

SOCIETY HILL REPORTER

Newsletter of the Society Hill Civic Association
 Issued November 8, 1995

Message from the President

The Lowdown on What We're Up To

The Civic Association has had a most active agenda since I became president last May. Many of these activities are described elsewhere in this issue of The Reporter or in earlier issues. However, I think it's a good idea to describe them all in one place, so that the community can see the scope of what we are doing. So here goes:

The Hotel at Penn's Landing: Our biggest public issue concerns the proposal to build a high-rise hotel at Penn's Landing adjacent to the Independence Seaport Museum. The City favors the hotel to aid in attracting convention business. The community is split. Some oppose any high-rise building on the waterfront. Some oppose the specific location. Others fear the loss of *de facto* public space to the east and south of the project. Many other residents favor a hotel as a good addition to the waterfront, bringing activity and a valuable facility to our neighborhood.

The Civic Association has been following the controversy closely. Space does not permit all the convolutions to be described here. Suffice it to say that the SHCA does not oppose the hotel or the development of the waterfront. It does oppose Penn Landing's development without giving the community an opportunity to participate in the planning process. (See page 8 for details.)

Clean-Up Day: Our fall Clean-Up Day will be Saturday, November 18th. Personnel and equipment provided by the City, the Park Service and the Citizens Alliance for Cleaner Neighborhoods will assist Society Hill residents clean the sidewalks, streets and gutters. An anti-graffiti squad will paint over the markings on the Franklin lampposts. (See page 2 for details.)

There will be posted temporary alternate-side-of-the-street parking regulations to permit sweeping where vehicles are usually parked. We encourage residents to use the day to spruce up their own properties. Also, we need help in placing and removing cleaning procedures signs, painting the Franklin lampposts and for other purposes. Volunteers should call Larry Meehan at 925-8464.



Next General Membership Meeting: Our January Members' Meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 17th at 7:30 at the Society Hill Sheraton and will feature Theodore Hershberg as its principal speaker. Dr. Hershberg is professor of Public Policy and History at the University of Pennsylvania. He will speak on the need for regional (i.e., city/suburb) cooperation, if the Philadelphia area is to remain competitive in the world marketplace. Professor Hershberg is a dynamic speaker, and I am sure all present will find his talk compelling. We give our thanks to him and to the Sheraton (and its manager, Gerry Gutenstein) for again being our host.

Branch Library: There are 52 branches of the Free Library in Philadelphia, but none around here. We are joining with our adjacent communities in an effort to bring a library to East Central Philadelphia. We are at the beginning of our efforts and will keep

the community advised as things progress.

Other new and on-going projects include

- After many delays, the process for historic designation of Society Hill will begin soon. See Bulletin Board on page 2.

- Project Street Trees (over 100 new trees have already been planted in Society Hill).

- Participation in a new inter-neighborhood consortium to study and monitor the question of riverfront gambling.

- Concern over the proposal of the Park Service to close Chestnut Street from 5th to 6th, without assurances that additional traffic will not be diverted to residential streets of Society Hill.

- Quality of life issues in general, such as noise, graffiti, parking, and the operations of new liquor licensees.

- The Reporter, published every other month, is another volunteer activity.

All this activity requires an enormous effort by a large number of your neighbors—too many to list here. But they know who they are, and I thank them on behalf of the Civic Association and the entire community.

To those of you who are not active, I urge that you come to our meetings and take part in our work. A membership application appears below. If you are interested in any of the activities mentioned here, fill it in and mail it today.

—Mel Buckman

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 Historic Preservation Society Hill Reporter
 Legislative/Liquor Control Town Watch
 Membership Tree Tenders
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 P.O. Box 3, Philadelphia, PA 19105

Bulletin Board

Uncle SHCA Wants YOU!!! The Philadelphia Historic Commission will soon begin processing Society Hill's nomination to become a City-designated Historic District which will offer some clout in protecting the historic, residential nature of the neighborhood. If you don't want to live next to a Hooters or a tannery, it behooves you to volunteer to assist the Commission. To do what? Call our Preservation Committee's Bernice Hamel (925-4363) or the SHCA office (629-1288) for information on how you can help. Do it today.

