The Anderson-Webster House

Built in 1912, the Anderson-Webster House embodies the American Arts & Crafts aesthetic with the prominent use of black basalt rock for house and grounds, cobbled clinker brick, half-timbering, and leaded glass windows. Notable architectural details include a prominent chimney clad in clinker brick, and thick, cobbled clinker brick porch piers, deep, overhanging eaves and exposed rafters, original windows, and a wide front porch that seems even wider as it attaches to a porte cochere (covered car port). An original massive oak front door opens to an interior which retains many original features (oak floors, wide moldings, fireplaces, leaded windows) and is beautifully furnished with American and European antiques and artwork.

The Arts & Crafts Movement evolved in England from about 1850 to 1900 when all things mass-produced were rejected in favor of hand-craftsmanship. In America, it emphasized a “back to Nature” theme and the use of natural materials and ground-hugging organic designs.

Designed by the Ballard Plannery Company, which practiced in Spokane from 1908 to 1925, the house was described in a 1914 Spokesman-Review article as “one of the most attractive” homes built in Cliff Park. Construction cost for the property was reported at $14,000—about 10 times more than the average house price at that time. Now owned by Judy Stone, it was built for Hannah & John Anderson, a Spokane civil engineer, who later sold the house to Margaret & J. Stanley Webster, a former congressman and United States District Court Judge. The Anderson-Webster House is listed on the National, Washington State, and Spokane registers.
SPA President’s Message
What Is Your Preservation Story?

In this issue we are focusing on 100-year-old houses. You know those walls could tell stories, if they could talk! But what about you? What is your preservation story? Why are you a member of SPA?

My story started in Santa Barbara. Growing up there I heard adults talk about “the city fathers” who made everyone build in the Spanish Colonial style, but I didn’t think much about it. Then Larry and I moved to Lexington, Kentucky, a beautiful old city, old at least by American standards. I really fell in love with the red brick buildings, a lot of them experiencing “adaptive re-use” like our favorite bar, where we learned the secret to making great Irish coffees. Between 1972 and 1980, urban renewal came to Lexington, which meant historic buildings were torn down to make the city look more progressive. They tore down the grand old hotel, not realizing they were also tearing down the places that made downtown Lexington unique, that gave it a sense of place. Sure, they saved a couple of them, like the Opera House, but they were curiosities, not real buildings.

When we moved to Sacramento, a state capital where you might expect to find some sense of history, it wasn’t there. There was an old house billed as the Governor’s Mansion, but the Governor actually lived in a modern house in the suburbs. Old Town was where you took visitors, but you never had the feeling it was real. California, my home state, keeps reinventing itself and historic architecture suffers.

Then we moved to Spokane and were once again surrounded by beautiful old buildings. Spokane continues to grow and new houses and buildings are going up, but sometimes a new business will start up in an old building, and that makes me happy! What makes me feel like my preservation story is here is the wonderful downtown that is still standing, and the great neighborhoods that give kids a sense of place, even when they have no idea what that means.

I look forward to hearing your stories as we work together to preserve Spokane.

Linda Milsow

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When SPA’s Board hired me as Executive Coordinator, it was the fulfillment of a nearly 20 year quest to work in Historic Preservation. Even as a child I loved old buildings and clearly remember when an historic Queen Anne funeral parlor was demolished near my elementary school to put in a gas station. Many (many!) years later, after earning a bachelor’s degree in History, I was accepted into the Historic Preservation Master’s Program at the University of Oregon. Shortly before graduation, I met my State Park manager husband and moved to North Idaho to begin our life together. It was while writing my thesis that I found SPA’s website and marveled that there was an organization in Spokane which advocated for the local built environment.

I have to admit, no class I took at the U of O prepared me to work for a widely popular nonprofit historic preservation advocacy organization. I had studied the history of architecture, legal and economic issues in preservation, field recordation, research methods, theory, etc. But it is working here that I have learned so much of how preservation works in real life. Preservation is complicated – it is muddied by economic, legal, cultural and political issues. One can easily see these complications by looking at the YMCA building debate, for example.

But I’ve learned the secret to how it works – it’s the people! It’s the people of SPA, members and volunteers, who over the years have dedicated countless hours to saving historic buildings and landscapes, who make all the difference! It’s the people who voice their concerns in a multitude of ways on many preservation related issues. Governments, legislation, incentives and ordinances have very important roles in the preservation of our historic built environment, but it’s the vocal groundswell of opposition to the demolition of a building that can change the path of history! It’s the people who can change minds and hearts.

Every morning, as I walk to the post office by a different route, I learn more of the historic buildings downtown. I marvel at what Spokane still has standing. Many cities of this size and age have lost their historic architectural icons. We are lucky to have so many hardworking members and volunteers acting as sentinels watching over these architectural artifacts from our historic past. I’m proud to work for you!
Even in a city crammed with charming Craftsman bungalows, the 1910 Weaver House is a stunner. And as bungalows go, the cedar-shingled, two-story, 5-bedroom house with over 3000 square feet of living space is a “bungalow on steroids,” says owner Louise Kodis, who bought the house in 1979. Since then, Kodis’ home has also been her studio, where she creates the award-winning textile pieces for which she is so well known. Kodis says she discovered the house by chance, walking home one day. Seeing it was for sale, she quickly arranged to see it, and knew within the hour that she should buy it. This July, she threw the Gypsygarden House, as she calls it, a party to celebrate its 100th birthday, inviting dozens of friends and neighbors and “people addicted to old houses.”

