

# Preservation Matters

Newsletter of the Preservation and Conservation Association

To foster and encourage preservation and conservation, focusing on the built environment of Champaign County and East Central Illinois.

## Heritage Awards

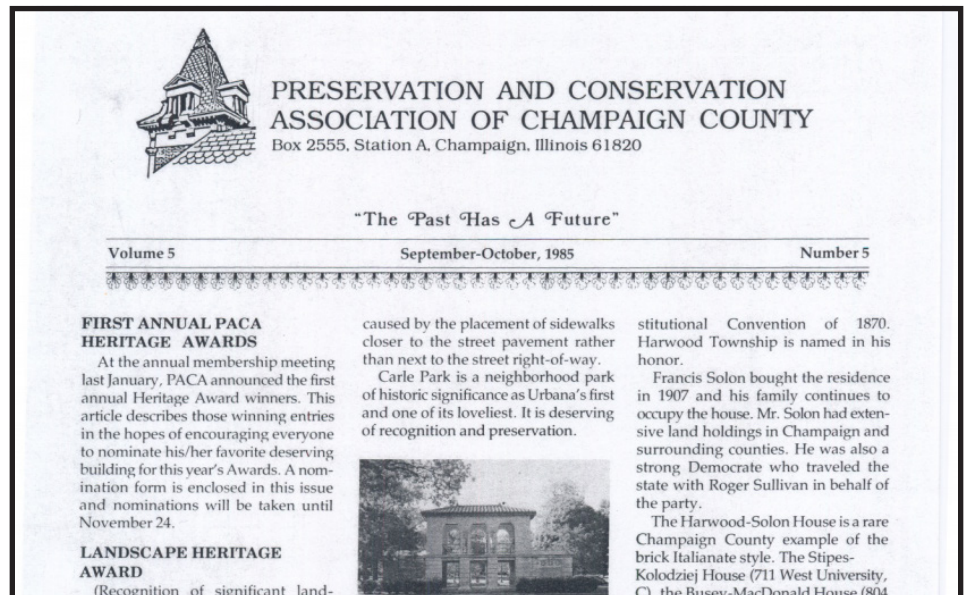
By Thomas Garza

On October 15 at 2pm, PACA will be holding our 36th annual Heritage Awards program. It's taking place once again at 25 O'Clock Brewery in Urbana (208 W Griggs St). If you can, please come early at 1:30 and mingle with drinks and snacks before the ceremony begins.

I hope you will be able to join us. It should be a fun time.

In honor of this event I thought I'd take a moment here and talk a little bit about the history of these awards.

The PACA Heritage Awards began in 1985 as a way for us to recognize and celebrate some of the preservation efforts being made around the community. When first created the awards were modeled after similar events put on by state and national preservation organizations, so the organizers created a set of defined categories in order to highlight



PACA newsletter highlighting our first Heritage Awards Ceremony

the various types of projects being recognized. In the first year we gave an award for: **Outstanding Contribution** (a residential, commercial, or institutional property which has accomplished recent renovation or restoration and is architecturally and/or historically significant), **Landscape** (recognition

of significant landscape, related structures or landscape art), **Landmark** (anniversary of significant date or recent accomplishment of National Register or landmark quality building), **Residential** (residence of architectural and/or historical significance), **Institutional/Commercial** (institutional or

commercial building of architectural and/or historical significance, **Environmental** (accomplishments for the environment or other sites such as commercial, residential, or farm outbuildings, bridges, streets, roads, alleys, signs, vehicles. Significant dates, persons, or events in northeast Illinois history can also be acknowledged), and **Special** (outstanding contribution to the preservation community).

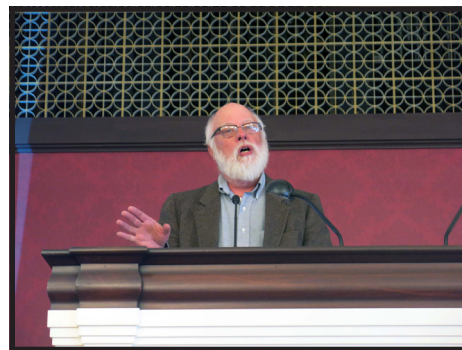
I have included the descriptions that went with these categories so that you can understand why right from the start they seemed to have a hard time confining the awards to just those specific types of projects. In quick succession they added **Honorable Mention** in 1986, **Oomph** in 1990, **Adaptive Use** in 1992, **Community Commitment** in 1994, **Neighborhood** in 1995, **Rescue** in 1996, and so on.

