



Heritage HILL

For Immediate Release: April, 2016

Heritage Hill Association
126 College SE Grand Rapids, Michigan 49503
(616) 459-8950; Website: www.heritagehillweb.org

The Heritage Hill Annual Weekend Tour of Homes May 21 and 22, 2016

The 47th annual Heritage Hill Weekend Tour of Homes opens doors to eight lovingly restored private houses and three historic public buildings on **Saturday, May 21 from 11 am - 5 pm and Sunday, May 22 from 12 pm - 6 pm**. Enjoy seeing one of the country's largest urban historic districts in its spring bloom. Take the grand tour of century-old homes built for the elite of Grand Rapids such as the 1886 Queen Anne for the Davis family of the Stow & Davis Furniture Co.; a 1916 Georgian Manor that hosts six bedrooms, six baths and five fireplaces; a 1912 Tudor Revival with a sweeping view of the city, and two homes that showcase how new construction weaves into a historic fabric.



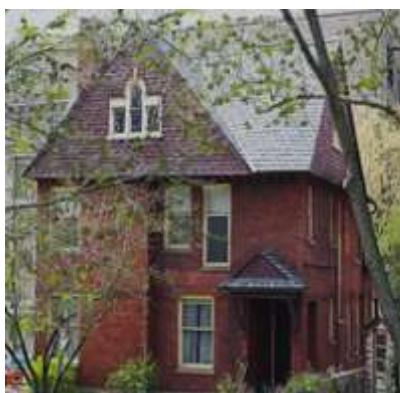
Three public buildings are featured including the meticulously restored Frank Lloyd Wright designed Meyer May House and The Calkins Law Office, a gleaming white 1836 Greek Revival building that is the oldest surviving structure in the city.



Advance tickets are \$15.00 and are available at the Heritage Hill Association office or at www.heritagehillweb.org. To obtain tickets by check, send to the **Heritage Hill Association, 126 College SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49503**. Tickets the weekend of the tour are \$20.00. Free shuttle bus transportation for the tour is provided between featured properties.

Heritage Hill was named by *This Old House* as one of the "Best Old House Neighborhoods" in the country. Its 1,300 homes represent Michigan's finest collection of 19th and 20th century American architecture.

Proceeds benefit the Heritage Hill Association which supports the historic preservation of this unique neighborhood and assists with land use planning, engaging community resources, crime prevention and block club organizing. Please call 616-459-8950 for more information.



Heritage Hill Weekend Tour of Homes

May 21 and 22, 2016 Line-up:



535 Fountain NE: Dressed in all her finery of spindles and gables and gingerbread, this Queen Anne's transformation from a humble ten room farmhouse into the grand lady she is today began the day that George and Alice Davis (of Stow and Davis Furniture Company) purchased the home in 1886. The sweeping wrap-around porch with all of the spindles, a bay window, and the trim on the gables were added and extensive interior renovations were done. The Davis' family lived in the house for over 120 years. Her new owners are both in the arts and they bring a modern touch to the interior design with their Mid-Century Modern furniture and art collections - a new wardrobe for a fine lady.



19 LAFAYETTE NE: From a seat high upon the hill and a grand view of the city below, this Queen Anne boasts a formal Palladian window on the top gable, a red-brick façade, and a carved, stone-capped granite pillars. Being neglected for many years, its new owners reconstructed a grand front porch, redesigned the kitchen, replaced crumbling plaster and removed walls to expand the living room. The new layout is open and filled with light from the large windows. Built-in bookcases in the office and trim around the fireplaces provide evidence of the owner's woodworking talents.



29 GAY SE: With fourteen rooms, six bedrooms, six baths and five fireplaces, all on four floors, you should plan on an extended visit. This brick home was built in the Georgian Manor Style in 1916 by Chester Idema, a wealthy and very forward-thinking banker, and the house remained in the family for over sixty years. There are many surprisingly modern innovations in the home that were designed by Mr. Idema. Though the architectural style is formal, the unique furnishings, antiques and artwork make this home, now used as a bed and breakfast, a very special place.



