



# Facade

A Publication of the Cleveland Restoration Society



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2009

## ANNUAL REPORT

Kathleen H. Crowther  
Executive Director

Like many nonprofit organizations, we were very happy to close the door on 2009. In 2010, we feel more settled into the economic realities of our city and region. That does not mean that we are content. However, the feeling of rapid change and a downward spiral has subsided, and we are more adjusted to what we think is our new reality. We are committed to “thrive” not just “survive”.

In 2009, apprehension about our funding streams kept us on edge, but we pulled through the year by working carefully to manage our costs and by being open to new ways of working. We were particularly worried that it would be harder for members to support our work through donations to the Annual Fund. With the economic news so concerning, we were prepared for reductions in donations to this annual campaign, but in fact, overall support was increased. On behalf of the board and staff, please accept our deep appreciation for your continued, and in many instances, increased support. With a penny-pinching approach

each day, we closed the year with a small surplus that will be set aside for emergencies. We also did not draw down on our endowments, allowing these funds the time needed to recover from the market lows and gyrations.

I normally like to start off this annual retrospective discussion with the most important programmatic milestones. This year, the milestone that is the biggest one is living through the upheaval of the Great Recession without completely losing focus and belief in the future. Whatever lies ahead, Cleveland and northeastern Ohio is our home – this is our place in the world. We are going to work hard to apply historic preservation tools and principals for the betterment of our community for ourselves and for future generations.

### Completion of Large Projects

During 2009, we were able to close some very significant projects. Two of these relate to capacity building: the completion of a proprietary data base for our loan program, and the configuration of high-capacity membership and donor software. In both instances, the data was completely cleansed through

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the only reliable manner known to us — record by record — using our own human capacity. The time involved in these projects was significant, and the staff is to be commended for its careful and diligent work. We are very confident of our information in these two very critical aspects of operation.

Through the support of the Eva L. and Joseph M. Bruening Foundation and the Abington Foundation, we were able to create our proprietary Heritage Home Data Base. This tool is working very well, and is a primary feature in our effort to license this program to other preservation organizations. The foundations understood the importance of this platform and provided a total of \$40,000 that really powered us forward on this initiative.

We also completed an arrangement with Ohio Treasurer Kevin L. Boyce that provides \$5 million in loan funds for our Heritage Home Program<sup>SM</sup>. This is an important

additional resource for our homeowners and will be particularly helpful with energy efficiency. We have been developing this relationship under the predecessor treasurer and are pleased that this multi-year effort is completed and successful for preservation. To the Treasurer's credit, he understood right off that the greenest building is the one that already exists, and so he committed his staff to working on this program with us. We are excited to use this new alliance to both improve our older and historic housing stock and make these homes more energy efficient. Learn more about this new program on page 18 of this issue of *Façade*.

## Expansion of Our Footprint and Increased Technical Assists

As proof of our important role, the number of communities we serve increased in 2009. In addition, we provided a record number of instances of technical assistance. The number of new loans we



booked declined. In other words, despite the bank tightening up its lending approvals and despite the reluctance of people to enter into loans, we expanded our service areas through contract with new cities and we provided more free assistance. Our new service areas include Oberlin, Avon and the neighborhoods of Hough and Fairfax in Cleveland. It appears that we will continue to increase

our footprint as we have recently completed a diagnostic for Canton in Stark County.

We have concerns that the number of new loans we book each year has declined since 2007. Now we are fully aware that we have been part of the so-called housing bubble, and therefore we are part of its “burst” or at least the reconfiguration of residential markets in Cleveland and northeastern Ohio.

**“Before” and “after” pictures of this house in Shaker Heights illustrate the good work of CRS’s partnership with Fund for the Future and the Lomond Community Association. In 2009 the homeowners received grant support to clean the sandstone entry way and paint the stucco and half-timbering, dramatically improving the home’s curb appeal.**



Photos by Jamie Bertram

We still hold hope (and work toward our goal) of increasing the number of loans we provide to homeowners. But the important thing is that we are out there talking to people and finding other means of providing preservation assistance.

