Landmarks: Our Principles

The last two years have seen a fundamental reconsideration of the Pittsburgh historic-preservation ordinance, a State Supreme Court decision that may overthrow all such ordinances, and quarrels over a sizeable number of historic buildings in and out of Pittsburgh, with property rights and the free exercise of religion among the most prominent issues.

This seems a good time for the Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation to examine and state its own principles and beliefs with regard to preservation advocacy.

Whom Landmarks Serves

People react to their physical environments with varying amounts of appreciation and concern. Landmarks exists for those who feel genuinely at home in a community of Allegheny County, and for whom the appearance of a house, a street, an open area, a public building, a prominent engineering work, any or all, calls up a strong impression of beauty or power, or evokes a fond sense of familiarity. Landmarks is interested in the elements that create the conceptually evasive thing called the character of a community; in its architectural and scenic beauty; and in whatever gives a perspective back into its past history.

The fond sense of familiarity

Standards such as those expressed by the National Register or historic-preservation ordinances tend to distort the real reasons for preservation. Surely we do not preserve a building or district for the academic reasons most commonly given, for the benefit of historians—even architectural historians—and it would be shaming if we did so primarily for tourism. We should be preserving things for us.

History

History is casually assumed to consist of 1) what happened in the past, or 2) the study of what happened. Until recently we at Landmarks were primarily concerned with places built or planned 50 years ago or more, reacting to modern buildings, planning, and development that threatened our area's character and the visible traces of its past. We are coming to a new sense of history, however, as a continuum of past and future. We can imagine the history of a community as a cable, formed of strands of varying length, toughness, and prominence: each individual strand ending somewhere along the way, every section of the cable unique, yet the cable a unity from end to end. A preservationist, using this analogy, is one who tries to assure that the cable is not rotted or hacked at, who tries to assure that the essential quality and culture of his community remain, whatever changes occur.

For this reason, we feel that Landmarks should apply critical methods to proposed new buildings and development, accepting the simple fact of change that comes with them, but using our best judgment and effort to guide the change. We hope to compete in print, as early as possible, on conspicuous upcoming projects, and advise on their design where the historic character of a community or neighborhood is involved.

Continued on page 12
Welcome New Members

The Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation welcomes the following new members, who recently joined Landmarks. We look forward to their participation in our work and special events.

Ms. Stella C. Cafaro
Ms. Colleen C. Derda
Robert M. Duskey
Tom Guerrieri
Ray Haradin
William H. Henneman
Ms. Janey Jones
Ms. Julia MacLeod
Ms. Mary Malli

Miles McGoff
Kevin Murphy
Ms. Mary R. Pitty
Robert Schuler
Ms. Alisa Shapley
Ms. Elizabeth A. Staag
Mr. & Mrs. James M. Stark
Ms. Ohia Vargo

Make Your Gift Count Twice!

You may be able to double the value of your membership or yearend contribution to Landmarks if you or your spouse are employed by one of the many area companies that generously match employee contributions to non-profit institutions. Check with your employer to secure the appropriate forms; then, submit these forms to Landmarks with your contribution. We will complete our section of the forms and forward them according to your company’s instructions.

We thank the following companies which matched employee contributions to Landmarks in 1991:

- American Express
- Chevron Corporation
- Consoliated Natural Gas Co.
- Exxon
- Federal Express
- Gulf & Western Industries
- H.J. Heinz Company
- May Stores
- Melton Bank
- PPG Industries
- Sony Corporation
- Tandy Corporation
- TRW
- United Parcel Service
- USAIR
- Westinghouse Electric

Thank you, Trustees

The Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation thanks the following trustees of our organization who generously contributed to our yearend appeal.

Charles C. Arnberg
Roger D. Beck
Mark Stephen Bibro
Mrs. Kenneth S. Bonzel
Donald C. Burnham
C. Dana Challant
Mrs. James H. Childs
Mrs. Robert Dickey III
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Ms. Robert Wardrop
James L. Winkler
Ms. Alan E. Wohleber
Arthur P. Ziegler, Jr.

Education News: Landmark Survivors

The Landmark Survivors video, a recent project of our education department, is being distributed to area schools. The 40-minute video, intended for high school and adult audiences, highlights the life stories of seven surviving Pittsburgh landmarks: the Allegheny County Courthouse and Jail, Fort Pitt Blockhouse, Smithfield Street Bridge, Clayton, Kennywood Park, Fort Pitt Boulevard, and Station Square. The video can be purchased through Landmarks and is also available on loan to schools through the Film Distribution Library of the Allegheny Intermediate Unit.

In addition, the video has been purchased by historic preservation organizations across the country. The video serves as a model for communities interested in educating their school children about local history and historic preservation efforts. Forty-two schools and historical organizations have purchased copies of Landmark Survivors.

Landmark Survivors was funded through a grant from the Henry C. Frick Educational Commission and created by the Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation, in cooperation with students in the Advanced Production Class at Fox Chapel Area High School.

To preserve the historic architectural fabric of Greater Pittsburgh:
- individual buildings
- neighborhoods
- historic commercial areas
- parks and public sculpture

To preserve major artifacts that contributed to the industrial development of the region:
- the Riverwalk of Industrial Artifacts at Station Square
- the Transportation Museum
- the Steel Heritage Task Force

To preserve major engineering monuments:
- to educate the public about the history, architecture, and culture of the region
- educational programs for students, teachers, and families
- publications
- tours, lectures, videos, and exhibits

To contribute to the new economy of Greater Pittsburgh by developing tourism based on our architectural, engineering, and industrial history, and on the development of our historic riverfronts:
- To continue a well-managed, soundly-financed membership organization to implement these goals on a long-range basis

PHLF News is published six times each year for the members of the Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation. It is supported through membership dues, proceeds from Station Square, and advertising revenue.

