PRESERVATION
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CENTURY BUILDINGS FOR 2026

This year is the fortieth time Preservation Racine will celebrate National Preservation Month by presenting our annual Century Building Certificates to the owners of well-maintained buildings that are at least one hundred years old and are located in the City or County of Racine. Long-time Preservation Racine member Don Rintz, after attending a preservation meeting in Madison, Wisconsin, brought back the idea of celebrating century buildings. Our local program was developed from his initial idea. We owe a debt of gratitude to Don and the people who were farsighted enough to know how important our landmark sites are and to encourage their protection and care.

Preservation Racine will host this year's event on Monday evening, May 4, 2026, in the Great Hall at the DeKoven Center, 600 Caron Butler Drive (21st Street), Racine, Wisconsin. The reception to honor the building owners will begin at 6:00 pm, followed by the program at 7:00 pm. All members and friends of Preservation Racine are invited to attend.

Memorial Hall, 72 Seventh Street

In November 1919, the American Legion Post 76 had recently been formed and a project to erect a memorial building to honor the fallen men of the World War was under discussion in Racine. Post Commander LeRoy Gittings reported the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR) and Spanish War veterans wanted the Post to go on record endorsing a memorial building. After further discussion, Captain Walter Haight made a motion, seconded by John Belden, to authorize the post commander to "express an opinion in favor of a Memorial building if the citizens of Racine decided to expend money for a memorial for the ex-service men of the great war." On January 12, 1921, a committee of 25 was appointed to push the project and adopt concrete plans. At least $100,000 of the $300,000 anticipated cost would come from public subscription. Industrialists and other larger employers were asked to distribute contribution blanks to their employees to facilitate their contributions. One week later, the Wisconsin Attorney General decided that unexpended funds from the War Relief Funds, often called "War Chests" or "Patriots' Funds" could be used to erect memorial buildings for fallen heroes. From Racine County's War Relief Fund $100,000, was appropriated from their roughly $125,000 balance. The remainder of that money went to Burlington to establish a hospital and to provide food, clothing, and fuel to the unemployed.

The final $100,000 would come from city funds; when finished the city would assume operation, get a clear title to a new public institution with an auditorium for speeches and rallies, an exposition center, and meeting rooms for veterans' organizations and civic groups. However, the final cost of the building was $525,000. The city issued $175,000 in bonds and William Horlick, Sr. made a significant contribution to meet the increased cost.

Land along Lake Michigan between Fifth and Seventh Streets was considered for the building because of its higher elevation and approximate north-south mid-point of the city limits in the 1920s. The city spent $60,000 acquiring about eight lots in Block 31 of the Original Plat and razing houses for the project in 1922. Late in the same year Chicago architect Howard Van Dorn Shaw submitted a sketch of the proposed building which was unanimously approved by the common council and the memorial commission. Bondgaard & Christensen were chosen as the contractors; groundbreaking began in 1924. The corner stone was laid on Memorial Day in 1924 by William Horlick, Sr. and former United States Vice President Thomas R. Marshall under Woodrow Wilson was the main speaker. The dedication of Memorial Hall was on October 26, 1925. The Schulte Band and the American Legion Drum Corps played, and the main guest was Brigadier General John McQuigg, the national commander of the American Legion.

Architectural features of Memorial Hall incorporate Classical Revival and Neoclassical elements. It is constructed of Indiana limestone and brick, and copper for the roof. The main façade faces south and features a two-story raised portico supported by four Corinthian columns projecting under the end gable of the

main roof. Above the portico is a sculpted version of the seal of the State of Wisconsin and two sculpted eagles. The east side of the building has a second story colonnade with paired columns between two bays. The west façade has the names of famous battles inscribed on the north and south ends. At the west steps are two twelve-pound Napoleon cannons, which means they shot twelve-pound cannon balls. They were used extensively by the Union in the Civil War. They are named for their designer, Louis Napoleon.

In June 1980, Memorial Hall was added to the National Register of Historic Places. In 2001 a fourteen-month, $2.5 million renovation replaced original boilers with three new high-efficiency boilers and two chillers, and added a new copper roof. Elevators have been added to make the floors handicapped-accessible. Original wood doors and windows had deteriorated and were replaced, plus a great deal of general updating and painting.

Patrick Flynn is the current manager of Memorial Hall. We thank him for his stewardship of this public institution that continually reminds us of the sacrifice of those who died serving our country, and all the men and women who served, plus the many people who gave of their time and wealth to build this fine memorial.

Debbie Yale

141 Duane Street, Burlington, Wisconsin

The Burlington Free Press described it as a "red brick Dutch Colonial" when it noted that Joseph and Marie Bazal were building this charming house in 1925. It has a gambrel roof to increase available space on the 2nd floor, typical of Dutch Colonial Revival homes, but does not have flared eaves which were common in the style. The front of the house features a near full-width dormer of cream stucco allowing large windows with decorative shutters. The house sports copper gutters and downspouts. A small pedimented porch with four columns defines the front entrance facing Duane Street. The rear of the house has a similar dormer and a back bump-out while a sunroom extends out the east side of the house.

Born in 1891 in Austria-Hungary (in what was later Czechoslovakia), Mr. Bazal started working in a dairy at age 15 in Milladore, Wisconsin where his family had immigrated. He studied dairy science at the University of Wisconsin before returning to the butter business, for a time working in a creamery at Wheatland Township. He married Marie Boschert of Burlington in 1918.

Eventually the Bazals moved to Burlington and in 1923 founded Bazal creamery which for many years provided milk, butter, and cheeses to the community with traditional daily home delivery service. In 1926 the Bazals bought the 1880s Burlington Town Hall and fire station at the southeast corner of Pine and Washington Streets. Ambitiously, at a reported cost of nearly $50,000 they removed the peaked turreted attic, took down the fire bell tower, built additions on to the east and south, and fully renovated the building into the handsome two-story cream brick structure that still stands there today. The family sold their interest in the business in 1950 when Mr. Bazal retired.

Mr. Bazal died in 1956. He was an outdoorsman who enjoyed hunting and archery and considered himself a conservationist. Mrs. Bazal remained in the house until her death in 1980. The house passed to their daughter Betty and son-in-law Henry Keleski who in turn sold it in 1981. The property passed through four more owners until the current owner Barbara Madsen purchased it in 1993 and has beautifully maintained it since.