Physick, Anyone? Back in the mid-'60s, a developer planned to demolish the Hill-Physick-Keith House (now the plain-vanilla Physick House) at Fourth and Delancey and replace it with a gas station. Happily, the **Walter H. Annenbergs**, through their family foundation, purchased the property—built in 1786 for **Henry Hill**, an importer of Madeira wine and subsequently owned by **Phillip Physick**, a Federal-era physician. The Annenbergs donated the house for safekeeping (and upkeep) to the Society for the Preservation of Landmarks which restored and refurbished it as a museum and community resource.

But after 30 years the building once again needs major refurbishing—and an endowment to secure its future. Enter neighbors **Edith and Harold Kohn** and the **Arronson Foundation**, which offered a challenge grant of \$50,000 if that sum can be matched by the end of 1995. With little over a month to go, \$35,000 has been raised by a committee headed by neighbors **Jo Ann Buller** and **Carol Feurborn**. Another \$15,000 is desperately needed. If every household in Society Hill offered \$10, the goal would be reached. If you give something more it will put the goal that much nearer.

Send your check to **The Physick House Endowment Fund**, 321 S. Fourth St., Philadelphia 19106. Donations are tax deductible.

Incidentally, the house/museum is open for tours—and a special educational program de-

signed by neighbor **Janet Cooke** takes fourth-to-sixth-graders through the building to learn about early medical practices. Call 925-7866 for more information.

Another amenity—the house (and garden, weather permitting) are rentable for weddings and other affairs. Now get out your checkbook and make a donation. As Ben Franklin once allegedly observed, "Generosity is a Most Powerful Physick."

Eine Kleine Nachtmusik: A little night music—or even afternoon music—has power to soothe the savage breast. If you're stressed out by worldly concerns, you need to mainline a chamber music fix. And you can get one right where you live by subscribing to one (or, preferably, all) of the chamber concerts by Society Hill's own musical ensemble—**The Philadelphia Chamber Ensemble**—mostly Philadelphia orchestra instrumentalists. They concertize three times a season—Friday evenings at 8 with repeat performances Sunday afternoons at 2—in historic Old Pine Church at 4th and Pine.

The acoustics in the stenciled sanctuary are miraculously crisp and the music selections—pieces for chamber groups by **Kreutzer, Schumann, Haydn, Beethoven, Mozart, Martinu** and the like—are thoughtfully programmed, mixing unfamiliar works with chamber music favorites.

Concert dates for the 1995-96 season are November 17 and 19, January 19 and 21, and March 8 and 10. After the concerts there's a complimentary cheese, wine and fruit reception in the church, where you can chat with the musicians and socialize with your neighbors. Ticket prices are \$20 for each concert and well worth it. For info, call 592-7840.

Happy birthday, CC: Historic Christ Church, off Second St. above Market, marks its 300th birthday in November. Founded in 1695—only 15 years after Penn inundated the City with Quakers—there were enough Episcopalians around to start a rival congregation. There were soon enough new members to put up the substantial Georgian building which is still in use today. Christ Church's crypts hold the remains of **Ben Franklin, Benjamin Rush, Robert Morris** and many other Revolutionary heroes.

To mark the anniversary, the church will hold a three-day colloquium, November 14-16. Subject: *The Soul of America in a World of Violence*. Speakers include historian **Arthur Schlesinger**, diplomat **Max Kampelman**, jurist **A. Leon Higginbotham** and Palestinian superwoman **Hanan Ashrawi**. Admission is \$5 per session or \$10 for the whole conference—a real bargain for world affairs buffs. Call 922-1695 for more info.

Police Blotter: The good news is that in the past three months robberies in Society Hill decreased by 30%—and *there were none at all during the first 18 days of October*.

