

Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation

NEWS FOR MEMBERS

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SURVEY BOOK NOW PUBLISHED

Over two years ago we embarked on a survey of the extant buildings of Allegheny County in order to compile a register of significant architecture. We felt that the major work of our organization could not proceed until we had made this study; we could not formulate a sound preservation program unless we knew all of the important buildings in our area.

Under a grant from the A. W. Mellon Educational & Charitable Trust, Mr. Van Trump and Mr. Ziegler and our staff have devoted hundreds of hours to this work. They have driven over 4,000 miles to investigate where good buildings might exist; they have interviewed dozens of persons to obtain leads and information, and they have carried out extensive research in order to record the salient facts about the structures.

The result is a hardbound book unique in the United States. To our knowledge, no other city has completed a study of this size and complexity.

Our book contains an architectural history of Allegheny County from the beginnings at the Point to 1920. We define twelve preservation districts, areas where neighborhoods of buildings form delightful districts. Each of these we hope can be retained with their unique architectural character, and in several cases we have already undertaken restoration programs to preserve them. The main section of the book is the register itself. In it the significant buildings in every area of the City and every municipal division of the County are described. The book closes with an extensive bibliography and a series of maps and indexes that enable the reader to use the volume as a tourguide.

Our book is scholarly, detailed, and as complete as we could make it. We also think that it is a handsome book. It is illustrated with dozens of photographs, and the descriptions are written in a deft and often beautiful prose. In it we pull no punches. If castigation is called for when good structures have been neglected, it is forthcoming; when praise for restoration is in order, it is gladly given. Often our authors are wry, witty, provocative, or sad, but always they mete out words appropriate to the building and its current circumstance.

With this book we have set our goals for many years to come. No planning agency, no highway department can any longer plead ignorance when they slate important buildings for demolition. Our book sets the standards for our community, and as a register of significant buildings, sets a standard for every community to follow. It also defines the labor before us.

We think that our members will be proud of this great work. The book sells for \$8.50 hardbound, but all members are entitled to one copy at \$7.50, plus 38¢ sales tax if they order by November 30, 1967. For your own interest and pleasure we encourage you to purchase the book, and we ask that you consider the pleasure of others by giving it as a Christmas gift. Additional copies are available at the regular price of \$8.50, plus 43¢ sales tax.

We are pleased to announce the formation of a library for Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation. Recently we received the gift or permanent loan of over 4,000 volumes on architecture, history, urban planning, and general literature. Our Director of Research, James D. Van Trump, was our chief benefactor in providing more than 3,000 books including his extremely fine collection of nineteenth century architectural volumes. Previously he had made available his research material accumulated through years of work. The publishing firm of Van Trump, Ziegler & Shane, Inc., also provided its extensive collection of books on modern architecture and planning. Several other persons have given us rare books, and we have made limited purchases of books on Pittsburgh's past. Through the generosity of the Charles H. Spang fund of the Pittsburgh Foundation, all of these volumes are now being catalogued for use.

We welcome Mr. Theodore Bowman, Mr. James Knox, Mr. Julian Miller, Mrs. Cleveland Rea, and Mr. Richard M. Scaife to membership on the Board of Directors. We wish to express our appreciation for the interest in the Foundation shown by these and all the members of the Board.

On Sunday, August 27, 1967, it rained in Pittsburgh, but it did not dampen the enthusiasm of a group of members and guests of the Foundation who followed James Van Trump on a circuit of the architectural glories of Oakland. The exterior and interior of the Soldiers and Sailors Memorial, the University of Pittsburgh's Cathedral of Learning, the foyer of Carnegie Music Hall were succeeded by the courtyard of the Board of Education Building bathed in watery sunshine, and finally the First Baptist Church, where the group basked in full sunlight and enjoyed welcome refreshments as guests of the Church. Everyone said, "We must do this again;" and next summer we will--come rain or come shine.



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