

The *Landmarker*

A publication of the Preservation Association of Central New York
Fall 2000

Message from the president:

Join us and preserve part of our precious history

Dear Reader:

The challenges of sustainable growth, responsible development, aesthetic improvements and the role of historic preservation are frequently at the forefront of our concerns. At times it seems difficult to reconcile the needs of our community with the push and pull of political and economic vagaries.

The buildings in which we work, live, and play, as well as the landscapes we move through, reflect our history and tie into questions we have about our environment. How do we create a balance that ensures environmental sensibility and reflects our search for a diverse quality in our surroundings? Understanding the role historic preservation plays, and encouraging its employ is a great way to create the atmosphere you wish to live in. Historic preservation shouldn't just be where you go on vacation. You can have the richness of historic legacy in your back yard.

The Preservation Association of Central New York, a non-profit organization serving Onondaga County since 1975, has a membership made up of people just like you. It is joined by architects, landscape architects, environmentalists, planners, historians and anyone who believes that historic resources are worth saving. By joining the Preservation Association, you have the opportuni-

ty to talk with people who are deeply concerned about the environment and our historic resource heritage.

PACNY can help you get answers to challenging situations and work with you to protect our historic legacies. We are excited about working with individuals and community and environmental organizations to help achieve sensitive and reasonable alternatives to the destruction of historic resources.

Won't you consider joining us to learn more about historic resources and the role historic preservation plays in Onondaga County? We need active membership support to do the job and look forward to welcoming new board members and general members. Technical knowledge of historic preservation is not requisite. The desire to support these efforts is!

Your membership helps fund us as we provide this support to Onondaga County, but we also need members who can help us with fundraising, membership, volunteer organization, newsletter production and project specific work.

We need you to join now! Please call us or fill out the membership form found in this newsletter. We look forward to welcoming you soon, and we thank our current members for their continued support!

J.A. Evangelisti,
president

Preservation Association to appeal Loos decision

By **Samuel Gruber
and Joanne Arany**

The board of the Preservation Association of Central New York (PACNY) will appeal a local judge's decision rejecting the organization's Article 78 petition which declared that the Syracuse City Planning Commission (CPC) acted "arbitrarily and capriciously" in granting the new owner of the Conrad Loos building permission to demolish the structure. The Loos building, erected in 1895 and designed by prominent Syracuse architect Archimedes Russell, was designated a City of Syracuse Protected Site by the Common Council in July 1999. It is located at the corner of Park and Butternut streets on Syracuse's north side.

According to PACNY President J.A. Evangelisti, highlights of an appeal will address the definition of economic hardship and the attendant lack of CPC procedures to evaluate economic hardship as well as other specific procedural actions of the City Planning Commission. PACNY filed its notice

See APPEAL, Page 9

Preservation Association of Central New York

The Preservation Association of Central New York Inc. (PACNY) is a not for profit advocacy organization dedicated to the preservation of the historic resources of Central New York. PACNY's primary focus is directed towards issues pertaining to the resources of Onondaga County and the Greater Syracuse area. Founded in 1974, PACNY's primary goal is to illuminate the positive value of historic preservation for Central New York, in large part by preserving the past as a living part of our community. PACNY is a membership organization with a volunteer Board of Directors and part-time paid staff.

Board of Directors

J.A. Evangelisti Jr., president
Elizabeth Crawford, vice president

Vic Vaccaro, treasurer
Carol Burritt, secretary
Joanne Arany, preservation committee

Katherine Moran, representative to SLPB

Douglas Armstrong
Mary Duffin
Susan Hamilton
Edward Servatius

Executive Director

Samuel D. Gruber

The Landmarker

This issue of The Landmarker is published by the Preservation Association of Central New York.

Editor: Joanne Arany

Production: Maria T. Welych

Contributing writers: Joanne Arany, Douglas V. Armstrong, Carol A. Burritt, Beth Crawford, Mary Duffin, J.A. Evangelisti, Sam Gruber and Susan Hamilton

The heart of preservation

From the editor: Carol's enthusiasm shows the Board that people from all walks of life can connect to the essence of preservation. You don't have to be preservation professional to play a role in PACNY's efforts to help protect our city's historic resources.

By Carol A. Burritt

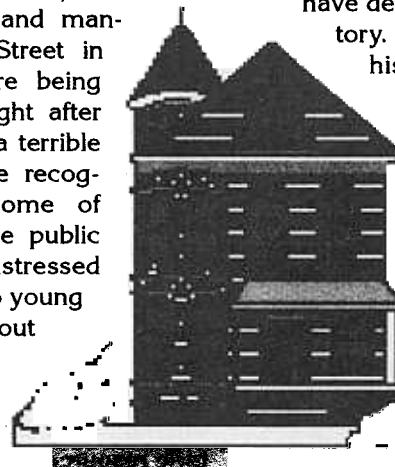
I am very much in love with old buildings. Every time I see an old building or interesting house or hear about a threatened structure I immediately become alert. I think this is due to my recollection when I was in my teens (some years back!) of the wonderful homes and mansions on James Street in Syracuse that were being demolished one right after the other. This is a terrible loss that today we recognize as an outcome of flawed and reactive public policy. I was distressed over it then, but too young to do anything about it.

At about the same time, there was a faction in Syracuse that wanted to demolish the Loews building and its beautiful movie palace. All of the other grand theaters like the RKO Keith's and others along S. Salina Street in downtown Syracuse were already gone. The threat of losing the splendid Loew's Theater got the public's attention and an effort went out to save it, thank goodness! As I recall, I was working at my first full time job and not making much money at the

time, but I scraped together about \$20.00 and sent it in. It felt good!! I was proud that I made a contribution that ultimately helped save a landmark in my city -- now known as the Landmark Theater.

I have been involved with tracing my family history and because of that have developed quite a love of history. Along with that love of history comes a love for things that are old. Antique furniture, antique people (they are extremely interesting), antique silverware (some of my ancestors were silversmiths), and antique buildings -- if its old, I love it!

