DELANCEY STREET PARK OPENING CELEBRATED BY HUNDREDS

Red, white and blue bunting and band music marked the dedication of Delancey St. Park, 3rd and Delancey, June 9 at 7 p.m. Over a hundred Society Hill families gathered under the newly planted locust trees for the ceremonies presided over by City Recreation Commissioner Robert W. Crawford, Commissioner Crawford's son, the Delancey St. Park in "...a token of improvements planned in the area."

Principal speaker, Leon J. Kolanskiwicz, Councilman at Large, praised Gaetano Giordano, Councilman 2nd District, and Commissioner Crawford—saying that "the Delancey St. Park was made possible only through their efforts and cooperation." He also said that Delancey St. Park was the fastest built of any such city park.

"This area, because of its historical background will become one of the greatest spots in the United States," Councilman Kol-

ankiewicz predicted, "and some day the Delancey St. Park will be in direct competition with Rittenhouse Square. As vast improvements occur day by day, this section will not be recognized by people who return to see it in a year and a half. The Delancey St. Park is an official be-
ing of the Restoration of the Society Hill Area."

Commissioner Crawford explained that this park will have no supervision and no key, and that it will be up to the neighborhood to protect it and keep it free from vandalism. He added that the tank area will eventually include some sculptured playground pieces.

The Invocation was given by Rev. Earnest Harding, Rector of Christ Church and the Prayer of Dedication by Rev. Joseph Kow, Rector of St. Peter's Church. Music was furnished by the Police and Firemen's Band, and others were from

Continued on page 2, Col. 1

SUCCESS STORY

Hundreds of local residents gathered on Addison St. (between 4th and 5th Sts.) Saturday night, July 25, to help make SHAIRA's block party a success.

At 6:30 p.m. sales began of frankfurters and knoephla, but also, homemade cakes, donuts, cookies, watermelon, even on the cob, coffee, soda and ice cream. An estimated 70 people participated simultaneously in the bingo game, and there was a rummage sale and jewelry counter. The fun continued in fair weather under festively hung lights, until 11 o'clock, when torrential summer showers failed to arrive. The total net proceeds, $380.00, were turned over to SHAIRA's Treasurer, Bob Levin, to be used in October for the Children's Hallo-
ween Party and Window Painting Contest.

As Jan Winter, Chairman of the Recreation Committee says, "It was the preparation by committee members and the cooperation and work of the Addison St. residents which made the party possible at all. Special thanks should be given to Mrs. Helen Borchiklin and Mrs. Deborah Newbold, who gave so generously of their time and energy.

Booths were taken care of by the Addison St. residents, their friends and families. SHAIRA wishes to thank Mrs. L. Beldiger, Mrs. M. Christensen, Miss E. Christopher, Mr. and Mrs. J. Ciliberti, Mr. T. Clozins, Golden's Market (4th and South), Mr. J. Lewis, Mrs. D. Marenz, Miss R. McDonnell, Mrs. J. McGinty, Mrs. E. Mertz, Mr. and Mrs. Podgorski, San's Market (2nd and South), Miss Selma, Mrs. A. Sobel, Mr. and Mrs. M. Wanilis, Mrs. T. Wanilis, Mrs. M. Yosco and Mr. C. Zabrowski. Also, SHAIRA ex-

presses appreciation to Mrs. Sovoka and Mrs. Rahberger of Stamper St. for their gifts.

Culture on the Rocks?

18 months ago, the old carter's building at 431 Pine St. was home to a Washington Square Theatre. Now, it's home to what was to be one of Society Hill's finest contributions to the rest of the city, the Washington Square Theatre. It would be a cult-
ural center with a small auditorium seating 200 for the presentation of plays by Shaw, O'Neill, Ibsen, Arthur Miller. It would include a theater school, a symphony music hall and an art gal-

ery. It would be staffed by prominent profession-
als from Hedgeway, Chelsea Art Center, Museum School of Art. It would house the of-
cers of the Marboro Music Festival (Rudolph Serkin, Director), the organization responsible

Portion of the building at 431 Pine St. that would have been the proposed Washington Square Theatre.

for bringing Pablo Casals to the U.S. It would be a non-profit organization.

