

2002

House and Garden Walk



Saturday, September 14, 2002

Presented By
Logan Square Preservation

① 2954 W. Logan Boulevard (1st & 2nd floors)



Edward LaBelle designed this 3-flat apartment building in 1906 for August Buechner, a foreman for a local construction company. The architectural styles include Beaux Arts interspersed with Arts and Crafts and Prairie style influences. Notice the large second floor porch with French doors leading into the apartment. In 1976 when a young man bought this building, the brick was black. He had it cleaned and soon the color lightened to brown and then to tan. Sixty years worth of coal soot suddenly disappeared. In

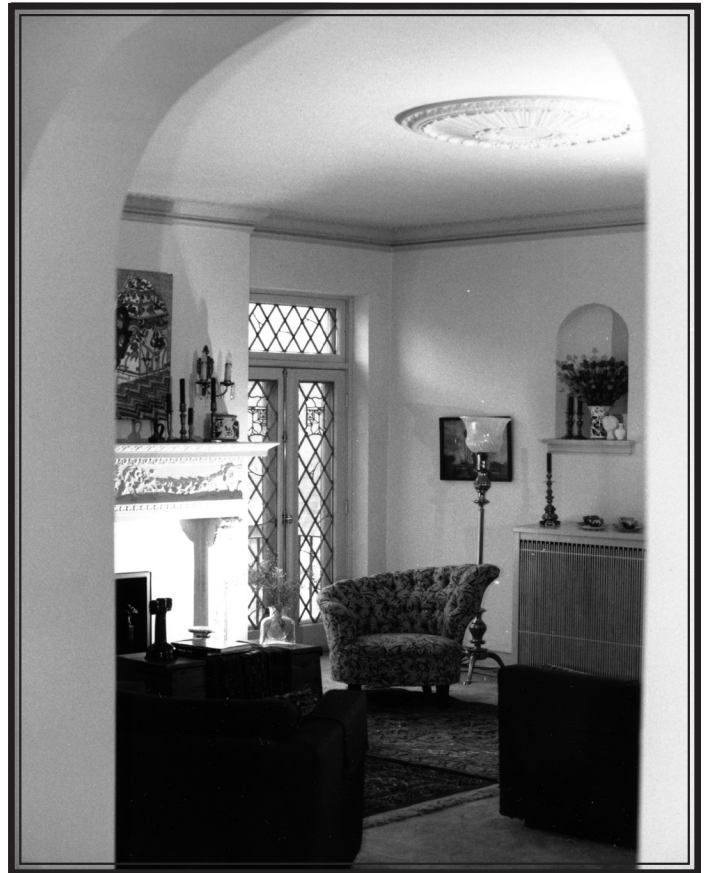
1980 the three apartments were sold as condos, but last year the present owners repurchased all three condos and are returning the building to its original design.

Visitors will tour both the ground and second floors, which were gutted by fire 20 years ago. Although the interiors of the two floors are new, they demonstrate a combination of restoration and modernization techniques into one combined apartment.

② 2954 W. Logan Boulevard (3rd floor)

This is the most original of the apartments since it was not destroyed in the fire. Notice the ornate plasterwork, especially the fireplace and ceiling ornamentation. On either side of the fireplace are leaded glass French doors. A sun porch extends the entire width of the building on the front and provides winter light for plants, since it faces south. In any season, it provides a wonderful view of historic Logan Boulevard.

Portions of the woodwork have been restored, including the oak trim in the dining room. Note the original butler's pantry on your way to the kitchen. The only room that is totally original is the den with an original ceiling and light fixture.



③ 2954 W. Logan Boulevard (garden deck on roof of the garage)



This garden deck built on a garage demonstrates how an additional living area can be added to a previously unusable outdoor space. In order to support the tremendous weight of a landscaped garden, the structure had to be strong, constructed of steel I-beams and heavy timbers to support the roof.



Proper drainage is required for summer gardening and weather protection and moisture conservation is essential for over-wintering garden plants.

