

# 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.*

## PACA's Annual Meeting 2021 in review

Last year we held our annual meeting online via the video conferencing application called Zoom. Out of an abundance of caution, we decided to do it the same way this year as well.

Zoom has become a familiar part of many people's lives during the pandemic as businesses and schools have sought out new ways to get people 'together' without their having to actually share physical space. Despite Zoom's familiarity however, (or maybe because of it) online meetings of this sort are not very popular. They are rather static, the audio quality tends to vary a great deal so it can be difficult to follow who's speaking, and at best they are only a poor substitute for an in-person gathering where spontaneous interactions are more likely to occur.

Consequently this year's meeting, like the last one, was sparsely attended.

Our annual meetings are intended to be an opportunity for our membership to dig more deeply into the details of what we've been doing as well as a space for us to share some ideas about what we intend to do in the coming year. We also want to give members an opportunity to speak directly to and ask questions of the people who are making the decisions that guide the organization.

Because few people attend these meetings, most of our members miss out on the information that we present in them and so I think it would be a good idea for me to start condensing and sharing that information with you in our newsletters as well.

As you know, our recently adopted strategic plan created a set of four committees – finance, relations, advocacy, and education - whose work collectively encompasses the entire array of activities that

PACA was created to perform, while allowing the groups to each focus their attention on only one specific area.

As the country continues to move more towards something like normal operations, we are able to foresee a time when our committees can finally begin to function as they were intended to, but until then we're making the best use of our time that we can.

Despite all of the various pandemic related difficulties however, we're off to a reasonably good start, and a great deal of planning has been done, but external conditions have precluded us from really getting things off the planning board and out into the world and that, in turn, has limited our ability to recruit from the membership beyond just having our board members ask their immediate circle of friends and acquaintances if

they want to help out.

It is this very reaching out beyond the people we already know that was one of the main reasons we created the committee structure. These groups were designed to give the membership an opportunity to become more involved in our activities, and to provide for continuity and create a knowledge base so that even though members may come and go, their efforts would continue on.

It's difficult, however, to do this when conditions don't allow for any public activities to take place, and that's been the hump we've been trying to get over.

Hopefully in the coming year – if conditions continue to improve - you'll start to see more

announcements about events that you can attend. We'll send out email, put up posters, and place announcements on social media. At these events we want to share our work with you, as well as create a space for you to network and form relationships, with us and with each other. Those relationships, in turn, will hopefully lead to more members feeling comfortable joining in PACA's activities and help to keep the organization thriving.

Now let's hear from our committees.

**Finance Committee**

The Finance Committee has a very broad mandate. They are responsible for creating our budget, overseeing fundraising efforts (which include the operation and maintenance of our

Architectural Salvage Warehouse and the activities of our Salvage group), they manage any property that we own, they are responsible for our grants program, our advocacy and education funds (the Lachlan Blair and Mark Chenail funds respectively), and they manage our investment portfolio.

The current chairman of our finance committee is Tod Satterthwaite, and for a variety of reasons he's been called out of town a great deal lately and so many of that group's activities have remained in a holding pattern, but he continues to do what he can from a distance.

Let's start off their report with a look at our 2021 financial situation:

**2021 Income**

	2020	2021
Warehouse Sales	\$ 60,368.00	\$ 53,721.00
Membership	\$ 2,960.00	\$ 2,133.00
Contributions	\$ 9,437.00	\$ 9,957.00
Interest/Investments	\$ 462.00	\$ 3,126.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 73,227.00</b>	<b>\$ 68,937.00</b>

- PPP loans of \$5700 were obtained in both 2020 and 2021, they are included in Contributions.
- The Board choose to invest the funds in the Vanguard account in mutual funds and ETFs; this resulted in a higher level of investment income in 2021 compared with 2020.



In this illustration we have the 2020 and 2021 income figure set side by side for comparison. As you can see 2021 sales income was down even from the previous year's figures.

## 2021 Income



- COVID continued to impact the Warehouse operations resulting in closures on many days and shortened hours on others.
- Warehouse Sales have suffered because of COVID. 2021 sales were 11% lower than 2020 sales and 23% lower than 2019 sales.



Even in its second year the pandemic had a big impact on our sales.

