

Innovation and Preservation: The Architectural Heritage of Chestnut Hill



The Vanna Venturi House: an architectural marvel in Chestnut Hill.

Philadelphia's Garden District Grows Ripe with Extraordinary Architecture and Design

The harmonization of innovative architecture and the natural environment has come to define the look and feel of Chestnut Hill's architectural legacy. In this urban enclave located just outside of Center City, Philadelphia, visitors will find an abundant collection of extraordinary architecture highlighting 19th- and early 20th-century residential buildings and European-influenced work alongside country estates and sprawling gardens. Designated as "Philadelphia's Garden District," this progressive community is nestled along the 1,800 acres of Wissahickon Valley Park, part of Philadelphia's 9,200-acre Fairmount Park system, making it one of the most environmentally-friendly residential and business corridors in the region.

Examples of early Italianate Victorian, Queen Ann and Colonial Revival designs can be found throughout the community, showcasing the work of renowned architects like Samuel Sloan, G.W. & W.D. Hewitt, Wilson Eyre Mellor Meigs and Howe, and most notably – Horace Trumbauer, Louis J. Kahn and Robert Venturi. Early on, these architects played a pivotal role in outlining the delicate balance between preserving the green space and natural assets of Chestnut Hill while embracing new development. This tradition of "designing with nature" remains a core value for the corridor today.

"Chestnut Hill continues to change and evolve," remarked Richard Snowden, owner and managing partner at Bowman Properties (which owns a significant number of the neighborhood's commercial and residential buildings) and president of the Chestnut Hill Business Improvement District. The community works hard to make sure that new developments reflect the preservation ethos of the neighborhood as well as those who support its growth. While we embrace change, we also remain dedicated to the historical significance of Chestnut Hill and the community-focused values of the corridor."

One West is an example of this development and is the first completely new building on Germantown Avenue (the neighborhood's main street) in 30 years. Facing the business district and a part of Fairmount Park, this mixed-use space sits on two acres of land and features a five-story building with luxury condominiums and retail space on the ground floor. Designed by local firms Stanley Runyan and Associates of Chestnut Hill and SPG3 architects, the project was developed by Bowman Properties, and is a prime example of honoring the historical integrity of the community with innovative new designs. The use of Wissahickon schist (native stone) and landscaped terraces blend this modern structure seamlessly with the neighboring historic buildings and well-manicured avenue.

A convergence of old and new, Chestnut Hill bridges the gap between historical preservation and economic development, along with bucolic charm and urban accessibility. "Chestnut Hill offers a unique mix of cosmopolitan amenities paired with distinctive history and space – a luxury in any metropolitan area," says Martha Sharkey, executive director of the Chestnut Hill Business District (the official marketing arm for the destination).

"As we celebrate the 20th anniversary of our designation as Philadelphia's Garden District, we also pause to appreciate the (more than) 100 years of innovation and preser-

(Continued on page 13)



The Sign of Craftsmanship®

Exterior Painting ♦ Interior Painting
Pressure Cleaning ♦ Carpentry
Shutter Repair & Installation
Kitchen Cabinet Refinishing
Wallpaper Removal & Installation

610-664-5555

www.johnneillpainting.com

The Exterior Season is in Full Swing

Did you know that routine maintenance can save you hundreds if not thousands of dollars on exterior home repairs and painting?



Call today for your free maintenance inspection.



**Dan Helwig, Inc.
REALTORS®**

1415 Bethlehem Pike,
Flourtown, PA 19031
215-233-5000



YouTube

**Cutting Edge
Advertising!**

Your Family Realtors
Serving
Springfield Township
since 1976.

Property Management

Leasing & Monthly Rent Collection

Property Related Bill Payment

Manager On-Call 7 Days A Week

Maintenance & Contracting

Paper & Internet Advertising

Monthly Statements & Checks

Year End 1099 for your Tax Filings

**Prospective Tenant Screenings includes
Credit Checks & Reference Evaluation**

Move-In & Move-Out Reports

We Will Attend Court & File if Necessary

**Tenant Portal - Tenants Pay Online &
Submit Maintenance Reports**

**Owner Portal - Check Payment History,
Reserves, and Maintenance History**

www.DanHelwigRealtors.com

Contact us today, and we'll manage your property!

