



# PRESERVATION AND CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION

Box 2555, Station A, Champaign, Illinois 61825

"The Past Has A Future"

Volume 10

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Number 6

## FOCUS ON: WILLIAM L. SPRINGER FEDERAL BUILDING

In response to Congressional legislation, a site, located at the northwest corner of Church and Randolph Streets in Champaign, Illinois was purchased for the sum of \$27,000 in 1902 for the construction of a future post office. During the following year, drawings were prepared in the office of James Knox Taylor, supervising architect of the U.S. Treasury for the new facility. The final selected design was in the Second Renaissance Revival style. This style, the result of a reaction against High Victorian architecture, had been developed in the office of McKim, Meade and White in the late nineteenth century. Its aesthetics emphasized simplicity and order. The choice of this style for the Post Office in Champaign probably was influenced by a desire to give the building an imposing presence reflecting the authority of the Federal government.

Construction began in October of 1904. The contractor was George Weber, and the masonry work was from the Excelsior Terra Cotta Company. Two and one-half months later, exterior construction was completed. After interior improvements, the building was ready for occupancy as a U.S. Post Office.

Between the years 1905 and 1927 several remodelings took place in an attempt to keep the Post Office modern and up-to-date. In an effort to meet the increasing volume of mail, the workroom and mailing vestibule were expanded in 1928.

By 1936, the postal needs had once again outgrown the facility. In order to accommodate this need, the 1928 addition was demolished, and a new extension to the original structure was constructed. The architect for this work was L.A. Simon. The contractor was A.C. Smith, the metal work was by the Durin Iron Company and the Fiat Metal Manufacturing Company both from Chicago.

During the following three decades, the Post Office witnessed very little change, except for minor maintenance and repair.

In 1966, with the conversion of the Post Office to a Federal Building, a major remodel-



ing was undertaken. This conversion entailed installing new floor coverings, new partitions, and a new suspended acoustical tile ceiling. The following two decades witnessed several alterations including: the introduction of aluminum windows and doors; the application of cement slurry on parapet walls; the installation of an elevator; a new gravel roof; and the removal of skylights.

An Act of Congress in 1979 renamed the Federal Building the William L. Springer Federal Building. William L. Springer was the Republican Congressman from the Illinois 21st Congressional District from 1950 to 1972. The building was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1976.

### Construction Chronology

- 1902 - Site is purchased at Randolph and Church Streets.
- 1903 - Architectural drawings are prepared in the office of James Knox Taylor, Supervising Architect of the U.S. Treasury.
- 1904 - October  
Construction is begun.  
Contractor: George Weber  
Masonry: Excelsior Terra Cotta Co.

December

Construction is completed on the exterior.

1905 - July - Interior is completed.

1916 - The interior is remodeled.

1928 - A new addition, measuring 73'10" x 35'9", expanding both the workroom and the mailing vestibule is constructed.

1936 - The 1928 addition is demolished to make way for a larger, more compatible structure. Additionally, the interior is remodeled and a vault is added.

Architect: L.A. Simon

Contractor: A.C. Smith

Ironwork: Dufin Iron Company,  
Chicago

Miscellaneous Metal Work: Fiat Metal  
Manufacturing Company, Chicago

**1991 marks PACA's ten year anniversary! The Board of Directors is planning some exciting activities to help celebrate this anniversary. Watch for details in next year's newsletters.**

- 1966 - The building is converted into a Federal Office Building and a major interior remodeling is undertaken.
- 1972 - The building is reroofed and a suspended acoustical ceiling is installed.
- 1979 - Building is renamed for William L. Springer.
  - A new mechanical system is installed and the ceiling is insulated.
- 1980 - The roof was replaced, per drawings and specifications.
- 1981 - The mechanical system is upgraded, elevators are installed, wood windows are replaced with aluminum sash, and new entrance doors are installed.
- 1983 - The entire building is repainted.
- 1984 - New task lighting is installed in the open office space on the first floor and the carpeting is replaced.
- 1991 - Building is deeded to the Champaign Park District for use as a Cultural Arts Center.

The above article was taken from the *Historic Structures Report for the Federal Building, Champaign, Illinois, 1986*.

#### SCOTT HOUSE MOVE

Built in the 1870's from lumber milled on site, the Scott House ranks as one of rural Champaign County's oldest surviving homes. Its Italianate exterior has survived unchanged with the original roof brackets, siding attached with cut nails and "antique" window glass. With walnut millwork, plaster ceiling medallions, cast iron mantlepieces and gas lighting from an on-site carbide pit, this residence is from an era of rural living that provided a prosperous, elegant lifestyle earned with long hours of farm work on land still being cleared by horses and oxen.

