

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 stated that the Delancey St. Park is "only a token example of improvements planned in the area."

Principal speaker, Leon J. Kolankiewicz, 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. 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 beginning 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 Koci, Rector of St. Peter's Church. Music was furnished by the Police and Firemen's Band, ushers were from

Continued on page 2, Col 1

Culture on the Rocks?

18 months ago, the old caterer's building at 431 Pine Street was acquired to provide a home for what was to be one of Society Hill's finest contributions to the rest of the city, the Washington Square Theater. It would be a cultural 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 symphonic music hall and an art gallery. It would be staffed by prominent professionals from Hedgerow, Cheltenham Art Center, Museum School of Art. It would house the offices of the Marlboro Music Festival (Rudolf Serkin, Director), the organization responsible



Portion of the building at 431 Pine Street that would house the proposed Washington Square Theater

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 Stassen and Evans Kephart, is preparing to bring legal action 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 residents. Largely because of this petition, SHARA's Board of Directors passed a resolution against the Theater, and several surrounding churches

Continued on page 2, Col. 2

SUCCESS STORY

Hundreds of local residents gathered on Addison St. (between 4th and 5th Sts.) Saturday night, July 23, to help make SHARA's block party a rousing success.

At 6:30 p.m. sales began of frankfurters and sauer kraut, home baked cakes, do-nuts, cookies, watermelon, corn 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, threatened summer showers failing to arrive.

The total net proceeds, \$280.00, were turned over to SHARA's Treasurer, Bob Levins, to be used in October for the Children's Halloween Party and Window Painting Contest.

As Kurt 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 Buerklin 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. SHARA wishes to thank Mrs. L. Beddger, Mrs. M. Christensen, Miss E. Christopher, Mr. and Mrs. J. Ciliberti, Mr. T. Cilinski, Golden's Market (4th and South), Mr. I. Levin, Mrs. M. Mayers, Miss R. McDonnell, Mrs. J. McGinty, Mrs. E. Mertz, Mr. and Mrs. Podgorski, Sam's Market (2nd and South), Miss Sellers, Mrs. A. Sobel, Mr. and Mrs. M. Wanielista, Mrs. T. Wanielista, Mrs. M. Yotsko and Mr. C. Zaberer. Also, SHARA expresses appreciation to Mrs. Soroka and Mrs. Kahrigler of Stamper St. for their gifts.



Bus Driver Missing

Riders on the Route 90 bus have missed their favorite driver this summer. Jerry Goldman has been transferred to another 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-four 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 re-assigned his old position, George Clapp, PTC Public Relations Director, was contacted. Mr. Clapp said that because of driver seniority, 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 return.

Architect Charles E. Peterson participated in the Annapolis Roundtable Conference on June 25 with planners and developers from Baltimore and Washington. Mr. Peterson vigorously attacked the "mass teardown" where old neighborhoods of character and charm are knocked down by the bulldozer to be replaced by flimsy architectural barracks, many of which are slums from the beginning in spite of all the money spent. Plenty of references were made to Society Hill.



Chimes heard ringing out over this area three times daily originate from the 20th floor of the Penn Mutual Insurance Building 6th and Walnut, 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 several minutes of familiar bell music recorded in Atlanta, Georgia.

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

You may join SHARA if you reside in Society Hill and either rent an apartment (or a house) or own property here. Kindly contact Mrs. Sophie Gaev, WA5-4047.



William & Joanne Surasky, Editors; Esther Abercauph, Dorothy Evans, Joseph McIlvaine, Mary Dvoretzky, Pat Reid, Ed Scherneck, Ida Weintraub.

Printed in Society Hill by Fineart Printers

At the last of many meetings discussing the standing of the businessmen in Society Hill, members of SHARA's Board of Directors were told by the Redevelopment Authority that they would consider allowing those few merchants to stay for the lifetime of the present owner providing their establishments conform in all particulars to the resolution passed at the previous general meeting of SHARA (long-time residence, privately-owned establishment of service to the local community, willingness to rehabilitate to the Redevelopment Authority's standards.)

While every individual resident has a perfect right to either view, it is to be hoped that the resolution passed by 300-member SHARA, as well as the petition signed by over 1000 neighbors, will outweigh at the Redevelopment Authority as well as in City Council, the appeal of any small dissident group.



