

Next Issue
February 10

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Since 1968 • Serving Washington D.C.'s Intown Neighborhoods

Small Business Showcased in Adams Morgan

By Lisa Duperier*



photo—Adams Morgan Main Street Group, Inc. Skynear Furnishings' owner Lynn Skynear (standing) shown with Creative Director Hallie Del Villan.

Adams Morgan's participation in the District's second annual "Small Business Saturday" on November 26, 2011 was deemed a success by the organizers and business owners who took part.

Given the national focus on "Black Friday" and "Cyber Monday" immediately following Thanksgiving, Small Business Saturday (SBS) was first touted in 2010 as a way to encourage people to support local and neighborhood shops and restaurants. More publicity and ads surrounded this year's program as local partners created activities to continue positive effects into 2012.

Adams Morgan Main Street organized events to showcase retail and other neighborhood businesses, with more than 30 of these offering some type of special. Adams Morgan's local Farmer's Market celebrated its 40th anniversary.

National sponsors such as American Express, Clear Channel, and Women in

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Quality Renovations of Older Adams Morgan Apartment Buildings by Jubilee Housing Aiding in Maintaining Area's Diversity

By Anthony L. Harvey

Jubilee Housing celebrated the 2011-'12 holiday season with high notes of program accomplishments. These included the completion of residential leasing for the final phase of its two-year, Adams Morgan apartment building historic preservation and renovation program of the Euclid and Sorrento apartments.

Also of note was the December 2011 purchase of an eighth Jubilee Housing building, this one the Maycroft in Columbia Heights at 1474 Columbia Road, NW, and the announcement of a competitively won \$100,000 grant from TD Bank's "Housing for Everyone" Program. Jubilee was one of 25 recipients of these "Housing for Everyone" awards — a \$2.5 million TD Bank program for 2011 — and Jubilee will use its grant in the recently announced project of renovating the 65-unit Maycroft Apartments.



photo—courtesy, Jubilee Housing, Inc. January 2012 view of the Sorrento Apartments restored façade as seen looking east across the Euclid and 18th Street (presently under reconstruction) intersection.

Completion of the Euclid and Sorrento marked the first use by Jubilee of federal historic preservation tax credits in the programmatic mix of funding which came together to launch these two building renovations.

The Euclid and Sorrento, the second of the overall project's two phases, followed the renovation of the 27-unit Ontario Court apartments, which was sandwiched between this second phase and that of the first phase which had included renovation of the 29-unit Mozart, the 60-unit Ritz, the 12-unit Fuller Court, and the 17-unit Marietta.

All seven of these apartment buildings are in the Reed-Cooke section of Adams Morgan, a neighborhood in transition from a residential/light industrial zone to a residential/community-serving retail zone. New housing construction in Reed-Cooke has primarily been luxury condominiums priced at market rate, with only a few affordable units, and these units being priced at the high end — typically 80 percent of the Average Median Income (AMI) of the Washington Metropolitan area, which is roughly \$100,000.

In an eloquent statement on the Jubilee Housing website, the Adams Morgan community it serves is char-



photo—courtesy, Jubilee Housing, Inc. View of the Sorrento Apartments façade prior to its restoration.

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DC Public Library Division Head Honored

By Anthony L. Harvey

In a full page, public service announcement on January 5, 2012, The Carnegie Corporation of New York and *The New York Times* announced the 10 winners of the 2011 "I Love My Librarian" Award. Supported by the American Library Association and "@your library®" — the Campaign for America's Libraries — the award honors librarians from throughout the country "who have demonstrated outstanding public service and who make a difference in their communities." These 10 winners were selected from over 1,700 nominations by library users nation-

wide. Listed in alphabetical order, the first winner was Venetia V. Demson, who heads the DC Public Library's Adaptive Services Division.

The text of Ms. Demson's nomination, from an anonymous (to the public, that is) library user, characterizes her as "a dedicated librarian and disability advocate who has built an innovative adaptive services program at the DC Public Library — one that serves as an international model."

Descriptions of her innovative programs and community partnerships follow, as well as encomiums from professionals in the field and staff and officials from partnership organizations. These include the Columbia Lighthouse for the Blind, the American University's program for learning disabilities, the DC Council of the Blind, Metropolitan Washington Ear, the DC Rehabilitation Services Administration, and the DC Public Schools system. Especially eloquent are testimo-



photo—courtesy DC Public Library. View looking into the space at the Martin Luther King, Jr. Library occupied by the Adaptive Services Division.

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RECENT REAL ESTATE SALES

Reports are available exclusively on our website by clicking the Real Estate Sales link.

Features Moved to Website

Restaurant Reviews and "Food in the 'Hood" features are now to exclusively available on our website by clicking the respective link buttons on our home page.

See in Special Online Content:

- Ecuadorian Embassy Sustained Significant Earthquake Damage, August 23, 2011
- DC Board of Zoning Adjustment Reconsidering Mt. Pleasant Library Case
- Balancing Neighborhood Retail: The 25% Rule
- Reconstructing Historic Holt House
- When Does My Cast Iron Staircase Need Attention?

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From the Publisher's Desk...

By P.L. Wolff

PUBLIC CORRUPTION REACHES APPALLING NEW LOW

Last month our city council was grappling with what it believed will solve a whole host of ethics in government problems – to wit, the “Board of Ethics and Government Accountability Establishment and Comprehensive Ethics Reform Amendment Act of 2011,” introduced by Ward 4 Councilmember Muriel Bowser on behalf of the Committee on Government Operations which she chairs.

Unfortunately, the consensus among most local commentators, community activists, and knowledgeable citizens was fairly negative. We, ourselves, raised at least two major issues in our December editorial (“City Council’s Attempt to Deal With Ethics Reform Has Too Many Flaws,” issue PDF page 2).