In 1909, lots 18 and 19 in the South Side Cable Addition lay undeveloped, part of the rough and rocky Manito Plateau, still mostly thick stands of pine and cedar, dotted by outcroppings of basalt. That same year, Nebraska natives Lawrence and Lydia Weaver came to Spokane in search of opportunity, bought the property for $1500, hired Spokane architect Alfred Jones to design a home for a large family that was both beautiful and practical, and moved into it the following year. Built for $10,000, the house far exceeded the minimum cost of $2500 called for in the covenant of the upscale subdivision. Lawrence Weaver found success raising cattle and sheep and cultivating extensive fruit orchards in the Wenatchee Valley while Lydia raised their four daughters and two sons: Polly, Persis, Mary, Margaret, John and Robert. The couple stayed in the house they had built until their deaths in the 1960s.

In 1910, the Spokesman-Review praised the Weavers’ new home for its features and proportions, which lent “to the motif of convenience and beauty.” Louise Kodis agrees, saying that the Arts and Crafts tradition favored useful, working spaces, which is how the artist sees her home. The Weaver’s dining room now displays the pieces of her latest project and the living room holds her work table and stores the many colorful fabrics and materials she needs. Then there are the collections: vintage cookie cutters in the kitchen where the ironing board once lived, hand mirrors, pitchers that ring the shelf of the ground floor nursery, a wall of a hallway with a collection of framed mirrors, and of course, examples of her art are everywhere. Kodis has filled the garden with the same sense of
abundance and informality, a welcoming place to invite guests, for whom she loves to cook and entertain. In the warm August days, Kodis is busy creating her next project, a September installation at the Jundt Museum, and the tranquil house continues its useful, working life.

**SPOKANE CENTENARIANS: THE TABER-OTT HOUSE**

*by Suzanne Schreiner*

When Dr. Samuel and Jane Joseph came to Spokane to look for a house in 1989, their realtor said there was a special house they should see, but they had better do it quickly or it would be gone. Almost as soon as they arrived at the 1910 Craftsman with its gabled roof and wrap-around porch they knew it should be their home. In 2010, as the house turns 100 years old, Jane Joseph says she can’t even put into words what the house means to the family. They raised their three daughters here, and Sam established his career. Over the years, they restored some original features to the home and made sure improvements were in keeping with its historic style.
When they remodeled the kitchen in the early 1990s, Jane learned of a 1925 Magic Chef eight-burner stove from her sister. Knowing it would be a perfect focal point for the room, she had it shipped to Spokane and architect (and future SPA member) Gary Lauerman designed the new kitchen around it, even though a chimney had to come out to make room for the old workhorse.

The home also carries some Spokane history in its past. One of the early houses in the exclusive Rockwood development, it was designed by prolific Spokane architect W.W. Hyslop for E.G. Taber, the chief engineer for the Spokane International Railway from 1907 to 1940. In 1927, Taber married his second wife, Anna Stratton Browne, the widow of Spokane pioneer and developer J.J. Browne, for whom Browne’s addition is named. The Browne’s came to the tiny community of Spokan Falls in 1878, when it had only a few pioneer families, and lived through poverty to become wealthy as Spokane grew. Anna died in 1936 and Taber lived in the house until his death in 1946.

In 1948, Franklin and Margie May Ott bought the house. Franklin was a successful wheat farmer in the Palouse and Margie May, of course, was the pianist and teacher who became so well known in Spokane’s musical circles. For decades, scores of piano students came to the Rockwood neighborhood home and cooled their heels in Margie May’s living room, awaiting their turn on one of the two grand pianos that dominated the dining room.

Eventually, the Josephs came to know Margie May Ott and they enjoy their home’s piece of local history, but for them, Jane says, it remains what it has always been, “just a wonderful family home.”
1894 Victorian house, Logan neighborhood.

On Saturday, July 17th, 58 volunteers put in a combined 311 hours toiling on the windows of this 1917 Catholic landmark on a foothill north of Bigelow Gulch. We made phenomenal progress. Mike Prager wrote a great article on the project in the Spokesman-Review: http://www.spokesman.com/stories/2010/jul/03/glass-from-the-past/

This house MAY be available to be moved to a new location for little or no purchase cost. If you are interested please leave a message with Dave at 535-3201.

**Mount St. Michael**

**Storm Windows Project**

*by Gary Lauerman*

On Saturday, July 17th, 58 volunteers put in a combined 311 hours toiling on the windows of this 1917 Catholic landmark on a foothill north of Bigelow Gulch. We made phenomenal progress.

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SPA MISSION STATEMENT
Spokane Preservation Advocates is dedicated to preserving Spokane’s historic buildings, neighborhoods, landscapes and character.

BUS TRIP TO HISTORIC WALLA WALLA

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There is considerable history in this community and we’ll visit historic neighborhoods, with a local guide. Wine has become an important industry here and we’ll have time to visit many of the local wineries. Saturday morning, we’ll tour the Kirkman Museum with curator Greer Buchanan. Built in 1880 as a private residence, it became a museum in 1977 through the efforts of local citizens and has been restored to Victorian style. After lunch, a local guide will show us though some of Walla Walla’s historic neighborhoods and there will be time to explore the many wineries and shops in the delightful downtown. On Sunday, we’ll tour some of the outlying wineries in the area.