

# Lake Forest Preservation Foundation NEWSLETTER

Lake Forest, Illinois

September 2007



## Family Visit to Log Cabin at Crab Tree Farm, Sunday, September 23 1-4pm

An early Lake Forest log cabin, rescued from demolition in December 2005, will be open to Foundation members for family tours at Crab Tree Farm, Sunday, September 23 from 1-4pm. Crab Tree Farm is located just north of the village center of Lake Bluff on Sheridan Road (see next page to register).

Dating from the mid 19<sup>th</sup> Century, the log house has been restored by noted preservationist and owner of Crab Tree Farm John Bryan, and his team of conservationists. The log cabin is in a section of Crab Tree Farm that is amazingly rural in character and noted for being the last lakefront working farm in Illinois. Indeed this has been a gentleman's farm since the 1860s when pioneer Judge Henry Blodgett made it his retreat. Since then it has belonged to the Scott Durands and the William McCormick Blairs prior to becoming the Bryans' home a quarter century ago.

The event will include tours conducted of the interior of the cabin with its exhibit of historic layers of wall surface, etc., as

well as of the exterior. The setting is on a forest edge next to a farm pasture typical of the pioneer period. The cabin has been restored with its original formula daub as per the guidelines from the Department of Interior. The clapboard siding, perhaps two coverings from the 1850s and the 1910s, has been removed to show the cabin as it may have appeared in the two decades between the 1830s and 1850s.

From around 1910 on, the cabin was located at 297 Mills court in Lake Forest where it had been moved across the railroad tracks from its original site. Multiple reports, including that of member Shirley M. Paddock, who knew the long-time owner who had moved it to Mills Court, placed its origins west of the railroad tracks. Accounts vary slightly, but the cabin may have been an early school or church, which was moved to Noble Avenue.

Elsewhere in Lake Forest there are reproductions of pioneer cabins – at Ragdale, near Woodlands Academy on Sheridan,

and on the Grove School campus, all dating back to the 1930s' Americana revival nostalgic period. Ragdale's Barnhouse may contain remnants of a home of this 1830s' vintage. Highland Park and Deerfield also have similar pioneer structures preserved. But they do not compare to the quality and authenticity of this remarkable example, very likely one of state-wide and national significance. Come and see why!

This event is free to all members of the Foundation. New memberships are welcome and can be purchased on the day

of the event. Tours will be conducted every 10 minutes and will last about ½ hour. Please email [info@lfpf.org](mailto:info@lfpf.org) or call 847-234-1230 to make your reservation along with your preferred time for the tour. Reservations are limited and will be honored in the order they are received. Event may be rescheduled due to rain.

We look forward to seeing you on September 23<sup>rd</sup>.

## HISTORIC PRESERVATION AWARDS

During the last two years a diverse and striking array of local preservation projects received awards from the Foundation. In June of 2006 and 2007 the Foundation president made presentations of these award-winners at City Council meetings. The winners included structures dating back to before the Civil War and also new housing. They ranged from City-owned and commercial structures to residences, an estate garden and a church. Awards were made for preservation, rehabilitations, adaptive reuse, and harmonious new infill houses in established neighborhoods.

### 2006 Historic Preservation Award Winners

#### 334 East Westminster - 2006 Rehabilitation

Originally built as a schoolhouse in 1862, 334 E. Westminster was converted into a residence after 1868 and moved to its present location from Walnut and Washington Streets in 1906. During its history, this Victorian Italianate home served as a doctor's office and as a stop on the Underground Railroad. Drew and Lisa Van Vooren purchased the home in 2003 and undertook a complete rehabilitation of the building from foundation to rooftop. All original materials that could be saved were repaired and refurbished. Those materials that were beyond repair were meticulously replicated, often using old growth salvage wood, including 100-year-old Douglas fir for the joists and beams that needed to be replaced. This was a bottom to top rehabilitation project and created a jewel for all passersby to enjoy.



block garage was demolished to make way for an ADA-accessible live-in-studio. The damaged sections of the building were all rebuilt using historically-accurate materials, returning the façade to Shaw's original design. David Woodhouse was the project architect.



