

A Walk Through the Prospect Hill Historic District

Historic Tour Guide No. 4



City of Bloomington, Indiana



The Burns Grocery was one of eight stores in the city owned by Roy Burns. These tiny, full service and accessible venues were later replaced by the “supermarkets” of the 1950s.

By the 1960s the neighborhood had fallen into disrepair and the grandness of the houses along Rogers Street was lost in shabby siding and cobbled up rental units. Today that devastation is almost unimaginable. Prospect Hill’s story would be incomplete without including the efforts of Wilbert (Bill) Sturbaum, Rosemary Miller, the City of Bloomington, and Bloomington Restorations, Inc. (BRI) Between 1968 and 2005, Bill Sturbaum serially purchased and restored seven buildings in a single block. He saved four others by assuring their ownership to interested preservationists. Rosemary Miller championed the cause of the dilapidated Paris Dunning House in 1985, obtaining money for its restoration. The Prospect Hill Historic District was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in March 1991. Within the year, district residents were also successful in establishing Bloomington’s first locally designated historic



In Appreciation:

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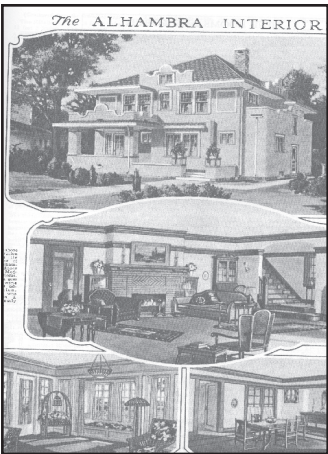
Prospect Hill Historic District

The neighborhood now known as Prospect Hill developed at the southwest corner of the original City Plat, which terminated at Third and Jackson Streets. Prospect Hill Addition was platted and annexed to the city on June 7, 1893. It was laid out on a rounded hill with South Rogers, Fairview, Third Street and Smith Avenue as its borders. The McPheeters Addition, which encompasses the eastern edge of the district, was platted and annexed in 1888. Later additions that moved west towards Walker Street were developed by J.D. and W.S. Showers. In the early days, from 1895 until 1910, the Southside Stone Company (later the Henly Stone Company) operated north of Second Street across from the hospital, which was established in an old brick farmhouse in 1905.

The Paris Dunning House, at the end of Third Street, anchors the neighborhood with its refined early Greek Revival and Federal style. It was the home of Prospect Hill’s most famous resident, Governor Paris Dunning. The brick house at 213 South Rogers is also thought to have been built around the same time, in the 1840-50s, and may be the oldest house in Bloomington. Another striking early property is the Gothic Revival farm house at 308 South Maple, built in 1860. The former home of Judge James Hughes, it was once called the “Prospect Property” and contained over 16 acres including the land that now forms blocks of housing on Fairview and Jackson Streets. A rural character remains in the neighborhood, with several small barns and an existing home adapted from a chicken house. Many of the smaller homes were built with decorative wooden porches that were later replaced with brick or limestone.

