



RIPS NEWS

Advocates for Historic Architecture

www.RockIslandPreservation.org

Membership Meetings

- November 17, 2015
Tuesday
6:30 PM
Karpelos Manuscript Museum/ First Church of Christ, Scientist
700 22nd Street, Rock Island
Come to celebrate the 100th Birthday of this historic structure. *Please note the early start of the meeting.* *See the related article.*
- December 15, 2015
Tuesday
6:30 PM
Hauberg Civic Center
1300 24th Street, Rock Island
RIPS will host our annual holiday social in the Hauberg dining room. Members are encouraged to bring an appetizer or holiday treat to share. *Please note the early start of the meeting.*
- January 19, 2016
Tuesday
7:00 PM
Home of Linda Anderson & Bruce Ohrlund
1718 21st Street, Rock Island
Regular business meeting

Remember to keep the third Tuesday of each month marked on your calendar for monthly RIPS meetings and activities

PRESERVATION AWARD NOMINATIONS

Each May, to celebrate National Historic Preservation Month, RIPS presents Historic Preservation Awards and Certificates of Recognition. These honor the individuals, groups or businesses that have preserved or restored historic structures in our community.

To qualify for an award or recognition, a structure must be:

- A residential, commercial, religious or public building
- Within the city limits of Rock Island
- 50 years or older

RIPS may also consider recognition of individuals or groups who have saved a historic structure from being destroyed or defaced or, by example or special efforts, furthered the momentum of historic preservation in Rock Island.

For more information about the Awards and to see past winners go to www.RockIslandPreservation.org and click the tab for Preservation Awards. We will review candidates at our March meeting, so don't delay your submissions!

Genuine preservation is a challenge which is why we publicly recognize and commend those who have accepted the challenge and whose work follows preservation guidelines.

CENTURY~OLD TREASURES

The 1915 year end issue of The Rock Island Argus proclaimed that the city was in the middle of a building boom! A *million* dollars had been invested in construction. Over 200 dwellings had been built, more than ever before in a single year. The article included a long list of houses constructed all over the city. Here is a look at a few of the significant buildings of 1915.

Brennan House 2229 10th Avenue

Julia and Agnes Brennan were the original owners of this home constructed by carpenter/contractor J. E. Johnson at a cost of \$4679. They shared it with their elderly, Irish-born parents, John and Ellen. The Craftsman/Prairie style home faces 10th Avenue and is sized to fit perfectly on a corner city lot. Prairie features include a low-pitched hip roof with wide overhangs. A simple trim band surrounds the house just below the second story windows which are placed in such a way as to reinforce a horizontal feel. Roof dormers and the front door hood add Craftsman touches. At the time



Photo from City of Rock Island

Dizotell House 1600 29 ½ Avenue

The first owners of this unique home were Jhirard & Nettie Dizotell. While Foursquare houses are not unique in Rock Island, this concrete block home that features four differently patterned blocks most certainly is. The blocks on the porch are similar in size to bricks, but are laid in a diagonal lattice pattern on both the porch skirt and railing. The bottom of the porch piers have a rubblestone pattern molded into the blocks. Most of the walls and the rest of the porch piers and columns feature a traditional rough-faced block similar to what is often seen on foundations. The top four courses, located just under the eaves, have a geometric, almost spider-web pattern. The only wood used on the exterior of this house is on the fascia board, the beadboard soffit, the porch deck and the porch steps.

It is thought that this might be a mail order or “kit” house. Sears Roebuck and other American manufacturers sold kit houses from the teens through the 1940s. A house plan was selected from a catalogue and all the supplies needed to build the home were delivered by rail. Concrete blocks would have been the exception. They would have been produced on site using a set of molds. Sears included a block making machine called Wizard in their kits. Using this machine, you could make 50-70 blocks a day. Imagine the amount of time it would have taken to make all the concrete blocks needed to build this house.



Photo by Daryl Empen

Channon House 1710 Lincoln Court

This small Craftsman style home was first owned by Lucy Reynolds Channon. She moved here when she was 65 years of age. Over time the house was “modernized”, having its front porch enclosed and its exterior covered with aluminum siding. In 1997 a group of Broadway neighbors came together for a Great Unveiling, removing the siding and reopening the front porch. With a fresh coat of paint in period-appropriate colors, the restoration was complete.



Photo from City of Rock Island website

CENTURY-OLD TREASURES

Fire Station #5 901 18th Avenue

Fire Station No. 5 became operational on February 2, 1915. August Schmidt had been appointed as captain of the new hose company. Other original No. 5 fire fighters were William Bach, Ben Stephens, Harry Blocklinger, and Otha Kinne.

The new fire station was designed by architect George Stauduhar and built by H. Tappendorf at a cost \$15,611 including equipment. The most expensive item was the structure itself, which cost \$6,668, The La France fire truck

inside cost \$6,000. Two thousand feet of hose were purchased at a cost of \$1,600. The heating, installed by Ward & McMahon, cost \$600. The plumbing was put in by Channon & Durfva for \$468, and the electric work was contracted to Electric Machinery & Construction Company for \$275. A Moline vacuum steam heating system was installed, and a tub and showers were among the amenities for the members of the company.

Fire Station No. 5 is a two story Prairie-style structure, topped with a hipped roof that was originally covered with red clay tile. The square building is built of wire cut brick and has copper gutters and deep eaves with exposed rafters. The central working door has been changed, but the opening, with its brick trim remains the same. The arched opening is formed by bricks laid three deep in alternating horizontal and vertical sets. There are additional details formed by bricks mortared into a circle and then set into concrete. Incised stone above the entrance says "No. 5 - Fire Station - No. 5." Three eight over eight double hung wood windows are situated above the stone sign. On either side of the window set are diamond-patterned red square tiles inlaid with green and set in tan-colored concrete. The other three sides of the building are relatively simple, with unadorned brick walls and windows.

