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Redesigning Downtown: The Fabrication of German-themed Villages in Small-town America

Caroline Theodora Swope

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

University of Washington

2003

Program Authorized to Offer Degree: Division of Art History

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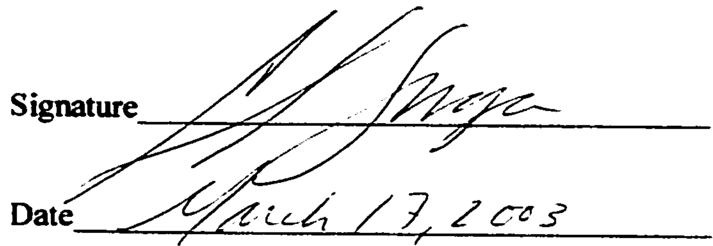

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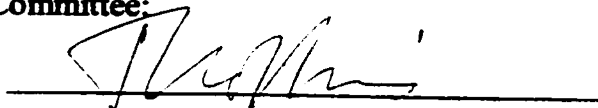

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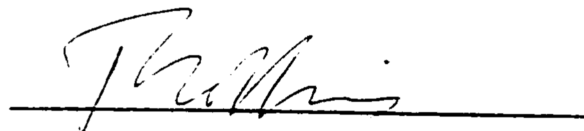

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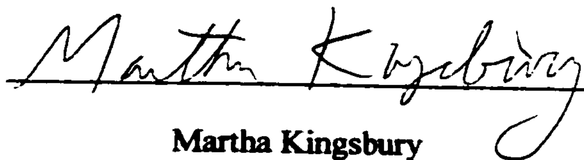

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Abstract

Redesigning Downtown: The Fabrication of German-themed Villages in Small-town America

Caroline Theodora Swope

Chair of the Supervisory Committee:
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This dissertation examines the conversion of Leavenworth, Washington, and Helen, Georgia, into Germanic-themed towns in the 1960s and '70s. Although neither community had a Germanic ethnic base, both sought economic and physical rebirth by remodeling their town cores in an "alpine" or "Bavarian" style. My research indicates that these efforts to "create culture" betray the same fundamental instinct pioneered in a series of world's fairs and in Disney's theme parks. They also share a living history element with Colonial Williamsburg, another American community that has a fabricated cultural and historical identity. This study argues that Helen and Leavenworth's revitalization movements are related to a rising preservation movement in the United States, and proposes that they constitute important variants of the national trend to capitalize on tourism as other forms of economic revenue declined.

Close analysis of the circumstances and the architectural design processes behind the civic transformations (including extensive archival research and interviews with the surviving protagonists) suggests that the choice of a Germanic theme was a direct result

of American military presence in post World War II Germany. The principal community designers for both Helen and Leavenworth were stationed in post-war Germany, and both sought to recreate a vision of the appealing Alpine and late-medieval landscapes they had encountered overseas. Back at home, their positive and romantic vision of Germanic culture was promoted by America's growing travel and entertainment industry. Books of Germanic fairy tales featured illustrations of half-timbered chalets, while Disney used similar elements in cartoons like Snow White and Sleeping Beauty, which promoted a connection in the American psyche between German architecture and childhood fantasy. America's extensive Germanic heritage, combined with its central role in the reconstruction of post-war Germany, made it particularly receptive to the idealized "Germanic" environments created at Helen and Leavenworth, which continue to inspire similar communities. Finally, this thesis explores the challenges and successes of these communities' strategies over time, investigating how they may provide helpful case studies within a broader investigation of the problem of "created culture."

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All photos, unless otherwise noted, were taken by the author.

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DEDICATION

To my father

Fred C. Swope

and now there are two…

INTRODUCTION

I am a preservationist. I state this fact first, because I feel that it is very important for the reader to understand my inherent biases and training. I grew up in *the* Commonwealth, which entailed family trips to Jamestown, school trips to Williamsburg, and living near civil war battlefields. I selected my undergraduate institution specifically due to its proximity to a historic district. I continued my education by earning a Masters in Historic Preservation, and to this day I still consult on preservation projects. Preserving old buildings is my lifeblood, which makes my selection of this dissertation topic very unusual. Fake German towns. Fake German towns post-World War II. These communities, under economic duress, decided to re-façade their entire downtown core, destroying virtually every reference to their late nineteenth and early twentieth century American commercial architecture. Clearly, this is an affront to everything that I believe in. So, why would I select this topic for my doctoral dissertation? Quite honestly, I wanted to understand the underlying causes that would lead a community to completely destroy its architectural history, and I wanted to see how this community would fare once the transformation was complete. The purpose of this dissertation is to study closely the evolution of these communities into created culture, a form of living entertainment, and to hypothesize what place they hold in American history.

Scholars have devoted considerable research to an affiliated theme: the selling of culture through world's fairs. Historian Robert Rydell notes that these fairs "presented

new mediums of entertainment and opportunities for vicarious travel in other lands."[1] He examines the lure of ethnographic exhibitions, and the role they played in helping Americans define their sense of self. The commodification of word's fairs, specifically the 1964-65 New York world's fair, was briefly examined in the 1989 Queens Museum Study, Remembering The Future. This study showed the increasing role of culture as entertainment instead of education, as seen in the Small World exhibit developed by Disney and sponsored by Pepsi, a major international corporation.[2] Art Historian Karol Ann Marling developed this theme by investigating Disney's fantasy creations in Designing Disney's Theme Parks: The Architecture of Reassurance. In this text, she notes that " The appetite for fantasy had not disappeared, nor the special ability of a three dimensional landscape to feed it."[3] In separate texts, she has also examined the role of the automobile and of television in sustaining Disney's success.[4] A natural cousin to Disney's endeavors, a living theme park of sorts with an added historical flavor, is Williamsburg, Virginia. Perhaps the most probing study of this hybrid was presented by cultural anthropologists Handler and Gable, in their text New History in an Old Museum. They focus their inquiry on the invention and manipulation of history and tradition through corporate sponsorship. Of particular interest to them is the quest for accuracy,

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[1] Robert W. Rydell. All The World's A Fair: Visions of Empire at American International Expositions, 1876-1916. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984) 2.

[2] Remembering the Future: The New York World's Fair from 1939 to 1964. (Flushing: The Queens Museum, 1989)

[3] Karal Ann Marling, Ed. Designing Disney's Theme Parks: The Architecture of Reassurance. Montreal: Centre Canadien d' Architecture, 1997) 27.

[4] Karal Ann Marling. As Seen on T.V.: Visual Culture of Everyday Life in the 1950s. (Cambridge: Harvard, 1994)

the holy grail of the institution.[5] In the late 1960s a growing national preservation movement sparked the creation of the National Main Street program, which addressed economic redevelopment through the preservation historic structures. While there are numerous federal and state Main Street publications, there is no published inquiry into the underlying catalysts, successes, and failures of the movement.

To date, no one has examined a natural extension of these developments, economic revitalization through the creation of a cultural identity. There are certainly numerous communities that capitalize on their historical ethnic roots, like Frankenmuth, Michigan, Solvang, California, and Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. However, the creation of strictly tourist driven communities seems to be a relatively new development. Helen and Leavenworth, which had both experienced severe economic hardship and physical degradation, transformed their downtown cores into psuedo-German shopping and dining meccas. The architectural change is so complete that it would likely be impossible for the buildings to be restored to their nineteenth appearance. In fact, there is no desire for such an undertaking, since the economic success of these communities has been nothing short of phenomenal. Leavenworth currently hosts more than a million tourists a year, and Helen supports a similar number. Each town has won a host of redevelopment and community awards, and has garnered national and international press. Yet the academic world has been largely silent concerning these created Bavarian villages.

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[5] Richard Handler and Eric Gable. New History in an Old Museum: Creating the Past at Colonial Williamsburg. (Durham: Duke University Press, 1997) 76.

The lack of scholarship on these psuedo-German towns is partly a function of the low-brow culture that many associate with a fake, non-native theme. The words "kitsch," and "forced" have been popularly used across academia when addressing this subject. Much like tourist art created by Native American or African sculptors, these architectural creations are not generally considered "true art", but merely "false" artifacts created purely for economic gain. They are often driven by consumer (tourist) demand more than the creator's personal vision, and the quality of the work is frequently inferior to the "original."[6] Perhaps another reason for the lack of scholarship is the relatively small number of these communities that exist. Helen and Leavenworth are considered architectural anomalies, and as such do not often garner significant attention from academics. A masters thesis by Michael Guest is one of the few scholarly works available on these communities. It is a sociological and anthropological study focused primarily on community initiated design (which is more a myth than a reality as we shall later see) and popular culture. Only a single section touches on architecture and post-modernism, linking the social failure of modern architecture with the rise of "pleasure-zone architecture." [7] Preservationists, through the National Main Street Center, have written extensively about downtown revitalization during the late twentieth century. However, these documents are either how-to manuals, as demonstrated by Revitalizing

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[6] Jules-Rosette Bennetta, The Message of Tourist Art: an African Semiotic System in Comparative Perspective. (New York: Plenum Press, 1984) 16.

[7] Michael E. J. Guest, The Post Modern Simulated World of Helen, Georgia, USA: A Study of the Creation of A Unique Tourist Environment, masters thesis, Roehampton Institute of Higher Education, University of Surrey, Great Britian, 1992, 35.

Downtown, or congratulatory texts which publicize Main Street successes.[8] These documents extensively explore the reasons that urban and small downtown cores declined, and talk about the remedies employed by the Main Street Program, but do not discuss any alternate methods of community revitalization.

This dissertation focuses on the revitalization of Helen and Leavenworth within the context of several national trends. The first chapter examines the predecessors to Helen and Leavenworth and highlights the historically significant contributions that paved the way for the creation of these faux German communities. For World's Fairs, I examine the increasing importance of foreign culture as entertainment, paying special attention to the architectural forms used to promote Germanic exhibits. For Disney's parks, I explore the relationship between fantasy, entertainment, and the built environment. Finally, for Colonial Williamsburg, I examine the viability of culture as entertainment within a living tourist community. The second and third chapters provide a detailed examination of Helen and Leavenworth, including a description of each town's history, the genesis of the reconstruction, a description of the transformation process, a visual analysis of a representative set of structures, a description of the outcome, and a look into the future of these communities. The fourth chapter examines the Main Street Program, and clarifies Leavenworth and Helen's place within growing national revitalization trends. The fifth and final chapter provides a closer examination of the influences of tourism on communities, and also looks at the rationale behind the selection

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[8] National Trust for Historic Preservation. Revitalizing Downtown. (Washington, D.C.: National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1988) and Suzanne G. Dane. Main Street Success Stories. (National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1997.)

of a German theme, and perhaps more importantly, the reasons that this theme resonated so clearly with tourists across America.

Although the general background information concerning created cultural themes, economic revitalization, and relationships between the United States and Germany comes primarily from secondary sources, tying these themes to Leavenworth and Helen required a great deal of primary research. Collecting primary data proved particularly challenging due to the lack of accurate historical records, coupled with varying personal accounts of the town's development. Many early decisions were discussed at social functions and informal meetings, and these decisions needed to be discovered through personal interviews, which were often colored by one's perception of events. Formal documentation of the decision making process, such as archives of meeting minutes, early design review guidelines, and zoning/renovation permits, was quite scarce and often non-existent. The most sizeable source of primary information on Leavenworth, the Ted Price and Bob Rodgers Historical Collection, was donated to the University of Washington Special Collections in the summer of 2002. The impressive size of the collection (nine boxes in total) is misleading, since many items are duplicates, or even triplicates. Much of the documentation pertains to business ventures outside of the scope of this paper, and in many cases the collection list does not match the content of the boxes. The most valuable resource found in the boxes were transcriptions of oral interviews, although once again the usable information was quite sparse, since most of the questions addressed are not directly applicable to this topic.[9]

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[9] These interviews were commissioned by Ted Price, one of the original proponents of the theme town. He and his partner left the community under somewhat hostile circumstances. As credit for the town's transformation was increasingly given to other parties, Price wanted to clarify the importance of

Fortunately, I was able to conduct several interviews with the founders of Helen and Leavenworth which augmented primary source information. The oral history captured through these interviews was immeasurably valuable in the development of this dissertation, and hopefully will serve to fill several gaps that would otherwise exist in the history of these communities. For historical information on Leavenworth, I was able to meet with Ted Price, one of community's founders. This interview helped clarify issues associated with theme selection, and also provided redevelopment details that were not found in his book, Miracle Town: Creating American's Bavarian Village in Leavenworth. I also met with two current shop owners and community leaders, Bob Smith and Heidi Kyllonen. They, along with Patrick Daulton, city code administrator, helped me understand the current design challenges and the future goals of the community. For historical information on Helen, I conducted an interview with the designer, John Kollock, and reviewed his private scrapbooks and architectural models, which proved invaluable to this study. Jimmy Wilkins, one of the main business leaders in Helen and an original instigator of the Bavarian theme, also agreed to meet with me and provided insight into his role with the project. Bruce Banks, city manager, made arrangements for me to sit in on a design review board meeting, and helped me sift through old city files. Finally, the citizens of Helen, Georgia, were delightfully open with my requests for information, and gave me all materials that they could find. All of these sources were invaluable and while not complete, helped to substantially fill the gaps in documented primary and secondary information on these communities.

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their role. Thus the majority of interview questions ask community leaders to recall how active Price and Rodgers were in the transformation, and focuses less on the transformation itself.

CHAPTER 1

Created Culture: World's Fairs, Disney, and Williamsburg

"...we learned very shortly that themes do draw people. Knott's Berry Farm, and Disneyland, and Solvang are very good indicators of that."

Bob Rodgers, interview transcription, 22 January 1994 Ted Price and Bob Rodgers Historical Collection, University of Washington

Where do Helen and Leavenworth fit into the larger milieu of tourist destinations? What are the predecessors of culture as entertainment? The conceptual roots of Helen and Leavenworth can be traced back to the early world's fairs of the 1800s. The relationship is not direct, however, as world's fairs evolved into two distinct forms: permanent amusement parks (such as Disney) and living historical displays (such as Williamsburg). The purpose of this chapter is to explore the relationships between world's fairs, Disney, and Williamsburg, and to identify the characteristics of these architectural and cultural forms that have been adopted within the communities of Helen and Leavenworth.

World's Fairs

The world's fairs of the late 1800s and early 1900s appear to possess three major characteristics that influenced the design and development of Disney and Williamsburg. Xenophilia, a fascination with the "other", played a major role in drawing crowds to the world's fairs and was a catalyst for the development of Disney's parks. Nostalgia and

nationalistic trends in the late 1800s and early 1900s fostered the development and display of native architectural forms in both the early world's fairs and Colonial Williamsburg. Finally, the potential financial gains associated with the entertainment venues of world's fairs were one of the driving factors for the transition from temporary displays within world's fairs to large permanent venues such as Disney's theme parks. The purpose of this section is to explore the manifestation of these characteristics in world's fairs, and the degree to which these characteristics influenced the development of both Disney and Williamsburg.

The first international fair was the 1851 Great Exposition in London, England. Planning for the event began in the late 1840s, when the British Society of Arts decided to host a national exposition displaying raw materials, machinery, manufactured products, and fine art. With the interest and support of Prince Albert, the endeavor became larger in scope, and by 1849 planning began for an international exposition, which would showcase British ingenuity to the world and introduce foreign products and ideas to the British. A flurry of planning drew more than 15,000 exhibitors, and while almost half were British, the remaining came from more than forty different countries, with France the most prominently represented.[1] The Great Expo, as it was called, opened on May 1, 1851. It was financially successful, and also successfully fulfilled its intended purpose of a free exchange of ideas between countries. Many other countries were intrigued by this great success, and developed plans to host their own expositions.

As other countries began the process of developing their own fairs, they began to search for ways to expand the popularity, appeal, prestige, and ultimately, the

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[1] Kenneth W. Luckhurst. The Story of Exhibitions. (London: The Studio Publications, 1951) 111.

profitability of the event. A flurry of other fairs followed, and between 1851 and 1900 eleven different world's fairs were hosted throughout Europe and the United States. Early analysis showed that a primary draw of the fairs was the entertainment venues, especially those that provided exposure to the architectural and cultural aspects of foreign countries. The Paris Expo of 1867 was one of the first major fairs to capitalize on this idea, through the development of a number of internationally themed buildings that were erected in a park surrounding the main site. These buildings included a mosque, a Swiss chalet, a replica of Philae, and a Dutch diamond workshop. Scholars are unclear regarding who controlled the development of these "international" sites, although it appears that individual countries were responsible for the building designs. Many of these national areas had eating establishments where waitresses were dressed in national costume, and musicians played exotic national music.[2] These novel attractions resulted in attendance increases for expositions (more than eleven million people attended the Paris Expo) as the general public came to observe and safely interact with foreign people and culture. For a public that did not have the time or the funds for travel, such an opportunity was not only considered educational, but much safer, quicker, and easier than traveling to distant lands.

The financial success of the midway and entertainment areas of the 1867 Paris Expo was duly noted, and future fairs increased the size and importance of these exhibits. The 1878 Paris Expo developed a number of unusual, international structures facing a large courtyard. Half of the courtyard was fronted with French exhibits, while the other

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[2] Luckhurst 133.

half was home to the *Rue des Nations*, a picturesque facade representing various architectural traditions from participating countries. The 1889 world's fair in Paris had a colonial exhibition on the *Esplande des Invalides*, which included Egyptian streets and Moorish palaces. These colonial exhibitions not only allowed Europeans an opportunity to experience the exotic in the safety of their home country, but helped foster beliefs in European cultural superiority. Even the youngest fairgoers would notice striking differences between modern European architecture and manufactured goods and the vernacular, "quaint" architectural facades and hand made items of the colonized people. Later European fairs began to include a number of international sideshows, which also garnered additional interest from the public. World's fairs continued throughout the twentieth century and the size and the prominence of foreign cultural exhibits grew. The degree, size, and scale of international structures, themes and ideas contained within this evolving fair prototype provide ample evidence of the increasing public interest in the display, and consumerization, of the "other."

Early American Fairs (pre-1964)

Few Americans attended these early, foreign world's fairs. The primary purpose of early American fairs, much like their European predecessors, was to measure their technological achievements and superiority against that of other countries. However, the American fairs also inherited other traits displayed by their European predecessors, and in this manner the fascination with the "other" transferred directly to world's fairs conducted within the United States. The 1876 world's fair in Philadelphia was one of the

first major fairs held in the United States. The nationalistic displays, which included a New England log house, were popular with the public. However, there were several foreign buildings that attracted considerable attention, including a Turkish coffee building and two traditionally constructed Japanese structures. This marked only the second time that the Japanese had participated in an international show, the first being in Vienna's 1873 fair.[3] These exhibitions garnered an extraordinary amount of interest, since Americans' geographic isolation made them far more curious about the unfamiliar displays produced by foreign cultures. Therefore, the xenophilic attitudes that had taken hold in Europe established an even firmer foothold within America.

More than twenty-seven million visitors saw the 1893 Chicago world's fair, an impressive number since the total U.S. population was just over sixty-three million.[4] This grand dame of United States Expositions is repeatedly credited with having tremendous impact on urban planning, as well as architectural and landscape design in this country. The core of the fair, white plaster neoclassical facades that stately lined the shore of a man-made lake, projected a new ideal in American urban planning: one of an ordered, clean, artistic city. The planned city had wide boulevards, broad public spaces, and lavish landscaping. Urban planning was a nascent field in the United States. The fair, designed to work as an integrated whole, was seen as a major improvement over many American cities, which featured irregular planning, eclectic building styles, and a haphazard arrangement of public services. Although the planning elements of the fair would profoundly impact professional architectural fields, it was the hodgepodge of

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[3] Rydell 11.

[4] Luckhurst 220 The high numbers probably represent multiple visits by local residents.

exotically themed venues that impacted amusement parks and other tourist destinations in the United States.

Published photographs and maps indicate that while the "White City" sat at the center of the fair, the perimeters were filled with a vast array of foreign pavilions and entertainment venues. Western European pavilions, representing the most "civilized" countries, were clustered closest to the center core, while displays from more exotic locations were found at edges of the fairground [Figure 1.1]. The unspoken message was clear. American ingenuity had designed a superior, planned city, (albeit decoratively facaded with neoclassical elements) which was placed at the center of the fair. The farther one moved from the American center, the more one encountered unsophisticated, small-scaled vernacular structures from foreign lands.

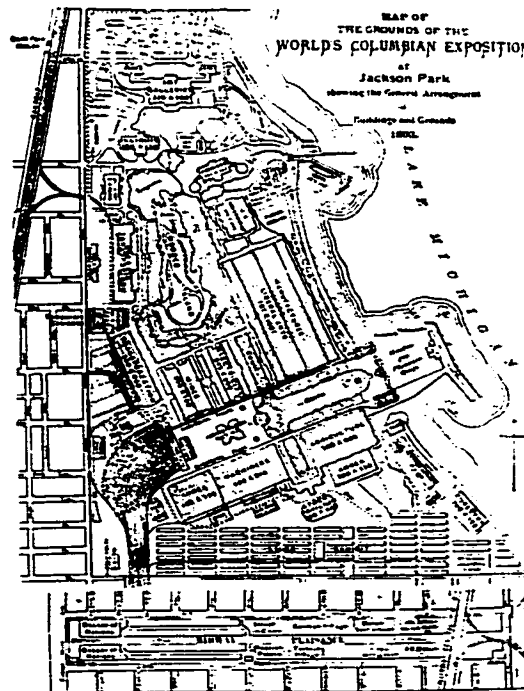

Figure 1.1: Map of the 1893 Colombian World Exposition. From Burg, 83.

The German and Irish villages were located closest to the central core. Their advantageous placement may have been influenced by the large numbers of German and Irish immigrants in the United States, and in Chicago in particular. Between 1860 and 1900 approximately twenty eight percent of all immigrants were German, and about fifteen percent were of Irish descent.[5] The German government building was lauded as "the most substantial and much the handsomest on the lake shore."[6] The structure was an eclectic combination of designs. The center of the structure took the form of a richly decorated city hall, topped with an onion domed central tower. Upper sections of the building were covered with fresco paintings while side wings featured rusticated masonry on the lower levels and detailed *fachwerk* covering irregular massing on the upper levels [Figure 1.2].[7] Reports indicate that visitors were enchanted by the building and the intricate visual textures provided by pillars, balconies, and heavy ornamentation. As visitors moved further out from the core they entered the midway, which primarily hosted more exotic countries, from West Africa and East Asia. Finally, as described in a contemporary guide, visitors would "descend to the savage races, the African of Dahomey and the North American Indian, each of which has its place."[8]

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[5] U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Census. Historical Statistics of the U.S.: Colonial Times to 1970. Part I. (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office) 105-106.

[6] David F. Burg. Chicago's White City of 1893. (Lexington: UP of Kentucky, 1976) 212.

[7] *Fachwerk* is a term used by Germanic immigrants in the United States during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries to describe half timbering, a medieval building system of braced timber framing filled with either brick or straw reinforced clay.

[8] Rydell 65 [citing Denton Snider, World's Fair Studies. Chicago: Sigma Publishing Company, 1895]

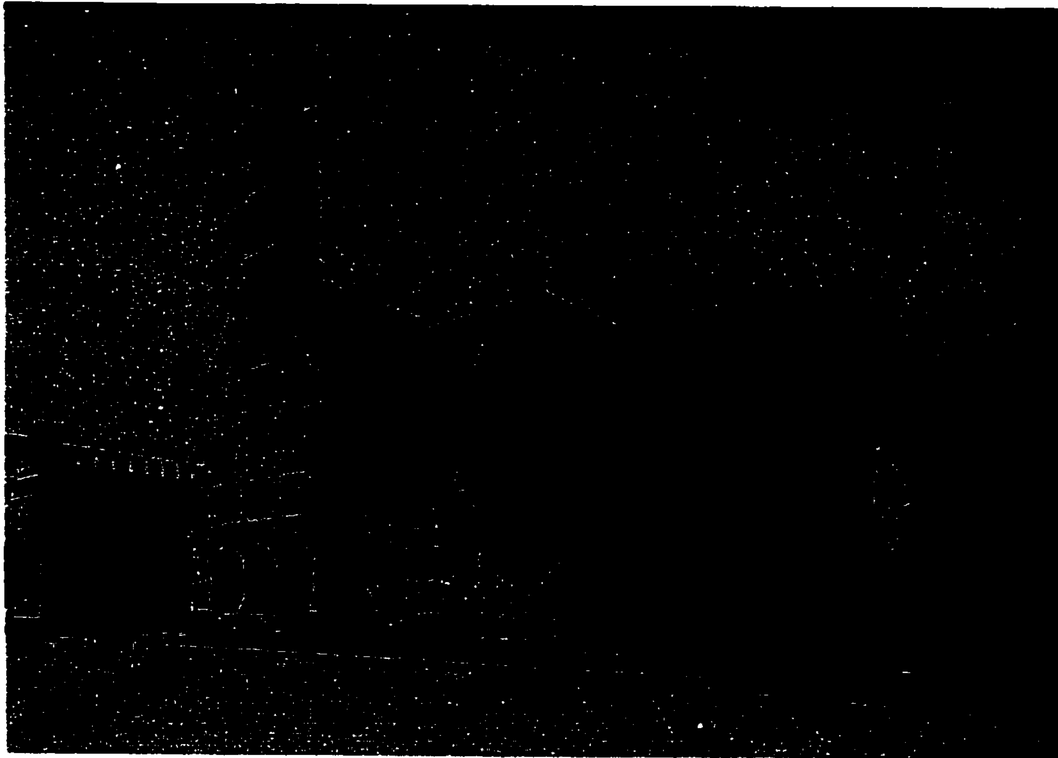

Figure 1.2: German pavilion at the Chicago World's Fair, 1893. From Appelbaum, 82.

The midway entertainment area housed exotic Javanese, Algerian, Tunisian, Austrian, and Turkish villages, a Cairo street, a Moorish Palace, and a festive Viennese café. Directly above the Javanese village was a large German village, which contained a moated castle, encircled by architectural examples from Germany's different provinces. Fairgoers were induced to linger with performances of the Berlin Philharmonic and the German army band. German cuisine and beer were also attractions. For those who wanted to continue their Teutonic experience, the Austrian Village was located close as

well, and was reportedly one of the most popular places in the Midway.[9] The entrance gate to the site, which was sometimes referred to as "Old Vienna" mimicked large blocks of cut stone, set into a massive Northern Renaissance gate. A painted double headed eagle, the symbol of the Royal House of Hapsburg, hovered over the entrance. The main interior courtyard of the village was surrounded by more "stone" structures, visually rich with heavily painted facades and irregular, steeply sloping Northern Renaissance rooflines [Figures 1.3 and 1.4]. Lower attendance was reported at the Lapp, Chinese, Turkish and Dahomey villages.[10] While the fairgoers were intrigued by the various cultures represented, those exhibits that showcased vernacular European forms were the most heavily attended. Immigrant families would have been familiar with these structures from their homeland and may have taken particular pride in showing their U.S.-born children images of their mother country. Additionally, many of these forms were similar to the vernacular European architecture illustrated as backdrops for the growing market of children's fairy and folk tales.[11] Now participants were able to view three dimensional buildings.

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[9] Burg 219 [citing Ben C. Truman, History of the World's Fair. Philadelphia: Mammoth Publishing Company, 1893].

[10] Burg 219.

[11] Grimms' German Popular Stories, first printed in 1823, defined his reputation, and heralded the beginning of a trend in folk culture combined with children's literature. See Chapter 7 for additional information.

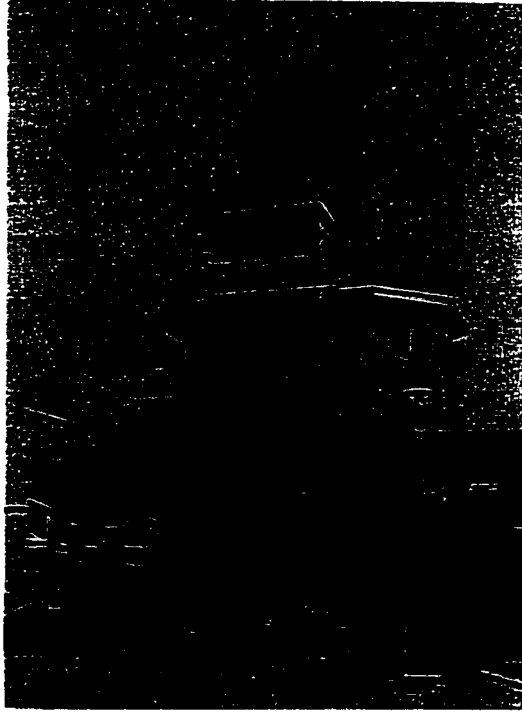

Figure 1.3: Entrance to "Old Vienna," Chicago World's Fair, 1893. From Appelbaum, 100.

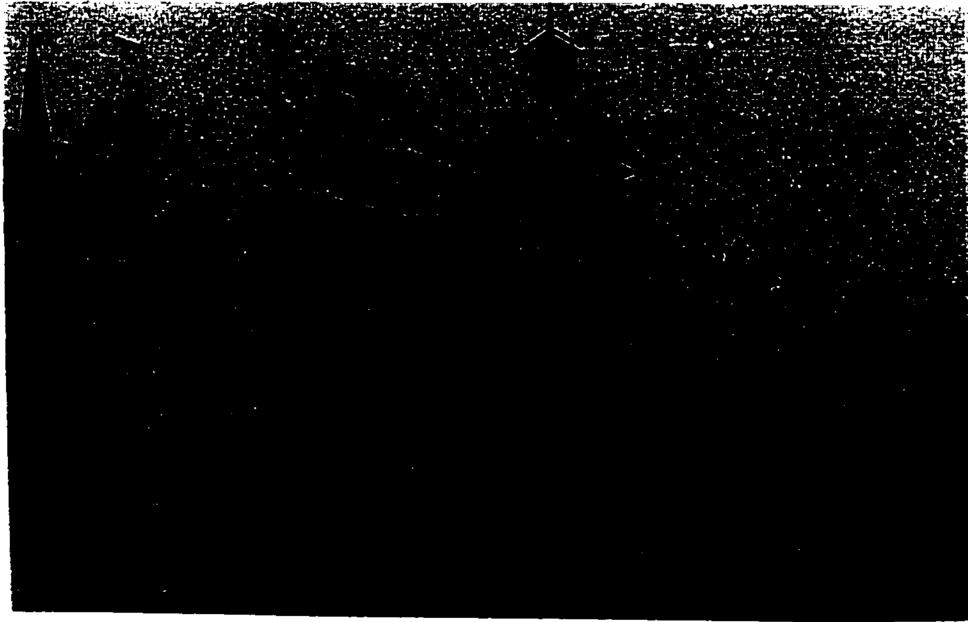

Figure 1.4: Courtyard of "Old Vienna" Chicago World's Fair, 1893. From Appelbaum, 101.

These fabricated cityscapes awed visitors with exaggerated proportions, intricate craftsmanship, exotic themes, and even their freakish, carnival nature. The architectural backdrops were a major contributor to the success of the experience. Authenticity was a relative term, and even the main German pavilion (not the German village) contained an amalgamation of historical and regional styles. The relationship between fantasy, entertainment, foreign culture and historical vernacular forms was cemented in the public's mind. The fair helped the general public vicariously travel to other lands, without the expense, inconvenience, or the dangers.[12] It was a sanitized, romanticized experience, and the public loved it. The proven commercial success of these foreign displays, combined with an overall decline in the quality of amusement parks and world's fairs in the 1940s, created the impetus for Walt Disney to explore the possibility of developing a grander vision of xenophilic entertainment.

Nostalgia and Nationalism

While the interest in exotic foreign cultures created a major form of entertainment and revenue, it was certainly not the only attraction at the world's fairs. Although the host countries were often anxious to prove their modernity to the world, there was still a strong interest in the traditional ways of life. This interest was fueled by increasingly defined national identities, which were evident in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century, a time when many of the current political boundaries were solidified.

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[12] Dioramas were a major entertainment venue at turn of the century world's fairs. They recreated famous events or places. Sets were animated with lighting, narration, music, and sometimes actors were on hand to recreate scenes.

Fairs and expositions often hosted exhibitions that reflected these nationalistic trends, in some cases focusing on the vernacular and folk traditions that were identified with the host country. Architecture, due to its inclusive scale and presence, was a major component of such exhibits.

These nostalgic and nationalistic trends were evident at the first American fair, the 1876 Philadelphia expo, which displayed a New England log house as a proud symbol of American history.[13] While some Americans were still living in log cabins in 1876, urban inhabitants did not regularly encounter these structures. With America's own recent past just beginning to draw patriotic interest, such icons showcased the country's rapid development from frontier outpost to civilized nation. Another reason for the interest in colonial architecture was the relationship found between a tangible object, such as a building, which could represent an intangible ideal, such as freedom or democracy. This interest in architecture as heritage was spurred on by the celebration of Columbus' discovery of America at the 1893 Colombian World's Exposition.[14] A "Hunter's Cabin", a dirt-floored log house, was built as a "museum" in honor of Daniel Boone and Davey Crockett.[15] State pavilions that were constructed by many of the original thirteen colonies also frequently capitalized on early history through reproductions of historical monuments. All the exhibits were designed to reflect the

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[13] Rydell 11.

[14] It was during this time that increased interest in historic preservation, particularly saving architectural landmarks associated with great political leaders, like Jefferson and George Washington, began to appear in the United States. For additional information on the history of the preservation movement in the United States, please see Charles B. Hosmer, Jr. Presence of the Past and Preservation Comes of Age, Volume I and II.

[15] Marling Colossus of Roads, 21.

current interests and passions of the general public throughout a time dominated by strong nostalgic and nationalistic feelings.

These feelings of nationalism and nostalgia extended beyond the boundaries of early American world's fairs. Shortly after the 1876 Philadelphia Exposition, the renowned architects McKim, Mead and White traveled to New England to study colonial architecture. The publicity associated with this trip placed historic architectural forms in the limelight across America. An interest in colonial forms continued throughout the twentieth century, and spurred several variations of colonial revival dwellings and furnishings that continued well past World War II, particularly with the impending bicentennial celebrations. Capitalizing on the growing popular interest in American history, individual states began to use historical events for image promotion. For example, at the 1964-65 New York world's fair, the Illinois state exhibit included an automated statue of Lincoln that recited the Gettysburg Address daily to crowds of enthralled people.

Americans were not the only ones to use historic architecture to represent ideas of nationality. Europeans were also impacted by nationalistic and nostalgic trends and began to create and display large scale architectural reproductions at their own world's fairs. The most popular feature of the 1935 Brussels Expo was an elaborate, cobblestone reconstruction of "Old Brussels." A few years later, the Paris Expo of 1937 also piqued interest in historical architecture. Although the Expo exhibited a number of streamlined modern buildings, the most popular area of the fair, the *Île des Cygnes*, displayed historic architecture. The *Île des Cygnes* was a slender island which housed reconstructions of

more than two dozen different regional styles of historic French buildings, with the Eiffel tower, built for the 1898 Paris fair, standing sentry in the background [Figure 1.5]. Exhibition planners were careful to place such historical/cultural interpretations away from the main buildings to prevent stylistic clashes, and to emphasize that these structures were part of a past, not present, architectural construction. Within the *Île des Cygnes*, a concerted effort was made to glorify rural life and folklore, an unusual juxtaposition with the celebrated modernity of the fair. This counter-emphasis allowed an escape from the homogeneous aspects of industrialization and urbanization that most European countries were encountering during this time.

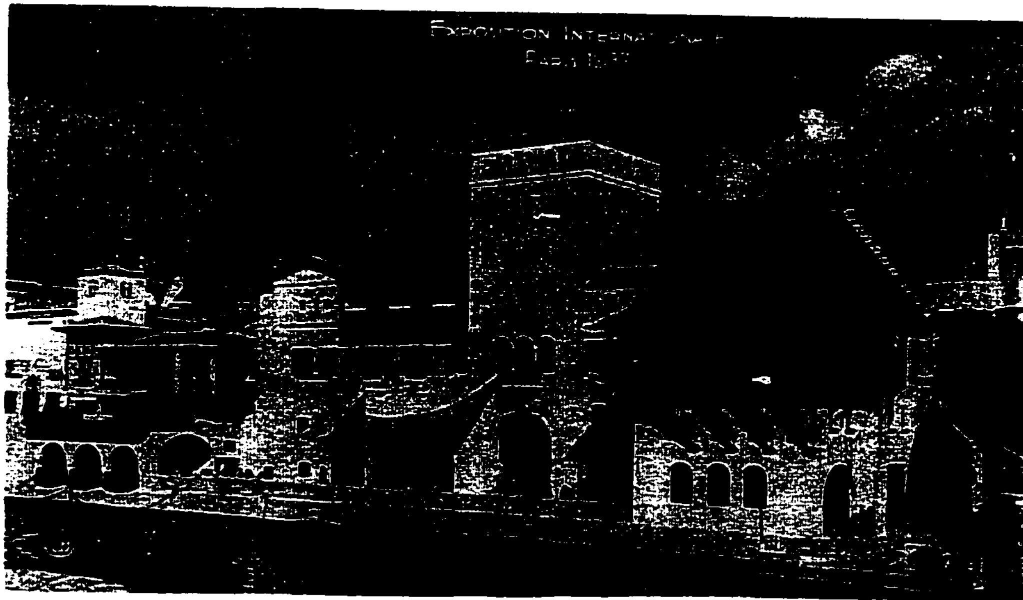

Figure 1.5: French Regional Center, Paris Exposition of 1937. From Peer, 56.

The successful reception of displays emphasizing local culture led some of the fair's planners to hypothesize that folklore/heritage excursions could fit into popular leisure activities and scouting excursions. French regionalists argued that vernacular traditions could help promote tourism, or even market regional art forms.[16] However, in spite of this hypothesis, most of western Europe and America did not immediately develop these ideas within the tourism and entertainment industries. By the twentieth century, living folk museums began to take hold in both the United States and Europe. One of the best known, and financed, living folk museums is Williamsburg, Virginia, which began its construction/reconstruction in the 1920s. While many living culture museums conformed to the world's fair model of privately owned, walled, attractions, Williamsburg developed an entirely new form of packaged culture as entertainment. This former colonial capital was sold, building by building, by its citizens in exchange for the economic benefit and national prestige that it was able to garner as a living history museum.

Financial Motivations

The proliferation of world's fairs was a direct result of the demonstrated profitability of these events. The first world's fair, the 1851 Great Expo, was a huge financial success, costing approximately £292,000 and raising more than £438,000.[17] Fees and admissions represented only part of the total financial gain. The host countries

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[16] Shanny Peer France on Display: Peasants, Provincials, and Folklore in the 1937 Paris World's Fair (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1998) 165.

used world's fairs to promote their own products, which they could export to foreign countries for an additional profit. The host countries also benefited from an education in foreign goods and products, which often served to increase the efficiency and productivity of their own industrial processes. However, perhaps the most unexpected financial windfall of the world's fairs was derived from the amount of money the public was willing to spend on the entertainment aspects of the fair, which included the national pavilions, restaurants, midways, and gardens.

