In the city named after him, none other than "Thomas Jefferson" will deliver the keynote program at the Historic City of Jefferson's Annual Dinner Meeting. Actor Bill Barker, one of the premier Jefferson impersonators, will introduce us to the man who is our city's namesake. HCJ members will not want to miss this very special Annual Dinner program on April 6th at McClung Park Pavilion.

Members will soon receive registration information in the mail for the dinner and program. The evening will begin with a wine reception at 4:30pm followed by dinner at 5:15. A short business meeting after dinner will precede the featured program by Bill Barker.

HCJ is privileged to have our own local KRCG celebrity, Dick Preston, to emcee the evening's events. The meal will be catered by Argyle Catering, featuring German pot roast and chicken cordon bleu.

Besides the annual election of officers, the business meeting will include the presentations of the Preservation Pioneer Award, the Volunteer of the Year Award, and a Lifetime Achievement Award.

Registration deadline is March 27. You won’t want to miss meeting Thomas Jefferson up close! If you have questions, you may call Janet Maurer at 291-4320. Mr. Jefferson’s appearance proudly sponsored by:

Jefferson Bank

Bill Barker has portrayed Thomas Jefferson in a variety of venues since his first appearance at Independence Hall in Philadelphia in 1984. He has appeared as Jefferson for Colonial Williamsburg since 1993.

Barker received a BA in history from Villanova University and University of Pennsylvania. He has been cast as Thomas Jefferson in many different venues including the musical 1776, and programs on Jefferson presented on all the major networks.

Barker has performed as Jefferson at the White House, the Palace of Versailles in France, Great Britain, and throughout the United States. He presented for Chautauqua and has been featured as Jefferson in several magazines including Time, People, Atlantic, Philadelphia, Southern Living, Reader's Digest, and the Colonial Williamsburg Journal.

The same height, weight and general appearance as Mr. Jefferson, Barker is regarded as the foremost Jefferson impersonator in the country.
A Fond Farewell to D.J. Nash

It is with great sadness and heavy heart that we bid adieu to our dear friend D.J. Nash. D.J. was a long-time member who served on the HCJ Board of Directors and most recently as chair of HCJ’s Oral History Program. The Oral History program was, in fact, her inspiration. D.J. was involved in many, many community efforts, too numerous to mention in this short tribute. But, arguably, she will be remembered most for her kindness, concern for others and sense of humor.

She was everyone’s friend, warm and refreshing to be around; a genuinely kind, unique and interesting person. You would have a hard time getting her to talk about herself. She always managed to redirect conversations back to her questions about you. If you were happy or sad about something, she wanted to celebrate or commiserate with you.

Our deepest sympathies to D.J.’s children and husband, Wade. She will be sorely missed.
The walls of the state penitentiary came falling down. Or so it appeared in June 2013 as members of the HCJ Board and the city’s Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) toured the MSP to assess the devastating deterioration of the historic site. Mark Schreiber, HCJ member and former MSP deputy warden, pointed out the extensive water damage from gaping holes in roofs and consequences of years of lack of building maintenance, resulting in what Schreiber called, “Life after man.” He continued that in the future, the city will no longer be conducting tours of the historic structures, but instead point to a plaque that reads, “Here once stood the old Missouri State Penitentiary.”

Schreiber’s premonition of life without historic tours came all too soon a few months later in October when the MSP was officially shut down because of mold creeping over damp prison wall surfaces, mold harmful not just to walls and ghosts, but certainly to human tourists. The closing—enacted shortly after the Travel Channel’s MSP production of a “Ghost Adventures” episode—caused the cancellation of some 5,500 reservations: history tours, ghost and paranormal hunts, photography tours, and television and movie filmings. It was obviously a major disappointment for the entire business community, as attested at the time by Ryan Burns, communications manager at the CVB, since such a major tourist site attracts multiple webs of commerce.

