



Gateway

The Voice



Mansion Hill

OF THE East Row Historic Foundation

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The Voice of the East Row Historic Foundation

is published monthly and paid for by the East Row Historic Foundation (ERHF). Diverse, responsible commentary is encouraged. All opinions are those of the authors and do not necessarily express the opinions of the ERHF and its officers. Articles, editorials, classifieds or calendar items should be sent to Jim Guthrie, Deanna Heil or Fran Blasing. The editors reserve the right to edit all submissions or reject inappropriate material. Deadline is the 15th of the month. Drop off at 611 Monroe Street or via e-mail: KillianP@aol.com, rjyoder@aol.com or fmbiasing@aol.com

Next Meeting

Joint meeting for Gateway and Mansion Hill neighborhoods

**Tuesday, July 11, 7:30 p.m.,
St. John's Church, corner of
Park Avenue & Nelson Place.**

*Meetings are held on the
first Tuesday of the month at
7:30 p.m. at St. Mark Church at
the corner of Monroe and 8th.*

Editors of The Voice

Fran Blasing
Nadine Parris
Bob Yoder
Mary Beth Crocker

June Meeting Recap:

- Pat and Ian Budd reported that Northern Kentucky University's Governor's Scholars' Project proposed to erect a gazebo at Eighth and Linden as a service project. There will be no charge and it will be painted.
- Ian Budd requested help with the advanced planning of Riverfest T-shirt sales. Anyone interested can contact Ian or Pat at 491-7696.
- Dennis Middendorf suggested inviting OKI to a future ERHF meeting to make a presentation of the proposed I-71 Light Rail Program.
- Two members of The Artery spoke about their program and need for support. The chairman asked them to present an up-dated business plan to ERHF so that we could consider financial assistance.
- ERHF passed a motion that we voice our collective opinion expressing concerns about the appropriateness of any proposed off-track betting facility.
- Corey Siddall stated that there is interest in forming a committee regarding TANK's proposed construction site on Fourth Street.
- ERHF passed a motion that we voice our collective opinion expressing concerns about the appropriateness of a liquor license being granted to the Peace Bell location.

With Deepest Sympathy

Our deepest sympathy goes out to the family of John Dunning. John, who died on June 10, 2000 was a kind, compassionate man who will be missed in our neighborhood family.

Memorial contributions may be made to the Covington Cathedral (Basilica) Foundation.

July Agenda:

- Tree Committee report
- Voting on the commitment to plant two trees on E. Fifth Street
- Committee reports
- TANK news

Because of the July 4th holiday, the next meeting of the East Row Historic Foundation will be July 11th. The location will also be changed to St. John's Church on the corner of Park Avenue and Nelson Place.



Announcing The Newport Historic Building Restoration Series, Workshop #6: Historic Plaster Molds - Recreating Plaster Medallions & Brackets

On Saturday, August 12 at the Newport City Building, 998 Monmouth Street, First Floor Multi-Purpose Room, from 9 a.m. to noon, the City of Newport Historic Preservation Office announces: Historic Plaster Molds — Recreating Plaster Medallions & Brackets, the sixth workshop in the Newport Historic Building Restoration Series. Presented by Ken Clift and Paul Blasing. Admission to this workshop is FREE.

The Newport Historic Building Restoration Series presents four workshops a year. It is designed for historic building owners, do-it-yourselfers, and those interested in accurately restoring an old building. Restoration professionals from all disciplines will provide technical assistance on specific topics and answer questions.

Historic Plaster Molds — Recreating Plaster Medallions & Brackets will describe and demonstrate the art of recreating damaged or missing plaster medallions and brackets. The workshop will conclude with a tour of the 1879 Italianate mansion in which Ken has restored and recreated all the decorative plaster moldings, medallions and brackets.

