



UCHS Fall Event: Black Bottom Panel Discussion

In the 1970s, the destruction of the Black Bottom neighborhood in West Philadelphia gave way to the nation's first and largest urban research park by displacing its largely Black residents. In 2021, the proposed loss of the low-income housing at 3900 Market Street to make way for new development is the latest example of displacement of long-term residents in our neighborhood. What can we learn from the experiences of the past to prevent displacement yet support development in the future?

The University City Historical Society is hosting a panel discussion about Black Bottom, now the site of the uCity Square. Entitled "Black Bottom: The Wheel is Come Full Circle," this virtual event will include former residents and those who have been actively involved in and/or have closely studied this transition over the past half century. The panel discussion will be free to the public and take place Thursday, November 18, from 7 to 8:30 pm.

The panelists are as follows:

Dr. John Puckett, Professor Emeritus of Education at the University of Pennsylvania, will be the moderator of the panel. The title of the panel discussion is taken from his recently published five articles, "Once the Black Bottom: The Wheel is Come Full Circle," available for reading at <https://collaborativehistory.gse.upenn.edu/discover/stories>.

Dr. Walter Palmer, founder and director of The Palmer Foundation and a lecturer at the University of Pennsylvania Graduate School of Social Policy and Practice, is a community activist with expertise in community and economic development and civil rights. A former resident of Black Bottom, he is featured in the WHYY presentation "Remembering Philly's Black Bottom with Dr. Walter Palmer," available on YouTube.



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Gerald "Sid" Bolling, former resident of Black Bottom, represents the organization Black Bottom Tribe in negotiations with University of Pennsylvania and Drexel University. With others, he is working to create a cultural center for the former neighborhood, and to establish historical markers for key places that made up the Black Bottom.

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Dr. Edward Epstein, Director of the Teachers Institute of Philadelphia, is the author of "Race, Real Estate and Education: The University of Pennsylvania's Interventions in West Philadelphia, 1960-1980" (2020).

Registration is limited. Please reserve your spot at <https://uchs.wildapricot.org/events>. All Philadelphians are urged to attend as these well-informed people share their thoughts about the history of displacement in University City and what we can learn from this today.

The event will have a Q&A component. It will be recorded and shared via the UCHS website.

UCHS is Proud to Announce Our New Logo

Many thanks to our members who responded to requests to review new logo options and to share your thoughts. The new logo you see with this issue of *On the West Side* reflects the selection of an overwhelming majority of members who responded to the request for comment. UCHS rebranding seeks to visually suggest the diversity and architectural interest of West Philadelphia, as well as to reflect our mission to advocate for the preservation of the history, architecture and cultural heritage of West Philadelphia. Many of your comments on the designs did echo the diversity representation.



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New Board Members

The University City Historical Society is proud to announce the addition of two new members to our Board of Governors: Anurag Sagar and Elyana Tarlow.

Anurag Sagar has lived at the intersection of 46th and Osage Avenue for the last 30 years and loves her Garden Court neighborhood. She is a member of the Garden Court Community Association and is on the zoning board with Elyana. Anurag is a trained molecular biologist and now works in adult literacy.

Elyana Tarlow is currently on the zoning committee and is the Garden Court Civic Association co-president. Elyana is a native Philadelphian who moved back to the city four years ago. She is a retired lawyer who specialized in commercial transactions, real estate lending, banking, and commercial development and taught at Gettysburg. Elyana currently lives in the Garden Court Condos.

Join us in welcoming Anurag and Elyana to the UCHS Board. We look forward to their making many important contributions to the organization in the future.

The 2022 Valentine Awards Tea

UCHS is delighted to announce that our annual Gift to the Street Awards will return in 2022! We canceled this past year's event due to COVID-19 protocols and are hoping to be able to gather in person again for our Valentine's Tea this coming February. In the event that it is unsafe to do so, our Awards Ceremony will be held virtually. We invite your nominations for worthy properties and people. There are three types of awards and as always, we are enlisting your help to find worthy nominees. The Mike Hardy Preservation Initiative Award is given to a person or group of people who have acted unselfishly towards the preservation of a building or historical neighborhood resource in West Philadelphia. The Outstanding Preservation Award is given to acknowledge an exceptional building restoration. The Gift to the Street Award is given out as a grassroots spotlight on houses and businesses in our neighborhood that have received partial restoration, perhaps of a porch, garden, a roof or windows. Please consider nominating yourself or your neighbors for any of these awards by emailing us at info@uchs.net. Details about the Tea will be provided in our next newsletter.



Old Time Recipes

Pecan Pie

1/2 stick of butter
1/2 cup of sugar
3 eggs
1 cup of white Karo syrup
1 teaspoon full of vanilla
Pinch of salt
2 cups of pecan meat

Cream butter and sugar together, then add one egg at a time. Beat thoroughly. To this add the Karo syrup, one teaspoon of vanilla, pinch of salt and pecans.

Pour mixture into unbaked pie crust and bake at 325 degrees for 30 minutes. Let cool for 2 hours and serve.

Peanut Brittle

1 cup of granulated sugar
1/2 teaspoon of baking soda
1/2 cup of roasted peanuts, chopped

Melt sugar with no water over low heat, stirring constantly (be careful not to burn). Then add chopped peanuts. Still until thoroughly mixed and then quickly stir in the baking soda. Pour mixture onto hot buttered tins and spread by tilting the pans. Cool thoroughly before serving.

From *Tried and Tested Recipes*, Philadelphia, PA, 1907

West Philly Through the Lens LOCUST STREET EAST OF 40TH STREET, 1905



Joseph Minardi photo collection.