Today my husband likes to tease me about my love of old structures. Whenever we happen by a dilapidated old gas station, corner store or chicken coop he tells me "there's another one for you to save." Although I haven't quite convinced him of my dream to purchase an historic house to lovingly restore, he at least is starting to acquire an appreciation of a portion of our history that evidences itself in the buildings of our ancestors. •



Preservation Resource Center

PACNY maintains a Historic Preservation Resource Center that contains several hundred books on local history, architecture and historic preservation philosophy, techniques, materials, laws and other related subjects. The resource center also houses a vertical file of thousands of items pertaining to the architectural history of Onondaga County. The center is located at the PACNY office at 650 James Street, Syracuse. Use of the resource center is by appointment. Call 475-0119 for appointments.

On the Web

Check out the Preservation Association's new Web site at <http://community.syracuse.com/cc/pacny>

PACNY receives grants for National Register District research

By Sam Gruber

In November 1999, PACNY received a grant that will contribute to revitalization efforts on Syracuse's West Onondaga Street, once one of the city's most elegant thoroughfares, but now suffering from hard times. A \$6,500 grant from the Preservation League of New York State/New York State Council of the Arts Grant Program will be used toward the cost of preparing local protected site and National Register Historic District nominations for the neighborhood.

According to Tania G. Werbizky, Director, Technical and Grant Programs, Preservation League of New York State, this is the first time the funds from the program -- which has allocated almost a half million dollars since 1994 -- have gone to a project in Onondaga County.

"We are very pleased that the Preservation Association of Central New York is initiating new projects and actively seeking funding to protect the County's historic sites. The high quality of the project made it stand out in a competitive grant cycle," said Werbizky, who will present the Preservation Association with a check October 23, 2000, when the Association sponsors its second walking tour of the area.

In 1997, three blocks of West Onondaga Street were declared a Potentially Eligible Historic District by the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation - providing limited protection from inappropriate development to the area when public funds are used. PACNY notes that local protected site designation, which would have to be granted under the City of Syracuse's Historic Preservation Ordinance, would provide



Built for noted business leader Frances Gridley in 1895 by Syracuse architect Archimedes Russell, 749 West Onondaga Street is one of the many fine houses which PACNY believes should be included in a designated historic district. Damaged in the Labor Day storm, the house was subsequently purchased by Rick Bruno, who is investing in its restoration.

greater protection to the historic appearance of the street. Only local protected site designation can prevent drastic alterations to buildings, sudden demolition of historic structures and unsightly infill buildings smack in the middle of this historic street. Designation allows change and provides the basis for discussion, review, and design guidelines.

Sam Gruber, executive director, and board member Susan Hamilton will oversee the project, which will also involve local volunteers. The first stage of work is to research the history and architecture of the period and provide full reports on historic, architectural and urbanistic significance of individual properties and the area as a whole. Only when this information is com-

pleted will actual boundaries for districts be proposed. The process has to involve property owners and residents.

The Preservation League of New York State/New York State Council of the Arts Grant Program is a re-grant program that encourages the stewardship of New York State's architectural heritage. The program supports locally based projects undertaken by municipalities and not-for-profit groups throughout the state. Since its inception in 1993, the Preservation League of New York State/New York State Council of the Arts Grant Program has awarded \$466,786 to 98 projects across the state. The grant program is a partnership of the Preservation League of New York

See GRANTS, Page 12

Study helps Central New York gather the region's archaeological information

By Douglas V. Armstrong

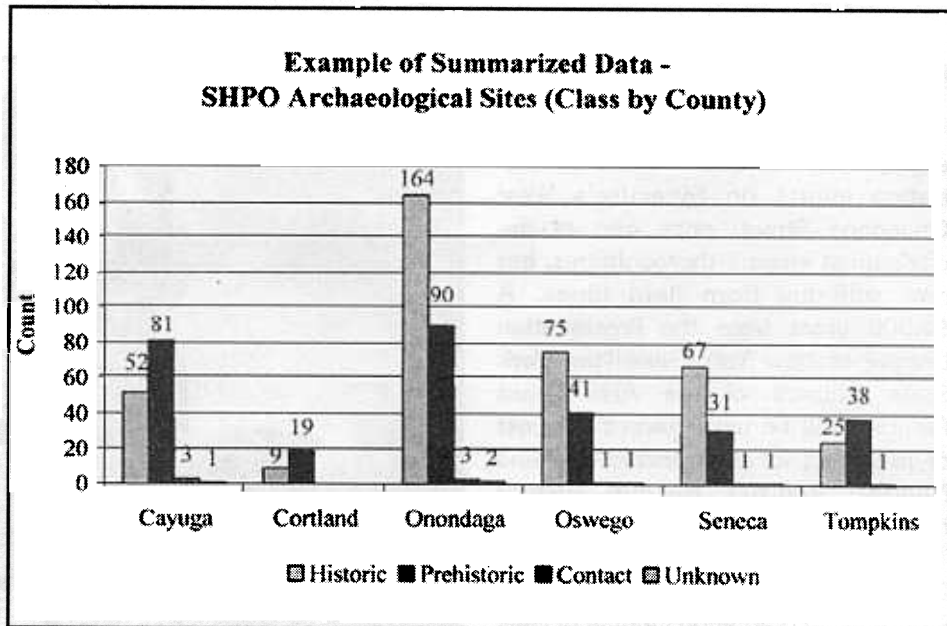
Researchers at Syracuse University are happy to report the completion of a three volume study, "Archaeological Sites and Preservation Planning in Central New York," which was written by Douglas V. Armstrong, Elizabeth Kellar, and Lou Ann Wurst and published by the New York State Historic Preservation Office.

The study compiled information from a wide range of site lists and records systems and organized them into a unified site file and Geographic Information System (GIS). The site file and GIS translated records on paper form into computerized databases allowing the creation of maps plotting the spatial location of all of the sites that have been reported for the region.

The project has been described by New York State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) archaeologist Robert Kuhn as "a milestone in New York State cultural resource management." Its importance rests in a scope that integrates many sets of information to retrieve multiple sources of known, but here-to-fore not utilized, information on archaeological sites within the region. The project's strength is that it shows how a comprehensive integration of site information from a variety of sources along with a GIS spatial format can help to identify existing problems in site file records.

But more important than finding faults, or problems, the synthetic compilation of existing information establishes a format within which corrective measures can be effectively achieved.

Archaeological sites contain a vast array of information pertaining to the



region's prehistoric and historic past. Archaeological sites are cultural resources which fall under the same historic preservation laws and ordinances as other historic properties like standing buildings. In fact, many if not all of the standing historic buildings have associated archaeological sites.

