

## The Importance of Historic Preservation <sup>[1]</sup>

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Written by admin   24 Feb   Category:

While spring cleaning, Mike unearthed this article he'd saved from his teenage years.

As the city inks a deal with MSD to tear down over 1K buildings, we're reminded of the importance of historic preservation. Once these gems are gone, they don't come back.

NOTE: Photos by recent Benton Park resident, Robert LaRouche

# everyday

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## A (Last?) Look At 3 Landmarks

Right, looking northwest, the Buder Building (left), the Title Guaranty Building and the Wainwright Building. In the background at far left is the Civil Courts Building. Below, the endangered Buder and Title Guaranty form a wall with the restored Wainwright.



### Challenges

#### Quality Of Life

"In my view, they as a whole constitute the major architectural achievement of St. Louis... a truly overwhelming and irreplaceable work of civic art.

"I hope that somehow, by some miracle, they can all be spared for the city... As an historian of American architecture, I count the wall they make among this country's major glories."

Story by Charlene Prost  
Photos by Robert LaRouche  
Of the Post-Dispatch Staff

THE thoughts above — eloquent and forceful, some say; much exaggerated, others say — came from Vincent Scully, the well-known professor at Yale University. He voiced them in 1974, when he was helping to choose a redevelopment plan for Louis Sullivan's Wainwright Building, since restored as a state office complex.

Then, and even before, opinions were clashing over whether the turn-of-the-century office buildings of which Scully spoke, squarely in the path of the uncompleted section of the Gateway Mall and just south of the Wainwright, should be torn down for a landscaped City Beautiful mall.

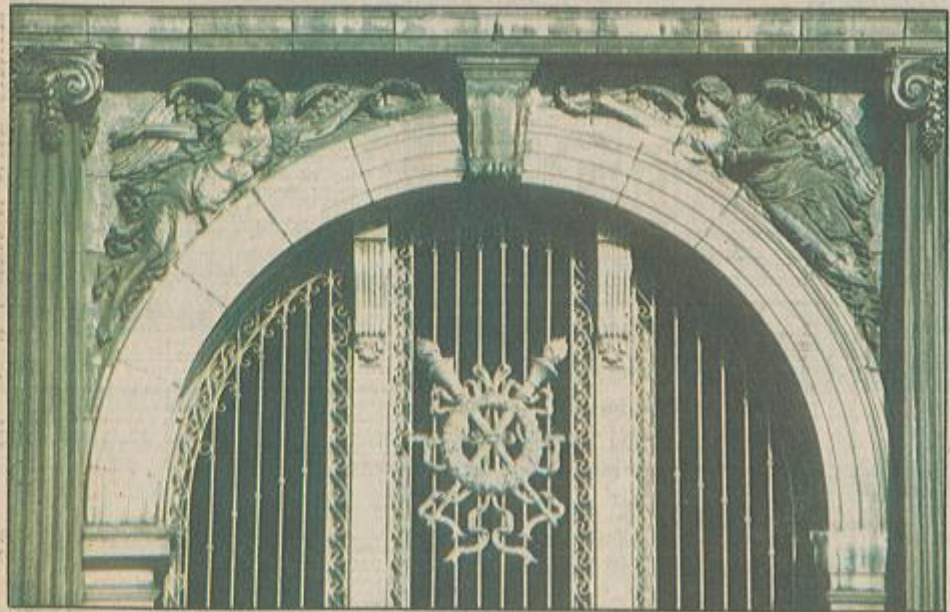
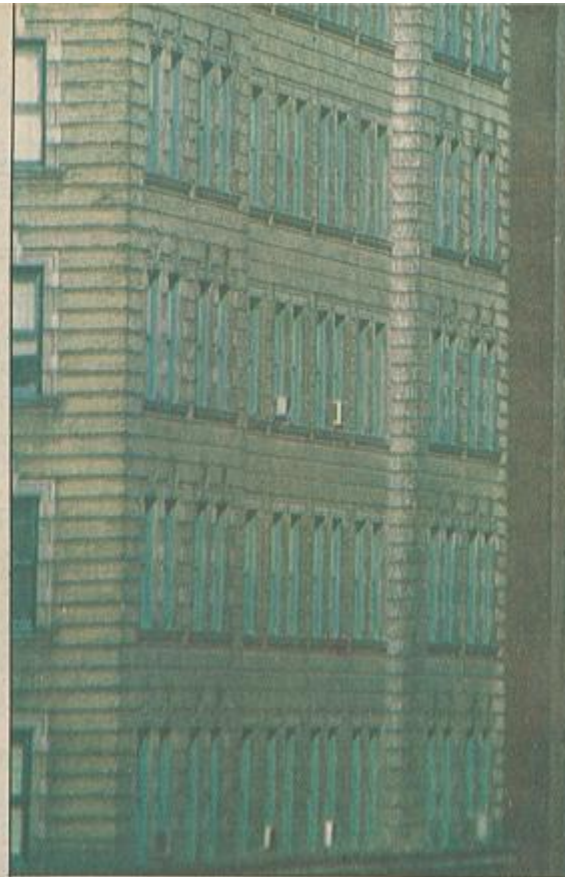
The debate is getting stronger as the buildings come closer to demolition. St. Louis architect George Hellmuth, a principal of Hellmuth Obata & Kassabaum, restated the



