



# NEWS

www.chrs.org

February 2010

## The Hill Center Looks to Revive Local Landmark

by Mike Canning

**F**or Capitol Hill residents who have long wondered what would happen to the Old Naval Hospital at the heart of the neighborhood, the answer will come this year with ground-breaking for the new “Hill Center,” coming as early as February.

The Hill Center project not only looks to restore a classic Capitol Hill structure but also to revivify the building through lifetime learning opportunities and cultural offerings, contributing to an ever more vibrant neighborhood. Construction is expected to take about one year.

The project aims to create a nexus of classroom and meeting hall—a place to learn, contemplate, and converse. The Center will house rooms for education and the arts, meeting rooms for both Hill and citywide functions, and office space for local non-profit groups.

The Hill Center’s genesis came with the organizing in 2002 of the Old Naval Hospital Foundation, a broad coalition of Capitol Hill residents committed to seeing the deteriorating hospital building on the 900 block of Pennsylvania Avenue restored and placed in viable use. By September 2007, after a competitive bidding process, the city selected the Foundation’s Hill Center proposal for redevelopment of the building.



IMAGE COURTESY BELL ARCHITECTS

Creating the Hill Center at the Old Naval Hospital will be an ambitious enterprise, one which the Foundation estimates will cost up to \$10 million. More than half of those funds—over \$5 million—has already been committed to the project by the DC government. Significant other contributions will come from the Capitol Hill Community Foundation (a quarter million dollars). An endowment is expected to be established to help maintain the Center over the years.

The project recently received major recognition and additional monetary backing when, on December 9, it was awarded a \$150,000 competitive Save America’s Treasures grant, presented by the President’s Committee on the Arts and the Humanities and the National Park Service.

While there is, thus, some solid financial backing, the Foundation recognizes that several million more will still be needed to

create a completely refurbished, historically accurate, and state-of-

*Continued on page 2*

### Also in this issue

<b>ARTICLES</b>	
Zoning Committee Report.....	2
Historic Preservation Briefs.....	4
Historic Photos of Capitol Hill.....	5
2010 House Tour .....	6
Seeking City Approvals.....	7
CHRS Board Nominations .....	7
Eastern Market Manholes .....	8
Christmas Bird Count.....	9
The Hill on Film .....	10
A Remembrance: Peter Craig.....	10
Looking Back .....	11
<b>COLUMNS</b>	
President’s Column .....	2
Did You Know? .....	9
CHRS Supporters .....	11
<b>LOOKING AHEAD</b>	
February Preservation Café.....	3
February Overbeck Lecture .....	3
Mark Your Calendar .....	12

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# President's Column: Looking Forward in 2010

by Beth Purcell

This is the first *News* issue in 2010. We are hoping for a healthy, interesting, and productive year for everyone on Capitol Hill. CHRS will hold the House and Garden Tour on Mothers' Day weekend. We also plan another free historic walking tour, as well as interesting Preservation Cafes and membership forums.

In addition, there is a lot of other work to be done in 2010. We all know that the L'Enfant Plan—our wonderful streetscape and views of the Capitol—is a vital part of our Capitol Hill heritage. Hard work and controversy are another part.

Two hundred and nineteen years ago this month, the stormy relationship between L'Enfant

and the Commissioners came to an end—L'Enfant had failed to publish his plan of the city. George Washington replaced L'Enfant with Andrew Ellicott, who completed L'Enfant's plan. The historic L'Enfant Plan is now ours to protect as well as to enjoy. We need to ensure that the plans for Pennsylvania Avenue, SE—the potential Town Square at 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> Streets, and the square/circle at 14<sup>th</sup> Street and Potomac Avenue—contribute to our neighborhood. We also need to ensure that future transportation planning (including streetcars) preserves our streetscapes and views. We look forward to a good year for us all. ★

## Zoning Committee Report

by Gary Peterson

The Capitol Hill Restoration Society Zoning Committee met on January 14, 2010, to consider two cases.

BZA #17978 involves the application of Diana Embrey for a special exception to increase the lot occupancy from 60.7% to 67.7% at 612 A Street, NE. The applicant proposes to build a larger replacement garage. An owner is allowed to increase lot occupancy to 70% with a special exception. The Committee voted unanimously to support the special exception, finding that the new garage will not substantially impact the light, air, or the privacy of use and enjoyment of neighboring properties.

