Tornado Stirs Interest in Preservation

Shortly after the last edition of YESTERDAY & TODAY was mailed in May, a tornado ravaged Jefferson City. The devastation included many historic buildings throughout the city, including many in the Capitol Avenue Historic District. While grateful that no lives were lost that day, the community suffered the irreparable loss of multiple historic buildings.

Historic City of Jefferson (HCJ) began posting updates on social media just hours after the storm struck. With the help of HCJ members who lived in the area, the organization was able to immediately post pictures and provide hourly status updates. As volunteers began clearing the debris, it soon became evident that Capitol Avenue was forever changed.

As HCJ shared on Facebook the stories of each historic building damaged, followers of the page increased along with interest in how they could help. The loss of these historic homes was felt not only by those within the community, but by people as far away as Ireland who saw the pictures and learned of the buildings’ histories.

More than 2 months after the storm, the voice of historic preservation is perhaps louder than it has ever been in Jefferson City. Nearly 4,500 people follow HCJ on Facebook, one of the largest followings among non-profits in Jefferson City -- and larger than many for-profit organizations! That means more people will receive news and updates related to historic preservation.

In addition, HCJ has been featured in the media weekly, often multiple times each week since the disaster.

“We want to thank all of our media partners, such as the News Tribune, KRCG 13, KOMU, KBIA, KWOS, KJLU, and the many others who continue to help us spread information, not only in Jefferson City, but throughout mid-Missouri,” executive director Anne Green said.

The increased social media following and presence in the news has helped to grow HCJ membership. More than 50 new members have joined the organization in 2019, pushing the membership total to the highest in its 36-year history.

“We are thrilled to have them on-board, as we continue to move historic preservation forward in our community,” Green said.

Four days after the tornado, HCJ assembled a group of local organizations, including the Chamber of Commerce, local elected officials, representatives from our Congressional offices, local businesses, and others. HCJ led the conversation and helped establish an approach to rebuilding of Capitol Avenue, and other historic neighborhoods struck by the storm, in an organized manner.

Following that meeting, HCJ negotiated with the city for a temporary flat-rate fee for building permits, which the City Council approved. A $25 flat-fee for all building permits will be issued to storm-damaged residential buildings through the end of August.
Wow! It has been an unbelievable couple of months -- a new home for HCJ, plans for a very busy summer of projects, and, oh yeah, ... a little thing called an F3 tornado!

Yes, our new home took a direct hit from the tornado. But, thanks to a great group of volunteers, the **Tweedie House** was cleaned up and secured in just 2 days. We are working to get all repairs completed in the next month or so. We’ll be ready for open house and tours this fall.

The tornado also brought with it some distinct challenges. We worked with the city to have one flat $25 fee for all building permits needed for a particular address - no matter if it was an “historic” building or not - it was to help the community as a whole. Interestingly, we figured out that 80 percent of those buildings we’ve been supporting were built before 1950 — definitely historic to some points of view, depending on when you were born!

We’ve also worked directly with several building owners on **Capitol Avenue**, by providing a structural engineer to help them determine the feasibility of rebuilding. And, we’ve acted as mentors to numerous owners who needed help in finding appropriate building materials and contractors.

Additionally, we’ve been gathering architectural salvage from several buildings that have to be demolished due to extraordinary damage. We are preparing that salvage for resale and reuse. Monies from the sales will go to other rehab projects.

Speaking of those projects, we have had a special intern, **Vance (Joseph) Jisa**, helping us with the **Caretaker’s Cottage** at the **Veteran’s Cemetery**. Having grown up in Jefferson City, he’s working on his dual degree in South Carolina — in carpentry and historic restoration. The work is nearly complete thanks to Vance and lots of volunteers. We’ve also had a very generous donation of free WiFi for the building from **RadioWire** and a $1,500 donation of materials from **Lowe’s**.

The rest of the summer and fall will be bringing more projects, including a trip to the opening of the new **State Historic Society of Missouri headquarters** in Columbia, our annual home tour and grand openings of both the VA cottage and the Tweedie House.

