PRESERVATION
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CENTURY BUILDINGS FOR 2022

This year is the thirty-fourth time Preservation Racine will celebrate National Preservation Month by presenting our annual Century Building Certificates to the owners of well-maintained buildings that are at least one hundred years old and are located in the City or County of Racine. Long-time Preservation Racine member Don Rintz, after attending a preservation meeting in Madison, Wisconsin, brought back the idea of celebrating century buildings. Our local program was developed from his initial idea. We owe a debt of gratitude to Don and the people who were farsighted enough to know how important our landmark sites are and to encourage their protection and care.

Preservation Racine will host this year's event on Monday evening, May 2, 2022, in the Great Hall at the DeKoven Center, 600 Caron Butler Drive (21st Street), Racine, Wisconsin. The reception to honor the building owners will begin at 6:00 pm, followed by the program at 7:00 pm. All members and friends of Preservation Racine are invited to attend.

3643 Highway 38, Caledonia

Standing on the land at 3643 Highway 38 and viewing the charming Queen Anne house before you … you are easily transported in your imagination to the original farmland of the Morris and Gifford families in the 1800s. William Gifford born in 1822 married Catherine Morris born in 1831 in Cambridge, New York. In 1861 they established residence in Racine County where they purchased 235 acres of land from Catherine's father, John Morris. John Morris had bought a farm in Caledonia Township in the 1840s and eventually sold that land to the couple. William Gifford later added fifty more acres to his original purchase. He was a diligent farmer and became one of the more prominent and prosperous pioneers of Racine County.

William and Catherine had six children: John, Mary, Harriet, Ellsworth "Elmer," William H., and Albert M. The sons assisted their parents with the farm.

In 1888 William died at the age of 66, Catherine died seven years later. William H. and Elmer were the executors of both wills, and they purchased the family property from the other heirs and then split the property between them. Ellsworth Elmer, the elder brother, chose the original Morris homestead which was by then the "old" Gifford family house and land. He had married Alice Metcalf from Raymond, Wisconsin in 1882. William H. married Emeline Mosher in 1890. He started dairy farming on his land and began his soon-to-be thriving dairy business.

Elmer may have rebuilt the house in 1895 after his mother's death. Elmer's brother, carpenter Albert Morris Gilbert, may have been the builder as he built his brother William H.'s Queen Anne style home on the property at the corner of Dunkelow Road and (what is now) Highway 38. The Queen Anne style was popular from 1880-1910.

There are four shape subtypes of the Queen Anne style. Elmer Gifford's house meets the style of a steeply hipped roof with two cross gables. The hipped ridge runs front to back parallel to the side of the house. It has a one-story high, asymmetrical porch extending across the front and one sidewall of the house. The porch has spindle work railings and a spindle work frieze suspended from the ceiling. The free classic columns rise from pedestals on the railings to the porch ceiling. Ornamental elements appear above two windows on the side gable. The walls of the house are wood clapboard.

In 1908 Elmer E. Gifford was so proud of his house that a photo of it along with his own photo was included in the *Plat Book of Racine and Kenosha Counties*. Elmer and Alice had no children. They lived on the homestead property until 1914 when they sold the house and property to John Flynn and retired to a home in Racine at 2307 Washington Avenue. Elmer lived until 1936 and Alice died 5 years later.

John Flynn was born in Ireland in 1879 and immigrated with his family to Racine the same year. He was another distinguished Racine pioneer. At the time of immigration he lived on a farm near Highway 38. At the age of 13, John was employed by the Horlick Crushed Stone Company. Later he worked for the streetcar company in Racine. He drove horse-drawn cars and was the first man to operate an electrically driven streetcar in Racine.

He was later employed at the Racine Paper Goods Company working for the Parmenter family. In 1903 he rented a farm of 320 acres on the site now occupied by the Racine Country Club. The land was owned by Charles A. Wustum. Later he purchased a farm of 60 acres known as the Noble farm and ran it for seven years. He was active in rural affairs and was a director of the Racine County Milk Association for several years.

In 1913 Mr. Flynn bought the property from E. Elmer Gifford and lived there and operated it until 1943 following the tradition of dairy farming and farming the rich soil of Racine County until he died tragically at St. Mary's hospital after an attack from an "enraged bull" at his farm.

Margaret L. Williams and John Flynn were married in 1900 and had five children … three daughters and two sons. One son Attorney Gerald T. Flynn graduated from Marquette Law School because (it is reported) his father did not want him to farm. Gerald was a member of the Wisconsin State Senate from 1950-54 and was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives from Wisconsin's First Congressional District serving from 1958-1960. Gerald's son Dennis Flynn (John's grandson) retired in 2002 after 25 years as a U.S. Circuit Judge in Racine. The 1950 Plat map shows Emil Thorkelson and his wife living on the property. In later years the land became the subdivisions of Hoods Hollow and part of Aldebaran.

Valerie and Robert Connor purchased the house and two and one third acres in 1983. It is to their tribute that through hard work and love this Queen Anne house has maintained its integrity on the interior and exterior. It is possibly built on some of the original foundation composed of fieldstone and rock formation. The original maple and pine floors have been refinished, a lower back room was finished and opened to the house and to the yard, it has been reroofed, the front porch railing, columns and spindle work have been carefully maintained. A remodeled kitchen and bathrooms in keeping with the style have been incorporated. Robert Connor has painted the house multiple times. Large maple and oak trees original to the property were lost in a storm a few years ago … but other one-hundred-year-old plus trees remain. Preservation Racine is proud of the devotion that the Connors have painstakingly contributed to this historic house and property. They have honored the previous Racine County pioneers. It is a house the Connors hope will be passed on to appreciative generations.

