



# MISSOURI PRESERVATION

*Preserving Place And Community For Future Generations*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **Missouri Preservation Announces 2024 Places in Peril**

Non-profit organization Missouri Alliance for Historic Preservation (Missouri Preservation) releases their 2024 list of Missouri's endangered historic places.

### **FOR RELEASE ON December 4, 2024.**

**St. Louis, MO** — Missouri Preservation announced their 2024 Places in Peril list via a virtual announcement on Tuesday, December 3rd.

Places in Peril is an annual list of endangered historic places in the state of Missouri. These places are nominated by concerned individuals and decided upon by a committee of preservation advocates. The announcement video is available for viewing on Missouri Preservation's website [www.preservemo.org](http://www.preservemo.org) and on social media. In addition to the 2024 list, Missouri Preservation invites individuals to explore the interactive map available at [www.preservemo.org/we-advocate/places-in-peril](http://www.preservemo.org/we-advocate/places-in-peril) which pinpoints past-listed Places in Peril and lists their known status from successfully saved, in-progress, needing help, and in some unfortunate cases, lost. The 2024 Places in Peril announcement is made possible thanks to our sponsor, The North Taylor Fund, and Corporate Partners: Enhanced Historic Credit Partners and STRATA Architecture + Preservation.

### About Missouri Preservation

Founded in 1976 as the Missouri Heritage Trust, Missouri Preservation has evolved into a respected grassroots network of individuals, organizations, and preservation commissions throughout Missouri. Missouri Preservation advocates for, educates about, and assists in the preservation of architectural and historic landmarks that embody Missouri's unique heritage and sense of place.

Information on how you can support each of these endangered places can be found at [www.preservemo.org/we-advocate/places-in-peril](http://www.preservemo.org/we-advocate/places-in-peril)

### **Marycliff**

Wildwood, Saint Louis County

### **Jeff-Vander-Lou Green-Board Buildings**

St. Louis City

### **DeLozier Building**

Clinton, Henry County

### **Anna Bell Chapel**

New Haven, Franklin County

### **Photo Links:**

Marycliff

<https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/juqij1bogzbgdgs3isw40/Marycliff.JPG?rlkey=nfsoa7dk9ct27bpsotwbxzbis&dl=0>

Jeff-Vander-Lou Green-Board Buildings

<https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/zxai0maf8z5h7ydo9y96d/JVL-Green-Board-Buildings.JPG?rlkey=sixeuanoxphukz08few4x6pkr&dl=0>

DeLozier Building

<https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/f7377pe2peidfpt35zpch/DeLozier-Building.jpg?rlkey=jbvs73lwthdwm0s7b6iifspxl&dl=0>

Anna Bell Chapel

<https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/biyoclv67p2p34wkwnr41/Anna-Bell-Chapel.jpg?rlkey=ql59tfxrw65vwwk9xgm60n7yy&dl=0>

