



The Soulard Renaissance

"The Neighborhood Magazine of Historic Soulard"

VOL. XVIII — ISSUE 2

Celebrating the Renaissance of Soulard

SPRING 1993

"SOULARD FOR SALE" SET FOR MAY 23

Are you tired of spending hours of your valuable time stuck in Highway 40 traffic? Are you tired of paying rent and getting eaten alive at tax time? Are you tired of living in a vanilla suburban sub-division with no character or semblance of neighborhood feel?

If you answered yes to any of those questions, why not check out the exciting housing opportunities in the city's hottest residential neighborhood—Soulard. "Soulard For Sale" will be held on Sunday, May 23, 1993, from 12:00 noon to 4:00 p.m. Admission is free to the public.

"Soulard offers some of the best housing values in St. Louis," says John Durnell, coordinator of the 5th annual event. "Only in Soulard can you combine the ambience of buildings constructed by early settlers of St. Louis with the meticulous craftsmanship of 20th century rehabbers and restorationists."



This 1840s French Creole style house is one of many renovated homes which will be featured at "Soulard For Sale."



Soulard homes offer history and charm inside and out.

For more information
about
SOULARD FOR SALE
CALL
771-5563



Soulard's century-old streetscapes are evocative of urban Europe.

OTHER ITEMS INSIDE ...

TALENT IN SOULARD
SOULARD GARDENING
NEW SOULARD BUSINESSES
NEIGHBORHOOD FABRIC
RESTAURANT REVIEW
RECYCLING IN SOULARD
THE STARS OF SOULARD
SOULARD BEYOND 2000
"BORN TO LEASE"
THE "BUFFALO BILL" HOUSE
AARP HELP FOR SENIORS
THE 1896 TORNADO & MORE

Prospective home buyers may pick up a map showing which homes are open and general information about Soulard at the corner of 9th and Emmet Streets, just two blocks south of Soulard Market. The map will contain a list of each home's amenities and the asking price. This is not a guided tour, so participants may choose which homes they wish to visit.

Local realtors say buyers are well-positioned to profit from the current housing market. "Interest rates on 30-year mortgages are at their lowest mark in 20 years," says Alan Richardson of Richardson Realty. "This makes Soulard even more affordable for the first-time home buyer."

Over 15 homes will be open for your inspection on the tour date. Neighborhood residents will be available to answer questions regarding the area.



See Victorian splendor in "Ripple Row."

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Soulard reawakens each spring as if from a dream, her pulse quickening as temperatures rise. The pear trees bloom like fluffy white clouds, and soon come the flowers in succession: crocus, daffodils, tulips, iris, and roses. Neighbors emerge from their houses as if from cocoons; I've seen more of my fellow Soulandians in the last few weeks than during the entire winter season. The sidewalks are full of residents, visitors, and even real estate agents. Thank God for spring; it's my favorite time of the year.

Here in Soulard, spring heralds the "Soulard For Sale" open house tour and Operation Brightside's "Blitz" Day (ah, spring cleaning!) and gardeners galore, and rehabbers armed with their saws, ladders, hammers, and paint brushes. In this issue of *The Renaissance*, we've tried to capture some of this spring energy.

I enjoy hearing various perspectives on the neighborhood and seeing Soulard through fresh eyes. Recently, my 13-year-old second cousin, Sarah, stayed with Carla and me for the weekend while her parents were out of town. Sarah hails from the quintessential suburb, Ballwin, and while she spoke little in direct terms of Soulard, she did allow that it was quite different from her home, using the quintessential teen phrase, "It's weird."

As we drove Sarah back to the 'burbs, Carla and I both were startled to feel like we were driving through a movie

set; it was—well—*weird*. When we got out of the car at Sarah's house, we encountered her father, lawnmower in hand (I swear I'm not making this up!), discussing with a couple of his neighbors the best ways to accomplish the greenest possible lawn and the easiest eradication of crabgrass. God bless them—it was beyond surreal.

On our way to the highway out of the 'burbs, Carla and I passed bland streets of vinyl-clad sub-divisions, then several areas of freshly destroyed forest: old growth trees up-ended, earth-moving equipment parked for the weekend in the mud. No doubt a new crop of "Hunter's Glens" and "Whispering Creeks" is about to rise from this rubble. I got more depressed when I then remarked to Carla, "Just think, over half of all Americans now live in the suburbs."

My spirits finally lifted as we exited Interstate 44 and arrived back home in Soulard. For all its warts and minor annoyances, life in Soulard honestly offers something that my cousins and their friends just don't know: a sense of permanence, of diversity, of history, a sense of *soul*. City living in areas like Soulard is ideal for some of the other 50% of Americans—the ones who long for a sense of "place" and of real community. Perhaps this life is right for you, too. For our part, my wife and I had had our fill of suburban sprawl; we were happy to be back home.

—Jay Gibbs



NOTES from the BRICK HOUSE

by Sedg Mead

We are now well into 1993. Several events have occurred that have an impact on the Soulard Restoration Group (SRG):

1. Phyllis Young was reelected the 7th Ward Alderman.

2. Freeman Bosley was elected mayor.

We are looking forward to working with them and plan to invite them to meetings of the SRG in the near future.

3. Richard Eaton has led the new committee that is dealing with the Information Center and a proposal will be presented to the Board and the Membership in the near future. He has an objective of completing whatever is decided on by this fall, when the National Trust for Historical Preservation will be in town.

4. A proposal was submitted to the Southwestern Bell/City of St. Louis Neighborhood Growth Grant by Steve Botts, Rod Wright, Bob Kraiberg, and Hilda Willman. We are requesting a grant to buy a golf cart and provide operating funds for our crime prevention watch program where off-duty City police officers patrol the neighborhood. Many thanks to Steve, Rod, Bob, and Hilda for putting together a proposal in a very short period of time!

5. Our new editor of *The Renaissance*, Jay Gibbs, and his staff have put together a very successful first edition—Mardi Gras 1993. Anyone interested in submitting articles for future editions should contact Jay.

6. While the weather was cold, Mardi Gras was again successful. Mary Lipic did a great job at getting the SRG float organized.

All in all, it appears that the SRG is off to a successful new year!



The Soulard Renaissance

The Soulard Renaissance has a circulation of 8,000 and is published by the Soulard Restoration Group.

It is distributed to Soulard residents, to Soulard and St. Louis area businesses, and to our advertisers.

Call Jay Gibbs 241-3894 for editorial information. Call Jeanne Weber 771-8428 regarding advertising opportunities, rates and schedules.

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Soulard Restoration Group

Do you love living in Soulard?

Would you like to meet more of your neighbors?

... then membership in the

SOULARD RESTORATION GROUP

is for you!

The group consists of homeowners, renters and local businesses. Meetings are held the first Wednesday of each month in the school hall at Trinity Lutheran Church, 8th & Soulard, at 7:30 p.m.

SOULARD LOSES A FRIEND BILL KING — 1942-1993

On February 8, 1993, Soulard lost a friend when Bill King died suddenly of a dissected aorta.

Bill was an owner and principal in Mary King and Associates, Inc., one of the leading real estate brokers in the city, and specializes in Soulard in addition to other city neighborhoods. Mary King, Bill's wife, started their firm in 1989, and Bill joined her in 1990.

Bill and Mary met in Wichita, Kansas in 1972, where they worked together in a hospital. They married in 1975 and moved to St. Louis in 1982 when Bill became Director of Data Processing at Jewish Hospital in the Central West End.

In St. Louis, Mary became involved in selling residential real estate, working for both Coldwell Banker and ReMax Realtors. Bill became interested in the business and joined Mary for a while as a sales associate. She became an assistant manager and found she liked running a sales operation. He found that he liked the operations and computer end of the business.



Bill King

When they started their own business, they chose Soulard as the place for their office, and they moved to a home in Benton Park on Illinois Street. In March 1992, they moved to their new and expanded office above the Sidney Street Cafe.

Bill once said about their business, "Mary is the boss, but I have a lot of input." It says a lot about Bill, who

was unassuming but quietly competent. Bill will be particularly remembered for his creative ads in various publications, including *The Soulard Renaissance*.

