

INDIANA PRESERVATION

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2026



INDIANA LANDMARKS



10 MOST ENDANGERED

Calling attention to threatened places

GOOD WORK

Honoring two communities for inspiring achievements

ROOTED IN HISTORY

Monroe County farmers win rural preservation award

A Public Voice

SINCE 1966, SECTION 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act has ensured that before federally funded or federally permitted projects move forward, agencies must consider impacts on historic places and the communities connected to them.

For decades, Section 106 has helped preserve thousands of historic buildings, neighborhoods, landscapes, archaeological sites, and cultural landmarks—places that strengthen local economies through heritage tourism, support neighborhood revitalization, and connect generations through shared history.

Section 106 is not about stopping progress. Instead, it fosters thoughtful collaboration leading to more effective and valuable outcomes for communities. The law ensures the public has a voice, allows agencies to explore alternatives, and helps decision-makers understand more fully what could be lost.

The federal Advisory Council on Historic Preservation recently outlined proposed changes to Section 106 that give federal agencies much more power to decide whether a project needs a historic preservation review at all, meaning potential damage to historic places might never be identified, studied, or discussed before decisions are made and history is literally demolished.

As federal officials weigh these proposed changes, they should remember why the law exists in the first place. The future of our communities should not be determined behind closed doors; it should be shaped through the open, transparent, and collaborative process that Section 106 has provided for generations.

Brad Ward

Brad Ward, President

On the Cover

In Peru, the vacant c.1862 Shirk-Edwards House continues to deteriorate, neglected by an absentee owner. With its porch nearing collapse, the historic house needs significant investment to secure its future. Read about it and other threatened properties on pp. 8-15. PHOTO BY EVAN HALE



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STARTERS

Rare Opportunity

FOR THOSE FASCINATED with the House of Tomorrow in Indiana Dunes National Park, on September 25 and 27 Indiana Landmarks is offering two exclusive experiences to see the 1933 World's Fair home during its remarkable restoration—a rare chance few people will ever experience. Tickets are limited. See p. 22.



TODD ZEIGER

700

grain mills are believed to have existed in Indiana in the 1860s, but few remain standing today, making Adams Mill in Cutler a rare survivor worth saving. See p. 8.



COURTESY UNCOVERING BLACK HISTORY AT GREEN'S BLUFF

Hidden History

In Owen County, stories surrounding Boone's Cave have circulated for generations, including accounts that it may have been used as a holding space for African Americans before they were sold into slavery or as a hideout along the Underground Railroad route through the county. *Uncovering Black History at Green's Bluff*, a new short documentary funded through a partnership between Indiana Landmarks Black Heritage Preservation Program and The Nature Conservancy, investigates the legends and the history behind them. Watch it at Indiana Landmarks' YouTube channel, youtube.com/@IndianaLandmarks.



EVAN HALE



Putting Landmarks in the Spotlight

SAVING HISTORIC BUILDINGS OFTEN STARTS

with helping people understand their value: the history they illuminate and the economic and cultural role they can continue to play in their communities. For bringing local landmarks to the forefront, groups in Marion and Wabash have won Indiana Landmarks' 2026 Sandi Servaas Memorial Awards, recognizing outstanding achievement in historic preservation.

Founded in 2011 in response to disinvestment in downtown Marion, Save Our Stories (SOS) works to build appreciation of the city's architectural heritage while demonstrating how historic buildings can support community revitalization. In

Since 2011, Save Our Stories has worked to bring attention to Marion's local landmarks through talks, tours (left), and hands-on preservation efforts, including making repairs to a 1905 residence and carriage house (above) designed by Samuel Plato, a notable early Black architect whose legacy the group has helped elevate and protect.

PHOTOS COURTESY SAVE OUR STORIES



choosing its name, the all-volunteer group wanted to draw attention not only to local architecture, but also to the stories behind the places.

One of the important stories the group wanted to spotlight was the wealth of local landmarks designed by Samuel Plato, one of Indiana's first Black architects, who lived and practiced in Marion from 1902 to 1921. SOS staged public tours showcasing his architecture and hosted a symposium on Plato's legacy at the 1912 Wilson-Vaughan House, today an events venue known as the Hostess House.

From these early educational efforts, the group expanded to direct investment in local landmarks, beginning with a Plato-designed house at 917 South Adams Street. Using grants and an Indiana Landmarks loan, the group stabilized the 1905 residence and carriage house while also securing its listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Going forward, SOS will collaborate with Indiana Landmarks on additional repairs and identifying a restoration plan for the house.

SOS also acquired and remediated the former 1936 Firestone Auto Service Center through a combination of an Indiana Landmarks loan and Indiana Department of Environmental Management funding. The organization successfully nominated the building to the National Register of Historic Places and promoted redevelopment opportunities through tours and public events. The building is now poised for new use by local development group Marion Land Trust.

Through popular programs such as its Upstairs Downtown tours, public presentations on redevelopment projects, and online platforms including the Disappearing Marion Substack,

SOS continues to engage residents in the role preservation can play in strengthening Marion's future.

"Outstanding preservation is not just about saving structures. It's about reintegrating them into community life," said Sue Bratton, president of Save Our Stories. "By stabilizing, remediating and transitioning properties for reuse, we support neighborhood revitalization, economic development and sustainable land use, while our tours and educational programs transform preservation from a niche activity into a shared community value."

In both Marion and Wabash, preservation is proving to be a powerful tool for community engagement. While Marion's Save Our Stories has rallied residents around local landmarks, a school-based initiative in Wabash introduced students to the possibilities of historic preservation.

In 2025, Wabash High School launched its Pathways to Career and Postsecondary Class, an innovative program that challenged 17 freshmen to collaborate on envisioning a new use for Wabash's vacant 1890 Sposeep Building. Students explored the structure, took measurements, and learned about its history and architectural features, consulting with Indiana Landmarks and Wabash Mayor Scott Long to better understand the building's potential economic and community impact.

Using their research, students created scale models and floor plans proposing new uses for the property. During a public presentation attended by local real estate professionals, redevelopment officials, Indiana Landmarks staff, and community leaders, students presented concepts that ranged from an arcade and event venue to a physical therapy and mental health center.

Wabash High School's Pathways to Career and Postsecondary Class won the Servaas Memorial Award in the youth-serving category for a project introducing students to historic preservation. Students developed concepts for repurposing the vacant 1890 Sposeep Building (below) and showcased their ideas through scale models at a public presentation to community leaders.