here is what the people of St. Louis have to choose between — capitalizing on the grandeur and dignity and fame of the Gateway Arch' — the focal point for the mall his group wants to create — "or the preservation of several buildings whose

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Below, a terra cotta detail on the Title Guaranty Building near the first-floor level





4D

## Landmarks

From page one

architectural attributes are moderate at best."

Trusheim is president and chief executive officer of General American Life Insurance Co., which has a new office building beside the mall. He said, "I suppose it is difficult to say something has no historic value, but these buildings just have the unfortunate posture of being located on a block in the mall."

Pride recently bought the Title Guaranty Building and is trying to acquire the other two through condemnation. Pride wants new buildings to begin rising in the mall by June or earlier, but court proceedings could delay that timetable.

Sentiment about the buildings has run high, and not only in St. Louis. Some prominent "outsiders" — people like Paul Goldberger, architecture critic for the New York Times, and organizations such as the National Trust for Historic Preservation and the national Society of Architectural Historians — agree with Scully.

Goldberger, writing recently in the Times, said the three buildings "are not only exceedingly handsome and dignified in themselves: They all work well as an ensemble."

"To lose the Title Guaranty, the Buder and the International buildings, then, would be to leave a figurative as well as a literal void in the center of town, for it would mean the loss of three of downtown's finest buildings."

Of the latest mall plan designed by Heilmuth, Obata & Kassabaum, he wrote, "It seems especially ironic that a portion of the sites of these three strong buildings would not be turned into open space at all but would be used for new high-rise construction. So these excellent old commercial buildings would be sacrificed not entirely for open space, but for new commercial buildings."

Locally, last-ditch efforts to save the buildings have not ended.

As one form of protest, the Landmarks Association of St. Louis Inc., which nominated the buildings to the National Register of Historic Places, will be among the last tenants to leave the Title Guaranty before it is closed next Monday.

And newly formed Market Preservation Inc. hopes to block Pride's plan with a petition it is circulating.

Market Preservation, which has offices in the Buder, needs 15,300 signatures to force the Board of Aldermen to reconsider its approval for Pride's razing of the buildings.

If the aldermen refuse to change their minds, the issue would go to the voters, who would decide whether the buildings should be razed or saved. Market Preservation says it will file suit if necessary.

**"To lose the Title Guaranty, the Buder and the International buildings . . . would be to leave a figurative as well as a literal void in the center of town."**

to delay the demolition until the matter is reconsidered.

Steve Sorkin, president of Market Preservation, noted in a recent letter to Pride that, "while conducting our petition, we noticed something that startled even us — something that gives us an excellent chance of forcing a public vote on the issues."

"Ninety percent of the people we approach at random sign to have those buildings saved."

"Among our ranks are preservationists . . . architects, engineers and artists. . . . There are tenants who don't want to see their elegant offices face a wrecking ball. There are many people among us who feel your entire mall idea, your financial figures and the way it was forced on the public is not in the best interest of the citizens of St. Louis. . . ."

"We will work until the last building goes, of that, please be certain."

Last year, Pride itself proposed renovating the Title Guaranty and the International, situated on the north half of the block bounded by Seventh, Eighth, Market and Chestnut streets. The Buder, on the south half of the block, would have come down.

Frustrated in its attempt to find money to raze all the buildings and complete the mall between Sixth and 10th primarily with landscaping, the group decided on a "half-mall" approach — new and renovated buildings on the north half of the blocks and open space on the south half.

That wouldn't mean a completely open vista for the Gateway Arch at the eastern end of the mall, it said, but it would just have to do.

Then, however, Pride decided that because of economics and aesthetics even the Title Guaranty and the International would have to go.

Pride wanted profits from the renovated buildings to pay for acquiring and landscaping property on the south side of the block. But because the buildings are old and inefficient, Pride said, that wouldn't work.

