

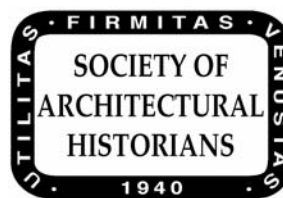
# *The Society of Architectural Historians* **Missouri Valley Chapter**

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## **News Letter**

### **MOTELS IN THE CITY OF ST. LOUIS**

*by Michael Allen*

There is ample recognition of the significance of mid-century motels along roadsides across America, where motels used colorful signage and design to beckon to weary Americans enjoying their automotive freedom. Perhaps because of nostalgic idealization of the motor court and the "open road" and perhaps because of the stigma that postwar urban renewal efforts have attained, local history has overlooked the significant wave of urban motel construction that took place in St. Louis between 1958 and 1970.



*Bel Air Motel, now the Hotel Indigo, 4630 Lindell, built 1959. Photo from Landmarks Association.*

The 1958 opening of the Bel Air Motel on Lindell Boulevard renewed the building of lodging in the City of St. Louis while introducing a hotel form new to the city, the motel. St. Louis' last new hotel before that was the nearby Park Plaza Hotel (1930), a soaring, elegant Art Deco tower built on the cusp of the Great Depression. However, another hotel built before the Depression was more indicative of future trends than the Park Plaza. In 1928, Texas developer and automobile travel enthusiast Percy Tyrell opened the Robert E. Lee Hotel at 205 N. 18th Street in downtown St. Louis (listed in the National Register on February 7, 2007), designed by Kansas City architect Alonzo Gentry. While the 14-story Renaissance Revival hotel was stylistically similar to contemporary hotels, it introduced the chain economy hotel to St. Louis. Tyrell's Robert E. Lee chain grew to include hotels in San Antonio, Laredo, and Kansas City as well as St. Louis.

These were fairly traditional urban hotels in exterior appearance, but not internally. All bearing the same name, the hotels impressed a singular identity upon business travelers in the then-strong St. Louis-Texas trade region. The St. Louis Lee Hotel's 221 rooms were small but luxurious, and the hotel had but one coffee shop-style restaurant to serve its guests. There were no bars, lounges, ballrooms or other spaces found in large St. Louis hotels up to this time. The Lee simply offered affordable, quality rooms for business travelers who could forego other frills. The hotel also stood across the street from a major parking garage, making it a convenient stop for the motorist. It survives today as the Railton Residence, a facility of the Salvation Army.



*The Robert E. Lee Hotel, now the Railton Residence, 205 North 18<sup>th</sup> Street at Pine, built 1928. Shown following recent renovation by Trivers Associates for the Salvation Army. Photo by Tom Paule, Tom Paule Photography, courtesy Andrew C. Smith, AIA, Trivers.*

Three years before the Robert E. Lee Hotel opened in St. Louis, the Milestone opened in San Luis Obispo, California. Designed by Los Angeles Architect Arthur S. Heineman, the Milestone sat on a well-traveled road outside of urbanized areas. Rather than consisting of a single building, the Milestone was comprised of several two-room bungalows with attached garages. A restaurant occupied another building. Such developments were usually called motor courts, but Heineman called his a "motel," shortening the phrase "motor hotel."<sup>1</sup> The form was replicated many times in the next few years, although the Depression slowed construction and the American tourist indus-

try. Motels or motor courts tended to consist of separate or connected units arranged around a courtyard with a single restaurant or bar serving the guests. The earliest were located exclusively on highways or roads outside of major cities and near major attractions.

As the federal government designated more roads as United States highways and made improvements that encouraged more automobile-based tourism, streets inside of cities began to receive more interstate traffic. In the St. Louis area, motels built before 1957 were located in St. Louis County where there was not yet dense development. The prevalent early motel form was the one-story motor court. This form required large tracts. One of the most famous of the motor courts was the Streamline Moderne Coral Court Motel on Watson Road, built in 1941 and designed by Adolph Struebig. No longer extant except for the façade of one unit displayed at the Museum of Transportation, the Coral Court's multiple curvilinear clay-tile buildings included attached garages for all units. This feature was common in the motor courts that developed between 1930 and 1960 on Watson Road.

