



BAY VIEW Historian



VOLUME 2023, NO. 3

www.bayviewhistoricalsociety.org

SUMMER 2023

Bay View High School Building Turns 100

BY RON WINKLER

Bay View High School (BVHS) was organized in 1914 during Milwaukee's rapid growth. Prior to 1914, Bay View's high school age students traveled to South Division High School (SDHS) on 15th and Lapham Blvd. Milwaukee Public Schools (MPS) recognized Bay View's need for a school within walking distance and opened BVHS in 1914. The seven faculty members and 150 students were housed in temporary wooden barracks along Russell Avenue between Lenox Street and Pine Avenue. It took until 1922 to obtain the current BVHS building at 2751 S. Lenox Street, which was dedicated 100 years ago.

Bungalow Days

Gustav A. Fritsche, SDHS's principal, was reassigned to BVHS and served in that capacity until his death in 1939. Bernhard Korn was vice-principal as well as history teacher.

The story from barracks to bricks is a snapshot of life a little over 100 years ago. As enrollment increased, more crude wooden structures were added. By 1917, a sprawling campus of six buildings had been constructed. The school, nicknamed "Fritsche's Foundry," in reference to Bay View's rolling mill, was primitive at best, with a leaky roof, no lights, soft splintery wood floors and no central heating (each room had its own coal burning stove). There was no hot water; athletes participating in the school's two sports of football and track took cold showers using a sprinkling can or bucket of water.



The classroom environment was no better. Thin walls and different classes being held simultaneously in opposite corners of the same room gave the opportunity for students to be educated in several subjects at the same time.

New School

By 1917 the barracks was at capacity and plans were made for a new edifice. MPS architects Van Ryn and DeGelleke designed a state-of-the-art school in a style known as Collegiate Gothic. Estimated cost was between \$600,000 and \$700,000 with completion expected in the fall of 1920. The final cost was actually \$1,250,774.



Groundbreaking was on September 18, 1917 at the top of the hill overlooking the barracks. However, progress was slow in those days because horses hauled the building materials. Additionally, during the WWI era (1914-1918), manpower and materials were scarce. Work soon came to a standstill and the new school remained a steel skeleton until after the November 11, 1918 armistice. Work resumed and the cornerstone was laid in 1918 on the southeast corner of the building.

The school finally opened on September 5, 1922, although dedication took place the following year on May 25th. In addition, work continued until October 18, 1925. The school's capacity was set at 2,457 students and with only 875 eager students that first year, the BVHS district was expanded to include eleven grade schools.

"The Castle on the Hill"

The campus covered seven acres and two square city blocks between Russell Avenue and Montana Street on the north and south, and Lenox Street and Taylor Avenue on the east and west.

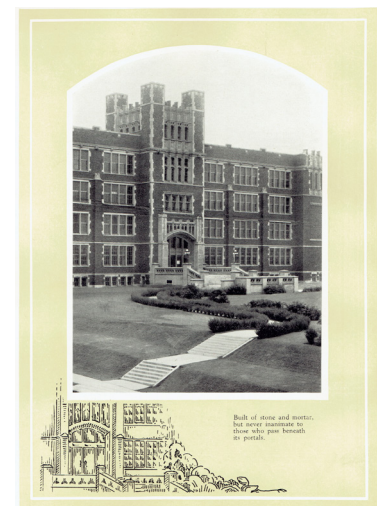
The school's elevated location and rooftop battlements transformed "Fritsche's Foundry" into the "Castle on the Hill." Although addressed on Lenox Street, the building faced north to give it a commanding view of Bay View and Lake Michigan.

Inside, Bay View's history is depicted with murals near the original Russell Avenue entrance and also on both the inside and outside of the auditorium. The murals, dedicated in 1923, are titled, "The Spirit of Bay View."

The school colors of scarlet and black were adopted in 1916. The athletic teams, originally the Silverites and then the Bays, became the Redcats in 1950. The school's newspaper and yearbook, "The Oracle," took the name from the oracle at ancient Delphi in Greece, a shrine where the clergy obtained information from deities. Today, there is neither a school newspaper nor an annual.

Principal Fritsche had a high regard for scholarship and gave the school its Latin motto, "Palmarum Qui Meruit Ferat." The words mean "Let He Who Deserves the Palm, Carry It." They come from Horace, the Roman lyric poet, who observed the Roman custom of giving victorious gladiators a palm branch as a symbol of victory. In this way, Fritsche was inspiring students to work hard for what they wanted to accomplish.

