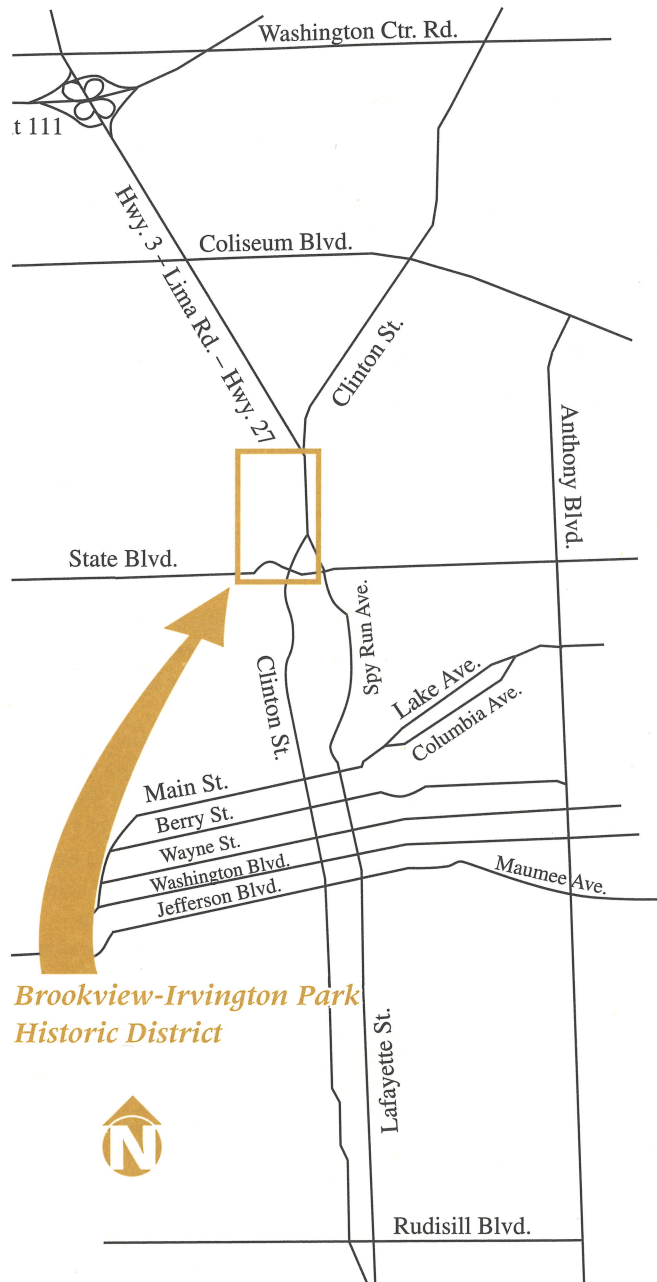


Location



Acknowledgements

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Donald Orban, Preservation Planner
Creager Smith, Preservation Planner

Angie Quinn, Consultant

For more information about historic preservation
in Fort Wayne, call 311 or [260] 427-8311 or visit
www.fwcommunitydevelopment.org/preservation



**COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT**
*Planning
& Policy*

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Brookview- Irvington Park Historic District



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
Vibrant. Prosperous. Growing.

Introduction

Significant as an outstanding local example of a suburban development that reflects principles of design important in the history of community planning and development; and for both its landscape architecture and collection of early to mid-20th century residential architecture, the Brookview-Irvington Park Historic District was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2011.

The National Register is the nation's official list of properties considered worthy of preservation. Listing on the National Register gives properties a degree of protection from any potentially adverse effects of state and federally funded projects, and may also provide financial incentives for appropriate rehabilitation.

For more information about historic districts please call the Division of Community Development at (260) 427-8311 or visit www.fwcommunitydevelopment.or/preservation.

History

The Brookview-Irvington Park Historic District is located north of downtown Fort Wayne in an area shaped by glacial moraines and prehistoric rivers that rises dramatically from south to north. Three historic residential suburban developments make up the district, each maximizing the vistas and varied topography along Spy Run Creek (a tributary of the St. Mary's River) and the St. Joseph River. The area appealed to families with incomes ranging from middle class to wealthy, and homes in the district reflect this diversity in size, scale, and architectural style.

