A JEWEL HIDDEN IN THE MIDWEST
The Allen County Courthouse
Fort Wayne, Indiana

By Donald D. Doxsee

2014
Your author claims no copyright in this article and all or any part of it may be reproduced with or without attribution as to the source.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Emergency</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raising the Funds</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Courthouse Jewel</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Rotunda Murals</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Circuit and Superior Court Murals</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scagliola</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ceilings</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Light Fixtures</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bas Reliefs</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sound Problem - Curtain Removal</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restoration of Clocks</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lady Liberty</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The New Park</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002 Rededication</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Continuing Project</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust Web Site</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Appendix and notes
- Baughman Letter on 2002 Dedication Day
- Restoration Organization Notes
- Executive Directors
- 1966-1975 Renovation
- Courthouse Electrified from Beginning

*Mr. Doxsee is a Fort Wayne attorney, a past president of the Allen County Bar Association and secretary and a board member of the Allen County Courthouse Preservation Trust, Inc.*
A JEWEL HIDDEN IN THE MIDWEST
The Allen County Courthouse, Fort Wayne, Indiana
By Donald D. Doxsee

The Emergency

It was 1993 and the courthouse murals were in danger of falling five stories to the rotunda floor. Something had to be done immediately or they would be destroyed. Water had leaked from the rotunda dome and weakened glue holding the murals in place.

Court administrator Gale Ort saw the problem and took it to Circuit Court Judge Thomas Ryan. Judge Ryan called an emergency meeting of the county commissioners, prominent community lawyers, and local preservationists Craig Leonard and Madelane Elston to discuss the problem. They were able to secure the support of Lincoln Life Insurance Company president Ian Rolland for an emergency loan to hire mural experts and to build scaffolding to inspect the murals.

While the immediate problem was being worked on, the committee was expanded to get the views of more of the community and to decide on how to raise the funds needed to save the murals. A trust was established with a board to oversee the project. The big decision was whether to raise only the funds needed to save the murals or raise a much larger amount to restore the murals and entire courthouse. Over the ninety plus years since the courthouse was built, the murals had been over painted as part of a faulty restoration in the 1930's, many of the decorative ceilings had been painted over and much of the imitation marble (scagliola) had been damaged. It was decided to restore the entire building. Both Trust President Judge Ryan and his 2003 successor Madelane Elston (Elston had been Ryan’s Vice-President from the beginning) spent an enormous number of personal hours dedicated to the new trust, overseeing of the restoration and making sure it was done correctly.
Raising the Funds

It was estimated that the cost of repairing the murals would be close to a million dollars. The cost of renovating the entire courthouse would cost another seven million dollars. In a community as small as Fort Wayne, Indiana, raising the necessary funds would be an enormous task. Rather than hiring a fund raising firm and paying their fee, Lincoln life Insurance Company president Ian Roland and Jack Lehman (1931-2013) of the Fort Wayne National Bank volunteered to raise the funds. Alex Jokay, former Lincoln Life treasurer and Madelane Elston also helped.

The three county commissioners Jack Mc Comb, Jack Worthman and Ed Rousseau enthusiastically supported the project. They committed county funds for the structural repairs. The newly established trust would be responsible for the murals and art work. Without the help of the commissioners and subsequent commissioners Linda Bloom, Nelson Peters, Marla Irving, Bill Brown and Therese Brown, as well as the support of the county council, this project would have failed. Judge Ryan became president of the trust and oversaw its operation through the rededication in 2002.

A special effort was made to raise funds from the local attorneys. Attorney Phil Burt undertook this project. Close to a million dollars of needed funds were raised from the attorneys. As an inducement, each attorney who contributed five thousand dollars or more had his or her name engraved on a plaque placed in the building. However, the major funding came from the county, local foundations and the state’s Build Indiana Fund.
Courthouse Jewel

Restoration expert Jeff Greene of EverGreene Architectural Arts, Inc. of New York City was hired to inspect the courthouse and report on needed restorations. After his inspection he stated that the Allen County courthouse is a “jewel unknown to the rest of the world.” He said that it has more high quality scagliola (imitation marble) with a greater range of colors than any other building in the United States. He said it was second only to the Reform Club in London, England.

