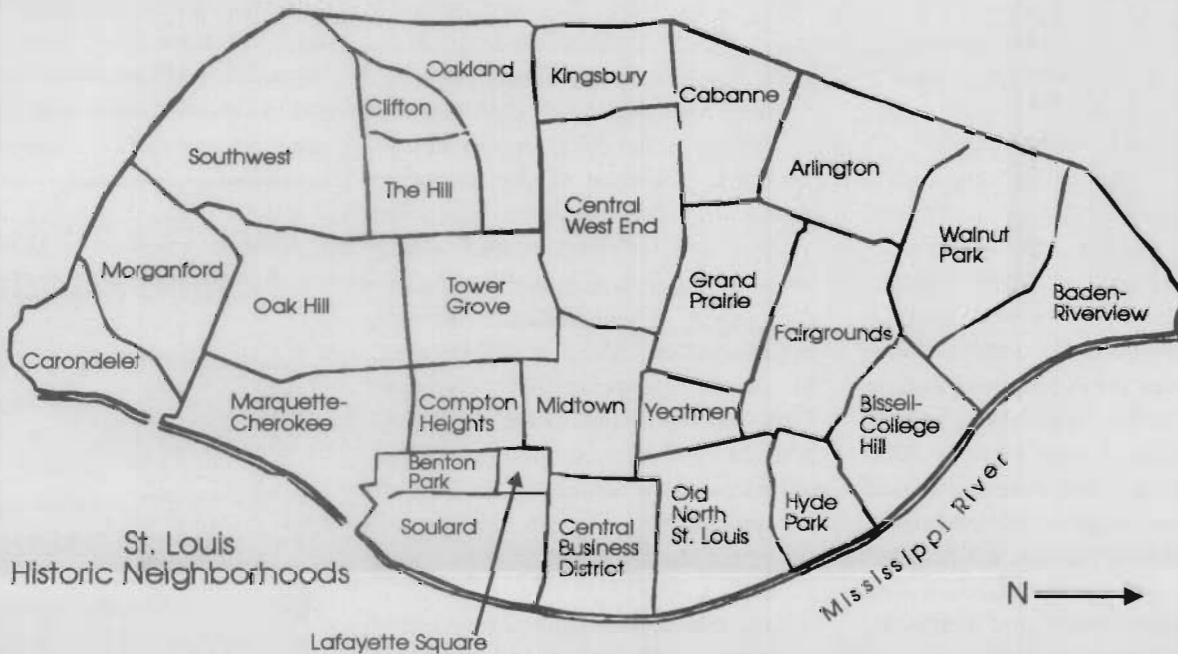


preservation **issues**

NEWS FOR THE PRESERVATION COMMUNITY

MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
 HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROGRAM

★ Vol. 3, No. 5 ★



A Neighborly History of St. Louis

The neighborhoods of St. Louis were autonomous communities, unified by history, customs, and sometimes language. Although brick construction was ubiquitous, the neighborhoods produced distinctive architecture that evidences their unique development.

The city's first expansion outside the original 1764 town was the Soulard neighborhood. Soulard is the product of a wave of immigrants from Germany and Eastern Europe around 1848. They came to work in breweries that sprang up throughout Soulard. The neighborhood fabric exhibits its strong European background in narrow streets; buildings fronting directly on brick sidewalks; and its housing: simple two-story brick rowhouses with Greek Revival or Federal details; and the








"flounder" or half-house: two-story brick with sharply sloped roof (see *Missouri Architecture*, Page 3). These were sited two, even three, to a lot, creating a dense urban environment. Today Soulard houses an interesting mix of blue collar and professional people, who appreciate its proximity to downtown and its varied nightlife.

West of Soulard is Lafayette Square. Around a wooded park is an elegant neighborhood of Second Empire houses, with incised stone facades and ornate mansard roofs. The square began in the late 1850s as a fine residential area remote from the increasingly commercial downtown. The area declined after World War I but today, after restoration of its grand buildings, the square has regained its place as an important residential area and is home to urban profes-

sionals and young families.

