



CHRS CELEBRATING 60 YEARS OF PRESERVATION

# NEWS

www.chrs.org

October 2016

## Emerald Street Walking Tour

by Beth Purcell

On September 11, 2016, CHRS offered a complimentary tour of Emerald Street, NE (between E, F, 13th, and 14th Streets). Emerald Street, known as Emerson Street until 1950, is a one-block street lined with brick Queen Anne houses that reflects Washington’s late 19th-century boom in population and building. The tour focused on understanding the street, answering: Why are these houses here? Who were they built for? Why do they look this way? The fifty tour attendees learned about population trends, three architectural styles, and two methods of brick construction.

As of early 1892, square 1029, the future site of Emerald Street, was open fields. Two speculators, William Mayse and Louis D. Wine, formed a syndicate and bought the entire square for \$72,000. This square, like the other squares on Capitol Hill, was surveyed when the city was founded. It was divided into 26 lots, fronting on E, F, 13th or 14th Street with access to an H-shaped alley. Mayse and Wine bought the square and widened the alley to create Emerald Street. This allowed them to add more rowhouse lots, 169 in total. In 1895, Francis S. Carmody subdivided again to add one last lot.

In the late 19th century, Washington was growing fast. The middle-class population was



IMAGE COURTESY ELIZABETH NELSON

Walking tour at George P. Newton’s houses at 1306–1308 Emerald Street, NE.

expanding and needed housing. Mayse and Wine accurately predicted a big demand for their rowhouse lots and they doubled their money. By 1893–1894, 43 new owners, including several developers, had bought all but four lots.

One of the developers, George P. Newton, built 28 brick rowhouses on Emerald Street by the end of 1893, and then went on to build 32 more houses on Emerald Street between 1894 and 1896, plus 32 houses on 14th, E, and F Streets. Newton’s houses on Emerald Street are red

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# President's Column: An Invitation to Join CHRS

I dislike making anyone feel they're been "put on the spot", being a shy person myself. So, it's uncomfortable for me to ask people to join CHRS. At the same time, I'm well aware that folks are more likely to join if asked by a friend. And the Society needs to continue to attract members. What to do?

I've found that it's not at all painful to extend an *invitation*. Whenever we have an event—a walking tour, a Preservation Café, a lecture—I forward the notice to people I think might possibly be interested. Maybe they'll attend and maybe they won't but 1) they will know that CHRS is an organization

that I support, and 2) they will become more aware of our activities, programs, and the many ways we contribute to the quality of life on Capitol Hill. Over time, they may become interested themselves, perhaps participate as a volunteer, and eventually even join. And if they don't, we will have lost nothing and they will at least know that we are welcoming and inclusive.

So, next time you receive an email announcement from our office manager, Carl Spier, please consider passing it on to a few of your contacts. And when you've finished reading your newsletter, share it with a neighbor.

Of course, if you have the time and temperament for a more substantial effort, the House Expo organizers could certainly use your help on October 16. They're setting aside one of the tables for a "hospitality booth" where attendees can ask questions, pick up promotional materials and enter email addresses in a drawing for May 2017 House Tour tickets. I plan to be there most of the day and look forward to mingling with members while assisting visitors. To volunteer, contact Michelle Carroll, pilliodmp@aol.com or (202) 421-8698.

— Elizabeth

IMAGE COURTESY ELIZABETH NELSON



## CHRS at Barracks Row Fall Festival

Despite the abundance of competing activities, plenty of folks chose Barracks Row as their destination September 24. Soon after CHRS set up its tent, people started streaming by. We entertained our youngest visitors with beads to string and temporary tattoos. We also made a concerted effort to extend invitations to our upcoming events, including the Preservation Cafés, the September Membership Meeting, and the Emerald Street Walking Tour. We received a very positive response,

especially with respect to the House Expo on October 16. We distributed stacks of newsletters and House & Garden Tour catalogs, previewing the May 13–14, 2017 event.

Many thanks to those who helped make our participation possible: Carl Spier, for preparing the materials; Chuck Burger, Beth Purcell, Joanna Kendig and Susan Burgerman for staffing the booth; Joanna's husband, Gene, who not only returned our materials back to the office at the end of the day, but also made a small repair to our tent; and whoever interceded with the weather—it could not have been more pleasant.

## 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.

### ABOUT CHRS

Capitol Hill is a special place. We promote, preserve, and enhance the character of our historic neighborhoods.

