



**Move in Progress, 2015**

Civil War. Architectural historians continue to admire Greek Revival design for its purity and simplicity, balance and proportion. Chicago's oldest house, the 1830s Clarke House in the Prairie District, is also Greek Revival.

The physical features of this one-and-a-half story frame home include six Doric columns, which support a portico that covers and extends across the front of the house. The door has a full transom and sidelights, and the four front windows are paired on either side of the door.

While the house benefited from continued residents over the years, it was in serious despair and required a slow restoration process. Early repairs included asbestos and lead paint removal, termite and water damage, a wood shingle roof and electrical wiring. Interior work included removing layers of wallpaper and linoleum and opening two fireplaces.

Collinsville's Historic Preservation Commission faithfully guided the project, assisted by architects and contractors and countless specialists and volunteers. In 2002 the Collins House was placed on the National Register of Historic Places. Irving Dilliard died that year at age 97.

The City of Collinsville took over demolition of several deteriorated commercial buildings adjacent to the house and moved the house 150 yards to create a new city park. This marked a second move for the house, which originally was located at Main and Center streets, then the heart of the city.

A joint dedication and grand opening of the Collins House and park was held on September 24, 2016. The celebration and program recognized the civic and private cooperation that

made the project possible—hours of decisions and work by individuals and organizations as well as financial donations and memorials, grant money and gifts of furniture and accessories. Period furniture and household items, including prints and photographs, artifacts, and china, complete the interior.

Collinsville Garden Club members have established seasonal vegetable gardens and appropriate period landscaping.

Together the HPC, the city, and a newly formed Friends group plan for the house to be maintained as a museum and educational tool for school children and visitors to learn about local history and experience life in Collinsville in the 1800s. Not only is the Collins House basic to town history, it also has a direct connection to the early building of Illinois.

Dilliard maintained a lifelong interest in history – “things that make you think about the past and changes over the years.” He always hoped that “something good” would happen to his grandparents' home. Change has happened and something good has happened to the house and also to his community –something from the past that future generations will inherit.

The Collins House is open on Saturday from 11 – 3 with volunteers serving as hosts. Friends of the DD Collins House, a recent group, is a 501(c)3 organization with a website,



**Work Day Volunteers, Trisha Haislar, Collinsville Garden Club, and Bill Iseminger, CHPC chair**

<http://www.friendsoftheddcollins-house.org/>. For more information about house tours call 618 420 0288.

*Mary Sue Schusky of Collinsville is a member long-time friend of the Illinois State Historical Society. She is the daughter of Irving Dilliard.*



**Kitchen and Front Parlor under renovation**