



NEWS

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October 2011

“Water and Light”—Bartholdi Fountain Restored

By Lisa Dale Jones

You can’t miss it. Anyone walking near the United States Botanic Garden (USBG) along Independence Avenue has seen the Bartholdi Fountain, newly restored to its original 1876 appearance. Designed for the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia, Frédéric Auguste Bartholdi’s fountain has been a fixture in Washington, DC, since 1877, when Frederick Law Olmsted convinced Congress to purchase it for \$6,000 (half the asking price). It originally stood at the center of the Botanic Garden when it was located directly in front of the Capitol. In 1932 the fountain was moved to its present location along Independence Avenue in what is now called Bartholdi Park. (Bartholdi also designed the Statue of Liberty.)

Although the fountain has been repaired and cleaned at various times in the past—most recently in 1986—it was in serious need of a major restoration. After many years of study and planning, the fountain was dismantled in 2008 to begin the process. The work was overseen by Stephen T. Ayers, AIA, LEED AP, Architect of the Capitol (AOC), with involvement by Holly H. Shimizu, Executive Director of the USBG. The work was divided into several phases in order to secure the funding in manageable segments. According

PHOTO COURTESY ROBINSON IRON



The Bartholdi Fountain in the 1890s.

to Mr. Ayers, “Congress was very generous with funding this project.”

Dismantling the Structure

Robinson Iron in Alexander City, Alabama, specializes in restoring and constructing fountains and undertook the major portion of the restoration. Scotty Howell, Vice President of the company and project manager for the Bartholdi restoration, says it was a large-scale project right from the start.

“We needed to hire a 120-ton crane just to remove the pieces of the fountain. The diameter of the pool is 100 feet, so it was about 75 feet to the center of the fountain from the crane, and the fountain is heavy. That jacked up the crane specs pretty well!”

The parts of the fountain were loaded onto two 18-wheeler flatbed trucks and driven down to Alabama.

After they arrived, all the pieces were cleaned down to the original cast iron, and then sprayed with molten zinc to keep them from rusting.

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President's Column: Reaching Out

By Beth Purcell

Capitol Hill always faces new challenges. For example, the CSX Virginia Avenue Tunnel construction will have a major effect on neighbors near the 200-1100 blocks of Virginia Avenue. The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) provide for community participation in decisions on this project. CHRS plans one or more public meetings for the community to learn about their rights under NEPA and NHPA and how to use their rights to be heard.

Homeowners are always looking for new ideas and solutions to problems. Our Preservation Cafés try to meet this need by finding experts to discuss topics of interest to homeowners.

We are doing a lot to be a resource for the Capitol Hill community, but we need to and want to do more. CHRS reaches out by participating in events such as the H Street Festival and Barracks Row Day. CHRS volunteers meet people attending these events to offer information, answer questions when we can, and get feedback on questions important to Capitol Hill neighbors. We use this feedback to respond to questions and respond to the needs of the Capitol Hill community. Please contact us by telephone, letter, or email about issues that are important to you, or programs that CHRS could offer that are of interest. ★



PHOTO COURTESY ELIZABETH NELSON

CHRS table at Barracks Row Day.

CHRS in the Neighborhood

As part of our “Beyond the Boundaries” program, CHRS volunteers are engaging in a variety of community outreach activities. In September, we staffed booths at both the H Street Festival and Barracks Row Day. The H Street Festival was hugely well-attended, even larger than last year. The scene extended all the way from 8th Street to 14th Street, NE: a grand opportunity to share the Society’s mission with those living outside the boundaries of the Capitol Hill Historic District.

Barracks Row Day seemed tame by comparison, but it was lovely to see old friends and introduce ourselves to newcomers on the Hill. At both events, we distracted the children with beads to string and temporary tattoos while we passed out membership information and “vintage” house tour catalogues to their parents.

On October 5, we’ll have a presence at Walk to School Day in Lincoln Park, passing out pencils with our web address to all the students. Volunteers are always welcome—and they always have fun. Just check out the photos on our homepage. If you would like to assist in any of our outreach efforts, please call or email Elizabeth Nelson, 543-3512, elizabeth_knits@yahoo.com.