The bad news is that there were 14 robberies

during that 3-month period—five of them during September which hosted a mini-crime wave—one hold-up near Third and St. James, practically on the doorstep of the city's district attorney, when two perpetrators with handguns took a purse from a woman pedestrian at 8:35 p.m. on a Thursday evening. Another robbery with a gun occurred near Society Hill Towers at 10:10 p.m., also on a Thursday. There were two more robberies with a gun at on 5th Street at Locust and at Pine shortly after midnight on the same early Monday morning. And a strong-arm robber made a night of it on a Wednesday two days later at 5th and Walnut at 9:15 p.m. In several instances the perps were young girls. It's getting as bad as Merion and Chestnut Hill down here. The moral is to avoid walking alone during the evening.

The Great Semi-Annual Car Migration & Neighborhood Clean-Up

Pay attention—or you could get a parking ticket!

The Streets Department will be giving the neighborhood its twice-a-year proper hosing (the tax assessor only does this once a year) on Saturday, November 18th, the weekend before Thanksgiving. Residents are asked to sweep their sidewalks, bag the debris and take it to major intersections (numbered and tree-named street corners) for a special Saturday afternoon pick-up. Leaves will be recycled. Do not include household trash.

To clean the gutters, a complicated ballet of alternate-side-parking is being choreographed. Pay attention or you might end up with a ticket:

Starting on Friday night, November 17th, neighbors should move their cars to the opposite side of the street. Beginning at 7 a.m. on Saturday, police will start ticketing cars still parked on the usual side for towing. City street cleaning machines will then clean the normally-obstructed side of the street. After 1:30 p.m. parkers may move their car back to the conventional side. Tickets for being on the wrong side will be given at 4 p.m. Saturday. If you can't move your car at the scheduled times, give your keys to a friend who can do it for you.

During the morning, while cars are no longer parked on their normal side, all of you can sweep up the gunk and debris from your gutter (and the gutter of your neighbor who's out of town—and even the gutter of the infuriating neighbor who just doesn't give a flying fig about his block). Any problems about City trucks not showing up or cars not towed or illegally parked, call 545-3260. To volunteer for posting instruction signs or flier distribution, call Clean-Up Day Co-chairs **Mary Sturdivant** or **Larry Meehan** at 629-1288.

The good news is that after the clean-up—starting at 12:30—there will be a picnic for the volunteers, the police, the Streets Dept. and neighbors in the **Pennsylvania Hospital** cafeteria and courtyard at 8th and Spruce with light refreshments furnished by South Street restaurants—including **Bridget Foy's, TGIFriday**, and **Pizzeria Uno**. See you there.

SOCIETY HILL REPORTER

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Once Upon A Time

*There were two brothers who
lived on a hill
(Society Hill)*

*These same two brothers
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The Whole Shutter Catalogue

By Penelope Hartshorne Batcheler

Retired Independence Park Historical Architect

Editor's Note: This is a first in a series of articles to make historic restoration as authentic and painless as possible. If you have any questions or suggestions mail them to the Editor, Society Hill Reporter, P O Box 3, Philadelphia, PA 19105 and we will try to get answers for you promptly.

Because many of the houses in the neighborhood have turned over since their original restorations, the new owners may not realize the fine points of the art. Shutters, for example, are not something you buy out of a catalog. You must have them made to order. And they are expensive and require frequent maintenance. If rotted, you should have them repaired by a skilled carpenter—so it's both smart and thrifty to inspect them regularly, and repaint them frequently to prevent rot.

The importance of shutters to the neighborhood (and to your particular house) is that they tend to enrich the façades of both the individual house and the whole street. Without them our houses look almost bald.

Most historic row houses originally had shutters at their front and back windows for security, or when "bowed" (partially-closed), they screened out the sun. "Venetian" (louvered) shutters in the 19th century (the 1800s) admitted breezes while shading upper floor windows. More easily-used interior folding shutters both shaded and gave privacy to principal rooms of larger houses.

Shutter details varied over time: 18th-century shutters usually had raised panels with surrounding quarter-round moldings hand-cut into the solid stiles and rails which surrounded them [see illustration A for a cross section]. At lower floors, shutters were often strengthened by vertical board backing.