*In all, 16
databases and
their respective
GIS coverage
were compiled
for Central
New York.*

So it was very important to consider all of the varied lists of historic properties that have been compiled for the region in order to better assess the preservation planning needs of the archaeological resources of the region.

In all, 16 databases and their respective GIS coverage were compiled for Central New York. The computerized record system includes the SHPO archaeological site file records, SHPO archaeological survey records, State Museum site and survey records, National Landmarks, National Register Properties, State Department of Education Historic Markers, and an array of site file information including

avocation archaeologist Gordon DeAngelo's personal site file, assorted thematic studies of regional significance such as the New York State and National Park Service's Underground Railroad (or pre-Civil War African-American Freedom Trail) study, and the recent National Park Service *Erie Canalway Special Resource Study*.

The project was begun after encountering several instances when significant archaeological sites in the Syracuse area were negatively impacted by development. In each instance it was discovered that one of the primary reasons for the loss of the cultural resource was that the New York SHPO did not have sufficient information on the archaeological site to articulate a need for site assessment, mitigation, or protection.

A contributing inhibitor to archaeological site protection in New York State is a legal structure that requires that the SHPO archaeological site file already have a known site at, or in close proximity to a property, in order for an archaeological study to be

See STUDY, Page 10

Preservation Association

The Preservation Association recognizes the following recipients of PACNY's historic preservation awards for 2000, presented on April 30th:

The **Jasena Foley Education Award** is given to individuals or groups who educate, promote, engender or advocate a preservation ethic in Central New York. This year, the award was given to: **Christine Capella Peters** for her leadership in historic preservation in New York State for many years. She is a member of the technical staff for the New York State Historic Preservation Office, a division of the State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation. Her responsibilities include assistance to individuals, organizations and local governments interested in the state and federal preservation programs, with a majority of her time dedicated to the review of physical undertakings affecting historic and cultural resources. Through both research and practice, she has developed an expertise in cultural landscape preservation, and is recognized within the agency and preservation community as a respected expert in the field.



In addition to her position with the State Office, Capella Peters is a Visiting Instructor with the Faculty of Landscape Architecture at the State University of New York, College of Environmental Science and Forestry (SUNY-ESF) in Syracuse, New York, from where she earned a Bachelor of Landscape Architecture in 1980 and a Master in Landscape Architecture in 1990. At SUNY-ESF she teaches the Faculty's undergraduate urban design studio in conjunction with Distinguished Teaching Professor George W. Curry. The course utilizes public service projects to provide the students with an exciting and realistic view of urban design practice, allowing Capella Peters to draw on her own 8 year experience as a municipal planner and designer during the 1980s. She also works with the Faculty's

Landmark Preservation Board, as a Trustee of the Preservation League of New York State, the Heritage Coalition, the Association for Preservation Technology and many other organizations, not least which is the Preservation Association of Central New York.

The **Wilma Auer Award** honors volunteers who have made particularly outstanding contributions to PACNY. This year, the award was presented to: **Mary Duffin** for her long service on the board of the Preservation Association and as a volunteer. Mary joined the board when PACNY was housed in the Parke Avery House, and has helped organize countless events. Her service on the board includes many years as its secretary, and she continues to chair the Annual Dinner and meeting committee.

Preservation Merit Awards are given in recognition of exceptional achievement in historic preservation. This year, recipients were:

-- The **Zen Center of Syracuse** in recognition of the carefully considered and executed adaptive reuse of the carriage house at 266 West Seneca Turnpike.



The Zen Center, located in the former Joshua Forman House, was extensively remodeled in 1901 by then-owner George Palmer. Recently, the center undertook the complete restoration/renovation of the carriage house, also erected by Palmer. Despite the setback of a terrible fire that ravaged the building when restoration neared completion, the Zen Center board and membership persevered, and rededicated themselves to the completion of the job. Today, the carriage house serves as the Center's Zendo (meditation center) open for use since October 1999. The project architect was Lynn Fitzpatrick. The contrac-

See AWARDS, Page 14

Meet your PACNY board officers

Officers elected to the PACNY Board want to tell you about themselves. The board and membership want to welcome President J.A. Evangelisti, Vice President Beth Crawford, Treasurer Victor Vaccaro and Secretary Carol Burritt. All of our officers have been members of PACNY for a number of years and each has already dedicated many hours of much appreciated time and energy to help PACNY grow into a strong and productive advocate for the protection of historic resources.

J.A. Evangelisti

Recently serving as vice-president for PACNY, Jae grew up in colonial northwest Connecticut, where he developed his interest in historic preservation. He was involved with a family owned retail lumberyard and wood shop throughout high school and college. Jae attended Quinipiac College and the University of Connecticut before moving to Syracuse in 1976. Since then, Jae has operated his own construction business, Evangelisti Enterprises. He has bought and renovated university area housing and continues to own and rent several of properties. Jae's commitment to preservation is what motivated him to join the Preservation Association and his strong belief that hard work makes a difference keeps him coming back.

Beth Crawford

Beth Crawford is new to the PACNY board. Beth has served as a PACNY volunteer and participated in PACNY events for over 15 years. Originally from Massachusetts, Beth is a graduate of Syracuse Univer-

See BOARD, Page 8

Middle school students learn about stewardship

By Mary Duffin

Preserving and understanding our past must begin with our young students so that they may become good stewards of the man-made environment -- including buildings, neighborhoods, landscapes and archaeological resources. They need to continue the efforts of those who have come before so that the best of our past can be saved to enjoy today and in the future.

The Central New York Council for the Social Studies held their annual Student Summer Program for grades 4 through 7. The program's focus, "The Underground Railroad in Central New York" was a success. The first event of the program was held at the Onondaga Historical Association (OHA). Ellen Schwartz of the OHA taught the students about the Underground Railroad and the people and places that were involved in helping enslaved African-Americans gain freedom.

The students viewed "The Faces" from the Wesleyan Methodist Church in downtown Syracuse which were preserved due to a community effort assisted by Douglas Armstrong, PACNY president ex-officio and chair of Syracuse University's Department of Anthropology, and PACNY. The students also visited the Jerry Rescue Monument and, on a walking tour, saw the buildings involved in the abolition movement.