Now, this month our city council members have to grapple with wondering which one of them will be criminally charged for playing loogie-googie with campaign funds or – heaven forbid – pay for play. Meanwhile, citizens across the city are voicing criticism for what seems to be an oddly low-key reaction by council members to the Harry Thomas affair. Actually, “voicing criticism” is too mild of a characterization; there is not a single person with whom we have spoken who has not expressed total outrage over what they view as virtual silence on the part of the politicians.

Yes, it is true that most did the usual thing of putting out press releases stating what a sad day all this was for the city and for the Thomas family – all very lovely, but where was the publicly stated actual outrage? We have not seen any evidence that a single politician has called for a change in the law that allows someone convicted of stealing from the public treasury or otherwise egregious acts adversely affecting the citizens under color of law from qualifying for a seat on the city council. True, that probably requires an amendment to the Home Rule Act, but that shouldn’t be a reason for any of our political leaders not to initiate whatever process is necessary to implement such a restriction.

So, what did Ward 5 Councilmember Harry L. Thomas, Jr. do that caused the United States Attorney for the District of Columbia to issue a 29-count Statement of Offense to which defendant Thomas, at his January 6th plea hearing stated, “Guilty as charged”? In a nutshell, he stole \$350,000 of public funds for his personal benefit. Or, as U.S. Attorney Ronald C. Machen, Jr.’s count 19 in the charging document states with respect to just a fraction of the total stolen – but what is stated clearly applies to the entirety of the stolen funds:

“Beginning at least as early as in or about April 2007 and continuing until at least in or about February 2009, as set forth below, in the District of Columbia, THOMAS embezzled, stole, obstructed by fraud, without authority knowingly converted to the use of a person not the rightful owner, and intentionally misapplied property . . . under the care of, under the custody of, and under the control of the District of Columbia, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, . . .” (The complete Statement of Offense document is posted at <http://dcwatch.com/council/ethics111223b.htm>.)

But that wasn’t all; filing false federal tax returns was the other shoe being dropped, or as stated in the Statement of Offense:

“Between in or about October 2008 and in or about May 2011, in the District of Columbia, THOMAS did willfully make and subscribe individual Income Tax Returns for the calendar years 2007, 2008 and 2009, which were verified by a written declaration that it was made under penalties of perjury and which he did not believe to be true and correct as to every material matter [and]

“For the years 2007 through 2009, THOMAS prepared and filed tax returns with the Internal Revenue Service (“IRS”) in the District of Columbia that under-reported his income by failing to disclose the payments from the grant funds that he had received through HLT and TEAM THOMAS from INDIVIDUAL #1, . . .” (According to *DC Watch*, that unnamed individual is none other than Neil Rodgers who served as the staff director of the city council’s Committee on Libraries, Parks, Recreation, and Planning of which Councilmember Thomas was chairman.)

What has especially outraged us beyond our usual outrage regarding corruption and criminality of public officials is that the funds that Thomas diverted for his personal use were intended for the purpose of funding youth baseball and related programs. So, it is not just the taxpayers that have been hurt but it is also kids from neighborhoods where those sports opportunities were of enormous value. To do this to the very same kids he continually intoned from the council’s dais and at almost every public event was his greatest priority and that it was his mission to do all that he possibly could for the kids . . . well, the hypocrisy is incredibly disgusting. His acts were far worse than simply stealing from the public trough; he was stealing from helpless kids – that was truly evil. □

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Selected Recent Real Estate Sales

Prepared for the InTowner by Jo Ricks

Reporting Period: November 2011

The Selected Recent Real Estate Sales monthly feature is now available on its own web page and may be accessed directly by the link in the middle of the home page or by the button in the left side panel. This has made possible the introduction of a new format which allows for easy search by addresses by scrolling down through the list, starting with single family houses, proceeding to condominiums, and concluding with co-ops. □

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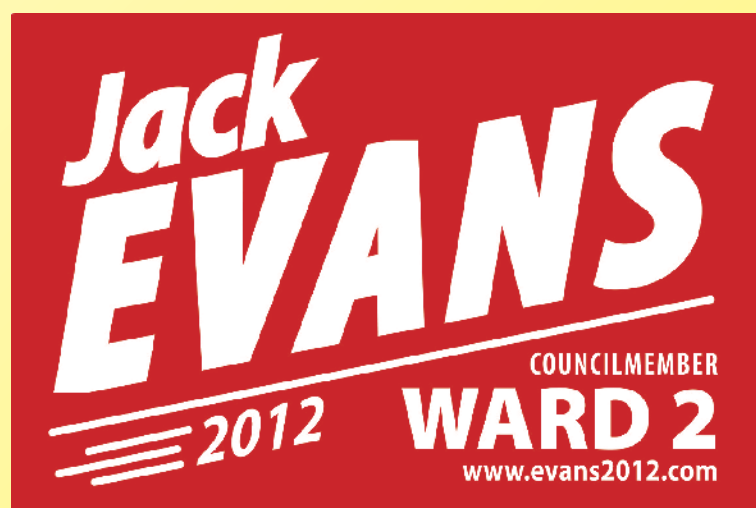


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RESERVATIONS RECOMMENDED

By Alexandra Greeley

RESTAURANT REVIEWS BY ALEXANDRA GREELEY

Effective with this issue, the monthly restaurant review feature will no longer be published in the issue PDF but instead will appear exclusively in our website's Restaurants section, accessed directly by the link in the middle of the home page or by the button in the left side panel.