Richard Murray (1942-2006), Senior Curator of the American Art Museum of the Smithsonian Institution, had also inspected the courthouse and said the courthouse murals are among the top five examples of American murals of the Progressive Period. He also stated that the courthouse is one of the finest beaux arts building in the country.

This beautiful building was completed in 1902 at a cost of a little over eight hundred thousand dollars. This was at time when most Indiana courthouses were being built for less than three hundred thousand dollars. It took over forty years to payoff the bonds. Its exterior is of Indiana limestone. Its beautiful interior is of highly ornate plaster work, scagliola walls and columns. The first floor, second floor and the grand stairways are made of Italian marble. This elegance came at a high cost, but the civic leaders of the time where trying tell the rest of the country that Fort Wayne was an up and coming place. Its Bass Foundry made heavy iron wheels and other parts for the railroad industry, the Wayne Knitting Mills made stylish silk stocking for the whole country and a forerunner to the local division of the General Electric Company was starting its first production.
The Rotunda Murals

The rotunda murals are the center piece of the courthouse. They were painted on canvas by Charles Holloway (1859-1941) of Chicago. There are four murals depicting “War,” “Joy & Peace,” “Despotism” and “Law & Order.” Holloway, a world renowned artist, was a graduate of the Saint Louis School of Art and studied at the Academie Des Beaux-Arts in Paris. His murals adorn Steinway Hall and the Auditorium Theater in Chicago, the old Federal Courthouse in Milwaukee, the South Dakota State Capital and the Studebaker Administration Building in South Bend, among others.

As noted, the glue behind the rotunda murals was weakening and the murals were in danger of falling to the rotunda floor. The murals “War” and “Despotism” had a major tear and the torn material was being kept in place with roofing nails. In addition a 1930's depression era government works project and a later 1946 project had resulted in harsh black lines being painted around the mural subjects as well as massive over painting. By luck and with the aid of the Smithsonian’s American Art Museum it was discovered that a layer of grime had built up on the murals before the over painting. This made it possible, with delicate work, to remove the over painting.
Perry Houston of Houston & Associates of Fort Worth, Texas was employed to re-glue the murals to the rotunda walls and to restore the paintings. The restoration involved erecting scaffolding from the main floor five stories to the base of the murals. A full floor was built over the top of scaffolding to work on the murals. After the right solvents were developed, the murals were cleaned and restored a square inch at a time. At the same time the stained glass panels in the rotunda dome were removed for cleaning and releading by Jaeger Studios of Wisconsin with the assistance of local restoration artist Chuck Knox of Knox Decorative Painting.
Circuit and Superior Court Murals

Next to the rotunda murals, the Circuit Court murals were the most valuable. They were painted by Carl Gutherz (1844-1907). Like Charles Holloway, he was a graduate of the Academie des Beaux-Arts in Paris. He is noted for his seven murals which adorn the ceiling of one of the rooms in the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C. He is also noted for his portraits which include those of Robert E. Lee, Jefferson Davis and Susan B. Anthony.

Over the judge’s bench is a mural depicting the harsh origins of the law. The artist intended this to put defendants in fear as they looked toward the judge. As the judge looks toward the back of the courtroom, the rear mural implores the judge be just and merciful. The mural on the North side of the courtroom depicts the triumph of peace over war and the mural on the South side depicts the triumph of justice over evil.

Unfortunately the original Circuit Court murals had also been over painted. Some of the over painting was grotesque. The cherubs in one of the murals were so distorted that they looked more like devils than angels. One soldier’s leg trouser was painted blue, the other gray. Unlike the rotunda murals, there was no protective layer of grime. The over painting had bled into the original work. They could not be repaired. Photographs of the originals were discovered and the murals were recreated. The originals have been placed in storage.