Over time the number of different categories that had been created proliferated to the point where it didn't make any sense to just endlessly keep adding new ones. We were practically creating new categories for every other project we found. I remember that during my time on the awards committee even when there were many good projects to choose from, we would often still have a difficult time finding any that adequately fit into our existing categories, or we'd have five or six that fit into one category and nothing for any of the others.

Ultimately the categories had become an impediment to our desire to recognize worthy projects rather than a useful guide for how to do so, and we decided to leave the definitions

behind and just award worthy projects with the simple Heritage Award we use today.

For several years we had a standing heritage award committee, but with the introduction of PACA's strategic plan, the awards became the work of the Relations Committee and this will be their first year running the show.



Rich Cahill, 2017 Heritage Awards Ceremony

Regardless of who is tasked with overseeing the Awards however, they must be prepared to do research year-round. Rich Cahill chaired the committee throughout all the years I was involved in it, and we generally had three or four other people working with us as well. For many years we were fortunate to have two realtors on the committee — Tony Bamert and Kathy Reeves — and they both brought a wealth of knowledge and many worthy projects to our attention.

We also found likely prospects from places mentioned in the News Gazette and as often as not, through word of mouth. We would meet 2-3 times a few months ahead of awards season and discuss our ideas, eventually winnowing our list down to 6-12 finalists.

That's when the real work began. Contacting properly owners and

arranging for photos and histories took a great deal of time and legwork. In fact Rich mentioned to me that his initial involvement with the Heritage Awards committee consisted of his being recruited at the last minute to help Karen Kummer (my predecessor) put together a slide show for the awards ceremony.

Eventually the slides gave way to a power point presentation, and lately it's just been standing displays with



Chris Knight, 2017 Heritage Awards Ceremony

photo collages.

The presentation ceremonies have changed over the years as well, as we try to find the right balance between providing information and keeping the audience's attention. In years past the Heritage Awards ceremony was a part of our annual meeting, and this combination was sometimes a bit awkward for all concerned. Having both the meeting and the awards as part of the same event meant that someone was going to sit through something that they likely had little interest in. That's why we decided to break out the awards from the annual meeting and make them into a separate event all their own.

The format of the awards is still in the process of being decided so if after this year's ceremony you have



any suggestions for something you'd like for us to include, by all means let us know. We'd like for this to be a celebratory event for the awardees, and an entertaining and informative one for those who attend. Any of you who have done any kind of restoration or even remodeling work on your homes will have a good idea just how much time, effort, expense, and frustration is involved in trying to bring your vision to reality, so you can certainly appreciate the work you'll see on display at one of our events.

One of the biggest unknowns about these events is how much time to offer the awardees to speak about their project. As Rich put it in an email to me *"Many had nothing to say and others may well still be talking."*

He went on to say *"One of my favorites was Chancellor Wise. She came and stayed for the entire meeting She was honored for bringing the WWI memorial back to Lincoln Hall. Another was Wilmer Otto with his video of horses moving an Amish Barn."*



Rich Cahill with Wilmer Otto, 2017  
Heritage Awards Ceremony

Rich also mentioned the excellent press coverage we've gotten over the years. He says *"I tried to give the News Gazette our final list weeks*

*before the meeting. I would sometimes meet them at a site, often with a photographer. One of my favorite memories was going all over National Guard Armory in Urbana with the commanding officer, including up on the roof next to the Eagles"*

The awards are in many ways a showcase for us. PACA's work is often difficult to see. Through education and advocacy we strive to preserve the historic architectural and cultural resources of Champaign County, and with our awards we try to recognize the best of local efforts to keep these special places vital, active, and participating parts of our community. When we are successful at this, the awards help us make preservation visible and relatable, and that is itself a big part of our mission.

