

THE PRESERVATIONIST

Newsletter of
THE SPRINGFIELD PRESERVATION TRUST

Spring 2001

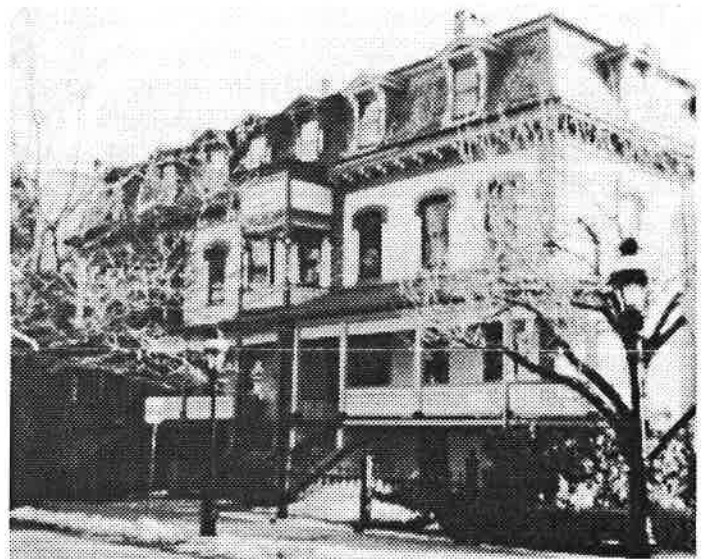
FINE HOMES & FLOWERS

2001 Spring Tour of Historic Homes

Mark your calendars! The Springfield Preservation Trust is presenting its Spring Tour of Historic Homes on Sunday May 20, 2001, from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m., in the Mattoon-Quadrangle Historic District. The theme of this year's tour is "Fine Homes and Flowers" and you will see plenty of both on this tour. Seven private residences will open their doors, including three 1870's townhouses on Mattoon & Elliot Streets and two condominium units in the restored Classical High School Building. A two-story townhouse in the Kimball Tower also will be open, as well as an urban apartment in the former YMCA on Chestnut Street. In addition, the tour will include commercial space located in the 1870's Italianate house on Elliot Street and the Cloister Art Gallery located on Cathedral Square at St. Michael's Cathedral.

The Mattoon-Quadrangle interiors will be adorned with special floral creations. Those who attended last year's Spring Tour may remember its splendid floral art works. Once again, some of the Springfield area's finest floral designers will create individual arrangements specifically for each of the building on the tour.

As a bonus, the Springfield Library & Museums will take \$1.00 of the adult ticket price for admission to its museums on the day of the tour for anyone holding an SPT Tour



ticket. So plan an afternoon outing for the family. The tour begins at 1:00 p.m., at 27 Elliott Street in Springfield. Tickets for the tour will be on sale there, or you may buy tickets in advance at Flowers Flowers, The Flower Box, and Westfield Flowers. Tickets are \$12.00; there is a \$2.00 discount for SPT members. For more information contact Ted Jarrett at 413-781-0641.

NOW AND THEN

NOW... Vinyl siding hides the details, and the empty commercial building does not speak well of what was once here. Look down the street and you see vacant land and lots of missing houses. The commercial building, once Anderson Little, has served many functions and will soon be reused again. But where is this and what was here before?



FALL HOUSE TOUR GREAT SUCCESS

The Springfield Preservation Trust's Annual Fall House Tour was its best-attended tour in recent years. The weather contributed to the success of the event by providing fair skies and mild temperature. People were already lining up for tickets at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Peter Picknelly, Jr., a full half-hour before the advertised start of the tour.

The Picknelly estate at 330 Park Drive in the Colony Hills section of Springfield was one of two possible starting points for the tour "Around Forest Park." The tour featured a selection of homes in neighborhood's surrounding the park. Most of the homes were built in the 1920's in the Tudor Revival style popular at that time. A surprise favorite of the tour was the unique house built by Herbert Hearn in 1923-24, tucked up against Entry Brook Dingle at the end of Fairdell. Visitors were impressed by stone embellishments salvaged from some of Springfield's lost architecture.

In the "ticket booth" at the alternate starting point on Washington Boulevard, cider and pastries were available for visitors. The SPT also displayed its heirloom gifts for sale along with special flower arrangements provided by Westfield Flowers in honor of the tour. The large restored garage of this Forest Park Heights home provided a perfect spot for these activities.