Unprecedented growth in the 19th century forced rapid expansion westward. With the railroad, it was now (See *ST. LOUIS*, Page 6)

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September/October 1993

St. Louis Accepts the Challenge

Deputy
State
Historic
Preservation
Officer

The focus of this edition of *Preservation Issues* is St. Louis – the location of the 47th national preservation conference of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. This year's conference theme, "The Challenge of Livable Communities: Revitalizing Urban Environments through Historic Preservation," is a natural for St. Louis. St. Louis is an eminently livable community with a rich and diverse heritage, a heritage reflected in the wealth of historic properties remaining – including 161 listings in the National Register of Historic Places, a total of over 5000 individual properties. Preservation of many of those individual landmarks and historic districts has contributed directly to the preservation of the unique characteristics that make St. Louis a special place to live.

The history and development of St. Louis has been shaped by its location on the Mississippi River. Before the establishment of the city as a French trading post in 1764, the cultural landscape of St. Louis had been shaped by the native Mississippian culture, whose impressive burial mounds dominated the river valley. Such mounds were still intact in the 19th century, spurring the nickname "Mound City." From its modest beginnings as a trading post, St. Louis gradually grew to a thriving center of transportation and commerce. Through its portals, later christened the "Gateway to the West," came German, Irish, and countless other European immigrants that swelled the city's population. The traditions and contributions of those settlers created a city of diverse architecture, character, and culture. That city is alive today in the public monuments, commercial buildings,

and neighborhoods of St. Louis.

Numerous St. Louis landmarks provide key links to the city's past as well as prominent tourist attractions – ranging from the 1839 Old Courthouse, location of the Dred Scott decision, to Eero Saarinen's symbolic Gateway Arch (designed in 1948, built between 1958-65), to the Scott Joplin House, one-time residence of the legendary ragtime pianist/composer. Still other rehabilitated buildings provide strong economic as well as cultural anchors – such as the Anheuser-Busch Brewery, established ca 1852 and still brewing, St. Louis Union Station, Theodore Link's ca 1891 Romanesque design reborn ca 1985 for hotel/commercial/retail use, and the fabulous Fox Theatre, its opulent Near Eastern splendor restored for the benefit of contemporary audiences.

Greenspace is a vital component of any livable community, and St. Louis is home to three, distinct historic parks and gardens – Forest Park, site of the 1904 World's Fair, Tower Grove Park, a Victorian walking park dotted with fanciful gazebos and bandstands, and the Missouri Botanical Garden, Henry Shaw's country estate that is today renowned internationally for its botanical gardens and research programs.

But undoubtedly the feature contributing the most to the livability of St. Louis is its neighborhoods. From the elite private places of Portland and Westmoreland Places to the largely German working class neighborhoods of Soulard and Hyde Park to the African-American enclave known as the Ville, each neighborhood reflects a unique history and architectural character. Many of these neighborhoods experienced a spurt of rehabilitation in the 1970s and 1980s fueled by federal tax incentives for rehabilitation. This influ-

sion of private investment coupled with city-sponsored neighborhood initiatives created a virtual urban renaissance, providing graphic demonstration of the link between historic preservation and urban revitalization.

For these and many other reasons beyond the scope of this brief introduction, we believe St. Louis is an ideal laboratory for a conference focusing on the topic of livable communities. We welcome the participation of conference attendees and look forward to stimulating discussions on the timely issues of urban revitalization and historic preservation. – *Claire Blackwell*

New Life for the Old Loretto Academy

Investment
Tax
Credits

Constructed in 1908-09 for the Sisters of Loretto, the academy, located in the Lafayette Square

Historic District, enjoyed almost 80 years of continuous and productive use. Until 1952, the building functioned as the Loretto College and Academy, a Catholic high school for girls. From 1952, the academy served first as a day care center and subsequently as a home for retired sisters. In 1988, with only seven sisters remaining, the Loretto Academy closed its doors.

Thanks to the Intercommunity Housing Association, an organization of several religious women's groups, including the Sisters of Loretto, the academy will now be home to 19 low-income families.

The adaptive use of the academy (school-to-apartment conversion) was carefully worked out by developer Ken Nuernberger and Jeffrey Brambila, a St. Louis architect. Because the academy was an Investment Tax Credit (ITC) project, they were responsible for providing functional living units and also for maintaining the architectural character of the historic building.

