

The Soulard Restorationist

Volume VIII Issue II

April 1, 1983

I SOULARD

...means hundreds of trees

Soulard keeps renewing itself. This time it's trees. Picture a streetscape made up of 19th century red brick homes and storefronts. Then add stately red maples, handsome lindens, flowering crabapples and shady white ash trees. Sound impossible? Not in a few years.

The Restoration Group is well on its way toward its goal of planting 1000 trees along Soulard streets. The project began in the fall of 1982 and already 200 new trees have been planted. "Trees for Soulard," as the project is called, is a cooperative effort of the Restoration Group, area businesses and the city's Forestry Department.

Arbor Day, Saturday, April 9th, is the kickoff for Phase II of the project. SRG expects to plant close to 400 trees this spring.

Tree committee chairman Bob Printz explained how the project began. "Soulard has come a long way in terms of restoring its housing stock. Now we can begin looking at projects like this one that improve the overall quality of life," said Printz. "When all the trees are mature, Soulard will have the appearance of green space, even though the area's buildings are very close together."

The tree planting is funded by SRG and corporate sponsorship, with support from the city Forestry Department. Proceeds from the Fall Soulard House Tour were contributed by the Restoration Group. Corporate gifts received were from Monsanto, Anheuser-Busch, and Manufacturer's Bank. St. Louis Forestry Department helped plant a portion of the trees. "Cooperation like this from many parties is needed to make the

project work," said SRG past president Debra Manning. "What's really exciting is to see the tremendous help from neighborhood corporations. In Soulard, business gets involved in the community," added Manning.

Still, to get the trees in the ground will require a great deal of work. Volunteer coordinator Mark Lyman explained. "The Restoration Group has always prided itself on what it's been able to accomplish through volunteers. We'll need every one of them on this project." Although the city helps plant some of the trees, they cannot do the entire job. "If everyone helps, we can get this planting done in two or three week-ends," says Lyman. Additional help is being sought from other organizations like the Girl and Boy Scouts.

Steven Frowine of the Missouri Botanical (Shaw's) Garden and informal consultant for the project gave a few tips on planting. "Tree planting isn't complicated, but it requires some work. The hole should be larger than the root ball. Burlap need not be removed but it should be loosened and any twine or bundling material removed," said Frowine. It's a good idea to stake young trees so that their top roots are not broken. Beyond those tips, most important is water. Trees should receive the equivalent of 1 inch of rainfall a week during the first year," he added.

Frowine ticked off a list of interesting tree facts. "For example, trees cool the air. One large elm in one day will evaporate 7 tons of water, having the cooling effect of ten room air conditioners running for 24 hours. Trees can reduce highway noise by 50%. Trees provide privacy, give food and shelter

for wildlife, and filter out dust and pollen," he commented. "Best of all, they provide us with colorful flowers and beautiful shapes."

This spring the group plans to plant several varieties of trees. *Red Maples*: fast growing, brilliant scarlet in autumn, gray thin bark, mature at 60 feet. *White Ash*: vigorous, fast growing, tolerant of many soil types, yellow or deep purple in fall, growth to 65 feet. *Flowering Crabapples*: one of the most popular flowering trees, fragrant pink or red blossoms in spring, tolerates heat, growth from 8 to 30 feet. *Sunburst Locust*: light filtered shade, grows rapidly to broad, round headed tree, adapts to city conditions with bright gold foliage, growth to 50 feet. *River Birch*: lustrous and deep green in summer, leaves are yellow in autumn, accepts wide range of soils. Unique bark that curls, peels and varies from bright copper color to cinnamon

continued on pg. 2



SPRING House Tour

The Spring House Tour is set for Mother's Day, Sunday, May 6, and will run from 1-5 p.m. Anne Mesko is the Tour Chairman and needs volunteers for houses to be on tour and people to help plan and work the tour. This year's Spring Tour will probably feature at least one apartment as well as several houses. If you'd like to add yours to the list, call Anne. Further information can be obtained from the housing office.

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Historic Soulard Buildings Saved REDEVELOPMENT PLANNED

All's well that ends well—so the saying goes. But Soulard residents weren't sure of the outcome when the City's Heritage and Urban Design Commission considered the demolition of three landmark buildings in Soulard recently. The historic homes are now expected to be saved as a result of the intervention by the Restoration Group.

Three buildings were involved, all of which are victims of either fire, vandalism or deterioration. The City's Building Commissioner asked for demolition to protect the public's safety. The buildings are located at 800-802 Geyer, 704-706 Soulard Street and 1837 South 9th Street.

SRG President John Jennings spoke at the January 20th hearing of the Heritage Commission. Jennings told the commissioners that "SRG opposes these demolitions because of the buildings' unique contributions to the 19th Century history of our city and region. Once gone, they cannot be replaced." He asked the commission to avoid creating additional vacant lots in a historic district that is lifting itself up by its bootstraps. "Destruction of these landmarks does nothing for Soulard or St. Louis," said Jennings. "It creates no new housing, no jobs and no tax revenues for the city. Instead, demolition hastens the well documented flight of population out of St. Louis." Members

of SRG's Board of Directors also attended the public hearing.

At 1837 South 9th, fire had destroyed much of the site of the Soulard Pizzeria. Although the city had condemned the circa-1850 residential structure, Heritage Commissioners turned down the application for demolition. The building's owner said he expected one of two development companies to restore the building.

Anne Wotka of Laclede Partnership expects to save 800-802 Geyer Avenue in a proposed townhouse development. The buildings, across the street from national landmark Sts. Peter & Paul Church, occupy an important Soulard corner at 8th Street and Geyer. Heritage Commissioners expressed skepticism about prospects for renovation. "We've heard proposals like this before," said one commissioner. "We stop demolition based on a developer's plans. Then the plans stall and the condition worsens." After assurances by Wotka and SRG that restoration was imminent, Heritage granted a 60-day delay in demolition.

