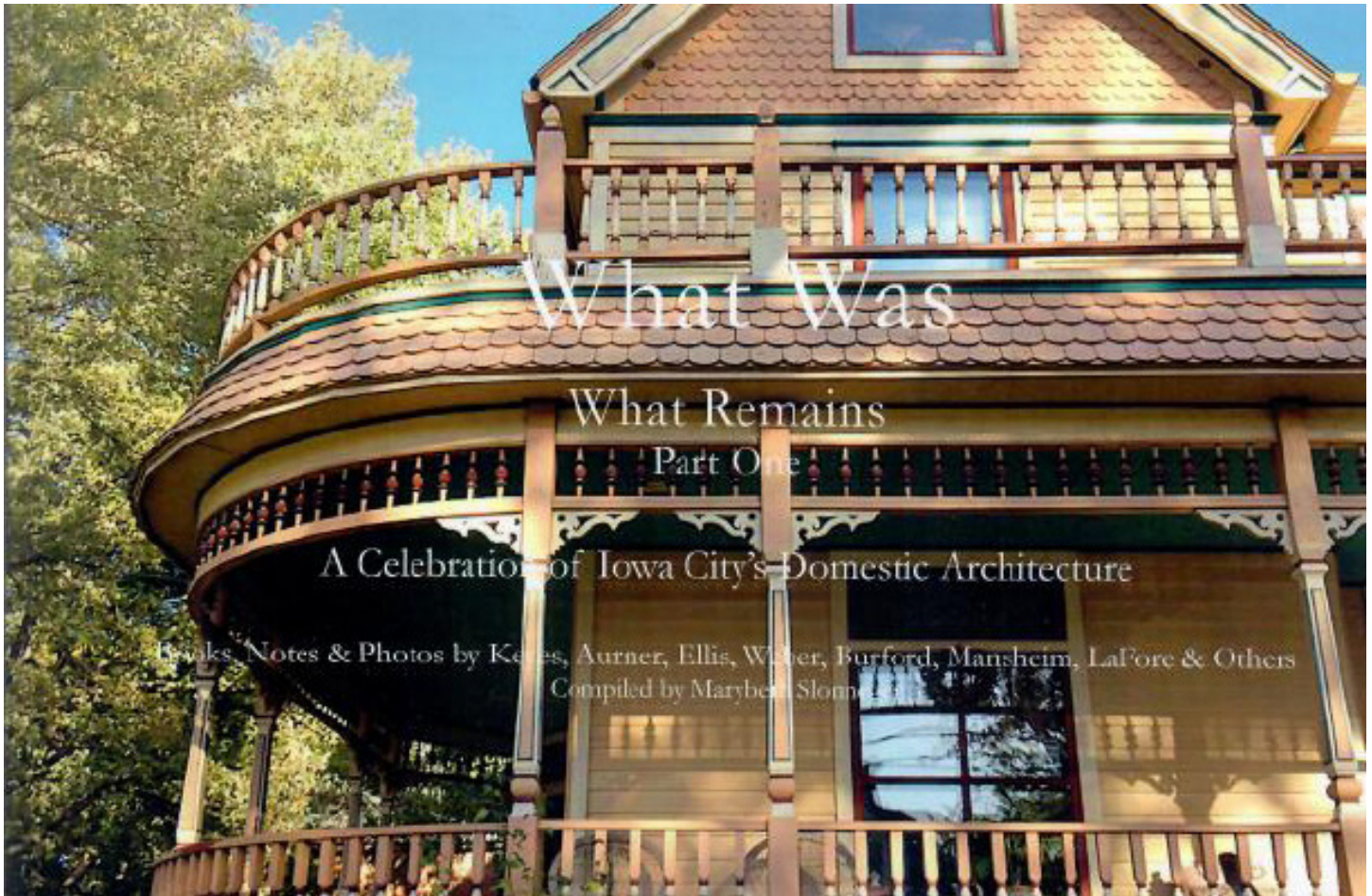


# Friends of Historic Preservation

December 2024

*Good for the community. Good for the climate.*

PO Box 2001, Iowa City, Iowa 52244 • [info@ic-fhp.org](mailto:info@ic-fhp.org) • [www@ic-fhp.org](http://www@ic-fhp.org)



## What 1,500 Photos Reveal in New Book by Slonneger

When a house or neighborhood is torn down or radically altered, only old photos can truly show “what was” the authentic style of a house or the fabric of a neighborhood. What we value, for its usefulness, aesthetics, and potential is “what remains.”

Marybeth Slonneger’s newest book title is well chosen: *What Was, What Remains: A Celebration of Iowa City’s Domestic Architecture*. Yes, a celebration but also a requiem. We have lost much.

