



PRESERVATION AND CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION OF CHAMPAIGN COUNTY

Box 2555, Station A, Champaign, Illinois 61820

“The Past Has A Future”

Volume 5

November-December, 1985

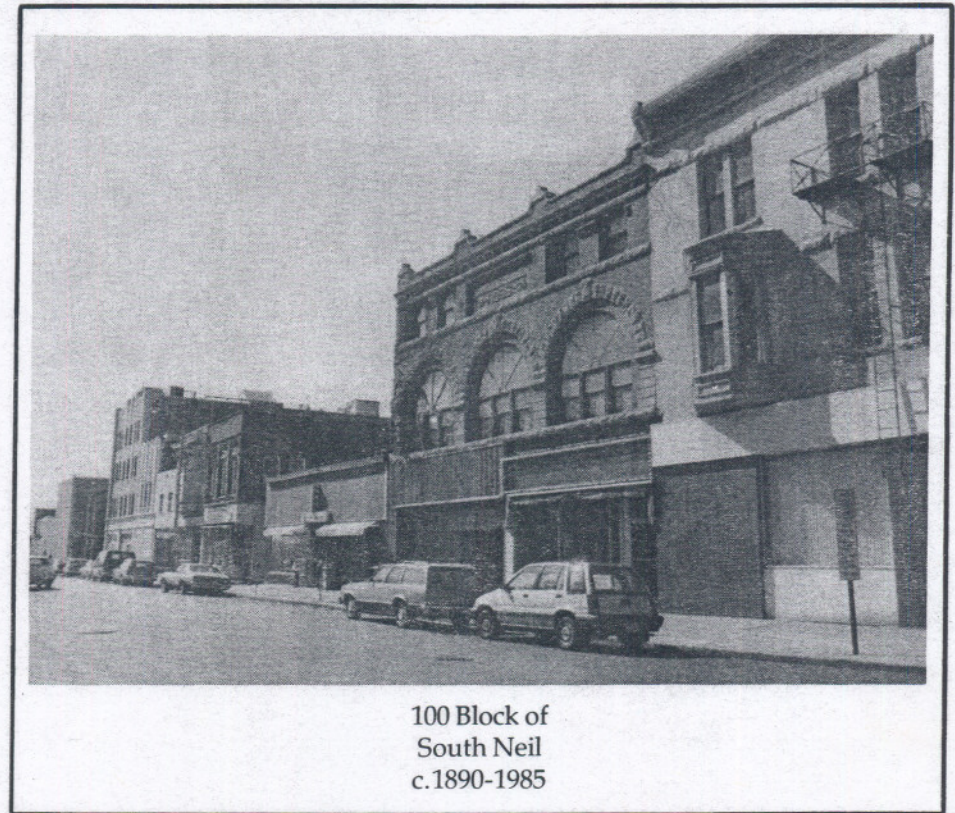
Number 6

THE DOWNTOWN CHAMPAIGN PICTURE

The downtown Champaign area is taking on a new look — vacant. *Christie Clinic* has finally begun their long discussed expansion, the first step of which involved the demolition of all the remaining non-clinic buildings on the 100 block of West University and South Neil. In the fall of 1984, PACA presented the Clinic with a detailed proposal for the reuse of two of the more historic and architecturally important buildings on the block — 101-103 and 105-107 South Neil (see the Sept.-Oct. 1984 Newsletter). It was felt that there were viable economic uses for these two corner buildings and their retention would not hinder the Clinic's expansion plans. The buildings, however, would help keep the pedestrian character and scale alive at that major intersection. In addition, the adaptive reuse of those buildings could have increased the Clinic's community image a hundredfold. But the perceived need for more parking and an uninterrupted view of the new red brick Clinic prevailed. So now another large expanse of parking joins the Bank of Illinois and the Commerce Bank lots in west Champaign.

Two other significant structures in downtown Champaign are also scheduled for demolition. Christie Clinic has begun removing the historic *Eisner Warehouse* building (c. 1890), 202 South Market, for employee parking. PACA had found a buyer who was willing to restore the badly deteriorated building; however, the Clinic was unwilling to negotiate.

The *Kaufman Building* (c. 1879), 16-18 Main Street, is scheduled for demo-



100 Block of
South Neil
c. 1890-1985

lition this spring. As part of a land trade between the *News Gazette* and the First National Bank, the *News Gazette* will demolish the building and trade the vacant lot to the Bank in exchange for the Bank's parking lot next to the *News Gazette* building. Once again, in the interest of creating more parking lots, an architecturally valuable building in Champaign will be sacrificed.

