

PH LF NEWS

Published for the members of the Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation

No. 125

September 1992

- Historic Thornburg:
Variations on a Theme
- The Preservation Fund Since 1985
- Remodelings and Purity:
A Few Passing Remarks
- Pittsburgh Architecture:
Associative Architecture

To Be Closed



At the end of July a fear was confirmed: the Church of St. Michael the Archangel on the South Side Slopes is to be closed by late October, and a time may be coming when its gauntly beautiful tower will cease to exist. A new parish, Prince of Peace, will determine whether the church and its rectory will

be sold, but sale is surely the expedient course — when and how would it be used again? — and the roof structure is said to be weakening.

But this is a building — a group of six buildings, in fact — that seems to call for extraordinary efforts of preservation. Its hillside location, presenting difficulties of access and parking, may perhaps have been one reason for the closing, but it has also given the St. Michael's group a dramatic and conspicuous setting. People think of Europe when they see St. Michael's up on the hillside among the little houses, see the copper spire against the trees. The church, dedicated in 1861, may be the oldest functioning church in the city. Its spare mid-Victorian Romanesque architecture is simple, handsome, and lucid. Its tower is a true landmark, a familiar and prominent presence on the South Side over seven generations. And the church and its buildings, along narrow Pius Street, is one of the most visually effective architectural groups in Pittsburgh.

According to a news release of July 27 from the Diocese of Pittsburgh, 11 new parishes are to be established as part of "first phase reorganization/revitalization," these parishes typically having a number of "worship sites," i.e., church buildings. One result is that, of 63 parishes that submitted reorganization plans, 14 will have their churches closed. On the South Side, St. Michael the Archangel, St. Casimir, and St. John the Evangelist are to close, leaving four "worship sites" in the new Prince of Peace parish.

Another church of great architectural merit, St. Mary Magdalene in Homestead, has been under threat but may stay open if the parish can pay certain debts. This church, built in the 1890s to a Frederick Sauer design and remodeled, much for the better, by Lamont Button in the 1930s, would also be a sad loss. Hopefully the parish can meet the conditions under which it can remain.

Of the 14 churches to be closed by the Diocese, only two have Historic Landmark plaques while several bearing our plaques have been considered and spared.



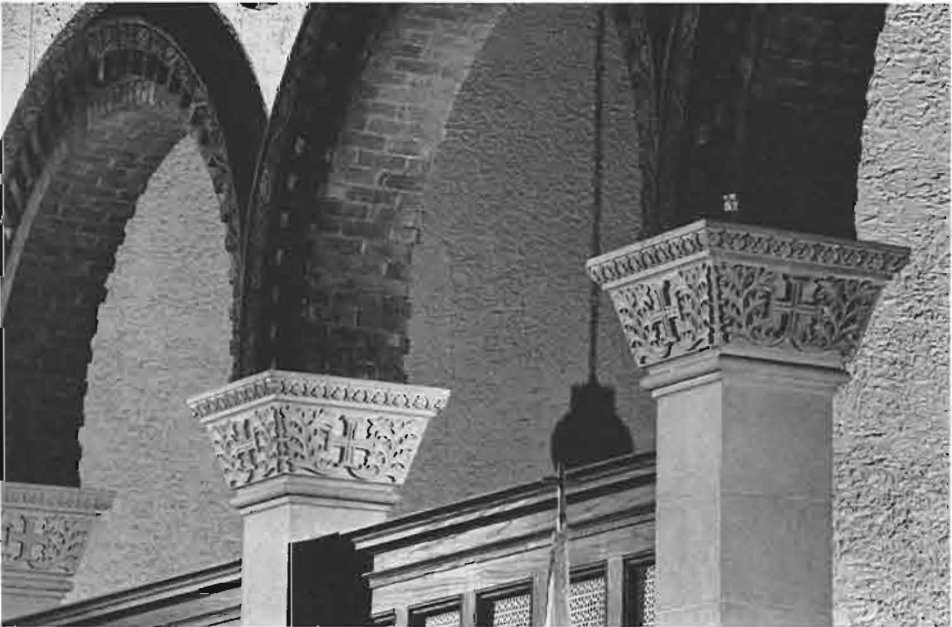
Left: St. Michael's stands a hundred feet above the South Side Flats. Below: the church and its rectory.



Above: the interior of St. Michael's. Right: the former Sisters of St. Francis convent and St. Michael's Orphan Asylum at St. Michael's.



St. Michael's is one of those to be closed; the other is Saints Peter and Paul in East Liberty, a tall stone building of 1890 constructed originally for a German congregation. Its twin spires are landmarks, too, in their part of East Liberty. It seemed at first that the parish would survive, but in fact it is to terminate at the end of October.



A Button doorway (above) and nave arcade (left) at St. Mary Magdalene. Right: Saints Peter and Paul, whose closing many will regret.



PHLF NEWS

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 attendance at our special events.

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Gifts

The Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation wishes to thank Anthony T. Rosenberger for 17 photographs from the 1930s of the A.M. Byers & Co. plant, Ambridge, in operation.

Correction

On page 10 of the July *PHLF News*, we inaccurately listed one of the conference participants and businesses. In fact, Thomas E. Auel attended the Religious Properties Conference on May 16. He is a manufacturer's representative whose company is ARCON Specialties Company, specialists in masonry restoration. ARCON has helped restore Station Square, the Union Trust Building, the lobbies of the Frick and Oliver buildings, the Hornbostel campus at Carnegie Mellon University, St. Paul Cathedral, and more than 52 churches located in Ohio, West Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania.

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Louise Sturgess Editor
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20 Years of Membership Support

The strength of a non-profit organization lies in its membership. At Landmarks, we are fortunate to have many members who have loyally supported our efforts in historic preservation for 20 years or more. This is an admirable record of service. We greatly appreciate the faithful support and continuing participation of the following people:

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Education News

Pittsburgh Heritage & Hands-On History

Landmarks' two summer workshops, offered this June and July through the Allegheny Intermediate Unit, received rave reviews. Seventeen teachers participated in the Hands-On History course, taught by Diane DeNardo, and 20 teachers participated in Pittsburgh Heritage, taught by Sue Neff. Here are some of the teachers' comments:

Pittsburgh Heritage

- The instructor was the main strength. She has a wealth of knowledge which she shares with enthusiasm. Sue Neff creates an environment conducive to learning for everyone.
- I enjoyed the combination of classroom work and out-of-class tours; . . . many ideas were presented for use in a school setting. The instruction and hand-outs were excellent.
- The first-hand accounts by residents of life in the "industrial bottoms" of McKees Rocks were interesting, and the tour of the churches was excellent.

One of the Pittsburgh Heritage art activities was to construct cardboard bridges and test their strength.



The 1992 Pittsburgh Heritage class.

Hands-On History

- The instructor really knew her material, believed in, and enjoyed her work. The variety of guest speakers was excellent.
- The guest speakers, walking tours, and assignments were the strengths of the course. The archives and census workshops were especially interesting. The use of oral history has motivated me to record my family history.
- The wide variety of activities and topics were interesting. The guest speakers were fantastic.

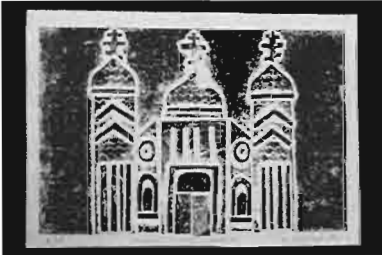
School & Community Groups

Now that September has begun, Landmarks will be working with many schools and community groups in the Pittsburgh region. Our educational programs include *Portable Pittsburgh*; *Architects-in-the-Schools*; *Architecture: The Building Art*; the *Landmark Survivors* exhibit and video; tours; slide lectures; and in-service programs. These programs feature the history and architecture of Pittsburgh, and can be used to enrich any classroom curricula; or they provide an entertaining program for a community, corporate, or professional group.

Call Diane DeNardo at (412) 471-5808 for details.



