

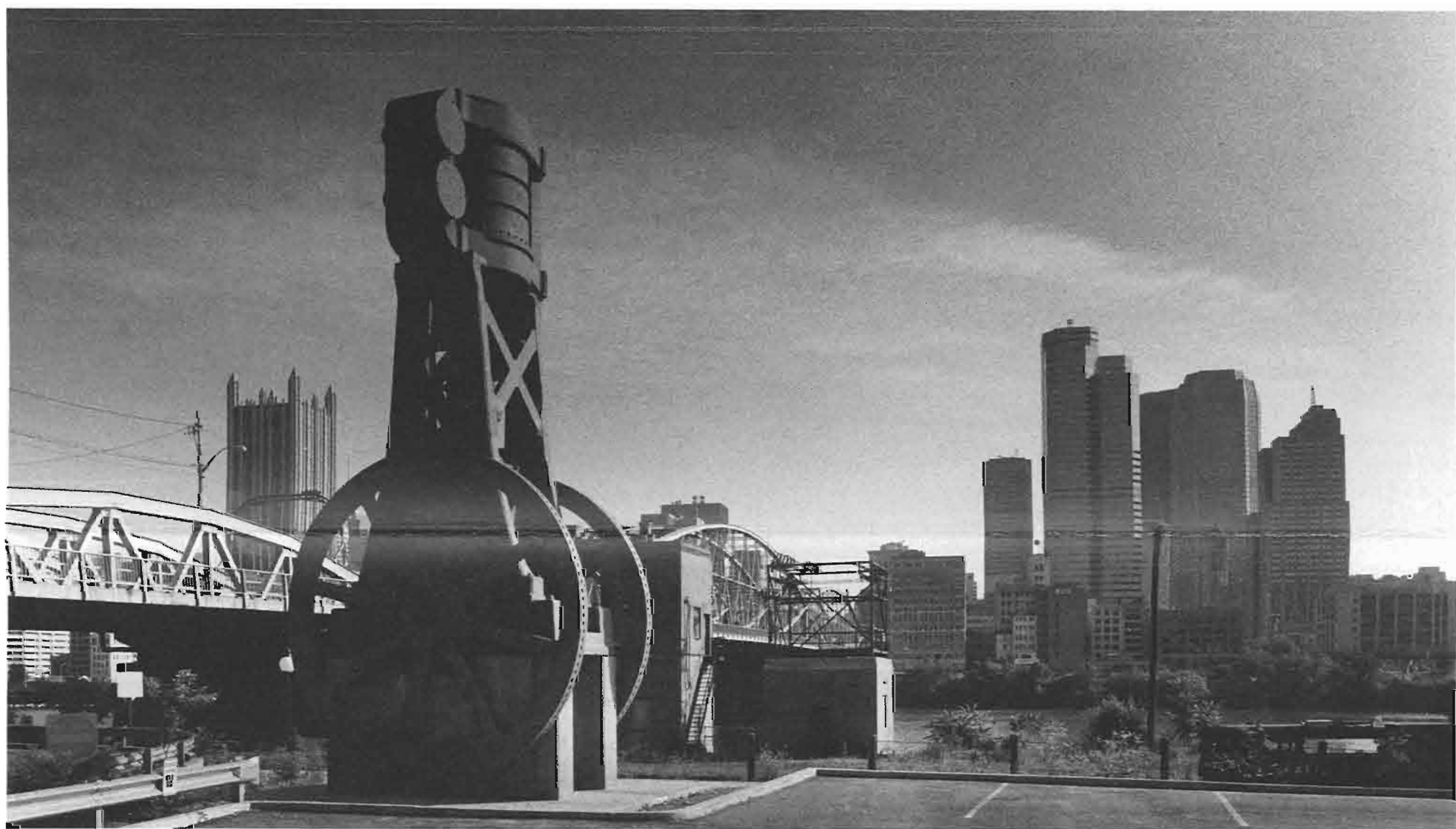
Published for the members of the Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation

# NEWS

No. 119

August 1991

- Events & Education News
- Pittsburgh Architecture:  
*A Center of Gravity*  
*The Effect of Time*
- More on the Syria Mosque
- Historic Architecture and the  
Pleasures of Dining



## Colossal Artifact at Station Square

*A Mesta vertical blast-furnace blowing engine, c. 1900, was recently installed at Station Square along Landmarks' Riverwalk of Industrial Artifacts. The Riverwalk will be over a mile long, stretching from the Panhandle Railroad Bridge to below the Fort Pitt Bridge. Through a dramatic display of industrial artifacts and appropriate interpretation, the Riverwalk will tell the story of Pittsburgh's industrial heritage.*

A colossal steam engine was assembled at the end of April, over a three-day period, at Station Square to serve as a major display along the Riverwalk of Industrial Artifacts, being designed by the Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation. The last industrial artifact here of such prominence was the Bessemer converter erected in 1979, and the engine is even taller and more conspicuous in its location beside the Smithfield Street Bridge.

The recent arrival is a Mesta blowing engine of c. 1900, about 48 feet high, equipped with two 24-foot flywheels, and weighing approximately 600 tons. It was brought in pieces to Station Square from the Sharpsville, Pa. plant of the Shenango Furnace Company, and re-erected. A furnace company specializes in the smelting and casting of iron, and this one-cylinder blowing

engine acted together with a two-cylinder Allis engine to supply the blast for a blast furnace.

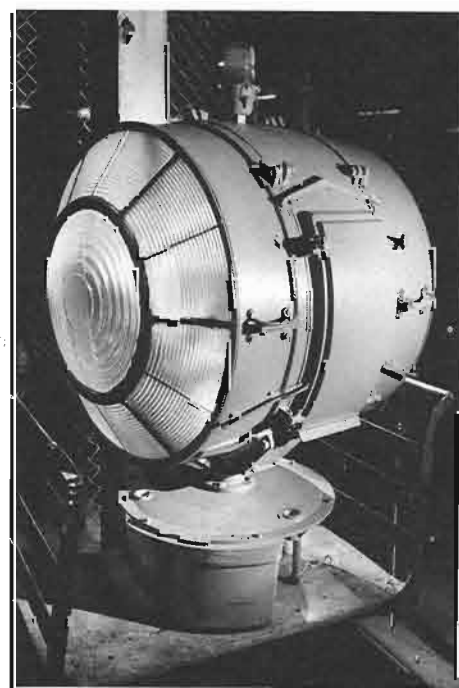
Toward the bottom of the frame, just above the flywheel axles, is the steam cylinder, with its valve gear on the side facing the Smithfield Street Bridge. Bevel gears run from the axle rotate eccentrics that move rods that oscillate a plate that pushes and pulls on the rods that oscillate the rotary valves that admit and release the steam. Dashpots play a part too, presumably to slow down the cutoff of steam entering the cylinder. The piston rod rises and falls, raising and lowering a crosspiece that pushes and pulls on the blowing cylinder piston and also forms a crosshead for the connecting rods to the flywheels whose momentum keeps the engine from being stuck on a dead center and also evens out its motion.

The blowing cylinder sent out air at 30 pounds per square inch to tall stoves filled with loosely-stacked brick, half the time being heated, half the time transferring the heat to the blast so that by the time it entered the furnace its temperature was 800 degrees. A blast-furnace campaign, with ore, coke, and limestone continuously entering at the top and slag and iron tapped at the bottom, lasted for years with very occasional interruptions, so such engines had to be solid and reliable. This engine was in operation until the mid-1960s, when Shenango's blast furnaces were replaced by electric furnaces.

