MERIDIAN STREET FOUNDATION
NEWSLETTER
www.meridianstreetfoundation.org
FALL 2005

FROM THE OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

Dear Meridian Street Neighbors & Friends:

Meridian Street is one of the most important and noteworthy areas of our city, both in its past, present and into the future. When I drive along this street, I often reflect on its cultural and historical significance in the development of our city. Not only is it a main corridor, traveled by many residents and visitors as they go to and from our downtown area, but it is also an incredibly vital anchor to the center city of Indianapolis.

My connection to Meridian Street is quite personal; I grew up only a few blocks from the North Meridian Corridor near Holliday Park and I can see Meridian St. from my home, so I am quite familiar with about every inch of Meridian from 96th St. to Monument Circle. I have the fondest of memories of this neighborhood from my childhood, and I continue to be amazed at the progress this area continues to make.

The work that has been done in this neighborhood to preserve its historical integrity is truly remarkable. Without dedicated and organized neighbors, who share the City's passion for maintaining the historical significance of the homes in the area, Meridian Street could have become just another heavily-traveled artery in a busy city and its illustrious history forgotten. But homeowners along Meridian and its neighboring streets take seriously their responsibility to continue the tradition of vitality that Meridian Street neighborhoods have always brought to Indianapolis.

The key word here is neighborhood. More than just a historic corridor with some of the best architecture anywhere in the nation, it is a place where people live, children play and neighbors gather. To Mayor Peterson and me, the neighborhood is the building block of a great city. More than anything, people are attracted to communities by the quality of life in its neighborhoods.

The Peterson Administration has made improving the quality of life in neighborhoods our top priority. Since 2000, we have worked to rid neighborhoods of blight and eyesores by increasing the number of code inspectors and full-time code prosecutors, initiated a plan to end the century-old problem of dumping raw sewage into our streams and rivers and invested millions in federal funding to revitalize neighborhoods through the rehabilitation of vacant structures and new construction of quality, affordable homes.

The Meridian Street Corridor is without a doubt one of the showcases of Indianapolis, and we attempt to recreate a portion of what you have done so successfully for the past century in other neighborhoods.

So on behalf of the City of Indianapolis, I want to thank you for your commitment to the heritage you inherited when becoming a resident along Meridian Street. The things you do everyday, both small and large, help to maintain its special spirit and ensures that Meridian Street's glory days are not only found in its past, but will continue well into the future.

Sincerely,

Steve Campbell
Deputy Mayor for Public & Neighborhood Affairs

ANNUAL MEETING AND DINNER INVITATION

SOCIAL COMMITTEE

The year has flown by and it is time again for our MSF annual dinner. The event this year will be held on Wednesday, October 12 at the Riviera Club located at 5640 North Illinois. A buffet prepared by the Riviera Club will feature chicken and beef dishes. This will begin promptly at 6:30 and will carry a cost of $18.50 per person.

It will give all neighbors the opportunity to catch up on what is happening in our area. A feature will be a guest speaker from the Mayor's office. The event offers an excellent opportunity to mix and mingle with your neighbors.

RSVP by Friday October 7. Please send your checks to:

Michael Quinn
5437 North Meridian
Indianapolis In 46208
Please call with any questions
257-8171

MERIDIAN STREET FOUNDATION

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ALICE IN MERIDIAN LAND

The heat was overwhelming. The sun seemed to suck the life out of everyone and everything. Yet the day was one of the best days of this long hot summer. A group of old friends gathered at Ruth Vignati's lovely home at Olde Mill. We were there to say good- bye to Bob Pinkley, a friend to us and a friend to Meridian Street.

When I first met Bob, he was the Treasurer of the Meridian Street Foundation (MSF). Later he became President. At one point he was both President of MSF and a Commissioner on the Meridian Street Preservation Commission (MSPC). This is a man who cared deeply about his community. He was a commissioner during the most contentious era of the MSPC.

As a commissioner, he was dedicated and courageous, always trying to follow the law even if he knew a neighbor in the historic district would walk away unhappy with his vote. He believed the only way to be fair to one and all was to apply the law and the guidelines without prejudice. This may sound like a simple task. Believe me, it's not. It is not easy to tell friends and neighbors they cannot do exactly what they want to do with their historic property.

So we laughed, told war stories, ate fine food and said good-bye to Bob as he leaves to start the next chapter of his life in the little town of Barrington, New Jersey. He and his wife, Pat, are moving with their grandson to be closer to their daughter. We understand his decision, we are excited for his future, but we feel the loss of a dedicated member of our community.

Alice Berger

L to R: Shirley Berry, Jody McLane, Bob Pinkley

CLOUDS OF WITNESS

The Meridian Street Foundation neighbors have lost a longtime friend and neighbor in the recent passing of Eileen Poston Dollens. Mrs. Dollens with her late husband, Wilbur, moved into their Meridian Street home in 1959 and both were ardent supporters of the Meridian Street Foundation, opening their home to tours and meetings. After the MSF was formed, Mr Dollens served as a board member of the MSF. Eileen was a professional dancer with many famed corps de ballet, and later taught at the Jordan College, then at Butler University, retiring in 1976. She kept active in the world of dance as much as possible until her death. She is survived by son, David and his wife Susan, two grandchildren and four great-grandchildren. We will all miss the grace and contributions of this lovely couple.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Neighbors,

Warm greetings to all and a special welcome to new residents in our neighborhood!