During the next fifty years at least ten cities, ranging from New York to Sydney, hosted world's fairs. Businessmen saw new ways to earn money, countries found opportunities to advantageously market their culture, and guests were exposed to a new form of entertainment, the midway, which capitalized on both the xenophobic and xenophilic moods of the Victorian era. Although not all of these fairs were profitable for the promoters, concessions and entertainment venues continued to perform extraordinarily well. Additional entertainment-based attractions were added to future fairs in an attempt to increase the total number of participants. Since most of the profits made at the fairs came through these entertainment venues, the events' foci began to shift from education and passive display of factory manufactured items, to cultural exhibits and sideshows. Large corporations became increasingly involved, using the fair to highlight their product through carefully designed "entertainment" venues. The costs of such displays were simply written off as part of their advertising budget.

However, in spite of the evolution of their economic model, the profitability of world's fairs continually declined throughout the twentieth century. The failure of the

[17] Luckhurst 220.

world's fair model was not a surprise to critics. As early as 1851, developers of the Great Exposition expressed concern over the viability of the fair prototype. The abolition of large scale exhibitions was advocated by The Commissioner-General of the event, who apparently foresaw the difficulties that could develop in preparing such massive events in increasingly shorter and shorter periods of time, advocated the abolition of large scale exhibitions. He suggested that permanent museums or even specialized exhibits could take over the role of commercial display.[18] Although this suggestion was heeded in the London decennial exhibition of 1871, the majority of future expos continued to follow the original fair prototype, which ultimately led to their downfall. The very proliferation of fairs hastened the trend, since at the turn of the century it was not uncommon for a world's fair to be hosted every two or three years. Such a rapid interval left countries financially and physically drained, unable to continually sponsor exhibits. The financial cost for clearing large building sites, constructing a great number of buildings, and providing necessary infrastructure was substantial, especially since the majority of the structures were temporary and were destroyed after the fairs closed. With declining attendance and rising developmental costs, the world's fairs were no longer profitable for their sponsors. However, the financial gains made by midway vendors, coupled with an increase in leisure time among the middle classes, provided an opportunity for capitalization on the fairs' greatest successes; the midway and carnival zones. These zones became forerunners of amusement parks, such as Coney Island in New York. These parks were in large urban areas, and park organizers usually worked closely with

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[18] Luckhurst 220.

local transit to ensure adequate access. In some cases, transit companies owned amusement parks, and placed them at the end of their lines. The permanence of these amusement parks reduced the recurring development costs that plagued the world's fairs. Furthermore, the development of a park that was completely focused on entertainment venues was successful with the general public.[19]

Although these amusement parks were a huge success, by the 1920s they were beginning to show their age. Many needed extensive overhauls and modernizing. The owners, in some cases, had refused to provide adequate maintenance. Movie industry growth provided alternate fantasy venues and leisure escapes for the pubic.[20] Additionally, many of these parks were originally designed more for adults, with vaudeville type acts and risqué sideshows, than children. Problems also occurred as urban areas expanded to surround parks bringing both rough inner-city patrons and increasingly large numbers of dark skinned visitors, African-Americans and immigrants from Southern and Eastern Europe.[21] Amusement parks began to fall out of favor with the post-World War II baby boomer population. Family entertainment that better fit the mid-twentieth century values of suburban families was needed; and many traditional amusement parks were unable to adequately address the need. One disappointed father, searching for an appropriate venue for his family, finally decided to take matters into his own hands. This individual was one of the entertainment geniuses of the twentieth century, Walt Disney.

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[19] See John F. Kasson's Amusing the Million and Kathy Peiss' Cheap Amusements for more detailed investigations of amusement park culture at the beginning of the twentieth century.

[20] John F. Kasson. Amusing the Million. (New York: Hill & Wang, 1978) 112.

[21] Kasson 97.

Disneyland

Walt Disney observed the decline of world's fairs and amusement parks, and was frustrated by the associated lack of viable options for family entertainment. Amusement parks had proven to be economically viable ventures, and Disney was convinced that their downfall was a byproduct of insufficient maintenance and the inability to provide quality attractions for the entire family. To address these shortfalls, he focused on creating a theme park that referenced his rapidly expanding cartoon and movie productions. Disney's vision for the theme park combined both the nostalgic and xenophilic characteristics found in world's fairs with the fantasy elements showcased in his productions. For example, Disney's Main Street was the product of combining nostalgic, nationalist elements with the fantasy vision of the perfect American town, whereas Disney's Sleeping Beauty Castle was a combination of xenophilic elements and a fairy tale vision of castle. The stylistic elements of the architectural forms that he developed within Disneyland and Disney World eventually formed a model for redesigned communities like Helen and Leavenworth.

Walt Disney's travels had introduced him to a number of amusement parks and entertainment venues, where he carefully noted the aspects he liked and thought might be usable in his own development. He had traveled extensively in Europe and documented the cultural and stylistic aspects of these countries that could be incorporated within his vision. He visited the Chicago Rail Road fair in 1948, and was enchanted as trains took passengers to various "lands," which included models of the French Quarter in

New Orleans, Yellowstone Park, and a Native American Village.[22] Disney's work in the entertainment industry had convinced him that the general public was fascinated with fantasy, a counterpoint to the rapidly modernizing, routine, and standardized world around them. He was particularly intrigued with the ability of three dimensional environments to help make fantasy illusions real and tangible.[23] Eventually, Disney purchased enough land for his park near Anaheim, California, a site carefully selected due to its proximity to freeways and major population centers. To make sure that his park had the right moral overtones for a family destination, he purposefully selected land away from the beach, thereby discouraging bathing suit attire.[24] Disney consulted with architects who were asked to design the park's buildings, including the centerpiece project, the Sleeping Beauty castle (which encased a roller coaster). However, he quickly became dissatisfied with their conceptual drawings. Although reports are unclear, it is likely that the architects, trained in modernist styles, simply lacked the historical and vernacular background that would enable them to provide the fairytale images that Disney required. Disney's vision was of an architectural style that blended vernacular traditions with historical embellishments drawn from his own imagination. He immediately turned to his animators, who created reams of sketches, each more fantastic than the next. Throughout the development process, it was decided that the park would act as a gigantic stage set, employing a set of illusionary tricks to keep the participants engaged in their surroundings. Sleeping Beauty's castle anchored the park, serving as the

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[22] Marling, As Seen on TV, 102.

[23] Marling Designing Disney's Theme Parks: The Architecture of Reassurance 27.

[24] Kirse Granat May. Golden State, Golden Youth: The California Image in Popular Culture, 1955-1966. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002) 30.

hub. This visual "wienie," as Disney called it, maintained one's focus on the center of the complex, and coaxed people down the broad boulevards. The themed areas of the park (Fantasyland, Frontierland, Adventureland, and Tomorrowland) radiated outward from the castle. Although none of these areas were explicitly modeled on real environments, each drew upon set architectural themes. Sleeping Beauty's castle echoes the fantasy Germanic architecture of Bavaria's Mad King Ludwig (Neuschwannstein, which itself was a romanticized nineteenth century vision of a medieval castle). Fantasyland has elements from European vernacular architecture, particularly medieval vernacular, as seen in Mr. Toad's half timbered home. Mr. Toad was a character from an early twentieth century British children's tale, Wind in the Willows. Frontierland borrows images from the American West, while Adventureland looks towards exotic locals in Africa and South America.

One of the most interesting aspects of Disneyland's structures, apart from their eclectic design, is the reduced scale that was used for all of the buildings. At first, Mainstreet USA appears to be full scale, but gradually one becomes aware that every brick, shingle and even the gas lamps are reduced in size. The design guidelines apply to each individual structure, through a set of complex mathematical formulas. The ground floor of buildings is at a 7/8 scale, while the second floor is at 5/8 scale. This visual mechanism deceives the eye into believing that the structures are taller than they actually are, and at the same time makes them seem more approachable on a subconscious level. This design illusion is especially evident in Sleeping Beauty's castle. The masonry units become smaller every few courses of brick. It is unclear if this scale illusion was used at

previous world's fairs, but it was certainly an old stage set design trick that Disney would have been familiar with through his movie productions. As a result of these scale variations, the park was much more expensive to build, but Disney was willing to absorb the additional cost. He felt that such a scale allowed the mind to play more freely with the built environment, much like a toy, and made the fantasy aspect even more believable.[25]

Early publicity from Disneyland extolled the greatness of the park, and its rather unusual blending of various design and planning components. It was described as "...something of a fair, an exhibition, a playground, a community center, a museum of living facts, and a showplace of beauty and magic... filled with the accomplishments, the joys, the hopes of the world we live in. And it will remind us and show us how to make those wonders part of our lives."[26] The theme park was astoundingly successful, and by 1965 overall park attendance was one fourth of the total population of the United States.[27] Numerous scholars have written about the significance of Disneyland's main street. It was the fantasy communal environment that many nostalgic Americans wished they had, and a very different reality from the strip malls, freeways, and autoparks that awaited them once they left.[28] An additional zone, an international street, was scheduled for construction along Main Street between 1956 and '58, although it was never started. The

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[25] Richard Schickel, The Disney Version (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1968) 323, Bright, 64 and Marling, 79-80.

[26] Michael Sorkin, ed., Variations on a Theme Park: The New American City and the End of Public Space (New York: Hill and Wang, 1992) 206.

[27] May 43.

[28] Marling Designing Disney's Theme Parks, 181.

international street was intended to provide a place where people could experience exotic locations in a controlled, non-threatening environment.[29] While this area was never realized, Walt Disney continued to express interest in such a theme, particularly through his involvement in the 1964-65 New York world's fair. He used this fair to gauge how receptive the public might be to a second Disney theme park that would incorporate some of these xenophilic elements.

1964 - 65 New York World's Fair

The 1964-65 New York world's fair was a critical event that provided Disney with the confidence to expand his vision beyond Disneyland and into Disney World. The fair, keeping with changes made by its recent predecessors, allotted a sizable square footage to entertainment venues and concessions where profit margins were large. Modern machinery and technological inventions were utilized to provide "authentic" backgrounds for commercial promotions. Theatre stage sets were extremely high tech, and many companies, such as Exxon and Coca-Cola, brought in outside production companies to help design and "market" their fair venues. It was Disney's involvement in this capacity, and the corresponding success of his exhibits that led him to the creation of Disney World. To understand the appeal of Disney's exhibits, it is important to understand the state of world affairs, as well as the common American perception of these events, in the early 1960s. The increased prominence and size of urban areas in the United States after World War II split populations more visibly into urban and rural areas. Whereas urban communities were focused on the development of efficient,

modern living and working spaces (as seen in the metal Lustron houses that were built after the war), rural areas tried desperately to keep up through increased farm mechanization. The prevalence of traditional building techniques and handcrafts began to wane with the increased homogeneity brought about through modern communication and cheaper mass production. America had a love affair with modern architecture and all other signifiers of a modern, technologically superior culture.

At the same time Americans had a growing interest in foreign countries and travel. This was due, in large part, to the anti-isolationist role played by the United States after World War II. The Marshall Plan sent millions of U.S. dollars to reconstruct Europe, and thousands of American troops were based in Germany, England, Italy, and other European countries. Americans back home, perhaps inspired by letters from soldiers abroad, may have been curious about the romanticized descriptions of the European continent. America also took a great interest in European culture because of its ties to fantasy and folklore, and were enchanted by childhood fairytales (European in origin) made physical with cobblestone streets, medieval castles, and elaborately costumed hosts. While there certainly were home-grown American folktales, as in Johnny Appleseed and Paul Bunyon, these figures had no real architectural trappings, and were focused on the machismo themes of exploration and domination. It might appear that an interest in modernity would conflict with the fascination with foreign history and culture. However, to a country that was increasingly uniform in dress, language, customs, and architecture, which tended towards the functional and the sterile, the fragmented regionalism of Europe was particularly interesting, perhaps in part because it

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[29] Marling Designing Disney's Theme Parks, 92.

did not threaten America's emerging superpower status. The same traditional building techniques and crafts that seemed provincial and hopelessly outdated at home were frequently viewed as quaint and exotic when embellished with foreign designs and foreign costumes. Twentieth century American exhibits, both at home and abroad, focused on showcasing the superior modernity and technology of America. Although many European displays also focused on modern technology, Americans were frequently fascinated by the native, vernacular styles and traditions that showcased the national identities of these foreign lands.

The planners of the New York World's Fair wanted to showcase a number of foreign displays, but many European countries, including Italy, France, and Great Britain, were unwilling to sponsor pavilions due to high rental and construction charges. Spain and Japan were among the small number of foreign countries that participated. International corporations capitalized on a lack of national pavilions by filling their exhibits with carefully cultivated, romanticized images of foreign lands. This was the industrial, capitalist equivalent of colonialism displayed by France with its *Esplanade des Invalides* at the 1876 Paris Exposition. The Coca-Cola exhibit recreated five different environments from around the world; Rio de Janeiro, an Indian garden, a Cambodian feast, a Hong Kong street, and a Bavarian Ski lodge. The Bavarian ski lodge certainly would have been one of the least exotic of the environments, and would have been the most comfortably familiar, since it was the only European portion of the exhibit. Three exhibiting corporations of the New York world's fair enlisted the talents of Walt Disney to help create their pavilions. The Ford Motor Company's exhibit contained life sized, moving replicas of dinosaurs. General Electric had a moving "theatre" which took

visitors back to the turn of the century with an automated guide, who then proceeded to show how electricity made each generation's home more modern and efficient. Pepsi commissioned the "Small World" ride, where visitors traveled through a set filled with colorful automated dolls representing the nations of the globe. The figures were united by the common song that they sang, and also by the unthreatening similarity of their physiology, form, and scale. (although they did all wear simplified consumes from their regions.) Disney was even hired by the State of Illinois to produce a life sized fully automated figure of Lincoln, capable of speaking to his audience. Disney's application of modern technology to realize fantasy and xenophilic dreams was unprecedented and delighted audiences. Since modernity, xenophilia and fantasy were prevailing themes in America during this time period, Disney created an entertainment venue that tapped into every aspect of the public's imagination. The response to these displays was overwhelmingly positive, and provided Walt Disney with the necessary encouragement to develop a grander version of his existing theme park, Disney World.

Disney World

Marketing studies showed that only ten percent of Disneyland's guests lived east of the Mississippi, so Disney decided that the best way to acquire new visitors was to bring his theme park to the east coast.[30] Disney World was first introduced to the public as "Project X." After deciding that Florida would provide an amenable location, Disney

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[30] Judd 89.

was able to acquire more than 28,000 acres of land.[31] In 1965 he promised Florida's governor that there would be another Disneyland type park, in addition to a new community that was being called Epcot (Experimental Prototype Community of Tomorrow). Which forms from the 1964 world's fair impacted Disney's new development? He seemed to be particularly enamored with the foreign and corporate pavilions that he helped design. He felt that these displays combined the best aspects of education and fantasy. He was so intrigued with the various national pavilions as a type of three dimensional United Nations, that he decided to add a similar element to his new park, which eventually became a part of Epcot. He also continued his unique blend of fantasy and realism in the amusement section, and expanded his architectural constructions with the addition of large internal hotels. Disney World's large size allowed the property to support several hotels, making a visitor's experience all-inclusive and raising profits. Disney was particularly pleased with this aspect of the park, since he had been quite distressed with the development of poorly themed cheap hotels and eateries that crowded the edges of Disneyland. He wanted to keep the fantasy illusion as inclusive as possible, a belief, and basic design challenge that would eventually impact Helen and Leavenworth as well.

Five hotels were originally planned for construction in Disney World, with Asian, Venetian, Persian, Contemporary, and Polynesian themes. These drew visitors into a fantasy world, much like the midway sections of world's fairs.[32] Due to budgetary and time constraints, only the Contemporary and Polynesian hotels were built. Interest in

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[31] Disney now owns about forty-three square miles of land in the area, making it approximately the size of San Francisco.

Polynesian culture appeared in the 1960s, due in part to Hawaiian statehood in 1959, the Kon Tiki adventures lead by Norwegian Thor Heyerdahl, and a tourism industry that increasingly promoted exotic, relaxing tropical vacations.[33] The Polynesian resort, with its tropical oasis swimming pool, Hawaiian luau, themed rooms, immense quantities of flowers, and brightly costumed employees, provided an exotic experience.[34] The Contemporary resort, which was a modern, prefabricated structure, intersected by the monorail, represented Walt Disney's interest in modern technology. At the time of its construction, the Contemporary would have been every bit as exotic and otherworldly as the Polynesian resort. While the hotels certainly caught people's attention, the most international and exotic flair of Disney World came from a new section that the California prototype did not have- Epcot.

Epcot was originally designed as a modern utopia, a self contained city for approximately 20,000, which Disney considered the ideal community size. The center had a pedestrian city core, with city offices and international shopping pavilions. Homes ringed the exterior, and mass transit, in the form of a monorail, would enable the community to move through the city. Walt Disney died before his dream was fully realized, and his brother Roy, cautious about anything grander than an enlarged Disneyland, quickly scrapped the project.[35] As a result, Epcot became another theme

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[32] Marling Designing Disney's Theme Parks, 159.

[33] Marling Designing Disney's Theme Parks, 118.

[34] The author stayed at the Polynesian resort in 1976, at the age of five, and still remembers the hotel experience much more vividly than the rest of the park.

[35] Walt Disney's original version of Epcot was finally realized when Disney constructed Celebration Station, Florida, a planned city for 20,000.

park in the complex, although it was amazingly similar to world's fairs in its layout and exhibits. Epcot was not opened at the same time as Disney World, remaining under construction until 1982. The front section housed several pavilions, funded, in part, by major corporations, and representing their interests. General Electric's pavilion (designed by Disney) from the New York's world's fair was reopened here. Kraft's pavilion displayed various forms of food technology, including a hydroponic garden. Kodak commanded the central building, a large geodesic sphere, containing the "world of the imagination." The most novel and popular part of Epcot became the international pavilions, where there are currently more than ten countries represented, each in its own architectural setting. The countries are arranged around a central lake, with a rather Beaux Arts axis that determines the main entry point, directly across the lake from the American pavilion. Counterclockwise from the entrance are Mexico, China, Germany, Africa, Italy, the United States, Japan, Morocco, England, France, and Canada. Originally, Walt Disney planned for these areas to be much like the international pavilions at world's fairs, each supported by a host country, providing exhibits and information along with dining and shopping experiences. Although the countries were not interested in providing full scale pavilions (most likely due to cost concerns), the Disney corporation constructed thematic areas that had the architectural flavor of each country. The interiors largely became shopping spaces, filled with native goods, and restaurants, selling regional specialties.[36] Some of the pavilions offered rides, as in Mexico, or movie experiences (Canada and China) which focused on providing

[36] Epcot accommodated adult visitors with sales of alcohol, which were banned at the original Disney World.

entertainment, rather than educational value. Visitors to Epcot can take a quick trip around the world, buying Mexican handicrafts, taking a picture in front of a Japanese pagoda, eating lunch in Italy, and pausing for an afternoon sweet in France. Then they can leisurely head back to their Disney hotels satisfied with the knowledge that they have just seen (and shopped) most of the known world, never having to leave the safe, balmy confines of Florida. A Disney publication boasts, "Paris is one of the great cities of the world for walking, and the World Showcase miniature version, while just as charming, is easier to cover on foot."[37] In the Nations of the World Pavilion at Epcot, there are few rides. Shopping and eating become their own amusement, and the public associates foreign lands with large, outdoor shopping malls, where one can hardly wait to visit the next country to see what tempting, unusual wares it can offer.

While the architectural detailing in each of the pavilions is amazingly accurate, scale has been sacrificed, and styles that may occur at opposite ends of the host country have been placed side by side. Karol Ann Marling has described the world pavilions as "...a map of the real places in the world that had already been transformed into quasi-fantasy by Hollywood, paperback books, and the collective imagination."[38] And, of course, Disney movies, such as Snow White, Sleeping Beauty and Pinocchio, had already helped create fantasy environments based on European vernacular building techniques. As one travels through these worlds, everyone speaks English, medical shots are not needed, beggars do not harass, and streets are clean. The foreign attendants that are brought in to keep the shops and serve at the restaurants all speak English perfectly.

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[37] Richard R. Beard, Walt Disney's Epcot: Creating the New World of Tomorrow (New York: Abrams, Inc., 1982) 174.

Even books published by the Disney corporation, which glowingly describe the wonders of Epcot, make the connection between collective fantasies of the American public and the international pavilions. A section on Germany reads: "Yes, we think of fairy tales when we daydream about Germany, and of craftsmanship, of the romance of river castles, of oompah bands, and of sauerkraut and beer."[39] This is not the twentieth century Germany fraught with political rifts, nazism, and massive warfare. This is a softer, "imagineered" world, designed for tourism, filled with gingerbread, quaint half timbered structures, and images of Heidi peeking out from flower festooned windows. Other authors have noted that Disney park guides warn readers that they won't find "real" countries here, only their "essence," much the way a traveler, upon returning home, remembers only amalgamations of what they saw.[40] Some authors have been concerned that visitors to the World Showcase might come away from the displays with an underlying belief that the foreign nations are basically theme parks, filled with quaint people and customs and constantly happy.[41] Today, Disneyland and Disney World combine as one of the most successful entertainment venues ever created. What led to the widespread acceptance and success of Walt Disney's vision? Academics from numerous fields have approached the Disneyland/Disney World successes, each examining the issue with parameters set by their own field. Some have argued that Disney was first successful with its Main Street USA theme, in the main parks, due to

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[38] Marling Designing Disney's Theme Parks, 159.

[39] Beard 182.

[40] Project on Disney, Inside the Mouse (Durham: Duke University Press, 1995) 77.

[41] Stephen M. Fjellman, Vinyl Leaves: Walt Disney World and America (Boulder: Westview Press, 1992) 233.

Americans longing to make sense out of their lives. The solution was to search for a "community of memory" which would serve to reconnect people with each other, and with the past.[42] Disney, in a very conscious way, tried to recreate this (and originally had even hoped that his park would have a more educational, teaching aspect than perhaps it does today). The Disney corporation wanted to expand this original mission with the creation of an American History theme park in Virginia, however this "Disneyfying" of history raised such an uproar in the 1990s, that the Disney corporation quickly tabled the project. There has also been an interest in Disney's relationship to late capitalism, where the unconscious (fantasy) and nature (wilderness, and anthropology) have been commodified.[43] If this is true, then Disney has managed to understand these developments almost uncannily, and make considerable profits from them. Fantasy takes center stage in both Disneyland and Disney World, and is combined with anthropology at the World Showcase. Recently the Disney corporation has capitalized on the American interest in Wilderness by adding the California Adventure to Disneyland, and the Wilderness Lodge in Disney World. The latter attraction is a rather odd transplant of Yosemite or Glacier National Park, hotel and all, into a Florida environment.

Other scholars point to the more tangible social and economic trends at the time, which were exploited by Disney's infamous marketing machine. Political and cultural conditions in the United States after the Second World War created an environment that was very conducive to Disneyland and Disney World. A rapid expansion of middle class lifestyle had occurred, and by 1960 the per capita income was thirteen percent higher

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[42] Fjellman 56.

than it had been just fifteen years earlier.[44] This increase in wealth allowed families to spend considerably more on entertainment and luxury goods than ever before. At the same time that Americans were becoming wealthier, people were leaving crowded urban spaces and moving into suburbs. Between 1950 and 1960 U.S. suburbs grew by forty six percent in contrast to eleven percent population growth in cities.[45] While suburbs created an inexpensive, homogenous neighborhood for raising children, they were also considerably more sterile than urban areas. As a result, families often felt compelled to use their expanded economic power to vacation in areas that were quite different. Disney capitalized on this desire by using television as a vehicle to publicize his products. The cartoons and feature films that he produced were strengthened with promotions from his Sunday night television show and the Mickey Mouse Club. This popular children's television show, produced in the 1950s, promoted Disney's theme park and the variety of consumer goods produced for the venue.

Another factor in Disney's success may have been an increasing need for Americans to retreat from disturbing events occurring in the real world. Following the post World War II era of increased prosperity was a period of increasing political and social unrest. In 1954 the Supreme Court reversed a long standing policy of racial segregation with its Brown v. Board of Education ruling. During the early 1960s civil rights demonstrations were held throughout the south. Urban violence culminated in

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[43] Fjellman 6.

[44] U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Census. Historical Statistics of the U.S.: Colonial Times to 1970. Part I. (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office) 225.

[45] Neil Larry Shumsky, Ed. Encyclopedia of Urban America: Cities and Suburbs. Volume 2. (Santa Barbara: A.B.C.:CLIO, 1998) 761.

Harlem, New York, and in Watts, Los Angeles. When concerns were not monopolized by national affairs, they were diverted to international incidents, and the United States' growing role abroad, particularly in the Vietnam War. In an increasingly unsettled environment, it is not surprising that images of fantasy and safety garnered tremendous public interest. Although the primary architectural style during this time period was modernism, with its sleek industrial lines, the art world did offer escapes through Surrealism and Pop Art. Interest developed in Jungian Psychology, fantasy, popular culture, and myth. If myth is used synonymously as ideology, as Barthes argues, then its function "...is to empty reality" and to depoliticize it.[46] Disney was able to capitalize on all of this, and allow visitors to explore, at some level, the fantasy, exotic, and unknown, while still being in a realm of complete safety. This became Disney's "hook", allowing him to pull potential consumers to his park. However, once this hook has pulled people in, do they realize what is real and what is fake? Do they even care? Joel Achenback has described the late twentieth century as an era of surrealism, where even though the public can sometimes tell the difference between real and fake, they often don't care.[47] Disney's success clearly illustrated the public's willingness to suspend their disbelief in the name of true pleasure, enjoyment and escape from the troubles of modern life. As a result of the public's willingness to embrace Disney's vision, his theme parks became the model for all future recreational areas to follow, referred to by some scholars as "America's stand in for Elysium... the utopia of leisure."[48] As a result, Helen and Leavenworth,

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[46] D. Ley and K. Olds, "Landscape as Spectacle: World's Fairs and the Culture of Heroic Consumption." Environment and Planning D: Society and Space 6 (1988) 194.

[47] Fjellman 6.

[48] Sorkin 205.

encouraged by the fantastic success of Disney, decided to focus on his xenophilic entertainment venues and take them one step further through the establishment of living, artificial communities.

Colonial Williamsburg

Long before the creation of Disneyland, Colonial Williamsburg, Virginia, had learned that packaging culture, in this case American culture, was a very profitable enterprise. Unlike Disneyland and Disney world, which were created corporate entities, Williamsburg started as an incorporated town, which saw tourism (and philanthropist funding) as a way to revitalize an economically depressed community. What type of precedent does Williamsburg set for created culture? How does Williamsburg represent an advancement of the model of tourism represented by world's fairs and amusement parks? Williamsburg was the byproduct of a greater national movement that was extremely interested in depictions of historical America. The interest in the history of America was reflected in the nationalistic and nostalgic elements of American world's fairs in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. Displays of colonial furnishings and material culture had been particularly popular at the 1876 Philadelphia exposition and the 1893 Columbian World's Fair in Chicago. Williamsburg was an attempt to transform an incorporated community into a historically accurate representation of America's past that would serve to satisfy the interests of the general public. This transformation of an incorporated community into a living theme park established a new

precedent for created culture that was followed by both Helen and Leavenworth in the mid twentieth century.

Williamsburg, founded in 1699, was Virginia's colonial British capital. After the revolution, Virginia moved the commonwealth's capital to Richmond. As a result, Williamsburg, which had been a very wealthy city, with legal offices and a college, began to dwindle in size and significance. By the early twentieth century, many of the colonial buildings had burned to the ground, were decaying, or had been extensively remodeled by the existing thousand residents. W. A. R. Goodwin, pastor of the Bruton Parish Church, had long been fascinated with the historical context of Colonial Williamsburg. Here lay the remains of a eighteenth century village that had housed prominent figures in American history such as Thomas Jefferson, George Washington, and John Hancock. The original Virginia Colony of Jamestown was close, as was Yorktown, where the British surrendered. Goodwin was concerned that this concentrated history was being lost among contemporary developments, which had begun to overshadow the original, now decaying, historic structures. He was convinced that a way could be found to preserve this icon of American History.

Goodwin turned to Henry Ford for a solution in the 1920s. Ford was uninterested (he had not yet started his Greenfield Village project), so Goodwin turned to another wealthy American, John D. Rockefeller, Jr. Rockefeller wanted a legacy for his family's money, something that would legitimize and memorialize their wealth in the way that public libraries had for the Carnegies. In 1926 Rockefeller visited Williamsburg and decided that the "opportunity to restore an entire colonial community and keep it free

from incongruous surroundings was irresistible."[49] Rockefeller and Goodwin purchased as many buildings as possible, in an attempt to obtain complete control over the preservation and restoration of the town . To accomplish this feat real estate transactions were conducted under great secrecy, until more than two million dollars worth of property had been purchased. Finally, in 1928, the town was informed of the "mystery" purchaser's identity in a public meeting. There was some local opposition, mainly from people that resented a transformation being pushed upon them by outside forces. Some referred to it as the second "Yankee occupation" of their town. One townsman, Mayor S. D. Freeman, argued that local townspeople would lose control over their own environment, and would become museum objects, like "a butterfly pinned in a glass cabinet."[50] A town meeting was held in June, and the citizens voted on turning over control of their public properties, such as the courthouse and Market Square. This was an unprecedented moment in American history. Communities had certainly given away large parcels of land to attract industrial development in the past. Tax exemptions were also a common approach for bringing new industry and development into a community. However, the sale of all public and most of the private buildings to an external entity, in hopes of increasing both the historical prominence and economic revenue of the town, was unheard of. Williamsburg was clearly feeling the weight of their economic struggles, and Rockefeller was offering rare economic hope to the town inhabitants. While there certainly were those that were not enamored with the plan, it

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[49] George Humphrey Yetter. Williamsburg Before and After: The Rebirth of Virginia's Colonial Capital. (Williamsburg: The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, 1988) 52.

[50] Richard Handler and Eric Gable. New History in an Old Museum: Creating the Past at Colonial Williamsburg. (Durham: Duke University Press, 1997) 33.

appears that public pressure from willing inhabitants, combined with the clout of Rockefeller's name, was enough to convince the majority of the town. Williamsburg's citizens were convinced that a radical transformation would be successful, both financially and as a historic contribution to the American public. Out of almost two hundred cast, there were only four dissenting votes. This overwhelming support left people in surrounding communities both surprised and bewildered. One local rhymester commented on the event with the ditty-

My gawd they've sold the town,
My gawd they've sold the town.
And it is said the news is spread
For many miles around.

They've sold the courthouse green,
I daresay all the people,
They'd sell the church, the rectory too
And even sell the steeple...

The streets will come up
And the poles will all come down
So take it from me stranger,
It's going to be some town.[51]

Although the majority vote provided legal approval for the transfer of public buildings, such as the courthouse, individual homeowners negotiated contracts directly with Historic Williamsburg for their private residences. Many sold their homes to Williamsburg, under the condition that they be granted lifetime occupation of the building after the restoration was completed. However, not all families were interested in selling their dwellings. A handful refused, and to this day a few lone Victorian structures

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[51] Yette 55.

remain in Williamsburg, marked by private property signs. Despite Colonial Williamsburg's intense efforts, these structures remain an anomaly in the re-fabricated colonial town.

Williamsburg had changed greatly since its colonial days, and to re-create the town as it appeared in the time of Washington and Jefferson was no easy task [Figure 1.6]. Eighty-eight original buildings, constructed between 1699 and 1840, the period of historical interpretation, existed in varying states of decay. These all required massive restoration. Beyond these restoration projects, there were a tremendous number of structures that no longer stood, many of which were historically important, including the original Capitol and the Governor's residence. The 1699 Capitol was destroyed by fire in 1747 and the Governor's Palace had burned to the ground in 1781. These buildings needed to be completely reconstructed. Colonial Williamsburg entails a 173 acre historic district, with more than 500 buildings on the property. With only eighty-eight original structures, more than 82% of the buildings are twentieth century reconstructions.[52] More than 400 structures, many of which would have been historic in their own right, were demolished to create "old" historic Williamsburg.[53] While architects and historians were fortunate to find a wealth of historic prints and documents (some archived in England) describing the original structures, in many cases records describing the colonial buildings were limited or unavailable. When plans were made to reconstruct these edifices, architects frequently had to depend on more general records, or historic trends. The early design staff often engaged in heated discussions regarding the best methods for recreating

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[52] Handler 15.

buildings which lacked adequate historical records. Several architects in the restoration group (Platt, Cram and Coolige) advocated aesthetically and architecturally pleasing reconstructions, which were not always historically accurate. Other members, including Kimball and Kocher, strictly adhered to all original building information. While it appears that Kimball and Kocher usually swayed their counterparts when existing records were found, it is unclear how accurate many of the undocumented reconstructions were. [54] Such a high percentage of new construction in a historic district (possibly the highest in the nation) is extremely unusual, and makes one wonder what is truly "real" in Williamsburg. Certainly the majority of the buildings are not, nor are most of the gardens [Figures 1.7 and 1.8].

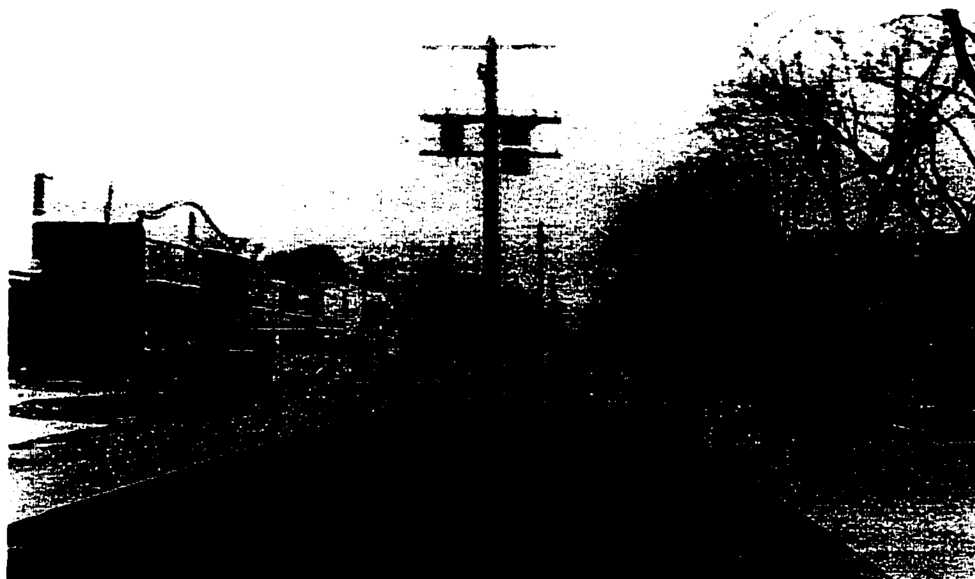

Figure 1.6: Williamsburg, Duke of Gloucester Street, looking East, 1928. From Yetter.

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[53] Yetter viii.

[54] Yetter 60.

Figure 1.7: Williamsburg, Duke of Gloucester Street, early twentieth century. From Yetter.

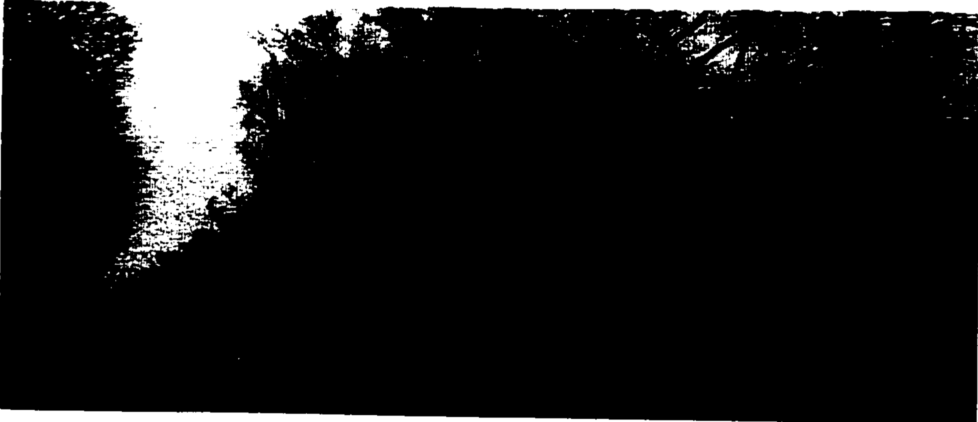

Figure 1.8: Williamsburg, Duke of Gloucester Street, 1980s. From Yetter.

Architectural historians and critics have long cast a wary eye on Colonial Williamsburg. Ada Louis Huxtable, the architectural critic for the New York Times, claimed that Williamsburg paved the way for Disney by fostering "the replacement of reality with selective fantasy," and encouraging Americans "to prefer- and believe in- a sanitized and selective version of the past."[55] Williamsburg certainly is connected to world's fairs and Disney through the selling of fantasy; however, in this case the fantasy is frequently publicized as reality. Exactly how does this American icon promote itself? How honest is Williamsburg in communicating to tourists that a majority of the town was fabricated in the twentieth century? How does the general public perceive this attraction?

Books discussing Colonial Williamsburg, from both a historic and an architectural vantage point abound, particularly since the Colonial Williamsburg foundation actively publishes, or endorses volumes on these topics. One description sanctioned by the organization states that:

> "The overall ambience was not intended to express a particular date, but rather the feeling and appearance of a continuum of time reflecting the colonial experience, together with the classical tradition of the early republic which evolved from it."[56]

Another text published by Colonial Williamsburg mentions:

> "An atmosphere of colonial lifestyle evokes a vivid and romantic period in our history which, while contrasting dramatically with today's standards, offers a measure of entertainment as it promotes appreciation for present principles."[57]

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[55] Handler 44.

[56] Yetter 60.

[57] Peter Beney. The Majesty of Colonial Williamsburg. (Gretna, Louisiana: Pelican Publishing Company, 1997) 9.

Thus, the organization consciously recognizes, and admits, that it is expressing a generalized period, appealing to the public's imagination and romanticism. Rarely mentioned in all the glossy publications on Williamsburg is what happened to the living, working town that was supplanted by reconstructions. What type of precedent was set for other communities that wanted to revitalize their downtown cores in such a fashion? Is there a real Williamsburg, or is the town primarily a tourist attraction that shuts down after the last tourist goes back to their hotel in the evening? Where did the citizens go? As buildings were purchased, some homeowners received lifetime tenancy rights. However, upon their death the structures returned under the full control of Colonial Williamsburg. Many of the homeowners did not even request these rights, with their families simply leaving the downtown core and moving to suburban areas surrounding the community.

The core commercial businesses were significantly impacted by the reconstruction of Williamsburg. Before the restoration began, all shops, gas stations, garages, and legal offices were removed from the downtown, and placed on the western end of the main street; located "in such a way as to interfere as little as possible with the restoration of the town."[58] After the restoration was completed, the businesses were provided with an opportunity to return. However, many of the original businesses either relocated or considerably changed their product line to address tourist needs. For example, the local drug store remains, but it has a considerably smaller stock of pharmaceutical wares, and a larger selection of cold drinks, sun block, and film than one

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[58] Kocher, 94.

would expect to find in a normal community drug store. If the citizens of Williamsburg want to purchase a light bulb, a head of lettuce, or hold a community meeting, they can no longer do this downtown. These elements of urban life have been removed from the downtown core. In their place are dozens of shops that vie for tourist patronage, where one can easily purchase homemade soap, a colonial mob cap, or a powdered wig. This shift is not unusual in tourist communities, where the needs and spending patterns of the tourist supercede those of locals. Therefore, the real town of Williamsburg, with residential housing and commercial establishments that cater to locals, has been removed from the downtown core, and forced to exist in strip malls that ring the historic center.

