



RIPS NEWS

Advocates for Historic Architecture

www.RockIslandPreservation.org

Membership Meetings

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| February 16, 2016
Tuesday
7:00 PM | Home of Diane Oestreich
This is a regular business meeting. | 816 22 nd Street, Rock Island |
| March 15, 2016
Tuesday
7:00 PM | Gas & Electric Credit Union
2015 Historic Preservation Awards review and selection. Please be prompt to the 7:00 meeting start as doors will be locked. | corner of 24 th St. & 4 th Ave |
| April 19, 2016
Tuesday
7:00 PM | Home of Anthony & Kyla Heddlesten
This is a regular business meeting. | 541 23 rd Street
<i>See related article</i> |

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

DAVIS~WEYERHAEUSER HOUSE

Samuel S. and Apollonia Weyerhaeuser Davis House, built 1982

Although this is now the home of Anthony and Kyla Heddlesten, it was first occupied by Samuel S. Davis and his new bride, Apollonia Weyerhaeuser. Mr. Davis, with his brother, began what later evolved into today's MidAmerican Energy Company. Apollonia was a daughter of the wealthy Weyerhaeuser lumber family.

Although it was rented for many years, nearly all of its original architectural features, both inside and out, remain. The exterior is a simplified Queen Anne style, with wide clapboard siding and decorated front gables in both the house and the porch roof

Most of the interior is original – beautiful staircase, molded woodwork, a fireplace mantel that matches the newel post – but the striking oak floors are new, as is the remodeled kitchen. This is the first time that the “Davis-Heddlesten” home has been open for our meeting. Please join us for our April 19th meeting at 541 23rd Street.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

It's February again, and time to renew your RIPS membership. Please check your mailing label for your expiration date, as a few of you are paid for additional years. We are a 501c3 organization so your dues are tax deductible as are additional donations, as allowable by law. Please use the enclosed renewal form.

We will send you a membership card if you request one. Each month, we email meeting agendas and minutes for those who request them, but we do need your email address for this.

Some of you have taken advantage of an emailed option for our quarterly newsletter – if you prefer not to receive a hard copy, we email you the direct link for each new newsletter as it is posted on our website. The digital posting should be available on or before you would have received your printed newsletter.

If you have any questions, contact Diane Oestreich at 309-788-1845 or email blueskies78900@yahoo.com

HAUBERG CIVIC CENTER

The Hauberg Estate: A Historic Building and Property as a Public Trust

When the children of John and Susanne Denkmann Hauberg gave this property to the city in 1956, the intent was clear: “to make the place available for the citizens of their home town to enjoy in perpetuity.” (wording in a recent memo sent by one of the granddaughters to members of the city council) They decided that such a gift was the best way to preserve the building and gardens and to insure that their interest in public use could be sustained. The city in effect would be functioning as the holder of a “public trust”. Families who set up trusts for their children or grandchildren or some other cause know that their intentions will be carried out. A city needs to treat major donated properties in the same way as a “public trust”.

Many historic buildings across the nation have been designated as National Register sites and/or local historic landmarks. While most of them were built by residents on private properties, they are a public value because their presence is part of the total character of a place. Citizens of a town know such places; they see them regularly; they contribute to the city’s “sense of place.” We all benefit from features that make our city a good place to live. In some fortunate situations such as here in Rock Island an individual family believed so strongly in the connection of their lives and an estate with the community that they gave the property to the city which is the only entity which truly can manage it for the good of the whole public. Such a gift, especially when it is such a great place that it subsequently has been listed on the National Register of Historic Places, is the most generous action a citizen can take for a city.

While only a few cities have been lucky to receive such gifts, many cities would like to have such a house. One good example is Barrington. Lacking such a community house for events, it finally bought a house which had been built in 1898. Considered the best house in the city, it was the home of a successful business leader. Now that the village owns the site, “after many years of waiting, this house once again will become the gathering place for a multitude of activities and celebrations in the center of our village, and we’ll put the ‘WELCOME’ mat out for ourselves.” Does this story sound familiar? The only difference is that Rock Island is fortunate that it did not have to buy such a house.

For over sixty years the Hauberg house and grounds have been available for public use under the name Hauberg Civic Center which in itself conveys its meaning. “Civic” means “of a city” or “of citizens”. Many regular and special events have been held there. It truly has been “ours” – not some kind of nice looking private place beyond some fences or property lines. *For this gift, as for all significant gifts, the wishes of the donors or their offspring should continue to be the key non-negotiable factor.* The council and the city administrators need to follow the wishes of the Haubergs. Since they feel strongly that it should remain under city ownership, if city officials have concerns about how it can be sustained and attract more users, then city officials, park board members, representatives of the Hauberg family and other concerned citizens should have detailed discussions about how to proceed so that both donor and city objectives can be accommodated. To skip that process and put out a ‘for sale’ announcement of so-called “surplus property” is a betrayal of the family’s generosity to and trust in this city.

