

# ON THE WEST SIDE

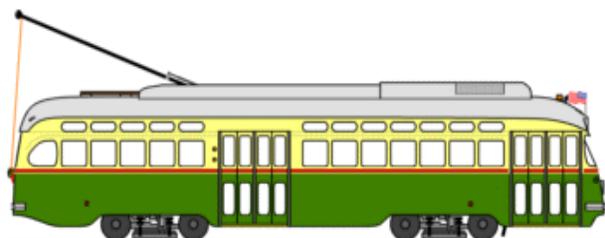
THE UNIVERSITY  
CITY HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY



October, 2004

<http://www.uchs.net>

Mike Hardy, Editor



## A TICKET TO RIDE

the special **University City Trolley** on Saturday, October 16 is included in this newsletter. It entitles you to participate in **UC Trolley Day**, where *1938 meets today on the tracks*. From 10 am to 6 pm, **SEPTA, University City Historical Society, University of Pennsylvania, and University City District** will be encouraging everybody to taste, hear, and see the modern and historic charms of University City. Free rides will be available all day on three newly renovated 1930's era Philadelphia trolley cars. These cars will operate in a continuous loop, connecting riders to concerts, exhibits, mini historic home and garden tours, restaurants, bakeries, shops, farmers' markets, museum displays, book sales, and tree plantings, among other destinations.

UC Trolley Day will be the passenger debut in University City for SEPTA's restored **PCC** cars. These cars originally ran in Philadelphia from the late 1930's to the early 1980's. Light, agile, and now air-conditioned, an 18-car fleet is scheduled to operate full time on the re-born #15 **Girard Avenue** trolley line, re-introducing lost connections between **West Philadelphia, Fairmount, and Northern Liberties**.

The construction of trolley lines in the late 1800s and early 1900s enabled the conversion of the neighborhood from a collection of estates and farms into a thriving residential area. Federally designated as the **West Philadelphia Streetcar Suburb Historic District**, much of University City retains the streets, trains, housing, institutions, and parks that were constructed in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The neighborhood also enjoys recent developments such as new retail and restaurants, park renovation, and an influx of

new families choosing to call the neighborhood home.

UC Trolley Day showcases University City's brilliant present by riding on a shining piece of the past.

The trolleys will loop south through the Penn campus along **38th and 40th Streets, West on Spruce and 42nd Street to Baltimore Avenue, South on 49th Street, and East on Chester Avenue**. Riders will be able to board and disembark at will at more than 15 locations throughout the neighborhood approximately every twenty minutes. From 10am to 6pm, trolley riders will be free to enjoy the following attractions during their tour:

- Tour historic houses and gardens (on the **4500 block of Chester Avenue**) including visits to **The Gables**, a Victorian bed and breakfast, on this intact block designed by Philadelphia architect **Willis G. Hale** in 1888.
- Attend signed book sales of **Joel Spivack's *Philadelphia Trolleys*** and **Robert Skaler's *West Philadelphia, University City to 52nd Street***, purchase UCHS "Architectural Treasures" posters highlighting images of the area's famed period architecture, and experience **University City "Then and Now,"** a beautiful and informative slide presentation at the **UCHS office at Calvary Center, 48th and Baltimore Avenue**.
- Visit **The Rotunda** at **4014 Walnut Street** to experience a variety of crafts from oil paintings, prints and sculptures to clothing, handbags, mirrors, and footstools, with posters, zines, and more to spare! All the items for sale are handcrafted by Philadelphia artists. PLUS Noon-2 p.m: **Russell Kutcher & Eric Coyne** perform classical duets for cello and violin with members of the **Muhlenberg Piano Quartet** and the **Haddonfield Symphony Orchestra**.
- Tour the **USP Lower Mill Creek Garden** (a project of the **University of the Sciences in Philadelphia, UC Green, Baltimore Avenue in Bloom** and **Philadelphia Water Department**) at **43rd and Chester Avenue**.