Heather Egan

1800 North Main Street, Racine

The two-story mixed-use commercial/residential building at 1800 North Main Street is a perfect example of its style. It is Early Twentieth Century Commercial (1900 to 1930), developed in response to the fussy, ornate Victorian styles of the nineteenth century. The main characteristics are flat roofs, patterned masonry walls with stepped brickwork cornices, and a recessed entry that "draws one in" through wooden paneled doors with large glass windows. The storefronts have large plate glass display windows, transom windows and occasionally bulkhead windows. Doors to the upper flats are usually a simple paneled door. Awnings are typical for the upper floor, main floor, or both. This building has all these characteristics. In addition, the upper story windows have stone lintels and sills that stretch between four evenly placed brick pilasters. The subtly protruding, patterned brick is all in the top quarter of the building with corbelled brickwork leading up to a stone cap.

The building has had a vibrant, diverse and hardworking history. The City's website lists it being built in 1900. However, the address 1800 does not appear on North

Main Street in the city directory until 1904 with Theodore Giese running a grocery there and living upstairs with his family. In fact, tax rolls indicate a large jump in the value of the property indicating construction in 1903. The *Journal Times* carried an announcement of the store opening on October 1, 1903. Giese was a naturalized German who had immigrated to the United States in 1881. In 1900, he was a widower running a grocery and saloon at 1843 North Main Street, with six children and a sister-in-law (who he married) in tow. He had to file for bankruptcy and the property was sold at public auction in April 1901. His new grocery did not last long. In 1906 the Gieses still lived there, but Theodore was an insurance agent and the store was vacant. Later that year the North Side Boy's Club occupied it. The purpose of the Club was to elevate youth, especially boys ten to twenty years old. In 1909 there were 225 males enrolled in manual training to prepare them for employment and to be good citizens. There were also sewing and singing classes for girls, and dances on the weekend for all. It even became a loaning branch of the public library distributing books on Wednesday and Saturday afternoons. This would end in 1910 when Giese lost the building to a Sheriff's Sale in January. The sale occurred after Giese made a desperate attempt to petition for a liquor license and open a saloon on the premises, which he hoped to then sell to a Milwaukee brewery. This failed because neighbors petitioned against it.

The superintendent of the Boy's Club, W. G. LaFavor, was an experienced "social settlement worker," but also a gifted artist. He was asked by the Improvement Assn. and Alumni of Winslow School to create a life-size bas relief to memorialize A. B. Augustin. He was a Racine native, educator and principal of Winslow School for over twenty-five years. LaFavor sculpted the mold and the art bronze was cast by a Chicago firm. LaFavor had done similar work previously when he lived in Washington D.C. He created the mold for a bas relief of Edward Everett Hale, the chaplain of the U.S. Senate for many years.

For the next ten years the building was occupied by a tailor and a clothing store, and was occasionally vacant. The back of the building housed two auto repair businesses—Arnold's Garage and then Foreman's Garage through the 1920s. In 1920 a grocery was once again in the building. One of Racine's first Piggly Wiggly stores opened there in 1923. Into the thirties and forties, soft drink and wholesale tobacco companies operated there; the fifties brought an optometrist, a vending machine company and real estate offices. In 1962 Elsmo Inc. bought the building and ran a music publishing, piano sales and real estate sales, property management, and insurance agency. Sverre Elsmo was a local songwriting celebrity with such titles to his credit as: The *Kringleville Polka, Go Badgers Go, American Yankee March, Chapel in the Pines* and a Green Bay Packer fight song. Various realtors worked out of the building from 1969 until the 1980s. The Elsmos sold the building in 1988 to Ray Kant and others who ran the Cabinetry Shop for many years. After Kant vacated the premises, it became a salon.

Now the building is being prepared for a new, exciting endeavor. Two years ago, Robert and Rebecca Venn purchased the building. They have remodeled, rehabbed, added an addition to the back and landscaped the property. When the work is finished it will be their residence and Rebecca's studio and gallery called The M Street.

