

ON THE WEST SIDE

THE UNIVERSITY
CITY HISTORICAL
SOCIETY



March, 2006

<http://www.uchs.net>

Mike Hardy, Editor

ACCOLADES & CELEBRATION

The University City Historical Society, at a snow-delayed Valentine's Awards Tea on Sunday, February 19 at "The Castle," the home, at 48th and Springfield Avenue, of Ellie and Nick Cernansky, announced their preservation awards and commendations for work done in 2005.

Before a full house of UCHS members and honorees enjoying great company, refreshments, a look at the Cernansky's latest discoveries and restorations and another annual get-together, Arlene Matzkin, the president of UCHS, presented Outstanding Preservation Awards to one newly restored c. 1892 residential property at 4800 Springfield Avenue and a newly restored church at 4017 Chestnut Street, the former Chestnut Street Baptist, built c. 1895 with Frank Rushmore Watson as architect.



This mammoth Gothic Revival church, when restorations to the interior are complete, will become the new home of West Park Church, currently on the 4700 block of Chestnut Street. Pastor Terry M. Davis, on behalf of the congregation and those who directed its exterior restoration, including a new roof, complete masonry restoration, refinished wooden window elements, refinished wooden entrance doors and faux marble columns, received the award and provided some of the inspiring story of their acquiring and work on the building. The

award was shared with the Hooven Group of West Chester, Pa, their principal contractor.



Nancy Brisbon, the owner of 4800 Springfield Avenue, along with her mother, Delores and son, Welton

Red Hawk, accepted their Outstanding Preservation Award for the restoration of their home's roof, including its metal cresting, its front bay, porch railings and other historical details, together with the removal of inappropriate window treatments.



Working with contactor Louis Tannen and others, they based their work on a period postcard of 1910 that appears in Robert Skaler's West Philadelphia, University City to 52nd Street (see www.uchs.net)

Preservation Honors for distinguished examples of major preservation efforts were shared by two residential projects and the Calvary Center for Culture and Community at 48th and Baltimore, for their on-going restoration of this c. 1904 Gothic Methodist Church by Dull and Peterson, architects, including the recent restoration of the great gables above the sanctuary's spectacular Tiffany windows, the largest in the city

(www.calvary-center.org). **Rich Kirk**, the leader of this effort, accepted on behalf of Calvary.

Preservation Honors were also granted to **223 Buckingham Place**, c. 1897, **Walter Steelman**, developer, for its transformation from a vacant and abused twin, including its façade restoration, by new owners, **Pink & Ruby, Inc. (Rob Leventon and Jeff & Jessica Lutzner)** and to **256 S. 45th Street**, a c.1895 row house, **Margaret Gibson/Horace Drace**, developers. The latter property also experienced a total restoration from a formerly abandoned and seriously compromised shell by its owner/contractor, **Tim Delaney**. Delaney was also commended for leading the effort, with the help of volunteer contactors, community organizations, community service providers and others, to restore the badly deteriorated porches of his neighbors in



Matt Grubel, of **Regent Square**, was presented with this year's **Preservation Initiative Award** for developing and maintaining the website "**The**

Building of West Philadelphia – An Historical Survey of Suburban Architecture"

(www.business-services.upenn.edu/communityhousing/survey) cited by **UCHS** as "a major addition to the appreciation of University City's very special place in architectural history and a critical instrument for assisting in its historic preservation."

Additional photos and information about the awards and all of those also commended and thanked for their "**Gifts to the Streets**" in 2005 in the form of historically sensitive façade treatments and greening improvements can be found at the **UCHS** website, www.uchs.net.

HOMEOWNER WORKSHOPS

As announced in the last "**On the West Side**," the **Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia** is pleased to announce an upcoming series of

workshops in April for the owners of historic homes. **These workshops are free and open to the public, but seating is limited.** Don't miss this great opportunity to learn from historic preservation professionals including architects, contractors, craftspeople, and consultants, about the best practices for the restoration and maintenance of your historic home.

While repeated each preceding Wednesday in **Germantown** in the carriage house at **Cliveden, 6401 Germantown Avenue**, these workshops in **West Philadelphia** will be held on four April evenings at 7 p.m. at the **Calvary Center for Culture and Community, 48th and Baltimore Avenue** (enter on 48th Street).

Topics and dates are as follows:

Thursday, April 6 - Working with Architects and Contractors: Planning Ahead

Tuesday, April 11 - Roofing on Historic Buildings

Thursday, April 20 - Historic Windows: Maintenance, Repair and Replacement

Thursday, April 27 - Masonry and Pointing

These are special opportunities to learn and ask about the practical details of historic preservation and maintenance and produced for a special audience in West Philadelphia. But, to reserve your space, or if you have any questions, please contact **Patrick Hauck, Director of Neighborhood Preservation Programs**, at 215-546-1146 x.4 or patrick@preservationalliance.com.

UCHS TAP

At the **April Homeowners Workshops**, information and applications will be made available for a new **UCHS** initiative, a **Technical Assistance Program** for University City property owners considering exterior work on their older properties. This will offer them the opportunity to engage architectural and preservation professionals in a personal site visit and hands-on consultation before they begin work to insure the best possible advice on options, costs and resources available to getting the job done right.

