

November 2012



# ILLUMINATIONS

A quarterly publication of the Historical Society of University City

## Winter/Spring Programs Coming in 2013

*The Historical Society announces three fascinating programs for Winter/Spring 2013.*

The Historical Society

of University City

6701 Delmar Blvd.

University City, Missouri 63130

[www.ucityhistory.org](http://www.ucityhistory.org)

[ucityhistory@hotmail.com](mailto:ucityhistory@hotmail.com)

**February 5** Kiki Jordan will give a talk entitled, "A Look Back at St. Louis: Life, Architecture and Interiors 1885-1910." With the emergence of the industrial revolution, St. Louis becomes a viable city in the late 1800s. Not only are new industrial technologies used, but many companies emerge, giving vitality to the city and housing market. New inventions and the development of interiors change dramatically, forging a new viewpoint on the style of the day as well as the comforts of home. Jordan is adjunct professor of interior design at St. Louis Community College—Meramec. 7 pm at University City Public Library.

**March 5** "State of the City." To celebrate founder E.G. Lewis' birthday, Mayor Shelley Welsch and City Manager Lehman Walker will discuss their plans for meeting the challenges facing University City. This is the third year for this popular event. 7 pm at the City Council Chambers in City Hall.

**April 9** Local author Frank Reedy will talk about gangs and crime in University City and St. Louis. 7 pm at the library.

### Holiday Gift Ideas Inside!

*Enclosed is a flyer listing books, videos, posters and other merchandise offered by the Historical Society.*



The City Hall spotlight shines Sept. 8, for the 40th anniversary of Blueberry Hill.

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## A Message from the President by Eleanor Mullin

The end of the year is a good time to reflect on what we have to be thankful for. On behalf of the Historical Society, thanks and gratitude go out to the following:

Mayor Shelley Welsch and City Manager Lehman Walker, for agreeing to provide our "State of the City" program two years ago, and making this an annual event.

Alan Spector, Pam Sanfilippo, and Margot McMillen, our 2012 speakers, for presenting informative, entertaining evenings. They graciously donate their time and knowledge, which allows us to hold these events at no charge to our members and the public.

Joe Edwards and Boo McLoughlin (Executive Director of Craft Alliance) for their spectacular gifts, which made the Raffle at our Annual Dinner great fun.

Patrick Wall, head of our Library, for his ongoing help and concern for our society. As you know, the Library gives us office and storage space, and the use of the auditorium for our programs. What you don't know is that Patrick helps in a myriad of other ways, responding quickly to my numerous emails and in-person requests, from compiling and printing mailing lists to setting up the a/v equipment for our programs, to

answering calls that come to the Library for us.

Christa Van Herreweghe, the Library's assistant director and head of IT, whose help was invaluable in setting up our new computer system. Christa lends a willing hand to accomplish whatever we need.

Ying Lin, who while working at the Library agreed to create our new, independent website. Ying now works at Maryville University, and her continuing help with the website is a boon for us.

Finally, our Board, whose knowledge and interest in U. City History keeps our organization going. Special thanks go to David Linzee, who puts together our newsletter (and frequently writes most of it!). Special praise goes to Sue Rehkopf, our archivist, whose knowledge of our history is extensive. Sue puts in more hours than all of us combined as she handles our annual membership letters, organizes papers and items that come in and responds to requests for pictures and information from our archives. Our city and society are blessed to have Sue give so generously of herself.

Wishing you all a healthy, happy Holiday Season and New Year.

### Author Speaks on Woman's Suffrage at Annual Dinner Meeting

More than 40 members of the Society enjoyed our Annual Meeting and dinner on October 9 at The Pasta House on Delmar. Of course the food was delicious and plentiful, and the Pasta House staff gracious and helpful. After dinner, Eleanor Mullin, President, conducted the meeting. She thanked our three new life members, Mary Costantin, Key Drey, and Anthony Frisella, who just moved into U. Heights One. She also thanked Joe Edwards, who made a generous contribution to the Historical Society as a thank-you for Bill Kaufman running the Spotlight for Blueberry Hill's Anniversary party. Minutes from last year were approved, and Board members who were up for re-election were voted in by acclamation. Diane Peterson was introduced and proposed as a new board member, and she was elected by acclamation.

