

Deborah Bishop receives preservation award

Thirty-five people attended the annual Decorah Historic Preservation Commission award presentation Saturday, May 15, from the front lawn of the nationally recognized Cooley-Whitney house.

Commission Chair Kyril Henderson welcomed those attending from the verandah of the restored 1867 house presently owned by Steve and Peggy Hart at 305 Grove Street.

Decorah Mayor Don Arendt added the city's welcome and thanked the Commission for three years of diligent work educating the public about the importance of preserving historically significant properties in Decorah. He also invited interested people to apply to fill the current vacancy on the seven member Commission.

Two speakers provided information to the group. Decorah educator Elizabeth Lorentzen, member of the Winneshiek County Historic Preservation Commission, explained the important characteristics of the Italianate architectural style of the Cooley-Whitney house, and also showed several photographs of his-

torically significant places in Decorah which share the same style.

She also gave a background of the builder and owner of the home, E.E. Cooley, as one of the founders of the city of Decorah. The house was among the first to be built on the peak of the hill overlooking the city. The house was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1980 through the research of Mary Klimesh of Decorah.

Paul Cutting of rural Decorah then shared a summary of his work and photographs of historic log buildings he has located, relocated and preserved. His research has located approximately 100 log buildings in Winneshiek and Allamakee Counties still in existence. Cutting has personally preserved and reassembled three log homes in the area.

Henderson spoke about the work of the Commission. It is completing its first state of Iowa grant, Planning for Preservation, with local historian, David Anderson, which includes the training of 15 local citizens concerning research about historically significant places and

generating a plan for preservation. The Commission is also beginning a second state grant - to have an application written for listing the Decorah swimming pool building on the National Register of Historic Places.

Henderson also presented the 2010 Decorah Historic Preservation Commission Historic Preservation Recognition Award to Deborah Bishop of Decorah, and shared a summary of the dedicated work by Bishop for historic preservation over the last several years.

She has led the work to physically preserve the bricks, Kanota Stone, maple flooring and wood from the East Side School building after its demolition. She also prepared the site inventory of the



From left, Mayor Don Arendt, Deborah Bishop and Kyril Henderson. (Submitted photo)

Caretaker House on the old county farm near Freeport. Most recently, she has helped write the grant for an application to list the Caretaker House on the National Register of Historic Places.

Bishop thanked the Commission for the award and reminded everyone that the work done includes many people's efforts.

The Hart family then allowed the visitors to tour their historic home, which is currently for sale.