



# Neighborhood News

The Newsletter of The Old Third Ward Association, Inc.  
Summer - 2004

Linda Muldoon - Editor

## A Brief History of the OTW

This is the tenth year of existence for the Old Third Ward. Some of you might have wondered why this neighborhood has an annual dinner, a picnic, a newsletter, and a walking tour. Many residents have come and gone during the past ten years and so a brief history of our existence seems to be in order.

### The Alarm

Ten years ago the neighborhood was jerked out of everyday life when the news was leaked to us that the County, under the leadership of then Executive Ron Vandehey, wanted to tear down five blocks of homes in order to create parking lots and office buildings. Aldermen Walter Kalata and Michael Whitman helped us gather information and we called the neighbors together. Over one hundred neighbors, the press, television and radio stations, and Mayor DeBroux attended this first meeting. That evening we elected a board of directors and set about to stop this gross incursion.

### The Background

In the 1970's the County had aggressively purchased neighboring homes and we now have the jail and its parking lot as a result. The City had lobbied to keep the County Buildings in the Downtown and the County was looking for space to grow. Many of the homes taken in the late 70's and early 80's were filled with history and were some of the grandest of Appleton's houses. By the 90's, many on the County

Board who had wished to take the Courthouse elsewhere dug in their heels in their wish for more space. The neighborhood had become a pawn in a feud between the County and the City.

### The Action

Under the leadership of Frank Council, one of the first acts of the neighborhood board was to change the common name of the neighborhood. This part of the city had been known as the Courthouse Neighborhood but since we were

now in a pitched battle with the County, we needed our own identity. Hence, the name Old Third Ward was born. The County was now just another neighbor.

In the old days, the Third Ward was known as "The Fighting Third". This nickname seemed quite apropos. The neighbors had drawn a line in the sand saying that given the demolition of homes in the 80's, if any more disappeared, there would cease to be a

*Cont. on Page 2*



The John J. Sherman residence at 324 S. Walnut. The Sherman family lived here from 1895 until 1929. The McKenzie family then resided here until 1944. The house was demolished in the mid 80's for the County parking lot. *Photo courtesy of Helen McKenzie Fieweger.*

neighborhood and the city itself would be much poorer.

Many of us at this time attended more County and City meetings than we would like to remember: Property Committee, Ad Hoc Parking Study Committee, County Board meetings, City Plan Commission, Common Council meetings. In addition we met with the East Central Planning Commission and the State Historical Society. Each year the Historical Society publishes a list of the ten most endangered historic properties in the state. That first year, this neighborhood was number one on this list.

#### The History

Many of us were at the same time researching the history that is our neighborhood. Although some of us knew some of this history, the wealth of it was a source of amazement. We became even more determined to save what we could. The Fox Cities Convention Bureau gave us a grant to publish a walking tour of the historic homes. Due to space constraints, we limited ourselves in this tour to the blocks most threatened by the County. We also gave our first home tour so that the public could see the inside of the homes and hear the history. We printed signs and the city installed them announcing the boundaries of the Historic Old Third Ward.

#### Great Progress

During this same period of time, we learned that the City wanted to widen Prospect Street. By letting the residents of Prospect Street know of the plan, the public outcry was overwhelming and the plan went away. (The plan still exists and will come back some day.)

As a neighborhood we were making progress with the public and politicians. We found friends in many places. A gentleman's agreement was reached with the County. They took five houses, built the new Juvenile Home, and agreed to discuss a joint law enforcement center (police and sheriff departments) with the City. Alderman Whitman worked hard behind the scenes to broker this agreement. We would not see an actual vote by the

County Board until Supervisor Michael Meyer drafted a resolution outlining the County boundaries of expansion in 2002. Ron Vandehey resigned from office to pursue the private sector and the new Executive, Jim Schuette, was a friend to the neighborhood.

We added one home and district to the National and State Register and two homes are now on the local register. The Outagamie Historical Society gave us an award for our walking tour, we had four successful home tours, and the Appleton Historic Preservation Commission gave us an award for preserving local history. In 1998 we won Midwest Living Magazine's Home Town Pride Award and were given a cash prize and a block party. (If you missed the party, it was a grand and good time for all.)

