

**NOMINATION OF HISTORIC BUILDING, STRUCTURE, SITE, OR OBJECT
PHILADELPHIA REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION**

SUBMIT ALL ATTACHED MATERIALS ON PAPER AND IN ELECTRONIC FORM (CD, EMAIL, FLASH DRIVE)
ELECTRONIC FILES MUST BE WORD OR WORD COMPATIBLE

1. ADDRESS OF HISTORIC RESOURCE *(must comply with an Office of Property Assessment address)*

Street address: 1523-29 Bainbridge St.

Postal code: 19146

2. NAME OF HISTORIC RESOURCE

Historic Name: Hotel Brotherhood, USA

Current/Common Name: The Bainbridge Club

3. TYPE OF HISTORIC RESOURCE

Building Structure Site Object

4. PROPERTY INFORMATION

Condition: excellent good fair poor ruins

Occupancy: occupied vacant under construction unknown

Current use: Event space

5. BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Please attach a narrative description and site/plot plan of the resource's boundaries.

6. DESCRIPTION

Please attach a narrative description and photographs of the resource's physical appearance, site, setting, and surroundings.

7. SIGNIFICANCE

Please attach a narrative Statement of Significance citing the Criteria for Designation the resource satisfies.

Period of Significance (from year to year): from 1883 to 2023

Date(s) of construction and/or alteration: 1906 (prior building on site); 1920; 1937 (reconstruction post-fire)

Architect, engineer, and/or designer: Andrew C. Borzner, architect

Builder, contractor, and/or artisan: _____

Original owner: Hotel Brotherhood, USA

Other significant persons: _____

CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATION:

The historic resource satisfies the following criteria for designation (check all that apply):

- (a) Has significant character, interest or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the City, Commonwealth or Nation or is associated with the life of a person significant in the past; or,
- (b) Is associated with an event of importance to the history of the City, Commonwealth or Nation; or,
- (c) Reflects the environment in an era characterized by a distinctive architectural style; or,
- (d) Embodies distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style or engineering specimen; or,
- (e) Is the work of a designer, architect, landscape architect or designer, or engineer whose work has significantly influenced the historical, architectural, economic, social, or cultural development of the City, Commonwealth or Nation; or,
- (f) Contains elements of design, detail, materials or craftsmanship which represent a significant innovation; or,
- (g) Is part of or related to a square, park or other distinctive area which should be preserved according to an historic, cultural or architectural motif; or,
- (h) Owing to its unique location or singular physical characteristic, represents an established and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood, community or City; or,
- (i) Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in pre-history or history; or
- (j) Exemplifies the cultural, political, economic, social or historical heritage of the community.

8. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Please attach a bibliography.

9. NOMINATOR

Organization Philadelphia Historical Commission Date 6/1/2023

Name with Title Historical Commission staff Email kim.chantry@phila.gov

Street Address 1515 Arch St. Telephone 215-686-7660

City, State, and Postal Code Philadelphia, PA 19102

Nominator is is not the property owner.

PHC USE ONLY

Date of Receipt: 6/14/2023

Correct-Complete Incorrect-Incomplete Date: 6/14/2023

Date of Notice Issuance: 6/15/2023

Property Owner at Time of Notice:

Name: The Hotel Brotherhood of the USA

Address: 1523-29 Bainbridge St.