BZA #18032 involves the application of John Graham and Lori Kerr for a special exception to screen in an existing deck and for a variance to add a second floor to an existing garage at 647 C Street, NE. The committee unanimously voted to support the special exception for the deck and to oppose the variance for the second floor of the garage. The committee did not believe that the applicant met the burden of proof for the variance.

The next meeting of the Zoning Committee will be held on March 11, 2010. ★

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Hill Center, *continued from cover*

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the-art building. It is launching a major fundraising campaign within the Capitol Hill community to bridge that funding gap. The fundraising committee's honorary chair is Richard Moe, former Chair of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Individuals and businesses interested in fostering the project will be approached, and various underwriting opportunities will be offered to donors.

The Old Naval Hospital, one of the area's most distinctive landmarks, was opened in 1866 when it served as a facility for "seamen serving on the Potomac River and its tributaries." It was later used to care for war veterans, as a Hospital Corps training school, and as the Home of the Old Soldiers and Sailors. More recently, the building served as the headquarters for the effort to establish the Martin Luther King, Jr. national holiday. It is currently home to ANC 6B.

While the hospital has continued to be used sporadically over the years, the main building has been essentially vacant for more than a decade and has been declared one of the District's most endangered historic buildings. For more information, go to [www.oldnavalhospitalfoundation.org](http://www.oldnavalhospitalfoundation.org). ★

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*Canning is a member of the Board of the Old Naval Hospital Foundation.*

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## Capitol Hill Restoration Society (CHRS)

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To reach any of the above, please contact the Society offices at (202) 543-0425 or via e-mail: CapHRS@aol.com.

www.CHRS.org

Celebrating more than 50 years helping to preserve and protect Capitol Hill's residential character, the Society is now the largest civic association on Capitol Hill, and one of the largest in the District of Columbia. From the beginning, the Society has played a key role in maintaining the diverse, residential character of our neighborhood. With your participation, we will continue to do so for many years to come.

Start or renew a CHRS membership:

- ★ On the web at [www.CHRS.org](http://www.CHRS.org)
- ★ Call (202) 543-0425; choose option 2
- ★ Pick up a form at one of our meetings

Starting at just \$25 per year for a single membership, it's a great deal.

# Preservation Café: How To Get a Free Home Energy Audit

Are you still reeling from the Ashock of opening your winter heating bills? Do you wish you knew how to lower your heating and air conditioning costs and be more comfortable in your home? If so, come to the CHRS February 17 Preservation Café to hear **How To Get a Free Home Energy Audit** and what you can learn from one.

The speaker at the Preservation Café will be Jim Conlon, founder and president of Elysian Energy, LLC, one of the companies engaged by the District Department of the Environment to conduct free energy audits for Washington homeowners. As a DC taxpayer, you've already "paid" for one of these energy efficiency assessments, so you can enjoy a direct return on your taxes by attending the Preservation Café to find out how an energy audit can help you cut your home energy bills.

The energy raters come to the home to inspect and measure energy characteristics such as insulation levels, heating and cooling system efficiency, the water heating system,

and window efficiency. Diagnostic testing can gauge air leakage and duct leakage. After the audit is completed, an efficiency score is computed and a report is generated for the homeowner that lists cost-effective options for improving the home's energy rating and efficiency. Mr. Conlon's company has conducted over 1,000 such audits, and he will explain how to participate in the program, how an audit works, what some of the common issues and potential solutions are, and what kind of report and recommendations homeowners receive after an audit. Several CHRS members who have had recent audits have been very happy with their results.

**How To Get a Free Home Energy Audit** will be held Wednesday, February 17, from 6:30–7:15 pm in the downstairs community room at Ebenezers Coffeehouse at Second and F Streets, NE. The Preservation Café is free, accessible, and open to all in the Capitol Hill community. No reservations are required. ★

## February Overbeck Lecture Features CHRS

This month's Overbeck Lecture will be given by Dick Wolf, immediate past President of CHRS, on the history of the Capitol Hill Restoration Society. He's expected to recount, among other topics, some of the organization's early battles to save our neighborhood from the bulldozer and wrecking ball. The lecture will be held Tuesday, February 9, at 8:00 pm, the Naval Lodge Hall at 330 Pennsylvania Avenue, SE. As always, admission is free, but a reservation is required due to limited seating.

To reserve, send an e-mail to [lecture@capitolhillhistory.org](mailto:lecture@capitolhillhistory.org), and indicate the number of seats you will need. The reservation is automatic—you will be notified only if no more seats are available.