Richard Williams of Plum Senior High School was one of twelve historians and guest speakers who visited the Hands-On History teacher in-service.



Above: "View of Pittsburgh from the South Side," by Candra Anderson, an art teacher, commercial artist, and Pittsburgh Heritage participant. Right: Teachers made "Something Special Books" during Pittsburgh Heritage.



Kathy Marcollina with her team's award-winning bridge.



Join LANDMARKS

Support the Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation in its work to:

- ◆ Preserve architectural landmarks, historic neighborhoods, and industrial sites and artifacts in Allegheny County;
- ◆ Create tours, lectures, publications, and educational programs featuring the history, architecture, and culture of Pittsburgh and Allegheny County;
- ◆ Continue the development of Station Square, the 52-acre riverfront site where Landmarks' principles of historic preservation, adaptive use, and urban planning are creating a lively attraction for Pittsburgh.

Membership Benefits

- ◆ Many rewarding volunteer opportunities.
- ◆ A 10% discount at The Cornerstone book and gift store at Station Square.
- ◆ Free initial consultation on landmark designation and preservation advice for your historic property.
- ◆ Free access to our historical and architectural library in The Landmarks Building at Station Square.
- ◆ Free subscription to *PHLF News*, our membership newsletter published six times each year.
- ◆ Discounts on, or free use of, all educational resources.
- ◆ Reduced rates on tours, and invitations to lectures, seminars and special events throughout the year.
- ◆ Free admission to the Station Square Transportation Museum.

Membership Categories

Please enroll me as a member of the Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation. I have enclosed a tax-deductible contribution in the amount of (check appropriate category):

- ☐ Individual \$20
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- ☐ Senior Citizen \$10
- ☐ Corporate Supporter \$50 and above
- ☐ Corporate Member \$250 and above
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"A copy of the official registration & financial information of the Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll free, within Pennsylvania 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement." (as required by PA Act 202)

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Creating a Future
for Pittsburgh by
Preserving its Past

AUTUMN TOURS

September 30 Walking Tour
Dormont

Join Al Tannler of Landmarks as we explore the borough of Dormont, established in 1909. Our tour encompasses the thriving Potomac Avenue business district as well as nearby domestic architecture both grand and humble. The tour will begin and end at the light rail station at Potomac Avenue and Broadway. Parking is available in the borough lot at the corner of Potomac and Espy — one block south of the light rail station and two blocks north of West Liberty Avenue. The tour begins at 6 p.m. and ends at 8 p.m. Tour fares: \$2 for Landmarks members and \$5 for non-members.

October 14 Walking Tour
The Borough of Thornburg

The walking tour begins at 6:00 p.m. in Thornburg on Princeton Avenue near Hamilton Road. It will end around 8:00 p.m. Tour fares: \$2 for Landmarks members and \$5 for non-members.
(See feature article — Historic Thornburg: Variations on a Theme)

October 18 Bus Tour
Albert Gallatin's Friendship Hill

Members and friends of Landmarks will travel by bus to "Friendship Hill," near Uniontown. This was the home of Albert Gallatin from 1791 to 1825. Gallatin, who lived to be 88, was one of the most remarkable Americans of his time. As Secretary of the Treasury, he nearly halved the national debt, arranged to buy the Louisiana Territory without serious trouble to the budget, and spared the budget once more when the U.S. undertook the National Road. He was also Minister to France for five years.

Gallatin bought "Friendship Hill," 340 acres overlooking a Monongahela River bend, in 1785. He began to build, first a brick house completed in 1791, then a frame annex of 1798, then a stone part finished in 1823. To these, other people added more around 1895 and 1900. The house has belonged to the National Park Service since 1980, but only recently has it been restored for tours.

Marilyn Parris, superintendent of the Friendship Hill National Historic Site, will personally guide us through the 35-room house, including the attics and basement.

The tour bus will leave Station Square at 12:45 p.m., returning at 6:30 p.m. Tour fares: \$20 for Landmarks members and \$30 for non-members.



December 5 Bus Tour
The Brookville Victorian Christmas Celebration

Brookville, Pennsylvania is a tiny place, the seat of Jefferson County, with a population of only 4,500. But it has a handsome nine-block historic district, and was an early beneficiary (from 1983) of the Pennsylvania Main Street Program, executed in collaboration with the National Trust. Successful economic revitalization has included careful restoration and preservation of houses, institutions, and business buildings in the area around the 1869 Italianate Courthouse. Brookville prospered in the Victorian period through lumbering and wood products, and there is some lavish residential architecture as a result. Along and near Main Street are 26 historic buildings of interest.

The Victorian Christmas celebration tour will include an introduction to the Main Street Project by David Taylor, borough secretary, while tour participants eat lunch at The Meeting Place. Following lunch, participants will be able to explore the Main Street area at their leisure: there will be toy sales, street crafters, walking tours, museum displays, horse and buggy rides, strolling carolers, a brass ensemble, and a "Christmas-tree lane" in the Courthouse. At 4:00 p.m., tour participants will gather at The Meeting Place for a cup of hot chocolate and a pastry before returning to Pittsburgh.

The tour bus leaves Station Square at 9:30 a.m. and returns at 6:00 p.m. Tour fares: \$40 for Landmarks members and \$55 for non-members.

Tour Information/Reservations
If you would like further information on any of these tours, or if you would like to make a reservation, please call Mary Lu Denny at (412) 471-5808, Monday through Friday between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Mark your calendar now, and plan to tour with Landmarks this autumn.

Historic Thornburg:
Variations On a Theme

Albert M. Tannler

Four miles southwest of downtown Pittsburgh, the borough of Thornburg, founded in 1909, rises on a terraced bluff in the Chartiers Valley. In 1806, Thomas Thornburg acquired over 400 acres of land including the parcel on which the borough of Thornburg now sits. This parcel — some 250 acres — was acquired by Thomas' heirs Frank Thornburg and his cousin David in 1899; they established the Thornburg Land Company and began developing their share of the family estate into a planned suburban residential community.

Thornburg houses appear to be family members who share primary building materials of fieldstone, brick, stucco, and wood shingling, and whose differing details are charming expressions of individuality.

The decade from 1899 to 1909 saw the development of the unique character of Thornburg. It began with Frank Thornburg's arrival from Clinton, Iowa. The inception of the project engendered acclaim and rapid growth; of the 75 buildings in the Thornburg Historic District, 28 were in place by 1905. It ended with high drama: the bankruptcy of the Thornburg Land Company, the permanent departure of Frank Thornburg for California, and

the establishment of the borough. During the intervening years residents were attracted by the beauty of the region, the convenient rail links with the city, the novelty of the first golf course in the area, and the special character of the community emerging under the direction of its founder — businessman, showman, and architectural aficionado.

Only two restrictions were placed on prospective residents: (1) houses must cost a minimum of \$2,500, and (2) the first stories must be built of brick or stone to prevent fires. In 1900, the first five houses were erected along Princeton Road. These can be described as "simplified Queen Anne," a style found in abundance at the turn of the century in urban as well as suburban communities. Very soon, however, distinctive housing came into being: comfortable, informal, rustic yet sophisticated. Some houses wear the attire of the earlier "Shingle Style," others the emerging "Craftsman" style, and both traditional and contemporary ornamentation were used. However diverse such decorative elements may be, however varied the roofs or the fenestration, Thornburg houses appear to be family members who share primary building materials of fieldstone, brick, stucco, and wood shingling, and whose differing details are charming expressions of individuality.

A key factor in the development of the communal character was Frank Thornburg's interest in contemporary California architecture and his conse-



Early Shingle Style houses face their Queen Anne neighbors on Princeton Road.



Steep gables and fieldstone porches and chimneys are characteristic of many Thornburg houses.

1993 Tour & Special Event

SUGGESTION FORM

We are preparing our 1993 events schedule and need your input. Please take a moment to send us your suggestions for walking tours, bus tours, and special events in the coming year.

