MERIDIAN STREET FOUNDATION
NEWSLETTER
meridianstreetfoundation.net "Our Dreams Are Getting Better All The Time" FALL '08

THEN/NOW PRESENTATION

Explore the unexpected turns that Indianapolis has taken since the Circle City began to flourish in the mid-1800s. The changes – some glorious, some disappointing and some startling – are reflected in **Indianapolis Then and Now**, a photo-oriented look at the city put together by author Nelson Price, photo researcher Joan Hostetler, and photographer Garry Chilluffo.

Accompanied by a Power Point presentation of dozens of vintage photos that depict sites around the city as they looked in the 1800s and 1900s – contrasted with color images of the sites as they look today – Nelson, Joan and Garry will present this program at 6:30 pm on Tuesday, November 11, 2008

Their book features images of sites ranging from the N. Meridian Street Mansions (Then/Now photos of the Booth Tarkington home are included), the old Riverside Amusement Park to the long-gone, much-missed English Hotel and Opera House and the legendary Tee Pee Restaurant. Other sites featured in Indianapolis Then and Now include long-forgotten structures on Monument Circle (in the 1800s, there was a physician's home and office – Doc Coe's House – on the current site of the Columbia Club), the Madam Walker Theatre, and sites in Broad Ripple, Beech Grove, Fort Harrison and the Indianapolis Motor Speedway. Massachusetts Avenue, the Fountain Square Theatre, Butler University and the oldest known photo taken of the Indianapolis cityscape also are featured.

Nelson, Joan and Garry worked for London-based editors who have produced "Then and Now" books about Rome, Boston, Chicago and other major North American and European cities. Their Indianapolis book, published in 2004, already is in its fourth printing, and has set some sales records for the series at book signings.

A former feature writer and columnist for The Indianapolis Star, Nelson is the author of Indiana Legends and other books about famous Hoosiers; he also is a radio personality and hosts "Hoosier History Live!" on WICR-FM (88.7), a call-in talk show about the state's history. Joan is the owner of Heritage Photo Services, an Indianapolis company specializing in photography preservation, archive management and photo research. Garry, an Indianapolis-based commercial photographer, is noted for his architectural photography and has a strong interest in historic preservation.

A book signing will follow their presentation.

UPCOMING SOCIAL EVENTS WITH MERIDIAN STREET FOUNDATION

Bring your family and friends to the Meridian Street Foundation fall festival at the Governor's residence on Saturday, October 25th. Enjoy cider and a warm meal with family and friends while we watch the children in their costumes bobbing for apples.

Please attend our annual meeting on November 11th at Woodstock Club. We will be having our board meeting and program which are open to the public at 6:30 p.m. There will then be hors d'oeuvres and cocktails at 7:30 p.m.

Invitations will be coming in the mail for the fall festival and hors d'oeuvres. We hope to see you there!

Meredith Mitchell and Ryan Fisher
Social Committee Co-Chairs

MERIDIAN STREET FOUNDATION

5354 N. Meridian Street Indianapolis, Indiana 46208

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PRESIDENT'S LETTER

By John Peoni

As you receive your third and final newsletter for 2008, it will be approaching Fall and soon, the year's end. I can't help but reflect on my experience as President of the Meridian Street Foundation.

Perhaps the most heartwarming memory I have is the willingness of each of our board members to serve and represent their neighbors for the common good of our community. Central to our mission is protecting the original integrity of the houses which lie in the district; moreover, historic preservation. While this may seem arbitrary and unimportant at times, it really isn't at all. Back in the early 1970's, the state of Indiana had the good sense to create the Meridian Street Preservation Commission, and later enacted numerous statutes by which the commission governs any changes proposed by owners. Imagine for a moment how the street might appear today, if not for the fortitude of so many thoughtful groups and individuals. The importance of our street and adjoining neighborhoods extends well beyond bricks and mortar. We live in a unique residential area. Suburban neighborhoods have attempted to replicate it by creating similar housing stock, but seemingly end up with only a contrived version of an historic treasure.

Meridian Street is an important asset to our city and our state. It is the boundary that divides the city from east to west. It is a thoroughfare that welcomes visitors to the Children's Museum and to the heart of our city – downtown Indianapolis. It is the official residence of our governor and has been home to so many prominent citizens.

These have been times of uncertainty, a strained economy, stagnant and declining property values, and increasing property taxes, all potentially creating greater fragility. I am encouraged when a listed property is sold and when owners substantially invest in restoring their homes. This is a definite sign of confidence, and a commitment that powerfully strengthens our neighborhood and our city. Moreover, it is a commitment that insures the preservation of an irreplaceable era of housing.

The Meridian Street Foundation has fundamentally been a catalyst in the ongoing stabilization of the neighborhood, directly or indirectly helping the 700+ households in the district. It has provided an important cohesiveness which is necessary to all vital neighborhoods.

When you first moved into your home you may have received a welcoming telephone call from Alice Berger, our membership chair. You might have been approached by Elaine Klein, the chair of our nominating committee, asking you to consider being a board member. Or perhaps you were assisted by Nancy Whitaker, the chair of our land use committee. You may have been personally invited to attend one or another of our events by either Meredith Mitchell or Ryan Fisher, co-chairs of our social committee. Hopefully you have enjoyed receiving the newsletter which is edited by Peggy Sabens. These are but a few of our dedicated board members, all busy with family, jobs, old houses, …. working tirelessly, trying to improve the quality of life in our neighborhood.

Admittedly, I have not been a remarkable President. My term has not been epochal in any way, merely status quo. I've undertaken a role filled by so many before me, all of whom have helped make the Meridian Street Foundation what it is today. I have profound respect for all of them.

I will be remiss if I don't mention our other officers: Stacey McCarthy, Vice-president; Raul Burciaga, Secretary; and Lisa Haynes Whorley, Treasurer. I am very grateful for their dedication.

Please consider being involved in the Foundation. If you are not a member, please join today. It is not expensive to join and we promise to put your dues to good use. It will benefit you in many positive ways, hopefully improving the health, safety, enjoyment, and general welfare of all of our neighbors. I encourage you to visit our web site: HTTP://www.meridianstreetfoundation.net to learn more about the Meridian Street Foundation, plan to attend both our Fall festival at the Governor's residence in October and our annual meeting at the Woodstock Club in November. This year our annual meeting will feature Nelson Price, author of Indianapolis Then and Now, published in 2004.

A special thanks to Alice Berger. She, along with husband David, have been long time residents at 49th and Meridian. They will soon be moving to another home, taking them out of our neighborhood. Alice has bridged both the Meridian Street Foundation and the Meridian Street Preservation Commission – serving on both boards. She has given countless hours and immeasurable energy imbued with great tenacity. Alice has been the consummate good neighbor – we will miss her.

It is always nice to see you in the neighborhood!

Peace, John Peoni

SUITING UP FOR SCHOOL

For the first time ever the Indianapolis Colts, the Indiana Pacers and the ADVANTAGE Health SkyConcert Foundation are joining forces to make a difference for local IPS students across the city, by raising thousands of dollars with the Suiting Up For School initiative. All money raised will put school uniforms on the backs of IPS students, supplies in their backpacks, and help keep them fed when they are not in school. The entirety of funds collected will be distributed to Shepherd Community Center, Gleaner's Food Bank, and the United Way's Backpack Attack program. Be a part of history by joining the Indianapolis Colts, the Indiana Pacers and the Advantage Health Skyconcert and make a donation to help improve the life of a local IPS student!

