

SAINT PAUL'S SCHOOL

1891 - 1991

Upon her death in 1888, Mrs. Eliza Burke Gregory bequeathed \$10,000 for the education of boys in Portsmouth. Her church, St. Paul's Catholic, had established a girls school, St. Joseph's, on King Street in 1876. The current site was selected, purchased, and a handsome two story brick structure was constructed in Italianate style. It featured a slate roof and an entrance tower with a marble plaque above its double doors. The school opened in September 1892, administered by three Xavierian Brothers with 60 boys in elementary grades, and the term "Academy" was adopted. The boys school was to be under the management of persons of the Catholic faith, but "be open to scholars of all denominations."

Enrollment grew steadily. By 1930 there were six Brothers and 213 boys. Its reputation also attracted many non-Catholic students. In 1931, teaching responsibilities were assumed by the Sisters of Charity serving at St. Joseph's. Both schools became co-educational. In 1948, St. Paul's became the high school, and St. Joseph's the elementary.

In 1957, a major modernization was completed. The tower was removed and the original 1891 structure was covered by a modern façade. Only the south wall remained visible. In 1959, St. Paul's became the first integrated school in Portsmouth. Its final name change, "Portsmouth Catholic High School," occurred in 1964. By 1991, enrollment declined from 220 to 74 students. Upon closing on May 29, 1991, it was one of the oldest operating Catholic high schools in the nation.

The school sat empty until 1996, when it was purchased by Monumental United Methodist Church to create needed parking. Monumental ceded the portion of the property containing the original building to the City of Portsmouth in 2001, and an agreement was reached to save the historic building. The modern façade and additions were removed.

In 2005, the school was purchased by Mr. and Mrs. Ernest R. Holloway. A detailed restoration was undertaken costing \$750,000. This included repairs to the original slate roof, rebuilding the entrance tower, and restoration of the original maple floors and ornate diagonal beadboard ceilings. The location of the original staircase was discovered and it was recreated. The marble plaque above the main entrance was found and returned to its original location.

Aubrey C. Brock of Portsmouth was the restoration architect. Professional Contractors Group, owned by the Holloways, completed the restoration work.

During its 100 years of existence, over 13,000 students graduated and went on to enrich their lives and the quality of life in Portsmouth.

DEDICATED BY THE OLDE TOWNE FOUNDATION

JANUARY 2014

APPENDIX II

ELIZA GREGORY

At a time in Portsmouth when the Catholic community was struggling to firmly establish itself, an Irish-born man by the name of John Burke took Eliza Keenan, also Irish, as his wife on April 24, 1821. Their daughter, Eliza, was born around 1823. A life-changing event, one of many to come to Eliza, the daughter, occurred at 17 years old when her mother died (August 30, 1840).

Eliza was sent to be educated at St. Joseph's Academy in Emmitsburg, Maryland, the motherhouse of the Sisters of Charity. Most likely she majored in Music, for after graduating from that institution with honors and distinction, she returned to Portsmouth and began to teach music. Posthumously, it was written of her: "Naturally energetic, she employed her time in teaching music as a mode of employment... The best instrumental musical portion of society in her native city and in several other sections of the state owe their proficiency to her care and untiring energy."

Eliza married John H. Gregory, a native New Yorker. In 1842, he owned the New York Store on Crawford Place where one could buy rich and beautiful silks, damasks, linens and cloths. Their son, John H. Gregory, Jr. was born around 1846.

In 1850, Eliza's household consisted of herself, age 24, her father, John Burke, 60, a grocer, husband John, 32, a merchant and son, John, Jr., 4.

In 1860, Eliza, John, Sr., their son and Mr. Burke lived at 81 High Street. Eliza was a schoolteacher, Mr. Gregory, a bookkeeper and Mr. Burke was retired.

But a few years later, quite suddenly Eliza's life unraveled. Her 18-year old son, John, Jr. died on January 18, 1864. Twenty-one months later, on October 29, 1865 her husband died. Only Eliza and her father remained in the household.

Although it appears that Eliza was financially secure all of her life, at some point she established Mrs. Gregory's Female Academy in Portsmouth. In 1868, a local newspaper published an article about the school describing it as a "flourishing and popular seminary of learning" that ranked with the finest. Mrs. Gregory was called "an accomplished preceptress, earnest and devoted in her high calling, and is very well known to almost everyone...she possess large experience in teaching the young of this community..."

After Eliza's father passed away November 29, 1878 at 87 years old, she found herself alone and bereft. Around 1880, she decided to move to St. Vincent's Hospital in Norfolk, under the auspices of the Sisters of Charity with whom she had a bond. Her obituary described the decision in the following way: "...in her declining years, being delivered by the hand of death of all her relations, she became like a stranger in a new city. In her loneliness and despondency, she sought aid in her Holy Religion. Well did it fill the gap caused by the severance of every human bond. St. Vincent's Hospital became her new home, and there under the nestling of the Sisters of Charity, she learned meek resignation."

During her eight years in residence, she grew close to the Sisters, and she gave generously of her wealth to the poor and orphans.

At 8:30 AM on June 10, 1888, having receiving Last Sacraments, "she resigned her soul to the will of God." A large funeral mass was held at the hospital, and from thence her body was transported to the family plot in Cedar Grove Cemetery where her parents, husband and son had long since been interred.

Eliza Gregory had amassed a considerable estate through inheritance, but mostly through her own successes in teaching. Three-and-a-half months before her death, she made her final Will. In addition to leaving \$10,000 for the establishment of a school for boys of all denominations, but under the control of the pastor of St. Paul's Catholic Church, she left a like amount to St. Vincent's Hospital as well as the profits from the sale of her properties in Portsmouth.

1891 Catholic High School Portsmouth

1. Owner – Ernest Holloway 1729 Royal Park Ct, Virginia Beach, VA. 23454
757-288-8248

2. Architect - Aubrey Brock 109 East Main St. Suite 412 Norfolk, VA. 23510
757-533-5520 Aubrey@humphreys.com

3. Contractor -James Garcia P.O. Box 271 Virginia Beach, VA. 23458
757-288-0108

4. Project - Dennis Dugay 1704 Royal Park Ct, Virginia Beach, VA 23454
Manager 757-613-9351 ddugay@cox.net

5. Historic - Paige W. Pollard P.O. Box 4266 Suffolk, VA. 23439
Consultant 757-923-1900 paigelw@verizon.net

6. Broker - Jeffrey B. Parker 150 West Main St. Norfolk, VA. 23510
HRACRE Member 757-228-1820 jeff.parker@cbre.com

Project Team

(Only those firms indicated on this application will be acknowledged to receive a certificate at the awards banquet.)

