

# Preservation PROGRESS

FOR THE PRESERVATION SOCIETY OF CHARLESTON



Spring 2006 • Volume 50 • No. 1



THE 2005



CAROLOPOLIS AWARDS



*Pictured Carolopolis Winners: Unitarian Church, 4 Archdale Street & 137 President Street*

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*P r e s e r v i n g   t h e   P a s t   f o r   t h e   F u t u r e*



## LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

As I address the Society's membership in this column for the first time allow me to begin by wishing everyone best wishes for a healthy and fruitful year ahead. Many challenges face us as preservationists in Charleston during 2006. As our Executive Director Cynthia Jenkins reminded us at our Annual (Carolopolis) Meeting in January, "This is no ordinary time, no ordinary year."

It's worth noting that the crisis in planning for the area around Marion Square is not just a dialogue between the City, a few developers, and the leadership of Charleston's preservation organizations. The almost daily opinions expressed in "Letters to the Editor" and/or special mailings, even the flurry of e-mails we see all serve to underline the importance of this issue to all who love Charleston. This is a watershed moment for the future scale and livability of Charleston as we know it.

Into the constructive discussion I'd like to reiterate another aspect (beyond height, scale and mass) that is equally important. This is traffic and parking.

The City's traffic impact study (conducted in 1998) and published in 2000 described Calhoun, King, and Meeting Streets. It graded their situation as "D" on an A-F scale with "F" being defined as gridlock. Anyone who travels these streets today would acknowledge the traffic congestion has greatly intensified – especially when students at the College of Charleston are in town. Other cities have mass transit systems that can absorb the impact of intense development. But at this point, Charleston and her visitors are clearly not ready, or able, to abandon their automobiles.

Consider this scenario: If only six of the sixteen major Marion Square area projects described in the last issue of Preservation Progress were completed as proposed, the already dire traffic in the above-mentioned area would be exacerbated by the addition of 87 new hotel rooms and 196 new condos (many of whose owners have more than one car). Add to that – cars driven by all the workers at 100 Calhoun Street's office complex, the two floors of new retail space where the old Millennium Music buildings now stands; traffic visiting the Holiday Inn Historic District's planned convention facility; staff, student and public traffic using the Simons Art Center and their new Science building; 480 new college dormitory rooms; and (for good measure) a winning season at the College of Charleston's planned basketball arena.

This doesn't even take into consideration what might replace the Rivers Federal Building or the staff and student traffic using the planned Clemson Architectural Center. Last, but certainly not least, it doesn't take into consideration all the traffic associated with the proposed 8-story hotel to be built on the old County Library site.

Aesthetics notwithstanding, can Calhoun, King and Meeting Streets afford a "D" traffic situation being made infinitely worse? Can Charleston's Marion Square afford this?

Traffic congestion means everyone suffers; everyone who lives here and everyone who visits here. But traffic congestion on this kind of scale means more than mere inconvenience. It feeds the appetite for more parking, and more parking spaces require the destruction of more historic architecture. To ignore the impact of unbridled traffic is to step onto a slippery slope for the preservation of Charleston.

Steven Craig  
President

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*The Preservation Society of Charleston was founded in 1920 with its purpose being to cultivate and encourage interest in the preservation of buildings, sites and structures of historical or aesthetic significance and to take whatever steps may be necessary and feasible to prevent the destruction or defacement of any such building, site or structure, such purposes being solely eleemosynary and not for profit.*

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the four windows, it would have an odd number of columns (such as the five columns of the portico of the 1838-39 Robert William Roper House). This was relatively unnoticeable when a portico on the side of a house was viewed from the street, and the view was then along a colonnade rather than of the front of a portico. When a house is on a corner such as the 1853-54 Jenkins Mikell House (94 Rutledge Avenue), a monumental portico might simply ignore the pattern of windows and use an even number of columns. The house on the opposite corner, the Edward L. Trenholm House (at 93 Rutledge Avenue) has five columns rather than six.

The flexibility of the twin-parlor plan ultimately prevailed, and by the 1830s most larger houses in Charleston were being constructed using this plan, such as the houses constructed on the East Battery in the 1830s. The single house never stopped being used for smaller houses, but many smaller houses were also constructed using the twin-parlor plan. Even some double houses had twin parlors constructed along one or both sides of their central halls.



Jenkins Mikell House (1853-54)

## OTHER HOUSE PLANS

Few Charleston houses seem to have been designed by architects. Most were designed by highly skilled builders who followed one of the three traditional plans for the city's vernacular houses. Sometimes the plans were enlarged and embellished to the point that an architect was certainly hired, as for the William Mason Smith House. This was also in the case with the Jenkins Mikell House, which although it

has the twin-parlor plan, can be attributed to Jones & Lee on the basis of its skillfully designed Italianate details and rams-head capitals on its portico.

Some gentlemen-amateurs with professional ability designed houses with unusual plans for themselves, their relations, and their friends. Gabriel Manigault designed the Joseph Manigault House for his brother, and although it is basically a double house, it has unique features: Its main room runs the length of the side of the house; the sides of the house are three bays deep rather than four; and its entrance lodge was inspired by the Pantheon.

Thomas Pinckney is known to have designed houses, and he undoubtedly designed the Middleton-Pinckney House that he and his wife built, which has a cruciform plan and a cantilevered staircase. In both of these examples, principal rooms were designed to provide light and air on three sides. In other words, they can be considered Charleston houses despite their unusual plans. Notably, when Pinckney designed El Dorado Plantation, he made it U-shaped so that all its principal rooms could be equally well lighted and ventilated.

Charleston also has some houses with plans that are characteristic of other nearby localities. For example, a house on 20 South Battery has projecting wings on either side of the back. Houses with this basic plan are common in Beaufort, but the typical house with the Beaufort Plan has a U-shaped piazza that leads to doors at the back of each side.

The c.1845 William Ravenel House at 13 East Battery has a plan that is characteristic of row houses in Berlin. It is L-shaped with the principal rooms across the front and with bedrooms in a long wing off one side of the back, and the wing in back has floors at the same level as the rooms in front. The plan and use of Greek Revival details make it likely that this house was designed by the German architect Karl Friedrich Reichardt, who was in Charleston designing the Charleston Hotel and other buildings.

There are other unusual Charleston houses that can be attributed to architects, but relatively few. They include the 1808 Nathaniel Russell House, attributable to Charles Bulfinch, and the c.1802-16 Patrick Duncan House (Ashley Hall School), probably by William Jay. About 99 percent of Charleston's houses do not have known architects. Charlestonians seem to have been quite content to use plans that had been adapted for local conditions by trial and error and that had proven their worth.

## CHARACTERISTICS OF CHARLESTON HOUSES

Most Charleston houses are detached, single-family dwellings of types that developed from the English row house. Most were built flush with the sidewalk and at a front corner of their lot. Most have side yards rather than front yards. Except for Freedmen's Cottages, all other types of Charleston houses usually had two or three stories. The Pre-Revolutionary examples are most often three-storied single houses, and the Antebellum examples are most often two-storied twin-parlor houses.

Other features that occur frequently together include use of wood construction materials, rooms with high ceilings, and louvered shutters (blinds) — all features that increase coolness. Also typical are tall hipped roofs (especially on houses of the Adamesque period), wrought iron balconies, plain exteriors with lavish interiors, low-fired "gray" brick, exposed brick or weathered stucco and walls or fences.

An especially striking characteristic is the use of multi-storied colonnades across the sides and backs of houses. Since piazzas shaded houses, facilitated circulation, and served as outdoor living spaces, they occur on nearly all single houses and twin-parlor houses, and were sometimes added to double houses and houses of other types. With approximately 3,000 piazzas in Charleston, with an average of about 14 columns per piazza, column totals approach 42,000. Charlestonians could have held up their piazzas with posts, but they preferred columns and used a record numbers of them. Rather than using columns for porticoes, they almost invariably used them as part of a colonnade.

Some Charleston houses have monumental porticoes, but very few in comparison to the number that have multi-storied colonnades. Monumental porticoes were usually reserved for churches, a precedent set by the second St. Philip's, which had and has three monumental porticoes like the present St. Philip's. The nearby Charles Pinckney House had the earliest monumental portico in the United States known to have been applied to the front of a house (using pilasters rather than columns). Charleston has no houses with monumental columns on three or all four of its sides like numerous plantation houses throughout the South, and there are very few monumental, pedimented porticoes in the Lowcountry (Hampton being one of the few exceptions).

