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MSF News & Views

MAINTAINING MERIDIAN STREET'S MISTRESSES

By James Sabens, Chair Beautification Committee

Some don't know how it started; some blame it on a glance; some waged a long campaign. But whatever the reason very few of us would willingly give up our "mistresses". And for good reason. Whatever they are called; "dowagers", "matrons", "faded roses", "storybook castles", "bygone glories", "mansions", our Meridian Mistresses knew all the tricks to hold us in their spell.

They have survived past loves, both happy and sad; they have survived residents who have been insensitive and uncaring; they have survived years of being relegated to the real estate "back burner", but they all continue to reach out with new energy and become a very important part of each new owner's life.

All of us remember what it was like to spend that first night in our new (to us) homes; the unusual but soon familiar noises we heard; the silence with no neighbors' TV or stereo; the overwhelming doubts about what we had taken on here. What would our neighbors be like? Could we keep our cat out of Meridian Street traffic? How could we ever fill the place up with furniture? How much would the gas bill really be?

But soon, most of our doubts were allayed; the sun shining through our large windows; the feeling of being a part of this ever growing city and so convenient to everything; not having to draw maps for friends and relatives to find us; knowing we wouldn't be snowed in for weeks, the flowers which appeared out of nowhere the first spring, the feeling of helping to continue a link with the past.

So we will admit the Meridian Street area is already beautiful; so why do we have a Beautification Committee of the Meridian Street Foundation? Good question—and this is why we are asking you, the Meridian Street area residents, to share with us your ideas and areas of interest and concern.

Here are some suggestions already received:

1. Work with Historic Landmarks of Indiana to expedite posting appropriate signage identifying Meridian Street from 40th Street to Westfield Boulevard as the Meridian Historic District.

2. Develop procedures for vacant lot or empty house weed and grass control.

3. Develop advertising methods for home improvement, repair and maintenance contractors and real estate agencies that are in keeping with the appearance of the area.

4. Present a "Neighbor of the Season" award to a deserving resident of the area.

5. Provide information about our area and organization to new residents.

6. Develop a central listing of companies and individuals who have provided satisfactory service in remodeling, repairing, maintaining area properties. A "Help Hotline" so to speak.

7. Determine if tree planting in the boulevards (space between sidewalks and street) should be a neighborhood project or by individual requests through the Parks Department?

Your thoughts and ideas are important to us. Please send them to: James Sabens, 5354 N. Meridian St., Indpls., IN 46208 or call (H) 257-3741 or (O) 898-3309.

EDITOR'S NOTES

Robert L. Craft

It is a pleasure to serve as editor of the Meridian Street Foundation *NEWS & VIEWS* — our neighborhood association's quarterly newsletter — and to work closely with all residents of this area in developing an attractive, interesting and informative publication. Every effort will be made to assure that it will be representative of the high quality of appearance and maintenance of our respective homes and properties.

Our Newsletter Committee members are Robert L. Craft, Editor, 5556 N. Meridian St., (257-2655); Robert Johnstone, 5141 N. Meridian St., (253-3098); Mrs. James E. (Marnee) Lerums, 5125 N. Meridian St., (255-9162); Mrs. Jay (Carol) Weiss, 4605 N. Meridian St., (283-5194). These people have volunteered their time, effort and expertise to achieving the above goals. The participation of other residents in the MSF area in the

(See Page 3)

THE PRESIDENT'S VIEWS

John C. Klein, MD

The Meridian Street Foundation representing homeowners on Meridian street north of 40th, the west side of Pennsylvania, the east side of Illinois, south of Westfield Boulevard and the intersecting streets was formed in 1960 by interested and concerned residents to effectively combat the encroachment of negative development.

Recently, the Meridian Street Foundation was rekindled by a nucleus of homeowners cognizant of the potential for erosion of stability, property values, architectural integrity, beauty, prestige and safety of our area. The rejuvenation is well underway with committees functioning to promote preservation, aesthetic virtue, social interaction and safety. This newsletter is a new feature that will be informative in an interesting way.