Restorationists were initially discouraged at 704-706 Soulard, however. The Commission approved demolition of 704 Soulard, across the street from Soulard's Restaurant, the building's owner. Faced with losing the highly visible 19th century landmark, SRG members voted to approve picketing of the restaurant at the February 2nd membership meeting. In a last ditch effort to avoid a conflict, SRG members met with the restaurant's owner February 19th.

As it turned out, owner Ray Braddock was willing to save the buildings provided a buyer could be found. SRG went to work finding a buyer. Developer Collins & Herman, Inc. now have a 30-day option on the property. Pending financing, the firm plans market rate units for the site.

Code Committee Member Dick Phelps reflected on the outcome. "It's never easy to save buildings like these. They're in the worst condition and are usually the least attractive to developers or homeowners. Saving these buildings is a great plus for Soulard," said Phelps. "Although some loose ends need to be tied up, it shows the impact SRG can have through persistence. We can be a positive force to unite the city, building owners and developers in saving our historic heritage," added Phelps.

The city's Heritage and Urban Design Commission is charged with enforcing Soulard's historic district code. Commission meetings are open to the public and are held the fourth Thursday of the month at 3:00 p.m. in Room 208, City Hall. Tom Dobbin (771-7435) chairs the Restoration Group's Code Committee.

Trees, from pg. 1

and silver. Growth to 80 feet. Last fall, little leaf linden and redbud trees were also planted.

In preparation for the spring kickoff on April 9th, SRG President John Jennings reviewed the history of Arbor Day. "The first Arbor Day was celebrated in Nebraska in 1872, about the time Soulard was in its heyday. Its founder, J. Sterling Morton, was Grover Cleveland's Secretary of Agriculture. Morton's home, Arbor Lodge, is now a Registered National Historic Landmark surrounded by a magnificent arboretum of over 160 varieties of trees," said Jennings. "Trees planted by Morton in the 1870's still stand today. Arbor Day in Soulard is a great chance to make the same contribution to our neighborhood that Morton made to the nation 100 years ago."



A letter from one of the Editors

Dear Readers,

I regret to inform you that this will be the last issue that I will serve as co-editor of the Restorationist Newsletter.

My husband, Jim, and I are moving across the river to Highland, Illinois. We've purchased an "almost untouched" home that has some lovely architectural detail. It will never possess the charm of our rowhouse, but we will make it home.

I will miss our home. It was our first home. I will miss our tulips in the spring, the chrysanthemums in the fall and our beautiful stained glass transom created by Mithra. But, most of all, I will miss the people of Soulard, particularly the SRG members. I will miss the people who are not of the "throw away" society. I will miss the people who are not afraid of hard work, not afraid to challenge people or ideas that stand in the way of the betterment of their neighborhood, which ultimately results in the betterment of our city.

SRG is a media through which many have chosen to work together to build a better neighborhood, community and city. SRG has also given individuals like me an opportunity to "blossom." Never having the talent to become a professional writer, but having the desire to transmit ideas through the written word, I was given the opportunity as a contributing and co-editor of the Restorationist.

Thank you Mr. President, John Jennings, SRG officers and Board of Directors. Thank you Skip Gatermann, Catherine Perry, Pat Finkelstein, her children Abraham and Aaron, Pam and Bill Mundy, Lana Downing, Gary Cope and all the contributing writers for making me glad I volunteered.

I have talked it over with Catherine and she said I could become a foreign correspondent!

Suzanne Connelly



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About the Restorationist

The Soulard Restorationist, circulation 3,000, is published every two months by the Soulard Restoration Group. It is mailed to SRG members, advertisers and subscribers and is distributed in Soulard area businesses. Call Business Manager Gary Cope (home 241-2684 or work 289-3666) to place ads and subscriptions. Membership information is available from the SRG Housing Office (771-5563). Letters to the Editors and articles are appreciated.

The next Restorationist will be published June 1, 1983. All persons interested in contributing to the newsletter should meet at Tammany Hall on April 13, 1983 at 7:30 p.m. Copy deadline is May 5, 1983, and ad deadline is May 10, 1983.



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Welcoming Committee

ROLLS

Q. What's red, has four wheels, and is pulled by several Restorationists?

A. The Soulard Welcome Wagon.

Designed to show new residents that Soulard is the friendliest neighborhood in town, the Soulard Welcome Wagon is beginning operations. It's not the usual welcome, however.

According to SRG Membership Chairman Alice Jennings, the Welcome Wagon idea was conceived by fellow member Hilary Clements. "Hilary's idea was to fill a red wagon with beer and wine, and stop by to personally welcome a new resident," Alice explained. "The idea is great because it helps us communicate a real message behind SRG—that Soulard's a neighborhood full of friendly people," says Alice.

Carolyn Swindell has donated a red wagon to the group and a list of volunteers was assembled at the March 2 membership meeting. The Welcome Wagon Committee hopes to use its visits as a recruiting tool for new memberships. "We think this is the best way to tell new people about the benefits of becoming a member of SRG. They need to know what the group does to make Soulard a great place to live," says Hilary.

The Welcoming Committee is also a way people new to Soulard can learn about churches, schools, restaurants and other services in and near Soulard. "People hear about Soulard through open houses, Mardi Gras, House Tours or newspaper stories. Once they move in, we want to show them it's a community, too. As a volunteer organization, we want new people to know they can make a contribution to the Restoration Group's projects," explained Alice.

