

July 25, 2023

7:00-8:45 PM

Meeting of COMO Preservation

www.comopreservation.org

Columbia Public Library, Friends Room

I. Call to order by Dianna O'Brien

The sign-in sheet was passed around and the following were present: Dianna O'Brien, Nina Sappington, Barb Reed, Greg Reed, Julie Plax, Debby Cook, Sarah Seat, Chris Creasy, Melissa Bernhardt, Elena Vega, Kate Stockton, Janice DeRosier, Dan Viets and Patrick Earney.

Event Reminders:

-July 29, 10 AM-Noon. - Meet in front of The Broadway Hotel for the Brick Streets Tour. Patrick Earney will lead the free tour. Registration is required. Sign up at: www.comopreservation.org.

-August 22 – Tanner Ott will discuss the restoration projects he and his father, John Ott, have done, including the obstacles, challenges and his favorite project.

-September 26 – Amanda J. Stanley Harrison, will discuss the challenges of repurposing historic buildings. The Museum of Anthropology plans to reopen soon in Ellis Library's lower level.

-November 4 – Wells, Springs and Industry of Early Columbia. We'll meet at Flat Branch Park near the playground. Stephen Bybee will present information about tanneries, mills and blacksmith shops of early Columbia.

Future Meeting dates: August 22, September 26, October 24, November 28 and December 19 in the Friends Room of the Columbia Public Library.

II. Minutes of the last meeting were approved.

III. Team Reports

Advocacy Report – Dianna O'Brien– The Advocacy Team's Task/Mission Statement: to encourage alternatives to demolition by providing information to property owners and protecting historic properties through discussion and engagement.

-Most Notable properties- At least 50 years old, house, park or workplace that plays a part in history of architectural influences that identify Columbia. (ie. Jesse Hall, Wabash Station, Blue Note). No privileges, limitations or restrictions on the sale or alteration of the property.

-National Registry - no protection by tax credit and no restrictions on what you do with property.

-Local Landmark – protect what you love.

-Local District – 2+ property owners agree to protect property of historic interest to community.

*Advocacy Team- next meeting Oct 19, 9-10 AM at EatWell.

Restoration Report – Elena Vega – The Restoration Team will be the clearinghouse for information and resources to support owners of historic properties.

- Now Online! – a list of artisans, masons, craftspeople and others with experience in caring for and researching historic properties. Will be updated.

- Working to find out what sister organizations are doing to help preserve historic buildings-
Historic Preservation Commission.

*Restoration Team- next meetings: Sept. 14, 5:45-7:15 PM and Oct. 19, 5:45-7:15 at EatWell.

Education Report – Chris Creasy– last blog was Feb. 17. New blog yesterday about Ellis Fischel. Need volunteers to create blog content, do research on local history and give tours.

Cindy Mustard – video series. Great granddaughter of man who built Conley House. Gave the house to the University to keep forever!

Avenue of the Columns tour is being developed.

Education: tours, blogs and community outreach.

*Education Team- next meeting Sept. 20, 3:00-5:00 PM at The Grind on Forum.

IV. Speaker: Billy Polansky, Center for Urban Agriculture

Henry Kirklin

Henry Kirklin was born June 6, 1858 in Boone County. He was emancipated at age 5. As a teen he worked for Joseph B. Douglas, a general greenhouse and nursery owner. Kirklin learned about plants, pruning and agricultural skills from Douglas and the other gardeners that worked for him. At the age of 23 Kirklin became a greenhouse attendant at the University of Missouri Agriculture School. Kirklin was so skilled that he began teaching students, but he had to teach plant propagation outside or in the green house, since the University did not allow black teachers.

Kirklin's home was on Switzler Street. He raised prize winning fruits and vegetables on his land and sold them going door to door with a wheelbarrow and then a horse and wagon. He became famous for growing strawberries and celery. (Celery is apparently hard to grow in Missouri.) He exhibited his produced at the 1904 World's Fair in St. Louis. In 1907 he won a gold ribbon at the Jamestown Exposition in Virginia. In 1913 he was honored by the National Negro Business League.

He bought a couple of houses adjacent to his property and his wife managed the rental houses. Kirklin made as much money raising crops on his 2 acres as other folks made on 120 acres.

An Evening Missourian article in 1919 called him the “best American negro farmer.” He traveled to horticulture meetings all over the country and met and corresponded with Booker T. Washington. Although he was not educated, he talked to students at Douglass High School and encouraged them to learn a trade and work hard. He sent his daughters to Lincoln Institute (now Lincoln University). Kirklin was on the board of the Dalton Vocational School in Chariton County. Kirlin was self-taught but became a very successful businessman. He was a member of the St. Paul AME Church on Park Street.

Glass photo negatives were found in one of Kirklin’s houses. They were from Joseph Douglas’s photo studio. The Boone County Historical Society has cleaned and digitized the photos. They contain portraits from the late 1800’s – early 1900’s.

Henry Kirklin died in 1938 and was buried in the Columbia Cemetery in an unmarked grave. In 2019 Boone County Historical Society, Columbia Center for Urban Agriculture, Friends of Historic Columbia Cemetery, Sharp End Heritage Committee and MU College of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources started a fund-raising campaign to raise money for a headstone. In 2020 the headstone was installed. In 2021 the Henry Kirklin Plant Sciences Learning Laboratory was opened at MU. University President Choi officially recognized Henry Kirklin as the first black teacher at the University. On October 14, 2022, Henry Kirklin was inducted into the Boone County Hall of Fame. Boone County Historical Society video was the introduction to the Hall of Fame presentation.

Children’s Book- (IM)possible: the Untold story of Henry Kirklin the father of Agriculture by Charlis Jeanette, 2022.

Center for Urban Agriculture- Urban farm in Columbia. The headquarters is located next to the Arc, but they still have the original site. Last year 50,000 lbs. of food was donated to the Food Bank.

Brainstorming - Ideas to create interest in historic preservation.

Lisa Nelson - Involve kids in historic building. Competition to build out of Legos. Joplin. Sponsors for teams of kids.

Make flash cards of historic buildings. Playing cards, calendar.

STEM project.

Gingerbread historic houses – Downtown Christmas windows.

Cole Camp – brass plaques on historic houses. Fayette and Glasgow do this too.

We’ve talked about QR codes on buildings.

Note – Matt Fetterly will be doing a presentation at the Boone County History & Culture Center. August. 10? - Check their calendar.