City: Philadelphia State: PA Postal Code: 19146

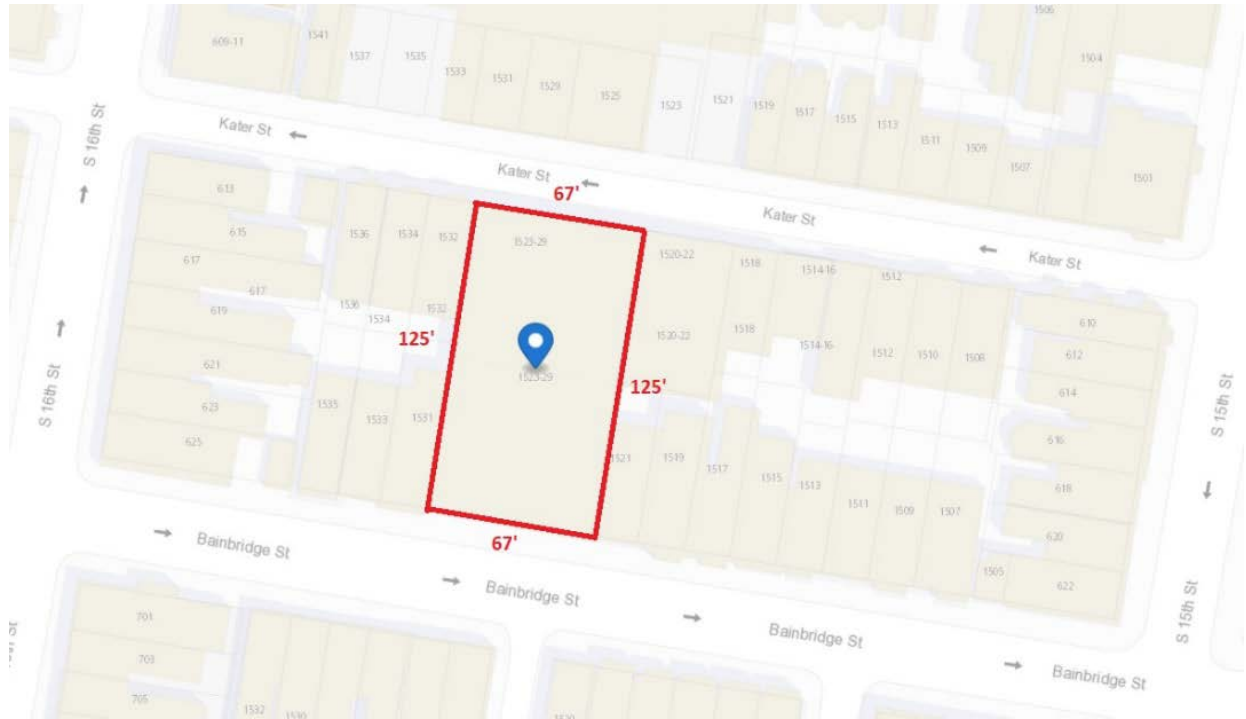
Date(s) Reviewed by the Committee on Historic Designation: 7/19/2023

Date(s) Reviewed by the Historical Commission: 8/11/2023

Date of Final Action: 8/11/2023

X| Designated Rejected

5. BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION



Beginning at a point on the South side of Bainbridge Street at the distance of 203 feet Westward from the West side of 15th Street, thence extending Westward along the North side of said Bainbridge Street 67 feet to a point, thence extending Northward along property lines 125 feet to a point on the South side of Kater Street, thence extending Eastward along the South side of said Kater Street 67 feet to a point, and thence extending Southward 125 feet to a point on the North side of said Bainbridge Street, the first mentioned point and place of beginning. Being 1523-29 Bainbridge Street.

6. ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

The Hotel Brotherhood building at 1523-29 Bainbridge Street is a mid-block two story, five bay brick building clad in stucco which fronts onto Bainbridge Street and runs through to Kater Street at the rear (Figure 1). Its broad volume is unique amongst the rowhouses of this Graduate Hospital neighborhood block (Figure 2). Constructed as a garage and meeting hall, the front façade has been altered but retains a moulded terra cotta entablature above the first floor with monumental incised Roman lettering announcing “Hotel Brotherhood - U.S.A.” (Figure 3). The first floor is a mixture of pedestrian doors, windows, and a garage opening. The second-floor features replacement double-hung windows, sometimes grouped in triplets. The building is topped by a stepped parapet and a flat roof.



Figure 1. 1523-29 Bainbridge Street front façade. February 2023.



Figure 2. North side of the 1500 block of Bainbridge Street. January 2023.



Figure 3. Entablature above first floor with "Hotel Brotherhood – U.S.A." lettering. February 2023.



Figure 4. Cornerstone with emblem and date of founding (1884) and date of construction of the building (1920). February 2023.



Figure 5. Rear elevation on Kater Street, seen as the gray stucco wall. February 2023.

The rear of the subject property on Kater Street is a gray stucco wall with one door and three sets of grouped windows. The wall features a tall parapet that steps up to what would be a second-floor height, although no buildings behind this wall rise to that height.



Figure 6. Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission marker in front of subject building, awarded in 2016. February 2023.

7. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

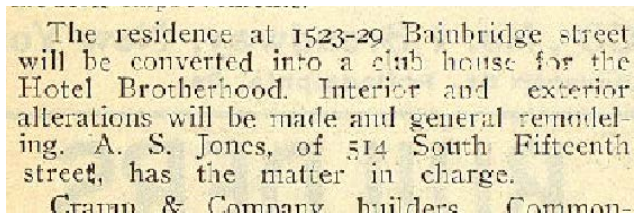
Introduction

The Hotel Brotherhood USA building at 1523-29 Bainbridge Street is a purpose-built garage and meeting hall, constructed in 1920 to a design by architect Andrew C. Borzner for the Hotel Brotherhood USA and reconstructed in 1937 after a fire.¹ The property is historically significant and merits listing on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. Pursuant to Section 14-1004(1) of the Philadelphia Code, the property satisfies Criteria for Designation A and B. The property:

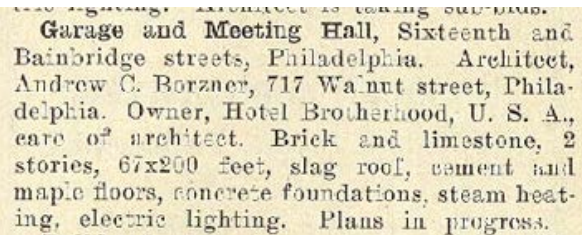
- (a) Has significant character, interest or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the City, Commonwealth or Nation;
- (b) Is associated with an event of importance to the history of the City, Commonwealth or Nation.

Site and Building History

The Hotel Brotherhood USA (Brotherhood) purchased the property at 1523-29 Bainbridge Street on August 30, 1906, for \$5,000 with a \$10,000 mortgage. At that time, a large residence or hall (depending on the source) stood on the site and was used by the Brotherhood as its headquarters beginning in 1906 (Figure 7).²



The residence at 1523-29 Bainbridge street will be converted into a club house for the Hotel Brotherhood. Interior and exterior alterations will be made and general remodeling. A. S. Jones, of 514 South Fifteenth street, has the matter in charge.
Crann & Company, builders, Common-



Garage and Meeting Hall, Sixteenth and Bainbridge streets, Philadelphia. Architect, Andrew C. Borzner, 717 Walnut street, Philadelphia. Owner, Hotel Brotherhood, U. S. A., care of architect. Brick and limestone, 2 stories, 67x200 feet, slag roof, cement and maple floors, concrete foundations, steam heating, electric lighting. Plans in progress.

Figure 7. (Left) *Philadelphia Real Estate Record and Builders' Guide*, October 10, 1906, p. 656. Figure 8. (Right) *Philadelphia Real Estate Record and Builders' Guide*, December 17, 1919, p. 813.

By 1920, the Brotherhood had raised enough money to demolish their existing facility and have a new clubhouse constructed at 1523-29 Bainbridge Street. The December 1919 mention in the *Philadelphia Real Estate Record and Builders' Guide* confirms the architect as Andrew C. Borzner (Figure 8). Figure 9 details the parade and cornerstone laying celebration plans for May 30, 1920.

¹ *The Philadelphia Real Estate Record and Builders' Guide*, The Athenaeum of Philadelphia, January 28, 1920, p. 72; *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, October 17, 1937, p. 22.

² *The Philadelphia Real Estate Record and Builders' Guide*, The Athenaeum of Philadelphia, October 10, 1906, p. 656; An 1894 *Philadelphia Inquirer* article refers to the building as a hall whereas the *PRERBG* refers to it as a residence.

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THOUSANDS WILL WITNESS CORNER- STONE LAYING

**Exercises of the Hotel Brotherhood
Sunday Afternoon, May 30,
at 1529 Bainbridge St.**

BIG CELEBRATION IS PLANNED

Sunday, May 30th, will be a banner day for the Hotel Brotherhood, U. S. A. A few years ago, Al S. Jones and his associates advocated removing from Pine street and purchasing a building of their own. They succeeded, and moved in the building at 1529 Bainbridge street. Several years ago they burned the mortgage, and then A. S. Jones started a boom to erect a new building. He was again successful and was made chairman of the committee, and next Sunday will be one of the most eventful days of his career, when the corner-stone is laid.

Wesley P. Jones is chairman of the Corner-stone Committee, and George A. Washington will be the Master of Ceremonies. G. Grant Williams was appointed a committee of one on publicity, and all members of the Brotherhood feel satisfied that there will be a big crowd, if the weather is clear.

Andrew S. Coles, the youngest Grand Master ever elected by the M. W. Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania, will lay the corner-stone, assisted by the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge and subordinate lodges. The Grand Lodge will meet at 409 S. 11th St., Sunday, at 1 p. m., and will be escorted to 17th and South Sts., by the Knight Templars, headed by the famous Cornucopia Band of 50 pieces. The parade will leave 17th and South Sts., at 2 p. m., and march to 15th and Bainbridge Sts., where the corner-stone will be laid. It will be one of the largest celebrations ever held. The Hotel Brotherhood will turn out in a body. Each member will donate \$1.00, and his name, written on a card, will be deposited in the corner-stone.

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Figure 9. Philadelphia Tribune, May 29, 1920, p. 1.