- Meet at 10 a.m. at **43rd and Chester Avenue** for registration and demonstration tree planting. Break into teams to plant 50 “underwire” trees appropriately sized for planting under PECO’s high-voltage wires at various locations in University City. Join **UC Green, PECO, neighbors, and USP & UP students & staff** in this community greening.
- See a photography exhibition at the **University City Arts League** at **42nd and Spruce Streets**.
- Visit the pharmacy museum at the **Marvin Sansom Center for the History of Pharmacy** at the **University of the Sciences in Philadelphia, Main Floor, Griffith Hall, 600 S. 43rd Street**.
- Enjoy international cuisine along **Baltimore Avenue, 40th Street** and other locations along the route from **Italy, Laos, China, Thailand, Africa, India, Mexico, Greece** and **Eclectic America** including the newly reopened **Marigold Kitchen** at **45th and Larchwood Avenue**.
- Shop for fresh and organic groceries at the **Firehouse Market, 50th and Baltimore; Fresh Grocer, 40th and Walnut;** and the **Clark Park Farmers Market, 43rd and Baltimore Avenue**.
- Purchase baked goods at **Sugar Hill Bakery, 49th and Baltimore; Metropolitan Bakery, 40th and Walnut; Genuine Bread and Specialty Shoppe** at **45th and Springfield Avenue**
- Experience Philadelphia’s largest **Tiffany windows** at the **Calvary Center, 48th and Baltimore**.
- Enjoy coffee or water ice at the **Green Line, 43rd and Baltimore; the Paris Café, 41st and Walnut; the Bucks County Coffee House, 40th and Locust; La Naz Café, 47th and Baltimore** and **Café d’Afrique, 45th and Baltimore Avenue**.
- See a movie at **The Bridge Cinema de Lux, 40th and Walnut Streets**.
- Have a drink at the new **Mar Bar, 40th and Walnut; Copa, 40th and Spruce; Mill Creek Tavern, 41st and Chester; Gojjo’s, 45th and Baltimore; Dahlak’s, 47th and Baltimore; The Library** at the **Inn at Penn, 37th and Walnut Streets**.

- Get your membership card and borrow a book from the newly restored **Walnut West Library, 40th and Walnut Streets**.
- Visit **Clark Park**, University City’s largest public space, at **43rd and Chester Avenue** and see the only statue of **Charles Dickens** in existence.
- Experience **West Philadelphia Streetcar Suburb Historic District** in style as you travel thru portions of the **Cedar Park** and **Spruce Hill** neighborhoods still laced with functioning trolley tracks, a prime factor for their original development and one of the special amenities and opportunities for their future desirability for living in the 21st century.

While this year’s **UC Trolley Day** may become an annual event, it can preview the construction of a permanent **University City Streetcar Trolley Loop** long advocated by **UCHS** and others which would also include **Powelton, Lancaster Avenue** and **Penn’s University Square** (see “streetcars” at [www.uchs.net](http://www.uchs.net) for details). Operating night and day, seven days a week, it could provide, for both residents and visitors alike, an alternate to total dependency on the automobile and fossil fuels to reach not only the attractions above but to: get home or to work; pick up the groceries; mail a letter; visit the doctor or dentist; take the pet to the vet; rent a room; get to church; buy some bread; get to the bank; pick up the kids; get to school or day care; have brunch; get to a **Philly Car Share**; buy a house; hear a talk; buy a book; take out a pizza; get the best haircut in the city; eat **burritos, gyros, injera, pad thai, fettucine alfredo, chicken tandouri** and anything **Kamul** cooks; visit a friend; get to a meeting; take in a museum; buy plants and flowers; stock up on cat litter; pick up dinner-to-go, go into town, in short, accessing and enjoying the myriad of amenities along the extensive still existing streetcar track system that promises a 21st century solution to meeting the urban transportation needs of University City’s diverse communities.

So, this October 16, invite your friends and everyone else to pick up tickets (at locations all along the proposed route and at the **UCD, 3940 Chestnut Street**) to ride and experience what could be the next of the historic developments in University City.

Look for the poster (in color) on the next page at area stores and attractions along the route pictured to locate additional tickets on or before the **UC Trolley Day** on Saturday, October 16.

