



The Souldard Renaissance

"The Neighborhood Journal of Historic Souldard"

Volume XIII, Issue IV



Souldard Parlour Tour

Souldard Holiday Parlour Tour



A Delight for the Senses

By Hilda Besand

On December 3 and 4, take a break from fighting holiday shopping crowds and waiting in line for a department-store Santa to experience a civilized Christmas tradition — the annual Souldard Holiday Parlour Tour.

This year's tour promises an elegant stroll through the best-holiday-dressed neighborhood in St. Louis, led by seasoned tour guides telling fascinating stories of historic Souldard. The tour and guides are brought to you by the Souldard Restoration Group, the neighborhood association of historic Souldard.

Each stop on the 7-home tour will be a sensual delight as the aroma of hot spiced cider and roasting chestnuts mix with the sights of fabulously decorated Christmas trees and gifts and the sounds of carolers wafting through the neighborhood. We'll indulge your quivering senses by serving Christmas cookies, candy canes, hot spiced cider and roasting chestnuts in the homes.

And, we'll have our own Santa Claus — not some droopy, department-store version, but the genuine article. Visitors young and old may have their picture taken with jolly Old Saint Nick for no extra charge. A tree display will grace the staging area to delight visitors as they wait in line to sit on the old guy's laps. (Just kidding — no lines, promise.)

Step Up St. Louis, a community service organization, will donate up to \$750 in matching funds from the tour to purchase trash cans for the neighborhood.

See SEASONAL DELIGHTS page 14

**Saturday & Sunday
December 3rd & 4th
1:00 to 6:00 p.m.**

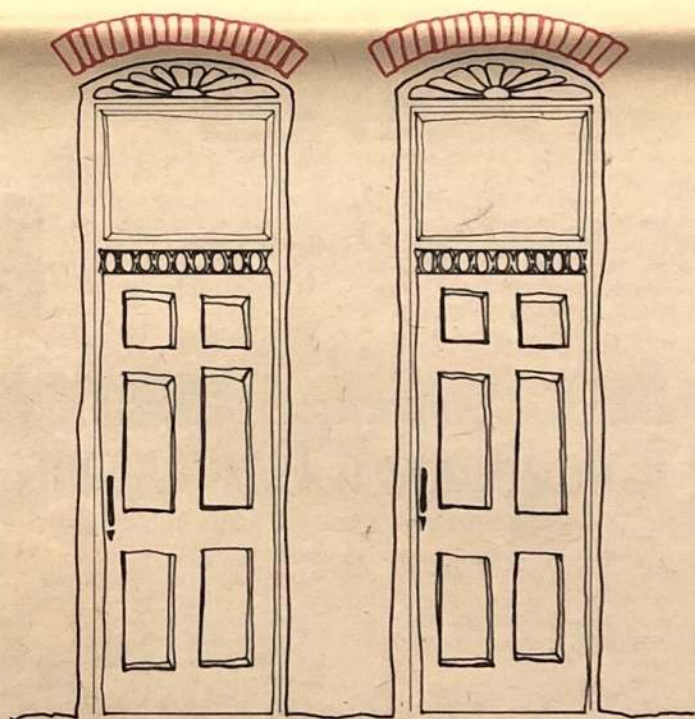
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A Guided Tour of Historic Souldard Homes

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NOTES FROM THE BRICK HOUSE

It's hard to believe that a year has passed since I was first elected president of the Souldard Restoration Group. It was a lot of fun, and didn't take as much time as I had feared (I have to say this so someone will run for president next year). I think, by all measures, that our organization had an excellent year.

We did so not because of my efforts, but because of all the hard work by our members. We had a great house tour in September, we are planting trees this fall, our neighborhood crime patrol has made a vitally important contribution to the neighborhood, and we have made much progress toward funding for an executive director and an office. Perhaps more importantly, we have lots of new members, and many new faces at every meeting, bringing fresh ideas and lots of needed energy.

I think we are approaching one of our best years ever. After much "on the job" training, I feel much more confident about my second (and definitely final) year as president. We have an experienced Board of Directors, interlaced with some new

faces. I think we will have an exciting and productive year.

I would like to use this space to give my personal thanks to three "retiring" board members: Fred Andres, Richard Eaton, and Russell Farber. All three were excellent board members, always offering special insight to the many issues we faced. As board members, their wisdom and hard work made Souldard a better place for all of us to live, and for that we should all be grateful. (We will not, though, miss the cigar smoke at Board meetings!!!)

During the first week end in December, the Souldard Restoration Group will host our annual Holiday Parlour Tour. There are really no words to adequately express how special this tour is — both to visitors and to our members. No other single event brings so much joy, optimism, and good cheer to our organization — and I guess that's what celebrating the holiday season should be all about.

I'm looking forward to seeing everyone at our post-tour party.

Rod Wright, President,
Souldard Restoration Group

Public Schools Offer Career Seminar

The New Directions Center of the St. Louis Public Schools, Adult Vocation Education Division will offer free Career Shopping Seminars for Homemakers and Single Parents on Thursdays from 9 to 11 a.m. at O'Fallon Technical Center, 5101 McRee Avenue, Room 216.

NEW DIRECTIONS is a resource center for single parents and homemakers wishing to return to the world-of-work. Assistance will be provided in skill assess-

ment, labor market information, career exploration, and education and training opportunities.

Subjects covered will be: Taking a look at today's job market, identifying your vocational skills and interests, and taking first steps necessary for entering the world of work.

For more information and registration call Linden Leathers at 776-2215, ext. 219.

New Editor Stumbles In

It's on somewhat of a sad note that I assume my new post as editor of *The Souldard Renaissance*. Sadness not caused by the impending task ahead, but sadness at the sudden and untimely death of my beloved mother, Carolyn Ann Lester.

In my current role as "Mr. Mom," my own mother has been an invaluable source of courage and inspiration. As a child she instilled in me a strong sense of independence and resoluteness, without which I never would have attempted to build my Xanadu in Souldard.

The death of a loved one is always a hard pill to swallow, and it is not always easily passed, and I know for a fact that the last thing she would want is for me to jump ship on her account. Even so, her presence will be sorely missed by our entire family.

In case you haven't been to a membership meeting lately, it may come as news to you that we have voted to change the name of *The Souldard Restorationist* to *The Souldard Renaissance*.

The primary motive behind this is to attract even more new members to our ranks. It has become evident in recent years that the term "Restorationist" does not truly reflect the overall mood that prevails in our neighborhood.