The program is being developed and administered for **UCHS** by the **Community Design Collaborative** www.cdesignc.org of the **Philadel-**

phia Chapter of the American Institute of Architects who will be recruiting and selecting the design professionals who will provide technical assistance services to some 6 to 8 property owners this spring. If you would like an application to be among these recipients, contact UCHS in April at (215) 387-3019 or info@uchs.net. If you would like more information about the professional design volunteers, contact the CDC at (215) 587.9290, cdesignc@cdesignc.org.

More information and a detailed calendar will be available in the next “**On the West Side.**”

PARTY FOR THE PARK



The **7th Annual Clark Park “Party for the Park”** will be held Thursday, May 4, 2006 from 5:30 – 8

p.m. This fundraising event will insure that Clark Park will continue to be a neighborhood asset for all of University City to enjoy. For tickets, please call 215.243.0555 or www.ucityphila.org. UCHS members will also be getting special invitations by separate mail.

As the largest public open space in University City, Clark Park, a 9-acre triangular piece of land located between 43rd and 45th Streets and Baltimore and Woodland Avenues, receives nearly year-round use for festivals, the Clark Park Farmers’ Market, and the outdoor activities of neighborhood residents. Like most Philadelphia parks, municipal funding has never kept pace with Clark Park’s maintenance needs, and for many years, Friends of Clark Park (FOCP) volunteers have spent hundreds of hours weeding, planting, watering, and cleaning.

The FOCP approached the University City District (UCD) with their concerns in late 1998. In response, Eric T. Goldstein, former UCD Executive Director and a registered landscape architect, developed a plan of action on the basis of his previous experience in the highly-regarded Public Landscapes Program of Philadelphia Green.

The plan called for the UCD to hire and manage a competitively selected professional landscape

contractor to supplement the maintenance services that the City currently provides, including regular mowing, weeding, mulching, pruning, and litter and leaf removal. The UCD and FOCP hold the “Party for the Park,” an annual May event to raise funds for these services. **Without the “Party for the Park”, this year-round maintenance would not exist.**

In August 1999, the FOCP and the UCD presented this proposal to the **Recreation Department** and received its support. Although neighborhood groups have long been part-time caretakers of the city’s parks, the level of partnership proposed among the UCD, Recreation Department, and FOCP creates a new model for public space maintenance in Philadelphia. Over the past six years over \$375,000 has been raised to supplement landscape maintenance in the park, improving its appearance, health and vitality.

When you get your individual invitation, UCHS urges you to add your support to this preservation of one of the neighborhood’s treasured green spaces.

PROMISES OF SPRING

This Saturday, March 18, from 10 am-12 noon, at the **University City Arts League, 4226 Spruce Street**, landscape designer, **Steve McCoubrey** and **UC Green** chair, **Mike Hardy**, will conduct a free community landscape design workshop for those interested in the greening development of two **Baltimore Avenue** traffic triangles at **46th and Cedar and 47th Street**. Co sponsored by the **University City District**, the workshop will examine alternative visions for the triangles, set to be landscaped this year by a collaboration including **UCD, UC Green, the Philadelphia Streets Department, Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, the City of Philadelphia** and other potential sponsors. No prior registration is required.

This workshop is the outgrowth of a course in private garden landscape design, sponsored by **UCD** and taught by **Steve McCoubrey** at the Arts League that may be repeated in the coming months. Contact the Arts League for further information at (215) 382-7811, info@ucartsleague.org

And to learn of the host of greening events,

including the opportunities to join in the planting of 100's of trees in University City this spring by volunteer planters, go to www.ucgreen.org for a full calendar and the announcement of a coming **UC Green Corps**. Better yet, you can be notified about volunteer opportunities and other greening events in or related to University City by subscribing to the **UC Green Announce Email List!** Just send an email with "subscribe" in the subject line to: info@ucgreen.org.

AND SAVE THESE DATES

Thursday, May 10, 1 p.m., Formal opening/
dedication of the **USP Lower Mill Creek Garden,
43rd and Chester Avenue**

Saturday, May 13, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., **Spruce
Hill May Fair in Clark Park, 43rd and Baltimore
Avenue**

Saturday, June 3, 1-5 p.m. – **Annual UCHS
Historic House Tour - Powelton- A Village in**

the City. Jointly sponsored by **UCHS** and the **Powelton Village Civic Association** as part of **Philadelphia Open House**. (Special discounts will be made available in the next "**On the West Side**" to members for pre-tour day tickets)

AND SPECIAL THANKS TO

those who renewed their annual dues and made special contributions to **UCHS** as **Friends of UCHS: The John Bartram Association; Elizabeth Bressi-Stoppe, University of the Sciences in Philadelphia; Joanthan A. Cass & Jacquelyn A. Caridad; Lindsay Johnston, On Common Ground Realtors; Karin Boykin & George Karpyn; Richard Lowe; John & Bettsy McCoubrey** and as **Sustainers of UCHS: Brian Ratigan & Melani Lamond; Mark Wagenveld.**

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