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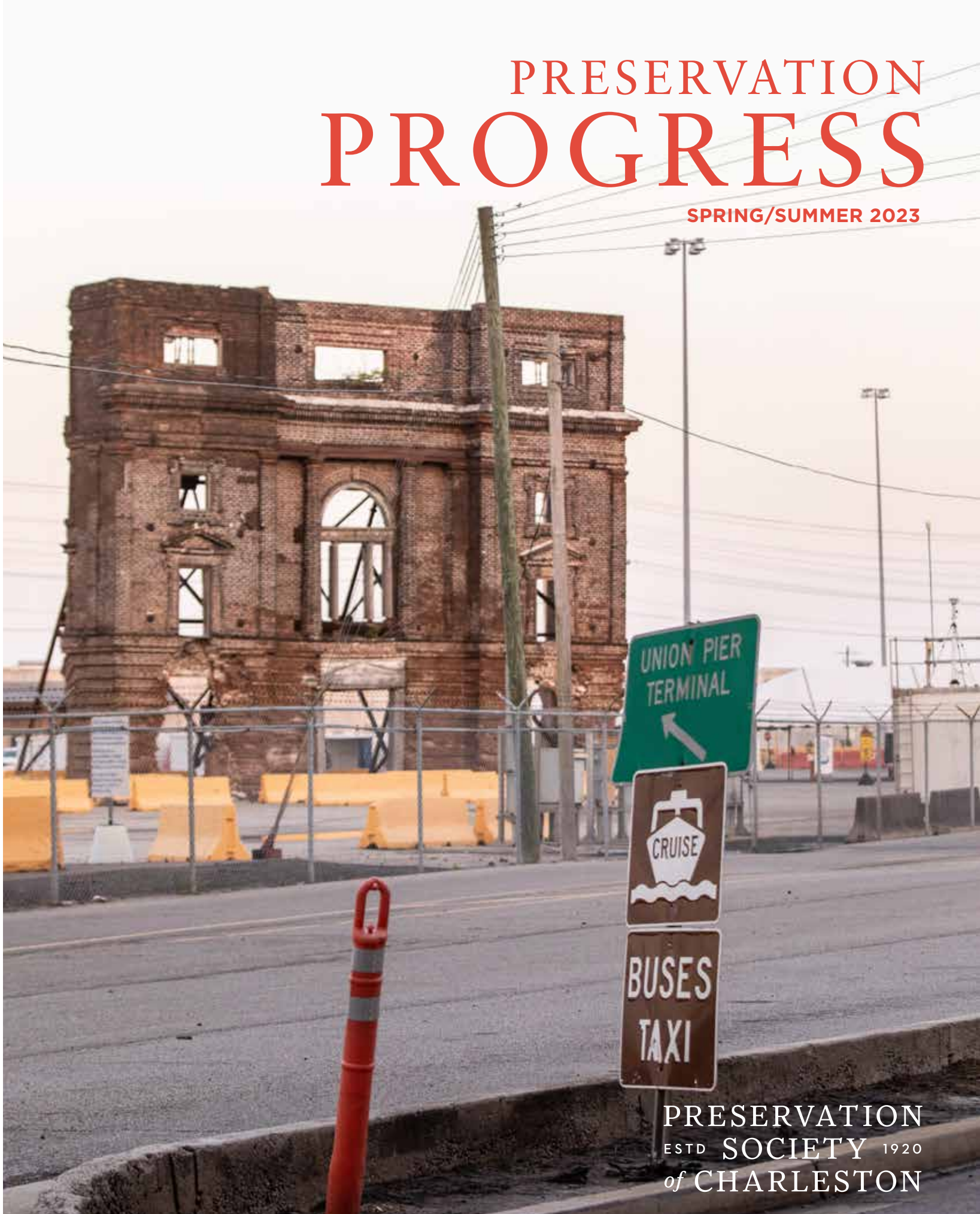
October 17, 2023
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CHARLESTON SYMPOSIUM
MARCH 8-10, 2024
Save the Date

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and enjoyment of Charleston’s distinct character, quality of life,
and diverse neighborhoods.*

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Preservation Progress is published by the Preservation Society of Charleston to educate and inform its membership and the public about historic preservation. The Preservation Society of Charleston serves as a strong advocacy leader for citizens concerned about preserving Charleston's distinctive character, quality of life, and diverse neighborhoods. As the oldest community-based historic preservation organization in America, we are the sum total of our members and friends, a dedicated group of residents and supporters of preservation from across the country who believe that some things are worth saving. Individual membership in the Society is \$50 and includes a one-year subscription to *Preservation Progress*. Published continuously since 1956, *Preservation Progress* (ISSN 0478-1392) is published at a minimum two times per year and includes a subscription to E-progress. For advertising inquiries or article submission, mail to 147 King Street, Charleston, SC 29401 or email preserve@preservationsociety.org.

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LEARNING FROM GENERATIONS PAST, LOOKING AHEAD

by W. Andrew Gowder, Board Chair

Friends of Charleston, and of the Society, I want to welcome you to the latest issue of *Preservation Progress*. I am excited to share these thoughts with you in the first few months of my term as Board Chair. There is much to enjoy and to inform you in this issue, from updates on our membership drive, our groundbreaking and valuable oral history project, profiles of local makers in our retail shop and a look back at this year's Carolopolis Awards. We also do a deep dive on a matter of intense focus for our staff, board, and members, the once-in-a-century redevelopment that will occur on the city's eastern waterfront at Union Pier. We present you with some valuable historical background and perspective as well as our concerns about the progress of the rezoning and sales efforts there so far, and our view of the way forward.

Before you dive into all of that fascinating content, I would like to introduce myself to you and let you know a little about me, and how I came to this opportunity to serve this organization and our community in this role.

I have lived in Charleston all my life, except for a brief sojourn to Spartanburg for college and Winston-Salem, N.C., for law school. I was born in Roper Hospital on Calhoun Street and my parents brought me home to a garage apartment on St. Andrews Boulevard before we moved less than a year later to a newly constructed brick home just off Orange Grove Road in the Northbridge area of West Ashley. That's where I called home until I moved back to town after law school and my mother lives in that same house to this day.

Both of my parents were Charlestonians, growing up here in the 1930s and 1940s, living downtown and attending Rivers High School. Neither of their families had automobiles and they walked or took the bus everywhere they needed to go, which you could easily do in those years. Grocery stores were on the corners, doctors and pharmacists were nearby on the same block or the next, church was close enough to walk there on Sunday, and in my mother's case, there was always enough change to escape the summer heat in one of the several movie theaters on King Street. (To this day my mom is an expert on 1940s film.)

I grew up in a time when most of the West Ashley neighborhoods were relatively new, and the commercial areas clustered around Avondale, St. Andrews Shopping Center, and a little later, Ashley Plaza Mall (the site of the City's embattled "Piggly Wiggly" project). Since my parents grew up downtown, we went there frequently to shop, eat, attend church, or simply drive down King Street and ride around the Battery. Most of the places we frequented were owned by local families and my parents had known many of them for years. I watched downtown at the end of its prominence in that era in the 1960s, then its decline as businesses moved out to the shopping centers and malls in the suburbs in the 1970s. In the late 1970s and 1980s, the restoration of the Market (remember The Gourmatisserie?) and Charleston Place under Mayor Joe Riley's leadership began a reinvigoration of the business district and then the rebuilding and growth following Hurricane Hugo in 1989 fast-forwarded Charleston into the 21st century.

By the late 1980s, I had returned to Charleston to begin practicing law downtown and my wife and I bought a fixer-upper on Bennett Street in Harleston Village. We loved our 12 years there, but persistent flooding on our street compelling us to frequently move our cars in the middle of the night during a rainstorm and speeding cars along Ashley Avenue as our young son began to ride a bicycle persuaded us finally to move.

I share all of this to give you my perspective on how I see Charleston and its changes over the years. Of course, change is constant in everything, and we should not expect our communities or our cities to be any different. But what the Preservation Society of Charleston has stood for over 100 years is the preservation and maintenance of something that is abstract but very real, and all of us recognize it when we see it: a quality of life in our community that has value and is worth saving for our children and

But there must be balance, between the lived experience of everyday residents and the tourist economy, between the existing infrastructure we have for human habitation and a hospitality and housing industry that craves growth without appropriate regard for the capacity the city has for absorbing that growth in an equitable and healthy manner.

future generations; the character of the city that is the sum of its many parts in its architectural beauty, its location and environment, its history, its shared sense of community among its residents; and finally, a shared vision of the future that we all hold in common.

We are proud of our city and welcome visitors and new residents as we always have. Tourism and the businesses that depend on it are important to our economy. Growth and being welcoming to new citizens are not only healthy, but essential to maintaining a vital community. But there must be balance, between the lived experience of everyday residents and the tourist economy, between the existing infrastructure we have for human habitation and a hospitality and housing industry that craves growth without appropriate regard for the capacity the city has for absorbing that growth in an equitable and healthy manner. And now, we face the effects of sea level rise and increasingly frequent and violent storms in a coastal city, and we are forced to determine how best to manage rising tides and chronic flooding in a way that will allow our city to continue to be resilient and livable and at the same time maintain the special character that makes Charleston treasured by people around the world.

The good news is that we are up to the task. Our citizens, led by you, our members and supporters, our board, and our talented, passionate, and committed staff are ready to face these challenges and move our community forward in a way that benefits all our residents, and leaves no one behind. I thank each of you for joining us in this work. Please come up and say hello at our next event. I look forward to meeting each one of you.

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*In our advocacy to keep Charleston livable,
we press into the headwinds of speculation
and short-term thinking with a powerful tool:
the stewardship ethic.*



STEWARDSHIP, IN ACTION

by Brian R. Turner, President & CEO

Our significant advocacy victory at Union Pier is an important reminder of the power of preservation as a bridge between people in a world that can otherwise feel fractured and disjointed. In changing that project's direction from a developer-driven to a community-led process, we pressed against the headwinds of speculation and short-term thinking with a more persuasive case.

Preservationists are of all stripes, but commonly bonded by their interests in promoting a stewardship ethic above all else. Whether grand or vernacular, familiar or obscure, worthy of celebration or a reminder of painful stories to never forget, The Preservation Society's belief in the value of our shared heritage bonds our organization to a diverse set of viewpoints throughout the community.

On a personal level, this "big tent" preservation is the best way to learn this city. In the last two years, so many different Charlestons have come to life for me through the lens of the individuals who care most deeply about the future of this place.

As we know well at the Preservation Society, effective place-based conservation necessitates civic action. Given our breadth of support, which continues to grow, we are well-positioned to take on the immense pressures to profit from the character of this city. Our day-to-day work recognizes the trust the community has placed in us as we press for responsible land use decisions.

Now, because of the unprecedented efforts of a committed coalition, the next evolution of Union Pier Terminal is more within our community's control. And it will remain a core focus. Having been a fenced-off port for as long as anyone living can remember, it deserves new life. As you will see in the coming pages, the area has a unique cultural history as Charleston's lifeline to the world and ecological history as marshland aiding the peninsula's resilience.

As important as Union Pier is, *Preservation Progress* is usually a good reminder that we can walk and chew gum, too. Our Carolopolis Awards, traditionally profiled in our spring edition, were another remarkable success this year. The stories behind the buildings — the aspects that give these places meaning — are increasingly playing an important role in the selection and presentation of what we have come to call the Academy Awards of preservation.

We hope that this edition will inspire and amaze. And to you, our members, we are ever grateful for your support. I pledge to you our commitment to continue the important work that links our community and lifts our spirits.



