

Lafayette Avenue, N.E.

17 Lafayette N.E. Sweet House. Italianate. This was built as a duplex about 1875 by Martin L. Sweet for his daughters. A tunnel once connected this house with the family home at 254 Fulton E.

35 Lafayette N.E. Immen House. This home, built in 1885 by Frederick Immen, is a notable example of Victorian Romanesque Revival architecture. Of particular interest



are the rich ornamental details, the high pitched gables, and the arched windows, especially the large double-arched window in the main tower. The beautiful slate roof is one of only three patterned slate roofs remaining in Heritage Hill. A prominent Grand Rapids businessman, Mr. Immen was extremely active in real estate and investments. Mrs. Immen, after whom the Loraine Building was named, was a dynamic leader in the civic and cultural affairs of the city. Today their beautiful home is a superb example of the adaptation of a gracious residence into an equally gracious, highly efficient professional building. (Photo: David Hanks, 1976 Heritage Hill Association calendar.)

40

02/17/78 5410 Pitsch

Torn down at this time was the former Ahavas Achim synagogue, which had been built on the front of the Philo Fuller house at 44. The newer front portion of the synagogue had eliminated the front yard, and was built out to the sidewalk.

44 Lafayette N.E. Philo C. Fuller House. Originally addressed as 40 Lafayette N.E., this house represents one of the most ambitious preservation projects ever undertaken by the Heritage Hill Foundation. The imposing pedimented Italianate Victorian mansion commands a sweeping view of the Grand River valley from its setting high on Lafayette Avenue hill. Built about 1860, the home was occupied by Francis B. Gilbert until his death in 1885. At that time, Philo C. Fuller, Mr. Gilbert's son-in-law, along with his wife and family, made this house their home. In 1948 the house was hidden from view when Congregation Ahavas Israel wrapped their synagogue around the north and west sides of the structure. In February, 1977, the Heritage Hill Foundation acquired the home to prevent it from being demolished to make way for a parking lot for a proposed apartment complex. In October, 1977, the demolition of the synagogue began. The Foundation proposed to restore the facade to its former grandeur; refurbishing all of the original exterior architectural amenities, reopening all of the bricked-in fenestrations, replacing the missing and vandalized porticos, and restoring the intricate paired brackets with their drop finials. The brick was carefully cleaned and stained in the manner in which it was originally treated. When completed, the restoration returned to the community one of its outstanding architectural and historic landmarks. In addition, the streetscape regained one of its most important structures.

50 Lafayette N.E. Holt House. John C. Holt, an associate with the Grand Rapids & Indiana R.R., later president of the Antrim Iron Company, and a prominent member of



the Grand Rapids business community, built this magnificent home for his bride, Kate Huntington Gilbert, in 1886. Although Holt was a Kentucky native, he seems to have had a penchant for European styling. The house is an excellent example of the Queen Anne/Shingle style of architecture, with its Romanesque portico, which was promulgated by the Victorian architect Henry Hobson Richardson and his contemporaries. The stonework around the foundation and the arched doorways and windows are typical of the

Richardsonian mode. The glass enclosures on the porch are not original. This fine example of the style exhibits on a smaller scale the architectural elements of the great summer cottages of the eastern seaboard. The style was favored by the elite wealthy for their seasonal residences (often containing 50 to 100 rooms) at Newport, RI, and other fashionable resorts of the era. The innovative, irregular shingling on the tower and on the gables of the Holt House was intentional and, probably, the momentary whim of some local craftsman. The barn-like front gable is known as a *gambrel*, and was popular because it opened up more space for living in the upper areas of the house. The many notable and individualistic architectural details are highlighted by the imaginative, contemporary paint treatment. They include a 2-story stained glass window and a rococo-style dining room ceiling. Jerry Dreyer has owned the 6,500-square-foot home since 1974. (Photo: James Starkey, 1980 Heritage Hill Association calendar.)

55 Lafayette N.E. The Gilbert House. Built in 1876-78 by Thomas D. Gilbert, this residence is an outstanding example of Eastlake architecture, which is an adaptation of



of the Eastlake style of furniture popular in the late Victorian era. Typical of the Eastlake style is the use of geometric designs. Its pilasters and many of the other details are hand-carved stonework. Today houses of this type are extremely rare in the United States. Mr. Gilbert's home is no less imposing than the pioneer settler himself, with a long and colorful history. He helped to organize the Union Benevolent Society, the forerunner of Blodgett Memorial Hospital. (Photo: David Hanks, 1972 Heritage Hill Association calendar. Another photo is in Baxter, p. 784.)