The murals in Superior Courtroom room two had also had been over painted, the glue was weakening and the canvas deteriorating, They could not be saved. These murals were recreated with changes to correctly depict the Indians. The South mural depicts the important 1794 Northwestern Ohio battle of Fallen Timbers in which General Wayne defeated the Indians. The North mural is of
the signing of the Indian Peace Treaty of Greenville, Ohio. The battle and treaty opened the Indiana Territory to settlement. The battle mural was painted by Florian Piexotto. The treaty mural has been attributed to Charles Holloway. However, preservationist Perry Houston has serious doubts that Holloway painted that mural because the original does not appear to be in Holloway’s style.

Scagliola

One of the outstanding features of the building is the scagliola in the four main courtrooms, the third floor hallways and the 140 interior columns. Over the years the scagliola had warped, cracked and been damaged. Scagliola is made of a special hard plaster. During the making of the plaster and, while it is still wet, special dyes are inserted to give it its color and its resulting marble appearance. It is then sanded and buffed to a marble like sheen. When properly made it is difficult to tell from real marble. Today there are few people that know how to make and repair it. The Trust was able to get the services of David Hayles from England and his assistant Angelic Bakalar to do the repairs. He repaired and replaced large portions of the courthouse scagliola.

Ceilings

Over the years the ornate stenciled designs in the courthouse hallway ceilings were over painted with a gray paint. Small patches of the over paintings were removed to discover the original designs and colors. The Trust could not afford to recreate the original stencil painting. Jeff Greene’s firm came up with a less costly process of recreating the same designs on silk screened panels which were then glued in place.
Restoring the courtrooms presented a special problem. As the courthouse was a working building, the restoration had to accommodate the court calendars. This was done by restoring one courtroom at a time. Scaffolding filled each courtroom as it was worked on. The colorful ceilings were restored and imitation gold and silver leaf was reapplied. The glass domes in each of the courtrooms were cleaned, releaded and backlit.

**Light fixtures**

Over the years most of the original light fixtures in the courtrooms had been replaced. Rod Collier of architectural firm of MSKTD & Associates discovered that the Stewart Iron Works of Covington, Kentucky had made the original light fixtures and that it was still in business. When contacted it was discovered that they still had the molds for the original lights. Arrangements were made to reproduce and install replicas of those lights in the courtrooms. Seventy fixtures were replaced. Some were over seven feet tall and thirty-three inches wide. The services of boat builders were required to create the wooden molds for the glass light shades attached to the bases. It seems that boat builders rather than wood workers were better able to create the double curves needed for the shades.

**Bas Reliefs**

Bas reliefs surround the upper parts of the walls of each of the four main courtrooms. The reliefs in the Circuit Courtroom and in Superior Courtrooms one and two were created by William J. Barth (1866-1915) and Robert J. Stack (1872-1942). Both were born in Germany and came to the United States at an early age. They came to Fort Wayne after completing work on the Chicago World’s Fair in 1895 under contract with the Northwestern Terra Cotta Co. of Chicago. The bas reliefs in Superior Courtroom three were created by M. J. Doner of Chicago who also had worked on
the Chicago Words’s Fair. The bas reliefs are hard plaster sculptures depicting various themes. They suffered almost no damage over the 100 years of the courthouse’s existence. They needed some repair work. Cleaning and repainted a bronze color.

Sound Problem - Curtain Removal

A major problem occurred when the judges had reservations about removing the heavy green curtains covering the walls of each of the four main courtrooms. These curtains kept voices from echoing off the bare scagliola walls. However, the curtains hid the beautiful scagliola and diminished the beauty of the courtrooms. The judges were satisfied after acoustic experts installed special carpeting and sound absorbing seating. A sound system was also installed.

