

SINCE 2011, SAN FRANCISCO-BASED DESIGNER SCOTT PAGE HAS BEEN MAKING **3-D LASER SCANS** OF HISTORIC CHURCHES AND THEATERS AROUND THE BAY AREA, INCLUDING FIRST CHURCH OF CHRIST, SCIENTIST (LEFT). SEE ADDITIONAL SCANS AND LEARN MORE AT [PRESERVATIONNATION.ORG/ONLINE](http://PRESERVATIONNATION.ORG/ONLINE).

INNOVATION

# Radiating History

**R**adiography has traditionally been used to produce X-ray images that help assess everything from a person's bones to the structural integrity of steel bridge components. It's even used to check for concealed images behind valuable paintings. But this spring, the technology made history—or helped to preserve it—at the only remaining structure of the largest British-built fort in North America, the Fort Pitt Block House.

Completed in 1764 in what is now Pittsburgh, the Block House has a series of gunloops, or openings, in its facade that afforded soldiers 360-degree views. But after 250 years, the original timbers framing the gunloops showed signs of deterioration.

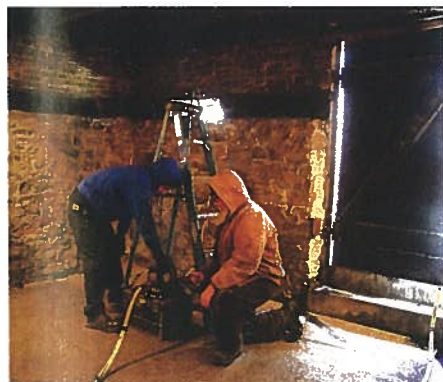
“[The timbers are] part of the building structure, and if their interiors deteriorate enough, they’ll ultimately fail the building,” says Dirk Taylor, the engineer chosen by the Fort Pitt Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution to coordinate Block

House preservation efforts in advance of its 250th anniversary.

Reluctant to use traditional, invasive evaluation methods such as drilling, Taylor enlisted TÜV Rheinland to assess the timbers using computed radiology. A digitized version of the standard X-ray examination, it produces longer-lasting, higher-quality images while eliminating costly film and development chemicals.

“The exams revealed that there isn’t really a whole lot of damage, [as we originally] thought,” says Emily Weaver, curator of the Block House. Instead, only simple repairs were needed to the surface of the beams.

“So there are gunloops in the building that are still the same gunloops that a soldier would have looked through 250 years ago,” says Weaver. “Most of the building is original, but it’s really cool that wooden pieces [in particular] are still original after all of this time.” —David Robert Weible



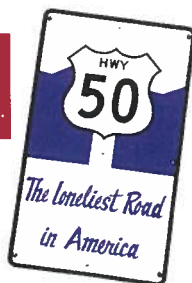
OPPOSITE: COURTESY BRENDIA WEINBERG; ABOVE: COURTESY SCOTT PAGE; RIGHT: COURTESY ROT ENGLER/CH

Nevada's U.S. 50, built in 1926 roughly following the route of the original Lincoln Highway, is named *The Loneliest Road in America* by *Life* magazine. Nevada tourism officials seize on the negative label and turn it into a marketing campaign.

1956

Influenced by his participation in a 1919 army convoy on the Lincoln Highway, President Eisenhower signs the National Interstate and Defense Highways Act into law, establishing an interstate highway system in the United States.

1986



2003



Preservationists save and restore Bedford, Pennsylvania's iconic Coffee Pot. The former lunch stand was built along the Lincoln Highway in 1927.

TIMELINE PHOTOS FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: WIKIMEDIA/LEVENTE JAKOB; ISTOCKPHOTO/LANCEB; WIKIMEDIA/DAVEHEISTERHOAB; WIKIMEDIA/JEFF KUBIHA