CLAYTON
The Henry Clay Frick Estate

Visit The Frick Art Museum, Carriage Museum, Greenhouse and Museum Shop

Tuesday - Saturday 10:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m., Sunday 12:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.

Guided tours of the house are available by reservation.

7200 Penn Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15208 • 412-441-0600
Exploring the Interior Architecture of Pittsburgh's
Downtown Landmarks
Troy Hill Walking Tour

Offered through Pitt's Informal Program, this illustrated lecture and walking tour will feature the most interesting aspects of the archi-
tecture of downtown Pittsburgh: including, Richardson's grand stair at the Allegheny Courthouse; the neo-
Deco lobby of the Koppers Building; and the multi-
dimensioned use of aluminum at Alcoa's headquarters. Call Pitt's Informal Program at 648-2560 to register.

Sat., April 27, 2-8 p.m.

Distinguished Lecture & Awards of Merit
James van Sweden, whose firm is the land-
scape architect for Station Square's new
River Plaza and Riverwalk of Industrial
Artifacts, will address us on his firm's accomplish-
ments nationwide, and its plans for us. Oheen, van Sweden Associates, located in Washington, D.C., is noted for naturalistic gardens, best differentiates
the year around. Landmarks will also recog-
nize individuals and organizations who have
furthered the cause of historic preservation in its annual "Award of Merit" program.
Free to Landmarks members; $2 for non-members.

Sat., April 27, May 3, 9, 16, 6 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Exploring Your Neighborhood
This two-credit teacher-in-service course is offered by Landmarks through the Alle-
gheny Intermediate Unit (AIU). Teachers will learn how to use their school's neighbor-
hood as a "classroom." Teachers will be introduced to research techniques using ar-
chives, architectural styles of the neighborhood, newspapers, city directories, interviews, and the landscape itself to investigate the history of their local community. Call the AIU at 394-5761 to register.

Wed., April 27, 6 to 8 p.m.

Mt. Lebanon Walking Tour
Architectural historian Elaine Werther of Mt. Lebanon and Landmarks'archivist Al
Tansler will guide us through the novel
residential development in Mt. Lebanon where
new houses of contrasting styles bor-
side tree-shaded, well-kept streets. The
group can adjourn to a local restaurant
for a Dutch-treat dinner.
Tour fare: $2 for Landmarks members;
$5 for non-members and guests.

Fri., May 15, Reception: 5:30 to 8 p.m.
Sat., May 16, Conference: 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Religious Properties Conference
This conference, held at Calvary United
Methodist Church and sponsored by the Allegheny Historic Preservation Society, the City of Pittsburgh Historic Rev-

discovery, Preservation Pittsburgh, and Land-
marks, will inform the public of religious-
building preservation problems in the Pitts-
burgh area; initiate a construction history
among preservationists, religious property owners, and public officials; and offer
practical advice regarding religious property
restoration, maintenance, financing, and community involvement.
Reception: $30 Patrons; $20 Benefactor Conference: $25 per person, including lunch.

Sat., May 23, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Antique Auto & Engine Festival
The Carnegie Museum of Natural History's
seventh annual festival features the first public display of a collection of autos in
Pittsburgh, and in this century 100 antique and
vintage automobiles, engines, motorcycles,
bicycles, sleds, and toys. Come learn about the
collection, and learn the secret of riding a bicy-
cle from the 1900s.
Suggested admission donation: $2 for adults; children admitted for free.
RELIGIOUS PROPERTIES: CAN THEY BE SAVED?

There is usually a place of worship within sight in any long-settled community, a punctuation to the street scene, breaking up the uniform accumulations of houses and stores, creating drama on a skyline or on a river plain seen from above. Such consecrated buildings are quite often of no great architectural import. Yet they are extensions of home for the faithful who go there, and places of unbrièfing if not fully-known ritual for their neighbors. And sometimes, of course, they are works of fine architecture, of concern to anyone who cares about the beauty of the community.

Neither the beauty nor the historic character of St. Peter’s Episcopal Church in Oakland was enough to save it two years ago. The parish was tiny, discouraged, and without resources, the Diocese had other and pressing uses for the money that might have given it a longer existence, and developers were making offers for the site. What happened to St. Peter’s could happen to a number of other architecturally valuable religious buildings. Devotion of the sizeable congregations they were built for, religious buildings lack meaning except as works of the architect’s art cast in a religious format. They may also be struggling with physical deterioration and endowments inadequate for maintenance, let alone restoration.

How to treat them? Consolidate congregations in one surviving edifice—the best architecturally, we may hope? Recruit new members? Adapt the building fully or partially to community, commercial, or residential use? Despair and let the buildings go?

Not the last, we hope. And as instruments of such a hope, several organizations have come into being in the last few years. They include, for instance, Partners for Sacred Places in Philadelphia and Inspired Partnerships in Pittsburgh. The Philadelphia Historic Preservation Corporation’s Historic Religious Properties Program publishes inspired: a quarterly of advice and examples, and Historic Boston Incorporated published Religious Properties Preservation: A Boston Casebook, that includes 29 religious buildings whose futures are secured or hopeful.

The last days of St. Peter’s

Preserving religious properties is a critical issue nationwide. On May 16, the Allegheny Historic Preservation Society (AHPS), Historic Review Commission, Preservation Pittsburgh, and Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation are sponsoring a conference to focus local attention on this critical issue. The conference will be held at Calvary United Methodist Church, Allegheny and Beech Avenues, in Allegheny West on the North Side. There will also be an opening reception on Friday evening, May 15, in the handiously-restored Victorian home of Ben and Joedda Sampson at 939 Western Avenue.

