

ON THE WEST SIDE

THE UNIVERSITY
CITY HISTORICAL
SOCIETY



May, 2008

<http://www.uchs.net>

Mike Hardy, Editor

TOUR

THE

TWINS



For the second year in a row, the **Historic House Tour of UCHS** will feature a sampling of one of the area's most distinctive architectural house forms, by following last year's mansions tour with a look at the unique twin houses of Philadelphia, a signature house type in West Philadelphia's historic districts. On Sunday, June 1, over a dozen will be open and on display for those taking the UCHS walking house tour "**Twin Houses of University City**" from 1 to 5 pm, including a garden reception with light refreshments for tour goers and house tour owners.

Twin houses from both the 19th and 20th century will be on the walkable circuit, with their owners proudly displaying their creative and colorful adaptations to the twins' extra light, generous proportions and their handsome architectural features, for they often had more detail than the simpler row house, the Philadelphia standard.

UCHS members who use the form enclosed to order advance sale tickets, may do so at a discounted members' rate of \$20/each. If, however, you wait until the day of the tour to purchase your ticket, the price climbs to \$35/each, so get your order in the mail today.

And friends and neighbors may use the same form to join UCHS with its many benefits, including the discount on tour tickets. All will receive a confirmation letter and instructions as to where to pick up

a ticket/map/tour descriptions on June 1 to begin the tour. This will be sent out by **Philadelphia Open House (POH)**, the umbrella organization of the **Friends of Independence National Park** that sponsors the UCHS tour along with a number of tours in other venues in the region.

The general public can purchase tickets for the **UCHS Twin Houses** tour for \$30/each from POH and learn about all of the other tours offered, including a **Powelton Village House Tour** on Saturday, May 31, organized by the **Powelton Village Civic Association**, at www.friendsofindependence.org

The weeks ahead offer great opportunities to enjoy the best of the area.

LETTER FROM YOUR UCHS PRESIDENT

With best regards, Belynda Stewart

We have exciting news: for the first time in ten years, we have hired **Summer Interns** from **Penn's Design School**. Our interns, **Alexander Balloon** and **Meredith Marsh**, both graduate students in **Historic Preservation and Urban Redevelopment and Design**, will be gathering material on the more than three-hundred properties in **University City** and **West Philadelphia** that have been placed on the local **Philadelphia register** by the **Philadelphia Historical Commission**. They will be researching, documenting and photographing the properties, as well as notifying their respective owners of the registry. Once completed, this material can be accessed via our soon-to-be revamped web-site.

If that is not enough for a summer project, in their spare time, Alexander and Meredith will be digitizing the slide collection of **Sylvia Barkan**, a long-time

UCHS Board member who has more than a thousand photographs of area properties that no longer exist.

At the **University City Historical Society**, we think the sharing of this information is essential, and will go a long way towards creating awareness and educating property owners, thereby maintaining the historical architectural integrity of our University City neighborhoods.

And so that you may enjoy some of the treasured properties here, I would like to personally invite you, your friends, and neighbors to join us for our **Annual House Tour** on Sunday, June 1, 2008 from 1 to 5 PM. This is always an excellent outing, and we would love to have you with us.

UPDATE: HPRP

The latest news from the **Historic Properties Repair Program** administered by the **Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia** is that the program of grants for exterior repair and restoration of historic residential properties owned by low- and moderate-income homeowners continues in full swing. To date, according to **Project Director, Randy Cotton**, the total 57 properties completed or in process citywide represent a total increased property value of \$1,182,000 of which \$889,000 came from the city, \$195,000 from the owners and \$98,000 from the **National Trust for Historic Preservation**.

And of those 57 property repairs and restorations, 23 were in **West Philadelphia**, an impressive percentage indeed!

UCHS voted to make a special contribution to the project to encourage its continuance and Randy reports that the city last year made an additional contribution of \$200,000 to that end and is proposing a similar figure for this year. Letters to your city council person urging a continuance of this program that both helps low- and moderate-income homeowners maintain and restore their homes in historic districts while improving the city's tax base would be an appropriate way to both thank the council for its foresight and encourage them to continue the program, the first in the city's history.