Over the years, even before the prison complex’s decommission in 2004, various state and local groups have attempted to save the site for commerce and tourism. As early as 2001, the legislature created the Missouri State Penitentiary Redevelopment Commission, a joint effort of the state, county, and the city to develop plans for the site. However, the Commission’s progress stalled. In 2009, Office of Administration Commissioner Kelvin Simmons described a plan by private development and state government to redevelop the old MSP 140-acres to include historic preservation, tourism, private enterprise, and state offices. Some projects were completed with the construction of the state health lab and the new federal courthouse, as well as opening public tours of the ghost-laden prison walls. At its peak from 2010 to 2012, the MSP site had become one of the state’s largest tourist attractions, generating about $275,000 in revenue in 2012 from more than 19,000 visitors from some twenty-three countries.

So it was with a community’s sigh of relief in November 2013 when Governor Jay Nixon and CVB Director Diane Gillespie announced the joint city-state agreement to share the $2 million cost for repairs and mold cleansing of the MSP. With Gov. Nixon’s announcement that the CVB could continue tours in spring of 2014, we held our breaths, wanting to believe that these prophesies were more than spiritual maneuverings. After all, the old penitentiary had withstood—or not withstood—some ten years of inaction.

The agreement, however, is holding true. The city is leasing the MSP property for fifteen years with two additional five-year terms as needed and splitting the $2 million cost with the state’s Office of Administration. According to CVB Director Diane Gillespie, dependent on favorable weather conditions, tours of MSP will commence on March 15, 2014 with three housing-unit buildings, including the gas chamber, open for visitors; the fourth building will open in April or May. A joint meeting of the OA and the CVB will take place mid-February to confirm that all essential repairs and maintenance tasks will be completed by the March 15 opening, including the repaired roof and elimination of mold.

Gillespie commented that the CVB is “very excited that the OA expedited their joint plans, thereby moving forward with opening the MSP.” As Steve Veile, HCJ president, recently stated, Governor Nixon “took a giant leap . . . in leaving a lasting legacy” as the catalyst for the city-state agreement. Most certainly, the Jefferson City CVB joined the governor in leaping forward for economic development and historic preservation in our capital city.

To view the history of the development of the MSP and the progress of the 2013 city-state agreement, check out www.missouripentours.com.
Abandoned Buildings: *Old Town at Risk*

By Cathy Bordner

**PART I - Defining the Problem and Its Cost**

This is the first of a multi-part series addressing the problem of abandoned buildings and the decay that is evident in our City’s core. Of most immediate concern is the decay of one of our City’s oldest and grandest streets, East Capitol Avenue. In this area that spans the mile between the old Missouri State Penitentiary and our Missouri State Capitol, there are nineteen abandoned buildings. Instead of a corridor graced with elegant old homes, a corridor on which visitors to our city pass, there is blight and the negative economic impact that goes with it. Part One deals with background information to help our readers understand the scope of the problem.

The abandoned building problem is a cancer in Jefferson City’s older neighborhoods. These vacant buildings are draining city resources, negatively impacting the neighborhoods where they stand, and sapping the energy out of revitalization efforts in the inner core of our city. By looking closely at this problem and its impact, we can understand the importance of solving this problem and develop effective strategies to address it.

In 2007, the City Council passed an abandoned buildings ordinance. Since its passage, 110 buildings have been identified as meeting the criteria for classification as abandoned buildings. Nineteen of those buildings in and around East Capitol Avenue are identified on the list as being owned or under the control of one person. That person has defied nearly every attempt by the City to fix up or sell the properties. What is a city to do?

Cost #1 – City Staff Time and Resources: City staff spends time and resources addressing code-enforcement issues in abandoned buildings, inspecting the buildings, completing paper work, preparing for hearings, hiring private contractors to perform work, and issuing liens. These actions are necessary because of the large number of rundown, vacant and/or abandoned buildings in Jefferson City. This is a significant drain on city resources. In some cases the owners of abandoned buildings have the financial resources to maintain their buildings. For those who do not have the resources to take care of their buildings, the buildings should be offered for sale or donated to an entity like Habitat for Humanity or Old Town Redevelopment Company.