#### 395 North Green Bay Road - 2006 Rehabilitation

Two Gables, popularly known as The Mr. T House, 395 N. Green Bay Road, received a top down rehabilitation of the historic home and a new east side addition to expand the kitchen and add a great room. The house was originally designed for O. Babcock in 1910 by the architectural firm of Albro and Lindeberg. The Laurance Armours acquired the property in 1913 and after a fire in 1928 engaged David Adler to renovate the interiors and replace the charred wood shingle roof with slate tiles. In 2004, Legacy Partners, working with architect Michael Bressman, oversaw the latest rehabilitation and expansion of this unique manor house.



#### 1260 North Green Bay Road - 2006 Rehabilitation

The Ragdale Barnhouse at 1260 N. Green Bay Road was designed by Howard Van Doren Shaw in 1897 as a part of the Ragdale summer retreat for the Shaw family. The barn house buildings served to house the farm animals and equipment used on the property. The barn house buildings were converted into a residence in 1939 by Shaw's son-in-law John Lord King and underwent further renovations in 1950. The Ragdale Foundation undertook the current rehabilitation project in 2004-2005. A 1950s' cement-

#### 1044 N Western Ave - 2006 Rehabilitation - Adaptive Reuse

Formerly known as the Knauz property, 1044 N. Western Avenue received an award for Rehabilitation—Adaptive Reuse. This project, undertaken by Leonard Turelli, working with Witmer Associates, converted a car dealership, showroom and garage into spaces housing offices, shops and a restaurant. The building, designed by Stanley D. Anderson, perhaps working in Howard Van Dorn Shaw's firm, was built in the 1920s. Additions to the original building were added in 1946 and 1955. A final addition was designed by Balfour Lanza in 1960 and now houses the A.J. Edwards offices. The rehabilitation of the Knauz buildings has created an inviting corner drawing pedestrian and vehicular traffic to the shopping and dining venues created by the reuse of the property.



estate was subdivided, the log house served as an individual residence. The current owners, Mr. and Mrs. Don Brown, working with the Poulton Group, restored the cabin to its original look and is now used as a guesthouse—a delightful amenity to their recently constructed home.



#### 1711 Devonshire Road - 2006 Preservation

Designed and built in the 1950s for the Abel Fagans by the firm of Keck and Keck in the modernist style, 1711 Devonshire Lane exhibits the characteristics that mark the Keck and Keck design vocabulary—flat roof, deep eaves, cedar siding, modular design, fixed Thermopane windows with operable separate screened vents and passive solar orientation. Franklin McMahon maintained and preserved the home as it was originally built during the years of his ownership.



#### 272 North Sheridan - 2006 Preservation

The log outbuilding at 272 E. Sheridan Road was designed and built by the architectural firm of Mayo and Mayo in 1936 as a part of the Alfred Mansfield estate. After the Mansfield

### 2007 Historic Preservation Award Winner

#### 745 East Woodland Road - 2007 Infill Design

The new residence and bridge of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Shaw is designed in the Arts and Crafts style by Guedtner & Melichar Architects. Located on a triangular site with the ravine forming the longside of the triangle, the house takes its shape and massing from the ravine. The house has a low stature that “grows” out of the ravine slope. Careful attention to roof shapes, wall heights and eave heights gives the home a more organic appearance. These lower building masses also lessen the impact of the new residence upon neighboring properties.



Rajkovich, designed the house to also be in harmony with the site, so that the garages give privacy to the formal interior areas that look out onto a courtyard. Careful landscaping obscures the large fieldhouse across the street.

#### 429 East Illinois Road - 2007 Rehabilitation

The rehabilitation of the wood frame Queen Anne Victorian style home of Mr. and Mrs. Anthony Abbattista has repaired and restored the historic elements and has removed past mistakes. The historically correct addition, the wood windows and other exterior details make this home appear as it might have been originally well over a 100 years ago. The architects were Guedtner & Melichar Architects and the builder Lynch Construction. Even the new coach house is in keeping with the house design.