For those who suggest that the building still could be retained for public use but under private ownership or a long- term lease, I emphasize the difference. If a building is privately owned, in the end the owner will have the major say on what can happen as would be expected because it is a business. It no longer is true public space for which decisions are made by the public sector. For example, in this case involving a caterer, past experience with this company at its other sites suggests that it most likely would want to have exclusive rights for provision of food in the building. It might be more difficult, if not impossible, for users to bring in their own food or use another caterer such as currently is allowed. So, the Hauberg Estate would be run as if it were a regular private business: the public is welcome to come and enjoy the facilities and food, but on the owner’s terms, schedules and prices. In that sense how would it be different from going to Huckleberry’s or any other restaurant in a historic building? Moreover, if the business owner, when he now is facing public pressures, would give reassurances that he will retain its true public access and retain exterior and interior architecture and gardens, what would prevent him from changing policies in the future? Businesses often legally can depart from agreements after a time lapse because of changed circumstances; “in perpetuity” is not as long as the definition suggests. Seemingly firm agreements may not be so firm in the future – as evidenced even by those people who now believe they can go against the Hauberg’s intentions.

In this year when we celebrate the 100th anniversary of the National Park System, and the 175th year of Rock Island, we are reminded that some natural and historic places are worth preserving for their public value and that the public needs to find ways to manage them as PUBLIC properties – and not evaluate them strictly on economic benefit-cost terms. For the Hauberg Civic Center, the city needs to retain the ability to put the “Welcome” mat out for ourselves.

By RIPS member, Dr. Norm Moline, Professor Emeritus of Geography, Augustana College and long time preservationist. He recently completed two terms on the Illinois Historic Sites Advisory Council.

HAUBERG CIVIC CENTER

The story of Hauberg has been written from many perspectives. Hauberg descendants donated it to the city in 1956 for civic use. Over the years, it has served as a meeting site for hundreds of organizations and special events. There are memories of those who visited the grand home, but other memories, equally touching, are those of nearby children who grew up playing in the woods. Local writer David Collins, author of many children's books, spent his early years at 909 23rd Street, an easy walk to the lower Hauberg woods. He shared his memories in a 1988 compilation, "Rock Island, Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow." It's still available for purchase at the RICHS library.

Following are some excerpts from his longer essay:

"Every young person has his own favorite place, his wonderland where imagination springs alive. The woods, sprawling triumphantly between Tenth and Twelfth avenues and 23rd and 25th streets was such a place to the boys and girls of the surrounding neighborhood in the late 1940s. The rolling hillsides and endless paths promised constant thrills and delights, especially on weekend afternoons.

"Fantasy faded a bit in the wintertime, but the woods still held its magnetism. The icy slopes welcomed the sled-pulling "charge of the mite brigade," whispering "try me, if you think you're brave enough" to each urchin wrapped in ten pounds of coat and leggings. A half hour climb up the hill was rewarded with a death-defying two-minute decent with the icy needles pricking over-plump cheeks all the way down".

On one of his visits to the park, the 10 year old met an old man, who turned out to be John Hauberg. They had many long conversations about Indians and history of the area. He and his parents were even invited to visit the Hauberg home. He wrote:

"His was the biggest house I had ever seen, like a museum or something. It was a nice afternoon, but it wasn't quite the same. Everybody smiled and talked a lot, and then when we left, I sensed I had given over my friend to my parents."

Although he feared Mr. Hauberg wouldn't visit with him again, the following Sunday,
"..... I saw the familiar figure. He was smiling as he neared. I was afraid you wouldn't come," I burst out. "Why!"

"I don't know. I just thought you liked my parents better and wouldn't still want to talk to--to some dumb kid."
The old man smiled.

"Oh, your parents are very nice. But you know, David, adults don't always listen so well. You're a good listener."

Once more the woods around us came alive with Indians and pioneer settlers of days gone by. And a young boy learned that life's heroes were not always on the movie screens.

They could be anywhere. Even in a Rock Island woods".

24th Street Entry Detail
Photo by Linda Anderson



RESEARCH YOUR HOME

Research Your House – At Home

Did you know that you can learn much of the history of your house while sitting at your home computer, thanks to the online resources at your library. Learn how to access these resources and, most importantly, techniques to make your research easier and faster. Join RIPS in the Community Room at the downtown Rock Island Library on

Saturday, March 6, at 2 pm.

