MERIDIAN STREET FOUNDATION
NEWSLETTER
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WINTER 2010

50 YEARS of greatness

MERIDIAN STREET FOUNDATION

1960
2010

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By John Countryman, President

As I write my first president's message, the Indianapolis Colts have just secured their second trip to the Superbowl in just four years. While the enthusiasm experienced on such an accomplishment varies from one person to the next, the consistent commitment to excellence required to achieve the Colts' record setting decade for most wins is hard to debate. As a fan, these statistical successes are very exciting. As a father and proud citizen of Indianapolis, the manner in which they have achieved this success is so much more important. My experience is that this is an organization that consistently works hard, is well prepared, is passionate about their team's success and cares about their community. The Colts experience is an intergenerational experience that I am proud to share with my children and that will be enjoyed by their great-grandmother come February 7th.

So what does all of this have to do with the Meridian Street Foundation? While the Colts have displayed the aforementioned qualities and brought pride to our city over the last ten years, this year marks the 50th year of the Meridian Street Foundation's work to responsibly preserve and protect one of the very best streets and neighborhoods in the country.

While the battle to preserve the residential nature and historical beauty of our neighborhood began fifty years ago, this overwhelming success story continues to be written today. The writers of this history are our neighbors who have answered the call to get involved as board members, committee members, volunteers and contributors. In the 2 ½ years that I have served our board, I have witnessed an organization that works hard, is well prepared, is passionate about our neighborhood and that cares deeply for our community. These "success-determinants" are essential to an organization whether it be an NFL team or a neighborhood organization such as ours. Although my time on the board has been shorter than some others with whom I serve, the leadership provided by recent presidents including Stacey McCarthy, John Peoni, Virginia Handley, Kathy Shorter, Cindy Zweber-Free and Elaine Klein, to name a few, in addition to the more than twenty board members and countless volunteers that serve, support and contribute to our efforts each and every year serves as the foundation for the work that we have accomplished over the past half century and that we will accomplish in the decades to come.

"While the battle to preserve the residential nature and historical beauty of our neighborhood began fifty years ago, this overwhelming success story continues to be written today"

In the year ahead, know that our Public Safety Committee, lead by our Vice-President Sheila Little, is working hard in coordination with the city's police department to address and to respond to what appears to be increased crime in our neighborhood. Raul Burciaga, our Secretary, continues to serve as our property tax coordinator. As each of us enters the November ballot, be sure to exercise your right to vote your opinion on the Constitutional Amendment to include Property Tax Caps. I believe that our community's efforts and abilities to organize the protests at the governor's mansion two short years ago, continue to serve as the 'shot heard round the city' with regards to this referendum. Finally, please take advantage of the opportunity to gather with neighbors you may already know and to meet neighbors you may not know at our annual events beginning with our 50th Anniversary Kick-off Party in March, Easter Egg Hunt in April, Summer Picnic in June and Annual meeting in October. While the preservation of our homes and streets is essential to the mission of the Meridian Street Foundation, the people that I have had the pleasure to know who make up our great neighborhood are the single largest factor that have prevented me from opting for the suburban commute, so I strongly encourage you to join us for one or all of our events in 2010.

I am grateful to my fellow board members, our volunteers and our member families for their contribution of time, talent and treasure. I am honored to be serving the Meridian Street Foundation and look forward to continuing the stewardship of our neighborhood and community that the Meridian Street Foundation began 50 years ago.

MERIDIAN STREET FOUNDATION; THE FIRST HALF CENTURY

by Bernard Frechtman

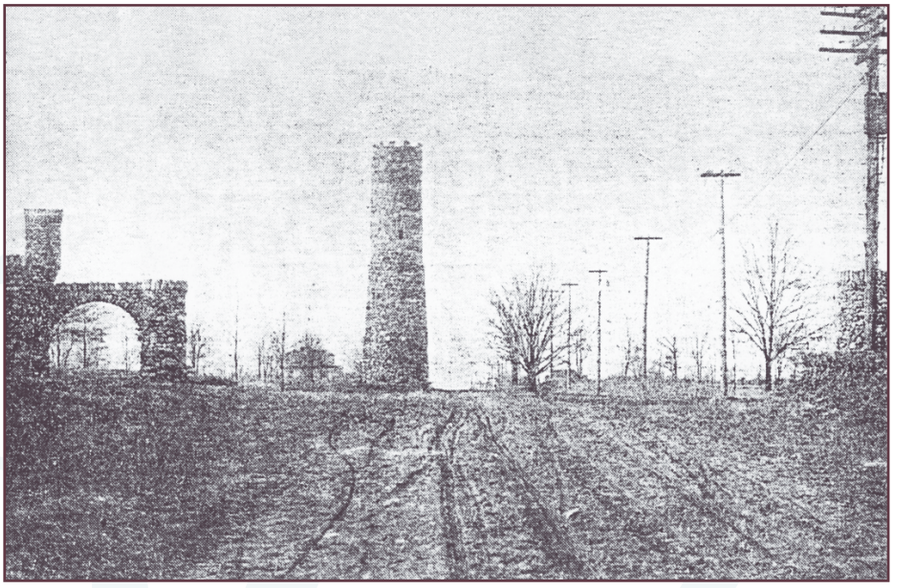
Driving south on Meridian Street from Westfield Boulevard or north from 40th street, you enter an enclave of early 20th century houses that have maintained their stately beauty into the 21st century. How does that happen? Fifty years of active participation by neighborhood residents organized for that purpose through the Meridian Street Foundation is the answer. And how did that come about?

Among the great events of 1960 John F. Kennedy was elected President, the Soviet Union launched Sputnik, Pittsburgh beat the New York Yankees in the World Series, Hollywood produced The Apartment and Psycho, To Kill a Mockingbird was a best seller and the Meridian Street Foundation was organized.