It is not surprising to discover that the tourist influence eventually overwhelmed Williamsburg. Rockefeller had agreed to provide the funding to reinvent the town in its historical image, but he intended the town to become self-sufficient through the financial windfalls of tourism. There were financial concerns about sustaining funding for such a large scale endeavor, so a major part of the colonial Williamsburg organization was established to control the historical tours and run the hotels, restaurants, golf courses and gift shops. Theoretically, this income producing division only existed to provided funding to sustain and expand Williamsburg as a pure academic research environment. In reality, the tail often wags the dog, and tourist needs and wants frequently controlled the development of Williamsburg. As a result of the focus on continued economic windfalls, Williamsburg became more of a recreational center than an accurate historical reproduction.

The restoration of Williamsburg clearly and dramatically altered the social fabric of the original community. Although one could argue that this impact provides ample

evidence that these kinds of restorations should not be performed, the overwhelming financial success of Williamsburg was bound to create successors. The restoration transformed Williamsburg from a small, economically struggling community into a major tourist attraction within the United States, establishing a precedent for later economic revitalization projects based on tourism. Helen and Leavenworth are examples of other small, economically struggling communities that followed a modified Williamsburg prototype. However, rather than fabricating models of their historic past, these communities took advantage of the xenophilic tendencies of the American populace and created artificial communities based on historic European communities. These artificial communities made no pretense of historical accuracy, but were developed purely for the purposes of providing entertainment in exchange for much needed financial gains. As such, these communities drew upon the most appealing aspects of both historical communities (such as Williamsburg) and created communities in amusement parks (such as Disney's Epcot Center). A new type of artificial community was created, one which experienced several of the same positive and negative attributes as its predecessors.

CHAPTER 2

Leavenworth, Washington

"An easy two or three hour drive from such major urban centers as Seattle and Spokane, one finds a valley of unsurpassed beauty unspoiled by modern progress."

Leavenworth Echo Sonnenschein Edition vol. 9 1972-73

Leavenworth, Washington, is located on the east side of the Cascade mountain range. The economic development of Leavenworth was strongly influenced by the vast timber resources in this area. Once these resources were spent, the community was forced to develop creative means for capitalizing on the remote, natural beauty of the region. What were the predominant economic conditions that formed Leavenworth? How did the community respond to changing economic realities during the mid-1900's? What made the community decide to adopt a Germanic redevelopment theme? Who was responsible for these changes? What was the design process, and how has it evolved over the several decades of community development? How did the community transformation impact the town's inhabitants? What future challenges need to addressed by the community? Interviews with Ted Price, one of the founders of the Bavarian theme, and other community leaders provided a great deal of the primary source information for this chapter. Discussions with these locals indicate that economic factors were the driving force behind the community's wholesale adoption of the Bavarian theme. However, the original idea was not tied to these economic concerns, but rather was the vision of Price's partner, Bob Rodgers, who was stationed in Bavaria after World War II and was interested in creating a community that reflected his fondest memories of the region.

Early Regional History

Eastern Washington was primarily explored and settled during the 1860s gold rush. In the early 1890s, homesteaders appeared in the Wenatchee River area and Icicle Valley, and the Great Northern Rail Road Company laid tracks on the area now traversed by State Highway 2. The Okanogan Investment Company bought land by the railroad right-of-way and platted a new community in 1893, which was subsequently named Leavenworth, in honor of Captain Charles Leavenworth, president of the Okanogan Investment.[1] The Great Northern Railroad was a primary employer in the region, building a roundhouse and machine shops in the area, and in 1897 the company started work on a railroad tunnel to replace the Cascade switchbacks.[2] Expansive forests dominated the landscape, and in 1903 the Lamb-Davis Lumber Company, of Iowa, established a local presence. The Wenatchee River was dammed downstream and logging camps were built throughout the area. The presence of Lamb-Davis had a significant impact on the rapid development and expansion of Leavenworth. Lamb-Davis started Leavenworth's first bank and provided utility services for the local residents.[3] Between 1903 and 1913 the town's population tripled, and at its peak Leavenworth had

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[1] Ted Price, Miracle Town: Creating America's Bavarian Village in Leavenworth Washington (Vancouver, Washington: Price and Rodgers, 1997) 5 and Ruth Kirk and Carmela Alexander, Exploring Washington's Past (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1990) 105. Brokenshire's Washington State Place Names indicates that the name Leavenworth was selected by Charles Leavenworth in honor of his great uncle, Col. Henry Leavenworth, founder of Ft. Leavenworth, Kansas. (112)

[2] Kirk and Alexander 105.

[3] Kirk and Alexander 105.

almost 6,000 residents.[4] A building boom occurred at the turn of the century, and many local establishments were housed in one- and two-story, late Victorian brick commercial structures, characterized by regular bay spacing, large plate glass storefronts and simply ornamented cornices. Unfortunately, Leavenworth's prosperity was short lived. The Great Northern Railroad rerouted its tracks in the 1920s, and pulled out of Leavenworth completely. Shortly thereafter, in 1928, Lamb-Davis closed the local sawmill due to depletion of local timber supplies. The loss of its two major employers, and the Great Depression that followed, plunged Leavenworth into economic ruin. Entire blocks of the commercial district were sold for unpaid taxes, and many businesses closed. The community was frozen in a state of decay for decades, and only modest improvements were made to a few of the smaller structures (exterior metal siding modifications) during the 1950s [Figure 2.1].

Introduction to Bavaria

During the 1950s Ted Price and his companion, Bob Rodgers, started vacationing at the ski slopes off Highway 2 near Leavenworth. Price also spent a considerable amount of time in the area on business travel as a pharmaceutical representative for Pfizer Labs.[5] Price and Rogers became enamored with the region and discussed purchasing a nearby cabin, but they ultimately decided to acquire a local eatery called Cole's Corner Cafe. The cafe was located at the junction of Highway 2 and Wenatchee Road, about 15

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[4] Price 6.

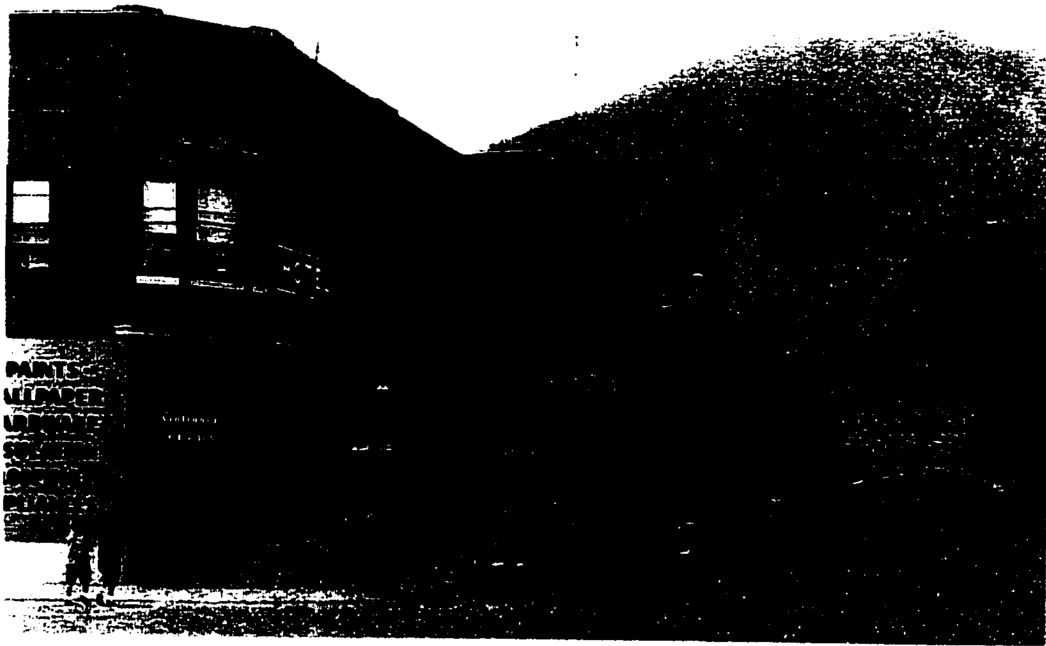

Figure 2.1: Leavenworth (Front Street) in the 1950s. Price viii.

Figure 2.2: Leavenworth (Front Street) in the 1990s. From Price ix.

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[5] Ted Price, personal interview, 25 October 2002.

miles west of Leavenworth. After purchasing the café in 1957, they renamed the property "The Squirrel Tree" and began extensive remodeling of the property. Price originally thought that the restaurant could house his large collection of Native American artifacts, forming a theme that would serve to catch the attention of passing tourists. Rodgers, however, had a different type of design in mind: German-Bavarian.[6] Rodgers had fought in Czechoslovakia during the war but was stationed in Munich from 1945-1946.[7] He had pleasant memories of the mountains and the quaint rural architecture he had encountered during this time. Due to the topographic similarities of the two regions he felt that a German Bavarian architectural style would blend perfectly into Chelan County. He also believed that the natural associations made with great Alpine ski resorts would further strengthen the thematic connections.[8] For the Squirrel Tree, Rodgers wanted to add *fachwerk* (half-timbering), broad gabled roofs, painted murals and floral decorations to the existing structure. Price, however, was not so easily influenced and was deeply concerned that a German theme, in light of American's recent involvement in World War II, might offend potential visitors.[9] Price recalled the discussion by reminiscing in a 1988 interview "Lets try it, but rather than calling it German, after two wars with Germany… lets call it Swiss. We could still use German

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[6] Price interview.

[7] Price interview. Rodgers also traveled in Southern Germany and Switzerland in 1955.

[9] Price interview.

architecture ... but lets advertise it as Swiss."[10] This compromise of a *Swiss*-Bavarian theme allowed Rodgers to apply his preferred architectural elements to the café.[11]

Although there are differences between German and Swiss architecture, Rodgers and Price were more interested in replicating a generic Bavarian theme and were not terribly concerned with the architectural nuances of each region. Conversations with Price indicated that he and Rodgers were unaware that Bavarian is a term used for a region of Germany, and that it does not extend into neighboring Switzerland. Switzerland and Germany were, in their minds, culturally similar enough to change the geographic destination of the theme, yet not actually change the cultural implications.[12] As such, Price and Rodgers began the transformation of their newly acquired property with a focus on the visual aspects and marketability of the final design. The desired architectural elements were put in place, and a local artist was commissioned to paint a mural of a mountain climber on the exterior of the building. Waitresses were clad in homemade dirndls, and Swiss-German band music was played in the background. Soon after opening they decided to develop a small gift shop as well, and on a merchandise scouting trip they began to seriously consider promoting their themed shop, with the ultimate goal of expanding into a themed community.[13]

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[10] Ted Price and Bob Rodgers Historical Collection. Box 2. Oral History Transcript, page 4, tape 4, interview with Ted Price by Jim Anctil. 21 June 1988

[11] Price interview.

[12] Price interview.

[13] Price 17-18.

The partners visited Los Angeles on a buying excursion for shop merchandise. During this time they visited Knott's Berry Farm and talked to the owner, who provided them with considerable advice on effective promotion of tourist destinations. As a result they employed several promotional mechanisms, including the commissioning and advertisement of floral plantings throughout their property, as well as the tracking and advertisement of peak leaf season (the turning of the leaves was quickly becoming a popular draw to the region).[14] However, in spite of the success of these promotions, Rogers and Price still felt that a single property could only spark a passing interest in most tourists. The idea of increasing the scale of the "Bavarian" theme in order to draw additional tourists was very compelling. Initially, they thought that they might be able to build an entire alpine village on their own. In the early 1960s they purchased ten additional acres of land in support of this idea. However, they were unable to acquire the additional eighty acres which were required for their plan. They scaled back their expectations and focused on the development of a small hotel next to the original restaurant. The hotel, appropriately named Chalet Hotel, was constructed in 1961 and featured a wide gabled building, with a prominent roof-overhang and wood trimmed balcony.[15]

While the plans for the hotel were being developed, Price and Rodgers spotted another promotional opportunity on the immediate horizon. The 1962 Seattle World's Fair was sure to attract a large number of travelers, and Price and Rogers hoped that those enroute to the fair would drive along Highway 2 and visit the Squirrel House. They

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[14] Price 20.

[15] Price 27.

advertised but were disappointed when only a few tourists stopped at their establishment.[16] Their failure convinced them that they needed to develop a large-scale tourist destination. However, lacking the resources to realize their dream of an Alpine village, they began to evaluate the feasibility of creating an Alpine village in Leavenworth, enabling them to leverage the resources of existing business in the region.[17] Leavenworth offered a favorable location since the city had many vacant buildings and existing infrastructure.

The original plans for transforming Leavenworth were quite ambitious and called for redesigning existing structures into "Bavarian" structures with half timbering, balconies, large roof overhangs and gingerbreading. Furthermore, they wanted to develop a bell tower, parks and a walking downtown core, with parking hidden from the main retail area.[18] In order to support the illusion of a Bavarian community, they supported the wholesale adoption of Bavarian culture, which included the continuous broadcast of Bavarian music and locals dressed in Bavarian folk costumes. Additionally, Price and Rodgers felt that new residences should be constructed in a "Bavarian" style, which would help continue the Germanic illusion. The couple would embrace the style when constructing their own home, Haus Lorelei, several years later.[19] While Price and Rogers were trying to sell their idea of converting Leavenworth into a Bavarian

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[16] Price interview.

[17] Price 27.

[18] Price 33.

[19] Lorelei was named for Lorelei Rock, site of the Rhine legend composed in 1800-1802 by German author Klemens Brentano, which told of a beautiful maiden who lured men to their death through her singing. Rodgers, stationed in Germany post World War II may have visited the site on leave.

community, the town began to encounter severe social and economic problems. Economically the community was bottomed out. Additionally the townspeople had been split by a feud concerning a new high school. These challenges made it extremely difficult to introduce new ideas into the community, especially those that required significant commitment of sparse financial resources. As a result, Leavenworth's chamber of commerce ignored the ideas promoted by Price and Rogers and focused on seeking help from outside resources.[20]

Community Development and L.I.F.E.

In 1962 some of Leavenworth's citizens contacted the University of Washington's Bureau of Community Development.[21] The Bureau of Community Development was placed under the adult education program and had helped numerous cities and small towns evaluate their needs and create action plans for community redevelopment. While archival information is scarce, it appears that the program was started in the late 1940s and continued until the mid 1970s when it was disbanded. Funding appears to have been provided from state or perhaps federal funds, since the program was not affiliated with a university department. By the early 1960s communities as diverse as Anacortes, Cle Elum, Grand Coulee, Port Angeles, Roslyn, Soap Lake and Seattle had made use of the

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[20] Price interview.

[21] Sources are unclear about who initiated the original contact. Price indicated that it was the current mayor (Price interview), the 1990 Sonnenschein auf Leavenworth The Sonnenschein auf Leavenworth is a tourist publication of the Leavenworth Echo. (found in the U.W. Special collections Chelan county file) claims the Vesta junior club was responsible, and Judy van Deen's article in the Seattle Times (View of Puget Sound, October, 1979) wrote that several businessmen were responsible.

bureau's expertise.[22] While it is difficult to measure the effectiveness of the bureau's measures on the overall economic health of a community, reports indicate that, at the very least, the inhabitants of these various locales felt that community spirit had increased.[23] In an attempt to implement some of the ideas sponsored by the Bureau of Community Development, Leavenworth formed a self study program in October of 1962, focusing on inhabitants of the Upper Wenatchee Valley. A town meeting was called, and more than 200 people showed, a considerable portion of Leavenworth's 1,500 population.[24] The program was given the nickname L.I.F.E. (Leavenworth Improvement For Everyone). More than fifteen different committees formed, addressing such diverse themes as education, planning and churches. One of the goals of the program was to determine if the two main sources of income for the area, logging and agriculture, could be revitalized and expanded. Initially, tourism was not addressed; the closest theme was recreation.[25] However, Price approached Dirk Anderson, the bureau's consultant, and asked that such a committee be added. One was eventually created and Price served as a co-chair.[26]

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[22] The container list (found at Special Collections, University of Washington) for the Community Development Office accession lists community studies and the dates that they were prepared. Studies were conducted from 1951 until 1976. The records were deposited in Special Collections in 1981. All contact information for the program lists only the Community Development Office, and no departmental citation. An examination of the U.W. phone directory for this time does indeed list the Community Development Office, but in no way connects it to any department, although it was housed in the business building. Almost all references to the program use the phrasing staff member or consultant and rarely is professor used. When the program shut down, sometime during the late 1970s or early 1980s, personnel associated with it cease to appear in faculty and staff directories.

[23] "It's a Community-Wide Analysis," Seattle Times Sunday Supplement 21 July 1963:1.

[24] Price 37.

[25] Leavenworth Community Study. L.I.F.E.: Leavenworth improvement for everyone. V. 1 1963-1965.

[26] Price interview.

The first meetings of the tourism committee in 1962 were fairly tumultuous as the committee members debated over the best ways to draw tourists to Leavenworth. Although the committee produced several reports describing various tourist activities that could be promoted in the area, it would be several years before any action would be taken by the community to implement committee recommendations. Their initial reports, released in 1962, primarily recommended that Leavenworth create and market an autumn leaf festival. Although numerous postdated press accounts indicate that a committee decision was made at this time to pursue an Alpine design, the committee report indicates otherwise. The report focuses on the marketing of local recreational activities, and does not mention the idea of transforming the town into an Alpine themed community.[27] Although Price introduced the topic on more than one occasion over the next several years, it appears that the committee often rejected his ideas.[28] Many of his requests, which included the hiring of a local photographer, Walt Rembold, to take images of every commercial structure in the town (for conceptual study and design purposes), were rejected by the committee as costly and unnecessary.[29] There was some degree of interest in developing a themed community, but locals generally seemed more interested in a western theme than a Germanic one, which seemed too foreign to many in the community.[30] Price approached Mike Wolfe of the architecture department at the University of Washington, hoping that the department could provide some design visuals

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[27] Leavenworth Community Study. L.I.F.E.

[28] Price interview.

[29] Price 38 and Price interview.

[30] Price interview.

to help sway opinion. However, design training at the University focused on either historical high style designs, or on increasingly modern styles, so the department was unable to offer much help. Wolfe offered to help create an authentic "gay 90's" theme but was not supportive of a Germanic theme, claiming that it was not authentic, and as such would be ridiculed and considered cheap by outside observers.[31]

Failing to receive the level of support that he had hoped to garner through the L.I.F.E. tourism committee, Price was forced not only to find amateur designers to meet his needs, but to fund most of the initial design work on his own.[32] Although Project L.I.F.E. did not directly impact Price's cause, it did help him establish useful contacts with Leavenworth's business and civic leaders. Rather than deal with the bureaucracy, Price bypassed the committee altogether and independently approached a number of building owners to see if they would incorporate his recommended Alpine design elements.[33] Some local residents liked the Bavarian theme, but were unwilling to invest the capital needed to fully remodel their storefronts. These residents supported moderate designs, $500 at most, which would leave the traditional false front buildings in place and simply add half-timbered fachwerk below.[34] Price was not enamored with these designs, since he was convinced that they were not visually powerful enough to capture the attention of passing travelers. So, Price continued to develop his ideas, waiting for an opportunity to fully implement his vision. In June of 1964, Price brought his ideas back

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[31] Price interview.

[32] Price interview.

[33] Price interview.

[34] Price interview.

before the tourism committee in another attempt to drum up the necessary level of community interest and financing. At first, it appeared that all of his hard work would finally pay dividends. After two years of community study, L.I.F.E. had failed to develop any ideas that would foster real community improvement and economic revitalization. As a result, some of the concepts generated by the tourism committee were receiving real attention from the community for the first time. The tourism committee generated enough momentum to finally approve and initiate its first community project as a result of this meeting, teaming with Lake Wenatchee in the fall of 1964 in the promotion of an autumn leaf festival. Furthermore, a verbal agreement to implement a Bavarian theme was reached between Price, Rodgers, and the other committee members. Price and Rodgers were understandably thrilled by this development, but it turned out to be yet another false start when the written committee report failed to mention or otherwise acknowledge this agreement.[35]

In January of 1965 Price and Rodgers visited the Los Angeles Gift Show to purchase merchandise for The Squirrel Tree. As an excursion they passed through the small town of Solvang, California.[36] The community of Solvang was founded in 1910 as an educational colony by mid-western Danes. Some of the towns' buildings were constructed in a Danish style and the mother tongue was still spoken by many in the community. Half-timbered buildings with thatched roofs were common on main street. The community began to attract tourists to the area and by the 1960s Solvang was well known for its Danish theme, architecture, and souvenirs. Price and Rodgers were

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[35] Price 40, Price interview and Leavenworth Community Study, L.I.F.E.

[36] Price 46 and Price interview.

enthralled with the town and the unified theme that it displayed. They approached many residents and shop owners, and even met Earl Peterson, the man responsible for much of the community's architectural designs.[37] Price and Rodgers took numerous photographs and purchased postcards as well, so they could show businessmen in Leavenworth how Solvang was designed.[38] [Figure 2.3] They were hopeful that evidence of another town's success might finally win over the community. When the couple returned to Leavenworth, Price actively approached business leaders with his idea of a Bavarian theme, and referred to Solvang as a successful example of themed development. At first, things appeared bleak for Price and Rodgers. Price wrote a section for the Labor and Industry report, once again advocating the creation of a themed town, but the published committee report did not even mention the possibility.[39] It was becoming clear that many of the community leaders were merely humoring their ideas, allowing them to participate in committees and write reports, but excluding their ideas from the finished products. Even worse, many community members became actively hostile towards the Germanic theme; even the committee head suggested if Price was so enamored with the Danish town that he should simply move there.[40]

In spite of all the opposition, there were occasional glimmers of hope. The chamber of commerce president, Bob Brender, supported the Germanic theme as did

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[37] Price interview.

[38] Price 46.

[39] Leavenworth Community Study (L.I.F.E.).

[40] Price 48 and Price interview.

Vern Herrett, a business man and leader in the local Democratic party.[41] Encouraged by the support of these community leaders, Price and Rodgers finally decided to lead by example. They put the Squirrel Tree on the market and began to actively purchase real-estate in Leavenworth.[42] While some locals were impressed with the couple's decision to invest substantial funds in the downtown, the move was interpreted as outsider aggressiveness by others.[43] Although real estate in Leavenworth was extraordinarily inexpensive, the couple purchased property at such a rate that they began to put themselves at risk for declaring bankruptcy. They had leveraged all of their available assets to purchase these properties, and they had not yet found a buyer for the Squirrel Tree. It is distinctly possible that, without additional help, their dream would have finally died due to lack of funding and community interest. However, a fire at the Chikamin Hotel finally provided an opportunity for Price and Rodger to put their dream into action.

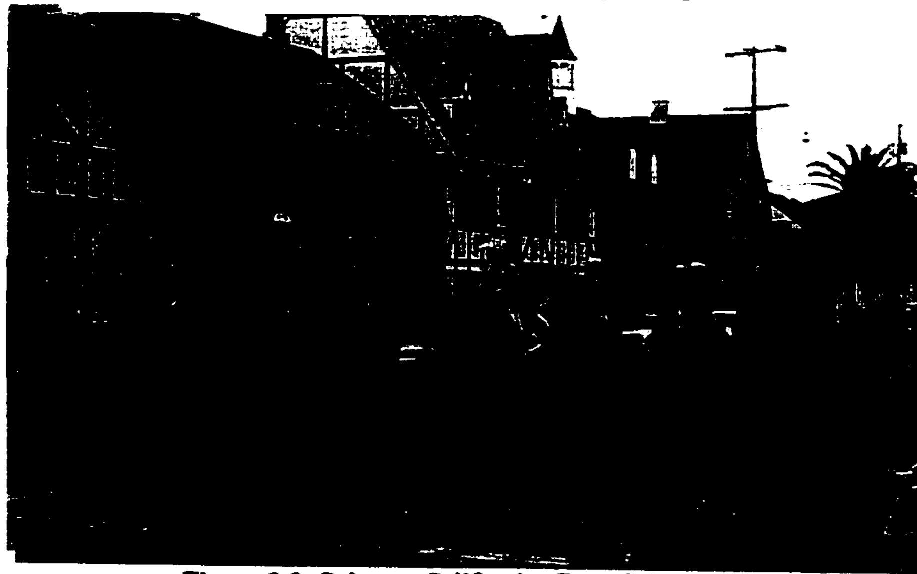

Figure 2.3: Solvang, California. From Price 46.

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[41] Price 48.

[42] A buyer for the restaurant and hotel complex was not found for several years.

[43] Price interview.

The Chickamin Hotel, on the corner of Front Street and 9th, had actually been damaged by fire back in 1961. The owner, LaVerne Peterson, spent several years remodeling the interior. In 1965, she was ready to begin work on the exterior. She consulted with Pauline Watson, another shop owner, and together they decided to approach Price. Although not an acquaintance of Price's, both were familiar with his redevelopment concept, and were interested in talking with him and seeing if he could offer any tangible design assistance. Several business owners attended the impromptu meeting, where Price marketed the Swiss-Bavarian style and presented slides of Solvang to convince the business owners of the viability of themed communities.[44] Peterson agreed to adopt a Swiss-Bavarian theme for her building remodel and renamed her hotel "The Edelweiss".[45] Price believes that one of the reasons she agreed to his ideas was that she really wanted to be the first person in town to adopt the new theme and to effect a change in the community.[46] The finished product was intriguing to many other local business owners, who subsequently contacted Price for more information regarding his ideas for a thematic community. Van Herrett, a longtime advocate of Price's ideas, agreed to remodel the Cascade Drug Store and the PUD building. These buildings adjoined the Edelweiss along Front Street. In the meantime, Pauline Watson and Bob

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[44] Price interview.

[45] Price's book indicates that the name was selected because the Edelweiss is the state flower of Bavaria. (52) The plant grows in several Alpine regions, and is the national flower of Austria. Germany does not have a national flower, and I have been unable to confirm if Bavaria has a state flower. This blending of cultural details is consistent with the created theme of Swiss-Bavarian and the hybridized architectural style that would be embraced by the community during its formative years.

[46] Price interview.

Rodgers made sketches based on some of Rodgers old European travel photographs, which showed how other structures throughout the community could be remodeled in a Bavarian style.[47] The community as a whole did not immediately embrace the Swiss Bavarian theme, even after some of the initial development work had been completed. University of Washington Architecture Professor Mike Wolf continued to push the "gay 90's" theme, and summarized his thoughts on Price's ideas by telling him, "You can't do that -- you're not a German town. It would be dishonest to take a German theme. You'd end up being a cuckoo clock town."[48]

In spite of these dissenting opinions, Price's idea began to slowly gain support from the community leaders and business owners. It is difficult to speculate the reasons why; perhaps they were influenced by the success of the Squirrel Tree, as well as the decision by LaVerne Paterson to remodel her hotel in an Alpine style. Another influencing factor was probably the constant promotion of Solvang by Price. Ultimately, perhaps the most deciding factor was Price's experience and ability to market ideas to the public. Price had spent a great deal of time marketing the Squirrel Tree, and had carefully honed and refined his skills over the years.[49] These skills ultimately pushed his idea to the forefront, and led to the adoption of his plan by local leaders and residents alike. On June 10, 1965, Bob Brender, president of the chamber of commerce, formally endorsed the plan, and six building owners earmarked the financial resources necessary to jumpstart "Project Alpine." Rodgers and Pauline Watson co-chaired the committee,

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[47] Price 52.

[48] Price 44 and 55.

[49] Price and Rodgers, wanting to focus their abilities and resources, sold the Squirrel Tree to new owners in 1965.

which was placed under the guidance of the Chamber of Commerce.[50] Property owners met, and were asked to give a gentlemen's agreement that any future remodeling would follow an Alpine theme.[51] It is unclear how the promotion of a Germanic theme changed from that of Swiss-Bavarian to Alpine. Alpine, Bavarian, and Alpine-Bavarian appear to be used interchangeably. Pauline Watson recounted "We were calling it everything ... Austrian, German, Swiss. And we had to settle down with-and the committee then, did meet and settle down [with an Alpine theme]..."[52] Thus, with minimal participation in the planning process from the majority of the community members, and without any legal design guidelines, the town started to transform its architecture into an Alpine inspired community. Travel posters of German cities were shown, in addition to photographs from Rodgers' tour of duty in Europe.[53] Postcards and photographs from Solvang provided additional design resources. Price also contacted the former Community Development consultant, Professor Mike Wolf, who was not pleased with the adoption of the Germanic theme. Price, concerned that professional opposition to the design theme might split the community, asked Wolf to refrain from making any comments about the program. Wolf agreed not to volunteer his thoughts, and it appears that no one from the community approached him once the transformation started.

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[50] Price 53.

[51] Price interview.

[52] Ted Price and Bob Rodgers Historical Collection, Box 2, interview of Pauline Watson by Richard Barrington, 8 February 1984.

[53] Price interview and n.a. "Leavenworth Goes "Alpine," The Leavenworth Echo 17 June 1965, 1.

Leavenworth goes Alpine

While the town was undergoing its transformation, Price once again played to his strengths and began to focus on promoting the community. He contacted the state tourism division and created press releases immediately.[54] The Seattle Post-Intelligencer reported on Leavenworth's transformation from a "typical small town with jumbled architecture and buildings with no character to a Bavarian alpine village."[55] Local publicity from the town's own paper, The Echo, helped Leavenworth find a designer for their new community. Earl Peterson had been one of the primary designers in Solvang. Peterson and Price had met during one of Price's trips to California. As a result of their discussions, Peterson had visited Leavenworth and subscribed to the local paper, The Echo. When The Echo started running stories on a German transformation, Peterson showed up in Leavenworth and offered his services as a designer.[56] Although he never moved permanently to Leavenworth, he eventually bought the local paper and designed the façades for the Tannenbaum and bakery buildings owned by Price and Rodgers.[57] He also created the original design for the Edelweiss hotel, but it was not approved by the city council due to the steep roofline (the original building had a gently sloping roof; Ulbricht ultimately designed the remodel). Peterson stressed that one of the ways Leavenworth could make its downtown core appear more alive was to focus on making the upper floors look inhabited, by adding window treatments and evening lighting where

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[54] Price 55.

[55] Jack Jarvis, "Leavenworth Aims at Alpine Heights," Seattle Post-Intelligencer, 21 April 1966 n.p.

[56] Price 56.

[57] Price interview.

necessary.[58] This theatrical design technique would give the illusion of a greater downtown density, implying full retail and residential occupation, and an accompanying sense of stability. As the downtown became more commercially viable, real residents and businesses (and success) would replace the fabricated ones. One of Peterson's primary messages to the community was to focus on "authenticity," although his definition of the term was unclear. He normally referred to his designs as "Old European Style," insinuating that he was developing a hybridized, fairytale style of architecture for the community.[59] In July of 1965 the Chamber of Commerce held a meeting where representatives from the Washington State Arts Commission, the Seattle Times, and a marketing expert also addressed the need for "authenticity." Once again, the definition of "authenticity" was still unclear.[60] Ultimately, it appears that authenticity meant that the architectural style should satisfy Americans' own expectations, which were often different than the real architectural designs found throughout Bavaria.

The arrival of several native Germans, Heinz Ulbricht, Albert Wierich, and Herbert Schramel, provided additional expertise that would prove invaluable in the community's quest for "authenticity." Ulbricht had read about Leavenworth's plan to adopt an Alpine theme in the Seattle Times and had significant design expertise, having helped design the Old English Inn in Victoria, Canada and an "old world" themed Federal Way shopping center.[61] His German heritage attracted him to Leavenworth's

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[58] Price interview.

[59] Price 58 and interview.

[60] Price 59.

[61] Price interview and Jarvis n.p.

projects, and he offered to design facades for the community. Ulbricht did not charge an up-front fee for his services. Instead, if an owner liked, and used, Ulbricht's façade designs, then they were charged a fee.[62] Der Markt Platz Building was one of his main design projects.[63] He also designed the accepted plans for the Edelweiss remodel, the Cascade Drug Store, and the PUD (Public Utilities) building.[64] Wierich was a German prisoner of war who had been held captive in the United States. He decided to remain in Eastern Washington after the war. He was also intrigued by the project and helped paint murals on some of the buildings, and worked on the Tannenbaum building.[65] Ulbricht was responsible for bringing Schramel into the community. Schramel was a professional artist from Ansbach, Germany, who also helped with many of the community's murals and eventually settled in the town, operating a video store.[66] The support of these local men that had significant experience with native German art and architecture was crucial to the project's ultimate success.

The first six buildings were in the process of being transformed by the fall of 1965. The cost of the redesign varied for each structure, ranging from $3,500 for the simpler structures to more than $30,000 for some especially exuberant property owners.[67] In the meantime, Price returned to Slovang to meet with Ferdinand Sorensen and Clyde

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[62] Ted Price 60.

[63] Price interview.

[64] Price 65.

[65] Price interview.

[66] Price interview and Elizabeth Wright Evans, "Cascade Alpine Village" Seattle Times Magazine 11 September 1966.

[67] Elizabeth Wright Evans.

Knight, wood working specialists who helped teach Price techniques for making milled lumber look like hand split timber. In his youth, Price had attended camouflage school at the 20th century Fox Studio in Beverly Hills and was known at that time for his visually realistic illusions.[68] In addition to elevation remodeling, Price and Rodgers were adamant about decorative accessories. They felt very strongly that to be "authentic", each element of the town's new identity needed to be carefully constructed. In an attempt to capture all of the intricate design details, many features were added throughout the community. A glockenspiel, a percussion musical instrument which produced bell-like sounds, was added in the gable end of the Tannenbaum shop. Building owners purchased carved wooden signs and wooden benches for the exteriors of their stores. Seasonal lighting was put in place to showcase buildings. Herb Schraml was hired to paint murals on several buildings. While the finishing touches were being placed on the first set of buildings, work on a second group had begun. Ulbricht designed the Barber Shop Building, the Larsen Drug Store, the Seattle First National Bank, and the Corner Supply Building (a minor remodel due to insufficient funds.)[69] Price and Rodgers decided that they would like to construct a bandstand in the center of town, and started searching for an appropriate design model. Obviously, one of the major concerns with all the remodeling projects was the ability to secure project financing. Price and Rodgers worked closely with the local branch of Seattle First, convincing them to become active in the project by

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[68] Ted Price 11.

[69] Price interview.

not only remodeling the bank building, but also by supporting local business owners with loans whenever possible.[70]

By 1967 Price and Rodgers had exhausted themselves with their constant remodeling and leadership roles in the community. A benefactor of the community, Carolyn Schutte, offered them a chance to relax and become more familiar with European architecture at the same time, by sending them on a four week tour of Europe. The group traveled though Denmark, Liechtenstein, Belgium, France, Switzerland, Austria and Germany.[71] The inclusion of so many non-Germanic countries once again indicates that the authenticity of the structures was not to be construed literally. The ultimate focus was on borrowing architectural styles from throughout Europe to create an amalgamated style that Americans would interpret as Alpine. There had been discussion of building an "authentic" German bandstand, and the group looked at several while in Europe, but felt that they were all too ornate, so they once again created their own "authentic" design upon their return to the United States.[72] [Figure 2.4] When questioned about what made a bandstand design "authentic," Price was unable to reply, and merely indicated that the structure didn't have to be German, it just needed to help make the town look "pretty." Discussions with the founder clarify that despite his use of the word "authenticity", and the frequent use of the term in historical documents, authenticity towards a specific historical German Bavarian style was not necessarily desired.[73] Instead, the businessmen wanted the town to pick a design theme that was consistent in its use of certain design

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[70] Price interview.

[71] Price interview.

[72] Price 87.

elements (roof overhangs, half-timbering, multi lighted sashes, wall murals, and flower boxes) , rather than consistent with historical accuracy through building mass, fenestration details, construction materials, rooflines and other stylistic features. Not only did the trip serve as inspiration for the travelers, but it also provided a wealth of photos that provided a variety of design ideas to interested property owners. At this point, Leavenworth was already well on its way towards developing the core of their Alpine community, and continued press from Seattle papers started to draw curious Seattleites through the community on weekends.

Figure 2.4: Bandstand.

[73] Price interview.

Publicity and Growth

Shortly after Project Alpine was initiated, tourists began to visit the Bavarian themed community, in large part due to the promotional efforts led by Price and Rodgers. However, Leavenworth received its largest promotional boost from the 1967 "All American City" contest co-sponsored by the National Civic League and Look Magazine. Starting in 1949, eleven cities were recognized each year based on local government reforms and community spirit. The National Civic League had previously awarded this title to other communities (including Anacortes and Port Angeles) that had completed the University of Washington Community Development Program, so Price and Rodgers contacted Ken Nyberg, from the Bureau of Community Development, to ask about Leavenworth's chances for successfully competing in the contest in 1966.[74] Nyberg felt that Leavenworth still had too many projects under development to be able to participate in the contest at that time. However, within a single year the town made enormous progress on the development of its Bavarian structures, and Nyberg indicated that he felt Leavenworth would be a strong contender for the 1967 award. Look Magazine was searching for a town that embodied the "American" traits of community spirit and self-motivation. Leavenworth was one of eleven cities selected for the award, and sponsored a small group to fly to Milwaukee to present their case study. The co-chairs of the Alpine committee, Pauline Watson and Bob Rodgers, were among those selected to represent Leavenworth. Watson was chosen due to her strong speaking skills and Rodgers was

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[74] Price 99 and Price interview.

selected due to his lifelong involvement in the project.[75] In early 1968 the award was given to Leavenworth, which received considerable publicity from the event. In that same year Leavenworth would also win the All American City title from the National Municipal League, the Standard Oil Community Development Award, and a Federal Highway National First Place Award.[76] All of these awards raised the stature of Leavenworth and dramatically increased regional and national interest in this reformed community.

With Leavenworth's increasing success, Rodgers and Price became concerned about the lack of a legal framework to control the remodeling of local buildings. Rodgers consulted with officials in Carmel, Solvang, and Palm Springs, California, and used their input to craft rudimentary design review guidelines.[77] The design style that Rodgers focused on defining was "authentic Bavarian," a style that was very loosely defined. Conversations with Price indicate that the guidelines focused on generic Alpine architectural features, including half timbering, multi-light windows, broad gables, balconies, and extensive gingerbreading. There was no attempt made to discern "authentic Bavarian" architecture from Swiss architecture, or even architectural styles in other German regions.[78] In fact, there seems to have been a considerable amount of confusion regarding what was authentic. Pauline Watson recalled that "We all believed in Authenticity 100%. We just didn't know if we were in total agreement, authentic to

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[75] Price interview.

[76] "Leavenworth: Tourism and Prosperity for "Little Bavaria," Seattle Post-Intelligencer NORTHWEST Magazine 28 October 1973: 8-9.

[77] Price 101 and interview.