Eventually, the fire station became too small to hold modern vehicles, and with its location at the corner of Douglas Park, its "ownership" was transferred to the Parks Department. Today, the building is in imminent danger. Bids for its demolition have been publicly posted. The building is in need of a new roof and additional repairs. But the demolition of this architect-designed piece of our public heritage will be a significant loss to the community and raises the question, why do we allow our public buildings to fall into disrepair?



Photo from City of Rock Island website

RESEARCH WORKSHOP

Rock Island Preservation Society is planning a research workshop to be held in early 2016 at the Rock Island County Historical Society Research Library.

The workshop will showcase the wide variety of materials available at the library including City Directories, maps, commemorative publications and bound copies of The Rock Island Argus. We will investigate the increasing number of new on-line research resources, their use and limitations. Veteran researchers will share their strategies, favorite sources and helpful tips followed by time for hands-on instruction.

Attendees can begin to research a historic building of their choosing or can join RIPS members in a research project focused on the Weisman and Burgart Additions.

Please watch for workshop date and time coming soon.

HERITAGE RESOURCES PLAN

The City of Rock Island is currently working on a city-wide Heritage Resources Plan. With a CLG grant awarded to the Preservation Commission, the city has hired Lakota Group to assist with the project that is intended to lay out actions and policies to preserve and prevent the loss of irreplaceable historic resources. A steering committee has been formed that includes two RIPS representatives, Linda Anderson and Diane Oestreich.

Over the past few months, Lakota Group representatives have met with City staff, the steering committee and several focus groups. On Tuesday, November 3rd a community speak-out session was held at the downtown Rock Island Public Library. With the use of maps, note cards and a questionnaire, attendees were asked to identify buildings or neighborhoods they identified as important to the historic character of our city. The final activity had attendees demonstrate how they felt future funds should be spent in support of heritage preservation by putting their play dollars in spending boxes.

Now the Lakota Group is reviewing all this information and formulating a plan. For those who missed the speak-out session there will be at least one more opportunity for input. A town meeting is planned for early 2016 to review the draft plan. Watch for updates on the plan contents and meeting dates and times from our committee representatives. This is our chance to publically support historic preservation in Rock Island.

100 YEAR CELEBRATION

Happy Birthday Karpeles Manuscript Museum First Church of Christ, Scientist

Rock Island Preservation Society, in association with Karpeles Manuscript Museum invite you to a celebration of the 100th year of the building.

We hope all will be there to share a piece of birthday cake, hear a short presentation about the history, architecture, and restoration, and enjoy the restored auditorium as well as the current manuscript exhibit which features documents from the Civil War.

6:30 to 8:00 P.M.
Tuesday, November 17, 2015
700 22nd Street, Rock Island

The local Christian Science congregation organized in 1896 and soon built a small frame church in the 800 block of 23rd Street. Less than 20 years later, the growing membership, which included many of Rock Island's prominent families, decided that they needed a much larger building and the 22nd Street lot was purchased.

That lot had held a large brick Italianate home dating from 1869 that was built for Cyrus Dart, a prominent grocer. Although that house was razed, the house next door on 7th Avenue, built by his brother, Albert, still stands as a funeral home.

The new church, reflecting the classical Renaissance design of the Mother Church in Boston, was designed by Chicago architect William C. Jones. Solomon S. Beman, who designed the Mother Church had been retained by the local congregation but he died before he could design this one. The building does not look like what we typically recognize as a church – no steeple, bell tower or figural stained glass windows – but it is characteristic of Christian Science churches throughout the world.

Groundbreaking took place in 1914, hence the cornerstone date, and completion was in 1915. The total cost was reported to be \$114,000, which included the large pipe organ, that still remains, and other interior furnishings.

The exterior is made of Bedford (Indiana) limestone, which accounts for its unaged appearance today. Bedford is uniform in texture and color, unlike the limestone we see in many Rock Island basements, the downtown library, and arsenal buildings which display a definite striation and yellow color. Because of its uniformity, Bedford is often used for decorative carvings on buildings made of other materials. Notice the exterior columns here especially. They were “monolithic” which means they have no seams but are a single huge stone. How they were transported here is not known.

The shallow hipped roof rises to a prominent central dome. That dome, of glass and copper, blew off during a major windstorm in 2012 and is now enclosed with a temporary cover. The sanctuary still features the inner dome made of several thousand fishscale-shaped pieces of stained glass. It was not damaged in the storm.

When the small congregation joined the Moline church in 1994, this building was sold. An unsuccessful attempt was made to reuse it, but eventually it sat vacant and unused for a decade, lightly vandalized during that time. Finally, in 2012, it was purchased by Dr. David Karpeles to add to his nationwide group of Manuscript Museums. Under the ownership of Dr. Karpeles, much needed repair has been undertaken, both inside and out. Repair of vandalized stained glass windows is ongoing, and exterior storm window protection has been added. Exterior lamp standards have been rebuilt as well. The auditorium has largely been restored and will be featured at the birthday party. Please celebrate with us!

The building is a designated Rock Island landmark. The landmark application is a comprehensive summary of its history.
<http://www.rigov.org/DocumentCenter/Home/View/1031>



7th Ave façade, Circa 1915,
Photo from Retro Quad Cities Facebook page