Prospects are good that the Welcome Wagon will be successful, too. With interest rates declining and new apartments coming on the market, new residents are expected in Soulard in even bigger numbers this spring and summer. Already apartment managers and real estate agents are giving us referrals. They're pleased because their tenants and clients will be happier with their housing choice.

If you're new to the neighborhood, or know somebody who is, call the Welcome Wagon. The dispatcher is Thelma Hemmen at 771-5563 or Alice Jennings at 773-0566.

If you see a slightly tipsy but very friendly group pulling a wagon down your block, please—don't call the police. It's just your neighbors saying "Welcome to Soulard."

Highlights of SRG Meetings

FEBRUARY 2, 1983

The meeting was held at St. Agatha's Day Care Center at S. 9th and Utah. Bev Sporleder, director of the Center gave a short speech about the day care center and its services.

Market Preservation Inc., the group trying to save the International, Buder and Title Guaranty Buildings from demolition (Gateway Mall) passed around a referendum petition to get the Gateway Mall issue on the ballot. Registered voters of the city of St. Louis were asked to sign if they supported the issue.

The Street Renaming Committee presented their recommendation for street name changes. After discussion, pro and con, the membership agreed to endorse the plan.

The proposed bylaw revision was read and discussed. A vote will be taken at the March meeting.

The Opera Theatre of St. Louis will present a one act opera in Soulard on April 20.

MARCH 2, 1983

Patsy O'Connell, Sigel Community School Coordinator talked about the proposed school tax increase that will be on the April ballot. It's a 27¢ increase, of which 3-5¢ will go toward the operation of the community school program in the city. Patsy encouraged everyone to vote.

It was announced that over \$11,000.00 has been raised for the "I Leaf Soulard" project. The SRG recently received money from Monsanto, Anheuser-Busch and Manufacturers Bank. Money was also donated by the Anheuser-Busch Credit Union. A planting day will be on April 9—Arbor Day. More details in this issue of the newsletter.

The by-law revision was discussed. The motion needed a 2/3 majority vote. The vote was 27 in favor, 16 opposed. Motion failed by two votes.

The next meeting of the SRG will be on Wednesday April 6, 7:30 p.m. at Trinity Lutheran School, S. 8th and Soulard Streets.

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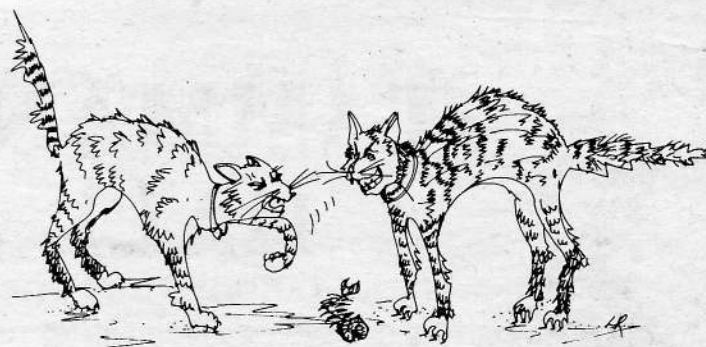
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MARDI GRAS. The words are French, but the good time was pure American. Parades and parties, that's Mardi Gras in Soulard. The Mardi Gras Ball was the talk-of-the-town. Everyone there was in costume or formal wear and next year's ball will be the best yet. Contact Hilary Clements for reservations. Don't miss it!

And speaking of not missing it, Sorkis Webbe, Jr., the Seventh Ward Committeeman, arrived at a "Chic" party at 1217 Victor in a horse-drawn carriage. Sorkis, however, was pursued by a large woman(?) in a tight brown dress. In his famous diplomatic way, he was able to re-direct Miss Scarlett and breathed a sigh of relief when he confided to Peter Sortino, "Pete, I'm going down for the count!" The Moyers, Gene and Vicki, showed up en masse with Moyers Marvelous Magical Marching Band. Vicki plays a mean comb and Gene a "Ba-a-a-d" washboard. A good time was had by all.

Look out "Meals on Wheels"! Here comes "Wine in a Wagon"! You read it here first. It was just announced at the last meeting of the SRG that our own Alice Jennings, wife of SRG Prez John, who just got a big promo at Ma Bell, will dawn her howdy high-heels and greet all the new residents of Soulard, pulling a little red wagon loaded with wine and beer. With all the new people moving into the area, Alice may need assistance in pulling her welcome wagon. That's a lot of "welcome" to go around.

Mark and Anne Lyman will be sling-ing clay at a glorious resort on Lake Michigan as the invited guests of the owner who will even sponsor a "Show" of just their pottery. It's quite a recognition of Mark and Anne's talents and we're awfully glad they live here. The show is scheduled for Mid-June. By the by, you should see their studio at 12th and Victor...very Marin County.

The Houghlands, Paul and Jane, just returned from an exotic trip to "Baghdad on the Bayou," Houston, Texas. Paul explained that they were wine and dined in the "grand style" at the Inn on The Park, a Five-Star Hotel that even turns your bed down and places a mint on each pillow. Jane later confessed that the food was incredible (she never stopped eating) and she loved every minute of it. She's working her good time off at Sigel Community School during a strenuous aerobics class.

Anyone wishing to visit Paul Kjorlie,

he now lives at 2307 Rosati Street.

Good fences good neighbors make. The Sortinos are having their rear brick patio re-layed and adding beautiful limestone retaining walls. With a privacy fence to crown the entertainment area, Leslie plans sumptuous plantings to tantalize the nose and delight the eyes. Truly one of the most beautiful gardens in Soulard.