The Allegheny County Commissioners recently donated a 1,000-watt Westinghouse rotating beacon from the Allegheny County Airport to the Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation. It is awaiting installation at Station Square. The beacon, five feet high, has a lamp with one green and one white lens, designed to rotate six times a minute. Originally installed in 1954, the beacon was recently replaced.

For the sheer size, the Mesta engine approaches the limit we can hope for, and smaller and subtler artifacts such as the airport beacon are to be rather more typical. Large and small, the artifacts, the Riverwalk, the trees and landscaping, and the historic buildings at Station Square have the potential to work beautifully together. Something similar is to be found on Riverside Drive in New York, though there monuments inspire the passer's fancy instead of industrial objects. Riverside Drive's sculptures narrate, our artifacts hint and help passers-by reminisce, each adds a touch of the non-mundane as foreground to a spacious view across and along a river.

This fall, the Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation will begin a fundraising campaign to support the development of the Riverwalk of Industrial Artifacts, an interpretive center, and the expansion of the Station Square Transportation Museum.



*For sheer size, the Mesta engine approaches the limit that Landmarks can hope for along the Riverwalk of Industrial Artifacts. Smaller and subtler artifacts such as the 1,000-watt Westinghouse rotating beacon from the Allegheny County Airport are to be rather more typical.*

# PHLF NEWS

## Welcome New Members

Ms. Renee Asher  
Mrs. Patricia P. Bagdon  
James M. Cline, Sr.  
Ivan X. Domitrovic  
Ms. Beatrice Hirschl  
Ms. Joanne Juhl  
Ms. Catherine M. Kelleher  
Scott R. Laing  
Ms. Jacqueline M. Longmore  
Ms. Mary Frances Lucatorto  
Todd R. Markley  
Kenneth J. Merusi  
Kenneth R. Mori  
Miss Linda Myers  
Thomas G. Patarlis  
Leah Marie Schwotzer

Ms. Suzanne Sepety  
Mr. & Mrs. J. Dale Smith  
& Family  
Ms. Deborah A. Taggart  
Ms. Lois E. Yoedt  
Dr. & Mrs. John H. Zabkar  
& Family

**Corporate Members**  
Coopers & Lybrand  
Earth Sciences Consultants, Inc.  
Kirkpatrick & Lockhart  
Pittsburgh Steelers Sports, Inc.  
Rennekamp Lumber  
Company, Inc.  
Triangle Messenger Service, Inc.

## To Remember Senator Heinz

The Allegheny County Commissioners have established the Heinz Memorial Committee to choose the most appropriate memorial to the public service career and accomplishments of the late U.S. Senator John Heinz. The Committee members are:

Thomas Foerster, Chairman, Board of County Commissioners  
Lawrence W. Dunn, County Commissioner  
Sophie Masloff, Mayor  
Elsie Hillman, Republican National Committeewoman  
Anthony J. F. O'Reilly, President, H. J. Heinz Company  
Robert Wilburn, President, The Carnegie  
Arthur P. Ziegler, Jr., President, Pittsburgh History  
& Landmarks Foundation

Citizens are invited to make recommendations to the Committee in care of the Allegheny County Department of Transportation, 101 Court-house, Pittsburgh, PA 15219.

Senator Heinz served as a member of our Board of Trustees and was helpful to us in many ways, particularly in securing Federal funding for, and National Park Service commitment to, the preservation of the Carrie Furnaces and the Pinkerton Landing site through the Steel Heritage Task Force.

## Trustee Honored

Arthur J. Edmunds, trustee of the Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation and retired executive director of the Urban League of Pittsburgh, has received an honorary doctorate in human letters from La Roche College. We are very pleased to offer our congratulations to Mr. Edmunds.

## Gifts Received

The Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation wishes to thank the following for their gifts:

- Donald C. Burnham, of Cedarhurst, for an automobile exhaust whistle of 1912.
- The Allegheny County Commissioners, for a rotating beacon light from Allegheny County Airport.
- Duquesne Light Company, for its donation to our library of the video-tape, "Pittsburgh: An American Industrial City."
- Carl O. Hughes, of West Homestead, for an 1898 book of views of Pittsburgh.

## Errata

- Two factual errors appeared in the last *PHLF News*:
- On page 6, the engines at the Mission Street station delivered 7,000,000 gallons a day, not 700,000,000.
  - On page 12, the Court of Honor was along Fifth, not Liberty, Avenue.

PHLF News is published six times each year for the members of the Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation. This year, the newsletter has expanded, both in the number of pages and in the number of issues. It is supported through membership dollars, proceeds from Station Square, and advertising revenue. We have been pleased with the early responses to the substantive essays by Walter C. Kidney, and appreciate your continuing comments and suggestions.

Arthur P. Ziegler, Jr. .... President  
Louise Sturgess ..... Editor/Executive Director  
Diane C. DeNardo ..... Director of Education & Marketing  
Mary Lu Denny ..... Director of Membership Services  
Eric F. Dickerson ..... Advertising Sales Manager  
Walter C. Kidney ..... Architectural Historian  
Stanley A. Lowe ..... Director of the Preservation Fund  
Albert M. Tannler ..... Archivist  
Susan K. Donley ..... Education Consultant  
Greg Pytlik ..... Designer

# JOIN

### The Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation

- Support the preservation of architectural landmarks, historic neighborhoods, and industrial sites and artifacts in Allegheny County;
- and the creation of tours, lectures, publications, and educational programs featuring the history, architecture, and character of Pittsburgh and Allegheny County.

Call Mary Lu Denny (412) 471-5808 to learn more about our membership benefits and giving categories. She will be happy to send you a complete package of membership information.

# E P V H E & N L T F S

## REVIEW

Before we look ahead to the second half of 1991, we thought it would be worthwhile to see where our membership tours and special events have taken us thus far.

The year opened with a spring lecture series. Speakers Tersh Boasberg (February 14), Peter Brink (March 12), and Bernard Lemann (April 8) discussed current historic preservation issues; 146 Landmarks members and friends attended this lecture series. Then, more than 1,500 people participated in our fifth Hands-On History Festival on May 4. Twenty-six classes from 18 schools exhibited local history and architecture projects and 60 students constructed cardboard bridges for the "Great Pittsburgh Bridge-Building Contest."

On May 18, 179 people walked through the grounds of Allegheny Cemetery. On June 1, 40 people toured several homes and gardens in Oakmont, as well as the library and country club. And, on July 17, 160 members and friends strolled along Shadyside's historic streets. For the third year, Landmarks cooperated with the Pittsburgh Symphony Society in its "Summer Casual Concert Series." Between July 19 and August 30, an estimated 300 people toured downtown Pittsburgh, (escorted by Landmarks docents), enjoyed a picnic dinner in Bessemer Court at Station Square, and listened to one of 10 summer concerts.

Two popular annual events attracted many hundreds of people: the Neville House Antique Show on June 2, and the Auto Festival at Station Square on June 29.

