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DUNCAN MANOR

All photos by Landmarks Illinois unless otherwise noted.

Credit: Stephanie Wood Photography.

Illinois Richard H. Driehaus Foundation Preservation Award. Turn to page 3 to learn more.

Towanda. The couple have restored the historic home, earning them a 2021 Landmarks Illinois Richard H. Driehaus Foundation Preservation Award. Turn to page 3 to learn more.

Cover: Randi and David Howell with their son Arlow in front of the Duncan Manor near Towanda. The couple have restored the historic home, earning them a 2021 Landmarks Illinois Richard H. Driehaus Foundation Preservation Award. Turn to page 3 to learn more.

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FROM THE PRESIDENT TO OUR MEMBERS

Landmarks Illinois recognizes the importance of preservation surveys: they identify a place and its significance to the community to understand why it must be saved. At the Landmarks Illinois website, we are proud to host three databases based on extensive and ongoing preservation surveys.

This summer, we published Women Who Built Illinois — a first-of-its-kind database of women architects, engineers, developers, designers, builders, landscape architects and interior designers who contributed to the built environment of Illinois from 1879 to 1979. The work of women in these professions is rarely recognized and much of it remains unprotected without landmark designation. This new database aims to help other women and girls see that women have, in fact, been building Illinois for over a century. We thank those who contributed to this survey, including Landmarks Illinois Director of Advocacy Lisa DiChiera, Skyline Council Member Erica Ruggiero and Landmarks Illinois intern Cray Kennedy as well as Julia Bachrach, Cynthia Weese, Kim Kerbs, the Chicago Women in Architecture Foundation and AIA Illinois.

In July of this year, we launched a survey of county World War I monuments in Illinois. This database has been updated annually since 2012 and currently contains information on 4,100 architecturally significant, non-residential suburban Chicago buildings constructed from 1935 to 1975. We expect to have all Cook County suburbs surveyed by 2022-2023. We thank intern Sheila Webb, SAIC Professor Charles Pipal and the students of the SAIC historic preservation survey class for their continued work to build this important database being used to identify and protect places of the recent past. We also thank the Jocarno Fund for its continued support of this survey.

From the Pritzker Military Foundation made a corresponding grant program available in 2017 and 2018 that helped fund 11 WWI monument restoration projects in 11 Illinois communities. We thank Landmarks Illinois Director of Reinvestment Suzanne Germann for leading this effort for the organization. We also want to recognize Landmarks Illinois Regional Advisor Emilio Padilla, AIA and veteran Steve Thompson of Mattoon for his work to complete the survey before he passed away in July of this year.

Surveys like these are powerful preservation tools. We hope they will help people better understand the places in their community and lead to work that saves them.

Continuing our 15-year-long partnership with the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC) Historic Preservation Program, Landmarks Illinois is also working to complete the Recent Past Survey of Suburban Cook County. This database, which is updated annually, contains information on more than 4,100 architecturally significant, non-residential suburban Chicago buildings constructed from 1935 to 1975. We expect to have all Cook County suburbs surveyed by 2022-2023. We thank intern Sheila Webb, SAIC Professor Charles Pipal and the students of the SAIC historic preservation survey class for their continued work to build this important database being used to identify and protect places of the recent past. We also thank the Jocarno Fund for its continued support of this survey.

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**Preserving Duncan Manor**

**-a family affair**

Randi and David Howell put their passion and creativity to work restoring Duncan Manor, a large, 1866 Italianate farmhouse sitting on six acres on old Route 66 near Towanda. This imposing house is highly visible from Interstate 55 and was the original owner, William Duncan, alive through their preservation efforts. 

“The Duncan Manor is ‘dripping with history,’” Randi said. “We think differently. If these historic structures die with us, we pass on no visual history of times past to our children.”

The Howells know the historic home has meaning to people near and far, and ensuring its maintenance for generations to come is the couple’s goal. They aim to keep the story of the home and its original owner, William Duncan, alive through their preservation efforts.

“Our hope is that our children grow up to feel as passionate as we do about these old buildings and the history they hold,” said Randi. “This landmark is their reality, and every day they get to see just how much appreciation the world around them has for our home.”

The restored Duncan Manor not only provides a home for the Howells, but serves as a place where the community can come for a reprieve from daily life. Today, the mansion hosts weddings, tours, concerts and other events.