Project Name: 1891 St. Paul's Catholic High School Portsmouth

Owner/Developer: Ernest Holloway

Design Team

	<u>Company Name</u>	<u>Point of Contact</u>	<u>Phone</u>	<u>Email</u>
Architect:	Humphreys & Partners	Aubrey Brock	533-5520	aubrey@humphreys.com

Contractor: Professional Contractors Group

288-0108 N/A

Broker: CB Richard Ellis

Jeffrey B. Parker
490-3300 jeff.parker@cbre.com

Project Managers:

Ernest Holloway
Dennis Dugay
288-8248
613-9351
N/A
ddugay@cox.net

Historic Consultant: Commonwealth Preservation Group, LLC
Paige W. Pollard
923-1900
paigelw@verizon.net

1891 St. Paul's Catholic High School Portsmouth

The 6,000 square foot property was built in 1891 as a school by the nearby St. Paul's Catholic Church in the Olde Towne section of Portsmouth. In 1957 a major addition to the school was constructed which included wrapping new construction around the original structure on three sides. During this construction the Bell Tower, which formed the front entrance to the building, was demolished. The school was vacated in the late 1980's and sat empty until 2002 when the 1957 addition was demolished leaving the original structure.

The building was purchased from the City of Portsmouth by the 441 Washington Street LLC in August of 2005, construction started in September 2005 and was completed with the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy in mid September of 2006. Restoration of the exterior of the building was performed based on old photographs and the interior restoration was based on evidence found during the rehabilitation process. After removal of layers of ceiling tiles, floor tiles, and cement we found evidence of wainscoted ceilings, maple hardwood floors, and the location of the original center stairway.

The exterior restoration included the reconstruction of the prominent Bell Tower and front entrance. With the assistance of historic photographs the new Tower now mirrors the original structure both in height and architectural features. The historic photos also aided the addition of another original feature - a "plaque" over the front door. During construction, inquiries were made and the original "plaque" was discovered leaning against the back of St. Paul's Catholic Church. The seven hundred pound piece of engraved granite is now back where it belongs over the front door announcing that the building is St. Paul's Catholic High School built in 1891.

The roof is Buckingham Slate. It had extensive damage to both the roof structure and the slate. After repairs to the roof structure the damaged slate was addressed. To match the existing slate and maintain the old original look, repairs were made with existing slate. In some instances existing slate was insufficient for the repairs and new slate was used. Buckingham slate is not

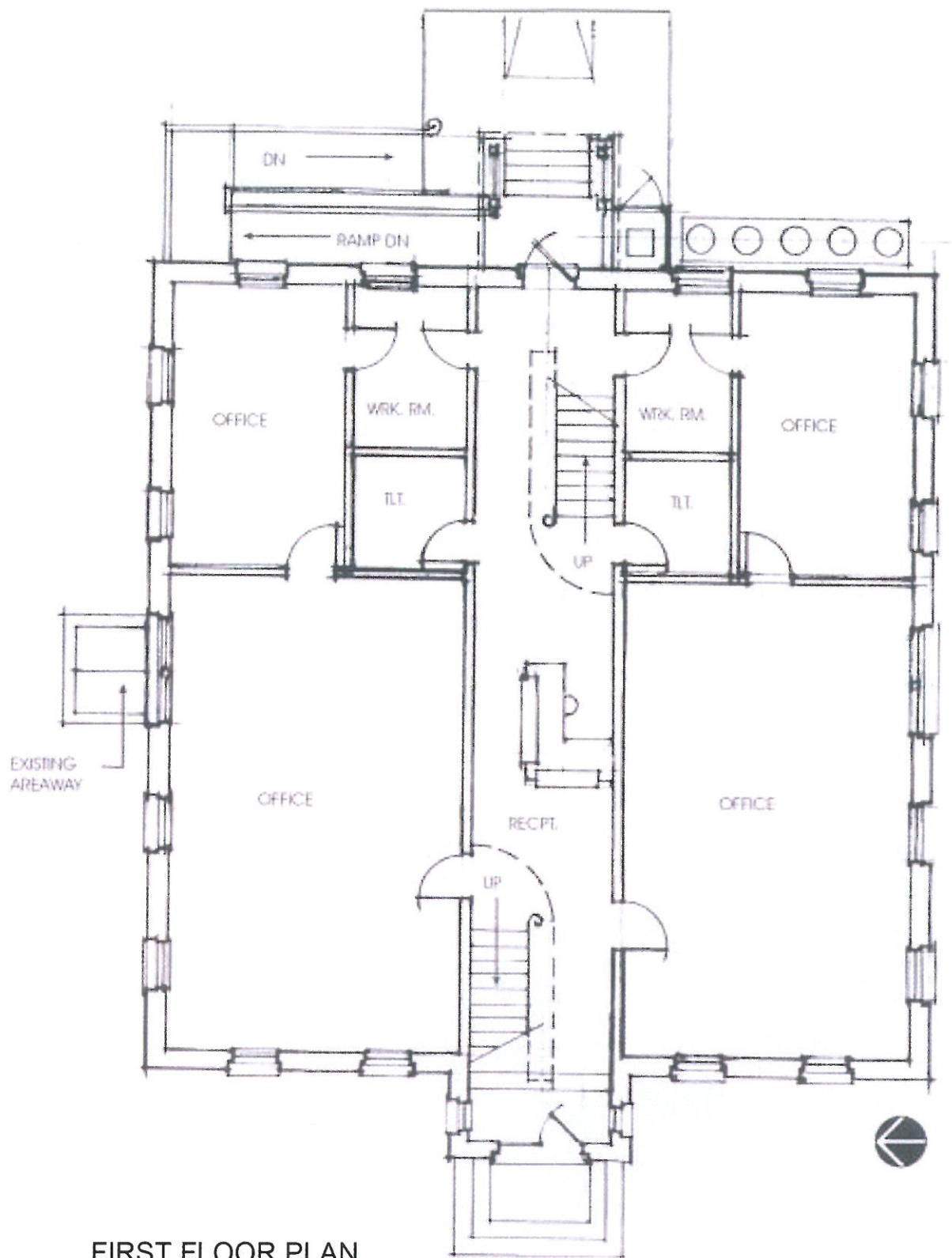
readily available so to match the original slate we had it mined in Central Virginia specifically for the restoration project.

When the 1950's addition was added all the windows on three sides of the building were removed and filled with cinder blocks, this process not only destroyed the wood framed and glass windows but also the brick window arches with their white key stones and window sills. All of these were restored during the rehabilitation. Our Architect drew up the original window design and all the windows were custom made to match the originals.