Debbie Yale

1300 Hayes Avenue, Racine

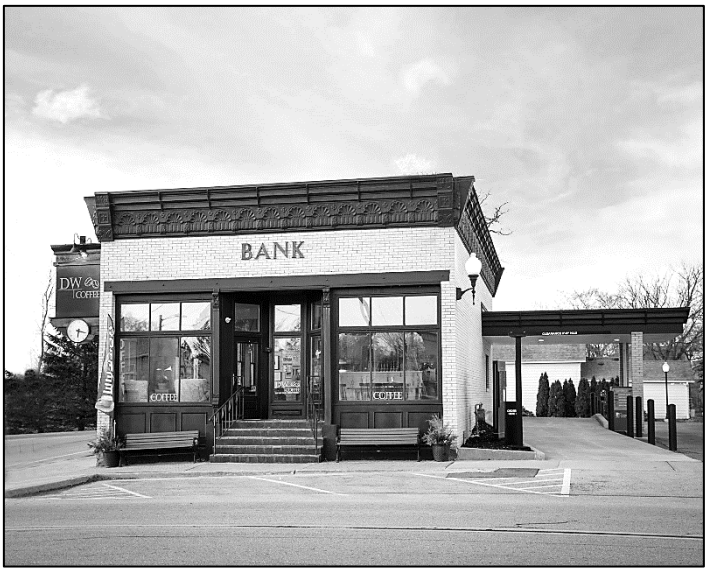
Daniel O. and Ida B. Hibbard built their house in 1915 on the southwestern corner of what used to be Garfield Avenue (until 1914 when it became 13th Street) and Hayes Avenue. In 1912, they had purchased two lots from Hans and Marie Nelson, two of the platters of the Nelson and Sorensen Addition to Jay Eye See #5 subdivisions. Sadly, the Hibbards did not enjoy living in their new home for very long. Ida died on December 16, 1916, and Daniel, an Educator who had served as Principal of Janes and Lincoln Schools, sold the house in 1919 after retiring.

1300 Hayes Avenue reflects the influence of two of the architectural styles prominent in the early twentieth century: Prairie and Craftsman. Most likely this house was constructed by a local carpenter using pattern books and popular magazines as inspiration.

While it is possible to assert that Prairie features are present, this house does not display the horizontal planes or mass characteristic of the architectural style. And, similarly, the typical Craftsman identifiers are missing, too. Thus, the exposed beams and rafters are not seen; instead, they are incorporated into the eave overhang as trim above the side gables. At the ends of the extended roof slope, there are brief, wood cut-out designs.

What this house does exhibit is a full width one-story porch with brick piers supporting wood columns which rest on their own pedestals, spindles under the railings with a unique broad wood cut-out pattern, and a front door topped by a stained glass, floral window. In addition, the ivory stucco cladding reflects the house's Midwestern location. An approximately three-foot high red brick foundation meets the house walls. Three vertical panes over a solitary pane are seen in the three-window groupings. That pattern changes on the smaller windows flanking the chimney where three vertical panes are sited below square panes. The perimeter of the house, between the two stories and the gabled areas is decorated with narrow green horizontal and vertical strips. The front dormer gable is unusual because it is beveled, not straight. The petite dormer, jutting out on the rear roof could have qualified as an eyebrow window except its roof line is straight, not arched. John O. and Andersa M. McGrew became the new owners in 1919. In 1950, Mrs. McGrew, now a widow, sold her home to the couple who would live there for the next forty years: Robert L., an Industrial Product Merchandizer for S. C. Johnson, and Lola M. Paap. It was Mr. Paap's death in 1990 that led to the sale of their home to Steven W. and Barbara C. Krenzke. After five years, the Krenzkes sold to Frank Molinaro, a Lab Worker, and Janice K. Schaefer. It was this couple's divorce that led to the current owners purchasing this house in 1995: Rey Luis and Danielle M. Cartagena.

Mary Newbold



201 West Main Street, Rochester

This single-story cream brick commercial building was built between 1900 and 1901 right beside the Fox River in Rochester at the intersection of Main and Front Streets on the SE corner. It is a typical Victorian style with symmetrical plate glass front windows articulated with slender metal columns with quirky capitals, overhanging eaves, beautiful oversized cornices decorated with palmettes and elaborate corner braces, and an inset porch and entrance. The interior consists of plaster walls, high tin-plated coved ceilings with decorative crown moldings. Hanging light fixtures reclaimed from the Delafield hotel were installed when the tin ceilings were refurbished.

The lot where this building stands was first built upon in 1858 and was the location of Adams Hardware Store with Robert Adams listed as merchant. Mr. Adams came to the

U.S. in the 1840s from England. His sons Henry and Edward took over the family business around 1870. A fire in 1891 damaged the building and merchandise owned by Eugene Sawyer. In 1892, Sawyer left his business and in 1896, another fire broke out and the building, now the site of Charles Trost's Grocery, burned to the ground. A new brick building was constructed, now owned by John Lehman, a treasurer in the Town of Rochester. Charles Trost continued to conduct business here selling hats, shoes, and bicycles. In 1910, the post office was also housed in the building, with access from the side door on the east side. General merchandise was sold here for the next 26 years, operated by the Halbach Bros until 1906, and then the Edwards Bros, Frank and William, and other partners including C.W. Atherton until 1926. Atherton took the civil service exam in 1921 and became post-master. There was yet another fire in 1923 but little damage to the building. It should be noted that there were also several robberies over the years with the most common items stolen being woolen blankets, dry goods, and cigars!

In 1932, Robert "Bobby" Winkler began operating a grocery business and bought the building from Lehman and remodeled it in 1933. He added new plate windows to the front of the building, and refrigeration so he could sell meats and milk. Winkler's son, also Robert, relocated the grocery business to Burlington in 1954/55. After Mr. Winkler moved, the Near New Auto Body shop was run from the back of the building and was owned and operated by Mr. Raymond Kempken. The post office was moved to the front of the building. Community State Bank bought the building from Kempken in 1982 and operated for nearly 40 years but closed in 2019. During this time, another robbery took place when the bank was robbed at gunpoint with the bank manager being taken hostage. He was released a few miles from town unhurt. In 2019, Bob Willard and Jane Hamilton purchased the building and began extensive renovating. DW Coffee, a lovely little cafe with indoor seating and drive-thru ordering (repurposed from the Community State Bank's teller system), is now being operated by Leslie Kinsey.