However a neighboring church, represented by the law firm of Harold Seaseen and Evans Kepart, is opposing any use of the theater against the Theater should it be passed by the Zoning Board, and a petition of protest against the Theater was signed by about 50 local resi-
dents. Largely because of this petition, SHAIRA's Board of Directors passed a resolution against the Theater, and several surrounding churches

Continued on page 3, Col. 2

Bus Driver Missing

Riders on the Route 90 bus have missed their favorite driver this summer. Jerry Goldman has been transferred to an-
other line. Because of union regulations, he was replaced by someone with higher seniority who requested a place on this route. Jerry has been with the PTC, twenty-
hour years, and has had various duties, but his greatest wish is to be back on the "Society Hill" bus and see all his friends again.

In the hope that Jerry might be reas-

signed his old position, George Clapp, PTC Public Relations Director, was contacted. Mr. Clapp said that because of driver senior-

ity, the company could do nothing at this time. However, he said his department has received many letters from Mr. Goldman's passengers, particularly mentioning his friendship and courtesy. Perhaps more such letters would facilitate Jerry Goldman's re-

turn.

Chimes heard ringing out over this great three times daily originate from the 20th floor of the Penn Mutual Insurance Building, and are made possible through a stereophonic tape device. The hours are struck at 9 a.m., 12 noon, and 5 p.m., all but Sundays, followed by sever-

Continued on page 2, Col. 2

Nothing this side of Sarasota approaches a dance-ringing circus as closely as have SHAIRA's general meetings, when it comes to the un-
predictable, and your SHAIRA membership card is your ticket to these meetings. Once a member, we urge you to join a committee and so help form SHAIRA policy by making your voice heard at the most crucial times. Members also receive this paper.

You may join SHAIRA if you reside in Society Hill and either rent an apartment (or a house) or own property here. Kindly contact Mrs. Sophie Gervin, WA-4047.
CULTURE (Con't)

wrote letters also in opposition. The Zoning Board still has the matter under consideration.

While it was decided to go ahead with these con-
siderable forces against it the Theater at 5th & Pine is doomed; SHARA members interviewed recently offered approving and disapproving reactions. Also, the minister of one of our largest churches states, "We were not given sufficient informa-
tion prior to asking for our opinion." The Church was asked on Saturday for an opinion to be ready by 9 A.M. the following Monday, and being unable to secure anyone to speak on behalf of the Theater on such short notice, "We leaned rather heavily on the fact that the SHARA Board had opposed the Theater." Several members of SHARA's Board have expressed regret at what they fear may have been a too hasty decision on the basis of only one side of the story.

The Board was told there would be no parking available for the Theater and the local residents would suffer. However, we now know that Mr. Andrade of the Redevelopment Authority has stated that the City Plan calls for two park-

The Board was told the plans for the Theater included a "coffee house" which might attract unsavory patrons. The actual plans submitted by Mr. Louis Silverman, chairman of the Theater group and a member of the Penna. Lion of the Greater Philadelphia conservation group, for the removal of the store on the NE corner of 5th & Pine and its replacement by an open garden, replaced with statue, in which coffee will be served to patrons between acts. The reaction of SHARA members interviewed was extremely favorable because, even suggesting opening the garden to the public so there "might be some pleasant place in the neighborhood to go for coffee."

It was suggested that there might be late-
night parties staged by the performers which would disturb the neighborhood. Persons con-
tacted with "the theater," however, explain that late-night parties are apt to be a phenomena of amateur groups and that the plans for the Theater involve plays put on by professional actors only.

In respect to the churches which are against these plans, it might be considered that many of them are very elderly; it might also be recalled that in times past, the Church has been a proponent of culture.

Nonetheless, the SHARA Theater has been commended by many other groups in the city, that both the Redevelopment Authority and the Planning Commission are in wholehearted accord, and that until recently Society Hill has received much favorable publicity concerning the Washington Square Theater.

