PB Presents its 2011 Historic Preservation Awards and History Event

It’s that time of year again! Preservation Burlington will be presenting its 2011 Preservation Awards on February 8, 2012. Awards will be presented to owners who have done outstanding work in preserving and/or restoring the historic integrity of their buildings during the preceding year in the following categories: Residential, commercial, and institutional. PB will also be presenting its Ray O’Connor award to a Burlington resident who exemplifies Ray’s spirit of social responsibility and community stewardship.

As a part of this event, Tom Simon, local historian, author, and PB Board member, will lead a discussion and photographic presentation on his new book, *The Wonder Team in the White City: UVM at the Intercollegiate Base Ball Tournament of 1893*. This event will be held on February 8th at 7:00 PM in the Black Box Theater of the Main Street Landing Performing Arts Center, 60 Lake Street, Burlington. Light refreshments will be served. $5 suggested donation.

PB’s History Hunt

This past fall Preservation Burlington debuted a new educational event/contest geared toward children and adults alike. History Hunt - an architectural scavenger hunt - asked participants to look around our beautiful city and, based upon hints provided in a series of photographs, identify by name/location the structures on which the architectural features are found.

Preservation Burlington, along with the City of Burlington and the University of Vermont’s Historic Preservation Program, gathered a series of photographs of architectural elements found around Burlington (such as the porch detail pictured above) for an architecture scavenger hunt.

From 1890-93, the UVM nine were among the greatest college baseball teams in the nation. Simon transports us to Chicago for UVM’s chance at a tournament that would eventually become the College World Series.
President’s Corner

Matt Viens is an attorney who has a passion for Burlington’s history and its architectural structures and neighborhoods. He became president of Preservation Burlington in the spring of 2011 after serving as vice-president for approximately two years under President Ron Wanamaker. Matt lives in a circa 1840 Greek Revival home in the city’s South End with his partner and their two dogs.

As many of you know, over the last few years Preservation Burlington (PB) has been experiencing a transformational time in its history. Like many non-profits during this Great Recession, we have been required to make cutbacks in response to diminished resources. While some of these changes, such as the loss of our executive director position, have presented us with challenges, others have resulted in a refined mission and recommitment to PB’s core values.

An example of this has been our organization’s focus on education; whether it be teaching homeowners how to “Be Green” by reusing rather than replacing their homes’ historic wooden windows or encouraging local school children, through their participation in PB’s “History Hunt”, to recognize and appreciate some of the historic structures that help to define their hometown.

While educational opportunities have become an important component of PB’s mission, we’ve maintained many of our traditional and much enjoyed events. One of these is our annual Homes Tour. For the past two years, we have sponsored “theme” tours. In 2010 we focused on mid-century modern structures which became popular across the country following World War II. This year, our tour consisted of carriages houses and barns that had been restored and reinvented as private homes, offices, and B&Bs. In 2012, our Home Tour will be going back to its roots and showcasing homes representing a variety of styles and architectural periods. Be sure to mark your calendars for June 9, 2012!

We are on the verge of a new chapter—one that blends advocacy for protecting Burlington’s rich architectural heritage and the just plain fun that can be had through our educational opportunities and events. I look forward to experiencing this time with you.

Matt Viens, President
Preservation Burlington

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Historic Wooden Window

Historic windows are often the first elements of an older home to be re-placed. They are threatened because of a dwindling amount of skilled workers to restore historic windows properly and an ever increasing push for newer more “efficient” synthetic windows. PB’s Historic Wooden Window Workshop focuses on providing training for regular people to learn the necessary skills to restore and re-pair historic wooden windows. Ron Wanamaker and Amy Mentes of Wanamaker Restoration will share their window restoration knowledge with workshop attendees, and provide helpful “how-to” tips to make your historic windows more energy efficient. Attendees will learn that a properly restored historic window with a functional storm window is just as efficient a new vinyl window.

The restoration process may take more time, but the end product is more aesthetically pleasing and often less expensive.

The workshop will take place on Saturday, February 4th from 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM. A suggested donation of $20 is appreciated.

Contact info@preservationburlington.org for details.
New Materials Old Houses; When, Where, What?

By: Ronald Wanamaker, Wanamaker Restoration

Ronald Wanamaker is a local resident who owns an 1869 Italianate Home on South Willard Street, as well as his own contracting business which specializes in historic buildings. He is a member of the Design Advisory Board for the City of Burlington and is a strong advocate for responsible and appropriate restoration practices.

Recently, Burlington’s Planning Commission has been revisiting the issue of replacement materials on historic buildings. Because of the frequent use of substitute materials to replace the historic features of buildings throughout the city, the Planning Commission is attempting to implement standards that will create a measure of consistency and review for such projects. As Burlington continues to work towards an understandable and predictable ordinance, it is important to remember some key points.

