

D.C. PRESERVATION LEAGUE  
**R E P O R T E R**

SPRING 1999

*The mission of the D.C. Preservation League is to preserve, protect, and enhance the historic and built environment of Washington, D.C., through advocacy and education.*

## **Anacostia Historic District Nominated to the National Trust for Historic Preservation's 11 Most Endangered Historic Places**

*by Renée Ingram*

Last January, the African American Heritage Preservation Foundation, Inc., nominated the Anacostia Historic District and its surrounding community to the National Trust to be considered as one of the 11 Most Endangered Historic Places in the country. The district—located in the southeast quadrant of the nation's capital—encompasses roughly 20 city squares, contains approximately 550 buildings dating from circa 1854–1930, and displays the city's richest collection of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century, small-scale, frame and brick, working-class housing. Incorporated in 1854 as Uniontown, the district has since expanded to include the Griswold subdivision and its immediately adjacent residential and commercial areas. The Anacostia Historic District is bounded roughly by Martin Luther King, Jr., Avenue on the west, Good Hope Road on the north, Fendall Street on the east, and Bangor Street and Morris Road on the south. The Anacostia Historic District also contains within its boundaries Cedar Hill, the home of Frederick Douglass, a nineteenth-century statesman, orator, and abolitionist.

The Anacostia Historic District was designated as a local historic district in 1973 and expanded in 1978. The expanded district was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1978. It has been on DCPL's Most Endangered Places List in Washington, D.C., since 1996.

The Anacostia Historic District is one of Washington's earliest suburbs. The unique character of the Anacostia Historic District is dominated by three major architectural styles: the "Cottage," the "Italianate," and the Washington "Row House" styles. In addition, representative examples of the charming Queen Anne style are also featured throughout the historic district. Though defined primarily by its residential properties, a core commercial strip along Good Hope Road and Martin Luther King, Jr., Avenue functions as the area's primary thoroughfare and serves to physically and visually bind the district to the heart of downtown Washington, D.C. The buildings along these two streets include early



*Renée Ingram on Cedar Hill, Home of Frederick Douglass  
Credit: Jerry Maronek*

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## **DCPL Receives Notification of New Grants-in-Aid**

*by Mark Edwards*

In late January, DCPL received notification of award from the District of Columbia Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs of two matching federal grants-in-aid for historic preservation identification, registration, and education projects in the city. Both projects were reviewed and approved by the D.C. State Historic Preservation Officer.

The first project, with an overall budget of \$22,643, is to prepare written and photographic documentation for a National Register nomination of the Lower Sixteenth Street Historic District. This project will evaluate the results of a windshield survey of the target district, develop an annotated bibliography for

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# Letter from the President

Greetings! As you will see from this issue of the *Reporter*, the D.C. Preservation League has been tremendously busy over the past several months with the many services that we provide to the community, as well as with our own housekeeping. In December we moved to new quarters due to the temporary closing of the Investment Building, which was our home for many years. After an exhaustive search of the city conducted principally by Jerry Maronek, we were offered the former Lawyer's Club in the National Law Building. We are grateful to Eastbanc, Inc., for helping us meet our needs. Please stop by to visit!

We are pleased to report our success in applying for and receiving grants during 1998. Our track record was phenomenal, considering our relative lack of institutional experience in this area. Mary Hewes, Mary Farrell, and Donna Hanousek worked diligently to update and organize our records to provide the very specific kinds of information that are required in grant applications. Ms. Hewes identified the organizations that were most likely to provide us with funding. We could not have been so successful without their dedication. They are continuing their efforts this year, and 1999 looks like it may be another banner year.

Many of you may be wondering about our search for an Executive Director which was begun last year after a successful campaign to raise funds for the position's salary. In the late fall of 1998, our Search Committee identified and recommended a slate of qualified candidates to the Board. From this list, we offered the position to Mark Edwards, former Georgia State Historic Preservation Officer. Mark joined the DCPL team in early January, but soon after decided to pursue a career in preservation consulting. Therefore, our search has been renewed. We hope to have the position filled in the very near future. We are indebted to many foundations and our members for making it possible for us to hire someone to fill this very crucial role.

Finally, because of the emphasis on specific program and salary fundraising during 1998 and the additional expenses associated with the office move, the League's general operating account was in the red for several months. The staff and Trustees worked feverishly to reverse this situation. While we are no longer in debt, we still do not have a significant cushion or ability to provide up-front funding to finance programs and staff. We appreciate the generosity of our many volunteers and contributors. Please remember the League when considering your charitable contributions.

Our organization and programs are strong. Our finances and staffing situations are improving. In light of this, I remain optimistic and look forward to the months to come.



*The D.C. Preservation League Reporter* is a publication of the D.C. Preservation League, whose mission is to preserve, protect, and enhance the historic and built environment of Washington, D.C., through advocacy and education. Readers are encouraged to submit information and opinions.

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# Issues Update

In macroeconomics, savings equals investment. In downtown Washington, D.C., more often than not, new development equals preservation—well some preservation. D.C. Preservation League Issues Committee efforts during the past several months have been focused on two major downtown development initiatives that may result in important preservation components.

## Square 488

The D.C. Preservation League has a long-standing agreement with the developers of Square 488, a block that borders on the west side of Judiciary Square, NW, and is bounded by Fifth Street on the east, Sixth Street on the west, E Street on the south, and F Street on the north. This square has a “brutalist” firehouse on its northwest corner and is just across F Street from the Metro Center building, which is executed in the same style.

The League’s agreement with the previous owner recently conveyed to the National Academy of Sciences (NAS), the new owner of the site. Working within the terms of the agreement, NAS and its architect, KCF/SHG, are seeking League input on a development plan for constructing a new, 11-story office building while retaining facades and some setbacks for eight existing historic structures: an 1887 apartment building at 500 E Street; the Salvation Army Building at 503 E Street, built in 1924; a 4-story structure at 509 E Street, built in 1905; townhouses and apartment buildings at 511 E Street and 509 and 511 Sixth Street, all constructed just before the Civil War; the 1880 apartment house at 507 Sixth Street, and the jewel-like Greek Revival townhouse at 513 Sixth Street, built in 1830. The exterior of these structures will be restored to the era of their construction, with interior restoration of several to the extent of the planned setback, which in most cases will be 20 feet. The Greek Revival townhouse at 513 Sixth Street will receive additional attention, with approximately 37 feet of the interior space

retained and restored, including the entrance foyer, arched opening in the stair hall, and the original stairs.

