

Huck: Old, new worlds meet in renovation

Continued from Page 1

age of the material.

The old jail contained women's and men's cells, an armory and the warden's apartment. It was connected to the courthouse by a tunnel used by prisoners to attend their trials. Anderson salvaged a couple of cell keys and a lock that he plans to mount on a plaque in the renovation.

Lynette Stuhlmacher, a preservation architect who works on historic buildings, said, "Our approach is to retain as much of the original material as possible. We use the term 'adaptive reuse.'"

The grand staircase, terrazzo floors, black iron stair railings, granite wainscoting and plaster walls will be cleaned and retained.

Over the years, many changes were made to the interior. Originally, the plaster ceilings were decorated with stenciled designs. In 1906, this Victorian decor was covered with a pressed tin ceiling. Then, when National Louis University converted the building to classrooms, the ceilings were dropped and fluorescent lights added, along with glass block windows and central air conditioning. These layers have been removed, exposing some of the original stenciling.

"When you replace glass block windows, you can't just put in Marvin windows," Anderson said. "We are matching the originals with new custom-made mahogany windows."

Stuhlmacher added that the original window frames had small metal ventilators on the bottom sashes so that the courtrooms could be ventilated without opening the

large windows.

"They are unique and very beautiful," she said. "We are restoring a few of these so that people can see what they were like. We will be using insulated glass to help with heat efficiency."

Anderson added, "The building had a unique floor system that we have never seen before. In the time frame of 1896, concrete was a new building material for floors. The floors were cast in concrete 10 inches thick, with stovepipes in them to take up space. The stovepipes are crumbling, so it's a problem now. We're taking out all the floors and putting in new floors."

The objective is to repair what can be repaired and replace what is missing. Damaged bricks on three sides will be replaced with matching bricks.

"We have to reconstruct the openings on the east side," Anderson said. "We have found bricks that match pretty close."

The exterior has a combination of brick and terra cotta decorative elements with a red clay tile roof.

"There are different levels of repair needed on the terra cotta," Anderson said. "Some can be patched. Some have to be made. New molds need to be recast. This is done in New York state and takes six months."

One of the outstanding architectural features of the building is its clock tower. Much of it was reconstructed after being struck by lightning in 1988. The clock mechanism works, but neighbors have complained that the time is consistently off.

"We're having that fixed," Anderson said.

The lower part of the tower, reached by an existing circular staircase, will serve as an outdoor patio for one of the residential units. An entrance from the parking garage will lead into the basement, where the floor has been lowered three feet. From there, residents can ride the elevator to their condominium units.

"The original building had an elevator, likely the first in DuPage County," Anderson said, "but it was too small for ADA (American Disability Act) standards, so we had to enlarge the shaft."

Not an easy step with walls that are 18 inches thick.

From old newspaper write-ups, the team was aware that a time capsule was hidden in one of the walls. Dan Wright, superintendent of construction, used a metal detector to locate the box, labeled "J.P. Sauer, 1896," in the northwest corner. They plan to have a grand opening in March.

A replacement time capsule will be included in the renovation filled with objects suggested by Wheaton schoolchildren.

Stuhlmacher sums up the work involved in preserving, rehabilitating and restoring the historically important building.

"We work with a higher degree of standards. The pace is much slower because it takes time to find the materials we need. The work is very meticulous and time-consuming and it has to be constantly checked. We still have to comply with modern standards. Essentially the Old World and the New World meet."

"It's not a museum," she said. "It's going to have life in it."