Flowers, plants and DESIGNS OF DESTINCTION. Once again, you're reading it here first! — Announcing another business soon to be opening its doors in Greater Soulardia. Steve Bess and Bob Davis will be opening Soulard's newest retail flower shop. The location, 12th and Victor, will make it easy for you to stop by and purchase that just-right arrangement to make any get-together an AFFAIR TO REMEMBER! The scheduled date of opening is April 4. Good Luck Steve and Bob!

Finally, at a Mardi Gras Party of two dear friends, a portrait of Larry Hollenberg, "The Sage of South 13th Street," was unveiled. Gasps echoed throughout the room as oohs! and aahs! gave vivid approval of the likeness. Larry, caught totally off-guard, was left speechless. Kathy Poe was there, however, to squeal with delight at Larry's sudden projection into the world of painted people.

Til next time, keep those cards and letters coming!

Photo by Bill Mundy



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NHS "Face Lift" Loans

The opinions expressed here are those of the individual writers. For information on NHS "Face Lift" Loans call 865-3050.

NHS Assistance Available

by Bob McDonald

I was fortunate recently to have a drink and an enlightening conversation with Vicki Moyer, a friend and Souard neighbor who works at Neighborhood Housing Services. She told me of two programs that NHS has initiated. The first is assisting residents of Souard and Benton Park in obtaining insurance. Vicki is able to help those who have had a difficult time getting needed insurance coverage to obtain good coverage at reasonable rates. With her help, we were able to save over \$250.00 on automobile insurance. If you could use this type of assistance, call Vicki at the Central office of NHS.

We also talked about a loan program that NHS plans to renew this year. I got the particulars from Dave Gildehaus, Assistant Director. The program is called "Operation Facelift" and is available to all area residents on a first-come, first-served basis. The maximum loan amount is \$1,500.00 at 3% interest over two years. The NHS Board has tentatively approved the program if funding can be obtained. The loans are intended to help finance work on areas of a house that are visible from the street, such as porches, balconies, mansard roofs, cornices, etc. In the case of a corner house, work done on the back could also qualify. I am very interested in the program, as our "new" house on South 11th won't be complete without a balcony. I feel this program provides an excellent opportunity for many of us to continue to improve the appearance of our neighborhood. Remember that when people come to Souard to visit friends or for house tours or just sight-seeing, they will leave with the impression of what they can see as they drive or walk down our streets.

NHS also has other loan programs for use on other areas of renovation. Call them if you have any questions or would like to sign up for "Operation Facelift."

The NHS \$1,500.00 Face Lift Loan

by Douglas W. Junker

At the last meeting of the Souard Restoration Group, Bob McDonald hawked the virtues of the Neighborhood Housing Services' "Face Lift" loans and urged everyone to make application. He explained that, to-date, very few had applied. I think that people who at first thought this was an excellent opportunity to do some needed work on their building's exterior at such a great interest rate (3% with a two-year payback), saw the flaws in the program after a little thought.

Souard homes are all brick. At most there is a wooden cornice. I know after having mine re-done recently, \$1,500.00 doesn't go very far. To get it completed, you would have to borrow more money somewhere else. Some people have suggested the money could go for storm windows. Well, storm windows just on the front might be fine for buildings with common walls, but it doesn't do much for the rest of the house if you're "free standing." Besides, who is going to drive by your house and say, "Wow! What great looking storm windows!" If you have tuckpointing done, you should probably consider having the whole house done, and once again, \$1,500.00 doesn't cut it. After all, a leak is a leak whether it's in front or causing a wall to bulge in the rear! \$1,500.00 could cover the cost of flower boxes, but that would be like putting a new vinyl top on a car with a smashed in trunk. Besides, who wants to pay \$60.00 a month for flower boxes?

Souard homes do have back porches and balconies as well as side porches and steps where \$1,500.00 could go very far. Fences and minor brick work can also be completed with such funds, but since these can occur on the side and back of the buildings, the money cannot be used.

A "Face Lift" loan is not a new idea. In fact, during the 1700's, ministers fearful that Catherine the Great would be appalled by the true poverty, created "cardboard" fronts on homes and buildings that she would see when she made her Grand Tour of the Russian Empire.

Come on, NHS! Loosen up and let that \$1,500.00 go further! After all, you don't want to be known as "NHS the Great," do you?

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Soulard VACANT LOT designated Historic Site

by Skip Gattermann

Extensive research has been done which proves that the first vacant lot resulting from urban renewal was created in Soulard. "This is truly a milestone in the history of American urban centers as well as for historic preservation in the United States," observed April Phool, director of the National League for Urban Preservation. "It is interesting to note that the oldest neighborhood in St. Louis has America's oldest vacant lot."

Researchers found that the bureaucratic dream of destroying the fabric of America's inner cities was carefully planned. Soulard was targeted for demolition because of its historic significance. If the government could get by with demolition in Soulard, they could get by with it anywhere. This was the bureaucratic feeling of the time. One government official who wished to remain anonymous put it this way, "We felt that the 1960's was a perfect time to get the headacheball swinging. Today Soulard—tomorrow the nation!"

Investigation also revealed that demolition to create the first vacant lot was well planned and would set a pattern for all those to follow. Bulldozers rolled down Menard Street early on a Sunday morning while the residents slept or were at church. Many people said that the first sign of demolition was when they heard the crash of a load bearing wall. Neighborhood action was quick, and Third District police were summoned only to discover that the wrecking crew had no permit. Demolition stopped. It was learned that copper gutters and lead plubing in the structure had mysteriously disappeared. All seemed to be secure until two a.m. the following morning, when the sound of wailing sirens were heard from fire trucks. Awakened neighbors knew where they were going.