#### 245 North Sheridan - 2007 Infill Design

The new home of the Robert Saffrins on Sheridan Road has used salvaged bricks and timbers to make the house harmonious with nearby older homes. The architect, Thomas



#### 885 Woodbine - 2007 Rehabilitation

The new and old sections of the James and Josephine Kuhn home are so compatible in their design that it is impossible to distinguish the external appearance of one section of the

building from the other. Guedtner and Melichar were the architects for the recent renovations and addition of this 1908 carriage house, and Erskine Construction was the builder. Original windows were preserved, as were details such as copper gutters and downspouts, doors, and hardware.



**First Presbyterian Church 700 N Sheridan Road - 2007 Rehabilitation**

The original First Presbyterian building was designed by Cobb & Frost in 1886 and is a prime example of the Shingle Style. Although the original structure has been renovated, altered and expanded several times, Guedtner & Melichar Architects reestablished a hierarchy of entry doors, which were designed to face east toward the College, by enhancing the narthex entry doors and subordinating the southern entries at the tower and south parlor wing. Together these alterations bring back, to the extent possible, the original design intent of the building by having a solid stone building base, punctuated by recessed entries.



**344 East Wisconsin Avenue - 2007 Rehabilitation**

The Thomas Daly home has been restored to its envisioned 1902 appearance from what was an unattractive, cement shingle-sided 1950's duplex with aluminum covered trim. The extensive repairs and the additions, such as new windows, a fireplace and fence were completed by Michael Hrusovsky Co.. The yard was landscaped in keeping with the vintage of the house; this house enhances the neighborhood and keeps the design of the original.



**81 West Laurel Avenue - 2007 Garden Restoration**

The restoration of the original Redfield house gardens, designed by Rose Standish Nichols, was carried out by Masonry by Fernando and Craig Bergmann. The pool foundations and walls were restored and the new plantings were designed with historic integrity. The garden and home were originally designed by Howard Van Doren Shaw in 1909.



**Lake Forest Library 360 East Deerpath - 2007 Rehabilitation**

The Lake Forest Library, built in 1931, has had several additions, but this award was for the 2001 David Woodhouse addition, known as the Louise Wells Kasian Memorial Courtyard. It transforms an outdoor space into the interior Children's Activity Room, bringing daylight and sun into the lower level of the library. Enclosed by an iron railing and dense landscaping, Woodhouse installed a glass roof and steel supports to create this additional space, which, although modern, is very much in keeping with the classical design of the original building.



**251 King Muir Road - 2007 Preservation**

The Remensnyder home in the King Muir Historic District has been preserved by a major undertaking to stabilize the foundation. Replacement of wood shutters, hinges, roof tiles, light fixtures, windows with true individual muntins, and shrubbery were all done to match the originals. The simple looking lines and materials have been preserved in this classic home designed by Howard Irwin in collaboration with Stanley D. Anderson in 1929.



These outstanding projects are presented as examples of good stewardship and good design. They represent a level of excellence in architecture and design which the Preservation Foundation seeks to protect as our local heritage of nationally-significant architectural and landscape visual character. While the Foundation does not maintain a list of recommended architects, garden designers, or contractors, those thinking about buying, rehabilitating, or building new places today locally, homes or businesses, would do well to consult past Preservation Foundation award winners' designers. Good stewardship and good design and even striking adaptive reuse are indeed possible and practical in Lake Forest.

## West Park Historic District Update

The Illinois State Historic Preservation Office has approved the nomination of Lake Forest's treasured West Park neighborhood to the National Register as an historic district!

The application was completed last winter by Shirley Paddock and Arthur Miller under the leadership of then Foundation president, Jim Herber. In June, the three traveled to Landmarks Illinois' annual state preservation conference at the University of Chicago to present a digital slide show and field questions from the Illinois Historic Sites Advisory Council. Ted Hild, the project's ISHPO contact person, spoke glowingly about the quality and integrity of the 130 house district with its central park. The nomination was unanimously approved and sent on to Washington and the Department of the Interior. The final review will be this Fall.