65 Lafayette N.E. Built by William R. Shelby in 1882, this Italianate townhouse reposes in a cluster of similar homes at this site, all of which were built by the Shelby family. Mr.



Shelby moved to Grand Rapids in 1871, having been elected secretary and treasurer of the Grand Rapids and Indiana Railroad, and of the Michigan and Lake Shore Railroad. Of interest is the unusual bonnet-hooded dormer, which is a continuation of the façade, interrupting the roofline. The pairing of ornate brackets is a notable detail in this type of architecture. The house itself is a typical example of the bracketed mansions of the Victorian era, exhibiting rich classical detailing. (Photo: David Hanks, 1973 Heritage Hill Association calendar.)

71 Lafayette N.E. Shelby house. Italianate. Built in 1873 by William R. Shelby. Typical of the bracketed mansions of the late Victorian period, exhibiting rich classical detailing.

74 Lafayette N.E. The McCabe-Marlowe House. Also known as the Gallup House, this Italianate villa was begun in 1865 for James Gallup, a local businessman and public servant.



The house took five years to complete, and was constructed a section at a time, allowing the owners to move in while work was still being done. It was originally heated by fireplaces, and then changed over to steam and gas. The classic Greek Revival portico is a later addition, but is particularly noteworthy. Another addition was completed in 1912, and is now used as an office and conference room. Today the interior of the house retains all of its original spacious elegance. From the 12½-foot

living room ceiling with its 18-inch cove molding and plaster of paris border of fruit and flowers to the mahogany balustrade of the center hall staircase, this home reflects the graciousness of another era, preserved to the present by owners who have loved it and lived in it. Marie Bell McCabe and Wilma McCabe Marlowe, aunt and niece, purchased the house in 1945, and opened the doors to students to attend meetings with prominent citizens. They had begun their teaching careers at Grand Rapids Junior College in the 1920's, in the fields of microbiology and chemistry. Since 1979, when the Misses McCabe and Marlowe moved to Florida after their retirements, the house has been maintained as a single-family reception and hospitality house by Grand Rapids Community College and its Foundation. (Photo: David Hanks, 1972 Heritage Hill Association calendar.)

111 Lafayette N.E. The Perkins / Hutchins House. An excellent example of a modified Eastlake style of architecture, this gracious home is typical of Heritage Hill in that it



incorporates the design influence of several classic styles, including Gothic Revival and Italianate. The house was built in 1881 (one source gives the date as early as 1872) by Gaius W. Perkins, one of the founders of the School Furniture Company, to which the American Seating Company traces its origins. The house features steep irregular roof lines, tall chimneys, gables, and massive cornices. Soon after 1900, the Perkins family set up one of the first outdoor Christmas light displays in Grand Rapids, placing electric lights on a pine tree in one corner of the yard. In 1916, Mr. Perkins' son Charles

bought the home and remodeled it extensively, moving the original front entrance from Fountain Street to Lafayette Avenue. The address changed at that time from 241 Fountain N.E. (the old numbering had been 181) to 111 Lafayette N.E. In 1928, Mr. Perkins sold the home to Lee M. Hutchins, who moved in with his son and daughter-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Lee Wilson Hutchins, and their two children. In 1975, this home was still a single-family residence, occupied by Mrs. Lee Wilson Hutchins and her son, Mr. Lee M. Hutchins. Helen Hutchins Rossano, granddaughter of the 1928 purchaser, still lived here in 1995. (Photo: David Hanks, 1975 Heritage Hill Association calendar.)

126 Lafayette N.E. Hefferan House. The stately Georgian Revival streetscape of the 100-block of Lafayette Avenue, N.E., is typical of the freewheeling style of architecture in



Heritage Hill at the turn of the century. In 1906, George Hefferan built this Classic Revival home, which is notable for its imposing and basically Georgian brick façade, the dentil treatment, the Regency bonnet roofed dormers, the elegant windows, and the corner quoining, which is usually not found in this part of the country. Prominent in Grand Rapids business and philanthropic circles, Mr. Hefferan, son of pioneer lumberman Thomas Hefferan, was vice president and secretary of the Michigan Trust Company. He served as an active member of the UBA Hospital Board, and his wife was the founder of the Community Chest in Grand Rapids. One of the most interesting things about this house is that in the late 1960's, in an attempt to "modernize," the entire portico was removed. In the summer of 1975, noting all of the restoration activity which was taking place in Heritage Hill, a new owner restored the portico with the Georgian balusters in the gallery and balustrade. A lovely oriel window serves as a stair dormer. (Photos:



top, David Hanks, 1976 Heritage Hill Association calendar, showing portico removed; bottom, James Starkey, 1978 Heritage Hill Association calendar, showing portico restored.)