During 2009, we completed a few large and interesting preservation projects for Shaker Heights, Lakewood, South Euclid and East Cleveland. In Shaker Heights, we partnered with the Fund for the Future by detailing the recommended work program for forty-five residents to whom they provided grants. In Lakewood, we partnered with the city in “Operation Paintbrush” by providing color schemes for thirty-three houses. In South Euclid, we created a special publication on front porch restoration, “A Welcoming First Impression: A Guide to Porch Maintenance and Repairs,” that the city will use to improve design standards. In East Cleveland, we nominated the Masonic Temple to the National Register of Historic Places.

#### **Adaptive Use of Sacred Landmarks**

We all knew the time was coming for the formal announcement of the closing of Catholic churches in Cleveland, Lorain and Akron. It has been a heart-breaking experience to receive the calls, visit the churches and see the anguish people are going through at this time. We have tried to see where we can best serve our community on this issue, and it is on the adaptive use of these structures. This is an issue that crosses all faith belief traditions. We are especially challenged by this given the reduction of population throughout the region and the drastic loss of populations from urban centers in particular.

Our Sacred Landmarks Task



Photos by Michael Fleenor

**The East Cleveland Masonic Temple was designed in the Egyptian Revival style by Harold M. Morse, a Freemason who was an engineer and architect by trade. The building was completed in 1927 and is a rare example of Exotic Revival architecture in the United States.**

Force has conducted a survey of nineteen to-be-closed churches in order to identify the most significant and difficult for resale so we can offer our preservation assistance to the community. We have accumulated a body of information on fifteen out of the twenty-four Catholic Churches in Cleveland. None of these churches will be easy to reuse for a purpose other than a church. However, new possibilities can be envisioned based upon what we have seen in Cleveland, and in other locations across the world. The Ohio Historic Preservation Office is helping us expand our website to offer sample case studies for the public to consider.

There are ten churches that we think need special consideration, for a variety of reasons. One of these churches is St. James in Lakewood, which we featured in the Winter 2009 issue of

*Façade*. St. James’ design was influenced by twelfth century Sicilian Romanesque sacred monuments, with the layout and interior appearance drawn specifically from the monastic Cathedral of Monreale (1174). The exterior was loosely inspired by the massing of the exterior of the Cathedral of Cefalù (1131-ca. 1240). There is no real adaptive use that could be acceptable to the preservation community. It is a complete ensemble of the highest order that cannot be dismantled without horrific ruination. Here is where we must disagree with alternatives. They simply do not work.

Despite the trauma of closings, we were able to light the steeple of a beloved Cleveland Landmark — Old Stone Church. May you forever stand in the same spot for the same use!

### Sustainability and New Messages

We are working to infuse all of our discussion with the language and perspective of sustainability. After all, we were sustainable before sustainability was cool. Preservation is all about using, reusing and recycling. This recession also gives us an opportunity to communicate new messages that follow on the new world order. What do