#### Great Sadness

On July 4, 1997, Frank Council, who had led us through our struggle for recognition, died. He lived to see the agreement but not the accolades. The stone bench on the corner of Walnut and Prospect was placed there in memory of Frank. It is a place to rest and it carries the message "Expect Goodness and Truth". We welcome those entering our neighborhood with these words. The phrase was found in Frank's notebooks written in the year before he died. These words do not reflect naivete but they do demonstrate the attitude that we struggled to maintain. We expected goodness and truth but we also knew that these qualities can be elusive. To rule out their possibility would be to assure a standoff and defeat. Every now and then I visit the bench to weed and to visit that memory.

#### What Now?

And what is the situation now? Why do we still exist as a neighborhood group? In sharp contrast to 1994, County Executive Toby Paltzer comes to our Winter Dinner and the Summer Picnic. He also will call and ask our opinion of property decisions which might affect us. The County recently asked for fifty walking tours to give to employees who exercised by walking the neighborhood. Real estate agents call and ask for the history of houses that are for sale and for walking tour

booklets for their clients.

Bill Anderson was appointed by the Mayor to be on the Riverfront Advisory Committee and Linda Muldoon is on the Historic Preservation Commission. We monitor development activity on the river for its possible effects on the neighborhood. We beautify with planters. We give scholarships. We wish to collect as many stories as possible from elderly residents with an eye to publication and we continue to pursue landmark status for as many homes as possible.

Those of you who lived through all of the above know that many details have been left out but if this gets any longer, I'll need two newsletters to tell the tale.

Linda Muldoon, OTW Newsletter

## News of Then 100 Years Ago Or So

In 1904, a new ordinance was enacted which stated that automobiles could not travel more than 8 miles per hour. If this was exceeded, the driver could face a \$25 minimum fine.

Ryan High School had burned down and the remnants of the old building was being demolished. The City was deep in discussions of the new high school.

*Evening Crescent, Feb. 04*

The misses Jennie and Mamie Alberty were surprised Monday evening at their home on Walnut Street by a number of young people, the affair being a private masquerade. The party was delightfully entertained with games and dancing. (The Alberty's lived on the SW corner of Walnut and 7<sup>th</sup>.)

*Evening Crescent, April 16, 04*

A report came into the police station early this afternoon which can not be exactly verified, that a person living in the Third ward was caught in a bear trap Thursday night while stealing wood on west College avenue.

Cont. on pg. 4

# Summer Picnic & Reunion

Circle September 12 on your calendar. The Summer Picnic is coming. There will be food and fun for everyone. Watch for your invitation.

In conjunction with this year's picnic, we are inviting all those who grew up in or whose family lived in the OTW to join us for a reunion picnic. We hope to make connections and to explore the past.

We ask that any of you who have relatives who grew up here, or if you know who used to live in your house, or if you know of anyone who has pictures and memories of the old days, please ask them to come. If you know of such people and they cannot attend, we would still like to hear from you because we would like to record their stories. Call 739-5762 for information.

# News of Now

## Scholarship

In May the Board presented a \$250 scholarship check to Nick Rogers, an Appleton East graduate. Nick plans to attend UW Oshkosh to study history. He was extremely interested in the architecture of older homes and the history they contained. The check was going to help him buy books.

A scholarship is still available in 2004 for Restoration Craftsman. If interested, please call. The scholarship is open to anyone living in Appleton and looking to improve or develop restoration skills.

## Summer Flowers

In May, 18 planters were placed around the neighborhood by the City. Kerstin Danielson, Bill Anderson, and Tom Long were in charge of planting the flowers. If you live near one of the planters, and if it ever stops raining, give the flowers some water if they are dry.

## Clean Up

Although starting to be overgrown once again, on May 1, fourteen neighbors gathered at the old steps on Prospect near Elm. The pathway had become infested with burdock and tree limbs. The garbage and noxious weeds were removed. Tree limbs are still a problem. This used to be the steps taken to walk to Water St.

## Thanks

Chris VanderWielen left the Board at the end of her term in January. Chris was most helpful working on home tours, the picnic, and the winter potluck. Thank you, Chris and welcome to Marybeth Laux who was elected to be a new board member.

## Help

In the next newsletter I wish to have an article about one of the most colorful denizens of our neighborhood: Police Chief Prim. Prim lives in the memories of many who are still alive. I would very much like to hear from any of you with anecdotes about the Chief.



