

Central Illinois Landmarks Foundation



April 2014

National Register Status For The Kickapoo Building !

The Kickapoo Building at Knoxville and Main Streets in downtown Peoria has been added to the National Register of Historic Places. The building was completed in 1911 by local builder John Hartwig from the designs of architect Albert Keifer, in the Classical Revival architectural style with German Renaissance Revival influences.

Its shape denotes it as a “flat-iron” building as it occupies a triangular piece of ground.

The building is owned by the Jumer Family Estate. They successfully applied for National Register status to qualify for historic tax credits to help pay for an extensive renovation which will cost about \$1.2 million.

The second floor will be converted to six apartments, which will be a welcome addition to the downtown housing scene. Having acquired a strip of land from the First United Methodist Church, they will expand the parking lot along the former Knoxville St. to accommodate 35 cars. The apartments will be available for lease near year end 2014.

Although built expressly as a brewery-tied house for Anheuser-Busch, over the course of its

existence the building housed a number of additional commercial functions, including hotels (Knox Inn, Kickapoo Hotel), restaurants (Knox Café, Ballard Johnson Co.), a barber shop (Frank DeFavia), a jewelry store (Herman Fern), a confectioner (Baselon Bros.), cleaners (Whalen Bros., Margie’s), law en-



August Busch Emblem

forcement uniform store (LPD Uniforms), artificial limb makers (Jacob Wambsgans, Rudolph Jungst), automobile and parts dealers (Jeffery Motor Car Companies, Verkley-Curless Auto Company), and a boarding house. Among the most prominent long-term tenants was a Shell Oil Company gas station (1930-1966), at the corner of Main and Knoxville, and the architectural office of Leslie H. Kenyon (early 1960s-2005), at the corner of Knoxville and

Glendale. The building’s current name comes from the Kickapoo Hotel, operated on the second story of the building from 1931 until the 1970s.

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The Kickapoo Building—circa 1930

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Present-day ground floor tenants include Thirty-Thirty Coffee Company and Margie's Cleaners.



The Kickapoo Building—circa 1950's

The most recent occupant of the second floor was Sonny's Recording Studio; the space is now vacant.

CILF salutes the Jumer family for their commitment to this significant preservation project.

The Kickapoo Building is the 29th Peoria county listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

Historical information for this article was taken from the application for the National Register prepared by Darius Bryjka on behalf of the Jumer Family Estate. Thanks to Bob Howard of ReMax for his assistance in preparing this article.



The Kickapoo Building today

Veteran's Memorial Park To Be Rededicated To Honor General Shalikashvili

As one passes the GAR Greenhut Memorial Hall it is difficult for the eye not to notice how well the adjacent pocket park accentuates the building in purpose and solemnity.

It was on May 14th, 1994 that Bradley graduate General John M. Shalikashvili, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, returned to his adopted home town for the dedication of Veteran's Memorial Park.

In his remarks, General Shalikashvili stated, "This park is a reminder to every citizen who passes by that Peorians stand second to none in service to our great nation." The General's words still ring true today.

On Saturday, May 17th at 11:00 a.m. the park will be rededicated to honor General Shalikashvili. This happens to be the 20th anniversary of the earlier dedication and is Armed Services Day.

Participating in the festivities will be officials of Peoria Park District, several veteran's organizations, and a military band.

The General's widow, Mrs. Joan Shalikashvili, will travel from the state of Washington to participate in the ceremony honoring her late husband. Other family members will also attend.

The event will conclude with a public reception at the GAR Memorial Hall.

The site of the park was a gasoline station until 1976. Central Illinois Landmarks Foundation purchased the property after a fund drive in 1993.



It was turned over to the Peoria Park District in 1998 and they own and maintain it today. Dr. George Kottemann played a key role in the original acquisition of the park and the subsequent rededication honoring General Shalikashvili.

Peoria's National Listings

Peoria's rich history is reflected in the 26 listings on the National Register of Historic Places:

- ◆ The Central Building/Southside Bank—103 SW Adams
- ◆ Christ Church—Christ Church Rd., Norwood
- ◆ Cumberland Presbyterian Church/Peoria Musicians Hall/Busey Bank—405 N. William Kumpf Blvd.
- ◆ Judge Flanagan residence /Peoria Historical Society—942 NE Glen Oak Ave.
- ◆ Judge Jacob Gale House— 403 NE Jefferson
- ◆ Grand Army of the Republic Memorial Hall/Central Illinois Landmarks Foundation—416 Hamilton Blvd.
- ◆ Grand View Drive
- ◆ Illinois Waterway Project office—257 Grant St.
- ◆ International Harvester Building—1301 SW Washington
- ◆ Jubilee College— US150
- ◆ Kickapoo Building— 726 Main St.
- ◆ Madison Theater—502 Main St.
- ◆ Peace and Harvest statues—Main and Jefferson
- ◆ Peoria Automobile Club/Shore Acres Park— Chillicothe
- ◆ Peoria City Hall—419 Fulton St.
- ◆ Peoria Cordage Company/Tri-City Machine Products—1506 SW Washington St.
- ◆ Peoria Mineral Springs—701 W. Martin Luther King Dr.
- ◆ Peoria State Hospital—US24, Bartonville
- ◆ Peoria Waterworks Pumping Station—Lorentz Ave.
- ◆ Pere Marquette Hotel/Marriott Pere Marquette—501 Main St.
- ◆ Pettingill-Morrison House/Peoria Historical Society —1212 W. Moss Ave.
- ◆ The Pioneers sculpture—N. Magnolia St., Elmwood
- ◆ Pleasant Grove School—Pleasant Grove Rd., Eden
- ◆ John C. Proctor Recreation Center—300 S. Allen St.
- ◆ Rock Island Depot and Freight House—32 Liberty St.
- ◆ Springdale Cemetery— 3014 B. Prospect Rd.
- ◆ YWCA Building/New Hope Apartments - 301 NE Jefferson
- ◆ Washington C. Wear house—Princeville

National Historic Districts

- ◆ Northside Historic District
- ◆ West Bluff Historic District



Peace and Harvest



YWCA

A Proud Heritage



Judge Jacob Gale house



Peoria Musician's Hall



Christ Church

Thanks to Marjorie Schwebel

After many years of dedicated service to CILF, Marjorie Schwebel is stepping off the board of directors to spend more time with her family. Her contributions of time, ideas, and energy will be sorely missed.