Those world events were going on when the people living on Meridian Street organized to preserve the neighborhood and to protect against the encroachment of undesirable building construction that had already caused the deterioration of properties on Meridian Street below 38th Street.

Historically Meridian Street began emerging as a prestigious residential address going back as far as 1880. By 1915 seventy-eight houses had been built between Fall Creek and 38th street. In 1920, recognizing the need to preserve the residential nature of the neighborhood the residents formed the Meridian Street Association "… to promote economic interests by shielding and advancing aesthetic values…" of Meridian Street between 40th street and Westfield Boulevard.

Between 1920 and the 1960's houses on lower Meridian Street were beginning to give way to conversion to apartment houses and commercial enterprises. Additionally, developers sought to take advantage of the zoning that allowed for medium to high-rise apartments. And so began the commercialism of lower Meridian Street below 38th that led to the tearing down of well established historic homes and the conversion of homes into businesses. In an effort to preserve what had become the city's premier neighborhood, the Meridian Street Foundation was founded in 1960.



In 1899 these stone towers and archways marked the entrance to a real estate subdivision called Meridian Heights at 46th and Meridian. Today, if you were standing on the spot from which this picture was taken, you'd be in the middle of Meridian Street, looking north. The tall tower is gone and only a few heaps of stones mark the locations of the archways. (Photo Contributed by Walter M. Ross)

In 1969 when road builders were set to widen North Meridian Street, angry local residents physically stood in their way to stop that expansion. And in 1971 after the construction of Tarkington Tower, the Meridian Street Foundation, was motivated to get the State Legislature to establish the Meridian Street Preservation Commission. The commission would be charged with enforcing the standards supported by State Statute that required home owners to seek approval for any exterior alterations of their homes. Thus ensuring the preservation of the integrity of the architechture and the single-family residential character of Meridian Street and surrounding neighborhoods.

The Meridian Street Foundation, that this year is celebrating 50 years of existence, provides the organizational structure (through its members and activities) to create a cohesive community spirit that maintains the impetus to keep Meridian Street corridor in its ongoing well maintained standard of appearance. In addition to being a watchdog of the standards for the neighborhood the MSF has involved itself in other aspects of community life that helps to create a spirit of community. These programs are conducted through various committees within the Foundation that include: the Public Safety/Traffic Committee, which works to keep neighbors safe by focusing on crime prevention through a block-by-block crime watch program and a constant dialogue with the local police; the Beautification Committee works by organizing programs to encourage maintaining beautiful lawns and the planting of trees; providing seasonal décor for the holiday season and special occasions; the Land Use Committee assists homeowners by reviewing their applications to the Meridian Street Preservation Commission prior to hearings, and making recommendations to the Commission regarding applications. The MSF also maintains a website for the neighborhood to keep residents informed of important information that affects each resident in the area and is responsible for the publication of this newsletter which goes to over 700 residents. Additionally, MSF was instrumental in the establishment of HARMONI, which seeks to make physical improvements to various parts of the neighborhoods with in the Meridian Street Foundation boundaries.

So the organization that was created to fight the downgrading of the Meridian Street area has moved forward to an active program of total community participation.

WHAT CAN WE DO ABOUT OUR SAFETY?

By Marilyn Strawbridge, member, Safety Committee

We are all aware that our neighborhood is experiencing an increase in burglaries. Even though we may feel particularly vulnerable, the truth is that this happens everywhere, not just in our fair neighborhood. It is also true that we can do a lot toward making our homes safe and less vulnerable to opportunistic crime. Opportunistic crime is crime that is committed because an opportunity presents itself, and someone takes advantage of that opportunity. We, well-meaning individuals, home owners, neighbors, neighborhood organizations and police departments can do much to thwart this crime by being vigilant, staying connected and communicating with one another. In essence, we need to form a "team" approach to changing the current environment into a much safer one we can all be happy about.

Henry Castor, the Community Liaison Officer for The Indianapolis Metropolitan North District Police Department wants to assure neighbors that officers are taking our concerns very seriously and concentrating on the neighborhood by increasing patrols and hiring extra officers to combat the problem. He advises us to always be alert of suspicious activity. If something doesn't look right or is out of the ordinary to please call 911 and report it. Even though people think they may be bothering the police, it is just that 'reporting of activity' upon which community policing relies. Officer Castor emphasizes it is with these combined efforts that we will catch the individuals committing these crimes. Police officers will come to individuals homes to provide "a walk through and around the premises" of the home to see if there are certain weak points in a house that burglars might possibly target. Many times simple modifications can be made to make a home less vulnerable. Officer Castor encourages home owners to contact him at 317 327 6168 for more information.

Sheila Little, Chairman of the safety committee for the Meridian Street Foundation would also like for neighbors to know that they can get information about incidents in their immediate area by going to the website http://www.indystar.com/apps/pbcs/.dllarticle?AID=/99999999/NEWS/70416062.

Once at this site:

- Place the curser on MAIN MENU for a pull down menu.
- Search archive by address
- Type in your address, click on the box for 1 mile, click on box for 1 month (at bottom)
- See map of 911 calls and place curser over the symbol for details.

Little would also like us to know that efforts are currently being made to reenergize and support the organized Crime Watch effort in our neighborhoods. This effort designates specific blocks which are organized by a block captain for the purpose of deterring crime. Meetings are held periodically to discuss specific concerns and to help each other to stay safe. Your closest neighbors are in a perfect position to be proactive against crime. Volunteers in each block are being asked to revive or start these groups through MSF. Please make yourself known if you would like to help in this effort.