Some of our members have expressed some displeasure over this issue, but I want to assure them that the idea is not to lessen the restorationist movement that began more than 15 years ago.

The name change to "Renaissance" actually reflects the success that restorationists have brought into Souldard through their hard work and investments. I am a restorationist myself; and I support the name change.

By definition, "renaissance" refers to revival and rebirth. Souldard has experienced an unparalleled rebirth and revival.

There are many new kinds of people that now call Souldard home, not to mention people who have always been here and not been included in the restoration movement.

If our organization is to keep the influence that it has enjoyed in the past, it is essential that we earn the respect and trust of the neighborhood as a whole, not just a segment of it.

Let's work together to define the term "renaissance" as it relates to our phenomenal neighborhood. Let's make the word "renaissance" synonymous with "Souldard."

If many of the new articles and ideas that have been promised do come to fruition, it promises to be an exciting and interesting period in the life of the newspaper, as well as the organization.

The Proposed Historic Building Code is still floating around out there; and I look forward to using the *Renaissance* as a tool to share the pros and cons of it, as well as a sounding board for for opinions about the code.

Members have been coming up with new ideas for activities that will enhance the enjoyment of the neighborhood, and the *Renaissance* will be there.

Ed Bushmeyer will be contributing a series of articles dealing with the history of the Souldard Restoration Group and interviews with early activists, be they active now or not.

Beautification is again on the agenda, as the recent Souldard Market clean-up and tree planting project have shown. I have been promised articles comparing current beautification efforts with the plans originally proposed for the neighborhood.

Last, but not least, are the elections slated for this spring. I cannot over-emphasize the importance of registering to vote and voting. Your vote or lack thereof can have a profound effect on Souldard.

These are just some of the things that *The Souldard Renaissance* hopes to address in upcoming issues.

We should be thankful that we live in a country that affords us free speech in a public forum.

Only the residents of a community can work to affect change in that community. Souldard is a living example of that concept.

Make your ideas and opinions known through letters and articles to the *Renaissance*. Through them, we can build a neighborhood we can all be proud to call home. Finis!

Dave Lester, Jr.
Editor

A Tip of the Hat to Barb

It's not very often that a voluntary newspaper the size of ours finds an editor with the dedication of Barbara Alice MacRobie.

In fact, we're lucky to find an editor at all. Unless you have worked closely with the production involved in putting a paper like *The Souldard Restorationist/Renaissance* on the street, you cannot fully appreciate the stamina needed to accomplish such a feat.

Being familiar with the work involved in our newspaper, I can assure you that Barbara, in her three years as editor, has done an incredible job of coordinating the good news that is coming out of our neighborhood all the time. Under her

tenure we have watched the Souldard Restoration Group begin to revitalize its ranks with the next generation of pioneers, and credit must be given in part to the positive publicity provided by our publication. Her clever use of words, color, as well as her ability to cajole writers, has been critical to the continuing success of the newspaper.

Barbara will be a hard act to follow! I only hope that we can continue to produce a newspaper that meets Barbara's high standards. We would like to wish the best of luck in your new ventures and also give you a truly heartfelt "THANKS" for what you have contributed to the Souldard Restoration Group.

Dave Lester, Jr.



The Souldard Renaissance

"The Neighborhood Journal of Historic Souldard"

The Souldard Renaissance has a circulation of 6,000 and is published every two months by the Souldard Restoration Group. It is distributed in Souldard and St. Louis area businesses and our advertisers.

Call 771-5563 for information and to place ads. Letters to the Editor and articles are appreciated. Copy deadline is one month prior to the date of issue; ads are due 15 days prior. Address correspondence to:

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Laundry Service With a Smile

by Phil Willman

In my book of lists, doing laundry ranks only below mopping floors as the household chore I abhor. Countless Saturday afternoons I have created distractions, any distraction, to avoid sorting socks and ironing rumpled shirts. Only when I realize one last, clean shirt hangs resolutely in my closet do I then dive into the mound of clothes accumulating in the corner.

George Mehlick, owner of Soulard Soap Laundromat, knows of my, and your, dread of the drudgery of wash day. He understands, as he puts it, that laundromats are all like funeral homes: "Everyone has to pay a visit eventually." He does his best to make that visit a pleasant, social one, by offering a full service laundromat that is clean in appearance, prompt in service and personal in atmosphere.

Since I began using Soulard Soap, I have actually learned to look forward to, or at least not dread, doing laundry.

George and his wife and partner, Betty, have operated Soulard Soap, at 9th and Soulard streets, since August 1985, as a "one-stop shop" for laundry needs.

They purchased the business after George had looked at approximately 50 other laundromats.

He knew, as soon as he saw the facility, that he wanted to begin his business in Soulard, and three short days later he was the owner of the only full-service laundromat in Soulard.

Certainly all of the modern equipment we rely on to assist in the task can be found there—18 top loader washers, 6 double washers, heavy duty washers, 15 dryers, and drop-off and dry cleaning services.



George Mehlick, behind the counter at Soulard Soap, stands at the ready to serve all your full service laundry needs, 7 days a week.

But what sets Soulard Soap apart from any other washery is the sincere, genuine interest George takes in his customers.

By the second time I had visited the place he knew me by name, and by the third visit he knew more about me than many of the people with whom I work daily. He has created with me, and his other customers, a sense of trust that is lacking in the current service industry climate of high volume sales, national franchises, and consumer wariness.

George, a native of Pittsburgh, Penn-

sylvania, learned how to deal with people successfully in a service business by spending 18 years with A&W Restaurants as its national franchise director.

He spent most of his time traveling from city to city, often five days a week, a lifestyle with which he grew weary.

Ten years ago he was transferred to St. Louis. Then, the company was sold, and the new owners wanted him to increase his traveling. Instead, George decided to go out on his own, and chose the laundry business to be the venue for his entry into

entrepreneurship.

Soulard Soap has blossomed as a neighborhood laundry service since George purchased it.

For example, he has seen his shirt service increase from 50 shirts to 300 a week.

He attributes his success to his philosophy of getting to know his patrons and their needs. He believes it is important for his customers also to get to know him.

It is impossible to do this and be an absentee owner. So George spends a lot of time at the laundry, as much as forty hours a week.

George is impressed with the progress Soulard has made toward being a better, safer place to live and work. His favorite spot in the neighborhood is 8th and Soulard in the spring, when the white blossoms of the Bradford pear trees are at their peak beauty.