Although Charleston houses owe much to the designs of Palladio, very few have either a monumental portico or a two-storied portico. Other Palladian characteristics shared by most Charleston houses are symmetry and tri-part compositions with a podium and attic story. They reflect the classical tradition that Palladio studied and adapted to create a new style of architecture.

Many Charleston houses have Palladian pediments set into their roofs—pediments that are part of the roof structure as on the river side of Drayton Hall and the William Gibbes House. A pediment within a roof became a hallmark of plantation houses in the Lowcountry, and it often gives town houses the look of plantation houses.

No characteristic is entirely unique to Charleston, but various combinations of characteristics are unique, and these combinations are what make all types of Charleston houses easily recognizable. Most importantly, they contain generously sized rooms that are well lighted and ventilated. They are exceptionally well designed in historical styles and exceptionally well constructed. These and other characteristics have made Charleston houses worth adapting and preserving. ■



1845 William Ravenel House



## Preservation PROGRESS

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## 2005 CAROLOPOLIS AWARDS

The Preservation Society held their Annual Membership Meeting and Reception at Charleston Place's Riviera Conference Theatre on January 19, 2006. The event marked the Society's presentation of eight Carolopolis Awards and two Pro Merito Awards to those properties exemplifying outstanding achievement in exterior preservation, restoration, rehabilitation and new construction in the city during 2005.

A standing-room-only crowd of members, guests and invited honorees also heard outgoing president Glenn Keyes recount the many challenges and achievements of the Society during the past, eventful year. Also in compliance with the Society's charter, the slate of previously nominated officers for 2006 was officially elected to serve during the current calendar year.

Markers & Awards Chairman C. Harrington Bissell, Jr. presented a Carolopolis plaque to each awardee following a description of the property and the work program in its historical context given by Executive Director Cynthia Cole Jenkins. The crowd was given a photographic tour of each property – showing it both before and after the work program being recognized. Following the award presentations, a lavish reception awaited as a celebration of another year in the Society's continuing effort to preserve and protect Charleston's architectural heritage.



Sara Ficke, Robert Stockton, Jim Crow,  
Suzi DeMerrell, Aubrey Hancock  
and Jane Locke.



Students of Clemson's Historic Preservation Program:  
Mary-Kate Dula, Joshua Skinner, Kate Joseph, Paul  
Woodward, Genevieve Prosser, Bunker Burr, &  
Katie Stoy enjoy the reception.

To view more photos from Carolopolis 2005 log onto our website at [www.preservationsociety.org](http://www.preservationsociety.org)

  
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## PRO MERITO

This year, the two Pro Merito or “For Merit” awards were granted (for exterior preservation and exterior rehabilitation, respectively) in addition to the Carolopolis Awards given for exterior preservation, and new construction.

### EXTERIOR REHABILITATION

Exterior Preservation is defined as the act or process of applying measures necessary to sustain the existing form, integrity and materials of an historic property. A 2005 Pro Merito award for exterior preservation went to:



#### 28 WENTWORTH STREET

Ansonborough  
1984 Carolopolis

The work program for this two and a half story Charleston single house (ca: 1840) was developed by E.E. Fava Architect and completed by Benjamin Wilson Restorations.

The property is owned by W. Galloway and C.C. Paul.

### EXTERIOR REHABILITATION

Exterior Rehabilitation is defined as the act or process of making possible a compatible use for a property through repair, alterations and additions while preserving those portions or features which convey its historical, cultural, or architectural values. A 2005 Pro Merito Award for exterior rehabilitation went to:

#### 222 CALHOUN STREET

Old Bethel United Methodist Church  
Radcliffeborough  
1975 Carolopolis

This two-story frame building dates back to ca: 1797 and is the third oldest church structure in Charleston. The work program was developed by Liollio Architecture and Stier, Kent, and Canady, contractors.

The property is owned by Old Bethel United Methodist Church.



## CAROLOPOLIS

### EXTERIOR PRESERVATION

Under this category, a 2005 Carolopolis Award went to:

#### 67 LOGAN STREET

Harleston Village

Constructed in 1887, this two-story, frame Charleston single house has elements of both the Queen Anne and Italianate styles. The work program was developed by the owners and completed by Robert Kilter, contractor.

The property is owned by Gregory and Nancy Allen.



## 2005 CAROLOPOLIS AWARDS



**4 ARCHDALE STREET**  
Unitarian Church  
Harleston Village

While construction of the original Georgian-style building began in 1772, work was interrupted by the British occupation of Charleston during the American Revolution. The church was re-built in 1852 in the Perpendicular Gothic style very popular at the time. Earthquake damage from 1886 required significant alterations to the latter design. The 2005 work program was developed by Glenn Keyes, Architects and completed by Dillon Construction.

The property is owned by the Unitarian Church in Charleston.



**254 ASHLEY AVENUE**  
Cannonborough-Elliottborough

Built c.1895 as a two-story, frame Charleston single house, this structure was converted into a duplex early in the 20th century. The 2005 work program was developed and completed by the owners, Adekunle and Miriam Soyoye.



### NEW CONSTRUCTION

Defined as the act or process of construction of a new building that is architecturally and aesthetically an asset within the context of the existing streetscape and neighborhood. Under this category, a 2005 Carolopolis Award went to:

**23 ELLIOTT STREET**  
Charlestowne

Completed in 2003, this three-story residence of hand-molded brick was built on the site of a 19<sup>th</sup> century rice storage facility and more recently the c.1936 Charleston Day School building. It was designed by Randolph Martz, Architect and constructed by Opus Development of Charleston.

The property is owned by John and Karen McDonald.



**4-D ASHE STREET**  
Cannonborough-Elliottborough

Constructed in 2003, this one-story, 500 square-foot cottage is a small-scale example of appropriate infill construction. The design program was developed by the owner and Steve Bauer, Architect and completed by Omni Services.

The property is owned by Bill Turner.



## 2005 CAROLOPOLIS AWARDS



### 445 MEETING STREET

Cannonborough-Elliottborough

Completed in 2005, the new Piggly Wiggly supermarket replaced a c.1960 Piggly Wiggly building that had outlived its usefulness. Its design, which pays tribute to the railroad heritage of upper Meeting Street, was developed by David Rice and Sandy Logan with LS3P Associates and was completed by Newton Builders.

The property is owned by Piggly Wiggly Columbus Corporation.



### EXTERIOR REHABILITATION

Under this category, a 2005 Carolopolis Award was given to:

#### 137 PRESIDENT STREET

Cannonborough-Elliottborough

Constructed c.1905 as a pharmacy, the original section of this building was one-story. By 1920 a second story, frame, apartment addition had been constructed atop the original roof. Additional one-story sections were added during the early 20th century with significant remodeling done c.1945. This adaptive reuse work program was developed by Ashley Jennings, Architect with Prescon, LLC and completed by Chastain Construction Company.

The property is owned by Joe Wez, LLC.



#### 186 CONCORD STREET

French Quarter

The one-story, concrete, Fleet Landing Building was constructed in 1942 by the United States Navy as a checkpoint for naval officers and enlisted personnel on shore leave in Charleston. It replaced an earlier structure that served as a docking facility for the Cooper River Ferry. The building is owned by the State Ports Authority and is a timely reminder that drastic changes are not always necessary when rehabilitating historic buildings for adaptive reuse. The 2005 work program was developed by Reggie Gibson, Architect and completed by Newton Builders.

The building is leased by Tradd and Weesie Newton.



The 2005 Carolopolis Awards presentation was made possible by the Society's staff, the Markers and Awards Committee, Charleston Place, Carriage Properties, Nelson Printing Corporation and Fredericksburg Pewter. Assistance with property research was provided by Robert Stockton, Robert Behre, The South Carolina Department of Archives & History and The Buildings of Charleston: A Guide to the City's Architecture by Jonathan Poston (University of South Carolina Press, 1997).



# A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE CAROLOPOLIS AWARDS

Newer members of the Preservation Society of Charleston may not be familiar with the story behind our Carolopolis Award Program which dates back to 1953. Its origins are consistent with the goals of the Society – then and now.

The Society is dedicated to cultivating and encouraging greater interest in the preservation of buildings, sites and structures of historic and aesthetic significance in the City of Charleston. Also, we are willing to take whatever steps necessary and feasible (as a not-for-profit eleemosynary organization) to prevent the destruction or defacement of any such building, site or structure. Since our incorporation in 1931, these goals have been tested many times and in many ways. However, our influence on the number of buildings saved from the wrecker's ball or rehabilitated for continuing use has been legion. By 1953, some tangible symbol of reward was sought to acknowledge those properties whose owners aligned with our goals and standards in an outstanding way. Since then, the Society has presented 1,283 awards in recognition of this achievement.

