

ON THE WEST SIDE

THE UNIVERSITY
CITY HISTORICAL
SOCIETY



October, 2006

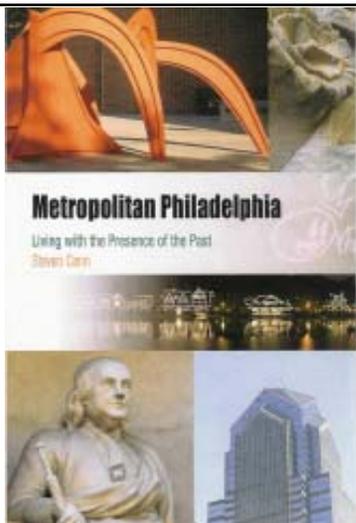
<http://www.uchs.net>

Mike Hardy, Editor

LECTURE

AND

BOOK SIGNING



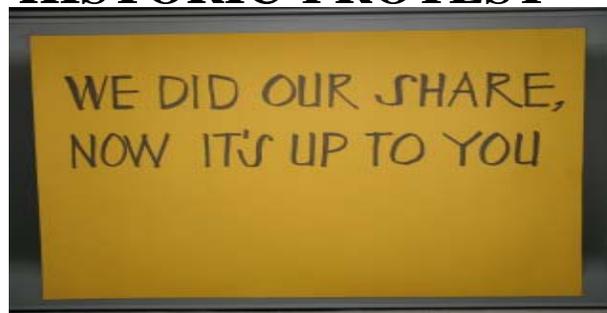
Steven Conn, the author of the recently published and widely praised, **Metropolitan Philadelphia: Living with the Presence of the Past** will discuss, read from and sign his book for those acquiring it on **Saturday, October 28** at 6 p.m. in the basement level of the **Calvary Center, 48th and Baltimore Avenue**. Steven, who teaches history at **Ohio State University** and is the **Director of Public History**, has been a resident of University City since 1990 and, while his heart resides here during the academic year, he and his family reunite on **Chester Avenue** during each summer vacation.

In his discussion of "Philadelphia – past, present and future?," Steve will focus on the special place of **West Philadelphia** in the central influences he explores in his book – the city's utopian impulses, its middle class identities, the city's watershed and the place of art and cultural institutions in developing a shared Philadelphia character.

There will be the opportunity also for a lively question-and-answer session and to buy his book for \$20 from representatives of nearby **Bindlestiff Books** on **Baltimore Avenue**.

This book is not only for Philadelphians, but makes a great holiday gift for former residents.

HISTORIC PROTEST



At a regular meeting of the full **Philadelphia Historical Commission** on Sept 8, 2006, representatives from **UCHS** and **Spruce Hill Community Association**, advocates of a proposed "local" historic district for **Spruce Hill**, together with those representing other proposed districts before the commission, conducted a "silent protest" during the report of the commission's **Nominations Committee**. They held signs reading, "**SPRUCE HILL & WEST PHILADELPHIA HAVE WAITED OVER 20 YEARS!**"; "**WE DID OUR SHARE, NOW IT'S UP TO YOU**"; "**SUPPORT THE PRESERVATION OF SPRUCE HILL**"; "**ACT NOW ON SPRUCE HILL NOMINATION**"; "**ACT NOW ON DISTRICT NOMINATIONS**" and "**WE'VE WAITED LONG ENOUGH.**"

Thus they and representatives of the **Preservation Alliance of Greater Philadelphia** quietly but emphatically commented upon the commission's failure both to act on the nominations and to communicate with all those who have devoted so much time, energy and treasure in developing the nominations for the commission's consideration.

Following the report of the Nominations Committee, the Chair of the commission addressed the protesters and promised that this matter would become the first piece of business before the commission at its next regular meeting.

The protesters later commented on this as a positive first step and the first response from the commission since the delivery of the rewritten nomination for Spruce Hill in 2002!

The next meeting of the commission is on Friday, **October 13, 2006**. UCHS and several other neighborhood representatives are prepared to address the commission. If you are available at 9 a.m at **1515 Arch Street, Room 18-029**, please join members of those five neighborhoods and support the formal consideration of all our historic district nominations.

REPORT FROM CALVARY



By **Rich Kirk, Calvary Center**

The **Calvary Centennial Gala** was held September 16, 2006. It was a fundraiser, and a very successful one at that, but it also was, by all accounts, an evening which will long and fondly be remembered by the well over 200 who attended the affair.