After World War II, developers in cities began building motels that combined the courtyard form with the greater density of the urban economy hotels built by Tyrell and others; these tended to be called "motor lodges." As motel historians Andrew and Jenny Wood write, "Before long, small-time motor courts were rendered obsolete by chains like [Holiday Inn](#) that began to blur the distinction between motels and hotels. Single-story structures gave way to double and triple deckers."<sup>2</sup> Motels sprung up to accommodate the demand for plentiful and affordable lodging. Another shift in the motel industry that followed Tyrell's lead was the rise of national chains. In 1946, M.K. Guertin founded the Best Western chain and in 1952 Kemmons Wilson founded the Holiday Inn chain; others followed, including the famous Howard Johnson's.<sup>3</sup> The chains preferred larger buildings in which units were connected and faced shared surface parking. Like the motor courts, the motor lodges of the 1950s and 1960s required large lots and were constructed mostly on the periphery of the city. The motels are epitomized by a Howard Johnson built on Lindbergh Boulevard in suburban south county built in 1957: 40 units in three one-story buildings surrounding a separate restaurant building, with an overall low density.<sup>4</sup>

In the City of St. Louis, the Bel Air introduced the motel form, starting a building boom that lasted through 1970. St. Louis County already had several motor courts and lodges, especially along Watson Road, which was part of Route 66. The 1959 *Polk's City Directory* shows only one listing within the city limits under "Motels and Auto Courts" — the Bel Air. By 1971, 16 were listed. Most had been built after 1962. Six were located downtown,

four in the Central West End, one in Midtown, one in south city, one west of the Central West End, and three in north city. Most had 100 rooms or more, but one was as small as 22 rooms. Six were owned and operated by national chains. Almost all were designed in the styles of the Modern Movement.<sup>5</sup>

## THE BEL AIR MOTEL

In 1957, developer and philanthropist Norman K. Probststein announced plans for the 150-room Bel Air Motel at 4630 Lindell Boulevard in the Central West End. Obscure architect Wilburn McCormack came up with a design that fit within the general realm of the International Style: a grid formed by the white-painted concrete of the structure, large windows, metal panels, red brick. A three-story section in the rear sat atop a covered parking garage. A T-shaped two story section formed a courtyard with swimming pool (a make-or-break feature for a modern motel). The front elevation was essentially a glass box, and extremely different from anything that had been built in the Central West End up to that time. No large hotel of any kind had been built in the city since the Park Plaza Hotel.<sup>5</sup>

The Bel Air was most notable, however, for setting the new conventions of "luxury" (Probststein's own word) lodging in the city. While the motel defied the conventions that had typified pre-Depression hotels, the image of luxury was retained. The Bel Air's advertising makes clear it was not a "budget lodge" but a sleek urban motel for the traveling businessperson. Inside of the Bel Air was a spacious modern restaurant, as well as an exotic cocktail lounge. The rooms had large windows, desks and balconies. The swimming pool provided recreation, and the 175 covered parking spaces offered privacy and safety. All of these ingredients would resurface with the larger motels in the city.

The Bel Air would hold its place among the motels built after its opening due to its configuration as a luxury motor hotel. A 1961 *St. Louis Globe-Democrat* article entitled "Building Boom in Motor Hotels" lays out the characteristics of local "luxury" motels: good furniture in the rooms, real art and antiques in the lobby, a heated pool, a full-service restaurant and bar, meeting and conference rooms, king size beds and fridge in all rooms.<sup>6</sup> The restaurants might have a South Pacific or Polynesian theme, like Trader Vic's at the Bel Air East. The Bel Air provided all of these, true to Probststein's vision. The article mentions the DeVille as its only city example, but the Bel Air and Bel Air East were certainly its predecessors as high-end motels marketed to businessmen rather than casual tourists. The Bel Air was so immediately successful that he added a third floor to the front section one year later (designed by Russell, Mullgardt, Schwartz and Van Hoefen). The total room count became 198.

## THE DIPLOMAT, THE DEVILLE, AND BUILDING CODE CHANGES



*De Ville Motel, 4483 Lindell at Taylor, built 1961. Photo by Toby Weiss, [www.BELTstl.com](http://www.BELTstl.com)*

Immediately following the Bel Air came the Diplomat at 433 N. Kingshighway at Waterman (now the site of Central Reform Congregation's synagogue). The building permit dates to September 16, 1959, with Hausner & Macsnai of Chicago as architects in consultation with Joseph R. Passoneau, then dean of Washington University School of Architecture. The 180-room, three-story Modern motel occupied the site of the 75-room Usona Hotel, dating to 1902 and demolished for the project. Adolph Rosenberg headed a group of investors that purchased the site and built the new motel.<sup>7</sup> The Diplomat, located a few blocks northwest of the Bel Air, demonstrates not only the immediate influence of the new motel but also the demand for lodging in the Central West End that had begun in the 1920s. As Clayton lured more businesses out of downtown, the Central West End became a convenient middle point for business travelers.

In 1961, the DeVille chain based in New Orleans entered the St. Louis market in close proximity to the successful Bel Air. Developer Paul Kapelow purchased a large site at the northeast corner of Taylor and Lindell avenues, where three large houses stood. These houses had been damaged in the 1959 tornado, and Probststein had considered the site for a second motel that same year.

