HCJ Annual Dinner Meeting to Feature Bob Priddy

Author, historian and radio personality, Bob Priddy will be the keynote speaker at the Historic City of Jefferson’s Annual Dinner Meeting on Sunday, March 20th. Mr. Priddy has been reporting the news and documenting Missouri history for over 30 years. His daily radio program *Across Our Wide Missouri* can be heard on over 60 Missouri Net radio stations. He is currently News Director of Missouri Net.

Mr. Priddy has authored five books including a three-volume set of *Across Our Wide Missouri*, *Only the Rivers are Peaceful* (1989), and his current book *The Art of the Missouri Capitol: History in Canvas, Bronze, and Stone*. The latter was co-authored with Art Historian Jeffrey Ball.

HCJ members will remember the fascinating tour of the art work in the Missouri Capitol conducted by Mr. Priddy for HCJ in 2008. Many on the tour were unaware of the treasure we have in our state capitol! Priddy has since finished his book on this subject.

It will be available to HCJ members at 30% off the regular price.

The theme of this year’s Dinner Meeting will be *Celebrating Preservation Pioneers*. The first recipient of the newly created Preservation Pioneer Award will be Juanita Donehue. Emcees for the evening will be Sam Bushman and Warren Krech. The meal, with a choice of chicken cordon bleu or pork chops and a vegetarian option, will be catered by Argyle Catering Company.

Reservation forms will be mailed to members and are also available online. The cost is $20 for HCJ members and $22 for non-members. There is a March 11 deadline for reservations. Sorry, no reservations can be made without payment. For more information contact Lois Heldenbrand at 619-9376.

This should prove to be a very enjoyable evening and one you won’t want to miss!
A Box Full Of Memories

by Steve Veile
HCJ President

One single solitary box.

I went on a treasure hunt recently in an attempt to find a picture. Our dear friend and founder, Elizabeth Rozier, had passed away at the age of 103 and we wanted to honor her in some small way. Jenny Smith, our newsletter editor, decided to do a tribute within these very pages. But, we needed a picture.

Another HCJ founding board member, Gary Kremer, told me they had some items in the archives of The State Historical Society of Missouri and perhaps I could find something of value there. When I went to view the items, a single box was placed before me and I did find a picture. But, I found some other things too.

The box was full of files and papers and old, old photos. Many of us have an image of Elizabeth Rozier as a stately older woman with white hair tied up in a bun. It was an image that never changed. But in this box there were pictures of her as a girl, some at the age of 20 or so, and perhaps even younger. Many were unmarked and undated with the identities of those pictured impossible to know. Pictures that were taken between 1915-1925, that vintage era a long time ago.

The most intriguing item in the box was an old handmade scrapbook that seemed to cover the four years when “Dee” McReynolds, as she was known then, attended Carthage High School. She had pasted in photos of her high school friends, their handwritten messages to her, and invitations to dances, ticket stubs, and memorabilia from all of the activities that a pretty young girl like Elizabeth might have been involved in. Precious memories from her youth, before she married state Senator George Rozier... before she moved to the capital city...before she became a preservationist and passionate protector of our architectural treasures.

A couple of things struck me looking through that box. First, what a shame that so many pictures were saved without names or dates attached. Good times from the very old days with images of people taken at places unknown and unknowable at this point. Who are these people? What were they doing? Why were they so important to Elizabeth? We will never know.

The other thing that struck me: Here in this box sit photos, letters, clippings and files from the life of a good and great woman. Over 100 years upon this earth and one cardboard box is left to show for it! Makes one think about one’s own mortality and what we will leave behind in our box for others to find and wonder about.

Golden Hammer Awards
Will Resume in May

Do you have suggestions of recently renovated properties that have made a difference in their neighborhood? Contact Deedie Bedosky @ 635-2177
In a break with tradition, the annual HCJ Homes Tour has been moved this year from the first Sunday in June to the last Sunday in September. This year marks the 150th anniversary of the start of the War Between the States, so this year the Homes Tour will focus on Civil War-era homes. This will be a driving tour, with participating homes spread throughout Jefferson City. Homes expected to be featured on the tour this year include the Dulle Home on St. Mary’s Boulevard, the Monaco Home on Moreau Drive, the Marmaduke House on East Capitol Avenue, and the Female Seminary on State Street. For more information, or to volunteer to work at the Homes Tour (we need MANY volunteers!), please call Steve Veile at 635-8667. More details will follow in coming newsletters.

