



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

Photo by Don Patton



Long vacant, the buildings of Fort Snelling's Upper Post are in various states of decay.

## Fort Snelling's historic Upper Post named to Most Endangered Places list

In May the Upper Post of the Fort Snelling Historic District received the dubious honor of being named one of America's 11 Most Endangered Historic Places. It's a designation given annually by the National Trust for Historic Preservation to the nation's foremost historic places facing the most dire of threats. The announcement sends a call to action to save this significant place before it is lost forever.

The property, a once-active military base, sits across a highway from the 1820s Historic Fort Snelling, operated by the Minnesota Historical Society.

Construction of the Upper Post began in 1879 and continued into the early 1900s. During the first half of the 20th century, it served as a major national defense facility, a training site for officers during World War I and later a rehabilitation center for wounded veterans. In time, the Upper Post earned the moniker "Country Club of the Army" for the quality of its recreational and housing facilities. Remodeled before World War II, the post became an induction center for more than 300,000

**Upper Post** *continued on page 3*

## CALENDAR

### MEETINGS AND WORKSHOPS

**Sept. 27 - 29:** Minnesota's 27th Annual Statewide Historic Preservation Conference, Red Wing. See page 4 for details.

**Oct. 24:** State Review Board meeting, 7 p.m., Minnesota History Center, 345 Kellogg Blvd. W., St. Paul. For agenda information call Michele Decker, 651-296-5434.

**Oct. 31 - Nov. 5:** 59th National Preservation Conference, Pittsburgh, Pa. For more information go to [www.nthpconference.org](http://www.nthpconference.org).

### CAPITAL GRANTS

The Minnesota Historical Society's State Capital Projects Grants-in-Aid program will distribute approximately \$900,000 in matching grants for the 2007-08 biennium to county and local jurisdictions for historic preservation projects of a capital nature. Grant awards range in size from \$10,000 to \$150,000.

All seekers of capital grants must submit a preapplication. Priority is given to properties that are listed on the National Register of Historic Places or have been determined eligible for listing.

For eligibility requirements and application materials, go to [www.mnhs.org/capitalgrants](http://www.mnhs.org/capitalgrants); write the MHS Grants Office, 345 Kellogg Blvd. W., St. Paul, MN 55102-1906; call 651-296-5478; or fax 651-282-2374.

**July 28:** Preapplication due by 4:30 p.m.

**Sept. 1:** Grant application due by 4:30 p.m.

**Oct. 3:** Grants Review Committee meets.

# SAVED

**Dakota County: William G. LeDuc House (1862-65), Hastings.** Built for noted merchant, historian, promoter and Civil War veteran William LeDuc, this Gothic Villa estate has been restored as a museum. Project partners include the City of Hastings, Dakota County Historical Society, LeDuc - Simmons Foundation, MacDonald and Mack Architects, Scenic Byways Program, State of Minnesota and Minnesota Historical Society.



The LeDuc House before (left) and after restoration as the LeDuc Historic Estate, administered by the Dakota County Historical Society.

**Otter Tail County: Hotel Kaddatz (1914-15), Fergus Falls.** The Renaissance Revival Hotel Kaddatz was designed by George Hancock for merchant Charles Kaddatz to house U.S. District Court officials. Vacant since 1975, it was rehabilitated for mixed use by Artspace using federal preservation tax incentives. Work included cleaning and repointing brick, repairing windows and floors, and installing new mechanical systems and water service.



Hotel Kaddatz before (left) and after rehabilitation for mixed use.

# REGISTRATION

## Recent additions to the National Register of Historic Places

**Hennepin County: Chicago Milwaukee and St. Paul Railroad Grade Separation (1912-16), Corridor parallel to 29th St. between Humboldt Ave. S. and 20th Ave. S., Minneapolis.** Prepared by Andrea Vermeer and Will Stark.



Defining features of the 2.8-mile-long CM & SP transportation historic district include a trench through which the railroad passed, street bridges that span the trench and adjacent buildings that form its walls. The railway tracks have been replaced by a bituminous bicycle-and-pedestrian trail known as the Midtown Greenway.

**Lake of the Woods County: Canadian National Railways Depot (1923), 420 N. Main Ave., Baudette.** Prepared by Carmen Tschofen.

**Winona County: J. R. Watkins Medical Company Complex (1900-14), 150 Liberty St., Winona.** Prepared by Robert M. Frame III.



The Watkins Medical Company, pictured here in 1930, produced home remedies, spices and flavorings, cosmetics and perfumes, household cleaners and other products sold throughout the country by "Watkins Men." The complex's seven buildings include manufacturing and warehousing facilities and a 1911 administrative headquarters designed by Prairie School architect George Maher.

# Wanted: Multimillion-dollar citizen advice

There is your chance to advise the Legislative Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCMR) about future funding priorities for Minnesota's environment and natural resources. Beginning July 1,

2007, the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund will generate approximately \$22 million a year for two years for special projects, which can include historic resources. The

LCMR is seeking citizen input on ways to spend the money. Just log on to the LCMR web site at [www.lcmr.leg.mn/lcmr.htm](http://www.lcmr.leg.mn/lcmr.htm) and click on the Citizen Input Form.