The prestige of earning a Carolopolis Award is considerable in that the standards are high and consistently strict. Nominations for the award are reviewed by the Preservation Society's Committee for Markers and Awards Committee. The Society's Board of Directors then votes on the Committee's recommendations. Winners fall into three primary categories: those buildings acknowledged to have been exceptionally well-preserved, rehabilitated or are outstanding examples of new construction.

"Taking the preservation route when working with historic buildings," says the Society's Executive Director Cynthia Jenkins, "is very rarely the path of least resistance – economically speaking. That's why recognizing those

courageous enough to go the extra mile is so important. It's important to the individuals who do it and it's important to the citizens of Charleston as a whole. It's especially important to the preservation of Charleston architectural and cultural heritage."

Thus, Carolopolis Awards are usually mounted proudly near the doorway or gate entrance to the property so recognized. The Carolopolis Award, itself, is a round, metal plaque that is a slightly modified reproduction of the official seal of the City of Charleston. The word "Carolopolis" comes from the original name of the city, which was derived from a combination of the word "Carolus" (Latin for Charles) and "Polis" (Greek for City), thus Charles Towne and later Charleston. The words "Conditio A.D. 1670" refer to the Latin word for founding, and, of course, to the date of Charles Towne's founding on the west bank of the Ashley River in 1670. The other date inscribed on the award indicates the year for which it was given.

The vigil for those standing guard on historic properties is unending. Thus in 1999, the Society established the Pro Merito or "For Merit" Award to honor those properties given a Carolopolis Award (not less than 20 years ago) which have undergone a second major renovation or have displayed an admirable level of continuous preservation. A Pro Merito Award may be given in the Exterior Preservation, Restoration, Rehabilitation, or the Continuous Preservation category.

Needless to say, the Carolopolis Awards Program is a major part of the Society's mission. And the ceremony (each January) at which the winners are acknowledged is one of the most eagerly awaited and exciting events on Charleston's preservation calendar every year. ■



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## BOARD MEMBER HIGHLIGHT:

*Connie H. Wyrick*

Preservation Progress welcomes four new members to the Board this year. Each issue during this 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary year will spotlight a different one. This time, our focus falls on Connie Wyrick, a well-known and longtime advocate of historic preservation and sustainable communities. Connie Wyrick is a retired book publisher and author. Her published works include *A Precipice of Stratford Hall* and *History of the Governor's Mansion of Virginia*. Connie has served as a trustee of numerous cultural resource organizations including the Confederate Museum (Richmond, VA), the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities (Richmond, VA), Hagley Museum and Library (Wilmington, DE), and Drayton Hall in South Carolina. She worked professionally as Research Scholar for the Robert E. Lee Memorial Foundation, Vice-President of Research and Restoration, and director of development for Historic Charleston Foundation. She has lectured extensively on southern architecture and culture and was appointed in 1993 by the National Park Service to serve as a United States delegate to the Ditchley Preservation Conference in Oxford, England. She and her husband, Charles "Pete" Wyrick (a former chairman of the City of Charleston's Board of Architectural Review), live in the newly rehabilitated and converted Murray Vocational School.



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*4th row left to right:*

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Sharon Kucharski  
Bev Seinsheimer  
Richard Halsey  
Laurie Tarleton Moore  
Charles Sullivan



# New Faces Among the Society Staff



**Alix Robinson Tew** has recently assumed the role of Director of Membership and Development for the Society. Born and raised in Charleston, she graduated from the College of Charleston. After what she terms “a brief stay in Columbia,” Alix returned to the Holy City with her husband and three children “to raise her family here.” Formerly, Alix was Director of Development for Trident Academy. She and her family live at 4 Logan Street in the c.1852 house lived in during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century by Susan Pringle Frost – suffragist, realtor, and founder of the Preservation Society of Charleston. “The Society’s mission is one that has always been close to my heart and now I can truly have an active part in it.”

A twenty year resident of Charleston, **Cynthia Setnicka** joined the staff this past January as Manager of the Society’s Book and Gift Shop. She has an extensive background in retail, most recently for Earth Fare. The retail business offers many outlets for Cynthia’s talents, but she finds merchandise buying and creating displays particularly gratifying. She has been truly delighted to meet many of our regular visitors as well as people experiencing Charleston for the first time. Aside from her career in retail, Cynthia is a licensed realtor. She enjoys cooking, walking her dog and loves the presence of music and art in this beautiful city. “I fell in love with Charleston twenty years ago and am thrilled to now be working in an environment focused around this wonderful place.”



Cynthia looks forward to meeting you on your next visit to the Book & Gift Shop!



The Society’s new Business Manager is **Mary Spivey-Just**, a South Carolina native who recently relocated to Charleston after spending many years in the Washington, DC, area. She holds a BS Degree in accounting and keeps a careful eye on the Society’s financial status from her third floor office at the 147 King Street headquarters. She says, “My position at the Society has been a welcoming introduction to Charleston and the fascinating business of preservation.”

Welcome aboard **Amelia Lafferty**, our new Projects Coordinator. Amelia moved to Charleston in order to finish her undergraduate degree in Historic Preservation at the College of Charleston. This native of Shelbyville, KY, says, “I feel very fortunate to be working in my chosen field this early in my career. I love the variety of projects this job entails and I especially enjoy the many people I meet in this unique and challenging position.”



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# Beyond Height, Scale and Mass

Two related themes inspire the main article for this issue of *Preservation Progress* as we begin the 2006 calendar year. One: the membership's very encouraging and positive response to the last issue's discussion of "Height, Scale, and Mass" says volumes. It illuminates for us our readers' genuine appetite for a better understanding of the language of key preservation issues currently facing our city. Two: as we prepare a year-long celebration of the 50th anniversary of *Preservation Progress*, our research into the origins of the publication underscores its continuing mission. Volume I, Number I (dated December, 1956) clearly states: "The Society's chief weapon is informed public opinion. Not biased opinion, but informed opinion. [*Preservation Progress* is intended to be] our active entry into the field of information and education."

To that end (for both reasons) here is a brief glossary of architectural terms\* we've all heard used quite frequently of late – in particular regarding the sixteen major projects completed, approved, or proposed in the concentrated area (approximately 7 blocks) along the Calhoun Street corridor. This is roughly the area from the South Carolina Aquarium to Coming Street (excluding the hospital district at the west end of Calhoun Street).

**Height:** According to Merriam-Webster, the term "height" can be used to define "the vertical distance either between the top and bottom of something or a base and something above it." It is also defined as "the extent or elevation above a level." Another reads "the condition of being tall or high." For a more specific architectural definition, we need to look further into the professional preservationists' arena:

John Milner Associates, Inc. [JMA] is a Pennsylvania-based consulting firm specializing in historic preservation, planning, and cultural resource management. In 1979 they wrote the Beaufort Preservation Manual for the city of Beaufort, SC., which became a standard for preservation in historic districts all over the country. Among the subjects addressed therein was basic design criteria for new construction (expressed in user-friendly language). In their architectural parley, height carries a qualitative meaning as well

as quantitative value. Their advice to preservationists puts it this way: "In essence, when the scale (including height) of buildings in a neighborhood or in those of an entire community are consistent, new construction should be restricted from drastically altering those relationships."

**Scale:** According to JMA, the "scale" of a building is its degree of relatedness to the size and proportions of both the human body and adjacent construction. Some of the factors affecting a building's scale include:

- (1) **Cornice or eave height.** New construction should not ignore the dominant cornice height of adjacent buildings. Disrupting this line destroys the "rhythm" of the entire street. While inordinately low buildings create a void at the second floor level that interrupts the feeling of enclosure, disproportionately tall buildings will overpower the majority of the lower structures nearby.
- (2) **Elevation of the first floor.** When the street is typically fronted by houses (or buildings) with prominent steps leading to raised first floor porches (or entries), streetscapes suffer greatly from the impact of any new construction with an on-grade entry.
- (3) **Floor-to-floor heights.** This important element of scale is often ignored in new construction which tends toward lower ceiling heights. For instance, 19<sup>th</sup> century rooms were loftier in response to climatic conditions. Even though today's high-tech climate control systems have eliminated that necessity, new construction should be encouraged to conform to the neighboring building's floor-to-floor relationships.
- (4) **Bays, windows, and doors.** The scale of a building is strongly affected by proportions, both of the building as a whole, and of its principal façade components. Proportions, in turn, are largely dictated by the height/width relationships of door openings, window openings, and column spacings. These features divide the building visually into what are commonly termed "bays." The façade of a building should draw upon the proportion and number of bays contained in neighboring structures, if it is to appear compatible with its surroundings.