In October 1937, a fire which started in the first-floor garage spread to the second floor, causing damage which was repaired in December 1937 (Figure 10). The zoning permit applications for the repair work phrase the scope as repair owing to fire damage, but do not indicate that it was a complete reconstruction of the building. The building's exterior today remains relatively unchanged from the 1937 reconstruction.

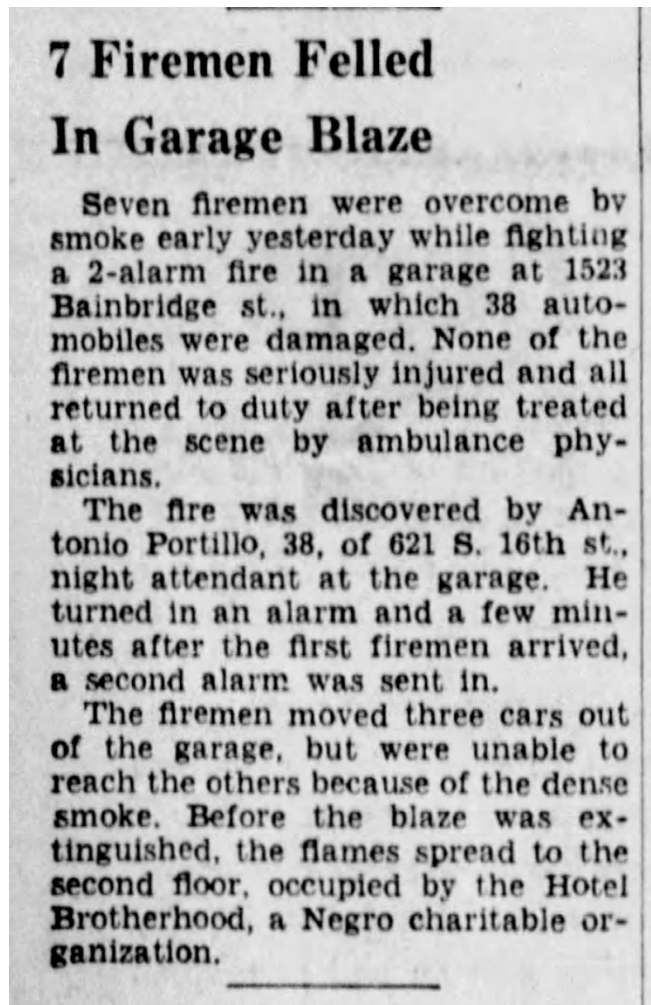


Figure 10. *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, October 17, 1937, p. 22.

Satisfaction of Criteria A and B

Criterion A: Has significant character, interest or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the City, Commonwealth or Nation; and

Criterion B: Is associated with an event of importance to the history of the City, Commonwealth or Nation.

The Hotel Brotherhood USA building at 1523-29 Bainbridge Street, now known as the Bainbridge Club, satisfies Criteria for Designation A and B. Under Criterion A, the property has significant value as part of

the development and cultural characteristics of the City and Nation, as the headquarters of the Hotel Brotherhood USA, one of the earliest unions representing Black workers in the United States which was founded in Philadelphia in 1883 to provide medical and death benefits for Black hotel workers. Under Criterion B, the Hotel Brotherhood USA is associated with an event of importance to the history of the City and Nation, being the 1885 protest organized by the Brotherhood against wage discrimination for Black hotel workers which led to a retraction of the proposed pay differential by the hotel proprietor. This marked the beginning of the Brotherhood as an organization structured along labor union lines for the advancement of Black hotel and associated service workers in the United States.

The following narrative and associated footnotes are taken directly from the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission Historical Marker Nomination Form, with the permission of its author, C.W. (Clara) Lewis, Historian for the Hotel Brotherhood, USA.

The history of the Hotel Brotherhood USA, (Brotherhood) is an early American story of beginnings and change. The beginning is the first Philadelphia colored mutual aid, self-help society for hotel workers, its transition to an active hotel worker trade organization with models of successful off-shoots in various cities, and its progress and contributions as one of the largest organizations of its kind in the country pressing forward colored hotel workers' rights, and their economic empowerment. The Hotel Brotherhood USA's legacy is the contribution it made to change in the local Philadelphia perception and to change in the attitude held for colored hotel workers in segregated America, as well as, to the change in America's national value attributed to colored hotel and restaurant workers' capacity as a labor group at the forefront of early labor and union history. The Hotel Brotherhood USA began in 1883³, in the throes of 'Jim crow' America, in response to colored hotel workers being denied equal sick and death burial benefits provided by their white employers to their white counterparts. Seven colored Philadelphia Head Waiter⁴ and hotel employees from grand hotels in the magnificent city joined