Opening in 1963 at 4483 Lindell Boulevard, the striking, E-shaped DeVille Motor Hotel rose to 11 stories in its center section. The DeVille boasted 226 rooms and 180 parking spaces as well as a swimming pool. Of all the motels built after the Bel Air, the DeVille was the most unusual architecturally. Its curvilinear concrete forms were the sophisticated design work of Charles Colbert, a renowned New Orleans architect and modernist who would later serve as Dean of the Columbia University

School of Architecture.<sup>8</sup>

Yet the mass, site and style were not the only features noted in the press. When the builders broke ground in October 1961, they were making local building history. The new DeVille Motor Hotel would be the first major building erected after the city's adoption of a new building code earlier that year. This code more than anything enabled builders of economy motels to seriously consider locating within the city limits.

Prior to the 1961 building code, large buildings were restrained by requirements that the majority of wall surface area meet a defined thickness. Materials such as concrete panels and glass had to be employed within larger wall systems, and could not be used to clad an entire building. Before 1961, construction of a glass high-rise in St. Louis was not permitted by code. The removal of the old restrictions allowed St. Louis to embrace the building technologies that allowed for fully modern architectural expression.

Mayor Raymond Tucker was an enthusiast for the DeVille project. In a *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* article from 1961, the mayor raved: "Certainly, this will be an impressive monument to the perseverance of those far-sighted citizens who worked on our code for more than five years."<sup>9</sup> Greater modern expressions would rise in St. Louis, of course, but the DeVille was the first to fully embrace the code. Gone was the need to use solid masonry, as the Bel Air and Diplomat motels did. Costs could be lower and -- realized at least in the case of the DeVille -- the architect's hand could be unfettered.

### MORE MOTELS

Another Central West End motel was the Parkway House (now razed and replaced by the Metro Lofts), located at 4545 Forest Park Parkway and completed in 1963. The building permit dates to August 13, 1962 and inexplicably refers to the 119-room motel as an apartment building. The cost was \$795,000 and California architect J. Richard Shelley designed the four-story building. Architecturally, the Parkway House was a departure from its contemporaries. The rooms were arranged around two courtyards shielded from external view, save for one cut-through. The room entrances were on the perimeter, where long open corridors with concrete knee walls were interspersed on the front elevation with large glass walls at stairwells. The courtyards featured brick walls and the private faces of the rooms, which had balconies.

An unsigned *Post-Dispatch* article from around the motel's opening celebrated Parkway House's design and hinted that the conventions of motel design had been noted by the reporter: "Projected [on Parkway House]



was the idea that motor hotels don't have to be all of the same hum-drum pattern and that this could be different.”<sup>10</sup>

Hum-drum or not, there was definitely a pattern building in city motel construction. In the next nine years, other developers would adapt the motel to various sites in the city from large downtown lots to sites in commercial districts in north city. The 22-room *Ebony* at 3622 Page (1963) and the 60-room *Carousel* at 3930 N. Kingshighway were small one-story motor courts in north St. Louis. The still-existing *Warwick Hotel* at 15th and Locust downtown built an adjacent 3-story, 58-room motel in 1964, while the *Lennox* (built in 1929) at 823 Washington downtown attempted to rebrand itself as the *Ben Franklin Motor Hotel* with the addition of a parking garage in 1965.

## THE BEL AIR EAST AND THE DOWNTOWNER



*Downtowner Motel, 1133 Washington at Tucker, built 1962*

In the 1960s, two multi-story motels larger than 150 rooms with budgets over \$1 million were built downtown. The 9-story, 203-room *Downtowner* at 1133 Washington adapted to a rare large vacant lot in a high-density location. Building permits issued on November 23, 1962 and March 21, 1963 report a total construction cost of \$1.7 million – a small figure compared to the *DeVillie's* \$4.5 million cost. Designed by Memphis firm George Thomason and Associates, the *Downtowner* occupied the site once occupied by the *Carleton Building* and cleared in 1928 by Chicago railroad magnate Samuel Insull. Insull, owner of the Illinois Traction System whose electric interurban line terminated at the site. Insull had grand plans for a skyscraper at Tucker and Washington that never came to fruition, although his company did complete the *Central Terminal Building* to the north (now the *Globe-Democrat Building*) in 1930. The *Downtowner* site had been left open to the tracks below for 36 years before construction.<sup>11</sup>

Guests to the *Downtowner* could pull their cars in off of Washington, where a courtyard opened into the motel lobby. The building formed an L-shape, with the courtyard opening extending upward to offer additional light to the rooms. On the first floor, the motel offered a corner restaurant and a smaller cafe. A modest ballroom and two meeting rooms were provided. The *Downtowner* building certainly capitalized on the new building code. The concrete structure's floor plates extended through the walls, with only glass and metal serving as a thin curtain wall on each story. The walls of each room were beveled in pairs to provide an accordion-like appearance. At the corner of the building where there was a stairwell, the wall was clad in a grid of alternating colored metal panels. As with many mid-rise buildings of the era, including the *Plaza Square Apartments*, color was employed as an element of articulating what otherwise might have been a monotonous expanse of lines. After the *Best Western* chain took over, it eventually painted over the colored panels. By the late 1990s, the panels were a dull and often-maligned brown. Thomason's design proved more economical than imaginative. In 2008, the building was rehabilitated as apartments and the exterior nearly completely reclad in granite and modern metal.

