

# Preservation Society of Pawtucket

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## **PSP Mission Statement:**

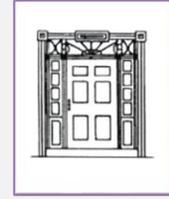
The PSP, through educational programs and community service, shall discover, memorialize, and preserve the history and architecture of Pawtucket, Rhode Island.

## **2019 Recap**

We have had an active and interesting year and have continued building a network of support in the community and with other organizations. We had a change of format for the 2019 meeting; we welcomed a group of 20 people to have a roundtable discussion about the PSP's general direction. We are now able to use our resources exclusively for programs and activities, and we wanted to hear ideas about what those activities can or should be.

This year we led nine walking tours and had more than 100 people join us. We covered downtown, Woodlawn, Slater Park, parts of Quality Hill, the Exchange Street district, and the west side of Central Falls. All of our tour notes can be downloaded from the website. Please let us know if you have ideas or requests for next year's tour season.

We invited Jonathan Duval, a Brown University graduate student in architecture history to present his research on Raymond Hood, a celebrated architect and native of Pawtucket. Hood worked as draftsman for the architecture firm that designed the Pawtucket Library in 1899. He later was accepted to the Ecole des Beaux-Arts where he earned a degree. He was invited to partner with a colleague in New York to submit a design proposal for the Chicago Tribune tower. Their design was accepted and Hood went on to become one of New York's best-known architects. Other buildings on which he worked are the American Radiator Building in Manhattan's Bryant Park, Rockefeller Center, the McGaw-Hill building in Manhattan, and the New York Daily News building, also in Manhattan. An exhibition of Jonathan's research will be on display at Brown University's Bell Gallery, beginning on April 1.



## **Visit our Website**

You can find all of our walking tour notes, a list of historic marker houses, and more.

## **Donate**

We need your financial support to fulfill our mission. See our [website](#) for the [Donate](#) button or send your donations to our address. We would love to list your name as a donor in our next Annual Report.

## **Amazon Smile**

Your purchases on Amazon can help us. On your first visit to [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com), you will be asked to select an organization to support. The Amazon Smile Foundation will donate .5% of purchases to the organization you select.

## **Follow us on Facebook**

Our [Facebook](#) has real-time updates and bits of information that you might find interesting.



We were thrilled to partner with Doors Open RI when they decided to have this year's festival in Pawtucket and Central Falls. More than 2000 people attended the event to explore ten historic sites. We were able to provide a history and timeline about the building at 238 Main Street, built by the Industrial Trust Company in 1905. If you didn't get

a chance to see the inside of the building during the event, you can still see the copper dome from the outside. Just be sure to look up!

We were happy to work with the following individuals and organizations on programs, events and activities in the past year:

Blackstone Valley Tourism Council  
Brown University  
Doors Open RI  
Jonathan Duval, architecture historian  
Ken Postle, cemetery volunteer  
Marina Flannery, Director of Environmental Education, BVTC  
Michael Viveiros, documentary filmmaker  
Pawtucket Library  
Preserve Rhode Island  
Public Archaeology Laboratories  
Rotary Club of Pawtucket

Our sincere gratitude goes to everyone who participated!

## Annual Appeal

We hope you will continue supporting us by participating in our programs, attending our events, expressing your moral support for our efforts, and of course by making a [financial donation](#). Donations can be made online, or by mailing your check to our address (PO Box 735, Pawtucket, RI, 02862). Your financial support makes it possible for us to spread awareness about why historic preservation is important. It also helps us plan public events that highlight the city's historical resources. We need more volunteers to better serve the community, so if you have an interest in history, preservation, or just want to help out, please let us know.

## Call for Board Members

If you are interested in history, preservation, or in the city of Pawtucket, we have opportunities for you. Come to one of our board meetings, meet us and find out what we do, and decide if you would like to join our board. This is a great time for the PSP and there are lots of ways you can help us serve our mission. Give us a call or email us and we'll let you know when the next meeting is.

## Advocacy

Through various advocacy efforts, we hope to highlight properties that are in need of attention. We're keeping an eye on the following:



### **Read-Ott Mansion, 67 Walcott Street**

We've added the Read-Ott mansion to our list of properties to watch. John Blake Read, a hardware merchant, built this house in 1842. In 1862, the house was purchased by Joseph Ott, founder of Royal Weaving. In 1966, plans for Interstate 95 forced the Greek Orthodox church to leave their building on George Street, so they purchased the Read-Ott mansion and held services in it until their new building was finished. We hope the church will continue preserving and caring for this house that has so much value not only for its history but also its architectural details. The house contributes so much to the neighborhood and we hope it continues to do so for many more years.