The author, an Iowa Citian, has produced several books on local history. This one has the greatest

scope. Some 1,500 photos (historical and present-day) fill the thousand pages of the two volumes. Organized by streets, her work walks us through older neighborhoods, from modest working-class houses to ornate merchant-class Victorians. A wake-up call to protect older neighborhoods, this rich visual exploration also deepens our understanding of that most basic element of life—the buildings we call home.

*What Was, What Remains* is for sale at Prairie Lights Bookstore in Iowa City or by directly emailing the author at [mbslonn@mchsi.com](mailto:mbslonn@mchsi.com). Supplies are limited.

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*Friends of Historic Preservation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit. We work to save historic buildings and neighborhoods and build awareness of the cultural, environmental, and economic benefits of preservation. Board of Directors: Bob Miklo, Rachael Carlson, Heather Blatt, Ginalie Swaim, Louis Tassinary, David Woodruff, and Marty Boller. Administrator: Meg George.*

# As 50th Anniversary Approaches, FHP Hires Meg George as New Administrator



Friends of Historic Preservation (FHP) is closing in on its 50th anniversary. Starting in 2025, we will celebrate a half-century of local nonprofit grassroots preservation. We intend to more widely share the history, meaning, and benefits of our built environment.

Here to help is our new administrator, Meg George (*right*). Her experience in communications and membership programs will increase our efficiency and effectiveness. “Meg’s energy and can-do attitude immediately impressed us,” said FHP board member Ginalie Swaim, who was on the hiring committee. “Having Meg on board is especially useful now, as our anniversary plans get underway. Her focus and skills will help immensely.”

Meg is excited, too. “I joined the staff of FHP be-

cause I believe in the organization’s preservation efforts, and my professional experience in event planning, working with members, and internal communications can be utilized to grow awareness and, in turn, expand our preservation work,” she said. “I appreciate history and learning new things, and being part of Friends offers opportunities for both! I’m eager to discover more about Iowa City and make connections within the community along the way.”

## Six fun ways to get involved in local historic preservation

- 1. Stay connected!** Make sure you’re on our mailing list. Email us at [info@ic-fhp.org](mailto:info@ic-fhp.org). That’s simple, right?
- 2. Get inspired!** Attend the Historic Preservation Awards on February 27, 2025. The annual event showcases great preservation projects in Iowa City and Johnson County. Those on our mailing list will get further details. (Hint: see #1.)
- 3. Check out our social media!**
  - Follow both of our accounts: Friends of Historic Preservation and The Salvage Barn on Facebook, and [fhpreservation](https://www.facebook.com/fhpreservation) and [salvage\\_barn](https://www.instagram.com/salvage_barn) on Instagram. Be the first to see the newest old stuff we’re selling.
  - For informational riches on our website: [ic-fhp.org](http://ic-fhp.org).
- 4. Shop at the Salvage Barn!** Then show your friends the cool things you bought. (We have gift certificates, too!) We’re at 2401 Scott Boulevard in Iowa City. Open: Wednesday through Saturday, 9 to 5.

### 5. Join Friends—just in time for our 50th anniversary and upcoming social and educational events!

Our members and supporters are integral to the success of local preservation. To join, renew, or donate, scan this QR code. Easiest ever! Options: join via our membership card or [www.ic-fhp.org/donate-become-a-member](http://www.ic-fhp.org/donate-become-a-member).



**6. Share your energy and ideas!** Help us plan our 50th anniversary. Or apply to join our Board of Directors. A bit more time-consuming, yes. But the work is gratifying, the people interesting, and the community payoff long lasting. Email us at [info@ic-fhp.org](mailto:info@ic-fhp.org) for details—or just to say hello and stay connected. See #1.

## Remembering Jeff Schabilion

By the time Jeff Schabilion, 46, stepped up to the podium at the 1989 dedication of Old Brick’s cornerstone, he had already been involved in local historic preservation for over a decade. This summer, he died at age 81, after a long career as a University of Iowa paleobotanist and many years of community involvement.

In 1975 Schabilion cofounded Friends of Old Brick (later renamed Friends of Historic Preservation) and was a longtime board member. He enjoyed salvaging and incorporating architectural components into and around his quirky and charming stone “Mof-fitt” cottage on Rundell Street. He led tree walks in older neighborhoods and helped launch local efforts to restore part of the historic Mormon Handcart Trail where Iowa City and Coralville connect. Schabilion’s papers donated to the University of Iowa Archives also document the early years of this organization.

While saddened to hear of Jeff Schabilion’s death, we are grateful for his legacy to this community.





# JCHS Honors Sellergren with Weber Award for Preservation Leadership

Because of her ongoing dedication and work for the Iowa City Historic Preservation Commission, Jordan Sellergren received the Johnson County Historical Society's illustrious Irving B. Weber Award on October 20, 2024.

