

## **1st Place - Mary Bernadette Petty**

I feel very fortunate to have grown up in a community with several historically significant buildings, one of which - Howard Van Doren Shaw's gorgeous 1916 estate, "Stonebridge," - is just three blocks from my home. It rests only a mile away from another Lake forest treasure which was also designed by Shaw - Ragdale. Unfortunately, my community cannot come up with a practical plan to repurpose the estate and the town wants it demolished. I met with a former village trustee and an attorney to try to understand if the village had the right to demolish something so beautiful. How could they do this I asked? Don't they understand the historical and architectural importance of this estate? What about all the stained glass? Each pane depicts a virtue, isn't that important? The artisan millwork? The barrel vault ceilings? The copper domes? These things are beautiful. They were built intentionally, by artists, and tearing them down is robbing all of us of a piece of beauty in our community: beauty which serves as a bridge to the past; beauty that lifts our thoughts to appreciate the men and women who worked so hard to create something beautiful meant to stand the test of time and the excellence of their creative minds.

When Lake Bluff had a Village Board meeting regarding the fate of Stonebridge, I went to speak to the board. it was awkward at first, because everyone else there was significantly older than me, but I didn't mind. I tried my best to persuade them, and although the board respectfully listened, they would not reconsider their position.

While the experience has been very disheartening, if not outright heartbreaking, it did further my resolve to study Architecture and Civil Engineering. I seek to study at a world-class institution where I can grow academically and personally and I can learn about and become qualified in historical building preservation.

As a member of the Children of the American Revolution, and as a Junior Ranger at numerous American Revolutionary War and Civil War sites, I feel a strong responsibility to protect our historical sites: from both the decay of time and from indifference.

One of the greatest honors of my life occurred this last march when my family was visiting Mount Vernon. A staff member asked my sister and me if we would lay the wreath on the president and First Lady Washingtons' tombs. I was so humbled to be even near President Washington's tomb, much less participate in the ceremony. I was surprised to learn that it was not the National Park Service which maintained Mount Vernon. Rather, it was and is the Mount Vernon Ladies' Association who have lovingly restored and maintained our first president's home. I was inspired by Louisa bird Cunningham's 1853 letter to her daughter in which she asked, "If the men of America have seen fit to allow the home of its most respected hero to go to ruin, why can't the women of America band together to save it?" Mrs. Cunningham's words were further confirmation that we cannot just stand by and watch our community and national treasures crumble from neglect. Although there are not many females in architectural engineering, I believe I can make a difference, just like Louisa Bird Cunningham and her daughter Ann Pamela Cunningham did. My career objective is to study either Architecture or Engineering at the undergraduate level and then practice as an Architectural Engineer who specializes in historical preservation. I hope I have the same determination as the Mount Vernon Ladies' Association; their novel vision, beginning nearly 200 years ago, continues to bless us today.

*By submitting my essay on how historical preservation applies to my daily life, I hope I will inspire other young people from lake Forest to look for the beauty in history; not just of their home town, but also wherever they settle for college and beyond. Beauty can be found in many places, but especially in those places that have stood the test of time and protected us, taught us, and raised us in the nurturing and inspiring town of Lake Forest.*

### **1st Runner Up - Amelia Fontana**

The Lake Forest High School was constructed in 1935 and designed by Lake Forest Stanley D. Anderson to look like estates in the surrounding neighborhoods. this was to prevent a disturbance of the historic surrounding architecture and look like an elite East Coast boarding school

with a "County Gregorian" style, says Anderson's biography. I believe that the high school is a representation of the influence of historical architecture in our town and a reflection of its influence on public architecture.