The actual lesson and demo will last about an hour, but if you bring your charged laptop and your Rock Island, Moline, or Davenport library card, we'll help you get started on your own research. And it's free!

FRIENDS OF HAUBERG

In response to the proposed sale of Hauberg, a new membership organization, Friends of Hauberg Civic Center, has been formed to help support the facility. The easiest way to keep up to date on the rapidly changing organizational status is to watch their Facebook page. "Friends of Hauberg Civic Center." Annual dues are \$20. Larger donations are not being sought at this time, pending non-profit status.

Contact: Friends of Hauberg Civic Center, PO Box 3174, Rock Island, IL 61204-3174.

RIPS Facebook page is also keeping tabs on current news. Be sure to "like" both pages

HAUBERG ESTATE LANDMARK NOMINATION

The Denkmann-Hauberg home at 1300 24th Street was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1972 and although many in Rock Island think of it as a landmark property, it has never been nominated for local landmark status. That is about to change. At our January meeting, RIPS members voted to support a landmark nomination and the paperwork is currently being prepared.

The Denkmann - Hauberg Estate (home, carriage house and landforms) is being nominated under three criteria in the Rock Island Preservation Ordinance:

Criteria 3: Representing the distinguishing characteristics of an architectural...style...which retains a high degree of integrity. The Denkmann-Hauberg house is arguably the most outstanding example of a high style Prairie mansion in Rock Island. The horizontal banding of art glass windows that work their way around the geometric non-traditional shaped house combine with traditional medieval half-timbering elements into a Prairie Style masterpiece. Stylized tulips in various shapes and sizes appear in nearly all the decorative details. The original carriage house compliments the size and architecture of the home.

Criteria 2: Associated with an important person or event in national, state or local history. The contributions of both Susanne (Denkmann) and John Hauberg are legendary. Susanne's civic activities focused on children and the poor including establishment of West End Settlement and Rock Island YWCA. John was instrumental in the designation of Black Hawk State Park and donated his personal collection to create Hauberg Indian Museum. His contributions include recorded oral histories of early pioneers, hundreds of glass negatives, and the founding of Black Hawk Hiking Club.

Criteria 4: Notable work of a master builder, designer, architect or artist. Susanne commissioned Robert C. Spencer, a friend and office mate of Frank Lloyd Wright, to design her home. He was known for blending modern Prairie style with historic elements and including designs elements based on abstract plant forms. Jens Jensen, known as the father of the prairie landscape, was hired to design the 10 acre property to include a terraced garden, open meadow, and native woodland.

The granting of landmark status to the Hauberg Estate by the Rock Island Preservation Commission will require a review process be followed before changes are made to the exteriors of the buildings or the landforms. We trust that landmark status will contribute to the preservation of the magnificent Rock Island treasure, Hauberg Estate.

LANDMARKS ILLINOIS PLANNING EVENT

Landmarks Illinois, the only statewide preservation advocacy organization, is coming to the Quad Cities to ask our help in developing a new five-year plan. Please join preservationists on

Thursday, March 17, at 6:30 pm at St. John's Church (7th Avenue & 45th Street).

There's plenty of parking and easy access from all directions. LI will lead us as we talk about the state of preservation in our area and in Illinois. What is working and what isn't. What are our major challenges? Is it mostly residential or commercial? And, the big question, how can Landmarks Illinois help? What do we need – state historic tax credits? Do we need more local partners?

LI has formal plans for both communications and development. They want to add advocacy and engagement plans.

Watch for a formal agenda on our Facebook page in early March and email reminders to those who request them on their Membership Renewal Application.

HISTORIC RESOURCES PLAN UPDATE

Over the past few months, The Lakota Group has been working on a Historic Resources Plan for Rock Island. A first incomplete draft was recently submitted to the Steering Committee. It is both a sales pitch and a road map for the direction forward for preservation in Rock Island. It presents a snap shot of our current preservation status, including planning documents, landmarks, historic districts and ordinances.

Results of community engagement are noted as are some recommendations for the City to improve its preservation initiatives, including suggested actions for RIPS and rewrites to the preservation ordinance. There will be significant additions to this report available after mid-February, and a new draft should be online then. The Lakota Group is still accepting comments on the draft State of the City Report, which is now available on the City's website at www.rigov.org under the City Clicks heading. RIPS will keep you posted through our Facebook page. The final report will be presented to the Preservation Commission and City Council in upcoming months.