

## MIDWEST OFFICE - HIGHLIGHTS

January 2007

### SAVING HISTORIC PLACES

The potential demolition of up to 161 historic structures on the **Mark Twain National Forest** in southern **Missouri**, which could result in one of the largest losses of federally owned property in the history of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), prompted the MWO to engage deeply with the Mark Twain National Forest as they developed a **Programmatic Agreement** to guide future treatment of these historic properties. The current Programmatic Agreement and **Facilities Master Plan** do not sufficiently address the Forest's responsibilities under the NHPA. Throughout the ongoing consultation, the MWO has been working closely with **the Public Lands Initiative team**, the **Law Department**, and the **Advisory Council for Historic Preservation**. The MWO is advocating for a stronger Programmatic Agreement that considers all mitigation strategies, along with a re-evaluation of the Facilities Master Plan to provide more alternatives and appropriate protective measures for the Forest's legacy of cultural resources.



*Markham House  
Mark Twain National Forest  
Missouri*

**Nicollet Island**, located in the heart of the St. Anthony Falls National Register Historic district in Minneapolis, is a significant part of the City's nineteenth-century riverfront milling district that developed around the Falls. Beginning in 2005, the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board and DeLaSalle High School began exploring the option of building a new stadium on Nicollet Island, which would significantly alter the character of the island. The Midwest Office joined our statewide partner the **Preservation Alliance of Minnesota**, the **Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office**, the **National Park Service**, the **Friends of the Riverfront**, and many others in objecting to the new stadium, whose scale and siting are inappropriate for the Island and not in compliance with the guidelines for the Historic District. While the objections of these organizations were critical in the decision of the Minneapolis Heritage Preservation Commission to deny the application for the stadium, their decision was overturned by the Minneapolis Planning Commission and the City Council. The Friends of the Riverfront elected to challenge the actions of the City and have filed suit, claiming that the City did not follow the proper procedures in overturning the decision of the Commission. Both the **Preservation Alliance** and the **National Trust** have joined the lawsuit as co-plaintiffs to demonstrate to the City administration the importance of maintaining the integrity of the regulatory review process and the decisions of the Heritage Preservation Commission.



*Nicollet Island  
Minneapolis, MN  
NPS Boundary Map*



### **REVITALIZE COMMUNITIES**

This fall Mayor Richard Daley formally announced the **Chicago Greystone Initiative**, making available \$1.3M in preservation grants and loans targeted to that unique building type in Chicago's North Lawndale neighborhood. The Midwest Office helped develop that program and is now engaged in promotion of the program and education of property owners on appropriate care and renovation of Chicago Greystones in partnership with **Neighborhood Housing Services** and the **City Design Center of the University of Illinois, Chicago**.

### **ENGAGE THE PUBLIC**

**Eleutherian College**, founded in 1848 in Lancaster Village, Indiana (pop. 200), was listed as one of the **National Trust's 11 Most Endangered Places in 2005**. That listing has played a vital role in the College's ability to attract attention and financial assistance, according to Jae Breitweiser, founder and president of Historic Eleutherian College, Inc. People from across the nation have been drawn to the landmark site by its unique and important story, donating their time, talents, and money. Hampton Hotels' *Explore the Highway with Hampton(R) Save-A-Landmark* program provided \$15,000 for site improvements and 20 employee-volunteers from Indiana, Ohio and Kentucky to help with the work. Schoolchildren from Madison Consolidated High School history classes and students at Southwestern wrote letters of support for Eleutherian College's successful application for State of Indiana grant funds. A local African American construction firm jumped at the chance to act as general contractor for the project, although this was an expanded role for the firm, and many subcontractors have submitted pared down bids just for the opportunity to work on such an outstanding site.



*Example of the rich architectural resources at Eleutherian College Lancaster Village, IN*

### **LEAD THE PRESERVATION MOVEMENT**

For the past year, the Midwest Office has been consulting with the **Milwaukee Preservation Alliance (MPA)**. This fledgling group, which began meeting in January 2003, plays a critically important role as the only preservation advocacy group in Wisconsin's largest city. MPA began as a follow up to meetings with former Mayor John Norquist about preservation advocacy and staff cuts made to the city's historic preservation personnel. It was determined that the time had come for a unified effort to educate and influence policy makers, developers and neighborhood groups on the benefits of preservation. By facilitating a series of strategic planning sessions with MPA, the Midwest Office is helping the board reexamine where the organization has been in order to better understand their future. Through this strategic planning approach, the MPA board is seeking to better define the group's mission and goals, reconnect with and build a stronger support base, and develop a pro-active relationship with local politicians and policy makers, developers, neighborhood groups, and the business sector.

Although **Main Street** is a part of the National Trust, our state Main Street programs and individual Main Street towns often don't make use of the tools offered through the Midwest Office. In the summer of 2006, the **Midwest Office** began collaborating with **Illinois Main Street** to introduce Main Street communities to our many programs, training tools, and grant opportunities that could be of benefit to them. This year Midwest Office staff accompanied Illinois Main Street staff on their two regional training sessions in Rockford and the Midway area of Chicago, presenting an overview of Trust resources and financial incentives. Staff also attended several Main Street site visits to speak with local non-profits and property owners about the use of the **Donnelley Preservation Fund**, the **Federal Rehabilitation Tax Credit**, and the



Rockford downtown  
Rockford, IL

Trust's allocation of **New Market Tax Credits**. This November, staff presented a grant-writing workshop at the **State Main Street Conference**, which was designed to help Main Street coordinators learn the basics of writing a strong grant application, as well as the specific information required when completing one of the Trust's grant applications. The session was very successful, encouraging dozens of Main Street communities to apply to the Midwest Office for assistance with their projects or programs in the future.

### **FUNDING FOR PRESERVATION BY THE NATIONAL TRUST**

Once again, the **Jeffris Family Foundation** of Wisconsin has demonstrated its commitment to historic preservation in Wisconsin. Recognizing the value of preservation education and networking, especially for preservationists working in small communities, the Foundation endowed two scholarship funds for the 2008 National Preservation Conference in Minneapolis and Preservation Leadership Training which will be held in Minnesota. It is anticipated that the scholarship will enable preservationists from small communities, with limited resources, to attend these important events. In addition, the Foundation has provided funding for two intensive workshops on Historic House Museums and Revitalizing Historic Theaters which will take place in 2007-2008. Both workshops are now in early planning stages

The Midwest Office has been participating in the **Illinois Initiative on Recent Past Architecture (IIRPA)**, a consortium of numerous local, state, and national preservation organizations focused on the preservation of 20th century resources, including our statewide partner **Landmarks Illinois, DOCOMOMO Midwest**, the **Recent Past Network**, the **Illinois Historic Preservation Agency (IHPA)**, **Preservation Chicago**, and others. The group has been focused on the identification of threatened historic resources in and around the Chicago metro area,



developing a survey form to facilitate the documentation of these resources by volunteers. As a continuation of our work with IIRPA, the MWO provided a Kohler grant to the **School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC)** and **Landmarks Illinois** to support the development of a graduate course that surveyed recent past resources in the Chicago area. The students, working with Landmarks Illinois, IHPA, and the Wisconsin Field Office, designed a methodology and survey form to document hundreds of buildings in 17 suburban towns north of Chicago. The resulting database will be linked to a mapping system and made available on-line in early 2007 through the Landmarks Illinois website, along with rest of the course information, which will serve as a much-needed model for additional recent past survey work in Illinois and across our region.