Preservation of historical architecture is very important in our community as it reflects decades of tradition, identity, and the history of our town. Coming from a family that intends to preserve our own ancestral architecture and identity, I understand this value. My father owns a stone masonry business that often works on the renowned streets of our community (Mayflower, Sheridan) to preserve the beautiful stone and brick work that makes our town unique. Every house comes with its own story and by preserving the masonry tradition, these houses and estates preserve the craftsmanship of masonry trades in a world where younger generations are finding more value and beauty in modern architecture. Relating this to my own family, my father built the very own stone house that I live in. With doric columns, an authentic mosaic, "pinecone" pillars, lion face fountains, and a floorplan representative of an Italian villa, my own home represents this traditional Lake Forest facade with touches of Italian detail that stores the architectural history of my Roman roots. My father often reminds me that he made this house to illustrate traditional stonework that is characteristic of Italy and my community. My house is a constant reminder of where I come from and what my culture values, much like the historic buildings in Lake Forest.

This is very similar to the Lake Forest Preservation Foundation mission which has a commitment to preserving the identity of our community. Established by Presbyterians in 1857 as described by archives on the City of Lake Forest website, historical masonry that is often characteristic of Presbyterian churches is very prevalent throughout Lake Forest. Picturesque masterpieces embodied by the Lake Forest College, Market Square, the LF Library, and City Hall continue to mirror this tradition of mason craftsmanship. Between the classical stonework, the colorful landscaping, and the aesthetic ivy that is so characteristic of Lake Forest, I would consider the job of maintaining this unique architectural legacy successful. Integrating this visual character into our neighborhoods, future

generations learn to value this unique celebration of history and exceptional surroundings.

In conclusion, in a time where architectural tastes are shifting and modernism seems to suppress the unique craftsmanship captivated by our own community, now more than ever is it important to find preservation of this rich history and identity of Lake Forest. While the preservation of this traditional architecture not only teleports the town back to its roots, it inspires people to dig deeper into their own community history and appreciate the beauty of our town.

### **2nd Runner Up – Emma Darling**

Growing up, I have always admired our family home and learning about its history and the origins behind its style and architecture. Purchasing a home in 2003, my parents had specific qualities they each were looking for. My dad desired a home with character similar to a style he was used to in the UK and my mom sought a home with beautiful landscapes located in an established and safe neighborhood. 1311 Edgewood Road in Lake Forest met all of their objectives.

Our house was built in 1999 by Ruggles & Ruggles, who were inspired to replicate a home on Lake Windermere in England that was originally built during the English Arts and Crafts Movement. The construction upheld the traditions of the movement in terms of providing clarity of structure and asymmetry, while utilizing a variety of materials and traditional construction and craftsmanship. The mid-19th century English Arts and Crafts Movement mirrors many of the values held by the Lake Forest Preservation Foundation. The movement originated as a way to highlight the traditional skills of the craftsmen who were replaced by machines during the Industrial Revolution. The prominent features of our home, including the white stucco material, gabled roofs, and traditional landscapes maintain the beauty of the streetscapes across Lake Forest. Our house won a Lake Forest Preservation Foundation Infill Award in 2001, honoring its compatibility with Lake Forest's established values of historical visual character that are prevalent throughout our city.

Our home is close to another notable landmark of Lake Forest, First Presbyterian Church. The church has played an integral role in my life, and is where I was baptized, attended pre-school, got confirmed and later became a member. I came to recognize and greatly appreciate its history and splendor, including its steeple, bell tower, sanctuary, and most notably, its beautiful Tiffany windows. The church was originally built in 1887 by Charles Sumner Frost, and was later awarded the Heritage and Rehabilitation Awards to honor its preservation of its original structure. As a member of the church, I was recently involved in the Great Room renovations, a major refurbishment project that enlarged the gathering space inside the church. Amid the building process, I had a chance to vote on naming the "Great Room" and sign an original supporting beam before it was put in place, thus preserving my name in the future history of the church. With the renovations now complete, I can recognize how the design maintained the authenticity of the church's interior.

Lake Forest is more than just a beautiful suburb, but a city steeped in architectural history that has maintained its cultural heritage through efforts of the Lake Forest Preservation Foundation. Living in a city that values history entices people to move here and enjoy its culture, allowing Lake Forest to be a strong and thriving community with access to excellent facilities, academics, and nature. By enabling growth while maintaining original values, Lake Forest is able to extend and cater to present and future generations.