



THE HISTORICAL BULLETIN

December 2010

Vol. XXIV, No. 4

A newsletter by the Brown County Historical Society dedicated to the preservation of Brown County history.

YOUR LAST CHANCERY

by Mark J. Steuer

In a recent email sent to the members of the Save the Chancery Coalition (STCC), local Green Bay-area architect, Denise Dauplaise, shared that she had heard her six-year-old daughter say, *"That is the saddest thing I have ever seen in the whole entire world."*¹ The event in question was the razing of the former Green Bay Diocese Chancery (Bishop's House) at 1910 South Webster Avenue in Allouez, Wisconsin, on Sept. 1, 2010, which, ironically, coincided with the 71st anniversary of the beginning of World War II. Young or old; we all suffer in some way when a *"piece of the societal quilt"* is torn away.

The STCC met in an eleventh-hour effort on June 20 to ask for a meeting with Bishop David Ricken of the Green Bay Catholic Diocese for a *"90-day extension on the demolition and purpose other uses for the landmark."*² The razing of the Chancery was slated for August 31. For all



Diocese of Green Bay, former Bishop's Chancery (Allouez), as it appeared earlier this year. Photo by Don Kraft.

intents and purposes, the bureaucratic wheels for razing were well in place by the time the STCC coalesced to save the structure. Demolition permits had been purchased from the Village of Allouez and services of a wrecking company contracted. STCC President, Jim Rivett, stated, *"We've reached out to the Diocese repeatedly in the past, but have been denied any extension... We have been encouraged by the public's interest in our efforts and by groups interested in renting possible space in the restored site, and are just asking the Diocese for a few more days."*³

Since no effective historic preservation ordinance was evident in the Village of Allouez, the Catholic Diocese moved ahead unabashedly. In the *Compass*, official newspaper for the Green Bay Catholic Diocese, Patricia Kasten stated that *"Diocesan officials said the decision [for razing] was based on safety code deficiencies, accessibility issues for those with disabilities, and the ongoing functionality of the building use and for security."*⁴ For a 99-year old building that the Chancery is (now was), many observers could agree that these and other issues did exist. The STCC also agreed that some of these issues existed; however, despite the architectural and structural foibles of the Chancery that needed to be addressed, the STCC felt that this historic structure was well worth saving.

The STCC and its partners, such as the Wisconsin Trust for Historic Preservation (WTHP), the Brown County Historical Society (BCHS), Historic Allouez

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YOUR LAST CHANCERY

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Society (HAS), *Voyageur* magazine, and Neighborworks of Green Bay, aimed to “1) explore and find a viable buyer for the Chancery that would allow the property and structure to return to the Allouez tax base, while preserving the integrity of a visual and historical icon in the Allouez community, and/or 2) fundraise to purchase the property itself and develop a Historic Visitor’s Center non-profit organization offering community use facilities and rental office space for small businesses.”⁵

Despite a spirited Village of Allouez Board Meeting on August 17 where 20-plus STCC members and friends spoke on behalf of the Chancery, an attentive Village Board sided, in the end, with Diocesan wishes, though no Diocesan officials were present.

As the wrecking ball swung, local Allouez resident, Tony Saladino, bemoaned, “I just think it’s terrible. If a building with this much personality is worthless, then what does it say about our worth as a people? Are we worthless, too? We’re speeding into the future, for what?”⁶ Added Holly Dudley, vice-president for HAS, “Somehow it’s going to make Allouez just one more average place.”⁷

As for the former Chancery, the 16,000-square-foot building was built in 1911 for the

purpose of housing Bishop Joseph Fox, a Green Bay native. This neoclassic structure, with Second Empire architectural roofline elements, served as a bishop’s residence until 1976, then became Diocesan office space until 2009. As Denise Dauplaise and her daughter witnessed the Chancery razing, this architect noted that the building had “three solid layers of brick on the outside



The Chancery as it was being razed in August. Photos by Denise Dauplaise.

and wood studs on the interior... it was built like any church or commercial building of that time: like a rock.”⁸

For countless other razed historic structures (like the former Penn Station and the former Green Bay Chancery), this article represents a microcosm of the five stages of grief, namely: Denial, Anger, Bargaining, Depression, and Acceptance. Another treatise will deal with these five stages but, for now, suffice it to say that these elements are metamorphosing into the Brown County Trust for Historic Preservation (BCTHP). The negative results suffered by the STCC and the greater Green Bay community at large will now be better served by the BCTHP and its partners in a quest to be proactive members of the historic preservation community.

