

### Chapter Three Historic Significance of Hobart Manor

The preservation program for Hobart Manor must be based on decisions as to how the history of the building should be interpreted. Interpretation means selecting those aspects of the buildings' history that place it in its most significant temporal and spatial contexts for preservation and enhancing the understanding its significance. Although Hobart Manor is virtually the result of a continuous sequence of decision-making over a period of some 120 years, it would be impossible to preserve all of that history in a manner that users and visitors to the building could understand or that would make the building serve the needs of the College today.

In order to evaluate Hobart Manor and identify the significant elements of the building that the College should interpret in its preservation program, we have looked at the building in two ways. One way is identify the significant historic contexts for the building and the other is to identify specific elements of the building that correspond to the significant contexts.

#### Significant Historic Contexts

Two historic contexts have been identified as being important to the interpretation of Hobart Manor: associational significance and architectural significance. Associational significance refers to the persons whose lives are related to the house. Architectural significance is based on an analysis of the

individual architectural elements of the building.

Associational Significance. The house reflects the tastes and lifestyles of three distinct eras and persons. The first is the association with John MacCullough who epitomizes the mid-nineteenth century industrialist. The siting, scale and materials of the house tied together both MacCullough's Old World heritage and his sense of economic and social position in his new homeland. His association with the industrial growth of Paterson makes the house an important reminder of the region's prosperity during the 1860-70's when the volume of immigrant labor, patents, and production multiplied continuously.

The second era and, architecturally, the dominant one is the one associated with Garret Hobart, Jr. Born to American position and economic security, Hobart made the house a statement of the early twentieth century era of investment management and political opportunity. The acceptance of the house as a suitably located home, the need to remodel it to look up-to-date, and the life-style that dictated extensive rooms for entertaining and living accommodations for a household staff are all typical of the homes of successful men in the corporate world before income tax and the Depression. The house provided a stage for a lifestyle that few people can now remember.

Third, the building is significant as a part of the growth of William Paterson College. Since the College, then Paterson State Teacher's College, assumed ownership of the estate in 1951, the building has served as a link to local history as well as being part of the College's history of providing new educational

opportunities for Paterson, Wayne and the surrounding region.

Architectural Significance. Hobart Manor derives its architectural significance primarily as an example of the work of Fred W. Wentworth. Although MacCullough chose the site and orientation of the house and there still remains clear indications of the exterior walls of his castle, the present Tudor manor character was created by Wentworth. This style, one of the eclectic revival styles popular in the early twentieth century, accommodates both the elements of the earlier building and Hobart's program. The architectural significance is also enhanced by being one of the few examples of Wentworth's residential work and one of the few examples of the work of this fine Paterson architect still standing today.

#### Hierarchy of Significant Areas

Individual elements of the building are significant as they relate to the two historic contexts. These elements have been identified in terms of their need for preservation. Of greatest significance is the front elevation of Hobart Manor and the unaltered main rooms and staircase of the Garret Hobart, Jr., remodeling.

Protection should be given to the walls of the main building that show the size and masonry of MacCullough's castle. The changes that are still visible in the walls of the main building are an important document for understanding the materials and craftsmanship used by MacCullough. There remains a significant

amount of late nineteenth century building fabric visible on the ground story of the front elevation (Illus. 12) and the first and second stories of the side and rear portions (Illus. 13 & 14) of the main building. Changes have been made to each of these elevations as evidenced by the outline of a port-cochere (Illus. 13) now enclosed with a fieldstone base and a six-bay window, and by the outline of windows sealed with fieldstone along the old kitchen wall (Illus. 14). Much of the pattern of stone work in these sections reflects the same craftsmanship and materials notable on the early photographs of MacCullough's house (Illus. 3). Further study of the basement level and exterior stonework finishes which may reveal clues to the earliest form of the building. This type of information is important for future interpretations of MacCullough's building.

The aspects of the house with the greatest historic integrity are the elements associated with the design by Wentworth for Hobart Jr. between 1915 and 1919. These elements include the entrance hall, reception room, smoking room, drawing room, ante room, main dining room, billiard room, library, and upstairs hall with their decorative detailing. Of less architectural significance, although contributing to the historic value of the building as an early 20th century document, are the 1915-1919 architectural details in the three-story wing. These include the bedrooms, fireplaces, bath finishes and fixtures, hardware, and detail of floor, ceiling and wall moldings.