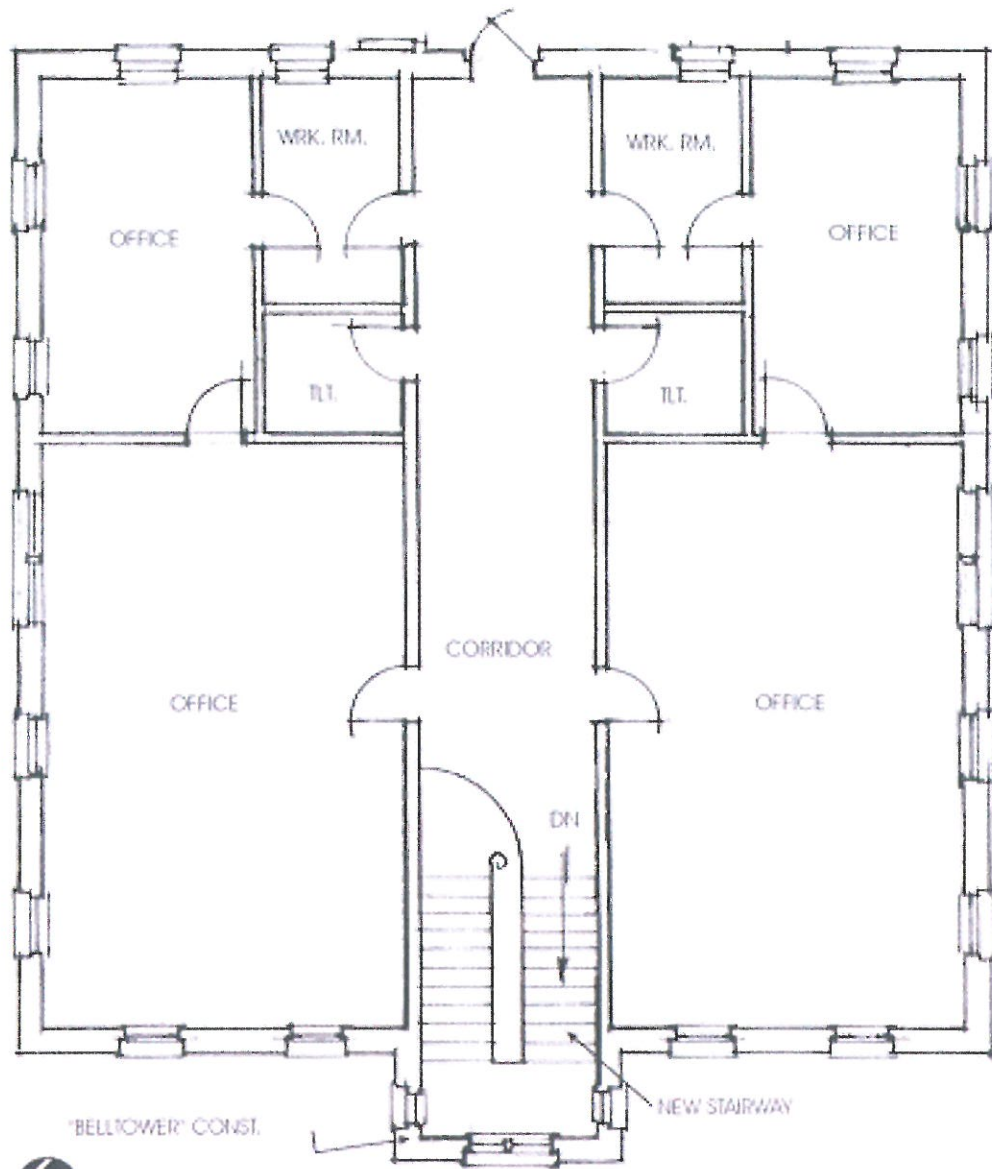
Maple hardwood floors were still present in most of the building. Through an extremely labor intensive process, layers of tile and adhesive were removed without damaging the original flooring. These floors were then refinished. Hardwood floors had previously been removed from the hallways and one small room so during rehabilitation new Maple hardwood floors were installed in these rooms.

One of the most difficult and disappointing aspects of the refurbishing was to find that the outside brick walls would have to be painted. We had always planned to replace broken bricks and point the building to maintain the brick as it had been. However, three things prevented us from doing that; 1) two of the walls had been painted with marine paint when they were interior walls and we could not remove the paint without destroying the brick, 2) tiles had been applied to two sides of the building and removing the cement that held the tiles created some surface damage to the bricks, and 3) experts advising us on the brick work noted that the "good" side had been sand blasted and was showing signs of deterioration. As a result we were granted approval by the city and state to paint the exterior.

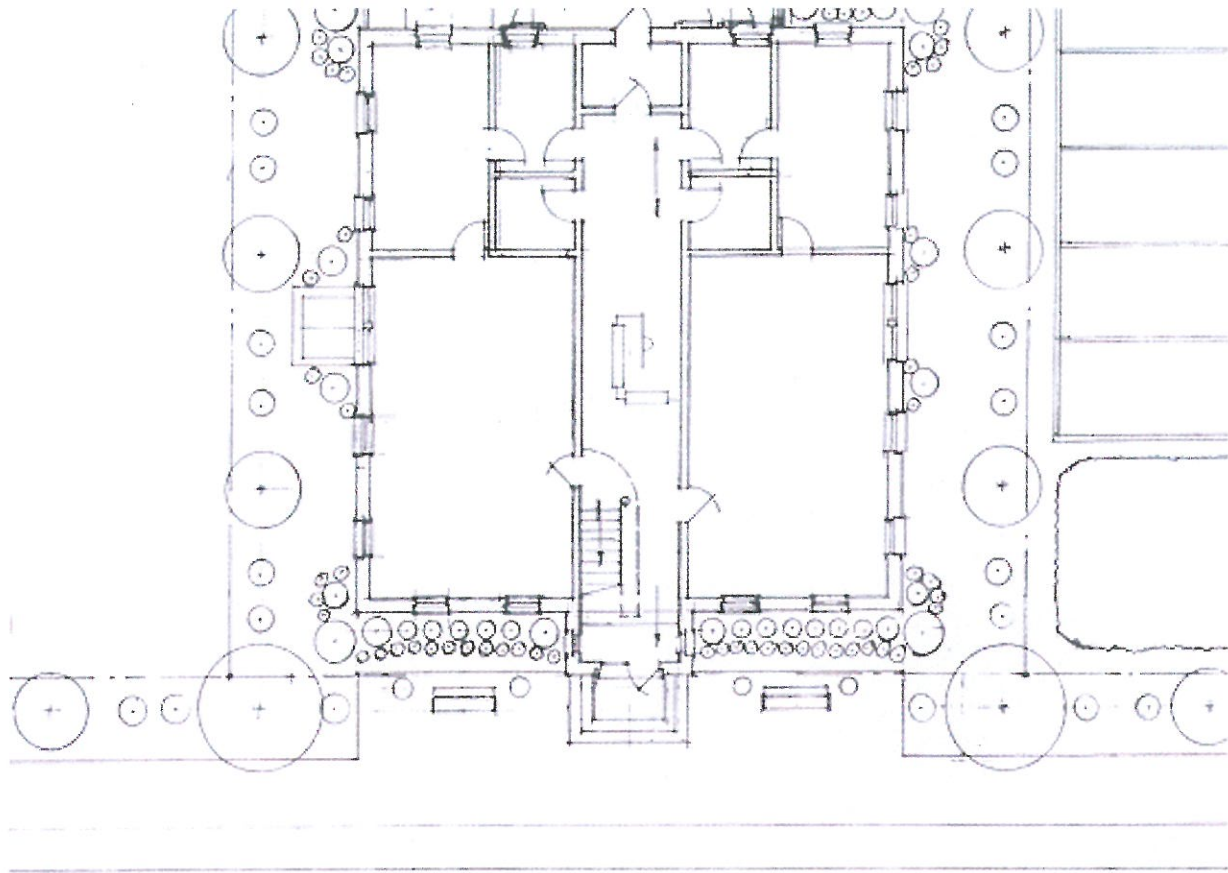
The team is extremely pleased with the outcome of the building and proud to present it as a candidate for the Best Renovated/Historic Rehabilitation award.



