



# Washktenaw/Hill Historic District

## ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN

FEBRUARY 4, 1980

FINAL REPORT

## Introduction - November 1979

In 1972 City Council appointed the Washtenaw/Hill Historic District Study Committee at the request of the Historic District Commission and the Washtenaw Neighborhood Association. For several reasons - lack of Commission staff, competition from other potential historic districts such as Liberty Street and the Old West Side, as well as lack of strong pressure from the neighborhood itself - the Study Committee never met until recently.

In the spring of 1979, the Hays family, facing the sale of their home at 1555 Washtenaw, renewed pressure for an historic district. Given the large size and vulnerable corner location of the property, the family felt that the kind of controls embodied in an historic district ordinance offered the best means of protecting both the house and grounds from unsympathetic changes, additions, or even demolition.

Since it was felt that the original study committee had too little neighborhood representation to be really effective, a series of meetings was held with neighboring property owners to determine the extent and nature of the proposed historic district and the best method of accomplishing such a goal. Those present came to the following conclusions:

1. City Council would be asked to add several names to the original list of members;
2. The District would be worked out in two successive phases - Phase I will consist of the "core" properties at the intersection of Washtenaw and Hill - 1547 and 1555 Washtenaw, and 1310, 1410, and 1530 Hill; Phase II will include a much larger area extending further along both Washtenaw and Hill and taking in the area bounded by Hill, Forest, Cambridge, and Washtenaw.

This approach was recommended because there would be only five properties in the Phase I district, all are single family residences with owner-occupants actively in favor of a district. This situation alone will greatly ease the process of creating a district. Three of the five Phase I buildings have already been documented as Ann Arbor Historic Buildings and information on the other two is readily available from the owners.

Another factor in the two-phase approach is that the original members of the study committee are concerned about further delay which would be necessitated by working out a much larger district all at one time. They believe that seven

years of patience to date deserves more immediate attention, particularly with the present concern over the future of the Hays House.

The final consideration is that this "core" district will serve as a guide and an inspiration in explaining the advantages of being part of an historic district to property owners in the larger, Phase II area. This should be especially effective with the many fraternities, co-ops, and churches.

### Washtenaw/Hill Historic District Study Committee

Rosemarion Blake  
Sam Breck  
Julie Casa  
Mary Hathaway  
Edward Hays  
Frances Hays  
Elizabeth Hayden  
Winifred Favreau

William Heldreth  
Theodore Hensei  
Raleigh Morgan  
Richard Neumann  
Janet Newman  
Marjorie Reade  
William G. Shepherd  
Bret Waller

# The Washtenaw/Hill

## Historic District

### PHASE I

The five houses in the Phase I part of the Washtenaw/Hill Historic District do indeed form the core of the neighborhood. The histories of each structure, which follow in chronological order, help to illustrate how the houses are linked to each other and to the history of Ann Arbor.



