

Cornerstone Quarterly

A MEMBERSHIP NEWSLETTER OF
CORNERSTONE SOCIETY, INC.



June 2013

Preservation Month's Cornelius O'Brien Lecture a Great Success

On May 9th, in the Brown Memorial Auditorium & Gym, the Cornerstone Society marked its 25th Anniversary by welcoming Mayor Joseph P. Riley of Charleston, S. C. to be its Cornelius O'Brien Lecturer for 2013. Charleston's highly celebrated Mayor, of nearly 40 years, is totally committed to the preservation and economic development of his community. He believes in the maintenance of living spaces, on a human scale, as well as having parks and green spaces dotted throughout this classic, 18th century southern City.

After Greg Sekula, of Indiana Landmarks, escorted the Mayor to Madison from Louisville, KY, the Mayor began his day at the Iron Gate Inn on E. Main Street. After meeting a few of the Cornerstone Society's Board Members and touring the Inn with partner, Dee Comstock, a Cornerstone member, the Mayor boarded one of Madison's trolleys, with other Cornerstone members, to see some of the highlights of Madison's Historic Landmark District. Camille Fife, a preservation specialist, and others provided the Mayor with a running commentary of what he was seeing. He was particularly

interested in Madison's waterfront and the new Ohio River Bridge being completed, since that is how our wonderful 19th century town is first seen by so many future residents and guests. Once at the Brown Gym the Mayor, and nearly 100 guests were treated to a lovely catered picnic lunch; the brain-child, by one of the organizers of the day's festivities, Brad Miller—a member of the Cornerstone Society's Board, as well.

Then at 1 p.m., the O'Brien Lecture, that is free and open to the public, was heard by an audience of 115 people. After brief introductions by Rick Berry, Chairman

of Madison's City Council and Jan Vetrhus, President of the Cornerstone Society; the Mayor gave a spellbinding talk, aided by slides, about historic downtown Charleston, proper. The title of his speech was: "Preserving the Heart of a City: Charleston, S.C., in the 21st century." He noted, and exhibited pictorially, all the essential elements needed to retain, preserve and improve an exquisite Historic District in the 21st century. By the 1970's, Charleston had suffered

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President's Corner

For 25 years the Cornerstone Society has been an advocate for historic preservation. Sometimes we have been a lone voice but often we band together with others committed to preserving our built and natural environment.

Yes, the ELKS building is still under construction, but it is still standing! And it would not be without Cornerstone's lone voice. While those who look at it every day complain that no progress is made - its nice to hear visitors and several neighbors compliment the improvements. We owe a special thank you to John Eckert who has been providing legal council. Now that he has retired, we are in Tony Goebel's capable hands.

While the city chose not to fund the position of historic preservation planner in the 2013 budget, our combined voices were heard and the mayor has agreed to fund a part time position. Cornerstone, along with Historic Madison and the Historic District Board of Review worked with councilman Darrel Henderson to interview candidates and recommend three finalists to the mayor. With our continued pressure, a full time position can be included in the 2014 budget. Those negotiations start in June.

In conjunction with the city's building inspector, Mark Johnson and the Madison Main-Street Program, Cornerstone is promoting a tuck-pointing workshop, Saturday, June 29th at 746 W. 3rd Street, starting at 9:00 a.m. After some instruction, volunteers will hone their skills while helping an elderly couple care for their historic home. Plan to join us. Call Mark at 265- 8524 so we can organize supplies.

As you'll read in the rest of the newsletter, our 25th year is a busy one. Your suggestions and ideas are always welcome.

Jan Vetrhus

REMEMBER EVERYDAY ART

Classes and Public Talks

JUNE 22-23, 2013

At VENOGÉ & THIEBAUD FARMS

Call 821.427.3560

Or

**www.venoge.org/everydayart 1820-
1860.htm**

MADISON MOVEABLE FEAST

Tours, Dinner, and Dessert

July 26, 2013 - 4-9 P.M.

Indiana Landmarks

Cost: \$35 member, \$50 non-member

**Contact: Greg Sekula, 812.284.4534 or
gsekula@indianalandmarks.org**

***Cornerstone Society, Inc.
is a sponsor of this event.***

Doing Things Right —

Several years ago, this writer wrote an article (in the Cornerstone Newsletter) about the dangers and problems of using vinyl-siding on historic structures in our National Historic Landmark District. Whether such siding, over time, becomes brittle and pieces of it break-off or crack; is installed improperly and actually becomes wavy; encourages mold to grow between the siding and the surface below; or becomes a deadly gas during a fire by turning into hydrochloric acid —often its application is a poor idea. Vinyl-siding is, on the other hand, a quick fix for a contractor or home-owner so the structure will look, almost instantly, fresh and neat, but it is still a bad idea overall. Why? In addition to its inherent dangers, it is because such siding covers up vital architectural details which not only hurts the significance of our National Historic Landmark District, as a whole, but lessens the value of the property for the homeowner, too.