Other helpful information to discourage these "crimes of opportunity" include the following: electronics are the favored target, so anything owners can do to keep these from view is helpful. Do not leave purses and other valuables in plain site from a kitchen window or back door. Do not leave a car running in the driveway or at the curb while warming up (this is a tough one in this cold weather). Always lock the house and put the alarm on (if available), even when you are home. Be wary of vans, trucks or cars that are unusual. Get license plate numbers, criminals are caught this way. Don't assume you won't be visited a second time. Burglars have been known to come back. Report everything. Call your neighbors if something looks suspicious. Big dogs are a deterrent, especially big dogs that bark. Mid North Public Safety group wants everyone to know that the 30 member Canine Unit has relocated its offices to the former North District headquarters at E. 42nd and N. College Avenue, effective immediately. This unit is operated 24 hours a day and this should provide an added police presence to our neighborhood.

The best advice is to watch out for each other, work with the system to be able to catch the perpetrators, communicate often and take control over what you can control. Being nosey and observant is a good trait when confronted with this problem. These types of activities define what it means to live in a real community and can only enhance life in our neighborhood. Questions can be directed to: Marilyn Strawbridge (mstrawbr@butler.edu)

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A SHARED COMMUNITY VISION FOR MIDTOWN

By Kathy Shorter, HARMONI

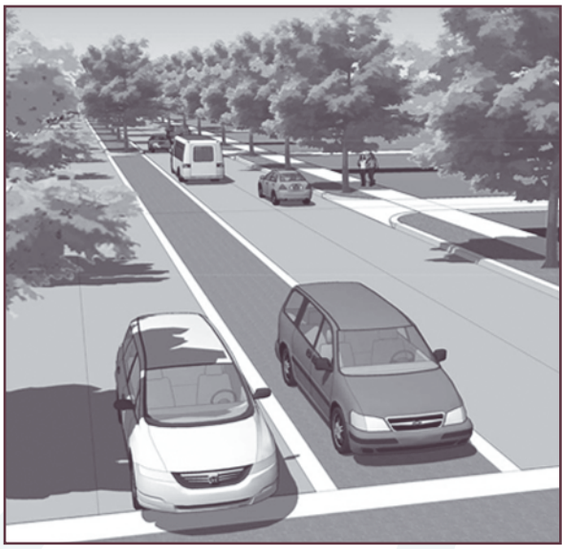
In an effort to attract desirable reinvestment, HARMONI has catalyzed and co-led three focused processes to help define a shared vision for Midtown. Envision Broad Ripple, Maple Road Visioning, and Envision College Avenue have involved hundreds of residents in over 24 evening sessions to date. The results of this work will be refined sub-area plans, form-based zoning practices, and a definition of the type of development that residents and business owners want to see in Midtown. This will help to limit the controversial "zoning by variance" practice and will discourage the proposal of suburban style chain establishments and fast food restaurants.

Envision Broad Ripple began on Earth Day 2008, Maple Road Visioning in October 2008, and Envision College Avenue was launched in August 2009. Partners include Green Broad Ripple, Broad Ripple Village Association, Broad Ripple Alliance for Progress, Meridian-Kessler Neighborhood Association, CAN-DO!, Maple Road Development Association, other neighborhood associations and stakeholders, and the Department of Metropolitan Development. City of Indianapolis senior planners Bob Wilch and Kathleen Blackham have been key leaders of these sessions. Many resident urban design experts have participated throughout these sessions in a volunteer capacity.

Community Education

A key component of the visioning processes has been education. Participants in all three visioning processes have learned from videos, lectures, presentations by experts, recommended reading, the creation of a special section in the College Avenue Library, and field trips highlighting current urban design topics such as:

- New Urbanism
- Sustainability
- District Typologies
- Transit Oriented Development
- Density
- Smart Growth
- Form Based Zoning
- Complete Streets



The educational component has ensured that participants are making informed decisions in the planning process, based on best practices. In addition, DMD has constructed wooden models of the community on large aerial photographs, allowing participants to better visualize the sections of Midtown that are working well and the ones that need special attention. To be sure that you receive notice of future meetings, please logon to www.indyharmoni.org and sign up for the distribution list.

PROPERTY TAX CAP AMENDMENT FORUM II

by Raul Burciaga,
MSF Property Tax Sub-committee

With the start of the new year, the Indiana General Assembly is in heated debate over the first phase of making property tax caps an amendment to the Indiana Constitution. The Joint Resolution must pass both houses of the General Assembly before it can be put before the voters of Indiana in a referendum this November. In an effort to present the homeowners of the historic district with the ramifications of the pending legislation, the Meridian Street Property Tax Cap Subcommittee will again partner with the Meridian-Kessler Neighborhood Association in presenting another information forum. Our first forum with area state senators and representatives fielding questions regarding property tax caps from moderator John Katzenberger took place December 1, 2009. To view the videotape of this forum go to: www.indy.gov/eGov/Cable/Pages/home.aspx and click on On Demand Meetings and Special Events then in the left hand column click Special Events then look for Property Tax Cap Amendment Forum on Dec. 1, 2009.

The second forum will be much like the first. We hope to present questions such as; how will a reduction in revenues affect local government services should the caps take effect? What impact would lower revenues have on school districts, city government, townships and associated range of services such as police and fire protection, health services and parks and recreation facilities? On the panel, we hope to include representatives from the mayor's office, school districts, townships as well as taxpayer advocacy groups. Additionally, we hope to have John Katzenberger back as our moderator. Questions from the audience will be accepted to help direct the topics of discussion. The date of the forum will be the first or second week in May to coincide with the first installment of our 2009 property tax bill. Please watch for MSF e-mail alerts as to the exact time and place.

As a group, we are considering co-sponsoring a candidate's forum in September to hear what candidates up for election in November 2010 have to say about the possibility of property tax cap amendments. Again, please watch for MSF e-mail alerts as to the exact time and place.

MIDTOWN COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS MASTER PLAN AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

by Kathy Shorter

With the intent of defining potential catalyst projects in Midtown, HARMONI and the Maple Road Development Association jointly issued a Request for Proposals in July. After a comprehensive review of responses from local and out of state firms, a team led by Mansur Real Estate Services, Inc., which includes Greenstreet, Ltd., Eden Collaborative, and Browning Day Mullins Dierdorf was selected for the preparation of a Midtown Commercial Corridors Master Plan and Implementation Strategy.

