

PH LF NEWS

Published for the members of the Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation

No. 146 June 1997

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- The Joseph Urban Room
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- Pittsburgh Architecture: Bridges Coming Up, Going Down

Deutschtown: Now a City Historic District



Cedar Avenue, looking toward town.

On February 3, a small area in the eastern part of the North Side known as Deutschtown, or Dutchtown, was designated a City Historic District by the Pittsburgh City Council. Streets affected are the greater part of Cedar Avenue north of Pressley Street, fronting on the East Common, and Avery, Lockhart, and Pressley Streets, two blocks long and running parallel to East Ohio Street and east from Cedar Avenue, and parts of Nash and Moravian Streets.

The area is primarily domestic, with Cedar Avenue a little showier than the others as its park frontage might lead one to expect. Several houses have fancy fronts, one or two from the 1880s suggesting the wayward Romanticism of Joseph Stillburg, and a double house having bays with chamfered corners that suggest row-house design in the District

Allegheny United Church of Christ (to be mentioned later.) At one time, too, there was a mid-Victorian grade school close to Cedar Avenue and there were several institutional buildings to the east, cleared away with some houses around 1970 for I-279. The south side of Pressley Street, now occupied by a housing slab and little else, had houses, two large institutional buildings, a large garage, and a Masonic Hall earlier in this century. The present domestic character of this part of the Historic District is thus a mild distortion of its past, though certainly there is every reason to have designated what remains. The space of the streets is very agreeable; the width is a little less than fifty feet between the nearly-continuous house walls two or three stories high which are typically of red brick, so that the effect is intimate and special.

The elements of the present City Historic District, it should be known, had been part of a National Register District since 1983, once the I-279 peril had come to an end. Being on the National Register of Historic Places was not, however, a firm protection against destructive forces unless these forces depended on State or federal money. Positive protection had to come on the local level, from the City of Pittsburgh in this instance.

Landmarks helped convene meetings to bring into the open the concerns of residents of the potential District, concerns natural to property owners whose control of their properties is to be limited. The initiative for designation, however, came from the East Allegheny Community Council (EACC), which for some years has sought to stabilize what

was a deteriorating neighborhood. Absentee ownership was a problem, among other things. Voluntary efforts at restoration and maintenance, and new construction to harmonize with what is there have already done much, and City Historic District status will protect what has been done and, experience elsewhere suggests, encourage more of the same.

When the East Allegheny Community Council nominated Deutschtown on June 24 of last year, a public meeting had already been held to collect opinions and present facts. The property owners of the proposed District, in addition, had been notified according to law of the intention to nominate. (The EACC is of course an organization, but an individual has also the right to nominate something within Pittsburgh as a City Historic Structure or District.) What is covered in a nomination and any eventual designation is any exterior visible from a public street or place, and nomination automatically interdicts change to these exteriors for up to forty-five days while the Historic Review Commission of Pittsburgh (HRC) determines whether the nomination is valid; this is typically done with a public hearing. The Criteria for designation are worded as follows:

“Historic Structure” means anything constructed or erected, the use of which requires directly or indirectly, a permanent location on the land, including walks, fences, signs, steps and sidewalks, at which events that made a significant contribution to national, state or local history occurred, or which involved a close association with the lives of people of national, state, or local significance; or an outstanding example of a period, style, architectural movement, or method of construction; or one of the last surviving works of a pioneer architect, builder or designer; or one of the last survivors of a particular style or period of construction.

“Historic District” means a defined territorial division of land which shall include more than one (1) contiguous or related parcels of property, specifically identified by separate resolution, at which events occurred that made a significant contribution to national, state, or local history, or which contains more than one historic structure or historic landmarks, or which contains groups, rows, or sets of structures or landmarks, or which contains an

(continued on page 16)

Bigelow Boulevard Lives

The decision by Mayor Murphy to retain the block of Bigelow between Fifth Avenue and Forbes as a vehicular thoroughfare is cause for rejoicing and an audible sigh of relief. As our readers likely recall, the Mayor had last year advocated the obliteration of that block on Bigelow in order to give the University of Pittsburgh a putative increase in its pedestrian safety and palpable gratification of its unceasing push for urban Lebensraum. Readers will also likely remember the 30-day trial closing of the Boulevard last fall, with its rather ambiguous assessment and the equally indecisive results of innumerable surveys of public opinion. Now citing the generally negative impact of the trial closing, the Mayor has proposed joining forces (again) with the University to find a compromise that will preserve the Boulevard for cars. At the time of the announcement, a scheme was unveiled that called for the narrowing of the Boulevard to two lanes, the removal of parking in the debated block, and a more park-like landscape setting. And, yes, there was to be some better demarcation of pedestrian crossing points.

It would indeed seem that this was a Solomonic compromise—everyone got something and no one got everything. In this corner of the world, the unexpected volte-face is indeed welcome, since we have before said that Bigelow, as part of Pittsburgh’s great network of parks and boulevards, is a historical site of the greatest possible significance. There is, however, a sad irony in all the statements made about the non-closing. Cities elsewhere in the country (Louisville and Buffalo come to mind) are allocating great sums toward the restoration of their boulevard systems, often part of an overall scheme including linkage to parks, and often the handiwork of Frederick Law Olmsted or his firm. Pittsburgh’s parks-and-boulevards plan of the 1890s, created by Edward Bigelow, is a brilliant adaptation of the Olmsted scheme, and, as such, ranks as one of our most important demonstrations of city planning. Yet nowhere in all the verbiage of the closing issue did any public official offer the great aesthetic and historical significance of the Boulevard as even a secondary argument for retaining the thoroughfare in its unsevered entirety. The grim truth is that the public mind of the City, with regard to this aspect of the designed landscape, is just about where it was a half century ago: the cultural and economic importance of this vital asset is to be ignored, and the single cause of pedestrian safety is to be all that counts. We have the long-term experience of other pedestrian districts, Allegheny Center and the center of East Liberty, to teach us better.



St. Mary’s Priory, now a City Inn. of Columbia. Avery, Lockhart, and Pressley Streets are for the most part quieter in their house designs. Two churches stand out among the houses. One of these is the former St. Mary’s German Catholic Church, now Pittsburgh’s Grand Hall at The Priory, and The Priory—A City Inn. (The other is

Photo by William Rydberg, PHOTON

PH NEWS

Welcome New Members

(as of May 20, 1997)

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.

- Madalon Amenta

Arnheim Insurance Associates, Inc.

Mr. & Mrs. Thomas S. Barbush and family

Mary Bates

John W. Becker

Melicent Bielich

Miriam G. Bode

Edward Brandt

Linda J. Brown

Dr. & Mrs. George F. Buerger, Jr.

Beth Cameron

Harriette L. Carlisle

Lisa Castelli

County of Allegheny Office of Special Events

Lois A. and Donald F. Davies

Timothy C. Engelman

Agnes Weber Floyd and family

Klaus Giese

Gladstone Middle School

Marion Grafe

Maxine and Leo Hengin

Ralph Hofmann

Robert and Eleanor Katchur

John W. Kelly

Robert Kinsey

Barbara Koszka

James S. Kovacsik

Mr. & Mrs. Edward M. Krokosky and family

William E. Lafranchi
- Lizabeth Lanford

Mark Lofstead and Merri Klein

Margaret K. Long

Stanley C. Lore and family

Sara Masters

Al and Patricia Mature and family

Mark and Kim McCoy-O'Donnell and family

Mr. & Mrs. C. Hax McCullough

Kate Meeder

Joyce A. Milan

Mercedes Monjian

Morningside Elementary School

Bambi Morton

Carol and Ralph Nill

Brian A. Nogrady

Elliott Oshry

Pine Richland School District

Rowan School

Saint Bernadette School

Lisa Schlessman

Allegra Sedney

Thomas Simmons and family

George V. Smith

Bob Staresinic

Judy Stipanovich

Stephen Strein

Richard J. F. Sullivan

Kenneth S. Thompson, M.D.

The University Honors College

Christine Wovchko

Elsie Yuratovich

Welcome Corporate Members

(as of May 20, 1997)

- Benefactors**

Ellwood Group, Inc.

Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield

National City Bank of Pennsylvania

Oxford Development Company

PNC Bank
- Partners**

California University of Pennsylvania

Fayette Bank

Frank P. Hess & Company, Inc.

Graham Realty Company

Hilb Rogal and Hamilton Company of Pittsburgh, Inc.

Insurance Restoration Services

Johnson & Higgins of Pennsylvania, Inc.

Keystone State Savings Bank

Mellon Bank

NorthSide Bank

Sesame Inn Restaurants

Tempus Creative Services

Correction



In the March 1997 issue of *PHLF News*, we stated that the Lowen House on Lowenhill Avenue was in Beechwood. In fact, it is in Beechview. The Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation, the Jehovah's Witnesses (owner), and a prospective buyer are continuing

discussions to see if a way can be found to save the severely deteriorated but rare surviving board-and-batten house of c. 1860. As of publication, the forecast was promising.

PHLF News is published four times each year for the members of the Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation, a non-profit historic preservation organization serving Allegheny County. Landmarks is committed to neighborhood restoration and historic-property preservation; public advocacy; education and membership programs; and the continuing operation of Station Square, an historic riverfront property opposite downtown Pittsburgh.

- Arthur P. Ziegler, Jr.

Louise Sturgess.

Cathy Broucek.

Elisa J. Cavalier.

Tom Croyle.

Mary Lu Denny.

Mary Ann Eubanks.

Barry Hannegan.

Thomas Keffer.

Walter C. Kidney.

Linda Mitry.

Howard B. Slaughter, Jr.

Albert M. Tannler.

Gregory C. Yochum.

Ronald C. Yochum, Jr.

Greg Pytlik.
- President

Editor/Executive Director

Assistant to the President

General Counsel

Comptroller

Director of Membership Services

Education Coordinator

Director, Historic Landscape Preservation

Superintendent of Property Maintenance

Architectural Historian

Staff Accountant

Director of Preservation Services

Historical Collections Director

Horticulturist

Assistant for Public Policy and CIO

Designer

Torrence M. Hunt Fund for Special Projects

In March, Torrence M. Hunt informed the Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation of his decision to establish a Named Fund at Landmarks. "As a trustee of Landmarks and a donor to many of its projects," said Mr. Hunt, "I have been a strong supporter of Landmarks' work for more than three decades."

During the past decade, Mr. Hunt supported the publication of three major books by Landmarks and helped create the Riverwalk of Industrial Artifacts at Station Square. The Hunt Foundations sponsored the publication of *Allegheny Cemetery: A Romantic Landscape in Pittsburgh* (Landmarks; 1991) and contributed to the 1985 edition of *Landmark Architecture* and to the forthcoming edition of *Pittsburgh's Landmark Architecture*. As a member of Landmarks' Industrial Artifact Committee, Mr. Hunt arranged for Alcoa's donation of an aluminum reduction pot and for its installation at Station Square near the Gateway Clipper ramp. On several occasions, Mr. Hunt has contributed funds in support of the Riverwalk.

We are grateful to Mr. Hunt for establishing a Named Fund at Landmarks and look forward to working with him on future projects.

1996 Year-End Gift Donations

In addition to the donors listed in the March 1997 issue of *PHLF News*, Chevron Products Company recently matched gifts given by Elizabeth R. Bradley and Stephanie G. Sladek. The PPG Industries Foundation recently matched a gift from Mr. and Mrs. Robert Wardrop.

In Memoriam: Robert Garvey

We regret to announce the death of our good friend Bob Garvey, who served as the executive director of the National Trust for Historic Preservation at the time we founded Landmarks. Bob was helpful at the outset and helpful many times again through his years at the National Trust.

Bob was the second executive director of the Trust; he provided leadership in the enactment of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, and went on to serve as executive director of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation until his retirement in 1986. The Trust presented him with the Louise DuPont Cowninshield Award, the highest award given in historic preservation, in 1991.

He visited with us in Pittsburgh on a number of occasions and worked with our vice president Barbara Hoffstot when she served as a trustee of the National Trust; Bob developed a close friendship with the Hoffstot family.

In his retirement, he became active in environmental preservation and particularly took an interest in the Outer Banks Wildlife Shelter in North Carolina. He died on December 28 at the age of 75.

We are grateful for his encouragement, his constant assistance, and his friendship.



Left to right: Margaret Henderson Floyd, Franz Schulze, and David DeLong.