He envisions a time when he and his wife may move to Soulard.

He also recognizes the diversity of people who live in Soulard.

Often, on cold days, he will open the laundry early to allow the patrons of Sts. Peter & Paul's Homeless Shelter to warm themselves before his customers come in.

He believes the shelter is a necessary and worthwhile community service which he, as a nearby business owner, wishes to accommodate.

Soulard Soap is open Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. to 10 p.m., and Saturday and Sunday, 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. Both drop-off and dry cleaning services are available, in addition to the coin-operated machines on the premises.

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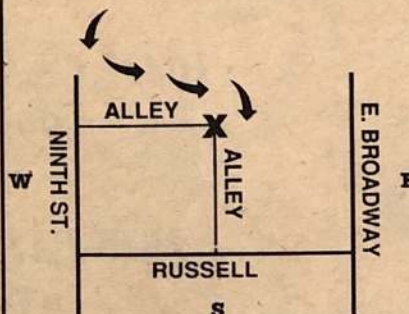
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Soulard Watch Strikes Gold

by Vicki Renisch

The Soulard Watch mobile crime patrol was in high gear in October.

A hit-and-run driver struck and damaged a car parked in the 2200 block of South 9th Street, causing \$1,400 worth of damage to the vehicle. An alert, caring neighbor called Emergency 911 from a pay phone.

Police officer Denkerhof of the Third District took information from the witnesses and determined that the driver of a gold Camino was responsible for the incident.

One week later, Soulard Watch member Larry Hollenberg saw a gold Camino with damage to its right front fender. It was parked at the corner of 8th and Geyer streets.

Soulard Watch reported the sighting to Captain Gary Perkins of the Third District. A few days later, the perpetrator was taken into custody.

The driver had been recently released from state prison, and was returned to prison because of his involvement in the incident.

Without the help of the neighbor who reported the incident to the police, this man would have been free to victimize someone else.

If the watch does nothing more than encourage Soulard residents to be mindful of their neighbors and quick to call 911, it will be successful.

On another note, a foot patrol was initiated recently in our neighborhood. Alderman Phyllis Young of the 7th Ward was instrumental in convincing the Chief of Police that the Third District needed such a patrol because of its many residential areas.

If you see the officers on patrol in your area, be sure to welcome them and encourage them in their work.

Soulard Watch always needs volunteers. Call Barbara Taylor, the new coordinator, if you can volunteer one evening a month to protect your neighborhood. Barbara can be reached at 436-7408.

Remember, Christmas can be a busy time for thieves. Be more cautious than usual with locking your car doors. If you have an alarm, use it.

If you hear an alarm, wait one minute for a possible mistake, and then call 911.

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by Jay Gibbs

Hello, A. Rehabber fans.

For the last five years I have been alternately working on, and cursing at, my house on scenic 9th Street. Well, I'm "nearly done" now (yes, I've been saying that for the last six months, but who's counting?).

The end of my life as a rehabber is truly close, though the house and proto-garage seem to cling to this non-finished status quo with more tenacity than quicksand to a man being rescued.

This forthcoming change of life has found me nostalgic and philosophical, please bear with me and we'll all get through this together.

Rehabbing, from a zen point of view (!), is essentially overcoming the inertia of an old house. And let me tell you, brother, anything the size of a house has plenty of inertia. I used to say that I was dragging my house, kicking and screaming, into the 20th century; but that was overdramatic.

More accurately, I should have compared it to pushing a massive, ponderous bulk up a steep, bumpy incline, with an uphill push of one inch as often as not resulting in a backslide of three feet.



More Adventures of an Amateur Rehabber

This is a far truer representation of the relationship between the self-made rehabber and his, stubborn, mouldering, dusty, stupid, crumbling, pain-in-the—oh, where were we? Oh yes, back to the nostalgia.

During these last five years of rehabbing I have entertained you, I hope, with articles of my exploits under the name, "More Adventures of an Amateur Rehabber," 20-some of them in all.

My first column in February, 1984, was a true account of my digging for caves in my basement, based on information provided by the previous house owner. By the way, there are **no** caves under my basement.

The next article, in the summer of 1984, detailed some of the more colorful happenings of my early rehabbing career, including the unique experience of gutting a house and the collapse of my entire carriage house roof, while I was standing on it. This second article also provided the "More Adventures..." title for the quickly popular (to my honest surprise) column, and I haven't missed an issue of the *Restorationist* since.

First, I want to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has enjoyed my column and told me so, who spurred me on when I was down, and who unwittingly provided material for, and assistance with, my writings. Merci beaucoup.

Second, I wish to announce that this is my last "Amateur Rehabber" column.

I read all my past articles, and was amused and surprised by the changes in my life, my attitudes, and even my writing style.

It's a scream to look at frozen snippets of one's past; oh, the memories.

Somewhere in a fair tale I've gutted, framed, insulated, drywalled, painted, and yelled in/at/to my house, and spent five years doing it all.

Soon I'll actually be able to just live, and enjoy, the place. Oh, what a feeling!

As I'm writing this, Contractor Bob is building my future two-car garage. It's

shaping up nicely. I have personally been laying all the brick on the garage, resulting in chewed-up hands and a still-not-finished house interior.

I call it a "future" garage because my car probably won't fit once I haul all the junk, excess building materials, extra furniture and all the tons of other savable rubbish out of the house.

As it turns out, I'll be living here after all, rather than moving, as previously reported in this space. Anyway, in my "spare" time, I am painting woodwork, installing closets and hanging doors, among other things, with technical help from my parents and others. It never seems to end but it must end soon.

To help me pay the monthly installments of my new, improved, higher mortgage, two other persons will be moving in the house shortly: my sister Julie, and my new friend Sandy.

Each of us will have our own private area, and will share the common rooms. The house is big enough for the task, and besides, it will be great having housemates after living alone here almost four years.

As the Eagles once sang, "Late at night, the big old house gets lonely."

So life chugs on, A. Rehabber fans, though this column will not.

I will still be writing for the *Restorationist*, er, *Renaissance*, and will be able to approach other subjects of interest and note to the neighborhood. At the same time, the completion of my house will allow me to pursue other interests, such as my furloughed metal-trading career,

women, reading, hobbies, and maybe housebuilding or more rehabbing. I'll be around.

...

Gosh, this area has come a long way since I started here in September, 1983!

Let's take my square block, bounded by Ninth, Tenth, Emmet, and Geyer streets, as a sort of microcosm of the Soulard neighborhood. This block contains 28 historic buildings.