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www.CHRS.org

Celebrating more than 50 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 Capitol Hill Restoration Society Zoning Committee met on September 8, 2011 and considered five cases. The Committee voted to support three cases, take no position in one case, and oppose a portion of one case. The cases considered were:

18243. This case involves replacing an existing garage and building a roof deck. The applicant needs a special exception to construct a free standing garage addition serving an existing one-family row dwelling not meeting the lot occupancy requirements, and a variance from the accessory structure height and story limitations at 1231 F Street, NE. The lot occupancy will change from 60% to 65% (a special exception is needed to go from 60% to 70%). The Committee voted to support the special exception.

There is a height issue with the garage because it can only be 15 feet high measured from the backyard. The alley in this case is much higher (10 feet) than the backyard and they need a variance to build a useable garage. The Committee voted to support this variance.

The applicant also wants to build a roof deck and the tower to cover the interior stairs is 5 feet too high. The committee voted to oppose this request and recommended that an exterior stair be built instead.

18247. In this case the applicant is seeking a variance from the floor area ratio requirements, a variance from the rear yard requirements, a variance from the off-street parking requirements, and a variance from the loading requirements, to allow the development of a new restaurant in the HS/C-2-A District at 1309 and 1311 H Street, NE.

This case involves a building (two buildings combined into one) that has been substantially altered by man and a fire. It consists of a 3-story section and a one-story section. Without going into further details the owner proposes to create a 3-story restaurant with 25% of the third story open. The committee voted to take no position.

18254. The applicant needs five variances and one special exception to construct a 315 square foot garage with 100% lot occupancy into a two-story plus roof deck single-family residence located at 1303 Linden Court, NE. This is a property that is internal to the square and is located behind the Atlas Theater. There will be one parking space in the building. The property has any number of problems, including being in both the R-4 and C-2-A zones. The committee voted to support the application.

18258. The applicant needs a variance from the off-street parking requirements, and a special exception from the roof structure requirements to allow the construction of a new four-story apartment house with ground floor retail, in the C-2-A District at 1442 Pennsylvania Avenue, SE. This property is the former KFC site.

Applicant proposes building a four-floor apartment building. The first floor will be retail and there will also be a roof deck. The Code requires 11 parking spaces and the applicant proposes 7 spaces. To provide the required parking the applicant would have to dig a basement and build a ramp. Because of the unusual shape of the property doing this would be prohibitively costly. The special

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Historic Preservation Briefs

By Nancy Metzger

Looking At “The Hawk” From a Preservation Perspective

Ever since it was announced that Hawk ‘n’ Dove owner and founder Stuart Long was selling his legendary tavern, people have been reminiscing and swapping tales about the “good old days” that began 44 years ago. The preservation story is equally interesting—and goes back much farther. The Hawk ‘n’ Dove is actually comprised of three historic buildings—the westernmost frame building with a gable roof that served for a long time as a cigar shop and the center building (Main Bar) which was once a two-story blacksmith and carriage repair shop and after that a gas station with a pump at the curb. The easternmost building, now the Pub, was once connected to the neighboring building (now known as the Tune Inn, another legendary bar) when they both operated as a salt-water taffy factory.

Along with the accolades for running his successful business, Mr. Long also deserves accolades for what he didn’t do in the 1960s when he established his business. Simply put, 10 years before the establishment of the historic district, he recognized the value of historic preservation and left the building much as it had been in 1927 when it was Harvey’s, selling 5-cent cigars. (There is a photo on the Hawk ‘n’ Dove website to prove it.) At a time when aluminum siding covered many frame buildings and historic trim was removed without much thought, Stuart Long replaced only the windows and door. Granted, the door in the photo was a beauty but it also appears to be very short, so it is not clear it hadn’t been removed by 1967. So the little frame building is ready for Xavier Cevera, the new owner, to “reverse” that

earlier change and install appropriate windows on the second floor and in the first-floor store-front bay, getting rid of the “Ye Olde Colonial Store” feeling.

Over the years, the buildings at 329 and 331 Pennsylvania Avenue, SE have been altered numerous times, inside and out, so the signature bay windows with the dramatic swooping copper roofs likely did not mean a loss of historic fabric. The present lack of windows on the second floor of both buildings contributes to a “hybrid” feeling—not having windows would indicate a one-story building but the height of the buildings is the same as the two-story building at 327 Pennsylvania Avenue, SE. Mr. Cevera will be re-introducing windows on the second floors in a size and style appropriate for brick construction of the period, thus re-establishing the historic scale. On the ground floor the easternmost building, no. 331, will have a new flat store-front (a solution likely similar to the pre-1960 condition) and the center building will have new entrance doors with side lights. All these new windows will help to introduce more light into the interior space and allow for more patio seating, some of Mr. Cevera’s goals. Yet they will also help to establish the separate identities of the three buildings—a bonus for the historic district. Mr. Cevera expects the construction to last about six months as the interior is being completely renovated.

