

NABB NEWS

THE NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION OF THE BACK BAY
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(Left to right) Elliott Laffer, Jerome and Sybil CooperKing, Susan Baker, and Kathy Palmer enjoy NABB's Member Reception at the Fairmont Copley Plaza Hotel. More pictures from the reception appear on page 4.

NABB's annual reception to welcome new members and greet old friends was held on January 23 at The Fairmont Copley Plaza Hotel. Over two hundred guests enjoyed complimentary hors d'oeuvres in the elegant ambiance of the Oval Room while mingling with their neighbors. Committee representatives and NABB ambassadors kept an eye out for the red carnation indicating a new member, and many lively, informative conversations ensued. Thanks to Membership Chair Nancy Macchia for organizing this very special evening and to Roberta Orlandino and the many volunteers who helped: Sue Baker, Cathy Wallace, Margaret Pokorny, Jerome CooperKing, Barry Solar, Kathleen Alexander, Michael McCord, Josh Dawson, Susan Ashbrook, Nancy Devereaux, Molly Mosier, Fritz Casselman, Rosanne Kumins, Dianne O'Connell, Faith Perkins, Conrad Armstrong, Roseann Color, Emily Fayen, Elliott Laffer, Kay Nagle, Tom High, Shelley Bame-Aldred, Jack Gregg, Valerie Conyngham, Janine Mudge-Mullen, Sharan Schwartzberg, Jim Hill, Kris Field, Ellen Rooney, and Sandi Gaskin. We gratefully acknowledge The Fairmont Copley Plaza Hotel for its generous support.

MEMBER RECEPTION



NABB President
Linda Zukowski



Left to right: Ellie Smith, Barbara Chassaigne, Jennifer Lowe, and Mary Anne Kelleher



Nancy Devereaux and Vivien Li



Francesca Carriuolo and Michael McCord



Left to right: Asa and Dan Welner, State Rep. Marty Walz, and Greg Hanselman

BY MARIAN ULLMAN

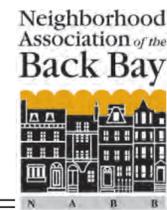
The approaching fortieth anniversary of the Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay has prompted me to recall some of my early days on Marlborough Street. I moved here in the fall of 1947. There was no neighborhood association, no playground, and, aside from church, very little opportunity meet anyone. Many houses in the Back Bay were still private homes, as were those of three of my immediate neighbors. On one side lived Mr. and Mrs. Lowell, parents of the poet, Robert Lowell, not yet famous. On the other side, but one, lived Mrs. Francis B. Crowninshield (in spring and fall). In this house, the only residence in Back Bay designed by H.H. Richardson, and the one across the street occupied by Mrs. Henry Endicott, there were large staffs of servants, including a chauffeur. When Mrs. Endicott departed for her summer home on the North Shore in her Cadillac limousine, the staff lined up on the front steps in white aprons in very Upstairs, Downstairs fashion to wave goodbye. Behind me, in a huge house at 306 Dartmouth Street, lived Mr. and Mrs. Edwin S. Webster. Their conservatory

MARIAN ULLMAN WROTE A REMINISCENCE OF HER EARLY YEARS IN THE BACK BAY FOR NABB'S 40TH ANNIVERSARY. THE SECOND HALF OF HER ESSAY WILL APPEAR IN THE SPRING ISSUE OF NABB NEWS.

was always filled with flowers raised and brought in from greenhouses at their spring or fall home in Chestnut Hill. Passersby on Commonwealth Avenue appreciated the bright color of flowers always turned toward the street for the benefit of the neighbors. Prior to World War II, the heavy wave of Irish immigration had provided a generous supply of servants, but during the war many servants left for better-paying jobs in the factories. Rosie the Riveter had likely previously been a chambermaid, a waitress, or a cook in some Back Bay town house. Since it's well nigh impossible to run one of our four- or five-story houses with a basement kitchen and a dining room on the floor above without servants, many, many houses were put up for sale when servants became difficult or impossible to find, and the owners moved to the suburbs. The houses were bought largely by rooming-house operators and people like me who turned them into apartments. It was a period of tremendous change in Back Bay. Coal furnaces were common, and of course a janitor was a necessity to tend the furnace twice a day, not

