Gettysburg's Cyclorama Building Faces Demolition

Plans for a new visitors center at Gettysburg National Military Park have put the fate of Richard Neutra's Cyclorama Building in jeopardy. Architects, architectural historians, and preservationists are campaigning to save the Cyclorama Building and to encourage the National Park Service to preserve and restore it. The building's location on a hallowed site of the battle, its significance as a work of modern architecture, and its physical condition, have all become considerations in the controversy over its preservation.

The Cyclorama Building, designed in 1958 by Richard Neutra, FAIA, is slated for demolition as part of plans by the National Park Service for a new visitors center.

The Architect

Richard J. Neutra (1892-1970) holds a place of international importance in the history of modern architecture. Born in Austria, he emigrated to the United States in 1923, settling in California in 1925. His commissions over the next forty-five years ranged from major public buildings including the U.S. Embassy in Karachi, Pakistan, to domestic architecture like the Palm Springs house he designed for Edgar Kaufmann - the same Edgar Kaufmann who commissioned Frank Lloyd Wright to design Fallingwater. In 1977, Neutra was posthumously awarded the American Institute of Architect's Gold Medal, the highest award presented by the AIA.

The Building

When the National Park Service began a program, known as Mission 66, to upgrade park visitor facilities in the late 1950s, they commissioned the nation's foremost architects to design major buildings for many of the National Parks. For Gettysburg - indisputably one of the nation's most sacred historic sites - they hired Richard Neutra.

The Cyclorama Building opened in 1962 as the visitors center for the park. In Neutra's design, a concrete drum houses an 1884 panorama painting (the cyclorama) depicting the 1863 battle. A long, low two story office wing extends to the south of the drum and offers a rooftop vantage point for viewing the commemorative landscape of the battlefield.

PRESERVATION PA BATTLES HARRISBURG PARKING GARAGE

Preservation Pennsylvania's Christmas present from the City of Harrisburg was word that the city parking authority plans to build a high rise municipal garage on the site of our headquarters building. The garage proposal would take not only our building but at least eleven historic properties in Harrisburg's oldest municipal and National Register historic district. Beyond the fate of our own building, Preservation Pennsylvania regards this action as a dangerous precedent for the future of other locally designated historic districts across the Commonwealth.

Harrisburg's Mayor Stephen Reed has expressed his opposition to the destruction of a city neighborhood in order to create off-street commuter parking. On the other hand, he acknowledges his concern for the city's ability to preserve its historic character.

"The project, if successful, will make local historic districts around the Commonwealth even more vulnerable than they already are."

Margaret B. Wallis, President
Preservation Pennsylvania

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LEGISLATIVE REPORT

National

Historic Homeowner Tax Credit

Efforts continue in Washington to secure passage of the Historic Homeownership Assistance Act H.R.1134/S.496. Focus is on having the credit included in the tax bill that Congress is likely to consider this spring or summer. Pennsylvanians can help by contacting Senator Arlen Specter, who cosponsored the legislation, thanking him for his support and urging him to push for its passage in 1998. Other key members of the Pennsylvania delegation are Congressman Chaka Fattah (Philadelphia), Phil English (Erie), and William Coyne (Allegheny County).

ISTEA becomes BESTEA

The House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee plans a late-March markup of H.R.2400, which would reauthorize the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act. Now known as BESTEA, the house version contains higher spending levels than those approved in last year’s balanced budget amendment. According to the Surface Transportation Policy Project (STPP), which is tracking the progress of the legislation, it is likely that the house will move the bill quickly and bring it to a final floor vote by early April. If this schedule is met, the house and senate versions could be resolved by the end of April and the bill could go to the President by early May.

State

Institutions of Purely Public Charity Act (Act 55)

In late November, Governor Ridge signed legislation that for the first time defines what it means to be an “institution of purely public charity” and therefore eligible to be exempt from property and sales tax in Pennsylvania. The criteria are: “to advance a charitable purpose”; “operating entirely free from private profit motive”; “must benefit a substantial and indefinite class of persons who are legitimate subjects of charity”; “to relieve government of some of its burden”; and “donate or render gratuitously a substantial portion of its services”.

