



HISTORIC KENOSHA

Third Avenue Historic District

The Third Avenue Historic District is Kenosha's early twentieth century "mansion" district, consisting primarily of large period revival homes on lots that sit along the picturesque Lake Michigan shore. Not only is the architecture of the district important, but the Kemper Center complex contributes significantly to the history of education in the community, and many prominent industrialists made this district their home.

Most of the land now occupied by the Third Avenue Historic District was part of the real estate holdings of Charles Durkee. Charles Durkee, a New Englander, arrived in the newly founded settlement of Pike Creek (later Southport, then Kenosha) in 1836 and eventually owned large tracts of land in the southern portion of the community. Part of the land that forms Library Park was donated by Durkee for an English type commons. (*See Library Park Historic District.*) Durkee was active in business in the community and had a long political career, eventually serving in the U.S. Senate.

An 1882 bird's eye view shows that at that time the Third Avenue Historic District was settled much as it is today, except that most of the buildings existing in 1882 no longer exists. There was a residential redevelopment of the district at the turn of the century beginning with some transitional Queen Anne Colonial Revival homes built between 1899 and 1905, the oldest of which is the **George A. Yule House, 6300 Third Avenue**, built in 1899. The development of the district as a prestigious home for Kenosha's most prominent families began at this time.

Many of the homes in the district were designed by regionally important architects. Richard Philip was responsible for the outstanding Tudor Revival **Alford House, 6315 Third Avenue**. Philip was a Milwaukee native whose most noted work in Wisconsin is Riverbend, the Walter J. Kohler estate in Kohler. Max Dunning was responsible for the design of the fine Georgian Revival **Eugene Head House, 6348 Third Avenue**, and the very eclectic revival **Fred H. Carpenter House, 6318 Third Avenue**. Dunning was born in Kenosha and studied at the University of Wisconsin. Pond and Pond of Chicago was the most prolific architectural firm in the district. They were responsible for some of the largest homes in the district including the **Yule House, 6300 Third Avenue**, the **Jeffery Nash House, 6221 Third Avenue**, the **Allen House, 6305 Third Avenue**, and the **Wilson House, 6536 Third Avenue**. The firm was made up of brothers Irving K. Pond and Allen B. Pond. The architecture of the Third Avenue Historic District reflects the people who developed the neighborhood in the early twentieth century. They indicated through their homes that they were conservative and upper class while still being fashionable.

The Third Avenue District as a whole was the residential area of choice for many of Kenosha's most important industrialists and their families in the early twentieth century. In 1890, the major manufacturing firms in Kenosha were Simmons Manufacturing Company, Bain Wagon Works, N.R. Allen & Sons Tannery, Pettit Malting Company, and Chicago Brass Company. By 1920, the major manufacturing firms were Nash Motor Company, Simmons Manufacturing Company, American (Chicago) Brass Company, Allen-A Company (Black Cat Textiles Co.), N.R. Allen & Sons Tannery, and Cooper Underwear Company. Between 1910 and 1920, Nash Motor Company emerged in Kenosha as the major employer, overtaking Simmons Company. Throughout Kenosha's history of industrial growth, employment was largely concentrated in a small number of firms.

There are three individually significant industrialists associated with two properties in the district: **Charles Jeffery** and **Charles W. Nash, 6221 Third Avenue**, and **Charles C. Allen, 6331 Third Avenue**. The Nash Motor Company had its beginnings in the Thomas B. Jeffery Company, founded in 1900 to make automobiles. In 1915, Charles W. Nash purchased the company. It merged with the Kelvinator Company in 1937. The company merged with the French automaker, Renault, in 1979 and was acquired by the Chrysler Corporation in 1987. Daimler-Benz AG and Chrysler merged in 1998, and today is known as DaimlerChrysler.

Charles C. Allen took over the Allen-A Company in 1912, becoming president and general manager. A hosiery manufacturer, the company was an important employer and manufacturer in the 1910s and 1920s. A devastating strike and the depression of the 1930s spelled doom for the plant.

Some other important industrialists included **George A. Yule, 6300 Third Avenue**, the son of George Yule, who took over the Bain Wagon Works after Edward Bain's death. **Walter J. Frost, 6408 Third Avenue**, was president of the Frost Manufacturing Company between 1910 and the 1930s. The Frost Manufacturing Company specialized in plumbing supplies and other brass goods. The Vincent-McCall Company, a producer of furniture springs, developed as an adjunct to the Simmons Company. **Roger Kimball, 6331 Third Avenue**, purchased an interest in the Allen-A Company in 1916 and became vice-president and general manager. **James Anderson, 121 - 66th Street**, was an executive with the American Brass Company.