Parents of boys or girls interested in joining a Cub Scout Pack or Scout Troop should contact Mr. Winter, Chairman of SHARA'S Recreation Committees, Room 100, and presently Scoutermaster of Troop 95. (MAT-51B0. 423 So. 3rd Street.)

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Is New School Plan in Keeping with Improved Education?

At a time when there is great emphasis on better standards of education, citizens should be aware of any steps which may lessen Public School efficiency.

An adjustment teacher instructs students with reading problems. These students are taken out of their normal classes on a given special help, and then returned to their regular classes.

In September, the Board of Education will start counting their adjustment teachers with in the regular teachers allotted to each school. This means that when there are presently 35.2 pupils per regular teacher, the School Board will soon be able to say there are only 34. This would constitute a paper figure only; there would still be 35.2 pupils per normal classroom teacher.

Under this new counting system, a princi-
pal would have the privilege of either doing away with the adjustment class and using that teacher for regular classes, or maintaining the adjustment class and increasing the actual teaching pupil ratio from 35.2 to 36.

Recently the legislature voted increased funds for increased services in our schools but the above procedure is not necessary to increase services.

This is the first of many steps the school board can take to give the citizens the impression they are increasing services and decreasing pupil-teacher ratio. Collecting and reporting on the number of adjustment teachers at present are not counted in the regular allotment. If the school board decides to count them on the allotment as it is doing now, the adjustment teachers will be counted. More often these figures are kept in his or her regular job, the students are divided among the regular teachers, thus their load would be increased.

We as taxpayers and parents have a right to know what goes on in our schools. The school board does not wish us to know about this and other procedures. It is time for us to act on behalf of our children. We can't let our normally slow classes be allowed down even more by let-
ting our adjustment program be done away with or be increased in our teacher already heavy load.
Eyes of World on Society Hill Plan

In the 17th and 18th centuries when ships sailed into Philadelphia Harbor, they looked upon a city of handsome homes built for a free people. Each house was built with care, the wooden interiors skillfully fashioned by hand. As the city prospered, business and industry grew, encroaching upon the residential areas. In time, the city grew and people moved to suburban living. The city was slowly dying. Many surrounding areas went under the bulldozer to make way for new generations of houses; all alike, all modern, hastily built, mass produced. Gone was the charm of the old.

It seemed as though for years there was a dream of freedom started a new notion. New ideas were born. Shortly after the second world war the city planners of Philadelphia began to work on a new kind of living, based on redevelopments that would preserve the old and combine it with the new, to bring back our old city. They worked and they dreamed. The result: the Redevelopment Plan for Society Hill, Unit 1 and Unit 2, that we know so well. However, this plan took 12 years to perfect.

The first redevelopment plan was displayed at Gimbel’s in 1947 at the Better Philadelphia Exposition. Even at that time a large section of Society Hill was earmarked Historic Residence Rehabilitation. In October of 1950 a plan for an area called the Old City was published. This plan was inspired by Title I of the 1949 Housing Act which appropriated money for slum clearance and urban redevelopment. This was the first major legislation by Congress of any importance in the rebuilding of our cities. Before the plan could be put into effect, the problem of the food markets had to be solved. Through the cooperation of the Greater Philadelphia Movement, the Old Philadelphia Development Corp., the City Planning Commission and the Redevelopment Authority, the food center was moved to a new, efficient and strategically located quarters in South Philadelphia. This opened the way for constructing our neighborhood as a quality residential sector in the center city, not unlike Wm. Penn’s original plan for a ‘green country town’.

How unusual it is for redevelopment planning to preserve and build around still-standing structures instead of first making a clean sweep of the entire area. Can any other city claim this unique approach? We are indeed fortunate that our city government and its associated planners appreciate the past and are investing in the future. From time to time we see people from all over the world coming up and down our streets, examining each house, peering into corners. They are not paying...they are looking for a dream. The tourists who come here are not peering...they have heard about that dream.