Between June 25 and August 7, our education staff presented an architecture program to 26 students in Citiparks' "Emphasis Art Camp" (June 25); a family workshop, "The Highs and Lows of Pittsburgh" (June 29); and two teacher in-service courses, "Exploring Architecture" (June 26-July 2 and July 31-August 6) and "Pittsburgh Heritage" (July 10-19). Our education director Diane DeNardo also participated in two seminars: one sponsored by the Pennsylvania Federation of Museums and Historical Organizations (July 30 and August 5); the other sponsored by the Beaver Valley Intermediate Unit (August 7).

Many hundreds of members and friends have participated in our tour and special events program this year. If you have not yet had a chance to participate, plan to attend one of our forthcoming events.

## PREVIEW

### Sunday, September 15 Restoration Arts Tour

2 pm-5 pm  
Planning to restore a house or building? Interested in restoration skills? Need some skilled craftsmen? Hop on a bus with Landmarks and travel to craft shops and projects to meet the workers who know the trades you will need and who specialize in restoration work.

**Cost:** \$10 members; \$20 non-members

**Reservations:** call (412) 471-5808 by September 11

### Sunday, September 29 Oakland Walking Tour

2 pm-5 pm  
Oakland has never had a single identity. Villa district, farmland, middle-class neighborhood, medical complex, slum, elegant institutional district: Oakland has been several of these at any given time. Gain a sense, on this tour, of several of Oakland's present and former selves.

**Cost:** \$5 members; \$10 non-members

**Reservations:** call (412) 471-5808 by September 23

### Mondays, September 23 & 30; October 7 & 14

### Exploring Your City Teacher In-Service

4:45 pm-8:30 pm  
"Exploring Your City," a one-credit teacher in-service course, offers a first-hand knowledge of Pittsburgh's architectural and historical development through a downtown walking tour, historical slide shows, and instruction in research techniques and architectural styles. Teachers return to the classroom with new insights to share with students in history, geography, social studies, and art. To register, call the Allegheny Intermediate Unit at (412) 394-5761.

### Thursday & Saturday, October 3 and 5 Exploring Pittsburgh's Architectural Treasures

Call Pitt's Informal Program at (412) 648-2560 to register for this illustrated lecture on Thursday evening from 6:30 pm-8:30 pm and downtown walking tour on Saturday from 9 am-12 Noon.

### Thursday-Saturday, October 10-12 Station Square Sheraton

### Pennsylvania Council for the Social Studies 38th Annual Conference

Landmarks' education director Diane DeNardo will present several workshops featuring the history and architecture of the Pittsburgh region. For information call (412) 793-7339.

### Thursday, November 7 14th Annual Antiques Show Preview Party

5 pm-8:30 pm, Station Square Sheraton  
Save the date! Members of Landmarks will be mailed an invitation to the 14th Annual Antiques Show Preview Party. If you are not able to attend the preview, plan on visiting the show on Friday and Saturday, November 8 & 9, from 11 am-9 pm, and on Sunday, November 10, from 11 am-6 pm. Proceeds will benefit the continuing restoration of the historic Neville House in Collier Township.

**Requested admission donation:** \$4.00  
(Those attending the preview party are admitted free throughout the weekend.)

## Tour Ohio's Historic

# Z O A R V I L L A G E

Thursday, September 26  
8:30 a.m.-6:00 p.m.

Join the Neville House Auxiliary on Thursday, September 26 for a full day touring Ohio's Historic Zoar Village. Founded in 1817 as a Separatist community, Zoar continues to be relatively isolated and retains much of its 19th-century character. Recently the Ohio Historical Society has acquired and restored several of the original town buildings reproducing part of the village as it appeared in the days of its greatest prosperity in the 1830s.

The tour fare is \$27 per person, including bus transportation, admission fees, and a casual buffet lunch. Buses will depart from the Neville House in Collier Township at 8:30 a.m. and will return at 6:00 p.m. For more information and reservations call Hazel Peters at 921-4728.



# PITTSBURGH ARCHITECTURE

Walter C. Kidney

## A Center of Gravity

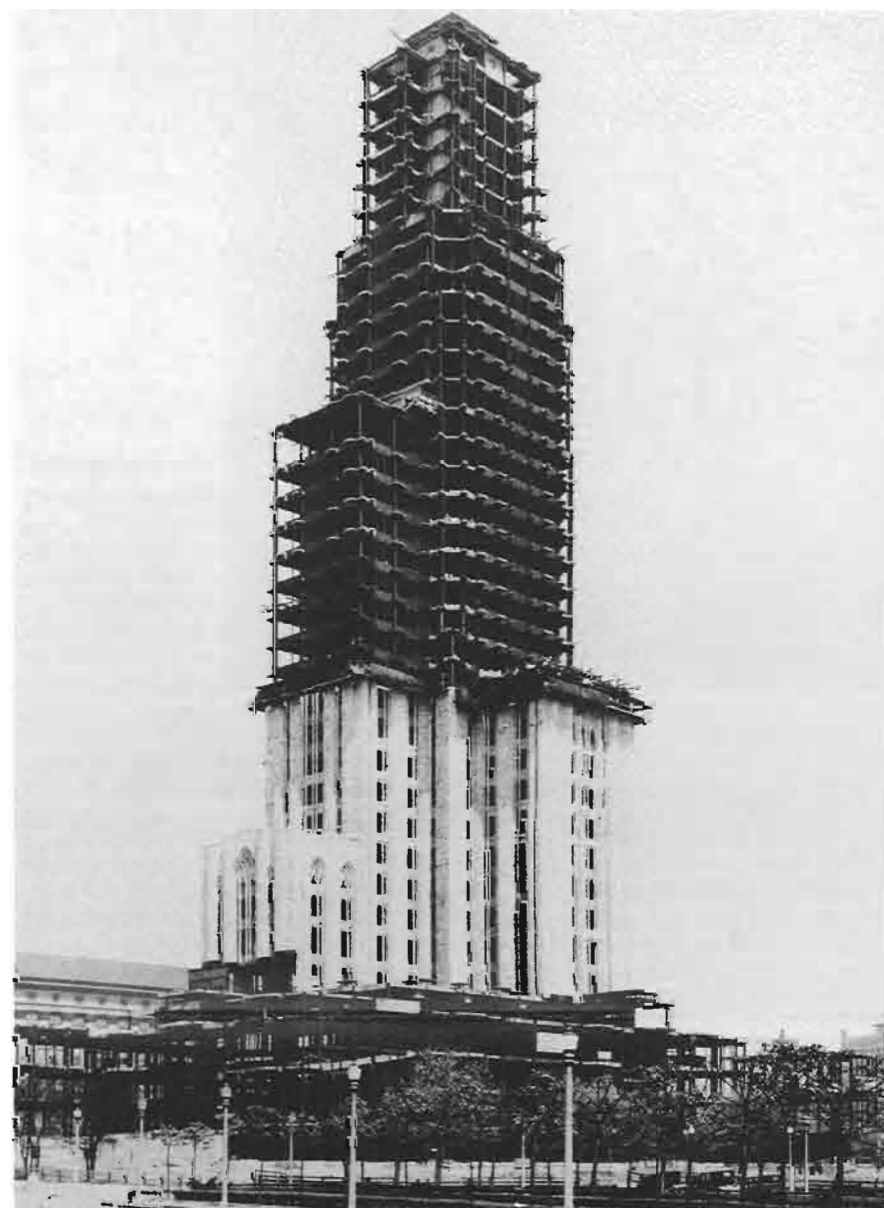
"Architecture" is a vague concept, implying the good ordering of construction and, without too much straining, of any component of the physical world one lives with — "from a matchstick to a city" as one industrial designer's motto puts it. "Good"? I can imagine an ideal building. It accommodates its material purposes perfectly, including that of being durable construction. For every reason, people like inhabiting it. Both inhabitants and passers-by are enlivened by experiencing it, through sight and perhaps other senses too. Its appearance is consistent with its purpose and its significance to the public; in its location, it dominates or harmonizes with all around it, whichever is appropriate. It has an internal harmony, so that in form and dimensioning, color and texture, every detail is vital within itself and adds to the vitality of the whole composition: nothing slack, nothing inconsistent. Furthermore, if you can imagine what lies between the inner and outer surfaces, there is no illogic, no padding-out, no fakery. In brief, this building makes utter and lovely sense.