An opportunity to participate in an experimental *Choral Speaking* group has been offered members of SHARA. This art form, old as Greek Drama, underwent a renaissance with the expert guidance of Marjorie Gullen, professor at the University of London.

Joseph McIlvaine, who studied with Miss Gullen in England, has been asked to organize a *Choral Speaking* group in Society Hill, which will meet one night a week during the fall and winter months.

In England, *Choral Speaking* groups are as common to local communities as are the many choral singing groups in America.

Mr. McIlvaine may be reached by calling MA 7-3018 or contacting him at 315 Pine St.

DELANCEY PARK (Con't)



the Shot Tower Kadets of America, of South Philadelphia, and the Police Detail was from the 6th District, Captain James Keane, Commanding Officer.

Delancey St. was named after the Rev. William Heathcote Delancey, Provost of the University of Pennsylvania from 1828 to 1833. Rev. Delancey's great grandfather came to the United States in 1680. The Delancey St. Park occupies land where a police station (constructed in 1873) and a fire station (1877) once stood. Both buildings, which had been closed previously, were demolished in January 1959.

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CULTURE (Con't)

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

While it would appear that with these considerable forces against it the Theater at 5th & Pine is doomed, SHARA members interviewed recently offered only favorable reactions. Also, the minister of one of our largest churches states, "We were not given sufficient information prior to asking for an 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 parking lots nearby; that there is presently a commercial parking lot only 1/2 block away; that the Theater has acquired a small lot on Lawrence St. for that purpose; that all the parking facilities of the block-long 5th Street Shopping Center (1 door away) should be available in the evenings; and that the Old Pine Church has plans for constructing a large parking area on Lombard Street at 5th, which will be in daytime use only, to service their proposed museum.

The Board was told the plans for the Theater included a "coffee house" which might attract unruly patrons. The actual plans submitted by Mr. Louis Silverman, chairman of the Theater group and a member of the Penna. House of Representatives, call for the removal of the store on the NE corner of 5th & Pine and its replacement by an open garden, replete with statuary, in which coffee will be served to patrons between acts. The reaction of SHARA members interviewed was extremely favorable here, some 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 connected with "the theatre," however, explain that late-night parties are apt to be a phenomena of amateur productions; and 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 their congregations are non-resident. It might also be recalled that in times past, the Church has been a proponent of culture.

Noteworthy, too, is that this 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. Kurt Winter, Chairman of SHARA's Recreation Committee, former Cubmaster, and presently Scoutmaster of Troop 95. (MA7-5180. 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 once a day, given special help, and then returned to their regular classes.

In September, the Board of Education will start counting their adjustment teachers in with the regular teachers allotted to each school.

This means that where 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 principal 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 teacher pupil ratio from 35.2 to 36.

Recently the legislature voted increased funds for increased services in our schools but the above procedure will certainly not increase services.

This is the first of many steps the school board can take to give the impression they are increasing services and decreasing pupil-teacher ratio. Counselors and retarded class teachers at present are not counted in the regular allotment. If the school board decides to count them on the allotment as they are counting the adjustment teachers, they will once more show a paper figure of decreasing the teacher pupil ratio, when in actuality they are increasing it. If the counselor is kept at his or her regular job, the students allotted to that person would have to be 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 slowed down even more by letting our adjustment program be done away with or by increasing our teachers' already heavy load.

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Shortly before the conventions, Society Hill News reported Dorothy Evans polled "the man on the street" with the following results:

For President	% of vote cast
Kennedy	50
Nixon	20
Stevenson	20
Rockefeller	5
Humphrey	5



Compliments of
Mrs. Samuel P. Eckert

PROFILE ON PETERSON

Charles Peterson, author of the article on the Abercrombie and Neave houses in the May issue, is an architect, architectural historian, landscape architect and park planner. Since July 1, 1954, he has been Supervising Architect, Historic Structures, for the National Park Service. And, as many Society Hillers are gratefully aware, he takes his interest in historical structures home with him!