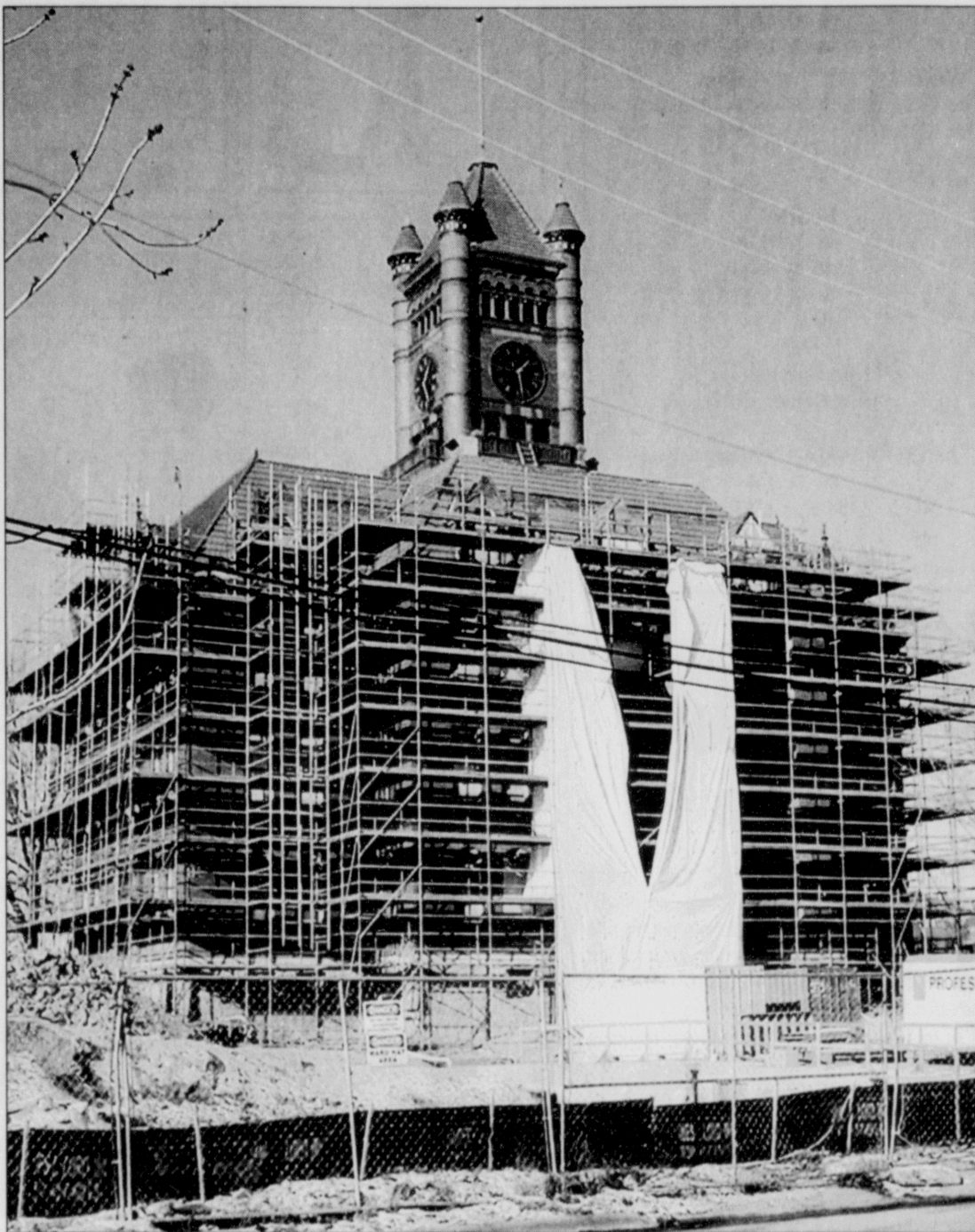


PHOTO COURTESY OF SHARON HUCK
The old DuPage County Courthouse in Wheaton, listed on the National Register of Historic Buildings, is undergoing renovations to reform it to its former glory and modernize it for residential occupancy.

Book: Author embraces 'escapist' label

Continued from Page 1

she said, and women need that escape valve.

One key to her success is the injection of a certain amount of comedy into her fiction.

"My books have a lot of humor in them. I find readers really respond to that," she said.

The new book starts with quarterback Robillard's discovery of Blue Bailey, a young woman he sees on the side of the road, dressed in a beaver suit and apparently distraught. He stops his car to ask if he can help and the pair's lives become intertwined.

That opening scene had Debby Bodnar, an Anderson's

employee who had access to an advance copy, cracking up.

"I've read her books for years. The best part I like about it is they're funny," Bodnar said. "I love the way she pairs very unlikely people together. She's really good at character development."

Bodnar, of St. Charles, said she's known Phillips for years. She only wishes, she said, that Phillips would be more prolific.

"I'm always teasing her that she takes too long to write," she said.