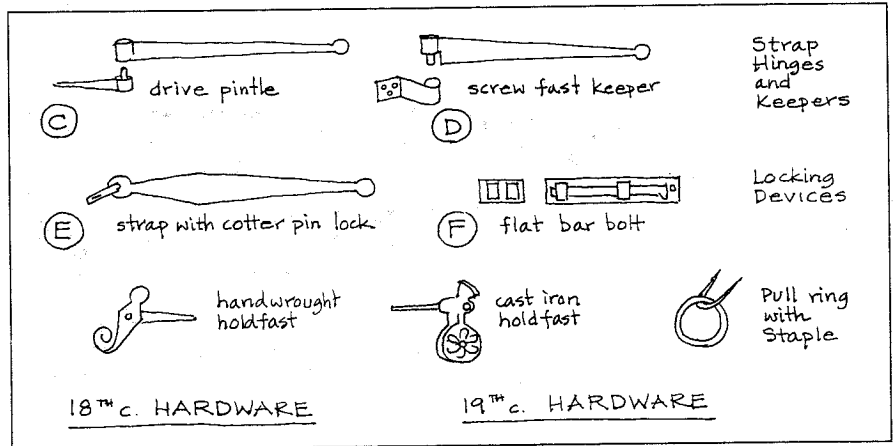
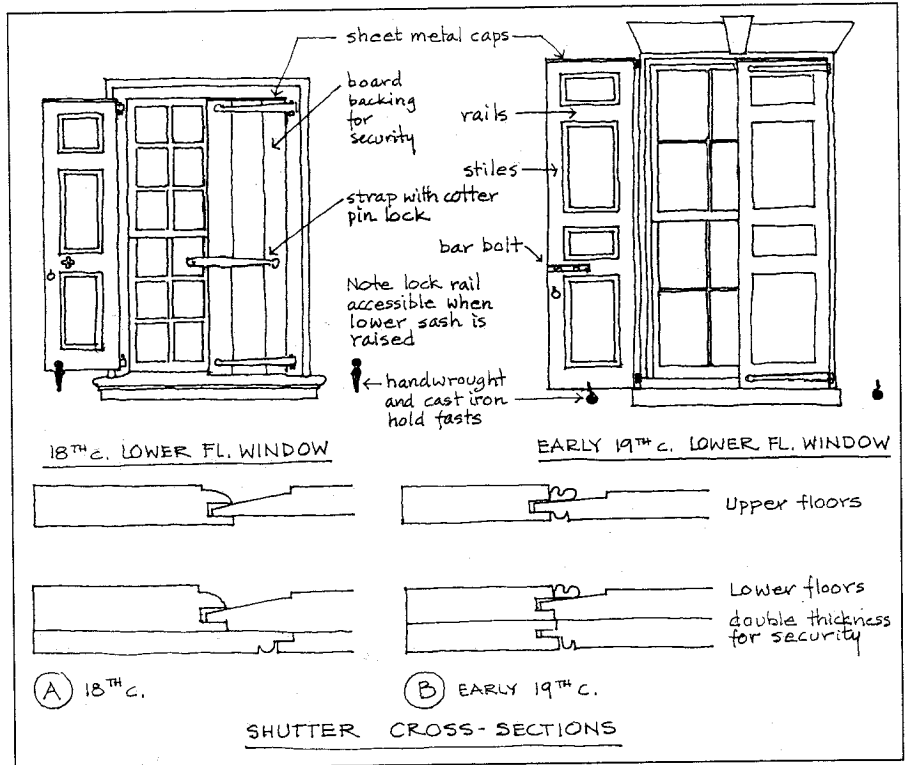
In the 19th century, the front panels were surrounded by moldings applied with nails [see illustration B]. The shutters were also made more secure by being backed with a secondary panel system.

