

The Soulard Restorationist

VOLUME I ISSUE 7

JULY, 1976

Agenda

Following is the proposed Agenda for the Soulard Restoration Group membership meeting scheduled for August 4, 1976 at 7:30 P.M. at St. Joseph Croation Church Hall:

1. Further discussion on L.R.A. lots: Purchase and Garden Permits.
2. Details on new logo: cost, material, etc.
3. Newsletter questionnaire.
4. Announcement Re: class on proper window replacement to be conducted by Jim Felling.
5. Update Re: legal action to prevent demolition of Boys' Club buildings.

Notes from last meeting

Skip Gatermann presided at the monthly meeting held on July 7th at St. Joseph's Croation Hall. He announced that Garry Waters had accepted the chairmanship of the 1977 House Tour Committee. The Tour is scheduled for September.

Garry spoke briefly about the "Restorationist", and its purpose which is to help bring the community together. The newsletter will have "The Market Place", which will provide a free ad service to members who have something to sell or swap. Members will receive a questionnaire regarding the "Restorationist", which will solicit ideas for improving the newsletter.

Judy Shehan moved to continue to finance the newsletter up to \$50.00 per month. The motion carried unanimously.

Tony O'Connell asked for names of people who want to play volley ball on a weekly basis. Anyone interested in the game who has not signed up should contact Tony.

Skip announced that Soulard beat Lafayette Square at the baseball game on July 4.

The membership voted to accept the Flounder half-house logo design submitted by Barbara Clark.

Skip asked the membership to report to him any known properties for sale in the area which should be added to the new housing sale list.

Birch Mullins reported that a map has been made to show L.R.A. properties in the Soulard Area, including vacant lots, as people may be interested in buying available lots adjacent to their properties. He suggested that members volunteer to take care of vacant lots to beautify the neighborhood. This might help to get them out of the hands of L.R.A. Possibly we could get them deeded to the Restoration Group as a non-profit organization, if the lots could be maintained. He also suggested that perhaps a package involving several pieces of property could be arranged between some of the members.

There was a lengthy and at times emotional discussion regarding the activities of the Boys' Club. Don Daniel, the president from the Lafayette Square Restoration Committee, was present to lend moral and financial support. Leonard Ruzicka, the attorney for the Restoration Group, was present to answer questions from the membership. It was pointed out that legal action against the Boys' Club could be very lengthy and costly. Hilary Clements moved to proceed and fight as far as we could. His motion carried.

Without any formal motion, many members decided on the spot to make personal donations to be used toward legal fees. More than \$400.00 was donated. The attitude of the membership was that the historic area legislation applicable to Soulard would be established as a reliable guideline in the area.

COURT HEARING REVIEWS BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT DECISION

A hearing regarding the Soulard Restoration Group's suit to enjoin the Boys' Club of St. Louis from demolishing 8 buildings it owns on 10th and Victor Streets took place on Monday, July 19, at 9:30 A.M., Judge Lackland Bloom presiding.

A number of motions were filed subsequent to the original petition. They included a motion to dismiss on behalf of the Boys' Club, a motion to dismiss on behalf of the City Attorney representing the Board of Adjustment, a motion by Lafayette Square to intervene in the suit on behalf of the Soulard Restoration Group, a petition by John and Jan Kelly to join suit and an amended petition by the Soulard Restoration Group to include a charge that the Boys' Club intentionally contributed to the deterioration of the buildings in question, subsequent to acquiring the property, by omission.

A recess was called to allow all attorneys to familiarize themselves with the various motions and petitions.

Upon resumption of the hearing, Judge Bloom denied the Lafayette Square motion, but allowed their lawyer, Peter Wunderlich, to act as a friend of the court. The Soulard Restoration Group's lawyer, Peter Schmitz, withdrew the Kellys' petition, but asked that they be allowed to be named in the original suit as additional plaintiffs.

Arguments were heard regarding the motions to dismiss. The Boys' Club position was that the four plaintiffs (Jerry Dempsey, Judy Shehan, Sue White and Sedg Mead) have no right to petition the court in this matter because they are not truly representative of the neighborhood. Peter Schmitz countered that anyone residing in the District has a right to petition the court.

Judge Bloom announced that the purpose of the hearing was to review the action of the Board of Adjustment and the temporary restraining order and the request for making the order permanent. He will only review the following matters: 1. whether the action of the Board of Adjustment was lawful and 2. whether its decision is supported by competent and substantial evidence.