This comprehensive effort will build on the input from three Envision Processes that have been going on over the past 18 months: Envision Broad Ripple, Maple Road Visioning, and Envision College Avenue. The plan will place special emphasis on the southern portions of Midtown—along 38th Street and nearby business corners. It is important to note that the southern ¼ of Midtown has now "declined enough" to be included in the Neighborhood Stabilization Program Target Area---based on the high percentages of vacant and abandoned homes. The plan will be designed to spur economic development that was expected (but not yet realized) with the large public infrastructure investment on 38th Street in recent years.

The Master Plan will seek to define development plans for 3-5 targeted areas (business nodes), which are declining and require stabilization or which would offer the highest impact for turnaround. The plan will include site plans, development overview, financial analysis, project proformas, and complete project structure.

The outcome will be a highly visual, well-understood, market-oriented plan that helps to communicate to business owners, potential developers and investors what the Midtown community desires and will support along its primary commercial corridors. As well, the resulting plan will inform the community of what is realistic and sustainable. It will include a clear strategy and detailed tactics needed to realize the plan and will provide professional assistance in implementation including a realistic timeline, financing strategies, and next action steps. Each of the three to five site specific plans will include clear project definitions, concept plans, financial analysis/ proforma, ownership structures for the involved sites, a transaction structure and project schedule.

Other equally important outcomes are the actual agreements that will result from the planning work between various partners. In particular, clearly defined development parameters will guide all future development proposals. The adoption of the plan will result in the adoption of a proactive approach to Midtown development.

The implementation strategy components of the plan will be critical to taking Midtown visioning and planning far beyond previous efforts. The professional assistance of the selected firms will help in establishing financing districts and will help to build the capacity and framework to succeed in implementation.

Planning phases will be completed in 2010 and implementation phases will begin in 2011.

> Few will have the greatness to bend history itself; but each of us can work to change a small portion of events, and in the total; of all those acts will be written the history of this generation.
>
> *– Robert Kennedy*

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A HOUSE HISTORY: 4122 NORTH MERIDIAN STREET

By Tiffany Benedict Berkson

Sol Meyer and his brother Ferdinand A. Meyer built the 10,000 sq. ft. blonde brick Mediterranean Revival home located at 4122 N Meridian Street in 1922. Though little is known about most of its former residents, the life of its builder is well documented.

Sol Meyer was born in Fort Recovery, Ohio on October 22, 1866. At age 14, he became a telegraph operator for the Lake Erie & Western Railroad, eventually working in the same capacity for the Western Union Telegraph Company in Portland and Richmond, IN and the at Pennsylvania Railroad in Richmond, IN. He arrived in Indianapolis in 1888, as an accountant for the Pennsylvania railroad working until 1893, when he retired to start a career in banking. In 1896, he and a cousin Sol S. Kiser established the Meyer-Kiser Corporation, which handled real estate, insurance, loan and investments. Eventually, the Indianapolis based Meyer-Kiser Bank was formed in 1906, with Sol Meyer as President. The bank was originally located at 28 E. Washington St. and later at 136 E. Washington St.

The Meyer-Kiser Bank financed many buildings comprising the early 20th century Indianapolis' skyline including: the Hotel Lincoln, Spink Arms Hotel, Methodist Hospital, Illinois Building, the Electric Building and the Roosevelt Building among several others. Sol Meyer owned the American Association Indianapolis Indians baseball team for about seven years (1907 – 1914), during which time; the famous pitcher Bull Durham was part of the team.

Sol Meyer selected the architectural firm of George and MacLucas to design side-by-side duplexes for his family, the other being located at 4118 N. Meridian St. (built in 1924). Though both Meyer homes are similar in style, they are architecturally distinct. 4122 is designed in the Mediterranean Revival style with 4118 in the Italian Renaissance style.

At 4122, the designers successfully created the illusion of an imposing single-family home, fit for a bank president, by enclosing the dual entrances in a vestibule with a single portal, an arched opening framed with Ionic columns and an elaborate iron door. This limestone doorway is balanced by first floor arched-head French doors with sidelights and second story paired casements. Additional details include a hipped tile roof, extended bracketed eaves, a raised basement, blonde-colored bricks, projecting sill and belt courses of limestone and wrought iron work.

A feature article on the home (see page 7) appeared in the Indianapolis Star on October 15, 1922. The article describes "modern" 1920's living with a focus on the homes 18 rooms, impressive living room, miniature ice plant, soft water service and the cozy children's room.

4122 N. Meridian Street

Sol Meyer and his wife Florence (nee Strauss of Washington, DC), along with sons Edward Meyer and Sol Meyer Jr. occupied the lower half, while Sol's eldest son Ferdinand S Meyer and wife Rosalind, along with their son James Meyer, occupied the upper half of the duplex for a period of years. The 1930 census notes the presence of a radio, as well as live-in servants in both households and places the homes value at $60,000. (About $754, 000 in 2010 dollars).

The family names become especially confusing because Ferdinand A. Meyer and family lived next door at 4118 N. Meridian (upper unit) and Leslie Meyer with his sister, Fannie Meyer (lower unit). Leslie Meyer owned the Home Furniture Company located at 301-3 E. Washington St.

With the crash of the stock market in 1929, the fortunes of the Meyer-Kiser bank fell on hard times leading to the eventual dissolution of the bank in the early 30's and the departure of the Meyer families from both 4122 and 4118 N. Meridian St. for Miami Beach, FL.

Sol Meyer passed away at age 73 in November 1939.