Autumn is upon us, bringing the many new activities that begin around the school calendar. This year, please make time for MSF neighborhood participation. Mark your calendar and RSVP today for the MSF annual dinner and meeting, which will be at the Riviera Club on Wednesday, October 12, at 6:30. (More info included in this newsletter.) If you're a new resident or if you just haven't participated in awhile, this is the perfect time to meet your neighbors and find out what's going on.

The 2004-2005 MSF board and committee members have been energetic and focused. As the new 2006 board is named in October, we need more people to bring projects to completion. If you have interest in safety, beautification, historic preservation, Alice Carter Park, working on the newsletter or website, sidewalk improvement, or social events, we need YOU!

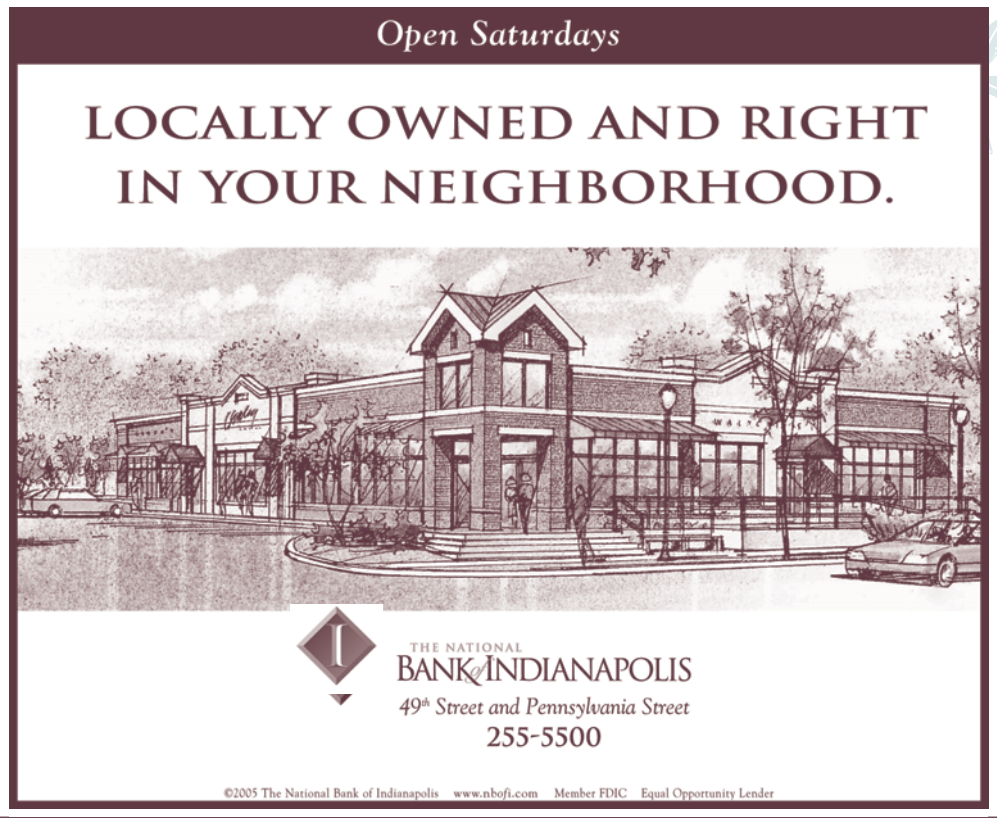
Call me at 283-5322 and let me know if you're interested. We will match you to your interest area. We would also welcome your new ideas.

To learn more about MSF neighborhood association, please browse www.meridianstreetfoundation.org.

Hope to see you October 12!

Sincerely,

Kathryn Roudebush Shorter,
President



A TRIBUTE TO THE NORTH DISTRICT INDIANAPOLIS POLICE DEPT. COMMUNITY RELATIONS OFFICERS

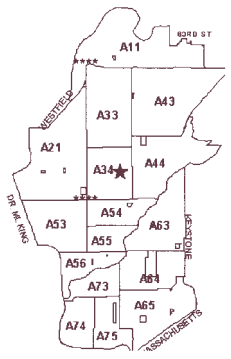
Ben Hunter

The Indianapolis Police Department (IPD) Community Relations Officer acts as a liaison between the community and the police department. They attend community meetings held by business and neighborhood associations, civic groups, youth groups and schools. They assist in the education of people and build police-community relationships .

Although our area is quite small, covering the area from 40th Street to Westfield Boulevard and Illinois to Pennsylvania Streets, sections A21, A33 and A34 (see inset ***) on a narrow strip of housing, our IPD Community Relations Officer, Ben Hunter has taken the time to commit to involvement with the MSF. Ben Hunter and Officer Debbie Fletcher have enabled our Crime Watch Zones as notated by signs on Meridian Street. We have tried to participate in our neighboring public safety groups (Meridian-Kessler and Butler Tarkington Neighbor Associations Public Safety Groups).

IPD Community Relations has kept us informed about safety in our community. Ben Hunter has attended our MSF meetings, prevented us from being overrun by trucks and traffic when planting blue flowers on Meridian Street, attended our block parties for safety. He has told us about the "guy on the bicycle" that may rob us, or the folks that take your car keys from you kitchen and drive away with your SUV the next day, or the December/Christmas bandits that meet you as you return from church late at night after you attend mass or church last year.

As Officer Ben Hunter is leaving our community for responsibilities elsewhere in IPD, the Meridian Street Foundation wishes him a good farewell and thank him for his attention to such a small section of the North District IPD. Our new officer for Community Relations will have big shoes to fill but we welcome him/her to our neighborhood association and look forward to a safe MSF community.



Editors Note. Our new representative is Officer Jason Cottey, phone 327-6167, email c4678@indygov.org

Your Business Name Could Be Here!

