

TOUR OF HISTORIC ELMHURST

MAY 17, 1981

THE ELMHURST HISTORICAL SOCIETY

1. Glos Mansion-120 E. Park Ave.--Built by Henry L. Glos, "The Father of Elmhurst" in 1892. He was the great grandson of John Glos Sr., Elmhurst's (and eastern DuPage County's) first settler in 1837. Henry Glos was elected to twenty consecutive terms as President of the Board of Village Trustees and the incorporation of the village in 1881 was effected largely through his efforts. He was the founder of the Elmhurst National Bank in 1894. The bank is now the largest financial institution in DuPage county. Glos Mansion is remarkable for its white oak woodwork, the solid brass doorknobs and hinges, the copper gutters and downspouts and the outer walls (some over a foot thick) of Bedford Limestone. The building was given to the city (along with Glos Park) by the family in 1941. It was used as Elmhurst's City Hall from 1942 to 1970 and since May of 1975 has been the permanent home of the Elmhurst Historical Museum.

2. Glos Tomb-121 S. Kenilworth Ave.--Was designed in the Beaux Arts style and built at a cost of more than \$20,000 at the same time the Mansion was built. A special city ordinance was passed giving the right to "built and maintain a mausoleum to cost not less than \$5,000 and to be built of stone. Henry Glos died in 1905 and Lucy, his widow, in 1941. Both were interred in their private mausoleum which stands in a park across from their home. The land around the mausoleum was dedicated as Glos Memorial Park in June of 1980.

3. The Emery House, 284 S. Kenilworth Ave.,--Built in 1889 by William H. Emery, Elmhurst civic leader, who was founder of one of America's largest leather companies. A woman who claimed to be Anastasia, youngest daughter of the murdered Russian Zsar Nicholas II and his family in 1918, lived with the Emery's from 1945 to 1963. She drew world wide attention to Elmhurst in 1962 when she wrote a best selling book called "Anastasia" asserting her claim. She underwent and passed more than 30 hours of lie tests according to a Chicago Tribune article. She also underwent numerous psychiatric tests which, again according to the Tribune, "she proved she was not suffering from delusions." Soon after writing her book she moved to New York where she now lives. There have been several other women who also claimed to be the daughter of the last Russian Zsar. Most historians feel that none of the Zsar's five children escaped the slaughter of the royal family in 1918 by the communists.

4. Henderson House, 301 S. Kenilworth Ave.,--Frank Lloyd Wright, who many consider to be the greatest architect of them all, designed this home in 1901. It is the only registered Frank Lloyd Wright home in Elmhurst and is considered a classic example of Wright's "Prairie School Style" in which he tried to blend the structure of the home with its natural surroundings. In a typical Prairie Home, which Wright made famous and which led to the modern ranch home, open spaces inside the home expand into the outdoors through porches and terraces. This

style is noted for its low, horizontal form (see the roof lines) and the home seems to grow out of the ground. This effect is emphasized by Wright's use of wood and other materials as they appear in nature. One has the perfect opportunity to compare the master's home which you now see with one by his pupil (Griffin) just down the street.

5. Walter Burley Griffin House, 281 Arlington St.,--Griffin (1876-1937) was a world famous architect who lived in Elmhurst. He was, besides Carl Sandburg, the only local resident ever to be honored by being pictured on a postage stamp. The stamp was issued by Australia in 1963 to honor Griffin for his design of their national capital, Canberra. Griffin lived at 223 S. Kenilworth Ave.,-his home torn down to make way for a church parking lot. He was chief draftsman for Frank Lloyd Wright at his studio in Chicago for four years and the Wright Prairie School influence can be seen in this home and the many other buildings he designed around the world. It is thought that Griffin was the first architect to design a "multi-level"home. The home you see was built in 1903. A recent asking price was \$300,000.
6. Sloane House, 248 Arlington St.,--A home designed also by Walter Burley Griffin (in 1909) as a modest economy house in the the style of the Prairie School. Griffin insisted on proper landscaping for a house and much of what he recommended remains at both his Elmhurst homes.

