



The Past is Present

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In this issue:

Page 1

**Downtown
Preservation:
Members Take Hard
Hat Tour**

**Nissen House
Project Receives
PHF Support**

Page 2

**Board Adopts
Strategic Plan**

**Red Bank
Restoration Progress
Continues**

**Razing Concerns:
UNCSA Plans at
Issue**

Page 3

Survivor of the City

**Winston Town Hall
Molding Found**

Page 4

**St. Philips Church
Still Likely to Move**

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Newsletter of Preserve Historic Forsyth whose mission is to promote, protect and advocate for historic resources in Forsyth County. Preserve Historic Forsyth is a 501(c)3 organization. Donations are tax-deductible as allowable by law.

Downtown Preservation: Members Take Hard Hat Tour

By Steve Zorn

On an overcast day in early August, a group of PHF members met for a hard hat tour of Winston Factory Lofts in downtown Winston-Salem. Lindsay Lewis of Clachan Properties, a Richmond, VA-based developer, led the tour of the former R.J. Reynolds building at 101 E. Sixth St. This was originally part of a three-building complex housing the operations of P.H. Hanes Company from 1916 until 1951.

The 91,000 square-foot-building is being converted into an 87-unit apartment project.

This building was designated a local historic landmark by Forsyth County Historic Resources Commission in 2010 and it received National Register designation in 2005. Both of these designations make the property more attractive, in terms of reduced property taxes, for redevelopment.

The hour-long tour included access to the top floor with amazing views of the downtown skyline, enticing several members to jokingly inquire about application forms. Several representatives of MGT Construction of Richmond, general contractor for the project, joined Lindsay in highlighting unique features of the project, including a rooftop deck, movie theatre, fitness center and resident lounge.

The project is expected to be completed by spring 2013.



Nissen House Project Receives PHF Support

By Mary Giunca

A \$500 grant from Preserve Historic Forsyth will go toward rehabilitation work on the 1875 Nissen House in Lewisville.

The Lewisville Historical Society launched an effort to save the house from demolition in May 2008. The house was moved to a piece of land behind the Lewisville Town Hall in 2009, and will be used as a community space.

The George Elias Nissen House, which belonged to a Forsyth County industrial pioneer, needs extensive work, including siding, structural repairs and landscaping.

Contact Mary Gaines 766-8256 or Merrikay Brown 766-5842 if you would like to donate time or money to the project.



Nissen House before moving.

PHF Board Adopts Strategic Plan

By Mary Giunca

William Hinman, a certified local consultant in the nonprofit field, worked with board members of Preserve Historic Forsyth to develop a strategic plan that will chart the organization's course over the next five years.

PHF's board adopted the plan at its June meeting. "Plans are a road map that help guide the organization while providing strategically important priorities for the use of always limited resources," said Hinman.

A board questionnaire, a board/staff retreat and meetings with members helped to identify and set priorities. A smaller *ad hoc* committee met with Hinman. Members included Catherine Hendren, David Gall, Mary Giunca, Will Knott, Jeff MacIntosh and Kelly Mitter.

"Planning is important," Hinman said, "but methodical, persistent implementation is the true measure of the forward-acting nonprofit organization. PHF has much to offer our county—even more so when guided by their exciting plans now in place."

Red Bank Restoration Progress Continues

By David Gall

Eight volunteers worked until their paint cans ran dry on June 9 at the Red Bank School. Volunteers primed most of the exterior, using 10 gallons of primer, and repaired crawl space doors.

The 1881 school building survived years of neglect and a move from a nearby field to Forsyth County's Horizons Park in June 2011. Since then, the Save the Red Bank School Committee has been working to restore the school, which will be open to the public and serve as a witness to rural life in this region.

Work crews plan to install exterior stairs, railings and a ramp for the disabled. Contact David Gall at 773-1213 or daviddegarc@bellsouth.net if you are interested in volunteering for painting or carpentry work.



Razing Concerns: UNCSA Plans at Issue

By Marc Bryson

On July 12th, Winston-Salem lost another historic structure to needless demolition. The University of North Carolina School of the Arts razed the 1915 J. Ashe Templeton house at 2008 Sunnyside Avenue. UNCSA plans to construct a central storage facility on adjacent property facing Acadia Avenue and plans to rezone and pave 2008 Sunnyside for truck access.