Donation Levels

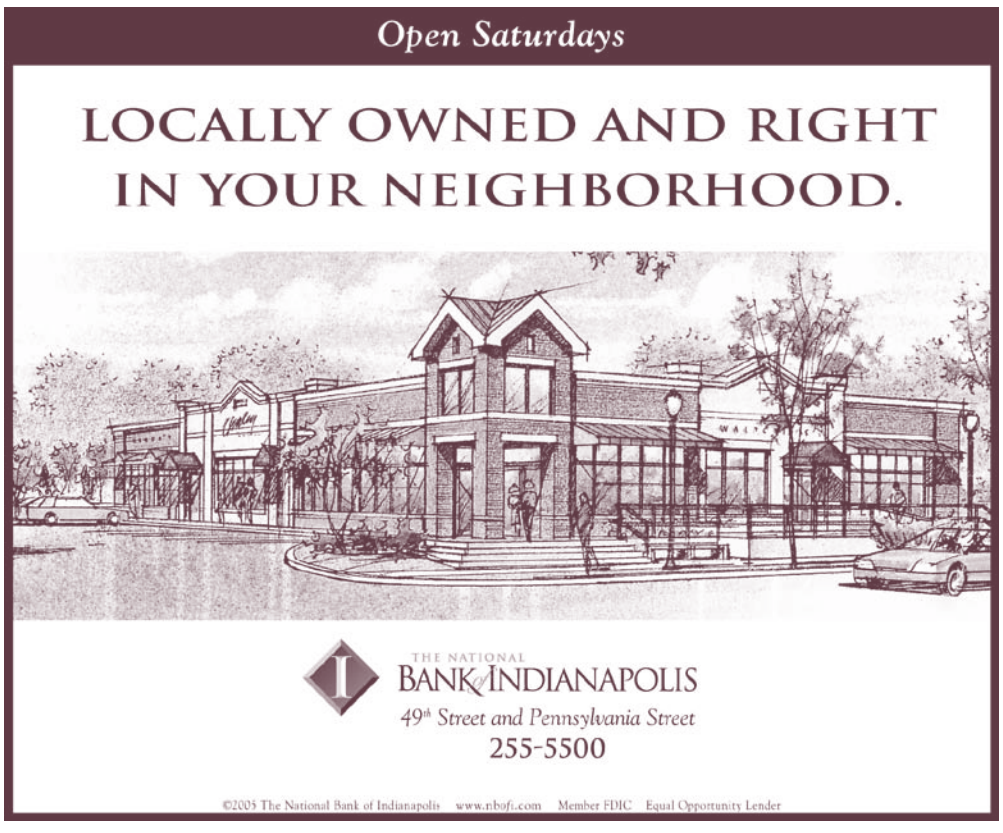
$57 - Your donation will provide for an IPS student a complete uniform, a backpack full of school supplies and a weekend's worth of meals. In thanks for your donation, you will receive a commemorative campaign t-shirt and a personal letter from Pacers, Colts and SkyConcert executives!

$32 - Your donation will provide for an IPS student a complete uniform and a weekend's worth of meals. In thanks for your donation, you will receive a commemorative campaign magnet and a personal letter from Pacers, Colts and SkyConcert executives!

$17 - Your donation will provide an entire weekend's worth of meals for an IPS student. In thanks for your donation, you will receive a personal letter from Pacers, Colts and SkyConcert executives!

The initiative also includes an online auction of autographed merchandise from the Colts and Pacers.

Emmis Community Fund
attn: Amanda Atkinson
40 Monument Cir, #600
Indianapolis, IN 46204
www.suitingupforschool.org



HARMONI UPDATE

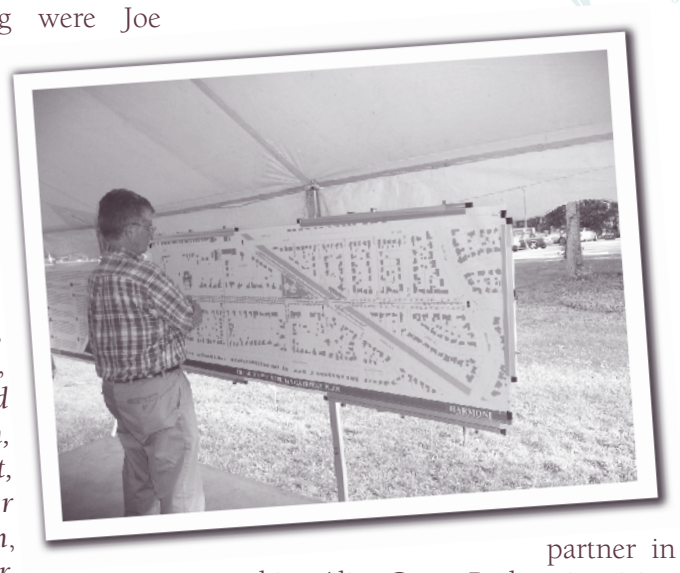
By Kathy Shorter

The HARMONI team is continuing to work very hard on a number of projects that are intended to improve connectivity, infrastructure, walkability, and economic vitality in the Midtown area. Highlights of recent months include the following:

Outstanding efforts by many MSF area residents to help perform traffic study counts under the direction of the Storrow Kinsella team. What a great neighborhood spirit we have! Special thanks to Elaine Klein, Beth Deane, Ann Rich who helped recruit, and about 20 others who spent hours tallying cars and watching traffic patterns. This was so important in helping the traffic engineers determine options for slowing traffic.

Wednesday, June 18 was HARMONI's "Big Tent" meeting, held at Alice Carter Park on a beautiful summer evening. Over 175 neighbors gathered to hear the preliminary recommendations to calm traffic on Meridian Street, improve walking and biking connectivity to the canal path, and to help eliminate "the great divide" of our neighborhoods. This meeting was one of a series of meetings (earlier ones were held at Meridian Methodist Church in May) where attendees were offered response sheets to give feedback and suggestions so that traffic calming can be done in the most satisfactory way. (Thanks to Cindy Zweber-Free and many MSF volunteers for making this a huge success, one with very positive media coverage as well, and lots of useful input by residents.)

Speaking that evening were Joe Wynns, *Director of Indy Parks,* David Sherman, *Director of the Department of Public Works*, David Wu, *Policy Director, Office of the Mayor*, and Meg Storrow, *Principal, Storrow Kinsella Associates*. In addition, Sharon Butsch Freeland, *Executive Director, Broad Ripple Village Association,* Carl Pebworth, *President, Meridian-Kessler Neighborhood Association*, John Barth, *President, Butler-Tarkington Neighborhood Association*, and John Peoni, *President, Meridian Street Foundation* all spoke in support of the initiative and the connectivity and multimodal objectives of Phase I. Kathy Shorter, HARMONI President, spoke about the general goals of HARMONI and Cindy Zweber-Free, HARMONI Vice President, read the following statement from Brian Payne, President of the Central Indiana Community Foundation:



"Central Indiana Community Foundation is thrilled to partner with HARMONI as part of our Inspiring Places Initiative. We believe that the collaboration of the Meridian-Kessler, Broad Ripple, Meridian Street and Butler-Tarkington neighborhoods is by itself inspiring and that the health and vibrancy of these neighborhoods is incredibly important to the future of Indianapolis as a whole. And when you add the great leadership that exists in HARMONI and the individual neighborhood associations, you have an ideal partner.

We at CICF believe that connectivity is the theme for the 21st Century. For Meridian-Kessler and Butler-Tarkington to once again live up to their quality of life potential, we have to improve the connectivity across Meridian Street. That means we must slow down automobile traffic and rebalance toward pedestrians and bicyclists over automobiles. We must rebalance toward people over machines. And for this park to actually inspire families and couples to use it, we must first create a safe way for them to get here. We're confident that it can be done if the neighborhood residents and city leaders want it to happen. And if they do, we will be an enthusiastic partner in making Alice Carter Park an inspiring place and neighborhood destination."