The loss of original, old growth wooden house parts is like clear cutting our old growth forests once again. Many of the materials on our old homes are of irreplaceable quality. In addition to filling our landfills, the energy output required to manufacture even one set of replacement windows has a real measurable impact on our planet. The State Historic Preservation Office puts it best:

“Preservation is part of the Vermont ethic: you don’t throw something away if it is still useful. It is good common sense in the fullest sense of the Vermont tradition to conserve, use, and improve what you already have.”

WHEN are substitute materials appropriate?

Replacement materials are an important and necessary part of every maintenance and repair cycle. Alternatively, substitute materials should never be considered on a building that contributes to a historic district or is eligible for listing on either the State or National Registers. When a building component has failed, and the cause has been identified and addressed, the damaged material can and should be replaced with the same or similar materials. This type of repair is called “replacement in kind.”

Substitute materials are materials of a different property or composition than the original materials. Although there are many situations when these materials are warranted, they should be installed in a very limited way and revisited periodically to assess their viability. When we look back at the substitute materials of the recent past, e.g. asbestos and aluminum and vinyl siding, we can see that their use on any historic building has negative impacts on the value of that building as well as the entire neighborhood. Fiber cement board siding does have some potential as a useful substitute for wood siding in consistently moist environments, but this application should only be considered in limited situations.

Reinforcing the conservation ethos: all maintenance and repair projects should seek to replace as little functioning original material as possible. It is important to stress “limited replacement” when discussing the appropriate actions to take when addressing damage due to external causes. This isn’t only economically prudent, but also the least destructive to both the environment as well as the heritage resources of our city.

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The summer of 2011 ended much differently than most Vermonters had anticipated. Hurricane Irene had wreaked havoc along the Atlantic coast, destroying many communities in its path. By the time Irene reached Vermont, it had been downgraded to a tropical storm, but the state was not spared in the least. Heavy rainfall caused rivers to swell, resulting in severe flooding across the state. Many of the historic buildings that survived previous natural disasters again faced the challenge of recovering from extensive water damage.

In response, Preservation Trust of Vermont organized teams of volunteers to conduct surveys of the damage in downtowns and village centers statewide. Two current Historic Preservation Graduate students participated in the volunteer effort. Rebecca Reese and Tonya Loveday traveled to Waterbury and Moretown and aided in the documentation of damaged buildings. In addition to surveyors, Preservation Trust of Vermont deployed architects and engineers to provide free structural assessments.

After compiling the data collected in the surveys, it was determined that the flooding impacted nearly 700 historic buildings. Close to 200 of these buildings sustained extensive structural damage, and almost all experienced significant water damage. The survey did not collect information on damaged structures in rural areas, yet Preservation Trust of Vermont anticipates that an additional 300 to 500 historic buildings will have been affected. Vermont’s iconic covered bridges were not spared from Irene. Following the storm, 52 covered bridges were inspected. Two bridges were destroyed as floodwaters raged, including the 141-year-old bridge in Bartonsville. An additional five covered bridges were significantly damaged, and 12 sustained minor damage.

As the clean up and repairs continue, discussions are underway concerning ways to better prepare for and respond to natural disasters in Vermont. UVM graduate students, Reese and Loveday, are working with Eric Gilbertson and Paul Bruhn of Preservation Trust of Vermont. Together they planned a project in response to the flood damage to historic buildings that includes educational materials for homeowners and making the surveying process for towns more efficient.

Despite the extensive destruction to Vermont communities, Reese and Loveday found that many of the residents affected by Irene remain in high spirits. This positive outlook has carried throughout the state, as seen through the numerous fundraising and volunteer efforts. Preservation Trust of Vermont is currently accepting donations to help repair and rebuild historic structures.

Information regarding donations can be found on Preservation Trust of Vermont’s website at www.ptvermont.org.
"The one constant through all the years has been baseball," says James Earl Jones, standing at the edge of a baseball diamond surrounded by ghosts of the 1919 Chicago White Sox. "America has rolled by like an army of steamrollers. It's been erased like a blackboard, rebuilt, and erased again. But baseball has marked the time. This field, this game, is a part of our past. It reminds us of all that once was good, and could be again."

It's one of the most recognizable movie speeches of all time, yet it is sure to give the listener goose bumps every time it is heard. Like Iowa's Field of Dreams, Burlington's Centennial Field was carved out of a farmer's field in time for its grand opening in 1906. Named to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the University of Vermont's first graduating class, Centennial Field has been the home of UVM athletics ever since. Over the years, Centennial has hosted semi-professional and minor league baseball, as well as exhibitions by visiting Major League and Negro League ballclubs. From the days of Tris Speaker to Ken Griffey Jr., both of whom roamed its spacious center field, Centennial has marked the passage of time here in Burlington. It was already 13 years old by the time of the 1919 World Series, and its grandstand, built in 1922 and hardly changed since, is the oldest still in use in professional baseball.