**Mass:** "Mass" refers to the relationship between solids and voids, as well as the differentiation of planes (i.e., projections). In other words, the surface of a building is made up of siding or walling (solids) and windows and door openings (voids). The relationship between these two areas combined with projecting bays and/or overhangs defines a building's mass. Thus, large overhangs, small windows, with expansive brick or stucco walls lend a feeling of weight and solidarity to a structure (vis-à-vis the term "massive"). Conversely, large windows, light trim, and vertically elongated elements create a feeling of lightness and delicacy. New facades should attempt to relay the feeling of either lightness or weight based on the relative mass of neighboring structures. Continuing our discussion beyond definitions of height, scale and mass – the question is begged – what comes next? The answer is design. Again, Milner Associates say it concisely:

"All buildings possess a number of common elements which combine to express the structure both as an entity and as a part of the larger community. No building is so isolated from its surroundings as to avoid an impact on the townscape, whether that impact is positive, negative, or neutral. These design elements (like height, scale and mass) when identified and their interrelatedness defined, can be used by the review board in evaluating the appropriateness of proposed construction . . . and avoid wholly subjective responses in their appraisal of new buildings." ■

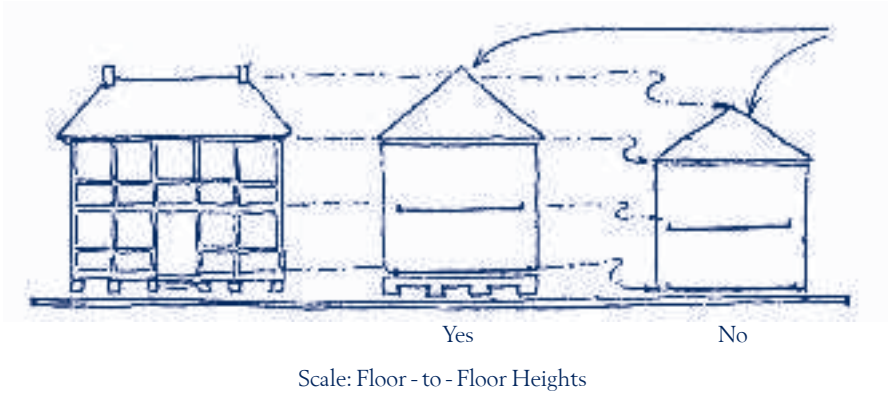
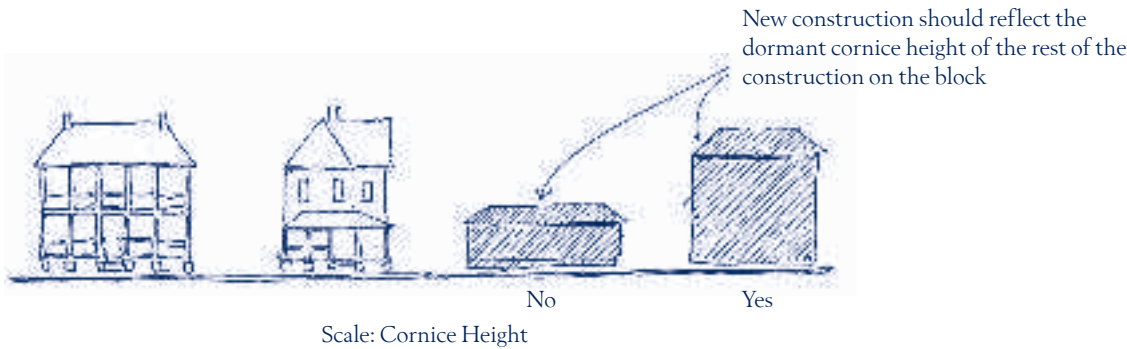
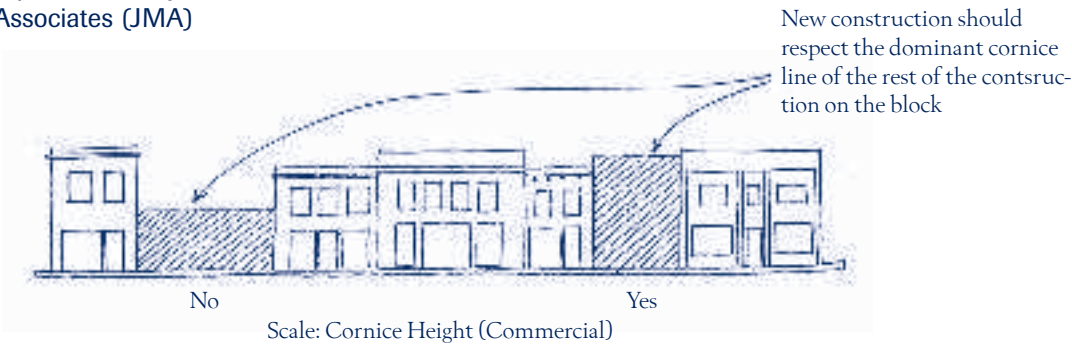
\*For more on the language of preservation, visit our website, [www.preservationsociety.org](http://www.preservationsociety.org). A glossary of architectural terms and definitions of styles is presented there and listed in alphabetical order.

*For all the Volunteers*

Who make the Fall Candlelight Tours of Homes & Gardens possible,  
*Preservation Progress* expresses its sincere appreciation. Thank you for all you do.



\*Architectural graphics courtesy  
of John Milner Associates (JMA)



# Tell it Like It Is:

## *Is “restoration” a lamb of a term sometimes usurped by wolves in sheep’s clothing?*

In a word, yes. Sometimes a phrase or word used in the discussion of preservation issues gets picked up and used in inappropriate ways. For example, the word “restoration” has been used in the discussion of new construction being planned for Marion Square. One component of those plans includes a proposed eight-story Hilton hotel on the site of the former Charleston County Library. The use of “restoration” in this case would imply replacing something that previously existed or has been demolished. According to the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Restoration, “restoration” is defined as “the act or process of accurately depicting the form, features, and character of a property as it appeared at a particular period of time by means of the removal of features from other periods in its history.”

For the record, our position re: the eight-story hotel has been that a building of such height, scale and mass never existed on Marion Square in the first place, and that the hotel – as proposed – is inappropriate for the existing neighborhood. Historically, those buildings were mostly two and three stories (some with fourth floor dormers), as shown in the Fall/Winter 2005 issue of Preservation Progress. However, that would be only one “restoration” concept. What about restoring the height, scale, and mass of buildings on Marion Square during the Revolutionary War? And how did the surrounding structures appear when Charles Towne’s original tabby hornwork still existed? In short, a “restoration” is not the issue at hand. New construction of an appropriate height, scale and mass is.

What other criteria (besides height, scale, and mass) are engaged when planning appropriate new construction for an historic site?

While height, scale, and mass are the basic building blocks for judging the appropriateness of new construction for an historic site, style is the next crucial element.

Acknowledging the context of the surrounding neighborhood (site awareness) is paramount to establishing appropriate style. How tall are the buildings neighboring the site? What is their average size? When were they built? What are the elements of their style? These things all help to inform decisions concerning the style for new construction.

It should be noted the Preservation Society doesn’t impose any particular style for new construction in historic districts. Generally, our position usually favors sympathetic, compatible designs (and/or design elements) that are fresh interpretations of those elements originally found at or nearby the site. The purpose of this is to foster buildings that are of their own time and place, not reproductions of the past or theme park fantasies creating a false sense of history.

### ***What is “classic” in terms of architecture?***

See “Classical,” says Webster. Classical is another of those words bandied about rather loosely these days. According to the Dictionary of Building Preservation, edited by Ward Bucher (Preservation Press, 1996), “classical” is defined as “of the style or period of premedieval Greek and Roman art, architecture, or literature (from 700 B.C to 330 A.D.)” As interpreted in the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, it is usually called “Classical Revival” or “Greek and/or Roman Revival” and refers to architecture built approximately between the years 1820 and 1861. The term “classical” when used in a Charleston context begs the larger question, “What are the various architectural styles appropriate for use in Charleston? Some of the styles finding popular expression in Charleston before c.1860 include Georgian, Federal, Regency, and Greek Revival – to name just a few.

Clearly, different parts of the City of Charleston developed at different times in the evolution of popular architectural styles. Thus, different neighborhoods reflect the architecture of their time and their place (even within

the City). The rebuilding that naturally occurred following Charleston’s various earthquakes, wars, fires and storms have served to blur the homogeneity of those styles within given neighborhoods. After the 1860s, Charleston started to embrace such styles as Italianate, Second Empire, and Queen Anne, among others.