The Meridian Street Foundation will serve as an important bridge in this anchor area between local neighborhood organizations and will augment rather than supplant their functions.

Our first social function, announced elsewhere in this issue, will serve to facilitate our knowing one another better and encourage a sense of unity. At that function this fall, the Beautification Committee plans to bestow the first "Neighbor of the Season" award.

We need the moral and financial support of everyone in our area to maximize the success of the Meridian Street Foundation for our mutual good. You are urged to join with your neighbors today in our very-important-to-you organization. I look forward to meeting and welcoming you "into the fold" in the near future.

COME ONE, COME ALL, HAVE A BALL, AT MSF'S PICNIC-PARTY THIS FALL

Roberta Lamberson and Virginia Handley
Co-Chairs, Social Committee

Mark your calendar's now!!! Sunday afternoon, September 27th is the date of the first social event of the fall season—a modern "old-fashioned" picnic and get-together for all residents in the Meridian Street Foundation area. There'll be food, fun and fellowship for all—families, couples, singles—everyone—of all ages.

The **PLACE** will be Stanley and Barbara Markuson's spacious lawn, (4621 N. Meridian St.,—directly across from the Governor's Residence); the **TIME** will be from 3:30 to 6:30 p.m.; and, again, the **DATE** is Sunday, September 27, 1987. Real honest-to-goodness picnic food will be catered by Dodd's Town House (Stephen and Susan Fox). The menu planned is fried chicken, cole slaw, baked beans, fried biscuits and apple butter, iced tea and lemonade—all for only $5 per adult, $2 per child. Dessert contributions will be most welcome.

Parking will be on the east side of Meridian Street or on side streets. We aren't even considering this might happen, BUT—in case of inclement weather, our picnic will be held in the Fellowship Hall of the Meridian Street Methodist Church.

We hope you won't be the least bit reluctant about coming, even if you are not well acquainted with fellow residents of the MSF area. We ASSURE you that it will be next to impossible NOT to make new friends. We promise you this will be a special day for all of Meridian Street Foundation area residents—do come and be a part of this entertaining event.

If you have any questions, call either Roberta Lamberson (283-6209) or Virginia Handley (283-2576).

Reservation for MSF Fall 1987 Neighborhood Picnic-Party
(Please return not later than September 14, 1987)

Complete and return with check, payable to MSF, to Virginia Handley, 17 W. Hampton Dr., Indianapolis, IN 46208. PLEASE PRINT.

_____
(Family Name)

_____
(His First Name)

_____
(Her First Name)

_____
(Children's Names and Ages)

_____

No. Adults @ $5: _____
No. Children @ $2: _____
= Total $ _____

Will You Furnish A Dessert?
_____Yes _____No

MERIDIAN STREET FOUNDATION

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4475 N. Meridian St. 283-6356

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5001 N. Meridian St. 257-3048

Ex-Mansion is Revived By Lively Family of 8

The Home of John C. Klein, MD, President, Meridian Street Foundation

(Written by Sally Falk—Hoosier Habitat)
(Reprinted by permission of The Indianapolis Star)

There's an old Woolworth's soda fountain where the ballroom was, and the portable toilet was removed when the bomb shelter was transformed into a personal computer room.

So was the bottled water. But the stained-glass ceiling which brightened many an Indiana governor's shower remains.

Dr. and Mrs. John C. Klein live in the old Governor's Mansion at 4343 North Meridian Street. They bought the house in 1978 from Robert Dawson—who had bought it for $62,500 at auction in 1973.

The last state function in the mansion that served seven governors was in 1971. Then, Gov. and Mrs. Edgar E. Whitcomb moved into Riley Towers, saying the house was in very bad repair.

The home, built in 1920 by the president of the Stutz Motor Car Co., never was well-suited to public functions. Instead, it seems to suit the Klein family's six school-age children - Emil is 16, followed by Heather, 14; John, 13; William, 11; Heidi, 8 and Nina, 5 - and Bear, the great dane.

