

THE PRESERVATIONIST

NEWSLETTER OF
THE SPRINGFIELD PRESERVATION TRUST

Winter 1990

MILL RIVER HISTORIC DISTRICT NOMINATED

After almost two years, the lower Mill River industrial area along Mill and Main Streets has been nominated to the National Register of Historic Places.

The Mill River area was the city's major water-power source. Although most of the buildings which can be seen date from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the river valley contains remnants of older buildings, dams, and power canals. A variety of earlier mills, including the lower watersheds of the federal armory, once lined the river bank.

*Season's
Greetings!*

APPLICANTS SOUGHT FOR SURVEY

In keeping with procedures for conducting an historical land survey, the Trust is currently reviewing applicants to research

and nominate several Springfield neighborhoods to the National Register of Historic Places.

In August, the Trust was awarded a matching grant from the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC) to continue survey work first started in 1971. The Springfield Survey Continuation Project will cover the Pine Point and Bay neighborhoods as well as the remainder of Metro Center not surveyed in previous projects.

Representatives from MHC met with Trust project coordinator, Audrey Higbee, and Trust vice president of education, Robert McCarroll, in

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COMMUNITY MEMBERS RECOGNIZED FOR HISTORICAL WORK

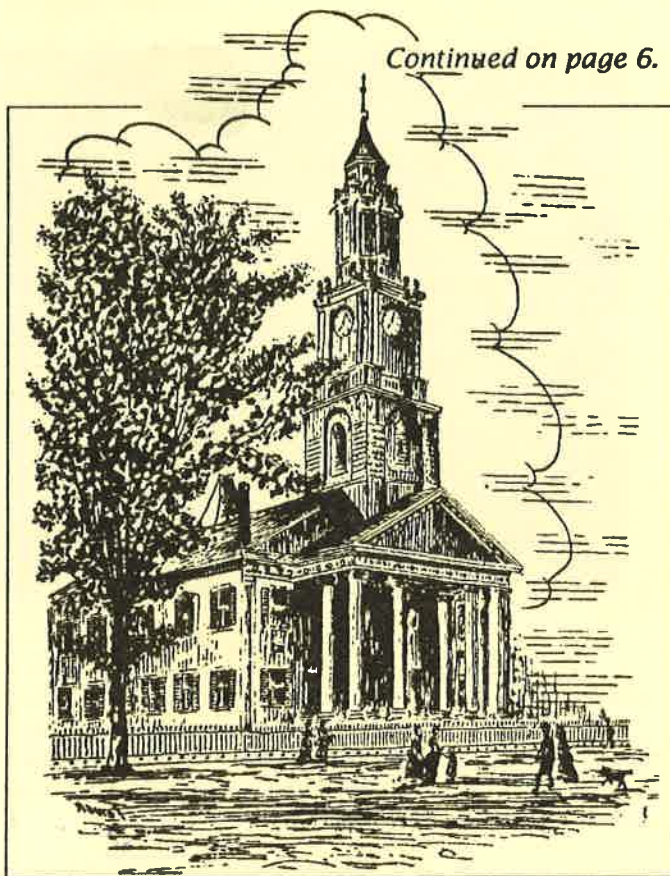
Trust members and friends once again joined together at the Third Annual Recognition Reception to honor individual and commercial efforts on historically-based projects. The affair was held on November 18 at Old First Church in Court Square, itself a honoree.

The categories receiving recognition this year were Careful Stewardship, Renovation of Non-residential Buildings, Renovation of Residential Buildings, Removal of Artificial Siding, and Sensitive New Construction.

President Dan Sotak-Cooper opened with an introduction recapping the Trust's 1989-90 activities and thanking several board members for their contributions. Jim Boone, vice president for advocacy, then entertained the audience with commentary and a slide show of the honorees'

Continued on page 4.

This line drawing of First Church at Court Square appeared on the invitation.



Paint it, Black?

One element of change in our historic neighborhoods is the growing preponderance of imaginatively painted houses. As one walks through certain areas of Springfield, one sees a wide variety of color schemes from the time-worn monochromatic to what can only be described as thundering technicolor.