In August, 1906 young businessmen Walter Seavey and Frederick Shoaff purchased a rural estate north of Spy Run Avenue and the Wabash and Erie Feeder Canal from the widow of Warren H. Withers and platted it as the Oak Knoll Addition to the City of Fort Wayne. Conveniently located at the end of the regular trolley line, and along a primary road leading to the downtown area (Leo Road—now Clinton Street), the plat offered large hill-top lots with views of the St. Joseph River, and smaller lots without the river view. Between 1906 and 1920, Seavey, Shoaff, and other well-to-do families built architect-designed homes on the larger lots. Sales on the smaller lots were slow until after World War II, when their convenient location on the main road to expanding north side shopping and suburban areas made them attractive for builders of modest homes.

Following closely on the success of this development, local realtor John Vesey and the Tri-State Loan and Trust Company acquired the area immediately to the northwest of Oak Knoll, along Spy Run Creek, and began to develop it as the Irvington Park Addition during 1910-1911. Upon Vesey's death in 1912, his widow donated the platted park area to the city for a public park, named John H. Vesey Park. Following initially slow sales, landscape architect Walter Hoxie Hillary was hired to refine both the plat and public park designs. Marketing efforts highlighted the location next to the Centlivre Park resort and beer garden, as well as its convenience to trolley and interurban lines. Advertisements touted the natural, wooded beauty of the site. A May 5, 1911 advertisement in the Fort Wayne Daily News noted: *"Fort Wayne's most beautiful subdivision: A real park. Not just a Name. Beautiful Trees with Running Brook. Come and See it...A superb landscape where natural beauties are unsurpassed. Can you imagine anything more enjoyable than a beautiful home among the trees and flowers, overlooking the beautiful city park, with rippling brook and birds singing in the trees? Away from the smoke and dirt of city life...and only a few minutes (trolley) ride from the heart of the city, take the Spy Run (trolley) car to end of car line and you are at the addition."* Lots sold steadily but slowly during the first decades, but became more popular during the 1930s and 1940s as automobile access improved with the paving of Leo and Lima roads.

Centlivre Park was a private resort and beer garden, owned and operated by the Centlivre Brewing Company from c.1880 to 1961. It was located to the west of the Oak Knoll Addition, and south of the Irvington Park addition and Vesey Park, where a large apartment complex now sits. A popular area for picnicking, boat excursions, and horse races, Centlivre Park also provided a location for circus performances, baseball games, and automobile races, and was a busy, vibrant destination for many Fort Wayne residents on weekends. Fort Wayne's professional Negro league baseball team, the Fort Wayne Colored Giants, played on a ballfield located in Centlivre Park, attracting many of Fort Wayne's African American population to the park as well, to watch the ball games, picnic, and recreate with their families and friends. Charles Centlivre, owner of the land, platted a small residential area of eight house lots between Spy Run Creek and Clinton Street, to adjoin with Irvington Park and Oak Knoll. This small subdivision, Centlivre Park Addition, provided a continuous section of residential lots from Irvington Park to the area south of Centlivre Park.

Wildwood Builders, one of Fort Wayne's largest suburban developers, worked with several investors to create the Brookview Improvement Company in 1917 to develop the area just south of Centlivre Park. With the leadership of Lee Ninde and Fred Shoaff, they hired Boston landscape architect Arthur A. Shurcliff to design a plan for the area. Shurcliff had worked for Wildwood Builders previously on the Wildwood Park and Lafayette Place suburban developments, and had completed some work for the Fort Wayne Parks Department as well. Ninde and Wildwood Builders engineer Francis H. Bulot, as well as Boston firm Metcalfe & Eddy that specialized in storm and sanitary sewer engineering, worked with Shurcliff to develop the plat for Brookview. The design successfully highlighted the natural beauty of the dramatic topography by creating parallel automobile parkways on each side of Spy Run Creek that provided convenient and pleasant travel through the development. He also successfully completed the proposed section of State Boulevard that had been proposed, but not completely defined, by George Kessler's 1911 Park and Boulevard Plan for Fort Wayne. Lots sold quickly in Brookview, and many homes were built before 1940.