Which is an ideal, and an ideal that experience shows should be taken as a center of gravity rather than as a rigid eggshell dividing good from bad. There is so much that lacks some of these qualifications, yet we have been glad to live with it. Were perfection possible, it might prove *not* to be perfection: we might get bored, long for stupidity,

spray graffiti, introduce a little volatility into a scene whose perfection, however inspired, may after all have been too narrowly conceived for spirits living in time and craving for time to bring new things.

In my childhood I was exposed to some of the fiery prose of the Modernists, the passionate prophets who were attacking — it seemed — that specious architecture raised to gratify the Babbitts. But prophets seem to inhibit at least as much as they liberate, and anyway the Babbitts have taken Modernism to their hearts. To be undogmatic, more liberal, more eclectic; to feel that architects should be seen and not heard, take their theories and exegeses lightly and look at their actual buildings, as they are and where they are, seems only good sense.

*The Cathedral of Learning in Oakland is without logic. A steel frame is made to carry masonry whose form and mass imply a structure of stone laid on stone, as piers and buttresses, and stone braced against stone, as arches. Still, it is a beautiful fantasy, and since it was intended to symbolize an ideal of self-improvement through education, it perhaps should be regarded as habitable sculpture rather than architecture. It was designed by Charles Zeller Klauder (Philadelphia) and built between 1926-37 for the University of Pittsburgh.*



## The Effect of Time

Lovers of Old Masters have had the occasional trauma of seeing Rembrandts and so forth cleaned properly after centuries of neglect, and realizing that what they *thought* were Rembrandt's colors were no such thing, that three centuries of chimney smoke and other dirt had, so to speak, been dabbling in matters artistic. The same in architecture: you may have assumed that the architect wanted the building as you see it, little knowing of the dirtying, the mispainting, the amputations of detail that may have alienated you from the building or have left you respecting it but missing its full effect. And yet, the workings of time are not always bad.

Trinity Episcopal Cathedral in downtown Pittsburgh, for example, is black with all the soot that has lodged on it since the early 1870s. But its sandstone when fresh was probably a medium gray with maybe a tinge of yellow: a freestone that accepted squaring and carving, but that may never have had a very inspiring color, may have looked rather cold and dead. Pale granite, white limestone, white terra cotta beg for cleaning; they are the lilies that, when they fester, smell far worse than weeds. But a velvety-black sandstone, like creosoted wood and weathering steel, can look darkly beautiful under sunlight. Such materials drink in the light but, when the light is strong, never lose their character, their definition, their color, texture, and individual material composition.



This Shadyside apartment house, built around 1910 of solid masonry, reveals another way in which time can change the architect's intentions. Brick and other small masonry units are a surprisingly fluid medium of building, and when the soil yields beneath them they follow the soil. This building, out of plumb, wavy seen down its length, has lasted 80 years, be it remembered.

# Preservation Scene

## Landmarks Gives Old Allegheny Post Office to Pittsburgh Children's Museum



The Old Post Office Museum sculpture garden in the making; one of the "Ladies of Stone" from the Fourth Avenue Post Office is being lowered into place.

In the late 1960s, the Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation launched a campaign to change the Urban Renewal Plan for Allegheny Center, which called for the demolition of the Old Allegheny Post Office, built in 1894-97 to designs of William Martin Aiken, and the erection of an apartment building on the site.

Ultimately Landmarks achieved a victory, but in order to do so we had to buy the Post Office building, then in ruinous condition, for \$116,000 and restore it, putting it to a good use. We utilized it as our offices and established a museum relating to architecture and local history, and made it available for community exhibits.

In the early 1970s the Junior League of Pittsburgh called upon us to discuss their interest in establishing a children's museum, and we suggested that they might utilize our lower galleries as an experimental beginning. They did so, with great success.

Feeling that they were using the building for an excellent purpose, we ultimately agreed to lease the entire building to them and relocate our offices to Station Square. We felt that a history museum was still needed, and at that time we called together representatives of historical organizations throughout the city to discuss the possible

development of a history museum in another location; the Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania took on responsibility to develop this.

We have watched the Pittsburgh Children's Museum grow and provide marvelous educational programs for youngsters who have enjoyed the exhibits and programs, and who have also loved experiencing the architecture of the Old Allegheny Post Office with its great domed space and its garden court.



Christopher A. Priore's Sky now adorns The Pittsburgh Children's Museum rotunda.

We offered to the Pittsburgh Children's Museum the gift of the building on its eighth birthday so that they could stop paying rent, apply the first savings to exterior restoration of the building that is now needed, restore the landscaping that needs some attention, and then put their money entirely into their programs.

Landmarks trustee Arthur Edmunds says, "Pittsburgh has a great asset in this noble building that is being well used by the Pittsburgh Children's Museum. That organization deserves to have the building, and feel secure that it is theirs. Landmarks will have accomplished its purpose of saving the building and putting it to good use."

Under the terms of the contribution, the building must be maintained as the Children's Museum and the architecture cannot be changed. Its beauty is a wonderful advantage, though not without its drawbacks.

"Any museum that has more cubic footage than square footage presents problems," says the Children's Museum's executive director Maggie Forbes. "Not exactly an exhibit designer's dream building, the Children's Museum has made fantastic use of its air space by installing the two-story high climbing maze, Luckey's Climber, and Christopher Priore's whimsical aerial sculpture, Sky, which conjures up celestial imagery at the same time that it pays tribute to the stunning architecture of the building.

"It's a building that speaks to all our visitors — young and old. After the initial 'wow' elicited by our exhibits, heads inevitably tip back to take in the soaring heights of our dome."

Transfer was executed during the Museum's eighth-anniversary celebration at the end of June.

### The Boyd Theater Case

July 10 was a day of shock for believers in historic preservation law, for it was then that Judge Rolf Larsen of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania, in *United Artists Theater Circuit, Inc. v. Philadelphia Historical Commission*, called a landmark designation "without the consent of the owner . . . unfair, unjust, and amount[ing] to an unconstitutional taking without just compensation, in violation of Article 1, Section 10 of the Pennsylvania Constitution." The building in question was the Boyd Theater, designated outside and in by the Philadelphia Historical Commission (PHC) in 1986. Among the points made by Larsen, who spoke for the 4-3 majority, were:

- that aesthetic matters were not within the police power of the State;
- that, though the owners testified in the PHC hearing on designation, the PHC was in the position of both judge and advocate;
- that the theater was under virtual public control after designation regardless of the owner's wishes;
- that, though the public was to be the beneficiary, the owner was to bear the sole cost;
- that designation of one building amounts to "spot zoning" that allows the owner no sharing in a common good as ordinary zoning does.

