



**UTICA AOD.COM**  
OBSERVER-DISPATCH / THE MOHAWK VALLEY'S INFORMATION SOURCE

## Guest view: Key piece of history must be saved

By **JOSEPH BOTTINI**

**Special to the Observer-Dispatch**

Posted Jul 29, 2010 @ 03:29 PM



When Bagg's Hotel, a venerable Utica landmark for more than a century at the western end of Main Street, was razed in 1933, Bagg's Square Memorial Park was created. Within its confines, a building was constructed.

The building's interior was elegantly dressed in beautiful carved woodwork. In the southeast corner of the one room, there is a door to a vault constructed as a repository of the hotel's records. The building was topped with an eagle, a work of art fashioned at Tiffany's in New York City. A beautiful stone wall surrounded the park.

The park and building were donated to the city by Thomas R. Proctor's widow, Maria, who inherited ownership of the fading landmark. This park was to serve the people of Utica.

The destruction of the hotel, and construction of the memorial park and building, took place during the Great Depression. Maria Proctor ordered all demolition done by hand, so to provide work for the unemployed. She further instructed all wood from the demolition be given to the poor for heating their homes.

The history of this benevolence would qualify this site as a historic location. The significance of this hotel is made greater when one learns that it was in this hotel where a meeting was held to select a new name for Old Fort Schuyler.

In a "Utica Monday Night" presentation July 12, I referred to the western end of Main Street (Utica's birthplace) as "Utica's Unofficial Dump." One could make the plausible argument that, if the birthplace of Old Fort Schuyler/Utica is at the western terminus, the Bagg's Hotel site, at the eastern end of Main Street, is the "cradle" of Utica.

It was in this hotel where Utica received its name. It was in this hotel many distinguished visitors became guests. Here many local dignitaries carried on the business of celebrating the successes of Utica's growth. And it was here, a Utica benefactor showed compassion for the poor. No greater event need be held at any location to render it a just and fitting place to be respected for the perpetuation of its existence.

The present city administration has come forward with a plan to resurrect the city's Harbor Point, and the section formerly known as Bagg's Square. Compliments to the mayor, his staff and the volunteers who worked on the committee.

However, the greatest potential for tourism is only possible when visitors observe a city that has respect for those places of importance to the history of its founding and past successes.

The Proctor High School Junior ROTC, under the leadership of Master Chief Mark Williamson, joined a few volunteers from The Genesis Group in attempting to clean the park. It needs more than we are able to do in order to restore this honored "cradle" of Utica's youth.

Let this be a clarion call to the mayor and all local, state and national representatives to help obtain historic restoration funds.

*Joseph Bottini is a retired New Hartford school teacher and co-author of "Utica: Then & Now," published in 2007. He lives in Sauquoit.*

Copyright 2010 The Observer-Dispatch, Utica, New York. Some rights reserved

Advertisement



How this strange 62-cent fruit is making Americans skinny.



Learn to profit from penny stocks. Make a fortune overnight and achieve your dreams!



Utica - New trick now allows New York drivers to cut their insurance cost in half.



Do not buy until you read this 4 week study on the results of using the E-Cigarette to quit smoking.



The scary truth about snoring you need to hear...



Utica - New trick allows any New York resident to get extremely cheap car insurance.

## Popular Videos



Boston firefighter catches boy after 3-story drop



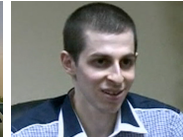
Drunken Dad Allegedly Forces Daughter, 9, to Drive



Raw Video: Passenger Bus Crashes in New York



Raw Video: Dust Storm Rolls Through Texas



Military: Gilad Schalit Now in Israel



Police: Mich. Man's Daughter, 9, Drives to Store

### At Guest

At Guest Online. Shop Target.com. [www.Target.com](http://www.Target.com)

### The Next Internet Boom

Stock Investment With 1,000% Potential Gains [www.smauthority.com](http://www.smauthority.com)

### HOT Penny Stock EMBA

Invest in the newest Cloud-based ERP firm in the mkt today [www.TechStockWire.com](http://www.TechStockWire.com)

Ads by Yahoo

Loading commenting interface...

[Privacy Policy](#) | [Terms of Service](#) | [About our Ads](#)

The Observer-Dispatch, Utica, New York | (315) 792-5000 | 221 Oriskany Plaza Utica, NY 13501

Copyright © 2006-2011 GateHouse Media, Inc. Some Rights Reserved.

Original content available for non-commercial use under a [Creative Commons](#) license, except where noted.

SEO by eLocalListing | [Advertiser profiles](#) | [RadarFrog Merchant Directory](#) | [Contest Rules](#)