

# THE PRESERVATIONIST

Newsletter of  
THE SPRINGFIELD PRESERVATION TRUST

Winter 2000

## 1999 PRESERVATION AWARDS AND ANNUAL MEETING

The Springfield Preservation Trust Annual Meeting and Awards Ceremony was held November 21, 1999 at the Carriage House at the Barney Estate in Forest Park. The annual meeting, which was originally held to elect new officers, has evolved into an event that celebrates Springfield's preservation efforts. Over 80 people attended this event, which focused on recognizing property owners who have contributed to historic preservation in Springfield. The number of award recipients seems to grow each year, from residential rehabilitation to sensitive new construction; the spirit of preservation continues to thrive in Springfield. This year the Board of the SPT recognized 18 property owners in the City of Homes.

For the past 2 years, the annual meeting has been expanded to include a guest speaker. This year's speaker was Tony Souza, the Executive Director of WHALE, The Waterfront Historic Area League in New Bedford, Massachusetts. His presentation was highlighted by stories of New Bedford's successes as well as failures, an honest appraisal of how his organization struggled to build a strong preservation movement in his city and how historic preservation has become one of New Bedford's most valuable assets.

The SPT also took the opportunity to recognize 2 of its own members. Diane Fisher, a long time member and former president who retired from the Board in 1999 was recognized for her years of service to the SPT. And Wilfred Stebbins who stepped down as Board President after 6 years of service was the recipient of the Donald Camp ion Award for Excellence in Historic Preservation. Both members have worked hard and dedicated themselves to the preservation cause and will continue to support preservation issues in the future.

The importance of maintaining and restoring an historical property should not go unnoticed. The SPT welcomes recommendations from our membership at large. If you know of any appropriated restoration projects, buildings that have been "reborn" with new use or someone who deserves recognition for good stewardship of an historic or architecturally significant property call the SPT voice mail and leave a message.

SPT VOICE MAIL 413 747-0656.

## FIRE DAMAGED MULBERRY STREET HOUSE TO BE REBUILT

Nearly ten years ago, on Easter morning, a raging fire destroyed two-thirds of the roof on the once grand house at 81 Mulberry Street in Springfield. Built around the turn of the century by Chester Bowles (who later became ambassador to Mexico) this house is one of the finest examples of colonial revival architecture anywhere in the City of Homes. Legend has it that Chester had cultivated one of the most magnificent gardens in the city behind his impressive home. The last occupants of the house, Dr. & Mrs. Frank Bill purchased the house in 1946. At that time it had already been turned into apartments and rooms for rent.

After the fire 81 Mulberry stood empty, quietly deteriorating. It had a strange almost Jeckel and Hyde quality. From the front, it retained its grand appearance. From the rear, the devastation was made real. It is that front façade that grabbed the attention of Springfield native Mike Noonan. From his home in San Diego, California, Mike read an article in the Union News about the City's desire to level the house. An earlier effort by the neighborhood historical group to renovate the house had been thwarted by an uncooperative and unresponsive Historic Commission. By the

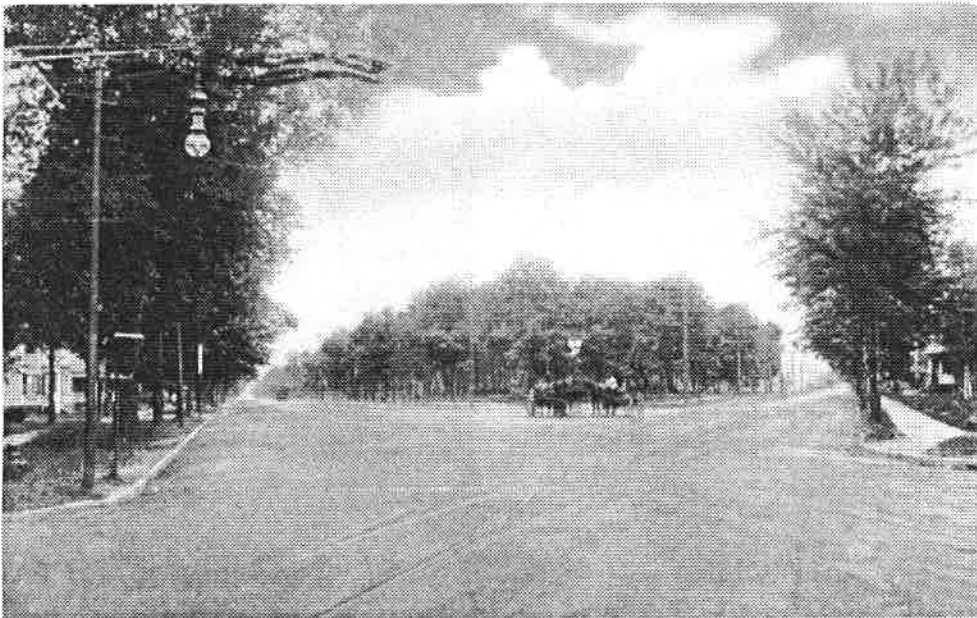
*Continued on Page 2*

Springfield Preservation Trust  
979 Main Street  
Springfield, MA 01103

NON PROFIT  
ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
SPRINGFIELD, MA  
PERMIT #219

## HOUSES & FLOWERS

The 2000 Spring Tour of Historic Homes  
Ridgewood Historic District, Springfield  
Sunday May 8th, 2000 1pm to 4pm  
See pg 2 for details



## Springfield Then...

This bucolic scene of Springfield could be so many places around western Massachusetts in 1910. The horse and wagons of two friends stopped in the road to visit without concern for traffic. Note the horses drinking from the water trough at the intersection of the unpaved road. The picture also shows signs of urban development. Note the granite curbs, a hallmark of Springfield, and the overhead electric streetlight to the left of the picture. Do you recognize this intersection? Turn to page 4 and see if your guess is right.