

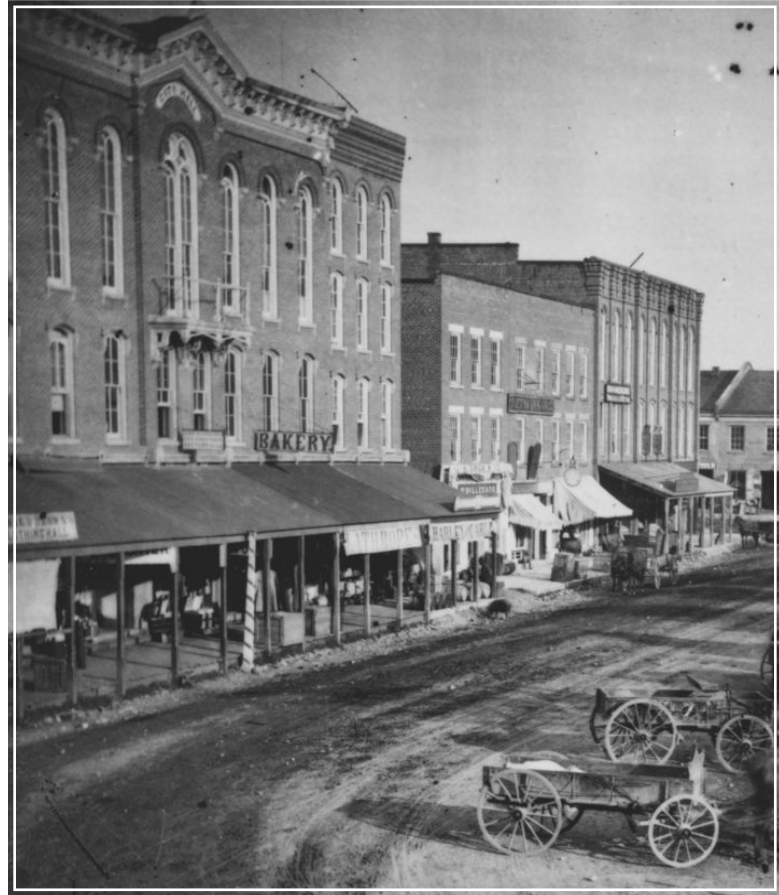
## Delphi Preservation Society Celebrates 25 Years

By Tom Atkinson

It's hard to remember back to the founding of Delphi Preservation Society twenty-five years ago this summer. In fact, this milestone birthday crept up on me, pointed out by others. Former Delphi residents Shari Rodriguez, Mike Sanders, and I started DPS back in 1994 as an outcome of then Mayor Sam Deiwert's strategic planning activities. As I recall, we were pleasantly surprised by the turnout at the first meeting, held in the basement of the Delphi Public Library. On that evening, a staff member from Indiana Landmarks showed slides (yes, using a carousel tray) of preservation victories and challenges and it must have encouraged us to keep going.

There have been many memorable events since 1994. One that changed DPS' course was the Hamilton Street Bridge and its unfortunate destruction. With the funds received to pursue preservation work from the company whose truck destroyed this beloved bridge, we bought from longtime pharmacist Frank Fitch two-thirds of the present-day Opera House. It took time and money to acquire the remaining third, but we persevered and, today, have a truly magnificent performing arts hall as a result. Through the years, we have staged historic house tours, nominated buildings to the National Register of Historic Places, and have eternally-protected a growing roster of Delphi landmarks. Our Opera House was the centerpiece of the Stellar project which has transformed downtown Delphi.

It's the wonderful people of Delphi -- committed to our City, Deer Creek Township, Carroll County, and their future -- that have made the journey successful and usually fun! Some of the giants in our organization's history are no longer with us but remembered for the unique ways that they each supported DPS and its mission. Richard Funkhouser, Charles Gerard, Martha Been Justice, Carol Wellnitz, and Jerry Young all come to mind as leaders who left a mark that has made the quality of life in our community better. And, we enjoy tireless volunteers -- some new and some who have been around for twenty-five years, who give so much of themselves to realize DPS' mission and keep our organization moving forward. With what we have accomplished in twenty-five years, it's hard to imagine what DPS will be reflecting upon when we celebrate our fiftieth birthday!