One of the catalysts which made the general population appreciate older houses, especially Victorian styles, was the birth of the colorist movement. Originating in the San Francisco area in the 1970's, the colorists reintroduced the 19th century concept of painting structural elements in many rich and varied colors. Granted, the Victorians' organic colorations pale next to the modern-day colorist's brilliant exuberance, but both parties shared pride of place and individuality.

After the turn of the century, multi-colored paint schemes fell out of favor. All houses, new and old, were painted with a single color or had only a second trim color. Artificial siding swept through neighborhoods like the proverbial foul wind, covering the idiosyncratic detailing of old homes which had become creaky maintenance-prone relics fit only for crazy old ladies with 27 cats. Three-tone paint jobs were virtually unseen for the next sixty years.

Enter the colorists. As their Victorian houses were painted with multiple and somewhat more intense colors, the architectural elements stood out, and people began to notice the wonderful variation of styles in our housing stock. Queen Anne, Mansard and Craftsman styles, to name but a few, slowly emerged from the gloom.

Whether or not one appreciates the current trends in paint color, we must thank the colorist movement for drawing attention to once neglected assets and glorifying them by their bright outburst of enthusiasm.

— Dan Sotak-Cooper

*Editorial**Please, have a seat, but...*

More than one and a half years ago, City Council designated a seat on the Historical Commission to the Trust. Since September 1989, there has been a vacancy that can only be filled by a Trust person. We are sensitive to the problems that have faced the Mayor during this time and as such have been patient.

*Editorial**Congratulations on new city ordinance*

During the summer, numerous light fixtures in several historically significant buildings in the city were sold without proper procedure or concern for their value as property or their potential historic value.

City councilors Kateri Walsh and Bob Markel proposed an ordinance that would require all sale of city property to be approved by City Council. Councilor Markel then wisely amended this to require all surplus city property to be surveyed by the Springfield Historical Commission to determine its historic significance and to place preservation restrictions on its sale or future use if appropriate. Written reports of historical significance must be submitted to the City Council.

This ordinance will go a long way to preserve buildings, equipment and fixtures of historical significance. The City Council has taken a step in the right direction by employing the expertise of the Historical Commission on this matter.

— Jim Boone

**Can You Guess?**

Do you know this house? Turn to page 7.

We ask city councilors and citizens to encourage the Mayor to select one of the two nominations submitted to her so that the Trust may contribute our time, effort and expertise to the city.

— Trust Board

FALL CEMETERY TOUR ATTRACTS THE BRAVE



Tourgoers braved rainy weather to hear Don D'Amato's history of the Springfield Cemetery and its inhabitants.

Headstones replaced hearthstones as the Trust opted for a tour of a different nature this fall.

On Sunday, October 28, the Trust sponsored a pre-Halloween walking tour of the Springfield Cemetery. Led by local historian, Donald D'Amato, the tour visited the region's first Victorian graveyard.

Established in the 1840's to replace the burial grounds behind Old First Church which were dislocated by the coming railroad, the Springfield Cemetery became the final resting place for most of the city's prominent nineteenth-century citizens.

The tour began at the Gothic-style office and columbarium. Despite wet skies, tourgoers wound past the burial markers of noted locals such as Armory Commandant James Ripley and Indian Motorcycle inventor George Hendee.

Stops also included the receiving crypt designed by Henry Hobson Richardson, and the E.C. Gardner chapel with its Tiffany windows. At each point, Don D'Amato shared amusing anecdotes and interesting historical background.

SIMPLE MEASURES LOWER UTILITY COSTS

by Tersha d'Elgin

Reprinted and edited from Copley News Service

Today, conserving home resources is easily achievable and affordable.

You can increase your existing home's energy efficiency and take advantage of new technologies by making a careful personal or professional energy audit from basement to attic.

Find out what areas may be losing heat. Determine the condition of your plumbing and whether water is being wasted. This audit will include checking insulation, windows and doors, the heating system, pipes and ducts, and appliances.

Most utility companies provide inspection either free or for a minimal fee. A professional audit takes from one and a half to two hours. [Ed.'s note: Baystate Gas and WMECO provide this service free of charge.]

