

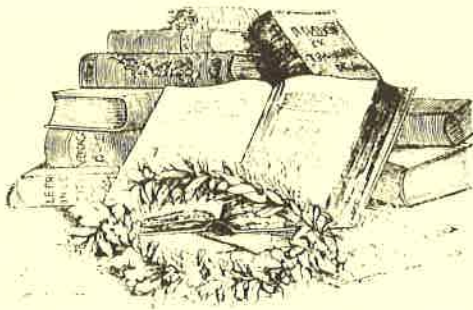
The PRESERVATIONIST

Newsletter of
the SPRINGFIELD PRESERVATION TRUST

Summer 1992

TWO TRUST MEMBERS NAMED TO THE HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Long-time Preservation Trust Board member Jim Boone, and new Board member William Devlin, were appointed to the Springfield Historical Commission by Mayor Markel. Each is filling a seat vacated by resignations. Jim Boone fills the seat which is designated for a realtor and Bill takes the Architects seat. The Trust applauds the Mayor for these very wise appointments which show his dedication to historic preservation and his desire to appoint people to the Commission who have expertise in their particular areas. The Trust congratulates both of these Trust members on being recognized for all their contributions to the City.



TRUST MAKES DONATION TO MERCY HOSPITAL

Over the course of the past year, the Preservation Trust Board of Directors has held its monthly meetings in the Community room at Mercy Hospital and will continue to do so for the next year as well. In an effort to show our appreciation for the use of this space, the Board voted to donate \$100 to the library endowment at the hospital. We welcome other Trust members to join us at any of these Board meetings, which are always held at 7:30 P.M. on the first Wednesday of each month.



The Kesser Israel Synagogue will be one of the "sacred places" opening for the Trust walking tour.

FOREST PARK "SACRED PLACES" TOUR ALL SET TO GO

The Trust's second "Sacred Places" tour will take place on Sunday, September 20th at 1 P.M. This year's tour will highlight the Forest Park area which contains a variety of religious buildings dating from the first two decades of the twentieth century. Last year's tour focused on downtown Springfield and its late nineteenth century churches.

The 2-hour guided walking tour will visit historic places of worship in the city's largest streetcar suburb. Already lined up to participate are Faith United Church of Christ, Trinity United Methodist church, Saint Barnabas and All Saints Episcopal Church, Kesser Israel Synagogue, and First Park Memorial Baptist Church. At each stop, a member of the congregation will explain the history of the building. Other landmarks and homes along the route will also be discussed by the Trust tourguides.

Space on this tour is limited. To make reservations, call Bob McCarroll at 736-0629. Tickets are \$4 for Trust members, \$5 for all others. Remember to wear comfortable walking shoes since the route is one-and-a-half miles long.

TRUST DEFENDS HOUSE MOVING

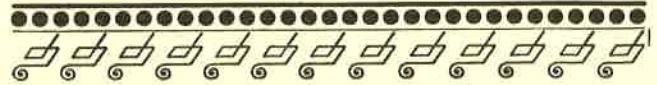
Much criticism was leveled recently in the local news media at a member of the community who had moved a house in order to save it. The Trust wrote letters to the newspapers in order to set the record straight.

In 1987, a house on Catherine Street was scheduled for demolition. The house itself was offered to the Trust for moving. The Trust then found a vacant lot for the house and was about to purchase it when we found Carlo Marchetti, who agreed to carry on with the project at his own expense. The Trust had moved houses before and we were well aware of the huge financial risk involved when one bears in mind the cost of moving the building and then the total restoration of the property. The Trust applauds any private party who is willing to take on such a process. The Trust can attest to the fact that there are no "free" houses out there.



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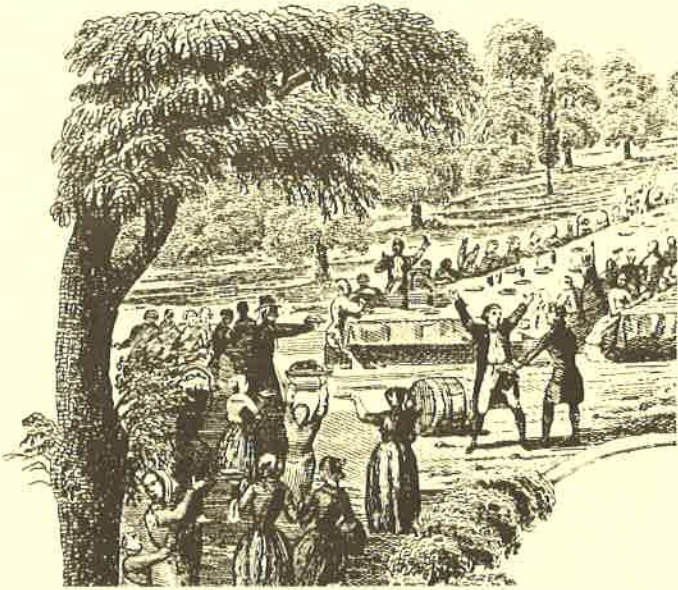


