

Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation

NEWS FOR MEMBERS - NUMBER TWELVE
MAY 1969

HIGHWAY GRANT FOR RETRIEVAL AND DOCUMENTATION

Interstate 79 is now eating its way through North Side. In its path stand hundreds of fine nineteenth century houses, Avery Institute (see page 145 in Landmark Architecture of Allegheny County), St. Mary's R.C. Church (p. 142) and St. Boniface Church (p. 144), as well as some of the oldest Greek Revival structures in the county. In the past such buildings simply vanished without a trace. But in this case a full record will be made. We requested a grant of \$45,540 to cover the costs of making a complete photographic record of the buildings, carrying out a measured drawing program of the most important of them, and undertaking archeological investigations along the route of the old canal. We will also remove architectural and interior ornaments for use in our restoration programs. The Pennsylvania Department of Highways (10%) and the Federal Bureau of Roads (90%) has granted full funding for this work, and we have already begun. This is one of the first such programs in the nation, and our work will be followed by other cities that want to see if they can apply it to their local highway demolition emergencies.

We have just been notified that we have won our second Golden Quill Award for one of our publications, Pittsburgh's Neglected Gateway, the Rotunda of the Pennsylvania Railroad Station. The first one was given for Liverpool Street. The award is for distinction in journalism among publications in Western Pennsylvania.

The Junior League has been intensively researching the Neill family that originally owned the Neill Log House (1787) that we are restoring in Schenley Park, and Mr. Arensberg has produced a lengthy study of the deed that will presently be published in the Western Pennsylvania Historical Magazine. In spite of this activity, we still lack a considerable amount of basic knowledge about the early days of this house. Nevertheless, we are nearing the time when we will need to complete the interior furnishings, and the League has taken on the furnishings as a project. The members would appreciate it if any one who has appropriate eighteenth century furniture that might be like those pieces that would have been in this house (tables, a cradle, a bed, a corner cupboard) and who would wish to donate them to our organization for use there, would please notify our office. We will transmit the information to the Junior League.

Our annual meeting, normally held in early spring, has been postponed this year because of the extreme demands on the officers and staff by the museum campaign. We hope that our members will grant us an extension until fall, at which time we plan to issue a full report on our work. At that time we will also release a printed summary of the work of the organization since its inception five years ago.

PROPERTIES ARE AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE AND RESTORATION IN MEXICAN WAR STREETS AREA. SEVERAL IN URGENT NEED OF OWNERS. CALL THE OFFICE FOR INFORMATION.

1233 RESACA PLACE RESTORATION

We have completed the restoration of the interior of our house at 1233 Resaca Place in the Mexican War Street Restoration District. Warren Schweitzer and his men labored over this house for 14 months, and they have produced a masterpiece. With their craftsmanship they reconstructed woodwork, mantels, plaster, and artifacts from many other North Side houses that are now demolished. This house is almost a museum in itself while serving as a three unit apartment building with some of the handsomest apartments in Pittsburgh. One two-bedroom apartment will be available for May 1 occupancy; interested persons should call the office. Below are some photos of the work. This house will be included on our spring tour of the North Side cultural mall.