Jonathan Eeg

2343 Mead Street, Mount Pleasant

The former Lakeside School building, District No. 13, at 2343 Mead Street (originally 2339), is in the Lakeside neighborhood Village of Mount Pleasant. The structure's appearance today, inside and out, has been altered from when first constructed, yet substantial materials, form, and character remain as it appeared in the 1930s.

In 1901 an unassuming one-story vernacular, narrow wood-sided structure, totaling approximately 960 square feet and rectangular in form, was constructed; the building was oriented on an east-west axis. The west façade had a standard paneled entry door symmetrically flanked to the north and south by common sized, four-over-four double-hung windows. In the north façade were three symmetrically placed oversized six-over-six double hung windows. All windows and the door were trimmed with common casings, but had headers topped with projecting beveled cornices. The south and east facades' windows and doors were likely similarly trimmed. The building's wood shingled hip roof was moderately sloped. A soffit was finished with fascia board similar in dimension to the window/door casings. The building was punctuated with a six- to eight-foot-tall cupola, having a footprint of four to nine square feet, straddling the ridge, just behind the west roof's plane intersect.

As area manufacturing and families with children increased, by 1909 an equally sized, rectangular addition was added to the east end of the original school building, similarly on a full foundation, but with a north-south axis. The addition's south façade had two symmetrically placed oversized windows, and in the east façade were three oversized windows, all likely six-over-six double hung, and an entry door. (It is unclear if the current entry door on this addition is original, as it now provides access only to a later second floor.) In the north façade were two oversized windows, likely originally six-over-six double hung. On the north portion of the west façade, a doorway provided access to the first floor via a small vestibule. A hip roof was extended from the original structure, and exterior treatments matched the original building.

From 1909 to 1920, a full second story was added with access through the east entry door, via a doublewide staircase ending at a large landing having a horizontally oriented four-light window. Observing remnant details on three windows, it is likely that all second level window trim and siding matched what exists. The roof retains its original forms and dimensions.

During this period, a neighboring non-extant one-story classroom building was constructed to the north to alleviate school overcrowding. In 1922 District No. 13 began constructing a new school at 2317 Howe Street and moved in by September 1923.

It is unclear when the half-round rain gutters and asphalt faux-brick siding were installed, or when the cupola was removed from the original building.

In 1929, Achilles and Mary Totero purchased the former school building and added a one-story storefront addition, converted classrooms into commercial and living space, and, by 1939, established Totero's tavern and restaurant. Thus began a 75-year, multi-generational family tradition until 2014 when the last meals and drinks were served.

In 2016, contractor Jeff Cady purchased the building and began the process of renovation: the exterior of the building was brought back to approximate its 1930s appearance by exposing the original clapboard siding. Energy efficient windows and updated mechanical systems were installed, and the residential units were renovated.

Chef Alex Hanesakda leased the first level space and renovated the kitchen, dining, and bar areas. He added a pergola to the south side of the building and opened his restaurant, SapSap (Laotian for Delicious Delicious) in 2021. Jeff and Alex now carry on the tradition of great food and a positive community impact in this historic building.

Matt Sadowski

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208 E. Main Street, Rochester

The house at 208 E. Main Street, Rochester is a two-story, pedimented, cross-gabled Queen Anne with a corner entrance and porch. It has clapboard siding, and vertical strips, fish scale and diamond shaped wood shingles in the pediments and in a band between floors. A full height bay is on the east side with paired, pedimented windows with a decorative panel below; these windows are also on the south side. Projecting, mitered flat lintels are above the first floor single and second floor windows. The barn/garage has a pedimented side gable with a diamond shaped window and fish scale shingles.

The age of the house is a question not fully answered. The Rochester Assessor believed the house was built in 1880. Many early owners only possessed the property for a year or two, but after 1860 there were four long-term owners so a house must have been built. But the tax rolls show the combined value of the land and improvements was $680 in 1861 and 1862 and then dropped to under $500 from 1866 through 1899. The value of land and improvements is $1000 in 1900 and $2000 in 1913.

Perhaps a smaller house was originally on the property and it was enlarged by the Barrys who had four children, or perhaps carpenter Abram Sheard built it to its present size. The answer will probably never be known.

The house is in Block 16 of the original 1838 plat of the village of Rochester; this is east of the Fox River at the corner of Main Street (Highway D) and Chicago Street. The parcel comprises Lots 10 and 9, except for the southwest corner of 9; however, through most of the early years of its deed transfers it included all or half of Lots 1 and 2. The original owners of the village—David Anderson, Consider Heath, Henry Mygatt, Elias Smith, Jacob Myers, and Mrs. Cox—had five deed transfers among themselves between 1840 and 1843 involving this property. In September 1843 Henry Van Valin bought the four lots for $1800, but they were sold at

public auction for non-payment of taxes in 1851 ($9.87) and again in 1852 ($28.28). Through 1855 and 1856, Sally Ann Van Valin, Henry's widow, regains the title of the parcel, which she promptly sells for $1200. There are a few more sales, including one involving eighteen heirs each getting paid $50! Melvin and Julia Gibson bought the four-lot parcel in June of 1860 and sold it to Sally Ann Barry in March of 1866 for $600.