There are three possible outcomes of his review of these matters: 1. he can dismiss the suit, 2. he can agree with the Board of Adjustment or 3. he can return the matter to the Board of Adjustment with guidelines for their review of the decision and second hearing of the matter.

The basic thrust of the case for the Soulard Restoration Group is that the Board of Adjustment was not legally constituted when it sat to hear the appeal of the Landmarks decision because there was a vacancy in the seat of the structural engineer whose expertise was germane to the case and therefore the Board and the public were deprived of this expertise.

Furthermore, the decision reached to allow demolition was not based on findings of fact. It is wholly unsupported by the evidence presented to the Board of Adjustment.

The Boys' Club attorney countered that the absence of one member of the Board did not change the decision since the four votes constituted a majority. Furthermore, the opinion of one architect, Karl Nicoloff, who viewed the buildings in question on behalf of the Boys' Club was sufficient as expert testimony in favor of their being structurally unsound and too expensive to rehabilitate. Moreover, the destruction of 8 out of 1200 buildings in the District in order to provide an "aesthetically pleasing athletic field" in no way jeopardizes the letter or the spirit of the Historic District legislation.

Mr. Wunderlich informed the Court that indeed the real issue is a precedent because Missouri lacks law at the state level to guide historic district legislation and until that is rectified or until clear and precise precedents are set, this legislation operates under a legal shadow.

Tuesday, July 27, at 5:00 P.M. was set as the deadline for the submission of further written evidence and precedents. A decision can probably be expected by Friday, July 30.

SIDELIGHTS TO THE HEARING: HUMOR AND SPORT IN COURT

The Boys' Club's young hotshot lawyer, C. John Pleban, with a Jimmy Connors' killer instinct lobbed and smashed his way through court with vociferous objections to every witness, question, piece of evidence and statement introduced by the S.R.G. legal team of Schmitz and Rizucka.

He attempted to harrass, intimidate and generally cast aspersions on the testimonies of Judy Shehan and Jerry Dempsey by suggesting that they are not residents and property owners in Soulard.

"Mr. Dempsey, would it surprise you to know that you actually live on Oxford in Maplewood?", he queried.

"I would not only be surprised, I would be utterly astounded," Jerry replied.

Shortly thereafter, he intimated that Judy's name may not be on the Deed to 2219 South 11th Street.

Jerry and Judy were unperturbed by it all and calmly assured the Court that they are not Soulard apparitions, but indeed do live at and own 2401 South 13th and 2219 South 11th Streets, respectively.

Judy in fact noted that she keeps her Deed of Trust tucked away at home where she can reassuringly view it every single day, if she so desires.

Meanwhile, Guy McClellan remained stoic under fire as he quietly rejected the implication that his testimony to his legal partnership and joint Soulard property ownership with Sedg Mead amounted to hearsay evidence.

Mr. Pleban clearly needs to review the differences between a murder trial and a civil case in order to properly amend his courtroom demeanor. It goes almost without saying that the hardest swing does not necessarily result in the most accurate shot.

THE MARKET PLACE

NEW FEATURE

A new column will begin in the August issue of The Soulard Restorationist entitled "The Market Place". The feature will be a free service to all members in-good-standing of the Soulard Restoration Group. This

feature has been developed to strengthen the communication links between all members of our community of Soulard.

The column will be divided into the following sub-headings: Services (individuals who perform various services such as ironing, grass cutting, et.); For Sale, (items to be offered for sale); For Hire, (persons who desire employment).

To place your ad., please call Skip Gatermann at 771-4191 before the 15th of each month. Ads received after the 15th will be placed in the next month's publication. All ads should be no longer than 20 words, including telephone number.

NEW TRADITION STARTED

How do traditions begin? This one began when the Lafayette Square Restoration Committee challenged the Soulard Restoration Group to a softball game. The challenge was followed by practice for the two "teams", and on July 4th, both teams, along with their loyal fans, met in Lafayette Square Park.