League and local officials are planning elaborate dedication ceremonies for June, but much work has to be done first. For the past twenty years, the couple who live next to the lot have destroyed the lot's historic appearance. They cleaned off old tires, bottles and mattresses. They planted grass and a few trees. Even a flower bed borders the rear of the lot. Ms. Phool pointed out that all of this will go. "The league couldn't understand how this charming couple could be so insensitive to the historic fabric of the lot and neighborhood," commented Ms. Phool. "Why, this was as if someone had put aluminum siding over a Mansard roof."

Some tires from an old '62 Chevy have been donated and will be strewn strategically on the lot. An old Philco console television set will be dumped in

the flower bed. Several mildewed mattresses have been acquired, too. Ms. Phool spoke cheerfully of the most significant find for the restoration of the lot. "Recently, some New Orleans bricklayers confessed to having used some 'hot' bricks taken from the home which formerly stood on the lot. These bricks will be removed from the subdivision houses in which they were used and scattered about the lot." She went on to explain that the bricklayers have been found guilty of bricknapping and sentenced to live in a suburban tract house for the rest of their lives.

The city will make its contribution to the lot with the help of the street department. They mayor in a noon press conference yesterday announced that city salt trucks used during winter snow storms will dump salt around the bases of lot trees. This will assure their demise.

To identify the lot, the league has secured the services of a noted sculptor to place a rusted wall of metal at the front of the lot. Lot history will be spray painted on it. Orange fluorescent paint will be used.

Exciting OPERA comes to Soulard

The mysterious story behind the face painted on the floor of Tellers Bar is told in a lovely and melodic opera to be performed in Soulard, Wednesday, April 20, at 7:30 p.m.

The opera, "Face on the Barroom Floor" was commissioned with original music by the Central City Opera of Colorado during their 100-year anniversary of the legendary bar in the Rocky Mountains. Set in the Old West in 1876, the opera is an engaging story of love, jealousy and death accompanied by ragtime music. Performed in English, it is not opera in the traditional sense.

Opera comes to Soulard for the first time ever, courtesy of the St. Louis Arts and Humanities Commission and the Soulard Restoration Group. The opera will be performed by the acclaimed Opera Theatre of St. Louis company through the Commission's Neighborhood Performance Series.

"Face on the Barroom Floor" is the perfect way to introduce yourself to the joy of opera. No longer just for high-brow audiences, opera entertains, enlightens and educates. The Soulard performance will be fully staged, with costumes, sets and a professional cast. Music is by Henry Mollicone and operetta by John S. Bowman. The Opera Theatre of St. Louis is taking this same opera to Scotland in 1983 as part of the Edinburgh International Arts Festival.

The Soulard program will consist of two parts. First the 35-minute "Face on the Barroom Floor," followed by a short program of operatic musical selections.

The evening is free and open to the general public. It begins at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, April 20, at Trinity Lutheran Church, 8th and Soulard. Don't miss it!

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Infill Status Report

by Catherine Perry

The saga of SRG vs. the CHIP Infill project is finally at an end, after much hard work and disappointment. As you probably all know, the buildings, which contain both market rate and subsidized apartments, are under construction and nearing completion. The lawsuits concerning the projects were settled, and SRG will have input into management and tenant selection. An additional settlement provision, which would have allowed SRG representation on the CHIP and YEHS Board of Directors and CHIP / YEHS representation on the SRG board, failed by two votes to reach the 2/3rds majority required by the SRG by-laws and so will not be implemented. (The vote was taken at the March SRG membership meeting).

John Jennings, President of SRG, expressed disappointment in the outcome but stated, "Now we can put this controversy behind us and move on to happier work in the neighborhood." John then presented a long list of GOOD NEWS—including the successful saving of several buildings from demolition, opera theater in Soulard, and the appearance of the SRG Welcome Wagon. See this issue for more details on those things.

I would personally like to thank all of the people who helped us on the lawsuit, and especially the individual plaintiffs, who really put themselves on the line for something they believed in. Although the reasons many of us had for opposing the CHIP infill remain, the buildings are a fact and we should look forward positively for the good of the whole neighborhood. Let's all work together and welcome our new neighbors the same as we would any other new "Soulardians." (Think of all the potential new SRG members, Operation Brightside volunteers, tree planters, etc.)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

OPERATION BRIGHTSIDE's Project Blitz for 1983 will be in Soulard on Saturday, May 14. Volunteers to work are badly needed and should call Region 2 Chairmen, Paul Von Gontard of Anheuser-Busch and Don Occhi of the Elks Club.

SIGEL COMMUNITY SCHOOL, located at 2039 Russell Blvd., will start its spring courses the week of April 11, running through the last week of May. Subjects range from bookkeeping and microcomputer BASIC to stained glass and upholstery, to aerobic dancing and tennis. Most classes run for eight weeks and have a fee of \$10 to \$20 (a few that require supplies or books cost more). There are also several "Home Repair Mini-Classes" which, for a fee of \$2-\$5 will give you a one night course in such things as tuckpointing, drywall and plumbing. Call 865-5050 for information.

continued on pg. 12



Photo by Bill Mundy

SRG House of the Month 2113 Menard

by Clark Rowley

This two-family has been tied up in an estate for a number of years. The title was recently cleared, and the heirs are now offering it for sale.

The building is perfect for conversion to a single-family home. The first and second floors have three rooms each, and the third floor provides space for a third bedroom if an interior staircase is installed connecting all three floors and the basement. An added bonus is a newer garage constructed of cinder-block. The garage is in excellent shape.

