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ROOFLINES



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FALL 2011

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Naval Academy Job with Parisian Influence

In its first major job for the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, Wagner Roofing is restoring the 1907 roof on Mahan Hall, which contains the distinctive clock tower and houses a stage for theatrical productions and presentations to medium-sized audiences. The second floor is home to the Hart Room, which was the old library and is the closest thing the Naval Academy has to a Student Union. The building is named for Alfred Thayer Mahan, a Navy flag officer whose concept of “sea power” became a critical nation-building strategy in the 19th century.

It was designed by Ernest Flagg, who also designed the Naval Academy’s Bancroft Hall, the Naval Academy Chapel, Maury Hall, Sampson Hall and the superintendent’s residence. His career was largely influenced by his studies at École de Beaux-Arts in Paris, under the patronage of his cousin Cornelius Vanderbilt II. In *The Greater Journey: Americans in Paris*, David McCullough portrays Flagg as one of the group of American

architects who spent time in Paris and returned home with French ideas of architectural design, such as structural rationalism.

At the Naval Academy, Wagner’s job includes replacing the slate, membrane roofs and built-in gutter with copper. Historic skylights are being cleaned, and ornamental copper dormers are being restored. It is anticipated

that the work will be complete just before Christmas.

Some of the job’s challenges include intricate detail—such as fourteen 6-by-8-foot copper dormers, copper bells and cheneaux—all of which were replicated in Wagner’s sheet metal shop. Wagner project manager Kevin Morgan said some of the dormer repair work

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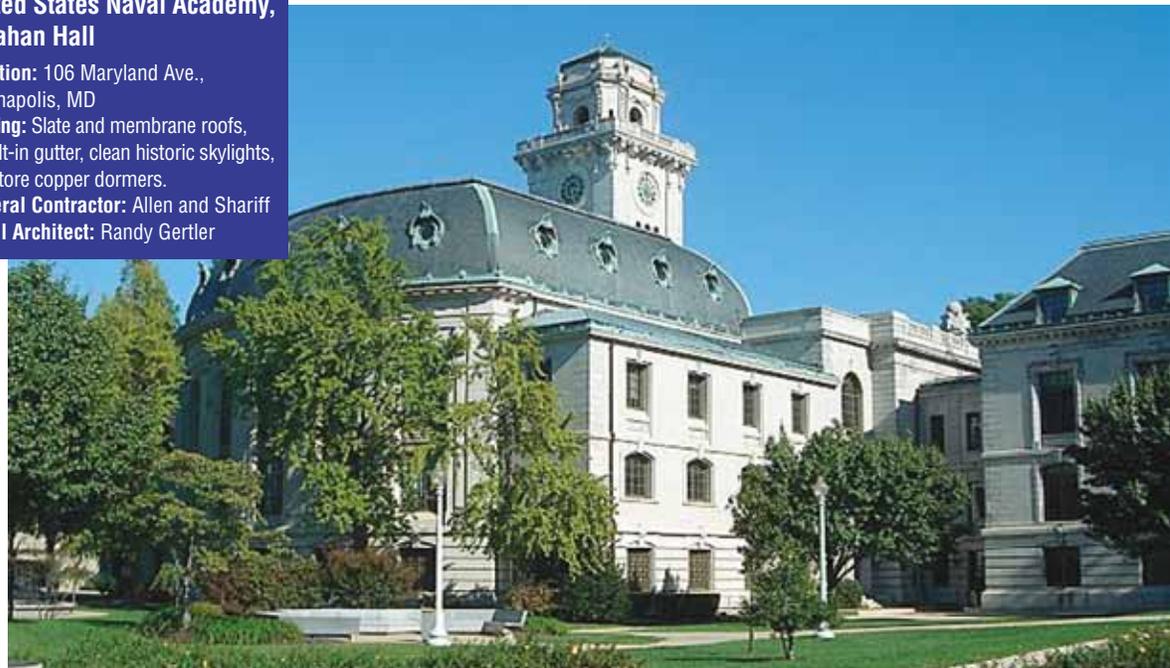
Above: Randy Herald and Jose Santos installing 6-by-8-foot dormer after restoration. Below: West mansard elevation with clock tower.