That is why it is so important for home-owners and members of the Historic District Board to know about and follow the historic guidelines. By the way, the guidelines are covered under City Ordinances —for those of us who may have forgotten this fact. Yet, I have noticed during my walks around town that a number of people are actually doing the right thing and either replacing wood siding with new wood siding, when needed, or uncovering it from either vinyl and aluminum applications or various kinds of shingling. I decided to interview two couples who have done the right thing, the first couple I spoke to: replaced patched siding that was covered in vinyl and aluminum and in the second case: a couple is now removing an inappropriate shingle application on a dwelling (after they first removed vinyl-siding) exposing the mostly intact wood siding below. Both couples have very interesting stories that they were willing to share in this Cornerstone Society Newsletter.

Stan and Peggy Attenburger moved to Madison from Tennessee, where Stan was a physicist with the Oak Ridge National Laboratory, doing research into the potential use of nuclear plasma fusion as a power source. Peggy notes that they had looked at numerous communities before they decided to retire to Madison, Indiana. The couple owns *Madison by Design* on Main Street; that Peggy manages, and remarks she should have been a Business Major in College rather than majoring in French —she so enjoys being a business woman. Stan reported, with a reserved chuckle, that Peggy had to live in a ranch-style house for years in Tennessee and he felt she deserved the kind of home she wanted when they purchased their federal-style home at 507 Jefferson. They also purchased a shot-gun house next door that had vinyl and aluminum siding on it.

Unfortunately, they soon discovered that there was water damage being done inside the walls of the shot-gun, or cottage as they like to call it, due to water condensation. Water was running down between the vinyl siding and the often patched covering below it. The water was coming from an air conditioning unit. They had the siding removed and had to have repairs done to the timbers below the siding —and as Stan explained, the timbers were originally hewn with a foot adze, (cottage timbers as seen in

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Doing Things Right, continued

the left photo and then seen on the right with new painted cedar siding over the timbers.) They had G-Rye Construction, owned by Daniel Girod of Canaan, Indiana do the work on this structure.



Both Stan and Peggy's fathers did house building in Ithaca, Michigan where they were high school sweethearts, and they are committed to doing things right. As Stan exclaimed, "we never considered doing anything but wood siding," for the smaller structure. The pair also had Girod raise the roof of the cottage to help correct the ventilation and water issues affecting the house and apply new shingles to the roof, as well. The cedar planks, for the siding, were purchased from a lumber yard in N. Vernon, Indiana. The housing inspector, at the time of this work, identified the project as "repair work" in front of the HDBR.

Like the Attenburgers, Walt and Jan Dubbeld retired to Madison, Indiana after living in other parts of the United States. They are both originally from Iowa. They live at 219 W. 5th Street; that they are restoring, as well as the building on Mulberry Street. Walt comes from a construction background having originally done scenery production work for a cable television station. Then he became the Site Director for the Historic Forks of the Wabash River Center, and has a specialized knowledge of what happened to the Miami Indians who were forced to move to Oklahoma –as were so many tribes living in the Eastern United States. The Dubbeld's saved the 1849 Mulberry house from demolition and as Walt said, "once stuff is gone, its gone." They have used the services of professional historic building restorers such as Messer's Ash, Cunningham and Wullenwebber, along the way, too, and even had Darren Rabino of Hanover College identify the age of the structure at 521 Mulberry. As Jan Dubbeld said, "we have a cultural obligation to save buildings and not tear them down." She came from a family that took care of objects and saved their money to buy decent things; they did not "waste money on cheap stuff that breaks." In one community, where she and her husband lived, they watched McDonald's Restaurant tear down a very large "...fantastic

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Doing Things Right, continued

Sulky Barn..." for race horses, and that painful memory has stayed with them. They have lived in Madison for five years and both do much of the restoration work themselves on their two properties. (First picture on left: vinyl-siding, hiding shingle-siding at 521 Mulberry, wood siding now being uncovered at 521 Mulberry Street)



Doing the right thing not only helps our Historic Community, it does something very special for the heart and souls of those willing to do the work — it brings smiles to their faces.

O'Brien Lecture, continued from page 1

many of the problems that Madison has undergone, as well, and ones the audience could relate to.

Mayor Riley showed slides of how critically important structures on Street corners, in particular, have been saved, so as not to allow urban decay and blight to really take hold and infect the rest of a given street. The Mayor also stressed: follow-through with critically important urban planning is essential and is to be done often, if necessary. What he did not say, but what he exemplifies, is a Mayor with vision and true leadership, (who also really cares about his citizens and worries about the meekest of them). He is a Mayor who has the ability to say

"no," when half-measures or the "quick buck" threaten the City's irreplaceable cultural and architectural history. And one suspects, because of his firm commitment to the historic heart of Charleston, his leadership and willingness to do urban planning with the citizens of the City, the private and public funding have followed. Please think about these facts everyone. This was an O'Brien Lecture at its best —and we have Link Ludington to thank for it.

If you did not renew
your Cornerstone membership
at the Christmas party,
please renew now!

Send your check to
P. O. Box 92, Madison.

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P.O. Box 92
Madison, Indiana 47250



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● Capital	\$500	● Family	\$30
● Pillar	\$250	● Individual	\$20
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