(See LORETTO, Page 6)

The National Trust's Financial Assistance Programs

The National Trust for Historic Preservation plays many roles as the leading advocate and educator on behalf of historic preservation, a clearinghouse for information on preservation practice, curator of one of the finest collections of historic American homes, and a proponent of federal, state, and local legislation protecting our architectural, cultural, and maritime heritage.

The National Trust, through its financial assistance programs, plays yet another role. It demonstrates that preserving our heritage improves the quality of life in American communities. The National Trust's four grant and loan programs - The National Preservation Loan Fund, Inner-City Ventures Fund, Critical Issues Fund and Preservation Services Fund - have assisted thousands of innovative preservation

projects that protect the continuity, diversity, and beauty of our communities.

The National Preservation Loan Fund provides below-market rate loans to nonprofit organizations and public agencies to help preserve properties listed in or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. Funds may be used to create or expand local and statewide preservation revolving funds, for site acquisition, or rehabilitation work.

The Inner-City Ventures Fund provides matching grants and low-interest loans to nonprofit community organizations to help revitalize older, historic neighborhoods for the benefit of low- and moderate-income residents. Funds may be used for acquisition, rehabilitation, and related capital costs for projects that offer housing, neighborhood services, and commercial opportunities for area residents.

The Critical Issues Fund fosters innovative research and problem solving to effect policy change at the local, state and national levels. The Critical Issues Fund supports the development and implementation of the National Trust's public policy agenda by providing funds, alone or in partnership with other funding sources, for policy-oriented research projects.

The Preservation Services Fund provides matching grants to nonprofit organizations, universities and public agencies to initiate preservation projects. Funds may be used to support consultants with professional expertise in such areas as architecture, law, planning, economics, and graphic design; conferences that address subjects of particular interest to historic preservation; and curriculum development in preservation directed at select audiences. - *Ben Handy*

For additional information on these programs, contact Ben Handy of the National Trust Midwest Regional Office, 53 West Jackson Blvd., Suite 1135, Chicago, IL 60604, telephone (312) 939-5547.

MISSOURI

Historic Architecture

Flounder Houses ca 1830-80

Characteristics:

- The single-sloped roof is the main defining feature of this single-bay house.
- One room wide and one or two rooms deep are the most frequently found plans. One-and-one-half or two-and-one-half story versions are the most common height. The two-and-one-half story version will normally consist of a cellar, two full stories, and a loft.
- Flounders most often appear in urban areas, in working or middle class neighborhoods, on narrow lots with the gable end facing the street or alley. They are also found "attached" to more pretentious houses as a rear "ell" or "back house."
- The entry is most commonly found to the side along the lowest edge of the roof and is covered by a gallery porch. The porch roof is often a continuation of the building's roofline.
- Known free-standing examples of the house type are all located in St. Louis.
- The windows frequently diminish in height with each additional story.
- Although normally constructed of red brick, examples once existed in St. Louis that were constructed with stone, frame, and half-timbered bearing walls.

This two-and-one-half story flounder at 2306 Hickory St., St. Louis, is a free-standing example showing vestiges of a gallery porch.



PHOTO: ILENE FETLOWITZ

Missouri Architects and Builders

William B. Ittner

William Butts Ittner was born in St. Louis in 1864, the first child of Anthony and Mary Butts Ittner. Anthony, who had left school at age nine to work in a lead factory and then as a bricklayer, established Ittner Bros. brick company with his brother Conrad in 1859. In 1876, the company built an extensive new plant. Anthony Ittner was elected to the St. Louis City Council in 1867; after several terms in the state legislature, he was elected to Congress in 1877.

Throughout his political career, Ittner worked to establish trade schools for American young men. His son William graduated in 1884 with the first class granted diplomas by Washington University's Manual Training School, an exemplary institution which attracted national attention. Ittner graduated in Architecture from Cornell University, then traveled in Europe before returning to St. Louis where he married Lottie Crane Allen and entered Eames & Young's office. From 1889 to about 1891, he practiced alone before entering brief partnerships, first with William Foster and then with Link & Rosenheim. Ittner served as President of the St. Louis Chapter of the American Institute of Architects from 1893-95.

