

# ON THE WEST SIDE

THE UNIVERSITY CITY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



May/June, 2014

<http://www.uchs.net>

Joseph Minardi, Editor

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**Saturday, May 10th** visit the UCHS table at the 56th annual Spruce Hill Community Association **May Fair**. The annual community fair will be held in **Clark Park** from **10 am to 4 pm**, featuring great music, food, crafts, games for kids and a raffle with a grand prize 60" Samsung TV. The **Baltimore Avenue Dollar Stroll** will take place on **Thursday, June 19th**. This will be the only Dollar Stroll for 2014, so be sure to come out and visit the UCHS table. As usual, there will be a wide assortment of vendors offering a variety of exotic taste treats as well as free music and other entertainers.

### HOUSE AND HOME: SPRING HOUSE TOUR, JUNE 1st

On **Sunday, June 1st, from 1-5 p.m.**, join other old-house enthusiasts for "House and Home," a tour of University City houses. In a variety of building styles spanning a century of West Philadelphia development, see the special ways homeowners have decorated, furnished and adapted, to make these houses, "homes." The homeowners will be on hand to tell you more.

**Tickets** may be reserved in advance online, at [uchs.net](http://uchs.net) for \$20/ or purchased on the day of the tour for \$25. On June 1st, purchase or pick up tickets at: 4501 Baltimore Ave., ZED's Last Minute Gifts from 12:30-3 p.m.

This is a walking tour, involving many staircases - wear comfortable shoes!

The 2014 University City Historical Society  
**House and Home**  
A Collection of University City Houses in a Variety of Styles, Filled with Things which Make Them Special Homes  
Sunday, June 1<sup>st</sup>  
1:00-5:00  
Reservations \$20.00  
Purchase online: [uchs.net](http://uchs.net)  
Day of Tour \$25.00  
Purchase at: ZED's Last Minute Gifts  
4501 Baltimore Ave.

**HOUSE TOUR**

## Ask the Experts

**Q:** I plan to have the exterior of my University City house painted this summer. I'm getting several quotes. I've had estimates from \$3,500 to \$12,500! What am I missing? How can I pick the best contractor to do the job right?

**A:** First, ask the obvious questions about how much prep work the painters expect to do at your house. Scraping, replacing missing trim, filling in gaps, and other repairs and prep will make a big difference in how long your new paint job will last.

Next, ask the painters about their EPA training, certification, and adherence to proper work practices to prevent lead contamination. See the EPA's website at <http://www2.epa.gov/lead>. Read the handbook *Renovate Right for Contractors and Trainers*.

On April 22, 2010, Federal laws changed. If your house was built before 1978, and if a contractor's exterior work will disturb more than 20 square feet of paint which may contain lead, then the contractor MUST follow the Renovation, Repair and Painting Rule's requirements. Contracting companies, sole proprietors and individual contractors must all follow the law.

This also pertains to interior work: painting of more than six square feet per room, paint prep, electrical work, plumbing, carpentry, and window replacement work must adhere to the same standards.

Per the handbook, contractors must explain the processes to owners and occupants in advance, and must keep records for three years after the job is completed. Lead-safe work practices during the job include:

- Work-area containment to prevent dust and debris from leaving the work area.
- Prohibition of certain work practices like open-flame burning and the use of power tools without HEPA exhaust control.
- Thorough clean up followed by a verification procedure to minimize exposure to lead-based paint hazards.

Contractors, even the smallest businesses, who do not follow the rules are subject to fines of up to \$37,500 per day; however, we have observed contractors in the neighborhood who are **not complying**. Don't choose them!



## UCHS ROARING TWENTIES DINNER WRAP UP

Members of UCHS and their guests were treated to an exquisite meal with accompanying beverages provided by the Restaurant School at Walnut Hill College for the UCHS Roaring Twenties spring dinner held on April 4. In addition to feasting on such delicacies as breast of chicken rosé, broccoli soufflé and Venetian ice cream, the attendees were treated to a lecture on the history of University City in the 1920s given by Mark F. Lloyd, University Archives Director at Penn. As part of the presentation, Mr. Lloyd handed out maps that he had prepared especially for the gathering, beginning with the Colonial era and the Hamilton family holdings in West Philadelphia, continuing to the modern era and the University of Pennsylvania's expansion. According to Lloyd, there was a time (the first time actually) when Penn threatened to move to the suburbs to keep up with its longtime rival, Princeton, and their rural campus. Luckily Penn stayed in West Philadelphia and the neighborhood continued to grow.

