

Carondelet Historical Society NEWSLETTER

Perpetuating the Heritage of Carondelet

Vol. 43, No. 1

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Winter 2016

Carondelet's Frame Heritage

St. Louis is a city known for its extraordinary brick architecture. In neighborhood after neighborhood, charming brick bungalows, brick flats, brick mansions with towers and brick storefronts line the streets. Brick construction was often preferred, especially by Germanic St. Louisans, for its sturdiness and permanence. From the mid-19th century on, the City's building ordinances encouraged brick construction as protection against the fast-spreading fires that had devastated so many American cities.

Two South City neighborhoods, however, have an abundance of Victorian era frame homes scattered amongst the brick – Tower Grove South and Carondelet.

In Carondelet, these frame homes sprinkled amongst the red brick give the streetscapes a distinctive character. Though aluminum or vinyl siding often disguises the charm and age of these frame homes, their scale

and proportions reflect their 19th century origins. An intricately milled railing, a windowed door with embellished wood trim, or an ornate wooden cornice peeking out at the roofline, are clues that these homes date to the Victorian era.

In 1870, the City of St. Louis annexed Carondelet,

and St. Louis's building ordinances applied to all structures built in Carondelet after that date. These City ordinances reveal how Carondelet (and Tower Grove South) came to have a substantial collection of frame architecture dating to the Victorian era.

The ordinance approved April 1, 1882, required quality materials and exceptional building practices on small homes as well as great public buildings. The ordinances seem to have been written by

See Frame Heritage, page 4



The mid-19th century house at 5801 Minnesota is an example of American Gothic architecture that is very rare in the St. Louis area. It features gothic arched window and door openings, steeply pitched gabled roofs, and ornately milled vergeboards. It is clad in vertical board and batten siding. This c. 1945 photo is from the Donald Dates Collection.

Kindergarten in 1873

Later this year, the Carondelet Historical Society will be unveiling its new "Kindergarten in 1873" experience. This hands-on visit to Susan Blow's original kindergarten classroom will be geared for field trips by kindergarten and primary grade classes. Board Member Jodi Broussard, who is developing the program, describes the experience as "interactive. The children will be in a different environment. Docents will dress in period fashions," similar to what Susan Blow and her student teachers wore.

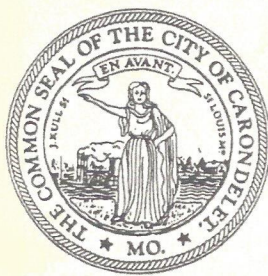
The children will sit at the benches that are modeled after the original kindergarten benches. They will play with "Froebel's Gifts," an early form of educational toys developed by the innovative German educator Frederick Froebel. The gifts included building blocks and balls covered in colorful yarn that helped the children learn color and form. At the broad replica kindergarten tables, the children will do projects with other "Gifts" designed

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HISTORICAL SOCIETY

*Perpetuating the
Heritage of
Carondelet*

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Carondelet's 250th in 2017

Board Member J.R. Remelius is spearheading an effort to plan a celebration of the 250th anniversary of the founding of Carondelet. (The year 2017 has even greater significance because it also marks the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Carondelet Historical Society.) To begin this collaborative effort, Remelius invited community leaders, businessmen and citizens to participate in brainstorming meetings, the first of which took place on February 20th. A follow-up meeting will be held on Saturday, April 16 at 1:30 p.m.

Upcoming Events

Sunday, April 10

1:30 p.m.

Author Gary Gene Fuenfhausen
Little Cabins: Slave Dwelling
Architecture in Missouri's Little Dixie

Saturday, April 16

1:30 p.m.

Meeting for Carondelet's 250th
Anniversary Celebration
Public participation welcomed at this
planning meeting

Sunday, May 15

1:30 p.m.

Annual Membership Meeting

Sunday, July 10

1:30 p.m.

The Queens of Swing
The Quartet performs Swing Music
accompanied by historical commentary on
the music and period

Change of Address Requested:

If you have moved, please notify the Society of your new address. In that way you can save the Society volunteers hours and postage.