PHOTO COURTESY WHS P-CAP



"This project took a building these students had probably driven by hundreds of times and gave it a new level of importance to them," says Justin Denney, Wabash High School Math Department chair, who helped develop and oversee the program. "It taught them people really care about these buildings and that they have a story, and maybe because of that they notice other buildings and have questions about them. It opened the door to a way of thinking that this isn't a pile of bricks, it's history to them."

As winner of the Servaas Award's youth-serving category, the Wabash High School P-CAP Class receives \$1,000, and organizational category winner Save Our Stories receives \$2,000. Both groups will receive an original sculpture "No Doors to Lock Out the Past" by late Evansville artist John McNaughton at Indiana Landmarks' Annual Meeting on September 12.





Farm Owners Honor Early Rural Heritage

FOR MORE THAN TWO CENTURIES, ROLLING hills and woods in Monroe County have served as the heart of a family farm, where a farmhouse and double-crib log barn from its earliest period still shape the landscape. For preserving the farm and incorporating its landmarks into modern operations, Jeff Lucas and Anne Fields Lucas received the 2026 John Arnold Award for Rural Preservation from Indiana Landmarks and Indiana Farm Bureau, honoring the family's stewardship of the historic Tate-Tatum Farm south of Bloomington.

John and Susanna Tate established the farm in 1822, and several historic buildings dating from their ownership remain on the property. The farm stayed in the Tate family for gen-

Jeff Lucas and Anne Fields Lucas and their family (left) received the 2026 John Arnold Award for Rural Preservation from Indiana Landmarks and Indiana Farm Bureau in recognition of their preservation and stewardship of the Tate-Tatum farm in Monroe County. The couple has invested in the farm's historic structures and successfully integrated them into modern agricultural operations, while securing the property's listing the National Register of Historic Places.

PHOTOS BY PAIGE WASSEL
AND CORRIN HUNT
PHOTOGRAPHY



erations before Jeff Lucas and Anne Fields Lucas purchased it in 2015 and began adapting it for modern agricultural operations and as an event venue called Whippoorwill Hill.

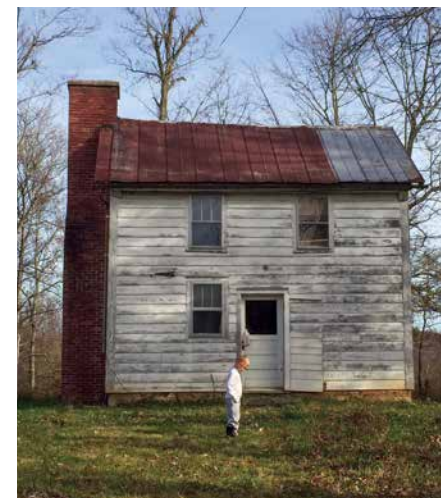
Jeff and Anne first spotted the property's vintage for-sale sign while traveling to Rural King and decided to check it out. Despite being overgrown and in need of care, the farm's early structures and landscape captivated the couple, whose desire to keep the land as a farm helped convince its owners to accept their offer.

Respect for the property's history inspired the Lucases to restore its landmarks, including the 1822 double-crib log barn. In 2024, they undertook a major rehabilitation of the 1822 Tate-Tatum Farmhouse, repairing windows and original wooden siding, upgrading plumbing and electrical systems, adding an accessible entrance, and incorporating salvaged historic architectural features into a modern farmhouse design. Today, the house serves as a preparation and gathering space during event season and as a short-term rental in the winter.

The family adapted the farm's historic outbuildings for continued use, converting its double-seater outhouse as a run-in shelter for the farm's pony and donkey, and reusing garages as a chicken coop and farm storage. To honor the farm's heritage, the Lucases successfully nominated it to the National Register of Historic Places.

In 2016, when planning their wedding, Jeff and Anne began envisioning how they might hold the ceremony at the farm, but they were reluctant to build a new structure. A cousin alerted them that owners of the 1892 Russell Barn in Shelby County, Indiana, wanted to remove the vacant and collapsing structure. After dismantling and cataloguing the barn, the Lucases oversaw its reconstruction on the Tate-Tatum Farm, holding their wedding in the construction zone.

In adapting the barn, they preserved as much original material as possible while turning it into a modern event venue with a commercial kitchen, accessible restrooms, and exterior porches. Today, the transverse-frame barn hosts weddings, reunions, meetings, and other events.



Since purchasing the Tate-Tatum Farm in 2015, the Lucas family has worked to preserve its historic character, including a major rehabilitation of the 1822 Tate-Tatum Farmhouse (above) and repairs to the double-crib log barn (below), another surviving structure from the same period.

PHOTOS COURTESY LUCAS
FAMILY AND PAIGE WASSEL



The income generated supports ongoing maintenance and preservation of the farm's historic buildings.

"It would have felt disrespectful to the farm to build something new," says Anne Lucas. "While we could have put up something bigger and fancier, this feels like it could be the graduation of the historic buildings already at the farm."

Today, the Tate-Tatum Farm spans 156 acres encompassing farmstead, pastureland, woods, cropland, and hay ground that feeds the Lucases' small herd of Angus/Charolais beef cattle and three horses.

Their interest in the property's history also led them to uncover and preserve three-quarters of a mile of historic Monon Railroad bed that runs through the farm, now used as a walking and horseback riding trail leading to the former Hays Grocery, a 1913 general store that Anne's parents Rudy and Kay Fields restored as a small lodging and gathering space.

"Jeff and Anne Lucas's stewardship of the Tate-Tatum Farm reflects their desire to honor the farm's history while making it economically sustainable for the future, intentionally preserving its historic buildings and adapting them for continued use in a way that reflects the spirit of the Arnold Award," says Tommy Kleckner, director of Indiana Landmarks' Western Regional Office and Arnold Award coordinator.

"It feels redeeming to have the hard work we've put into the farm in the past ten years seen and appreciated at this level," says Anne Fields Lucas. "This is an honor for not just us personally, but the farm itself and the folks who lived here, as well as a nod to Monroe County having an asset like this."

Indiana Landmarks and Indiana Farm Bureau presented the Lucases with the Arnold Award on August 13 at the Indiana State Fair. The annual award is named in memory of John Arnold (1955-1991), a Rush County farmer committed to preserving Indiana's rural heritage.



10

MOST ENDANGERED

Each year, Indiana Landmarks uses the 10 Most Endangered list to call attention to the state's highly threatened historic places. The designation helps rally advocates for these landmarks and funding for their preservation. You can help us save these sites by sharing their stories with others and voicing your support with decision-makers who can influence their fates. See more photos of the places on this year's list at indianalandmarks.org.