### IT SPEAKS FOR ITSELF.

The beer we brew and put on the market speaks for itself. It's a good beer, it's a pure beer, it's a beer that suits almost every taste and is sold at a price that will please most people. In short, it's a brew you cannot afford to miss buying if you're fond of

## Good Beers.

**GEO. WALTER BREWING CO.**

**Telephone 161**

## Become a Supporting Member of the Old Third Ward Neighborhood Association, Inc.

Voting memberships are open to residents, both homeowner and tenant, and non-resident property owners. "Friends" are non-resident, non-voting members who wish to support the purpose of the association financially.

### Membership Categories

Friend	\$10 or more	Sponsor	\$100 or more
Resident	\$15 "	Sustain	\$250 "
Family	\$25 "	Benefactor	\$500 "
Patron	\$50 "		

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

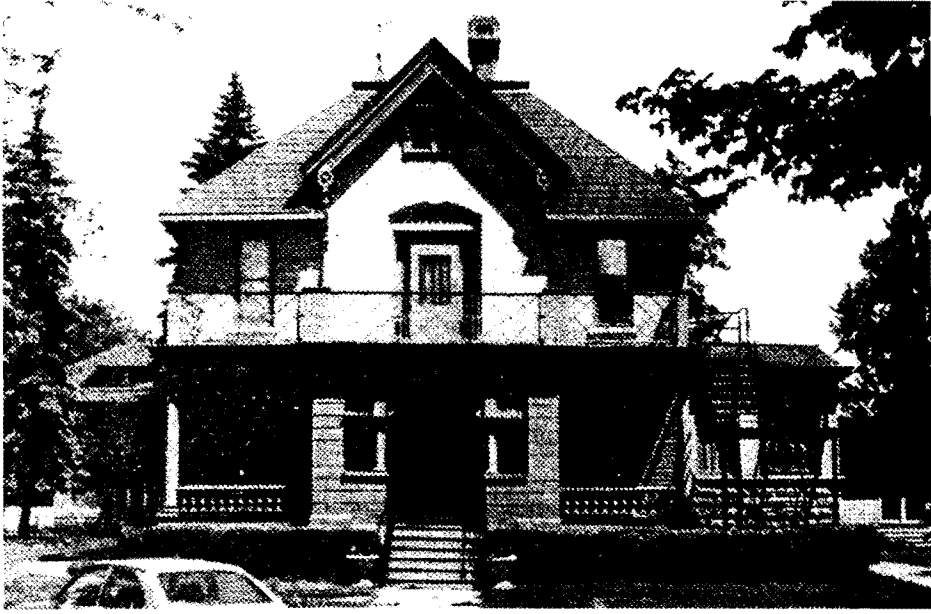
City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_

Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to volunteer, please call me!

Address checks and correspondence to:

Old Third Ward, P. O. Box 2574, Appleton, Wisconsin 54913-2574



St. Mary's Congregation Rectory at 522 W. Seventh St. was demolished in June. Charles Hove, a well-known architect, designed this building in 1885. Hove also designed the first St. Mary's School, Kamp's Harness Shop (the horse head building on College Ave.), Temple Zion, and many buildings on College.

**Old Third Ward Board**

Bill Anderson - Pres.	734-7484	Rebecca Baron, V.P.	738-0351	Steve Kehn	954-5973
Kerstin Danielson	733-8323	Todd West—Sec.	749-9999	Sharon Rorabeck-Allen	739-4000
Hugh Beyer—Treas.	749-1677	Marybeth Laux	734-6513	Linda Muldoon	739-5762

Old Third Ward  
P. O. Box 2574  
Appleton, Wisconsin 54913-2574

News of [then] from pg. 2

The officer who relates the story says the man is just able to walk today, while yesterday he was not able to leave the house. No arrests have been made.

*Evening Crescent, March, 04*

Classified ad:  
For Rent- A 2-story brick building and basement, 24x60, corner of College avenue and State street; suitable for shoe store as there is no such business on the west side; also a good location for a drug store. Enquire of P. Leonhardt, College and Cherry St. (This is, of course, the location of Morton Pharmacy.)

*Appleton Post, May, 1889*

A big parcel of tramps were rendezvoused in the ravine of Dead Man's Creek near the Atlas pulp mills yesterday. If they remained there all night they must have been in almost as disagreeable a condition as was the mythical personage who gave the locality its dismal appellation. (Does anyone know the location of Dead Man's Creek?)