



ART LIBRARIES SOCIETY OF NORTH AMERICA

## **37<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference Indianapolis, Indiana, April 16-21, 2009**

**Session/Meeting Name: From Courthouse to Modern House: Historic Preservation in Indiana**

**Date, Time: April 19, 2009, 2:00-3:30pm**

**Moderators: Amy Trendler**

**Recorder: Laurie Chipps**

Speakers:

**Duncan Campbell**, Director, Graduate Program in Historic Preservation, Associate Professor, Department of Architecture, Ball State University

**Joseph C. Blalock Jr**, Associate Professor of Landscape Architecture, Ball State University

**Mark Dollase**, Vice President of Preservation Services and Director, Central Regional Office, Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana

Abstract:

Historic preservation today means education, advocacy, and the conservation and restoration of everything from historic buildings and landscapes to works of modern architecture. A wide range of these efforts and issues play out in Indiana, the home of historic courthouses, the city of Columbus, one of the finest and best appreciated collections of modern architecture in the country, and a vibrant preservation network. In this session we will hear from educators and professionals in the field who will review the historic preservation movement in Indiana, describe the state's resources for historic preservation, and illustrate how they interact to provide historic preservation advocacy that is a model across the United States. Specific examples of education and advocacy will be addressed through discussion of the American Grand Tour Project for environmental design students and the work of the Landmarks of the Recent Past Committee of the Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana in raising public awareness about preserving modern architecture.

Presentation #1: **Preserving Indiana: A National Model** by Duncan Campbell

Indiana has succeeded in considerable efforts in historic preservation. Since the passing of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, there has been much attention on historic preservation. Currently there are seventy graduate programs for the study of historic preservation, one of which is at Ball State University.

Indiana has led the way in grass roots efforts for historic preservation, having the largest state-wide preservation group in the country. They are funded by an endowment based on a donation by Eli Lilly, though one-third of annual funds are raised by themselves. There are nine regional offices with one director per office.

Several programs have been established to save historic structures. One is a real estate program called the FLIP (Fund for Landmark Indianapolis Properties) Loan. This loan provides buyers with \$50,000 seed money to buy a building they intend to preserve and landmark, with the agreement that the money will be paid back to the organization. Other grants include African American Heritage Grant, Marion County Historic Preservation Fund,

Indiana Preservation Grants, Legal Defense Grants, and the Historic Preservation Education Grants. The Historic Preservation Education Grants also released an educational pamphlet entitled "[Preservation What?](#)"

Each state has its own preservation department. Many surveys have been done and one of the most common phenomena is "slip covering" or, the tendency in the 1960's to cover historic facades with rather than tear down. There is a façade grant program that assists with restoring these buildings. Another effort includes preserving/relocating historic bridges. Since many old bridges cannot accommodate current traffic and vehicles, they are moved elsewhere in order to be preserved. There is also an effort between the National Trust for Historic Preservation and HGTV called "Restore America." Current efforts include the West Baden Springs Hotel/Resort and the French Lick Springs Resort & Casino. Several other initiatives were also touched upon.

Presentation #2: **The [American Grand Tour](#) Technologies: Wiki and Google Earth Integration for Investigating Place**, by Joseph C. Blalock Jr

Mr. Blalock related several personal experiences that led him to create this project, travel being the main impetus. Also, as an educator and designer, he is interested in how one educates other designers. He believes that travel plays a very important role in this, stating that the best way to design for the future is to travel and learn as much from the past as possible.

For centuries, travel has played a role in education. The "Grand Tours" of the past were designed for the wealthy and elite to see the world. But how do you do the same for people of today who cannot necessarily afford it? With a focus on the places in the US, Mr. Blalock put together a survey for people to nominate what they believe are worthy places that people should visit in the US. What began as 100 sites is now over 300. The best way to allow people to see these places affordably is via the web. Contributions are accepted from his students as well as general users.

Based on the same software as Wikipedia, Mr. Blalock has created his own wiki so that users can contribute photos, videos, etc. Similar projects include [MIMOA](#) out of the Netherlands. With the American Grand Tour website, Mr. Blalock created the outline and structure of the content. Maps are based on the Google Maps feature "My Maps" which can also be viewed in Google Earth.

