



Signs to mark historic Pasfield House

By **JAYETTE BOLINSKI**

STAFF WRITER

Markers designating the "Pasfield House Historic Area" are being installed near the site of one of Springfield's oldest homes.

Tony Leone, owner of the 108-year-old Pasfield House at 525 and 535 S. Pasfield St., said Monday that workers are to begin installing the markers this morning. Leone paid for them himself, and they were designed by Ace Sign Co. in Springfield.

He said he walked the neighborhood with a petition and got about 90 percent of the residents to agree to having the markers put up. Boundaries of the Pasfield House Historic Area will be Pasfield and New streets, Capitol Avenue and both sides of Edwards Street.

"The facts are indisputable. It was (George) Pasfield's estate," he said. "Frankly, it was their estate



for about 90 years. So I can't think of any other designation that would be more appropriate than to go back to the original west-side estate of the Pasfield family and landmark it like that."

The Pasfield House is an 8,000-square-foot Georgian-Revival mansion built in 1896 by the grandson of George and Mary Pasfield. It sits at Pasfield Street and Jackson Parkway and overlooks what once was the family's wooded, 40-acre estate. At the time, it was the largest residential property in the city. Early records describe it as "well out in the country" and a

"cosy (sic) rural retreat."

Three generations of George Pasfields lived at one time or another on the property: George Pasfield; his son, Dr. George Pasfield; and his grandson, George Pasfield Jr.

The original George Pasfield, who purchased the property in 1841, was one of the first merchants to do business on the town square. He was a driving force behind the relocation of the state capital to Springfield in 1837.

Dr. George Pasfield was the "city's wealthiest man and a personal friend of (Abraham) Lincoln," according to the headline of his obituary in 1916.

George Pasfield Jr. was president of the Springfield Park District and president of the Capitol Grounds Purchase Association that was charged with enlarging the Statehouse grounds and erecting the State Armory building. He had

the Pasfield mansion built when he was 26 years old.

Leone said it has taken about two years for the new markers to become a reality. Workers will install several on top of street signs, and others will be put elsewhere between the corners.

The signs depict a drawing of the Pasfield House, as well as a cross-and-star design that appears on its porch and is repeated on architectural details throughout the interior.

"Everybody's been very, very helpful," Leone said of the marker project. "The Pasfield family has such a rich history, and sadly it's kind of forgotten. They were probably the most prominent family in the first 100 years of Springfield's history."

Jayette Bolinski can be reached at 788-1530 or jayette.bolinski@sj-r.com.