FIRST FLOOR PLAN



SECOND FLOOR PLAN



LANDSCAPE PLAN

Tower: Old Portsmouth building finally gets a suitor

Continued from Page B1

Les French, president of the Olde Towne Civic League Foundation, said he's pleased with the outcome.

For a half-century, the original building had been hidden away behind a 1950s wrap-around addition.

The school closed and the building was sold to the neighboring Monumental United Methodist Church.

French saw the old school when the church came to the Commission for Architectural Review for approval to demolish the building.

"We always knew there was something in there, but we didn't know how much of it was intact," French said.

The commission told the church they could demolish everything but the 1891 structure. The church appealed to the City Council, which upheld the decision.

Monumental eventually took the case to federal court, where mediation resulted in a compromise that seemed to satisfy both sides.

The city agreed to pay for demolition and clearing of the newer addition, and the church, in turn,



FILE PHOTO

The St. Paul's Catholic Boys School, shown here in 1891, was hidden away behind an addition to a high school in the 1950s. For years, Olde Towne preservationists dreamed of seeing the building restored.

The school building is in a "late Victorian style that is often seen in commercial and industrial-type settings."

would transfer the deed of the original structure to the city.

The next hurdle for Olde Towne residents was to make sure the city found a buyer that was willing to rebuild the tower.

"The tower is the heart of the structure," French said.

French said that once the

building is restored and the tower rebuilt, the old school building would be a "jewel for the historic district."

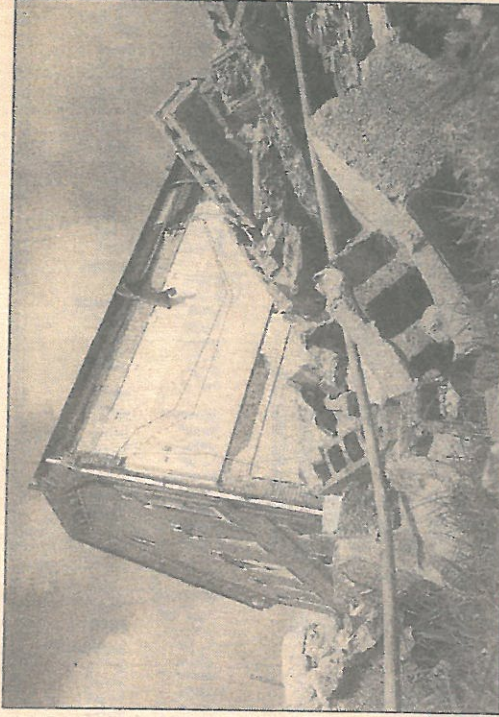
Aubrey Brock, a Norfolk architect working on the project, agreed.

Brock is a Portsmouth resident and one of the local preservationists who wanted to see the building added to the neighborhood's collection of architectural antiquities.

"The significance isn't limited to the building itself," he said.

"It's part of the cultural heritage of Portsmouth."

The architect described the school building as a "late Victorian style that is often



CHRIS TYREE/THE VIRGINIAN-PILOT

One year ago, the 1950s-era wrap-around addition was torn down, and the 1891 Catholic school building saw light again. A developer, Mickey Garcia, plans to restore the building and its bell tower.

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"You see some of these types of buildings in the north end of the shipyard," he said.

Brock said he isn't sure if the tower ever had a bell in it.

"What I'm hoping is that as the word sort of gets out there that something is finally happening, folks will begin to show up with photographs and this and that," Brock said.

Garcia is working with the state's Department of Historic Resources to apply for tax credits that would allow him to do the building the way it

should be done.

The developer estimates that with tax credits, the restoration will cost about \$600,000.

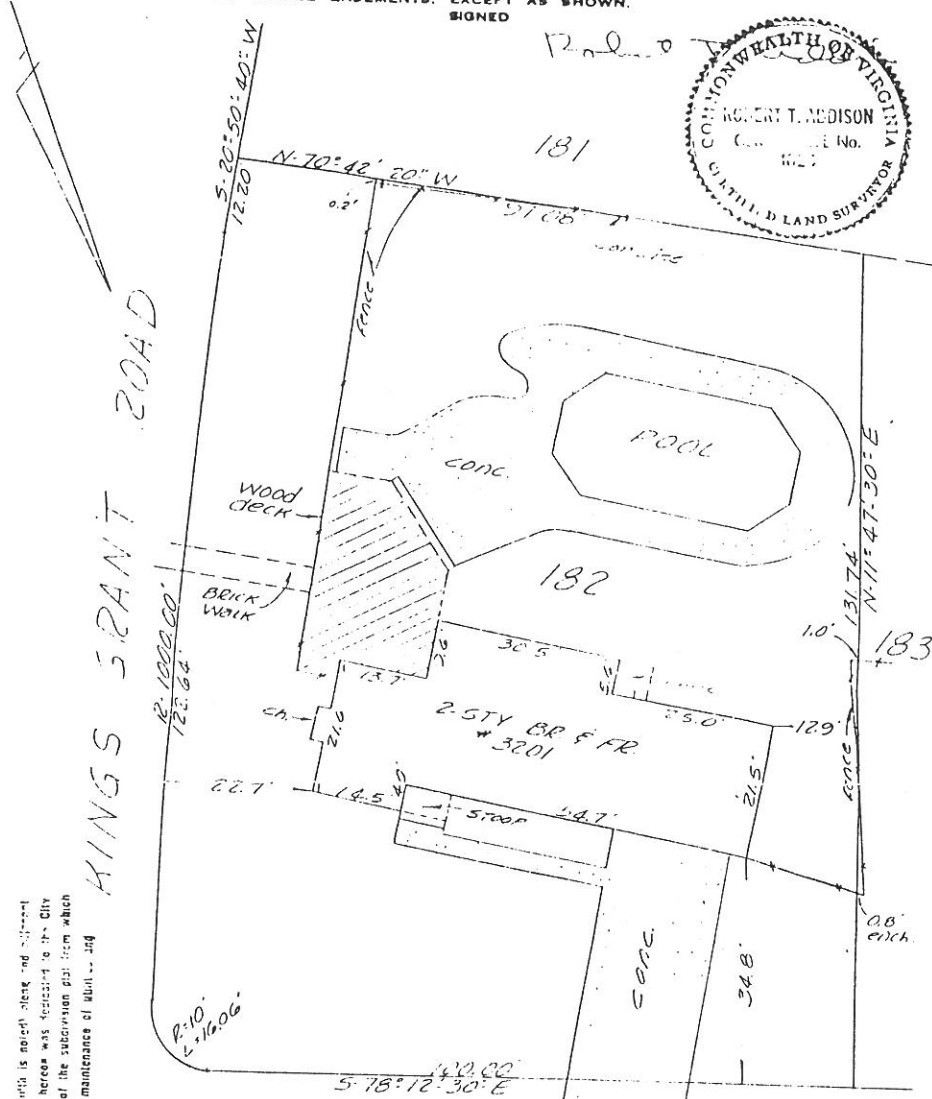
Garcia became interested in the building as soon as the wrap-around was torn down last year, he said. For a year, the building has stood on the corner waiting for a suitor, its exterior a mixture of neglect and potential.