United States Naval Academy, Mahan Hall

Location: 106 Maryland Ave., Annapolis, MD

Roofing: Slate and membrane roofs, built-in gutter, clean historic skylights, restore copper dormers.

General Contractor: Allen and Shariff
Naval Architect: Randy Gertler



Under the Roof at Wagner

Sarah Reynolds

Job: Accounting Manager

Years at Wagner: 3 (started as a receptionist; then promoted to Billing and Accounts Receivable; recently promoted to current job)

Most Challenging Work: Collecting payment, especially on big jobs

Looking at Roofs: I look at them differently now. I never thought much about roofs, and didn't realize how many types of roofs were out there. Now I find myself always looking up, especially at the buildings we've worked on in D.C.

Lives In: Upper Marlboro, MD, about 30 minutes from work, under a boring shingle roof.

Tools She Can't Live Without: My computer, my adding machine and my check scanner for deposits. Without the scanner we'd have to go to the bank every week.

Pastimes: Hanging out with my kids and playing golf with my husband. Who is the better golfer? It depends. If he hits it in the woods, I am. But he hits a lot farther than I do. He can get it there in two shots if everything goes well. It'll take me three shots, but I get it there consistently.



Moving Around the Quad at Howard

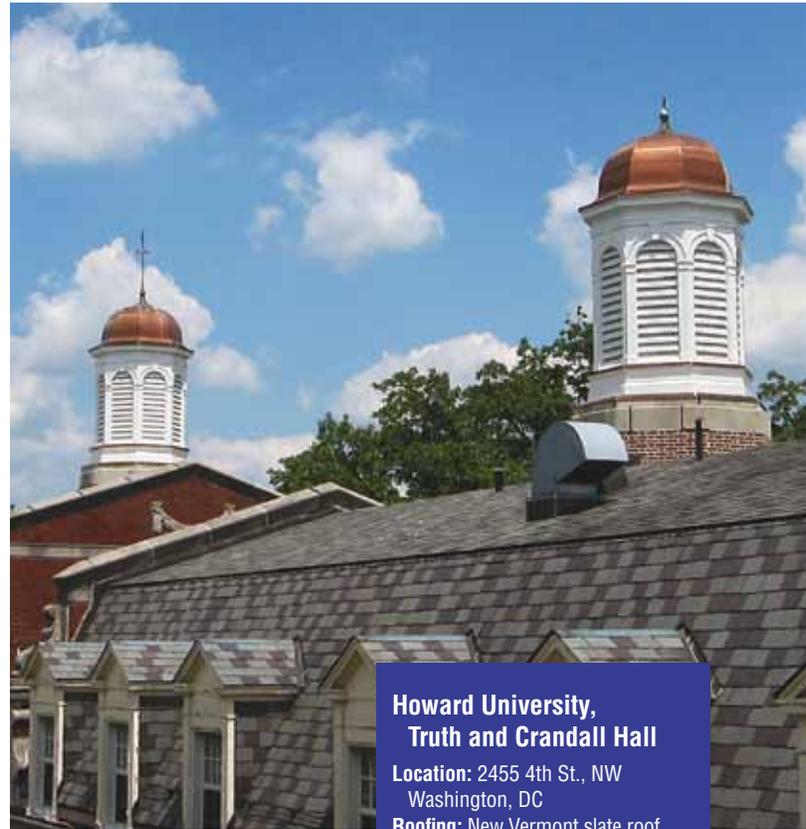
Wagner is making its way around the quad at Howard University. On the roofs, of course.

After replacing the roofs on Truth and Crandall Halls six years ago, Wagner replaced the roof on Wheatley Hall last year and finished work on Frazier Hall, about one month ahead of schedule. Those four dormitories, plus Baldwin Hall, make up the Harriet Tubman Quadrangle, otherwise known by coeds as the quad. The quad houses about 640 female freshmen.

Frazier, which was built in 1930, was the first residence hall for women at Howard University.