Bill had many friends in Soulard and enjoyed the neighborhood very much. Like many of us, he just liked old buildings. He particularly enjoyed eating at local restaurants, including Soulard's, Tucker's, and Mike and Min's.

For anyone wishing to remember Bill, contributions may be made to his favorite charity, Disabled American Veterans, National Service Office, 1520 Market, St. Louis, MO 63103.

A WORD FROM PHYLLIS YOUNG ALDERMAN, 7th WARD

You may have noticed that tree-trimming and removal of the dead trees has occurred in Pontiac Park. Plans are to plant 24 new trees in the park. Most will be along the perimeter of the walkway through the park. Three new trees will be on the playground itself with two additional trees on the ledge between the playground and the basketball court. The payment for the new trees will come out of money allocated to our ward from the 1993 St. Louis Works program



The AIDS FOUNDATION OF ST. LOUIS recently announced that Clementine's raised more money for the Foundation in the 1992 pledge walk—FROM ALL WALKS OF LIFE—than any other bar in the region. I was extremely pleased to be a part of the effort.

I have walked with Clementine's support for the past four years, and I plan to do so this year. However, this year there is a challenge! Denny, the bartender, and I are competing to see who raises the most. Denny won last year. You can help the Foundation and either Denny or me by sending your check made out to FROM ALL WALKS OF LIFE to Denny McKonkey, Clementine's, 2001 Menard, St. Louis, Missouri 63104 or to Phyllis Young, 905 Lami St., St. Louis, Missouri 63104. (I'm playing fair, Denny. I included your address!)

The WALK takes place on June 13 in Forest Park. It's six miles long, and it's for a good cause. Please be generous and help us show St. Louis that Soulard supports the Foundation.

In 1988, I was personally involved in developing a new program for designated neighborhoods, Operation ConServ. This

program was created to make City Government responsive to the special needs of its diverse neighborhoods through a single contact person, the ConServ Officer. Soulard was fortunate to be one of only 21 neighborhoods throughout the City that was designated as a ConServ area and has benefitted greatly from this program's services.

The ConServ Officer for the Soulard neighborhood is Mary Hart. Mary works closely with neighborhood residents and organizations to coordinate concentrated services in the form of code enforcement, removal of weeds and debris, and removal of derelict vehicles. She is also the contact person for implementing special activities related to beautification, education, housing, marketing, recreation and safety in our neighborhood.

In the area of housing, the ConServ Officer works closely with the neighborhood based non-profit housing corporation. The Soulard Community Housing Corporation may acquire property for redevelopment and acquire and hold problem properties that have become nuisances in the neighborhood. Currently, the Housing Corporation owns the property located at 803 through 815 Allen Avenue. Plans are underway to develop this property in two phases. Phase One will be the development of three single-family townhomes at 803, 807, and 809 Allen and Phase Two will be the development of three "creole" cottages at 811 through 815 Allen Avenue. The remaining parcel, 805 Allen, had already been rehabbed as three rental units.

The goal of the ConServ program is to make residents confident about the future of their neighborhoods. Our ConServ Officer can coordinate the various city services needed in our neighborhood and I encourage you to call her with your service requests. Mary can be reached at 622-4628 between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.

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GREAT PLACE FOR STEAKS!!!

—recommended by Jeanne Weber

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KATHY BARKEY

Graphic Artist & Soulard Rehabber

What do you get when you cross a graphic artist with a rehabber? A Soulard star named Kathy Barkey. It is apparent in her work and in the preservation of her home on South 11th Street that rehabber-Kathy and artist-Kathy both possess the capacity to visualize possibilities as well as revel in the process of creation.



Kathy enjoys working in her at-home studio.

To understand what graphic art is, you only need to look around at the magazines on the coffee table, the books on your shelves or posters on the walls. The coloring, typeface, ads and illustrations are chosen and placed by design to have a desired effect on the viewer. If you believe, as I did, that this was just a matter of being handed a few photos, some copy and a role of scotch tape, think again. An inspired Kathy has her own unique ideas.

Currently on assignment with the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, Kathy is responsible for a new look to the *Sunday Magazine*. She does the layout and artwork for the cover story and other feature articles. For a piece on St. Louis street names she took a board-game approach, com-

plete with directions, challenges and penalties. A January 17 cover promoting an article on women and AIDS won praise from the highest *Post* echelon.

In addition to the assignment with the paper, Kathy is in demand as a free-lance artist. She has designed promotional material for courses of-

fered by the American Red Cross and the manuals for the courses. In a series of six books for the organization, Kathy chose pictures, illustrations and sometimes copy for a fresh and lively approach to what were formerly sterile text books.

A native of St. Louis, Kathy has lived in Soulard for 13 years. Her talent was evident early. When she was seven, one of her paintings was chosen as an entry in a children's art fair in Japan. Beyond the pleasure of home projects and gardening, she enjoys city neighborhoods with their unique shops and ethnic restaurants, being with friends, and float trips.

When I asked Kathy what she'd like to do in the future, she replied without hesitation, "Rehab another house!"

Soulard Garden Club is Growing

In the last couple of months the Soulard Garden Club has formed. Co-founder Carol Brayton is busy chartering the organization: "This is a real garden club; there are only four other such clubs in the St. Louis area."

Their mission is to "help beautify Soulard," specifically to plant flowers around street trees and to plant a flower garden along 9th Street near Soulard Market, for starters. The group also takes advantage of quantity discounts on orders for home gardens of its members.

The Soulard Garden Club meets on the second and fourth Saturdays of each month at 2:00 p.m., at the beautiful courtyard/garden of Molly's Bar, 816 Geyer Ave. (weather permitting), or in Molly's Bar second floor.

Call Carol Brayton at 436-0395 or Ann Chance at 351-1771 for more information. The club has over 15 members already and is seeking more. Give it look, gardeners!



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Saturday, May 22 - 3-7 Hot Club Canary



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In Soulard...because we are the only brokerage in Soulard selling ONLY Soulard! We specialize in the neighborhood and know it intimately.

Selling Soulard...because our track record is consistently the best in Soulard! 19 Soulard homes sold in 1991. 26 homes sold in 1992, from fixer uppers to Mansions! To 1st time buyers, relocaters, empty nesters, local renters, and more... And, in 1993 we top the deck again! As of the end of March, 8 properties sold or under contract so far...

806 Soulard — \$82,500	2624 S. 11th — \$139,000	820 Ann — \$88,900
1852 S. 10th — \$110,000	2726 S. 13th — \$78,000	1829 S. 10th — \$110,000
1017 Lafayette — \$89,900	2637 S. 12th — \$139,900	



2637 S. 12th

Over 3000 sq. ft. with this superbly restored 2nd Empire Mansion! Pocket doors, wood floors, original trim, master suite, large kitchen, garage, great position! **\$139,900**



1230 S. Sidney

Neat 2 bedroom townhouse. Contemporary rehab with atrium, skylight, wood floor, w/ stove, pretty yard, 2 car parking and huge closets. Shows well! **\$76,000**



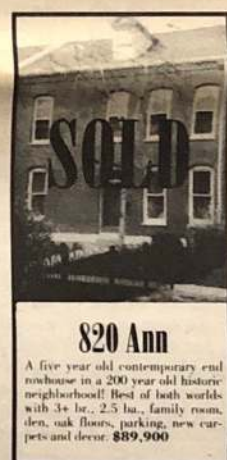
1827 S. 9th

Pre-civil war New Orleans style home loaded with character and history on 9th near The Abbey! Fantastic opportunity to buy genuine history, superbly updated and restored! **\$124,900**



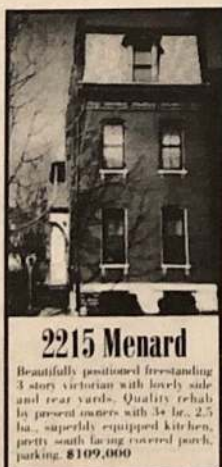
720 Lami

1st time buyers dream! Totally rehabbed 3 story, 3br/1.5, townhouse with off street parking, all systems updated for easy maintenance, great space and light for just over \$70,000.



