



PRESERVATION MATTERS

January 1996

Volume 12 Number 1

A PUBLICATION OF THE PRESERVATION ALLIANCE OF MINNESOTA

INSIDE P M

Fairmont Church
Once Again Faces
Demo Threat

150 Year Old Oxcart
Trail Faces Obliteration

Stillwater Bridge
May Have Limited Life

Roger Brooks:
The Alliance's
New President

Preservation Matters
Needs A Few Good
Volunteers

Upcoming:

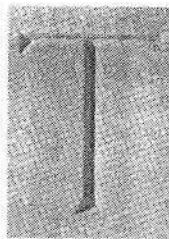
*A former firehouse becomes
a boathouse in Saint Paul's
West Side*

*Duluth's Washington
School becomes an Artspace
Project*

*The Property Rights Issue:
How it could affect
preservation*

*The Longfellow House in
Minneapolis' Minnehaha
Park is restored*

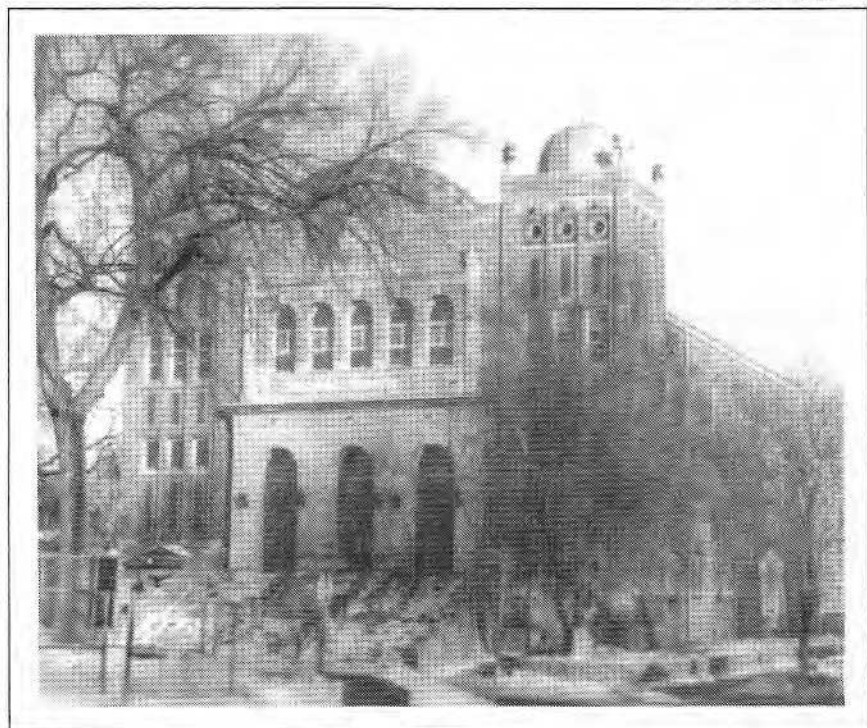
Three Minneapolis Synagogues to be Studied For Heritage Designation



Three north Minneapolis synagogues: Mihro Kodesh Synagogue at 1000 Oliver Avenue North, Adath Jeshurun Synagogue at 3400 Dupont Avenue South, and Sharei Zedek Synagogue at 1119 Morgan Avenue North are in the initial steps of research by the Minneapolis Heritage Preservation Commission for future heritage designation.

When asked her reaction to these designations, Marilyn Chiat, Director of the Center for Study of Religious Places of Worship, exclaimed "Oh, Wow!" The noted scholar then continued, "The north Minneapolis places are incredibly important; they are the only physical evidence of a once-vibrant Jewish religious community in north Minneapolis."

continued on page 11



former Mihro Kodesh Synagogue at 1000 Oliver Avenue North, Minneapolis



PRESIDENT'S COLUMN
by Roger Brooks

PRIORITIES AND COMMITMENTS

Last year, under the leadership of Rolf Anderson, the Preservation Alliance made impressive strides. The accomplishments were recorded in these pages: A critical strategic planning effort, a successful fund-raising event with special guest Richard Moe of the National Trust, a preservation festival, a membership drive and phone-a-thon that increased membership by 30 percent, and new office space. We also intensified our preservation advocacy, sponsored several special projects, and published this newsletter every month.

Now we are poised for rapid growth. As the new president of the Alliance, I am committed to keeping the momentum going. I'd Like to see the Alliance become an even stronger voice for preservation.