The MSF *News & Views* is now accepting a limited number of appropriate advertisements. For information, call 257-3741 or email jmsabens@indy.net

BIOGRAPHY

Hi. My name is Raul Burciaga and I hold the office of Secretary for the Meridian Street Foundation. I have agreed to serve as Secretary for the 2005–2006 term. I have been on the board of directors for two three-year terms and will continue as a non-voting member on the board of directors to fill the office of Secretary. My partner and I have lived on Meridian Street since 1991. Our house was built in the early 20's in the late "Prairie" style of Frank Lloyd Wright. Since living in the house we have come to admire Frank Lloyd Wright's style of architecture. You might say we have become "groupies" and have visited a number of his historic houses in other states. I have been an architecture buff for many years and this house fulfills a dream of living in an architecturally-significant house. Currently, we are in the process of renovating. (I think it is a continual process in these older homes.) In 1995 this house was chosen to be one of two Decorator Showhouses for that year. That gave us an opportunity to experience first-hand the process of renovation with some creative designers. When I'm not busy with the house and the yard, my day job is that of physician, specifically psychiatrist. I find my interest in architecture to be a fun "hobby" that is both hands-on and cerebral. Living on Meridian Street and serving on the MSF has given me the opportunity to immerse myself in the "hobby" of architecture and experience the process of historic preservation from both the personal renovation of a historic home to the community aspects of living in and protecting a historic district. I'm looking forward to serving the MSF for another year.

AROUND THE CORNER...

RICHARD PICCOLO

As construction continues eastward along 38th Street to revitalize the corridor once know as Maple Road, efforts have begun by the Maple Road Development Association to create a "Quality of Life Plan" for the corridor and the neighborhoods, both north and south along 38th Street. Such a Plan is consistent with the type of planning currently under consideration by the Indianapolis Community Development Summit. The Association will be assisted by the Indianapolis Neighborhood Resource Center, the Indianapolis Neighborhood Planning Service, Ball State Urban Planning Service, as well as the neighborhood groups both north and south along 38th Street, including The Meridian Street Foundation.

The effort starts by building community relationships – a four month schedule of relational interviews, conducted by several neighborhood focus groups, with various neighborhood leaders regarding their views and vision of the planning and future revitalization of the Maple Road corridor. From the information gathered, the Association will conduct public forums to disclose, and expand upon, the findings of the focus groups. The result of these combined efforts will be the creation of a 38th Street/Maple Road Community Revitalization and Quality of Life Plan.

It is more than likely that several of the Members of our Foundation will be contacted during the coming months for their valued input into this commercial revitalization and development process. I encourage all that may be called upon to lend their support in this continuing effort.

AROUND THE BLOCK

This fall, we welcome many new neighbors. Jeff and Lisa Whorley, former residents of Indianapolis, have moved back to the city from Las Vegas, and are enthusiastically renovating their new home on Meridian. Other new families include the Preins, the O'Neills and the McCarthys.

Christopher and Catherine Touloukian, who moved to Meridian Street last July, are happily settling in. They are finishing a kitchen renovation and preparing a nursery. Toddler Harry will have a little sister, expected in early November. Tim and Megan Caress are parents of a new baby. In April, Patsy Solinger's daughter gave birth to twins, Mitchell and Amelia, whose big sister has just started high school at Brebeuf. Patsy's beautiful home was recently pictured in Indianapolis Home magazine, featured for its elegant outdoor living spaces. In June, Marsha and Al Langdon rejoiced with the birth of their ninth grandchild, a little boy. Reece and Wayne Olander became grandparents for the first time in August, with the birth of Charlotte Olander, daughter of Wayne and Reece's son Emerson and his wife. Stacey and Kevin McCarthy celebrated the birth of Kevin II, dubbed Mac, also in August.

We extend congratulations to Austin Ritterspach who, in early summer, won the award for excellence as adjunct faculty at the University of Indianapolis. Austin, who teaches in the Department of Religion and Philosophy, was chosen out of a field of more than 250 adjunct faculty members, based on student evaluations and the recommendation of the chairman of his department.

If you have news for Around the Block, contact Helen O'Guinn at htoguinn@aol.com or Peggy Sabens at jmsabens@hotmail.com.

HISTORIC RESTORATION OF THE BREAKERS ROOF COMPLETED

(Newport, RI)—A nearly year-long restoration project aimed at preserving one of America's most famous Gilded Age mansions for years to come has been essentially completed. During 2002 The Breakers, an Italian Renaissance-style villa built for the family of Cornelius Vanderbilt II in 1895, received a new roof and other exterior repairs at a cost of two million dollars.

The Breakers, a National Historic Landmark built by Richard Morris Hunt, is the most famous of The Preservation Society of Newport County's collection of 11 historic house museums. The 70-room 19th century mansion, used as a summer cottage by one of America's wealthiest and most influential families, is open for tours daily year round and is visited annually by almost 400,000 people.

Construction began in March 2002 and included rebuilding several chimneys, replacing the entire roofing system—including more than 30,000 terra cotta tiles—and restoring or replacing rooftop skylights. In addition, the exterior limestone walls were power washed to remove decades of grime and lichen growth. Some

Continued on Page 9

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References Available

317.254.5611

John Sabens, *Owner*
info@bellavistalandscaping.com
www.bellavistalandscaping.com

BEAUTIFICATION

Hello one and all. It's been a very hot muggy summer and I for one am looking forward to fall. If any of you want to add to your "River of Flowers" please contact me at 283-2453 or sharp2577@aol.com. If you are interested in starting a "River of Flowers" program on your street let me know ASAP so we can get those bulbs ordered.