Cost #2 – Crime: A theory called the broken window theory says that broken windows and rundown buildings give the impression that no one cares, which encourages vandalism, vagrancy, drug activity and other crimes in vacant buildings. This theory appears true in the East Capitol Avenue area, which has a very high concentration of abandoned buildings. According to the August 7, 2013, Jefferson City News Tribune, “Officers found a vacant house on fire at 111 Adams Street,” a structure that is one block off East Capitol Avenue. The article continues that several subjects were squatting in the vacant house. A December 10, 2013 Jefferson City News Tribune article states a twenty-three-year-old man admitted to having sex with a girl under the age of fourteen “at an abandoned residence on East Capitol Avenue.” This area has more buildings on the city’s abandoned buildings list than any other area in the city, a fact that appears to promote major crime in that neighborhood.

(Continued on page 5)
The Abandoned Buildings Ordinance
What It Is and How It Works

In 2007 City Council passed Jefferson City’s Abandoned Building Ordinance to address the blight and decay of abandoned buildings. In 2011, the ordinance was amended to bolster its enforcement. On August 24, 2011, an article in the Jefferson City News Tribune reported that city staff was, “…moving forward with plans for an abandoned building register, hoping to begin the process next month.” The article went on to summarize the Ordinance:

“A structure is put on the abandoned buildings list when it has been unoccupied for at least 90 days and meets at least two of the criteria: unsecured, fire damaged to prohibit safe occupancy, site of loitering or vagrancy, lack of property maintenance and upkeep, boarded up for at least 90 days, taxes in arrears to the city for more than one year, disconnected water or electricity, structurally unsound or a potential hazard.”

The Mayor and Council recognized the abandoned building problem, and directed city staff to develop procedures to enforce the Abandoned Property Ordinance. Since then, city staff has identified 110 buildings to meet the criteria to be on the Abandoned Property Registry. Once city staff identifies a building as meeting the criteria, they notify the owner, who may repair the problem. If the building continues to meet the criteria, the owner is required to pay a $44 registration fee, then $32 monthly as long as the building is on the registry.

The City of Jefferson pays for the hours spent by police, fire, emergency crews, and other public services dealing with crime, including crime in neighborhoods with abandoned buildings. There is also the high costs in human suffering for victims of crime and the trickle-down effects to society that accompany crime.

Cost #3 – Decreasing Property Values and Property Tax Revenue: The property values of vacant and/or abandoned buildings decrease, causing a negative impact on bordering properties and often entire neighborhoods. Neighborhoods with abandoned buildings can see a decrease in the value of other real estate in the neighborhood, even of properties painstakingly maintained by their owners. These owners of renovated and maintained properties in devalued neighborhoods are forced to bear a monetary loss in their investment. Like falling dominos, neighborhood property deficits result in a loss in property taxes for the city coffers.

To illustrate this problem, let’s look at the East Capitol Avenue neighborhood. Recently the Marmaduke House, at 700 Capitol Avenue, which was beautifully restored several years ago, and responsibly maintained since, sold at auction for $300,000. This was a quarter of a million dollars less than expected. Again, this building is in a neighborhood with nineteen buildings on the Abandoned Building list, all owned by one person.

We have concentrated our attention to East Capitol Avenue for many reasons: a large number of abandoned buildings exist in a small area, the corridor has high visibility, and these homes are important to our city’s architectural history. But other districts are just as important.

The city’s Southside, or Old Munichburg, has been dealing with derelict landlords and abandoned buildings for decades. The members of Old Munichburg Association (OMA) have worked long and hard to bring positive attention, businesses and investment to their area. And yet they have landlords who allow abandoned buildings to undergo demolition by neglect, adding to crime and blight.