We hope to see all of you at these events and would love to hear from you regarding your ideas for projects and events.

~ Donna Deetz, President
Pioneering Partnership with VA Almost Complete

After months of work and countless volunteer hours, HCJ is proud to announce that work on the Caretaker’s Cottage at the National Cemetery is almost complete.

In 2018 HCJ partnered with the Department of Veterans Affairs to save the historic building and keep it from being demolished. Just inside the main gate of the cemetery, the Second Empire style superintendent’s lodge (Caretaker’s Cottage) stands 1 ½ stories tall. The lodge’s design follows the standard plan issued by U.S. Army Quartermaster General Montgomery C. Meigs. Built in 1871, the Jefferson City lodge is not only one of the oldest of its type, it is one of only 17 that remain throughout the country.

In May 2019, Vance Jisa joined the rehab project as a summer intern (see page 6 for a profile of Vance). Aided by former two-time Golden Hammer winner Dustin Long, the project moved along at a brisk pace over the summer. By early July, the kitchen had been stripped, sanded, repaired, primed and painted a warm yellow color that closely matched the paint once in that room.

Work continued in July as historic brick in the basement that was almost 150 years old needed to be replaced in areas. In addition, Dustin and Vance replaced the roof and repaired the trim on the exterior to ensure the structural integrity of the building in the coming years.

Work on the cottage should be finished shortly after Labor Day. HCJ is the first non-profit organization to partner with the VA to save one of these historic buildings. We hope that our work on this project can serve as a model to other non-profits throughout the country as they look to save the remaining 16 Meigs lodges.

HCJ will rent the space to qualifying veterans-related non-profit organizations for only the cost of utilities. Once the building is complete, HCJ plans to have an open house so our members and the general public can view the rehabbed building.

We would like to thank the many individuals who have volunteered their free time to help breathe life back into this historic building. Your work is greatly appreciated and valued by HCJ!

~ Anne Green, Executive Director

View, Respond to City Historic Preservation Plan

In March 2019, Jefferson City awarded a $30,000 contract to Heritage Consultants to help develop a Historic Preservation Plan. The plan will be incorporated into the city’s comprehensive plan that is being developed over the next year, and will aid the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) in its mission to “safeguard and promote the city’s cultural, aesthetic and architectural heritage.”

The consultants have met with focus groups, city staff, members of local associations, and toured all parts of Jefferson City. From that research, they have assembled a 45-page draft plan. A public hearing was held July 23rd, and residents have been asked to send feedback to the city regarding the plan.

The final version of the plan will be presented to the HPC at its regular meeting, 6 p.m. August 13 at city hall. Then the plan will go to the city council for adoption.

The plan lists 71 specific steps within the activity areas, emphasizing partnerships between the city, HPC, HCJ, and other non-profit entities and citizens. A copy of the plan is on the city website for review and input at: www.jeffersoncitymo.gov/live_play/history_heritage/historic_preservation.php.

Activity Areas Included in Draft Historic Preservation Plan

| Area 1 | Jefferson City’s Historic Preservation Program – coordinating historic preservation planning tools and resources on revitalization and enhancement strategies; |
| Area 2 | Planning and Development – aligning historic preservation strategies within Jefferson City’s planning programs and processes; |
| Area 3 | Historic Commercial Centers – Focusing public and private sector strategies on revitalization and enhancement of the city’s historic commercial centers; |
| Area 4 | Strengthening Historic Neighborhoods – strengthening historic neighborhoods as distinctively attractive places for home ownership and investment; |
| Area 5 | Welcoming Visitors and Storytelling – as Missouri’s Capital City, using wayfinding, interpretation, and heritage tourism to welcome visitors and enhance quality of place as an economic development and revitalization strategy. |

~ Donna Deetz, President
One of Jefferson City’s Jewels Highlighted In 14th Annual Homes Tour

The Historic City of Jefferson (HCJ) will feature another charming, older and desirable neighborhood in its 14th annual Homes Tour 1-5 p.m. September 22 along the streetscape of Forest Hill Avenue. For the first time, this year’s tour offers a new VIP ticket option, a book signing and online ticket purchasing.