By 4:00 Saturday afternoon, approximately 800 people had taken the tour. By comparison, the spring tour in the Ridgewood Historic District drew approximately 250 visitors.

(Those of you who missed that tour missed some extraordinary houses. We hope to have another tour in the area in the future—perhaps when the restoration of 81 Mulberry Street is complete.) The beautiful Candlelight tour in McKnight the previous fall had similar attendance figures. The spring tour on Belleview in 1999 drew approximately 500 visitors.



Those who missed any of these tours missed remarkable opportunities to visit some of the best-preserved and most lovingly restored homes in this City of Homes. Mark your calendars now for the Trust's Spring Tour, Sunday 20 May 2001.

HISTORIC HOMES TOUR GREAT NEIGHBORS

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WHAT AND HOW OF REPLACEMENT WINDOWS

Introduction. Replacement windows have a major impact on the look of a building wherever they are used, leaving the impression of a handsome “fit” or a splotchy eyesore. Different projects have different aims and have different design needs. In projects of major adaptive reuse, such as converting industrial buildings to residences, windows are replaced with very different window types, so some decent design thought is needed. For many projects, especially improving historic houses in controlled districts, the intent is to minimize any changes in appearance. This column is written to that aim. Because whatever you do will likely be there for many decades, always do your homework: get referrals and product literature, check certifications, and visit similar jobs. Beyond that, there are several things to consider before you spend money.

Consider non-replacement. That most un-American of options, “maintenance,” can work wonders. Sometimes, fixing what you have is plenty. Remove and re-fit the sash, scrape and paint, re-glaze (re-putty) all glass, caulk/seal where needed, add weather-stripping, tighter locks, etc. Replace ropes on double-hung windows. If a few pieces are beyond repair, have new ones made locally to match. Any good “handyman” can do all or most of this work.

Add storm windows. If you’re thinking of replacing windows for insulation, you should know that two single-glazed windows (your primary window and the storm window) are generally more energy-efficient than one new double-glazed window. Storms can be done well, especially with the often-overlooked option of using interior storms. Interior storms can be almost invisible to guests inside, and of course leave the exterior appearance unchanged. Usually one company sells, measures for, makes, and installs the storms, especially where there is no other work under way at the same time.

Plan for replacement windows. When existing windows are truly beyond saving, replacement windows are needed. They became big business in the 1970’s, so there are lots of types now. Some of the major design and product-selection factors include:


1. Historical period. Very old houses have often had one or two window changes already, usually involving enlarging “lite” (individual windowpane) and/or opening sizes. If you have a mix of window styles, take care to develop an overall solution; professional advice is well advised.
2. Fit the window to the opening. One of the quickest ways to cheapen the appearance of your house is to use under-sized windows with fill around them. Many products are available that will fit the openings can be custom fitted.
3. Match window type. The occasional historic house where the double-hung windows have been replaced with casements or sliders does indeed look like “Grandma at a rave in Elvis get-up.”
4. Match detailing. The thickness of opaque parts (frame, sashes, muntins, etc.) is critical. The older the house, the more diligently the window makers worked to make all these elements thin-thin-thin, to maximize daylight admitted. Recall the “fat”, early vinyl windows of 15 years ago with their charming “maximum-security” look.
5. Choose materials carefully. Material selection is important and difficult. New wood can be primed or un-primed and makes finish-color selection easiest. Metals (usually aluminum, steel) can have the highest quality factory finishes, but are tough on detailing and thermal efficiency. Vinyl is not recommended. It is still a relatively new material, environmentally threatening to make, and difficult to recycle. Fiberglass is another new entry. With any all-new material or system, no matter how well tested in the lab, you are the Guinea pig, developing the needed, real-world field experience. Mixed-material windows (wood clad with vinyl or aluminum, etc.) can be nice, but different materials behave differently and must be well detailed. Exotic materials, such as teak, can work well, but come with all the rainforest/sustainable-harvest issues, and of course have the usual “how-do-I-match-it?” future repair problems.
6. Remember integrity. An honest, one-over-one (two large lites), double-hung window will look far better than an eight-over-eight (16 small lites) with the dinky, snap-out fake muntins. Some of the high-end (expensive) windows

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have more effective-looking fake muntins, or you could use some of the options listed below.

7. Color is very important. While vinyl has been available in only the larval white and landlord brown, other products are available in more colors, and some of the standard "neutrals" are paintable to various degrees. Well-trimmed and detailed windows can provide a strong color accent, where it belongs. This eliminates the phony "shutters", which do not belong on many houses and are only added for color.