The nonprofit charitable community is applauding this legislation which is the culmination of many years of advocacy.

Main Street Program

For the first time since its creation in 1980, the Pennsylvania Main Street Program is proposed to have its own line item of $2 million in Governor Ridge’s 1998-99 fiscal year budget. Preservation Pennsylvania worked closely with the Pennsylvania Downtown Center to continue this important program for Pennsylvania communities struggling to enhance and revitalize their downtown business districts. We commend the administration on recognizing the role of this program in building healthy Pennsylvania communities.

21st Century Commission

The 21st Century Environment Commission was created by Governor Ridge in 1997 “to establish Pennsylvania’s environmental priorities for the 21st Century guided by the principle of providing a better environment for future generations without inhibiting the ability to prosper.” The commission is comprised of 60 members including legislators; cabinet secretaries; representatives of industry, environmental organizations, the service sector, academia, mining, farming, and local government. Teams have been created within the commission to consider defined priority areas of environmental stewardship, sustainable use of natural resources, human health and environment.

continued on page 6

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MISSION STATEMENT

Preservation Pennsylvania, through creative partnerships, targeted educational and advocacy programs, advisory assistance, and special projects, assists Pennsylvania communities to protect and utilize the historic resources they want to preserve for the future.
Revolving Fund Offers New Programs for Nonprofits

Based on information gathered as part of Preservation Pennsylvania's recent needs assessment and subsequent strategic planning by the board of directors, the organization's revolving loan fund is being revamped to meet specifically defined needs of the preservation community.

Beginning in May 1998, four distinct revolving fund options will be available to tax exempt nonprofit preservation organizations or community groups, or public agencies. In all cases, buildings must be listed, or eligible for listing, in the National Register of Historic Places. In most cases, priority consideration is given to properties listed as endangered in the annual Pennsylvania at Risk.

Crisis Intervention Revolving Fund makes deferred loans of up to $10,000 at favorable interest rates to contract for professional services for information and assistance in order to counter a threat to a historic building. (Note: Not available in Philadelphia County; Philadelphia organizations should apply for crisis assistance to Preservation Pennsylvania's Philadelphia Intervention Fund).

Revolving Fund for Historic Property Acquisition makes combined low interest loans and grants to acquire threatened historic properties. Maximum loan/grant combination is $50,000; 2/3 loan to 1/3 grant.

Discretionary Revolving Fund provides low interest loans for activities that address threats to significant historic resources that are not likely to be met through existing programs of Preservation Pennsylvania or the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission. The maximum loan amount is $30,000 and loans will not exceed a period of five years.

Special Loan Fund makes low interest loans to meet significant historic preservation needs of tangible cultural resources in Pennsylvania not likely to be met through existing programs of Preservation Pennsylvania or the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission. The specific purposes of this fund are to provide direct assistance for the protection of endangered tangible cultural resources and to promote innovative demonstration projects which can be successfully replicated. Each year one or more special needs will be identified as priority areas for funding. During 1998, priority areas for funding are heritage tourism development and legal services to protect endangered historic resources. Maximum loan is $20,000; maximum term of loan is five years.

More information on changes to the revolving fund and application procedures will be available at the Historic Preservation & Heritage Partnerships Conference in Williamsport in May.

Williamsport Prepares for Preservation Conference

Final arrangements are underway for the 1998 Historic Preservation and Heritage Partnerships Conference which takes place May 3-5. Register now and join us in Williamsport. For a conference program and registration information call 717-234-2310 or visit our website at www.preservationpa.org

Williamsport’s Peter Herdic House is one of the many fine Victorian era mansions located in the Millionaires Row Historic District of the host city for the 1998 Historic Preservation & Heritage Partnerships Conference. Renovated and opened as a restaurant in the mid-1980s, the Herdic House was the first project of Preservation Pennsylvania’s revolving loan fund.

KEYSTONE SOCIETY
Andrew W. Mellon Foundation
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Claneil Foundation
Dr. and Mrs. Harlan R. Giles
The Glatfelter Insurance Group
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The Richard King Mellon Foundation
The Roy A. Hunt Foundation
Henry L. Rosenberger
Wolf Foundation
William Penn Foundation
Wyoming Foundation
York Federal Savings and Loan Foundation
Keystone Society members contribute a minimum of $2,500 annually to Preservation Pennsylvania.