For clothes dryers, save time and money (and extend the life of your clothes) by cutting down the drying time. Dry full loads and always clean the lint screen before starting the machine.

In the washing machine, was full loads, preferable in cold or warm water. Also use energy-saving wash cycles.

Buy energy-saving incandescent light bulbs. Low wattage is fine for hallways and areas that don't need blinding bright light. Try energy-efficient

fluorescent bulbs to light up work areas.

Shop for an energy-efficient fridge, such as one with a water dispenser or a small compartment that holds items you want to get to frequently.

A reputable plumber can help pinpoint areas of water leakage or faulty piping. For help in locating a competent plumbing contractor, call your local chamber of commerce. When you have determined

"You can increase your existing home's energy efficiency and take advantage of new technologies..."

the nature and extent of energy and water efficiency in your household, you can set about improving it.

Most houses have areas that could be a little warmer. Heat escaping through the attic may account for up to half of a home's entire heat loss. You can add attic insulation yourself with products such as CertainTeed Fiber Glass Insulation. Tough'n'Foam Instant Insulation from Convenience Products can be used around pipes and electrical outlets.

Install weatherstripping and caulking around doors and windows. Use storm windows and doors

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CERTIFICATE RECIPIENTS

Careful Stewardship

The Library and Museums Association
The First Church of Christ, Congregational

Renovation of Non-Residential Buildings

CMC Development for the Massasoit and Terminal Buildings
Christopher and Susan Zarlengo for a carriage house on
227 Mill Street

Renovation of Residential Buildings

Robert Smith for 80 Florida Street
Daniel and Lisa Sotak-Cooper for 56 Dartmouth Street
Carlo DiLizia for 23 Ingersoll Grove
Paul Sears and Theodore Janett for 95 Sumner Avenue

Removal of Artificial Siding

Thomas and Ellen Gallagher for 34 Mountainview Street
Theodore Jarrett for 15 Forest Street
Victor DeAngelo for 85 Dartmouth Street
David and Elizabeth Lederman, 22 Clarendon Street
Jeffrey Leighton for 92 Mill Street
Berkeley-Monmouth Realty Trust for Berkely Street
Henrietta Chiz for 54 Catherine Street
Jan Jasinski for 1054 Worthington Street
Timothy Mulcahy and George Gonzales for 41 High Street
Stephen and Patricia O'Mally for 41 Cherryvale Street
Jaime Moraci for 65 Dartmouth Street
Mark and Jean Erstling for 24 Spruceland Avenue
Robert Abel, Jr. and Edward Shone for 168 Pineywoods
Avenue

Sensitive New Construction

John Russo for 313 Maple Street carriage house
Community Restorations, David Gaby and Robert Pyers for
homes on Monmouth and Harvard Streets

MEMBERS RECOGNIZED, *continued.*

sensitive efforts at historical rehabilitation or
reproduction.

The ceremony concluded with individual
acknowledgment of each of the special guests,
and a general membership vote ushering in a



*President, Dan Sotak-Cooper, standing center, reads
names of honorees who flank him.*

new slate of officers.

The new, approved Board of Officers for
1990-91 include Diane Fisher, president; Robert
McCarroll, vice president of education; James
Boone, vice president of advocacy; Marilyn Sutin,
treasurer; and Sarah Murray, clerk.

Attendees were treated to champagne and
pate, along with other mouth-watering hors
d'oeuvres courtesy of Chanterelle Caterers,
before the ceremonies began. Approximately 85
people attended the gathering.

SCHOOLS DELIGHTED WITH VIDEOS

The superintendent of the Springfield schools
enthusiastically accepted donated Trust videos,
according to Board member, Sandi Vella who made
the presentation. Ms. Vella is also principal of the
Bowles-Samuel Elementary School.

Dr. Peter Negroni hailed the concept behind the
videos which are earmarked for the libraries of
Central, Putnam Voc-Tech, Commerce, Bridge,
Academy, as well as the audio visual department.

Dr. Negroni viewed the video before presenting
them to Mr. James Tillotson, the director of social
studies. Both men enthusiastically agreed that
Springfield children should know the architecture
and background history of their city. Mr. Tillotson
added his strong belief that had there been a strong
preservation group active in the 1950's, urban
renewal in the north end would not have eliminated
the city's historical sites.