As a society, are we “half-empty” or “half-full” with respect to historic preservation? Time will tell. Get involved as an advocate, a member, a researcher, or a friend of the Brown County Trust for Historic Preservation and its aforementioned partners and partners to come. An anonymous author once penned, “It’s not good because it’s old, it’s old because it’s good.”⁹

SOURCES:

- ¹E-mail from Denise Dauplaise to STCC members. September 3, 2010.
- ²STCC Press Release: “Citizen’s Group Continues to Lobby Catholic Diocese to Stop Historic Bishop’s House Demolition.” July 27, 2010. Page 1, par. 3.
- ³Ibid. Page 1, par. 4.
- ⁴Kasten, Patricia. *The Compass*: Official Newspaper of the Catholic Diocese of Green Bay, Wisconsin. “Safety Code, Accessibility Issues among Reasons for Change.” April 8, 2009. Page 2, par 1.
- ⁵Save the Chancery Coalition Report for the Village of Allouez (WI) Board Meeting, Tuesday, August 17, 2010, 6:30 PM. Page 3, par 3.
- ⁶Styf, John. “Old Allouez Chancery Razing Rocks Onlookers.” jstyf@greenbaypressgazette.com. September 2, 2010. Page 1, par. 4.
- ⁷Ibid. Page 1, par. 6.
- ⁸E-mail from Denise Dauplaise to STCC members. September 3, 2010.

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THE BELLIN BUILDING

2009 HISTORIC PRESERVATION AWARD WINNER*

**Presented at the BCHS annual meeting
on Sunday, Feb. 14, 2010*

by Jerry Abitz

What does one do with a building that is 95 years old? In 2006, a group headed by Steve Schneider became the owner of this eight-story building in downtown Green Bay at what was once considered its busiest corner. He had put in a bid on this building—at roughly half of the assessed value—and was surprised when the seller accepted. Financing was secured and, as Safford Building LLC, he became its landlord.

The building in question was the Bellin Building at the southwestern corner of Washington and Walnut Streets. Built in 1915, diagonally across the street from this site was the Minahan-McCormick Building (built in 1907). Both Dr. Bellin and Dr. Minahan had ties to the Casco hospital in Kewaunee County. Was their rivalry formed there? Or was it the result of Minahan controlling the operating room at St. Vincent Hospital? Surgery was where the money was to be made, and the competition for patients was fierce. This rivalry resulted in the formation of the Deaconess Hospital, later renamed Bellin Memorial Hospital in honor of its founder.



Facing Walnut Street, the Daily Buzz coffee shop occupies a prominent space on the first floor of the Bellin Building, right next to the grand staircase in the entryway. *Photo by Jerry Abitz.*



The Bellin Building, at the corner of Washington and Walnut Streets, in downtown Green Bay. *Photo by Jerry Abitz.*

The rivalry also carried over into the erection of buildings to provide office space for the medical and dental professions. Minahan built a six-story building; Bellin built a seven-story building. Minahan added two floors; Bellin added a floor and a penthouse, making it the first small skyscraper north of Milwaukee.

How does one revitalize a building when what was once a shopping area has become an entertainment district? Against the advice of his architect, Schneider, president of the building association, conceived of visually opening the ground floor to public view with massive windows, and erecting a grand staircase leading to the second floor. On the main floor, he had installed an upscale bar and a modern coffee shop (the Daily Buzz); at the top of the staircase, he built an upscale restaurant (now Black & Tan Grille) to cater to the crowds attending cultural events at the Meyer Theater across Washington Street. Parking for his rental clients and the general public, while normally a problem in a congested area such as this, was available in a convenient parking ramp where the Minahan-McCormick Building once stood.

Construction began with demolition to install the staircase and larger windows.

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BELLIN BUILDING

(Continued from page 3)

Dramatic black floor tiles were installed that set the tone for a sophisticated look when entering the building. New lavatory facilities were installed, featuring granite-clad floors and walls. The manual elevator, one of only four of this kind in the U.S., was refurbished. (Otis Elevators, with a contract to maintain them for their lifetime, is still honoring that agreement.) While not the originals, these 1947 elevators employ an operator to assist users. The exterior of the building, clad in white terra cotta tiles, was cleaned and missing tiles were replaced; new lighting was installed to showcase the building's façade at this high profile address, and a new flagpole erected on the roof.

