

The History Keeper is meant to keep residents and land-owners of historic properties within the City of Belvidere informed about the assistance available to them and to keep them informed about the latest happenings.

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# The History Keeper

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## Friends of Preservation Meeting

The Belvidere Historic Preservation Commission is looking forward to bringing back their Friends of Preservation meetings after a long hiatus! In 2016 and 2017 the Commission would host meetings for those who owned historic properties lived in historic properties or just down-right appreciated historic properties. There would be presentations on proper ways to restore trim, how to find period appropriate fixtures, etc. We will be holding a Friends of Preservation meeting at the Boone County Museum of History, 314 South State Street on Thursday, April 17th at 6pm. The night is meant to be a fun and informal gathering of residents who share a common desire. A presentation will not be provided at this meeting, instead Commissioners will be available to talk to and we would like to hear from you as to what presentations you would like to see in the future.



## Upcoming Fundraisers

Stay tuned for upcoming fundraisers and community outreach events!

Commissioners are working hard on organizing a summer Victorian Picnic Series with other community stakeholders, a stained glass window tour, a scavenger hunt with a twist and more! Events will be advertised in the City's Belvidere Bulletin (<https://www.belvidereil.gov/newsletters/>) and on the Commission's Facebook Page.



# Doctor Whitney



A simple, brick house at 210-212 E Menomonie St. was home to Daniel Hilton Whitney, one of Belvidere's first physicians.

## DANIEL WHITNEY

Dr. Daniel Whitney was born Oct. 20, 1806 in Yates County, N.Y. He came to Boone County in 1835 with Simon Doty, who was the county's first sheriff.

Daniel's brother, Aaron Whitney, apparently came along with them, and the brothers spent their first winter in a cabin near the present site of the Pillsbury/Green Giant plant.

Daniel was so carried away by the area's beauty that he wanted to call it "Elysian Fields," a name for eternal paradise in Greek mythology. But another of the city's earliest settlers suggested "Belvidere" instead.

Daniel was trained as a physician, but he was multi-talented, according to the "The Pioneers of Winnebago and Boone Counties who came before 1841." He was appointed an election judge in 1836 and was Winnebago County's first county recorder. He was elected the county's first commissioner in 1840 and also served as a circuit clerk.

He was known as a generous man who never turned away poor people in need of medical attention. Daniel also is credited with writing the petition to establish Boone County, which until then was part of Winnebago County.

Daniel's first wife, Elizabeth Potter Hazzard, died in September 1835, leaving behind a 5-year old daughter named Mariam, said local genealogist Helen Maxwell Williams. On Dec. 10, 1836, Daniel married Sarah "Sally" Caswell, daughter of Timothy and Mercy Caswell. Aaron married Sally's younger sister, Matilda.

Daniel and Sally had seven children, five of whom died before age 5. Their daughter Adelaide died in 1838 at age 1, and two unnamed infant sons followed. They had another daughter named Adelaide in 1841. She went on to marry Walter S. Jones and have two sons, Leslie and Hilton.

After Adelaide came Beverly Vaughn Whitney, a son who served as a lieutenant in the 42<sup>nd</sup> Illinois Infantry in the Civil War. Beverly, then 21 was killed in the Battle of Vicksburg in 1863.

Two more sons followed Beverly; Henry Clay Whitney and Daniel Whitney Jr., both of whom died in childhood.

Mariam Whitney married Dr. Stephen Charles Gooding in 1851, and both of them died on Feb 24, 1860. Mariam died of "inflammation of the bowels" and Stephen of "congestion of the lungs," according to cemetery records. They left behind three small boys: 8-year old Daniel E. Gooding, 6-year old Stephen Whitney Gooding, and 2-year old Charles Hilton Gooding.

Daniel and Sally Whitney took their grandsons in and raised them until their own deaths – Daniel of typhoid fever in February 1864, and Sally in the late 1860's.

**If Walls Could Talk**  
**By: Kathy Sterbenc,**  
**Belvidere Daily Re-**  
**publican (Originally**  
**appeared in July 27,**  
**1990 issue of BDR)**

**Address:**  
**210-212**  
**E. Menomonie St.**  
**Belvidere, IL 61008**  
**Style: Greek Revival**  
**Year Built: 1856**

## Whitney Continued...

### GREEK REVIVAL

Daniel and Sally built the two-story, Greek Revival house in 1856. The eave overhangs slightly with a wide band of trim underneath it.

Wood shingles originally covered the low-pitch roof. The front door is topped with a large stone lintel, and pilasters lead from the lintel down to the ground. Sidelights, or small windows, flank the front door.

Side and rear additions have since been built on Whitney's house. The house has been converted into two apartments.