In 1975, an addition and parking lot on the north side of the school added classrooms and a 1200 seat gymnasium. Unfortunately, this addition covered the school's main entrance facing Russell Avenue and destroyed the beautifully landscaped campus.



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\$20 Individual/\$17 Seniors (Age 65+)
\$30 Household/\$25 Senior Household
\$30 Non-Profit/Small Business
\$55 Corporate
Philanthropic Levels:
\$100 Friend
\$500 Leader
\$1,000 Patron
\$2,500+ Benefactor

Bay View Historical Society
2590 S. Superior Street, Bay View, WI 53207
www.bayviewhistoricalsociety.org

Bay View Historical Society is a non-profit organization
with 501(c)3 status operating for educational purposes.

*The Bay View Historian is published four times
a year by The Bay View Historical Society.*

President's Message

As we end spring and we move into summer, we begin our busy season. In late April, we held our Annual Dinner. It was a wonderful night of laughter, food, community, history, and fundraising. It was great to see familiar faces and meet some of you in person! Read more about this event later in the Historian.

On May 13th, the Beulah Brinton House was a stop on Historic Milwaukee's Spaces and Traces. We spent the day giving tours of the house, educating guests about Bay View and the Historical Society, and increasing awareness about renting the house for events.

Coming up in June, we have our 28th Landmark Dedication at the Nordberg House on Logan Ave. In July we plan to participate in Humboldt Park's Fourth of July Parade. In August, Ron Winkler and Sean Reagan will be leading our Annual August Walk. This year, the walking tour will be of Bay View's "Northern Border." We have a lot of other events that are still being planned. To stay up to date on all upcoming events, check our website and Facebook.

Outside of events, the House Committee has been hard at work re-establishing our regular services such as lawn mowing and house cleaning. The board of directors approved a contractor to begin work on repairing and painting the garage. Proceeds from the annual dinner and annual appeal/ membership renewal will pay for this project. We also have several landscaping projects that need to get done. See page 5 for a very exciting fundraiser that will help us fund these projects.

Our committees need more volunteers to support events and basic functions of the Society. Please send me an email to join our volunteer email list. We will be sending out specific areas/ tasks that we need help with. If you see something you are interested in, we would love your help!

Have a suggestion or comment on what's going well or what could be improved? I want to hear from you! Send me an email at President@BayViewHistoricalSociety.org.

Hope to see all of you at our upcoming events.

Best,

Margaret Herzfeld

Bruno Nordberg House to Become Society's 28th Landmark

BY RON WINKLER

Join us on Saturday, June 10th at 1:00 pm when the Bruno Nordberg house, 2940 S. Logan Avenue, will become Bay View Historical Society's (BVHS) 28th landmark. Landmarks Historian Ron Winkler will give the history of the house and how Bay View's Nordberg Manufacturing Company was founded via Finland and Walkers Point. (See the Spring 2023 "Historian" for a brief history of the company.) BVHS President Margaret Herzfeld will then join Winkler to present the BVHS's landmark plaque.

There will be a short piano recital by one of the owner's music students at 1:45 pm. Everyone will receive a souvenir booklet and will be invited to enjoy refreshments and tours of the house. The event, which is free and open to the public, will be held rain or shine. Local politicians have been invited.





**BAY VIEW
HISTORICAL SOCIETY
2023 ANNUAL DINNER**

"SCULPTING MILWAUKEE"

Saturday, April 29, 5:30pm, South Shore Yacht Club

EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

Photos by Kevin Petajan

SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR DONORS:

Adventure Rock
America's Black Holocaust Museum
Avalon Theatre
Bacardi USA
Bentley's Pet Stuff
Betty Brinn Children's Museum
Colonial Quality Printing
Milwaukee Art Museum
Milwaukee Athletic Club
Milwaukee County Zoo

Milwaukee Milkmen
Milwaukee Public Museum
Movida at Hotel Madrid
National Bobblehead Hall of Fame & Museum
Sheboygan Historical Society and Museum
Supermoon Beer Company
David Drake
Candice Owley
Grace Pelisek





