

Nomination for 2021 Historic Preservation Award for the Foxhall Callbox Project

When the MPDC and DCFEMS callboxes were rendered obsolete with the advent of advanced public safety radio communications and the introduction of 9-1-1 emergency calling, many of the District's historic police and fire callboxes were removed before an initiative was begun by, among others, the D.C. Preservation League and Cultural Tourism D.C. to preserve the remaining callboxes by encourage organizations, supported by grants, to preserve the remaining callboxes in their neighborhoods.

Nearly 18 years ago Foxhall neighborhood resident Cheryl Tlam Foster drafted a series of stories, "Seven Stories for Seven Boxes," which began the process of calling attention to the plight of the several callboxes located within the boundaries of the Foxhall Community Citizens Association. Cheryl, a museum exhibit specialist, relocated away from D.C. before she could proceed with her project. Fifteen years later, a committee of residents lead by Sara Paulson, used Cheryl's early work, built upon it, researched and verified historical facts, wrote narratives, fund-raised and contracted with Vision Sign and their employee Jason Alexander to fabricate and install the interpretive materials. The six callboxes (four fire and two police) were completed and unveiled in 2020 (during the Covid-19 pandemic year) without fanfare and therefore limited press coverage. Sara Paulson was joined by past FCCA President Robert Siciliano and residents Hulit Taylor and Ann Haas in seeing the project through. The project cost \$20,000 and has been paid for.

The following images illustrate examples of the callboxes:

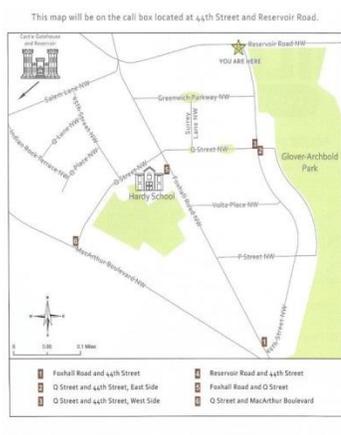


Figure 1 Map of the Foxhall Callbox locations.

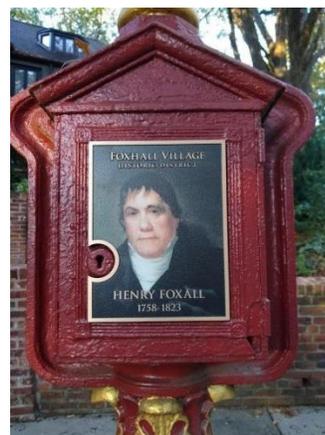


Figure 2 Located at Reservoir Road and 44th Street, NW, this is the callbox that begins the story.

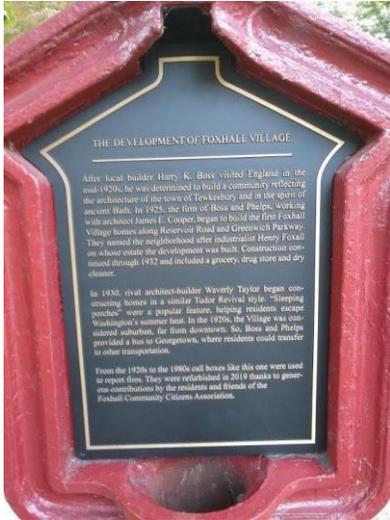


Figure 3 The interior of the callbox in Figure 2 detailing the development of Foxhall Village.



Figure 5 One of the two police callboxes creatively depicts callbox's roles in history.



Figure 4 The fire callbox located on 44th Street and Q Street is the only one also insight of a police callbox in the distance.



Figure 6 The callbox at MacArthur and Q Street displays a beautiful image of the Washington Aqueduct's Castle Building painted by Peter Waddell.



Figure 7 Callbox fund-raising appeal.



Figure 9 Police callbox ready for installation of graphics.



Figure 8 Vision Sign's Jason Alexander refurbishes the fire callbox in front of the historic Hardy School on Foxhall Road.