Horace and Sally Ann Barry were New York farmers who had come to Rochester with his parents in the 1840s. When they bought the parcel in Block 16, they were forty-five and forty-seven years old respectively, and also owned a farm valued at $3000, which they continued to work into the 1870s. The 1880 Census lists them as retired farmers. When Sally Ann Barry sold the property to Abiah Sheard for $250 in June of 1892, she and her husband were residing in Dodge County.

Abiah Leslie Horton Sheard was married to Abram (sometimes Abraham) Sheard. His parents came from England in 1836 with their two children, took up 120 acres of Government land in Section 25 of the Town of Burlington to farm. They had six more children. By the 1870 Census the Sheard family lived in Rochester. Abram married Abiah in 1873; he had become a carpenter. The Sheards had no children. Abram died September 3, 1915 and Abiah died of pneumonia June 23, 1916. Joseph and Annie Dobson purchased the property in October 1916.

Joseph Dobson wired the house for electricity soon after buying it and had a foundation laid for a horse barn. He owned a farm on Highway 20 when he bought the Sheard house. During his thirty-three years in the house, he acquired three more farms, which he rented out, was a Village Trustee, Village President and secured the contract for patrol work on the State Trunk Line (Highway 20) and the Burlington Road Trunk. He was also instrumental in getting the state to replace the bridge over the Fox River. He celebrated his 90th birthday in his house on March 1, 1949 and was the oldest resident of Rochester at the time. Annie and Joseph both died that year, she on April 18 and he on November 11.

The Dobson heirs, three daughters and two sons, sold the property in July of 1951 to two women who were going to turn it into a three-unit apartment building. For the next fifty-four years the house would be sold five times, but with many title alterations due to death, additional owners added, and divorce. The most recent sale was in 2005 to Jesse and Kerri Cardenas who have returned the house to its former glory.

Debbie Yale

1700 North Main Street, Racine

If you grew up in Racine, especially if you grew up on the north side of Racine, you would remember North Main and High Streets as the location of Homer Dary and Son Drug Store. Later it became Dary's Apothecary and Gifts and was in the family for over fifty years. More about the Dary family later.

The building on Main and High was built in 1920. The 25 by 58-foot building is a two-story painted brick commercial structure. It is an example of the Early Twentieth Century Commercial Style. It has a rectangular plan with a flat roof and decorative brick trim on both Main Street and High Street sides. The second story features six symmetrically placed windows on the front of the building. A charming black awning has been added by the new owner to blend with the black paint accents on the building. Also added was a low black wrought iron fence to mark the parking area on the north side of the building and to blend in with the neighborhood. The lower level has large glass windows used to display goods and products available in the store. The entire building is fresh, smart, and inviting to those passing by.

The lower level of the building has had many uses in its one hundred plus years. Before the present building was erected in 1920, there are records of a grocery story on the property as early as 1901. Leonard Schaefer was a grocer at the location until 1918. The new building was erected in 1920 and Clement Daniels is listed as a druggist at the address until 1935.

Homer Dary and his wife, Caroline, operated not only 1700 North Main Street, but also a drug store at 2100 Clarence Ave. Soon the business became Homer Dary and Son Drug Store; Homer II and his wife, Geraldine, worked and lived with his parents. We're not sure how they divided themselves between the two drugstores. But, wait, there is another Dary Drug Store for a while at 3115 Kinzie Avenue. They were very busy people!

Unfortunately, Homer II passed away at the age of 36 in 1951. The senior Darys retired to Florida, and Geraldine Dary became the owner of the business. She changed the name to Dary's Apothecary and Gifts and managed the store until 1981. Then begins a series of different businesses ranging from computer sales, a U.S. postal outlet, real estate, travel agency, insurance agency, music store, and in the end, a tattoo parlor. Then followed several years of an empty building.

Enter a new owner, Tracy Stacy, who has a wonderful vision of what she wants to and is doing with this century old building. Her goal is to bring together artists/crafters in the Racine area and give them a place to showcase their talents and products. Along with that, there is a coffee shop with comfortable chairs to sit in, sip coffee and chat with friends. A very welcoming atmosphere permeates the whole shop. Owner Tracy also provides a quieter area for small groups to meet on the second floor of the building. Our thanks to Tracy and her staff for making such a pleasant, meaningful use of a lovely old building by reusing and repurposing this gem.

Karen Verbeten

3310 North Main Street, Racine

The white painted brick house at 3310 North Main Street was built as a farmhouse reportedly in 1915 when the area was still in Caledonia. It is a one and one-half story, front-gabled structure with a moderately pitched roof. The simple façade consists of centered multi-paned, double-hung windows, a pair on the upper story and a gang of four on the first floor. The front entrance is off the south-east corner on the enclosed porch. The brick façade goes up the gable to the roof without a break. There are two gabled, inset dormers on the north side of the house. The south side has the porch, one gabled, inset dormer, and a false gable toward the back of the house. Single windows on both north and south sides have stone sills and articulated arched brick hoods. The brick pattern appears to be all stretchers, which would imply the brick is a veneer. That would support the age of the building since using brick veneer became common around 1915.

