

2015 ANNUAL PRESERVATION AWARDS

As we have done for many years, RIPS celebrates National Historic Preservation Month by presenting Historic Preservation Awards. Our awards are given primarily for exterior details that can be enjoyed from public right of way and are generally for work completed the previous year. This year's presentation took place at the Rock Island City Council meeting on Monday, May 11, and was followed by a reception for our winners. We presented five Historic Preservation Awards, two Certificates of Recognition, and two Special Awards.

AWARDS

Sometimes new garages are hidden behind a vintage house. However when Julie and Paul Hansen at 2223 17th Street decided to add a garage, they took special care. Because their home is located on a corner lot and their garage is visible from the street, the Hansens chose a garage addition that reflects the architecture of their historic home. It is joined to their stucco house with an addition that expanded a former rear porch. Both the room addition and the garage are covered in the same stucco as the original house and have similar corner detailing. Moreover the garage, although large, is recessed from the street and accessed by a narrow, offset, and unobtrusive driveway. Plantings also are used to partially screen the garage from view. This is an outstanding example of how modern conveniences, such as attached garages, can be added to a historic home. The home has special meaning to the Hansen family because it was Julie's grandparents' house since 1957.



Alexandra Elias owns a stucco bungalow cottage at 848 21st Street. It had been vacant for many years and was in danger of demolition when she stepped in to save it. Both the interior, which was in very poor condition, and the exterior were completely restored and updated. Tile inserts in the stucco walls were retained as a major architectural feature. Potentially damaging trees growing next to the foundation were removed. This modest but detailed home is located on a highly visible corner and serves as an example of what can be accomplished with vision and hard work.



Just a block away, Michael and Jessica Matherly restored a delightful Victorian Cottage at 807 21st Street. Although modest in scale, this home once again enhances its block. For decades, it was hidden under shingles with a "home center" blank steel front door. Over the past years, the Matherlys have carefully removed the shingles, unveiling the original clapboard and fish scale shingles in the gable. The clapboard was repaired where needed and many other exterior repairs were made before it was painted an appropriate color. Original wood storms were restored and used, rather than replacing them with aluminum. The final touch was a vintage Victorian front door, just like the home may have had originally.



A woman with vision, Audrey Brown, at 724 19th Street, accomplished a true transformation of her 1880s Italianate home. By the time she purchased it, the home was in poor condition and the historic style was not apparent. About the only thing visible of the original home were the paired eave brackets, the round attic window, and the overall shape. Windows had been cut down to rectangles and the ornate hoods – round in front and rectangular on the sides - were long gone. New vinyl covered the original clapboard. Fortunately her father was skilled and could reproduce the original window hoods and other missing pieces. The interior, which had extensive damage, also required major renovation and restoration. Eventually Ms. Brown hopes to reconstruct a small stoop over the front door like the home had originally.



The preservation efforts of David and Barbara Parker at 702 20th Street are nearly invisible. Although it was a major and expensive project, the Landmarked home, which has been in their family for seventy years, and which they now share as the Victorian Inn B&B, looks unchanged to the passerby. Those decades of ownership have seen continued maintenance, renovation, and restoration. The recent installation of a new roof is not normally an award candidate. However the Parkers undertook an outstanding restoration of built-in gutters during the same project. These gutters are located directly above the exterior masonry walls with no roof overhang. When the roof was replaced, leaky tin gutters were removed and copper replacements were installed. The work was done well, with the copper extending up the slope of the roof several inches. Although barely visible, this is an outstanding work of preservation. Often built-in gutters are roofed-over and exterior gutters installed. However because there is no overhang, adding gutters would have required modification of the ornate cornice beneath the eaves. The Parkers are also recognized for rebuilding and restoring the balustrade over the front porch as well as restoration of the north side porch.



CERTIFICATES of RECOGNITION

Both of our Certificates this year are for porch work. Jeanette Jones' home at 1010 21st Street had a porch that had been reconfigured and enclosed for decades. Louvered windows surrounded the porch and the entrance had been moved to the side. She removed the enclosure and added appropriate columns and railings. She reconfigured the sidewalk to recenter the porch entrance on the front door.



Pat and Verne Stevens of 1712 21st Street in the Highland Park Historic District restored a small rear porch. Despite its size and location, the Stevens family took special care when they rebuilt and restored it. Even the lattice skirting beneath the porch matches the original.

SPECIAL RECOGNITION

Although RIPS usually gives awards to those who own buildings, Steven and Cynthia Pressly are the former owners of 520 18th Street. However they are honored for being good neighbors when their Wheelan-Pressly Funeral Home moved from this address to their current 7th Avenue location. After that move, they did not abandon this building, but continued to maintain it for several years. They never permitted it to become an eyesore as has happened in many other business moves. By offering it at a marketable price, they were able to sell it to new owners who converted the building to a residence and the popular Skeleton Key antique mall. Working together old and new owners achieved an excellent example of adaptive reuse.



The Karpeles Manuscript Museum, 700 22nd Street, took over the former First Church of Christ Scientist after years of semi-abandonment. It was in rough condition, both inside and out. Leaky roofs and vandalism had done extensive damage to the building. This Special Recognition is for the work completed on the restoration of the large sanctuary. While complete restoration of the entire structure is ongoing, the sanctuary is once again a beautiful space after undergoing extensive repair, plaster patching, and refinishing.