# Historic Preservation Briefs

by Nancy Metzger

## 227 Pennsylvania Avenue, SE

The Court of Appeals motions panel rejected, without comment, CHRS's Motion for a Stay and Injunction in early January. Given the rulings of the Mayor's Agent (MA) and the Court of Appeals in December and January, the Heritage Foundation (HF) will be able to continue work on all portions of the building, including the disputed third-floor addition. This means that ultimately, if CHRS is successful on the merits of the case, the HF could be required to remove the addition. Our preference, of course, would have been for the court to have issued a Stay against more building, but even the city's brief against the Stay agrees that, should we prevail, the HF would be required to remove the third-story addition. The Court's rejection of the Stay motion has no effect on its previous order, which lifted its Show Cause Order concerning the timeliness of our appeal and directed the city to submit the administrative records to the Court by January 17. No schedule for hearings, etc. has been established, but Court of Appeals cases generally proceed slowly.

Legal issues that have been raised by the September 2009 MA decision include the unprecedented view of the MA that when both the Commission of Fine Arts (CFA) and the Historic Preservation Review Board (HPRB) have jurisdiction, CFA views take precedence, as well as the MA's decision not to defer to the judgment of the HPRB on matters of compatibility. Underlying all of this is the problem of conflict of interest with the Mayor's Agent being in the chain of command between the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development and the Historic Preservation

Office (HPO) instead of being an independent judge from the Office of Administrative Hearings, as was previously the case. The present set-up leaves the HPRB and the HPO without any legal representation from the city in contested MA cases, though the Office of the Attorney General provides legal support to the MA. (See October 2009 issue of *CHRS News* for complete story on the MA decision.)

## Planning for Utilities in Home Renovation Projects

Kitchen renovations, rear additions, second units, and other home improvement projects quite often demand more electrical capacity than the house's present system offers. When that happens, present electrical codes require larger meter boxes

for the heavier cables, insulation, turn-off switches, etc.—and the result is the large unsightly boxes that unfortunately can be seen on the fronts of various houses across the Hill. On our narrow row houses, such boxes can take up a significant portion of the front façade. If you are contemplating any such projects, one of the early steps in the process should be to check with the architect and/or electrician if a “heavy up” will be needed and, if so, what will be the best alternative placement for your particular house. The city's Historic Preservation Office will be glad to work with you and your architect or contractor to find the best possible location. Contact Amanda Molson, the primary contact staff person for Capitol Hill, at 442-8827 or at [amanda.molson@dc.gov](mailto:amanda.molson@dc.gov). ★



Home renovations and improvements have left many Hill front façades with large, unsightly electrical boxes.

# Historic Photographs of Capitol Hill

by Beth Purcell

The CHRS membership forum on December 7, 2009, featured historic photographs of Capitol Hill. Colleen McKnight, Special Collections Librarian at the Historical Society of Washington, DC (HSW) and local historian Cindy Janke put together a wonderful presentation. Ms. McKnight began with early 19<sup>th</sup>-century Capitol Hill buildings that are no longer in existence, including Carroll Row, a boardinghouse where Lincoln lived (located where the Library of Congress Jefferson Building stands today); the Varnum Hotel at New Jersey Avenue and C Street; and Trumbull Row (demolished in the 1930s for the Supreme Court building). We also saw the old Brick Capitol at First and A Streets, NE. After the British burned the Capitol in 1814, there was an effort to move the capital to Philadelphia. Building the Brick Capitol to accommodate Congress was part of a successful effort to keep the capital in DC.

In 1871, Albert Grant built "Grant's Row" on the 200 block of East Capitol Street. These were some of the most expensive rowhouses built in the city during that time. Grant expected a demand for expensive houses on Capitol Hill. Instead, DuPont Circle became the fashionable neighborhood, and there was little demand for the Grant's Row houses. They were sold to the Phoenix Life Insurance Co. Henry Folger, President of the Standard Oil Co., bought Grant's Row in 1928. In 1929, the houses were demolished to build the Folger Theater. The Butler mansion, built in 1874, was demolished to build the Longworth House Office Building. In the 1870s, Alexander Shepherd's administration undertook many public works,

including re-grading the streets. We saw an example of dislocation caused by this program: 826 E Street, NE, alone on its block, high on a bluff overlooking the new, lower level of E Street. This house is no longer there.

