



Category: Preservation Spirit
Rolland Development Corporation
21 Hyde Park Boulevard
Niagara Falls, New York

If walls could talk, those at 21 Hyde Park Blvd. in Niagara Falls could report how it feels to escape demolition at the eleventh and a half hour, and they would say a grateful “Thank You” to Mary Ann Rolland and her late husband, Bill, who rescued it.

It is one of sixty-seven houses designed by renowned architect Stanford White and built in 1895 in the Echota neighborhood for technical employees of the Niagara Falls Power

Company. An order for its demolition had already been signed, utilities disconnected, and asbestos removed when Niagara Falls Historian Tom Yots’s email seeking “a person of interest” was answered by the Rollands. They pledged to purchase the historic but derelict house.

No restoration neophytes, the Rollands had previously restored a stone house in the city and, having just finished a Victorian cottage in Lewiston, were looking for a new project. Additionally, Mary Ann had researched 21 Hyde Park and recognized its historic significance.

In the two years since February

2008, when the purchase was made for the value of the land, \$4,000—saving the city \$20,000 in demolition costs and ensuring a good tax future for the property—the house has been totally rehabilitated. The list of work performed covers three pages, much of it done by hired neighbors and local companies.

Working against nearly insurmountable odds, including hostility from some who wished to see the house gone, the Rollands remained undeterred. Thus, a house hours from demolition has been rehabilitated into a neighborhood jewel and is currently on the market for \$160,000.

Preservation Buffalo Niagara is pleased to honor Mary Ann and the late Bill Rolland as exemplary models of the Preservation Spirit.