³ In 1883 the idea of "Brotherhood" came to Ludwig Peterson, a waiter employed by the Continental Hotel in Philadelphia, after his friend George Franklin, an excellent waiter and highly favored above the others by the headwaiter, got sick and died without the means to have a decent burial. The usual custom was resorted to, and the hat was passed around the Hotel for contributions, but some refused to give because of the favors granted to him in good health, and his neglect to make the necessary preparation for a time like this. Peterson communicated his idea to S.K. Govern who consented after much persuasion to attempt to form an organization so that this would never happen to a waiter again. In 1884, they were employed by the Lafayette Hotel, Sansom and Broad Streets and on October 8 the idea was agreed to by a goodly number of the men. A call was then issued by S.K. Govern for all Philadelphia hotel employees to attend a meeting October 10 at 327 S. Juniper St., the home of Ludwig Peterson with whom Mr. Govern resided. Source: Souvenir Program 50th Anniversary and Mortgage Burning Celebration (1943) p. 8.

⁴ The position of a Philadelphia Grand Hotel Colored Headwaiter was that of a man of distinction and a pillar in the community. Mulatto looking, business savvy, and talented, he was a leader who was able to make connections across color lines. The Headwaiter was a negotiator and intermediary between the colored staff and hotel management, and he pre-screened for new hotel hiring of colored wait staff and bell hops, managed the wait staff, and doubled as MC and manager of the

together in brotherhood and mutual benevolence to ensure when colored hotel workers get sick they have financial benefits to help with medicine and expenses, and when they die they do not die penniless without money to be buried.⁵

Early actions by the Brotherhood as a hotel workers trade organization took place in 1885. From its Philadelphia-based headquarters, the members ignited the Hotel Brotherhood, USA protest against Resort Hotel Proprietors of Summer Resorts along the Atlantic Coast (Proprietors). In February 1885, the Proprietors after an annual conference meeting held at the Continental Hotel, Broad and Sansom Streets, posted in the Philadelphia Press a resolve to pay differential hotel labor wages and institute a two-tier salary structure. White waiters would be paid \$25 monthly, colored \$20; and white bellhops would be paid \$15 monthly, colored \$12.⁶ It also stated that colored employees were less efficient and not dependable. This resolution came at a time when colored hotel workers were already being denied health and death benefits by these same employers.⁷

This protest was led by founding member and President Stanislaus Kostka Govern. "Brother Govern purchased fifty copies of the Philadelphia Press and sent one copy each to the prominent Headwaiters and hotel employees throughout the country. A notice was also sent requesting them to attend a special meeting at the then headquarters of the Hotel Brotherhood, 327 S. Juniper Street, to offer protests against such discriminations."⁸

Those present at the meeting included Frank P. Thompson, Andrew F. Stevens, Sr., Charles H. Hamilton and many other well-known hotel employees. The meeting was quite a success and a committee of three - Govern, Frank P. Thompson and C.H. Hamilton - was elected to draft resolutions denouncing such discriminations in wages and other harmful statements as published by the hotel Proprietors."⁹

waiter/entertainers. He was exemplary in hotel service skills and professionalism (Lomax, 2003, p. 31). In 'The Northside: The African American In the Creation of Atlantic City' by Nelson Johnson (Nov 2010), writing of the seashore resort hotel early development there, hotel work was an attractive alternative. While it was often difficult work, an employee was part of something bigger and more dynamic than were Blacks hired to perform domestic work in private homes. In Atlantic City, Blacks were not servants but, rather, employees in a hotel and recreation economy that relied upon them heavily for its success. At Flagler's Royal Poinciana Hotel Resort, the baseball team, noted in Kevin McCarthy's 1907 'African American Sites in Florida' (p. 209), the waiters doubled as baseball men. They were the resort hotel's recreation draw for its privileged guests.

⁵ Lewis, Peter. 1934. "Hotel Brotherhood Completes Fifty Years of Service." *Philadelphia Tribune*. Nov 1, 1934. p. 27; White, James H. Revised (Peter Lewis, Original 1924). 1943. *History of the Hotel Brotherhood*,. 59th Anniversary & Mortgage Burning Celebration. 1943, Oct. 24 - 29. Hotel Brotherhood USA. Philadelphia, PA. p. 1, 7-9, 11-12.

⁶ Lewis, Peter. 1934. "Hotel Brotherhood Completes Fifty Years of Service." *Philadelphia Tribune*. Nov 1, 1934. p. 27.

⁷ White, James H. Revised (Peter Lewis, Original 1924). 1943. *History of the Hotel Brotherhood*, 59th Anniversary & Mortgage Burning Celebration. 1943, Oct. 24 - 29. Hotel Brotherhood USA. Philadelphia, PA. p. 8.