Since its founding in 1955, CHRS has worked continuously to make Capitol Hill the desirable location it has now become. Due to CHRS's efforts, Capitol Hill won designation as a historic district in 1976. Today, that legacy of standing up for the community continues with our work in planning, zoning, historic preservation, and public safety.

CHRS is a volunteer organization, made up of Hill residents who love their historic neighborhoods and want to ensure that the unique character of the Hill is around for future generations. Come join us!

To learn more or join, please visit:  
[www.CHRS.org](http://www.CHRS.org)

# Overbeck Lecture: Alexander Shepherd and the Making of Modern Washington

On Monday, November 7, Overbeck History Lecture Series speaker John P. Richardson will present a lecture on Alexander R. ("Boss") Shepherd, the man credited with helping to transform Washington from its post-Civil War shambles into a modern city during DC's territorial government period (1871-74). Richardson calls Shepherd's achievement in building Washington's infrastructure against all odds an American success story. Richardson's lecture will be based on his biography, *Alexander Robey Shepherd: The Man Who Built the Nation's Capital*, soon to be published by Ohio University Press. Copies of the book will be available at the lecture for purchase.

Richardson became interested in Shepherd when he lived in DC's Shepherd Park neighborhood, just

a short distance from the site of Shepherd's summer home, Bleak House. During his professional career, Richardson was president of American Near East Refugee Aid (ANERA) and the Center for Middle East Policy and later was an officer with the Central Intelligence Agency, serving in Pakistan, Jordan and Indonesia, before retiring in 2005. He is secretary of the Association of Oldest Inhabitants of Washington, DC.

The lecture will be held at the Hill Center at 921 Pennsylvania Avenue, SE, at 7:30 pm. As always, admission is free but a reservation is required due to limited seating. Visit <http://hillcenterdc.org/home/program/2511> or simply call (202) 549-4172. The Overbeck Lectures are sponsored by the Capitol Hill Community Foundation. ★

## Hilloween 2016

Hilloween is an annual free street party outside of Eastern Market. This year it will take place on Friday, October 28, from 5:30-7:30 pm and feature a hayride, face painting, crafts, music and treats.

CHRS will be once again hosting a children's activity table with temporary tattoos and beads to string. This is a grand opportunity to let our neighbors get to know us and the organization we represent—and hopefully whet people's appetites for the House & Garden Tour.

It's "light duty" and a really good time. The kids are darling in their costumes and their parents are in a jolly mood. Best of all, it doesn't conflict with Halloween, so you can help out at our table and still be at home to greet Trick-or-Treaters and/or await the Great Pumpkin.

To volunteer, contact Elizabeth Nelson, (202) 543-3512 or via e-mail at: [elizabeth\\_knits@yahoo.com](mailto:elizabeth_knits@yahoo.com).

press brick, in stretcher bond, with thin mortar joints in the then-popular Queen Anne style. Press brick gives a smooth, monumental appearance, and lends itself to surface ornament.

Queen Anne style is eclectic exuberant, with a lot of variety in ornament. Judith Capen of the American Institute of Architects describes the style as "... variety in pressed brick, and as belt and string coursing ... brick door and window hoods. To enliven the roof line, row houses acquired large and elaborate roof cornices."

Newton's houses on Emerald Street express the Queen Anne style through a corbelled table at the cornice, string courses as window sills, and window openings with wood fluted pilasters, with scrolled spandrels above. Over the door and window openings are brick segmental arches with pearl molding. Newton designed some houses and the architect N.T. Haller designed others.

The 1900 Census, the first census after building began in 1892, shows that residents of square 1029 were 100 percent white and worked in typical Capitol Hill middle-class occupations. Many were government clerks and others worked at the Government Printing Office as printers, compositors, bookbinders and pressmen. Two worked in the building trades—a carpenter and an electrician. George P. Newton lived at 526 14th Street, NE, in a house that he built.

Other occupations included policeman, fireman, teacher, insurance agent, grocery clerk, bookkeeper, milliner, and one physician. Approximately 52 percent owned their houses and 48 percent were renting. Thus, the first residents of Square 1029 were typical middle-class Capitol Hill residents, exactly

the market that Mayse, Wine, and Newton had targeted.

In 1905, Newton turned to the Classical Revival Style for his next set of houses at 1364–1372 E Street, NE. These houses, designed by N. T. Haller, have a prominent brick parapet and an overhanging metal cornice.

In 1923, Thomas A. Jameson built four brick porch-front rowhouses at 519-523 13th Street, NE. Gustav Stickley's magazine, *The Craftsman*, published between 1901 and 1916, criticized Victorian houses and popularized the Craftsman style, emphasizing beautiful and visible structural elements, light-filled

rooms, porches, dormers, and the use of earth tone bricks with raked mortar joints to create shadow.