Here are some of our priorities for 1996:

- Make the Alliance a true "coalition" of preservation organization. We will facilitate communication among groups, help people find the resources to accomplish their preservation objectives and build a more effective network that can make preservation a stronger force in Minnesota.
- Improve our communication capacity. We will invite more input into our newsletter from preservationists around the state, develop our World Wide Web site into an information clearinghouse, and develop "how to" handbooks for preservationists.
- Increase our organizational capacity. We will improve our financial standing, expand our membership, formalize our internal procedures, and continue to strengthen the board. Eventually, we want to be able to hire a full-time staff person who can work on preservation issues around the clock.

At this point we are almost entirely a volunteer-driven organization. We continue to need your help to reach our objectives. After our January board meeting we will have a range of active committees on which any member is invited to participate. But don't wait to be called. Step forward and lend a hand.

There's a lot of talk these days about the decline of community participation, that hallmark of American life deTocqueville found so remarkable. In his book, *Bowling Alone*, Robert Putnam of Harvard University says that various factors in modern life are diminishing our willingness and ability to come together in

groups to work on issues and problems that affect us all. In the long run, he says, that's a dangerous trend that could threaten the very foundations of our democratic society.

Volunteering for the Preservation Alliance might not reverse this trend, but, well, it can't hurt either. And if you're interested enough in preservation to be member of the Alliance, I'm sure you'll find working on preservation issues fun, too!

In the meantime, I welcome any ideas or comments you might have about the Preservation Alliance. Please feel free to call me at 612/690-2648.

PRESERVATION MATTERS

Published monthly by the

Preservation Alliance of Minnesota

*Suite 54, International Market Square
275 Market Street, Minneapolis, MN
55405*

612/338-6763

Board of Directors

Roger Brooks, President
Martha Frey, V. President
Robert Frame III, Treasurer
Mark Peterson, Secretary
Rolf Anderson
Robert Copeland
Peter Erickson
Thomas Holman
Richard Husband
Diane Montgomery
Susan Ormto
Peter Rland
Virginia Sweatt

**National Trust For Historic Preservation
Advisors:**

John Kuester
Charlene Roise

Staff

Marvel Anderson

Editorial Staff

Robert Roscoe, editor
Jody Keppers
Kristofer Layon
Ken Martin

The Preservation Alliance of Minnesota is a private, non-profit organization dedicated to preserving, protecting, and defending Minnesota's historic resources. PAM is a 501(c)3 organization. Basic membership fees are \$25 per year.

Internet URL:

<http://www.umn.edu/nlhome/m121/brook024/pam.htm>

FAIRMONT CHURCH ONCE AGAIN FACES DEMOLITION THREAT

Once rescued from demolition by a preservation-minded bidder at an auction, the First Church of Christian Science in Fairmont is again in a threatened status.

Larry Vogel, the church's owner, is still in the process of putting together a re-use plan for the building, but deferred repairs have become a community concern. The vacant Romanesque-inspired masonry building needs roof repairs and rebuilding of a deteriorating rear wall near a public sidewalk. Because of a perceived hazardous situation, fence has been built in this area of the church.

On November 1st of 1995, Fairmont city officials gave Vogel 30 days to present them with a development plan or reinforce the rear wall. Recently the city gave him additional time, and in mid-January MacDonald Mack Partnership, an architectural firm with renown experience in historic preservation will survey the situation and follow up with structural recommendations.

The First Church of Christ Scientist was built in 1898 on Blue Earth Avenue, one of Fairmont's main streets. In accordance to the purposes of worship, the church building's architecture comes not from a display of ornamented surface but from the simplicity of a four-way vaulted roof supported by arched walls with large stained glass windows, all to focus worshippers to the reading table at the center of the floor.

The church was designed in the Richardson Romanesque style by one of Richardson's students in Boston, Harry Jones, who later became one of the most talented architects in Minneapolis at the turn of the century. Jones is perhaps best known for his design of what is now called Butler Square, park buildings at Lake Harriet, and the Scottish Rite Temple (along with Warren Hayes) at Dupont Avenue near Hennepin Avenue.

But the building needs more than a structural remedy. It needs a buyer who can envision its economic and cultural potential.

Fairmont, a city of 11,000 in Martin County along the Iowa border, is a city with a strong economic base, serving as an agricultural center that is complemented



with five substantial manufacturing plants. Its location on Interstate I-90 intersecting with Highway 15 from Hutchinson connects well with other southern Minnesota cities. All these factors would tend to provide potential for entrepreneurs seeking to meld historic preservation with economic re-use.

But there is the Fairmont Opera House factor. This National Register-designated structure has recently been renovated for multi-use for performances and public events and is doing quite well. Many citizens took pride in the restoration effort, but may consider that the need for public performance is well met with this fine facility.

