

OSMUND OVERBY 1931-2014 TRIBUTES AND REMINISCENCES

Osmund Overby was a founding member of this chapter as well as other organizations devoted to the appreciation and preservation of our built heritage. Although he was not a native of Missouri, he had a profound influence on the state both through his own efforts and through the efforts of several generations of students and colleagues he inspired. In this issue we have asked some of them to write about their personal experiences with Ozzie, as he was known to all. We begin with the official obituary written for the national Society of Architectural Historians.

Paul Overby and Damie Stillman: *Paul Overby is the son of Dr. Overby. Damie Stillman is professor emeritus at the University of Delaware, perhaps best known for his books on 18th-century English art and architecture. He succeeded Ozzie as editor-in-chief of the Buildings of the United States series.*

At the University of Missouri-Columbia, he was a key contributor to long-range campus planning, a driver of the renovation of Pickard Hall, and director of the Museum of Art and Archaeology. He led teams of architectural students from around the nation during several summer projects for the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) in St. Thomas, Boston, Newport, Hanover, and Ste. Genevieve. In 1987, Ozzie was named Distinguished Alumnus of St. Olaf College. During sabbatical years, he conducted research and taught at the University of California, Berkeley; the University of Tennessee, Knoxville; Washington University in St. Louis; and the Philipps University in Marburg, Germany, which was one leg of an extraordinary, year-long road trip through fourteen European countries the family made in a 1971 Volkswagen camper van.

Ozzie founded and led several historic preservation organizations at community and state levels in Missouri. He was also a nationally-recognized champion of architectural preservation. In Ozzie's honor, the Missouri Alliance for Historic Preservation, an organization that advocates for preservation of architectural and historic landmarks in Missouri, annually bestows the Overby Award, given for a published work contributing to the documentation and interpretation of Missouri's architectural history.

Ozzie was a long-time dedicated member of the society of Architectural Historians, becoming a Life Member in 1958, and he played a major role in the Society for thirty years. He served in many leadership roles: Editor of JSAH, 1968-1973; 2nd Vice President, 1982-1984; 1st Vice-President, 1984-1986; President,

1986-1988; and Editor-in-Chief of the Buildings of the United States series, 1990-1996. In 1998 he was named a Fellow of SAH to commemorate his decades of service to the Society and the profession. As Editor of the Journal, he guided this major publication, shepherding authors and prospective authors to produce an impressive series of articles on the built environment throughout the world. As President of the Society, he led the organization ably, especially, among other activities, helping the fledgling project for Buildings of the United States gather strength and momentum and presiding over the first of its many grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities. Subsequently, as the second Editor-in-Chief of that project, he was responsible for the publication of the first four volumes of the series and for selecting and encouraging the authors for many of the other volumes that have appeared in the last two decades.



Osmund Overby, 1931-2014

As a scholar of American architecture, he wrote a number of articles and books, including *William Adair Bernoudy, Architect: Bringing the Legacy of Frank Lloyd Wright to St. Louis* (1999) and his own co-authored volume in the BUS series, *Buildings of Missouri*, which will be published posthumously. Over the course of his career, Ozzie advised and mentored numerous doctoral students who have gone on to teach around the world.

Ozzie served on the board of the Missouri Parks Association, advised former Governor Christopher Bond on the restoration of the Governor's Mansion in Jefferson City, and served on advisory committees for the HABS and various other preservation organizations. He lent his time to civic, academic, and religious organizations, including St. Andrew's Lutheran Church in Columbia, where he sang in the choir for many years. While working and in retirement, he joined his wife Barbara on Archaeological excavations in Portugal, and together they walked the Camino de Santiago in France and Spain and a similar pilgrimage route, St. Olaf's Way, in Norway from Oslo to Trondheim.

Ozzie is survived by his wife of sixty years, Barbara, an accomplished musician, textile artist, cook, and business owner, who often accompanied him to SAH meetings. He is also survived by his son Paul; his daughters Katherine Howland and Charlotte; and four grandchildren, Clara, Alexander, Joseph, and Sarah.

Admired for his kindness, intellect, humor, generosity, and humility, Ozzie greatly inspired these same qualities in his friends, colleagues, and family. He will be sorely missed.

H. Meade Summers, Jr. is a former member of the St. Louis County Historic Buildings Commission and a longtime supporter of Landmarks Association.

Ozzie Overby was an outstanding professor of preservation. One of the greatest thinkers I ever knew.