PACA is very concerned about the loss of these important buildings and for the sense of time, place and scale they represent. But PACA as an entity cannot do it alone. We need the help and support of our membership.

Please, *take the time* to call the parties involved: Christie Clinic, the *News Gazette*, the First National Bank or the mayor's office and the City Council. Express your feelings about what has and is going to happen. It only takes a few moments, but it can save history. If you don't care, why should anyone else?

UPDATES

The Hunter Farmhouse, Sidney, that was advertised in the last newsletter, was purchased by Wanda Bengoechea for \$1.00 from the University of Illinois.

Next spring, Ms. Bengoechea will move the structure to a new site, probably in the vicinity of Savoy. The building will then be renovated and offered for resale. For more information, contact Ms. Bengoechea.

The last newsletter had a line in the Landmark Heritage Award article inadvertently left out. "In 1869 Mr. Abel Harwood bought the house (503 S. State) and surrounding land for \$12,000."

GREEK REVIVAL COTTAGE

The quaint little "Workman's Cottage," dating from the 1850s is the only remaining example of residential Greek Revival style architecture in Champaign-Urbana. It has been sitting in Urbana's Leal Park, empty and forlorn, since 1977, when it was moved by the Historical Museum to make way for a parking lot on University of Illinois property. With the help of state and federal grants and private donations, the move was accomplished and the exterior was restored to its appearance of more than a century ago.

When it was moved, it was intended to be used as a conference and resource center for preservation and conservation organizations. Since the fervor (and the funds) of the Bicentennial Era have passed, the building has been sitting devoid of purpose, and worse yet, deteriorating to where it is now a target of vandalism and an attractive nuisance that could pose danger or cause injury to the curious.

The Historical Museum, itself the victim of shrinking federal funds, has no resources sufficient to finance any operation in the Cottage, or even to maintain or continue interior restoration.

The Urbana Park District, on whose property the Cottage is located, is understandably concerned that it not be allowed to sit vacant and deteriorate too much longer.

The Museum, in cooperation with the Preservation and Conservation Association of Champaign County, now urgently solicits the community for potential uses and users for the Greek Revival Cottage. Both the Museum and the Park District are willing to consider a wide range of uses. The only restric-

tions are that the new use and user should be consistent with goals and activities appropriate to public property. As such, a not-for-profit or governmental unit or agency, or an educational or community service use is most desirable. This does not necessarily rule out a small business such as a tea room or appropriate retail or professional operation.

The Cottage requires substantial interior restoration and decoration, but it does have water and electrical service into the basement, which is very ample and roomy. The roof is in good condition, and the main floor includes a fireplace and a chimney for a wood-burning stove. Much of the original woodwork is intact, and the layout would lend itself to a variety of uses. The Illinois Heritage Association advises us that *small grants* may be available from the State of Illinois for restoration if the building is open to the public for a specified number of days per year.

The Museum invites your proposals, formal or informal, for use of the Greek Revival Cottage as a long-term leaseholder. Please send your proposal to the Museum at 709 W. University Ave., Champaign, IL 61820.

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

The annual PACA membership meeting is scheduled for Sunday afternoon, February 2, 1986, in the exciting new office of ARCHITECTURAL SPECTRUM, 11 Main Street, Champaign. The business meeting will begin at 2:00 PM and will include a review of 1985's activities and plans for 1986, the presentation of the 1986 budget and the election of three members to the Board of Directors. Only members in good standing are allowed to vote in the election (your mailing label shows the month/year of your membership).

Following the business meeting there will be a slide presentation by Wayne Price, chairman of the Illinois Historical Society's Save Our Barns Committee. His talk, "The American Influence on the Illinois Barn" will discuss the various ethnic influences apparent in the construction of Illinois barns. It should prove a very interest-

ing program and a fitting introduction to a rural preservation program for Champaign County. Presentation of the Second Annual Heritage Awards will also be made. After the meeting, tours of the newly renovated building will be available.

The meeting is open to the general public, so mark your calendars and bring your friends!

CIVIL WAR INFORMATION NEEDED

The Champaign County Historical Archives of The Urbana Free Library is seeking information on Champaign County men who were involved in the American Civil War. The information is needed for a major new book, which the Library will publish in the fall of 1986. The Archives wants original photographs, diaries and documents, as well as family stories and souvenirs.

