

Morgan County Historic Preservation Society
 P. O. Box 1377
 Martinsville, IN 46151
<http://www.mchps.org>

Fall 2010

PRESERVATION NEWS

ALL MEMBERSHIPS EXPIRE DECEMBER 31, 2010

Please make our secretary's job easier by renewing promptly.
 Print and fill out the membership renewal form in this newsletter
 and mail it with appropriate payment to:
 MCHPS, P. O. Box 1377, Martinsville, IN 46151.

Message from the President

Joanne Stuttgen (765) 349-1537
jstuttgen@comcast.net

I have been postponing the writing of this newsletter in hopes that I would have good news to share about Grassyfork. But, alas. I have none. As you are aware, we have been in discussions with a potential buyer who envisions the property as a specialty hotel and outdoor community education center. As of my last conversation with them in early October, work was continuing on a development plan and pro forma, with November 15 as a target date for completion. This date has come and gone. My phone calls requesting a project update have not been returned. Meanwhile, Art Brill, our exclusive listing agent, continues to show the property to people with a variety of interesting ideas for its reuse.

Our monthly expenses on Grassyfork and the Old Jail building currently exceed our income from sales of items at the Martinsville Candy Kitchen. We will be facing financial crisis if one of these buildings does not sell by next summer. Fortunately, the Old Jail, which has been vacant since the end of July, will soon have a new tenant. Attorney Jerry Smith will be occupying the first floor until his new office on the north side of the square is ready for use in about six months or so.

On a slightly brighter side, work on the feasibility study of the Veterans Building in downtown Martinsville is proceeding. We will soon sign a contract with Browning Day Mullins Dierdorf Architects, whose thoughtfully assembled team will conduct the study and prepare the final report. Read more about this project below.

The Morgan County Sheriff's residence and Jail has recently been the subject of a feasibility study of its own. Brittany Brown, a graduate student at Savannah College of Art and Design and an intern with RATIO, an Indianapolis architectural and engineering firm, is now completing the study, a course project, for a fictional bar and restaurant she calls Calaboose. Seating is creatively located in the jail cells themselves, with a bar on the first floor of the residence and special event seating on the second floor. It's a fine plan for a destination restaurant. (Now we need a buyer and a talented chef.) Bon appétit!

Grassyfork Heritage

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The historic Grassyfork property remains on the market and continues to be regularly shown by our exclusive listing agent, Art Brill of Real Living Town and Country. Art can be reached at (765) 349-7653. The list price is \$86,900.

Prospective buyers are asked to submit a well-documented proposal for the building's reuse along with their offer. Requests for Proposals can be obtained from Art Brill.

MCHPS acquired the 7,000 square foot Grassyfork building and three acres in March 2009 with the help of a revolving loan from Indiana Landmarks, which holds protective covenants on the property. Asbestos has been removed and a structural engineer has prepared a structural condition assessment of the building. The building is clean, sound, and ready to be passed on to a new owner.

MCHPS also acquired the former rock garden site consisting of roughly two acres. It is hoped that this garden site, located in the ravine north of the building, will be returned to its original use and serve as a public garden. If the buyer of the building wishes to take on that challenge, MCHPS is willing to include this property in the sale.

Built in 1936, the landmark Martinsville building served as the administrative office and sales room of Grassyfork Fisheries, once the world's largest goldfish hatchery. Because of its historic significance and to provide tax incentives to the new owner, the building has been nominated to the National Register of Historic Places. This nomination is now pending. The new owner must agree to endorse the nomination.

National Register listing assigns no obligation to private property owners. There are no restrictions on the use, treatment, transfer, or disposition of private property beyond those contained in the protective covenants held by Indiana Landmarks. Further, National Register listing does not lead to public acquisition or require public access to the property.

National Register listing does make the property eligible for investment tax credits, a valuable financial tool for extensive restoration projects.

If you have questions or concerns, please contact the Society's president, Joanne Stuttgen, at (765) 349-1537 or the Society's listing agent, Art Brill, at (765) 346-1232.