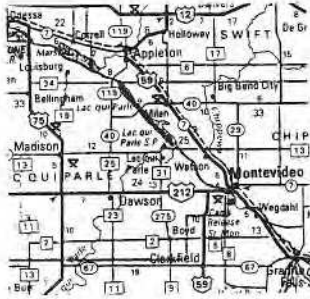
Another factor working against a short term stabilization is that Vogel is a private owner of the church building which makes donations for preservation efforts less advantageous than would its ownership by a non-profit organization. But Vogel has tried to donate it to a county historical society, but the group has been working for over a year to obtain a state-granted non-profit status which at this is yet to be applied for.

continued on page 8



AND AN OXCART TRAIL RUNS THROUGH IT.

MUST PROGRESS, HISTORY AND HIGHWAYS ALWAYS COURSE IN STRAIGHT LINES?



The 160 acre farm in Lac Qui Parle County that Lynn Lokken's family has owned since the 1860s has rich soil under footsteps and a view horizon of rolling prairie. And an oxcart trail runs through it.

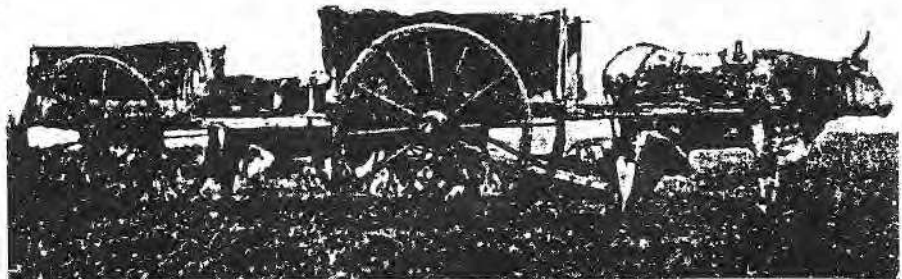
This century-and-a-half old transportation route is a remnant of the Red River Oxcart Trail used by traders to carry goods between Pembina and Saint Peter. Also running across the farm close to the trail is a rather scenic county road that winds down a valley through stands of oak, meanders across parts of virgin prairie, then passes over an old steel girdered bridge crossing the Lac Qui Parle River. Their farm is located between Montevideo and Madison in Lac Qui Parle County which borders South Dakota.

The problem for Lynn Lokken and her family is a county-proposed bridge replacement. Building the needed new bridge itself is of no concern, but State roadway regulations requiring straightening road approaches to the bridge would have a domino effect of taking out the trees, disturbing a nearby historic site, possible damage to Native American artifacts in a valley bluff and obliterate most of those plainly visible deep oxcart ruts.

Lokken, her family, and a group of supporters are objecting to this county proposal, stating that this area is heritage to the Lokken family and to citizens of the area. The Willmar West Central Tribune wrote a recent article that wryly questioned whether progress must always travel in a straight line. And a newly formed regional environmental organization in nearby Montevideo, C.U.R.E. (Clean Up Our River Environment), is researching other nearby sections of oxcart trail and is advocating preservation of the trail on Lokken's land.

The trail itself is a series of parallel depressions in prairie soil approximately a foot deep and a little more than a foot wide. The trail section on the land the Lokkens own is 800 to 900 feet long. Lokken's photographs show the trail is clearly visible from a distance of 200 feet away from it, and in the late summer and early fall the ruts take a chocolate brown color contrasting with the yellowing grasses of the prairie.

This section of the Red River Oxcart Trail follows the Minnesota River, imprinting a second layer of human transportation, the first being paths of Native Americans who formed the route over time and terrain. And at the point where the Native Americans made their river crossing is the present bridge. The river bluff that is part of the curving road designated for removal is known to contain archeological items whose importance is yet to be determined. Lac Qui Parle County Engineer Merlyn Hanson and archeologists at the State Historic Preservation Office have exchanged corre-



spondence about the matter, but extensive studies have not been conducted.

Of additional significance is the Amos Huggins Homestead, declared by the Lac Qui Parle County Historical Society as a historic site. Located near the bridge, Huggins was a trader with the native tribes in the area. He was killed in the Conflict of 1862 and his cabin was burned. A grove of old trees now marks the site. Bridge replacement may also affect this property; state

continued on page 10

CROSSING THE DIVIDE:

THE STILLWATER BRIDGE IS ENDANGERED BY A FEDERAL AGENCY'S DUAL ROLES

How can the National Park Service call for removing a historic structure when it has the duty to protect it?

In a broadly cultural sense, preservation belongs to the ages, but when it comes to governmental jurisdiction, preservation belongs under the aegis of the National Park Service, a Federal agency that reviews and registers historic properties placed on the National Register, authorizes historic tax credit certifications and conducts other preservation duties. Although NPS also is charged with regulating natural areas and national parklands, these dual roles should pose no conflicting situations.

But the Saint Croix River Valley in the vicinity of Stillwater is now the locus of just such a conflict.