We also saw photographs taken by Henry Arthur Taft between 1890 and 1908. He lived on First Street, NE, (where Columbus Circle is today) and at 627 Ninth Street, NE. His photographs offer a rare view of middle-class home interiors, including Bradbury-type wallpaper, tin ceilings, and mismatched dining room chairs.

HSW recently obtained a public school photograph collection, and we saw several schools that no longer exist: old Brent School, Third and D Streets, SE; Cranch School, 12<sup>th</sup> and D Streets, SE; Lovejoy School (the original two buildings); Lincoln School, Second and C Streets, SE (renovated by Adolph Cluss); Payne School (the 1896 building destroyed in a 1983 fire); and Wallach School (where Hine School is today). To see a photograph of Wallach School, check the fire callbox near Hine on Seventh Street, SE.

Bert Sheldon photographed churches between 1946 and 1952. Christ Church, at 638 G Street, SE, looks much the same today, as does Ebenezer Church, at Fourth and D Streets, SE. St. Cyprian Catholic Church, which served African-

Americans, stood at 12<sup>th</sup> and C Streets, SE, until it was demolished in 1960 to build rowhouses.

John P. Wymer documented Washington between 1948 and 1952. He divided Washington into 57 areas, then systematically photographed and mapped each one. Thanks to



Payne School, ca. 1900.

him, there are many photographs of mid-20<sup>th</sup>-century DC neighborhoods. We saw some of his photographs of Rosedale from 1949, including the 1800 block of Rosedale Street, NE.

In the 1960s, Emil A. Press photographed buildings slated for demolition. We saw the 100 block of Independence Avenue, SE, a commercial row with eight restaurants. This block was demolished to build the Madison Building.

HSW has over 100,000 photographs; many are digitized and searchable on HSW's website. HSW has many other collections and welcomes Capitol Hill residents to come to HSW to research, by visiting in person (at 801 K Street, NW) and online ([www.historydc.org](http://www.historydc.org)). ★

PHOTO COURTESY HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF WASHINGTON, DC

# Discounted House Tour Tickets Available Until February 15!

Please save Mother's Day weekend (May 8-9) for the 53rd Annual CHRS House & Garden Tour.

This year's theme is Community Experiences/Cosmopolitan Stories, and the footprint is the area bordered by Pennsylvania Avenue and East Capitol Street between Third and Eighth Streets, SE. As always, we feature a wide variety of house styles, from the most traditional to the fabulously renovated with all of the newest in home décor. More details will follow in upcoming issues of *CHRS News*.

Funds from the tour provide the largest annual source of unrestricted funding that CHRS receives, and accordingly, we rely on these funds to underwrite our expenses. With the support of our members and other friends and neighbors, ticket sales have been steady in recent years. Thank you for supporting the tour and CHRS! We sincerely hope you will join us again this year for what will be another fabulous tour of spectacular homes and gardens.

**Gift certificates for discounted tickets are available until February 15** by calling the CHRS office at 202-543-0425. These redeemable \$20 ticket gift certificates are a true bargain for members as well as non-members, since anyone may purchase as many of these \$20 gift certificates as they want right now. On February 16, the price returns to \$25 for non-members in advance of tour weekend, when it then rises to \$30. In March, CHRS members will receive a mail offer to purchase only four of the discounted \$20 member tickets; additional tickets will cost members \$25.

NOW definitely is the time to buy a whole packet of discounted gift

certificates to give as Valentine Day gifts to your neighbors and friends. You could also take them as hostess gifts to dinner parties. And they will make great birthday presents or first-day-of-spring gifts and, of course, they will fit nicely into an Easter basket!

Sponsorship opportunities are available to businesses or individuals who wish to support the tour at a higher level and receive special marketing and publicity benefits. Details on sponsorships are available by contacting Aileen Moffatt at [acmoffatt@hotmail.com](mailto:acmoffatt@hotmail.com). An outline of sponsor levels and benefits is posted on the CHRS website [www.chrs.org](http://www.chrs.org). ★



*Capitol Hill Restoration Society*

## 53rd Annual House and Garden Tour

May 8-9, 2010

[www.chrs.org](http://www.chrs.org) | [caphrs@aol.com](mailto:caphrs@aol.com) | 202-543-0425



## Volunteers Needed

Over 150 volunteers are needed to produce a successful House and Garden Tour each year. We need your help! If you would like to help in advance of tour weekend by doing research on houses (we will teach you how to do this) or assisting with write-ups on tour houses, please let us know. Or, if you can work a 2-3 hour shift as a docent at one of the tour homes on either Saturday, May 8, 4-8 pm or Sunday, May 9, 11-5, please send us an e-mail at: [caphrs@aol.com](mailto:caphrs@aol.com) and write "tour volunteer" in the subject line.