Jamie Van Trump's Legacy Celebrated

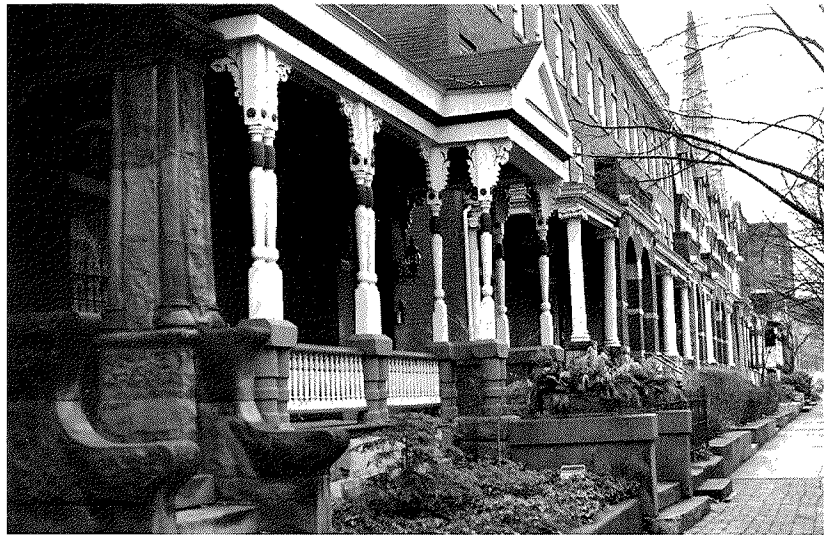
A symposium, "The Legacy of James D. Van Trump (1908-1995)," was held at the Frick Fine Arts Auditorium of the University of Pittsburgh on March 21. The impetus for the symposium came from The Friends of Frick Fine Arts of the University of Pittsburgh, who invited Landmarks and The Heinz Architectural Center of The Carnegie Museum of Art to plan and co-sponsor the four-hour event.

The symposium was organized around three themes central to Jamie's work, and three distinguished speakers were invited to address individual topics.

After a general welcome by David Wilkins of the University of Pittsburgh and reminiscences of Jamie by Barry Hannegan of Landmarks, Margaret Henderson Floyd of Tufts University, author of *Architecture after Richardson*, spoke on "The Heart of American Architecture: Regionalism Behind the Veil of Style." Architectural critic and historian Franz Schulze of Chicago, biographer of Mies van der Rohe and Philip Johnson, delivered "Notes on the Art of Architectural Criticism," and David DeLong, professor of architecture and historic preservation at the University of Pennsylvania, talked about "The Place of History in Historic Preservation."

After the presentations, members of the audience met the speakers and enjoyed coffee in the Fine Arts Building cloister.

Historic Landmark Plaque Awards

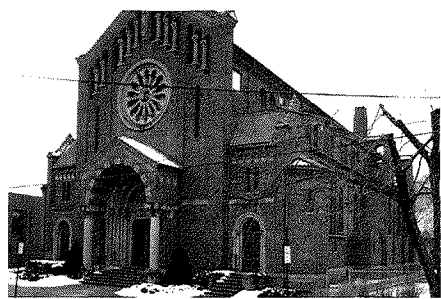


Beech Avenue, Allegheny West.

Our Historic Landmark Plaque Designation Committee, chaired by Richard Scaife, met on April 1 to consider twenty-four applications. Approved for Historic Landmark plaques were:

- **Allegheny West, as a district.** These were the “out-lots” in David Redick’s survey of Allegheny Town and its divisions. The town was surrounded by the Commons, intended as pasturage and the out-lots were farmland for the town’s property owners. Farming seems not to have enjoyed any activity after the first years of the nineteenth century, and the area now known as Allegheny West was urbanized by 1870.

Today it is bisected by a commercial street, Western Avenue, that contains an interesting mix of Victorian architecture, most of it once domestic. On the parallel streets are two outstanding churches, Emmanuel Episcopal by H. H. Richardson and Calvary United Methodist by Vrydaugh and Shepherd, but Mid- and Late Victorian house architecture of a substantial sort predominates in a setting of brick walks and old trees.

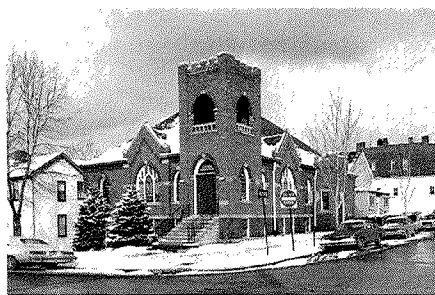


All Saints Church (above) and the convent (below).



- **All Saints Church, Etna.** This is a work in the Italian Romanesque style, built in 1914 to designs of John Theodore Comes. Comes, along with a few other Pittsburgh architects, led Catholic architecture away from awkward, showy design toward genuine beauty.

Victorian ecclesiastical architecture was apt to be hard in effect, to have decorative work that seemed added to rather than integral with the basic fabric of the church. All Saints has a bold porch, characteristic of the style, but its detailing is otherwise subordinate to the tall, very slightly modulated brick walls.



- **St. Matthew's African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, Sewickley.** This church of 1912 has rich associations for the African-American community, and is an element of Sewickley's historic center.



- **Hartwood Acres, Indiana Township.** This is not an innovative building group, to be sure; the house of 1928, the home of Mary Flinn Lawrence, is Elizabethan. But it is our immediate area's nearest approximation to a great Long Island house. The architect, Alfred W. Hopkins, indeed had a New York practice; his specialties were jails and farm buildings.



Service buildings at Hartwood Acres.



St. Colman's School (above) and St. Colman in his niche (below).



- **St. Colman's School, Turtle Creek.** The designer here was Edward Joseph Weber of Link, Weber & Bowers: a man with a bold imagination and a fine sense of materials. The raised red brick diaper pattern above the first floor is a remarkable, jaunty design, and St. Colman inside his Gothicised shell niche is awesome. This dates from 1927, just when H. L. Mencken traveled along Turtle Creek Valley despairing at its dreariness.



- **Dilworth Traditional Academy, East Liberty.** This is a design of 1914 by Vrydaugh & Wolfe, a well-established Pittsburgh firm. It is one of many Pittsburgh public schools to be constructed in the 1915 period. Its detailing suggests progressive influence from Chicago, where experiments in form and ornamentation characterized commercial, residential, and institutional design.



Establish a Named Fund at Landmarks

A Named Fund is an unrestricted contribution to the Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation's endowment fund. Each Named Fund is given a name (usually the donor's name), and is invested along with the rest of Landmarks' endowment and managed in accordance with applicable policies and procedures.

Accounting records are kept in a manner that separately identifies each Named Fund. Income and capital gains and losses experienced by the endowment are allocated pro-rata to the Named Fund according to its share of the value of the entire endowment. If the donor so requests when the Named Fund is established, Landmarks will communicate periodically with the donor of the Named Fund to discuss its status and the use of its income, identifying activities that may be of interest to the donor. By law, ultimate responsibility for determining how Named Funds will be used rests with Landmarks' Board of Trustees. However, Landmarks works closely with donors to accommodate the donor's specific interest (neighborhood revitalization, education, historic religious properties, etc.).

Income and, where permitted by law, realized net capital gains are used to fund Landmarks projects, subject to Landmarks policies regarding the expenditure of endowment income and net realized capital gains.

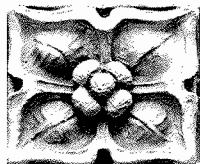
Questions regarding Named Funds may be referred to Cathy Broucek or Arthur Ziegler by calling (412) 471-5808.

Events for Members

Call Mary Lu Denny, Monday through Friday between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. at (412) 471-5808, for more information on the following tours and special events.

Weekly Downtown Walking Tours
Wednesdays, 12 Noon to 12:45 p.m.
June through September
Sponsored by The Galbreath Company
\$2 members; \$3 non-members

Meet at the fountain in the USX Tower Plaza and explore the architectural landmarks and corporate skyscrapers along Grant Street and surrounding Mellon Square Park.



Author's Reception:
Pittsburgh's Landmark Architecture
Thursday, June 19, 5:30 to 7 p.m.
5057 Fifth Avenue, Shadyside
\$50 members (\$40 tax deductible);
\$75 non-members (\$65 tax deductible)

Celebrate the publication of
Pittsburgh's Landmark Architecture
by Walter C. Kidney.

McKees Rocks Church Tour
Wednesday, June 25, 6 to 8:30 p.m.

Visit four churches in the McKees Rocks "Bottoms" and enjoy an ethnic dinner following the tour.

NAACP National Convention Tours

- **Bus Tour of East Liberty, Homewood, and Wilkinsburg**
Tuesday, July 15, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Enjoy a buffet lunch at The Southern Platter Restaurant.

- **Downtown Walking Tour**
Wednesday, July 16
12 Noon to 12:45 p.m.
Lemonade and cookies will be served at the Allegheny County Courthouse.

- **Bus Tour of Manchester and the Hill District**
Saturday, July 19, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Lunch will be served at the historic Crawford Grill.

The bus tours are \$30 for members and convention guests, and \$40 for non-members. The walking tour is \$2 per person.

Sewickley Garden Tour
Thursday, July 17, 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Visit eight private gardens in the Sewickley area and enjoy lunch at the Allegheny Country Club.

Downtown Dragons Family Tours
Saturday, August 2, 9:30 to 11:30 a.m.
Sunday, August 3, 2 to 4 p.m.

Search for gargoyles and other creatures carved in stone on this downtown walking tour for families.

Historic House Tour in Manchester
Sunday, August 17, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Join homeowners and Landmarks staff for a summer afternoon house tour in historic Manchester. More than a dozen private homes will be open.

Schenley Farms Walking Tour
Wednesday, August 20, 6 to 8 p.m.

Docents from Landmarks will lead guided tours through the Schenley Farms Historic District in Oakland.

Pittsburgh Bridge Lecture and Boat Tour
Thursday, August 28, Lecture 6 to 8 p.m.
Saturday, August 30, Boat tour aboard The Voyager, 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

See the ad on page 5 for details.

Micro-Brewery and Pub Tour
Saturday, September 13
12:15 to 5 p.m.

We will tour several micro-breweries located in historic Pittsburgh buildings.

Murray Hill Avenue Walking Tour
Wednesday, September 17, 6 to 8 p.m.

We'll stroll down Murray Hill Avenue in Squirrel Hill to Third Presbyterian Church, where light refreshments will be served.

Rudy Brothers Art Glass Tour
Sunday, October 19, 2 to 5 p.m.

Join Albert Tannler and author Joan Gaul for this afternoon bus tour exploring some of Pittsburgh's finest glass designed by the Rudy brothers.

The Grassroots Net

In the August 1996 issue of PHLF News, we discussed the need for a grassroots network to deal with public policy issues. Ronald C. Yochum, Jr., Landmarks' assistant for public policy, and other staff members are working on a number of issues affecting historic preservation. Here are just a few of the public policy matters currently under study and discussion:

Federal Urban Policy

Landmarks was pleased to be called upon to supply recommendations regarding Federal urban policy for a dinner meeting that was held with Richard Moe, the president of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and Vice President Al Gore. Landmarks supplied background information on successful historic neighborhood restoration programs here and recommended that Federal policy move away from specific programs developed in Washington and instead provide a flexible response to neighborhood-created and managed revitalization efforts.

We also recommended that less funding be provided for the urban expressways that empty cities, making it more difficult for inner-city residents to obtain jobs, and that more money be allocated toward transit systems that link urban residents and suburban commercial development.

We also underscored the importance of the proposed Homeowners Tax Credit for the restoration of historic housing by their owners. We urged curtailment of large-scale projects, often envisioned by planners and political leaders, that require major disruption of existing buildings and streets for the imposition of idealistic, visionary glamour projects. We urged, too, that the planning process be opened even further for involvement of citizens and grassroots organizations dedicated to their communities. These people, after all, will be living with the results of the planning efforts. Politicians and planners are often gone before the outcomes are clear: grassroots folks remain.

Homeowners Tax Credit Legislation

Federal legislation known as the "Historic Homeownership Assistance Act" is pending before Congress and would provide homeowners with a 20% tax credit of qualified rehabilitation expenses for restoring eligible historic houses. Eligible buildings would include owner-occupied homes listed on national, state, or local historic registers, and homes located in federal, state, or local historic districts. Such a tax credit would be a significant incentive for historic preservation of single-family and multi-family homes in urban areas where many of Pittsburgh's historic districts are located. Preservation Action in Washington, D.C. has taken the lead, together with the National Trust for Historic Preservation, to point out the value of this program and its potential to create private investment in the renewal of thousands of historic houses.

Amendments to the City Historic Preservation Ordinance

We provided extensive commentary in our November 1996 newsletter regarding the proposed amendments to the City Historic Preservation Ordinance and

we continue to work with the Historic Review Commission and City Council on these matters.

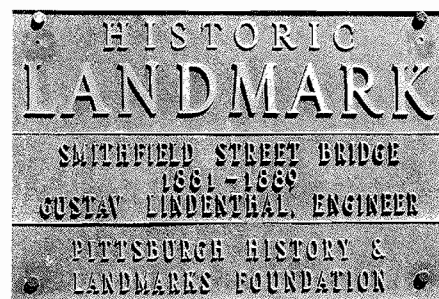
The Compromise Plan for Bigelow Boulevard and the University of Pittsburgh

We are pleased that the compromise plan will keep Bigelow Boulevard open as it passes between the Cathedral of Learning and the former Schenley Hotel, thereby maintaining the great boulevard system of Pittsburgh described in the August 1996 issue of PHLF News. Closing Bigelow at the Cathedral of Learning would have resulted in truncating one of the best pieces of urban planning in the history of the City. Landmarks testified at public hearings to that effect. Now we will be working closely with the City and the University to see that the area is appropriately landscaped.