The Stillwater Bridge, leading from the east downtown area across the river to Wisconsin, has served border communities for many years, but the 1970s and 80s brought heavy traffic to Main Street in downtown Stillwater, creating frequent L-shaped gridlocks along Main Street and the east-bound intersecting street leading to the bridge.

Several years ago the Minnesota Department of Transportation proposed to build a new bridge down river nearly a mile which would provide both an additional vehicular access across the Saint Croix and would also bring back a more pedestrian oriented ambiance to the retail activity along Main Street with its many restored historic storefront buildings.

A step in the new bridge public agency review process analyzed the effect of the new bridge on nearby historic resources, and one of the outcomes was a Memorandum of Agreement signed by SHPO, MnDot, the Advisory Council and the Federal Highway Administration which included a finding that the Stillwater Bridge would remain in place.

Subsequent to that agreement, the National Park Service asked MnDot to remove the Stillwater Bridge because, according to NPS, an additional bridge in that stretch of the Saint Croix River would impair the scenic as-

pect of the river's natural environment, so if MnDot wanted to build a new bridge, it must remove an existing one. This decision by NPS in effect determined a historic resource to be in conflict with a natural resource, both being under the jurisdiction of that agency.

This contradiction has been challenged by SHPO, who claims the bridge to be integral to the heritage of the Stillwater environs, which ceased being a natural area over a century ago when lumbering, agriculture, river traffic and the resulting settlement changed much of the river valley from a natural riverway to an evolved cultural landscape.

Dennis Gimmestad, Government programs and Compliance Officer for SHPO at the Minnesota Historical Society, says the NPS action nullifies the Memorandum of Agreement by changing conditions once in place. If the Memorandum no longer has viability, states Gimmestad, SHPO could rescind their approval, and the result could be delay in new bridge construction, creating an "Unresolved Issue" that requires lengthy appeals and legal encumbrances. When asked why the Park Service cannot allow a historic structure to remain within what is normally relevant to a bridge - natural features of a river gorge - Gimmestad says their narrowly-focused interpretation is "entrenched" in their beauracracy.

continued on page 8



an old postcard image of the Stillwater Bridge

ROGER BROOKS ASSUMES PRESIDENCY OF THE PRESERVATION ALLIANCE

Roger Brooks has been elected President of The Preservation Alliance of Minnesota at a recent Alliance Board meeting. Brooks is Deputy Legislative Auditor For Program Evaluation for the State of Minnesota. He was elected to the Preservation Alliance Board of Directors in 1993, and is a past Chair of the Saint Paul Heritage Preservation Commission.

Roger Brooks succeeds Rolf Anderson, who served as Alliance President for the past five years. Rolf had previously decided to cap his energetic tenure as president so he could have more time to pursue his eclectic array of preservation interests.

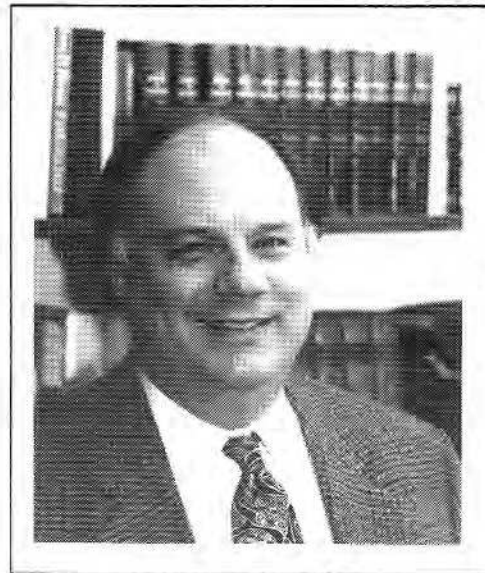
Brooks brings considerable professional resources to his new task of guiding the statewide preservation group. Prior to joining the auditor's office, Roger was assistant professor of political science at Macalester College, specializing in comparative policy analysis. He has also taught at several other colleges, including the Humphrey Institute at the University of Minnesota. Other credentials include being a Woodrow Wilson Fellow, a recipient of a European Parliamentary Study grant, and service on various national legislative evaluation committees.

He received an A.B. degree from the University of Michigan, an M.A. and Ph D in political science from Michigan State University and has received certification in program evaluation at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

"The argument for heritage preservation is mainly a soulful one," Brooks observes, "but preservation is also important for economic development, tourism, and all the other activities that make Minnesota a state that is vibrant, prosperous, and a good place to live and do business."

Supporting and working on grassroots preservation is Brooks' principal focus, and as the new President of the Alliance, he seeks to form a "true alliance" by establishing stronger ties with people and organizations committed to preservation in Minnesota. "We want to be a more forceful advocate for preservation," Brooks stated, "We will facilitate better communication among preservationists."