Restoration of the Clocks

Originally, there were thirty-two clocks in the building, including the four facing outside in the rotunda. They were controlled by a single master clock on the main floor by means of air impulses sent to each clock. The system was made by the Johnson Electric Service Company of Wisconsin, now known as the Johnson Controls, Inc. The clocks system fell in to disrepair over the years and the clocks were replaced with individual electric clocks. Only the old master clock remains. As part of the restoration, the inside clocks were replaced with new workings and, in some cases,
new faces. The giant exterior rotunda clocks needed new motors, glass faces and hands. Recently, in 2011 the county updated four rotunda clocks with a computer system that would allow them to keep time with a satellite system.

Lady Liberty

The outside of the courthouse dome is capped with a 13 foot statue of Lady Liberty. During the restoration, she was removed from the dome for refurbishing by WPC, Inc of Fort Wayne. She revolves on her base to face the wind and rests on sixteen one inch ball bearings. After she was brought down, several small dents were discovered on the statute that appear to have been made by bullets. She holds a torch in one hand and sword in the other. Once in the past the sword had come loose and it is reported to have fallen on a judge’s automobile causing some minor damage.

The New Park

When the city of Fort Wayne was laid out in 1824 only a half block was set aside for the county to build a courthouse. The present courthouse occupies the entire half block. As part of the restoration, the City’s Redevelopment Commission, with the help of the Trust, was able to buy the remaining half block to build a park. This happened by a stroke of good luck. Local businessman Dick Waterfield had recently purchased all of the lots making up the other half of the block. He was willing to sell the property to the Trust. Local benefactor Ione Auer (1893-2007) donated funds to assisted
in the purchase land, demolition of the buildings and the design of the park. The Trust conveyed title to the Fort Wayne Park Department with certain reservations to preserve its open character. The trust has created an endowment to provide funds to the Park Department for its maintenance.

2002 Rededication

The restoration was completed in 2002. It was also the one hundredth anniversary of the courthouse. The restoration was celebrated with a rededication ceremony of music and distinguished speakers. President Teddy Roosevelt was to speak at the original dedication, but became ill and could not attend. However, at the rededication, his great grandson Tweed Roosevelt was present to give a few remarks. Attorney James Barrett, III, also spoke. Mr. Barrett’s grandfather James Barrett, then the county attorney, had spoken at the original dedication in 1902. The dedication was followed that evening by a very elegant black tie dinner in the courthouse. The Fort Wayne Philharmonic was centered under the rotunda dome and played for the guest throughout the evening. It was an evening to remember.

Ms. Kathryn Baughman Wilkens of Upland, California wrote a wonderful letter describing the rededication ceremony and the elegant dinner following the public events. It is in the appendix.
A Continuing Project

With the completion of the restoration, the work of the courthouse trust has turned to maintaining the art and beauty of the building. One of those projects was to take action to protect the encaustic tile floors. Over the years the tiles had not been properly cleaned and a layer of wax mixed with dirt had built up. The tiles were cleaned and research led to a coating that would protect the surface of the tiles.

Another project was to determine if the outside of the building needed work. By agreement with the County Commissioners the trust was responsible for the art work and the county was responsible for the structural parts of the building. However, the trust assisted the county in reviewing what was needed and what experts to hire.

In 2011 after a preliminary inspection it was determined that the outside of the courthouse needed to be cleaned and the mortar between the stonework and wall art needed to be to be repointed. Scaffolding was built around the outside building for cleaning the limestone and repointing the mortar joints. The exterior of the building is as ornate as its interior. There are large stone bas reliefs running along the top of the East side depicting important historical figures. On the West side the bas reliefs record the names of the county’s townships. Engraved above the entrances on the four sides of the building are inspirational quotations about justice and government and busts of important persons. While all of this art work was in good repair, it needed cleaning and refurbishing.

