



A Newsletter from Pella Preservation Trust

PRESERVE PELLA

RENOVATION OF THE WHITE HOUSE

Bruce Boertje

Ann Summitt mentions in her PPT President's letter on page six that it sometimes takes a visitor's eye to fully appreciate what Pella has to offer, and to understand why historic preservation is vitally important to our community. New Pella residents Lee and Juli White are a great example. Their home is nestled in a historic neighborhood at 509 Liberty Street, just one block south of the Vermeer Windmill and the Pella Historical Society Museum.

Juli relates their story: "We popped into Pella on a whim in 2020. We had been on vacation out west and decided to stop in Pella after seeing it on a map; we'd never been here before. We came into town and were literally here only five minutes before we noticed the historic architecture around town and saw what a thriving little community Pella is. We said: 'We've found a hidden little gem in Iowa!'"

"Lee literally stood on the back steps of Liberty Street Kitchen and said, 'It's just a shame that one of these houses right here couldn't come available for us.' We talked about it on the way back home to North Carolina. We decided that we would put our property up for sale and if it sold quickly, then we would take it as a sign that we should be in Pella."

"We put our house on the market and four days later had a cash offer! During a walk-through video chat with our real estate agent in late fall 2020, we saw the potential to both restore and bring this house into the 21st century. So, we said, 'ok, we're out of here.' We moved to Pella December 2020 and began the extensive renovation process the following month."

"It's now been a year and a half, and Lee, as a remodeling contractor, has done nearly all the work himself. Me, I'm the unskilled labor part of this duo," laughs Juli. "So far, we have had a plumber and electrician do some work for us, but everything else has just been by our own hands."

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The home of Lee & Juli White after renovation (top) & showing its potential (bottom)

HAPPY 175TH BIRTHDAY PELLA!

Bruce Boertje

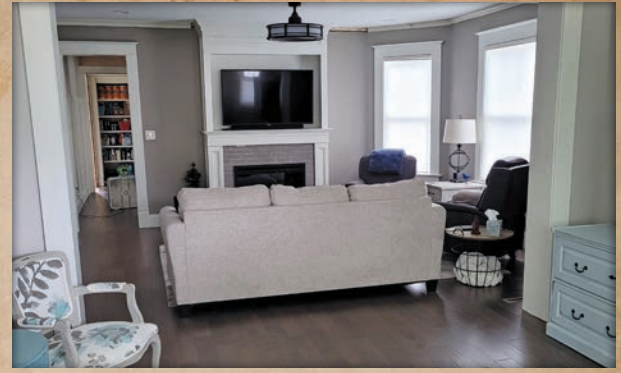
The 1830s and '40s were turbulent times in the Netherlands. Although the Dutch constitution provided for freedom of religion, Pella founder Dominie Henry P. Scholte and other ministers were fined and imprisoned for not following the state church's doctrine. The country's lower and middle class were also stifled financially; there was little hope for bettering their lives, and many struggled to even feed their families. The culmination of these events eventually led thousands of Hollanders to leave their native land in search of better opportunities. Scholte and his followers were part of this exodus.

August 2022 marked the 175th Anniversary of the founding of Pella by Dominie Henry Scholte and the Dutch emigrants who followed him to America. Through regular Facebook posts, the Historic Pella Trust/Pella Preservation Trust has followed the week-by-week events of Scholte and the settlers who began arriving in Baltimore aboard four chartered sailing ships in May 1847. The hope is to compile these weekly posts into book format, to document the hardships and adventures that the original 920 emigrants faced after leaving their native land.

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The White's living room prior to restoration..



... and after renovation

ARTICLE: RENOVATION OF THE WHITE HOUSE

(continued from page 1)

Juli notes: "We have taken about 800 pictures during the renovation process, and about once a month I rerun them on our TV just to remind Lee of all the hard work that he has done in the past year and a half!"

Juli even provided a brief history of the property: "In 1854, the property on which the current structure sits was conveyed to Levi Nossaman from Henry & Maria Scholte. Real estate documents indicated the current structure (which replaced an older dwelling) was built around 1900, though it may have been earlier.

"Through the years several others took possession by inheritance, including notable Pella family names such as Brouwer, Versteegh, Vogelaar, & Klein. In 1971, the home was sold to Andrew & Laura Slings from Nellie & Reink Klein. The Slings sisters, who grew up in the home, recently visited during the renovation process and shared lovely stories of their childhood in the home."