In September, 1983, five of these could be considered renovated and capable of sheltering a typical (huh?) household. Three more buildings were substandard but livable, to use vague terminology.

The other 20 were shells — that's right — as late as 1983, 20 of 28 houses on my square block were shells in varying stages of abuse and decay.

Today, just over five years later, there is still one shell and yet one substandard but

See *AMATEUR REHABBER* page 7

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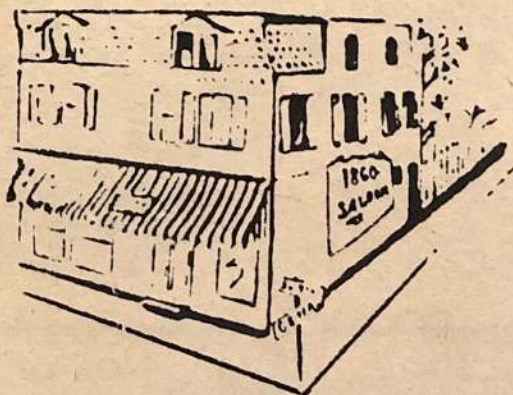
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Felling Pottery Studio and Gallery Opening

Felling Pottery in Souland opens its first show with a reception on December 3 and 4 from noon to 5 p.m. in the gallery at 2637 South 12th Street. The show of Kathy Felling's recent work features porcelain and stoneware forms displaying a wide range of surface treatments and techniques.

The gallery is in the front parlor of the artist's renovated Souland townhouse. The gallery exclusively displays the owner's artwork on Tuesday, Thursdays and Saturdays from noon to 5 p.m.

Kathy Felling works in her well equipped studio at the rear of the property. "Having the gallery and studio at home allows me to balance my artistic and family interests," she said. "It also reduces some economic pressures, so I can pursue my ideas with a little less worry about 'will it

sell?'. Fortunately, people have responded to my ideas.

Kathy makes use of various techniques to execute her ideas. Recent prize-winning works resembling artichokes are wheel-thrown and sculpted porcelain. Other pieces are bowls, jars, and vases with brushed or stenciled images of real and fantastical birds and fish. She also has explored press-molding with found objects or molds of her design. Her glazes vary from cool glossy celadons to crackled matte glazes airbrushed with subdued greens, pinks, or blues.

"I work from an intuitive level. I think I'm more inspired by traditional aspects of art pottery than by intellectual, political or

social comment," Kathy said. "Ideas come to me. I try to work them out and make the results available for other people."

The artist took her first pottery and painting lessons as a child. Later, her father built her first kickwheel and kiln. She attended Washington University, where she obtained a bachelor of fine arts degree in 1977. She operated a studio in Des Moines, Ia. from 1978-1983. There she exhibited in statewide juried shows and art fairs. Her studio and gallery are now established in St. Louis where, in addition to her own work and commissions, she teaches small classes.

For more information call Kathy Felling at 664-4297.



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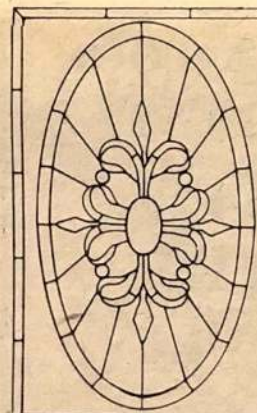


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Amateur Rehabber

Continued from page 5
livable house; the remaining 26 historic buildings have been rehabbed.

That's a pretty dramatic turnaround, and I think that it reflects the renaissance of Soulard in general.

But, I'll be the first to insist that further improvement is necessary and vital. In this vein, I have only one more point to make as the "Amateur Rehabber," I hope you'll suffer along as I rant philosophic once more.

Four years ago in the December, 1984, *Restorationist*, a fellow rehabber and friend calling herself "Danica's Crazy Daughter" related her story of renovation adventures on 13th Street.

Her words, describing difficulty, heart-break, perseverance, survival and triumph, inspired this novice rehabber at a time when things looked increasingly overwhelming. Now I have arrived at the same point that she did four years ago. Here goes.

I literally saved an antique house, and "brought it back," as rehabber "pioneers" are fond of saying.

My grand old lady had a pretty face and a badly sagging rear end. She had 1920's wiring that no longer worked, 1940's plumbing that barely worked, and a long-deceased, rusted-out coal boiler with attendant radiators whose only function was to be in the way.

She had narrow, twisting staircases in the wrong places, and kitchen and bath facilities way past the point of quaintness. She had loose, broken windows, sagging floors and roof rot.

Mice cavorted on her dining room floor, ignoring the stench of nameless, almost forgotten cats.

She had wasps in the roof and standing water in the basement. Poorly-conceived remodeling had ruined her once graceful interior lines.

In short, this damp, warped and bulging old lady had reached the nadir of her 130-year existence. But even then, she had a quiet but definite feeling of coziness, of warm-fuzzy hominess, as if her former builders and occupants had somehow stayed around to watch and guard the grand old dame.

Even then she felt like "Home."

I tore into her innards, scattering her guts around the yard and into dumpsters. With my crowbar I destroyed her sagging rear and her termite-ridden porches.

I was not satisfied until she was but a skeleton, bereft of walls, ceilings, doors, windows, fixtures and character and charm.

But I didn't forget those things or the cozy feelings. I began to rebuild her, to rehab and reshape her as a new yet old, modern yet traditional home fit for today while remembering yesterday.

With a great deal of financial and professional help I returned her from the dead to the living.

Modern energy-efficient furnaces and thermal windows keep her old bones warm now, and new a kitchen and baths affirm her place in the late 20th century.

I brought back the doors, mantles, and woodwork that had made her charming, and they look twice as good. Art glass



transoms and soft carpet are things she never knew, but which now accentuate her character.

And now she is back, and ever-improving. She supports my life, as I have supported hers.

She is again proud, and cozy, so much so that someone who happened through her during Fall House Tour will soon be moving in, journeying from Dogtown to do so.

The neighborhood around my old house has enjoyed a similar resurgence, and is even now continuing to grow, while remembering its roots.

I wrought from a wreck, a home. Many of us have done it.

To all you potential rehabbers out there, I invite you to our neighborhood. There are still buildings crying out for attention, houses that the profit-minded developers have passed over, buildings that could be

See REHABBER, page 12



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Soulard Renaissance Interviews Alderman

Phyllis Young is near the end of her first term as alderman of the 7th Ward of the City of St. Louis. A newcomer to the political scene four years ago, Phyllis says she's learned a great deal from the experience of serving the large and economically and socially diverse 7th Ward.

