



BRICKS & MORTAR

News from HISTORIC BOSTON INCORPORATED • Spring 2010

HBI Partners with North Bennet Street School

Handmade Houses Provides Training and Restoration

Historic Boston Incorporated and North Bennet Street School have formed a partnership to restore early historic buildings in Boston and provide hands on training to preservation carpentry students.

Handmade Houses, initiated with a grant from the 1772 Foundation, leverages the unique strengths of the two organizations in the interest of preserving pre-20th century structures in the city of Boston. Historic Boston will serve as project manager, overseeing the acquisition and restoration of properties while North Bennet Street will provide specialized carpentry and construction skills through its Preservation Carpentry department.

"This partnership enables Historic Boston to take on new projects in Boston's neighborhoods and provide real world experience to students who are learning the specialized skills of early carpentry and restoration," said Historic Boston Executive Director Kathy Kottaridis.

Through *Handmade Houses*, Historic Boston will acquire properties and manage the work on them. These will later be leased or sold to support a sustainable revolving fund for the partnership. This fund has been started with seed grants totaling \$300,000 from the 1772 Foundation.

Projects will be chosen based on a number of criteria including the potential educational value, the historic or architectural significance, and the potential for payback. Buildings must be at risk of demolition or irreversible deterioration due to neglect.



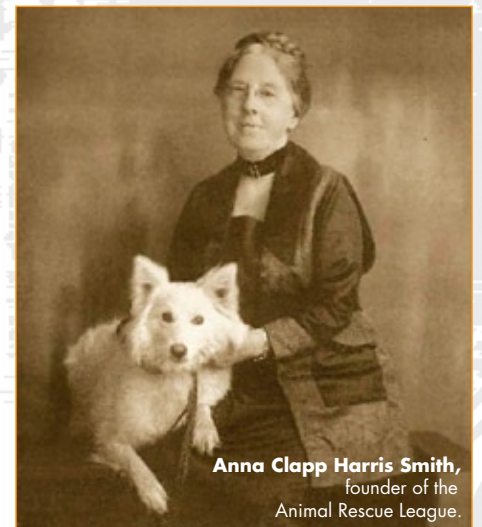
The Anna Clapp Harris Smith House, located at 65 Pleasant Street in Dorchester, was built in 1804 on a foundation that purportedly dates to 1636.

The first project, already underway, is the rehabilitation of 65 Pleasant Street in the Jones Hill section of Dorchester, once the home of the Animal Rescue League Founder Anna Clapp Harris Smith. Built in 1804 by Samuel Clapp, it is understood to have been constructed upon the foundation of the 1636 house of Thomas Jones, which burned in 1803.

Historic Boston has executed a two-year purchase option with the current owner and is working with the North Bennet Street School to rehabilitate the building with the goal of turning the four-unit residential building into a two-family house.

The project at 65 Pleasant Street has a variety of educational opportunities: removal of shingled siding to reveal original clapboards, sill repair, rebuilding of window sashes, interior plaster repairs and the recreation and restoration of architectural elements.

"We are glad to be able to offer our students the opportunity to use what they have learned in the classroom," said Steve O'Shaughnessy, head of the school's Preservation Carpentry Department. "It is a chance for them to make a difference in the field while they get practical experience."



Anna Clapp Harris Smith,
founder of the
Animal Rescue League.

Historic Boston Breaks Ground on New Headquarters

After many months of planning and preparation with the Roxbury community and many project partners, Historic Boston Incorporated launches the rehabilitation of the Eustis Street Fire House on May 15th.

Construction is expected to continue through the summer and Historic Boston will move into the building in the fall.

The first floor of the building will be leased to the Timothy Smith Network, a collaboration of 34 state-of-the-art community technology centers located throughout Roxbury launched in 1996 by Mayor Thomas Menino. The network is named for a 19th century Dudley Square merchant who left funds for the children of Roxbury.