The purpose of the conference is to inform the public of religious-building preservation problems in the Pittsburgh area; initiate a constructive dialogue among preservationists, religious property building owners, clergy, and public officials; and offer practical advice regarding religious property restoration, maintenance, financing, and community service.

Adam Schneider from Partners for Sacred Places in Philadelphia and a local architect will address the issues of maintaining a religious property, implementing a restoration/main-tenance program; budgeting; and becoming an integral part of the community.

Knowledgeable and experienced speakers will address such questions as: How do you raise restoration or preservation money from non-members of a congregation, or from foundation and governmental sources that ordinarily do not give to religious groups? Is it feasible to raise a maintenance, as opposed to a restoration fund? Can a major restoration/preservation fund be created that would be available for any worthy religious building? How can we devise effective adaptive uses for properties no longer in religious use?

To conclude the conference, Susan Brandt, executive director of the AHPS, will moderate a discussion with representatives from Pittsburgh-area churches and synagogues who have had experience in, or are in the midst of, preserving religious properties.

On a Friday evening and Saturday conference are open to anyone interested in preserving religious properties. Admissions to the reception are $30 (patron) and $50 (benefactor). The Saturday registration fee is $15 per person and includes lunch. For further information, call Mary Lu Denny at Landmarks (412) 471-3808.

CALVARY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

The host church for the religious properties conference is Calvary United Methodist on Pittsburgh’s North Side. It is a religious building of historical and architectural significance, facing a host of restoration and preservation problems today. It is a literally outstanding work of architecture, with a great dark spire visible for miles, and its French Gothic design is handsomely and elaborately ornamented. The interior of the church as first decorated was a national treasure, one of the few interiors of its kind. The Diocese, now, of course, it is a time of exuberant display of wealth and success. A young architect from Sewickley, Thomas B. Wolfe (1860-1933), was sent to Europe to study the great cathedrals. He returned to design Calvary United Methodist Church as a Gothic church with mix-matched spires and leering gargoyles. The young scion of the house of Tiffany on Fifth Avenue had also studied abroad. It was his expressed goal to bring the beauty of the old art forms to the people using the new techniques of the industrial age.

Tiffany made the glass for his window in his own factory, constantly experimenting for new effects. The drapery folds of the clothing of the figures in the Calvary windows are made with draped glass which was then cut to fit the designs. The shadow lines are in the glass itself. Chunks of glass are used to simulate jewels, and the roses at the feet of the women in the window glow with a rare radiance.

It is likely that a young associate designed the figures of the windows because they are especially well drawn and Tiffany himself was not adept at drawing the human form. The Roman soldiers are without brawn, not overly sentimental as too often was the case in this period.

The large window at the back of the choir loft is the most spectacular, and should be viewed as the afternoon sun shines through. The crowns of the elders gleam like 24-carat gold and the whole window shimmers with a special golden light. It is almost an ethereal experience, and its title the “Apocalypse” is made very real.

The original interior must have been breathtaking. The glorious woodwork, brass, and glass shone against walls painted green with gold medallions and elaborately ornamented. The interiors planned as an integrated whole were made with draped glass which was then cut to fit the designs. The shadow lines are in the glass itself. Chunks of glass are used to simulate jewels, and the roses at the feet of the women in the window glow with a rare radiance.

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The original interior must have been breathtaking. The glorious woodwork, brass, and glass shone against walls painted green with gold medallions and red stone colonnettes. An enormous brass chandelier hung from the ceiling just before the pulpit and the cushioned pews of pale lilac and green covered the benches. A photograph gives a glimpse of the sanctuary as it once appeared.
The elaborate Gothic front of Calvary United Methodist Church

The interior of Calvary when new

Tragically, the worst damage to the church was in 1941, at the height of its affluence when the membership totaled over 700. Tiffany’s brilliant but subtle color scheme was dealt a heavy blow by the congregation during World War II when, in a burst of patriotic enthusiasm parishioners literally knocked out the middle tier of amber colored windows and replaced them with garish red, white, and blue glass windows. The glorious chandelier was melted down for the war effort. Furthermore, age began to catch up with the church, even as its congregation diminished to a fraction of its former size. The sandstone carving began to crumble, the fancy roof arrangement began to leak, and the large Tiffany windows, glass held in thin cames of lead, to buckle.

Efforts to save the church, a city landmark as much as the oversized home of a small congregation, have led to the formation of the Allegheny Historic Preservation Society. Susan Brandt, a trustee of Landmarks, is leading the campaign to restore the church and secure its future, together with two prestigious Methodist ministers, Reverend Robert Richards and Dr. David Harris. There is a sense of plan and purpose to the action at Calvary. The ministry publishes a charming newsletter, and Susan Brandt has conducted a feasibility study to plan new uses for the community treasure. The chapel behind the sanctuary is equally beautiful and would lend itself well to concerts and receptions. It is Susan’s hope that the church can be restored to its original splendor.

CATHOLIC CHURCH REORGANIZATION

Late in the fall of 1991, the Pittsburgh Catholic Diocese announced that, because of problems affecting some parishes, the number of parishes and “worship sites” would be reduced in some long-settled communities, probably with some closings. Among the churches that could be affected are:

Holy Rosary, Homewood. This is a church of 1928 by Ralph Adams Cram, a large and elegant example of his love affair with Spanish Gothic though other national elements appear as well. The limestone exterior has very fancy carving in places while the interior is severe and simple, dependent on good proportion and colorful stained glass.

St. Anthony, Homestead. Here is a little gem of a church by Lamont Button, built in the early 1940s and just a little too new for Landmarks’ official cognizance in the past. It looks a little suburban for Homestead, but it shows how effective a simple design can be if proportions and materials are just right.