# Seeking City Approval for Structural Modifications and Improvements?

A Capitol Hill homeowner was recently ordered by the Historic Preservation Review Board (HPRB) to remove an enclosure of a front upper balcony. The homeowner had not sought approval from the HPRB or other necessary city regulatory bodies. He had not obtained required permits, and neither the Historic Preservation Office nor the local Advisory Neighborhood Commission (ANC) had been consulted. In addition, the CHRS Historic Preservation Committee was not given an opportunity to learn about the proposed work and provide its views to the homeowner and the HPRB. The removal order could have been avoided if prior consultation had occurred.

For a resident of Capitol Hill seeking approval by the Board of Zoning Adjustment (BZA) and/or the HPRB for a proposed addition or exterior modification to their home, the approval process includes the local ANC. The CHRS Zoning Committee also provides its views to the BZA, and the CHRS Historic Preservation Committee provides its comments to the HPO and HPRB.

CHRS is an important stop when seeking BZA approval. While CHRS doesn't carry "great weight" like the ANCs, it is recognized to have a formal interest in structural modifications that may affect the appearance of the Capitol Hill Historic District. Permits proposing modifications to a structure's exterior should be discussed with the appropriate ANC's planning/zoning committee. Opposition to a proposed variance or special exception by an ANC is a significant obstacle to approval from the city.

Visit the following websites for ANC boundaries and contact

information for your Commissioner: [www.anc6a.org](http://www.anc6a.org), [www.anc6b.org](http://www.anc6b.org), and [www.anc6c.org](http://www.anc6c.org).

Then contact the appropriate ANC committee and CHRS committee chair:

**ANC 6A**  
Economic Development & Zoning Committee. Chair: Drew Ronneberg, [ronneberg6a02@gmail.com](mailto:ronneberg6a02@gmail.com).

**ANC 6B**  
Planning and Zoning. Chair: Francis Campbell, [francis6b10@anc6b.org](mailto:francis6b10@anc6b.org).

**ANC 6C**  
Planning, Zoning, and Environment. Chair: Rob Amos, [robamos@yahoo.com](mailto:robamos@yahoo.com).

**CHRS**  
CHRS Zoning Committee. Chair: Gary Peterson, [pgarylaw@aol.com](mailto:pgarylaw@aol.com).  
CHRS Historic Preservation Committee. Chair: Nancy Metzger, [nancymetzger@verizon.net](mailto:nancymetzger@verizon.net).

A Capitol Hill Historic District Guideline on the city's building

permit process can be found on the CHRS website under "Publications;" its title is "The How, When, and Why of Getting a Building Permit."

For city permits, the Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs offers the Homeowner's Center on the second floor of 941 North Capitol Street, NE, which provides coordinated access to all construction discipline permitting desks (<http://tinyurl.com/jtt6n>). See also the online "postcard permits" at: <http://tinyurl.com/yddtld7>.

The Advisory Neighborhood Commissions consider a wide range of policies and programs affecting their neighborhoods, including traffic, parking, recreation, street improvements, liquor licenses, zoning, economic development, police protection, sanitation and trash collection, and the District's annual budget. A future issue of the *News* will have an article about why ANC Commissioners are important to Capitol Hill residents. ★

## Seeking Nominations for 2010–2011 CHRS Board

The Nominating Committee is seeking recommendations for individuals who wish to be considered for positions on next year's CHRS Board of Directors. These positions include President, First Vice President, Second Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary for one-year terms and three At Large Members for two-year terms. Nominations for the 2010–2011 CHRS Board will be announced in the late spring.

If you wish to be considered, to recommend someone, or to find out more about the responsibilities, please contact one of the members of the Nominating Committee: Dick Wolf ([richwolf1@verizon.net](mailto:richwolf1@verizon.net), 543-4353), Nancy Metzger ([nancymetzger@verizon.net](mailto:nancymetzger@verizon.net), 546-1034), Barbara Eck ([eckbarbara@yahoo.com](mailto:eckbarbara@yahoo.com), 544-0840), or Paul Cromwell ([paulcromwell@verizon.net](mailto:paulcromwell@verizon.net), 543-7530). You may also volunteer to serve on a Committee by contacting a member of the Nominating Committee.