Combinations. Often, due to cost or other considerations, mixed solutions are used. This is an often-ignored approach. Consider the following suggestions.


1. Repair and rehab most existing windows, and/or add storms. Do more elaborate restoration at one or two special windows (with beveled or stained glass, fancy curved muntins, etc.)
2. Some companies, such as Marvin, make sash-only replacements, with or without subframes, for where basic frames are good.
3. Southwest exposure windows can be ruined in harsh sun; replace those and rehab the rest.
4. Where authenticity is critical, new windows can be custom-made locally. These are usually single-glazed; combine with interior storms.
5. Do the more elaborate work at the front (including some at sides so all windows match from within the front rooms), simplify elsewhere.
6. Phase the work, doing one side of the house, or six windows, every year or so, etc. Remember, product details might change through the years, so pick a corner or other stopping point where such differences will be less obvious.

Beyond windows. A house's design is a whole entity. Proportions, materials and styles of all the various elements must work together to maintain the overall integrity and appearance of a house. The occasionally seen Victorian covered in the 1950s-vintage, striated siding never works. Of more immediate concern to the subject of windows is trim. Vinyl siding can ruin the look of beautifully restored win-

dows (e.g., if vinyl siding comes to a narrow "J-trim" strip, one inch off the window opening).

Costs. For per-window costs, figure on \$10.00 for the sheet-of-poly-with-hairdryer approach (not discussed above). Estimate \$50.00 to \$80.00 for the handyman-rehab, about \$200.00 for good storms, about \$300.00 to \$500.00 for custom replications, replacements or restorations' and the sky's the limit for really special items. Of course sizes, materials, timing, and many other factors will affect costs, sometimes radically. As always, you get what you pay for. Window replacement is a major work: the Contractor, and products/materials chosen, should reflect this. One careful, architect-designed job done in 1982 used cheap windows, which lasted 12 years! The subsequent salesman-designed job is a disaster. On another job, windows were used which had fake muntins (the little division bars) represented with tape! These looked ridiculous a few years later, when the tape hung in shreds on various windows. My suggestion is generally not to skimp on this essential component of your house; where money is tight, go with the better quality of the next-simpler step down, rather than the cheaper version of the next-fancier approach. Putting in your own time, doing simpler projects entirely or "goffering" for your General Contractor can help, sometimes a lot, in saving money.

A final suggestion. A little thinking goes a long way. It's far, far cheaper to look at a few ideas on paper than to make changes in the field, or to say "Oh, no!" as you look at the finished product. Get good advice before starting!



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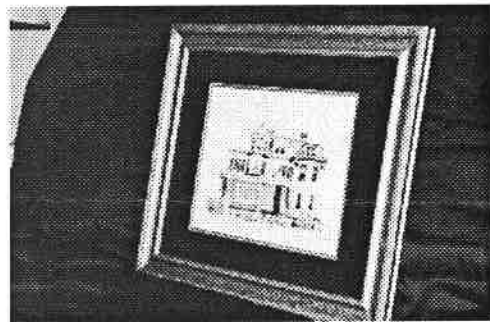
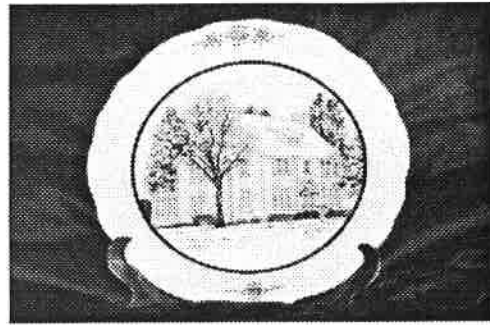
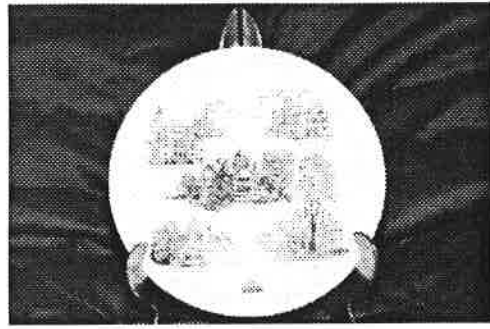
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GIFT ITEMS WITH HISTORIC PRESERVATION THEME HELP RAISE FUNDS FOR SPT

SPRINGFIELD PRESERVATION TRUST'S LIMITED EDITION COLLECTIBLE PLATES. A series of plates depicting Springfield's finest architecture. First in the series: "Lost Architecture" beautiful dwellings demolished never to be enjoyed again. Your purchase can help us save future structures from such an ill fate. Price \$40.00 + shipping. 8-inch diameter.