Alice Berger

PAID HOUSEHOLDS OF THE MERIDIAN STREET FOUNDATION AS OF 8/1/05

*Patrons $100;
**Business $300.

Appel, Wilbur, Jr. & Jeanne
Bailey, Dr. John & Pamela
Baxter, Kim (Sommerville Team) **
Behrmann, David & Nancy
Berger, Dave & Alice *
Berger, Walter & Susan
Bodick, Leanne
Bradshaw, John & Patricia
Breedlove, Robert & Michael Matthews
Brown, Doug & Constance
Bruins, Scott & Marilyn Bull *
Buchanan, Raymond & Rossalin
Bunting, Dan & Ruth Anne
Burciaga, Raul & Darryl Pebbles *
Burnham, John & Anna
Butterworth, Dr. and Mrs. Joseph *
Campbell, Mary Jo & W
Collier, Joseph
Cox, Phil & Jane
Dawson, Susan
Deane, Beth
DeCoudreaux, Alecia
DeCoursey, Paul & Carol
Dedinsky, Greg & Pam
Denan, Thomas & Maggie
DeWitt, David & Julie *
Dilts, Mike & Susie
Dorfman, Larry & Karen
Dunlop, Stephen & Dr. Charlene
Eckstein, Kevin & Allison
Elbrecht, Jay &Josh Salyer *
Essleman, Jack & Melanie
Farrell, Kevin *
Fitzgerald, Larry
Forsee, MaryAnn
Fugate, Michael & Valerie
Gerner, Henry & Dorothy
Gillman, Linda Sue
Glickert, Karen
Goodman, Kenneth & Carolyn
Graffis, Rich & Susan
Grein, Tom & Mary
Handley, Neil & Virginia
Harvey, Brent & Gwen
Haynes-Whorley, Jeff & Lisa *
Hazlett, Samuel & Margaret
Hickman, Vaughn & Melissa
Holt, David & Don
Hull, Avis
Jakovievich, Vlady
Johnson, James & Diane
Kimbel, Alan & Anne
Klein, Dr. John & Elaine *
Klopfer, Tibor & Shawna
Kramer, Ted
Krause, Marty & Ellen
Kroeger, Marjorie
Lamberson, Roberta
Langdon, Al & Marsha
Little, Monroe & Sheila
Lyons, Lloyd & Wendy
Madden, Ed & Ethel
Malooney, Dr. John
Martin, Anita
McCarthy, Stacey & Kevin
McComb, William & Christine
McLane, Bill & Jody
McPherson, Heather & Malcolm S
Metz, Anthony & Carol
Morgan, Rees Marinele
Morris, Jim & Tina
Needler, Timothy
Nkosi, Rome *
Oesterle, Bill & Melissa *
O'Guinn, Helen
Orentilicher, David & Judith Failer
Orr, Donald & Susan
Ossip, Greg & Joanie
Paine, Andy & Jane
Peoni, John & Susan
Piccolo, Richard & Judi *
Pinkley, Robert & Patricia
Planje, Ted
Ponader, Erick & Wendy *
Pope, Dr. Thad, Jr. & Ann Jacobs
Quinn, Michael *
Rich, Richard & Ann *
Ross, Roberta
Rossebo, Dorothy
Sabens, Dr. Jim & Peggy
Scott, Gene & Beverly
Schmidt, Michael
Seidensticker, James & Janice
Shorter, Fred & Kathy *
Smith, Tony & Maria *
Sipe, Ken & BJ *
Solinger, Patsy
Spain, James & Derek *
Sparks, Rick & Cindy *
Spaulding, Steve & Jennifer
Stack, Chris & Ann
Strawbridge, Robert & Marilyn
Stuart, Marion & Cordie *
Sweeney, Chris & Rosie *
Swinehart, Susan
Touloukian, Christopher & Catherine
Tunnell, Ella *
Tussing, Jean
Velonis, Chris & Barbara *
Vignati, Ruth & Skip
Walsh, John & Roberta
Watson, Hugh & Jane
West, Stephen & Phyllis *
Whitaker, Gary & Nancy *
Wilkins, Gene & Patty
Winston, Michael
Wolf, Christian & Elaine
Wolfe, Chad & Laine
Wolfram, Gretchen
Ziegler, David *
Zweber-Free, Edwin & Cynthia *

Thank you for your support. We regret any inadvertent omissions. Please contact Rome Nkosi, Membership Chair if any questions.

LAND USE COMMITTEE

Greetings from the Land Use Committee. As we told you in our last newsletter, all of the resources you need to file an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness are now available on the Meridian Street Foundation website www.meridianstreetfoundation.org. In addition to an application packet, you will find links to the Indiana law governing our historical community and the Meridian Street Guidelines. We strongly urge you to reveiw those guidelines befor submitting an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness.

You all should have received "North Meridian Street Historic District Homeowner's Guides" which we distributed earlier this summer. These packets include all of the laws and rules that govern exterior alteration to the homes in our neighborhood. The packets also include phone numbers of the appropriate parties for problems or concerns you may have. Please review this information. If you have any questions or comments or did not receive your packet, please e-mail Cindy Zweber-Free or Erick Pondaer.

L to R: Roberta Lamberson, Cindy Zweber-Free. 750 Homeowner's Guides were distributed in 3 hours by MSF board members and their families.

DID YOU KNOW?