A new charter passed in 1897 called for the non-partisan election of St. Louis School Board members and the creation of a new office of commissioner with an elected term of four years. In June of 1897, William B. Ittner became the first Commissioner of St. Louis Public Schools. By 1910, when Ittner resigned to become consulting Architect to the Board (a position that allowed him to pursue private practice), his Tudor and Georgian Revival St. Louis school buildings were nationally acclaimed for their flexible, functional design, and artistic excellence. He continued as "consulting ar-

chitect" to the board until October, 1914. The first of Ittner's St. Louis designs to be built was Eliot School (1898-99); the last was Bryan Mullanphy (1914-15).

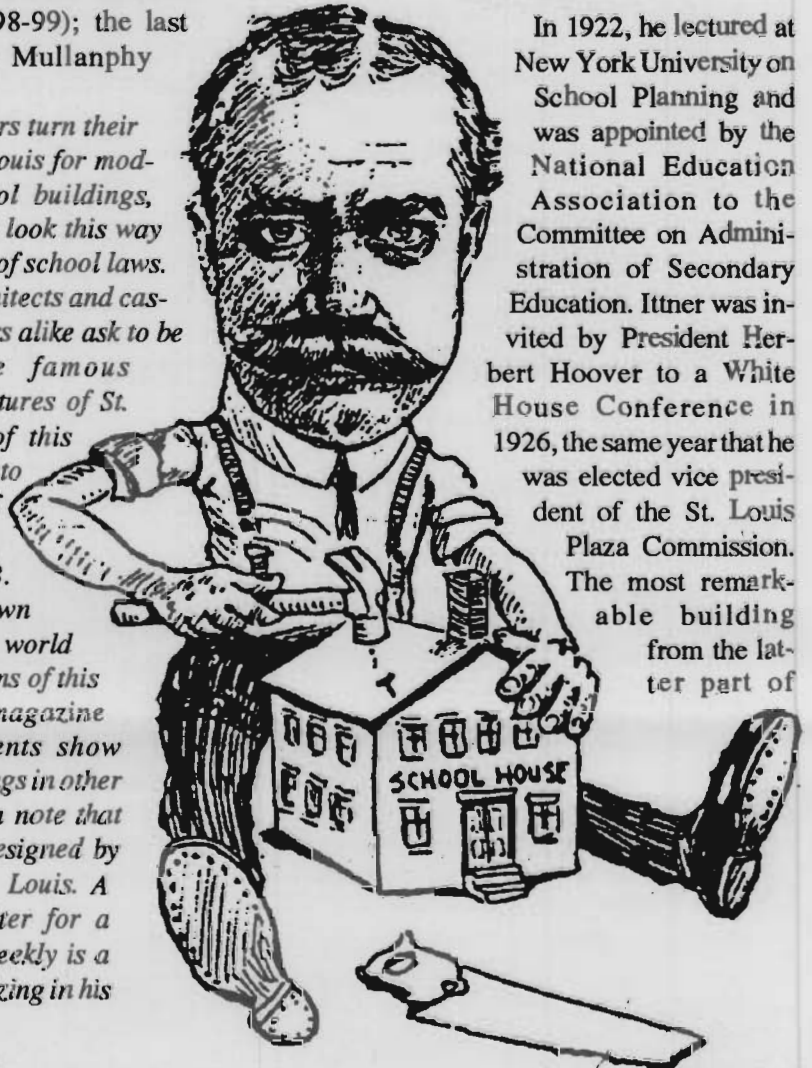
"Educators turn their eyes to St. Louis for models of school buildings, even as they look this way for patterns of school laws. Visiting architects and casual sightseers alike ask to be shown the famous school structures of St. Louis. All of this fame is due to the genius of one man, William B. Ittner, known all over the world for his designs of this kind. The magazine advertisements show great buildings in other cities, with a note that they were designed by Ittner of St. Louis. A popular writer for a New York weekly is a trifle patronizing in his views of St.