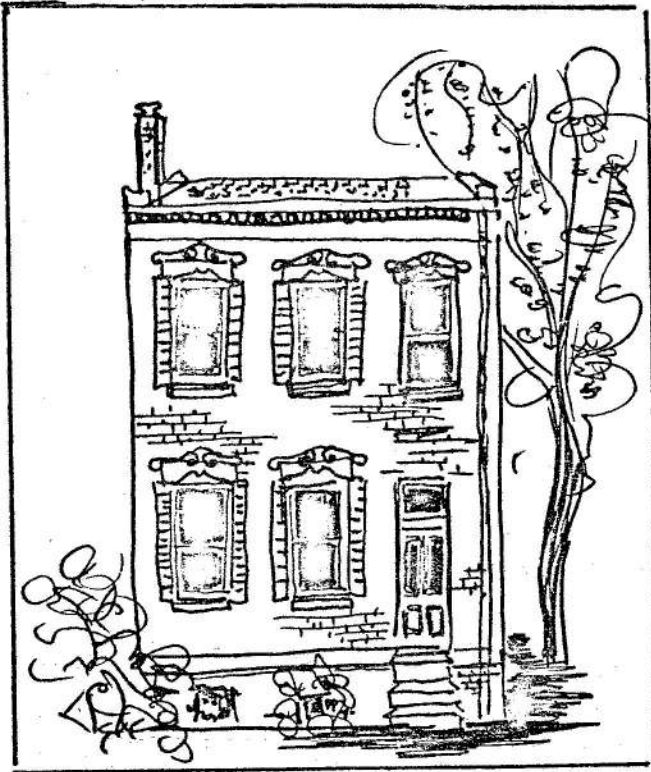
When the call, PLAY BALL! came, the cold brew started to flow along with the adrenalin. The competition was fierce. There were hits, walks, home runs, stolen bases, safes, outs, and all the other things that make a game exciting. At one point the folks from the Square had two runners at third base at the same time.

This spectator found humor in the fact that many players chose wool socks and workboots to play in. They looked like they just climbed down from the scaffolding only long enough for a few trips around the bases. Judy Shehan stole the day when she appeared on the pitcher's mound in an old St. Agatha School uniform, complete with cap and sun-glasses....Yes, Jennifer, there is a Charlie Brown!

Soulard won the game and the right to buy the beer next year. The Fourth of July softball game between the two neighborhoods has become a tradition.

La Maison

(The House)



Almost all of us are familiar with the house on the hill, Judy Shehan's home at 2219 S. 11th Street. Restoration in Soulard got its start as Judy began to help friends and friends of friends buy homes in the neighborhood. The house on the hill is still unofficial headquarters for prospective buyers and sightseers. As we go through the house, see what's been done and hear about Judy's plans, the rest of us begin to feel our own restoration plans are possible.

Built about 1830 and completed in 1852 by Charles and Margaret LaBeau Creeley, the house was part of Thomas Russell's Crystal Springs Farm. The house, and the four lots on either side make up one half acre of rose gardens and shade trees, most unusual in an inner city neighborhood.

The Creeleys, a slaveholding family, were probably Southern sympathizers during the Civil War. It is possible they were involved in storing arms and ammunition in the house, transporting them to the river via a series of tunnels, and shipping them down the Mississippi to the Confederate army. The Creeley home was heavily mortgaged in 1863; the family disappeared completely from public record in 1867. At that point, the property was sold to the Lippert family, and part of it was still in the Lippert estate in 1972.

When Judy purchased the property in 1969, it was structurally sound, with hand-made bricks and massive cyprus timbers intact, but needed massive remodeling. An early example of Greek Revival in St. Louis, the house is beautifully simple, with broad board pine floors and crisp white woodwork. Judy has sanded the floors, restored the woodwork, insulated and wallpapered. She has put on a new roof, rebuilt the side galleries, and rehabilitated the yard. Probably the most impressive project is Judy's kitchen which she built (literally) from the ground up.

Next year's project is to redo the second floor, installing heating and airconditioning ducts, insulating, and adding all the finishing touches. When Judy began to work on the second floor, she discovered what seemed to be a Voodoo charm between the floor joists in the bathroom. She found alternating rows of chicken bones and corn and, in the middle, a handmade doll and a domino with seven spots. With typical restoration bravery, Judy shoveled the whole thing out and threw it away. As she says, "nothing awful has happened yet." We hope it never does.