Carondelet Historical Society

Membership Application

Name _____ Telephone # _____

Address _____ Zip _____

E-Mail _____

Individual	\$15	Victor Kunz Art Gallery Benefactor	\$50
Family	\$25	Fred Bouchein Library Benefactor	\$75
Business	\$40	James Eads Engineers	\$100
Life	\$250	Susan E. Blow Educators	\$125

Make checks payable to Carondelet Historical Society.

Mail to Carondelet Historical Society, Mary Ann Simon, 6303 Michigan Ave., St. Louis MO 63111

Two of the New Board Members

Bob Fox

Shortly after he retired from a 32-year career at A.G. Edwards and Wells Fargo Advisors, Bob Fox visited Carondelet Historical Society. Society President John Remelius gave him a tour of the exhibits and the library. "I was hooked," Fox recalled. Soon he was volunteering two mornings each week in the library and last October he became a board member.

Bob has been entering all the books in the Society's collection into the computerized database. Considering that the book cases in the library number 42, it has been a monumental task. He has now cataloged over 3,500 books. He admits, however, that sometimes the books are just too interesting and his efficiency drops. "I've been known to start looking at one of the old books, and I'll lose an hour."

In addition to cataloging thousands of books, Fox has helped with special projects including helping John Remelius with the Herculean task of sorting through boxloads of old books stored in the basement. (Years ago, area residents had hauled the cardboard boxes filled with books to the Society, thinking a few of them might be significant.) Fox and Remelius identified and saved any books that pertain to Susan Blow, Carondelet history, St. Louis and regional history. The other books were sold to benefit the Society.

Fox will be cataloging all the pertinent books they found, and the books will be available in the library. He explains that this project and the entire cataloging of the book collection is critical to the overall project of expanding and developing the Society Library as a research facility.

Fox, an Affton native, earned a degree in business administration with an emphasis on accounting from Missouri University-St. Louis. Genealogy and his father's personal history, however, always stirred his interest in history. His father, who died when Fox was 11 years old, "was in the Battle of the Bulge. He was a radio operator in General Patton's Third Army," Fox states. Fox has been searching for details of his father's service, which has proved challenging since so many records were destroyed by the fire at the National Personnel Records Center in 1973. (The destruction of these national records has made Fox even more dedicated to preserving records at Carondelet Historical Society.) While continuing to search for information about his father's military service, he has traced his ancestors to living in St. Louis in the 1820's.

Bob and his wife Lorie, a middle school reading specialist in the Parkway School District, live in nearby Webster Groves.

Jodi Broussard

Three years ago, Jodi Broussard wandered into the Historical Society searching for information about a home in Carondelet that she and her husband Christopher had seen for sale. They figured the two story house that boasted over 2,800 square feet could make a great home for the two of them and their four, then all teenaged, children. The Society's plat maps showed Broussard, who studied history at Washington University, that the house was built by 1883. The Broussards bought the historic brick home on Michigan Avenue.

Early last summer, Jodi came back to the Historical Society, this time to volunteer. Soon she was developing an index for all the family histories in the library. Then she began studying the conservation of textiles to help curate the Society's vintage fashion collection and other fabric artifacts. The textile and fashion collection was particularly large because another institution had given many items to the Society years ago. Many of the garments had been in storage for years. A number of the items were deteriorating, even rotting.