PHOTOS BY EVAN HALE

Adams Mill

CUTLER

IN CUTLER, IN NORTH CENTRAL INDIANA, Adams Mill stands as rare survivor, a picturesque centerpiece of a popular recreation area along Wildcat Creek that points to Carroll County's early settlement. Dedicated volunteers have preserved the grist mill for decades, but critically needed structural repairs now threaten the site.



In 1845, John Adams built the grist mill on land where he had already constructed a dam and millrace. The building quickly became the area's commercial hub, even holding a post office and Masonic lodge. The mill produced flour for over a century until commercial milling ended in 1951. Recognizing its significance, James Broadhurst purchased the mill in 1973 to preserve the landmark and turn it into a museum, a vision that lives on today through its use as a museum of rural Americana. Of the approximately 700 grain mills believed to have existed in Indiana in the 1860s, few remain standing today, making Adams Mill one of the oldest standing examples of its type. Owned since 2009 by nonprofit Adams Mill Inc., the mill and its museum are open seasonally to visitors and serve as a focal point for campers who rent nearby grounds and cabins from the organization.

A study in 2023 by a timber restoration specialist identified foundation and sill issues causing the mill to settle and its first floor to bulge outward. Minimum repairs to stabilize the structure are estimated at \$80,000 while full restoration could cost as much as \$550,000, a hefty price tag for a nonprofit that relies on campground rental income and donations to maintain the grist mill. For the all-volunteer group, it's a significant financial challenge, and until full funding is secured, the mill's future remains precarious.



Castle Hall

INDIANAPOLIS

BUILT IN 1911 BY FOUR LOCAL LODGES OF THE African American Knights of Pythias, Castle Hall served as a cultural, social, and economic hub for Indianapolis's Black community at a time when many public venues shunned Black visitors. Today, the brick building remains one of the most significant surviving landmarks tied to Indianapolis's African American history, but its legacy is in serious jeopardy.

Located near Indiana Avenue, the city's historic center of Black culture, the building hosted state and regional conferences, community gatherings, and fraternal activities while providing valuable first-floor commercial space for Black-owned businesses and organizations. In 1914, Madam C. J. Walker hosted 200 guests at Castle Hall for a formal dance that the *Indianapolis Recorder* proclaimed unrivaled "in the social history of Indianapolis colored people."

After the Knights of Pythias vacated in 1946, the building served for decades as home to a storage and moving company. Recognizing Castle Hall's historical significance, the building's current owner purchased the landmark and launched critical repairs to the masonry, roof, and structural systems. However, funding challenges halted the work, leaving the building in a vulnerable state.

Currently, temporary scaffolding and structural shoring remain in place to support portions of the structure. The scaffolding extends over the Indianapolis Cultural Trail along the building's south façade, creating an increasingly urgent situation. Castle Hall has the potential to reclaim its role as a crossroads of culture, commerce, and community, but without urgent investment and repair, that possibility is quickly fading.



See more photos at indianalandmarks.org/10-most-endangered

Shirk-Edwards House

PERU

IN PERU, INDIANA, THE SHIRK-EDWARDS

House is distinguished by its grand architecture and past owners, including a national trailblazer in women's suffrage. Today, that heritage is overshadowed by the house's visible deterioration including peeling paint, a leaky roof, and a porch perilously close to collapse.

Real estate investor and banking magnate Elbert Hamilton Shirk added onto an earlier structure to create the Italianate residence c.1862, but its association with later owners Richard Elbert Edwards and Marie Stuart Edwards represents an equally important chapter in the house's history. In 1921, the Edwards hired Indianapolis architect Merritt Harrison to give the house a Neoclassical makeover, including a new stucco exterior. Marie Stuart Edwards, leader of Indiana's Women's Franchise League and a key figure in creation of the National League of Women Voters, lived in the house from 1914 to 1970, using the property as a home base while championing social causes and women's rights in Indiana and beyond.

An absentee owner currently holds the vacant property and has yet to take action to address the house's growing list of code violations or the City's direct requests for repairs. Meanwhile, the Shirk-Edwards House is at a tipping point, in need of significant investment to honor its noteworthy heritage.



Plymouth Fire Station

PLYMOUTH

IN THE CENTER OF DOWNTOWN PLYMOUTH, A TOWERING

firehouse has been at the heart of community life since it was built in 1875. So, when the building's exterior brick showed signs of accelerating deterioration a couple years ago, residents raised the alarm.

Originally home to both the city's fire department and city hall, the building's arched bays and bell tower reflected its civic importance, supporting firefighting operations for over a century until a new station was built in 1980. The National Register-listed building continued to serve the city in the intervening years, alternately housing the city's ambulance service, visitors' bureau, and even a preschool and temporary art exhibits. The original city hall chamber and fire pole remain, pointing to the firehouse's heritage.

A study of the building estimated much-needed exterior repairs will total over \$1 million. A recent grant from the Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs is a great step toward preservation, but the City of Plymouth will need additional funding to ensure the firehouse's longevity.

Around the state, historic fire stations have been repurposed as a community center, restaurants, coffee houses, an antiques store, and even a private residence, proof of their enduring value as beloved and adaptable community landmarks. As one of the oldest of its kind in Indiana, the historic Plymouth Fire Station deserves a similar positive outcome.





Tunnel Mill Scout Reservation

CHARLESTOWN



FOR DECADES, BOY SCOUTS AND CUB SCOUTS HAVE enjoyed camping, hiking, fishing, and learning leadership and life skills at the Tunnel Mill Scout Reservation, a 142-acre camp in Charlestown in Clark County. The future of that legacy and the camp's extensive collection of historic buildings is uncertain, as its owner, the Lincoln Heritage Council, announced earlier this year that it intended to sell the property, citing a declining number of campers and financial challenges in maintaining the expansive site.

Tunnel Mill's history dates to 1804, when John Work purchased 100 acres along Fourteen Mile Creek. Around 1811, he built his home and later established a grist mill nearby. To increase water flow necessary to power the operation, Work blasted a tunnel through a nearby limestone bluff and constructed a dam, leaving a lasting physical imprint on the landscape. Today, his house (left), the tunnel, mill remnants (below), and a family cemetery remain as reminders of the site's history.

Following a fire that destroyed the mill, the property was sold in 1928 for use as a Boy Scout camp, a purpose that has shaped it for nearly a century. Tunnel Mill Scout Reservation retains a collection of historic buildings constructed from the 1930s to 1950s, including rustic log cabins built in 1933 through the vision of local scout leader H.A. Meyer, who proposed a "Pioneer Village" as the camp's centerpiece.

