

# GAZETTE

The St. Joseph Historical Society

## Contact:

219 East Poulin Street  
St. Joseph, Missouri 64501  
816-232-5861

## Memberships:

Individual	\$20
Family	\$35
Contributor	\$50
Patron	\$100
Benefactor	\$500
Life	\$750

## Executive Director:

Daniel Johnson

## Board Members:

### President:

Cole Woodbury

### Vice President:

Denise Bartles-Tapia

### Secretary:

Julia Chambers

### Treasurer:

Tracy Anderson

### Historian:

Emily Baumann

Donna Klein

Kathy Hill-Bahner

John Tapia

Bill Leppart

Gary Baumann

### Past President:

Patrick Squires



4th Street  
South from  
Faraon

## The Prawitz Collection

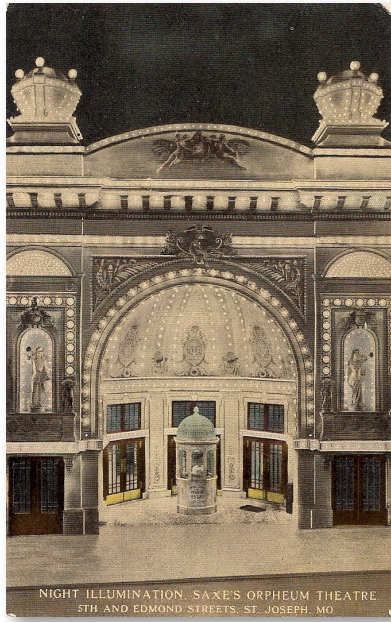
In July of 2018, the Row received a phone call from a man who wanted to know if the museum would be interested in around 300 negatives taken by St. Joseph photographer

Edward J. Prawitz. After hearing an excited yes in reply, the caller then asked if we would be willing to pay \$10,000 for the images? After hearing a disappointed no, we were then asked if we could pay \$1,000? Again, the answer was no. The next question from the caller was, would someone be willing to come and get them for free? That, we could do!

Board member Cole Woodbury drove to Chicago to meet with the donor, David R. Phillips. Mr. Phillips had been a professional photographer for more than 70 years



Krug Park



## Mere Coincidence?

The postcard above shows the entrance to the Orpheum Theatre that was at the corner of 5th & Edmond Streets in about 1910. Notice the concave arched entrance with a free-standing ticket booth at its center. This is framed by matching recessed sculpture niches featuring statuary above the entrance level. Now, compare this to the image below.



This is mural painted on the walls of the Cinemark Palace At The Plaza movie theater in Kansas City, Missouri. I wonder where they got their inspiration?

and was a voracious collector of vintage images and negatives. He amassed hundreds of thousands of images from Chicago and the western parts of the United States.

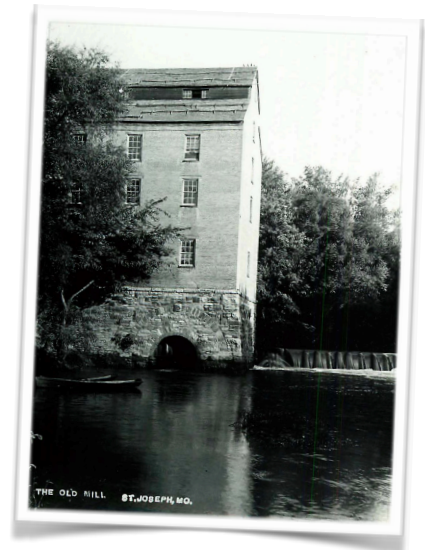


Parts of his collection have been the subject of exhibits, books and even film. Phillips worked for a time near St. Joseph and acquired the Prawitz images from the widowed Mrs. Prawitz.

The images are all of the St. Joseph area, but many are rural in nature showing more scenery than identifiable views. The one thing that all of them have in common is their quality. Mr. Prawitz was definitely a very talented photographer.

Some of the images in this collection are quite obviously the originals used to create postcards at the time that are well-known to collectors today like the one of the Corby Mill included here.

These images, and others that the St. Joseph Historical Society already has in its collection, will



be the beginning of a photographic archive that the Board is currently working on to create. This project will give a new and exciting purpose for the museum that will add to the museum's purpose and help secure its relevance into the future. There will be more information on this project in future issues. 📷



## A Word From Your Executive Director

The Robidoux Row Museum officially opened its doors for its 28<sup>th</sup> season on March 1<sup>st</sup>. As we look forward to the future and this upcoming season we should also look to the past.