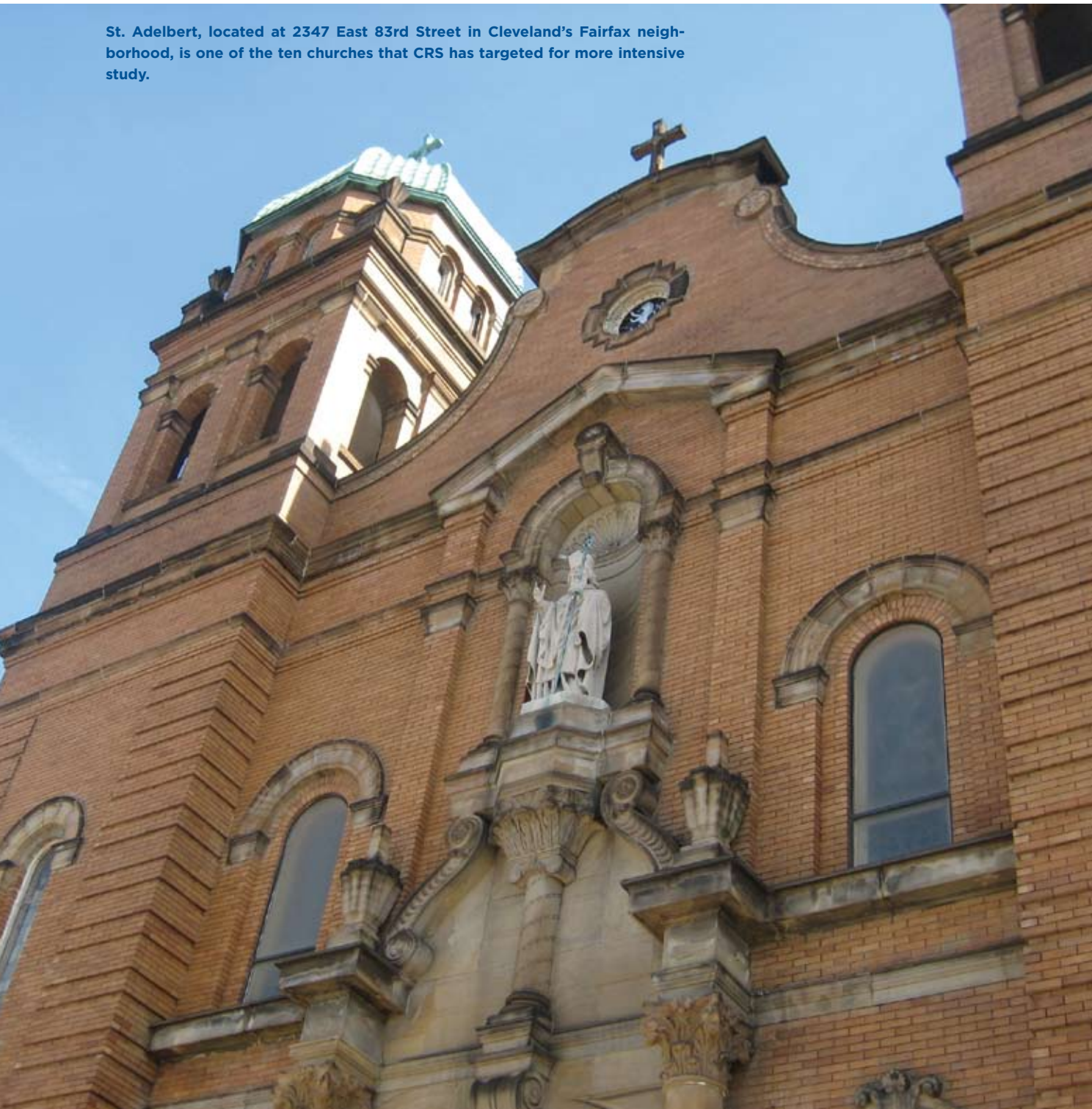
you think they are? Here are some of the ones we have come up with. Please, please send us your ideas. We are all ears!

- The greenest building is the one that is already built.
- Retrofit your old-growth lumber windows – don't send them to the landfill.
- The biggest payoff for energy

efficiency is to insulate your attic; make sure all of the openings are covered so it is air-tight.

- We are still making loans.
- Stay in your house and make it more comfortable with upgrades that are compatible with its architecture.
- Stay in your old house, enjoy it!

**St. Adelbert, located at 2347 East 83rd Street in Cleveland's Fairfax neighborhood, is one of the ten churches that CRS has targeted for more intensive study.**



**Southworth Mansion Recognized  
by National Trust for Historic  
Preservation with Honor Award**

I wish you could have been there! What a moment! At the National Preservation Conference in Nashville, the Laborers Local 860 won a prestigious Honor Award for the rehabilitation of its headquarters building on Prospect Avenue. We nominated this project for an award not once, but twice. The competition for these awards is really fierce. As someone who has twice served on the jury, I can tell you there are many projects of the highest caliber that submit and do not win each year. But we felt that Local 860 deserved recognition because their project helps us illustrate the truism that renewing an existing building creates for jobs than new construction. And the National Trust for Historic Preser-

vation agreed.

