



# NEWS

www.chrs.org

March 2014

## CHRS Spring Forum: The River in Our Backyard

**D**o you know where to rent a canoe for free on Capitol Hill? The closest place to spy a bald eagle? What local river is part of America's first national water trail, the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail? That's right: the Anacostia River. Sometimes called "America's forgotten river," this waterway is becoming more accessible due to the Anacostia Waterfront Initiative, expansion of the Anacostia Riverwalk Trail, and the diligent efforts of conservationists to restore its water quality after centuries of silting and pollution.

The Anacostia Watershed Society, host of CHRS's popular 2013 river tours, has for twenty-five years spearheaded a campaign to make the river "swimmable and fishable" again. Along with the Anacostia Community Boathouse Association they will present a program on the river's progress and the many recreational opportunities at our Spring Forum on March 27 at the Northeast Library.



IMAGE COURTESY ANACOSTIA WATERSHED SOCIETY

Boaters push off to enjoy the Anacostia.

- Discover boating, conservation and educational activities for

*Continued on page 6*

### Seeking Nominations for 2014-15 Board

CHRS will hold elections for the 2014-15 Board of Directors by postcard ballot in May. The elections committee (Gary Peterson, Elizabeth Nelson and Beth Purcell) is seeking recommendations of 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.

If you wish to be considered, to recommend someone, or to find out more about the duties of each position, please contact Gary Peterson at (202) 547-7969, or via e-mail at: [pgarylaw@aol.com](mailto:pgarylaw@aol.com). Recommendations must include the position for which the person wants to be considered and his or her resume.

Recommendations must be submitted to Gary Peterson by the end of the day on April 10, 2014. Nominations will be announced at the end of April.

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# President's Column: The Grass is Greener Here— Let's Keep it That Way

By Janet Quigley

**D**DOT's recent proposal, hastily withdrawn, to pave the southwest banks of the Anacostia into a four-lane boulevard is a wake-up call to appreciate and preserve our remaining open space. An active Capitol Hill waterfront may be a faraway concept to many of us, but it is attracting the attention of planners. Development projects are sprouting to the west: 2,800 units at Yards Park; 1,500 units at Southwest Waterfront's The Wharf; 350 at Florida Rock; hundreds at Buzzard Point if the soccer stadium comes in, plus copious commercial space throughout the area.

Yards Park is a pleasant space but unmistakably urban. The Wharf's planned waterfront appears to be a ribbon of boardwalk flanked by high rises with very little green. The Anacostia waterfront has the potential to remain more green than pavement—if the public protects it. We look forward to a better vision from DDOT for the old Southeast Freeway.

I continue to be impressed with the Anacostia Riverwalk Trail, an escape from noisy streets just minutes from the heart of Capitol Hill. On an unusually warm day in February I took a spin to check out the construction progress. I was pleased

to discover that it is now possible to cycle virtually uninterrupted from stadium to stadium, i.e. from RFK to Nationals Park, stopping only at 11th Street SE and South Capitol Street. The trail is coming along; kudos to DDOT. Next stop: DC United Stadium!

## Medlink Revisited

Will this be the year that the old hospital property at 700 Constitution Avenue is successfully developed into apartments? Northeast neighbors of SHW Hospital, formerly known as Medlink, can be forgiven their skepticism as the troubled southern parcel, vacant more than ten years, has defeated one developer after another. The current project has a good "foundation" thanks to a thorough vetting in 2012 shepherded by local ANC Commissioners Scott Price and David Holmes, which incorporated community concerns into developer IBG's plans. The southern third of the block-long building is to be converted to apartments with underground parking and plazas front and back.

Fast forward to 2014 and a new firm, Urban Structures Incorporated, has taken up the project. Demolition began in January and the first community meeting was held in

February. This sequence of events made for a bumpy start. To USI's surprise, when workmen began cutting down large old trees with no notice, neighbors called the city. When (admittedly ugly) exterior trim was removed without the Historic Preservation Office's knowledge, permit inspectors were called. When demolition crews were spotted wearing masks and carrying material that looked like asbestos, more phone calls ensued.

Developers always seem to be surprised that Capitol Hill residents take an acute—or any—interest in what goes on in their neighborhood. Well, the dialogue has now been opened and will continue.

