

The Salem Preservationist

Reporting historic preservation developments in the greater Salem area

"Looking backward and forward to a Greater Salem"

In Salem



Roger Conant Statue Restoration

The Salem Common Neighborhood Association (SCNA) has been making strides to restore the famous 1913 Roger Conant statue, which overlooks the Salem Common. A grant from Heritage Preservation's SOS (Save Outdoor Sculpture) Program allowed the SCNA to have the statue's condition assessed in Nov. 2001. It seems to be stable, but has suffered from extensive copper corrosion, resulting in metal loss and the obscuring of surface detail. The recommended work for restoration is estimated to cost from \$17 - \$24,000. Fundraising efforts are under way and anyone wishing to contribute to this effort may send a check (payable to the Roger Conant Statue Restoration fund) to SCNA, POB 8608, Salem, MA, 01970. Web Site: <http://scna.green-arrow.net/RogerConant.php>

HSI Executive Director Resigns

John Goff, Executive Director of Historic Salem, Inc. from November 2000 until March 2003 has resigned. Mr. Goff will continue to be active in the historic preservation field and his future contributions in preserving what makes Salem a unique city in which to live and work will be anticipated with interest.

Salem City Hall Restoration Celebration in April

Mary Usovicz, Chairperson of the Friends of City Hall, reports that the Salem City Hall Restoration Committee has nearly completed its spectacular restoration of the entrances, hallways, and staircases in Salem's Greek Revival style City Hall designed by Boston architect Richard Bond. The handsome Quincy granite constructed landmark is located at 93 Washington Street. A grand celebration is planned for April 17, 2003. All contributions to this project are greatly appreciated and may be sent to: Friends of City Hall, c/o Salem City Hall, 93 Washington Street, Salem, MA 01970.

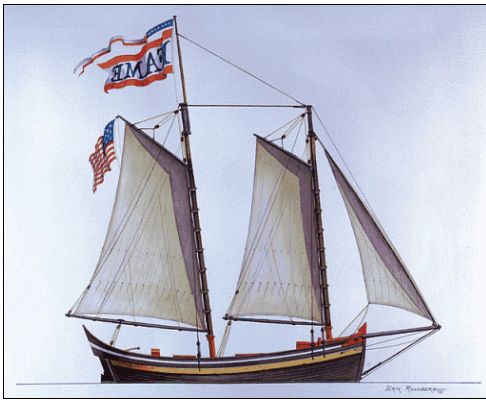
Benson Enthusiasts Hope to Bring new Benson Art Museum to Salem

In a move which promises to renew interest in one of Salem's famous native sons, parties in Salem, Lynnfield and out of state are collaborating in an effort to create a new Frank W. Benson Museum in Salem. Frank W. Benson, born in 1862 at 46 Washington Square, is recognized as one of the nation's earliest and most influential Impressionistic artists, who began his career in The Studio building at 2 Chestnut St. In his later years, Frank, his son George, and his daughter Sylvia all owned houses on Chestnut Street. In the 1890s, Frank's brother, John, designed the superb Colonial Revival style Phillips-Wheatland House adjacent to the Stephen Phillips Memorial Trust House at 30 Chestnut Street.

Faith Andrews Bedford, author and great-granddaughter of artist Frank Benson, is presenting a slide show at the Harvard Historical Society in Harvard, MA on the evening of March 20th.

Future in Question for St. Mary's Italian Catholic Church

St. Mary's Italian Catholic Church downtown near Riley Plaza recently closed its doors as an active Catholic church. This handsome, early 20th century Renaissance Revival style brick building, with marble interiors, possesses both architectural and historical significance. However, its future remains uncertain. Watch for future reports about this property.



Privateer *FAME* soon to set sail for Pickering Wharf in Salem

With Spring 2003 almost here, Captain Michael Rutstein and shipwright Harold Burnham are nearing completion of reconstructing a full size replica of the War of 1812 Salem privateer, *FAME*, to sail in Salem Harbor. *FAME* is scheduled to sail to Salem for her first commercial service as an educational vessel during the summer of 2003. Michael Rutstein spoke about his exciting project at the Peabody Essex Museum's Phillips Library on March 27th. The reconstruction of a lost, but extremely important, piece of Salem's maritime history is a tremendous accomplishment for Capt. Rutstein and Mr. Burnham. Once she arrives in Salem, *FAME* is scheduled to depart regularly on tours from Pickering Wharf. For further information, please write Captain Michael Rutstein, 54 Martin Street, Essex, MA, 01929 or visit www.SchoonerFame.com.

New Future Studied for Salem's First Baptist Church

The City of Salem, Salem Partnership and State's Division of Capital Asset Management (DCAM) have been working together over the past few months to study the possibility for the historic circa 1804 / ca. 1850s First Baptist Church on Federal Street, just east of North Street (Route 114) to be saved, re-used and incorporated into a new expanded courthouse facility. The collaboration of all parties and their adoption of preservation as a *starting point* in the adaptive re-use design process indicate that early developments are encouraging.

Coming next issue:
Peabody & the Community Preservation Act

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Near Salem

Danvers Preservation, Inc. up & running; efforts to save Danvers Railroad Depot

The Globe North section of the Boston Sunday Globe on March 2, 2003 reported that Danvers Preservation, Inc. is planning to raise funds to move the 1868 Victorian Era train station from Cherry Street back to its original site near Danvers Town Hall. After moving the building, the Danvers landmark will be restored. Some dormer windows and architectural "gingerbread" were lost over the years. The primary movers behind this project -- and Danvers Preservation, Inc. -- are John Archer and Town Archivist, Richard Trask.

DCAM opens Danvers State Hospital (Kirkbride) for Public Tours

As reported in the Salem News of February 26th, 2003, DCAM (the State's Division of Capital Asset Management) is allowing visitors to now tour the historic Danvers State Hospital site in the Hathorne section of Danvers between 10 am and 12 noon on the second and fourth Tuesdays of every month. To sign up for new tours of the historic buildings, call (508) 792-7453 at least one day before the gates are opened. The former Danvers State Hospital site contains a rich assortment of late 19th century Victorian, Gothic and Colonial Revival style structures which have been underutilized and endangered for many years. Thank you, Danvers preservationists and DCAM, for helping to educate all of us about the value of these rare Most Endangered buildings.

Marblehead's Friends of Tucker's Wharf Rally to Save ancient Salt House

Peter Sorlien and Gary Kissal of the Friends of Tucker's Wharf reported in the Salem News on March 3, 2003, that their Friends group is still trying to save the ancient Blackler's Salt House, which has been a waterfront landmark in Marblehead since ca.1770. Town voters rejected demolishing the Salt House in 1999 and 2000. For those wishing to join the effort to preserve this significant maritime property, please contact Friends of Tucker's Wharf, (781) 631-2567 or Mr. Sorlien at peter@antiquesappraiser.us