Member News

Welcome to 2021's
New and Restored Members:

Deirdre Aaron
Joseph Arters
David Othmer & Maureen Barden
Fred Allen Barfoot
Debra Breslin
Mary McGettigan & Larry Caputo, MD
Manuel Diaz Corrada
Murray Dubin & Libby Rosof
Lewis Fishgold
Jacob Gantz
Jeanette Gillison
Ivy Gray-Klein
Ann Kell
Elaine Lander
Anita McKelvey
Betty Moloznik
Glen Muschio
Julie Orts
Anurag Sagar
Tobias Schulze-Cleven
Martin Seligman
Charles A. Thrall & Sally A. Simmons
Elyana Tarlow
Carrie Waterman
Jeffrey Young
Randy Zauhar & Jenny Yu

2021 Donations to UCHS – Thank You!

Lewis J. Baum
Eric Cohen & Anne Pomerantz
Roger & Joyce Converse
Robert Glorioso
Michael D. Hardy & Barry L. Grossbach
Debra and Rich McCarty Stasiorowski
Bettsy & Steve McCoubrey
John Puckett & Karin Schaller
Tim Siftar
Maureen Tate
Marianna Thomas
Helma Weeks

Question? Ideas? Contact us at
info@UCHS.net

Visit Our YouTube Channel

Check out the University City Historical Society's YouTube channel for great videos such as our Oral History Project and UCHS updates and events. And be sure to click the subscribe button.



Holiday Gift Ideas

The holiday season is right around the corner and what better gift can there be than a book about West Philadelphia? Luckily there are quite a few to choose from, so here's a list of some great books you can purchase as holiday gifts.

Historic Architecture in West Philadelphia: 1789-1930s

Philadelphia, City of Neighborhoods: 1890-1910 (chapters on West and Southwest Philadelphia)

Joseph M. Minardi

West Philadelphia: University City to 52nd Street

Robert M. Skaler

The Jewish Community of West Philadelphia

Allen Meyers

Pushing Back the Gates: Neighborhood Perspectives on

University-Driven Revitalization in West Philadelphia

Harley F. Etienne

Row House Days: Tales From a Southwest Philadelphia Childhood

Jack Myers

Becoming Penn: The Pragmatic American University, 1950-2000

John L. Puckett

Building America's First University: An Historical and

Architectural Guide to the University of Pennsylvania

George E. Thomas and David B. Brownlee

Many of these fine books are available at your local bookseller.

Ask the Experts

CHIMNEY CONCERNS

Q: The chimney in my Victorian home is full of cracks. In the attic I can see that it tilts slightly and has been smeared with cement there and above the roof line. I'm sure that the entire chimney and fireplace have to be rebuilt, but I don't know where to start.

A: A licensed chimney sweep or the local fire marshal would be the first person to contact for a safety inspection. A professional sweep will also assess the structural condition of your chimney.

If the chimney is structurally sound, all that may be needed is a flue liner. There are several varieties on the market, either clay or metal. In the meantime, don't use your fireplace until you're sure your chimney is clean and safe. A chimney fire is the last thing you need.

From *The Old-House Journal*, December 1981.

WAXY WORRIES

Q: In our Victorian house, the floors under the area rugs put down by the previous owner are lighter than the rest of the floor. Is there a safe way to remove old wax from these floors without damaging the patina?

A: All floors which are waxed need to be periodically stripped of built-up old wax and dirt before rewaxing. Use any commercial wax remover, as long as it is specified for use on wood.

From *The Old-House Journal*, November 1981.



LOOKING UP! – VICTORIAN CEILING TREATMENTS

Continued from previous issue.

CEILING DESIGN

Victorians, no matter how devoted some of them were to pure design, generally agreed that ceilings should echo, sometimes softly and sometimes loudly, the dominant style of the room. Although it was important to more Victorians to have a carpet on the floor than a design on the ceiling, it was even more impressive to have both. The neoclassical approach, which was fashionable during the early nineteenth century, emphasized monochromatic bas-relief sculpture effects made on-site by a decorative plasterer or bought ready-made from a catalog. The historic references were Greek, Roman, Italian Renaissance, French Baroque, and Rococo. During the late nineteenth century, the Aesthetic Movement attempted a fresh approach to ceiling design by experimenting with Oriental motifs and color theory. Perhaps the most interesting aspect of late Victorian ceiling design was the attempt to blend the tops of the walls with the edges of the ceiling by extending richly molded cornices well into the ceilings and linking them with harmonious bands of colors. The field of the ceiling was either decorated freehand by a fresco painter on the plaster or by a decorative painter on canvas, or it was covered with a suitably “artistic” wallpaper. During the 1880s, neoclassicism returned in the form of Adamesque ceiling of bas-relief ornaments that provided an elegant antidote to these complex cornices, involved color schemes, and highly figured ceilings of the Aesthetic Movement. At a lower level in the social scale of interior decoration, stencil decorations provided art as well as simplicity without expense and anxiety.



A lovely Victorian ceiling in the Ronald McDonald House, 3925 Chestnut Street. Note the decorative plaster molding and painted fresco. Joseph Minardi, photographer.

CEILING PAPERS

There was absolutely nothing worse than a white ceiling, or so the Victorians believed. There were several ways to decorate ceiling space, including stenciling, painting decorative murals, and applying ornaments made of wood, plaster of Paris, or papier maché, but the cheapest way was with paper. From the 1870s to the 1890s, special ceiling paper, which is different from wallpaper, was produced. Tastemakers suggested that ceiling-paper patterns should appear the same from all directions and that the design should be stylized rather than realistic. Ceiling paper was considered a modern treatment, and it was highly recommended because it could be both applied and cleaned easily.

From *Illustrated Encyclopedia of Victoriana*. Nancy Rushling and John Crosby Freeman, 1994.

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