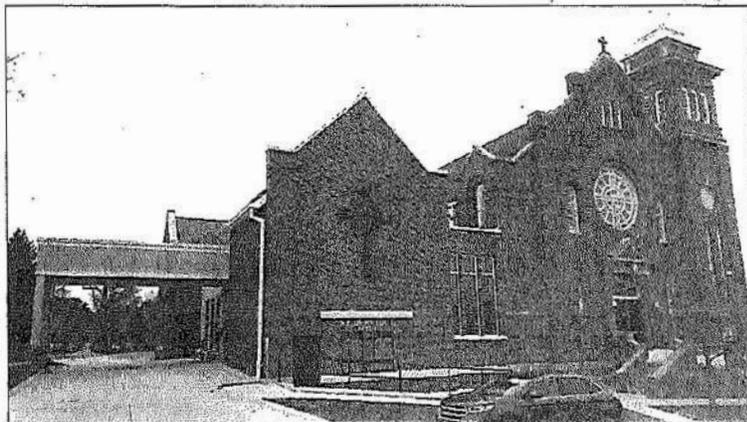


NEWS



Steve and Alice Runde are being recognized by the Decorah Historic Preservation Commission for their restoration of the Poultry House and Carriage House above, and St. Benedict Parish is being recognized for the preservation of their historic church and "sensitive development" of the church's addition, at right. (Submitted photos)



Decorah Historic Preservation Award presented to the Rundes and to Benedict Parish Monday

The Decorah Historic Preservation Commission will present preservation awards to Steve and Alice Runde and to the St. Benedict Parish in a Monday, May 13, event at St. Benedict Church at 307 W. Main St.

The event begins at 5 p.m. in the Parish's new gathering space entered through the new entrance on the building's south side. The event will include three short presentations and an informal reception.

The Decorah Commission's annual historic preservation award is part of Preservation Month activities happening throughout the U.S. The National Trust for Historic Preservation established May as Preservation Month in 1973.

Runde

According to Commission Chair Mark Muggli, Steve and Alice Runde are being recognized for their "commitment to the careful and historically appropriate restoration of the Poultry House and Carriage House on the Weiser Mansion property at 608 W. Broadway." Both buildings are included as con-

tributing properties on the National Register Broadway-Phelps Park Historic District.

Before the Rundes began their careful restoration, both buildings had deteriorated badly, and the Poultry House was in danger of collapse. The Rundes have done extensive work on preserving the exteriors of both buildings in a way that supports their long-term survival, Muggli said.

The interior and mechanical systems of the Carriage House have been completely refurbished and the building is now a performance and event venue. It is currently being used as a worship space by the First Lutheran congregation while First Lutheran Church undergoes testing and repair.

According to the "Walk Into the Past" sign at 608 W. Broadway, the Horace Weiser Second Empire mansion on this site was completed in 1873. The Poultry House and Carriage House, built in the same architectural style, were presumably constructed at about the same time. The original mansion was heavily damaged by a fire in

1920, and the home was rebuilt as a more contemporary, Italian Revival building that was razed in the late 1950s.

St. Benedict

The St. Benedict Parish is being recognized for "their decision to continue to use their architecturally important church building in Decorah's historic and civic center; for their careful preservation of the historic building itself; and for their sensitive development of the church's addition, which defers to the original building while replicating some of its key features," Muggli said.

According to Ruth Kath's 1992 *History of St. Benedict Parish*, the current St. Benedict Church was built in an Italian Renaissance Revival style in 1918. The architect was Emanuel Masqueray, a French-born architect famous for having designed the St. Paul Cathedral (1904), the Minneapolis Basilica of St. Mary (1908), and many other major churches in the upper Midwest. Masqueray died in 1917, and St. Benedict church was one of his

last commissions.

Several years ago, St. Benedict Parish explored constructing a new building near its school on Rural Avenue. The Historic Preservation Commission is recognizing the parish partly for its continued commitment to its historic building in the town center.

"The presence of five other historic churches near this classic church adds greatly to Decorah's historic character. It is this character that local residents value and that attracts so many visitors," said Commission member Judy van der Linden.

Commission member Diane Scholl said the Parish is to be commended "for this commitment to remaining in Decorah's historic downtown area."

"They also made sure that their addition both preserved and complemented the original building," said Scholl.

The Award

The award event will include short presentations by Runde and by a representative of St. Benedict

who will explain their reasons for taking on these projects, as well as the key stages of the projects themselves.

Decorah Historic Preservation Commission member Hayley Jackson noted that the Commission has often given just one annual award.

"Giving two awards this year allows us to highlight two different but important types of rehabilitation: careful historic restoration, as with the Poultry House and Carriage House, and the sensitive addition to a historic building, as with the Church," Jackson said.

Founded in 2008, the Decorah Historic Preservation Commission is a state-certified local commission with responsibility for all aspects of Decorah historic preservation. Current members include Mark Muggli, Hayley Jackson, Judy van der Linden, Adrienne Coffeen, Lois Humpal, Steve Kelsay and Diane Scholl.

The Commission's 2018 preservation award was given to five Decorah residences that represent the five decades of design by noted Decorah architect and engineer

Charles Altfillisch. A complete list of previous awards is available on the Commission's website at decorahia.org/historic-preservation/awards.