



February 2017

ILLUMINATIONS

quarterly publication of the Historical Society of University City

State of the City

First program of 2017



Mayor Welsch

To mark the birthday of University City founder E.G. Lewis, the Historical Society presents State of the City, at 7 pm Tuesday, March 7 in the Council Chamber on the fifth floor of City Hall, 6800 Delmar. Mayor Shelley Welsch and interim City Manager (and former police chief) Charles Adams will address the challenges and opportunities facing University City in 2017. The event is free and open to the public

Shelley Welsch has been mayor of University City since 2010. She worked in broadcast news for 17 years, partly in Washington, D.C. She was one of the founders and executive director of the Green Center. She also co-founded the River des Peres Watershed Coalition and was first president of the board of directors of the Sutter-Meyer Society. In addition, she established the Regional Initiative

on Youth. She served on the City Council 2002-6, representing the Second Ward.

Charles E. Adams was a 31-year veteran of the University City Police Department when he was appointed Chief in 2005. He joined the department in 1974, patrolling the streets and later training officers. In 1982 he was promoted to detective. Three years later he was promoted to patrol sergeant. In 1989, he became supervisor of detectives. He was promoted to captain in 1994 and major in 2002. He retired recently, but in November 2016 was asked to return as acting city manager.



Acting City Manager Adams

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Comings & Goings On HSUC Board

Carol Diaz-Granados, our longest serving board member, is departing. In 1987, she gave a talk at the annual dinner. Judy Little invited her to join the board. She has served as newsletter editor and secretary. She designed many of our neighborhood booklets and produced the first HSUC brochure with Judy Little. She also designed invitations for our annual dinners. Carol said, "My favorite was the tall invitation with the lovely turn-of-the-century fashion model on the cover -- an image from a magazine that we found in the time capsule of the cornerstone at the oldest standing school in University City." She organized and supervised a four-year archaeological excavation on the grounds of the Sutter-Meyer Farmhouse, discovering the well, the cistern and many fascinating artifacts. Her husband, Jim Duncan, has served as archivist and board member. In retirement she is looking forward to spending more time with her eight grandchildren and relaxing at her farm. "I have thoroughly enjoyed working with all of you, and many others, over the past 30 years," Carol said. We return the compliment and thank Carol for all she has done.

Dorie Miller has also resigned from our board. She served for over a decade, after being persuaded to join by then-President Ralph Bowser. Dorie's service on the board has been as, in her words "jack of all trades." She was quick to volunteer for any task, whether helping set up for a program, do mailings or other office tasks, or work on the annual dinner. Early in her career Dorie taught school in Indiana, was a librarian for the St. Louis Public Library, and tutored in public schools. In retirement, Dorie has driven a route for Meals on Wheels. She is still active at her church, First Unitarian, and belongs to a play-reading group which has met for 40 years. She is close to her children, son Harry, a jazz musician in New York; and daughter Valerie, an arts administrator for Inner City Arts in Los Angeles; daughter Lucia, an administrator with St. Louis Community Colleges. She also has a grandchild, Rose, who is a freshman at Bennington. We thank Dorie for her service, and hope to see her at our programs in the future.

The Board of Directors is happy to welcome a new member, **Judy Prange**, who is also executive director of U City in Bloom. But that still leaves us

with empty seats, and we are eager to hear from our members who have one Tuesday evening a month free and would be interested in serving. For more information on what's involved, you can email ucityhistory@hotmail.com or call President **Eleanor Mullin** at (314) 862-2972.

UCHS & HSUC

High School Class Makes Gift

In October 2016, the U. City High School Class of 1966 held their 50th re-union. Almost 200 graduates attended. Gail Needles, Secretary for the class, and Rich Schainker, President (he was elected to a Life Term Presidency in 1965!) contacted the Historical Society and asked if we could send a representative to their Sunday event, as they had a gift for our Society.