Also lending importance to the district is the existence of the Kemper Center complex. Kemper Center began as an Episcopal girls' school called Kemper Hall. Kemper Hall provided young women with a private

education that was distinguished in the Midwest. In 1865, the Episcopal Church decided to locate a girls' school in Kenosha. First known as St. Clare's Hall or Academy, it acquired the Charles Durkee house and some of the grounds for its location. The first class graduated in 1874. For the early years of the school, it was under the direction of an Episcopal priest and was noted for its emphasis on scholarship. In 1878, the church decided to operate the school under the direction of the Sisters of St. Mary, an Episcopalian order. Under their care, Kemper Hall maintained its reputation as a leading private school in the region and drew students from both local families and other areas of the country. It was operated as both a day school and a boarding school, and many prominent women traced their education back to Kemper Hall. Kemper Hall closed in 1975. The complex was later acquired by Kenosha County and is currently used for both public and private purposes.

Finally, the overall appearance of the Third Avenue Historic District is of upper-class ambiance. The natural boundary of Lake Michigan to the east as well as the unusually large setbacks of the houses give the district part of its attractiveness. The district was developed as a prestigious residential neighborhood in the early twentieth century, and the prominent families, along with Kemper Hall, occupied their mansion-like homes in the district until recent years. Currently, many of the homes are still maintained by single families; however, prohibitive upkeep costs of some of the largest mansions has resulted in alternative uses.



**#1 KEMPER HALL
(Kemper Center)**

Kemper Hall was the most significant private school in the community in the late nineteenth and much of the twentieth century. It began as an Episcopal girls' boarding school in 1865. Because of

financial pressures, it closed in 1975. The complex is now owned by Kenosha County and is operated by Kemper Center, Inc. The grounds remain in a park-like state, and the buildings are used for various public and private purposes. Several of the buildings are executed in the Gothic Revival style; the connecting wings of the complex continue the Gothic theme. It was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1976.



**#2 CHARLES DURKEE HOUSE
(Senator Charles Durkee Mansion)
6501 Third Avenue
Kemper Center Grounds
(1861, 1871) Italianate**

The earliest structure of the Kemper Hall complex, the

Durkee Mansion is a two-story Italianate house built of cream brick and topped with a low-pitched hipped roof. Large window openings are decorated with round brick arches that extend down to form window surrounds. Wide eaves form an arch on the front of the house and make a gable above the projecting pavilion of the south side of the house. The north side of the house features a two-story polygonal bay window. In 1865, East Hall was built and in 1871, a connecting addition was added to the rear of the building. Between 1874 and 1975, the classes of the Kemper Hall girls' school placed datestones into the walls of the house.

Charles Durkee arrived in Kenosha in 1836 and eventually owned large tracts of land in the southern end of the settlement. He was a prominent early resident who served in the U.S. House of Representatives between 1849 and 1853 and the U.S. Senate between 1855 and 1861. After Durkee left Kenosha in 1865 to become Governor of the Territory of Utah, the home was acquired for the girls' school.



**#3 ST. MARY'S CHAPEL
Kemper Center Grounds
(1875) Gothic Revival**

This Gothic Revival chapel is built of cream brick and decorated with light stone window trim and red brick string courses and window moldings. It has a steeply-pitched roof with gables, wall buttresses, Gothic arched openings, and a polygonal vestibule. A large rose window above the vestibule decorates the front gable. Remodeling in 1906-1908 removed the original bell tower and added stone coping on the front gable and a bapistry to the vestibule.



**#4 CONVENT
Kemper Center Grounds
(1911) Gothic**

Now called Ambrose Hall, the last major building constructed for the Kemper Hall complex was this three-story cream brick Gothic convent completed in 1911.

The building has a steeply-pitched hipped roof and three gables on the front facade. Two-story bays project from the front facade and flank the front entry porch. A connecting wing between the convent and the chapel was also built at this time and is a five bay brick structure with a flat roof and gothic-arched windows.



**#5 HAROLD W. JEFFERY HOUSE
6331 Third Avenue
(1909) Georgian Revival**

Formal, classical details highlight this red brick, two-story building with a rectangular plan.