Unique NAS standards require a building with as many individual offices as possible, each with a window. A planned atrium will help fulfill the window requirements, while some of the restored spaces will also serve as clusters of offices. Approximately 8,000 square feet of retail space is planned, including a science store on E Street and other retail space at the English basement level on Sixth Street.

Because of its size and proximity to other historic buildings, this is a difficult urban design project. The trick will be to blend low-scale historic structures (essentially horizontal elements) at the perimeter of the site with the verticality of the proposed new office tower. At the same time, a harmonious relationship between old and new construction, with each element separate and distinct and the new not overwhelming the old, needs to be achieved. The League is working closely with the architectural team to ensure that on-site historic structures and proposed new construction are creatively addressed to meet this project’s challenges.

## Announcing a Contest to Rename the DCPL Reporter

DCPL is seeking ideas for a new, more exciting name for our newsletter. Send in your ideas now! The Board of Trustees will select the new name from the list of entrants. The winning entry will be highlighted in our next newsletter and receive a \$25 gift certificate to the National Building Museum Gift Shop.

Please send, fax, or e-mail your ideas to the League’s office at 1815 Pennsylvania Avenue, Suite 200, Washington, D.C. 20006, Fax (202) 955-5456, e-mail [dcpreserv@aol.com](mailto:dcpreserv@aol.com), along with your name and phone number so that we can contact you if you are the winner.

The deadline for submissions is August 1, 1999.

## 921–941 F Street, N.W.

The north side of the 900 block of F Street, NW, marks the site of another major project that may soon get underway in the Downtown Historic District. The site—921 through 941 F Street—is owned by St. Patrick’s Church, located around the corner on 10th Street. The site was originally developed by the church into a series of low-scale commercial structures in the late 19th century. Now the Archdiocese of Washington proposes major demolition of the existing structures for construction of a new office building. Seven of the existing eleven facades will be restored and incorporated into the new design. The remaining four facades have lost most or all of their architectural integrity. Under the current proposal, these four facades will be declared noncontributing elements in the historic district. The League does not oppose their demolition.

This block of F Street is one of the most important remaining in the Downtown Historic District. The League is enthusiastic about the potential for revitalization and restoration of this block and the possibilities that redevelopment and preservation present for a new and vibrant street life. However, the League has expressed “reluctant opposition” to the new design scheme because it does not, in the League’s opinion, address the important issues of height, scale, massing, and proximity to other historic structures. Further, in the League’s opinion, the preservation elements are too small to justify the amount of demolition associated with the project. The ultimate design of this development effort is a very important undertaking because its outcome may establish precedents for future preservation projects elsewhere in the District of Columbia.

As with Square 488, however, the challenge is creating a design concept that relates well to preservation elements, maintains a sense of the historic nature of this side of the F Street block, and creates a new structure that acknowledges the importance of nearby St. Patrick’s Church without overwhelming it. Other nearby neighbors include a diverse variety of historic buildings. Thus, compatibility issues such as height, scale, and massing

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are critical to the success of the overall urban design proposal.

The city's Historic Preservation Review Board has recognized the concerns expressed by the League and the Committee of 100 on the Federal City. However, in February, the board approved the Historic Preservation Division's staff report on the project which, while acknowledging the complexity of issues surrounding this site, generally recommended approval of the preliminary design concept for an 11-story office building. The League plans continued consultation with the design team as the project goes forward to help ensure that the League's concerns find resolution in the final design.

### **Other Issues in Brief Potential Development at 8th and G Streets, NW**

The League is working with a design team representing Calvary Baptist Church, the owner of a vacant parcel at 8th and G Streets, NW, and two adjacent buildings. The design team is developing a preliminary proposal for this site, located across G Street from the National Museum of American Art.

### **The Tivoli Theater**

In early February, several members of the League's Issues Committee inspected the interior of the historic Tivoli Theater, located at 14th Street and Park Road, N.W. This brief visit was arranged through the offices of Robert More, President and CEO of the Development Corporation of Columbia Heights, and

committee member Sally Berk's contacts in the D.C. Fire Department. The D.C. Fire Department accompanied committee members into the dark, damp, and nearly totally decayed interior. The visit was a prelude to committee development of a position on site reuse.

### **An Update on the Taft Bridge Lions**

Tom Burke of the Civil Engineering component of the Department of Public Works advised in late January that a contract for the restoration of the Taft Bridge lions has been issued to Professional Restoration, Inc. In mid-February, the lions were moved from storage to the Professional Restoration, Inc., studio in Southwest Washington for work to begin. Burke hopes to have the lions back on their bridge pedestals by December 1999.

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## **DCPL Salutes Key Players and Welcomes New Trustees**

Several people who have been instrumental in furthering the mission of the League have recently retired from our staff or board. We would like to thank them for their dedicated service and welcome our new staff and trustees.

*Judith Lanius* served as a Trustee for eight years before retiring in December. Her main interest was in spreading the message of the organization. She headed our Education Committee for many years. During her tenure, that committee offered tours, lectures, and city-wide conferences that benefited hundreds of citizens. Most recently, she spearheaded the founding of the Enforcement Coalition for Greater Enforcement Preservation. Judith was most generous in every way and her presence will be sorely missed at board meetings. She will continue to represent the League on the city's Heritage Tourism Coalition.

*Al Dobbins* has retired after serving three years as a trustee and a member of the Issues Committee. During this period, he represented the League at many planning forums and meetings and worked to ensure that planning and architectural design were compatible with the historic character of the city. Although his expertise will be missed, he assures us that we may continue to call on him for his wise counsel.

*Rick Busch* resigned from our staff after many years of outstanding service to the League. He served DCPL in several capacities, including Acting Executive Director. His gentlemanly and professional demeanor, as well as his generosity, are truly appreciated by all. Fortunately, we do not have to bid him farewell entirely as he has graciously agreed to serve as a member of the Education and Issues Committees.