Phase I of “The Maples” Condo Project Now Underway

If you have recently been past The Maples, the historic 1795 house and grounds in the 600 block of South Carolina Avenue, SE, you know that work has started at the site. For one

thing, the large tree on one side of the door has been removed. It had been planted too close to the house and would not have survived the construction. Although a lovely specimen, its absence does provide a much better view of the façade, which will be restored closer to its historical appearance when the porch is reconstructed. The historic house plus all of its additions and three new town houses are all being converted into a condominium project.

Altus Realty, owners and developers, reported to ANC 6B03 Commissioner Norman Metzger that “interior demolition is being carried out under the permit issued in March. The heavy equipment on site was used to create the ramp for the Dumpsters to be pulled close to the building. We are in for our foundation to grade permit with the city. This is for the construction of the garage, which is the first phase of the work. We hope to start work on the garage late this year and anticipate that the work will take four months, weather permitting.” Altus plans to introduce a website soon so the neighbors can keep up with the project.

There has been some disappointment thus far with the project—everyone hoped that the archaeological excavations of the South Carolina lawn would turn up evidence of the wine cellar, supposedly forty-two feet underground, that Count Louis Francoise de Pourtales was reported to have constructed in 1858 when he was owner of the property. So far, the location remains a mystery. ★

Question: When Is “Fake” Not A Problem?

By Shauna Holmes and Nancy Metzger

The answer, according to September’s Preservation Café speaker, architect Carol Beach, is when faux (meaning “fake”) painting is used to create the illusion of an architectural element or a different material. Another term is *trompe l’oeil* (“fool the eye”). Faux painting has a long and celebrated history, starting about 5,000 years ago in Mesopotamia when frescoes of gardens and other scenes were painted on the walls of villas of wealthy residents’ villas in an attempt to bring a garden spirit inside or perhaps to brighten a room.

In a profusely illustrated talk, Ms. Beach traced the story of faux painting from its beginnings in the ancient civilizations through the Classical period (think of the frescoes of Pompeii, Greece and Rome) into the great works executed by the Italian artist Michelangelo (Sistine Chapel ceiling) and the villas of the 1500s architect Palladio. Some of the grand residences of Europe (painted urns in illusionist niches, for example) were also featured in the talk by Ms. Beach who did her dissertation on the topic.

By the 1700s (Georgian Period) softer woods were beginning to be used and they needed to be painted to help preserve them. So faux and decorative painting was often used to dress up the pieces and make them look stylish. In Colonial America, where few could afford expensive wallpaper, wall surfaces were painted with landscape scenes to give the impression of wallpaper. Stencils were extensively used, providing a decorative touch in an economical and easy way. Wood-graining (using paint to imitate exotic or more expensive woods) on both furniture and interior trim and doors was a well-known decorative practice. Faux



PHOTOS COURTESY CAROL BEACH

TOP: Painted wallpaper, New England, 1830s. BOTTOM: Painted niche.



painting continued in popularity into the Victorian era as decorative finishes were applied to add richness

near the high ceilings or create the illusion of fancy plaster work, marble floors or walls, or wood paneling. (The marbleized columns of the Building Museum are prime examples from this period.)

But faux painting is definitely not a relic from the past, as Ms. Beach showed with examples of both furniture and wall treatments executed in a contemporary manner. Floors were covered in “fake” marble

tiles or even “Turkish carpets.” Walls shifted from simple plaster surfaces to those looking like limestone block fit for an Italian villa, fancy wood burl panels, or brick work that successfully merged two different brick styles/ colors and multiple repairs. Painted furniture can highlight the contemporary setting as successfully as it does traditional homes. One particularly striking example shown was a low credenza painted in silver and then “combed” for texture.

Even if you missed the fascinating introduction, you will have a chance to attend a hands-on demonstration of faux painting at the November 16 Preservation Café. Mark your calendar now and plan to attend because it will give you a chance to ask questions and consider faux painting, which is at home whether that home is traditional or contemporary. ★

PHOTO COURTESY LISA DALE JONES



Stephen T. Ayers and Holly H. Shimizu in front of the restored fountain.