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SPT CALENDAR

Monthly meetings are held in the Community Room at Forest Park Library at 7:30 p.m. the first Wednesday of each month. All members are welcome. The next meetings are scheduled for January 2, February 6, and March 6.

Threatened Houses to be Moved

The Springfield Historical Commission has reached agreement with the state Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC) about the preservation of six houses in the McKnight National Register Historic District that had to be removed for the construction of the new magnet school at Mason Square.

Through the process of an environmental impact study that showed that the new school could negatively impact the McKnight District, it was agreed that if six houses were moved to appropriate sites within the McKnight neighborhood and restored, then the construction of the school would not be blocked by the state commission which has the power to do so under the law.

The first step was taken by the Springfield commission when it granted permission for two of the houses to be moved to two adjoining lots on Sherman Street and attached restoration criteria to the permit.

In January of 1990, the Trust wrote Mayor Mary E. Hurley suggesting that all or some of the six houses be moved to the vacant land on Thompson Street at the entrance to the McKnight neighborhood. The Mayor acknowledged our letter in March thanking us for our ideas.

A second letter was sent in October reiterating our belief that the four remaining houses to be moved would fit by age, style, and scale on the vacant land on Thompson Street.

SIMPLE MEASURES, *continued.*

if necessary. In case you're not ready to make the sizable investment in storm windows, most building supply and hardware stores sell kits for making your own from plastic sheets.

Don't block registers or radiators with rugs, furniture or drapes. And wrap extra insulation around the outside of hot water heaters. Turn the temperature down on the water heater thermostat: 120 degrees Fahrenheit should be sufficient. You also can get by with lower temperature settings on wash loads.

To maximize heating system output, make sure the furnace is cleaned and tuned. Like many other home appliances, thermostats have gone electronic. Heating system thermostats can be programmed to reduce temperatures during those hours when you're away from home or asleep.

If your schedule is not conventional, it is now possible to telephone your home and command your heating system to turn on in advance of your arrival.

For every degree your thermostat is lowered in the winter and raised in the summer, your fuel bills can be reduced by 3 percent, according to govern-

Continued on page 6.

APPLICANTS SOUGHT, *continued.*

September to view the three areas to be surveyed and to finalize the scope of the work.

An advertisement placed in the Springfield Sunday Republican and letters sent to a list of 40 historical surveyors supplied by MHC elicited 20 resumes from individuals interested in performing the survey. Requests for Proposals (RFD's) were sent to six of the initial applicants. The six were chosen on the basis of past experience in completing historical surveys and educational qualifications.

Three of those six original applicants submitted proposals. Following MHC approval of the three finalists, the Trust survey project sub-committee will award the project to one of these individuals.

The project is to be completed by June 28, 1991.

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The editor wishes to extend special thanks in this holiday season to Jim Boone, Bob McCarroll, Marilyn Sutin, and Dan Sotak-Cooper for their time and effort in helping put these newsletters together.

My thanks go to David Premont and fellow members on the Trust Board who have contributed as well.

ment energy reports. At the rate of 15 percent reduction for two-thirds of the day, this would translate into a savings of as much as \$300 a year. Most electronic thermostats cost less than \$200.

If your heating system is really decrepit, a new system may be justified. The "pulse combustion systems," which inject fuel into the furnace to be mixed with air in controlled spurts, are nearly 100 percent efficient.

Heat recovery ventilators recover heat from evacuating air and transferring it to the cooler air entering the system. Some HRVs can be retrofitted into existing heating installations. Other require a separate duct system.

•Low-emissivity or low-E glass has the highest insulating properties for new windows. And insulated metal doors should be considered, rather than wooden doors.

Fireplaces are another household energy culprit. About one-third of all household heat can disappear up a chimney without glass fireplace screens.

When improving insulation, don't overlook ventilation. Without some circulation, moisture and stale air can accumulate and create problems

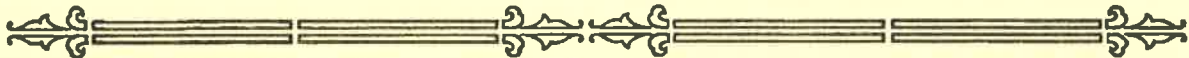
even more severe than the high cost of energy.