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GRASSROOTS COMMUNITY ADVOCACY SHIFTS PLANS FOR UNION PIER

by Sam Spence, Director of Public Affairs

On June 16, 2023, the State Ports Authority and City of Charleston announced a dramatic shift on the Union Pier project to a community-driven process that would respond to significant public outcry over the project as it was initially proposed. Through a partnership with the Riley Center for Livable Communities at the College of Charleston, a new team will be selected with the intent to develop a reworked master plan for Union Pier that reflects the design values of Charleston's unique historic character and natural environment.

The move came after months of critical feedback from community residents and nonprofits, and nine days after a blockbuster June 9 special meeting of the City of Charleston Planning Commission that made clear the community's fundamental rejection of the initial Union Pier plan.

Working in an unprecedented collaboration, the Preservation Society, Coastal Conservation League, and Historic Charleston Foundation marshaled resources, manpower, and expertise to have a significant impact on the public discourse around this project. Not merely resisting development altogether, the three groups and their supporters contributed to a nuanced conversation around Union Pier, leading to a deeper understanding that more public input will ultimately lead to a project that will better match with community values and needs.





Over the next year, you will hear even more creative ideas about Union Pier as it is redesigned with an all-new approach. The City of Charleston is also mounting an effort to create a new “Waterfront District” future land use category that will help guide development projects seeking to build along our fragile coastlines.

This project would not have changed directions without help from committed residents.

“This shows that grassroots community advocacy remains an effective way for citizens to engage in solutions-oriented discourse that is positive and forward-looking,” said PSC President & CEO Brian Turner after the announcement on June 16. “We owe a debt of gratitude to all the individuals and organizations that stepped up and made a difference.”

The Preservation Society, working with our community partners, is committed to making sure Union Pier includes new, transformative public spaces, that its coastline models innovative water management techniques, and that the height, scale, mass, and intensity of development are compatible with our historic urban neighborhoods.

For the latest, visit preservationsociety.org/unionpier.



THE HARD: COLONIAL CHARLESTON'S FORGOTTEN MARITIME CENTER

by Nic Butler, Ph.D.

Near the center of Union Pier, under a windowless warehouse at the southwest corner of Concord and Pritchard streets, rests one of the least-remembered sites in the history of the Charleston peninsula. A projecting point of sand and shells at this location, once known as “the Hard,” served as a focal point of maritime activity from the dawn of recorded history in South Carolina to the turn of the 19th century. The construction of the present pier during the early 20th century obscured its colorful history, but the proposed redevelopment of the site presents an opportunity to revive memories of an important landmark.

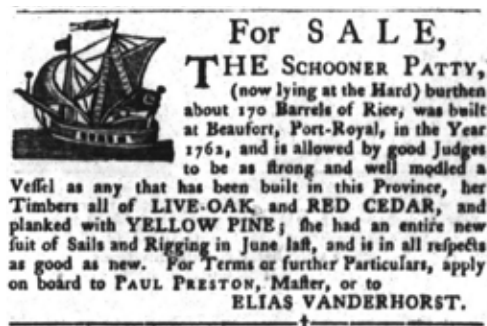
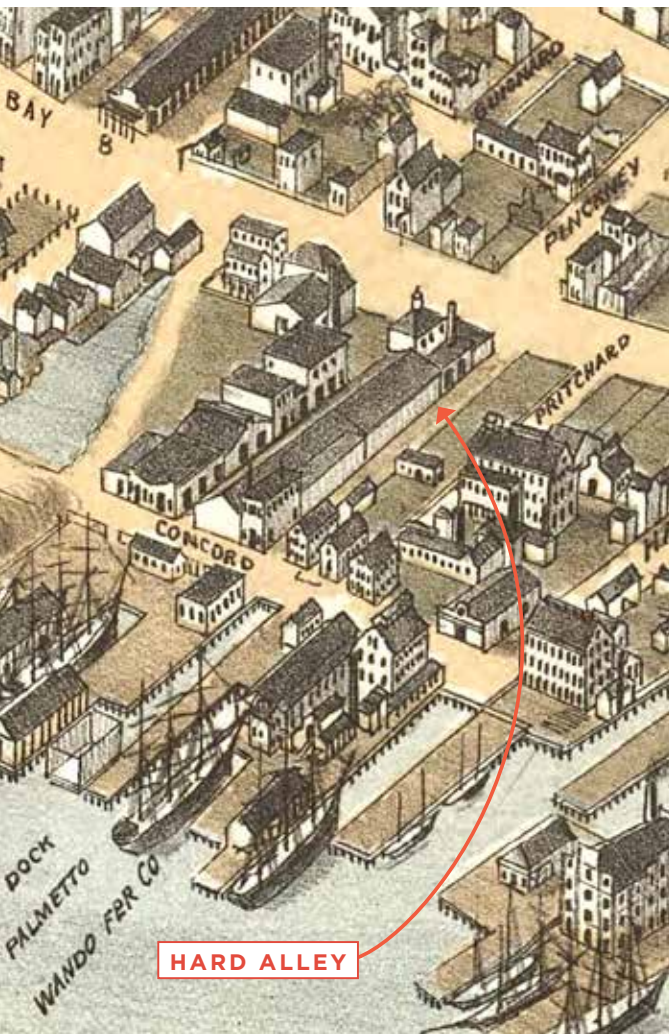
Before it was reshaped by human hands, the Hard was simply a low, wedge-shaped promontory surrounded by marshland, located nearly a mile north of a similar headland once identified as Oyster Point (now the southeastern tip of the Battery).

A projecting point of sand and shells at this location, once known as “the Hard,” served as a focal point of maritime activity from the dawn of recorded history in South Carolina to the turn of the 19th century.

It extended eastwardly into the intertidal zone of the Cooper River along an axis nearly perpendicular to modern East Bay Street. A curving inlet flowing to the northwest facilitated access to the Hard and no doubt attracted the attention of turtles, shorebirds, and ancient humans. The site offered a convenient landing point for watercraft, and likely served as a waypoint for Native Americans traversing to and from settlements on modern Daniel Island, Hobcaw Point, and Mount Pleasant.

Here, as at dozens of coastal sites across the Lowcountry of South Carolina, generations of Indigenous people might have deposited millions of oyster shells to create a large, circular midden or “shell ring.” Physical evidence of such a structure at the Hard has not yet been found, but its former presence is suggested by the name of a gun battery erected during the American Revolution. British forces occupying Charleston in 1780, likely repeating a phrase used locally, identified a “v”-shaped battery at the east end of Pinckney Street as an “old Indian fort.” That nomenclature was used elsewhere in

IMAGE: McCrady Plat, 1773, depicting “The Hard”



the site. The number of newly built vessels launched from the site is unknown, but the memorable hurricane of August 1728 blew one nearly finished sloop into Rhett's marsh to the north of the Point.

Houses and outbuildings built of brick and wood sprouted around the foot of the Point Wharf during the first half of the 18th century and contributed to the gradual filling of the adjacent marshlands. A 1747 newspaper noted the aging condition of Rhett's "old wharf" at "the Point," after which the large hurricane of 1752 likely demolished the remainder of its wooden fabric. By that time, additions of pilings, oyster

shells, and ballast stones had likely reshaped the topography of the Hard to accommodate large-scale maritime activities. Newspaper references from this era demonstrate that the site hosted small ferry boats as well as larger vessels seeking to careen, repair, or re-mast. Thomas Wright, a Rhett heir managing the Hard at mid-century, was so frustrated by traffic at the site in 1757 that he raised prices and published a schedule of fees. His detailed list of maritime supplies and services provides a valuable snapshot of life at the Hard, where generations of enslaved ship carpenters lived and worked among piles of timber for ship construction, trees felled for masts, oyster shells burnt for lime, and barrels of tar, pitch, and turpentine used to waterproof maritime surfaces.

Under a series of managers, maritime life at the Hard continued with little change from the death of William Rhett in February 1722/3 until the end of 1773. In December of that year, lawyers divided the plantation known as Rhett's Point between his two great-granddaughters. Ownership of the Hard and its commercial interests descended to Mary Hasell Ancrum Grainger McCalister. Following her death in 1794, Mary's son James Hasell Ancrum sold the property in 1800 to a pair of prosperous ship carpenters, William Pritchard and son.

Booming exports of South Carolina cotton at turn of the 19th century triggered a profusion of wharf construction to the north, south, and east of the Hard that reached farther into the Cooper River. When the Pritchards agreed with their southern neighbor, Florian Charles Mey, to create Concord Street through the eastern edge of their respective properties in 1801, they jointly widened Hard Alley to 20 feet and ceded it to the City of Charleston. Maritime activity around the landlocked Hard continued to expand in subsequent decades, dominated at mid-century by the warehouses and rail lines of the Union Cotton Compress Company. Their successors, the Charleston Terminal Company, usurped Hard Alley in 1905 and triggered a protracted dispute with Charleston City Council. Four years later, the city agreed to close the colonial-era passageway in exchange for a strip of land to widen Pritchard Street to its present breadth.

The expansion of Union Pier in the 20th century supplanted maritime traditions established at the Hard generations earlier and erased its physical vestiges. Despite these changes, documentary evidence of the site's early history preserves an important story: The natural topography of the Hard formed the nucleus of a vibrant cultural landscape that evolved over three and a half centuries into the present Union Pier. To acknowledge the site's deep and diverse legacy, references to the Hard merit inclusion in plans for its post-industrial future.

William Rhett amassed a fortune through import-export commerce, and his wharf near the east end of Unity Alley formed a valuable part of Charleston's colonial economy. To accommodate his private affairs, however, including businesses of questionable legality, Rhett constructed a second wharf at the Hard that extended eastwardly from Lot No. 48 into the Cooper River. Besides using the "Point Wharf" and adjacent property to load and unload sailing vessels, the owners hosted a variety of commercial activities related to ship maintenance and construction at

TOP IMAGE: C. Drie's Bird's Eye View Map (detail of Hard Alley), 1872. Source: Library of Congress.

BOTTOM IMAGE: A 1768 ad for a ship "now lying at the Hard"

Through a chain of convoluted circumstances at the turn of the 18th century, Sarah and William Rhett acquired the valuable Lot No. 48, along with approximately 25 acres of adjacent land formerly belonging to John Coming. From their mansion house, now 54 Hasell St., the couple developed a suburban plantation occasionally called Rhett's Point. Because the waterfront landing at the Hard anchored its business and domestic activities, the property was more commonly known as Rhett's Point (later Trott's Point). A grant issued in 1714 empowered the Rhetts and their heirs to claim the tidal inlet and acres of marshland immediately north of the Hard, cementing the family's control of the area for the remainder of the century.

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For an expanded audio version of Dr. Butler's story, listen to his Charleston Time Machine podcast, available at charlestontimemachine.com.

Nic Butler is the historian at the Charleston County Public Library.

LEFT
IMAGE:
Clinton map
of Charle-
ston (detail
of Native
American
fort), 1780

RIGHT
IMAGE:
The Hard,
Charleston
County, 1773



BELOW: Investiture
of Charleston (detail
of Native American
fort), 1780





L to R: Mark Green | Eric Main | Cynthia Legette | Zach Fuqua | R. Thomas Cox | W. Ashley Thiem



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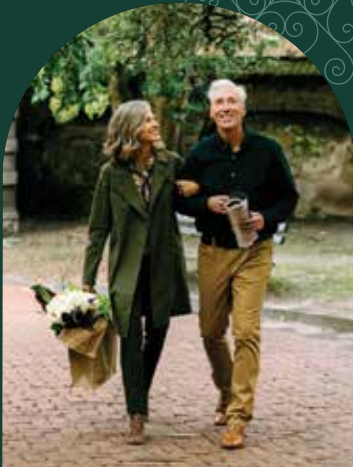
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REDISCOVERING UNION PIER'S CULTURAL, ECOLOGICAL, AND HISTORICAL EVOLUTION

by Laurel M. Fay, Preservation Coordinator

Beyond the chain-link fence and underneath the stark 70-acre concrete slab at present-day Union Pier lies a rich, storied history of Charleston's maritime business, manufacturing, and international trade. Historical maps, newspapers, photographs, and other archival resources reveal the extent to which activity on this site has had a profound impact on Charleston's cultural and economic development, stretching back to the city's earliest days.