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ANNUAL MEETING AT INDIAN ORCHARD MILLS HONORS PRESERVATIONISTS

Approximately 80 people attended this year's annual meeting and award ceremony, which was held at the Indian Orchard Mills. The Mills, formerly a knitting factory, is now home to artists' studios and some light industry. More than 30 artists opened their studios to visitors before the formal meeting, giving our membership a wonderful opportunity to meet with artists, purchase original art work, and explore a fabulous old industrial building.

The meeting opened with a summary of the Trust's activities during the past year; two highly successful house tours, the publication of the Maple Hill Walking Guide, and continued efforts to advocate for historic preservation. The membership also voted in the new Board of Directors for 2001. Officers are Sarah Murray, President, Ted Jarrett and Linda Craven, VPs of Education, Bill Devlin and Carey Noonan,

VPs of Advocacy, Wilfred Stebbins, Secretary, and Rosemary Morin, Treasurer. Board members are Allen Agnitti, John Bellows, Ellen Berry, Jim Boone, Susanna Eden, Keith Gromacki, Bill Malloy, Bob McCarroll, Dan Myers, Mark Prince, Michael Rita, Michael Stevens, Marilyn Sutin, John Tansey, Hank Thornburn, and Annmarie Tucker.

After all business matters were completed, the floor was given over to Jim Boone to present the annual preservation awards. As usual, Jim presented a slide show of the winning properties and introduced the winners to the membership at large. This is always a wonderful event for us and the award recipients, who are so pleased by the recognition of their efforts to maintain, preserve, and restore their property. The year 2000 award recipients are

continued on next page

continued from page 5

- Stewardship: Proprietors of the Springfield Cemetery
Maple Commons for apartment buildings on High, School, and Union Streets
New Colony Court LLC for 154-164 Maple Street
Saint Peter's Episcopal Church for 45 Buckingham Street
- Rehabilitation: Susan Mastriani for 128-130 Mulberry Street
Walter Kroll for the carriage house at 61 Dartmouth Street
John Tansey for 67 Saint James Avenue
Springfield Library and Museums Association for 44 Oak Street (Indian Orchard Library)
Ann Rice for 114 Marengo Park
- Restoration: Springfield Park Commission for Skate House in Forest Park
Massachusetts Highway Department for General Edwards Bridge
- Sensitive New Construction: Springfield Library and Museums Association for 1187 Parker Street (16 Acres Library)
Springfield Park Commission for the entrances to Forest Park
- Reshingling: Stephen and Catherine Hays for 175 Forest Park Avenue.

The event ended on a high note as our guest speaker, John Mullin, FAICP, Professor of Landscape Architecture and Regional Planning at the University of Massachusetts spoke about New England mill communities.

MIRACLE ON MULBERRY STREET

A miracle is happening on Mulberry Street! Last time we wrote about the fire-damaged colonial revival house at 81 Mulberry Street, we told you that Mike Noonan had purchased it from the city of Springfield and would be rebuilding it for his home. Mike hired Hank Thorburn and the Thor Construction crew to begin what we suspect is the most ambitious residential renovation project ever attempted in the City of Homes. The Ridgewood neighborhood is deeply grateful to Mike for taking on a project that everyone had given up on.

The 1991 fire did tremendous damage to the house (including burning through two-thirds of the roof.), but not nearly as much as being exposed to the elements for ten years. It looked like such a hopeless case, yet Hank tells us that he was surprised by how much of the house could be saved. It was built so well that even the windows still opened and closed easily! The entire foundation (with a series of beautiful brick support arches) and the front and side walls have been braced and left standing while all of the floors and interior walls have been carefully removed. So far they have taken 15 tractor trailer truckloads of debris from the construction site. All doors, trim and windows have been saved and will be reused wherever possible. Materials will be duplicated to match the original as needed.

