



The Iowa

Preservationist

Fall 2007

Volume 17 Issue 3

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Country School Preservation Moving Forward in Iowa

More than 60 persons eager to learn and share country school preservation experiences gathered October 5 and 6 at the Johnson County Historical Society Museum in Coralville. This was the eighth annual conference sponsored by the Iowa Historic Preservation Alliance.

Mark Dewalt of Winthrop University praised Iowa for leading the nation in efforts to preserve country school buildings, program and history. But, he encouraged participants to make a greater effort to involve younger persons with this important task.

Susan Fineman, preservationist from Nashua, New Hampshire, reviewed early efforts on discipline in country schools. She suggested use of the "dunce cap" as a discipline method was more a myth than a reality.

Gordon Hendrickson of the State Historical Society of Iowa updated participants on the procedures for applying for a country school grant. The grant application is avail-

able online by going to the State Historical Society of Iowa website at www.iowahistory.org/grants/shsigrants and then clicking on country school grants. The deadline for submitting a grant is May 15. Matching money up to \$5,000 is available to help with preservation of buildings used as one- and two-room schools that will be used for educational purposes.

Rosanne Malek of the Iowa Department of Education talked about a new

Continued on page 4.



Conference participants visit two-room Coralville School. Photo courtesy Susan Fineman.

Communications Changes

As you may remember from our last newsletter and you will read in "From the Co-Chairs" on page 2, IHPA is experiencing some big changes. Not only do we have new officers and a new address, we are also working hard to bring on new board members and become a more active voice in preservation activities across the state. And, with this newsletter, we are beginning to bring our communications up to 21st century standards!

In the next few months, the newsletter will be fine-tuned and you will notice continuing changes at our website, including an up-to-date calendar, a news archive, and a discussion forum. So visit www.iowapreservation.org often in the next few months to see how we're changing to make preservation better in Iowa. And, if you're interested in contributing to the newsletter or website, be sure to fill out the Membership Survey on page 7.

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News from the Co-Chairs

I'm back!!

Hello, after a two-year hiatus from the executive board of the IHPA, I am excited to be back as the Vice-Chair, or Co-Chair as Rose likes to remind me. As many of you may know, I broke my neck in July of 2005. I had surgery and once again had complete use of my extremities. But as spinal cord injuries go, I have since learned, they do not heal as quickly as the physical injuries do. I could move and walk and do other activities, but my fine motor skills suffered for the next year. This was incredibly frustrating for me, and I asked Jackie Adams to take the reign as Chair, as she was Vice-Chair at the time. She agreed, and at the Annual Meeting in Council Bluffs, her term as Chair expired.

I want to take this opportunity to thank Jackie for the incredible effort, time and personal commitment she gave to the IHPA and all involved with historic preservation and being an advocate for all things historic. I am also proud to congratulate Jackie for being appointed by Governor Culver to The State Historical Society Board of Trustees. This with the massive effort she is undertaking in her home town of Red Oak by purchasing the historic Murphy Calendar Company several years ago, and most recently buying a large number of the commercial buildings which have made up the town square, and not to forget the fact that she is the driving force responsible for the 1903 Burlington Northern Depot getting restored, Jackie is historic preservation. I am certain Jackie's passion can be spread across the state with her appointment to the Board of Trustees.

Now to the future of the IHPA; we have a new board of directors with Rose Rohr of Anamosa as the Chair, George Wakeman of Sioux City (that's me) as Vice-Chair, Martha Hayes of Mt. Pleasant continues as Treasurer, and a newcomer to the board is our Secretary, Abbey Gaffey, also of Sioux City. Rose and I will be leading the effort together as co-chairs of the board.

The board has decided to undertake some very aggressive projects in the next year to expand the role of the IHPA in the state, bring our communication process into the 21st century, and as always we need to raise capitol to continue our cause to keep true to our mission which is:

The Mission of IHPA is to build partnerships that enhance our economic and cultural future through the preservation of Iowa's significant historic resources.

How are we going to do this? We're starting by undertaking a strategic planning session with the help of the Iowa Advisors to the National Trust for Historic Preservation, Sam Erickson and Dan Tindall. The results of that planning meeting will be discussed in our next newsletter and form a plan for the next year of the organization and beyond. But one thing is certain: we need all of our members to become more active in the IHPA by getting involved in IHPA Committees, forwarding information to the IHPA Board regarding events and issues in your community or area, forwarding your email address to info@iowapreservation.org so we may save valuable dollars by sending out the newsletter electronically to become fiscally and environmentally responsible.