Dan Barry

1728 College Avenue

The plot of land on what is now College Avenue was owned by Simon and Jane Whiteley in 1876 and passed through many hands until 1925. Charles Aschuler, founder of Charles Aschuler Manufacturing Company, and his family owned the property from 1894 to 1913. George N. Fratt, a prominent Racine banker, and his wife Elizabeth bought the site in 1919 and sold it to Dr. Andrew S. Pfeiffer and his wife Anna in 1925. Dr. Pfeiffer was a popular and lauded Racine physician and surgeon. "Andy", as he was known to friends, opened a practice in Racine with his brother Edward and established the Pfeiffer Clinic on Washington Avenue in Uptown with another physician brother, Edward. Andrew was involved in many civic movements and was known to make friends with many of his large number of patients. He generously cared for those who were unable to afford his services.

In 1926 Dr. Pfeiffer hired B. Wade Denham (1880-1946), a local architect and building contractor, to design and build the eclectic "Tudor Revival" house at 1728 College Avenue. The house was built at a cost of about $125,000. "Tudor" can be an imprecise description as few Tudor houses are close to the architectural elements of 16th-century England. This style is adapted from late Medieval and early Renaissance English styles ranging from thatch-roofed cottages to grand manors built during the Elizabethan and Jacobean eras (1558-1625).

Some say the house on College Avenue, with its stone cladding, is meant to look like a cottage from the English Cotswolds, where limestone was quarried in the Cotswold Hills in Gloucestershire and used to build cottages. The stone for this house, which closely resembles the yellow English stone, is, however, from Lannon Village west of Milwaukee.

The Tudor style allowed an architect a great variety of creativity and floor planning. It allowed rooms to face in any direction, two-storied or one-story rooms, windows and also wings to be placed where needed.

The Tudor house built by the Pfeiffers was a distinctive style in their neighborhood, which consisted of many Victorian houses. Another distinctive feature of the Pfeiffer house is that its design is turned 90 degrees to adapt to a narrow urban lot. What would ordinarily be the side façade faces the street and is emphasized with windows and one of two large elaborate stone chimneys … the second chimney is on the opposite façade.

The cross-gabled roof is dominated by large clipped gables (jerkinheads) on all sides with differently shaped windows below. This clipped gable form, which imitates the look of a thatched roof, provides structural stability, wind resistance and additional attic space, and allows architectural detail such as higher windows or dormers. It is covered with slate, and the gutters are copper.

There is a variety of windows throughout the house. A nested traditional gable inside the south-facing clipped gable encloses the front door with its four-centered, or Tudor, arch and small window. The dormer windows on the sloping roofs nearest the road have clipped gables that match the rest of the roof. Three sets of casement windows are on the right and left sides of the gabled front door. To the left of these is a low parapeted turret with battlements (castellates). Behind and to the left of the parapet are two narrow windows and below them are two sets French windows edged with stained-glass panes. All windows have stone sills and decorative stonework above.

A paved walk from the street side leads to a stone archway at the back of the house and to the back of the property. A low stone wall borders the front of the property.

Dr. Pfeiffer and Anna proudly raised a son in Racine who also became a doctor. To their sorrow this son, Dr. Charles Willis Pfeiffer, died in December of 1944 during the Battle of the Bulge, while serving at a field hospital with the Army Medical Corps in World War II.

After practicing in Racine for 38 years, Andrew died and was buried here in Racine in 1950. A year later his widow sold the house to Betty and Paul Lyle. Paul was an executive vice-president of Western Printing. The Lyles sold the house to Richard and Gladys Beere in 1959. He owned Beere Tool, became a successful farmer and moved to Waterford in the late 1960s. In 1971 the house was sold to Harry and Alma Hedland. Harry was vice-president of Engineering at Racine Federated Industries. In 1979 Gayle and Norbert "Nibs" Kosterman purchased the house. Gayle was executive vice-president at S.C. Johnson and "Nibs" was in the restaurant business in Racine.

New owners Erich and Laura Trepte purchased this well-cherished Tudor house in October 2025 and are continuing its loving care as the house celebrates its 100th anniversary.

Heather Egan

233 South Kane Street, Burlington

The Queen Anne style house at the corner of South Kane and Duane Streets is a two and a half story, wood-framed beauty that presents the typical Queen Anne asymmetry and a marvelous wraparound porch. Slender classic columns, spindle work balustrades, a mansard roof, and a perforated decorative wood lattice skirt highlight the porch. The front and north façades both have dominant gables and gable dormers with fish scale siding and flared verge boards. At the top of the large first and second story windows are decorative panes of leaded glass; the gable and dormer windows are also leaded glass. The recessed entry-way is left of the center with a wood door with a window in the top third. It is framed with modest trim, as is most of the house; the windows are topped with a wooden frieze; but the gable and dormer windows have a triangular denticulated lintels that reach between the sides of the gable. To the left of the entrance is a projected bay with a flared pyramidal roof, intersecting at the corner of the house, and topped with an engaged finial.

In 1865 Anthony Meinhardt purchased Lots 1-9 of Block 3 in Johnson's Addition in Burlington. He was a successful merchant who, after his retirement, started Meinhardt Bank with his daughter Eda in 1891. After his death later that same year, his wife Elisa, son Albert, and Eda continued to run Meinhardt Bank until 1970. Lots 1-4 changed hands a couple times until Jeanette Cooper sold Lot 1 to Henry Madigan for $700 in December 1902.

Madigan was an attorney who had graduated from "the law department of the University at Madison" in 1894. He was also very active in real estate development. There were numerous articles in the Burlington Free Press between 1907 and 1911 of him buying lots, estates and farms, and building houses on them; in addition, he bought older buildings, houses, and barns, moved them to one of his lots, and remodeled them to rent or sell.

The newspaper reported on February 2, 1907, that Madigan had hired contractor Matt Rewald to build him a new residence on Kane Street. Excavation did not begin until August of 1908. It is unclear if Madigan and his wife, Eva, and their two young sons actually lived in the house, since he sold it in a land contract to Oswald B. Rittman for $4,900 in October 1910. The land contract was fulfilled in March 1911. A few years later the Madigans moved to Spokane, Washington.