In brief, Larsen found in the operations of the PHC a bad means to an end he admitted to be good.

Our own Historic Review Commission suspended deliberations on Syria Mosque and 901-11 Bingham Street until the implications for our historic-preservation ordinance could be determined. Chairman John DeSantis, however, pointed out two differences between our situation and that in Philadelphia. In the first place, the roles of advocate and judge are separate here: the HRC and the City Planning Commission make recommendations on designation to City Council, which makes the decision. Second, our ordinance covers exteriors only, so that control of a property may be significantly diminished.

The "taking" issue is at the heart of the problem. If an owner loses the ability to replace his building by something more useful or profitable, if he is compelled to maintain architectural features that are useless, inconvenient, or expensive, then perhaps his property has been taken unfairly; and if so, what specific governmental agency does the taking, City Council or any other, signifies nothing. In the case of an individual building the claims of injustice seem clearer at first, since one owner bears an expense of maintaining an amenity for the public. In a historic district or conservation district, all are in the same boat and everyone benefits from the well-maintained character of the neighborhood, in theory. Yet the owners have different incomes, different maintenance expenses, and changing needs for accommodation, and strict exterior controls can lead to inconvenience or outright hardship. It may be, then, that an effective historic-preservation ordinance will prove unconstitutional. The July 17 issue of the paper *In Pittsburgh* went so far as to say, "Is this the end of the historic preservation movement? It could be, at least around here."

Apart from legal compulsion, though, what resources do we have? Theoretically, the City might buy out the owner, frankly not afford to do this. Perhaps an easement could be obtained on the exterior of a building, major interiors, or open areas — our preservation law, by the way, does not cover natural features — through grant, purchase, or even lease, whether by government or some private organization. There is also the resource of pressure from public opinion, formed and concentrated by an organization such as Landmarks.

The National Trust for Historic Preservation, joined by Landmarks, has filed an *amicus* brief in support of the petitions of the City of Philadelphia for review. Pennsylvania preservationists will meet in Philadelphia on August 13 to discuss the situation. (For information, call Preservation Fund of Pennsylvania, [717] 569-2243.)

### More on Syria Mosque

Landmarks is very much concerned over the urbanistic consequences of whatever will happen on the Syria Mosque site and the vacant one adjoining. The Historic Review Commission held a public meeting on City designation on June 20, as a basis for a recommendation to City Council. The most interesting topic concerned a study commissioned by the University of Pittsburgh from MacLachlan, Cornelius & Filoni, the architectural office that rehabilitated Heinz Hall and Benedum Center. The estimates were discouraging, yet preservationists were unwilling to give up; and indeed, this may be one of the situations where victory will eventually be snatched from the jaws of defeat (or despair, which is the same thing).

We testified as follows:

*The Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation favors the preservation of Syria Mosque if a means can be found of maintaining it in good working condition and keeping it in meaningful use. We recognize its many associations with great events and great names, and its long-familiar presence in an area intended to be the cultural center of the city. But we wish particularly to discuss it as one element of an urban architectural group.*

*One can imagine the Oakland Civic Center of the early 20th century as composed of two great open spaces, the Cathedral of Learning Campus and the Soldiers' and Sailors' Memorial grounds, forming an L with the old Schenley Hotel, itself on an open site, as a hinge element. The Cathedral of Learning, the Schenley Hotel, and the Soldiers' Memorial are very large and tall buildings, surrounded by elegant buildings but of a subordinate character. The architectural style, for the most part, is Classical.*

*Of the buildings that surround the Soldiers' Memorial, whose main bulk is about 140' high and 150' wide, the greater part are between 40' and 50' high on the street, with some higher. Widths vary from 45' to about 200'. Materials are brick, stone, and terra cotta, with colors from dead white to dark tan, with cream and warm gray somewhat predominant. The style, with the exception of Syria Mosque, can in every case be called Classical, and in Syria Mosque the exotic ornament is subordinated to the prevailing rectilinear form of the building. The overall effect of the group is diverse but very harmonious, its major defects being in lots to each side that have never been built on and that give the ensemble an incomplete look.*

*To remove Syria Mosque is thus not to remove only a building with its own specific value, but also to risk a disruption of what has been a harmonious architectural group. Any new building would have exacting standards to meet as regards massing, proportions, style, and materials if it were to fit well visually in this group, which attained its present form six decades ago. And, seeing construction, institutional and otherwise, around Oakland from the last few decades, we may wonder if such harmony is now possible.*

In saying this we were treating Syria Mosque more as a visual element than as an institution, and giving notice that if something took its place, that something had better be good. A general consistency of height, proportion, style, detailing, and materials might actually accomplish such a visual task if a literate and sensitive architect were commissioned. A function as classroom or office space would be nothing new to the Soldiers' Memorial group, since Thaw Hall precedes everything except the Schenley Hotel and the Soldiers' Memorial, while the former Physicians' Building and National Union Fire Insurance Company began as discreet business structures in the 1920s.

### Motor Square Garden

Late June brought the good news that the long-closed Motor Square Garden, most recently a retail arcade, has been bought by the West Penn AAA Motor Club. It is to be hoped that the grand internal spaces and great windows will not suffer in the office-retail conversions about to occur.

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### Replacing St. Peter's

St. Peter's Episcopal Church, once at Craft and Forbes Avenues in Oakland, was demolished in 1990 with much emotional stress. Built in 1852 to designs of John Notman, St. Peter's stood so as to define the western end of Oakland with a black spire like a boundary stake. The Design Alliance, then, is under challenge to create an acceptable replacement for a well-known, much-loved building in a conspicuous place.

The slender grace of St. Peter's is inevitably gone. Its spire was about 200 feet high, the approximate height of Oxford Development's new and thus far nameless building, but the latter is enormously greater in bulk, and of course speaks to the financial being rather than the spiritual: more challenge, it may be, to make this fact acceptable.

In some ways the building form is rather nice, an escape in most parts from the glass box, even a sort of reminiscence, in its upper section, of nearby Montefiore Hospital as it used to be. The broken pediment on the side facade is a vigorous sculptural form, and the color contrasts of the wall materials — not chosen yet: red brick and limestone would be good in this setting — seem promising as a way to create firm horizontals. The general feeling is robustly Classical, no attempt being made to evoke delicate Gothic ghosts.

We have, however, to deplore the absence of moldings. A molding, long and judiciously profiled in cross-section, can define an opening or the edges of a distinct building mass, break a vast wall into comprehensible parts, or simply place an interesting shape, with rich variations of light and shade, against a blank surface. The sloping planes that terminate the masses here are ersatz cornices of a sort fashionable in Post-Modernism these days. Real cornices of terra cotta or cast stone, not so tall and projecting less, with strong but simple profiles of bold curves and narrow flat surfaces, would define the parts of this building much more effectually.

The Post-Modern sloping sort of cornice probably derives from a rendering and engraving practice of a few hundred years ago, never intended for literal reproduction, in which a Corinthian capital was a truncated cone and a cornice a sort of hopper, the architect being intended to supply the missing detail according to his fancy.