Karen Bode Baxter is a preservation specialist in private practice and a former president of Missouri Preservation and of the St. Louis Chapter of the Society of Architectural Historians.

Following the memorial service in Columbia, we stopped at the Saarinen chapel at Stephens College, and when we found it locked Bill Hart and Mimi Stiritz went right to the college president's office and asked if it could be unlocked so we could look at it. They had security come right over and unlock it for us! We figured Ozzie would appreciate our attitude of visiting architectural masterpieces whenever we got the opportunity, especially after hearing his children tell stories of the times they did that with him. Apparently one of his favorite descriptive words, was appropriately – Marvelous.

John D. Schaperkotter is a St. Louis attorney and trustee of the Gertrude and William A. Bernoudy Foundation, which has supported many architecture-related projects, including the Frank Lloyd Wright House in Ebsworth Park.

The Bernoudy Trust was fortunate to engage Osmund Overby as author of *William Adair Bernoudy Architect: Bringing the Legacy of Frank Lloyd Wright to St. Louis*. We sought a thorough and realistic assessment of the career of one of Missouri's most prominent mid-century architects. Ozzie brought gentle good humor and perseverance to every facet of the project, and his extensive knowledge of architectural history proved invaluable. With the photography of Sam Fentress and publication support from the University of Missouri Press, the Trust was able to produce a lasting tribute to Bill Bernoudy's work and an important study of an architect's career, along with the dramatic life experiences Gertrude Bernoudy brought to their marriage. Ozzie devoted a major portion of his later productive years to our book and we are both pleased with and grateful for his dedication to the project. The book quotes Bill Bernoudy reminding his peers that the responsibility of an architect ultimately is to create beauty for his client and those around him, something Bill regularly achieved. The same can certainly be said about our late friend Osmund Overby.

Howard Wright Marshall is emeritus professor in the Department of Art & Archaeology at the University of Missouri-Columbia. His books include the seminal *Folk Architecture in Little Dixie* (1981), *Vernacular Architecture in Rural and Small-Town Missouri* (1994), and *Barns of Missouri: Storehouses of History* (2003). His most recent work is *Play Me Something Quick and Devilish: Old-Time Fiddlers in Missouri* (2013).

I met Professor Osmund Overby in the usual way -- a nervous student knocking on the office door of a professor, a supplicant seeking approval of a term paper topic from the remote, suit-and-tie dignified lecturer saying, "next slide please" every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, on the high podium of Ellis Library auditorium.

It was the autumn of 1968. I had returned to the MU campus in Columbia after three years in the Marine Corps followed by two quarters at Central Missouri State University in Warrensburg. As an NCO at headquarters at Camp Pendleton, I had taken advantage of an "early out" (for enlistees who could get admitted to a college with a start date within 30 days of the end date of their hitch), so Warrensburg, a decent college on the quarter system, fit the bill. Warrensburg served me fairly well in getting back to civilian life, and I transferred to MU in fall 1967.

Almost by accident I had stumbled into Ozzie's Art History and Archaeology (AHA) 142, American Art and Architecture. I benefitted tremendously from sampling courses with other superb teachers in other departments, such as Rob Spier and Ray Wood in Anthropology, Andrew Minor in Music History, Tom Cooke in English lit (I finally graduated with a degree in

English). At that time, the History Department was uninterested in such things as old Missouri farm buildings and old Missouri farmers' memories (luckily that changed). That delightful AHA 142 course with Overby in the fall of 1968, together with a few courses in other departments changed my life. Unlike the prevailing elitism in the study of art and architecture as well as American culture in the Sixties at many colleges, Ozzie Overby exuded warmth and curiosity about all sorts of cultural expression and material culture, and to me his interest in vernacular architecture and folk art was thrilling. I would later find that find that Ozzie's approach was due to an inherited respect for local history and folk art and the good fortune of fine education first at St. Olaf and then graduate education at the University of Washington and Yale.

By chance, I began working part-time for Mary Patricia Holmes, helping conduct archaeological surveys and National Register nominations at the old Missouri State Park Board's Historic Preservation office on 8th Street in Columbia, where Dr. Overby and the Phil Cotton were among the spiritual leaders. The small busy crew of bright enthusiasts loved the field research, did good work, and their program was the precursor to other state-wide preservation programs and citizen-powered groups such as the Missouri Heritage Trust (now Missouri Preservation). I soon was finding time on my own to record old farm houses and barns in the Columbia area, including several in my home county north of Columbia (Randolph County).