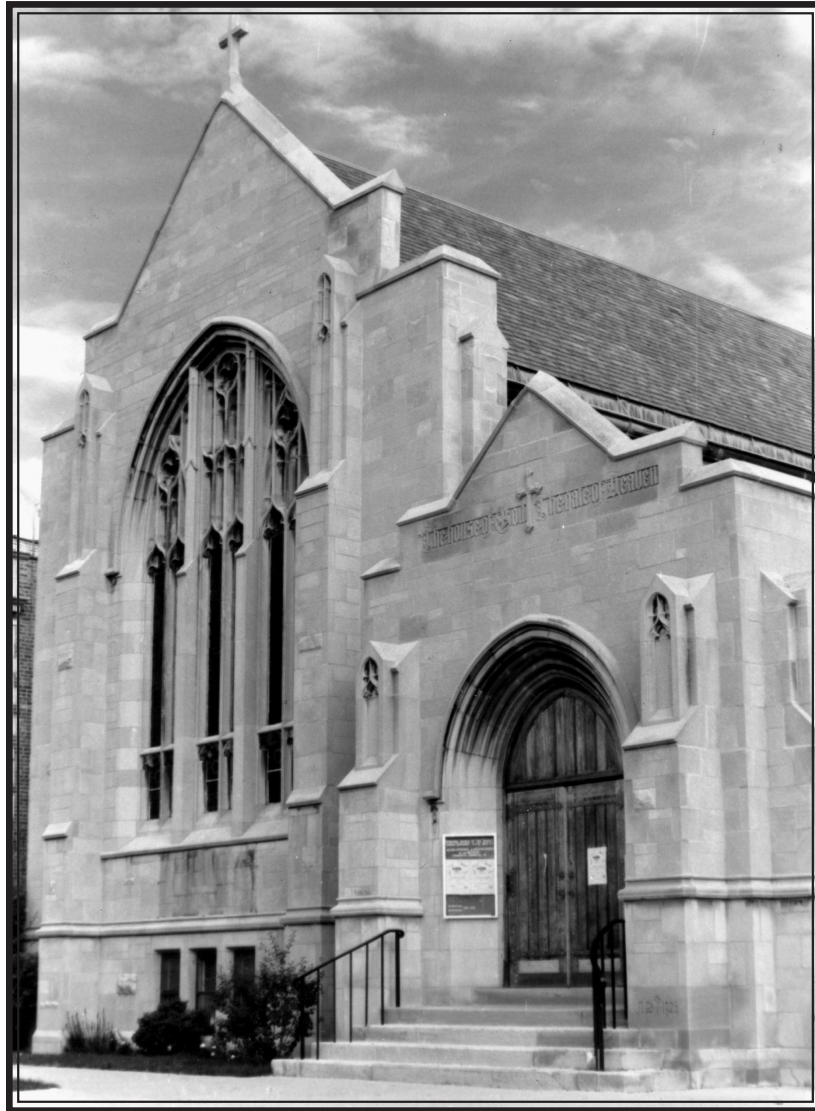


④ 2900 W. Logan Boulevard (Episcopal Church of the Advent)

In 1905, ground was broken for the original church which is now the parish hall with its entrance on Francisco. On March 4, 1912, the Advent was organized as a parish. By Christmas 1913, the mortgage had been paid in full. From 1914 to 1916, however, attendance dropped off sharply and indebtedness increased to \$6,000. For this

reason, the Vestry petitioned the Bishop to be allowed to revert back to mission status.

Instead, on January 1, 1917 the Bishop appointed Rev. Gerald Gratten Moore to take charge of the parish, and soon after people began to return. Over the next four years, the debt had been erased and a building fund was begun. By 1926, \$30,000 had accumulated in this fund and on November 28, the corner-



stone of the present neo-Gothic church was laid.

The architect for both parts of the building was Elmer C. Jensen, an active member of the congregation and a well-known Chicago architect. By January 1927, steel trusses were in place, and March saw the roof completed, with the opening and dedication of the new church on Oc-

tober 17, 1927. Due to the Depression, it was not until May, 1937, that the beautiful stone altar and reredos were dedicated. Finally, forty-five years into the parish life, on June 9, 1946, the church was consecrated. The original design included a steeple on top of the corner tower but this was later eliminated due to costs.

⑤ 2850 W. Logan Boulevard



This Prairie-style home was originally built by a physician for his medical office. The waiting room and examination rooms occupied the first floor and the family's living quarters were on the second floor. The house is unusual because it sits on two full city lots and is set back from the other homes, creating a large front yard. In the rear is a coach house that is heated and equipped with water for cleaning the coach. Notice that both the house and the coach house have eyebrow windows in the attics.