# UC Trolley Day

*"Where 1938 meets today on the tracks"*

SEPTA, University City Historical Society, University of Pennsylvania, and University City District invite you to taste, hear and see the modern and historic charms of University City.

**October 16th  
from 10am - 6pm**

FREE rides on  
newly renovated 1938  
Philadelphia trolley cars

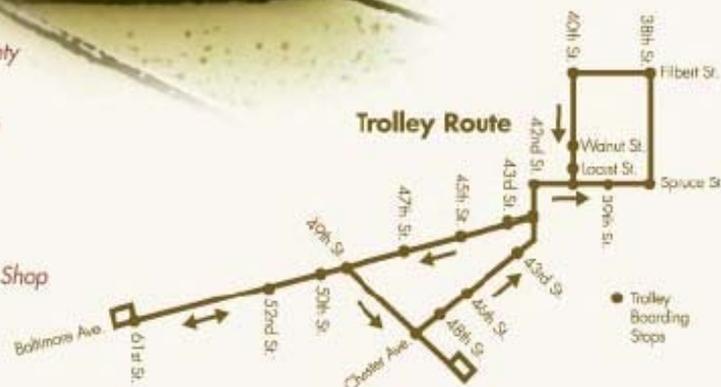
**Pick up your  
FREE tickets at locations  
around University City  
and at UCD's office  
(3940 Chestnut St.)**

Trolleys will loop through  
the Penn campus along  
38th and 40th streets, west  
on Spruce to Baltimore  
Ave., south on Baltimore,  
south on 49th St., and east  
on Chester Avenue.

Riders will be able to  
board and disembark at  
15 locations throughout  
the neighborhood  
approximately every  
20 minutes.

**Attractions include:**

- University City Historical Society
- Calvary Center
- Clark Park Farmers Market
- USP Lower Mill Creek Garden
- University City Arts League
- Maragold Kitchen
- Fresh Grocer
- Sugar Hill Bakery
- Metropolitan Bakery
- Genuine Bread and Specialty Shop



Call 215.243.0555 for more information.

# PORCH SAVERS

are needed on Friday and Saturday, November 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>, to finish the job started in June, 2004 when a visiting group of **World Changers** worked for a week on S. 45<sup>th</sup> Street between Spruce and Locust Streets to save a row of intact, but rapidly deteriorating, historic porches on either side of **256 S. 45<sup>th</sup> Street**, a long abandoned and burned out row house being restored by new owner/developer, **Tim Delaney** of **Denver, PA** and his crew. Delaney had previously indicated his willingness to use his work force to direct the restoration of the porches of his neighbors if funds could be found to cover the cost of building materials. Neither of his neighbors could presently fund these expenses.

Both **UCHS** and the **Spruce Hill Community Association** agreed to share the responsibility for up fronting these costs to use the special opportunity offered to save this row of porches. Not only had a responsible developer offered to use this labor to restore the flanking porches, but an outside non-profit had agreed to perform a week's worth of labor to the same end. A minimum investment by both organizations, plus additional volunteer assistance from the community could "reknit" the block for the future.

~~Both of the property owners of the flanking~~ porches agreed to sign a legal waver promising, in the event of a sale of the property outside the family, to reimburse the contributing community organizations the sum granted to provide for the building materials, hopefully to go to future such historic preservation "rescue" efforts.

With the work of the World Changers in shoring up the porches, removing and replacing the deteriorated roofs completed, the final installation and finishing of the row remains. Replacement railings, spindles and metal stamped corbels are on order from **Woodland Building Supply, 4701 Woodland Avenue** and **John Green Decorative Sheet Metalworks** along with columns, bases and capitals prepared and remilled by two local carpenter volunteers, **Louis Tannen** and **Hector Medina**.

We would like to invite other professional craftspeople to join in this community effort along with others interested in contributing their labor, at whatever level of expertise, in installing the porch components, scraping, sanding and priming the existing and recycled architectural details and giving this row a new future for all of us. Call us at (215) 387-3019 or email us at [info@uchs.net](mailto:info@uchs.net) to volunteer. We will get you all the necessary details.

## ON THE WEST SIDE

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