Oswald and Hilda Rittman were living in Genoa Junction, now Genoa City in Walworth county, in 1907. The Burlington Free Press announced in March of 1910 that Rittman and partner Edmund Johnson "have gone to Burlington to start a clothing store." They purchased an already established clothing and gents furnishing business and continued that line. The Rittmans sold the house to Dr. F. F. Newell in October of 1917. In an unusual swap the Rittmans moved into the residence on Jefferson Street which Dr. Newell had occupied. By January 1920, Oswald Rittman, Francis E. Kellogg and another partner, incorporated the Kellogg Ice Cream Company of Burlington.

In May 1928, Dr. Newell sold the house to Maud M. Mathews Unverzagt. Maud and Fred Unverzagt had been recently married, as their marriage license had been reported in the newspaper on January 11, 1928. This union was very short as they are living separately by 1930, and Maud claimed to be single in the Census records for 1930-1950. Fred is still listed as married in the 1930 Census, but divorced by 1940. Maud retained ownership of the house until her death, but she was living on Perkins Boulevard by 1940. Maud died on June 28, 1969. Her name had been added to her sister's, Grace Mathews, headstone in the Hudson Cemetery in Burlington, but she is buried in the mausoleum at Valhalla Cemetery in Milwaukee. In her will she donated the house to Burlington Memorial Hospital.

The hospital sold the house to Lance Mason in 1970, who sold it to his parents, Lyle and Mary Mason in 1982. Lyle died in August of 1997; Mary sold the house to Anthony and Mary Savoia in June of 2001. They sold the house in 2006 to the current owners Phillip and Patricia Birch. They are the second longest owners and have done much of the work themselves to maintain their beautiful house through the years.

Debbie Yale

1126 College Avenue, Racine

This handsome, cross-gabled building is the second on its plot, replacing an earlier house that had been built in 1849 and can be seen on both the 1874 and 1883 Bird's Eye maps of Racine. The new house was listed as part of the "Healthy Building Boom" of 1889 in the *Racine Daily Journal* of November 2. The listed owners and costs showed that Frank Marshall, who had acquired the property just the previous year, had paid $2,800 for it. It is the second house built by him: the first was built in 1881 for $2,700 and is still at 1703 College Avenue. Interestingly, although its clipped gables give it a more cottage-like appearance in comparison to the folk Victorian of 1126, its plan and structure are very similar.

Frank Marshall was a well-loved and tireless worker who had retired as Foreman of the wood department at the J. I. Case Threshing Machine Company in 1884. It was an early retirement owing to ill health, and his team brought him to near tears by collecting a gift of over $100 for him to show their appreciation. Afterwards, he worked as a contract painter and took an interest in local affairs, as when he formed part of the committee to decide on the paving of College Avenue. It was the first street to be paved in Racine, and the committee visited Chicago, Detroit and Milwaukee before they decided on bricks. His obituary notes that Frank Marshall had been a pioneer resident, Civil War veteran, member of the Grand Army of Republic, and had guarded Camp Utley as a Veteran Reserve.

The house was inherited by his son Everett A. Marshall, who later sold it to Fred and Katherine Schemming. They divided it into two residences and rented them out until 1951. The two apartments survived when the house passed to the Rev. Alex V. and Anna C. Hoiriis, and it was still functioning as a two-family building, several owners later, when Jay and Betty Jean Hutchison acquired it in 1996. They, too, rented it out for a while, but later moved into it and set about meticulous restoration work. Hinges have been stripped of paint and brought into condition, windows individually repaired so that the sash cords work again, a lovely stained-glass panel in the front window glows and glitters, and Jay has preserved and framed some of the items he found in the walls, as well as some of the original electrical wiring, light-switches and plumbing. The replacements are similar to the originals or period appropriate. Most recently the Hutchisons replaced the roof and the tattered aluminum and asphalt cladding that had covered the original wood clapboard and discovered the original wood siding underneath, complete with two large panels of decorative shingles, which are carefully preserved under the new clapboard until they can be refurbished and revealed again. The results are beautiful, both inside and outside, and we are so lucky that the house has been rescued by such devoted owners.

Pippin Michelli

1340 Arthur Avenue

Sometimes a house's story begins before it even exists. The land that would become 1340 Arthur Avenue was originally purchased by a man named Phillip Sheehan. He died before having the opportunity to build on it, and the property passed to his two brothers.

Records show that a court battle ensued between the brothers, Jeremiah Sheehan and James Sheehan, along with James's wife, Katherine. Further research indicates that James died during this dispute, leaving his wife to inherit his half of the land.

However, a court order on March 1, 1926, lists Katherine as a resident of Walworth County Insane Asylum. This could have meant she was mentally unfit or possibly just elderly and poor as asylums were known to have been used then as an early, albeit brutal, form of senior assistance. Regardless, the court ordered an auction, which took place on May 3, 1926, and the land was sold to the highest bidder.

The buyers were Otto and Louise Reinke. According to U.S. Census records, Otto Reinke was a first generation German American and a contractor by trade. By June, a building permit was issued and shortly afterward, he listed a newly constructed brick bungalow for sale in Racine Journal Times advertisements.

The property was eventually sold to a man named Gerhard Voelkers. For more than 30 years, Gerhard Voelkers owned a dry goods store at 228 Main Street, which now houses Butcher and Barrel restaurant. He bought 1340 Arthur Avenue from Reinke in October 1928 but apparently did not reside there. According to the 1930 U.S. Census, Voelkers had been widowed and was living at another residence with his daughter and son.

During the 1910s and 1920s, Voelkers appears frequently in the real estate transfers section of the Racine Journal Times, suggesting he may have been speculating in properties, possibly owning some for rental income.

The couple who did inhabit 1340 Arthur Avenue can be identified through a newspaper announcement of their marriage in August 1928. The clipping reads:

"The marriage of Miss Isabelle Blantz, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Paul Blantz, 2013 Taylor Avenue, and Albert Daum occurred Tuesday at Waukegan. They will be at home, after a short wedding trip, at 1340 Arthur Avenue."

This nuptial announcement was published two months before Voelkers purchased the property from Reinke, indicating that the house was, indeed, used as a rental investment.

The Daums did not remain renters forever. They purchased the house in 1936, then sold it four years later to William and Carrie Gonsky. Over the next few decades, the house passed through five different owners. In 1973, Duane and Barbara Huth purchased the property—and they continue to own it today.

The house is a charming yellow tan brick bungalow that strongly reflects the Prairie School and Craftsman architectural styles popular in the 1920s. The broad, low pitched, multi hipped roof creates a striking horizontal profile. Reinforcing this horizontal emphasis is a group of four windows divided by narrow muntins, a Prairie style characteristic designed to maximize natural light.