■ My suggestions for Landmarks' tours and special events in 1993 are:

■ Do you prefer ☐ bus tours or ☐ walking tours? (check one)

■ Members have already suggested the following tours for us to consider in 1993. Would you be interested in attending:

- ☐ a walking tour of Arsenal Park in Lawrenceville
- ☐ a walking tour of Allegheny Cemetery
- ☐ a walking tour of the Bluff area from Duquesne University to Fifth Avenue High School
- ☐ a bus tour to the East Washington Historic District in Washington, PA
- ☐ a bus tour to Johnstown's Southfork Area
- ☐ a tour of neighborhood restoration projects currently underway, supported in part by Landmarks' Preservation Fund

■ Please complete this form and return it to:
Mary Lu Denny
Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation
One Station Square, Suite 450
Pittsburgh, PA 15219-1170

Please add your name and address if you wish. Thank you for taking the time to help us plan a year of tours and special events featuring the history and architecture of the Pittsburgh region.

The Pittsburgh region is our home, a familiar place we do not want to leave. But without historic preservation, it could leave us.

A Year-End Gift

Since its founding in 1964 as a non-profit membership organization, Landmarks has made a difference in the life of Pittsburgh. Our great accomplishments have been to identify and save architectural and industrial landmarks, preserve historic neighborhoods, educate the public regarding our history, and create Station Square.

Our work continues as vigorously as ever, with the help of members' contributions. We have no governmental support, and depend on individual donations to maintain our General Fund and our individual projects.

Our program goals for 1993 are ambitious, and your contribution to the Landmarks General Fund is the means by which we can attain them. Please contribute now, and help us keep working for the future of Pittsburgh's past.

CONTRIBUTIONS

to Landmarks' General Fund in 1993 will help us:

- advocate the preservation of endangered landmarks.
- retrieve endangered artifacts that will later be displayed in the Riverwalk of Industrial Artifacts at Station Square.
- provide technical assistance and funding support through our Preservation Fund to more than 20 neighborhood/community groups that are restoring historic properties.
- offer educational programs such as *Portable Pittsburgh*, *Pittsburgh Heritage*, the *Hands-On History* summer institute, teacher inservices, and family workshops.
- organize the Landmarks library and describe our historical collections so they can be available for research purposes.
- publish major books, brochures, and *PHLF News*.
- host tours and special events for the benefit of our members and the public.

Enclosed is my year-end contribution of \$ _____ to Landmarks' General Fund.

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Address _____

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Contributions are tax-deductible. Please make checks payable to the Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation and return payment with this form to:

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Please give to Landmarks

"A copy of the official registration & financial information of the Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll free, within Pennsylvania 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement." (as required by PA Act 202)



Frank Thornburg's "mansion," c. 1907; Samuel T. McClarren, architect.

quent influence, on some level, on the design of the residences erected by his clients and neighbors. In 1905, the April 1 issue of *Construction* magazine noted:

Frank Thornburg arrived home from Los Angeles, Cal., last Friday, after two months' absence. While away Mr. Thornburg, who laid out and is developing Thornburg, adjoining Crafton, secured 60 photographs of Los Angeles residences, and intends reproducing most of the dwellings at Thornburg. The suburb is noted for its pretty homes, nearly all of which are patterned after houses in other cities, of which pictures were taken by Mr. Thornburg from time to time. The 60 new photographs are mostly of houses of the mission type and some are very artistic. Mr. Thornburg says that throughout California house architecture is rapidly improving. Until a year or two ago nearly all dwellings in California cities were built of wood exclusively and few were provided with cellars. Now stone foundations are being used, some first stories are brick or cobble stone and the upper stories plaster.

One can almost hear Frank Thornburg's voice. He was apparently aware of residential design "throughout California." He therefore probably knew about the revival and extension of the Shingle Style taking place in the San Francisco Bay area in the work of Bernard Maybeck and his colleagues. But Los Angeles and surrounding communities most certainly provided the locus of his inspiration; one can discern visual affinities between houses in Thornburg and the early work of Greene and Greene and Hunt and Grey in Pasadena as well as the "Mission/Craftsman" bungalows designed by Roehrig, the Heineman brothers, and others in the Arroyo Seco. (Almost certainly it was to Los Angeles that Thornburg's founder returned in 1909; he died there in 1927, thirteen days after his 71st birthday.)

Frank Thornburg found an ally — someone who could translate ideas about buildings into buildings — in his cousin, the Pittsburgh architect, Samuel T. McClarren (about whom we know, as yet, very little). McClarren designed numerous houses in the community, including his own home at 533 Hamil-

ton Road which burned in November of 1905 and which he rebuilt the following year; almost certainly Frank Thornburg's second home at 501 Hamilton Road sometime prior to 1905 (and its sibling at 1060 Stanford Road); and the third, and last, Thornburg family home at 1132 Lehigh Road sometime between 1907 and 1908. Other local architects worked in Thornburg but Samuel McClarren, more likely adapting rather than copying cousin Frank's photographs, was responsible for much of the built fabric of the borough.

In 1979, the Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation, at the request of the Thornburg Community Club, surveyed the borough and prepared historic district nomination forms for the older section of the community. In 1982, the Thornburg Historic District was added to the National Register of Historic Places.

Thornburg's significance is three-fold. It is an outstanding example of the 19th-century planned residential suburb modeled after Frederick Law Olmsted's Riverside, Illinois, and Bruce Price's Tuxedo Park, New York — communities that combined the benefits of country living with metropolitan proximity. Beyond this, Thornburg's communal character and integrity — both natural and architectural — has been retained to a remarkable and gratifying degree. Other turn-of-the-century planned suburbs in the Pittsburgh metropolitan

A "Spanish Mission" style home on Cornell Road.



area, such as Rosslyn Farms (1903) and Schenley Farms (1905), have suffered from urban encroachment and unsympathetic development. Finally, and most significantly, the houses of Thornburg are expressions of the avant garde of their time, unusual in the Pittsburgh area where new buildings have most commonly been reactive rather than innovative in design. The houses were erected during those years — 1901-1909 — when architects in California, Frank Lloyd Wright in the Midwest, and Gustav Stickley in upper New York were creating and defining an indigenous American residential architecture. It would be 1907 before Stickley's immensely influential *Craftsman* would devote an article to the "California" house; at the same time Samuel McClarren was building Frank Thornburg's splendid stone and shingle house on the summit of the borough.

We are told that on long summer evenings, Samuel McClarren would sit on his porch and serenade his Thornburg neighbors with a rendition of "The Fatal Wedding with Variations" on the cornet. No other musical selections are mentioned; the captive audience apparently responded with a mixture of amusement and exasperation. Today it is unlikely that one will hear "The Fatal Wedding with Variations" wafting through Thornburg. One can, however, experience felicitous architectural variations on the theme Frank Thornburg composed in the community that bears his name.

The Preservation Fund Since 1985

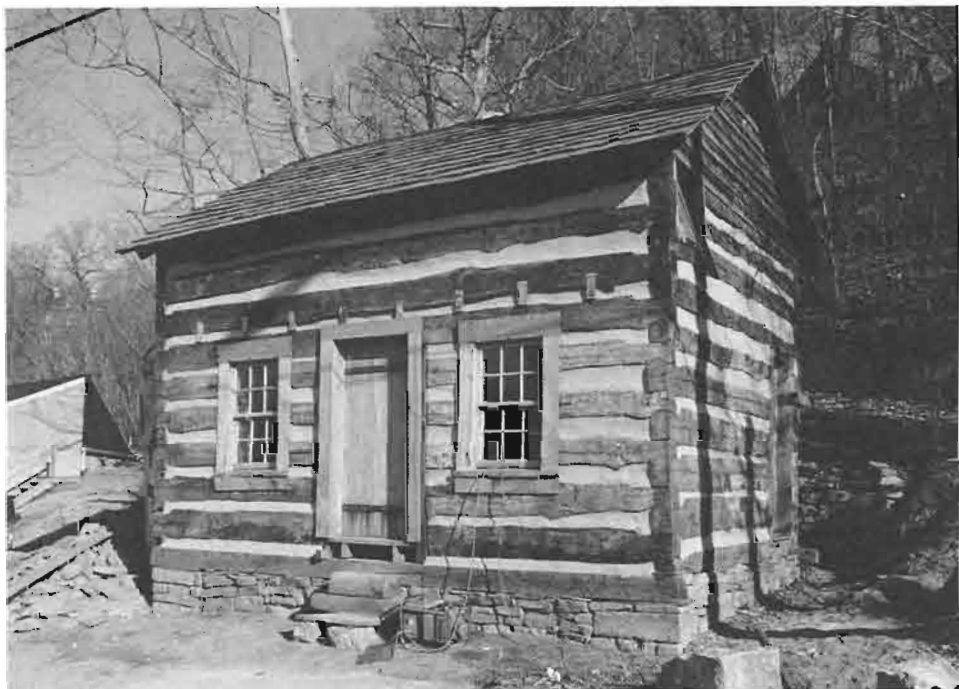
Stanley Lowe, Director

Since 1985, loans and grants of over \$2 million, plus technical assistance, have demonstrated the effectiveness of Landmarks' Preservation Fund.