On Wheatley Hall, Wagner removed the old slate, replaced copper trim and gutters, installed new Vermont slate and 20-ounce Freedom Gray copper on 27 dormer roofs. The finished product looks like it did in 1931—beautiful multi-colored Vermont slate: 40 percent Semi-Weathering Gray/Green, 40 percent Unfading Purple and 20 percent Non-Fading Green. Even the commercial type steel snowguard with pipe rails was replicated. The built-in shop-fabricated copper gutter is covered with custom gutter screening.

The challenging part of Wagner's work at Howard was scaffolding the five cupolas at Wheatley, Baldwin, Truth and Crandall, and Frazier. The cupolas required major structural repairs and extensive carpentry. The wood louvers on the cupolas, siding and windows and trim on the 104 dormers required three coats of paint. Also,



Howard University, Truth and Crandall Hall

Location: 2455 4th St., NW
Washington, DC

Roofing: New Vermont slate roof, copper built-in-gutter and standing seam arch copper roof on cupola

Wagner repointed the brick work below the wood cupolas, matching the existing grout.

Previous work at Howard included a new built up roof on the hospital in 1985, new slate and rubber roofs on the Cooke Hall addition in 1990, and a new rubber roof on the bookstore in 1999.

The dormitories were designed by Maryland native Albert Irvin Cassell, who was born in 1895. He began his education in the segregated Baltimore public school system, but moved to New York in 1909, where he attended Douglas High School and studied drafting. Cassell was admitted to the Cornell University architec-

ture program in 1915. He joined Howard University in 1920, became head of the school's architecture department and spent nearly two decades at the university. He designed the Founders Library, which would become an architectural and educational symbol for the university."

Famous Howard alumni include David Dinkins, first black mayor of New York City; former DC Mayor Sharon Pratt Kelly; Nobel and Pulitzer prize-winning novelist Toni Morrison; Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall; and former Atlanta Mayor Andrew Young. ●

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Letter From the Vice President

History by Design

Are we lucky to live in a city as special as Washington, D.C.? Our nation's capital is chock-full of stories, fantastic buildings, architects, designers and history, not to mention politicians, whom we shall not discuss here.



Since we work with the built environment, especially the historic aspects, we have always been interested in learning the stories behind our buildings and sharing them with our clients and friends.

David McCullough, the noted historian and author, has just published his latest book, called *The Greater Journey*, about Americans in Paris from

the 1830s to the 1900s. In researching the history of Mahan Hall on the U.S. Naval Academy campus, we discovered that the architect was Ernest Flagg. He traveled to Paris to study at École des Beaux-Arts from 1889–91, brought his ideas and inspirations back to New York City, started his practice and then designed Mahan Hall and the chapel at the Naval Academy and the Corcoran Gallery of Art, among others. Read more in our cover story about the Mahan project.

Coincidentally, the French architect of the Folger/Hibbs Building, Jules Gabriel Henri de Sibour, worked with Ernest Flagg in NYC before he returned to Paris to attend École des Beaux-Arts. He eventually moved to Washington and had

his office in the Folger/Hibbs Building. As you know from our past newsletters, we did extensive work on this building, both inside and out. (See our Summer 2000 Newsletter on our website: “Polishing a Small Gem in D.C.’s Downtown.”)

Another interesting architect that we came across is Albert Irwin Cassell, who designed portions of Howard University. He was born in Towson, Md., in 1895, the third child of Albert Truman Cassell, a coal truck driver, and Charlotte Cassell—also known as Lottie—a laundress. Three of his children followed in his footsteps and became architects.

And finally, we have a more modern example of an offspring who was drawn to architecture and inspired by her family’s

work in the building profession. Our daughter Rachel (who also worked on the Folger/Hibbs Building, doing interior layouts) earned her Masters in Architecture from Catholic University in 2006. She will be completing her Architectural Registration Exams in the next few months, after which we can officially call her an architect.

It’s a good season to celebrate not only our daughter but architects all across this beautiful—and beautifully designed city. Enjoy your fall, and we look forward to working with you in the coming months.

