



# The DELPHI COLUMNS



## Masonic Temple Building

### Mission

The mission of the Delphi Preservation Society is to support the preservation, protection and restoration of historic structures in the greater Delphi area from the threat of neglect, obsolescence, and the pressures of a modern society.

To achieve this mission, the Delphi Preservation Society will support, encourage, inform, and educate the public as to the architectural significance, history and heritage of the greater Delphi area.

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Delphi Columns  
Editor  
Craig Wellnitz

The Masonic Temple building began as a brick, two story, Italianate structure built before 1868. In 1878, the building was bought by John Swegman. The building was called the Occidental Hotel. Swegman and his family ran the hotel, which included a saloon.



*Occidental Hotel, 1875. Courtesy Bradshaw Insurance.*

In 1888, he retired and turned over the operation of the hotel to A.B. Sabin and it became known as the Sabin House. Later the building became the Clifton Hotel.

In 1892, George Stengel rented the space to convert it to a sanitarium and public bath house. There had been drilling in the area for natural gas wells, and water with "medical qualities" was found. Stengel also piped in water from Snyder's Spring and from a spring in South Delphi. There was enough gas from the well to heat the water for the 12 baths. The waters were believed to treat "neuralgia, rheumatism, indigestion, and blood diseases."



*Owned by Times Past Restorations, LLC. Photo 2009.*

The baths were gone before 1900 and the building housed the Iona Hotel, run by John McDonald. In June 1913, the Masonic Building Association purchased the hotel building from the Swegman family and converted it to their lodge.

Mt. Olive lodge No. 28 of the Freemasons began in Delphi in 1843. The Masons removed the hotel rooms on the second floor so that the large ceremonial hall with a stage on the east side could be constructed. The second floor ceiling was raised, and the stained glass skylight was installed.

The parapet on the façade above the roof has changed at least twice since its original construction. It was straight across the top, but later was enhanced by arches. The brick surface was parged with a cement mixture. The



*Postcard of Masonic Temple, after 1913.*

arches were subsequently eliminated, and the current parapet installed.

Occupants in the lower level after it became the Masonic Temple include: Yantis Wells Loans, Dentist Dr. Charles Erbaugh, law offices of Judge Diamond. A few years ago, the Delphi Masonic Lodge merged with the Camden Lodge and the building was sold. It is currently owned by Times Past Restorations, LLC, and houses the Times Past Antique store and the Artisans Gallery.

**Editor's Note:** This feature article is the first in a series on buildings within the Delphi Courthouse Square Historic District, nominated to the National Register of Historic Places in 2010. -Craig Wellnitz

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# Recent Goings-on with your



People gather at the Art Gallery for hot chocolate in preparation for the historic homes walking tour.



The tour approaches the Atkinsons' Queen Anne house on East Franklin Street.



The Traegers dress up for the Halloween party at the Art Gallery. A catered dinner was later served.



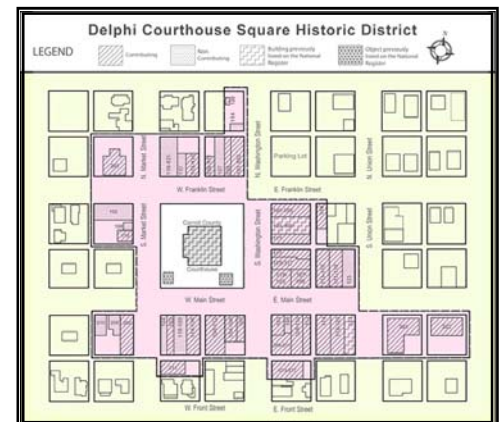
After dinner, the Halloween party goes assembled in the Opera House for a showing of the Lon Chaney silent film classic, *The Phantom of the Opera*.

## Delphi's Courthouse Square Historic District is Nominated to the National Register of Historic Places...

*On January 27, 2010, the Courthouse Square Historic District was given State Register status and now proceeds for consideration for the National Register of Historic Places.*

Delphi's rich architectural merit is evident in the nomination to the National Register of Historic Places for the Courthouse Square Historic District including the blocks immediately surrounding the public square and extending east to include the City Building and Delphi Public Library. Forty-three buildings are included within the boundaries, many dating from the 1850s through the 1870s.

Within the district are three buildings previously listed individually on the National Register: the 1864 Old Delphi City Hall and Opera House, the 1874 Niewerth building, and the 1916 Carroll County Courthouse. Of the forty-three buildings within the district, thirty-one are listed as "contributing" and only twelve as "non-contributing." This is an unusually high percentage of contributing structures.



# Delphi Preservation Society



Volunteers work on the DPS entry in Delphi Main Street Association's first annual "Gingerbread Walk."



A replica of the Delphi City Hall was DPS's winning entry, winning the Group, Historic, and Peoples Choice Awards.



Delphi Preservation Society members and friends join together in the Art Gallery for dinner and good times at the DPS Christmas party. It was a good end to a good year.