*Jim Rogers*, former president of DCPL, and *Diana Daniels*, former trustee, recently resigned after several years as co-chairs of the Nomi-

nating Committee. Jim has been a long-time, active supporter of the League, serving on the board since the early 1980s through his presidency. Diana was a board member for eight years. During that time she served on the Development Committee and the Nominating Committee, the latter of which she continued to serve after her board term expired. We are grateful to both of them for their financial and personal support. They have spent countless hours identifying and interviewing new candidates for the board. Their hard work will be appreciated by the League for many years to come as they have helped to create the legacy of a strong board.

Due to her increasing commitments to Save Our Seminary, *Bonnie Rosenthal* recently submitted her resignation as chair of the Membership Committee. During her tenure in that position, the committee formulated operating procedures, worked to computerize the organization's records, and developed a more sophisticated membership strategies. Her in-depth knowledge of DCPL was essential to providing the leadership for initiatives undertaken over the last year and a half that have already greatly benefited the organization.

*Chrysa Cullather* will be serving as both the editor and designer of our newsletter. She has worked as an editor and designer for several environmental consulting firms and the National Safety Council's Environmental Health Center. Chrysa recently left The Environmental Health Center to form her own editing and design firm, Chrysalis Communications. The League appreciates the fine work of our previous editor, *Anne Rollins*, and our previous designer *Bruce Rosenthal*.

DCPL welcomes three new trustees: *Elizabeth (Liz) Gibson*, *Andy Navarette*, and *Renée Ingram*. Ms. Gibson is Asset Manager for the General Services Administration's National Capital Region. Liz Gibson is trained as an architect and has worked at the General Services Administration since 1991 as a cultural resources manager.

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*(Historic Anacostia, continued  
from page 1)*

residential properties that have since been converted to commercial use; buildings constructed for combined commercial/residential purposes, with stores on the first floor and apartments above; and twentieth-century commercial structures. A small number of intrusions exist within the historic district; vacant lots and used car dealerships are more of a problem currently than large-scale buildings. The deterioration and neglect of properties throughout the district's residential and commercial sections constitutes Anacostia's greatest disadvantage and threat to its architectural and historic integrity.

The history of the Anacostia Historic District begins in the early part of the seventeenth century. In 1608, Captain John Smith recorded in his journals that he "sailed up the eastern branch" in search of the main branch of the Potomac River. Smith landed on the river's south bank—where the present day Anacostia is located—and noted that he was well received by the Nacochtank Indians. The 1632 journals of another explorer, Henry Fleet, give the first indication that the name "Anacostia" was derived from the Nacochtank tribe. Fleet noted that at the time of his arrival, the same land traversed by Smith more than 20 years earlier was now referred to as the "Nacostine." Later, the Jesuit missionaries would Latinize the name of the tribe to the "Anacostines," with the area eventually becoming known and referred to by the Nacochtanks as "Anacostia." Until its early development in the 1850s for residential purposes, the land constituting the Anacostia area was primarily agricultural.

The Anacostia Historic District is significant for both its historical and architectural contributions to Washington, D.C. The district includes Uniontown, one of Washington's earliest suburbs, which was incorporated in 1854. Uniontown was designed to be financially accessible to Washington's working class, most of whom were employed at the Washington Naval Yard. Unlike many neighborhoods across the river, land in Anacostia was less

expensive, and homeowners could frequently afford to buy two lots and build detached or semidetached houses. Most existing buildings date from the 1870s through 1930 and include freestanding and semidetached frame structures with front porches and Italianate detailing, as well as brick row houses and one-, two-, and three-story commercial buildings on the area's commercial streets. Despite the presence of many successful small businesses and an active citizenry, a number of buildings are now vacant and slowly deteriorating, and the historic character and prosperity of the neighborhood are endangered.

### **Historic Significance**

The Anacostia Historic District is significant for its historical, cultural, and architectural contributions to the city of Washington, D.C. Its preservation is vital to retaining a comprehensive sense of the development of the nation's capital, particularly as it relates to the expansion of the city beyond the boundaries of the L'Enfant Plan and into its associated communities. The district's surviving physical fabric is key to defining its sense of scale and the quality of life intended within this former agricultural area. The rapid deterioration and neglect of this fabric threatens to erase this unique character and remove those physical, visual, and cultural resources that together define its perception and experience as a unified community. The continued lack of awareness, education, and adaptive re-use of the Anacostia Historic District must be addressed and resolved at both a local and national level. Developing viable solutions and funding mechanisms to support these efforts are critical to the ongoing redevelopment and revitalization of our nation's capital as a whole. Continued neglect and deterioration of this community will serve only to tarnish the outstanding historic preservation initiatives undertaken throughout other areas and serve as a poor reflection of the limitations of preservation outreach in the District of Columbia.

While blight is likely the area's greatest deterrent, it also suffers from insufficient public relations and lack of inclusion in

promotional materials and brochures aimed at tourists and visitors to the nation's capital. (This is a problem for many of Washington's historic neighborhoods, as much of the attention remains focused on the downtown Mall area and federal properties, and visitors are not yet fully encouraged to explore the city's distinct surrounding communities.)

### **What Is Needed?**

Greater attention and support must be given to local efforts to strengthen preservation enforcement in the District of Columbia, imparting fines and restrictions on property owners who allow their historic properties to deteriorate. City officials must respond to the demands to improve their inspection and enforcement obligations—not only to protect and preserve the city's architectural history, but also to avoid the repeated instances of safety hazards created by such neglect and irresponsibility. The local government must work with national representatives to support DCPL's efforts to pass tax legislation (already introduced to the Washington, D.C., City Council) that would provide economic incentives to owners of properties 50 years and older for rehabilitation and historic preservation purposes.

Unplanned development and economic development pressures, coupled with ongoing neglect and lack of preservation enforcement regulations, place the Anacostia Historic District in dire straits. The lack of financial support (both local and national) and the risks currently facing this community pose a tremendous threat to the district. The erosion of the district's physical fabric has resulted in the disappearance of services vital to the survival and sustenance of the community. The area is an excellent candidate for reinvestment, and yet such reinvestment threatens to introduce large-scale development inappropriate with the district's distinct and contributing features.