Concerned that potential residential development could erase the property's history, Friends of Tunnel Mill Scouting Heritage Society launched a fundraising effort to acquire the camp, but the Lincoln Heritage Council turned down their initial offer to purchase Tunnel Mill for \$850,000. The friends group continues to raise money in hopes of acquiring the site, aiming to preserve and share its story while broadening the camp's availability for all youth, as well as making it available for public events and as a rental venue. It's an ambitious financial and operational undertaking for the nonprofit, all-volunteer group, but one that supporters believe is essential to ensure Tunnel Mill's legacy endures for generations to come.

First Church of Christ Scientist

EVANSVILLE

FOR MORE THAN A CENTURY, THE SMALL

church at 212 Mulberry Street has stood as a testament to Evansville's architectural and religious heritage, tangible history now at risk of being lost.

Designed by celebrated local architect Clifford Shopbell and completed in 1916 for the First Church of Christ, Scientist, the landmark is one of the city's finest surviving examples of early twentieth-century Neoclassical architecture. Featuring white brick, a Bedford stone façade, and a grand columned portico, the building embodies the Christian Science movement's emphasis on reason, harmony, and early Christian ideals.

The church served the Christian Science congregation for more than 70 years, through the Great Depression, the 1937 Ohio River Flood, World War II, and decades of community change.

Since 1988, Bethany Apostolic Church has occupied the building, but today the small congregation struggles to afford maintenance and repairs. Deterioration of the original green clay tile roof and historic windows has allowed water to infiltrate, damaging interior walls, ceilings, and finishes—defining features that will be costly to restore.

Losing the landmark would mean far more than the disappearance of a church. It would erase a rare example of purpose-built Christian Science architecture, a masterpiece by one of Evansville's most important architects, and a physical reminder of a period when civic ambition, architectural excellence, and community investment helped define the city.



Ayres House

FORTVILLE

NEAR DOWNTOWN FORTVILLE, A STATELY

house with columned portico captures the eye, its grand architectural features still signaling the prosperity of its original owner. Now vacant, the property occupies a coveted spot near the city's thriving Main Street, where its future hangs in the balance.

In 1913, businessman Arthur B. Ayres commissioned construction of a new home for his family in a prime location near downtown Fortville. Constructed of Redwood shipped from California, the Colonial Revival-style house reflected Ayres' status as a businessman whose influence reached well beyond Fortville.

A Rush County native, Ayres built major oil interests in Kentucky, selling his company to Standard Oil and developing a friendship with John Rockefeller before settling in Hancock County, where he founded Fortville's gas and telephone companies. He channeled his wealth into philanthropic support for the town's Carnegie Library and the James Whitcomb Riley Hospital for Children in nearby Indianapolis.

While the Ayres' home remains one of the town's most architecturally distinguished houses, its elite status isn't secure. The building requires substantial investment and environmental remediation after long use as a funeral home. The Town of Fortville acquired the property in 2024 and has considered demolishing it for surface parking. At Indiana Landmarks' urging, the Town issued a request for redevelopment proposals in 2025 but received no response, leaving the Ayres House in limbo.



See more photos at indianalandmarks.org/10-most-endangered



City-County Building

NEW ALBANY

IN THE EARLY 1960S, CONSTRUCTION OF

interstate highways and urban renewal reshaped many downtowns across the country. In southern Indiana, construction of Interstate 64 and the Sherman Minton Bridge through downtown New Albany cleared four blocks for new federal, county, and municipal buildings. More than 60 years later, the area remains a remarkably cohesive enclave of Modernist civic architecture—including three buildings designed by the local firm of Walker, Applegate, Oakes and Ritz—but without intervention that design legacy could be lost.

The firm established the area's character with the New Albany Floyd County City-County Building completed in 1961. The streamlined rectangular glass and concrete structure embodies Modernist principles through a symmetrical façade with minimal ornamentation, accented by three inscribed medallions and a distinctive curved entry canopy. The building is significant as Indiana's first combined City-County Building, made possible by the Indiana County Building Authority Act of 1953. Walker, Applegate, Oakes and Ritz later designed the federal courthouse and public library across the street, creating a unified civic grouping.

In 2021, the City relocated its offices to a rehabilitated historic warehouse downtown. Though some court functions remain in the City-County Building, aging systems and space constraints recently prompted the County to move many operations to a former bank building across the street, leaving plans for the structure uncertain.

Ironically, construction of the City-County Building resulted in demolition of the nearby nineteenth-century Floyd County Courthouse, though portions of its surviving columns still stand on the grounds. Repeating that history now by demolishing the City-County Building in name of progress would be a shame. Constructed as a symbol of the future, the landmark's architectural heritage is now worthy of preservation in its own right.

Kiwanis Field

LA PORTE

IN 1950, LA PORTE'S KIWANIS CLUB

spearheaded construction of a new stadium for the local high school's football team. Architects O'Keefe and Keil delivered a striking Streamline Modern fieldhouse, with locker rooms tucked under a sloping grandstand where students, parents, and fans have gathered for more than 70 years to cheer on the mighty Slicers.

The stadium landed on the 10 Most Endangered list last year after school officials suggested that building a new football stadium would be more cost effective than investing in repairs and updates to the aging facility. Preservation advocates mobilized quickly, with more than 750 community members signing a petition in support of rehabbing the landmark and preserving it as the high school's signature sports venue.

Since then, school officials have partnered with Indiana Landmarks' affiliate Preserve Historic La Porte to explore possibilities, commissioning a study that assessed renovation options. Armed with the results, the committee identified a plan that would rehabilitate the existing fieldhouse and locker rooms.

However, it's too soon to celebrate a preservation win; the school board must still approve the proposal and determine how it will be funded. With community support, a workable rehabilitation strategy, and broad collaboration already in place, it's time for a final push to get the plan over the goal line.



Lincoln Pioneer Village

ROCKPORT

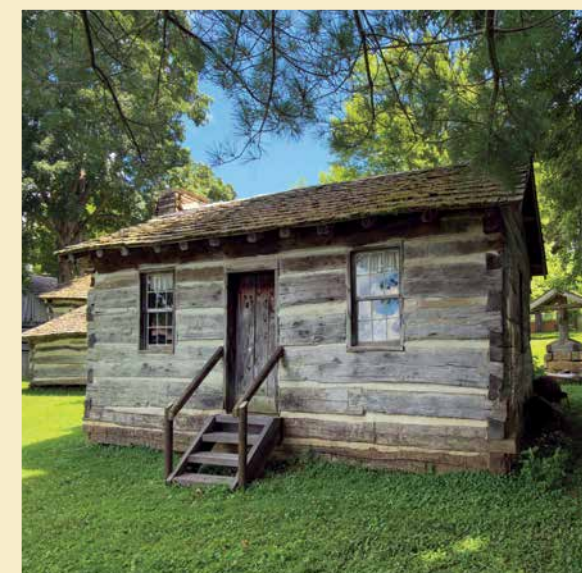
IN SPENCER COUNTY, LINCOLN PIONEER VILLAGE

tells the unique American story of both the frontier life that shaped a young Abraham Lincoln and a community determined to preserve that history. Now, the Village needs vision and funding for that story to continue.

