

SPRINGFIELD PRESERVATION TRUST

Quarterly Newsletter

WINTER 1988



ANNIVERSARY BASH HELD

The Trust celebrated the fifteenth anniversary of its incorporation at a gala reception on Sunday, November 22. Held in the lavishly-decorated lobby of the Paramount Theatre, the event was the Trust's way to show its appreciation to all who had helped over those years. Nearly one hundred people including past board members, house tour participants and project sponsors spent the afternoon sipping champagne, sampling tasty hors d'oeuvres, and visiting with fellow preservationists while a strolling violinist played. Past Presidents Laurie Wallace, Fran Gagnon, Jim Boone, and Bob McCarroll as well as current President Phil Burdick spoke of the events and activities of the Trust since its inception in 1972. Special thanks go to Don Champion, who made available the theatre, and to the planning committee consisting of John Bellows, Steve Haddad, Paul Mann, Dan Sotak-Cooper, Lisa Sotak-Cooper, Marilyn Sutin, and Terri Ward.

NEW MEMBERS WELCOMED

We would like to welcome to Trust membership the following new people: Kim Baker, David Bell, Mark Curto, Diane Fisher, Norman MacLean, Gary McKie, James and Marilyn Riddle, and Collean Westburg.

Valley Victorians Will Come Alive in Quadrangle in April-May: Jim and Dan in Excellent Lecture Series

The SPT in conjunction with the Connecticut Valley Historic Museum is presenting a series of six lectures in APRIL and MAY on Wednesday evenings from 7 to 8 p.m. SPT Board members JAMES BOONE and DAN SOTAK-COOPER will participate, with Jim discussing architecture and Dan sharing his knowledge and enthusiasm for Victorian furnishings. Acclaimed historian Donald D'Amato will also deliver a talk. The series is called VALLEY VICTORIANS, and it coordinates with displays of architecture of interior decoration assembled by the museum. The six lectures are as follows:

1. Colonial Architecture - the Roots of Victorian
2. Lifestyle in the Victorian Era
3. Victorian Architecture
4. Painting the Victorian House
5. Interior House Decoration
6. Furniture of the Victorian Era

Bus tour participants don't need to be reminded of the liveliness of Jim and Don's talks about the Victorian era in Springfield, and Trust is proud that one of our younger members will present a lecture.

All Trust members will want to support this interesting lecture series. Please contact the museum for registration information.

1988 Membership Renewal to Begin

The annual renewal of membership will soon begin. When you receive your renewal letter, please respond promptly so that a follow up letter does not have to be sent. This year, the Board will undertake a new membership drive to increase the ranks of preservationists. While we seek new members, it is important that we do not lose old friends!

SPEAK OUT "The Other Cost of Owning a Home in Springfield"

by Edward Pomeroy

Buying an old house, restoring it, and maintaining it is expensive and it's hard work. If you love old houses it's worth it, but unfortunately in Springfield that is often not the only cost. Although our city has some impressive historic districts with many well kept homes, it also has noisey traffic, blaring radios, litter, loose dogs, junk cars, and too many property owners who would be just as happy (judging by the condition of their property) living in the center of a dump. Putting up with the problems listed above is the other cost of owning a home in Springfield.

I'm often amazed at conditions preservationists tolerate in their neighborhoods. Some of the problems mentioned above could be alleviated with a call to the police, or agencies like the city's housing code enforcement office, or the dog control center. Vandalism, loose dogs, blaring radios, and rubbish should be reported and complained about, not tolerated. There are lots of reasons why people put up with city problems ranging from fear to indifference, but Springfield's preservationists should consider that putting up with a diminished quality of life in the city is not going to help attract preservation-minded home-buyers to Springfield's old neighborhoods. People interested in living in old homes can also find them in suburban or rural areas where they don't have to put up with "city problems." Springfield's old houses won't be restored or saved if people interested in preservation don't want to live in the neighborhoods.

Edward Pomeroy is a homeowner in McKnight and a computer analyst.

SPEAK OUT inaugurates a new feature in the **NEWS-LETTER**: a column where members can express their ideas, complaints, challenges, dreams or frustrations about **PRESERVATION ISSUES** in Springfield. Editorials do not necessarily represent the view of the Executive Board, but they will review all columns for appropriateness. We hope you share our enthusiasm for this new feature and will call Anne Rice at 739-5099 with plans to **SPEAK OUT**.



HAPPY BIRTHDAY GREAT OLD HOUSE

Celebrate the 100th Anniversary
of This Super McKnight House on the
SPT Spring House Tour on May 1st

SPRING TOUR BEING PLANNED

The twelfth annual Historic House Tour has been set for Sunday, May 1. Homeowners in McKnight and Ridgewood have already offered to open their houses. The tour will ultimately feature residential buildings in each of Springfield's varied historic districts. Anyone interested in showing their home or helping with the tour should contact Bob McCarroll at 736-0629.

sears REALTORS

JAMES A. BOONE

97 FLORIDA STREET
SPRINGFIELD, MASS. 01109

OFF.: (413) 785-1636
RES.: (413) 734-9110

(413) 788-9529
JACK MAHAN, PROP.