## 2020 Expenses



- **Total Expenses** **\$65,000**
  - Includes \$2,845 for new LED lighting in the warehouse
- **Operating Fund Net** **\$ 1,231**
- **Investment Income** **\$ 3,126**
- **Total Income minus Expenses** **\$ 4,357**
  
- Warehouse renovation expenses were kept low as many materials were recycled and work was done by staff and volunteers.
- We did well to stay financially solvent given all the difficulties of the COVID year



In this illustration we have the 2020 total expenses. As you can see despite spending \$2845 for our new warehouse lighting, the good news is that we still managed to generate a very small profit for the year.



## Salvage.

The salvage volunteers and the warehouse team continue their efforts in fair weather or foul, and we have included some information in the Finance Committee report about their activities as well.

The following is a report of the work of the salvage group as prepared by Richard Cahill and salvage co-director Marty Savoie.

The volunteers involved included: Marty and Janet Savoie, Lee Stoops, Dave Pruitt, Elyse Harshbarger, Phyllis and Joe Williams, Bill and Blaine Bogner, Dave Spears, Tod and Beth Satterthwaite, Tom Warda, Al Friedrich, and Joe Zalabak. A special thanks to go to Elizabeth Stegmaier of Champaign Unit 4 schools who coordinated the overall school renovation project and well as the staff and contractors involved in the project who always were helpful.

Tom Gillespie Real Estate company donated items saved from his properties. We saved oak doors, fireplace mantel, fireplace inserts, walnut roll top desk, antique oak dresser, ~ 700 bricks, bathtubs, extra door hardware, and unpainted oak trim.

Multiple trips were made to Edison School and Champaign Central High school. From Edison we saved thirty” wide maple countertop, tables, cabinet drawer hardware, flat file drawers, large storage units, and large utility sinks. From Champaign Central we saved the center court section of the Combes Gym Floor from with the letter C, tables, cabinet doors, storage units and scientific glass ware. From

the former Christians Science Church, we saved doors, folding chairs, light fixtures, and janitor sinks.

Rantoul School gave us permission to salvage the Myra Thompson Elementary School built in 1920. At least fifteen trips were made. Over seventy wooden lockers, twenty-five wooden storage cabinets, classroom doors, handrail, and library shelves. Wells and Wells gave us permission to salvage 509 South 4th Street (Former Jewish Student Center) and 314 East Healey. A nice entryway with beveled glass door and side lights, interior doors, large cast iron air returns, decorative cast iron side heat registers, decorative trim, porch handrail and spindles, newel post and plinth blocks.

The historic Colonel Wolfe School at 401 East Healey is being converted into apartments. Wells and Wells gave us permission to save items left behind by the University of Illinois we saved a desk, oak tables, slate blackboard, wood doors, coat hooks, coat rack, and kitchen wall cabinets for the warehouse. We also arranged for Hospice Hearts and Habitat Resale Store to save office furniture.

Stark Construction contacted PACA regarding the demolition of the UI caretaker’s house at Willard Airport. We saved interior doors, beveled glass entry doors, multi pane windows, cabinet doors, and a garage door. A 1933 two story house was salvage in Deland. Doors, etched windows, color glass transom, handrail, balusters, newel post, claw foot tub and floor registers were saved

David Monk learned that building in Bondville he was renting as an office

and storage space had been sold and had to be vacated. Multiple trips were made in November and December. Among the interesting item saved were blacksmith equipment, Danish Modern desk, cast iron café seats and table, metal stools, small metal storage cabinets, heavy duty cartwheels and a small printing press. A total of fourteen trips were made to Mack’s Recycling. The total weight was 14,040 pound s for \$1,386.

Carle Hospital gave us permission to salvage items for the Lincoln Lodge Motel at 403 West University, Urbana. We saved nine heavy brass bar stools, janitor’s sink, brass room number from the thirty-one rooms, handrail and spindles, janitors sink, furnace door, and exterior lights.

A garage sale was held at PACA West in October. Two days were spent preparing items for sale.

## The warehouse.

The warehouse has remained open for business throughout the year whenever it has been reasonably safe to do so. Our remodeling efforts have been mostly completed although a few projects still lie ahead, specifically the final clearing and reorganizing of the west wall, and the completion of our office space.

Work has begun on some maintenance issues. Thanks to volunteer (and former board president) Lee Stoops, our badly deteriorated metal casement windows are getting a much needed facelift. His work includes replacing broken panes of glass, removing years of rust, and re-painting and glazing. Rich Cahill undertook a major cleaning and organization of

the basement, and some gutter work was done on the Northwest corner of the building in order to improve the drainage situation. We added a dehumidifier to the basement, fixed the lock on the front door and have been working on the wiring for our office area. All in all we continue to do our best to keep the place in good order so as to present the public with the most convenient and inviting shopping experience possible, and of course be good stewards of our historic building.