The tour features six homes:

106 Forest Hill, owned by Rich and Kris Bush – built 1930
115 Forest Hill, owned by Phil and Kelli Stiles – built 1931
116 Forest Hill, the Lewis Hord Cook home – built in 1923
119 Forest Hill, owned by Sandy Bryan and Gary Sublette – built in 1933
140 Forest Hill, owned by Lisa Lemaster – built in 1938
142 Forest Hill, owned by Rosie and Shelly Chruma – built in 1955

Forest Place Addition was platted in 1922 on what had been pastureland owned by local architect Fred Binder - whose dream of a park was fulfilled with Memorial Park, once named for him - and marketed as an upscale neighborhood to appeal to residents moving away from the city’s core. Many of these homes were constructed by the Schell Construction Company.

Day-of-event tickets are $15 and will be sold at the HCJ tent at the corner of West Main and Forest Hill. Advance tickets for $12 are available online by going to the HCJ website, www.historiccityofjefferson.org, or the HCJ Facebook page, https://www.facebook.com/H CJinc/. New this year is the option to purchase VIP tickets. A VIP ticket costs $25 and includes the homes tour, as well as access to the wine reception 2:30-5:30 p.m.

“We added this event to the Homes Tour to give our guests the opportunity to relax and socialize with one another during the event. This is a great way to meet other people in the community and to relax for a while during or after the tour,” executive director Anne Green said. Reception participants will receive a complimentary HCJ wine glass as a memento, and enjoy a variety of wines and live music. Light appetizers and non-alcoholic beverages will be available.

Also new this year will be a hot-off-the-press first installment of a series of books, sponsored by HCJ, featuring the 100+ City Landmarks designated by the Historic Preservation Commission. “This will be the first time it is available for purchase by the public. We invite our guests to purchase their one copy and have it signed by the author, Michelle Brooks, who will have her own tent at the event,” Green said.

The organization hopes to see more than 700 visitors this year. Funds raised from the tour support HCJ’s ongoing activities throughout the year.

“Forest Hill Avenue is such a quaint and charming neighborhood that I hope our community will join us as we highlight one of the jewels of Jefferson City,” said Claudia Goodin, Homes Tour co-chairperson.

~ Michelle Brooks

Share Your Ideas!

Have an idea for a story you would like to see in Yesterday & Today? A project or a history you would like to share with HCJ members, or a topic you would like to learn more about?

Story ideas are always welcome from HCJ members and preservation-related organizations. You may author a piece yourself, or request a topic to be researched and published by another HCJ member. Contact Editor Michelle Brooks at showmeselectron@yahoo.com to discuss your ideas.
Homes Tour Featured Homes

Unmarked Civil War Veterans’ Graves Receive New Markers

Of the 119 veterans buried at the Woodland-Old City Cemetery, 104 served in the Civil War. HCJ member Nancy Thompson, chairperson of the city Cemetery Resources Board, identified 13 of them were without a headstone.

Collaborating with HCJ member Michelle Brooks, who is researching the individual members of the 62nd US Colored Troops, they identified eight of the veterans to be from that Civil War regiment, which founded Lincoln University with the help of the 65th USCT.

Thompson gathered the required documentation for six Veterans Administration veterans markers. The remainder received white marble replica markers, purchased by the city board and community donations. All of these new markers were dedicated in June.

~ Michelle Brooks

~ Photo courtesy Gerry Tritz, Jefferson City News Tribune
Local Man Brings Historic Construction Skills Home

This summer, HCJ has benefited from the externship of Vance Jisa, a junior at American College of the Building Arts, Charleston, South Carolina, pursuing a bachelor’s degree in applied arts and sciences, architectural carpentry and restoration.

“It is the only accredited 4-year degree program in the U.S. that blends the traditional aspects of an academic degree with the hands-on practical education in skilled old-world artisan work,” he said.

The Jefferson City native returned home the same night as the tornado, with an arrangement to work at a local cabinet shop for his externship. However, with the lessening of the business’ workload in the storm’s aftermath, they were no longer able to hire him.

