

# SPRINGFIELD PRESERVATION TRUST



## Quarterly Newsletter

SUMMER 1989

### NATIONAL TRUST STATUS SOUGHT FOR MILL RIVER AREA

The application for National Trust Status of the Mill River area in south Springfield has finally been completed by an outside consultant. Ed Lanagon of the Springfield Library recently presented his survey of the Mill River Historic District before the Trust. His findings will be incorporated into an application to the National Register of Historic Places later this summer. The area is located in the vicinity of Main, Mill and Locust Streets in the south end of Springfield.

Dating back to the 1700's, the area became important as an industrial complex developing around the Mill River. Portions of that waterway now run underground, covered in the 1980's because of flooding.

Although little remains archaeologically from early industries, several buildings of historic value remain from the late 1800's and early 1900's. On Mill Street, a fire station, dated 1894, boasts a four-story tower and interesting artificial paneling around the windows and entryway. It is currently owned by the city and used for storage. Around the corner, a late 1890's office building also has some notable features. The structure has nice classical detailing with capitals on pilasters and a continuous board of connecting lintels. There is a recessed street entry, stained glass windows, and a bay window on the second floor. Part of the building is capped with a pyramid roof. Further up Mill Street, the *Jewish Weekly News* and other tenants reside in the former Springfield waste building. This in turn was built on the foundations of the lower water shops of the Federal Armory.

*Continued on last page.*

### ANNUAL MEETING AND PICNIC SET

The annual meeting and preservation pot-luck picnic has been set for Sunday, August 20th at the home of Trust member Sandra Vella. The picnic is open to all current dues-paying members. A brief annual meeting will be held to review the events of the past year, to discuss future projects, and to elect members of the Board of Directors and Officers for the coming year. Anyone interested in serving should contact Lisa Sotak-Cooper at 781-6927. The picnic will begin at 2:00p.m. Members interested in attending should contact Sandy at 736-8502 to let her know what dish they will be bringing and the number of people in their party. Sandy has a pool so remember bathing suits and towels.

### VIDEO FUNDING GRANTED

Following its successful *Guide to Residential Architecture in Springfield*, the Trust is going forward with a video on local architecture based on the booklet. Copies of the video will be given to city schools and libraries. An application submitted to Continental Cable was recently approved and the Trust will receive \$7,500 towards the project. The Trust has also allocated \$2,000 for the video from its budget. Production meetings have already begun with a videographer. The projected completion date is the end of this year.

### DID YOU KNOW?

Trust members Jim and Merry Boone's front parlor is on the cover of the 1989 *Old House Journal Catalogue*? Quite an honor for them and recognition for Springfield.

## SUCCESSFUL SPRING HOUSE TOUR

The Thirteenth Annual Historic House Tour was held Sunday, May 7th. Over 400 people took advantage of the opportunity to glimpse residential buildings in Springfield's various historic areas. Thanks go to Trust members Jim and Deena Shriver, Gary Lewis, Bob and Mary Markel, and Bob McCarroll for opening their homes. Also thanks go to the Connecticut Valley Historical Museum, Indian Motorcycle Associates and Classical Condominiums for participating in the tour.

Once again, we are grateful to Shawmut Bank for helping underwrite a portion of the tour expenses. The tour netted \$2,500 which will be used for future Trust projects. The Board has already voted to spend part of the funds to buy architectural books for the Forest Park Library which has for several years provided its community room for our monthly meetings.



*Visitors flock to see the Shriver's Gothic Victorian mansion built in 1874.*

## CONVENTION ADDRESSES HOUSING NEEDS

Anne Rice, Jim Boone, and Diane Fisher went to Lowell to attend Historic Massachusetts, Inc.'s annual convention. This year's program drew people from all over New England and featured walking tours of Lowell as well as a number of very informative speakers and workshops.

The topic of affordable housing and infill housing in historic areas was discussed at length as this is a pressing issue all over the region. Groups must work together to meet everyone's needs and establish relationships early in the process.

There was much concern expressed about the devastating effect of the Tax Reform Act of 1986 which has damaged and slowed Investment Tax Credit restoration work nationwide. Much work is going on with Congress to try to make some changes to once again stimulate investment in Historic Restoration.

Finally, much emphasis was put on encouraging preservation groups to find other groups in the community that they can link with who might have similar interests and whose concerns could be joined to accomplish everyone's goals. Examples would be conservation groups and preservationists working together to save undeveloped historic land. Affordable housing people and preservationists need to work together on adoptive reuse of historic buildings.



*This 1904 Colonial Revival was originally built and owned by an important Forest Park builder.*

### NEW MEMBERS WELCOMED

We would like to welcome the following people as new Trust members: Jane Moser, Steve Moser, Patricia MacKay and Richard Tyrell, and John and Arlene Lewis.