Historic Boston will also be supporting the Boston Parks and Recreation Department with stewardship and interpretation of the 1633 Eliot Burying Ground adjacent to the firehouse.



Roxbury friends and neighbors of the Eustis Street Fire House gather with Mayor Thomas Menino to celebrate historic preservation month.

Below: **Bergmeyer Associates** rendering of The Eustis Street Fire House after its rehabilitation.



Over the winter, Historic Boston commissioned students in North Bennet Street School's Preservation Carpentry Program to rebuild three rounded Italianate windows on the firehouse's facade. They removed what remained of the windows to use as a base and, while there is not enough material to restore the windows, the students will be using existing materials as a model to fabricate what is missing.

"The restoration of the fire house is important to the overall revitalization of Dudley Square" said Mayor Thomas Menino, who joins HBI and project partners for May's ground breaking. "Preserving and re-using historic places enriches communities and restores neighborhood pride."

Historic Boston's move into the Eustis Street Fire House is intended to spur greater interest in preservation projects as catalysts for neighborhood revitalization.

Susan Silberberg-Robinson Joins HBI Board of Directors

Historic Boston Incorporated is pleased to announce the appointment of Susan Silberberg-Robinson to the Board of Directors.

Silberberg-Robinson is a lecturer in urban design and planning at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and senior vice president of Community Partners Consultants, Inc.

“Susan has deep experience and valuable insights about community planning that will help guide HBI’s investments in Boston’s neighborhoods,” said Historic Boston Board President Matthew J. Kiefer, director, Goulston & Storrs.

Silberberg-Robinson said she wanted to be involved with the work of Historic Boston because of the organization’s emphasis on improving neighborhoods through historic preservation.

“Any time there is an organization or public agency that is looking to affect change in a community, it is interesting,” she said. “Historic Boston has a novel approach. Rather than piecemeal preservation, they look at strategic planning and how can targeted investment galvanize community residents around a common set of goals.”

Mike Tilford Joins Historic Boston Incorporated

Michael Tilford joined Historic Boston in January in the position of Senior Acquisition and Development Manager.

Tilford came to Historic Boston as a Fellow of the 1772 Foundation to help define and establish the Handmade Houses partnership with North Bennet Street School. His work there helped secure a two-year purchase option agreement with the owner of the 1804 Anna Clapp Harris Smith House at 65 Pleasant Street in Dorchester.

To his new role, Tilford brings creative strategies and innovative approaches to HBI’s preservation and real estate activities. He will specifically focus on the financial structures of potential HBI acquisitions and projects, and he will manage projects through development.

Tilford holds a Masters of Science in Real Estate Development from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, a Masters of Business Administration from Boston University, and a Bachelor of Arts in history from Gonzaga University.

New Uses Envisioned for Emerald Necklace Landmark



Unused for more than 30 years, the Agassiz Road Shelter could once again become an important community amenity. Historic Boston Incorporated is working with a coalition of residents and City officials to restore the stone structure also known as the “Duck House.”

Built in 1897, the shelter sits in a large clearing alongside the Muddy River on Agassiz Road, a parkway that connects the East and West Fens neighborhoods. It was designed by Boston architect Alexander M. Longfellow, as a “comfort station,” or public bathrooms, for park visitors. The building fell into disuse and was ravaged by a fire in 1986 that damaged the building and destroyed the roof.

The Duck House, built in 1897, was designed by Alexander M. Longfellow, a nephew of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. The building’s exterior is constructed of brown and gray granite blocks that mimic the style of many buildings within Boston’s Emerald Necklace park system.

or non profits willing to restore the building to accommodate an active use there. City Council President Michael Ross, in whose district the building sits, recently ushered City Council approval for providing a long-term lease for the building. Mayor Thomas M. Menino, who supports restoration and re-use of the Duck House, has proposed the necessary State legislation that allows for this building and similar at-risk structures in Boston parks to be leased long term to private businesses.