The nomination has been a lengthy process since its beginnings in 2007 when Delphi Main Street and Delphi Preservation Society cosponsored a grant application to Indiana Main Street. The grant provided an intern from Ball State University's Center for Historic Preservation for the purpose of researching the buildings and preparing the District nomination. Over the next several months, the intern worked in conjunction with the State Preservation Office to determine the district boundaries and to detail the architectural styles and integrity of the buildings. The Center for Historic Preservation at Ball State University submitted the nomination to the State

Historic Preservation Office in December 2007.

In April 2008, staff from Ball State University met with property owners to discuss what listing on the National Register would mean to them. At the meeting, hosted by the Odd Fellows in their historic 1880 building, tax credits and other incentives were reviewed along with the fact that no restrictions are placed on property owners by virtue of being on the National Register.

Following that meeting in 2008, the nomination hit a snag. New photographic image requirements had been adopted which required that the photographs submitted

with the Delphi Courthouse Square nomination be redone. Revised imagery was submitted in mid-2009 and the nomination was submitted for substantive reviews. In the course of the review several buildings were upgraded from non-contributing to contributing status and the boundary was extended to include the library. A revised map and changes were completed to the nomination by Ball State in late 2009 and the nomination scheduled for review at the quarterly meeting in January 2010. On January 27, 2010, the Courthouse Square Historic District was given State Register status and now proceeds for consideration for the National Register of Historic Places.



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## WINTER 2010 ISSUE

### The DELPHI COLUMNS...

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### **Matters of the Heart Exhibit**

Through March 3, 2010  
Ceramic artists Mary Firestone,  
Angie Peterson, & Diana May;  
jewelry artists Dawn Cooley &  
Joanne Kuhn Titolo; and new  
work by resident artists Rena  
Brouwer, Terry Lacy, & Alan  
McConnell.

At the Opera House Gallery  
of Contemporary Art, 109 S.  
Washington Street.

### **Volunteer Callout!**

Sunday, February 21, 2:00  
p.m. Learn about workdays.  
Become a Gallery volunteer.  
Help with cleaning or publicity.  
There is something for every-  
one, so get involved!

### **Volunteer Workdays ...**

The fourth Saturday of the  
month from 9:00 a.m. to noon.  
Meet at the Opera House Gal-  
lery.

## The President's Message: 2009 in Review

What a great year! Our 2009 push was the replacement of the roof in our City Hall/Opera House and to find additional tenants for our retail spaces.

Over the Spring, DPS found out we were prioritized as a granted project for the City Hall roof by the Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology of the Indiana Department of Natural Resources. Unfortunately, as the year progressed, it became evident that the downturn in the economy would not allow for the DPS project to be funded during 2009. DPS reapplied for the grant in October and has just learned that the roof replacement is second on the 2010 project list.

Anita Werling, Chair of the Opera House Advisory Board, approached the DPS Board with a proposal for an Opera House Gallery of Contemporary Art to occupy the 109 S. Washington location. In a burst of volunteer labor, the location was prepared

and the Gallery was opened to rave reviews in June with over 400 attending opening night celebrations.

We received a number of grants and donations for the Gallery and façade projects. Contributors include: SIA Foundation, Duke Energy, U.S. Aggregates, Delphi Main Street, and Tri Kappa. Our membership has grown to 90 members, individuals, families, and businesses.

The DPS Board is excited to welcome Mike Dickison to our Board of Directors. Mike replaces Bethany Coughill who resigned just in time to give birth to her new daughter. Mike took on the contractor recruitment for the demolition of the back of our 105 S. Washington property.

DPS is presently recruiting board members for the 2010-2013 term. If you would like to find out more about serving, contact Greg Norman at [drnorman57@gmail.com](mailto:drnorman57@gmail.com) or phone 574-967-4008.



# Become a Member...

You don't have to live in Delphi, or own a historic home to become a member of the Delphi Preservation Society. All you need is an interest in historic preservation and the architectural and cultural heritage of the greater Delphi area.

## Benefits of Membership...

- Informative and educational meetings throughout the year.
- Quarterly newsletter *The Delphi Columns*.
- Special events, including a program at Carroll County Old Settlers Celebration and Historic Home Tours.
- Association with others interested in historic preservation.
- Access to historic preservation professionals and tradespersons.
- Members First event notification.
- Member discount on selected items in the Delphi Preservation Society Gift Shop located in the Opera House Gallery of Contemporary Art at 109 S. Washington Street, Delphi.

## Annual Membership Categories

<input type="checkbox"/> Student (Under 18)	\$10	
<input type="checkbox"/> Individual	\$20	
<input type="checkbox"/> Family	\$35	
<input type="checkbox"/> Business	\$50	Includes business-card size ad in <i>Delphi Columns</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> Corporate Sponsor	\$100	Includes above plus listing on DPS web site

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### Opera House Gallery of Contemporary Art Hours

Thurs., Fri., Sun. noon to 4:00 pm  
Sat. 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.  
Opera House Tour: Sat. & Sun. 1:00



**R.W. TRAEGER & CO.**  
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