As members of the D.C. Preservation League, let us work together to support this effort—volunteer with the DCPL's Anacostia Task Force and write letters of support to the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Time is of the essence.



# D.C. Preservation League Applauds the Friends of Pierce Mill

The Friends of Pierce Mill want to get things moving again—specifically the water wheel, gears, and millstones. This volunteer, nonprofit group formed in 1996, a few years after the mill literally ground to a halt when the wooden gears failed. The group is working closely with the National Park Service to restore the mill in Rock Creek Park as “a living exhibit of water-powered milling and a window on nineteenth-century industry in Washington, D.C.”

The mill was built in the 1820s by Isaac Pierce and incorporated the latest in milling technology, a revolutionary system that used the power from the water wheel throughout the milling process. One of eight mills that operated in the Rock Creek valley, Pierce Mill was busiest during the middle of the nineteenth century, but continued to grind flour and corn until 1897, when the main shaft broke. By that time, the mill had become a part of Rock Creek Park.

The National Park Service restored the mill in the 1930s and again in the 1960s. When the old wooden gears wore out in 1993, the Park Service no longer had funds to repair the building and the machinery. The Friends of Pierce Mill later formed to assist in the mill’s restoration.

Working with the Park Service, the Friends of Pierce Mill paid for preliminary studies of Rock Creek and the mill and has now hired the eminent millwright Derek Ogden to draw up restoration plans. Further studies will locate the old millrace, long since covered up, and determine how to reactivate it. One group of volunteers is researching the Historic Structures Report required by Park Service regulations. Through sheer luck—and the quick action and persistence of a couple of Friends of Pierce Mill members—the group acquired the trunks of two large white oak trees that were cut down during construction at the National Institutes of Health. There is enough wood to rebuild the main water wheel shaft and some beams inside the mill. Much work remains to be done before construction can begin, but progress to date now demonstrates what is possible when citizens act together in the name of preservation.

*The sketch of the mill above was provided by the Friends of Pierce Mill and the artist, Ted Hazen. For more information about the Friends of Pierce Mill, call Richard Abbott at (202) 244-5267.*

*(Welcome, continued from page 4)*

She is a member of the Landmarks and Education Committees. Ms. Ingram is Chief Financial Officer and Chief of Administration at America’s Promise—The Alliance for Youth, a nonprofit organization established by Colin Powell. She is also the President of the African American Heritage Preservation Foundation. Ms. Ingram worked for 10 years as Vice President and Treasurer for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. She is a member of the Landmarks and Membership Committees. Mr. Navarette is an attorney in the Business and Finance Section of Morgan, Lewis & Bockius. He is cochair and an active member of the DCPL Government Affairs Committee. In this role, he drafted the proposed Tax Credit for Restoration and rehabilitation of Older Buildings that is being considered by D.C. City Council.

## **We’ve Moved!**

And the Post Office has not been forwarding our mail. If you recently sent anything to us at our former address, please resend it to the following address:

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Phone: (202) 955-5616  
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## **DCPL Participates in the CFC Campaign**

The Combined Federal Campaign of the National Capitol Area has approved the participation of the D.C. Preservation League for 1999. DCPL’s designation number is 7753, and we are listed in the “Local Agencies” section of the campaign catalog. Please consider DCPL when making your designations.

# Membership Update

## New Members

(October 1, 1998–March 31, 1999)

Caroline Alderson  
Charmaine Arner  
Bell Clement  
Olga Corey  
Rachel S. Cox  
Jill Dennis  
Betsy Garside  
Faye Harwell  
Mary Hartz  
William West Hopper/Carl David Feske  
E. Renée Ingram  
Maryanne Davey Jackman  
Jennifer Karr  
Gale Kaufmann  
Linda S. Keenan

Brian Kraft/Janine Smith  
Leslie Loudon  
Tom Mayes  
Manna, Inc.  
Thomas G. McDowell  
Scott Meacham  
William A. Morgan  
Alvin Rosenbaum  
Richard L. Storch  
Mary S. Templeton  
de Teel Patterson Tiller  
Ellen M. Wagner  
David White  
Carolyn Widman

## 1999 Corporate Renewals

Brennan and Company Architects  
Community Systems  
Cesar Pelli and Associates

Donohoe Construction  
Chatelain Architects, Inc.  
Harry Weese Associates

## 1999 L' Enfant Society Members

The John Akridge, Co.  
Curtex Group  
CVS Corporation  
Diana Daniels  
Douglas Development Corporation  
Eastbanc, Inc.  
E.H.T. Tracerics, Inc.  
Friedman, Billings, Ramsey & Co., Inc.  
Gensler Associates

Jones, Day, Reavis & Pogue  
Klingle Corporation  
Judith Lanius  
Lenkin Corporation  
Manulife Financial  
Regency Commercial Construction, Inc.  
RTKL Associates  
David M. Schwartz Architects

## L' Enfant Society

The League has recently established a special society for its major donors. To be eligible for the L' Enfant Society, a member must join or renew with a \$500 or more membership contribution. L' Enfant members will be acknowledged in the League's newsletter and annual report. We are planning to offer special events for these generous members. So when you next renew, please consider joining the L' Enfant Society and make a significant contribution to our capital city.

## Membership Subcommittee Seeks Volunteers

The Membership Subcommittee, a small group of League members and staff operating as a subset of the Development Committee, would welcome new subcommittee members to help fulfill its important role: attracting new members for the League and retaining present members. Members, of course, are the League's strength in realizing its goals and working on its initiatives. In addition, member dues supply a significant portion of the League's operating expenses.

The Membership Subcommittee meets monthly to plan and coordinate individual subcommittee member or small subcommittee group projects. In recent months the Membership Subcommittee has successfully completed several initiatives crucial to the League's health and growth:

- ❖ Contacting lapsed members and promoting reactivation
- ❖ Holding a year-end fund drive, increasing membership by 10 percent to obtain a Meyer Challenge Grant
- ❖ Restructuring membership and corporate membership categories and dues
- ❖ Choosing and installing new software for tracking member solicitations and renewals
- ❖ Redesigning member and corporate member application and renewal forms

Projects now underway include developing a special solicitation for renewing corporate members; establishing a web site explaining League mission, structure, and projects and soliciting new members; producing an inexpensive flyer soliciting new members and planning public distribution of the flyer; and planning outreach through neighborhood preservation and improvement groups to recruit new members.