Tour-goers bravely confront rainy weather during the spring house tour.

SPRING HOUSE TOUR IS RAINED UPON

Rain dampened the attendance but not the spirit of this spring's Historic House Tour. In the sixteen-year history of this rite of spring, inclement weather has happened only three times. Normal attendance was cut in half by the drizzly skies, but those who ventured out found a collection of interesting and diversely-furnished homes.

Thanks go to the following people who shared their gracious homes with the public: David Hall in McKnight, David and Sally Fuller in Forest Park Heights, Jeff and Sandra Leighton in Maple Hill, Steve and Shelley Cazavilan in Ridgewood, John Stumpf and Judy Matt on Mattoon Street, and John Parisi in the Colony Court apartments. Thanks also go to the numerous Trust volunteers who worked on the tour and to Shawmut Bank, which again sponsored the tour.



IT'S PICNIC TIME!

The annual Preservation Trust Pot-Luck Picnic will be happening on Sunday, August 23 at 2 P.M. This year's event will take place in historic McKnight on the adjoining grounds of two beautifully restored homes, one owned by Ted Devanski and Bill Guzzy, the other owned by Lynne Goldberg and Bob Wool. Feasting will be centered amongst the flowering gardens of Ted and Bill, with swimming taking place in the circular pool at Bob and Lynne's. Please phone Lynne at 781-6640 by August 16th to say how many people are in your party and what dishes you will be bringing.



**TO ADVERTISE IN THE
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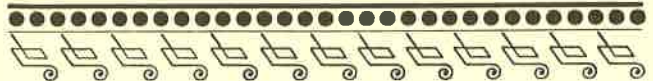
FOR RATES AND INFORMATION

SPT CALENDAR

Monthly meetings
held at 7:30 P.M. in
the **Memorial House at Mercy Hospital**
Next meetings are
August 5, September 2, October 7

Sunday, August 23 at 2 P.M.
Annual Pot-Luck Picnic

Sunday, September 20
in Forest Park
"Sacred Places" walking tour
of historic churches



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HABITAT HOUSE PROGRESSING, VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

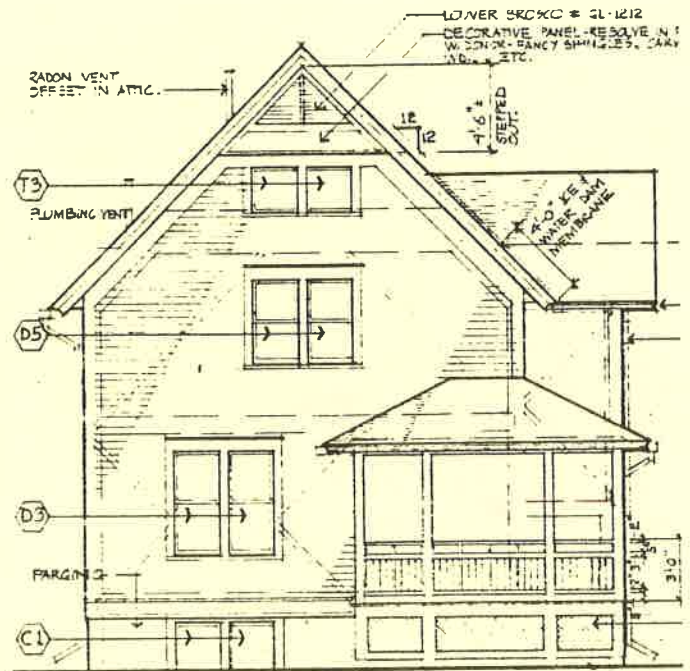
In mid-July, construction is expected to begin on the Greater Springfield HABITAT for Humanity house at 107 Marion St. in the McKnight district, which was described in our previous issue.