“It was a real honor for us to work on it. I’ve never seen casting of that size with that complexity. It has amazing undercutting, and the molds they used to produce this must have been incredible. It’s an incredibly well made piece, especially being made three-sided. Most fountains are made in fours. This is quite unusual. There’s nothing else like it in the world.”

Repairs

The entire weight of the large bowl on the fountain rests on the central column and the backs of the heads of the three sea nymphs—not on their arms—so it is essential for the column to support the weight. Unfortunately, the interior of the main column was in very bad condition, according to Shimizu: “There’s a panel opening at the base of the column, behind one of the shells. We put on special suits and actually crawled inside. There was a lot of corrosion and rust.”

Howell concurs, “We were really surprised at the condition of

the central column. We had to use stainless steel plates and bolts on the inside to reinforce it.”

While the fountain itself was being repaired and restored in Alabama, the basin it rests in was being upgraded here in DC by Grunley Construction Company of Rockville. The basin was repaired, with new electrical wiring and filtrated plumbing, and new concrete was poured and painted a dark gray blue. New light fixtures were installed around the circumference and vines were trained to grow up the light posts. Shimizu is grateful they decided to redo the basin; “We just had an earthquake here, and the new basin stood up to it!”

Lighting

Lighting was an important part of the fountain from the beginning. Bartholdi meant the fountain to be an allegorical representation of water and light, indicating what was important to modern cities in the 1870s. (There is a battlement

signifying a city wall at the very top of the fountain.) The original lights around the large bowl were gas lamps, based on the design of Parisian street lamps. The Bartholdi fountain was the first fountain to be lit at night, making it a modern marvel at the time. In 1915 the fountain was fitted with electrified white globes, and the globes remained until the current restoration.

The new lanterns, based on the original gas lamps, were designed and created by the Klemm Reflector Company in Philadelphia. Leonard Gutekunst, president of the company, explains some of the design problems they had to solve, including bird-proofing the new lamps. “The original fixtures were gas, and...the gas flame itself was enough to keep birds out, but the new fixtures are electric, so a number of steps were taken to prevent bird entry while maintaining the original appearance of the lantern. The top cap has a cover to prevent building of nests; the bottom of the lantern cage has a perforated plate to allow any water to exit and dead bugs to fall through but prevent bird entry; and the constant spray from the fountain should discourage most nesting anyway.”

The AOC wanted the lanterns to use LED bulbs, but there was nothing available for the lamps that worked adequately, in the right size, and that could function in a wet environment. Gutekunst points out that they used a regular medium base socket that will accept an LED retrofit bulb, suitable for a wet environment, when available.

In the meantime, the AOC is using compact fluorescent lamps (CFLs) in the fixtures, which are not only energy efficient, but they also provide the best light quality around the fountain.

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Architect of the Capitol Addresses CHRS Membership

By Sharon Weiss

On September 22, CHRS was honored to once again welcome the Architect of the Capitol, Stephen T. Ayers, to address us at a membership meeting. The meeting took place in the Carriage House of the newly renovated Hill Center, and included the membership approval of this year's CHRS budget.

Mr. Ayers showed a photo-laden presentation of the properties his office manages. The Architect of the Capitol (AOC) is responsible to the United States Congress for the maintenance, operation, development and preservation of 17.4 million square feet of buildings and more than 460 acres of land throughout Capitol Hill. In addition to the U.S. Capitol, this includes the House and Senate office buildings, Capitol Visitor Center, the Library of Congress buildings, the Supreme Court buildings, the U.S. Botanic Garden, the Capitol Power Plant, and other facilities.

The AOC also is responsible for arranging for inaugural ceremonies and other major events on the Capitol grounds.

One event that takes place every two years is the major office shuffle when new members are elected in the House and Senate. Mr. Ayers described the elaborate process with a time-lapse presentation of one office being redone. The process is multiplied by approximately 235 office moves that have to be accomplished in just 30 days! This is quite an undertaking, which involves completely emptying out the office, painting, cleaning and putting the office back together again for the next occupant. Members of Congress choose their new offices based on seniority, and can take a virtual tour of each potential office online. Mr. Ayers said that it's usually the view out the window that makes

an office desirable—everyone wants a view of the Capitol Dome.