From 1816 to 1830, the Lincoln family lived and worked in the rugged landscape of southwestern Indiana, experiences that helped form Abraham's character, values, and worldview. Area residents began memorializing the influential president's life in the county as early as 1872, just seven years after his assassination, founding Lincoln City on land where the Lincolns once lived.

The vision for Lincoln Pioneer Village originated with George Henry Honig, a nationally acclaimed sculptor born in nearby Rockport in 1874. Although his artistic career took him across the country, Honig remained deeply devoted to his hometown. Inspired by Lincoln's legacy, he imagined a place where visitors could experience the president's Indiana story and the realities of pioneer life. Built through the Works Progress Administration during the Great Depression, the project provided jobs, attracted tourists, and united locals who donated timber from their land, heirlooms from their homes, and countless hours of labor to bring the Village to life.

Today, the site is in danger of falling into neglect, threatened by funding challenges, aging structures, and the loss of people with specialized knowledge needed to care for it. Preserving this nationally significant landmark will require sustained investment, dedicated stewardship, and renewed efforts to share its heritage.



See more photos at indianalandmarks.org/10-most-endangered



Forward-Thinking Generosity

IN DOWNTOWN DELPHI, JUST A BLOCK AWAY

from the Carroll County Courthouse, a turreted Queen Anne-style house on Franklin Street has turned heads since it was built in 1896. Generations of residents have carefully preserved the home, including its most recent owners, Tom and Joy Atkinson. Now, the couple is continuing its legacy and benefiting Indiana Landmarks by selling their house to the preservation organization for less than the appraised value. Indiana Landmarks will resell the house at market value with preservation covenants, ensuring its architectural significance is protected while turning the Atkinsons' generosity into direct support for the organization.

Long-time Delphi residents know the property as the Ruffing House, named for Joseph E. and Laura Ruffing, who built the home and operated a downtown jewelry store. Members of the family continued living in the house through the early 1940s. Constructed by builder W.H. Clawson, the home's design is based on a pattern book plan by nationally known Tennessee architect George F. Barber. Still distinctive a century later, the house caught the eye of the newly married Atkinsons when they bought it in 1992, charmed by its well-tended historic features, including original sycamore woodwork, fretwork, and pocket doors.

To help protect their longtime Delphi residence and support Indiana Landmarks, Tom and Joy Atkinson sold their 1896 Queen Anne-style house to Indiana Landmarks for less than appraised value. The organization will resell the property at market value with preservation covenants to ensure its historic character is maintained.

PHOTO BY TOMMY KLECKNER

MEMBER PROFILE

In the intervening decades, the couple raised their two sons in the house while maintaining its historic character. They removed the original slate and two layers of asphalt shingles to install a slate roof mirroring the original design and repainted its exterior three times. They also stabilized the historic carriage house, lifting the structure to install a new concrete foundation before adding a sympathetic addition. Over the years, they enjoyed watching the space evolve from teen hangout to guesthouse.

The couple has also connected with Ruffing family descendants, gifting Joseph and Laura Ruffing's great-grandson with the original owners' framed marriage certificate, which had survived for 130 years in the house.

The Atkinsons are equally committed to preserving Delphi's heritage. Tom helped found Delphi Preservation Society in 1994 and became acquainted with Indiana Landmarks as a resource supporting the local group's efforts to preserve downtown landmarks.

Last summer, the Atkinsons put the Ruffing House on the market, looking to downsize to a smaller, one-story house, but struggled to find the right buyer to steward the property.

"Rather than lower the asking price and risk the old house falling into unsympathetic hands, we explored options with Indiana Landmarks," says Tom Atkinson. "In the end, it made sense to convey the house to an organization that would protect its future and help it find a new preservation-minded owner."

"More than anything else, we want our two sons, when they return to their hometown of Delphi as old men, to drive by 201 East Franklin and see a house that hasn't changed, at least not much, since they were boys living in it," adds Joy Atkinson.

FOR SALE

LANDMARKS ON THE MARKET

see more at indianalandmarks.org/properties-for-sale



66401 Walnut Road Walkerton

1869 Italianate rural homestead on 5 acres in St. Joseph County. Recent improvements include full exterior tuck-pointing, new lintels, roof, and copper work. Featuring a central hall layout, the house includes 3 beds, 2 baths, and custom kitchen with heated flooring. English barn, 3-car garage, gazebo, storage shed and viewing deck also on property.

\$419,000
Mary McDowell
202-257-1130



307 N. Van Buren Street Auburn

Built in 1891 by Charles Eckhart (Auburn Automobile Company) this 4,104 square-foot home boasts 5 bedrooms, beautiful architectural details, coved ceilings, 2 marble gas fireplaces, renovated kitchen and first floor primary suite, full basement + carriage house/garage and storage. Don't miss this opportunity to own a piece of automobile history!

\$349,999
Matthew Kruse, Realtor
260-414-2020



BRIEFLY NOTED

Indiana Landmarks welcomes **Alan Shaul** as full-time events technology production coordinator. Shaul holds a bachelor's degree in telecommunications from Ball State University and has over 25 years' experience in live event production all over Indiana, including supporting events at the Indiana Landmarks Center in a part-time capacity for the past 10 years.

Bryan Daniel joins Indiana Landmarks as operations manager, focused on developing, implementing, and maintaining systems and tools to help the organization be effective in its

day-to-day work. Daniel holds a master's degree in counseling and counselor education from Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis and previously worked at A Longer Table as an operations and community director.

We sadly note the recent passing of **Dr. Stanley Warren**, past chair of Indiana Landmarks' African American Landmarks Committee, whose scholarship and commitment to documenting Black history in Indiana played an instrumental role in establishing Indiana Landmarks Black Heritage Preservation Program.

Indiana Landmarks and Indiana Humanities jointly award historic preservation education grants for public programs educating Indiana citizens about historic places and properties and their preservation. Applications for the next round of grants are due September 30, 2026. See more details and apply online at indianahumanities.org/grant/historic-preservation-education-grant.