Even as new and different styles began to emerge, the general character of any given neighborhood is readily apparent to the careful observer. Thoughtful analysis using the tools of height, scale, and mass are invaluable in maintaining the appropriateness of style in any Charleston neighborhood.

### ***What is “modern architecture” when used in an historic context?***

The word “modern” is not strictly an architectural term per se, but it is often used as a lay term in the discussion of new Charleston architecture. It sometimes appears as the word describing what is in contrast to that which is “traditional” in the Holy City.

The Dictionary of Building Preservation defines “modern architecture” as “a term used beginning in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century to describe a movement that combines functionalism with aesthetic ideals that include rejection of historical design precepts and styles.”

“Modernism” on the other hand, appears in the Elements of Architectural Design, Second Edition by Ernest Burden (Wiley & Sons, 2000). It says the word describes a style of architecture built between 1960 and 1975. The term comes from the Latin modo, meaning ‘just now.’ It goes on to say, “Every successful style is theoretically modern until superimposed by the next.” It adds, “Revival styles can be built with modern materials and techniques. The ‘Modern Movement’ was the conscious attempt to find an architecture tailored to modern life and one that made use of new materials. It rejected the concept of applied style and the use of ornament.”

Charleston’s early preservationist architect Albert Simons also wrestled with “modernity,” at least in the abstract use of the word. In 1924 he wrote, “It is clearly evident that architecture in Charleston has been distinguished by dignity, by refinement, and by scholarly appreciation for correctness of form. In our present-day quest for progress and modernity, which is altogether to be commended, let us not ignore the value of this great heritage, which is far more vital than mere sentiment; it is nothing less than the records of the ideals of a people.”

Forty years later, in 1964, Simons was asked to write the Foreword to a reprint and updated version of This is Charleston, A Survey of the Architectural Heritage of a Unique American City (Carolina Art Association, 1944). He spoke with both caution and faith to the “modern” architects working in our city. “After a couple of generations of experimentation and controversy, modern architecture has achieved orthodoxy throughout the civilized world, although it has given rise to a great variety of sectarians. With its establishment it has naturally grown more conservative and responsible. It will in time grow more gracious, more urbane and more attuned to human emotions, and Charlestonians should prepare themselves for its acceptance but on their own terms. We should ask of our architects that our buildings be not only of our time but of our place. If we do this, we can hope for another age of distinguished Charleston architecture.”

Today, creating the architecture Simons envisioned for Charleston depends on a balance of appropriate height, scale and mass combined with thoughtful attention to detail. Without this criteria being met, the citizens of Charleston are heir to fantasies, caricatures, and cartoons of architecture unauthentic to the spirit of our City. Without insisting on this criteria being met, we – in fact – fail as preservationists of Charleston’s architectural heritage. ■



## Looking Forward/Looking Back

In celebration of the first half-century as publishers of *Preservation Progress*, the Preservation Society will revisit vintage issues of our publication now resting safely in the Society's archives. We'll examine two decades per issue throughout this anniversary year and look back on some of the people and events that marked significant highs and lows in the preservation movement for Charleston.

### *Preservation Progress*: The First 50 Years...Part I: The 1950s and 1960s

This year marks the 50th anniversary of *Preservation Progress*, official newsletter of the Preservation Society of Charleston. In December 1956, a one-page, hand-typed, mimeographed sheet was mailed to the Society's membership bearing the masthead for the very first time, "*Preservation Progress*."

Prior to the first edition, the Society's history was apparently recorded chiefly in a series of now dangerously fragile scrap books primarily comprised of newspaper clippings about historic Charleston buildings (existing or being torn down at the time). Among those clippings about treasures, change, and loss are a few wistful reminiscences penned by the first generation of preservationists recalling the Charleston they knew as it was slipping away from memory's grasp. *Preservation Progress*, on the other hand, was begun as a serious tool of communication, a bid for action . . . almost a call to arms for an organization needing to expand their membership, increase their political influence, and make a significant difference in the preservation of Charleston.



Volume 1, Number 1 carried an "editorial" briefly summarizing in a few, brief sentences the Society's history since April 1920 when it was called the "Society for the Preservation of Old Dwellings." The inaugural issue of the "new" *Preservation Progress* proudly announced that the membership had officially voted to change the organization's name to the Preservation Society of Charleston. It assured readers that this name change in no way meant the Society was abandoning the "old dwellings," but that they had increased their area of interest to include "ALL buildings, sites, and structures in the City of Charleston having significance or aesthetic distinction."

The unnamed 1956 editor goes on to say prophetically, "Today the growth of our City is creating increased demands for the limited supply of land for public and private enterprise. Many of Charleston's buildings of historic and aesthetic value face the probable danger of defacement or destruction. It is clearly the responsibility of our Society to take the initiative in focusing attention on the problem and encourage consideration, discrimination and advance planning in changing the face or flavor of Charleston for future generations."

The size of the organization was not mentioned in this first issue, but apparently meetings of the group were comfortably accommodated in the Drawing Room of the Dock Street Theatre. The announced topic of a panel discussion for the upcoming meeting held there was, "Why Save Old Buildings?" Panelists included Mrs. S. Henry Edmunds, plus Messrs. Richard Bradham, Jack Krawcheck, Albert Simons, and Randall C. Stoney.

That December 1956 meeting also included the election of new officers for the Society's busy year ahead. They were: Louis R. Lawson, Jr., President; Berkeley Grimball, First Vice-President; deRosset Myers, Second Vice-President; Elise Pinckney, Recording Secretary; L. Louis Green, III, Corresponding Secretary; and Virginia Gourdin, Treasurer.

This was the inauspicious beginning for a publication that would eventually bear witness to a half-century's worth of key preservation issues facing the Holy City. Over the next 50 years, it would record victories and losses, joys and concerns; it would evoke sweet memories and make dire predictions. A complete archive of *Preservation Progress* (containing all its bouquets and brickbats) exists in the Society's headquarters at 147 King Street – preserved for posterity. Another partial set exists in the South Carolina Room of the Charleston County Library and the Library of the College of Charleston.



In 1961, Elizabeth Jenkins Young, former Society President, discusses the restoration of the c.1715 John Lining House.

Leafing through the publication as it appeared in the 1950s is a time warp in several ways. Computers have spoiled us to expect typeset copy in everything we read. The hand-typed articles of the '50s are a shock to the eyes. Layout and graphics were rudimentary at best; photographs were nonexistent. The occasional exclamation point was about as visually exciting as *Preservation Progress* got in those earliest issues.

Today's preservationists have learned (though practical experience) to be strident in their advocacy. But a membership drive in January of 1957 spearheaded by Elizabeth Jenkins Young was amazingly genteel. It gingerly coaxed shy preservationists out of the shadows and encouraged them to belong. "You do not have to be ASKED to join the Society," it reassures would-be members. "If you ARE with us . . . SHOW US. Join!!" Membership in 1957 was \$2 per person. Sending in dues "before billing" was officially encouraged so as to save "effort and postage." Yes, those were the days.

A significant issue raised by *Preservation Progress* in its first year was the lack of professional planning on behalf of Charleston's City Council. The complaint voiced at the time called it "the dangers of individual projects or piecemeal city planning in Charleston." It went on to add, "Business district planning, slum clearance, parking projects, zoning interests and preservation are part of everyday city operations in many cities throughout the United States. But Charleston," it laments, "has no certified City Planner [at this point]." And *Preservation Progress* encouraged City Council to do something about that – "the sooner the better."



By March 1957, our publication "commended the Mayor and City Council for hiring Mr. Arthur N. Tuttle, Jr., as city planner and Mr. W. C. Dutton, Jr., as consultant to the city in planning." Perhaps we were beginning to be a voice heard in the wilderness.

Through much of the '50s decade, *Preservation Progress* reflected a not-so-subtle war between Charleston's historic architecture and the city's

growing number of automobiles; specifically a constant push for more and larger parking lots. Several issues decry the loss of significant 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century buildings lost to the need for more surface parking in Charleston.

The Preservation Society officially joined hands with [via membership to] the National Trust for Historic Preservation in March, 1957. *Preservation Progress* quoted the Trust's magazine, *Historic Preservation*, in this on-going battle against parking lots. "The automobile . . . continues to be the leading agency of destruction, with super highways, parking and used car lots and drive-in shopping centers claiming important structures from coast to coast."