## Tregoning Departs OP

Controversial DC Office of Planning Director Harriet Tregoning resigned February 21 after seven busy years in the Fenty and Gray administrations. Championing a new vision for urban living, her approaches to development, the zoning rewrite, bike lanes, parking and building heights often met with mixed reviews. She moves to the US Department of Housing and Urban Development to head the Office of Sustainable Housing and Communities and looks forward to the challenge. Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development Victor Hoskins has appointed Rosalynn Hughey, OP's Deputy Director of Citywide and Neighborhood Planning, as interim Director. Ms. Hughey began her career with OP in 2000 as the Neighborhood Planning Coordinator for Ward 4 and has 25 years' experience in urban planning. We wish her well in this challenging position. ★

## Earth Day Cleanup April 5, 2014

Be a part of something big: the annual cleanup of the Anacostia River. Last year's event drew more than 2,000 volunteers. They removed 97,367 pounds of trash, recycling and tires, making the river safer for fish and cleaner for everyone. This year's cleanup runs from 9 am to noon, followed by a celebration at RFK Stadium. For information, contact Ann DeSanctis at (301) 699-6204 x109 or [adesanctis@anacostiaws.org](mailto:adesanctis@anacostiaws.org), or sign up at: [www.anacostiaws.org/earthday2014/volunteer.html](http://www.anacostiaws.org/earthday2014/volunteer.html).

# Capitol Hill Restoration Society (CHRS)

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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 Second Vice President . . . . . Lisa Dale Jones  
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 At Large . . . . . Lisa Wilson  
 Immediate Past President . . . . . Beth Purcell

## COMMITTEE CHAIRS

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 Budget & Administration . . . . . Paul Cromwell  
 City Planning . . . . . Monte Edwards  
 Communications . . . . . Susan Burgerman  
 Community Development . . . . . Chuck Burger  
 Community Relations . . . . . Elizabeth Nelson  
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 Grants . . . . . Larry Pearl  
 Historic Preservation . . . . . Shauna Holmes  
 House & Garden Tour . . . . . Susan Young  
 Membership . . . . . Vacant  
 Zoning . . . . . Gary Peterson

## NEWSLETTER

Lisa Dale Jones and Kelly Vielmo, Editors  
 Jean Kohanek, Layout

## WEBMASTERS

Donna Breslin, Paul Cromwell, Scott Knight

## OFFICE MANAGER

Gloria Junge

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 55 years helping to preserve and protect Capitol Hill's residential character, the Society is 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.

To start or renew a CHRS membership:

- ★ On the web at 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.

# Zoning Briefs

By Gary Peterson

The CHRS Zoning Committee did not meet in person in February because of bad weather. Instead, for the first time, the committee did all of its business via email. The committee considered three cases:

**#18712: 821 I Street, NE.** The applicant is renovating a four-unit row house and converting it to two units. As part of the renovation he wants to add a two-story rear porch; the property currently has just rear stairs coming down from the second floor. The stairs will be attached to the porch. The structure occupies 73% of the property and the addition will boost the lot occupancy to 74%. The permitted lot occupancy is 60% and an owner can go to 70% by getting a special exception. Anything over 70% coverage requires a variance. Adjacent properties also have porches but the committee did not believe the applicant qualified for the variance. However, the committee voted to take no position on the application.

**#18713: 1500 Pennsylvania Avenue, SE.** The applicant proposes building a four-story, 42-unit apartment building. A new apartment building of this size must supply 21 parking spaces but, in order to do this, the

applicant needs to make 8 of the spaces compact parking spaces. Compact parking spaces are not permitted in a garage with less than 25 spaces and a variance is needed for these 8 spaces. The applicant also needs a special exception to have roof structures of different heights. There will be roof enclosures for mechanical equipment, stairs and elevator shaft ranging in height from 20 to 15.5 feet. The committee voted unanimously to support the application.

**#18724: 819 D Street, NE.** This case involves the conversion of the Way of the Cross Church of Christ from a church to a residential property. The property involves the church and two houses, one immediately to the south and the other immediately to the west. The proposal is for the two houses to each have two units and the church to contain 26 units for a total of 30 units. The total lot area is 11,457 square feet and would be allowed 12 or 13 lots as a matter of right. The proposed 30 units require 15 parking spaces, but only 6 can be supplied. The committee believed that the applicant's proposal is much too large for the site and suggests a development of 21 units. ★

## Final Chance for Comment on Regulations

The Office of Planning (OP) has scheduled a series of open house meetings to discuss the draft proposed changes to the zoning regulations with OP staff. The Zoning Commission has held hearings on the draft and plans to leave the record open to take comments until April 17, 2014. The OP staff will answer your questions on a one-on-one basis. A copy of the regulations is on the OP website (<http://planning.dc.gov>) and at each public library. The OP office is at 1100 4th Street, SW, Suite E650. The staff will be there to answer your questions from 8:30 am–5 pm on March 4, 7, 14, 21, and 28. If you have any questions about how these regulations affect Capitol Hill, please contact Gary Peterson, chair of the CHRS Zoning Committee at [pgarylaw@aol.com](mailto:pgarylaw@aol.com) or 547-7969.