Pennsylvania Heritage Club
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Robert R. Anderson Family
Harvey Bradley Buhl Foundation
Center for Rural Pennsylvania
Emily Foundation
Dr. and Mrs. Henry A. Jordan
Kieran Timberlake & Harris
McEwen Trust
Mrs. Henry S. McNeil
National Trust for Historic Preservation
Mary V. Pendleton
Thomas Rippon
York Foundation

Pennsylvania Heritage Club members contribute $1,000 annually to Preservation Pennsylvania.

For information on becoming a member of the Pennsylvania Heritage Club or the Keystone Society, contact Preservation Pennsylvania.

**ATTENTION**
Registrants for the Historic Preservation & Heritage Partnerships Conference

The location of the opening reception has been changed from the Community Arts Center to Williamsport City Hall. City Hall is located at 245 West Fourth Street, directly across from the Community Arts Center.
Preserving Community Character


National Trust president Richard Moe, in collaboration with former White House speech writer Carter Wilkie, continues the fight against sprawl in this exploration of communities, the choices they have made, and how new life can return to our cities and towns largely through the ethic and tools of historic preservation. The book begins with the story of battling Disney's plans for a theme park in northern Virginia. Moe and Wilkie also feature Pittsburgh's success in urban revitalization as an example of how historic preservation can be a key player. Moe has made sprawl the defining issue for the National Trust in the 1990s - likening preservation's role in this land use debate to the stand preservationists took against urban renewal in the 1960s. As preservationists battle against the continued loss of rural landscapes to residential and commercial development and related urban decay and disinvestment in traditional downtowns, this book can provide valuable insights and ammunition.

Note: Preservation organizations may order this book at a special discount by contacting Birgit Neu, Manager of Special Sales, Henry Holt and Company, 212-886-9263. Discount percentage depends on the number of books ordered; minimum order is 5 books (40% discount).


Another important weapon in the sprawl-fighting arsenal is this thoughtful discussion of the role of the automobile and highway construction in determining this century's patterns of land use. Kay, who is architecture/planning critic for The Nation, traces the history of how we have moved from a country with a working system of public transportation to a nation reliant on the individual automobile for much of our movement from place to place. She points to the impact of government transportation policies on our land use patterns and the destructive impacts on countless rural landscapes and our cities and towns. Like Moe and Wilkie, she also offers glimmers of hope and examples of places trying to revive historically workable modes of transportation and places experimenting with new ways of making public transit responsive to today's needs. An article by Kay, adapted from the book, appeared in the May/June 1997 issue of Preservation magazine.


First published in 1989, this handbook for preserving rural communities has been updated with information on recent initiatives and with continued warnings about ongoing challenges from sprawling development, pollution, and efforts like the "property rights" movement. Thirty-two case studies document successful efforts across the nation and offer models to rural areas now under attack. Information on organizing conservation efforts, writing effective legislation, setting up land trusts, public relations and education programs from the first edition are augmented by new sections on heritage tourism and making rural conservation compatible with economic development.

Technical Preservation

New titles in the Preservation Tech Notes Series from the National Park Service:


Metals, Number 4: Rehabilitating a Historic Iron Bridge. By Joseph P. Saldibar, III. The case study of moving and rehabilitating the Stillwater Road (Shea) Bridge in Cumberland, Rhode Island, offers a model for dealing with other similar situations in which a historic bridge must be moved to be preserved.

To obtain copies of the above two technical publications or other titles in Preservation Tech Notes series contact: Larry Hunter, Heritage Prescription Services, National Park Service, 1849 C Street, NW, Washington, DC 20240; phone: 202-343-9583.

Volume 20, No. 10 (1997) of CRM (Cultural Resources Management) devotes the entire issue to a partnership between the National Park Service (NPS) and the University of Pennsylvania to work together on managing cultural resources in the Intermountain Region of the NPS.

For copies of this or other issues of CRM contact: Cultural Resources, National Park Service, 1849 C Street, NW (Org. 2251), Washington, DC 20240; phone: 202-343-3395.