St. Mary Magdalen, Homestead. The refining hand of Lamont Button passed over this Fred Sauer work after a disastrous fire in the 1930s. The front doorways of sandstone are Sauery’s, but almost all the other detailing, and the whole interior, are by Button. The red brick and terra cotta of the 1930s are gorgeous in color and vivid in contrast with the original yellow brick.

St. Adalbert, South Side. This is your basic big Romanesque church of 1889, more robust than many and dramatically sited, looming over Mary Street above two intervening blocks of house tops.

St. Casimir, South Side. The gravel church at 21st and Sarah Streets is one of the most conspicuous of the South Side.

St. Michael Archangel, South Side. The 1861 church built for the Passionist Fathers was designed by Charles Bartberger. It stands halfway up the Slopes on Pius Street, not only a handsome work in the Mid-Victorian, Pre-Richardsonian, Romanesque but the center of a remarkably picturesque group of Victorian religious buildings.

St. Joseph, South Side. John T. Conn’s work of 1916 is also halfway up the Slopes, about a half-mile east of St. Michael. It is a slightly strange but beautiful church, with a massive concrete Romanesque porch fronting a tower and aisles of red brick with cream-colored surface patterning that remove almost any feeling of mass. Above all this is a Baroque-looking tower roof of fine shape and proportion.

Nothing will be decided about these and the churches of some 60 other parishes of the Diocese for some months, but there is a chance that some notable works of local architecture will be left without a purpose.
Happiness is not subject to contrivance, yet certain places seem to anticipate that the experiences within them will be extraordinarily superior ones, that life as lived there will have an integrity and certainty not found elsewhere. Elsewhere the laughter is nervous, the grace under pressure is threadbare, life is an accumulation of fragments, meaningless. But these few good places invite your best thoughts. In the home you furnished with inspired improvisation you can be yourself, and there is a special resonance between you and all that you see. In some public places, a concert, a speech, a ceremony, or the mere fact of being there can create a feeling of community with others; the place and the occasion have a classic quality, harmonious and solid, the basis of good, shared memories.

Right: "Lynnhurst" stood at the northern end of Beechwood Boulevard until about 1940. Harry Thaus's boyhood home was a gloomy-looking edifice as originally constructed, but in the time of the builder Emil Winter, remodeling and landscaping gave it a more gracious and homelike tone. Such contrived paradises looked as if they might last forever, but a few decades saw the whole spate of existence for most of them.

The South Hills Country Club, in Whitehall, might almost be a home for one of its members, with only the tall doors of a public room to imply anything else. A John O'Hara might find discontent and embroiled social woe in such a place, but the architect and the building committee anticipated quiet, happy days and evenings, the matter of nostalgia to come.
Good Places

The new dining room of McCreery's department store appeared this way around 1900. Here was paradise at a price, a place to relax and be pampered, and was enjoyed as such for three decades. Then someone thought to glamorize the room with parrots that happened to be carrying psittacosis. The resulting deaths closed the dining room and the store.

This lively scene at the entrance to the Highland Park Zoo dates from around 1900. If one can ignore the feelings of the animals and shrug off the placing of the Zoo to generate streetcar traffic, one sees this as a happy place, a place for family outings, democratic and widely accessible.

The Oakland Civic Center can be seen in two different ways. Public access varies from building to building, and only a certain few can enjoy some of the stately interiors and the activities they accommodate. On the other hand, the exteriors of the buildings are there for public enjoyment, whether seen individually or as harmonious groupings around three great lawns. Anyone can take pleasure in the varied yet unified ensemble, and pride in the community that has created such a display.

THE CORNERSTONE
Book & Gift Shop of the Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation
Members of Landmarks receive a 10% discount

We feature books from
★ The Preservation Press
★ The National Trust for Historic Preservation

The Shops at Station Square • On The Balcony • 412-765-1042
Preservation Scene

PCRG, Summary, and Its Thanks to Landmarks

The Pittsburgh Community Reinvestment Group (PCRG) has just published Summary of Neighborhood Lending in the City of Pitts-
burgh, an analysis of lending by Integra, Deller, Meller, and Pittsburgh National Banks in 1990. The text begins with general background and history of the PCRG, then cites the methods used in the analyses that fol-
low, which are made by lending institution, geographical area, race and income, and amounts lent and numbers of loans made per area. Appendices give names, addresses, and telephone numbers for PCRG member groups, and the PCRG lending-
institution memberships of a number of community-development advisory com-
mittees. Persons interested in the Summary should ask their neighborhood organizations.

In December, the 26 neighborhood organi-
zations of the Pittsburgh Community Re-
investment Group wrote Landmarks a letter of thanks for administering the Integra Bank/PCRG/Landmarks loan program, which has leveraged over $425 million in neighborhood reinvestment. The Summary of Neighborhood Lending, the letter acknowledges, also was funded by Land-
marks. The letter was signed by representa-
tives of:

- Allegheny West Civic Council
- Bloomingdale Garfield Corporation
- Breiningers, Inc.
- Calibre Place Citizens Council
- Center for Neighborhood Information
- Charles Street Area Council
- East Allegheny Community Council
- East Liberty Development, Inc.
- Eastside Alliance
- Fireview Citizens Council
- Friendship Development Associates
- Garfield Jubilee Association
- Hill Community Development Corporation
- Hill District Ministries, Inc.
- Homewood-Brushton Rehabilitation and Development Corporation
- Lawrenceville Citizens Council
- Lincoln-Leimont-Larimer-Belmar
- Citizens Revitalization and Development Corporation
- Manchester Citizens Corporation
- Northside Development Corporation
- Northside Conference
- Northside Tenants Reorganization
- Observatory Hill
- Oakland Planning and Development Corporation
- South Side Local Development Company
- Spring Garden Neighborhood Council
- Troy Hill Citizens, Inc.