Promising Progress

WHEN INDIANA LANDMARKS

names a property to our 10 Most Endangered list, we commit to seeking solutions that will improve its prospects and supporting those working towards its revitalization. When a property leaves the list, we continue to monitor its condition through our watch list until it is no longer endangered. We're pleased to report encouraging progress at several past 10 Most Endangered sites.

Traders Point Covered Bridge

Indianapolis

Advocates continue to raise funds for the c.1880 bridge's rehabilitation and relocation to Eagle Creek Park, estimated to cost \$2 million. With a \$1 million pledge from Lilly Endowment Inc., the project is now more than halfway to its fundraising goal.

Rudicel-Montgomery Barn

Shelby County

Just over \$100,000 has been raised to stabilize the 1910 barn in the past year. Indiana Landmarks is helping coordinate bids for re-roofing the 12-sided barn to determine the total project cost and identify the remaining fundraising needs.

Hulman Building

Evansville

A new developer has acquired the Art Deco tower, with plans to adapt the 1929 building into a boutique-style hotel and retail space and convert the Hulman Garage into a municipal market.



Traders Point Covered Bridge



Hulman Building



Mineral Springs Hotel

PHOTOS BY EVAN HALE



Crump Theatre

LEE LEWELLEN

Mineral Springs Hotel

Paoli

The new nonprofit Springs of Hope in Paoli purchased the 1895 hotel earlier this year and plans to put on a new roof, repair masonry, and address storm damage and water infiltration as part of Phase 1 of the rehabilitation. The group hopes to adapt the property as a boutique hotel with restaurant and retail spaces.

College Hall

Merom

A \$750,000 grant from Lilly Endowment's capital project initiative for residential youth camps is supporting critical masonry work at the camp's signature 1863 building.

Crump Theatre

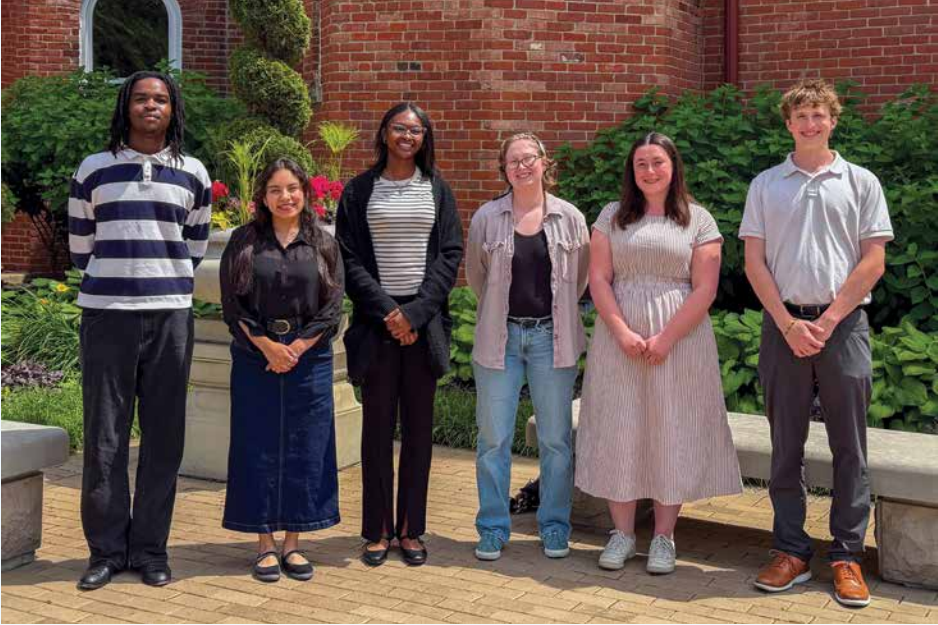
Columbus

A nearly \$6.1 million READI 2.0 Arts and Culture grant will support Project Encore, an \$21.85 million initiative to adapt the 1889 theater into the Crump Center for Performing Arts. Plans call for preserving the theater while expanding its use as a regional entertainment venue.

You can help save Indiana's meaningful places!

- Upgrade your membership
- Make a donation — Consider a Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD) from your IRA
- Encourage others to join
- Leave a legacy gift

For more information contact Jennifer Hiatt at 317-822-7922



EVAN HALE

With Our Thanks

Student interns play a vital role in supporting Indiana Landmarks' work. Through hands-on opportunities to document and rehabilitate local landmarks, interns gain valuable experience and mentorship as they explore careers in preservation, history, and related professions. We are grateful for help from several student interns over the summer:

In Indianapolis, **Regina Graves** and **Jacob Theodore** assisted Indiana Landmarks Black Heritage Preservation Program's Project 250, a statewide public history and community initiative to document the 250 most significant Black heritage sites in Indiana. A journalism major at Indiana University, Graves was drawn to the program from her interest in documenting Indiana's Black settlements, with a focus on storytelling and historical documentation. Theodore, an interior design major at Indiana University, wants to create spaces that can be used by everyone, including historic landmarks.

Kaitlynn Jackson and **Cynthia Arias Matus** helped Indiana Landmarks' Central Regional Office monitor properties protected by preservation covenants and easements in Marion County. Jackson is pursuing a bachelor's degree in Ball State University's architecture program and Matus is pursuing a master's degree in historic

preservation at the University of Notre Dame.

Johnny Burrice, who is studying civil engineering at Hanover College, joined work by Indiana Landmarks' Southern Regional Office to revitalize and raise awareness of Hanover's landmarks, collaborating with us through the college's Nichols Endowed Historic Preservation Internship. He assisted with construction management at historic homes being rehabbed by Indiana Landmarks, research, creation of a walking tour brochure for the town's pending National Register Historic District, and helped with covenant and easement monitoring throughout the southern region.

In South Bend, **Hayden Lake** researched Black heritage sites in the city to help prepare for nominating them to the National Register of Historic Places, assisted with planning heritage trades workshops, and documented and developed a restoration proposal for the West Side Recreation Club, a former entry on Indiana Landmarks' 10 Most Endangered list. Lake is pursuing a master's degree in historic preservation from the University of Notre Dame.

From left to right (above) Jacob Theodore, Cynthia Arias Matus, Regina Graves, Hayden Lake, Kaitlynn Jackson, Johnny Burrice

Tours & Events

September/October 2026



**Delaware Street
Spooky Tour**
OCT. 17

GEORGE HANLIN

Visit indianalandmarks.org/tours-events to learn more and register. All times are Eastern unless noted.