Originally the roofs of both the home and the coach house were covered with Vermont semi-weathering green slate, known for its durability and longevity. In fact the original roof on the house lasted until the 1960s when it needed some minor repairs. Instead of repairing broken slate, the owners were convinced by a persuasive roofer that removing the slate and replacing it with cheaper asphalt shingles was appropriate. At that time, the coach house roof was repaired using good slate from the house and that roof lasted until this year. Also the original copper gutters and downspouts were replaced with cheaper galvanized metal in the 1960s.

This year since both the roof and gutters were

showing their age and had to be replaced, the owners wanted to restore the original materials. Of course this decision was difficult because slate is more expensive than shingle and copper costs more than galvanized metal. They found to their amazement that although the materials cost more, the labor is similar. It costs just as much to install galvanized metal gutters as it does to install copper. Copper has an advantage because it does not have to be painted, lasts much longer and eventually develops a pleasant green patina oxidation. Over time it may even save time and money.

Removing the old roof, making necessary wood repairs and preparing the surface with waterproof felt and ice shield (see figure at top left and bottom left on page 7) costs the same regardless of the final covering material. The installation cost of slate is similar to heavy duty, 30 year simulated slate shingles, but it is guaranteed for 60 years and can last much longer.

A Docent will demonstrate how slate and copper are installed and answer questions about approximate costs. This is an excellent example of restoration rather than rehabilitation.

Visitors can handle a piece of slate used on this



Tar paper and ice shield are installed on the wooden roof.



Slate and copper are applied over the tar paper.

house in May of this year. It is quarried in Vermont and it is called semi-weathering green slate, because it contains traces of iron and over the years some of the pieces will weather to a brownish-green color, creating the typical alternating color we recognize in historic buildings. Slate is quarried in large blocks using carbide saws, but the final pieces are split apart by hand using a cold chisel and hammer. This is one of the old professions that still exists. Two holes are drilled in the top of each piece and two copper nails hold it in place. Each tile is overlapped to make it watertight. Although rain will run between two tiles, it hits the face of the tile below and therefore rolls on down the roof. Copper flashing is placed around the chimney and along walls to insure watertight fittings. Of course, slate cannot be placed on every roof, since

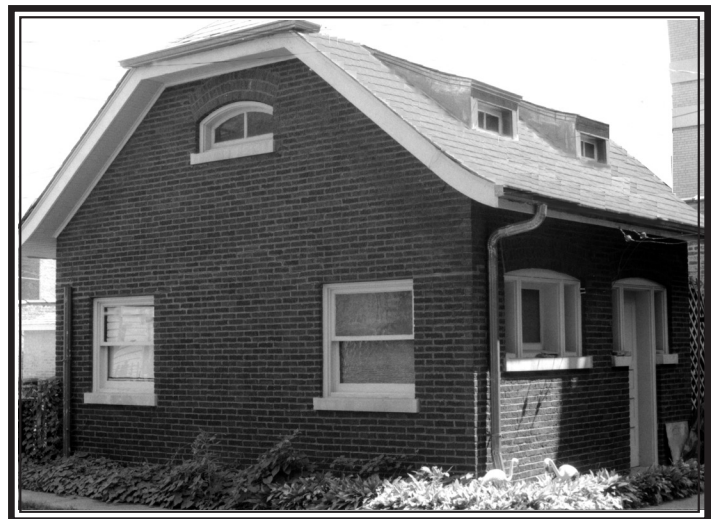
the heavy weight of the stone requires a specifically designed structure.

You may feel a piece of the copper gutter that was installed on this house in May. This is 16-ounce copper and should last 50 years or longer. The cost of installing copper is the same as galvanized metal, although the material cost is slightly higher. A 10-foot piece of copper downspout costs \$30 verses \$20 for galvanized metal.

The cost of the slate for the house, the large porch and the coach house was \$19,000. Costs of the copper for cladding the eyebrow windows, gutters and downspouts on the house, porch and coach house was \$10,000. Labor for all the work was about \$40,000.



Tar paper and ice shield are installed on the coach house.



Finished slate and copper roof on the coach house.

⑥ 2656 W. Logan Boulevard

As one of the oldest houses on Logan Boulevard, this typical farmhouse (see figure at right) was built in 1885. At that time anyone who wanted a wooden building had to build outside the city limits of Chicago, since a law prohibiting wood construction was passed after the great fire in 1871. It is designed in the Italianate style, including a gently sloping hip roof, wide eaves, bays and round-headed windows.