Deep overhanging eaves contribute to the house's sheltering appearance, while the brick veneer offers a solid and durable, yet warm feel. A screened in porch built over the front entrance and extending off one side of the façade provides a functional and comfortable outdoor space.

From the substantial brick chimney visible on the exterior, one can infer the presence of a large fireplace prominently situated in the living room. In both Craftsman and Prairie architecture, the hearth symbolized the heart of the home.

The house's attractive landscaping and impeccably maintained appearance makes it clear that the Huths have lovingly cared for 1340 Arthur Avenue for many years. Congratulations to them on their 53rd house anniversary and on receiving this well-deserved Century Building Award.

Debra Schug

Trinity Lutheran Church, **2065 Geneva Street**

On September 9, 1924, ground was broken, followed on November 23, 1924, by the laying of the cornerstone for the new Trinity English Evangelical Lutheran Church to be built on

MADE IN RACINE – AUTOMOBILES (PART 2)

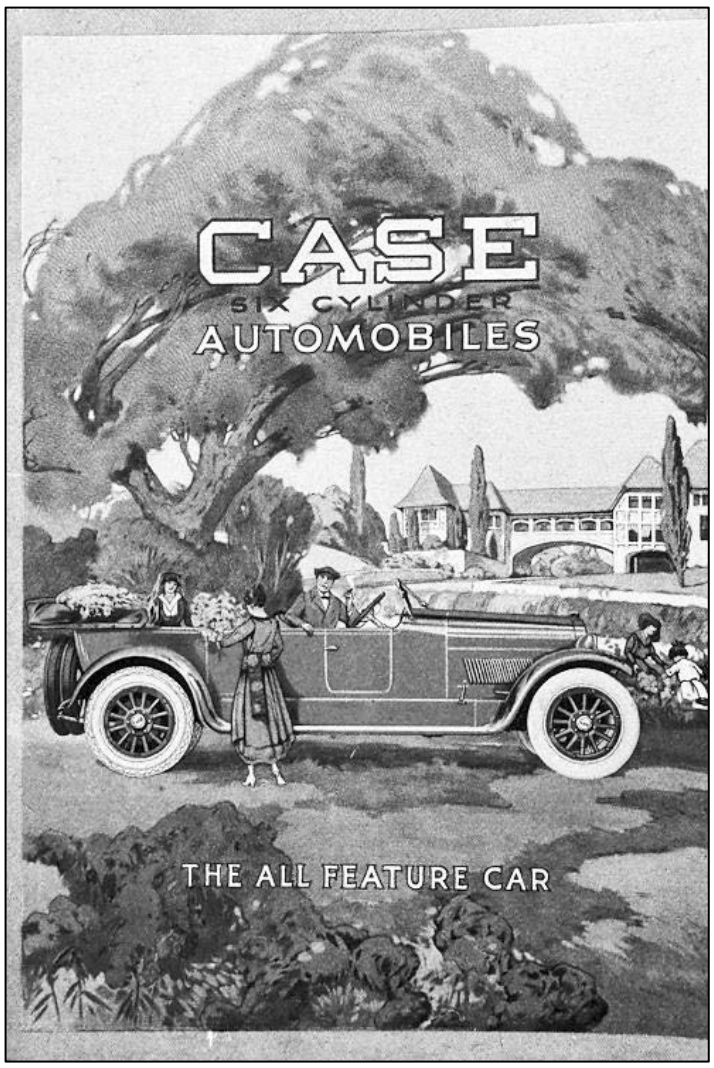
In the last Preservation Racine Newsletter, we learned that Racine was once a formidable automobile manufacturing center, with several companies involved in producing Racine-made automobiles. We also learned that the Mitchell Motor Company (which got its start as a wagon manufacturer) was the largest and best-known Racine automaker. Historians estimate that over 2,000 makes of automobiles were once sold in the U.S. throughout the heyday of domestic production, and Racine can be proud to have claimed a few of them. One of our earliest auto-makers was the Pierce Engine Company. Founded by Andrew Pierce, their first products were a line of gasoline-powered marine and stationary engines. However, in 1895, he began to experiment with building a "horseless-carriage" by placing a motor in a surrey. Eventually, he succeeded, and began building the Pierce-Racine automobile in 1904.

Pierce-Racine Car, 1914–1910, picture credit: Jim Mercier

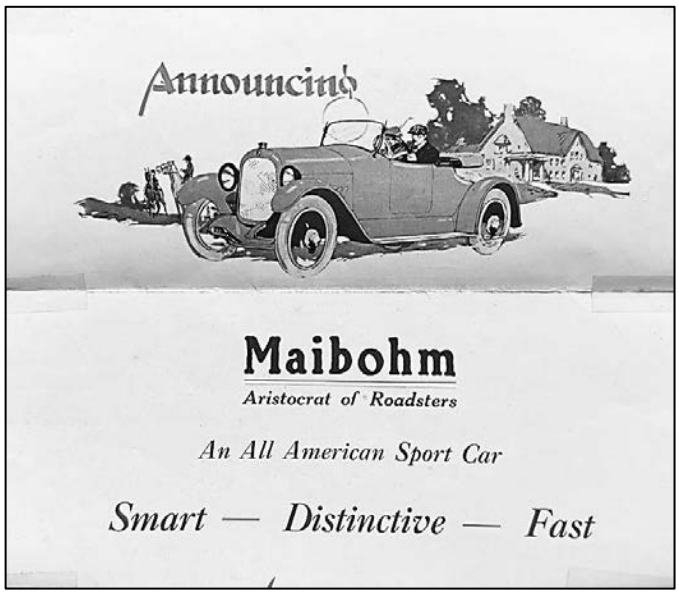
Arrangements were made with the J.I. Case Threshing Machine Company to market the car, and by 1910, Case bought the company and began to build their own CASE automobile. They proved to be very popular, and were even entered in numerous races at Indy. Case automobiles were made until 1927, when the company decided to manufacture farm machinery exclusively. It was said that Case executives thought they could easily market their CASE cars to farmers, but apparently, they proved to be too expensive for that market. The large three-story former factory building is still standing on the corner of Clark and 3rd Streets.

The Maibohm Motor Company began making a small two-seater automobile in 1916 at 1500 Clark Street. Three years later, their plant burned down and the company moved to Sandusky, Ohio. The president of the company was Peter Maibohm, a former blacksmith and wagonmaker.