If you have office skills, experience in administration, ideas or suggestions for expanding League membership, or an interest in public affairs, call the League offices at (202) 955-5616 and tell Steve Elder you'd like to join the Membership Subcommittee. The subcommittee needs you.

# League Continues to Play Major Role in Heritage Tourism Coalition

by Rick Busch

Heritage Tourism is a national movement that is changing the way we think about historic resources and is the fastest growing segment of the travel industry. The 1995 White House-sponsored Conference on Travel and Tourism defined heritage tourism as "travel directed toward experiencing the arts, heritage, and special character of a place."

Somewhat surprisingly, Washington, D.C., has lagged behind other cities in recognizing the hidden potential of its many cultural and historic sites and diverse neighborhoods beyond the Mall. That is until 1996 when Fran Cary, former Executive Director of the Humanities Council of Washington, D.C., and Barbara Franco, Executive Director of The Historical Society of Washington, D.C., took the initiative to organize the D.C. Heritage Tourism Coalition with the D.C. Preservation League as a founding member. The consortium now numbers some 70 museums, heritage sites, and related cultural organizations, nearly all of which are located outside the city's monumental core.

The purpose of the Heritage Tourism Coalition is to offer products and programs that encourage visitors to venture into city neighborhoods beyond the Mall and experience the Washington that those of us who live here know, love, and call

home. Getting travelers to stay a day or two longer and explore our neighborhood resources not only showcases the District at large and helps create a new and positive image, but also stimulates the kind of neighborhood economic development and revitalization the city needs to stabilize its economic base.

There is a strong link between the D.C. Preservation League's mission to preserve, protect, and enhance the historic and built environment of our city and heritage tourism's city-wide focus. In many cases, city neighborhoods contain landmarks and contributing elements that the League has either saved or is working to preserve.

Tourism is Washington's second largest industry with 22 million visitors annually, a figure that offers tremendous potential for future heritage programs. Recognizing Washington's potential, the Heritage Tourism Coalition is working to establish partnerships with other public and private organizations to help neighborhoods and historic sites realize their potential and tap this captive tourist market. And after two years under the wing of the Humanities Council, the Heritage Tourism Coalition is moving to establish itself as an independent, incorporated nonprofit organization.

The League continues to have a strong role in the coalition. In February,

former D.C. Preservation League trustee, Judith Lanius, was elected chair of the coalition's new steering committee. In this role, Ms. Lanius will help chart the coalition's course. Richard Busch is serving as the Treasurer for the coalition. Kathryn Schneider Smith, eminent local historian and former President of the Historical Society, serves as interim Executive Director, and Barbara Wolfson, former board member of the Humanities Council, will continue to serve as Deputy Executive Director.

The steering committee's membership reflects a wide cross-section of our city's heritage potential. In addition to the Ms. Lanius, Ms. Smith, and Ms. Wolfson, the committee consists of JoAnn Azzarello of the Humanities Council; Victoria Farley of the Humanities Council; Barbara Franco of the Historical Society; Lynne Fitzhugh, an independent consultant; Paul Haley of the Navy Memorial and Heritage Center; Bill Hasson of the Georgia Avenue Heritage Trail; Cindy Janke of the Kiplinger Washington Collection; Harriet Lesser of Sumner School and Archives; Carol Mahoney of the Civil War Trust; Dominic Moulden and Gloria Hood of Manna CDC; Oramenta Newsome representing the Local Initiatives Support Corporation; and Eryl Platzer of the Octagon House.



*Heritage Tourism Steering Committee meeting at the Octagon House*



# Ambrose, Others Endorse Preservation Enforcement

by Rick Busch

One of the first results of the D.C. Preservation League's 1998 preservation Summit was publication of the *Summit Report and Action Plan* outlining the steps necessary to strengthen preservation enforcement in the District of Columbia. The document was publicly introduced at a press conference in front of the Old Naval Hospital on Capitol Hill on November 17, 1998, and received support from D.C. Council member Sharon Ambrose (Ward 6). Along with Ambrose, then-Councilmember-elect Phil Mendelson and representatives of Council Chairperson Linda Cropp and Councilmember Jack Evans, attended. Mrs. Ambrose's ward includes the Capitol Hill Historic District (the largest such district in the city), the Anacostia Historic District, and the Navy Yard Historic District.

Representing the D.C. Government were Wilbert J. Parker, State Historic Preservation Officer for the District of Columbia; James T. Speight, Jr., Chair of the Historic Preservation Review Board (HPRB); and Armando Lourenco, Administrator of the Building and Land Regulation Administration in the Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs. The League and the Coalition for Greater Preservation Enforcement—a grass-roots organization it formed in late 1997—now composed of four city-wide organizations, 17 neighborhood groups, and several other interested communities, were well-represented.

Everyone who spoke recognized what the lack of enforcement of the city's preservation-related ordinances means and the need for action. (See related article in this issue: Red-Letter Day for Preservation Enforcement.) An important step in this direction is a series of meetings that Mr. Lourenco has held since November with neighborhood preservation representatives from

Dupont Circle, Georgetown, and Mount Pleasant. In addition, he made a presentation to a special Enforcement Coalition meeting in late January, where he heard concerns and outlined plans for correcting a situation that has suffered from lack of attention for the past two decades.

In attendance and words, the public show of united support on behalf of better preservation enforcement at the press conference was further affirmation of the direction set at the June 1998 Enforcement Summit organized by the D.C. Preservation League and the Coalition. That summit culminated a concerted two-year effort by the League and was generously supported by Hines Interests Limited Partnership and the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

The League thanks Bob Vogt of the Foggy Bottom Historic District for covering the cost of mailing the *Summit Report and Action Plan* to those who attended the June 4 event; Bill Hopper and Jay Mallin of Historic Chevy Chase, D.C., for donating their professional expertise and materials to provide color photography of demolition by neglect sites, and for preparing the supporting color attachment to the press release; and Dick Wolf and the Capitol Hill Restoration Society for subsidizing all costs associated with the November press conference.



