

Coin Harvey House

P.O. Box 522

Huntington, WV 25710

Mission Statement: The Coin Harvey House must be saved in order to protect, preserve, and maintain the distinctive architecture, culture, and history relating to the early days of Huntington, WV. The next generation will only inherit what we choose to save.

The Following questions are frequently asked about the Coin Harvey House.

1. Why is the Coin Harvey House important?

The Coin Harvey House was listed on The National Register of Historic Places in 1969 for the following reasons:

- a.) **Designer of the home-** In 1874, William Hope “Coin” Harvey, a 23 year-old farm boy, designed and built this beautiful Creole style home, which was based on two trips he made to New Orleans, while building the house.
- b.) **Economic Theories-** Coin Harvey was a gifted economist whose theories on free coinage of silver became a panacea for The United States in difficult times.
- c.) **Political Significance-** Harvey ran for President of The United States in 1932 against FD Roosevelt.
- d.) **Architectural Significance-** The house is of classic style and is considered “architecturally perfect”, which has frequently been described as being one of Huntington’s oldest, loveliest, and most charming buildings. After travelling the United States and Europe, Marshall University’s president, Dr. Lawrence J. Colby, around the turn of the century, spoke at the Kiwanis Club, and described the house as “the most beautiful house he had ever seen in Europe and America, because of its symmetry, proportions, and curved chastity of the front.” He said, “The whole design approaches perfection in its type of classical architecture.”
- e.) **Arts-** It has beautiful, stained Tiffany style windows, a cast iron mantel in the parlor, painted to resemble marble, and decorative, unique woodwork.

2. Where is The Coin Harvey House located?

This lovely old home was built in 1874, just two years after Collis P. Huntington built a terminal for the C & O Railroad and later formed a city, which was named in his honor. The location of The Coin Harvey House, on 3rd Avenue was a choice residential area. In

fact, 3rd Avenue was often referred to as “Society Row”. Now, it is an important location between Marshall University and Downtown Huntington.

3. Who owns The Coin Harvey House?

In 1925, Dr. Earl E. Gerlach acquired and began to practice medicine in the Coin Harvey house. His daughter, Lenore Kaiser, inherited the house in 1945. In 1996, Lenore directed, in her will, that the house be placed in a foundation. Upon her death in 1999, the home was deeded to the “E.J. and Lenore Kaiser and David E. Gerlach Foundation”. Lenore’s attorney, James W. St. Clair, was designated as trustee of the foundation, and he still remains in this position today, with the responsibility of preserving the house.

4. How can restoration of the Coin Harvey House benefit the community?

- a.) Historic preservation is a proven social and economic benefit to an urban area like Huntington.
- b.) Restoring historic buildings causes less carbon emissions than the construction of new structures.
- c.) Historic preservation drives the transformation of blighted neighborhoods into thriving communities of architectural beauty, promoting an incredible ripple effect.
- d.) Historic preservation generates obvious and compelling appeal to business investment and downtown vitality. Some of these advantages include new residents, walkable neighborhoods, pedestrian activity, and tourists seeking unique and authentic environments.
- e.) Further development of this project will create pride in our citizens, while providing opportunities to showcase our city for both residents and outsiders. It will furnish our school children with a unique opportunity to learn local history. Collaboration with The Huntington Convention and Visitor’s Bureau will provide tours of The Coin Harvey House and other nearby buildings, which are also listed on The National Registry of Historic Places.

5. How much land is involved with The Coin Harvey House?

The original lot was 30’ by 160’; however, an additional 10’ by 160’ on the east side, was donated to the foundation. It is possible to acquire the remaining, 80’ by 160’, vacant lots on the east side. The property on the west side is 60’ by 160’. The owner operates an auto body shop there and has expressed an interest in selling the land. His building is 5 feet from the house; therefore, the foundation would like to acquire and use that land for parking, yard beautification, etc. If all this property could be obtained, The Coin Harvey House would be in a park-like setting, which would contribute to many positive social and economic opportunities.

