The Neuman Brothers Coffin Fitting Works, Birmingham, UK

ARCH 574—Historic Preservation Design Studio

Fall 2014, Paul Hardin Kapp, Instructor

Studio Project: The Renovation and Adaptive Use of the Neuman Brothers Coffin Fitting Works
Jewellery Quarter, Birmingham, UK

Project Synopsis:

For the past forty years, industrial decline has occurred and factories have been shuttered throughout the UK. Post-industrial decay has been particular acute in Britain’s “second city,” Birmingham. Now that the Great Recession is receding; innovation and entrepreneurship is returning to the “city of a thousand trades.” For the fall 2014 studio, the Historic Preservation Studio will design a renovation and adaptive use of the Neuman Brothers Coffin Fitting Works in the historic Jewellery Quarter of Birmingham, United Kingdom.

The Neuman Brothers Coffin Fitting Works was built as a factory in 1899. The company fabricated coffins until 2001 and then closed its operation. Notable people, such as Winston Churchill and Princess Diana, have had their remains placed in Neuman Brothers Coffins. The building is approximately 12,000 S.F. in size and is a masonry and timber framed building with a large courtyard. The Birmingham Conservation Trust acquired the building in 2010 and is interested in restoring the façade facing Fleet Street, restoring parts of the front section of the building as a heritage museum, and adapting the rest of the building for a small business incubator. Historic building documentation, restoration, structural and environmental systems retrofitting, and a new rear addition will be explored in this project.

NAAB Student Performance Criteria (SPC’s) that will be met in this Studio:

B.1-Pre Design
B.2-Accessibility
B.3-Sustainability
B.8-Environmental Systems
B.9- Structural Systems
B.11-Building Service Systems
C.9-Community and Social Responsibility