The second event was a tour of historic Oakwood Cemetery led by Claire DeLoria. The students learned about people buried in Oakwood who were involved in abolition activities. DeLoria also spoke to the students about Oakwood's historic picturesque landscape that is filled with art and architecture, taking them on a scavenger hunt for a more interactive learning experience. Students were excited to share their discoveries and came away with an appreciation for the memorials

dedicated to those who sought to break the chains of slavery.

The Seward House in Auburn New York was the third site for the students participating in this program. The home of William H. Seward was his base during a long and illustrious career as a celebrated statesman, having served as the secretary of state, U.S. senator and New York governor while maintaining an active stance as an abolitionist. Students listened to curator Betty Lewis speak of how Seward and his wife, Frances, assisted in the Underground Railroad. Later, students had an opportunity to explore Seward's home life during the mid- to late-1800's and viewed an exhibit which gave more information about the historic context of his time. Students learned that the Seward House is a registered National Historic Landmark.

The final site on this program was the home of Harriet Tubman, the great liberator and "conductor" of the Underground Railroad who also lived in Auburn, settling there because of her friend, William H. Seward. While visiting her simple home, students learned about Tubman's 19 successful trips south where she achieved the rescue of over 300 slaves. There was much to learn about her services to the Union Army during the Civil War and how Tubman continued to help others after the war by expanding her property into a home for the aged.

The students and teachers who participated in this program came away with valuable knowledge about the period of the Underground Railroad. As educators, the teachers are confident that these students will go on to enrich others with the knowledge they gained during their participation in this program and become stewards of our history and the resources that tell the stories of our rich heritage. •

Maintaining windows on our history

By Susan Hamilton

Ignoring advertisements that exhort me to rip all the windows from my Victorian house and replace them with vinyl-clad ones, I have undertaken to rebuild my home's original wooden sashes. It's a labor-intensive job, and the result may not be quite as energy-efficient as new windows, but the payoff is in the fine old wood's beauty and integrity.

The hardest part of rebuilding double-hung windows may be in getting them apart. They may have been painted shut, and the ropes are often broken. Use a putty knife to break any paint seal, then remove the stop molding -- the vertical strip that blocks the lower sash from swinging into the room. This sash is (or was) attached to counter-weights hidden in the wall by a rope or chain that travels over a pulley.

A rope's knot would be tucked into a hole in the side of the sash and a chain probably screwed into the slot leading to that hole. With the rope or chain detached, you can remove the lower sash easily; the upper sash is more difficult, because the vertical parting strips between its channel and that of the upper sash are often brittle and likely to break when pried. Plan to replace the parting strips with new wood.

With both sashes out of the window frame, you can scrape accumulations of old paint. Originally, the sides would not have been painted; however, they may have been over time. After removing as much paint as possible, treat all exposed wood with an equal mixture of turpentine and linseed oil. The sash-

es may need to be scraped, primed and repainted on the outside and refinished or repainted on the interior side.

If old putty around the glass is deteriorated, I completely replace it while the window is dismantled. Paint strip-



per will soften old putty so it can be scraped out. Coat the groove where the glass rests with the turpentine/linseed oil mixture before resetting the glass panes in a bed of glazing compound.

Now it's time to deal with the window's weights and pulleys. On each side of the frame is a pocket cover providing access to the bottom of the weight pocket, a vertical space in which the counter-weights move as the window is raised or lowered.

Often the weight pocket is covered with paint, so finding it can be a challenge. It is usually held in with a screw or two. With the pocket open, you can remove handfuls of blown-in insulation that may have drifted in. I recommend replacing the old ropes with sash chain, which is less likely to break.

Remove the pulleys at the top of the window (two on each side) and oil them. Then feed the sash chain over each pulley and let it drop into the weight pocket, to be secured to the weights.

To reinstall the window sashes, pull on the chain for the upper sash until the weight is raised to its highest point, then insert a sturdy nail through it at the pulley to hold it in place. Measure the end of the chain so that, with the window resting at the sill, the chain reaches about an inch past the hole in the sash slot. Screw the chain into place just above the hole and check to make sure that the window operates properly.

Then measure and cut the chain for the lower sash in the same way. Now you can replace the weight-pocket covers and the parting strips before hanging the lower sash.

Finally, replace the stop molding carefully, making sure it doesn't press too tightly against the sash and impede its movement. Then sit back and enjoy the view of your refurbished window! •

sity's VPA Design Department. In her professional life, Beth is an associate with Crawford & Stearns Architects and Preservation Planners in Syracuse, where she has participated in the preservation and adaptive use of hundreds of buildings across New York State. Crawford was a founding member of the Heritage Coalition Inc., serving as editor of the Heritage News and in various positions on the executive board. Beth is married to architect Randy Crawford and is very proud of her very preservation-minded daughter Rachel.

Victor W. Vaccaro Jr.

Victor W. Vaccaro Jr. joined the board of directors of the Preservation Association of Central New York as treasurer during the summer of 1997 and has occupied the position since that time. Always interested in historic structures, Vic welcomed the opportunity to use his business training and experience to oversee the finances of an organization dedicated to preservation. Vic is a senior audit manager at Dannible & McKee, LLP, a regional public accounting and consulting firm, where he has worked for the past ten years. He graduated magna cum laude from Clarkson University with degrees in accounting and finance and is a certified public accountant in New York State.

Carol A. Burnett

Carol resides in Elbridge but has lived most of her life in Syracuse and works here as a legal secretary in a job she enjoys immensely. She has been a member of the Preservation Association for several years and actively joined the board in March 2000. Carol brings strong feeling to her desire to save our city's historic resources, noting that, "so much of our heritage has been taken from us due to poor priorities and lack of planning by our elected officials. My hopes are that as a group we can make a difference locally by encouraging a preservation ethic among the public and our elected officials." In

See BOARD, Page 9

James Street preservation covenant dates to 1921

We wonder: What if their ideals had been upheld?

By Douglas V. Armstrong

The concern of Central New York citizens about the destruction of the region's architectural and cultural heritage is not new. In 1921 when the C. E. Mills Oil Company planned to purchase and demolish the house of E.J. Page on the southeast corner of James and Lodi Street, the announcement was met with protests by neighbors. A local committee was formed to represent the interests of local homeowners.

