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## "1977 Remembered"

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from  
Bill Abbott

## 1977 remembered

As we approach the end of another year, it seems appropriate to look back and see what has been accomplished in the last 12 months. For preservationists, it has indeed been a very good year. Not only has the pace of the bulldozer and wrecking ball been slowed, in part by concerns for energy and economics, but increased awareness on the part of the general public and their political representatives has led to a number of favorable decisions at all levels of government. In addition, the nation's news media have taken up our cause with unusual fervor, reporting and frequently editorializing in favor of historic preservation issues.

Secretary of the Interior Cecil D. Andrus has recommended to President Carter that major changes be made in the nation's historic preservation program (story on page 1). Implementation of this plan, expected shortly, will have a lasting effect on preservation in the United States. Congress responded to an increased interest in preservation by appropriating \$45 million for the National Park Service grants-in-aid program (last year's figure was \$17.5 million). Although the amount is still far less than the authorized level of \$100 million, it is fair to say that preservation is beginning to be taken seriously on Capitol Hill. At the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and at the U.S. General Services Administration, new leadership has pledged its support of preservation.

The U.S. Department of Transportation made two rulings that were significant victories for preservationists. Secretary of Transportation Brock Adams turned down the use of federal funds for an interstate highway that the state of Tennessee wants to build through Overton Park in Memphis (PN, November). Earlier in the year, the Urban Mass Transportation Administration refused to grant \$6 million for a transportation complex in Columbus, Ohio, because the city had permitted the demolition of the Union Station Arcade (PN, May). In a case involving another railroad station, perhaps the most significant legal decision of the year came when the Court of Appeals, New York state's highest, upheld the landmark status of Grand Central Station in New York City (PN, August). That case is now to be appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court.

The National Trust has also had a banner year. In January we bought the Andrew Mellon Building, a National Historic Landmark built as the McCormick Apartments, at 1785 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W., for our new headquarters and in November we launched a drive (picture on page 5) to raise the \$1.9 million needed for rehabilitation and restoration. In September we opened the last in our network of six regional and field offices, the Southern office in Charleston, S.C. The first national conference on maritime preservation in Baltimore gave attention to the Trust's interest in that area. *America's Forgotten Architecture*, published by Pantheon Books for the Trust, was a critical and publishing success; it has gone into a second printing. All of these projects and many others will be treated in greater detail in the 1976-77 annual report now being prepared for printing.

While preservationists are succeeding more frequently, they still must contend with such opponents as developers who, when they hear of potential objections to demolition permits, wreck buildings before a court order halting the work can be used. That happened in the Adams-Morgan neighborhood of Washington, D.C., last month and continues to happen elsewhere. For 1978 we can hope that more and more people become aware of the economic value of preservation and that some of this year's ideas for more effective preservation become realities.

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