### The Baldwin/Hall House - 1530 Hill

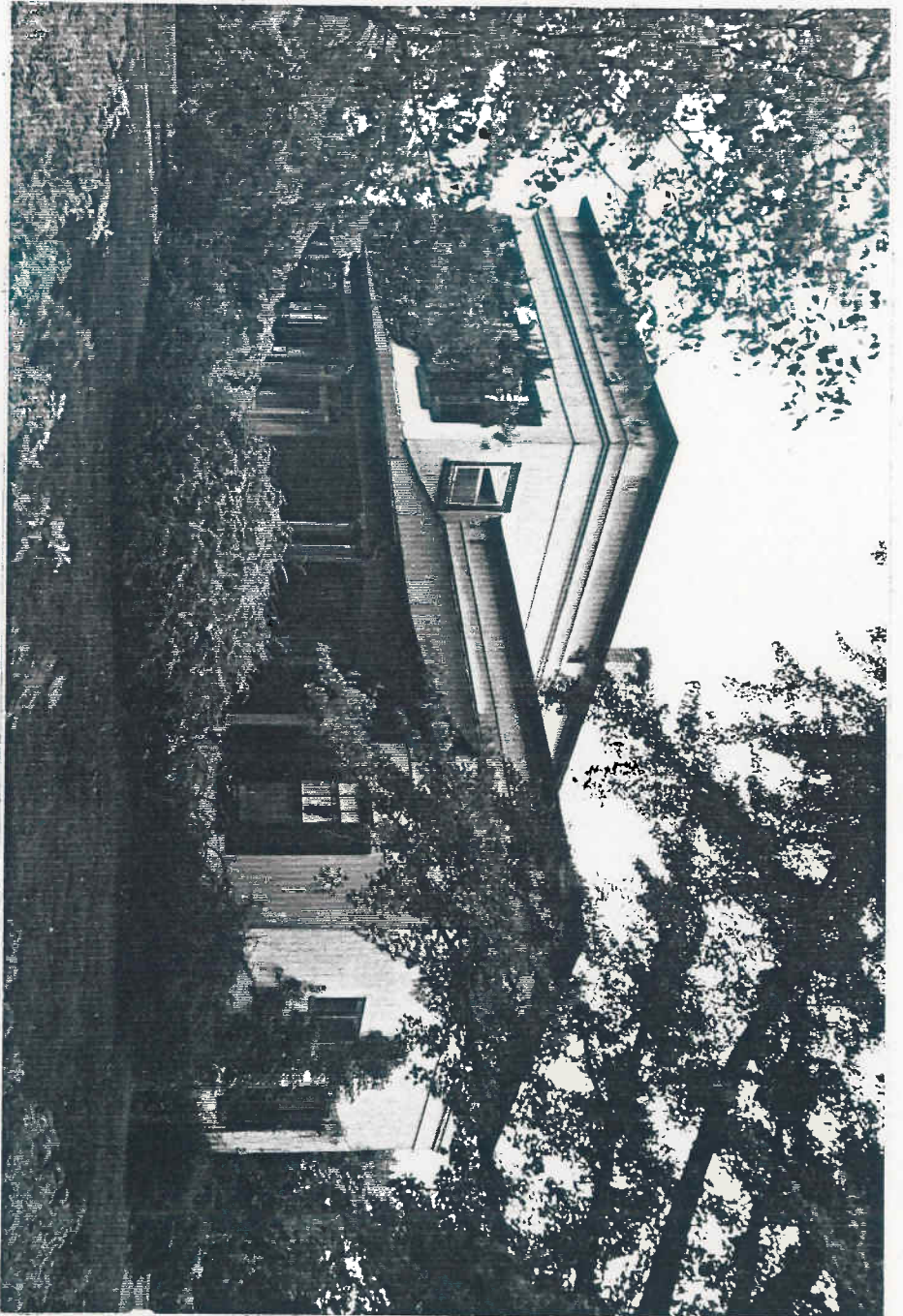
There are two possible stories on the origin of this house. The Michigan Alumnus, Vol. XXXIX, 1932, contains an unattributed article which states that this house was built in 1860 by Daniel E. Wines, father of Levi D. Wines, for Deacon J. D. Baldwin, at a cost of \$100 cash and unenumerated quantities of farm produce and wood. However, the house is of the Roman type "country residence" style, very much in architectural vogue during the late 1840's, and there is no record that Baldwin moved his family during their early years, and for these reasons we think it was built when Baldwin first came to Ann Arbor in 1847, and was probably remodeled in 1860 when his daughter, Mary, was married to Joseph Baker Davis, a well-known professor of civil engineering. We do know this wedding was a grand affair.

J. D. Baldwin came from Onandaga County, N. Y., by way of Detroit where he had been engaged in the hardware and leather trade. He purchased 154 acres of land outside the city and established a flourishing fruit and berry farm, and was thereafter, until his retirement, very active in the development and showing of Michigan fruits and a leader in the Washtenaw Pomological Society. His mother, Susan Dorr Baldwin, was the daughter of one of the soldiers who, disguised as an Indian, threw overboard that shipment of tea in the Boston Harbor - the Boston Tea Party. J. D. Baldwin was married to Elizabeth F. Hubbard and they raised four children in the Ann Arbor residence, Eugene C., James C., Mary, and Charles C.