Regarding HARMONI, Phase I:

A number of follow up meetings have been held at the request of neighbors and nearby neighborhood groups. Hopefully, individual concerns are being addressed. Please contact czwebfree@aol.com or kathyshorter@gmail.com if you would like to discuss concerns or clarify anything. Phase I is still in the design stage.

Other HARMONI news:

Have you seen the new Midtown Indy Guide, published by HARMONI? It is available at G. Thrapp, at Patachou, and at many other Midtown locations---it is also being distributed in downtown hotels and by realtors. The Guide is intended to promote the Midtown District and the area's independent businesses and cultural attractions.

HARMONI is participating in and helping to facilitate Envision Broad Ripple, a planning process that is helping to create a revitalized Broad Ripple. Stay tuned!

HARMONI fundraising efforts continue. Many, many thanks to those of you who have made generous contributions to help HARMONI move forward.

Stay in touch by checking www.indyharmoni.org

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

AROUND THE BLOCK

By Helen O'Guinn

The housing market may be stagnant, but there's a flurry of comings and goings in our neighborhood. This issue, we welcome many new neighbors and also give the nod to those moving from one part of the neighborhood to another.

Chris Dixon and Kim Albee have moved here from Washington State so Kim could take a job with Hill-Rom in Batesville; Chris has kept his job with Boeing and is actually closer to his customers, most of whom are in Europe. Robert and Mary Ann Elia moved here from Chicago so Mary Ann could work for Eli Lilly. Bob, an author, runs Mulebox Books; check out the website (www.mulebox.com) to read more. Bob and Victoria Tipmore and their two little girls–Isabel, 18 months, and Sophia, 3 ½–are also new to Meridian Street. Bob owns a Budget Blinds franchise and Victoria works with him. Tom and Christi Malasto have moved/relocated within the neighborhood. Tom is CEO of the Indiana Heart Hospital, while Christi stays home with their three children: Mia, 7; Camille, 4; and Samuel, 2. Helen O'Guinn and her son Robby have returned to the neighborhood after more than a year away.

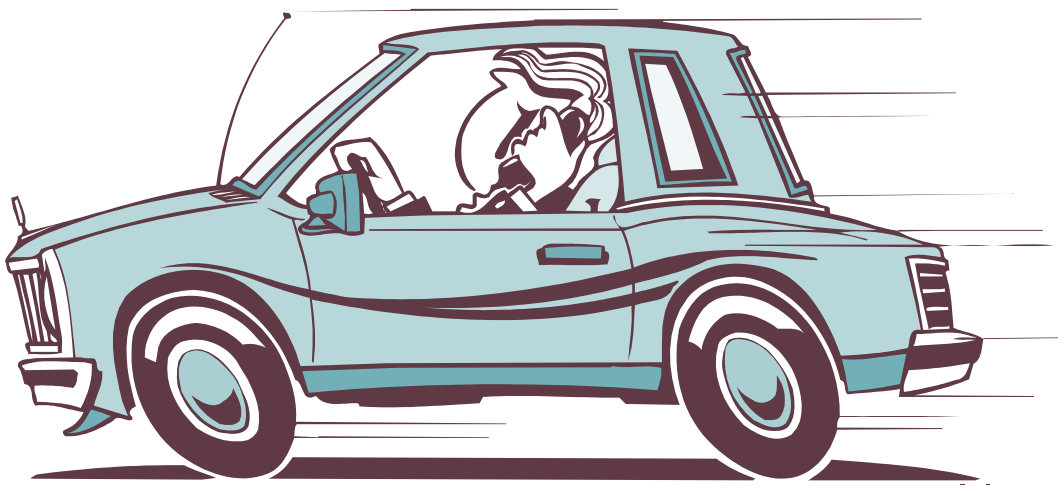
With great sadness, we note the passing of Alan T. Nolan, a fine former neighbor and a renowned Civil War historian and author. Alan and his wife, Jane, who served on the Meridian Street Foundation Board lived in the neighborhood for many years.

SECOND-GENERATION TRAFFIC CALMING--WHAT IS THAT?

By Kathy Shorter

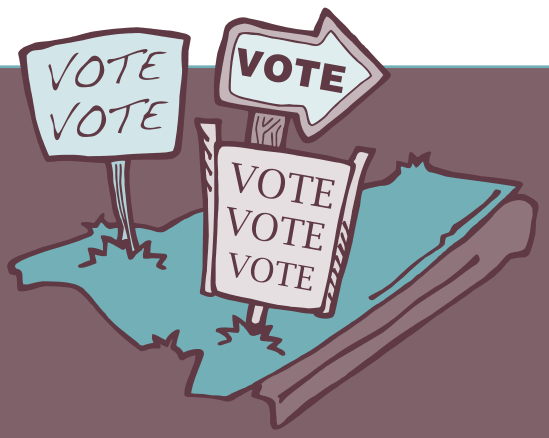
The goal of traditional traffic calming is to create more livable neighborhoods by slowing traffic. However, traditional traffic calming concentrates almost exclusively on slowing traffic through engineering interventions such as stoplights, radar, etc. Second generation traffic calming uses a much wider range of interventions, focusing on an interplay of mental, psychological, social, cultural, economic, physical and political interventions. It suggests that people in neighborhoods must stop enabling speeders!

Over the years, many of us have tried unsuccessfully to address the speed of traffic in our neighborhood. For the first time, through Phase I of HARMONI, we are working closely with the City, with an urban design firm, and with traffic engineers who are making recommendations to try to successfully change speed patterns in our area--mostly using the traditional methods. However, the City traffic engineers have previously stated that people will drive as fast as they are comfortable driving, no matter what the speed limit or enforcement… and to some extent, this seems to have been proven true in the past.



Regardless of the enforcement situation, it has become evident that traffic calming requires many approaches, all working together. If you are interested in the subject of slowing traffic on Meridian and other neighboring areas, please take time to look at the following article on the web:

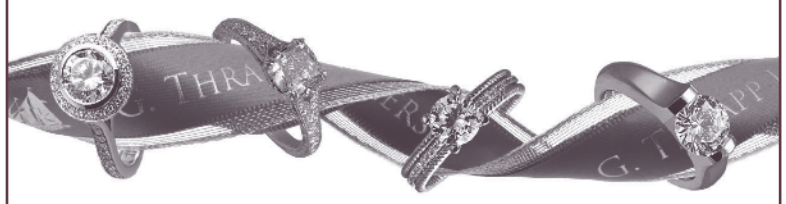
http://www.lesstraffic.com/Articles/Traffic/SGTC.htm



Political season is upon us. If you wish to display political signs (or any signs), please place them in your yard, not in the boulevard between sidewalk and street. They are a traffic hazard and ? unlawful in the latter location. thanks.

Something old,

Something new…



Something borrowed,

Something

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EVIDENCE OF RAW SEWAGE IN YOUR YARD?

By Sheila Little

We live on Meridian Street across from 45th Street. Every time we have a downpour, we accumulate greater than one foot of overflow at our driveway. Forty-fifth Street has overflowed to the extent that DPW has posted High Water Signs. Our neighbor to the south of our property had the soil in his yard and that area of the right-of-way tested for contaminants by an independent laboratory. Their report indicates that there is raw sewage in his yard. Because our driveway collects the greatest amount of run-off water during any rain storm, it is likely that we see more raw sewage than that of our neighbors.

Apparently, the run-off water is mixing with the sewage on our side of the street. So far, the run-off water has eroded most of the grass and soil that used to be in the right-of-way area. The free-trees from the city that were planted by MSF last year in the area in front of our house are growing poorly and the thought that we have been picking up the morning newspaper covered with coliform bacteria makes our skin crawl. Many joggers, dog walkers and kids transit up and down Meridian Street and do not know that it is possibly a cholera infected puddle that they walk through or get splashed with by on coming traffic.