The Airport Busway and the Wabash Bridge

For years, we have been working with the Port Authority regarding this huge project. We continue to feel that light rail should be built connecting downtown, Station Square, and the airport, using one of the existing but now unused rail lines to expedite service to the western communities and the airport.

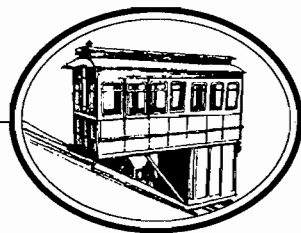
This spring, Paul Skoutelas, the new executive director of the Port Authority, concluded that the new "Wabash" bridge could not be built, given mounting expenses and political opposition. The summer of 1993 had seen intense discussion of the need for and the placement and design of the new bridge, and a handsome if awkwardly located bridge had seemingly been settled on. But then arguments broke out about approach alignments at both ends, and meanwhile the cost of everything inflated. Mr. Skoutelas recommended that the buses simply utilize a lane on Carson Street that would be designated for buses only and cross on the Smithfield or Fort Pitt Bridges. George White, a transit engineer now at Point Park College who was instrumental in the high-tech development at the new downtown Library Center, has proposed that the old Panhandle Bridge be paved for buses and have an HOV lane cantilevered on the downtown side: an inexpensive solution providing access to the Triangle for buses on an exclusive right-of-way, and an HOV lane to the Wabash Tunnel. He has obtained the support of the president of American Bridge, and studies show that the Panhandle Bridge can carry the additional weight. A two-story intermodal stop would be developed at the existing Station Square Light Rail and bus station. We support this commendable plan of Mr. White's; in fact, originally we had advocated the use of the Panhandle Bridge for both buses and Light Rail rather than PAT's expenditure of the huge sums necessary to build a new bridge that never seemed to us to be



Is Anything in Your Neighborhood Eligible for an Historic Landmark Plaque?

Call Cathy Broucek at (412) 471-5808 and ask about the criteria for Historic Landmark plaques and the nomination procedure.

Help us bring public recognition to architectural landmarks in Allegheny County.



THE SOCIETY FOR THE PRESERVATION OF THE DUQUESNE INCLINE

Dedicated to the preservation of that which cannot be replaced

For a membership please phone 381-1665

work: *Public Policy Issues*

feasible. This solution is much less costly and quicker to carry out.

The Mon Valley Expressway and Southern Beltway

Just as I-279 opened the land to the north of Pittsburgh to urban sprawl, consuming wonderful farmland needlessly for distant housing, so the Mon Valley Expressway will once again create a hemorrhaging of the city in favor of suburban sprawl. The City has the infrastructure in place for good housing and it has the accommodations for good living. Landmarks is advocating that we concentrate our scant resources on improving our historic neighborhoods and creating a good urban transit system rather than contributing to the waste of good land, the increase in highway noise and pollution, and the bleeding of the city.

The New Downtown Plan

Landmarks continues to serve on the various task forces for the development of a new downtown plan by the Department of City Planning. Landmarks staff members serve on the housing, planning, and marketing task forces.

Major Parking Facilities for the Golden Triangle

The health and well-being of historic buildings in the Golden Triangle are greatly affected by where downtown parking is located. Proposals for large parking garages are in order, but the location of these must be carefully considered. The current proposal to build a 5,000-car garage adjacent to the Civic Arena will put a further barrier between the historic Hill District and downtown. The planning of the lower Hill in the 1950s for an arts acropolis, apartments, and a home for the Civic Light Opera (the Civic Arena) resulted in the eradication of the homes of over 8,000 people, and a plan that was never carried out and in fact has largely been cancelled. But the Civic Arena and its parking lots already have formed a barrier, and a huge parking garage will do more to wall neighborhoods off from downtown Pittsburgh rather than connect them.

The Proposed Botanical Garden

At first it might seem that a botanical garden and historic preservation have nothing in common, but further examination of the proposal to locate a large new public botanical garden in Marshall Township provides a different perspective. Marshall Township is not readily accessible by any public transit, thereby eliminating or lessening the chances of job creation for and visitation by many inner-city residents, including minority residents who often live in historic neighborhoods. How much more beneficial it would be if a new attraction was self-sustaining and capable of generating employment opportunities for all of our people.

Landmarks has proposed that the idea of placing the botanical garden in or near one of the major public parks be studied; in particular, we have suggested

that conversation be opened with the residents in the Highland Park area where it could possibly be located adjacent to the zoo and overlooking the river. Such a development would also help provide needed funds for the maintenance of Highland Park.

Nominating Pittsburgh Historic Districts

Last year, we worked with the residents of several neighborhoods to determine whether they would like to be nominated for City Historic District designation. To date, Deutschtown has been so designated and several more neighborhoods may soon be nominated. Designation provides Historic Review Commission control of remodeling and demolition so that a neighborhood can retain its historic character. (Please see the cover story of this issue for more information.)

Regional Renaissance Partnership

The Mayor, County Commissioners, and the Allegheny Conference have proposed a \$1 billion improvement program for the City, primarily because the mis-conceived and deteriorating projects of the previous decades now require yet more investment. The improvement program involves the creation of a new ball park, improvements to the Civic Arena, possibly demolition of Three Rivers Stadium and its replacement, a major augmentation to the Convention Center, and a number of other projects. The huge investments in similar projects from 1950 to 1970 did not address housing needs in the neighborhoods, improvements to "Main Streets," or job-training opportunities and public-transit access to jobs. We will be commenting further upon the proposed improvement programs in a future newsletter, but we do want our members to know that we will be advocating that funds must be included in these vast expenditures for

the restoration of our historic neighborhoods and for job training for residents. These issues must be addressed if we are to have a vibrant city. Positive, strong commitments must be included in the Regional Renaissance Partnership. We must take care that we do not end up with a glittering array of projects that begin benefiting a few owners, sports teams, and investors, and eventually require further subsidies. Such enterprises may not benefit historic inner-city buildings or their inhabitants, and the claims of these must be heeded as well.

National Trust Regional Director Explores Opportunities for Partnership

On March 27, Patricia Wilson Aden, director of the Mid-Atlantic Regional Office of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, came to Pittsburgh to meet with Landmarks president Arthur P. Ziegler, Jr., and Howard B. Slaughter, Jr., director of preservation services. After discussing issues relevant to the Trust and opportunities for a collaborative partnership between the two organizations, Ms. Wilson Aden toured Manchester, the South Side, and Garfield.

Ms. Wilson Aden is interested in developing model programs here in Pittsburgh through the National Trust that will benefit other parts of the country as well. "We at the National Trust always view Pittsburgh as a leader. We hope by working together in this manner we are breaking new ground," said Ms. Wilson Aden. Howard B. Slaughter, Jr. commented: "This is a significant opportunity for Landmarks and demonstrates the important role our organization plays in regard to the historic preservation movement nationwide."



THE LANDMARKS STORE

The Book and Gift Shop of the Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation

OLD HOUSE BOOKS AND VIDEOS

Before you begin fixing up your old house, you might want to visit The Landmarks Store at Station Square. New book and video titles relating to home improvement include:

- *Inspecting an Old House Before You Buy*
Produced by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, this informative video will take the guesswork out of buying an older home. A preservation consultant guides you through several houses, addressing such important areas as roofing, structural soundness, electrical service, and plumbing. \$29.95
- *Caring for Your Old House*
This book provides helpful advice on inspecting a house for possible purchase: what to expect when considering repairs and hiring architects and contractors. \$16.95
- *Lighting for Historic Buildings*
One of the most perplexing questions facing a restorer is how to light an historic interior appropriately while meeting modern living needs. This book provides a valuable guide to the history of lighting, and catalogs 481 reproductions. The Landmarks Store has other books in this series: *Wallpapers for Historic Buildings*, *Fabrics for Historic Buildings*, and *Floor Coverings for Historic Buildings*. \$19.95 each.

Books on the care of moldings, windows, and other details of a building are also available. The Landmarks Store carries books on preservation law and on saving neighborhoods from inappropriate development.

Please show your Landmarks membership card at the counter to receive your 10% discount on the above prices. The Landmarks Store is open Monday through Saturday, 10 a.m. to 9 p.m., and Sunday, Noon to 5 p.m. For more information, call the store at (412) 765-1042.

Call Mary Ann Eubanks
at (412) 471-5808
if you are interested in

EXPLORING PITTSBURGH'S RIVERS AND BRIDGES

Sign up for a two-part education class. On August 28, education coordinator Mary Ann Eubanks and bridge engineer John Nedley will present a slide lecture on the history and design of notable Pittsburgh bridges.

On August 30, class participants will board the *Voyager* and embark on a three-hour river tour.

The class will be limited to 30 people.

The class fee will be \$40 for members of Landmarks and \$50 for non-members.

Call now for reservations.



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Preservation Scene

Burke's Building: Recalled to Life

For decades enterprises have been in and out of 209 Fourth Avenue, subjecting that gem of a building and its owners to the torture of hope. But now it is solidly occupied by the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy, which is finding use, to judge from the look of things at their February 6 opening, for every cubic inch.

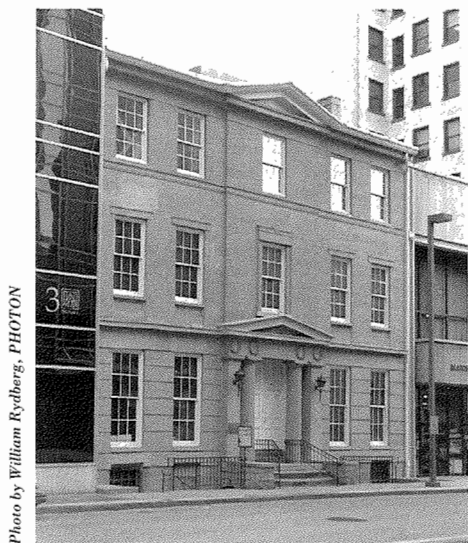


Photo by William Rydberg, PHOTON

Number 209 is also known as Burke's Building, a sandstone-fronted office building of 1836 designed in the Greek Revival style by the English-born John Chislett. Other buildings in the Triangle that have some claim to be Greek Revival in their lines and their period have none of the swank of Burke's Building, with its Grecian Doric columns and Napoleonic wreaths, luckily bypassed by the Fire of 1845 and untouched by the building's own burning-out around 1900.

Inside, only a little window woodwork remains of the trim from 1836; the rest is metal stairs, pressed-metal ceilings, bare brick in places, a variety of features and surfaces from the post-1900 period, up to Landmarks Design Associates Architects' modifications of 1996 for the Conservancy.

The Conservancy is proud of what it calls a "green" renovation of the building, one conservative of resources. The first consideration was the re-use of as much extant building material as possible, supplementing this with new natural or recycled material. The building shell was carefully insulated. Electricity consumption was reduced to the minimum, thus minimizing unwanted heat. A natural-gas heating and cooling system is not only economical to run but does not emit certain pollutants. Non-toxic finishes and carpeting were used to improve air quality. Drywall is made of recycled newsprint.

Credited for the conversion work are Landmarks Design Associates Architects, Conservation Consultants, Inc., and the Carnegie Mellon University School of Architecture, all of Pittsburgh, and the Rocky Mountain Institute of Snowmass, Colorado, with support from the Vira I. Heinz Endowment.

Hillside Stability

The Port Authority has stabilized the side of Mount Washington where the Duquesne Incline crosses the busway from the Triangle to Carnegie. Loose material has been removed, and eighteen rock bolts installed.



Photo by William Rydberg, PHOTON

Liberty Avenue Restorations

In our August 1996 issue we showed the fronts of 801 and 803 Liberty Avenue in the process of being stripped of the Dimling Candy sign that had covered their upper floors since 1953. This February, the restored fronts (including ones on Eighth Street and Exchange Way) were revealed. The buildings can be documented as far back as 1877, though the Eighth Street front of 801 suggests Greek Revival of c. 1850. A remodeling permit of 1892 is the principal document used in Landmarks Design Associates Architects' restoration for The Pittsburgh Cultural Trust. The buildings are next to Benedum Center, and the Original Oyster House, long at Market Square, has branched out into 801.