### **Property Descriptions**

Marycliff — Wildwood, Saint Louis County

Frequent travelers down Highway 109 in St. Louis County might be shocked to learn that a sprawling historic estate sits just off the road out of sight. The grand home was completed in 1905 as a summer home for wealthy businessman, Peyton Carr, and was originally known as Woodcliff. Clad with wood shingles and limestone, the home sprawled over 10,000 square feet and contained seven bedrooms and multiple sleeping porches. The 130-acre estate featured a rose garden, pergola, tea house and tennis courts. In 1944, following the death of her husband, Mrs. Carr sold the estate to the Brewers & Malsters Benevolent Association. It was again sold in 1950, this time to the Society of Mary, who gave it the name Marcycliff. The building was expanded to add an additional 17 bedrooms, the expansion bringing the living space up to 12,630 square feet. Marycliff was actively in use by the Marianists as a conference and retreat center for many decades. Priests and Brothers of the Society of Mary resided in Marycliff until 2016 when they were relocated to other Society of Mary residences. Since then, the building has sat vacant. In 2017-2018 a study was undertaken to determine the feasibility of rehabilitating the structure for expanded use as a family retreat center. Plans were developed and funds raised towards a \$2.5 million budget. However, after the pandemic struck in 2020, plans for the Marycliff Family lodge were discontinued and in March 2024, the Marianist Province of the United States submitted an application to the City of Wildwood to demolish Marycliff. The Wildwood Historic Preservation Commission made a site visit shortly after the application was submitted and was shocked to discover that preliminary demolition was already underway, including removal of the radiators, some interior paneling, flooring, as well some artwork, whose removal damaged brickwork on the primary living room fireplace. While the City of Wildwood has denied the demolition application and the demolition appears to be on hold for now, the future of this historic site is not yet secure. Without the funds to complete their plans, and unwilling to sell due to the value and beauty of the location, the Marianists see demolition as their only option. By listing Marycliff as a Place in Peril, nominators hope that the Marianists will be encouraged to seek alternative options for the reuse of the historic building.

### Jeff-Vander-Lou Green-Board Buildings — St. Louis City

The historic buildings across the Jeff-Vander-Lou neighborhood in Saint Louis City date to the late 19th century, but the name which we now know the area by was not coined until 1966 with the creation of Jeff-Vander-Lou, Inc. Founded by housing activist and community developer Mr. Macler C. Shepard, Jeff-Vander-Lou, Inc. had a goal of acquiring and rehabilitating homes across the neighborhood to improve the affordability and living conditions for homeowners and renters. By the end of World War II, the neighborhood, which was one of the first areas where African Americans could own real estate, was considered blighted. Between 1968 and 1978, JVL acquired and rehabilitated dozens of buildings, usually a few at a time. These buildings continued to provide quality affordable housing, even as others around them were abandoned and left to deteriorate. In 2000, the St. Louis Equity Fund created JVL Renaissance, Inc. and breathed a third life into the structures across two phases, JVL Renaissance I, and JVL Renaissance II in 2004. The buildings were again sold in 2020 to Hudson & McKee Real Estate (also operating as H&M II, LLC) who proposed a renovation to keep the housing affordable. However, it was not long after the sale that many of the buildings were vacated and the first floors boarded up with green plywood. Deferred maintenance and abandonment caused these buildings to deteriorate rapidly in a short amount of time. Many have visible holes in the roof, a few have experienced partial collapse of masonry walls, and at least one has suffered a fire. Only a small portion of historic buildings in this section of the neighborhood are under private ownership and a few others are held by the Land Reutilization Authority of St. Louis; the loss of these green-boarded buildings would result in almost a total loss of original structures in this portion of the Jeff-Vander-Lou neighborhood. Many of the buildings south of Cass Avenue also feature limestone facades and Second Empire style influences, and arguably make up the largest existing concentration of this building style in St. Louis outside of Lafayette Square. Beyond their architectural value, these buildings represent the legacy of Jeff-Vander-Lou, Inc. and the resiliency of the neighborhood in spite of white flight, redlining, and disinvestment in the 1960s and 70s. It is hoped that listing the JVL Green-Board properties as a Place in Peril will shine a light on the neglect and hopefully catch the attention of a developer who is willing to purchase the structures and follow through with rehabilitation for affordable housing.