WINDOW ON 12th STREET

by Jim Felling

In case you hadn't noticed, there is a lot more to watching your neighborhood than merely putting a new coat of paint on those sashes and jambs. Glass, being a dense material, conducts temperature readily, thereby raising heating and cooling expenses. Most window units are also very leaky, thereby making you one of Laclede and U.E.'s very favority customers. Weatherproofing of windows and storm sash will save enough money to pay for themselves in the course of several years; especially, if you recall those two and three hundred dollar per month heating bills.

The procedure involved in the reconditioning of windows is far too involved and variable to cover in this article for the do-it-yourself types. However, at the next

Restoration Group meeting we will co-ordinate a workshop for two days in August for those who are interested to attend for both days.

For those of you who will contract your window work, I recommend the following: all wood both on sash and jamb should be stripped of paint; pocks and irregularities filled with water putty or similar material. Glass should be removed from sash, rails replaced or strengthened with dowels (braces and screws split wood and hasten deterioration), then primed. Cracked glass should be replaced, new glazing compound applied, and then finished with a top quality paint -- in that order.

Jambs should be similarly treated with primer, putty and paint. In addition, the gap between the brick moulding and brick should be stuffed with oakum (jute packing) and sealed with butyl flex caulking compound. Window tracks should also be lined with copper anodized aluminum or bronze metal weatherstripping. If possible, have the contractor use old wrinkled and bubbled glass when making replacement lights. This wavy glass is far more interesting to view the world through than technically perfect, characterless modern glass. Old glass is cheaper to obtain, but much harder to cut, so that the price is about the same as new glass.

The workshop which is planned will go through all steps involved in the reconditioning of window openings, sash, and glass cutting, using hands on under supervision, following demonstration. The workshop will be at Tom Sawyer's house at 2630 S. 12th Street, dates to be arranged.

COMMENTS AT LARGE

From time to time the newsletter staff will share letters, comments and criticisms it receives. We welcome feedback from the membership and would like to serve as a forum for your ideas.

Dear Editor:

I have followed with interest the progress the Group has made. Although I am not yet an owner in the area, I still have high hopes for investment, and later residency possibilities. My present circumstances prevent me from considering residency immediately.

The people I have met in the S.R.G. have impressed me as energetic, intelligent, and dedicated....

I would think the Boys' Club should and could find an already vacant area for their ball field. Maybe they could have a restoration project and teach the boys something of value for their later years.

We Americans only have a 200 year heritage. We should not lightly destroy a representative of half of that history.

Phillip E. Betts

Alton, Illinois

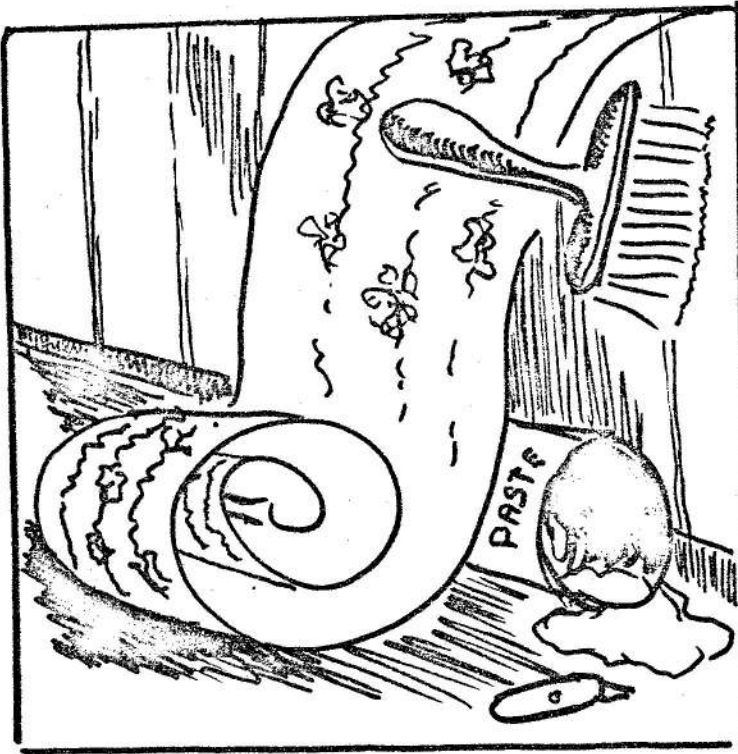
BELL NEWS

A recent encounter with a Bell Telephone workman to install a new phone yielded information of personalized services for telephone users which were unknown at that time by this writer. Due to an unpleasant attitude and inferior workmanship on the part of the installer, I contacted the supervisor for phone installation for this section of the city. She came out personally to view the situation and to finally rectify it.