"That's why we needed a big house and grounds. It afforded us more room," says John, Sr.

Go-carts now race around the driveway which used to be jammed with limousines carrying the likes of Presidents Kennedy, Johnson and Truman. The best change, though, has to be the basement.

The ballroom has been transformed into a teenage hangout, anchored by an old-fashioned soda fountain.

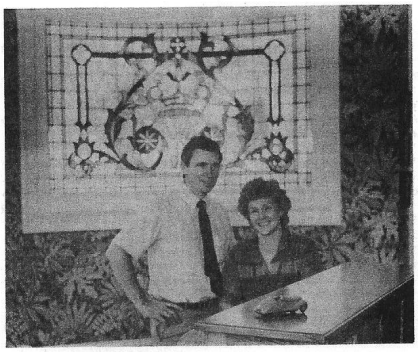
The 1947-model Bastain-Blessing fountain was rescued from a Woolworth's store in Chicago, complete down to the Coke taps and syrup-topping jugs. All the goodies are there for a soda, malted or sundae—chocolate or cherry, please?

The hand surgeon was a soda jerk in his younger days, so the fountain brings back memories. Elaine, who's in charge of keeping it stocked, shares similar sentiments about 50's fountains.

They both enjoy the homes's history.

Architect for the Kleins' home was Frank B. Hunter, who was architect for more then 300 homes, mostly along the Meridian Street corridor. He also built the Zaring Egyptian Theatre, Fountain Square Theatre—and the Broad Ripple Park swimming pool.

Hunter designed the bathrooms with Rookwood tile, made by the Rookwood Pottery Factory in Cincinnati, and designed the ornate ground glass design on the shower door. Evidently, Hunter also was responsible for the curved stained-glass skylights, believed to be Tiffany glass.



Many Indiana governors have enjoyed the solarium, where John and Elaine Klein had new stained-glass windows made to match a 1945 photo.

A swooping brick and wrought iron fence was added in 1928 by the second owner. The tips of the spears are gold leafed. The balustrade has lions' heads carved in the poses—but the lions moved from 4343 to 4750 North Meridian Street when that home became the Governor's Residence and home for then Gov. and Mrs. Otis R. Bowen.

In 1975, the home was the St. Margaret's Guild Decorators' Show House. Very little is left from that revanp—except the emerald green plush carpeting in the entry. Swards of green rise up the wide front stairs. The walls bloom hot pink—and pink and teal. Geranium print wallpaper covers panels of the walls.

The Kleins like bright colors. Counters in the new kitchen are coral pink; walls are French blue.

It's true in the solarium, too. Considered a favorite room by former governors, the solarium is wallpapered in an overgrown jungle print. Klein chose it despite objections. Three stained-glass windows curve around the solarium. The Kleins had the windows reproduced form a 1945 photograph. The floors are original marble, but a fountain was lost over the years.

Similarly, chandeliers throughout had been lost but now are found.

Lost forever, though, are the smoke nymphs which once adorned the fireplace. Kleins tells the story that one governor's wife was offended by the nymphs' bare breasts—and, in an attempt to file down the plaster sculptures, defaced them instead. Whether the story is true or not, the nymphs have been supplanted by more modest marble.

"SPECIAL FRIENDS" OF MSF

The following individuals have not only volunteered their personal time and expertise to serve as officials of the Meridian Street Foundation as well as be deeply involved in its activities and programs, but each of them has also made a substantial monetary contribution toward the financial support of this newsletter. The support of these "Special Friends" of MSF is gratefully acknowledged and appreciated.

They are: President John C. Klein, MD, Editor Robert L. Craft, Directors Virginia Handley, George H. Maley, Stanley Markuson, James Saben and Gene and Beverley Scott. Contributions ranged from $50 to $100.