7. Steichen House-269 S York St.--Home of the in-laws of Carl Sandburg-the Steichens. Edward Steichen (1879-1973) was a world famous photographer in his own right and in World War I was in charge of aerial photography for the American Expeditionary Force. During World War II he headed the U. S. Navy Aviation Photography unit. As head of the photography department of the Museum of Modern Art in New York City he organized the well known "Family of Man" exhibit. In 1963 he received the Presidential Medal of Freedom for his many contributions to photography. He was the author of several books. The Steichen home also served as the first rectory for St. Mary's Catholic Church which was destroyed by fire in 1898. In the last few years it has undergone extensive restoration and looks much the same as it did in 1898.
8. Dr. Fischer's Home-203 S. York St.--Built in 1890 by Dr. Frederick Fischer, it was his home until 1918. Dr. Fischer was one of Elmhurst's earliest doctors and civic leaders. He was the first volunteer from the township in 1861 to respond to President Lincoln's call to arms in the Civil War where he participated in most of the major battles. Later he would become clerk of DuPage County and in the words of one historian "he won the admiration of all lovers of fair play by refusing to be implicated in a plot to remove secretly the records from the county seat-then in Naperville-to a site in Wheaton". The plot was successful and that is why the county seat is now in Wheaton and not Naperville. The early settlers

often had a habit of taking things into their own hands. The Fischer buildings served for many years as the Crane Sanitarium and later as the Elmhurst Hotel. Its future is now much in doubt (you can see the for sale sign on the lawn).

9. Dr. Marquardt's Home-185 S. York St.--Former home of Dr. Edward W. Marquardt the founder of Elmhurst Hospital. When the young Dr. Marquardt came to Elmhurst to live in 1902 he rented the home of Dr. Heidemann on north York Street. When it became time for Dr. Marquardt to build his own home he couldn't think of a plan he liked nearly as well as the one Dr. Heidemann had used. Thus the Marquardts decided to use this same architectural plan, built in reverse, on the east side of York Street at number 185 (the home you see now). The original house of Dr. Heidemann (an exact copy) was destroyed by fire. A Victorian home, it is one of the few remaining houses of its period in Elmhurst today.
10. Ludwig Graue Store-136 W. Park Ave.--Built in 1864 with an addition put on in 1880 it is the oldest building for business in Elmhurst. It is also the oldest brick building in town. Many living residents can still remember shopping at Graue's store which carried a general line of merchandise including groceries, dry goods and shoes. The first gasoline to be sold in Elmhurst was sold at Graue's store.
11. Graue Home--141 Virginia St.--Built in 1880, and occupied by the Graue family for over 100 years it is believed to be

the house longest occupied by one family in Elmhurst. Dorothy Graue will probably be on the bus and we can check it out with her.

12. Seth Wadhams House-Wilder Park-The mansion you see was built in 1868 by Seth Wadhams, an ice company owner in Chicago. Ice was big business in those days before refrigerators. The home is one of the most magnificent examples of Victorian architecture in the Chicago area. T. E. Wilder acquired the estate in 1905 and in 1922 the building and land were purchased by the City of Elmhurst. The Wadhams had one son, Dana, who died soon after the mansion was built. The death was a blow to Mrs. Wadhams one from which she never recovered. She was an invalid for the remainder^d of her life. The small greenhouse just to the east of the mansion was built by Mr. Wadhams in an effort to comfort her sorrow. The greenhouse today is much the same as it was in 1870. At one time the Wadhams estate extended as far east as Poplar Avenue.
13. Lizzadro Museum-Wilder Park-Called The Lizzadro Museum of Lapidary Art it has one of the finest collections of Lapidary Art in America. Built in 1962 by Joseph F. Lizzadro on land donated by the Elmhurst Park District it is owned by the Lizzadro Family Foundation.