HRC Report

The Historic Review Commission (HRC), City of Pittsburgh, published its report for 1996 in February. The HRC is responsible for about 2,000 buildings in nine districts, thirty-nine historic structures, and one historic site. Continuing the report, then: historic nominations were processed for adding the Syria Mosque site to the Oakland Civic Center Historic District (eventually approved by City Council); for creation of the Deutschtown National Register District as a City Historic District (approved by City Council); and for designation of Pennsylvania Hall and the Mineral Industries Building on the Pitt campus as City Historic Structures (rejected). For Preservation Week in May of 1996 the HRC presented its annual awards for outstanding projects; there were seventeen of these. The HRC walking-tour brochures are still available, and this fact was mentioned; so was the existence of the Pittsburgh Register of Historic Places, completed in 1993. Finally, the HRC declared that it had issued 190 Certificates of Appropriateness, affecting buildings under its jurisdiction. Most required no approval from the HRC at its monthly meetings, and the average time for a Yes or a No to applicants was 6.6 business days.



Shouse House to Be Demolished

In March, the Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation learned that the Shouse house of c. 1840 on Main and Bridge Streets in Glenwillard was to be demolished. This promised a sad end to a building of historical significance in a small community near the county line.

Glenwillard was originally Shousetown, and this was the house of its founder Peter Shouse, a boat builder who came here in 1822. The original house was a three-bay construction with a chimney at one end; at a later date, a five-bay addition with a chimney at each end was added, reproducing the original details, and the porch that gave the street front a nearly symmetrical appearance must have been added later still.

Shousetown was a boat-building area through most of the nineteenth century, but its supreme moment was probably in 1867, with the launching of the hull of the *Great Republic*, designed by Nathan Porter, a relative of Peter Shouse. This, one of the grandest packets in the Lower Mississippi River service, was fitted with machinery and cabins at Pittsburgh.



The Women's Cabin on the Great Republic.

Murals Survive Church Demolition

The condemnation of St. Mary's German Catholic Church in McKeesport, in consequence of a parish merger, raised the question of what would happen to its art. Candlesticks and the like were easily transferred, but Dargate Galleries was more ambitious in wanting a dozen murals, up to forty feet high and attached to the walls with a mixture of glue, paint, plaster, and tacks. Boris Brindar, of Restore, Inc. in Highland Park, spent three months getting them down. Eleven were auctioned to Our Lady of Fatima parish, which is moving from its little Romanesque church on the South Side to a former school in Collier, where the gymnasium will become a chapel.



Schoolhouse Arts Center Building

The Schoolhouse Arts Center, a historic red-brick schoolhouse at 2600 South Park Road in Bethel Park, needs further rehabilitation work, specifically improvement of the heating system. This will require \$25,000, and donations in any amount will be greatly appreciated. Discussions, in the meantime, have taken place regarding possible performing-arts programs.

Communicate with Mary Kennedy at (412) 385-7170, or use voice mail at (412) 488-8778.

Call Us

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.



Homewood Cemetery Greenhouse to Be Razed

Major historical structures at Homewood Cemetery seem destined for destruction: greenhouses of 1909-10, consisting of a very large Palm House in vaulted form with five gabled wings. These were the work of the Pierson U-Bar Company, a subsidiary of the famous Lord & Burnham company of Irvington, New York, the builders of the Phipps Conservatory.

The greenhouses are no longer serving their original function of growing and sheltering cemetery plants.

Unfortunately too, through the years the greenhouses have deteriorated. They had always been expensive to maintain, and Cemetery officials had taken to maintaining them as best they could, substituting corrugated plastic for the Palm House roof glass and installing plastic across all of the growing rooms in the winter to help keep the heat in and the moisture out, hanging rolls of plastic inside the growing rooms in order to conserve heat by keeping it at plant level, not up at the glass ceiling: yet at all times trying to honor the architecture of the existing buildings.

Weather and age have continued to take their toll; the cyprus mullions have rotted away through the years, the glass panels have broken, and repairs continue to increase in their expense.

Below the greenhouses is a vast basement storage area, simply built against the hillside without a real side wall. Dampness permeates the area from both the greenhouses above and the hillside itself, and an engineer has declared that it is not even feasible to demolish the greenhouses and put a new roof over the basement.

As we have said, the greenhouses are not needed as they once were. The Cemetery once grew all its plant materials, its seasonal flowers, and even vines and shrubs in the greenhouses, and at times tropical plants for the



private mausoleums wintered over there. Although the greenhouses are still functioning for growing materials, the regulations of the Environmental Protection Agency regarding the use of chemicals and the ready availability of plant

materials from professional growers make the \$300,000-a-year operating cost wasteful. The Cemetery is able to acquire its plant materials from growers at much less cost than that of trying to maintain the buildings, grow the materials, and deal with the environmental regulations.

Landmarks and a number of others have inspected the buildings and have had to concur that the costs of restoration would be extremely large and the use of the buildings for the Cemetery no longer appropriate. The Cemetery has attempted to seek the \$600,000 required to restore the buildings, but has not met with success, and it appears at this writing that they will be demolished in late summer.

There is an adjacent warehouse building possibly of the mid-1930s, a handsome brick building. It will be retained, and a new warehouse building will be erected next to it that will be complementary in its architectural design.



More News on the Neptune Statue

After reading the article "Neptune Fountain at Phipps Conservatory" in the March issue of *PHLF News*, Mrs. James G. Hunter called to inform us that the restoration of the statue by Karkadoulis Bronze Art, Inc. was made possible from donations in memory of Mary Reed Sutton, an original member of the 1975 ad hoc committee for the restoration and preservation of Phipps Conservatory and also a member of Landmarks.

On September 12, 1996, Phipps Conservatory, Partners in Parks, and the City of Pittsburgh Department of Parks and Recreation sponsored a dedication ceremony at the Phipps Conservatory lily pools to celebrate the return of the newly refurbished Neptune statue.

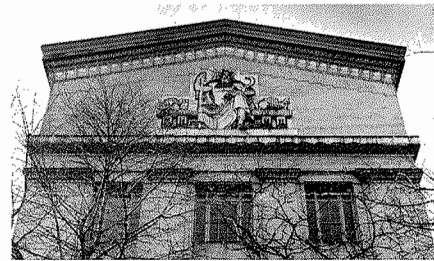
The bronze statue was cast c. 1858

and graced the Conservatory's front entrance around 1895. Neptune later was moved to various locations and eventually was vandalized. Its refurbishment and return to Phipps Conservatory in 1996 was justly celebrated.



Hornbostel Buildings at Pitt

Two fragments of Henry Hornbostel's grand hillside scheme for the University of Pittsburgh, proposed to the Pittsburgh Historic Review Commission as City Historic Structures, have been rejected by that body as having insufficient architectural interest in themselves. The City's Planning Commission and City Council will very likely agree. Landmarks agrees too, but with the



additional recommendation that the relief sculpture of *Aesculapius* on Pennsylvania Hall, a part of the intended Medical School, and the lively terracotta doorframe of the Mineral Industries Building, the original Dental School, be preserved and re-erected in new construction. *Aesculapius* occupies almost the whole height of the Medical School's gable, and would be a startling figure to encounter if properly sited, while the fancy Dental School doorway would absolve a fair-sized modern building from any further architectural obligations.

Jill Watson Fund

A fund has been announced to commemorate the architect Jill Watson, partner in Arthur Lubetz Associates, who was killed in the TWA Flight 800 disaster. She had been an adjunct professor of architecture at Carnegie Mellon University, and the fund will support WATS: ON?, the Jill Watson Festival of the Arts, to be held annually at CMU. The first festival was held this March.

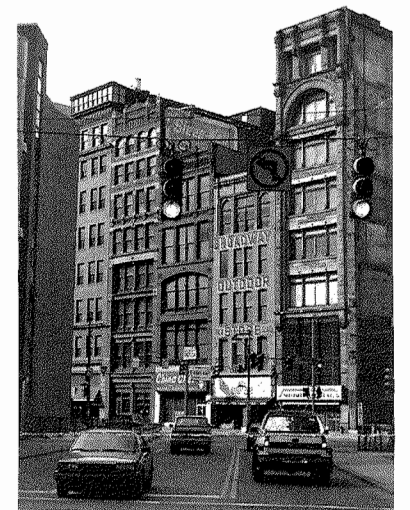
Though the Lubetz office is best known for bold Post-Modern work, Jill Watson will be remembered among other things for 5437 Penn Avenue where she restored a four-story commercial-residential building for the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation. Another Flight 800 victim, Judy Penzer, painted a mural, *Bride on Penn Avenue*, on a plain side wall of 5437 in a design continuing that of adjacent houses.

Contributions can be made to: The Jill Watson Fund, Carnegie Mellon University, 5000 Forbes Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15213. Checks should be made payable to Carnegie Mellon University.

What's the Architecture?

Walter C. Kidney

The City of Pittsburgh's historic preservation ordinance protects only exteriors visible from public land. In a flat-roofed building, such as a commercial structure on Liberty Avenue, the protection is confined to facades, to a few inches' depth at one end of a building 160 feet deep. In a way this seems absurd: function and structure can be altered infinitely behind this surface, whose fancy treatment says nothing about what it covers, save that it apparently needs all the light and air it can get. A utilitarian mind would



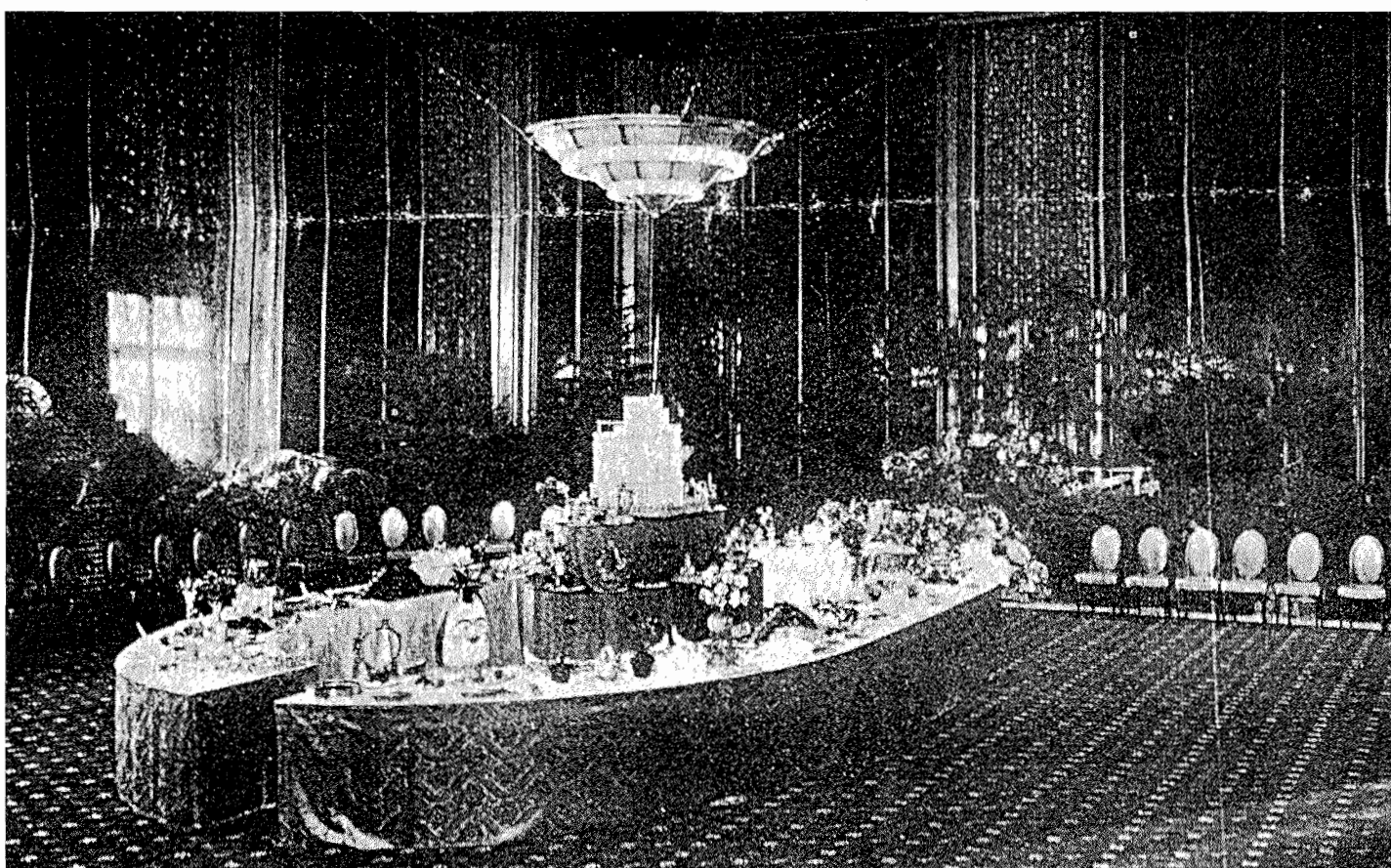
Architecture as a branch of the skin trade.

just as soon see the facade come down. It is a screen, a mask; the joists probably run side-to-side between the party walls so it holds nothing up, and plain construction is good enough to complete the enclosure. To demand preservation of the fancy front is to ignore the reality of the building, which consists of spaces and the materials sufficient to define them.