The Piggins brothers, Charles and Fred, made an automobile for a little over a year starting in 1909, but turned instead to commercial truck manufacturing in 1911. When producing cars,

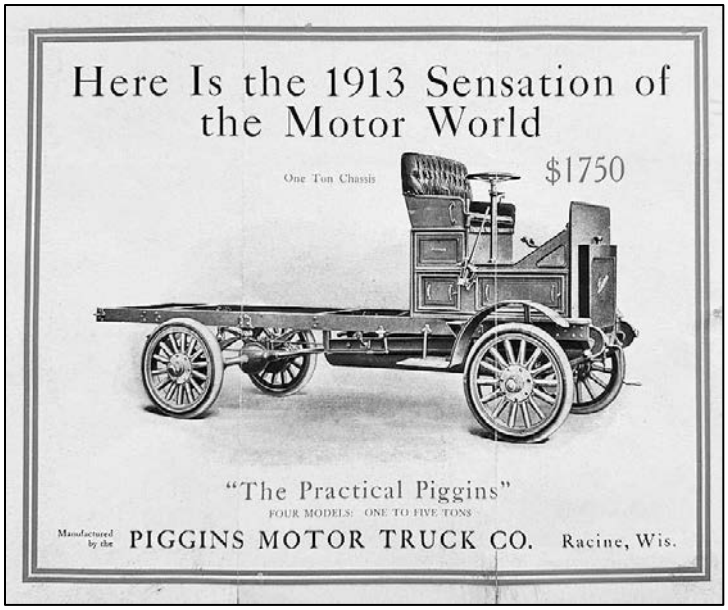


Case Car, 1910–1927, picture credit: Jim Mercier



Maibohm All American Sport Car, 1916–1918, picture credit: Jim Mercier

they had the distinction of building the largest and most



The Practical Piggins Truck, 1911–1916, picture credit: Jim Mercier

expensive vehicles ever made in Racine. Priced at nearly $3,500 (about $120,000 today), it's easy to see why car-buyers would prefer to purchase a Ford Model T, which was priced at only $850 in 1909! The Model T proved to be very affordable because of mass production due to assembly line savings. The last Piggins truck left the factory in 1916.

Another automobile which called Racine home was the LPC, and it was named after the company founders: William Mitchell Lewis (yes, from the Mitchell Motors Company fame), Rene Petard, and James Cram. They were best known for developing the first electric gear shift. The company was located in the old Racine Industrial Plant (now, Racine Business Center) on 16th Street. However, they were only in business for a few short years, from 1914 to 1916.

Racine's automobile legacy actually contributed to the formation of many automobile accessory plants here as well, some of which are still in business. Tires, jacks, radiators, exhaust systems, and many more accessories were all made here, thanks to these automobile makers. As a side note, it was said that about 95% of all the parts used on the Mitchell were either sourced locally or manufactured in their own factories.

Only a few old buildings remain that link Racine to the glory years as an automobile manufacturing center. Who would have known that Racine was once an important auto manufacturing powerhouse!

Oh, one last bit of useful information ... did you know that a 1909 Piggins auto was the first car ever to be stolen in Racine? That's correct! It happened way back in 1910, when two men broke into a locked garage on Park Avenue and drove off, according to newspaper accounts. It was eventually found the next day near Chicago.

Jim Mercier

(Trinity Lutheran Church, continued from page 5)

Geneva Street, between Yout and Goold Streets. The red brick, Neo-Gothic Revival style building, would feature two square towers with notched tops (one larger in height with a belfry), cut stone trimmings, pointed arches, and detailed woodwork. The dimensions of the church are 42 by 96 feet with a seating capacity of 500 people and an additional space for 88 more people in the loft plus room for a pipe organ. The Milwaukee architectural firm of Leiser and Holst designed the church building with Olson Brothers, Martin H. Schultz and Fergus construction of Racine acting as contractors. Interior designer and Religious Painting Company, Carl Reimann of Milwaukee executed the stained-glass windows. Interestingly, this company produced the windows for both the Geneva Street church and their earlier church on Milwaukee Avenue.

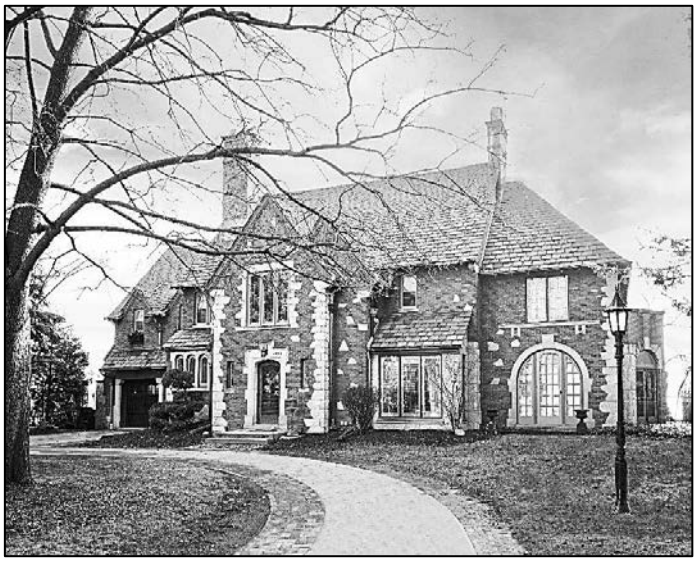
The congregation of Trinity Lutheran Church began as a missionary church of Saint John Lutheran Church located on Erie Street, where the services were conducted in the German language. In June of 1904, Saint John Lutheran Church petitioned the district to establish an English mission church on the northside of Racine. This was the first English Lutheran church in the entire Missouri Synod. By 1905 a Christian Day School was established. The English-speaking Lutheran Church began with just four members and by 1906 laid a cornerstone for their own new building, constructed on the corner of Milwaukee Avenue (now Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive) and Albert Street. During the tenure of this building, a parsonage was built, altar niche windows and a pipe organ were added and by 1914 electrical lighting was installed. By 1919, fueled by the continued growth of this community, a decision was made to purchase six city lots on Geneva Street to build a new church.