Among the items most badly needed are photographs of Champaign County men in their Civil War uniforms and information of any kind on the activities of the GAR (Grand Army of the Republic) posts in Champaign County after the War.

The book's coverage of the activities of the Champaign County men in the War will be extremely complete. It will include extensive descriptions and histories of all area military units and will provide at least brief coverage of nearly every local man who enlisted in a unit raised in Champaign County, as well as information on many Champaign County men who served in units raised in other parts of the country.

The author of the book is Robert Behrens, Senior Loan Officer at the Commercial Bank of Champaign, who combines a long-term interest in Champaign County history with extensive experience in writing and publishing.

Persons who have materials to share are urged to call or write The Urbana Free Library Archives as soon as possible. Archives staff can be reached at 367-4025 or at 201 South Race Street, Urbana, IL 61801, from 10:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Saturday. All materials loaned will be treated with extreme care and returned as soon as they have been photographed.

The Urbana Free Library expects Robert Behrens' book to become the single most comprehensive publication on Champaign County men in the Civil War, and it is eager to make the book as complete as possible.

150 YEARS OF CHICAGO ARCHITECTURE

An exciting exhibit detailing 150 years of Chicago architecture is currently at the Museum of Science and Industry. Historic Chicago, modern Chicago and contemporary Chicago are united into a single portrait of a city with the most important new architecture in the world. The exhibit is divided into four parts: Early Chicago, the Prairie School and Frank Lloyd Wright, Realities — the influence of Mies van der Rohe and larger Chicago firms, and Trends — the work of different architects and different currents. The exhibit runs through January 15, 1986.

TAX CREDIT UPDATE

The Reagan administration's proposed repeal of the federal tax incentives for rehabilitation of historic buildings would be a "devastating blow" to the preservation of the nation's physical heritage and to efforts to revitalize older urban areas throughout the nation, National Trust President J. Jackson Walter announced recently.

"Without tax incentives, the economics of the marketplace dictate the demolition of many historic buildings as some developers try to realize the highest return on their investment by constructing new buildings," Walter said. "Repeal of the incentives discriminates against older buildings and ignores the public benefits to be derived from the preservation of historic buildings."

The release of "The President's Tax Proposals to the Congress for Fairness Growth and Simplicity" May 29 signaled the formal beginning of a major public policy debate that has significant implications for the future of historic preservation. The proposals call for elimination of the 25 percent investment

tax credit for rehabilitation of certified historic buildings, and for elimination of the 15 and 20 percent tax credits for rehabilitation of older commercial buildings. The changes are proposed for all expenditures made after January 1, 1986.

"The tremendous increase in urban redevelopment activity after the enactment of the 1981 tax credits has proven that the incentives are accomplishing exactly what Congress intended," Walter said. "The preservation movement will do all in its power to insure that these incentives are retained."

"Any changes in the name of fair tax reform must recognize that private investment in this country's heritage has benefits for society as well as the investor," Walter said. "The federal tax code must contain incentives that overcome the marketplace's tendency to ignore the long-term benefits of preservation."

(Reprinted from *News Service*; National Trust for Historic Preservation.)

In Illinois over \$600 million has been invested in 250 projects and over 30,000 jobs have been created. Over \$100 million has been returned to the state and local tax base and 97¢ of every dollar of tax credit taken is returned in federal revenue resulting from these projects.

The recently released House Ways and Means Committee's tax package does retain the Investment Tax Credits for rehabilitation. However, the following changes were made.

The historic credit is reduced from 25% to 20% for certified historic rehabilitation and requires full adjustment to basis for property placed in service on or after 1/1/86. The non-historic 15% and 20% credits have been merged into a single credit: a 10% credit for non-historic buildings constructed before 1935. There are also major changes in the transition rules affecting projects already underway. For more information about the specific changes involved, call PACA or Preservation Action, the national preservation lobby (202-659-0915).

The future of this very important preservation tool is in doubt. The Senate must still debate the issue. *Your* input is important. Call or write the Illinois delegation in support of retaining the

Investment Tax Credit for historic buildings.