Mass Ave Walking Tour

Sept. 12, Indianapolis

Discover the unique history of Indianapolis's Massachusetts Avenue, a flourishing cultural and commercial corridor that anchors the historic district affectionately known as Mass Ave. Tour departs at 9:30 a.m. \$20/general public (ages 12 & up); \$17/member; \$15/child (ages 6-11); free to children ages 5 and under.

Indiana Landmarks Annual Meeting

Sept. 12, Indianapolis and online

Join fellow Indiana Landmarks members and friends in Indianapolis for our 66th Annual Meeting. We'll elect new directors, applaud winners of the Sandi Servaas Memorial Awards, Williamson Prize, Cook Cup for Outstanding Restoration, and Renaissance Award, and hear updates from Indiana Landmarks President Brad Ward. Program begins at 3:30 p.m. in person and online with reception at Indiana Landmarks Center to follow. Free with registration.

Propylaeum Building Tour

Sept. 13, Oct. 11 & Nov. 8, Indianapolis

Take a deep dive into Indy history at the Propylaeum, a Queen Anne-style landmark in the city's Old Northside that has served as a hub for arts, culture, and women's leadership since 1923. Presented in partnership with the Propylaeum Historic Foundation. Tours depart at 1:30 p.m. and 2 p.m. \$15/general public; \$12/member; \$10/child (ages 6-11); free to children 5 and under.

White River State Park Walking Tour

Sept. 16, Indianapolis

Explore the cultural significance of White River State Park on a guided walking tour highlighting the area's history from Indianapolis's settlement to the present day. Presented in partnership with White River State Park Development Commission. Tour departs at 6:30 p.m. \$12/general public (ages 18 & up); \$10/member; \$7/child (ages 6-17); free to children 5 and under.

FRENCH LICK & WEST BADEN SPRINGS TOURS

Discover the fascinating history of two turn-of-the-century hotels and their award-winning restorations on daily guided tours. (Tues.-Sat., June-Dec. & Wed.-Sat., Jan.-May)

West Baden Springs Hotel
2 & 4 p.m.

French Lick Springs Hotel
Noon

\$18/adult, \$15/member, \$8/child ages 6-15, and are free to children ages 5 and under. Advance tickets required.

Behind-the-Scenes Tours

Get an exclusive look at spaces not normally open to the public at West Baden Springs Hotel on a two-hour tour beginning at 2 p.m. on Sept. 10 & 24, Oct. 8 & 22, Nov. 5 & 19, and Dec. 3 & 17. Tickets cost \$50/person, \$45/member. Advance tickets required.

Twilight Tours

Costumed characters depict famous guests at West Baden Springs during its heyday in the 'teens and '20s. Tours depart at 7 p.m. on Sept. 12. Tickets cost \$25/adult; \$20/member; \$10/child (ages 6-15). Advance tickets required.

indianalandmarks.org/french-lick-west-baden



KELLY HARRIS

Athenaeum Building Tour

Sept. 20 & Oct. 25, Indianapolis

DISCOVER INDIANAPOLIS'S

German roots on a one-hour guided tour exploring the history, architecture, and preservation of the Athenaeum as it evolved from German clubhouse to hub of modern urban life. Tours depart at 1:30 p.m. and 2 p.m. Advance tickets encouraged. \$15/general public (ages 12 & up); \$12/member; \$10/child (ages 6-11); free to children 5 and under.

Conversations in Indiana African American History and Culture

Sept. 17 & Oct. 15, Indianapolis and online

On Sept. 17, Jakobi Williams, chair of African American and African Diaspora Studies at Indiana University, shares stories of Indiana's Black history. On Oct. 15, Kisha Tandy, curator of social history at the Indiana State Museum, highlights the vital role early African American mutual aid societies and financial institutions played in Indianapolis. Presented in partnership with Freetown Village. 6 p.m. at Indiana Landmarks Center and online. Free with registration at freetownvillage.org or 317-631-1870.

House of Tomorrow Experiences

Sept. 25, 6 p.m. CDT
Sept. 27, 11 a.m. CDT

Join fellow Indiana Landmarks members for a one-of-a-kind cocktail or brunch experience at the iconic House of Tomorrow in the Indiana Dunes—an exclusive opportunity to experience and support the landmark home with glass walls in place but before interior restoration begins. Each behind-the-scenes experience includes remarks from the expert restoration team and extended time to tour the House of Tomorrow. Tickets cost \$300/person for Friday's cocktail experience and \$200/person for Sunday's brunch experience. To learn more and register, visit us.emma-live.com/houseoftomorrow.

Proceeds from Indiana Landmarks' House of Tomorrow Experiences benefit our Endangered Places Program, offering grants, loans, advocacy, and strategy to help save historic structures and revitalize Hoosier communities.

Note: Tickets for the annual Century of Progress Home Tour on Sept. 26, 2026, are SOLD OUT and NOT included in the purchase of House of Tomorrow Experience tickets.



Decoding Downtown Indy

Sept. 19, Indianapolis

Explore the hidden history of downtown Indianapolis landmarks on a 90-minute guided tour. Along the way, learn about architectural styles and compete for fun prizes. Tour departs at 9:30 a.m. \$20/general public (ages 12 & up); \$17/member; \$15/child (ages 6-11); free to children 5 and under.

Visiting Virtuosos

Sept. 24, Indianapolis

Indiana Landmarks and Visiting Virtuosos present an evening of special music at Indiana Landmarks Center with cellist Arkady Orlovsky and pianist Tamara Orlovsky featuring works by Fauré, Boccherini, and Mozart. The event is the first in a series of performances designed to celebrate exceptional artistry and serve the community through music, education, and engagement. Doors open at 7 p.m. with concert from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. \$35/general public; \$25/member; free to children 12 and under.

Monument Circle Walking Tour

Sept. 27, Indianapolis

One-hour guided walking tours explore Indianapolis's most recognizable historic district, highlighting how and why these blocks have become a symbol of the city. Tours depart at 1:30 p.m. \$10/general public (ages 12 & up); \$8/member; \$5/child (ages 6-11); free to children 5 and under.

Indianapolis Neighborhood Walking Tours

May-Oct.

Explore some of the city's most fascinating historic neighborhoods on 90-minute guided walking tours offered select mornings and evenings. Departure times vary. \$20/general public; \$17/member; \$15/child (ages 6-11); free to children 5 and under.