After the *Downtowner* came the 15-story *Bel Air East* in 1963. The 192-room hotel cost over \$3 million to build, and its design program reflected a high budget. As with the first *Bel Air*, Probstein aimed to distinguish the motel by making it luxurious. A 1962 *Post-Dispatch* article on downtown development wrote about the motel's features, including its 300 enclosed parking spaces, the *Popover Room* restaurant (serving pancakes and charcoal cooking) and rooms with views of the Mississippi River and the future Gateway Arch. The article notes: "Some of the enticements of the main deck of a luxury liner will be incorporated into the fifth floor terrace" including a heated pool, shuffle board, children's playground and illuminated putting green.<sup>12</sup>

Architects Hausner and Macsai of Chicago, designers of St. Louis' earlier *Diplomat Motel*, gave the *Bel Air East* a vertical emphasis. The base of the building was a four-story podium, with a recessed first floor under three levels of parking. A stylized concrete grille shielded the parking floors, and an exaggerated Polynesian entrance on Washington Avenue led to *Trader Vic's* bar. Above the podium, gardens and a swimming pool flanked the central tower, which presented blind dark brick walls to the east and west. The north and south sides were framed in a concrete grid. The grid outlined balconies behind which were the recessed glass walls of the rooms. Again, saturated colors were used to add stylistic complexity and whimsy. Here, the architects had the curtains within each bay of the tower in alternating colors, so that there were vertical color stripes along the sides.

Not only was the design of the Bel Air East more sophisticated than some of its predecessors, but its designers had a much more significant body of work.



*Bel Air East Motel, Washington Avenue between Third and Fourth. Note the faux-Polynesian entrance to Trader Vic's Restaurant.*

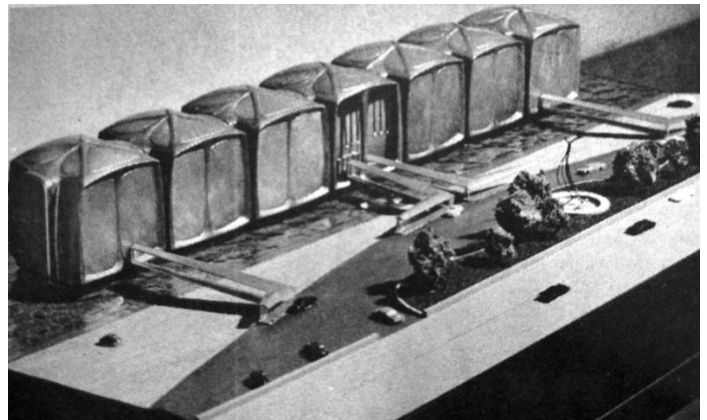
Hausner and Macsai was a partnership between Hungarian-born John Macsai (FAIA) and Robert Hausner that lasted from 1955 to 1970.<sup>13</sup> Among the firm's work are numerous high-rise apartment buildings in Chicago, including several on Lake Shore Drive. A contemporary work to the Bel Air East is the firm's apartment building at 21 East Chestnut Street in Chicago. That building shows a distinct similarity to the St. Louis motel in the exterior expression of the concrete structural grid. Macsai remained a prominent Chicago architect well into the 1990s.

Construction of large motels in the early 1960s attracted local press attention. The St. Louis Post-Dispatch's popular weekend "Pictures" feature for November 24, 1963, featured photographs of the Downtowner, Bel Air East and DeVille. Writer Clarence Olson was bullish on the new hotels: "St. Louis, for the first time since the 1920s, is having a hotel building boom. Too sumptuous to be classified as motels, they combine the features of a major downtown hotel complex with the convenience of a highway hotel."<sup>14</sup> Olson noted the 1961 building code as "major factor" in the boom.

According to Olson, the travelers were mostly "businessmen traveling on expense accounts and attending conferences."<sup>15</sup> These travelers on the move were much like the patrons of the Robert E. Lee Hotel back in

the day, but were accustomed to the luxuries introduced by Norman Probstein at the Bel Air.

An unbuilt downtown project from the late 1960s would have offered an unprecedented strange twist on the motel. In 1968, developer Charles Cherry received a mooring permit for the "Bo-Tel," a floating motel clad in gold glass to be located on the Mississippi River centered on the Gateway Arch. The convenience of arriving by car would be joined to the convenience of arriving by boat or even private helicopter! Cherry's 420-foot long, 5-deck structure would have had its own floating swimming pool and marina in addition to a more conventional motel load of 240 rooms, a private club, three cocktail lounges and two restaurants.<sup>16</sup> Cost was estimated at \$7.2 million, and despite announcements of construction, work never began.