⁸ Lewis, Peter. 1934. "Hotel Brotherhood Completes Fifty Years of Service." *Philadelphia Tribune*. Nov 1, 1934. p. 27.

⁹ Lewis, Peter. 1934. "Hotel Brotherhood Completes Fifty Years of Service." *Philadelphia Tribune*. Nov 1, 1934. p. 27.

Govern, Frank P. Thompson and other Hotel Brotherhood, USA's leaders¹⁰ got attention across the State and the country during this protest for colored hotel workers. Letters were also received from a number of leading headwaiters from Boston, MA to Savannah, GA endorsing the meeting and commending the protest. In the aftermath, the hotel Proprietors withdrew their resolution and statements. This was the first far-reaching result of the Hotel Brotherhood organization.¹¹ This activism and efforts of the Brotherhood established its beginnings as an organization structured along labor union lines. W.E.B. Dubois referenced the Hotel Brotherhood, "And the announcement rumored (that), 'Colored hotel employees had formed an organization, was official!'"¹²

In the ensuing years, Hotel Brotherhood USA was noted as the first colored organization representing hotel workers with offshoots in major cities throughout the country, including Boston, MA, Washington, DC, Savannah, GA, Richmond, VA, Indianapolis, IN, New York, NY, Wilmington, DE, and Baltimore, MD.¹³ The Hotel Brotherhood USA institution model advocated for hotel workers and later restaurant wait staff, and then private and domestic servers for the first 30 years of its existence. The results were a sequence of projects that used pooled savings from weekly and monthly member contributions as an economic development strategy for self-help.¹⁴ This financial capital funded worker benefits and aide programs and institutional investments. It laid the foundation for charting a path of sustainability for all trained, skilled hotel workers who had a goal of professionalism and job retention.

The reputation of the Hotel Brotherhood, its members and their civic and community participation positioned it appropriately as a leadership organization deserving of designation as a 'pay master' for colored workers at large Philadelphia hotels and catering companies. These establishments and their clientele did not want to see colored workers lined up outside of their hotel or place of business to collect their pay if they were not on duty. Consequently, these Proprietors provided for colored workers

¹⁰ Hotel Brotherhood leaders had many connections to Philadelphia's elite business and civic community. During this time after Reconstruction Stanislaus Kostka Govern, Frank P. Thompson, C.J. Massey, Walter Timothy, Peter Lewis, James Snowden, Alfred S. Jones and other Hotel Brotherhood, USA leaders were in the community and in the public eye. Through their diverse activities and business negotiations as newspaper agents, stockbrokers, cemetery operators, caterers, bakers, teachers, colored baseball entrepreneurs, these early members were noted as comparatively wealthy.

¹¹ White, James H. Revised (Peter Lewis, Original 1924). 1943. History of the Hotel Brotherhood, 59th Anniversary & Mortgage Burning Celebration. 1943, Oct. 24 - 29. Hotel Brotherhood USA. Philadelphia, PA. p. 9.

¹² Dubois, W.E.B. 1905. *The Philadelphia Negro*. Chapter 12. The Organized Life of Negroes.

¹³ *Washington Bee*. 1886. Volume 12 June, 1886.

¹⁴ In the *Philadelphia Tribune* (5/22/1915) it is recorded that over the last 27 years membership went from 7 to 500. The Hotel Brotherhood, USA in Philadelphia was able to hold and pay for its headquarters with self-help initiatives and fund raising. From the 'History' recorded on the 'Brotherhood,' it organized itself into a Finance Company composed entirely of its own members. Shares were valued and issued. Participation was mandated, '... so the raising of amounts were met. In addition, at the same time each (member) would have the satisfaction of knowing ... that he is assisting in the purchase of the property he is personally identified with (White. 1943. 59th Anniversary. pgs.11-12).

to be paid off site,¹⁵ and progressively the Hotel Brotherhood USA evolved into a central employment venue and registry where prominently posted daily job opportunities were available for not only hotels locally, but luxury resorts from Maine to Florida, and grand hotels across America.

During the days of early luxury resort hotel development, at the start of Florida's transformation from 'pesthole to playground,' the influence of the Hotel Brotherhood movement charted another course to hotel worker rights in the emerging leisure component of the resort hotel industry. S.K. Govern, Head waiter and General Manager, worked the hotel in winter resort seasons 1885 and 1886 with his baseball playing team of waiters.¹⁶ S.K. Govern negotiated with the resort owner using the principles of the Hotel Brotherhood USA for hotel worker rights. The resort hotel baseball workers received contracts for the first time which included benefits for health and death, equal and fair pay, and additional pay for doubling as hotel entertainment. This kept the team of waiters active and generating revenue all year.¹⁷ This package of benefits for hotel workers became the standard model to match for a luxury resort hotel having baseball playing waiters.