Today's homeowners can go solar to almost any degree. But getting the most watt per dollar and fixture is not always a matter of the most collectors, controllers, heat storage equipment and insulation. Thoughtfully plotted architecture together with a few sola energy elements can be just as ecological and economical.

Water conservation is more than a passive effort to use less. You should be retrofitting your toilets and shower heads with water-saving devices and checking for leaks, especially in the toilet. Toilets account for 40 percent of all water usage. Toilet leaks can waste up to 100 gallons a day. Fixing these leaks is usually as easy as adjusting the plunger ball or the overflow pipe.

Older homes probably still have 5- to 7-gallon toilet tanks and should be outfitted with a water-filled plastic bottle or bag available from local water companies. These take up extra room in the tanks and result in less water per flush.

Use the minimum water level in dish and clothes washers and use double cycles only when absolutely necessary.

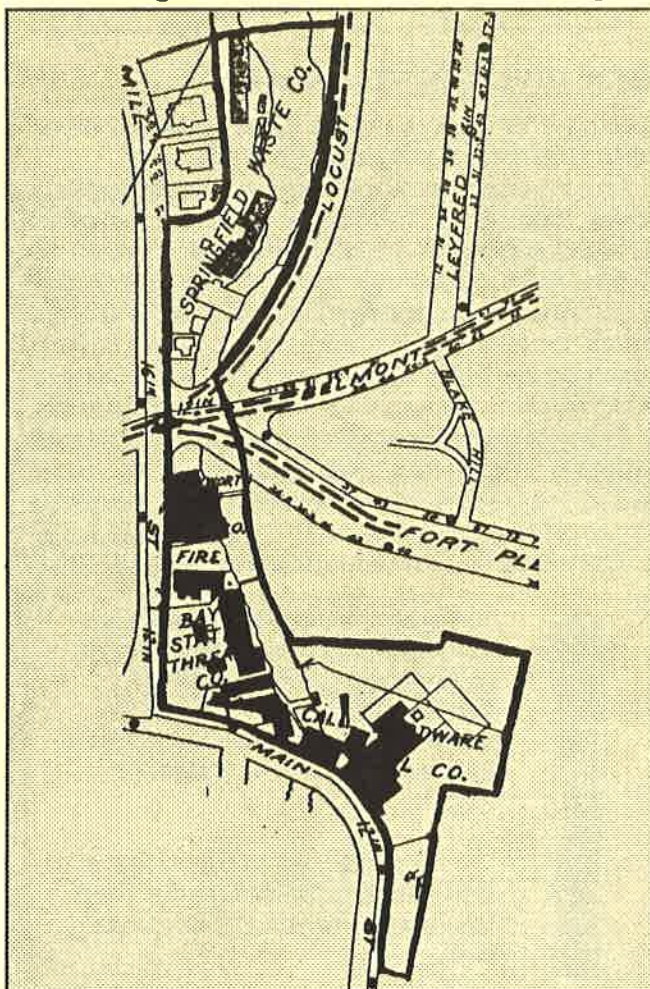


MILL RIVER, continued.

The study and nomination were commissioned by the Trust from past tour proceeds and done by local historic researcher Edward Lonergan. The nomination will now be reviewed by the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC) and if approved, then by the National Park Service. The review process can take approximately one year.

National Register status will protect the area from harmful federal or stated-funded activities. It will also make available federal income tax credits for substantial renovations meeting federal standards for historic properties.

The nominated district covers the lower part of Mill Street and along Main.



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HOUSE TIPS



CAN YOU GUESS? 134 Buckingham St.

When the Trust purchased this 1881 stick style home in 1981, it had sat vacant and totally gutted for over five years on the corner of Buckingham and Bay Streets in the McKnight Historic District. The acquisition was prompted by the building's desperate condition and the Trust's sense of mission to act as well as advocate for restoration.

The house was an empty shell when bought for back taxes. It had no walls, no windows, and no mechanical systems. The Trust totally rebuilt the porches and the inside, retaining the original charm, scale, and woodwork. The slate roof also was restored and much of the foundation rebuilt.

