

A newsletter on historic preservation from the State Historic Preservation Office of the Minnesota Historical Society.

## Meetings and Workshops

### April 17

SHPO Workshop for State/Federal Agencies, 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m., Minnesota Landscape Arboretum, Chanhassen. This workshop is intended for state and federal cultural resource staff and historical and archaeological consultants. Registration information will be mailed in late March. For details call Kelly Gragg-Johnson, 651-259-3455, or e-mail [kelly.graggjohnson@mnhs.org](mailto:kelly.graggjohnson@mnhs.org).

### May 20

State Review Board meeting, 7 p.m., Minnesota History Center, 345 Kellogg Blvd. W., St. Paul. For agenda information call Michele Decker, 651-259-3450.

### July 10-13

National Alliance of Preservation Commissions Forum, Astor Crowne Plaza, New Orleans. The NAPC Forum is the only national conference dedicated to local preservation commissions and their issues. For information go to [www.uga.edu/sed/ps0/programs/napc/forum2008.htm](http://www.uga.edu/sed/ps0/programs/napc/forum2008.htm).

### May is Preservation Month

Preservation Month serves as a showcase for historic preservation successes nationwide. This year's theme: "Preservation in Progress." For tips on planning Preservation Month events, visit the web site of the National Trust for Historic Preservation at [www.nationaltrust.org/preservationmonth](http://www.nationaltrust.org/preservationmonth). To publicize your events, e-mail [localhistorynews@mnhs.org](mailto:localhistorynews@mnhs.org). Include the event name, date, time, location, a brief description, sponsors and contact information.

## Preparing for the unthinkable

by Britta L. Bloomberg, Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

In August 2007, severe flooding hit southeastern Minnesota. The damage was widespread, inundating roads and bridges as well as buildings. Gov. Tim Pawlenty called a special session of the Minnesota Legislature, which passed a recovery package that included \$250,000 for owners of damaged historic properties.

The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) is administering these funds and has joined other state and federal agencies on the Minnesota Recovers Task Force to assist affected communities in their recovery – a process expected to last for months. The legislative appropriation gives owners of historic properties throughout the region a place to turn

to after exhausting other sources of assistance. The majority of the requests for help have come from the hard-hit city of Rushford in Fillmore County, a community rich in historic buildings.

### Taking steps

Unfortunately, disasters – and the damage to historic properties that ensues – are all too common. Historic buildings are especially vulnerable because of their prominent locations, design and fragile materials. While you can't prevent the unthinkable from happening in your community, you can take steps to be prepared for an emergency.

**Preparing for the unthinkable –**  
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*Rushford was especially hard hit by the August 2007 floods. Among historic buildings receiving financial assistance are two National Register properties – the Rushford City Mill and the Southern Minnesota Depot, which houses the Rushford Area Historical Society.*

## Preparing for the unthinkable – continued

Following the floods of 1997 and the tornadoes of 1998, the SHPO developed a disaster plan for historic properties to assist community leaders and property owners. It can be found on the Minnesota Historical Society web site at [www.mnhs.org/shpo/disaster/index.htm](http://www.mnhs.org/shpo/disaster/index.htm). But not every community has made use of the plan. Our recent experiences in southeastern Minnesota made me realize it was time once again to call attention to the plan and reiterate the importance of being prepared.

### Planning is essential

When disaster strikes, it is essential to know what to do, how to start and where to go for help. Unless assessment and remedial action are taken immediately, irreplaceable historic resources will be lost.

It is perhaps most important to remember not to make hasty decisions about the future of damaged properties but to take time to seek expert guidance. While your situation may seem overwhelming at first, even severely damaged properties

can be rehabilitated with careful planning and sensitive attention. Too often we see buildings demolished before historic preservation solutions have been explored.