Upon graduation from the University of Minnesota, young architect Peterson began work with the National Park Service as Landscape Architect in San Francisco. Since then he has prepared development plans for many parks and historic sites, both east and west, from the Petrified Forest of Arizona to the Skyline Drive in Virginia. He has been the architect for many historic building restorations, beginning in 1931 with the Moore House, where Cornwallis signed the British surrender at Yorktown, Virginia.

Every once in a while architect Peterson switches hats and becomes lecturer and author. He is contributor to two books on Old Philadelphia: Historic Philadelphia, by the American Philosophical Society and Philadelphia architecture in the 19th Century by the University of Pennsylvania Press. He is editor of "American Notes" in the Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians of which he is Past President and presently a Director. And he is the author of Colonial St. Louis, published in 1949. His lecturing on architectural landmarks of Philadelphia have taken him before many audiences, from California to Puerto Rico, Boston to New Orleans. He recently bought and -- because restoration is a long-time process -- is restoring two houses at 332 and 334 Spruce Street. These were built in 1831-32 by Stephen Girard, and have two of the handsomest stairways in Society Hill, to say nothing of most attractive gardens planted with shrubs and flowers appropriate to an early 19th century home.

SHARA hopes soon to present Mr. Peterson in a talk on Society Hill Landmarks -- date to be announced.

Maureen Murdoch

Eyes of World on Society Hill Plan

In the 17th and 18th centuries when ships sailed into the Philadelphia Harbor, they looked upon a city of homes, a city of dreams 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, great numbers of people moved to suburban living. The city was slowly dying.

Many surrounding areas went under the bulldozer to make way for immense sectors of houses; all alike, all modern, hastily built, mass produced. Gone was the charm of the old.

It seems fitting and right that here in our city, where a dream of freedom started a new nation, a new idea was born. Shortly after the second world war the city planners of Philadelphia began to work on a new kind of living, based on redevelopment, that would preserve the old and combine it with the new, to bring alive 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 plan for center Philadelphia 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 1 of the 1949 Housing Act which appropriated money for slum clearance and city 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 new, efficient and strategically located quarters in South Philadelphia. This opened the way to reconstructing our neighborhood as a quality residential sector in center city, not unlike Wm. Penn's original plan for a "greene countrie towne."

How unusual it is for redevelopment plan-

ners 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 going up and down our streets, examining each house, peering into corners. They are not prying...they are looking for a dream. The tourists who come are not peering... they have heard about that dream.

The revolutionary plan of redevelopment for Society Hill has attracted the attention 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. It will come to life 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 are the quality and achievement of its choir. Its beginnings stemmed from the activities of the Clerk of the Parish who led the congregation in the responses, 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. Records show that in 1761 a special anthem was sung by a group of parishioners even before the actual, although informal, assembling of a choir in 1762 by William Cartwright. When in 1763, 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

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514 Cypress Street has been bought by Theodore and Naomi Cam. They are restoring the house with a modern interior. Mr. Cam 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 Moschzisker, Director of the Print Club and sister of Michael von Moschzisker, of the Redevelopment Authority, has bought the property at 310 Delancey Street and intends to restore it prior to living there. Miss von Moschzisker 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 completely for their own occupancy. Mr. Nelson is a buyer of imported china for Wanamakers and travels extensively for them.

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Although the Hill-Physick-Keith 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. Webster Plass of 334 Spruce Street. The plants, shrubs, and lawn 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.