Jameson's houses, designed by George T. Santymyers, are beige brick in American bond coursing and raked mortar joints, incorporating these popular Craftsman elements (porches, light-filled rooms dormers, and visible eaves). Jameson built approximately 900 houses, including hundreds on Capitol Hill. ★

The Emerald Street walking tour will be offered again **Saturday, October 8**. Meet on corner of 13th and Emerald Streets, 10 am.

## How Emerald Street Got Its Name

In 1892, William Mayse and Louis D. Wine named their new street in square 1029 "Emerson Street," possibly because it's between E and F streets, although no information could be found on why they selected "Emerson." In early 1950, the Commissioners wanted to change the street's name and considered calling it "E Place, NE." A public hearing was scheduled to learn people's views. Although no records could be found from the hearing, someone must have made a compelling case for "Emerald Street," the name the Commissioners selected in 1950.

*See "District Street Name Changes Ordered," Washington Star, 3 May 1950, 31. NARA RG 351, Records of the Government of the District of Columbia, Minutes, including Orders: 1878–1952, vol. 107, pp. 167, 714 (C.O. 940044, 942932, 26 Jan. 1950, 2 May 1950).*

# Emma M. Gillett, Pioneering Attorney and Capitol Hill Developer

By Beth Purcell

**E**mma M. Gillett (1852–1927) came to Washington from Wisconsin in 1880 to study law after becoming interested in it while settling her mother’s estate. In 1881, President Garfield appointed her as the first female notary public in the United States; she worked for the pension office visiting widows of Civil War veterans, so they could execute vouchers for benefits.

After attending and graduating from Howard Law School, Gillett worked for and eventually formed a law partnership with Watson J. Newton (1849–1913). They handled general practice matters such as real estate, estates and trusts. Gillett was a typical Washington lawyer; she worked long hours and ate lunch at her desk. In 1898, Gillett and Ellen Spencer Mussey co-founded Washington College of Law in (now part of American University), the nation’s first co-educational law school. She served as dean until 1923, and taught real property and common law.<sup>1</sup>

She worked for women’s suffrage, alongside Elizabeth Cady Stanton and others, and chaired a local suffrage committee. She talked her way into a large grocers’ convention, so she could lobby attendees; she and other suffrage advocates served “goodies” to qualify as food exhibitors.<sup>2</sup>

Beginning in 1887, Gillett found time to invest in real estate, buying and selling multiple properties. In 1904, Gillett and Donna M. Pratt, a widow, each built a two-family flat at 1353 and 1355 F Street, NE, designed by the well-known architect Nicholas T. Haller, and built by George P. Newton, who had built multiple



IMAGE COURTESY AMERICAN UNIVERSITY, WASHINGTON COLLEGE OF LAW

**Seated: Emma M. Gillett and Mrs. Ellen Spencer Mussey, co-founders of Washington College of Law; Watson J. Newton, faculty member. Standing: Caroline I. Greisheimer, Flora Raymond, Emma R. Bailey, Delia S. Jackson, Helen Malcolm, and an unknown additional member of the Class of 1899.**

houses nearby for his own account and also for his relative, Watson J. Newton. The estimated cost for both houses was \$6,000.

These brick houses are in the Classical Revival style with square bays and canted (corners shaved at an angle), double-hung windows and clerestory windows at the cornice. Unlike the flats built at 1340, 1342, and 1348 E Street, NE, which had two front entrances (one for each flat), 1353 and 1355 F Street, NE, were built with a single front entrance. In the rear, evidence remains of a door on the second story, which may have been the entrance to one of the apartments.

In 1910, 1353 F Street, NE, was rented to Clay V. Davis and his family; he was a bookkeeper in the War Department. One unit in 1355 F Street, NE, was rented to two families: James E. Mortimer, a machinist at the Navy Yard, and the other unit to Richard L. Conner, a secretary at a business association, together with their families.<sup>3</sup> ★

<sup>1</sup> “Dean Emma M. Gillett Resigns Law School Leadership Today,” *Washington Star*, 12 Oct. 1933, 14.

<sup>2</sup> “Suffragists Arrive,” *Washington Star*, 11 Apr. 1910, 12; “Good Things to Eat: Attractive Exhibits at the Pure Food Show,” *Washington Star*, 9 Nov. 1909, 12.