The recent hurricanes and earthquake affected the Capitol grounds. Interestingly enough, the Capitol itself, which is made of masonry, only had a few minor plaster cracks in the walls, but the Rayburn Building, with a steel frame, had much more wall damage. Mr. Ayers noted that the sound of the cast iron dome on the Capitol shifting around during the earthquake was "terrifying." (There was no danger of it collapsing.)

The AOC is also responsible for the preservation and stewardship of all the artwork and statuary within the buildings. A new statue of Rosa Parks is almost complete and is expected to be dedicated before the end of the year and placed in

Statuary Hall. Contracts are in place to begin the process for the design and sculpture of new busts for both Dick Cheney and Al Gore to become a part of the collection of busts of Vice Presidents in the Senate Chamber.

Mr. Ayers also reminded the CHRS membership of numerous volunteer opportunities for those interested, especially in the U.S. Botanic Garden and in the Capitol Visitor Center. ★

Volunteer at the Botanic Garden:

www.usbg.gov/education/get-involved.cfm

Volunteer at the Visitor Center:

www.visitthecapitol.gov/cvc_volunteer_flyer_2-2011.pdf

AOC YouTube channel:

www.youtube.com/user/AOCgov

October Preservation Café Will Feature Green Roofs

With the current focus on environmentally green efforts, many of us have heard about the potential for green roofs to reduce rainwater runoff and contribute to cleaner waterways, especially in urban areas like DC. Mark your calendar for CHRS's October 19 Preservation Café, where Capitol Hill architect and CHRS board member Maurice Walters will talk about "Green Roofs" from the perspective of a Capitol Hill homeowner.

Drawing from his personal and professional experience, Mr. Walters will discuss the global, local, and personal benefits of green roofs; how to assess whether your roof could withstand the load; and other considerations such as access and long-term maintenance. He will be joined by Scott Titanish from LiveRoof, a company that manufactures a modular green roof system which provides property owners with ready-to-install, pre-planted modules containing live plants selected for their specific region and rooftop environments. Mr. Titanish will bring samples of LiveRoof modules and explain their design, installation, and maintenance.

"Green Roofs" will be held Wednesday, October 19, from 6:30–7:15 pm in the downstairs community room at Ebenezers Coffeehouse at 2nd and F Streets, NE. The Preservation Café is free, accessible, and open to all in the Capitol Hill community; no reservations are necessary.

Testing the Fountain

Once all the pieces were cleaned and repaired and the new lanterns were built, Howell says the next step was to assemble it at the shop.

"We erected the fountain on a concrete pad right outside our office. We installed all the nozzles—there are seven of them—three turtles, three fish, and the castle."

But it didn't work properly right away.

"We didn't have enough water pressure in our shop to drive the fountain," he says. "We had to borrow a hose from the fire department and connect it to a fire hydrant. We got a good flow then!"

The fountain wasn't exactly invisible when it was set up. "The fountain caused quite a stir around here," says Howell. "The newspaper did a story the day we tested the water flow. It was on the front page. We had a lot of people drive by to look at it."

The Color of the Fountain

None of the original finish survived under the layers of newer finishes. But there were clues. Shimizu took a field trip to the National Gallery to view the small Statue of Liberty there to see the color Bartholdi may have had in mind. As Howell explains, "We don't know the original color. Bartholdi used a color that emulated bronze. All accounts from the day talk about 'the bronze fountain from France.' Frederick Law Olmsted told Congress we'd be crazy not to buy the fountain for \$6,000, as the bronze metal itself was worth more. They didn't realize at the time that it was iron."

After testing the fountain, Robinson Iron dismantled it again and added a series of paints to achieve a bronze look. They now call the mixture of tan and two darker colors the "Bartholdi Finish."

A benefit of stripping the old finish is the reappearance of lost

detail, as Shimizu points out: "The new coating system protects it, looks like bronze, and allows us to see all the detail work. The old coating had too many layers of paint, and some of the detail was lost. Just look at the fabric folds in the clothing, and the expressions on the sea nymphs' faces!"

Back to Bartholdi Park

After the fountain was finished earlier this year, the pieces were loaded back onto two 18-wheelers and driven to Washington. Howell says it took Robinson Iron only a day to put it together. They touched up the paint, did some fine-tuning, hooked it up to the plumbing and electrical wiring and made sure the water flows were all running properly.