Juli closed with: "We thank Pella Preservation Trust very much for recognizing Lee's hard work on this one." It would be hard *not* to recognize Lee and Juli's hard work; the attached pictures speak both to the quantity and the quality of the work they have lovingly put into returning this beautiful showplace to life.

Fortunately, the removal of replacement aluminum siding revealed the original narrow wooden clapboard siding hiding underneath. The original siding has been restored and provides a visually appealing exterior finish that most modern houses simply do not possess.

Many interior changes were also made. Bathrooms were added or enlarged. The kitchen was completely reworked and updated. Interior finish updates include fresh painted wood, done in clean, soft white. As a reflection of the exterior colors, the use of darker tones in a variety of patterns was also used. The solid pine staircase was redone to accent the natural varnished carved newel post and

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The newly renovated front entry



The kitchen before...



... and after!

ARTICLE: RENOVATION OF THE WHITE HOUSE

(continued from page 2)

top hand railing. The spindles and wainscot-covered wall were painted white for a crisp open feeling. The white woodwork feature, with natural wood accent, flows throughout the home.

You can follow the White's renovation journey via Facebook. Juli's page is called "The ReDo Life." As Juli says, "We are ReDo fanatics. We love turning the ordinary into the extraordinary, one project at a time."

Juli and Lee are a wonderful example of people that are drawn to Pella and who purchase our historic homes precisely *because* of the character and history that these properties possess. Pella deserves to have our heritage promoted and protected, as well as those properties that have helped to create it.

Our heritage is what distinguishes us from other communities; our heritage and culture are what helps make Pella a desirable place to live. Without it the unique becomes ordinary. We welcome the Whites to Pella and particularly thank them for helping us view our community through the eyes of visitors. And for saving and renovating one of our community's treasures. ■



The newly added master bathroom

ARTICLE: HAPPY 175TH BIRTHDAY PELLA!

(continued from page 1)

Scholte and his family arrived in advance of the Hollanders, which were officially named the Association. Scholte's early arrival allowed him to arrange cross-country transportation for the Dutch immigrants and their possessions to their prearranged rendezvous site in St. Louis. After spending four to six weeks crammed into their sailing ships, the Hollanders now spent another three arduous weeks on the overland trip to St. Louis. This route required a half-dozen transfers of passengers and their belongings between assorted railroads, canal boats and steamships.

The last of the entourage arrived in St. Louis by the 4th of July. Soon, Scholte headed an official five-person Committee of Investigation that set off to seek a final location on which to settle. Enough affordable land was needed to house both the current Association and future immigrants. Land was needed for both farming and a location to form their community, which was to be called Pella.

The Committee of Investigation arrived in Fairfield, Iowa, at the western-most land office in the newly-formed state of Iowa. There they met a Baptist circuit-riding pastor named Moses Post. When informed of their mission, Post suggested a suitable location in Marion County. He then led the committee to the current site of Pella and assisted them in purchasing the claims of several pioneer settlers in the area. Perhaps the most important purchase was the claim of Thomas and Nancy Tuttle – part of the land on which Pella is now located. These purchases were scattered over two townships and ultimately provided adequate land for the Association's needs.

Sadly, over 100 of the original Association members did not live to see Pella. The grueling journey to America; the cramped traveling conditions to St. Louis; and the oppressive heat, unsanitary and unfamiliar surroundings in St. Louis itself, claimed many dozens of lives.

In the middle of August, the first batch of over 300 Hollanders left St. Louis on a chartered steamship, headed for the site of Pella.



Ship typical of what the Dutch settlers took to America



The settlers arrive in Pella, as depicted by artist Joost J. DeBruin

Arriving in Keokuk, Iowa, in a driving rainstorm, they arranged transportation for their belongings via wagon to Pella. Most of the men and older children made the final 125-mile journey on foot. After several days of trudging, the first of the group began arriving at Pella on August 19.

The previously agreed-to purchases of existing pioneer's claims were paid. Arrangements included buying the pioneer's claims

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ARTICLE: HAPPY 175TH BIRTHDAY PELLA!
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and existing buildings, plus their farm implements, livestock, and existing crops. This allowed the Association to survive their first winter in Iowa. The center nine blocks of Pella were soon surveyed to allow construction of homes to begin. Many sod huts were erected in an area that gained the nickname Strawtown. A few large sheds were also erected to house multiple families for the winter.

That fall, construction began on a relatively large building to serve as the community's church/school/meeting house, as was Dominie Scholte's large home along with a few others. With that, the Dutch hunkered down for their first Iowa winter.