Ken, is a lifelong resident of Kentucky. He is a retired firefighter/paramedic, and is the owner of Gateway Bed & Breakfast on Sixth Street in Newport, for which he won the 1992 Great American Homes Award from the National Trust for Historic Preservation for the rehabilitation of the structure. Ken, who is active in the community, has been a member of the Newport Historic Preservation Commission for nine years, and has served as chairman for six years. Ken is also co-author of the award winning book Newport, Kentucky: A Bicentennial History 1795-1995 . He was appointed in 1998 by Kentucky Governor Paul Patton to a four-year term on the Historic Properties Advisory Commission. It was established to provide continuing attention to the maintenance, furnishings, and repairs of the Executive Mansion, Old Governor's Mansion, the New State Capitol, as well other state historic properties. He

also attended a five-day Restoration/Renovation Conference in Charleston, South Carolina in the fall of 1999.

Mr. Blasing, vice-chair of the Newport Historic Preservation Commission, is a lifelong advocate of historic preservation and historic house restoration. Originally from Cincinnati, Paul purchased his first historic house in Norwood in 1988, a brick Queen Anne four-family house that he still owns. He has also participated in other Newport Historic Building Restoration Series Workshops, and has attended House Doctor programs sponsored by the Ohio Historic Preservation Office, and the Old House Fair sponsored by Cincinnati Preservation Association. He also attended the Restoration/Renovation Conference in Charleston.

The workshop will describe and demonstrate the art of recreating damaged or missing plaster medallions and brackets. Ken and Paul will demonstrate the lost art of using original plaster features to create a “mother mold,” and the process of pouring and recasting new molds to match the originals. There will be a slide presentation of the plaster work on the 1879 Italianate mansion.

Handouts will also be available at the workshop. Cold soft drinks and water will be provided. For further information, contact John Paquette, at 859-292-3666. ☘



By Mark Cunningham Church
Historical Society

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Vinyl Windows & Economic Sense

OK, you're still not listening. I've been talking and writing about the virtues of old wood windows, and rebuilding them since 1992. I wrote an article about vinyl windows that was printed in the Mansion Hill Flyer and the Gateway Newslast June. (See eastrow.org — click on **Newport News**, then click on John Paquette's articles). In it I wrote about all the inherent problems associated with them — the net being is that they fail, and never pay for themselves, and that once you start the cycle of ripping out the old wood windows and putting in vinyl, the cycle goes on forever.

I guess I have to speak more directly; I guess I have to speak to your wallet. I need to tell you about all the money you're throwing away. Vinyl windows just don't make economic sense. Here are just a few real world examples/reasons why.

As I said, I've been rebuilding wood windows myself since 1992. I grew up in a 1920's house with six-over-six wood windows, with sash cords and weights, the whole nine yards. I began reglazing and repainting them as summer work for my father when I was 12 years old. When I was home from college in the summer, I reglazed and painted them again. They never needed rebuilding, they just needed to be maintained. I've never worked on new or even newer houses. The reason is the quality of windows. Wood, vinyl and aluminum are not the same as a 75 year old or older wood window. These windows are made of old-growth lumber, the type of wood that is more impervious to rot, holds paint better, and here's the best part: if they're still in your house, they should last indefinitely.

A property owner came into the City Building early in June to fill out a Certificate of Appropriateness application to replace his existing (original) wood windows with vinyl — all 48 of them. I asked him several questions: what was wrong with them? Did they all need to be replaced? Did they have a warranty? And then I asked, how much were they going to cost? He told me, \$21,000. He was going to sell the building anyway, so apparently they were going to be a major selling point for the prospective new buyer. What he's really doing is passing on \$21,000 that will have to be respent — albeit probably more than that if you take into account cost of living, inflation, etc. — in less than 15 years because it's not a matter of if they fail, but a question of when. And the cycle continues. What I couldn't tell him, but I'm telling you, is that I personally would rebuild 48 windows (96 sash) for less than half that amount of money. And that's if they all need to be rebuilt. If they haven't been maintained, they are going to need some work: replacing a sash cord here or there, replacing broken glass, reglazing. And some will need more extensive repairs: replacing stiles or rails, fixing broken tenons, truing up a warped bottom rail, etc. Sash cord comes in a 50 foot hank for around \$8. With that you can replace all the sash cords in 3-4 average size windows. A new piece of glass, average size 30" x 32" is around \$10. A gallon of good quality linseed oil-based glazing compound costs about

