



NOVEMBER, 2011

*Preparing for the Future by
Learning about the Past*

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Victorian Vanities Researching “Step Back in Time”, a New Program for Adults

Victorian Vanities is planning to bring a program designed exclusively for adults into its repertoire by June of 2012. Rochelle Christopher, executive director for Victorian Vanities is planning to graduate from Bucks County Community College this spring with a certificate in Historic Preservation. Under their tutelage, the staff of Victorian Vanities has started contacting retirement communities to gauge their interest and get their input on what elements should and should not be included in this new program. The use of Project Management skills in the execution of this program is being highlighted.



With this new program Victorian Vanities will significantly expand its audience and better fulfill its mission of teaching people about American History. Initial research shows that there is great interest in this type of program among activities directors and residents alike. Books about American history are on the best-seller lists all the time. Have you read the New York Times number one bestseller called *Killing Lincoln*? The popularity of the History channel indicates that there is a real desire to learn about the past.

Victorian Vanities would also like to acknowledge the invaluable contribution of Christian Hobson, Program director for Tenth Memorial Baptist Church for his invaluable contribution to this project.

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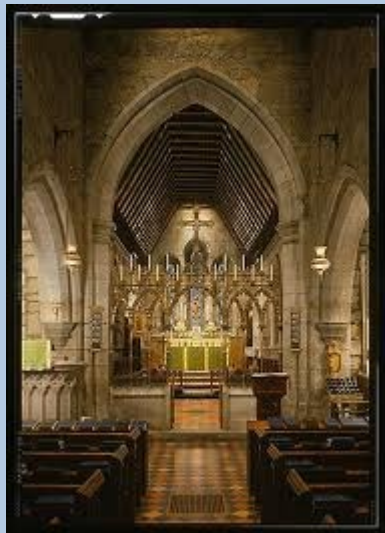
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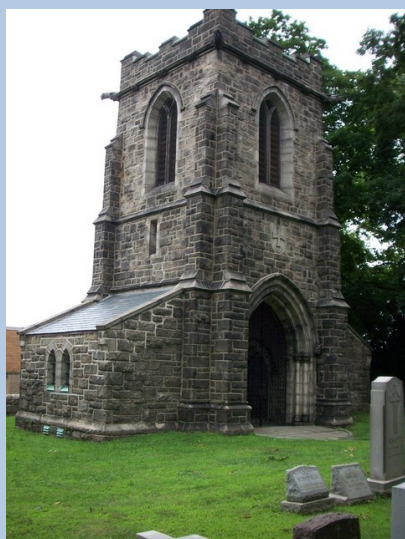
www.victorianvanities.org

Call for Volunteers

Do you love American history? You can make a difference in the life of someone else by sharing a few hours a week helping us fulfill our mission. Please contact us at 2150844-1919.



St. James the Less-Interior



Wanamaker Bell Tower

Designed by James Windrim



Frank Stockton's grave at The Woodlands Cemetery in Philadelphia

St. James the Less is Open again!

Those of you who read this newsletter with any regularity know that cemeteries and grave-hopping is an avocation of ours. So we were quite surprised to see that the East Falls Historical Society was giving a tour of this once-closed church and cemetery. The church was built in 1846 on land acquired from Laurel Hill cemetery, and was not just meant for well-to-do merchants, but also for the neighboring working-class factory and mill workers. It is an early, influential example of the English Gothic Revival style and is, in fact, a faithful reproduction of an English medieval church (it was built from measured drawings of St. Michael's in Cambridgeshire, which was built in 1230 AD.

Magnificent trees surround this church--it is possibly the most densely wooded graveyard I've visited. Most notable is the giant horse chestnut, whose massive branches seem to twirl in the sunlight. A later addition to the St. James-the-Less churchyard is the Wannamaker Memorial Tower, which was built to serve both as the church's carillon and the Wannamaker family tomb (the bells sound the hours, and have a lovely, robust tone). This tower was built by noted architect, William Windrim.

It's important to know that there is a middle school on the grounds of this church also. Opened just this year, it has started with the fifth grade and will add one grade each year for the next three years. The school is independent and takes children from the surrounding neighborhood. They have a longer school day and an extended school year making it far more likely that we can work with them. We have already met with the school principal, Laura Dimery to see what sort of arrangements we can create so that Victorian Vanities can partner with them.



The Lady or the Tiger?

And while we're on the subject of cemeteries, did you know that Frank Richard Stockton (1834-1902) is buried in **the Woodlands** cemetery? Stockton was a comic author best known for his humorous short stories. Stockton's story of a magical fairy, *Ting-a-ling*, published in 1867, was his first major success. By 1873, he was editing and contributing to *St. Nicholas*, another well-known children's magazine. In 1882 he published his most famous story *The Lady, or the Tiger?* It became so popular that it was adapted into a play and a film.