Trust Web Site

The trust has an internet site with additional information and photographs. The site has a self guided tour which can be downloaded and printed. The site located at http://www.allencountycourthouse.org

The courthouse was a named a national historic place in 1976 and a national landmark in 2003 by the U.S. Park Service.
APPENDIX AND NOTES

[The following is a letter from Kathryn Baughman Wilkens sent to the Courthouse Trust describing her impressions of the 2002 courthouse dedication]

The weather was sunny and crisp for Monday's noontime rededication ceremony on the courthouse green. As I listened to the Fort Wayne Area Community Band play Sousa marches, I noticed classical details of the limestone exterior: its columns, statues and inscriptions. Miss Liberty was back atop the copper-sheathed dome where she belonged, holding aloft her torch and pirouetting gracefully in the wind. A flock of pigeons circled around her in an attempt to elude two dark birds of prey, but my attention was drawn from the sky by drumbeats announcing the arrival of the color guard—serious young men brandishing flags of the United States, Indiana, Allen County and Fort Wayne.

James M. Barrett, reprising his grandfather's role 100 years earlier, presented the courthouse to the people of Allen County. Recognizing that the ideals of justice and equity his grandfather mentioned in 1902 are still elusive in 2002, he said, "As we rededicate the courthouse, let us also rededicate ourselves to these constitutional provisions, the values they embody, and their just and impartial enforcement. For they are the necessary ground to nurture and achieve that justice and equity for all which are the unfulfilled promise and the challenge to the people of our great republic as we enter a new century."

After Allen County Commissioner Linda Bloom accepted the courthouse on behalf of the people, the band played a march that had been written for the 1902 dedication by G.E. Holmes called, appropriately, "Dedication March."

Other speakers took the stand, people who had raised funds and coordinated efforts. Jeff Greene of Evergreene Studios talked about the uniqueness of the artwork in the courthouse. "All of the elements of the elaborately decorated interior—the tiles, art glass, scagliola—work together in a succinct design ensemble," he said. "It took five years to build, eight years to restore and would cost $250 million in today's money."

Scagliola restorer David Hayles said, "As a craftsman I feel privileged to have worked here." Then he raised his hands dramatically, turning palms toward the audience. "It's my hands that I've been very happy to have shared on your building," he said.

President Teddy Roosevelt had been invited to speak at the 1902 dedication ceremony but an injury from a carriage accident kept him from attending. In 2002, his grandson, Tweed Roosevelt, traveled from Boston to make amends. "I have no idea what my grandfather would have said," Roosevelt admitted, "but his statement would undoubtedly have ended with 'Vote for me.'" He extolled the courthouse's attributes. "You got yourselves a $250 million courthouse for $8.6 million. The people of Fort Wayne certainly know the value of a dollar."

At the ceremony, I walked around to look at all four sides of the building and to see again one reason I love it so much. Busts of Anthony Wayne and John Allen are on the south side; Washington and Lafayette flank the west entrance. And on the north facade, I looked up to see Miami Chief Little Turtle and Shawnee Chief Tecumseh. It's amazing to me that the courthouse planners recognized the contributions of these two Native Americans and had the courage to give them equal billing with the likes of Wayne and Washington.
That night my husband donned his tuxedo and I my long dress, and we went downtown for the gala dinner. We didn't even have to walk the block from the parking garage to the courthouse—the tourist trolley ferried us. At the entrance, lest we forget we live in 2002 and not 1902, we were ushered through a metal detector and I had to pass my sequined bag through an X-ray machine.

Cleared by security, we were free to wander through the building. It was fun—and incongruous—to see formally dressed people strolling through the courtrooms. Cocktails and hors d'oeuvres were served on the second floor. For a time, I stood by the balustrade, looking down on a string quartet and looking up at Charles Holloway's murals. It was like being inside a work of art.

When it was time to go down to the main floor for dinner, the string quartet gave way to the Fort Wayne Philharmonic; Edvard Tchivzhel led the orchestra in music by Pachelbel, Prokofiev and Strauss. They played selections from Tchaikovsky's Swan Lake, Mozart's The Marriage of Figaro and Rossini's Barber of Seville.

Tables on either side of the orchestra gleamed with glassware and ivory china trimmed in gold. Flickering candlelight illuminated vases of roses, lilies and daisies which towered in the center of each table. The elegantly printed menu promised pumpkin bisque, salmon, medallions of beef and champagne. And any worries I had about not knowing anyone evaporated as we introduced ourselves to our tablemates. Having grown up in Fort Wayne, I should have expected the cordiality we received from our dining companions. Eventually, the evening came to an end, but not the pride I felt for my hometown.