A new award to honor individuals for their pioneering work in historic preservation in Jefferson City has been created by the HCJ Board of Directors. The very first Preservation Pioneer Award will be presented to Juanita Donehue at the HCJ Annual Meeting on March 20. Juanita will be honored for leading the way in the revival of the near east side of the city, where she purchased and renovated the old Kullen Mercantile Building and created O’Donoghue’s Steaks and Seafood Restaurant (shown at left). We looked on in amazement as the entrepreneur moved into an area that many people tried to avoid due to an aura of decay, blight and crime that seemed to be present. But Juanita saw an opportunity and, as a result, not only has her restaurant taken off, but others have joined her on the band wagon. Now Prison Brews and The Mission have added new life to the area.

HCJ hopes to present the Preservation Pioneer Award to a deserving individual at each annual meeting. To nominate someone for a future Preservation Pioneer Award, please contact Steve Veile at 635-8667.

Mark Rehagen treated HCJ members to a very entertaining and convincing portrayal of Abraham Lincoln February 10th at Langston Hughes Auditorium. At 6’4” and with a striking likeness to the 16th President, Rehagen relied upon some 20 sources to construct his portrayal, the most influential source being the Doris Kearns Goodwin account Team of Rivals. He considers his subject “our last great statesman.” This was his sixth performance of the Lincoln portrayal. Every program is a little different each time in order to present something new for repeat patrons or to tailor it to different audiences. “I especially enjoy portraying Lincoln to grade school students, bringing history alive for them,” he said. Mark has also played Lincoln in the Capital City Players production of Civil War.

Mark is Vice President, Cash Management Operations, at Central Technology Services.

Right: Mark Rehagen dressed for his Lincoln role with narrator Doug Richardson, who played the role of John Milton Hay, Lincoln’s secretary.
Remembering Elizabeth Rozier
A Historic Preservation Legend and Founding Member of HCJ

by Jenny Smith

The year is 1972. I hold a dream of Elizabeth Rozier in which she is standing with her back to the old Lohman building built in 1839 at Jefferson Landing, her white hair gathered into a perfect bun. Her hands are flung high in front of her as she glares up at a poised backhoe being operated by Governor Hearnes, daring him to touch any historic structures in Jefferson Landing. He backs off and she wins. Or rather, the citizens of Jefferson City and Missouri win. In this dream, she is my heroine.

With the passing of Elizabeth Rozier last month at the age of 103, I was reminded of this enduring image of her as a defender and crusader for historic preservation in Jefferson City. Her victory in saving Jefferson Landing was a defining moment in historic preservation in the Capital City. It gave legitimacy to the burgeoning movement. It made the citizenry pause, look around at the history disappearing all around them, and finally ask “why?” Her effort was a bold move, even considered radical by many in an era when “out-with-the-old, in-with-the-new” was the conventional wisdom. She challenged the widely-held assumptions that economic development and historic preservation were mutually exclusive. And now, 35 years later, we see that she was right.

Jefferson Landing is a State Historical Site, touted on our “Feel the History” slogans promoting Jefferson City, attracting thousands of visitors each year. Nobody questions now the wisdom of preserving Jefferson Landing, the historic preservation centerpiece in our county.

I visited with her on a number of occasions about her ordeal in saving Jefferson Landing. “Few people understand how close we came to losing those buildings. It took an emotional toll on me. There were many nights I came home with tears in my eyes,” she told me. We must not forget that she is also credited with saving the Carnegie Library on Adams Street.

Elizabeth was born on October 23, 1907 in Carthage, Missouri to Allen and Maude McReynolds. She attended college in a day when this achievement was rare for a woman. She first attended Monticello College in Illinois, then the University of Wisconsin, finishing her degree at the University of Missouri. She once dated a young zoologist named Marlin Perkins, also a student at MU. He would go on to become the famous host of the long-running TV show “Wild Kingdom.” With a twinkle in her eye and her characteristic good-natured chuckle, she told me, “He liked to talk a lot about animals.”