Thank you for continuing to be a part of the Iowa Historic Preservation Alliance! I am very excited about our recent achievements, including work to fix the state rehabilitation tax credit program (see Rod's update on page 4) and helping to save very important buildings across the state, such as the nationally significant Williges Building in Sioux City (see the back cover). Of course, we also cannot forget our on-going programs: the Most Endangered and Preservation at its Best. With you, these programs and our organization can become stronger. Be sure to renew your membership (or become a member for the first time) by filling out the form on page 7 and get involved in IHPA today!

Contributed by George Wakeman

Spot on SHPO

News from the State Historic Preservation Office

Movie theaters come in all shapes and sizes: from meeting halls and converted opera houses of the early 20th century to mid-century drive-ins and the multiplexes of today. Depending on the venue (and the movie, for that matter), the experience is different from the moment you read the marquee until the last credit rolls off the screen. Today, we snack on pizza and nachos while sitting on rocking chairs fastened to steeply pitched risers in a short auditorium. We probably walked through the mall to get there and we'll walk through a sea of cars to get out. But, many of us also remember sitting in a long Main Street auditorium looking down over the backs of rows and rows of people and seats. The gently sloped floor was always slightly sticky, and we felt special if we could grab one of the loveseat-sized chairs on the occasional end of the row. We walked down the street to get there—either from our house or our car parked a block away—and walked past the same brightly lit storefronts to get home.

The State Historic Preservation Office wants to learn more about Iowa's movie houses and the state's connections to Hollywood. That's why we are embarking on what will likely become a multi-year and multi-phase study of Iowa's movie theaters and other properties associated with the film industry. In addition to the theaters, we want to know more about Iowans associated with cinema, from actors and actresses to producers and directors (not to mention musicians, writers, costume designers, and distributors). That's why we're also talking with people who have been bringing movies to you for decades, including Robert Fridley, who has been a fixture in Iowa's film industry since the 1930s. We also want to know more about the filming locations of the many movies filmed in the state over the last 100 years. You probably remember *Field of Dreams* (1988) and *Twister* (1995), but do you recall *Penitentiary* (1935) and *Cold Turkey* (1968)?

Although we're concentrating on properties built or associated with the film industry before 1970, we're researching everything from the nickelodeon to the multiplex—the whole story over the last century. Not all of these buildings, people, and places will be significant. Some will have such a small association with the film industry they'll be considered irrelevant, and others will barely be recognizable due to alterations over time. But in the end, they all tell a part of the story. By gaining an understanding of the entire history of cinema in Iowa, we hope to be able to determine which properties are most worthy of preservation for future generations.

So, if you have a wonderful movie theater in your town, or know of another property that could help represent Hollywood in the Heartland, we want to hear from you. We'll be working with IHPA to put information about the survey on IHPA's redesigned website this winter, but in the meantime contact Paula Mohr at the State Historic Preservation Office for more information about the survey or if you would like a digital copy of our site inventory form for theaters. Paula can be reached at Paula.Mohr@iowa.gov or 515.281.6826. Help us learn more about the last 100 years of Iowa cinema!

Contributed by Barbara A. Mitchell



Iowa Theater, Onawa. Photo courtesy the State Historical Society of Iowa's State Historic Preservation Office.

Recent Actions on the National Register of Historic Places

Edmundson Park Historic District, Oskaloosa, Mahaska County. Listed 09/27/2007.

Lincoln Township Mausoleum, Zearing, Story County. Listed 09/27/2007.

Henderson Lewelling House, Salem, Henry County. Listing upgraded 08/31/2007.

Fort Madison Downtown Commercial Historic District, Lee County. Listed 08/31/2007.

Williges Building, Sioux City, Woodbury County. Listed 08/31/2007.

Knoxville WPA Athletic Field Historic District, Knoxville, Marion County. Listed 08/02/2007.

Country Schools (continued from page 1)

source of funding for school preservation—a service learning grant available through public schools. Barb MacDougall of Boone talked about the service learning grant she had received to involve elementary students at her school in a country school preservation project.