The house has a full basement and a small, brick-paved courtyard. The woodwork inside is intact, although a purchaser may want to remove it to frame out the walls. Floors are pine, as are most Soulard floors. They are in good condition and could be sanded and sealed to create the golden floors so popular in restoration neighborhoods. The third floor boasts a mansard roof, a Victorian stylistic device. The potential of the cornice and facade is revealed in the home directly to the south, which is the twin of 2113 Menard. Work has been completed on the facade of this home, which is owned and occupied by Neal and Susan Jareczek.

At present, a tenant occupies the first floor of 2113 Menard. Asking price for the building is \$19,800. For additional information or for a look at the building, contact the listing agent, Clark Rowley at 773-3543 or 231-1850. He is with John R. Green, Inc., and lives in Soulard.

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A MILLION YEARS of Soulard History

by Skip Gattermann

In the last issue, we traced the history of the network of caves beneath Soulard from their discovery circa 1850 to their acquisition by Lee Hess, a local pharmaceutical manufacturer, in 1945 with the intention of making them into a unique tourist attraction.

One of the major tasks to complete the mile-and-a-quarter tour route was to connect the two caves with a 190 foot tunnel. To do this, 400 carloads of rock were removed from the tunnel. During this construction period, many fossils were found in the caves. More than three thousand individual bones were found—the largest number believed to have been found in any North American cave. Among the fossils found was that of an extinct piccary or wild boar (*Platygonus Compressus*) believed to have lived before the last ice age between 20,000 and 500,000 years ago. The bones of an extinct armadillo were found—the farthest north the bones of an armadillo had been found. The armadillo was quite large compared to its modern day cousin who lives in the American Southwest. Mr. Hess discovered the remains of an extinct woodchuck which was named for him—*Marmota Monax Hessi*. Eventually, many of these fossils were placed on display in the cave museum.

The tenement buildings which used the cave as a natural sewer were renovated (probably to the horror of preservationists) for the cave museum. The Second French Empire influenced row houses with their Mansard roofs were converted into a modern Spanish style museum building.

In addition to the fossils from the cave, the museum was home to many other novel and some very unexpected items. The Damascus Palace and Ancient Tile Court, which was the historic home of the thirteenth century caliphs of the Mohammedan Empire, was displayed. It was reported that H. Ephraim Beguriat first exhibited the palace at the Columbian Exposition of 1893 in Chicago. The entire palace and court were exhibited at the St. Louis World's Fair in 1904 on International Avenue next to the Brazil Building. The exhibit was carefully crated after the fair to be stored temporarily. Temporary storage became permanent, and at the time of Mr. Beguriat's death, the storage firm became the owners. From this company Mr. Hess obtained it. The palace featured, according to a tourist brochure, "the cradle of the Mohammedan Caliph, historical tapestries, paintings, and window guards from the time of Christ." The materials used in the palace's construction formed a sen-

sational list—ebony, mother of pearl, ivory and crystal. Among these items were plaques of handcarved Cedar of Lebanon which were preserved very well because of the wood's unusual hardness. There were embroideries of gold, velvets, brass urns and many other beautiful items.

The museum also housed bronzes, marbles, statuary, paintings, a miniature World's Fair and other objects of art. Behind this wonderful museum was the true treasure—the cave itself. Featured in the cave was a place called the Narrows where a slow-moving spring provided a water flow of tranquil beauty. At this spot was an unusual feature—a stalagmite named for the Al Capp cartoon character because of its resemblance. It was called the Schmoo. Another feature was the Black Dahlia, an unusual natural black and white onyx formation, so named as it was discovered at the time of the Black Dahlia murder case in Los Angeles. The formation was a natural fountain fed by a small spring. The spring forever flowed over the tip of the Black Dahlia.

On a cold, snowy February 22, 1950, Cherokee Cave opened to the general public for the first time. Mr. Hess invited neighborhood school children to tour the cave that day. Two hundred kids showed to take the tour free of charge. Some of them made the mile and a quarter route eleven times!

There were many other features of the cave which made the entire experience of a visit a royal treat. However, there is an old saying that "all good things must come to an end." The year 1961 brought the death blow to the cave and museum. The construction of the Ozark Expressway (I-55) ended the cave operations. The cave was directly in its path. The highway department purchased the property from Mr. Hess. The main entrances were sealed permanently by the highway embankment. Engineering studies were done to determine if the nineteen foot thick cave ceiling would support the highway. Alternatives were to fill the caves or drive supporting beams through them. As a result of the construction of the highway, a major portion of the cave has been destroyed. Mr. Hess died in July, 1961, and the Damascus Palace and other museum items were auctioned.

As late as 1969, entrances and part of the caves were reported still open with access from the brewery complex. Also remaining is the beautiful antebellum Chatillon-DeMenil House which was part of the Hess Estate and has since become a national landmark. Another reminder is a small street connecting Seventh Street to Broadway which is fittingly named Cave Street. Even though progress has erased a wonderful part of St. Louis and Soulard for future generations, it cannot erase the warm memories of many older St. Louisans who had the tremendous opportunity to share the beauty of Lee Hess' vision—the Cherokee Cave, a mile and a quarter walk into a million years of history under a city.

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Elmer & Lee Mick

1126 Sidney

by Clark Rowley

It would seem that people sometimes purchase houses accidentally. Such is the case with the Feurbacher Mansion at 1126 Sidney, recently purchased by Elmer and Lee Mick. At least, that is the word from Elmer.

As the story unfolds, Elmer is a beer can collector and a historian and devotee of the beer industry. Actually, he is being modest. He is a nationally recognized expert and member of the Beer Can Collectors of America, Gateway Chapter. He also serves on the Board of Directors of the National Association.