[78] Price interview.

what?"[79] In July 1970, community design review guidelines were adopted, and within a year a law was enacted requiring that all signage be consistent with a Bavarian theme in its use of materials and colors. Gothic Black Letter was the preferred type style, wood was the favored signage material, and neon signs were prohibited. The ordinance was unusual because it did not have a grandfather clause, but rather it required all shopkeepers to bring their existing signs up to code within one year.[80] Throughout the transformation of Leavenworth, owners had been encouraged to remodel their buildings using a generic Alpine or Bavarian style, which was a hybrid of authentic features and Americanized ideals.[81] The city code was developed under similar pretenses, resulting in a set of rules that were not necessarily consistent with "authentic" Bavarian architecture. For example, the first major building renovation to occur after the passage of the new design reviews was the Der Markt Platz (at the corner of Eighth and Front Streets). Price and Rodgers, owners of the building, asked Ulbricht to design the structure based on images they had brought back from Garmisch-Partenkirchen. The design included large overhanging roof eaves and flower laden balconies, attributes often found in Bavarian architecture. Much to Price and Rodger's dismay, they discovered that their balconies and gable ends extended beyond the four foot overhang allowed by the hybridized guidelines developed in 1970. It was not until 1977 that this oversight in the city code was adjusted, and the building was completed. As much as these inaccuracies might

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[79] Pauline Watson interview by Ted Price. Ted Price and Bob Rodgers Historical Collection, Box 2, interview transcript, 1987.

[80] Wenachee Daily World July 1971 (clipping in Price's possession).

[81] These two terms seem to be used interchangeably during this time.

trouble a historian, they did not in any way damage the image of Leavenworth in the public's eye, as more than 10,000 visitors flocked to the community on peak weekends in 1978. However, despite the huge commercial success of the redevelopment project, there were a variety of side effects which did not have the same positive impact upon the community and its residents.[82]

As mentioned earlier, the decision to transform Leavenworth was made by community and business leaders without substantial input from other citizens. As a result, many residents never became comfortable with the community's transformation. One sent in an anonymous poem to the community's newspaper in the mid-1960's expressing his viewpoint:

Alpineitis

We live in a town, not so very big in girth,
The name of this town is at present Leavenworth.
It was a nice quiet town, 'cept for feudin' o'er a school.
And we even had our own community swimming pool
Now an Alpine bee came a-buzzin' into town.

And he stung the folks to action so they can't sit down.
They're all nervously competing
(call it co-operation, by the way)
And their bank rolls they're depleting,
While they try to act so gay.
Now it's Alpine this, and Alpine that-
Even our Alpine dog chases an Alpine Cat.

And our Edelweiss cows are giving goat's milk cheese,
While an Alpine frog yodels in the Alpine breeze.
Soon the tourists will be climbing
Up our Mountain Home Alps,
While Old Timers sit and scratch their Alpineized scalps.
Well, now, I tell you folks, that I've had it "up to here."
So I'm going into town and get an Alpine beer!

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[82] John Hinterberger, "The All-American Bavarian Town," Seattle Times 22 July 1978, n.p.

Alpine-nonamous

P.S. I wouldn't dare to sign my name-I'd be labeled as a foe,
And end up in a sad disgrace
With the Bavarians and Gestapo.
But I think it's still the U.S.A., With the freedom of the Press-
And I think some folks will secretly side with me- Or do I miss my guess?[83]

This poem presents the view of the town dissidents, who strongly opposed the transformation of their hometown into a curiosity for tourists. The poem reminisces about a time when Leavenworth was a simple town, and laments the arrival of an "Alpine bee", which clearly represents the outsiders that brought the redevelopment plan to the community. The poem's author is concerned that the "sting" of the Alpine bee has spurned community and business leaders into a competition that threatens to bankrupt the town. Beyond the threat of bankruptcy, the author is also clearly concerned about the loss of the town's identity. He presents these concerns by selecting common, everyday aspects of the community, and framing them in a Bavarian context. The contextual references start simply with an "Alpine dog chasing an Alpine cat", and progressively increase in complexity to an "Edelweiss cows giving goat's milk cheese" or an "Alpine frog yodel[ing] in the Alpine breeze." Finally, the end of the poem, which associates the Bavarians with the Gestapo, not only expresses that author's concerns that the townspeople have lost control of their home, but also draws parallels between the redevelopment effort and the prior war against Germany. By drawing upon these pre-established negative connotations, the author is attempting to remind the townsfolk that

[83] Leavenworth Echo 19 May 1966 5.

not everything associated with Germany is good, a point of view that Price himself often worried could undermine the ultimate success of his vision with the American public.

In 1978, only five of the 178 current business licenses were held by people who had lived in Leavenworth during 1965, when the idea of transforming the town was first proposed.[84] However, the population of Leavenworth remained at approximately 1,500 people. One is left to wonder how many of the town's original inhabitants were pushed out (due to lack of funds or for other reasons), or simply chose to leave the area because they objected to the transformation. The strain of constantly hosting tourists and living "on display" continues to bother some local residents. In 1990, a group of teenagers wrote "Tourists Go Home" on a bridge by the commercial district.[85] The locals are not surprised by this activity, and many have expressed concern at the difficulty of raising children in a town with a manufactured image. Patrick Daulton, the city code administrator, notes that there simply "is nothing for the poor kids to do."[86] The town no longer has a movie theatre, and many teenagers spend their time and money in Wenatchee which has a McDonalds, and can offer a more "American" teenage lifestyle, free from the constant burden of hosting tourists. This apathy towards the theme extends beyond teenagers. Daulton describes the town as being split since those people who

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[84] Hill Williams, "Marking Season's Change in Bavaria" Seattle Times, 19 September 1978: B2.

[85] Ellis E. Conklin, "Leavenworth takes the Best with the Wurst." Seattle Post-Intelligencer 22 October 1990: C1-C2.

[86] Patrick Daulton, personal interview, 22 October, 2001. In 1976 local businessmen tried to engage teenagers in the towns revitalization by creating a training program to emphasize the importance of tourism. A student run gift shop, nicknamed "The Barn" would provide hands on retail experience and allow students a measure of self government. The site selected though was too far from the main downtown to entice many visitors and before the end of the summer the program closed. (Price 149)

work downtown do not generally shop downtown, preferring to take their business to Wenatchee instead, where they can purchase necessities for living without encountering a constant barrage of cuckoo clocks, nutcrackers, and gift items.[87]

Price and Rodgers did not ultimately stay in the community that they had helped to create. The investment of tremendous personal and financial resources into the small community was physically and emotionally draining. Furthermore, Leavenworth was a small, conservative community, and Price and Rodgers found that their lifestyle as a homosexual couple was not accepted by many.[88] As stories of Leavenworth's transformation continued to be told and retold, the facts were obscured, and the couple felt that many community inhabitants failed to give (and often took) credit for their own hard work. In the early 1980s, Price began to video tape, at his own expense, interviews with the various parties involved in the town's transformation. He hoped that this archival record would clarify the roles played by key individuals in the community. The resulting video interviews and transcripts, which describe the evolution of the community over time and the individuals that participated in the transformation, were donated to the Special Collections at the University of Washington, Seattle in 2002.[89] Price and Rodgers sold most of their commercial property and moved away from Leavenworth in 1986. Their departure from Leavenworth did not mean the end of their involvement in

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[87] Daulton interview.

[88] Price interview.

[89] Interestingly, originally Price had contacted the Oregon State Historical society, and had wanted to deposit the records there. The reason for this is unknown, although Price is a native of Oregon. The collection was not accessible at the University of Washington until late 2002. These records fill nine boxes, although not all are currently available for public viewing. Some have not yet been catalogued and others have been sealed for the life span of key figures.

community development projects. Price's involvement with L.I.F.E. and Project Alpine provided him with many connections across Washington state, and he was asked to serve on numerous panels for the Washington State Department of Commerce and Economic Development.[90] There were other small communities in the state that were familiar with Leavenworth's success, and many of these towns attempted similar undertakings, in hopes of creating a new economic base from tourism. White Salmon, in the southeastern part of the state, and North Bend, directly east of Seattle, both began to adopt Germanic themes in the late 1970s and early 1980s. However, neither community had substantial support for the endeavor from local inhabitants, and in both cases the communities did little more than construct a handful of cheap Germanic renditions.[91] During the early 1980s the community of Troutdale, Oregon, approached Price and Rodgers seeking their help in creating a themed town. However, it soon became clear to Price that the community was merely looking for an investor and was not interested in committing the funds and effort needed to make a large scale transformation successful.[92]

The couple's decision to remove themselves from Leavenworth allowed other community leaders to take a more active role in the continued transformation and maintenance of the community. About the same time that Price and Rodgers left, an erosion of the design standards within the community became evident. Many new business owners were attempting to capitalize on the area's success while only

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[90] Price interview.

[91] Price interview.

[92] Bill Smith, personal interview, 21 October, 2001, Heidi Kyllonen, personal interview 21 October 2001, and Price interview.

marginally applying the Germanic theme to their new structures.[93] Ulbricht summarized the town's concerns in an interview:

> Interviewer: What do you think about the newer building going up?
> Ulbricht: Its not the quality that I would like to see.
> Interviewer: It's slipping then?
> Ulbricht: That's right.[94]

Obviously, some businessmen worried that this dilution of Bavarian theme would eventually disappoint and drive away incoming tourists. These residents firmly believed that the community's success hinged on its ability to visually appeal to tourists by offering a somewhat believable European experience. In response to this growing concern, a new set of design review guidelines were drafted by a new group of business and community leaders. One of the most influential pro-Bavarian advocates to emerge during this time was Bob Smith. Smith had moved to Leavenworth as a dentist during the 1970s and eventually retired from his practice and opened a bed and breakfast in the community. Smith, along with other residents, including Heidi Kyllonen, decided that several changes were needed to ensure Leavenworth's continued success. Since one of their main concerns was the ability of local committee members to be effective in enforcing the city's design review guidelines, strict minimum requirements for committee membership were established.[95] All board members of the design review committee are required to have visited Bavaria at least once in their lifetime.[96] This requirement is

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[93] Price interview and Smith interview.

[94] Ted Price and Bob Rodgers Historical Collection Box 2 interview of Heinz Ulbricht by Barrington 1 November 1983.

[95] Daulton and Smith interviews.

[96] Daulton interview.

particularly unusual and there is no evidence that this type of requirement exists for any other design review committee in the United States. Although there are committees that have set positions (i.e. chair must be filled by one historian, one by an architect, etc.), this level of exclusivity is unprecedented. These requirements were merely a precursor to the massive overhaul of the city design code that would take place over the next several years, and would focus on the development of an "authentic" German-Bavarian community.

"Authenticity"

The idea of authenticity can be traced back to the roots of Leavenworth's transformation, where early reports documented Price and Roger's concern with developing an "authentic" Bavarian community. However, their definition of authenticity is not entirely consistent with the common usage of the word. To Price and Rogers, authenticity did not necessarily mean that all designs needed to be accurate reproductions of Bavarian structures, but rather implied that all designs needed to be consistent with the spirit of Bavaria as they defined it. In fact, the original designs for Leavenworth were based on Rodger's memories of his European experience, which included broad gabled buildings, multilighted windows, and lots of detailed dark woodwork.[97] These elements occur in a number of regions across Europe, and are not exclusive to Bavarian regions. Furthermore, Price and Rogers often made conscious

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[97] Price interview.

decisions to modify Bavarian designs to match their ideal vision of the transformed community. For example, when Price and Rodgers searched for a new bandstand design, they turned away from traditional Bavarian designs and instead created a simpler design that more closely fit with the community's chosen aesthetic. Even their marketing of the community was not consistent with traditional Bavarian architecture. When Price and Rodgers began promoting their ideas for a themed community to the residents of Leavenworth, they created posters that showed photographs of Rothenberg with its heavy half timbering.[98] Rothenberg was an extremely popular tourist destination in Europe at the time, due to its unusually large and intact medieval town center, so it is not surprising that Price and Rodgers would have been familiar with this image. However, Rothenberg is not Bavarian, nor is it in the mountains, so the selection of these photographs is inconsistent with the community's claims of authenticity. However, all of these inconsistencies did not bother the early founders of Leavenworth's transformation. Indeed, they may not have even been conscious of them. As long as buildings contained several elements that were judged to be key identifiers of the newly adopted architectural style, such as half timbering, stucco work, tile roofs, pierced shutters, and window boxes, they felt that they were developing a real Bavarian community. Indeed, early residents appear to have bristled when they were asked about their Bavarian facades. "That's a dirty word [façade] around here. This is real architecture."[99] However, in spite of these protests, the reality is that most of the early architectural remodeling focused solely on facades. Fachwerk beams were not load bearing, and buildings were not really

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[98] n.a. "Leavenworth Goes "Alpine." Leavenworth Echo 12 June 1965: 1.

[99] Conklin C1-2.

constructed of wattle and daub. Traditional architectural elements, such as gables and balconies, were supported by steel beams. New Bavarian construction also focused on cosmetic design details that were only applied to the facades. Even if one considered the external elements the most important indicators of "authentic Bavarian" architecture, Leavenworth would fail the test. Although the front of the buildings loosely comply with Bavarian designs, many of these same structures fail to consistently realize thematic elements in the back alleys, leaving an independent observer with the definite impression that indeed, only the facades are important [Figure 2.5].

Figure 2.5: Alley entrances in Leavenworth's commercial core.

A more detailed understanding of Leavenworth's definition of authentic Bavarian architecture can be achieved through a closer investigation of four early building remodels located along the main street (Front street). The Edelweiss Hotel, Alpen Haus, the Bakery Building, and the Tannenbaum were all refaced between 1965 and 1966. Hans Ulbricht was responsible for the design of both the Edelweiss and the Alpen Haus. The Edelweiss hotel, the first themed structure in Leavenworth, was built through a remodel of an existing turn of the century structure: the Chikamin Hotel [Figure 2.6]. When remodeling these types of structures, one of the first issues that needs to be addressed is building mass and roofline form. Most turn of the century brick commercial buildings are two stories high, and are considered two part commercial blocks, with ground floors reserved primarily for retail, and upper floors adapted to housing. Roofs are usually sloped to the back of the structure, with false fronts lining the street. Converting these large blocky shapes into a Germanic chalet can be difficult, and if steep roof pitches and large overhangs are not added it is difficult to fully maintain the illusion of a Germanic farm house. Ulbricht's original sketch shows a false cross gabled roof, fill-in of the clipped corner entry, a small projecting gable from the main façade, wooden balconies, fachwerk, and the unusual feature of a Chinese moon gate [Figure 2.7]. While the sketch is fairly convincing (with the exception of the moon gate), the building as constructed is considerably less authentic. The main problem seems to have been one of scale. The addition of the false roof raised the roof line to a point where a third floor (visually) was created. However, since this third floor is functionally non-existent, the entire area was simply covered with fachwerk, extending well above the visual

dimensions of the drawing. This large expanse of white space, lacking fenestration and bisected with dark timbers, is visually weak, and out of balance with the heavily detailed lower stories. Additionally, the gabled roof overhang is slight, and out of scale with the rest of the structure (this may have been in part due to oddities in the original building ordinances previously discussed) [Figure 3.2]. A cross gable was added, most likely in an attempt to handle the difficult task of remodeling a corner structure with two facades. However the end result is decidedly non-Germanic.

Figure 2.6: Edelweiss Hotel at start of renovation in 1966. From Price 68.

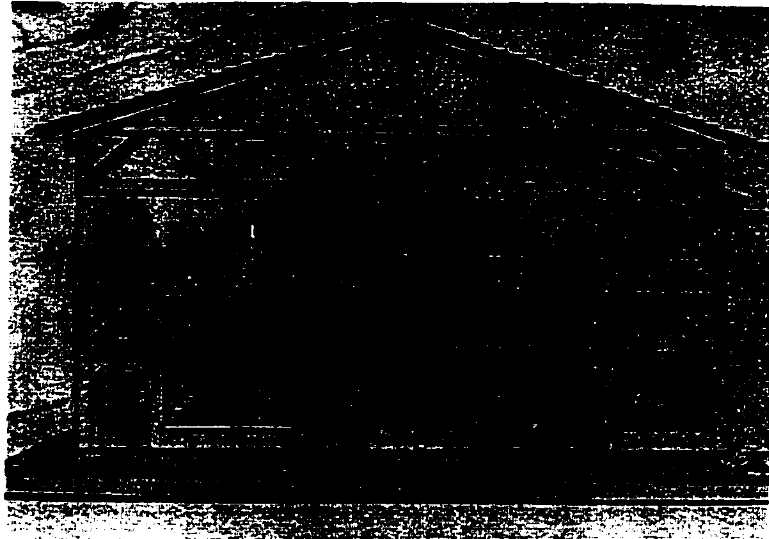

Figure 2.7: Ulbricht's sketch of finished Edelweiss renovation. From Leavenworth's Chamber of Commerce.

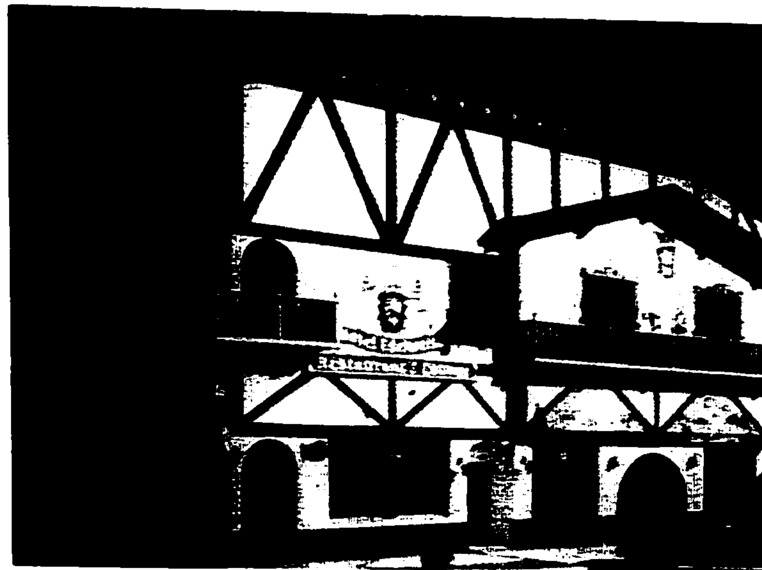

Figure 2.8: Finished Edelweiss renovation. From Leavenworth's Chamber of Commerce.

Another Ulbricht designed building was the Alpen Haus. This design took a standard one part commercial brick block with corbelled cornice and added a raised roof, giving the illusion of a two story gabled roof stuccoed building [Figure 2.9]. A shallow full façade balcony was constructed on the second floor and fake windows were added, each sporting a pair of heart decorated shutters. A comparison of the finished drawing [Figure 2.10] and the constructed façade [Figure 2.11] once again reveals design incongruities. The ratio of the second floor to the first floor in the constructed façade is significantly larger than the ratio displayed in the finished drawing. As a result, the scale and importance of the main retail space of the Alpen Haus is dramatically decreased. Furthermore, the retail fenestration on the main floor (size, shape and number of bays) is also inconsistent with the original design concept. The finished drawings depict the bisection of the main floor into two distinct retail spaces, recessed on either side of a solid wall. The constructed facade sports a series of arches that act as a front screen for recessed entries. Neither of these designs is particularly effective, and the constructed façade is especially lacking in depth. Its main three dimensional components, the balcony and overhanging eaves, are weak and spindly. Balcony supports are not visually strong enough to convey a sense of weight. Once again, the constructed façade fails to capture the depth of authenticity that the townsfolk had originally hoped to capture in the community redevelopment process.

Figure 2.9: Alpenhaus before renovation. From Leavenworth's Chamber of Commerce.

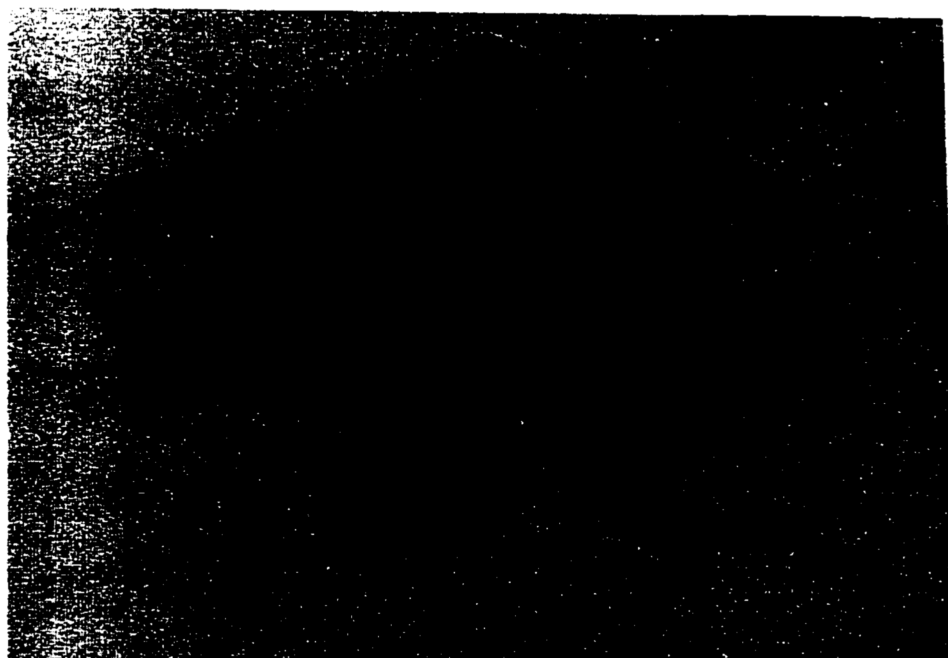

Figure 2.10: Ulbricht's sketch of renovated Alpenhaus, 1965. From Leavenworth's Chamber of Commerce.

Figure 2.11: Finished Alpenhaus renovation. From Leavenworth's Chamber of Commerce.

Based on these case studies, it can be concluded that the authenticity of Ulbricht's designs was compromised by both design and implementation issues. His designs indicate a strong reliance on fachwerk, yet in both examples the elevation as drawn was not entirely (for unknown reasons) executed, and significantly more blank space appears in the constructed facades. These problems imply that Ulbricht possessed a stronger sense of design detail than a sense of proportion. For the Edelweiss, this lack of proportion and scale is evident more in the finished product (which could be blamed on the contractor), but with the Alpen Haus it is evident in both the drawings and the completed structure. These issues with scale would make it difficult for most architectural historians to consider these structures to be congruent with native Bavarian

architecture. However, Price and Rodgers considered the final outcome to be well within the limits of their criteria for "authenticity."[100]

Remodels of the Bakery Building and the Tannenbaum were handled by Earl Peterson. Peterson also utilized a design theme that was heavy in fachwerk, but he showed the ability to apply traditional Bavarian design elements to a limited degree. The Bakery building (1966 remodel) was originally a small, single story, one part commercial building with two entries (building right was recessed and building left was flush) [Figure 2.12]. This typical brick commercial structure with a corbelled cornice line and flat roof was transformed into a gabled two story structure with a projecting second story cross gable and false chimney [Figure 2.13]. The original drawings were followed fairly closely by the contractor, although there were changes made to the upper story windows, and the shutters were not added as specified. While the building does show that the contractors had learned to falsify half timbering more effectively with irregular and worn beams, the balcony detailing is still rather small and ineffective against the building's mass [Figure 2.14]. The Tannenbaum building (1966 remodel) involved the transformation of a two story brick commercial building into stylized chalet [Figure 2.15]. It was particularly ambitious project since the main entrance of this corner building was to be moved to create more of a village square effect, breaking up Leavenworth's grid system. A false gable roof was added to the structure, and the main floor window and door alignments were changed to accommodate a large arched opening. Once again, the original sketch was followed rather closely, although there were some anomalies [Figure 2.16]. In the completed façade, the third floor overhangs

[100] Price interview.

the second just slightly (this may be for structural reasons). As a result, the second floor windows were pressed up against a third floor stringcourse (of sorts), which did not allow for the installation of the jack arches as drawn. Although a seemingly small detail, this gives an odd break in the façade, which is unfortunate, considering Peterson had applied a number of traditional Bavarian design elements to this structure, resulting in the most convincing remodel the community had undertaken [Figure 2.17].

In spite of the breaks in authenticity displayed in the buildings designed by Ulbricht and Peterson, many of the subsequent building remodels exhibited a tendency to be even more eclectic. The eclectic nature of these structures may have been, at least in part, due to the increasing pressure placed on building owners to Germanize their structures. These owners often responded with remodels that merely met the minimum requirements of the community's definition of authenticity. The Freiburg (formerly the Fitz) building typifies this period of reconstruction [Figure 2.18]. This two story, two

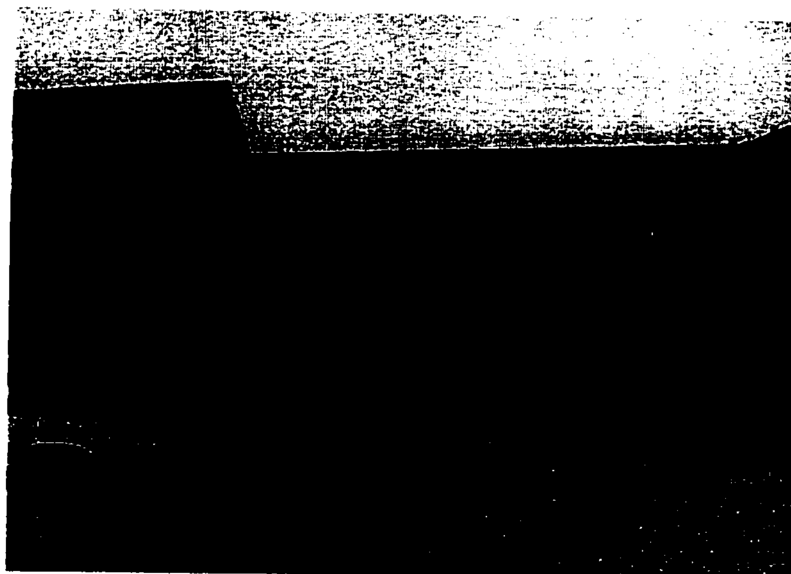

Figure 2.12: Bakery building before remodeling. From Leavenworth's Chamber of Commerce.

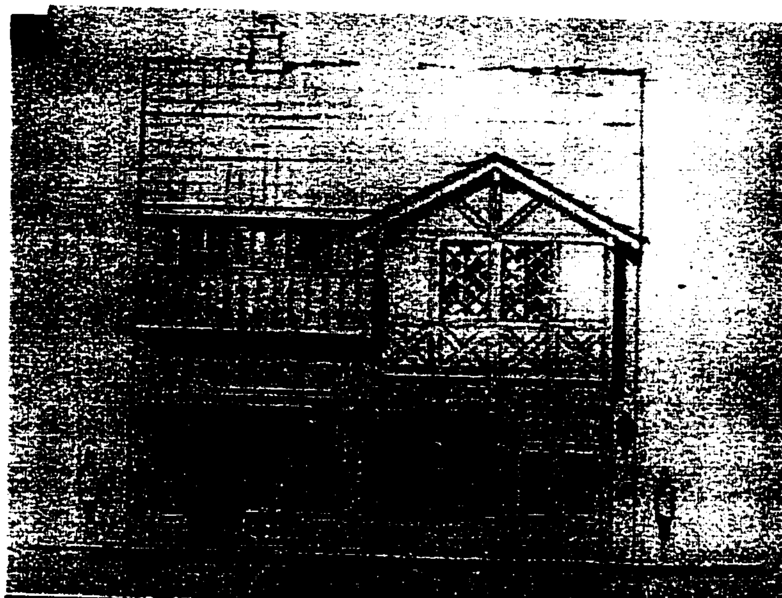

Figure 2.13: Peterson's sketch for the bakery building remodel. From Leavenworth's Chamber of Commerce.

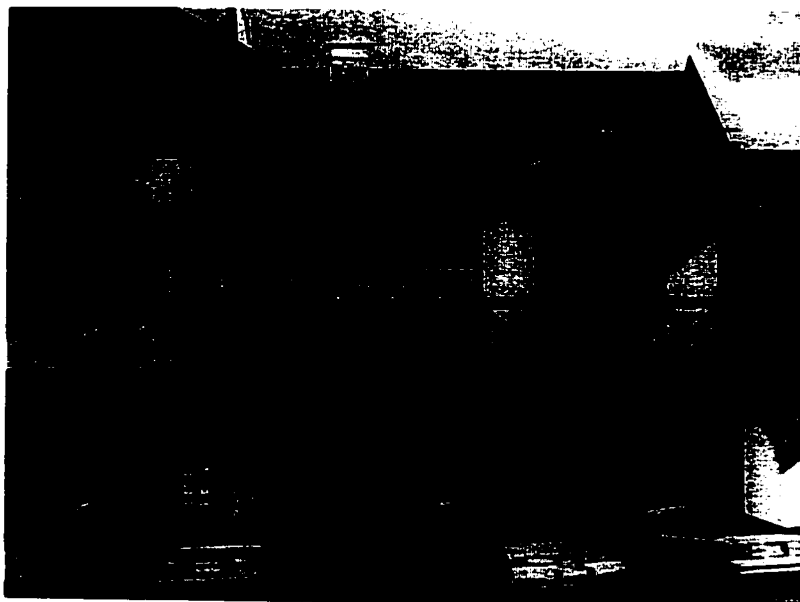

Figure 2.14: Finished bakery building remodel, 1966. From Leavenworth's Chamber of Commerce.

Figure 2.15: Tannenbaum building before remodeling in 1966. From Leavenworth's Chamber of Commerce.

Figure 2.16: Tannembaum remodeling sketch by Peterson. From Leavenworth's Chamber of Commerce.

2.17: Tannenbaum after remodeling in 1966. From Leavenworth's Chamber of Commerce.

part, brick commercial structure had marginal design details added, and the resulting façade is somewhat odd. A false gable end was placed on the structure, yet all of the original second floor windows, the cornice, and jack arches, were left intact. The only major "Bavarian" addition on the upper stories is a small balcony which runs the width of the elevation. The old Shelton Café Building (currently the Hotel Tyrol) is another example of minimal remodeling resulting in a superficial treatment of building components [Figure 3.19]. This structure was a large two part brick commercial block, with multiple bays and jack arched windows ornamented by an elaborate corbelled cornice. The nicest feature of the building, the corbelled cornice, was covered with a very un-Bavarian mansard roof, seemingly held up with undersized brackets. Original

windows were removed, and inexpensive aluminum windows, decorated with non-operational, out of proportion shutters, were installed in their place. This underscaling of applied elements continued with the balcony, which appears precipitously disconnected from the main structure. The ground floor displays a mix of brick and stuccoed fenestration which is usually hidden under masses of flower baskets. The building is a perfect example of the need for strict design guidelines in these themed communities, since the random and inappropriate application of various design elements leaves the structure out of place with the other remodeled structures in the community.

Figure 2.18: Freiberg Building in 2001.

Figure 2.19: Old Shelton Cafe (currently the Hotel Tyrol).

At the far extreme of the redevelopment effort were several structures that bordered the downtown commercial core, and therefore provided a limited amount of Bavarian detailing. Commercial street, which runs parallel to Front street and forms one edge of the commercial core, is one example of these marginally modified districts. Victorian structures remain intact, with limited additions of porticoes and balconies filled with flower boxes [Figure 2.20]. Some buildings along this street have not yet been modified at all, such as Brender's Autobody, which is a classic early 20th century wooden false front automotive shop [Figure 2.21]. Another example of minimal compliance with the Bavarian theme is the Ace Hardware store off Route 2, on the edge of the main commercial district. The business owners installed small thin fachwerk detailing on the

retail portion of the building, without bothering to even include this minimal detail on the large warehouse section of the building [Figure 2.22]. These business owners took advantage of the tourist flow to realize economic gain, while only complying with the minimal requirements of the design review board to have a limited degree of fachwerk. The attitudes displayed by these business owners was likely a major contributing factor in the decision to strengthen the design guidelines and ban fachwerk altogether.

Of course, developing stricter guidelines proved to be more of a challenge than anyone really expected. Leavenworth's hybridized style lacked the strong, defining components that were needed to successfully develop and enforce the design review guidelines that were needed to maintain the integrity of the community. As new building owners continued to apply the bare minimum number of details to new construction and remodeling jobs in an attempt to minimize costs, many of the existing business owners

Figure 2.20: Commercial Street remodels.

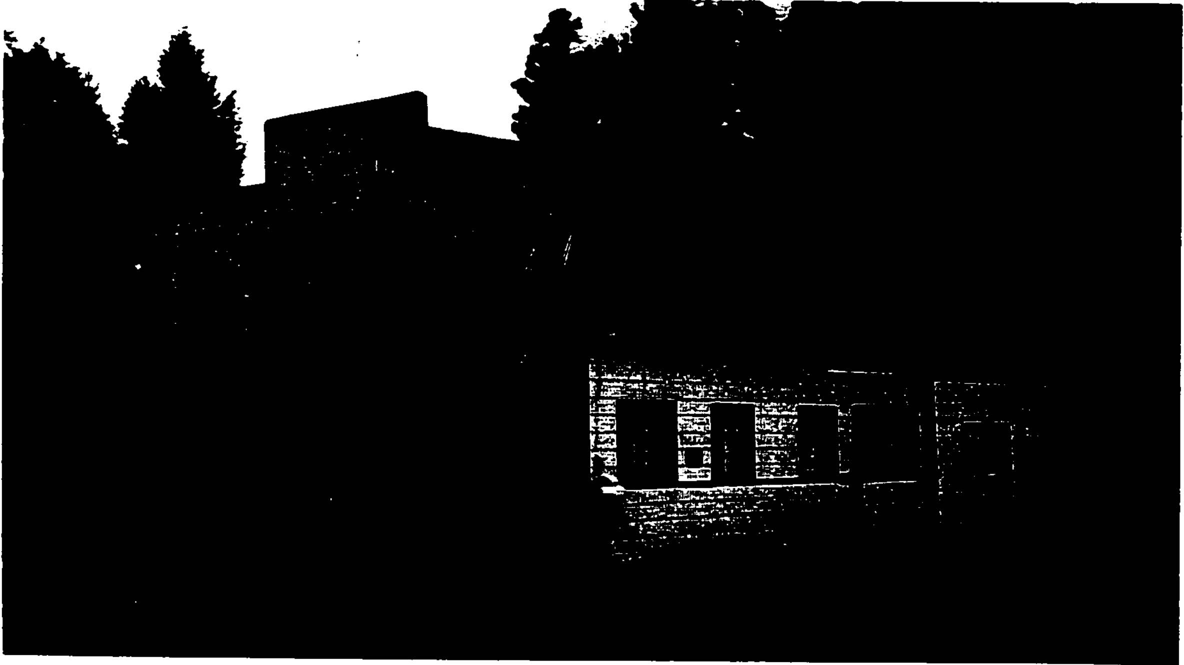

Figure 2.21: Brender's Autobody, untouched early twentieth century structure.

Figure 2.22: Ace Hardware building.

became concerned that the community would become a cheap parody.[101] In response to these concerns, community leaders discussed the development of more stringent design review guidelines during the late 1980s and early 1990s. During this time Bob Smith, a business owner who was active in the promotion of Leavenworth's Bavarian theme, hosted a German exchange student from Bonn. The student's comments that the community was "pretty, but not very Bavarian" intrigued Smith, who subsequently decided to visit Bavaria and personally view the native architectural style.[102] Smith took hundreds of photographs, and acquired a library of books which illustrated folk architecture and rural village life. Smith brought these resources back to the community, fueling a growing interest in authentic Bavarian architecture. When these resources were coupled with the community realization that it would be difficult to develop strict guidelines for the original, hybridized style (which left much open to interpretation), a new movement began in Leavenworth.[103] Responding to demands from business owners to prevent the continued dilution of the community's theme, the design review committee decided that existing, Bavarian architectural forms (as found in Germany) would be studied and used to develop new design review guidelines. It is difficult to enumerate all of the reasons that the committee selected the German Bavarian style over the original Swiss "Bavarian" theme created by Price and Rodgers. It is hypothesized that Germany was selected over Switzerland because Germany has only one predominant culture,

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[101] Price and Smith interviews.

[102] Smith interview. Smith has since made more than twenty-two trips to Bavaria.

[103] Smith interview.

whereas Switzerland is subdivided into three distinct cultural regions (German, French, and Italian). Also, the local residents were more familiar with Germany, since some of them (including Rodgers) had either been stationed in Bavaria after World War II or worked and lived with POW's from World War II.[104] Also, the stigma of selecting German Bavarian architecture, which was one of Price and Rodgers earlier concerns, had long since passed from the public consciousness. Smith was a strong advocate of the German theme because he believes that a vast number of Americans (40 – 60% in his estimation) have some degree of German heritage. He also believes that Americans are more familiar with southern Germany and Austria due to immense popularity of the Sound of Music movie which was released in 1965.[105]

Once Leavenworth decided to specifically adopt German Bavaria as a role model, the community began to conduct extensive research on the cultural and architectural history of this region. Locals collected numerous guidebooks and texts specializing in pictorial images of German-Bavaria. The new guidelines were carefully drawn, and included a map of Germany, with Bavaria outlined and appropriate building styles highlighted. Geographically they define Bavaria as the region along the Czech border, Garmish-Partenkirchen on the Austrian border, Regensberg, Munich, Berchtesgaden and Passau. They do not include Nuremberg or Rothenberg ob der Tauber, which were added to Bavaria in the early 1800s.[106] It was decided that the design emphasis would primarily

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[105] Smith interview. The 1990 Federal Census shows that 23.2% of Americans believe themselves to have some German ethnicity. This is the highest percentage of any ethnic group. The World Almanac (New York: World Almanac Books, 2003) 355. The film version of The Sound of Music was based on the 1959 Rodgers and Hammerstein Broadway musical.

[106] City of Leavenworth, "Portfolio of Photographs of Old World Bavarian Architecture and Signs for the City of Leavenworth" 23 January 2001: 1.

focus on a particular style, Bauernhausen, which were farm houses in "Old World Bavaria." These farmhouses (chalets) were typified by wide gable ends, stucco exteriors, and heavy ornate wood accents.[107] Illustrations of acceptable building styles were copied from a German periodical, *Das Haus*, which published an article on the different regional farmhouse variations in Germany, with illustrative examples of each, in 1984. Each regional architectural style is matched by number to the map, and styles that are not considered acceptable have been crossed out, leaving only a handful of appropriate styles, most broad gabled log or stucco chalets. [Figure 2-23]. Furthermore, references are provided to a selection of German books (housed by the city) which offer extensive illustrations of Bavarian and Austrian farm houses. Although text is limited (and usually in German) the illustrations are thought to be enough to help guide design professionals towards an authentic adaptation of the style.[108] One of the main tenants of the revised guidelines is that half-timbered fachwerk is not an acceptable feature, since it is Franconian in origin.[109] In actuality, half-timbered structures are traditional throughout most of Germany, so the committee had to work quite consciously to exclude this style. One possible reason for the banishment of a style that many people naturally associate with southern Germany (and indeed, a style that represents the majority of early remodels throughout Leavenworth) is that the style is easily "bastardized" with 4x8 sheets of stucco board and 1x4 timbers; a detail that according to Smith just "doesn't do it."[110] To

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[107] City of Leavenworth 1.

[108] Daulton and Smith interviews.

[109] City of Leavenworth 1.

[110] Smith interview.

make sure that building owners fully understand the guidelines, the back section is filled with more than thirty pages of photos, most taken in Bavaria, illustrating examples of acceptable and unacceptable (usually half timbered) architecture.