To get the festivities in the Roaring Twen-

ties atmosphere, guests were encouraged to don 1920s attire, which several in attendance did. Digital images of Philadelphia in the 1920s were displayed in at both ends of *The Great Chefs* room, further enhancing the Jazz Age ambiance. The UCHS would like to thank everyone who turned out for the dinner and the Restaurant School at Walnut Hill College for hosting and their event planning expertise.



Top left; UCHS Vice-President Elizabeth Stegner warms up the crowd; bottom left, Mark F. Lloyd speaks to the group; above, diners in period garb. Photos by Joseph Minardi.



## Featured Historic House - Hermann Herzog House

On the corner of 41st and Pine Street stands the one-time home of acclaimed 19th century landscape painter Hermann Herzog (1832-1932). The German-born artist moved to West Philadelphia some time in the 1860s, settling in a house on 41st and Pine Street. In the home his son Lewis (1868-1943) was born. Lewis Herzog was a fine artist in his own right. Before long the senior Herzog was on the move, painting his way across the American West. By 1872 the house was owned by a man named C.M. Hall.

The house (4101 Pine Street) itself is one half of a pair of Second Empire twin homes on the 4100 block of Pine Street. Occupying the corner lot, the Herzog House was the most desirable house of the semi-detached homes on Pine Street.



4101 Pine Street, the Hermann Herzog House. Photo by Joseph Minardi.

## 4224 BALTIMORE AVENUE UPDATE

A meeting was held on March 26th at Rosenberg Hall to discuss the future of 4224 Baltimore Avenue, a residential and retail project slated for the corner lot at 43rd and Baltimore Avenue. The latest version of the project was presented by Omar Blaik of U3 Ventures with an assist from project architect Cecil Baker. After the Powerpoint presentation, there was an extended Q&A session between the developers and audience members. One of the major concerns was whether or not 4224 Baltimore Avenue would have a high number of transients living in the rental units. U3's Omar Blaik did his best to assuage fears by stating the housing units would be geared toward young professionals who work at Penn, HUP and CHOP. Another selling point was the quality of building materials that will be used in construction. The current vision is for five stories of condominiums and eight stories of rentals, totalling 132 units. Other specifics include 60 parking spaces, 50 bicycle spaces, a fitness center, and 17,000 s.f. of retail space which includes a mid-level restaurant with between 3,000 to 4,000 s.f. of space (some in attendance disputed those dimensions). An easily accessible public restroom across the street from Clark Park could also be a possible amenity.

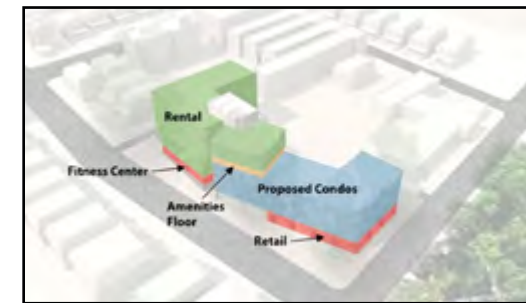
The actual look of the two-building complex will be, in the words of Cecil Baker, "an organized jigsaw puzzle," basically a glass building with a panels of nichihua in warm colors. The lower levels will be faced in brick and there will be a covered walk, ideal for seasonal outdoor dining overlooking Clark Park along 43rd Street.

Several UCHS Board members were in attendance, as well as Spruce Hill Community Association president, Barry Grossbach, who is eager to move the ball forward. After the three meetings held between the developers and residents, Grossbach feels that the residents have had their say on the topics of heights and density. The overall reaction from the 100-some people in attendance that evening was positive, not only to the latest version of the project, but also for the developers and their public meetings. The next step is for the big Baltimore Avenue development to apply for zoning, and it appears likely that it will win approval from the ZBA.

"I'm very excited to see this [being] built," said one blogger. Another concerned local was pleased with "how [the design team] can greatly improve initial designs over time with community involvement."



Architect Cecil Baker informs the room of around 100 concerned University City residents at the March 26th meeting regarding 4224 Baltimore Avenue. Photo by Joseph Minardi.



Site diagram of the current configuration of the mixed-use proposal for 4224 Baltimore Avenue. Courtesy of Cecil Baker Architects.