A study of Caledonia plat maps shows no structure on the property in 1887 or 1899, as expected. The 1915 and 1924 maps show a building, again as expected, but the 1908 map also shows a building. When Peter Harig bought the land in 1905 the tax rolls list a value of $200. In 1907 the value jumps to $900, goes to $1000 in 1910 and remains so through 1915. Harig sold the property to Peter Bungard in 1911 and he sold it to Ruffalo in 1914. The tax rolls indicate value goes up to $1800 in 1916, $2100 in 1920 and $2500 in 1925. It would appear that the house was improved on or added to 1915, probably to its current size.

There have been sixteen names on the title of this property. The first owners were real estate investors beginning with John T. Kingston who paid $1.25/acre to the U. S. government, and sold 129 acres to Charles Wright for $6.20/acre. When Cornelius Lenz purchased it in 1857 the price was $60/acre. Men who actually farmed the land owned it until 1914 when Louis and Mary Ruffalo bought the property; it had by then become a four-acre parcel. An immigrant from Italy, Mr. Ruffalo worked for Chicago & Northwestern Railroad as a supervisor, and apparently never lived on the farm, as the city directories and census lists the family on Railroad Street and Forest Street. Before he died in 1924, the father of ten raised quite accomplished children. His two oldest sons were University of Wisconsin graduates, an auditor and medical school student, the third was a U. S. Naval Academy graduate, two sons were currently at UW, one daughter was married, one was working, two were in high school, and the youngest son was still in primary school. The property was sold in a Sheriff's sale in 1937, then sold again in 1938 to John and Magdalen Ruksas who ran the Oak Tavern at 612 State Street. Their son was an

aviator in World War II. Stephen and Nettie Poplawski were the next owners and they were farmers. The property was divided for the last time after Nettie sold it. Lawyers, office workers, and teachers own it from 1960 to 2005, when the current owners Sheila and Charles Wittkowski bought the house. They have kept it in consistently lovely condition over the years.

Debbie Yale

3305 Washington Avenue, Racine

The handsome red brick house at 3305 Washington Avenue, is an American Four-Square, or Prairie Box, meaning it has a cubic structure with four rooms on each level. Features of this house common to its style include: a simple hipped roof, a symmetrical façade with a multi-window dormer, also with a hipped roof, pairs of double hung upper windows, a centered front door with a large window, and plain glass sidelights. The full front porch has four square columns on brick piers supporting its roof. The first story porch windows have smaller upper sashes and larger lower ones.

The Lars Sorensen family owned this property for nearly eighty years. Lars and his wife Anne Kristerina (also known as Stine) emigrated from Denmark in 1882, where he had trained to be a blacksmith. He worked in local factories perfecting his craft until he opened his own shop. During this time, he was also buying small parcels of nearby land. Lars was one of the developers of Jay Eye See Subdivision #5, Nelson and Sorenson Addition, where this property is located in Block 1, Lot 2 (note the spelling of Sorenson in the plat title, and Sorensen in their signature). Sorensen's holdings included the entire block southwards from Washington Avenue, stopping just three lots short of Thirteenth Street (formerly Garfield Street).

City directories indicate Lars' blacksmith shop and his residence were outside the city limits on the south side of Twelfth Street from 1901 to 1904. In 1906 the directory's location is more precise; the blacksmith shop was at 3305 Twelfth Street and the Sorensen residence next door at 3309 Twelfth Street. By 1914 Twelfth Street was renamed Washington Avenue. Tax rolls show the value of Lot 2 was $300 in 1912 and increased to $4000 in 1913. Obviously, a substantial structure was built there by 1913; and the 1914 city directory indicates 3305 Washington Avenue was now the family residence while their former home at 3309 Washington Avenue had a new resident. The 1916 directory shows the Sorensen blacksmith shop was at 3301 Washington Avenue.

Lars Sorensen died on December 31, 1922; he was 64 years old. An interesting fact is that at Lars death all of his seven children, ages 38 to 24 years of age were still living at home! In his will he left all the lots facing Washington Avenue (Nos. 1-7) and the lot (No. 9) behind his shop on Hayes Avenue to his wife Stine. The blacksmith shop property soon became a Standard Oil filling station and today is Infusino's Pizzeria. Aladdin Flower Shop occupied 3309 Washington Avenue from 1929 to 1982 while baker Martinius, Pedersen ran Washington Bakery at 3311 Washington Avenue from 1929 through 1943. Henriksen's Bakery opened there in 1945 and remained there until 1961 when it was followed by Larsen's Bakery in 1962. Larsen's expanded into both store fronts (3309 and 3311) in 1983.

Stine remained in the house with three of her daughters until her death in 1940. The house remained in the family until 1976 when Howard and Winifred Dehnart purchased the house and converted it to a two-family rental, which necessitated the addition of the east-side enclosed stairway. It was remodeled in 1994 for use as a retail store. Calico, Canvas and Color was a specialty textile shop which sold quality fabrics and supplies. Before the business closed in 2009 it was renamed to Calico Print Works reflecting a different focus.

A *Journal Times* article of August 8, 2011 reported the building had been vacant for a few years before the current owner, Stacy Adamek, saw its potential. She moved her hair salon, The Bluegrass, from 1831 South Green Bay Road to this location. In late 2011, her investment in time, wealth, energy and imagination paid off and she and her staff were able to move into their beautiful, historic "new home."