Little is known about later residents of 4122 N Meridian St., but included: Mr. MacGill, manager of Crane Company – dealing in valves and pipe fittings; Mr. Dithmer, at one time the secretary and treasurer of the Polar Ice & Fuel Company; Albert M Bristor, vice president & Treasurer of Union Title Company; Raymond R Mulvihill, vice president of United Collieries Inc. The surnames McClane, Valinet, Foster, Lipman, Maas, Winslow, Heifetz, Mosakowski and Cook appear as former residents.

The home was also featured as the St Margaret's Guild Decorator's Show House in 1979.

Current owners, Gaylon Melton, & Len Pilarski, relocated from Washington D.C. and bought 4122 N. Meridian St. in 2007, spending considerable time researching and renovating this remarkable house into what is now truly a single-family residence - one they are proud to call home.

Note: The current owners would love to hear from any one that can share photos stories or other information about there home. You can contact them at 317.352.2949.

LUXURY, WITHOUT OSTENTATION, TYPIFIED IN HOME BUILT FOR SOL MEYER ON NORTH MERIDIAN STREET

Courtesy of
The Indianapolis Sunday
Star, October 15, 1922

Beauty and Convenience of Arrangement Feature Construction of Modern Residence Divided Into Upper and Lower Apartments for Two Families

To one with the normal woman's curiosity – and this curiosity is by no means limited to the one sex – there is no doubt more or less wonder as to the interior of some Indianapolis homes that present a pleasing exterior. Perhaps there is a feeling that some of the North Meridian street houses are too large for real homes – that because from the outside, many of them seem almost like handsome public buildings, the interiors must be made up of large, empty looking rooms, gloomy corners and an atmosphere of dreary splendor.

Those who have had this impression will find the interior of the Sol Meyer home at 4122 North Meridian Street a delightful surprise, for from the cream tinted entrance hall to the shining white tiled kitchen it is a charming example of luxury combined with homelike comfort.

From the first glimpse of the exterior, in cream-colored brick, there is a suggestion of comfort which is accentuated by the architects George & MacLucas that break the otherwise formal line of the front. Even in summer their dark green is an effective touch against the light background of the brick and white stone of the entrance way, while in winter they take on added charm by their enduring verdancy when other shrubs are bare.

Has eighteen rooms

As many of the modern houses, the porches of the Meyer home were placed by the architects, George & MacLucas, on the north and south sides of the building, leaving the east front unbroken except for two tall French windows and the entrance way guarded by an ornamental iron gateway, the work of Ernest Melaun(?) of Indianapolis. This gateway opens into a small tiled portico from which one door leads into the lower floor apartment and another into the stairway leading to the upper apartment, the home of Mr. and Mrs. Ferd S Meyer. The apartments are of similar design, each containing nine rooms, three baths, a sun porch and a sleeping porch.

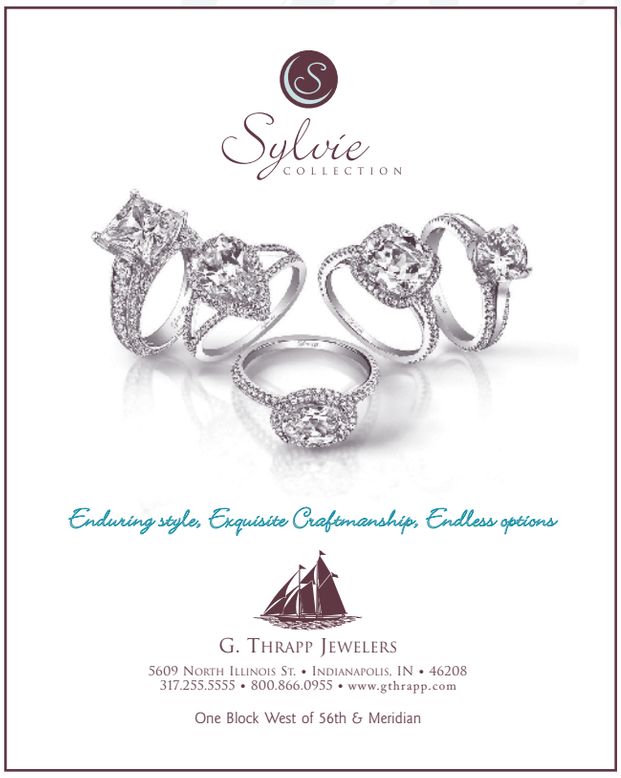
The first impression that one has upon entering the lower apartment is one of restful, cheerfulness, for the decorator, Thomas H Thompson, has made use of color throughout the entire house with the exception of the kitchen and baths. Here white tile, furnished by the Gates Mantel and Tile Company, has been employed. This company also furnished the black and white marble tiles that form the floor of the entrance hall and the long hallway leading from the front to the back of the house.

Opening off this entrance hall are three doors. One, a wide archway leads into the long living room on the left. Another opens into the dining room, and the third into a wrap closet where coats, umbrellas and other out-of-door needs, are kept conveniently at hand. There are three things about this closet that will probably attract a woman even sooner than the more impressive features of the house. The first is the long mirror covering the entire inside of the door, the second the generous sized window that lights this mirror and the closet and the last a low door at one end of the closet which opens to reveal the storeroom for the toys of Sol Meyer Jr., the youngest member of the family. It is but one of the touches which make a real home out of this big house.

Living Room Impressive

The size and somewhat formal furnishings of the living room, combined with the wide carved stone fireplace lend to that room an impressive dignity.

On the north side an equally delightful effect has been obtained in the many windowed breakfast room that opens off the dining room by the use of wicker furnishings in black touched with orange. These against the background of



LUXURY, WITHOUT OSTENTATION (CONT).

Courtesy of
The Indianapolis Sunday Star, October 15, 1922

cream-colored walls give an impression of colorful cheer that should start any day well.