The variance petition, necessitated by the size of the lot, was approved and subsequently posted by the City. If no appeals are filed, work should begin sometime around July 14.

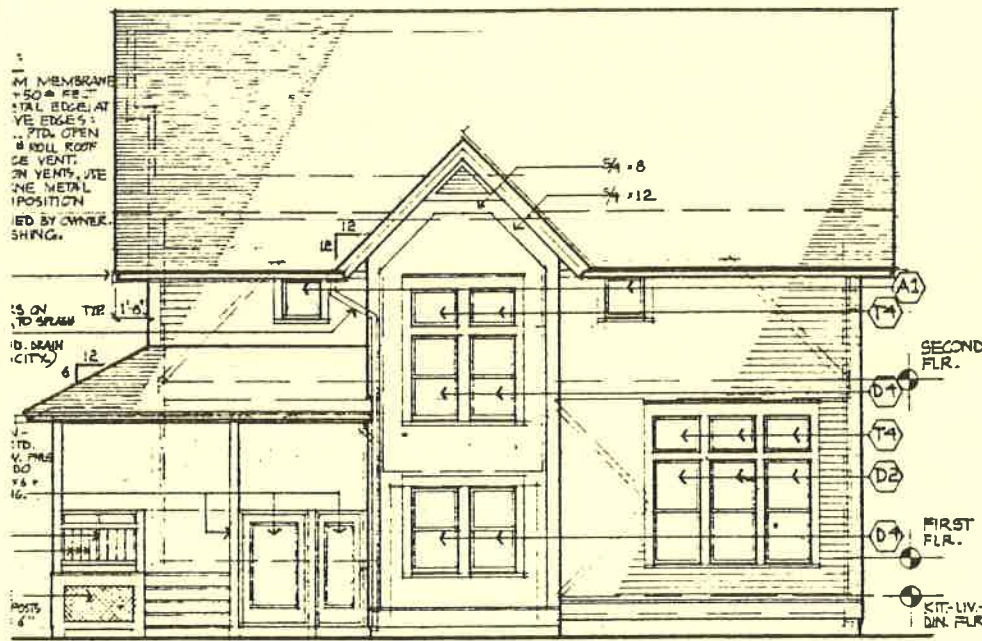
These HABITAT houses are built with the sweat equity of the homeowner families and the essential donated work of volunteers. While many contractors and suppliers also donate labor and/or materials, a major portion of the work is in the hours which volunteers contribute. Persons of all skill levels, from masters in a trade to go-fer around the site, are needed to complete such a building project.

Please help preserve and enhance a part of the McKnight area. Reach HABITAT through Bruce or Ruth Pierce at 589-1984.

- Bill Devlin



Drawing of the front of the proposed HABITAT house to be located in the McKnight area.



Side view of the proposed HABITAT house.

CAN YOU GUESS?



Many of you have noticed the Department of Employment Security on the corner of Worthington Street and Main Street. This "Art Deco"-style facade should be appreciated by all of us, as there were very few built in Springfield (the Steiger's building being another premiere example). This particular building started life as a bus company called the New England Transportation Company. The building was also used for a long time as a department store. This is a wonderful building and we are lucky to have it, but...turn to page 7 to see what was taken down in order to build it!



Devlin

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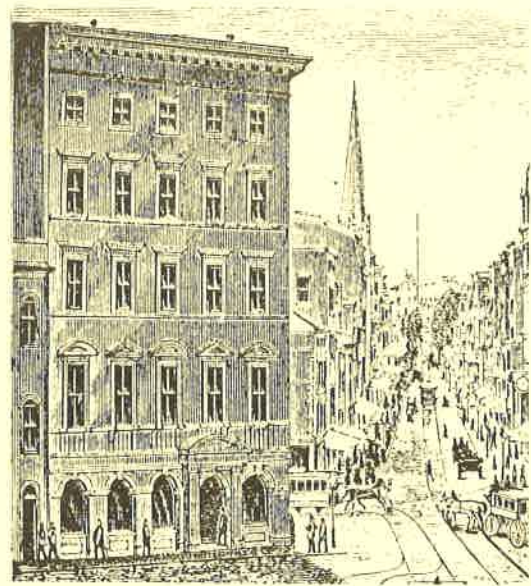
BOSTON UNEARTH'S ITS HERITAGE

The following is a report on a special tour which took place in Boston during the 7th Annual Statewide Preservation Conference hosted by Historic Massachusetts, Inc. and attended by several Springfield Preservation Trust members.