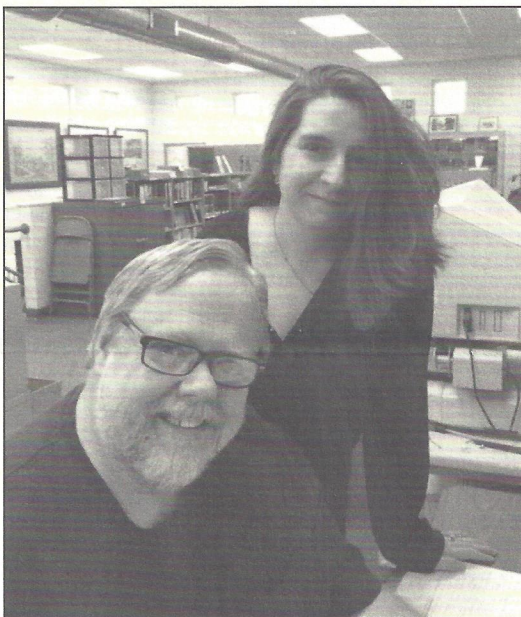
"Textile conservation is very expensive," Broussard explains. After consulting with board members, she decided to focus the collection. It was critical to conserve items that were

related to Carondelet families, history, or institutions. She is cataloging the significant items and has ordered acid free paper and acid free boxes to safely store the fashions that are artifacts of neighborhood history.

The rest of the fashion collection was sold or donated to other organizations. "Even rotting garments had sets of buttons or pieces of lace or embroidery that could be sold." The sale of vintage fabrics, textiles and fashions netted almost \$4,000 for the Society.

Broussard is currently developing a program geared for visiting kindergarten classes (see page 1). In December, 2015, Broussard joined the Society's Board of Directors, completing the unexpired term of the late Kay Stanford.

The daughter of a Marine, Broussard was born in Florida and raised in Nashville, Tennessee, which accounts for her hint of a Southern accent. The Broussards came to St. Louis so Jodi could study at Washington University. In three short years, they have become rooted in Carondelet.



Frame Heritage *from page 1*

craftsmen, who were committed to creating a great city for the generations.

For instance, Section 9 of ordinance 12,027 prescribed the thickness of materials for foundation walls. "All foundation walls shall be built of stone laid in best lime or hydraulic cement mortar. No foundation wall shall be less than eighteen inches thick..."

Section 20 prescribed the mix of the mortar. "All brick piers shall be built of best, hard, well-burned brick, and laid in clear cement mortar, two parts sand and one hydraulic cement, and bricks well wet when laid." The results of the building practices laid out in this ordinance can be seen in the well-constructed buildings all over Carondelet, many of them more than a century old.

Article IV, titled "of the protection of property against fire," required masonry construction in much of the city and it explains why Carondelet builders were allowed to build frame. It outlawed the construction of "any building or buildings, or any addition to any building the front side and rear walls of which are not composed entirely of brick, stone, mortar, iron or other incombustible material..."

It also explained that the fire preventive masonry was required only in the then densely developed area most vulnerable to fire. That area was bounded by the Mississippi, Cass Avenue on the north, approximately Grand on the west, and Cherokee Street on the south. Though masonry construction was preferred by most, even for farm houses, south of Cherokee, masonry construction was not required in the Carondelet area until 1897.

The building ordinance 18,964, approved on April 7, 1897, even more fully outlined craft and construction practices. Section 66 even detailed bricklaying practices dependent on weather. "Wetting Bricks—Bricks when laid in warm weather shall be wetted, when laid in cold weather shall be thoroughly dry and protected from the elements."