Also, tearing down the Buder would expose the back sides of the other buildings, and fixing up the

back sides would be expensive, Trusheim said.

But architect Eugene Mackey said that with proposals for renovation was wrong. Mackey did a Title Guaranty, who concluded that in terms of renovating the buildings replacing them with what a new 14-story office building would cost \$47 million.

Mackey said that because he was involved, the Title Guaranty would end up with a building with rents of \$12 less than rent in a new building.

Because the building Register, the owners would federal tax break for rent. That could mean about \$3 million investment.

By being creative, mechanical services for space, for example — the competitive, with plenty Mackey said.

"And as a bonus," he said, "architectural Preservationists, and argue that it is important because they are described as the most important America. Together, they the early evolution of Wainwright by itself, context and some of its history."

"It is like the Old City Mackey said recently. "there by itself, looking feel like you want to go somewhere."

Of the three buildings considered the best in the 12½-story structure was Lincoln Trust Building, prestigious firm of nominating it to the National called it "an outstanding skyscraper."

Landmarks noted that "remarkably unchanged decorated on the outside and terra cotta frieze overflowing with fruit designs. Marble and wainscoting can still floor contains offices amber and clear glass."

The 12½-story Buder Swasey, another no headquarters of the Railroads when it opened.

In designing the steel-frame construction Sullivan a few years ago building too is lavishly ornamental grillwork, lions' heads.

The 16½-story International Eames & Young and estate activity, with the first floor. It too is an important and less lavishly

## Hospital

From page three

evasive phrases. After 10 minutes of frustration, I described my conversation with Nancy Proctor. Gorman's entire attitude changed abruptly. His crewcut red hair seemed to bristle, and words poured forth.

When Nancy called me, she thought the patient was in trouble. I was home that afternoon watching the football game, a college game of some sort. I know these nurses very well, and they are always

everything to be ready before I got there. I also wanted to see the end of that football game. The procedure with the little girl was totally mechanical, and I work better if there's some entertainment in the background. It helps my concentration.

That's standard procedure in the operating room, if you want to know the truth. Maybe people don't watch TV, but many of the surgeons bring cassette players and they listen to their favorite music while they work. I always listen to tapes when I'm in the OR. My



**WORD SEARCH**

ONPHLEONPNRRNCDOIAAC  
EODAPJRMDCIIAHPZRKD  
OMATUYASHWWTCSZROIH  
HRBLITTTIPLSYRAEOZCN  
SSTAENNRROCMRHNZRWI  
AGURROIIPLUDYILEUAI  
NNAMOSHOOXPETHBURSTN  
IPRLIWUNATOCNASHIEW  
ODRIETETSRUBOUOLCRO  
COSCWEATHERMHSIORLW  
SMLREANIOLNCSYNCKO

Instructions: Hidden words below appear forward, backward, up, down or diagonally. Find each and box it in.

Blizzard	Gale	Waterspout
Chinook	Hail	Whirlwind
Cyclone	Rain	Sandstorm
Monsoon	Snow	Hurricane
Typhoon	Wind	Cloudburst

Tomorrow: Sleep

busy, we don't have time for a lot of nonsense.

I don't go out of my way to make enemies. I just try to do my job. But I remember a couple of years ago when I was a resident, I was between cases in the operating room. I just had a few minutes and I ran down to the cafeteria to get some coffee and yogurt. One of the social workers came up behind me in the line and said, "Oh, Dr. Gorman! How nice! Could I eat lunch with you?" I said, "No," and ran straight back to the operating room. I heard some comments about that — that I was stuck up and thought I was too far above her to be nice. That wasn't the case at all. I just don't have a lot of time to sit around and chat.

**TOMORROW:** The intern, the psychiatrist and the "basket case."

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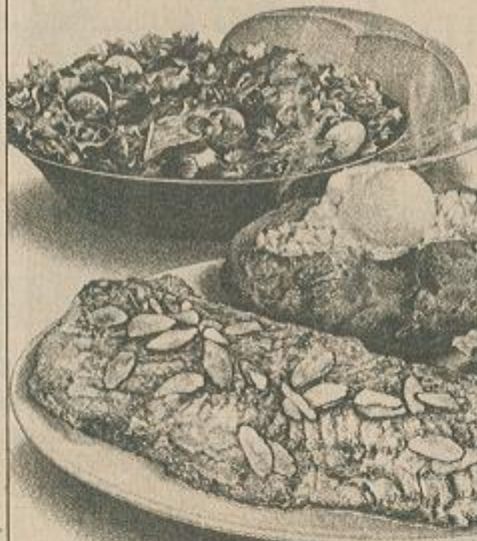
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