to mention the job of taking out the ashes. Dirt on the windowsill was much worse than it is today. The janitor also shoveled the snow—not just a shovel's-width path down the middle, but the whole sidewalk and a path out to the street so that Madam could reach her limousine easily. Gradually coal gave way to oil, and the sight of heavy barrels of ashes waiting to be picked up from the alley was no more. You can see how life was lived then at the Gibson House Museum at 137 Beacon Street. The kitchen and laundry are an especial treat. Small food markets, which did a large business by telephone and delivery, and supplied only the finest quality in meats and produce, gradually went out of business. There was no such thing as a supermarket. The nearest approximation was an A&P on Mass. Avenue. Pilgrim Laundry Company, which had keys to half the houses in Back Bay, picked up the laundry and dry-cleaning and returned it a week later. That company lasted a little longer but it, too, finally went out of business. I did not have a washing machine until about 1955, nor did I have a television set until about the same time.

NABB NEWS



WINTER 2011

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NABB Joins Minority Report on Christian Science Plaza Plan

BY SYBIL COOPERKING

Since January 2009, The First Church of Christ, Scientist and the Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA) have been meeting with a Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) appointed by Mayor Menino and comprising residents, business owners, institutions, professional organizations, and community organizations to review plans proposed by the Church to redevelop part of its complex and plaza on Massachusetts Avenue and the north side of Huntington Avenue. In January 2011 an informational presentation on the Plaza Revitalization Plan was given to the BRA Board of Directors, who are expected to vote this spring to endorse the new master plan. Also in January the Boston Landmarks Commission voted unanimously to designate the Christian Science Center Complex a Boston Landmark. This designation must now be approved by the Mayor and the City Council.

The 14.5-acre Plaza currently has seven buildings and approximately 10 acres of open space, as shown in figure 1. The Plaza will remain as the world headquarters for the Christian Science Church, and the Church plans to continue to maintain

including the addition of new shade trees, benches, and tables. Landmark designation will require approval of any such modifications by the Landmarks Commission.

The CAC responded to the master plan with both majority and minority reports. The minority report written by NABB, Fenway Civic Association, and Fenway Community Development Corporation shared the majority report concerns about the need to include the Midtown Hotel property in the plan, and the necessity to

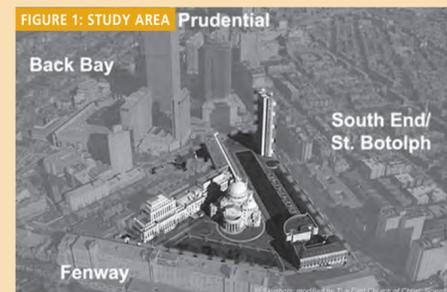


FIGURE 1: STUDY AREA Prudential

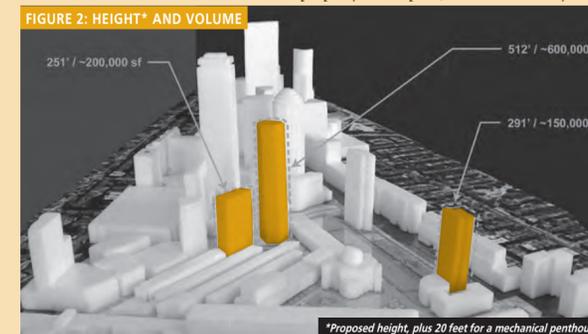


FIGURE 2: HEIGHT AND VOLUME

control of the Plaza. Under the proposed plan, the existing buildings will remain in use for Church activities as well as rental to other entities, such as Northeastern University. As shown in figure 2, approximately 950,000 square feet of new development is proposed within three buildings. On Huntington Avenue adjacent to the Sunday School Building, a 291-foot building is proposed; near the intersection of Belvedere and Dalton Streets, two buildings of 251 feet and 512 feet are proposed. Alternative uses of the three proposed buildings have been discussed but not established.

mitigate the environmental impacts of pedestrian level wind and the construction impacts on abutters. Additionally the minority report expressed concern about the large scale of the requested development and the arbitrary increase of the current as-of-right zoning from around 650,000 square feet to 950,000 square feet. NABB has consistently opposed the BRA's tendency to waive zoning restrictions almost reflexively whenever a major developer asks it to. The minority report also recommended deed restrictions (seen as more rigorous than zoning) to protect adjacent small-scale neighborhoods such as Clearway and St. Germain streets from adverse environmental impacts and becoming extensions of large-scale development.