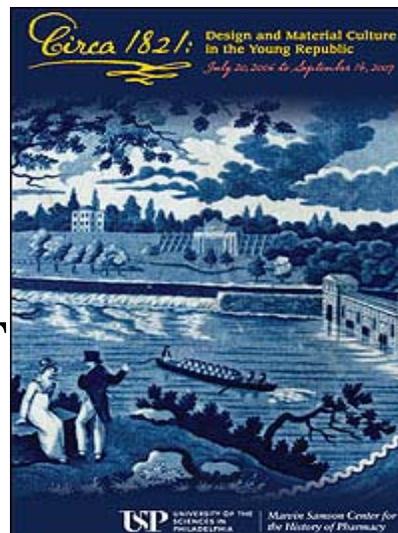
The evening offered something, or several some-things, to please every palate. It was duly noted that no one had ever seen the community so dressed up for a party! For the serious minded, there was the announcement of the occasion itself, the beautiful centennial commemorative guide book souvenir, and the superlative opera recital by the neighborhood's own incomparable **Cecelia Chaisson**, which took the audience in the dome-lit chapel by storm. But beyond the solemn side of the occasion, the gala was a party extraordinaire! Delicious gourmet food from many local restaurants delighted the senses of taste and smell, and a lively silent auction with some of the most exciting items auctioned off live created full-blown cacophony in the downstairs gym transformed by decoration into an elegant, romantic

setting, and for those who needed a quieter venue, the outdoor scene was one of intimate conversations and laughter on the lawn, served up with amazing cocktails and spirits at the bar (and off the premises!) To cap off the affair, the resident **Curio Theatre's** improv comedy sent them home laughing!

It was a celebration for a magnificent building once thought lost but now being saved. But more than that, it was a celebration for a uniquely University City redevelopment experiment that has given new life to the building, not just as an ecumenical sacred space, but as a functioning community center and venue for culture and the arts as well, all under one vast roof. It was, truly, a celebration *of* the community, *by* the community and *for* the community, at its best.

For more information about the gala and **Calvary Center**, where **PayPal** and other donations are always welcome, visit www.calvary-center.org !

CIRCA 1821 EXHIBIT OPENS



The recently opened exhibit, "**Circa 1821; Design and Material Culture in the Young Republic**" is only the second mounted by **Michael J. Brody**, the latest **Director and Curator of the Marvin Sansom Center for the History of Pharmacy**, the museum at the **University of the Sciences in Philadelphia**, to commemorate the founding date of the **Philadelphia College of Pharmacy and Sciences**, the nation's oldest and the precursor of **USP**.

But the exhibit goes well beyond **PCPS** and the history of pharmacy to embrace objects in contexts – local, national, international, artistic, technological, etc – to place its some 60 objects dating between

1800 and 1850, and all from USP's collections and on loan from area collectors and institutions, into a rich network of associations, true to Brody's objective of "wide appeal for those interested in 19th-century history, in the decorative arts and prints of the period, as well as devotees of Philadelphia history, its architecture and cultural institutions."

Embracing portraits, prints, literature, glass, silver, ceramics, furniture, metalwork, textiles and manuscripts among others, the small university museum space is transformed into an ambitious and fascinating network of its objects and the rich tapestry of their broader connections and associations.

Open during weekdays when the university is in session from 9 to 5 and free to the public, the self-guided exhibit will be in place until September, 2007. Arrangements for group tours can also be made for a curator's tour with Michael Brody by contacting him at (215) 596-8721 or thru USP's website at www.usip.edu under "museum."

Don't miss visiting this latest addition to University City's cultural venues.

ANOTHER PARTY



AND PLANTING

The Friends of Clark Park, the support group that works to preserve and improve University City's largest and most beloved public space, invites the public to a party and benefit barbeque feast and fundraiser in the park on **Saturday, October 21** from 3 to 7 p.m.

Music, food, drink and games, sponsored by the **University City District, Citizens Bank, USP** and others will be part of a celebration of the latest upgrades in **Clark Park**, including scores of trees

and plantings. Your \$20 ticket will also provide you with a **Family Membership** along with the opportunity to lay the groundwork for further improvements to the park. For further information, call **Chris Leswing**, (215) 906-0624, or email scooter@magpage.com.

And, also joining in the fun and refreshments will be volunteer planters finishing up after planting some 40 trees in **West Powelton**, one of four major community volunteer **Tree Vitalize** plantings organized by **UC Green** this fall. One of these, installing some 70 new trees in **West Shore** and **Spruce Hill**, will also originate in Clark Park on Saturday, November 4 from 10 am to 1 pm. For more information on all of these, go to www.ucgreen.org for full details.

NOMINATE!!

Those who know how to do it (contractors, suppliers, etc) and those who have done it well (property owners who are making or have made historically sensitive improvements to their facades or greening improvements to their environments). Please submit your suggestions for contactors and suppliers using our enclosed "**UCHS Contactor/Supplier Questionnaire**" to help others in the neighborhood make the most informed choices when planning work on their properties. And, to commend those doing exemplary jobs in repairing/restoring/repainting their properties in University City or making greening improvements, send in their addresses and UCHS will send them thanks for their "**Gifts to the Streets**" along with a complementary membership and invitation to next year's **Valentine's Awards Tea**.

Before the light of Fall fades, please send us your nominees!

REMEMBER:

Saturday, October 14 is the **Second Annual OctTrolleyFest** in **University City, Darby and Yeadon**. Call (610) 583-0877 or email janhaigis@yahoo.com for full details.

AND SPECIAL THANKS

To those who recently renewed their dues and, in particular to those making special contributions as **Friends of UCHS: Robert & Elizabeth Adams-Eilers; Luisa Boverini & Jeff Heit; Susan Joshi; Nadine Landis; Dr. Ann Mayer; Maureen Tate & Gerry McHugh** and as a generous **Sustainer of UCHS: Elizabeth Stegner**

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