Essentially, the Preservation Fund is available for start-up costs and bridge financing in projects benefiting historic Allegheny County buildings and neighborhoods. Eligible are non-profit 501 (c) (3) community-based organizations of demonstrated competence that can secure their loans with full collateral. Loans are for two years or less, with interest at the prevailing prime.

These are the Fund's accomplishments to date:

- The **Henderson-Metz house** at 1516 Warren Street in Fineview was converted into nine low- to moderate-income rental units. Loan amount: \$40,780
- The owner of **841 North Lincoln Avenue** in Allegheny West received a bridge loan for acquisition and restoration. Loan amount: \$45,000
- The Perry Hilltop Association for Successful Enterprises Inc., received a loan to purchase **108-10 Lafayette Avenue**. Loan amount: \$7,000



Dickson log house

- The endangered **Dickson log house** (c.1797) on Western Avenue in Ben Avon was purchased and renovated by a local historical association. Loan amount: \$10,000



The Priory

- **St. Mary's Church Priory** (1888), located on the North Side between Pressley and Lockhart Streets, was renovated as a "bed-and-breakfast" city inn. Loan amount: \$50,000
- The **Hollander Building** at 415 East Ohio Street on the North Side was acquired by North Side Civic Development Council and renovated for commercial purposes with support from East Allegheny Community Council. Loan amount: \$100,000



Hollander Building



Nevin Row

- **Nevin Row** in Allegheny West was restored. Loan amount: \$38,600
- Through the **Home Ownership for Working People** program, five vacant buildings in the Central North Side were rehabilitated for low- and middle-income families. Loan amount: \$162,000. In phase two, five vacant houses in Manchester at 1100-09 Pennsylvania Avenue were acquired; four have been renovated and sold. Loan guarantee: \$15,000. In phase three, the Manchester Citizens Corporation bought five houses beginning at 1009 Manhattan Street and remodeled them for single-family occupancy. Loan amount: \$145,000



251-53 Alpine Street, Central North Side



Saturn Way, Central North Side



Allegheny Brewery & Pub

- The **Eberhardt & Ober Brewery** (1883), at the foot of Troy Hill on the North Side, was acquired and renovated to house a brew pub and incubator space for businesses. Loan amount: \$50,000
- The **Rachel Carson Homestead** Association in Springdale obtained professional architectural services for the preparation of a schematic design and rendering for the construction of an educational wing on the site of the Homestead. Loan amount: \$5,700
- Major repairs were made to the **New Bethel Missionary Baptist Church** roof and steeple in Lawrenceville. Loan amount: \$9,400
- The Braddock's Field Historical Society commissioned a building re-use study for the **Carnegie Library in Braddock**. Loan amount: \$10,000



Carnegie Library in Braddock

- The Braddock's Field Historical Society began renovation on the first two floors of the **Carnegie Library in Braddock**. Loan amount: \$40,000
- **Masonic Hall** at 16 W. North Avenue in the Central North Side has been purchased by the Central North Side Civic Council and awaits renovation as part of the Federal-North improvement program. Loan amount: \$100,000
- **1417 East Carson Street** was purchased by the South Side Local Development Council and the structure was renovated for office and storefront use. Loan amount: \$39,000
- The Steel Industry Heritage Task Force moved a **48-inch rolling mill** to a Homestead site where it will be preserved. Loan amount: \$25,000

Know Your NEIGHBORHOOD

The *Neighborhood Market Information Book* of the Pittsburgh Community Reinvestment Group (PCRG) is just out, financed in part by Landmarks' Preservation Fund. Loose-leafed and thus readily updated, it offers the following:

- a description of the PCRG and of the financial institutions with which it has business relations
- descriptions of the 26 Pittsburgh member neighborhood organizations, giving representatives, incorporated territory with population statistics, date of incorporation, subsidiary organizations, mission statement, meeting dates, scheduled events, programs and activities, institutional tie-ins, marketing tools, marketing sponsors, and board and staff members
- member organizations' newsletters and newspapers
- representatives and committee members, including those from the financial institutions involved
- community banking services and programs of the financial institutions
- housing and financing programs of the Urban Redevelopment Authority of Pittsburgh.

A copy of the *Neighborhood Market Information Book* is in the library in the Landmarks offices. Call Albert Tannler, (412) 471-5808, if you wish to come to the library. Or, contact PCRG at 322-6053 for a mail-order copy at \$10 plus postage.



Anderson Manor

- **Anderson Manor** (c. 1830), at 1423 Liverpool Street in Manchester, was renovated. Loan amount: \$103,000
- Bethel Park Historical Society received a loan of \$1,500 to appeal a possible sale and demolition of the **Bethel Park School House**.
- The Allegheny West Civic Council, through the North Side Civic Development Council, received a loan to restore **901-05 Western Avenue** to a form similar to its original, with addition of a new office wing. Loan amount: \$80,000



901-05 Western Avenue



1403 Sheffield Street



852 Beech Avenue

- The Allegheny West Civic Council and the owner of **852 Beech Avenue** received a bridge loan for acquisition and restoration. Loan amount: \$45,000

- The Northside Tenants Reorganization borrowed money to acquire two nuisance bars and rehabilitate 33 vacant buildings in **Brighton Place**. Loan amount: \$220,000
- The **Harry Darlington house** at Brighton Road and Lincoln Avenue was reconverted from a 21-unit dwelling to a single-family house, with stopgap financing and money for initial work from a loan through the Allegheny West Civic Council. Loan amount: \$165,000
- Technical assistance was given to the **Affordable Housing Program** of the Manchester Citizens Corporation.
- Landmarks received and lent funds to the Oakland Planning and Development Corporation to assist the rehabilitation of **Allequippa Place**. Loan amount: \$166,000



Allequippa Place

- **The Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation** used a loan to purchase a nuisance bar. Loan amount: \$24,000
- A check was presented to the Mexican War Streets Society to establish and maintain **Mechanic's Retreat Park**. Amount: \$2,500
- Technical assistance was provided for the construction of infill housing on the **1300 block, Sheffield Street**.
- Manchester Citizens Corporation purchased **1256-58 Decatur Street** with a loan from the Fund. Loan amount: \$42,000
- **1311 North Franklin Street** was rehabilitated as part of the Home Ownership program. Loan amount: \$45,000
- **Integra Bank** augmented the Preservation Fund in 1990 with a \$500,000 loan.