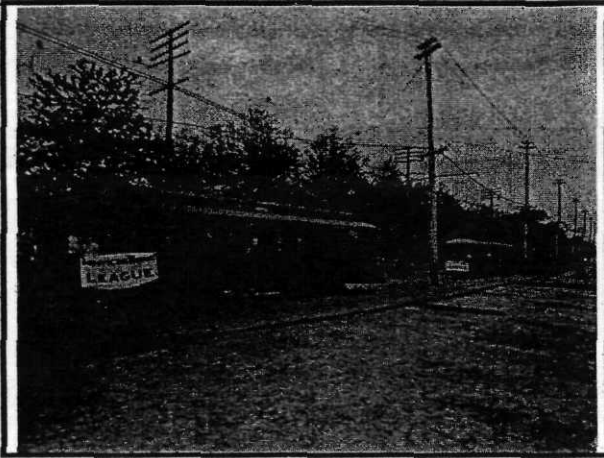
Margot McMillen was our speaker. She has written six books on Missouri issues—heritage, women, conservation, and history. Her program covered her recent book, published in 2011: *The Golden Lane: How Missouri Women Gained the Vote and Changed History*. In 1916, St. Louis hosted the Democratic Party's Presidential Convention. The St. Louis Woman's Suffrage Association, headed by Virginia Minor, decided this

was their opportunity. On June 14, as the convention began in the Jefferson Hotel, thousands of women lined both sides of Locust, all dressed in white, holding yellow parasols, and wearing a yellow sash that said "Votes for Women". They stood for hours—IN SILENCE—as delegates walked to the hotel. Talk about 'speaking softly' (or not at all!); the delegates at the convention agreed to put woman's suffrage on their national platform. Another historic feat that occurred in St. Louis—and one that should be more recognized than it is.

After the program, and socializing, we held a raffle. Two great packages were offered: Joe Edwards provided a party for ten at Pin Up Bowl, and Landmark Theaters gave four tickets to the Tivoli; Craft Alliance provided a necklace, one-year family membership and voucher to take a class. Carol Diaz-Granados won the Pin Up Bowl/movie package, and Bob Kaufman won the Craft Alliance gift.

The Historical Society looks forward to another year of exciting programs.





*Streetcars carry delegates to the American Women's League Convention, 1910. From the Lewis Photograph Collection..*

## WESTWARD THE STREETCAR!

### *Beyond the Loop*

The debate over Joe Edwards' Loop trolley, probably the hottest local controversy of 2012, isn't the first argument over a new streetcar line in University City. In 1915, some of the city's richest and most powerful men battled over a proposal to extend the Delmar line west of the Loop.

Today, a streetcar is so rare that it's a tourist attraction. Things were very different then. The decade 1910-20 was the peak time for streetcars in St. Louis, according to the book *This Is Our St. Louis*. A network of 300 miles of track "extended to practically every developed part of the city."

It followed that if you wanted to develop residential property, a nearby streetcar line was very desirable. So reasoned Theodore Hemmelmann Jr., a major developer and leader of a group of investors who put up \$179,000 to purchase from E. G. Lewis (to be exact, from the trustee of the bankrupt Lewis interests) 138 acres of mostly vacant land north of Delmar and east of Hanley. Hemmelmann told the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* that his new development, University Park, would be a prestigious subdivision similar to Parkview, with a "serpentine" street plan. But it needed a streetcar.

Like today's Loop trolley, the 1915 proposal was promoted as giving a boost to a sagging local economy. Three years before, founder E.G. Lewis had gone broke. Mayor August Heman, struggling to put the city back on its feet, eagerly embraced the University Park

development. The *Post* predicted the streetcar line would eventually go all the way to Clayton, opening up a lot of vacant land for development.