Charleston's waterfront landscape has changed drastically since the city's founding in 1670. The downtown peninsula, once home to a network of inlets, creeks, and marshland, was slowly filled to expand buildable land area along the Charleston Harbor and Cooper and Ashley rivers.

The Union Pier waterfront is no exception to this pattern of development. Many wharves occupied the property in the 19th century before Union Wharf expanded and was ultimately consolidated. Early wharves, constructed in the 18th and 19th centuries, extended out from high ground along the eastern edge of the peninsula, toward the Cooper River. These original modest, wooden-plank wharves were eventually replaced with large concrete piers stretching further into Charleston Harbor, increasing capacity to receive large cargo and passenger vessels.

The 20th century brought about continued development of Union Pier through wharf expansion and property consolidation, furthered by economic growth in the post-WWII era.

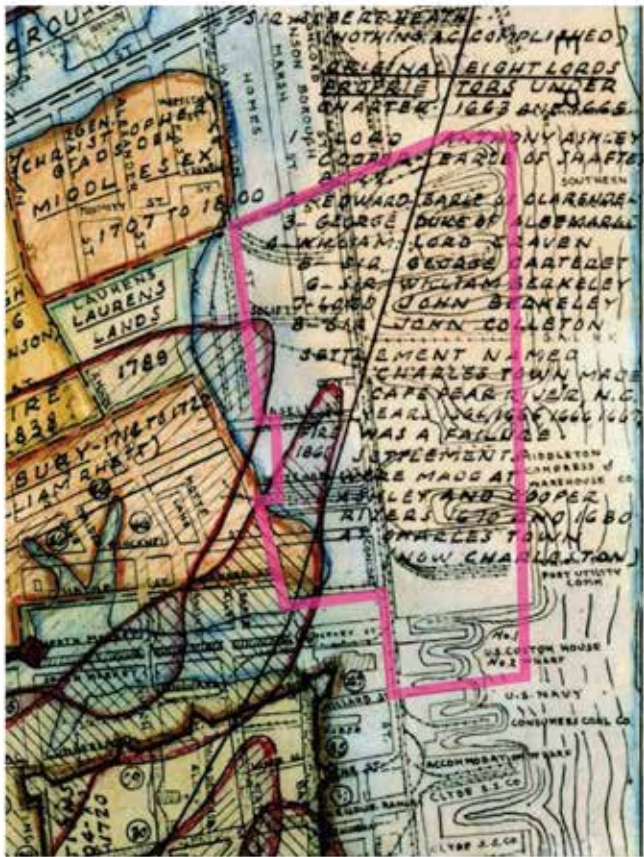
A PORTAL FOR DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE

By 1849, the eastern part of the Charleston peninsula reflected a distinctive jagged edge made up of wooden wharves typically named for their owners, often wealthy merchants and businessmen. Smaller businesses and tenants set up shop at these landing areas, creating a diverse business district. There were eight early wharves built near the current Union Pier property: Bennett's North and South wharves, Patton's Wharf, Knox's Wharf, Marsh's Wharf, Union Wharf, William's Wharf, Fitzsimon's Wharf, and a public landing.



IMAGE: 2023 Union Pier property.
Source: Google Earth Pro.
Graphic by Laurel M. Fay

IMAGES
1949 Halsey
Map. Source:
South Carolina
Historical Society.
Graphic by
Laurel M. Fay



Union Wharf was one of the busiest wharves in Charleston when it first appeared in the historical record in 1842. It was so successful that just four years later in 1846, it absorbed three neighbors: Knox's, Marsh's, and Williams' wharves. With this expansion, they became known as Union Wharves 1-4. By the 1870s, the waterfront was dredged, allowing for much larger vessels to dock and unload along these piers, increasing capacity and making domestic and international trade more efficient.

A diverse array of local and imported goods were available for sale, such as fresh seafood, cotton, rice, sugar, salt, coffee, fruits, Spanish cigars, molasses, sugar-cured hams, Irish potatoes, Caribbean spirits, lumber, coal, iron, and much more. Some wharves, like Palmetto and Union wharves, operated stores where people could purchase goods.

Superior quality old Jamaica RUM, and London P. Madeira WINE.

By Napier, Rapelye & Bennett.

On SATURDAY, the 27th inst. will positively be sold, on Fitzsimons' Wharf, at 11 o'clock precisely, 34 PUNCHONS OLD FOURTH PROOF

JAMAICA RUM,

Landing from the ship Favourite, from Belfast.

The above RUM is upwards of three years old, imported into Belfast in 1817, and until its exportation remained under the Keys of the custom house. Its undoubted character renders it worthy the attention of the dealers in the Article.

ALSO,

17 quarter, and 19 hogshheads } L. P. MADEIRA WINE,

Imported direct, and of superior flavor and brand. Conditions—all sums under \$200, cash; over 200 to 500, 60 days; over 500, 90 days; approved paper. January 24

SALES AT AUCTION.

New crop New Orleans Molasses and Palm Leaf.

BY M. C. MORDECAI.

THIS DAY, 7th inst., at 11 o'clock, will be sold, at Union wharf, previous to the sale of Coffee, 57 bbls. prime new crop Orleans MOLASSES.

AND,

320 mats PALM LEAF.

Conditions at sale. Ja 7

Cargo new crop Rio Coffee.

BY M. C. MORDECAI.

THIS DAY, the 7th January, at 11 o'clock will be sold at the stores on Union wharf, The cargo of the barque Brazillero, from Rio.

CONSISTING OF:

2500 bags prime green new crop RIO COFFEE. Catalogues will be ready and Coffee can be examined by the 1st prox.

Conditions in future advertisement. Ja 7

Spanish Segars.

BY M. C. MORDECAI.

THIS DAY, the 7th inst., at 11 o'clock, will be sold, on Union wharf, immediately after the sale of Coffee, 300,000 SPANISH SEGARS, part of which are very choice.

Conditions at sale. Ja 7

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DARKY, with a Child aged 12 months, she is a complete seamstress and tayloress, and in every respect a most excellent house servant;

NANNETTE, between 12 and 13, understands the taking care of children and plain sewing; and Her sister, MARCELLINA, aged 8 years.

All the above can be warranted good characters, and are the property of a family who wish to remove to the northward, therefore will be sold for cash. For information respecting them, apply at Mr. Isham Williams', on Williams' wharf.

April 9

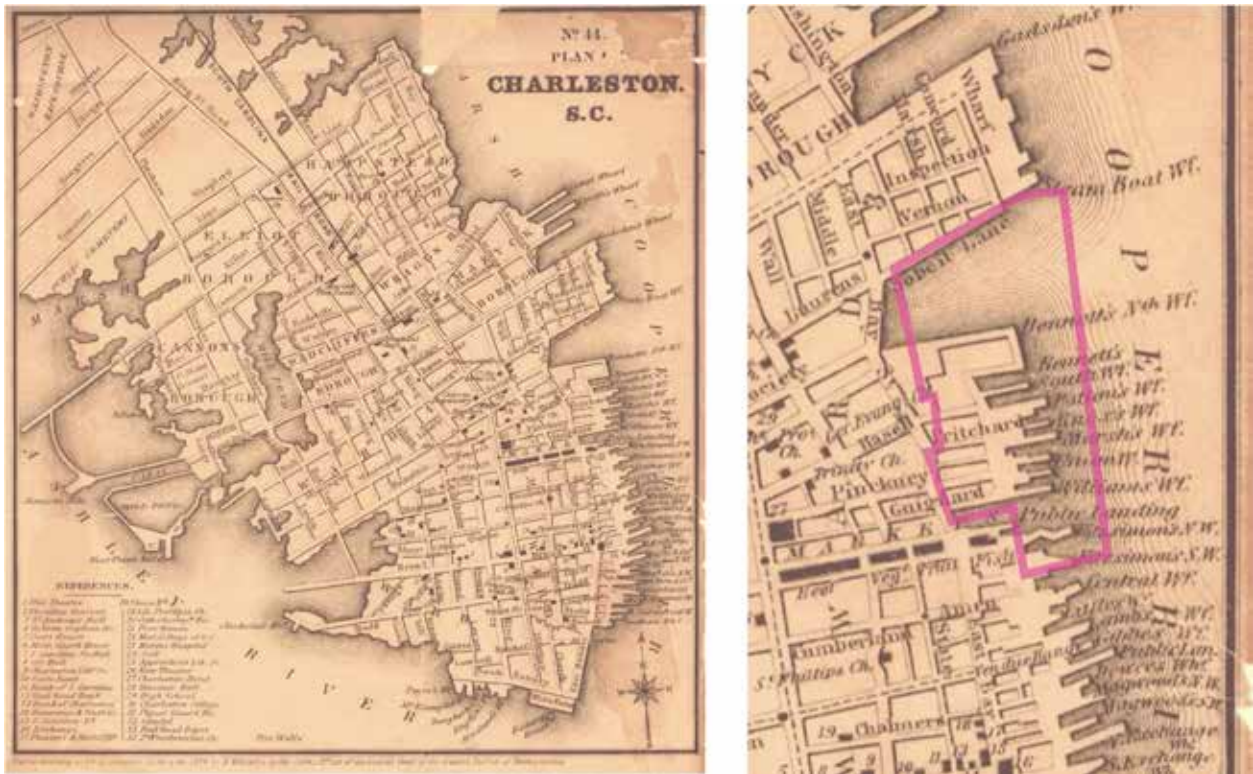
thstu 3

TOP LEFT IMAGE: Jamaican rum and Madeira wine for sale at Fitzsimon's Wharf, 1821. Source: *City Gazette and Commercial Daily Advertiser*

TOP RIGHT IMAGE: Molasses, palm leaves, coffee, and Spanish "segars" (cigars) for sale at Union Wharf, 1845. Source: *Charleston Courier*

MIDDLE IMAGE: Advertisement for "Prime Windward Coast Slaves" for sale at Williams' Wharf, 1805. Source: *City Gazette and Daily Advertiser*

BOTTOM IMAGE: Enslaved children, ages 8 to 13 (and one infant), for sale at Williams' Wharf, 1812. Source: *City Gazette and Commercial Daily Advertiser*



TOP IMAGES: No. 44 Plan of Charleston, S.C., 1849. Source: Historical Maps of Alabama Collection, University of Alabama Department of Geography. Graphic by Laurel M. Fay

Just north of Union Pier, Gadsden's Wharf is known for being one of the most heavily trafficked import locations for enslaved Africans on colonial and early American soil, and neighboring docks also contributed to making Charleston a hub for the buying and selling of enslaved people of African descent. There were five such wharves along Union Pier historically associated with the slave trade: Mey's Wharf, Williams' Wharf, Fitzsimon's Wharf, Patton's Wharf, and Union Wharf. Among these, Williams' Wharf had the highest number of recorded transactions related to the buying and selling of enslaved Africans. During the first half of the 19th century, newspapers advertised the sale of "prime Windward Coast Slaves," as well as individuals trained in trades, often sold to settle estates or pay debts. Some vessels were advertised as offering passage for enslaved people. Other ads publicized rewards to be collected on these wharves for capturing and returning enslaved people attempting escape.