The cost of printing, publishing, addresssing, mailing and postage of this newsletter will initially range between $500 and $600 per issue depending upon the contents. There will be no cost for researching, writing or editing these contents. Such services are contributed by various members of the Foundation.

All members of MSF are encouraged to join the ranks of "Special Friends" in support of their neighborhood association's newsletter. Checks should be made payable to MSF Newsletter and forwarded to John C. Klein, 4343 N. Meridian St., 46208.

PRESERVATION AND PROTECTION

By Richard Guernsey, Chair, MSF Preservation Committee

The Meridian Street Foundation has formed a Preservation Committee to act as a focus for the protection of the area's historic and environmental significance. This group will work closely with the Meridian Street Preservation Commission (MSPC).

In 1971 the Indiana Legislature created the MSPC to preserve and maintain the historic North Meridian Street Corridor. The south to north jurisdiction of the MSPC extends from 750 feet south of 40th Street to 750 north of Westfield Boulevard. Its zoning jurisdiction lies within the south-north boundaries and extends 1,000 feet to the east and west of the "Corridor" (see map).

The preservation area is divided into two categories: (1) Meridian Street Properties, which means parcels of land any portion of which lies within 100 feet east or west of the "Corridor"; and, (2) Bordering Properties, which means parcels of land lying within 1000 feet east or west of the "Corridor". Bordering Properties also include parcels of land lying within the 750 foot radius south and north, respectively, of 40th Street and Westfield Boulevard, where they intersect with Meridian Street.

The MSPC protects this historic area by reviewing and approving: (1) any proposed zoning change anywhere within the Meridian Street and Bordering Properties areas; and, (2) any structure or feature on any Meridian Street property. Normal repair and maintenance work is excluded from this otherwise mandatory review, as is any interior work, unless it involves a change in the use of the property.

All property owners who seek to effect any such changes must initiate an action before the MSPC. Approval by the Commission is necessary to obtain any zoning change or variance. A Certificate of Appropriateness is necessary for construction and demolition work.

All property owners who contemplate changes as described above should contact Indiana's State Building Commissioner in the offices of the Indiana Administrative Building Council, who serves as Secretary to the MSPC, and/or refer to Indiana Code 18-4-24 and Indiana Administrative Code 925 IAC 1-1 for specific details and legal requirements.

Additional information may also be obtained by contacting Richard Guernsey at 283-2400.

SOCIAL NOTES

By Roberta Lamberson, Co-Chair Social Committee

The Social Committee of the Meridian Street Foundation has been established for the purpose of planning activities and providing means through which residents of the MSF area can become friends as well as neighbors—not just people whose home is a particular address in our area.

Our committee welcomes ideas and suggestions of activities which will help to achieve these goals. Since our area is a large and extended one, we need the help, cooperation and contributions of everyone. Please don't hesitate to call or contact any social committee member (names and phone numbers listed below) with any ideas you may have or volunteer to help in any capacity in which you are interested.

On the form below, please check those activities or functions in which you are most interested—in addition to adding your own.

Please notify any social committee member of any special events or happenings in your immediate area such as new neighbors, new babies, weddings, illnesses, etc. Help us to let others know that we care about them. We live in a special and unique area in which many neighbors are wanting to become friends.

Social Committee members are: Virginia Handley (283-2576) and Roberta Lamberson, (283-6209), Co-Chairs; Susie Dawson, 253-1590; James and Margaret Sabens, 257-3741; Bernard Wells, 251-7484; Steven Fox, 253-2227 and Robert and Dorothy Rynard, 257-4002.

CHECK THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES IN WHICH YOU WOULD BE INTERESTED IN PARTICIPATING OR ASSISTING AND RETURN THIS FORM TO: Roberta Lamberson, 32 E. 46th St., Indianapolis, IN 46208. Thank You.