Recognizing the significance of buildings such as the Scott House to the history of our area, PACA conducted a search for someone to move the house when it became threatened with demolition. A feature article in the *News Gazette* attracted numerous inquiries and after several open houses, one couple accepted the challenge. On November 15, Kevin and Kelly Cook began the formidable task of restoration by hiring Garrelt's House Movers to relocate their new home from its original location north of Seymour to an abandoned homestead site south of Mahomet.

PACA thanks Bill and Dorothy Scott for their patience and cooperation in allowing the relocation of an architecturally and historically important structure, when demolition would have been an easier approach and wishes the Cooks success in preserving one of the few remaining Italianate farmhouses for future generations.

#### ORPHEUM PRESERVATION PROJECT

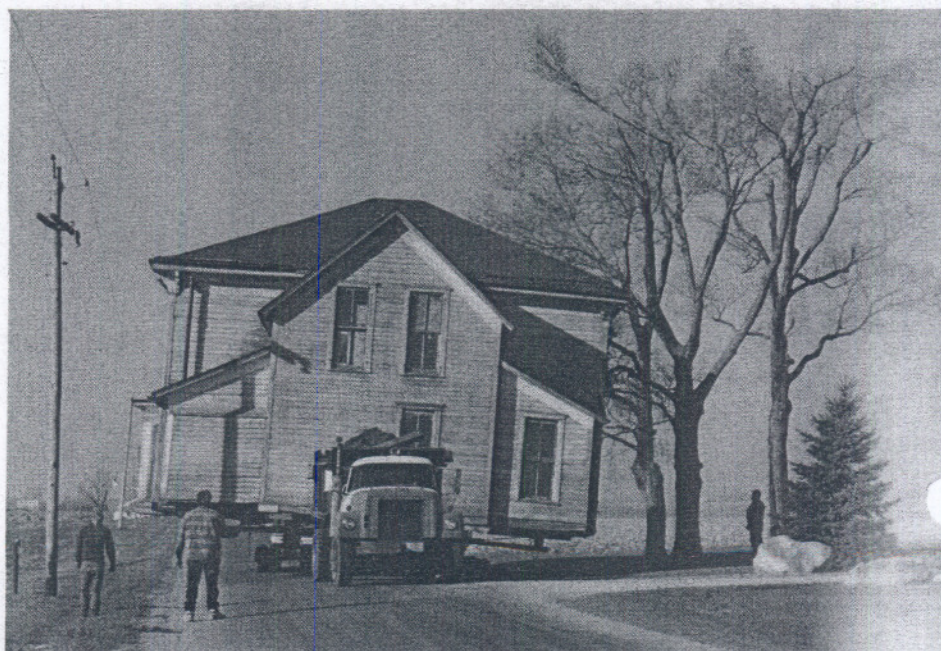
In late October the Orpheum Committee sponsored a unique, rather off-beat, fund raising event, "Pet Pictures with Santa." For two afternoons, volunteers shepherded dogs, cats, and even guinea pigs, to have their pictures taken with Santa Claus. The event raised funds for the winterization effort and generated good publicity for the Orpheum Project. Orpheum volunteers also staffed a session of WILL's fund raising telethon. PACA thanks all of the *patient* volunteers!

The Illinois Historic Sites Advisory Committee formally recognized the architectural and historical significance of the Orpheum Theatre on December 7 when it approved the Orpheum's National Register of Historic Places nomination. The nomination will now be forwarded to the Department of the Interior for additional review, and if accepted, the theatre will be placed on the National Register. Listing on the National Register underscores the importance of this building to the community and should facilitate fund raising efforts, especially from philanthropic corporations and foundations. **Listing does not, however, prevent demolition.**

On December 18, the Champaign City Council ratified a contract with PACA to winterize the Orpheum Theatre. This work can now begin. Under the terms of the agreement, PACA must develop a preliminary report on the future rehabilitation of the Orpheum Theatre by May 1, 1991, and a project plan by August 30. The Committee is working with the East Central Illinois Partnership for Excellence in Education (ECIPEE) and the Champaign-Urbana Junior League to more fully

develop the idea of a children's museum. This work must now begin in earnest and PACA is looking for volunteers to help formulate marketing and business plans. If you know of someone who might be interested in helping plan the Champaign-Urbana Children's Museum, please let us know.