Pennsylvania Heritage

Westsylvania is a new magazine celebrating the heritage of western Pennsylvania. Published quarterly by the Allegheny Heritage Development Corporation, the latest issue contains articles on classic diners of the region, on Meadowcroft Museum of Rural Life and West Overton Village, and on the preservation of the Mishler Theater in Altoona. One year subscription is $18. For ordering information call: 800-898-3636.

Lancaster's Heritage Tourism Program is featured in the March/April 1998 issue of Forum News, a publication of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. The article, prepared for the Trust by Scott Standish, chief of long-range planning at the Lancaster County Planning Commission and coordinator of the Lancaster County Heritage Tourism Initiative, describes Lancaster's efforts to develop a program that focuses on authenticity in designating and promoting heritage resources to visitors to the county.

"Authenticity proved to be a critical issue for the program," writes Standish. "With the growing popularity of heritage tourism, many attractions like to promote themselves as 'heritage attractions' to increase visitation, yet they may not be authentic heritage sites. The Lancaster County Heritage Tourism Initiative developed guidelines and criteria for authenticity to identify sites, services, and events reflecting the heritage of the county." For more information contact Scott Standish at 717-299-8333.
STATE PROGRAM NEWS

PHMC REVIEWS RECORD REHABILITATION TAX CREDIT PROJECTS IN PHILADELPHIA

By Bonnie Wilkinson, Bureau for Historic Preservation

In 1998, over $288 million in proposed rehabilitation costs will be undertaken or are currently underway in Philadelphia as a result of the federal rehabilitation investment tax credits. This is exciting news in Pennsylvania as rehabilitation of older buildings not only stabilizes ongoing projects in downtown Philadelphia, but supports the public policies of the City of Philadelphia and the Redevelopment Authority of Philadelphia in revitalizing the area around the Philadelphia Convention Center and the Reading Terminal Market. These projects are undertaken through the national historic preservation partnership with the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission’s Bureau for Historic Preservation and the National Park Service.

The Tax Reform Act of 1986 makes available a 20% rehabilitation investment tax credit to owners and holders of certain long term leases of income-producing properties. These federal tax credits generate jobs, enhance property values, and augment revenues for state and local governments through increased property, business, and income taxes. The rehabilitation investment tax credits in concert with the federal low income tax credits also assist in the creation of affordable housing in historic buildings. Through this program, abandoned or underutilized schools, warehouses, factories, churches, retail stores, apartments, hotels, houses, and offices throughout Pennsylvania have been rehabilitated in a manner that maintains their historic character.

To be eligible for the 20% tax credit a building must be listed in the National Register of Historic Places, either individually or as a contributing building within a historic district; the project must meet the “substantial rehabilitation test”; projects must be completed within a 24 month period; and the rehabilitation work must be undertaken according to the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation. These ten broad based standards insure that the building’s historic qualities are preserved as part of a project, whether it is restoration, preservation, rehabilitation, or reuse.

For more information on the rehabilitation investment tax credit program in Pennsylvania contact:

Bonnie Wilkinson
Bureau for Historic Preservation
Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission
PO Box 1026
Harrisburg, PA 17108-1026
Telephone: 717-787-0772

New Hotels Recapture Center City Landmarks

Many of the major tax credit projects currently underway in Philadelphia reflect the surge in convention-oriented businesses spurred by completion of the Philadelphia Convention Center.

Reading Terminal Headhouse The $58.7 million rehabilitation of the 1885 headhouse into a 210-room Marriott Hotel includes 42,000 sq. ft. of retail space with a Hard Rock Cafe and microbrew pub. Rehabilitation involves window replacement on floors three through nine, repair of windows on the second floor, repairing the granite base, replicating the missing cornice, and cleaning and repointing the brick and terra cotta. The headhouse was listed in the National Register in 1972 and designated a National Historic Landmark in 1977 for its outstanding significance in the history of American engineering, transportation, and commerce.

Philadelphia Savings Fund Society (PSFS) Located at 12th and Market Streets and recognized as the first International Style skyscraper built in America, PSFS is another National Historic Landmark being converted to hotel use. The $105 million rehabilitation includes conversion of the main banking hall into a ballroom; granite, brick, and limestone restoration; restoring the storefront to its original appearance; replacing windows and restoring signage; and building a three-story addition to include meeting rooms and a kitchen facility.

