

of Preservation Historic Winchester, Inc.

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REHABILITATION REAL ESTATE TAX EXEMPTION PROGRAM

RICHIE PIFER, JR.

Considering a rehabilitation of your residential or commercial structure in the City of Winchester's Historic District? If so, you may be able to help recoup some of your costs through the City's rehabilitation real estate tax exemption program. This local program can be used alongside the state and/or federal tax credit for which you may also be applying. However, they are two completely different programs and must be applied for in that manner. While the state and federal tax credit programs are administered through the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, www.dhr.virginia.gov, the local real estate tax exemption program is applied for and administered by the City Assessor under the Commissioner of the Revenue. You can call the City Assessor's office at 667-1815 and request a rehabilitation tax exemption packet which contains the application, information sheet and the portion of city code applicable to the program. Remember, it is important to read and understand the guidelines and requirements for the program in order to receive the maximum benefit to you, the property owner. But, don't worry, the amount of paperwork required for this local program is minimal!

Here's how the rehabilitation program works. The City will grant a partial exemption from real estate taxes for a "qualified" structure, commercial or residential, located in the Historic District for a period of ten years, commencing on January 1st of the succeeding year. There are a few important details, however, that must be considered before you apply for the partial exemption. For residential structures, the improvement must increase the base assessed value by at least 40%, or 60% for commercial structures. Also, the structure must be over 25 years of age and the total square footage cannot be increased by more than 15%. Any improvement made to vacant land or total structure replacements is not eligible. Once those criteria have been met, the applicant must complete the one page application and submit it along with a \$20.00 check to the City Assessor. The application remains active for two years. Once submitted and *prior* to the commencement of *any* work, the Assessor will inspect your structure to determine the "base" value. All existing components of the structure are eligible for the tax exemption except for porches or basements, *unless* they are being "substantially" rehabilitated. "An increased assessment due to a change in value (e.g. reassessment) will not affect the amount of exemption." (City of Winchester, General Information Form) The property owner must also comply with all building code regulations and obtain necessary permits prior to the commencement of work.

Once the property owner has completed the rehabilitation of the structure, he/she must request in writing that the City Assessor return to the property for a final inspection at which point the final assessed value shall be determined. However, should this not occur within the two year application period, the exemption will be denied. Once the final number has been determined, the difference between that number and the base number shall be the tax exempt amount for a period of ten years, commencing on the 1st of January after completion and approval. **(Cont. page 3)**

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REVOLVING FUND SPOTLIGHT: THE GRIM-MOORE HOUSE

SANDRA BOSLEY



The properties at 504-512 1/2 S. Loudoun as they appeared in the 1976 Architectural survey.

Hiding underneath additions and a Victorian bracketed porch were two homes dated to the 1790s.

In September of 1784, Jacob Grim sold the southern portion of Winchester city lot 210 to Henry Moore – the Moore family did not purchase the northern half of this lot until 1801. In 1795, Henry Moore acquired a small portion of lot 211 from Cornelius Baldwin (whose house is also a Revolving Fund property, featured in Newsletter Volume 31 No. 3.) Insurance records indicate that buildings were extant at both 510 and 512 South Loudoun Street by 1796.

The houses were sold by Henry and Catherine Moore to their daughter, Elizabeth Moore, in 1805. Elizabeth was to later marry Michael Copenhaver, and the house remained in the Copenhaver family until 1878. For the largest part of these buildings' history, 510 and 512 have had a single owner. During a period of split ownership (1916-1929), the brick veneer addition to 510 was constructed. Since 1929, the house has reverted to single

ownership.

The property was purchased by the PHW Revolving Fund in 1976 in deteriorated condition. William and Virginia Miller undertook the bulk of the restoration work. During the process, the brick veneer addition was razed, the dormers on 510 eliminated, the siding replaced on 512, and the Victorian gingerbread porch removed, bringing the buildings closer to their appearance in the early 19th century.



Workers reveal the logs at 512 S. Loudoun during the initial renovation.



510 S. Loudoun as it appears in the 2009 Revolving Fund review.

The Grim-Moore House is in use today as a private residence. ♦

AGLOW ON AMHERST: A SUCCESS!

The 2008 Holiday House Tour, held on December 6 and 7 in the Amherst Street area, was a smashing success. The generous donations of our sponsors — Wachovia, the Adams Companies, BB&T, First Bank, and The Final Yard — the advance promotion and planning of the House Tour volunteers, and Wilke Green's contributions and sacrifices led to one of the busiest years for the Preview Party on record. Approximately 425 guests signed the guestbook placed at the home of David and Tonia Sweeney during the Daylight Tour, and around 150 guests were present for the Preview Party and Candlelight Tour. Not to be outdone, the Bough and Dough Shop also produced a strong showing at its

location at the Winchester Little Theatre. Many thanks are due for the use of such a fantastic location for our shop.

We had a generous outpouring of volunteerism this year, but as always, docents and ticket takers are in high demand for the Holiday House Tour. If you are interested in helping — either with the House Tour or another event throughout the year — please take a moment and return the form below to be added to our volunteer list. We are already planning another fabulous tour for 2009 — be sure to join us! ♦

Check each item that you are willing to volunteer your time and return to **PHW, 530 Amherst St. Winchester, VA 22601**

PHW Activities

- ☐ Newsletter
- ☐ Education
- ☐ Community Relations
- ☐ Special Events
- ☐ Membership Campaign
- ☐ Revolving Fund

Holiday House Tour

- ☐ Docents
- ☐ House Chairmen
- ☐ Decorators
- ☐ Publicity
- ☐ Bough and Dough Shop

Name:

Phone:

E-Mail:

REAL ESTATE TAX EXEMPTION (CONT. PAGE 1)

Based on the current real estate tax rate of \$0.68 per \$100.00 of assessed value, if a property owner has a property initially valued at \$200,000.00 and a final assessment of \$280,000.00, the tax exempt amount of \$80,000.00 shall be an annual tax savings of \$544.00, which is in effect for ten years! If the tax rate were to not change, this translates to \$5,440.00 over the ten year period! Furthermore, this partial tax exemption transfers with the property itself, re-

gardless of the number of times the property changes owners!