We can contact the mayor's office, DPW and the Marion County Health Department but the major concern is the infrastructure of the street in this area and a concerted effort to solve our problem. If you are also experiencing sewage overflow and high water during downpours at either 56th , 52nd or 43rd Street and Meridian, please take pictures and contact us at onelastnerve@gmail.com.

Editor's Note-we note articles in the newspaper and in driving around Indy recently that some work is being done on the drainage infrastructure, a daunting task for the city.

NEW OWNERS WILL UPDATE TARKINGTON HOME

reprinted by kind permission of the Indianapolis Star and at the request of our new neighbors, Tim and Doris Sadler

Booth Tarkington's Meridian Street home has new owners who plan to bring the mansion back to its former grandeur.

Tim and Doris Anne Sadler didn't plan to take on another renovation project, but when buyers showed up a few months ago wanting to purchase their house on 46th Street near Butler University, they looked around and fell in love with a nearly 100-year-old home at 4270 N. Meridian St.

The house, built in 1911, was Tarkington's home from 1923 until he died in 1946. It was the Decorator's Show House in the early 1980s and had been on the market for the past few years.

The Sadler family (which includes daughter Lucy, son Morgan, pooch Bella Blu and cats Boo Cleopatra and Mickey) moved in last month, and their tribe has already increased by one, after a kitten showed up in the kitchen one day. He's been named Newton Booth Tarkington, which was the author's real first name.

Doris Anne, the former Marion County Clerk, who now heads the Feinstein Foundation, and businessman Tim, who used to head the Marion County Alcoholic Beverage Board, know they have a multi-year project ahead.

The first few steps: ripping up carpet, stripping wallpaper and freshening things up so they could move in.

Workmen are re-plastering the second floor, so living with a thin layer of dust has become a way of life.

The good thing is that in a house with about 30 rooms, there's always a place to move to after a room is finished, said Doris Anne, who's been reading over the Meridian Street Preservation Commission's handbook in between cleaning up the yard and getting painted-shut windows to open. A carriage house on the property has two apartments and room for household staff.

In the future, the Sadlers want to fill the home with guests just as in the old days.

"We want to take it back to what it was when Booth Tarkington entertained here," she said.

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REMOVAL OF TREES AT 4936 NORTH MERIDIAN STREET

By Bob Wilch, Chair,
Meridian Street Preservation Commission

There have been a number of questions regarding the removal of mature and healthy trees at the Sloan residence located at 4936 N. Meridian Street. This house was built in 1923 for Indianapolis surgeon Dr. Goethe Link. He hired Frederick Wallick, architect, to design the house and Jens Jensen, a famous Chicago landscape architect, to design the grounds. In addition to the Link residence, other Indianapolis houses for which Mr. Jensen designed the grounds are the Allison (1914) and the Stalnaker (1922) estates and the house in Golden Hill called Westerly (c.1925).

As most people probably know, the removal of healthy trees on Meridian Street properties in the Meridian Street Preservation Area requires a Certificate of Appropriateness from the Meridian Street Preservation Commission. The Sloans appeared before the Commission at the May 20, 2008 public hearing seeking a Certificate of Appropriateness to remove all landscaping that was not part of the original Jens Jensen plan dated April 1923 and install new landscaping to restore the original plan.

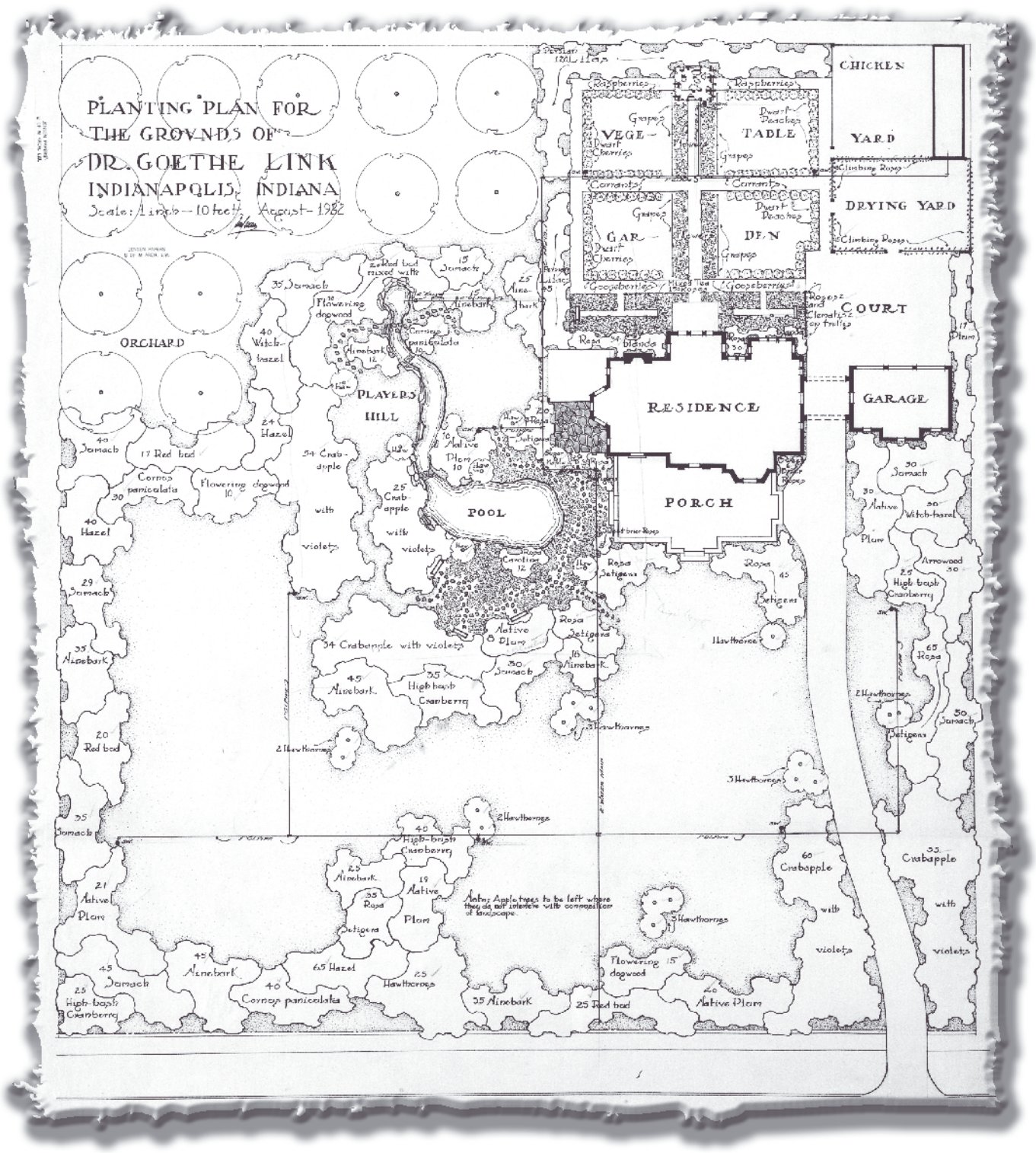
The Meridian Street Preservation Commission was impressed by the fact Mr. and Mrs. Sloan had sought the original plans from the archives at the University of Michigan and had invited the national expert on Jens Jensen from the university to walk the property with them to identify the remaining elements of the plan to be preserved. Since Mr. Jensen usually did not identify on his plans existing trees that were to remain, an attempt was made to identify and preserve trees that were older than the original plan, so they could be saved.