Last summer, a coalition including HBI, the Boston Parks and Recreation Department, and the Fenway Civic Association held a planning and design session for roughly 30 architects, planners, industry representatives and institutional representatives at Northeastern University. They examined the potential uses for the building and its site, and explored leasing the public building to private interests for uses and services that would benefit park visitors. Based on that day’s work, the Parks Department issued a Request for Expression of Interest, seeking businesses

“The Duck House is a picturesque building that contributes to the overall character of the historic Back Bay Fens.” said Parks Commissioner Toni Pollak. “We are supporting the redevelopment of the building with good planning and realistic development ideas because by doing so, we preserve a piece of the Park’s history and allow for an exciting new use.”

Historic Boston has applied for grants on behalf of the Parks Department to fund renderings of the Agassiz Road Shelter in the context of its unique park setting. These perspectives will preview a vision of the building across the Muddy River after the invasive phragmite reeds are removed with the dredging of the River later this year. The renderings are part of a planned Request for Proposals for Lessees, and a private fundraising campaign to help the Parks Department with exterior restoration of the building.

Architect's rendering of the façade and foyer of the Edward Everett Theatre in Hyde Park.



Edward Everett Theatre building today.

The theater was renamed several times and remained open until the mid-1980s.

The two-story street front commercial portion of the building, with five retail spaces on the ground floor and several office spaces on the second floor, is in excellent condition, well maintained, and nearly fully occupied. Architecturally, the handsome, yellow brick commercial block is a significant presence in the Logan Square streetscape.

While the feasibility study is conducted, HBI is working with Tierney on a series of physical improvements to the building that could open areas that have been closed off for years.

The entry, hidden from public view for more than 25 years, will be restored and used as exhibit space for art shows or for events. The long-missing Broadway style theatre sign, which is visible on the building in several historic photographs, will be recreated and installed over the entry. Historic Boston and Pat Tierney have partnered with Hyde Park Main Streets to submit a grant to the city's Edward Ingersoll Browne Fund to help fund this work.

The Everett Square Theater effort is a project of HBI's Historic Neighborhood Centers program, a strategic initiative that uses the tools of real estate and historic preservation to support the revitalization of Boston's neighborhood commercial districts.

Historic Hyde Park Theatre Street Presence To Be Revived

Efforts to rehabilitate the once bustling Everett Square Theatre into a multi-use performance, movie, and event venue will get a boost from interim steps to restore at least part of the site for more immediate use.

Historic Boston Incorporated is working building owner Pat Tierney to open the foyer of the former theater to public view for the first time in decades. In addition, Tierney will soon open a long-shuttered adjacent storefront as a space for events and temporary retail operations.

"We hope that completing some highly visible physical improvements in the short term will inspire the community and build support for the eventual full rehabilitation of the theater," said Pat Tierney, Hyde Park resident and owner of the Everett Square Theatre building. "We want to enhance the streetscape and promote a vision of this site as a place for entertainment, performances and nightlife."

There is an ongoing study to determine the feasibility of redeveloping the theater and potential uses. The multi-use commercial building on Fairmont Avenue was designed by architect Harry M. Ramsay and built in 1915 to be used for stores, offices and "motion picture exhibition." From early on, the theater also hosted live performances and events.

HBI Leads Effort to Rehab Highly Visible Fields Corner Commercial Structure

The two story commercial building that occupies a half block at 1510-1514 Dorchester Avenue is not historically important in the traditional sense. It was not designed by a famous architect or used by a well known historical figure, and the façade has been significantly altered since it was built in the mid 1890s.

The building is, however, highly visible and restoring some of its lost architectural character will have an important impact on the Fields Corner streetscape. In addition, the improved building will upgrade tenant spaces in ways that will support their business and the economic health of the district. These are the reasons Historic Boston Incorporated took on the project through the Historic Neighborhood Centers Program.