He was always intrigued by the Feurbacher Mansion, which was constructed by Max Feurbacher of the Green Tree Brewery. He and Lee have attended Souland house tours. When they learned that the Feurbacher house was for sale after the last Fall House Tour, the couple put an offer on the building. They were somewhat surprised when they ended up owning it. "She blames me for buying the place because of my interest in brewery memorabilia, and I blame her for buying the house because of her fascination with the music room," Elmer jokes. The pipe organ installed in the drawing room inside the front door has created a music room.

Differences aside, the Micks are forging ahead with repairs on the building. They are concentrating on exterior work, replacing gutters, patching roofing and tuckpointing the chimneys, among other projects. They are also replacing the ceiling in the dining room and doing some other interior work.

Elmer is a retired Postal Service employee, and Lee works at Francis Realty.

We are sorry to hear that Mr. Mick has been injured in an accident while working on his new home. Get well soon!

By-Laws

by Clark Rowley

The "no" vote for the SRG By-laws change at the March meeting was an important tactical error.

The vote was an echo of decisions made several years ago which yielded the Section 8 infill presently being constructed. For those displeased with the In-Fill Project, it may be helpful to review the record.

When Charles Derleth was president of the SRG in 1977-78, it became apparent that Section 8 was going to be an important issue in the neighborhood. At that time, YEHS had a number of Section 8 units, and more were on the way.

In contemplation of this potential development, several people realized that there was a basic problem on the part of the SRG—we were standing on the outside and could not exercise any control over Section 8 because we had no real involvement.

To alleviate this problem, the suggestion was made that the SRG involve itself directly in Section 8 by rehabilitating several units. This would have gotten us into the system and also would have nullified the criticism that the SRG was anti-poor people and anti-Section 8.

Unfortunately, the outcry was extremely harsh. A small number of people organized themselves and attacked the idea on a very emotional level. It all culminated at a board meeting characterized by verbal bullying. Derleth got sick of the accusations and resigned, and the matter never came before the membership.

We are paying the price today. One of the biggest problems regarding the In-Fill Project was the fact that SRG was totally outside and many decisions on the In-Fill were made and approved before anybody in SRG even knew that the project was on somebody's drawing

board. Likewise, the failure to participate in a positive manner provided ammunition for demagogic rhetoric that SRG was anti-poor people and anti-subsidized housing.

Be that as it may, the choice to ignore Section 8 and hope it would go away was certainly a loser. In fact, inaction was substituted for positive steps. What made the decision most tragic was that it was made not by careful consideration, but because a handful of opponents mounted an irrational and personally derogatory campaign. In retrospect, it can be seen that those opponents lacked any vision or tactical sense and, in fact, made inevitable the current construction.

Today we have the units, whose number and architectural mediocrity would not have been possible had SRG chosen a role of forceful participation. For the \$17,000 plus which SRG recently spent to fight In-Fill, we purchased the opportunity to again join the system. The vote of the membership on the By-laws change wasted that opportunity.

It is interesting to note that some of the same people who vehemently fought participation in 1978 spoke against the By-laws change. Their reason for not wanting representation on the SRG and YEHS boards was that "those people" are not trustworthy. It is unfortunate that the SRG is now deprived of an ability to keep its eyes on "those people," whoever they may be. And it is doubly unfortunate that after an expenditure of \$17,000, the SRG still displays the total inability to see that more Section 8 is just over the horizon, and again we have surrendered a chance to exercise some control over that future development by knowing what is being planned.

Mike & Linda Hudson

by Clark Rowley

Some people arrive in St. Louis and immediately discover Souland. Others only discover Souland after they have checked out the entire metropolitan area. Such is the case with Mike and Linda Hudson, who recently purchased a totally redone townhouse with apartment at 1113-1115 Lynch.

They started their search for a home in Ballwin. Things went downhill from there; of course, until, after totally consuming several real estate agents, they ended up in Souland. Their objective, after sifting through various alternatives, was to have a home and an investment property at a reasonable price. This is an option available in Souland.

Their house was originally a four-family, and it had been uninhabitable for a number of years. They developed one half of it into a rental unit with two bedrooms, 1½ baths, and all the amenities, as agents say. For themselves, they took 1113, which has buildings on both sides of it.

To alleviate the lack of side windows, a contemporary design was developed, complete with a light scoop from the top floor to the first floor, topped with a large skylight. Designed and developed by Laclede Partnership, the house has two bedrooms, 1½ baths and a finished third floor library/family room.

The Hudsons have always lived in west county. This is their first home and investment property, and their ability to perceive the potential and opportunities of Souland is a credit to the neighborhood. Linda is with Ernst & Whinney, an accounting firm. She works on the health care consulting staff, analyzing new health care services for hospitals. Mike is with American Bell, a newly formed company which is a subsidiary of AT&T. American Bell is involved in marketing telecommunications equipment and systems to businesses.

Besides their dog and parakeet, the Hudsons share the building with Rich McAfee, their tenant in 1115 Lynch. Rich, who recently returned to St. Louis from Kansas City, used to live in Souland. He also works with the telephone company.

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Photo by Bill Mundy

Anyone know where this is?

Send us your guess — your name might appear in the next issue.

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Here's our one and only response to last issue's "Where is it?" picture.

Hey —

Of course I know where the parapet cap is

— I rehabbed it.

It's at 1309-3E Shenandoah.

Dave Lewis

Heritage and Urban Design Commission Meeting

January 27 and February 24, 1983

RESIDENTIAL:

Approval was granted for the rehabing of the following structures inside and out: 1927-29 South Ninth Street, by the Laclede Partnership; 1039 Victor — complete interior/exterior restoration by Kiernan & Partners; 727 Shenandoah — renovate 3-family missionary structure by Laclede Partnership. The following permits were denied pending submission of more detailed plans: 1040 Lami, 2312 South 9th Street, 1039 Victor.