Much of his acreage was forested - the portion along the Ypsilanti Road (Washtenaw Avenue) where the First Presbyterian Church now stands was known as "Baldwin's Picnic Grove". Water for his home and farm came from a spring a short distance up what is now Hill Street (in those days Myrtle Avenue and later Spring Street).

In 1876 he sold his home and most of an 80 acre piece of land, bounded by what is now Baldwin, Wells, Forest, and Hill Streets, to Israel and Olivia Hall, who later subdivided the farm, keeping nearly three acres in the core of their block for their garden. With great foresight, they placed the restrictions on the property, including the general set-back, which gives such grace and character to the area.

The house was first occupied by the Hall's son, Eugene, a contractor and builder. In 1885, the Hall's youngest son, Louis, and his bride Elizabeth, moved into the old Baldwin house. The original pink brick of which the house was constructed had already been stuccoed over and Mrs. Hall soon added the fireplaces and the sloped roof porches. She had the entry changed and the fan light in Georgian revival



style was added. Louis Hall became a prominent member of the Dental School faculty of the University of Michigan. They raised four children: Douglas, Louis, Richard, and Elizabeth. The family was involved in ambulance and other service in World War I, and son, Richard, was the first American soldier to die in that war.

The Hall's daughter, Elizabeth, married J. R. Hayden, professor of Political Science at the University. Now a widow, Mrs. Hayden still lives in the family home with her niece, Mrs. Winifred Hall Fravreau, daughter of Douglas Hall.

The extensive old-fashioned garden to the rear of the house still gladdens the heart of the visitor.

Date of Construction: 1847-48  
First in City Directory: 1868  
Present Owner: Elizabeth Hayden



## The Henry Simmons Frieze House -

1547 Washtenaw

The acreage for this estate was purchased by Henry Simmons Frieze from J. D. Baldwin and William and Sara Saunders in 1859. Frieze brought in skilled stone masons from Guelph, Ontario, to split and work the local soft grey, green and rose boulders. The building is unique in Ann Arbor since few houses designed in the Italianate mode are articulated in such fine masonry work. Walnut and butternut were used in the finely finished interior. The black walnut panels are said to have come from Ann Arbor trees.

In 1868 Frieze was appointed Acting President of the University of Michigan and he decided to move with his family

closer to campus. He sold the estate to J. Austin Scott and his wife, Sarah Shepard Ranney Scott. Scott had had a long and illustrious career trading in livestock and as an owner of vessels on the Great Lakes. For several years he published a newspaper, Miami of the Lakes, out of Perrysburg, Ohio. He moved to Ann Arbor in 1868 to semi-retirement, and became a trustee and strong supporter of the Congregational Church. The house was taken over by (son or grandson) Ranney C. Scott in 1886. In 1897 it was acquired by Ann W. Wilson who sold it in 1898 to Horace L. and Julia G. P. Wilgus. At this time the estate was divided into six lots and the Wilgus family moved into the manor house.

Horace L. Wilgus was a Professor of Law at the University. An Ohio State University graduate of 1882, he opened a law

Office in Troy, Ohio, in 1886, then moved to Columbus in 1888. In 1890-1 he helped organize the Ohio State Law School where he became Secretary and Professor of Elementary Law. In 1895 he came to Ann Arbor to become Professor of Law, Corporations and Torts. He was married in 1886 to Flora Bell Ewing who died in 1894. In 1897 he married Julia Gay Pomroy. Their daughter, Caroline Gay, married Stanley D. Dodge, Professor of Geography at the University, and that family lived in the home for many years. Title passed to Walter Wilgus in 1963 and in 1969 the home was purchased by the William G. Shepherd family.

William and Theo Shepherd had done extensive restoration, removing partitions and repairing the slate roof. The house is on the National Register of Historic Places.

