

PRESERVATION MATTERS

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2008 Salvage Synopsis

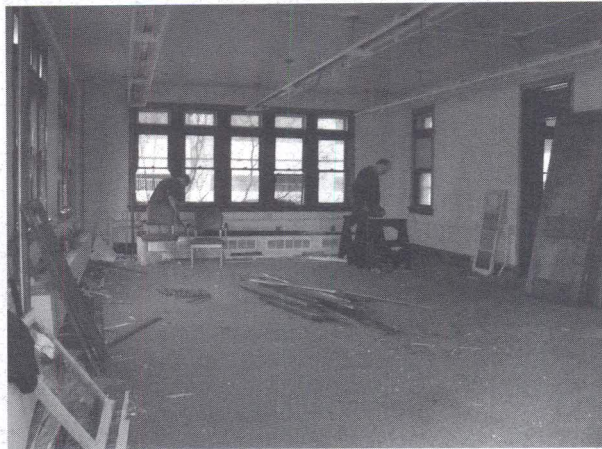
This article was written by Bob Swisher, salvage co-chair emeritus, and PACA salvager since 1983.

Salvage last year - I, of course, remember the projects that I worked on and those were few as I spent most of my time with bricks, I'm sorry, I mean pavers. We sold over 25,000 pavers at 25 cents each and 5,000 large pavers at 50 cents each. We have 7,000 large pavers already on pallets ready to deliver and numerous small pavers on both pallets and in the dirt ready for spring.

I did, however, go to Charleston, IL with other volunteers where we salvaged three houses. Our bounty was a great looking fireplace, oak doors, and trim. We also acquired a staircase, registers, claw foot tub and some hardware. I spent two weekends with a great group of volunteers on John Street salvaging from the 1903 Presby House, which is now the site of steel beams going up and up. We took so much oak out of this building it was unbelievable. We also took door and window trim, rafters and beams, doors, registers, some light fixtures and one double-sized freezer and a two-door refrigerator plus a whole room full of oak paneling.

I only went to Decatur one time but Darrel Foste and Dan Leisure made a couple of trips to the middle of the city where they brought back some really different items. Over the summer, our volunteers also spent a lot of time cleaning the basement of the Solon House from where we took numerous truck loads of decayed wood to two burn piles, one in Mahomet and one in northeast Urbana. Here we accidentally set fire to the grass and the fire department had to come and put out the fire!!

I know there are many other salvage operations and volunteers in 2007 that I can't



remember. At our most recent salvage operation, the Vegetable Crops Building, Suzanne Ashley-Wannamueller was in charge and she organized over two dozen volunteers. Altogether they harvested thousands of feet of stained birch trim, doors, transoms, a newel post, windows and hardware to the warehouse, in addition to scrap copper, lightning rods and downspouts. Earlier in the year, about a dozen volunteers spent most of a weekend at the main U of I Library taking apart and loading two dozen heavy and large cast iron bookcases (about 250 lbs. each). Suzanne was again in charge of this project; it is ongoing salvage project and we will have more shelving units in the near future.

2008 salvage operations are, as usual, unknown at this time. There is a possibility that we will acquire another 30,000 street pavers from a different source this spring. If this comes about we will need a great number of weekend volunteers to stack them. Get on board now. This means \$15,000 for PACA and local preservation projects.

Salvage is like finding money; but we need lots of help. See you at the brick pile!

Bob Swisher

Local School Architecture

The Early American Museum is hosting an exhibit on historic schools beginning March 1 and running through December. Developed by historic preservation intern, Kali Morgan, this exhibit explores the meanings of local school buildings from both an architectural and community view point. Photographs of school buildings, historic and current, are included in the exhibit. Contact the Early American Museum, Champaign County Lake of the Woods Forest Preserve at 586-2612.

Historic Preservation: Conserving Heritage through Preservation, Restoration, and Salvage

Rebecca Hunter, an architectural historian, will present a lecture about the history of the historic preservation movement and suggest ways people can become involved in local, state, or nationwide preservation efforts. She will explain why architectural salvage is crucial to restoration and heritage - a passion dear to PACA members. Hunter's lecture is sponsored in part by the Illinois Humanities Council; it is free and open to the public. It will begin at 2pm, March 1, at the Early American Museum (see above).