When asked where she gets ideas for her books, Phillips joked, "There's a warehouse in Tulsa."

Actually, she works in an

office in the Naperville home she shares with her husband.

"It's a job. It's a full-time job. I write pretty much 9 to 5 on weekdays and catch-as-catch-can on weekends," she said. "I've been doing this since my children were small."

The couple have two grown sons and a grandson.

Phillips said her books are largely character-driven. Getting each character nailed down takes time.

"It takes me a while to figure out who the characters are," she said. "I revise constantly. My first 10 drafts are unreadable. The characters gradually are unveiling as I write the book. My heroes and heroines

always have flaws to them. They're real people."

Though Phillips already is working on her next novel, she's promoted "Natural Born Charmer" in Florida, Tennessee, North Carolina and Virginia since the book was released Feb. 6.

Bodnar said she expects Phillips' signing at Anderson's Bookshop to be a popular event.

"She has a huge fan base," she said. "People drive from different states to come meet her. She sounds just like her books. She's just as funny in person."

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Play: Show is full of zingers

Continued from Page 1

will deliver.

"My cast is really great," she said.

When the show opens, the couple has been married just six days, said Antonia Jankowski, a freshman theater and English major from Oak Forest who plays Corie. The couple begins to settle into their new apartment, which Corie chose.

"Chaos ensues. Neil Simon writes the most amazing scripts," Jankowski said. "The lines speak for themselves."

"Neil Simon is known for his one-liners, his zingers," Palmes said.

Palmes said she founded North Central's Studio Theatre about 10 years ago to give students, especially first-time directors, a "laboratory" wherein they could hone their craft.

"We emphasize the actor-coaching element and de-emphasize the scenic elements such as set and costume," she said.

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Sports fans: Turn to the **Daily Herald** for the inside scoop.

District 4 educator set to retire

BY HENRY STUTTLEY

Daily Herald Staff Writer

James Frontier, a longtime Addison Elementary District educator, has called it quits.

The Addison District 4 curriculum director has decided to retire, effective June 30, after holding various positions in the district for 20 years.

"I've been blessed," said Frontier, 56. "You don't mind getting to work early and staying late. I've had fun."

For Frontier, the fun started as principal at Stone School, then at Fullerton shortly thereafter. When he joined Addison District 4, the newest technology was the carbon copy machine, he

recalls.

"I hate to date myself, but that's old," he said.

Now, Think Pad computers in the classrooms have become the hot commodity.

He owes the change in technology in the district throughout the years to many parents, teachers and school board members.

"It's changed because we needed to reach out and touch the students in the classroom," he said.

Frontier, a Western Springs resident, isn't clear on what he's going to do after June.

"I'm anxious to learn something different," he said. "I'm not sure what that is yet."

Frontier is the second administrator set to leave the district this school year.

Pat Masterton, assistant superintendent of business, resigned to take a position in Elmhurst.

Superintendent A. Don Hendricks said with Frontier leaving, the district will have big shoes to fill.

He hopes to fill the position by April 30.

"This was somewhat anticipated," he said. "The lives he has touched have been tremendous, and he's made an outstanding contribution to the educational landscape in Addison."

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Corso: Pool water always 83 degrees

Continued from Page 1

pool.

Manager Missy Contri says you'll find the water to be a comfortable 83 degrees whether it's raining, snowing or simply freezing outside.

The pool has eight lanes and is 25 yards in length. It's open for adult lap swim from 6 to 8:30 a.m. Tuesdays and Thursdays. Adults can swim from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. and 8 to 9 p.m.

weekdays. If you're bringing the whole family, head over to the Aquatic Center from 2 to 6 p.m. Saturdays and noon to 5 p.m. Sundays for open swim. Admission for residents ages 4 and older is \$2 and \$4 for others.

"We really fill up on Sundays because the word is starting to get out," said Contri. "We have a big pool, it's relaxing and it's the best price around."

To shed winter pounds and

find fun on a budget, run, jog, walk or stroll along the indoor walking track at the Bensenville Park District, 1000 W. Wood St.

Access to the track is free and hours are 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. weekdays and 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekends.

Seventeen laps equals one mile and March 21 equals the first day of spring — so get in your winter fun before it's time to head outdoors.



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