City Hall Annex The Renaissance Revival City Hall Annex is a significant building within the Broad Street National Register Historic District. Its conversion to a 499-room Marriott Courtyard Hotel, at a cost of $49.7 million, includes exterior cleaning, repointing terra cotta, repairing copper, restoring bronzed windows and doors, a new roof, and restoration of the lobbies.

Affordable Housing Rehabs Revitalize Neighborhoods

The other major use of the tax credits in Philadelphia is in creating affordable housing.

Carl Mackley Apartments One of the first housing projects authorized and constructed under FDR’s New Deal, the complex is being rehabilitated into 184 units of affordable housing. The $19 million renovation includes enlarging units, exterior cleaning and repair, and window repair.

4142-4144 Parkside Avenue A $2 million rehabilitation of a pair of Renaissance Revival houses in the Parkside neighborhood, which borders Farnam Park, will add sixteen more units of affordable housing to this National Register Historic District. Known as Brantwood II, the buildings will undergo restoration of the exterior including removal of fire escapes, replacing missing copper, and rebuilding windows. Elevators will be added, and the entire interior structural system of the buildings will be replaced.

1721-1731 Marilton Avenue Also in the Parkside Historic District, this row of six three-story rowhouses was built between 1877 and 1910. The $2.4 rehabilitation into twenty-five units of affordable housing includes the restoration of copper and windows, and the complete reconstruction of the interior. These buildings and the Parkside Avenue houses are being rehabilitated by Penrose Properties.

PHMC RECRUITS ARCHITECTURAL DESIGNERS

The State Civil Service Commission has opened a Localized Testing Program for the Architectural Designer 2 classification. The list from this examination will be used to fill two full-time positions in the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, Bureau of Historic Sites and Museums in Harrisburg.

Positions involve professional architectural work designing/reviewing project designs for historic sites and museums owned by the Commonwealth. Minimum salary $36,401. Minimum requirements: One year as an Architectural Designer 1; or two years experience in architectural work, and a bachelor’s degree in architecture, architectural engineering or related field. Necessary Special Requirements: professional degree in architecture or State license to practice architecture and at least one year of graduate study in architectural preservation, American architectural history, preservation planning, or related field or one year of professional experience with historic preservation projects. Pennsylvania residency required.