And yet: think of this fancy commercial front as the cover of a catalogue. The cover takes up only a small fraction of the catalogue's thickness, but it is designed to be more evocative than the drab and colorless factuality of its pages; thus it is vividly designed, treated and printed (as it were) in full color on better stock. Seen this way, special attention to a facade makes sense. And even as structure, plan, and function are altered within, an analogy may be possible between a traditional catalogue cover and different offerings, over the decades, as a result of the company's introduction and withdrawal of products. Consider the Regina brand name: music boxes in 1900, vacuum cleaners a half-century later; the name persisted, the sounds changed.

Believing that...through beauty life could be made joyous, to create beauty became his goal, and by virtue of that he lived and died a great artist....It is seen in his architecture, in his decorative interiors, in his stage productions, in his murals, which were, when the final analysis is made, merely reflections and inevitable results of his nature. The joyous spirit dwelt with him, grew with him, and went out from him into others' lives.

Otto Teegen, "Joseph Urban,"
Architecture, May 1934



The Urban Room set for the opening luncheon on May 9, 1929.

The Joseph Urban Room: Landmarks and the William Penn Work Together

Albert M. Tannler

On March 4, the Westin William Penn Hotel held a reception to unveil a refurbished Urban Room, sixty-eight years after the opening of the room celebrated a major expansion of the hotel in 1929.

News accounts recorded that inaugural opening. One reported:

Last night for the first time, the Urban room, connecting the seventeenth floor of the addition to the ballroom, was thrown open. The interior was designed by Joseph Urban, New York, famous for his stage settings, and is done in a motif of gold and black. The decoration is carried out in the colors of Pittsburgh from top to bottom

Another account stated that the room "is regarded as one of the most beautiful public rooms in the country. It is named after its designer and decorator."

Whether the owner of the hotel who commissioned the Urban Room or its designer chose black and gold as a tribute to local boosterism or for purely aesthetic reasons, the Urban Room has served its constituency well: it is a remarkable space designed by a remarkable artist.

Joseph Urban

Joseph Urban (1872–1933), Viennese-born and trained, was something of a prodigy. At the age of nineteen, while still a student of architecture at the Vienna Academy of Fine Arts, he received his first design commission to decorate the palace of the Khedive of Egypt. His trip to Egypt had a decisive influence on his work. He later wrote:

The strange deep blue of the Mediterranean, the white city, the flaming sails of the boats, the riot of color in the costumes, and over all a purple sky—this enormous impression followed me my whole life and dominated for years my color schemes.

Urban's talent for design was prodigious and many-sided. He designed buildings and all aspects of their interior decoration. He was commissioned by the Austrian government to design stamps and currency. He was a noted illustrator of children's books. He designed calendars, posters, and exhibitions—his prize-winning interiors for the Austrian Pavilion at the St. Louis Exposition in 1904 are but one of many examples.

In 1911, Urban came to America where he spent the remainder of his life and where he continued to combine diverse design careers. His stage sets, lighting design, costumes, and stage direction for opera, theater, Broadway extravaganzas, and films revolutionized these fields. He designed buildings in Palm Beach, Florida—such as the Bath and Tennis Club, the

Paramount Theatre, and several houses including a remodeling of "Mar-a-Lago" (now a National Historic Landmark) for Marjorie Merriweather Post. Urban's completed projects in New York, Pittsburgh, Cincinnati, Detroit, and Chicago included theaters, hotel banquet and reception rooms, restaurants, social and athletic clubs, a clothing store, an office building, residential interiors, and a city college (the New School for Social Research). His last position was lighting director for the Century of Progress Exposition, which opened in Chicago shortly after his death in 1933.

Joseph Urban and Pittsburgh

In 1926 Joseph Urban submitted a set of designs for a proposed first-floor remodeling of Kaufmann's Department Store; the project was awarded to Pittsburgh architects Janssen & Cocken.

In 1927 the Pittsburgh Hotels Company commissioned Janssen & Cocken to design a Grant Street addition to Pittsburgh's grand hotel, the William Penn—a logical commission since Benno Janssen and his former partner Franklin Abbott had designed the original hotel building on William Penn Place for Henry Clay Frick in 1914. Construction began in 1928. Then, later that year, the William Penn was sold to hotel developer Eugene C. Eppley. In August of 1928—presumably at Eppley's request—Joseph Urban prepared designs for a men's lounge, tea room, and exhibition room for the hotel. These designs were not executed.

Around this time Urban also designed

tile for a swimming pool in a new wing of the Irene Kaufmann Settlement in Pittsburgh's Hill District. (See "Another Overlooked Pittsburgh Design by Joseph Urban—Now Gone" on page 9.)

The Urban Room

In 1929 Urban designed the room in the William Penn Hotel that bears his name (the second of three hotel reception rooms to be so named) adjacent to the Grand Ballroom on the seventeenth floor. The Urban Room could be used as an extension of the ballroom or as a separate reception or banquet room. On May 9, 1929, 1,500 guests gathered there to celebrate the opening of the "Greater William Penn Hotel."

Urban's banquet room has walls of black Carrara glass, outlined in gilt trim, rising from a black and green marble base to a four-tiered concave gilt molding. The elliptical ceiling painting, which is surrounded by four gold concentric rings, has a border of twelve colorfully dressed women playing musical instruments in a field of golden flowers. Behind the players, across a blue waterway, exotic buildings are set against a blue sky. The sky serves as the background for a filigree of golden branches in the center of the painting. Fourteen murals around the room depict an exotic tree set within a flower bed. Urban colored blossoms and branches purple, pink, green, brown, gold, blue (a blue-green shade called "Urban blue"), white, and black. Originally the wood floor was painted black, and movable carpeting, it has been surmised, was laid as occasions dictated. A large cone-shaped bronze chandelier reflected light upward onto the ceiling painting.





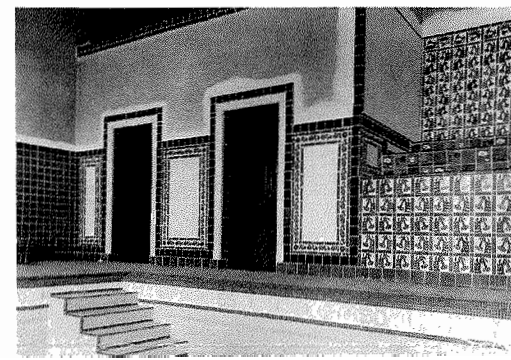
stin William Penn Hotel.

Another Overlooked Pittsburgh Design by Joseph Urban—Now Gone

Today the Irene Kaufmann Settlement will dedicate their \$650,000 addition....The blue swimming pool ranks among the beautiful pools of the country, the tile work being the design of Joseph Urban.

The Index of Pittsburgh Life, January 18, 1930

Recently Martin Aurand, Architecture Librarian and Archivist at Carnegie Mellon University, sent me a copy of an article about the Irene Kaufmann Settlement in the Hill District. The article by Edward M. Power appeared in the February 1932 issue of *Greater Pittsburgh* and documents Joseph Urban's design of



A Walk Along Carson Street

Walter C. Kidney

The City Historic District centered on East Carson Street has been in existence long enough to offer a number of examples of new commercial fronts in old buildings, and show how they are fitting in. Most of the District's ground-floor fronts predate the District's designation, for better or worse. Several of these are worth commending.



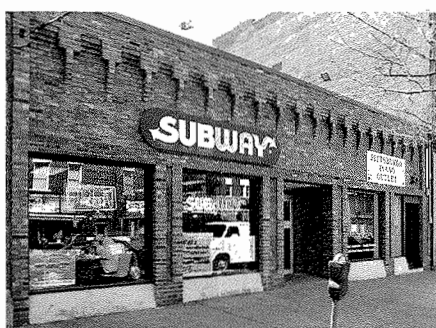
1212-18 East Carson

Photos by William Rydberg, PHOTON



1113-15 East Carson

Numbers 1212-18, where gangly Romanesque in tan brick perches over Modernistic etched black glass, stand out. At 2022, the Subway sign is crass, but the corbel table along the top of the facade has real verve. Le Pommier, at 2104, re-uses and duplicates an authentic Greek Revival wooden shop front that had remained at the site. The front of 2312 has a charming fakery about it:



2020-22 East Carson



Le Pommier, 2104 East Carson

a pseudo-gambrel gable in mellow brick and stucco, fronting a plain brick box; the effect suggests a home-grown Dutch Expressionism, from 1930 or thereabouts at a guess.

Of the post-designation commercial fronts, most are harmonious and inoffensive. They are inclined to have open frames of wood or metal, little-adorned and holding large areas of glass, as in the cases of Rustica International and the adjoining Natural and Organic Food Market in the 1100 block. Other examples of this minimal style, admitting much light to interiors inclined to be deep and spacious, are the Tuscany Café at 1501, Bruschetta's in the 1800 block, and the yet-unlabeled shops in the Maul Building, dark skeletons of framework within cream-colored 1910-period terra

cotta. Fascia signs tend to use Roman lettering faces, not too large.

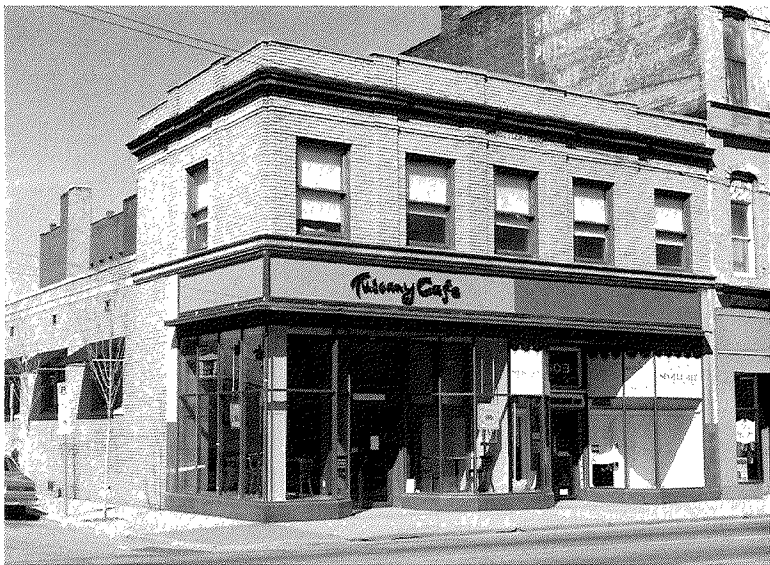
The effect, as such frontage extends along the street, will be inoffensive but perhaps a little too self-effacing, too



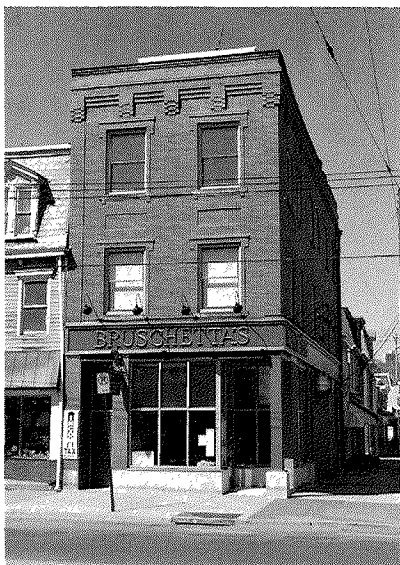
2312 East Carson, to the right of Cupka's Cafe II.

subdued for the brash and bold red-brick fronts typically found above. Fat City at 1601 (chrome, black glass, neon) and City Grill at 2019 (black-and-white tile checkers with blue neon) are desirable interruptions to the encroaching good taste, which again is to be found in the plain building now under construction on 18th Street at the northeast corner. On the other hand, simple hanging signs, oval in shape and unusually pleasant in design, give distinction to the two Always A Monday establishments, laundry and cafe, at 2328-30.