*Charles Cherry's proposed Bo-Tel, showing three gangplanks connecting his row of large pavilions to the wharf. Photo courtesy Fine Arts Department, St. Louis Public Library.*

Another Modern downtown hotel was Stouffer's Riverfront Inn (1969) at 200 S. Fourth Street, with its central circular tower. However, Stouffer's was built in the manner of previous downtown hotels, with large convention, meeting and ballroom spaces, several restaurants and shops and without interconnected parking. While having a site similar to motels, with a large front lawn and wide entrance driveway, Stouffer's Riverfront Inn (now the Millennium Hotel) has always been a hotel, not a motel. Construction of Stouffer's would mark the return of constructing new full-service hotels to serve downtown visitors and conventioners.

## THE END OF THE BOOM

Many of the new motels in the central city were built on sites cleared for urban renewal, including the 11-story, 250-room Holiday Inn Downtown at 2211 Market Street and the 103-room 2-story Travelodge at 3420 Lindell, both built in 1964 in the Mill Creek Valley area. The largest motel built outside of the central corridor was the five-story, 103-room Congress (1964), designed by William B. Ittner, Jr. and Lester C. Haeckel and located at



6543 Chippewa on the city leg of Route 66. The last of the motels built in the city during this period was the striking cylindrical high-rise Rodeway, 2600 Market at Jefferson, another Mill Creek Valley site, built in 1970 and expanded in 1973.<sup>17</sup>



*Holiday Inn, 2211 Market Street, built 1964, photo from Downtown St. Louis Partnership Collection, Western Historical Manuscript Collection-St. Louis*

Of these motels, those with reported construction budgets over \$1 million included the tallest: the DeVille, the Downtowner and the Holiday Inn Downtown.<sup>18</sup> Most were built rather economically, of widely-available materials like brick, aluminum, concrete and glass. Many of the architects responsible for these designs are not well-known, and many are from cities outside of St. Louis due to the chain connections of the motels. Charles Colbert is the exception, not the rule, to the architectural pedigree of the motels. By and large, the greater motel designs from the postwar period were found in St. Louis County, including Meyer Loomstein's Colony Motel (1965) in Clayton.

Today, of the 16 motels listed in the 1971 city directory, six remain standing. When the Bel Air re-opened as the Hotel Indigo in 2009, it joined the Bel Air East, Carousel and Ebony as the only ones still operating as motels. Most of the motel buildings have been altered to states that do not resemble their historic appearance: the Bel Air East and the Downtowner have been completely re-clad; the Holiday Inn Downtown has had a new pitched roof placed over its flat roof; the Carousel and Ebony have had numerous alterations to window opening size; the Congress was retrofitted for senior housing with major room configuration changes as well as a prominent elevator shaft addition built in 2008. The only remaining motel from the city's peak years of construction that still retains sufficient architectural integrity to be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places is the first Bel Air, listed this year.

The few motels constructed in the city since the Rodeway have been low-rise buildings of little architectural merit.

The rise and fall of the motel in the city limits may not have been as illustrious as it was in other parts of the country, but it marked a significant return to new lodging construction and design in St. Louis. The impermanence of the physical traces of this period demonstrates not only the short-term vision of motel developers but also the uneven match between this automobile-based form and an urban city. Fifty years after the arrival of the motel in the city, planners wisely have turned away from the idea of outright embrace of the automobile. Postwar architecture is often threatened by new construction of higher density. The remaining motels of the city, in whatever degree of integrity, give testament to a recent and relatively brief intersection of a new American building type and an old city.



*Travelodge, 3470 Lindell, built 1964, seen on left from intersection of Lindell and Olive, with College Church in distance. Photo from George McCue Photograph Collection, Western Historical Manuscript Collection-St. Louis.*

## NOTES

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2. Andrew and Jenny Wood, *Motel Americana*. <http://www.motelamericana.com>, Accessed 9 October 2008.
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4. "Johnson Motor Lodge's Opening Here Tomorrow," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, 16 June 1957.
5. These figures are based on analysis of *Polk's City Directory* for the years 1958 through 1971 as well as the *St. Louis Daily Record* for the same period.
6. Baxter, Karen Bode et al. *National Register of Historic Places Inventory Form: Bel Air Motel*. Washington, D.C.: Department of the Interior, 2009.
7. St. Louis, Missouri, Missouri Historical Society, Missouri Historical Society, "St. Louis Hotels, Taverns, Restaurants," Vol. I, 158-161.