Date of Construction: 1859-60

First in City Directory: 1868

Present Owner: William Geoffrey and  
Theodora Shepherd

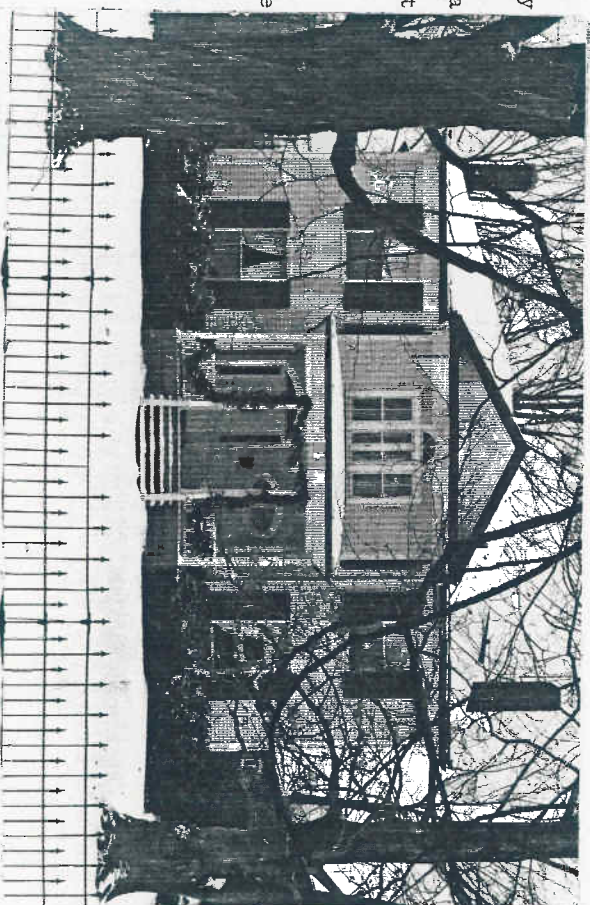
### The Edward deMille Campbell House - 1310 Hill

The land on which this house stands (as well as the house at 1410 Hill Street) was once a part of the oldest of the Ann Arbor Fair Grounds. When Olivia Hall created her subdivisions, she purchased the piece of property now known as Burns Park. Arguing that the fair grounds had a "pernicious influence" on the youth of the town and should be moved further out, she convinced the city to make a trade. Thus the Burns Park area was once Ann Arbor's second Fair Grounds and the older fair grounds was opened for subdividing.

The house was first occupied by Edward deMille Campbell and his family. Campbell was a son of one of the oldest families of New York. He was married in 1888 to Jennie M. Ives (of the Detroit Ives family who later bought the land and developed the Ives Woods portion of Ann Arbor). Campbell came to Ann Arbor in 1890 as a Professor of Analytical Chemistry and Metallurgy.

The symmetry and detailing of this Georgian Revival house put it in the Neo-Colonial mode. The interior floor length windows were designed with spools resembling chemical elements for its chemist owner.

Five of the six Campbell children were born in this house and a tree was planted for the birth of each child and named for that child. Two trees - Cornelia and Mary -



still spread their branches in the front yard.

The Campbell family sold the house in 1901 to Margaret Lydecker, a widow newly arrived from the East. She opened a boarding house which, according to memoirs from that period, was famed for its style and elegance and for providing the "best food in Ann Arbor".

Her daughter, Margaret, married Earl Salisbury "Doc" Wolaver, a Professor of Economics, and they raised their family in this home. In 1971, Margaret Wolaver, by then a widow, sold the house to the U of M basketball coach, David Strack. When the Stracks moved to the University of Arizona in 1972, Haskell and Janet Newman purchased the home.

Date of Construction: 1890

Present Owner: Haskell and Janet Newman



### **The Freer/Shearer House - 1410 Hill**

This Georgian Revival home was designed by Irving Kane Pond of the Chicago firm of Pond and Pond. "Ike" Pond was the son of Elibu Bartlit Pond, publisher of the Ann Arbor Argus from 1854 to 1878. Irving was a life long athlete and gymnast. He was on the football squad of the U of M and in his senior year he made the first Michigan touchdown in intercollegiate competition. As an architect, his Ann Arbor buildings include the Michigan Union, the Michigan League, the Student Publications Center, and the West Physics building as well as several residences.