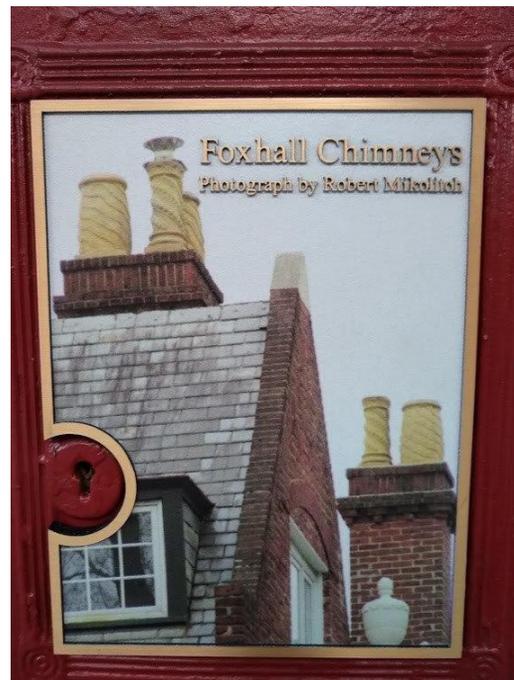


Figure 10 The callbox imagery captures features unique to the Foxhall area.

As the nominator, I am a life-long Foxhall Village resident, attended the original Hardy Elementary School, live in a home purchased by my grandparents in 1926, had careers in public radio, law enforcement and historic interpretation as a Seasonal Park Ranger with the C&O Canal NHP and served as President of the Association of the Oldest Inhabitants of D.C. from 1999 until 2019.

As part of this package I am also including some design documents from the Callbox Committee, a copy of the FCCA newsletter announcing the completion of the project and a separate letter of support. I would also appreciate it and think it would be appropriate if the nomination is accepted that Cheryl Tlam Foster's, Jason Alexander's and Peter Waddell's names are included in any narrative or citation.

Contact Information for Foxhall Callbox Project Committee:

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William N. Brown, Nominator

The D.C. Preservation League's
2021 District of Columbia Awards for Excellence in
Historic Preservation
c/o Nominator William N. Brown
4425 Greenwich Pkwy., NW
Washington, D.C. 20007-2010

I support this application to recognize the good work of the Foxhall Callbox Project Committee for refurbishing the call boxes located within the boundaries of the Foxhall Community Citizens Association.

The call boxes now serve as clear reminders of the history of the neighborhood. The neighborhood is better for the efforts by the individuals involved.

Conrad J. DeWitte, Jr.

Secretary, Foxhall Community Citizens Association

Former ANC Commissioner (ANC 3D09).

FOXHALL News

foxhall.org

2021 FCCA Annual Meeting Notice

The Foxhall Community Citizens Association will hold a brief annual meeting to elect Board of Directors, via zoom on Wednesday December 2nd at 7 p.m. The zoom link details will be emailed for currently paid members on November 30th.

Call Boxes - at the Finish Line!

The Call Box Committee: Sara Paulson, Bob Siciliano, Hult Taylor and Ann Haas

We are happy to announce that the Call Box Restoration project is complete. We have installed an original painting by local artist Peter Waddell on the call box on the corner of Q Street and MacArthur Boulevard, and replaced some missing panels in a couple of the other call boxes.

Thanks to all the contributors who made this happen. We were able to finish with a last minute grant from the FCCA. If anyone still wants to contribute to this community effort, please go to the FCCA website and make a donation there: www.foxhall.org.

Additional photos can be found on Page 6.