\$16, enough to reglaze dozens of sashes, even if all the glazing had fallen out. The quality of construction of old wood windows in the houses in Newport is astounding. They are built with quality that's unheard of today. What you probably didn't know is that they were built like a Windsor chair from the 18th or early 19th century: they have absolutely no glue or adhesives of any kind in them. They don't have screws, nails or metal — except the hardware. They are built using small wedges and pins — all made of wood. How do they hold together? It's a simple evolutionary process that was learned many hundreds of years ago: wood, even after it's dried, continues to shrink. The wedges and pins are put in so that when the wooden rails and stiles (the horizontal and vertical pieces that make up a sash) shrink as they age, the joints actually become tighter and stronger. (Windsor chairs were built in much the same way, with pins and wedges, fitted together before the wood was completely dry, and the wood shrunk quickly, tightening the joints. Thus by the time they were finished for a customer, the joints were already strong). The point is this: even if you have to go to extremes because the windows haven't been maintained for many years, the initial investment to bring them back to shape is still less than replacing them. And now that you've gotten them into shape, the next time you have to repaint, and replace some glazing compound that's reached the end of its life, that's all you need to do.

Let's talk about painting. How long should a good paint job last? That's debatable. Some say five years, some say 7-10. One of the problems is that today's paints don't contain lead. Now I know some of you are going to call and tell me the reasons that we shouldn't have lead in our paints. I know all the safety issues involved, so I understand the ban on lead. But lead in old paint was actually the best thing for the wood. Alkyd and latex paints on the market today are inferior to old lead based paints. Ask a retired 80-year-old painter how often he had to go back and repaint? It certainly wasn't every 5 years. That being said, windows are still a maintenance issue. 90% of a good paint job is preparation. If you or your painting contractor don't spend 90% of the time preparing the paint surface and 10% of the time painting, the paint job won't last. And please don't try and save money and spray paint. It will just have to be painted sooner. You just can't push as much paint into the wood with a spray gun as you can with a good china bristle brush. It isn't possible. So what's the answer? If it's done correctly, by the time you're ready for your new paint job, your vinyl windows will have failed, and you have to replace them again. Wouldn't paint be cheaper than new vinyl windows? Do the math.

How about "Tilt in for easy cleaning?" Now there's a major selling point. How often do you wash the outside of your windows? Every six months? Every year? Every couple of years? Call a window cleaning service. Have them give you an estimate. I'm willing to bet that even if you have 48 windows it still will only cost a couple hundred dollars

continued on back

Vinyl Windows continued from front

(if that) to have them cleaned once a year. Wouldn't that be money better spent than replacing your windows?

Do vinyl windows add value to your old house? Is it a major selling point when you put it on the market? I know some people who wouldn't even consider buying a property that had vinyl windows because they'd want to tear them out and replace them with salvaged, old windows. But the seller surely put the cost of the windows into the selling price. So, aesthetics aside, sellers may very well lose potential customers and have a building overpriced because it has vinyl windows.

Here's another common myth: double-glazed windows, (wood or vinyl) save energy. The problems with double-glazed windows are many. First, the majority of air infiltration and heat loss is not through the glass itself, but rather around the windows: through cracks and spaces in the window jambs, and through sections of interior and exterior window trim. Ill fitting windows also cause energy loss. Weather-stripping between the two sash, under the lower sash, even in the window jambs, as well as using a good quality caulk both on the inside and outside trim, is not only more cost-effective than replacing the existing wood windows, but it pays for itself years quicker (in energy savings) than replacing the windows. Second, the double-glazed windows will fail. It's not a question of if, but of when. They are sealed with a form of caulk. Caulk has a very limited life when subject to the heat buildup that occurs when vinyl windows bake in the sun. They may reach temperatures of 160 degrees Fahrenheit, which not only distorts the vinyl itself, but accelerates the aging of the glazing sealant. You have all seen cloudy windows. That means the window has failed. When the windows are sealed at the factory, a desiccant or drying compound is put into the airspace between the two pieces of glass. When the sealant deteriorates, the desiccant can only accept moisture until it's saturated. Then the windows cloud, permanently. There is no way to fix it. In most cases you can't even replace the double-glazing portion of the sash. You have to replace the entire window. Third, if you really need a second piece of glass, storm windows make more sense economically because they serve two purposes: they add a layer of insulation because they cover the majority of areas where air infiltration occurs, but they also

serve to protect, for years, glazing compound and the paint on your windows.