I came across a book that would further change my life and future, the just-published *Pattern in the Material Folk Culture of the Eastern United States*, by Henry Glassie. I didn't quite know what to make of this book, but it mesmerized me; someone smart was out there in the boondocks measuring "folk" buildings, barns, log cabins, taking seriously the nearby grassroots traditions ignored by most academics.

Such as white-oak basketmaking. To my surprise, at that meeting that day in his office in the upper chambers of Jesse Hall, Professor Overby cordially approved my cock-eyed idea for a research paper – to photograph and interview an elderly maker of white-oak baskets in rural Howard County, northwest of Columbia. The paper clicked, and I passed the course, and along the way I tried to absorb not only the lecture material but the modus vivendi and the way of being a scholar and teacher so beautifully before me at every class meeting. That term paper for Ozzie would later evolve into a seminar paper at Indiana University, then into a publication in a small academic journal, and finally into a chapter in a text for undergraduate folklore courses, Jan Brunvand's *The Study of American Folklore*.

With little hesitation, thanks indirectly to Overby, my old plan of going on to law school was laid aside. I began to think about being a professor in art history and architecture. Ozzie saw this, we talked about it, and to my surprise he discouraged me from applying to his department at MU for graduate training. What Ozzie said next lit the torch: Sure, you could go to grad school here at MU, and I'd be pleased to advise you. But, why not talk to Henry Glassie, who wrote this book that interests

you so much? Where does he teach? Why not go there for graduate school and study with this Glassie fellow?

So I did just that. I went to Indiana University in Bloomington in the fall of 1970 and studied with Glassie, who became my mentor there and for the next decade. I decided to formulate my dissertation as an extension, or version, of his *Pattern* book, but here in Missouri's "Little Dixie" folk region.

The years at IU, and during successive years in my career, whenever I had the chance to do so, I stopped off in Columbia to visit Ozzie. Since my family was in central Missouri, and my then-wife's family was in eastern Kansas, I had a number of chances to stop by. Ozzie always received me warmly and fortified my notions about studying Missouri's old vernacular buildings. I began working at the Library of Congress in 1977, as the material culture and vernacular architecture specialist at the American Folklife Center there. In 1981, I left Capitol Hill and took a teaching position at Kansas State University.

At the same time, Ozzie, along with his colleagues in other departments at MU, Walter Schroeder (Geography), Susan Flader (History), Clyde Wilson (Anthropology), Allen Everson (Forestry), got approval to establish the Missouri Cultural Heritage Center, an interdisciplinary program in the Graduate School. In 1982, I came back to Columbia again and finally, to direct this new research center. The Center produced interesting and various projects, and brought major grants to MU -- until rubbed out by a campus budget crisis in 1993. (Lesson? "Beware the unfunded mandate.")

As director of the Center, with Ozzie's advice, I worked hard to continue academic research and publishing, give conference papers, and I taught a course each semester for Art History and Archaeology. In due course, and with publication of my dissertation (*Folk Architecture in Little Dixie*, Univ. of Missouri Press) and a book that began with my field research for the Library of Congress in Nevada and then Italy (*Paradise Valley, Nevada: The People and Buildings of an American Place*, Univ. of Arizona Press), I was made full professor. When the Center closed, I moved from the Conley House into Pickard Hall, for a while sharing Ozzie's office until a space of my own could be carved out. I developed and taught large undergraduate courses and graduate seminars in folk arts, material culture, vernacular architecture, field research methods, and, with Ozzie and Susan Flader, Historic Preservation. Ozzie, Susan, and I, with several other professors, promoted preservation across the campus. A number of our students went on to develop important careers in the field – Toni Prawl, Becky Snider, Deb Sheals, and Carol Grove, to mention just several of our students who carry the work forward.

I was lucky to make many trips to conferences with Ozzie, sometimes in his trusty VW microbus, and excursions to examine historic sites and buildings. I was, even as an adult and colleague, always marveling at his unassuming command of important knowledge and keen insights into the various puzzles we sorted out. We served on the campus Historic Preservation Committee together, and I admired Ozzie's adroit handling of difficult problems and difficult personalities in

conserving, while admitting necessary alterations to MU's historic landscape and buildings. I worked with Ozzie to help save and conserve the Conley House on campus, and the Hickman House in Howard County, developing an archaeological project there with Prof. Marcus Rautman and others to help convince campus leaders of its importance. My publications to document the Pelster House barn in Franklin County owed much to Ozzie's insights and knowledge.