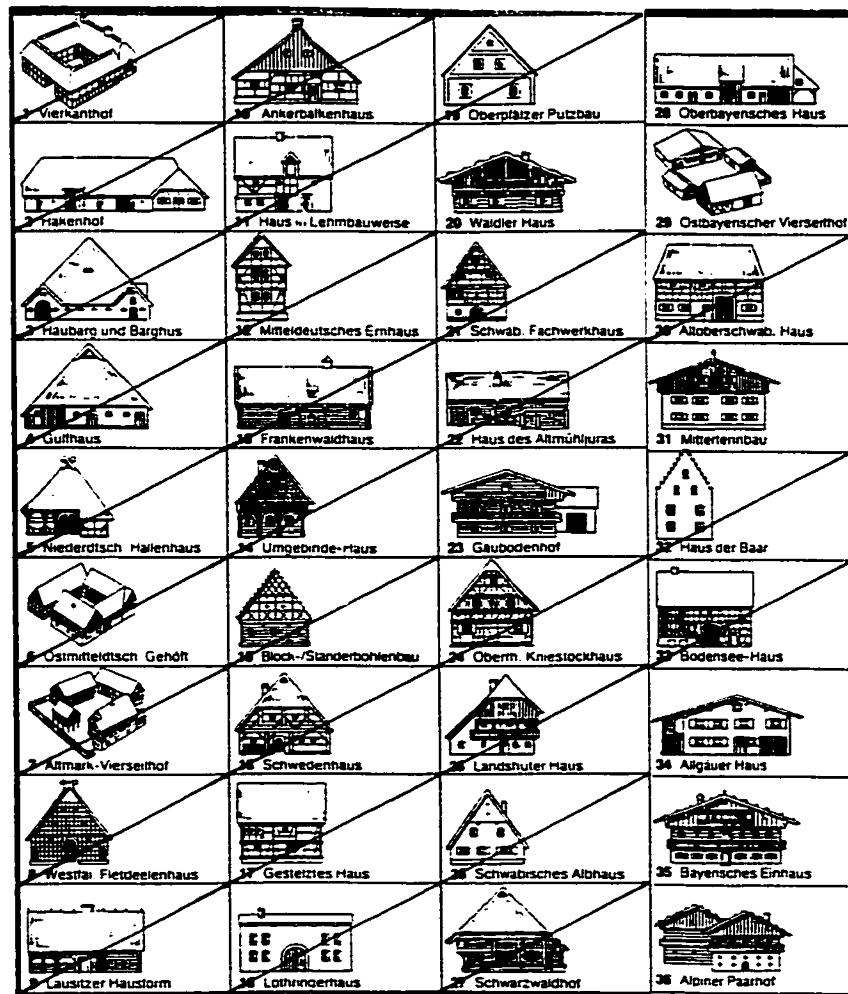

Figure 2.23: Appropriate and inappropriate Germanic styles as illustrated in Leavenworth's Portfolio of Old World Bavarian Architecture and Signs for the City of Leavenworth.

Signage and landscaping are also addressed, with a particular emphasis placed on the utilization of either carved wood or wrought iron signs. Neon and handmade paper signs are strongly discouraged. For the most part, the guidelines have been well received by the community, although there are some who feel that the guidelines are too restrictive, and effectively stifle the entrepreneurial spirit that led to the creation of the community.[111] However, the new community leaders believe that this quest for authenticity embodied in these guidelines will maintain the integrity of the community, and ensure its commercial success in the future. In fact, some business owners, such as Heidi Kyllonen, hope to expand the quest for authenticity to costumes, residences, and perhaps even a limited adoption of the German language as well.[112] Anything that adds to the authenticity of the community is thought to make it somehow better, and more desirable to visit. The oxymoron of an "authentic fake" (defined by the fact that the community, no matter how authentic, will always be a reproduction of a non-native style) does not seem to be an issue with many of the community leaders; instead the quest seems to give Leavenworth a defined goal and purpose that leads to a sense of self-satisfaction. Kyllonen is unusually stringent in her definition of authenticity. Her mother was German, and her father was a merchant marine who had traveled extensively. After the death of her mother the family moved to Leavenworth, in part due to the Germanic theme. Kyllonen considers herself a "created" German, defined as someone who speaks

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[111] Smith interview.

[112] Price interview. During the initial remodeling of the town some inhabitants felt that perhaps free German lessons would help imbibe the community with a greater since of authenticity. This suggestion was never followed through though. (Conklin C1)

German with her family, owns a German restaurant and Haflinger horses, lives in a German styled house, and has a German name, Heidi.[113] Perhaps the most intriguing aspect of discussions of authenticity with these residents is how firmly they believe in the German Bavarian theme, yet they constantly promote or discuss other themes within the community. For example, Kyllonen mentioned that many people are attracted to Leavenworth due to its Austrian theme, and Smith's hotel, the Hotel-Pension Anna, has advertised its "Authentic Austrian Décor."[114] This confusion of regional and national styles seems to be the one thing that is the most "authentic" about Leavenworth, since the town has a Danish Bakery an Australian gift shop, and advertises Nordic sweaters. One early restaurant (the Edelweiss) specialized in cheese fondue (Swiss) and Wiener Schnitzel a la Cordon Bleu.[115] Early fundraising projects for the city included the sale of peanut brittle, advertised as "a real Bavarian treat!"[116]

After years of study and evolution, the new design guidelines were finally enacted in 2001. As mentioned, these guidelines are much stricter and cover a broad range of topics from specific signage, massing, fenestration and exterior decorative details. It is too early to tell if these guidelines will have the intended effect of improving the authenticity of Leavenworth, or if they will simply go unenforced. The first application of these guidelines was in the design review of The Leavenworth Safeway, a grocery store constructed in 2001. Application of design review guidelines to a structure of this

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[113] Kyllonen interview. Haflinger is an Austrian breed of horse.

[114] Kyllonen interview and Sonnenschein auf Leavenworth 2000 (a tourist publication) 23 and 2001 version, 33.

[115] Seattle Post Intelligencer, "Leavenworth: Washington State's Little Bavaria," Seattle Post Intelligencer Special Supplement 2 August 1981: 15.

size and scale would be intimidating, even with firmly established and time proven guidelines. For a fledgling set of guidelines, The Safeway proved to be a real challenge and test to the underlying tenets that the community had worked so hard to establish. First of all, the city annexed a portion of the land where the Safeway was constructed to ensure that non-themed buildings would not encroach too close to the commercial core.[117] Once this was completed, the city needed to decide how to apply its design review guidelines to such a massive structure. The resulting interpretation is a structure with a large gabled roof that overhangs the front portion, and multiple shed and gable roofs that break up the black massing of the store. Limited mural paintings adorn the structure as well, although the massive asphalt parking lot in front diminished the Bavarian detailing [Figure 2-24]. All in all, the Leavenworth Safeway seems to be a moderate success, containing some of the key elements of Bavarian architecture, but utilizing them in a way that doesn't necessarily fit the scale of the building. Of course, since this is only the first test of the guidelines, additional time, as well as an application to a variety of different structures, is truly required to assess the effectiveness of the new, stricter guidelines.

Of course, the success or failure of these guidelines may extend beyond an evaluation of the level of visual harmony achieved between the various structures. It is possible that these stringent guidelines may stop or even reverse investment in the region, should the cost of business become prohibitive. This would prove to be another turning point which would test the value of authenticity against the value of profitability. It may in fact be quite some time before any significant expansion to Leavenworth is observed.

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[116] Price 164.

Price and Rodgers were originally very strong believers in continued expansion of the theme beyond the downtown core. During the early 1980s they had planned to build condominiums shaped like a giant castle, with underground parking for more than 500 automobiles. However, with their departure from the community, the property was sold to Vacation International, which intended to construct a similarly designed series of condominiums on the site. Ultimately, the corporation decided against developing the property, and in the late 1990s sold the property to Harriet Bullet, a local environmentalist and outspoken opponent of Leavenworth's Bavarian transformation. The several hundred acre site was donated to Audubon, which plans to keep the property undeveloped.[118] This placed an end to one of the more ambitious expansion projects, and no other projects of this magnitude are currently on the horizon.

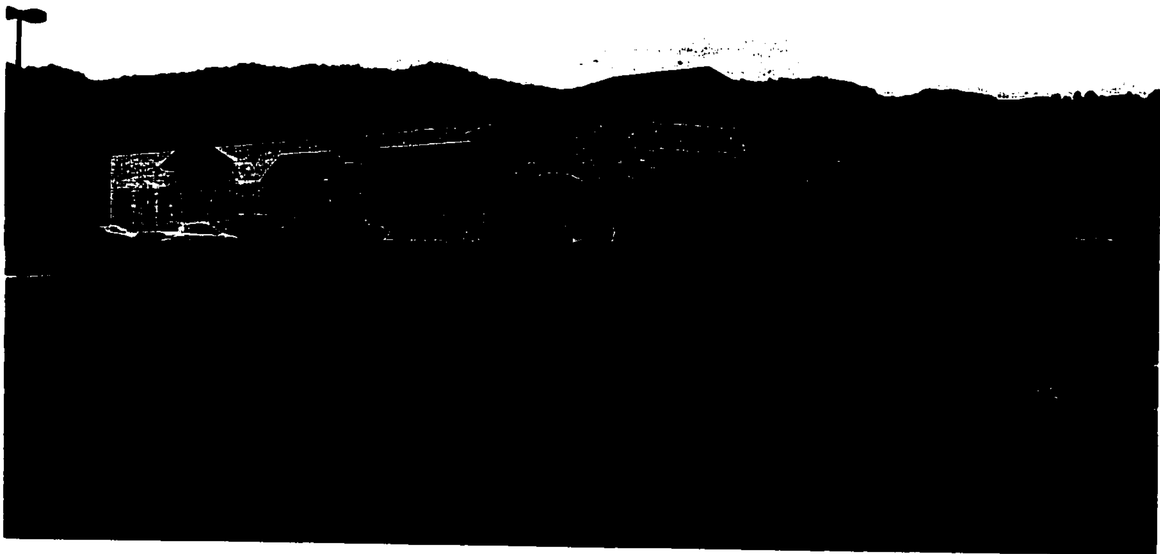

Figure 2.24: Leavenworth Safeway, 2001.

[117] Smith interview.

Leavenworth was not the only town to undergo a significant change in identity during the mid to late 20th century. Helen, Georgia, a town with remarkably similar social and economic characteristics as Leavenworth, independently began a similar transformation into a German themed village. The purpose of the next chapter is to dissect the transformation of Helen and analyze the resultant social and economic state of the community.

[118] Price interview.

CHAPTER 3

Helen, Georgia

"Beer, music, singing and dancing in the tradition of the Munich festival. The whole village becomes a party ground. [...] This is something so special you won't want to miss it."

The Helendorf River Inn brochure

Helen, Georgia, is located in the northeastern section of the state, at the headwaters of the Chattahoochee River and the foothills of the Appalachian mountains. Helen, like Leavenworth, relied on local area's natural resources, gold and timber, to fuel its economic development. Once these resources were commercially spent, Helen also found itself searching for an alternative means of economic development. What made Helen independently decide to adopt a Germanic redevelopment theme? What are the differences and similarities between the development process and ultimate outcome for both of these communities? Interviews with John Kollock and Jimmy Wilkins, two of the main proponents of the Germanic theme, provided a great deal of primary source information for this chapter. Much like Bob Rodgers in Leavenworth, Kollock's post World War II travels in Germany directly impacted theme development, although Kollock's own design training brings a different emphasis to the remodels.

Early Regional History

The Nacoochee Valley, which lies directly south of modern-day Helen, was originally settled by the Cherokee. Their main trail, the Unicoi, which joined their territory in eastern Tennessee to the Savannah River, currently lies under Helen's Main

Street.[1] Some believe that DeSoto may have traveled through the Nacoochee Valley during his 16th century explorations of the southeast.[2] Before the Georgia colony was established in the early 1700s, the area was explored by Carolinians, although the region was not legally opened to settlement until 1820, when it was incorporated and named Habersham County. The native Cherokee were removed shortly thereafter, when gold was discovered in 1828. Upon the discovery of gold, the entire region experienced a population boom; in 1820 Habersham County had 4,451 residents; by 1830 its numbers had swelled to 10,671.[3] The landscape was mutilated by hydraulic mining, and this activity lasted until larger and more profitable gold fields were located in California, which reduced the population of White County (formed from Habersham County) to just under 3,500 people in 1857. White County still retained several small scale industries, including "eight legal distilleries, three jug factories, thirty grist mills, one flour mill, twenty saw mills, and three gold mines."[4] The economic growth of this region was further interrupted by the Civil War, and like much of the South, White County remained in a state of economic depression throughout the Reconstruction period. During this time, North Georgia remained primarily rural and was sparsely populated. It was not until the turn of the century that tourism and the lumber market led to another economic revitalization of the region.

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[1] Carroll Proctor Scruggs History of Helen, Nacoochee & Robertstown. Copple House/Caroline House, nd., 1 and 5.

[2] Scruggs 12.

[3] Scruggs 16. By 1857 the Nacoochee Hydraulic Mining Company was chartered, with headquarters not far from Helen. Flumes extended into modern day Helen.

[4] Scruggs 19.

Formation of Helen and the Lumber Industry

By the late 1800s, a large demand for timber to support new housing, industrial building and exportation resulted in the revival of sawmills and the lumber industry throughout the region.[5] Fast-growing southern pine and poplar, with trees up to seven feet in diameter, attracted attention, and in 1911 White County was chosen for the site of a large sawmill by the Byrd-Matthews Corporation of St. Louis, Missouri (later sold to the Morse Brothers Lumber Company).[6] Railroad lines were established, allowing lumber to be efficiently shipped out of the area. The revitalization of the lumber industry attracted subsistence farmers, who came looking for jobs which paid up to a dollar a day.[7] The sawmill employed about 150 people directly, while others were employed through trade and transportation associated with the industry. Up to a hundred additional workers came in from the six surrounding counties on a daily basis.[8] The community around the sawmill grew to almost three hundred residents before Helen was officially platted in 1913.[9] The surveyors, F. G. Jones and J. H. Allen, used the Unicoi trail as the Main Street. The original plan laid out one hundred and fifty building lots, which were a variety of sizes to support development needs.

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[5] Scruggs 25.

[6] Scruggs 27.

[7] Anderson 3.

[8] Scruggs 28.

[9] The name honored the daughter of Mr. McCombs, a railroad executive.

By 1913 Helen had a drugstore, its own bank (the bank of Helen), a general merchandise store, and a company commissary. It even had its own newspaper, entitled "The Helen Herald." John E. Mitchell of St. Louis became the main real estate developer in the area. He also was responsible for starting construction of a hotel, located on a high knoll just to the northeast of the town.[10] The hotel, frequently booked by executives of the Byrd-Matthews Lumber Company, was used as a clubhouse and became known as the Mountain Ranch Hotel. The establishment was favored by low country residents during the summer who came to escape the heat and play golf and tennis, or swim in the pool. The hotel, with its wrap-around porches and central fireplace, continued to be a major employer and destination in the area until the main building was gutted by fire in 1944.[11]

Much of the town's success was due to the presence of the sawmill, which was one of the largest in the eastern United States, with peak production rates up to 125,000 board feet of lumber per day.[12] However, by 1925, the area's marketable timber had been cut, and the saw mill was sold to buyers who had it dismantled and shipped to Mexico.[13] The logged-off land was sold to the U.S. Forest Service, which took on the difficult task of reforesting the mountainous acreage.[14] Local inhabitants left the region in search of new jobs, resulting in a disruption of the social fabric of the newly formed community.

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[10] Scruggs 35.

[11] Scruggs 37.

[12] Scruggs 31.

[13] Scruggs 32.

[14] Scruggs 32. The forest service currently owns 40% of the total acreage in White County.

The Great Depression made matters worse, dampening hopes for an economic recovery. The remaining residents survived by taking advantage of small, occasional employment opportunities. For example, the Civilian Conservation Corps came into the area during the Depression, and hired young men to build dams and bridges, plant trees, and improve roads. After the program was phased out, many local men continued to make a living working for the Forest Service.[15] There were a few small businesses that survived the Depression, or were even started during this time, including a sawmill operated by "Charlie" Maloof, and a manufacturing mill founded in 1936, which used local dogwood trees to make shuttles used in textile manufacturing.[16]

In the middle of the twentieth century, White County began to see the first signs of economic recovery through tourism. The state acquired 1,800 acres of land just northeast of Helen and dedicated the tract as Unicoi State Park in 1954. A hotel, rental cottages, a restaurant, campsites, and a trading post were all constructed to support park operations. A five mile forestry trail was constructed near the park facilities, leading up to Anna Ruby Falls, a popular hiking destination with rolling mountains, hidden coves and abundant streams.[17] The area's proximity to Atlanta (less than 100 miles away), provided a steady flow of tourists seeking respite from the stress of modern, urban life. In spite of this newfound economic prosperity in White County, Helen was still struggling economically. Job opportunities were scarce, farming was marginal, and industry growth was slow. The lumber and shuttle mills closed their doors in 1962 when

[15] Anderson 17.

[16] Scruggs 37.

[17] Scruggs 41.

the local lumber source was depleted. The only remaining successful industries were Wilco Hosiery Mills, which employed a hundred women, and the Orbit Manufacturing Company, which manufactured women's sportswear.[18] Many of the younger residents had already moved to large urban areas in search of job opportunity, further dimming the community's prospects. Locals watched as cars drove through town on State Highway 17 and 65 headed towards Unicoi State Park and Anna Ruby Falls. Tourists rarely stopped in Helen since the destruction of the Mountain Ranch Hotel in 1944 had left almost no lodging in the area. Residents tried to attract tourists' attention in the 1950s by planting bulbs and dogwood trees down main street and removing dilapidated barns.[19] However, these improvements had a minimal impact and failed to entice tourists into the community.

Helen's Rebirth, in Alpine Fashion

In 1968 three local businessmen, Jim Wilkins and Bob Fowler of the Orbit Manufacturing Company and Pete Hodkinson III, a local from nearby Clarkesville, met over lunch, and the conversation turned to the dilapidated state of the small town.[20] Helen had a small commercial core with nondescript concrete block, wood, and brick buildings. Most were one story, constructed in a turn of the century vernacular style. The Wilco Hosiery Mill was U-shaped and sat on the southwest side of main street. The

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[18] Jim Wilkins, personal interview, 27 June 2000.

[19] Anderson 21.

[20] Scruggs 6.

gable ends of the building were stepped false front, with exposed rafter ends. Many other buildings had stepped false fronts as well, or extended facades with single story porticos. The buildings appeared worn, and offered little to entice travelers [Figure 3.1]. Wilkins described the buildings as "nothing but junk," adding that the automobile repair shop had a dirt floor.[21] Mr. Hodkinson told the group that a college classmate, John Kollock, might be able to help bring life into the small community.[22] Kollock was living in Atlanta at the time, but his family was from the area, so there was hope that he might take interest in the project. Reports vary, but either Hodkinson or Wilkins approached Kollock after church one Sunday, and asked him for suggestions to help "fix-up" Helen.[23] Kollock remembers Hodkinson specifically asking for help selecting paint colors to revitalize the town and attract visitors. About that time Hamilton, Georgia, another small town, had embarked on civic improvements, and painted its buildings in hopes of enticing Calloway garden visitors to stop in their community, so Helen's improvements seemed a logical step to attracting tourism.[24]

Kollock had a BFA in theatre set design and was a commercial artist with a diverse background, having been involved with photography, writing, illustrating, painting, carpentry, film, and theatre. He had acted in a number of Atlanta theatres and was involved with several Hollywood films, including Disney productions.[25] In 1952

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[21] Wilkins interview.

[22] Wilkins interview.

[23] Wilkins claims he asked Kollock. Kollock claims that Hodkinson approached him. Wilkins interview and John Kollock, personal interview, 27 June 2000.

[24] Kollock and Wilkins interviews and Scruggs 6.

[25] Coastal States Life Insurance Company Coastlines, May 1970 (reprint).

Kollock was stationed in Bavaria with the Army Special Services, and because of his connection with the entertainment industry, he supported camp shows in Munich, Metholz, and Garmish.[26] He had been particularly impressed with the rural Bavarian villages, which were not only fun and exciting places to visit in the summer, but remained inviting even in the winter, when the climate was bleak, due to their whimsical architectural designs that incorporated colorful gingerbreading, balconies and deep roof overhangs.

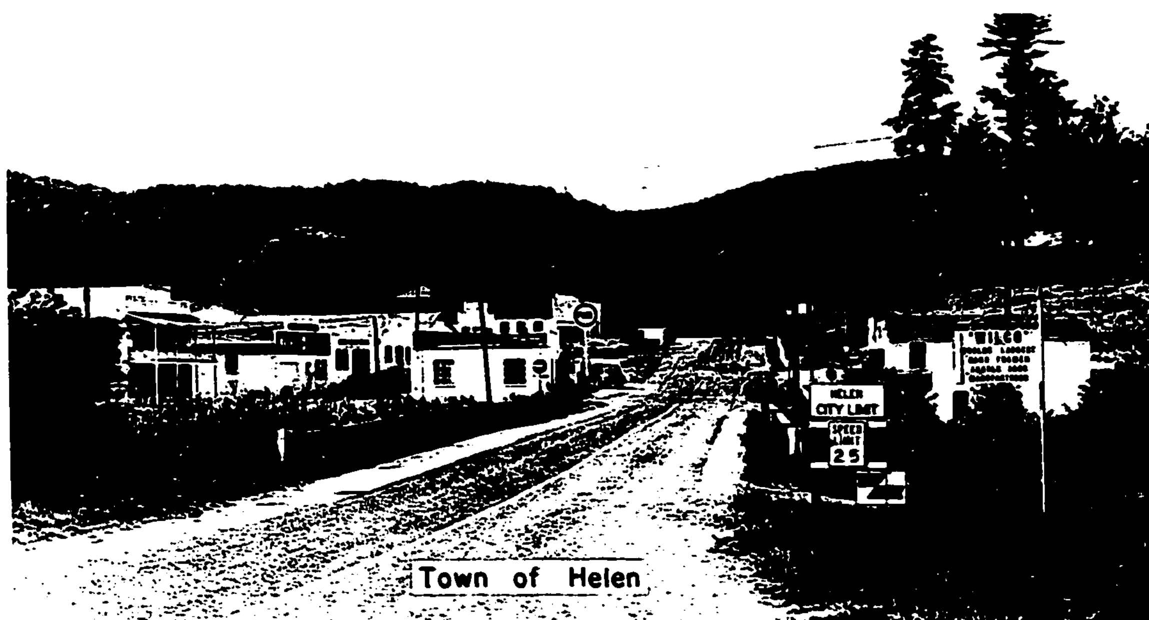

Figure 3.1: Helen, Georgia, in 1968. From the collection of Barbara Westmoreland, Helen, Georgia.

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[26] Kollock interview.

Kollock had long been interested in American community history but felt that the old farms of Appalachia were not happy, colorful places. Instead, he believed that Appalachian farms were heavy and sad, reflective of the primitive times and harsh living conditions in pioneer America.[27] The striking difference between the clustered buildings of an Alpine farming village and the isolated images of Appalachian farms made a lasting mark in his memory. In 1965 he had driven through Helen on a winter's evening, and stopped to study a view for a possible painting. The thick fog, hiding the town's buildings, combined with the sound of church bells, briefly transported him back to the Alpine villages he had seen in Bavaria.[28] When approached by Hodkinson three years later about revitalizing the town, he immediately remembered his vision from the past and was greatly intrigued by the possibility of converting Helen into his dream environment. Kollock felt that Helen could be made to resemble an Alpine village and believed that such a remodel would entice tourists to stop and spend both time, and money, in the community. He did not consider any other stylistic approach .[29]

Kollock drove into Helen to walk around the town and view the buildings more closely. It was in early January and the natural landscape, combined with gray concrete block buildings, created a bleak scene. Kollock immediately noticed that the two main business streets in the town followed the line of the hill up, making the commercial section of the town appear to end at the horizon line. As a result the mountainous landscape seemed to rise from the edge of the town, isolating the community in a

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[27] Kollock interview.

[28] Scruggs 6.

[29] Kollock interview. Kollock has mentioned now that he thinks an English village might be nice, since many of the settlers in the area were originally English in origin, and might relate better.

mountain setting. Most of the buildings in town had a false front roof line, with a gable hidden behind the front façade. When seen from above, the low pitch of the roof lines reminded him of Alpine farm houses.[30] He photographed all the commercial buildings in the town, and returned to his studio to create a series of drawings showing each building with a pseudo Bavarian façade. He seemed to have embarked on the exercise more as an academic one, believing that associated expenses would doom his proposals.[31] However, he felt that this visually rich style would attract the attention of the business owners, with its picturesque half timbering, small scale buildings and colorful flower filled windows. Furthermore, he thought that the cultural connection to southern Germany would allow the business owners to use festivals, such as Octoberfest and Fasching, to draw tourists to the community and spend money. So, in spite of his doubts, he proceeded forward and developed an initial set of drawings that showed his vision of a "transformed" Helen.[32] [Figures 3.2 and 3.3] He showed the drawings to Hodkinson, then Wilkins and Fowler. Pete Hodkinson was a native of South Georgia, who became familiar with Helen while he was a student at North Georgia College. He had lived in the Helen area for more than fifteen years by the time the project started, and operated clothing and gasoline businesses in addition to a small farm.[33] Hodkinson, described as a visionary and entrepreneur by Kollock and others in the community, was

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[30] Helen, 1972, Scrapbook in the White County Library, Helen, Georgia.

[31] Kollock interview.

[32] Kollock interview.

[33] Alpine Yodler: Welcome to Georgia's Alpine Village. Scrapbook in the White County Library, Helen. "Village Sells Rooms in Motel to Build It."

one of the driving forces behind the community redevelopment. Kollock recalls that Hodkinson was someone who could sell anything, especially if he had a drawing to go with it.[34] Pete Hodkinson was very interested and felt he could convince others to financially support the project. Hodkinson single-handedly convinced Wilkins of the plan's viability. Wilkins owned almost half of the buildings on the town's main thoroughfare, as well as Orbit enterprises, a textile operation with ten plants in the southeast (including one near Helen), and an outlet shop in Helen. The centralized power base that Wilkins commanded in the community gave the Helen redevelopment program a significant advantage over its counterpart in Leavenworth. Whereas Price and Rodgers had to spend several years gathering financial and political support from the various businesses in Leavenworth, Kollock and Hodkinson merely needed to convince Wilkins, who, with his significant financial resources and political clout, was able to single-handedly jumpstart the necessary renovations in Helen.

The plan to "Bavarianize" Helen was brought before the town council on January 11, 1969, and was approved.[35] However, since the community only owned two buildings in town, the Town Hall and the Fire Department, they had to rely on individual merchants to make the bulk of the changes. With no state or federal funding available, each merchant was responsible for their own building. Wilkins agreed to transform one of his buildings first; a large U shaped factory outlet on one side of the main thoroughfare in town [Figure 3.4]. The building had been rented out to various shops, but many were not

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[34] Kollock interview.

[35] Bob Harrell, "Helen is becoming an Alpine Village." Atlanta Constitution 26 March 1969, 18.

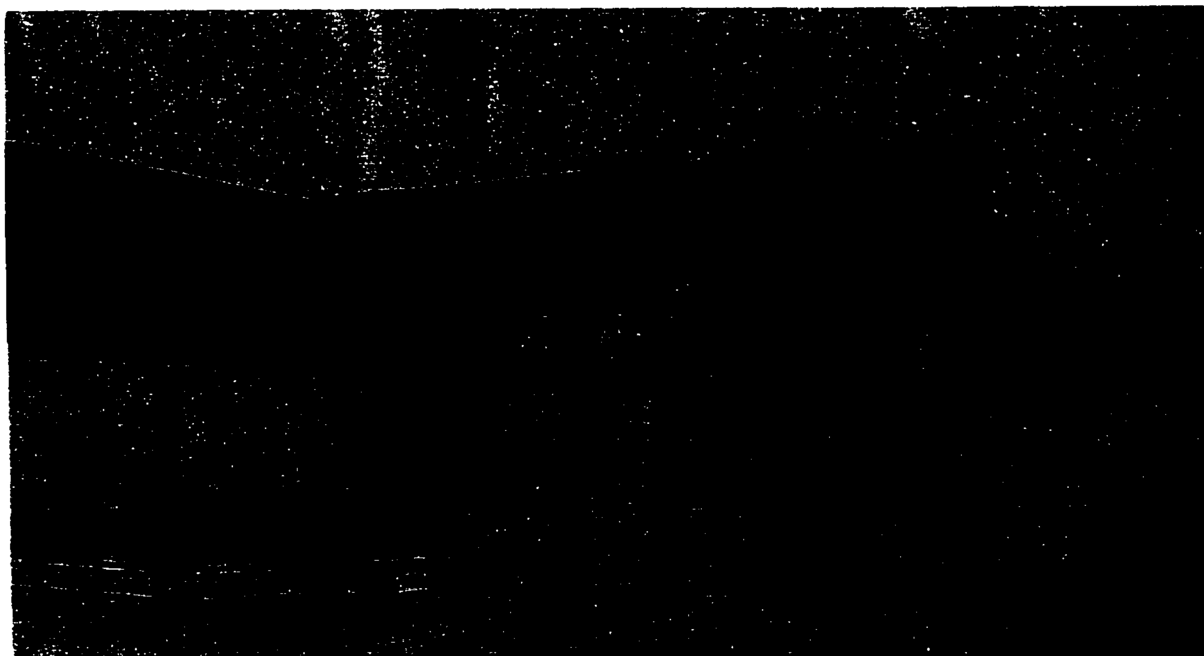

Figure 3.2: Kollock's vision of an alpine Helen. From Helen's Visitor's Center.

Figure 3.3: Kollock's vision of an alpine Helen. From Helen's Visitor's Center.

doing well financially. On January 14, only three days after the transformation was approved by the town council, the first nail was hammered into place.[36] Wilkins spent nearly $80,000 reconstructing his building into a pedestrian mall, and sought new lessees to operate small gift shops and other establishments that could cater to tourists' needs almost immediately.[37] [Figures 3.5 and 3.6] All but one were local people and, according to Mr. Wilkins, many had never even owned a business before.

Figure 3.4: Wilkins' factory outlet pre-transformation. From the collection of Barbara Westmoreland, Helen, Georgia.

[36] Harrell, "Helen is becoming an Alpine Village." 18.

Figure 3.5: Wilkins' outlet mall post "Bavarianization."

Figure 3.6: Detail of Wilkins' outlet mall courtyard.

[37] Wilkins interview.

Other local residents followed Wilkins' lead and began to open small shops designed to cater to passing tourists. The community got an added Germanic boost in 1969, when Bernd Nagy, an Austrian native, decided to open an import shop specializing in Tyrolian merchandise. Nagy, an etcher in his native country, had come to the United States to work with a graphic arts company in Atlanta. An amateur photographer, he had stumbled upon Helen early in its transformation and was intrigued. He immediately purchased one of the buildings and started an import business known as the House of Tyrol.[38] The business is extremely successful to date, and operates both a catalogue and a web site in addition to their brick and mortar store. Like most of Helen, its focus on Alpine culture is loosely based. In addition to the expected beer steins, nutcrackers and Hummel figurines, one can also purchase smoked salmon, English china, and tractor decor.

Reports vary on how enthusiastic town inhabitants were regarding the proposed changes. Some remember that support was "instantaneous and enthusiastic."[39] Kollock remembers confusion and slight anxiety.[40] The architectural changes were foreign to many who were used to seeing only white walls and brown roofs. If people were reticent about changing their existing business, then Wilkins and Hodkinson would try to change the buildings on either side to help "influence" their decisions.[41] Local builders were pleased, since remodeling projects kept them hired. The unusual colors and roof

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[38] Kollock interview.

[39] Scruggs 7.

[40] Kollock interview.

[41] Kollock interview.

materials surprised many and while some grumbled, authority and money carried the day. Residents were unsure what this new architectural style was, and Kollock remembers one local examining the new forms and turning to him to say "Oh, you are building a Japanese town."[42] Wilkins described the mood of many in the small community as "apathetic" and feels that real enthusiasm for the project didn't start until after the first building conversion, his former factory, was finished, allowing for businesses to open.[43] By the summer of 1969, most of the commercial buildings in the town were participating in the project. Kollock feels very strongly that the project's early success was due to the Wilkins' financial clout, Hodkinson's ability to talk just about anyone into following the project, and his own ability to produce thematic renderings. The local people, once influenced by this combination, began to display a strong gregarious community front, and followed the project with relative enthusiasm, even though they likely did not fully understand the implications. Upon completion of this activity, Helen would become an anomaly in North Georgia, its pseudo half timbered *fachwerk*, bright murals, and gingerbreading contrasting sharply with the standard cinderblock, plank, and log vernacular structures found throughout the region.

Crafting the Tourist Village

The detailed redesign and rebirth of Helen initially took place in Kollock's studio. He developed the Bavarian detailing from a personal collection of photographs and

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[42] Kollock interview.

[43] Wilkins interview.

material gathered during his stay in Germany. Another key source for his images was a series of German railroad models that he had acquired years earlier.[Figures 3.7 and 3.8]. These constructions, designed to provide scenery for model trains, represented two different architectural styles. The first model represents a Swiss chalet three story farm house. The cross gabled roof broadly protrudes over the frame shading a host of carved and painted details. Multi lighted windows are flanked by green shutters. A stuccoed ground floor is reached by staircases flanking either side of the front façade. The second model shows a series of three urban *fachwerk* buildings, reminiscent of Rothenburg, Germany. Steeply gabled roofs adorn tall multistory structures facing a cobblestone street with a small statue decorated fountain. Kollock used elements of each style in Helen's remodeling. He alternately refers to his blended style as Southern German, Bavarian, European, and/or Alpine.[44] The interchangeable use of these terms shows that Kollock, just like Price and Rodgers from Leavenworth, was more interested in capturing a regional motif than developing the town in a single style. Newspaper articles from the early 1970s also describe the town as Alpine, Bavarian, or Austrian, showing that the general public had a similar view of his work. Once finished, his unscaled drawings were taken to experienced builders Roy Sims and J.S. Chastain and turned into a physical reality.[45] [Figures 3.9 and 3.10]

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[44] Kollock interview.

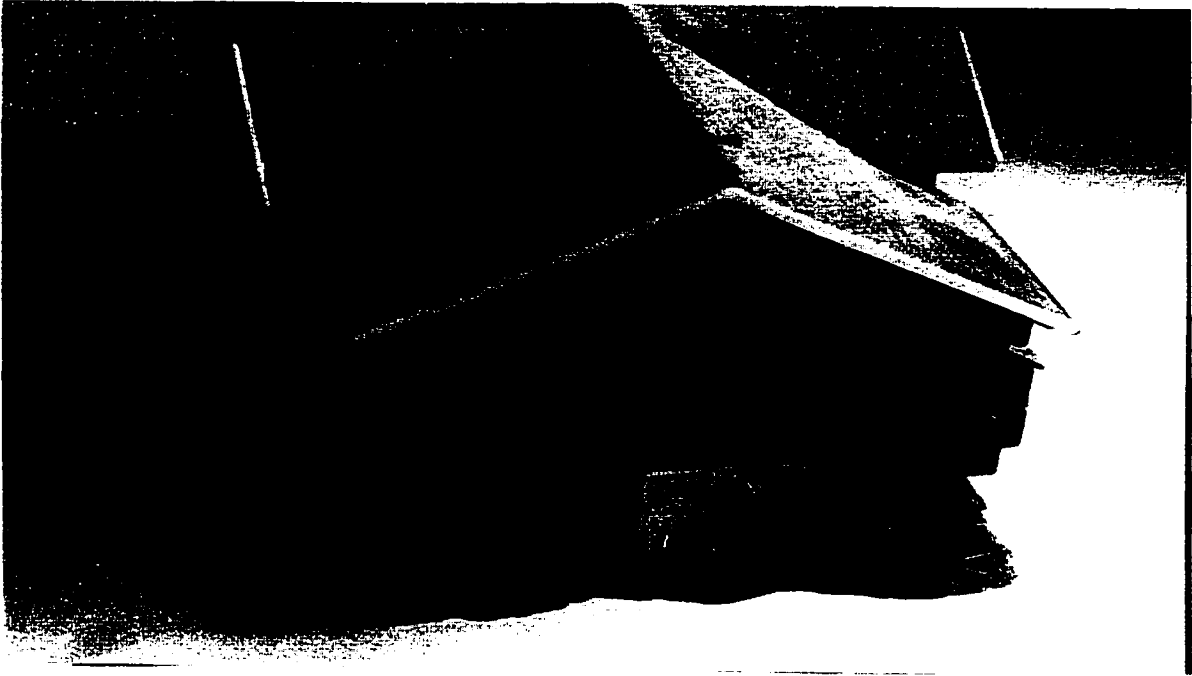

Figure 3.7: Kollock's chalet railroad model.

Figure 3.8: Kollock's *fachwerk* railroad model.

[45] "Bavarian Village Coming to Life in Helen, Georgia." The Wrightsville [Times?] Vol. 89 No. 41 undated article from Kollock's files.

Figure 3.9: Helen's Old City Hall. From Helen's Visitor's Center.

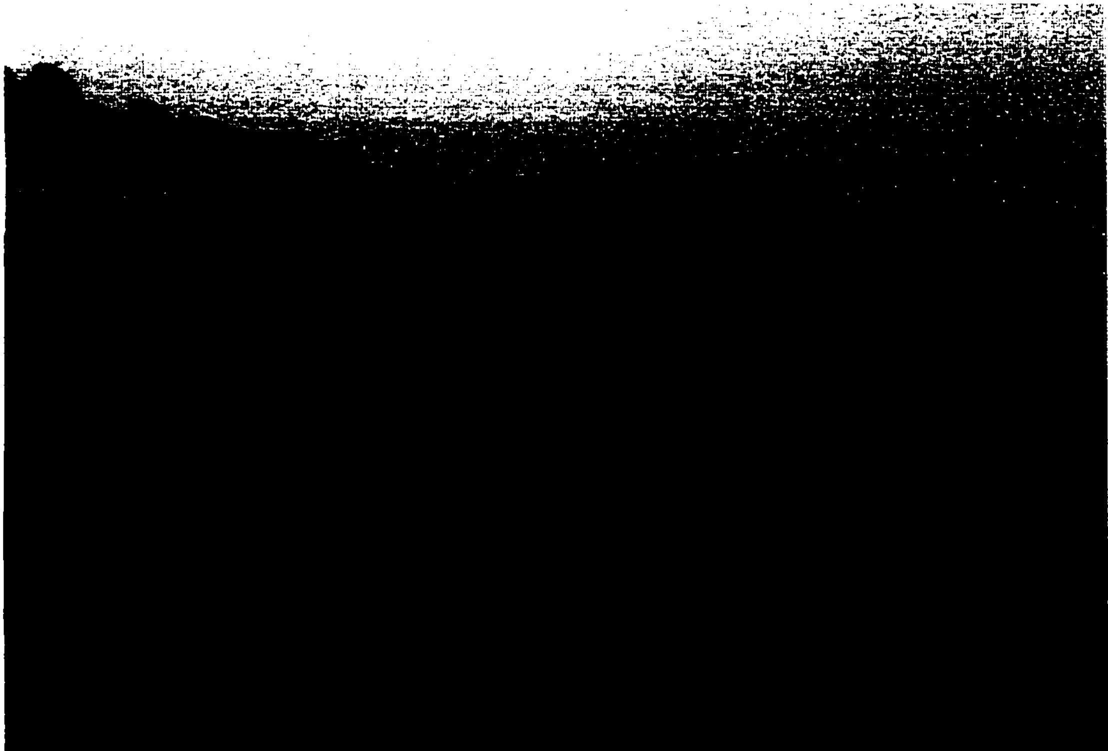

Figure 3.10: Helen's Old City Hall as envisioned by Kollock. From Helen's Visitor's Center.