Like many historic cities, Boston now has an official City Archaeologist. This person is in charge of investigating, identifying and cataloging archaeological sites and their artifacts within the city of Boston. Most of us know of the damage done when development is not sensitive to the built environment which exists above ground. Underground and beneath the city's harbor, the city archaeologist has the knowledge and the tools to define the impact of a project on those areas - things which are no less important to the history of the locale than artifacts, vessels or buildings which have survived.

The Archeology Lab in Boston is not a big fancy operation. It is located on North Street, about two blocks from the Paul Revere House, in the basement of a city building which was originally a police station. The lab was one stop on a tour of North End archeology which was offered at this year's Historic Massachusetts Preservation Conference on May 8th. The city archaeologist conducted the tour. At the lab, we saw high school student volunteers washing dishes. These dishes were shards of pottery from the grounds of a stoneware factory which has long been closed. Also in the lab were hundreds of broken pieces of 18th century gravestones. These stones were discovered when an early 19th century mausoleum was recently taken apart and rebuilt. It seems that the original builders of the mausoleum used broken headstones as fill in the structure's foundation.

Another stop on the tour was the Central Artery, site of one of the biggest projects the city of Boston has ever seen. In one section where the new artery tunnel is to be dug, there was once a mill pond. This mill pond was filled in during the early 19th century. The archaeologists believe that when they begin to dig, they may discover the remains of old ships and boats which, along with other timbers, were used to stabilize the fill material at the time the pond was filled in.



It is quite interesting to walk along the streets of the North End with someone who knows the original landscape so well. I had known about land filling in the city - Back Bay being one well-known example. What I didn't understand was that Back Bay was but one of numerous projects done since the English first settled Boston. In the harbor area, the land has been repeatedly filled so that the original shoreline is a half mile from the present harbor in many places. The Quincy Market and other buildings stand on land that was "new" only 50 years before they were erected.

This tour called for powers of perception that were very different from those used on standard historic building tours. With the right guide, one can see the shore line as it used to be, even with the tremendous urban build-up of three centuries. Some light was shed on one persistent mystery: Why, with no hills or streams, do all these streets have curves in them? The answer is that most of them followed the shoreline that was current at the time they were laid out - a shoreline which was changed many times.

This tour was only one part of a very interesting conference put on by Historic Massachusetts, Inc. and co-sponsored by the Springfield Preservation Trust. The conference is held every May in different locations throughout the state. Look for information about the 1993 conference in future issues of this newsletter.

- Mike Stevens



POST OFFICE, SPRINGFIELD, MASS.



CAN YOU GUESS? Continued from page 5.

This is what was demolished at the corner of Worthington and Main Streets - the Post Office & Customs House. Built in 1889 in the Romanesque style, it was designed by William Freret. It was the first post office in the city to be built specifically for that purpose. When it outgrew its space in 1931, it was torn down and a new post office was built on Dwight Street. Note that the Homestead Building (the one with the tower on Worthington Street) remains in both pictures.

COMING NEXT TIME...What apartment building was built on the prominent downtown lot that had been occupied by a certain church designed by a world-renowned architect? The answer appears in our next issue!

THE MUSHROOM EFFECT

Have you ever started a "small" job at your house...only to have it mushroom into a huge job? Old house lovers, preservationists and do-it-yourselfers know this well. But look on the bright side, you usually learn lots of new skills during the process. For instance, I had never built a hatchway before. But recently, I went to paint my wooden bulkhead only to find that carpenter ants had eaten large sections of it. Guess what? I now know how to rebuild a hatchway. I sure am lucky, aren't I?

- Jim Boone



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BLIGHT BUSTERS PROGRAM BEGINS

In our last newsletter, we wrote about the formation of a task-force, set up by the city to come up with recommendations for various vacant and/or vandalized properties in Springfield. The city has already begun demolishing housing at scattered sites. The city is now applying to the state for more funds to demolish deteriorated buildings. The main concern to the Preservation Trust is that no historic buildings should come to be included on the list of those proposed for demolition. The Trust feels that any historic buildings should be boarded and secured, not demolished. There is also an ongoing concern that the controversial Hotel Charles building might be considered for demolition. Our advocacy people will be closely monitoring this situation and will keep our members informed.

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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