The Hotel Brotherhood, USA was aligned with the founding of the Hotel and Restaurant Employee Workers Alliance union. In 1891 Govern, representing the Hotel Brotherhood USA was one of two African American delegates to the founding Conference.¹⁸ This union affiliation facilitated access and paved a path for the members of the Hotel Brotherhood, USA, through which they could achieve and accomplish the organization's early goals and mission of equity. As identified in its Preamble to its Constitution, 'the mission is to correct (society's) mistake by creating an institution that would "train men for efficient service along with the beneficial idea," and to keep a member Directory, "for the benefit of the men wishing employment."¹⁹ These measures and advances in policies and procedures along the lines of a skilled trade worker's union guided the organization, and it progressed in the best

¹⁵ This information was revealed in an interview by the researcher, C.W. (Clara) Lewis, with Mr. Michael Jones, Hotel Brotherhood USA, President and holder of its archives, existing documents and files (April 21, 2013).

¹⁶ Referencing Wilk (2013) he writes about the economic interdependency of black baseball entrepreneurship and the hotel industry in the age of Jim Crow. His example is of the Cuban Giants. Wilk continues his opinion on the partnership and business advantages identified for both the entrepreneur and the resort hotel. The hotel provided food, shelter and cash income during resort season, which helped teams stay solvent throughout the rest of the year. Most importantly there was access to patrons. Colored Baseball Entrepreneurs used hotels to subsidize black baseball entrepreneurship costs and was a draw for wealthy guests who loved what was becoming America's favorite pass time, baseball. Costello (2007) describes the Headwaiter Frank P. Thompson (a Hotel Brotherhood founder/member) and S.K. Govern (also a Hotel Brotherhood founder/member) Axis, luxury resort hotel sports entertainment. McCarthy (1907) notes, when Flagler built his hotels in Florida, to go along with his railroads he also established black baseball teams for his guests (p. 209).

¹⁷ Costello. Rory. 2007. "S.K. Govern." SABR. p. 1.

¹⁸ Garb, Martha. 2014. *Freedom's Ballot. African American Political Struggles in Chicago from Abolition to the Great Migration.* p. 136.

¹⁹ Lewis, Peter. 1934. "Hotel Brotherhood Completes Fifty Years of Service." *Philadelphia Tribune.* Nov 1, 1934. p. 27.

interest of the colored hotel and restaurant laborers well into the 1930s.

Distinguished early Hotel Brotherhood members that made contributions to the colored hotel and restaurant workers cause and those that just supported its philosophy and legacy over the years are distinguished (Pennsylvania Judge Robert C. Nix, Sr.; Julian Bond, Civil Rights activist) and cross many social groupings.²⁰ Today, reflective of its history and demonstrated self-help capabilities of the founding leadership and many leaders who followed, the organization is preparing to continue and renew its focus on the hotel and restaurant industry, its managers and workers. It is entering another era of responsibility and service to the diverse community where its headquarters is located in the history of the African American community and Lombard-South Corridor of the now South of South (St) Neighborhood Association. It is an active business neighbor hosting community and neighborhood meetings, venue for celebrations and events and looking at long range partnership options for a feasibility study to grow for the neighbors and center city hotels/restaurants microgreens on its 2000 sq/ft roof deck, 'from the farm to the table project.'²¹

²⁰ Pennsylvania Judge Robert C. Nix, Sr.; Julian Bond, Civil Rights activist have national recognition. Including but are not limited to the following: Founders S.K. Govern, C.S. Massey, and Frank Thompson, all baseball entrepreneurs (1885-1889); Brotherhood Treasurer for 22 years (1898 - 1920) Alfred S. Jones, a business accountant; Historian, Peter Lewis, Editor of the *Philadelphia Tribune* (1915-1932); W.E.B Dubois, Historian and Sociologist; Philadelphia's 1st Black City Councilman President, Joseph Coleman; PA Senator Hardy Williams, Philadelphia Judge Debra Griffin; Philadelphia Councilwoman Blondell Reynolds Brown; PA Senator Anthony Hardy Williams, City Councilwoman Ann C. Verna, and City Councilman Kenyatta Johnson. This information was revealed in an interview by the researcher, C.W. (Clara) Lewis, with Mr. Michael Jones, Hotel Brotherhood USA, President and holder of its archives, existing documents and files (April 21, 2013).