6. What restoration has been completed?

- a.) Numerous termite-infested rear additions have been removed, because they were in poor and unsafe condition.
- b.) The remaining termite and flood damage was repaired to the front portion of the original building.
- c.) The exterior has been scraped, repaired with stucco, and painted.
- d.) The beautiful, Tiffany stained glass windows have been repaired and reinstalled.
- e.) Following extensive research, the yard has been excavated approximately 3 feet to the original elevation.
- f.) New electrical, plumbing, and heating systems have been installed.
- g.) The interior walls have been repaired, finished, and painted in the original colors.
- h.) Architects and engineers are completing the final restoration and addition plans, including yard drainage and landscaping.
- i.) The 3 fireplaces and the chimney have been restored. The chimney was lined with metal and dampers. Coal baskets were installed, which are fired by natural gas.
- j.) Heavy insulation was installed in the attic and all the walls.
- k.) Ventilation, insulation, and ground cover was added under the ground floor.
- l.) Engineers designed the beams and they were installed, in order to support and level the parlor, hall, and bedroom floors.
- m.) The 4 defective columns on the front porch were replaced with identical designs of the original.
- n.) A waterproof front porch floor was installed at the proper elevation to drain away from the front wall of the house. While doing this, the dangerous six inch stepdown, that divided the porch, was eliminated.
- o.) The woodwork from the parlor, front hall, and bedroom was removed and taken to a wood stripping facility, then reinstalled. The beautiful, unique trim has been finished with walnut stain, followed by 2 coats of hand-rubbed lacquer.
- p.) The exterior double-curved front stairway was rebuilt to the detailed description of the original design. This was documented by oral history and many articles in The Herald Dispatch newspaper. These articles were written by James R. Hayworth, who lived across the street from The Coin Harvey House, and he was the historical writer for the local newspaper.
- q.) A concrete foundation was installed under the entire house.
- r.) The 4 ft. high concrete wall, surrounding the entire yard, was removed. It was built to protect the property from flooding from the Ohio River. However, the wall was no longer needed, because now, there is a city floodwall.
- s.) Limestone block walls were built to support the adjacent property, both East and West.
- t.) Beautiful post lights were installed in the garden
- u.) Landscaping planned by Kim Jenkins, landscape architect, is almost complete. This includes herringbone brick sidewalks, brick walls for support of gardens and planting of boxwoods and other bushes. 650 tulip bulbs were planted in the front yard, which will bloom Spring 2019.

**** This is just a brief outline of the situation and is not a reflection of the magnitude of the work that has been accomplished by volunteers, paid contractors, and other employees, nor the efforts needed to complete this worthwhile project. ****

7. How will the restored house be used?

The Coin Harvey House should be developed in a way to make it self-supporting. With its valuable location, it can provide many possibilities for development. Several suggestions have been made concerning the use, including:

- a.) Historic House restoration with furnishings
- b.) A restaurant with a New Orleans theme
- c.) A social center
- d.) A wedding and party venue
- e.) An office
- f.) A public downtown park
- g.) Bed & Breakfast/ Inn
- h.) House tours for visitors, locals, and school children
- i.) Annual memberships will be sold, and those who join will be offered special privileges.

A combination of the above is possible.

8. What financing has been received toward this project?

The foundation is an IRS 501 (c)-(3), a tax deductible charity.

The project has received 50/50 matching grants twice from the WV Department of Culture & History. The first grant was several years ago and it was used to install a new roof and gutters and to repair the exposed chimney. The second grant, in 2014, was provided to stabilize and rebuild some of the most damaged walls and windows and to repair and paint the exterior. In 1893, the front steps had been modernized into a Victorian style by Mr. Frank Enslow. The WV State Architect, Michael Mills, inspected and approved all of the work provided by the grant, which we later found to be inferior quality, materials, and workmanship. After thorough research, a complicated new stairway was designed and built to the historical documentation, which was a double-curved masonry stairway.

Huntington's mayor, Steve Williams, was able to obtain the funds necessary for the demolition of a portion of the additions to the back of the house, including everything to the alley.

The Junior League of Huntington gave \$1,500 for the professional landscape architect, Kim Jenkins of Ashland, Ky, to design the front yard.