___ Christmas Open House
___ Wine/Cheese Tasting Party
___ Fall Celebration (covered dish block party)
___ Halloween Party (for small children)
___ Golf Tournament
___ Luncheon/Style Show
___ Walking For Fitness
___ Easter Egg Hunt (for small children)
___ Garage/Yard White Elephant Sale
___ Dinner Parties For Eight
___ Scavenger Hunt/ Neighborhood Party
___ Block Representative/ Welcoming Committee
___ Telephone Committee

Name_____

Address_____

Telephone_____

(Editor's Notes)

publication of this newsletter, will be most welcome. Simply contact the Editor. It will be a pleasure to have you join with us.

MSF NEWS & VIEWS will be published quarterly in August (Summer Issue), November (Fall Issue), February (Winter Issue) and May (Spring Issue). Each issue will be mailed during the first week of the month for which it is published. All copy for each issue must be received by the Editor not later than the 10th day of the month preceeding the month of publication.

Although MSF directors and committee chairs will provide articles of interest, other area residents are encouraged to send or notify us of newsworthy items. Articles about new resident arrivals, departures, births, deaths, special activities, etc. within the MSF area are welcome. Additionally, we invite your suggestions for articles about people, places personalities, pictures and events occurring throughout the realm of our neighborhood.

With your assistance and participation, we anticipate a publication which you will find interesting and informative, a publication of which you will be proud, a publication which, with other activities of the Meridian Street Foundation, will strengthen our organization in quality as well as quantity of members and programs.

YOUR SUPPORT IS NEEDED...

...if your Meridian Street Foundation is to become the strong, viable and effective neighborhood association which it can and deserves to be. If the goals of your organization are to be achieved in the most successful manner possible, for the benefit of every resident in the area, then it will take the support of every one of those residents, whether it be their financial or personal participation—or both.

Now that a core group of 70 members has been established (that's only about 12 percent of the total number of residences in the MFS area), it is time for the remaining 500-plus families to provide their support. Financial support is only ten dollars per year per residence. Personal participation is whatever amount of time or expertise which can be conveniently contributed.

In either case, now is the time to take action and actively support your neighborhood association's activities. Take that action by completing the Membership Application reprinted herein and sending it with your check for $10 to MSF Treasure Timothy Wright. Your support will be sincerely appreciated by all of your neighbors in MSF.

MERIDIAN STREET FOUNDATION MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

(Please Print or Type All Information Requested)

Applicant's Name:_____
(first) (init) (last)

Address:_____
(Street No. Name, Zip)

Telephone - Home:_____ Office:_____

Occupations and employer names of residents:_____

_____

_____

Family Member Names: Spouse_____

Children at home and ages:_____

_____

I am willing to participate in the following areas:

____ Beautification ____ Membership/Mailings

____ Preservation ____ Newsletter

____ Neighborhood Associations Liaison ____ Social

____ Crime Watch/Public Concerns

I suggest the Foundation consider the following subjects:

_____

_____

(Enclose $10 check payable to Meridian Street Foundation and send to Timothy Wright, 4950 N. Meridian St., Indpls., IN 46208)

PERSONAL IMPRESSIONS OF "MERIDIAN IN BLOOM"

By Roberta Lamberson
Drawings By Maryann Meese Fletcher and William Cotterman

In addition to the fun of serving as a hostess in one of the homes, I was one of the fortunate people who visited all eight homes included in the second annual "Meridian In Bloom" house tour held on July 11 and 12. Each home was unique and special in many different ways.

Features of the Mark Gorski home at 4011 N. Meridian St. (c. 1914), were the lovely antiques from Mary Gorski's antique shop on College Ave. and many of Mark's awards from his Olympic cycling days. Their back yard with its swimming pool and playground equipment could well be the envy of any young family.

The Einar Stefansson home at 4142 N. Meridian St. (c. 1917), was especially interesting as it is in process of being redecorated and we were able to get an idea of its "before" and "after" appearance. The stained-glass skylight in the stair hall with a "secret room" above it was the intriguing feature for most visitors.