The Brookview-Irvington Park Historic District has an outstanding collection of residential architecture from the early to mid-20th century, with a wide variety of styles, sizes, and building costs as it developed between 1906-1965. Large architect-designed homes are concentrated in the center of the district, primarily along North Clinton, Terrace, and Eastbrook Drive. Joel Roberts Ninde and Grace E. Crosby, perhaps the earliest female architects to work professionally in Indiana, designed the four large homes along N. Clinton Street in Oak Knoll. Other notable architects whose work is found in the district include A.M. Strauss, and T. Richard Shoaff. Architectural styles in the district include Prairie, Craftsman, American Foursquare, Colonial Revival, Tudor Revival, and Ranch. An enameled steel Lustron house with a matching garage is also located in the district at 2510 Oakridge Road.

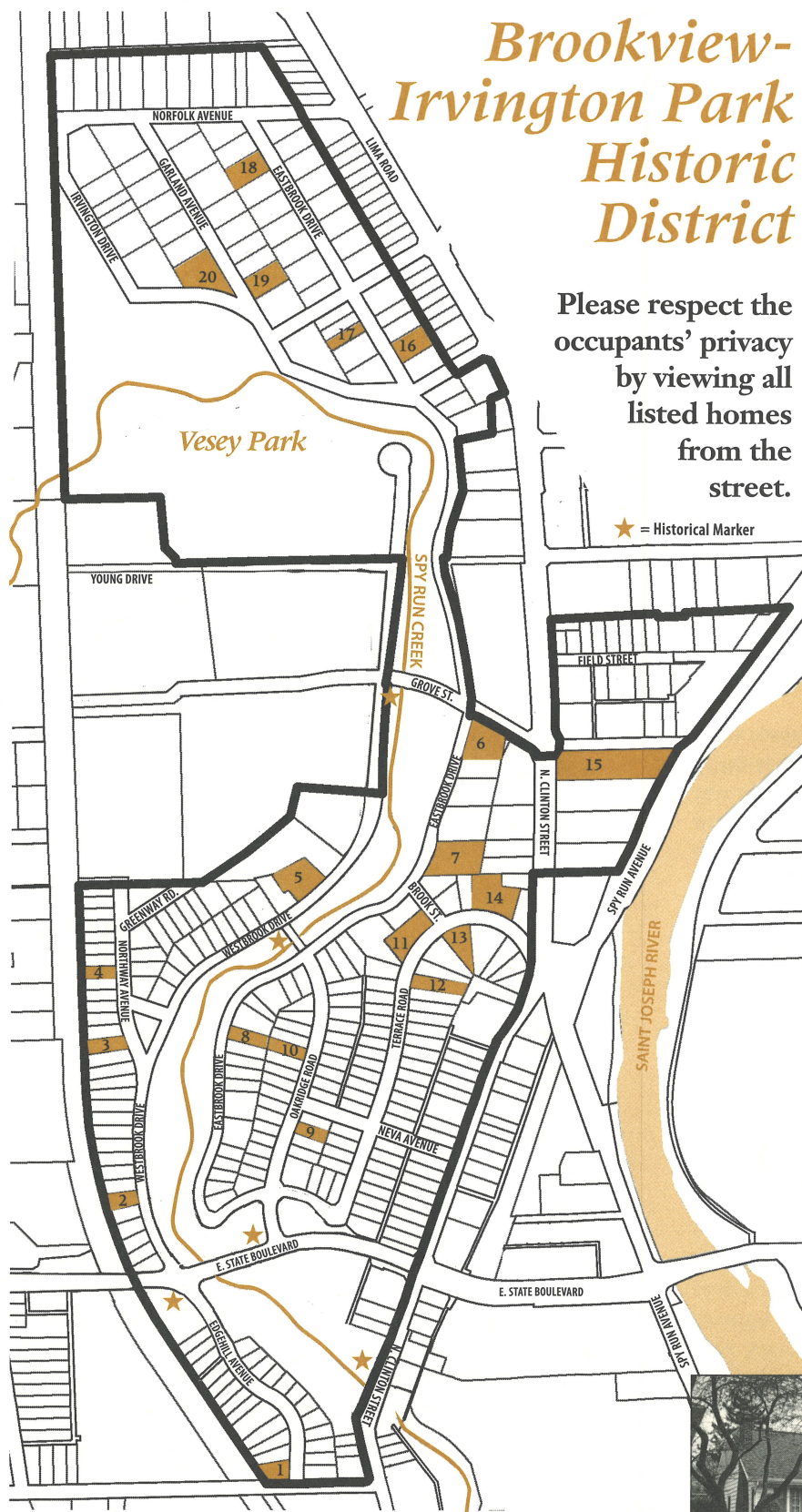
Changes in drainage and traffic patterns over the years have resulted in alterations to the original plat. A flood control project removed the southernmost portions of both Eastbrook and Westbrook drives and redesigned the rights-of-way to hold a series of rain gardens. State Boulevard has been realigned to improve traffic flow and safety. Although these projects removed several homes and a portion of the historic circulation system, efforts have been made to mitigate the effects of the projects on the historic district. The cumulative effects of the projects have not substantially affected the overall historic integrity of the district.