## Did you know?

### Baltimore Avenue and Woodland Avenue

Depending on its source, **Baltimore Avenue** started either in 1872 or 1811, or earlier. The sixty-plus year gap is due to the fact that the original stage route to Baltimore and Washington, laid out by the road jury in 1811 and built by the Philadelphia, Brandywine and New London Turnpike Company "over the road leading from the Schuylkill to Darby, commonly called the Woodland Road [now Woodland Avenue], where said road diverges from the Philadelphia and Lancaster Turnpikes", no longer exists as such.

It is probable that the road existed earlier than 1811 as the Darby Road from Merion Meeting to Darby Meeting.

**Woodland Avenue** was once known as Plank Road, so-called for the wooden boards covering the road. On choice Sunday afternoons the sporting fraternity would race their horses on the road. The name was first applied about the 1850s during the height of the racing craze. The "track" stretched from 49th Street to the Blue Bell Tavern and was often littered with broken wagon parts along its length. In time, the law intervened and the Plank Road returned to its once-quieter life and its now familiar name, Woodland Avenue.

UCHS Board member, Mark N. Silber (right) lecturing on the finer points of Penn's campus architecture during one of Mark's recent walking tours, April 29th.

Photo by Joseph Minardi



### University City: Then & Now - 4600 block of Locust



Collection of the editor.



Photo by Joseph Minardi

Locust Street is seen here looking east from Farragut Street. The "then" photo was taken in January 1914 when the Brunswick Apartments (on left) were newly built. The south side of the 4600 block of Locust had not been built yet. The apartment building is still standing, with alterations including removal of balustraded roof and addition of aluminum siding.

## SPRINGTIME IN UNIVERSITY CITY



# ON THE WEST SIDE



## PROFILES IN ARCHITECTURE

### *Frank Miles Day*

Frank Miles Day (1861–1918) was part of a new generation of city architects who disparaged the excessive ornamentation and historically inaccurate combinations of the late-Victorian era. After graduating from Penn in 1883, he traveled abroad for three years for additional schooling and work. Sojourns to Europe were fundamental for up-and-coming architects in those days. Upon returning to Philadelphia he was employed briefly in the offices of George T. Pearson (1847–1920) and Addison Hutton (1834–1916) before starting his own practice in 1887. Five years later, his older brother Harry became a partner.



Frank Miles Day  
(1861-1918)

Day's high-profile commissions and his association with the University of Pennsylvania, where he was valedictorian and president of his class, led to some major work for Penn (Franklin Field, The Museum of Archaeology, Weightman Hall) and a number of universities throughout the country.

Day was also the recipient of many awards and accolades throughout his lengthy career. He also twice served as the president of the national chapter of the AIA as well as serving on the Board of Directors.

## Like the UCHS on Facebook!

<https://www.facebook.com/UCityHistoricalSociety>

The University City Historical Society is happy to announce our new Facebook page and we would like you to send us articles, photos, etc. for us to share with our fan base. We can't wait to hear from you!



## 40TH AND PINE UPDATE

A judge in the Court of Common Pleas ruled on April 9th that the historic mansion at 400 S. 40th Street may be demolished. This decision affirms an earlier split decision from the Board of Licenses & Inspections Review. As a result, the mansion at 40th and Pine may be demolished by Equinox Properties, the developers for Penn, at will and a new apartment complex built. This suit was heard after the appellants, made up of near neighbors and the Woodland Terrace Homeowners Association, appealed an earlier decision by the Zoning Board that granted variances allowing for demolition. The April 9th decision is certainly a blow for those concerned with the preservation of this historic mansion.

You may recall from our January/February newsletter that Equinox Properties, in an effort to quell neighborhood tensions, proposed a Compromise Plan. This plan would include saving and rehabilitating the historic mansion and build an L-shaped apartment building around it. UCHS members who attended a meeting with the developers in February voted unanimously in favor of the Compromise Plan in the hopes that this would end the debate and finally put this corner to good use. After the April 9th Court of Common Pleas decision, Equinox Properties stated that they and Penn remain open to the Compromise Plan; however, they will be unable to pursue this plan if the appellants continue to appeal and bring the case to the Commonwealth Court of Pennsylvania (a move that, according to a tweet posted by their attorney, the appellants intend to do).

UCHS believes in the Compromise Plan and hopes that, through our continued support of it, a project will move forward that will not only enliven a highly visible corner in our neighborhood, but also save the historic mansion.



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**DON'T MISS THE 2014 UCHS HOUSE TOUR – SEE INSIDE FOR DETAILS.**