# The 57th Annual House and Garden Tour: *Our Homes, Our Gardens, Our History*

Saturday, May 10, 5–8 pm and Sunday, May 11, 12–5 pm

This year's House and Garden Tour will include about a dozen properties between Massachusetts Avenue and D Street, SE, between 3rd and 8th Streets. Much of Capitol Hill was constructed during the last quarter of the nineteenth century, and this year's Tour showcases the gradual development, from 1850s frame houses to the brick, stone and iron dwellings of the first years of the 20th century.

The Tour's circular route from Third Street to Eighth Street and back is about a mile and a half.

Additional information about the Tour will be posted on the CHRS website as it becomes available,

including interior and exterior photographs.

The previous 56 House Tour brochures are now available on the web site, thanks to the work of Anita Large and Scott Knight.

If you are interested in volunteering as a docent on the weekend of the Tour, please contact Paul Cromwell at paulcromwell@verizon.net. ★

## Tour Volunteers Needed

Can you spare an hour or two in April or May to help a good cause? CHRS is currently seeking volunteers for:

- House Tour Docents
- Ticket booth at Eastern Market
- Cookie and cupcake bakers
- Bicycle deliveries
- Social media support
- And many others

To be a part of this year's house tour, please contact CHRS Office Manager Gloria Junge at 543-0425 or CapHRS@aol.com.

## Attention CHRS Members: Special House Tour Ticket Offer

As a valued CHRS member, you are invited to join us for the 57th Annual Mothers' Day House and Garden Tour to be held on May 10-11, 2014! This year's tour, themed "Our Homes, Our Gardens, Our History" will feature a dozen fabulous homes in the shadow of the US Capitol. The footprint is a charming area north of Pennsylvania Avenue between Third, Eighth, Massachusetts Avenue NE and D Street, SE.

Protecting the historic fabric of our unique community is vital, and this highly popular event is also CHRS's biggest annual fundraiser. Proceeds support our preservation efforts on Capitol Hill throughout the year. Your support will help fund the restoration workshops, education programs, historic research and impact studies that increase the public's appreciation of, and support for, the Hill.

Your membership entitles you to purchase up to four (4) discounted tickets for \$20 each through Friday, April 18, 2014. The regular price is \$25 per ticket through May 9, and \$30 on Tour weekend. And if you can, please consider making a tax-deductible contribution by becoming an Individual Sponsor. The more unrestricted dollars we raise, the harder we can work for Capitol Hill.

This ticket discount is only available using the members' order form in this newsletter and returning it by US mail or email. The discount form must be received with full payment before April 18, but an earlier reply would be much appreciated and will guarantee that tickets will be available.

Thank you again for your continued support. CHRS is an almost exclusively volunteer-run organization, so member contributions make a great deal of difference. Please be as generous as you can. We look forward to seeing you, your family and your friends on the Tour.

*Janet Quigley*  
CHRS President



57th Annual  
**House and Garden Tour**  
Saturday and Sunday • May 10–11, 2014

## Individual Donations and Ticket Order Form

### Tax-Deductible Contributions

Benefactors, Patrons, and Sponsors will be listed in the Tour brochure if received by April 15.

- Benefactor** (\$1,000, 8 complimentary tickets, \$840 deductible)
- Patron** (\$500, 4 complimentary tickets, \$420 deductible)
- Sponsor** (\$250, 2 complimentary tickets, \$210 deductible)
- Contributor** (\$100, completely deductible)
- Funder** (\$50, completely deductible)

My/our name(s) should be listed as follows: \_\_\_\_\_

### Member Tour Tickets

For tickets only, mail or scan and e-mail with full payment by April 18.

\_\_\_\_\_ Member Tour tickets @ \$20.00 each (limit 4 per household)

\_\_\_\_\_ Additional Tour tickets @ \$25.00 each

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing address: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

### Payment Information

Sum of contribution and tickets. *Your cancelled check or credit card statement will be your receipt.*

- Enclosed is my check for \$ \_\_\_\_\_ payable to CHRS, Inc.
- Please bill my credit card \$ \_\_\_\_\_  Mastercard  Visa

Card Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Expiration: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ CVV Code: \_\_\_\_\_

**Tickets will be mailed approximately two weeks before the Tour.**

CHRS  
P.O. Box 15264  
Washington, DC 20003-0264  
Phone: (202) 543-0425  
CapHRS@aol.com

# March 19 Preservation Café: Money-Saving Preventative Home Maintenance

There are simple and cost-effective preventative measures that can extend the life cycle of many of the components of your home.