The first general use of photography in *Preservation Progress* came along late in 1957. But sadly, the images were mostly downers. Headlines such as "And The Walls Came Tumbling Down" along with "Doomed From [the] Outset" appeared over poignant photographs of evermore houses and public buildings being lost to the wrecking ball. Another big loss was the news that C. W. (Bud) Dutton, the City's first professional planner, was [already] leaving Charleston to become Executive Director of the American Institute of Planners in Washington, D.C. This announcement was accompanied by additional information indicating the City's funding for hiring Mr. Dutton's replacement was "unavailable [for the] next year." It was a decade of wins and losses.

As the decade of the '50s came to a close, *Preservation Progress* was becoming more self-confident and taking a more "global" view. A regular feature in every issue was "Preservation Elsewhere" which updated members on preservation battles being waged in other areas of the country. The victories won in such places as Philadelphia, PA, the Georgetown section of Washington, D.C., Boston, MA, and New Bern, NC seemed to inspire local members to greater advocacy on Charleston's behalf.

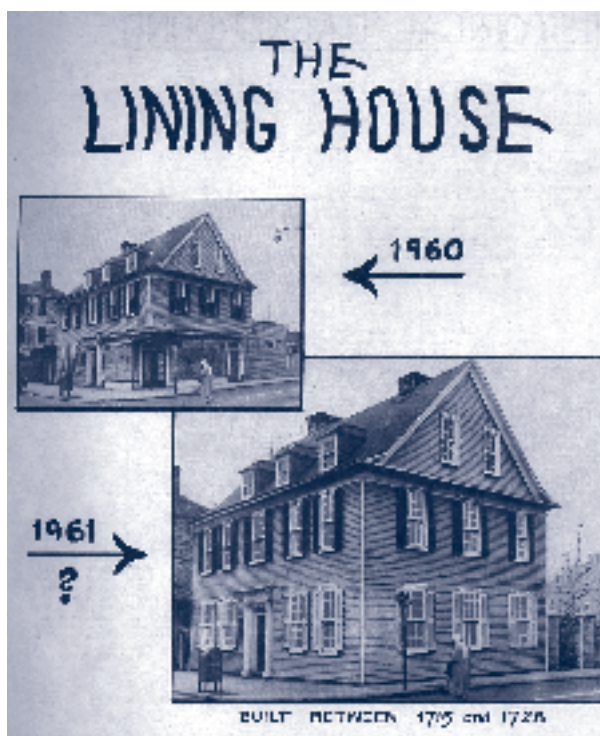


The 1960s for the Preservation Society of Charleston was definitely the decade of the Lining House (106 Broad Street) and *Preservation Progress* closely followed suit editorially. In March 1961, Albert Simons, formerly of the local architectural firm of Simons & Lapham, wrote a compelling analysis of the early (before 1715) frame structure and recommended (with certain caveats) the restoration of the house – as a headquarters for the Society and a house museum for Charleston visitors.

"This project, to be successful, however, can not be undertaken in a half-hearted manner," he warned. "It must be a full-scale program carried forward only after careful study and in a conscientious and thorough manner."

Fanning the membership's passion for restoring the Lining House as the Society's "cause" were two photographs of it appearing in the same issue of *Preservation Progress*. One photo showed the house as the run-down, heavily-altered former drugstore it was in 1961. The other photo was a skillfully retouched version showing how it could look after it was handsomely restored. Fully twenty years before digitally-altered photographs were commonplace, this miraculous vision of "what could be" must have seemed undeniable.

Although it would later be decided that undertaking the physical restora-



Long before it became a reality, Society members saw this idealized view of a restored Lining House in the early 1960s

tion of historic properties (and the operation of a house museum) was beyond the Society's mission and funding capabilities – the Lining House project was a colorful and exciting episode in the evolution of the Preservation Society of Charleston.

Writers of Albert Simons' caliber were frequent contributors to *Preservation Progress* in the '50s and '60s. Historian Elias B. Bull, famous landscape architect Loutrel W. Briggs, and accomplished writer/scholar Eleanor Pringle Hart were among the by-lines appearing under our masthead during those years. Ms. Hart edited *Preservation Progress* for many years and she (with Anne Thomas as her assistant) contributed greatly to the publication's refinement as a voice of the movement in our city.

In early 1964, Eleanor Hart invited Elizabeth Whitaker Tizza to write a profile of artist/writer Elizabeth O'Neill Verner (1883-1979). This touching tribute in *Preservation Progress* opened the floodgates to a wonderful series of tributes and biographies that illuminated for the membership some of the fascinating personalities who called Charleston "home."

The following year, a lengthy profile of John Bennett (1865-1956), founder of The Poetry Society of Charleston in 1920 was another outstanding example. This newspaperman, historian, folklorist, scholar, and artist was a key player in Charleston's cultural Renaissance after World War I.



Another founder of the Preservation movement in Charleston and a renowned "hostess with the mostess" was the indefatigable Dorothy Haskell Porcher Legge. In 1965, she recounted in a lengthy article her colorful memories rehabbing one of the pre-Revolutionary townhouses on Courthouse Square (in 1924) and, later (in 1931), the first of the several row houses now known as "Rainbow Row."

As the decade of the '60s closed, the Preservation Society of Charleston took a major step in the hiring of its first Executive Director. John D. Muller, Jr., former Society President, was approved by the membership at its May meeting. Then President, Elizabeth Jenkins Young, said of the new position, "[This is a] new experiment and a brand new thought on our part." She compared the directorship to a job as general manager and expressed confidence it will provide "real help and good direction" to the group's preservation efforts.

*Preservation Progress*, itself, was maturing into a publication with a fully defined and identified staff. Editor was Mrs. Waddell Robey, Jr.; Assistant Editor was Mrs. Constance Baumeister; Photographer was Mrs. L. Louis Green, III; and Artist was Mrs. William Deeble. With this crew aboard ship, our evolving newsletter sailed bravely on into the 1970s. ■

## NEXT ISSUE:

*Preservation Progress*: The First 50 Years...  
Part II: The 1970s and 1980s



# Remembering Miss Sally

A PERSONAL TRIBUTE BY J. MICHAEL McLAUGHLIN

She was born in 1908. I was born in 1945. Despite the obvious chronological difference, we learned we shared some delightful common ground. We were both from Indiana, and at one time we lived in roughly the same Indianapolis neighborhood – the onetime stomping ground of Booth Tarkington, James Whitcomb Riley, and Kurt Vonnegut. We discovered we had several friends in common along with memberships in some of the same arts and cultural organizations in the Hoosier capital. Still, the two of us reflected very different times and clearly different backgrounds. And yet, unlikely as it may seem, I'm proud to say we became close friends – bonded by a mutual discovery that transformed both our lives. That discovery was Charleston, South Carolina.

Sally Reahard, or "Miss Sally" as she liked to be called, made her discovery long before I did. Her enthusiasm for all things Charlestonian began a lifetime earlier – in the 1930s – when as the only daughter of a very successful Indianapolis pharmaceutical executive she accompanied her parents on several extended visits to the Lowcountry. Her father had nearly died in the terrible influenza pandemic of 1918 and in response to his subsequent health problems the Reahards pursued yearly winter escapes to the relative warmth of these southern climes.

One year, they wintered in Summerville. That visit was influenced no doubt by the old Pine Forest Inn's international reputation (a generation earlier) as a healthy environment for pulmonary patients. At other times, the Reahards stayed at the Fort Sumter Hotel on The Battery or they joined the distinguished list of guests staying at the Villa Marguerita, which hosted the likes of Henry Ford and Robert Frost during those years. They always arrived in Charleston by private railroad car with Sally's "Ford roadster" shipped here separately to serve as her runabout for exploring the Lowcountry's picturesque back roads and coastal distractions.

It was on one of these casual motor jaunts into the countryside that the Reahards were received at Drayton Hall and given a rare and impromptu private tour by Charlotta Drayton, fourth generation of the Drayton family to own and care for the ancient family seat. Ironically, forty years later, it was Sally Reahard's substantial gift that made it possible for the National Trust for Historic Preservation, Historic Charleston Foundation, and the State of South Carolina to purchase of Drayton Hall from Miss Drayton's heirs. After its costly initial stabilization, Drayton Hall was presented by the National Trust to the public as a unique and wonderful architectural museum.

Shortly after I came to Charleston in 1979 I became one of those early volunteer "interpreters" who took on the challenge of introducing this American Palladian villa to a public not at all accustomed to finding a plantation house "preserved (as is) rather than restored." Especially at first, a house museum offering what appeared to be fifteen empty rooms wasn't an easy sell. Guests paying to see Drayton Hall greeted the staff with an array of reactions ranging from initial disappointment to overt hostility. But almost always we were able to take those startled visitors on that now-familiar Drayton Hall journey from dismay to complete delight.