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AROUND OUR COMMUNITY

• Thu., Jan. 26 (10am): A public hearing on internet gambling as been announced by the city council's finance committee chairman, Ward 2 Councilmember Jack Evans, to be held in Room 412 of the Wilson Building, January 25 at 10:00am in Room 412 of the John A. Wilson Building (1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW). The hearing will continue until all witnesses have testified or 1:00 p.m. when it will recess until resuming at 6:00 p.m. as to ensure that working residents interested in testifying will have an opportunity to do so.

With this hearing which follows Chairman Evans' initial, more informal June 29th public oversight roundtable on the matter, the committee is providing another opportunity for the DC Lottery and Charitable Games Control Board to provide an update on the series of community meetings it held in the fall of 2011, as well as its on-going implementation internet gambling for the District. The original legal authority for this program was included in Title VII, Subtitle G, "Lottery Modernization Act of Bill 18-1100," of the "Fiscal Year 2011 Supplemental Budget Support Act of 2010," which is now DC Law 18-370.

Also to be discussed at the hearing will be Bill 19-474, the "Lottery Amendment Repeal Act of 2011," which would amend the law to "Legalize Lotteries, Daily Numbers Games, and Bingo and Raffles for Charitable Purposes" (DC Law 3-172) by eliminating the authorization for on-line gambling. (*The InTowner* addressed this highly controversial provision in an editorial last August, see From the Publisher's Desk, "Online Gambling Parlors About to Sneak Into Our Neighborhoods"; available in our website's archive of editorials at <http://tinyurl.com/6mch7y3>.)

Members of the public wishing to testify should contact the finance Committee's assistant, Sarina Loy, at (202) 724-8058 or by email at sloy@dccouncil.us, and provide name and organizational affiliation (if any) no later than 10 a.m on Wednesday, January 25. Witnesses may specify whether they would like to testify at during the morning portion or the evening portion. Witnesses should bring 15 copies of their written testimony to the hearing.

The Committee allows individuals 3 minutes to provide oral testimony in order to permit each witness an opportunity to be heard. Additional written statements are encouraged and will be made part of the official record. Written statements may be submitted by e-mail to sloy@dccouncil.us or mailed to: Council of the District of Columbia, 1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Suite 114, Washington, DC 20004.

• Thu., Jan. 26 (7pm): The Kalorama Citizens Association (KCA) will be holding its monthly meeting at Good Will Baptist Church (1862 Kalorama Rd. – to enter, go up the main front steps and bear right to the rear side door). This month's meeting will offer a special program devoted to some of the social and architectural history of Adams Morgan and will feature Howard University

Professor Mark Mack and Mary Belcher, KCA's community liaison to the Walter Pierce Park Archaeology Project, who will provide an overview and summing up – complete with slide show – of the activities of the project to date. Over 8,000 African-Americans and Quakers were interred in the area of Pierce Park in the 1800s.

Also offering a presentation will be Laura Trieschmann of EHT Tracerics, Inc., a local architectural history firm, who will explain what makes up an historic district or qualifies as an historic landmark, how they become officially recognized, and discuss the three historic districts in Adams Morgan, their

landmarked buildings, and other buildings of note.

In addition to the two presentations noted, officials of the National Zoo have been invited to discuss the implementation of provisions in the Zoo's current Master Plan that call for restoring the long-deteriorating historic 1800s Holt House mansion located between Rock Creek and Adams Mill Road and converting it into a research facility. KCA for a number of years has spent much time and resources in a campaign to convince the National Zoo, part of the Smithsonian Institution, to preserve Holt House and put it to some constructive use.

For more information, send an email to President@KaloramaCitizens.org or call Denis James at (202) 232-8829.

[Note: Holt House has been the subject of previous coverage by *The InTowner*. See, "Zoo Allowing Collapse Of 200 Year Mansion, Desecration of Old Burial Ground and Rock Creek Pollution; Laws May Be Broken" (May 1997), available by request to newsroom@intowner.com; Scenes from the Past (April 2003), available in on-line archive; "Preservation-Minded Neighbors Decry Decayed State of Zoo's Historic Adams Mill Road Site" (June 2003), available by request to newsroom@intowner.com; "Reconstructing Historic Holt House" (March 2010), available in website's Special Online Content section.]

• Sun., Jan. 29 (3:30pm): The "Music with the Angels" series presented by the Church of the Holy City (16th & Corcoran Sts., NW) this month will be featuring cellist Natalie Spehar, violinist Francis Liu, and pianist Jessica Stitt presenting a program of works for chamber trio ensemble, including by Ravel and Rachmaninoff. Admission is free; a reception will follow with light fare and refreshments to be served. Donations to the church's Tower Restoration Fund welcome. For more information, call (202) 462-6734 or visit www.ChurchoftheHolyCityDC.org.

• Fri., Feb. 3 & 10 (12:15-1pm): The free, 45-minute Friday lunch hour pipe organ recital and demonstration series at National City Christian Church on Thomas Circle, NW, commences its spring season organ recital series with a program to be presented by Dr. Jung-A Lee, Professor of Organ, University of California at Irvine, featuring works by Ad Wammes, J.S. Bach, Maurice Duruflé and Eugene Gigout; and on the 10th, Thomas Bailey, organist and choirmaster at St. Peter's-by-the-Sea Church, Bay Shore, New York, will perform works by Buxtehude, Vaughan Williams, Dupré, and others.

These performances all take place inside the soaring John Russell Pope-designed sanctuary (reminiscent of a great Christopher Wren church in London) featuring National City's magnificent 7,000-pipe, five-keyboard Möller organ. For more information, call the church's music office at (202) 797-0103 or send an email to cmiller@nationalcitycc.org or visit www.nationalcitycc.org.