It is believed that the building on 3<sup>rd</sup> and Poulin was built in the 1840s (with additions added in the 1850s) by Joseph Robidoux for those settling in the St. Joseph area. It also temporarily housed those who were moving on



westward toward California, Santa Fe and Oregon. Joseph and his sister Pelagie also lived in the building for eight years until Joseph's death in 1868.

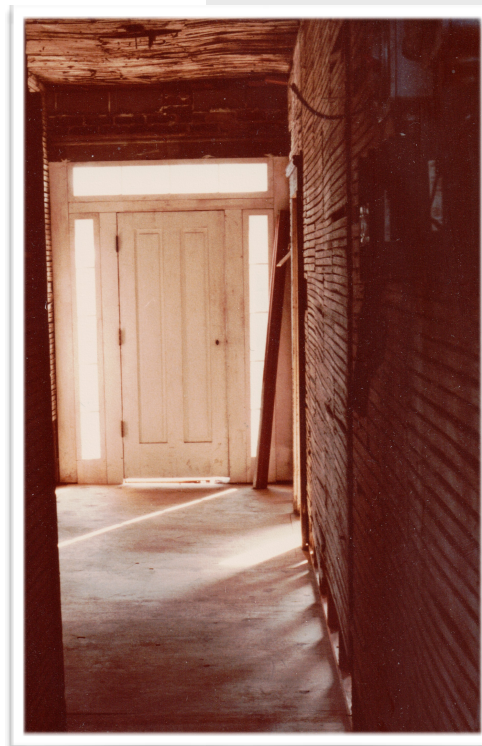
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Views of The Row in those early days.



After Joseph's death, the building was used as an apartment complex for over 100 years. A lack of care and maintenance ultimately led to the building being condemned. The Saint Joseph Historical Society stepped up in 1971 to save, and ultimately restore, the building. The Historical Society rebuilt and saved as much of the original structure as possible.

On May 1<sup>st</sup> 1981, the Robidoux Row Museum was first opened to the public. Since then, the Museum has shown the people of St. Joseph and the region a part of what makes St. Joseph so special. We have come so far and the future looks even brighter. ☸

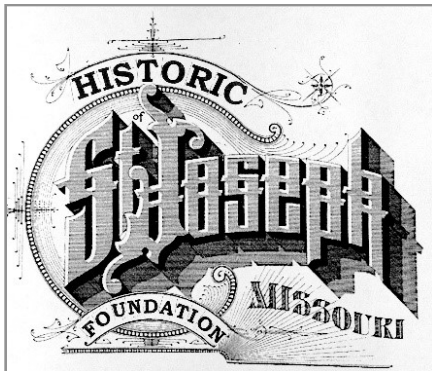


## Any Ideas?

Have you any ideas for an article or feature you would like to see in a future newsletter? Perhaps you would even like to contribute one yourself. Please, feel free to contact Daniel with your thoughts. A quality newsletter can be a great way to gain membership for the organization.

816-232-5861

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**Join Us. It's Free!**

### The Historic St. Joseph Foundation

A partnership of stakeholders in St. Joseph committed to protecting and improving the historic assets of our community.

[historicstjosephfoundation@gmail.com](mailto:historicstjosephfoundation@gmail.com)

520 Francis St, Suite 300 - 64501



## Missouri Preservation Conference

This is going to be a big year in St. Joseph for historic preservation. Missouri Preservation is a statewide non-profit organization dedicated to promoting, supporting, and coordinating historic preservation activities. They will be hosting their statewide Missouri Preservation Conference here in June from the 19th through the 21st. Preservationists, architects, historians, educators, and more will be converging on our city to attend educational sessions, workshops, networking sessions, trade show exhibits, and taking tours of our amazing inventory of historically significant architecture.

It will be a grand opportunity to showcase the St. Joseph Historical Society and the Robidoux Row Museum to a concentrated group of people who share an interest in history. Our goal should be to instill upon these guests just how special St. Joseph is as a community, and also how important Joseph Robidoux was in the settling of northwest Missouri, and ultimately, the expansion of the West. We want the attendees to return to their respective communities eager to spread the word of their time spent in St. Joseph so that others will feel the need to come and visit.

The SJHS Board will explore having a presence at the conference, as well as, what promotional items or even special event we might be able to have to greet these folks. The length of time that these people will be in town is brief and their attention will be drawn in many different directions. Let us make sure that we can offer something that will speak to the uniqueness that is Robidoux Row.