One interest group Brooks has in mind to form a working relationship with is the environmental movement. "Preservationists and environmentalists are natural allies," Brooks commented, "One is trying to conserve the built environment, the other the natural



environment. Both are concerned about maintaining a high quality of our spaces and places."

Brooks gives much respect for Rolf Anderson's role as Alliance President. "I want to thank Rolf Anderson for the tremendous contribution he has made to the Alliance over the past six years," he says, "He has devoted time, energy, wisdom, and good cheer to the cause. I'm relieved that he is going to remain an active member of the board."

Miracle Needed For the Spot Cafe

The Spot Cafe, the White Castle-type diner at 615 South Tenth Street in Minneapolis is about to be razed unless a last-minute buyer is willing to move the structure. Built in 1932 and moved to the present site in 1951, the diner was originally called the Eat-A-Thon, subsequently became the Chick O Burger before becoming the Spot Cafe which closed long ago. Its architectural significance comes with its white and blue glazed brick exterior intended to give the diner a clean aesthetic.

The impending prospect of demolition has gone on for several years, and a demolition permit has been granted by the Minneapolis Heritage Preservation Commission. The building's interior is totally stripped of former diner furnishings and is in extremely dilapidated condition. Anyone interested in the building should contact Amy Lucas, Minneapolis HPC at 673-2422.

PRESERVATION MATTERS FAX INTERVIEW WITH ROGER BROOKS

Vitae Statisticae:

place of birth: **Ann Arbor Michigan**

age: **51**

place or city of residence: **Saint Paul**

personal status: **married: wife: Ronnie;
children: Kirsten and Russell**

occupation: **Deputy Legislative Auditor For Program
Evaluation, State of Minnesota**

education: **A.B. University of Michigan;
Ph.D. Michigan State University in Political Science**

What are your particular preservation interests?

Support for community grass roots preservation

*What is your favorite historic place or building in
Minnesota?*

State Capitol, designed by Cass Gilbert

*What interests or ability can you bring to the Board of the
Preservation Alliance?*

organizing ability, getting things done

*You knew you gained a personal interest in preservation
when....*

**I learned that my older sister had been born in a 200
year-old structure that had served as a morgue for
old Fort Mackinac on Mackinac Island in Upper
Michigan. My father worked for the state park.**

What are your other interests?

**Music, gardening, sailing, wilderness camping,
reading about history**

*What is the most recent book you have read that you
enjoyed?*

Italian Neighbors by Jim Parks

Why do you think historic preservation is important?

**Historic preservation strengthens communities, and
strong communities enhance quality of life.**

Anything else you would like to tell us?

**I have been a member of the Preservation Alliance
Board since 1993, and a member of the Saint Paul
Heritage Preservation Commission from 1985 to
1995, serving as Chair from 1992 to 1993.**

PAM GOES ON-LINE

The Preservation Alliance has become one of the first state preservation organizations to develop a site on the World Wide Web. To those with access to the Internet, the site offers information, news of other organizations as well as the Alliance, a calendar of events, links to other preservation organizations, and notices of opportunities for volunteers.

The site is still under construction and will be expanding throughout the year. One of the goals of the Alliance is to include on the Web site information about every preservation organization in the state. A survey form is being sent to all organizations to collect relevant information.

"The Web site should be a valuable resource for preservationists in the future," said Roger Brooks, the new president of the Alliance. "It will allow anyone interested in heritage preservation to find out what others are doing and foster a more coherent preservationist community."

So far, only a few organizations have their own Web sites, including the MHS State Historic Preservation Office, Blue Earth County Historical Society, and Clay County Historical Society. The Alliance Web site will allow scores of additional organizations at least a minimal presence on the Web.

The Alliance Web site can be reached with a computer, a modem, and a link to an Internet provider. Full instructions, including a list of providers in Minnesota can be obtained by calling Marvel Anderson at the Alliance office (612/338-6763)

The URL address for the site is:

<http://www.umn.edu/nlhome/m121/brook024/pam.htm> (all lower case)

Fairmont Church continued from page 3

Several years ago Vogel was successful in purchasing a demolition-threatened church and using the building for his business before another church group came along and obtained it from Vogel. "I've already 'recycled' one church," Vogel says, "now this one is a real challenge."

With the success of that venture, when he heard through friends that the Christian Science church would be auctioned the following day with the few prospective bidders interested only in salvaging the church's stained glass windows, and the likely high bid to run just a few hundred dollars, Vogel became interested.

But the next morning's twin cities newspaper printed an article about the building exclaiming its value, and the bidding quickly ran up into the thousands of dollars. But with several members of the historical society telling Vogel that the group would take over the building if Vogel would be the successful bidder and his determination to not let the church be razed, his \$15,000 bid bested the salvagers and the church was his.