Louis as a whole, but he is unable to find words to tell of the beauty and fitness of the Soldan High School, one of Mr. Ittner's latest triumphs." - Reedy's Mirror, December, 1914

In addition to the 50 school buildings in St. Louis, Ittner's firm produced hundreds of school buildings in over 25 other states. Ittner and his family moved in 1908 to the house he designed at 5553 Bartmer, which is still in existence. Other notable buildings by Ittner in St. Louis include the 1916 Missouri

Athletic Club (designed with G.F.A. Brueggeman) and the 1921 Scottish Rite Cathedral.

In 1922, he lectured at New York University on School Planning and was appointed by the National Education Association to the Committee on Administration of Secondary Education. Ittner was invited by President Herbert Hoover to a White House Conference in 1926, the same year that he was elected vice president of the St. Louis Plaza Commission. The most remarkable building from the latter part of



William B. Ittner, Architect, Commissioner of School Buildings. From "St. Louisans As We See 'Em" ca 1904.

Ittner's career is the epitome of St. Louis Art Deco - the 1929 Continental Building in Midtown.

William B. Ittner died in 1936 but his name lives on in St. Louis architecture through the firms of William B. Ittner, Inc. and Ittner & Bowersox, Inc., the latter founded by his grandson, H. Curtis Ittner in 1972. - Carolyn Hewes Toft and Cynthia H. Longwisch, *Landmark Association of St. Louis, Inc.*

St. Louis' Legacy of Historic Schools

The relative value of the school building itself as a symbol of quality education and community culture has varied widely in the 150-year-plus history of St. Louis public schools. The golden age of exemplary school buildings might be dated from 1880 to 1930. Most of these buildings are still standing; most are still in use. Landmarks Association undertook a two-phase survey partially funded by the Missouri Department of Natural Resources. Extant St. Louis school buildings documented as a result of the survey range from the 1868 Clinton and Lyon Schools (designers unknown) up to the functional late-1930s designs of George W. Sanger. In between, a number of the 1870s schools of Frederick Raeder and the 1880s and 1890s designs of the Kirchner brothers still stand; 47 William B. Ittner schools remain in St. Louis, as well as many by his able successor, Rockwell M. Milligan.

In an effort to help preserve this legacy of design, the Board of Directors of Landmarks Association and the American Institute of Architects, St. Louis in 1989 established a committee to review proposals to alter and add to St. Louis public school buildings. The committee encourages such plans to respect and preserve the architecture of the pre-1940 school buildings. In this important ongoing cooperative effort, the committee also hopes to eventually address questions of adaptive reuse for schools that are being closed. — *Toft and Longwisch*



PHOTO ROBERT C. PETTUS

Soldan High School, located in the Visitation Park Certified Local Historic District, is a Jacobethan variegated red brick school designed in 1908 by William B. Ittner. Designed at the height of Ittner's tenure as school board architect, the modified E-plan school was named after Superintendent of St. Louis Public Schools Louis Soldan (1842-1908). A neighborhood anchor, Soldan features extensive use of limestone trim and three copper-clad cupolas; it is generally considered one of Ittner's best designs.



PHOTO ROBERT C. PETTUS

Sumner High School, Ittner's 1908 Georgian Revival red brick school is located in the Ville Local Historic District and was individually listed in the National Register in 1988. Attracting teachers unusually well-qualified to teach at the high school level, Sumner enjoyed a fine reputation for both quality education and a full range of extracurricular activities. Noted graduates include activist Dick Gregory, opera singers Grace Bumbry and Robert McFerrin (the first African-American to sing at the Metropolitan Opera), rock stars Chuck Berry and Tina Turner, and tennis great Arthur Ashe.