820 Ann

A five year old contemporary end rowhouse in a 200 year old historic neighborhood! Best of both worlds with 3+ br., 2.5 ba., family room, den, oak floors, parking, new carpets and decor. **\$89,900**



2215 Menard

Beautifully positioned freestanding 3 story Victorian with lovely side and rear yards. Quality rehab by present owners with 3+ br., 2.5 ba., superbly equipped kitchen, pretty south facing covered porch, parking. **\$109,000**



2352 S. 10th

Look out bargain hunters! Rehabbed 3 story Victorian townhouse with 3br., 2ba., including Full Master Suite, eat in kitchen, 2nd floor laundry, at less than \$80,000! (Owner Broker)



2208 S. 9th

If you like contemporary, this one's dynamite! Gourmet's kitchen, jacuzzi tub, 2 master suites, neat porches, loads of light, closet space. Great position on the park!



2310 13th

Authentic Soulard style! A rehabbed 3+ br., 2.5 ba., with all the original character retained! Landscaped yard, screened porch, unique kitchen, wood floors, charm galore! **\$119,900**

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Cherokee Cave Revisited

by Robert Mazrim

Many of those residing on the south side of St. Louis are well-acquainted with the portion of the city's history which lies beneath their feet. The limestone bedrock on which the city was constructed is riddled with naturally occurring fissures, sinkholes, and caves. Most of the accessible passages were utilized during

remaining illicit entrances, and to attempt to compare the many cave fables that circulated above ground to the physical reality that lay 40 feet below the city's floor. As it turns out, the cave is as rich and strange as the stories imagine it to be. A short videotaped documentary has been produced from footage recorded on the visit.



the nineteenth century by early brewing operations. The year-round cool temperatures were ideal for keeping beer chilled during the lagering process.

Most of these subterranean chambers were abandoned during prohibition and have subsequently been sealed or collapsed. The most storied of these passages remains Cherokee Cave, located beneath Cherokee and DeM- enil streets.

Cherokee is one of the larger cave systems beneath the city. It is unique in that it has seen a strange variety of occupations during its history, as well as its prehistory. The cave was utilized by three different breweries during the middle and late nineteenth century, notably the infamous Lemp family operation. Prior to its occupation by brewers, however, most of its passageways were filled with flood-deposited mud. This mud contained the skeletal remains of several species of extinct mammals, including the peccary, that roamed the bluffs on which St. Louis now rests—that was 20,000 years ago. The bones were discovered in the late 1940s as a portion of the cave was reopened as a Meramec Caverns-inspired show cave.

During the summer of 1991, a small expedition visited Cherokee Cave in order to seal

The cave's future remains uncertain. The passages were found to be littered with debris left behind by recent explorers. Several known bone fragments preserved in the mud deposits had been stolen. Rumors of development of the Lemp Brewery complex circulate almost bi-monthly. If any such plans do materialize, they would almost certainly affect the contents, if not the remaining structure of the cave. (About one-fourth of its passages were destroyed during the construction of Interstate 55.)

Cherokee Cave is now completely off limits to visitors. Unfortunately, the only way to curtail further damage to the cave and its contents (and to avoid injury-related litigation that could permanently seal the passages) has been to deny all access requests made to current owners of cave entrances. Hopefully, the contents of the cave, which include ancient bones, brewery architecture, and the remains of the Lemp's private subterranean theater, will be preserved by recent measures.

In the meantime, if you would like to see what the cave looks like, you may order a copy of the 25-minute documentary by mail. The cost is \$20.00 plus \$2.00 shipping and handling. Send a check to Mnemonic Images, PO Box 457, Louisiana, MO 63353.



PLANT SALE TO BENEFIT SOULARD COMMUNITY GARDEN

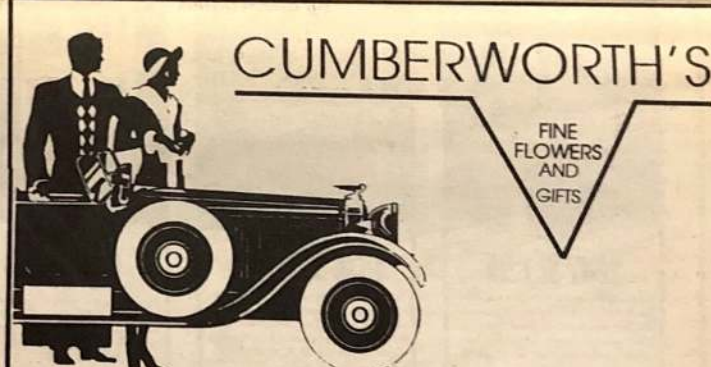
The Souland Community Garden is conducting a plant sale on May 23 during the Souland For Sale event. This sale of perennials and annual bedding plants will fund projects planned for the garden on 9th Street between Lami and Barton.

Local gardeners are invited to donate any surplus plants from their spring divisions or seed starts. Also available will be nursery quality plants ready for your garden.

Last year, Souland Community Garden was awarded the Blue Ribbon for best overall garden in the 1992 Urban Gardening competition sponsored by Gateway To Gardening Association, the Missouri Botanical Garden, and University Extension; and the 2nd place Operation Brightside regional award.

Now in its second year, the garden is planting a variety of ornamental, fruit and evergreen trees and shrubs and installing a butterfly garden, in addition to doubling the number of household garden beds. Plans also include brick walks and a gazebo.

Visitors to Souland during the Souland For Sale event, neighbors, gardeners, and anyone interested in seeing how Souland neighbors work together are invited to drop by the garden on May 23.



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Billy Peek: 5/1,14,15,28,29...
Souland Blues Band 5/7,21,22...

Two New Bakeries Are Delicious Additions to the Soulard Area

Two new bakeries have opened in the last few months in Soulard's vicinity. They are both located along Russell Boulevard, one at 9th St. and Russell in the heart of Soulard, and the other at Mississippi Ave. and Russell, a block west of the Soulard neighborhood. These two establishments have divergent origins and specialties, and both are worth mouth-watering visits.



PAN DORA BAKERY

by Bob Scudieri

Where can you find fresh fruit tarts, Irish whiskey pound cake, maple walnut muffins and chocolate murder cookies? Near Soulard, of course — at new Pan Dora Bakery. Newly situated on the south side of Russell Avenue, between Mississippi and Gravois, the bakery is named after Dora Kemoll, the grandmother of sisters Julie Hale and Kate Berger.

Kate, a former magazine editor (*Golden Bread*) in Austin, Texas, joined sister Julie to start Pan Dora. Julie initiated the business after having dreamed one day opening her own bakery.

As a young mother, Julie began baking out of her kitchen, using organic grains, which she milled fresh with the stone mill given to her by her husband.

For years she sought commercial baking equipment at garage sales and auctions, preparing for the time she would have her own bakery. The building in which Pan Dora operates was rehabbed by Kate and Julie's father.

The business began by supplying caterers and restaurants with baked goods such as rolls, muffins, breads and cakes. Julie's very first customer was the old Tivoli Movie Theater in University City. Today's customers include Patty Long Cafe, Brandts in University City, and the St. Louis Art Museum Cafe.

One of the specialties of Pan Dora is focaccia—traditional Italian flatbread. At Pan Dora the focaccia (pronounced "fo-ká-chi-a") comes in a variety of toppings: herb, cheese and tomato or eggplant.

The small Italian cookies called biscotti are also a treat worth tasting. And, the chocolate murder cookies get their name from the three different types of chocolate used in their preparation.

But the rare treat offered by the Pan Dora Bakery is the Bakers Bread. This prize for the palate takes 36 hours to make and was developed by Julie herself. If you enjoy the smell of fresh baked bread; if you must have your toast with coffee in the morning; if you will lose your heart to the Bakers Bread of Pan Dora.

And when you stop by to sample these Soulard delicacies, say "hello" to Julie and Kate's mom, Joann Kemoll Berger—who now joins her daughters as their biggest booster and sometimes counterperson.



SOULARD DELI & BAKERY

by Tonca Yarbrough

The Soulard Deli and Bakery opened Mardi Gras weekend at 2100 S. Ninth Street. Kudos to owners Jerry Rice and Donna Graham for their creative transformation of this corner storefront to a bright and cheerful enhancement to the neighborhood. Look for the striped awning at the southeast corner of 9th Street and Russell Blvd.