As indicated in the June 23, 1921, Syracuse Post-Standard, dated the outcome was an agreement made by a new purchaser, George Cochran, with members of the property owners' committee and neighbors. The agreement placed a formal restricted use covenant on the property. This covenant was agreed to in consideration of the sum of \$400. Advocates on behalf of the neighborhood included Judge H. Hiscock, Governor Nathan L. Miller, Horace White, H. Winfield Chapin, Frank C. Soule, John Wilkenson, Frederick Frazer, Carleton A. Chase, M. D. Edwards, and Newell B. Woodworth, along with additional restriction agreement signers Gertrude Belden, Helen S. Everson and Delight B. Black. The article indicates that the agreement "safeguards neighbors and land owners further up the street as the covenant runs with the land and protects heirs of present owners." Lawyers Frank N. Decker and William A. Mackenzie represented a number of residents whose "interests were identical with those of the committee in their desire to maintain the residential quality of the neighbor-

hood."

One of my first impressions of Syracuse was a sad sigh and the thought, "what might the city of Syracuse be like today if the houses on James Street had been protected from demolition."

It is striking to find that 80 years ago, Syracuse neighbors rallied to protect their neighborhood. They realized that the loss of the corner to a gas station would permanently alter the residential character of their community. Many of these individuals figured prominently and positively in the future of their community.

Eighty years ago, Syracuse neighbors rallied to protect their neighborhood.

Unfortunately, in time the efforts of these citizens were not supported. Even though this initial preservation effort was successful, the importance of safeguarding the residential quality of James Street was lost during a period of poor planning in the post World

War II era. I believe that today most residents of the region view the ultimate history of the demise of the residential properties of James Street as an unfortunate defacing of our community's urban core. Yet, we continue to let the city's past be demolished for structures of lesser quality -- gas stations, drug stores, car washes, and fast food restaurants.

Currently, this lot is under construction. PACNY will continue to research the history of this site and the covenant attached to it. We will report if the new construction complies with the spirit and language of the covenant in our next newsletter.

If any readers can share information about the history of the site, we would love to hear from you. Call us at 475-0119. •

APPEAL, from Page 1

of appeal on Aug. 15, 2000. The temporary restraining order against the building's demolition remains in effect until legal proceedings are resolved.

Recognized as a historic and architectural resource in the City of Syracuse, the Loos Building was recently singled out in the Onondaga County Settlement Plan by city/county planning consultant Andres Duany, as playing a potentially catalytic role in the stabilization and improvement of the Butternut Street neighborhood.

Joanne Arany, chair of PACNY's Preservation Committee maintains that the city is neglecting its responsibilities to monitor the condition of vacant structures and is not enforcing appropriate health, safety and zoning regulations. In the case of the Loos Building, neither the previous or current owners had been cited by the city for code violations despite the obvious disrepair of the building.

This disrepair has led some neighbors to label the building an "eyesore," calling for its demolition, a situation that could be profitable to the current owner but result in a significant loss of a critical historic resource for the city. Additionally, the core intersection of the historic streetscape would be further disrupted, negating the city's efforts to restore or maintain neighborhood centers.

PACNY Executive Director Samuel Gruber reiterated PACNY's concern that the precedent of allowing self-imposed economic hardship to be the basis for allowing demolition of the protected site effectively strips protection from all Syracuse historic buildings -- whether designated or eligible for designation. According to Gruber, "Under the commission's interpreta-



The Conrad Loos Building, built in 1895 by Archimedes Russell for the North Side merchant, is the object of a legal challenge by PACNY against Syracuse. The mixed-use brick building was declared a protected site in 1999, but the city planning commission has granted the owner permission to tear it down.

tion of economic hardship, maximum short-term profitability is the final measure of a building site's worth -- not whether a building on that site is of value to the community for historic, architectural or cultural reasons. Every historic site is now at risk, and just think of all the historic buildings situated on prime downtown sites."

According to Gruber, "Demolition and new development of any of these sites might provide immediate or short-term economic gain rather the long-term benefits of sensitive reuse of older structures. PACNY has demonstrated that reasonable economic return can be achieved while redeveloping historic structures."

PACNY's suit to save the Loos Building is intended to ensure protec-

tion of all viable historic resources by requiring that city agencies enforce existing regulations or legislative ordinance, and/or establish appropriate criteria and procedures to assure objective site by site analysis of proposals that may result in irretrievable loss of critical historic resources.

The Preservation Association calls upon the community to support its efforts to protect central New York's architectural heritage. The PACNY Board urges individuals to contact elected representatives and the media about their concerns, and to join PACNY, and contribute extra funds to aid PACNY's legal action. For more information call 475-0119. •

BOARD, from Page 8

addition to her interest in preserving worthwhile historic resources, Carol enjoys spending her time with her 1 1/2-year-old granddaughter, family

genealogy, gardening and reading. Carol is a member of the CNY Genealogical Society as well as several genealogical and historical soci-

eties around New York State. •

required (New York State Historic Preservation Act of 1980, Chapter 354, Section 426.1-426.3).

Unfortunately, even though a wide range of resources are known and have been reported through the State Museum and the State Historic Markers programs, the formal SHPO list is very incomplete. Our goal was to compile and assess all of the known information so that the state would be better able to protect significant archaeological resources that might be threatened.

Funding for the project was through a competitive grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation's Intermodal Surface Transportation, Efficiency Act and the Intermodal Transportation Enhancement Act program administered by the New York State Department of Transportation. The study was sponsored by the New York State Department of Parks Recreation and Historic Preservation and the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs at Syracuse University.

The study has been produced in three volumes. The first is a standard book format presentation that includes GIS maps of the sites represented on all of the databases. It also includes some detailed analysis of the quality of information contained in each database and some basic comparisons between the various site files. The second volume is a CD-ROM version which contains the full text of the first volume plus all of the databases and maps which can be downloaded via ArcExplorer, a free internet software program. The CD includes very detailed information and is designed to be used by SHPO, local and regional planners, and scholars. The third volume is a large format Atlas. For information on this project contact Douglas Armstrong at darmstrong@maxwell.syr.edu or Robert Kuhn at the New York State SHPO Office at Peebles Island. •



The Samuel Forman House was built in 1812 by Samuel Forman, an early inhabitant of Onondaga Valley. The house, a fine example of Federal style architecture, was saved from demolition in 1999 when PACNY joined local community groups to protest development in the area.

