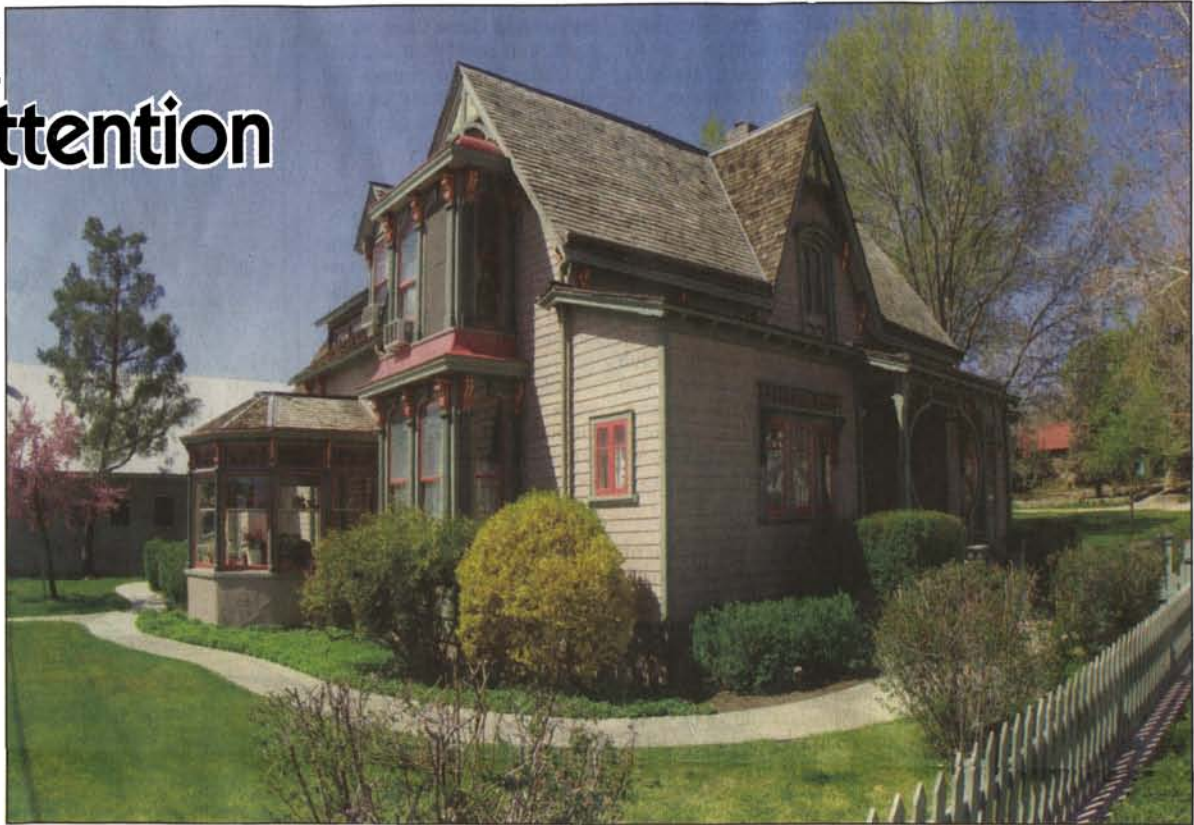


## Worthy of attention



The Bashford House now stands on the grounds of Sharlot Hall Museum, on West Gurley Street in Prescott. Moving the house to its present location was one of the area's first efforts toward the preservation of historic buildings.

Courier/Jo. L. Keener

# Historic preservation is a Prescott tradition

By CINDY BARKS

The Daily Courier

PRESCOTT – Prescott's historic buildings might not compare with those in some East Coast communities, but within Arizona, the community stands above most.

Barnabas Kane, the chairman of the city's Preservation Commission, emphasized Prescott's varied inventory of historic buildings Tuesday during a presentation to the Prescott City Council.

"Prescott boasts more historic buildings than most towns in Arizona," Kane said as an introduction to his presentation.

Along with the sheer numbers of buildings, Kane said, Prescott also features much diversity in architectural styles. That is in contrast to some western cities that have one prominent style, such as Santa Fe, N.M., Kane added.

The styles he displayed in his presentation ranged from the Victorian homes along Mount Vernon and other nearby streets to the Territorial style of the Gurley Street Grill and Murphy's Restaurant buildings to the Neo-Classical Revival style of The Palace.

Kane speculated that the richness

'Why do people visit Prescott? Is it for the view from Highway 69? We think it's for the history.'

- Barnabas Kane,  
chairman, Prescott Preservation Committee

of history is what draws people to the community. "Why do people visit Prescott? Is it for the view from Highway 69?" he asked. Rather, he said, "We think it's for the history."

Kane included a brief history of the national historic preservation movement, starting with the 1820s successful effort to save George Washington's home at Mount Vernon, and running up to the unsuccessful effort in the 1960s to preserve Penn Station in New York.

"Certainly, that was of national significance," Kane said of the Mount Vernon effort. But he maintained that on a smaller scale, Prescott's history is also important. "Even though (Prescott's) history is not 300 years old, and George Washington did not sleep in Prescott, the history is still of significance," he

said.

Even so, Kane allowed, "not everything is worth saving." That is why the Preservation Commission has criteria to determine the significance, including the age of the building, its architectural integrity and its place in history.

The local preservation effort took off in the mid-1970s, when the community united to save the Bashford House. Ultimately, the effort succeeded in moving the house from its original location on Gurley Street to the grounds of Sharlot Hall Museum.

According to Kane, another Prescott institution worthy of preservation is the Prescott Frontier Days rodeo grounds off Fair Street. "Certainly, the grounds are worth saving, and some of the buildings," he said.

Council members, who have faced a number of historic preservation issues recently, had several questions for Kane and Historic Preservation Specialist Nancy Burgess about the process that owners of historic homes should follow when renovating their buildings.

Burgess said that unless the buildings are within a historic preservation overlay district, the city offers only advice for the owners. And she said owners of such buildings often seek her out for tips on how to make their renovations consistent with history.

Councilman Steve Blair said he has a problem with the amount of "misinformation" that regularly circulates in the community about the role of the city's historic preservation effort.

Kane said one of the purposes of his presentation was to improve communication – both within the community, and between the Preservation Commission and other city boards and commissions. He earlier gave the same presentation to the Prescott Planning and Zoning Commission, and he said he would be available to present it to other groups as well.

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