A recent tour from the basement to the roof revealed a lot of features. Bellin's original safe is intact, and contains the rental contracts of the early occupants of suites. One of the floors still has the original configurations with frosted windows in the doors and transoms hidden behind a false ceiling. Solid wood flooring, an inch thick, previously covered by carpeting, was restored. In many of the suites, the flooring is terazzo. The view from the top is stunning with a panoramic view of the city, the river, and the bay.

A lot of history is connected to this building. It was the site of the first radio station north of Chicago, WHBY, organized by

Abbot Pennings and operated by the Norbertine Fathers. On the same floor, the forerunner of WBAY-TV broadcast its programs two hours per night from 1948-1952 when it officially went on the air



In the entryway of the Bellin Building, this grand stairway leads to Black & Tan Grille, an upscale restaurant, on its second floor. Photo by Jerry Abitz.

from what is now known as the WBAY Auditorium. At one time, it was also the home of the National Cheese Exchange, a group that set cheese prices for most of the nation.

For the above efforts and the renovation of all systems, the Brown County Historical Society at its annual meeting in February awarded the Safford Building management with its 2009 Historic Preservation Award for Building Adaptive Reuse.

**Hazelnut Gallery
Wish List**

If you have shopped in the Hazelnut Gallery, you know that many intriguing items fill a very small space. Along with a great selection of local history books and historic toys, the gallery carries donated collectibles. We are in need of quality objects for the upcoming season. Silver-plated, porcelain, and glassware items are sought by our customers. Holiday-themed items are welcome. Sales of donated items support the purchase of local history books. Donations are tax-deductible.

Thanks!

*We couldn't do it
without you!*

People involved in the Society have the tendency to work hard toward its goals because they believe in what we do. As a result, 2010 proved to be a successful year, thanks to the continuing financial generosity of Society members and sponsors. I am always amazed at the tireless efforts of the many volunteers whose time and talent support the programs and projects that are the foundation of this organization. Whether providing financial support or giving freely of time, our dedicated members are vital to all that we achieve. *So, to one and all, thank you for your commitment this year. I look forward to the year ahead.*

— *Christine Dumbaw*

EVENTS

Join us for one or all!!

“A VICTORIAN HOLIDAY TEA”

2:30-5:00p — Sat., Dec. 4



A formal tea followed by a musical program featuring “The Yankee Daughters,” and a museum tour.

Reservations required. Call 920-437-1840.
\$15/person.



“A VICTORIAN CHRISTMAS ”

Create a unique holiday memory with a Group Tour or Tea Party* in December

Group Tours (10 persons min.)

- Large groups will be divided for a more personalized tour.
- Adult chaperones admitted at no charge. (One chaperone is requested for each group of 10 students).
- Join us for hot cider and cookies following the tour, and visit the Hazelnut Gallery Gift Shop.

Tea Parties (10 persons min. to 24 max.)

- Relax and visit over a cup of steaming tea, and enjoy two courses of delicious treats.
- Enjoy a tour of Hazelwood festively decorated for Christmas.

To schedule a tour or a tea, simply call our offices (920-437-1840) weekdays between 8:30 a.m. and 4:00 p.m., or leave a message anytime and we will return your call.

Admission	Group Tour	Tea Party
Adults	\$3.00	\$15.00
Students	\$2.00	\$15.00

*Group tours and tea parties can be scheduled for day or evening times, and tailored to meet the needs of your group. Payment can be made at the time of your tour.

Celebrate the season...



Experience the holiday traditions of the late 1800s with a visit to Historic Hazelwood! Children can make an ornament, and participate in a scavenger hunt. Linger awhile to enjoy a cup of hot cider and a cookie!



Hours

New this year — a candlelight tour!
4:00p - 6:00p on Sat., Dec. 11

12:00n - 4:00p

Saturdays and Sundays, Dec. 11, 12, and 18, 19
Sunday thro’ Thursday, Dec. 26, 27, 28, 29, 30.