The revolutionary plan of redevelopment for Society Hill includes the confluence of planners everywhere. They want it to succeed. They also want to plan for green gardens, parks, and attractive places to live in the heart of the city. The fulfillment of this hope depends on us. It is built in the confidence of individual responsibility. We all have a responsibility to the city under our hands. We are living in that dream.

Janet Lewis

200 YEARS OF MUSIC

In keeping with the history and eminence of St. Peter’s Church, the Parish has achieved a great deal of music, its beginnings stemmed from the activities of the Choir of the Parish who led the congregation in the response, set the pitch for chanting, and led the singing of hymns. The congregation of St. Peter’s enjoyed singing together and practiced on their own. Record shows that in 1761 a special anthem was sung by a group of parishioners even before the actual, informal, assembling of a choir in 1767 by William Cartwright. When in 1765, Francis Hopkinson, a signer of the Declaration of Independence, made a collection of "Psalm Tunes with a Few Anthems and Hymns for the Use of the United Churches of Christ Church and St. Peter’s Church", the choir’s activities continued on page 4, Col. 3

514 Cypress Street has been bought by Theodore and Naomi Can. They are restoring the house with a modern interior. Mr. Can is an architect, a member of the American Institute of Architects, and will have his offices in his home.

William and Carol Johnson have purchased 518 Spruce Street. They are newly arrived from California by way of New York and Mr. Johnson, an artist, works for the Ayer Advertising Agency. The Johnsons plan extensive improvements to the house and will occupy the first floor.

Miss Bertha von Mochsirski, Director of the Print Club and sister of Michael von Mochsirski, the Redevelopment Authority, has bought the property at 310 Delancey Street and intends to restore it prior to living there. Miss von Mochsirski has been a Society Hill resident for some time.

503 Cypress Street has been acquired by Carlton and Muriel Nelson, who are rehabilitating the house for likely future occupancy. Mr. Nelson is a buyer of imported chocolates for Confectioners and travels extensively for them.

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This is to acknowledge the letter from the unknown writer in the great midwest to the editorial.

Aaron Packer
Cabinet Makers
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Reproductions – Contemporary
411 Spruce St. – W.A. 5-9156

Although the Hill-Physick-Kreh Mansion has been closed for several months, perhaps residents have noticed that the garden is being maintained. This is not the work of the owners (The Pennsylvania Hospital) but of Mrs. Werner Plasz of 334 Spruce Street. The plants, shrubs, and lawns for the past two summers have been planted, watered, cultivated and maintained through her generosity, and SHARA, on behalf of all residents, wishes to express its appreciation.

Herman’s Shoe Service
400 Market St. – W.A. 2-0197
Shoe repairs for Society Hill Established 1939

Froodies Barber Shop
335 So. 4th St.
HAS BEEN IN THIS LOCATION FOR FORTY-NINE YEARS

The following information comes from Mrs. Samuel P. Ross, President. The Cultural Mark-
Neave House Details Tell of Colonial Era.

Still standing on the northwest corner of Second and Spuce Streets is the long-abandoned public wash house erected by the Philadelphia merchant, Samuel Neave, in 1759. An inquisitive eye can trace the outline of former windows on the south side of the house. These windows once overlooked a walled garden which probably occupied the ground between the house and Spuce Street (now covered by the rubble remains of Tucker's Tavern, pulled down last winter). The four story yellow brick building, adjoining Neave's House on the west, hides the remaining walls of Neave's backbuilding. This area once contained the "plaza, pantry, kitchen, back parlor, and servant's quarters. Farther to the west, on ground now occupied by later houses at 209, 211, 213, and 215 Spuce Street, stood Neave's coach house and stable (which housed at Neave's death "a Chariot & 3 Coach Hr. sets") and a green house. Thus this manse, with its backbuilding and outbuildings, must have constituted one of the finest colonial residences of the city. Like many Philadelphia merchants, Neave had his store on the first floor, with living quarters and the "envy of many" the second floor rooms of the establishment in the backbuilding.