Mary Newbold

1322 State Street, Racine

The four-man Racine Fire Department Engine Company #2 was located at 1322 State Street. It was actually the third home for Engine Company #2; the first was a wood frame building on the east side of Main Street at Second Street. In 1878 it was relocated to 45 Main Street between Second and Third Street. With the increased use of steam-powered pumping engines, all three of Racine's firehouses were inadequate for keeping the number of horses needed to pull the engines, and all lacked an observation tower to monitor for fires, especially needed in the industrial areas.

The Great Fire of May 5 and 6, 1882 caused the Racine Fire Department to modernize and expand, as the Common Council recognized the need for more and better equipment and facilities. Plans to build three new engine houses in the 1st, 5th, and 6th Wards had been discussed for years. The plans became a reality after the Great Fire, especially since Engine House #2 had burned down while the men were fighting the fire; it was the first to be replaced.

The city purchased the lot for $650 on December 4, 1882; the two-story cream brick firehouse was soon built in the 5th Ward, with a four-story watchtower or observation tower. It is an example of the late Victorian Eclectic style, a relatively simple building with clean lines. The façade and west side windows have a symmetrical pattern, with stone lintels and sills. Attractive corbeled and recessed brickwork makes up the cornice.

The building had undergone some remodeling in 1911. On April 28, 1938 the newspaper announced that the observation tower was to be leveled to the roof top by a WPA crew who were working on the building. The towers were no longer required as the city had grown larger and taller, and better alarm systems were being used. However, the removal was never carried out as the tower still stands two-stories above the roof with the original interior narrow stairs and heavy beams to hang the hoses on to dry. Besides the intact tower, the firemen's pole is still there, as are the second-floor firemen's original wooden lockers, and the large front engine doors also are intact and working. The main floor has original stained and varnished beadboard on the ceiling and four feet high on the walls. Matching oak doors and window and door trim grace the building.

Engine House #2 remained in operation until November 1967, when the new Fire Station #2 at 2430 Northwestern Avenue was finished and occupied by firefighters and equipment from State Street and the station at Grand Avenue and Sixth Street. In October 1967 the State Street

Station and Engine House #4 located on Wisconsin and Fourth Streets were put up for sale.

Between the end of 1967 and 2005 the building was occasionally vacant, but also used as a warehouse by Nelson Electric, a shop by Distinctive Woodwork and later Wilson Metalsmithing. Today the building is in remarkably good condition and well maintained by the current owner. For sixteen years Kathryn Maisto has run Fairwinds Canvas LLC in the building. It is a complete marine canvas fabrication shop serving yacht owners mainly from Sturgeon Bay to Chicago, but they will travel to customers nationwide. It is also a marine canvas training center.

Debbie Yale

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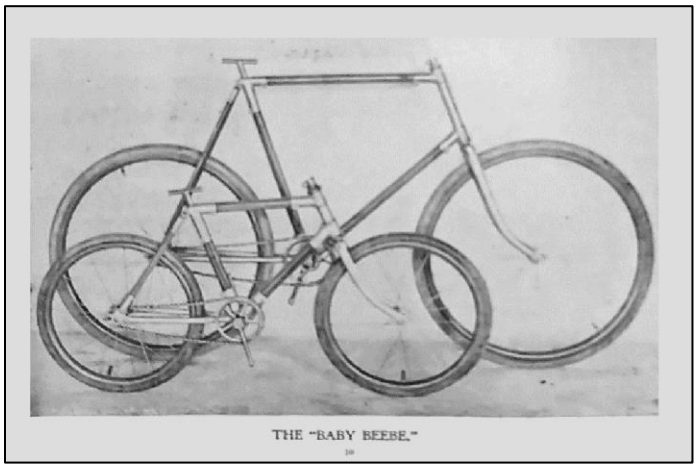
Made In Racine - Beebe Bicycles

Many of us know that Racine was once a powerhouse for automobile manufacturing back in the early 1900s. Names such as Mitchell, Piggins, LPC, Maibohm, Ajax, Pierce, and Case proudly rolled off our factory floors with the "Made In Racine" emblem on them. But did you know that we once made bicycles (actually called "wheels" back then) here at one time? That honor goes to the Beebe Manufacturing Company who began making them way back in 1896. Although automobiles were manufactured here for almost 35 years, bicycle production only lasted for about 10 years.



THE "BABY BEEBE."

Charles Beebe was certainly no stranger to Racine's manufacturing history. Back in the 1870s, he was a partner with Lucius Blake in Blake, Beebe & Company, a successful fanning mill manufacturer. In 1886 he was involved with organizing the Beebe Cart Company, a manufacturer of two-wheeled road carts. By 1891 the Beebe Manufacturing Company was incorporated and began producing buggies, carriages, road wagons, cutters, and other similar products. Bicycle production did not begin until 1896, however. Their plant was located south of 17th Street. and Packard Avenue (just south of the old Milwaukee Road tracks).

Their first year of bicycle production must have been a little rocky for them. According to their 1897 bicycle catalog, they mention that, "As a decided novelty in 1896, it suffered the severest criticism of prejudice and competition. Yet the season of severest tests, hard and rough riding has only proven the claims of its advocates." Their frames were constructed of wood, while the front and rear forks were made of steel. Again, quoting from their catalog, "The Beebe Combination Frame possesses all the firmness of a metal frame with superior strength and resilience."