His dramatic rescue of the Christian Science church from the auctioneer's gavel made great newspaper copy in the following weeks. This made Vogel feel interest would be generated in a re-use effort that could be partnered with the county historical society. And the Preservation Alliance of Minnesota honored Vogel at its 1994 Preservation Awards Ceremony for his commitment and courage in the church rescue.

Stillwater Bridge continued from page 5

And when it comes to what could be termed an intrusion in a natural environment, there is the situation of the proposed new bridge's profile. Its western end, coming high on the bluff near where Highway 36 turns toward downtown Stillwater, would run well above the shore before extending across the river, presenting a more dominating presence to the riverway than the low-slung Stillwater Bridge that seems to glide over river waters, allowing minimal impedance to the rise of wooded bluffs beyond.

Because of this contradiction as it now exists, MnDot cannot refuse to remove the Stillwater Bridge due to NPS's position. MnDot would be allowed to keep the bridge operational through normal maintenance until it reaches the end of its "useful life. Conversion to a use for a bike path or a pedestrian bridge would also be prohibited.

This issue comes a little too early for a resolution that could be provided by a proposed State of Minnesota Historic Bridge Plan. Now in the study stage by the historic research firm Hess Roise Companies, the plan would establish a program to determine needed main-

At this time Vogel is doing his best to promote the church as a potential restaurant and public events space that could complement the continually booked-up opera house. Last December Vogel held a holidays party that was well attended by many local citizens, including the mayor and half of the city council. A new councilmember, Jim Smith, praised the church's interior architecture. An acoustic string band from Chicago played for the guests later told Vogel the character and acoustics of the former worship space provided an excellent setting for their music.

This event, along with comments and advice from other supporters, has given Vogel the idea this church can offer an acoustic space better suited for music in small ensembles than can the large performance-oriented opera house, thus the two facilities can offer more variety of public uses and can complement each other.

Robert Roscoe

Place Names

Fairmont was originally called Fair Mount, referring to its location beside and above the Central Chain of Lakes, having a fine overlook over the lakes and surrounding countryside, including part of an adjacent county.

tenance for the state's bridges that have historic eligibility. The objective of this program would be to provide appropriate maintenance to historic structures so their useful life can be maximized. As for this structure, judged by the Preservation Alliance to be one of Minnesota's ten most endangered historic properties, scraping away rust from its steel girders is one step necessary to keep up the bridge; but it is the scraping away of a different kind of rust that is more critical to its survival.

Robert Roscoe

Place Names

Stillwater is a name that was intended to mean exactly what its words say: the stillness in the water. The name also may have been inspired by its Yankee founders who were familiar with the town of Stillwater, Maine.

PRESERVATION ATTITUDES

When I wiped the snow off my December 10 Sunday Strib on our front steps and saw the front page article "Mr. Disney's Neighborhood", I figured after a thorough reading of their treatise on "new urbanism," I'd have enough material to begin writing a "Preservation Attitudes" diatribe, but all it took was a few paragraphs to bring my cynicism to a boil, to then fling the paper on the hardwood floor, and bring my fingers to my Macintosh. So here goes:

This "return to traditional values" via some pretty rows of brand new gingerbread houses is a specious prospect. At best, these Disneyburgs are nothing more than another type of suburban subdivision that keeps sprawl as a development tool, albeit at a slower rate. More scenic countryside will be despoiled, more freeways will be needed, and more earth resources extracted to build some updated replica of what already exists: our towns and city neighborhoods upon which the "new urbanism" tries to emulate.

And as recent studies tell us, much of the costs for suburban development, such as asphalt for highways, utilities, and other municipal services, is taxpayer-borne, along with more indirect costs for state-aid for schools, hospitals, etc.

It seems obvious that the best way to return to traditional patterns is to return to the real ones in our towns and cities and do whatever it takes to update them. Not only is this the most vital form of historic preservation (most neighborhoods have some historic value), but this return-rebuild concept performs the highest national service—the true revitalization of the places of the real America, a land that is a mosaic of beginnings both modest and mighty. This return-rebuild would hold in place land resources and the houses and buildings that took earth resources to build.

But the Disneyburgs are not really a new urbanism. They are a continuation of the same make-then-throw-away mentality that fuels an obsolescence-dependent economy. Moreover, they really contradict the search for the authentic by plying buyers with purposefully-manipulated environments. Or to put it in a plain eloquence, they're phony.

There is an irony that many of us who are urbanites savor our weekend trips to small towns with picturesque streetscapes among the bed and breakfast places where we stay. On our Sunday morning walks, we get the feeling that the quietness about us comes from a peacefulness of what is small and close-knit. Maybe what we are mistaking quietude for a blanket of inactivity from a town's descent from vitality, as places such as these have become economically left behind. More often than not, these towns, with the amount of emphasis new urbanists put into prairie sod, could

become authentic places for those seeking so-called kinder communities.