There is no such thing as a maintenance-free building. I've said it before, I'll keep saying it. If you own a house with a "tin roof," which should last 100 years or more, you still have to maintain it: keep it clean and free of debris, and molds, etc... And it must be painted at least every five years. If your house has metal-lined box gutters, they should be painted at least every three years. That's the way tin roofs and box gutters last so long: you have to take care of them. But it's cost-effective, it makes economic sense. Same is true with your windows. If you have original or old wood windows in your house, they're not going to last forever if you don't maintain them. Do you know of anything that does? Vinyl windows are maintenance-free for maybe a few years, and then you have to replace them again: they start to stick, they don't lock properly, the seal fails between the double-glazing, the thermal changes they go through in a couple of years twist and warp them, and you can't repair them. You just put them in the landfill, and buy new ones. Ask anyone who has owned vinyl windows for ten years or more how they're holding up. Or better yet, how about five years? I have had many property owners who are getting Certificate of Appropriateness permits from my office for new sets of vinyl windows to replace the existing vinyl replacement windows. Why? Because of the reasons I've just stated.

For people like me, owning a home is the largest appreciating asset I will have in my lifetime. How many appreciating assets do you own? Cars depreciate, yet we don't hesitate for a second to spend thousands of dollars on repairs, maintenance, washing, etc. Wouldn't money be better spent on an appreciating asset? Invest money in your house. Spend it wisely: keep your old wood windows.

And finally, when was the last time you heard someone say, Wow those vinyl windows look great! or I love the beautiful patina on that white vinyl! or Are those the original wood windows — oh, geez, they're vinyl, they look so much like real wood!

Look for a Restoration Workshop on advanced window repair techniques in the near future. As always, if you can't wait, I am available to walk you through what you need to do, what materials to buy, etc... For more information, contact John Paquette at the City of Newport: 292-3666, or via e-mail: jpaquette@cityofnewportky.org. 🐾



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Opening on the Historic Preservation Commission

A Mansion Hill neighborhood resident is needed to fill an opening on the Historic Preservation Commission. Those willing to serve should address a letter of interest to: Mr. Corey Siddall, President, Mansion Hill Neighborhood Association, 501 East Second Street, Newport, KY 41071. Letters must be received by Wednesday, July 12, 2000. Commission members must have an interest in historic

preservation, and be willing to finish out Mr. John Dunning's term, which expires January 31, 2002. The Commission meets monthly at the City Building on the fourth Wednesday at 7 p.m. For further information, contact John Paquette at the City of Newport, 292-3666, or via e-mail: jpaquette@cityofnewportky.org. 🐾

Historic Preservation Commission News

What follows is a summarized review of the May 24, 2000 Preservation Commission meeting.

The owner of **928 Washington Avenue** started installing vinyl siding without a Certificate of Appropriateness permit. Work was stopped by Historic Preservation Officer John Paquette on Friday, May 5 before the work was completed.

Commission Decision: The existing Insulbrick and vinyl siding on the front (east) elevation of the property must be removed and the original clapboards must be repaired or replaced. The Insulbrick on the front should be used to repair other portions of the structure. Other orders include: replace window trim and corner boards where missing, with 5/4" stock by 4-6" width. Work must be completed in 90 days. Deadline: August 25, 2000.

Other Commission Business:

Staff Officer John Paquette brought up the following items:

Historic Building Restoration Series Workshop #6: Recreating Historic Plaster Molds & Medallions for the second weekend in August, presented by Ken Clift & Paul Blasing.

Preservation Awards Banquet, May 31, 2000 in Bellevue at St. Anthony's Church & the Weller Haus Bed & Breakfast.