As Drayton Hall's primary benefactor and most ardent fan, Sally Reahard completely understood the challenge of our mission and she regularly offered her encouragement to the staff in light of our sometimes difficult jobs. She made it a point to "know" as many of the staff as she could from afar – remembering our names and even our birthdays – sending us small tokens of thoughtfulness to show her appreciation for our hard work. A box of candy here, a basket of fruit there. Flowers on holidays came to the property without fail. The tag always read, "With love to you all. Miss Sally."

This was the generosity I will always remember – as much as her considerable gifts to the property, its physical infrastructure, and the operating budget year after year.

In turn, the staff of Drayton Hall would always send a package of small gifts to her home at Christmastime and again on April 9<sup>th</sup>, which was her birthday. She was not a lady in need of anything material, so it was never an easy task to shop

for her. We'd usually settle for some inexpensive logo items featuring Drayton Hall from our gift shop and then chip in on one nice gift we all hoped might please her. She was always gracious and convincingly delighted with every one of our choices.

One year, the rigors of the Yuletide season caught us short on time. I was planning on traveling to Indianapolis for the holidays anyway, so I volunteered to circumvent the slow mails and deliver our Drayton Hall Christmas "surprise" myself. That's how we met.

With Christmas just a day or so away, I drove to her house and stomped through the heavy snow drifted near her back door with the carefully wrapped Drayton Hall package in hand. The sprightly little figure who greeted me there couldn't have been more welcoming. She could hardly contain her excitement and enthusiasm to have a real, live emissary from her beloved Charleston (and even

Drayton Hall!) in her own home. I tried to answer her barrage of questions and was given a tour of her copious "collection" of Charleston memorabilia proudly displayed throughout her lovely home. And because I was invited to do so – I enjoyed staying for a delightful cup of hot tea with sugar cookies on the side to make the moment last. She was great fun. When it came to talking about Charleston, we never seemed to get it all said.

Her "thank you" note to me was returned in kind and that eventually evolved into a warm and friendly correspondence which endured for many years. I soon learned I was just one of many Charleston contacts she called her "pen pals." Sally loved getting mail and she was an inveterate letter writer. Off and on, she exchanged letters with people from the Preservation Society, the Southern Regional Office of the National Trust, Historic Charleston Foundation, the Middleton Place Foundation, The Charleston Museum, and the South Carolina Historical Society, along with others.

Sally kept in touch by phone, as well. I always enjoyed her calls – especially knowing she listened as carefully and caringly to my perspective as she did to the opinions of those "movers and shakers" holding positions of leadership in key organizations of interest to her. She kept up on current preservation issues concerning the city and maintained an enlightened, intelligent overview. Charleston was only one of her many interests, we would all learn. But those of us dedicated to Charleston's preservation and history were among her favorite people. That was clear.

At the time of her death in July 2003, much was made of the fact that Miss Sally (by then 95) had not physically been to Charleston since 1940. It was even said that she lived a somewhat "reclusive" and "isolated" life mostly within her Indianapolis home. She laughed about it herself; "I haven't been downtown in twenty years," she would say. But she was anything but isolated. I knew her to drive herself on errands in and around her neighborhood with frequency and ease. She just saw no NEED to travel far.

And there was this: Not long after World War I, Sally's father devised the key manufacturing process by which the first miracle drug of that era – insulin – could be mass produced. From that point forward, she was raised in a family of great privilege. During the Great Depression that designation alone bore considerable risk. She once told me her life changed dramatically following the tragic Lindbergh kidnapping of 1931. When that story unfolded across the newspapers and into the consciousness of a horrified nation, children of wealthy families everywhere were thought to be the targets of copycat kidnappers . . . or even worse. Loving parents like Sally's enveloped their children in protective measures that had to be stifling at best. She told of being escorted to school every day by Pinkerton bodyguards. Even walking along a public street was fraught with danger. In time, isolation became a way of life. I will always believe a certain level of caution remained with Sally Reahard to the end of her days.

The Sally Reahard I knew was anything but lonely and seldom alone. Her keen intellect and insatiable curiosity enjoyed absolute freedom and unlimited travel through her love of books. Special booksellers and dealers in New York and Chicago kept an eye out for special titles of interest to her. They regularly sent lists of "finds"

Miss Sally continues on page 16



## Reaching Out to New Orleans

The date is January 13, 2006. A photograph on the front page of the Post & Courier looks like a movie still from “Armageddon” or some apocalyptic sci-fi epic from the ‘50s made in Japan. But this isn’t fiction; it’s not the movies. This is real.

As everyone knew who saw it, this twilight panorama was of America’s own New Orleans – four months after Hurricane Katrina. The storm devastated thousands of square miles of the Gulf Coast, bringing unimaginable pain and chaos to countless people across Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama. The trauma for New Orleans was exacerbated by the failure of the city’s aging levee system. Standing in the foreground of this grim photograph were three “ambassador” preservationists from Charleston, a city that knows something about loss.

Robert M. Gurley, Assistant Director of the Preservation Society, was one of those ambassadors – along with local architect and Society Past President Glenn Keyes plus contractor Jim Rhode. Jonathan Poston and Kristopher King from Historic Charleston Foundation rounded out the group of five from Charleston whose four-day visit to New Orleans was both an official response to the disaster and something of a returned gesture of goodwill. In the weeks after Hugo, back in 1989, the Preservation Society of Charleston received a welcome a check for \$5,000 from the Preservation Resource Center of New Orleans.

“This trip gave us the opportunity to return the gesture in kind,” said Gurley of the check (for \$5,000) from the Preservation Society which he presented to their Preservation Resource Center. More than the cash donation, the Charleston group brought preservation expertise and sage advice that will actually result in saving a significant number of historic structures.

The team worked with preservationists from New Orleans to survey approximately 200 historic buildings that had been “fast tracked” for immediate demolition by city officials. For a majority of those structures, the news was bad. Neglected prior to the storm and weakened by termite infestation, many were too far gone to recommend salvaging. Others, however, were rescued from the wrecker’s ball.

“Sometimes, you’ve got to pick your battles,” Glenn Keyes said. “Preservationists in New Orleans will have to prioritize in order to maintain their clout and credibility when the serious rebuilding begins.”

Clearly, the visit to New Orleans reawakened some unpleasant memories for some in the group. “It’s sometimes difficult for those who were in Charleston at the time to realize that Hugo’s unhappy visit was seventeen years ago, now,” added Keyes. “Many of today’s Charleston residents moved to the Holy City well



### Miss Sally continued —

available for sale or soon to be up for auction. The attic of her Meridian Street home became a virtual library of rare and wonderful titles – not just those books she acquired herself, but the numerous volumes her parents read and loved before her.

Near the end of her life, it became a priority to her that these books find a suitable “home” where they might be shared and used for research – or merely enjoyed as she had enjoyed them. Today, many of these volumes are in the Reahard Reading Room of Missroon House, now headquarters of the Historic Charleston Foundation, at 40 East Bay Street.

Today, Sally Reahard’s legacy is everywhere in Charleston – not just in the bricks and mortar of Drayton Hall, Missroon House, or even the library books she sent here “to share.” Her largesse extended far beyond our city. She quietly funded innumerable projects and emergency expenditures that will always befall worthy non-profit entities from time to time. Those gifts, impressive as they are, have been recounted elsewhere.

I would add that her love of Charleston resonates in human hearts as well. Every visitor to our city who falls in love with our city’s rich heritage, beautiful architecture, artistic and literary traditions shares a figurative “a cup of tea” with Sally Reahard. Somehow, every exuberant post card written to friends back home extolling Charleston’s radiant charm carries her stamp. Everyone who vows to return – maybe even live here someday – meets Miss Sally somewhere on the road. And those born and raised here can thank Sally Reahard that so much of their beloved Charleston has been responsibly preserved.


When the Preservation Society first learned of her bequest in 2002, Preservation Progress published a memorial tribute that I feel bears repeating. Executive Director Cynthia Jenkins wrote, “Her astonishing gift is so generous it tends to disguise what it actually means for us; that the work of historic preservation will go on beyond her time, my time, and generations to come.” That would please her enormously.

At the Society’s 2006 Annual Meeting, outgoing president Glenn Keyes announced the final distribution of her bequest. “Sally Reahard’s overall financial contribution to the Preservation Society of Charleston,” he said, “has totaled nearly \$1.4 million.”

Thank you again, Miss Sally. I miss you still. ■

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after Hugo and have no frame of reference to the storm at all."