Church member, Tara Mattes, researched the history of who first owned this plot of land and subsequent ownership, beginning in 1839, when Orville W. Barnes came westward from Connecticut to Wisconsin Territory, purchasing land from the United States Government. According to the Abstract of Title the documented ownership of the land transferred twelve times between 1839 and 1919 being reduced in size from the original 160 acres to 80 acres, then 30, 10, 8, and finally to individual city-sized lots. The last recorded property owners of the piece of land where the church was to be built were Max and Luella Heck. Max was an attorney, judge, and state senator. They sold six lots to the church and continued to live next door to the church until Max's passing in 1938, when Luella moved to California. In 1942 the piece of property to the north of the church was then sold to an organization that originally planned to build Lutheran High School there. In 1947 the Trinity community purchased the property set aside for the proposed Lutheran High School, after the decision was made to build the high school on Luedtke Avenue. They ultimately moved a house and cleared the property to build a larger grade school, which was completed in 1960. In 1949 the church's name was changed to Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church.

This church continues to serve the Racine community with faith, reverence and love. Our thanks to the Trinity congregation for caring for and preserving this beautiful and historic church.

Vivian Merlo

1833 Main Street



The construction of the house at 1833 Main Street began in 1926. The Racine architect Frank Hoffman designed the English Tudor style house.

This house, known as the Collier house, is distinctive not simply for its design, but also for the materials in which the design was executed. Its basic exterior material is a form of brick then called brushed brick, with stone accents and quoins. Recent efforts to find a similar brick revealed that it has not been available since 1953. To give the masonry work added visual variety, the brick has been laid in different patterns.

But the brickwork is not the only striking architectural touch. For example, the copper gutters drain through copper downspouts, which have decorative concrete supports. The Vermont slate tiles vary in size - larger on the lower levels, smaller on the higher levels - to give the roof an appearance of greater height. Curved slate tiles are used to ensure integrity of design, while accommodating transitions in the roof's slope.

The design literally never loses sight of the importance of its location. For that reason, almost every room has a view of Lake Michigan. The windows are all leaded glass, many of which have stained glass panels executed by Enterprise Glass of Milwaukee. Although the windows and doorways are arched, all have screens and storms.

The house was built for Mayme and Thomas Collier, Jr. Thomas Collier, Jr. was an industrialist with interest in several Racine manufacturing enterprises. In 1916 he incorporated two firms for the production of poultry incubators: Wisconsin Incubator Company and Ironclad Company. Later Collier headed a single firm that combined the names of his two earlier businesses: the Wisconsin Ironclad Company which produced other appliances involving heating or cooling, including mangles, iceboxes, and refrigeration equipment.

In 1939 the house was purchased by Rachel and Arthur L. Olson, who owned it until 1972, when it was sold to Gary and Tanya Lehmann. Thereafter, the house was acquired by Gail Kosterman and David Mitchell, who in turn sold it in 2001 to Dr. Randall Moles, an orthodontist. In 2021 it was purchased by the current owners, Diana R. Dovorany, an emergency physician, and Randall M. Bruce.

Preservation Racine is pleased to honor this house which has retained its beauty for 100 years.

Nat Cycenas

1401 Grove Avenue

According to a pamphlet printed for St. Edward Catholic Church for their Golden Jubilee in 1969, the parish was first organized in October 1919. In those days, the city limits stretched only to Cleveland Avenue, while the area west of Grove Avenue was practically open field. Father John Bott was an Army chaplain returning from World War I. Archbishop Messmer of Milwaukee instructed Father Bott to organize a congregation far from the main section of Racine in the area called West Racine. It was to be the first non-ethnic Catholic Church in Racine.

During the early part of October 1919, about 20 men came together at a meeting. There, they met Father Bott, who was to become their Pastor. They decided on the name St. Edward for their new church. A Finance committee was formed and began a church fund campaign by obtaining subscriptions for $2,210.

Soon after, 23 women met with Father Bott to further develop plans for the congregation. The women held a large bazaar and church fair in December. That event, which netted over $6,000, and another bazaar the following April, which raised $2,210, put the church on its feet.

The first church building was purchased for $900. It had been a small Lutheran chapel and polling place located at the corner of Wright and Hayes Avenues. The building was moved to Grove Avenue on the east side between Wright Avenue and Fifteenth Street. A home for the pastor was purchased nearby at 1330 Grove Avenue.

By January 1926, plans were announced for the construction of a rectory and school. The architect was J. Mandor Matson. Matson was born in Norway, but spent most of his life in Racine. He designed and constructed numerous public buildings including Horlick and Park high schools, Wilmanor and Bull Manor apartments, Granada and Douglas theaters. The rectory was completed by the end of 1926. Both the rectory and school were

dedicated at a ceremony on May 30, 1927. The little wooden church in the middle of the block had been outgrown. Mass continued to be held in the basement of the school for 26 years until the indebtedness was finally cleared and the new church was built in 1953.

The rectory building was designed in the Italianate style, although it does not have the traditional roof brackets. The windows on the first level are decoratively framed in stone with an arch on top. There is a simple framing of stone surrounding the windows on the second floor. There is a bay window on the north side. The building has a cross-hipped roof with arched dormers. The front of the building has decorative squares below the windows on the first floor and decorative circles between the windows on the second floor. There are two small balconies on each side of the rectory facing Grove Avenue. Originally, there was a two-car attached garage on the south side. After the new church was built, the garage was replaced by a breezeway connecting the rectory to the church. The original roof had rounded red tiles. They were replaced in the 1980s with a traditional shingled roof. The rectory was the residence for the priests serving St. Edward Church until about 2006. Currently, the rectory is used for church offices as well as meetings.

Our appreciation to the Saint Edward community for preserving and maintaining this beautiful rectory.

Laura Gellott and Marcia Pfost

917 Grand Avenue

This lovely house at 917 Grand Ave was built in 1898 by John R. Evans, a Welsh man born in 1853. John was a skilled carpenter and was employed at J. I. Case company. He was married to Eliza and they had five children. Over the next 128 years, only two different families—the Evanses and the Wilsons—have lived here! John Evans died only eight years after building the house, and Eliza remained in the home raising five children (two of whom would become doctors), tutoring students, and taking in boarders, sometimes as many as six at a time! After Eliza died in 1942, her oldest daughter Eleanor lived here until she passed in 1983. The house was then sold to Robin and Diane Wilson, who sold it years later to their son, Neal Wilson. Neal lives there now. The Wilson's have done a beautiful job of maintaining this house with the help of a local general contractor, Brian Exner of BC Exner LLC, an expert in renovation and restoration. He maintains that the original builder, John Evans, clearly knew his trade as there are certain features unusual for the time.