“This house is our home, but it is a home we plan to share with the community as long as we are the stewards,” the Howells said.

Visit tinyurl.com/DuncanManor to learn more about this award-winning preservation project.


**2021 Landmarks Illinois Richard H. Driehaus Foundation Preservation Awards**

- **Mercer County Carnegie Library**
  - Aleo Award for Adaptive Reuse

- **Epiphany Center for the Arts**
  - Chicago Award for Adaptive Reuse

- **Pullman Artspace Lofts**
  - Chicago Award for Rehabilitation

- **Chicago Union Station**
  - Chicago Award for Restoration

- **West Pullman School Senior Community**
  - Chicago Award for Adaptive Reuse

- **Nauvoo Historic Residences**
  - Nauvoo Award for Restoration

- **Tiger Senior Apartments**
  - Paris Award for Adaptive Reuse

- **Duncan Manor**
  - Towanda Award for Stewardship

- **Cristo Rey St. Martin College Prep**
  - Waukegan Award for Adaptive Reuse & Richard H. Driehaus Legacy Award for Innovation

Visit www.Landmarks.org in the months ahead to learn more about the upcoming event, which will feature a fresh night of programming and festivities.

**IN MEMORIAM**

Landmarks Illinois is mourning the passing of two passionate volunteers who worked for decades to save historic places throughout Illinois:

**Robert Meers** served on Landmarks Illinois Board of Directors from 1979 to 1985 and as a member of the organization’s first Preservation Fund Committee. As a real estate developer, he led the rehabilitation of landmarks including the Fort Dearborn Hotel/Traders Building and Lake Forest’s Market Square. Meers at Landmarks Illinois Preservation Ball in 1984.

**Steve Thompson** dedicated his time, passion, and expertise to preservation in Coles County and to Landmarks Illinois, serving as a Regional Advisor. As a veteran of the United States Army, 101st Airborne Division and 8th Infantry Division, Steve worked to elevate and honor Illinois’ military history in addition to his tireless work throughout his career at the State Historic Preservation Office, as a preservation consultant and a community preservation advocate. Thompson at the Mattoon Depot in 2015.
Muddy Waters House Chicago
The Commission on Chicago Landmarks approved a final landmark recommendation in August for the home of Blues legend Muddy Waters in Chicago’s North Kenwood neighborhood. The Chicago City Council will vote on the landmark recommendation this month.

Landmarks Illinois drafted the landmark designation report and we continue to work with Waters’ great-granddaughter Chandra Cooper and the nonprofit MOJO Museum on a rehabilitation and reuse plan. Built in 1892, the two-flat structure at 4339 S. Lake Park Ave. was occupied by Waters, his family and various visiting musicians from 1954-1973. Waters and his wife Geneva modernized the home and the landmark designation report focuses on these important years and the changes.

Halsted and Willow Group Chicago
The Commission on Chicago Landmarks approved a final landmark recommendation in August for four historic, mixed-use buildings at the intersection of Halsted and Willow Streets in the Lincoln Park neighborhood. This rare grouping of Italianate and Queen Anne commercial buildings, constructed 1880-1889, makes an impressive community gateway. The buildings were once threatened by development and included on Landmarks Illinois’ 2014 Most Endangered Historic Places in Illinois. Landmarks Illinois provided grant funds for a landmark designation report, and with Lincoln Central Association, RANCH Triangle and Ald. Michelle Smith, advocated for protection of the buildings. The Chicago City Council will vote on the landmark recommendation this month.

Hotel Belleville Transformed Into Lofts on the Square Belleville
In September, senior citizens moved into their new apartments at Lofts on the Square, a 1931 building originally known as the Hotel Belleville. In 2014, Landmarks Illinois included the building on its Most Endangered Historic Places list after the City of Belleville announced plans for demolition. Landmarks Illinois joined locals to secure funding for a conditions assessment by White and Borgognoni Architects and to convince city officials to leverage historic preservation tax credits in finding a private developer. The result is a $14.2 million investment by Bywater Development Group and PCR and to convince city officials to leverage historic preservation tax credits in finding a private developer. The result is a $14.2 million investment by Bywater Development Group and PCR.