Sheila Wagner
Vice President

Naval Academy

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was so tricky it reminded him of auto body work. “We had to repair the dents from the inside out,” he says. “These things are eight feet high and six feet wide. We’re replacing the flashing around the window leaving the pantineaed copper. The repairs to the dormers were necessary due to ice and snow damage.”

Not only did all Wagner’s engineered drawings have to be submitted and approved by the Naval Academy, but all the fabricated metal has to match existing conditions exactly and has to be approved by Maryland’s State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO).

“The Navy and SHPO want it to look like it’s never been touched,” Morgan says. “Our job is to duplicate the metal



Shop-fabricated copper replica of a “bell” from Mahan Hall is on the left.

pieces exactly how they were made more than 100 years ago.”

But one of the biggest challenges is working around the regular activities at the Academy (such as events like graduation and days when new plebes arrive) and having major construction underway while making it look as much as possible like nothing’s going on. “It’s probably the most challenging job

I’ve worked on in my 44 years of roofing,” Chuck Wagner says.

But Morgan and metal workers Randy Herald, Manny Cerrito and Jose Santos agree that it’s also an honor to be working on the grounds of one of the most revered institutions in the nation. These metal men have worked a total of 2,280 hours to date in the shop and field, and we are halfway finished. ●

Serving the Community

Wagner Roofing supported the following organizations in 2011:

- Donations to National Cathedral School
www.nationalcathedral.org/support
- National Rehab Hospital
- National Foundation Cancer Research
- The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society
- Tudor Place Foundation
- American Cancer Society
- National Roofing Contractors Association
- NRCA OSHA Fall Protection Defense Fund
- DC Preservation League
- Montgomery Hospice
- National Building Museum
- Poor Roberts Charities



**American College of
Obstetricians and
Gynecologists**

Address: 409 12th St., SW
Washington, DC

Roofing: Before: Concrete dome
built in 1981 designed by architect
Arthur Cotton Moore,
After: Installed standing seam
copper over 8th floor dome roof

Project Manager: Daniel Karchem

**National Cathedral School,
Hearst Hall**

Address: 3609 Woodley Rd., NW
Washington, DC

Roofing: Phase III South elevation—
replacing built-in gutter and copper
on dormer roofs



Earthquake Damage, Aug. 23, 2011:
Center gable limestone feature removed
with crane on Aug. 24. Donations to
the Cathedral Earthquake Fund would
be greatly appreciated. Go to: www.nationalcathedral.org/support/



Other Wagner jobs in progress or recently completed.

**B&B Alexandria Corporate
Park Management LLC**

Address: 6315 Bren Mar Dr., Alexandria, VA

Roofing: Replacing 11,000 sq ft roof with white TPO
(thermoplastic polyolefin) roofing and 3" insulation

Church of the Epiphany

Address: 1317 G St., NW, Washington, DC

Roofing: Replacing gutters on left side and right courtyard,
slate repairs and replacing flat roof with 20 yr TPO roofing

General Contractor: Monarc Construction

In
the
Works

In the Works



George Washington University, Ames Hall

Address: 2101 Foxhall Rd., NW, Washington, DC

Photo: Architect's rendering of Ames Hall at George Washington University at Mt. Vernon College Campus