"The size of the devastation is what made the biggest impression on me," said Jim Rhode. New Orleans has almost ten times as many historic buildings as does Charleston, and it has been estimated that 25,000 of them are damaged. Toxic flood waters of more than four feet soaked into more than 100,000 New Orleans households – in both historic and non-historic areas. For New Orleans, at least, the flood damage was as bad as or worse than the havoc caused by the wind.

Terrible as it was (for Charleston), Hugo and Katrina are not comparable in several key ways. First of all, Hugo cost South Carolina twenty lives. Katrina took more than 1,000. Our flooding was caused by a tidal surge which roared in like a battering ram but went out in relatively short order. When Katrina breached New Orleans' levees, the waters of Lake Ponchartrane poured into the city like milk into a giant cereal bowl. With nowhere else for it to go, polluted flood waters settled in the lowest areas and made an already toxic situation even more miserable. While we in Charleston saw little or no

violence in the storm's aftermath, looters and rampant fires plagued the Big Easy. Utility crews were able to restore power to most of the Lowcountry within weeks, while some parts of New Orleans were still dark after more than four months.

Katrina seems to have justifiably earned the title "greatest cultural catastrophe America has ever experienced," a sobriquet granted by Richard Moe, president of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. We wish our fellow preservationists everywhere along Katrina's path the grace and strength to proceed along the difficult journey ahead – as they strive toward physical, spiritual, and architectural recovery. ■



Jim Rhode, Glenn Keyes, & Robert Gurley were among the team surveying the devastation Hurricane Katrina wrought on the city of New Orleans.



## FOR HOMES THAT MADE HISTORY...Thank you.

From the Battery to the Beaches, to the Old Village of Mount Pleasant, the perseverance and passion of the Preservation Society of Charleston are what keep our city alive and vibrant while insuring the history of our city and its buildings are kept intact. We, at Daniel Ravenel Real Estate, support the Preservation Society and highly commend them on their hard work and success in honoring the Lowcountry's material and cultural heritage. We thank you for helping Charleston, our great city, continue to be one of the most historical and preserved cities in the United States.



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# TYPES OF CHARLESTON HOUSE, PART II

by Gene Waddell

*Editor's Note: In the last issue of Preservation Progress we ran Part I of Gene Waddell's fascinating survey of Charleston's domestic architecture. In Part II, he continues to enlighten newcomers, visitors and young preservationists in the Holy City as to the depth and breadth of our architectural heritage. Mr. Waddell's comprehensive and extremely well-received, two-volume Charleston Architecture 1670-1860 (Wyrick & Company, 2003) is currently available at the Preservation Society Bookstore.*

## DOUBLE HOUSES

Early in the 17th Century, the British philosopher Francis Bacon wrote an essay on building, and he referred to a double house as a house that is two rooms deep and two or more rooms wide. He considered this type of house ideal for providing sets of rooms for summer use on one side and for winter use on the opposite side.

The phrase "double house" has come to refer generally to a house with four rooms on a floor—two in front and two in back. A single house is not half of a double house. A single house is two rooms deep, but only one room wide. As has been discussed, a single house developed as a detached row house. The double house was invented as a villa or country house. It is sometimes referred to as a "detached" house, but it was not originally part of a row. Some later examples were built partly or wholly attached, but even when double houses were built in urban areas, they were usually built separately.

The country house intended for occasional use as a villa was invented by Andrea Palladio, who set out to recreate the appearance of the earliest classical houses. The characteristics that Palladio considered most important to include in his country houses were compactness, symmetry, and tri-part compositions. Directly through the influence of published editions of his Four Books and indirectly through the emulation of houses derived from his designs, these characteristics became typical of British and American country houses of the 17th and 18th Centuries. More specifically, by compactness, Palladio strove to make most of his villas as nearly cubical as possible. This created a more massive form, and it was less expensive to build. It required smaller foundations and smaller roofs. By applying symmetry, he ensured (as he states) that the weight of the building would be evenly balanced, that it would settle evenly, and that its roof would be less likely to pull apart. Symmetrical buildings were cheaper to build, more stable, and therefore more permanent. They were sturdier than asymmetrical buildings, which tended to settle unevenly. They came to be preferred visually for their balance and harmony.

Palladio made the middle floor of a three-story house taller than the floors above and below in order to have a piano nobile for the principal rooms of his villas. He gave the ground floor and the upper floor lower ceilings, and he made ground floor resemble the podium of a Roman temple and the upper floor resemble the attic of a Roman triumphal arch. An attic story is a story above the principle cornice of a building, most typically the uppermost story of a triumphal arch. Triumphal arches also typically have a tri-part composition with a wider central section and narrower side sections, and Palladio adapted this composition by placing the principal rooms of his villas in the center and the smaller rooms to each side.

The pre-eminent example of these principles of Palladian design is Drayton Hall, which is divided both vertically and horizontally into three parts except that its upper floor has taller than usual ceiling heights. Drayton Hall was designed in c.1738, shortly before the Charleston fire of 1740, and it is the earliest building in the Lowcountry that is known to have had a fully symmetrical plan. There had been earlier double houses, such as Archdale Hall and Brick House on Edisto, and they too had been strongly influenced by Palladian principles of design, but after the construction of Drayton Hall, even Charleston single houses began almost invariably to have symmetrical plans with a centrally placed stair hall.

Most double houses built in Charleston before about 1750 had asymmetrical plans, including the c.1735 Thomas Rose House and the 1743 George Eveleigh House (59 and 39 Church Street) or the c.1728 Harvey or Izard House (110

Broad St.). The plan of the Eveleigh House was asymmetrical in that it had one rather than two chimneys and no central hall. By contrast, the plan of the first floor of a later double house such as the c. 1769 Miles Brewton House had two rooms to either side of a central hall.

The first major house in Charleston to show strong evidence of Palladian influence was Charles Pinckney's mansion on East Bay Street just north of the creek that was later filled in for the Market. It had a unique T-shaped plan that placed the stairs off to one side

where they were usually located in the asymmetrical double house, and this allowed the central hall to be unobstructed.

The c. 1769 Miles Brewton House (227 King Street) marks the highest development of the Palladian villa of any urban house in the American colonies. Like most Charleston double houses, its principal room—the dining room—was in the upper story, and this room was enlarged by adding most of the width of the front hall to its overall length. Placing the main room in the third story of Charleston double houses required taller than usual ceiling heights for the uppermost floor.

From about 1740-1820, nearly all Charleston buildings of every kind had symmetrical plans. Many buildings of all types were given at least the semblance of a podium and attic and a strong central emphasis including the Exchange, District Courthouse, and Fireproof Building. Even the larger single houses that were exclusively residential were built on a podium or high basement, and the windows of their upper floors had 6 over 6 lights rather than 9 over 9. It is no exaggeration that until the 1820s, Charleston was a Palladian city.

## TWIN-PARLOR HOUSE

By 1800, a distinctly different plan was being employed for row houses in Philadelphia, and Thomas Jefferson referred to it as the "Philadelphia plan." It quickly spread to New York, and by about 1820, reached Charleston. As Jefferson noted, the new feature of this type of house was that its chimneys were relocated from in between rooms and moved to a common wall so that adjacent rooms could have sliding doors in between the rooms. When the doors were open, the front and back rooms could be used almost as if they were one room. This made it possible to use an entire floor as a living room or dining room as occasion required, and when not needed for entertaining, two smaller rooms could be put to everyday uses, and if only one room was needed, it could be heated more easily.

The earliest known use of the twin-parlor plan for a Charleston house was in the William Mason Smith House (26 Meeting Street) in c.1820, and there is good evidence that this house was designed by the English architect William Jay. Jay probably learned of the plan while he worked in Savannah, which has many earlier examples of the twin-parlor plan.

The twin-parlor plan also provided an impressive entrance hall. Its stairs run from the front to the back of the house in a single unbroken flight. In a single house and double house, the stairs usually go up a half-flight and turn back. In a double house, the back door is under the landing, and one of the rear rooms has to be entered under the stairs. The rooms of a twin-parlor house can be entered directly from the stair hall. The disadvantage of a side hall was that the principal rooms of the house could not have direct light and ventilation from three sides, as they do in many late single houses, and the front entrance had to be positioned asymmetrically. In order to disguise this asymmetry, some houses had "masked piazzas"—that is, the piazza had a false front added to create a symmetrical front—and since the earliest known example of a twin-parlor house has a masked piazza, Jay probably introduced this feature.

Because the long side of this plan was only four bays wide, another disadvantage was that if a monumental portico were added with columns flanking



Miles Brewton House (c.1769)