14. Old Main-Elmhurst College-This building was constructed in 1878 and is one of the oldest college buildings in DuPage county. The State of Illinois and The United States Department of Interior National Park Services announced the listing of Old Main in the National Register of Historic Places on August 13, 1976. Classes are still held in the building. We plan to stop and visit the building.
15. Kratz Hall-Elmhurst College-The building to the north of Old Main, it is even older than the National Historic Landmark. It was built in 1864. At one time it housed the entire college: the first floor containing a chapel and classrooms; the second floor had an apartment and student rooms; the huge attic served as a dormitory; the basement provided a kitchen and dining room. Landmark status was applied for but turned down. The college plans to tear down Kratz Hall.
16. McCormick House-299 Prospect St--This house was designed by Ludwig Mies Van der Rohe, a German architect who pioneered in glass and steel architecture, for Mr. and Mrs. Robert McCormick (of reaper fame). Van der Rohe designed the entire III campus in Chicago and many skyscrapers throughout the world. It is believed that the McCormick home was the only house he ever designed. The clean, uncluttered lines of his buildings (like the Chrysler building in New York) can be seen in the house. He was the first architect to leave the steel skeletons of buildings exposed (you see a lot of that now) and later in his great apartmentsbuidings he would expose concrete for the first time to view.

He was elected to the National Institute of Arts and Sciences Hall of Fame in 1961.

17. Birthplace of Astronaut Joseph P. Kerwin-160 W. St Charles Rd- Kerwin was one of three Astronauts to man the United States' first orbiting space station in 1973. Called Skylab, the station orbited the earth for 28 days. Kerwin is also the first physician to ever be named to the astronaut program. For his feat Kerwin was honored by the President and Congress and received a ticker tape parade in New York and Chicago. The skylab program proved that human beings could live and work in space for long periods of time. In June of 1971 a similiar Russian attempt ended in tragedy when all three of their cosmonauts died on the return flight.
18. Lee Sturges Home-280 Cottage Hill Ave.-designed and built by Mr. Sturges in 1893 it is one of the largest homes in Elmhurst. Sturges was a nationally known etcher whose sketches hang in many museums. He owned a large milk company.
19. World's Fair House--333 Elm Park Ave--This home, designed by Chicago architect Howard Fisher, was built especially for the World's Fair in Chicago in 1933. It was supposed to be the "House of the Future"-a pre-fabricated home of steel, stressing simplicity and efficiency throughout". Many of its features did become become a part of the homes built after the 1930's. It had five rooms and a bath, a recreation room and a laundry room in the basement. The recreation room and

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laundry in the basement were new features at the time. An Elmhurst couple purchased the entire house and had it moved to its present site. However, after a recent fire, it was remodeled by the new owners and it has lost some of its original World's Fair design.

20. Unknown Home-The house on the SW corner of Grace and Elm Park- This home illustrates the process of on-going historical research. The home was first noted because it seemed very old (over 100 years) and had a distinctive and unusual style of architecture. You don't find many small, stone houses (almost like a large playhouse) in Elmhurst. It was first thought to be the caretaker's cottage for the old Elmhurst Country Club Golf Course which lay where York High School now stands. The eastern limits of the golf course were along Grace St. But after interviewing a family that once lived in the home in the early 1900's we were told that it was a summer cottage built on the golf course by a Chicago resident. Others still say it was the caretaker's house. Perhaps it was both at one time or another. Anyone on the bus having a theory will be listened to. Research on the chain of title for the home is continuing.
21. Villa Virginia-160 W. St. Charles Rd.-This magnificent home on the corner of Hagans and St. Charles was built by Wilbur Hagans, a founder of Rand-McNally & Co., in 1882. A lover of race horses he built a race track called Hawthorne across the street from his home (between where now run Argyle and Mitchell streets) and ran his fine stable of horses against all comers.

He abandoned the track and racing in 1896 but two of his grooms took his horses and the name of his track and established the famous Hawthorne Park Race Track in Cicero.

