

BROWN COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY 2010 HISTORIC PRESERVATION AWARDS



Truttmann Hearth Ware, 3795 Shirley Road, Town of Shirley

As grocery, hardware store, and location for meetings and card parties, Zellner's general store was the social center of the Town of Shirley since it was built in the 1920s. However, the decline of the era of the small family store forced Zellner's to close in the 1980s. As a daughter to Green Bay's Truttmann Hardware family, Alison VanLanen had a soft spot in her heart for the old Zellner store building, and sadly watched it go downhill over the years. Finally, in January 2009, she and her husband John decided to purchase the building, with thoughts more on just saving it than specifically how to use it. Coincidentally, their fireplace store (which was started in 1997 after the family closed the Truttmann Hardware store on Main) was outgrowing its space, and the Zellner building suddenly had its new use. The VanLanens removed a dilapidated garage and an incompatible brick front wall, added a front porch, restored the hardwood floor and the pressed metal ceiling, and livened the building with a new exterior color scheme. The old store is once again a proud cornerstone for the Town of Shirley.



Larkwood Wedding Chapel, 7019 Dickinson Road, Town of Lark

More than 50 years after first organizing in the Town of Lark (about 7 miles southeast of De Pere), a congregation of German Evangelicals and United Brethren decided in 1912-13 to build a permanent and beautiful church building, mixing traditional Gothic Revival styles with detailing from the Arts and Crafts movement popular at the time. Classical rosette motifs decorated the church pews and the magnificent stained glass windows. The unique sanctuary has sloped floor seating that curves around the altar for an amphitheater effect, and large wood rolling partitions can be pulled down from the ceiling like a roll-top desk to create meeting rooms off of the sanctuary. As is the case for many rural churches, the congregation dwindled and the church eventually closed its doors. Mike and Ruby Gilbertson both had dreams of a wedding business, and the empty building presented a perfect opportunity. While they repaired water damaged plaster, repainted the walls, and repaired the altar platform, they wisely preserved the original architectural features of the church. They've been told that the church is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, and they intend to proceed with the nomination process soon.



Petry-Neveu House, 802 East Walnut Street, Green Bay

In 1897, the Petry family built this Stick-Style house at the corner of Walnut and Jackson. Five years later, daughter Carrie married August Neveu, a well known Green Bay druggist, and they took up residence in the house. Descendents continued to live in the house up until 2004. By the time Tristan Zimmerman and Troy Kapalczynski purchased the house, lack of maintenance had resulted in cracked plaster and sagging floors due to structural distress, poorly executed repairs had resulted in a loss of historic trim and details, and they found outdated utilities and a lack of insulation. With a commitment to historic preservation and the Navarino neighborhood, Tristan and Troy went all in to restore the house. In addition to structural repairs and updated utilities, they replaced inappropriate additions, installed new wood framed windows, replastered the interior, and refinished the floors. All the fixtures and interior/exterior wood trim were either restored, replicated, or replaced with similar items salvaged from other buildings. Finally, the exterior was painted in a show-stopping 14 color painted lady scheme. They eventually intend to run a small neighborhood café from the first floor (not unlike the Petry-Neveu family, who ran various businesses from the first floor). With neighbors now beginning to make similar improvements, this beautiful house has set a wonderful example for this ascending neighborhood.



Cotton House, Heritage Hill State Historical Park, 2640 S. Webster, Allouez

Cotton House has been one of the Green Bay area's more notable landmarks since it was built by John Cotton (a military captain stationed in Green Bay) and his wife Mary in the 1840s. In the early 20th century, the Green Bay Diocese acquired the building for use as an orphanage. Later, it was given to the Brown County Historical Society, who in 1938 moved the house to its present site and remodeled it for use as a museum. In 1977, Cotton House became the anchor of the new Heritage Hill State Park. By the end of the 20th century, however, deterioration and wear from increased visitation made major repairs necessary. In 2009-10, the building was closed to visitors and a full scale restoration was undertaken. The first floor was re-leveled and reinforced to accommodate the visitor traffic. Deteriorated chimneys were disassembled and reconstructed, rotted framing members were repaired or replaced, roof shingles and portions of the wood clapboard siding were replaced, and modern utilities and installations were removed from what had been an upstairs apartment. All the while, every square inch of the building was documented, including molding patterns, shadows of former walls, layers of paint colors, and nail types and locations. The newly restored Cotton House now stands ready to educate future generations about life in early Green Bay.