• Fri., Feb. 10 (7-9pm): Cuban classical guitarist Ernesto Tamayo will be performing a benefit concert for the teen program of Adams Morgan's Mary's Center at the Church of the Holy City (16th & Corcoran Sts., NW). He has been praised for his brilliant technique, artistry, and exceptionally warm tone and expressive interpretations. To purchase the \$75 tickets or for information, call Amy Bruno at (202) 420-7049.

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JUBILEE

From p. 1

acterized as being among a Washington working class segment, two thirds of which make less than 30 percent of the AMI, and work in service and support roles often at no more than minimum wage.

The community's racial and ethnic composition — 58 percent black, 33 percent Latino, and 9 percent identifying as other — reflects the neighborhood's historic multi-cultural diversity, and supported by Jubilee providing 215 households in these seven apartment buildings with newly renovated apartments that provide an anchoring basis for both those whose age and medical conditions predicts long-term occupancy and for younger families and individuals who will ultimately transition into market rate apartments or moderate income housing being pioneered by organizations such as Manna and other Washington non-profits.

The renovations and historic preservation of these handsome, almost 100-year-old brick, stone, and masonry apartment buildings have been widely praised both in the community and by Washington philanthropic agencies as well as by government agencies, banking and other funding institutions, and fellow non-profits.

Specific costs for the Euclid and Sorrento renovations included a \$9.6 million Historic and Low Income Housing Tax Credit Equity from PNC Real Estate, \$5 million in financing from United Bank, a \$3.6 million Home Investment Partnership Program loan from DC's Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD), and 52 units of local rent supplements program subsidy from the District's Housing Authority.

"This project is a prime example of how government can partner with the non-profit sector to leverage private sector investment and preserve quality affordable housing," said DHCD Director Leila Finucane Edmonds. PNC Bank Regional President Michael N.



photo—courtesy, Jubilee Housing, Inc.

This view shows how the façade restoration has revealed the original beautiful brick work.

Harreld added, "We understand the value of mixed income diverse neighborhoods and the financial challenges inherent in developing them — challenges that are magnified in the current economic environment."

In conversation with this reporter, Jubilee Housing's Executive Director Jim Knight reflected on Jubilee's overarching program mission, one strategically promoted by its early inspirational supporter, the famed area developer James Rowse — namely, a mission to provide safe and affordable housing to families and individuals, often desperately in need of such accommodations. Once housing is met, so goes this remarkable philosophy, there is then the opportunity to meet other goals — for example, adequate health care, education and training, and jobs. Knight noted that not every resident of Jubilee Housing would transit out, echoing the age and medical condition concerns and conditions of stable, long-term residents.

Knight also emphasized Jubilee's innovative educational programs such as Jubilee Jump Start serving infants, toddlers, and pre-schoolers; Jubilee Youth Services which includes after-school programs and computer labs; a wellness center, and referrals to related programs within walking distance in Adams Morgan.

Those wishing to visually appreciate the dramatic appearance of newly renovated and restored Jubilee Housing apartment buildings need only take note of the Sorrento Apartments at 18th and Kalorama Road, whose now restored exterior façades brightly reflect the fascinating brick and stone work of the building's original construction. Smiles on the faces of residents entering and leaving no doubt reflect the handsome appearance of the individual apartments inside and their state-of-the-art appliances and conveniences. □

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BUSINESS

From p. 1

Public Policy added a needed push. WASH-FM 97.1 provided music and giveaways.

"Generally," referring to the Saturday following Thanksgiving, "this is one of the slowest Saturdays of the year in our neighborhood business area," said Hallie Del Villan, Creative Director of Skynear Furnishings; "but it was different this year."

In the last 15 years, 65 percent of all new jobs nationwide were created by small businesses. According to Janet Lugo-Tafur, Executive Director of Adams Morgan Main Street, "Shopping local produces a true multiplier effect, since our truly local small businesses reinvest in the DC economy at

a 60 percent higher rate than do chains or online retailers.

Centralized activities at the Sun Trust Plaza planned by Adams Morgan Main Street included the Obama Administration's Deputy Administrator of the Small Business Administration, Marie Johns, speaking about the importance of small business to the economy; the newly confirmed director of the Department of Small and Local Business Development (DSLBD), Harold Pettigrew, reading a Mayor Vince Gray Proclamation; and Ward I Councilmember Jim Graham who not only spoke of the critical importance of neighborhood small business in job creation for DC, but who also had the honor of joining in the cutting of the spectacular SBS-themed cake that had been created by the brand new neighborhood retail bakery, Sweet Themex.

Demos and fashions punctuated the program with the Tibet Shop showing its wares, including a wonderful singing bowl, and Idle Time Books showing special coffee table books, calendars, and cards as holiday gifts. Owner Val Morgan noted their continuous retail presence in Adams Morgan for 30 years and said, "This is a shout-out for Adams Morgan Main Street for its promotion of retail." Hot coffee and cider was cheerfully purveyed by Tryst owner Constantine Stavropoulis' "right hand," Jocelyne DeHass. High marks were given to the fashion show put on by Violet Boutique as well as winter wear by Skynear.

Various program segments highlighted particular businesses. "Gifts Galore" highlighted Adams Morgan's newest jewelry business, Turquoise, as well as Idle Time Books, Tibet Shop, and with mentions of Crooked Beat, Toro Mata, Tienda Malik, Little Shop of Flowers, Capitol Hemp, and

Brass Knob. "Looking Good in Winter" showcased Planet Pet, Skynear Furnishings, MINT Club Spa Retreat, and with mentions of And Beige, Joy's Spa, Beauty Tu You, Mercedes Bien, Meepps Fashions, Morton's Fine Art, Fleet Feet, Smash, and Salon XYZ.