22. A Lustron House-603 S. Rex Blvd.--Anyone conscious (and over 18) at the end of World War II can remember the Lustron House which was to be the answer to the housing shortage. These pre-fabricated homes by the Lustron Corp. in Ohio could be completed in four days and cost about \$8,000. Whole towns, especially in the east, were built of these "quickie" homes. There is another in Elmhurst at 451 S. York. The houses were all one-story, two bedroom and were built on a slab foundation and used porcelain enamel steel panels for exterior walls. The Lustron homes quickly ran into conflict with local buildings codes. Elmhurst granted the two permits then stopped completely.

23. Potawatomi Indian Village-near Spring and Butterfield Road junction-At this point according to historians there was a Potawatomi Indian village in the early 1800's. The Indians in DuPage county were first described by French explorers in the 17th century. When the white man first came to settle the area known as Elmhurst the Potawatomi tribe had established control. While the Potawatomi were generally considered to be peaceful they still managed to be the aggressors in the famous Fort Dearborn Massacre in Chicago. In 1835 after long years of bargaining the Indians agreed to sell their lands in the Chicago area to the government in exchange for money and a new home west of the Mississippi. Then the first settlers came to DuPage

county in 1837 (John Glos and his family). A few Indians remained in the Elmhurst area for many years living in small villages along Salt Creek. Many early settlers often told of finding an Indian helping himself to food in the farm kitchen-uninvited. Children still find Indian arrowheads chipped from rock in this area-some over four hundred years old.

24. The Home Where President Carter Stayed-451 S. Kenilworth Ave.- National attention was focused on the James Wall home in 1978 when President Carter stayed overnight at the home of his Illinois campaign manager. The area was roped off and thousands watched in person as the President arrived. National television cameras filled the area as Elmhurst had its night on the tube.
25. Cottage Hill Tavern-413 S. York St--Built in 1843, it is the oldest residence in Elmhurst which still survives. It was moved to its present location from a site near the corner of St. Charles Rd. and Cottage Hill Ave. In the 1840's it served as a stopping place, tavern and inn for travelers going west. Since it was located at almost exactly one day's horse ride from Chicago it was a mandatory stop. During the early days the home or tavern (operated by the Bates family) served as a place where people on the roads, teamsters and early immigrants could get food, drink (whiskey) and a place to sleep. Even the stage coaches stopped at Cottage Hill Tavern. The home looks much as it did in the 1840's^{and} succeeding owners have kept faith with the past by not changing the basic design of the historic tavern. George P. A. Healy, America's foremost portrait painter who

painted more living Presidents than any other artist (the only beardless portrait of Lincoln is by Healy).lived here for six years in the 1850's. With the coming of the railroad in 1852 the mode of travel changed and the tavern closed to become a private residence. Some people say that on a very still night you can hear the old pioneers singing and dancing in the old tavern.

245. Site of Former Home of Carl Sandburg- ? S. York St.--Carl Sandburg, called "America's most loved poet" lived in Elmhurst during the 1920's and early 1930's. Here in Elmhurst he spend some of his most productive years, writing the first parts of his great Lincoln biography ("The Prairie Years"). Here also he wrote his "Rootabaga" books and compled the "American Songbook" and wrote scores of his best poems. Sandburg loved Elmhurst referred to his days here "as the happiest of my life". A few living Elmhurst residents can still remember Sandburg walking eastward down York Street, a book in hand, perhaps going to a PTA meeting at Hawthorne School where his daughters attended. In the early 1930's when the traffic on York Street became too noisy (those new things called cars were coming to Elmhurst) the Sandburgs moved to Michigan. The Sandburg home, a small white frame house with a porch at the side, called by the poet "His Happiness Home", was located in the northern most part of the church parking lot (Baptist). When the church purchased the home because it needed more room in 1964 it was offered to the city if it would pay the cost of relocation. But these were the days before historical preservation had much meaning and nothing was done. Sandburg's home was torn down to become a parking lot.