

SPRINGFIELD PRESERVATION TRUST

Quarterly Newsletter

Winter 1989

TRUST WELCOMES SPRING WITH MAY HOUSE TOUR

Welcome spring with the Trust at its Thirteenth Annual Historic House Tour set for Sunday, May 7 between 11 a.m. and 4 p.m. This year's tour provides an overview of Springfield's various historic areas including homes in the Forest Park Heights, Maple Hill and McKnight neighborhoods.

Come explore the 1896 home of Mary E. McNight, whose husband John helped build the neighborhood. This large Colonial Victorian on Ingersoll Grove boasts several attractive features including large stained glass windows and original plasterwork on the living room ceiling ornately decorated in gold leaf and floral sprays.

In Forest Park, visit a 1904 Colonial Revival on Florentine Gardens which was considered modest because of its distance from the trolley lines on Sumner Avenue. Built and owned by F.C. Newman, an important builder in Forest Park, the house has been extensively restored after years of neglect. It now gleams with well-kept brass and the warm tones of natural wood.

The woodwork, and particularly the stairwell millwork, in this Gothic Victorian mansion on Maple Street is one of the special features in this 1874 home. The house also features original stencilwork, embossed wallpaper, and a lovely, revised solarium which offers a handsome view of the valley.

On Mattoon Street, where restoration work is still to be found, an 1870s Second Empire townhouse has recently been renovated from a boarding house into a single dwelling. Once a street slated for redevelopment, its many row homes have now been saved as a reminder of Springfield's architectural past.

Other buildings on the tour which have also been recycled are the Indian Motorcycle Building



Gary Lewis' large Colonial Victorian home boasts three floors, a landing and a walk-up attic on a fourth level. It is featured this year on the Annual Spring Tour.

MAYOR'S VETO OVERRIDDEN

Thanks to City Councillors DiMonaco, Markel, Foley, Ogulewicz, Santinello and Keogh, the Springfield Preservation Trust has a designated seat on the Historic Commission. The ordinance had been passed by the City Council but was vetoed by Mayor Neal. It was returned to the Council where the six councillors, who had always supported our efforts, once again stayed with their commitment and voted to override the veto.

Though there are no vacancies at the moment on the Commission, a Trust designee will be seated when the next seat becomes available now that the city ordinance requires it.

The Trust looks forward to being able to serve the City of Springfield through its new voice on the Commission. Thanks to all Trust members who worked so hard to see that the ordinance received the positive vote that it got.

Continued on page 3



Indian Motorcycle Building before renovation. The smoke stack is no longer there, but the other buildings are intact.

CONFERENCE ADDRESSES MARKETING NONPROFITS

Historic Massachusetts, Inc., (HMI) and the New England Heritage Center of Bentley College in Waltham, Mass. is offering a special repeat conference entitled "Promoting Preservation II: Profitable Marketing for Non-Profits". The program will take place Saturday, April 8 at First Church in Court Square in Springfield, and runs from 9:30 a.m. through 4:30 p.m.

The program focuses on developing basic marketing concepts and strategies which will help nonprofits "step into the limelight". In addition to lectures on getting started and publicity, there will be two case study workshops, one on fundraising, the other on membership and program marketing.

Conference space is limited and accepted on a first-come, first-serve basis. The cost is \$40 for HMI members, \$45 for non-members. Checks are payable to New England Heritage Center and should be sent to the New England Heritage Center, Bentley College, Waltham, MA 02254. Refunds are not available for cancellations after March 31. For more information, call HMI at (617) 723-3383 or the Center at (617) 891-3481.

NEW MEMBERS WELCOMED

We would like to welcome the following people as new Trust members: Sue Keenan-Jabari and Imara Jabari and Terry and Deborah Barker.

INDIAN MOTORCYCLE BUILDING IS DEDICATED

After years of struggle, effort, and luck, the Indian Motorcycle Building has been renovated and is ready for occupancy. The Springfield Preservation Trust has been involved in this effort as long as there has been a Trust. Hilton Abbott and David Sanborn were early organizers along with Peter Zorzi.

As a large vacant building, the structure was constantly threatened with demolition. National Register status was obtained which afforded some protection and was helpful in preventing demolition when new traffic patterns were considered. The building was often a political football with little or no community support.

At the dedication ceremony, State Representative Roy Jorden, in the presence of the Governor, credited the Trust with being the group that always hung in there when no one else cared. All members of the Trust can feel proud that this historically significant building has been saved.

We should always keep this type of project in mind. The Trust has often argued against demolishing buildings simply because there is no immediate use for them. As we can see with the Motorcycle Museum and as we saw with the YMCA and others, uses will emerge. Congratulations to all of us for our foresight and perseverance.