Drawings were held throughout the day for 15 cash cards worth \$25 each donated by American Express. Susan Borja, one of the lucky winners, said, "This is a great time to win extra shopping money!" Skynear's owner, Lynn Skynear, said that she had more publicity, purchases, and attention generated to her long-time retail business from SBS and its related activities of Adams Morgan Main Street than from other promotions.

In addition to all the local TV stations, two private film crews also filmed footage to use for the upcoming year and placement in next year's Small Business Saturday national commercials. Among neighborhood retailers being filmed A.M. Wine Shoppe, where

one film crew spent four hours and also paid owner Justin Abad who said, "Small Business Saturday and the attention brought to our business and other retail by Adams Morgan Main Street was terrific, and we are excited about the prospect of continued attention for 2012!"

Mellow Mushroom provided pizza for the volunteers and participants and Perry's concluded the day with hot mulled cider samples. Other food establishments mentioned or providing specials included El Tamarindo, Casa Oaxaca, Amsterdam Falafelshop, Jack Rose, Las Canteras, Bourbon, Instant Noodles, Bardia's New Orleans Café, Grill from Ipanema, Chief Ike's, and Jamaican Joe's. □

*Lisa Duperier, a Texan, has resided in Adams Morgan for more than 20 years. She serves as President of Adams Morgan Main Street (www.ammainstreet.org), on the Board of Kalorama Park, and with other volunteer activities.



photo—Adams Morgan Main Street Group, Inc.

Shown (l-r) are Sweet Themex owner Adrienne Holmes cutting the cake she created with ANC IC-04 Commissioner Gabriela Mossi and SBA Deputy Director Marie Johns looking on.

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Scenes from the Past

Many of the buildings housing businesses and educational institutions along Connecticut Avenue were built as private homes, and the structures at 1832 and 1834 Connecticut — just south of Leroy Place and across from the Universal North building — were no exception.

Real estate investor and builder John H. Nolan applied for a building permit for 1832 and 1834 on March 13, 1906. Nolan would become the first owner-occupant of number 1834 along with his family. The two homes were designed by the architectural firm of Wood, Donn & Deming and built at a combined cost estimated at \$35,000.

The houses were declared 50 percent complete on May 22, 85 percent on June 16, and 97 percent on August 13, 1906. Following the time-consuming interior trimming and plaster work, the houses were officially declared 100 percent complete at 2:40 in the afternoon of December 4, 1906.

Despite constructing a total of 93 impressive dwellings and 258 medium to large-sized buildings in Washington, DC, Nolan led a quiet life that kept him out of most of the social columns in the newspapers, while avoiding submitting biographical entries for the various “Who’s Who in Washington”-type publications. He would reside at 1834 Connecticut from 1906 until 1913.

Nolan had been born in Washington in May of 1861, the son of James F. and Mary (Donahue) Nolan. He and his family were enumerated at 1413 8th Street, NW in the 1880 census, which indicated that both of his parents had been born in Ireland and that his father worked as a carpenter and roofer. Nolan also indicated that he was employed as a carpenter that year, when he was age 18.

He received his education at St. John’s College in Georgetown, and thereafter became an apprentice to prominent builder Robert I. Fleming. *The City of Washington* (1903) describes his employment as follows: “There he remained until he had mastered every detail of the building business, and was fully equipped to start for himself. His beginning was of course on a small scale, but gradually he extended his operations until he did not confine himself to contract work, but branched out and erected buildings as an investment, and in every instance found a ready purchaser.” In 1892, he became a Master



2010 view of 1832 (left) and 1834 (right) Connecticut Avenue, NW.

photo—Paul K. Williams, Kelsey & Assoc. private collection.



photo—courtesy <http://washingtoncenter.asu.edu>.

2011 view of 1834 Connecticut Avenue, NW, now Arizona State University’s Washington Center.

Builder.

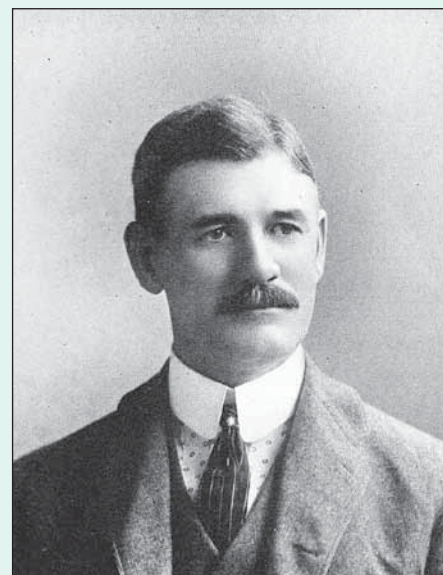
The book went on to describe his voice and reputation for aesthetically built buildings in the city: “Few men’s talents lie in more than one direction, and fewer still cultivate those talents to such an extent that each has reached a degree of excellence, whereby either could be used toward bringing in handsome revenue. Nature has been good to John H. Nolan, one of Washington’s best known constructors of modern buildings, and at the same time the possessor of a beautiful, rich, well placed bass voice that has brought it possessor prominently before the public of this and other cities.”

In 1885 Nolan had married a Miss Williams of Washington; in late 1901, several years following her death, he married Miss Lida Anderson. With his first wife, he had four children: James H. (b. June 1890); Helen R. (b. October 1892); Bessie (b. January 1895); and Charles M. (b. December 1896). They were enumerated at 1829 8th Street in the 1900 census, but had moved to a house at 1423 U Street by early 1901; Nolan had built the entire row of houses from 1415 to 1429 U Street beginning in March of 1898.

Nolan’s four children and second wife moved from the U Street house and were all enumerated at 1834 Connecticut Avenue in the 1910 census, a house substantially larger than their prior residence.

Nolan’s business success can be somewhat measured in that the couple then employed two black, live-in servants at the house in 1910. They included Patty I.