Elizabeth’s father was a state senator from 1935-1942. It was through her father that she met one of his young colleagues, another state senator, George Rozier. George’s family came from an old family of French settlers in Ste. Genevieve. His great great grandfather, Ferdinand Rozier, immigrated to Missouri in 1803 with his business partner, John James Audubon, the renowned ornithologist for whom the Audubon Society was named.

George and Elizabeth were married in 1941, moving to Elmerine Avenue in Jefferson City three years later, and filling their home with the liveliness of two adopted sons, John and Jim. After George passed away in 1983, Elizabeth continued to live on Elmerine until 2004. We neighbors affectionately called her “the Queen of Elmerine.” She hosted the first neighborhood Christmas party in 1996 and again in 1997. “This should become a street

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tradition,” she announced, “but not necessarily at my house,” she added with a chuckle. And, so, it became a tradition. She was royalty in our eyes and now a legend.

Even with her efforts to raise public awareness of the cultural, aesthetic, and economic value of historic preservation, an event in February 1982 would set the movement back. The destruction of the 150-year-old City Jail sent shock waves throughout the community. A small but passionate group of early preservationists had managed to arrange funding to renovate the old jail for adaptive reuse. But the jail came down anyway, not for parking, not to build something else in its spot, and not because of lack of funding to restore it. It came down because a few powerful people simply did not want it there. Jefferson City lost too much downtown historic architecture in the 1960s and 1970s, in large part due to the prevailing anti-preservation attitudes. It was Elizabeth Rozier’s mission to change these attitudes.

With the loss of the old jail, Jefferson City’s preservation community resolved that such groundless historical destruction should not happen again, at least not without an organized counter-effort. ENOUGH, they said. With that determination, the Historic City of Jefferson was established. The organizational meeting was held in Elizabeth’s living room in February 1983. Carolyn McDowell, Mary Ann Caplinger, Chris Graham, Eldon Hattervig, Jill Johnson, Gary Kremer, and Elizabeth Rozier became the first Board of Directors of HCJ. It was Elizabeth who got this ball of community conservation rolling and growing. From 25 members in 1983 to almost 300 members in 2011, HCJ is now the preservation voice in Jefferson City.

We owe the formation of HCJ in large part to Elizabeth, but she was also actively involved in an impressive list of other organizations, to name just a few: the Cole County Historical Society, the Missouri Alliance for Historic Preservation, the Tuesday Club, St. Mary’s Guild, Grace Episcopal Church, the State Historical Society of Missouri, National Trust of Historic Preservation, Arthritis Advisory Council, Council of Clubs, and Phi Beta Kappa and Phi Beta Phi sororities. In addition, she devoted a great deal of effort to improve library services in the area, serving on many local library boards and commissions.

She was a lady of charm, wit and refinement, an engaging conversationalist, an inquisitive history buff.

She received the Jefferson City Chamber of Commerce William Quigg Leadership Award and the Gregory Stockard Distinguished Service Award presented by the Jefferson City Historic Preservation Commission.

In celebration of her 100th birthday, Representative Mark Bruns read a Proclamation and Certificate of Excellence in the House of Representatives, honoring and thanking her for her community leadership. Bruns observed that Elizabeth had accomplished more in one lifetime than most people do in three.

She was a lady of charm, wit and refinement, an engaging conversationalist with an interest and inquisitiveness on many topics. She was an enthusiastic history buff: on a visit with her at Heisinger Home, she gushed about listening to the book “Undaunted Courage” on a audio recording that told of Lewis and Clark’s journey. By this time her eyesight was gone, but she was enjoying the services for the visually impaired that she herself had helped to establish.

Longtime friend Dottie Dallmeyer said of Elizabeth: “She was a pillar of our community, a preservation pioneer and advocate, a grand lady, whose influence and caring will live on in the City of Jefferson for years to come.” There is no doubt that Jefferson City is a much better place due to the influence of Elizabeth Rozier.
Carolyn Bening, one of the newest members of the Thomas Lawson Price Society, was welcomed at a December 12 reception at the home of Darryl and Connie Hubble. Lynn Osvold, and Henry and Mardelle Gensky also became TLP members recently, bringing the society membership to 33. Many thanks to all for their commitment to the mission of HCJ.