When Ozzie began to pull together his plans and team to research and write the Missouri volume of "The Buildings of the United States" series, I signed on to cover a batch of counties in western Missouri; in due course, this great last work of Ozzie's will be completed and published. Ozzie, who had served as Department chair as well as director of the Museum of Art and Archaeology, was my mentor once more. It was a constant thrill to be a faculty colleague and to witness his continued popularity with students at all levels and interests. When Ozzie announced his retirement for 1998, one valuable thing I accomplished while AHA chairman was to find, and bring to MU, a brilliant and appropriate young scholar to replace (curious word, replace) Ozzie – Keith Eggener. After a five-year stint as department chair, I retired in 2000.

I can't sign off without mentioning the marvelous Barbara Overby, as much a teammate and precious partner that ever a man could have. Visiting Ozzie and Barbara in their Columbia home was a joy, a timeout from the frantic world for a moment of hospitality, good coffee, perhaps a bit of music, perhaps a walk downstairs to see Barbara's current weaving project, and conversation. For some years, I rather began to wish I had been born Norwegian in southern Minnesota rather than Scotch-Irish in Missouri. My sons Sandy and John felt the same way, and John went to St. Olaf College in part because of his admiration and respect for Ozzie (whose parents were esteemed faculty at St. Olaf, and where Ozzie took his bachelor's degree).

All this is to say that, throughout my academic career, and indeed my personal life, Ozzie Overby was an inspiring colleague, a patient friend, and a compass. Whenever a student of mine would ask me where best to apply to graduate school, I would always do as Ozzie did way back in the Sixties: ask them questions, such as, "What is the best book you have ever read that speaks to your favorite topic or inspires you?" "So, where does the author of that book teach?" "Okay. Go there. Learn. Carry it on." To this day, my model for what a teacher and mentor should be remains the irreplaceable Osmund Overby.

Toni Prawl is Senior Historic Preservation Specialist at the Missouri Department of Transportation. She received her Ph.D. in 1994 with her dissertation on E. J. Eckel.

I am but one of the numerous individuals indebted to Ozzie, not only for the guiding academic light he was to us, but also for the remarkable personal qualities he possessed and so generously shared. "A gentleman and a scholar" in all aspects of the expression, Ozzie was my professor and advisor, and one of the kindest and most knowledgeable persons I've ever known. He was an intellectual, but above that he was a man of

integrity and high moral character, which he demonstrated through the multiple facets of his life.

I had the privilege of knowing Ozzie for 30 years, becoming acquainted with him and Dr. Howard Marshall during our conversations about the new historic preservation program they were cultivating at Mizzou in the mid-1980s. My first course with Ozzie was the Historic Preservation class that he and Dr. Susan Flader co-taught during the winter semester of 1985. From there and the completion of my Masters' Degree with my research focusing on a historic farm the University owned, I entered the Department of Art History and Archaeology (AHA) to pursue interdisciplinary studies and a Ph.D. emphasizing historic preservation, material culture, and American architectural history. There were other students with similar interests finding their place at MU, thanks to the leadership of Ozzie and Howard and their colleagues in various departments and schools. We formed an unconventional group at the time, taking an organized approach to engaging in similar but individualized programs.

History (Dr. Susan Flader, Dr. Susan Benson, Dr. Steven Watts, Dr. Noble Cunningham); Anthropology (Robert Bray); Housing and Interior Design (Gary Hennigh, Dr. Ruth Brent); Textile and Apparel Management (Dr. Laurel Wilson); Geography (Dr. Walter Schroeder); and Agriculture (Ken Schneeberger) were some of the disciplines the supporting faculty represented. Our AHA seminars generally were held at Pickard Hall, one of the Ellis Library rooms among the stacks, and sometimes Ozzie's house. I recall one seminar at Ozzie's running late due to long student presentations and Ozzie feeding us an impromptu lunch even though his kitchen was not particularly stocked for it—scrambled eggs and toast for all! Besides Ozzie's frequent hospitality and generosity, Barbara always welcomed us and warmly accepted phone calls for Ozzie regardless of the evening or weekend timing. The pair graciously hosted spontaneous or scheduled events and I remember the fall department picnics held in their backyard. Ozzie alone was an inspiration to me, and as a couple, he and Barbara were twice the ideal role models for me and my husband.