Kemp, age 39 and a native of Virginia, and Laura Martin, age 37 and a native of North Carolina. Martin indicated that she was a widow and had two children, but neither of which were alive in 1910.



photo—*The Book of Washington*, 1903.

Builder John H. Nolan, a resident of his own construction project at 1834 Connecticut Avenue, NW.

Among Nolan’s many building commissions he is known to have constructed several impressive apartment buildings that included the Westover at 16th and M Streets, NW; the twin apartment buildings in the 1400 block of R Street known as the Gladstone and Hawarden. He was also known for his downtown Davidson Building at 1413 G Street, NW, where his company had its office in which he kept offices; the Bond Building at 1400 New York Avenue, NW; and the Bancroft Hotel at 18th and H Streets, NW. The building permit index reveals his construction activities began in 1891 and lasted until 1913.

The 1920 census lists Nolan living at his daughter Ruth’s house at 245 41st Street in Norfolk, Virginia, along with his son-in-law, John E. Ballenger, a civil engineer at the naval base. Nolan indicated that he was a “builder of houses in DC” and it is unknown why he would suddenly stop building at age 52. In any event, the house at 1834 Connecticut Avenue was sold that year to Albert P. Maderia.

—Paul Kelsey Williams
Historic Preservation Specialist
Kelsey & Associates, Washington, DC

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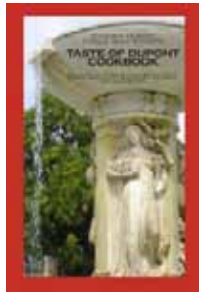
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Many local restaurants submitted recipes: Floriana, Annie’s Paramount Steakhouse, Level One, Cafe Dupont at The Dupont Hotel, Ruth’s Chris Steakhouse, Twist at the Carlyle Suites Hotel, Black Fox Lounge, Darlington House, SoHo Tea and Coffee, Skewers/Cafe Luna, One Lounge, Fairfax at Embassy Row, Pesce, Al Tiramisu, Cafe Green, Urbana at the Hotel Palomar, The Tabard Inn, La Tomate, The Burger Joint, Pizza Paradiso, Swann House Bed and Breakfast and Restaurant Nora.

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Food in the ‘Hood

By Joel Denker

Will Return Next Issue

Editor’s Note: The writer is taking a mid-winter break this month; his column will return with the February issue.

LIBRARY

From p. 1

nials from library users and from parents of library users.

The concluding section of the formal nomination poses the question, “How does the nominee make the library a better place?” The answer given for this nomination is illuminating:

“Venetia is the Regional Librarian for the DC Regional Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped. She oversaw the distribution of the new digital Talking Book players and the rapid expansion of the BARD (Braille and Audio Reading Download) service. She worked with architects to redesign The Adaptive Services Division, physically restructuring the space to support her vision. This increased the number of adaptive workstations from 3 to 12, added a learning lab space with an FM loop amplification system for the hearing impaired, created a Braille literacy corner, and installed an updated audiobook recording booth with digital recording capability. Over her time at the library, Venetia brought video phones, captioned telephones and handheld amplifiers into the library.”

Upon receiving notification of the award, DCPL’s Director of Library Services Nancy Davenport proudly noted, “Venetia’s work ensures that people with disabilities have the access they need to read, learn, and



photo—courtesy DC Public Library.

Adaptive Services Division Director Valencia Denson.

use the library — and to use the technology — independently. The training and app development programs that Venetia and her staff have created are cutting edge.” □

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photo—courtesy DC Public Library.

A quiet reading area.

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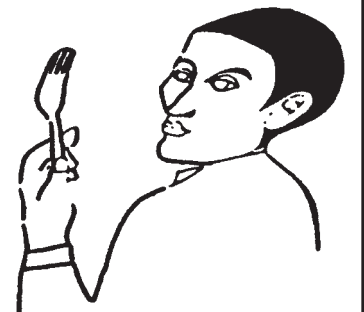
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At the Museums

By Anthony L. Harvey*



Antico, *Apollo Belvedere* (model created ca. 1490-'96; cast ca. 1502).

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART
4th & Constitution; (202) 737-4215
Daily, 10am-5pm / www.nga.gov

The National Gallery of Art's 2011-'12 exhibition schedule has included two magisterial shows of late Medieval and early Renaissance art. The first of these reviewed here, titled "Antico: the Golden Age of Renaissance Bronzes," features the extraordinary small bronze statuettes and larger bronze portrait busts — as well as medals



Antico, *Equestrian Statuette of Marcus Aurelius* (model created by 1496; cast ca. 1519-'28).

and reliefs — crafted by an apparently self-taught master in the art of sculpting late 15th and early 16th century works that reimagined classical sculptures of the Greeks and Romans.

Son of a butcher but possessed of a rare propensity for aesthetics and intellectualized, artistic refinements, Antico, as the artist was known for his expertise in working with the arts of antiquity, was born Pier Jacopo Alari de Bonacoisi, acquiring the "de" for his artistic attainments in the service of three generations of Gonzagas in the rarified cultural atmosphere of the Gonzaga court in the Italian principality of Mantua.

Although little is known of Antico's early life, it is evidenced by his work that he was trained by someone in the goldsmith's art

and in the restoration of classical marble sculptures. And in the sensitivity and exquisiteness of his bronzes, he was obviously conversant with the humanistic conventions of the artists, scholars, and philosophers of Mantuan court society. His creations reflect a sculptural parallel to the humanistic pursuits of painters such as Mantegna and Bellini, especially that of Mantegna, whose dialogue with the ancients in his paintings were often intended to reflect an almost actual, if idealized, painterly conversation between Renaissance concerns and those of Greek and Roman ideas, accomplishments, and mythologies.

