

271 Vincent Place

Patient and methodical, the current owners arrived in 1983 and are in the midst of an ongoing, phased restoration project. Phase I has been to make the home "livable." The Victorian home previously has seen some alteration, particularly in the rear of the house. Research is currently underway to determine the original room configuration.

The history of this home is related to the Finla McClure family mansion at 770 W. Highland, on the House Tour in 1987. It is probable that the land of 271 Vincent was sold by the McClure family who owned a large portion of property and built their mansion in 1891. In 1893 the McClure family sold this land to Ira Perry for \$132.00. Perry surely built this home and resided here from 1894-1899. He became the manager of the Grand Union Tea Company, located at 11 Grove Ave. In 1899, Eugene and Bessie Christie paid \$2,500 for the property, then the only house on the east side of the street.



Until 1929, Myron W. Elliott was the owner and resident. He was a job master in the Machine Department of the Elgin Watch Factory. The house stood vacant in 1929-30. Then followed several owners in quick succession: Richard Mason, of B.S. Pearsall ("manufacturer of butter, oleo-margarine, mayonnaise, etc., since 1907"); Ira Cornelius, of the Cornelius Coal Co., and Harry Atkinson, of Parkside Dairy Company.

The Queen Anne home is characterized by several exterior features:

- the prominent three-story turret with witch's cap
- the typical variety of wall materials (clapboard on the first floor, fish scale shingles on the second floor, butt shingles on the third floor)
- a Palladian window on the front facade (third floor)
- stained glass in the turret, stairway, and parlor windows

Also typical of a Queen Anne home is the front porch. The current owners returned a previous "home improvement," a screened-in porch, to this open porch.

The foyer provided another challenging project. Curved bookcases, original to the home, were found in the basement. The bookcases were recently refinished, and a new window seat was reproduced to match the markings left indicating the original.

The fireplace in the front parlor was added, probably in the 1930s, as was the arch between the parlors. These owners replaced ordinary glass with the leaded glass in the two windows framing the fireplace. The pocket doors and hardware between the dining room and parlor are original. On the floor, at the base of the right pocket door, is a "thermostat" similar to the one found in 391 Jefferson. The holes for the chains are still visible in the floor.

Upstairs, the style is evident in the turret space in the master bedroom and in the intricate pattern on the doorknobs and strike plates throughout. Victorian expression is also seen in the turned newel post and balusters on the main staircase.

Still appearing on the owners' "list of things to do" are several projects: renovate the kitchen (based on original design), add a deck/porch outside on both sides of kitchen glass doors, remove carpeting on main staircase, and refinish all of the wood floors. Fortunately, the one project that many homeowners dread was not necessary—the woodwork was left unpainted and required no stripping.