

The Window

Volume 1, No. 10

ON HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Don't Throw It Out

by Kathy Jans-Duffy, Collections Manager, Seneca Falls Historical Society

Have you ever had a flood in the basement? Papers, photos and objects sitting in soggy boxes? What do you do? A few years ago I had the opportunity to attend a work-study program at Cornell in the book repair department. One of the subjects that we covered was disaster recovery. Hopefully we'll never have to use it at the Historical Society but it is knowledge well worth having.

When papers get wet the first thing you want to do is to get them out of the area. If there are more things than you can manage to take care of quickly, freeze them in a frost-free freezer to cut down on moisture damage. Paper left damp or wet gets moldy very fast, inks can run and pages can get stuck together. By freezing the items the damage is stopped until you have a chance to take the time to work on them. If mud or sewage is involved rinse the items carefully in clear water until they are clean, then freeze or dry them.

When a dry work space is available use blotting paper or plain paper towels interleaved between the pages to soak up water and stand the book on end to dry. A fan will also help to keep the air moving and speed up the process. Change blotting papers as needed. When the pages are completely dry the book can be put away.

Photos are a little trickier. If they get too wet, especially with warm water, the emulsion will slide right off. Also, if they are in a frame, remove the frame right away so the photo does not get stuck to the glass. Again, dry them as quickly as possible by hanging them by the corners and keep the air circulating. Negatives can also be hung but be very careful that they do not get scratched. If you happen to have glass plate negatives these too can be saved by drying carefully, propping them up so air can circulate all around.

If your items aren't found in time and they are musty they can be freshened up by placing them in a bag with crumpled newspapers or activated charcoal. Close the bag tightly for several days, change the newspapers or charcoal until the smell is gone. Mold can be vacuumed or brushed off, but be very careful. Wear a mask and work in a well-ventilated place. Exposure to sunlight and circulating air is the best way to get rid of it.

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October 2006



Through The Window

Through *The Window* above we see the employees of the Seneca Button Company gathered in front of their workplace in the late 1880s or very early 1890s. This thriving factory, located on the south side of the island once located between the Bridge Street and Ovid Street bridges, specialized in manufacturing buttons from a type of bean. This was at a time before zippers, when fashion and common decency depended on buttons or hooks. Seneca Button, at the end of Mill Street, shared the island with other businesses, like the Gleason & Bailey Manufacturing Company, the last incarnation of the original Cowing & Company, makers of pumps, fire engines, and wood pipe.

Photograph Courtesy of the Seneca Falls Historical Society

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ARCHITECTURAL STYLES, PART 8

Cayuga Street



braces. Porch roof supports are typically short, square, sometimes tapered, columns resting upon masonry piers. Hipped roof variations of the Craftsman style can also be found.

Dutch Colonial Revival



Beryl Avenue

This subtype of the Colonial Revival was most popular between 1895 and 1950 and is distinguished by its steeply pitched gambrel roof. Locally, side gambrels were prevalent in the 1920s and 1930s. Unlike original Dutch Colonial, the revival style houses usually feature separate dormer windows or a continuous shed dormer across the front. Federal style entries are often found, sometimes beneath a separate roof or a full-width porch. Early examples were commonly built with front-facing gambrels and included cross gambrels at the rear.

State Street



Eclectic Styles

Tudor Style

This style, loosely based on variations of early English building traditions, features decorative half-timbering, and a steeply pitched side-gabled roof with one or more cross gables. Popular between 1890-1940, these houses almost always contain tall, narrow windows usually in multiple groups. The windows usually have multi-pane glazing, and the massive chimneys were often crowned by decorative chimney pots. Exteriors of early examples are often found with stucco walls. Later, brick or brick veneers were widely used.

Originating in southern California, the Craftsman style was primarily influenced by the Arts and Crafts movement. Between 1905 and 1930 pattern books



Johnston Street

and magazines contributed to the national popularity of Craftsman houses, from simple bungalows to more elaborate variations. In the northeast United States the side-gable bungalow became the most popular subtype. They usually feature porches contained under the main roof, which often sports a centered dormer. The eaves are rarely boxed, displaying exposed rafter tails and decorative beams sometimes supported by triangular knee

Craftsman

Maynard Street



Don't Throw It Out
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You can buy disaster kits, but for most household floods, plain white paper towels (lots of them) will do the job. Have a safe dry place that you can leave the items while they are drying out. Most importantly, don't store them where they might ever get wet (in basements or where they can be rained on or under fire sprinklers) Papers and



Photograph Courtesy of the Seneca Falls Historical Society

photos should also be kept out of very hot and dry places as this will cause them to become brittle and hasten their deterioration.

