

# **The Younglove Building**

## **Historic Preservation at Work**

By: Ethan Evans

From a gathering area for local men, chewing tobacco and sitting around a warm stove talking of weather, politics, and crops, to the oldest surviving building in downtown Bowling Green Kentucky, the Younglove Building has come a long way.

Built by Thomas Quigley in 1837, and opened as a pharmacy in 1842, it quickly caught on. The three story building with decorations above the windows and the twin chimneys was a pleasure to look at, and a business success. Sales were very profitable. It made good, great in fact, sales until the Civil War, when most of the drugs and goods it had were looted by Union soldiers. Later, the pharmacy went back into business and began to flourish once more. A soda fountain was installed and a signature look of high counters and glass cases, filled with prescription drugs, candy, and Indian artifacts became known to the store. Even later, it began serving sandwiches and hot meals.

This building is still in use today, sporting a mahogany colored roof and an eye-catching storefront with iron front pieces near the coin store entrance. It is

on the National Register and among the businesses that occupy it are a home decoration store, a coin store, a law office, and a living space.

One person, Jonathan Schwer, is working to become a preservation craftsman. David Lyons, who is the owner of the construction firm doing the work on the Younglove Building, is training Jonathan to rebuild the old windows, fix decrepit parts of the ceiling, and re-paint most of the structure. They will also repair some of the rotted wood on the outside of the building and turn the upper space into apartments. This kind of work gives people jobs who might otherwise not have jobs because of the economic downturn.

This project also stimulates our economy in other ways. For example, last year a ball park was constructed downtown and a new performing arts center is coming. Most people who come to these pass this building, so, if they are attracted to this building, they may come and explore the downtown, stimulating the economy. The well known Western Kentucky University is nearby and students walk down from the hill to the downtown. Preservation creates many jobs, because of the "Kentucky Main Street Program." In Kentucky's 2<sup>nd</sup> congressional district alone **128** net jobs have been created.

Preserving the Younglove Building also has great cultural meaning. It survived the Civil War, and even housed Union soldiers. It is a valuable educational piece as well as being one of the oldest buildings in the city. A popular Bowling Green artist paints and lives in this building, and her works can be seen in many art galleries. Preserving this building leads to more interest in Bowling Green's downtown and more interest in preservation as a whole.

One other factor that applies to the preservation of the Younglove building is the environment. When buildings are preserved, the materials used to build it will not go to our growing landfills. The yellow poplar used as the frame is a strong wood, and is irreplaceable now. So, things like the wooden framework or brick of the Younglove building could, and should, not be replaced.

Over all, the Younglove building has survived since 1837 and its positive historical, economic, cultural, and environmental impacts on the town are huge. The preservation and restoration of the Younglove building are very crucial to the town's history.

"The best prophet of the future is the past."

~Anonymous