Kollock kept the purpose of the transformation, drawing tourists and their money into Helen, at the forefront of his mind throughout the development process. As such, he made sure that architectural changes were not academic, but rather were largely influenced by commercial needs. For example, building facades were photographed and modified as necessary to make sure that they supplied picturesque images for tourists and their cameras. Colors were carefully selected to provide maximum contrast in both black and white and color photographs. Early in the development process, the wood trim of several structures was stained too dark and failed to satisfactorily show the wood working details in photographs. Once the mistake was recognized, the stain was changed to a lighter, more photogenic, tone.[46] The center of the U shaped manufacturing building owned by Wilkins was filled with small retail stores. Kollock, familiar with stage set tricks and Disneyland illusions, designed the buildings to create favorable optical illusions. For Wilkins' building, he reduced the scale on the second floor to make the structures look larger and more impressive.[47]

Once the major physical changes had been made, Kollock still needed to add the finishing touches. He decided to develop painted wall murals, similar to those seen in Oberammergau, Germany. Kollock had never painted murals before, but no one else in the community had any experience, so he agreed to create the murals as well. In Bavaria most of the murals are religious in content, but Kollock wanted to recreate images from local history instead. The pseudo-Bavarian architecture combined with realistic images

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[46] Scruggs 9, John Kollock print portfolio in the Helen 1972 scrapbook and Kollock interview.

[47] Kollock interview.

drawn from local history creates an interesting contrast: Helen was a town proud of its regional history, yet she was willing to destroy architectural reminders of that past in order to achieve economic stability. Kollock first illustrated images of local Native Americans and included a representation of DeSoto, the legendary Spanish explorer who may have passed through the region in 1540. Pioneers and gold miners were depicted as well. A 1913 scene shows the lumber mill in Helen [Figure 3.11]. For this image, Kollock had one of the long time residents, who had actually worked at the mill, climb onto the scaffold and make adjustments to ensure the accuracy of the scene. Even the Mitchell Mountain Hotel, which had been destroyed by fire decades earlier, was depicted with local Haynes Sims opening the gate, just as he had as a child.[48] [Figure 3.12] Kollock was concerned about possible vandalism, since he wasn't sure how the locals would react to paintings on the building's walls. To help counter this potential threat he decided to use locals as models for the murals. Polaroids were taken of construction workers and townspeople on the street, and the resulting images were used for the facial details. This integration of locals into the projects was a huge success, and Kollock remembers people coming into town on Sunday to show their relatives the paintings. To this date none of the murals have ever been vandalized.[49]

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[48] Bob Harrell. "Air Paintings Tell Helen History." Atlanta Constitution n.d.– scrapbook copy provided by John Kollock.

[49] Kollock interview.

Figure 3.11: Kollock's mural showing Helen's saw mill days.

Figure 3.12: Kollock's mural showing Mitchell's Mountain Ranch.

While the photogenic nature of each new building was determined, it quickly became evident that the tall light poles throughout the center of downtown detracted from the newly themed business district. As a result, in 1969 local business leaders opened discussions with the utility to bury the cables. Kollock was insistent that all wiring should be placed underground, to maximize photogenic aspects of the community.[50] The Georgia power company agreed to remove the contemporary electric power poles as long as Helen agreed to finance the replacement street lights. Other utility companies followed suit, with the Standard Telephone Company of Cornelia also placing their lines underground, and supporting the installation of an alpine styled phone booth [Figure 3.13]. One might wonder why the utility companies enthusiastically placed their support behind the small community. The power company likely agreed to these modifications because the town was only two blocks long, and therefore the expense of moving the power lines underground was limited. It is likely that Mr. Wilkins' influence in the region also helped to sway the power company's decision making process. The telephone company became involved with Helen for a different set of reasons. The North Georgia region was rapidly growing, and the telephone company felt that this type of public relations would be good for their business. Northern textile plants were beginning to spread to the south and additional plants were spreading upwards from Atlanta into North Georgia. A new road, Georgia route 400, also known as the Appalachia Developmental Highway, was in the early stages of planning and development. This road system included a 187 mile extension of the Blue Ridge parkway that would cut

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[50] "Bavarian Village Coming to Life in Helen Georgia." Times-Courier [Ellijay, GA] 24 April 1969, np.

directly through Standard Telephone Company's operational territory. The Standard Telephone Company believed that all of these developments would result in an increase in the population in North Georgia, which would directly translate into a larger customer base for their operations.[51] Furthermore, it didn't hurt that the success of Helen put additional money in their pockets, with gross revenues from Helen increasing more than 30% in the first year after the renovation. The publicity received from their investment in Helen truly paid off, when the Alpine themed pay telephone booth made the cover of the Telephone industry's national magazine, Telephone Engineer & Management, in 1972. As a result of their success with Helen. Standard became involved with another local community, Dahlonega, Georgia, which also was beginning to renovate its downtown. Dahlonega, the site of the first gold rush in the United States, was experimenting with a western themed downtown and the Standard Telephone Company was interested in repeating its past success with this community.[52]

Since essentially every building remodel (including the "alpine" telephone booth) was designed by Kollock there was a strong sense of design continuity. Once again, this provided Helen with some significant design advantages over Leavenworth. Leavenworth was forced to rely on a variety of different designers to produce the finished drawings for various structures throughout its commercial district. Obviously, each designer had his own ideas and concepts that were reflected in the final design. Furthermore, the difficulties of achieving and maintaining stylistic integrity in Leavenworth were further compounded by the fact that there were a variety of different

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[51] Telephone Engineer & Management 1 January 1972, 31 [Helen 1972 Scrapbook].

[52] Telephone Engineer & Management 31.

Furthermore, the difficulties of achieving and maintaining stylistic integrity in Leavenworth were further compounded by the fact that there were a variety of different

Figure 3.13: Publicity print by Kollock illustrating the community's new themed phone booth. From the "Helen 1972" Scrapbook.

store owners that were responsible for financing and implementing these designs. Many of these store owners were merely interested in applying minimal stylistic modifications, simply to satisfy the peer pressure from other shop owners without adversely impacting
their financial bottom line.

Helen employed a single designer, Kollock, who worked primarily with a single owner, Wilkins. As a result, Helen was able to present a more visually appealing, cohesive design. Given this rare opportunity to reshape the landscape to match his personal vision, Kollock drew upon his past travel and design experiences to determine the stylistic models that would be employed in the reconstruction of Helen. What were Kollock's major influences? What changes were made to existing structures? What are his stylistic trademarks? Kollock not only used the railroad models discussed earlier in this chapter, but also relied heavily on his memory and photographic material that he had acquired in Europe. He frequently mentioned two places that captivated him during his travels: Rothenburg and Oberammergau. Rothenburg is a small medieval city that was Frankish. It currently is a part of the Free State of Bavaria, added to the kingdom of Bavaria in 1802. Since the nineteenth century the majority of the small town's buildings have remained unchanged and essentially Franconian in style, with steep gabled rooflines, tile roofs, elaborate *fachwerk*, and small, shuttered multipaned windows. Occasionally the stucco sections of the *fachwerk* are painted, or even replaced with brick. Facades can have upper sections that extend beyond the main building. Murals are uncommon. This style is commonly found in urbanized centers, and is much more elaborate than design elements typically found in rural structures [Figure 3.14].

Figure 3.14: Rothenburg, Germany. Postcard.

The second style of architecture favored by Kollock is one found in rural farming regions, commonly known by its Swiss name, chalet. Chalets have very wide gabled rooflines, constructed of either tile or wood, with primarily stuccoed elevations. The rooflines project quite far over the building walls and provide shelter for a series of balconies and porches. Woodwork can either be unpainted or painted, with paint colors primarily green or red [Figure 3.15].

Figure 3.15: Chalets in Garmish-Patenkirchen. Postcard.

A village sub-variety of the Chalet that is similar in massing and roofline, but has smooth plaster walls which are frequently decorated with ornamental paintings, can be found in Oberammergau [Figure 3.16]. One would not usually find these two styles of chalet mixed, as they originated in different regions. Kollock, however, had no problems mixing elements of these two styles together, along with elements of the Franconian structures he encountered in Rothenburg. The result is a set of designs that were based on an amalgamation of Kollock's memories of Southern Germany. An example of the hybridization of these styles is evident in his remodel of the former Wilco outlet mall [Figure 3.17]. This particular design combines the white stucco and the broad gabled roof and balcony of a mountain chalet with fresco scenes and heavily timbered fachwerk. Most of the individual elements are visually correct, with the noticeable exception of the

scale and the size of timber elements. Kollock intentionally adjusted the scale on most of his creations so that the community would appear more compact and reminiscent of fairytale villages. Since most of the buildings in Helen were already one story, Kollock simply reduced the proportions of the "second" level that was added by the new roofline [Figure 3.18].[53] Throughout the commercial core, Kollock placed great emphasis on hidden courtyards and visual surprises like the "water fountain", which was modeled on the one appearing in his fachwerk railroad model. Even the main town courtyard was covered with stones to mimic cobblestones. These details, augmented by extensive landscaping and wooden hand lettered and painted signs, give his creations a European feel, even if it is scaled and interpreted in a slightly theatrical way.

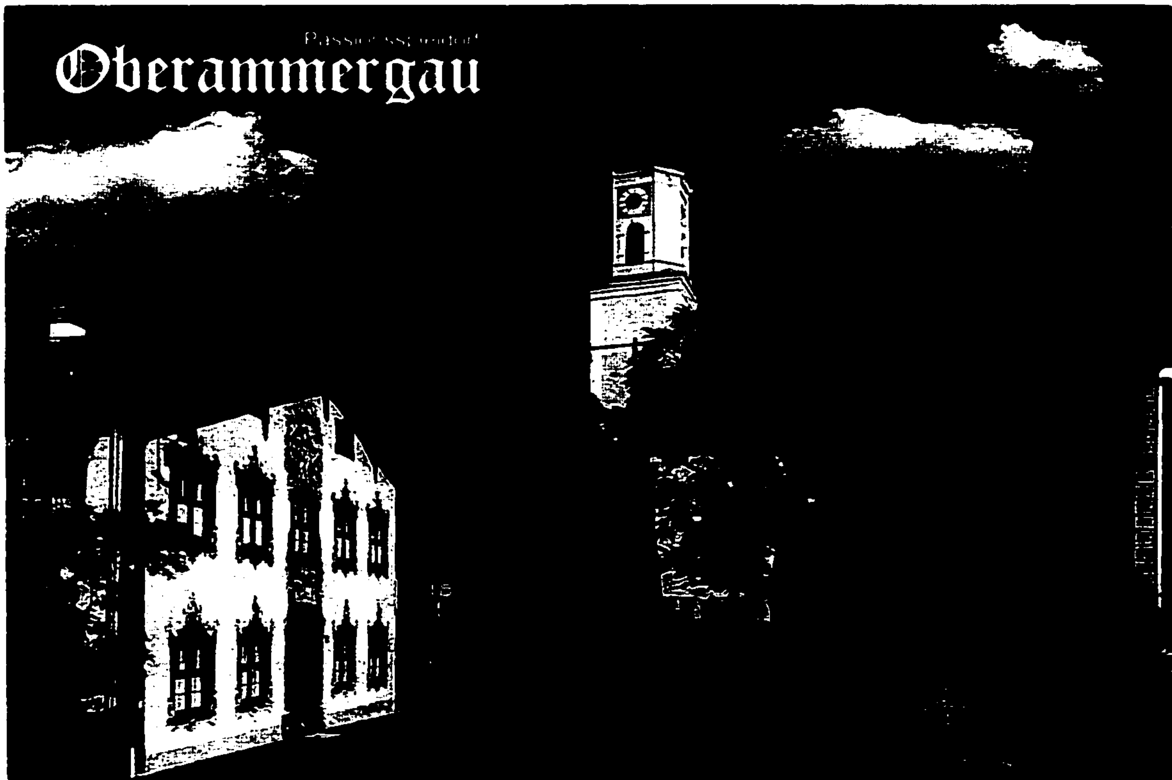

Figure 3-16: Oberammergau, Germany. Postcard.

[53] The carved (wood?) decorations on the House of Tyrol façade were not made by Kollock, but were added later by the Austrian owner.

Figure 3.17: Interior courtyard of the remodeled Wilco outlet mall.

Figure 4.18: Front façade of the House of Tyrol.

Attracting and Managing the Flow of Tourists

In just a few months the town had totally transformed its architectural setting. Now they needed to entice tourists to visit. There had been very little publicity within Georgia regarding the town's transformation. Kollock had a friend, Bob Harrell, who wrote for the Atlanta Constitution and traveled around the state writing stories for his Dateline Georgia column. He was interested in writing a story on Helen, prior to its completion, but Kollock was against the story and strongly believed that publicity surrounding the town needed to be limited until the project was completed.[54] Harrell acquiesced and didn't write a story on Helen until March, 1969, when most of the initial renovation work was finished. The newspaper story featured a large photo of the newly created "Alpine Village," with commentary from local business owners. Once Harrell broke the story, other papers in the area wrote about the transformation, and Helen had instant, and free, publicity.[55] Helen continued the publicity blitz through the development of a press release, which included several drawings of the remodeled community and was sent to several local communities, including Wrightsville and Ellijay, in late March of 1969. The community also developed a large scale promotional campaign for town events. Festivals, complete with music and food, were planned to entice visitors. The first event was the Chattahoochee Trout Festival and Alpine Hoedown (clogging) on September 20, 1969. In October the town sponsored a Fall

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[54] Kollock interview.

[55] John Kollock and Bob Harrell, "Helen is becoming an Alpine Village." Atlanta Constitution 26 March 1969, 18.

Festival Open Air Market, and by early November the community had won the "Stay and See Georgia" contest sponsored by the state chamber of commerce.[56] In less than one year the town had changed its architectural fabric, garnered the necessary publicity, and most importantly, begun to collect critical tourist revenue. More than 10,000 people visited Helen during its first summer of operation.[57] Octoberfest celebrations were added the next year and the festival was soon moved to September, to piggyback with travelers visiting the changing fall foliage. Within a few years, it was not unusual for Helen to have more than 15,000 people visit for busy weekend events.[58] Helen had become a "can-do," small town phenomenon. In the spring of 1970, the Western Wood Products Association gave four plaques to Helen commemorating the community's imaginative use of wood products. This type of official recognition fostered a strong sense of community pride, and locals became even more involved in the maintenance of the commercial area. Flowers were planted in windows boxes, trash cans were painted and garbage was cleared from the streets.[59]

The rapid increase of tourism began to strain the town's maintenance capabilities. Trash accumulation and dirty restrooms caused many tourists to complain in the summer of 1971 and the increasing amount of garbage produced by visitors each summer was quickly becoming a problem. The chamber purchased large wood pickle barrels, stained

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[56] Alpine Yodler Scrapbook .

[57] Coastal States Life Insurance Company.

[58] Alpine Yodler Scrapbook. Cliff Sewell. "Alpine Village in the Hills Draws Tourist to Helen." Savannah News-Press Sunday Magazine July 8, 1973 7F.

[59] Helen 1972 Scrapbook.

them, and kept them lined with trash bags.[60] These additional containers helped solve the accumulation problems encountered in previous summers. Although not Alpine in origin, these containers were commonly used in Main Street communities sponsored by the National Trust, and could be found in other historic communities at the time, including Historic Williamsburg. They were considered quaint enough to blend into the unusual environment, and were not nearly as expensive as customized receptacles. Helen's maintenance department was able to keep the city clean on weekdays, but their staff did not work on weekends, when many of the tourists arrived. The city asked the businesses to provide extra funds to support weekend cleaning services, so the chamber stepped in and organized a fee structure, collecting $6 per month from each business for trash removal and restroom cleaning.[61]

In 1972, a newly formed Chamber of Commerce decided to focus on the finishing touches that "...could make it [Helen] really superb."[62] The main thrust of this project involved the landscaping of Helen with flowers and trees traditionally associated with Alpine regions. Up until this point, a considerable number of artificial flowers had been used to decorate Helen, but it had become apparent to the community leaders that natural flowers would greatly increase the aesthetic appeal of the community and perhaps become a tourist attraction in their own right. Flowers were purchased wholesale from Sara Groves of Oxford, Georgia, and were brought to Helen in a large trailer.[63] Hanging

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[60] Helen 1972 Scrapbook.

[61] Helen 1972 Scrapbook.

[62] Helen 1972 Scrapbook. Chamber of Commerce letter, n.d.

[63] Helen 1972 Scrapbook.

flower baskets were placed on every lamppost in the commercial district, and additional trees were planted throughout the town. Originally the chamber had hoped to acquire trees from the local national forests. However, it quickly became evident that the trees available were not large enough, nor were they appropriate for an "Alpine" setting. As a result, the chamber decided to purchase trees from local nurseries, and sent a letter to all residents asking for donations of $10 per tree. Each tree could be purchased in memory of a loved one or other significant community figure.[64] Just as the murals were successful due to their depiction of local town residents, the drive to collect money for trees was successful due to the chamber's clever approach of involving the townsfolk in each community upgrade.

With these new improvements, the chamber began to expand their publicity drive. They printed and distributed a brochure on Helen, illustrated with some of Kollock's drawings of the community [Figure 3.19.] The brochure highlighted the location of Helen on a regional map and listed almost thirty regional activities including state parks, campgrounds, and shopping centers. Helen's efforts paid off, and in 1972 the community once again won the Georgia State contest, "Stay and See Georgia." Remarkably, the judges' comments focused more on Helen's new landscaping and maintenance efforts than on the Alpine architecture. They remarked: "With their hands as well as their hearts they planted the trees and flower boxes, replenished the colorful baskets of flowers hanging from every post and bracket and literally polished their Alpine town to a spic and

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[64] Helen 1972 Scrapbook. Chamber of Commerce letter, n.d.

span beauty. ... Its picture postcard appearance is a delight to the eye... but it is the citizens of Helen that make it an outstanding attraction."[65]

Growth Challenges

For six years Kollock continued to produce drawings and the town's image was refined to match his drawings. [66] Community leaders financed a trip to Germany and Austria for Kollock in the early seventies, to study and photograph architectural sites in the region. The trip was part of a project by community leaders, via the Alpine

Figure 3.19: Helen's publicity brochure, illustrated by Kollock, showing part of the finished Wilkins building remodel. From the Helen 1972 Scrapbook.

[65] Alpine Yodler Scrapbook.

[66] Kollock interview.

Investment Corporation, to construct a new 200- room hotel. The Alpine Investment Corporation, created to help control the potential sprawl around the edges of the town, was composed of various community leaders who wanted to take an active role in the future development of Helen.[67] Helen lies in a valley surrounded by National Forest land and Unicoi State park. The mountainous regions were owned by federal and state agencies, which meant that only the valley could be developed. The corporation was designed to keep development locally controlled, and out of the hands of outside groups that might destroy their valley. Locals were particularly concerned that all of their hard work might be undermined by outsiders with "more money than sense," who might model future development after the large-scale tourist trap of Gatlinburg, Tennessee.[68] Pete Hodkinson was president of the corporation, which initially purchased 1,200 acres of undeveloped land along three miles of the Chattahoochee River. After purchasing the land, the group decided to build a hotel in order to entice tourists to make extended stays in Helen. Since Helen had only twelve motel rooms in the early 1970s, building a hotel seemed to be the next logical step in the development of the community. However, the corporation had spent a considerable amount of money on real estate, and lacked the financial resources needed to build the hotel. As a result, they came up with the novel idea of selling individual hotel rooms to pay for the *Helendorfer's* (Inn of the Village of Helen) mortgage.[69] Participants (both locals and non-locals alike) could purchase a hotel room for $17,500 to $19,500, and were entitled to seven free days of

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[67] Alpine Yodler Scrapbook.

[68] Kollock and Wilkins interviews.

[69] The official name of the development was Northeast Georgia's Alpine City

occupancy a year in the building. Investors even received a deed for their particular room. At the end of the year, after 10% of profits were given to the corporation, all remaining income was split between the owners.[70] The project was also designed to include an ice skating rink, tennis courts, a golf course and horse-back riding, although these features were never realized.[71]

The transformation of Helen into an 'alpine' village had some visitors drawing analogies between Helen and existing theme parks. The Men's Garden Club of Hendersonville, North Carolina, visited Helen in the Spring of 1972, and devoted a small section of their publication, The Mountain Gardener, to Helen's unusual transformation. They described the town as: "A bit of Disney? Perhaps, but this little place earns that happy Disney feeling."[72] Tourists wrote to Helen with glowing reports of how much nicer Helen was than the commercial tourist traps surrounding Orlando. One letter to a local newspaper from a San Antonio resident told potential Disney visitors to "Forget Florida" and travel to Helen instead. His letter paid particular homage to the North Georgia's natural beauty and lack of "tourist traps."[73] Other small communities became intrigued by Helen's success, and many sent representatives to learn how Helen had managed to revitalize its economy and downtown core so effectively. Vernon D. Martin, director of the Coastal Area Development for Georgia, visited in June of 1973 with

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[70] Alpine Yodler (scrapbook), unknown newspaper, "Village Sells Rooms in Motel to Build It." During the late 1970s the investors simplified the operation by becoming a corporation, and each individual owner became a stockholder in the corporation.

[71] The hotel (which was named the Helendorf) is now privately owned.

[72] Mountaineer Gardener Hendersonville, NC May 1972 vol 18, page I.

[73] Alpine Yodler. "Forget Florida" letter to editor by Bill Holchak.

several colleagues. They were impressed by Helen's success and expressed interest in following Helen's lead.[74]

Regardless of how one measures success, tangible goals were achieved in the community. Helen created a new industry to support the area's flagging economy. While developers commonly tout tourism as a "clean industry" that will not damage the surrounding environment, this is not always the case. In this particular example, the historical environment of Helen was destroyed by the transformation. The town's social fabric too, was irrevocably changed. Originally, a sizable portion of the town's inhabitants were shop and building owners, whereas today, many shop and building owners live outside the community, and even outside the state.[75] Similar results were observed in Leavenworth, which leads to the conclusion that these transformations may improve the overall economic health of the community, but they do not necessarily directly benefit the original inhabitants of the community. Many of these inhabitants are pushed out by business interests that vie for the attention of each passing tourist. Over time, Helen has also experienced a similar loss of the local control that community leaders tried so hard to retain. In the early days of the transformation, the community had a personal, vested interest in the success of the downtown core, and as such, inhabitants were extremely proud of their role in the town's growth. The local townspeople believed that they had personally created a new, attractive community. It was a type of rebirth, an architectural and cultural renaissance, for the community which had pulled itself out of decline through vision, hard work, and perseverance. However,

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[74] Alpine Yodler, Letter dated June 19, 1973.

[75] Kollock and Wilkins interviews and Bruce Banks, personal interview 26 June 2000.

locally coordinating this new enterprise quickly became a difficult, if not impossible job. As Helen grew in size and financial success, it became, in many ways, a victim of its own success. When the original project was small, and practically controlled by only three men, the boundaries were easy to define. This centralized control led to a very unified architectural theme, with the same master artist (Kollock) controlling all of the details, from signage and buildings massing to materials and mural themes. However, the town quickly became a magnet for external business interests, and outside property owners and commercial backers soon entered the mix. Early promoters of the community were worried that such a change might harm Helen, and were concerned about maintaining the town's unique atmosphere. The Alpine Valley Improvement Corporation was designed to control these changes by placing stipulations on what could be built and how such structures would be designed. Unfortunately, one of the initial leaders of this corporation, Pete Hodkinson, died prematurely in a hot air balloon accident in 1976. This left the community without their most talented visionary, and Kollock, the main designer of the community, lost his primary supporter and promoter.[76] As the project became larger Kollock found himself unable to maintain control over all its aspects. He found this expansion frustrating and felt that many of the new entrepreneurs were outsiders, coming from locations as far away as Florida, to capitalize on Helen's newfound prosperity. He felt that many did not contribute to the continued upkeep and revitalization.[77] Kollock sat on the community review board at that time and helped guide many of the design reviews. Enforcing the local community ordinances,

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[76]Bob Harrell. "Helen Pretties Her Face to Get Tourists to Stop." Atlanta Constitution, March 14, 1972.

which have the same legal authority as standard zoning guidelines, was not a popular job. One property owner insisted that because all accent colors were red and green, he wanted to blue trim and a blue roof. Arguments regarding the appropriateness of such a color ensued, and Kollock increasingly found himself embroiled in controversy. Eventually, against Kollock's advice, blue was constructed [Figure 3.20][78]

The constant battles held in the design reviews began to wear on Kollock. He had consciously decided not to become financially involved as a property or business owner years before and felt that as an independent observer, his input would be perceived as more fair, and would therefore carry additional weight. It is unclear if this strategy helped or hindered him as the town grew. The professional detachment that he strove to maintain may not have been appreciated by some in the community, making him seem more like a meddling outsider who had no real economic interest vested in the community.[79] Kollock eventually withdrew his support from the project and turned to other commercial projects in the mid-1970s. He would not return to Helen until the early 1980s, when he worked as a paid consultant on a local history museum, "The Castle."[80]

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[77] Kollock interview.

[78] Kollock interview.

[79] Kollock interview.

[80] Kollock and Wilkins interviews.

Figure 3.20: The Heidelburg building with blue trim.

Current Design Reviews and Challenges

With Kollock and Hodkinson gone, the face of Helen began to change considerably. The success of the community's redevelopment work brought in a considerable number of absentee landlords and aroused interested in development from large hotel chains and fast food venues. Concern over the inappropriateness of some designs fostered a more formalized design review process [Figure 3.21]. Current design review guidelines were drawn up by Hill Studio, P.C., of Roanoke, Virginia, in 1994. The guidelines state that all commercial construction in Helen must be consistent with the architectural style of a Bavarian town.[81] The text emphasizes the difference between *Altstadt* (old town) and *Faubourg* (the newer developments) common in German towns.

[81] City of Helen, Georgia Architectural Guidelines 24 September 1994, 2.

The *Altstadt*, normally confined by city walls, have dense population centers, with small winding streets. The *Faubourg* is more rural in nature, and usually contains farmhouses.[82] Mention is made that Helen's commercial core, as first designed by Kollock, is very similar to an *Altstadt*. Later developments, such as the encompassing strip malls and isolated commercial structures on the edges of town are discussed in the context of *Faubourg*.[83] Bavarian design elements are listed as including exposed wood beams (*fachwerk*), decorated doorways, multi-light windows, bell towers, and cobble-stone streets. These elements are all constructed in dense detail, and small scale.

Immediate recognition is given to the fact that "Helen is not a true reproduction of a Bavarian village, but an artist's interpretation of a typical Bavarian town" with an amalgamation of exaggerated buildings, designed to give viewers the "essence of an Alpine village."[84] Although Helen's design guidelines claim that a uniform architectural style has been applied to the entire town, it really is a hybridization of several styles (predominately chalet and fachwerk) developed by Kollock. Bruce Banks, current city manager, refers to the *fachwerk* as "Storybook" in style, but still believes that it is an Alpine design element as well.[85] This amalgamation of stylistic designs does not seem to concern him, since all are European in origin, and lend an air of exotic "otherness" to the community. It is quickly clear that the purpose of the guidelines is to help property

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[82] The terms selected to describe the various parts of the community are most telling. *Altstadt* is a German word, while *Faubourg* is French. The cultural blending carries even beyond the architectural styles. City of Helen, Georgia Architectural Guidelines, 2.

[83] City of Helen, Georgia, Architectural Guidelines, 2.

[84] City of Helen, Georgia, 2-3.

[85] Banks interview.

owners continue to maintain the town's current appearance and to steer them away from inappropriate architectural details that are not associated with traditional Germanic/European architecture [Figure 3.22].[86]

Of course, establishing guidelines and enforcing guidelines are entirely separate activities, and at times Helen has had problems with the latter. Helen's design and review board has seven members, but the community is small, and members must either be city residents, business owners or property owners. Since most absentee owners are not interested in sitting on the board, Helen must rely primarily on community

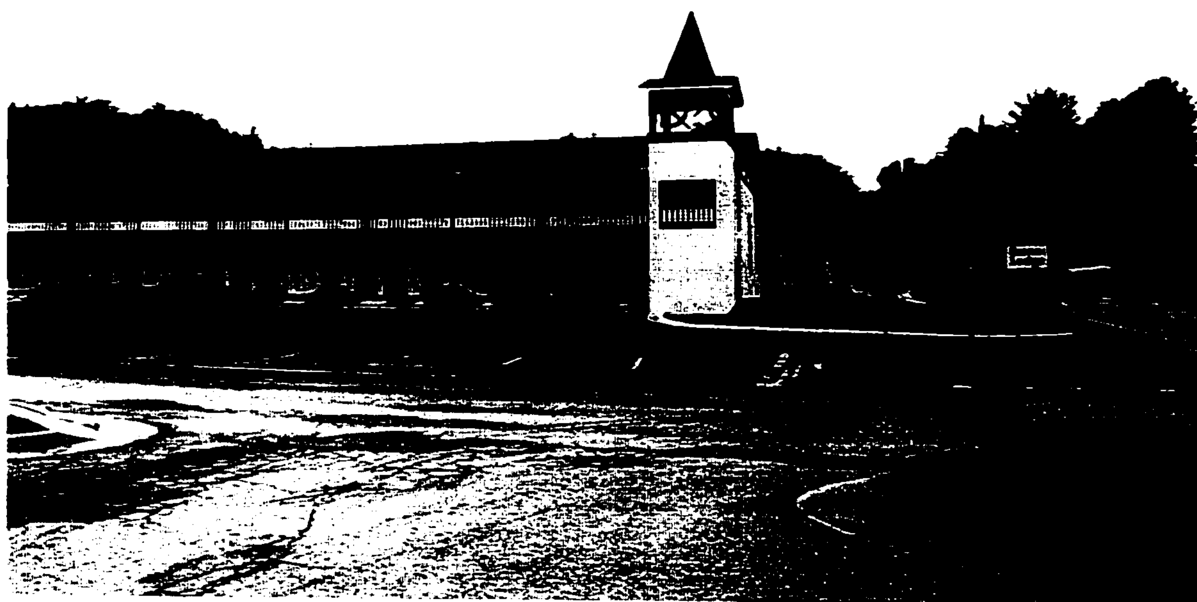

Figure 3.21: 1980s Econo Lodge with minimal theme development.

[86] City of Helen, Georgia, 3.

Figure 3.22: Page of illustrations from Helen's Architectural guidelines.

residents[87]. This is not an easy task, since only 350 people (including children) inhabit the town. These requirements for holding a board office are not uncommon, but it does strain the small community's resources. Several board members are elderly, and establishing a quorum for meetings can be a challenge.[88] Bruce Banks (the current city manager) is the most active member of the board, and as such, wields a considerable amount of influence, particularly over the city planned buildings and landscaping elements. His involvement with private projects can be more tenuous, and the city council discourages him from offering professional advice.[89] Banks generally applies his personal judgement to evaluate remodeling projects, rather than rely on the guidelines or

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[87] Banks interview.

[88] Banks interview.

[89] Banks interview.

on other outside resources.[90] Unfortunately, many times both his advice and the prevailing codes are ignored, for a variety of political, economic, and legal reasons. For example, in general, the level of building maintenance is directly correlated to the level of personal involvement in the community. Most of the property owners in Helen no longer live in the community; they live either in the county, or out of the region entirely. The prevailing philosophy is that tenants are responsible for face lifts or other remodeling on the structures. This considerable expense is often avoided by the tenants, and as a result many of the buildings are starting to show signs of wear. Banks is particularly concerned with this new precedent, and worries that building design and upkeep will continue to suffer as a result.[91] Signage is another recent code issue that has plagued the architectural design review board. Wooden or metal signs are preferred, but many current business owners favor using large blue and red neon "Open" signs from Costco or Walmart. The city's code does not allow backlit or neon elements, except for vacancy signs. Paper or plastic interior signage are not allowed either.[92] However, many of the store owners have simply chosen to ignore the code and use neon signs as they see fit. Frustrated by this development, Banks embarked on a campaign to eliminate illegal signage in the summer of 2000. Rather than comply with the code, many business owners complained of selective enforcement, and one is currently challenging the city.[93]

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[90] Banks interview.

[91] Banks interview.

[92] City of Helen, City Development Code Sec. 34-1005.

[93] Banks interview.

With the absence of the original visionary, and the political entanglements that are common in governments, the town's theme is beginning to wear thin in places. Visual degradation is particularly noticeable since Helen was the product of an artist's interpretation and keeping the ensuing architectural constructions matched seems to have been difficult. This is compounded by a lack of early written guidelines that ideally would have spelled out the development process for the original town center. As a result, the community has a hodgepodge of buildings, including a large Dutch style windmill hotel, and a shopping mall covered with a marginal amount of fachwerk. Small details have also been overlooked in many cases. For example, large metal trash barrels sit throughout the town, and some are painted with underwater scenes, whereas others are covered with red, white, and blue stripes [Figure 3-23]. These details may seem small at first, but their cumulative effect serves to diminish the authenticity of an Alpine experience. Since the community has avoided strictly defining what is and is not Alpine, German, Bavarian, or European, this comes as no surprise. The design review guidelines, particularly without sufficient enforcement, are simply not detailed enough to help a building owner that might be only marginally interested in compliance. Many developers also have failed to understand how to apply Germanic detailing to buildings of different size, type and scale. Part of Helen's appeal was gained from the small scale, exaggerated forms created in the central core. Their stuccoed images, elaborate carvings, and carefully orchestrated overhangs and balconies created a fairytale effect. It is difficult to successfully modify these design elements to work on larger structures, such as multi-story motels. In many cases new property owners have altogether ignored scale in their construction and instead, for economic reasons, have only applied a minimal amount of

Figure 3.23: Main Street trashcan.

Bavarian detailing. Kollock mentioned the shopping mall on the outskirts of town as an example of this planning failure, not only in terms of its style, but in its use and location as well.[94] The building, a low- end retail mall, is similar in content to many such commercial malls across the country. Kollock strongly believes that the community should focus its attention on small specialty shops to entice tourists, and not large, cookie cutter establishments. Wilkins was responsible for building the mall, and admits that it is "not a Bavarian deal" like the buildings downtown.[95] Of course, this once again raises

[94] Kollock interview.
[95] Wilkins interview.

the issue of what type of architectural details are important for establishing continuity, and how rigorously should a community enforce strict implementations of these guidelines.

Helen has also encountered significant problems with "urban-type sprawl", which has led to the development of large motel and shopping center establishments on the outskirts of the town. In his original vision, Kollock wanted to replicate the small-town, community experience found in England and Germany, where the historic core of a town is protected from urban encroachment by swaths of forested parkland. The greenbelt keeps the urban core from being built too far out, and in Helen's case would have contained the core into a small area that was totally accessible by foot. Kollock had hoped that Helen would continue its success by staying small and allowing people to park once, then walk throughout the rest of the town to shop. However, Helen was unable to claim ownership over all of the real estate beyond the downtown core. As a result, they tried to control development within these areas through the use of strict zoning controls that required all buildings to be constructed with a Germanic theme. The result of this zoning ordinance is an overwhelming sprawl of psuedo-Germanic structures undermining the original dream and vision that Kollock fought to retain. Helen is not unique in experiencing this type of themed sprawl, and even if they had placed tight design controls within its own borders, there would have been sufficient bastardization of the style from outlying commercial venues, as can be currently seen near Disneyland and Disneyworld. Walt Disney was so distressed by the close push of retailers that sought to capitalize on his creation, without adhering to the same design controls, that he made sure to purchase an excessive amount of acreage for his Florida themepark. The original plan for

transforming Helen never looked ahead at mechanisms for controlling growth, or for enforcing stylistic constraints. It is doubtful that anyone truly believed that the transformation would lead to such economic success, or that outside pressure and internal politics would significantly impact the town's ability to maintain its fantasy image. At the time, people were so focused on their economic survival, that few had the foresight to tackle these issues of theme integrity. Even fewer would be concerned about any of these issues, if revenues stay high. What would happen to Helen if profits declined? Would the community decide to reinvest considerable time and finances towards a more accurate recreation of the Germanic architectural image, complete with details, or would they decide that the town could be best bolstered in other ways? Helen successfully enticed visitors to stay during their first advertising campaign, which urged visitors to "Go abroad this year, visit Helen." The campaign promised visitors a would get a taste of European style, shopping and cuisine, without the need to travel large distances, learn new languages and spend considerable sums of money.[96] Although this marketing campaign might not draw experienced travelers, it proved to be a financial success throughout the seventies and eighties by drawing people unable or unwilling to travel abroad. However, with the advent of cheap air travel to Europe in the nineties and beyond, it is becoming more difficult for Helen to attract tourists.[97] The ability of the masses to experience travel abroad, coupled with the slow yet noticeable decay of the buildings in Helen, appears to have led to a steady decline in attendance. The future of Helen is certainly fraught with questions that remain to be answered, much like the future of Leavenworth.

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[96] The Alpine Yodler Scrapbook.

Although the future of Helen and Leavenworth cannot be accurately predicted, there are several trends that have been observed over the past several years that may offer a glimpse. Throughout this chapter, several parallels were drawn between Helen and Leavenworth. In many cases, it was apparent that Helen had significant advantages over its counterpart. Helen was blessed with a strong financial base provided by Wilkins, the primary owner of real estate in the community, and also had access to a single, skilled designer that was able to consistently and uniformly apply his vision to most of the commercial buildings within the downtown core. As a result, Helen was designed in a more authentic and consistent fashion, which would lead one to believe that they would likely experience greater commercial success and recognition. However, in spite of all the concerted effort that went into the development of Helen, it ultimately encountered the same problems that Leavenworth experienced in the late twentieth century. Success ultimately led to outside interests exercising their own political and economic power upon the fabric of the community, pushing the original townsfolk and founders out of the picture and building a collection of structures that failed to conform with the original design standards. Interestingly enough, for all its advantages, Helen seemed to be the least prepared for these outside influences, and to date has failed to adequately address these concerns. Leavenworth, on the other hand, has fought back against these retailers by developing a very stringent set of guidelines, and backing them up with a community spirit that demands not only compliance, but also demands that the community continue to evolve towards a higher ideal. Leavenworth has raised its standard for authenticity, and in going beyond architectural issues to social concerns of dress and language, they

[97] Kollock interview.

are pushing the envelope for future generations. Leavenworth seems poised to correct some of the mistakes of the past, and limit the same problems in the future. It is difficult to hypothesize the reasons that Leavenworth would end up more prepared for the future than Helen. Perhaps all of the challenges that Leavenworth faced throughout the design process left it better prepared to address future concerns. Or perhaps there are other subtle factors that have influenced the situation. Either way, it will be interesting to see how these communities fare in the early twenty-first century, both economically and aesthetically.

Looking at all the issues that have plagued both Helen and Leavenworth, one is forced to wonder: Is this the fate of all communities that reinvent themselves? In order to answer this question, one must search for parallels that could provide us with additional insight on the success rates of revitalized small towns. There is another, nationally recognized program, that also focuses on the redevelopment of small, economically struggling communities. The next chapter will examine the Main Street Program, and compare the redevelopment strategies employed by Helen and Leavenworth against the national trends led by this program.