Your favorite photos and important family documents want to be in a stable environment that is not too hot or too damp so be careful where you store them.

Meeting Results

The Seneca Falls Heritage Preservation Commission met on September 26, 2006. The Commission reviewed the following applications:

- APPROVED the application for roof replacement using IKO 30-year Cambridge East Straight-cut, dual black architectural asphalt shingles, and to replace deteriorated half-round gutters with white aluminum k-style gutters and downspouts, and to construct a 26' X 26', freestanding, single story, residential out-building in the rear yard, at 86 Cayuga Street,
- APPROVED the application to widen the parking area of the driveway by 4' to the east, leaving as is the driveway apron or entrance; to replace only that portion of the slate sidewalk broken up at the driveway crossing, using concrete tinted black to approximate slate color; and to remove overgrown bushes at the front of the property, replacing them with flowers and low growing shrubs, at 82 West Bayard Street.
- APPROVED the application to change the color scheme of the house from taupe with brown trim to River Falls Gray with white trim and black doors; and to replace the aluminum screen door with a wood screen door, at 7 South Park Street.
- APPROVED the application for installation of a concrete block flowerbed retaining wall using 4" high "Countryside" charcoal/tan blend blocks along the rear property line, to be at least two, but no more than three, courses high at 51 East Bayard Street, and to renew a Certificate of Appropriateness for an evergreen hedge issued July 26, 2005.

The Commission heard of a question raised regarding what appeared to be an inappropriately colored porch floor

and steps on State Street. The color in question was apparently tinted primer, now covered by the primary, appropriate color. The Commission also learned of a fence installed without the issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness. The Commission directed a letter and application form be sent to the property owners in an effort to bring them into compliance with the Historic District local law.

The next scheduled Commission meeting is Tuesday, October 24th at 7:00 pm at Village Hall. Procedural training will be available at 6:30 pm.



Annual Statistics

From the Certified Local Government October 1, 2005 – September 30, 2006 reporting period:

- The Heritage Preservation Commission conducted 11 meetings at which they reviewed 65 applications for Certificates of Appropriateness; 46 were approved as submitted, and 17 were approved with modifications, totaling 63 for a 97% approval rate; 2 applications were denied, and no hardship appeals were requested;
- Of the 65 cases, 77% were minor alterations, 15.4% major alterations, 4.6% new construction, and 3% demolitions or removals.

Significant events regarding the Village's historic preservation program during the reporting period included: increasing the membership of the Commission from 5 to 7; republishing the *Guidelines & Standards for the Protection and Enhancement of the Seneca Falls Historic District*; and publication of the local preservation monthly newsletter, *The Window on Historic Preservation*.

The Window

ON HISTORIC PRESERVATION

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Village of Seneca Falls



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The Window on Historic Preservation is an historic preservation newsletter for the people of Seneca Falls, NY. This publication is also available online at www.senecafalls.com. Questions or comments about this publication, or about historic preservation may be directed to 568-6894, sfha@rochester.rr.com, or by writing to: Planning Department, 60 State Street, Seneca Falls, NY 13148.

NEWS & NOTES

Seneca Falls Main Street Improvement Program Launched

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October 2006

The Seneca Falls Heritage Area Visitor Center will be hosting two Main Street Grant Application Workshops: one on Wednesday October 25th at 5:30pm, and a second workshop on Monday October 30th at 5:30pm. The agenda for both evening workshops will be the same. The purpose of the workshops is to provide more detailed information on the NYS Main Street Grant Program, including the application submittal process, frequently asked questions, how funds can be used, eligibility, scoring and review process, etc.

Owners of commercial properties in downtown Seneca Falls along Fall Street and State Street may apply for financial assistance to rehabilitate façades and building interiors under the NY Main Street program. The \$200,000 grant program is designed to better the appearance of building façades and interiors, which can improve the economic viability of the downtown area and help increase property values. The funding comes from the New York State Division of Housing and Community Renewal through Seneca County, and is administered by the Village of Seneca Falls Heritage Area Department.

For more information contact Christina J. Selvek, Heritage Area Director at 315-568-2703 or sfhadirector@rochester.rr.com.



Where Am I?

This photo depicts an architectural detail found somewhere in the Seneca Falls Historic District.

Can you identify the building?

ANSWER to the September Where Am I?: porch columns at 66 State Street

The Window

ON HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Village of Seneca Falls

60 State Street

Seneca Falls, NY 13148