Planned alterations of the public realm include the rebuilding and possible redesign of the Reflecting Pool, as well as enhancements to the lawn areas,

For more information, the plan document and meeting notes can be viewed at www.bostonredevelopmentauthority.org/Planning/PlanningInitsIndividual.asp?action=ViewInits&InitsID=144

Marian Ullman (1911–2010): Activist, Neighbor, and Friend

BY ELLIOTT LAFFER

It's fair to say that without the contributions of Marion Ullman, NABB as we know it would not exist. Present at the creation, Marion grew with the organization, moving from support roles into one of NABB's leaders. She served for many years as an officer and director.

In the late 1970s, as NABB was outgrowing its original structure, in which Marian was serving as one of three vice presidents, she was an active participant in the committees that considered how best to change the group to face new challenges. In addition to a revised officer structure and enlarged board, discussions in the committees led to two key initiatives that cemented Marian's role in NABB history.

The association had long published a newsletter that informed the membership about what was going on in a very articulate and polished way. However, the committee, officers, and board agreed that NABB needed an expanded

communications vehicle. As the first editor of NABB News, Marion brought this paper into existence, made sure that all of us who wrote for it met the high quality standards that she set, and created the basic template that has been followed ever since.

In addition to improved communications, Marion felt that NABB needed to put more effort into better connecting our members through social activities. Marion served as the founding chair of Friends and Neighbors. All of us who have participated in the wide-ranging activities offered through the many Friends and Neighbors groups can thank Marion for the vision that led to its creation and the skill to get it strongly off the ground.

Marion shared her wise counsel with all of the early leaders of NABB. She was a pioneer in making sure that women would have a leading role in the organization. She was always there when the neighborhood needed her. All of us who knew her are richer for her presence. The neighborhood and the city are better places because of her work.



Marian Ullman at NABB's 50th anniversary in 2005

Environmental and Energy Chief Jim Hunt Addresses NABB's Annual Meeting

James W. Hunt, III serves in Mayor Menino's Cabinet as Chief of Environmental and Energy Services for the City of Boston. He is the Mayor's lead advisor on environmental and energy policy, and oversees several City agencies including the Inspectional Services Department, the Environment Department, Parks Planning, and Boston's Recycling Program. Hunt also serves on the Board of Directors of the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority and as a Trustee on the Boston Groundwater Trust.

In remarks to the members gathered for NABB's Annual Meeting at the Algonquin Club, Chief Hunt acknowledged the contributions of NABB's leadership over the years. He complimented NABB volunteers on their efforts in protecting the architectural fabric, health, and quality of life of the city and making significant progress "past the tipping point" toward solving the complex groundwater depletion problem.

Chief Hunt stated that expanding the economy while protecting the environment were priorities of the City's administration. He was proud of the fact that Boston beats New York City in urban forest cover and of the campaign to expand this canopy by planting 100 thousand trees by

See JIM HUNT on page 2

The 2010 Annual Meeting

2010 COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARDS

A highlight of the Neighborhood Association's 2010 Annual Meeting at the Algonquin Club on September 16 was the presentation of NABB's Community Service Awards. Steve Wintermeier, Chair of the Awards Committee, presided as Kathleen Kolar received the Mary Natale Citizenship Award for significant and unheralded service to the neighborhood, and the Garden Club of the Back Bay was recognized with the Paul Prindle Community Leadership Award for its decades of important and sustained leadership in neighborhood quality-of-life issues. The edited remarks below are adapted from the presentation by Mr. Wintermeier and the report of the Awards Committee.

(Left to right) Kathleen Kolar, Natale Award Honoree; Steve Wintermeier, Chair of NABB's Community Service Awards Committee; and Garden Club of the Back Bay Co-Presidents Jolinda Taylor and Jackie Blombach. Taylor and Blombach accepted the Prindle Award on behalf of the Garden Club.



The Garden Club of the Back Bay has touched the lives of virtually everyone that lives, works and plays in the City of Boston. The Club, organized in 1964, includes in its mission the promotion of civic beauty and horticultural improvements in "the streets and public squares of Boston." Club members literally roll up their sleeves and get their hands dirty to improve the quality of life in our neighborhood.

PAUL PRINDLE LEADERSHIP AWARD The Garden Club of the Back Bay

The magnolias that blossom each spring along Commonwealth Avenue are the fruits of a project organized at the Club's inception. In 1995, the Club revived Laura Dwight's vision and subsidized the planting of 45 additional magnolias. This tradition of planting and caring for trees continues to be the main focus of the Garden Club today as members tend the Back Bay's roughly 1,000 street and alley trees. The Club's inventories of street and alley trees have informed the environmental decisions of the Back Bay Architectural Commission and the Parks Department.

