

ON THE WEST SIDE

THE UNIVERSITY CITY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



March, 2013

<http://www.uchs.net>

Joseph Minardi, Editor

Valentine Tea and Awards Presentation - Recap

The University City Historical Society would like to thank its members and guests for attending our annual gathering and awards ceremony at the Castle, and to Ellie and Nick Cernansky and staff for their fantastic preparation and hosting duties. And a special thanks to Doris Cochran-Fikes for her remarkable tea sandwich prowess. The Valentine Tea wouldn't be the same sumptuous feast without her! The UCHS would also like to thank Kevin Fischer for his wonderful guitar serenading.



Mark Silber with his 2012 Gift to the Streets Award.

For the awards portion of the festivities, the Gift to the Streets Award went to Mark Silber for the great work on his home at 4213 Baltimore Avenue and Susan Weiler for her rear porch addition to her c. 1904 Colonial Revival home at 235 S. 46th Street. The Outstanding Preservation Awards were given to Frank and Mary Allegra and Ray and Julie Davis for the extensive and coordinated restoration of the façade and porch at 4603 and 4605 Cedar Avenue (twin home). Ray is a contractor and owner of Davis Home Improvements here in University City. Last (but certainly not least) was the Preservation Initiative Award given to Mike Hardy for

his many years of leadership, dedication and hard work on behalf of the University City Historical Society. Unlike the other awardees, Mike was unaware of his impending honor and was quite surprised.

We hope to see you at next years Valentine Tea.



Mike Hardy holding his Preservation Initiative Award for 2012.



A table filled with the customary delicacies of finger sandwiches and homemade pastries.



Recipients of the 2012 Outstanding Preservation Award are Frank and Mary Allegra (left) and Ray and Julie Davis for their work on 4603 and 4605 Cedar Avenue.



The University City Historical Society acknowledges with appreciation those property owners in our district who have improved and beautified our streetscape through their thoughtful consideration of the historical and architectural heritage of our community. The University City neighborhoods that include, but are not limited to - Powelton Village, Woodland Terrace, Spruce Hill, Cedar Park, Garden Court, Squirrel Hill, and Walnut Hill - represent the full realization of a mid-to-late Victorian and Edwardian "Streetcar Suburb." The UCHS salutes these property owners for their efforts at preservation and restoration of homes and businesses so that our district will maintain its unique character for future generations.

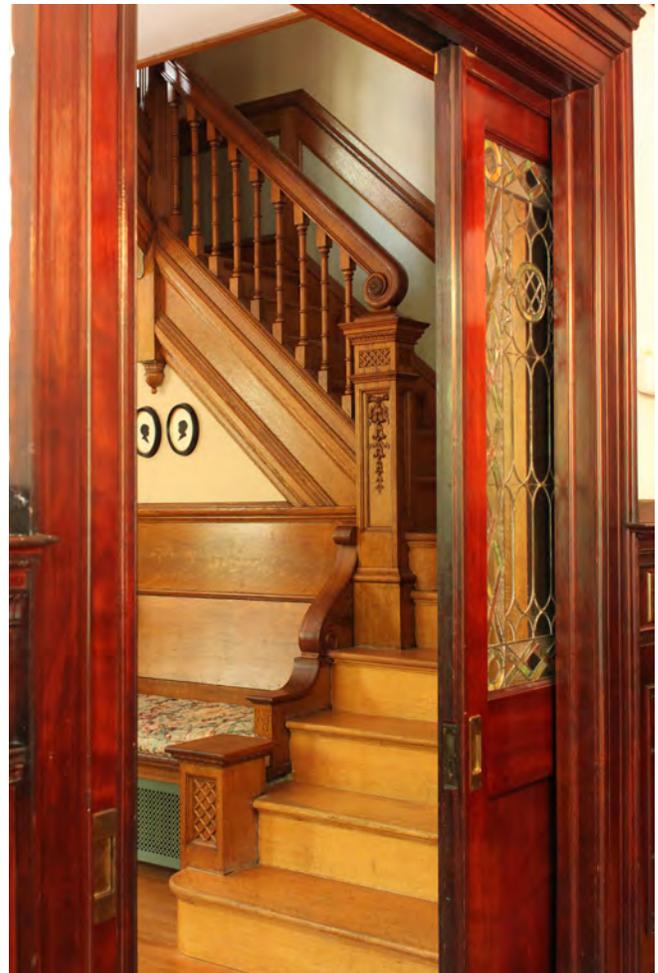
Working Conditions in "the good old days"

Next time you feel like complaining about your job, take a look at what 19th century office workers had to deal with! Following are a set of actual office rules posted in this country in 1872 by **Zachert U. Geiger**, proprietor of the **Mount Carriage and Wagon Works**:

- Office employees will daily sweep the floors, dust the furniture and showcases.
- Each clerk will bring in a bucket of water and a scuttle of coal for the day's business.
- Clerks will each day fill lamps, clean chimneys, trim wicks. Wash the windows once a week.
- This office will open at 7 a.m. and close at 8 p.m. daily, except on the Sabbath, when it will remain closed.
- Men employees will be given an evening off each for courting purposes, or two evenings a week, if they go regularly to church.
- Any employee who smokes Spanish cigars, uses liquor in any form, gets shaved at a barber shop, or frequents pool or public halls, will give me good reason to suspect his worth, intention, integrity, and honesty.
- Every employee should lay aside from each pay a goodly sum of his earnings for his benefits during his declining years, so that he will not become a burden upon the charity of his betters.
- The employee who has performed his labors faithfully and without fault for a period of five years... will be given an increase of **five cents per day**.