“We look for projects that can strengthen the community by rehabilitating existing buildings that are important to the neighborhood,” said Jeffrey Gonyeau, senior program manager. “We hope that this work will serve as a model for owners of properties in similar condition and will spur them to make similar improvements.”

1510-1514 Dorchester Ave. houses two stores, a restaurant, and a dentist’s office as well as the Dorchester Youth Collaborative, a non-profit organization that serves local teens. Over the years,

stucco and later metal siding were applied to the façade of the building and haphazard changes were made to storefronts and signage by individual tenants. One of the few remaining historic details is an elaborate wooden cornice that runs along the roof line.

Historic Boston worked with the owners of the building, Stephen and Deborah Golden, and Fields Corner Main Street, Inc. to obtain a \$50,000 grant from the city’s Restore Program to help fund the project, estimated to cost \$260,000. In addition, HBI is providing the Golden’s with a \$210,000 low cost loan for the rest. Historic Boston and Fields Corner Main Street will also work with individual tenants to obtain city grants for signs, and have assisted the Dorchester Youth Collaborative in receiving a grant from the city’s Partners With Non-Profits program to install a new cooling system to replace non-working window air conditioning units that are visible on the second floor.

The project, which will be managed by Historic Boston, includes installing uniform storefronts and a new, lighted sign band. The rehabilitation will be inspired by historic evidence and will retain a traditional appearance but use modern materials that are durable, easy to main-



Restoring the exterior of the 1890’s commercial block at 1510 Dorchester Avenue restores order to a façade layered with generations of signage and building materials.

tain and energy efficient. Metal siding on the upper floor will be removed and new clapboard siding installed to match the original siding visible in historic photos. The windows in the second floor will be replaced with operable double-hung windows and the cornice will be restored.

The structure will be dubbed the Golden Building in honor of its owners. Stephen Golden’s father and uncle ran a popular neighborhood pharmacy there for many years in the mid-20th century.

“We are very pleased to be working with HBI and are excited that this project is moving forward,” Stephen Golden said. “We think it will be great for our building and will be a real shot in the arm for Fields Corner.”

In Memoriam

Historic Boston Incorporated notes with sadness and great respect the passings of two prominent supporters, architectural historian Pauline Chase-Harrell and architect Joan Goody.

Joan Goody was a nationally known architect who played a pivotal role in several visible Boston projects as a senior member of the Boston firm Goody Clancy.

Goody was a public advocate for good design and for many years chaired the Boston Civic Design Commission, which reviews the proposed design of new buildings. Her firm was noted not only for new architecture but also for city and university planning and historic preservation.

“She was creative and found unusual solutions to problems,” said Carolyn Osteen, Historic Boston board clerk and a partner at Ropes & Gray LLP. Goody brought to Historic Boston an insightful perspective based on her extensive experience.

Goody, known for her sense of style and humor, had a deep appreciation for both contemporary and historic design, Osteen said.

Among her notable projects were the restoration of Trinity Church at Copley Square including turning a cramped basement into a major gathering area and turning a public housing project at Harbor Point into a mixed-income neighborhood. She was the lead designer on a project to convert the former St. Elizabeth’s Hospital in Washington into Department of Homeland Security headquarters.

She was a Brooklyn native and studied history at Cornell and architecture at Harvard Graduate School of Design. Goody was seen as a pioneer and role



Joan Goody served on Historic Boston’s Board of Directors for twenty years.

model for younger women having made her way in the field that was dominated by men. She served on numerous boards and public positions. Goody was awarded the Boston Society of Architects Award of Honor in 2005 in recognition of her contributions to the profession and to the community.



A member of HBI’s Board from 1979 until 2005, **Polly Chase-Harrell** more recently served actively on HBI’s Programs and Projects Committee.

Pauline “Polly” Chase-Harrell, a resident of Boston and Arrowhead Farm, Newburyport, was a prominent Boston architectural historian and president and owner of Boston Affiliates, a historic preservation consulting firm that she co-founded in 1980. For many years, she was an active member of Historic Boston’s board and, more recently, a member of HBI’s Council of Advisors.