Ittner's final St. Louis public school was designed in 1914. Bryan Mullanphy School (below), now located in the Shaw Certified Local Historic District, features much stone detailing as well as exceptional brickwork. Originally an elementary school, the building now faces new educational

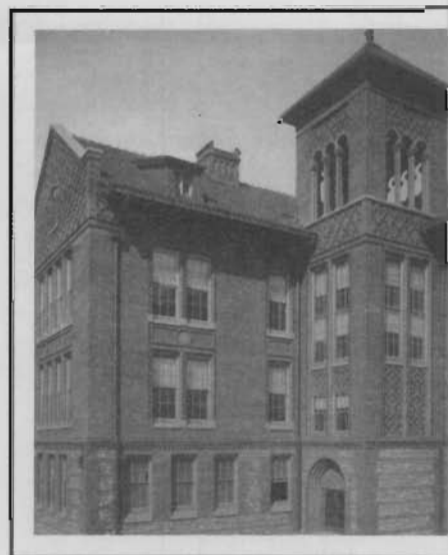


PHOTO COURTESY WILLIAM B. ITTNER, INC.

horizons as the Mullanphy-Botanical Garden Investigative Learning Center to open in September, 1993. Near the Missouri Botanical Garden, the school is ideally situated for its intended use as a horticultural and science learning center. The school originally boasted a wonderful formal garden complete with fountain, visible in the photo; long since lost, this formal landscape will be recreated with the help of the Botanical Garden.

William B. Ittner's Jacobethan 1905 Henry School (named for American patriot Patrick Henry) is highly regarded as a superb example of the brickmason's art. Raised diapering highlights the gables, the cornice and the towers. In an exuberance of detail, brick wreaths appear between first- and second-story windows, basketweave patterning appears on the towers and windows feature pressed-brick surrounds. Like nearly all of Ittner's 47 extant St. Louis public schools, Henry School remains in operation as an elementary school.



PHOTO ROBERT C. PETTUS

(ST. LOUIS, from Page 1)

possible as well as desirable for the upper and middle class to live some distance from their work. New developments provided the health benefits of the country with city convenience.

The Central West End neighborhood contained the earliest suburban developments: elegant private streets, well-landscaped and enclosed by ornate gates. Constructed between 1890 and 1920, large houses on open lots were finely crafted in exceptional materials, following the popular Revival styles of the day by such prominent St. Louis architects as George I. Barnett and Theodore Link. The middle class achieved some of the same distinction with modest brick versions on surrounding blocks.

The city's expansion affected adjoining towns as well. The earliest of these was Carondelet, founded by French from Cahokia and Kaskaskia, and the only St. Louis neighborhood where some remnants of original settle-

(LORETTO, from Page 2)

The exterior of the building, a melding of English Tudor and Adamesque design and detailing, was closely rehabilitated to its original appearance. Notable features include the monumental entry portico with Ionic order columns, slate roof, copper domes, and nine-lite sash.

The interior was adapted for contemporary living, including new kitchens and bathrooms. At the same time, portions of the historic cruciform plan, including articulated wall surfaces and hardwood features (i.e., stair railings, fireplace mantels, etc.) were incorporated into the new design. Rehabilitated intact is the two-story chapel at the rear of the building.

The Loretto Academy is an excellent example of the federal ITC program for historic buildings at work. It also earned the investors an Urban Development Award for historic preservation and urban design from the St. Louis Community Development Agency. — *Lance Carlson*

ment building may remain, hidden under centuries of remodelling. Like St. Louis, Carondelet grew with German immigration in the 1849s as the small rubble stone houses from this period evidence. Annexed by the city in 1870 despite bitter protest, Carondelet has the widest range of architectural periods and styles, from early Federal through Greek Revival, Queen Anne, Gothic Revival, and late Victorian houses.

Shaw Neighborhood is the creation of Henry Shaw, who also provided the city with Tower Grove Park and the Botanical Gardens, an internationally recognized botanical research facility. The neighborhood was intended to complement both, and is comprised primarily of one- and two-family houses and flats with large windows; their restrained decoration is carried predominantly on cornice and porch.

The Ville began as Elleardsville in 1870. Its small African-American population was increased by segregation elsewhere in the city, and augmented early in this century by immigrants from the South. The Ville remains a closely-knit community today, possessing many sites important in black history. The typical housing type

in the Ville is a southern vernacular design — a frame shotgun house under hipped or gable roof.

A similarly distinct neighborhood is the Hill, in southwest St. Louis. It was largely rural until 1880, when large clay deposits here began to supply the city's demand for terra cotta and brick. Italian immigrants gradually replaced earlier workers and created this self-contained community nearby, with its own groceries, restaurants, and other services. Houses on the Hill are frame or brick single-family bungalows, usually set on a high raised basement. Today, many are still owned by families of the original builder, and the Hill is famous for its Italian restaurants and bakeries.