Additional Garden Club projects include:

- The installation of tree pit fences and mulching around street trees.
- Grants to fertilize new trees and inoculate the

historic elms on the Commonwealth Mall.

- Assisting the Esplanade Association with its tree inventory and pruning projects. Garden Club volunteers tagged over 1,200 trees!
 - Caring for plantings at the Clarendon Street Playground.
 - Planting window boxes at the Women's Lunch Place.
 - Working with Hale House residents and beautifying their property.
 - Caring for the front gardens of the Commonwealth School, the Learning Project Elementary School, the College Club, and the Snowden International School.
 - Offering pruning services to homeowners at reduced rates.
 - Dispensing generous grants to local non-profit organizations that advocate for Boston's green spaces including the Friends of the Public Garden, City Roots/Urban Ecology Institute, and the Boston Schoolyards Initiative.
 - Holding regularly scheduled meetings and educational public programs.
- The Club's award-winning volunteer website, www.gardenclubbackbay.org, is a comprehensive source of information for regional garden and environmental programs, classes, and lectures.

In honor of the hard and far-reaching work of the Club's over 140 members and its substantial contributions to making the Back Bay a greener, more livable, more beautiful and sustainable community over nearly fifty years, the Awards Committee was pleased to recommend the Garden Club of the Back Bay as the recipient of the 2010 Paul Prindle Community Leadership Award.

The 2010 NABB Awards Committee found an everyday hero walking among us, an ordinary person, living a life of extraordinary deeds.

Kathleen Kolar is perhaps best known as one of the tireless volunteers who played a quiet but leading role in addressing groundwater issues and working for changes that literally protect the foundation of our neighborhood, but she has also applied her strategic intelligence to complex issues from the Millennium project to biking initiatives.

Less well known, are the personal and private battles she has taken on. In between appearances to help the Back Bay in our community's hour of need, many others have been personally touched by her giving nature. Those who know her are aware of the personal sacrifices she has endured to care for ailing relatives and friends and in between all of this public and private work, Kathleen found time, energy and resources to travel to the former Yugoslav Republics to work with and for those who had endured the unspeakable hardships of ethnic conflict.

Kathleen Kolar is a citizen's citizen and her guide-star is always the common good. She is a person of wisdom, integrity and strong principles who can be relied on to speak up for those principles. Kathleen is, in her own quiet and unassuming way, an intellectual leader, an inspiration to our community and all those touched by her caring.

On behalf of the Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay, the people of Boston, family, friends and those who suffered the hardships of ethnic conflict who have all benefited from this woman's spirit of giving, it is with pride and honor that we present Kathleen Kolar with the 2010 Mary Natale Citizenship Award.

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NEW OFFICERS

At NABB's Annual Meeting in September, outgoing Chair Ann Gleason passed the gavel to newly elected Chair James Hill. Ann will now serve as NABB's Secretary. President Linda Zukowski will continue in office for another year. Other officers elected at the meeting were Vice Chair Don Carlson, Vice President Susan Baker, and Treasurer Gene Bauer.

NABB Chair Jim Hill and former Chair Ann Gleason flank Annual Meeting guest speaker, Jim Hunt.

■ **JIM HUNT** from page 1
2020. A "pet peeve" of his has been how poorly we have recycled in the past. In recent years, however, he cites a 35% increase in recycled tonnage and urges the ongoing adoption of single-stream recycling.
Hunt is also committed to increased sustainability for Boston's homes and businesses through developing plans for curbing greenhouse gas emissions and the use of clean technologies. Boston was the first city in the nation to require as a matter of zoning that all new construction must conform to LEED standards. Historic districts will have to invest more in weatherization and energy efficient retrofits. Boston was one of the first Solar America Cities and has a goal to increase solar energy capacity to 25 megawatts by 2015. Various locations for wind energy turbines, from Moon Island to City Hall, are also under discussion.
During a lively question-and-answer session, Jim Hunt and NABB members discussed the need for a "cultural

shift" in the mentality that "the car is king" to the idea that cars, bikes and pedestrians must share the streets. Many strategies to achieve this end are in the works—from the expansion of bike lanes and bike rentals, to improved traffic signal and pedestrian crosswalk timing to the Complete Streets program, which is gathering traffic data to support the design of technologically smarter and greener infrastructure. Most in attendance seemed to agree with Hunt's statement that, "Perhaps there is no greater walking neighborhood than right here in Back Bay."
When the controversial subject of corporate sponsorship and tax breaks was raised, Chief Hunt said his administration appreciates the help of various friends groups and corporations to supplement the City's insufficient resources.
Chief Hunt's takeaway message was, "Organizations like NABB drive change. We should all work together, as the mayor likes to say, to 'turn beantown into greentown'."