Our President, Eleanor Mullin, attended the Brunch at La Chateau. Mr. Schainker spoke, and presented Ms. Mullin with a generous check for \$500 to thank the Historical Society for providing a variety of pictures from our archives that they used a decade ago for their 40th reunion, and were using again this year. Ms. Mullin, a U. City graduate herself, spoke about what the HSUC does, and expressed a hope that members of the class of '66 would join the society. At the end of the event, the class released doves in honor of their deceased classmates.

Author Event

Murder in the neighborhood

David Linzee, board member and editor of *Illuminations* since 2009, will discuss and sign his new mystery novel *One Fell Swoop* at U. City library at 7 pm on Friday, April 7. He wrote the HSUC neighborhood history booklet *Parkview Gardens: Its Rise and Fall and Rise*. His latest book takes readers to a fictional counterpart of that neighborhood, where a multi-million dollar property speculation leads to international intrigue and murder.



Peacock tile by Rhead

U. City Ceramics In La-La Land

Frederick Rhead and the U. City Pottery

by David Linzee

On a visit to the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, one of the foremost museums in the country, I was delighted to see on display a decorative tile and vase from the University City Pottery. Both were the work of Frederick Hurten Rhead. Born in England in 1880, he came to University City in 1909 to join the faculty of People's University, the correspondence school founded by E.G. Lewis. Lewis, an amateur potter, sought noted artists to teach in his ceramics department. Rhead's years in U City were productive. He produced many artistic works as well as instructional articles. He left in 1911, as Lewis's enterprises went into decline. In the 1930s, he would become famous for designing Fiesta Ware. On display at LACMA is a peacock tile. Peacocks were a popular arts and crafts subject. Rhead's renderings were notable for their detail. LACMA also has an earthenware vase with a graceful tree branch and mushroom design. More works from the University City Pottery are on display at the St. Louis Art Museum and in the U. City library.

Reborn from the Ashes First Century Plaque in Phoenix Heights

by Liz Beall Poelker

The house of Jesse and Ali Appleton is the first in Phoenix Heights to receive a Century Home plaque from the Historical Society. The subdivision of Phoenix Heights arose from the ashes of the Barnes-Johnson house, a spectacular mansion built before University City existed. (See "The Baron S. Barnes House: A Lost Landmark" by Esley Hamilton in Feb. 2012 Illuminations.) The house was on a large property at the corner of Big Bend and Delmar (then called Bonhomme Road). After the building burned in 1915, a subdivision of 22 lots was created from the property. Several features of the original house were used in the first four new houses in the subdivision. The Appletons' home at 7042 Delmar has the pediment and columns from the main entrance of the mansion (see picture). The highly ornamented, carved stone window surrounds of the two small windows in the west wall are from windows that flanked the mansion's front door. The iron fence on the east side of Big Bend south of Delmar is also from the Barnes house.



Jesse and Ali Appleton in front of their home on Delmar

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History Round-Up St. Louis in the Spotlight

The Missouri History Museum in Forest Park has announced that 2016 was a record-breaker, with attendance at more than 517,000. The success was attributed mostly to two hit shows, the continuing *A Walk in 1875 St. Louis* and the debuting *Route 66: Main Street through St. Louis*, which is still on view. Jody Sowell, director of exhibitions, told the *West End Word* that "I've lived in a lot of places and I've never seen a city where so many people are engaged in local history." Next up is #1 in *Civil Rights: The African American Freedom Struggle in St. Louis*, which opens in March. Numbers are also up at the Library and Research Center on Skinker.

A bit of St. Louis history got a minute-- a very expensive minute--in the national spot-

light. During the Super Bowl Feb. 5, Anheuser-Busch ran a commercial about its founders. It was a lavishly produced mini-epic that showed Busch surviving a steamboat wreck and trudging across a muddy river bank to be told, "Welcome to St. Louis!" Next, in a tavern, he met Anheuser, in a scene as dramatic as Stanley meeting Livingston.

NBC's *Today Show* is heavily promoting its long history with commercials featuring Dave Garroway. Born in upstate New York, Garroway spent most of his growing up years in St. Louis. He was a graduate of University City High School and Washington University. He was the first host of *Today*, anchoring the show from 1952 to 1961.