### Advocacy Committee

The Advocacy Committee reflects the heart and soul of what PACA was created to do. All of our other activities are in a sense adjuvant to their work.

This committee acts to support preservation friendly legislation, tracks government actions as they relate to our interests, engages with neighborhood groups in order to support their activities, works with our Education Committee to communicate preservation priorities to the general public, tracks our easement program, keeps an eye on endangered buildings, encourages adaptive reuse, and many other things besides.

Advocacy Committee Report by  
Committee Chair Susan Appel for the  
2022 PACA Annual Meeting

The Advocacy Committee is tasked with advocating for preservation in a number of ways and on various levels within Champaign County. In the past year:

- We have developed and carried out a regular inspection program for the three properties for which PACA holds preservation easements (the Orpheum, the Solon House, and the Ricker House).
- We identified and investigated potential threats to several historic structures, whether recognized as such or not, and we worked with owners and officials to encourage preservation and avoid demolition. We also monitored the impact of new development on historic buildings. Our letters to new City Council members in both Urbana and Champaign likewise encouraged them to look favorably on issues related to historic preservation, and we watched for developments discussed by local Historic Preservation Commissions.
- We facilitated the digitizing by the Archives at the Urbana Free Library of the last segment of PACA's survey of local architecture from the later 1980s, which makes them available to the public.
- We volunteered to help with the updating of Urbana's pamphlet guiding owners of local Landmark properties of the responsibilities that come with landmark designation. .
- The Committee is also expected to stay up to date on preservation-related legislation, and we have followed potential zoning-related changes in Urbana, Champaign, and at the University. We are in contact with Landmarks Illinois and the State's Historic Preservation Office, and we try to be aware of developments at the federal level, in the U.S. Department of Natural Resources. This committee has many

responsibilities, and covering them effectively really requires more than the three people who have managed it this year. Since we are losing one, perhaps two people, we really encourage PACA members who share in these interests to join the committee to help out in the coming year.

### Education Committee

The Education Committee's work is a key component of our overall mission. Engaging our community and helping people to understand why we do what we do (and why they should care and want to participate) is vital to our success. These quarterly newsletters are, for example, part of our educational efforts, as is our website and social media presence.

For obvious reasons we've not held any workshops or lectures for the last couple of years, although if you're needing one-on-one consultation on any old house problem you're welcome to stop by our Architectural Salvage Warehouse and we'll be happy to assist you with any questions that you may have.

One of the primary successes of last year's educational efforts would be the development of our library and museum corner.

If you've stopped into the warehouse recently you may have noticed that along the North wall we've created an educational space that includes a member library, a museum featuring various local artifacts, and a handful of displays. We have a hands-on demonstration of a magneto from an old telephone, a 'before and after'

series that combines photos from one of our earliest downtown architectural surveys with recent photos of those same places taken by PACA member Cary Frye. In our display cabinet we have a mortise lock exhibit with information about that ubiquitous bit of door hardware as well as some information about the keys that work in them, and we are in the process of working on an exhibit about architect Joseph Royer. Work is also in progress on an educational handout about the history of the Orpheum theatre and PACA's involvement in saving it from destruction.

### **Relations Committee**

The Relations Committee functions as our public face. It is charged with finding and recruiting people to join our board of directors, working with and encouraging volunteers, forming collaborations with other community groups/organizations, setting up the annual meeting, and organizing our Heritage Awards Program.

Now let's hear from the Relations Committee.

Did you see PACA at the Parade of Lights? Our float with hand painted facades of Downtown Champaign's historic buildings highlighted the beauty and diversity of the area.

You can come and see our 3rd place trophy at the PACA Warehouse.

Altgeld Hall on the UIUC campus was the inspiration for PACA's entry in the annual Raise the Woof fundraiser. The unique character of the building was celebrated in the shape of a cat house. We won 2nd place in that one.

At Boneyards Arts Festival the PACA warehouse was transformed into an exhibition space for art and design from local artists. It was a great opportunity to highlight their work and to reconnect to our members and the rest of the community.

We are also working on setting up a membership and volunteering infrastructure. It is now possible to inquire about and subscribe to volunteering opportunities online. You can learn more about this from our new flyer.

After a COVID necessitated break we are planning to highlight and reward important preservation projects in our community again in this year's Heritage Awards.

The call for nominations is currently out so please let us know who you want to have celebrated!

