



# Browncroft Crier

NEWSLETTER OF THE BROWNCROFT NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

SINCE 1973-VOLUME #136

P.O. Box 10127 Rochester New York 14610

May 2004

## ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Thursday May 27th

7:30 P.M.

Browncroft Baptist Church

BROWNCROFT HISTORY SLIDE PRESENTATION  
ELECTION OF OFFICERS FOR 2004  
COMMITTEE REPORTS  
VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION

In honor of the neighborhood's listing on the National Register of Historic Places earlier this month, the collection of slides of historic views of the neighborhood, including farm houses, nursery grounds, churches, parks and the early development of the subdivisions, will be shown. This slide show is always popular. Don't miss this opportunity to see it.

Bring your concerns and ideas for neighborhood projects that you want to work towards with your neighborhood association.

Come and join your neighbors.  
Support your association.  
Enjoy refreshments.

## Browncroft Historic District Listed on the National Register of Historic Places

It is done, at last. Browncroft is officially listed on the Department of Interior's National Register of Historic Places as a district of historically significant architecture and landscape design.

The Keeper of the National Register signed the nomination on April 20th in Washington D.C.

The Browncroft historic district is roughly bounded by Browncroft Boulevard and part of Merchants Road on the north to, but not including, Blossom Road on the south, Winton Road on the west to Newcastle Road on the east. This area primarily defines the original Browncroft Subdivision that was developed out of the nursery properties of Brown Brothers Continental Nurseries, which operated in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

The cultural resource survey document which had to be prepared for the State and National historic preservation agencies will eventually show up on the federal web site, where everyone will have easy access.

Although the listing is strictly honorary, it is hoped that residents present and future will recognize those qualities their properties have that contribute to the unique character of the neighborhood, and consider how best to preserve them.

A debt of gratitude is due to the many neighbors who contributed time,

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## In Memorial to Hilland Knapp

It is with deep sorrow that we report Bill Knapp, of Dorchester Road, died Saturday, May 1st from complications leading to congenital heart failure. He was much loved by his neighbors all around, and by this writer who, as a young neighborhood organizer, made his acquaintance in the 1970's when he was City Forester.

Mr. Knapp was the City Forester from 1966 to 1975 and subsequently the Director of Parks for the City of Rochester until his retirement in 1988. During that time he replanted Dorchester Road and the Elmcroft Subdivision streets after the Dutch elm disease wiped out the street trees in the 1960's, assisted the BNA beautification volunteers in rehabilitating the Browncroft Rose Garden at the corner of Browncroft Boulevard and Merchants Road in the 1970's, and promoted the tree planting project in the 1980's on Winton Road from Blossom to Merchants Roads by instructing his successor City Forester to "Give them what they want."

By retirement, Mr. Knapp had moved into Browncroft from the 19th Ward with his wife Betty, and continued to be Browncroft's tree guardian angel, working as a volunteer using his knowledge of horticulture and history.

He resided in the Browncroft neighborhood for approximately 25 years. During that time he performed two surveys for the neighborhood association of the trees in the public right-of ways and front yards of over 400 properties on 12 streets- first in

1991 after the ice storm and again in 2002 as documentation for the neighborhood's cultural resource survey for its nomination to the National Register of Historic Places. Without his expertise in documenting the historic landscape elements integral to the neighborhood's historic significance, Browncroft would not have been able to move forward toward this important recognition.

In addition, serving as a member of the Board of Directors for Monroe County People for Parks, Inc, a not-for-profit parks advocacy group, he became an advocate for saving trees and for park preservation countywide. He was involved in exposing the tragic removal by the County of Monroe of 11 one hundred year old oak trees in Genesee Valley Park for a driving range.

He participated in the Genesee Valley Recreation and Park Society's annual "March for Parks" walking under the Browncroft Neighborhood Association banner. Because he had raised the most amount of money that year for local park projects, the Browncroft Rose Garden was awarded a \$400 dollar grant from the proceeds of the march, which was used for the purchase of decorative stone benches.

He is survived by his wife of 53 years, Elizabeth Knapp; two sons, Robert and James; two grandchildren, his sister Janet Phillips of Florida and brother Richard Knapp of Norwich, New York, his godson, Jeremy Wilson, and many, many loving friends and neighbors.

Cassy Petsos.

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money, or both to make this happen; as well as to the City of Rochester, the Landmark Society of Western New York, and our New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, and most particularly to Hilland Knapp of Dorchester Road, who spent weeks walking the neighborhood to survey and catalogue each tree and shrub within the proposed district's front yards and tree lawns. Bill Knapp died May 1st knowing that his hard work came to fruition.

More information will be available in future issues of the Crier. Also, a neighborhood meeting is planned with a presentation by our State Historic Preservation Office regional liaison in June or July. A map of the district showing each lot included in the district will be on hand at the annual membership meeting May 27th.

## Neighbors Heeded Our Call for Volunteers

In answer to our article in the last Crier, neighbors have come forward to take on some very important jobs for the neighborhood organization.

Nick Rozanov from Browncroft Boulevard will be working on a new web site for BNA.

Kim Kopatz, also, of Browncroft Boulevard has volunteered to scan our historic slides so that we can make them more accessible in digital format.

Steve Howe (Windemere) and Andrea Marcus ( ) will be working on the Browncroft Crier.

Craig Epperson (Newcastle) has graciously stepped forward to fill the membership committee chair.

Also, since our last issue, a need arose for a Browncroft representative to meet with the City regarding the school choice initiative. Dede Ranger from Corwin Road and Chris Gaudieri from Elmcroft have taken on this important issue.

Thank You Everyone!

## Nomination of Officers for 2004

Our President, David Dickinson Kaiser, retires his leadership role in BNA this year. David served for three years - one more year than the traditional two, one year terms. We were fortunate to be able to keep him for that time.

We will need to nominate and elect officers for President, Vice-President, Treasurer and Secretary. Therefore, nominations (including self-nominations) will be taken, gratefully, from the floor at the annual membership meeting May 27th