# Manhole Covers at Eastern Market

by Monte Edwards

Most have noticed the distinctive cast iron manhole covers at Eastern Market that contain the Market logo. But how we got there and how the manhole covers provided funds to buy chairs for the North Hall is a typically convoluted Capitol Hill story.

It began in 1995, when Edge Advertising (EA) created the Eastern Market logo. The Eastern Market Community Advisory Committee (EMCAC), the Market Row Merchants and the District Department of Transportation (DDoT) created the Streetscape Coordinating Committee for the renovation of Seventh Street, and began lobbying DDoT, the Arts Council, and others for distinctive manhole covers that would incorporate the logo.

About a year later, architect Amy Weinstein was in Europe and provided a photo of a manhole cover in Ljubljana. With the help of EA, the border from Ljubljana was combined with the logo.

In 2009, four years after the effort began, the covers were cast and installed.



PHOTO COURTESY AMY WEINSTEIN

A manhole cover in Ljubljana was the inspiration for the new Eastern Market cover design.

Unfortunately, as previously mentioned in *CHRS News*, fourteen of the covers were cast with the logo reading "ON CAPITAL HILL SINCE 1873", rather than "ON CAPITOL HILL SINCE 1873".

With help from DDoT and the contractor, Anchor Construction, the foundry that produced the covers provided replacements at no cost.

EMCAC then arranged to purchase the defective covers for the value of the scrap iron, and embarked on a campaign to sell the covers as collectibles. All were sold for a net profit of over \$1,600, which will be used to buy chairs for the North Hall.

*CHRS News* is seeking details and photos of how the manhole covers are being adaptively reused. ★



LEFT: The original design for the distinctive 7th Street Eastern Market manhole covers.

RIGHT: The updated cover design, cast and installed in 2009.

IMAGES COURTESY EDGE ADVERTISING

# Christmas Bird Count Results

Each year the National Audubon Society sponsors a Christmas count of birds across North America. The count gives a rough idea of the status and health of the continent's bird species.

## DC Christmas Bird Count Checklist, Anacostia 2009\*

Canada Goose.....	352	Dark-eyed Junco.....	77
American Black Duck.....	1	Northern Cardinal.....	64
Mallard.....	48	Common Grackle.....	3
Bufflehead.....	3	American Goldfinch.....	2
Hooded Merganser.....	10	House Sparrow.....	30
Common Merganser.....	8	<b>Total Species.....</b>	<b>45</b>
Great Blue Heron.....	2		
Turkey Vulture.....	1		
Bald Eagle (immature).....	1		
Sharp-shinned Hawk.....	1		
Cooper's Hawk.....	1		
Red-shouldered Hawk.....	4		
Red-tailed Hawk.....	5		
Ring-billed Gull.....	726		
Herring Gull.....	4		
Great Black-backed Gull.....	10		
Gull Species.....	66		
Rock Pigeon.....	28		
Mourning Dove.....	27		
Red-bellied Woodpecker.....	18		
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker.....	3		
Downy Woodpecker.....	8		
Hairy Woodpecker.....	3		
Northern Flicker.....	4		
Pileated Woodpecker.....	1		
Blue Jay.....	17		
American Crow.....	167		
Fish Crow.....	20		
Crow Species.....	137		
Carolina Chickadee.....	16		
Tufted Titmouse.....	6		
White-breasted Nuthatch.....	6		
Carolina Wren.....	16		
Ruby-crowned Kinglet.....	3		
Hermit Thrush.....	1		
American Robin.....	148		
Gray Catbird.....	1		
Northern Mockingbird.....	6		
European Starling.....	87		
Fox Sparrow.....	2		
Song Sparrow.....	8		
White-throated Sparrow.....	111		

\* Listed in species order.