Mid-Century Losses Suburban Cook County
Three Mid-Century buildings identified in the Suburban Cook County Recent Past Survey database on the Landmarks Illinois’ website have been or may be soon demolished. They are the Second Church of Christ, Scientist in Evanston (Perkins and Will, 1946); Drift-Oaks Building in Oak Park (Robert Taylor, 1963, pictured); and the Mother Guerin High School in River Grove where efforts are underway to save its “Our Lady of River Grove” exterior mosaic mural. Preservation commissions, planners and preservation advocates are encouraged to explore the extensive database, which to date contains documentation of more than 4,100 commercial, institutional, office and religious structures in 70 municipalities in Cook County, and to seek recognition, protection and reinvestment in these resources. The most recent communities surveyed by students in the Graduate Historic Preservation Program of the School of the Art Institute included Glenwood, Ford Heights, Lynwood, Sauk Village and South Chicago Heights.

Chautauqua and Tabernacle Celebrations Freeport and Shelbyville
In 2018, Landmarks Illinois called attention to historic chautauquas and tabernacles on the Most Endangered Historic Places list. Two of these featured sites, the Oakdale Tabernacle in Freeport and the Chautauqua Auditorium in Shelbyville, recently celebrated major preservation victories. In August, the Freeport Park District voted unanimously to lease the Oakdale Tabernacle to a local nonprofit organization that formed to save the historic gathering space. Park district officials had previously voted to demolish the tabernacle, but changed course following successful local advocacy efforts in partnership with Landmarks Illinois. In Shelbyville, the Chautauqua Auditorium reopened in September following the completion of structural repairs, a new roof and floor, paint and stage improvements. The work follows a local referendum in 2020 where 60 percent of voters supported repairing the historic auditorium instead of demolishing it. Preservation efforts for the Oakdale Tabernacle and Shelbyville Chautauqua have both received financial support from Landmarks Illinois’ Preservation Heritage Fund Grant Program.

CHICAGO

INTO LOFTS ON THE SQUARE
BELLEVILLE

BELLEVILLE

CHICAGO

ALTGELD GARDENS STRUCTURES CHICAGO
In September, People for Community Recovery (PCR) and Landmarks Illinois submitted Chicago Landmark public suggestion applications to the Commission on Chicago Landmarks Program Committee for two important structures at Altgeld Gardens on Landmarks Illinois’ 2021 Most Endangered Historic Places list: School Building C, built in 1944, and the commercial Shop Building, known by locals as “Up-Top,” built in 1945 and designed by Keck & Keck (pictured). School Building C served as the community’s first high school, and the Shop Building originally housed a grocery store, drug store, beauty shop and doctor’s office. Both structures have been vacant for years and are deteriorating. PCR and Landmarks Illinois are advocating for reuse of both buildings to once again serve the community. A National Register nomination for Altgeld Gardens is underway, which would enable future owners to use federal historic preservation tax credits to help finance a rehabilitation and income-producing reuse of either building.

Credit: Sean Heitzman

Credit: Frank Heitzman

Credit: Liz Chilsen

Credit: Mark Shanks

Credit: Sean Reilly

CHICAGO

ALTGELD GARDENS STRUCTURES

CHICAGO

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Among the many women highlighted in the new database is Margaret Zirkel Young. Young became a licensed architect in Illinois in 1971 and had a long, successful career working at firms like Ezra Gordon & Jack M. Levin & Associates where she served as project architect on iconic Chicago skyscrapers like Newberry Plaza, built in 1974, and River Plaza, built in 1977. Young was a founding member of Chicago Women in Architecture and later became a registered real estate broker. She retired in 2002.

Below, Young shares insights on her unique career and experiences working in the male-dominated architecture field. An extended version of this article is available at the Landmarks Illinois Preservation News blog at www.Landmarks.org/Resources/Preservation-News/.

Landmarks Illinois: What was your most challenging and rewarding project while at Ezra Gordon & Jack M. Levin & Associates from 1966 to 1986? Were any clients reluctant to work with you since you were a woman?