A flat rectangular area on the roof supports a widow's walk. Many such homes also had a cupola or observatory, but we have no evidence in this house. Several



years ago when the siding was in need of repair, the owner opted for a brick facade. (See figure at left)

This house is affectionately known as the “Halloween House” in October and the “Christmas House” in December, because of its extensive decorations. It is often featured on the nightly news as one of the “must” houses to see at Christmas.

The interior has many of the original features. Furnishings reflect the owner's extensive travels to Europe. The kitchen and bathrooms have all been modernized and include a master bath with a unique separate shower room with seven showerheads.

⑦ 2845 W. Logan Boulevard

In 1901, this residence was built for George Seaverns, President of Seaverns Elevator Company. He also built the homes on either side (2843 and 2849). This house was built as a typical Chicago 2-flat greystone, but since it sat on the boulevard, the front facade was more ornate than a similar house on a

side street. Rusticated limestone alternating with bands of smooth limestone at the window heads and sills is topped by a dentil cornice across the first floor and porch. A Gothic peak with a checkerboard pattern of smooth and rusticated stone tops the facade.

The interior has recently been converted from two apartments to a single family home, using restoration techniques that followed both



local and state preservation guidelines. Since Logan Boulevard is a national historic district there are some tax incentives to restore rather than rehab historic buildings.

Although the house was largely gutted, architectural moldings and fixtures were painstakingly removed, labeled, stripped and rein-

stalled. Where original woodwork was missing, newly milled moldings were created or vintage-style pieces were purchased to match the originals.

The kitchen maintains its historic feeling with a tin ceiling and warm wood finishing but it is modernized to be functional in the 21st century.

⑧ 3023 W. Logan Boulevard

This 1915 building is typical of the grand apartment life-style on the boulevards at the turn-of-the-century. Notice the formal entrance with carved limestone Ionic Greek columns with volutes and egg and dart capitals and a shield over the doorway. Balconies were important, especially on hot summer days. As you enter, note the ceramic tile inlaid floors in both entry halls. Also as you climb the stairs to the second floor note the skylight that illuminates the staircase.

Living room: This apartment has been completely restored. The owner removed the old plaster walls down to the studs, but kept the original woodwork. Any missing pieces were remilled. The fireplace and side bookcases are original, although the glass doors are missing. Walk into the front bay and notice the wonderful view of the historic boulevard. There is a small porch just large enough for two people.

As you walk down the hallway, look into the master bedroom on the left. The master bathroom is on the right.



The original bathtub was re-enameled recently, but the new toilet and sink are reproductions. Finally on the left is the guest bedroom.

Dining room:

This formal dining room originally was used by the family for all meals. Only the maid would have used the kitchen. Although not original, the chandelier is similar to what may have been here. It was a “find” of the present tenants.

The doorway into the kitchen originally had a swinging door. The kitchen was the domain of the maid, so the family probably never went past that door. The maid lived in the back bedroom with her own personal bathroom. Notice the unusual shape of the kitchen due to the angled street in back. When you are finished looking please exit through the back door, walk down to the main level and turn left back to Sacramento Avenue.



Gardens

A - 3024 W. Logan Boulevard: Starting point for the walk. Corner lot with original wrought iron fence. Flowerbeds and ornamental trees accent the front, side and back.

B - 2954 W. Logan Boulevard: (Also listed as #3 building) Clever garden deck built over a garage. Secrets of how to reinforce the structure will be revealed.

C - 2630 N. Richmond Avenue: Backyard garden highlighted by a grapevine covered pergola and flagstone patio.

D - 2740 N. Richmond Avenue: A “recycled” stone patio designed by the owner is the center of a pleasing mix of annuals, herbs and perennials.

E - 2746 N. Richmond: City of Chicago award-winning backyard garden featuring a Koi pond, garden art, decks and many interesting plants.

F - 2656 W. Logan Boulevard: A bright array of annuals and roses decorate the large corner lot around the “Christmas House.” Enter at side or front gate.

G - 2447 N. Fairfield Avenue: Two backyards were combined to create this special space which includes a water garden.

H - 2845 W. Logan Boulevard: A professionally designed front garden with plants selected for color and hardiness. Note its “twin” next door also with a semicircular flower bed.

I - 2533 N. Sacramento Avenue: The “Neighbors Garden” maintained beautifully by volunteers, focuses this year on native plants, ornamental grasses and colorful perennials.

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No smoking or pets in gardens. Stay on walkways or designated lawn areas. Do not touch flowers, foliage or garden property. Please do not ask to use private bathrooms. Children must be closely supervised.