But the destruction of historic fabric doesn't stop there. UNCSA's master plan calls for the demolition of all houses on Sunnyside Avenue between S. Main Street and Acadia Avenue for the construction of student housing.

It would be a great loss to our historic neighborhoods if this master plan goes forward.

Large trucks will rumble into the new storage facility from S. Main Street and exit onto Sunnyside Avenue, further eroding the historic residential character and adversely affecting Washington Park, Centerville, and Sunnyside historic districts.

Residents of an attractive side-gabled bungalow adjacent to the storage facility will have to listen to the noise and enjoy a full view of the parking lot. UNCSA incursions into the Washington Park and Sunnyside historic districts have permanently altered the character of the street and destroyed the domestic scale of the eastern edge of Washington Park.

UNCSA also owns the house at 23 E. Banner Avenue, a late Victorian cottage, whose side faces Sunnyside Avenue. This house has been allowed to deteriorate to the point that the side porch is in danger of collapse. This house is another important contributing structure in Washington Park and its preservation is vital to the streetscape of Sunnyside and Banner Avenues.

PHF plans to continue meeting with UNCSA to protect the remaining houses on Sunnyside from demolition.



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Survivor of the City: Simbell Service Station

By Betsy L. Hendrix

Many businesses have occupied the building located at 480 West End Boulevard (next to the old Summit Pharmacy building). But the first occupant was the Simbell System Automobile Service Station that had its grand opening in March of 1929, according to the Winston-Salem Journal.

The Simbell building has a Spanish-influenced design with high, curvilinear parapets. The building has a wide frontage of 144 feet, and includes a ladies lounge. The cement apron in front of the building included evergreen plantings.

The Simbell System boasted a total of seven gas pumps and seven oil pumps. The station was said to be the only garage between Washington and Atlanta specializing in washing and lubricating. Supervisor C. L. Simmons and manager C. W. Campbell also stocked special oils, tires and accessories.

The building is presently occupied by Crossfit Downtown Winston-Salem.



Winston Town Hall Molding Found

By David Gall

David Beard has been coming to the old Happy Hill cemetery to help reclaim graves.

In July, Beard reclaimed a lost piece of Winston-Salem's history.

He pulled back a mass of briars and discovered a large carved terracotta molding that weighed 84 pounds.

Thanks to some photo sleuthing by PHF members Bill Brake and Molly Rawls, who is curator of the Digital Forsyth photo collection at the Forsyth County Public Library, the molding was identified as part of the 1894 Winston Town Hall.

The molding was part of a corner toe bracket that supported the arched entrance to the town hall, which was located at the corner tower at Fourth and Main streets. There were 16 such brackets in all.

The find comes just in time to be part of the Winston-Salem Centennial celebration in 2013.

Volunteers are needed for the project. If you can help, please contact David Gall 773-1213 or daviddegarc@bellsouth.net



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St. Philips Church Still Likely to Move

By Catherine Hendren

Without a miracle, St. Philips Episcopal Church in Germanton will be cut into four pieces in September and moved to the Church of the Advocate in Chapel Hill for worship and fellowship.

The church was built in 1891 on the Forsyth/Stokes county line and is the oldest Episcopal church in Forsyth County. The church has no running water, electricity or central heat and air conditioning. As such, it is the only pristine Carpenter Gothic church surviving in this area and is used only in warm weather. Once the church is moved to Chapel Hill, it will be renamed and modernized.

Preserve Historic Forsyth, Friends of St. Philips, a Stokes County nonprofit preservation group and Germanton's new ecumenical Episcopal congregation, which formed in May are opposing the move.

On June 16, D.G. Martin of radio station WCHL in Chapel Hill interviewed Lisa Fischbeck, Vicar of the Church of the Advocate about its plans for St. Philips. That 40-minute interview can be found at: <http://theadvocatechurch.org/?p=3739>. The station plans to broadcast a response to Rev. Fischbeck's piece from Sarah Woodard David, a historic preservation consultant, Germanton native and resident of the Historic Oakwood neighborhood in Raleigh.

On a more uplifting note, the ecumenical Episcopal Congregation is delighted to have around 25 congregants join together each week at Germanton United Methodist Church, which is next door to St. Philips. This congregation continues to request to worship at St. Philip's until the church is moved.

Bishop Curry has yet to respond to a single request made on behalf of the Friends of St. Philips or the new unnamed congregation. For the latest information, go to: www.savestphilips.org



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