David Lester of The Soulard Renaissance staff interviewed Phyllis recently regarding her impressions of political life and her outlook on the Soulard neighborhood — its successes and challenges and her views of its future. What follows is a summary of that interview.

Renaissance: Would you outline the duties and responsibilities of an alderman for the City of St. Louis?

Alderman Young: According to the city charter, the Board of Aldermen is supposed to be the legislative body, but the charter doesn't seem to recognize some of the other things that are demanded of an alderman.

It seems that we are the liaison between the general public and the various departments of the city.

People will call for development plans for downtown. One of the first things that I had to do as an alderman was go down and meet someone to talk about an encroachment permit for the Gateway One building. So I had to research exactly what type of permit that was.

I've had to learn a lot of real estate and legal terms in the past three-and-a-half years.

You get invited to school meetings, dances, barbecues and dinners. This job

involves a lot of public relations — meeting people and addressing their concerns.

But most of all, I believe it is important that someone is concerned and does show up to hear those concerns.

It is a very time consuming job. you can be at it from 7:30 in the morning to 10:00 at night, every day.

Renaissance: How would you describe the 7th Ward?

Alderman Young: The 7th Ward is a very diverse ward, possibly the most diverse in the city.

It encompasses the downtown business district, the city hall complex and Union Station, it takes in a segment of apartment complexes on the west side of Jefferson Ave.

It takes in a small segment of Lafayette Square which has seen quite a bit of rehabbing over the past few years. It encompasses Darst-Webbe, Peabody and LaSalle Village Housing Authority developments.

It includes LaSalle Park, which was done by Ralston Purina Co. as an urban redevelopment area. It takes in a large section of Soulard and Benton Park, and a section of Fox Park, but most of the neighborhoods are split, and I share them with another alderman.

So there is a wide range of housing stock and business complexes. As you can see there is quite an interesting mix.

Renaissance: How would you describe the ward in terms of progress? It looks like there has been a lot of construction in recent years.

Alderman Young: There has been a

PHYLLIS YOUNG



Alderman Young at a dinner recently at The Hat Factory, 12th and Russell.

lot of work going on downtown, although right now it has slowed down quite a bit because of tax credit changes and the economic climate. As most people know, we have a lot of available office space.

There have been improvements to Housing Authority buildings. The B-2 building has been totally renovated with 86 units, and people have been moved back into those now.

In the near future we will see construction on Clinton/Peabody. More than \$3 million has been allocated for renovation of those apartments. However, it's only a start because there are over 600 units in that complex.

In Lafayette Square there's been a lot of renovation. I remember campaigning four years ago, knocking on doors in one block of Hickory, and there was only one person living on the entire block.

All those apartments there have been rehabbed as condominiums and are occupied. And a lot of in-fill housing has been built along that same block.

In the near future, we will see the upper GM parking lot on Hickory as a new townhouse development.

In Fox Park there has been a lot of renovation as well, and hopefully more to come.

In Soulard, the tax credit changes have made a difference in the neighborhood; you don't see as much apartment development. But, we are seeing a lot of single family development going on, and that's encouraging. We hope in the near future to see something done with the Falstaff complex over in the Benton Park neighborhood.

If we can keep up the momentum, we can have a very stable ward.

Renaissance: As you know, The Soulard Renaissance is concerned with promoting Soulard, so let's get into some Soulard issues. As I recall, weren't you involved with the Soulard Market clean-up in mid-September?

Alderman Young: Yes, and it was a very rainy day, but I think we made a lot of improvements down there. We certainly picked up a lot of trash.

Renaissance: Was the market clean-up a success?

Alderman Young: It was very much a success. In addition, members of the Forestry Division cleaned up the area recently.

That's one of the major things about Soulard, as well as my other neighborhoods. The people seem to be very aware of trash. It must be the German heritage of the area.

Renaissance: I've noticed in recent

weeks that tree wells are being opened up in the neighborhood. What can you tell us about that?

Alderman Young: There is a cooperative effort going on. I have to say that this is one of the best neighborhoods in terms of cooperative efforts between the city and Restoration Group.

They're sharing the cost of the program, which involves the planting of some 750 trees on the streets.

It's a reforestation plan that I think will become a pilot for other areas. The Forestry Division was quite impressed when someone came to them and said, "We want more trees in our neighborhood and we are willing to share the cost."

That's an unusual approach, and it was very well received. There are wrinkles in the program, but I'm sure we will be able to work those out.

Renaissance: Some people in the neighborhood seem to have a negative opinion of blighting. What is it, and how does it work?

Alderman Young: Well, there have always been a good number of vacant buildings in our neighborhoods. I think that is why so much has occurred down here, because there are so many opportunities.

Blighting was established by state statute which says that a derelict building is a derelict building and that it is a hardship on the neighborhood because nothing constructive is being done with it.

So by blighting a building, you are just putting into law a recognition of the fact that a building is indeed derelict.

There is a 120-day waiting period during which it is hoped that a redevelopment plan is filed for that building. The redevelopment plan allows Operation Impact, a state agency, to have the right of eminent domain on those properties.

But, in this neighborhood in particular, most of those buildings are blighted under what is known as "friendly blighting." The property owner says to me that they want to rehab their house or that they want to re-do this house for resale. They want some tax abatement or some other incentive to compete with developers in other neighborhoods who have 10 years of tax abatement. By going through the blighting process with Operation Impact, the businesses or buildings in this neighborhood and this ward are able to qualify for that 10 years of tax abatement.

As a further incentive to people who want to buy a blighted building, they can participate in what is called the "for-sale incentive program." This would allow them up to about \$12,500 to bring down the

See INTERVIEW page 10

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In anticipation of the anniversary events, the historic church in Soulard is being completely renovated. Persons who desire to share in this major endeavor are invited to send contributions to Trinity Lutheran Church, 812 Soulard Street, St. Louis, MO 63104.

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Phyllis Young Interview —

Continued from page 8

cost of closing the loan and to pay some points and that sort of thing. That is a real incentive, and it gives us a competitive edge over some of the properties in the county right now.

So, I don't think that blighting is a detrimental process here, although it can be if you have a really reluctant property owner who shows no intent or desire to make improvements and has an outrageous price tag on that building.