From the breakfast room and dining room, doors open into the butler's pantry, along two sides of which cupboards and glass-doored china cabinets have been built to hold the dishes used in serving. The south wall of the kitchen too is built almost ceiling high with drawers enclosed shelves and a china cabinet, through the doors of which more dishes show in orderly rows. The entire kitchen in fact conveys an impression of spotless cleanliness. Shining white tile has been used for the side walls, the well-lighted sink seems a part of the background in its snowy enamel, and even the stove is of the unmarred whiteness that makes that kitchen necessity beautiful.

Miniature Ice Plant

But to most women the big nickel-trimmed white porcelain icebox is the object of greatest interest, exceeding, as it does, in convenience even the boxes built for outside icing. For in it a miniature ice plant freezes small cubes of ice for use whenever ice is needed and at the same time, by the Isko (?) system of refrigeration, the box is kept at an even low temperature. No iceman to clean up after, no drain pan to overflow, as drain pans have a way of doing – not even the disagreeable job of chopping the ice, with the resulting casualties of flying ice chips and lost pieces, for here are dainty frozen blocks ready for use.

Soft Water Service

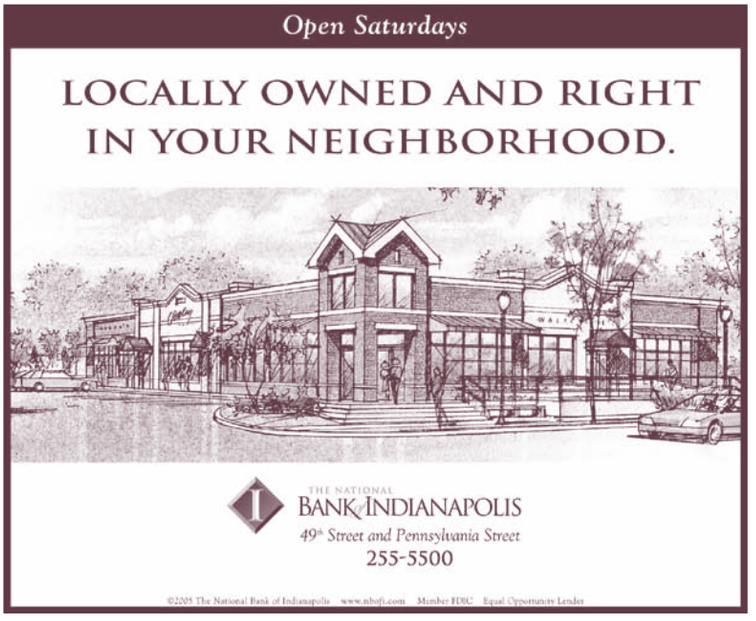
The same thoughtfulness which has been shown in the labor-saving equipment for the kitchen has been carried to the other side of the house, which is given over to bedrooms, and baths. The plural is used advisedly, for not only is there a luxurious tiled bath between the two large bedrooms, but another bath, only slightly smaller and equally well equipped, opens between the rear bedroom and the room set aside for the children of the family. So that when grimy boy hands are scrubbed, the smaller room temporarily bears the resulting high water marks. Neither is father's morning shave interrupted by a youthful voice insisting that "my teef need to be washed", for the children's bath provides for all their needs while a big mirror in the larger room, lighted during the day by a generous window on either side, and at night by a well directed light, bespeaks shaving comfort for the man of the house.

And speaking of comfort, what Indianapolis housewife would not rejoice in a convenience that is little short of a necessity in this town of which, as a cynical visitor once remarked, the hard water is the most noticeable feature – namely a soft water system? Not just soft water laboriously pumped at the kitchen sink, a bucketful at a time, but flowing, hot or cold, in the kitchen, bath, lavatory and laundry everywhere, in fact, that water is needed. A Permaltt (?) Water Softener in the basement, with a capacity of 1,700 gallons, is its source, with a 200 gallon Ruud water heater brings it to the desired degree of warmth. For drinking purposes a third faucet supplies city water.

Examining the bath room one of course notes the white marble floor, the glistening tiled walls, the admirable equipment of tub, shower and lavatory installed by Frien Brothers, the plumbers, but any one with the feminine eye for detail will observe two problems which belong particularly to the bath room – the problem of the elusive cake of soap and the fragile bathroom drinking glass. For he who has purged a cake of soap to the depths of the tub and landed it high and almost dry on the average bath tub, only to have it skid off into the depths again, will behold with keen appreciation the well-shaped recesses in the wall, one beside the tub and another beside the lavatory, from which even the slipperiest cake of soap can not escape unaided. As for the glass, a similar recess in the wall holds it securely out of the way of chance knocks that would send it to a disastrous end on the marble floor.

In the two big south windowed bedrooms generous clothes closets, fitted with many shelves, drawers and compartments for the storage of bedding have been provided, in addition to the bathroom linen closet. Since outside light in these closets was not available, the Hatfield Electric Company, which wired the house, has installed lights which are turned on as the door is opened, and off when the door is closed.

From the Spanish tile roof, a product of the Ludowini - Caledon (?) Company, guttered in copper by C Ott & Co., to the Ideal steam-heating plan, installed by the Warren-Webster Heating Company, no detail has been forgotten to provide beauty and comfort. The brick contractor, Edward H. Stevens employed Hytex (?) brick. Waxed hardwood floors, a product of the Eaglesfield Flooring Company, were laid by Julius Billo (?), J C (?) West, the general contractor, made up of lumber from the Indianapolis Lumber Company. The stone work used for trimming both the house and the ornamental gateway was done by Edward Dux. And the gateway, it seems is a fitting symbol of the entire home for it is only necessary to press a button on it to light the way from the entrance all along the wide graveled drive to the big garage in the rear. Luxury – yes but luxury which spells comfort more than ostentation.