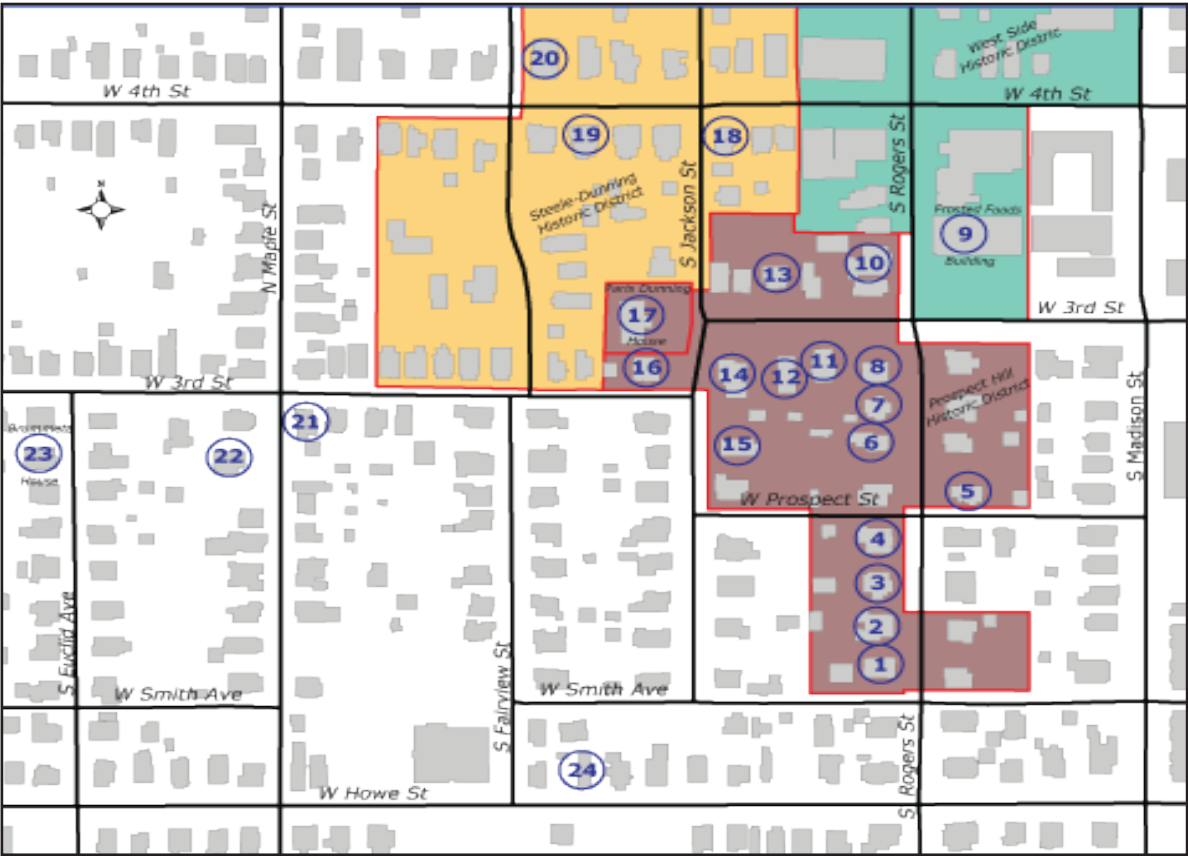


The Rogers Street neighborhood was developed as a prestigious upper middle class area bordered by workers’ cottages on the east, north, and later, west. It represents the only area developed as a professional residential neighborhood on the west side of town. The larger neighborhood was bordered on the west by the Monon Pond, once used as the city fairgrounds, the City graveyard (now Rose Hill Cemetery) and on the east by the levy. The levy famously housed Bloomington’s roistering saloons, houses of ill-repute and gambling venues.



The architecture of the Prospect Hill National Register District illustrates various “high styles” popular between 1890 and 1925, a time of growing affluence in Bloomington. Queen Anne, Free Classic and Period Revival style houses, some designed by prolific Bloomington architect John Nichols, are present. One small octagonal house on Rogers is a replica of Nichols’ studio, which was built and still stands on North College. Regionally important architects, Crapsey and Lamm, designed the home of Bloomington’s early druggist at 332 South Rogers. There are also several examples of vernacular style houses, two mid-nineteenth century houses with Greek Revival and Federal details, bungalows and American four-squares of the 1920s, including a splendid brick example of a Sears Catalogue home called “the Alhambra”.

This diverse group is a microcosm of Bloomington’s overall residential history. Several groceries, similar to the small brick storefront at 4th and Rogers, were once located throughout the neighborhood.



Prospect Hill Tour Sites

1. Harry F. Rogers House 346 South Rogers Street 1906

Harry Rogers operated a threshing machine for hire until switching to automotive repair. In 1926, he founded the Bloomington Garage at 6th and Madison, which is now a coop food market. The house is a unique example of the Elizabethan Revival style built in 1906. This house reflects the variety of styles that became popular nationwide following the Philadelphia Centennial Exposition in 1876. Note the classical porch columns and the use of stucco.