Again, Operation Impact can use the right of eminent domain to go in and acquire those properties, but it doesn't mean that the owner doesn't get the fair value of the property.

What happens is that Operation Impact will hire an appraiser, the property owner gets his own appraisal, and also a third appraisal is made. This allows the court to determine what the fair market value is for that property and awards a judgment to the owner.

Renaissance: Are there many buildings in Souldard that would be eligible for blighting?

Alderman Young: It's hard to say, but the actual number is decreasing all the time. The fact that people are rehabbing properties and there just aren't as many vacant properties as there were when some of us came down here 10 years ago, which is great.

Renaissance: Would you care to make a forecast of what Souldard will be like, say five to ten years down the line?

Alderman Young: I hope to see a very nice neighborhood. By that I mean visually attractive. I think that there will continue to be a big economic mix because this is the inner city and that is the way the neighborhood should be.

I would hope that we will have families staying here when they have children, rather than moving to the suburbs.

I think that we will have a very thriving neighborhood. It's a true community in comparison to other places. You know your neighbors, and that makes it sort of like a small town.

Renaissance: What do you find are the advantages of living in Souldard?

Alderman Young: I like the close proximity Souldard has to a lot of the things that I like to do in the city of St. Louis. It's close to downtown for shopping and it's close to the parks.

You can go to Tower Grove Park and take a three-mile run without any problems over there and you can bicycle over there if you want to.

You can easily get to Forest Park and participate in anything that is going on out there. If you want to go to concerts along Grand Blvd., You have easy access to that.

The ball park is close as well as the riverfront, and there's lots to do there.

Another thing that I think is important



PHYLLIS YOUNG

is that Souldard's crime statistics continue to decline. I think that it is a safe place to live.

In Souldard, you know your neighbors. This is a small community and you can have all kinds of friends here and you don't have to worry about making an impression on anybody. You can go out and just do your own thing.

Renaissance: Are there any other programs that you would like to make known to our readers?

Alderman Young: Yes. A program that the city is looking at right now is called Operation Conserv.

One of the problems with city government is that we have all of these services to offer, but nobody really coordinates them.

So what we've done is to hire conservation officers and we are assigning them to specific neighborhoods. The officer's job is to cruise around and look for problems within the neighborhoods so they can be addressed immediately. We realize that to continually strengthen our neighborhoods, some of these problems need to be addressed on a routine and immediate basis. By having someone that is trained and assigned to a particular neighborhood, those needs can be met immediately.

Officers will be trained to do building inspections as well as many other functions that have been assigned to many different departments before and trying to concentrate all that effort into one person's hands for coordination purposes. I think that will make a big difference in all the neighborhoods.

Renaissance: Alderman Young, I'd like to thank you for your time in answering our questions. Good luck in your future plans.

Alderman Young: You're very welcome. It was a pleasure.



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SOULARD SOUND

By the Roving Reporter

What Christmas present would you give to Soulard?

Carolyn Swindell, Nice Person

Those beautiful old light standards we used to have up along the streets. They are 100 years old and gorgeous.



Jeff Thompkins, Marketing Manager

I would give Soulard a wine and cheese shop. It desperately needs one; now we have to drive all the way to Lafayette Square.

Bob Printz, Eclectic Professional Entrepreneur

I would give it a forest along the freeway from the brewery, St. Agatha all the way past the market.



Rod Wright, President of the Soulard Restoration Group

One, funds for an Executive Director and housing office for the Soulard Restoration Group. Two, cheaper prices for shells in the neighborhood. And three, to have all the good softball players move out of Lafayette Square.

What is your favorite Soulard Christmas memory?

Gerri Soderberg,

Gerri's Apartment Prep Service

One of the most memorable Christmases in Soulard was last year at the Christmas Party at my house when we all gathered together after the House Tour and ate and drank and had a great time. We gathered around the piano and sang Christmas carols. It was a gathering of the Soulard people and it was very friendly, very open — it was just beautiful.



C. C. Everley, Contract Administrator for the Department of Defense

My favorite Soulard Christmas memory is the first Christmas we spent in our house right after it was rehabilitated. We moved in and were able to decorate the whole block and move in a 12 ft. high tree.



Bill Wakefield, Project Engineer

That was last year. We were on the Christmas Parlour Tour. We had about 800 people come through the house. That made us really feel a part of Soulard. That we were truly accepted and people really appreciated us, our house and our neighborhood. We really felt like part of the community after the tour.



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In Historic Souldard

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Hostel Happenings

by Pete Grace

There was a lot of activity during September and October, with people from 17 states and 25 countries represented. Among the countries: Portugal, South Africa, Scotland, Taiwan R.O.C., Israel and Argentina. In fact, no part of the world was unrepresented.

Tom, Sheela and their two children took a 10-day vacation to Isle Royale, Lake Superior, Michigan and left the hostel in the capable hands of neighbors. I wonder if the Cochran's stayed in hostels?

By the beginning of September, more than 2,700 overnights had been registered at the hostel... and the hostel staff hoped to beat the record of 3,000 by the end of the month. In fact, it was a very busy month indeed — and a new record total of 3,168 overnights was logged for the year!

The good word about the Huckleberry Finn Hostel — and St. Louis — is obviously getting around the world.

Interesting recent guests included:

- A middle aged man from Hungary who was attending an international conference on radioactive chemistry.
- Two women from Switzerland, architectural designers who enjoyed exploring the Arch, the Wainwright Building, the Old Courthouse and other area sights.
- Many British exchange students on the road with Greyhound bus passes.

— A steady flow of Germans with "Drive-Away Cars" roaming the country.

— A young student from Japan, Hiroki Marodome, bicycling from California to Boston.

— A student from Indianapolis also bicycling across America to raise money for Muscular Dystrophy research.

— Several hitchhikers and motorcyclists, including a young woman from Japan riding a Yamaha who met a young Japanese man riding a Honda. They shared several meals and toured the city together.

— Half a dozen AMTRAK travellers on a 30-day unlimited travel train pass.

— Several families, including a nice couple from Israel with a one-year-old son who loved the Cochran's old and shaggy dogs.

— Three visitors from France who stayed for five days to "see everything in this old French town!"

Finally, the "interesting guests" that hit closest to home (Souldard): According to Tom, they hosted a boy scout bicycling troop from Ballwin, Mo. (where is that??) — that was here for an overnight "urban experience."

Neat! Perhaps we Souldardians should organize an overnight to the Ballwin-West County area for a "suburban experience."