We the property owners on Meridian Street are required to abide by the Meridian Street Preservation Commission (MSPC) state statute. Yes, we have a state law governing this street but before you become too concerned remember that most "upscale" communities have laws or covenants governing them. Some of the "laws" are extremely strict compared to our law. In some communities you are not allowed to leave your garage door open or have swing sets. Some even tell you what your mail box should look like and require that all windows have white coverings. Our law simply applies to historic preservation and commercial encroachment. The MSPC law is the reason your homes are so valuable and continue to look as they did back in the 1920's. Below I have listed what you are required to bring, when you apply for a Certificate of Appropriateness, before you make changes to the exterior of your home or property.

The MSPC's administrative code (925 IAC 2-4-2) requires an application for a Certificate shall be filed in triplicate with all exhibits (together with eight additional copies thereof without exhibits) with the Commission and shall:

(a) State the name of the Owners and street address of the property on which the work for which the Certificate is sought is to occur, and the reason for the work

(b) Describe in detail (1) the work to be done, (2) the change resulting from such work, if any, in architectural features of the structure upon which such work is to be done, (3) the nature and type of materials to be employed, specifying which such materials will be external and visible upon completion of the work, (4) the name of the person who prepared the plans

(c) The application shall be accompanied by (1) a current photograph of the property taken from Meridian Street, if the work will be visible from Meridian Street (2) a photograph depicting the location of the work to be done and clearly showing all features to be altered or affected, (3) a site plan indicating the accurate distance between the proposed construction and all property lines if new construction is proposed, (4) if appropriate to the type of work being proposed, accurate drawings, with dimensions, showing the property or structure before and after the work for which the certificate is sought (5) samples, pamphlets, or other information explaining the materials to be used

The Commission may, before a hearing on a petition, require:

(1) Maps, plot plans, structural drawings and specifications, landscaping plans, floor plans, elevations, cross-sectional plans, architectural renderings, diagrams, or any other technical or graphic materials. (State Statute 36-7-11.2-34)

Alice Berger, Commissioner
Meridian Street Preservation Commission

Neighbor Spotlight
Sheila P. Little

She is fascinated about DNA, forensic science and community safety. She is a research advisor at Eli Lilly and Company and an adjunct Professor in the Department of Medical and Molecular Genetics at the Indiana University Medical School. Her degrees come from Denison University (Ohio, BA) and Harvard University (M.S. and Ph.D.). Her husband, Monroe Little, is an associate Professor in the Department of History at I.U.P.U.I. and Director of the Afro-American Studies Program. They have a son, a recent graduate of Princeton and a daughter, attending an Indianapolis Charter school. Sheila has served as a member of the Indianapolis Alzheimer's Association Board and the Board of Trustees of Denison University. Sheila has a concern for community safety (Crime Watch Organizer) and is our chairman of the Public Safety Committee.

EDITOR'S NOTE

Meridian Street Foundation News & Views published three times a year is the communication arm of the Meridian Street Foundation, a 501C3 not for profit neighborhood association. We welcome comments and ideas from our neighbors. Our main thrust is to reinforce the idea that while a certain degree of discipline and commitment is necessary to live in a unique and significant neighborhood, the rewards far outweigh any disadvantages.

Peggy Sabens ph. 257-3741, fax 475-0224, email jmsabens@indy.net
John Peoni, Raul Burciaga, Phil Cox
Kathy Shorter, Vaughn Hickman
Also Rome Nkosi, email rnkosi@aol.com attn: MSF

We will gladly accept letters or comments for inclusion in upcoming issues.

CARS OF MERIDIAN STREET - Reprint from Summer 1990

FRED BARBER

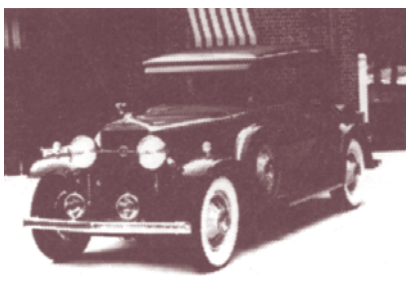
Let's take an imaginative trip back in time - to say 1913 - and place ourselves in the 4300 block of North Meridian Street.

We are standing in a dirt path along the street, and wide expanses of open land lie between scattered houses. On a warm and dry September afternoon, an occasional car raises a cloud of dust (and plenty of noise) on unpaved North Meridian. More often, it's a horse and carriage, and the street is littered with evidence that horses use it.

On the east side of the street, Mrs. Carl Walk stands in front of her house, hands-on-hips, fuming. Mrs. Walk has just purchased a new 1913 Rausgh and Lang electric automobile, and it doesn't run well on the rough unpaved street. The pavement from downtown Indianapolis ends at 38th street. Mrs. Walk will complain loudly and use her influence to bring the pavement out to 46th street, so she can drive her car.

Indianapolis' love affair with the automobile had begun. And until the depression would change things, North Meridian Street would provide residences for automobile manufacturers, and a route of travel to-and-from the city where the cars were made.

Some of the finest cars in the world were made in Indianapolis... Duesenberg, Stutz, Marmon, Cole, Lexington and others. Many of the founders and executives of the companies that manufactured these cars lived on North Meridian Street. And the residents who were not involved in the manufacturing of automobiles were still caught up in the romance of this relatively new invention. The people who lived on the street were affluent, and many drove (or rode in) large and expensive cars. Cars were often parked in driveways, in front of the handsome houses, because the owners were proud of their automobiles, and the classic lines of large cars in the 1920's and '30's added just the right touch for the ambience enjoyed by people who would head to the countryside out North Meridian on a Sunday afternoon. At many houses, the chauffeur could be seen polishing the brass or nickel or chrome of these elegant machines.