During the course of our conversation she told of the following services offered by Bell Telephone: (A) Supplying information as to the best location for a phone in a multi-storied building. (B) Providing various types and styles of telephones for different examples of architecture. (C) Supplying wire, brackets and assistance to the homeowner who may personally install the phone if there are special requirements for the installation. (Example: phone desired on stucco wall with wire concealed in stucco). (D) If shoddy work is performed by a Bell Telephone workman the resident is encouraged to call the supervisor for the Soulard area immediately at the business office (dial, 611).

TRY A LITTLE (OR A LOT) OF WALLPAPERING

by Ruth Day



If you've never had the pleasure of standing back to admire your own freshly hung strip of wallpaper, then you've denied yourself a real treat. But it's not too late, so step right up folks, and have a try at hanging paper.

Every wallpaper store has a beginner's kit complete with step-by-step instructions on how to hang wallpaper. I got mine many years ago for \$2.49 -- and it contained all sorts of goodies. There was a brush for paste, a brush for brushing, a little roller, a little cutter, a long string with a little weight on the end, and some blue chalk. Maybe there were even more things, but it doesn't matter because I didn't use all of these. The string with the weight and the chalk got lost early in the game. But I still get out my little kit when I'm ready to hang paper, and add a pair of scissors, a measuring tape, and framing square.

I start papering in a corner and usually work from right to left. Maybe I do this because I'm right handed --

but I'm not sure because I have also worked from left to right. I guess what I'm trying to say is that that's not one of the things that's important in wallpapering. Now it is important to cut more paper than your wall is tall. Leave an inch or so at both the top and bottom and trim off the surplus after hanging. This sounds like extra work, but it really isn't because for some reason or other, you can't measure wallpaper exactly like you can wood panelling. Perhaps it stretches or shrinks when it gets wet from the paste. If you don't believe me -- try to measure your wallpaper exactly and then when it doesn't work, leave a surplus at the top and bottom and trim it off. Walls slant every which way -- up, down, in, out, sometimes all at one time -- especially Soudard walls. But it doesn't matter, because with a little fussing and trimming and pushing here and pulling there, the job will be O. K.

Now you can't do anything about the slants and the ins and outs, but you must patch obvious holes in the plaster and remove old paper for a nice job. Loose dirt should also be removed, or the paper won't stick. In general, a wall should be prepared for paper much in the same way as it is prepared for paint.

A lot of wallpapers really aren't paper. They're cloth covered with a marvelous plastic that can be scrubbed. Colors are sealed in the plastic so that they rarely fade. These wall coverings are a dream to hang because they don't tear like paper does. Such coverings will last virtually a life time, but if you should decide to change your decor, you can throw away your Red Devil wallpaper scraper because these coverings are strippable. This means you can simply peel them off the wall when you're tired of them.

Almost all paper wallpaper is plastic coated so that it can be washed like paint and colors are fade-proof. But it may occasionally tear in hanging and generally has to be scraped off in the removal process.

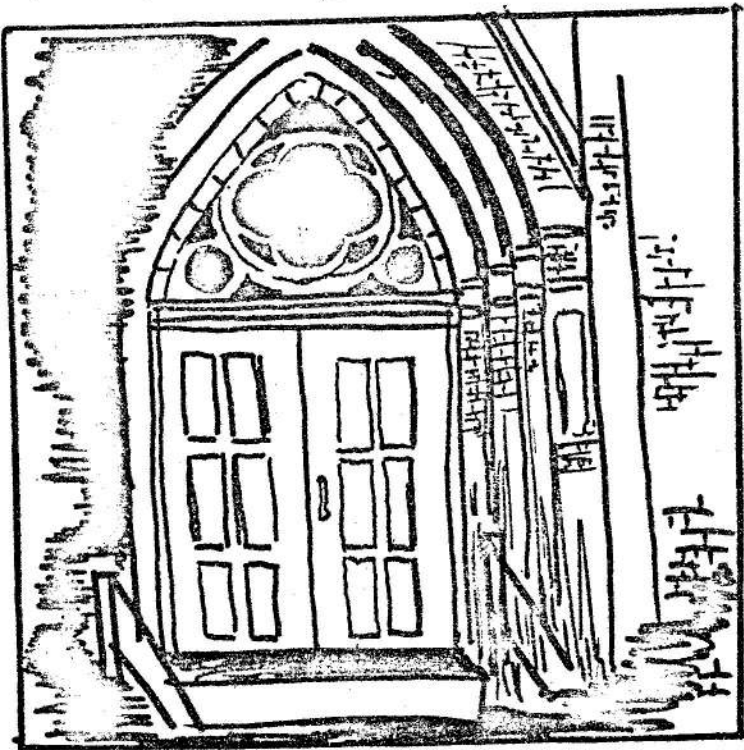
What about the cost of wallpaper? Prices range from the ridiculous to the sublime. When Phelan's at Crestwood closed its store, I bought wallpaper at 50¢ a roll. The most expensive paper I have ever used was \$18.75 a roll -- imported Japanese grass paper. There are some types more expensive than this. If you really want to hit the big time, you can always use carpeting on a wall. I've never done it, but a goofy friend