132 Lafayette N.E. Blair House. The gracious Charles Blair home, built in 1894, interprets the Georgian Revival style in frame, and is crowned by a massive gambreled roof. The vertical lines of this home are accented by the corner pilasters, the tall windows, and the lines of the Greek Revival portico. (Photo: David Hanks, 1976 Heritage Hill Association calendar.)



143 Lafayette N.E. Briggs House. Colonel George C. Briggs of the Seventh Michigan Cavalry built this imposing Tudor Revival home in 1900. The interesting castellated



roofline is unique in Heritage Hill. After distinguished service during the Civil War, at the end of which Col. Briggs participated in the surrender of Gen. Robert E. Lee, he commanded the cavalry in the south sub-district of the Plains during the Indian uprisings in the West. When he returned to Grand Rapids, Col. Briggs became very active in the business and political life of the city. One of his greatest interests was art, and his home here on Lafayette Avenue contained a specially designed gallery, the only private

art gallery in the city, where his many priceless works of art were displayed. (Photo: David Hanks, 1974 Heritage Hill Association calendar.)

148 Lafayette N.E. Barnett House. A truly monumental American Craftsman style home, the Barnett House is one of the only true full 3-story homes in Heritage Hill. The



steeply pitched roof with its many gables and dormers which allow high-ceilinged rooms with straight walls, give this house a legitimate third story. Built in 1881 by James M. Barnett, a lumberman, this home also boasts one of the last remaining rare, red slate roofs in the city. The facade is highlighted with elegant classic details which include dentil decoration and both round and square fluted pilasters and columns. There can be no doubt of the solidity of this massive structure, which undoubtedly mirrors Mr.

Barnett's image of himself as a solid citizen and a moving force in the 19th Century business community. Mr. Barnett's interests were many and varied. They included the lumber business; banking, in which he served as president of the First National Bank and as a director of the Michigan Trust Company. He was also a director of the Grand Rapids Gas Company, the Michigan Barrel Company and the Antrim Iron Company.

(Photo: James Starkey, 1978 Heritage Hill Association calendar.)

151 Lafayette N.E. Muir House. This house began as a 4-room frame farmhouse in the style of a Victorian cottage before the Civil War. Built in the 1850's by Ebenezer M. Ball and his brother, William, this delightful home subsequently underwent a three-quarter Greek Revival renovation.



It acquired its Classic Revival pediment and columns when that style became popular. The pediment is supported by three graceful, fluted Corinthian columns. The fluted pilasters on the main door and window also reflect the attempt to adorn what would have otherwise been a simple cottage with classical details. There is an interesting bow window on the south side of the house. The house has had several very colorful owners, and there are many interesting true stories about it. At one time it was known as the "Totem Pole

house" because of the very unusual totem pole which Mrs. Floyd Barber purchased and had shipped from Alaska in the 1950's to stand in the front yard at the southeast corner of the house. Unfortunately, the totem is no longer part of the Heritage Hill streetscape, but portions of it still exist. Alan and Sally Littlefair have owned the house since 1987.

(Photo: James Starkey, 1977 Heritage Hill Association calendar.)

215 Lafayette N.E. Wykes / Weatherly House. Built in 1875 for Arthur B. Wykes, a Grand Rapids butcher, this distinctive house has an extravaganza of truly classic



Eastlake detailing, calling to mind such fairy tale characters as Hansel and Gretel. Houses of this type are noted in American Victorian architecture for their gingerbread trim, pierced bargeboards, curved brackets, and rows of furniture-type spindles forming openwork friezes along the veranda. This outstanding home would be classifiable as Queen Anne style if it were not for the distinctive ornamentation. It is a rare and valuable part of the Heritage Hill streetscape. The detail on this style of house is lavish and pronounced because of its three-dimensional qualities, the product of the chisel, the gouge, and the lathe. Previously, other types of architectural embellishments had been the result of the

scroll saw. Builders of Eastlake homes were usually obsessed with detail, and decorated their houses with excessively ornate towers, gables, and verandas, which are a delight to the eye. Note the interesting Mansardic roof on the tower. It is easy to imagine what a wonderful time the builders of this home must have had as they selected the ornamentation for their house. A bit of this, a bit of that, whatever caught their fancy was blended into the whole to create a completely individual structure with its own distinct personality. Uniformity was not the order of the day. Every home was a reflection of its owner's particular likes and dislikes. Every home had a statement to make. The imagination can conjure up all manner of ideas about Mr. Wykes, a butcher, a solid citizen, a man whose home reflects the more whimsical side of his nature. The home was later occupied by F.H. Weatherly and his wife, Louise. Mr. Weatherly was associated with the Shriver, Weatherly Company, workers in sheet metal. Mrs. Weatherly was the principal of East Leonard School for 38 years, and was instrumental in founding the PTA in Grand Rapids. (Source: Heritage Hill Foundation calendar, undated. Photo: David Hanks, undated Heritage Hill Association calendar.)