CHAPTER 4

Saving Downtown: Post World War II Commercial Decay and Revitalization Efforts

"Welcome home to Main Street... Unlike the homogenized environment of a shopping mall, Main Street is real..."

Suzanne G. Dane Main Street Success Stories, 1.

Urban communities and small towns across America experienced major demographic and settlement shifts after World War II. Rapid growth in household incomes, coupled with a national highway system, helped many realize homeownership, resulting in an exodus of middle and upper class citizens to the suburbs. This drain on urban financial resources ultimately led to economic and physical decay.[1] Small towns and rural areas also saw their population bases decline, as young people displaced by low paying jobs and heavy agricultural mechanization left for higher paying jobs in urban/suburban communities. Forty percent of the U.S. population lived on farms in 1900, whereas by the late 1990s, less than two percent of our nation's population lived on farms.[2] Downtown decline was first addressed in urban areas, leaving smaller communities to suffer until the 1970s, when the foundation for the National Main Street

[1] For excellent overviews on the issues of urban decline see Jane Jacobs, The Death and Life of Great American Cities, and Zane Miller, The Urbanization of Modern America. David Danbom investigates farming trends in his text Born in the Country.

[2] Marion Nestle. Food Politics. (Berkeley: UCA Press, 2002) 11.

Center was established.[3] This organization proved to be highly successful in leading economically depressed commercial districts towards financial and physical recovery. Although Helen and Leavenworth suffered through the same set of problems plaguing Main Street participants, the program was in its infancy when they were approaching economic collapse, and was not available in their regions. As a result, Helen and Leavenworth needed to establish their own methods for preventing physical and economic ruin.

A superficial comparison of Helen and Leavenworth with Main Street communities reveals few similarities. In fact, most preservationists would bristle at the comparison. After all, Main Street communities showcase a large number of carefully restored historic structures, while Helen and Leavenworth destroyed their historic buildings to create Germanic facades. However, a more rigorous comparison shows more similarities than meet the eye. These extend beyond the underlying cause of the decay, and are evident in the fundamental principles that were applied towards the redevelopment of these communities. Leavenworth, Helen, and towns participating in Main Street programs addressed both physical and economic decline in their communities through renovation projects and mass promotion. Leavenworth went through a large scale community study (L.I.F.E.), a standard component that precedes many Main Street partnerships. Finally, Helen, Leavenworth, and numerous Main Street participants have discovered that tourism needs to be a major component of their revitalization plans, since it provides a revenue source that is critical for the sustenance of

[3] At the federal level the organization is referred to as the National Main Street Center. However, most states have their own offices which organize local participants. At this level the term generally used is Main Street Program.

the community. The purpose of this chapter is to examine these similarities and demonstrate how Helen and Leavenworth are not isolated anomalies, but merely variants of national revitalization trends.

Declining Downtowns

The United States has traditionally been uneasy with its urban centers. National identity was centered on endless tracts of undeveloped land, and densely populated urban areas were the antithesis of our national ideal. As a result, national policy regarding the growth and management of urban centers was scarce. The Depression and World War II had postponed most improvements to urban areas, and with the upsurge in wealth after World War II, many Americans preferred to simply move out to the suburbs rather than struggle with decaying urban infrastructure. In 1956 Congress passed the Federal-Aid Highway Act, authorizing more than $31 billion for interstate construction.[4] This dramatically accelerated American movement into suburbs, effectively decentralizing urban areas. Urban vacancies and declining rental incomes resulted in the deterioration of historic buildings. Lower income families moved into vacant buildings, and as property values began to decline in these areas, tax bases fell as well, leaving many cities struggling to provide basic services. Perhaps the final blow to these communities was the emergence of competitive pressures from newly established suburban retailers in

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[4] James A. Glass. The Beginnings of a New National Historic Preservation Program, 1957-1969. (Nashville: American Association for State and Local History, 1990) 3 and Suzanne G. Dane. Main Street Success Stories. (D.C.: National Main Street Center, 1997) 2.

shopping centers and malls. These centers, designed for automotive transport, provided easy access from the freeways and free ample parking for consumers. Urban communities developed long before the advent of the automotive age could not provide the same levels of access. As a result, these urban shops experienced a dramatic decrease in the number of consumers, forcing many of them into bankruptcy. Without some means of support, or a reversal of the trend, it was feared that these urban communities would completely collapse into decay. Local and national officials began to take notice of the situation, and attempted to devise solutions to a problem that was becoming widespread across America.

Eventually, the political power of large cities attracted the attention of state and federal politicians, and action was taken to halt and even reverse decline. City leaders, often in conjunction with teams of "urban planning specialists," developed key components for urban renewal, including the wholesale clearing of blighted areas. During the 1950s and 60s, the Housing and Home Finance Agency (HHFA) and the Federal Housing and Urban Development (HUD) program provided funds to help clear slum areas (many filled with historic buildings) and create land blocks for new development.[5] However, in many cases, these large tracts of land sat vacant, contributing nominal funds into the cities' already low tax revenues. In other locations city planners experimented with design elements considered conducive to social interaction, leisurely stays, and ultimately retail sales. From 1961 to 1975 New York City created a

[5] Glass 4. For a more complete discussion of urban renewal see Martin Anderson's The Federal Bulldozer (1964), Jane Jacobs' The Death and Life of Great American Cities (1961), Allen J. Matusow's The Unraveling of America (1984), and The National Commission on Urban Problems, Building the American City (1968). It is estimated that from 1949 until 1961 urban renewal demolished more 148,000 buildings (Matusow, 102).

development code that served as a model for many urban areas. Developers were given a bonus for providing street level plaza space. Features listed as desirable included seating, greenery and trees, retail frontage, sufficient illumination, food facilities, and continued maintenance.[6] Visual pattern and rhythm were also considered highly important.[7] However, it became increasingly clear that America's downtowns remained only marginally commercially viable. New uses needed to be found for downtown districts that would address economic challenges, yet capitalize on a long overlooked asset; community history through the built environment. Significant urban losses, such as Penn Station in New York, and large swaths of historic communities bulldozed for urban interstate projects, helped mobilize preservation advocates across the country, resulting in a reevaluation of economic revitalization policies and procedures.[8]

Historic Preservation in the United States

Early preservationists were traditionally interested in history and either did not understand, or engage with, the economic realities inherent in building maintenance. Most early projects were narrowly focused on saving homes considered important due to their owner, such as George Washington's home in Mount Vernon. The economic benefits of preservation for a region were acknowledged, but rarely addressed, during the first half of the twentieth century. In 1912 William Appleton (president of the Society for

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[6] Whyte 121.

[7] Byron Mikellides Ed. Architecture for People (London: Studio Vista, 1980), 74-86.

Preservation of New England Antiquities) reminded business leaders in Cambridge, Massachusetts that the numbers of visitors (and the dollars spent) in a community were closely tied to the maintenance of historic structures. He firmly believed that the preservation of a historic home was "a business proposition" for the city.[9] In the 1920s, public interest in "romantic" buildings and settings from the past increased, perhaps as a reaction to the rapid commercialization of the American landscape.[10] As a result of this newfound interest in historic structures, neighborhood and district preservation plans began to appear for the first time in the United States. In 1924 Charleston, South Carolina started the restoration of its residential and commercial neighborhoods, creating zoning laws for the first historic districts in the United States. New Orleans followed suit in 1936 and the state of Louisiana passed a constitutional preservation amendment, designed to maintain the Via Carre district through a private foundation.[11] However, these preservation activities remained isolated at the local level, and failed to establish a foundation for saving historic structures throughout the United States.During the 1960s intense interest in the continued success of European commercial cores, coupled with large scale real-estate clearance in urbanized areas of the United States, led American preservationists to join governmental and business leaders in developing preservation legislation.

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[8] For more detailed information on preservation battles in the United States, please see Charles B. Hosmer Jr. Presence of the Past and Preservation Comes of Age, Volumes I and II in addition to Christopher J. Duerksen's Handbook on Historic Preservation Law.

[9] Charles B. Hosmer Jr. Presence of the Past. (New York: G. Putman's Sons, 1965) 268.

[10] Hosmer (Presence of the Past) 228.

[11] William J. Murtagh Keeping Time: The History and Theory of Preservation in America. (New York: Sterling Publishing, 1990) 58-59 and Robert E. Stipe and Antoinette J. Lee The American Mosaic: Preserving a Nation's Heritage. (D.C.: ICOMOS,1987) 114-115.

Getting the federal government to effectively address these issues was not easy. It wasn't until after election of President Kennedy that preservation issues were seriously addressed by the federal government, spurred in part by the upcoming bicentennial. A key moment for preservationists was the creation of the "Rains Committee" in 1964, which was charged with researching preservation policies both in the United States and abroad, and was sponsored by the U.S. Conference of Mayors and the Ford Foundation. The committee, composed of key members of Congress, preservationists, and heads of major Federal agencies, traveled to Europe in 1965, visiting eight countries in hopes of learning how these nations managed the challenges of maintaining old urban centers.[12] Upon their return the committee published "With Heritage So Rich." Copies were sent to the president, congress, state governments and leading mayors in an effort to build support for a national preservation movement. The establishment of a National Trust, a non-partisan advisory council, was recommended to protect the interests of historic communities and structures. The committee's findings led to the passage of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public law 89-665), which created the National Register, authorized HUD to make grants for historic preservation, and required HUD to consider impacts to national register properties when designating urban renewal and clearance areas, marking the first time the Federal Government was held accountable for its treatment of historic properties.[13] In spite of all

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[12] Glass 10-11.

[13] The same year congress passed the Demonstration Cities and Metropolitan Development Act, which addressed economic concerns in large, urban areas. Another bill, the Department of Transportation Act of 1966, required the Federal Department of Transportation to consider both environmental and historic impacts caused by highway projects. Glass, 19 and 50.

the new legislation, federal funds to assist actively in historic preservation were not immediately available, and only a decade later were tax credits allowed for historic rehabilitation. While these developments were encouraging to preservation advocates, they failed to address all of the key challenges facing historic commercial districts. Eventually preservationists realized that the economic health of a region directly impacted its ability to maintain its historic structures. It was also increasingly clear that successful large scale preservation required significant local support, and the establishment of zoning laws that mandated preservation. In response to these concerns, the National Trust began to take a more active, holistic approach to downtown redevelopment and preservation. Since much attention had previously been given to large urban areas, the Trust decided to use smaller commercial districts as a proving ground for new preservation strategies.

Economics of Preservation and Main Street

In 1977 the National Trust felt organizationally and financially strong enough to create a funded downtown preservation program: The Main Street Project.[14] The main factors for the physical and economic decline of small cities were similar to those of their larger urban counterparts; increases in automobile usage, suburban housing, and suburban shopping malls. Additionally, these small communities often experienced dramatic population decreases as inhabitants moved to larger urban areas in search of better jobs. Further aggravating the problem was the rapid growth of commercial properties.

[14] This pilot project would eventually become the National Main Street Center.

Between 1960 and 1990 commercial retail space increased by a factor of four; but, retail sales did not rise at nearly that rate.[15] The revitalization of these downtown cores clearly extended far beyond the establishment of rules and regulations to preserve existing architecture. Preservationists needed to pay careful attention to the economics underlying these development areas, and to carefully assess the assets and liabilities of the business districts. These economics were a critical factor for establishing self-sufficient communities with the means and desire to maintain their historic architecture. A three year study launched in 1977, examined the reasons that selected downtowns were economically unhealthy, and identified revitalization strategies that would nurture economic growth *within* historic preservation guidelines. Three pilot communities were selected; Galesburg, Illinois, Madison, Indiana, and Hot Springs, South Dakota. Each of these cities was too small (population range from 5,000-38,000) to qualify for HUD development grants. The pilot program focused on four key components: organization, promotion, design and economic restructuring. Professional help, including the services of historic architects and business consultants, was made available. All three communities were successful in proving that historic downtown buildings could become viable commercial spaces. Local business were encouraged by the program, and for every dollar spent by local government, eleven dollars were invested by businesses during the rehabilitation process. By the end of the pilot program, sales tax revenues in Hot Springs were up by 25%.[16]

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[15] Suzanne G. Dane. Main Street Success Stories. (Washington, D.C.: National Main Street Center 1997) 2. This trend was to continue for several decades. In the decade between 1980 and 1990 retail space increased by more than 40%, yet retail sales were only up by 8%.

[16] National Trust for Historic Preservation. Revitalizing Downtown. (Washington, D.C.: National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1988) 2.

Due to public interest and enthusiasm the program continued, and expanded by forming state Main Street programs to facilitate local coordination in 1980. Each state was allowed to select five towns for participation. There were two main criteria for entry: a desire to preserve one's historic environment, and sufficient financial/public support to effectively complete the transformation. Most Main Street communities supported population levels between 2,500 and 50,000, although in 1985 the program expanded to accept urban areas which housed up to 250,000 residents.[17] Communities larger than this generally do not qualify, since the economic dynamics in these areas are considered substantially different. Smaller communities also fell outside of program guidelines, since it was believed these communities did not have enough critical mass to support the program financially. From an economic standpoint, the Main Street program has been immensely successful. By the end of 1993, every dollar spent by a community brought in an average of $24 in outside investments. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development considers this one of the most successful economic development programs in American history. The program has expanded to encompass forty-two states, and more than 1,200 communities, with more than 5.87 billion dollars generated since the programs inception and a net gain of 33,000 businesses.[18]

What exactly made this program successful? The Main Street Program is based on four interconnected themes: organization, promotion, design, and economic restructuring. The organization and promotion components take their cues from shopping mall successes, including standardized hours for all business, and common promotion of

[17] While the program does allow communities with populations of 2,500 to apply for the program, the preferred minimum population is 5,000.

joint sales, holiday celebrations, and community events. By marketing downtown as an entity, store owners are able to pool advertising resources. To help coordinate these events, towns are responsible for hiring a program overseer. This person performs the same basic role as a chamber of commerce, or a better business bureau, but is responsible only to participating businesses and property owners in the historic downtown core. Building design is the aspect that works with the historic fabric of the district. Owners are encouraged, frequently with subsidized or free architectural services, to return buildings to their original, historic appearance. The design consultants highlight the unique characteristics of each building, resulting in a rich tapestry of building materials, colors, scale, and ornamentation that keeps the downtown core from becoming monotonous and two dimensional. Particular emphasis is placed on the reconstruction of each building's historical detailing, such as ornamental iron work, elaborate woodwork, or seed window glass. The aesthetics, not only of the individual buildings, but of the downtown as a whole, are rigorously promoted. Designers work carefully to ensure that non-historic structures blend with their historic counterparts. Even back alley entrances are cleaned, painted, and given new signage and lighting to keep the restoration theme congruent with the main façade. Signage, plantings, trash receptacles, and public seating areas are also considered important for maintaining a clean, relaxed, social atmosphere within the downtown core. Downtown shops capitalized on small commercial districts that were originally designed to be easily traversed by foot. Planners have long realized the value of quiet and pedestrian paths in retail zones, and these small districts, which often see relatively light street traffic due to federal and state bypass construction, offer

[18] Dane, (Main Street Success Stories) 9.

pedestrian friendly environments conducive to a leisurely, enjoyable shopping experience.[19] Economic restructuring is the final component, and encourages participants to rethink the types of businesses that can be economically successful in a downtown commercial core. Large scale retailers, such as Wal-Mart and Kmart made it increasingly clear that small mom-and-pop operations could not compete with their convenient locations and low prices. As a result, merchants were asked to focus on goods and services not available at these retail mega-stores, including high end retail items, specialty goods, or personalized services.

Scholarly literature examining the federal, state or local governmental roles in this program is scarce. Nor does there seem to be any published inquiry of how the national Main Street movement fits into broader economic or planning trends during this period. This lack of published information may be, in part, due to the lack of an archival repository for the organization. The little published material that is available is almost exclusively produced by the National Trust or the National Main Street Center, and is presented in a format designed to appeal to business investors, providing fairly concise goal descriptions and emphasizing lengthy financial tables. However, personal experience with the Main Street program supports the subsequent observations.[20]

The Main Street program set out to save historic buildings by producing economically profitable historic shopping districts. It was tremendously successful in the

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[19] Christopher Alexander, Sara Ishikawa and Murray Silverstein. A Pattern Language. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977.) 175.

[20] I have been a resident of Lexington, Virginia for most of my life. During the summers of 1993 and 1994 I worked for the local Main Street organization, the Lexington Downtown Development Association, established in 1985. I received coordinator training from the Virginia Main Street program, and attended a State Main Street conference in conjunction with travel to other Main Street programs, both in and outside of the commonwealth.

achievement of these two objectives. But the types of businesses, and indeed, many of the customers, changed more drastically than many had expected. Higher-end specialty stores combined with aggressive promotions attracted substantial business from tourists, but had limited appeal and utility for the local residents. Tourists were far more likely to patronize a gift shop or a restaurant than a hardware store or craft store, so these types of businesses were slowly replaced by more lucrative retail shops. Large downtown buildings that were unable to successfully house single enterprises were frequently subdivided to accommodate multiple tenants. For example, Lexington, Virginia, a National Main Street participant, lost its downtown hardware store in the 1990s. The large space was then subdivided on the interior and exterior. A former department store was completely transformed into a county office building, drastically altering fenestration and materials. A former gas station and two drug stores became gift shops. A movie theatre was transformed into condos while a creamery became a restaurant. All of these changes fell within the guidelines of the Main Street program, and made Lexington an economically successful community with a wealth of well preserved, historic architecture. However, through the eradication of all the original stores that served local inhabitants, the social fabric of the community was irrevocably altered, and part of the community's history was still lost in the name of economic gain.

Helen and Leavenworth

How do Helen and Leavenworth fit within the national trends of urban renewal and historic preservation? What are the similarities that bind Helen and Leavenworth to Main Street communities? Helen and Leavenworth were both small, economically struggling communities that were suffering the same fate as thousands of other communities in the 1960s. Both of these communities were highly dependent on industries that utilized abundant natural resources in the surrounding areas. When these resources were depleted, these industries abandoned the area, leaving the communities economically weakened. Broader national trends, including population shifts to urban areas, coupled with increases in automobile usage, suburban housing, and large scale suburban shopping malls, further exacerbated local economic issues, leaving the commercial districts of Helen and Leavenworth in a deep state of decay.

Leavenworth and Helen were approaching economic and physical ruin at approximately the same time the public began to pay attention to these problems in urban areas. Although the National Trust was in the process of addressing urban renewal through historic preservation, these programs had not yet been applied to smaller communities. Georgia did not develop a state Main Street program until 1980, although some cities, like Savannah, had developed successful preservation records. Washington State did not join the program until 1986, almost a decade after the pilot programs had been launched. Obviously these governmental developments occurred too late to help Leavenworth and Helen. Even if Main Street programs had been operational during Helen and Leavenworth's time of need, it is highly unlikely that they would have been

viable candidates. The population of Helen was less than three hundred, which was well below the absolute minimum standard of 2,500 residents generally required by the program. Also, many of the buildings in Helen were constructed from concrete block, and the few that were constructed from wood had dirt floors, and were already structurally unstable. Due to Georgia's considerable age, and the vast number of antebellum buildings that were structurally intact at the time, it is doubtful that anyone would have considered the town's remaining commercial buildings, primarily dating from the early twentieth century, historically important. The one building that might have attracted attention, the Mountain Ranch Hotel, had burned to the ground years earlier. Leavenworth had more buildings, and many of the structures were superb representations of turn of the century brick commercial styles. However, Leavenworth had a population less than 2,000, which was also below the threshold for consideration. Furthermore, given Washington State's much younger settlement age, it is unlikely that many people would have considered Leavenworth's structures particularly noteworthy during the 1960s. In 1955, the president of Colonial Williamsburg had warned that there was "a limit" to historic preservation and that preservation activities were only justified in regions that had *real* antique importance.[21] Buildings from the late Victorian era, structures that were less than a hundred years old at the time of our bicentennial, were frequently not classified as historic. They were often just labeled as "old" buildings, physical remnants of a previous generation.

As a result of all of these factors, Helen and Leavenworth were essentially on their own in developing of a set of strategies to revitalize their commercial districts.

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[21] Hosmer, (Presence of the Past) 260.

Although Leavenworth entered a community self study sponsored by specialists at the University of Washington, much of the study focused on issues other than economics (such as churches, schools, and recreation). Helen did not even have access to these limited resources, and remained completely isolated from professional planners throughout their community redevelopment. In spite of these conditions, the process developed to initiate the economic revitalization of these communities was strikingly similar to the process applied in future Main Street programs: organization, promotion, design, and economic restructuring. Helen and Leavenworth encouraged standardized hours for all business, and each town celebrated German festivals and used community events as a mechanism for common promotion. Local organizations, similar to chambers of commerce, helped coordinate events and publicity. Therefore, the organizational and promotional elements of these towns were driven by the same mall-based concepts that were ultimately used in Main Street communities, albeit using German culture as the underlying theme.

Although the resulting architectural forms in Helen and Leavenworth are markedly different from that of subsequent Main Street communities, the underlying design principles are not. Main Street communities focused on the restoration of the historic buildings within the downtown core. Helen and Leavenworth were focused on the fabrication of an Alpine Village within their downtown core. Central to the success of both of these concepts was an unwavering emphasis on the design details. Helen and Leavenworth believed that it was extremely important to develop a complete Germanic architectural language. These communities were very concerned that ignorance of critical design details could lead to a monotonous or discordant design that would not

capture the attention of visiting tourists, or worse yet, might come across as an obvious front which would immediately turn off tourists. To avoid these problems, Helen and Leavenworth both hired local building specialists (and in Helen's case, a graphic artist and stage set designer) to ensure that the reproductions were complete. In spite of published historical accounts that focused on the "authenticity" of each community's transformation, it is clear that complete authenticity was never the main goal. Rather, the designers were focused on creating harmonious cityscapes that portrayed a general and recognizable theme of Germanic architecture. The whole town had to support this transformation, for it was extremely important that every detail, even the costumes worn by store owners and employees, continued the illusion. Signage, plantings, trash receptacles, pedestrian friendly walkways, and public seating areas were also critical design elements that received attention in both these towns and subsequent Main Street communities.

Economic restructuring was obviously the major driving force behind the redevelopment of Helen and Leavenworth, and owners carefully selected businesses that would be successful in this new community. Ironically enough, aside from the German theme, the types of stores that are found in these towns are very similar to those found in Main Street redevelopments. Many businesses avoided competing with large scale retailers, and instead focused on stores that would interest visiting tourists, such as gift shops, restaurants, and personalized services. The influence of tourism is an especially important aspect of Helen, Leavenworth and Main Street communities. Regardless of the ultimate visual design (historic or Germanic), the underlying economics were the main driving force behind the transformation and maintenance of these small cities. All of

these communities had initially survived by providing basic goods and services to the local population. However, the demographic shifts across America, coupled with competitive pressures from large scale retailers, had made this model economically unviable. As a result, these towns were redesigned around a fundamentally different type of consumer – the tourist. Helen, Leavenworth and Main Street communities were all designed to provide services to tourists, and continue to thrive because they address tourist needs. The next chapter explores the relationships between tourists and these communities, and the fundamental changes that occurred to accommodate these relationships.

CHAPTER 5

Tourism

"...tourism is tainted [it] tarnishes all it touches..."

Simone Abram, Tourists and Tourism, 1.

Previous chapters have discussed the genesis and evolution of World's fairs, Disney's amusement parks, Williamsburg, Main Street communities and the case study towns, Leavenworth and Helen. For all of their differences, each of these sites shares tourism as a common denominator. What are the roots of twentieth century tourism in the United States and how did communities tap into this new resource? What are tourist expectations? How were Helen and Leavenworth influenced by these expectations? The purpose of this chapter is to examine the evolution of tourism and its ensuing impact on communities throughout the United States. Special attention will be paid to the impact of tourism on Helen and Leavenworth, communities that fabricated an identity and cultural heritage in an attempt to draw tourists that otherwise would simply have passed through the community. What made Helen and Leavenworth independently select a Germanic theme for their community? Did Americans have a special connection with Germany that drew them to these communities and allowed them to suspend their disbelief in this created culture?

Tourism in the United States

Twentieth century tourism in the United States was increasingly defined by automotive travel, and roadside establishments rapidly appeared for the sole purpose of catering to travelers. During the late 19th century travel was reserved for the wealthy, who generally preferred to partake in grand European excursions. However, the inaccessibility of Europe during World War I, coupled with national campaigns that promoted the beauty of the natural landscape, contributed to a rise in domestic tourism in the early twentieth century. This trend was short lived, as the New York stock exchange crash and the ensuing Great Depression dealt a severe blow to the American economy. It was not until after World War II that the American economy was strong enough to once again encourage leisure activities that required substantial amounts of disposable income and free time. The gross national product grew by more than one and a half times between 1945 and 1960.[1] This, combined with low unemployment and inflation rates (about 3 percent each), contributed to a strong economic climate. The population of the United States grew during this time, rising almost twenty percent during the 1950s and fueling unprecedented consumer demand. The proliferation of unions also had a dramatic effect on the economy, with union membership accounting for about 30% of the labor force between 1945 and 1965.[2] While unions provided a great many services to their members, increased pay and reduced work hours greatly impacted recreation and leisure trends in the United States.

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[1] Figures given in 1958 prices. U.S. Department of Commerce. Historical Statistics of the United States Colonial Times to 1970, pt. 1, (Washington, D.C.: 1975) 224.

Travelers used interstate highways to leave large population centers, and sought out areas that differed from their suburban surroundings. The proximity of Leavenworth and Helen to major highways was a critical factor in the tourist based transformation of each community. The towns were initially developed as a base for local lumber operations. When the surrounding areas were reforested and designated as state or national forests in the mid-twentieth century, Helen and Leavenworth became geographically isolated. This geographic isolation, combined with the closure of local timber industries, were the major factors in the physical and economic decay of these communities. However, these parks became a major draw for urban tourists (from the rapidly growing metropolitan areas of Seattle, Washington, and Atlanta, Georgia), resulting in a steady stream of recreational travelers that passed through Helen and Leavenworth. In fact, travelers originating from Atlanta had to directly pass through Helen on State Route 17 to enter Unicoi. Since the tourists were already passing through their towns, Helen and Leavenworth simply needed to find a way to entice the travelers to stop, get out of their automobiles, and spend both time and money. What mechanisms were available and commonly employed by communities to attract tourists? Which of these mechanisms would best suit Helen and Leavenworth?

Communities with a substantial tourist base and service employment are generally referred to as "post industrial."[3] The growth of convention centers and hotels that occurred in the early 1970s through the 1980s was merely a precursor to broader changes in the urban landscape. Former industrial cities, such as Pittsburgh, Birmingham, and

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[2] The World Almanac (New York: World Almanac Books, 2003) 150.

Cleveland, transformed themselves from spent manufacturing cities into tourist destinations, which ultimately brought newfound wealth and prestige. Private sector specialists have estimated that a couple of dozen tourists per a day in a community is financially equivalent to the addition of a new industry with a payroll of fifty to sixty employees.[4] There are five main categories of tourism that are usually employed by these communities: ethnic, cultural, historical, environmental and recreational.[5] Environmental as well as recreational tourism does not generally occur in urban spaces. The tourists that were traveling through Helen and Leavenworth were already enroute to recreational and environmental locations where they could hike, ski, swim or picnic. Convincing travelers to stop in these communities would probably require a different focus. Ethnic tourism, where the main attraction is xenophilic and/or xenophobic generally occurs in countries outside one's own, with a few notable exceptions like Santa Fe or San Francisco's China Town. This type of tourism would have been an unlikely selection for the communities. Cultural tourism is centered on "high" culture, which is generally concentrated in urban areas that can support opera, symphony, theatre, and museums. Neither of these small towns was in a position to offer this type of attraction. The last type of tourism, historical, is usually defined by smaller settlements, or urban enclaves with historic buildings or wild-west themes.[6] This would have been the most

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[3] Steven V. Ward. Selling Places: The Marketing and Promotion of Towns and Cities 1850-2000 (New York: Routledge, 1998) 186-89.

[4] British Tourist Authority. Tourism and the Environment: Papers Presented at a Conference of Tourism and the Environment. (London: British Tourist Authority, 1971) 37.

[5] Valerie Smith. Hosts and Guests: The Anthropology of Tourism (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1989) 4.

[6] Smith 4.

likely theme to be employed by Helen and Leavenworth, and there were those in Leavenworth that were interested in a gay-'90s theme or perhaps a wild west construction. However, Helen and Leavenworth chose a different route, and introduced an interesting twist to the theme of "ethnicity" by creating an artificial ethnic environment based on Alpine Europe. As we saw, this decision was not based on any market research, but was driven by the memories and experiences of Rodgers in Leavenworth and Kollock in Helen.

Architectural form would play a critical role in the realization of this unique style of tourism. In one study, thirteen percent of tourists indicated that they enjoyed architecture more than any single element when traveling.[7] Building forms needed to be carefully crafted to attract the attention of passing motorists, as well as encourage leisurely stays once they had parked their cars and begun to traverse the community on foot. Architecture designed to attract motorists' attention needs to be understood quickly, which is accomplished through the use of brightly colored elements and strong, visible outlines. Roofs were clad with red or blue "tiles," and complex facades were constructed with overhanging balconies and turrets. Helen even has one hotel, designed in the shape of a windmill, that was constructed on a hill overlooking the town and can be clearly seen from a distance along the highway. [Figure 5.1] Clearly, the form, style and location of these architectural creations were highly influenced by their overarching purpose of capturing the attention of tourists. A review of one of Kollock's early design sketches reveals this intent, where he has rendered a Bavarian styled church with the simple caption; "The world's largest stop sign," in small lettering on the lower left [Figure 5.2].

Figure 5.1: Heidi Hotel, Helen, Georgia. Hotel Brochure.

However, the design elements have to be carefully balanced, as designs that appear sufficiently complex from a traveling automobile have a tendency to appear two dimensional when carefully viewed by pedestrians. To help counter this perception, Kollock spent a considerable amount of time developing realistic elements, such as winding cobblestone paths that led to courtyards tucked away from the main street. These courtyards were designed to give the city the haphazard feel of a medieval town, as well as to appeal to tourist's curiosity and draw them further into the community. These

[7]George Gault. Investing in the Past: A Report on the Profitability of Heritage Conservation.

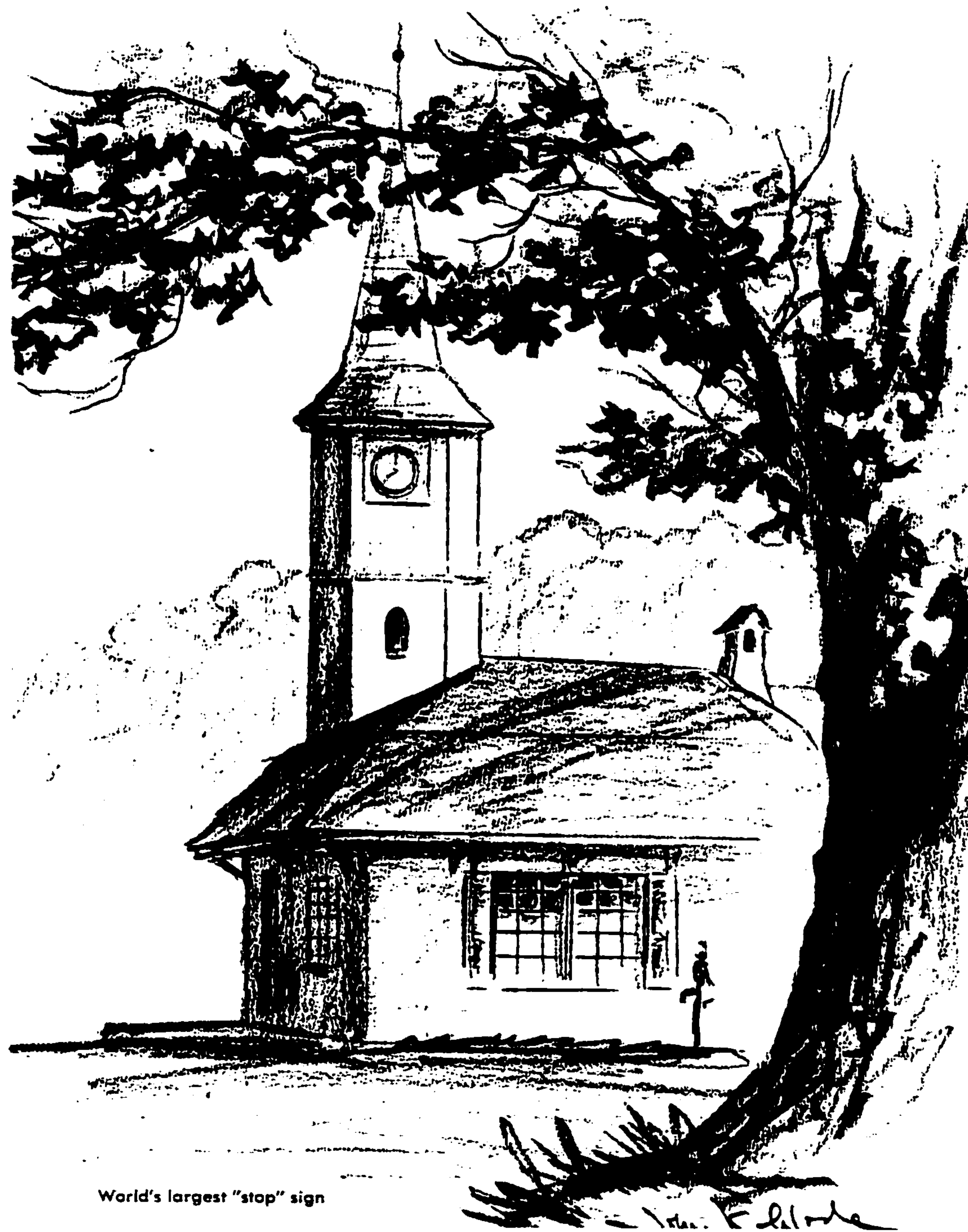

Figure 5.2: Kollock sketch. From the Alpine Yodler Scrapbook.

(Ottowa: Heritage Canada, 1974) 3.

alleyways were often adorned with intimate details, such as small scale mural painting, to provide adequate reward for their exploration. Helen and Leavenworth placed considerable thought into their community redevelopment projects. However, in spite of their careful consideration of all design details, coupled with their focus on satiating the needs of the tourists, there was still a considerable amount of inherent risk associated with this project. How would tourists react to an artificial reproduction of a German village?

Tourist Expectations

A primary motivator for travel is the desire to experience events, places, people or food that one would not typically find at home. Studies by the tourism industry also focus considerable attention on a tourists' search for "authenticity." While this term is slippery and rarely defined, it appears that authenticity is predicated on the idea that a foreign culture possesses a set of traits (rituals, costumes, foods or architecture) that are somehow lost in modern society. The more intact these traits are, the more "authentic" an experience becomes. It has even been argued that the quest for authenticity is a requirement for modern consciousness.[8] However, in spite of this quest for the authentic and the exotic, American tourists frequently expect the technological comforts of their own world, and are not always comfortable leaving their own environment behind. One way of maintaining psychological comfort is to control other cultural environments, particularly third world ones, by relegating them into unchanging museum-scapes which

[8] Dean MacCannell. The Tourist: A New Theory of the Leisure Class. (New York: Shocken Books, 1976) 3

has accounted for the much of twentieth century American tourism.[9] Examples of this can be seen in world's fairs and Disney's theme parks. If the search for authenticity is a component of modern tourism, then why is the appearance of stasis with these cultures so popular among the masses? What does this say about tourists that visit Helen and Leavenworth's fake architectural styling? What are they searching for?

The tension between authenticity and imitation is considered by many of these scholars to be a primary driver in the development of American society. Jean Baudrillard has argued that since its inception America hoped to separate itself from history, in order to become a perfected state.[10] However, from the very beginning, Americans developed architectural forms that "borrowed" abbreviated visual signifiers from other cultures. This was further exacerbated in the late nineteenth century, when America became fascinated with machinery and its ability to create copies of authentic goods which were indistinguishable from the original. Copies of European goods became valued commodities in their own right, worth more than original American creations. At this point, the distinction between authentic products and mere imitations became blurred. Numerous scholars, including Roland Barthes, Daniel Boorstin, Jean Baudrillard, Umberto Eco, and Miles Orvell, have addressed the resultant issues of authenticity in American culture. Central to all of their arguments is the idea that many produced items were understood as fake, yet in some sense, they became real in their own right. The reality of these imitations came to a head at the 1893 Colombian World's Fair, when organizers decided to select Beaux Arts influenced, neo-Classical buildings in favor of

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[9] MacCannell 8.

[10] Jean Baudrillard. America. (London:Verso, 1988) 80.

the native developed Chicago school style. Chicago architect Louis Sullivan (one of the creators of the Chicago school style) angrily commented that the fair, with its palatial white buildings, "deny(ied) the real, exalting the fictitious and false."[11] Not only did the Columbian World Fair serve as a showcase of America's preference for architectural imitations, it introduced the idea of architectural and cultural fantasy into mainstream American culture. The exotic yet controlled architectural elements and sideshows allowed Americans the fantasy of being in another world, while maintaining the stability and familiarity of their own world.

While imitations were promoted and accepted as the great democratizing force of the machine age, the twentieth century introduced a new set of issues. The modern movement, reacting to the continued use of "reproductions," strove to create genuine and authentic architecture that broke through the manufactured illusions and that reflected the time in which people lived.[12] A desire for authenticity began to permeate the social consciousness, and manifested itself in a variety of ways from building construction to popular advertising. During the 1960s and 70s Coke launched an advertising campaign centered on identifying their product as the "real thing," presumably superior to all the imitation soft drinks (like diet Pepsi) that were beginning to flood the market.[13] In the late twentieth century this trend has culminated with reality television shows where producers focus on showing audiences a "real" experience. In spite of this twentieth century movement towards authenticity, there was still a strong interest in the fake,

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[11] Miles Orvell. The Real Thing. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1989) 31.

[12] Orvell xv.

[13] Orvell 144.

particularly in tourist architecture, as indicated by Disney's stunning financial successes and roadside architecture of the time.[14] The popularity of the fake in this domain was a product of the carefully combined and promoted elements of adventure and the exotic combined with control and safety. Tourists were willing to accept the fake, so long as it met a set of preconceived notions and provided the amenities they had come to expect in modern life. Road-side attractions, motels, and entertainment venues quickly monopolized on these trends in an attempt to attract consumers passing through in their automobiles. Restaurants, designed in the shape of coffee pots or castles, increasingly blurred the line between fantasy and reality. These structures were brazenly promoted as glorified, commercial fakes and the public loved them. As a result of this fascination with the fake, scholars often referred to the United States as a "culture of the factitious."[15] Boorstin designates these structures as "pseudo," and states that their defining features are their simplified, dramatized nature, which makes them accessible through being less visually complex.[16] The willingness of the American public to set aside issues of authenticity and embrace the fake, under the right circumstances, enabled Helen and Leavenworth to successful develop and promote their vision of a Bavarian community. However, this still leaves the question - why did these communities select a German theme? What is the significance of this theme to the community, and the tourists that visited the remodeled town in droves? In order to answer these questions, one must

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[14] For information on roadside architecture and folklore, see Karal Ann Marling, Colossus of Roads.