of mine loved shag carpeting to the extent that she used it on one wall portion very effectively. Another friend utilized a lot of big maps from "National Geographic" magazine on one wall in her son's room. It was great for a teenager and cost was practically nil -- just a few cents for paste. Imo's Pizza Parlor on Big Bend in Webster Groves is papered with pages and covers from European magazines. Looks great. And a friend of mine is thinking about papering his young son's room with comics from the newspapers. Sounds like a good idea and anyone can afford it.

Incidentally, a roll of paper is 36 sq. feet and it comes in single, double and triple rolls. There's going to be waste with wallpapering, depending on the size and shape of the room, and the pattern. For instance, I have a pattern in my living room that repeats itself every 28". I had to cut each strip quite a bit longer than the wall height to make the pattern match, so I had to waste more than I would have with a plain wallpaper.

Now you've got it all rolled into a nutshell. So tarry no longer. You can do a lot with wallpaper in your Soulard home. Give it a try -- you'll be awfully glad you did.

SERVING SOULARD: ST. AGATHA CHURCH by Larry Hollenberg



The Parish of St. Agatha was founded in 1871, six years after the end of the Civil War. It was the ending of the war that gave impetus to the growth of the city, which in turn caused a need for this new parish, founded by German immigrants. The closest Catholic Church had been St. Peter and Paul, but due to the distance, poor sidewalks and language differences, the new parish was begun.

In its early days, St. Agatha Church and School provided a haven for German immigrants by supplying spiritual and educational needs. The early school taught in German exclusively until 1906, when the neighborhood began to change as some residents began moving to new locations in the city and new nationalities moved in.

The present church building dates from April 12, 1885 when the corner stone was laid. The building is in typical German Gothic, a lofty structure of little exterior ornamentation. The edifice is

constructed of red brick with a stone foundation. The front view reveals a single central tower, soaring in height. Tiny spires or finials help to produce this effect. The entrance is deeply recessed and features a set of three circular windows contained in an arch shape. The main circular window of stained glass represents the good shepherd. The two smaller windows contain roses symbolic of the love of the Good Shepherd for his sheep.

The interior contains woodwork which, delicately carved, predominates the structure; a lofty central aisle supported by columns; vaulted ceiling; and a communion rail of Corinthian columns evenly spaced with the spaces filled with a dainty pattern of wheat and grapes. The ambo of natural wood is surrounded by finely-colored, well-sculptured statues of the Apostles standing on pedestal bases. Above the alters are paintings on canvas of the Holy family and the Death of St. Joseph. Stained glass windows around the church depict the life of Christ, and above the later are scenes from the Old Testament.

The Reverend Edward J. Clohesy is the ninth pastor of St. Agatha, serving since 1963. In an article written in 1971 for the St. Louis Review for the 100th anniversary of the church he stated, "With the passage of time St. Agatha Parish has been subjected to social and cultural changes. Accordingly, her role in the community has altered somewhat. While 100 years ago her school accepted only children of German ancestry and members of the Catholic Church, today its doors are open to all nations and non-Catholics are welcome. The parish is more needed than ever. She is ready to fulfill her destiny in the years to come."