The Wilsons are the owners of Wilson's Tea and Coffee; a popular coffee shop located in West Racine. Robin and Diane were both registered nurses when they decided to open the coffee shop in 1991. Neal is a master coffee roaster driven by a willingness to experiment, and by engaging with a wide network of coffee roasters, especially through hands-on experience launching and leading roasting operations.

The house is best described as Late Victorian, specifically a Queen Anne–influenced Folk Victorian. While it borrows ornamentation from high-style Queen Anne, the overall form is simpler and more boxy. This architectural style was found widely in growing Midwestern towns and this house is a gorgeous example that still maintains much of its original design, both inside and out.

The house presents itself with a lively, asymmetrical façade, a defining characteristic of Queen Anne architecture. Its exterior composition is animated by a steeply pitched roof intersected by cross gables, while a prominent bay window projects from the first floor, adding both dimension and light. A decorative front porch, detailed with turned posts, delicate spindle work, and ornamental brackets, adds to the house's late 19th-century craftsmanship. The use of wood siding, rather than masonry, further reflects the stylistic preferences and construction methods of the period.

Over time, the house has been updated in ways that balance modern function with historical preservation. Major systems, including electrical and plumbing, were replaced in the 1980s. Most windows have been updated, and glass-block units were added in the basement. A former side entrance off the dining room has since been enclosed, though the original door remains visible from the interior, hinting at the house's earlier layout. Outside, the driveway—installed in the late 1980s or early 1990s—was constructed using salvaged historic street bricks, adding another layer of character that connects the property to its broader historical context.

Jon Eeg

1628 Park Avenue

As more people moved to Racine in the early 1900s, land on the historic South Side that previously belonged to a single owner began to be divided up and offered to prospective buyers to build new houses. This is how 1628 Park Avenue came to be.

Property records show that a woman named Julia Roberts sold eight parcels of land on Park Avenue for $9,700 to Joseph and Kate Carroll in 1904. By 1908, according to the Sanborn Fire Insurance map, only five lots remained empty on the west side of the block.

When Joseph died in 1911, a builder and contractor named Fred Hanson (also spelled Hansen) purchased the lot that would

become 1628 Park Avenue (pictured above). A 1912 Racine Journal Times article listed Hanson as owning 19 Racine properties, including this one.

By February 1913, Hanson was placing advertisements in the newspaper listing 1628 Park Avenue for sale as a "new nine room house" with "quarter sawed and oak floors, gas and electric fixtures, complete bath, laundry tubs, hot water heat and a garage with room for two machines."

This is still a fairly accurate description of the house—though, if newspaper ads weren't charged by the word, Hanson might have elaborated further. Fortunately, Preservation Racine doesn't operate with this pricing structure, so we can share more details here.

The two-story house is a quintessential American Foursquare, recognizable by its boxy form and hipped roof. A centered hipped dormer on the front roof slope contains three rectangular windows, giving the façade a well-balanced appearance. The second story features a symmetrical row of four double-hung windows, each with divided upper sashes—another hallmark of the Foursquare style.

Large, front-facing windows on the main floor create a sense of openness in the lower-level rooms, while the full-width open-air porch—supported by simple square posts set over brick piers—give the entrance a welcoming yet sturdy look.

The design was most likely derived from the then-popular housing plans, sometimes referred to as "kit houses," marketed to builders and contractors like Fred Hanson. The Building Technology Heritage Library online hosts catalogs from this period including one called "A Book of Plans: By our wonderful offer you can build economically" published in 1911 by the Chicago House Wrecking Company. This book contains a very similar house plan to 1628 Park Avenue.

One of the dominant forces in the kit-house industry at that time was Sears, Roebuck & Co. Many of its catalogs featured not only plans but also millwork options, along with photographs of the company's impressive early-1900s lumber yards and manufacturing operations in Chicago. It is possible some of 1628 Park Avenue's woodwork was ordered from one of these catalogs.

The house still retains its original wood siding. The interior wood features are made from high-quality, stain-grain lumber. These pieces were crafted from old-growth wood, the kind no longer widely available or affordable today as it was in the early 20th century.

Hanson appears to have been living here as his name is listed in the 1912 City Directory at this address. Additionally, when the for-sale ads ran in 1913, he instructed interested buyers to "inquire on premises." One ad also noted that he "will sell cheap."

Perhaps this offer caught the eye of John Wensing, who purchased the home later that year. U.S. Census records show that Wensing was a first-generation American, born in Wisconsin to German immigrant parents. In 1920, at age 70, John was living at the house with his wife; his son, Fred; as well as Fred's wife and son.

Wensing apparently left the house to his family upon his death. This is evident from the many family members listed in the 1941 sale to second owners, David Pryce Davies and his wife, Mary. David Pryce Davies was a vice president and consulting engineer for J.I. Case Company.

David died in 1985, and Mary continued to own the house until she passed away in 1988. From 1988 to 2015, Dale and Lori Rogers owned the house until purchased by Richard Cranley.

Richard's son Sam and Sam's wife Katie bought the house in 2020. They have been working diligently to preserve and restore its historic character, including installing a new roof, painting the exterior—which Sam did himself—in a historically appropriate palette of deep navy with crisp white trim and bold red accents, as well as stripping and refinishing the interior woodwork. Congratulations to them on this rightfully earned award.

Debra Schug

1314 Hayes Avenue, Racine

Located in the West Racine subdivision called "Jay Eye See" is 1314 Hayes Avenue. Anyone familiar with Racine history will

recognize the district's name as J.I. Case's famous trotting horse, Jay Eye See.

Property records confirm that the J.I. Case Land Company owned this particular parcel until 1897 when it was first transferred to a man named John Hackenworthy. The lot would be sold three more times until the land that would become 1314 Hayes was sold to Ella Jeppesen in 1913.

U.S. Census records indicate that Ella and her husband, Sophus, were involved in real estate. Sophus was an immigrant from Denmark, while Ella was Wisconsin-born, but also of Danish heritage.

The couple developed the land and eventually sold the newly built house to Russell and Mayme Olson in 1916. Mayme died the following year, and by 1919 Russell had remarried as well as sold the house to Nels and Kate Wilson.

