



## HISTORIC MOUNT PLEASANT MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

### Living in an Historic District: Windows. Windows, Windows!

July 2023

Welcome to our fourth Historic Mount Pleasant (HMP) Monthly Newsletter. Our goal is to inform community members about historic district permit requirements, common technical issues and solutions, and other aspects of the historic district, including its history.

#### Restoring or Replacing Windows: Easier Than You Think

There are few, more fraught subjects in our historic district than dealing with existing windows. As the DC Historic Preservation Review Board writes in their guide, [Window Repair and Replacement](#):

“Windows are one of the most important and integral character-defining features of historic buildings. They provide a sense of scale, craftsmanship, proportion and architectural styling. Windows are a building component that requires occasional maintenance or repair, or if extremely deteriorated, replacement.”

Fortunately, for all of us, DC’s Historic Preservation Office (HPO) has prepared an excellent guide, [Window Repair and Replacement for Historic Properties](#) that guarantees compliance with D.C.’s [Historic Preservation Standards for Window Repair and Replacement](#) and answers questions regarding the entire process, including sources for window repair and replacement. For more resources, see also [Window Installers & Repair](#) in Washington Consumers’ Checkbook.

As they write in their guide, you should always consult with the HPO staff prior to ordering windows or starting any work. They will help you with each of the necessary steps, as can a qualified architect or contractor familiar with historic buildings. The [HMP Design Review Committee](#) is also a great resource.



# MT. PLEASANT HISTORY

## Summer in Washington:

### Keeping Cool in DC

Hot enough for you? Look outside around your windows (and sometimes doors) and you may find fittings for attaching retractable awnings - once a vital tool for keeping cool in DC's hot summers. In 1917, almost every window at the Argyle was shaded (some are retracted).



The Argyle Apartments, 17th St. and Park Road, Washington, D. C.

**1,500 Door and Window Awnings, Porch Shades and Drop Curtains**

Handy, guaranteed settings for the shades of home or office. Settings made of durable material and fitted conveniently for use. Made of heavy material to look as though it were in place in person. By mail or please your representative.

**Door and Window Striped Awnings**

White and colors, heavy and light, and made of various materials. Made of durable material and fitted conveniently for use. Made of heavy material to look as though it were in place in person. By mail or please your representative.

**\$1.85 Each**

**Porch Roll Up Drop Awnings**

Made of the same material and in the same color range as the window awning. All work guaranteed to last.

3 1/2 feet	5 feet	8 1/2 feet	10 1/2 feet
\$2.65	\$2.95	\$3.95	\$4.95

**"Capitol" Porch Shades**

4 feet wide, \$2.95	7 feet wide, \$5.45
4 feet wide, \$2.95	8 feet wide, \$5.45
6 feet wide, \$4.95	8 feet wide, \$6.95
10 feet wide, \$7.95	

Door and window awnings were readily available from the DC's [awning supply companies](#) and major department stores; including Woodward & Lothrop, The S. Kahn Sons Company, and The Palais Royal, whose advertisement for awnings, porch shades and drop curtains in the [June 01, 1924, Evening Star](#) is shown at left.

Right, is a 1911 view of Lamont Street from 19<sup>th</sup>, with a porch awning on the near house and a front door awning a few houses up. Note the shutters at every window which could be closed with the windows open to ventilate with privacy.



**"How to Keep Cool?" The Question of the Hour** from the [Evening star. \[volume\], July 24, 1910](#)  
 [Warning: this 1910 newspaper article ends with negative racial stereotypes]

"A SURPRISINGLY obvious unanimity of opinion seems to actuate Washington folk during the sunnier months on one point at least... Everybody everywhere within this city devotes much time and energy to the gentle art of being and staying cool.

"In the houses of many are water fans which run softly all night and send gentle waves of cool air over a sleeper. The windows are screened and awnings shut out the sun's glare, all in an effort to be independent of the outside temperature.

**Hardwood Extension Window Screens**  
 Monday..... **45c**  
 —Made of selected hardwood, with fine black wire cloth filling; size 18x33 inches.

**Sherwood All-Metal Extension Window Screens**  
 Monday..... **78c**  
 —These have wire closely woven into frame. Can be used as permanent screens if desired; size 30x37 inches.

**Star Brand PORCH SHADES**  
 All 8-Ft. Wide. Monday. **\$6.34**  
 Special .....  
 —These have the new combination hook and pulley; are made of wide basswood slats, very closely set, finished in fast oil colors—brown and green; complete with ropes, fixtures and anchoring device.  
 —Other sizes from 3 to 12 ft. wide, a shade—\$2.39 to \$10.69.



"Upper porches are screened by matting curtains, and on them during the day women in the most daring of neglige[es] play bridge, or do the weekly darning, or just loll and play with the children, and give thanks that they cannot be seen from the street."

**Cooling the House**  
 In India it is done by throwing water against the matting of reed and bamboo. In many Washington houses it is done by putting a block of crystal-clear American Ice on a fern-covered table and letting the electric fan play over it. In many homes, particularly where there is sickness, sheets wrung from ice water are hung about and reduce the temperature of a room quickly.

*American has four plants in Washington and can take care of its customers however great the demand.*

**AMERICAN ICE COMPANY**

[Evening Star, April 16, 1922 – Porch Shades](#)

[The Washington times. July 26, 1923 - Ice Cooling](#)

And don't forget Mosquitoes!

From the [Evening Star, May 12, 1918 – Screen Your Doors and Windows](#)

**1500 "Continental" Window Screens**

**Palmer's Mosquito Canopies**  
  
 —are just the thing to protect you from mosquitoes, flies, etc., while you sleep. They fit all sizes of beds. Made of closely woven netting mounted on collapsible frame, which can be folded up like an umbrella when not in use. Complete with rope and pulley. Limited quantity **\$2.75**

**Varnished Natural Hardwood Finish**  
**SCREEN YOUR DOORS AND WINDOWS**  
 Sizes 18 and 15 Inches High, Extend from 21 to 33 Inches Wide..... **37c**  
 —A great Monday offer of fine window screens made of seasoned lumber with metal center brace and fine black Japanned screen wire filling.

**USE Continental**  
**Highly Varnished Screen Doors — As Illustrated**  
 Choice of 6 Sizes—Monday Special ..... **\$2.19**  
 —Doors that would cost \$4.50 to \$6.00 if made to order. They are the "Continental" make, of fine lumber, in natural hardwood finish, with mortised corners and mitered mountings. Sizes 30x78 in., 32x80 in., 32x84 in., 34x82 in., 34x84 in., and 36x84 in., complete with fixtures ready to hang.

**Perfect Ventilation Assured With the Use of These Ventilating Shade Fixtures**  
 —that enables you to lower your window shade from the top and let the air in when you lower your window. Shade may be raised or lowered as any ordinary shade during the daytime or when the ventilating feature is not required.  
 —Sold only when you buy shades. Price of fixtures, **35c**  
**Window Shades, 59c and Up**  
 Kann's—Third Floor.