The structure will actually be stronger than when it was built over 100 years ago. This is because of the use of a new,

super strong product made of compressed wood (known as engineered plywood). The truss system is called Timberstand and one of the many benefits is very long spans can be supported by one beam (called an I-Joist). In several places on the third floor, a single span of beam measures 26 feet long, 18 inches deep and 5 inches wide. The original house was balloon framed. New construction today typically calls for platform framing. This renovation calls for a combination of an old technique blended with new construction methods, taking the best from each. Hank expects the house will be dried in before the end of March. We encourage Trust members to drive by the job site and see for themselves the Miracle on Mulberry Street.



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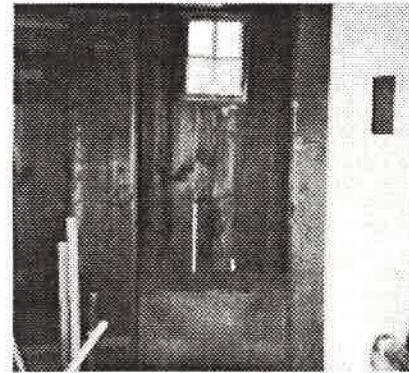
PRESERVATION PROJECTS IN PROGRESS

409 Union Street, Ridgewood Historic District

The name of the original owner of 409 Union Street is not known. The original house was built in the early 1800's. Remnants of the original shell were found during the recent rehab of the structure. In the 1840's, John Robinson of New York City moved to Springfield and purchased the house. He added an addition to the full front and side of the original structure. The next major renovation occurred in the early 1900's when central heating, indoor plumbing and electric lights were added. Members of the same family who purchased the house from the Robinson family occupied the house from 1903 until the fall of 2000 when its current owner purchased the home and began renovation. Look forward to touring 409 Union Street at some future date!



The house as seen now is essentially what existed after the addition.



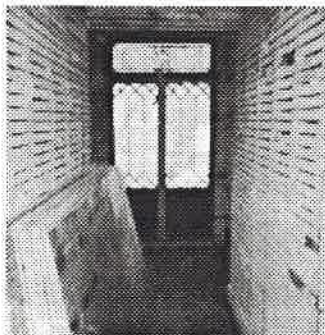
A three-seat attached outhouse still stands at the rear of the property.



This 1840's firebox had been covered over in a 1950's renovation and was found while stripping off a 1970's Z-Brick wall.

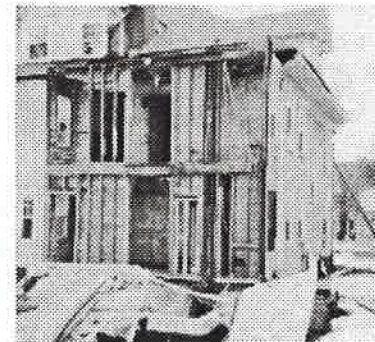
46 Forest Park Avenue

The Forest Park Home Ownership Project, Concerned Citizens for Springfield, the U.S. Department of Urban Development, and the Home Investment Pact Project of Springfield have pooled resources to rehabilitate the vacant house at 46 Forest Park Avenue. The late 19th century structure has been known by many names, such as the Nauheim Sanitarium and the Forest Park Inn. When completed, the house will be two, two-story side by side housing units.



The original doors from the second floor hall will once again open out onto an open porch. The original three flight front steps are also being rebuilt from an early photograph of the house.

If you know of a restoration or preservation project that you would like to see featured, let us know.



The oldest part of the house has been removed.



The entire double level front porch is being reconstructed with new Corinthian columns and capitals

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NOW AND THEN

...THEN Some of you may have recognized the Sampson funeral home at the corner of State and Westminster Streets in McKnight, but the grand house is long gone. These two properties remind us that State Street was lined with mansions from Maple Street to Mason Square, formerly Winchester Square. All that are left are the funeral homes or former funeral homes. Drive up State Street and imagine what a grand place it was. -p.s. Chestnut Street, the location of the recently demolished Donoghue House also was lined with mansions. Now, one more is gone.

SPT is looking for "shutter bugs" to volunteer for photography assignments. We often need photographs for newsletters, publicity, and fundraising activities. If you are handy with a camera and would like to volunteer your services for a worthy cause, please leave a message for Sarah Murray (SPT President) at (413) 747-0656 or contact an SPT Board Member

The Springfield Preservation Trust is Springfield's only not for profit, all volunteer organization dedicated to the preservation of Springfield's built environment. Founded in 1972, the SPT raises funds from membership and events to support its education and advocacy activities on behalf of architectural preservation in Springfield. To become a member, contact: Springfield Preservation Trust, 979 Main Street, Springfield, MA 01103