The original plan is very elaborate with many trees and shrubs, such as crabapples, ninebark, sumac, hawthorns, dogwoods, roses, red buds, high-bush cranberries and native plums. In addition, the plan includes other features typical of other Jensen plans including a water feature, outdoor seating spaces, open lawn, walkways, and an orchard. Unfortunately it seems that most of the original Jensen plantings did not survive the intervening 85 years, and other trees that did not conform to the plan were planted or allowed to grow in their place. If allowed to remain, many of the trees that were removed would have blocked the sun from the newly planted trees.

One characteristic of Mr. Jensen's designs that was not repeated in the new plan is that he tended to show such dense tree plantings on his site plans that it would have been difficult for the trees to survive. The new site plan shows trees in the same arrangement as in the original plans but in more practical quantities.

Even though it is unusual for the Commission to approve the removal of healthy trees in the Meridian Street Preservation Area, the MSPC voted unanimously to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness. The Commission felt strongly that the restoration of this important historic landscape merited the removal of the trees that had grown up over the years that were not a part of the original setting for the house.

There are a number of web sites devoted to Jens Jensen for those seeking more information regarding his life and work.

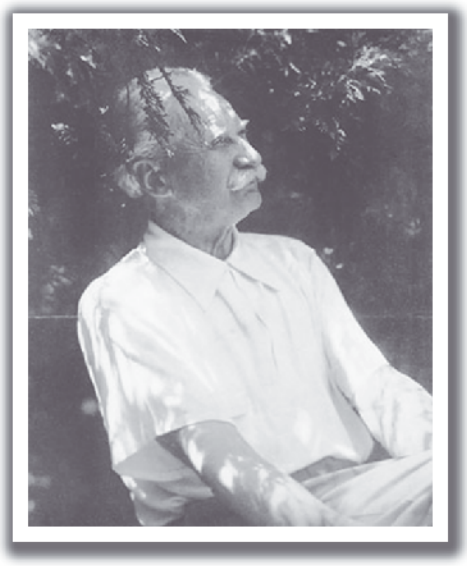


JENS JENSEN

By Connie J. Zeigler, Meridian Street Preservation Commission Staff Person

After Frederick Law Olmsted, Jens Jensen is probably the best known landscape architect in American history. Born in the 1860s, Jensen was a native of Denmark, who moved to Chicago when he was in his 20s. His landscapes are a celebration of the prairies and woodlands that he loved in his adopted country. His projects included several Chicago and Madison, Wisconsin, parks and the palatial estates of many of the movers and shakers of America in the first quarter of the twentieth century. In Indianapolis, Jensen is known to have designed the grounds of the Allison Mansion (now part of Marian College) and the Goethe Link home at 4936 North Meridian Street. His design for the Link home included some of his signature elements, such as native plantings, limestone surrounded natural-looking water features, and a groomed lawn area for performances.

The discovery of an original Jens Jensen landscape, hidden within a 1950s or 1960s design by a local landscape architect and untended



for years to boot, is comparable to finding out that Frank Lloyd Wright designed a Meridian Street home that had been altered over time so that the Wright design was barely discernible. Although the alterations might have been made by well-known and talented architects, the importance of the property would lie in the original design and its restoration would be worth supporting and celebrating.

A landscape design is even more changeable than a house. Plants grow and die and new plants are added and eventually the design is lost. The discovery of the blue prints for 4936 North Meridian's landscape and the current owners' determination to restore the original Jensen landscape design of their property is equally worthy of celebration. Although it was a shame to lose some of the mature trees on the property, the landscape that will result from the restoration will be an important one for Meridian Street and Indianapolis, and the nation.

4936 NORTH MERIDIAN STREET UPDATE

By Rob Sloan

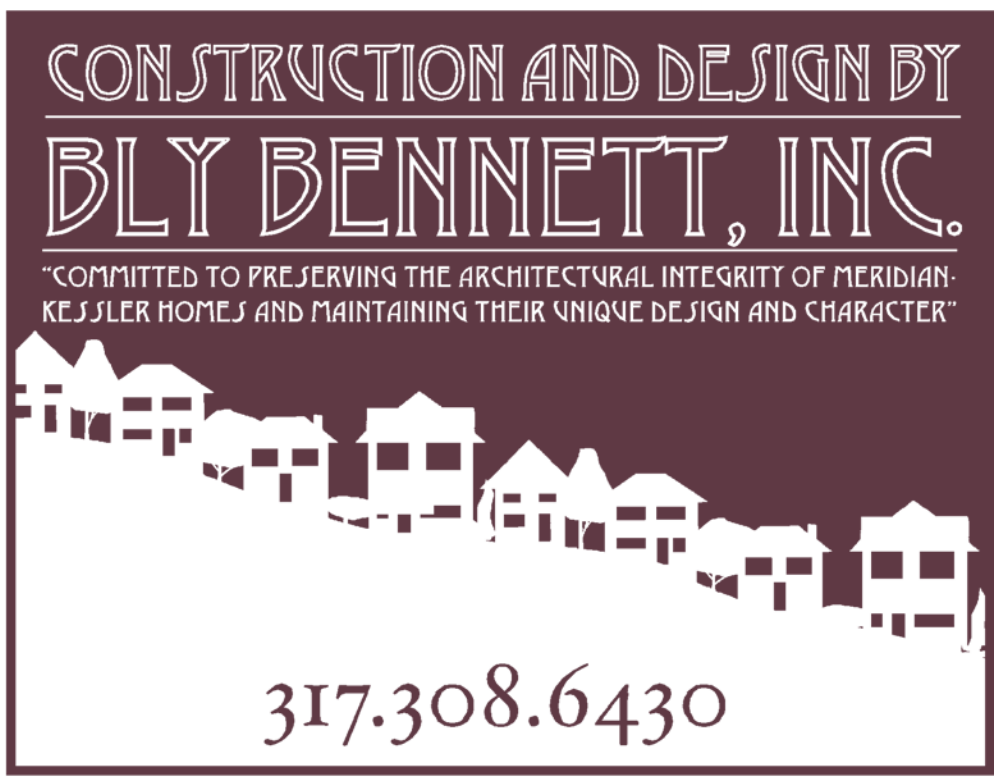
I was asked to write a short update on our landscape restoration project at 4936 North Meridian. As many of you may know, the original landscape was designed by the famous American landscape architect Jens Jensen, and commissioned by the original owner Dr Goethe Link. Link became friends with Jensen, who later designed his garden in Brooklyn, Indiana, and we have located some of the correspondence between the two that documents their friendship. The Jensen family donated the original plans for 4936 N. Meridian to the University of Michigan, and the master plan, perennial garden and water feature plans have been scanned and copied for our restoration.

Unfortunately very few of the original plant species survived, and almost all of the remaining trees were ones that "volunteered" themselves to the property after the original landscape was installed. Eighty-five years later the only signs of the original plan are the massive water feature and a few smaller plants that have managed to self propagate. Jensen was the founder of the prairie style landscape, and the original trees were smaller flowering varieties, which could not be planted under the canopy of shade that was present when we began the project. Now that the intervening years of growth have been removed, we can start the restoration.

Our goal from the onset of the project has been to faithfully return the landscape to the original form Jensen had designed, placing a high priority on finding original plant materials available to Jensen at the time, and avoiding the temptation to use modern hybrid varieties. Jens Jensen found his inspiration in the native species of the time, and turning back to the antique varieties creates the sense of naturalism that Jensen had intended.

Currently the grounds have been stripped of all the euonymus vines, and the plant beds in the front yard have been outlined with metal edging. The water feature is currently being restored to working condition, and this has included replacing and repairing pumps, drainage lines and filter systems. An underground pump room located in the lawn and accessed through a manhole cover, houses the pumps, valves, and electrical panels that are being reworked and modernized. The irrigation system will be installed this fall, followed by several inches of topsoil, and then finally we can start planting by early Spring. Jensen was often said to "sow trees." Based on the large numbers of trees specified on our landscape, this was no exception. We have adjusted his totals down to allow for healthy tree growth and spacing, translating into approximately 200 trees that will be replaced on the property. Our house, which is quite exposed at the moment, will soon disappear again behind a new border of plantings.