So, the next time you are considering rehabilitating your home or other property in the Historic District, remember that it can be both exciting and cost effective. What a fantastic way to be rewarded for owning and maintaining a piece of Winchester's history! ♦

THE UNION BANK BUILDING: THEN AND NOW

The Union Bank Building is one of the jewels in Winchester's Walking Mall. The building, constructed c. 1878, is High Victorian Italianate in style and is the only building with a cast iron façade in the city. The building suffered a "modernization" with the original upper story façade hidden behind a nondescript sheathing and the entrance level drastically altered to create display cases and inset entryway. Debra Johnson and Richard Oram have been going through the painstaking process of restoring and recreating the original look of this building.

With the recent opening of the Union Jack Pub and Restaurant in the building, it is a fitting time to show a retrospective of this building's progress. Be sure to visit the official Union Jack website at <http://www.theunionjackpub.com/> for more images from this building's past and present. ♦

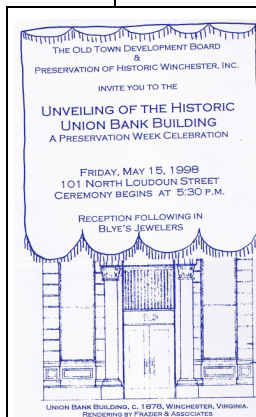


The Union Bank with its cast iron façade as it originally appeared, c. 1878. Cast iron became popular for ornamenting Victorian facades due to the cheap cost and ease of forging of iron into shapes that would be far more costly and time consuming to produce in stone.

A photograph c. 1970 shows the stark modernization applied to the façade. The aluminum sheathing and inset entryway were common "updates" to older commercial buildings. Note the painted advertisement and "vanished roofline" are still visible on the southern upper story.



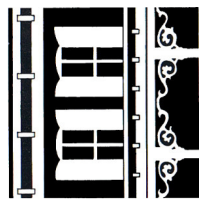
The first phase of the renovation—removing the upper-story sheathing—was completed in 1998. (See invitation, right.)



The Union Bank Building as it appears in January 2009 after a complete interior and exterior renovation. The building is now in use as the Union Jack Pub and Restaurant.



Preservation of Historic Winchester



Hexagon House ♦ 530 Amherst St. ♦ Winchester, VA 22601

NEWS

Late Winter 2009

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UPCOMING EVENTS

February 10: Lecture Series with Dr. Warren Hofstra
*The Age of Affluence or the Age of Anxiety:
America in the Postwar Era*

7:30 pm, Old Town Event Center, 403 S. Loudoun St.

During the decade and a half following World War II Americans enjoyed unprecedented prosperity. Not only did productivity and prosperity increase dramatically between 1945 and 1960, but wealth dispersed more broadly across American society than ever before. It can be said that the modern middle class in the United States was born in this era. But at the same time that more and more Americans enjoyed the comforts of modernity, a cold war gripped the nation that not only imperiled American security but also led many Americans to fear the subversion of the middle-class world they were creating. Thus the greatest threat to American freedom came from a communist adversary as much as it emanated from obsessive domestic measures to combat communist infiltration. This lecture will focus on the paradoxes and promises of the post-World War II period—variously called the “Age of Affluence” or the “Age of Anxiety”—and stimulate discussion about how it profoundly affected history and the development of the historic preservation movement.

February 11: Charlie Broadway Rouss Day

Join the City as we celebrate the birthday of one of Winchester’s famous philanthropists. Activities include:

11:00am & 11:30am- Brief guided tours of City Hall

Noon- 4th floor Exhibit Hall: “Illustrated History of Rouss City Hall” presentation by Tim Youmans

2:30pm- Mt Hebron Gatehouse Chapel- Comments by Mike Foreman

3:00pm- Procession to Rouss Mausoleum, Mt Hebron Cemetery- Wreath Laying

3:30pm-5:00pm- Charley Rouss Fire Company Open House
Anytime in the afternoon- Tour Park at Old Hospital Site on S. Stewart St.

5:15pm- The Handley Library Auditorium-
Official Welcome: Mayor Elizabeth Minor
Introduction of Rouss Descendants: Linda Q. Ross
Slide presentation by Larry Mullin, author of ‘*The Napoleon of Gotham: A Study of the Life of Charles B. Rouss*’

6:00pm- Reception by PHW in Benham Room of The Handley Library

Visit <http://www.winchesterva.gov/> for more information.

March 10: Preservation Workshop

PHW hosts a lecture by Jeff Price of Virginia Lime Works on lime mortar and the importance of compatible materials in historic structures. The lecture will be held at the Old Town Event Center (403 S. Loudoun St.) at 2 p.m. The event is and open to the public.

Visit *Virginia Lime Works* at <http://www.virginalimeworks.com/>

ARE YOU A PHW MEMBER?

Preservation of Historic Winchester, Inc., is a 501 (c) (3) nonprofit organization dedicated to protecting Winchester’s architectural heritage. PHW depends on income from membership and contributions to achieve its goals. *All contributions above membership are tax deductible.*

Join today by completing this form and returning it to PHW, 530 Amherst St., Winchester, VA 22601.



____ Individual
____ Corporate

\$25
\$100

____ Family/Business
____ Other

\$45

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____