Other Iowa activities included a new book based on interviews with former country school teachers by Helen Augustine of Emmetsburg, the creation of Iowa's first country school replica in Albia by Joan Beary and Marilyn Robinette, creation of the first agriribition center in Iowa near Independence by program manager Mike McGill and the development of a new country school video by Jeanette Kottke and Sue Benning of Fredericksburg.

Participants had a chance to visit and learn about an unique preservation project at the two-room Coralville school. The bottom floor classroom has been restored to the 1870s when the school opened and work is nearly complete on the second floor classroom to depict the 1950s when the school was closed.



Conference participants listen to Ed Miller while visiting Straw College at Kalona Historical Village. Photo courtesy Susan Fineman.

Saturday morning more than 40 people visited an Amish school, public school museums in Kalona and Wellman, and one of the first consolidated township high schools established in Iowa. The building is now used as a community meeting center in Washington township.

Mark your calendars: the 2008 country school conference will be held in Ames on October 10 and 11!

Contributed by William Sherman

Thanks Main Street IA!

The week of October 13-18, George, Rose, and Rod all took some personal time to present the Iowa Historic Preservation Alliance to prospective Main Street applicant communities. A total of 31 communities and 72 people attended these IHPA presentations. We are grateful to Main Street Iowa for this membership development opportunity!

IHPA and IA-SHPO Attend National Historic Preservation Conference

The first week of October was the annual national historic preservation conference in St. Paul, Minnesota. This year the State Historical Society of Iowa (SHSI)-State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) saw a good opportunity to get a number of staff to the conference. The state has had out of state travel restrictions for as many years as I can remember. This year the conference was close and I for one am grateful to the SHSI administration for seeing the wonderful training and learning opportunities for the staff with their attendance. When you get a chance, thank Cyndi Peder-son for encouraging this professional staff development.

The conference is a virtual whirlwind of activity with meetings of all kinds taking place at different venues over several days. The National Park Service and the President's Advisory Council on Historic Preservation presented a couple of interesting sessions on Preserve America and the White House Summit results from last summer in New Or-

leans. Basically, Iowa is not as far ahead as other states in embracing the Preserve America initiative. For instance, Kentucky has a majority of its counties listed and Iowa has just a few cities. I'm working on finalizing an application for my county, Hardin, because then the whole county can take advantage of funding for heritage development from the federal government. I hope other counties can work the same way and not just focus on the largest town.

I did have a couple of presentations during the course of the conference. The most important was about the story behind our cooperative strategy for advocacy on the State Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credits. We were the only mid-western state to succeed last year in increasing our available tax credits. By working with larger stakeholder groups than just us, we succeeded in having a very large base of support for this effort. Basically we got our idea from the farmers

Continued next page.

National Preservation Conference (continued from page 4)

who were very successful the year before in getting multiple groups to stump for the renewable fuels credits and so we decided to use a similar tactic for our efforts. The Chamber Alliance of Iowa, the Professional Developers, the tourism industry, the Alliance of Chamber Executives, the Iowa Equity Fund, the Midwest Housing Equity Group, the Iowa League of Cities, and a couple of the largest cities in Iowa all joined us in our efforts. The really great thing about this partnership was the rapid and quick response to changes in the Iowa Legislature and Governor's office as well as the fact that many of these organizations have high paid professional lobbyists working for them and our tax credit efforts. We have definitely now seen the fruits of our efforts with over \$200 million dollars in tax credit projects applied for since the program was opened up the first of July!

The other session I was able to participate in and present at was the "Farmsteads on the Fringe" two-day field trip. This was the first time the National Trust has selected a rural back-to-back field trip. This trip was all about the massive, disorganized new development occurring around the Twin Cities. This development has forever destroyed hundreds of thousands of acres of good farm ground with new development. Several niche/sustainable farms and one very special community were visited. The developer in this community saved the two barns and a crib in his development, reusing them for a community center and landscaping equipment storage. I presented the grass roots based Iowa Barn/Farm survey that we are using here in Iowa to document the rural agricultural architecture. This system of rural agricultural architectural survey involving local funding and people is a project that elicited many inquiries from conference attendees and many different organizations and states. The IHPA is on the right track

"WE WERE THE ONLY MIDWESTERN STATE TO SUCCEED LAST YEAR IN INCREASING OUR AVAILABLE TAX CREDITS. BY WORKING WITH LARGER STAKEHOLDER GROUPS THAN JUST US, WE SUCCEEDED IN HAVING A VERY LARGE BASE OF SUPPORT FOR THIS EFFORT."

with this survey and I encourage you as a reader to go to our web site, download the information, and get out there and document your rural heritage with your local youth.