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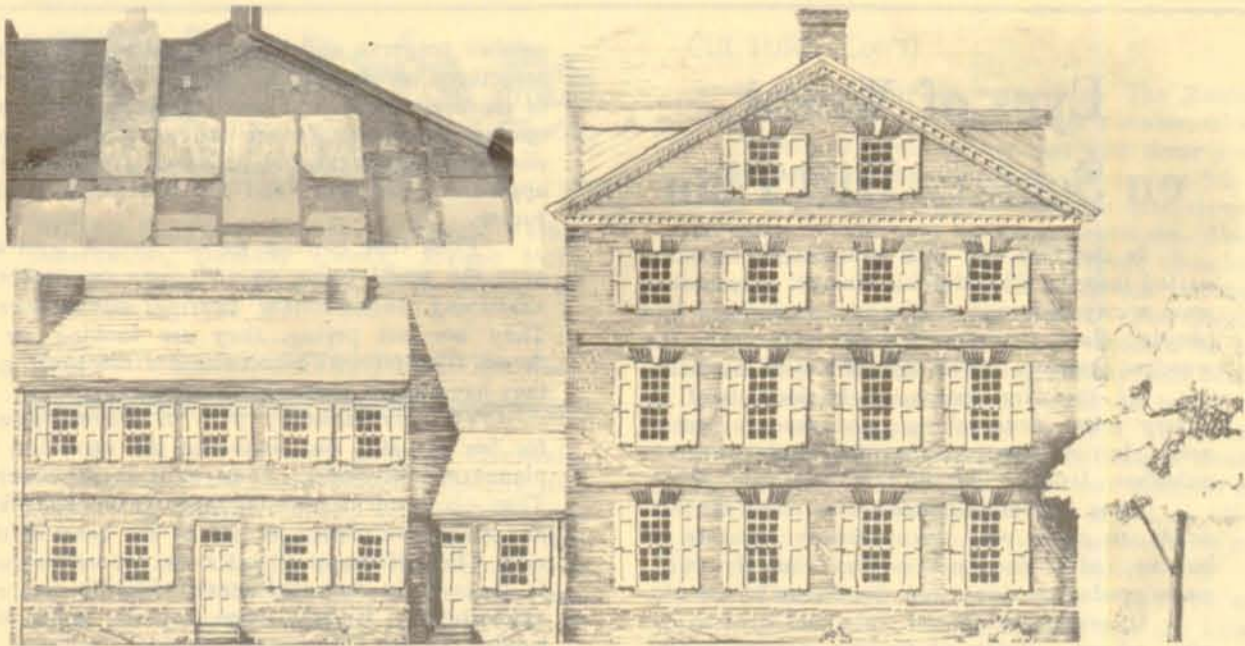
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This paper will accept personal advertising (items for sale, kittens for distribution, etc.) at \$2 for 3 lines. We also invite your correspondence. Address Society Hill News, 325 Pine Street.

FREDDIE'S BARBER SHOP
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 HAS BEEN IN THIS LOCATION FOR FORTY-NINE YEARS

The following information comes from Mrs. Samuel P. Eckert: A center-city cultural landmark is the public book review series now in its 5th year at Temple Beth Zion, 18th and Spruce. The reviewer is Dr. Reuben J. Magil, who has a city-wide reputation, and preceeding each review is a fellowship hour during which refreshments are served. The series of 5 begins Wednesday, Oct. 26 at 1:45 PM; series tickets cost \$5, single tickets \$1.50, available from Mrs. Eckert, 5th & Pine Sts., WA2-4569.

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Restoration study of south side of the Neave house. Photo of top two stories shows marble keystones still visible.

Neave House Details Tell of Colonial Era.

Still standing on the northwest corner of Second and Spruce Streets is the long-abused pre-Revolutionary mansion 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 Spruce 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 included the "piazza", 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 Spruce Street, stood Neave's coach house and stable (which housed at Neave's death "a Chariot &...3 Coach Horses") and a green house. Thus this mansion, 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 above and the "working" parts of the establishment in the backbuilding.

A great deal is now known about the original contents 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 parlor, for instance, stood what must have been a magnificent, throne-like Chippendale sofa, finely upholstered "with a Cover of Check" and crowned with a canopy of "Gauze Hangings." This same room had window curtains of "green Harrateen," 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 "oval Walnut Table," and "3 Walnut Chairs." On the walls were "5 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 Cullender, Fish Strainer, & small Funnel...3 spits, some Skewers...a Coffee Mill...2 frying pans, 1 dripping Pan Lazey back & Gridiron," to name but a few items from a long list. In storage at the time of the inventory was a "barbacuing 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 assist in fighting fires.

The above is but a sample of the known appointments of Neave's once handsome house. Our list also includes an itemized inventory of the contents of the store, including everything from "Superfine Cloth" 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 Spruce 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 "new" 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.

James F. O'Gorman

Since this article was written the Redevelopment Authority has decided to level the back buildings.

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 (Con't)

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 stalls.

The number of singers has greatly increased to its present count of forty 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 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 Spruce 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 Whartons 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 25; advance tickets are now on sale.