Among the speakers at the November 1998 press conference were HPRB Chair James T. Speight, Jr., and SHPO Wilbert Parker (center).

Credit: Bill Hopper, Historical Chevy Chase, D.C.

# Red Letter Day For Preservation

by Rick Busch

Friday, February 26, 1999, may well go down in the annals of preservation history in the District of Columbia as the day when new life was breathed into preservation enforcement in our city. At noon on this day, senior officials from the Building and Land Regulation Administration publicly posted a notice of violation on a Georgetown property located at 3015 M Street, N.W., and ordered the owner to abate the violations. The owner was officially served with this notice on February 23, 1999.

The property owner has been ordered to (1) demolish portions of the three-story structure he added to the existing building that exceed the approved scope of work, (2) reconstruct a historic carriage house that was illegally demolished to match the appearance approved in original permit drawings, and (3) hire a certified surveyor to conduct a wall survey to ensure that the final location of walls is in accordance with the approved site plan and plat. All of these corrections must be made within the next six months or the owner may be subject to a civil infraction fine of up to \$500 per day for each violation. Of course, the owner has the right to appeal the order within the Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs and the D.C. courts.

This public show of support by top city executives for the city's preservation-

related ordinances marks the first time in recent memory that D.C. government officials have shown their willingness, and indeed eagerness, to enforce laws that help maintain the historic architectural heritage of Washington, D.C. These are the same ordinances that the vast majority of historic district residents support and abide by as part of living in very special areas of the city.

"Enforcing our city's preservation-related ordinances is about preserving nonrenewable resources," according to Barbara Franco, Executive Director of The Historical Society of Washington, D.C. Ms. Franco's statement aptly captures the long-time work of the D.C. Preservation League, its Education and Issues Committees, and more recently, the Coalition for Greater Preservation Enforcement that the Education Committee formed in 1997.

DCPL is proud of its collective actions that are drawing attention to the serious and long-standing disregard for preservation enforcement: the Preservation Summit held last June, the September *Summit Report and Action Plan*, and the November press conference in front of the Old Naval Hospital on Capitol Hill that formally introduced this document to the public. These actions, along with a strong understanding of the importance of historic preservation by Armando Lourenco, the new head of the Building and Land Regulation Administration, have gotten us where we are today.

In addition to this dramatic and public action on the part of the city, Mr. Lourenco advised the D.C. Preservation League that the abatement order process has received the necessary approvals within the D.C. government. According to Mr. Lourenco, this means that it can be applied to other property owners in historic districts who have violated city ordinances and the D.C. Construction Code. There are plenty of them. Stay tuned.

(Grants, continued from page 1)

all primary and secondary research used, and summarize project findings in a public presentation to the Lower Sixteenth Street community. Federal Historic Preservation Fund (HPF) support in the amount of \$19,750 will be matched by \$2,893 provided by DCPL for project oversight and administration. Work on this project began in March and will be completed by August 31, 1999. EHT Tracerics, Inc., of Chevy Chase, Maryland, will act as DCPL's subcontractor and perform all project work.

DCPL's second project will use \$20,165 to develop an original, camera-ready brochure for the Strivers Section Historic District to heighten public awareness of our city's history and architecture. Like similar brochures prepared over the past decade, this educational tool will also inform the public about historic preservation and the important role it plays in our lives. DCPL will print 2,500 copies of the brochure. Federal HPF funds totaling \$18,000 will be matched by \$2,165 provided by DCPL. Work was initiated in March and will be completed by September 30, 1999. Project work is being conducted by architectural historian Kimberly Williams.



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Office, please call Jerry Maronek at (202) 955-5616. Thanks!

### Historic Preservation Division Moves to New Quarters

After years at 614 H Street, NW, the Historic Preservation Division of the Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs has moved. They are now located at 941 North Capitol Street, NE, Suite 2500, Washington, D.C. 20002. They can be reached at (202) 442-4570. The fax number is (202) 442-4860.



*Anacostia Historic District, SE*  
Credit: Jerry Maronek



*Anacostia River Basin, A Cultural Landscape*  
Credit: Jerry Maronek



*Brooks Mansion, 901 Newton Street, NE*  
Credit: T. Rooney



*Holt House, National Zoological Park, Adams Mill Road, NW*  
Credit: Wanda Bubriski

# DCPL names DC's Most Endangered Places for 1999

by Wanda Bubriski

The DC Preservation League announces this year's list of Washington's Most Endangered Places. They are the Anacostia Historic District, Anacostia River Basin, Brooks Mansion, Holt House, Warde-Totten House, Old Naval Hospital, all pre-World War II D.C. fire houses, all historic D.C. public schools, historic community theaters. These sites include newly nominated places, as well as sites which were listed in previous years.

Modeled after the National Trust for Historic Preservation's program, DCPL announced its first such list in 1996. To qualify for listing, a site must be a resource having historical, architectural, or cultural significance that is in danger of demolition, substantial alteration, or deterioration through neglect or vandalism. The League's Landmarks Committee is responsible for soliciting nominations to the list, evaluating the nominations, and making recommendations to the Board of Trustees who then approve the final list. The Landmarks Committee works throughout the year to develop programs to raise public awareness about the plight of these resources and to develop possible preservation solutions to save them. Each endangered site has a task force led by a chair. In keeping with DCPL's educational mission, the task forces will lead site visits throughout the year. For further information, contact Landmarks Committee Chair, Jerry Maronek at (202) 955-5616. Following is a brief description of the League's 1999 list.