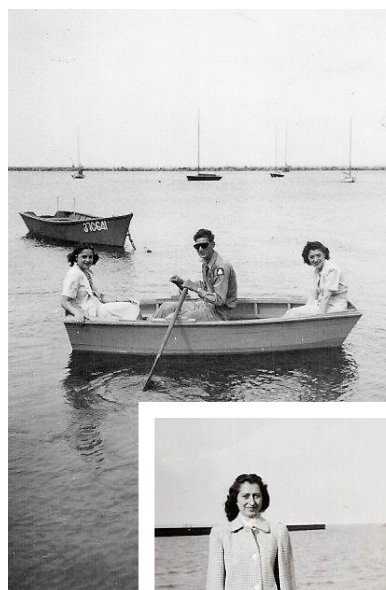
South Shore

BY KAREN GERSONDE

Summertime always brings back memories of growing up in Bay View and the St. Francis area, by Lake Michigan. I was always attracted to the water. I love swimming, boating and walking along the great shore lines of the lake. I love looking for different colored rocks, or sea glass, and love to watch all the waterfowl that call the lake their home. In my youth, I used to bike the trails along the lake, always looking for a cool breeze to cool me off on a hot summer day. Or I would just go swimming at South Shore Beach and have a picnic on the shore.

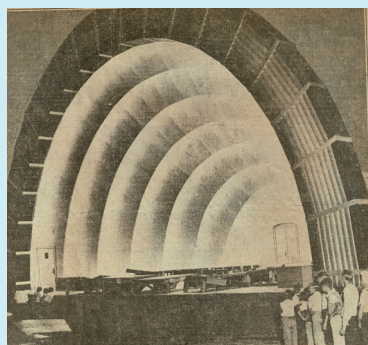
I guess the apple doesn't fall far from the tree. My mother, Fausta Decesari and her family grew up on South Superior Street, just off of East Russell Ave. I never realized how much they cherished living by the lake until I started browsing through her old family photos which I acquired when she passed away. I discovered numerous photos of my mom and her siblings and friends, boating at the yacht club, and picnicking at South Shore Park. This was their hang out, as I think all of Bay View flocked to this area to cool off in the hot summer months, just as they do today. They walked and posed on the rocks, just as I have done numerous times. They spread out their blankets on the lawn and shared many good times with their dear friends and family. My grandparents also did the same, utilizing this area for many a family gathering. I know my mom's brothers Joseph and Andy liked boating and this was the perfect place for them. There was something for everyone at the park and lakeshore.

The attached family photos I believe were taken in the 1940's. The South Shore Yacht Club looks so different than it does today. But it is still a pillar of the community and the South Shore Park and beach are a welcoming sight for all. Times may change through the decades but every generation still loves Lake Michigan and all it has to offer. Bay View is a great place by a Great Lake. That will never change!



Where in (Historical) Bay View?

BY RON WINKLER



Do you recognize this Bay View landmark?
Look for the answer in the next issue of The Historian.

Answer to last issue's quiz (Winter 2022):

Martin Daavelaar owned this Victorian Gothic cream city brick home at 2467 South Burrell Street which was constructed in 1886. In 1890 Davelaar built a new home for himself at 2513 S. Kinnickinnic Avenue which still stands. Davelaar owned one brickyard in Chase's Valley to the west behind this home and a second one on Pryor and Delaware, the site of today's Lewis Playground





DINING & CONVERSATION WITH JOHN AND SONJA NELSON GURDA

➡ BID FROM JULY 1 - AUGUST 1!

**Experience an evening at the Beulah Brinton House
Fall 2023 — a very rare opportunity!**

In honor of the 150th anniversary of the historic home of Warren and Beulah Brinton and as a fundraiser for improving the property, John and Sonja will join 8 guests for fine dining and delightful stories about the Bay View area.

Bid on an evening event to include warm welcome by John and Sonja while dining team provides beverages and appetizers for guests as they enjoy touring the entire home and property (fall date to be identified**).*

Then a very fine dinner will be served including several continental courses. Lovely desserts and beverages with specialized stories will complete the evening. Photos will be taken by request!

Visit the **Bay View Historical Society website store** from **July 1 to August 1** to bid on this unique experience. **Bidding begins @ \$1000.** You can make it a special event for 8 family members or friends.

Deadline for bidding is **August 1, 2023.** Note: as a 501(c)3 fundraiser, the entire donation may be eligible for an itemized tax deduction.

Please contact Susan Ballje – susan.ballje@yahoo.com with questions.