Leaf Collection Coming Soon to Curb Near You

The DC Department of Public Works (DPW) will conduct two leaf collections this year between November 9, 2020 and January 30, 2021. Residents are asked to rake their leaves, for collection, to the curb or into the tree box at the front of the residence. Collections for our neighborhood will occur as follows:

	Rake Leaves Out By	Collection Date
First Pick-up	Nov 29	Nov 30 thru Dec 5
Second Pick-up	Jan 17	Jan 18 thru Jan 23

Changes in city plans for leaf pick-up this year produced confusion among residents, but ANC 3D Chair Chuck Elkins said the "bottom line is that the city will be conducting the leaf pickup with vacuum trucks exactly as they did last year."

Elkins said pick-up times can be found at <http://leaf.dpw.dc.gov/leafcollection/> and entering your address.

Elkins said the city initially announced it was not going to vacuum the leaves this year and that residents would need to put leaves in paper bags for pick-up and composting. They were going to distribute 20 bags to each household. Now, no bags will be distributed and bagging is not required, according to Elkins. Already bagged leaves will be picked up, but city collectors prefer them loose at the curb.

Changes Afoot Along MacArthur Blvd.

John Bray

Key sites along the east end of MacArthur Boulevard are in play.

A blank slate now occupies the site where a 15,000-square-foot Safeway store once stood, leaving the Palisades with no large, full-service grocery. Developers have gained approval to put in its place a nursing and residential complex for seniors. Despite concerns about the project's impact on the community, ANC 3D voted to support the developer's application that went to city zoning authorities. The ANC, expecting city zoning approval, traded its backing for a deal with the developer that covers construction management and an effort by the developer to include a grocery store. The store would be about a third the size of the demolished Safeway. Part of the development, a residential cluster at the rear of the site, required a special exception, which went before

MacArthur Blvd. con't on Page 4...

November 2020



Pictured above: newly restored Call Boxes, painted by area artist (and Tudor Place's artist-in residence) Peter Waddell.

Materials from Committee Work featuring text for the callboxes:

Call Box History Themes

February 23, 2020

1. 44th and Foxhall

[209 words]

“Henry Foxall - Industrialist”

Foxhall Road was named after Henry Foxall (with an “h” added for reasons unknown), one of the earliest armaments suppliers to the US government. Foxall emigrated from England to Philadelphia and then to the new capital, Washington DC. In 1801 he built a cannon foundry near Canal Road in what is now Glover-Archbold Park. In 1813, Foxall’s cannons were used by Commodore Perry in the famous Battle of Lake Erie. In 1814, after burning the White House and Capitol, British troops were prevented from destroying the foundry by a violent thunderstorm.

With his foundry business a success, Henry Foxall bought a summer home (“Spring Hill”) on what is now P Street between Foxhall Road and 44th Street. Presidents Jefferson, Madison and Monroe are said to have enjoyed the views of the Potomac from its second story porch.

National Park Service Mules, including ones that towed canal barges, were housed in this area and were used to cut grass in Foxhall Village circles.

From the 1920s to the 1960s call boxes like this one were used by the Metropolitan Police to call in reports. They were refurbished in 2019 thanks to generous contributions by the residents and friends of the Foxhall Community Citizens Association.

2. 44th and Q

[180 words]

“The Development of Foxhall Village”

After local builder Harry K. Boss visited England in the mid-1920s, he was determined to build a community reflecting the architecture of Tewkesbury and the spirit of ancient Bath. In 1925, the firm of Boss and Phelps, working with architect James E. Cooper, built the first Foxhall Village homes along Reservoir Road and Greenwich Parkway. They named the neighborhood after industrialist Henry Foxall on whose estate the development was built. Construction continued through 1932 and included a grocery, drug store and dry cleaners.

In 1930, rival architect-builder Waverly Taylor began constructing homes in a similar Tudor Revival style. "Sleeping porches" were a popular feature, helping residents escape Washington's summer heat. In the 1920s, the Village was considered suburban, a long hike from downtown. So, Boss and Phelps provided a subsidized bus to Georgetown, where residents could transfer to other transportation.

From the 1920s to the 1960s call boxes like this one were used to report fires. They were refurbished in 2019 thanks to generous contributions by the residents and friends of the Foxhall Community Citizens Association.