Back in California two weeks later, I visited Los Angeles's new Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels that had been dedicated on September 2, 2002. The two buildings have nothing in common other than the coincidental dates of their dedication and rededication. I suppose it isn't fair to compare a church and a courthouse, but I did anyway. The cathedral's artwork, beautiful as it is, seems superimposed. Its interior—stark, modern and cold—seems to diminish the individual; naturally, its purpose is to glorify God in heaven. By contrast, the Allen County Courthouse was built to glorify the institutions of mankind; thus it is more earthy and humanistic. Its warm light and richness of detail lend a welcoming atmosphere. Its artwork, integral to the building, gives a sense of order and rightness to the people who visit and work there.

I admit I'm a little jealous of those people. That Monday night, I didn't want to leave; I wanted to stand with my husband by the marble balustrade, dressed to the nines, a glass of champagne in one hand and a canapé in the other, listening to Eine Kleine Nachmusik and gazing up at beautiful paintings. That's my idea of heaven—a place where justice, history, humanity and art come together.

Kathryn Baughman Wilkens
The following is a summary of my notes taken from other documents regarding the organization of the trust:

The Allen County Courthouse Restoration of 1993-2002

The beginning of the great courthouse renovation of 1993-2002 began in early 1993 with a casual hallway meeting between Circuit Court Administrator Gale Ort and attorney Donald D. Doxsee. Mr. Ort concerned about the deteriorating condition of the courthouse in general and the rotunda murals in particular stopped attorney Doxsee in the hallway to discuss this problem. Both agreed that problem was serious (they did know at that moment is was even more serious than they imagined) and something should be done. Mr. Doxsee agreed to lend his weight to the project and it was agreed to take the matter to the Circuit Court Judge Thomas L. Ryan.

Judge Ryan immediately recognized the seriousness of the matter and took steps to set up an ad hoc committee of concerned members of the bar. The first ad hoc committee consisted of:

- Hon. Thomas L. Ryan, Judge of the Allen Circuit Court
- Jackie Abbott of the Legal Department of Lincoln Life Insurance Company
- Donald D. Doxsee of the firm of Williams Williams & Doxsee
- Arnold Duemling, attorney
- Miles Gerberding of the firm of Barnes & Thornburg
- Walter P. Helmke of the firm of Helmke and Beams
- Jack Lawson of the firm of Beckman & Lawson
- Gale Ort, Circuit Court Administrator

Walter P. Helmke, Jr., a former president of the Allen County Bar, at the request of the Judge Ryan, agreed to act as informal chairman. It should be noted that his father Walter P. Helmke, Sr., former Allen County Prosecutor, was chairman of the Allen County Bar Association Committee which oversaw the 1996-1975 courthouse renovation.

The first meeting was held on March 24, 1993. The above persons attended as well as the following guests:

- George Bachinsky, Courthouse Architect
- Jeff Greene, President of EverGreene Painting Studios, Inc.
- Craig Leonard, Preservationist
- Jack McComb, Allen County Commissioner
- Jack Worthman, Allen County Commissioner

On doing damage to the rest of the building and in particular to the rotunda murals (although we did not know then, how badly). The dome was made of terra cotta brick, but the cost of replacing the brick would be too expensive. The County Commissioners agreed that the dome should be covered with metal. The county wanted copper, but the state of Indiana wanted aluminum. After some experimentation by the contractor in which the aluminum failed to bend properly, the State finally agreed to the copper. The State had a say in the method because it was paying part of the cost and also
because the county had received state money in the 1975 restoration and agreed to give the state a say in future work on the courthouse.

The committee agreed that the courthouse had serious problems and that further study was needed. It was agreed to continue the committee. It was also agreed to get an opinion from some experts restoring art work.