The Deli offers a variety of sandwiches, salads, soft drinks, teas and flavored coffees. Bakery items include pastries, doughnuts and homemade bread. To the great pleasure of this ice cream junkie, sundaes, floats and custom-mixed ice cream treats are also on tap. Meats and cheeses may be purchased by the ounce or the pound, and as their menu boasts, "No sandwich too big, no party too small."

Jerry and Donna are not newcomers to the area. Jerry has been a business owner and resident of Soulard



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much more.
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since 1979. Donna moved out-of-state for a time, returned often for a "Soulard fix," and now lives a few blocks from the Deli. Donna makes jewelry and Jerry is a talented woodworker. Donna bakes and Jerry is a free-lance philosopher.

Have coffee and doughnuts over the morning paper. Pick up treats for the office or a summer patio supper. Stop in for lunch. Don't miss the Soulard Deli and Bakery.



No Sandwich Too Big, No Party Too Small.

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Sat & Sun 8 am-2 pm

THE ST. LOUIS WASHINGTON BLUES REORGANIZED

by Doug Harding

The St. Louis Washington Blues was a Missouri Militia company in St. Louis very much like the National Guard today. Organized in 1857, they were made up mostly of Irish citizens of St. Louis, several being residents of the Soulard neighborhood. They soon became one of the finest companies in St. Louis, but when the Civil War broke out, they disbanded. Some went south and joined the Confederate Army and others joined the Union. Very few survived to return to St. Louis when the war ended.

In 1990, at John D. McGurks, a group of Civil War living history buffs met and reorganized the old company. Our purpose is to educate ourselves and the public on what it was like to live in St. Louis in the 1850s and be in the militia.

We recreate the military and social aspects of the original company, even using their original constitution and by-laws. Soulard is well-represented today with several members of the Washington Blues living in the neighborhood.

The St. Louis Washington meets once a month in the St. Louis area. They drill at Foust County Park in Chesterfield, Lafayette and Tower Grove Parks. They were the honor guard in the Soulard Mardi Gras Parade and marched in the 24th Annual St. Patrick's Day Parade. They were awarded first place for adult marching unit in this parade.

The next meeting of the Washington Blues will be on Sunday, May 16, from 12:00 noon to 4:00 p.m. Visitors are welcome and membership is open to all who are interested in the goals of the group.



The St. Louis Washington Blues Reorganized drill team serving as honor guard in the Soulard Mardi Gras Parade.

CLEMENTINES

2001 Menard
at Allen

664-7869



Neighborhood Fabric

by Jay Gibbs

There is some debate over the exact age of 2350 Menard Street. The "6 over 6" windows, its simple roof line, and the mortice and tendon carpentry framing on the interior place it in the Federalist-style era, probably the

of the brick walls had to be dismantled and relaid, and a new roof system built. Inside, the antique 24" wide stairs were replaced by a wider, "floating" staircase, and the chopped-up floorplan was reconfigured for



2350 Menard as rehab was beginning. Tarps form a temporary roof.

1850s. But the arch-topped windows and simple wood cornice are early Victorian-era features, more common to a slightly later time. It seems this house is transitional architecture, hence its date of construction is difficult to estimate.

What wasn't debatable was the unusable condition of the shell before rehab. The building's owners, Jack and Judy Dyer, hired John Durnell Design and Construction to gut rehab the old structure into their new home. On the exterior, over 50%

modern use. Several new window openings in the side walls allow in more light, and a new two-car garage backs to the alley.

The facade has been restored with energy-efficient reproduction windows and the cornice has been refurbished and painted. This old shell has been rendered a beautiful 2-plus bedroom, 2½ bath townhouse ready for its new residents. Kudos to John Durnell Design and Construction for this attractive transformation.



The finishing touches being added to this new/old home.

HARD SHELL CAFE — 9th St. & Geyer Ave.

by Carla Schild-Gibbs

During Mardi Gras season in Soulard, just about every restaurant and bar in the neighborhood dusts off its cajun-style menu and starts dishing up crawfish and jambalaya. This service is well-appreciated by the seasonal reveling boards, but where can St. Louisans turn year-round when a hankering for cajun hits? Fortunately, the answer is in our neighborhood at The Hard Shell Cafe, adjacent to the 1860 Saloon at the corner of 9th and Geyer.

Our intrepid group of expert diners met for a Friday dinner and endeavored to sample a bit of every-

thing on The Hard Shell Cafe menu. Appetizers included a range of St. Louis favorites (wings, toasted ravioli, potato skins) and in our search for something a bit different, we tried the seafood nachos. Presented with generous toppings, including big chunks of crab and shrimp, this prelude to dinner adds a terrific twist to a traditional favorite.

Salads mixed a variety of crisp vegetables, and the house poppyseed dressing was a favorite. The Hard Shell Cafe purchases all of its vegetables at Soulard Market, and the steamed medley of vegetables served with the dinner entrées are

testament to just how terrific *really* fresh vegetables can be.

We relished every bite of the cajun dishes samples. Highest praise came in for the shrimp etouffee served as part of the cajun sampler, which includes red beans and rice (spicy!) as well as a bowl of gumbo—an excellent choice for the cajun lover who can't quite decide what to order. Cajun-style softshell crab and a hearty crawfish chowder also met with appreciative palates.

Special commendation must go to Mindy, who ordered the All-You-can-Eat Crawfish special. This delicacy requires a bit of work using a technique best described as "bite the tail, suck the head." The resulting extra spicy bite of crawfish is classic cajun and worth the effort.

Some of the non-cajun entrées we sampled included a melt-in-your-mouth smoked salmon steak special, a crispy chicken breast sandwich deemed no less than "excellent" and a generous plate of seafood pasta in a very tasty sauce. The fried shrimp, featured in the shrimp platter, could have been cooked a bit longer, but were nonetheless enjoyed.

Of course, we finished off dinner with coffee and the richest desserts

we could select from the menu. The Irish Bash Cream, a cheesecake with Bailey's and chocolate crust, disappeared almost as soon as it hit the table. And French Chambord cake was a dream selection for chocolate lovers.

Our waitress, Mary, handled our large group easily (or maybe it just seemed that way) and did not show a hint of distress when it took us about 20 minutes to divide up the bill. Gee, I hope the tip came out right.... If you are a frequent visitor to the Soulard neighborhood, you may be very familiar with the 1860 Saloon; it's a landmark establishment, after all. But if you haven't yet wandered into the cozy charm of The Hard Shell, it's time you took a few steps past the Saloon to the Geyer Street entrance. An imaginative menu, relaxed atmosphere and blazing fireplace make it a worthwhile destination for lunch or dinner.

[Editor's notes: Watch this spring and summer as the establishment constructs a beer garden addition at the rear of the Cafe. Also, KUDOS to 1860 Saloon and The Hard Shell Cafe, who recycle all of the literally tons of glass bottles they use monthly.]





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SOULARD IS SELLING!

by Alan Richardson

The Soulard For Sale House Tour gives the general public an opportunity to see why Soulard is such a successful comeback story. Twenty-five years ago, the area was an urban slum, slated to be razed to make way for industrial development—despite the fact that it was—and still is—the oldest continually-inhabited area west of the Mississippi.

Today, the Soulard neighborhood stands on its own two feet, a federally-protected historic district largely restored with a fascinating range of properties. You'll see gloriously restored Victorian mansions, pre-Civil War rowhouses, Second Empire architecture mixing in with New Orleans-style cottages. You'll catch glimpses of wonderful hi-tech contemporary gut rehabs—apartments and homes—all framed by pretty sidewalks. Plus, of course, the Farmers Market and the bars, restaurants and corner coffee shops for which the neighborhood is renowned.

What you won't see are the figures that give evidence of the neighborhood's success and underline the strength of its housing market. Let me highlight some of them for you. For the second successive year, Soulard was one of the—if not THE—top selling city neighborhoods with over 30 properties sold. Through the recession, Soulard held its own among the best, dropping on average only 10-15% in value. This compared to parts of the County, which saw as much as a 30% drop before the recession leveled out.

Results to date this year suggest Soulard will do equally well in 1993. As of the end of March, we had at least 12 properties sold or under contract. Perhaps the only thing that will slow the numbers down this year is the fact that the available housing stock is decreasing! Put another way, there are fewer houses for sale than there were a year ago. Of course, if that trend continues, demand will begin to exceed supply, and we will begin to see an upward curve taking over in property values.