The Botanic Garden staff meanwhile had prepared the park for the completion of the fountain, finishing the landscaping and installing chairs and benches so people can once again enjoy the fountain and park. As Stephen Ayers puts it, "It's such a beautiful place to walk through. When you come here you feel the weight of the world lift off your shoulders."

So come, visit the fountain at Bartholdi Park, and enjoy this restored gem at the foot of Capitol Hill. ★

Welcome CHRS Supporters

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

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Capitol Hill House Histories

CHRS has established a project to collect histories of Capitol Hill homes and businesses. Eventually these will be placed on the CHRS website.

If you have a history that you would like to contribute, please send to CapHRS@aol.com with "House History" as the subject line. If the history is available only in printed form, please mail a copy to:

Capitol Hill Restoration Society (House History)
P.O. Box 15264
Washington DC 20003-0264

If you are willing to share, but do not wish to send your only copy, please contact Paul Cromwell at (202) 543-7530 or paulcromwell@verizon.net to make arrangements to have copies made.

Virginia Avenue Tunnel Update

By Shauna Holmes

On September 14, over 120 members of the Capitol Hill community attended a Virginia Avenue Tunnel Environmental Assessment and Section 106 Public Scoping Meeting at Van Ness Elementary School. The presentation boards from the Scoping meeting are now posted online on the VirginiaAvenueTunnel.com website at www.virginiaavenuetunnel.com/project-resources. The website also has other information about the project, including a description of CSX's proposed plans and project milestones.

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the DC

Department of Transportation (DDOT), CSX, and cooperating agencies will be reviewing comments on the project that were submitted at the Scoping meeting, as well as all other Scoping comments from the public, which need to be submitted by October 14. General comments about the project may be submitted at any time throughout the Environmental Assessment process. If you have not already provided your comments but wish to do so, or if you have questions about the project, you can submit them by e-mail at contact@virginiaavenuetunnel.com.

The next public meeting about the Virginia Avenue Tunnel is expected to

be a Project Design Concepts Meeting later this fall. Given the major impacts this enormous project is expected to have on the Capitol Hill community, CHRS will do its best to keep its members as up-to-date as possible regarding this project. A letter CHRS sent to FHWA requesting Consulting Party status during the Section 106 review can be found on our website at www.chrs.org, along with the reply from FHWA. Section 106 review considers project effects on historic resources such as the Capitol Hill Historic District and the 100+-year-old tunnel itself, along with ways to avoid, minimize, and/or mitigate adverse effects. ★

Renovation of Northeast Public Library

By Vincent Morris, President of Friends of the Northeast Library

Many Hill residents know about the landscaping and window replacement at the Northeast Public Library two years ago. The project resulted in a beautiful garden, flagstone patio and seating area facing the intersection of Maryland Avenue and 7th Street, NE.

Now the second part of that project—a full interior renovation—is soon to begin. Starting next spring, construction will begin on a \$10 million project that will be one of the most significant renovations to happen at the library since it was built in 1931.

The Georgian Revival Style building still has much of its original woodwork. The plan is for the renovation to stay true to the original concept and preserve the look and feel of the building as it appeared when it first opened.

If you are curious as to how that might look, it's worth visiting two

other recently renovated DC Public Library (DCPL) branch libraries that are similar to Northeast: Petworth and Takoma Park. The goal is to make Northeast have the look and feel of a historic library, but with improved conveniences of modern libraries—such as easy Internet access and well-lit spaces.

Much of the budget covers things that are essential, but not necessarily exciting: new plumbing, electrical work, a sprinkler system, bathrooms, better access, hazardous material abatement, eliminating code violations, a new HVAC system and a new security alarm.

However, there is great incentive for the community to get involved. That's because the architect, who will begin work later this fall, is committed to hearing from library patrons.

Once the construction starts, it's likely that the library will be closed

for a full year, reopening in the spring of 2013.

The Friends of the Northeast Library (FONEL) is taking the lead in working with DCPL and the contractors on the project. As with other Friends groups, FONEL is a group of volunteers that advocates on behalf of Northeast and raises money through book sales to support activities and efforts at the branch.

Besides reviewing the project at our meetings and discussing it with CHRS, we intend to hold additional meetings this fall to gather input. The project will be reviewed by the ANC and by the city's historic preservation staff. We will be distributing information about the project when we hold our annual fall book sale and children's party on November 5, 2011.