<sup>3</sup> “Building permits issued,” *Washington Star*, 2 Nov. 1904, 3. DC building permit # 999 ((2 Nov. 1904). Bureau of the Census, Population Census (1910, Wash., DC, ED 146).

# 2017 House & Garden Tour

If it seems like it's too soon to start planning the 2017 House & Garden Tour, you're right—it does *seem* too soon.

But it's not. A myriad of loose ends have to come together like clockwork on Mother's Day weekend to make a successful Tour. The houses selected, of course (*check*); the Program Guide printed (*check*); tickets in-hand (*check*); balloons distributed, blown-up, and secured to something (*um...*); tea refreshments ready to serve (*hold on...*); docents assigned to every house (*wait, wait*); Eastern Market both staffed (*help!*). And the list goes on.

The annual CHRS House & Garden Tour is one of the stars of the Capitol Hill calendar—it's fun, it's popular, it's historic in its own right. It is also quite an undertaking and only happens with the support of hundreds of volunteers. Like you.

The great thing is that none of the volunteer tasks is a huge burden, they're all pretty simple, such as:

- Help set up the tent at Eastern Market.
- Distribute cases of water to every house.
- Run extra tickets to House #4.
- Ferry a docent from House #6 to House #2.
- Get photographs of the tour goers at House #10.
- Replace a missing front yard sign at House #8.

You can do these things, even if you **are** a rocket scientist.

But maybe you're at Mom's house on Mother's Day. Then what? Well, you can pitch in before Mother's Day weekend:

- The Eastern Market tent and booth need to be set up for the three weekends before Mother's Day weekend.

- The Eastern Market booth must be staffed each of those weekends (three shifts of two folks each). And the tent and booth need to be folded up for each of the three weekends before Mother's Day.
- All the houses need to be photographed for the Program Guide. Every house needs a written description.
- The Program Guide needs to be proof read.
- Day-of supplies need to be obtained and on-hand.
- Sponsors and advertisers need to be recruited to participate in the Program Guide. If you can help with any of these, give us a ring!

There's plenty to do and plenty of fun folks to do it with. So plan early and let us know how you'd like to help. Contact CHRS at the email below and tell us what day/days you are available, what type of task you enjoy doing, and how to reach you: [HouseTourCHRS@gmail.com](mailto:HouseTourCHRS@gmail.com). ★

## Thank You, CHRS Supporters

*We thank the following CHRS members and supporters.*

### NEW MEMBERS

Sheila Faison  
Barbara Price

### SILVER

Sara Alcorn  
Silvana & Wesley Hallman  
Judith Capen & Robert Weinstein

### BRONZE

Geoffrey & Suzanna Brown

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Carol & John Hirschman  
Meg Maguire & Dale Ostrander

### ANNUAL FUND

*In Memory of Gloria Junge:*  
Chris & Dan Mullins & Family

## CHRS To Hold Free House Expo

On Sunday, October 16, from 10 am to 4 pm, CHRS will hold a free House Expo at the Eastern Market North Hall, featuring over 30 home service exhibitors. Experts and informative speakers will show ways to improve, repair and enjoy your historic home.

Work and play in the "Tool Zoo"—an antique tool exhibit. Come hear speakers about local and federal home improvement tax incentives; how to prepare your home for aging in place; discovering the history of your home; facade easements; iron work and details; solar cost benefits and installations; and how to install, grow and manage a green roof. There will also be presentations by local landscape, interior, and bath and kitchen designers.

The event is open to the public as well as our members so spread the word with your friends and neighbors.

Volunteers are needed for setup, cleanup, and serving as hosts the day of the event. If you can help, contact Elizabeth Nelson, [elizabeth\\_knits@yahoo.com](mailto:elizabeth_knits@yahoo.com), (202) 543-3512.

# Building Materials Discussed at September Preservation Café

The September Preservation Café speaker was Gary Barnhart, general contractor and owner of GL Barnhart Construction. A Capitol Hill resident, Mr. Barnhart previously trained as a construction inspector before starting his firm in 1997. Today, the company focuses on modern renovations, historic restorations, and construction work in the Capitol Hill area. The presentation, titled “Traditional & Historic vs Modern Building Materials,” focused on the many choices of exterior materials that can be used on Capitol Hill homes.

The construction trade has been affected less by advances in modern technology than almost all other industries. However, many products have changed with advances in materials and technology. To the surprise of many, various materials are made with modern methods to appear just like original materials. In some cases, the fake materials perform better in terms of durability and longevity than the originals. There are also circumstances where the fakes are of much lower quality and natural materials are better from an environmental perspective.