Although I was his student, I rarely addressed him "Dr. Overby," mainly because of all the other roles he fulfilled in my life: mentor, boss, life coach, fellow preservation volunteer, and friend. He had a hand in several jobs I entertained as a graduate student, whether it was informing me of opportunities, encouraging me to apply for positions, supporting me with letters of recommendation, or supervising me as an employee. He helped me secure funding as a graduate research assistant and also part-time work at the Museum of Art and Archaeology. It was through Ozzie that I learned of a fellow MU student's research in Autun, France that led to a summer abroad excavating the cloister area and conducting architectural studies of a medieval church. Thanks to his tutelage, I spent a summer working with the National Park Service as a member of a Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) team in Richmond, Virginia, and had internships and/or temporary employment with the State of Missouri (the State Museum and the Historic Preservation Program, now known as the State Historic Preservation Office or SHPO). Later employment

came through contracts with the SHPO, more HABS work (this time documenting French Colonial buildings in Ste. Genevieve), and working on the Society of Architectural Historians' (SAH) *Buildings of the United States* book series (Oxford University Press) for various volumes of which Ozzie was the editor in chief.

I credit Ozzie for the Los Angeles trip my husband and I took shortly after we were married because he suggested I apply for the SAH student scholarship to participate in the organization's architectural study tour of the city. Ozzie was instrumental in bringing École des Beaux-Arts scholar Richard Chafee, Roger Williams University (Rhode Island), to lecture in Missouri and assist me with my dissertation topic, E. J. Eckel. Eckel was an academically trained French architect who practiced in St. Joseph from the late 1860s to the early 1930s.

Besides Ozzie's dedicated teaching and student advisement, he shared his time and talent in statewide capacities, a member of the Missouri Advisory Board reviewing National Register nominations, and founder of our statewide preservation organization, formerly known as the Missouri Heritage Trust and renamed the Missouri Alliance for Historic Preservation, or simply Missouri Preservation. I got involved in the organization as a student because of Ozzie's commitment, and through the years I looked forward to a reunion with him and Barbara at the annual preservation conferences held across the state.

It was later in Ozzie's career that our paths crossed and just a few years after I completed my Ph.D., he retired. In October 1998, we honored him with an "Ozziefest," an oral festschrift and celebration recognizing his contributions to the University of Missouri. In conjunction with the event, the Osmund Overby Endowment Fund was established to enable students to pursue studies in American art, architecture, and historic preservation. It wasn't until then that I realized Ozzie had been teaching as long as I had been living! As a professor emeritus, Ozzie continued to be a preservation leader, remaining active with Missouri Preservation and even helping charter a new organization dedicated to rural preservation, the Missouri Barn Alliance and Rural Network (MoBARN) established in 2011.

These nurturing examples are just a few of the ways Ozzie has influenced one student's life. He has been there, actively involved in other students' lives as well, and supporting countless preservation causes, while maintaining balance with his personal life as a devoted husband, father, and grandfather. As the Overby Endowment Fund agreement proclaims,

All who know Professor Overby know him as a person of immense charm, personality, dignity, integrity, and humanity. As teacher, mentor, and researcher, he has inspired generations of students and set an example for both students and colleagues to emulate in their careers and personal lives. Rare among even the best teachers, Ozzie in his life and work has been a consistent beacon and a respected model, admired by us all.

Here's to our beloved Ozzie; may we all strive to have more "Ozzieness" within us so we may enrich the lives of others as he has blessed ours.

Debbie Sheals is an architectural historian who has worked as a preservation consultant for more than twenty years. With Ozzie's guidance, she received a master's Degree in Cultural Heritage Studies from the University of Missouri in 1993, and spent several years as the president of Missouri Preservation. Her work has taken her to scores of communities in Missouri and other states, and involved the study and rehabilitation of well over 1,500 historic buildings.

I love my job. I know that seems like an odd way to begin a tribute, but I want to make the point that Osmund Overby changed lives. I clearly remember my first day of Ozzie's course on American Art and Architecture and how I thought I'd gotten the classic absent minded professor as an instructor. Little did I know what an impact he would come to have on my life and those of my fellow students! Ozzie's lectures introduced me to the world of historic preservation and showed me the path to a career I could never have dreamed was possible. Even more importantly, he became a cherished friend and mentor.

Any of his former students will tell you what a pleasure it was to hear him lecture. I often joke that I went into Art History just so I could look at pictures during class, and that is half true. The man could put together a mean slide show. But he was also a master at showing us how to take a scholarly approach to a topic, and to think for ourselves. I literally had more than one "light bulb" moment in his class, such as finding out that the study of everyday architecture was a recognized field, and that some people actually worked as historic preservation consultants.