Gary Barnhart, a Capitol Hill-based craftsman and contractor, sees many of the same issues over and over again as he repairs and restores neighborhood houses. In the March Preservation Café, Gary will focus on a few of the most important things a homeowner (or favorite contractor) can do to avoid problems and save money on long-term maintenance. Topics will include: sealing exterior walls, winterizing, getting ready for summer, plumbing systems, preparing for emergencies, and performing regular inspections.

Wednesday, March 19, 6:30–7:15 pm, Ebenezers Coffee House (downstairs), 2nd and F Street, NE. Handicapped-accessible; no

## Capitol Hill Village Housing Seminar

Do you want to learn how to make simple changes to your home to make it safer and more comfortable? Are you thinking of making more substantial changes to the layout and functioning of your home to reflect your current and future needs?

The Housing Committee of Capitol Hill Village is sponsoring a seminar that can help you learn more about these issues. Speakers will be Tori Goldhammer, an occupational therapist whose consulting business helps homeowners adapt their homes for safety and comfort, and Byron Buck, whose company renovates and modernizes homes.

The seminar will be held Friday, February 21, 10 am–noon at Hill Center, 921 Pennsylvania Avenue, SE. The event is open to all without charge, but seating is limited and registration is required; please call 543-1778 to reserve your seat.

reservations required. Contact Elizabeth Nelson, 543-3512 if you have questions. ★

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## Spring Forum, *continued from cover*

Capitol Hill residents and visitors of all ages.

- Sign up for river tours and classes; learn about new docks and rental locations.
- Pick up National Park Service's newly published Anacostia Watertrail map with routes through Capitol Hill's waterfront.

Spring is just around the corner; this is the perfect time to begin planning outdoor activities with friends and family.

## Free Paddle Nights

One of the best kept secrets on Capitol Hill is this free event: on Thursday nights in summer and early fall, AWS offers free paddle nights at four locations along the river. Canoes and kayaks are available; signup is required. They also offer full moon and sunset tours.

## CHRS Spring Forum, March 27

Northeast Library, 330 7th Street, NE, in the Community Room (basement). Membership meeting 6:45–7 pm; presentation begins at 7 pm and is open to the public.

## Pontoon Boat Tour is Back

By popular demand, CHRS will again partner with AWS to hold an historic/ecological river tour on Saturday, May 17. Members can sign up by contacting the CHRS office.

## Membership Meeting

The CHRS quarterly membership meeting will take place on March 27 at 6:45 pm, immediately before the Forum. Topics will include a progress report on recent activities, a preview of the House & Garden Tour (and call for volunteers), and announcement of the Nominating Committee as required in the bylaws. All members are welcome to attend. ★

# April 8 Overbeck Lecture: How the Folgers Brought Shakespeare to Capitol Hill

On Tuesday, April 8, Stephen H. Grant will deliver an Overbeck History Lecture on the lives of Henry and Emily Folger, who amassed the world's greatest collection of Shakespeare treasures, including 82 First Folios, and built a library on Capitol Hill to house them.

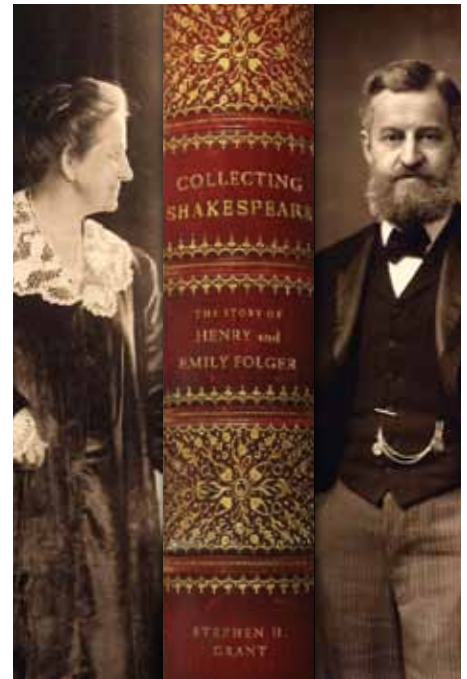
Based on his new book, *Collecting Shakespeare*, Grant will recount how the Folgers financed their collecting hobby with the fortune Henry earned as president of Standard Oil of New York, and how they secretly acquired prime real estate on East Capitol Street, around the corner from the Library of Congress, for a facility that would include a reading room, a public exhibition hall and an Elizabethan theater. A block-long row of handsome Italianate town houses, known as Grant's Row, was demolished to make way for the project.