“In the week that followed the storm, I couldn't help but linger on the historic buildings and wonder what help my education and skill might be able to offer. I reached out to the HCJ Facebook page and things just moved ahead after that,” Jisa said.

He has helped move the Jefferson City National Cemetery caretakers’ cottage project forward (see story page 3).

“The home, while the victim of some water damage, is in nearly pristine condition for its age. Most of the work on the home is weather proofing and repair that time had dictated and previous tenants neglected or overlooked,” he said.

He has worked on exterior weatherproofing and repair, preserving the mostly-original roof trim. Inside, the flooring is being preserved, while plaster repair and paint will give it “a much-needed face-lift, making it a viable space once more,” he said.

Jisa said he is motivated by the simple satisfaction of providing the skills to help save older buildings.

“Older buildings have more character, more attention to detail. It’s simply a sign of the times; care was taken because you couldn't simply order or mass produce something. I really enjoy that and try to honor that effort and dedication to craft. It’s also out of respect to the communities and people who built them. They're almost always locally-sourced and built, they're snapshots of that community at the time.”

His interest in historic buildings came from a lifelong love of architecture, he said. “The built environment shapes a community and the people intertwined with it.”

The 30-year-old also enjoys furniture-making, stained glass, sculpture, painting, cooking and shooting sports.

After completing his degree, Jisa said he hopes to return to Missouri.

“I'd prefer to be working in either a carpentry shop or with a business that allows me to apply my expertise in regards to historic properties and pieces,” he said.

Eventually, he said he would like to operate his own business, specializing in architectural carpentry, including windows, doors and interior finish work.

Interest, from page 1

At the same time, the HCJ Board of Directors voted unanimously to create a Permit Payment Program to cover the costs for not only historic buildings but all buildings damaged by the storm.

“HCJ did this because we recognize that, while historic preservation is important, caring for and helping neighbors in times of crisis is what truly makes our community special,” Green said.

As of the end of July, HCJ has paid for more than 120 building permits. Member and public donations have raised more than $4,000 toward the Permit Payment Program and to help rebuild Capitol Avenue.

Also, HCJ has partnered with a local developer, who offered storage space for large architectural pieces in a warehouse close to Capitol Avenue. People who have historical features, such as columns, bricks and lighting, may store them in this space, at no charge, until they reach the point in the rebuilding process when they are needed.

HCJ has paid for two structural assessments for buildings on Capitol Avenue that were in danger of being demolished. “We are happy to report that both structures were found to be viable, despite having areas where the brick was actually coming off their houses,” Green said.

HCJ will continue to work with the city and residents to develop a long-term plan for restoring historic structures damaged by the storm.

“We thank all of our members for standing with us over the past several weeks to help this community in its time of need,” Green said.

Story and photo, Anne Green, Executive Director
The 2019 Heritage Day was observed May 15 at city hall to commemorate Historic Preservation Month.

Mayor Carrie Tergin, Mary Schantz, city Historic Preservation Commission chairman, and Donna Deetz, Historic City of Jefferson (HCJ) president, presented the awards for the Gregory Stockard Distinguished Service, Jefferson City Local Landmark designation and art contest winners.

HCJ vice-president Jane Beetem received the prestigious Stockard award. Her interest in historic preservation was sparked by a childhood in an historic Kentucky community. Before retiring in 2015, she worked 9 years for the Missouri Department of Natural Resources, State Historic Preservation Office. As an historic preservation consultant, she has completed 20 National Register of Historic Places nominations, for more than 100 properties mostly in Jefferson City. With her husband, Jon, she has rehabilitated several local properties, including 505 State St., 310 Benton St. and 504 Jackson St. She also has been a contributor to several publications, including the Missouri Resources magazine, the SHPO newsletter and HCJ’s Yesterday & Today.

The 2019 Local Landmark designees are Madison’s Cafe, 214-216 Madison St., and Residences at 204, 204 E. High St.