- Orpheum V.I.P.'s
- Clare Brown
  - Susan Appel
  - Jeff Carper
  - Gisele Atterberry
  - Sue Ochs
  - Bill French
  - Sharol Hanson
  - Perry Morris
  - Robert Ek
  - Kathleen Jones
  - Marianna Murphy
  - Laird Thompson
  - Angus & Jenny Hepburn
  - Ed Probst
  - Sheila West
  - John Garvey
  - David Hough
  - Jim Flavin
  - Bruce Komadina
  - Joy Hagerman
  - Donald Barnhart
  - Rick Ewing
  - Athan Chilton
  - Marsha Daniels
  - Laura Nisenson
  - Charles Butzow
  - Joe Eichman
  - Tom West
  - Sharon Gunason
  - Marsha Stephens



## LOCAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION ORDINANCES

Locally enacted and enforced ordinances are the most effective means of preserving cultural landmarks. Because they are community enacted and enforced, local ordinances can address the specific preservation needs of a city, town, or county. A typical local ordinance empowers a municipal or county government to create a historic preservation commission, establish local historic districts and landmarks, review rehabilitation projects, and delay or deny proposed demolition permits.

Effective ordinances are developed as a result of local input and consensus and will vary in content from community to community. However, a strong preservation ordinance will include a statement of purpose, provide for the establishment of a review commission, outline a process for designating local landmarks and/or historic districts, and include a process for reviewing actions affecting designated places.

Many communities have ordinances establishing local incentive programs that assist owners of designated properties. Such programs include low-interest loans, grants, and easements. Members of the review commission also serve as technical advisors and are available to assist property owners in ensuring proper rehabilitation techniques.

When preservation ordinances are certified by the State Historic Preservation Offices (IPO), local governments may participate in state and federal incentive programs. Properties located in designated historic districts can qualify for the twenty percent income tax credit. Certification also extends the Property Tax Assessment Freeze benefit to local landmarks and residences within local historic districts.

### Case Study

More than sixty Illinois communities have some type of preservation ordinance. Those ordinances range in scope from establishing landmark commissions with purely educational missions to establishing stringent guidelines governing the rehabilitation or demolition of locally designated landmarks.

The City of Rock Island's preservation ordinance is typical of a strong ordinance. It establishes the Rock Island Preservation Commission, defines the criteria for evaluating properties for local designation, and provides a process for the review of actions affecting locally designated properties. The city has completed a comprehensive survey of the community, identifying potential landmarks and districts. Two neighborhoods have local historic district designation, while several individual properties enjoy landmark status. The ordinance's certification by the National Park Service and the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency extends rehabilitation tax incentives to local properties. The city has also established local facade rehabilitation grants to encourage the reuse of its historic structures.

## CERTIFIED LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

Your local government's role in historic preservation may be greater than you think. The Certified Local Government Program was established by the National Historic Preservation Act Amendments of 1980 to integrate local preservation programs into the existing federal/state preservation partnership. It recognizes municipalities and counties that have local historic preservation programs. To become certified, a local government must have a historic preservation ordinance, establish a preservation review commission, have an active local survey program to identify historic resources and provide for public participation. Illinois has fifteen Certified Local Governments, including one county.

Certified Local Governments play an active role in the National Register of Historic Places review process. All nominations for places within the jurisdiction of a Certified Local Government are first submitted to the local review commission and the chief elected official for their review and comment. Nominations rejected at the local level cannot move forward in the review process without an appeal to the Preservation Services Division.

Certified Local Governments are also eligible for matching grant funds to assist in the implementation of their local preservation pro-

gram. At least ten percent of the federal Historic Preservation Fund is set aside specifically for Certified Local Governments. The funds can be used for a variety of projects, including surveys, preservation plans, staff support, and public education.

