

Prince William Library
Manassas, Virginia
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Potomac News
Conner House

SAVED

Home served as hospital in Civil War

By CHRISTINE RIEDEL
of the Potomac News

MANASSAS PARK — The thick-walled, sandstone building is a Civil War hospital, an old federal headquarters and a former farmhouse, all wrapped up in one.

It's also the only building in Manassas Park that has a famed role in history.

Those qualities made officials decide that the Conner House, a deserted building on the southern edge of the city, is worth saving.

To accomplish that task, which could cost hundreds of thousands of dollars, the Manassas Park City Council voted earlier this month to establish a historical commission charged with raising the necessary funds.

"The structure itself isn't too bad. But because of weather and deterioration and vandalism, it is worn down," said Manassas Park Building Official Fred Wharton.

But the Conner House's



The Conner House, which once served as a Civil War hospital, is slated for restoration.

By Robert J. Stewart-Potomac News

18-inch thick walls will stand for years to come, he said. The house was built in the mid-1800s.

Although the building is now boarded up, Wharton and others hope that renovations will stabilize it enough to open it up for public tours. All told, that

effort may cost up to \$250,000, Wharton estimates.

The city would like to complete some substantial improvements by 1995, Manassas Park's 20th anniversary.

The building is already on the National Register of Historic Places, Wharton said, and

would be a rich cultural resource for a city that has no other historic buildings.

The building was originally built as a single-family residence. But during the Civil War, it was used as a hospital.

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Home served as Civil War hospital

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and the Confederate Camp Walker was located nearby. Later, it became a dairy farm and was once known as Blooms Farm.

Catharpin resident E.R. Conner Jr., whose parents and grandparents both lived on the property, remembers the days when the Conner House was part of a thriving farm.

"It had a front porch on it, as I first remember it," Conner said, adding that he also recalls a smoke house and several other outbuildings.

The farm was just one of Conner's father's business ventures. The elder Conner also ran a grocery store, was a Manassas Town Council member and a Delegate to the general assembly.

The younger Conner sold the property in the early 1960s and can't remember the last time people lived in the house.

Manassas Park will be talking with officials from Manassas and Prince William County to get help for the project, Wharton said.

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