The first occupants of this house were P. C. Freer, Professor of Chemistry and Director of the Laboratory of General Chemistry, his wife Agnes, and their family. They lived here only four years and the house was then occupied from 1902 to 1907 by Professor Albert A. Stanley, head of the School of Music, and his wife, Emma. In 1907 the house was purchased by Chauncey H. and M. Louise Deshler Shearer. Chauncey Shearer was engaged in the insurance business. In 1917, ownership was transferred to the Shearer daughter, Marie, where it remained until Frank P. and Julia Landis Casa purchased the home in 1972.

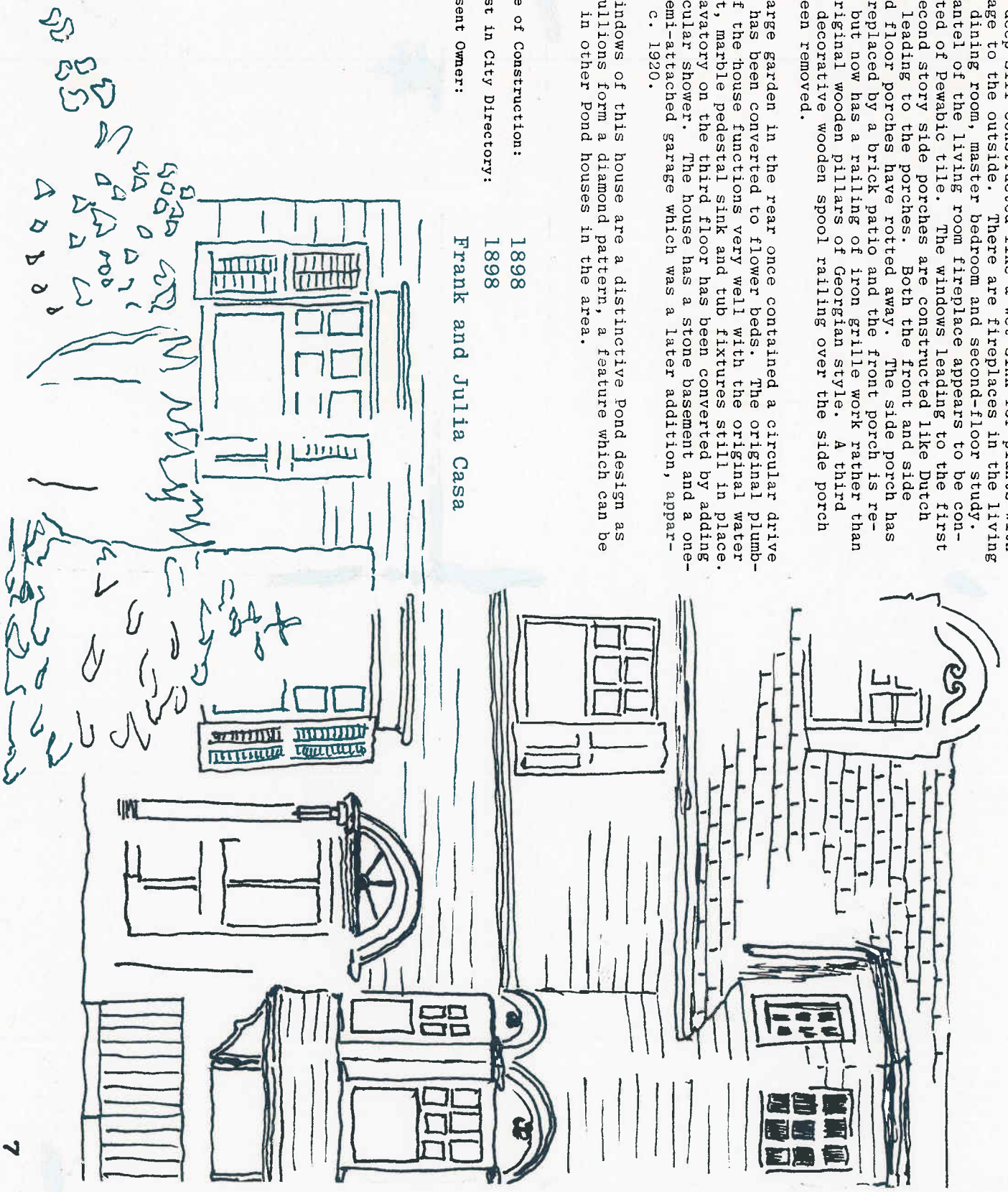
This is a three-story house with handsome oak trim and paneling, particularly in the dining room where the high window