410 Overton: slates are ordered, and a weekend is needed when volunteers can put up the slates and metal-work.

806 Monroe: Ownership is contingent upon potential property owner being able to sell his house on Lexington Avenue. He needs a Certificate of Occupancy from the City to live in it (806 Monroe) while he's working on it. As a result, he still doesn't have title to the property.

Discussed next month's NHPC agenda items.

Main Street Coordinator Eric Avner presented his Monmouth Street Facade Study Grant Application to the Commission asking for a letter of support.

East Row Historic District expansion. Commission members walked a portion of the potential expansion area.

Newport Arts & Music Festival Coming Soon

The 5th Annual Newport Arts & Music Festival will descend on James Taylor Park (west end of Riverboat Row), on Saturday and Sunday July 8 & 9. This year's event promises fun for everyone with an exciting blend of eclectic music, varied traditional and non-traditional art, an expanded KidZone, and a chance to sample the area's delicious food and beverages.

Fifteen bands will grace the stage offering folk, pop, jazz and motown sounds to please your senses. The stage backs up to the river so passing boaters can also enjoy some of Greater Cincinnati's finest music talent. This year, we boast the largest number of artists ever: 53 artists to choose from. You'll be sure to find a wide array of distinctive ceramics, jewelry, photography, avant garde painting, sculpture and more. The KidZone will have activities courtesy of the Cincinnati Art Museum, the Newport Aquarium, and great folks from The Artery.

Why not invite your friends to Newport and make it a day? or two? Explore the festival, the aquarium, the Peace Bell, Monmouth Street, and see how many of our pigs you can find!

General James Taylor Park on Riverboat Row

Saturday, July 8, noon - midnight

Sunday, July 9, noon - 7 p.m.

For more info visit <http://www.cityofnewportky.org> or call Eric at 292-3666.

We still need more volunteers to staff various areas of the event. If you and some friends would like a free T-shirt and food while you're working, give Jen a call at 815-1424.

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This Month

Newport City Commissioners Meetings July 3, 10, 17, 24, 31

7 p.m., Multi-Purpose Room, City of Newport,
998 Monmouth Street. Information: 292-3666 or
www.cityofnewportky.org

Northern Kentucky Symphony Summer Series at Devou Park

Mark your calendars now. The Northern Kentucky
Symphony will again bring four FREE family-friendly
concerts to the historic bandshell in Covington's Devou
Park natural lawn amphitheatre.

- Saturday, July 8, 7:30 p.m., "Livin' la Vida Loca"
- Saturday August 5, 7:30 p.m., "Band on the Run"
- Saturday September 2, 7:30 p.m., "A Mouse,
Flamingoes and Whales—Oh My!"

For more information call 431-6216.

Victorian Christmas Tour December 2-3

For information, contact Rebecca Walker, 261-0718.

Every Saturday

THE FARMER'S MARKET IS NOW OPEN

Hey, let's all walk over to the Downtown Newport
Farmer's Market this Saturday. Meet Campbell County
farmers, purchase fresh produce at reasonable prices,
and support local agriculture at one time.

The Farmer's Market is each Saturday, from June 17
to October 28, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., in the parking lot at
709 Monmouth (between the Pepper Pod and Dixie
Chili). For more information call 572-2600.

Richard's
Gift Store/ Tanning Salon
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Vacation Bible School

Vacation Bible School at Trinity Baptist Church will take
place July 31 – August 4, 9 a.m. to noon, 5th and Park in
Newport. Children ages 4-12 may attend Marketplace 29
AD and experience Biblical times as Jesus did.

If you have any questions please call the church office
at 581-9197.

Join the List Serve

To join the Listserv send a blank e-mail to
east_row_subscribe@egroups.com

Recycle! It's easy!

Did you know, Rumpke offers a recycling
program in Newport? Call their recycling office at
242-4600 and set up an account. You pay for
the first three months in advance (\$12.98) and
they deliver a recycling bin to your door. Pickup
is every Tuesday at curbside. Help protect our
environment!

Time Well Spent



John Paquette, Ken Clift and Paul Blasing donate
their time to the restoration of the slate roof on 410
Overton. Pictured above are John forming the slate
shingles (l.) and Ken installing them on the roof (r.).



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