Shutter hardware also varied over time: To make the shutters swing open or closed, 18th-century hand-wrought strap hinges—riveted to the shutters and curved at one end—slipped down onto the upright pins of "pintels" driven into the solid wood window frames [see illustration C]. But 19th-century hand wrought strap hinges were made with the pin as an integral part of the strap. These pins dropped into the sleeves of shutter supports screwed into the window frames [see illustration D].

Early 18th century shutters were locked shut with a hand wrought strap and cotter pin system. Later flat bar-bolts were screwed into the shutter lock rails. To hold shutters open against the wall, hand-wrought shutter fasts were used in the 18th century and cast iron decorative fasts were introduced in the 19th century [see illustrations E and F].

Knowing how to preserve shutters makes sense considering their present-day cost. (Large shutters can run up to \$2,000 for a window—including fabrication, hardware, fitting and installation.)

If you're having them made or partially rebuilt, some woods—like cedar or mahogany—are better for exterior use. But no matter which wood you use—even though it will cost more—it is wise to treat all of them with wood preservatives (like Cupernol or Woodlife) before the shutter components are as-



sembled. Indeed, when holes are drilled for mounting hardware, it is a good idea to liberally apply preservative into these new openings. Allow the called-for drying time before painting.

All of this is to prevent wood rot—actually, a fungus—which needs moisture to grow. Therefore, you still have to keep water out of all the construction joints by keeping your shutters painted (you should repaint every four or five years (more often if you see the paint peeling away) and by applying sheet metal caps over the top edges of the shutters to keep out rain and melting snow.

Be advised that today's hardware, made from mild steel, rusts more readily than the original wrought

iron. It is therefore important to prime new hardware on all sides with rust-inhibiting paint before assembly. The fixed hardware (i.e. strap hinges) should be painted with the same paint as its surrounding woodwork. The moveable hardware—to keep it moving freely—should be painted with thinner coats of metal primer and black, metal-finish paint.

If you have shutters with relatively small areas of rotted wood, check out the *Old House Journal*, May-June 1993, pp. 42-46, for some tips on Fiberglass-reinforced polyester resin repairs for such problems.

You may not be able to do all this work yourself, but at least, this information should help you in talking with your restoration contractor

Carol Feuerborn

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Muzak, maestro, please: Rumor has it that an eccentric millionaire—who has his morning caffeine fix at The Morning Cup, opposite the Head House Shambles, would like to have some Mozart with his coffee. The millionaire proposed to **Peter Whitehouse**, then head of the South Street/Head House District Office—which is the tenant at the Head House—that he would put up some big bucks to have **David Mann Audio** install a CD player in the Head House, wire the Shambles and add some outdoor loudspeakers—if Peter would agree to put on some Mozart for his listening pleasure. Our personal opinion is that, sooner or later, the loudspeakers would be blasting out Moe Zart and his Gangsta Rappers.

As far as we're concerned, the only music we want to hear on Second Street are the strains of "Oh, Dem Golden Slippers" on New Years Day when The Drunken Mummies stagger down Two Street on the way back to their habitat.

There Goes the Neighborhood: Speaking of the Head House, **Bernice Hamel**, who led the drive to rehabilitate the decaying landmark, waxed exceedingly wroth last month at the South Street-Head House District for erecting a string of portable public toilets abutting the Head House Shambles during the recent South Street **Seven Arts Festival**. Besides the insult to the aroma of dignity that the structure should inspire, Ms. Hamel maintained, the potties blocked the entrance to the Shambles. She raised Cain with placement-perpetrator **Eric Blumenfeld**, and the toilets were moved catty corner over near the **Dr. Yuhas** veterinary clinic, where, presumably, his canine patients could lift their leg and return the favor. The South St-Head House District's maximum leader, **Dick Ostrander**, didn't know what all the furor was about. He must have thought it was tempest in a peepot.

Corrections: Charlie Peterson, the neighborhood's venerable architectural historian, denies the observation in the last issue that "He is the only surviving contemporary of Ben Franklin." Sorry, Charlie. We obviously forgot Ed Bacon.