## Donor Appreciation Night at the Delphi Opera House

By Joe Mayfield

The Delphi Preservation Society hosted a Donor Appreciation Night at the Delphi Opera House April 27th. Those in attendance were the first to see the beautifully designed and newly installed Donor Wall. The wall honors those who have given \$1,000 or more toward the restoration of the Delphi Opera House and serves as a permanent recognition in the front lobby. After the reveal, guests were treated to free hors d'oeuvres, drinks, desserts, and music by Mike Tetrault and Tuxedo Junction. Guests participated in a silent auction and a live auction called by Bret Rinehart. Based on rave reviews look for this event again in April 2020.



# Taking the Opera House by Storm...Window!

By Anita Werling

Energy-efficient and sound-isolating interior storm windows were installed on the second and third floor windows at the Delphi Opera House. Made possible by a generous grant from North Central Health Services (NCHS), administered by the Tippecanoe Arts Federation (TAF), fifteen windows ranging in height from 8 1/2 to 15 feet received interior storm panels custom-manufactured and fitted for each window by Allied Windows of Cincinnati, Ohio.

According to Joe Mayfield, President of Delphi Preservation Society which owns the building, the interior storm windows are expected to reduce energy bills by \$4,800 to \$6,500 per year. "The historic windows were restored in 2007 during a facade restoration project retaining their single-pane glazing in accordance with preservation guidelines. The interior storm windows will protect the view of these character-defining features while adding energy savings and patron comfort for the building."

Sara Daly Brosman, Executive Director of Delphi Opera House, Inc. which manages operations and programming at the opera house, looks forward to the impact the windows will have on patron comfort and



performances. "Train horns and street noise can be heard during some of our performances at the Delphi Opera House. These interior storm windows will significantly reduce sound infiltration and greatly increase the comfort of patrons sitting near these tall windows during cold weather."

The installation was completed in March 2019, thanks to the generous grant of \$20,801 from NCHS and the assistance from the staff at TAF.

## Home Tour-Review!

By Anita Werling

I wanted to take one more opportunity to bring to your attention the great response to our Home Tour in September of 2018. What an event!

At final count over 300 people toured the 11 historic homes and gardens on Saturday, September 15 in Delphi on an unseasonably warm Fall day. This was the first home tour sponsored by the Delphi Preservation Society in several years, but its success is sure to make it a repeat offering. Attendees picked up their wristbands and maps at the Delphi Opera House before heading out to tour the homes. Some elected to take the Delphi trolley which ran a continuous loop of the sites throughout the afternoon. Vintage cars were stationed in front of many of the homes adding another element of interest and topic of conversation among the visitors. Karyl Traeger, who chaired the home tour committee, was pleased with the outcome. "The turnout for the event was even better than we had hoped. And, the feedback was universally positive. I am sure this event will become a staple for the Society," Traeger stated. "This was the best fundraiser for the Society during 2018," added Joe Mayfield, president of the Delphi Preservation Society. "Proceeds were used toward the balance remaining on a construction loan for the restoration of the Delphi Opera House." Ideas are now being discussed for a similar event in 2020. Stay tuned as we plan, plan, plan. We will keep you updated on the progress in the upcoming newsletters this year.



## Historic Stage Mural Stabilized

By Anita Werling

The iconic mural on the Delphi Opera House stage wall and signatures of performers from the 1880s through the early 1900s have long attracted the attention of visitors. The mural "Bay of Venice" was painted in 1882 by photographer John Ennis for the theater's grand opening. Portions of the mural were badly deteriorated from leaks and cracks in the plaster. In January 2019, Mary Yeager led a team from Acanthus Arts in stabilizing the mural and actor signatures. The walls were carefully cleaned and then sealed to help protect them from further deterioration. Portions of the mural were then infilled to visually recapture some of its detail. Finally, tracings were made of the mural design. A future project is in the planning stages to recreate onto canvas the mural as it would have appeared when new. We are grateful to the Carroll County Community Foundation, the Jeffris Family Foundation, Sara Daly Brosman, Joe and Barb Mayfield, and Anita Werling and Bonnie Maxwell for providing the funds for this project.