AN EARLY HUB OF INDUSTRY AND MANUFACTURING

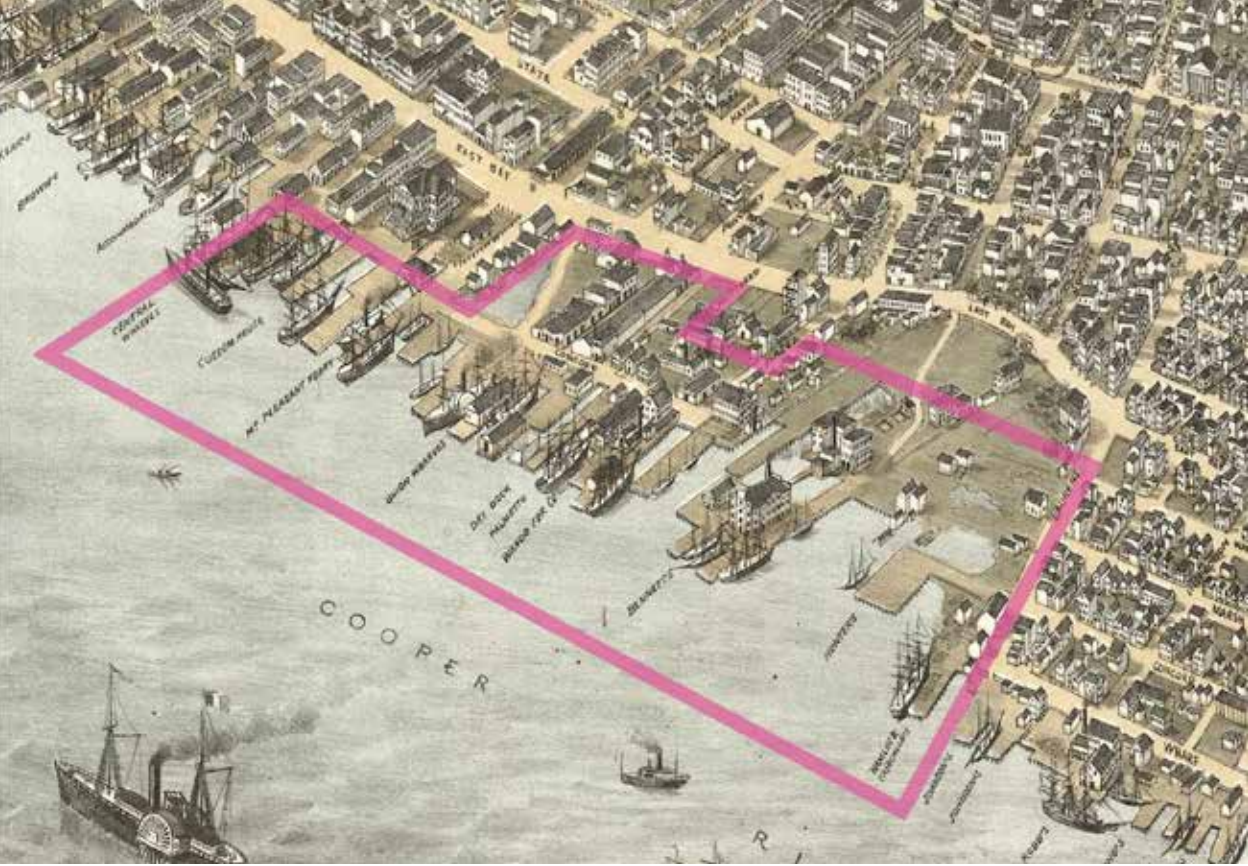
The wharves once located on what is now Union Pier created a thriving district for industry and manufacturing that helped establish Charleston as a major 19th century economic force. Blacksmiths, carpenters, ironworkers, manufacturers, shipbuilders, and merchants coexisted in this space, capitalizing on nearby railroad connections and the Cooper River.

Just to name a few: In the early 1800s, a blacksmith shop operated by John Corby was located on Knox's Wharf. Union Cotton Compress opened adjacent to Union Wharf in 1845. Leighou & Russell Carpenters opened across from Palmetto Wharf on Pritchard Street in 1853.

The Bird's Eye View Map of Charleston from 1872 gives us a detailed interpretation of what this eastern wharf neighborhood looked like, from the scale of the vessels in port, to the manufacturing mills and collection of commercial and residential structures located within and adjacent to present-day Union Pier. Wharves frequently changed hands and took on new names, reflective of their primary enterprise. Wilcox & Gibbs Guano Co. and Phosphate Works

TOP RIGHT
IMAGE
C. Drie's Bird's
Eye View Map,
1872. Source:
Library of
Congress.
Graphic by
Laurel M. Fay

BOTTOM
RIGHT IMAGE
Advertisement
for a new
coal yard at
Palmetto Wharf,
1857. Source:
Charleston
Courier



was located between Merchants' and Palmetto wharves in the 1880s. In the 1890s, Consumers' Coal Company and Pregnall's Shipyard and Marine Railway operated out of Merchants' Wharf. By 1901, Riverside Iron Works had set up shop on Palmetto Wharf, specializing in fertilizer and phosphate machinery, as well as marine railway and shipbuilding. People could also purchase coal, iron, and building materials from Riverside Iron Works and other vendors on the waterfront.

Now the backbone of Charleston's economy, the tourism industry also had its beginnings at the wharves, when Sullivan's Island and Mt. Pleasant Ferry Company began operating out of Palmetto Wharf in 1849. This ferry company provided pleasure cruises and excursions to visitors and residents to Mount Pleasant, Sullivan's Island, Fort Sumter, and other waterfront destinations. In peak summer season, the ferry carried more than 7,000 passengers in a single day, and even assisted transporting people to safety during hurricanes. Pleasure cruises and ticketed outings open to the public also departed from Union Wharf at the turn of the 20th century.

The Bennett Rice Mill opened in 1844 adjacent to Bennett's Wharves and is regarded as a significant example of pre-Civil War industrial architecture in Charleston. After the end of the Civil War and the decline of the economy once fueled by enslaved labor, the facility ceased operation as a mill in 1911. It briefly became a factory for Planters Peanut and Chocolate Company before closing permanently

NEW COAL YARD,
Palmetto Wharf, foot of Pritchard-street.



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LEHIGH LUMP COAL, for foundries
LEHIGH EGG COAL, for furnaces.

BITUMINOUS.
CUMBERLAND LUMP, for steam
CUMBERLAND MEDIUM, for parlors
CUMBERLAND FINE, for smiths
VIRGINIA FINE, for smiths.

ALSO,
ENGLISH CANNEL AND ORREL COAL.
All of which will be sold at the LOWEST MARKET PRICES FOR CASH.
Orders from the country promptly attended to.

September 26 1857 JAS. M. STOCKER,
Palmetto Wharf.

TOP LEFT IMAGE
Bennett Rice Mill
Historic American
Buildings Survey
(HABS) documentation
photograph by Louis
Schwartz, 1958. Source:
Library of Congress



TOP RIGHT IMAGE
Bennett Rice Mill façade
photograph by Leroy
Burnell, 2021. Source:
Post and Courier



in the 1930s. A series of natural disasters, including a 1938 tornado that ripped off the building’s roof, compromised its structural integrity. Thanks to the effort of early preservationists, including the Preservation Society of Charleston, its façade still stands today, a relic of the rice-cultivation industry, now isolated in a sea of concrete.

CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE OF UNION PIER’S HISTORICAL WHARVES

While trade and industry played a large role in shaping Union Pier’s waterfront, these historical wharves also contributed to Charleston’s rich cultural heritage. Charleston’s “Mosquito Fleet,” a small group of African American fishermen, formed well before the Civil War, and helped feed the city after the devastation of the war in the late 1860s. An 1885 newspaper article praised the Mosquito Fleet for being “steady, sober, industrious, and fearless,” in their dangerous line of work. They sailed their small fishing boats out of Fisherman’s Wharf, within Union Pier, at the foot of Market Street for decades. Immortalized by DuBose Heyward and George Gershwin’s opera, “Porgy and Bess,” the Mosquito Fleet had more than 100 men by the early 20th century.

Many of these fishermen came from multi-generational families that were decades-long veterans of the trade. Mosquito Fleet fishermen often sang distinctive songs as they brought in their hauls of blackfish, mullet, mackerel, red snapper, trout, whiting, shrimp, catfish, and more, to sell at Terry Fish Company and along Market Street. Through more than a century of hardship, including hurricanes, tornados, dangerous gales, and deadly seas and more, members of the Mosquito Fleet persevered, and the fleet remained a cultural touchstone long after its heyday. Eventually, the group disbanded in the 1970s.

BOTTOM LEFT IMAGE
Mosquito Fleet-caught
fish for sale at Terry
Fish Co. in 1930.
Source: *News and Courier*

SPECIALS	
FOR FRIDAY, MAY 30TH	
YOU GET BEST HERE	
COME — PAY — CARRY	
Local Blackfish	15c
Pound	
Local Shrimp, (headless)	25c
Pound	
Spanish Mackerel	18c
Pound	
Mullet	15c
Pound	
Red Snapper Steakfish.	35c
Pound	
(The best steakfish produced).	
Deep Water Whiting.	10c
Pound	
(2 lbs. for 25c.)	
SUMMER TROUT	15c
Pound	
Local Whiting	20c
Pound	
(Mosquito Fleet caught)	
Fish Cleaned and Delivered at	
Slightly Higher Prices	
PHONES 9 AND 172	
TERRY FISH COMPANY	
FOOT OF MARKET STREET	



BOTTOM RIGHT IMAGE
Mosquito Fleet
fishermen, c. 1930s.
Source: *Post and Courier*



TOP IMAGE
Mount Pleasant
and Sullivan's
Island Ferry
Company
brochure,
c. 1890. Source:
USC Digital
Collections

UNION PIER’S CONTINUED 20TH CENTURY DEVELOPMENT

In 1922, the City of Charleston purchased Union Wharves and began making improvements to overhaul the facilities under the management of the Port Utilities Commission, which was established to manage the city’s waterfront properties. The four Union Wharves were consolidated into one large wharf and renamed Union Pier. Due to financial strain exacerbated by World War II, the Port Utilities Commission failed to turn a profit for the City, and the wharves fell into disrepair. In 1947, the newly formed South Carolina State Ports Authority took ownership of Union Pier and continued to build upon and expand its footprint, which continued into the late 20th century and included construction of the massive concrete pier we see today.

The once-bustling urban industrial landscape that helped establish Charleston as the port city it is known as today has been largely forgotten and erased from public memory as historic structures were demolished, and the piers were consolidated and paved over. The courageous Mosquito Fleet fishermen, skilled tradespeople, and everyone who passed through and worked around these wharves had a significant impact on Charleston.

BOTTOM IMAGE
Union Pier, with
Port Utilities
Commission
Buildings No. 1
and 2, c. 1920s.
Source: Historic
Charleston
Foundation





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PUBLIC SPACES CRITICAL TO THE EVOLUTION OF DOWNTOWN CHARLESTON, UNION PIER

*by Erin Minnigan, Director of Preservation & Planning
and Sam Spence, Director of Public Affairs*

Mayor Joseph P. Riley, Jr. was 12 years old when the Tidewater Terminal burned. One of the worst fires in Charleston's history in 1955, claiming two lives and causing some \$3 million in damage a stone's throw from the U.S. Custom House, the blaze set the stage for what would become the mayor's namesake public space — one that still serves as a guidepost for Charleston waterfront developments, including Union Pier.

With a clarity of vision unmatched during his 40 years in office and in the time since, Riley knew precisely how to introduce Waterfront Park at its May 11, 1990, dedication.

"The lasting mark of a civilization is the city," Riley said, unveiling the park that reclaimed a derelict Adger's Wharf parking lot on the site of the 1955 fire. "And it is in the public realm of our cities that we must work with special care."

"No city has too many parks," he continued. "And when a city can combine a beautiful park with an exquisite water's edge, then the public realm is most-greatly enhanced."