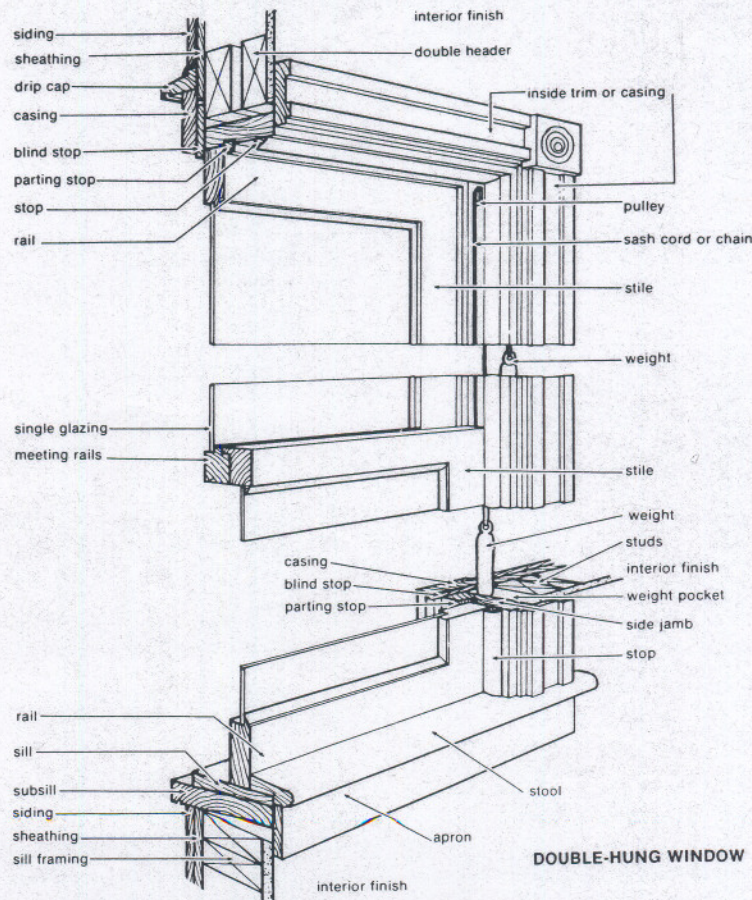
### Case Study

In 1983 Bloomington adopted a comprehensive historic preservation ordinance, the city's first step toward its designation two years later as a Certified Local Government. A preservation commission was established with responsibility for identifying, designating, and protecting local landmarks.

Bloomington became Illinois' sixth Certified Local Government in 1985. Since then, Bloomington has used Certified Local Government funding to strengthen its local program. CLG funds supported a five-year preservation plan developed in 1986 that provided goals and objectives for the city's preservation program. Bloomington has also used the funds to implement its survey of historic structures. The number of buildings surveyed and documented has increased dramatically, and one historic district (East Grove Street) was identified and recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

### The Lumber Room

#### WINDOW NOMENCLATURE



DOUBLE-HUNG WINDOW

#### **New & Renewing Members**

Mr. & Mrs. Lachlan Blair  
Mr. & Mrs. L. E. Doyle  
John Mitchell  
Judy Douglas  
Mrs. John J. Dwyer  
James Russell Vaky  
Sheila McCarthy  
Carol Marlin  
Mr. & Mrs. Gary Henigman  
James Dobrovolny  
Rachel Foster  
Raeann Dossett  
Ruth H. Fliegel  
Donald Burnhart  
Mr. & Mrs. George A. Miley  
Rebecca Haigh  
Chris & Melanie Hill  
Dusty Cory  
Dr. Norah McClintock Grady  
Barb & Jeff Kent

#### **Volunteers in Preservation**

Bob Swisher  
Hank Kaczmariski  
Rex Kummer  
Dick Elkorn  
Perry Steiner  
David Spears  
Sheila McCarthy  
Sharon Gunason  
Dick Davis  
Chris Stohr  
Steve Rameriz  
Lachlan Blair

#### **Salvage Donations**

University of Illinois  
Mr. & Mrs. Tim Larsen  
Ms. Leslie Nay  
Mr. Chris Miller  
Bob & Hilliary Holbrook  
Allan Eckel

#### **T-SHIRTS, T-SHIRTS, T-SHIRTS**

Christmas is coming and PACA is ready! Both PACA T-shirts and Orpheum Preservation Project T-shirts are available in a variety of sizes. PACA shirts are light brown with "PACA" resting on a squat Doric column and supporting the Greek Revival Cottage; short-sleeved shirts \$8.00. The Orpheum Preservation Project logo has been silk-screened onto a variety of different colored T-shirts. The shirts are available in both long- and short-sleeves; long-sleeved, \$15.00, short-sleeved, \$10.00. Contact PACA to arrange for delivery.

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ASSOCIATION  
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#### **PACA Newsletter**

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Steven Roemmel, Vice-President  
Nancy Delcomyn, Secretary-Treasurer

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Please submit material for publication in the  
next newsletter before 15th of month