After Nels died in 1936, his widow eventually sold the property to Louis and Helen Mandernak, who owned it from 1943 to 1954. A 1963 obituary of Louis states he was employed by SC Johnson for 28 years as a quality inspector.

From 1954 to 1968, the house belonged to Roy and Mary Lou Lewane. Roy worked as an advertising manager for the Hamilton Beach Company and evidently sold the house when he accepted a position with a Chicago advertising agency.

The house changed hands several times over the next few decades. However, this glimpse of the ownership history reflects Racine's early-to-mid-20th-century growth and its expanding middle-class workforce needed by the city's evolving manufacturing companies.

The house is a one-and-half-story structure and is listed in tax documents as a "Cape Cod." Although 1314 Hayes shares some Cape Cod characteristics—such as a steeply pitched gable roof with a central chimney and minimal ornamentation—the houses of this style (popularized in the 1920s) typically do not include porches. This house does, suggesting a different stylistic influence.

Its design aligns more closely with a Craftsman or a California bungalow with its large open-air covered porch, which spans the entire front of the house to create a functional outdoor space as well as a welcoming entry. Also characteristic of the Craftsman style are the three simple square porch posts set on brick bases.

A particularly interesting feature is the grouped first-story windows located on the front of the house. With their original storms intact, four windows are joined together by mullions into a single unit in a unique formation. The central rectangular window sits above a larger square single-pane light, flanked by identical windows on each side.

Further research suggests this window feature might reflect the tastes of the original builders. According to the 1930 U.S. Census, the Jeppesens lived at 1840 Michigan Boulevard in Racine. Built in 1927, that house features the same distinctive four-piece window grouping, indicating the Jeppesens might have favored that style.

Off the left side of 1314 Hayes is a protruding bay window, which could—as suggested in the 1915 house plans of a similar looking structure called "The Huron" published by home building supplier Aladdin House— "form a cozy nook for a window seat." The word choice of "cozy" is apt given this house's overall snug and inviting feel.

The façade is dominated by a front-facing gabled roof, steeply pitched to create additional interior space on the upper level. Centered within the roof is a prominent gable dormer, featuring a trio of windows with a small projecting ledge beneath. On each end of the dormer are symmetrical structures that subtly add to the house's overall visual balance.

The upper story is clad in rough-cut shingles that meet the horizontal lap siding covering the main level at the junction between the first and second floors. Adding texture and visual interest, this mixed-siding design is typical of Craftsman-era houses as are the wide, deep overhanging eaves.

The house's blue-gray siding color paired with white trim reflects the earthy and understated Craftsman palette. The porch's decorative white railing with vertical balusters as well as the lattice skirting below enhance the bungalow aesthetic.

The house was sold in 2021 to its current owner Allison Grothaus, who is taking great care to preserve the house's charm, warmth and enduring cheerfulness.

Debra Schug

From the President

Dear Members—

As discussed in recent newsletters, the historic preservation ordinance in Racine has very narrow application. This is because it covers only seven (7) local landmarks. In Wisconsin, there are 78 municipalities with similar preservation ordinances, all providing for a local register of landmarks and for a city commission to review proposals for exterior changes to those landmarks. It is this review and comment process that provides a level of protection to those landmarks. A landmark's listing on a national or state historic register provides no such protection. Since 2019, the Planning Heritage and Design Commission (PHDC) has had this oversight function in Racine.

In Milwaukee, the situation is very different. Where Racine has its seven local landmarks, Milwaukee has approximately 190 local landmarks and districts. They cover a wide range of historical periods, architectural styles, usages, and ownership types. Landmark designation and review are the responsibility of the Milwaukee Historic Preservation Commission (HPC).

Two of Milwaukee's latest landmark additions were notable because the owners of the properties opposed granting them local landmark status. Also, the Milwaukee HPC proactively pursued designation because of concerns that the owners were considering a study to replace one of the buildings. The buildings in question stand side-by-side on West Kilbourn Avenue—the Miller High Life Theatre (former Auditorium) and the UW-Milwaukee Panther Arena. They both are owned by the Wisconsin Center District, created by the State of Wisconsin in 1994 to fund and operate a new convention center in Milwaukee. That is now the Baird Center, across Kilbourn from the Auditorium and Arena.

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Prior to the Auditorium, that block of Kilbourn was the site of the Milwaukee Exposition Building, built in 1881 by the Edward Townsend Mix firm. It was built in cream brick in a modified Queen Anne style, with an eclectic mix of towers, turrets, and domes. It burned down in 1905 and was replaced in 1909 by the Auditorium, designed by Ferry & Clas in a Neoclassical/Beaux Arts style. The Auditorium served for decades as Milwaukee's main venue for conventions, concerts, and other public events.

For example, former President Teddy Roosevelt made a campaign appearance there in 1912, immediately after he was wounded in an assassination attempt. [Roosevelt had appeared in Racine earlier the same day.] The Auditorium's current use as theater space followed a $42 million renovation in 2003.

The Arena opened beside the Auditorium in 1950. It hosted many sporting events and concerts over the past 75 years, and continues to do so.

In summer 2025, it emerged that the Wisconsin Center District had hired a consultant to study "highest and best use" for the Auditorium and Arena properties. This spurred the Milwaukee HPC into action. After a research and public comment period, it unanimously approved a measure to give local landmark status to the properties on November 3. This was approved by the Common Council on November 25 and took effect December 9.

The District's study continued and in January it was revealed that one of the study items was to raze the Auditorium and replace it with a new hotel. This can still happen. But now that the Auditorium has local landmark status, the owner (the District) must submit plans to the HPC for public comment, and the plans would have to be approved or rejected by the HPC and Common Council. Only after that process could the Auditorium be torn down.

Racine, of course, is much smaller than Milwaukee, but it can do better than seven local landmarks. In fact, there were nearly 80 such landmark designations prior to the ordinance change in 2006, which was meant to bring Racine into compliance with federal and state standards for local landmarks. Expanding that list of seven landmarks would bring more historic properties under public review for proposed exterior changes, but they must be added one by one. Under the current ordinance, Preservation Racine's Blake House was the first property added to the new list, in 2007. By 2011, five more properties were added—and then nothing for 14 years, until the seventh property was added in 2025. That said, City of Racine officials are supportive of expanding the list, and we should all look for opportunities to apply to designate more historic properties.

The owners of the former Auditorium in Milwaukee may consider tearing it down, but its recent listing as a local landmark will force a public discussion and approval process.

Scott Leonard