Cars of the 1930's look right at home with the houses in the Meridian Street Corridor.

The manufacturers themselves were well represented in the neighborhood. The Joseph Coles lived in the 4100 block, and then on the northeast corner at 49th Street. Harry Stutz lived on the southwest corner of 32nd and Meridian, and the president of Stutz lived in the 4300 block, in the house now owned by John and Elaine Klein.

The Fred Duesenbergs lived on Fall Creek Boulevard, and the Marmons (Walter and Howard) lived where the University Club now stands and on East 56th street, but executives of manufacturers, dealers and distributors lived on North Meridian, including the distributor for Losier and Chandler cars.

John Schaler, III, a real estate broker who now lives in Williams Creek, developed a passion for automobiles at an early age, and he remembers the elegant cars, later to become classics, that graced the driveways and carriage houses of North Meridian Street in the 1930's and 1940's. The Herffs, (north of the Tarkington House) had a chauffeur-driven Cadillac. The Coles, after their manufacturing plant closed, drove large Lincolns. Tom Joyce, who lived where the Martin Luther King building now stands, owned stately Cadillacs. A family in the 4100 block drove a Packard 902 Seadan. And Mrs. William Block, of the Block Department Store Blocks, was wheeled around town in a 1932 Cadillac V-16 limousine.

The lady who lived in a house since replaced by the Meridian Towers had purchased a new 1928 Marmon for her daughter. But the daughter died, and the new car was parked in the garage where it stayed until the 1950's.

With the depression, and then World War II and gasoline rationing, the big cars became unloved and often unwanted. They were sold at low prices, or even given away.

John Schaler fell in love with a 1930 Rolls Royce Phantom II owned by Robert McNamara of McNamara Journal Box Company in Broad Ripple. McNamara lived on a farm in Carmel, and his son was a classmate of Schaler's. Schaler first saw the red and black four door convertible Rolls when he rode a bike to the McNamara farm. He asked Mr. McNamara to promise him that he would be given an opportunity to buy the car if it was ever sold.

In 1944, when Schaler was 15, he again visited the McNamara farm and discovered, to his horror, that the Rolls had been converted to a farm wagon. The chassis, with its huge wheels, sat, forlorn, in a field. Schaler went immediately to McNamara's office and told him he had ruined "my" car. Remined of his earlier promise, McNamara told the indignant youth that he could have the car if he would reassemble it.

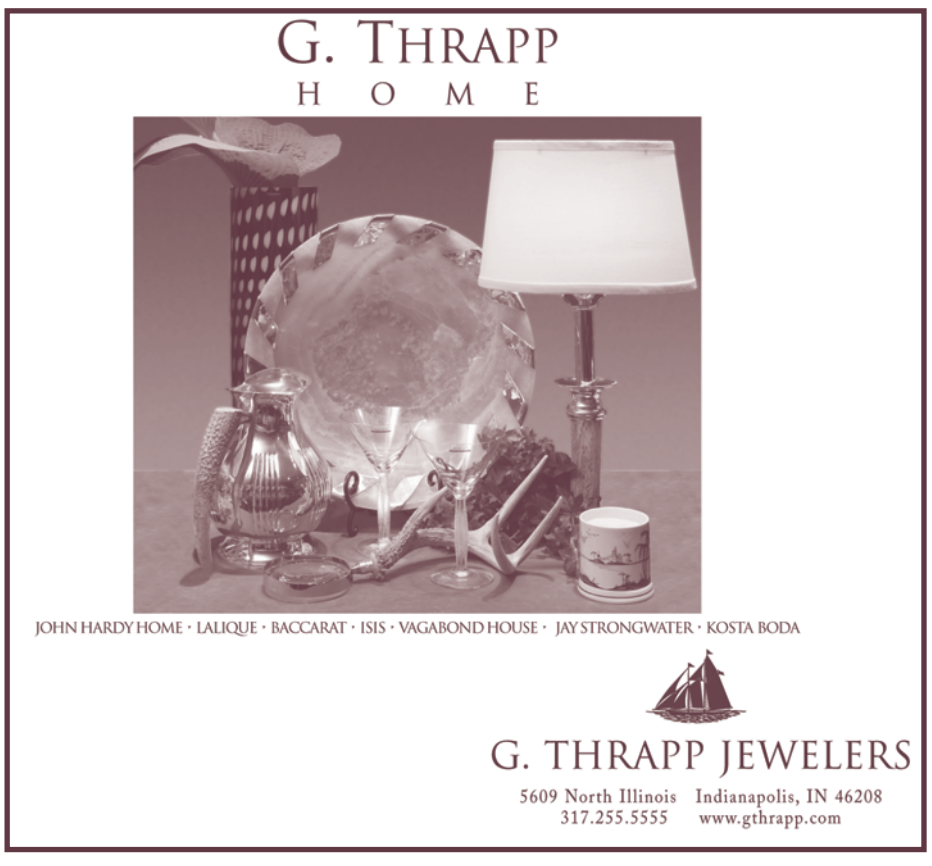
Schaler and a group of friends put the Rolls back together and drove it down Meridian Street. A plumber from the southside of Indianapolis saw them, asked them to pull over, and bought the car on the spot for $1,500.

With his newly-acquired wealth, Schaler, still too young to drive, went to Chicago and, for $1,300, purchased from a used car dealer a 1931 Rolls Royce Phantom II Huntington limousine and a 1934 Duesenberg Bowman and Schwartz town car. His parents made him return the Duesenberg, but Schaler wound up acting as an agent for the Chicago car dealer, selling rare old cars in Indianapolis. From that beginning, he became the state's first Rolls Royce distributor, and also a distributor for Mercedes and Jaguar.