PACNY helps get historical designation for 2 Onondaga Valley protected sites

By Sam Gruber

On Monday, March 13, 2000, the Syracuse Common Council unanimously approved designation for two protected historic sites on Seneca Turnpike in Onondaga Valley: the Samuel Forman house and the Village Green. The Forman House, located at 417 West Seneca Turnpike (formerly 203 West Seneca Street, Onondaga), was built in 1812 by Samuel Forman, an early inhabitant of the Valley.

The house is located on a tract of land reportedly transferred to Samuel's older brother Joshua by Ephraim Webster, the first permanent white settler in Onondaga County. Webster had a land grant to "Webster's mile square," of which he deeded some to Joshua Forman. Subsequently, all four Forman brothers settled there.

The house, a fine example of Federal style architecture, was saved from demolition in 1999 when PACNY joined local community groups to protest development in the area that sacrificed the historic character of the district to short-sighted planning. In a compromise, the house was saved and the owner, Eckerd drugstore developer Westlake Development Inc., worked with PACNY to sponsor the designation. The house was recently sold and the new owner has pledged to maintain the structure in accordance with the city's landmark ordinance.

The Common Council also designated the Village Green, a strip of open space deeded to the village of Onondaga Hollow by village founders Gordon Needham and Joshua Forman

See VALLEY, Page 12

Homeowner's tax credit legislation update

By Sam Gruber

Earlier in the year, when Congress and the President faced off over the national budget and proposed tax cuts, attention was focused on the big-ticket items over which there was much ideological disagreement. But tucked into the big Republican tax cut proposal that Congress passed and the president vetoed, are smaller items that deserve attention.

These items, if ever legislated, could greatly enhance the physical condition and quality of life of our neighborhoods by encouraging private investment into the improvement and restoration of historic housing stock.

One initiative in particular, the financial incentive in the tax bill for housing restorations in federal, state and local historic districts, has had widespread bipartisan support for many years and deserves passage.

The Preservation Association of Central New York has long supported a measure, passed by the U.S. Senate, that creates a 20 percent tax credit of up to \$20,000 for the rehabilitation of homes in historic districts. The tax credit would make it possible for lower income families to invest in abandoned or deteriorated homes. Developers could pass the credit on to families or the families could use the credit to lower their mortgage interest rate or to apply it toward their down payment.

This version of the tax credit generated widespread bipartisan support. The proposal had 178 co-sponsors in the House and 31 in the Senate. It also had been endorsed by a bevy of organizations, including the National Association of Home Builders, National Urban League and U.S. Conference of Mayors.

The credit, as originally proposed in H.R. 1172 and S. 664, was modified during negotiations between the House and Senate from a tax credit to a

deduction. This is a welcome first step, but a deduction limits rehabilitation incentives for middle- and lower-income families. The Preservation Association of Central New York calls on the Congress and the White House to strengthen the provision in any subsequent legislation. We are grateful that Congress supported the rehabilitation of historic homes as part of its tax package. It demonstrates that Congress recognizes the importance of



making the preservation and rehabilitation of older homes an economically feasible and socially desirable part of the nation's public policy. We are hopeful that Congress and the White House will now seriously consider the original proposal which would provide an even stronger incentive for community revitalization and historic homeownership.

Congressman John Walsh has supported the bill over many years, and

we urge Congressman Walsh to continue to fight to keep and strengthen the provision in current budget negotiations. We are concerned that a new influx of money slated to demolish vacant houses in Syracuse will not be judiciously expended and many architecturally historic features and homes will be lost forever. We urge Congress to reconsider the original historic homeownership tax credit proposal. Reinstatement of this tax credit would do more to revitalize our older neighborhoods and communities than any other federal initiative to date.

Historic preservation helps all kinds of neighborhoods, and is especially important as part of the stabilization and improvement of property values and conditions in urban neighborhoods. Anyone who walks through Syracuse neighborhoods knows that we have a wealth of historic housing stock, much of it of good quality that needs to be restored.

The city of Syracuse and the older towns and villages of Onondaga County cannot rely solely upon improvements to the older housing stock undertaken with HUD grants, such as the recently established Neighborhood Stabilization Program. Private investment and private ownership is essential to maintaining economic diversity of neighborhoods and the economic health of property-tax dependent municipalities. Only through incentives such as those itemized in this bill can we encourage private investment in older housing.

We encourage the citizens of Onondaga to urge Congress and the President to support the historic homeownership tax credit.

For more information on the proposed legislation, or on other programs to identify and assist older and historic properties, contact the Preservation Association of Central New York at (315) 475-0119. •

in the early 19th century. The Village Green was, in 1807, legally described as a place "set apart for a green" that "shall forever remain open and unenclosed ... for the use and ornament of the village." The green forms, along with the open space associated with the Presbyterian Church and Academy Green (previously designated), the central historic civic open space of the Valley community. The area that extends from the NE corner of Valley Drive, past Milburn Drive ending at a point now located on the west side of Onondaga Creek has always been the heart of the neighborhood and played an important role in public ceremonies throughout the 19th century.

Gordon Needham's House, previously located at the eastern end of the green, had been designated a protect-

ed site, but after a court challenge, was demolished by Faith Heritage School. Joshua Forman's home, located north of the Green at its eastern edge, was substantially rebuilt in the early 20th century and is now the home of the Zen Center.

The successful protected site applications were researched by PACNY board member Joanne Arany and PACNY Executive Director Samuel Gruber. Speaking about the significance of the Village Green at a public hearing on the sites held before the City Planning Commission, Arany urged the pursuit of further historic designations in the Valley area. PACNY continues to work with local property owners and officials to develop a historic district to preserve and promote the best qualities of the area. •

State, a state-wide not-for-profit membership organization dedicated to protecting and enhancing the state's architectural heritage, and the New York State Council on the Arts, the state's arts funding agency.

PACNY to Receive UNSAAC Support for Berkeley Park Research

In July, 2000, PACNY was awarded a \$4,000 grant from the University Neighborhood Services Advisory Committee (UNSAAC) to support research leading to the nomination of the Berkeley Park residential neighborhood to the National Register of Historic Places. The proposed district was developed as a residential park in the early decades of the 20th Century and boasts houses designed by many of the region's best architects.

The landscaped setting remains intact. Berkeley Park, like Strathmore and Sedgwick, offered new suburban amenities within the city limits at the beginning of the Automobile Age. PACNY's research will build on work produced by students in Prof. George Curry's historic preservation class at SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry School of Landscape Architecture several years ago. •

On the road again

The Onondaga Historical Association is on the road again. OHA is offering a three-day bus tour of historic Philadelphia October 25-27, 2000.

