



# Preservation Matters in Independence

*A Publication by the Independence Historic Preservation Division*

*Community Development Department*

*111 East Maple Avenue, Independence, MO 64050*

*Also available at: <http://www.independencemo.org/comdev/HistoricPreservation.aspx>*

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## City Supports Preservation Efforts in the 2007-08 Fiscal Year

The Independence City Council continues to promote preservation initiatives through its support of repairs at two of the City's most historic sites: the 1855 Bingham-Waggoner Estate and the 1881 Vaile Mansion.

For years, the Bingham-Waggoner Estate, located at 313 West Pacific Avenue, has worked with seven antiquated window air conditioning units to cool the building's interior during the hot summer months.

In order to install a central air cooling system, \$25,000 was dedicated in the City's 2006-07 Capital Outlay Funds. The Historic Preservation Division began to investigate options to cool the main house and/or the Carriage House in spring 2007. The City is currently in the process of collecting bids from local contractors. It is anticipated that the work will be completed after the holiday season in the winter of 2008.

In 2006, preservation work at the Vaile Mansion, located at 1500 North Liberty Street, included the

installation of new chimney caps, repair or replacement of corbels (brackets), and repair of the front porch. During these repairs, it was noted that many of the third floor and tower windows were suffering from deterioration and decay.

As repair of just one window is estimated at \$1,000, a generous allocation of City Council Goals Funds, in the amount of \$50,000 was provided by the City to aid in the restoration of the windows. An additional \$10,000 was contributed by the Vaile Victorian Society.

Of the 119 windows within the building, those displaying the most significant amount of deterioration will get top priority.

A special thank you to the Independence City Council for showing their continued support of preservation efforts and for both of these projects, two of the City's most treasured historic sites.

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*"It's not good because it's old, it's old because it's good."*

*-Unknown*



## Home Improvement Workshops Offered throughout 2008

The City of Independence Historic Preservation and the Neighborhood Services Divisions, as a part of the ongoing outreach efforts to promote the rehabilitation of traditional housing in Independence, is sponsoring a series of workshops related to home improvements. Sessions will be held monthly with the exception of May, where weekly sessions will be held in recognition of Historic Preservation Month. Workshops will be held throughout the City and will highlight topics such as: *Going Green: Tips to becoming an energy efficient home; 353 tax abatement and historic preservation financial incentives; lead and asbestos abatement; tips for painting your house; building codes; identifying historic architecture; and, more.* For more information, call (816) 325-7419 or (816) 325-7410.



## Are Independence Heritage Commission

**Meetings open to the public? If so, where are the agendas posted?**

Heritage Commission Meetings are held the first Tuesday of the month at 6:30p.m. The meetings are always open to the public and participation is encouraged. Agendas are posted the week before the meeting on-line at: <http://www.indepmo.org/agenda/Listing.aspx> as well as in City Hall. All agenda items slated for public hearing are also posted in the *Examiner* 15 days prior to the meeting. For more information or to request a monthly electronic copy of the agenda, contact Preservation Staff directly at: 816.325.7419.

## Many Resources Available for those Researching their Historic Property

There are many reasons to be excited about moving into a new home or neighborhood. For some, it is the history of the house or even the neighborhood and its many stories that are the most intriguing. Once that interest is peaked, many wonder where to begin to learn more about dates of construction, previous ownership, neighborhood development patterns, and potentially historic designation.

So, where do you start if you are a property owner interested in researching the history of your property?

For properties in Independence, the Jackson County Historical Society, the Mid-continent Public Library, Genealogical Branch, or even the Kansas City Public Library are all excellent places to begin.

All three resources provide assistance with historical research such as tracing genealogy, property ownership, and famous people or events associated with a property or area. Their staff can assist you with researching city directories, newspaper articles, books, archival photos, Sanborn Fire Insurance and bird's eye maps, and sometimes abstracts or deeds, when available. These sources list the use of the building over the years, those who occupied the residence or business, and often the period or dates of construction. Development patterns of an area can also be traced.

Other resources include the marriage and death certificates and property deeds to research people and parcels within Jackson County. These are available at the Jackson County Recorder of Deeds Office.

Once this information is collected, the local Historic Preservation Office can then assist you with writing and submitting a historic designation report for review and approval by the Independence Heritage Commission and ultimately the City Council for listing on the local or National Register of Historic Places.

So, if you are seeking information regarding researching local history, both people and places, try the local historical society, library, or the County Recorder of Deeds Office.

From there, the Independence Preservation Division can assist you in accessing architectural surveys as well as processing nominations for designation.

### For more information contact:

***Jackson County Historical Society Archives***  
Jackson County Courthouse  
Historic Independence Square  
**816.252.7454**

Open Monday through Friday.  
Call the number above to schedule a research appointment. Advance appointments are required.

***Mid-Continent Public Library Genealogy and Local History***  
317 West 24 Highway  
Independence, MO 64050  
**816.252.7228**  
9-9 Monday-Thursday, 9-6 Friday, and 9-5 Saturday

***Jackson County Courthouse Annex Recorder of Deeds***  
308 West Kansas Avenue,  
Room 104  
Independence, MO 64050  
**816.881.4400**

***Kansas City Public Library***  
14 West Tenth Street  
Kansas City, MO 64105  
**816.701.3427**