My wife is Jennifer, and the new addition is David who was born 6/18/08. We have two other children - Ella age 5, and Blake age 3.



ATLANTIC CROSSINGS

Many remarkable people live and have lived in our neighborhood, some famous, some not so famous. However the "clouds of witness" they represent enhance our experiences in this wonderful neighborhood. Today we are reprinting the first part of an article from the MSF newsletter of February, 1989, by Carl M. Sauer, who with his wife, Erma, lived on "our" street from the early 1940's until their deaths in the early 1990's. If you are interested in learning more about the Sauers let me know as I have his autobiography, "Engineering a Life". Peggy Sabens Editor

We saw the "BIRD" on the airport in Singapore years ago when it first began to fly. I never dreamed I would fly on it someday.

Since then I learned to fly and owned a Bonanza. We flew it all over the USA and Canada. The worst calamity of my life was when I could not pass the physical to maintain my pilot's license. So, we ended up with a slow boat on the Great Lakes for nine years. We decided we had traveled enough.

Then this opportunity came up, and I was possessed for another adventure. Today I saw the CONCORD again in a landing pattern between other jet planes making an approach to our Indianapolis International Airport. Remember, that was in April, 1986.

What a graceful BIRD. It reminded me of a Flamingo in flight with its long neck straight into the wind. Tonight my heart is beating faster and I cannot go to sleep. Tomorrow we are going to fly on that BIRD, higher and faster than we have ever flown before.

Some say the concord is the eighth wonder of the world. I think so, but I also know that there will be a ninth wonder somewhere in the free world quite soon. As entrepreneur is dreaming and scheming and using all the ever expanding knowledge available to make that wonder come true.

Government and skeptics cannot stop this progress.

It is 3 a.m., the Nikon f2 is loaded with ASA 200 for color slides. The Nikon automatic is loaded with the same speed film for color prints. The interchangeable lenses are a 22mm, 25mm and 85mm. The 200mm is too heavy to take.

My "one-a-day" pills are counted out. One for the Gout, one for the uneven heart beat, one for Sugar Diabetes. My tux and Erma's formals are packed and the bags closed and tagged. We expect to dress formal for dinners on the QE2 return trip.

Good Friends called us at 6 a.m. to wish us a safe journey. Others gave us a card the day before departure showing the sinking of the Titanic.

Bob and Barbara took us to the airport. We had for passes to admit us the reception area with the ninety others who made up the "Tour of a Lifetime" group. The English tea was a fabulous breakfast.

The usual check for security was quick and easy. We said goodbye to Bob and boarded the BIRD.

The flight to New York didn't take long at about 700 mph and at 36,000 feet high. Another breakfast was served during the half hour it took to refuel the BIRD. With plenty of champagne available, we felt lifted up in more ways than one as we took off for London. We flew at less than the speed of sound until we reached the end of Long Island then we could feel the power come on as we went through Mach 1. Nothing unusual happened as we climbed to 56,000 feet to a top speed of 1,350 knots.

We have been served a cocktail of our choice and "Caviar Borquette", lobster and cheese kumquats. It looks dark outside even though the sky is clear. There is no dust in the atmosphere to reflect the sun's rays. We can see the curvature of the earth. The noise level is slightly higher than a normal jet. The double windows feel hot from the air's friction.

We arrived at Heathrow Airport at 11 p.m. London time. No delays in customs but it was 1 a.m. before we were in our hotel room ready for some rest. Others did not get their bags until. 3 a.m.

Wednesday morning we took a guided tour of London with an excellent guide. That evening we had a dinner at our hotel and then to the theater to see "the Mousetrap." This play has been running in this theater for 34 years. Now we know who "done it" but we won't tell.

Thursday we slept till 11 a.m. The Jet-lag is still with us. Took a cab to Picadilly Circus and Street. Erma found and purchased some Wedgewood Ladies. We had tea at the Ritz, cocktails at the Savoy hotels, and ended the day with hamburgers at McDonalds within one block of the Ritz.

We took a river boat tour down the Thames to the Greenwich Museum and the sailing ship Cutty Sark. Friday evening we had cocktails and dinner at the Dorchester Hotel where we stayed in 1956.

We visited the famous Harrods Department Store and although it is huge, it is not much larger than Ayres' downtown store. Of course we looked at the women's better dresses and found their prices to be about the same in British pounds as they are in American dollars, which amounts to about 50% higher.

Following a two-hour bus ride, we arrived in Southhampton just as the Queen Mother was leaving the QE2. It has been 50 years since the first QE was launched.

After boarding the ship, we walked a long city block down a corridor t our stateroom. It was very spacious with twin beds, plenty of closet space and a bathroom similar to a first class hotel room.

We spent the next two hours exploring the four dining rooms, gift shops a Casino, movie theater, four swimming pools, two exercise rooms and a large night club. The night club floor show featured a chorus line of ten "show girls," a comedian and a good dance band.

To Be Continued Next Issue

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BEAUTIFICATION

By Stacey McCarthy

Fortunately this past summer, lots of rain came upon us. Hence, lots of blooming flowers & green grass. We lost several mature trees in the storms and a few had water damage. Soon the leaves will turn magnificent shades of orange, red, yellow, & umber as fall arrives. What a glorious summer it has been!

Lawns of the Season: Spring Lawns of the Season plaques have been on display since late June. Please submit Fall Nominations to Mccarthystaceyd@yahoo.com, see the MSF website for criteria. (www.MeridianStreetfoundation.net)

5630 N. Meridian-Estelle and Elliott Nelson

While we enjoy this immaculate lawn every season, seeing their red geraniums are a welcome sign of Spring. Typically, Mother's Day marks the date in which most gardeners would say it is "safe" to plant flowers with little risk of a late frost. For years, Mrs. Nelson's husband has adorned her front urns & beds with enormous red geraniums as a traditional mother's day gift. Since living in their home for 35 years the Nelsons have maintained their lovely lawn by cutting grass & trimming their hedges themselves. They use Scott's lawn for fertilizing & have some help with plantings. Each spring the geraniums, represent history & tradition for the neighborhood.

5105 N. Meridian-Dr. Joe & Joyce Butterworth

The Butterworth's property, of 15 years is gracefully elegant. Every tree and blade of grass is picturesque. Dick Gale Landscape & Design maintains the property. The caramel, pea gravel driveway is kept to perfection and is a unique, warm contrast to the vast, green lawn. Antique urns exploding with bright, pink flowers anchor their front walkway. What a gorgeous 'pop' of summer color.

4266 N. Pennsylvania-Drs. Bruce and Elise Heslin

The Heslin property was the featured as the 2008 "Decorator Show House" for St. Margaret's Guild. In the neighborhood for 13 years, the homeowners took on a 2 ½ year renovation inside & out. While the exterior of the home was 'under construction' for most of that time, the Heslins have continued to show their neighborhood spirit through the seasons. This past spring yielded their masterpiece. After moving out for 5 months, they were able to move back in over the summer. The property is lined with mature & young trees which creates a nice canopy for the sidewalks. The front patio & pool areas are buffered by formal, well manicured evergreens. The heavenly children's playground in the back includes a jogging trail. All of which is adorned by a mix of grasses, hostas, & sprinkles of vibrant, perennial color. The Heslins maintain the property with mowing & planting help. The St. Margaret's Guild landscapers (E.L.M.–Estate Landscape Management) pulled it all together just in time for the show.