L.A. Preservationist Impressed

Joe Ryan of West Adams Heritage Association in Los Angeles toured Pittsburgh in November 1991. Sandi Stotz, director of PCRG's Mar-
kets' Preservation Fund, Mr. Ryan was in Pittsburgh after hearing Stanley Lowe's lecture at the Joaquin Miller High School. Joe Ryan wrote Landmarks a letter of thanks for the tour and for the impact of Landmarks' Preservation Fund and the Pittsburgh Community Reinvestment Group. After his Pittsburgh tour, Mr. Ryan wrote the follow-
ing letter as a colleague in Miami:

"We met at the National Trust Conference in San Francisco last year and you gave your seminar "Real Estate is the Name of the Game." We both followed speaker Stanley Lowe into the hall to ask questions. As I saw you for the first time, he said that he couldn't really explain the whole Pittsburgh process to us that we should come out to Pittsburgh to see the process in operation.

Well, I took him up on his offer and have just returned from four days with Stanley, and it is absolutely true — you can't believe what is going on in Pittsburgh!

I sat in on four meetings with four differ-
ent bank presidents and appropriate vice-
 presidents, each committing hundreds of mil-
dions of dollars to Pittsburgh neighborhoods targeted by Stanley and his coalition of neighborhood groups. The level of expertise and business acumen that now, even these are not safe from political whim

"Looking at Our Resources."

"Looking at Our Historic Properties." See pages 20 and 21. The book can be ordered for $5.00 shipping included, from: Architecture Archives, University Libraries, Carnegie-Mellon University, Frew Street, Pittsburgh, PA, 15213-3890; or from Landmarks’ Cornerstone shop in the Shosh at Station Square (412) 765-1042. Historic Trail

It started as a dream of North Side State Representative Tom Murphy: to connect the miles of Pittsburgh’s riverfront property into a continuous nature/heritage trail. Access to the river, formerly commandeered by indus-
trial plants and railways for over 100 years, is now becoming transformed into something just a dream. The Three Rivers Historic Trail, a proposed 11.5-mile walking/running/ bicycle trail, will become a reality within the next four years.

Friends of the Riverfront, a grass-roots organization formed out of Tom Murphy’s grand design in the summer of 1990, includes the Serra Club, The Carnegie, the University of Pittsburgh, Three Rivers Rowing Asso-
ciation, Pittsburgh Wheelmen cycling club, the Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation, and other community groups along the riverfront. Its goal is to work with various community groups, private land-
owners, and large corporations, as well as with city and county governments, to make the Heritage Trail’s possible. The proposed trail will run from the East End Bridge, through Station Square, to The Steel Industry Heritage Task Force, of which Landmarks was a co-founder in 1983, continues its work. Recent meetings have emphasized "visions," from poverty mat-
ters for action, and three levels of action. The visions are:

- Vision 1. America’s Second Industrial Revolu-
tion Heritage Area — “Looking at Our His-
toric Properties.”
- Vision 2. Three Rivers Steel Heritage Recre-
at ion Areas — “Looking at Our Resources.”
- Vision 3. Regional Heritage Economic Devel-
opment Program — “Looking Forward.”

- Act immediately to select, acquire, and stabi-

- Authorize an entity for oversight of the Her-

- Work toward implementing a “Living Steel” tour at the Edgar Thompson Works.

- Three levels of action will be established.

- Imperial Point to be destined as Pittsburgh’s rapid-transit station.

- Three Rivers Historic Trail, to the interpretive centers and other historic sites.

- Fully restored and seating 30, it will be an or-
down activities, with some community members’

- Three Rivers Historic Trail, from Serra Club to the City of Pittsburgh. An

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down activities, with some community members’
Two Houses Lost

At the end of November, 1991, sudden threats to two historic area houses were realized, despite neighborhood anger, suspensions, and hastily-mounted attempts at rescue.

The Jones house, before and during demolition

In Edgeworth, the B.F. Jones III house had stood at 203 Creek Drive since 1929. It was a work of Branch Smith, a fashionable architect of large houses, designed in a Georgian style whose two-story portico and crowning balustrade gave it something of a Southern feeling.

The Snyder-Backoace house, Mt. Lebanon

The Snyder-Backoace house in Mount Lebanon was much smaller, built around 1835 and added to and remodeled since. A developer had bought the original site of the house, but the Municipality imposed the condition that the house be moved to another lot owned by the developer. The move created structural damage, and the house stood in a precarious condition when a demolition permit was issued November 25.

Homestead Centennial Labor Committee

1992 will be as important year for labor industry in the Pittsburgh area. The Homestead 1992 Centennial Labor Committee is planning a three-day symposium in July, 1992 to commemorate the Homestead Strike of 1892. The 1993 Committee, formed in the spring of 1989, is a collaborative effort by the United Steelworkers of America, the Steel Industry Heritage Task Force, Steel Valley Authority, and many others organized out of the need to honor and remember the triumphs and tribulations of the working women and men in the Pittsburgh area.

The Symposium, “Reflections and Lessons,” is planned for July 5, 6, and 7. It will educate the public about past and present problems people have learned from the 1892 strike, and the whole experience of mill work. The symposium will include addresses by labor historians Dr. David Montgomery of Yale University; Professor David Beley of the University of Southern California; USWA President Lynn Williams; John Hoerr, author of And the Wolf Gaily Crouched; and many other historians and commentators from local universities and organizations around the nation.

For more information, call Russell Gibbons, secretary-treasurer and conference coordinator, at the Philip Murray Institute of Labor Studies, (412) 237-4554.

City Theatre

The former Birmingham Street Methodist Church, now the City Theatre, on November, 1991, to praise from the press for a good adaptive use of a historic building. L.P. Ferrille Associates have been praised for their tasteful juxtaposition of new and old, and for that matter the very location of the building, with regard to street safety, parking, and proximity of restaurants is considered by the City Mayor to be that of the old Oakland in Oakland.