These events remind us of the hardships endured by Pella's founders as they sacrificed to build a better life for themselves and for future generations.

Their values continue to make Pella a desirable place to live: Freedom, Security, Cleanliness, Inclusiveness, Education, and Piety. It can be challenging to find evidence of those pioneers and their values, but one tangible reminder is the historic buildings they left behind.

The purpose of the Pella Preservation Trust is reflected in our Mission Statement: To protect and promote buildings, sites and landscapes important to the Heritage of Pella, Iowa. That focus distinguishes our organization from that of the similar-sounding Pella Historical Society, whose mission broadly encompasses the entire "History of Pella", and thus are not able to focus on preserving Pella's historic buildings.

We invite your financial contributions and your assistance in spreading our mission. We owe Pella's founders an incalculable debt for providing Pella's wonderful heritage and our unique community. Happy 175th Birthday Pella!! ■



Dominie Scholte's 1847 map depicting the area in which the Dutch settler's purchases were located. The black dots indicated existing dwellings at the time Pella was founded.

UPDATES & NOTES OF INTEREST

Pella Community Center – After approval of the City of Pella's recent Local Option Sales & Service Tax, the community center should be in line to receive \$5.5 million to be spent on updating the building's infrastructure. The city will be working to secure an architect for the project and forming an ad hoc committee to help determine the focus and future direction of the building. The nonprofit organization Friends of the Pella Community Center are hoping that city approval will be coming soon so they can begin fundraising efforts to add a new main entry, elevator, restrooms, and reconfigure room layouts, among other planned improvements.

Historic Fire Station and Hose Tower – The City of Pella's Historic Preservation Commission has been discussing needed maintenance on the old Fire Station, with a focus on repairing or replacing the Hose Tower, which is in dire need of attention. Since the tower is only a replacement, not a replica of the original, the Commission is trying to determine how to proceed. A more historically correct tower replacement would likely be eligible for grants and tax credits.

Scholte Garden Historic District – Speaking of the Historic Preservation Commission, the application for the Scholte Garden Historic District has been submitted to the State Historic Preservation Office. If this application is approved, then the city

can proceed with officially designating the Garden area as a Pella Historic District. This would be Pella's second Historic District, following the Collegiate Historic District which was approved in 2019.

Wachter/Boardwalk/Mikol Sesker Home – A few years ago the Pella Preservation Trust assisted in locating a new owner and location for the historic Adolphus Wachter home (formerly at 300 Broadway). Renovation and restoration continues on the home. Plaster and lathe repairs are the next project. A glass, cylindrical elevator has been installed in the rear of the home. The home renovation is anticipated to be completed within the next few years.

Pella Community Memory Database – If you haven't already, please take some time to check out the Pella Public Library's online Community Memory Database. It is a wonderful, free digital collection of local historic photographs, documents and interviews culled from multiple sources around town. The website can be accessed at: cdm17106.contentdm.oclc.org.

Need assistance with a renovation project? – Check out Pella Preservation Trust's online list of local contractors who can help with your renovation project. <https://historicpellatrust.org/find-a-contractor-for-your-restoration-project/> ■

28TH ANNUAL MEETING HELD SEPT. 20, 2022

Jennifer Van Kooten

(Photos courtesy of Troy Human Photography)

Pella Preservation Trust held their annual meeting on September 20, 2022. We advertised an open invitation to anyone interested in our organization and its mission to protect and promote buildings, landscapes, and sites important to the heritage of Pella, Iowa. The evening began with a social hour featuring artifacts from the old Lincoln grade school, a slide show featuring renovations of the home at 509 Liberty Street, and vintage decorations and photos throughout the room.

A tradition of the Trust is to highlight a few properties within Pella who have displayed outstanding, exemplary renovation or maintenance with a Historic Preservation Award. Bruce Boertje, Lila Turnbull, and Ann Summit gave out the three Preservation awards to property owners during the evening program. The first award went to Matt and Tracie McCulla for 1109 Washington Street, this complex of buildings date back to the first decade of Pella and was home to the first two years of Central College classes beginning in 1854. Matt has renovated this property to house his business Ameriprise Financial Services.



Jeanette Vaughn receiving the Landmark Award from Lila Turnbull & Ann Summit.

Stan and Alma Vermeer were then recognized for 1111 Washington, the former Strawtown Inn & Restaurant, and one of Pella's earliest bakeries dating back to the 1850's. The Vermeer's have renovated this complex for conferences of their organization called Developing Great Relationships. Both Washington Street buildings were once owned by two founding members of Historic Pella Trust: Eunice Folkerts and the late Bob Klein.