Since Waterfront Park's opening 33 years ago, Charleston has grappled with increasing pressures from its economic success, the impacts of a changing climate, and more. But the public space Riley debuted that day has proven so transformative that its civic underpinnings are part of the foundation for any project along the edge of the Charleston peninsula.

Credit: Justin Falk Photography





LOOKING BACK

The recent proposal for Union Pier is not the first time redevelopment of the site has been explored. In fact, this is the latest episode in over 30 years of serious indication by the South Carolina State Ports Authority (SPA) of their intent to sell the site for private development. Two entire master plans were previously compiled for Union Pier that never came to fruition — we can now look back and say that was probably for the best.

It all started in the early 1990s, when the SPA announced it wanted to unload the Union Pier property, seeking to generate revenue for future terminal development. By 1995, it awarded a major contract to Ehrenkrantz and Eckstut Architects to provide master planning services for the site. The SPA's stated project goals were to "maximize the economic benefits and public usage" of Union Pier, and the plan phased development over a 20-year period to allow the SPA to continue operations until it relocated to an alternate port location.

The central feature of the plan was a new semi-circular harbor at the foot of Market Street, along with a public promenade extending from Waterfront Park. It also provided for incredible density, totaling nearly 2.5 million square feet of development, with buildings up to 9 stories, built right up to the Cooper River over piers. Adopted by City Council in 1996, the plan was critiqued soon after in the 1999 Downtown Plan.

Created to guide future development on the Peninsula, the Downtown Plan looked closely at what had been proposed for Union Pier and said such an increase in height could not be

"endorsed" because it was contrary to "the existing height regime: lower heights around the edges of the peninsula, with higher heights along the central spine." It concluded that heights on Union Pier should not exceed 55 feet, continuing the heights of existing neighborhoods around it, and urged the master plan be revised and resubmitted.

Instead, progress on Union Pier stalled for the next decade, until cruise ships came to town. In 2009, SPA revived talks of opening the site for redevelopment after Carnival Cruise Line announced a plan for year-round voyages, using Union Pier as a launching point. This time, architecture firm Cooper, Robertson & Partners was hired to develop the master plan with a primary focus on creating a new, expanded cruise terminal, while also identifying areas for private development and enhancing mobility conditions.

Adopted the following year, the plan recommended putting the terminal toward the north end of the site in an existing building retrofitted to handle embarkation/disembarkation operations and having surface parking concentrated near the building. For other areas, building heights were largely limited to 60 feet, and specific criteria were outlined for building massing, wall plane changes, and alleyways to prevent monolithic development.

To facilitate anticipated traffic increases, it was proposed to reconfigure Washington Street to emphasize it as a new thoroughfare, as well as reestablish Concord Street and continue the existing street grid into Union Pier. Finally, the plan highlighted the evolution of Union Pier and laid out several initiatives to interpret its history and restore lost features, including the reintroduction of a natural shoreline and public landing at the end of Market Street.

WATERFRONT PARK OFFERS LESSONS

In stark contrast to the approaches being contemplated for redevelopment of Union Pier is what occurred to the south, at Waterfront Park. The land sat vacant or underutilized after the 1955 terminal fire until the 1970s, when a private developer intended to construct a massive, high-rise residential and retail complex on the property, which would include filling in wetlands to facilitate large-scale construction.

Understanding the threat this posed to Charleston's fragile environment and quality of life, Mayor Riley worked tirelessly to secure grant funding to buy the property and build a world class park that opened public access to the waterfront. He understood that as the city grew and tourism pressure mounted, there would be an increased need for greenspace and public parks to mitigate those impacts.

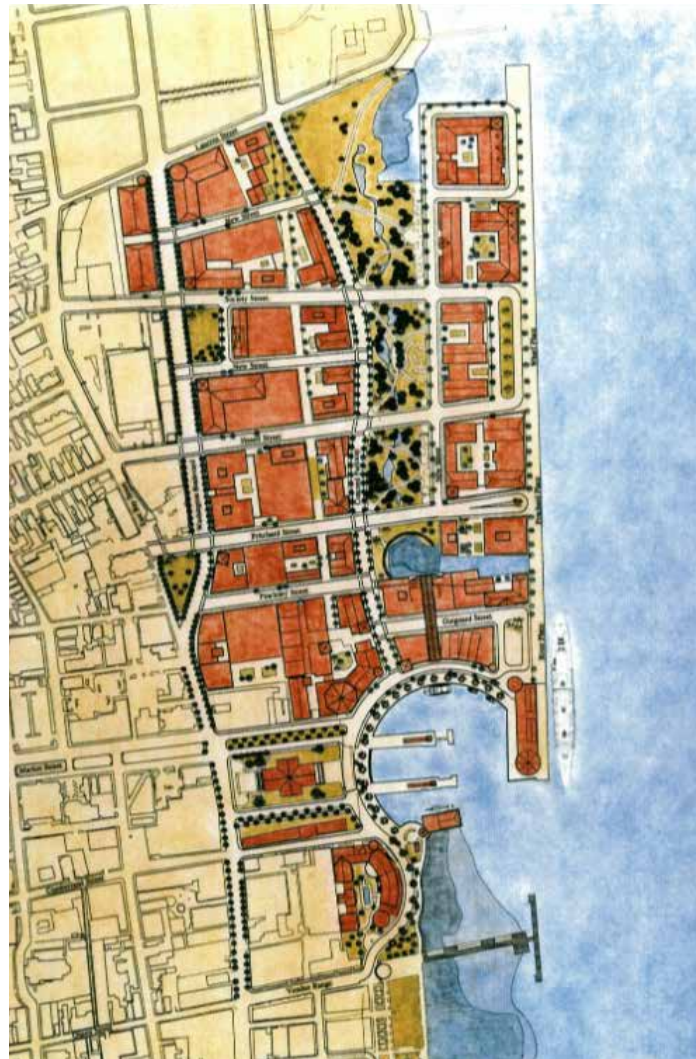
After 11 years of careful planning and meticulous implementation, Waterfront Park opened in 1990, designed by Boston-based firm, Sasaki. The result was a welcoming and accessible public space that harmoniously integrated land and water and emphasized Charleston's unique heritage. The park has since become one of Charleston's most well-loved amenities — a critical place of respite and enjoyment for residents and visitors alike, creating tremendous value for the area around it.

Lessons learned from the success of Waterfront park's redevelopment should significantly inform ongoing master planning processes for Union Pier.



TOP IMAGE: *Evening Post*
front page, June 17, 1955

MIDDLE AND BOTTOM IMAGES
Riley marks opening of Waterfront
Park on May 11, 1990. Credit:
City of Charleston archives via
Charleston Parks Conservancy



First, there is clear value to create a seamless transition from the surrounding historic neighborhoods that respects the scale and character of our unique built environment. Toward this goal, additional height and the intensity that comes with large-scale development is not desired for the property to protect essential viewsheds and avoid harmful impacts to our vulnerable, low-lying areas. Public access to the waterfront is a benchmark requirement, but along with this, there should be the creation of meaningful, substantial park space to support our quality of life and function as resilient infrastructure. Finally, people want to see a master plan that provides inclusive, inviting uses that are clearly resident-serving, not a luxury playground for tourists.

Plans and thinking for what should be built at Union Pier have evolved over the years, but the value remains clear of open space and a public realm that complements the human-scale walkable historic urban neighborhoods of downtown Charleston. You need to look no further than to Waterfront Park.

TOP IMAGE
Union Pier
Illustration
(1996) by
Ehrenkrantz
and Eckstut
Architects

BOTTOM
IMAGE
Union Pier
Rendering
(2010) by
Cooper,
Robertson
& Partners

ON THE HORIZON

TOP LEFT
Renderings
of Union Pier
Master Plan
(1996) by
Ehrenkrantz
and Eckstut
Architects

Pieces and parts of these previous plans have been carried through to the most recent proposal for Union Pier, but new pressures have also emerged that were not considered in the 1996 and 2010 plans, namely accounting for the need for resilience. Increasing flooding events and rapidly changing climate conditions call for serious consideration for how the site will manage water, especially given its sensitive location on the coastline.

TOP RIGHT
Renderings
of Union Pier
Master Plan
(2010) by
Cooper,
Robertson
& Partners

Other unprecedented challenges Charleston is facing puts the development of Union Pier in a new context and heightens the stakes for it to respond to community needs. Tourism numbers are at an all-time high, big box buildings are popping up at an alarming rate, and housing affordability is at a crisis point. In fact, through the 2021 City Plan data-gathering process, it was discovered that over 16,000 affordable units would be needed to eliminate the affordability gap by 2030.

Given these pressures, Union Pier is a critical opportunity to improve livability for our downtown neighborhoods. Since redevelopment of the site has been speculated over the past several decades, residents have been contemplating their visions for the future of Union Pier, with resounding consensus over a few key elements.





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of CHARLESTON

A LOOK BACK AT THE
69TH
CARLOPOLIS
AWARDS

PRESENTED BY





22 LEGARE STREET

PRO MERITO AWARD

OWNER: Summer and Clyde Anderson

PROJECT TEAM: Glenn Keyes Architects, Richard Marks Restorations, Wertimer + Cline Landscape Architects, Botticelli & Pohl Architects, Mark Zeff Interior Design



48 SOUTH BATTERY

RESILIENCE AWARD

OWNER: Stacey and Alison Nutt

PROJECT TEAM: Glenn Keyes Architects, CDS Restoration, LLC, Ables Landscapes



225 RUTLEDGE AVENUE

EXTERIOR AWARD

OWNER: Travis Arnett

PROJECT TEAM: Bello Garris Architects, Arnett Construction, Russell Rosen, P.E.



221-223 ST. PHILIP STREET

EXTERIOR AWARD

OWNER: Revival Street, LLC

PROJECT TEAM: New World Byzantine, Arnett Construction, Cintra Sedalik, and Josh Dunn Landscape Architecture.





before



after



452 HUGER STREET

EXTERIOR AWARD

OWNER: Peter and Laura Horlbeck

PROJECT TEAM: American Vernacular, Lloyd Custom Builders, Land Studio, Pirate's Forge, Josh Godbolt, and Timber Artisans



655 EAST BAY STREET

NEW CONSTRUCTION AWARD

OWNER: Madison Capital Group

PROJECT TEAM: Sottile & Sottile, Cline Design, Thomas & Hutton, Harold K. Jordan & Co., Jordan & Skala Engineers, Inc.



early 1960s



2023



DELTA PHARMACY

NEW CONSTRUCTION AWARD

OWNER: Willis High

PROJECT TEAM: The Middleton Group, Chastain Construction



KKBE COMING STREET CEMETERY

EXTERIOR AWARD

OWNER: Kahal Kadosh Beth Elohim Synagogue

PROJECT TEAM: Ahern's Anvil, Amanda Graham Barton Landscape Architect, Bennett Preservation Engineering, Clemson University, Ford Restored, Graveyard Shift, Magee Ratcliff Construction, Michael Du Bois Metalworks, Masonry Solutions International, Nicole Isenbarger Archaeology Collective, Stonemeister, UpSouth LLC





THE REFINERY

NEW CONSTRUCTION AWARD

OWNER: Refinery on Meeting, LLC

PROJECT TEAM: The Flyway Companies, The Middleton Group, Sottile & Sottile



8 FRANKLIN STREET

RESILIENCE AWARD

OWNER: John and Linda Spratt

PROJECT TEAM: Artis Construction, Byers Collaborative



4 DINGLE STREET

EXTERIOR AWARD

OWNER: Palmer Harrell

PROJECT TEAM: Brackish Builders, Conner III Builders, Marty Johnson



33 ASHTON STREET

EXTERIOR AWARD

OWNER: Anishi Scott

PROJECT TEAM: Julia F. Martin Architects, JJR Development, LLC, Troy Ayo





77 KING STREET

EXTERIOR AWARD

OWNER: Ted and Grace Fey

PROJECT TEAM: Dufford Young Architects,
Wertimer + Cline Landscape Architects,
Tupper Builders