Extending from the main block of the house is a south wing and

to the north projects an entrance gateway through which vehicles can be driven, topped with a sunroom. Brick pilasters are placed at the corners of the house and also define the shallow entry pavilion. The entry pavilion is topped by a pediment, and the main entrance is flanked with sidelights and decorated with a fanlight. Identical windows are symmetrically placed on the front of the house. On the first floor, the windows appear in a semi-circular reveal. A classically appointed piazza graces the front entrance.

This house was built for Harold W. Jeffery, vice-president of the Jeffery Company, an automobile and truck manufacturer that was later purchased by Charles Nash.



#6 W.H. ALFORD HOUSE
6315 Third Avenue
(1928-1930) Tudor Revival

Built for \$350,000 between 1928 and 1930, this fine Tudor Revival house is a red brick, two and one-half story building with a slate tile gable roof. The entry pavilion is constructed of

stone and topped with battlements. The tudor-arched entrance is decorated with stone label molding and a stone surround; above the entrance is an oriel window trimmed in stone. Multi-paned, casement-type windows are decorated with label moldings and tabbed stone surrounds. There is a two-story tower section at the northwest corner of the main block of the house. Richard Philip was the architect for the Alford House.

Walter H. Alford was vice-president of the Nash Motor Company when he began construction on the home. He was President of the city council and promoted the 1925 city plan that brought about the development of the Civic Center concept.



#7 CHARLES CHESTER ALLEN HOUSE
6305 Third Avenue
(1903) Georgian Revival

The home of Charles Chester Allen is a two and one-half story red brick Georgian Revival building

featuring a gable-roofed main section with two slightly recessed gable-roofed wings. Two gable-roofed dormers project from the main section roof. The front of the building is highlighted by a grand entry pavilion which is supported by paired Ionic columns. The actual entrance of the house has side windows and a jack arch. Above the entrance is a small balcony with a simple balustrade. A plain, but prominent cornice unites the main block with its end wings. Pond and Pond were the architects for this house.

Charles Chester Allen was the son of Charles W. Allen of N.R. Allen & Sons Tannery, one of Kenosha's largest industries at the turn of the century. Charles C. Allen was at first involved with the tannery, then later became head of the Chicago-Kenosha Hosiery Company.



#8 CHARLES JEFFERY HOUSE
6221 Third Avenue
(1904) Eclectic Revival

This two and one-half story red brick house is an eclectic period revival design that expresses no particular

architectural style, but does have some classical details. The building has a main block with a projecting end pavilion on the south side of the house. Symmetrically placed dormers project from the steeply-pitched gable roof. The large expanses of brick walls are punctuated by double-hung sash windows of varying sizes and multiple panes. A second story bay covered with pressed metal projects from the front. Pond and Pond served as architects for the Jeffery house.

Charles T. Jeffery, the first owner of the house, was the son of Thomas B. Jeffery, who founded the Jeffery Company in 1900. The Jeffery Company manufactured automobiles and trucks and was later purchased by Charles Nash. Nash purchased the Jeffery House along with the company.



#9 LUTHER WHITNEY HOUSE
6104 Third Avenue
(1850) Greek Revival

This Greek Revival house is a painted brick two-story block with a south ell. The original one-story ell had a second story frame gambrel-roof addition added probably in the

early twentieth century. The only decorations on the hipped-roof building are a plain frieze, a simple cornice, and an entrance with narrow sidelights. Windows are simple sashes with lintels and stone sills.

Luther Whitney arrived in Kenosha in 1837. He was Treasurer of the City of Kenosha from 1848 to 1850 and helped organize the First Congregational Church in 1858.



#10 MYRON BAKER HOUSE
6110 Third Avenue
(1900) Georgian Revival

This Georgian Revival brick house is two stories in height with a hipped roof and features a scrolled broken pediment at the centered entrance portico.

Myron Baker was an attorney. He served as District Attorney in Kenosha for 12 years, and was also a Circuit Court Commissioner. The house was subsequently owned by Gilbert Lance, who was associated with the Simmons Company and Cooper International.



#11 SAMUEL REYNOLDS HOUSE
6126 Third Avenue
(1902) Queen Anne

This two-story red brick house is a late version of the Queen Anne style. The main block has several projections that add asymmetry to the

design. The central dormer, projecting from the steeply-pitched hipped roof, features a segmental pediment. Windows are simple sashes, and between the second floor windows is a decorative oval opening highlighted with tabs. A full front porch with simple columns covers the front of the building.

The house was built for Samuel Reynolds, as assistant superintendent of the Bain Wagon Works.