## SPT CALENDAR

Aug. 20 Annual Preservation Pot-Luck  
2:00p.m. Dinner

(See related article.)

Monthly meetings are held in the Community Room at Forest Park Library at 7:30p.m. the first Wednesday of each month. All members are welcome. The next meetings are scheduled for September 6, October 4, and November 1.

## INDIAN ORCHARD SLATED FOR AUTUMN "AT HOME" TOUR

The Board of Directors has chosen one of Springfield's oldest but least known neighborhoods to highlight on the annual "At Home" Tour. This autumn event focuses each year on a single neighborhood and opens homes to provide an overview of the character of the area. The 1989 tour is scheduled for Sunday, September 24th between 11 a.m. and 4 p.m. The Trust is now forming a "house hunting" committee to identify and obtain eight to twelve homes for the tour. Anyone willing to help in this important planning process should contact Bob McCarroll at 736-0629.

Nonpareille

Wallcovering

Enterprise

Professional hanging of papers, textiles, foils  
screened prints, grasscloth, vinyls, murals &  
Residential · Small Commercial

graduate, U.S. School of Professional Paperhanging

Nancy W. Evans  
P.O. Box 80738  
Springfield, MA 01138  
(413) 781-8419



T H E  
WINDOW  
PEOPLE

custom  
Magnetic Seal  
interior storm windows  
for beauty and efficiency

Thomas McCurry  
(413) 584-7785

## HOUSE TIPS: WATER, WATER EVERYWHERE

*Ed. Note: The following is the first of a four-part series.*

You have an old house and you love it. This series is going to look at an unromantic aspect of restoration and that is maintenance. You are either starting a project, in the middle, or finished (although I have never met anyone who is finished). Maintenance is taking care of what you have already done so that it does not revert back to the way it was before you did it. Restoration is fun and rewarding, maintenance is work and vigilance but it is the most important thing you can do. So here we go with the most important-water.

\*\*\*\*\*

The greatest enemy of any house and especially an old house is water. Water can penetrate the smallest hole and start the mildew and deterioration of places you cannot see. In New England, the problem is compounded in winter when that water freezes and expands and makes the holes bigger thus rapidly increasing the problem.

The roof and gutters are the first line of defense. Visually inspect their condition with each change of season. Watch for worn places in the roof valleys, curled corners of the roof shingles, worn deteriorated flashing around chimneys and sewer gas stocks. Repair or replace the roof or valley before they leak. It is hard to get a roofer in February and your interior can sustain a lot of damage in a very short time. Also, go to your attic during a heavy rainstorm to check for even the smallest leaks.

In doing repairs, remember that roofing cement is a very short term solution. It is a tar-like compound that will dry out and crack quickly and you will be right back where you started, except you now have a heavy black compound to remove before you do the repair properly. Replacement of worn-out or damaged materials with similar materials in the style and quality

*Continued on next page.*

This newsletter is published by and for the members of the Springfield Preservation Trust, Inc.

Editor. . . . . Pamela Brecknell  
Contributors. . . . . Bob McCarroll, Jim Boone  
Photos. . . . . Marilyn Sutin  
Advertising . . . . . David Premont

### TRUST MEMBER LEADS FIGHT TO SAVE LANDMARK

When trust member Dan Sotak-Cooper heard that the oldest traffic light in Springfield was being threatened, he sprung into action.

The mid-century, single-post light at the intersection of Dartmouth, St. James and Worthington Streets was recently slated for a code upgrade. This would have extended the nose of the triangle on which the post sits into the intersection and added four aluminum overhead arms.

A group of citizens headed by Dan mobilized and voiced their objections, without success, to Traffic Planner, Al Chwalek. Pursuing the issue, the group collected 112 signatures from community members and presented the petition to the local and state Departments of Public Works. The form also went before the Historic Commission which gave its unanimous support to the community and before the City Council. As a result of

*Continued from first page.*

The Trust hopes the area will be designated an historic district. In past years, it has sponsored neighborhood surveys of the South End, North End, and Indian Orchard. The Trust also has sponsored the nomination of the eastern section of McKnight to the National Register.

*Continued from prior page*

originally there is always your best bet. If you are starting on a big house restoration, do the roof and flashing first. It may be expensive and may not look as good as a new paint job, but all subsequent interior and exterior work can be ruined if you have leaks.

Next issue: Gutters

Jim Boone

Councilman Bob Markel's efforts, the issue went into committee for further consideration.

**sears** REALTORS

**JAMES A. BOONE**

97 FLORIDA STREET  
SPRINGFIELD, MASS. 01109

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

**SPRINGFIELD  
PRESERVATION  
TRUST**

979 Main Street  
Springfield, MA 01103

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