If you have any questions, please email vsmorris@gmail.com. ★

Looking Back On Capitol Hill

By Nancy Metzger

Most Capitol Hill residents were very surprised to find themselves in an earthquake this summer. If we had paid better attention to our history, we wouldn't have been so surprised, as the occurrence of an earthquake was recorded in the March 9, 1828 entry of the Washington Navy Yard Station Log, that daily compilation of significant events and occurrences at the Yard, including a record of the weather, temperature, clouds and other pertinent details.

Earlier this summer CHRS received a communication from John G. Sharp of Concord, California concerning a transcription he had made of the Log from November 1822–March 1830. We are very appreciative he shared his work with CHRS. We've selected a few entries to share that give the flavor of the activities, concerns, and some people at the Navy Yard.

As Mr. Sharp notes in his introduction to the material, daily work assignments of the largely civilian workforce were a prominent feature of the Log, which is helpful for us as it gives a fuller picture of the workings of the Navy Yard. The March 12, 1828 and March 13, 1828 entries note Betsey Howard and Ann Spieden as horse cart drivers, the first and second females for whom we have documentation of employment at the yard. As with other workers, they were paid on a per diem basis. (Note: Mr. Sharp retained original spelling, capitalization, punctuation, etc. and entries are generally provided in full.)

Tuesday, January 1st, 1828: This day air light and variable. Riggers not at work. Labourers and Ordinary men employed in the for noon putting molds in boxes on board of a scow which was delivered to Rosenneck wood and discharging a long boat or scow that came from Columbia foundry with sixteen cannonades Oxen hauling timber to the saw pit and saw mill supplying steam furnace with wood Bell did not ring after dinner consequently no work in the afternoon being new year's day.

Wednesday, January 2nd, 1828: For the first part of the day moderate breezes from the South West and heavy rains at intervals in the after part more moderate with light rains Riggers employed at the Potomac rigging Ordinary men getting some water casks for rain casks from the officers dwelling labourers did not work today

January 10th, 1828: The first part of this day heavy rains & cloudy weather, the latter part cloudy and moderate breezes from N.E. Riggers employed working Tarpaulin for covering cannon at Green Leafs Point, Labourers putting planks into the scow to be sent to Alexandria and left the wharf at about Noon. She returned at midnight, after delivering the molds. Oxen hauling timber to and from Saw Pit and Saw Mill, Oxen and Horse Carts hauling dirt & in other duties of the Yard &c.

Sunday, March 9th, 1828: The day moderate breezes from the N.E. and cloudy, misty weather a slight shock of an earthquake about 11 o'clock, P.M.

Wednesday, March 12th, 1828: The first and middle part of the day cloudy weather and variable winds at sun set commenced raining. Riggers

employed as yesterday, labourers, some employed trimming coals which were set out of the Schooner Rising Sun, some cutting junk to be sent out to be picked into oakum. Ordinary men on various duties of the Yard, sent out to E. Simms 3424 lbs. junk to be picked into oakum. Hired Betsy Howard's horse and cart and widow Spieden's horse and cart, oxen and horses on various duties and of the yard, hauling coals from the Rising Sun.

Thursday, March 13th, 1828: This day pleasant and clear weather, wind variable from N.W. to N.E. Riggers employed about the Potomac, rigging, detailed four labourers scraping the sloop of war St. Louis, the remainder of the labourers working about coals (oxen hauling timber the bull being sore was taken out of the yard. Widow Spieden's horse and cart and Mrs. Howard's horse and cart hauling coals from the schooner Rising Sun, yd cart hauling from the Rose in Bloom Ordinary men went to Alexandria with Mr. Kelly, at two they returned, rec from Mr. Simms 239 lbs of oakum.

Friday, March 14th, 1828: The first and middle part of the day, moderate breezes from the S.W. and flying clouds, at 4 p.m. Heavy squall of wind and rain from the S.W. at 5 the wind shifted around to the N.E. With heavy rain, thunder and lightning at 8 p.m. pleasant and clear weather. Riggers, Labourers oxen and carts employed as yesterday, send out 2504 lbs of junk to Mr. Simms and rec. 258 lbs of oakum, and in discharging the Rose in Bloom of her cargo of coals. Carts employed as yesterday.