Garcia saw the latter.

"Other people go to the junk yard and see piles of junk. I see the Cadillac," he said.

■ Reach Janie Bryant at 446-2453 or Janie.bryant@pilotonline.com.

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT I, ON **JUNE 5, 1985** SURVEYED
 THE PROPERTY SHOWN ON THIS PLAT, AND THAT THE TITLE LINES AND THE WALLS OF THE
 BUILDINGS ARE SHOWN ON THIS PLAT.
 THE BUILDINGS STAND STRICTLY WITHIN THE TITLE LINES AND THERE ARE NO
 ENCROACHMENTS OR VISIBLE EASEMENTS, EXCEPT AS SHOWN.
 SIGNED



NOTE:
 A five (5') easement (unless greater width is shown) along and adjacent
 to the side and rear lines of the lot shown herein was indicated to the City
 of Virginia Beach, Va. upon the recording of the subdivision plat from which
 this lot is taken, for the installation and/or maintenance of storm and
 drainage facilities.

WATERGATE LANE

PHYSICAL SURVEY
 OF
 LOT 182, KINGS GRANT, SECTION TWO
 VIRGINIA BEACH, VA.

FOR
 RANDALL D. HALM & BARBARA G. HALM

THE PROPERTY SHOWN HEREON APPEARS TO BE IN FLOOD
 ZONE C AS SHOWN ON U.S.D. FLOOD HAZARD
 MAP, PANEL 7B COMMUNITY NO. 515532018 G, REV. JAN 17, 1985
 (VIRGINIA BEACH, VA.)

JUNE 5, 1985
 REV. JUNE 14, 1985

SCALE: 1" = 20'

NOTE: FOR PLAT SEE
 M.B. 51, PG. 30

ALTON M. BUTLER
 LAND SURVEYOR, P.C.
 VIRGINIA BEACH, VA.

BRUNING 40-21 556 19

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Continued from Page B1

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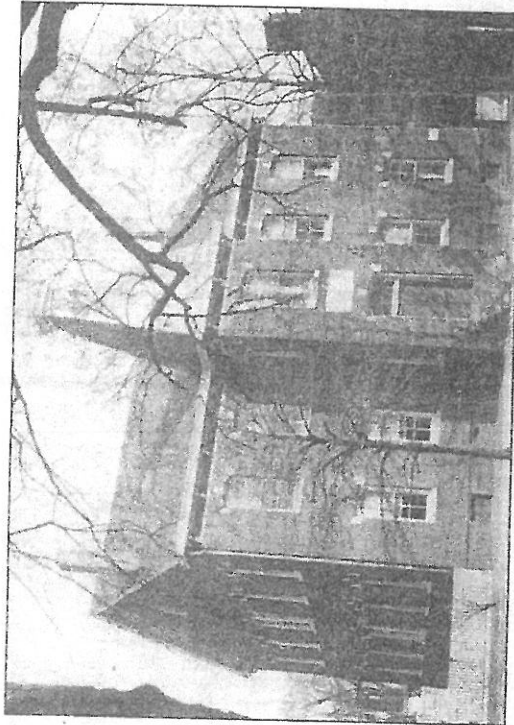
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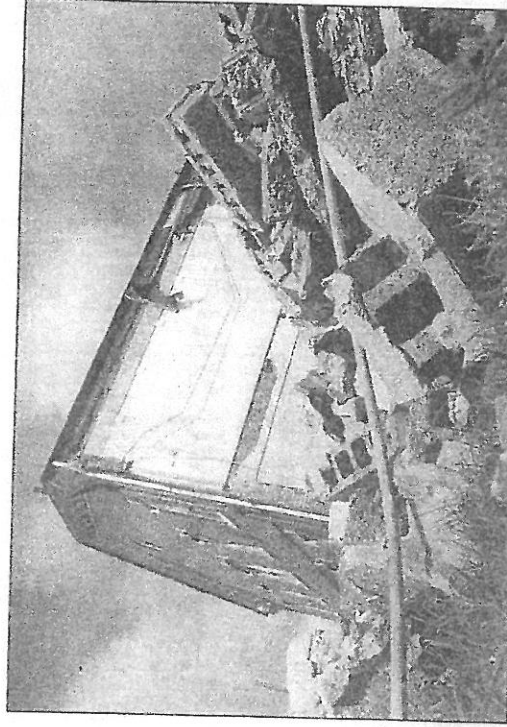
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1891 Catholic High School Portsmouth, VA