## 2024/25 Historic Preservation Awards

We are looking for nominations for our awards program this fall! Properties do not need to be landmarked but projects must be completed or will be completed by the event. The awards program recognizes those property owners that have renovated and/or restored an aspect of their historic property, an organization that has supported historic preservation, an individual that has supported Belvidere' History and a property that has not necessarily undergone a renovation but has always maintained their building and yard. If you know a property worthy of recognition, please contact Gina DelRose at 815-547-7177 or [gdelrose@belvidereil.gov](mailto:gdelrose@belvidereil.gov)

### Congratulations to the 2024 Historic Preservation Award winners!

Achievement Awards: Jose and Jennie Marquez, 605 E. Hurlbut Avenue, Guillermo Ramirez, 710 N. State Street, Juan and Maria Guerrero, 711 S. State Street, Jeff and Debbie Carlson, 107 W. 1st Street, Christopher Butt and Julie Ohlsen, 107 W. 1st Street.

Continued Excellence Award— Georgann Walker, 705 N. State Street

Organization Award: Boone County Museum of History

Priem Award— Carol Rowe.



## 2025 Historic Property Maintenance Program



### Due to successful fundraising, we are excited to announce the return of the Historic Property Maintenance Program in 2025!

The Historic Property Maintenance Program is funded by various fundraisers hosted by the Commission and book sales. Any property that is locally or nationally landmarked or located within a registered historic district is eligible to apply for the annual grant funds to assist in exterior renovations.

Since 2013, The Belvidere Historic Preservation Commission has awarded \$20,903 in grants.

## Resource Corner!

Looking for resources to help with a renovation? Maybe find a local historic landmark or museum to visit on a road trip? Or just enjoy scrolling through pictures? [PreservationDirectory.com](http://PreservationDirectory.com) is the online resource for historic preservation, building restoration and cultural resource management in the United States & Canada.

## Belvidere Historic Preservation Commission

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The Belvidere Historic Preservation Commission (the Commission) has been a part of the community for decades. The Commission is comprised of seven members who live in Boone County and work for or own property within the City of Belvidere as well as a staff liaison. The Commission's goal is to promote the protection, enhancement, perpetuation and use of improvements of special character or historical interest or value for the health, prosperity, safety and welfare of the people of the City. Since its inception, the Commission has landmarked 29 local properties, five national registry properties, the 2004 West Hurlbut Local Historic District, the 2012 North State Street National Historic District and the 2012 South State Street National Historic District.

**For More Information Visit:**

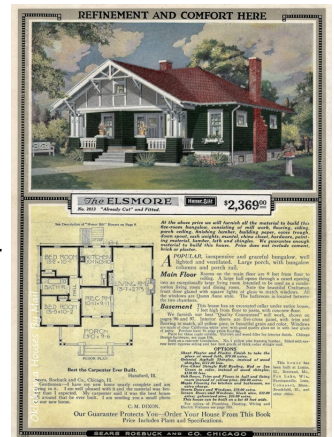
<https://www.belvidereil.gov/historic-preservation-committee/>

**Or find us on Facebook: Belvidere Historic Preservation Commission**

## Sears Modern Homes

Houses were sold primarily through mail order catalog by Sears, Roebuck and Co. From 1908 to 1942, Sears sold more than 70,000 of these houses. The kits included most of the materials needed to build a house. Sears Modern Homes offered more than 370 designs in a wide range of architectural styles and sizes over the line's 34-year history. While the vast majority of models were for single-family house designs, there were some duplexes and larger multiple-family buildings available. In order to provide materials for these homes, Sears operated a lumber mill in Cairo, Illinois. The kits were then shipped primarily by railroad boxcars. The largest concentration of Sears Modern Homes exists along railroad tracks for this reason. Sales peaked in 1929. Financing through Sears helped many homeowners purchase homes, a number of which defaulted during the Great Depression. The company was forced to liquidate \$11 million in defaulted debt. The mortgage program was a public relations disaster, as many of the families Sears foreclosed upon refused to do further business with the company.

Identifying Sears Homes has become a pastime among history enthusiasts. However, many houses described as Sears Homes are not true Sears Homes, being either the product of another kit home manufacturer or not a kit home at all. National and regional competitors in the catalog and kit house market included Aladdin, Bennett, Gordon-Van Tine, Harris Brothers, Lewis, Pacific Ready Cut Homes, Sterling and Montgomery Ward (Wardway) Homes. \*Wikipedia



## ONGOING ACTIVITIES

### Historic US Route 20 Association

The Historic US Route 20 Association continues to support communities like Belvidere on their website and Facebook page. <https://www.facebook.com/HistoricRoute20>

### Book Sales

Thank you to the Boone County Journal for providing the Commission two editions of these great postcard books for sale! Books can be purchased at Belvidere City Hall.



Commissioner Dobberfuhl's A Walk Through Time, South State Street Edition has been very well received. Copies of her book can be found at Belvidere City Hall, The Boone County Museum of History and CTEC Shack.

### Financial Incentives

Are you a National Registry landmark or within a National Registry District? Do you have questions about State and Federal Tax incentives to help off-set the costs of renovations? Visit: <https://dnrhistoric.illinois.gov/preserve/funding.html>

### New Belvidere Historic Preservation Commission Members!

We are excited to welcome back David Kummerow and Lisa Kummerow and new members Natali Monaghan, Kim Coniglio to the Commission!

