

# SPRINGFIELD PRESERVATION TRUST

# Quarterly Newsletter

## WINTER 1987

### McKnight Tour A Huge Success

Sunday, September 28 saw the streets of McKnight awash with throngs of people attending the Trust's third annual AT HOME House Tour. Beautiful weather, good publicity, twenty victorian homes, and a great neighborhood brought out twice as many people as previous tours. The nearly 800 people caught Trust coordinators unprepared. By one o'clock all tour brochures were sold, and remaining tour-goers were given photocopied maps listing the participating homes.

This annual autumn event, underwritten by Bank of Boston, unveiled a wide variety of homes in New England's largest wood-framed, late Victorian neighborhood. Included were examples of Italianate, Stick, Queen Anne, Colonial Revival, and Shingle styles. Houses ranged from those under renovation to those already lovingly restored.

The AT HOME tour is a major fund raising event, with this year's profits going into the residential architecture guide. More importantly, it is a major educational event which highlights one of Springfield's historic neighborhoods and gives the public a chance to see the wonderful homes our city is fortunate to possess. McKnight certainly impressed many people.

A few AT HOME brochures were found after the tour. Members who would like a copy should send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to the Trust's office at 979 Main Street.

The Trust is grateful for the continued support from Bank of Boston and for the enthusiastic participation of so many McKnight homeowners. Special thanks go to Marilyn Sutin for photography, Jim Boone for house-hunting, Bob McCarroll for overall coordination, Ed Sims and Paul Kenney for gracious hosting of the "Thank Goodness It's All Over" Party, and Terri Ward and Carol Rucinski for fast action when we ran out of brochures.

Next year's AT HOME tour will highlight the Maple Hill Historic District on its tenth anniversary.

### Spring House Tour Being Planned

Tentatively set for Sunday, May 3, the eleventh annual Historic House Tour is being planned. As usual, this spring event is a sampler of the historic areas in Springfield. The Trust hopes to feature homes in Quadrangle/Mattoon, Forest Park Heights, McKnight, Maple Hill, Ridgewood, and Lower Maple Historic Districts. Tour-goers can either drive themselves or take buses with guides. Anyone interested in opening their home or helping to work on the tour should contact Bob McCarroll.

Our tours have led people to purchase homes in the historic areas, and numerous tour-goers have said we have shown parts of the City they never knew existed. The Historic House Tour is one of the signs of spring, so circle your calendars for this May 3 event.



### EXCELLENT HISTORIC BUILDING TO BE MOVED BY TRUST.

The large white 1896 building used as the Community House for the Martin Luther King Jr. Community Church will be moved by the Trust from its current location near AIC on Concord Terrace to a vacant lot on Bowdoin Street purchased by SPT.

The Church gave the historic structure to the Trust rather than demolishing it in order to build a modern facility. If on completion of the project there is a profit, it will be shared by the Trust and the Church, but past projects of this type have lost money while contributing to preservation and development efforts.

An Open House on January 11 from 1 to 3 p.m. will give people the opportunity to view the inside of this 10 - room building before the move. The Trust plans to find a buyer who will complete interior renovation.

Mayor E.E. Stone lived in the house while he was in office in 1903 - 4. Trained and employed as a railway engineer, Stone was responsible for early plans for the Memorial Bridge and the Little River Reservoir, though completion of these projects did not occur till later. Since the 1920's the building has been owned by the Church.

The Trust appreciates the Martin Luther King Jr. Church's generosity and community spirit.

## Applause for Indian Motorcycle groundbreaking

After years of effort, groundbreaking took place for the Indian Motorcycle Building being converted into 139 apartments.

Governor Dukakis was present and lauded the efforts of all involved. This has been a long effort that never would have happened if the building had not been listed on the National Register of Historic Places and become eligible for the Investment Tax credits. Developers, neighbors and preservationists are all due credit for saving this building which hopefully will become the basis for the revitalization of Winchester Square. Special praise should go to Hilton Abbott, Peter Zorzi, Dave Sanborn and Fran Gagnon who worked so hard to draw attention to the building and get it on the National Register. Their efforts go back at least 10 years.

## Trust Input In Tapley School Future

The SPT became very involved as discussions about the site for the Model Neighborhood School in McKnight took place during the Fall. The Trust's concerns were about the historic 1887/1910 Tapley School. The following position was voted and made known to city and state officials.

### TAPLEY SCHOOL - TRUST POSITION

1. The Springfield Preservation Trust supports the retention of the 1887 and 1910 portions of the Tapley School.
2. Any renovation of the Tapley School building must respect the significant interior and exterior architectural details.
3. The Trust does not object to an architecturally compatible addition, if the building is returned to educational use and additional space is required.
4. In the event that the Tapley School site must be enlarged for educational purposes, all houses should be relocated within the McKnight area rather than be demolished.

The Tapley site was not chosen for the new school, so the Trust's efforts will be directed towards the reuse and preservation of the Tapley School as soon as possible.

## WINTER CALENDAR

Meetings at 7:30 p.m. in the Community Room of the Forest Park Library:

February 4

March 4

April 1

## WELCOME NEW BOARD MEMBERS

PAUL HILLSBURG and SANDFORD WILK have joined the active Board of the Springfield Preservation Trust we are pleased to announce.

## Architectural Booklet Still Underway

The Trust still plans to publish a guide to residential architecture in Springfield. Production delays, however, will push printing of the 36-page booklet into 1987. The delays have resulted from the search for possible sponsors. Thus far, Studio One Architects has agreed to help provide financial support, and the Springfield Newspapers have offered to do the photography. Several local banks were approached but declined participation. The Trust itself has collected up to \$4,000 toward the project.

The booklet will provide an overview of local domestic architecture from our oldest existent houses of the early nineteenth century to current building types. Text and photographs will focus on styles as they commonly occur in Springfield. Trust members Bob McCarroll and Marilyn Sutin have been ferreting out examples of different styles, ranging from surviving Federal houses to rare quonset hut homes. A slide show will be assembled to complete the booklet.

Although not marking the City's 350th anniversary as had been hoped, the booklet will instead mark the fifteenth anniversary of historic preservation in Springfield. Both the Trust and the Springfield Historical Commission were founded in 1972. Happy Birthday to us!



# SPRINGFIELD PRESERVATION TRUST

979 main st.  
springfield, mass. 01103

NONPROFIT ORG.  
US POSTAGE  
PAID  
SPRINGFIELD, MA  
PERMIT NO. 219