### **Pitcher-Goff House, 58 Walcott Street**

The Pitcher-Goff House was built in 1840 for Ellis B. Pitcher, a cotton textile manufacturer. Ellis formed a partnership with his investors and formed the Pawtucket Manufacturing Company. He died in 1869 and in May of 1870 his family sold the house to Colonel Lyman Bullock Goff. Lyman B. Goff was the son of Darius Goff, one of Pawtucket's most successful 19th century manufacturers. In 1872 Lyman became a full partner with his father and brother Darius L., and the firm became known as D. Goff &

Sons. In 1880, he assumed the position of treasurer of the Union Wadding Company, a firm started by his father, and said to have been the largest manufacturer of cotton batting in the world at that time. Lyman deeded the Walcott Street mansion to his daughter, Elizabeth Goff Wood in 1922. Nineteen years later, Mrs. Wood gave the property to the Pawtucket Congregational Society, specifying that the house be offered to the Red Cross, rent-free, for use as a chapter house. The Red Cross accepted the offer, and occupied the building for twenty-five years. The house was later the first home of the Rhode Island Children's Museum. The house is now being sold again and we're just highlighting its significance.



As everyone now knows, the Hose Company Number 6 building was demolished in late October. We appreciate the coverage in the Valley Breeze about all the efforts to save it. We'll all be watching to see what goes up on the empty lot.



Two years ago, with the help of Ken Postle of the Blackstone Valley Historical Society, we discovered a cast iron bell hanging in the belfry of the lodge in the Oak Grove Cemetery. The bell was made by the Blake Bell Company, founded by William Blake who had apprenticed in the Paul Revere foundry. When we first found the bell, we could view it from below and couldn't get a good view of the top. We recently made another visit to check on the bell and this time were able to see the top of the bell, which is clearly marked "Blake Bell Company." This confirms that it is the original bell that the city purchased to hang in the lodge when it was built in 1895. The lodge building is severely deteriorated, but the bell is secure...for now. Our hope is that it can eventually be removed and installed in a place where it can be admired by everyone.



Oak Grove Cemetery Lodge c. 1895

## Marker Program

The goals and objectives of the Marker Program are:

- To identify and recognize historically and architecturally significant structures
- To raise public awareness of, and appreciation for, said structures
- To encourage historically sensitive changes to structures in the City of Pawtucket

Please see our [website](#) to review marker criteria and to download the application form.

Any building or structure located in Pawtucket that contributes to the historic character of the city will be considered. It will be evaluated for historical relevance, date of construction, architectural significance and integrity, landscaping, and contribution to the neighborhood.

We have approved historic marker plaques for:

### **J. Stewart and Lillie Cumming House, 614 East Avenue (1916)**



Stewart Cumming was President and Director of Colonial Laundries on Pawtucket Avenue. He was elected to the Pawtucket city council in 1907. He purchased this lot from the Oak Hill Land Company in 1916 and built the house. It was purchased in 1925 by Mr. and Mrs. Joseph M. Giuttari. Joseph was manager of several mills, such as the Plush Mills and Rochambeau Worsted, and he later established Lyon Fabrics. Joseph's wife Vanna ran her own dress making and fabric shop as an extension of her husband's business. The house was then sold in 1940 to the Jeremiah Family and in 1980 to the McKittricks. We are very happy that the new owners of this house are celebrating and preserving its historical value.

## Preservation Reward Program

We are very pleased to announce that we have established a Preservation Reward Program to support historic preservation efforts in Pawtucket. The details are below. The program application is on our [website](#).

The Preservation Society of Pawtucket (PSP) will give up to three monetary gifts (a combined total not exceeding \$2000) for preservation-related projects completed in the city of Pawtucket.

1. Eligible projects will have been completed in the eighteen months prior to February 1.
2. Projects must be viewable by the general public, i.e. not internal private property projects.
3. Projects need not be associated with a specific building or place. Digital, archival, or narrative projects will be considered.
4. Rewards will be given to individuals, non-profit organizations, small businesses, or religious institutions.

**Applications must be received by the PSP no later than February 1.** Applications and supporting materials may be submitted to us by mail or email (the addresses are below). Applications will be reviewed by the board of directors in February and March and decisions will be made by early April. Rewards will be announced and presented at the annual meeting in early May.

Supporting materials should include:

- Photographs (before and after)
- Project outline
- Description of historical relevance
- Summary of what the project contributes to the community

This reward program will be funded by the Elizabeth J. Johnson endowment fund, established to support history research and preservation efforts in Pawtucket.

Project examples are:

- Restoration – using materials to restore a building's exterior appearance (form, features, character) as closely as possible to the time when it was built
- Rehabilitation – compatible use of a building through repairs and alterations while preserving significant historical and original architectural features
- Preservation – preservation of historic resources or creating interpretations of historic sites
- Preservation Service – participation in activities that promote awareness of preservation needs in Pawtucket
- Stewardship – demonstrating dedication to the long-term care of an historic property or resource by reducing or eliminating future threats



We are pleased to share that a Pawtucket-based filmmaker, Michael Viveiros, is working on a documentary called *Guerrilla Preservation*. The film will examine how defunct and abandoned historical properties affect their surrounding communities. It will discuss how losing cultural resources can affect a neighborhood, and how this can lead to preservation efforts. Michael has also been researching private collections that have unknowingly become valuable historical archives. We have had

conversations with Michael about the Pawtucket Ice Company on Waverly Place (in the photo), the Hose Company Number 6, and the Oak Grove Lodge Bell. The project will be finished next year.