



Landmarks, Inc.

Established 1965

Landmark News

The official newsletter of Landmarks, Inc.

Preserving and Protecting Omaha's Built Environment

Landmarks, Inc. and ACT!VATE Omaha Present The 2007 Spring Historic Guided Walking Tour

Located just south of historic Burlington Station, Little Italy is one of Omaha's oldest neighborhoods. Initially populated by immigrants from Germany, Ireland, and Bohemia, Southern Italians arrived in the early 1900's. Salerno's shop repair shop at 6th & Pierce Street was the nucleus of the community. Further west on 10th street, many of Omaha's prominent business leaders made their homes on a hill overlooking the new city. Over a century later, the neighborhood continues to be a rich ethnic example of Omaha's brisk history.

Highlights on the tour include the striking **Cornish Residence**, one of Omaha's best examples of Second Empire architecture, and **Santa Lucia Hall**, which was built in 1891 as **Fire Station 9**. Landmarks, Inc. will display photographs of buildings as they used to appear including **Burlington Station** with its original portico. Dahlman Park is the southern border of the walking tour. Named for Omaha's "cowboy mayor," the park occupies some of the highest land near downtown.

Join us for this great combination of architectural appreciation and outdoor exercise!



St. Francis Cabrini Church

TOUR DETAILS

DATE: Saturday, May 12, 2007

TIME: Tour begins at 10:00am
Registration at 9:30am

**\$7 per adult, \$5 per member
\$2 for children 12 and under**

LOCATION: St. Francis Cabrini Church
1335 South 10th Street

Landmarks elects new Officers & Board Members at Annual Meeting

Thank you to everyone who attended the annual meeting in February. We are grateful to All Makes Office Equipment for hosting the event. We thoroughly enjoyed touring the Hupmobile building after the meeting. Landmarks, Inc. commends the Hupmobile building Owners for maintaining this important piece of Omaha's History.

Please welcome Landmarks, Inc.'s newly elected Officer's & Board Members:

Paul Nelson - President
Carol O'Donnell - Secretary
Stuart Shell
Kyle Whitfield



Touring the Hupmobile Building with Owner, Larry Hogya (left) Board Member, Frank Reida visits one of the Hupmobile's equipment presses (right)



The Endangered List *Written by Ken Mayer, reproduced with permission by Omaha By Design*

Landmarks Inc. recently announced its 2007 list of Endangered Buildings.

We are among those who believe that good architecture is worth saving. Not as museum pieces or relics, but because old buildings are valuable, beautiful and usable. Our architecture is our heritage, our history and our sense of place.

That's why Omaha by Design's Civic Omaha recommendations, now part of the city's Master Plan, include a Conservation of Buildings recommendation. And that's why Landmarks advocates for preservation and reuse.

In the month or so since the Endangered List was released, much has happened. Officials at the University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC) have assured Landmarks that they have no plans to demolish The Morsman Residence at 518 South 38th St. for campus expansion to the east. The house is currently used by The Omaha Women's Club, whose lease expires this year. The structure, by Omaha architect Frederick A. Henninger, was designed in the Tudor Style. The 1923 house was the first in Omaha to incorporate an attached garage and features a projecting limestone entry arch, fluted chimneys and leaded windows set in limestone frames. Landmarks has removed the Morsman Residence from its Endangered List.

To the west of the UNMC campus, however, another threat looms at 4524 Farnam St. that now houses a coffee shop. Although little is known about the building's architect, it is, nonetheless, a beautiful example of Sullivanesque commercial architecture. Built around 1900, by 1918, it served as the construction yard for John Harte, a prominent local contractor. As plans for rerouting Saddle Creek Road proceed, the building waivers between destruction and salvation. The current owner is working with UNMC and city planners to keep the building in place.

In addition to these aesthetic treasures, the fate of a building with historic significance is also in doubt. The Hupmobile Building at 2523 Farnam St. sits vacant. It stands as the last preserved Hupmobile dealership in the country. When the Hupp Motor Company ceased operations in 1940, the building was used for war production of artillery shells and plane parts, some for the Enola Gay Bomber. Despite enthusiastic interest from the Culinary School at Metropolitan Community College to reuse the building as an urban training restaurant, a deal could not be made, and the current owner has put the structure up for sale.

The Baxter Residence at 410 South Elmwood on the University of Nebraska at Omaha (UNO) campus is at risk of being destroyed as part of a student housing project. The 1927 house is important for both its aesthetics and history. Designed by Omaha's most famous architect, Thomas Kimball, in an eclectic Mediterranean style, it features a large open-air porch located on the north side of the main level, the south side has a two-level sun porch. The central exterior feature is a three-story tower. Originally, the house had a roof with green Spanish tile that highlighted the exterior Spanish-style arches. The extensive use of decorative limestone and terra cotta trim are distinctive Kimball touches. Other local Kimball buildings include the Fontenelle Hotel, the Burlington Station, the old Omaha Public Library and St. Cecilia's Cathedral.

William F. Baxter was president of the Thomas Kilpatrick Company and active in civic affairs until his death in 1934. He served on the board of trustees of the University of Omaha. In 1939, his widow donated monies that were used to fund the William F. Baxter Lecture series. The Milo Bail Student Center houses the Baxter Chapel in his memory. Baxter's two previous homes were destroyed during his life, one by fire, one by the Easter tornado of 1913; now a third Baxter home may be lost.

A few years ago, a delegation from Landmarks met with former UNO Chancellor Nancy Belck about saving the building. Current proposals for the student housing project include the use of the house as a student commons among the dormitories. Many other reuse options come to mind, such as housing for visiting alumni or professors or even as a residence for the chancellor. The decision is now up to the officials at UNO.

Maybe our planners should take a lesson from the life of William F. Baxter. A biography published in the *Omaha World-Herald* not long before his death read, "Philosopher, student and merchant, Mrs. Baxter says he thinks things through and is the most patient man she has ever known."

We owe it to those who built before us.