We are also working to create an annual Calendar in order to provide continuity in programming and help with our outreach.

In the near future we are planning on implementing a schedule of continuous outreach projects and thematic one-off events that are inclusive to the diverse population of Champaign County and which highlight the various ways that preservation helps tell the story of our community and the many people who helped to make it what it is today.

PACA's website has also been renewed, making it clearer and easier to navigate.

Finally, we always welcome new

members to our organization. The more people we have on our board and in our committees, the greater their impact.

Are you interested in becoming involved in helping us to preserve the beautiful buildings and places of Champaign? Do you want to help spread awareness of the importance of preserving our history for future generations? We can use your help in one-off projects or with longer term commitments. Whatever suits your situation and inclinations.

Please get in touch to become part of our team. We will be happy to have you.

### **Board Elections**

For this year's board elections we had two new and one returning candidate. Breaden Belcher, Lauren Gramly and previous board member Thomas Warda were all on the ballot.

We had a great response and virtually everyone who received a ballot returned it with their vote, which is wonderful and even though we will be going back to in-person meetings at some point we may retain the mail-in voting since it seems to reach more people than we ever get at our meetings.

All three were elected although unfortunately Breaden Belcher had to withdraw on account of an unexpected change in his situation.

With this I will conclude my report of our annual meeting. If you have any questions or comments, please send them to [pacaexdir@gmail.com](mailto:pacaexdir@gmail.com) or give us a call at 217-359-7222.

# An Avenue of Immigrants

## Some Historic Homes and Their Owners on Springfield Avenue in Champaign

By Brian Adams

As Urbana-Champaign grew, especially after the founding of the University of Illinois in 1867 and the arrival of the railroads in the 1850s and 1860s, many people were attracted to the twin-

cities to establish businesses and seek employment. Newcomers arrived not only from elsewhere in the United States, but also from farther afield in the United Kingdom and Europe. Those who

became successful often built fine homes for themselves and families, and some of these can still be seen on Springfield Avenue in Champaign.

### Theodore and Mathilda Siegel Residence. 501 West Springfield Avenue.



Theodore and Mathilda Siegel Residence, 501 West Springfield Avenue.

The Theodore and Mathilda Siegel House at 501 West Springfield Avenue was built in 1902 and designed by noted Urbana architect Joseph William Royer in the Colonial Revival style. The Champaign Daily News announced in May 1902 that “Theodore Siegel has purchased of D.C. Hamilton

the lot at the southwest corner of Elm street (sic) and Springfield avenue (sic). The lot is a very desirable one, being splendidly located. It is said that Mr. Siegel will have a handsome residence built there”.

Theodore George Siegel was born in Germany in 1847 and lived in

Champaign for over 40 years. He served as Alderman for the 3rd Ward in Champaign and, in 1900, on the newly formed street and alley committee. His wife Mathilda was born in Champaign in 1857. The couple had three daughters: Paula Auguste (b. 1882), Alma Emma (b. 1885), and Meta Lina



The Siegel daughters as children.



Theodore and Mathilda Siegel and daughters.



Former "Centennial Saloon" (1878-1879),  
201 N. Market St

(b. 1886). The Siegel family were members of St. Peter's German Evangelical Church in Champaign. Examination of city directories reveals that Theodore Siegel operated a saloon at 201 North

Market Street in Champaign. The 1878-1879 directory indicates he and Oscar Traub were proprietors of the Centennial Saloon at this address, while between 1885-1898 it was called the Siegel Saloon.

This and the neighboring building at 203-205 North Market Street were listed on the National Register of Historic Places in November 1997.

**Abraham and Bessie Selicovitz Residence, 509 West Springfield Avenue.**

A few doors down from the Siegel house at 509 West Springfield Avenue is the former residence of Abraham and Bessie Selicovitz built in the Queen Anne/Victorian style. Both were born in Poland (at this time part of Russia) in the 1850s and emigrated to America around 1880, first settling in Wabash, Indiana. Here they had two children, Rose and Harry. After about 10 years, they moved to Champaign, where they were members of the Sinai Congregation and B'nai B'rith.

