

# Springfield Preservation Trust

# S P T

October 2012

## Razed & Restored, 40 years of Preservation Successes and Failures in the City of Springfield

Over the last 40 years a great deal has happened with historic preservation in Springfield, both good and bad. Eight local historic districts were created; the old YMCA at 122 Chestnut Street was saved from demolition; 52 Westminister Street was restored. After a long battle, the Bowles Mansion was demolished; the Hotel Charles and York Street Jail came down for potential redevelopment that hasn't happened; St. Josephs

Church was replaced by a dull and generic suburban office building. These and many other preservation wins and losses

will be put into perspective through a special anniversary display.



As SPT celebrates its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary this October, we are looking back with a retrospective display of the last forty years of historic preservation in Springfield.



The retrospective will look at the successful preservation projects in Springfield over the past 40 years along with the losses of significant historic structures.

It will be an advocacy tool to teach those not familiar with preservation why preservation is important, and to remind supporters of preservation how far we have come. Before and after pictures will be used to show the great work of preservationism and the sad losses caused by disasters, urban renewal, and neglect. The successful projects can teach that buildings we lost could have been restored and hopefully convince others

### B&B Antiques

Estates and Antiques Bought and Sold  
Robert Holbrook      Robert Louder  
413 746 9341  
dogman102@comcast.net

### DENNER ♦ PELLEGRINO, LLP

Raipher D. Pellegrino  
rpellegrino@dennerpellegrino.com

4 Longfellow Place, 35th Floor  
Boston, MA 02114  
(617) 227-2800  
Fax (617) 973-1562

265 State Street  
Springfield, MA 01103  
(413) 746-4400  
Fax (413) 746-5353

that the endangered historic resources of Springfield can be restored and reused.

We hope that you will join us in celebrating SPT's 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary and visit the retrospective at a special event to be held in Center Court at Tower Square at the end of October. Look for more information through email, Facebook, and [springfieldpreservationtrust.org](http://springfieldpreservationtrust.org).

### Late Summer Homes Tour

More than 300 ticket buyers lined up for Mattoon/Elliot homes tour on September 8 despite threatening and sometimes wet weather. The tour coincided with the 40<sup>th</sup> Annual Mattoon Street Arts Festival, the region's oldest arts & crafts show.



Development of Mattoon Street began soon after the Civil War, and the street became one of few places in Western Massachusetts lined with brick, middle class Victorian row houses. By the 1930s, the neighborhood had become less fashionable, and many houses were converted to rooming houses. Revitalization began in the 1970s with many buildings being restored as single-family homes.

The seven stops included 1870s and 1880s Second French Empire style brick row houses, an 1880s Queen Anne style semi-attached wood house, a 1980s in-fill condo, a unit in an 1890 apartment building, and the 1870s Saint Michael's Rectory.



The Trust co-sponsored the tour with the Mattoon Street Historic Preservation Association, which is also marking the fortieth anniversary of its founding and the creation of the Quadrangle-Mattoon Street Local Historic District.

Thanks go the folks who shared their homes: Stan Chiz & Vickie Phillips Chiz, David & Sue Gonyea, Sarah Gorski & Rob German, Judy Matt, Carlos Melendez, Erica Walch, and Monsignor Connelly.

### Bird Mites: What you Need to Know

#### Part 1 of 2


Birds are adept at building nests in urban environments, especially in secluded and hidden areas offering them shelter. Older homes attract a plethora of birds along with their accompanying nests. In the Northeast, we often find sparrows, starlings, and pigeons, living in, or on, the nooks and crannies, dormers, and gutters, of our homes. Birds can also gain entry to roof cavities via broken tiles or through unprotected eaves.



Kathleen B. Pellegrino  
*Principal*

265 State Street  
Springfield, MA 01103  
[kpellegrino@livingstonelc.com](mailto:kpellegrino@livingstonelc.com)

413.746.2121 Telephone  
413.746.2816 Facsimile



**JAMES A. BOONE**  
SPECIALIZING IN SPRINGFIELD'S  
HISTORIC DISTRICTS

97 FLORIDA STREET  
SPRINGFIELD, MA 01103  
[www.MattBooneRealty.com](http://www.MattBooneRealty.com)

OFF: (413) 785-1636  
RES.: (413) 734-9110  
CELL.: (413) 244-4275

Many of us use window air conditioners, offering another venue for birds to nest underneath the units. And what about all the gorgeous greenery we see on our ivy covered brick homes? Ivy provides accommodations for wildlife, providing a home to potentially hundreds, if not thousands, of birds. And, the older trees growing near our homes offer birds the perfect place to nest, year after year.

Birds are beautiful to look at. We all enjoy seeing the first cardinal of spring, or the babies emerging from their eggs, but what is the potential damage beyond the 'mess' they may leave behind? Bird mites...