It's Always Sunny at the Street Sale

Back Bay treasure hunters were rewarded this year with back-to-back NABB Street Sales in May and September. Neighbors and visitors of all ages turned out on a sunny Saturday in September to stroll the Dartmouth Street Mall and shop for bargains.



Ariel Hansan and daughter Alexia at Oge's table.



Patriots fan Margaret Sherin ponders a purchase.



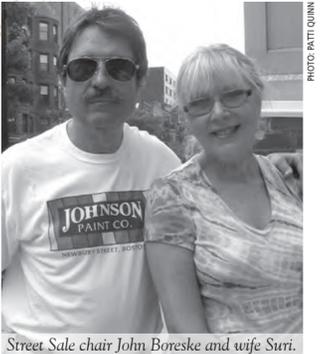
The Vendome Residents Committee



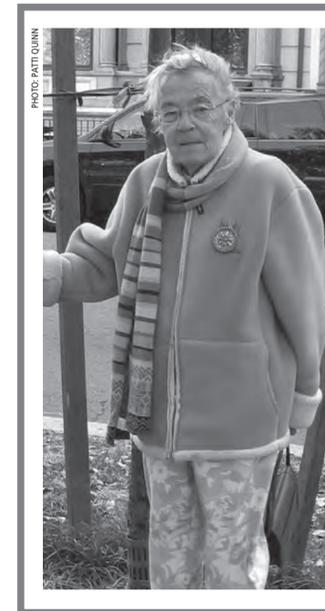
Faith Perkins and Daniel Perkins



Margaret Shepherd checks out the bling.



Street Sale chair John Boreske and wife Suri.



MARJORIE SMITH

Marjorie Smith passed away on November 25 at the age of 89. A lover of dogs, Marjorie was a dog walker and sitter and a supporter of Angell Memorial Animal Hospital. She was also a dedicated member of the Garden Club of the Back Bay. Marjorie never missed a NABB Alley Rally, where her energy amazed volunteers decades younger than she was. Among her lasting contributions to our neighborhood are two trees and a bench which she donated to the Commonwealth Avenue Mall in memory of her siblings. We will miss our kind and generous neighbor.



POOCHES ON PARADE

On a lovely Saturday morning in early October, proud Back Bay dog owners stepped out for a walk to celebrate and show off their beloved canine friends. Linda Selzer and Paula Welte co-chaired this NABB event, which brought back the tradition of the Commonwealth Avenue Mall Poosh Parade. Eminent, local veterinarian Dr. Jake Tedaldi of Vetcall led the proceedings, and a bagpiper accompanied the procession. Local businesses that donated to the event included Pawsh, Audrey's Pet Supply, Fish and Bone, Winston Flowers, Boston Pet

Sitters, Back Bay Vets, Towne Restaurant, Jules Catering, Fenway Bark, and photographer Susan Conway. All proceeds were divided between Buddy Dog Humane Society, a non-profit, no-kill shelter, and the Tufts School of Veterinary Medicine, which is doing significant research in the area of canine medicine. The mission of the parade, as always, was to share with dog-loving and canine-less neighbors alike the wonders of dogs of all sizes and varieties, and most importantly, to show that dogs can be good neighbors and good citizens! (All photos courtesy of Linda Selzer)



Jay and Christy Cashman's Phantom Manor, above. Dan and Kaja Fickes (right) with Busy Bees Elise and Kristi.



IT WAS A SPOOKY NIGHT IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD...

...as The Friends of the Clarendon Street Playground hosted its annual Halloween Party. Little ghosts and goblins braved the cold temperatures to enjoy a juggling and magic show, a hayride, and pizza and drinks before spilling out of the park to begin trick-or-treating around the neighborhood.

Many thanks to all of the volunteers who assisted at the party and the Cashman family who provided the hayride and opened up their home, which was transformed into a spooky haunted house by the magic of Dan Fickes. Michael George and Will Onuoha, ably assisted by City Year volunteers, ensured the safety of the hordes of revelers by coordinating the closure of Marlborough Street. A magical evening was enjoyed by all!