In 1896 and 1897 the company manufactured only a few different models. Their largest seller was the "Gentleman's Wheel" which was designed for men, of course. It would follow that there was also the "Ladies' Wheel." And yes, they also made the "Baby Beebe" for both young girls and boys. Now the whole family could go riding together! It's interesting to note that they made a special bike for seniors called the "Old Man's Wheel" (really, I'm not kidding!). They describe this bicycle as being geared for the "comfort and safety of aged persons. The wheels bring the rider closer to the ground, and allows him to easily mount and dismount. He is able to touch the ground with both feet while seated on the saddle, giving him perfect confidence." For those wondering, there is no mention of an "Old Ladies' Wheel!"

Potential customers could view the various models directly at the factory, or purchase them from the Elkins Jewelry and Music Store at 437 Main Street, or Christianson & Thorney Bicycles, which was also located downtown at 318 Main Street.

The price of these above-mentioned bicycles was $60 (except for the "Baby Beebe"). However, for those wanting an upgrade, $70 would get you a bicycle where all the metal parts on the frame as well as front and rear forks were nickel-plated and highly polished. Now, I know what you must be thinking, that $60 was a lot of money back then. And, you would be right! That $60 would equate to just under $2,000 in today's dollars! Considering that I found ads for other bicycle manufacturers for under $40, you just have to wonder why customers would be willing to shell out more money for a Beebe. However, it did come with a six-month guarantee from the factory ...

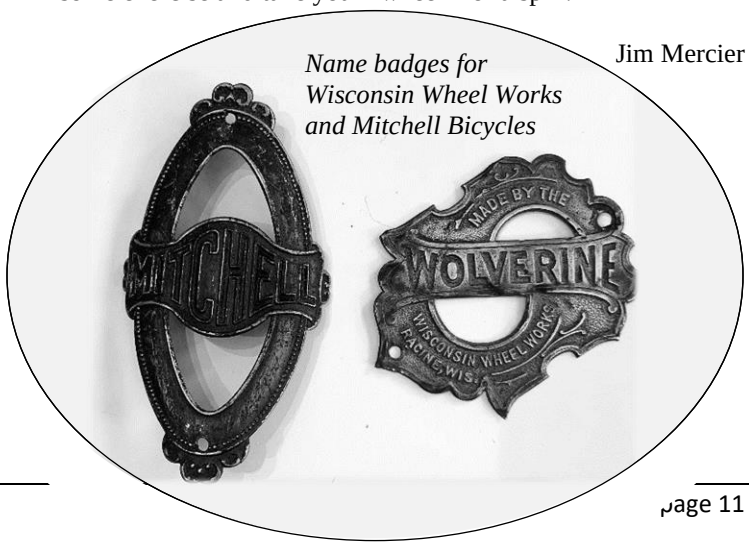
Our story doesn't end here, however. In 1899 William Turner Lewis, and his son, William Mitchell Lewis of Mitchell Wagon Company fame bought the company and changed the name to the Wisconsin Wheel Works. The new company continued to manufacture bicycles and even added motorized bicycles to their line. In June of 1900 the building was completely destroyed by fire. Bicycle production was then transferred to the Mitchell Wagon factory located on Washington Avenue, near the present-day Racine Public Safety Building.

In 1903 the Wisconsin Wheel Works name was changed to the Mitchell Motor Company, when they began to produce automobiles. By 1906 bicycles and motorcycles were discontinued in order for the company to focus more on automobile production, thus putting an end to bicycle manufacturing here in Racine.

Now, since it's such a beautiful day out, anyone care to get some exercise and take your "wheel" for a spin?

Jim Mercier

Name badges for Wisconsin Wheel Works and Mitchell Bicycles



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From the President

As you may know, the University of Wisconsin-Parkside archives have been closed for a more than a year as they underwent major remodeling and refurbishing. As last year, the archivists very kindly opened up for us privately so that we could get the research done for the Century Buildings awards on May 2. As I write, the archives are now open again just in time for a new round of research for the upcoming Tour of Historic Places. It is a pleasure to visit: easier to move around, and perhaps lighter too – or it may be that the reorganization has opened up the wall space which reflects more light. At all events, it is wonderful to have the resource back in use again!

Last month, I mentioned that Judith Schultz had donated an excellent research book for our own archives, and I am delighted to let you know that this month she has donated another! *Historic Preservation in Small Towns, a manual of practice*, by Arthur P. Ziegler, Jr., and Walter C. Kidney, is just right for our needs, recognizing that preservationists in small towns are in an especially tight space. The chapters cover the particular difficulties of small-town preservation, guides for organizing and constructing a preservation program, legal issues and finances, and a chapter on how to save a property. The loss of the Capitol/Park Theater remains painful, especially as we felt that given a little more savvy, we might have saved it after all. This book could help us build a stronger preservation protocol, and so it is very welcome!

Next, after the March program on getting the legal address and original ward number of a property, and on identifying styles and reading their "message" about the original property owner, a number of people asked if the program could be uploaded to the website. I have now done that, and you will find them as PDF documents on the "Research Guide" page.

Finally, I cannot close without thanking Brad Jaeck and Carol Hansen of Photographic Design Gallery and Framing, Sixth Street, for their superlative work on the Century Building program's photographs. Thank you, Brad and Carol!

With best wishes to all,
Pippin Michelli