

## 2010 Annual Preservation Awards

Every year the DNR Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology presents its preservation awards at the annual preservation conference. In 2010, the awards were given to six groups or individuals at the statewide historic preservation conference, Preserving Historic Places, held in New Harmony, April 7-9. Indiana Historic Preservation Awards are presented to recognize and congratulate the efforts of individuals, organizations, and agencies that educate, preserve, and advocate on behalf of cultural resources throughout Indiana.

### 2010 Hoosier Preservationist Award – Stanley Madison



Started in 1999, this award recognizes local Hoosier advocates of historic preservation. This is the highest honor given by the Indiana State Historic Preservation Office.

The legacy of Lyles Station, Indiana, a small community located west of Princeton, Indiana, began when freed slaves from Tennessee, migrated north and purchased land in rural Indiana. The settlement flourished because of a railroad station for passenger and mail service, which continued until the 1950's. The town grew during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centu-

ries, developing into a self-sustaining community of approximately 800 residents. At its peak (1880-1913), Lyles Station consisted of fifty-five homes, a post office, a railroad station, an elementary school, two churches, two general stores, and a lumber mill. However, the 1913 flood of the Patoka and Wabash Rivers left much of the area under water, beginning the area's decline.

Today, only a few homes remain, but nearly half of the residents are descendants of the original black settlers. Along with the scattered houses, the African Methodist Episcopal Church, a grain elevator, and the schoolhouse are all that stand as a physical reminder of the once-thriving settlement of Lyles Station, Indiana.

Madison is currently the chairman of the Lyles Station Historic Preservation Corporation, a not-for-profit organization, established in June 1997 and created to help preserve the history, oral and written, artifacts, building and land related to events, activities and life experiences of the people and the community of Lyles Station. Madison has helped raise funds for the restoration of the Lyles Consolidated School and now when students and visitors tour the facility they can better understand the history of the community.

The Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology nominated Madison for his work in preserving the history of Lyles Station, and the history of other African Americans in Gibson County. Whenever asked for help on identifying neighborhoods in Princeton which were once

African American neighborhoods, questions about African American cemeteries, or any other piece of Gibson County history, Madison willing helps—frequently going out of his way.

Although much of the physical remnants of the African American community in both Lyles Station and Gibson County are lost, the history is far from forgotten thanks to the dedication of Stanley Madison.

#### Award for Outstanding Restoration Effort

The Indiana Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology has selected Howard School Restoration Group, Inc. to receive one of its Indiana Historic Preservation Awards.

Built in 1881 and located in rural Fayette, Indiana in Boone County, the brick, one-room Howard School, abandoned since 1916, stood deteriorated and threatened by sprawl development. Local residents formed a non-profit group, Howard School Restoration Group, acquired the school in 2004, and began fundraising to save the building. Volunteers helped secure grants, hired an architect, and began work on the building. While professional carpenters, electricians, and other skilled laborers donated their efforts to the project, the organization's members did much of the work rehabilitating the school house, constructing a new restroom building, and creating a gravel parking area. The parking is also convenient for visitors to an adjacent 19<sup>th</sup> century cemetery that once served the same farm families that sent their children to classes at Howard School.

The Howard School Restoration Group capped their effort by successfully nominating it to the National Register of Historic Places. In researching the nomination, group president William Coan combed 19<sup>th</sup> century newspaper microfilm reels, hunted down names of the original contractors, and other significant facts about the school's history. The school was officially listed in September 2009.

The hard work of the Howard School Restoration Group saved a valuable historic resource for Boone County. At one time, Boone County had dozens of brick one-room schools. Howard School is now the only one left. The efforts of the group serve as an inspiration and model for citizen support of historic preservation.





### Award for Outstanding Grant-Funded Rehabilitation

The DHPA is recognizing two outstanding rehabilitation projects funded by Historic Preservation Fund grants that were completed in 2009.

Ten years ago, Franklin, Indiana's 1922 Artcraft Theatre was up for sale as first run movies moved out of the downtown. In September 2001, Franklin Heritage Inc. started running "Classic Cinema on a Classic Screen" to help support the theatre and keep the doors open, and in 2004 purchased the building with plans to restore it to its Art Deco glory. FHI received its first HPF grant of \$30,000 to prepare architectural and engineering drawings and specifications necessary to guide the rehabilitation and restoration, as well as the plans to restore the stage for use as well. The feasibility study identified the masonry and façade as high priority items for rehabilitation.

So, in 2008, FHI applied for a \$50,000 rehabilitation grant for masonry repair, specifically the parapet which was listing backwards and around the windows where corroded steel lintels were causing more damage, as well as removing non-original windows and historically appropriate replacements. The grant helped generate interest from the City of Franklin Redevelopment Commission, which awarded an additional \$150,000 to the project, and also attracted labor and material donations totaling \$98,000 from Kawneer and Architectural Glass and Metal for the storefront windows and entrance doors. The additional money helped FHI also repair the marquee and blade sign, replace the colored vitrolite panels on the façade, and install new poster cases. The result is a truly stunning transformation of the Artcraft Theatre.