222 PROSPECT SE: Small but mighty, this "twenty-something" is a hero in the neighborhood. In the 60s, 70s and 80s, there were many empty lots and deteriorating homes on this block. A preservationist at heart built this home in an attempt to stabilize the block- the first new house in Heritage Hill in fifty years. The floor plan is very open with lots of light and there is plenty of wall space, especially in the living room with its cathedral ceiling, where an extensive art collection from family and around the world is on display.



444 UNION SE: This newest member of the Heritage Hill family arrived just two years ago and is the brain-child of the owner and her builder. The existing homes seemed too large for a single person and an available empty lot offered the perfect opportunity to design a dream home. Every detail is perfectly planned in this open-concept design - the use of natural light, the quality of the materials and fixtures, the more than ample storage space, and a fantastic kitchen.



532 PROSPECT SE: This prim and proper 1912 Tudor Revival is very distinctive, with its steeply-pitched roofs, stucco construction and prominent gables. The wide front porch is just the place to view the happenings on the avenue. The interior has an air of formality, with a room to either side of the entry and a grand staircase, complete with a welcoming window seat on the landing. A distinctive fireplace with a cherry wood mantle graces the living room and the leaded windows in the dining room flood the room with light. The master bedroom has a patterned wood ceiling. Family heirlooms have found a comfortable place here in this serene and lovely home.



566 PROSPECT SE: This American Foursquare was just what the current owners were looking for – a smaller house in need of renovation that had good “bones” and lots of character. At 110 years old, this house was ready for a complete make-over and the owners spent six months of intensive labor giving it new life. They replaced all the wiring, plumbing and heating systems, added AC, a bath and an upstairs laundry, sanded floors and painted inside and out. They now have all the convenient, energy-efficient and worry-free advantages of a new home along with the charm and grace of this well-appointed supercentenarian.



425 PLEASANT SE: This house was so badly burned in a fire that the wrecking crew was on the way. Its current owners rescued it in the nick of time, and then spent years rehabilitating it, from the basement beams up to the top of the tower. This Queen Anne home was fortunate to have an extremely talented woodworker in charge of the recovery. The exquisite use of both repurposed and newly made wooden trim, paneling, built-in furniture, mantles and light fixtures is a display of the owners’ creativity and talent. A domed ceiling in the bath, a peaked ceiling in the kitchen, stained-glass accents in the windows, art everywhere, rainbow colors on the exterior, antique pieces next to a chair shaped like a high-heeled shoe- there is a delightful surprise around every corner.



CALKINS LAW OFFICE: This gleaming white Greek Revival building, with its noble columns and stately symmetry, was built in 1836 and is the oldest surviving structure in the city. Originally located in the heart of a Grand Rapids when it was still just a frontier town, it stood as a symbol of the bright future that would be this city’s destiny. Charles Philo Calkins purchased the building in 1837 and set up a law office with his partner, John T. Holmes. The city was growing rapidly, and Calkins’ practice, dealing mostly with real estate law, prospered as well, and soon outgrew this tiny building. When streets needed to be widened downtown, the office was moved to the Belknap Park area, and over time it was forgotten and neglected. Eventually, it came under the care of the Public Museum. It was fully restored, and the dedication ceremony in its current location at the meeting point of State, Washington and Jefferson, was part of the Bicentennial celebration of 1976.



FOUNTAIN SCHOOL, GRPS MONTESSORI 159 COLLEGE NE

This 1917 symmetrical red brick school was Grand Rapids second largest elementary school of its time. The ornate exterior trim includes sculptured children’s faces that grace the north and south entrances. Betty Ford was one of the more notable students of this school. This building, along with the adjacent Central High, house Grand Rapids Public School’s Montessori program. Montessori students attend schools on this campus from pre-school through high school. Grand Rapids offers one of the few programs in the country that includes a Montessori high school.



450 MADISON SE, the Meyer May House

A prominent Grand Rapids' clothier, Meyer May, commissioned Frank Lloyd Wright to build this Prairie style home in 1908. The home is Wright's first commission in Michigan and is true to Wright's philosophy that "form and function" are equal. Every aspect of the home's design works together to create a unified and harmonious whole. The house has been painstakingly restored by the Steelcase Corporation.