St. Louis has 28 distinct neighborhoods. Visitors should take the opportunity to explore them and experience their unique character and distinctive architecture. Whether home to descendants of its original residents, or to a new group of city "immigrants," the neighborhoods give life and vitality to the city of St. Louis. — *Jan Cameron*

Jan Cameron is an architectural historian with the St. Louis Community Development Agency's Division of Heritage and Urban Design.



The Loretto Academy, at 3407 Lafayette Ave. in St. Louis. Once a Catholic high school for girls, the building now houses 19 low-income families.

PHOTO: EILEY HAMILTON



Above, streetscape, east side of Shaw Place ca 1898, photographer unknown. (Courtesy of Missouri Botanical Gardens Archives)

Right, Soulard houses, 1818-1820 S. 8th St., free-standing, two-story brick, two-family homes. Note typical symmetry of plan and wrought iron work on common balcony.

" . . . neighborhoods give life and vitality to the city of St. Louis." - Jan Cameron



PHOTO S.J. RAICHE

PHOTO S.J. RAICHE



Left, Park Ave., overlooking the north side of Lafayette Park. View shows various structures including adaptations of the prevalent townhouse and Romanesque styles.

Right, William T. Harris Row, S. 18th St., near the northeast boundary of Lafayette Square. The row demonstrates a high degree of design continuity and is an adaptation of the townhouses prevalent on the perimeter of Lafayette Park.



PHOTO S.J. RAICHE

PHOTO CYNTHIA LONGWISCH



Left, east side of Benton Place in the Lafayette Square Historic District. A row of stone-front, French Second Empire townhouses are sited on a historic brick paved street.

1994 CAP Grants

The National Institute for the Conservation of Cultural Property (NIC) announces the availability of grants for the Conservation Assessment Program (CAP), contingent on Congressional appropriations for Fiscal Year 1994. Application materials will be mailed to prospective applicants the second week of October 1993; application deadline is Dec. 3, 1993.

Interested organizations are advised to submit their names to the National Institute for the Conservation of Cultural Property before Sept. 30, 1993, by calling Gretchen Wolf at (202) 625-1495. CAP grants are awarded to eligible institutions on a non-competitive, first-come, first-served basis.

CAP provides funds for an independent, professional conservation assessment of a museum's collections and environmental conditions and, where appropriate, historic structures. The assessor's resulting report will identify conservation priorities to assist the museum in developing a long-term plan for collections care and management.

CAP grants are one-time awards that support a two-day site visit by a conservation professional. For museums located in historic structures, the grant will also support a two-day site visit by an architectural assessor.

preservation issues

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Historic Preservation Program
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Dates to Remember

Route 66 Motor Tour, Sept. 18-19. Annual cross-state motor tour sponsored by the Route 66 Association of Missouri. Call Jim Powell for details at (314) 982-5500.

National Trust for Historic Preservation annual conference, "The Challenge of Livable Communities: Revitalizing Urban Environments Through Historic Preservation," St. Louis, Sept. 29-Oct. 3. For registration information call (800) 944-6847.

Rocky Ridge Day, Oct. 16. Mansfield, at National Historic Landmark, Laura Ingalls Wilder/Rose Wilder Lane Home and Museum. Guest authors Roger MacBride and William Anderson. For more information, call (417) 924-3626.

Historic Hotel for Sale

The Commercial Hotel in Boonville was built ca 1820s-1890s, and a steady evolution of architectural styles is evident in the red brick building. Located in a charming Missouri River town, the hotel once served as a tavern and inn for Santa Fe Trail travelers.

Just 25 minutes west of Columbia, this unique National Register-listed 7,400-square-foot property offers a variety of possible uses, such as a bed and breakfast or mixed residential and commercial use. May be eligible for a 20 percent federal tax credit. Protective covenants attached to deed. Price: \$65,000.

Contact Missouri Historic Preservation Revolving Fund Coordinator Jane Beetern at (314) 751-5373 for more information.



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