Tree Planting

- Another grant has been submitted to KIB for a fall or spring tree planting.
- Those who planted last fall, Don't forget to water your trees & maintain your mulch rings. Each tree needs 15 gals of water every 5-7 days.
- Mulching your trees & removing any weeds/grass will help your trees maintain moisture & provide nutrients to the soil. Be sure to leave a 3-5 in. ring between the tree trunk & mulch so your tree can breathe.

Seasonal Décor

- We are already planning for the Seasonal Décor which will hopefully be in place Thanksgiving weekend.
- Please "Sponsor a Lamp Post" so we can keep our neighborhood looking beautiful!
- All Checks can be sent to 5655 N. Meridian & made payable to Meridian Street Foundation.

Contractor Signs

- As always-Please refrain from contractor signs in your yard over 90 days.
- Contractor signs commercialize our properties & our neighborhood.

Great news!

The Butler University HRC (Health & Recreation Center) is allowing a few memberships to their neighbors. If interested call Josh Downing, Assistant Director of Recreation at 940-6144 or Scott Peden, Director of Recreation at 940-8436

CLOUDS OF WITNESS

The Meridian Street Foundation lost a true friend and neighbor with the passing this July of Alan T. Nolan, age 85. Mr. Nolan and wife Jane lived at 4118 N. Pennsylvania St. for many years. Mr. Nolan was instrumental in saving the Meridian Street corridor from commercial encroachment in the mid-1960's, for which all of us should be grateful. His wife, Jane, who survives, was, along with Alan a staunch supporter of our neighborhood and community, serving on the MSF as well as the Meridian Street Preservation Commission. Even in his later years when health concerns limited his activities he and Jane would be frequent attendees at many of our neighborhood events. He was a prominent attorney, civil war expert and writer with many publications. He was in great demand as a speaker. Born in Evansville he moved to Indy with his family in 1933 when his father was appointed a U.S. District Attorney. He graduated from Shortridge High School, Indiana University (Phi Beta Kappa) and Harvard Law School. He had many honors bestowed on him during his long and distinguished career such as Sagamore of the Wabash, honorary Doctor of Humane Letters from Indiana University, named a Living Legend in 2003 by the Indiana Historical Society, having served as Chairman of the board of that institution for many years, during the planning and construction of its new facility. Our condolences are extended to his family. We are fortunate to have citizens like the Nolans who invest themselves greatly in service to the community and in making all of us aware of what a magnificent opportunity there is to learn and appreciate what we hold dear.

INDIANAPOLIS CIVIL RIGHTS ADVOCATE ALAN NOLAN DIES AT 85

Alan Nolan had credentials and an education that could open any door. He used those tools instead to break down walls.

On Sunday, the city will remember Nolan, a civil rights activist, attorney, preservationist and author who fought segregation and intolerance in Indianapolis. He died July 27 at 85.

Nolan first encountered bigotry as a child in Evansville -- where both his grandfathers were former mayors -- when Ku Klux Klan members threatened to drown the young boy and his siblings.

"They threatened his mother -- who was a Protestant married to a Catholic -- with throwing her children into the Ohio River," said his widow, Jane Nolan. "The story obviously made a lasting impression on him."

Nolan was still in his 20s and fresh out of Harvard Law School in 1950 when he was elected vice president of the Indianapolis branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

A rookie lawyer at the prestigious Ice Miller LLP, he spent evenings scrutinizing the pace of integration in Indianapolis schools. He tracked enrollment figures to demonstrate that -- two years after integration -- not one of the more than 36,000 white children in public grade schools had a black teacher.

He also helped NAACP attorneys work on the U.S. Supreme Court's Brown v. Board of Education case, which abolished segregation in schools.

When a racist real estate industry stood between a black family and their dream home, Nolan used his legal training to coordinate the sale of the Northwestside house to fellow white NAACP member Tom Jordan, then transferred it to the family.

The work was risky.

"Being active in interracial work, there were many accusations that you were a pinko, a radical, maybe even a Communist," Jordan said. "Civil rights -- that was a bad word."

Loyalty oaths were common at city offices in the early 1950s. Then, there was a campaign to pull "Robin Hood" from public school libraries because some considered taking from the rich and giving to the poor a Communist theme. That led Nolan and several other professionals to form an Indiana branch of the American Civil Liberties Union

"To see this country becoming rigid, fearful conformists, it occurred to us that it would be a good idea for someone to raise the flag," he later told an Indianapolis Star reporter.

But a few days before the first meeting in 1953, Indiana War Memorial trustees, citing warnings that the ACLU was a Communist front, decided against allowing the gathering inside the memorial. The Knights of Columbus also turned away the organizers.

Nolan worried he would lose his job.

He did not. St. Mary Catholic Church agreed to host the meeting. The controversy made Edward R. Murrow's national television program, "See it Now" (although Nolan's interview ended up on the cutting-room floor). Nolan went on to spend 45 years at Ice Miller.

He was considered a straight shooter in the legal community even when he defended big companies. In labor negotiations, colleagues said, he preferred winning the long-term trust of a union to a quick victory.

As a historian, Nolan was known to bristle at books that romanticized the Confederacy. In one of his several Civil War histories -- "Lee Considered," he poked holes in vaunted Southern Gen. Robert E. Lee's legacy.

"I don't think it was a derogatory work," said Butler University history Professor George Geib, "but it was a cautionary work, and, I think, brilliantly done."

In addition to unearthing history, Nolan worked to preserve it. Hoosiers who visit the Indiana Historical Society can thank Nolan, a longtime board chairman, for finding a way to pay for the Ohio Street facility, board Chairman Michael Blickman said.

Nolan put the same lobbying skills to work in his own backyard. Area preservationist Fred Schlegel said the quiet, residential North Meridian Street corridor would be crowded with commercial development if Nolan had not teamed with legislators in the 1960s to protect it.

Nolan lived in the area most of his life, refusing to leave in the 1950s when his neighbors fled for the suburbs, his wife said.

Friends recalled his stately home on North Pennsylvania Street bustling with friends and family -- eight children from two marriages, the occasional foreign exchange student and other visitors from diverse backgrounds.

"Black people, Asian people, Catholics, Jews, Christians," said Asher Benrubi, a childhood friend of one of Nolan's sons. "We all grew up to be better people because we hung out amongst all types of people."

The house reflected the inclusiveness Nolan wanted to see in the world around him.

"Alan took huge pride in where he came from, and he understood deeply the obstacles that were in place for people who were not of privilege," said Blickman, also a partner at Ice Miller. "And so here was the son of a lawyer who went to Harvard Law School but who always identified with the little guy."

Christmas came in July for Bruce and Elise Heslin with the arrival of little Henry on July 25, 2008. He joins George, Sasha and Walter in their household. Also proud grandmother, Marsha, fortunately lives close enough to have plenty of time to spoil him (and his siblings) Welcome to the neighborhood, Henry!

PROPERTY TAX RELIEF?

By Raul Burciaga

The Meridian Street Foundation Property Tax Subcommittee held a property tax workshop on July 16, 2008 at the Riviera Club. Our speakers, Joline Ohmart, Washington Township Assessor, and Mr. D. Saul, CPA and volunteer at the Washington Township Assessor's office, reviewed the current property tax situation. They began by summarizing the 1998 Indiana Supreme Court ruling that found the previous calculation of tax bills was unconstitutional, forcing the state in 2002 to switch its method of property taxes assessments to the current method based on "market value." They tried to make sense of a very complicated formula used to determine our tax bills. They went over such terms as "neighborhood factors" and "trending" used to calculate more equitable market values. The recent tax assessment increases are based on January 2005 assessments calculated in the midst of the "housing bubble" as well as an increased proportion to the state's tax burden brought about by the recent tax reductions for businesses. The Governor and the Indiana State Assembly undertook steps to appease angry residential homeowners. The Governor froze 2007 taxes to the rate of the 2006 and called for reassessment of businesses. The Indiana State Assembly issued a "refund" to homeowners based on re-calculation of the tax assessments. Area taxpayers have had to pay "reconciliation bills" this summer and will be paying tax bills for 2008 this fall. Ms. Ohmart then reviewed how to file for an appeal of an assessment and what to provide in terms of the necessary evidence.