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### North Side Conference Awards

For the eighth year the North Side Conference of Neighborhood Associations held its annual dinner, and each neighborhood gave an award to the person or organization that has been most helpful to it in the past decade. The awards were as follows:

Allegheny West . . . .	John DeSantis
Brighton Heights . . .	Joanne Pefferman
Calbride Place . . . . .	Calbride Place Community
Central Northside . . .	John Lyon
Charles Street . . . . .	Charles Street Area Council
East Allegheny . . . . .	Judi Minton
Fineview . . . . .	Marjorie Pierce
Manchester . . . . .	Arthur J. Ralph
Northside Tenants	
Reorganization . . . .	Arthur P. Ziegler, Jr.
Observatory Hill . . . .	William Salinetto
Perry Hilltop . . . . .	Jean Wojcie
Spring Garden . . . . .	Paul Cerny
Spring Hill . . . . .	Richard Laux
Troy Hill . . . . .	Dennis Uhlig

The award to Landmarks president Arthur Ziegler was given because, in Harriet Henson's words, "The Northside Tenants Reorganization (NTR) was considering developing vacant structures on Brighton Place and converting them into rental units for low-to-moderate income individuals. However, there were two nuisance bars that were hampering the total and future development of Brighton Place. Mr. Ziegler was willing to take the risk, and loan an unknown resident council funds from Landmarks' Preservation Fund to purchase both nuisance bars so that the residents' dream could become a reality."

"The purchase of these two bars set the stage for the NTR to begin to be taken seriously by banks, funders, government officials, and, most importantly, our residents. Without Mr. Ziegler and the Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Preservation loan, this would not have been possible."

Our Preservation Loan Fund, under Stanley Lowe's direction, has helped many neighborhoods rejuvenate their areas and restore their historic properties, and we appreciate the recognition from NTR and its president Harriet Henson.

### Something New at C.M.U.

The Graduate School of Industrial Administration, an indifferent box assemblage of 1956, stands behind the Fine Arts Building at Carnegie-Mellon University. Now it is to receive a long annex, parallel to Tech Street and the Fine Arts Building, that seems to promise better. The architects, a little surprisingly, are not Dennis, Clark & Associates, architects for the attractive recent buildings elsewhere on campus; but Kallman, McKinnell & Wood, another Boston firm, best known for the Corbusian concrete Boston City Hall, has produced what seems a tactful building for the setting. It looks as if the fenestration of the Tech Street front will have a gentle rhythm compatible with that of the Fine Arts Building behind, while the north front entrance, down the street from though within sight of the Margaret Morrison entrance, will allude to the latter in a concave half-cylinder. Banding of the lowermost floor will give a visual base and a sort of Classical pedigree to the annex, and window surrounds, albeit plain, shallow or flush ones, will give a little extra force to the openings.

Exterior materials were still being selected in July, with the likelihood being that the cream of Margaret Morrison would be the major facing color, with the dark tan found in the Gymnasium across Tech Street for accent: the banding of the partly-underground basement, the window surrounds above, the concave entrance niche. The column before that niche will be plaster-faced, supporting a painted metal beam, and there will be a shallow painted-metal cornice.

Hornbostelian terra cotta, executed with verve, would be welcome but its days are past, and this certainly promises to be a decent neighbor to the older buildings, much more so than the 1950s building to which it is an annex.



### The New Jail

We have been awaiting an opportunity to say something about the design for the new Allegheny County Jail, to be erected downtown at the foot of the Bluff. There seems, in fact, not much to say. The six cell blocks appear boxy, although their fronts break forward at the centers. Architecturally there is nothing here to approach the present Jail, certainly, and the use of a brown brick in an area where brick is red may make the new construction stand out beyond its desserts. Still, the massing will leave the main building of Duquesne University visible from the Liberty Bridge. The tallest block will obscure Mies van der Rohe's Mellon Hall, which is something of an imposition on the landscape, neat but negative and utterly detached, and will group more or less well with the blocky Mercy Hospital buildings beyond.

### A Plaque for Union Station

In 1968, James Van Trump published *Pittsburgh's Neglected Gateway: the Rotunda of the Pennsylvania Railroad Station*, as part of Landmarks' "Stones of Pittsburgh" series. In that same year we began our plaque program, and the Rotunda was conspicuous among the city's great structures not to receive one. It seemed that Union Station, rotunda and all, was to be cleared for something called Penn Central Park, commercial development of a glossy, rootless, 1960s sort. But now Union Station shines as the Pennsylvanian, and looks better than ever in the living memory of most of us. And since June 19 it has its plaque at last, dedicated by Mayor Sophie Masloff and Arthur P. Ziegler, Jr., president of Landmarks.

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# Preservation Scene

(continued)



Photo by Clyde Hare

The splendid stairhall of "Sunnylegge."

## What Future for "Sunnylegge"?

Many of our readers know "Sunnylegge," the brick Romanesque house at Fifth and Wilkins Avenues. It was built in 1886 by Dr. James McClelland, a homeopath much consulted by Pittsburgh's rich, to designs by the very new firm of Longfellow, Alden & Harlow. Longfellow may have been the designer, since he had been in H.H. Richardson's office and the house is full-blooded Richardson Romanesque of the most artistically economical type. The exterior is, like

that of Richardson's own exactly contemporary Emmanuel Church in Allegheny, "beyond fashion," with stylistic labels possible but not totally relevant. Inside are fine woodwork, stained glass for the stair, and a century of accumulations of the McClelland family from Dr. McClelland to the artist Rachel McClelland Sutton.



"Sunnylegge," Fifth and Wilkins Avenues, Squirrel Hill.

The latter bequeathed the house to a young friend, Robert Meyerjack, with a fund for its maintenance during his lifetime. Rob was very proud and fond of the house, opening it often to the public on occasions such as James Van Trump's birthday. He hoped that it would become a house museum, smaller than "Clayton" but still an ample Late Victorian home that, like "Clayton," bears the authentic mark of its family.

In mid-July, however, Rob died at the age of 35. His sister, Gretchen Hempen, says that the family is very concerned to execute Rob's project of a house museum. The problem is one of money. In the next few months, means must be found to sustain this remarkable house.

## Old J&L Site

Late in May, the South Side Planning Forum received a report from its Riverfront Planning Committee and the architects Williams Trebilcock Whitehead on the site of J&L's South Side Plant. The area in question is 110 acres, more than double the size of Station Square and also along the Monongahela shore. It breaks down into three distinct areas: a 45-acre part west of the Hot Metal Bridge, still extant, that communicated with the Eliza Furnaces formerly across the river; a 30-acre area, still built upon and containing electric steel furnaces, east of the Hot Metal Bridge and adjacent to Carson Street; and a 30-acre vacant strip alongside the latter area, adjacent to the river.

General recommendations were that the new area be given over to uses not competing with those of the present South Side neighborhood, yet that the area west of the Hot Metal Bridge be not in violent contrast; that the shoreline be treated as an accessible public amenity; that the area be self-sufficient as regards traffic circulation and parking, and require no additional service of utilities; that the long-extant question of revived steelmaking west of the bridge be settled promptly so that possible land uses by the river can be determined; that no temporary use of the vacant areas be allowed; and that any use be consistent with the recently-adopted Neighborhood Plan for the South Side.