Don't miss the MCHPS-decorated lamp post in front of the post office in downtown Martinsville. We've "adopted" this post for the Christmas season and decorated it with Grassyfork-inspired goldfish. The Adopt-a-Post program is sponsored by Rediscover Martinsville.

Veterans Building Feasibility Study

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The collapse of the sale of Grassyfork earlier this year meant that funds intended to be used as a local cost share for this project had to be diverted to maintain the Grassyfork property. Consequently, the Morgan County Library Board of Trustees reluctantly agreed to contribute

additional funds to make up the required match. MCHPS is contributing \$3,750.00 of the \$10,500 local match, of which \$3,000 is a grant from Indiana Landmarks. The total project cost is \$21,000.

The purpose of this project is to determine how the Morgan County Public Library (MCPL) can best utilize the Veterans Building to accommodate expansion of public services and to prepare construction documents suitable for implementation.



Veterans Building, 75-77 E. Washington St., Martinsville

In late September, requests for statements of qualifications were mailed to more than a dozen architectural and engineering firms. Tours of the building were given to many of them, and six responses were received by the October 22 deadline. We encouraged creative partnerships, and we got them. After interviews with those we felt offered the best package for this particular project, the steering committee unanimously selected Browning Day Mullins Dierdorf Architects. On the team are several people involved with the recently completed Martinsville Planning Study for Downtown Revitalization. Also on this team is library consultant Kimberly Bolan Cullin, who will work with the library board to shape a vision for both expanded library functions and the Veterans Building itself.

The project will begin by December 1 and be completed by June 1, 2011. The final report will include but not be limited to the following items:

- A program to define potential space concepts
- A summary of methods utilized to arrive at the reuse concept, the program, and potential space concepts
- Construction documents for selected facade improvements suitable for implementation

- Estimated construction costs for exterior rehabilitation, as well as modified cost estimates for interior reuse concepts
- Estimated operational and maintenance costs of the proposed facility
- The exterior rehabilitation documents will be in a separate volume to make it easier for contractors to access the information for construction.

- A preliminary implementation and maintenance plan
- A strategy or strategies for financing the project
- A closing summary
- Appendices

have been vacant and on the market for nearly three years. Change is occurring throughout downtown! Look for much more to come in the next few years.

The Veterans Building is a two-story, two-storefront vernacular commercial building of approximately 12,000 square feet located at 75-77 E. Washington Street in downtown Martinsville, on the south side of the Morgan County Courthouse Square. The two units were built within months of each other in 1911. The building is deteriorated from general long-term neglect and damage suffered in a fire that destroyed an adjacent corner building. Currently, the roof leaks and moisture is seeping between the parge coating and the brick masonry on the east wall. Water infiltration through the south (rear) wall has caused floor girders, joists, and columns to rot. During the creation of the adjacent Veterans Park, dirt was mounded against the wall of the building and is causing interior moisture-related problems. Trees planted along the wall also threaten the foundation.

In April and May 2011, the Design Committee will direct a major landscape improvement project involving many community organizations, business owners, and community residents. The gravel beds at the corners of the courthouse square will be replaced with perennial beds designed by Ben Rawlins and the Master Gardeners. Each plot has been or will be “adopted” by volunteer gardeners, who will plant the beds and maintain them through the first growing year. This project is funded in part by a \$5,000 grant from Indiana Main Street. The local cost share of \$5,000 is being met by contributions by the City of Martinsville, Morgan County, and the private sector. Each entity will provide one-third of the cost, or \$1,666.66. If you would like to contribute toward the private sector share, contact Del Chafey, MCHPS board member and President of Rediscover Martinsville.