Abraham ran a junk collecting business at 17-19 South Market Street in Champaign, what we would now call a recycling facility. The Champaign Daily News

wrote in March of 1897 that "Abe Selicovitz intends to build a two-story eight-room house on West Springfield avenue (sic). G.R. Petty is now drawing up the plans for it". Later the same month the paper again announced "Abe Selicovitz, the old iron and rag buyer, is going to build a new house on Springfield avenue (sic) between Elm and Lynne streets". The house was finished in July 1897. The contractor was W.H. Stewart and the house cost \$2,500 and featured a stairway and hall finished in oak. Paradoxically, The Champaign Daily News reported in April 1903 that "Walsh, Heuck & Co. was awarded the contract for the plumbing, gas-fitting and hot water heating for the new Abe

Selicovitz residence at 509 West Springfield avenue (sic)". Did the original house not have these amenities? More research is needed to clarify the information reported in this news item. The house at 509 West Springfield Avenue features a unique brick wall that surrounds the property. Along the sidewalk are two cast iron hitching posts featuring horse heads with tie-up rings held in their mouths. Such features were signs of affluence, evidence of Abraham's success as a local businessman.





Thomas and Martha Finnigan Residence, 618 West Springfield



Abraham and Bessie Selicovitz Residence

Abe's scrap business was booming by the late 19th century. The Champaign Daily News reported in August 1899 that he planned to load 12 or 15 train cars for shipment with old iron, "...the largest amount he ever loaded at one time and there will be about as much left for another shipment". By 1905, he had yards in Mattoon, Charleston, Newton, and Paris, Illinois. In October 1905 it was reported in the Champaign Daily News that Abe was to partner with his son Harry in the business, which was to expand into the poultry business.



Thomas and Martha Finnigan Residence

Thomas Joseph Finnigan was born in County Louth, Ireland in 1853. In 1877 he married Martha Mary Delargey and the couple settled on a farm near De Land, Piatt County. In 1890, they moved to Champaign. Here they built the house at 618 West Springfield Avenue, which they occupied in October of 1900. This house, which occupied a large lot at the time, apparently replaced their original home at this address that was extensively damaged by a kitchen fire in June of 1899. The Finnigan residence is an impressive example of the Colonial Revival style, featuring bay, arched and palladian windows, corner pilasters, and exaggerated broken pediments. The Champaign Daily News reported in January 1919 that "Thomas J. Finnegan of 618 West Springfield avenue (sic), has returned from a business trip to his farms in Indiana".



618 West Springfield Avenue

This suggests he was a "gentleman farmer", residing in the city and managing multiple landholdings. The Finnigans had seven children and attended Holy Cross Catholic Church.



509 West Springfield Ave.



Thomas and Martha Finnigan Residence, corner pilaster detail

This handful of “mini-histories” of some historic homes along Springfield Avenue in Champaign demonstrates the value of welcoming new immigrants into our communities. These families have contributed to the local economy and politics of Champaign and added to its rich ethnic, cultural, and religious diversity and heritage. These brief vignettes also illustrate how our historic structures can educate about our own unique history.



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## The PACA Board of Directors needs you!

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As I mentioned in the annual report, one of our new Directors had to resign before taking his seat so we have an opening that needs to be filled. In order to serve, a candidate must hold an Individual or Family PACA membership in good standing. Commitments include attendance at the monthly board meeting, staying actively informed about ongoing projects in between meetings through semi-regular email correspondence,

participation in a minimum of one committee, and preferred attendance at events.

If you're interested please contact the Nominating Committee Chair (elyse@pacacc.org). We request a brief written statement about you, your qualifications, experience, or specific areas of interest.

Thank you for supporting PACA!

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## Volunteer opportunities at PACA

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A comment that I hear frequently from people is that they'd like to volunteer at PACA but they aren't sure how to get involved.

Generally speaking, volunteer opportunities at PACA fall into three main categories. We need people to work with the salvage crew, help us out at the warehouse, and take on administrative tasks.

We do other things too though. For example, every year we participate in Habitat for Humanity's Raise the Woof competition. Participants form teams and build doghouses.

PACA's team has won a prize every year we've participated.

Team members activities range from design, construction, and decoration (painting and detail work).

The event will be in September and we like to start getting ideas

together three to four weeks in advance. If you're interested in working on that with us, or if you'd like to be on our general volunteer list, just send me an email at [pacaexdir@gmail.com](mailto:pacaexdir@gmail.com) and we can sign you up.

We do have a separate list for salvage volunteers, so if that sort of thing is what interests you then please make a note of that.

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)

# PRESERVATION MATTERS

The newsletter of the



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

Spring 2022

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If you would like to contribute  
to the PACA newsletter, email  
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MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

PACA BOX 2575, Champaign, IL 61825

## MEMBERSHIP STATUS

New       Renewal

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

## MEMBERSHIP CATEGORY

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

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

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)