has a deep sill constructed like a wet sink for plants with drainage to the outside. There are fireplaces in the living room, dining room, master bedroom and second-floor study. The mantel of the living room fireplace appears to be constructed of Pewabic tile. The windows leading to the first and second story side porches are constructed like Dutch doors leading to the porches. Both the front and side ground floor porches have rotted away. The side porch has been replaced by a brick patio and the front porch is rebuilt but now has a railing of iron grille work rather than the original wooden pillars of Georgian style. A third floor decorative wooden spool railing over the side porch has been removed.

The large garden in the rear once contained a circular drive which has been converted to flower beds. The original plumbing of the house functions very well with the original water closet, marble pedestal sink and tub fixtures still in place. The lavatory on the third floor has been converted by adding a circular shower. The house has a stone basement and a one-car semi-attached garage which was a later addition, apparently c. 1920.

The windows of this house are a distinctive Pond design as the mullions form a diamond pattern, a feature which can be found in other Pond houses in the area.

Date of Construction: 1898  
 First in City Directory: 1898  
 Present Owner: Frank and Julia Casa







### **The Campbell/Hays House - 1555 Washtenaw**

The land on which this house is situated was once a part of the J. D. Baldwin farm. In 1859, Baldwin sold a seven acre piece to Henry Simmons Frieze for his new home. Eight years later the Frieze estate became the J. Austin Scott Homestead with some small additions to the property. Late in the 1890's the estate was subdivided into six lots, one of which was bought for Edward deMille Campbell and his wife Jennie for their new home. Edward was the son of Judge James Valentine Campbell, one of the first Supreme Court justices in Michigan and the first Dean of the U of M Law School.

Campbell was a distinguished professor of chemistry and the Director of the Chemical Laboratories. He had been blinded in a chemical explosion in 1892 and this house was designed by the well-known architect, Albert Kahn of the firm of Nettleton and Kahn, Detroit, expressly for Campbell's ease in getting around with many features arranged as in the first Campbell home at 1310 Hill Street.

The house is built in Georgian classical revival style, with fine interior woodwork in the trim, spacious stairways and study paneling. The porcelain keyholes and door handles and the marble fixtures in the bathroom are as originally installed. The house is a frame structure faced with brick.

## Preservation Standards

When both Campbell and his wife died in the mid 1920's, the house was inherited in equal shares by their six children. One child, Mary Lavinia Ives Campbell, remained in Ann Arbor. She and her husband, James Griffith Hays, an investment counselor, purchased the other shares in 1929. Significant renovations were done to the house, taking great care to preserve the original Kahn design. The rear third story porch was added soon after the house was built.

This is one of the few Kahn houses in Ann Arbor and the only one still intact in its original design, both interior and exterior.

The house was recently sold to Robert and Hilde Borcherts.