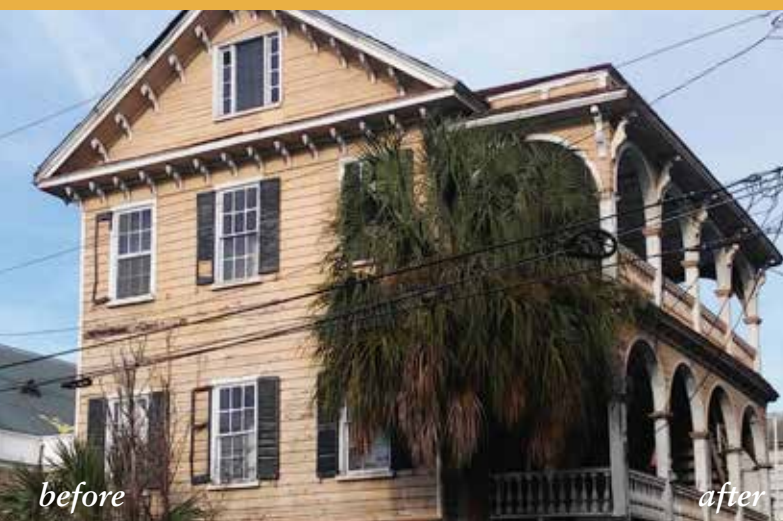


116 CANNON STREET

EXTERIOR AWARD

OWNER: Ashley Baize

PROJECT TEAM: Julia F. Martin Architects,
Archer Construction, Brian R. Wells



216 ASHLEY AVENUE

EXTERIOR AWARD

OWNER: John and Laura Bush, Mike Ulliman

PROJECT TEAM: Julia F. Martin Architects,
Archer Construction, B. Berry Interiors



ELIZABETH KIRKLAND CAHILL RECOGNIZED WITH SUSAN PRINGLE FROST AWARD

This year's Caroloopolis Awards concluded with a special presentation of the Susan Pringle Frost Award given to our former board chair, Betsy Cahill.

The Susan Pringle Frost Award honors individuals or organizations that have had a profound influence on historic preservation in Charleston or have gone above and beyond in support of the mission of the Preservation Society. The award, named for our founder, has only been given out a handful of times.

In 1920, "Miss Sue" formed the nation's first grassroots preservation organization, and her legacy lives on today in our work. She was a pioneer for long-term thinking, recognizing the need early for a dedicated organization to advocate for community values.

Like Miss Sue, Betsy has inspired so many to action and has served the Preservation Society with heartfelt devotion. After returning to her hometown of Charleston over a decade ago, she was struck by the many drastic changes that had taken place. She decided to take action by becoming a Preservation Society member.

Of course, Betsy is no ordinary member. She joined the board in 2012 and served as its chair from 2015 until 2022, charting a new course for the next century. We can think of no one more deserving of our organization's highest honor. Thank you, Betsy.



"Just when we shake our heads and think, 'Where have all our heroes gone?' We can rest assured that a true heroine of our times is rallying us to stand up for Charleston."

—ELIZABETH HAGOOD,
PSC VICE CHAIR





MARGARET DONALDSON *interiors*

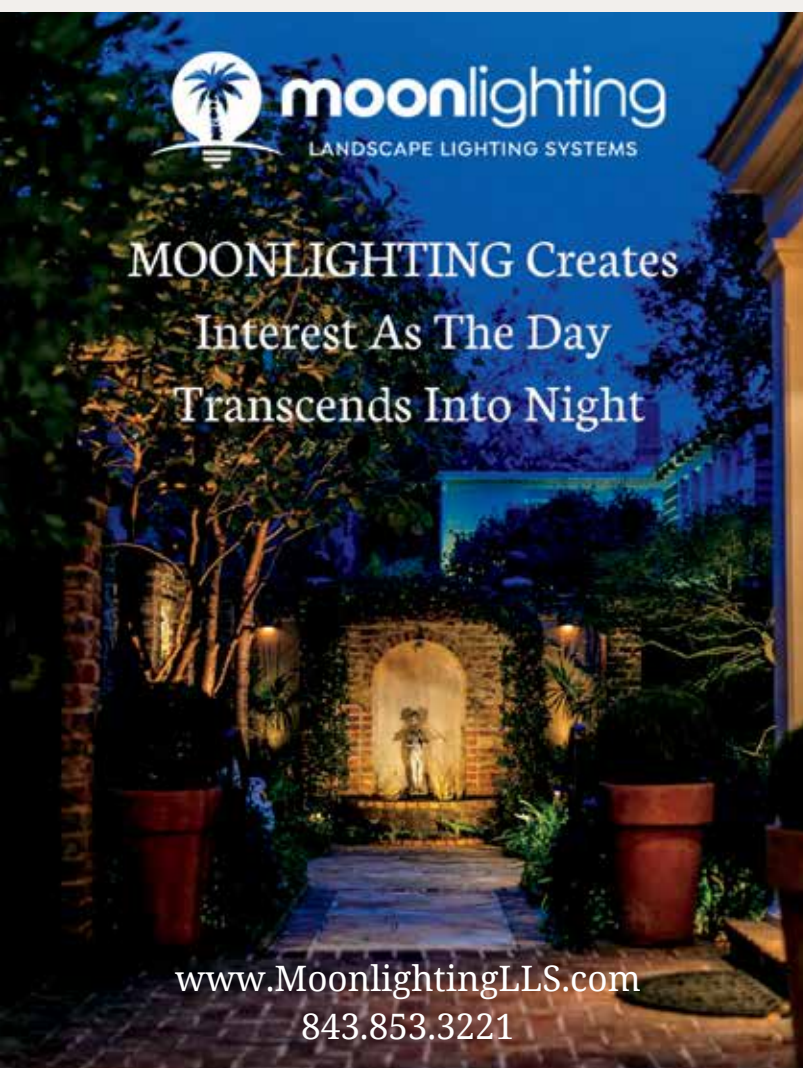
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PARTY PREP WITH THE PRESERVATION SOCIETY SHOP

by Grayson Flowers, Retail Associate

As the days get longer, I'm inspired to invite over friends for golden-hour gatherings. As luck would have it, the Preservation Society of Charleston's shop at 147 King Street has a number of magnificent local makers to help keep my table looking fresh while still showcasing familiar favorites.

Of course, the most crucial element of any get-together is the menu. The Junior League of Charleston's **PARTY RECEIPTS** is a staple in my kitchen (and in many of y'all's since its 1993 release). The variety of hors d'oeuvres, dips, and spreads helps make appetizer-selection a breeze. I like to start with the Artichoke-Spinach Dip (found on page 47) or the Shrimp Wadmalaw (page 98). I'll pair this with a relish tray that allows me to show off my **LANDRUM BOARD** made of fallen lumber sourced from across the Lowcountry.



Once snacking and sipping moves to the table, it's time for **Susan Gregory's** pottery to take center stage. Produced in a shared studio in the Neck area of North Charleston, Gregory's pottery and dishes range in size and design, so there is something to match every aesthetic. Her handy **SHARE CUPS** are the perfect vessel for table wine or a quick cocktail.

Speaking of: I recommend picking up a bottle of the **BITTERMILK NO. 5**, a locally made charred grapefruit tonic, that is guaranteed to become a bar cart essential for mocktail- and cocktail-partaking guests alike. One of the Shop's newest makers, **Kristy Bishop**, has created unique napkins hand-dyed in indigo, a natural hue with deep roots in Charleston. Be prepared for your first-ever napkin-related compliments.

Of course, you can't plot your entertaining without a show-stopping pan from **SMITHEY IRONWARE**. Known for its reliable and timeless pieces, Smithey's growing collection will find a place in any kitchen. All of Smithey's North Charleston-made pieces work from stove to table, but the polished carbon steel Farmhouse Collection is on another level. The **OVAL ROASTER** and the **PARTY PAN** most frequently land on my table, each as capable as centerpieces and they are for cooking and serving.

Garden & Gun magazine's **BLESS YOUR HEART** trivia game will be the cherry on top of any gathering. Covering topics from literature and arts to sports and cuisine, this card-based game is the perfect fit for your eclectic friends and your restless family.

Visit the Preservation Society of Charleston Shop daily from 10-5, or shop online at thepscshop.com to build up your hosting arsenal this spring!

Grayson Flowers is a Retail Associate at the Preservation Society Shop.



MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

THE SPRATT FAMILY

by Courtney Theis, Director of Advancement

Longtime Charleston residents John and Linda Spratt have called their Harleston Village single house home for over 25 years. Constructed in 1880, their home is where they have raised five children and enjoyed the many benefits of downtown living including shorter commutes and walkable amenities. According to Linda, “We always loved older houses, and we were just intrigued and excited about the property.” Downtown Charleston had a special appeal when they moved here from Richmond, Virginia in 1997. They were committed to sensitively rehabilitating their new house in multiple phases beginning shortly after they moved in. Though the process had its hurdles, like the stabilization of the joists in the rear of the house, they successfully updated systems and spaces to make it functional for the needs of a large family.

The city’s weather events started to impact their property with increasing severity, starting with Hurricane Floyd in 1999, followed by the 1,000-year flood in 2015, Matthew in 2016, and finally Irma in 2017. Linda recalled the scene of water rising up through the vents in their dining room and the rush to remove the furnishings before they were ruined during Irma. In addition to water breaching the garage and first floor of the house, the HVAC systems and electrical were damaged multiple times during these flood events. After Irma, interior designer Robin Rogers encouraged them to enlist Artis Construction and they ultimately

“We think it’s valuable encouragement for the PSC to acknowledge all the project teams and homeowners who are doing the right thing, and taking special care of these irreplaceable buildings.”

made the decision to raise their house. Byers Collective, Vail Engineering, Wolfe House Movers, and others joined the team to chart a path forward to combat the water challenges on the site. When facing such a monumental project, the family did consider relocating. But with the diminished returns on a flood-prone site and the investments they had already made in the property, the Spratts opted to elevate. Reflecting on their initial hesitations, “I don’t know where we got the courage to do it; this was a complicated process — not just the logistics of the design, but the timing and the preparations. It required a leap of faith; Tim Sites and Guyton Ash were confident we could do it.”



At the time, the City had not yet developed design guidelines for house elevations, so the team was pioneering a new process working with the Board of Architectural Review. The Spratts valued the effective comments of the

Preservation Society during the public review, which in their opinion improved the final plans. Among the considerations were the impacts to the streetscape and the preservation of significant character-defining features. The designs for the new front entry staircase, piazza staircase, and ground floor treatment had to be carefully crafted to blend seamlessly with the historic materials. In what ultimately became a precedent for future elevations in the city, the Preservation Society recognized the project with a 2022 Carolopolis Award for Resiliency in the inaugural year for this award category.

About the program, Linda commented, “We think it’s valuable encouragement for the PSC to acknowledge all the project teams and homeowners who are doing the right thing, and taking special care of these irreplaceable buildings.”

In addition to participating in programs like the Carolopolis Awards, the Spratts are active members of the Preservation Society. They believe the organization can make changes for the better in terms of neighborhood livability, tourism management, and supporting longtime homeowners and local development.

“Out-of-town investors have less interest in Charleston, they’re more focused in the bottom line and it really cuts into the fabric of our community,” Linda said. Pointing to the massive proposal at 295 Calhoun Street, adjacent to their Harleston Village neighborhood, as a case in point for this kind of problematic development that could even worsen flooding in an already at-risk location.

Citywide resiliency measures beyond private property owner interventions are a top line concern as we consider measures to manage water in Charleston. The PSC are grateful for the membership and alliance of Linda and John, who have personally invested in the long-term viability of their historic property and have captured the spirit of the first resiliency award given by the Preservation Society.