## Total Species Count by Year

2009 – 45	2001 – 61
2008 – 71	2000 – 57
2007 – 59	1999 – 65
2006 – 65	1998 – 54
2005 – 68	1997 – 53
2004 – 54	1996 – 47
2003 – 57	1995 – 54
2002 – 70	

## Did You Know?

- ★ **The Capitol Hill Garden Club has two seasonable topics at upcoming meetings.** February 9, 2010, 7 pm: Plants with Winter Interest. Landscape Designer Lynne Church will illustrate how certain trees and shrubs can make a garden look magnificent all during the winter months. March 9, 2010, 7 pm: Vegetable Gardening 101. As the soil warms and winter recedes, Dave and Casey Kniepp of Cheverly, MD, explain how to set up and plant a potager or kitchen garden.
- ★ **The District Department of Transportation has released an analysis of metered parking** near and along both Pennsylvania Avenue and 8th Street, SE, and in the vicinity of the Ballpark. It can be found at <http://tinyurl.com/yleq5xu>.
- ★ **The black squirrels occasionally seen on Capitol Hill are the descendents of animals displayed at the National Zoo.** In the first decade of the last century, the National Zoo received 18 black squirrels from the provincial government of Ontario. They've now spread over the city and beyond towards Baltimore, Charles County, Annapolis, and south of Ocoquan. Look for them on the Capitol grounds, where there's an abundance of food and no mammalian predators.

# The Hill on Film

by Mike Canning

**M**ovies shot on Capitol Hill have, over the years, occasionally used real residences to stand in for the homes of characters in a motion picture. In a way, you could say that a number of famous people have “lived” on the Hill, if only in film form. I’ll bet you didn’t know that we have had among us, at one time or the other, the following famous neighbors . . .

Henry Fonda “lived” at the Sewall-Belmont House while he was testifying in the Senate for confirmation as the Secretary of State? (*Advise and Consent*, 1962)

Also, the zesty Goldie Hawn for a time “lived” at a row house on the unit block of 9th Street, NE, before she became a State Department official. (*Protocol*, 1984)

Comedian Albert Brooks also “occupied” a large row house on East Capitol Street while he was a brilliant television news reporter. (*Broadcast News*, 1986)

Did you know that Meryl Streep and Jack Nicholson “moved into” a fixer-upper once on the 300 block of A Street, SE, after they got married? (*Heartburn*, 1989)

Then, too, the smooth Ryan O’Neal “lived” on New Jersey Avenue, just down from the Capitol, while he was a *Washington Post* journalist. (*Chances Are*, 1989)

And when Tom Cruise was doing some JAG duty once, he “worked out of” a house on the 900 block of E Street, SE, across from the Old Naval Hospital. (*A Few Good Men*, 1992)

Finally, and most recently, the lovely Annette Benning, a lobbyist with a nonprofit, “found” a lovely rental in one of the large apartment buildings on the 300 block of East Capitol, NE. (*The American President*, 1995)

## A Remembrance: Peter Craig

by Dick Wolf

**A**t Peter’s memorial service in late December at the Friends Meeting House, many were there who remembered him from the tumultuous freeway battles of the 1960s and 1970s. As noted in a *Washington Post* editorial commemorating his life, Peter, in saving the city from the blight of freeways, kept intact Washington’s unique beauty. But he did much more than that. His great legal gifts and leadership amidst the storms of racial protest—white men’s roads through black men’s neighborhoods—saved many thousands of working-class homes as well as some of Washington’s most historic neighborhoods, including Georgetown and DuPont Circle.

Peter also helped retain other vital areas, such as McLean Gardens and Capitol Hill. His legal efforts on behalf of Citizens for City Living were instrumental in saving the moderate-income housing of McLean Gardens. His briefs and arguments on behalf of CHRS saved the lots now occupied by the Jenkins Row Condominiums and Harris Teeter from being turned into what would have been the largest private office building in DC. Peter also helped me to write a legal opinion concerning the constitutionality of permit parking that led to CHRS obtaining the services of the law firm Covington & Burling in successfully representing DC citizens in that cause.

Peter went on to represent his Cleveland Park neighbors in a number of other cases, all the while working full time on transportation issues for railroads and the federal Department of Transportation. In Peter’s view of the world, his energy and legal gifts were at the service of the community. He and his family were benefactors to many causes in the District aimed at keeping families and neighborhoods intact.

We owe Peter much. Washington DC would be a much different city without him.

Peter, thanks for what you did, from a foot soldier in your battles. ★

You didn’t know that you were so surrounded by cinematic celebrities, did you? ★

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*The Hill on Film is an occasional series about how Hollywood has treated—or mistreated—elements of Capitol Hill. Canning writes movie reviews for the Hill Rag.*

# Looking Back on Capitol Hill

**G**eraldine Matthews, born in 1923, has spent her entire life on Capitol Hill, first living with her grandparents and mother on Terrace Place, NE (behind the Lutheran Church of the Reformation on East Capitol Street) and then at several other homes in both northeast and southeast Capitol Hill. She recounts many of her memories in the days of segregation, when there were subtle and definitely not-so-subtle rules about where one was welcome if one was not a white child. However, she and her friends had a lively social life, as she recounts in this 2002 interview with Marie Mingo for the Capitol Hill Oral History Project, when they enjoyed the sounds of the Big Bands at both the Lincoln Colonnade and the Suburban Gardens.