Monday, June 16th, 1828: The first part of this day cloudy weather, wind from the SE to SW the middle and ladder part sultry weather with

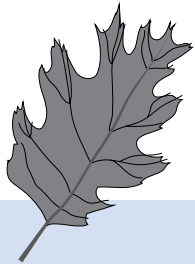
light rain about midnight we were appraised by the beating of the drum and ringing of the yard bell of afire, took out one Engine, there not being enough men to take out the other, at about 1 AM discovered the fire to be in George Town, at 2 the Engines returned, Riggers employed knotting yarns and wharfted one tenth of rope. Labourers stowing timber and docking knees. Ordinary men moving tin from the Cooper Shop to the Sail Loft over the Navy Store. Oxen hauling timber & knees, horses hauling and three labourers discharged for fighting in the Yard

Friday, July 4th, 1828: The day moderate breeze and flying clouds from the N.W., cool for the Season, the Bell did not ring to day and all the Yard Boats went to the procession, in the evening returned.

Although the Navy Yard writer seemed rather blasé about the earthquake, across town the resident of the White House, President John Quincy Adams, recorded the following in his diary: "There was this evening the shock of an earthquake, the first which I ever distinctly noticed at the moment when it happened. I was writing in this book, when the table began to

shake under my hand and the floor under my feet. The window shutters rattled as if shaken by the wind, and there was a momentary sensation as of the heaving of a ship on the waves. It continued about two minutes, then ceased. It was about eleven at night. I immediately left writing, and went to my bedchamber, where my wife was in bed, much alarmed."★

Terminology: "Ordinary" refers to those assigned to ships held in reserve or in for repair so they were available for duties in the Yard. "Riggers" were used on ships to fit masts, spars, sails, lines, etc. and when in the Yard they used their skills in lifting and hauling. "Oakum" is a tarred fiber used for caulking or packing the joints of timbers in wooden vessels (and sometimes found around the windows in old houses). It was recycled from old tarry ropes and cordage ("junk") that were painstakingly unraveled and taken apart into fiber. The craft mentioned in these entries were the Potomac, Rising Sun, St. Louis, and Rose in Bloom.



2nd Annual CHRS Fun Fall Auction

Tuesday, November 29 • Hill Center (Old Naval Hospital)

CHRS will once again be hosting a Fun Fall Auction! We are now accepting auction items. We are looking for weekend getaways, original art, rare books, furniture, kitchen and household items, etc. Everything including the kitchen sink. (Oh, wait a minute—we already have that!)

All items that are donated are tax deductible.

To make a donation, please contact Michelle Carroll at: pilliodmp@aol.com or (202) 544-7900.

We look forward to seeing you at the Fun Fall Auction!



Zoning Briefs, *continued from page 3*

exception is necessary to provide emergency access to the roof and will only be visible from the alley. The Committee voted unanimously to support the application.

18280. The applicant is constructing a rear addition to 630 A Street, NE, and is increasing the lot occupancy from 57% to 64%. The addition will extend a nonconforming (currently 4.3 feet with 6 feet required) open court (or dogleg). The applicant needs a special exception to increase the lot occupancy and to extend the open court. The committee voted to support the application. ★



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

Mark Your Calendar!

OCTOBER

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

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

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

19 Wednesday, 6:30–7:15 pm
CHRS Preservation Café, “Green Roofs” with Capitol Hill architect Maurice Walters and Scott Titanish of LiveRoof. Ebenezers Coffeehouse, 2nd & F Streets, NE, downstairs; free, accessible, no reservations needed. Details: Shauna Holmes, 546-5211

NOVEMBER

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

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

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

16 Wednesday, 6:30–7:15 pm
CHRS Preservation Café, “Demonstration of Faux Finishing” featuring DC architect Carol Beach. Ebenezers Coffeehouse, 2nd & F Sts., NE, downstairs; free, accessible, no reservations needed. Details: Shauna Holmes, 546-5211.

29 Tuesday (Time TBD)
Second Annual CHRS Fun Fall Auction. Hill Center (Old Naval Hospital), 921 Pennsylvania Avenue, SE.

Saturdays, April 16–November 19
9 am–noon (rain or shine)
H Street NE Freshfarm Market,
625 H Street, NE (across from H Street
Self Storage). Fresh fruits and vegetables,
pasture-raised meats, local dairy, breads
and baked goods, cut flowers and more.
www.freshfarmmarkets.org