### DeLozier Building — Clinton, Henry County

In 1887, the Henry County Bank building on the northwest corner of the courthouse square in Clinton was opened. It was designed to be a “handsome new building that would be a lasting ornament to Henry County.” Unfortunately, the Henry County Bank and other financial institutions housed in the building failed. Over the years, it housed the US Post Office, and was last occupied by Dunning Furniture, which closed in the 1980’s. In 1994, Tracy DeLozier purchased the building and donated it to the Henry County Historical Society in memory of his late wife Juanita DeLozier. The building was renamed The DeLozier Building in her honor. Five years after acquiring the building, the Historical Society began to slowly rehabilitate it. Work on portions of the building were completed as time and fundraising dollars allowed. The East and West Ballrooms were among the first finished and are available for public rental as a way to raise funds for the historical society’s museum, continued work on the DeLozier building, and funds for the maintenance of the 4 other historic buildings owned by the Henry County Historical Society. In spite of the goals of the historical society board and volunteers, maintenance is often deferred until the funding and the craftsmen with the skills to do things correctly are available, and thus many of the buildings face various issues. The rock foundation of the DeLozier building is compromised and deteriorating mortar leaves piles of dust on the floor. The second floor and basement are severely compromised

and are only accessed rarely and with extreme caution. The historical society hopes these spaces can one day be used for storage and administrative space. Without new funding sources and preservation expertise to stabilize and restore the DeLozier building, it is at risk of continued deterioration. The Henry County Historical Society is currently spending their limited resources to stabilize what they can, but the total amount of work required will greatly exceed their funding capabilities. After a series of building losses on the courthouse square, the historical society wants to ensure this iconic building remains a part of the streetscape for generations to come. It is hoped that listing the DeLozier Building as a Place in Peril will raise awareness for their plight, open up new fundraising opportunities beyond their community, and help them find experts who can aid in the stabilization and rehabilitation of this important historic structure in Clinton. Donations can be sent to the Henry County Historical Society (EIN #23-7010352) at 203 W. Franklin Street in Clinton, MO 64735 or by visiting [hcmomuseum.org](http://hcmomuseum.org)

#### Anna Bell Chapel — New Haven, Franklin County

When slavery ended after the Civil War, Anna Pryor Bell acquired farmland near the Missouri River in Franklin County where she and her neighbors built a log cabin church in 1865. As flooding was always a concern, the congregants of the African Methodist Episcopal Church purchased a lot in 1892 in a new subdivision of New Haven, overlooking the river and town below. Mrs. Bell traveled across the community and raised funds for the land and construction of the new church building, a one-story frame church with tall arched windows. Sometime after her death in 1905, the church was renamed Anna Bell Chapel in honor of the woman who was essential to the church's founding and construction. The church functioned as a vital center of the Black community for 100 years until the five remaining, elderly congregants made the decision to close its doors in 1995. For the next 25 years, New Haven resident David Smith watched over Anna Bell Chapel, paid the insurance and utilities, and mowed the lawn. In 2020, he turned to the New Haven Preservation Society (NHPS) for help. Over the years, the building had settled on its sandstone piers, sinking into the dirt up to the wood siding on one side. All of the original furnishings remained in the church, but a number of the 130-year old windows had been damaged by wind, and the front doors were warped and unable to fully close. The NHPS arranged for a structural assessment of the building, which determined that the chapel needed to be temporarily lifted to allow for foundation repairs and stabilization. The NHPS was deeded ownership and started a capital campaign to raise funds for stabilization. By 2023, the NHPS raised enough funds to stabilize the structure and the building was set on its new foundation before the winter. However, the future of Anna Bell Chapel is not yet secure as the structure itself needs extensive work, from lead paint abatement, plaster repair, window restoration, and a set of new doors milled. In addition, new HVAC, electrical and plumbing systems need to be brought up to current standards. All of the original furnishings, including the hymnals and altar linens, are in storage and ready to be put in place once the church is ready. The goal is to utilize the Anna Bell chapel as a place for religious and educational gatherings, concerts, and community meetings. It is hoped that listing the Anna Bell Chapel as a Place in Peril will shine a light on the story and place preservation efforts before a wider range of potential donors throughout Missouri and beyond who want to help honor the legacy of the formerly enslaved people who founded the Anna Bell Chapel. Those wishing to help ongoing preservation efforts can visit [newhavenpreservationsociety.org](http://newhavenpreservationsociety.org) to learn more and make a donation.