If you're interested in seeing what kinds of projects we've given awards to over the years, you can visit <http://pacacc.org/education/newsletters/>

---

## Become a PACA Volunteer!

---

PACA needs volunteers! We need people to work with the salvage crew, help us out at the warehouse, and join our committees.

Our next group activity will be to build a float for this year's Parade of Lights.

Team activities for this will range from design, construction, and decoration (painting and detail work).

I think this event is in December if

I am remembering correctly, so if you're interested in working with us on this, or if you'd just like to be on our general volunteer list, please send me an email at [pacaexdir@gmail.com](mailto:pacaexdir@gmail.com) and we can sign you up.

As far as salvaging goes, it's not all technical or heavy work. We need people to work in the actual process of salvaging itself of course, but also in de-nailing, sorting, and putting things away at the warehouse. Any and all skill levels are welcome as the work can be as heavy or light as it suits you. There's plenty to do in every aspect of the process from prying boards off of walls and carrying doors up and down stairs, to unscrewing light covers and door plates and dealing with the hundred and one little things that we find in old houses.

At the warehouse there is an endless amount of sorting and stacking to be done, and these are ongoing needs that exist throughout the year, not just when a salvage is going on.

On the administrative side of things, in line with our strategic plan we have a number of committees that deal with various aspects of running the organization (and keeping organized), so we are always looking for people to sit on those committees, and we also need help posting on social media, and things like filing, organizing, digitizing old photos and so on.

There's a lot to do so please join us! You can contact us by calling 359-7222, or writing to [pacaexdir@gmail.com](mailto:pacaexdir@gmail.com)

# The PACA Warehouse

By Thomas Garza



PACA has been involved in preservation advocacy in this area for forty years now, and yet many people still only know about us through of our architectural salvage warehouse. Fortunately the work of the warehouse is something people generally approve of and indeed many in fact see our salvaging activities as a goal unto itself: we save things from buildings destined to be torn down and then make them available to the public.

I regularly have people tell me how much they appreciate the fact that we do that kind of work.

Personally I have mixed feelings about this way of thinking. I agree that the act of saving still usable items that would otherwise be thrown away is a really worthwhile effort in and of itself, but it's not the only thing that we do nor should it be, and I am always trying to find ways to help more people understand this. If you really want to save parts from an old building then the best possible way to do

that is to save the entire building. When that can be achieved then all of its parts remain intact and in their proper context.

What we do with our salvaging efforts is often just a last resort in a worst-case scenario. It's the best that can be made out of a bad situation, and yet we don't always look at it as an act of desperation or despair. This place was about to be demolished but we now have the opportunity to go in and save some of these wonderful things that would otherwise just end up being discarded.

That's a success story.

But being involved in this work when you also do preservation advocacy can be complicated, and even though our salvage activity is inextricably linked to our preservation efforts as a whole, figuring out how to fully honor both missions is sometimes difficult, and I think a discussion of the occasionally fraught relationship between salvaging

and preservation is one worth having.

First lets consider who does what and why.

A preservationist tries to identify historic places and then educate people about the vital role they play in giving a community its character. A historic preservationist is someone who contributes to the protection of culturally important buildings, structures, and landscapes.

Salvagers work to save a building's bits and pieces. The acquisition of this type of material offers owners of historic buildings a source of parts for replacement or enhancement, and provides creative individuals with things they can use for their re-purposing and re-imagining activities.

But salvaging is not an alternative to preservation, it's an alternative to demolition, and that puts salvaging at the end of a process that begins with

preservation efforts.

Of course like all things, it's not an either/or situation. There is a whole spectrum of possibilities involved in between.

For example, as preservationists we want to save structures from inappropriate alterations almost as much as we want to save them demolition, so preservation is of necessity a multi-faceted activity. If you preserve an object you are doing what you can to save and protect it as it is. If you are trying to preserve something more nebulous like say, the character or feel of a neighborhood, then that may require a different approach. In that case preservation may also involve rehabilitation and adaptive re-use, which means encouraging creative changes to be made in order to keep the area useful and productive, since those are also important aspects of its historic character.