For now the Indiana State Assembly approved limiting 2009 tax increases to 1.5 percent and 1 percent thereafter. But without a constitutional amendment there is little to keep lawmakers from making further increases. The State Assembly failed to pass the first reading of the 1% cap on property taxes as a constitutional amendment. Homeowners may see some relief once the revenues from the increase sales tax are applied to the state budget.

There are many factors that influence our property taxes. These become issues for lawmakers and ultimately paid for by taxpayers. The Meridian Street Foundation Property Tax Subcommittee hopes to work with our surrounding neighborhoods associations to hold forums regarding issues that affect our property taxes. The members of the Meridian Street Foundation Property Tax Subcommittee are Raul Burciaga, Sheila Little, A. Berger, Nancy Logan and Stacey McCarthy. We can be reached at ruly2000@aol.com and welcome your comments and feedback. We would appreciate hearing from area residents who have an expertise in this area.

LILLY DAY OF SERVICE

By Kathy Shorter

Sherrie Bossung of Lilly and Mark Adler of Keep Indianapolis Beautiful, Inc. have invited HARMONI to help facilitate a number of service projects to help beautify the Indianapolis Midtown district in conjunction with Lilly's annual Day of Service next spring. Hundreds of volunteers will be available to help beautify our district's parks and public spaces on that day. HARMONI and the neighborhood associations (MKNA, MSF, BTNA, and BRVA) will help choose projects and plan for this work over the next two months.

Within the MSF area, schools, parks, and the Martin Luther King Center are being considered for projects at this time.

Two landscape design professionals have offered to volunteer their services. If you have skills in this area and would also like to volunteer in this planning, please contact one of us immediately.

Also, if you have additional ideas about public areas that need landscaping attention, please email mccarthystaceyd@yahoo.com, bdeane56@hotmail.com, or kathyshorter@gmail.com.

On Wednesday, August 6, neighborhood representatives met at HARMONI Co-Chair Kathy Shorter's house to plan for the Lilly Annual Day of Service, scheduled to help beautify Midtown public spaces on May 20, 2009.

Left to right: Larry Fitzgerald, BTNA, Netetia Walker, Executive Director, Martin Luther King Center, Sherrie Bossung, Lilly Corp., Mark Adler, Keep Indianapolis Beautiful, Sharon Butsch Freeland, BRVA Executive Director, Beth Deane, MSF and MKNA, Tom Healy, BRVA, Lara Knitter, MKNA Beautification Chair.

REAL ESTATE ROUNDUP

By G.B. Landrigan, Realtor

While not as robust as wished, our Meridian Street Foundation neighborhood has performed reasonably well when compared with the remainder of Central Indiana. Inventories do remain a bit above our usual average, but some price ranges are actually experiencing a shortage of available homes.

What is to come? Schools, Taxes, and Gas Prices -- strangely enough, these are becoming GOOD topics for our area.

Assuming that the cap of 1% of assessed value of a property becomes fact over the next two years, many MSF homeowners may notice a dramatic drop in taxes -- some lower than they were paying even four or five years ago. After the past few years of doubling, tripling, and quadrupling taxes -- and surprise "reconciliation bills", we may end up in a better position than before in two years. Our walkable and unusually convenient area is already becoming even more popular due to the apparently-permanent increase in gas prices. In addition, much planning and implementation has been done to create two essentially-new public schools in the area. School 84 is becoming the Center For Inquiry -- a much-touted magnet program. Sidener Middle School, next to the all-new Glendale shopping center, is now the Sidener Academy. Sidener will serve as one of the system's "gifted and talented" programs for grades 2-5.

The following statistics reflect the activity from 7/15/2007-8/15/2008. All data is from the Metropolitan Indianapolis Board of Realtors.

North Meridian Street
Number of Homes For Sale: 15
Average List Price: $794,400
Number of Homes Pending: 0
Number of Homes Sold: 7
Average Sales Price: $417,000

North Pennsylvania Street
Number of Homes For Sale: 7
Average List Price: $219,900
Number of Homes Pending: 1
Number of Homes Sold: 7
Average Sales Price: $285,000

North Illinois Street
Number of Homes For Sale: 11
Average List Price: $439,900
Number of Homes Pending: 0
Number of Homes Sold: 8
Average Sales Price: $480,000

Cross-Streets
Number of Homes For Sale: 4
Average List Price: $369,450
Number of Homes Pending: 0
Number of Homes Sold: 8
Average Sales Price: $297,500

MEMBERSHIP

By Alice Berger

David and I are beginning a great adventure, a new chapter in our life. We are full of the excitement one feels when about to embark on a new project. However, just under the surface of all this excitement is a twinge of sadness. We are moving from the greatest street in America and leaving behind the most dedicated, wonderful neighbors we have ever known.

From the time I was a little girl, I have always loved the big houses on Meridian Street and the Meridian Kessler/Butler Tarkington neighborhood. When we bought our house on Meridian, I wanted to make my mark, to leave this neighborhood a little better than when I moved in. I wanted to become a part of the history of this historic neighborhood. Now when I look back, I can only hope all the hard work and hours of volunteering made a difference. I believe it has. I believe I'm leaving my beloved historic neighborhood a little better, a little more preserved than when I moved here.

I wish I had time to share all the names of the wonderful volunteers I've worked with, but the list is simply too long. I am comforted knowing I am leaving you in very capable hands: Elaine and John Klein are dedicated preservationists; Kathy Shorter and Cindy Zweber Free, work tirelessly to improve the district with the HARMONI project; Peggy Sabens is the invaluable editor of this newsletter; the entire Meridian Street Preservation Commission is dedicated to preserving this historic district. You are also very fortunate to have Nancy and Gary Whitaker volunteering hours of time on land use and the MSF web site as well as your entire MSF board.

As my last official duty, I respectfully request you send in your membership dues, join the Meridian Street Foundation, become a board member and volunteer your time. The work is hard but the rewards are many. No one knows this better than me.

Keep in touch. I'll miss you.
Alice Berger,
283-2453 - sharp2577@aol.com

Benefactor List
(a benefactor is anyone donating $100 or more in membership dues)

Greg & Emily Bauwens
Kim & Pam Baxter
David & Alice Berger
Russell & Natalie Best
Douglas & Connie Brown *
Scot & Marilyn Bruins
Raymond & Rosalind Buchanan
Dan & Ruth Ann Bunting
Raul Burciaga
Emily & Jason Burke
Joseph & Joyce Butterworth *
William & Mary Jo Campbell
Bruce & Denise Cordingley
Greg & Pam Dedinsky
Jay & Josh Elbrecht *
Ryan & Scott Fisher
Catherine Fowler
Ed & Cindy Free
Tom & Mary Grein
Neil & Virginia Handley
Bruce & Elise Heslin
William & Patricia Hirsch
Charles & Leigh Johnson
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John & Elaine Klein *
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Patsy Solinger
James & Derek Spain *
Jay & Kathy Spitzenberger
Chris & Ann Stack
Marion Stuart
Alan & Terri Symons
Ella Tunnell *
Adele & Evelyn Tyson
Chris & Barbara Velonis
John & Roberta Walsh
Paul & Lana Warrenfelt *
Timothy & Susan Weber
Thomas & Julia Weede
Stephen & Phyllis West *
Gary & Nancy Whitaker
Jeff & Lisa Whorley
Christian & Elaine Wolf *

All dues are tax deductible
* donated more than $100 in membership dues

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.