Examples of traditional vs modern-equivalent materials discussed by Gary included:

**Rubble or brick vs. concrete foundations.** All these materials work well and require maintenance over time, but concrete is the preferred method these days because of labor and transportation costs. Ready-mix concrete has been around Capitol Hill since the 1915 and can be usually found in homes east of 15th Street.

**Solid (mass) vs. veneer brick walls.** Solid brick walls are fully masonry

and some face bricks are hard to match either in color or dimension. Hollow bricks of a standard dimension are used in a veneer wall construction, which is a wood-framed structural system with an air gap between the materials.

**Lime vs. cement-based mortars.** Lime-based mortars should be installed at historic mass walls and are required to be used in the Capitol Hill Historic District (CHHD). Cement-based mortars will work well in a modern (typically veneer) brick system. If one installs cement mortar in a historic solid wall, the mortar may damage the original bricks over time.

**Wood vs. cement-fiber siding.** Wood siding is to be used when replacing in-kind materials at the front façade in the CHHD. Wood siding requires a lot of maintenance while cement-fiber is a heavier material that will hold up well over time.

**Traditional stucco vs. EIFS.** EIFS is an acrylic stucco, pre-finished, rigid-insulated exterior system and can be problematic if not installed correctly. Traditional stucco should be used on existing homes and EIFS can be used on additions if the installer



Contractor Gary Barnhart.

has experience installing this type of system before.

**Solid vs. hollow metal fencing.** Traditional wrought iron and hot-formed steel fences are heavier and will last longer than hollow cold-formed steel or aluminum.

Happy to answer any renovation questions, Gary can be reached at (202) 569-8471 or via e-mail at: Gary@GLBarnhart.com. ★

## November Preservation Café: Zoning Changes

Matt Le Grant, the District’s Zoning Administrator, will discuss the new zoning regulations on Thursday, November 10, at 6:30 p.m. at Ebenezers Coffee House, 2nd and F Streets NE. The focus of the presentation will be on changes to the FR (formerly R-4) designation and how that will affect the Capitol Hill community. The presentation will end with a question/answer session. The event is free, handicapped-accessible and the public is encouraged to attend. No reservations required.



CHRS CELEBRATING 60 YEARS OF PRESERVATION

## Capitol Hill Restoration Society

420 10th Street, SE  
Washington, DC 20003

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## Mark Your Calendar!

### OCTOBER

**8** Saturday, 10 am

Emerald Street Walking Tour. Meet at the corner of 13th and Emerald Streets, NE. Details: Beth Purcell, (202) 543-0425, info@chrs.org.

**13** Thursday, 7:30 pm

CHRS Zoning Committee, Kirby House, 420 10th Street, SE, first floor  
Details: Gary Peterson, (202) 547-7969.

**16** Sunday, 10 am–4 pm

House Expo, Eastern Market North Hall. Details: Michelle Carroll, pilliodmp@aol.com.

**18** Tuesday, 6:30 pm

CHRS Board of Directors, Capitol Hill Townhomes, 750 6th Street, SE, second floor. Details: Elizabeth Nelson, (202) 543-0425, info@chrs.org.

**20** Thursday, 6:30–7:15 pm

CHRS Preservation Café: “HVAC and Insulation—Comfort Solutions for Historic Rowhouses” presented by Patrick Murphy at Ebenezers Coffee House, 2nd & F Streets, NE. Details: Greg Holeyman, (202) 543-0425.

**28** Friday, 5:30–7:30 pm

Halloween: CHRS will host a booth with activities for children in front of Eastern Market. To volunteer, please contact Elizabeth Nelson, (202) 543-3512.

If you received a complimentary copy of this newsletter, please consider joining CHRS!

[www.chrs.org](http://www.chrs.org)

### NOVEMBER

**7** Monday, 6:30 pm

CHRS Historic Preservation Committee, Kirby House, 420 10th Street, SE, first floor. Details: Beth Purcell, (202) 544-0178.

**10** Thursday, 7:30 pm

CHRS Zoning Committee, Kirby House, 420 10th Street, SE, first floor. Details: Gary Peterson, (202) 547-7969.

**10** Thursday, 6:30–7:15 pm

CHRS Preservation Café: Zoning Administrator, Matt Le Grant at Ebenezers Coffee House, 2nd & F Streets, NE. Details: Greg Holeyman, (202) 543-0425.

**15** Tuesday, 6:30 pm

CHRS Board of Directors, Capitol Hill Townhomes, 750 6th Street, SE, second floor. Details: Elizabeth Nelson, (202) 543-0425, info@chrs.org.