What sort of houses have been selling this year? Prices range from around \$70,000 to at least \$140,000. But here's an interesting note. Agreed contracts have been close to listing pricing—in most cases within 5%. I have had two full price contracts so far! This is so much better than 1992, when it was really a most aggressive market!

What sort of people buy? I have had contracts this year from young

professional first-time buyers, newly-marrieds moving into their first homes, relocatees from out of state and relocatees from the County looking for a relief from suburban insulation and rush hour traffic! People find the neighborhood very easy to settle into, as folk are generally out-going, friendly and hospitable. The SRG, one of the most active neighborhood groups in the City, is a good meeting point at its monthly socials. And on a nice day, you only have to step out onto the sidewalk to meet your neighbors!

What about financing? I have sold over 50 homes in the neighborhood during the last two years or so, and we've never failed to find a lender happy to work with us. Properties under \$100,000 can qualify for the low down payment FHA program, which is approximately a 97% loan. VA loans are also welcome in the area, and outside of that, conventional loans with 5% down payments would be available on most single-family homes—provided your income qualifies you, and your credit history is relatively good. A rough factor to figure how much you can borrow in total credit (including any long-term debt you might presently have) is to multiply your annual income by 3.

So, check out this village within a city! You, too, can become part of a federally designated historic district within minutes of the Arch and downtown—and catch the wave of urban living on its way up! A good place to start is the Soulard For Sale House Tour, which takes place on Sunday, May 23.

[Alan runs Soulard's own realty company, Alan Richardson Real Estate and sells the neighborhood exclusively.]

CURBSIDE RECYCLING SERVICE AVAILABLE IN SOULARD

by Jay Gibbs

There is something about the spring season—the sense of rebirth and new growth, we suppose—that reminds us of environmental concerns, with Earth Day and all. Here in Soulard you can do your part to satisfy these nobler impulses.

A volunteer group, calling itself Soulard Valet Recycling Program will pick up your recyclable material (a list follows) once a month at no charge—Hey, out in the County they have to pay for their recycling services! Here's how it works:

On the second Saturday of each month at 8:00 a.m., participants have their recyclables curbside in front of their homes, and shortly thereafter, a motley convoy of your neighbors driving pick-up trucks stops, loads up your donations, and moves on to the next stop. What could be easier than that?

The pick-up schedule for the remainder of 1993 is:

May 8
June 12
July 10
August 14
September 11
October 9
November 13
December 11

The following materials are taken and should be separated and prepared in the following manner:

Aluminum cans ... flattened
Corrugated cardboard ... flattened. Only material that resembles VVV is accepted. No fiberboard (e.g., cereal boxes, 12-pack cartons, etc.)

Container glass ... separated by color (clear, brown, green)

Newsprint ... packed in paper or plastic bags

Plastic bottles ... flattened with caps removed (soda and milk containers only). It helps if soda and milk containers are separated as well—and BE SURE TO REMOVE THE LIDS.

Phone books ... October and November pick-ups only

The only "charge" for this service is that participants are asked to assist at least twice a year in the monthly pick-ups. It takes about 2 hours and you don't get dirty, and by alternating workers this way, no one gets burned out.

Terry Hoffman, the service's founder, reports that only about 5% of the SRG's membership is now participating in this free service. Com'on SRG, let's get that number UP! Terry also reports that the haul of materials exceeds 2,500 pounds per month. Since its inception, this totally volunteer group has kept over 35,000 pounds of trash out of landfills.

All materials are taken to the Smurfit Recycling Company on the near north side, where the sight of all those bins of glass and bales of newspaper, cardboard, and plastic bottles will warm the heart of every environmentally-aware person. The Smurfit Corporation pays our intrepid group by the pound for the aluminum cans and the cardboard; the money has been accumulating for a year, and now the volunteers plan soon to purchase and plant either street trees or shrubs and trees in Soulard's three "pocket" parks.

The Soulard Valet Recycling Program is always looking for more participants. Call 664-2803 for a brochure and to join this effective and friendly group. Start recycling the easy way—it helps the environment, and it helps SOULARD!

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WHAT ARE YOU DOING IN SOULARD?

photos by Carlis Dawson & Jay Gibbs



Mary Lou and neighbors catch up on the local news while in that revered Soulard tradition — stoop-sitting.



Jim stops to chat on his way to Soulard Market one sunny Saturday.



Ann and Pat check out a house for sale.



Neighbors enjoy a block party on 8th Street.

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THE ☆ STARS ☆ OF SOULARD

by Jay Gibbs

[Editor's note: This article was written as one chapter of the forthcoming book *Soulard Stories*, which will cover the history, architecture, and today's state of affairs of Soulard. This chapter will appear in the architecture section.]

One of the most frequent questions from visitors of Soulard is, "What are those stars on the walls for?" Though many people assume that the stars one sees on the exteriors of most of Soulard's historic buildings are merely decorative, this is not the case.



This wall under reconstruction shows a familiar 5-point star and the strap which connects it to the roof joist at left.

The cast iron stars perform an important structural function. Basically, they are the visible part of a bracing system which holds the vertical brick walls solidly to the horizontal floors within. Each star is



French fleur-de-lis, installed upside down. Was this a political statement?!

connected to a two-to-three foot long iron strap, which runs through and past the thickness of the wall; the inner end of this strap is, in turn, bolted to a floor joist (beam) inside. Across the building, at the other end of the same joist, is another star and strap. Occasionally, p. 12 —The Soulard Renaissance — Spring '93



10-point "sunburst" star, seldom seen.

instead of straps, a long iron rod runs clear across the building, and a star is connected at each end of the rod.

As noted previously, these old houses were purposely constructed to remain somewhat flexible. As the exterior walls settled over the years, these stars kept the walls from bulging outward and, hence, from eventually dropping the floors they support. Far from mere ornamentation, the stars were and remain a key element in the stability and lon-



One of many late 19th century art nouveau shapes.

gevity of Soulard's old buildings.

On the other hand, the builders of the 19th century did not overlook any chance to add a little form to the function of their homes, these bracing systems included. The familiar stars sported by the majority of Soulard's houses were the most common braces, but even the stars varied in size, number of points, and style. Other very different shapes were also manufactured.

The braces found on Federalist and antebellum buildings were usually hand wrought in the small blacksmith shops of early St. Louis,



X" shape, another antebellum style, also called "Double S."

NEW NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATION FORMED

by Richard Eaton

The Soulard Restoration Group has joined the Council of Neighborhood Organizations, a new organization representing some 20 St. Louis neighborhoods. This new coalition of neighborhood associations will be registered with the State of Missouri as a not-for-profit corporation. The purpose of the newly-formed council will be to further those activities which add to the quality of life in St. Louis neighborhoods by working collectively and presenting a unified position on those issues that affect one or more neighborhoods. The council will work to improve lifestyles and living conditions, and assist elected officials in preparing, proposing,

and passing laws or statutes beneficial to a community or member association.

One recent example of neighborhoods pooling their efforts occurred when the Soulard Restoration Group, the Lafayette Square Restoration Committee, the LaSalle Park Neighborhood Association, and the Clinton Peabody Neighborhood worked with city and state officials to successfully block the conversion of the old Malcolm Bliss site into an open prison.

The first function sponsored by the Council of Neighborhood Organizations was successful when approximately 400 people attended the Open Mayoral Candidates Forum in LaSalle Park last February.



and appear as various "S" and "X" shapes. These shapes and their small-scale makers were pretty much supplanted by mass production iron foundries by the 1870s. The same foundries which manufactured the iron fencing, balconies, and storefronts churned out millions of the cast iron braces. The earliest cast ones were diamond-shaped, followed soon by the common stars, which proved most popular.



"S" shape, found on Federalist buildings.



Diamond shaped cast iron brace.

Other shapes, more expensive and therefore less common, included French fleur-de-lis, and various art nouveau confections near the end of the 19th century. Pictured here are just a few of the variety of iron braces found in the neighborhood, and looking for these artistic variations is an interesting diversion while walking around Soulard.