- Houses at **1403 Sheffield Street** and **1251 Liverpool Street** were purchased with closing-cost assistance from the Fund. Grants: \$1,600 and \$1,500 respectively.
- The Northside Civic Development Council borrowed for roof repairs and other work to the **Masonic Hall** on West North Avenue. Loan amount: \$20,000
- The Allegheny West Civic Council purchased **932 West North Avenue** for resale. Loan amount: \$17,000
- The South Side Local Development Company built **Edwards Court**, a five-house row on South Thirteenth Street near Breed. Loan amount: \$53,350
- Continuing the **Home Ownership for Working People** program, the Fund made available 50% closing-cost assistance to purchasers of 1007-11, 1019, and 1025 Manhattan Street.
- A loan made through the Allegheny West Civic Council allowed the purchase and beginning rehabilitation of **940 Beech Avenue**. Loan amount: \$15,000



1225 Monterey Street

- The Mexican War Streets Society and the Central Northside Neighborhood Council, in partnership with Landmarks, received a recoverable grant to repair **1225 Monterey Street**, the money refundable on sale of the house. Grant amount: \$17,000
- Landmarks loaned funds to the Homewood Brushton Revitalization and Development Corporation to acquire **607 North Homewood Avenue**. Loan amount: \$45,000
- The same group received a stopgap loan to purchase **1074 Wheeler** and **7212 Race Streets**. Loan amount: \$11,000
- The Northside Civic Development Council and East Allegheny Community Council acquired a portion of the **Schiller School property** in Dutchtown for housing, a park, and parking space. Loan amount: \$53,000
- Landmarks funded a lecture by **Bertha Gilkey**, of the Cochran Tenant Management Corporation of St. Louis, on tenant management of low-income housing.
- Landmarks contributed funding for the publication of the **Neighborhood Market Information Book** of the Pittsburgh Community Reinvestment Group.
- Landmarks provides on-going technical and/or economic development assistance to numerous organizations, including the Buena Vista Street Senior Citizen's program, Calbride Place Citizens Council, North Side Leadership Conference, the Pittsburgh Community Technical Assistance Center, Spring Garden Neighborhood Council, Homewood Brushton Revitalization and Development Corporation, East Allegheny Community Council, Manchester Citizens Corporation, Northside Tenants Reorganization, Allegheny West Civic Council, Negro Educational Emergency Drive, Mexican War Streets Society, South Side Local Development Company, and the Pittsburgh Community Reinvestment Group.
- Nationally, Landmarks provides on-going technical assistance services to the Los Angeles Community Reinvestment Group, the National Trust for Historic Preservation Main Street Programs; Landmarks Harlem; the National Economic Development and Law Center of Berkeley, California; the Design Center of Knoxville, Tennessee; Mt. Auburn Good Housing Foundation of Cincinnati, Ohio; Urban Women Inc. of St. Louis, Missouri; the N.E.W. Fund Foundation of Charleston, South Carolina; Savannah Neighborhood Action Project of Savannah, Georgia; and Unitarian House of Petersburg, Virginia.

The Preservation Fund: What the Communities Say

A meeting of Preservation Fund lenders and borrowers, held on June 8 to determine what effect the Preservation Fund has had on the neighborhoods where it has operated, elicited the following:

Susan Golomb of the South Side Local Development Company called it "invaluable," citing the construction of Edwards Court. This 10-unit project not only added new housing but has stimulated rehabilitation near by.

Jim Nordin of the Spring Garden Neighborhood Council said that the Fund allowed community control of site-development issues.

Harriet Henson of the Northside Tenants Reorganization stated that the Brighton Place rehabilitation has depended on the \$220,000 loan that allowed the purchase and closing of two nuisance bars. Their closing has given lending institutions and residents necessary faith in the project.

Mark Fatla of the Allegheny West Civic Council says that the Fund has helped his neighborhood tremendously. He cites its first application, at the fire-damaged Nevin Row at Galveston and Lincoln Avenues. No other lender would finance rehabilitation. The restoration of the Darlington house at Brighton Road and Lincoln Avenue, 901-05 Western Avenue, and 940 Beech Avenue were other Fund beneficiaries that helped stabilize and improve the neighborhood.

Nancy Schaefer of the Northside Conference called the Fund extremely helpful. The purchase of the Masonic Hall, made possible by the Fund, was a desirable stabilizing action.

Helen Hurst of the Homewood-Brushton Revitalization and Development Corporation said that the Fund has allowed them to rehabilitate conspicuous residential and commercial properties.

In addition, neighborhood representatives spoke of how many projects could not have happened without the Fund, and encouraged its continuing emphasis on loans to low- and moderate-income neighborhoods.

Landmarks Preservation Fund is working and is appreciated by the neighborhoods where it is operative. Its effectiveness is being noted in other cities too. The Cleveland Restoration Society, announcing the start of its own revolving fund, cited those of Pittsburgh, Providence, and Savannah as examples of how successful a fund can be.

Construction Begins at Brighton Place

After more than three years of planning, Brighton Place Associates gave the "Notice to Proceed" with construction on the Brighton Place project on Tuesday, July 28. The project includes the renovation of 19 existing historic townhouses on the Northside into 34 units of rental housing, a neighborhood laundromat and offices for Northside Tenants Reorganization, the developer, owner and manager for the properties. The project will be historic tax credit certified. The architect for the project is Landmarks Design Associates. The contractor for the project is Mistick, Inc. The contractor will employ WBE, MBE, and neighborhood residents. The project is partially funded through low income and historic tax credits, the URA, PHFA, Integra Bank, the Pittsburgh Partnership for Neighborhood Development, Pittsburgh National Bank, and the Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Preservation Fund. The first units should be ready for occupancy in early 1993.

Preservation Scene



Bellefield Hall



Survivors from Monongahela Wharf days

Plaque Awards

The Historic Landmarks Plaque Awards Committee met at the end of June and awarded plaques to

- Bellefield Hall, the former YMHA on South Bellefield Avenue that is a work of 1924 by Benno Janssen.
- Homewood Cemetery, with its picturesque landscape, impressive monuments, and buildings by MacClure & Spahr and others: a beautiful and historic place.
- South Vo-Tech High School, the old South Side High School of 1897 by Edward Stotz; its restoration won our Award of Merit a few years ago.
- Schenley High School, a Grecian Ionic work of 1916 by Edward Stotz on the edge of Schenley Farms.
- Allegheny Middle School, the old Allegheny High School, and specifically the 1904 part by Frederick John Osterling.
- 610 Lincoln Avenue, in the northeast part of Pittsburgh, a handsomely-restored Mid-Victorian house.
- Fort Pitt Boulevard between Wood and Market Streets, the sole reminder of the old Monongahela waterfront, and in a remarkably high state of integrity.

Six other decisions were deferred pending further investigation or necessary repairs, and one application was denied.

Landmarks' Historic Plaque committee meets once a year. If you would like to receive information on obtaining a Landmarks plaque in 1993, please call Walter Kidney at (412) 471-5808.

Painting New Brick

A question has arisen as to whether Allegheny Court 901-05 Western Avenue, can receive its Investment Tax Credit without one further restoration feature: application of paint to the new and cleaned brickwork. The brickwork had been painted some 50 years ago to disguise crude remodeling, and the Allegheny West Civic Council (AWCC) claims that repainting it is unnecessary given the quality of the new brickwork, which will tone in with the old. The State's Bureau for Historic Preservation, however, is insisting on a feature present 50 years ago and therefore part of the building's history. Somewhere the reality of the situation seems to have gotten lost. Perhaps the AWCC will have to replace the paint and bide its time until 2042, in which year it can strip it off because in the historic year of 1992 the brickwork was bare.

Smithfield Street Bridge Painting

The City of Pittsburgh Historic Review Commission has approved the painting of the Smithfield Street Bridge in the manner under discussion in the last few years, recalling the original 1883 color scheme: brown for the deck, royal blue for the trusses, and sandstone, a pale gray-tan, for the portals. Paint scrapings showed no trace of true heraldic colors on the escutcheons that hang over the portals of 1915, so we will have no final glory of black, gold, blue, and silver. On the other hand, the original torchlike portal lamps are to be restored, and the bridge will be largely removed from its present ignominious state. Painting is foreseen for sometime in 1994.