RESEARCHING YOUR HOME'S HISTORY

by Len Pilarski

Regardless, of what originally attracts one into purchasing an older home, i.e.: location, architectural styling, or a sense that it is just right; one quickly finds oneself wondering "if these walls could talk". In many ways they do, revealing ever-changing design tastes through paint layers and wallpaper. What an "old house person" is really asking is what living life within these walls was really like. Homeowners want to know not only who previously owned their home, but who may have passed through it, what events shaped the life of these former residents and how did their home figure in the social and historic nature of the neighborhood or city where it is located. For those wanting to research their Indianapolis home for answers to these questions there are options. A great starting point is reading a copy of the "The Main Stem – the History & Architecture of North Meridian Street" from the local library or at the MSF website: www.meridianstreetfoundation.net.

For those who prefer a "DIY" approach, The Historic Landmarks Foundation offers a Historic House Research Handbook at www.historiclandmarks.org/help/PDFs/HHRH.pdf or by contacting the Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana at 800-450-4534 or 317-639-4534.

Another is to seek out the services of an avid local history enthusiast. Our featured "Old House" homeowners, did just that after relocating to Indianapolis and purchasing their Meridian Street home. "We would recommend this approach to those unfamiliar with the local resources available or for those with little personal time. A June 2007 Indianapolis Star article lead us to contact Tiffany Benedict Berkson at www.homehistoryhunter.vpweb.com". Ms. Berkson charges a $45 per hour basic fee, and offers 3 levels of package options available for $59 - $149.

MSF MEMBERSHIP

by Nancy Whitaker

In 2009, I was encouraged by the number of people who responded to our outreach for help through MSF membership enrollment and renewal. Many thanks go to each and every member. There are approximately 720 addresses (residential and business) in the MSF area. Nearly 22% of the addresses are currently members of MSF. At this time, I would like to take the opportunity to thank and welcome again the NEW MEMBERS listed below who recently joined MSF.

Let's make 2010 a record year for membership! Fifty years after MSF was founded in 1960, our neighborhood is a vibrant community known for its architectural revival homes, beautifully landscaped yards and gardens, and year-round volunteer and social events that strengthen and enhance our community. I am confident that the founding members of MSF would be proud of our efforts and accomplishments since the seventies. Please help us now in our efforts so future residents can continue to be able to make this same proclamation in years to come. Just think of what might be accomplished if we could double our membership. . . .Please add your name to our roster if you have not done so already.

Starting in February, Kathy Williams will be taking over as membership chair. Please feel free to contact Kathy Williams (317.255.5305; drwandfamily@sbcglobal.net) with membership questions. As a new member of the MSF Board of Directors, Kathy is eager to use this opportunity as membership chair to get to know more of her neighbors. MSF welcomes Kathy's energy and friendly attitude.

Please join us as we embark on the next 50 years. Please find the MSF membership envelope enclosed in this Newsletter and mail your tax-deductible membership or renewal TODAY. Thank you.

Jeff and Dana Cooper (Benefactor)
Steve and Kris Duncan (Benefactor)
Donald and Beth Viellieu Fischer
Bernard Frechtman (Benefactor)
Lawrence Grein
James and Sarah Johnston
Andrew and Christina Klineman
Janet Knall
Ted and Lynn Kramer
Christina Morris
Thomas and Julie Shortridge (Benefactor)
Milton and Inda Singer
and
an Anonymous Member

MERIDIAN STREET FOUNDATION
10th Annual Neighborhood Easter Egg Hunt

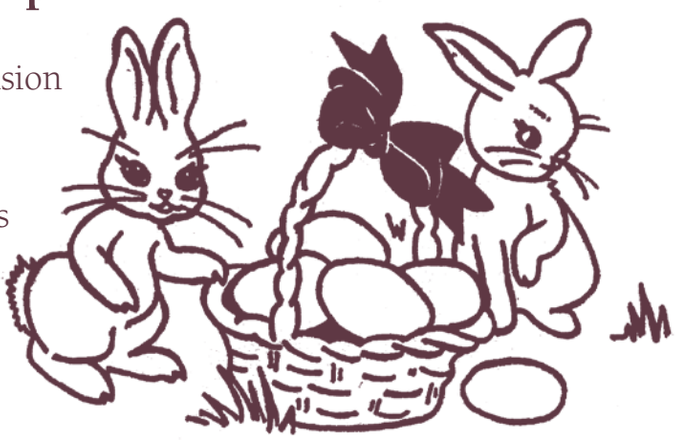
A tradition dating back to the 1950's when the Governor of Indiana sponsored an Easter Egg Hunt on the lawn at 4343

Saturday, April 3, 2010 at 3:00 pm

Preschool and elementary children
On the front lawn of the Old Governor's Mansion
4343 North Meridian Street

Bring your own basket and camera for photos with the Easter Bunny

$3.00 (per child) donation at the door
Space Limited!
Parking on East side of Meridian



RSVP Required Elaine Klein garden006@aol.com or 283.1835
Rain or Shine or Snow

REAL ESTATE ROUNDUP

By G.B. Landrigan, Realtor

North Meridian Street	North Illinois Street	North Pennsylvania Street	Cross-Streets
Number of Homes On Market: 8	Number of Homes On Market: 9*	Number of Homes On Market: 8	Number of Homes On Market: 3
Median List Price: $574,900	Median List Price: $275,000	Median List Price: $555,000	Median List Price: $399,900
Number of Pendings: 0	Number of Pendings: 0	Number of Pendings: 0	Number of Pendings: 0
Number of Sold Homes: 2	Number of Sold Homes: 4	Number of Sold Homes: 5	Number of Sold Homes: 1
Median Sales Price: $381,250	Median Sales Price: $268,750*	Median Sales Price: $380,000	Median Sales Price: $254,900

**-Two properties were not included in this figure as their published sales prices were artificially low due to extenuating circumstances. All statistics are from the Metropolitan Indianapolis Board of Realtors' Broker Listing Co-Operative (BLC) and were gathered the evening of 1/21/2010. While deemed reliable, the statistics are not guaranteed.*

While Meridian Street Foundation - area Realtors are generally an optimistic bunch, they have good reason to be for the coming spring market. The property tax episode is largely past and the housing market has begun to stabilize. The number of homes for sale in the area is average, if not just a bit lower, while interest rates continue to be remarkably low. Perhaps most important is a "sense" that many people have been waiting a bit longer to move than they had wished and are now testing the waters.