COMMERCIAL:

Approval was given for the interior/exterior alteration of 826 Ann.

DEMOLITIONS:

There were several demolitions submitted. 800-02 Geyer was denied pending finalization of plans to rehab within the next 30 days. Demolition of 4706-710-712 Soulard was requested. Permission was given for demolition of 706-8 but denied for 710-12. It is our understanding that Jeff Hicks is trying to put together a package to rehab 706-12 Soulard, and if he is successful, the demolition would be denied. Permission was given for demolition of a wooden structure only at the rear of 1839 South Ninth Street. Demolition for 1855 South Ninth was delayed pending submission of rehab plan in the next 30 days.

MISCELLANEOUS:

There were several miscellaneous items approved. Approval was given for an 18' x 36' swimming pool installation at 1322 Lami. Approval was given for erection of a 6-foot wood fence along Russell in the side yard of 2029 South Ninth Street. This is Mein's restaurant. Rebuilding of cornice at 2306 South 12th Street was approved and approval was given for the rebuilding of a stone retaining wall at 2337 South 13th Street.

Respectfully, Richard R. Phelps — SRG Code Committee

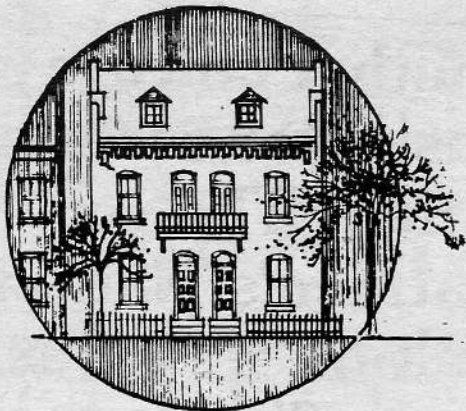
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Journal of a Restorationist

by Pam Mundy

Question: What does a novice restorationist do to become a seasoned veteran of the ways of Soulard?

Answer: Be a Fall House Tour Chairman.

I hear all of your giggles out there. Yes, they have caught another seemingly unsuspecting fool in the House Tour trap. I formally announce that I, Pam Mundy, have accepted the chairmanship of the 9th Annual Soulard House Tour.

Everyone I've talked to about being a house tour chairman says, "you've got a lot of work ahead of you." Funny, that's what everyone says when they walk into our house. However, I am not going into this project with starry eyes. I've done my homework, checked out possibilities, and said my prayers. And, you ask, how can someone who doesn't even know how to tape windows be chairman of the Fall House Tour? My answer is, I've found my calling. This is what my meager 23 years plus 22 days have been leading up to. I know what has to be done. Thanks to Sandra

Allen's records I know who to contact. The only thing I don't know is whose houses are going to be on the tour and who is going to help me. I need you for that answer.

Most people cringe when they are asked to be on a house tour. I probably would, too, if it weren't that I am so proud of my house—even in its present condition. Every house in Soulard is something to be proud of. If you're asked to be on the tour, please say yes. It gives you the perfect way to show off your prized possessions and it will give Soulard the attention it deserves.

There will be a meeting of all interested on April 13th, at 2319 South 12th Street at 7:30 p.m. That's my house—you'll get a preview of the fall house tour. Hope to see you.

The Market Place

To place a "free" 20 word ad in the Market Place call Catherine Perry 771-5769

St. Agatha Day Care Center

Special thanks to St. Agatha Day Care Center for hosting the February SRG meeting. St. Agatha, located at 3221 South Ninth Street cares for preschool children ages 2-5 and also has full day kindergarten. The center is in the old St. Agatha Elementary School, and has a specially designed gross motor skills room, which made even this 30-year-old want to go in and play. The hours are 6:45 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

St. Agatha is a United Way agency and receives some Title XX federal funding. More information about the center is available from its Director, Beverly Sporleder, at 776-6020.

For Soulard real estate services, contact neighborhood specialist Clark Rowley (John R. Greene, Inc., Realtors) at 773-3543 (home) or 231-1850 (office).

Appropriate exterior paint colors add considerably to the eye appeal of your Soulard home. For helpful suggestions on colors and paint, contact Karen and Clark Rowley at 773-3543.

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Upcoming Events

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WEDNESDAY, APRIL 6

SRG Regular Membership Meeting, 7:30 PM
Trinity Lutheran Church, 8th and Soulard Sts.

SATURDAY, APRIL 9

Arbor Day Celebration and Tree Planting.
Begins 9 AM in Pontiac Park, lunch at noon in Lynch & 13th St. Park.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 20

Opera in Soulard, 7:30 PM
Trinity Lutheran Church, 8th and Soulard Sts.
Free performance.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 4

SRG Regular Membership Meeting, 7:30 PM
Trinity Lutheran Church

SUNDAY, MAY 8

Annual Spring Walking Tour of Soulard, 1-5 PM
For tickets call 771-5563

Announcements, from pg. 7

Coming attractions at the VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS HIGH SCHOOL, 2500 South 9th Street, include the Wizard of Oz, at 10 a.m., April 20, 21, 22, 27, 28 and 29 (50¢), and Pajama Game, 8:00 p.m., April 14-15-16 (\$2.00). Plan to attend and see why this high school is called the "Crown Jewel" of the St. Louis School System.

SOFTBALL ANYONE? Sigel Community School, Tammany Hall, and the Millard Filmore Athletic Club (call Jerry Dempsey) all have teams in leagues.

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