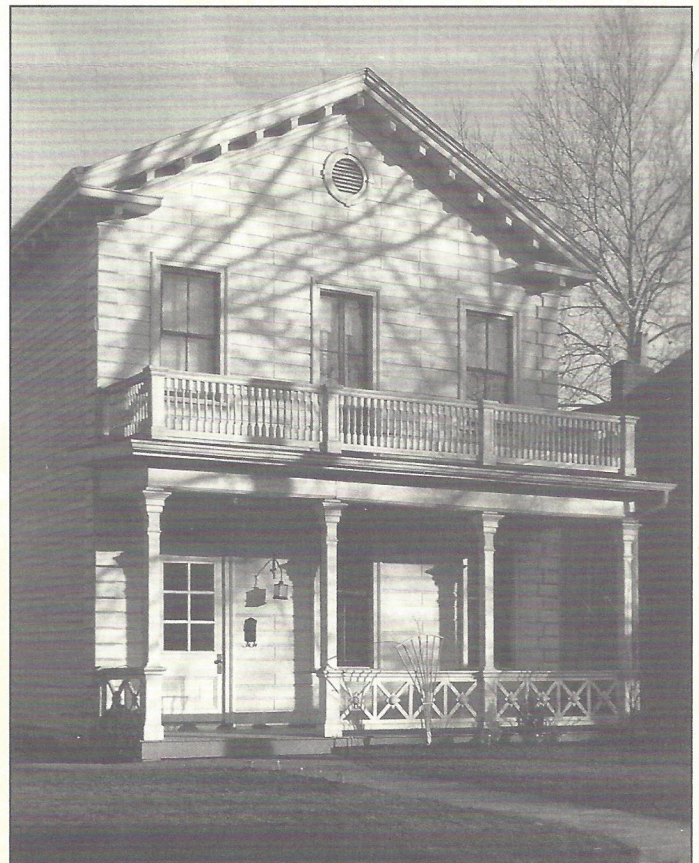
The 1897 ordinance required masonry construction in a much expanded district. A section named, "Fire Limits" described the district, which in the southern end of the City extended south on Grand from Meramec Street to the River Des Peres, thence east to the Mississippi River. These boundaries included all the developing area of Carondelet in 1897. (North of Meramec, the boundaries were expanded west to include most of the Tower Grove South neighborhood.)

That building ordinance of 1897 effectively ended frame construction in Carondelet. But the City's southernmost neighborhood already boasted elaborately decorated grand Victorian frame homes and charming Victorian cottages.

Though asbestos shingles or vinyl siding hide the 19th century character of many of these houses, their Victorian charm can be restored with thoughtful renovation.



Charter member of Carondelet Historical Society Donald Dates took this photo of the frame house at 6435 Virginia in 1945 (while he was still a high school student). On the back of the photo, his mother Helen Bribach Dates penciled, "Built 1892 for Mr. Chapin. Home of Mr. & Mrs. Harry A Chapin for over 50 years." Chapin had been the manager of Carondelet Ice and Fuel Company.



The house at 6716 Michigan Avenue that dates to the early 1870's is an example of the large, two-story frame houses atop "Quality Hill" in Carondelet. This photo from the Donald Dates Collection is dated 1948.

Carondelet's Frame Houses

Where the gracefully arching bridge leading from dramatic Bellerive Park opens onto Bellerive Boulevard, late 19th century frame homes are sprinkled amongst the brick homes. A dozen frame homes in that area, dating from 1878 to 1893, were built before St. Louis's building ordinance requiring masonry construction applied to Carondelet.

This freedom to build frame construction coincided with pressure for development in the Carondelet area at the end of the 19th century. An article in the Real Estate section of the *Post-Dispatch* of April 21, 1888 reported "Carondelet Lots in Demand." Included in the article was a transfer of a property on west side Minnesota between Bates and Caldwell (later renamed Bellerive). Carondelet resident and businessman F.J. Karleskind sold the property, which measured 30 feet by 148 feet, to Emil Hahn for \$150.

City Directories document that Hahn, a native of Germany and a naturalized citizen, was a "molder." He and his German-born wife Rosa had lived on the South Side near Jefferson and Chouteau before moving to Carondelet. On February 21, 1889, the City issued then 29 year-old Emil Hahn a permit for a "1 story frame dwelling." The cost of construction was estimated at \$900. Though that was a substantial sum for the day, the cost of frame construction was modest compared to that of masonry construction. No address was given on the permit; it was described as the west side of the 5600 block of Minnesota Avenue. The Hahns had two young sons when they moved into their new frame house. A third son was born after they made 5621 Minnesota their home. Permits document that Hahn built a one story frame stable on the rear of his property, in 1893.

Later a frame porch was added along the south side of the house, reorienting the house toward Bellerive. Despite that alteration, this house retains its late Victorian era frame character and even its original, ornamental vergeboard on the gable end.