The report suggests diversified, owner-occupied housing, but no public housing on a large scale. Retail should either serve the J&L site itself or should be of kinds not found on the present South Side; any large-scale retail should be kept to the eastern part. Office and industrial use may prove acceptable, especially east of the Hot Metal Bridge. Institutional development on a large scale is not to be encouraged. An interesting suggestion is that the Hot Metal Bridge might be converted as a link to the Parkway.

Early in the summer, the Gustine Company presented a general development plan for residential, office, and minor retail development, postulated on the great likelihood that the electric furnace plant would be torn down.

## Something for Everyone?

Preservationists, and even more developers, have been imagining the saving of the old Mackintosh-Hemphill buildings at 901-11 Bingham Street as incompatible with new development. A South Side developer, Thomas R. Tripoli, feels that this need not be so: that the proposed new development on the deep site need not come all the way to Bingham Street, and that the handsome old office and pattern-shop buildings can become a 50-room bed-and-breakfast inn or "European-style hotel." Whether the contemplated "panoramic view" of the Triangle from the hotel rooms would or would not be seriously impaired by the buildings of the new development needs to be checked out, but the idea of preservation and development, an escape for once from an adversary situation, is very appealing.

## Incline Open House Held

As a National Preservation Week event, and in honor of its 114th anniversary, the Duquesne Heights Incline held an open house May 19th and 20th. Included were tours of the machinery space and maintenance shop in the upper station. The incline runs 7,020 hours per year thanks to these. Certain improvements of a subtle nature are in progress: a tapering of the treads on a new set of wheels for better contact with the rails; a strengthening of the upper end of the wrought-iron track structure; and development of self-lubricating plastic to replace the traditional bronze in axle bearings.

## Bost Building

Early in the summer it was still uncertain whether the Steel Industry Heritage Task Force and the 1892 Labor Centennial Committee would be able to purchase the Bost Building in Homestead. This modest brick building, in July of 1892, was both union and press headquarters during the Homestead lockout and strike: an event that not only created remembered acts of violence but that stopped the progress of organized labor in the steel industry for a half-century. The building is tax-delinquent, and back taxes and restoration together may require up to \$1 million.

## Preservation Law Seminar

Landmarks will co-sponsor a seminar on historic preservation law, to be held in Pittsburgh on September 25 or 26. The session will last a half day, from 7:30 am to 12:30 pm, and is being held under the auspices of the Allegheny County Bar Association. Landmarks' participation in the conference is supported through a grant from the Allegheny Foundation to the Center for Preservation Law. For information call the Bar Association at 261-6161.



## West End Bridge

On July 3, the West End Bridge opened, after undergoing modifications at its North Side approach, but its beautiful central arch and its newly-cleaned stone abutments remained their old selves, as did the Warren trusses of the south approach.

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# Education News

## Landmark Survivors Video

Landmarks' newest educational resource was completed this summer and is ready for use with high school students and adult education programs. The video, funded through a grant from the Henry C. Frick Educational Commission, highlights the "life stories" of seven local landmarks: the Smithfield Street Bridge, Fort Pitt Blockhouse, Allegheny County Courthouse and Jail, Fort Pitt Boulevard, Kennywood, Clayton, and Station Square. The video uses these historic landmarks to increase public appreciation for historic preservation and the built environment.

Some of the themes explored in *Landmark Survivors* are: what constitutes a landmark; why and how these seven landmarks have survived; why some landmarks are at risk; people and organizations involved with historic preservation; and the value of historic preservation to a community and its people. The video also offers a unique perspective on the history and development of Pittsburgh and Western Pennsylvania.

The Advanced Production course at Fox Chapel High School, under the teacher supervision of Douglas Martin, videotaped the seven landmarks, transferred over 200 historic photographs and illustrations to video tape, participated in the videotaping of three interviews included in the program, and taped the narration of the script. Don Riggs, a retired local news personality and trustee of Landmarks, is the narrator of *Landmark Survivors*.



This photo by Donald J. Stetzer appeared in the Pittsburgh Press North on Wednesday, April 24, 1991. Fox Chapel High School students are editing the *Landmark Survivors* video.

Designed especially for high school students, the video is available to teachers through the lending library of the Allegheny Intermediate Unit, (412) 488-2780, or through Landmarks' lending library of educational resources. Teachers and other education organizers interested in renting or purchasing the video may call Landmarks' education department at (412) 471-5808.

## Portable Pittsburgh

Numbers can say a lot and the numbers related to the 1990-91 *Portable Pittsburgh* school year have just been tallied. Landmarks' in-school program for elementary school children in Allegheny County highlighting the history, heritage and architecture of Pittsburgh and Western Pennsylvania has had another busy year. This was the third year for the program and our volunteer docents who present the program traveled near and far to visit students in grades three through six. A total of 182 presentations were made to over 4,800 Pittsburgh and Allegheny County school students. One teacher commented, "I called my friend at lunch hour and told her to book it!" A student's thank-you note included: "Thanks so much for telling me about Pittsburgh's past. It helped me to write about Pittsburgh's past without any difficulty. I also got an A on it!"

During the same period, *Portable Pittsburgh* docents presented the program to 350 adults including presentations to the Berkley Hills Garden Club, Delta Kappa Gamma in Lower Burrell, Union National Bank Retiree's Club, and Country Meadows Retirement Center in Bridgeville.

The education department is preparing for its fourth year of the program and 15 sessions have already been booked for September. Teacher and education organizers can schedule a date or receive information on *Portable Pittsburgh* by calling Landmarks at (412) 471-5808.



Elementary School in North Allegheny School District. A total of 12 presentations were made to over 700 students in Kindergarten through fifth grade.

In conjunction with *Architecture: The Building Art*, a traveling exhibit which stays in the school for one month, the architects talk with individual classes and explain their work as an architect, often bringing along slides of their designs, blue prints, drawing tools, design models, and other tangible objects for the students to explore.

The response of the teachers, students and parents has been overwhelmingly positive as they begin to "see" their communities in a new and more personal way. Teachers are incorporating architecture and design principles into their traditional studies and children are experiencing the fascination of learning how a building stands up, how different building materials make structures look different, and how different countries have different architecture which reflects their cultures and environments.

The exhibit and in-school visits helped students at Franklin Elementary design and construct structures that were used to build a scale community on the school's play ground. The entire school was involved in the planning, designing, construction, and actual layout of the model community. It was part of a school-wide, year-long program on communication.

Landmarks is looking forward to the second year of this program. Interested schools can call now to receive information on the program or to schedule a month for the *Architecture: The Building Art* exhibit and related in-school visits. Architects, engineers, and designers interested in volunteering for the program can call Diane DeNardo at (412) 471-5808.

## Landmarks and the Pittsburgh International Folk Theater

Recently the Pittsburgh International Folk Theater asked to join Landmarks as an affiliated organization. An agreement has been worked out whereby Landmarks will co-sponsor performing, visual, and graphic art shows featuring Pittsburgh's ethnic groups and neighborhoods. Landmarks will intensify its reciprocal programs regarding visits by and exchange of information with European preservationists and urban planners.

For the last several years, Landmarks has seen visitors from many European countries and from the Far East who have been interested in preservation technology, neighborhood revitalization (particularly for low-to-moderate income people), and the development of commercial enterprises whose profits would be utilized for preservation purposes much as at Station Square. Europeans in many cases have more highly developed preservation legislation, and we are learning a great deal from them that can be applied to our work here in Pittsburgh. We are also attempting to bring more European visitors to our city and are working with the Pittsburgh Convention and Visitors' Bureau to do so.