Cost #4 – Loss of Investment: Private individuals, organizations (for example, not for profits like OMA, HCJ and Old Town Revitalization Company) and the City of Jefferson are investing in our older neighborhoods. We are encouraging private individuals to purchase old buildings, renovate them, and put them into use. Those individuals invest their money, time and resources in these projects. HCJ has invested in renovating an older building on E. McCarty. Old Town Revitalization Company works to get incentives from the city and low interest bank loans to eligible people to invest in renovation of older buildings in Old Town. The incentives are financed by tax dollars—yours and mine. However, there is no return on this investment as long as we allow 110 abandoned buildings (and probably many more that are not on the list) in the neighborhoods where people are investing. A half a million dollars can be spent renovating a derelict old building.
For the last several years both during my time on the City Council and as a member of the board of directors for Old Town Revitalization Company, I’ve been championing financial incentives to reclaim rental and vacant houses in our older, established neighborhoods as owner-occupied, single family residences. The rationale is pretty straightforward. It rings true for anyone who has experienced renting a place earlier in life before owning their home. Renters are not committed to their homes and neighborhoods in the same way as homeowners. If renters encounter a problem with a house or a neighborhood, they move on. If homeowners encounter the same problem, they work to protect their investment by correcting or improving the situation. That approach is working in many areas of Old Town. With the assistance of city grants and special bank financing, individuals are taking ownership of their homes and the surrounding neighborhoods.

But these efforts have had almost no impact on what could arguably be the most beautiful streetscape and neighborhood in Jefferson City — East Capitol Avenue. The area is not without its successes. A number of private businesses and associations lining East Capitol Avenue have restored their buildings with impressive results. Similarly, Jefferson City government has paid special attention to this neighborhood in deference to its historic and cultural significance. Still, a unique set of circumstances in the East Capitol Avenue neighborhood has made it immune to attempts to transform it into a community of residents who care about their homes and neighborhood. Simply put, there are very few houses available for would-be homeowners to purchase. The root problem has been privately acknowledged for many years. It is time to discuss it publicly.

One individual owns nearly three dozen houses in the neighborhood, including the majority of the houses fronting either side of the 400 and 500 blocks of East Capitol Avenue. In and of itself, ownership of a large number of properties in a neighborhood should not be an issue, but you get a hint of the problem if you travel East Capitol Avenue at night. There are no lights shining through the windows of the houses after dark. They are vacant and have been so for many years.

A check of public records confirms the problem. There are currently 110 properties registered on the City of Jefferson’s abandoned buildings list. Nineteen of the properties on that list are located in the area of East Capitol Avenue and belong to this same individual. Jefferson City government requires owners of abandoned properties to pay a registration fee. The registration fees for the vacant properties in the East Capitol Avenue neighborhood have gone unpaid and total approximately $15,000.00.

There are consequences for all of us when buildings are left abandoned and neglected. Sometimes they get our attention like early one morning last August when a homeless man set fire to a vacant house at 111 Adams Street knowing that squatters were inside. That house belonged to the individual noted above and will have to be demolished due to the extensive fire damage. So far that hasn’t happened and city government might have to use taxpayer dollars to raze the structure.

Other consequences are less dramatic but are nonetheless real. A Sunshine Law request to City Hall reveals a dozen special tax bills totaling over $33,000.00 filed since 2010 against properties owned by this same individual in the East Capitol Avenue area. The bills are for city services ranging from boarding up of broken windows to cutting vegetation to tearing down a garage. The bills have not been paid or, more accurately, they have not been paid by the property owner. They have been paid by you and me as taxpayers.

And while we are on the subject of taxes, four neighborhood properties owned by this individual have delinquent real estate taxes owed — three of them for the past two years and the fourth for three consecutive years. Those four properties are not contributing to public coffers for the services provided to them.

The most insidious and far-reaching consequence is yet to come. If these buildings continue to deteriorate and collapse or are demolished, East Capitol Avenue’s promise of a neighborhood filled with beautiful and historic buildings will go down with them. It is time for all of us to talk. This is more than a matter of private property rights; it is a matter of a community’s heritage disintegrating before our very eyes.

A member of the Historic City of Jefferson, Ron Medin served as a member of the City Council from 2007 to 2011, representing the City’s 5th Ward. He authored legislation that created the Old Town Redevelopment Co. and remains an active member of the Old Town Board of Directors.
Mark Schreiber To Be Honored with the Lifetime Achievement Award

Historian and author Mark Schreiber will be among those honored at HCJ’s annual meeting this year. He will be presented with a Lifetime Achievement Award, the second person in the organization’s 31 year history to receive such an honor. The only other recipient of this award was the late Dr. Joseph Summers, a prominent HCJ member.