Chase-Harrell worked tirelessly toward the designation of her home town of Newburyport as a National Historic Landmark district. In Boston, she served on the Boston Landmarks Commission, and on the boards of the Boston Athenaeum, Victorian Society of America, the Boston Preservation Alliance and multiple historical societies.

As President of Boston Affiliates, she undertook large-scale historic resource surveys, impact evaluations and mitigation for compliance review on the Central Artery, Boston Harbor clean-up and other public civil engineering projects, and assisted institutional and corporate clients with preservation and restoration advice and compliance. She has also taught courses at Tufts, Northeastern and Boston Universities, and UMass, Boston.

Chase-Harrell chaired the Boston Landmarks Commission from its inception in 1976 through 1988, and

continued to serve on the commission and chaired the South End Landmark District Commission until 1991. In 1983, she was a founding board member of the National Alliance of Preservation Commissions.

In addition to her consulting work, Chase-Harrell was an author of books including *Historic Maritime Resources: Planning for Preservation* with Marcia Myers, *Preserving New England* with Jane Holtz Kay, and *Arrowhead Farm: Three Hundred Years of New England Husbandry and Cooking*, which won an American Association of State and Local History commendation.

Letter from the Executive Director

Dear Friends,

It is fitting that we celebrate our 50th anniversary by moving to a new home in a new neighborhood. The Eustis Street Fire House's rehabilitation builds on our organization's history and embodies Historic Boston's intended future in Boston's neighborhoods.

As with our flagship building in Downtown Crossing, the Old Corner Bookstore Buildings, we will rehabilitate and occupy a structure that might otherwise have been destroyed and lost from our city's landscape. Thoughtful and forward-thinking preservation projects such as these represent a commitment to the places and characteristics that anchor our neighborhoods and make our city unique.

Our move to Roxbury signals HBI's commitment to strengthening all of Boston's neighborhoods and affirms our vision for community and economic development through historic preservation.

In Fields Corner, for instance, HBI has convinced building owner Stephen Golden that restoring the historic appearance of his 1890s commercial block will be financially beneficial to him and transformative for the surrounding business district (see story on page 5). In Hyde Park, we are helping a property owner and the community take incremental steps toward activating a dormant movie and vaudeville theater for new and relevant uses (See page 4).

Today, HBI is also a proactive partner in fostering innovative preservation initiatives. We offer the benefit of our experience and expertise while making the most of the skills and strengths of others. In this issue, look for our new partnership with the North Bennet Street School for early, "handmade" structures in Boston. This adds to ongoing alliances with neighborhood Main Street programs, CDCs, and public agencies in the interest of supporting vibrant neighborhoods through the preservation of historic places.

During its next 50 years, HBI will be just as responsive to the city's needs as in its first 50. While the needs will change, the demand for such work continues to exceed the resources available. To that end, we are launching a capital campaign this year to support our lengthening pipeline of projects involving important historic and cultural places in need of preservation.

This campaign is about more than raising money; it helps us continue to prove that Boston's historic properties can meet current needs, enrich communities, and play a critical role in our city's future.

Sincerely,

Kathy Kottaridis
Executive Director
Historic Boston Incorporated



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Become a Fan of Historic Boston

Historic Boston Incorporated has renovated its website, launched a blog and set up a Facebook page to provide updates from the organization.

The blog, found at www.historicbostonblog.org, will be used to announce events and highlight on-going projects at Historic Boston. It will offer a fresh look at preservation issues and local history as new information is discovered through the organization's research.

The website at www.historicboston.org relays news from Historic Boston and provides detailed information about the programs and projects currently underway. The site is a resource for supporters and partners of Historic Boston.

On **Facebook**, Historic Boston will highlight news and post photographs of events and projects.

Find Historic Boston on the Net:
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**Eustis Street
Firehouse**
built in 1859,
when restored
will be HBI's new
headquarters.

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