Date of Construction: 1899

First in City Directory: 1899

Present Owner: Robert and Hilde Borcherts



### ROOF

Given the outstanding architectural quality of the five houses in phase I, as well as the fact that so few contemporary changes have been made to any of them, the Study Committee recommends that the following Preservation Standards apply to each building:

The existing building height, roof lines, pitch, dormers, gables, towers and chimneys shall not be changed or modified. Slate, metal, or terra-cotta roofs shall be preserved and maintained. Dormers and skylights may be added to rear-facing roofs subject to the approval of the Historic District Commission. Such approval shall be based upon dormer designs compatible with the rest of the building in terms of roof pitch, proportion and materials. Skylights may be fixed or operable, but must have glazing which is parallel to the roof surface. Bubble or domed skylights will be permitted on the flat roofs of all structures. Skylights shall not extend more than six (6) inches above the roof surface.

### OPENINGS

The location, style, and material of window and door openings, and the number and arrangement of panes, shall be retained on the street and side facades of primary structures. Additional openings or changes in the size of existing openings shall not be made, unless approved by the Historic District Commission. Such approval will be based on the compatibility of the proposed changes with the style and period of the building.

### ADDITIONS

No additions may be made to the street facades of any primary structure. Additions made to side facades shall require the approval of the Historic District Commission. For corner properties, additions made to the rear facade shall also require the approval of the Historic District Commission. Such approval will be based upon designs being compatible with the building in terms of roof pitch, openings, proportion, materials, and design.

PORCHES, TRIM AND ORNAMENTATION

There shall be no changes to existing porches, trim, shutters, and ornamentation on the street and side facades of the building, except that replaced or repaired portions of such porches that are visible and above grade, including but not limited to columns, railings, balusters, decks, steps, foundations, and facia, shall match the original members in scale and material.

MATERIALS

Unpainted brick, terra-cotta, or stone shall not be painted or covered. Repointing of defective mortar shall match the original in color, style, and texture. Original wooden shingles, board and batten, or clapboard siding shall not be covered. Materials covering original siding may be removed.

\*For corner properties, additions made to the rear facade shall also require the approval of the Historic District Commission.

FENCES AND AWNINGS, STORMS AND SCREENS

Chain-link or similar security-type wire fencing is prohibited on corner lots and within fifty (50) feet of the front lot line for all other properties. Metal or fiberglass awnings are prohibited. Storm and screen doors and windows must be painted.

FIRE ESCAPES

No fire escapes will be permitted on front facades. Fire escapes, where required on side and rear facades, must be so designed and located as to minimize their visual impact and shall be subject to approval of the Historic District Commission.

SIGNS

Any exterior signs shall require the approval of the Historic District Commission before being installed, such approval being based on the compatibility of the proposed sign with the historic and architectural character of the building. All requests for sign approvals shall be accompanied by drawings to scale of the proposed design as well as samples of all proposed fabrication materials.

TREES

In addition to compliance with applicable Tree Regulations from Chapter 40, Title III of the City Code, the following regulations shall apply to all trees larger than twelve (12) inches in D.B.H. (the diameter of the trunk fifty-four (54) inches above grade) within the Historic District: before removing such a tree, the owner of the property

on which the tree stands must obtain a permit from the City Administrator or his designee. Such permit shall be granted only if the Administrator determines that the tree is diseased or dangerous.

**Restoration Standards**

The following restoration standards are encouraged in order to allow all buildings within the district to conform more closely to their original appearance:

1. Replacement of excessively deteriorated details with new material which is visually identical to the original;
2. uncovering of original wooden shingles, clapboard, board and batten siding;
3. changes in exterior siding and in the form of windows and doors, porches, trim, and ornamentation, where evidence of the original appearance is available;
4. preservation of original glass in windows and doors;
5. replacement of concrete steps and metal bannisters with wood where in keeping with the architectural character of the building;
6. location or relocation of air conditioners, meter boxes, and similar mechanical equipment so as not to be visible from the street;
7. removal of non-original materials from the front and side facades, especially any plastic, fiberglass, imitation stone, or aluminum;
8. maintenance of original, interior woodwork including windows and doors and frames, bannisters, staircases and open stairwells, original light fixtures, ornamental plasterwork, hardware, marble bathroom fixtures, fireplaces, mantlepieces, and hearths. Unpainted woodwork should not be painted.

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