But the story I want to tell you is of the astounding reception the men received when they walked across the stage to accept the award. The audience burst into cheering and gave the group a standing ovation! The live description of their project had to pause because of the thunderous noise. It was an eruption like I have never seen in twenty-five years of attending the conference, and the men were surprised too!

The next day I asked around about why the amazing reception, and the response was consistent. The audience loved the fact that these guys were strong, hulking figures of brute strength representing the muscle required and deeply appreciated by preservation. They can do the work – they are our essential partners whose power of

human strength and craftsmanship we cannot do without. Yea, Cleveland! It was the best!

**Refreshed Identity**

By now you have noticed the use of our new logo and colors. We have continued the implementation of this new look by carrying it forward into most of our printed materials, including the upgrade of Façade into a full-color magazine it deserves to be. We have received positive feedback on the vibrancy and readability of it.

After many years of talking about signage, but not feeling really settled on how to approach it, we took the plunge and built a “monument” sign, meaning a big sign built into the ground, which identifies our building and organization. It was a thrilling and scary process of approving the vibrant



Photo by Martin O Connor Photography



Photo by Michael Fleenor

**The Sarah Benedict House lawn became a “bier garden” in June when Beer & Brats @ the Benedict, the first of a series of special parties to benefit CRS, was held. President Joe Marinucci grilled the brats.**

green, interior-lighting, and the size itself. At the end, someone nudged us over the edge and the sign was fabricated and installed. We love it. Some people are rather startled by its vivid green, but again, we have only heard that it is a big success. Do check it out in the evening hours when our special lighting is shown to its full effect. I don’t think anyone could call us stuck in the past when you see it, and that was the very idea!

**Looking for New Resources**

During this year, we also worked hard to keep the ship afloat (or sailing fast) by ratcheting up our Annual Fund effort, submitting a record number of grant proposals, continuing a hiring freeze, and offering our Garden Level for rent. We pulled in the reins as best we could without hurting our programs too badly. That said, we really do need the functions that are “on-hold” at

this time. We really need the marketing function restored fully. But for the moment, we are doing what we can to protect our core because we know that historic preservation has to play an important role now, that we can enhance our city’s economic future by protecting the best of its landmarks.

Thank you for your support and belief in our mission. We know that you depend upon us to keep the dream alive of honoring our architecture and places of meaning and significance. It is not that easy to do, and I personally welcome your thoughts and advice. The staff of this organization is truly dedicated to its work. Every person does so much to be productive, creative and impactful. And the board of trustees, as your primary representative, leads the charge through level-headed policy and their full measure of work, wealth and wisdom. We are a team. ♦



Photo courtesy of Congresswoman Marcia L. Fudge

**Cleveland Restoration Society Honorary Life Trustee Bracy Lewis (left) and Executive Director Kathleen H. Crowther (right) meet with Representative Marcia Fudge in Washington, D.C. earlier this year to update the Congresswoman on national preservation issues.**

Cleveland Restoration Society		
AUDITED ORGANIZATIONAL RESULTS		
	2009	2008
<b>Revenues:</b>		
Membership	18,998	23,413
Contributions	68,449	68,229
Estate and Memorial Gifts	–	50,000
Grants and Programs	756,093	874,193
Operating	40,012	37,221
Investment Income	126,982	(160,722)
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,010,534</b>	<b>\$892,334</b>
<b>Expenses:</b>		
Personnel	666,488	707,374
Direct Costs	267,230	380,229
Operating	50,887	98,205
<b>Total</b>	<b>984,605</b>	<b>1,185,808</b>
Net Result	25,929	(\$293,474)
Add Back: Depreciation	\$104,513	\$103,552
<b>Adjusted Net Result</b>	<b>130,442</b>	<b>(189,922)</b>

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The negative adjusted net income in 2008 is largely due to a decrease in the value of the endowment fund. A total of \$103,000 was withdrawn from the endowment fund, of which \$70,000 was used on capital improvements to the Sarah Benedict House.



Canton neighborhood streetscape, photo by Breanna Boulton

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