2. Buchanan House 344 South Rogers Street 1906

This bungalow was built by Mr. Buchanan, a local blacksmith who had a shop on Madison Street. Inside, there is lovely pecan surface molding and the floors are diagonally laid hardwood. The form, with the pyramidal roof extending over the porch, is called a western bungalow.



3. Sare House 334 South Rogers Street 1906

Thomas Sare, a local lawyer, built this Dutch Colonial Revival house. It has a large bay window, Palladian windows and a gambrel roof. Its floor plan is a variation of one found in John Nichols' catalog, indicating that he may have designed this house.



4. Wiles House 332 South Rogers Street ca. 1895

This Free Classic style house was designed by architects Crapsey and Lamm for Wood and Anna Wiles. Mr. Wiles was the proprietor of Wiles Drug Store, a long time presence on the east side of the square. Notice the unusual diagonal wood siding on the front and sides and the classical garlands and wreaths. The garage once housed the family horse and surrey.



5. Fulwider House 325 South Rogers Street ca. 1895

Built by the Fulwidars, who owned a lumberyard on Madison Street, this is a two-story Queen Anne with a gabled roof, several side porches and bay windows. The interior has been carefully restored and features a lovely cherry staircase and a parquet floor in the entry.



6. 316 South Rogers Street ca. 1895

Architect John Nichols designed this Queen Anne style house for Mr. and Mrs. Ira Dillman. It has double front gables, a steeply pitched roof and various textures on the facade. Stained glass decorates the front window and others around the porch. An original barn can still be found in the back yard.



7. 310 South Rogers Street 1906

John Nichols designed this quasi-elliptical house with diamond-paned windows for Narrie and David Stewart. The Free Classic style is evident in the pedimented front porch and dentiled frieze. The floor plan is similar to Nichols' own house at 820 North College Avenue.



8. 304 South Rogers Street 1897

Designed by John Nichols for William Fogg in the Free Classic style, the house retains many original features, inside and out. Notice the wraparound porch with Doric columns.



9. Frosted Foods Building 213 South Rogers Street ca. 1930

In 1995 the rehabilitation of this old sheet metal factory surprised everyone when it created a versatile community focal point. Prospect Hill would be a different place entirely without this distinctive building with its quirky grade, bowstring truss roof and steel ventilator windows. Since its rehabilitation it has been adapted as a furniture store, an upscale wine bar and a private school.



10. 218 South Rogers Street ca. 1840

This is one of Bloomington's earliest buildings. An underground creek flows on the south side of the house and a tombstone is rumored to be used as part of the foundation. Governor Paris Dunning signed the original deed after the property was purchased at a sheriff's sale. Several frame additions have been made to the rear of this brick house; the iron railings and roof of the front porch are also alterations to the original structure. This house is a traditional house type known as a Central Passage.



11. 511 West Third Street 1914

The stucco and pebble finish on the front gable of this classic example of a California Bungalow adds individuality to the design.



12. Mickey Burke House 515 West Third Street ca. 1906

This Free Classic style house was built for Mickey Burke, a conductor on the Monon Railroad. He and his wife had one child and lived in the house until Mr. Burke died in the late 1950s. This house is distinctive for its clipped gables.



13. 516 West Third Street 1936

This is the newest house built in the Prospect Hill Historic District. The distinctive iron fence was made by Austin Seward, an early Bloomington blacksmith and businessman, who is rumored to have made the fish weathervane on the Court-house dome. The fence is not original to the site.



14. 525 West Third Street 1903

Bay windows and stained glass add charm to this modified bungalow. The interior has been remodeled and substantial modifications have been made to the rear of the house. The house was built by lumberman Jessie Fulwider. He deeded it to his wife in 1923 for the consideration of "love and affection."



