

NEWBURYPORT
PRESERVATION TRUST

P. O. Box 184, Newburyport, MA 01950
www.nbptpreservationtrust.org

Linking the past with the present and future



Quarterly Newsletter of the Newburyport Preservation Trust

Spring 2018

Tours, presentations, and programs celebrate "Newburyport Parks: Past, Present, & Future"



Preservation Week 2018 features all-free events Sat. & Sun., May 19-20

Preservation Week 2018, "Newburyport Parks: Past, Present, and Future," is tightly packed into the weekend of May 19-20, and turns the spotlight on the parks large and small throughout the city that contribute immeasurably to its atmosphere. The lineup of tours, presentations, and programs winds up Sunday afternoon with the annual Preservation Awards ceremony.

This year's keynote presentation, on Saturday afternoon, May 19 at 4 p.m., is "Bartlet Mall: History, Significance, and Preservation," by Newburyport-based architect Charles O. Griffin, at the historic 1805 courthouse on High Street. Unless you've been dragged in to Superior Court recently (for jury duty, of course), this is an opportunity for architecture enthusiasts to see the surviving interior details of this venerable Charles Bulfinch-designed building. An outdoor reception follows.

Get an early start at 9 a.m. Saturday at Battis Grove and learn how a neighborhood effort that began more than 30 years ago transformed the old railroad right-of-way from a dumping ground to a valued green space, and at the same time planted the seeds of possibility for the city's Rail Trail.

At 10 a.m., have your choice of a tour at Powder House Park and Learning Center, 57 Low Street, or join Window Woman of New England for a 15th anniversary open house at 44R Elm Street in Amesbury.

At 11 a.m., enjoy a guided tour of Atkinson Common, established in 1893, and from noon to 2 p.m. head to the South End for some fun, games, and food at the Atwood Park community social.

Complete schedule at www.NbptPreservationTrust.org

House that suffered partial collapse in February is deemed structurally sound by city inspector

Almost three months after the ell of an unoccupied 18th-century house at 320 Merrimac Street collapsed, Newburyport building inspector Peter Binette has determined that despite evidence of water damage and rot, the home is structurally sound and does not have to be demolished.

The mid- to late-18th-century house, built by shipbuilder Samuel Moggridge, is a contributing structure in Newburyport's National Register Historic District.

Part of the building at the rear collapsed on the evening of Wednesday Feb. 21, 2018. The building was immediately secured, with a notice posted prohibiting occupancy or trespass. Since then, the collapsed ell has been removed, and the building inspector has evaluated the remaining structure.

In early March, zoning administrator Jennifer Blanchet sent a zoning ordinance

At right is the house at 320 Merrimac St. in a recent photo. Below is a view of the rear of the house – minus the remains of the ell removed shortly after its Feb. 21 collapse.

Novak Niketic photos



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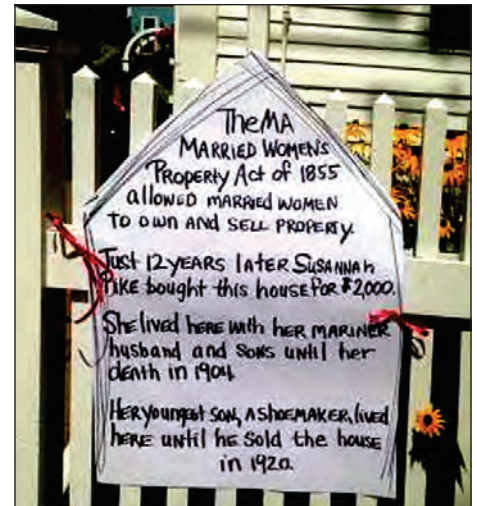
Prep for 2018 'If This House Could Talk' event at NPT's house research workshop on June 23

Once again this year, the Newburyport Preservation Trust (NPT) is sponsoring the popular "If This House Could Talk" do-it-yourself poster program during the city's Yankee Homecoming celebration from July 28 to August 5. To help residents prepare, NPT presents "Researching Your Historic Home" at the Newburyport Public Library on Saturday, June 23, 10 a.m. to 12 noon.

The program includes an informative illustrated lecture by experienced house researcher Linda Tulley in the library program room, followed by a tour and introduction to relevant research materials

by archivist Sharon Speildenner in the downstairs Archival Center.

For the last two Yankee Homecoming celebrations, NPT has sponsored "If This House Could Talk," the fun, historic house awareness program started in Newburyport by local history enthusiast Jack Santos. The premise is simple. Participants sign up, get listed on a guide map, then post a placard on their house with tidbits of house history. Then visitors stroll the neighborhoods, digesting information at their own pace. For tips on historic house research, don't miss this opportunity to hear from the experts. ■



NPT's winter education series included presenters Sally Zimmerman (above left), Linda Miller (left), and R.W. Bacon (below). All met with happy audiences (above).

Photos by Novak Niketic

NPT's series of preservation education programs packed 'em in this winter at the Custom House

It was a packed house for all three preservation education programs presented by the Newburyport Preservation Trust this past winter at the Custom House Maritime Museum.

First up on January 18, 2018 was Sally Zimmerman, preservation services manager for Historic New England, the premier regional preservation organization. Her timely topic was "Energy Efficiency in Your Older Home." Attendees were blanketed with helpful information about the most up-to-date findings on achieving optimal energy efficiency without compromising a home's historical features.

On February 15, architect Linda Miller, the founder and current co-president of the Newburyport Preservation Trust, presented "Would You Buy This House?", a copiously illustrated chronicle of her preservation struggles and triumphs with a run-down c. 1750 home in 1970s Newburyport. The knowing nods from so many in the audience echoed shared memories of rotted sills, aching backs, and depleted bank accounts.

A month later on March 15, "Documenting Historic Houses: How the Pros Did It in the Historic American Buildings Survey," an image-rich program by museum professional and author R.W. Bacon, described how the HABS surveys were accomplished across the U.S. in the 1930s, and how the HABS program shaped the development of a new specialty we know today as preservation architecture.

All events in the winter series were free, open to the public, and replete with both stimulating insights and practical take-home information. NPT is grateful for the continuing partnership with the Custom House Maritime Museum, one that serves a confirmed interest in preservation among so many citizens of Newburyport. ■

Will city train its eagle-eye on "demolition-by-neglect"?

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compliance request to owners Patricia Kain and Anthony Fiore informing them of city regulations against demolition-by-neglect. The ordinance states that the owner of a historic building "shall ensure that it is reasonably secure from significant damage due to weather, fire, trespass or vandalism, including by: securing all doors, windows and other exterior openings; employing effective water-proofing of exterior walls, roofs (including chimneys), and foundations; and protecting against fire or water damage."

A this writing, the owners' plans for the house – preservation, rehabilitation, or otherwise – are unknown. ■



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On Sunday, 1:00 to 3:00 p.m., visit the Cornelius J. Doyle Triangle across from Atkinson Common for the Centennial Memorial Observance.

The Preservation Awards ceremony, 4:30 p.m. Sunday at the Custom House Maritime Museum, is once again the festive climax of Preservation Week that recognizes stellar efforts throughout the city in multiple preservation-related categories.

Check out the complete schedule of all-free tours, presentations, and programs at the Newburyport Preservation Trust website, www.NbptPreservationTrust.org, where you can also download a handy, printable, and readable schedule. ■