*dining team are soon to be renowned as Bay View cooks who also love to garden and play canasta - a.k.a Anne Maedke, Jeanne Trogia, Nancy Tawney and Susan Ballje

Hammer Bill

In response to the last edition's Hammer Bill article, John Liebenstein wrote the following: *Bill's name was William Pergande. I remember when I was a kid his roaming through Bay View with his hammer.*

If you look the name up online, you'll find 1940 census records listing a William Pergande Jr. who lived with his father, Wm. Sr. and mother Kate.

Is it Time to Renew Your Membership?

Please look at your Bay View Historian mailing label to see when your membership will expire.

All yearly membership terms run from January 1 thru December 31. Any new memberships will be current through the end of the calendar year (one year plus pro-rated months). Members receive our newsletter, *The Historian*, with interesting articles and the latest information on all our events as well as discounts at a variety of Bay View merchants.

Thanks for supporting the programs of the Bay View Historical Society!

**PLEASE RENEW MY MEMBERSHIP IN
THE BAY VIEW HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

Membership Dues

- ☐ Individual.....\$20
- ☐ Household.....\$30
- ☐ Senior (65 or older).....\$17
- ☐ Senior Household.....\$25
- ☐ Nonprofit/Small Business.....\$30
- ☐ Corporate.....\$55

Philanthropic Levels:

- ☐ \$100 Friend ☐ \$1,000 Patron
- ☐ \$500 Leader ☐ \$2,500+ Benefactor

☐ Also enclosed is a tax deductible contribution of \$ _____

☐ Enclosed is my check in the amount of \$ _____

Please make checks payable to:
Bay View Historical Society

Name _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ ZIP: _____

Phone: _____

E-Mail: _____

☐ Please contact me! I'd like to volunteer for a project or committee.

☐ Please save a tree and send The Historian to the email address above.

Send your Membership Renewal to:

**The Bay View Historical Society
Attn: Membership
2590 S. Superior Street
Bay View, WI 53207**



Calendar of Events

Please check the BVHS Website BayViewHistoricalSociety.org for new TBD events coming this summer, including a Trivia Night, Bike Ride and Frozen Custard book talk!

Bruno Nordberg House Landmark Dedication

Saturday • June 10 • 1pm
2940 S. Logan Avenue

BVHS August Walk: The Northern Border

Saturday • August 5 • 9:30am
9am • Registration
Colectivo Coffee
2301 S. Kinnickinnic Avenue.

Monthly Open House

1st Saturdays from 1-4 pm
Saturday • June 3
Saturday • July 1
Saturday • August 5
Saturday • September 2

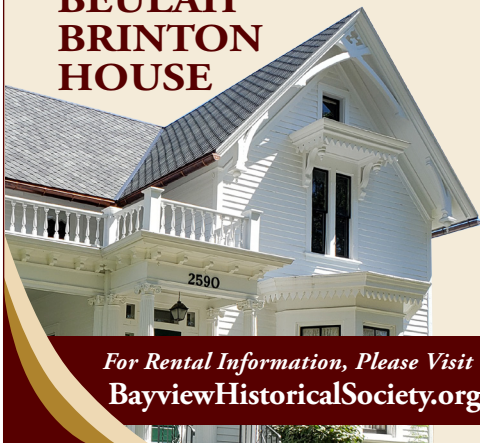
BVHS Board Meetings

Board of Directors meetings are usually held the second Wednesday of the month at 6:30pm. The format is hybrid, meeting in-person at the Beulah Brinton House and via Zoom, and are open to members.

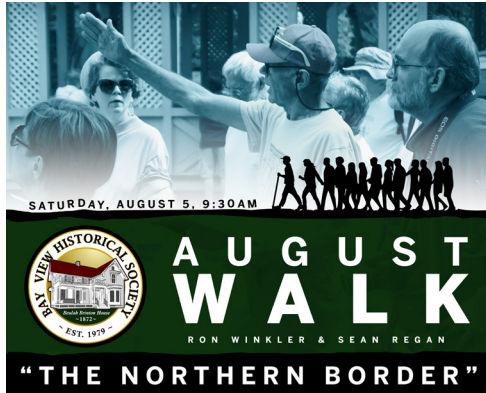
Wednesday • June 14 • 6:30pm
Wednesday • July 12 • 6:30pm
Wednesday • August 9 • 6:30pm

HOLD YOUR EVENT

at the Historic
**BEULAH
BRINTON
HOUSE**



For Rental Information, Please Visit
BayviewHistoricalSociety.org



Northern Border Walk

SATURDAY ~ AUGUST 5, 2023, 9:30 AM

This year's Bay View Historical Society (BVHS) annual August Walk will be held on Saturday, August 5th. We will start and end at Colectivo Coffee, 2301 S. Kinnickinnic Avenue. Registration will be at 9:00 am and the walk will begin at 9:30 am. The Western Border Walk will be led by society members Ron Winkler and Sean Regan.