Artists such as Antico and Mantegna had the great good fortune to work for such highly cultured patrons as Isabella d'Este and Francisco II Gonzaga, who together presided over the extraordinary Gonzaga court and whose challenging demands, exquisite taste, and ample funds allowed them to commission works of the highest artistic endeavor, using the most expensive materials available and requiring, in the case of such artists as Antico, studios possessing the necessary technical skills and equipment.

Antico's bronzes, of which three-fourths of his probable output are on display in two small rooms in the East Building, occasions this marvelous show, one which informs as well as delights. While the artistic ideas behind the works are highly intellectualized, the objects themselves are beautiful, precious objects, crafted with precision and exquisite finishes — a basic patinated bronze with lustrous gilding and silvering for highlights and decorative embellishments. These art objects, some of which border on the slightly precious, were created simply to be owned by illustrious patrons and displayed in rooms furnished with other appropriate art objects, books, and architectural refinements.



Antico, *Seated Nymph* (model created & cast ca. 1503).

The star of the show is a small statuette of a nude woman seated on a solid bronze bench with a brightly gilded wrap around her lap and topped with beautifully waved, golden curly hair. Her impassive gaze projects a feeling of the naturalness of her basically unclothed presence. The work, *Seated Nymph*, is from the Robert H. and Clarice Smith collection, and has an unusual aura all of its own.

A nearby, un-embellished but delicate work, titled *Spinario*, from a private collection, depicting a nude seated boy remov-



Andrea Mantegna, *Battle of the Sea Gods* [left half] (ca. 1485/1488).

ing a thorn from his foot is almost a genre counterpoint to the *Seated Nymph*. And a miniature version of the monumental equestrian statue of Marcus Aurelius, from the Sammlungen des Fürsten von und zu Liechtenstein Wien-Vaduz, cast in two parts that fit seamlessly together, has in its smaller scale but equally complex articulation a fascinating strangeness.

Displayed next to the *Marcus Aurelius* is a comparative pair of busts, one a Roman marble copy of a Greek bronze, the other Antico's re-imagining of the same work. Antico's so-called "imitation" wins hands down, especially with its ethereal crispness, the tightness of the curly hair, and the determined look of the sculpture's facial expression. And two statuette versions in the adjacent gallery of the *Apollo Belvedere*, one made from a stolen cast, warrant careful study. In addition, engravings by Mantegna and Giovanni Bellini pertinent to the show's overall thesis adorn the walls of the exhibition's two gallery rooms.

Antico's innovative techniques for bronze casting, using an indirect lost wax technique, are ingenious and are carefully and understandably explained in a large, 12-step illustrated wall panel which faces a second panel in the same gallery illustrating his use of materials in his finishing of these same castings. Antico's further innovation was in creating casts that could be saved and used for subsequent casting of duplicate copies of these uniquely designed and crafted bronze sculptures.

A beautifully illustrated exhibition catalog which includes several scholarly essays accompanies the exhibition; the catalog, available for purchase in the gallery's gift shops, is dedicated to the memory of the late Robert H. Smith, former President of the National Gallery of Art and a leading connoisseur of Roman bronzes. The exhibition continues through April 8, 2012. □



The Conquest of Tangier (detail ca. 1471-'75).

"The Invention of Glory; Afonso V and the Pastrana Tapestries"

In a tour de force of exhibition prowess and a grand display of art treasure repair, restoration, and preservation of four, more than 500-year-old wool and silk tapestries, the National Gallery has just concluded a second museum presentation of a late Medieval and early Renaissance art work little known to American audiences, this one called, for its place as residence in the collegiate church of Pastrana near Madrid, Spain, the Pastrana Tapestries.

These 15th century tapestries are large and luxurious — roughly 13 feet by 36 feet — and were constructed and woven in 1470 from the finest materials by skilled craftsman in one of the best tapestry workshop in Western Europe, that of Tournai, Flanders. Commissioned by Portugal's King Afonso V, victor over the Muslims of the Barbary



Landing at Asilah (detail, 1475-1500)

Coast and deemed by the Roman Catholic Church "Defender of the Faith," these tapestries depict actual events — namely, the taking in battle by King Afonso and his son and heir to the Portuguese throne, Prince John, of the North African port city of Asilah and the occupation of the nearby city of Tangier as its inhabitants fled in terror. Known in Europe as exemplary of tapestries that told "true tales," these astonishing works are among the earliest examples of contemporary war reporting — woven photojournalism as noted in the show's sumptuously produced catalog.

Scholars and art historians further explain that these tapestry works, and the seven oil and tempera on oak paintings that form the art ensemble known as the "Panels of St. Vincent" honoring the patron saint and protector of the Avis royal dynasty of Portugal — which are pictured in the catalog — were both commissioned by King Afonso

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

to celebrate his royal victory over Islam and to elevate the distinctiveness of Portuguese valor and artistic uniqueness to that of rivals Castile and Aragon. Afonso's commissions were beautifully realized. And their regal exhibition in large, high ceiling galleries in the East Building was nothing less than what they deserved.

Apparently commissioned for artistic designs — cartoons — to the same artist responsible for the St. Vincent panels, Nuno Goncalves, the tapestries present realistic portrayals of Portuguese warriors, both ordinary foot soldiers and the King, Crown Prince, and their nobles and retainers, in the armor, weaponry, and flamboyant regalia of the day. These works are said to be an absolutely vital source for the history of 15th century Portuguese armaments and battle appearance since apparently all but one of the suits of armor and very few of the combatants' implements of warfare have survived the passage of time.

