Precision Valley was such an important manufacturing area that it was on Hitler’s target list. The National Guard patrolled the high railroad bridge west of Claremont. The machine tools made there were used in most of the other military factories. We will see the buildings plus many photos and learn from the prominent local historian Hugh Putnam. Directions: From I-91 exit-7, go west. An Irving truck stop will be on the left (for coffee in or out). At 2.5 miles, pull into the parking lot on the left that matches this left photo. That was Bryant Grinder Co.; Jones & Lampson was on the right (demolishing soon).

At lunchtime, we will continue up that road to the Riverside Restaurant, pictured below. Keep right over the bridge by the church, see Lovejoy Tool Co. on the left. Notice the down-dropping driveway right after the building because that’s where we’ll park after lunch. Continuing to the restaurant, go straight through the light, then bear left. Notice the old Fellow Gearshaper Co. building across the river. Go straight through the next light and watch for Dollar General on the left. Turn into that parking lot and look for the Riverside Restaurant sign.

A process tour of Lovejoy Tool Co. will follow lunch, retracing our steps. See lovejoytool.com. Meet Eric Cram, Director of Engineering & Sales. After that, we will see one of Springfield’s five hydro-generating stations. Springfield Hydroelectric Co. was completely rebuilt many years ago. Mathew Rubin, owner, will describe it and it’s rebuilt and shed light on the other local stations. Directions: from Lovejoy, turn left (toward the restaurant again) but this time turn left at the light and then two more immediate lefts including the one down the steep hill in the left photo below. Park at the bottom of the hill on the far left. When leaving from this parking lot, turn left at the top and follow that street on down to the main street; turn right at the bottom and you’re on the way home.