Teaching did not end in the lecture hall for Ozzie. He and his wife Barbara opened their home to students and faculty, and dinners at their house were a delight. He even turned his office computer over to me so I could master what was then a new technology to submit my first National Register nomination on a diskette.

I often think of the word gentle when I think of Ozzie--he gently pushed his students to think for themselves, gave gentle corrections (like when he managed to correct my ridiculous pronunciation of *atelier* without making me feel stupid) and quietly steered us towards good decisions. He had a special talent for making comments on term papers and writing assignments that made you want to redo it just to show him you could do better.

He also steered me into what would become a long tenure on the board of Missouri Preservation. Ozzie was the founding president of Missouri Preservation, then the Missouri Heritage Trust, and he was an active member of the board of directors for more than thirty years. He was particularly adept at recruiting former students and actually tricked me into taking a seat on the board. After asking if I was interested and being told that I was

too busy at the time but would think about it for the future, he just told the executive secretary I had said yes and she put me down as a new member. Before I knew it, I was spending a good deal of my spare time figuring out how to run a statewide organization!

Thanks in part to our joint interest in Missouri Preservation, I came to see Ozzie as a friend and not just a demigod in the field of architectural history. He was brilliant, funny, and truly one of the nicest men I have ever met. Ozzie's lifelong involvement in the field of historic preservation helped saved countless architectural treasures, and created even more new friendships among those who knew him. We are all the better for it.

Carol Grove is an art historian who specializes in the study of American architecture and landscapes. Her book *Henry Shaw's Victorian Landscapes (2005)* is based on her PhD dissertation. She co-authored with Cydney Millstein *Houses of Missouri 1870-1940 (2008)*. She is currently helping to complete the Missouri volume of *Buildings of the United States* that Ozzie began.

Knowing that the definitive record of Ozzie's life and accomplishments has been written by articulate and eloquent colleagues my contribution is limited to a few memories and "rules" learned during the nearly three decades that I knew him.

My first official meeting with Ozzie was at his office in Pickard Hall when he was in charge of interviewing potential graduate students for the Department of Art History and Archaeology at the University of Missouri. I was a "non-traditional student" (the term used then which meant "considerably older" than the usual applicant) and visibly pregnant. Neither of these conditions seemed to bother Ozzie. In the discussion that followed I was upbeat and excited, so to temper my enthusiasm he explained that besides coursework I would be expected to pass the Princeton language exams for German and French. (As well as, I later found out, a grueling entrance exam meant to measure our knowledge where new students were expected to identify, date, and provide a "statement of significance" for twenty-five works of art. These were *not* the icons of art history a new student might hope for; one, for example, was a fourteenth century German *Vesperbild* – an excruciatingly graphic devotional sculpture. I suspect that after providing these qualifications for a master's degree Ozzie figured he would never see me again.

There was nothing more rewarding than taking classes under Ozzie (who was always in coat and tie even for seminars with a mere seven students). The real joy of reading the classics – Nikolaus Pevsner, John Summerson, Henry-Russell Hitchcock, and Sigfried Giedion – was only trumped by Ozzie's presentations. We spent hours in the dark little seminar room looking at slides and learning how architecture could communicate universal truths and that to be great it must accurately reflect its time, place, and the people who built it. We discussed high-style vs. vernacular architecture, beginning with Pevsner's "A bicycle shed is a building; Lincoln Cathedral is a piece of architecture." That the discussion even included vernacular buildings at that early date revealed much about the

professor. The importance of historic preservation – buildings as historical documents that should not be the victims of changes in taste -- was addressed with regularity. Ozzie would flinch if he heard me say he had "passion" for architecture but that is exactly what he had hidden beneath his reserved and soft-spoken exterior.

Until the day he died Ozzie was my mentor (and often I still feel him peering over my shoulder). He guided my master's degree and PhD work and was open-minded about subjects that were on the margins at that time, for example, the study of American gardens and landscape, an aspect of which evolved into my dissertation. As Ozzie's teaching assistant for many classes on American art and architecture, I was able to relive the lectures I had heard years before (and to correctly grade the exams). As a graduate research assistant for the SAH's *Buildings of United States* series I remember working in the Overbys' attic (which has one entire wall covered with an image of the 16th-century woodcut of the *Triumphal Arch of Maximilian*). There I felt fortunate to get to read the early stages of William Jordy's writings on Rhode Island architecture and Thomas Noel's for Colorado. Little did I know this BUS work was my initiation to later involvement. Ozzie and Barbara took mentoring seriously, and in the traditional way, inviting us over when interesting people came to town to visit, knowing we would learn from the evening. Long dinners around their table and beginning-of-the-semester departmental picnics in their backyard, always open to spouses, were regular events.