## The Ten Most Endangered Places List

### Anacostia Historic District, SE

This site is located between Martin Luther King, Jr., Avenue on the west, Good Hope Road on the north, Fendall Street and the rear of the Frederick Douglass Home on the east, and Bangor Street and Morris Road

on the south. Anacostia has been on the League's list since the program began in 1996. This site remains on the DCPL list because it continues to decline despite the efforts of community and civic organizations. For more information on the site, see the article on page 1 of this *Reporter*. This site was listed on the D.C. Inventory of Historic Sites in 1973 and on the National Register of Historic Places in 1978. Anacostia contains a number of vacant and critically deteriorated buildings that threaten the integrity of the historic district as well as impede revitalization of the community. Chair: E. Renée Ingram

### Brooks Mansion

*901 Newton Street, NE*

The Brooks Mansion is a singular example of brick Greek Revival residential architecture in Washington, dating from the late 1830s. Built by Colonel Jehiel Brooks and his wife, Ann Margaret Queen, the mansion was the center of their 246-acre estate known as Bellair. In 1887, the property was sold and subdivided, creating the early railroad commuter suburb of Brookland. In 1891, the Marist Society purchased the property, by then reduced to two and a half acres, to house the Marist College. The Marist Society added a large east wing in 1894. The mansion was owned by various Catholic Orders and used for educational purposes until 1970, when it was sold to the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, which threatened to demolish the building for a Metro parking lot. The District of Columbia has owned Brooks Mansion since 1979, and the property has been unoccupied since 1997. The place was included on this year's list because it is currently unoccupied, and insensitive alterations and lack of maintenance threaten the original mansion's condition. The Landmarks Committee hopes that the District Government will find an appropriate tenant. It was listed on the D.C.

Inventory and the National Register in 1975.  
Chair: Jerry Maronek

### **Holt House, National Zoological Park**

*Adams Mill Road, NW*

Built before 1827, Holt House represents an extremely rare example in Washington of the early Classical Revival style, despite the later alterations by Glenn Brown, W.R. Emerson, and Hornblower and Marshall (1890–1901). Long used by the Zoo, a Smithsonian Institution, as its administrative offices, the house has remained vacant for almost a decade and is critically deteriorated. The site is located within the National Zoological Park Historic District but in an area occupied by research and maintenance facilities where public access and visibility are limited. Holt House was listed on the D.C. Inventory in 1964 and on the National Register in 1973. The League will work with other involved parties in trying to develop solutions to save the building. Co-chairs: Wanda Bubriski and Betsy Merritt

### **Warder-Totten House**

*2633 14th Street, NW*

An early example of preservation commitment, the Warder-Totten house now marks one of the city's most egregious examples of demolition-by-neglect. In 1925, Washington architect George Oakley Totten reconstructed the Benjamin Warder House, originally built by H.H. Richardson in 1865 at 1515 F Street, on its present Meridian Hill site. Totten used all of the original exterior stone (except the main doorway) and much of the interior woodwork. Privately owned and vacant for a dozen years, this architectural landmark is virtually reduced to a shell. This site was listed on the D.C. Inventory in 1964 and on the National Register in 1972. It has been on the League's Endangered List since 1996. Rallies and news conferences have been held in front of the building. The property is currently up for sale, and DCPL is hopeful that a new owner will stabilize this significantly deteriorated landmark. Because the deterioration has continued, DCPL has decided to keep this structure on the list. Chair: Cathy Anderton

### **Mary Church Terrell House**

*326 T Street, NW*

Mary Terrell was a distinguished educa-

tor, suffragette, and civil rights activist. She achieved national prominence as president of the National Association of Colored Women (1897); as the first African-American to serve on the D.C. School Board (1895–1919); and as a member of the Committee of Forty, the founders of NAACP (1909); among other accomplishments. Her husband, Robert Terrell, was principal of M Street High School and the first African-American judge on the D.C. Municipal Court. The Terrells purchase of the house spurred racial integration of LeDroit Park. This turn-of-the-century house is included in the LeDroit Park Historic District, listed on the D.C. Inventory and National Register, and is designated a National Historic Landmark. Howard University owns this currently vacant and severely deteriorated structure. DCPL is actively encouraging Howard University to restore this property. Co-chairs: Tip Kendrick and E. Renée Ingram

### **Old Naval Hospital**

*9th Street and Pennsylvania Avenue, SE*

One of the many medical facilities constructed in Washington during the Civil War, this 50-bed hospital, built in red brick Italianate style, served naval forces from 1866 until 1911. From 1920 to 1953, it housed the Temporary Home for Veterans of All Wars. The Old Naval Hospital is still a federally owned property, but it is now permitted to the District Government. The building and its grounds lack systematic maintenance and have suffered insensitive alterations. Both the building and its grounds need to be renovated and restored. Located within the Capitol Hill Historic District, it was added to the D.C. Inventory in 1964 and to the National Register in 1974. Co-chairs: Patrick Lally and Donna Hanousek

### **All Pre-World War II D.C. Fire Houses**

Of the 29 pre-World II firehouses and 1 fire alarm headquarters that remain in Washington, 19 are still owned by the city. Six of these, as individual landmarks or buildings that contribute to historic districts, are protected by the city's preservation ordinance. Possible alteration or actual demolition threaten the remaining 13. These firehouses, dating from 1864 to 1939, were designed as landmarks for their respective neighborhoods. They are significant not only for their



*Warder-Totten House, 2633 14th Street, NW*  
Credit: Wanda Bubriski



*Old Engine Company 6 (ca. 1864),  
438 Massachusetts Avenue, NW*  
Credit: Jerry Maronek



*The McKinley School (1928), 151 T Street, NE*  
Credit: Jerry Maronek



*Tivoli Theater, 14th Street and Park Road, NW*  
Credit: Wanda Bubriski

architectural merits and diversity, but also for their socioeconomic impacts on their neighborhoods, as the firehouses spurred subsequent residential and commercial development. By focusing on the Old Engine Company 6 (ca. 1864), located at 438 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, the League hopes to bring public attention to the plight of these important buildings. Chair: Sally Berk

### All Historic D.C. Public Schools

Schools are crucial social spaces where we often experience our earliest and strongest emotional attachments to place. Washington's historic schools represent a wide variety of architectural styles built between the 1870s and the 1950s. While a number of these structures exist as functioning schools, many are in dire need of repair. Equally urgent, however, are the more than 50 historic schools currently on the D.C. Public Schools Surplus Property List. The League has listed historic schools on its endangered list since 1996 and has been working since that time with community organizations to save these structures. However, much work remains to be done including working with city officials to ensure that the sale of these properties does not lead to insensitive alterations or demolition. Examples of historic schools that are threatened include the Stevens School (1868) at 1050 21st Street, NW, one of the city's oldest surviving elementary schools for African American students; the Webster School (1882) at 740 H Street, NW, originally an el-

ementary school and later home to the Americanization School, a vital center for the city's immigrant communities; and the McKinley School (1928) at 151 T Street, NE, an enormous complex gracing the T Street Hill that was on the cutting-edge of technical arts high schools. Co-chairs: Mark Fetterman and Tanya Beauchamp