3. 44th and Q

[168 words]

"History of Police and Fire Call boxes"

Police call boxes like this one were installed in the 1920s for the Metropolitan Police. Each officer had a key to open the call box to check in with his precinct or request backup if needed. With the advent of two-way radios and walkie-talkies, the use of police call boxes declined in the 1960s. By the 1970s they were shut down, replaced by the 911 system.

Fire alarms like the one across the street were installed around the 1920s. In case of fire, anyone could activate the alarm by opening the door and pulling a lever. An automatic telegraph system transmitted the box number to a central office that directed the closest fire station to dispatch a fire truck to the vicinity of the call box. By the 1970s they were shut down, replaced by the 911 emergency system.

These call boxes were refurbished in 2019 thanks to generous contributions by the residents and friends of the Foxhall Community Citizens Association.

4. Reservoir and 44th

[209 words]

“Foxhall Village now and Then”

Welcome to Foxhall Village, one of Washington DC’s most charming and distinctive residential neighborhoods. Construction of the English Tudor style homes began in 1925. To guarantee the architectural integrity of the neighborhood, the community applied for, and in July 2007 was granted, designation as a District of Columbia Historic District, and the neighborhood was added to the National Register of Historic Places.

Across Reservoir Road is the Wetzell-Archbold Farmstead, containing the earliest known log dwelling in the District of Columbia. In the mid - 1920s, Anne Archbold, who bought the farm in 1931, and Charles Glover, a prominent banker, donated the property between Foxhall Village and Georgetown University to the National Park Service, creating Glover-Archbold Park.

In the late 1960’s, Foxhall residents, joined by Georgetown University students and other affected District residents, successfully prevented a Congressional plan to create a freeway through Glover-Archbold Park, via a new bridge over the Potomac - Three Sisters Bridge. The environmentalist Rachel Carson enjoyed walking in the Park to view wild birds.

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5. Foxhall and Q

[177 words]

“Development along Foxhall Road”

The thoroughfare where this box is located was originally known as Ridge Road, as it follows the hillsides above the Potomac Palisades. In the late 19th century, it was renamed in honor of cannon manufacturer Henry Foxall.

This fire box stands in front of the elementary school built in early 1930s at the request of the citizens of Foxhall Village. Originally named the Foxhall Village School, in 1932 it was renamed for Rose Lees Hardy, an Assistant Superintendent of Schools and a specialist in primary education. The school was granted historic designation in 2019.

During World War II, the Hardy playing field was turned into a Victory Garden, where local citizens grew vegetables to help the war effort. Before then this area was farmland. Q Street did not continue to MacArthur until the 1940s when homes were constructed.

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6. Q and MacArthur

[197 words]

“MacArthur Boulevard and the Washington Aqueduct”

MacArthur Boulevard was originally named Conduit Road because it provided access to the aqueduct that carried the District's water supply. It was renamed in honor of World War II hero, General Douglas MacArthur.

From 1902 to 1962, the Washington and Great Falls Electric streetcar ran from Georgetown to Glen Echo and Cabin John along the verge of the palisades overlooking the C&O Canal and the Potomac River. Until 1900 most of the land along the palisades was farmland and pasture, including simple Federal style farmhouses, cattle barns, dairies and a slaughterhouse.

The Georgetown Reservoir Castle Gatehouse

In 1850 Congress tasked the US Army Corps of Engineers with providing a water supply to Washington, DC. Montgomery C. Meigs chose the Great Falls of the Potomac River as the water source and designed the delivery system for the Washington Aqueduct. The Georgetown Reservoir Castle Gatehouse was designed to pump water from the Georgetown Reservoir to the McMillan Treatment Plant, four miles east.

From the 1920s to the 1960s call boxes like this one were used to report fires. They were refurbished in 2019 thanks to generous contributions by the residents and friends of the Foxhall Community Citizens Association.