[15] Orvell xxiii.

[16] Boorstin 11, 29 and 185-193.

explore the twentieth century connections between the United States and Germany through immigration, tourism and the role that Americans played in World War II.

Germanic Settlement in the United States

In 1683, German immigrants established their first permanent settlements in the United States in the vicinity of modern-day Philadelphia. Additional German settlements were founded shortly thereafter throughout the Mid Atlantic colonies, and it is estimated that by the time of the American Revolution between eight and nine percent of colonists were of Germanic descent.[17] The number of German settlers increased steadily through the late eighteenth century as Jewish, Protestant, and Catholic Germans came to the United States in search of religious freedom. Pennsylvania quickly became a haven for other religious groups, such as the Mennonites, Quakers and Amish from the Rhineland region. German settlers began to spread throughout the United States during the nineteenth century, settling in both rural and urban areas in the Mid Atlantic, the Midwest and Texas. In 1880 more than 13% of New York City residents were German born.[18] Furthermore, Dorothee Schneider has estimated that 20-30% of Chicago's population was first or second generation German from 1860 to 1900.[19] By 1910 more than 9

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[17] Gatzke 28. Many records and texts are unclear whether "German" means originating from Germany proper, or German speaking countries. I use the term Germanic to describe settlers that spoke German as their mother tongue, regardless of national origin. I have been unable to ascertain if other authors use the term German to include all German speakers, or only former citizens of Germany.

[18] Harmut Keil and John B. Jentz, Editors, German Workers in Industrial Chicago, 1850-1910. (Deksalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1983) 146.

[19] Keil and Jentz 20.

million Americans spoke German as their mother language, meaning that German speaking immigrants made up about 28% of the non-English speaking population, and more than 10% of the total population of the United States.[20] While twentieth century German immigration to the U.S. was small relative to the number immigrants from Mexico, Central America, and Asia, there were still more than 750,000 German immigrants during the 1950s and 1960s. At least half a million of these are estimated to be German war brides.[21] In 1982 more than a quarter of all Americans claimed some degree of German ancestry.[22]

While the Germans were present in large numbers, comprising the second largest immigrant group after the Irish, they quickly assimilated and did not form enclaves with the same visibility or political clout as other predominate ethnic groups. Although the devout, old-order religions have maintained distinct identities within the Mennonite and Amish communities, in many areas only the Germanic names of the communities, such as Brownsburg, Harrisonburg, and Swoope, remain. Locals with names such as Swisher (Schweitzer), Schwartz, and Schwab have long since forgotten their ancestry. Germanic identities maintained stronger cultural cohesion through some small enclaves in cities such as St. Louis, Cincinnati, Chicago, and Cleveland. However, even these groups tended to embrace American culture and the English language. For example, at the end of the nineteenth century there were more than 800 German newspapers in circulation

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[20] Trommler 222.

[21] Christine Totten. Roots in the Rheinland, (New York: German Information Center) 68-70 and Trommler 195.

[22] Totten 49.

throughout the United States.[23] By the late 1900s there were only fourteen such publications.[24] Glazer argues that the rapid assimilation of German speaking immigrants into mainstream American culture was a function of their unusually heterogeneous nature. They did not share a single religion, which was a unifying force among many American immigrants, such as the Irish Catholics and the Italian Catholics. They were skilled in a variety of professions, bringing expert craftsmen, businessmen, and farmers that scattered across multiple segments of society. As a result of these diverse religious and professional backgrounds, there was often little incentive for German settlers to form strong common bonds amongst their own people.[25] Without these cohesive bonds, it was easier for German immigrants to abandon older traditions and accept the American way of life. The transformation was hastened in the early 20th century, when Germans living in America faced a public backlash during World War I and II.

In spite of their willingness to embrace American ideals, Germanic immigrants still added a tremendous number of traditional accoutrements to American culture. Standard American party foods, such as hamburgers, hot dogs, pretzels and beer, have strong German connections. In fact, one could argue that the common acceptance of these traditions as American stands as a testament to the successful blending of German and American culture. For example, perhaps the most popular seasonal fixture in American homes, the Christmas tree, is a German cultural custom that was anglicized through Prince Albert's marriage to Queen Victoria. These are just a few of the examples

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[23] Trommler 188.

[24] Trommler 188.

[25] Nathan Glazer and Daniel Patrick Moynihan. Beyond the Melting Pot, second edition. (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1970) 312.

of the significant ethnic and culture heritage that can be traced back to Germany. Given the interrelationships that have formed between German and American culture over several centuries, it is not surprising that Americans have always possessed an inherent interest with certain aspects of German culture. This fascination has sponsored significant travel and residence of Americans in Germany, and also opened the door for the transfer of ideas from Germany into the United States.

Travel and Folklore in Germany

Considerable interest in travel to Germany became evident in the United States in the early nineteenth century. Guides promoted the mountainous Alpine regions partly as a component of the contemporary cult of nature as divine, a theme often explored by painters such as Caspar David Freidrich. Mountains were connected with religious moral experience, and summit climbing was raised to a civic virtue.[26] Beyond the draws of tourism, American universities had extended academic ties that led to American residence in Germany and the transfer of ideas back to the United States. In the early twentieth century almost 10,000 American college students studied in German universities.[27] Although some of this may have been influenced by sustained interest in the "mother country," Trommler suggests that the image of English universities remained one of conservatism and class conciseness, making German institutions appear more

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[26] Barthes 74.

[27] Trommler 191.

modern and appealing.[28] Although the exchange of ideas through travel and collaborative study would have certainly influenced America's perspective of Germany, the greatest influences on a wide body of people are often brought about through popular culture. And indeed, the transfer of German popular culture through the written word would perhaps have one of the greatest impacts upon America in the nineteenth and twentieth century.

Children's fairy tales became enormously popular during this time, and Wilhelm and Jacob Grimm entwined a reconstructed Germanic identity in their folktales. These carefully woven tales were designed to replace images of uncivilized Teutonic ancestors and were used to foster a growing national identity.[29] The Nazis also used German folklore heavily to promote their own nationalistic and political ideals. It was a strategy used to return "peasant values" to communities that had lost much of their solidarity through urban migration.[30] Since these fairy tales were used as a means of entertainment and propaganda, they were published and distributed to a wide audience, where escapist nature of the stories and their reaffirmation of social values made them immediately popular. In fact, these Germanic fairy tales, as collected by the Brothers Grimm, became extremely popular as children's literature, and translation sales were high both inside and outside of Germany.[31] Sales declined only during the two world wars, when people were at war with Germany and perhaps a bit closed to ideas originating from this country.

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[28] Trommler 191.

[29] Richard M. Dorson. Folklore and Fakelore: Essays toward a Discipline of Folk Studies. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1976) 67.

[30] Dorson 68.

[31] Their first volume of fairy tales was translated to English in 1884.

However, their introspective nature caused sales to soar even higher during the 1960s when psychoanalysis became popular.[32] While most Americans were probably not interested in this particular aspect of the tales, they were intrigued by simple stories with clear moral tales. Most of the stories occur in pre-industrial settings, where the surroundings are usually medieval type villages, and illustrators filled their books with images of quaint half-timbered houses and castles [Figures 5.3, 5.4, and 5.5]. Walt Disney animated some of the best known tales, Snow White (1937), Cinderella (1950), and Sleeping Beauty (1959).[33] Disney's version of these stories became even more fantasy based, and in many cases lost the harsher overtones of the original tales.[34]

Figure 5.3: Illustration from Gag's 1936 edition of Grimm's fairy tales, 65.

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[32] Donald Haase. Reception of Grimm's Fairy Tales. (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1993) 95.

[33] The film versions of these fairy tales would have been well known by the public. All three were nominated for Academy Awards and Snow White won an academy award in 1939.

Figure 5.4: Illustration from Folkard's 1949 Grimm's fairy tales, 50.

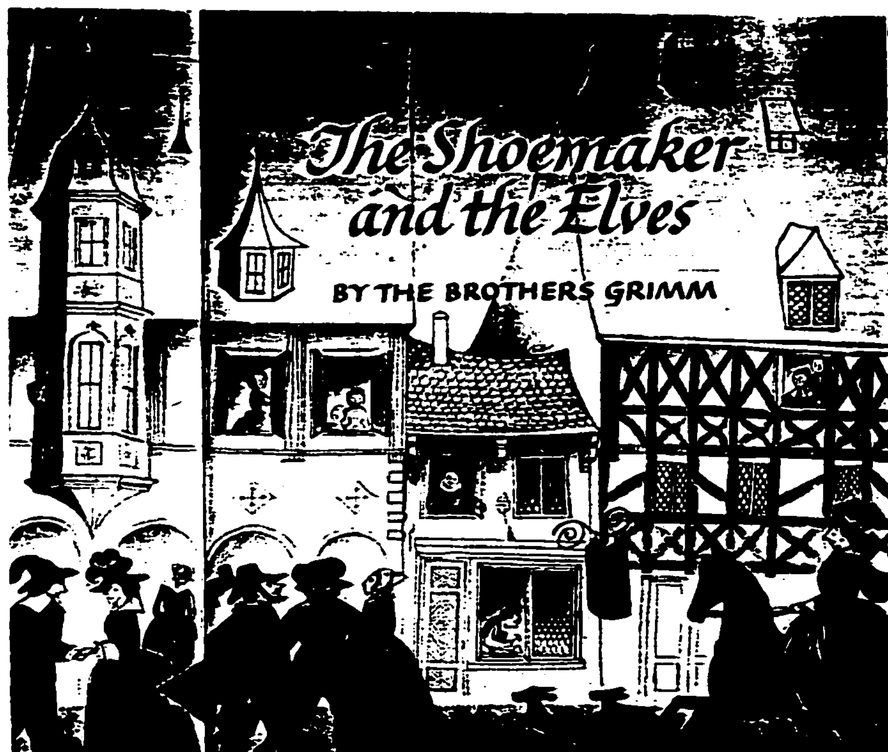

Figure 5.5: Illustration from Adam's 1960 version of The Shoemaker and the Elves (a Grimm's fairy tale), frontispiece.

Heidi was also an extremely popular children's text during the 1960s. The Golden Press, a division of Simon & Schuster, published their own version of the story, abbreviated to twenty-two pages. The text is richly illustrated with mountainous vistas, a quaint log cabin surrounded by flowers, and a small charmingly rendered medieval city complete with narrow winding streets, tiled roofs, awning covered windows and stuccoed facades. Although the story is set in the Swiss Alps, it is likely that few made any distinction between the landscape portrayed in the text and that described by returning GIs, since the similarities were striking. The first edition of the book was published in 1954, the tenth was published in 1974. Another popular children's title during this time was the Golden Book of Fairy Tales, one of the original ten books published by the Golden Press. This volume was first published in 1942, and remained in publication until 1977.[35] [Figure 5.6]

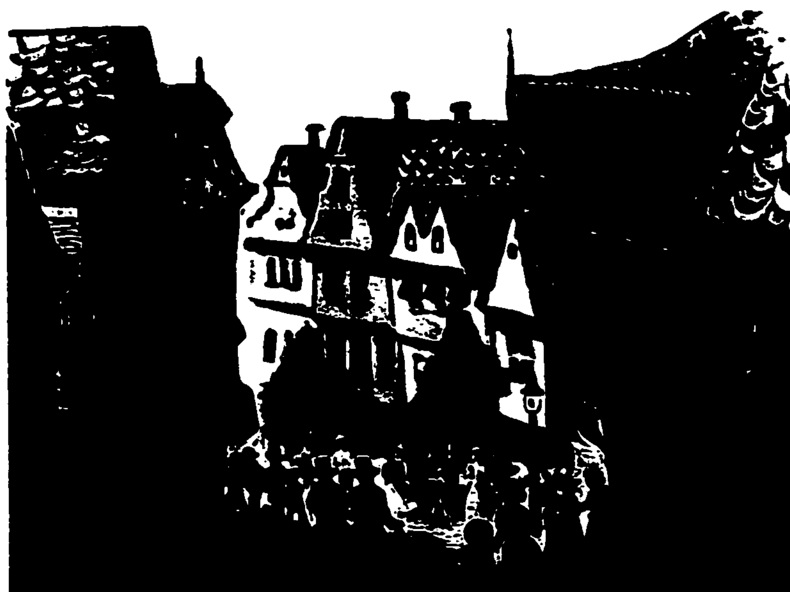

Figure 5.6: Illustration from Malvern's 1954 version of Heidi, 10.

[35] It has recently been reprinted, and is rapidly selling out with rave reviews from baby boomers who are acquiring copies to share with their grandchildren.

Another popular introduction to Germanic Europe was the film version of the Sound of Music. The movie had high visibility during the late 1960s, winning a best picture Oscar in 1965. The story blended Germanic culture and anti-Nazi sentiments with a fairytale ending, where the musical von Trapp family (presumably) lived happily ever after.

The popularity of these stories within the United States may have ultimately helped led to the success of the Germanic theme in Helen and Leavenworth. First, these stories introduced a generation of Americans to the buildings, landscapes and culture that existed in Germany. Exposure to these culture elements certainly would have created a level of familiarity that would have made these tourist communities appealing by taking advantage of the modern American's desire to experience the exotic within familiar trappings. However, perhaps even more important is the fact that these books established a relationship between German culture and renderings of fantasy and the fantastic. After reading these books in their childhood, most Americans came to associate German culture with the fantasy stories from their youth. These stories included places that they had always longed to see, people that they wished they could be, endings that everyone always dreamed about. Ultimately, these stories served to connect Americans with a time of happiness and joy, and dreams of a wonderful future. These are powerful associations, created at an early age, and they may have served as one of the greatest factors in the ultimate success of these redeveloped German communities. Helen and Leavenworth recognized the power of these childhood associations, and actively utilized them in the development of their communities. For example, the names of many of the businesses in Leavenworth were derived from these children's stories, such as the Enchanted River Inn,

Knight Traditions clothing store, and the Rumpelstilzchens restaurant. Helen boasts the Heidi Motel, Hansel and Gretel candy kitchen, and the Troll Tavern (located under a bridge.)[36] In fact, the connection between the style in Helen and children's fairy tales is so pervasive that the code administrator refers to the community's architectural style as "Storybook."[37]

Although these associations may be one of the greatest factors in the success of Helen and Leavenworth, they did not underlie the genesis of the theme. Ironically enough, World War I and World War II led to a decreased interest in German culture throughout the United States (although German Americans did not encounter the same levels of hostility as Japanese Americans, in part because their ethnicity and religious background was so similar to that of "mainstreamed" Americans), but these wars brought Germany to the forefront of American foreign policy, and transferred memories to American soldiers that ultimately led to the creation of Helen and Leavenworth.

American GIs and Germany after World War II

After World War II the United States, along with its allies, took control of Germany. The Marshall Plan, a massive economic aid package, focused on rebuilding most of Western Germany. Each of the allied forces was placed in control of its own region, and the United States was responsible for most of Southern Germany (Bavaria) and part of the Rheinland. While Germany has numerous regional differences in

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[36] Trolls are Scandinavian in origin, and appear in fairy tales compiled by Hans Christian Andersen, another major author of the fairy tale genre. It is not uncommon to find compiled versions of fairy tales where stories from the brother's Grimm are published with tales from Anderson.

language, culture, and architecture, American soldiers were generally limited to the region that they controlled. The French zone was practically closed to all American personnel during the 1940s, a development that may have contributed to Americans staying primarily in their own zone, even after relations between the two governing bodies had improved.[38] GIs who wished to explore Germany were encouraged to take R and R within American controlled regions at several picturesque mountain resorts owned by the armed forces, including Berchtesgaden, Chiemsee and Garmish. Some of these resorts still operate today.

Trying to determine the exact number of U.S. military personnel that served in Germany is difficult to fix, but the total reaches into the millions. It is approximated that since 1945 more than 15 million Americans have lived in West Germany. The numbers were particularly high from 1945-49, when the U.S. military governed southern Germany.[39] Early occupation forces with families (predominately officers) lived in private dwellings requisitioned from German families. This would have exposed them not only to German cultural items, but to German workers as well, since most families hired local domestic help.[40] Even as late as 1955 there were 200,000 American military personel in West Germany, the majority of whom were male.[41] The vast majority of these forces were drafted and had only been in the service for a few years. Although

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[37] Banks, interview.

[38] Harold Zink. The United States in Germany 1945-1955. (Princeton: Van Nostrand, 1957) 118.

[39] Totten 71.

[40] Donna Alvah. "Unofficial Ambassadors:" American Military Families Overseas and Cold War Europe Foreign Relations, 1945-1965. Dissertation. (University of California, Davis, 2000) 50.

fraternization with Germans was strictly forbidden at the beginning of the occupation, the U.S. government quickly learned that this was a difficult policy to enforce, and in a matter of months the Allied Control Council removed the ban on fraternization.[42] Studies estimate that as many as 80% of young GIs were involved with German women.[43] Considering the gender discrepancy on the bases, the high numbers of German men that had been killed in the war, and the number of German women that were attracted to the high (compared to German standards) salaries held by American personnel, these statistics are not surprising. The concentration of GIs could be particularly overwhelming to some of the small communities in which they were placed. Baumholder, which had a population of about 2,500 at the time of the war, became home to a military base of more than 30,000 Americans. Nearby Kaiserslauten (a city with a much larger population of 80,000) hosted more than 40,000 American forces.

All U.S. soldiers were given a pocket guide to Germany published by the Armed Forces Information and Education Division.[44] This guide described German law, products, and customs, and even suggested places to visit. The cover shows Neuschwanstein against a background of autumn leaves and snow capped mountains [Figure 5.7]. Images are used prominently throughout the guide, and include an alpine ski lodge, a bier stein, fachwerk buildings with a defense tower in Nurnberg, and an unusual fantasy drawing of fachwerk [Figure 5.8]. The guide describes Munich, the

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[41] Totten, 71. (This number represented more than 73% of all U.S. troops in Europe- Simson Duke. United States Military Forces and Installations in Europe. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989) 64.)

[42] Alvah 68.

[43] Zink 132.

[44] There were editions published in 1950, 1955 and 1965.

Figure 5.7: The 1965 Pocket Guide to Germany cover image.

Figure 5.8: Fantasy fachwerk in the 1965 Pocket Guide to Germany, 46.

capital of Bavaria, as "gay and cultural", and continues with a discussion of well-known Bavarian products, such as the glockenspiel.[45] A special section entitled "Land of Legend" discusses the scenic Odenwald, which inspired Grimm's fairy tales of dragons, talking animals, and ladies in distress. Mention is also made of Lorelei (the name selected by Price and Rodgers for their home), the mythical maiden who lured river sailors to death through her songs, and a full page photo shows her mythical rock home.[46] Specific mention is made of several festivals, including the Passion Play, Fasching, Oktoberfest, and the Meistertruck at Rothenburg, noting that "Germans enjoy entertaining, travel, and holidays as much as Americans do."[47] A connection between German and American foods is noted with the "typically American" hot dog, or frankfurter.[48] Potato dumplings and beer are also mentioned as local favorites. The guide admonished armed personal to remember that their second job was "to cultivate warm personal relations with the people of West Germany," and that their tour of duty was an excellent opportunity for them to expand their horizons and those of their wives and children.[49] Personnel were encouraged to utilize other guidebooks on the country to help plan excursions throughout Germany. A 1962 Pan-Am guide to the country describes the "glorious scenery... music, gay folk festivals, and quaint ancient

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[45] Armed Forces Information and Education, Department of Defense. A Pocket Guide to Germany. (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1965) 46.

[46] Armed Forces Information and Education, Department of Defense 17-18.

[47] Armed Forces Information and Education, Department of Defense 18.

[48] Armed Forces Information and Education, Department of Defense 25.

[49] Armed Forces Information and Education, Department of Defense 47.

customs."[50] The cover shows an imagined German village complete with a castle, a tall spired church, and *fachwerk* buildings. Favored items for purchase are listed as china, woodcarvings, cuckoo clocks and toys.[51] The cover of a 1972 Michelin Guide to Germany illustrates a *fachwerk* building as the backdrop for the Michelin man dressed in lederhosen and a feathered hat. Several model tour excursions are listed for Northern Germany, The Rhine, and Southern Germany. The guide emphasizes stays in Southern Germany, suggesting that this area has significantly more to offer.[52] All of this propaganda must have certainly had a significant influence on the American GIs, and likely served to encourage acceptance of the local culture and landscape.

In fact, these were probably very good times for the majority of the military personnel. There was little risk of additional war or uprising. Furthermore, they were able to experience a foreign country with a large number of Americans, thereby juxtaposing the foreign nature of the surroundings with the familiarity of the overwhelming number of GIs that were stationed in the area. Their relatively high salaries allowed them to fully enjoy all the benefits of these small communities, and associations of Germany with small town life, festivity, and alcohol, must have become quite common amongst the American soldiers. Locals learned very quickly how to part American GIs from their abundant salary. While beer, cigarettes and snacks were primary purchases, GIs also purchased souvenirs to send back to their families. In 1951 the "Black Forest Shop" opened in Baumholder, and was designed to appeal exclusively

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[50] Pan American Airways. Complete Reference Guide to Germany. (New York: Pan Am, 1962) 7.

[51] Pan American Airways 11.

[52] Michelin. Germany: West Germany and Berlin. (London: Michelin Tyre Company, 1972) 4.

to American soldiers. Among the goods offered were carved wooden figurines (normally religious, representing the traditional woodcarving techniques of southern Germany), cuckoo clocks with brightly painted and animated fronts, German knives, and, of course, large, lavishly decorated bier steins.[53] Porcelain and glassware were also purchased, although in smaller numbers due to the associated difficulties of shipping such items. It is estimated that by 1955 American GI's spent almost $5 million a year on services and durable goods around Baumholder alone.[54]

Servicemen quickly became involved in local fairs, and helped sponsor German-American friendship weeks, where the military bands joined local bands and played music for large festive crowds. Christmas and Fasching were favorite festivities, and the soldiers devoted considerable portions of their paychecks in order to provide Christmas gifts to poor or orphaned children. Military wives spoke of purchasing "the loveliest, hand carved... creations imaginable" in Oberammergau for Christmas celebrations and enjoying a "simpler and more peaceful" holiday.[55] Fasching, the German Mardi Gras Season, was a new concept for most Americans. However, once exposed to the floats and parades, Americans joined in the festivities, and soon began creating extravagant motorized floats to join in the parades.[56]

Soldiers would have encountered not only urban buildings in cities, but rural structures on the way to military retreats. While Allied bombing and ground fighting had

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[53] Höhn 43.

[54] Höhn 43.

[55] Alvah 206.

[56] Höhn 67.

heavily damaged many urban areas, rural areas still retained a fair number of intact structures. Exposure to these structures helped Americans to understand the traditional architecture that dominated the rural landscape of Germany. They even noticed many of the architectural detailing of these structures, such as planted window boxes, which unfortunately often became easy targets for drunken soldiers.[57] In urban areas that were undergoing massive reconstruction projects, efforts were made by the German authorities to make new structures harmonize with traditional forms.[58] Preservation of historic structures had long been encouraged in Germany, and the state of Prussia had enacted preservation laws as early as 1815.[59] As a result, thousands of American soldiers likely received their first exposure to concepts of historic preservation and local, vernacular architecture. Munich, the capital city of Bavaria since the thirteenth century, was one of the most popular cities in the region, visited by tourists and locals alike.[60] Since it was one of the largest cities in the American occupied sector, it received considerable attention from armed personnel. Much of its popularity has been attributed to a preservation movement that preserved not only the few remaining structures, but also insisted that the destroyed buildings be completely rebuilt to match the original edifices. A major landmark in the city was the medieval styled town hall. The building, constructed during the late 1800s in a gothic revival style, featured an elaborate

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[57] Höhn 66.

[58] Jeffrey Diefendorf. In the Wake of War: Reconstruction of German Cities after WWII. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993) 141.

[59] Diefendorf 48.

[60] Diefendorf xiii and 91.

Glockenspiel with animated figurines. The elaborate timepiece captivated many and the small mechanical cuckoo clocks that were available for purchase may have reminded soldiers of the larger timepiece. Armed forces recreation also helped soldiers spend their money by offering day or weekend excursions to other local sites.[61] A favorite was traveling to Munich for Oktoberfest. Other trips included visiting Neuschwanstein, whose fantasy castle built by King Ludwig was used as a model for Disney's Sleeping Beauty and Cinderella's castle.[62] GIs could take a bus from Garmish up the mountain to Oberammergau, site of the world famous Passion play, and a center of Bavarian wood carving. These trips are still offered today, and are still more favored (perhaps due to their lower cost or smaller length of time) than trips to Italy, Austria, England or the Netherlands.[63] Air Force families were also encouraged to participate in various German cultural groups and to provide excursions for their children.[64] One child (whose father was stationed in Paris during 1953-54) sent a card back to classmates mentioning their wonderful visits to Rhine castles, Oberammergau, and Neuschwanstein.[65] All of these trips and work activities served to further broaden American exposure to German culture and lifestyles.

While American forces stationed in Germany were intrigued by the cultural exchanges they encountered, some Americans still living in the U.S. were able to meet

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[61] Alvah 173.

[62] Neuschwanstein, built in the late 1800s, was a fantasy construction loosely modeled on medieval architecture.

[63] Captain and Mrs. Philip S. Townsend, U.S. Army. Personal interview, April 11, 2000.

[64] Alvah 113.

[65] Alvah 303.

Germans as well. More than 370,000 German prisoners of war were housed in over 500 military camps throughout the United States.[66] Some were permanent military installations, such as Ft. Lewis, Washington, Camp Stewart or Camp Wheeler in Georgia, while others were temporary base camps that were designed merely to hold the prisoners until their return to Europe. Many of these men were "rented" by the federal government to farmers or industries, who utilized this unexpected (and affordable) labor force. In some cases German POW's remained in the United States after their release, as was the case with Leavenworth's Wierich. After the close of World War II, many German military and technical advisors were trained in the United States during the 1950s. In 1955 the Federal Republic of Germany became a NATO member, and more than 4,500 Germans were brought to the US for military and defense training. At the same time almost 7,000 scientists and technicians immigrated to the US from Germany in search of high-tech employment.[67]

For about forty years, starting with World War II, Germany was a main focus of American foreign policy. The threat of communism, and the resultant tensions between East and West Germany, forced Americans to pay close attention to West Germany's political and economic health.[68] One result of cold war politics is that the image of the German (West German) was kept "reasonably appealing and positive."[69] Combined with

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[66] Reiner Pommerin, ed. American Impact on Postwar Germany. (Providence: Berghahn Books, 1995) 132.

[67] Totten 70-71.

[68] Maria Höhn. GIs and Fräuleins: The German-American Encounter in the 1950s West Germany. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002) 17.

[69] Trommler 236-37.

the experiences of vast numbers of US military personal in the region, and a long history of U.S. German exchange, it is no wonder that Americans find German culture more familiar than that of other European nations. Ultimately, the entire American experience with post World War II Germany brought about the ideas for recreating Helen and Leavenworth in Germanic redevelopment theme. The founders of these communities, Rodgers and Kollock, had very fond memories of their stays in Germany. They remembered the beautiful landscape and architecture, as well as the cultural traditions that had become part of their own lives during their stays.[70] Kollock specifically refers to the colorful architecture, flower filled planters and the constant festivals that he experienced in Germany. One of his greatest hopes for Helen, that he still views as unfulfilled, is an intense festival period for Fasching.[71] In rebuilding Helen and Leavenworth, Kollock and Rodgers were trying to recapture a part of their past while enticing future economic prosperity. Their ideas succeeded for a variety of reasons that have been explored in this chapter. They were able to mine the expertise of other American soldiers that had served in Germany, as well as German POW's that had remained in the United States, throughout the reconstruction projects. Furthermore, although no formal study has been undertaken in either community to determine the number of U.S. military personnel that visit the towns, businessmen in each report numerous conversations with active and retired military who claim that Leavenworth and Helen are either "just like Germany" or "close enough" to give family members a sense

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[70] Kollock and Price interviews.

[71] Kollock interview.

of their experience.[72] Leavenworth keeps an electronic guest book online for people to comment on the town. A retired military officer wrote, "I lived in Germany for over 10 years while I was in the U.S. Army. ... Every time I get lonely for Germany, I always head to Leavenworth…it is truly a Bavarian treat!"[73] These Germanic constructions attracted the attention not only of the small minority that had served in Germany, or the larger minority that had Germanic heritage, but also the majority of people who had been exposed to beautiful fairy tales of Germany throughout their childhood. To the majority of the American people, the childhood fairy tales rang larger than life in their memories, and the opportunity to experience the architecture and culture firsthand was too tempting to pass up. Therefore, one can see that America's long history with Germany not only brought about the ideas for these communities, but served to turn them into the successful tourist draws dreamed of by their creators.

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[72] Kyllonen and Smith interviews.

[73] Projekt Bayern. Letter from Jeff Bunnell 10 October 2001 <http://www.projektbayern.com.html>.

CONCLUSION

"We don't all dress in lederhosen and dirndls." 1990 Sonnenschein auf Leavenworth

As revealed in this dissertation, the Germanic recreations of Helen and Leavenworth have their roots firmly planted in an American tradition of created culture and are only the most contemporary manifestation of this trend. They successfully combined elements of foreign fantasy depicted in world's fairs and Disney's amusement parks with economic revitalization techniques employed by Main Street programs. They became another living display in the vein of historic communities such as Williamsburg, albeit with a fabricated cultural and historical identity. The selection of a Germanic theme for these towns was undoubtedly influenced by their picturesque location in the mountains, but even more importantly, it was a direct result of an American military presence in post World War II Germany. Community founders selected the theme due to fond personal memories of their time spent in Germany after the war, and the success of these communities with the general public was tied to the substantial number of Americans with Germanic ancestry, as well as decades of exposure to Germanic fairy tales. The constant promotion of Germany as a fun, middle-class society (beer drinking, hot dog eating, and band playing) by both the travel industry and the U.S. military also helped make these communities popular with the general populace. One can even conclude that the selection of Germanic revitalization themes was deeply intertwined with contemporary events, and the idea would likely not have been as successful if it had been introduced before the war, or even today.

What is the legacy of Leavenworth and Helen? Have they influenced other communities? Will they continue to exist in their present manifestation? Do they have any other historical significance? Helen and Leavenworth were extremely prosperous, and as such, it is not surprising to discover that other towns tried to imitate their successful transformation. Less than a decade after Leavenworth conceived of a Germanic redevelopment theme, the community of North Bend selected a Swiss Alpine theme to attempt a similar revival of their decaying business district. A limited number of businesses renovated their exteriors with projecting gables, shallow balconies and applied gingerbreading.[1] However, community consensus was never strong, so the design theme ultimately failed. The Germanic design of Helen also had a ripple effect in White County, Georgia. On the incoming routes to Helen, one is likely to encounter the occasional psuedo-Germanic gas station or other tourist facility. The citizens of Clarksville, Georgia (in neighboring Habersham country) decided to remodel their town around a western theme in the 1970s. Once again, however, a lack of community commitment left the town only half redesigned, with minimal detailing. The citizens of Dahlonega (in Lumpkin County) chose a different path, selecting a preservation based approach in the late 1970s. Kollock remembers the revitalization efforts of all of these communities and believes that it was sparked, in part, by Helen's tremendous financial success.[2] While this hypothesis is difficult to fully substantiate, it is clear that some people looked at the success achieved by Leavenworth and Helen and hoped to reproduce

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[1] The Washington State Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation has building inventory forms for North Bend that show a few of these "Alpine structures."

[2] Kollock interview.

the same results in their own community. For example, a visitor to projektbayern's web site commented:

> I have not only visited your charmingly, breathtaking little town on the internet, I have had the pleasure of seeing it personally! It has inspired me! Our town in Northern Alberta, Canada is also dying out, and I would like to approach the chamber of commerce with a plan to revitalize as you did with Leavenworth.[3]

While these Bavarian themed communities may bask in the praise of other towns, and politely offer suggestions and encouragement, they are very much aware that part of their financial success is motivated by the uniqueness of their sites. As such, they are extremely cautious about the dissemination of their market research. In the summer of 2001, Leavenworth completed a several hundred page marketing survey. Almost 3,000 people were randomly called across the state. Detailed questions were asked regarding Leavenworth's atmosphere, shopping, dining, lodging, and recreational facilities. I met with the chamber of commerce director, but was quickly denied permission to view the document, due to the fear that this information might be disseminated to other towns that wished to copy Leavenworth's success. This is very serious economic business indeed. These towns realize how high the stakes have become, and certainly don't want their uniqueness to be compromised by a proliferation of other Germanic communities.

Will Leavenworth and Helen continue to remain financially successful with their selected theme? Code administrators for both cities are worried that the theme may eventually grow stale, particularly if great care isn't taken to maintain buildings. There is

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[3] Projectbayern, started in 1996, is a volunteer group of citizens and business owners that are dedicated to enhancing Leavenworth's authenticity. They help manage the Octoberfest, Maifest, and other

eventually grow stale, particularly if great care isn't taken to maintain buildings. There is also a concern that as the novelty wears off, more aggressive tactics may need to be implemented, including longer shop hours and promotions designed to attract a wider range of clientele. Daulton has already drawn the following observations about the typical tourist demographic:

> The tourist crowd that is drawn here seems to be an older crowd. I walk the streets a lot and I see the kids being pulled along by grandma and grandpaw... they are bored into stupefaction. ... as a newcomer here I have noticed a drop in tourism...just about every shop is selling something that the shop next door is selling.... There is nothing for kids... or for young folks to do.... There just isn't enough.[4]

Daulton is also concerned that as travel to Europe becomes more common, Leavenworth may appear increasingly stale. "Why go to a Bavarian town in Central Washington when you can hop a plane and fly to Bavaria ...?"[5] However, as the threat of global terrorism becomes increasingly real, towns like Leavenworth and Helen might very well prosper, capitalizing on their safe, sanitized representations of foreign places. Daulton noted that they had indeed seen an increase in tourism since September 11th, 2001, so perhaps some of these trends have reversed, at least for the time being.[6]

This dissertation is by no means inclusive, and indeed has uncovered many other areas where additional research could be valuable. In the development of Chapter 5, I discovered that there appears to be no scholarly examination of the National Main Street

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[4] Daulton interview.

[5] Daulton interview.

[6] Daulton interview.

Program. A complete history of the program, based upon internal documents and interviews, would be most valuable to historians, preservationists, and architectural historians alike, and would be a helpful companion guide to Glass' The Beginnings of a New National Historic Preservation Program. Such a study might not exist because, apparently, National Main Street archives have not yet been organized.[7] The shifting definition of "authenticity" and its relationship to tourism is another topic that would clearly benefit from further research. While I was able to find a substantial amount of material that addresses "authenticity" as it relates to natives and tribal communities, as well as the impact of tourism on their work, the issue of one culture copying another culture does not seem to be explicitly addressed. Specifically, it would be interesting to see if America's adoption of the Bavarian theme could be linked to a desire to conquer or control the "other." This might be particularly true given the strong ties between military occupancy of Germany post World War II and the successful adoption of these themes. While much contemporary historical scholarship has focused on American influence on Germany post World War II, there doesn't appear to be much research into German influence on Americans. Considering the vast numbers of Americans who lived in occupied Germany, and indeed, the large numbers of armed force personnel who are stationed there today, this seems to be an area that could use substantial investigation. Architecturally, there are two issues that could be further developed. One is the role that children's literature (like Grimm's fairy tales) has taken in the dissemination of architectural forms. While fantasy and the built environment have been addressed

extensively with respect to Disney's creations, I couldn't find any sources that indicated how children's literature may have influenced perceptions of foreign architecture, and perhaps even Disney. Finally, while the forms created in Leavenworth and Helen are considered vernacular, one might be able to draw connections between these structures and the developing high style post modern movement. One of the main characteristics of post-modernism in architecture is a playful, mannered use of non-local historical forms, a deliberate wish to play with tradition. Clearly Helen focuses on this extensively through its deliberate borrowing of traditional styles to create a new, blended style. Indeed, there has been a proposal that Postmodernism is a neo-vernacular style, through it's displacement of modernism's universal style in favor of regional, ethnic traditions.[8] Another characteristic of postmodernism in architecture is the use of community input and design, which was another key component evident in the redevelopment of Helen and Leavenworth. Therefore, it certainly appears that there is enough evidence to warrant research into the links between these communities and the broader postmodern movement. Research into each of the questions posed in this conclusion will help to further clarify Leavenworth's and Helen's role in community revitalization, tourism, transculturation, and architectural history and continue to strengthen the foundation of research that has been established with this work.

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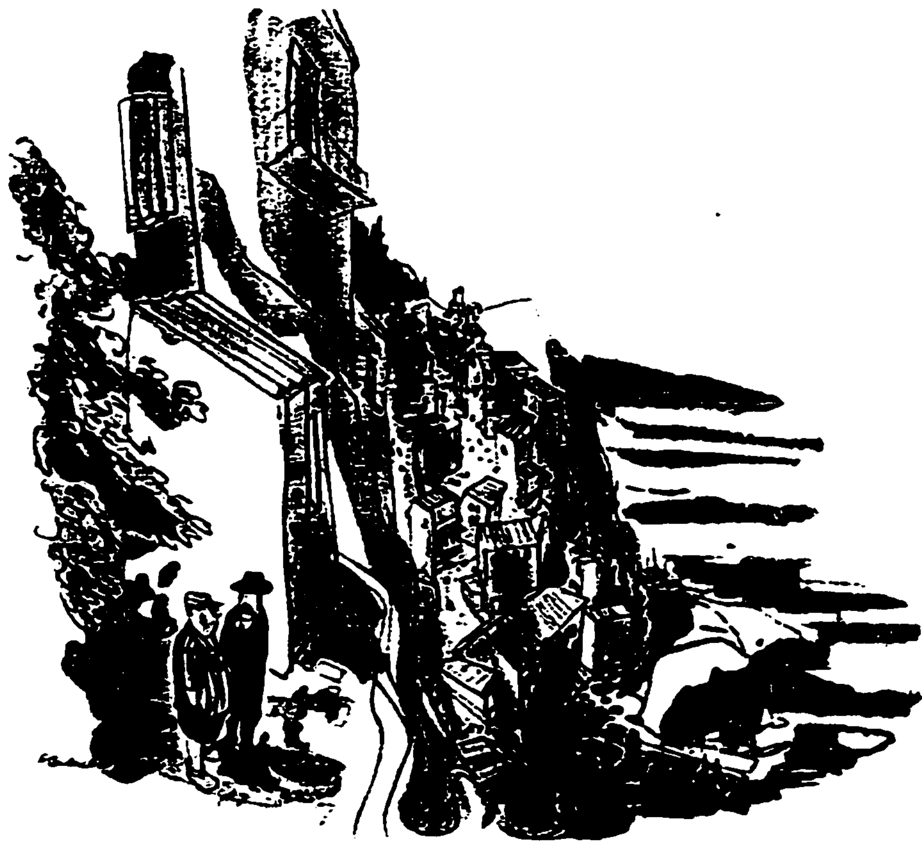
[7] This information was relayed to me during several phone conversations with National Main Street Center staff, during the research stages of this dissertation.

[8] Collins 122.



"The town has no history, Signore. It was built from scratch three years ago, entirely for the tourist trade."

Figure 6.1: Tourist architecture cartoon. From Judd 5.

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