Only a block away from the enchanting Hahn house stands a neglected, radically altered frame cottage at 5612 Minnesota Avenue. Neighborhood resident Tom Calhoun recently purchased the shabby-looking problem property and planned to demolish it. Once inside the home, however, the proportions of its rooms, the light shed by the bay window in the front parlor and the Victorian millwork charmed Calhoun. Recognizing the potential of the cottage, he has begun renovating it.



This circa 1889 photo shows Emil and Rose Hahn with a young child at the gate of the home they built at 5621 Minnesota at the northwest corner of Bellerive. (Photo courtesy of Andy Hahn, Director of the Campbell House Museum.)

Before major remodeling had radically altered their appearance, both 5612 and neighboring 5610 Minnesota had been matching Victorian era frame cottages. Documents found in City Hall show that they had a shared history.

John P. Rousch, a carpenter by trade, received a permit to build "(2) one story frame dwellings" on May 11, 1888. Together, their construction cost was estimated at \$1,900. A street numbering certificate issued on July 14, 1888 by the street commissioner confirms the date of construction for both 5610 and 5612 Pennsylvania.

Building permits document that Rousch constructed a group of frame structures and one brick house on the block. In 1889, Rousch was issued a permit for a 1.5 story frame dwelling and a 1 story brick dwelling both on the east side of the 5600 block of Pennsylvania. In the next year he built a frame shop and a frame office on the same block. While developing the block, Rousch lived at 6446 Virginia and then as a boarder on Bates Street near Michigan. By 1898, the City Directory listed Rousch as a contractor at 5600 Pennsylvania.

The carpenter may have been attracted to the area because the St. Louis building ordinances requiring masonry construction outlawed frame construction in much of the City, but allowed him to build frame houses in Carondelet.



The enclosed porch and shingle siding hide the original Victorian character of the 128 year old house at 5612 Pennsylvania.

Our Members are Generous

Since the last newsletter, the following members and friends have made financial contributions to the Carondelet Historical Society: David & Marla Bouchein, Dorothy Krehbiel, Ellen Chartrand Miller, Laura Rand Orthwein, Jr., Linda Riekes, and Betty Tonneas.

Since the last newsletter, the following organizations and associations have made financial contributions to the Carondelet Historical Society: American Water Charitable Foundation, Bevo Area Historical Society care of Betty Tighe, the Carondelet Lions Club, The Cleveland High School Staff-Alumni Association, the Cleveland High School Classes of January 1965, June 1965 and January 1966, and Dover Place Christian Church.

The following donations were made in memory of:

Ron Bolte
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by Emily Bedard
by Mr. Joseph Bier
by Mr. & Mrs. John Blaskiewicz
by Lee Ray and Mary Ann Borowiak
by Mr. & Mrs. David Bouchein
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by Gabriela Romero & Mariano Ghiretti
by William & Deborah Schmidt
by Gregory & Kimberly Stone
by John W. Verderber
by Linda H. Waller

Virginia Svoboda *by Bob & Mary Ellen Svoboda*

The following donation was made in honor of :

Mary Ann Simon *by Jerry Martin & Kris Zapalac*

Bequests

Society President John Remelius asks that friends and members who have planned a bequest to the Society let him know so that, "I can write you with our gratitude."

Carondelet Becomes a Town

In 1832, the French village of Carondelet was incorporated as an American town under the statutes of the State of Missouri. A survey of the town as it existed was executed as part of this process. This survey, the work of Laurentius Eiler, is likely the earliest map made of Carondelet and documents the new town before waves of German and Irish immigrants expanded the community.

Dave Bouchein located a reproduction of this 1832 survey map that had been traced on linen. The linen reproduction of the map dates to 1907. It has been in a private collection for decades. Bouchein acquired the map for the Society. It will be reframed and exhibited for the 250th anniversary celebration of the founding of Carondelet.