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FRIVOITY IN SOULARD

photos by Carlis Dawson
& Jay Gibbs

The Mardi Gras Festival and Saint Patrick's Day both provided parades and revelry in Soulard this past winter. During the various Mardi Gras events, the Soulard Business Association raised \$3,500.00, which was donated to Shelter the Children, a local charity. The First annual Soulard St. Pat's parade was organized after the downtown parade declined a local group's "Girl Scout" spoof. Soulard is becoming well-known for its off-beat parades and street theater.



Soulard Marketmaster Sandra Zak celebrates Mardi Gras with appropriate headgear.



Laura Daus of the SBA presents Shelter the Children's Jim Gleason with its \$3500 donation, raised during Soulard Mardi Gras.

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The Precision Lawnchair Drill Team was a hit at the Mardi Gras Parade.



Don't buy any cookies from THESE "Girl Scouts"!

Soulard Beyond 2000 Report

by Carlis Dawson

Soulard Beyond 2000 began as a dream committee of people dedicated to the neighborhood and willing to work. These people are action oriented and have continually amazed me at their ability to get things done without prodding.

Here, I will share with you some examples of the progress which has quickly moved us from dream to reality:



- ✓ One thousand pounds of lights for 1993 Christmas Contest have been received and are free for the asking...(FREE IN 93!). They are being separated and sorted in basements and garages all over Soulard.
- ✓ Bicycle Tour—Steve Sommers reports progress on Soulard loop to the Arch. Copies of the current bicycle tour are printed and available for the asking.
- ✓ Walk Tour Progress—Written script has already been prepared for the 12th Street Walk. It has been refined at this time and is in the design and layout process...more soon.
- ✓ Marketmaster Update—Sandra Zak says, "Plans are in the works for the Spring Cleaning and Spruce Up, fix up and paint campaign. Colors are being selected and we may look forward to improvements in the not too distant future."
- ✓ May Company Tour—Community Fair Success...recently the
- ✓ Soulard Trolley for the May 7-8 opening of the St. Louis Convention Center is about to become a reality, thanks to the Soulard Business Association, active in securing the service of a trolley that will tie Soulard to Downtown, Metro-Link and Union Station...Much more to come!
- ✓ Horse and Buggy Rides in Soulard—Gerry Warren is fulfilling a lifelong dream to have horses and provide carriage rides for the residents of Soulard. He is in the process of obtaining City clearances to license the service, and I hope you will welcome him and the service to Soulard by taking a ride soon. By this printing, he should be in operation!

If you would like to participate in the Soulard Beyond 2000 committee, join us by calling 664-9738 and we will invite you to the next meeting. Hard work...No pay...Great rewards!

May Company brought approximately 400 employees to St. Louis for the purpose of relocating. 71 employees express strong interest in accepting the transfer and more than 10 of these have become serious hunters of a Soulard residence. Mary Hart and Clark Rowley assisted me in being the only St. Louis neighborhood represented at four of the eight Community Fairs sponsored by the May Company.

Born To Lease: Portrait of a Soulard Renter

by B.F. D'Urban

Tracy Twelfthstreet doesn't know how to replace a faucet or install a toilet; she can't tell sashes from rafters or pine trees from pansies. She replaces the furnace filter twice a year, makes a day of it, and shares the experience with everyone with whom she comes into contact. An extinguished light bulb attached to a twelve-foot ceiling or a broken handle on the fridge requires a simple call, and a come-hither message of helplessness and frailty that would make Steinem wince and Rodham-Clinton form a task force. The call brings desired results, and order is restored.

She is surrounded by her favorite things—books, cable-TV, stereo, PC, answering machine, microwave, and the phone numbers of every restaurant that delivers or has take-out. Tracy is on a first-name basis with Domino's and can exist for three days on one order from North Hunan. It's a fairly self-sustained environment.

More a product of movie matinees than of television, she'd rather be Holly Golightly than June Cleaver. If Soulard had a high-rise apartment building, she would want the penthouse.

Tracy aims to simplify her life. There are no pets, for they require care. One plant in a state of trauma will soon die and be carried to the dumpster under cover of darkness lest her neighbor with the hanging plants and window boxes discovers her failure.

In the summer the patio is a lush rainforest, thanks to Greg Green-thumb who lives next door; he's the one with the window boxes. It is also the nocturnal habitat of Soulard's most love-sick felines. When it snows, Tracy doesn't deal with it, but hops on either of the two buses that stop at the corner and deposit her at the door of her downtown office building. Anyone who has not ridden the Tower Grove or Carondelet buses between Soulard and downtown has not truly experienced city living. But that's another story.

Tracy likes rehabbers. After all, some of her best friends are. They're the ones with varnish under their fingernails. She enjoys their stories of floor-sanders gone berserk, putting the kid to bed in a beer cooler, and ladders used for stairways. There's a special place in heaven for these people who have preserved this bit of time and space, she thinks—where God has gutted and dismantled all of the buildings and stored the pieces in hardware stores, old-wood warehouses and

little out-of-the-way antique shops, so that rehabbers can put them back together.

For Tracy Twelfthstreet, the aroma of hops is natural. Breathing plaster dust is not. A TV remote can be an extension of one's hand but not a paintbrush. She'd rather lie down than lay tile, and she prefers hanging-out to hanging wallpaper. Lacking pride in possession and unable to delay gratification, her pleasure is in the finished product, not in the doing: a book read, a paper written, the news digested.

While cocooning is comfortable, so is the knowledge that the neighborhood establishments offer familiarity and warmth; old friends and new acquaintances.

In the chaos of the corporate world she does not scream at the ringing phone, the latest chastising memo, or the impossible deadline. No need to retreat to the freight elevator with padded walls, and there's no time for a therapeutic walk to the Arch. She simply closes her eyes and finds herself 12 stories down and 18 blocks south at the APARTMENT.

There are hundreds of renters in Soulard. Tracy Twelfthstreet is just one of them.

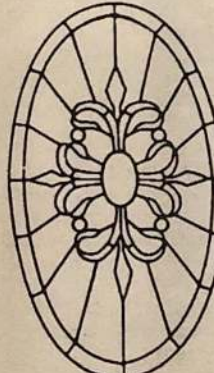


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Please remember:

- don't overload dumpsters.
- don't block dumpsters, alleys, streets or sidewalks with large items.
- place all large items at your regular bulk pick-up site.
- large items must be at least four feet from your trash dumpster or it cannot be emptied.
- separate yard waste—place grass, leaves and twigs in "yard waste only" dumpsters and bundle all branches greater than two inches in diameter and place bundles with bulk items.
- put car batteries, motor oil, large appliances, and tires next to regular bulk items at your bulk pick-up site.

Trash, yard waste and bulk item pick-up will begin at 10:00 a.m. Please have all bulk items at your regular bulk pick-up site by 1:00 p.m. on your Blitz Saturday.

BUFFALO BILL HOUSE

by Robert Scudieri

"In the community this house is known as the 'Buffalo Bill house.'" That was one of the comments we heard as our real estate salesperson walked us through the nineteenth century house in Souland.

When we saw the three-story brick home at 1826 South 8th Street, we immediately fell in love with it. A "gut rehab" before its reclamation, the roof literally was falling in. But after reconstruction, the house's mansard roof and its handsome brick facade complemented by a bright, modern interior convinced us this would be our next home. We would have bought the house anyway; the connection with the famous Buffalo Bill was just icing on the cake.

Wanting to know more about the history of our house, my wife, Lynn, and I went to the downtown library and consulted the coordinator in the library's section on neighborhoods. A very helpful man, the coordinator pulled out books and file folders on old St. Louis and our new neighborhood, Souland. We



discovered that early on our community was known as "Frenchtown" because of the settlers, such as Antoine Souland, who made their homes here after fleeing the excesses of the 18th century French Revolution. It was Antoine's wife, Julia Souland who, in 1838, deeded property for a farmers' market to the City of St. Louis. But we found out something even more on that first expedition to the library.

Fortunately, the library saves issues of neighborhood newspapers. In one of the files we found the December 1980 issue of *The Souland Restorationist*. On the front page was an interview by Judy Cunio-Marquis with members of the family whose ancestors had built our house—Clarence and Joan Moehle (the Moehles still own the other half of the building—1828 South 8th). There we learned that the building was constructed in 1860 by Joan's great grandfather, Michael Frederici. We also read with delight that Frederici's niece, Louisa Frederici "married Buffalo Bill Cody, and he is believed to have visited the home." Well, that was a tantalizing start—but we wanted to know more.