A dedicated preservationist with a textbook knowledge of local history, Schreiber has been instrumental in the preservation of the old Woodlawn and City Cemeteries and recently pushed state and local leaders to fix the problems at the old Missouri State Penitentiary caused by a lack of maintenance on the buildings in the historic campus. His efforts, at least in part, led to an agreement by the state to lease parts of the old prison to the City and to a decision by civic leaders to commit more than $2 million into the stabilization of those structures.

An avid local historian, Schreiber is retired after a 42-year career in criminal justice, much of it spent working in or around the Missouri State Penitentiary, the longest continuously operational prison west of the Mississippi River. He returned to serve as the last deputy warden before it closed in 2004. During his tenure, Schreiber collected many stories and artifacts from the prison, once called “the bloodiest 47 acres in America” by Time magazine. One of his books, Shanks to Shakers, documents rare, historical and collectible artifacts associated with life behind the walls. His other book, Somewhere in Time: 170 Years of Missouri Corrections was released in 2004.

Hank and Linda Stratman To Receive HCJ’s Annual Preservation Pioneer Award

The Preservation Pioneer Award this year will go to Hank & Linda Stratman for their work in the preservation and restoration of the lodge and cottages formerly known as Warwick Village. Now dubbed the Village Square, the complex has been lovingly restored by the couple following a five-year plan that includes conversion of the lodge into an apartment building. It also contains a coffee house, the Brew House, in what used to be the lobby area of the old hotel.

Restoration of the lodge was their first order of business, but then the couple tackled the series of cottages that now ring a parking area just to the west of the lodge. The ART Bazaar recently moved into one of those cottages with a beauty shop, gift shop, and art studio among the other tenants filling the now restored cottages. The Landmark Lodge at Village Square received HCJ’s Golden Hammer award in 2011 and was also designated a Local Landmark by the Historic Preservation Commission in 1997.

With the lodge and cottages complete, or nearly so, Hank & Linda spearheaded another improvement to the area. On Veteran’s Day, 2013, Freedom Corner was dedicated in the green space just east of the Village Square. A monument to the men and women who have served in the many wars in which this country has fought is now the focal point as you approach the Y intersection of McCarty and High Streets.

This award, the Lifetime Achievement award and the Volunteer of the Year Award, will be presented at the annual meeting in April by HCJ President Steve Veile.

Historic Moreau Drive District Placed on NRHP Celebration, Homes Tour and Ice Cream Social Planned

The historic east-end Moreau Drive neighborhood is celebrating! Residents received notice in January from the Department of Natural Resources, Historic Preservation Office that the National Park Service had accepted its placement on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). This was the culmination of a two-year process that started as part of a training exercise for two DNR employees. Tiffany Patterson and Michelle Diedriech completed an extensive survey of 283 houses within the boundaries of the district which was a great impetus to the nomination. You may recall that HCJ donated $1000 toward the expense of this application with the City contributing as well.

HCJ is excited about the recognition of the Moreau Drive neighborhood for its history and architectural distinction. In this spirit, plans are underfoot to return to the Moreau Drive neighborhood for HCJ’s annual Homes Tours this year in conjunction with celebrating the placement of this beautiful old neighborhood on the NRHP. Some of its elegant homes will be showcased. We also plan to resurrect the popular HCJ Ice Cream Social held many years as a fundraiser, to be held this year at McClung Park.

Plans for this neighborhood celebration and homes tour are being made for August but no date has been set…stay tuned. It is sure to be a spectacular summer event.
Why did you join HCJ?
My sister Sally invited me to be her guest at a meeting/program. I enjoyed the program, the food was good, the members were friendly and I have always had an interest in 'old buildings'. So, when she asked if I wanted to join, I did.

What do you like best about being a member?
The dedication of the group to preserving and promoting the history and historic buildings of our town. The level of knowledge, commitment and support of the members, especially the board and volunteers, is inspiring. The dedication of the members to the HCJ mission really came home to me when they were working to save the West McCarty street properties including my parent’s home, the Bassmann house.

