

Union Avenue, S.E.

20 Union S.E. The Smith House. Classic Revival. This house was built in 1890 for Samuel C. Smith.

32 Union S.E. The Thompson House. A whimsical Gothic Revival cottage built in 1866, this home is lavishly embellished by an abundance of wedding



cake-gingerbread adornments. It is in the style of Downing & Davis' country houses, replete with spired gables, pierced vergeboards, arched loggia, and other tasteful details. The original design of the exterior has never been altered. Its charm is immediately apparent and reminiscent of an era when life moved at a

leisurely pace, when the home was the center of family life. Not only did the builder create a home, he made it unique through the imaginative use of his skill and materials. The gracefully proportioned lines of a small inviting cottage are as appealing as the magnificence of a mansion. The exceptional living room features jewel-like stained glass windows. The vestibule, living room, dining room, and bedroom feature cove ceilings with central medallions. Michael and Mary Sebastian moved in in May, 1995. (Photo: David Hanks, 1972 Heritage Hill Association calendar.)

47 Union S.E. This shingle-style house was built about 1894 on property belonging to the Waters mansion. The 1995 owner is David Eppelheimer, a

teacher who purchased the house when he was looking for a way to display his vast collection of antique Christmas decorations.

(Photo: 2002 Heritage Hill Weekend Tour of Homes brochure, p. 17.)



62 Union S.E. The McNamara House. This attractive home draws its influence from the Gothic, with its steeply pitched roofs which form angular



gables and the decorative Gothic details which are used over the doors and windows. It is believed that Clyde C. McNamara was the original owner of this home, which was built in 1885. Mr. McNamara was active in the furniture industry in Grand Rapids, being associated with the Gunn Furniture Company and Marvel Manufacturing Company. The former dealt with office furniture, the latter with chairs and rockers.

Representative of the Midwestern vernacular style of architecture, the house is a joy to behold, but has no claim to fame through distinct features that often define the major architectural styles. This type of residence actually comprises the majority of 19th century Victorian homes. Here, the beautifully turned balusters reflect the influence of the furniture industry in Grand Rapids. (Photo: James Starkey, 1979 Heritage Hill Association calendar.)

102 Union S.E. The Lewis House. This home was built in 1876 by lumber baron Jeremiah L. Lewis, who came to Grand Rapids in 1873 and entered



the lumber business with Constantine Morton under the name of the Morton & Lewis Lumber Company. The house is an excellent example of Classic Revival and Craftsman style architecture, although it has some of the earmarks of a Greek farmhouse, as evidenced in the

broken returns and pilasters on the gable ends. Interesting features are the intricate Adam detail on the bay and the classic carvings in the pediment above the portico. (Photo: David Hanks, 1974 Heritage Hill Association calendar.)

116 Union S.E. This modified Georgian Revival house, built around 1897, was the residence of Dr. C.E. Hooker in 1912. It is probably most defined



by its third owners, Mr. and Mrs. Antoine Campau. Mr. Campau was a prominent partner in the well-known architectural firm of Robinson, Campau and Crowe. He was also a direct descendant of the founding father of Grand Rapids, Louis Campau. In the late 1990's, the house was converted back to a single-family dwelling from several apartments. (Old # 100.

Photo: Heritage Hill Association calendar, undated.)

120 Union S.E. This Stick-style house with Eastlake influences was the residence of Mrs. E.K. Sherwood in 1912, when it was numbered 122. (Old # 106. Photo: Heritage Hill Association calendar, undated.)



218 Union S.E. The Squier House. This beautifully-tailored Queen Anne, Free Classic, Craftsman-style home was built in 1907-08, and first belonged to Frank and Maryette Squier. Mr. Squier had come to Grand Rapids in 1905. In partnership with Charles B. Kelsey, he founded the United Tanners Lumber Company and became its president. He was later the executive head of the Grant State Bank and the First State Bank of White Cloud. Before his death in 1915, he was considered to be one of the largest timber owners in the state. After Maryette's death in 1928, the home was passed to Squier's niece, Ima Stone. She owned it just a few years before selling it to Judge Blair and his wife, Blanche. After the judge's death, the home fell into unspeakable disrepair. Jim and Diane Thorndill are the fourth owners of the house, having purchased it in 1982 from Blanche Blair, the "Cat Lady." The Thorndills were able to move in only in May, 1987, because a menagerie of more than 70 cats at one point had turned the floor of the house into a litter box. Urine-stained woodwork and plaster and hair-clogged radiator vents awaited restoration efforts. Most of the oak woodwork was salvaged with only some discoloration remaining. The fireplace and intricate mantle in the living room, while original to the house, were built for gas use. The third floor features a game and entertainment room. (Cf. Dorothy Brooks, "The Cat's Meow," GRP, Sunday, 10/01/1989, K1, K3.)