#12 RALPH COOPER HOUSE
6130 Third Avenue
(1947) Tudor Revival

This one and one-half story brick house was built in 1947. The house has multiple broad gables ornamented with beadwork moldings, corbelled

brickwork, and stone accents at the main entrance and elsewhere.



#13 GEORGE A. PUGH HOUSE
6208 Third Avenue
(1904) Late Queen Anne

This is a two and one-half story frame house with a wide central dormer, a two-story corner bay, and a simple porch with a denticulated cornice.

Dr. Pugh opened his practice in Kenosha in 1902.



#14 THOMAS DONLEY HOUSE
6214 Third Avenue
(1902) Late Queen Anne

This two and one-half story frame house has a wide two-story bay, a hipped roof with hip-roof dormers, and wide eaves with simple modillions suggesting beam ends.

Thomas Donley was an executive of the N.R. Allen & Sons Tannery for almost fifty years.



#15 ADOLPH EPSTEIN HOUSE
6220 Third Avenue
(1924) Georgian Revival

This two and one-half story Georgian Revival brick house has a gable roof supporting three small pedimented dormers with pilasters.

Surrounding the entrance are side windows and an elliptical fan window.

Adolph Epstein, a native of Russia, settled in Kenosha in 1898. He established a men's clothing store, J. Gottlieb and Company, which later became Epstein Brothers.



#16 GEORGE YULE HOUSE
6300 Third Avenue
(1899) Colonial Revival

This two-story red brick house is primarily a Colonial Revival design, but the two-story projecting bays on each end of the front facade are

from the Queen Anne era. It has a steeply-pitched gable roof with returned eaves and an elliptical window over the front door. A brick and concrete porch leads to the main entrance. The house has been altered in recent years, including an addition to the north end of the building. Architects were Pond and Pond.

This house was built for the family of George A. Yule, son of industrialist George Yule. George A. Yule was an executive in the Bain Wagon Works and president of the Badger Press Company.



#17 EDWARD F. ROWELL HOUSE
6312 Third Avenue
(1911) Georgian Revival

The Rowell house is a simple version of the Georgian Revival style, but features the prominent entry pavilion common to the style. The

two-story red brick house has a steeply-pitched gable roof and end wall chimneys. Paired brick pilasters decorate the corners of the house and single brick pilasters define the very shallow entry pavilion. Partial pilasters with stone stops flank the main entrance, which features narrow sidelights. Above the main entrance is a sash window under a semi-circular reveal.

Edward Rowell built this house on the site of his old house in 1911 and lived there until 1925.



#18 FRED W. CARPENTER HOUSE
6318 Third Avenue
(1915) Eclectic Revival

Chicago architect Max Dunning designed this two and one-half story house of eclectic design. The house features a segmentally-arched entrance porch, a tall central bay/dormer, and a variety of window shapes and surface materials. There is clapboard siding on the first floor with shingles above.

Fred Carpenter was vice-president of the First National Bank of Chicago.



#19 COLE-THIERS HOUSE
6324 Third Avenue
(1909) Georgian Revival

This two-story Georgian Revival red brick house feature a steeply-pitched gable roof and parapeted end walls. Dominating the front of the

house is an unusual portico over the front entrance which is decorated with sidelights and an elliptically-arched fanlight. The portico is supported by paired Corinthian columns. Three dormers project from the roof to the front of the house. Windows on the front facade are symmetrically placed.

This house was constructed for Allen Cole, a clerk with the N.R. Allen & Sons Tannery, but he only lived there a short time. It then became the home of Edward C. Thiers, an executive with the same company.



#20 ALEXANDER B. McCALL HOUSE
6334 Third Avenue
(1922) Spanish Colonial Revival

An example of the Spanish Colonial Revival style; the two-story frame stuccoed house has a basic rectangular

plan with an extension at the northwest corner and a one-story sun room on the south. Windows are placed fairly symmetrically on the building and decorated with non-functioning shutters. Two outstanding features of the house include the finely maintained red tile hipped roof and the elaborate cast stone surround of the portal leading to the entrance.

Alexander B. McCall came to Kenosha in 1908 from Chicago, where he had lived since 1885. From the 1920s through the 1940s, he was a top executive with the Vincent-McCall Company, a manufacturer of furniture springs.