One of the few paragraphs that I did read commented on an new town enthusiast who said he likes the idea that "from day one you start with a group of people who share the same attitude about living in a community." Nice try, but that concept has rarely worked even for the utopian settlements that used much stronger community strictures and repressive social compliance measures. But more than that, a *Wall Street Journal* article several months ago reported on problems in a town called Saint George, Utah located in the southwestern part of the state, once isolated from Los Angeles by several hundred miles of desert, but gaining refugees from the West Coast seeking to escape urban problems. But it has turned out that their kids still found drugs, teenage daughters got pregnant, and violence hasn't been far away. In short, Saint George has the same problems the ex-L.A.ites thought they left behind. However, according to the town's long-time residents, the increase in problems happened in direct proportion to the exodus of these newcomers, suggesting that they brought their problems with them.

Well, dear readers, please continue onto the next article of Preservation Matters. I should maybe finish that Disney tale in the Strib.



HISTORIC PRESERVATION MAGAZINE HONORS MINNESOTA ARCHITECT

A well-detailed addition to a turn-of-the-century Minneapolis house earned Joe Metzler, architect with Mulfinger, Susanka, Mahady & Partners a third place award in the sympathetic addition category in Historic Preservation magazine's Great American Home Awards.

The January/February issue of the magazine, published by the National Trust For *Historic Preservation*, featured 14 houses throughout the United States for their exemplary restoration efforts, including Metzler's design.

The owners, Frederick and Jill Taylor, placed importance on attention to detail, and Metzler's design aptly fits the house's straightforward massing while recalling the house's most significant features.

Joe Metzler also spends some of his off-the-drawing board time serving as a Commissioner of the Minneapolis Heritage Preservation Commission.



view of oxcart trail on Lokken field

Oxcart Trail continued from page 4

requirements would mandate raising the bridge height for flood control reasons, and the resulting elevated road approaches could disrupt this historical site.

Lokken and her husband have met several times over the past few years with the county concerning the matter, and at this time there seems to be some support for not disturbing the trail, but that support is greatly mitigated by fears of loss of road building funds if state guidelines are not met.

At a recent county commission meeting, the Lokken family was told the county "would like to see the area protected as it is." The commissioners seemed to think that the final decision would be made outside of the county, in Saint Paul, and in this regard, the county would not have the final word in the decision.

Why does Lynn Lokken want to save these old ruts?

"They're beautiful," she replies, "they represent a history that is personal and something I am attached to. It would be a shame to rip them out. The whole character of the land would be lost. Some people may only see this as farmland, but to us it is our heritage, having been in our family since the place was settled."

This Lac Qui Parle Oxcart Trail issue arises at a time when "cultural landscapes" have become an emerging issue in historic preservation. But their importance resides mostly with the leaders in preservation and a

few state agency administrators, and there is much work to be done to carry cultural landscapes to the general public. Preservation inevitably depends on protection by means of local ordinances or by economic benefit.

Are there economic incentives to keep an oxcart trail that can't grow crops or lodge visitors?

Perhaps Lynn Lokken, who works as a registered nurse, knows something about the tourism aspect of economic development. She told county commissioners that increasing numbers of visitors are discovering the countryside's rustic appeal, and in her opinion, "superhighways" are not what they come to see.

Robert Roscoe

Place Names

Lac Qui Parle is a name in French that means "the Lake that Talks," and was inspired from the Dakota name *Mde Lyedan* of the same meaning.

Place Names in this issue have been derived from the book *Minnesota's Geographic Names*, by Warren Upham, with an introduction by James Taylor Dunn, published by the Minnesota Historical Society.



Minneapolis Synagogues continued from page 1

HPC's Catalog Committee, headed by Marcia Ohlhausen, has looked at these designations for some time, but long-standing commitment to act on past nominations, often slowed by a sometimes contentious city council review and approval process, has delayed initial historic research necessary for the synagogue nominations.

Currently there are no synagogues in any area of Minneapolis with heritage designation. Saint Paul has designated Mount Zion Temple on Summit Avenue, but has no plans for further designations of synagogues.

For over the first half of this century the area around Plymouth Avenue in north Minneapolis was the center of Jewish life in the city. As most of the Jewish population lived in that area, there were many synagogues and religious schools that nurtured religious and cultural life. At one time most of Plymouth Avenue was lined with shops and stores owned by Jewish merchants, but the typical post-World War II move to the suburbs and a 1968 riot that burned many of the street's storefronts eventually resulted in a total urban renewal style demolition of Plymouth Avenue commercial buildings east of Penn Avenue.