Best Renovated / Historic Rehabilitation
HRACRE Design Awards
2006





441

Cecil
BOON





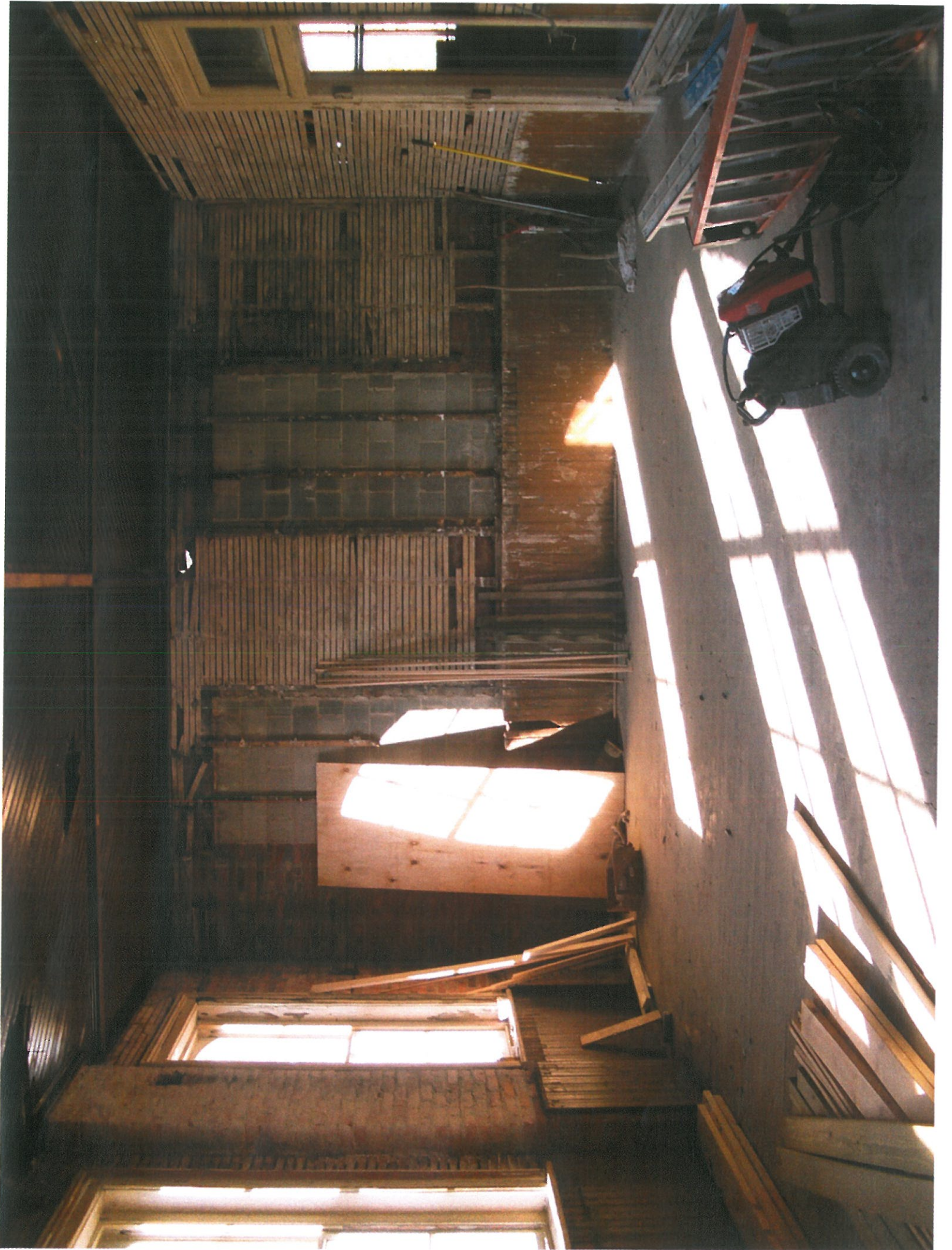
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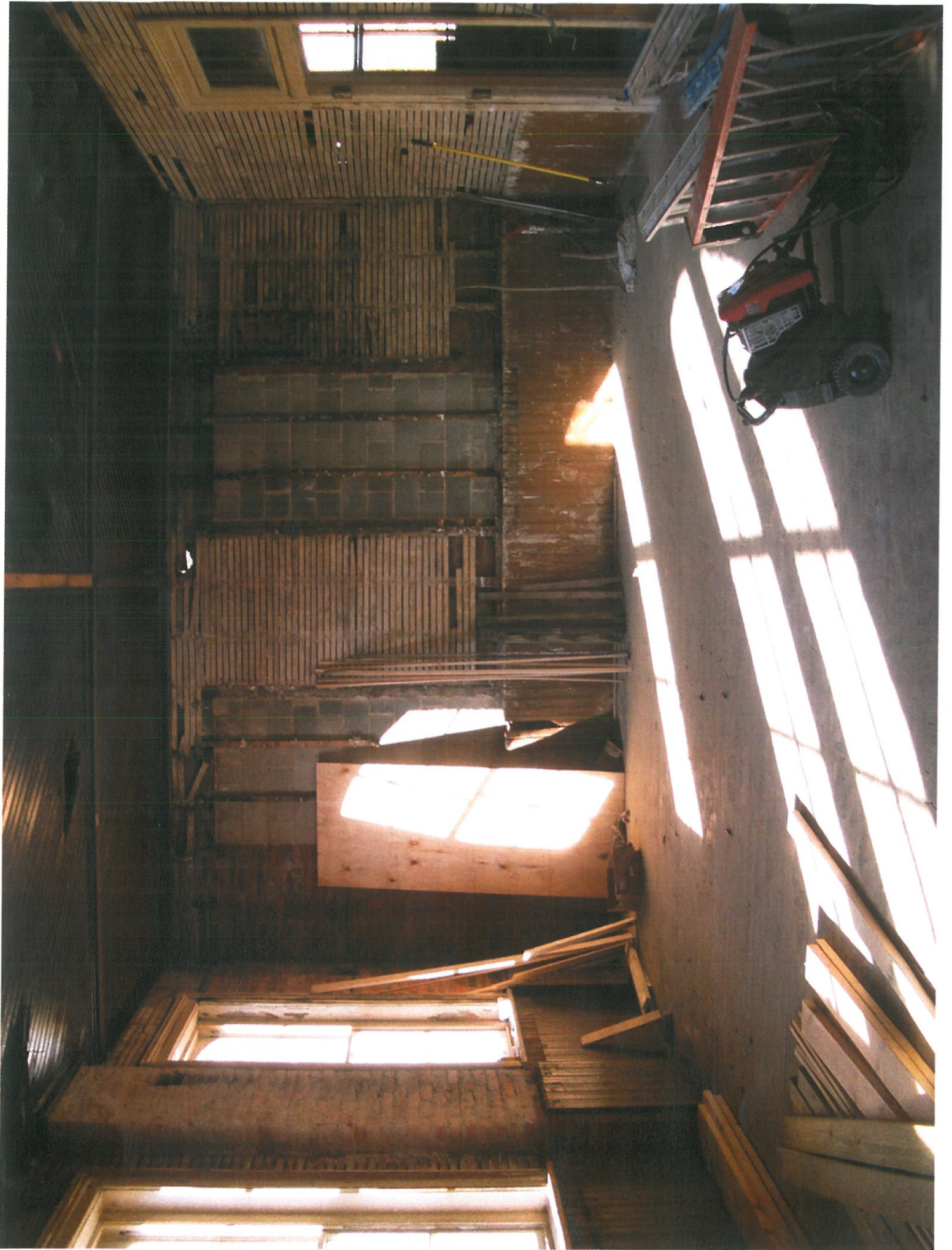