Featured stops include Independence National Historic Park, the van Gogh exhibit at the Philadelphia Museum of Art, and dinner at the reconstructed City Tavern.

For more information, contact Lynn Fallon at 315-428-1864. •



PACNY board member Joanne Arany, right, meets with Bruce Abbey, second from left, dean of the School of Architecture at Syracuse University, and Gene Hares, left, and Deborah Carr; children of Francis E. Hares, to formally announce the creation of the Francis E. Hares Preservation Lecture Series. PACNY had a long time friend in Fran and gave generous support to this lecture series, which is scheduled to begin in spring 2001. For more information, call Katryn Hansen in the School of Architecture at 443-5078.

Rescuing Harriet May Mills' Legacy in Syracuse

PACNY helps owner see potential in historic home.

By Beth Crawford

The Preservation Association of Central New York is pleased to announce that the significant Harriet May Mills House on West Genesee Street is no longer in jeopardy of demolition following several well-orchestrated efforts in late June. Representatives of PACNY are working with the current owners in an attempt to find a sympathetic developer of the property and have offered to work with them on local designation and possible protective covenants.

The property at 1072 West Genesee Street, Syracuse, New York is historically significant for its association with the politically active Harriet May Mills and her family. Most importantly Miss Mills was a prominent figure in both the national and New York suffrage movements of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

In mid-June PACNY Executive Director Sam Gruber became aware of a pending application for a special permit submitted to the City Planning Commission for a car wash for the property. Beth Crawford, PACNY volunteer and now vice-president, quickly prepared a "Blue Form" for NYS Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation review and the property was immediately determined eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. On Wednesday June 28, 2000 Beth Crawford had the opportunity to present this issue and a copy of Harriet May Mills' biography to Hillary Rodham Clinton on a campaign stop in Syracuse and ask for her support. Local Channel 3 covered the event



Harriet May Mills House on West Genesee Street is no longer in jeopardy of demolition following several well-orchestrated efforts in late June.

and interviewed Crawford, who was representing PACNY and also interviewed Dennis J. Connors at Onondaga Historical Association. Post-Standard columnist Sean Kirst was concerned about the fate of the house and ran a favorable article the first week of July interviewing owner Jim Taylor and Crawford. Based on PACNY's offer to help him find a new sympathetic use, Taylor has canceled the contract to sell to the demolisher.

PACNY representatives have toured the house with a potential purchaser and are currently assessing if their needs can be met in the structure. For further information regarding purchasing and restoring this property, please contact PACNY's offices or email Beth Crawford at rehabbeth@aol.com •

Harriet May Mills: A woman of Syracuse

By Beth Crawford

Harriet May Mills, born August 9, 1857, in the West Genesee home of her parents Harriet Ann (Smith) and Charles de Berard Mills, was raised in a family of prominent abolitionists. Her middle name was given in honor of her father's friend and fellow anti-slavery activist the Rev. Samuel J. May.

It is noted in a brief biography that the Mills home was used as a station on the Underground Railroad for fugitive slaves, although further documentation has not been found. It is also noted in the same biography, that the Mills family had many distinguished visitors to the West Genesee Street home including Frederick Douglas, Wendell Phillips, Elizabeth Cady Stanton Susan B. Anthony, Lucy Stone, Bronson

See MILLS, Page 14

tor was Entherm.

-- **John Krell** for his restoration and adaptive reuse of the former Herald Building. Krell, who owns and operates the Krell Distributing Company across the street from the former newspaper building, bought the vacant and derelict 1928 Herald Building from the city. Although his initial interest was the building's parking lot, Krell eventually invested \$1.5 million in the property -- replacing 198 windows, all of the mechanical systems, repairing the roof, and much more. Now, the Herald Building houses the American Red Cross and other tenants. Original decorative elements were saved and reused whenever possible, and these can best be seen in the foyer and ground floor offices. PACNY congratulates Krell for his private investment in an older Syracuse building and his demonstration that such buildings still maintain value and prestige.

-- **Plymouth Congregational Church of Syracuse** for the restoration of its Good Shepherd stained glass window. The window, restored in honor of Rev. Harvey Pinyoun, represents Jesus as the Good Shepherd, an important image to a congregation that actively serves the community in many ways. Syracuse-based stained-glass artist Rose Viviano restored the window. Crawford & Stearns were consultants on the project, and L. Klein of Cortland was the contractor. A \$28,000 grant from the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation Environmental Protection Fund helped the project, matched by \$34,000 raised by the congregation.

-- **The Onondaga Park Association** (OPA) in recognition of its annual house tours and the recent commissioning of a Master Plan for the restoration of Onondaga Park. The Master Plan, commissioned in the aftermath of the 1998 Labor Day Storm creates a framework for the

continuing restoration and maintenance of the park in keeping with its historic configuration. Landscape architect David Harding created the plan in consultation with the OPA, and the City Department of Parks and Recreation and the Syracuse Landmark Preservation Board. The plan was needed even before the storm hit, but the uprooting and severe damage to 155 trees in the park made the need for action urgent.

Tender Loving Care (TLC) Awards are given to individuals, organizations or civic agencies that have maintained exceptionally high standards of care for historic properties or landscapes.

This year's TLC Awards were presented to:

-- **St. Paul's Cathedral** in recognition of the restoration of the Cathedral's exterior masonry. International Chimney of Buffalo and Viau Construction of Syracuse carried out the 1999 restoration of St. Paul's. St. Paul's Episcopal Parish was founded in 1826 and this church, designed by Henry Dudley in 1885, is its third building. Its design freely adapts traditional Gothic elements into a handsome overall scheme that dominates its corner site. The pointed arched mullion windows and a large chancel window are distinctive features, but it is the newly restored 185-foot tower that defines the structure.

-- **The Palace Theater** of Eastwood, in recognition of its role as a defining presence in Eastwood since the 1920s. More than any other building or business on James Street in Eastwood, the Palace Theater, owned and managed by the DiBella family, contributes to the neighborhood's traditional Main Street appearance. Today, as Eastwood residents and businesses plan their future, the Palace Theater can be used as a centerpiece for the retention and reintroduction of Main Street urban values.