But how do you get the users in the *real* environment? With new technologies, if the user goes to the places featured, she/he can use GPS on phones, online maps, street views, compass, etc to actually explore the place electronically. This allows the user many advantages, including becoming a smarter tourist: can figure out what to do/where to go while en route or at the site. Also, the user can contribute to the website while on site. Technology combined with storytelling can also be used to enhance the user's experience of place. "Augmented reality" technologies can be combined using special virtual reality glasses so one can see the story being told on site. Also, use of web-connected cell phones can view and highlight locations. Secondlife is also a possible way for users to experience place.

Presentation #3: **The New Mod Squad: Saving Indiana's Finest Modern Landmarks**, by Mark Dollase

The second part of this session's title is explored in this lecture: preservation of modern structures. After a conversation exploring efforts that were needed so save current

buildings which are threatened, the Recent Past Committee was formed in 2005. This group is not focused solely on members of Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana, but also on education and outreach to the general population. There are also similar groups in Palm Springs and Chicago.

An example of what constitutes as "modern" architecture can be seen in a house designed by Edward Dart in Barrington, IL: very open, spacious, with walls of glass windows. Examples of old architecture include features of ornamentation, verticalness, limited light, etc. Examples of modern architecture center on the structure's lack of ornamentation, horizontal shape, expansive glass walls, and use of natural materials, such as the Walter Gropius House, Fallingwater by Frank Lloyd Wright, and the Farnsworth House by Mies van der Rohe. Much of this modern architecture was part of a lifestyle, i.e. the California lifestyle of outdoor living with pools, grills, etc., as well as the car culture of suburbia after WWII. Many of these homes were also advertised in pattern books so that they could be chosen, purchased, and built at the owners' request.

How are modern architecture problems dealt with today? An example given was the work done on Crown Hall at the Illinois Institute of Architecture. Also, rehab projects such as Farmers and Mechanics Savings Bank in Minneapolis (now a Hilton Hotel) and Price Tower by Frank Lloyd Wright in Bartlesville, Oklahoma (now an arts center) were detailed as successful buildings that have been adapted for other uses. Challenges to these efforts deal with the value of land and tear down/alteration projects. Demolitions also occur because there is a lack of appreciation for more current buildings or there is a lack of resources to maintain them.

The organization has created a styles guide to help define what "modern" architecture is. A survey was taken that listed 250-300 buildings as outstanding examples, listing identification of style, dates of construction, integrity, materials, and previous owners and architects.

Further examples discussed include: The House of Tomorrow located on Lake Michigan in Beverly Shores, IN, along with several others which were on display during Chicago's 1933-34 Century of Progress Exposition. They were later removed, but currently 4 of the 5 are under restoration. Also, a controversy has ensued in Fort Wayne, IN. over a library by architect Eero Saarinen and landscape architect Dan Kiley. Preservation efforts are trying to preserve the building as-is, but Concordia University wants to expand the campus' library, which would alter the building and fill in a portion of the lake designed by Kiley. There is also an effort to preserve an entire district of 1950's era homes (location?).

Upcoming events include the 2010 O'Brien Conference on Historic Preservation, April 16-19, 2010 in New Harmony as well as various outreach tours.

## Questions

**Q:** Preservation efforts seem so focus on residential buildings. Are there efforts for industrial buildings?

**A:** Indiana in general is weak in industrial buildings as a building type (not as many as other states) but there is definitely an effort. Industrial buildings most often are adapted for other uses. There is a presence of the auto industry in IN that is being pushed to preserve, this also includes the associated buildings. It has been quite a while, however, since there was even a survey of industrial buildings done in IN.

**Q:** Are there more graduate programs being added to curriculums?

**A:** No, there are not many more programs being added, but there are more students enrolling in the existing ones.

**Q:** When voting on the demolition or landmarking of a building, what factors are involved?

**A:** Many factors such as local politics, history of the site, funding, etc. There are many guidelines that can be followed for landmarking, but a lot of the decisions come down to politics.