#21 WILLIAM J. BERMINGHAM HOUSE
6342 Third Avenue
(1910) Prairie

This two-story red brick house has horizontal lines that suggest the prairie style of architecture. The building features a low-pitched hipped roof with

projecting central hipped roof dormer. A smooth stone surround decorates the front entrance. Windows are largely symmetrically placed small square sashes.

The house was built for William J. Bermingham, owner and president of the Bermingham Lumber Company in Kenosha.



#22 EUGENE HEAD HOUSE
6348 Third Avenue
(1913) Georgian Revival

This two-story red brick Georgian Revival house features a steeply-pitched gable roof and three dormers projecting from the front

facade. The flat arches of the first and second story windows extend across the front facade to form belt courses. Dominating the front is the entry portico covering an entrance decorated with sidelights. The semi-circular portico is supported by four Tuscan columns. Above the portico is a classical balustrade that creates a balcony. The architect was H. Max Dunning.

Eugene Head was the owner of the Telegraph Courier, Kenosha's oldest weekly newspaper, and the Kenosha News, the current daily newspaper for Kenosha.



#23 EMORY GRANT HOUSE
6402 Third Avenue
(1920-1921) Colonial Revival

This two and one-half story Colonial Revival frame house has dormers with round-arched windows and decoratively carved moldings

above and below windows on its principal facade.

Emory Grant was Mayor of Kenosha from 1886 to 1887, served as Superintendent of city schools, and was president of Kenosha Lumber.



#24 WALTER J. FROST HOUSE
6408 Third Avenue
(1913) Colonial Revival

Built in simple Colonial Revival style, the Frost house is a two-story frame building with a steeply-pitched gable roof,

projecting shed-roofed dormers, and symmetrically placed windows. The main entrance features a fine fanlight and is covered by a simple gable-roofed porch supported by two square columns. There is a one-story sun room on the south facade of the building.

The house was built for Walter J. Frost of the Frost Manufacturing Company, an important industry in twentieth century Kenosha.



#25 JAMES T. WILSON HOUSE
6536 Third Avenue
(1926) French Renaissance Revival

Formerly known as the "Manor House," this two and one-half story red brick French Renaissance

Revival residence has a large rectangular central block with slightly projecting end pavilions creating a U-shape. Three dormers project from the slate tiled hipped roof. The entry pavilion is constructed of a tower-like stone frontispiece, decorated with crests above triple windows marking the master bedroom on the second story. A single oak door is the main entry. The raised foundation is of stone ashlar. A small wing on the north end of the rear facade houses a garage with servants' quarters over-head. Pond and Pond were the architects.

James T. Wilson was an executive and later chairman of the board of the Nash Motor Company, Kenosha's most important industry in the twentieth century. The building was also listed individually on the National Register of Historic Places in 1975.



#26 JAMES & JANET ANDERSON HOUSE
121 – 66th Street
(1929-1931) French Period Revival

This two-story stucco and stone house, a slightly different interpretation of the French Period Revival style, features a main block

with two slightly projecting end pavilions and a garage wing on the west facade. The main block features a steeply-pitched hipped roof, while the end pavilions have a hip on mansard roof. Large stone chimneys project from the roof in several locations. Prominent stone corner quoins, stone bands, and stone segmental arches over openings on the first floor decorate the house. The main entrance is recessed behind a portal decorated with a stone surround and keystone. Milman and Morphet served as architects.

James Anderson was an executive of the American Brass Company, one of Kenosha's important twentieth century industries. The building is currently owned by Kenosha County and operates as The Anderson Arts Center.

Did You Know?

The Anderson Arts Center features six local and regional art exhibits annually. Log on to www.VisitKenosha.com for a list of Kenosha Area events.

Other Points of Interest



A – PATRICK ENGLISH HOUSE
6004 Third Avenue
(1849) Greek Revival

This two-story Greek Revival brick house with a one-story wing has a gable roof, a full pediment, and a delicately molded cornice. A transom covers the entrance, which also has side windows.

Patrick English emigrated from Ireland to Kenosha in 1845. He conducted a butcher business and also served as an alderman for several years.



B – BEN EICHELMAN HOUSE
510 – 60th Street
(1865)

The house was actually built by Henry Myers, although it is known as the Eichelman house. Eichelman was the owner of the Eichelman Hotel and operator of a clothing store and shoe repair business purchased in the 1870s. In 1903, the Kenosha Hospital Association chose it to be the site for their 12-bed hospital, the first in Kenosha. By 1911, the hospital outgrew these facilities and moved to its present site. In 1974, the building was refurbished.

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*Jon Hochstetter
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