Modern Classics

The closing of Leo Pfitz Cafe, at Walnut and Biddle Streets, at the end of November was a sad occasion, among other things, because of its charming ambiance. There was very little about the place that could be called decorative, yet its simplicity had a charm of its own, a solidity and taste that required no embellishment. It was perfectly refreshing to walk across the floor, not a carpet for once, with a nice firm feel to it. The openness to the street and the corner, modified by the tin hoods, enclosed you, defined your space, yet gave you a big outlook on the usually-quiet world just beyond.

We remember the Cafe Stephen B of some time ago, at Ellsworth and Biddle Streets. All the qualities mentioned above were present here as well — a simple, discriminating Modernism of the sort that Henry-Russell Hitchcock described as austere, not puritanical — though glass block walls facing southward made for a sunlit interior which disorientated customers so that they seemed to swim like exotic fish. Both restaurants affirmed, not so much that less is more, but that a little that is exactly right may be enough.

At City Cafe’s closing time, one report had it that a new restaurant was moving in, though the help was unaware of any such thing. There was some chance, at least, that this very handsome interior would not be lost.

Count Your Blessings

Research for a book on Henry Hornboostel took Walter Kidney in the fall of 1991 to Wilmingotn, Delaware. The Pennsylvania out of there, the Wilmington city hall and New Castle County courthouse, in the works of John Dockery Thompson, Jr., and Palmer. Hornboostel & Jones, the latter office collaborated on, and was probably the real designer of, our City-County Building.

The exterior is a massive work in granite with a Corinthian colonnade between pedimented twin entrances, with a few decorative Colonial Revival in Hindelopian veneer.

The inside is a shock. Two stair rotundas contain plaster-finished versions of the Greek-vino stair tile found at Baker Hall, C.U.I., though with ornamental cast-iron balusters: above the stair wells are narrow oval skylights of lead glass; and at the stairheads are chromosomes of carved stone. Otherwise, every trace of the 1914 interiors has been eliminated, as if in a spirit of hatred, for dead white, absolutely undisturbed and undecorated surfaces with narrow black steel frames for the openings. Any decorative painting in the stair rotundas has been obliterated. The interior of this magnificent building is nothing but a cheap remodeling job of perhaps 1970.

Furthermore, nightmarish too, there is one accessible entrance, controlled by a guard post and metal detectors, and the halls are full of police. New Castle County is prepared for terrorism, if not outright revolution. The central city, generally, apart from the Classical square on which the Public Building faces, is the sort of urban renewal that has stimulated the founding of organizations such as Landmarks.

Two views down Wylie Avenue at the corner of Crawford Street in the Hill District; top, c. 1945; above, c. 1960. This once-liver Hill District was cleared in the late 1950s, for a prestigious development that was never completed, although the great domed Civic Aron (shown here under construction) was in fact constructed.

African-American Historic Site Survey

American Blacks have held claim to a rich and diverse history in the Pitts- burgh area for over 200 years. Yet Afro-American history is also one of the most neglected, forgotten, and even fading histories of this region. Recently, several publications and films have focused on Blacks in Pittsburgh, with the 1990 PBS television special Wylie Avenue Days and numerous articles, shows, and books in print on Black Pittsburgh.

But the story of the African-American experience in Western Pennsylvania is far from complete. The Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation is assisting Landmarks Design Associates, Architects (LDA) in a county-wide survey to identify sites important to the development and function of the African-American community. This survey project grew out of an LDA historical/archaeological review of the Crawford-Roberts project in the Lower Hill District for the Urban Redevelopment Authority of Pittsburgh in the Spring of 1990.

Eliza Brown, director of marketing and research at LDA, is the director of the survey project. She is assisted by Daniel Holland of Landmarks. Brown has assembled an advisory committee to guide the scope and implementation of the survey. Advisory committee members include Pitt history professor Laurence Glassow; archi- zologist Ronald Carlisle; Frank Bolden, a Black Pittsburgh resident and former city editor of the old Pittsburgh Courier; and Walter Worthington, also a Hill District native.

Currently, efforts are underway to estab- lish a historical context for the survey and organize community input and participation in the identification of hard-to-find locations. The historical background has been subdivided into nine themes to provide a context for the site survey: Patterns of Settle- ment and Housing; the Church as a Focus of Community Organization; Power, and Pride; Earning a Living; A History of Work; Slavery, Abolitionism, and the Underground Railroad; the Rise of Blacks as a Political Power; Educational and Social Activities; Achievements, Sports, Recreation, and Leisure Activities; Cultural Achievements; Businesses; and Women. Each theme will help describe the various aspects of Black history in Allegheny County from 1760 to 1960.

Since much Afro-American history is oral and unrecorded, Brown is conducting inter- views in Black communities to draw upon the memories of neighborhood residents in areas such as the Hill District, Homewood- Braddock, Manchester, Homestead, Rankin, and Carnegie. "We can’t see things of im- portance the way the community saw them," Brown points out. Four or five residents will be selected in each neighborhood to help identify and justify significant sites in their respective communities not discerned through past archival research. Each inter- view will be recorded on video and audio tape, and will be catalogued as a special oral history collection at the Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation.

Much Black history is fading fast. Many of the residents are old, and their vivid and valuable memories need to be captured as soon as possible. With large-scale develop- ment schemes continuing, such as the Civic Arena construction and the Crawford- Roberts project, much of the Hill’s history continues to disappear. Walter Worthington explains that 43 different nationalities used to be naturally integrated in the Lower Hill, an area now disrupted by demolish-and- rebuild projects. Most importantly, many Blacks were displaced unceremoniously from their neighborhood, and many Black historic landmarks were lost.