## Barat Update

Heading into final approval stages at the City is the Barat Woods LLP petition, granting relief from the underlying 1.5 acre zoning (ca. twelve single-family lots on twenty acres) in favor of proposals in the one-hundred-and-twenty to one-hundred-and-forty-unit range. In exchange the developer will include some affordable housing units, preserve the open space in front of Barat's Old Main, and preserve the look, stone and brick of the original southeast-facing front façade.

Landmarks Illinois and the National Trust for Historic Preservation have sued the City of Lake Forest over the City Council's overturning of the Historic Preservation Commission's (HPC's) denial of the petitioner's request. Barat Woods LLP's petition sought to demolish most of the rear or northwest façade of Barat College's 1904 main building, referred to in deliberations as Thabor Hall. Prior to the City Council decision, though, the Foundation's Board of Directors voted to support the denial by the HPC, pending further City review.

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# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Since the Foundation's annual meeting in late April I have been serving as president of the Foundation, a busy and active few months with many committed and hard-working continuing and new board members. In April too the Foundation's new staff person, Marcy Kerr, agreed to come aboard, and since then she has made a substantial contribution to our efforts, for which I am very grateful. As you will read in this update, we have many programs and projects coming up, reflecting a great deal of volunteer board and member effort, and coordinated often by Marcy.

## Residential Redevelopment Challenges

Concern has been raised by residents who live near the intersection of Green Bay Road and Onwentsia Road. Many houses in this area, part of the Green Bay Road Historic District, have gone on the market. Proposals are coming into the City for demolitions or major alterations that amount to teardowns. Some houses are already permitted for major changes.

Since 1950, this neighborhood has been characterized by large, landscaped tracts subdivided from earlier estates: Louis F. Swift's "Westleigh" and Leander McCormick's farm, most notably. This is changing. Recently, the City's Historic Preservation Commission approved the demolition of a 1960's classically-designed residence of less than 4,000 square feet and its nearly 12,000 square foot replacement. Neighbors, with support from Preservation Foundation Board members, appealed the decision to the City Council citing problems of size, quality of design and neighborhood compatibility.

At the City Council hearing in early August, two aldermen supported the appeal but the rest thought that the petitioners were being subjected to too many delays, a hardship. They denied the appeal. The reason for the decision is troubling to the Foundation. While the review process should take as little time as possible for the interests of the petitioner, it also can't be hurried. Petitioners have good motivation to meet the legitimate interests of neighbors due to time-sensitive financial considerations. Grade A designs using classically-trained architects and landscape designers make the process move swiftly and efficiently.

During the course of the appeal, it was suggested that the neighbors meet with City officials to discuss possible revisions to the bulk ordinance for lots in the two to five acre category. It would be a shame to lose this bucolic section of town.

[The Green Bay Road Historic District was listed nationally in 1995 and locally in 1997. The Lake Forest Preservation Foundation sponsored the nomination.]

## Deerpath Hill Estates Area National Register District and Scattered Sites

While the Foundation focused on its West Park nomination project, board member Paul Bergmann worked with the State agency, King Muir Road area neighbors, and Foundation colleagues Shirley M. Paddock and me to complete a group of nominations for the Deerpath Hill estates areas. These neighborhoods date from the 1920s and were overseen by architect Stanley D. Anderson (as detailed in a previous issue of this Newsletter). The main district, approved in Washington a year ago, is bounded roughly by Northcliff Way, King Muir Road and Waukegan Road. Affected homeowners now are eligible for property and income tax incentives relating to preservation. Congratulations to King Muir area residents and, of course, board member Paul Bergmann!

In closing let me express my sincere thanks to our five hundred members/memberships and for the many substantial donations. This support makes possible our educational and advocacy efforts aimed at protecting Lake Forest's historic visual character.

Arthur H. Miller  
President



**The Lake Forest Preservation Foundation**

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