Bird mites are parasites that live on domestic and wild birds. They usually stay on the birds or in their nests their entire lives, but if a bird dies or the nest is abandoned, the mites will seek other hosts, including humans. The mites feed on the un-feathered nestlings, as well as the adult birds, and the large amount of nesting material used by the birds provides the mites with an ideal environment in which to thrive. Bird mites have a short life cycle (approximately 7 days) and can rapidly generate large populations, often in the tens, or hundreds of thousands. Some infestations occur from birds roosting on the outside of dwellings such as on window ledges or awnings.

Bird mites are members of the tick family but unlike ticks, they are usually not visible to the naked eye. Symptoms of bird-mite infestation include itchiness, a crawling sensation, persistent rashes and small red bumps on the body. They infest the warm, moist cavities, including the nose, ears, eyes, and scalp. Bird mites are nocturnal, and wait for their host to lie quietly, thus making sleep nearly impossible. They are potentially contagious to others but tend to prefer one human host. They generally avoid cats and dogs due to their fur, but may be carried inside by 'hitching a ride', then finding a more hospitable human host.

It's difficult to get rid of bird mites once infestation occurs because they adapt well to new environments and can become resistant to chemicals used to eliminate them. Many of our older homes are large, and have numerous cracks and crevices in woodwork, thus making eradication extremely difficult, if not impossible.

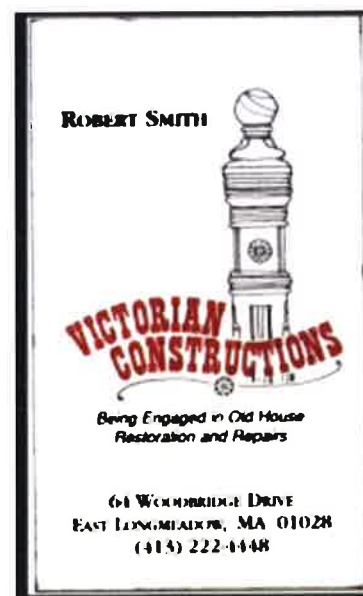
Next Issue, Part Two: How to Avoid and Eradicate Bird Mites.

### **Progress at 77 Maple St.**

At this time there is no construction work at 77. But, that does not mean there is no activity in its cause. A partial sampling of activities includes:

Applications are being prepared and submitted to potential funding sources. These are time-consuming because each application has requirements unique (to varying degrees) to each grantor. Submittal dates, letters of support, and many other types of documentation can be quite different for each submittal.

SPT President Ben Murphy is preparing a 77 Maple St brochure to be used in fund-raising, as well as for other outreach and educational purposes.



It will include a history of 77 from 1832 to present time; illustrations, engravings, old and current photos, etc.; and a couple of architectural drawings. It will also include a list of donor levels and the benefits of each level.

The 2 drawings have been prepared by Architect William J. Devlin AIA, Inc., of Springfield.

First is a preliminary plan of the first floor showing Units #1 and #2, and the second one is of the north elevation (side view, left ), w/ historical notes.

### **Curiosities at 77: The Rear "Stair Bay"**

This is part of the continuing series on 77's structural peculiarities. A "bay" is an increment of a building, usually referring to an actual structural increment. An example is; a common bay size in industrial buildings is 40-ft. x 40-ft., where, very commonly, economy of construction meets a bay size usable by many manufacturers, distributors, etc.

Anyhow, we have a nice bay right in back at 77, centered on where the Main Ell meets the Main Building. It's about 10-ft. x 12-ft., and there's no clear reason for its being there! As I see it, there's an outside chance it represents an "original ell". My guess is that the Female Seminary would have had a small ell, just enough for a service entrance, fire egress, and access to the privies out back (bits of brick walls in the cellar support that guess). It does not appear to relate to double rear stairs, which were probably built later.

Anyhow, that bay is beautifully suited for our new second stair!

For a multi-family structure, we need 2 stairs, for fire safety, etc. The grand stair in front is 1 of 'em; the new one in back will be the "daily use" one for most residents. With the main entry door at the welcoming "portico" entrance, this bay is right there at the other end of the entry hall. So, it will save us a wee bit of framing when the time comes. Good news!

### **Advertising**

If you are interested in advertising in our newsletter, the cost is \$35 per issue for a business card size ad. Contact [jimboone@hotmail.com](mailto:jimboone@hotmail.com) if you would like to join the group of advertisers that support the Trust and want to have our members as customers.

### **SPT Online**

You can sign up for the electronic newsletter at [www.springfieldpreservationtrust.org](http://www.springfieldpreservationtrust.org); just fill out your name and email address under the eNews Sign-Up banner on the left side of the page.

You can also join the Preservation Trust or renew your membership at [www.springfieldpreservationtrust.org](http://www.springfieldpreservationtrust.org); membership information is located on the Home Page.

You can also find us on FaceBook, [www.facebook.com/PreserveSpringfield](http://www.facebook.com/PreserveSpringfield)

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.

#### Newsletter contributors:

- ❖ Bill Devlin
- ❖ Bob McCarroll
- ❖ Ben Murphy
- ❖ Gayle White

#### Photography:

- ❖ Michael Marcinkewich
- ❖ Ben Murphy

Marilyn Sutin, Editor