John and Elaine Klein's home at 4343 N. Meridian St. (c. 1920), held much interest for all—both because of its historical interest as a former Governor's Mansion, and for its present colorful and tasteful decorating as well as its beautifully landscaped grounds. The large stained-glass windows in the solarium are awesome!

The present Governor's Mansion at 4650 N. Meridian St. (c. 1928), was impressive for many reasons. Mrs. Orr has devoted much thought, time and effort to collecting and displaying items of historical value and interest. An outstanding example is the collection of five silver pieces of the Presentation Silver which were issued from the Tiffany Studio for the battleship, USS Indiana in 1896. The set includes the silver punch bowl that has a dent caused by a bullet striking it on July 4, 1898, during the Spanish American War.

A quilt depicting all of the previous Governor's Mansions—including the present one—sewn by the quilting technique known as applique, made and contributed by two Hoosier ladies, presents a most impressive welcome in the Orr's entryway.

5250 N. Meridian St., the home of Mr. and Mrs. David Gilman, was especially impressive with the den panelled in three different kinds of wood and many dolls from Mrs. Gilman's collection (including a Shirley Temple doll, a Kewpie doll, and a Marilyn Monroe doll dressed in the famous red flare-buttomed slacks) were prominently displayed throughout their tastefully-decorated home.

Among the unusual features in the William Campbell home at 5455 N. Meridian St. (c. 1933), were the sunken dining room, the cherry-panelled library, and the extensive art collection of first-edition prints and contemporary art.

Attendance at this year's "Meridian In Bloom" Home and Garden Tour totaled 1900 people compared to 1300 in 1986, according to Suzanne T. Rollins, Preservation Historian of the Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana.

MSF President John Klein said that 1836 people visited his home and noted that the registration book was signed by people from all over Indiana and as far away as Chicago. He reported that approximately 600 attended on the first day with the balance on Suinday, the second day.

The home of Mr. Robert and Dr. Parvin Carter at 5437 N. Meridian St. (c. 1929), is remembered for its beautiful plaster work and the striking wrought iron gates at the entrance to the dining room and the matching wrought iron railing on the stairway.

The eighth home visited was that of Ms. Nancy Prather at 5747 N. Meridian St. (c. 1933). The decorating and furnishings of the interesting arrangement of her home are the obvious products of her creativity and imagination. There are a number of different levels in this home—one of which is the garage level to which one descends on a circular stairway.

This year's tour was the second in a series of three in the overall plan of the Meridian Street Project which began in June 1985. It consists of three parts: an architectural survey and nomination to the National Register of Historic Places for Meridian Street from 40th Street to Westfield Boulevard, a three year homes and gardens tour and ultimately, a published history of the street.

Acceptance in the National Register in September 1986 completed the first stage of the project. The third and final tour will be held in 1988. Proceeds from the three tours will be used to finance the historical publication.

Mrs. Robert D. Orr was honorary chairman, Keith O. Norwalk was General Chairman and Stanley Markuson was Treasurer of this year's tour committee which was composed of Meridian Street residents and staff members of Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana. Members of the tour's Executive Committee were: Marie Maude Chandler, Mrs. Gary Duncan, C.B. Landrigan, Charles R. Niehaus, Mrs. Robert D. Ross, Mrs. Chris Velonis and J. Reid Williamson, Jr.

In addition to the "Meridian In Bloom" committee, there exist two other entities established to enhance and protect the North Meridian Street Historic District. "The Meridian Street Foundation", founded in 1960, is dedicated to dealing with such issues as beautification, zoning and street widening. The other entity, the "Meridian Street Preservation Commission", established by Indiana Statue, is designed to maintain the architectural integrity of the district while maintaining design controls over new projects.

Residents of the Meridian Street area are urged to assist and support these organizations in their efforts to preserve the beauty and uniqueness of the North Meridian Street Historic District. A Membership Application will be found elsewhere in this issue.

Meridian Street Foundation
News & Views
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Indianapolis, IN 46208

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