Applications available April 20, 1998; must be submitted by COB May 1, 1998. Contact: Ms. Kris Gunderman, 717-783-4436 for Information, Test Announcement and Civil Service application.
• Bagtown Bridge, a steel pony through truss superstructure, currently located in Southwest Township, Warren County, is looking for a new owner to move it to a new location and rehabilitate the structure. A determination has been made that it is not feasible to upgrade the old bridge, and a new steel beam superstructure will be built on the existing abutments. The old bridge has been determined eligible for the National Register and township supervisors are entering into an agreement with the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission (PHMC) regarding mitigation of adverse effect on the historic significance of the bridge. The structure will be recorded according to HAER Standards for Documenting Historic Bridges. The bridge is 57 ft. long and 16 ft. wide. It was constructed in 1907 by the Marathon Road Machinery Company of Marathon, New York. The trusses have been load rated at 13 tons. Floor beams and stringers would need to be replaced and a transferee would be required to disassemble and transport the bridge at their own expense. For more information contact Township Secretary Leo Brown (814-589-7540) or project engineer Tom Patterson (814-723-1322).
• Eight counties of southcentral Pennsylvania, which have joined together to form the South Central Assembly for Effective Governance, held the second annual “Region at Risk” summit on March 10, 1998 in Gettysburg. Sprawl continues to be the focus of attention for the region that encompasses Adams, Cumberland, Dauphin, Franklin, Lancaster, Lebanon, Perry, and York counties. Following morning keynote speakers and afternoon intensive special topic sessions on issues such as land use and growth management, transportation, public works/infrastructure, municipal consolidation, and marketing the spirit of the region, more than 300 attendees adopted a series of resolutions calling for concrete actions to unify and improve the quality of life throughout the region. For more information on the Assembly, which is chaired by Harrisburg Mayor Stephen R. Reed, contact: South Central Assembly for Effective Governance, c/o Institute of State and Regional Affairs, 777 West Harrisburg Pike, Middletown, PA 17057-4898; 717-948-6178; fax 717-948-6306; email xcpsu@psu.edu
• Sometime on the night of Tuesday, February 24, a pair of 18th century wrought iron gates, weighing 300-400 pounds each, were stolen from St. Peter’s Episcopal Church in Philadelphia. Built in 1761 and located in Society Hill, St. Peter’s is a National Historic Landmark. Fortunately, the gates were recovered and returned by police on March 5. “We believe they were stolen and sold, maybe sold again, and suddenly because of the fact that we were going to so many places looking for them, they became an item that no one wanted to hold onto,” said Captain Thomas Quinn of the Philadelphia Police. The church has issued a statement thanking all those who helped spread the word about the theft and contributed to the safe return of the gates.
• The historic dome of the Scanlon Observatory, listed in Pennsylvania at Risk 1997, will have a new home at the Wagman Observatory at Allegheny County’s Deer Lakes Park. Built in 1930 by amateur astronomer Leo Scanlon and featured in scientific publications of the day, the observatory was removed from its original site following the sale of Mr. Scanlon’s home. The Amateur Astronomers Association of Pittsburgh will reconstruct the observatory and return its original telescope, recently discovered at Bethany College. Mr. Scanlon and his observatory are featured in the WQED television documentary Northside Story.
• Patrick O’Bannon, director of the Cultural Resources Group at Kise Straw & Kolodner in Philadelphia was recently elected president of the American Cultural Resources Association (ACRA). ACRA is a trade organization that represents business interests of cultural resources management firms throughout the U.S. O’Bannon is the first historian to serve as president of the organization. For more information on ACRA contact: ACRA c/o Tom Wheaton, New South Associates, Inc., 6150 East Ponce de Leon Ave., Stone Mountain, GA 30083.

Pennsylvania At Risk 1998
In the next Preserving Pennsylvania, a special issue on the plight of historic school buildings.
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Cyclorama....continued from page 1

In a recent interview with Preserving Pennsylvania, Neutra’s son Dion recalls his father’s excitement at being chosen for the Gettysburg commission. “My dad raved about the excitement of the symbolism of this commission; what it would mean to a transplanted Austrian such as himself to be given the honor to design on this hallowed ground,” said the younger Neutra, also an architect and involved with his father as project architect for the Cyclorama building.

According to the younger Neutra, one of Richard Neutra’s contributions to the design not in the original park service concept is the ‘historic rostrum’ which faces a window wall on the ground floor of the dome. “It was to recreate symbolically the notion of a ‘Speech of Commemoration’ that might occur here annually on the anniversary of Lincoln’s talk. A speaker of international renown would be asked to mount this rostrum and address an assembly of thousands on the lawn outside seen through sliding doors. The only requirement would be that the speech must last over ninety seconds,” recalls Dion Neutra, referring to the length of Lincoln’s Gettysburg address.

The younger Neutra disputes claims that the design was not substantially that of his father. “The design of this building is rife with inspired ideas authored by my dad; this was indeed one of his most significant designs; certainly a high point of his career as well, and therefore of the greatest value to preserve.”

Rodd Wheaton, assistant regional director for Cultural Resources and Partnerships in the Intermountain Region of the National Park Service, has researched the history of this commission and others for the Park Service as part of Mission 66. Wheaton echoes Dion Neutra’s sentiments on the importance of the building.

“The Cyclorama is as important to Pennsylvania in the history of modern architecture as Fallingwater,” says Wheaton. “It represents all of Neutra’s design ideas and philosophy.”

The Park

By the 1970s, the main visitors center had been relocated from the Cyclorama building to an adjacent structure housing the electric map, and the Cyclorama building became less central to interpretation efforts at the park. Today, the park is undertaking the construction of a new visitors center complex to meet the need for better conservation and display of artifacts and modern visitor amenities. As part of the plan, the Cyclorama building will be demolished and the site returned to the way it might have looked at the time of the battle.