Market Square Celebrates

On Thursday, August 6, Mayor Masloff presided at ceremonies marking the newly-refurbished and landscaped Market Square. The event was sponsored by the Market Square Association, an organization of local merchants. The Association published a souvenir program containing a brief illustrated history of Market Square by Landmarks' architectural historian Walter Kidney. In addition, Landmarks provided five historical photographic views of Market Square which were enlarged and placed on display in Two PPG Place.

Call Us with Preservation News

Our staff wants to hear from you if you see or know of any historic buildings that are threatened with demolition or that have recently been demolished. We need your help in covering the County. Please call Walter Kidney (412/471-5808) and report what you know.



Shadyside Bed and Breakfast

Bed and Breakfast

A current issue before the Pittsburgh City Planning Commission, and to come before City Council on October 1, is the licensing proposed by Councilman Jim Ferlo of bed-and-breakfast inns with fewer than 11 sleeping rooms in residential neighborhoods. The 24-room Priory on the North Side has done very well, and its success has saved a good Victorian building. One hopes that smaller bed-and-breakfasts might use a number of handsome but awkwardly-big single-family houses in the same way. A number of other cities have licensed small bed-and-breakfasts, and several have special regulations to protect historic character.

These are not to be rooming houses, and are to be in other ways well integrated into neighborhoods of one-family homes. Besides the maximum number of rooms, the maximum length of stay, parking provisions, signage, and spacing are matters of importance to their painless inclusion in such neighborhoods.

A hearing before the City Planning Commission on June 16, however, brought out the misgivings or outright opposition of many. The opposition made the following points:

- A B&B, however small, is a commercial operation in a residential neighborhood;
- its operation, adherence to safety codes, etc. would not be properly supervised by the authorities;
- absentee owners would aggravate the situation, being out of contact with and having no direct accountability to the neighborhood;
- transients would disturb the quiet of the neighborhood, with their comings and goings if in no other way;
- transients and delivery people might commit crimes, shielded by their anonymity;
- one argument for B&Bs, that it gives elderly people a source of income, seems not to be proven in practice.

There is also a geographical argument, related to traffic movement, parking, and cul-de-sacs since most of the protestors against the new B&B ordinance as drafted have addresses in Maple Heights Road or Maple Heights Court, where a B&B, Shadyside Bed and Breakfast, has been in operation for some time. The testimony shows some confusion, indeed, between B&Bs of any kind, anywhere, and Shadyside Bed and Breakfast. This establishment, as a matter of fact, can show warm letters of appreciation from happy and seemingly-respectable guests; and even among their neighbors in

Maple Heights Road and Maple Heights Court, those in favor of the Ferlo bill as written outnumber the opposed two to one in the testimony presented. A visit to the site showed an interesting rugged stone house, said to date from 1903, very well kept externally and set within a big yard. The proprietors say that they would like to expand from their present four guest rooms though not greatly. The impression, on a summer afternoon, was peaceful, and in practice such B&Bs seem harmless as long as they are chosen by people who like peace on a 24-hour basis.

Since there is confusion between B&Bs anywhere in Pittsburgh and one B&B in a Squirrel Hill cul-de-sac, the opposition to the Ferlo bill may actually be less than one might suppose, while some opposition is to things included or not included in the bill rather than to the idea as such of B&Bs in residential areas.

The best solution may be one proposed that would require the consent of abutting owners, as well as meeting certain standards of access, parking, safety, and so on. These met, there remains the human element, and another proposal made would require residence not only by a B&B owner but his residence at the address for a minimum time before his licensing. Short of a rigid exclusion of "trade" from a residential neighborhood, such provisions seem to promise the best way of maintaining neighborhood integrity.



The Old Stone Tavern

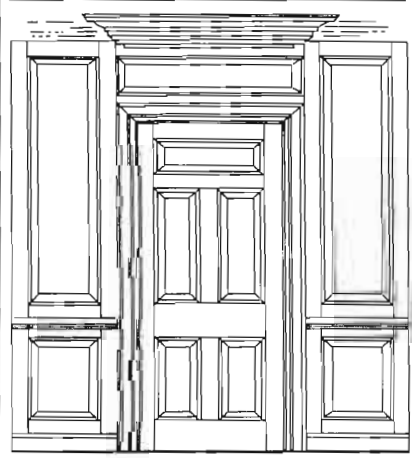
The Old Stone Tavern

Coates' Tavern, or the Old Stone Tavern, is up for sale. A 1752 datestone said to be on the building is incredible — not even the French had a firm hold on the Pittsburgh area in 1752 — but a pre-1800 date is possible, and this is certainly one of the oldest buildings in the city. Coates' Tavern stands on Greentree Road in the West End, large and in need of restoration. It has been a tavern and restaurant for 150 years at least. For further information in regard to the tavern sale, call Wayne Dean at (412) 471-9923 during the day, or (412) 835-3258 in the evening.

Donations and Contributions Welcome

If you would like to donate any architectural materials — or if you would like to make a tax-deductible contribution to support our library effort — call Albert Tanner (412/471-5808) for further information.


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Mt. Zion Baptist Church

African-American Historic Site Survey Focus: Churches

The African-American Historic Site Survey was finished on September 1. Originally, the survey was to be completed by July, but the extension marked an intensified focus by the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission on such ethno-history surveys in this state, particularly the history of blacks. This survey is the first of its kind in the state.

The thirteen-month survey started July 1991, when project director Eliza Brown, marketing and research director at Landmarks Design Associates, Architects, began preliminary research for the survey and assembled an advisory committee of local residents and historians. Since then the survey has covered 51 communities throughout Allegheny County, documented over 300 sites (many not extant), and completed nearly 200 survey forms for individual sites and three districts.

The African-American Survey will be circulated widely throughout Pittsburgh schools, libraries, and community associations, and will be kept in the Pennsylvania State Archives in Harrisburg. Ultimately, the survey will provide groundwork for further research projects, be the initial step in the nomination and preservation of some structures, and lead to a better understanding of black residents who have been a crucial part of Allegheny County's history.

More time was given to the survey in part because of the large number of black churches in Allegheny County. Finding them and recording their physical and cultural characteristics requires especially thorough and innovative research methods. Some churches are gone, but many still exist, although a congregation may not inhabit the original building in which it began.

Many old black churches that are no longer used stand vacant and threatened with future developments. The old Bethlehem Baptist Church in McKeesport, the first black Baptist church in that town (1903), is slated for demolition by the PA Department of Transportation. It stands vacant, and a new Bethlehem Baptist replaced it down the street in 1980, but its strong brick Romanesque Revival styling is rare and a

testimony of the early cohesiveness of McKeesport's black community.

Another, the Mt. Zion Baptist Church (formerly the A.M.E. Zion Church) in Elizabeth, a small, wood-frame structure (1910), is also targeted for demolition. It is situated in an area called the "Hollow" bordered by Route 51, which black workers in the mills of Clairton and Duquesne have called their home for nearly 100 years. Most of the original residents are gone now and have left the Mt. Zion Baptist Church an unguarded historic structure.

Dozens of black churches throughout the county, particularly those outside Pittsburgh, are threatened with neglect, dwindling membership, and development. For most black communities, the church served as the center of social, moral, and spiritual life, and some provided recreation, education, and sporting activities. Many today stand as the only physical remnant of a once-thriving black community long since moved out with the shifting economics of Western Pennsylvania.

Crafton History Published

Betsy Martin, *The Story of Crafton, 1740-1992* Crafton: Crafton Historical Society, 1992. \$15.95.

This is a history, published on the centennial of the Borough's founding though it goes much further back in time. The text is factual, and the illustrations are interesting and numerous. It is available for purchase at the Cornerstone, the book and gift shop of the Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation in The Shops at Station Square. Or, members of Landmarks may come to our library on the fourth floor of the Landmarks Building and browse through *The Story of Crafton*.

Meason House Survey

Landmarks' library has just acquired "Cultural Resources Reconnaissance of the Isaac Meason House National Historic Landmark, Fayette County, Pennsylvania," by Edward J. Siemon III and Ronald C. Carlisle. The text describes the physical setting, background history, past and present archaeology, and man-made features of the site, at present four acres around "Mount Braddock," Isaac Meason's great house of 1802.

