



Have your historic treasures gone unrecognized?

By Amy Squitieri



In this sesquicentennial year, Wisconsin communities are focusing new attention on their historic buildings and sites. Belmont, the first territorial capital, hosted a special session of the Legislature with present-day politicians dressing in period costumes.

Historic buildings are often a community's greatest asset for attracting tourists. Heritage tourism is one of the fastest growing segments of the nation's substantial travel industry. If you haven't already done so, the sesquicentennial year is a great time for your community to begin recognizing its historic treasures.

Mead & Hunt's historic preservation staff has helped dozens of communities across the state identify their significant historic buildings. Our architectural surveys draw out a community's best examples of style and identify buildings connected to important historical events.

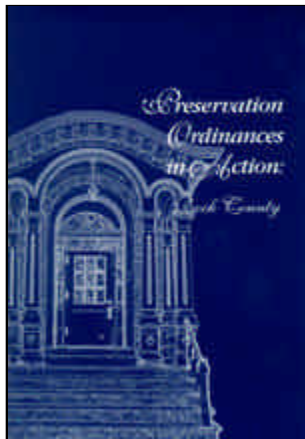


As a result of our survey of Eau Claire, citizens learned that 17 additional buildings qualify for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

City planner Pat Ivory welcomed the news, noting: "This will help us preserve for future generations and help us maintain the character of certain neighborhoods and properties."



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Once historic buildings have been identified, a community can take steps to recognize its valuable resources. Walking or driving tours can be designed to show tourists through a community's historic downtown or its neighborhoods of grand turn-of-the-century homes.

Qualifying public and private buildings can be listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Private properties are listed with the owners' support. Officials and citizens in Markesan and Wisconsin Rapids supported projects that resulted in an inventory of each city's architecturally and historically significant buildings and sites.

With an inventory in hand, a community can next move to encourage residents to protect their historic homes and commercial structures. Mead & Hunt's *Preservation Ordinances in Action: Rock County* describes how five communities use local ordinances to protect significant historic resources.

Owners who undertake suitable rehabilitation projects for their National Register-listed residential or income-producing properties can take advantage of historic preservation investment tax credits.

You can learn about special events planned for the sesquicentennial year by contacting the Wisconsin Tourism Department at 800-432-8747. To inquire about historic preservation investment tax credits, contact the State Historical Society of Wisconsin at 608-264-6500. For information on how to protect your community's

...information on how to protect your community's historic treasures, or to receive a free copy of Preservation Ordinances in Action, call Amy Squitieri, Mead & Hunt Manager of Historic Preservation, at 608-273-6380.