Roofing: Installing synthetic slate and TPO roofing

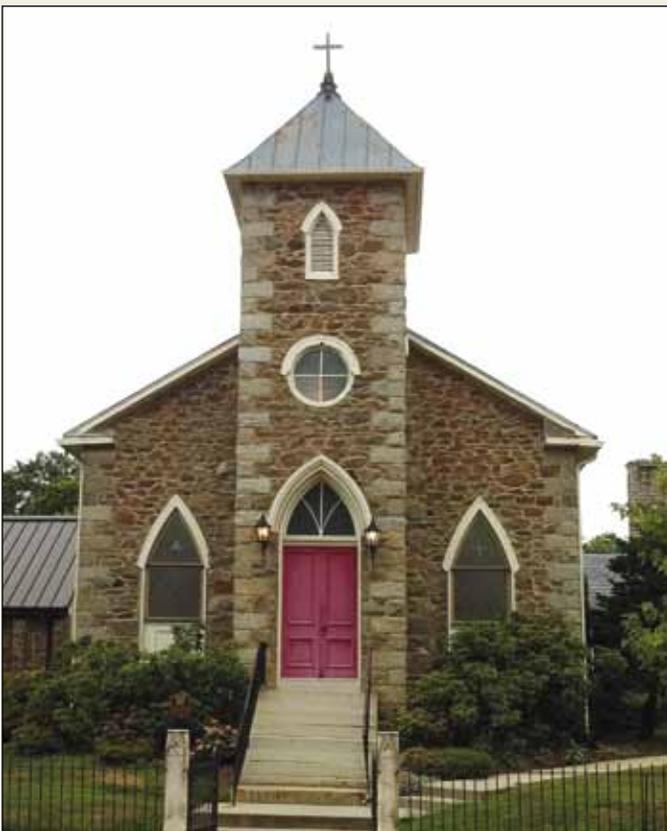
General Contractor: Donohoe Construction



Order of the Eastern Star

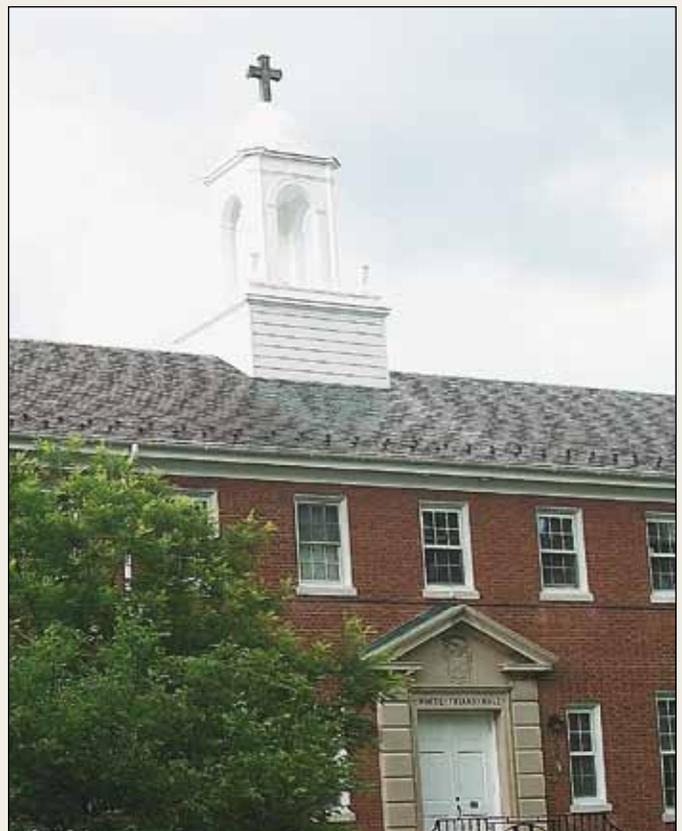
Address: 1618 New Hampshire Ave., NW, Washington, DC;

Roofing: Replacing concrete structure, steel beams, decking and water proofing system



St. Philip's Episcopal Church: 522 Main St., Laurel, MD

Roofing: Installing new synthetic slate roof.



Whitefriars Hall: Address: 1600 Webster St., NE, Washington, DC;

Roofing: Cupola restoration: Replacing slate and siding.

Back When...

The Beginnings of Wagner Roofing Company



Otto and Anna Wagner in the 1920s and fishing on the Potomac River. Otto, founder of Wagner Roofing Company in 1914, was born in 1886 in Germany and immigrated with his family to the U.S. in 1890. According to the 1910 U.S. Census, he was 23 years old and was a sheet metal iron worker.



Who We Are

**Chuck Wagner,
Sheila Wagner**
Owners

Larry Myers, Chris Giannini
Estimators/Project Managers

Jeremy Lee
Purchasing Manager

Sarah Reynolds
Accounting Manager

Mary Day
Service Manager

Brian Kidwell
Superintendent

Kevin Morgan
Operations and Project
Management

Tahnie Boggess
Project Manager

Jasmine Kim
Administrative Assistant

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