

INSTITUTIONAL AND CULTURAL OFFERINGS



The Antiquarian & Landmarks Society, Inc. located at 66 Forest Street.

A distinguishing characteristic of Asylum Hill is its numerous cultural, religious and institutional entities. No other neighborhood has such a concentration and they have a positive effect on the Hill -- both as tourist attraction, and, for what they offer residents, as well as some outstanding architecture. The best known of these is of course, the Mark Twain House, which draws over 50,000 people per year, and is about to undergo a major expansion. There is also the Harriet Beecher Stowe Center, which includes the Stowe House and Stowe-Day Library, the Antiquarian and Landmarks Society, the Hartford Camerata Conservatory, and the Hartford Courant Arts Center which houses the Hartford Ballet, Symphony and Orchestra. These institutions offer numerous programs to City youth, and many Asylum Hill children are active participants.

No other area in the city has such a wide range of institutional and cultural offerings located within its boundaries, except possibly the downtown area. The **KEY** for Asylum Hill residents is how to better utilize and partner with some of these institutions so that residents, students, children and people citywide can be better exposed to the learning, assistance, or enrichment that naturally accompany these offerings. They include:

◆ **Hartford Ballet**

The Ballet has several programs:

- Dance Program for City Youth
A scholarship program that operates during the school year which had 60 Hartford youth enrolled for the summer, 1997.
- Discover Dance
Offers dance classes in Hartford Public schools, including West Middle, to over 300 students city-wide.
- Pre-Ballet
Targeted to youth in the immediate neighborhood and has 10 scholarships.
- Summer Pre-Ballet
For 3-8 year old children, offers 50 scholarships for classes in August, funded through City's Recreation Department.

◆ **Hartford Camerata Conservatory**

Offers a six (6) week program to 100 youth - 80% of whom live in Hartford. Program lasts 6 weeks and is free. Classes are in music, dance, theater, and jazz. The program continues on Saturdays during the school year and has scholarships available for private lessons. The Conservatory also offers a 2 year college diploma program with accreditation from New England colleges and universities.

◆ **Mark Twain House**

Runs a Writing Program with students from Hartford Public High School (approximately 10-20) to support and encourage creative writing. They are also involved in several curriculum projects with Hartford Public High School, collaborating with faculty and students. They also offer free summer lawn concerts.

◆ **Harriet Beecher Stowe Center**

Sponsors a program entitled Courageous Connections for women of all ages on leadership for women. Conducts summer concerts and free house tours for neighborhood people, usually with a theme and collaborates with the West Middle School Committee on a summer project.

◆ **Hartford Public Library – Mark Twain Branch**

- Holdings
Books, audiobooks, large print books, business materials, reference books, Spanish books and magazines, videotapes, newspapers, magazines, and on-line journal indexes for adults and children. Special collections include an ESL section, a Business Information Center and a Community Information Center.

- **Community Use**

The branch is used as a site for literacy training, neighborhood meetings and special neighborhood events.

- **Computers**

The public has free access to the internet and numerous Microsoft and other computer applications. The Hartford Public Library system has an on-line Community Information Database for information about city and neighborhood organizations, events, and services. The Branch has scheduled classes in computer applications.

- **Programs**

The Branch provides adult and children's programs for day care centers, schools, and neighborhood residents. These include story telling, movies, arts and crafts, computer classes, book discussion groups, special guests, and reading incentive programs.

School Readiness Programs:

- ♦ The new Story Bag Program has been designed to bring reading readiness programs and packet collections to the HeadStarts and other daycare agencies and also to the Home Care Providers, creating a virtual library at many sites in Asylum Hill.
- ♦ Family Place is a series of 6-week parent/child workshops designed to teach caregivers about child development, health, nutrition, school readiness and reading in a section of the library created for family play and reading.

- **Services**

Reference and reader's advisory services are provided. Staff and volunteers assist with homework study and use of the computers.



Pictured above is the Mark Twain Branch located at 256 Farmington Avenue