The second award recognizes Fort Vallonia Days Association in for their rehabilitation of the Joe Jackson Hotel in Vallonia, Indiana. The two-story, brick hotel was built in 1914 and had housed a barbershop on the first floor and sleeping rooms upstairs. Although deteriorated, the hotel had not changed much in the 70 or so years before the Fort Vallonia Days Association, Inc. bought it in 1999. Initially, the Association considered demolishing the hotel, but member Sally Waldkoetter formed the Joe Jackson Hotel Committee to explore options to restore it.



The hotel was listed in the National Register in June 2005. Unfortunately 2005 was also when the southeast corner of the roof collapsed. The interior had to be gutted, and the side walls reinforced with steel girders to stabilize the framework. In 2006, the committee received a competitive Historic Preservation Fund grant award for \$20,920 for masonry rehabilitation on the upper portions of the building and installation of a new roof structure.

In 2008, Fort Vallonia Days applied for a second HPF grant for \$50,000. This project repointed 95% of the masonry, repaired and reset the limestone coping and masonry parapet, framed the interior walls and rooms and two staircases, and restored the façade, specifically a mahogany storefront including new doors, tempered glass, and stile and rail framing. In addition, the Association installed an insulated roof, restored and painted six double-hung windows on the main façade, and installed two doors on the East façade. The Hotel turns 100 in 2014, and the committee plans to keep working toward its complete restoration, in the meantime the commitment of a group of motivated volunteers has truly paid off.



### Historic Rehabilitation Achievement Award

Each year, the DHPA administers more than 30 Certified Historic Preservation Investment Tax Credit projects. These projects help bring vitality back to historic buildings. This year's award went recognized the work of the American Life Insurance Company for restoration of the Gibson Company Building, located at the southeast corner of Michigan Street and Capitol Avenue in downtown Indianapolis.

Constructed in 1917, the building was originally designed to incorporate the manufacture, sales and service of Willys-Overland automobiles, at the time the second largest car manufacturer in the US next to Ford. Although production never occurred at this site, the Gibson Company continued sales and service here for Willys-Overland, Willys-Knight, Hupmobile, and Dodge cars and trucks. The company emerged from the Depression known for its auto-parts subsidiary, Atlas Auto Parts. The Gibson Company also distributed several major appliance brands. In 1963 the building was sold to Palmer Dodge.



The building is evocative of the automobile businesses that dominated the Capitol Avenue corridor during the first quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. It is also significant for being among the many terra-cotta faced building of the district and era.

American United Life with the assistance of RATIO Architects has faithfully restored the historic features of the building while rehabilitating the interior for their own office occupancy as well as other tenants including street level commercial spaces.



### Award for Outstanding Certified Historic Homeowner Rehabilitation

New this year, this award recognizes Brian and Emily Mack for their outstanding rehabilitation of the Carlos & Anne Recker House, located in Irvington on Indianapolis' east-side.

Constructed in 1908, the Recker house was built according to plans from the 1905 series of homes published in Gustav Stickley's "The Craftsman" magazine, through which construction plans were marketed by mail. Although there are many Crafts-

man-style houses in Indianapolis, this is the only house in the city documented to actually have been designed by Stickley's architectural staff, and one of only two found in the state.

The building had been altered on the exterior by application of aluminum siding, and some unfortunate remodeling also removing some interior Craftsman features. Informed by an available photograph (circa 1940), current owners Brian and Emily Mack have restored the original shingle-above-clapboard siding including the reconstruction of carpentry details altered by the aluminum installers.



## **Governor's Award for Historic Preservation**

The first annual Governor's Award for Preservation of Historic Places was presented during the Statehood Day Ceremony, December 11th at the State House, to the City of La Porte for its restoration of the historic Central Station Plaza Train Depot.

The restoration has been a goal of the community through four different mayoral administrations. The depot was the center of transportation for passengers and freight in La Porte for more than 50 years after it opened in 1910. When passenger service ended in 1968, the building began to deteriorate and was finally abandoned. Beginning in 1990, city residents expressed an interest in preserving the landmark. The City of La Porte faced many challenges as it negotiated a long-term lease of the depot and sought funding.



Using Transportation Enhancement Funds from the Indiana Department of Transportation, a Historic Preservation Fund grant through the Indiana Department of Natural Resources' Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology, Tax Increment Financing through the City's Redevelopment Commission, and funds appropriated by the City, construction finally began in 2005.

The building now experiences new life as a visitors center for the community and houses the offices of the Greater La Porte Chamber of Commerce and the Greater La Porte Economic Development Corporation.

The careful rehabilitation of the Central Station Plaza Train Depot has preserved its original character while allowing for current uses. In addition to the renovation of the depot, the unusual canopy that once sheltered passengers on the platform has been restored. The depot is located within the Downtown La Porte Historic District and once again contributes a sense of place that attracts residents and visitors alike.