Cost will be \$5.00 for BVHS members and \$10.00 for nonmembers. Anyone purchasing a membership that day will be admitted for \$5.00. Each participant will also receive a copy of the new Northern Border walk brochure, one of nine walking tours designed to help Bay Viewites and visitors gain an appreciation of Bay View's history, architecture and lifestyle.

The approximately two-mile walk has three sections. The first is the residential area north of Lincoln Avenue and east of Kinnickinnic Avenue. The second section is centered on the industrial area north of Bay Street. The final section is along Kinnickinnic Avenue with its businesses and historic buildings.

The Northern Border has been part of the city of Milwaukee since 1857, yet it attached itself to Bay View sometime after 1887 when Bay View joined the city of Milwaukee. Most of the Northern Border Walk is unfamiliar to even Bay View residents.

Here are some of the Highlights

Allis Street/Punk Alley The alley between Allis Street and Mound Street was known as "Punk Alley" starting in the 1970s. Gangs ruled this area which was populated with liquor stores, dingy bars and boarded up homes. The gang activity involved drugs and starting fires in garages. Bill Doyle and the police department worked to eliminate the problem. Part of the solution was to tear down garages that were being used as hideouts by the gangs.

Kohl Brothers Grocery and Meats site, 630 E. Lincoln Avenue, northwest corner of Lincoln & Woodward In 1898, a wooden store was built on this site. It was taken over in 1927 by Max Kohl (Senator Herb Kohl's father), his brother Jack, and his



brother-in-law, Jacob Shapiro. Max Kohl started his empire of Kohl's Food Stores throughout Milwaukee starting in 1935. He also opened a chain of department stores throughout southeastern Wisconsin. The store remained open into the 1980s, but in 1984 the building was vacant and it was razed during the late 1980s.

Brunks Lane was named during the 1870s for William Brunk, a carpenter who lived on the street. There were about fifteen houses on the street which extended to Kinnickinnic Avenue until 1960 when Ward Street was extended east of Kinnickinnic Avenue to Allis Street. Ward Street was named for Milwaukee Iron Company founder Eber Brock Ward. The city turned this area into a nameless mini-park (named Zillman Park in 1978). Today there is one house on Brunks Lane which is the only brick street in Bay View.

Elias Stollenwerk Home, 2246 S. Aldrich Street Elias Stollenwerk (born 1857) was the senior member of Elias Stollenwerk and Company, contractors and builders. He built a Queen Anne home in 1890 as his home and office. He started his business in 1883 and employed his brother John. They built St. Augustine School (1888) and Church (1908), which was the Stollenwerk Family's parish.



Mound Street School/Winchester Village, 2147 S. Winchester Street This Queen Anne style school was built in 1886 between Mound Street and Winchester Street. The school closed in 1979 and was converted in 1983 to the senior housing Winchester Village addressed at 2147 South Winchester.

The Penney Flats row house was built in 1894 at 380-96 E. Becher Street by streetcar operator Lorenzo Seymer for \$9000. The story is that he either saved or embezzled his pennies to build these apartments. Row houses are rare in Milwaukee. This short segment of Becher Street was originally named Allen Street.



A Very Successful Bay View Spaces & Traces Tour



Bay View High School Continued

Gargoyles

The line of 150 gargoyles circling the school at the fourth level adds a touch of whimsy. It is a mystery why MPS or the builder included the \$50,000 worth of stone faces. That \$50,000 would cost \$898,321 today. Although Van Ryn and DeGelleke designed other schools in similar architectural style such as MPS's Washington and Riverside High Schools as well as UW-Milwaukee's Mitchell Hall and MATC's main downtown building, none of those have gargoyles.

BVHS's 1956 Oracle annual features gargoyles. Its forward reads: "Unchanging through the years, gargoyles that border Bay View's walls, look down upon the scenes below. Scenes that have varied with the generations that have walked our campus paths and made our halls their high school home." Nothing more is written about the gargoyles. No mention of why they are there or of any symbolism. There are four pages of photos depicting gargoyles on the school.