Busy Volunteers

Members have been noting on recent visits to the Historical Society that the rooms and displays seem to be sparkling. That is thanks to a team of cleaning volunteers including Phil Cantanzaro, Kim Dopplick-Gutknecht, Oscar Harper, Patti Lewis, Bee Parsons, and Tony Mendoza. They are lead by the energetic Society volunteer and Cleveland Dutchman Susie McClimans. The team has been compulsively dusting, vacuuming, scrubbing or polishing every surface they come in contact with. Since McClimans had to lug her own vacuum to and from the Society to carry out her much-appreciated work, the Society recently purchased its own Shark model vacuum cleaner.

Kristina Remelius has been setting up chairs and the refreshment table for the Society's events and meetings. Then she does the dishes after the programs.

Sandy Evers has been helping in the office and is currently updating the membership directory.

Volunteers have added a new element to the Memory Lane Room. They have set up and have operating the model train set. Visitors can turn on the trains and toot the train whistle.

In Memoriam

Board member and devoted volunteer Kay Zimmer-Stanford passed away on November 8, 2015. She discovered the Historical Society through her involvement with the Cleveland High School Staff-Alumni Association. Soon she was organizing and improving displays in the Cleveland room. Then she started promoting the Historical Society, its mission and events. She was a valued member of the Board of Directors.

Kindergarten

from page 1

to encourage dexterity and teach rhythm like paper weaving and making patterns with yarn. Frederick Froebel, who created these gifts, developed the first kindergarten in Germany and inspired Susan Blow to open the kindergarten in 1873 in the then new Des Peres School, now the Carondelet Historical Society. Throughout, Broussard and the other docents will encourage the children to recognize what is different and what is the same about kindergarten in 1873 and kindergarten today.

After the "Kindergarten in 1873" experience, the children will visit the turn-of-the-century grocery store in the Memory Lane Room on the second floor. This recreation of an old store features wooden counters, an old butcher block, wooden shelving, an antique wood cash register, a cast iron coffee grinder and old scales. These artifacts are from the Wernet Market and the Yaeger Market that was a neighborhood institution at 6101 Virginia from 1933 to 1991.

As a memento of their field trip, the Society will give each child a replica of one of "Froebel's Gifts."

Carondelet Lions Club

Don Harbaugh, a former officer of the Carondelet Lions, recently donated memorabilia from the disbanded organization to the Society. The items included a photo of the members posing on the steps of Carondelet Library in 1934. The members included men associated with long-time Carondelet businesses including Alfonze DeMerville who operated a mercantile on South Broadway and Ted and Carl Krehbiel of Krehbiel's Market that operated for over a century at the corner of Michigan and Bowen. The articles of incorporation of the Lions Club of Carondelet are dated August 11th, 1926.

The first sentence of its stated purpose read, "To unite its members in the closest bonds of good fellowship and promote a closer business and social union among them;" Along with encouraging ethical business practices, the Club encouraged cooperation with organizations, "engaged in laudable endeavors for the public welfare."

In addition to a copy of the by-laws, the memorabilia includes plaques with the names of past presidents of the club and a ceremonial bell. The local organization grew out of a movement begun in Chicago in 1917, when a business leader told members of his local business club that they should reach beyond business issues and address the betterment of their communities and the world.

The good work done by generations of the Lions Club of Carondelet is immeasurable.



This photo of school girls wearing homemade "little Dutch Girl" costumes was taken on the front lawn of the old Virginia Avenue School, later named Maddox School, at 6138 Virginia Avenue. The girls are wearing paper pinafores and paper hats. They appear to be playing the childhood game, "In And Out The Window." The photo, donated by the Dowd Family, was dated 1937.

*Researched and written by NiNi Harris
Layout by Lynn Josse*

Hours
The Carondelet Historical
Society will be open for
visits or tours on
Wednesday, Friday and
Saturday from
10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.
and Sunday from noon to
3:00 p.m.
Visit any time we are
open. To schedule a
special tour,
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