²¹ This information was revealed in an interview by the researcher, C.W. (Clara) Lewis, with Mr. Michael Jones, Hotel Brotherhood USA, President and holder of its archives, existing documents and files (April 21, 2013).

Bainbridge Club Still Fulfilling Its Mission

By Rose DeWolf

Daily News Staff Writer

Before the word "networking" became fashionable, it was happening down at the Bainbridge Club.

The club, on Bainbridge Street near 15th, has been around a while, serving Philadelphia's African-American community. In fact, its origins go back to 1883, to the founding of an organization called The Hotel Brotherhood of America.

The brotherhood was dedicated to improving the lot of black men who then worked as waiters and bellmen in Philadelphia hotels.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

The Hotel Brotherhood was a beneficial organization, relates Michael Jones, a field representative for Ford Motor Co. who is the Bainbridge Club's current president.

It seems a hotel waiter named Stanilaus Govern was motivated to organize it when a fellow waiter died and passing-the-hat didn't raise enough to bury him.

The Hotel Brotherhood's mission was to accumulate money in case of a member's sickness, injury or death. It also ran classes for those who aspired to become waiters and bellmen.

And that wasn't all. In 1885, when a group of Jersey shore hotel owners put an ad in a Philadelphia paper offering \$25 per week to white waiters and \$20 to "colored" waiters, the Brotherhood's Govern bought 50 copies of the paper, mailed

them to headwaiters and other hotel people asking them to protest. They did and the hotel owners agreed to pay all waiters at the same rate.

In 1892, Govern traveled to New York to represent the Brotherhood at the founding of the Hotel and Restaurant Employees and Bartenders Union.

In 1906, the Brotherhood bought the building at 1523-29 Bainbridge St. as a meeting place and social hall. The price was \$15,000.

After that the group's membership expanded beyond the hotel trade. The carefully kept dues books show the names of store clerks and janitors, of porters and lawyers. The focus of the organization shifted to the activities that took place in what became known as the Bainbridge Club.

The club became a place where black organizations met, where black people from all walks of life came for shows and parties. It burned down in 1937, but the members rallied to restore it and the mortgage was paid in full in 1943.

Social activities were (and still are) held in two large halls on the building's second floor or, in the summertime, on its large patio. A garage on the first floor has always been rented to help pay expenses.

"I first joined the club in 1979," said Jones. "I



Jones

was interested in it because my mother had come here from North Carolina to work in a hotel — the Bellevue-Stratford — and she told me stories about the place.

"When I joined, most of the members were elderly. The club had been very popular up until the '60s. I've been told that in the '30, '40s and '50s, it was so packed on a Saturday, it was hard to get in. But in the '60s, blacks were focused on integration, on joining white organizations, so younger people no longer came."

But it hadn't gone out of business. It still operated under its original non-profit Hotel Brotherhood of America charter. And Jones saw the possibility of the club serving the black community in a new way.

Today the Bainbridge Club is a meeting place for black professionals and business people. It has some 150 social members. And, says Jones, it's once again a place where people come to hear jazz on a Saturday night, where black organizations hold luncheons and dinners. A group of Postal Service managers recently held a luncheon there. A black fraternal organization held a benefit for its scholarship fund. A black politician had a campaign fund-raiser . . .

Jones said he felt strongly about saving the Bainbridge Club because of its roots in the Hotel Brotherhood: "I found the Hotel Brotherhood mentioned in a book called the History of Unions in America and W.E.B. DuBois mentions it in his book 'The Philadelphia Negro.'"

What Stanilaus Govern started in 1883 isn't over yet.

Figure 11. Newspaper article from 1990 regarding the history of the Brotherhood and the future of the Bainbridge Club. Philadelphia Daily News, February 28, 1990, p. 26.

Conclusion

The Hotel Brotherhood USA building at 1523-29 Bainbridge Street is deserving of recognition by listing on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The property has significant value as part of the development and cultural characteristics of the City and Nation, as the headquarters of the Hotel Brotherhood USA, one of the earliest unions representing Black workers in the United States which was founded in Philadelphia in 1883 to provide medical and death benefits for Black hotel workers, satisfying Criterion A. Additionally, the Hotel Brotherhood USA is associated with an event of importance to the history of the City and Nation, being the 1885 protest organized by the Brotherhood against wage discrimination for Black hotel workers which led to a retraction of the proposed pay differential by the hotel proprietor. This marked the beginning of the Brotherhood as an organization structured along labor union lines for the advancement of Black hotel workers and later restaurant wait staff, and then private and domestic servers in the United States, satisfying Criterion B. By satisfying Criteria for Designation A and B as outlined in Philadelphia's Historic Preservation Ordinance, 1523-29 Bainbridge Street merits listing on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

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