A great deal is now known about the original condition of the house and backbuilding, and accurate data is also available for restoring both of these elements. From an inventory of Neave's estate taken at his death just before the Revolution, it is known that the house was handsomely furnished in the latest colonial taste. In Neave's parlors for example, "there must have been a magnificent, throne-like Chippendale sofa, four footed, with a Cover of Cashmere and crowned with a "gaudy Hang." This same room had window curtains of "green Horse Hair," as well as "8 mahogany Chairs, Claw Feet.'"

The furnishings of the backbuilding were less elegant, in keeping with its function as the working area. But even here the "back parlor," contained in part an "Iron Stove ornamented," an "oak Walnut Table," and "3 Walnut Chairs." On the walls were "3 Maps & 5 Pictures." The kitchen, at the western end of the backbuilding, was amply supplied with utensils, many of which can be found in the modern home: "a Callender, Fish Strainer, & small funnel...3 spits, some Skewers, a Coffee Mill," firing pan, pl t striping Pan Lazey back & Gridiron," to name but a few items from a long list. In storage at the time of the inventory was a "Barbering Iron." "Cooking was probably done at a wide open fireplace, remains of which are still to be seen in the building. In the piazza were "12 Fire Buckets & 4 Bags" and "a copper Hand Engine," proof that Neave, a member of the Union Fire Company, lived up to the requirements imposed by Benjamin Franklin that members be constantly prepared to attend to the slightest fire.

The above is but a sample of the known furnishings of Neave's once handsome house. Our list also includes an itemized inventory of the contents of the store, including everything from "Superfine Cloths" to wines, silver buckles and fish hooks. There is also enough architectural evidence remaining to restore the house and its backbuilding with little guesswork.

The Neave House and Store has been urged for preservation by the Historical Commission in its entirety. No one doubts that the front portion will be preserved. The prospect of restoring the backbuilding has been threatened, however, by the proposed, but still uncertain, location of an access ramp from Spuce Street to a garage beneath the three projected apartment towers on the north. But to restore the house without its backbuilding would be a half-way measure: like building a new house without a kitchen, and would remove five rooms of the original house. A brief visit to the Samuel Powel House (244 South Third Street) should convince anyone interested, of the importance of the backbuilding to that restored colonial mansion.

As a tangible link with the colonial merchants of Philadelphia, and as an outstanding feature of the "true" Society Hill, the 200-year-old Samuel Neave House and Store should be preserved and restored complete. Nothing short of this can give an accurate picture of the house as Neave, and other colonials, knew it.

Since this article was written the Redevelopment Authority has decided to level the building for the new tower.

Mr. O'Gorman, a native of St. Louis, graduated in architecture from Washington University. He is working on old Philadelphia buildings for the National Park Service Design Office.

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200 YEARS (Cont'd)

were well established.

The installing of a church organ in 1764 led eventually to a more formal choir organization. In 1782 Matthew Whitehead was instructed to assemble twelve persons and teach them "to accompany the organ.

For many years the choir sang from the organ gallery, then from the box pews on each side of the sanctuary, and when the organ console was moved to its present position in 1920, the choir assumed its present location in the naves.

The number of singers has greatly increased to its present count of fifty and has been composed of men and boys, solely, since the second half of the nineteenth century. Through the years its beautiful singing has spread its fame and brought it many requests to perform. Not only does the choir sing at regular worship and special services at St. Peter's, but it is also in demand throughout the Pennsylvania Diocese. The Choir of St. Peter's has been on tour, has made recordings for RCA, has sung at the Academy of Music, has appeared on television, and has been heard on radio, and still participates in church services frequently broadcast.

To the congregation a means of joyful expression of faith, to the community a source of pride, the Choir of St. Peter's is a great aesthetic achievement.

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For use as a rectory when restored, Christ Church has bought the fine old house at 336 Spuce Street from the Walter family. A late 18th century row house built by Samuel Pancoast and sold to Mordacai Lewis (partner of merchant Samuel Neave—see article this issue by James F. O'Gorman) it was later occupied by the Wharton's after whose son, Joseph, the school of business administration at the University was named. For the benefit of the restoration a Society Hill tour and tea is offered on September 27; advance tickets are now on sale.

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