Homeowners in historic properties in historic districts in **University City** can learn more about

the program, its terms and whether they are eligible at www.uchs.org.

NEW ON THE WEBSITE

The newest addition to the **UCHS** website, www.uchs.org, is to <http://www.philaplanning.org/>, where you can study and download a copy of the **Philadelphia Rowhouse Manual: A Practical Guide for Homeowners**, developed by the **City Planning Commission** to both celebrate, analyze and promote the repair, restoration and rehabbing of the city's most common house form, one which continues to provide habitation and shelter for Philadelphians all over the city and whose future can provide us with one more form of sustainable living to add to the greenery and public transport which we continue to enjoy from Philadelphia's rich past. Whether you live in one or are just curious about how they function, check out the row on the web.

PRESERVATION MONTH SPEAKERS

In celebration of **Preservation Month, 2008**, this month's series from the **Preservation Alliance of Greater Philadelphia** includes the following topics and speakers, all at the **AIA Center for Architecture, 1218 Arch Street, 5:30 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.** Admission is free; refreshments are provided; reservations not required.

Tuesday, May 20, Nan Gutterman and Carl Baumert, City Hall Restoration

Nan Gutterman, AIA of **VITETTA** and Carl Baumert, P.E. of **Keast & Hood, Co.** will showcase their firms' collaborative work to conserve the monumental marble sculptures on **Philadelphia City Hall**. Their work on the 250+ **Alexander Milne Calder** designed sculptures is one aspect of the ongoing multi-phase exterior renovation of the building. The conservation of these sculptures is a critical component of the overall exterior envelope renovation project. Gutterman and Baumert will

discuss the need for the project's conservation objectives to balance life-safety and conservation concerns.

Thursday, May 22, Shawn Evans & Adrian Scott Fine, Boyd Theatre

Center City Philadelphia's last movie palace, the **Boyd Theatre**, remains unoccupied, for sale, and threatened with the possibility of demolition. Built in 1928 to designs of the **Hoffman-Henon Company**, one of Philadelphia's most prolific theatre architects, and seating over two thousand, the Boyd was a centerpiece of movie-going in Center City. Against all odds, the **Friends of the Boyd** fended off a demolition attempt in 2002 and remains dedicated to seeing this art-deco masterpiece restored. In this joint presentation, Shawn Evans, AIA of **Atkin Olshin Schade Architects** and Adrian Scott Fine of the **National Trust for Historic Preservation** will present the significance and the plight of this movie palace and place it in the context of a national preservation struggle.

Tuesday, May 27, Elisabeth Dubin & John Evans. Lincoln Cottage (DC) Rehabilitation

From 1862 to 1864, **President Lincoln** and his family escaped the oppressive summer heat by moving to a well-appointed **Gothic Revival** cottage on the northern edge of **Washington, DC**. By 2000, the **Lincoln Cottage** had fallen into disrepair, and the **National Trust for Historic Preservation** identified it as one of the National Trust's 11 **Most Endangered Properties**. Shortly thereafter, **President Clinton** declared the site a national landmark and placed it under the **Save America's Treasures** program which contributed significant funding toward its restoration. In 2003, **RMJM Hillier** restored the building's exterior and interior and created a **Visitor Education Center** by renovating an adjacent historic structure. Elisabeth Dubin, RA, LEED® AP, and John Evans, LEED® AP, of **RMJM Hillier** will discuss both projects.

Thursday, May 29, Emily Cooperman, Beth Sholom

Architectural historian **Emily Cooperman** will explore the history and significance of **Beth**

Sholom, located in **Elkins Park, Pennsylvania**.

The only synagogue ever designed by **Frank Lloyd Wright**, Beth Sholom is one of his most important projects, and in 2007, was listed as a **National Historic Landmark**.

LANDMARKS WALKING TOURS

Step Out, Look Up, Discover!

Offered May through December by the **Philadelphia Society for the Preservation of Landmarks**, over fifty different guided walking tours interpret the past, present and future of the Philadelphia region as expressed through architecture, urban design and social history. Knowledgeable volunteer guides share their appreciation of Philadelphia's three hundred year architectural heritage with residents and visitors alike.