The Big Classic Duesenbergs, Marmons, Stutz, Coles, Lincolns, Cadillacs, Packards and (also made in Indiana) Cords and Auburns have again acquired that status they enjoyed in the '20's and '30's; and many are now almost priceless.

A number of collectors and enthusiasts now live also onNorth Meridian Street, and on a pleasant sunny Sunday afternoon, you can see John Schaler or John Klein or Joe Follardor or Ike Brigham driving by those grand and graceful houses in cars just as grand and graceful.

They look just right. Like they belong there.



DID YOU KNOW?

Back in the 1950's and 1960's, no one wanted the big old houses on Meridian Street. The houses in Butler Tarkington and Meridian Kessler were still selling but not the "oversized" mansions on Meridian. By the middle of the 1960's, it looked like the N. Meridian Street corridor would become commercial like Meridian Street south of 38th Street. When Tarkington Tower went up at 40th and Meridian, the Meridian Street Foundation and the residents of the area knew they must take action.

Property owners from 40th Street to the canal appealed to the state to create legislation to form the Meridian Street Preservation Commission. The protective legislation, passed in 1971, requires property owners to get "Certificates of Appropriateness" from the Commission for exterior changes to their properties. The MSPC can stop attempts to change the single-family residential character of the street or alter the houses and landscaping in ways unsympathetic to their historical appearance.

The residents gained further protection when the North Meridian Street Historic District was listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The "Main Stem" (copyright 1992 by Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana) says of Meridian Street: "North Meridian Street's future as an Indianapolis showcase appears secure. The city's most publicly observed neighborhood, Meridian Street presents an attractive image of Indianapolis to passerby and residents, a pastoral garden where country and city, past and present live together harmoniously."

The very first chapter of the Meridian Street Preservation Statute, created in 1971 by the Meridian Street Foundation and this community, states: 36-7.11.2-1 Section 1.

(a) The purpose of this chapter is to preserve:
(1) from deterioration;
(2) from improperly conceived or implemented change; and
(3) for the continued health, safety, enjoyment, and general welfare of the citizens of Indiana; a historic, scenic, esthetically pleasing, and unique part of a street lying within Indianapolis constituting the backbone of a unique residential area.

(b) The general assembly intends, by passage of this chapter, to:
(1) encourage private efforts to maintain and preserve that part of the street and other similar streets and areas in Indiana;
(2) promote orderly and proper land usage; and
(3) preserve significant tourist attractions of historical and economic value in Indiana; by limiting and restricting unhealthful, unsafe, unaesthetic, or other use of unique areas that would be inconsistent with their character as tourist attractions and the general welfare of the public.

Alice Berger, Commissioner, MSPC

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NEW OFFICER

Hello to all resisdents and citizens of North District. I would like to introduce myself to you. I am Officer Jason Cottey, your new North District Community Relations Liaison. As many of you have heard Officer Ben Hunter is moving on to another position within the department. He has done an excellent job for those of us here on North District. He will be missed greatly. I have been on the Indianapolis Police Department for five years and have served as a street officer here on North District all those years. I am very familiar with all the neighborhoods on the North District and have already had a chance to meet many of you. I look forward to serving your needs. My email is c4678@indygov.org and my office phone number is 327-6167. Thank you!

Officer Jason Cottey
North District IPD
Office of Community Relations
(317) 327-6167

Historic Restoration Of The Breakers Roof Completed – Continued

(Newport, RI)—A nearly year-long restoration project aimed at preserving one of America's most famous Gilded Age mansions for years to come has been essentially completed. During 2002 The Breakers, an Italian Renaissance-style villa built for the family of Cornelius Vanderbilt II in 1895, received a new roof and other exterior repairs at a cost of two million dollars.

The Breakers, a National Historic Landmark built by Richard Morris Hunt, is the most famous of The Preservation Society of Newport County's collection of 11 historic house museums. The 70-room 19th century mansion, used as a summer cottage by one of America's wealthiest and most influential families, is open for tours daily year round and is visited annually by almost 400,000 people.

Construction began in March 2002 and included rebuilding several chimneys, replacing the entire roofing system—including more than 30,000 terra cotta tiles—and restoring or replacing rooftop skylights. In addition, the exterior limestone walls were power washed to remove decades of grime and lichen growth. Some minor finish work, including painting of window and door trim and repointing of some exterior cracks, remains to be completed as weather permits.

The Breakers remained open to visitors throughout the restoration project. "We are very grateful for the patience of the hundreds of thousands of people who came through The Breakers during 2002," said Preservation Society CEO Trudy Coxe. "While the construction did not affect tours of the house, some exterior access was limited for safety reasons, but the vast majority of our guests understood and appreciated the value of the restoration work that was being done."

Partial funding for the project was provided by the Loebs Family Foundation, Save America's Treasures, the Champlin Foundations and the Aletta Morris McBean Charitable Trust. In addition, more than 450 individuals paid $20 each to sign a new roof tile that was then installed on the building.

Significant restoration work is still needed on the east terrace of The Breakers; that project will be scheduled at a later date, as funding permits.