One of the most remarkable district fronts of any period is still under construction at 2009; a work of Integrated Architectural Services, that is of John Martine, it has a fantastic quasi-Classical composition like a two-level colonnade



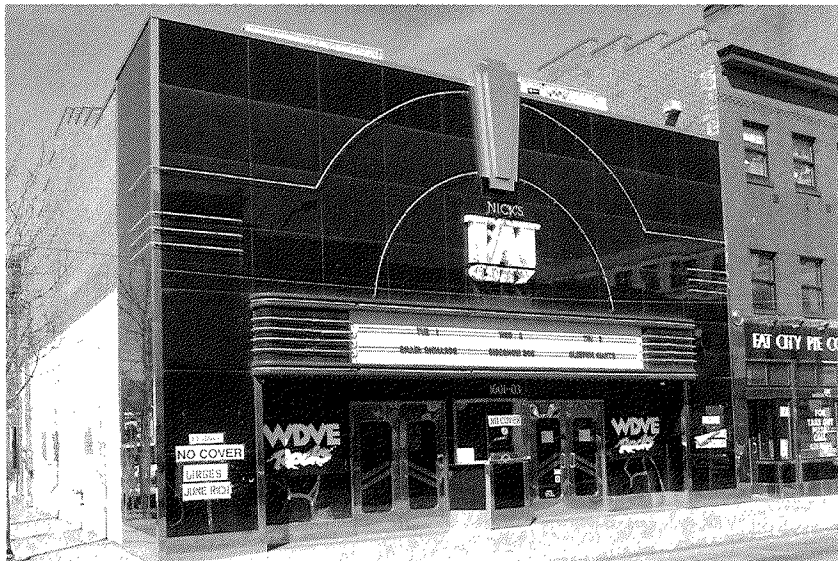
Tuscany Café, 1501 East Carson



18th and East Carson



City Grill, 1219 East Carson



Fat City, 1601 East Carson

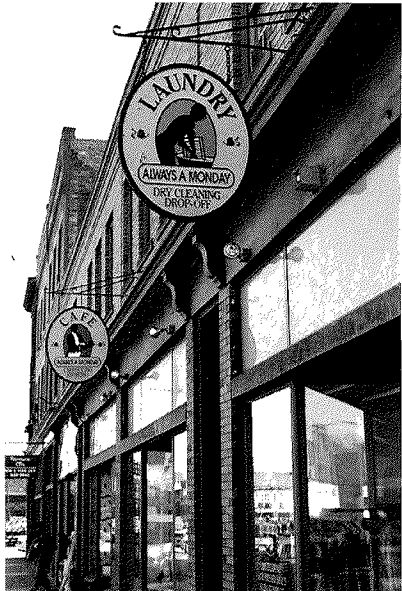
with a bracketed cornice, all done in welded and bolted steelwork with standing flanges creating strong shadows and silhouettes everywhere. Encased in plain red brick, this work of steel Classicism has a color yet to be determined. Martine says maybe “grey-blue green,” standing free of a red curtain

**The occasional walk
along East Carson Street
looks as if
it will offer fresh
and pleasant experiences
henceforth.**

wall, though a final decision on color had not been made at the time of writing. Another notable first-floor front is that of Sushi Two at 2122, Japanese in expression with woodwork light in color though solid in appearance that includes doors with close-spaced slats flush with their frames. Above is a false roof with Japanese pantiles.

Finally, the South Side Planning Forum is hoping that the western end of the old Jones & Laughlin site, as far east as 27th Street and north to the anticipated marina, will see commercial design similar in its nature.

Over all, we might applaud a little more boldness of contrast between the new commercial fronts and the old-and-bold Victorian upper stories. Yet the Historic Review Commission and advising South Side organizations are leading commercial design in the District away from the characterlessness that so often prevailed before, and the occasional walk along East Carson Street looks as if it will offer fresh and pleasant experiences henceforth.



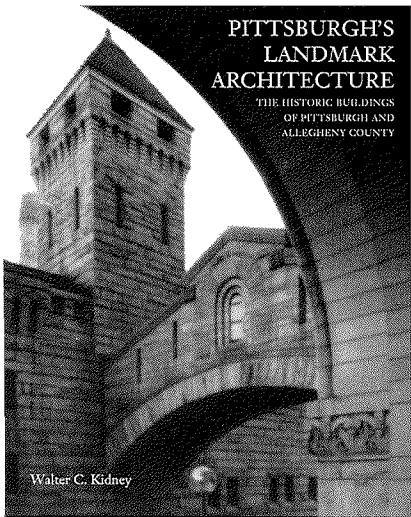
Signage at 2328-30 East Carson



2122 East Carson



2009 East Carson, under construction



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PITTSBURGH ARCHITECTURE:

Bridges Coming Up, Going Down

Walter C. Kidney

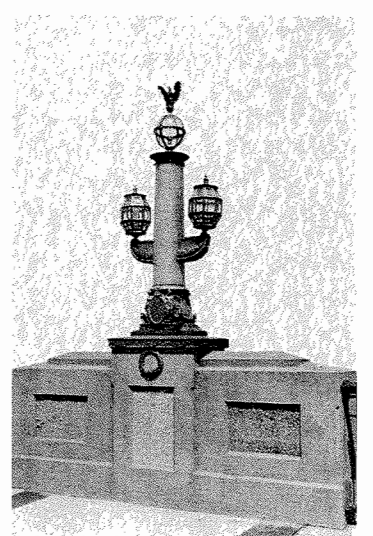
The Larimer Avenue Bridge, when completed in 1912, was said to have the second-largest concrete arch span in the world: 312 feet with a 67-foot rise. The City's engineer T. J. Wilkerson designed a mighty construction of bristling steel reinforcement held in place by a seeming chaos of timber formwork and falsework.



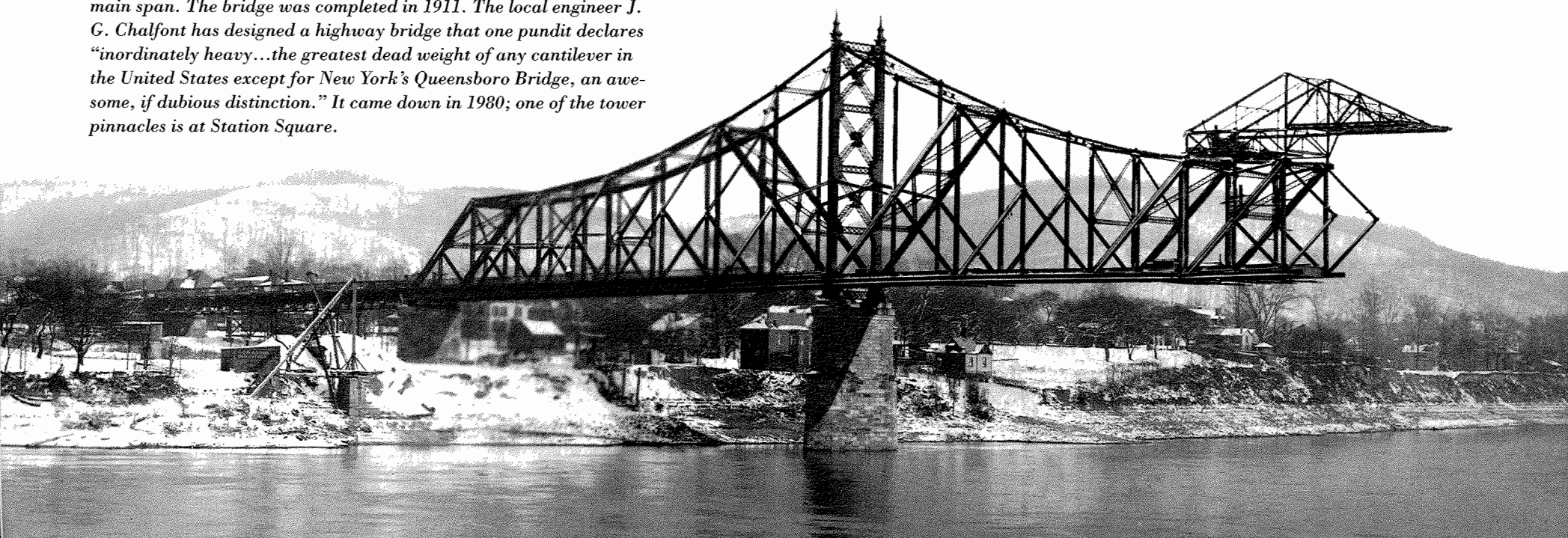
Construction shots for bridge projects are not too commonly seen, yet how interesting they can be, revealing the esoteric processes by which some great span was formed. Here are a few from our library.

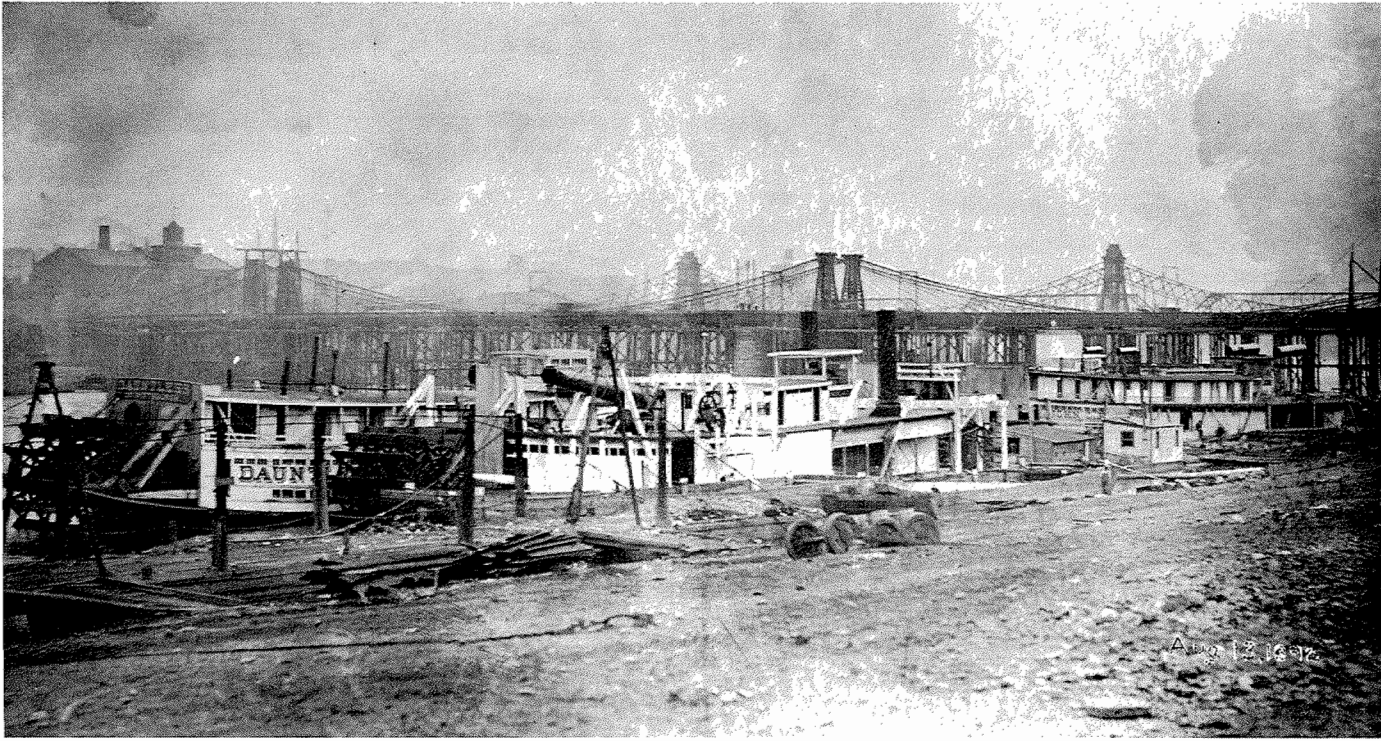


The Sewickley anchor span completed, the main span of the Sewickley Bridge seems to be clawing its way into space, with much will but no purpose. As it happens, the matching element is reaching out from Stoops Ferry. This is a cantilever bridge with a 750-foot main span. The bridge was completed in 1911. The local engineer J. G. Chalfont has designed a highway bridge that one pundit declares "inordinately heavy...the greatest dead weight of any cantilever in the United States except for New York's Queensboro Bridge, an awesome, if dubious distinction." It came down in 1980; one of the tower pinnacles is at Station Square.



The City Architect Stanley Roush topped off the Larimer Avenue Bridge with these lamps, absurd as a combination of elements but beautiful nonetheless.





In 1891, John Augustus Roebling's Sixth Street Bridge of 1859 came down; it was yielding place to Theodore Cooper's new truss bridge that could take the weight of electric trolleys. At this point, falsework holds up the deck, soon to be deprived of its support. Behind it is Gustav Lindenthal's Seventh Street Bridge. In the foreground, at the James Rees & Sons boatyard, are steamers that are probably awaiting repairs.



In September 1912, the project to carry Atherton Avenue over the Pennsylvania main line had gone this far: arch falsework that looks very light, sprays of reinforcing rods.



Photo courtesy of The Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh

Light's Golden Jubilee

Such was the name of the grand illumination shown here, a celebration in 1929 honoring the fiftieth anniversary of the light bulb. A similar event, outlining or festooning bridges and buildings, occurred in 1938 on the County's sesquicentennial.

The Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation participated in discussions on bridge lighting a few years ago, and came out in favor of just such pearl strings of light as are shown here. The alternative of floodlighting the bridges seemed to break up their airy superstructures too much and destroyed the effect of reflections on the water.

Bold Bridges

Opinions may differ on the Miesian starkness of One Oliver Plaza, but a look at that building when the sun falls on it reveals a remarkable color: a strong cinnamon with a singing quality, a far from negative hue. Such a color with a little more red in it, but no darker, would bring out the superstructures of our steel bridges, define their ossatures clearly and present them heroically. We should say goodbye to Aztec Gold, the PennDOT color of choice that begins in a vulgar curbstone hue and weathers to the color, witness the Liberty Bridge, of watery mustard.