What is your favorite HCJ program or activity?
The presentations are informative and entertaining. The Homes Tour is always wonderful and I love being able to see the inside of the featured homes. The Golden Hammer is great because it recognizes the efforts of individuals who are preserving ‘old’ buildings. The Art and Essay Contest promotes interest in preservation by youth. I guess the answer is, No, I don’t have a favorite.

Do you think we have made progress in Jefferson City on historic preservation?
Yes, I think HCJ has made progress in historic preservation. But, I also believe continued education and work to increase public awareness as well as member involvement in identifying, maintaining, rehabbing and preserving historic structures must be a continuous process.

If someone asked you the benefits of HCJ membership, what would you say?
As an HCJ member you get to meet and work with members who are dedicated to promoting the HCJ mission of historic preservation. You are able to attend the programs HCJ sponsors. You receive the informative and exceptionally well written newsletter. Simply put, HCJ membership includes friends, fun, knowledge, hard work, entertainment and food while looking back and moving forward together.

What one thing might HCJ members be surprised to learn about you?
While working for the US Post Office in the mid 1960s, I was featured in the Jefferson City News Tribune as Jefferson City’s first female mailman. A child who was playing in his front yard when I delivered mail to his house asked, “Are you a man or a lady?” He didn’t know ‘girls’ could deliver mail.
HCJ Members respond Generously to Foundation Appeal

A note from HCJ Foundation President Nicholas Monaco

The annual appeal to members of the Historic City of Jefferson was a wonderful success. More than thirty members generously responded with contributions at the request of the Foundation’s Board of Trustees. This response increased the Foundation’s financial strength and ability to fulfill its community-betterment programs by over 33%. We congratulate those who responded by honoring the HCJ Foundation with this dedication to making Jefferson City an even better and more beautiful city.

The Foundation compliments:

Mozelle DeLong Bielski  Victor & Lucille C. Kampeter  Ray & Anne Schneider
Richard Brownlee  Duncan & Lucia Kincheloe  Jason Schwartz
Richard Caplinger  Harold McDowell  Tony & Jenny Smith
BJ DeLong  Nicholas M. Monaco  Stephen & Sheila Stark
Jeanette & James Dulle  Lynn & Kristen Morrow  Mark & Alice Steward
David Griffith  Carol Poteat  Pamela Taylor
Lois & Dennis Heldenbrand  Bob & Nancy Priddy  James Tergin
Connie & Darryl Hubble  Robert & Bernadette Robison  Harriet Waldo
Laura M. Huot  Marilyn Rooney  Janet Walz

2013 HCJ Christmas Reception at the Lincoln University President’s home:
Right: Al Mueller (left) and Councilman Rick Mihalevich (right)
Below: Many thanks to the Jefferson City High School string quartet for providing the festive background music.

(Continued from page 5) Abandoned Buildings

building; but if it is in a neighborhood with abandoned buildings, with crime prevalent in the area, there will not be a sufficient return on investment.

Continuing down the current path has not worked. Condemnation and demolition of nineteen buildings in the East Capitol Avenue neighborhood is not the answer. What is the answer? This will be the subject of future installments of this series.

Coming Up: Future issues of the HCJ Newsletter will look at the following:

- Buildings on the abandoned building list with the names of owners;
- Costs incurred by city staff dealing with the problems of abandoned buildings, including abating nuisance and other ordinance issues and the likelihood of collecting on tax liens;
- Specific information about property taxes levied against abandoned buildings as opposed to maintained properties in the same neighborhood;
- Crime statistics for areas with abandoned buildings;
- Suggested solutions.
SAV E THE DATE!

Historic City of Jefferson Annual Dinner Meeting

Sunday April 6th, 2014
Social hour 4:30, Dinner at 5:15
Keynote Program: Thomas Jefferson in “person”

Looking back . . . . . . Moving forward

Web Master—Laura Ward
Newsletter Editor—Jenny Smith
Membership—Sam Bushman
Oral History—TBA
Golden Hammer Awards—Laura Ward
Social Media—Jami Wade
Homes Tour—Tammy Boeschen
HCJ Foundation—Nicholas M. Monaco

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