The Preservation Society of Newport County, Rhode Island is a non-profit educational organization dedicated to preserving and interpreting the area's historic architecture, landscapes and decorative arts. Its 11 historic properties—five of them National Historic Landmarks—span more than 250 years of American architectural and social development

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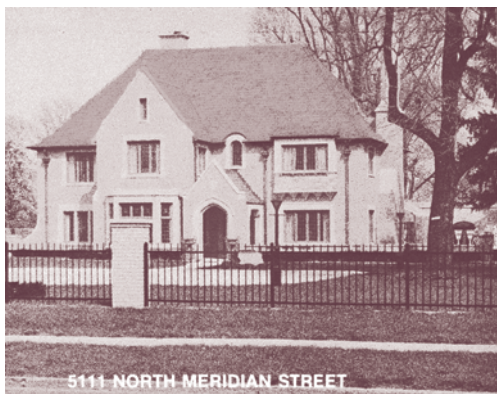
RESTORATIION UNDER WAY

By Helen T. O'Guinn



When the "For Sale" signs went up at 5111 and 5115 North Meridian Street, news quickly spread around the neighborhood that both homes needed substantial work to bring them up to the standard set on most of the rest of the street. Neighbors who walked down to the homes and walked around while they were for sale or went to the open houses reported that "serious disrepair" might be an understatement.

Fortunately, both homes have been purchased by individuals who are eager to restore these lovely homes to their showplace style.

The home at 5111 North Meridian Street was designed in 1930 by noted architect Henry Simons for the Berkley Duck family. During the 50s and 60s the Frederic Ayres, Jr., family occupied the home. In 1974, St. Margaret's Guild chose the home to be its Decorators' Show House.

Starting this fall, a team under the direction of Jim Lang and builder Tom Hession will begin a revival that will maintain the exterior architectural integrity and restore the interior spaces as well. Some rooms, such as the guest powder room and the foyer, will be revitalized; others, such as the kitchen, will be completely redone, using modern amenities. Upstairs, bedroom suites will be updated and will have modern bath and dressing areas. The attic, which was unfinished, will be turned into a media area.

The house also has a three-car attached garage and a six-car detached garage. Landscaping is planned for the grounds, all to take shape over the next several months.

(Editor's Note. Thanks to Jim Lang for supplying information on 5111. Perhaps when the home is stabilized, we may coax the owners to give an informal tour. If you are interested, send your email addresses and/or your phone #'s to 257-3741 or jmsabens@indy.net. In the next issue of the News & Views, we plan to have updates on renovations at 5115 North Meridian Street and the major landscaping at 5365 North Meridian Street. Stay tuned!

REAL ESTATE ROUNDUP

BY G.B. LANDRIGAN, REALTOR

BOARD OF REALTOR'S MSF STATISTICS

figures from Metropolitan Indianapolis Board of Realtors

For the past two years, Circle City Hoosiers have heard shrieks and panic expressed by much of the national media when the subject of real estate is discussed. In much of the country, the public has been on a buying binge of property. We've all heard the tale of New York condominiums doubling in price in a matter of months. San Francisco bidding wars. Massed groups buying a "little place in the Hamptons."

And many of us here have brooded, "Are none of these buyers in Indiana?"

It's true that while most of the country is in a massive bidding war, those of us in Indianapolis are seeing our homes appreciating at a rather modest rate of 2 - 2.5%. It is no secret that there is a much larger inventory of available properties than is usual and that homes are generally staying on the market for longer periods of time. What are the reasons for this and what of the future?

It should first be made clear that not all homes are facing this heretofore unknown problem. North Side homes priced under $200,000 are still selling relatively well. Clearly first-time homebuyers are still out there taking advantage of what are still among the lowest interest rates in decades.

As we move above $250,000, however, we see a greater disparity between the numbers of homes available and those that are selling as quickly as before. My firm put together a luncheon recently where 34 of the North Side's top agents gathered to discuss the situation. While many reasons were considered (taxes, new construction, and others), the predominant problem was that sellers are often expecting a very high sales price. While it is true that we experienced a brief period a few years ago when we could expect a relatively high appreciation rate, that period has largely passed. We need to price our homes very attractively at the beginning of the listing rather than pricing it higher and reducing it later on. Many of us have seen a home sell for far less than it could have had it been priced correctly at the outset. Buyers in Indianapolis tend to be more polite than those in many other cities. Rather than offering a low price that might "offend" the seller, Indianapolis buyers tend to wait until an asking price is offered more in their buying range before making an offer. In any event, this is certainly a wonderful window of opportunity for buyers.

A detailed report is always available under "real estate market reports" at landrigan.com

NORTH MERIDIAN STREET
Homes Currently For Sale: 12
Average List Price: $905,617
Homes Currently Pending: 1
Homes Closed since 1/2005: 0

NORTH PENNSYLVANIA STREET
Homes Currently For Sale: 10
Average List Price: $543,160
Homes Currently Pending: 4
Homes Closed since 1/2005: 3
Average Sales Price: $313,466

NORTH ILLINOIS STREET
Homes Currently For Sale: 6
Average List Price: $275,550
Homes Currently Pending: 1
Homes Closed since 1/2005: 3
Average Sales Price: $274,333

SIDE STREETS
Homes Currently For Sale: 6
Average List Price: $417,933
Homes Currently Pending: 0
Homes Closed since 1/2005: 0

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OUR MISSION

MERIDIAN STREET FOUNDATION

The Meridian Street Foundation is a charitable (501C3) foundation originally organized in 1960. The Foundation's chief purposes are the maintenance and improvement of existing health, safety and ecological standards, and the preservation of the architectural, historic and aesthetic significance of residential North Meridian Street and the neighborhood in which it lies.

Please Note: We live in the North Meridian Street Historic District, governed by the Meridian Street Preservation Act of 1971, administered by the Meridian Street Preservation Commission. Before undertaking any changes in structure or usage of your property, please check with either the MSPC or the Land Use Committee of the Meridian Street Foundation.