Stephen Grant is a former Foreign Service officer who has authored

five books, including a biography of Peter Strickland, a New London, Connecticut sea captain who became the first American consul in French West Africa. His book on the Folgers was preceded by his article in the June 2012 issue of *Washington History*, "A Most Interesting and Attractive Problem: Creating Washington's Folger Shakespeare Library."

The lecture is set for 7:30 pm at the Naval Lodge Hall at 330 Pennsylvania Avenue, SE, and will conclude with a book signing. As usual, admission is free but a reservation is required due to limited seating. To reserve, or to request inclusion on the lecture series notification list, contact [OverbeckLecture@capitolhillhistory.org](mailto:OverbeckLecture@capitolhillhistory.org).

The Overbeck Lectures are an initiative of the Capitol Hill Community Foundation. ★



Cover of *Collecting Shakespeare*.

## Help Wanted: CHRS Office Manager

CHRS is looking for a mature, personable, well-organized person with general office skills, including computers. Members of the Society and residents of Capitol Hill preferred.

Work includes maintaining membership records of the Society; responding to telephone and email inquiries by supplying routine information and publications or by referring inquiries to the proper Board member; helping prepare for and attending all Board and Membership meetings; maintaining stocks of literature and promotional materials; and assisting in preparations for the annual House and Garden Tour and other events.

Work 12–15 hours per week at the CHRS office at 420 10th Street, SE. Schedule can be flexible. This is a paid position.

If interested, call the CHRS office, (202) 543-0425 and speak with Gloria Junge, the current office manager.

## Thank You CHRS Supporters

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

### NEW MEMBERS

Justine Bello  
Mindy Turbov

### PATRONS

Gerard Dunphy

### SPONSORS

Elizabeth Hannold and  
Douglas Delano  
Peter and Christina May

### SILVER SPONSORS

Diane and John Shages



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

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## Mark Your Calendar!

### MARCH

**3** Monday, 6:30 pm  
CHRS Historic Preservation Committee, Kirby House, 420 10th Street, SE, first floor. Details: Shauna Holmes, 546-5211.

**13** Thursday, 7:30 pm  
CHRS Zoning Committee, Kirby House, 420 10th Street, SE, first floor. Details: Gary Peterson, 547-7969.

**18** Tuesday, 6:30 pm  
CHRS Board of Directors, Capitol Hill Townhomes, 750 6th Street, SE, second floor. Details: Janet Quigley, 543-0425.

**19** Wednesday, 6:30–7:15 pm  
CHRS Preservation Café: “Money-Saving Preventative Home Maintenance.” Simple and cost effective preventative measures to extend the life cycle of the components of your home with Gary Barnhart. Ebenezers Coffee House (downstairs), 2nd and F Streets, NE. Handicapped-accessible. No reservations required.

**27** Thursday, 7–8:30 pm  
CHRS Spring Forum: “The River in Our Backyard.” Just in time for Earth Day, learn what the Anacostia Watershed Society is doing to improve the ecology of our river and how you can help. Discover new docks opening in our area, boating classes for all ages and opportunities for canoe and kayak rentals with the Anacostia Community Boathouse. From 6:45–7pm a CHRS membership meeting will precede the program. Northeast Library, 330 7th Street, NE and Maryland Avenue. Details: 543-0425.

**57th Annual Capitol Hill House and Garden Tour**

May 10–11, 2014

Reserve your tickets today! Visit us at [www.chrs.org](http://www.chrs.org) or call 543-0425.

### APRIL

**7** Monday, 6:30 pm  
CHRS Historic Preservation Committee, Kirby House, 420 10th Street, SE, first floor. Details: Shauna Holmes, 546-5211.

**10** Thursday, 7:30 pm  
CHRS Zoning Committee, Kirby House, 420 10th Street, SE, first floor. Details: Gary Peterson, 547-7969.

**15** Tuesday, 6:30 pm  
CHRS Board of Directors, Capitol Hill Townhomes, 750 6th Street, SE, second floor. Details: Janet Quigley, 543-0425.

**16** Wednesday, 6:30–7:15 pm  
CHRS Preservation Café, topic to be determined. Ebenezers Coffee House (downstairs), 2nd and F Streets, NE. Handicapped-accessible. No reservations required.