The day before Ozzie died, I was asked to help clean out a small room of his files that had been stored in Ellis Library for a decade or two. They were likely put there while he was away on sabbatical, to allow someone else to use his office. Or maybe he had more files than room. I thought I knew everything about my mentor. But in deciding what should be kept and what should be thrown out (carbon paper and postage-paid envelopes with departmental letterhead to be sent "via air mail") I ran across things that surprised me. There was Ozzie's letter declining a position at a prestigious university in New Jersey because the chance to study Missouri architecture was such an opportunity. There was a wooden box crammed with hundreds of index cards with his hand-written notes (and judgment calls) on an eclectic range of buildings, many of them churches, none of which you were likely to learn about in an architectural history course. And there were folders full of his notes by subject, such as that for the "Thomas Jefferson lecture," which he had not needed to refer to for decades. Going through those files was serendipity. There was still more to learn.

Rules according to Ozzie:

- In writing about architecture "never call a house a home."
- Write the way you speak (don't be too lofty; do not mix vernacular and proper English). This rule was learned the hard way during my presentation on London's Crystal Palace (1851) and the Great Exhibition. My mention of Queen Victoria and the "pomp and circumstance" surrounding her arrival at the

event was struck down immediately when Ozzie stopped and asked me “just what is pomp and circumstance?” Another learning moment for me came with his accusation that a paragraph I had written (in another paper) seemed a little like “cocktail party banter.” Ozzie knew this kind of banter quite well, as he and Barbara were great givers of parties, but his observation (which absolutely paralyzed me at the time) taught me to keep the tone appropriate. Related to this is “If you want to be understood, know the big words but use the small ones.”

- Know the Vitruvian motto (and that of the Society of Architectural Historians) "Utilitas, Firmitas, and Venustas" (function, structure, and beauty).
- The more esoteric the subject the smaller the audience. (Don't take it personally if only a few people show up for your illustrated talk on “whatever”).
- I add this last rule: Be willing to pitch in and finish your mentor's work. Because without him/her you would not be where you are intellectually.

Carolyn Toft was the director of Landmarks Association of St. Louis, Inc., for many years, writer of its newsletter and author of several of its publications. Her book with Lynn Josse, *St. Louis: Landmarks and Historic Districts (2002)* won the Overby Award from Missouri Preservation.

Although I knew Ozzie for almost forty years, I was unaware of his saxophone and clarinet proficiency, let alone his prowess on the ski slopes. I had also forgotten about the family's year-long road trip through 14 European countries in a VW camper van! I did, however, remember he was a graduate of St. Olaf College, the University of Washington in Seattle and Yale University and that he held an MA in Architecture as well as a PhD in Art History. Luckily for us, he and his multi-talented wife Barbara moved to the Midwest early in their careers.

From the classroom setting at the University of Missouri in Columbia, Dr. Osmund Overby introduced students to regional culture as well as high art. Many of them were directed to St. Louis and Landmarks Association for their primary research. Several produced important studies on specific building types; others turned out valuable monographs about prominent local architects. But it was Ozzie himself who made the most lasting contributions to this organization.

A man of considerable national prestige, Ozzie was nevertheless eager to collaborate in myriad volunteer projects--even with novices such as yours truly. The earliest example I recall was the politically volatile, first-ever architectural survey of downtown St. Louis for which Ozzie actually rented an apartment.

During the summer of 1975, huge sections of the map drafted by Pat Hays Baer formed a room-size carpet at the then-shabby Ford Apartment Building as other volunteer architects doing field work traipsed in and out. The completed survey would become the basis for Landmarks' groundbreaking but infamous Multiple Property Nomination for the Central Business District.

Ozzie soon returned to St. Louis as co-author of Landmarks' publications on Laclede's Landing and the Old Post Office. His generous spirit, vast knowledge, eloquent writing style and gentle wit made working with him an absolute delight.

For years he continued to make the trek from Columbia to evaluate specific buildings, attend Landmarks' Board meetings, help organize conferences and complete research for his own definitive publications on Union Station and the Saint Louis Art Museum. His magnificent book on architect Bill Bernoudy, released in 1999, will soon be joined by the Missouri volume in the statewide series published by the Society of Architectural Historians.