Save the Date

The UCHS House Tour
May 19, 2013, 1:00 to 5:00 p.m.



Come right in!

Join us on Sunday May 19th from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. for a fun-filled house tour of some of University City's most exquisite and interesting private homes featuring a wide variety of historic architecture. Houses chosen for the house tour have yet to be determined.



Century-old Elena's Soul Lounge building demolished

The three-story home to one of Cedar Park's most popular institutions for over four years was consumed by flames at 1:00 p.m. on December 24, 2012. The resulting two-alarm fire left the structure so badly damaged that the Philadelphia Department of Licenses and Inspections had no choice to demolish the century-old building

on the 4900 block of Baltimore Avenue. According to Elena's owner, Algernong Allen, the building has housed a bar since the early 1900s.

But the tragedy didn't end with the blaze. The crew (JPC Group Inc.) hired by L&I to do the demolition of the Elena's Soul building badly damaged the two neighboring structures on either side, Gary's Nails and Cedar Park Cafe. JPC later claimed Gama Wrecking actually performed the demolition.



Cleared out lot on a bitter January day, guarded by a cyclone fence and orange cones, the site of Elena's Soul Showcase Lounge & Cafe, 4912 Baltimore Avenue with damaged business on either side.

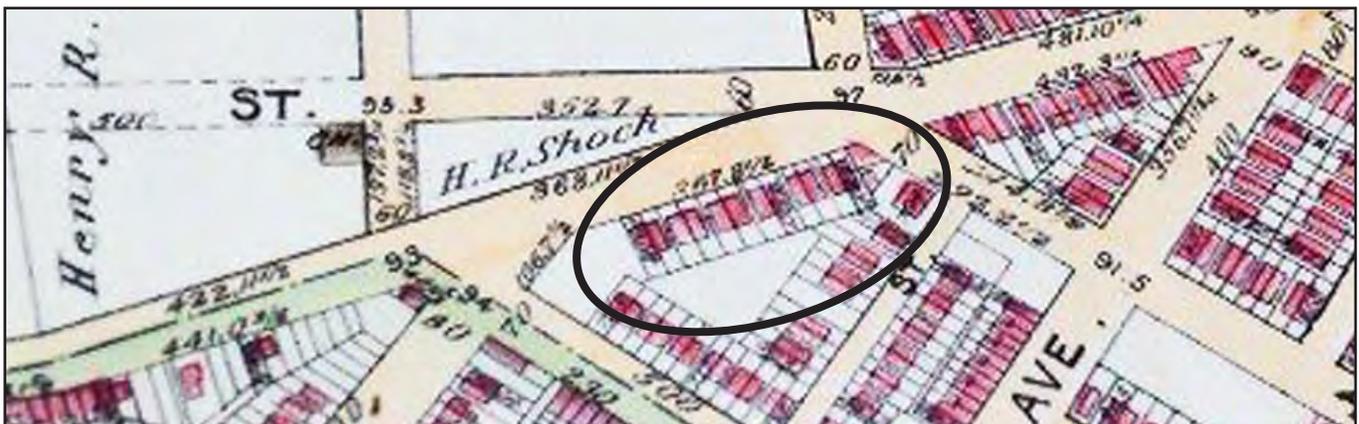
Photograph by Joseph Minardi

A three-hour fundraiser was held for the employees of Elena's Soul on January 25th at Cedar Works (4919 Pentridge Ave.), sponsored by the Baltimore Avenue Business Association and Cedar Park Neighbors. The charred Elena's Soul building, with its distinctive two-story wooden bay window, is gone forever, but the fate of its damaged compadres is still uncertain. A violation notice was affixed to the facades stating that the owners have 30 days to repair the buildings or tear them down.



Elena's Soul Restaurant, prior to the December 24th blaze. It was built of red brick which had been covered in stucco at some point.

Photo from Google Maps



4900 block of Baltimore Avenue (in circle), 1901. Reproduced from Atlas of the City of Philadelphia, G.W. Bromley & Co., 1901.



University City: Then & Now

When the University of Pennsylvania relocated to West Philadelphia in 1872, the neighborhood was home to a burgeoning streetcar suburb. Soon blocks like Walnut Street would be populated with lovely mansions of Italianate, Second Empire, Queen Anne, and Colonial Revival styles. The neighborhood and Penn both prospered as the nineteenth century turned into the twentieth, and the Market Street Elevated Line caused explosive residential and commercial growth in West Philadelphia. Now, in the twenty-first century, much of the Streetcar Suburb's architectural grandeur has been repurposed to fit the needs of the ever-expanding university, mostly for student housing.

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Walnut Street, east of 41st (1909)

Collection of the editor



Walnut Street, east of 41st (2013)

Photograph by Joseph Minardi