For additional information, check out the historical markers indicated on the map with a star. ★

Brookview-Irvington Park Historic District

Please respect the occupants' privacy by viewing all listed homes from the street.

★ = Historical Marker



5

2551 Westbrook Dr.
John D. & Agnes Shoaff House,
(T. Richard Shoaff, architect)
Neo-Colonial,
c. 1942
A son of Frederick B. and Alice D. Shoaff,

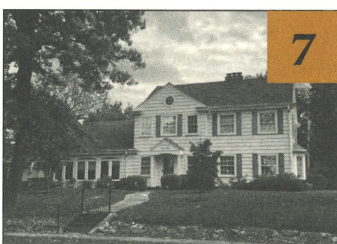
(2714 N. Clinton Street), John was an attorney with his father in the firm of Vesey and Shoaff. Agnes, was the daughter of Fort Wayne city planning proponent Robert B. Hanna. John's brother, T. Richard Shoaff, designed their home on land that adjoined the Centlivre Park and race track. The rear lot line retains an earth embankment that was part of the 4th turn of the race track. Contemporary in its massing, the house features wide clapboard and smooth wood siding, and horizontal muntins in the windows.



6

210 Grove St.
Herbert & Mary Bieberstein House,
Contemporary,
c. 1959
General contractor Herbert Bieberstein most likely built this

home himself. Clad in narrow, random coursed stone and vertical wood siding, the house is an exceptional example of a one-story front gabled contemporary house. A cantilevered pergola supported by square wood beams shades the ribbon of large windows centered under the low gable. The attached garage retains its original door with a large starburst decoration.



7

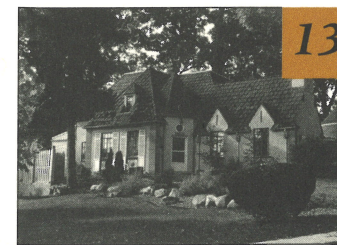
2708 Eastbrook Dr.
Herman & Mae Centlivre House,
Colonial Revival,
c. 1936
The side-gabled roof with its prominent moldings and eave returns; multi-pane

windows; and alignment of window and door openings are typical features of the Colonial Revival style. However, the lack of strict symmetry on the front façade is uncommon, and adds a comfortable elegance. When Herman, vice-president of the Centlivre Brewery, and his wife, Mae, built this home, it would have overlooked Centlivre Park.



8

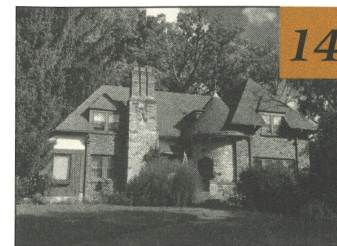
2414 Eastbrook Dr.
Herbert G & Mabel Zurmuhlen House, Craftsman, c.1925
This home derives its cottage-like character from the clipped gables;



13

2602 Terrace Rd.
Howard & Gladys Rohrbach House,
(A.M. Strauss, architect)
French Eclectic, 1935-1936
The Rohrbachs sold their home at 2406 Oakridge to purchase this house, commissioned by

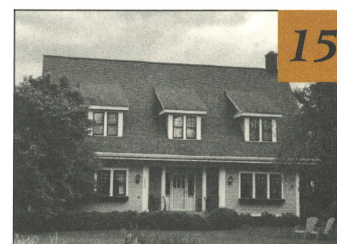
The News-Sentinel newspaper as a model home. An uncommon style, notable features of this unique home include: a steep, complex roof; stucco walls with quoin detailing at the corners; metal casement windows; entry tower; small recessed dormer on the front roof; and wall dormers to the right of the front entry. The Rohrbachs later built a home at 3322 Irvington Drive.