8. Lindsey Derrington, "Recoup DeVille Motor Hotel: No need to demolish historic building," *The Vital Voice*, 23 April 2008.
9. "\$4,500,000 Hotel to Be Built at Corner of Lindell, Taylor", *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, 30 September 30, 1961.
10. "The Parkway House," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, 22 September 1963.
11. "The Downtowner to Open This Week," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, 9 August 1964.
12. Al Delugach, "The New Face of Downtown St. Louis," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, 17 June 1962.
13. John Macsai Interview, Chicago Architects Oral History Project.
14. Clarence Olson, "Pictures," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, 21 November 1963.
15. Ibid.
- 16.
17. These figures are based on analysis of building permit records, the *St. Louis Daily Record* and the 1964 Sanborn fire insurance map.
18. *St. Louis Daily Record* and building permit records.



*Rodeway Inn, 2600 Market Street, built 1970, photo from Downtown St. Louis Partnership Collection, Western Historical Manuscript Collection-St. Louis*

## PRO-QUEST SCANS POST-DISPATCH FROM 1874 TO 1922

Dennis Northcott of the Missouri History Museum's archives is alerting everybody to a new on-line research source that promises to revolutionize research in the St. Louis area. A research organization called Pro-Quest has scanned the whole run of the Post-Dispatch from its beginning in 1874 to 1922. These scans are completely word-searchable and include display ads and want-ads as well as the news articles. Pro-Quest is a subscription service, but you can access it for free through your county library card – and remember, everybody is now eligible to obtain a county card, whether you live within the district or elsewhere in the city or county. From the home

page, click "Databases." Then click "Databases A to Z," select "P" and find Pro-Quest. The service has several other collections, so set the search page for the Post-Dispatch before entering your search terms.

As a random example of the new material available, take the architect Guy Study (searched in quotation marks to avoid confusion). Among the returns were some expected things, including a long article from 1917 about Breckenridge Long's celebrated art gallery at 5145 Lindell, which Study added to the earlier Eames & Young house. But there was also a real estate ad on October 29, 1916 under the heading "Buy Bungalows on the Ford Plan" announcing that 12 brick bungalows are "now building at the corner of Taylor and Labadie avenues. These bungalows are designed by Mr. Guy Study, Architect, and are unusually attractive, no two of the houses being alike." On July 20, 1919, Study appears twice on the same page of ads with a house design to be built in Davis Realty's Maryland Terrace subdivision and a short essay about the wisdom of building in Ames Place now. The many references to Study and his wife in the society columns show that they held a rather prominent place in St. Louis society. They were active in charity events for France during the war, as Mrs. Study was "a French girl," as one write phrased it.

## SAHARA IMAGES ADDED TO ARTSTOR DIGITAL LIBRARY

The national SAH is pleased to announce that on November 4, 10,000 digital photographs and QTVRs from the SAHARA Editors' Choice collection will be integrated into the ARTstor Digital Library. For institutions that subscribe to ARTstor, this will enrich the substantial architecture holdings already in the ARTstor Digital Library and provide seamless access to both collections

All photographs and QTVRs contributed to SAHARA still will be available through the SAHARA site. If you haven't already explored SAHARA, log in through the SAH website. If you cannot remember your user name or password, please contact Anne Bird in the SAH office ([abird@sah.org](mailto:abird@sah.org)) and she will be glad to help you. 312.573.1365

## NEW WEBSITE DOCUMENTS MAIN STREET ST. CHARLES

Thanks to Jo Ann Radetic, state CLG coordinator, and Franz Kraintz, AICP, economic development director for Manchester, for alerting us to the new "Preservation Journal" website. You can find it at <http://www.preservationjournal.org/pages/SouthMain.html>. The site was set up by a group of interested citizens to

collect the known information about the South Main Historic District and the Historic Downtown in St. Charles. Using the extensive collection of photos left by pioneer preservationist Archie Scott, the site includes good new correction-lense photos of every building in the two areas, including recent infill. The many historic photos show the dramatic improvement to almost every historic building over the past thirty years. Brief identifying information is included where known. The reliability of dating varies widely from building to building in St. Charles, but this site helpfully includes sources for these dates. The web design permits much more information to be added as it becomes available.

## A LOCAL ARTS & CRAFTS SOCIETY?

About 70 people visited the museum-quality Arts & Crafts house at 700 Bellerive on July 26, 2009, invited by owner Patrice Petrich. She would like to establish an Arts & Crafts society in St. Louis. This historic style didn't even have a widely recognized name thirty years ago. Now three magazines focus on it: *American Bungalow*, *Style 1900*, and *Arts & Crafts Homes*.

Several communities around the country already have Arts & Crafts or bungalow organizations, including Pasadena, Denver, San Francisco, and the Twin Cities, and closer to home, Chicago, Kansas City, and even the Phelps Grove neighborhood of Springfield, Missouri. As a first step here, Patrice has organized an e-mail group. To join, contact Patrice at [stlbungalow@charter.net](mailto:stlbungalow@charter.net). Ask her to e-mail you her two-page resource guide, which includes a comprehensive bibliography of books in print.