We have received at least 3 substantial private donations, as well as smaller contributions from our 2016 fund drive.

The largest amount of the funding has come from the savings of The Cabell-Wayne Historical Society. That source is almost depleted!

9. What is the budget for restoration of The Coin Harvey House?

The budget depends on the amount of land acquired and the use of the facility. A close estimate of \$500,000 had been established to restore the original section of the house. However, due to unforeseen problems, we have already exceeded our budget. Another estimate of \$500,000 will be needed to complete the new rear addition.

10. What still needs to be accomplished in order to restore the existing portion of The Coin Harvey House?

- a.) Light fixtures, door hardware, ceiling medallions, and crown molding need to be purchased and installed inside the house, and light posts need to be added to the front yard.
- b.) A combination of rift cut and quarter-sawn oak hardwood floors will be installed (3, 5, and 7 inches wide). They will be sanded, stained, and finished on site.
- c.) Reconstruct the iron balcony on the east side of the house.
- d.) Install 3 custom made interior doors to match the original, which is 93 inches high by 37 inches wide.
- e.) Repair 2 sets of French doors which lead to the balcony.
- f.) Make a set of French doors, each 24 inches wide by 93 inches high with glass inserts, for the front entry.
- g.) Add shutters to the east side of the house.
- h.) There is a plan to furnish the kitchen with a ceramic tile floor, cabinetry, and a gas range, which will be exhausted through the roof. The kitchen has been approved by The Huntington Sanitary Board for use as a commercial kitchen. There is a hand-washing sink, and a mop sink will be located in a new utility room.
- i.) The necessary addition, will contain an elevator, a stairway, handicapped public and private restrooms, a furnace room, a large enclosed patio, and a utility/storage room.

- j.) A large sitting/meeting room will be installed above the brick, patio room. It will contain a fabulous entry door with stained glass and an outstanding fireplace. Both are quite beautiful and came from Huntington's first architect's home. These items have been saved since they were given to The Cabell-Wayne Historical Society in the 1970s, when Huntington Urban Renewal was tearing down much of the city center.
- k.) A bathroom will be built off the existing bedroom, located on the upper floor.

11. Why do we need financial support?

There is limited financing that can be obtained from our community, as we must compete with many community organizations, such as The Huntington Museum of Art, The Huntington Symphony Orchestra, two large hospitals, Marshall University, multiple churches, The Boys Club, and many other civic organizations, plus The City of Huntington. Since the wealthy "Coal Barons" have died, gone out of business, or moved away, companies such as Ashland Coal and Ashland Oil have relocated or merged. These corporations formerly had given large charitable donations to our city projects.

Last year, we prepared an attractive brochure and mailed 1,600. The response was limited in success, for reasons stated above. During the last three years, we have raised and spent \$563,652.69 for construction, materials, and labor, including architects and engineers. Currently, our bank account is very low and dwindling fast. We need \$500,000 to build and furnish an addition. The addition is absolutely necessary to make the project financially viable.

It has been estimated that the East lots would cost \$200,000 and the West lots would cost \$400,000. This could possibly be negotiated. If we were to acquire this land, The Coin Harvey Park would be 180" by 160". This would make an excellent resting place for Marshall Students, pedestrians, and those living in the high rise across the street, etc. The community has already evidenced pride in the building, since we've added the double curved stairway with iron railings, new paint, new columns, and etc. Recently, a Riverboat tour group was completing a sightseeing trip around Huntington. As they came down 3rd Avenue, they saw The Coin Harvey House and asked the bus driver to immediately "Stop! Stop! Stop! This is the best thing we've seen in Huntington!" When the landscaping and furnishings are completed, The Coin Harvey House will become an important, beautiful entrance to Downtown Huntington.

Please Consider the Coin Harvey House with your Generous Financial Donation.

James W. St. Clair, **Trustee**

E.J. and Lenore Kaiser and David E. Gerlach Foundation

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Contacts:

Jim St. Clair: 304-638-0534

Doris "Mickey" St. Clair: 304-972-3883