Regrettably, four years ago, St. Agatha School, like many other parochial schools in the area, was closed and a consolidated school was located in an adjacent parish. The school building is not, however, vacant. The large second floor auditorium still serves as a meeting hall for weekly parish activities. The basement houses St. Agatha Headstart, a federally sponsored program, which operates from September through May, serving over 40 children ages 3 through 5 years.

The main floor is the new home for St. Agatha Day Care Center, operated by the Soulard Association for Family Services, Inc. At capacity, it will serve the families of 90 children, operating on a year round basis.

Father Clohesy wished to see this fine school building once again serve children of the Soulard-St. Agatha neighborhood and was enthusiastic in his approval of the new community programs which are operating there.

He has always been actively involved in maintaining the health and vitality of the St. Agatha neighborhood and continues to be concerned about the future -- to assure that the parish fulfills her destiny in serving the changing needs of the community.

(This is the first in a series of articles about the historically and architecturally significant churches in the Soulard Historic District.)

New Faces

THE COPES

Gary and Mira Cope and their family (Joshua - 2-1/2, and Jessica - 10 months) moved into their 9 room townhouse at 911 Soulard this month. Gary, a computer program analyst with Blue Cross, is pleased to be so close to work, and Mira looks forward to a daily walk to the market.

Familiar with German Village in Columbus, Ohio, the Copes plan to excavate the basement (complete with wine cellar), utilize roof space by adding a walk-out deck, remodel from top to bottom, and do a great deal of brick work outside. The Copes are especially proud of their cast iron fireplace in the master bedroom and the white marble fireplace in the living room.

THE FENWICKS

Michael and Kim Fenwick were looking for a house in Soulard and bought two instead. They closed the deal on their home at 2117 S. 13th Street and got the four family flat next door as well. The buildings have a lovely common yard and the Fenwicks have begun to make plans for getting it into shape.

2117 is a 9 room house with an interesting rear staircase and the Fenwicks hope to do extensive remodeling. Between them, Michael and his father-in-law can handle plumbing and wiring and both Kim and Michael hope to learn the rest as they go along.

Editorial

The recent controversy concerning the attempted demolition of several buildings in the Soulard Historic District by the Boys' Club of St. Louis has placed the Soulard Restoration Group in the position of protecting the buildings in question and the historic district legislation. The legislation states that existing structures in the historic district cannot be razed without appeals from owners through city channels.

The Restoration Group has raised a "defense fund" by volunteer contributions from members and non-members of the organization. The Lafayette Square Restoration Committee, Inc., provided \$2,000.00 toward a \$5,000.00 bond that guaranteed a court hearing on July 19th. In addition to the financial assistance, Lafayette Square

also provided legal counsel. Landmarks has stated their support along with the board of directors of the Chatillon DeMenil House Foundation in opposing the demolition of the buildings.

Members and non-members of the Soulard Restoration Group would like to express their appreciation and gratitude for the assistance and well-wishes expressed by the above mentioned organizations. With concerted effort on the part of conscientious restorationists and citizens throughout the area, this issue will be brought to a decisive and appropriate conclusion.

ROSTER UPDATE

NEW MEMBERS

Mira & Gary Cope, 911 Soulard Street, St. Louis, Mo. 63104 - Phone to be installed.

Charles Derleth, Jr., 2355 S. 11th Street, St. Louis, Mo. 63104 - Phone 865-0670

Paul C. Kjorlie, 5371 Arsenal St., Apt. 103, St. Louis, Mo. 63139 - Phone 771-6642

David C. Wozniak, 1211A Victor St., St. Louis, Mo. 63104 - Phone 771-0043

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Rev. M. Richard Jones, 600 West Clay, Taylorville, Ill. 62568 - No Phone

John Sudholt, 1832 S. 8th St., St. Louis, Mo. 63104 - Phone 621-1843

Please report any change of address or phone number to Skip Gatermann at 771-4191. This helps to keep an accurate roster for all of us.

ADLETS

DO YOU NEED AN EXTRA HAND? Restoration and repairs of all kinds. Reasonable rates - by the hour or job. Call Don Bennett, 865-3583.

DO YOU WANT TO GET HIGH? To rent scaffolding at reasonable rates, call Mike Smith, 771-3556 or 865-2766.

REPAIR AND MANUFACTURE OF WINDOWS, ornamental woodwork, stripping, etc. Call Mike Smith, 3509 Lemp, 771-3556 or 865-2766.

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