Sellergren chairs the Iowa City Historic Preservation Commission. It's in that role that Friends of Historic Preservation (FHP) has partnered with her, especially on joint efforts like the recent success of saving National Hall—once a Bohemian cultural/commercial center, and today the site of apartments, a laun-

dromat, and Pagliai's Pizza (*below*).

Working with FHP, Sellergren and the commission rallied considerable public support for the 1875 building. Over several months she presented a strong, convincing case at public hearings of the Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council. Finally this May, the City Council voted 7-0 to place this iconic property on its list of landmarked buildings. Sellergren's work was instrumental in achieving this success.

Sellergren was born in Burlington, Iowa, grew up mostly in Cedar Rapids, and has lived and worked across the Midwest and as far away as the U.S. Virgin Islands and New Zealand before moving to Iowa City in 2010.

She is the art director for *Little Village*



Holding the award, Sellergren accepts congratulations from FHP President Bob Miklo. FHP worked with Sellergren and the Iowa City Historic Preservation Commission to save National Hall on Bloomington and Linn streets.

*Magazine* as well as a talented songwriter and musician.

The Johnson County Historical Society annually confers the Weber Award for distinguished contributions to the research, writing, or preservation of Johnson County history.



## Who Was Irving Weber? A Keeper of Our Shared Past

Irving Weber was many things—a college athlete, a businessman, a local historian, and someone whose work still enriches our sense of time and place.

Born in 1900 in Iowa City, Weber was the University of Iowa's first All-American swimmer. He started his career in the local dairy business and cofounded the Quality Chek'd Ice Cream Association, a midwestern cooperative. He served as president for a quarter century.

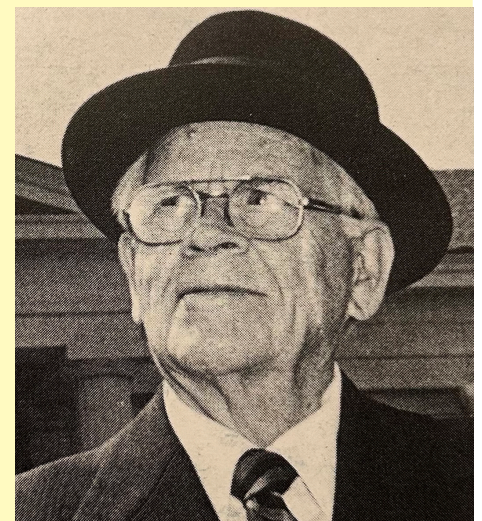
Upon retirement, Weber started writing a local-history column for the *Iowa City Press-Citizen*, and this is why he developed a following, became known as "Mr. Iowa City," and was designated as the

city's official historian. Weber wrote 850 columns over 25 years. Many were later published as eight volumes by the Iowa City Lions Club.

A valuable source for local researchers and avid readers, the multi-volume *Irving Weber's Iowa City* is available on the University of Iowa Digital Library. Marty Boller's amazing blog, *Our Iowa Heritage*, includes a topical index to Weber's work. Google "Irving Weber and Iowa City Public Library" for the many online videos by and about him. Lolly Eggers's biography explores this modest man's life.

Weber was a warm, gracious, entertaining speaker, and his stories knew no end. No wonder the

Johnson County Historical Society created the Irving B. Weber Award honoring his dedication to telling the stories of this county.







# FHP's Salvage Barn Stocks the Unexpected

As one would expect, the Salvage Barn is filled with . . . salvage. In 2024, our Salvage Team of staff and volunteers worked at four houses scheduled for demolition. Ponder all that they saved from the land-fill: 4,500 linear feet of flooring, 33 doors, 379 feet of baseboard, and 47 sets of doorknobs (glass, porcelain, and brass). And more, always more. While FHP laments the loss of older homes, we're grateful we could save so many quality materials to sell at the Salvage Barn, our architectural warehouse.

Still, it's the unexpected that attracts many to the Salvage Barn. Consider these examples, most of them donated.

*Left, from top:* an ornate headboard; period lighting fixtures; plain and fancy hardware; pressed tin; turned spindles from a Masonic Lodge; and funky and fun home decor.

*Right, from top:* an ornate heating register; a gleaming milking machine (use as a conversation piece, unless you own a cow); wooden arches and bathtubs; and an oak pew.

Are you looking for one-of-a-kind items to challenge your creativity or upcycling skills? To add character or whimsy or warmth to your home or business? To replace missing details? To awaken nostalgia for your great-grandma's house?

Then come shop at the Salvage Barn. We've been saving it all just for you.

FHP's Salvage Barn is at 2401 Scott Blvd., Iowa City (by ReStore). Open Wednesday –Saturday, 9–5). FHP members get 20% discount on first Saturday of each month, plus access to our Tool Library, Wed-Sat.