All three of these buildings are in solid condition and are occupied for use as Christian churches. Chiat noted the exteriors are still in "splendid" condition. The Oliver Avenue North synagogue's polychromatic exterior features twin domed corner towers and a magnificent entrance. Star of David elements have remained through the building's current use as an African-American Baptist place of worship, seeming to symbolize the cultural transition this building and the community has made.

Robert Roscoe

ALLIANCE SAVES ORIGINAL MINNEAPOLIS BUILDING PERMITS

The Preservation Alliance stepped in at the eleventh hour to rescue boxes of building permits used for authorizing construction of Minneapolis buildings. Because of space constraints, the city had microfilmed the permits and planned to destroy the original documents.

This matter had been brought to the attention of Alliance members and considerable effort was expended to find a new repository for the permits. However, the local logical sources such as the Northwest Architectural archives and the Minnesota Historical Society were unable to accept the documents at the present time.

Because of the important historical value of these records, the Alliance decided to accept the permits, and plans are now underway to transfer them to the Alliance.

Ultimately, the Alliance would like to find an appropriate archival facility for the records.

During the interim, space has been rented out at International Market Square to store the 300 boxes which contain the permits at a cost of \$70.00 per month. The Alliance would gladly accept any donations to help defray the expense.

Please contact the Alliance if you have any suggestions for a permanent location for the Minneapolis building permits.

Rolf Anderson

Preservation Alliance of Minnesota Membership Application

The Preservation Alliance of Minnesota is a membership organization. Your contributions make our work possible. And they are tax deductible. Join today! Fill out the coupon and mail it with your contribution to:

Preservation Alliance of Minnesota 275 Market Street, Suite 54, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55405-1621

Name _____

Address _____

City/State _____ Zip _____

Phone: home _____ work _____

Membership Categories

- Student \$15.00
- Individual \$25.00
- Family \$40.00
- Nonprofit/government \$50.00
- Business & professional \$75.00

In addition to my membership, I am enclosing an additional gift of \$ _____ to help the Preservation Alliance.

WHERE IS IT?

Where is it?

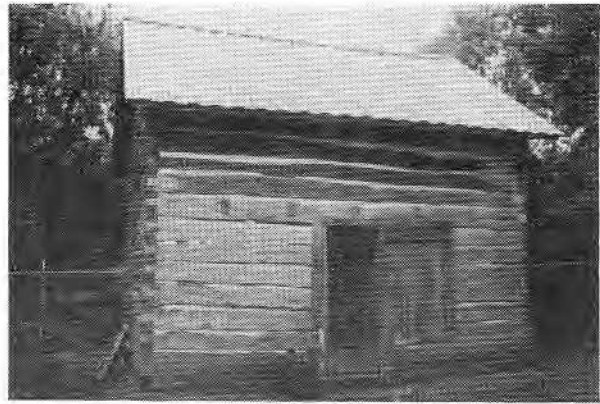
Chuck Liddy, architect with Miller Dunwiddie Architects, saw last month's *Where is it*, along with the word *summit* in the clue, he remembered his visit some years ago to a house on Summit in Minneapolis. The house was a very well-designed early modern structure with an elegant slightly-sunken living room. He then called us to identify the December *Where is it*.

Randall Pemberton, of Blue Earth, Minnesota correctly identified the *Where is it* for December. **Congratulations, Mr. Pemberton!** The Ward Beebe House was designed in 1912 by Purcell & Elmslie Architects, renown for their mastery of Prairie School architecture. The house cost \$9,000 to build. Located on Summit Avenue near Saint Thomas University, the house has been described in *A Guide to Minnesota Architecture* by

Minnesota properties listed on the National Register, with photographs supplied by the Minnesota Historical Society

Martinson and Gebhard as a "roofy Prairie house," and in Ernest Sundeen's book *Saint Paul's Historic Summit Avenue* as "so blending in with the streetscape of Summit Avenue that passersby can be unaware of its appearance, let alone its historic significance."

For this month's *Where is it*: You don't have to know the end reason this cabin was built, just tell us *Where is it!*



Preservation Matters is a monthly publication of the Preservation Alliance of Minnesota, a non-profit membership organization. Editor is Robert Roscoe; Writers are Rolf Anderson, Roger Brooks, Kristofer Lyon, Charlene Roise, Robert Roscoe, Rod Richter, Franklin Haws, Jr., Rod Richter, Chad Perkins, Scott Brown and Jody Keppers; Layout by Ken Martin; Distribution by Tom Holman.

Preservation Alliance of Minnesota
International Market Square
275 Market Street, Suite 54
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55405-1621
(612) 338-6763

NON PROFIT ORGANIZATION U.S. POSTAGE PAID Minneapolis, MN Permit No. 672