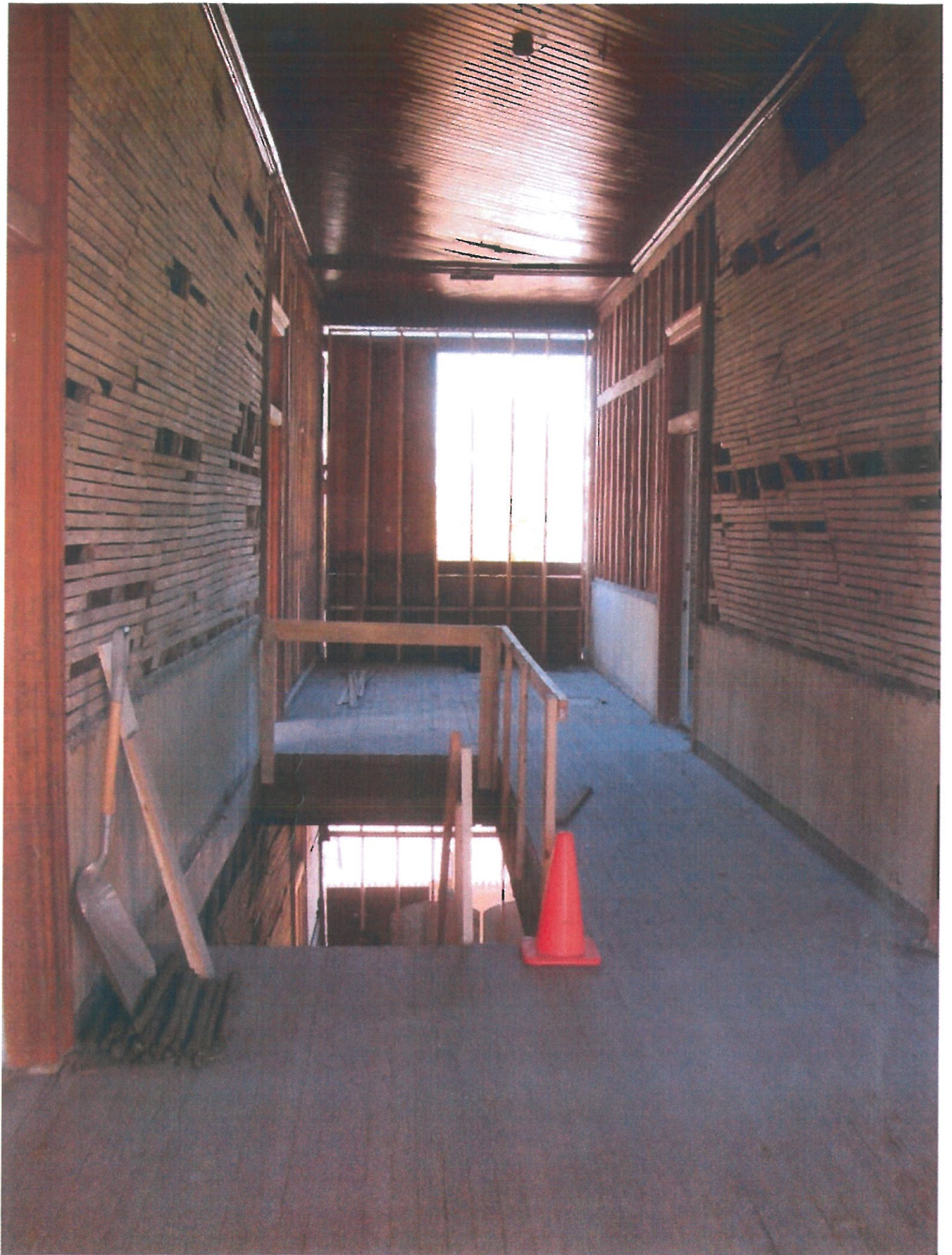


























































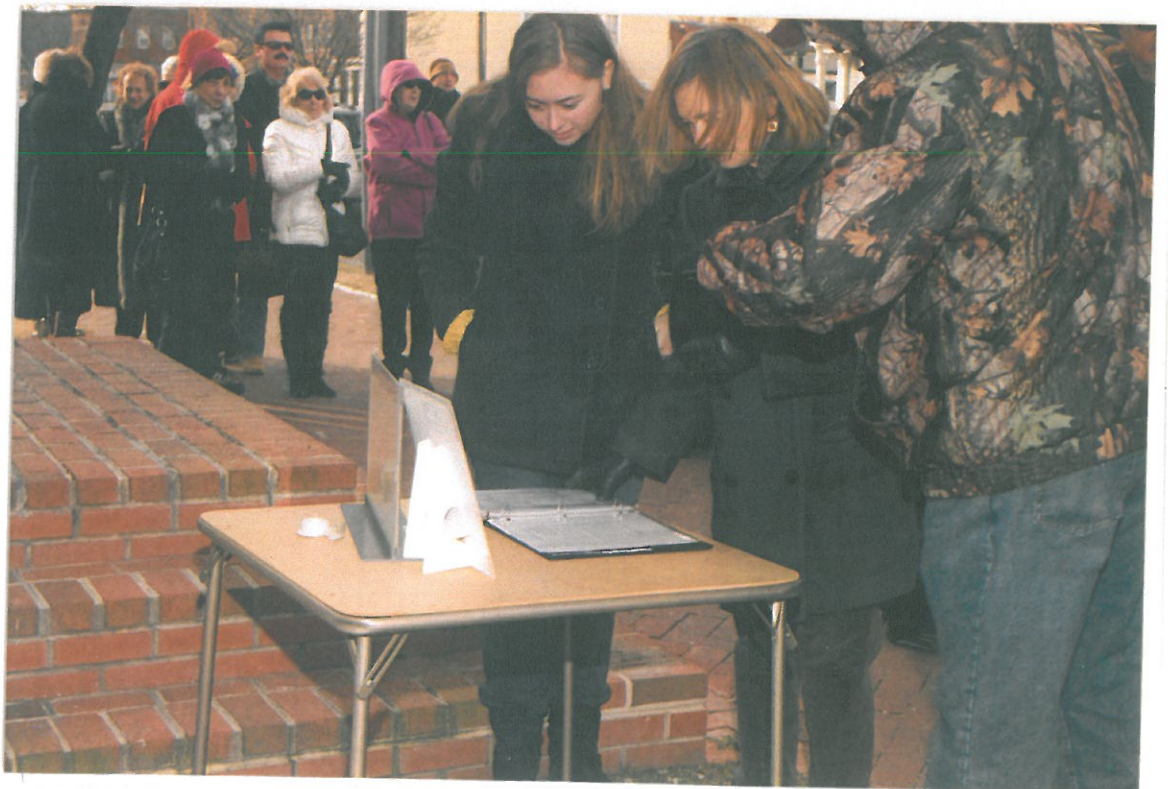


















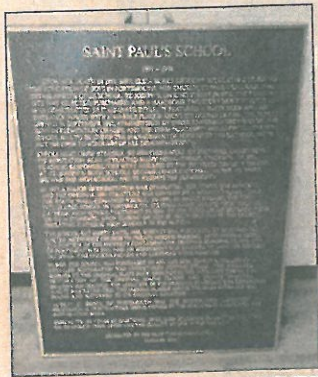




CURRENT

ST. PAUL'S CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL

BRONZE PLAQUE MARKS BUILDING'S ROLE IN HISTORY OF CITY'S EDUCATION



COURTESY PHOTO

The \$2,300 marker was purchased with funds raised from the foundation's Olde Towne holiday home tour.

By Lia Russell
The Virginian-Pilot

St. Paul's Central High School educated children in downtown Portsmouth for a century, and at 10 a.m. Saturday, the Olde Towne Foundation will unveil and dedicate a bronze marker honoring the school's history and contributions to the community.

The \$2,300 marker was purchased with funds raised from the foundation's Olde Towne holiday home tour, said Leslie French, a member of the foundation's board of directors.

Through such efforts, the Olde Towne Foundation seeks to "tell the rich history of Portsmouth," French said.

Founded in 1891 as St. Paul's Academy for Boys, the Roman Catholic school was financed through a bequest of \$10,000 by Eliza Burke Gregory, a member of St. Paul's Catholic Church, who died in 1888.

According to Portsmouth Catholic Regional School's website, the Italianate-style

See ST. PAUL'S, Page 9



Chef Sydney Meers demonstrates a recipe which focused on holiday recipes.

WHAT'S ON

The popular Detroit cooking classes, taught by Chef Sydney Meers, will be held at Port Norfolk's Stove, the restaurant, in early December. They left five hours later, a pound or two heavier, with holiday recipes in hand and a treat or two in reserve. The event was a monthly cook-

By Pamela Nichols
Correspondent

Fourteen strangers walked into Port Norfolk's Stove, the restaurant, in early December. They left five hours later, a pound or two heavier, with holiday recipes in hand and a treat or two in reserve. The event was a monthly cook-

want to go?