14

2615 Terrace Rd.
Edward & Geraldine Roethele House,
French Eclectic, c. 1935
Active in the family lumber and building materials business, Edward's early training as a mason likely had an influence on the design of his house.

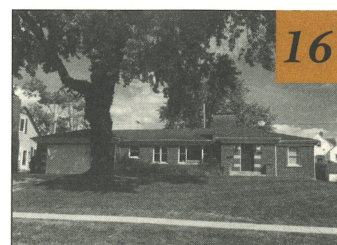
Projecting bricks in the walls and rough-cut stone add shadowed texture to the walls. The steep hipped roof, wall dormers that break the eave line, tower entry, and massive chimney are character defining features. The garage is in the basement level.



15

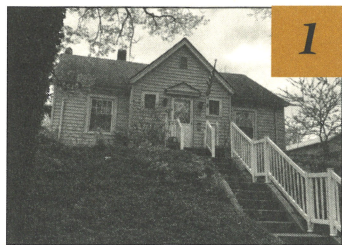
2734 North Clinton St.
Charles & Bertha Lang House, (Joel Roberts Ninde & Grace E. Crosby, architects)
Colonial Revival, c. 1909
The steep, side-gabled roof extending to the first floor is the first indication this home is not a typical Colonial Revival.

The symmetrical façade features a recessed porch with fluted classical columns; a main entry with sidelights and a solid fanlight; and many sets of both double and triple windows with multiple panes in the upper sash. Ninde and Crosby were the female architects behind the successful Wildwood Builders Company.



16

3212 Eastbrook Dr.
Ralph M. & Eva Ernst House, Ranch, c.1956
The low-pitched roof and long, rambling form with attached garage, are prime characteristics of the Ranch style. The prominent chimney, with its wide but narrow form, echoes the form of the house. The use of rectangular stone tabs to highlight both the main entry and the garage door illustrates the importance of the automobile. Mr. Ernst was President of Ernst Truck



1

**2101 Edgehill Ave.
Ramond & Charlotte
Huth House,
American Small House/
Colonial Revival, c.1936**

The symmetrical façade of this home features a central, projecting gable over the main entry flanked by small 4-pane

windows. The very long flight of front steps clearly illustrates the extreme changes in topography found in the neighborhood. Mr. Huth had a very short walk to his job at Frank Huth Tool & Machine Works, formerly located at 2112 N. Clinton Street.



2

**2243 Westbrook Dr.
Calvin & Theresa
Pieratt House,
American Small House,
c.1950**

The prominent front gable, overlapping entry gable, side-gabled roof, and prominent chimney, clearly show the

influence of the Tudor Revival style. Add the minimal eaves, lack of traditional detailing, and simple rectangular plan, and you have a perfect example of the American Small House. A matching garage is located behind the house.

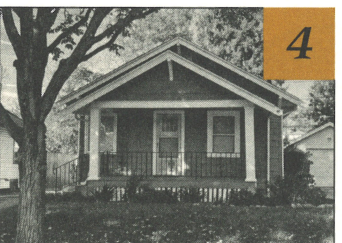


3

**2337 Northway Ave.
Hubert & Bertha
Sordelet House,
American Foursquare,
c.1925**

This American Foursquare style home shows a bit of Prairie style influence in the low-sloped hipped roof and deep eaves. The

matching full-width front porch with its paired columns, slat-style balustrade, and square lattice skirting is a notable feature. The low, triangular dormer on the main roof is unusual.



4

**2421 Northway Ave.
Charles & Gladys
Locke House,
Craftsman Bungalow, c.1925**

The small, front-gabled version of the bungalow was very popular in the growing, middle-class neighborhoods of early 20th century America. Low-

pitched gabled roofs with wide eaves; exposed rafters; vergeboards; knee braces in the gables; and sturdy, square porch supports are classic features. On this house, the star shaped cut-outs at the ends of the vergeboards are a nice surprise.