223 Lafayette N.E. Wonderly House. This Italianate house was built in 1870 for Joseph H. Wonderly. Occupied by Dr. William H. DeCamp from 1885-90, this house became the residence of attorney and civic leader Charles W. Calkins from 1891 until his death in 1918. Old number: 169 N. Lafayette.

230 Lafayette N.E. Kellogg House. Queen Anne. Truman Kellogg had this house built in 1890. Some of the original turned spindles can be seen in the open frieze of the veranda.

231 Lafayette N.E. Built in 1883. It boasts a pierced gable ornament.

247 Lafayette N.E. Bertsch House. This imposing Eastlake confection was built in 1883 by Christian Bertsch, prominent Grand Rapids businessman and founder of the



Harold Bertsch Shoe Co. The house displays the whimsical ornamentation that was typical of the Victorian era. Note the elaborate design of the shouldered hood molds over the windows. The effect of a tower is created by the gazebo-like structure which springs from the top of the bay window. The nine-foot double, arched front doors are four inches thick, and exude an aura of solidity and permanence. This is appropriate for a man who, born in Ohio, came to Grand Rapids in 1860 from Holland, Michigan, where he had spent two years making shoes with his brother, Harold. He went on to organize the Krekel and Bertsch

shoe firm on the site of the original Houseman Building. For 54 years, Mr. Bertsch was in the shoe business. He began his career with \$25, which he nurtured into \$500,000 at the time of his death, when he was president and general manager of the company.

(Photo: James Starkey, 1977 Heritage Hill Association calendar.)

310 12/12/60 116 *Capitol*

316 12/12/60 115 *Capitol*

317 Lafayette N.E. This Queen Anne home was restored in 2004-05 by Benjamin and Donald Rietema and Mark and Ann Elve. They rebuilt the front porch and restored the exterior.

320

326-28 *Gone before 1951.*

332 10/15/2003 9271 Rollaway Movers
House being moved to 441 Crescent N.E. by the Inner City Christian Federation.

337

411			
415	04/24/67	2406	DeVries
415-rear			
416	09/08/61	508	Staggs
417			
421			
422	08/30/91	8180	Pitsch
424-r	08/30/91	8181	Pitsch
425	10/22/70	3651	Capitol
428	12/17/97	8771	N & M Demolition Contractors
429	01/09/62	775	Capitol
432	03/29/62	982	Pitsch
433	11/29/61	631	Pitsch
434	05/14/62	1101	Houting & Meeusen
437	07/07/61	389	Pitsch House at the south rear of 439.
439	07/07/61	388	Pitsch
440	04/25/63	1570	Pitsch
444	11/29/61	630	Pitsch
445	11/01/61	588	Dore
448-50	01/18/62	806	Capitol
451	05/23/62	1159	OK Wrecking
452	01/18/62	816	Pitsch
456	01/03/62	770	Pitsch
537	03/26/99	8865	Pitsch

614	09/20/73 09/20/73	4459 4473	Loader & Dump Loader & Dump
734	10/15/79	5832	Riverside
736			
738	03/27/84 No cutoff.	7276	Pitsch
757	04/14/65	1911	<i>Stick & Vogel, Inc.</i> <i>To reuse sewer line. Plug in basement.</i>
761	04/15/97	8715	Courtade
767	02/19/74	4569	Cannon
769-71	04/15/97	8716	Courtade
813	02/23/98	8781	Pitsch
837	04/10/64	1752	<i>City of Grand Rapids</i>

901	05/19/69	3042	Cooke
904	05/22/81	6092	Neighborhood Improvement--Pitsch
905	05/19/69	3043	Cooke
909	05/19/69	3044	Cooke
911-rear	10/14/63	1668	Riverside House at rear between 909 and 913.
913	10/16/63	1674	Riverside
917	10/16/63	1673	Riverside
921	09/26/86	7554	Pitsch
1009			
1010	03/13/78	5455	Michael Stephenson
1249	02/10/77	5100	Neighborhood Improvement Rehabilitated.
1314	01/20/90	8004	
2143	07/25/69	3102	Jacob A. Kroon