### Historic Theaters

Washington's historic theaters represent a significant aspect of community life, especially during the period from 1920 to 1950. Often these theaters hosted both live stage performances as well as motion pictures. Several of Washington's theaters helped pioneer the Art Deco style in the city. Many innovations of the motion-picture theater industry were first tried in Washington. Many of these theaters are threatened and in need of protection. The threats range from demolition-by-neglect to abandonment. The focus is the Tivoli Theater, located at 14th Street and Park Road, NW. The Tivoli Theater was designed by Thomas Lamb, a prominent, nationally known theater architect and built by Harry M. Crandall, a local pioneering movie theater operator. The 1800-seat theater, which opened in 1924, was built for well in excess of one million dollars for a strictly middle-class clientele. The theater accommodated live music and motion pictures. The elegant building, with its lobby festooned with vast marble columns, ornate fountains and pastoral murals, has remained dark for almost a quarter-century. The the-

ater is in a terrible state of disrepair and is located in an area that is prime for redevelopment. The League hopes to play a role in encouraging the inclusion of a rehabilitated theater in any plans for the neighborhood. Co-chairs: Charles Cassell and T. David Bell

### Anacostia River Basin, A Cultural Landscape

*Bounded by the District Line, NE (roughly at New York Avenue) to Greenleaf Point, SW*

The banks of Washington's "other" waterway encompass a rich, yet neglected, array of natural and cultural resources. The Anacostia is a veritable oasis of scenic tranquility and wildlife diversity amidst flotillas of garbage and pollutants. A number of local and national landmarks, such as Kenilworth Aquatic Gardens, National Arboretum, Anacostia Park, Langston Golf Course, Kingman and Heritage Islands, D.C. General Hospital, Congressional Cemetery, boating clubs, Washington Navy Yard, U.S. Naval Station, and Ft. McNair, share its shores. This complex interaction of built and natural resources that make the Anacostia such a unique cultural landscape lacks systematic planning and public awareness. Many of the built elements have been overlooked, underused, underfunded, or simply abandoned. DCPL joins the Anacostia Watershed Society and the Sierra Club in bringing public attention to the vast resources of the river basin. Co-chairs: Susan Begley and Wanda Bubriski.

## Preservation Week Held May 9 to May 15, 1999

In anticipation of National Historic Preservation Week, members of the Landmarks Committee began an evaluation of the cultural resources in the Anacostia River Basin. This group spent a Saturday performing a reconnaissance survey of some of Washington's lesser-known national and community river-fronted features. These features range from the National Register-listed Langston golf course to a little-known wetland preserve to a scrap metal yard and a sewage "swirl" facility.

On Saturday, May 15, Landmarks Committee members Susan Begley, Kay Fanning, Liz Gibson, and Jerry Maronek participated in an all-day training session: "Understanding Cultural Landscapes: A Primer for Preservationists." The program was presented by the D.C. Chapter of the Association for Preservation Technology at the Women in Military Service for America Memorial.



*The Landmarks Committee participates in a reconnaissance survey. Left to right: Wanda Bubriski, Cathy Anderson, Susan Begley, and David Bell  
Credit: Jerry Maronek*

# DCPL Successfully Presents Two Nominations to HPRB

By T. David Bell, AIA

DCPL has been successful in obtaining the designation of two Washington landmarks. The Daniel Webster School and the United Mine Workers Building/University Club have been added to the D.C. Inventory of Historic Sites and recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

The Webster School is located across 10<sup>th</sup> Street from the Grand Hyatt Hotel and across H Street from the existing Washington Convention Center. It is a freestanding, three-story, 12-room public school built in 1881–82, and named for Daniel Webster, the celebrated orator and U.S. Senator from Massachusetts. It is one of the larger schools built during the period and one of few schools built so close to downtown. The design of the school was produced by the Office of the Building Inspector and approved by Edward Clark, Architect of the Capitol.

The D.C. Preservation League initiated the application for

Historic Landmark Designation with the Historic Preservation Division shortly before a demolition permit was to be issued for the school. The League's Landmark Committee worked hard to organize support for the application, which it had prepared. Charles Cassell, Tonya Beauchamp, David Bell, and Mark Fetterman gave the official testimony on behalf of the League. Tip Kendrick and Wanda Bubriski also gave supportive testimony in favor of the designation. Several additional community representatives gave supportive testimony as part of the committee's team effort, which was planned by Landmarks Chair Jerry Maronek. Despite opposing testimony, the review board voted unanimously in favor of the nomination.

The United Mine Workers Building at 900 15<sup>th</sup> Street, NW, is located on the northwest corner of Eye and 15<sup>th</sup> Streets at McPherson Square. This building was erected in 1912 as a freestanding, five-story, masonry structure for the University Club of Washington, DC, a social club founded in 1904 to promote science, literature, and art. Washington's George Oakley Totten, a member of the club, was the architect.

In 1936, the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) purchased and renovated the building its national headquarters, adding a sixth floor, which contained John L. Lewis' long time office. The UMWA was founded in 1890, and by 1940, it ranked as the country's largest single union.

Marliyn Feldman and Pam Cartwright of the Landmarks Committee wrote the DCPL nomination for Historic Landmark Designation. Betsy Merritt, Carol Mitten, and Jerry Maronek were on the designation team. Once again, the Review Board voted unanimously in favor of landmark status.



*The Webster School  
(1882) at 740 H Street,  
NW  
Credit: Jerry Maronek*

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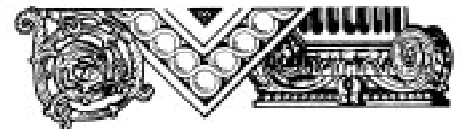
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