Congratulations to all the winners. •

Alcott, and Ralph Waldo Emerson. At the turn of the century Miss Mills used the West Genesee Street home as the headquarters of the New York State Women's Suffrage Association.

At the age of 63, Miss Mills was the first woman nominated for state-wide office by a major political party in 1920 and ran for Secretary of State on the ticket with Gov. Alfred E. Smith. At the time a New York Times editorial stated that she was "a conspicuous woman suffragist, and a clever politician and speaker."

She was known to be a very effective organizer campaigning against child labor, sweatshops, and sub-standard housing. Miss Mills was chosen as a NYS delegate to the 1920 national Democratic Convention, worked with Eleanor Roosevelt in state party politics, and toured with F.D. Roosevelt in 1928 speaking on women's issues. FDR recommended to then Governor Lehman that the Women's Building at the NYS Fair be rededicated to Miss Mills, which it was in 1934. The memorial plaque at the State Fair building says "Harriet May Mills, Distinguished Citizen of the Empire State, Prophet and Trail Breaker of a better social order, Loyal Champion in the battle for the Enfranchisement of Women, Friend of Humanity."

It was noted in the Syracuse Standard that Mrs. Roosevelt, then the First Lady, attended Miss Mills' funeral in Syracuse in May 1935. •

On the Web

Keep up online with the latest in historical preservation news from the Preservation Association of Central New York. Check out the Preservation Association's new Web site at

<http://community.syracuse.com/cc/pacny>

Westcott house tours brings out crowds

1999 tour was a success; 2000 tour is scheduled Oct. 1

In 1999, nearly four hundred people spent the good part of a fall Sunday walking the through the Westcott neighborhood, rubbernecking the houses of Allen and adjacent streets. The occasion was the first Westcott Neighborhood House Tour,



126 Concord St.

organized by the Preservation Association of Central New York and the Westcott East Neighborhood Association (WENA).

This event, which took place over five hours last Oct. 10, took two months to organize and was an opportunity for the Westcott Neighborhood to show off many of its best qualities -- beauty, community, history and neighbors. PACNY and WENA efforts raised funds for preservation and neighborhood beautification programs. The neighborhood also received wonderful press coverage, including a two-page spread in The Syracuse Newspapers' Home & Garden section.

The self-guided tour of neighborhood houses took place from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. A single ticket allowed



684 Allen St.

tour participants to visit five distinctive houses. A printed program provided descriptions and histories of the houses, but on-site guides helped answer questions and show visitors around.

The Westcott Street neighborhood developed between the 1880's and 1920's. Out of a series of farms grew one of Syracuse's first "street-car suburbs." Beautiful houses in the Victorian/Queen Anne style were built along Westcott, Cambridge, Allen and Fellows Streets. In the 1920s, many of the larger lots were filled in with new houses, including fine examples of Arts and Crafts houses and bungalows, and Colonial-style houses.

A very special thank you to our generous and patient homeowners: Andrew Besemer, Tim Cassavaw, Bill Cuddy, Jean Fox, Pat Hoffmann, David Jenks, Candace Rhea and Henry Shiller. We could not have done it without you! Special thanks to Jerry and Judy Grant who lent their home for the tour headquarters.



131 Harvard St.

Westcott Neighborhood 2000 House Tour is scheduled for 10 a.m to 4 p.m. Oct. 1. This year's tour will showcase five of the neighborhood's distinctive houses on Allen, Cambridge, Victoria and Clarke Streets and Euclid Avenue. Guides will present historical and architectural information. The selection includes houses designed by noted architects Ward Wellington Ward and Gordon Wright.

Again, a lecture series of



536 Allen St.

short talks will also be held throughout the day on topics related to the history, architecture and contemporary life of the neighborhood.

The day is a great opportunity to celebrate the architecture and history of one of Syracuse's most distinctive residential neighborhoods. In light of last year's outstanding turnout, neighborhood organizers are anticipating an even greater turnout this year and are busy preparing related events.

Advance tickets for the tour will cost \$8 a person and are available at selected locations. Tickets purchased



1002 Euclid St.

the day of the tour are \$10 per person. Registration begins at 9:30 a.m. at 600 Allen Street. All proceeds from the tour benefit PACNY and WENA. For more information or to volunteer, please call PACNY at 475-0119. •

Preservation Association of Central New York
650 James St.
Syracuse, NY 13202
(315) 475-0119
<http://community.syracuse.com/cc/pacny>

Historic Neighborhood Walking Tour Schedule, Fall 2000

The Preservation Association of Central New York (PACNY) and the Onondaga Historical Association (OHA) announce their fall schedule of neighborhood walking tours. The Saturday morning walking tours are all led by experts -- historians, architects, planners and community activists -- and provide a mix of old and new, discussing the past achievements of neighborhoods and what the future holds in store.

Spaces are limited, so participation is by advance registration with OHA at 428-1864. Tickets are \$5 for PACNY and OHA members, \$7 for nonmembers.

Berkeley Park

9 to 10:30 a.m. Sept. 16th

Historic preservationist Christine Capella Peters will present the history and architecture of one of Syracuse's most attractive residential neighborhoods: the garden suburb of Berkeley Park, developed in the first quarter of the 20th century. Situated near Syracuse University and Oakwood Cemetery, the neighborhood includes house designed by many of our finest architects.

Hanover and Clinton Squares

9 to 10:30 a.m. Sept. 23

OHA Curator of History and former PACNY and OHA director Dennis J. Connors talks

about Syracuse's two most architecturally distinctive historic public spaces. Dennis will discuss architecture, history and politics as we consider the forces that shaped this historic district.

Butternut Street

9 to 10:30 a.m. Oct. 14

Join architectural historian and PACNY Executive Director Samuel Gruber on a walk along Butternut from North Townsend to Park, one of the North Side's primary arteries. Drastic changes are taking place in the area, which has a mix of residential, commercial, religious and public architecture. Sam will discuss the effect of new development on the historic appearance of the street and the "feel" of a neighborhood rich in tradition.

Hawley-Green National Register Historic District

9 to 10:30 a.m. Oct. 21

Jamieson R. Steele reprises his popular tour of this exceptional historic district, last given in 1997. Jamie has lived in the neighborhood for decades and has helped preserve the best of the area's architecture. As a long-term representative to the Syracuse Landmark Preservation Board he has long fought for better code enforcement for the North Side.