15. Tinker's Mansion 317 South Jackson Street ca. 1900

The outstanding feature of this turn-of-the-century house is the extraordinary mansard roof. The house was built by Al Hayes, a tinsmith, who applied the decorative pressed metal sheets and baroque window heads. A narrow veranda wraps around three sides of the house. In the rear is a small, separate building constructed in the 1920s to isolate and provide fresh-air therapy for a family member who suffered from tuberculosis.



16. 610 West Third Street ca. 1920

The basic American Four-square form is embellished here with Mission Revival style parapets and is built of brown brick with limestone trim. The design is identical to the "Alhambra," a house kit available from Sears, Roebuck and Company in the 1920s. Notice the matching garage at the rear. The house "Already Cut" cost \$3134.00 and this included "a built-in ironing board, concealed by a panel door." The sun room had two sets of french doors and a window seat. Light and ventilation were a priority in more urban areas and became a marketing tool through Sears and Roebuck advertising copy.



17. Governor Paris Dunning House 608 West Third Street ca. 1845

This elegant early brick building combines elements of the Federal and Greek Revival styles. The house was individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places and completely restored in the 1980s. The house was built around 1845, and owned for some years by Paris Dunning, who served as an Indiana state representative and senator, president of the state senate, lieutenant governor and governor. He was also president of Indiana University's board of trustees.



18. 521 West Fourth Street ca. 1898.

Once a very common form, the double pen is represented by at least four examples in Prospect Hill. This Fourth Street house is a saddlebag form with the two rooms placed on either side of a central chimney. There are three double pen houses that show evidence of being moved to their current locations in Prospect Hill. This is a very early vernacular form that is difficult to date with any precision. This cottage illustrates Queen Anne style.



19. 613 West Fourth Street ca. 1910

This is one of a row of three nearly identical T-Plan cottages with Free Classic styling. These homes were built by the Henry Steele family (later owners of the Dunning property) as speculative housing. Two are duplexes. Using complex massing, pedimented gables and Tuscan columns, the buildings retain their residential character.



20. 620 West Fourth Street 1904

This pyramidal cottage with a chamfered bay window and a wrap-around porch was literally resurrected from ruins. Its restoration catalyzed an interest in this part of Prospect Hill. The house was later added to the National Register of Historic Places as part of the Steele-Dunning District in 2000.



21. Neal House 731 West Third Street ca. 1890

A perfect jewel box of Queen Anne details on a vernacular gabled ell house, this corner property has unique wooden bracketed awnings and a mansard porch roof. The exuberant carpenter's details in the siding and the shadow box gable ornament make this house notable.



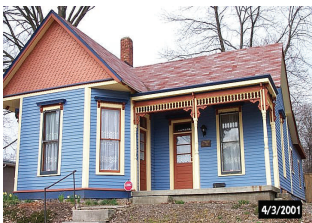
22. Hughes-Branum House 308 South Maple Street ca. 1860

Originally on almost 20 acres, this early house was owned by Judge John Hughes. The land was later developed by the Showers Brothers, who subdivided in 1893. The house is one of very few remaining properties in Bloomington in the Gothic Revival style with the decorative verges intact.



23. Brummett House 312 South Euclid Avenue 1895.

This house is named for its longest tenant, Christopher Brummett, who was a carpenter by trade. The house illustrates classic Queen Anne style on a modest house form. The corbeled window hoods and fish scale shingling are typical of larger houses on North Washington Street, but relatively rare in the west side.



24. 618 West Howe Street ca. 1900

The shotgun form is another early vernacular house type, similar to the double pen in its perennial adaptability. The shotgun was indigenous to the south during the late nineteenth century. In Bloomington several of these homes survive in working class neighborhoods on the west side. The house is one room wide and at least two deep. There are many theories about the genesis of this house form. Some consider it associated with Haitian immigrants, others think it is simply a hall and parlor turned sideways on a narrow urban lot.



Please respect the privacy of the owners by viewing all listed buildings from the street.