As times change so do people and the way they use things. The building housing a 19th century buggy whip factory must surely have found a new business model in order to survive into the 20th century. That new use likely required changes to the building itself, and as the century changed yet again, it is very likely that the use did too, necessitating further changes.

So there is more flexibility to historic preservation than many people imagine. It's not an unyielding desire to seal absolutely everything in amber and keep it forever unchanged.

All too often however, in order to change or update a place's use, a developer sees starting over with a blank slate as the easiest way to go about it. To them this means tear it all down and build from scratch. There are commercial forces at play here too. Contractors usually prefer to work with new materials and do new construction so they charge more to do anything else. There are whole industries that push in that direction as well.

This is where salvaging enter the picture. When we hear about someone planning to demolish a building we — as a group of preservationists that also do salvaging — suddenly find ourselves wearing two hats. On the one hand it's great to get that call,

because far too often we don't know a place is threatened until it's already down and everything is lost. On the other hand questions immediately come to mind — Do they have to tear it down? Can it be saved? — and we're left wondering how to proceed. It's one thing when it's a house or building that is already on our radar and we know the story and have an existing position on its fate, but more often than not it's some place that we know nothing about. When asked the person on the phone will always say that the place is too far gone and can't be saved, or would cost too much to repair, and if we don't have any information to the contrary we have to take their word for it.

If, once we get a look at the place, we see that the building is in fine shape and should be saved, that's where the conflicts arise. Do we, as preservationists, fight to save this building or do we, as salvagers, move quickly to lock down the salvage rights before everything is lost since we already know its fate is almost certainly sealed?

From a salvaging standpoint the sooner we can get into a place the better, since prior to demolition a building will often undergo asbestos abatement — which is incredibly destructive -- and the owners will sometimes allow firefighters in to do training in their building, which involves kicking in doors and windows, punching holes in walls and so on.

If we try to go in after those things have taken place we're confronted with little more than a big box full of rubble. There isn't much left that can be saved.

So there is an urgency and advocacy involved in salvaging just as there is in our standard preservation work. In each instance the goal is to save something important and irreplaceable that still has much to offer. In a sense you might say that salvaging is the conservation part of our name 'Preservation and Conservation Association (PACA)' with *conservation* being the protection of historic architectural resources, and *preservation* being the protection of the buildings that embody those resources. When we can't do the one, we try to do the other.

In a perfect world of course the choice of how to handle a particular project would be up to us. We would save it if it could or should be saved, and salvage it if that's the best or only option.

Unfortunately however, that choice is never ours to make. It's the owner or developer making the call, and our relationship with them is either adversarial -- if they choose to demolish and we decide to advocate against that decision -- or cooperative if we agree that the place must come down and we are able to work together with them in order to save as much as possible.

Now I don't want to paint too dark of a picture here. In most situations we have no doubt beforehand about how we intend to proceed. We are either confronted with a situation where the building should obviously be saved -- and we do whatever we can about it -- or else it's a place that obviously needs to come down and all that's left is to save what can be saved.

My main point with this article is just to share this one bit of 'behind the scenes' information with you since there is a tension that does sometimes exist and which will occasionally present us with questions which aren't always easy to answer.

Of course even in the past, as is surely the case today, there were many structures built that have no special architectural value and which, over the years, have been altered to such an extent that what little value they may have once had, has long since been lost. In some cases these places at least contribute to the overall character of the neighborhood and we'd like to see them preserved even in their imperfect state, yet in many other cases they are surrounded by newer structures or else have suffered from years of neglect and they no longer have much structural integrity.

Still, even in places such as these, the material value of the components can be very high and our work as salvagers is vital in keeping these things out of already overwhelmed landfills and our warehouse does that as well as fund our activities.