We could hike along Manchester road (good luck)... sleep on Grandpa Pidgeon's parking lot... and eat at one of more than 100 (conservative) fast food restaurants in close proximity.

AND, as a real taste of the suburban experience we could stay over until Monday morning and then join the millions of other commuters in their daily struggle to get downtown!

Until next issue...

Amateur Rehabber

(Continued from page 7)

reborn as your home.

It can still be done! you do not have to settle for someone else's visions. Create your own!

Whether you do the work yourself or hire contractors is not as important as the idea of taking something old and tired and decrepit and making something useful, new, and comfortable — sort of recycling on a grand scale.

Speaking for myself, I do not know of any feeling of pride and accomplishment as strong as that when I see my beckoning, brightly-lit house from the night sidewalk. And I did it myself.

You can make a difference! "Coming Home to Souldard" is much more than a trendy slogan. There's plenty of room for

many more in our little town in the city. I love Souldard.

I love the amalgamation of lifestyles, the funky people, the friendly pubs, the Market, the liveliness of this area in general, and, of course, the gorgeous federal and Victorian streetscapes that attracted me in the first place.

Most of all, I love the friendships that life here has brought, and the personal growth and experience life as a Souldard rehabber has wrought.

I would not live anywhere else in this city, because no other place holds this same wonderful, roiling chemistry.

I chose, and continue to choose, to live right here.

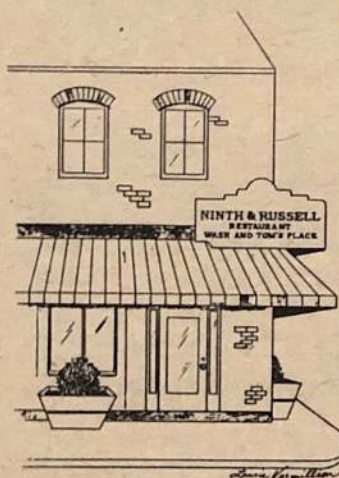
Goodbye, Amateur Rehabber fans; I am home.

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In Historic Soulard



SRG volunteers and market personnel pose for a picture after the Soulard Market Facelift, held during September before the House Tour.

Free Trees and Planting Service Offered

Soulard homeowners and businesspeople can now help beautify the neighborhood at no cost to themselves by taking advantage of a tree planting program conducted by the Soulard Restoration Group and the City of St. Louis Forestry Division.

The program, which aims to enrich Soulard by 500 street trees by next spring, is entirely free of charge. All a property owner needs to do to have a tree measuring at least two inches in diameter planted in a grassy area or well created in a brick sidewalk is fill out the form below granting permission and send it to SRG's beautification committee.

If you'd like a two/two-and-a-half caliper (trunk diameter) street tree planted in front of your home or business, please fill out this form and mail it to:

Beautification Committee
Soulard Restoration Group
P.O. Box 13312, Soulard Station
St. Louis, MO 63157

As the property owner, I allow the City of St. Louis and the Soulard Restoration Group to plant a street tree(s) on my property. I understand that this may require the Soulard Restoration Group or its contractor to remove pavement to create a tree well. This work will be done **free of charge** and I will not be billed for this work.

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C O N S T R U C T I O N

Seasonal Delights Featured on Holiday Parlour Tour

Continued from page 1

After all that excitement, get your oohs and aahs ready for a trolley ride through the Anheuser-Busch Christmas light display. The display features billions and billions (actually, half-a-million) of lights in nifty configurations, including the amazing Christmas tree that changes colors from red to white.

Animal and beer lovers will get a special treat from the stop at the Clydesdale stables.

Organ and flute Christmas music by some of Souldard's finest musicians will greet visitors as they gather at the starting place of the tour, Jesus Church, at the corner of 12th and Victor streets. Tours will begin at 1 p.m. each day; the last tour will leave at 5:30 p.m.

Tickets are \$6 on the day of the tour. Advance tickets are only \$5 and may be purchased at any Ticketmaster location (all Famous-Barr, Dillards and Regal Sports stores and Scott Air Force Base), the Eugene Field House and Toy Museum, or by calling the Souldard Restoration Group at 771-5563.

The tour is underwritten by a grant from Anheuser-Busch Companies; proceeds benefit the SRG and its neighborhood restoration and beautification projects.

Step Up St. Louis, a community service organization, will donate up to \$750 in matching funds from the tour to purchase trash cans for the neighborhood.

Here are some of the highlights of this year's tour:

- A former 4-family flat built in the 1860s that has been rehabbed into a modern, friendly home for a professional

couple. The lady of the house loves Christmas and she collects ornaments and decorations on her travels year 'round to festoon the home in December.

- Another former multi-family building that was lovingly renovated by the owners. When they converted the former coal-burning fireplace to one that burned wood, the owners designed and built a new mantle out of scraps of molding. The owners also enclosed a stairwell that had been located on the exterior of the house; the all-brick stairwell provides an interesting architectural element in this eclectic home.

- An apartment shared by two advertising specialists who live so close to their Fortune 500 employers they can walk to work. Their favorite room is the hexagonal-shaped sunroom with huge windows, exposed brick and plants, plants, plants. Decorating on the cheap for these young professionals means festooning the walls by wrapping the pictures in Christmas paper and tying them with ribbons.

- An open, contemporary rehab featuring two trees decorated by the owner's sister, a professional florist. One tree will be decorated with fruit ornamentation; the other with the owner's collection of Christmas ornaments in a variety of animal shapes.

- The owner of a lovely, Victorian restored townhouse dresses up her home each year with a 14-foot Christmas tree and an assortment of garlands, teddy bears and elaborately dressed and coiffed dolls. Her kitchen Christmas tree steals the show with baby's breath, ecru bows and white lights.



Carolyn Swindell's restored Victorian townhouse will be featured on this year's Souldard Holiday Parlour Tour. Carolyn enjoys decorating for Christmas using her collection of teddy bears, elegantly dressed dolls and elaborate decorations.

- The house-as-hobby designed and permanently in the process of renovation by Souldard's original eclectic entrepreneur. The owner of this former 4-family flat works on his house when he wants to, which means off and on for the past 11 years.

The home features unusual architectural pieces salvaged from St. Louis demolished buildings, including a beautiful wood floor made of pieces from the old Mangelsdorf Seed Company and the Masonic Temple.

For Christmas, the owner places a 14-foot tree in his dramatic two-story stairwell and invites friends over to hang 1,200-plus ornaments, including costume jewelry, seashells and heirlooms from a great-grandmother.