When completed in July, 1992, the African-American Historic Site Survey of Allegheny County will form a basis for fur- ther in-depth studies, preservation programs, historic marker programs, and continued documentation of a rich Afro-American his- tory in the Pittsburgh area. We will continue to feature this survey project in subsequent issues of PHLF News.
Pittsburgh: An Introduction
Walter C. Kidney

This historical portrait was written for a tabloid distributed by the International Festival Association to visitors. We felt that it might be of interest to the Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation membership as well.

Up to a point, any city can claim that its geography creates part of its destiny, but this is particularly true of this city where the hills contain coal. Because of the rivers, this area was worth a fight between the French and the British, when the British won the battle in 1758, the village of Pittsburgh was named and born. Soon, the coal came to fight, and the village grew. With the population explosion in the 1790s and the purchase of the Louisiana Territory in 1803 from Napoleon, the rivers became the route to a new life for tens of thousands of settlers.

Because of the coal, Pittsburgh was ready to supply these emigrants with window glass, bottles, brassware, and ironware as well as build the flatboats — and after 1811, steamboats — in which they traveled westward and southwest.

Until some 40 years ago, the history of Pittsburgh was more technological than cultural or civic. Steam, smoke, and fire dominated the local consciousness, or rather it was dominated by the industries these things so vividly represented. Nature and industry entered into that long battle that saw, at first, hillsides stripped of vegetation by furnace fumes, and frequently, the furnaces themselves invaded by weeds and even trees. Man settled close to work if he had to, away from the industrial river plains if he could.

In time, there seemed to evolve two distinct Pittsburghs. One was that known to the world, that of the river plains: steam engines before 1810, rolling mills by 1830, Pittsburgh-based, coke-fired blast furnaces from 1859, high-tonnage steel from 1873, petroleum from 1859; the various Westinghouse enterprises from 1870; aluminum from 1888; commercial radio from 1920. Industry taking hold, often originating here, finding new markets, breeding lesser industries to serve it, enriching some and progressive structures still in use.

Regardless of the good neighborhoods, the mansions, the nice middle-class houses, the parks and institutions, there were grave misgivings about the Pittsburgh way of life. A survey undertaken in 1907 found Pittsburghers irrationally committed to hard work, their housing on the average wretched, their governmental and social institutions in chaos. A biting but plausible magazine article of 1930 suggested that even the rich knew the art of being miserable; the meanest of outlook. There was even less indulgence among these austere masters for the working class; the workplace and working conditions were to be under absolute management control, and this had been so in the steel industry since the Homestead Strike, up the river from Pittsburgh, in 1892.

At the same time, there was a tradition of philanthropy whose scale could be incredibly massive. Andrew Carnegie’s benefactions are legend. The Carnegie Institute — main library, concert hall, art museum, and natural history museum — had four acres under roof by 1907. Carnegie Libraries in Brad- dock, Munhall, and Duquesne served his workers as libraries, concert halls, athletic clubs, and public baths. There were other Carnegie Libraries, purely libraries, in and near Pittsburgh, and eventually a total of 2,811 in various parts of the world. The libraries are merely the best-known of his gifts. His partner Henry Phipps donated a very large conservatory to Schenley Park, itself a 300-acre donation of 1889 by the expatriate landowner Mary Schenley. The second generation of bankers in the Mellon family have been spectacular givers. Richard Beatty Mellon and his wife donated the cathedral-sized East Carnegie’s benefactions are legend. The Carnegie Institute — main library, concert hall, art museum, and natural history museum — had four acres under roof by 1907. Carnegie Libraries in Brad- dock, Munhall, and Duquesne served his workers as libraries, concert halls, athletic clubs, and public baths. There were other Carnegie Libraries, purely libraries, in and near Pittsburgh, and eventually a total of 2,811 in various parts of the world. The libraries are merely the best-known of his gifts. His partner Henry Phipps donated a very large conservatory to Schenley Park, itself a 300-acre donation of 1889 by the expatriate landowner Mary Schenley. The second generation of bankers in the Mellon family have been spectacular givers. Richard Beatty Mellon and his wife donated the cathedral-sized East Liberty Presbyterian Church, at a cost of three million of the dollars of 60

places that had their own coal mines, made their own coke, heated air stoves and boilers with gases from the coke ovens and blast furnaces, charged the furnaces with ore from their own mines carried in their own ships, made their own tools, and were in brief little empires.

That other Pittsburgh, which evolved as industry did, was more escapist and shared ideals common to other American cities. Between the rivers, east of the original city downtown, the land rose to form a great hill, and beyond this hill it was possible to escape the sight, the noise, and some of the fumes of industry. Flight to such places, some 200 feet or 70 meters above river level and well inland, began around 1840, and the beginning of train service out this way in 1831 encouraged the development of true suburbs and exurbs. A contemporary development of this same nature was taking place in the Ohio Valley, west of the city, and by 1900 a town mansion, packed close to its neighbors, was obsolete; even if still within the city limits, a house of any consequence had its big yard, its flowers and trees, as a setting for its often picturesque architecture. Pittsburgh architecture itself, by this time, had changed from a harsh and uncreative affair of sandstone, red brick, and wooden siding into something lighter in hue, more sophisticated in the choice and handling of materials, more coordinated and well-proportioned in composition. Early in this century, again, the Pittsburgh area was the scene of a remarkable bridge-building campaign that created handsome and progressive structures still in use.