What St. Paul's School marker dedication

When 10 a.m. Saturday

Where 441 Washington St., Olde Towne

Cost Free



Now On Sale
CITY TRIP
801 Craw

E-Z Pass Cost: \$35

ST. PAUL'S

Continued from Page 1

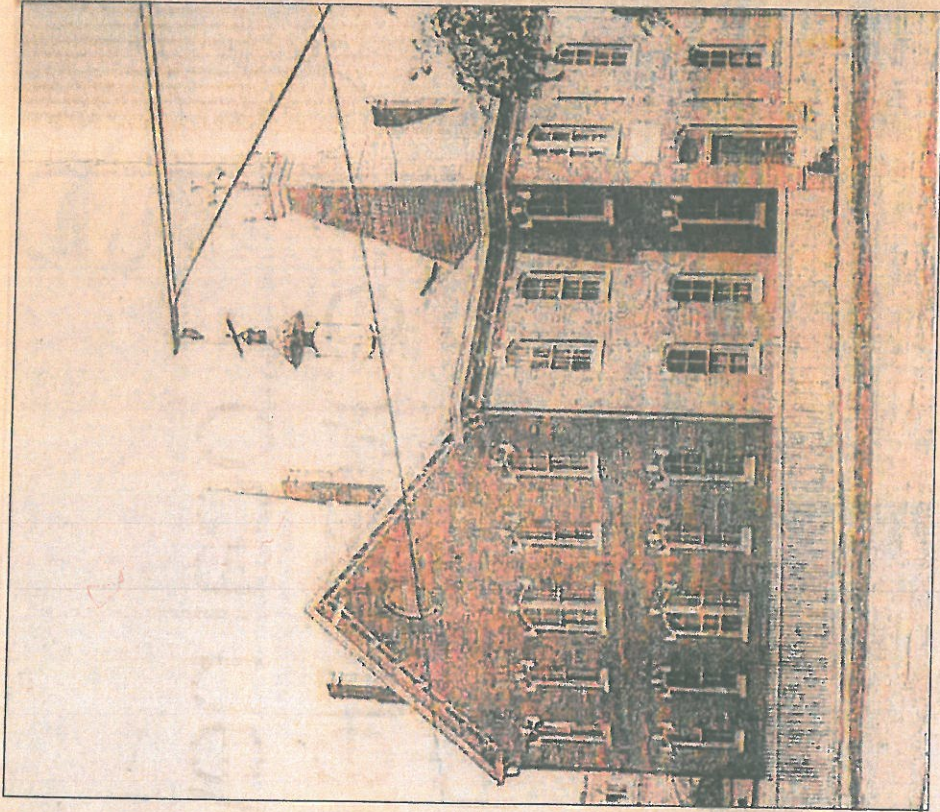
St. Paul's Academy at Washington and London streets was staffed by Xaverian Brothers, members of a religious lay congregation, until 1931 when it began admitting girls. At that time, the Daughters of Charity, a women's apostolic life society whose members administered and taught at St. Joseph's Academy, the city's Catholic girls' school, took over from the Xaverian Brothers. Both schools became coeducational and were open to students of all religious denominations.

St. Paul's school underwent a significant renovation in 1957. Its entrance tower was removed and a new facade was constructed over the building to give it a more modern appearance.

In 1959, Saint Paul's merged with Our Lady of Victory, a Catholic school for black children, to form St. Paul's Central High School. According to the marker, it was the first integrated school in the city. In 1964, the school changed its name to Portsmouth Catholic High School and retained that name until it closed its doors in 1991.

That year, Catholic High School, now Bishop Sullivan Catholic High School, opened in Virginia Beach and consolidated several of the area's secondary Catholic schools at that location.

During its 100 years of service, more than 13,000 students passed through the doors of St. Paul's school.



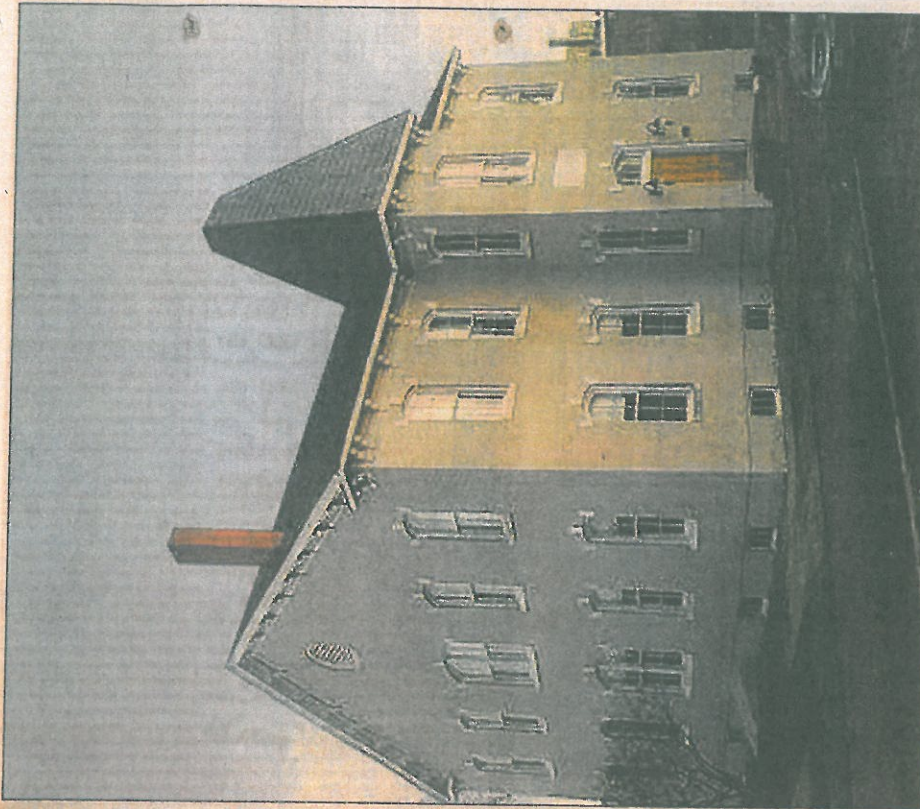
Ernest and Cheryl Holloway, of Professional Contractor's Group, bought the building in 2005 for \$25,000 and invested \$750,000 to restore the former school to its original design, at right. It's now an office building.

It remained vacant until Monumental United Methodist Church purchased the property in 1996, with the intention of tearing down the structure to create parking. Preservationists wanted the building saved and restored, and in 2001 an agreement was reached where, in exchange for a paved parking area, Monumental gave the building and 20-foot surrounding maintenance zone to the

city, according to James Windley, who was then on Monumental's board of trustees.

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"When I bought the building, it had four feet of water floating in it, but I thought



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COURTESY PHOTOS

it was worth saving and now I'm proud I did it," Ernest Holloway said.

Restoration of the 9,000-square-foot building included removal of the 1957 facade addition, repairs to the original slate roof, rebuilding the entrance tower that had been demolished, fixing and refinishing the original maple floors and diagonal beaded ceilings, and re-creating the school's original

exteriors, but also appreciate its history.

"With the installation of this plaque, anybody walking by there will be able to read it and have a good idea of the role that building played in the development of Portsmouth," French said. "We think markers like this are missing in many places in the city."

Now, with installation of the bronze plaque, visitors and other community members not only will see the building, currently home to Innovate Architecture & In-

Lia Russell, 222-5562, lia.russell@pilotonline.com