The last issue called attention to the commercial-free, good-music station at 107.9 on the FM dial—retransmitted from translators atop the Society Hill Towers. But, as reader Ed Wohlmuth pointed out, it is not provided by Rutgers—as the newsletter stated—but by Mercer County Community College.

Hero of the Oppressed Working Class: The golden shillelagh goes to Jack Downey for allowing the waitresses at his Front and South Sts. bistro to tack on an 18% service charge for bringing coffee to patrons who serve themselves at his \$13 Sunday brunch buffet.

Back to Square One: It was drinks all round at the Locks Gallery last month to toast the eventual new stewardship of seedy, historic **Washington Square**. The good people at Independence Park will take the neighboring park from the negligent hands of the Fairmount Park Commission after big federal bucks (and landscape architects **Delta Group**) replace the broken benches, fractured flagstone sidewalks, refit the fountain jet, replace the light standards with lamps similar to Independence Square's, replant ailing and missing trees and restore the maintenance buildings and guardhouse with a \$5 million grant wheedled from pre-Newt Washington by our hard-working congressman of the moment—and nifty neighbor—**Tom Foglietta** working with the **Friends of Washington Square**. Nice going, Tom! (You'd get our vote next year, except for the fact that our quadrant was gerrymandered away from you and handed to the Northeast's Bob Borski several years back by State Senator Vince Fumo, but that's another story)

Column compiled by Alan Halpern

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Checking into the Penn's Landing Hotel

by Bernice Hamel & Lorna Katz Lawson

The proposed high-rise hotel on Penn's Landing just south of the Seaport Museum and directly opposite the Society Hill Towers has created much turmoil in our community. Its location on the Landing, the lack of a Penn's Landing master plan, the Mayor's grab of the Market Street end for the mysterious Project X, the lack of responsiveness of the developer and the City to inquiries about the project, and the attempt to finesse community input have all added to the confusion. Here's the situation in late October:

The dispute in a nutshell

The Society Hill Towers Owners' Association filed a law suit in U.S. District Court to prevent the hotel's construction. The suit, represented by attorney M. Melvin Shralow, contends that the developers and the City will be wrongfully utilizing \$10 million of public funds to develop a high-rise hotel on Penn's Landing through HUD's Urban Development Action Grant (UDAG). The grant was originally approved in 1986 so that the Rouse Company could build a low-rise retail development on the Landing. That project was abandoned when Rouse ran into financial difficulties, but the grant to help finance it had never been officially withdrawn.

The City and Penn's Landing apparently offered it to another developer with an entirely different project nine years later. Tower residents were opposed to the high rise when they belatedly learned about it and started a lawsuit to have it modified. At an SHCA Board meeting on July 17th, Mr. Shralow asked our Board to support the lawsuit, while Stanhope Browne, chairman of Penn's Landing Corp. and a Society Hill resident, promised that community input on design decisions for the hotel would be forthcoming only if the Board did not support the Towers' suit. A motion was made to remain neutral—in order that our community could have design input, based on the developers' assurance (in their May presentation) that all City and federal documents were in place, including the City's 1986 application for a HUD grant.

Therefore, we were surprised to learn about a public hearing called for September 27th at City Hall, before Council's Committee on Rules, to consider a resolution to amend the HUD grant. This Resolution (#950531) authorized the Mayor to fiddle with the rules so that the developers—Somerset Holdings and Keating—could get the \$10 million federal grant to help finance the leasing of 85,000 square feet from Penn's Landing Corp. for the construction of this 25-story, 350-room hotel and 500-car parking garage.

Moment of truth

Based on this resolution, it appeared that the developers had misled the SHCA. President Mel Buckman and Lorna Katz Lawson, vice president and co-chair of the Zoning & Development Committee, both testified at the Council committee hearing. Mr. Buckman stated that the resolution was premature because our community had raised several design issues ignored by the developers and that our Association's July decision to suspend its earlier opposition was predicated on a dialogue between the developers and the community that has not occurred.