A few years ago, the house was in danger from blasting vibrations in connection with a nearby strip-mining operation, but monitoring suggests that the mining company is conforming with the conditions agreed upon. Landmarks Design Associates, Architects, has been engaged to investigate the physical history of the house and its grounds, and to do a bibliography of source material, for Preservation Pennsylvania.

"Woodville"

A Family Home for Two Centuries

In July, Landmarks printed a handsome color brochure for "Woodville," the Neville house in Collier township that has been a Landmarks property since 1976. The eight-panel pocket folder reveals the restoration progress that has taken place at the National Historic Landmark, and announces that the house is available for house tours, private group rentals, and special events by appointment. The brochure was supported through grants from Landmarks, the Neville House Auxiliary, and the Allegheny County Committee of the National Society of Colonial Dames of America. Professional photographer David Rentz volunteered his time and talent, and, as a result, there are several striking color photos of the house.

If you are a member of a garden club or community group whose members would be interested in touring "Woodville," or in holding a meeting there, please call Mary Lu Denny at (412) 471-5808, and she will send you copies of the brochure for further information.

Kitchen Restoration

Nathaniel Neblett, who has the restoration of Gunston Hall in Virginia to his credit, is consultant for the ongoing restoration of "Woodville's" log kitchen, probably the original part of the house. Both the floorboard and random-width beaded planking on three walls have had to be replaced, and all four walls, including one of bare log, painted a strong red-brown.

Landscaping Plans

Landmarks, the Neville House Auxiliary, and the Colonial Dames now are looking to the two-acre property of "Woodville," and the need to improve landscaping and parking through a coordinated plan. The Allegheny County Garden Club is donating \$7,000 for landscape planning and implementation, so that "Woodville" will once again be surrounded by gardens appropriate to its time and architectural character, and benefit from the convenience of adequate parking.

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Books on Architecture and Preservation for Children

Learning about the principles of building design, architectural history, and the why's and how's of saving important sites and neighborhoods isn't only an adult activity. That's why The Cornerstone has a special section of books on architecture and historic preservation written and illustrated for young readers. If you want to introduce your child or a young friend to the pleasures and significance of structures and places, here are a few suggestions (all selections are in paperback unless otherwise noted).

What It Feels Like To Be A Building (Preservation Press, \$10.95) uses animal and human figures to demonstrate basic engineering principles. *Round Buildings, Square Buildings & Buildings that Wiggle Like a Fish* (Knopf, \$10.95) examines the elements of buildings — doors, windows, roofs — through photographs of famous European and American buildings. *I Know That Building!* (Preservation Press, \$14.95) explores the world of architecture through puzzles, games, cut-outs, and other hands-on activities. *Architects Make Zigzags: Looking at Architecture from A to Z* (Preservation Press, \$9.95) presents an architectural alphabet of the most common features of buildings and neighborhoods. Miniature pop-ups of great architecture, old and new, are found in *The Seven Ancient Wonders of the World* (Chronicle, \$8.95 in hardcover) and *The Seven Modern Wonders of the World* (ditto, \$9.95). Finally, historic preservation of an individual structure is the subject of *Victoria House* (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, on sale for \$6.95, from \$12.95, hardcover) which tells the story of a family who discovers a neglected Victorian farmhouse and moves it to a new urban neighborhood, while the changes — good and bad — taking place in an entire town between 1910 and 1990 are depicted in *New Providence: A Changing Cityscape* (Preservation Press, \$9.95).

Any one of these publications would make a welcome back-to-school gift for your son or daughter.

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Remodelings and Purity: A Few Passing Remarks

Preservationists are apt to see remodeling as a bad thing, and certainly the view of 1975, showing a remodeling of a remodeling of 242 Forbes Avenue, with which we begin this essay gives us no basis for contradiction. Yet the South Side Market House was surely changed for the better after a fire of 1915.

And the Courthouse: as designed in 1884, the side archways of the Courthouse were open to the weather at both ends, with the first-floor corridors running through them like covered bridges. In the early 1910s their proportions were rendered taller because the street level was lowered, and in 1923 the whole first- and second-floor level in the archways was filled in for more office space. Only the informed will sense that this was done.

In 1936, an architect wrote of the "renovizing" of a hypothetical Victorian "atrocious," which he saw transformed from an affair "full of curves and wiggles" into an academically-correct piece of Neo-Georgian. Our moderns might demand every curve and wiggle intact, on the contrary. But Bloodgood Tuttle, the architect, showed



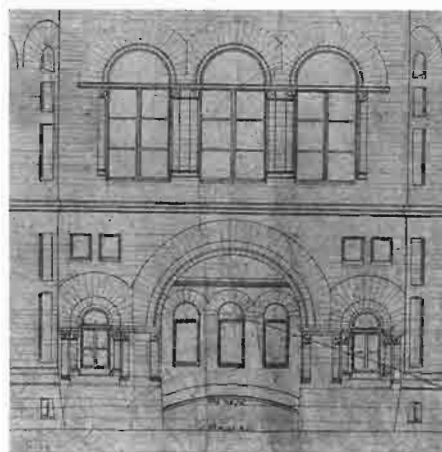
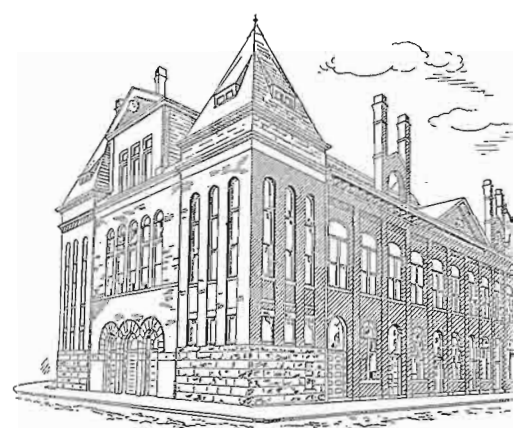
242 Forbes Avenue.

a midway stage in the house's economically-timed evolution that seems agreeable in itself — no white paint on the bricks yet, the homely but ample porch, porte-cochere, double doorway, and upstairs corner bay untouched though the roof and chimneys have been tamed. One might stop the remodeling about here.



South Side Market House, remodeled 1915.

South Side Market House as built, 1891.



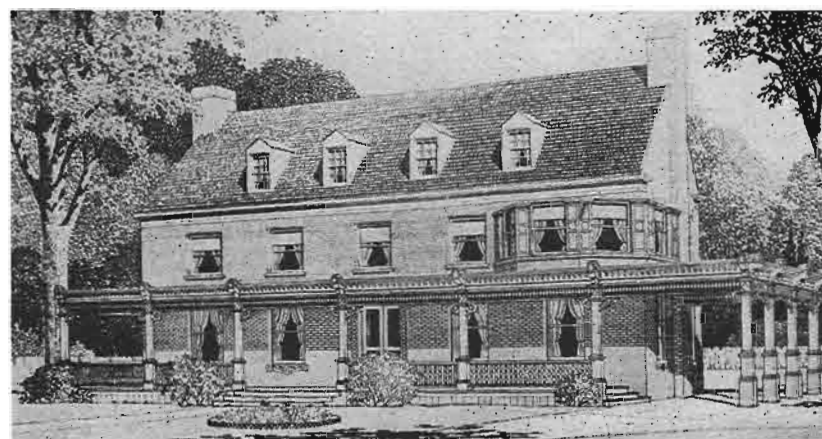
A Courthouse side portal, from a drawing of the 1880s and the portal in the early 1920s.



The portal after the 1923 infilling.



Bloodgood Tuttle's "renovizing" scheme and (below) the "renovizing" halfway along.