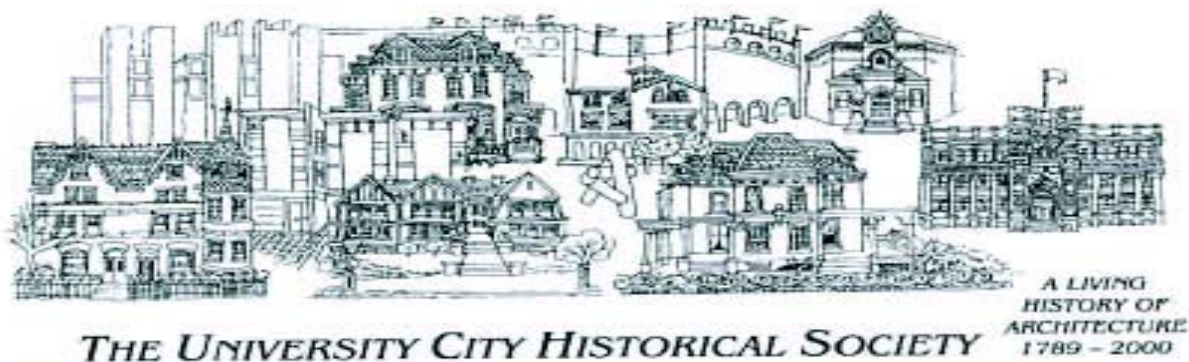
In June, 2008 alone, tour goers have a choice of from 4 to 6 different tour venues at both 10 am and 2 pm, Saturdays and Sundays and Wednesdays at 6 pm. For example, on Sunday, June 8 at 2 pm, leaving from the **University City Arts League, 4226 Spruce Street**, one can learn in 1½ to 2 hours about **Spruce Hill Victoriana** for only \$10/person, \$8/student with ID or free to a child under 10 with an adult.

For a complete description of all the tours, visit www.philalandmarks.org or for monthly tour schedules by mail, contact tours@philalandmarks.org or call (215) 925-2251, x 4.

AND SPECIAL THANKS TO

all of those who recently renewed your dues in **UCHS**, especially those who made very generous additional contributions as a **Sustainer of UCHS**; **Ellyn C. Sapper** and others who made additional contributions as **Friends of UCHS**: **NancyLee Bergey; Winnie Harris; Bruce & Sharon McCullough**.

**UCHS HISTORIC HOUSE TOUR, Sunday, June 1, 2008, 1 - 5 p.m.
TWIN HOUSES OF UNIVERSITY CITY**



Sunday, June 1, 1 - 5 p.m. - "Twin Houses of University City" highlights the unique side-by-side houses of Philadelphia's earliest garden suburbs. Be they ante-bellum **Italianate, Victorian Queen Anne or Twenties Revival**, with their joined porches, side gardens and walkways, they offered new lifestyle experiences for their occupants. Unlike row houses, their densely-built city counterparts, and unlike single family houses, their spacious suburban relatives, Philadelphia's twin houses were designed to include the best of both styles. This self-guided walking tour of over a dozen examples in western University City will take you inside both historic restorations and creative adaptations of this living tradition of shared independence and elegance, followed by an end-of-tour reception with light refreshments.

UCHS Members Discounted Advanced Sale Tickets, \$20 Each.
Orders And Payment Must Be Received By Friday, May 28, 2008
To Permit Confirmations To Be Returned
All Tickets On The Day Of The Tour: \$35/Each
For more tours of **Philadelphia Open House**,
www.friendsofindependence.org

UCHS
P.O. BOX 31927
PHILADELPHIA, PA 19104

AS A UCHS MEMBER, PLEASE RESERVE ___ TICKETS FOR THE UCHS HOUSE TOUR ON SUNDAY, JUNE 1 AT THE DISCOUNTED RATE OF \$20/EACH. MY CHECK TO "UCHS" FOR THE FULL AMOUNT IS ENCLOSED.

I WANT TO JOIN UCHS AS ___ A HOUSEHOLD MEMBER (\$20) ___ A SENIOR/STUDENT MEMBER (\$10). MY CHECK TO "UCHS" IS ENCLOSED.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP CODE _____

EMAIL _____

(ffold on lin line)



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