As our interest in our home's connection to Buffalo Bill grew, we looked for books on the famous cavalry scout, decorated 19th century soldier and originator of *THE WILD WEST SHOW*. One of the resources we consulted was Nellie Snyder Yost's book, *Buffalo Bill* (published in 1979 by Ohio University Press). There we found an account given by Louisa of how she first met Cody:

"On May 1, 1865, Louisa Frederici sat curled up in a big chair in front of a grate fire in her home

in old French town, St. Louis. She was reading a book when the chair was violently pulled from under her. She scrambled to her feet, whirled, and slapped a man. Her cousin, Will McDonald, was the jokester, but the man she slapped in the face was his companion, Will Cody, whom she had never met before. Embarrassed and apologetic, she stammered and blushed when they were introduced. Their courtship began that evening."

Yost wrote that next spring, on March 6, 1866, Louisa and Bill Cody were married—in her house, in the room with the grate fireplace!

Was this the house at 1826-28 South 8th? According to the *Restorationist* article, the home originally was a four-family flat. It is not inconceivable that the families lived in the same building. Who knows? Maybe along with Bastille Day, Mardi Gras and St. Patrick's Day, Souland might begin to celebrate a "Buffalo Bill" Day, commencing with the removal of a chair from an "unsuspecting" young woman in 19th century garb, who then jumps up to slap a "prankster" dressed in buckskin.

Wanting to know more, I called Clarence Moehle. "Well," he said, "It is known that Buffalo Bill visited the house—but it was not Louisa's home, and they were not married there."

Certainly from the evidence the Codys were married in a house in Souland. Maybe one of the readers of the Souland Renaissance knows which one. The present owners of 1826 S. 8th would love to know!

[Bob and Lynn Scudieri moved to Souland from the suburbs of Detroit in December of 1991.]

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AARP HELPS LOW-INCOME SENIORS

by Judy Ivery

Are you a low-income senior having trouble making ends meet? The American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) is here to help. Adults 55 or older whose income falls within certain guidelines may be eligible for assistance from the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP). The SCSEP was created by the Department of Labor to help those over 55 find permanent employment, either full or part-time.

Eligible clients are placed in a non-profit of public service agency for a limited initial assignment to receive on-the-job training 20 hours per week. Assignments may be offered in positions ranging from accountant to security guard to radio station news director. Many different organizations are represented—SCSEP has received requests from Benton Pride, Catholic Education Office, various city government offices, Double Helix Corp. (community radio and TV), Shelter the Children and YEHS. Many non-profit organizations and public service agencies work with SCSEP, so the range of opportunities available can be very diverse.

While in training, the client is assisted by the staff in looking for permanent employment. While in their initial assignment, they can learn new skills, update their work history and receive help in locating a permanent job.

Many of you recognize the red and blue logo of the AARP. Founded in 1958, the AARP is a non-profit organization pledged "to better the lives of older Americans through service, advocacy, education and volunteer efforts." The group has over 32 million members with 350,000 volunteers applying their time and talents to community service in the areas of voter awareness and education, health care and older workers' rights.

The AARP also has a strong voice in Congress. Membership in the organization offers financial planning for people 50 and over, supplemental group health insurance, a prescription drug service and a travel program. Membership also includes a bi-monthly magazine published by AARP, which includes articles on impending legislation, health care issues, and profiles of active seniors.

The SCSEP's Souland office staff is composed of seven permanent employees who service up to 80 clients at any one time. Jon Ford is director of the Souland SCSEP office and says that all of his staff have come to him through the program. "Several on my staff had worked in factories all their lives. Now one is my secretary, one is the office pay-

roll clerk and another is a job developer—all management-type jobs. So you can see, you can teach an old dog new tricks!" With life experience can also come a wealth of education. Jon has had clients with almost no education to those with PhD and Master's degrees.

Talking with the staff at the SCSEP office gives one an overview of what our changing economic situation can be like. It's especially

years with Globe Drug, three in the garment industry, stints with the *Post-Dispatch*, KSD and Fabrik Tractors. She used to walk to work at Globe Drug, but had to quit to take care of her ailing mother. When her mother passed away, she needed work—FAST. She came to SCSEP and found work in two weeks. Now her work in employment counseling with SCSEP is "entirely different from what I've done in the past,

but I think it's good to learn new things." She wants to go back to school for math, English and computer classes.

"When I was in the office, I thought I was in trouble," said Jean Woods. Now she is payroll clerk for SCSEP. She, too, worked in a factory most of her working life. After 22 years at the Talon Zipper factory in all phases of production, she lost her job when the company moved out of town, taking over 40 jobs. She found it difficult to find another production job. So she has had a variety of jobs from "rental property to horses." She calls the SCSEP "a good program."

Betty Sides retired after 30 years in wholesale optical and wanted to "try something more interesting." A home care nurse taking care of her sick husband told her about AARP, and she is looking forward to her first assignment.

Although the staff itself is composed of SCSEP "graduates," they are just a few of the hundreds of the seniors placed by the SCSEP in full-time jobs that can make life more interesting, fulfilling and easier for someone over 55 that is having a difficult time getting by.

The SCSEP is located at the corner of 11th and Allen, and their phone number is 773-3313.



Front: Mercedes-Mercedes Dickerson, Eva Gress; Middle: Betty Sides, Nannie Mitchell, Jean Woods; Back: Jon Ford.

difficult for seniors to find work in tough economic times. But these folks have shown that older people can find their places in the workforce. The staff is just a small fraction of the seniors who have been through SCSEP's program, and they are now working to help other seniors find interesting, satisfying employment.

Nannie Mitchell is proof that, "We can change, we can grow, we can't stay put." She worked 23 years in a garment factory as a machine operator, then the factory closed. Then she spent two years in childcare. When she turned 55, she was eligible for the AARP program; now, she is an employment specialist, helping fit people with assignments.

Even after raising four children herself (her husband died at age 37) and working as a secretary for 16 years, Eva Gress found that she still couldn't afford to retire. After her brother's company—Ideal Fabricators—closed, she found it hard to replace the job. Now, at 72, Eva is the secretary for SCSEP, handling transfers, terminations, and paperwork with grace. She is "grateful for my job; it's not easy to get work when you're 72."

If you wanted a definition for versatility you could say Mercedes-Mercedes Dickerson. She has spent 40 years in office work, from 13








Souland Community Garden

PLANT SALE

Saturday, May 23

9th St. between Lami and Barton

Drop by the garden to see how Souland neighbors work together.

Plant sale to fund garden projects features perennials and annual bedding plants.

Donate your surplus plants from spring divisions and seed starts to this good cause.

For more information, call Candace Ulrich — 773-1593

























































CHURCH CONCERT SLATED

The Lafayette Park United Methodist Church at 2300 Lafayette Avenue announces its "Kick Off The Summer" concert to be performed June 6, 6:00 p.m. at the church. The concert is held yearly to showcase the musical talents of the church's members. Admission is free; a free will donation helps support musical activities at the church. Light refreshments will be served beginning at 5:30 p.m. For more information call Edna Coleman at 664-7865 or 773-1346.

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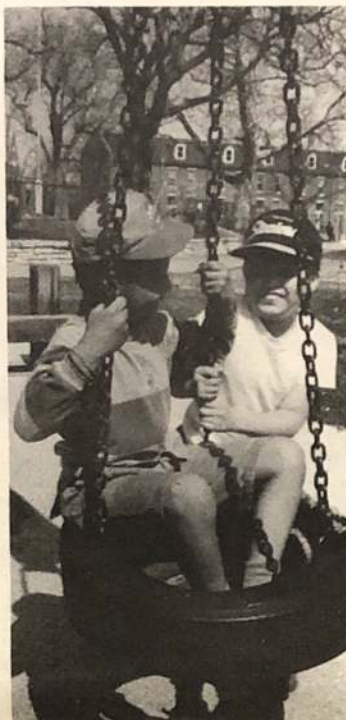
RECYCLE YOUR USED FURNITURE AND APPLIANCES

The Homeless Resource Bank needs good used furniture and appliances. These items are distributed *free-of-charge* to local homeless shelters.

