

Mount Vernon Historic Preservation Newsletter

Historic Preservation Commission

Please Allow Us to Introduce Ourselves

The Mount Vernon Historic Preservation Commission (MVHPC) was established as a Certified Local Government under a federal program in 1985 to foster preservation efforts at the local level. It serves as an advisory body to the Mount Vernon City Council for the purpose of promoting and protecting the city's architectural heritage (Mount Vernon, Iowa Code of Ordinances, Chapter 24).

The MVHPC's mission is to identify, interpret and protect the historic and archaeological resources of our community and to encourage historic tourism.

In addition, the MVHPC is charged under a city ordinance with reviewing all building permits within the three historic districts (Cornell, Ash Park, and Commercial). For renovation work in these districts, owners must submit an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness with the City. Permit and certificate applications are reviewed for appropriateness of the proposed projects according to the City of Mt. Vernon design guidelines and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards.

The MVHPC has a monthly meeting, generally the first Saturday of each month at 9:15 am. If needed for design review, a second meeting may be held on a mid-month Wednesday at 5:30 pm. These meetings are usually held at the Visitors Center and are open to the public. Your input is always valued.

Current MVHPC members:

Leah Rogers (Chair)	Suzette Astley
Peter Ault	Guy Booth
Mary Evans	Susan Hargus
Caroline Kelly	Hugh Lifson
Machele Pelkey	Ed Sauter

You may learn more about MVHPC by visiting the following websites:

www.mvhpc.org
www.cityofmountvernon-ia.gov
<https://www.nps.gov/tps/standards.htm>

Tour of Historic Brick Homes

6 Brick Homes on Fall Tour

This year's Brick House Tour will take place on Sunday, September 29. The tour schedule will offer 2 separate sessions. The first session will start at 12:00 noon and go until 2:30 pm. The final session will run from 3:00 pm until 5:30 pm.

The homes being showcased this year are:

1111 Palisades Road SW	Kutcher home
514 1st Street SE	Meyers home
417 A Avenue	Richardson home
201 2nd Ave NW	Harp home
601 1st Ave SW	Kelly home
303 3rd Street SW	Hedges home

Tickets are \$20.00 each, if purchased in advance. If purchased on the day of the tour, ticket price will be \$25.00 each. Each ticket allows participation in one session. Refreshments will be served at each home.

Tickets are available for purchase at Mount Vernon Bank and Trust or by calling Caroline Kelly at 319-651-5678.

Volunteers are needed to help with handing out brochures and gently guiding visitors at each home.

If you're interested in volunteering or would like more information about the tour, please contact Caroline Kelly at 319-651-5678.

All profit will go to Friends of Mount Vernon Historic Preservation to be used for local preservation projects. One project being considered is the revision/updating of the book, "A Centennial History of Mount Vernon, Iowa: 1847-1947", originally prepared by the Centennial Committee.

From *Mount Vernon Hawk-Eye*, September 3, 1869

We see the City 'dads' of Mt. Vernon are determined to enforce the hog law. Those who have swine had better read the ordinance No. 3. Or some fine morning they will find pigees missing.

Walking Tours

Enjoy Mount Vernon's Fall Foliage

Fall is one of the best times in Iowa, with warm days and cool nights, and the brilliant autumn colors of our trees. According to the Iowa DNR, fall colors typically peak in the first through third weeks in October for our part of the state.

And, there's no need to travel to enjoy autumn's colors. Mount Vernon is full of beautiful trees. With that in mind, it's the perfect time to take a walking tour of our historic districts.

Guided walking tours are available online for the Ash Park Historic District and the Commercial Historic District. Go to mvhpc.org and type 'walking tour' into the search box. Enjoy!

Book Review

Old is the New Green

Green Restorations: Sustainable Building and Historic Homes, written by Aaron Lubeck, will appeal to anyone trying to 'green' an older home while preserving its historic and cultural significance. Using sustainable practices and green building techniques, the book leads the reader through steps for restoring historic buildings. The book is available at Cole Library in Mount Vernon.

If You Live in an Old House

Quirks and Perks

-You know how to fix things...well, you can make it work.

-'Level' is a relative term...things tend to settle.

-People ask if your house is haunted...especially after they see the basement.

-You're used to random noises...you can sleep through anything now.

-You wouldn't have it any other way!

--Elizabeth Houseknecht, odysseyonline.com

Let Us Help

Design Review Process

We know that understanding design guidelines and the permitting process can be overwhelming. Before you begin a project on your historic property, contact HPC (Leah Rogers, 319-895-8330 or mvhpc.org) to schedule a pre-review meeting. We'll guide you through the process and provide suggestions for the final review.

Storytime

Archiving Mount Vernon History

MVHPC's summer intern, Addie Pacha, discovered newspaper articles, a photo album and brochures about Mount Vernon's Olde World Faire. Following is a summary of the event from archived documents.

Olde World Faire

Dates: 1993-?

Mount Vernon residents and visitors were transported back in time to a celebration of Europe's Middle Ages. The Mount Vernon Chamber of Commerce Tourism Committee and a matching grant from the Iowa Humanities Board sponsored an Olde World Faire. It was held at Memorial Park from Friday evening until Sunday afternoon. Festivities began with a Medieval feast of stew in bread bowls. Attractions included performances by musical groups, jugglers, sword play, craft demonstrations, an encampment by the Society for Creative Anachronism, play performances by Extraordinary Women, street theater and vendors serving old world treats. School children demonstrated their skills at juggling and playing the recorder. A highlight of the faire was the parade led by the king and queen from Cornell College's King Chapel through town.



King Alf Houkom and Queen Barbara (Babs) Moore

--Submitted by Mary Evans

Additional photos are online at mvhpc.org. Type 'Olde World Faire' in the search box.

If you would like to contribute photos or documents to the Mount Vernon Historic Preservation Archives, please contact Mary Evans at marye1840@gmail.com

We Want Your Stories

Remember When...

If you would like to share a story or reminiscence, please contact Machele Pelkey at flomac@netins.net.