Admission

Adults....\$4.00	Children (ages 6-17).....\$2.50
Seniors....\$3.50	Children (5 and under).....Free
Special family rate	\$10.00

PAINTINGS UNVEILED

The conserved paintings of *Rufus B. Kellogg* (by George Healy) and *The Hospitality of St. Julian* (orig. painted by Christofano Allori) were unveiled at the Neville Public Museum on Friday, Oct. 8. Both paintings were purchased from the Brown County Library as part of The Green Bay & De Pere Antiquarian Society’s “Save our Cultural Heritage Campaign” in 2007. Conservationist Tony Rajer restored the paintings through the support of Associated Bank and in partnership with the Neville Public Museum. The *Kellogg* painting is on loan to Associated Bank and hangs in the bank’s lobby; the *St. Julian* is on display at the Neville Museum.



Rufus B. Kellogg (1837-1891)
by George F. A. Healy (1813-1894)
Paris, France, 1887



The Hospitality of St. Julian (c.1615)
by Christofano Allori (1527-1621-Italian)
Green Bay, Wisconsin, 2007

Postcards of the two recently unveiled paintings. Photos by Anton Rajer.

“Goodbye, Sally... We’ll Miss You!”

by Wendy Barszcz, BCHS President

Although I did not realize it at the time, January, 2003, turned out to be a significant month in the recent history of the Brown County Historical Society. I had assumed the role of Executive Director only two months earlier, and was finally feeling like I was getting my feet underneath me. Now, here I was, having to find someone to fill the position of volunteer coordinator and interpretive supervisor for Hazelwood. This was not an easy task because the job required someone who not only would be willing to work a flexible part-time schedule that included a lot of weekend hours, he or she would need to put in the bulk of those hours in the summer months – a time when most people want their weekends to themselves. In addition, this person had to have experience working with volunteers as well as know something about historic house museums and local history.

But, somehow, fortune smiled on the Society – and me – with the arrival of Sally Enloe. Not only did she possess the skills and background we needed, she was a French- and Indian-period re-enactor, an excellent seamstress (which turned out to be a valuable extra skill for us), and a generally warm, enthusiastic, and conscientious person. To top it all off, she was a lot of fun to be around! The nearly five years I spent working with Sally were a genuine pleasure. So, it is with some melancholy that I write this farewell message to Sally who, at year’s end, has decided to move on to other challenges and interests.



Sally Enloe (L) as she provides explanations to attendees of the 2008 Farm Technology Days. Photo courtesy of BCHS photo collection.



Here in 2010, Sally Enloe (L) in character at the annual Civil War event held on the grounds of Heritage Hill Historical State Park. Photo courtesy of Kathy Kauth.

Sally showed a knack for recognizing and bringing out the best in volunteers, providing encouragement and support, and maintaining personal contact with them. Those who helped out as docents in the museum or with special events and activities were rightly made to feel that their contribution was not only appreciated, but important to our success as an organization. I am sure that more than a few of those who have donated time and effort to the Society and Hazelwood in recent years did so, at least in part, because of their respect and affection for Sally.

Even with the variety of other interests (as well as a second part-time job) that make up Sally’s life, her sense of obligation and dedication to Hazelwood and the Society have never wavered. Though she informed us in late October that she would be leaving her position as Hazelwood’s Curator of Interpretation, it is typical of Sally that she offered to stay on through the end of the year to help the Society and Hazelwood through the busy holiday season.

On behalf of a grateful Board, staff and membership, **thank you, Sally.** You’re an example of unselfish service and dedication, and leave behind a wealth of ideas and successful projects from which the Society will benefit from for years to come.

BOOKS BY MAIL

will be back in the March issue...

Check out the BCHS website www.browncohistoricalsoc.org, stop in at the office, or call 920-448-7340 to find out more about our selection of local history books.

Remember...
books make great Christmas gifts!



CELESTINE JEFFREYS

2009 HISTORIC PRESERVATION AWARD WINNER*

**Presented at the BCHS annual meeting
on Sunday, Feb. 14, 2010*

by Christine Dunbar

The majority of Green Bay residents passing 410 Bond Street had no idea this abandoned and deteriorating home had historic significance. Beneath the dilapidated siding, stood a historic treasure — the Fort Howard Guardhouse — built in 1833.