Completion of this much-anticipated, often formidable task has been lovingly undertaken by his friends and colleagues as a tribute to Ozzie's singular legacy.

Cole Woodcox is a professor of English at Truman State University in Kirksville with a special interest in architecture. He has served on the Kirksville Historic Preservation Commission and the board of Missouri Preservation.

Ozzie taught hundreds of undergraduate and graduate students at the University of Missouri. He mentored colleagues. He contributed his talents and interests to many groups. Countless people benefited from his intellect, advice, work, leadership, encouragement and support.

Former students and other architectural historians told me about Ozzie. And I had read some of his work. However, despite his national and state-wide reputation, I didn't actually meet him until years later at an SAH conference. People I was talking with at a reception introduced us. Charming and easy going, he smiled and said he was glad to come across someone living in northeast Missouri who was interested in architectural history. Months later, through a sequence of teas with him and Barbara, his wife of sixty years, he recruited me as a volunteer for Missouri Preservation (which he helped establish in the 1970s) and as the author of a chapter for his *Buildings of Missouri*, part of the multi-volume *Buildings of the United States* series sponsored by SAH. His guiding me toward these two undertakings has had multiple, deep effects on me professionally and personally: working with Missouri Preservation developed into serving on its Board for years and working with one chapter of *Buildings of Missouri* changed over the years into working with five chapters. In both enterprises, I encountered his generosity, thoughtfulness, ability to build functional systems and skill at collaboration. Ozzie built communities.

As an activist, he convened people who were interested in historic preservation and developed a flourishing organization to promote the state's built environment. For a few years we served together on Missouri Preservation's Honor Awards committee. Ozzie often voiced his admiration for a well-written nomination form. He made certain that people's work was noted. He was also keen to ensure that preservation work was recognized in multiple genres and from multiple parts of the state. He was an active, visible presence at preservation

conferences and honor awards. For many years at the awards ceremony in the Capitol Rotunda, he sat in the front row with Barbara and fellow, noted preservationist Elizabeth Rozier. He was well informed on scholarship related to historic preservation. That Missouri Preservation's annual award for the best publication on local architectural history is linked to Ozzie comes as no surprise.

As a scholar, he brought together people for the *Buildings of Missouri* project and gathered substantial materials on each of the state's 114 counties and one independent city. He shared effortlessly. For each county in the *Buildings of Missouri* that I worked with, Ozzie gave me sometimes a plump folder and sometimes a complete box filled with his field notes, annotations from readings, lists of sites, photographs, pamphlets, brochures, maps, National Register nominations. High-style, vernacular, archaeological locations, landscape designs. He considered myriad sites. In addition to who? and when?, he asked targeted questions about how? where? why? under what conditions? Ozzie wore his knowledge and accomplishments easily. He was modest. Frequently what started as a brief suggestion jotted in the margin of a chapter draft or as a casual comment made during a meeting about the book led to an essay he written, article he'd edited, dissertation he'd supervised, campus plan he'd contributed to, report to a board he'd served on, building whose renovation he'd supported, heritage survey or HABS project he'd conducted, conference presentation he'd attended, or the e-article of a colleague. Unassuming, Ozzie enjoyed assembling and sharing.

The soundscape at the Overby house in Columbia is memorable -- music, stories, quiet laughter, easy conversation. But, to me, three particular things at that house embody interacting with Ozzie. The first was a pathway laid out in stones in the front yard. It was modeled on the labyrinth at Chartres; it reminded him and Barbara of their trips along the Camino de Santiago. Working with Ozzie, I learned that buildings and landscapes are meditative journeys. The second is a plethora of ceramic fragments incorporated into the house's fabric. Perhaps Barbara had more to do with setting the tiles and sherds into steps, sills, and counters than Ozzie did, but, when visitors approach their house, the pottery suggests the pleasure of interacting with the Overbys. The pieces tell how people, relationships, interests, pilgrimages, collections, artifacts and lived environments interact and form histories. The labyrinth and pieces of pottery locate the ground we are coming from and coming to. The third is a watercolor portrait of Ozzie hanging in the living room. It's a three-quarter view. Names of architects he admired gather around his head. They form a neighborhood of understanding, support and capability. Taken together, these three things at the Overby house generate an outline of what I value about my work and friendship with Ozzie: a rarely equaled treatment of people, of concepts, of materials. He fostered and connected communities selflessly

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