

April 2006



# SPRINGFIELD PRESERVATION TRUST, INC.

979 Main Street, Springfield, MA 01103

Dedicated to Preserving Springfield's Architectural History

## Forest Park Heights Tour

The Trust, in partnership with the Forest Park Civic Association, will host a 'Homes of Forest Park' tour on **Sunday, May 7** between 1 p.m. and 4 p.m. The tour will feature 8 Victorian and Colonial Revival homes clustered in the Fairfield Street / Garfield Street area.

Besides being Springfield's largest local historic district, Forest Park Heights is one of the most elegant turn of the century neighborhoods in Western Massachusetts. Residential development was spurred in the 1890's by the expansion and electrification of the trolley system which connected the suburban neighborhood with downtown Springfield. Creation of Forest Park was a further incentive for people to live in the area. More than 600 houses were constructed over a 30 year period. The area north of Sumner Avenue was developed by the Mutual Investment Company owned by the McKnight family who also developed the McKnight and Ridgewood neighborhoods.

Admission is \$12 for SPT and FPCA members; \$15 for nonmembers. Tickets can be purchased in advance at Flowers Flowers, 758 Sumner Avenue, and the Flower Box located at 596 Carew Street. Tickets can be purchased on the day of the tour from 12:30 p.m. until 2:30 p.m. on Garfield Triangle..

To volunteer or obtain additional information, call Bob McCarroll at 736-0629

## Lawsuit Update

The Trust's ongoing lawsuit with the Museum Association and the Catholic Diocese of Western Massachusetts is in its final stage. As you recall, the Trust successfully won the case over the issue of the Museum Association and the Diocese being exempt from the guidelines of the Mattoon Quadrangle Historic District. The lawsuit was in response to the demolition of the Donohue House and the apartment block on Edwards Street.

Rather than accept the decision, they decided to appeal the case. The Court of Appeals moved the case to the State Supreme Court. When the date is scheduled, possibly in May, we intend to go to Boston to hear the

Oral Arguments. If you are interested in joining us, please contact Jim Boone at 734-9110.

## Annual Awards Ceremony

Please join us on **Wednesday, May 17**, as the Preservation Trust holds its Annual Awards Ceremony to honor those individuals and institutions that have done outstanding restoration and preservation work over the past year. This annual event reminds us all of the importance of preservation in the city, and highlights neighborhoods, homeowners, and contractors who care about their homes and Springfield.

## 14-16 Buckingham Street wins reprieve

One of the last grand mansions of State Street might still be saved. The house at 14-16 Buckingham Street started life around the corner on State Street, possibly presenting itself something like the old Byron Funeral Home just down the street.

Sometime around the 1920s the house was moved so that the large apartment house could be built on State Street. By the late 1990s, it was neglected and abandoned, and the City took it for unpaid taxes. The City marketed it several times as a single-family project, without luck, and pressure has arisen to have it demolished.

Now, after a meeting in Mayor Ryan's office, the City will try to market the house one more time. This is its last chance. The RFP will encourage a broader range of uses (up to 3 units of owner/ rental housing, and/or business uses), with some flexibility on parking requirements. While efforts will be made to advertise this RFP over a wider geographical area, only committed and bankable parties will be considered as preferred developers. Member suggestions are welcomed.

## Jim & Bob Show

Jim Boone and Bob McCarroll were featured guests on Katerie Walsh's morning radio show broadcasted Saturday 3/11 and Sunday 3/12 at 6:00 a.m. Both were glad it was taped earlier in the week! Jim and Bob talked about the Trust, preservation in Springfield, the Historic Commission, and pitched the house tour on May 7<sup>th</sup>. Katerie was a very gracious host.

## Did you miss our Annual Meeting?

The beautiful 30 room Amesmith Mansion on Maple Street was the site of the Trust's Annual Meeting held on February 26th. 65 members and friends gathered to share delicious food and drink and talk about what a wonderful place Springfield is and how fortunate we are to have such an incredible housing stock. The new Board was elected and officers chosen. The group was then entertained by Jack Hess, a local historian who spoke about the Knox Automobile Company and the many other transportation firsts in Springfield, including Rolls Royce, Duryea, Wason Car Company and of course, the Indian Motorcycle Company.

Special thanks to Committee members Bob Holbrook, Linda Langevin, and Patty Staples for organizing this event and putting together the wonderful refreshments.

## Farewell

After 6 tireless years as President of the Springfield Preservation Trust, and Board member for much longer, Sarah Murray, has decided to step down. Sarah was honored with the 'Donald E. Campion Award for Outstanding Contribution to Historic Preservation' for her many years of service.

Over the years she initiated the Lecture Series, created and organized the displays at Tower Square and Mattoon Street Art Festival, and created the Porches of Springfield poster. She forged close relationships with statewide agencies and the National Trust for Historic Preservation. She has been the energy behind much of what the Trust has done for a long time; we all thank Sarah for her leadership, energy, and her positive spirit. She will be sorely missed.

## Election of Officers

New officers were elected at the Annual Meeting. Longtime Trust member Jim Boone was elected President, Bill Devlin VP of Advocacy, JoAnne Cardwell Secretary, and Rosemary Morin Treasurer. The Board welcomes 4 new members, Thomas Conway, Michael Marcinkewich, Grace Murray and Jesse Steele. At our March Board meeting Jack Hess was also elected to the Board. Returning to serve on the SPT Board are Robert Holbrook, Jeanne LaLancette, Linda Langevin, Bob McCarroll, and Patty Staples.

## Monthly Meetings

Monthly meetings of the Springfield Preservation Trust are held on the first Wednesday of each month at 6:30 p.m., at the Mason Wright Retirement Center, 74 Walnut Street. All Trust members are welcome.

## Membership information

Want to help preserve Springfield's built environment? Join our organization and become a vital part of the movement to preserve our built environment and promote our architectural heritage.

- o (\$30) Household - Includes discounted admission to Trust events
- o (\$60) Patron - Includes discounted admission to Trust events and one complimentary event ticket
- o (\$120) Sponsor - Includes discounted admission to Trust events, two complimentary events tickets and an architectural guide
- o (\$200) Benefactor - Includes discounted admission to Trust events, two complimentary tickets and a Trust produced video titled "Homes of the City"

As per your request, two levels of lifetime membership are now being offered

- o (\$300) Lifetime Household - Includes discounted admission to Trust events
- o (\$600) Lifetime Patron - Includes one complimentary event ticket per year in addition to discounted admission to Trust events

Be sure to check your mailbox for our brand new membership brochure which highlights our history and mission, and also includes several wonderful photographs of historic homes in Springfield.

Many thanks to Erica Walch and Sarah Murray for a job well done.

## WE NEED YOU!

The Trust has a working Board, all volunteers, but you do not have to be a Board member to get involved. We would love to have each of you become part of a project; be a tour docent, help set up events, assist with mailings, help out at our table at the Mattoon Street Arts Festival, or contribute whatever talent you might have. Many hands make for light work. Please call Jim Boone at 734-9110, if you can help in any way.

Newsletter contributors:

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