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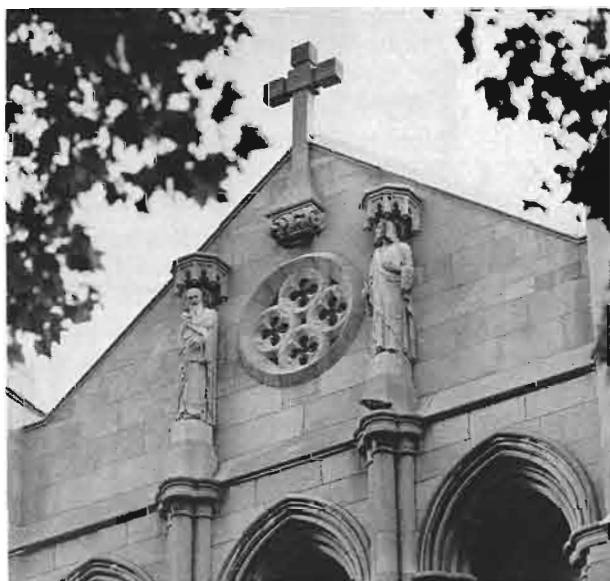
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PITTSBURGH ARCHITECTURE: *Associative Architecture*

Walter C. Kidney

A half-century ago a vocal part of the architectural profession was in high dudgeon about the long-continued habit of most architects and clients in designing, and commissioning, buildings in one or another historic style, or at least in something that looked like a historic style. Much of what was being built at that time was, indeed, silly, fakey, wasteful, and worse yet, bland. Now of course Modernism itself has come to seem habit-ridden, self-satisfied, and visually barren; we have been looking back to history and the possible applications of its forms once more. Such applications have their dangers, as a builder's magazine we receive at Landmarks shows. The magazine displays on the cover, every time, an expensive house that in its details makes traditional noises but — almost every time — lacks coherence; the whole thing is a jumble, as if the builder could not see from one Palladian window to the next. Whatever he lacked in intellectual integrity, a competent architect of 1925 did have a sense of the whole design and subordinated his details to it rather than exhibiting them, as so often is the practice today, like so many trinkets on the humiliated carcass of his building.



Right: The Longue Vue Club in Penn Hills has no real "style" under the usual classifications, though rural building in both France and England are hinted at. Rather, it has an air of long-established gracious rusticity, sophisticated informality. Behind its apparent simplicity is artifice. The roof slates look purposely as if the weather of centuries has been at them. The walls' mixture of rubble and thick mortar looks totally artless, but the effect is very carefully controlled, expensive hand-woven tweed for country wear; behind the stone, it well may be, is brick or even hollow tile.

Left: The Gothic arch has been as ubiquitous, within its shorter period of existence, as the Classical column. A Danish Renaissance castle, an 18th-century Oxford college, even a Greek Revival church in Ohio, have accepted the pointed arch as a symbol of religion or learning. In Calvary Episcopal Church in Shadyside, Ralph Adams Cram used a personal improvisation on Early English Gothic to symbolize a church whose roots were in England. He himself was an Anglican, indeed an Anglo-Catholic, and for him to use a style with English associations in this case was absolutely natural. There is a little more behind the design than this, though. The smooth limestone facing suits an urban church in a way that a rougher material would not, though the ample site and entourage of low houses keep transepts and a spire from being futile. The whole expression is generalized, succinct. Not skimpy: but Cram wanted a strong, telling design that would not be frittered away by ornament and that would bear being seen from a considerable distance. Indeed the spire, of whose composition he was especially proud, shows up as a light, clear form from miles away. Despite the Gothic associations there is a kind of modernity in the apparent simplicity.



Above: Alpha Terrace in Highland is, in drab reality, a double block front of 25 row houses, plain brick boxes. But the builder would not have it seen thus. He so faced the houses to the east that they give the effect of a rambling Queen Anne country house — or perhaps, houses squeezed together. And the houses to the west so that they seem like a castle, or castles — with porches! — submitted to the same treatment. This sort of thing is apt to be irritating, but here it is beautiful. It may be something to do with the scale: the width of the street, the height of the houses, the distance they are set back from the street. It may be a latent sense of drama, of the many individual lives behind the facades that their restless variety in massing and window forms imply. It may be a naive sense of conviction about the whole absurd thing that wins sympathy. Or some combination of these.

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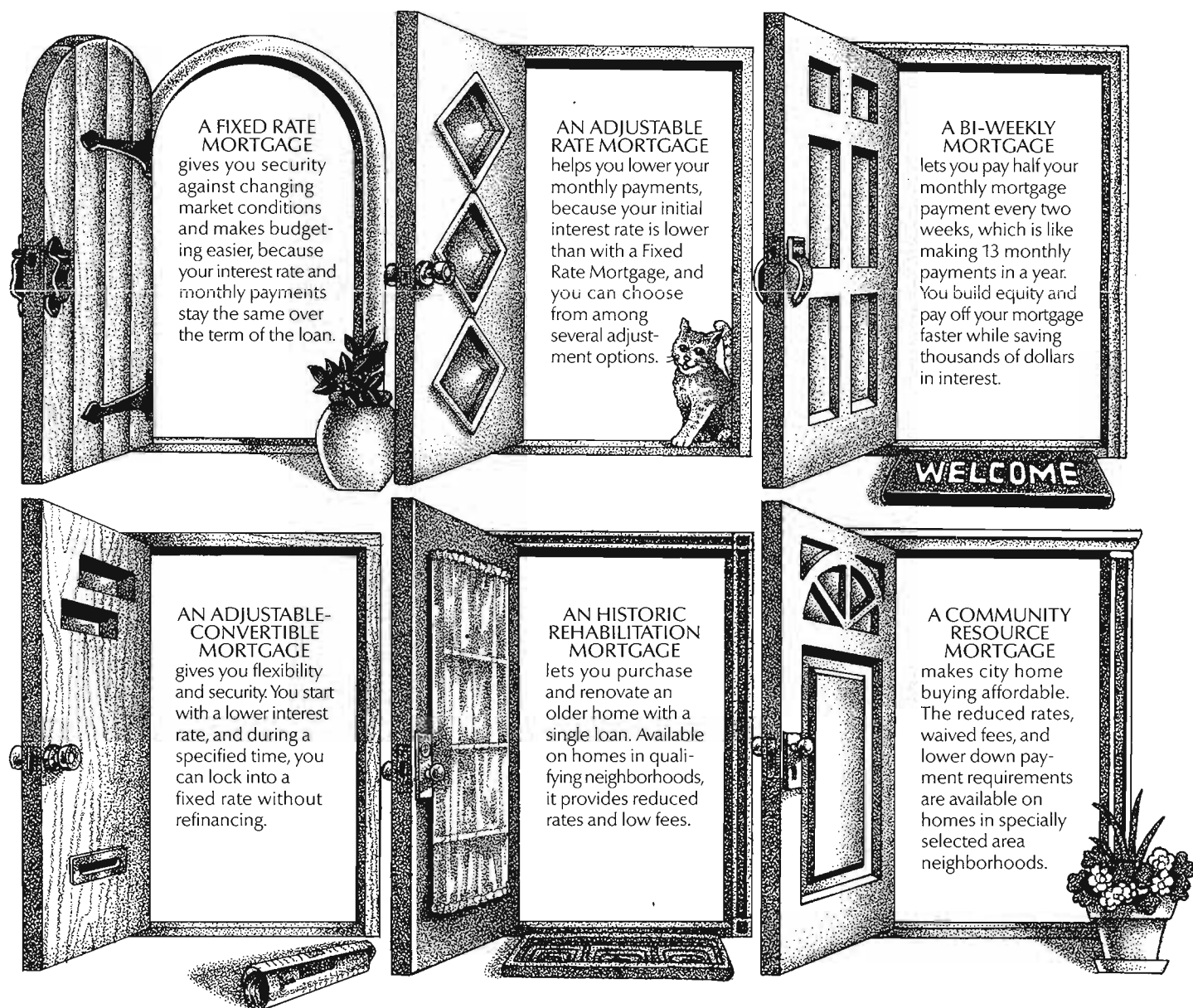
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