Sept. 1 & 26 - Chatham Arch

Chatham Arch, one of the city's earliest residential areas, developed into a thriving neighborhood of modest cottages, grander homes, apartments, churches, and commercial buildings that is still desirable today. Tours depart at 6:30 p.m. on Sept. 1 and at 9:30 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. on Sept. 26.

Oct. 23 & 24 - Woodruff Place Twilight Tour

Known as the city's first planned residential suburb, entrepreneur James O. Woodruff created Woodruff Place in 1872, an upscale, park-like neighborhood with stately homes and tree-lined esplanades. This special October edition of our Woodruff Place tour features neighborhood lore and haunting historical tales. Tours depart at 5:30 p.m., 6 p.m., and 6:30 p.m.

Preserving Historic Places

Sept 29-Oct. 2, Franklin

Hear from preservation experts on a range of topics including revitalizing Main Streets, advances in canal archaeology, marketing and storytelling for historic sites, and more. Hosted jointly by Indiana Landmarks, the Indiana Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology, and Indiana University. Visit indianalandmarks.org/preserving-historic-places to register and view the full conference agenda.

Indiana Modern Movie Night

Oct. 9, Indianapolis

Kick off the spooky season with a special screening of *North by Northwest*, presented by Indiana Landmarks' affinity group Indiana Modern. One of the first films to portray Modernist architecture as a symbol of elegance and sophistication, Alfred Hitchcock's classic spy thriller features the Vandamm House, an unforgettable setting inspired by Frank Lloyd Wright's iconic Fallingwater. Before the film, enjoy a brief introduction exploring the fictional house's fascinating origins and Wright's celebrated masterpiece of organic architecture. Doors open at 5:30 p.m. at Indiana Landmarks Center. Film begins at 6 p.m. \$10/general public; free for members.

Delaware Street Spooky Tour

Oct. 17, Indianapolis

Our annual spooky tour explores historic Delaware Street in Indy's Old Northside, a neighborhood where some of the city's most prominent residents built grand homes, churches, and society halls that still stand today. Enjoy an evening of spooky fun and local lore on a two-hour guided walking tour. Trick-or-treat at designated stops and get a look inside select historic landmarks including the 1903 Meredith Nicholson House, where the Hoosier author penned his bestselling mystery *The House of a Thousand Candles*. Costumes encouraged (but not required). Tours depart every 15 minutes from 4 p.m. to 6:45 p.m. \$25/general public, \$20/member, \$17 child (ages 6-11), free to children 5 and under.

Heritage Trades Workshops

Ongoing workshops equip homeowners and contractors with skills to address historic building repair needs. Visit our website for individual workshop details.

OCT. 16-17 - Wood Window Restoration 101 & 201, Logansport

OCT. 21 - Wood Window Restoration 101, Fort Wayne

NOV. 4 - House Hazards and RRP 101, South Bend

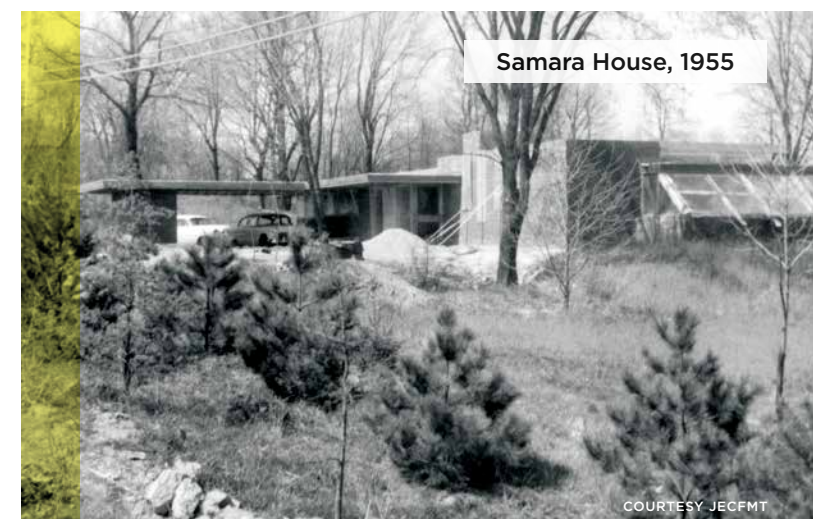
NOV. 18 - Plaster Repair 101, Fort Wayne

SAMARA TOURS

Apr.-Nov.
West Lafayette

Explore Samara, one of Frank Lloyd Wright's most fully realized Usonian designs, on regular public tours offered at 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. Wednesdays-Sundays, except when the house is closed for private events. \$20/general public; \$18/member; \$5/child (ages 6-11); free to children ages 5 and under.

samara-house.org



Samara Speaker Series

Oct. 14, Lafayette and online

Anna Andrzejewski, professor of architectural history at University of Wisconsin-Madison, presents "Rethinking Nature and Landscape in Frank Lloyd Wright's Usonia," a talk exploring Frank Lloyd Wright's professed deep reverence for nature, his practice of reshaping—and sometimes dramatically altering—landscapes to meet his vision, and how understanding his approach can inform restoration and preservation at Wright sites today. Program begins at 6 p.m. in person at Thomas Duncan Hall and online. \$10/general public; \$8/member.

Visit indianalandmarks.org/tours-events to learn more and register. All times are Eastern unless noted.



INDIANA LANDMARKS

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AND FINALLY



Historic Turnaround

IN 2021, STRONG STORMS

blew through Terre Haute's Farrington's Grove Historic District, toppling a mature tree onto the vacant c.1855 Grover-Lee House, smashing the roof, chimney and brick walls at the northeast corner. Recognizing the house's architectural and historical significance, Indiana Landmarks moved quickly to purchase the property from the trust that owned it, ensuring the damaged landmark wasn't lost to demolition.

After repairing damage from a fallen tree and addressing long-deferred maintenance, Indiana Landmarks is completing rehabilitation of Terre Haute's c.1855 Grover-Lee House, before listing the property for sale. Read more about the project on our website, indianalandmarks.org/news.

PHOTOS BY TOMMY KLECKNER
AND NOAH NOBBE

After launching repairs, Indiana Landmarks discovered more extensive damage along with issues in other parts of the house related to deferred maintenance. The project shifted from stabilization to more extensive rehabilitation, including rebuilding walls, repairing the roof and plaster and drywall, remodeling bathrooms, refinishing wood flooring, and constructing a new Greek Revival-inspired porch.

"With the project in the homestretch, we look forward to bringing the property to the market with the goal of finding a preservation-minded buyer to continue the Grover-Lee House's rehabilitation and preserve this important early landmark," says Tommy Kleckner, director of Indiana Landmarks' Western Regional Office.