Springdale Clean-up

The historic Springdale Cemetery will have a clean-up on Saturday, April 12, starting at 9:00 a.m. Gloves will be provided to the first 60 volunteers. Let's support our historic sites!

Fourth Annual Jazz on a Sunday Afternoon Provides Loads of Enjoyment

On Sunday afternoon, November 3rd over 90 music lovers and supporters of CILF gathered at the historic Grand Army of the Republic Memorial Hall in downtown Peoria.

In a cabaret like setting, seated around white table cloth tables with close friends, they were entertained by vocalist Stephanie Aaron accompanied by Larry Harms on saxophone, Mike Nellas on keyboard and Cory Flanigan on drums. At the conclusion of their performance an appreciative audience gave the performers a standing ovation. The fundraiser cleared \$2,140.

Walt Whitman's Lincoln

Brian "Fox" Ellis will present "Walt Whitman's Lincoln" at the G.A.R. Hall on Monday, April 14 at 7:00 p.m.



Lincoln was a fan of Whitman's "Leaves of Grass", reading excerpts to clients in his Springfield law office; the one time he took the poetry home Mary Todd threatened to burn it! Whitman's most famous poems, "Oh Captain! My Captain!" and "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd" were written as eulogies for this martyred hero. After Lincoln's assassination Whitman gave regular lectures on Lincoln to rave reviews. Fox recreates a program Whitman delivered on the Life of Lincoln woven with his Civil War poems and recollections of their misty morning encounter during the war.

Admission is \$5.00 per person or \$10.00 per family. It's a great program for children.

To Learn More...

Keep up to date on CILF and G.A.R. Hall news on Facebook (GAR-Hall) and our **new** website address:

CILFPeoria.org — or use the QR code at right



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As Time Goes By

By Susan K. Parr

Get out your timepiece and let's go back to earlier days in Peoria. If you were working downtown in the 1960's or before, early mornings were bustling. Retail stores like Bergner's and Block & Kuhl's beckoned us with a variety of goods and charming window displays. If lucky, you could find a seat at the restaurant in the back of the Bergner's store, or for lunch, you might order a hotdog, fries, and a Coke at the counter in Kresge's dime store and then ride up and down on Peoria's first escalator. Another popular restaurant was the Palace Cafeteria where tiny table lights were switched on to summon the waitress.

Another favorite early downtown spot in Peoria was Walgreen's located in the First National Bank building. In the wee hours of the morning, many of us entered Walgreen's through a corner door, where we grabbed a cup of coffee and a donut. Currently Commerce Bank, the First National Bank was chartered in 1863, and its first President was Lydia Bradley's husband, Tobias. Built in the 1920's for Peoria Life Insurance Company, it was the grandest and tallest building in downtown Peoria.

Rewind your timepiece even further back to the turn of the century.

Sitting on the corner of Main and Jefferson was Rouse's Opera House and Theater later to be called "Main Street Theater" Built in 1857 by the second doctor to settle in Peoria, Dr. Rudolph Rouse, it was the center of social activity. On the second floor was a stage and seating for 1200 patrons. The theater played host to dances, church bazaars, weddings, and political rallies while the first floor housed shops and offices.

The theater that housed the doctor's home

was considered an experiment that lasted sixty years. Will Rogers, Lincoln and Douglas, and P.T. Barnum played there. Soprano Christine Rouzard's magnificent voice attracted huge crowds to the theater. Windows were flung open when she sang so people could enjoy her magnificent voice. The crowds were so large they blocked Main Street.



Bergner's Dept. store—Photo courtesy of Peoria Historical Society Collection, Bradley University Library

Now, fast forward your timepiece from 1857 to October 16, 1920. Stroll west one block from Rouse's Opera House to 502 Main Street. There on the corner you look up to see stretched out over the sidewalk the marquee of a newly constructed Madison Theater. You pull out your wallet and purchase a ticket. It's opening night

and a Joan Crawford film "Humoresque," is playing accompanied in the pit by Monsieur Beaucaire and his Orchestra. The house is packed and not a seat is to be had.

Fast forward one last time to 2017 or thereabouts Once again you find yourself standing under the marquee of the newly restored Madison Theater.

You've just come from eating dinner in the elegant Table 19 restaurant in the Pere Marquette Hotel only a short distance across the street. Lining up at the box office, you pull out your wallet to purchase tickets. You swing open the double doors and walk over the threshold into a glittery and lush room filled with arabesques medallions and crystal chandeliers. You hurry to your seats. Musicians are ready with instruments poised. As the Maestro raises his baton, the audience sits silently waiting to hear a well known melody. The strings begin playing softly.

Dvorak's "Humoresque" Symphony No. 7 anyone?

**Central Illinois
Landmarks
Foundation**

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Note: A number of area employers (including Caterpillar) will match your contribution. Contact your employer for information.

Memberships cover a calendar year. Dues paid now cover through December 2014.

CILF IS A 501c3 CORPORATION AND ANY DONATION IS DEDUCTIBLE TO THE EXTENT ALLOWED.