This was our biggest restoration project. Over the past 10 to 12 years, The Trust has been instrumental in buying and restoring approximately eight deteriorated homes with our revolving fund. Some of the restoration projects were also supported by the Community Development Block Grant Program along with private bank financing.

Through the use of "before" and "after" open houses, The Trust helped educate many people about what could be done, and about their historic McKnight community while introducing them to the Trust.

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ENERGY LOOPHOLES HURT, NOT HELP (Part I)

Energy crises, skyrocketing fuel bills, and old house leaks can all add up to a bundle for homeowners this winter. With careful attention and a little elbow grease, however, your own aged home may be the source of more monetary gain than your forthcoming tax refund!

Numerous studies have focused on some surprising places where heat can leak and has changed the way "energy plumbers" are sealing those leaks. These "energy loopholes" can account for up to 60% of all air leaking out the living space and can amount to up to 40% of the conductive losses (heat loss through a solid barrier) in a traditionally retrofitted house. Together these can add up to about one-third of your present heating bill.

Some of the most surprising energy loopholes occur below the ground level. A brick foundation often has loose or missing mortar at many points. Given the age of many area foundations, this problem is common in about a third of Springfield's older homes. Because the wall is not one solid mass, a gap on the outside above ground portion of the bricks can easily flow into a gap on the inside below ground portion of the foundation. Consequently, a convective loop forms from the air movement throughout the foundation resulting in cold air infiltration AND cooler bricks from the loss of the dead air space between courses.

If your heating system is particularly inefficient (your basement, rather than the house above, is warm during a cold day) then more of the heat from the furnace or boiler's distribution ducts and pipes is lost to the outside. All this increases fuel bills and decreases comfort.

The best time to seek out such leaks is during a 20 degree day using your knuckles to feel the cold air pouring into the basement. Knuckles are more sensitive to cold than the palm of the hand. Once located, clear away the loose mortar and repaint with new. For small holes, a can foam sealant such as Great Stuff will be the quickest remedy — but remember, it is not structurally sound for larger areas.

Other sources of cold air leakage into the basement include window frames, the bulkhead door, dryer vents, and washing machine and floor drains. Check operation of the dryer vent flapper and cover floor drains when not in use. If you have a forced air heating system, seal all duct work joints with quality duct tape or clear silicone caulking.

The basement can be only the start of a "convective loop" that robs your house of heat all the way to

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The Springfield Preservation Trust

This newsletter is published quarterly for the members of the Springfield Preservation Trust, Inc., 979 Main Street, Springfield, MA 01103.

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Photographs: Marilyn Sutin

Advertising: David Premont

Springfield Preservation Trust is a non-profit organization dedicated to the preservation of historic structures in the City of Springfield, Massachusetts.

HOUSE TIPS, *continued.*

the attic, so take warning! Check your basement's energy health on the next cold day. And as an added precaution, don't forget to clean and angle gutters and downspouts away from the house to prevent further foundation deterioration.

— Roger Harris

Next issue: How to seal and find other hidden leaks.

(Ed. Note: Mr. Harris is Technical Director of the Hampden County Office of Energy and Management)

CHECKLIST: Are You Ready for Winter?

- Gutters free of all leaves and debris
- Moisture-holding vines and leaves are away from the house
- Storm windows are set properly
- Chimney flues closed tight when not in use (check with a candle on a windy day)
- Furnace cleaned and tuned up
- New fitters are on hot air furnaces
- Fresh oil in the snow blower (start before the first snow)
- A copy of the Old House Journal to curl up with during the first storm

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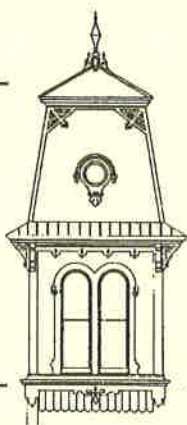
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For more information, **CONTACT DAVID PREMONT** at 782-9182 or write Springfield Preservation Trust, 979 Main Street, Springfield, MA 01103, ATTN: NEWS-LETTER ADS.