The Strip, on a "clear" summer afternoon in 1906.
years ago. The Mellon Institute of this same period cost $10 million, thanks in part to showy nonfunctional colonnades with 62-foot monolithic columns of limestone. Andrew W. Mellon gave the University of Pittsburgh 14 acres of very desirable land for its campus, and paid for the National Gallery in Washington, $16 million, out of his own pocket. Less demonstratively, the Buhl Foundation, funded by department-store profits, built Chatham Village, a model neighborhood—which still remains a desirable residence for many—"to demonstrate the profitability of high-quality moderate-income housing." The Foundation also financed the first architectural survey of Western Pennsylvania.

Around 1940, the city had one of its occasional campaigns to do something about its state of being, weary and depressed in many parts. This was promptly delayed by war, but the late 1940s found the abatement of industrial and domestic smoke in force, river pollution getting under control, and Pittsburgh businessmen traveling in search of capital. It is interesting to note that a conscious resolution of social differences allowed this. While many people are to be credited, it might have been impossible without the collaboration of the Democrat Catholic David Leo Lawrence, the mayor who was born a poor boy, and the Republican Presbyterian Richard King Mellon, a banker born extremely rich. The visible Pittsburgh Renaissance began in 1950 with neighborhood demolitions and reconstructions that were to continue for some 20 years.

The city, in the Renaissance years, experienced a certain doubt as to how it wanted to enter the future. The official line, trumpeted in the newspapers, envisioned office buildings and housing projects sweeping in scale and uncompromisingly modern in design, with industry very much downplayed. In the city, however, actual industrial construction was in fact taking place. Furthermore, conservative persons were taking alarm at the destruction of familiar buildings and street scenes, fearing rootlessness, homelessness, loss of positive beauty in the massive replacement of such things. In the end, the Renaissance did not carry out all its intentions, but it did in fact impress the world as a spectacle of economic recovery.

In the last 15 years, Pittsburgh industry has declined dramatically, and the destruction of industrial plants that looked as if they would last forever left the region rather stunned. The region still has some heavy industry, but will probably never be heavily industrial again. We have become, in general, a more business-oriented, more hedonistic, and perhaps more cosmopolitan city. And certainly we have become one that increasing numbers of people want to come and visit. Today you see a place much cleaner than in the past, with tall buildings that reveal a variety of recent architectural manerisms and more in the way of good restaurants and similar amenities than ever before. And yet Pittsburgh retains an old casual, homely, picturesque identity, a sort of amiable personality beneath the attempted cosmopolitanism. The hills that rise 400 or 500 feet above the river plains are heavily wooded in many parts or scattered with little wooden houses on narrow and sometimes uncannily-sloping streets. Pittsburgh architecture, building by building, tends to be drab, yet the terrain is such that this is often a wildly romantic city, a place of skylines, plunge views, and long perspectives. It is a city full of trees, hedges, flowers, lawns kept more or less neat. It has a population density of about 10 people per acre, a little over a fifteenth the average density of New York City in all its boroughs.

Against the official claims, the promotional material, the guidebook matter, then, must be set the attractiveness in many places of an older city. Neighborhoods where not much had reason to change since 1900 or 1920; neighborhoods created by the railroad, older and grander neighborhoods created by the railroad, workers’ neighborhoods older still, such as the South Side with its irregular and beautifully-sequenced streets.

The city, then, is apt to reveal curious corners, splendid architectural episodes — and sinister, dead flat places where industry used to be. In these hot, it can be as if the wrath foretold by a prophet had left silence and nothingness. What the industry created, architecture and neighborhoods, remains, and it is our concern to carry the best of it into our future.

The Cleared Lower Hill, with the Civic Arena, a showcase Center for the Arts, planned for an adjacent site, was quietly abandoned around 1970.

The Carnegie Library at Duquesne, but more than a library. You could attend concerts, play billiards, or take a bath here.
What to Preserve — Specifically

Landmarks is less disposed than some preservation groups toward freezing structures and places in time. We wish to be sure that whatever is so rigorously preserved will have significance for the community in the future, and will justify whatever sacrifices it requires. Among such may be:

- Pure monuments, built to commemorate people or events, and to be works of art.
- Working monuments, such as the Soldiers’ and Sailors’ Memorial or any of a number of churches, built as publicly-significant gathering places and as works of public art.
- Works of architecture whose artistry of composition frees them to some extent from ordinary utilitarian considerations.
- Open areas of visual beauty or power.
- Neighborhoods: not perhaps to be preserved in every detail, but to be subjected to controls, more or less stringent, to maintain visual consistency.
- Structures that, regardless of matters of visual artistry, have strong associations for a community and are integral to its perception of itself.
- Buildings and other places that recall the past of a community so vividly as to be useful for museum purposes.

Why So Much Preservation?

Landmarks wishes to be known as a fair and rational organization, an authoritative voice on matters affecting historic preservation: trusted as devoted to preserving what is essential, considerate of property rights, imaginative in its general vision and in seeking solutions to individual problems.

Adaptive Use: school into apartments.

Property Rights

Landmarks believes that the people of a neighborhood have a legitimate interest in the beauty and character of the neighborhood, and that the citizens of a community have a legitimate interest in the beauty and character of places visible to or often visited by people from all over the community. Some public control over demolition and construction to promote amenity and culture in such places seems fair. On the other hand, some preservationists act as if the world owes them whatever they want to keep, the mere property owner being an unpaid curator who has to be kept up to mark. Landmarks has no such attitude, and will seek increasingly to bring preservationists and owners into a relationship of trust and respect that makes possible a joint search that may result in a type of preservation satisfactory to both.

Compulsory landmarking, as an extension of legal zoning, by communities may prove to be constitutional in some or every form. Yet preservationists, Landmarks believes, should use any legal powers with a light touch. Otherwise property owners, especially institutions and businesses, may find it prudent to abandon pride and settle the landmarking question in advance by putting up new edifices of guaranteed architectural worthlessness. “Preserving the past” would bring with it the penalty of defacing the future.

Adaptation work: school into apartments.