BVHS's faces are not really gargoyles. Gargoyles are water spouts to expel water from a roof. Its face can be human, humanoid or animal. These gargoyles, found on castles and churches, are ugly and scary. On a church, gargoyles are an invitation to come inside for protection from evil beings. Castles had gargoyles to frighten enemies. With our modern gutters, gargoyles are unnecessary.

What we call gargoyles are grotesques, which are gargoyle-like decorative sculptures. Milwaukee's "gargoyles" and grotesques are from the turn of the 20th century and their purpose was simply decoration. Maybe the BVHS "gargoyles" were to guard the "Castle on the Hill," as well as those who enter it.

BVHS Today

Fritsche Junior High School, built during the post-World War II baby boom, opened in September 1963 for the area's 7th through 9th graders. That relieved the crowded conditions at BVHS, which then housed grades 10 thru 12. Over the years, junior highs became middle schools for grades 6 thru 9.

Major change followed a 2008 Community Task Force recommendation that Fritsche and BVHS share the same building. It resulted in the formation of Bay View Middle and High School. The BVHS building became home to grades 6 thru 12, with middle schoolers on the third level of the school.

The questionable combination of middle schoolers and high schoolers was doomed to fail as several fights and lockdowns occurred. MPS responded by phasing out the middle school. BVHS began the 2015 school year as a four-year high school. Ninth-graders are programmed into a freshman academy that supports students during their transition from middle school to high school.

BVHS prepares students for college by offering students the opportunity to earn college credits through Advanced Placement and Project Lead the Way courses. Additionally, since 2013, BVHS has offered a program of creativity and innovation, which builds upon rigorous training in science, technology, engineering, arts and math (STEAM). Expectations for graduation are more challenging and STEAM builds upon some of the school's strengths such as partnerships with the Boys and Girls Clubs, UW-Milwaukee, a variety of art institutions, and local businesses.

As of May 3, 2023, there are exactly 900 students, similar to the 920 students at the end of the 2013-14 school year. Jeffery Gaddis has been principal for three years and was vice-principal for ten years before that.

Want to Leave a Lasting Legacy?

Leaving a legacy often means handing down what we value most. For many of us, that includes making certain that our children and grandchildren will inherit our precious history and heritage.

When preparing your estate plan, please consider leaving a legacy to the Bay View Historical Society, too. Your doing so will ensure that the Society can continue its mission to encourage a sense of community by preserving, celebrating and sharing Bay View's rich heritage.

If you would like further information on how to remember the Bay View Historical Society, please contact **Nancy Tawney; 414-744-5674, ntawney@aol.com**

Passing Seen

BY BILL O'BRIEN

In my neighborhood gambols, I've seen gambrels. You've seen them, too, on houses with double-pitched barn roofs ⁽¹⁾. Their gable ends show a shallow slope from the ridgeline to a break with a steeper, taller slope below.



Gambol, gambrel, and some archaic slang all derive from gambe, an old French word for leg⁽²⁾. While gambol suggests more skipping than my walks entail any more, the image of a leg bent at the knee makes a good match for a gambrel roof.

Gambrels are generally associated with Dutch Colonial homes of the 17th century, one of many regional architectural forms revived in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. In contrast to the modest scale of

single-family homes, the Massachusetts State pavilion at the 1893 Columbian Exposition in Chicago was an extravagant and towering example of the style.



The best of Bay View's gambrel roofs is crossed, with two-pitched gables front and back and west and east. Built in 1901 as 494 Montana Street, it was the home of Edward Dixon, a Canadian-born marine engineer.



A larger house in this form stood at Kinnickinnic Avenue and Otjen Street until 1993, when Dr. Paul Hankwitz's home and surgery was demolished to clear the site for our new Bay View Library. Its former site was a stop on Ron Winkler's KK Link Walk, described and illustrated in the online Historian for October 2016.

While wooden barns were framed to make long, high, open upstairs spaces, our houses tend towards small rooms and flat ceilings. If your house's gambrel roof doesn't afford enough overhead, the yellow house shows a solution: punching dormers through the lower slopes.



NOTE:

(1) Why aren't these rooves?

(2) The modern French for leg is jambe. It's been 50 years since I've heard legs described as a "pair of gams."