

## CONTRACTOR'S LIST

If you know a skilled craftsman that you would recommend, please let us know.

Please include:

~Name of Contractor

~Category of work

~Phone/Email/website

Send information to  
jimboone@hotmail.com

## SPT BOARD MEETINGS

SPT members are welcome to attend

### when

Third Wednesday of each month

6:00PM

### where

Virtually through Zoom. Please email  
info@springfieldpreservation.org for a link.

## NEWSLETTER CREDITS

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## VISIT SPRINGFIELD PRESERVATION TRUST ONLINE

[www.springfieldpreservation.org](http://www.springfieldpreservation.org)

[www.facebook.com/preservespringfield](https://www.facebook.com/preservespringfield)

## ABOUT THE SPRINGFIELD PRESERVATION TRUST

The mission of the Springfield Preservation Trust (SPT) is to preserve and protect properties in Springfield, Massachusetts which have architectural, historic, educational, or general cultural significance for public edification and enjoyment.

SPT believes historic preservation is an important part of making Springfield a great place to live, work, and visit. Historic Preservation is crucial to tourism and economic development and creating a unique sense of place. It's a means of creating jobs, attracting investment, generating tax revenue, and supporting small business.

For 45 years, SPT has been an independent voice supporting historic preservation. Over the years we have held countless events to showcase how our old buildings can be part of our modern lives and show off the historic places that make Springfield unique. We've helped pass legislation on the state and local levels that averts the needless loss of historic places. Our online resources help homeowners with restoration and educate the public on the beauty, quality and value of older homes. These activities have helped save and restore Springfield's threatened historic treasures so that they are here for future generations to enjoy.

Springfield Preservation Trust, Inc.  
74 Walnut Street  
Springfield, MA 01105



## SPRINGFIELD PRESERVATION TRUST NEWSLETTER

### FALL 2023

*image above is*  
2022 Preservation Awards  
hosted by  
Elias Brookings Apartments

### SUPPORTERS

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*Photo Courtesy of Kira Holmes*



### ANNUAL PRESERVATION AWARDS

The Community Music School of Springfield will host the 2023 Preservation Awards on November 14 at 7pm. If you are interested in attending please sign up through Eventbrite at <https://bit.ly/3PAgCx6>.

The Preservation Awards honor individuals and organizations that help restore and preserve historic places in Springfield. After the awards ceremony, the display boards will be on view at the Springfield Museums from late November through the early months of 2024.

[springfieldpreservation.org/preservationawards](https://springfieldpreservation.org/preservationawards)

### 2024 CITY OF HOMES CALENDAR

Buy a City of Homes 2024 calendar today. It is the perfect gift for birthdays, the holidays, and a great keepsake. The calendar this year will be highlighting the Forest Park neighborhood. Thank you to all of our sponsors for supporting the calendar! To see the complete list of our sponsors please visit our website <https://bit.ly/3rAyH6g>.

Calendars are \$15 each and are available at the following locations:

Flowers Flowers, 758 Sumner Avenue

The Flower Box, 596 Carew Street

Support SPT by purchasing the calendar online at <https://bit.ly/3rAyH6g>. Online orders include an additional \$7 for shipping and handling fees.



*Photo Courtesy of Kira Holmes*



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Interested in being listed as a supporter in the SPT Quarterly Newsletter?

Become a member at the Greek Revival level or higher to be listed.

Visit [springfieldpreservation.org/membership](https://springfieldpreservation.org/membership)

## DANIEL B. WESSON AND THE WESSON MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

Article by Katherine Anderson

Often the most apparent mark of progress within a city is the establishment and growth of its institutions such as schools and libraries. In the city of Springfield, those institutions flourished along with perhaps an even more critical institution: its hospitals.

The first hospital established in Springfield was the City Hospital on Boston Road in 1870. The creation of this small farmhouse hospital which remained in operation until 1889 is significant in that it predated both Johns Hopkins and The Mayo Clinic, two of the most prestigious medical institutions in the United States. As the city of Springfield grew, the trustees of the City Hospital agreed to purchase 35 acres of land on North Chestnut Street where they would expand the hospital.

Daniel B. Wesson, a co-founder of the Smith & Wesson Company, also known as Volcanic Repeating Arms which would later become the modern-day Smith & Wesson that once had its headquarters in Springfield, offered Springfield City Hospital a generous donation to be used to continue expanding the hospital on the condition that they begin introducing homeopathic physicians to their ranks but that offer was declined. A number of years later, he would have another opportunity to advance homeopathic medicine in the city when he and his wife donated their mansion at 132 High Street to be used at the city’s first homeopathic hospital.