Madison’s opened in 1982. A century earlier, the location was a saloon, restaurant and cigar factory. Later, the site was used as a tailor shop and a telephone office. By 1923, the buildings were entirely for restaurant use. Owner Rob Agee participated in the city’s Commercial Façade Improvement Program in 2014.

The Residences at 204 were built in an Italianate design about 1880 for the Jefferson City Savings Association, later Exchange Bank. In 1925, the building was restyled in Classical Revival. This property also was improved in 2014, thanks to the city’s Commercial Façade Improvement Incentive. Owners Jay and Debbie Seaver renovated the main floor in 2018 for BarVino.

Winners of the Heritage Art Contest were: first place Addison Luetkemeyer, Helias High School, for “Missouri State Penitentiary” in pencil; second place Cori Winkelman, Helias, for “Carnahan Memorial Garden” in mixed media; third place Sydney Dunmire, Helias, for “Central Dairy” in acrylic; and honorable mention Carlie Rieber, Calvary Lutheran High School, for “Cliff Manor” in acrylic. The Mayor’s Choice Award went to Britni Spencer, Jefferson City High School, for “Standish House” in acrylic.

~ Michelle Brooks, photos Anne Green & Greg Schildmeyer
May – 912 Broadway

Dustin and Mandi Long, and Jim Long, renovated 912 Broadway. The couple previously received the May 2018 award for renovations to 929 W. High St.

The home was built in 1900 for the Henry Fischer family. He and his wife, Elizabeth, were both first-generation Americans, marrying in Fulton after relocating from Illinois and St. Louis, respectively. Henry was a laborer, then fire builder, mechanic with the railroad and then worked at the saddle tree factory. The couple reared 7 children and lived about 50 years in this home.

The Fischers sold the home in 1949 to Henry and Mildred Meisel. They married in California in 1940 and had three children. He was a carpenter for more than 30 years, first with Livingston Construction Company then owning his own Henry Meisel Construction Company. They were charter members of Faith Lutheran Church.

Diana Nichols bought the home in 2004 from the Meisel family. For more than 100 years, only 2 families occupied this home.

June – 823 Fairmount Blvd.

Brandon Chambers and Zebulon Thomeczek had a vision for 823 Fairmount Blvd, which sat vacant, taking in water for about 15 years. They received June’s award for their renovation work.

John and Addie Case bought this lot in the Wagner Place subdivision in 1926 and built soon after. Both grew up on farms near Ashland, then moved to Jefferson City after marrying in 1904. He was a carpenter, then janitor at city hall before being appointed fire chief in 1913, shortly after the fire department changed from volunteer to professional. He was fire chief during the 1918 Cole County Courthouse fire and the 1919 St. Mary’s Hospital fire. He resigned to start his own construction company in February 1920. He also served as a city councilman.

Joseph Kolkmeyer, assistant postmaster, and his wife, Susie, bought the home in 1930. They sold to Lellie Bohling in 1933, but it was occupied then by Harry Waltner, assistant state attorney general, and his wife, Ruth. Later, Albert Wallace, a senior engineer with the state highway department, and his family lived there.

Bohling and her husband, Walter, a Supreme Court commissioner, moved in in 1940. They sold in 1943 to her mother, Rose Moore, a dressmaker and twice a widow. Moore lived there until her death in 1962. Her granddaughter Vivian Cummock, who lived with her there, sold in 1969 to Liman and Mary Crader who sold in 1972 to Charles and Jana Davidson. Davidson was assistant director of the Conservation Federation. They lived in the home for 22 years.

Rose Beck bought the home from the Davidsons in 1995. She sold in 2005 to David and Julie Kenyon, who sold to Thomeczek in 2018.

See Golden Hammer, page 9
**Capitol Avenue Update**

The tornado that ripped through the city in May did little additional damage to the blighted properties recently acquired by the Jefferson City Housing Authority (JCHA) in the East Capitol Avenue Historic District. Sadly, further damage is hardly apparent on top of the underlying neglect.

One of these properties, the Parsons House at 105 Jackson was spared. JCHA has hosted two open houses there, but the house is still without a buyer. “We are very disappointed that there were no bids after the public pushed so hard for it to be the first property saved,” remarked Housing Director Cynthia Quetsch. The HCJ Board of Directors is committed to seeing that this historic treasure is not allowed to decay further. The Board will firm up an action plan at their August meeting if the house is still without a buyer.