## Upcycle-a-Map Art Project

Celebrating Arts and Humanities Month through exploration of Eco-Culture

**A youth art competition**

**Due October 28th**

# MAP into ART



1. Sign up with a **paper form or online** following the qr code
2. Take home a FREE map from our salvaged collection
3. UPCYCLE it by turning it into a work of art  
Your challenge is to create a work of art utilizing the map, or combine it with other up-cycled materials. Stop by the Warehouse with any questions; you might be inspired during your visit!
4. Turn it in **October 28th** at the PACA Warehouse, 44 East Washington St
5. Join us **November 16th at 5pm** for an open house/art exhibition

As part of the Earth Day to Recycle Project (E2Re)  
In collaboration with Ascending Aesthetics promoting material  
**Reuse, Repurpose and Recycle** while learning



Online Art Project Sign Up



More Info and E2Re Events Here

PACA would like to remember longtime member Antje Kolodziej who passed away on September 25.

Antje, along with her husband Edward, have been PACA members for many years. She worked to save the Cattle Bank (now the Champaign County History Museum) and she was also involved in efforts to save Uni High from being dismantled by the University's Department of Education.

Antje is survived by her husband Edward and a large family, and we wish them all the very best during this difficult time.

---

## Membership Renewal time.

---

PACA memberships run from November to November and so it's just about time to renew for 2023. In recognition of the important part members play in our organization, I thought this would be a good time to announce a new member benefit!

We take in some interesting things from time to time and so what I'd like to do is select a few of the more unique items that come in and for a period of time make them available to members only. Here's how it will work . . . whenever something really special comes in I'm going to set it aside off the sales floor. I'll take some photos of it, do as much research as I can about it and then post that information either in a newsletter -- as I'm doing here -- or in a special

mailing that only goes out to the membership.

Then for one month members will then have the exclusive access to this item. In order to avoid confusion this will strictly be first come first served, so we won't be doing any 'holds' for these items. If you are interested in an item you'll have to buy it when you see it (we will of course hold it for you in order for you to arrange for transportation once it's been paid for as we always do).

So that's the plan and we'll see how it works and as always, thank you for helping to keep PACA strong!

Here is our first, members only special. In honor of this spooky time of year we have . . .

### Antique Mortuary Coffin Carrier

This mortuary stretcher was designed to transport coffins. It is a product of the Champion Chemical Company of Springfield Ohio which was founded in 1878. The base expands outwards by pressing down on the center handle.

In our opinion with the addition of a glass top this cart would make an excellent coffee table, or perhaps the base of some kind of movable cart. I couldn't find any specific information but there are indications that this may date from around the turn of the century. The collapsed dimensions are roughly 10" x 10" x 27" tall. The expanded dimensions are 42" x 20" x 21 1/2" tall.

Members price \$350!





# PRESERVATION MATTERS

The newsletter of the



PRESERVATION AND CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION  
P.O. Box 2575  
Champaign, IL 61825

Fall 2022

President: Joe Zalibak

Vice President: Geoffrey Haider Badenhorst

Secretary: Thomas Warda

Treasurer: Geoff Bant

Executive Director: Thomas Garza

Newsletter Editor: Tom Garza

If you would like to contribute  
to the PACA newsletter, please contact us at  
[pacaexdir@gmail.com](mailto:pacaexdir@gmail.com)

Warehouse: 44 E. Washington St., Champaign, IL  
Hours: Tuesday - Friday from 12pm - 4pm and  
Saturday from 10am - 4pm  
Telephone: 217-359-PACA (7222)  
Web: <http://www.pacacc.org>  
E-mail: [pacaexdir@pacacc.org](mailto:pacaexdir@pacacc.org)



MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

PACA BOX 2575, Champaign, IL 61825

## MEMBERSHIP STATUS

New       Renewal

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

## MEMBERSHIP CATEGORY

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

Adult                 \$25  
 Student               \$15  
 Senior Citizen       \$15  
 Family                 \$40

PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

Corporate  
     Bronze                 \$250  
     Silver                  \$500  
     Gold                    \$1000  
     Platinum               \$2000

E-MAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

I wish to make an additional  
contribution: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

PACA is a non-profit organization dedicated to the preservation of our natural and built  
environment. Offices are located at our salvage warehouse:  
44 E. Washington St, Champaign, IL 61825  
217-359-7222 \* [www.pacacc.org](http://www.pacacc.org)