Wesson was born in Worcester in 1825. His father, a farmer, was also a manufacturer of wooden plows while his older brother Edwin was a leading manufacturer of target rifles and pistols. Daniel Wesson left school at eighteen to become his brother’s apprentice and, following his brother’s death, continued to experiment with firearms, working to improve the cartridges used in many of the pistols of the time. By 1853, he had convinced Horace Smith, also a gun manufacturer, to go into business with him, together patenting a pistol with a new repeating action that would become the basis for the famous Winchester rifle.

As their business grew, so too did Wesson’s interest in philanthropy. In 1904, at the urging of Dr. John Hosea Carmichael, surgeon-in-chief of The Hampden Homeopathic Hospital that operated in Wesson’s former home, he made a \$100,000 donation (equivalent to \$3,434,730 today) for the construction of a new hospital building to accommodate sixty patients. When it officially opened in late 1907 the hospital was renamed in his honor. As well, Wesson requested that a plaque dedicating the new building to his wife be installed. Wesson Memorial Hospital continued to practice homeopathy until 1923 when it converted to “modern-day” medicine.

The hospital, designed by the firm of Kendall, Taylor, & Co. out of Boston (now defunct, also designed Belchertown State School, Brattleboro Retreat), was home to a nurse’s training school that operated until 1938 when it was found that student nurses were occupying jobs that should have gone to graduate nurses (it was far cheaper to employ students than graduates). The hospital was listed as seven stories tall but on the High Street side was only five due to the slope on which it was built. The first floor had fifteen patient rooms, each ten feet by fifteen feet that were furnished with a brass bed, an oak dresser, a couch and chairs, and a technologically advanced call system. The lower floors housed offices, the morgue, and the original ambulance entrance.

In the 1930s the city experienced an epidemic that would lead to the construction of a new kind of hospital, one specifically for infectious diseases. Wesson Memorial was struggling to care for the growing number of patients being hospitalized with Tuberculosis, a disease caused by a highly contagious bacteria that typically affected the lungs.

Photo Courtesy of Paul Meagher

sister institution, Wesson Women’s, in merging with Springfield Hospital Medical Center to become Baystate Medical Center. Daniel B. Wesson’s name and philanthropic legacy live on in the Baystate Health system and in the city of Springfield.

### 2023 CEMETERY TOURS: VOICES OF THE GRAVE

Learn about important figures in Springfield history at the 10th annual "Voices from the Grave" historic cemetery tour. Hosted by the Springfield Preservation Trust and developed by SPT Secretary Michael Stevens, the tour is an hour-long experience through Springfield Cemetery. It is led by docents who take visitors on a tour to graves of interesting cemetery residents, where costumed interpreters will speak about each person of intrigue.

Hour-long walking tours will depart every fifteen minutes starting at 1:00PM at Springfield Cemetery, 171 Maple Street. Tickets for trust members are \$15 and non-members \$18 (Use the "SPTMember" promo code to receive \$3 off per ticket.) Buy your tickets through Eventbrite at <https://bit.ly/3Q1Q2P4>.

Photo Courtesy of Kira Holmes

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### Maple-High & Six Corners Neighborhood Second Saturday Walking Tour

On October 14, Preservation Trust Board Member Katherine Anderson Benson will provide a history of the Wesson Hospitals, the C.W. Porter School, and the beautiful homes of the Six Corners neighborhood. The walking tour departs from the rear of the High School of Commerce (Springfield Honors Academy entrance) and ends at the same. The SPT walking tours this season are sponsored by the Springfield Cultural Council and Mass Cultural Council. Thank you Springfield Museums for partnering on this event with the Trust

### Springfield Cemetery Architecture & Symbolism Tour

Within the Springfield Cemetery’s unique landscape are some of the most architecturally interesting stones and burial crypts in New England, featuring traditional cemetery symbols mixed with modern motifs and designs. This tour of the cemetery highlights some of these, explaining the significance behind some of the most common (and not-so-common) symbols of death and mourning. The tour will take place on Saturday, October 28th at 1:00pm. Please meet at the Cemetery main office at 171 Maple St.

Photo Courtesy of Paul Meagher

Photo Courtesy of Kate Anderson