But opposition arose from an unexpected quarter. Just before Christmas, Hemmelmann and partners were called to a public meeting at University City High School to defend their proposal. Frank C. Rand, president of International Shoe, Bradford Shinkle and Lee Niedringhaus, whose houses stood in the 7100 block of Delmar, didn't want a streetcar running by their front gates. Jackson Johnson, whose mansion at Big Bend and Delmar had burned down in January (see Feb. 2012 *Illuminations*), and who was building several houses for sale on the site, joined the opposition.

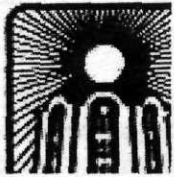
Rand was the group's spokesman. (He had another reason to dislike streetcars. In March 1914, a streetcar had crashed into his automobile in at the corner of Delmar and Goodfellow. He and his family were unscathed, but the car was totaled.) He said a streetcar would "spoil the street as high-class residential property." He complained of the "boisterous conduct" of passengers who on Sundays took pleasure trips to Creve Coeur Lake. He told the *Post* that he himself had invested in Hemmelmann's development (presumably before he found out about the streetcar line) but that he "did not want to profit at the expense of University City generally."

The *Post* did not buy that line. The streetcar extension "is favored by University City as a whole," it reported. Hemmelmann regarded the streetcar as essential to development, and if he didn't get it, he would "throw the land on the market unrestricted." The neighborhood would deteriorate. Rand and friends would stop the streetcar, only to find on their doorsteps "chicken yards, apartment houses, and perhaps a saloon or two."

On March 15, 1916, a bill to extend the streetcar line was introduced in the City Council. United Railways said that it planned to build "a fine station" at Delmar and Wellesley, linking the Delmar and Creve Coeur lines. But "final action was deferred" due to the opposition of Rand.

With that, the controversy over the Delmar extension disappears from the columns of the *Post*. The streetcar line never was extended west of the Loop, and Hemmelmann's subdivision was never built. University Park had to wait to be developed by Cyrus Willmore in the early 1920s. Rand's house, probably University

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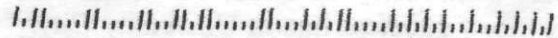
*St Louis Mo*

**Inside:**

Historical Society Gift Catalogue  
Winter/Spring Programs  
Trolley Controversy, 1915

David Linzee  
744 Syracuse  
University City, MO 63130

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City's grandest residence, still stands at 7100 Delmar, as do Niedringhaus' (7104) and Shinkle's (7108).

What happened, probably, was that the Delmar extension was swallowed up in the larger problems of United Railways. According to *Lion of the Valley* by James Neal Primm, the company was a typically ruthless enterprise of the era. James Campbell, a financier called "the Morgan of the West," and a member of a small group of powerful men denounced as "the Big Cinch" by Progressives, had bought up the smaller streetcar operators and formed a holding company, United Railways, that operated in several Midwestern cities. The company, said the *Post*, raised money by questionable means, made unscrupulous land deals, and provided bad, overpriced service to users. By 1919, the company was in receivership. It would not emerge until 1927, when it was reorganized as the St. Louis Public Service Company.

**HSUC Hosts Area Historical Societies**

On November 4, the Society hosted a meeting of St. Louis area historical societies in the City Council Chambers. Vice-President Ed Nickels welcomed guests to "one of the most beautiful city halls in America" and previewed HSUC programs. Representatives of other societies then talked about their activities: Overland, a meeting on endangered historic barns; Bridgeton, a walking tour of FeeFee Cemetery; Creve Coeur, refurbishment of Tappmeyer Homestead (1880); Heartlands Conservancy, seeking National Park Service designation for surviving Mississippian mounds; Glendale, Century Homes plaque program; Jennings, publishing a book on city history; Ferguson, Wall of Fame. St. Louis County preservation historian Esley Hamilton spoke about developments on the local history scene, especially Webster Groves' awards for construction and renovation in historic districts, a program he considers worthy of emulation.