## APT STARTS REGIONAL CHAPTER

The Association for Preservation Technology International (APT) is organizing a Central Plains Chapter, to include members from Missouri, Iowa, Kansas, and Nebraska. The APT calls itself "a cross-disciplinary, membership organization dedicated to promoting the best technology for conserving historic structures and their settings." APT members, who hail from more than 30 countries, include preservationists, architects, engineers, conservators, consultants, contractors, craftspersons, curators, developers, educators, historians, landscape architects, students, technicians, and other persons directly involved in the application of methods and materials to maintain, conserve, and protect historic structures and sites for future use and appreciation. The Association's respected periodical is [\*APT Bulletin: The Journal of Preservation Technology\*](#), featuring new developments in preservation technology, published three times a year. The APT website, [www.apti.org](http://www.apti.org), has begun the Digital Archive of Preservation Technology, which will eventually include whole texts of out-of-print technical

handbooks and trade catalogs drawn from libraries all over the country.

For more information about the new chapter, currently based in Kansas City, or to be included on our email distribution list, please contact Lurita McIntosh Blank, Acting Chair, APT Central Plains, c/o Walter P Moore and Associates, 920 Main Street, Tenth Floor, Kansas City, MO 64105. Phone 816.701.2100 office or e-mail [lmcintosh@walterpmoore.com](mailto:lmcintosh@walterpmoore.com).

## OUR NEW WEBSITE ADDRESS: [www.stlouisarchitecture.org](http://www.stlouisarchitecture.org) MORE HELP NEEDED

It seems like we just started our website, but already our talented webmaster Michelle Kodner has given us a new address, [www.stlouisarchitecture.org](http://www.stlouisarchitecture.org) (reversed from the old one) and a new, more streamlined look. Michelle has been adding our past newsletters to the Chapter's website and in some cases linking them to our list of architects. We're back to 2003, but we'd like to post everything since 1997. We have published a substantial amount of original research about St. Louis architecture that is now available to the public only at two or three libraries. The articles we have posted so far have already drawn responses from around the country. To complete this project, we need to scan the issues for which we don't already have digital files. Landmarks Association has offered the use of their high-quality scanner, but we need a volunteer who can visit the Landmarks offices at 9<sup>th</sup> & Washington for a few hours. If you're interested please contact Esley Hamilton at 314-615-0357 or [ehamilton@stlouisco.com](mailto:ehamilton@stlouisco.com).



*The Robert E. Lee Hotel, now the Railton, in 1928.  
From the National Register nomination, courtesy  
Missouri History Museum.*



**Exhibition: "Images from  
the Architecture of Theodore Link"**

through Friday, January 8, 2010

Architecture St. Louis, 911 Washington Avenue

Gary Tetley, one of St. Louis's most skilled architectural photographers, has been researching the career of Theodore Link for several years with research assistance from Carolyn Toft. This is your chance to see his unrivaled collection of images of Link's work, including major commissions near and far. Union Station in Little Rock; the Mississippi State Capitol in Jackson; and the campus of Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge are just a few. Landmarks Association's offices are in the Lammert Building, 911 Washington Avenue, Suite 170, open Monday-Friday, 9 to 5.

**Exhibition: "Southern Artifacts"**

through Saturday, January 23, 2010

The Sheldon Galleries, 3648 Washington Avenue

This exhibition presents an overview of photographs and selected sculpture by internationally recognized artist William Christenberry. Born in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, Christenberry has been inspired by the vernacular structures, cultural artifacts, and landscapes of Hale County since the 1960s, creating a rich synthesis of found images and objects. His work is held by museums around the world and has been the subject of at least six books. The Sheldon Galleries are open Tuesday noon to 8; Wednesday, Thursday and Friday noon to 5; and Saturday 10 to 2, plus one hour before Sheldon concerts.

**Exhibition: "Distilling Architecture"**

Opening Friday, December 11, 6 to 9 p.m.

through Thursday, Feb. 25, 2010

Centene Center for Arts and Education,  
3547 Olive near Grand

Our chapter member Ken Konchel is becoming celebrated for his black-and-white architectural photographs, which present buildings in arresting ways, creating compositions that do not immediately reveal themselves as architecture. This show includes a series of dramatic new images by Konchel of the two temporary Burnham Pavilions in Chicago's Millennium Park, one by Amsterdam-based Ben Van Berkel of UNStudio, the other by London-based Zaha Hadid Architects. See more of Ken's work at <http://www.kenkonchelphoto.com>.

This is also a good chance to see the attractive new Arthur & Helen Baer Visual Arts Galleries, part of the renovation of the historic building for the Arts & Education Council. The lavish terra cotta street front was created in 1907 by Baker & Knell for the Knights of Columbus, while the back was Jacob Mahler's 1880s dance studio. The Gallery is open during the week from 10 to 4.