*Before* a disaster strikes is the time for property owners, neighborhoods and communities to get organized and prepare a disaster plan. As Minnesota steels itself for spring floods and the tornado season, make time now to familiarize yourself with steps you can take to be prepared. Disaster preparedness is everyone's responsibility. ■

# Red Wing selected one of National Trust's Dozen Distinctive Destinations

Red Wing, a popular destination for travelers to southern Minnesota, boasts a rich history, well-preserved architecture and a picturesque setting on the Mississippi River near Barn Bluff. In recognition of these and other distinctive traits, the National Trust for Historic Preservation named the city one of its 2008 Dozen Distinctive Destinations, an annual list honoring the country's unique and lovingly preserved communities.

Red Wing is the first Minnesota city to receive the award. The city's rich history and culture have been preserved and interpreted for more than 20 years by the Red Wing Heritage Preservation Commission.

Distinctive Destination communities share a number of qualities:

- a sense of place and character,
- dynamic downtowns,
- interesting architecture,
- a strong commitment to historic preservation and revitalization,
- cultural diversity,

- an economic base of locally owned small businesses, and
- walking access for residents and visitors.

“It is encouraging to see communities so committed to the preservation of their historic landmarks, the revitalization of their downtown areas

and the protection of their unique heritage,” said Richard Moe, president of the National Trust. For other cities on the list, go to [www.nationaltrust.org/dozen\\_distinctive\\_destinations/](http://www.nationaltrust.org/dozen_distinctive_destinations/).

Congratulations, Red Wing! ■



View of Red Wing from Bay Point Park.

City of Red Wing

# Saved

**Goodhue County:** Red Wing City Hall (1905-6), Red Wing. This Renaissance Revival building designed by Lowell Lamoureux has housed the main offices of the City of Red Wing for more than 100 years. Rehabilitation, funded in part by the State Capital Projects Grants-in-Aid program, included cleaning masonry and cleaning and repairing the decorative pressed-tin cornice and pediments.



City of Red Wing

Red Wing City Hall during (left) and after rehabilitation.

**Morrison County:** Our Lady of the Angels Academy (1911, 1931, 1951), Little Falls. Built as a parochial boarding school, Our Lady of the Angels Academy – vacant since 1974 – was rehabilitated into 24 apartments using federal preservation tax incentives. Work included repairing and repointing masonry; repairing windows, plaster and woodwork; installing a new elevator and mechanical equipment; and converting the gymnasium into a parking garage.



Our Lady of the Angels Academy before (left) and after rehabilitation as apartments.

# Registration

## Locally designated properties

Fifty-five Minnesota communities have local preservation ordinances that empower them to designate properties as historically or architecturally significant. Recently designated for protection locally:

**Duluth (St. Louis County):**

Alfred and Jane McCordic House

**Lake City (Wabasha County):**

James and Agnes Stout Cottage

**Little Falls (Morrison County):**

Crowder's Gas Station

**New Ulm (Brown County):**

August Epke House

**Taylors Falls (Chisago County):**

Kahbakong Cemetery



The Epke House (1929) is one of eight locally designated properties constructed by the Saffert Cement Construction Company, later known as the American Artstone Company of New Ulm. It features the company's trademark color scheme of red, green and yellow concrete blocks.



Built in 1872, the well-preserved, Gothic Revival-style Stout Cottage belonged to James and Agnes Stout, early settlers in Lake City. They owned and operated a successful dry goods mercantile and played important roles in developing the city in the late 19th century.

## About this publication

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[www.mnhs.org](http://www.mnhs.org)

# Preservation conference set for Sept. 19-20

Mark your calendars for Minnesota's 28th Annual Statewide Historic Preservation Conference, to be held Sept. 19-20 in Northfield. Sponsored by the State Historic Preservation Office, the conference will be hosted by the City of Northfield and the Northfield Heritage Preservation Commission in cooperation with the Northfield Historical Society, the Rice County Historical Society and the Northfield Area Chamber of Commerce.

The program features lectures and working sessions on a variety of historic preservation topics as well as tours of local sites. Watch for a postcard about the conference to be mailed later this spring; registration details will be available in the summer. For more

information, call SHPO at 651-259-3450 or e-mail [mnshpo@mnhs.org](mailto:mnshpo@mnhs.org). ■



*The Northfield Historic District, listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1979, will be the backdrop for this year's statewide historic preservation conference.*



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