Rediscover Martinsville

Del Chafey
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As Rediscover Martinsville, the city’s Main Street program, approaches its second anniversary, we are happy to report that significant progress has been made in the effort to revitalize and restore downtown Martinsville. In 2010, the Economic Restructuring Committee guided the Martinsville Planning Study for Downtown Revitalization, a document that outlines recommendations and implementation strategies for everything from landscape improvements—including an amphitheater at Jefferson and Pike Streets—to building facades, signage, and marketing and promotion. The plan has been submitted to the Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs for approval. Once this is obtained, the City will apply for a \$500,000 grant to implement parts of the plan.

Significant private investment can be spotted throughout downtown. At the corner of Pike and Main Street, James Jones has purchased and nearly gutted the interior of the former Eslinger Hotel building. He plans an extended stay hotel or apartments on the second floor and a cafeteria-style restaurant on the first. On the west side of the square, the “Made by Hand” building is being converted into a diner. You have probably noted the plywood protecting the large glass display windows. And in October Mayor Phil Deckard announced that a local resident has entered into a purchase agreement for six properties that

News Briefs

Board of Directors

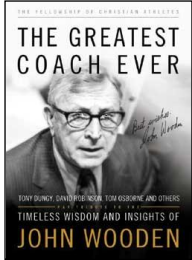
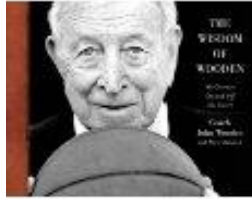
Hall Civic Association (Randy Marsh 317-430-8023 or emailmarsh@bernsindy.com) • HCA has taken one gigantic step into the future by acquiring title to the Hall Elementary School—the 1911 historic structure as well as all of the much later additions—from the Monroe-Gregg School Corporation. Located in northern Gregg Township, the school has for nearly 100 years served as an important community center for the families in the area. HCA believes preservation of the historic building and maintaining a valuable program of community services is worth the financial risk.

Raising funds to operate and maintain the newer portions of the school and repair the historic building is HCA’s focus for the immediate future. In October, the group rallied impressive support by organizing its first haunted house, the Hall’s Haunted Halls. The event had a Hollywood theme and featured scenes from various scary movies, such as “Halloween,” and “Carrie.”

A very short week after the haunted house closed on Halloween weekend, HCA hosted its sixth annual dinner theater. This year, local actors were replaced by an excellent singing and dancing troupe from Hendricks County performing Dames at Sea. A steak dinner with all the trimmings was part of the ticket price.

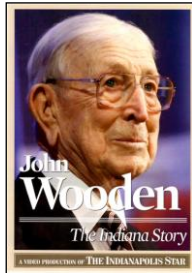
MCHPS Fundraising • We continue to offer a variety of books by John Wooden and other items at the Martinsville Candy Kitchen. These would make great Christmas gifts!

The Wisdom of Wooden, 2010. Coach's final book. \$22.00 + tax. 20% discount for MCHPS members.



The Greatest Coach Ever, 2010. Reflections on his genius and inspiration by sports figures. \$12.99 + tax. 20% discount for MCHPS members.

John Wooden; The Indiana Years. DVD, 2010. \$10.00 no tax. Sorry, no MCHPS discount on this item.



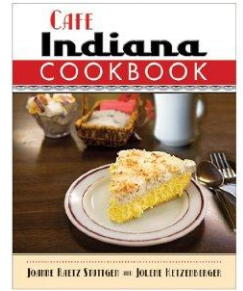
CLEARANCE!

All Cat's Meow collectible pieces now \$12.00 each + tax. No additional discount applies.



ALSO AVAILABLE:

Cafe Indiana Cookbook, 2010, by Joanne Stuttgen. A collection of recipes from Indiana's Main Street cafes and a celebration of our Hoosier culinary heritage. \$24.95 \$20.00 + tax. No MCHPS discount.



2010 Board of Directors

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Student	Free	Thank you for your support. Memberships expire December 31. Memberships received after October 1 will be extended through the following year. Please mail completed form to: MCHPS P. O. Box 1377 Martinsville, IN 46151 For more information call (765) 342-0391 or (765) 349-1949 or see our website at http://www.mchps.org		
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