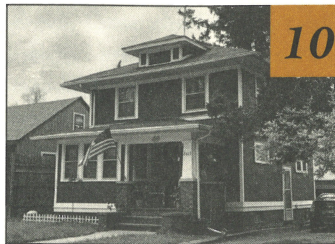


9

**2320 Oakridge Rd.
Alf & Blanche
Landes House,
Craftsman, c.1925**

A larger example of the Craftsman style, this home has a side-gabled roof with clipped gables, vergeboards, and exposed rafters. Wood shingles and narrow clapboard siding add

texture to the walls. The porch, with its clustered columns on high, brick pedestals, is a great feature.



10

**2415 Oakridge Rd.
John & Edna McMeen House,
American Foursquare, c.1925**

The box-like shape, hipped roof with central dormer, and front porch are all prime characteristics of American Foursquare homes. This house also features windows with decorative

muntins, stuccoed walls, and a solarium on half of the front porch. Mr. McMeen was the manager at Thomson McKinnon, a brokerage firm dealing in stocks, bonds, grain and cotton.



11

**2551 Terrace Rd.
Mrs. Hannah H.
Mohr House,
Tudor Revival, c.1925**

Hannah Mohr was in her 60s and a widow of many years when she built this picturesque Tudor style home on the top of the ridge. The steep roof, prominent front gable, and stucco

walls with half-timbering are classic features. The large chimney features Flemish-bond brick. Her husband, John, was a founder of the Hamilton Bank and a city councilman.

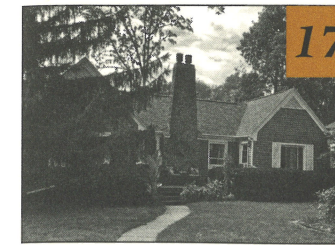


12

**2530 Terrace Rd.
Edwin & Gladys
Coolidge House,
Dutch Colonial Revival, c.1925**

The dual-pitched gambrel roof is the primary feature that defines the Dutch Colonial Revival style. This home also has a symmetrically balanced façade, and a large brick

chimney on the north side. A graceful, arched hood on large brackets breaks the low eave line and shelters the front entry. Coolidge was a draftsman at Tolkheim Company.

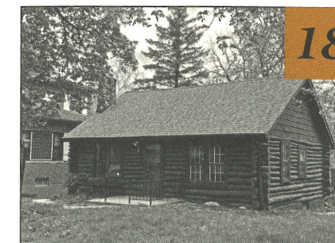


17

**3355 Eastbrook Dr.
Hollis & Alice
VanMeter House,
American Small House,
c.1943**

Often inspired by the Tudor Revival style, the American Small House first became popular in the late 1930s and

was the dominant style of the post-war 1940s and early 50s. Like the Tudor style, this home features pointed gables and a prominent chimney with weeping mortar. However, the roof slope is lower, and both eaves and decorative detailing are minimal.



18

**3221 Eastbrook Dr.
Milton & Vianna
Rogge House,
Park Rustic, c.1943**

Developed in the early to mid-20th century in the National Park Service, Park Rustic buildings typically use a combination of native wood

and stone in a design that harmonizes with the natural environment. Rarely seen in urban neighborhoods, this rustic home features a steep side-gabled roof; exterior walls finished with round logs and wide plank siding; and a fieldstone chimney on the south wall. Multi-pane windows flank the main entry.



19

**3318 Garland Ave.
John & Gertrude Kerr
House, Tudor Revival,
c. 1941**

Sold as *The Lewiston*, all the materials for this home could be purchased from the Sears, Roebuck & Co. for \$2,037 or less. The steep roof has a front

gable with a lunette window in the peak and a ribbon window below. The arched front entry is highlighted by brick with contrasting stone that flows into the prominent chimney. Mr. Kerr was the chief inspector at Wayne Pump Company.



20

**3314 Irvington Dr.
Carl & Lelia Halpin House,
Colonial Revival, c.1940**

An excellent example of its type, this home possesses many classic features of the Colonial Revival style: a symmetrical façade with a side-gabled roof; central entry with a classical surround

featuring fluted pilasters and a broken pediment; and multi-pane windows. In various forms, the Colonial Revival style remains popular from the beginning of the 20th century to the present time.