## Upper Post *continued from page 1*

Minnesotans called to serve in the war.

After the war, the Army gradually abandoned the buildings of the Upper Post. Today, the 28 buildings remaining on the 141-acre site are vacant and deteriorating. These structures and the site they occupy, with its proximity to the airport and light-rail transportation, are ripe for preservation, development and reuse.

There is reason for hope: efforts are already underway to save and reuse Fort Snelling's Upper Post. For more than a year, a diverse group of agency partners, convened by the Department of Natural Resources and the Mississippi National

River and Recreation Area, has been meeting to discuss the site's future. Hennepin County has successfully leveraged resources and is working with the DNR to begin stabilization of some of the buildings. The addition of the property to the 11 Most Endangered Places list promises to galvanize these efforts and bring more voices and resources to the table.

The Upper Post is the third property in Minnesota to be named to the National Trust's list of endangered historic places. The 1997 list included the Stillwater Bridge over the St. Croix River, and in 2002 Minneapolis's Guthrie Theater, built in 1963, was deemed endangered. Coincidentally, there were significant developments related to both of those properties in the same week that the 2006 list of 11 Most Endangered Places was announced:

- After years of negotiations about the fate of the Stillwater Bridge among a myriad of stakeholders, the memorandum of agreement addressing all the historic resource issues related to the new St. Croix River crossing was finally signed. When the new bridge opens, the historic lift bridge will be rehabilitated and incorporated into a new recreational loop trail spanning the river.



**Nina M. Archabal (right), Minnesota's state historic preservation officer, signs the Stillwater Bridge memorandum of agreement with Cheryl Martin, cultural resources specialist for the Federal Highway Administration.**

- May 7 was closing night for "Hamlet," the final production at the Guthrie Theater building designed by Ralph Rapson. The theater company moved to its new home overlooking the Mississippi River in June. Despite local efforts to save the Rapson building, the Walker Art Center, which owns the site, plans to demolish the building this summer.

Preservationists at the Minnesota SHPO and elsewhere are hopeful that designation of the Fort Snelling Upper Post as endangered will bring renewed energy and commitment to efforts to secure a future for this imperiled National Historic Landmark. As those efforts continue to unfold, we will keep you informed of our progress.

*- Britta L. Bloomberg, Deputy  
State Historic Preservation Officer*

## Introducing...



David Mather has joined the staff of the State Historic Preservation Office as National Register

archaeologist. A Ph.D. candidate in interdisciplinary archaeological studies at the University of Minnesota, Mather holds a master's degree in environmental archaeology from Sheffield University in England. Founder of his own archaeological research company, he served as consulting archaeologist for the Mille Lacs Tribal Historic Preservation Office. Mather's research interests include zooarchaeology – the archaeology of animal bones.

### Minnesota Preservation Planner

is published four times a year by the State Historic Preservation Office of the Minnesota Historical Society, 345 Kellogg Blvd. W., St. Paul, MN 55102-1906. Material from this issue may be reprinted with the following credit line: Reprinted with permission from *Minnesota Preservation Planner*, published by the Minnesota Historical Society, Vol. XVII, No. 3, Summer 2006.

Upon request, this publication is available in alternative formats: audiotape, large print or computer disk. Back issues can be found online at [www.mnhs.org/about/publications/planner.html](http://www.mnhs.org/about/publications/planner.html).

Unless otherwise noted, photographic images in the Planner are from the State Historic Preservation Office, Minnesota Historical Society.

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This newsletter has been financed in part with federal funds from the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, through the Minnesota Historical Society under the provisions of the national Historic Preservation Act as amended. However, the contents and opinions do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the Department of the Interior, nor does the mention of trade names or commercial products constitute endorsement or recommendations by the Department of the Interior.

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# Red Wing to host preservation conference

The 27th Annual Statewide Historic Preservation Conference will be held Sept. 27 - 29 at the St. James Hotel in Red Wing. Among activities planned:

- Keynote address by Charles Birnbaum, coordinator of the National Park Service's Historic Landscapes Initiative.
- Presentations by staff of the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency on Main Street commercial buildings, and by Randy Wilson of Community Design Solutions on design as an agent for community change.
- Reception at the E. S. Hoyt House (1913), designed by Prairie School architects Purcell and Elmslie.
- Tours of Red Wing's downtown commercial buildings, archaeological sites, the State Training School, Tower View, Old Frontenac and more.



**Tower View, pictured ca.1950, was built for research botanist Alexander P. Anderson, who originated puffed cereals.**

In addition, the Preservation Alliance of Minnesota will present its annual preservation awards at the Sheldon Theatre.

Registration materials will be mailed soon. They are also available online at [www.mnhs.org/presconf](http://www.mnhs.org/presconf). For more information call the State Historic Preservation Office, 651-296-5434.

## Minnesota Historical Society

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