Finally, Lee and Juli White were recognized for the work they have done to their home at 509 Liberty Street. Since January 2021, the Whites have done extensive renovations to this home.

The Historic Pella Landmark award is another form of recognition from the Trust. It is represented by a small, engraved plaque which is given to structures or sites which have architectural or historical significance in Pella. To date, 78 Pella landmarks have received this award. Jeanette Vaughn, Community Services Director for the City of Pella, accepted the Landmark Award for the century-old **Central Park Fountain**. The fountain was a gift from the Pella Women's Federated Club in 1922. The fountain was originally located in the middle of Central Park until it was replaced by a new fountain in



2022 Board of Directors - Front Row: Bob Zylstra, Mary VanWyk-VanMaanan, Ann Summit (President), Dody Boat, Jennifer Van Kooten (Executive Director). **Back Row:** Wayne Stienstra, Shawn Thomas (Vice President), Matt McCulla (Treasurer), Bruce Boertje (Secretary), Lila Turnbull, Katie Douglas. **Not Pictured:** Duane Rempe, Ron Rietveld (Board Member Emeritus), Ralph Jaarsma (Board Member Emeritus).

1956. The city then moved this fountain to Caldwell Park until 1972, when it was moved back to the north side of Central Park courtesy of the Pella Garden Club.

Shawn Thomas, Vice President, introduced our featured speaker, Bobby Green. Mr. Green is a businessman and preservationist from Los Angeles, California. He loves preservation of both historic automobiles and buildings and adds a vintage decor into his themed properties. This passion for restoration evolved into restoring historic businesses highlighting the details of these projects in his presentation. Bobby explained that it is rewarding to restore the building along with the original business, inviting the public back into a time and place of history. These places hold a story and become exceedingly popular destinations for everyone who remembers or wants to start a new tradition with their families.

Saving history creates a connection between generations, while constant change often causes a feeling of instability. You can view the entire presentation at <https://historicpellatrust.org/>

A big thank you was expressed to all the supporters of our organization, stating that memberships and contributions are what keeps our preservation efforts active. ■



Guest Speaker: Bobby Green

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Current and Prospective Historic Trust Supporters,

Historic Pella Trust recently changed its name to **Pella Preservation Trust**. The primary reason this has occurred is due to the fact that we have been confused with other nonprofits of similar names. Nothing else is changing. We will continue to support our mission statement: "To protect and promote buildings, landscapes, and sites important to the heritage of Pella, Iowa."

A few weeks ago, we held our annual meeting and at this meeting a quote was given about Pella that came from the May 9, 1962 *Chicago Daily Tribune*. It read, "Old dwellings in Pella are modeled after diverse styles of Dutch architecture, particularly one with a unique double dome. Windows are arched and rimmed with small, varicolored panes of glass such as are found in Holland." As you walk around Pella you can still catch glimpses of some of these treasures today. We must do all we can to keep these features intact for future generations to enjoy.

For those of us who live in Pella it is sometimes difficult to see our town through the eyes of our visitors. We go about our day to day lives without much thought to what we are stewards of. Sometimes we need to see our community through visitors' eyes. We are not just another community people travel through; we have a uniqueness that others just don't have. Why do you think we have been selected time after time as one of the best towns to visit or in which to live? In order for Pella to continue to be a destination spot, we must continue to strive to keep our Dutch appeal by protecting what we have. This can come in many different ways such as volunteering, supporting, speaking up, and taking care of what we have been blessed with.



An example of a Pella window "rimmed with small, varicolored panes of glass"

We have a wonderful and beautiful downtown district that is the envy of many towns our size. This allows our retailers to flourish. We also have parks that are significant to Pella, such as, Sunken Garden, West Market, Big Rock, Central Park, Brinkoff Park, South Park, and many other areas that make us rich and reflect our heritage. We have bricked streets, our founder, Dominie Scholte's original home, the 100-year-old fountain which is an anchor in Central Park, the old high school that now holds the Pella Community Center, and the old fire station. These must be preserved and taken care of in order for us to maintain our community's beauty and heritage.



Photo Credit: Jeanette Vaughn

Pella's century-old fountain in Central Park

It is truly an honor to be a part of the Pella Preservation Trust! We have so many wonderful people on our board! Please don't hesitate to let one of us know if you have any concerns or thoughts to help us remain stewards of what we have been entrusted.