Another very interesting leading edge development is in the area of rural heritage development. We attended a couple of sessions that dealt with this topic. The National Trust is working a multi-year grant with Kentucky and Arkansas to develop local rural heritage regions that can then be used as

models for the nation. These rural areas look remarkably similar to ours in Iowa and are facing many of the same issues. Iowa's Main Street Director, Tom Guzman, gave a great small town Iowa Main Street success story presentation at one of these sessions. This is a little different than the National Heritage Area development concept. Of course Iowa is very lucky to have the Silos and Smokestacks National Heritage Area designation, but that heritage area is only 37 northeast counties. Our other 62 counties can--and I hope will--benefit over the next few years from the pilot programs being developed by the Trust in these two states. I believe that the Iowa Departments of Cultural Affairs and Economic Development should review these pilot projects upon their completion and implement strategies that would work in Iowa. Our rural Iowa areas could definitely take advantage of this focused collaborative approach. I also believe that the Iowa Historic Preservation Alliance, as a not for profit organization, is positioned to assist these departments of our state government in these efforts. The most successful state efforts that I have learned about always seem to be the ones that have a good blend of state government and not for profit cooperative efforts.

Other sessions in St. Paul included:

- Partners Day General Session. This session provided important information on how the National Trust for Historic Preservation is reaching out to more people using technology as tool. The National Trust is currently creating a "virtual town square" for preservation organizations and exploring the various ways the Internet and other 21st century technologies can connect preservationists and help save historic properties.
- Green and sustainable design. Several sessions this year included information on how to include historic preservation as an important aspect of sustainable design. Architects and urban planners are finally realizing what we've known for decades: preservation is the ultimate form of recycling!
- Special lectures by St. Paul and Minneapolis historians David Lanegran and Charlene Rose, Minnesota's own radio personality Garrison Keillor, architects DeTeel Patterson Tiller and Steven W. Semes, sustainable development guru Ed McMahon, research psychiatrist Mindy Fullilove, and place-based foods expert Arlin Wasserman showed us that preservation touches all kinds of people and all sorts of professions.

Make your plans to attend Preservation in Progress, the 2008 Conference in Tulsa, Oklahoma, October 21-25, 2008. See you there!

Contributed by Rod Scott

Calendar of Events

November 2007

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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December 2007

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January 2008

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February 2008

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November 2007

Nov. 17 (9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.) ■ Workshop on the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. Hoyt Sherman Place, 1501 Woodland Avenue, Des Moines. RSVP by November 13 to Jason Van Essen: jmvanessen@dm.gov.

December 2007

Dec. 6 & 8 ■ Movies at the Museum: *Anthem: An American Road Story*. State Historical Museum, 600 East Locust, Des Moines. For more information: www.iowahistory.org.

January 2008

Jan. 5 ■ Resource Enhancement and Protection (REAP) Congress in Des Moines. For more information: www.iowadnr.com/reap/

Jan. 14 ■ New legislative session begins in Des Moines.

Jan. 15 ■ Deadline for Historical Resource Development Program (HRDP) documentary collections grants (special round). For more information: www.iowahistory.org/grants

Jan. 17 & 19 ■ Movies at the Museum: *The War Room*. State Historical Museum, 600 East Locust, Des Moines. For more information: www.iowahistory.org.

Jan. 23 ■ Deadline for National Endowment for the Humanities grant programs for Interpreting America's Historic Places (Planning Grants and Implementation Grants). For more information: www.neh.gov/grants/guidelines/IAHP_Planning.html and www.neh.gov/grants/guidelines/IAHP_Implementation.html

February 2008

Feb. 1 ■ Deadline for Dr. Frank Henry Landes Preservation Fund for Iowa grant application. For more information, contact the Midwest Office, National Trust for Historic Preservation, 53 West Jackson Boulevard, Suite 350, Chicago, Illinois 60604, (312) 939-5547 or mwro@nthp.org.