The Honorable Alan J. Dixon
Rm. 3126, The Hart Bldg.
Washington, D.C. 20510
(202) 224-2854

The Honorable Paul Simon
462 Dirksen Bldg.
Washington, D.C. 20510
(202) 224-2152

THE PROBLEM SOLVER

Plaster Repair

Homeowners, contractors, and architects working with older houses should know how to repair damaged plaster. A new University of Illinois publication explains the most frequent causes of plaster failure:

- House settling or a nearby source of vibration
- Moisture, often seen as powdery bubbles on the surface
- Broken plaster keys that cause plaster to separate from wood lath
- Improper curing or a bad mix that result in weak plaster

The first in a new series of publications on old house restoration, the sixteen page, illustrated publication, "Plaster," explains how damaged, sagging plaster can often be repaired. Written by the university's Small Homes Council-Building Research Council, the publication provides a history of plastering and a glossary of plaster terms. It also explains which modern plaster systems can be used to replace badly damaged plaster.

Loose plaster can be reattached with plaster washers. A drywall patch can repair small holes. For cracks that reappear year after year, a heavy-bodied bedding compound and fiberglass tape is an effective patching technique.

Where the white finish coat of plaster has separated from a firm basecoat, a latex bonding agent can be painted on the basecoat before a new finish coat is applied.

Sometimes plaster is too badly damaged to be repaired. The homeowner should know that plaster is always applied to lath. The lath can be either metal lath, old wood lath, rock lath, or a veneer lath.

A variety of plaster products are also available. The standard plaster used

today is gypsum and sand mixture, mixed on the job site. Another type of plaster, using perlite or vermiculite particles instead of sand, is bagged in the factory. It has a slightly higher insulating ability, and it performs better in cold climates.

Another option is veneer plaster. This is the least expensive plaster system, only slightly more costly than drywall. Veneer lath and plaster are not as thick as metal, wood, or rock lath and plaster. This allows the owner to install a thin layer of insulation and still end up with a wall the same thickness as the original plastered wall. With masonry buildings, this is often the only way the exterior walls can be insulated.

"Plaster," was prepared by Marylee MacDonald of the council staff. Copies

are \$1.00 each, plus 50 cents for postage and handling. Order from Small Homes Council-Building Research Council, University of Illinois, 1 E. St. Mary's Road, Champaign, IL 61820.

NEW & RENEWING MEMBERS

Bruce Hannon
 Celeste Valleau
 Alice Berkson
 Dr. & Mrs. Robert Kirby
 Janet Macomber
 Walter Allen
 Eunice Dowse
 Arthur & Ruth Hill
 Bruce Hutchings

Renew your membership now for 1986
 (Remember, contributions are tax deductible)

S.A.V.E. PROGRAM

The Salvage of Architecturally Valuable Elements Committee has the following items available.

- 3 pairs of 5-panel, oak pocket doors with tracks (84" x 36" and 30")
- 1 swinging oak dining room-kitchen 5-panel door (84" x 30")
- 1 oak 5-panel door (84" x 30")
- 3 pine 4-panel doors (80" x 24")
- 4 pine 4-panel doors (80" x 32")
- 1 pine 6-panel door (84" x 24")
- 1 pine 5-panel door (70" x 24")
- 4 pine 5-panel doors (84" x 32")
- 1 lot of miscellaneous oak woodwork
- 1 lot of miscellaneous pine woodwork
- 2 wood loft ladders (8 foot)
- neon tubing — love, bout, salon, beauty &
- 5 metal brackets



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 ASSOCIATION OF CHAMPAIGN COUNTY
 Box 2555, Station A, Champaign, Illinois 61820

ARTS COUNCIL OF CHAMPAIGN COUNTY

709 West University Avenue
 Champaign, Illinois 61820

NON-PROFIT ORG.
 U.S. POSTAGE PAID
 CHAMPAIGN, IL
 PERMIT NO. 618

PACA Newsletter

Published by the Preservation and Conservation Association of Champaign County.

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 Vice President: Hermenia Kruidenier
 Treas.: Norman Baxley
 Exec. Director: Karen Lang Kummer
 359-0114

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

Membership Application P.A.C.A.



MEMBERSHIP CATEGORY:

INDIVIDUAL

- Adult \$10.00
- Student (1/2 time or more) \$ 5.00
- Senior Citizen \$ 5.00
- Family (includes all members of a household with no more than two members being over age 21) \$15.00

Additional Contribution _____

CIVIC

- Over 100 members \$100.00
- 50-100 members \$ 75.00
- Up to 50 members \$ 50.00

CORPORATE

..... \$ 50.00

NAME _____

RENEWAL NEW MEMBERSHIP

ADDRESS _____
Street State Zip

Make check payable to: PACA, Box 2555, Station A, Champaign, Illinois 61820.