221 07/15/71 3927 Capitol

227

340 Union S.E. The Frost House. Queen Anne was the dominant style of domestic building from 1880 to 1900, and no two buildings are exactly alike. Constructed about 1889 for lumberman Shepard Frost, this house features the typical irregular massing and multiple gables--some with decorative detailing--as well as bays and overhangs. Always a single-family, the home suffered from a fire in the mid-1980's and was abandoned for a time. Subsequent owners labored seven years to restore it.

410-16 02/14/74 4467 Pitsch

411 Union S.E. Charming 5-bedroom, 2½-bath Victorian home.

454 10/03/74 4609 Southkent

500-02 11/27/84 7316 *Neighborhood Improvement--Pitsch*

511-rear 04/16/91 8133 Pitsch
Converted garage.

563 Union S.E. William G. and Bertha W. (Wurzberg) Logie and their family occupied this home in 1911-12. Their son James W. Logie, father of future Mayor John Logie, was born here on January 31, 1911. In 1936, this house was purchased by Dr. Cortez English, Grand Rapids' first black dentist and a jazz aficionado. Count Basie, Ella Fitzgerald, B.B. King, and other performers stayed at the English home on their way to perform at Idlewild. The basement bar installed by Dr. English remains intact. The house was completely restored by DeVere and Brenda Stroven and Dave and Kathy Bouma in 2004-05. (Old # 373.)

604-606 Double house.

624 10/21/76 5178 Neighborhood Improvement
Cancelled.

644 Union S.E. The Jacobs House. The first resident of this house was Frank M. Jacobs, who was store manager of Wurzburg's Department Store. The house was built in 1910 as an income property, and the tenants form an impressive list of people involved in downtown Grand Rapids. Doug Frens purchased the house in 1979. It is highlighted with stained and leaded glass windows.

649 Union S.E. The Ford House. Built in 1910, this foursquare bungalow was home to the future President Gerald R. Ford, his mother, adoptive father, and three stepbrothers from the time he was 10 through his junior year in high school, 1923 to 1930. The house was converted into two apartments sometime after World War II. By the time it was declared an historic landmark by the city's Historic Preservation Commission in late 1990, the house had stood vacant for nearly 20 years. Tim England and Rob Kent purchased the property in 1991 and completely restored the 3-bedroom home.

750 12/05/77 5419 Neighborhood Improvement--Cross

752 12/05/77 5268 Neighborhood Improvement--Cross

754

812-14	12/18/75	4969	Neighborhood Improvement-- Loader & Dump
1408	04/06/77 03/28/77	4944 5286	Neighborhood Improvement--Cross Cross (voided)
1412	03/28/96	8619	Fenstermacher
1415	02/17/78	5470	Cross
1418	05/14/75	4844	Ostrander Wrecking
1444	12/07/88	7840	

1500 Union S.E. Although no longer locally owned, Rowe International is one of Grand Rapids' oldest manufacturers. Originally known as the National Piano Manufacturing Co., it moved into its current facility in 1922, a site previously used by a maker of horse-drawn hearses and just half a mile from Kindel Furniture Co.'s flagship Grand Rapids plant. At the time, the firm made coin-operated electronic player pianos operated by its sister entity, the National Automatic Music Co. Today, Rowe is the world's oldest and largest maker of coin-operated jukeboxes. It merged its two divisions in 1925 to create AMI, the Automatic Musical Instrument Co., and later merged with the California-based maker of the William Rowe cigarette machine to create Rowe/AMI. While neither the most recognizable nor highest selling brand through the industry's post-World War II boom, when 24,500 units a year were shipped out of Grand Rapids, Rowe is the only one of the companies still viable today, with a 70% U.S. and 60% worldwide market share. With the exception of a 20-employee circuit board plant in Texas, all manufacturing is still done at the now 460,000-square-foot, 156-employee Grand Rapids facility. (*GRBJ*, July 17, 2006, p. 8.)