In proposing to demolish the building, the Park Service submitted a determination of eligibility to the State Historic Preservation Officer at the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission. The report, prepared by the historical architect and senior historian at the park, analyzes Neutra’s design philosophy and practice as they relate to this building. The report concludes that although the building contains elements of Neutra’s style, it is not an “exceptionally significant” example of his work and therefore not eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. Buildings less than fifty years old must meet the test of exceptional significance to be listed in the National Register.

Brent Glass, state historic preservation officer for Pennsylvania, concurred in the conclusions of the National Park Service report. “Clearly, the significance of this building presents a dilemma in using the National Register evaluation process,” Glass wrote. “Despite the known significance of Neutra’s contribution to Modern Architecture, the building received little if any professional recognition at the time of its completion in 1962. Nor has it achieved, in its 34 years of existence, the scholarly recognition that many other Modernist buildings of the immediate post-World War II period have. At this point, we agree that it does not meet the criteria exception for listing in the National Register...”

The Future for the Cyclorama

In March of 1997, the Historic Resources Committee of the American Institute of Architects (AIA) adopted a unanimous resolution calling for a rethinking and reevaluation of the determination of eligibility for the Cyclorama building. The resolution argues that because of Neutra’s internationally important status as an architect and the very small number of his commissions built in the Mid-Atlantic region, the building assumes an importance greater than that allowed in the National Park Service report. The AIA also called for an evaluation of the building based on its importance in the history of Mission 66 and in the history of the National Park Service.

In recent weeks, architects, architectural historians, and others interested in the preservation of the building have mounted a letter writing and email campaign to Washington and Harrisburg protesting the planned demolition and calling for a reconsideration of the building’s significance.

To date there has been no change in the position of the State Historic Preservation Officer or the National Park Service. As plans proceed for the new visitors center, demolition of the Cyclorama building appears likely.
CALENDAR

April 19-21  Pennsylvania Federation of Museums and Historical Organizations annual conference, Johnstown. Contact: PFMO, PO Box 1036, Harrisburg 17108-1026; 717-787-3253.

April 25-28  Rally III for America's Real Places, Ramada Congress Hotel, Chicago, Illinois. Contact: National Center for Heritage Development, 202-885-8910 or nchd@al.net.


April 26  Blair County Historical Society Open House. To celebrate the restoration and reopening of the Royer House. Contact: BCHS, 814-942-3916.

May 1  Path of Progress National Heritage Route Discovery Fair, Fayette County Fairgrounds, US Route 119, six miles south of Connellsville. Contact: Allegheny Ridge Corporation, 814-696-9380 or www.allegheny.org

May 3-3  Centre County Historical Society Plant Celebration at Centre Furnace Mansion, 1001 East College Ave., State College. Speakers, plants, books, antiques, food. Free admission. Contact: Centre Furnace Mansion, 814-234-4779.


May 17-20  National Town Meeting on Main Street, Pittsburgh. Conference sponsored by the National Main Street Center, National Trust for Historic Preservation. Contact: NMSC, 202-588-6219/588-6050.


May 3-5, 1998

Historic Preservation & Heritage Partnerships Conference

Williamsport

Sessions on preservation legal issues, building codes, historic district ordinances, signage to historic sites and in historic areas, funding for preservation and heritage programs, preservation in rural areas, and much more.


For more information, contact:
Preservation Pennsylvania at 717-234-2310 or at www.preservationpa.org
Pennsylvania 21st Century Environment Commission
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P.O. Box 2063
Harrisburg, PA 17105-2063
E-mail: 21st.Century.Env.Commission@al.dep.state.pa.us
http://www.21stcentury.state.pa.us

Name: ____________________________
Address: __________________________
Phone: ____________________________
Organization/Affiliation: ____________________________ Date: ________

What do you think are the critical environmental issues facing Pennsylvania today? ____________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________

How would you solve them? _____________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________

What needs to change in government, business and individual citizens to be able to address environmental issues effectively?
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________

Additional Comments: ________________________________________________
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Please fax this form to the 21st Century Environment Commission at: 717-783-8470
or mail to the following address:
15th Floor, RCSOB P.O. Box 2063 Harrisburg, PA 17105-2063

Thank you for your participation in the work of the Commission