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BLACK BUSINESSES OF CHARLESTON ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

by Anna-Catherine Carroll, Manager of Preservation Initiatives

For years, the Preservation Society has had the privilege of working alongside the community to contribute to a fuller narrative of Charleston's history through research initiatives like the Morris Street Business District, Charleston Justice Journey, and Historic Markers Program. These efforts, in conjunction with our daily advocacy work, allow us to continually learn from educators, activists, and residents who are shaping the conversation around celebrating and documenting Black history in Charleston.

Relationships developed from this collaborative work often present opportunities to engage long-time Charlestonians and listen to their personal memories of the vibrant, self-sustaining Black communities that have changed drastically in just a few decades. Time and time again, our staff hears conversations centering around fond and formative recollections of the businesses that played key roles in neighborhood life. From corner stores, barber shops, and service stations, to doctors' offices, restaurants, and funeral homes, the heartbeat of Charleston's economy and culture has traditionally been locally owned, neighborhood-serving businesses that provide essential goods, services, and gathering spaces. This is especially true for Black communities who forged entrepreneurial success and strong cultural identity in the face of racial segregation and injustice.

In recent decades, many small, family-owned enterprises have closed their doors as Charleston's urban and demographic landscape has transformed under intensifying redevelopment pressures, and Black-owned businesses have been disproportionately affected. In many instances, it is not just the business that no longer exists, but the building it occupied. The rate of change has been such that many Black Charlestonians who grew up frequenting streets like King or Spring say they no longer recognize these thoroughfares now dotted with high-end boutiques, luxury short-term rentals, and new development that dwarfs those familiar environs.

Henry Smith's Shell Station, the Brooks Motel, and McKenzie's Fine Arts Studio are each highlighted as part of the BLACK BUSINESSES OF CHARLESTON ORAL HISTORY PROJECT.

Visit preservationsociety.org/oralhistory to learn more about the people, places, and stories behind each of these businesses and their legacies that live on today.



TOP IMAGE
Brooks Motel before it was demolished in 2000 (courtesy of the *Post and Courier*)

MIDDLE IMAGE
Mr. Henry Smith shovels snow at his Shell Station (courtesy of Dr. Maxine Smith)

BOTTOM IMAGE
Article highlighting the opening of McKenzie's Fine Arts Studio (*Charleston Evening Post*, March 2, 1966)

Photography Studio To Open

Charles Edward McKenzie will open a photography studio at 215 Rutledge Ave. An open house Sunday from 4 to 7 p.m. will make the opening of McKenzie's Fine Arts Studio which will specialize in commercial, portrait and color photography.

Henry Smith's Shell Station at 40 Cannon Street, the Brooks Motel at 60 Morris Street, McKenzie's Fine Arts Studio at 215 Rutledge Avenue — these are just a few examples of former Black-owned and operated businesses with no structural remnant left to mark their presence in Charleston history. Today, each of these sites is occupied by modern infill or surface parking. However, the stories of these businesses are not lost. They live on in the memories of family members and patrons, as well as in personal photographs, keepsakes, newspaper articles, and advertisements that have not traditionally been documented in formal archives.

A COMMUNITY-LED EFFORT

The cultural significance and economic impact of Black businesses has been severely under-documented and the need is urgent to capture first- and second-hand memories of this central part of Charleston history. In 2022, guided by a group of advisors with ties to long-standing Black-owned businesses, the PSC began the visioning process for a community-led project that would provide an avenue for collecting and sharing stories of establishments and institutions that shaped Black life in Charleston. The idea of an oral history initiative was born out of a shared goal to allow business-owners and their families to elevate this historical narrative through the lens of their own personal experiences.

Over the course of a year, four initial interviews were conducted with family members of former, legacy business owners, constituting the pilot phase of the Black Businesses of Charleston Oral History Project. Beyond contributing to a more inclusive interpretation of Charleston's history for locals and visitors alike, the project aims to elevate the visibility of historic places where Black businesses operated, and promote broader policy reform to support, maintain, and attract Black-owned businesses.



IMAGE: Community members gather for a reception in honor of the project launch in fall 2022

In November 2022, a community event hosted at Burke High School marked the official launch of the Black Businesses of Charleston Oral History Project. The evening kicked off with a showing of a preview video featuring highlights from each of the initial oral history interviews, followed by remarks from Burke High School Principal Cheryl Swinton, project advisor Dr. Barbara Dilligard, and special guest former State Rep. David J. Mack III. Afterward, the community was invited to attend a celebratory reception and submit their own suggestions for future interviewees to contribute to this ongoing initiative.

Following a successful community launch, the project website went live featuring four interviews with Jean Brooks Murphy (Brooks family businesses), Sharon Scott (Scotty's Sweet Shop), Jamella Brown Jaglal (Dr. James Brown's dental practice), and Dr. Maxine Smith (Safety Cab Company and Henry Smith's service stations). Each oral history video is accompanied by historic photographs and detailed descriptions of the businesses and the neighborhoods in which they operated. This spring, the project's momentum added a fifth interview with Charles McKenzie, an accomplished photographer who owned and operated McKenzie's Fine Arts Studio on Rutledge Avenue. McKenzie notably photographed civil rights leaders during the 1969 Charleston Hospital Workers' Strike, including Coretta Scott King, Mahalia Jackson, and Jackie Robinson. Visit the oral history project website to listen to the full-length interview — including a story about when McKenzie photographed Muhammad Ali in Hampton Park!

Do you know of a business that would be a good addition to this ongoing initiative?

Explore the growing collection of interviews and share business and contact information at preservationsociety.org/oralhistory.

ENGAGING THE NEXT GENERATION

Through collaboration with oral history project advisors, the PSC has developed a partnership with the Charleston County School District 20 Principal's Collaboration Program (D20PCP) and Burke High School Foundation to engage local students in the Black Businesses of Charleston Oral History Project. The D20PCP is an innovative program spearheaded by local educators to strengthen academic progress in District 20, composed of elementary, middle, and high schools across the peninsula, through interdisciplinary, cultural enrichment opportunities. A key goal is to foster appreciation for Charleston's African American history and heritage. By bringing study of Black entrepreneurship and oral history methodology into the classroom, the PSC and D20PCP hope to inspire and empower local youth to learn more about their own family histories, strengthening intergenerational connectivity and community memory.

Teachers at several District 20 schools have already begun incorporating the history of Charleston's Black-owned businesses into their curriculum. To provide students with resources for continued study and a platform to share their research, the PSC, D20PCP, and Burke High School Foundation jointly hosted an Oral History Project Research Symposium and Black Business Showcase at Burke High School in May 2023. Students learned more about the research process from Avery Research Center and National Park Service staff and partnered with business owners and their families to share their histories via creative displays. Parents, teachers, and community members packed the Burke High School auditorium and exhibition space to celebrate student achievement, creating a palpable sense of pride in the rich history of Black-owned businesses in Charleston.

The PSC looks forward to continuing to work with local students as we establish a sustainable framework for conducting, recording, and sharing interviews as part of the Black Businesses of Charleston Oral History Project.

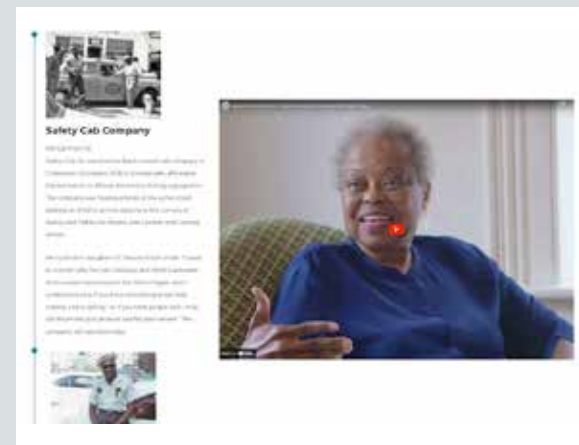


IMAGE: You can listen to full-length interviews and learn more about the people and places behind a variety of businesses on the Black Businesses of Charleston Oral History website

SPECIAL THANKS

The Black Businesses of Charleston Oral History Project has been stewarded by a passionate group of community members with a vision to capture the stories of the economic vibrancy significant to African American history in Charleston. These individuals have graciously served as Advisory Board members to this project, and several have shared their family stories as part of the pilot phase that we hope will serve as the foundation for an ongoing storytelling initiative.

We would like to honor and thank to our Advisory Board members, the individuals who shared their stories with us, and the team working behind the scenes. We extend our sincerest thanks to:

Dr. Barbara Dilligard, Jamella Brown Jaglal, Charles Edward McKenzie, Jean Brooks Murphy, Sharon Scott, and Dr. Maxine Smith. We also thank Prof. Damon Fordham and Travis Pearson for serving as oral historian and videographer for the initial phase of the project.

This project was launched with the support of the Henry & Sylvia Yaschik Foundation, Mr. and Mrs. John Winthrop, Mr. and Mrs. John and Elizabeth Cahill, and the Jean and James Rion Endowment of Coastal Community Foundation of South Carolina. This continuation of this project is made possible by the generosity of our donors. When you donate to the PSC, your gift contributes to all of our valuable preservation programs and advocacy efforts. Learn more at preservationsociety.org/ways-to-give.

OPENING OUR DOORS TO NEW MEMBERS

by Rebecca Hoffman, Manager of Advancement and Planned Giving,
and Kelly Vicario Hewitt, Community Outreach Coordinator

This year, the Preservation Society has been actively committed to making our cause more equitable, relevant, and easier to access by all communities on and off the peninsula. We know people are at the heart of our mission, and believe every citizen deserves to share their vision for Charleston. We are excited to update you on just a few ways we are expanding the PSC's geographic and demographic reach within the community.

As promised in our Centennial Campaign, we expanded our Advocacy staff to allow for additional outreach and civic engagement.

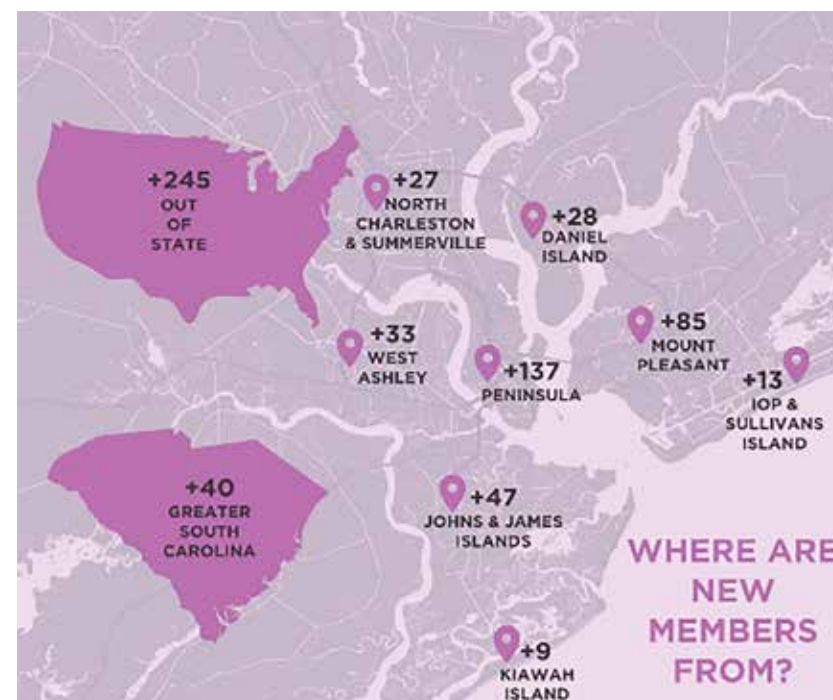
While engaged in more collaborative efforts than ever before, we are diligently working alongside partner organizations to find common ground and offer cross-disciplinary perspectives. A case in point was the recent program we co-hosted with the Charleston Parks Conservancy, Charleston Horticultural Society, and the Avery Research Center for African American History and Culture: *Black Women Dreaming with Land: A Conversation with Dr. Jessica Harris and Abra Lee*. The panel discussion, held at the Avery Research Center on Bull Street, featured Jessica Harris, one of the world's leading authorities on the

With historic preservation becoming a larger conversation off the peninsula, the Preservation Society has made a concerted effort to ensure our membership reflects the evolving needs of the community.