So forget the fact that there are only 21 shopping days left till Christmas and indulge your senses at the Souldard Holiday Parlour Tour. After all, Judy Garland says in the movie, "Meet Me in St. Louis," "It's so filled with the spirit of Christmas!"

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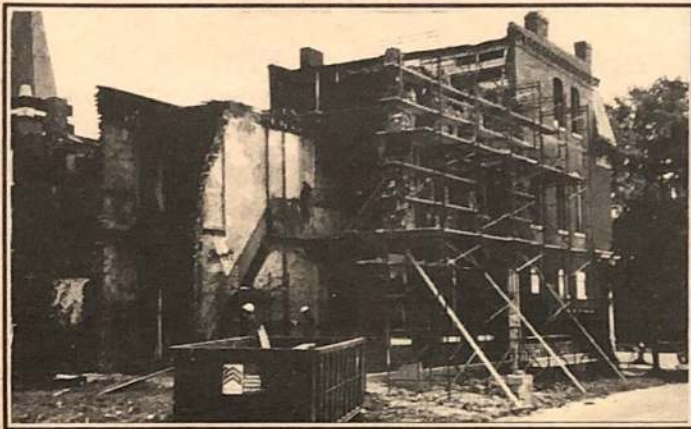
Allen • Avenue

*** Restaurant ***

825 Allen Ave. in Old Souldard

Neighborhood Fabric

This Victorian multi-family at 1829-31 South 9th Street languished vacant and crumbling for decades before BSB Development purchased and renovated it last fall and winter. The extent of the decay required that the entire rear portion of the structure be razed and rebuilt. In doing so, BSB converted the ten, tiny, two-room flats, standard working-class family-sized quarters in the 1880s, to five spacious, light-filled apartments for the 1980s.



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John Edele
 Ed (Cork) Woelm

1822 So. Broadway
 St. Louis, MO 63104
 Est. 1912

421-2131



NORTH HUNAN CHINESE RESTAURANT

**CARRY OUT
CALL
421-5260**

**FREE DELIVERY
CALL
421-0608**

DAILY LUNCH SPECIALS

**MON. - FRI.
11 AM - 3 PM**

DINNER

**MON. - THURS.
4 PM - 9 PM**

**FRI. - SAT.
4 PM - 10 PM**

FREE DELIVERY
9.50 MINIMUM

BEEF	
#39 Green Pepper Beef	6.75
#40 Beef with Broccoli	6.75
#41 Mongolian Beef	6.75
#42 *Beef with Garlic	6.75
#43 Snow Pea Beef	6.75
#44 *Beef with Hot Pepper Sauce	6.75
#45 Garlic Beef	6.95
#46 House Special Beef (Mandarin Style)	7.75

SEAFOOD	
#47 Shrimp with Cashewnuts	7.75
#48 Sweet and Sour Shrimp	7.75
#49 Shrimp with Lobster Sauce	7.75
#50 Sliced Prawns with Broccoli	7.75
#51 Sliced Prawns with Snow Peas	7.75
#52 *Sliced Prawns with Garlic Sauce	7.95
#53 *Shrimp with Hot Pepper Sauce	7.95
#54 Garlic Shrimp	7.95
#55 Three Ingredients	7.95
#56 Garlic Scallops	8.75
#57 *Scallops with Garlic Sauce	5.00
#58 Scallops with Broccoli	5.00
#59 Sautéed Shrimp with Scallops	5.00

Vegetables	
Braised Broccoli and Mushrooms with Oyster Sauce	5.00
Buddhist Delight	5.00
*Broccoli with Garlic Sauce (with meat)	5.00
*Bean Curd Szechuan Style	5.00
*Hunan Vegetarian Delight	5.00

Chow Mein	
(With Crispy Noodles)	5.50
Chop Suey	
(With Steamed Rice)	6.00
	6.20

Egg Foo Young	
#50 Pork, Beef or Chicken	2 patties 3.00 3 Patties 4.20
#51 Shrimp	3.20 4.50
#52 Special (Mixed Meats)	3.75 5.00
	4.20 5.50

Lo Mein	
(Soft Noodle)	5.50
#53 Pork, Chicken or Ham	6.00
#54 Beef	6.50
#55 Shrimp	
#56 Special	

Fried Rice	
#57 Pork, Beef or Chicken	Half 2.25 Whole 3.75
#58 Shrimp	2.40 4.00
#59 Special (Mixed Meats)	2.50 4.25
	2.75 5.00

#70 Pork, Chicken, Ham or Vegetable	
#71 Beef	
#72 Shrimp	
#73 Special (Mixed Meats)	

APPETIZERS	
Egg Roll (1)	1.00
Fried Won Ton (6)	1.95
Crab Rangoon (6)	2.75
Potstickers (6)	3.00
Fantail Shrimp (4)	3.25
B.B.Q. Spare ribs (4)	3.75
Appetizer Combo	
Egg Roll (2)	
Fantail Shrimp (2)	
B.B.Q. Spare ribs (2)	
Crab Rangoon (2)	6.25
Fried Wonton	

SOUPS	
(Served in evening only)	
Egg Drop Soup	1.20
Wonton Soup	1.20
*Hot and Sour Soup	1.20
Vegetarian Soup	2.50
San Shan Soup	3.75

PORK	
#20 Sweet & Sour Pork	6.25
#21 Double Sautéed Pork	6.25
#22 *Shredded Pork with Garlic Sauce	6.25
#23 *Hot Braised Pork	6.25
#24 *Hunan Pork	6.25
#25 Moo Shu Pork	6.95

CHICKEN	
#26 *Hunan Chicken	6.25
#27 Empress Chicken	6.25
#28 *Diced Chicken with Hot Pepper Sauce	6.25
#29 *Hot Braised Chicken	6.25
#30 *Sliced Chicken with Garlic Sauce	6.25
#31 Almond Chicken	6.25
#32 Crispy Cashewnut Chicken	6.25
#33 Sweet and Sour Chicken	6.25
#34 Moo Goo Gai Pan	6.25
#35 Cashew Chicken	6.25
#36 Sliced Chicken with Broccoli	6.25
#37 Diced Chicken and Shrimp	6.75
#38 Princess Chicken	7.75

**FREE
1989
Calendars**

421-0688

1728 SOUTH BROADWAY

**1 Block East of 7th Street
Between Lafayette & Geyer**