As charming as it is, Centennial Field needs $7-10 million in improvements to meet Major League Baseball's (MLB) current standards. For the past decade MLB has been granting the Vermont Lake Monsters a year-by-year renewal, but nobody knows how long that practice will continue. And then there's the issue of ownership. Centennial Field is owned by the University of Vermont, which did away with its varsity baseball program in 2009. UVM has no current need for a top-notch baseball facility, but will any other party invest millions of dollars in a facility owned and controlled by UVM?

Fortunately for Vermont baseball fans and preservationists, what to do about Centennial has already become one of the big issues in the current mayoral campaign. Perhaps our next mayor will come up with some creative solution that will allow Centennial Field's grandstand to continue to be the oldest still in use in professional baseball.

Tom Simon, PB board member and author of *The Wonder Team in the White City: UVM at the Intercollegiate Base Ball Tournament of 1893*, will be giving a presentation at the next PB event February 8th at 7:00 PM in the Black Box Theater of the Main Street Landing Performing Arts Center.
New Materials Old Houses, Cont’d from page 3.

**WHAT those materials may be?**

When replacing damaged building components, whether siding, windows, doors or any other visible decorative element, they should be replaced with components that match the original in size, profile and material. For instance, wood replaced with wood, slate with slate and so on. As mentioned earlier, building materials like fiber cement siding may provide benefits in certain circumstances but should be considered only in limited applications.

As for replacement windows, wood windows that provide the same glazing pattern (number of panes and muntins) are acceptable when an original window is damaged beyond repair. Remember that new wood replacement windows are not made of old growth lumber like the original windows and therefore do not have the “rot” resistance and will not stand up to the weather as well as the original windows. As a result, they will also require more regular painting.

I am encouraged that the Planning Commission and the staff of Burlington’s Planning and Zoning office are working together to make the permitting process a clear and simple one. At the same time we all need to think of our built environment in the same way that we think of our natural environment. After all, every piece of wood, glass, slate and iron came from the natural environment and it would be as thoughtless and inconsiderate to destroy and throw those resources away as it would be to pollute our waterways and our atmosphere.

Show your pride and buy a new Preservation Burlington T-Shirt! PB’s logo on the front and motto, “Looking to the future with respect for the past” on the back.

Only $15. Available in Forest Green unisex adult sizes S-XXL

Contact info@preservationburlington.org to order.
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Fire Destroys Local Historic Building

Historic preservation in Burlington suffered a sad loss in early September when a fire destroyed the historic Bailey-Hyde House on Pearl Street. The circa 1820 structure acted as both home and office to Benjamin F. Bailey and his family. Most recently the building housed dental offices. This five-by-two bay, two-and-a-half story brick building had been somewhat altered over the years, but up until the fire, remained as one of the most prominent Federal Style buildings in downtown Burlington. The cause of the fire is still unknown and under investigation.

Winter Tips for Your Historic Windows

As the cold weather approaches there are some precautions you can take to ensure that your historic homes are ready to stand the cold and moisture of the winter months. The following simple pointers can help keep the heat indoors this winter:

1. Check the Locks
   The locks on your windows are not just for security, By locking your windows you are ensuring that the rails are meeting together and creating a tight seal that is important for moisture reasons and for keeping out the winter air.

2. Weather Stripping
   Studies show that adding or renewing your weather stripping on your windows can increase the window’s efficiency up to 50%. There are a number of brands and types of weather stripping to choose from, and it can be quite pricey.

3. Storm Windows
   Yes, they are a drag to install every season, but use them! Studies show that a wooden window in good condition fitted with a storm window can be just as energy efficient as the more expensive replacement window.

4. Condensation
   If there is condensation forming on the inside of your windows, most likely there is cold air leaking through your storm window. If the condensation is on the inside surface of the storm window, then warm air from the building is leaking out of your window. Check the lock, use weather stripping and if necessary, caulk the seal around the exterior of the storm window.

Be sure to consult your local handyman or hardware store for advice.

There is a growing trend towards traditional wooden storm windows, as wood has better thermal exchange properties. The less expensive metal frame storm windows are still an acceptable choice.

These helpful tips are based on the National Trust for Historic Preservation’s Historic Wood Window Tip Sheet.
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Become a member today!
Join in a growing effort to preserve Burlington’s historic architecture and neighborhoods by becoming a member. Membership donations allow for Preservation Burlington to provide the programs and events that we all love, including forums, tours, and awards. Without your help, our organization would not exist.

All members receive a newsletter, a discount for a building marker, and early notification for the Homes Tour. Also our members are included in our e-mail lists, which provide first hand knowledge of events and alerts related to Historic Preservation.

Please see membership rates and payment information on the envelope insert.

Volunteers Needed!
Volunteering for Preservation Burlington is a great opportunity to learn about historic preservation, Burlington’s history, and the people who love both. We offer a range of opportunities to match your interests and availability.

We are currently seeking new members for our board of directors. If being on the board is more than you can do, you might be interested in joining one of our committees or helping our organization with a special event. Volunteers provide an invaluable service to our organization. Want to volunteer?

For more information, please contact info@preservationburlington.org.