Feb. 1 ■ Deadline for Iowa Community Cultural Grant applications. For more information: www.culturalaffairs.org/funding/iowa_community_cultural_grant/.

Feb. 7 (7 p.m.) & Feb. 9 (2 p.m.) ■ Movies at the Museum: *Genghis Blues*. State Historical Museum, 600 East Locust, Des Moines. For more information: www.iowahistory.org.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE YOUR
EVENTS ON THIS PAGE AND OUR
ONLINE CALENDAR? EMAIL THE
INFORMATION TO US AT
INFO@IOWAPRESERVATION.ORG

It's Time to Renew!

Help us preserve Iowa's historic sites by renewing your membership or by becoming a member for the first time. With your membership, you will receive our quarterly newsletter and special announcements about our workshops, seminars, special events, and annual meeting. Simply fill out the information below and send us your check today! Any amount over \$10 is deductible.

Would you like to become more involved by becoming a board member or serving on a committee? Please select any of volunteer categories below on the right and one of our board members will contact you.



Return Membership Form and Survey to:

17718 120th Street
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Phone: 319.462.3806
Fax: 319.462.3806
www.iowapreservation.org
info@iowapreservation.org

Membership Levels

- \$30 Regular Membership
- \$50 Supporter
- \$100 Partner
- \$500 Sponsor
- \$1,000 Sustainer
- \$5,000 Patron

Volunteer

- I'm interested in serving on the
- board of directors
 - communications committee
 - membership committee
 - fundraising committee
 - advocacy committee

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
 Phone (day): _____ Phone (evening): _____
 Email: _____

Membership Survey

As we grow to serve you and preservation in Iowa better, we need your input on preservation concerns across the state. Please fill out this brief member survey and return it with your membership renewal.

What preservation issues concern you most? (select one)

- Property types are disappearing or endangered (e.g., barns, schools, theaters)
- Lack of knowledge/training regarding preservation techniques and standards
- Local/state/federal officials do not consider preservation while rule-making
- Preservation is not seen as a key economic development strategy for Iowa
- Other: _____

What role is most important for IHPA? (select one)

- Dissemination of information on preservation activities around the state
- Helping preserve Iowa's historic places through advocacy, funding, or education
- Strengthening partnerships amongst Iowa preservationists
- Creating innovative partnerships between preservationists and other professionals
- Other: _____

How do you prefer to receive information? (e.g., newsletters)

- Electronically - via email sent directly to an inbox
- Electronically - via browsing on the World Wide Web
- Hard copy via US Postal Service

Is there anything else you'd like us to know?

Membership in IHPA runs with the calendar year, from January 1 to December 31. Memberships received after October 1st are applied to the next calendar year.

Your address, phone number, and email are safe with us. We will use them only for contacting you about IHPA activities and events or important preservation issues that we think you'll want to know about.



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Take Action! Update

As part of the redesign of our website, we are introducing a new feature allowing preservationists across the state to make their voices heard on preservation issues. Take Action! will feature endangered historic properties, information on state and federal bills affecting preservation, and other preservation concerns that need your input immediately. On the back page of the newsletter, we'll update you on how things turned out -- good or bad. Since the new website is still being designed, this month we wanted to fill you in on an exciting win for preservation that wouldn't have been possible without the hard work of many preservation organizations.

The Williges Building in Sioux City, designed by architect William Steele and recently listed on the National Register of Historic Places, is nationally significant as one of the last commercial buildings exhibiting the early Prairie School style of architecture. The exquisite use of terra cotta includes panels designed to look like abstract animal pelts, appropriate considering to the building's original use in the fur industry.

Local preservationists, including members of the Sioux City Historic Preservation Commission and SiouxLandmark, found out about the proposed demolition of the building and enlisted the help of the State Historic Preservation Office and Great Places board. Local media outlets kept tabs on the story and by mid-July, the building owner was convinced



Williges Building, Sioux City, with detail of the terra cotta animal pelts. Photos courtesy the State Historical Society of Iowa's State Historic Preservation Office.

to sell the building to local developer Bart Connelly, who plans to rehabilitate the building as office space.

Thanks to everyone who took action and worked together to save the Williges Building, and especially to Bart Connelly and his future tenants for agreeing to become faithful stewards of this magnificent historic property!