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For a great selection of Pittsburgh books, videos, gifts and classic photos, visit The Landmarks Store!

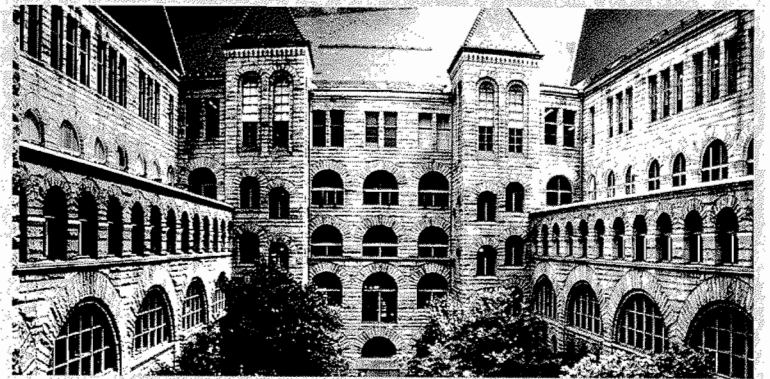
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(Some restrictions apply; valid through August 31, 1997)

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CREATING A FUTURE FOR PITTSBURGH BY PRESERVING ITS PAST

Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation

One Station Square Suite 450 Pittsburgh, PA 15219-1134

Education News

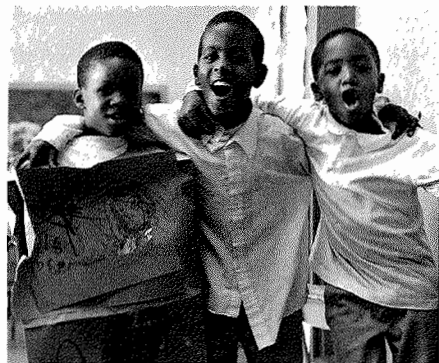
African-American Timeline to Be Reprinted

Thanks to a grant from Dollar Bank, the Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation is reprinting "The African-American Legacy in Allegheny County: A Timeline of Key Events." Dollar Bank supported the initial printing of the timeline in December of 1995 and 2,500 copies were distributed to schools, libraries, community groups, churches, etc. during Black History month in 1996. The second edition of the timeline will be printed in July, in time for the NAACP convention and tours.

If you are interested in receiving a free copy of the timeline, please call Mary Ann Eubanks at (412) 471-5808.

Summertime Stroll

Thanks to a contribution from The Galbreath Company, the Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation will offer guided downtown walking tours every Wednesday, June through September, from 12 Noon to 12:45 p.m. The tours will depart from the USX Tower fountain and end at the Allegheny County courtyard. Participants will explore architectural landmarks and corporate skyscrapers along Grant Street and surrounding Mellon Square Park. The tour fee is \$2 for members and \$3 for non-members. Advance reservations are not required but would be appreciated. Call Mary Lu Denny at (412) 471-5808.



Ozanam Cultural Center

On April 15 and 22, Landmarks' executive director Louise Sturgess introduced five and six year olds at Ozanam Cultural Center to basic ideas in architecture and helped them appreciate the value of a historic neighborhood. The children made paper-bag buildings and toured the Hill District.

Frank Lloyd Wright Wisconsin Heritage Tour

On May 2, Al Tannler, historical collections director at Landmarks, conducted a tour for members of the Frank Lloyd Wright Wisconsin Heritage group. They visited Emmanuel Episcopal Church on the North Side, Richardson's County Buildings and the Koppers Building downtown, and the Minnetonka Building and Stengel, Alden, and Steinberg houses in the East End.

Thank You

The Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation thanks Andrew and Robert Ferguson for donating two compact discs (The Rembrandts L.P. and U2 Boy) to Landmarks' "Portable Pittsburgh" traveling artifact kit. Thank you for contributing your popular music to Landmarks' educational program.

High School Students Participate in Architecture Apprenticeship

Twenty-one high school students from sixteen schools in Allegheny County participated in Landmarks' "Architecture Apprenticeship," sponsored each school year by the Gifted and Talented Education Program of the Allegheny Intermediate Unit. Students met with course instructor David Roth and Landmarks' staff once a month from October 1996 through February 1997. They toured downtown Pittsburgh; visited the offices of Integrated Architectural Services, Perkins Eastman, and Perfidio Weiskopf; spent time with students and professors in Carnegie Mellon University's Architecture Department; and explored the Hall of Architecture and The Heinz Architectural Center at Carnegie Institute.

They sketched wherever they went—and spent many hours in between the monthly classes developing building designs for an apartment, school, river-front park, and community center at Station Square.

At the conclusion of the course one student wrote: "I learned a lot about problem solving through buildings, perspectives, drawing techniques, and life. I developed a heightened awareness of buildings, spaces, and beauty."

Another wrote: "This apprenticeship gave me an excuse to look at the architecture in and around Pittsburgh for the



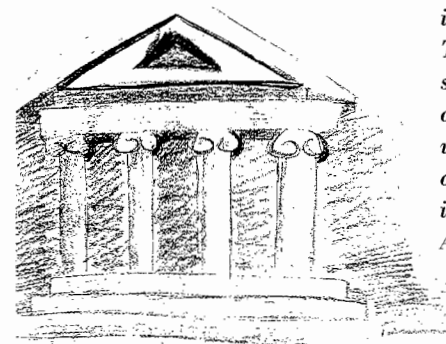
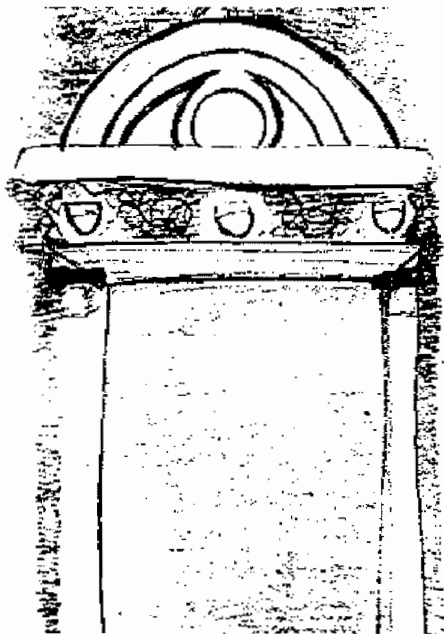
Apprentice students in the Hall of Architecture at Carnegie Institute.

first time. This was the first time I was in most of the buildings we visited and it was the first time I was inside an architect's office."

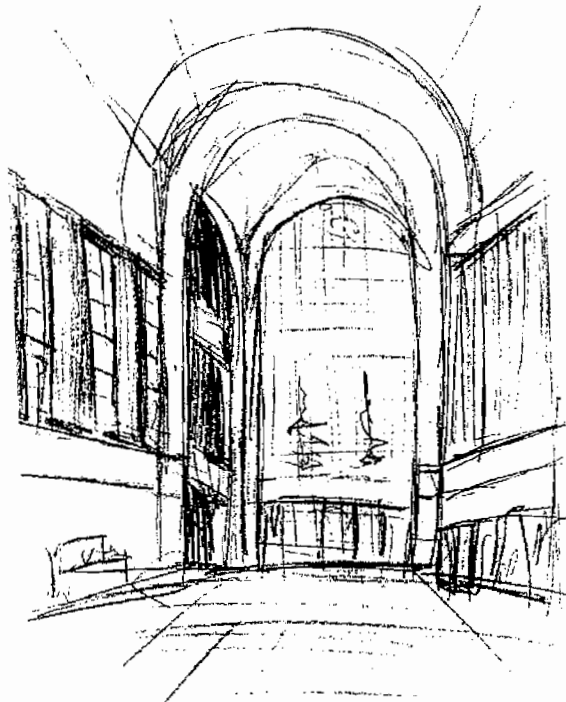
The class helped students decide if they did or did not want to pursue a career in architecture. One student said: "It reinforced my decision to study architecture by showing me what architecture is and what it takes to make it your career."



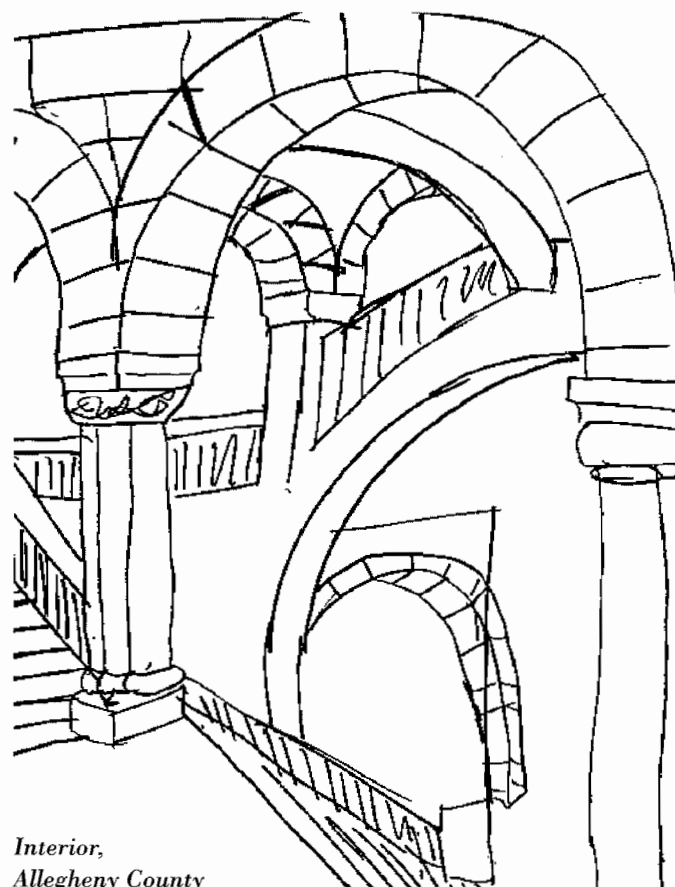
Linda Freund describes the school she designed for Station Square.



Architectural illustrator Tom Demko showed students how to use a shading technique when sketching the architectural casts in the Hall of Architecture.



City County Building

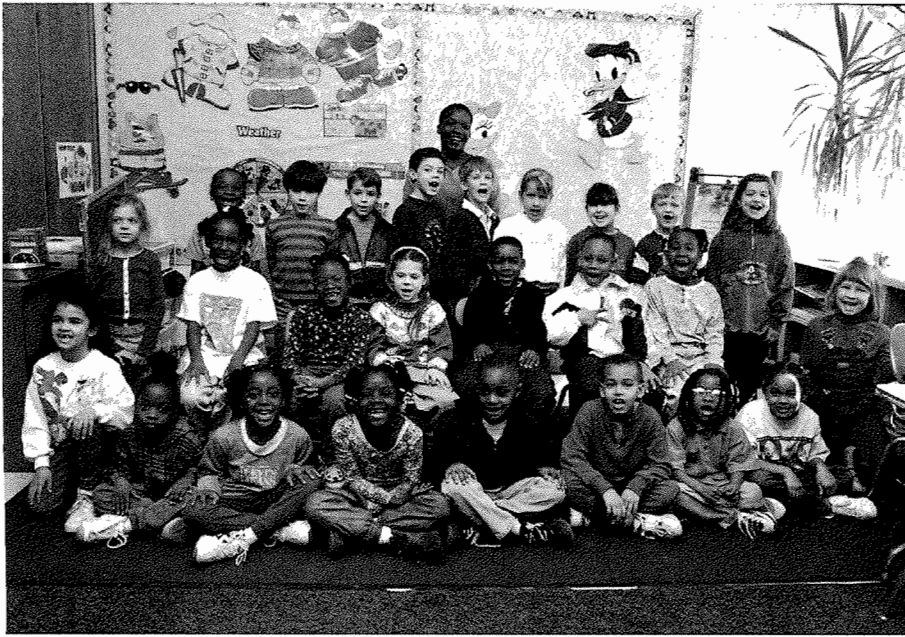


Interior, Allegheny County Courthouse

Architecture in Our Community

Margaret J. Starkes-Ross

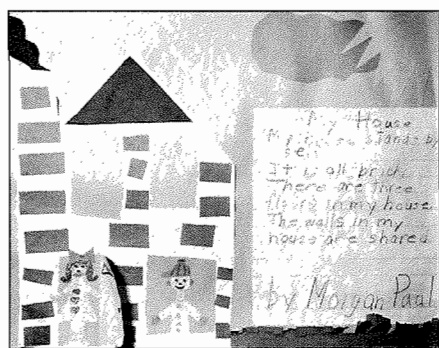
Photo by William Rydberg, PHOTON



Mrs. Starkes-Ross and her first graders at Sunnyside Elementary.