The first three of these four tapestries



The Conquest of Tangier (detail ca. 1471-'75).

depict the landing of the Portuguese forces at Asilah, their siege of the city, and conclude in the third tapestry with their successful assault and taking of the city. King Afonso and Prince John are prominently featured, both on horseback and brilliantly covered in armor and surrounded by heraldry. The city and surrounding terrain are said to be mostly imaginary, with little of the battleground visible due to the crowded jumble of warriors and the fierceness of battle. Many

“true tales” are being told simultaneously. The occupation of Tangier presents something of a continuous narrative in the form of a three-part composition, with the Portuguese army depicted at the walled city gate and one Portuguese soldier on a promontory within the city holding the royal banner of Portugal. The middle part of the composition is the empty city of Tangier with the adjacent third part capturing the fleeing population of the city. The artistry of all four tapestries is breathtaking!

The Pastrana tapestries are a dramatic reminder of the complex motivations of human warfare at the dawn of the age of European exploration and empire building — with its contradictory dynastic, religious, and nationalist motivations and ideologies, its search for raw materials and its quest for the control of the lucrative trade in slaves, silk, spices, ivory, and gold. It could serve as something of an opportunity to reflect on the enormous cost of conquest and its maintenance, together

with the ultimate vanity of empire and its flashpoints of fabulous wealth and ruinous expense.

The catalog for the exhibition, which closed in early January, 2012, remains on sale in the National Gallery's gift shop and book store. It is a large format treasure, beautifully produced, bound in glistening, fabric covered boards, with gloriously printed color reproductions of the tapestries in three page fold-out plates. The scholarly and technical essays surrounding the illustrations are models of explanation — clear, concise, and enormously informative. □

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*Anthony L. Harvey is a collector of contemporary art, with an emphasis on Washington artists. He is a founding member of the Washington Review of the Arts. For many years he was the staff person in the United States Senate responsible for arts and Library of Congress oversight by the Senate's Rules and Administration Committee and the House and Senate's Joint Committee on the Library.

Something of Splendor: Decorative Arts from the White House

By Kerry D. Touchette, A.S.I.D.*

This exhibition at the Smithsonian's Renwick Gallery across from the White House includes some 95 objects from the permanent collection of the White House organized to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the White House Historical Association. It's fun, it's easy on the eye, and is installed in a great location — the Renwick is such a rare survivor in the Second Empire style; be sure to see the Grand Salon up the grand staircase on the second floor while you are visiting.

The Executive Mansion, The President's House, and later after a paint job to cover up smoke and fire damage, the White House, holds the objects selected by curators William Allman and Melissa C. Naulin which are meant to show something of the story of how the presidents and their families lived, worked and entertained within its historic walls and what the tastes of each different period produced and surrounded the occupants and visitors.

Before Jacqueline Kennedy's bold new ideas about this property came to fruition in 1961, each president pretty much did whatever they saw fit when taking residence, even holding auctions



Mahogany Card Table (ca. 1800) by unidentified furniture maker (Baltimore, Maryland).



Dessert Stand, Lincoln service (ca. 1861) decorated on French porcelain blank by E.V. Haughwout & Co. (New York City).



Fireplace Andirons (ca. 1902) by unidentified brassworks (France).

like Chester A. Arthur's house cleaning and removal of 27 wagonloads of furnishings, and discarding things they that had gone out of fashion or were damaged.

Finally, a realization that this house should showcase American style and taste and have rooms with historic inspiration and tell the American history became the goal and evolved into a combination livable home and a state museum of sorts.

The exhibition of items ranging from table centerpieces, clocks, porcelain, and some impressive furniture are captivating and demonstrate the changing styles as time passed for the presidential families and what great craftsmen were doing during these times.

These diverse and sometimes intimate objects were witness to the turbulent and

sometimes wildly changing times of great consequence in the power hub of the American story. Some are emblematic of that American wish to impress and be on the cutting edge of the ever-changing apex of style, others are more enjoyable because of their feeling of a domestic and work oriented environment.

From the gilded Parisian, Pierre-Antoine Bellanger armchair circa 1817, covered in red Brunshwig & Fils fabric destined for the visitor's center at the White House to the over-the-top Gorham silver centerpiece circa 1871 in the form of a boat with an American Indian as its captain, you get a great sense of time and place that is rare in an exhibit of the decorative arts. Even the department store chairs and fabric valance from W & J Sloane's add something to the house's many moods and social changes and viewpoints missing from a purely clinical study of the decorative arts.

The ponderous and low-sitting Victorian sofa from an 1869 office and the hand-made crocheted thread coverlet made by Grace Coolidge counterbalance the sublime gilded bronze French mirrored table plateau by Derniere et Matelin of Paris, and the other grand imported and



Cut and Engraved Glass Compote (ca. 1853) by unidentified maker (probably New York City).

domestic items and send a message that this American home was not without the homey and functional if somewhat odd fabric of life. The obvious high point of French design brought into the White House was during the Monroe administration, yet a chair from local Georgetown cabinetmaker William King, Jr. shows that there were fine items of amazingly high quality locally available in 1818.

The White House's English style, small country estate exterior is at odds with most buildings nearby. It has always been architecturally the proverbial “Cadillac parked on the lawn” in the midst of a real working American town — especially as it is “book-marked” by the overpowering bulk of the mid-19th century Old Executive Office Building to the west (originally built for the State and War Departments) and the magisterial Treasury Department of the mid-19th century to the east. Yet, while it has been a symbol of power internationally, what lies within depended on the personalities and the times of the owners.

On view through May 6, 2012 at the Renwick Gallery of the Smithsonian American Art Museum (Pa. Ave. at 17th St. NW; 357-2531). Open daily, 10am-5:30pm. □

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*The writer, a Dupont Circle-based interior designer, has been in practice since 1976.



Armchair (1818) by William King, Jr. (Georgetown, District of Columbia).