Many thanks also go to the Hubbles for opening their home for this reception. Their home is a very spacious and beautifully renovated second-floor apartment above Whaley’s Pharmacy, 620 E. High Street, which they own and operate. The building dates back to 1896 and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The apartment was on the recent Heisinger Holiday Home Tour and featured in the Jefferson City Magazine. In 2000, when the apartment was in the beginning phase of renovations, it was on an HCJ Homes Tour. It was a treat to see the stunning finished product!

For more information on becoming a TLP Society member, contact Steve Veile at 635-8667.

The fire was crackling in the fireplace and the trees were decorated as hosts Craig and Ruthie Sturdevant welcomed more than 60 HCJ members to their historic home on Moreau Drive December 14th. The annual membership meeting began with Henry Gensky’s recounting the stories behind the late 1920s house built by the Ott family and later brought back to life in the late 50s by the Steppelmans, before being revitalized by the Sturdevants. The featured program for the evening was Ken Winn’s delightful account of the “Inventing the American Christmas.” In telling the history of many holiday traditions, Winn took his audience on a whirlwind sleigh tour from the earliest festivals rooted in the Roman Saturnalia honoring the god of seeds and fertility, to the 6th century’s blend of increasingly pagan traditions over the strict Christian elements, until Cromwell’s abolishment of Christmas in 1647. The New England Puritans banned the observance of Christmas until after the Civil War and not until 1890 did Christmas become a legal holiday in America.

Winn then turned to the evolution of Santa Claus from the symbolic fourth-century Bishop St. Nicholas; to the Teutonic Kris Kringle; to Washington Irving’s creation of a Dutch patron saint Nicholas; to Clement Moore’s tale of a sleigh and reindeer driver, “so lively and quick” who falls down chimneys before careening “up to the housetops.” The final transformation came with Thomas Nast’s jolly roly-poly, with “cheeks like cherries,” a beloved character soon to appear in Coke ads. With Winn’s affirmation that “Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Claus,” and before heading outside to look to the skies, HCJ members took in the eggnog and goodies arranged for by HCJ Secretary Janet Maurer.
HCJ Candidate Forum Educates Voters

HCJ’s first experience hosting a Candidate Forum was a great success, drawing over 60 spectators and 17 candidates for 7 city contests. The three mayoral candidates were given 10 minutes; council candidates, 5 minutes; city prosecutor and municipal judge, 3 minutes with a little time allowed for questions. Attending HCJ members found it refreshing to hear so much support for historic preservation from the candidates. As a non-profit organization, HCJ cannot make endorsements, but spectators came away with much more information on the candidates than they came in with, allowing for a more informed vote.

Congratulations to the winner of the mayoral race, Mayor-elect Eric Struemph. (Mayoral candidates pictured below.) Also after the February 8th election, Renee Godbee will face Brian Stumpe in the race for the City Prosecutor in the April election.

Mike’s Corner Pocket Renovation:
What part of those metal facades did we like?

The front façade of the former pool hall, Mike’s Corner Pocket on High Street, has been stripped off to reveal a treasure of architectural flourishes underneath, maybe one of the most ornate yet uncovered downtown. The name of a former store “S. H. KRESS & Co.” was also uncovered. The façade removal is part of a larger project undertaken by the family of Dan Pfenenger who recently purchased the building. There are plans for a sports bar and design business in the lower level and loft apartments in the upper level. With the uncovering of the beautiful craftsmanship beneath the metal façade, we are left to ponder what the thinking was back in the 1960s and 1970s that thought those facades were an aesthetic improvement?

We will watch this transformation as well as others on High Street with interest and with appreciation to these visionary owners!
**Save the Date**

HCJ Annual Dinner Meeting

Sunday, March 20, 2011
McClung Park Pavilion
Reception begins at 4:30 pm; dinner at 5:15 pm
Keynote Speaker: Bob Priddy

RSVP by March 11
619-9376

**Looking back**

Web Master—Tony Smith
Newsletter Editor—Jenny Smith
Membership—Sam Bushman
Oral History—D.J. Nash

**Moving forward**

Golden Hammer Awards—Deedie Bedosky
Development—Lois Heldenbrand
Homes Tour—Mary Ann Hall
HCJ Foundation—Stephen Stark

**OUR MISSION STATEMENT**

To proactively preserve our historic resources and create an environment that makes preservation a central focus for the future development in the City of Jefferson.

Visit our Web site at [www.historiccityofjefferson.org](http://www.historiccityofjefferson.org)