Also testifying was attorney Shralow, who contended that the "amendment" submitted by the Mayor is, in fact, a new application for a far different project. He argued that new environmental and

Continued

Checking into the Penn's Landing Hotel

economic impact studies are required, but the motion was passed by a three to one vote.

That afternoon, Judge Eduardo C. Robreno held a pre-trial conference attended by the lawyers for the plaintiffs (S.H. Towers Owners Assn.) and the City and Mayor, HUD and Secretary Cisneros. HUD lawyers informed the Court that the Towers' complaint was accurate and stated it would notify the City in writing of all the points in which the City would have to comply. The judge encouraged the parties to work out a stipulation, but as of this writing, the City would not agree.

The next day the full City Council approved Resolution 950531. Given that vote, Mel Buckman sent a letter to David Sowell of HUD, essentially restating his testimony and requesting HUD withhold its funding for the project until the community can participate in the design process. He emphasized, however, that "The Civic Association is not opposed per se to the development of Penn's Landing, and hopes the existing grant will be preserved so that the City will have the benefit of [HUD's] funds." Mr. Browne also wrote a letter to Mr. Sowell, stating that the reason the Penn's Landing Corp. did not bring revised plans to the community is that none had been given to it by the developer.

Where we stand

In response to Mr. Buckman's letter to HUD, Mr. Browne indicated which aspects of the project would be open to the community's design review. They are (1) Façade treatment of the hotel & garage; (2) Treatment of the top of the hotel; (3) Pedestrian access to the Landing; (4) Effect upon the Sculpture Garden; (5) The "alley" between the garage and the Seaport Museum; (6) Truck access from Columbus Boulevard; (7) Any other issue of similar scope and nature. The issues not subject to design review, Mr. Browne emphasized, are location, massing, and height!

At the last SHCA Board meeting of October 18th, Mr. Buckman's decision was supported by the Board...and that's where we are as of this report.

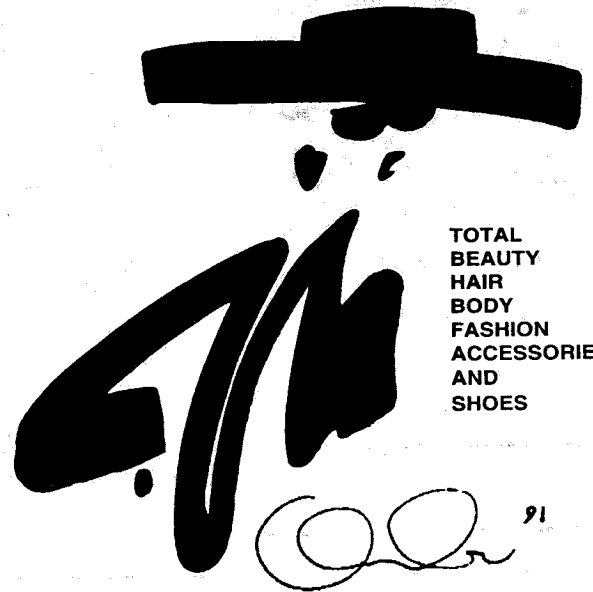
Manners & Manors

Walking towards Broad Street the other day, we noticed that the owners of a house near Fifth and Spruce have placed a plaque next to the door bearing the inscription "Wakefield Manor." Could it be that Oliver Goldsmith's favorite Vicar has taken up residence here? Or perhaps it's a homesick anglophile? Or maybe a nursing home operator? Until someone deciphers it for us, we think the idea of christening one's home with more than an address number bears imitation.

So we instantly dubbed our Pine Street digs "Tara." While we await the delivery of the plaque, we encourage our neighbors to name their residences now—before the best names are all taken. We suspect that "Manderley" is still up for grabs.

Pileggi

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Mark Your Calendars!

Next SHCA Board Meetings:

Wednesday, November 15, 7:30 pm

Wednesday, December 20, 7:30 pm

Both at Old Pine Community Center,
4th & Lombard

Next General Membership Meeting —in 1996!