Thanks to the overwhelming success of the campaign, the PSC added a Community Outreach Coordinator to staff in 2021. Regularly meeting with community leaders to discuss how the PSC can collaborate and build on our grassroots work, we have strengthened connections with local communities, hearing directly from residents about their concerns and ideas. As a bridge-builder, we are deepening our relationships with groups such as the Eastside Community Development Corporation, Enough Pie, and the Westside Neighborhood Association to name a few. Our advocacy strives to uplift community-led decisions, and includes the successful partnership with the Eastside community as we worked on a positive preservation outcome for the redevelopment of Wilmot J. Fraser Elementary School, a 1950s "equalization" school, from demolition.

food and foodways of the African diaspora who you may recognize from the Netflix documentary series, *High on the Hog*, and Abra Lee, an international speaker, writer, and current Director of Horticulture at Oakland Cemetery in Atlanta. We were grateful to be a part of this discussion which allowed the public to hear from culinary and botany experts and examine the impacts of both on the Black community, and look forward to similar collaborations in the future.

Preservation is an inherently collaborative field, and fostering a culture of outreach and partnership has been central to the ethos of our President & CEO, Brian Turner. Outreach efforts led our advocacy team to classrooms on the peninsula. Anna-Catherine Carroll, Manager of Preservation Initiatives, spoke to a leadership class at The Citadel, hearing from students that the



Preservation Society provides a service to the community in advocacy and connecting others to educational resources. Students in the class learned more about the organization and how PSC advocacy includes The Citadel and its students, serving an important role in community outreach. Director of Preservation & Planning Erin Minnigan engaged with this semester's students at the Clemson Design Center on a panel discussion about Waterfront Development. Other key advocacy initiatives continue to move forward with the ongoing support of community stakeholders, including the Black Businesses of Charleston Oral History Project, which has continued to gain momentum since its launch in Fall 2022. Thanks to the partnership of families of historical Black businessowners, these important, yet untold stories have been elevated and shared with a broad audience. This Preservation Month, a new generation of preservationists continued the work as we partnered with Burke High School Foundation and District 20 Principal's Collaboration Program to host a symposium for students focused on the fields of oral history, archival research, and heritage tourism.

These partnerships, in addition to our joint efforts with Historic Charleston Foundation and Coastal Conservation League focused on the Union Pier redevelopment, have provided a stronger vision and voice for Charleston. This has been a pivotal year for the Preservation Society and our goal is to amplify our advocacy efforts while continuing to build relationships across the region.

EXPANDING MEMBERSHIP ON AND OFF THE PENINSULA

With historic preservation becoming a larger conversation off the peninsula, the Preservation Society has made a concerted effort to ensure our membership reflects the evolving needs of the community. Our recent Membership Drive was designed to broaden our reach into typically under-served areas of the peninsula and forge new relationships with the potential for deeper connections. Since the start of our fiscal year in July, more than 600 new members have joined the PSC, each with their own unique perspectives and interests.

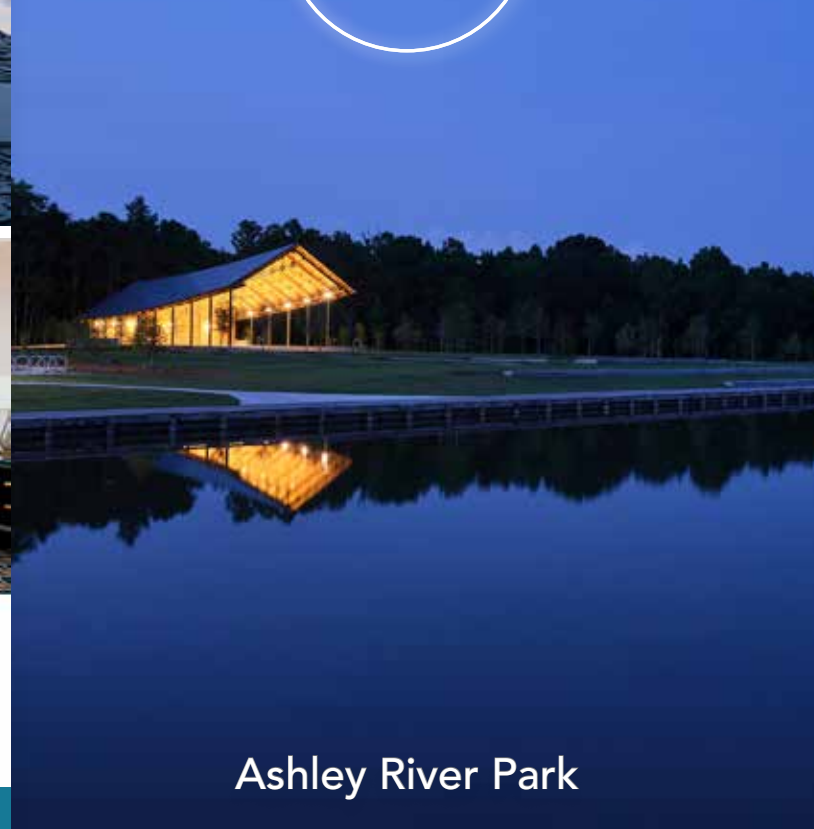
Membership has broadened throughout the Eastside, Westside, and North Central neighborhoods of the peninsula, and in addition to learning from longtime residents, we are committed to educating new neighbors about the legacy of the spaces and places they now occupy. We have seen tremendous response from residents of West Ashley and Mount Pleasant, who are facing increased threats to under-protected and often undocumented historic resources. We are proud to offer our support and guidance when possible to help the broader preservation of our community. With headlines about Charleston's always-growing tourism sector, ongoing water management challenges, and massive developments such as the proposal at Union Pier reaching beyond our immediate region, we welcome supporters from across the state and country to our member ranks to face these growing concerns.

As we welcome new members and speak with dedicated supporters, we are inspired and reminded that sharing knowledge and resources with our community is critical to not only our success as an organization, but to Charleston as a whole. Whether your focus is architectural heritage and the protection of our historic sites, or cultural heritage and the preservation of intangible resources, we hope to meet your individual visions for our city. Your support ensures the PSC will continue to be a trusted leader and steward of Charleston's layered history and heritage for generations to come.



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MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

ASHTON FINLEY

by Courtney Theis, Director of Advancement

A current resident of the South Windemere neighborhood in West Ashley, Ashton has been an enthusiastic advocate for historic preservation for many years. A native of Atlanta, she graduated with a Masters of Historic Preservation from the University of Georgia in 2011. After serving as the Hundley intern for the Preservation Society in 2009, she joined the staff as the Manager of Programs to lead the Fall Tours. “I loved my time working with the Preservation Society — as the nation’s first grassroots preservation organization, what better place to get my start in the field?”

Following her time with the PSC, she became an instructor in the Historic Preservation and Community Planning program at the College of Charleston. Her Introduction to Historic Preservation course covered topics such as architectural history, historic preservation law, historic districts, and the environmental and economic benefits of historic preservation. Her course also touched on the history of the preservation movement, highlighting Charleston as the first city to utilize zoning to define a historic district based on architectural merit and historic integrity.

“The fact that Charleston is the amazing city that it is today, with so much of its architectural character intact, is really a testament to this groundbreaking ordinance in 1931. I always tell my students that ‘preservation is action’ — the Charleston that we all know and love would not exist by happenstance — it took concerted efforts and continued vigilance by citizens and organizations like PSC to maintain its architectural character and integrity.”

Her historic preservation work does not end in the classroom, she has also been a fierce supporter of increased character protections for West Ashley, especially in the increasingly threatened neighborhoods of Old Windemere, South Windemere and

Byrnes Downs. Periods of idealism and growth seen after World War II, and with the rise of the automobile and an accessible bridge in 1926, neighborhoods like Old Windemere became active and desirable suburbs of the City of Charleston. Large lots and curved, tree-lined streets with a range of architectural styles like Tudor Revival, Craftsman, Cape Cod, and Ranch homes attracted residents from downtown to a new kind of lifestyle.

Yet, despite the thorough documentation and research cataloguing the area’s architectural resources, many are surprised to hear that there are limited protections for historic buildings in West Ashley and no local historic districts. “It’s unfortunate,” Ashton says, “To see Charleston falling behind other cities like Savannah on the creation and utilization of historic districts when this is the birthplace of the historic district.”

While there has always been an active community of citizens passionate about the rich and varied history of West Ashley, the recent demolition request of 8 Stocker Drive galvanized the community into action. When a developer announced plans to demolish the historic brick residence in Old Windemere last summer, Ashton and other residents mobilized to save the building and protect the architectural integrity of the neighborhood. The developer planned to raze the historic brick home to make way for two new out-of-scale houses. After the public outcry, and discussions with neighbors,

“Preservation is action — the Charleston that we all know, and love would not exist by happenstance — it took concerted efforts and continued vigilance by citizens and organizations like the PSC.”

local preservation groups and city leaders, including Mayor John Tecklenberg, the developer agreed to save the historic home and submitted a new plan for the property’s development. Despite that successful outcome, she says our historic character shouldn’t be subject to the whims of developers who we hope choose to do the right thing.

“I have heard from so many neighbors and community leaders that really want to see character protections and an increased public review process for the most historic neighborhoods in West Ashley,” she says. “There are so many benefits to these types of protections, including economic benefits for homeowners and the city. It really is a win-win for everyone.”

As a member of the PSC’s Susan Pringle Frost Circle, Ashton feels it’s critical to support the ongoing initiatives and advocacy of the PSC, not just for West Ashley, but for the area at large. “I’m so proud to be a member of PSC.” We are grateful for Ashton’s membership, engagement, and above-and-beyond advocacy work that make our community stronger both on and off the peninsula.

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— JENNA RICHARDSON

MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR MEMBERSHIP

*by Rebecca Hoffman, Manager of
Advancement & Planned Giving*

What began as a small group of 32 concerned citizens has now grown to a global network of more than 5,000. Our membership has never been more diverse, comprised of residents concerned with livability, settlement community descendants sharing lesser-known histories, and visitors who value our city’s unique features. But all of our members have one thing in common: the desire to protect and preserve Charleston’s cultural and architectural heritage.

The Preservation Society exists not only to advocate on behalf of our members, but also to provide you with a community of like-minded individuals. We hope you take advantage of all benefits included with your annual membership, especially our programs and events where you can engage with dedicated and new members, hear from leading preservation experts, and learn more about properties that have been recently restored or are currently undergoing rehabilitation.

*If you have any questions about
your membership, please reach out
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What once began as a few annual candlelight tours of private homes in an attempt to raise funds for a fledgling Preservation Society, has become a monthlong educational program powered by the mission and initiatives of the strengthened organization we are today.

Beginning last year, we reexamined our tours program and transformed its offerings to more closely model the sustainable tourism practices for which we advocate. With smaller group sizes and high-quality educational content, guests can truly enjoy immersing themselves in Charleston. From October 11 through November 4, join us for daily Walking Tours, Saturday House & Garden Tours, weekly Insider's Tours, and much more.

Whether you open your home or garden, volunteer as a docent, or sponsor our program, we thank you *all* for your steadfast support of the PSC and helping make this important piece of our mission possible.

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