Innovation and Preservation: The Architectural Heritage of Chestnut Hill

(Continued from page 12)

vation the community is known for," continued Sharkey.

Thanks to the efforts of the Houston-Woodward family during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the seed for Chestnut Hill's diverse landscape was planted. Often thought of as the founding family of Chestnut Hill, the Woodwards constructed spacious homes and cultivated green spaces throughout the region, with designs inspired by the revival ideas of English and French architecture, as well as the emerging American Craftsman style of the early 20th century. As the community grew, homes were seamlessly woven within the verdant landscapes surrounding the community. This unity of nature and architecture continued throughout nearly every development that followed.

A shining example of historic sense of place is the Morris Arboretum. Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, Morris Arboretum of the University of Pennsylvania began as Compton, the summer home of John and Lydia Morris (siblings), built in 1887. The property opened to the public in 1933 as the Morris Arboretum. Today, the Arboretum has restored many of its original historic architectural features including numerous working fountains, the Log Cabin, the Springhouse (pre-dating even the Morrises), Lydia's Seat in the Rose Garden, and the only freestanding glasshouse Fernery in North America. Morris Arboretum's newest architectural triumph is Out on a Limb, a permanent nationally award-winning exhibit which takes visitors 50 feet up into the treetops on a canopy walk that requires no climbing. Morris Arboretum is open 362 days a year.

Robert Venturi's 1960s Vanna Venturi House stands as a leading example of a modern piece that retains the spirit of Chestnut Hill's original character. Surrounded by trees and nestled near Pastorius Park, the Vanna Venturi House is known as one of the first examples of postmodern architecture, featuring complex geometrical designs. Built in 1964 for Venturi's mother, the home remains a private residence and is not open to the public.

Embodying the Chestnut Hill spirit, Krisheim Estate was originally a Woodward family residence. Designed by the architectural firm Robert Swain Peabody and John Goddard Stearns Jr. in 1912, this Tudor-Jacobean building served as home to the Woodward family for nearly 50 years before becoming a religious retreat in the '60s and '70s and split into apartments in the '80s. Today, the home is being restored to its original form by the Woodward family.

With the goal of ensuring the legacy of the Woodward family and heritage of Chestnut Hill, the

Chestnut Hill Conservancy (CHC) was established in 1967. Formerly known as the Chestnut Hill Historical Society, the CHC is dedicated to preserving the open spaces and historic structures of the community through land conservation and architectural preservation efforts. In celebration of the 50th anniversary of this organization and the 20th anniversary of the garden district designation – CHC is offering a series of guided tours exploring the architecture, history and natural beauty of this unique urban village. Tours will take place the second Saturday of every month (April – June) followed by the second Sunday of each month (August – October). Tickets for the tour begin at \$15. For tour times and highlights, visit www.chconservancy.org.

Visit www.chestnuthillpa.com to explore Philadelphia's Garden District and its distinct architecture and history. Join the conversation on social media with @chestnuthillpa and share your Chestnut Hill story with #chestnuthillpa and #phlgardendistrict.



One West is one of Chestnut Hill's newest buildings.



Wizarding

Summer Camps

ENGAGING ACTIVITIES

Quidditch * Dueling * Spells

POTIONS * Wand-Making

* HONEYDUKES & ZONKOS *

Full Day & Half Day PROGRAMS

For Ages 6-13 Trained Instructors






HEY, Harry Potter FANS!

ONE-NIGHT Wizarding EVENTS THROUGHOUT THE YEAR & BIRTHDAY PARTIES

\$50 off

full day camp registration

With this coupon. Not valid with other offers. Glenside location only. Offer expires 6-9-17. Coupon Code: ACFull

\$20 off

half day camp registration

With this coupon. Not valid with other offers. Glenside location only. Offer expires 6-9-17. Coupon Code: ACHalf

2016 Readers' Choice Winner

Hosted at Arcadia University

450 S. Easton Road
Glenside • 610-827-5678
brandywineschoolofwizardry.com

With this coupon. Not valid with other offers. Glenside location only. Offer expires 6-9-17. Coupon Code: ACHalf

SUBSCRIBE to THE LOCAL

We'll keep you
UP TO DATE
with Local news!

Call 215-248-8813