Donate your good re-usable items and help the homeless. Call the Homeless Resource Bank at 241-8803 to schedule a pick-up or get more information. The Homeless Resource Bank is a program of the Christian Service Center in cooperation with the City of St. Louis.

IT'S A KID'S LIFE IN SOULARD

photos by Carlis Dawson



Jason and Junior share a tire swing in Pontiac Park.



Raphael and Andy enjoy America's pastime.



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TORNADOES . . . NOT A PRETTY PAST

by Carlis Dawson

If you have ever stood as I have and watched a funnel cloud dance dip across the horizon, you know it is a scary sight. Soulard suffered from just such an event in 1896, and by revisiting the historic event, perhaps we can prepare for this sort of an emergency taking lessons from the survivors of that calamity. All of the quotations which follow were found in souvenir books printed soon after the storm. Now is tornado season. What happened 97 years ago this month can recur!

was nothing either on land or afloat strong enough to resist the pitiless fury of the awful wind, which attained a velocity of eighty miles an hour and brought havoc, ruin and death along with it."

"It was shortly before five o'clock when the cyclone [tornado] struck the city. The highest and lowest portions of the city felt the force of the tornado the most. Entering from the Southwest it attacked first the Compton Heights district, a thickly populated section, with large numbers of very costly mansions. Then



Seconds before plowing through Soulard, the tornado devastated Lafayette Square. Looking east along Lafayette Ave. from Jefferson Ave.

"Four hundred killed and twelve hundred injured is the record of the cyclone [tornado] which struck St. Louis and its suburb, East St. Louis, on the afternoon of Wednesday, May 27th. During the same fateful half hour or less, thousands of families were rendered homeless and property was destroyed to the extent of fifty millions, or nearly so. It was the most disastrous storm of modern times, and the destruction it worked was far more appalling than that of the Charleston earthquake, quoted as the most terrible disaster in a generation. Block after block of residence property for miles in succession was blown to the ground. Houses were demolished down to the foundations; others were left with but fragments of hallway, or fractions of the first-story floor remaining. Hundreds of miles of electric, telephone and telegraph wires were dashed to the ground, adding to the damage and wreckage, and increasing to an alarming extent the danger to life. Trees of half a century's growth were uprooted and hurled a distance of several blocks. Heavy iron fences were twisted as though they were composed of a sheet of tin. Masonry at the approach of one of the most substantial bridges ever constructed (Eads Bridge 1874) was blown away, steamboats were dashed across the river, broken in half and the fragments hurled high up onto the opposite banks. There p. 18 —The Soularb Renaissance — Spring '93

it made its way down what is known as the Mill Creek Valley to the river, tearing down in its course whole rows of smaller dwelling houses, many of them occupied by more than one family, and running down thousands as it went. When it struck the Mississippi River it cleared the harbor of the steamboats and other craft, dashing them wildly across to the Illinois shore, breaking them into pieces and drowning several unfortunates who were aboard."

"It was all over in a few minutes and then came the blinding rain, adding to the discomfort and suffering of the injured, and increasing ten fold the difficulties in the way of the thousands of rescuers who were speedily at work trying to remove wreckage and save the lives of those who were imprisoned. The evening and the night which followed will be remembered as the most wretched a large city has ever known. For a time every street rail in the city was tied up. Two power houses were completely wrecked. Scarcely twenty miles of the three hundred in the cities' electric road were operable. Thousands of clerks of both sexes were unable to reach home. The electric light plants were rendered unserviceable, and darkness added to the horror of the situation."

"In the absence of authentic information, the wildest rumors naturally prevailed. Special editions of



General path of the tornado. (The age of the reproduction affects quality.)

newspapers came out, but could not be circulated, as many streets were impassable and few street cars were running."

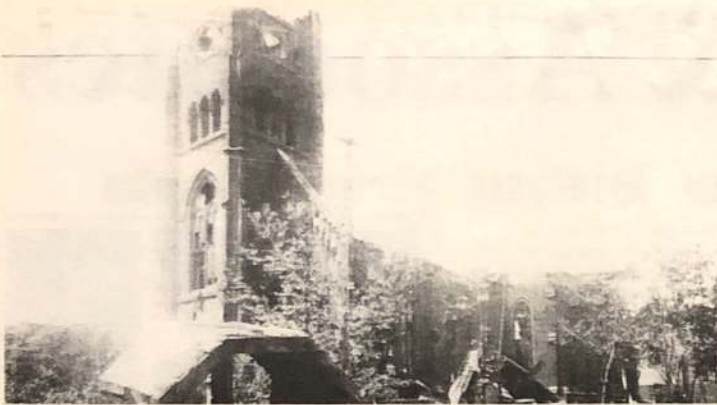
"In the section of the city where, perhaps, the relative destruction of life and property was greatest [including Soulard] from Chouteau avenue south to Lesperance [Allen] street, and east of Tenth street, a scene of desolation and disorder, horrible to even contemplate, was revealed by the daylight of Thursday. This district was right in the path of the storm, and its inhabitants, most of them belonging to the laboring class, rank among the worst sufferers. Their property, in

most cases, did not extend beyond scanty household furniture. Thousands were rendered homeless and practically destitute, many families being without food until relieved by the charitable. The destruction of factories removed all hope of earning a trifle to support the women and children. Being essentially a laboring district, this feature of the calamity was the more obvious and appalling."

"A passenger train on the Eads bridge had a narrow escape from being blown into the river, and it was only the tact of the engineer that this calamity was averted."



Corner of Broadway and Barry Street looking west. St. Vincent's Church in left background survived relatively intact.



Trinity Lutheran Church. Chunks of its steeple and roof litter the foreground.



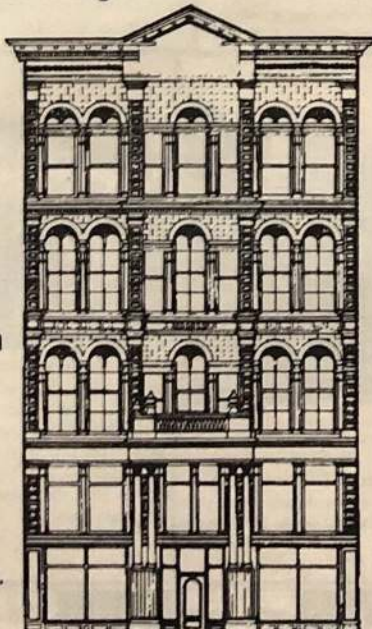
Broadway at Souland Street. Souland Market, one block west of this scene, was similarly wrecked.

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Historic Preservation
Department PA
1785 Massachusetts Ave., N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036



When a tornado approaches, your immediate action may mean life or death.

Seek inside shelter, preferably in a tornado cellar, underground excavation, or steel-framed or reinforced concrete building of substantial construction. Stay away from windows!

- **IN OFFICE BUILDINGS**—stand in an interior hallway on a lower floor, preferably in the basement.
- **IN FACTORIES**—when a tornado warning is received, post a lookout. Workers should move quickly to the section of the plant offering the greatest protection, in accordance with advance plans.
- **IN HOMES, SMALL BUILDINGS, AND VEHICLES**—go to the basement or to an interior part of the lowest level (a closet, bathroom, or interior hall). Get under something sturdy. Leave mobile homes or vehicles and go to a substantial structure. If there is no shelter nearby, lie flat in the nearest ditch, ravine, or culvert and shield your head with your hands. Do not try to outrun a tornado with your vehicle—leave your vehicle immediately!
- **IN SCHOOLS**—whenever possible, go to an interior hallway on the lowest floor. Avoid auditoriums and gymnasiums or other structures with wide, free-span roofs. If a building is not of reinforced construction, go quickly to a nearby reinforced building or to a ravine or open ditch, and lie flat.
- **KEEP LISTENING**—NOAA weather radio and your radio and television stations will broadcast the latest tornado advisory information. Call the Weather Service only to report a tornado. Remember: A tornado watch means tornadoes are expected to develop. A tornado warning means a tornado has actually been sighted.

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