Wednesday, January 17th, 7:30 pm
Sheraton Society Hill, 2nd & Walnut

6:30 pm: Board meeting
7:00 pm: Refreshments, coffee & socializing

Speaker: Prof. Theodore Hershberg
Professor of Regional Sciences, U of P
on City/Suburbs: *What's Next?*

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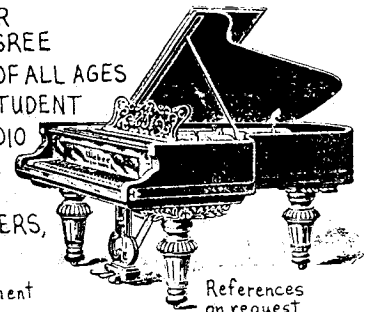
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Darts & Laurels

Dart: To be mutually shared by the **Zoning Board** and **Penn's Landing Corp.** for permitting the atrocity—and to the **Independence Seaport Museum** on Penn's Landing for committing it: Installing a bright red neon sign that reads **MUSEUM** on its roof. Philadelphia brutalist architects **Robert Venturi** and **Denise Scott Brown** wrote a book called "Learning from Las Vegas." It seems that the Seaport Museum and its architects—**Bower, Lewis,**

Thrower—have taken a page from that book and applied it to our waterfront. Penn's Landing does not yet rival the Vegas strip, but with that red camel's nose of neon under the tent, we're on our way.

The Seaport Museum folks would be more politically—and nautically—correct if they confined their nighttime illumination to St. Elmo's fire.

This column urges people who object to the neonization of the waterfront to withhold their support from the Museum until it permanently douses its ill-considered beacon.

Laurel: To **Rody Davies** for being a neighborhood-friendly architect. Besides restoring the Head House, he just finished the attractive metal grille and gate protecting the residential parking lot on Third just below Spruce. We also have another laurel for whoever the architect was who made a silk purse out of a sow's ear by removing that clunky, moderne front on the house at 218 Delancey and restoring a Georgian façade.

Laurel: To the Philadelphia Historical Commission's **Richard Tyler** for the most felicitous (or is it Felixitous?) use of the English language: At the last SHCA meeting he described newly-renovated Society Hill home façades which scrambled together elements from a number of different architectural periods as looking like something "that would make a cat smile."

Dart: To the Department of Licenses and Inspections for letting **Jim's Steaks** vent their grille onto the street instead of atop the building as we think the law requires. The odor of cooking steak and onions makes the corner of Fourth and South hazardous for dieters with weak will power and



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probably doesn't do anything for the disposition of **Julia and Isaiah Zagar** who run the Eyes Gallery next door. They're vegetarians.

Laurel: To **Ray Posel** for keeping his **Ritz** movie palaces the cleanest, best run and best programmed cinemas in the region.

Laurel: To the **Old City art tribe** for giving the City a real Avenue of the Arts while the over-publicized and under-impressive designated one has been sidelined by ravenous street reconstruction. On the other hand, North Second and Third Streets are already a veritable Soho South on a human scale—with art galleries galore, bargain restaurants, clay and fabric workshops, funky furniture showrooms and, starting this fall, a potential theater district with the opening of the **Arden Theater** on Second Street, just north of Christ Church. Don't forget, if you haven't yet made the Old City scene, the next **First Friday** tour of North Second and Third Street galleries is scheduled for December 1st from about 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.—a good time to buy your favorite wall a Christmas present. Walk the walk, talk the talk and gawk the gawk.

Dart: To the City's tourist promoters for

continuing the **Phlash** busses on life support long after the idea behind them has proved to be brain dead. Every time we see one phlash by, it's invariably empty. Pull the plug, guys. Call Doc Kevorkian. We understand that this ignoble experiment has

already cost the City treasury over \$2 million bucks. That's enough to give all of us overtaxed Soc Hill homeowners a \$2,000 reduction in real estate levies. And more than enough to teach 20 Philadelphia public school children to read.

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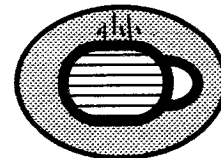
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