P.O. BOX 2860
SPRINGFIELD, MA 01101

FREE ESTIMATES

Mahan Slate Roofing

COMMERCIAL & INSTITUTIONAL
SLATE BOUGHT, SOLD & INSTALLED

Our Specialty - Slate Roofs Installed & Repaired

HOUSE PROFESSOR "Painting Your Old House: Part II"

Beyond prep work are the realms of color, type of paint, method of application, guarantee of workmanship, liability and other insurances and number of coats. Once, again we could write page upon page on any of those topics, but space only allows for the "Reader's Digest" version:

Color - Some consider this the most important aspect of the monumental painting project. Each era, region and style had its own character. And so the color schemes also varied widely. One color Victorian is a contradiction in terms. In general, post Greek-revival era had two, three, four or more colors per structure. This too is common knowledge, having been written about in even the most vague paint color manuals. Another sure sign of a poor restoration painter is if he/she suggests that you paint your Queen Anne white.

Type of paint - Oil is my motto. In many ways I am tried and true and traditional. So are oil based paints. Strong bond. Good durability and elasticity. What more could you ask for?

Method of application - Remember the "Karate Kid"? Brushy up, brushy down. Brush. If gives a good coat and has great control in the right hands. The reason I do not advise spray, you ask? Well, for starters, how about overspray?? Remember your next door neighbor's new car??? A little wind goes a long, long way.

Guarantee of Workmanship - Ask for two years material and labor. If you follow your painter's suggestions for prep work, then he/she should have no trouble with that.

Insurance - Always ask for a certificate of insurance from any contractor doing more than just minor repair work. Your "homeowner's" won't insure against a ladder falling on your neighbor's car if it belongs to your painter. Surprise! Always, always, ALWAYS ask your contractor for proof of liability and workmen's comp. insurance *before* they start the job. A professional won't mind your asking. It will show him/her that you know your stuff.

Number of Coats - Oil primer followed by two coats of an oil-based finish paint. Sometimes, depending on color, one coat of finish is acceptable. This depends on the prep work and the applicator as well. Ask to have an area at eye level done first. If you can see the primer after the finish coat has dried, you will need another coat.

Yes, there is a lot more. Whole books on the subject. This should just be a primer before you have that brush with history. Oh, by the way, a good painter always has a bad pun to share. Just ask. Until the next time . . .

By Sanford Wilk

EDITOR'S NOTE: IF YOU ARE PLANNING TO PAINT THIS SPRING, be sure to attend the lecture in the series described on page one on "Painting the Victorian House" for valuable tips on terrific color combinations to maximize the beauty of your house no matter what historical era it dates from.

Historic District Rules Important to Preservation of Neighborhood Cityscape

Many members of the Trust live in local historic districts, so we thought that a review of the basic rules that govern districts would be useful.

As preservationists it is our responsibility to be sure we each follow the rules and also to contact the Historic Commission staff person (Bill McGrath 787-6020) if we see violations taking place in our neighborhoods. Enforcement and the viability of our Historic Districts are all of our responsibilities. The Historic Commission controls any CHANGE to the exterior of structures in Historic Districts. This includes roofs, windows, porches, artificial siding, sky lights, steps, garages, railings, decorative trim alteration, removal or cover-up. Paint color is controlled only on Mattoon Street.

Also, any fencing that is in front of the foundation line of the house is controlled. Maintenance is not change unless it results in a change of architecture, design or materials. (removal of slate roof is change).

It is always best to contact the Historic Commission if there is any question. All requested changes must be approved by the Commission either on the basis of appropriateness or hardship. **SUPPORT THE RULES: WITHOUT THEM OUR HISTORIC DISTRICTS WILL LOSE THEIR ARCHITECTURAL INTEGRITY!**

Interior and Exterior
Renovations

Decks and Outdoor
Living Areas

Special Interior Woodworking

**accent
construction**

(413) 734-6090

JOHN M. FERNANDS

CHARLES ABDOW

TED JOHNSON

JOHN BRASSORD



The Golden Phoenix

*Fine Furnishings
Decorating Service
Christmas Displays
Antiques*

413-533-5211

459 Granby Road
Route 202

South Hadley, Mass. 01075

PLEASE RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP

___ Student \$10 ___ Individual \$15
 ___ Family \$25

Mail your check to:
Springfield Preservation Trust
979 Main Street
Springfield, MA 01103

SPT Calendar

Twelfth Annual Spring House Tour
May 1

Meetings at 7:30 p.m. in the Community Room of the Forest
Park Library:
February 3
March 2
April 6

This newsletter is published by and for the members of the
Springfield Preservation Trust, Inc.
Editor Anne Rice
Contributors Bob McCarroll, Jim Boone
Photo: Marilyn Sytin

Architectural Booklet Complete

By now, all members of the Trust should have received a complimentary copy of the *Guide to Springfield Residential Architecture*. Anyone who has not yet received a copy should notify the Trust. The booklet is also for sale for five dollars at the Mayor's Office of Community Affairs, 1250 Main Street. Trust members will receive a dollar discount. A number of booklets have been retained to give to new members. If you know anyone who would be interested in Trust activities, now is a good time to show them the booklet and encourage them to join!

STUDIOCRAFT
Renovation, Restoration, Remodeling
Box 2333, Springfield MA 01101
John Ring 413-732-2013

62 Westminster St.
Springfield, MA 01109

(413) 734-4382

"Westminster Stained Glass"

Custom Design and Construction
Repair & Restoration

Conrad Chaffee

Appt. Only

SPRINGFIELD
PRESERVATION
TRUST

979 Main Street
Springfield, MA 01103

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