Margaret Zirkel Young: As a young architect, when assigned to actually monitor the Newberry Plaza project construction from excavation and foundations to the roof top, that was probably my biggest challenge. I knew I could do it and I had my employers’ total confidence. Of course, I was a little concerned about how I might be received and accepted, but I was not totally alone out there. There were other design representatives (like structural and mechanical/electrical engineers) who monitored their part of the project and with whom I already had a very good rapport from earlier months of coordinating our construction documents. It was more than gratifying to quickly gain the respect of the construction crews. Yes, many tested me, but I always had the answers or made a quick decision to solve their perceived problem. I actually had the pleasure to work with many of them again on future projects.

Landmarks Illinois: Are there any women in the architecture profession who inspired you or who you viewed as a mentor?

Margaret Zirkel Young: In the 1970s, I met Natalie Griffin de Blois, a true star, very experienced, successful and gracious lady. She was 20 years my senior, and I came to respect her in many ways. Natalie freely shared her experiences as a woman in a large, well-known international firm (Skidmore, Owings & Merrill). I definitely viewed her as a mentor and good friend.

(Read more about DeBlois at the Landmarks Illinois Women Who Built Illinois database: www.landmarks.org/women_built_type/natalie-griffin-de-blos/)
The Cairo Historical Preservation Project, Inc. was recently created with the mission to ensure the preservation and protection of historic places in Cairo, a southern Illinois town located at the confluence of the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers and the seat of Alexander County. The preservation of Cairo’s Ward Chapel AME Church is the organization’s first priority, and a $2,500 Preservation Heritage Fund grant from Landmarks Illinois will be used for immediate repairs to the church’s roof. Built in 1874, the church was part of the Underground Railroad network, and in the 1960s, John Lewis and Jesse Jackson participated in the Freedom Rides movement there.

Cairo was once home to a booming steamboat industry. The Civil War Reconstruction period in the mid-1860s brought an influx of formerly enslaved people to Cairo. Racial tensions were always high in the community, but as the shipping and ferrying industries rapidly declined, jobs grew scarce and the racial unrest intensified. At its peak in the 1920s, the population was 15,000 people. Today fewer than 2,000 people call Cairo home. Over the years, the population was 15,000 people. Today fewer than 2,000 people call Cairo home. Over the years, the population has been drastically reduced through abandonment, demolition and periodic flooding. Cairo was once home to a booming steamboat industry. The Civil War Reconstruction period in the mid-1860s brought an influx of formerly enslaved people to Cairo. Racial tensions were always high in the community, but as the shipping and ferrying industries rapidly declined, jobs grew scarce and the racial unrest intensified. At its peak in the 1920s, the population was 15,000 people. Today fewer than 2,000 people call Cairo home. Over the years, the population has been drastically reduced through abandonment, demolition and periodic flooding. Cairo was once home to a booming steamboat industry. The Civil War Reconstruction period in the mid-1860s brought an influx of formerly enslaved people to Cairo. Racial tensions were always high in the community, but as the shipping and ferrying industries rapidly declined, jobs grew scarce and the racial unrest intensified. At its peak in the 1920s, the population was 15,000 people. Today fewer than 2,000 people call Cairo home. Over the years, the population has been drastically reduced through abandonment, demolition and periodic flooding.

The Cairo Historical Preservation Project, Inc.’s long-term preservation goal is to revitalize Ward Chapel AME Church so it can be used for spiritual and cultural events. Once stabilized, Ward Chapel will be included in the local heritage tour alongside other notable historic buildings in Cairo.

**ST. BASIL VISITATION CHURCH Englewood**

St. Basil Visitation, formerly known as Visitation and built in 1899, has been at the heart of the historical richness and cultural diversity of Chicago’s Englewood neighborhood for over a century. Located on Garfield Boulevard, the green tower and spire of the Gothic-style church serve as a beacon for the South Side residents and visitors.

In 1945, 1,679 students were enrolled in the church’s grammar school, making it the second-largest English-speaking parish in the City of Chicago. In 1932, the New World Co., Inc., a Southern Illinois town located at the confluence of the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers and the seat of Alexander County. The preservation of Cairo’s Ward Chapel AME Church is the organization’s first priority, and a $2,500 Preservation Heritage Fund grant from Landmarks Illinois will be used for immediate repairs to the church’s roof. Built in 1874, the church was part of the Underground Railroad network, and in the 1960s, John Lewis and Jesse Jackson participated in the Freedom Rides movement there.

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