Lest this sound as if it were a paid advertisement from the Realtors' trade association, it should be made quite clear that selling prices are not what they were two to three years ago. Some of this is certainly due to a particular home receiving less than it previously would have done. But many of us see that much of the activity has simply been in the lower price ranges of the area's market rather than the upper portion. As the inventory of the lower half is sold, many of us believe - with good evidence - that the move-up/ larger home market will also rebound rather nicely.

UPCOMING EVENTS

MSF 50TH ANNIVERSARY PARTY

Saturday, March 6, 5:00-9:00PM

Meridian Street Foundation members, please join us as we mark 50 years of neighborhood preservation with a jazz-age tribute to Meridian Street at the home of Len Pilarski and Gaylon Melton, 4122 N. Meridian Street. Mingle with neighbors and tour the beautifully restored home on historic Meridian Street. Parking on West side of Meridian. Cost $30 per person/$50 couple. Heavy Hors d'Oeuvres will be served. Wine will be provided. RSVP Required to Elaine Klein at garden006@aol.com or 283-1835 by February 23rd

**If you are not already a member of MSF, join now and join the party! See enclosed membership envelope for details.

EASTER EGG HUNT "PREP" PARTY

Tuesday, March 23, 6:00-9:00PM

Help the Easter Bunny stuff eggs! Bring your favorite bag(s) of candy to the Klein's house, 4343 N. Meridian and help fill the eggs and goodie bags. Pizza and soda fountain treats will be provided. RSVP to Elaine Klein at garden006@aol.com or 283-1835

10TH ANNUAL EASTER EGG HUNT

Saturday, April 3, 3:00PM

It's a Meridian Street tradition dating back to the 1950's when the Governor of Indiana sponsored an Easter Egg Hunt on the lawn at 4343. Now hosted by neighbors, John and Elaine Klein, please bring the kids, and their Easter baskets to the front lawn of the Old Governor's Mansion at 4343 N. Meridian Street. A $3.00 (per child) donation will be requested at the door. Come early, space is limited! Parking on East side of Meridian.

MSF SUMMER PICNIC

Sunday, June 6, 3:00PM (Location TBD)

MSF ANNUAL MEETING & 50TH ANNIVERSARY GALA

Saturday, October 16 (Time and Location TBD)

REFERENCE NUMBERS

Meridian St. Preservation Commission (MSPC), Chair
Bob Wilch, 327-5115
bwilch@indygov.org

MSPC, Staff
Connie Zeigler, 955-0377
conniezeigler@sbcglobal.net

Neighborhood Organizations
Butler Tarkington Neighborhood Association, 925-1110

Meridian Kessler Neighborhood Association, 283-1021

City Government Contacts
Indianapolis Mayor – Greg Ballard
317-327-3601

Mayor's Action Center
317-327-4622 (4MAC)

Washington Township Neighborhood Liaison - Catherine Moore
317-327-5380
cmoore2@indygov.org

City-County Councillors at Large
City-County Council office
317-327-4242
Ed Coleman 317-691-4505
Barb Malone 317-513-9658
Joanne Sanders 317-283-6040
Kent Smith 317-327-4242

City-County Councillor, District 9 - Monroe Gray, Jr.
(MSF area south of 56th Street)
317-327-4242 Office
317-297-1155 Home
mgray@indygov.org

City-County Councillor, District 2 - Ryan Vaughn
(MSF area north of 56th Street)
317-437-7701
rvaughn@btlaw.com

State Government Contacts
State Representative, District 86 – Ed Delaney
(MSF area south of 52nd Street)
317-232-9600
H86@in.gov

State Representative, District 87 - Cindy Noe
(MSF area north of 52nd Street)
317-232-9607
h87@IN.gov

State Senator, District 33 - Gregg Taylor
(MSF area south of 43rd Street)
317-382-9467

State Senator, District 30 – Scott Schneider
(MSF area north of 43rd Street)
317-232-9400

Indiana Governor - Mitch Daniels
317-232-4567

Federal Government Contacts
U.S. Representative, 7th District - Andre Carson
317-283-6516 (Indianapolis, IN)
202-225-4011 (Washington, D.C.)

U.S. Senator - Evan Bayh
317-554-0750 (Indianapolis, IN)
202-224-5623 (Washington, D.C.)

U.S. Senator - Richard Lugar
317-226-5555 (Indianapolis, IN)
202-224-4814 (Washington, D.C.)

MERIDIAN STREET FOUNDATION
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Indianapolis, Indiana 46208

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MSF 50TH Anniversary Kick-off Event

Saturday, March 6, 5:00-9:00pm

At the Home of Len Pilarski and Gaylon Melton
4122 N. Meridian Street (Parking on west side of Meridian)

Featured as this edition's "Historic Home", this 1922 home is unique in that it is one of only two known duplexes located along Meridian Street between 40th and Westfield. Over the year's, this home has fascinated many with the challenge of what to do with two of everything. After almost two years of renovation, the duplex is gone and it is a blend of classic and contemporary styling. Don't miss this opportunity to Mingle with neighbors and tour this beautifully restored home on historic Meridian Street.

If you are not already a member of MSF, join now and join us at the kick-off party. Membership application is enclosed

Cost $30 per person/$50 couple.
Heavy Hors d'oeuvres will be served. Wine will be provided.
RSVP required to Elaine Klein at garden006@aol.com or 283-1835 by February 23rd

50 1960 2010 YEARS of greatness
MERIDIAN STREET FOUNDATION

The Meridian Street Foundation is a charitable 501(c)(3) 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.