**MATTHEWS:** "...[I]t was what they call the Lincoln Colonnade. And they would have bands there. And they started, they would have dances for the school children and it would last 'til 9:00. That would be on Mondays, sometime on Mondays. And we'd go up there and then the group of us would walk."

**MINGO:** "Now where was the Lincoln Colonnade? Was that at Cardozo?"

**MATTHEWS:** "U Street, up on U Street...They would have, a lot of times, Big Bands. And we had Suburban Gardens, out Forty-Ninth, Northeast...Deane Avenue. It sat up on the hill. And they had all kinds of rides and they had a big pavilion. And they used to have all the big bands. Ella Fitzgerald, I never will forget. I can remember...Chick Webb... Lionel Hampton. I think we paid like seventy-five cents or something or a dollar and a quarter or something."

**MINGO:** "Oh, my gosh."

**MATTHEWS:** "We'd be begging for that. And we'd catch the streetcar. The streetcar would run out on H, out there. And we'd get to Fifteenth and H, they had to put the trolley wire up, I think, going out. Coming back, when we got there, they'd take the trolley wire down. Sure did."

The complete interview and many others can be found on the Ruth Ann Overbeck Capitol Hill History Project website, [www.capitolhillhistory.org](http://www.capitolhillhistory.org). ★

## Welcome CHRS Supporters

*We thank the following new members, patrons, and sponsors.*

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Streetcars with raising power poles on top, front of the Willard Hotel, ca. 1939.



**Capitol Hill Restoration Society**  
420 Tenth Street, SE  
Washington, DC 20003

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## Mark Your Calendar!

### FEBRUARY

**1** Monday, 6:30 pm  
CHRS Historic Preservation Committee, Kirby House, 420 10th Street, SE, first floor. Details: Nancy Metzger, 546-1034.

**9** Tuesday, 8:00 pm  
Overbeck Lecture: Dick Wolf Reviews the History of the Capitol Hill Restoration Society. Admission is free, but a reservation is required due to limited seating. To reserve, please e-mail: [lecture@capitolhillhistory.org](mailto:lecture@capitolhillhistory.org) or call 544-1845 (leave name, phone number, email address and number of seats needed). Naval Lodge Hall, 330 Pennsylvania Avenue, SE.

**16** Tuesday, 6:30 pm  
CHRS Board of Directors, Capitol Hill Townhomes, 750 6th Street, SE, second floor. Details: Beth Purcell, 622-4303.

**17** Wednesday, 6:30–7:15 pm  
CHRS Preservation Café: “How to Get a Free Home Energy Audit” with Jim Conlon, president of Elysian Energy. Ebezeners Coffeehouse, 2nd & F Streets, NE, downstairs. Free, accessible, no reservation required. Details: Shauna Holmes, 546-5211.

**25** Thursday, 10:00 am  
Historic Preservation Review Board, 441 4th Street, NW, Room 220 South. Details: Nancy Metzger, 546-1034.

### MARCH

**1** Monday, 6:30 pm  
CHRS Historic Preservation Committee, Kirby House, 420 10th Street, SE, first floor. Details: Nancy Metzger, 546-1034.

**11** Thursday, 7:30 pm  
CHRS Zoning Committee, Kirby House, 420 10th Street, SE, first floor. Details: Gary Peterson, 547-7979.

**16** Tuesday, 6:30 pm  
CHRS Board of Directors, Capitol Hill Townhomes, 750 6th Street, SE, second floor. Details: Beth Purcell, 622-4303.

**17** Wednesday, 6:30–7:15 pm  
CHRS Preservation Café on de-cluttering: “Take Back Your Closets!” with Jill Lawrence from Jill-of-All-Trades Professional Organizing Services. Ebezeners Coffeehouse, 2nd & F Streets, NE, downstairs. Free, accessible, no reservation required. Details: Shauna Holmes, 546-5211.

**25** Thursday, 10:00 am  
Historic Preservation Review Board, 441 4th Street, NW, Room 220 South. Details: Nancy Metzger, 546-1034.