Among the early results of this new relationship are the Folk Festival performance for the grade school and high school students at the Hands-On History Festival under the big tent at Station Square, their participation in our educational programs in the public schools, and their free performances for the public at Station Square. We were also able to obtain tickets to their special performance at the Homestead Carnegie Library for distribution to neighborhoods we work with in the city.



Walter W. Kolar, Executive Director of The Pittsburgh International Folk Theater.

The Folk Theater has arranged for a Bulgarian television film crew, which was doing a documentary on the life of Bulgarian immigrants on the East and West Coasts, to visit Pittsburgh, meet members of the Bulgarian community, and do a documentary on Landmarks' work to be shown on Bulgarian television.

We look forward to this excellent relationship with the Folk Theater, which should enable us to obtain more information from, and provide information to, the world community and should bring many more visitors to our city.

## Architects-in-the-Schools

The first year of Landmarks' educational program, *Architects-in-the-Schools*, was a huge success due to the enthusiasm of the volunteering architects:

Marsha Berger, Marsha Berger Architect  
Gary Carlough, The Design Alliance  
N. John Cuzolo, NJC/PSW Associates  
Ken Doyno, Rothschild Architects  
Ken Evans  
Anne-Marie Lubenau, Landmarks Design Associates  
Stefani Ledewitz, Quick Ledewitz Architects  
Bob Lynch, Robert Dale Lynch Architect  
Cherie Moshier, The Design Alliance  
Ken Nagie, Foreman & Bashford  
Charles Wellington, Johnson/Schmidt & Associates

The architects volunteered their time to visit classes at Chartiers Elementary School, a Pittsburgh Public School in the West End, Wexford Elementary School in the Pine Richland School District, and Franklin

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# Historic Architecture and the Pleasures of Dining

Walter C. Kidney

*Herewith, we continue our series on the visual and gustatory experiences of supping in old buildings of character in and around Pittsburgh.*

## Allegheny Brewery & Pub

This brewery and restaurant has been open about two years, and in that time has made a remarkable reputation. Its beers are among the very few in the United States to conform to the German *Reinheitsgebot* — unless specifically labeled “wheat beer” or some such, *only* barley, hops, yeast, and water are used — and they have a strong European flavor. Brewing is in a traditional bottom-fired copper kettle, though further processing is in technically advanced equipment, under the supervision of a German brewmaster.

The Allegheny Brewery & Pub is in the central building of the old Eberhardt & Ober Brewery in East Duchtown. The 1883 building by Joseph Stillburg is not the fanciest sort of brewery architecture, yet its pointed tower rises with some drama against the side of Troy Hill, and it and other surviving brewery structures are joined to each other and the new parking garage with an intriguing sequence of steps, terraces, courtyards, and at least one footbridge. The Brewery itself has a splendid romantic courtyard for outdoor eating. Inside, the decoration is of prints applied to industrially-austere brick walls penetrated by big, tall windows that afford distant views of the Triangle skyline. A picture window reveals the copper kettles and stainless steel of the brewery itself, which often may be toured.

The food is traditional German, ranging in price from cucumber salad (\$1.75) through sandwiches (about \$3.50) to dinner dishes from Wurstplatte (\$6.50) to Zigeunerschnitzel (\$9.75). The goulash soup (\$2.75) is outstanding, and the bread is a delicious, dark, solid loaf. At most times the beer (four kinds typically offered) is \$1.75 a glass, though the price rises on Friday and Saturday evenings.

## Froggy's

The three buildings of Froggy's have obviously undergone some change, but they still represent that plain, tasteful commercial architecture that replaced the buildings that fell victims to the Fire of 1845. The style, if a label were necessary, could be called Greek Revival of the simplest sort. Inside, bare red brick and exposed joists rather high up give a warm but spacious impression.

Of the dishes we tried, the barbecued shrimp, chili, soupe du jour (cauliflower, broccoli, cheese), and roast chicken got our applause. All in all the food is hearty rather than subtle, with entrees ranging in price from chicken breast (\$11.95) to filet mignon (\$18.95) in the evenings.

## Le Pommier

Although the interiors are new — though mellow with board wainscoting and floors — Le Pommier presents to the street a rare Greek Revival double shop front, simple but delicate, that is completely authentic. The effect is not French, but the deep blue woodwork does suggest a quality place within.

We dined there early one evening. We had mixed reactions on the appetizers: a tasty though not very large charcuterie plate (three kinds) and a chilled beet soup mostly color and little taste. The chef's selection salad (\$5.50) was very small but very tasty, and superior in quality if not quantity to the tomato salad. The chicken breast was very good basic chicken though stuffed a little discordantly with goat cheese and was accompanied by what was tantamount to a whole side dish of chutney. Lamb with capers, a special, was much enjoyed. Accompanying these were pommes frites, peas, and grilled eggplant. Desserts (\$5.00) tasted were a very sweet chocolate flan and an orange-champagne sorbet, with fruit. Entree prices vary between the chicken breast (\$15.50) and the strip steak au poivre (\$21.50). There is also a simple lunch menu.

## Tramp's

Tramp's claims two houses going back to 1848, and appears to have a deed to prove it. Indeed, while the ground floor is now filled in solid, quarter-round brick walls reveal the ends of typical rear wings from early 19th-century houses, framing a narrow courtyard. Inside and out, the building(s) allude in an incidental and fragmentary way to a past, whether a bordello past as claimed or not. Apart from two second-floor spaces, though, namely the front room of one house and a raised deck between the rear wings, no dining space is really appealing; there needs to be more openness, even where the old windows open only into other rooms, and lightness in the color of the woodwork, and better lighting of the space.

Lunch entrees include salads at \$5.95 and \$6.95, sandwiches at \$4.95 and \$5.95, and

entrees from \$6.95 to \$10.95. Dinner appetizers are \$5.95, beef and poultry entrees with salad \$11.95 to \$14.95, seafood entrees with salad \$11.95 to \$13.95, pasta \$8.95 to \$11.95. We had dinner: Crabcake Maryland (pleasant but bland), Mushroom Al Tramp's (seafood-stuffed, bland), and Artichoke Hearts Imperial (flavorful) to start with; then on to salads with white French with poppyseed (tangy), honey lemon (light, refreshing, sweet), and creamy Italian (not enough garlic) dressings; then to Medley of Italy (a small portion of two kinds of pasta with spicy tomato sauce), ziti with salmon (good interaction of flavors), and the Cajun platter (nice but could be just a little hotter). One of us finally had raspberry torte, actually a pie, a little gooey but a nice flavor.



*Interior of the Allegheny Brewery & Pub; the brew kettles are to the right.*

*The simple but delicate Greek Revival front of Le Pommier.*



*A detail of Tramp's and a view of the exterior (below).*



*The mid-nineteenth century commercial architecture of Froggy's.*

## DIRECTORY

Allegheny Brewery & Pub, 800 Vinial Street, Pittsburgh. 237-9402.

Froggy's, Market Street and First Avenue, Pittsburgh. 471-3764.

Le Pommier, 2104 East Carson Street, Pittsburgh. 431-1901.

Tramp's, 212 Boulevard of the Allies, Pittsburgh. 261-1990.