**Annual Gathering**

Sunday, January 31, 6 to 9:30 p.m.

Grbić Restaurant, 4071 Keokuk Street

Grbić Restaurant (pronounced GER-bich, with a hard "G") is located just off Meramec Avenue, one block south of Gravois and two blocks south of Chippewa. You may remember Grbić's as Bailey Farm Dairy. Learn more about the place at <http://www.grbicrestaurant.com/> Vegetarian selections will be available. Following our usual custom, we will meet at 6 p.m., dine at 7, and share pictures of interesting buildings until about 9:30. For reservations, please phone Esley Hamilton at 314-615-0357, or e-mail him at [ehamilton@stlouisco.com](mailto:ehamilton@stlouisco.com). The cost of \$25, payable at the door. Treasurer Richard Mueller will be glad to take your 2010 membership renewal at the same time, if you wish.

**Talk: "Crumbs from the Rich Man's Table"**

Sunday, February 7, 3 p.m.

Stupp Center, Tower Grove Park

Dr. Kenneth Winn, visiting professor of American studies at Washington University and former state archivist, will begin the 21<sup>st</sup> year of the Tower Grove Park Lecture Series, speaking about high society dining in the era of Henry Shaw. Stupp Center is located near the corner of Grand and Arsenal.

**Exhibition: "Faces of the Riverfront:  
Portraits of Historic Buildings"**

Sunday, February 14 to Monday, August 16

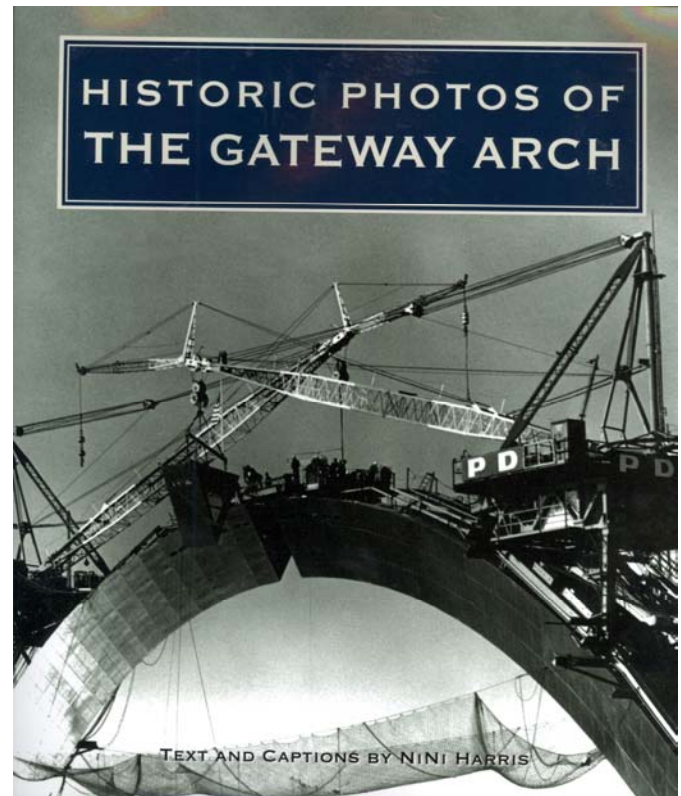
Old Courthouse, Broadway & Market St.

Local artist Sheila Harris has created about 40 watercolors of buildings that once stood on the Arch grounds. They will be displayed along with enlarged historic photos and actual architectural fragments of the buildings. Every stylistic era of the city's development was represented by the buildings, which were removed by 1940 to make way for the Jefferson National Expansion Memorial. The curator is NiNi Harris, whose research for *Historic Photos of the Gateway Arch* inspired her artist sister.

## NINI HARRIS'S NEW BOOK

*Historic Photos of the Gateway Arch* is one of a series of "Historic Photos" books that Turner Publishing Company of Nashville, Tennessee, has released around the country from Arlington to Anaheim. Most deal with cities or entire states, but only two others focus on single structures: the Brooklyn Bridge and Nashville's Ryman Auditorium, home of the Grand Ole Opry.

Our well-known local historian and chapter member NiNi Harris has expanded her subject by including pictures of the Old Courthouse and other adjacent buildings and a whole section on the neighborhood that disappeared to make way for the park. Buildings there ranged from simple warehouses to impressive Greek Revival and Italianate designs by the city's leading architects. Another section shows other entries in the 1947-48 competition, including the one by Walter Gropius which proposed a deck over the depressed lanes. Later photos remind us that even after the Arch was deducted in 1968 the grounds remained a treeless wasteland until Dan Kiley's currently embattled landscape was planted.



## News Letter

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