The first opinions were that of Jeffrey Greene of Evergreene Painting Studios, Inc. in reports or letters dated March 19, 1993 and August 9, 1993. Another opinion was from David Evans of the firm of Quinn Evans Architects dated August 6, 1993.

Mr. Greene recommended that Perry Huston, an art restorationist, examine the courthouse murals. Huston and Evergreene were currently working on restoring murals in the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C. including murals done by Carl Gutherez (who did our murals in the Circuit Court courtroom).

The committee continued to meet and to review comments from experts. Meanwhile, work on covering the courthouse dome with copper sheeting continued. As it turned out, the new covering stopped the leaks in the dome. The water stopped coming into the courthouse. This caused the glue holding the rotunda murals in place to start drying out and to loosen.

In early 1994 restorationist Perry Huston inspected the buildings and the rotunda murals in particular. He returned a report dated February 1994. It was discovered that the murals are in imminent danger of falling

EXPANDED AD HOC COMMITTEE

Judge Thomas Ryan, Judge of the Circuit Court
Judge Norman Baker, Judge of the Superior Court
Gayle Ort, Circuit Court Administrator
Walter P. Helmke, attorney
John E. Hoffman, attorney
Max Hobbs, attorney
Miles Gerberding, attorney
Alex Jokay, attorney
Jackie Abbott, attorney
Donald D. Doxsee, attorney
Jack Lawson, attorney
Arnie Duemling, attorney
Stanley Campbell, attorney
Bill Fishering, County Commissioners, attorney
Jack Mc Combs, County Commissioner
Jack Worthman, County Commissioner
Janet Nahrwold, ARCH Executive Director
Madelane Elston, ARCH Representative
The corporation was incorporated with the Indiana Secretary of State on August 25, 1994. The first board of directors consisted of the following:

FIRST BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Judge Thomas L. Ryan, Judge of the Alle Circuit Court
Jeannie X. Miller, Attorney
C. Suzanne Womack, Lincoln National Corporation
Madelane Elston, ARCH Representative
Alex Jokay, Former Officer of Lincoln National Corporation
George Huber, Murphy & Associates
Jack Lehman, Fort Wayne National Bank
Thomas Blum, NBD Bank
Robert Anderson, Norwest Bank
Brenda Robinson, Old Fort YMCA
Walter P. Helmke, Attorney
Emily Kass, Fort Wayne Museum of Art
Linda Ruffolo, Community Activist
Richard E. Bonsib, Bonsib, Inc.
Ladonna Huntley-James, Lincoln Life Renaissance Center
Mack E. Wooten, Central Soya
Steve Corona
Julie Inskeep Walda, Publisher Fort Wayne Journal Gazette

FIRST COMMITTEES

Finances/Fund-Raising Committee:
  John Kovatch Chairman
  Donald D. Doxsee
  Arnold H. Duemling
  Janet Nabrwold
Public Relations Committee:
  Richard E Bonsib
  Richard J. Ferguson
  Tim Borne
Facilities Committee:
  Jack McComb, chairman
  Janet Nahrwold
  Jack Worthman
  Gayle L Ort
  Jacquelyn M. Abbott
  Jack W. Lawson
  John H. Brandt
Legal/Bylaws Committee:
  Walter P. Helmke
  Miles C. Gerberding
  Jeanne S. Miller
  John E. Hoffman
History Committee:
Mike Hawfield, Chairman
Bill Decker
Mike Westfall
Craig Leonard
Joan Flinfpach
Max E. Hobbs
Donald D. Doxsee

Long Range Planning Committee:
Norman E. Baker
Stanley L. Campbell
John H. Brandt

The first meeting of the Trust Board was held on August 30, 1994. Of immediate consideration was the emergency dealing with the imminent problem of the danger that the glue holding rotunda murals could give way at any moment with the murals falling four or more stories to the first floor. If that happened they would be beyond repair - lost forever. There was an immediate need for $300,000.00 to erect the necessary scaffolding to remove the murals for repair. The Lincoln Life Insurance Corporation offered to loan the needed money. At this first meeting it was agreed to immediately pursue this option and secure a line of credit from a local bank.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS

By 1995, three years into the project, it was determined that the trust needed a full time executive director to assist the president in the various committees in public relations, assisting with donors, working on grants and other projects. The initial directors were on loan from Lincoln Life Insurance Company. After the completion of the initial restoration in 2002, the executive director continued to work with donors and grants, but the duties now include arranging for courthouse tours (primarily to school children) and promoting the courthouse as a fantastic wedding venue. The following is a listing of the directors to date

1995-1997 Terresa Reidt
1997-1997 Laura Rhoades
1997-2002 Elaine Skoog
2002-2004 Mary Lee
2004 to date Robyn Zimmerman
While this purpose of the publication is to describe why and how the 1993-2003 courthouse restoration occurred, it should be noted that a major upgrade of the building took place beginning in 1966. The following is a summary of that renovation.

The 1966-1975 Courthouse Renovations
from the 1975 rededication booklet:

The City-County Building was completed and dedicated on September 17, 1971. Thereafter, all the administrative offices of Allen County were moved to the City-County Building.

Strauss Associates, Inc. was employed in 1966 to draw the plans for remodeling and restoring the Court House. Definite instructions were given that the interior design of the Court House should not under any circumstances be altered.

In connection with the remodeling and restoring the Court House, the first phase took place between 1967 and 1971 when the basement was remodeled for the storage of records. New elevator cabs were provided and a tunnel was constructed under Main Street connecting the City-County Building and the Court House. Phase two of the work began in 1971 and was completed in 1975, and provided for new sidewalks, landscaping around the building, cleaning the limestone, installing new windows and doors and refinishing the dome and providing a new roof.

The principal features of the interior of the building were new plumbing facilities and electric wiring. A complete new heating and cooling system was installed providing hot and cold conditioned air to all areas of the building. New spectator seats and new carpets were installed in all Court Rooms.

In addition to the renovation, the Prosecuting Attorney’s Office was moved into the Court House, the Sheriff’s Office and the Clerk’s Office were enlarged. A new Law Library was established on the first floor.
Electrified from the Beginning

[The following information has nothing to do with the 1993-2002 restoration. However, your author was fascinated by the fact that the 1897 courthouse was electrified. Your author wishes to share the following information on the electrification of the courthouse.]

The new courthouse was built as an electrified building. This not only included electric lights, but included electric elevators. Electricity was still a new innovation. At the time. The White House in Washington, D.C. had its first electric lights in 1891. The Chicago World Fair in 1892 featured the new invention by lighting the entire fair with the new invention of electricity and light bulbs.

Because some of the promoters of the new courthouse were investors in local firms making electric distribution equipment, they saw to it that the courthouse was electrified with lights and elevators. Because electric was still in its infancy, there was not yet a central electric generating company in Fort Wayne. Thus, the courthouse had to generate its own electricity. A separate powerhouse was built along with courthouse. It was located across Clinton Street from where the current jail is located. The powerhouse not only generated electricity, but also generated steam to run the generators and heat the courthouse. A tunnel was dug from the powerhouse to the courthouse to provide the electric current and heat.

The original electric was 110 volt direct current. Why 110, I do not know. Most direct current, where it still used today, is 220 volts. I have a recollection that there was still direct current in the courthouse in the early 1970's as I recall attorneys burning out electrical equipment they brought to court. When courthouse employees used regular electric appliances, transformers were used in the building to convert direct current to alternating current. The 1966-1975 renovation rewired the building. It was at this time I suspect that the electric was changed to 110 alternating current. With the building of the City-County Building (now called the Rousseau Centre) across the street the powerhouse was torn down and the heat and the new air conditioning was provided from that building. There was a fire in the powerhouse in 1957 that did damage to the generators and I suspect that at time power was provided by the local power company.

All of the photographs in this publication were taken by the author except for the photo of judge Ryan (which is from the Allen County Bar Association) and the postcard photo of the electric generators. Most of the photographs are on file with the Allen County Library.