In other developments, JCHA is in negotiations with a buyer for the four-plex at 101 Jackson, a Buescher property. HCJ is also excited to see that renovations at the Standish House (103 Jackson) are underway!

Five properties were recently acquired by eminent domain in the 500 block of E. Capitol, including Ivy Terrace. JCHA is assessing safety issues before scheduling an open house for this and the other recently acquired houses. Ivy Terrace was recently appraised at $52,000.

Two empty lots will also be for sale at 504 East State and 115 Jackson. Acquisition of other blighted properties in the district will not proceed before these in the 500 block are processed.

*~ Jenny Smith*

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**Golden Hammer, from page 8**

**July – 708 Washington St.**

Chris Griggs and his mother Dorothy Walker rehabilitated 708 Washington St.

Fred and Minnie Holleroth are believed to have built the home by 1908. He was the son of German immigrants, who moved to Jefferson City from Westphalia. Fred was a clothing clerk, first at Czarlinsky’s and then at Weatherby’s. She was the daughter of Prussian immigrants and a shoe factory stitcher. They reared two children in the home and were members of the Central Evangelical Church. Holleroth was president of Weatherby’s, at 122 E. High St., about 1921-1930. His obituary called him a useful citizen and progressive businessman, who “never hesitated to give of his time and his money to further the interests of the community, which was his home.”

Minnie continued to live there until 1944, when she sold to Carl Kelsey, who lived there with his wife, Margaret, until 1954. The Kelsey’s partitioned the home to create two units. The home became mostly rental, owned by Bertha Reinke, Raymond and Lorraine Roling, and Lawrence and Verna Swillum.

Clarence and Clara Watt bought the place in 1960, living there until 1994. Born in Oregon, Watt was a truck driver and then worked at Tweedie Footwear. While living in this house, he was a salesman for Wallau Automobiles and she was a clerk at the division of sales and use tax. Clarence ran for city council and then became city assessor 1963 to 1979, while also serving as city defense director.

The home changed hands several times from 1994 to 2018.

*~ Michelle Brooks; photos courtesy of Laura Ward*
August
7 – The Landing After Hours: “Missouri’s Shady Ladies!” 7 p.m., Jefferson Landing State Historic Site
10 – Golden Hammer award, 10 a.m., TBA
10 – State Historic Society of Missouri (SHSMO) grand opening, 9 a.m., Columbia
10 – “Plein Air at the Landing,” 1-4 p.m., Jefferson Landing State Historic Site
13 – City Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) meeting, 6 p.m., city hall
16 – Third Fridays at 3, themed tours: “World War I and the Missouri State Capitol,” 2:50 p.m., Missouri State Museum
22 – “Historic Missouri Roadsides,” 7 p.m., Missouri State Archives
31 – 8th Annual Prison Break Race, 9-11 a.m., Missouri State Penitentiary
September
4 – HCJ Board meeting, 5:30 p.m., TBA
4 – Missouri State Museum informational meeting, 6 p.m., Jefferson Landing State Historic Site
4 – The Landing After Hours: “History and Archaeology of Missouri’s Capitol City,” 7 p.m., Jefferson Landing State Historic Site
10 – City HPC meeting, 6 p.m., city hall
14 – Golden Hammer award, 10 a.m., TBA
22 – Forest Hill Neighborhood Homes Tour, 1-5 p.m.
28 – Oktoberfest, Old Munichberg
October
1 – HCJ Board meeting, 5:30 p.m., Tweedie House
2 – Landing After Hours: “Buddy’s Stories: Growing Up in Jefferson City in the 1940s,” by Walter Schroeder, 7 p.m., Jefferson Landing State Historic Site
8 – City HPC meeting, 6 p.m., city hall
19 – Lincoln University Homecoming parade, 9 a.m., downtown
TBA – Haunted Jefferson City tour

Check our website often: www.historiccityofjefferson.org