Het aller beste, Ann Summitt

GREETINGS FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

2022 finds the Trust enthusiastic to protect historic properties! During our January planning meeting we decided to officially change our name to Pella Preservation Trust (Historic Pella Trust)! Another decision was to offer to help with the research needed to move along the process of forming the Scholte Garden Historic District. To encourage more conservation easements, we discussed advertising a home improvement grant. This grant would fund a project for a homeowner in exchange for a conservation easement on their property. A conservation easement helps protect a historic property from demolition or radical alteration and continues to provide protection even after future property sales. Our final goal was to continue our work with endangered properties, this involved collaborating directly with several homeowners throughout the year.

My fifth year with the Trust has been quite active, we finished the update of the Architectural Tour of Historic Early Pella booklet. This was the third reprinting of

the popular self-guided tour booklet and was financed by a grant from the Pella Community Foundation. The new booklets include current photos and descriptions of forty-two properties. It features three color coded tours that point out buildings of architectural interest including historic structures that were built by the original settlers. The booklets are available through the Welcome Windmill, Ulrich's Meat Market, Hometown Variety and the Pella Historical Museum Gift Shop. A donation of \$2 per booklet is appreciated.

The Tuttle Learning Walk is a busy destination for many. We are working towards adding educational signs for additional locations including the Soul Sleepers Church, the rock house, and other historic locations. Tuttle cabin was open for tours during Tulip Time, a Pella Grade School Christian field trip, Dutch Day-Camp and in August for the 175th Anniversary of Pella. We plan again to have a Tuttle Christmas Open House December 1-3, 2022.



As always, our mission is “to protect and promote buildings, landscapes, and sites important to the heritage of Pella, Iowa” and is supported entirely by your contributions, memberships and local project grants. A sincere thank you to everyone who has helped us preserve Pella’s heritage. Historic Pella Trust / Pella Preservation Trust is a 501c3 Non-Profit organization. Please join us through 2023!

Respectfully, Jennifer Van Kooten

PROTECT & PROMOTE PELLA’S HERITAGE WITH YOUR 2023 MEMBERSHIP

Pella Preservation Trust (Historic Pella Trust), established in 1994, is a non-profit preservation group that helps to preserve Pella’s architectural resources so that future generations may continue to be enriched by the historic legacy of Pella’s Dutch heritage and culture. **Mission Statement: To Protect and Promote Buildings, Landscapes, and Sites Important to the Heritage of Pella, Iowa.** We appreciate your 2023 memberships and partnership contributions for protecting the architectural resources of Pella, Iowa.

KEEP IN TOUCH

EMAIL: To receive timely Trust updates via email, please provide your email address on the attached form, or send it to: office@historicpellatrust.org.

Please visit PPT on the web and Facebook for local history, information and photos.

historicpellatrust.org



Follow us on Facebook.

Thank You for supporting the Pella Preservation Trust!

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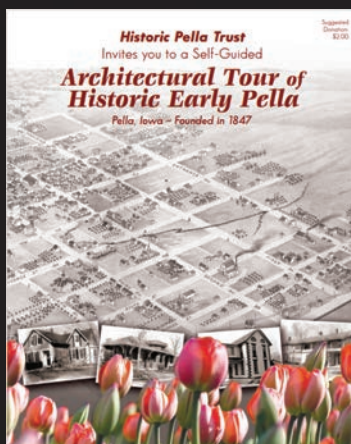


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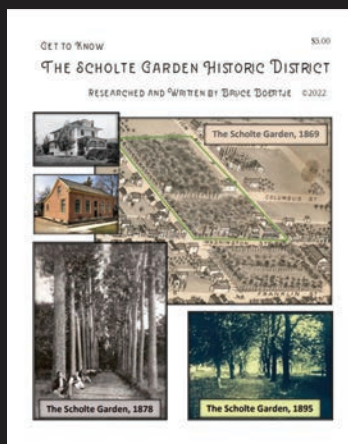
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NEW PUBLICATIONS



Architectural Tour of Historic Early Pella
12 pages. Updated with all new photos and revised text, third edition. \$2.00. Available at Tuttle Cabin, Pella Books, the Welcome Windmill, Pella Historical Society and other locations.



The Scholte Garden Historic District
by Bruce Boertje - Brand new 16-page booklet detailing the history behind the Scholte Garden and the homes that now fill and surround that historic area. Photos and description of every home in the district. \$5.00. Available at Tuttle Cabin, Pella Books and other locations.

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Watch for the **Strawtown Restaurant Reunion Fundraiser in 2023!**