The Guardhouse came into the spotlight in 2009, not to celebrate its venerable history but because it faced a city Raze or Repair order. It faced an uncertain future as city officials, the now out-of-state building owner, and the mortgage lender, attempted to resolve issues of repairs and back taxes. Historical groups and concerned citizens feared the imminence of the wrecking ball and were powerless to save the building.

Alderswoman Celestine Jeffreys, whose 7th District included the site of Fort Howard and the guardhouse, understood its local, regional, and national significance, and became a passionate advocate of saving the building.

Established in August of 1816, Fort Howard was part of the Government's military strategy to control the frontier, a symbol of its power and ability both to control the Fox Wisconsin waterway and make room for settlers. It continued to impact civilian development in the area and served as the



Fort Howard guardhouse as a residence at 410 Bond Street prior to being moved to Heritage Hill State Historical Park. Photo by Jim Dockendorff; courtesy of Heritage Hill Foundation.

cultural backbone of Green Bay for decades.

Decommissioned in 1853, the Fort and grounds were sold to the Chicago Northwest Railroad Company in 1868; the buildings either moved or demolished. Acquired by William Vandenberg, the guardhouse was

moved to 410 Bond Street to serve as the family residence; it remained as such through 1954.

Local historians had long believed the building to be the guardhouse, and kept a watchful eye on it. Jeffreys became involved when the City's Raze or Repair order placed the guardhouse in jeopardy. She encouraged people who cared about their community to become involved in preserving its history. She, along with other interested parties, organized a public meeting at the Neville Museum on the issue of saving the guardhouse. Initially, On Broadway Inc. expressed interest in relocating the building to Larsen Green, the site of Fort Howard. While preservationists discussed options for adaptive reuse of the building, Jeffreys coordinated with the city to ensure the building survived until a solution was found. When the Larsen site proved unfeasible, Heritage Hill State Historical Park was identified as a logical destination since two circa 1830s Fort buildings had been moved there in the 1970s, and the Park interprets the history of Fort Howard.

Jeffreys' continued tenacity assisted in securing funding to move the building and, on Dec. 23, 2009, the guardhouse was moved to Heritage Hill. Now in the capable hands of Heritage Hill staff, the guardhouse will be restored to its original federal style.

For her efforts in saving this historically significant part of our history, the Brown County Historical Society at its annual meeting in February awarded Celestine Jeffreys with its 2009 Historic Preservation Award.



Celestine Jeffreys. Green Bay Area Public Schools website photo (<http://www.greenbay.k12.wi.us/01/info/admin.html>).

**TREASURES FROM
THE BCHS COLLECTION**

by Christine Dunbar

**Hand-Painted Plates
to Exhibit
at James Watrous Gallery**

The dining room table at Historic Hazelwood sparkles with hand-painted porcelain tableware, reflecting the season and interpretation of the house. Frederika Crane, family friend of the Martin family, painted many of the pieces in this collection.

Six of Frederika Crane's hand-painted plates (ca. 1887) will be part of an exhibit titled "Handmade Meaning: The Value of Craft in Contemporary and Victorian Culture" at the James Watrous Gallery of the Wisconsin Academy of Sciences, Arts and Letters in Madison from Dec. 17, 2010, to Feb. 6, 2011. The plates

chosen for the exhibit depict early Green Bay homes and scenes.

Born in Neenah to Dr. and Mrs. Horace Crane, Frederika Crane (1854-1930) moved with her family to Green Bay when she was about 10 years old where she

soon became friends with the Beaumont and Martin sisters. In 1878, Frederika moved to New York City to attend the Art Students League, where she was considered a serious artist. Upon returning to Green Bay, she opened art studios in both Green Bay and Neenah where she taught art and china painting. A successful artist and business woman, Frederika was dedicated to her community, setting up a trust at the Kellogg Public Library to ensure continual funding to purchase fine art books for the public use.



Porcelain plate painted by Frederika Crane. Photo courtesy of Kathy Kauth.

**HOURS for
DECEMBER 2010 – MARCH 2011**
BROWN COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
BCHS offices – 8:30a-4:00p, weekdays
HAZELWOOD HISTORIC HOUSE MUSEUM
DECEMBER
12:00n-6:00p – Dec. 11
12:00n-4:00p – Dec. 12, 18, 19, 26, 27, 28, 29
JANUARY – MARCH
Off-season group tours and teas by appointment
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