

SAVE OUR
SEMINARY



AT FOREST GLEN

SOS NEWS

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SOS News is the newsletter of Save Our Seminary, the nonprofit organization dedicated to preserving the historic National Park Seminary and engaging the public through education and advocacy since 1989.

2016 Events

SOS is presenting quarterly educational programs about the history of the Seminary site this year. Mark your calendars now for these four public programs that will be held in the ballroom.

Seminary Sports

Wednesday, March 30, 7:30 pm

What Was Here Before National Park Seminary?

Tuesday, July 19, 7:30 pm

The SOS Archives

Thursday, September 22, 7:30 pm

Walter Reed Forest Glen Annex in the 1950s—A Time of Change

Friday, November 11, 7:30 pm

Details about each program will be sent to members and posted on the SOS website a few weeks before each event. Please note that the SOS annual meeting will be held at the beginning of the program on March 30.

If you can't attend these events, remember that we videotape and post them on our website. Our last program in 2015 on the history of medical services at Forest Glen can now be viewed at

<http://www.saveourseminary.org/events/past-events>.

2016 Tours

SOS is continuing our regular guided tours of the NPS historic district from March through November on the fourth Saturday of those months. For people who cannot attend a Saturday tour, we've added an extra tour on Sunday, July 10th.

If you haven't been on one of our informative tours yet, or it's been awhile, we hope you can select a date to visit the campus in 2016. These monthly tours are free to SOS members and are \$5 for nonmembers. The Seminary is a unique place to share with visiting family and friends.

SOS also provides guided tours for private groups on dates to be mutually arranged. Contact SOS at 301-589-1715 for more information about tours.

Historic House Tour

SOS will be presenting another of our popular open house tours this spring, so **save the date of Sunday, May 1st** on your calendar! We already have six residences confirmed, including the windmill and a condo in the Music Hall, and hope to have more homes. You'll see how these unique historic buildings have been successfully adapted for modern living.

Tickets will go on sale in April, and attendance will be limited to about 200

people. This special tour is a fundraiser for SOS to support our goals of preservation and education about the historic National Park Seminary.

Special Memorial Donations

SOS was honored to receive two special contributions recently in memory of two individuals. The first donation of \$5,000 was made by the Holt family in honor of Helen Holt, a former teacher at National Park College who passed away last year shortly before her 102nd birthday. We were fortunate to meet and share memories with Helen in her last few years. SOS plans to use this donation to create a permanent display of items from our archives for public viewing near the ballroom, her favorite place on the campus.

The other donation was a bequest of \$3,000 from the estate of James M. McCullough. Two SOS members were friends of his and know that years ago he danced in the Seminary ballroom. He was an avid Scottish dancer and a lover of music, and SOS hopes to honor his bequest and interests with a preservation effort related to the ballroom.

SOS is most grateful for these generous donations in recognition of the importance of the site to these two individuals and our mission to save the Seminary.

Maidens in the Spring

Our project to restore the Porch of the Maidens at Aloha House was scheduled for last fall, but by the time a paint removal test patch was done and approved by the state preservation office, the weather was turning too cold to complete a full restoration.

With spring coming soon, however, the process to remove the old paint from the 10 historic statues, repair their damaged parts, and repaint them should begin in April when the temperature is consistently warm enough.



SOS is eager to complete this major project and to celebrate the renewed beauty of these lovely ladies and honor the donors who are making this project possible.

Site Happenings

SOS and many others were glad to see that the first residents moved into the beautifully restored **gymnasium** in November. It was gratifying to see the lights on inside after years of darkness and not worry whether parts of the building would survive another winter. We look forward to sharing the history of the gymnasium with new residents as more of the condominium units sell.

The restoration of the **Colonial House** exterior, including new tan paint on the stucco with crisp white trim, was mostly completed before winter weather came. Now that spring is near, the windows and more interior work will be the focus. SOS is hoping the house will be completed enough to be included on our historic house tour on May 1st.

Although the gym and Colonial House are being brought back to life, there are still eight other historic buildings, divided into three separate development parcels, which await restoration into residences. SOS is encouraging the three developers to take action toward saving their deteriorated buildings.

The developer for the parcel of the **stable, carpenter shop, and servants' quarters** is very close to receiving all the necessary permits and is most eager to start work very soon. A winter weather emergency, however, complicated the process a little...

The weight of a snowstorm of more than 30 inches in late January caused the collapse of a section of the roof and two gables at the **carpenter shop**. These distinctive parapeted gables are what give this building its Spanish Mission style.



In the process of cleaning up the collapse, the owner/developer found that the remaining gables of the carpenter shop were not stable enough and thus had to be removed along with the complete roof to avoid further collapses. A temporary roof was built as soon as possible after the demolition and cleanup work was completed.

The plan for the **firehouse, power plant, and Practice House** parcel is to restore them in phases. The environmental cleanup of the power plant adds a significant cost to the restoration of that building, so the developer is starting first with the firehouse this year.

The last parcel of the **Italianate villa and the castle** sorority house is still in its early planning stage. While the owner/developer

puts together a plan, the roof leaks and numerous vines growing on the buildings must be addressed now. SOS is discussing some stabilization and planning ideas with the owner.

Among the historic buildings at National Park Seminary, there is now **a new building—a single-family home** next to the Swiss chalet. Once a sloped open green space, it was part of the original site plan for the NPS redevelopment that this area would be sold for a new house. The architect/owner plans to complete it this spring and make it his home.

NPS in the News

In December, local radio station WAMU 88.5 aired and posted an online story about the unusual residential community of National Park Seminary and its history. Included in the story were reminiscences from two SOS members who had personal past connections to the property. You can view the article and photos at https://wamu.org/programs/metro_connection/15/12/04/how_a_condo_development_saved_the_national_parks_seminary.

Treasure in the Archives

SOS recently received an important addition to our archives—an original framed diploma of a National Park Seminary student. The donor discovered it in a thrift store and thought it was worth finding a good home for it, and thus donated it to SOS.

This diploma of Virginia Robinson of the class of 1924 has the original signatures of James E. Ament as President and Katherine Munford as Dean. Ament was president and owner of NPS from 1916 to 1936. Miss Munford started her long and influential tenure at the school in 1907 as Head Mistress.

You'll be able to see this diploma and other interesting items in person at our program about the SOS archives in September.