Margaret J. Starkes-Ross, a first-grade teacher at Sunnyside Elementary Public School in Stanton Heights, developed the following educational unit after participating in Gateway to Music's February teacher inservice and hearing Louise Sturgess, executive director of Landmarks, speak about the value of using architecture in the classroom. Mrs. Starkes-Ross incorporated a study of architecture in her social studies and language arts curricula. With her permission we reprint her project description here.

First, I introduced architecture to the students as exploring the structure, appearance, and function of buildings. I created a week-long unit, with a different activity each day.



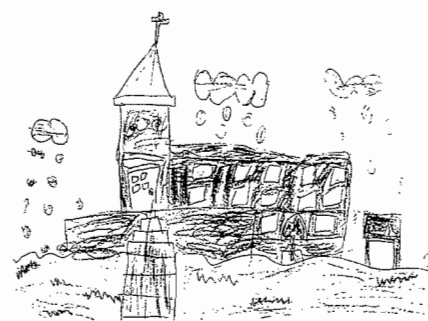
Drawing Your Home

The students were encouraged to involve their parents in helping them create an illustration of their home, as an over-night assignment. Students were asked to write a short paragraph about the type of house they live in. Is it one story or multi-story? With detached or shared walls? Row houses or duplex?

To my surprise, both the children and their parents became highly involved in this assignment. They went into great depth describing their homes. Each child was given the opportunity to share his/her project with the class.

Shapes in Architecture

Our second class activity was to describe the different shapes that made up our classroom. After a classroom discussion on the different shapes and designs in our classroom, the children illustrated what they saw in the room.



Neighborhood Walking Tour

Our third activity was to take a trek through our community to visit some of the landmarks in Stanton Heights. (Parents were encouraged to join us on this trip.) During our walk, we visited the United Methodist Church. We discussed the structure and shapes found in the buildings. As we passed houses, we talked about their similarities and differences. Children shared opinions about each home. We made our way to the No. 7 Fire Station, where children looked over the building design and appearance. We also discussed the community store and its purpose. Due to the weather conditions, we were not able to actually visit the store. We returned to our school, where the children were invited to illustrate the landmarks we had visited.

School and Neighborhood History

We concluded our study of Sunnyside architecture by reviewing the history of Sunnyside School and the Stanton Heights community. The buildings in Stanton Heights are mostly homes. They are one, one-and-a-half, and two-story homes. This community was said to have been built after World War II. Before this time, this area was a large golf course. The houses were given the name "salt boxes," because of their simplicity in structure. They were built around the same time period, so the majority of them have similar layouts. There are some row houses and duplexes. There is one church that the children thought was distinctive because of its windows and the cross at the top of it. There is one firehouse which is often noticed because of the Pepsi machine in front of it and the two big doors.

There is one two-story community store. One story is used as a store and the second story has several video games in it for children. Sunnyside School is the only school in this community. In order to meet the needs of the growing community, ground was broken for the new Sunnyside School on July 18, 1952. The one-story building is on a fourteen-acre site. The building is constructed of brick, glass, steel, and aluminum. One wing is 168 feet long and the other is 144 feet long. There is a 64-foot courtyard separating the two wings. I mentioned this project to my school secretary and she went into the archives and retrieved an abundance of Sunnyside memories, dating back to the 1800s.

The children timed themselves, walking from one wing of the school to the other. They then chose twelve words to describe our school and they were: nice, happy, big, excellent, fun, perfect, painted, brick siding, nicely built, "humpy" steps, learning, and shapes. They were asked to draw a picture of their school and to share whether or not there was anything else that they felt should be done to improve the school. Most of the children felt that it was fine the way it was. I'm positive that Sunnyside School with its rich history is looked upon as a community treasure...

This project has given me a whole new insight into architecture. It has taught me to appreciate building structure and design and not to overlook the creativity, effort, and beauty that is very obvious in the art of building. It has also provided me with an interest in the history of buildings that I might not otherwise have had. Both my students and I have had a window of knowledge opened through the study of architecture.

AshLee AcRie

Simone
Quinerly

Marshayla

Merrionne
Kelly McCain

Treminecoulverson

Rakisha

Sasha
Simpson

Darrius

Roderick Ramsey

Nathan Harper

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Lisa Schaefer

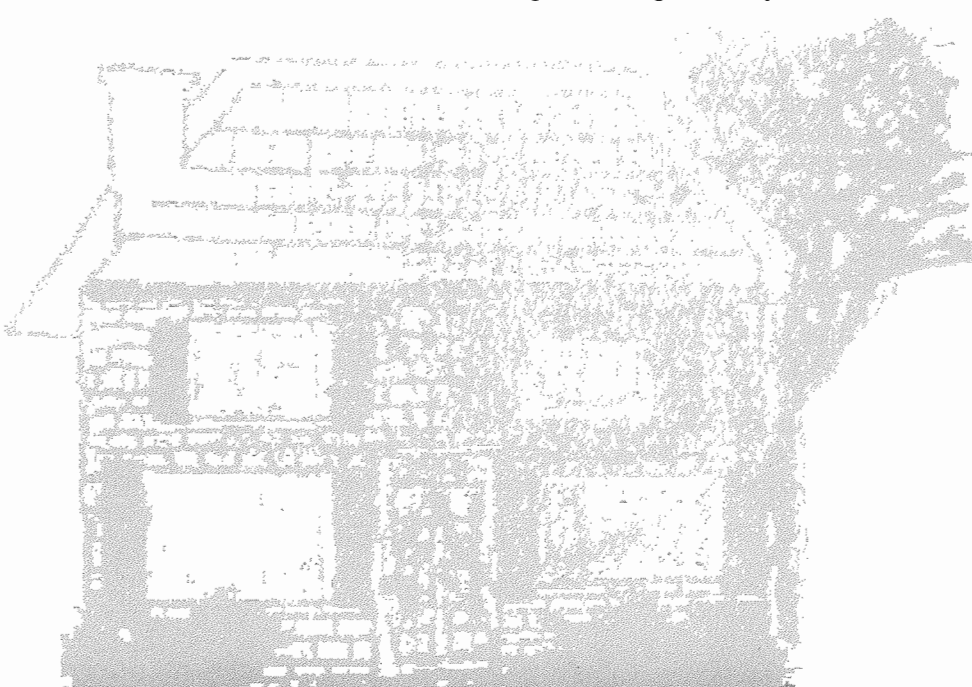
Kurt Diederich
Steven LaRussa

SHala
Taylor

Morgan Paul
Morgan Paul

Natalie

Anel Nic K



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

- Identify and preserve the architectural landmarks and historic designed landscapes in Allegheny County;
- Encourage and support the revitalization of historic inner-city neighborhoods through Preservation Loan Fund initiatives and programs;
- Operate Station Square, the historic riverfront project initiated by Landmarks in 1976;
- Create tours, publications, and educational programs on local history and architecture;
- Educate the public about historic preservation through the resources of Landmarks' library and archives;
- Continue a well-managed, responsive, and creative membership organization with the ability to implement these goals on a long-range basis.

Membership Benefits

- 10% discount at local historic Bed & Breakfasts and City Inns.*
- Free subscription to *PHLF News*.
- Many volunteer opportunities.
- A 10% discount at The Landmarks Store in The Shops at Station Square.
- Free access to our reference library in The Landmarks Building at Station Square.
- Discounts on, or free use of, all educational resources.
- Reduced rates on tours, and invitations to lectures, seminars, and special events.

*Please call Mary Lu Denny at (412) 471-5808 for specifics.

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Preserving Its Past*



Deutschtown: Now a City Historic District

(continued from page 1)

aggregate example of a period, style, architectural movement, or method of construction, providing distinguishing characteristics of the architectural type of architectural period it represents.

Should the HRC find that the nominated property meets the criteria, the freeze on change can continue for a total of eight months, *except* that any building or demolition permits from prior to nomination remain in effect. In the balance of this eight-month period, the HRC holds a public information meeting, then one or more public hearings, while Planning Department staff prepares a report and makes a recommendation based on the criteria. From the

resulting conclusions, the HRC makes a recommendation for or against designation to City Council, which decides the matter; this happens within five months after nomination. By the same time, the City Planning Commission must make its own recommendation to City Council. City Council holds its own public hearing, then votes for or against designation within eight months of nomination.

If City Council designates a property, visible exterior change comes under the control of the Historic Review Commission members and staff, with the former voting on conspicuous change in their monthly meetings and the latter approving or disapproving routine acts of maintenance and inconspicuous alter-

Book Reviews

- Ann Breen and Dick Rigby, *The New Waterfront*. New York McGraw-Hill [1996]. 224 pp., 363 illustrations. \$79.95.

This is a review of new waterside developments, some inland, in every inhabited continent but Africa. Some forty developments get extensive individual treatments, and a "gazetteer" adds succinct accounts of ninety-one others, including Station Square. This material is broken down by waterfront roles, as concerns the major treatments: commercial, cultural/educational/environmental, historic, recreational, residential, and working.

A meticulous book, full of objective information, very well illustrated, though with a wispy sans-serif text type not easily read.

Architecturally the variety shown is great. Some places keep the old, the familiar, usually the rather small-scaled. Others have opted for the big, the brash, and probably never-to-be-loved. In some cases the architecture seems so taken with itself that the harbor or whatever seems like an adjoining wet expanse where they haven't built anything yet; no rapport.

- Stephen Graf, *A Story of Resurrection: The Transformation of St. Mary's German Catholic Church into Pittsburgh's Grand Hall at The Priory*. Pittsburgh: Alps Development, Inc., [1997]. 62 pp., many color and b/w illustrations. \$18.95 at The Landmarks Store.

This is an account of the saving and adaptation of one of the city's oldest extant churches and its accompanying priory. The church was long threatened by the East Street Valley Expressway project, and the Diocese no longer wanted it; it looked, indeed, as if both buildings would come down in the early 1980s. Yet by 1982 it was clear to PennDOT, owners of the buildings by then, that their building space would not be required and might best be sold. And so they were, in 1984, to Edward and Mary Ann Graf, who converted the priory into The Priory—A City Inn, a B&B, in 1986, and St. Mary's Church into Pittsburgh's Grand Hall at The Priory, a social hall for rent.

A book-signing by the author took place on June 8, on the occasion of a Grand Hall open house and the dedication of Laura's Blumengarten, a small formal garden opposite the entrance.

ations without full HRC review.

Property owners are never *required* to restore their property, unless they have damaged it after its designation.

The intention of City Historic District designation is to some extent the collective intention of HRC members, seven people who are knowledgeable about architecture, urban planning, and historic preservation and representative of various interests. However, members of the Commission might lean toward archaeological correctness at one time; at another time, they might heed pleas of commercial requirements or economic hardship and favor the modifications that owners are urging upon them. Ideally, the District or the Structure finds present-day owners who respect their properties' past and the ways in which they are designed; find their plans acceptable for current uses; and have no trouble maintaining the old materials and detailing: who like the buildings, in brief, and can afford their upkeep. Within the matrix of a bygone fabric well kept, new shopfronts, new buildings, and the many changes natural in an inhabited neighborhood should be possible of a sort that neither brags of nor attempts to dissemble its newness.

Deutschtown has accepted its District status as a promise of stability and beauty that will make it all the better as a place to live. The principal opponent to designation was the one active church in the area, Allegheny United Church of Christ, which was afraid of being committed to preserving decorative features that were cheap enough to construct and install a hundred years ago but can these days be ruinous to repair. Should they have to apply for an HRC Certificate of Appropriateness to remove their frail leaded glass, historic preservation ideals, economic hardship, and possibly the free exercise of religion will disrupt what seems otherwise to be a prevailing harmony. And what then?

- Gabriel P. Weisberg, DeCourcy E. McIntosh, and Alison McQueen, *Collecting in the Gilded Age: Art Patronage in Pittsburgh, 1890-1910*. Pittsburgh: Frick Art & Historical Center, 1997. xix +428 pp. Very extensive illustration, color and b/w. \$75.00.

It is time to publish this issue, so a full reading of *Collecting in the Gilded Age* and considered reaction to the book will have to wait. For the moment, let us summarize the contents. The preface by DeCourcy McIntosh, the Frick's executive director and a trustee of Landmarks, explains the conduct of the project and the development of its themes, and credits the multitudes that helped, including Landmarks. The essays that follow are: John H. Ingham, "Reaching for Respectability: The Pittsburgh Industrial Elite at the Turn of the Century"; Alison McQueen, "Private Art Collections in Pittsburgh: Displays of Culture, Wealth, and Connoisseurship"; DeCourcy E. McIntosh, "Demand and Supply: The Pittsburgh Art Trade and M. Knoedler & Co."; Gabriel P. Weisberg, "From Paris to Pittsburgh: Visual Culture and American Taste, 1880-1910"; Constance Cain Hungerford, "Meissonier's 1806, Jena"; Ruth Krueger Meyer and Madeleine Fidell Beaufort, "The Rage for Collecting: Beyond Pittsburgh in the Gilded Age." A list follows of the 130 works exhibited in the Spring of 1997 that were the occasion for this book, and a five-page bibliography.