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**VICTORIAN
CONSTRUCTIONS**

ENGAGED IN
OLD HOME
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SPT CALENDAR

April 8 Conference: "Promoting
9:30-4:00 Preservation II: Profitable
Marketing for Nonprofits"
Sponsored by Historic
Massachusetts, Inc. and New
England Heritage Center of
Bentley College
(See related article)

May 7 Thirteenth Annual Historic House
11:00 - 4:00 Tour, Downtown Springfield
(See related article)

Monthly meetings are held in the Commu-
nity 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 April 5, May 3, June 7, and
July 5.

HOUSE TOUR, *continued*

on State Street, a turn-of-the-century factory now
converted into apartments, and Classical High
School. An 1890s Neo-Classical Revival building,
the school is being renovated as condominiums.
This year's stop documents the final stages of the
restoration process.

The Connecticut Valley Historical Museum
will also open its doors again offering two special
exhibits, Valley Victorians and "A Common-
wealth to Keep". Join us for free refreshments
available at the Quad.

Tour-goers may either drive themselves or
take guided buses which leave hourly. Tickets
are available at Longmeadow Flowers on Allen
Street and downtown Springfield, and in Long-
meadow. The cost is \$8 for the general public and
\$7 for Trust members and senior citizens. For
more information call Bob McCarroll at 736-0629.

APRIL IS MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL MONTH

It is time again to renew your membership for
the new year! We had a high renewal rate for 1988
which included a 30% increase in members. We
hope to do as well again this year, as we add new
friends and welcome back all our old members.

Please renew promptly when you receive your
membership mailing, or mail in this form.

Thank you!

TRUST CO-SPONSORS LOWELL CONFERENCE

At the invitation of Historic Massachusetts,
Inc. (HMI), a statewide, private, nonprofit preser-
vation organization, the Trust will be co-sponsor
of an upcoming conference entitled, "New Chal-
lenges for New England: Historic Preservation in
the 1990's" on Friday, May 12 in Lowell, Mass.

The conference will fall within Preservation
Week and will address themes important to the
entire region, including economics, housing, and
heritage tourism. Speakers will be drawn from
across New England, as opposed to just Massa-
chusetts, and is the first such forum in five years.

HMI presents conferences on preservation
issues throughout the year with the purpose of
increasing the awareness and appreciation of
historic, scenic and archaeological properties,
landscapes and areas in the state. Their other
activities include workshops, special events, and
publications. HMI is a membership organization
and welcomes individuals, organizations, com-
panies and agencies.

VIDEO PROJECT NEEDS FUNDING

Plans are underway to convert the Trust book-
let, *Guide to Residential Architecture in Spring-
field* into a video. The format would remain
essentially the same with additional narrative
and special graphic features added to enhance
the film.

The Trust is seeking business and individual
underwriters and contributors to help defray the
costs.

Grant requests for funding have already been
submitted, but are not expected to cover the full
expense.

- ___ Individual \$15
- ___ Family \$25
- ___ Student \$10

Mail your check to:

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Springfield, MA 01103

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

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**McCARROLL GUEST
CONFERENCE PANELIST**

Bob McCarroll was an invited, guest panelist at a conference on maximizing nonprofit resources sponsored by Historic Massachusetts, Inc. (HMI) and the New England Heritage Center of Bentley College held on March 4.

As a participant on a fundraising panel, Bob shared his expertise on house tours which he has been organizing for the Trust for many years. The Trust was approached by HMI who had heard of our successful house tours.

The conference also addressed developing a membership, using volunteers, and merchandizing resources.

HOUSE TIPS: NEW PAINT REMOVER IS OK

For do-it-yourselfers, 3-M has produced a new chemical paint remover called *Safest Strip* which lives up to its claim of having no harmful fumes and not irritating skin, unlike most standard strippers. Now the not so good news: compared to the methylene chloride strippers, *Safest Strip* works very, very slowly.

In doing a test on two pieces of old woodwork, one with thick, alligatored varnish, and the other a door casing with at least five layers of old enamel, I applied the remover *heavily* and had to leave it on for approximately twelve hours for both paint and varnish to achieve satisfactory results. The instructions suggest leaving the remover on for 1-3 hours for painted surfaces and 20 minutes for varnish. However, the painted surface scraped off smoothly in sheets (not "goopy" as with other strippers), and left the wood almost bare. For varnished surfaces, one might consider using methylene chloride strippers as they work instantly.

For amateurs, and especially those not pressed for time, *Safest Strip* is a respectable product which is safe to handle and doesn't require special ventilation.

— Dan Sotak-Cooper



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