



SHARON

HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The **Gilded Age**

Explore a transformational era in Sharon's past with this tour of grand mansions on the East and West Hills from the 1860s through 1925.



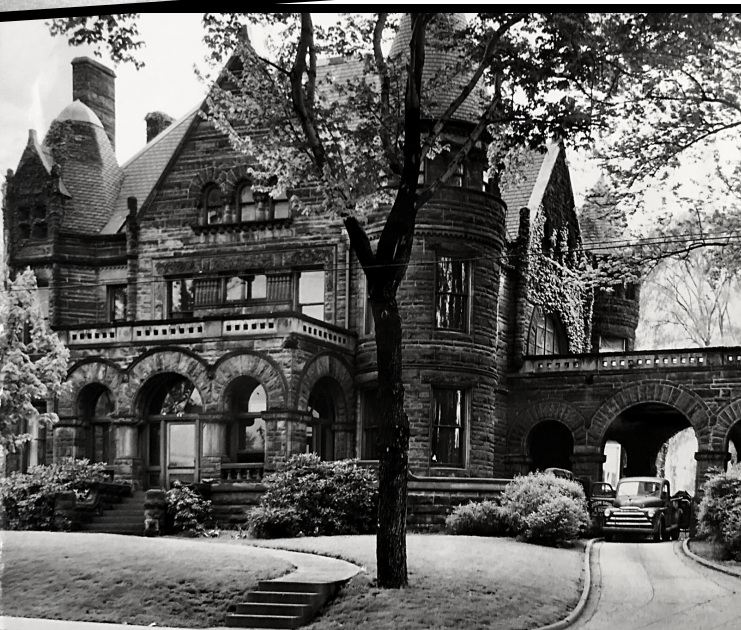
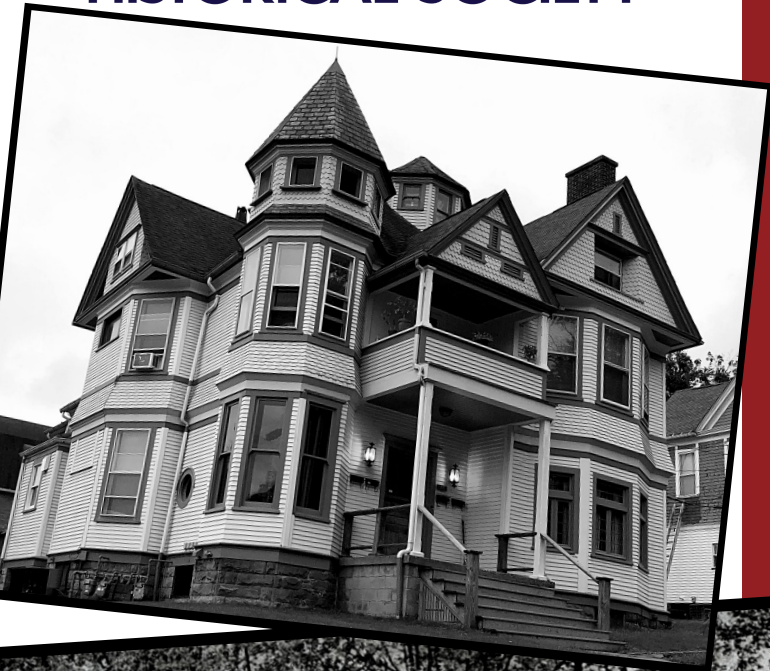
1 946 West State Street

This handsome Craftsman-influenced home was built circa 1910 by William T. Thomas, proprietor of the Thomas Music House and Thomas Theater (32 Shenango Avenue). The house and its architect, E. E. Clepper of Sharon, were featured in a 1912 issue of the Ohio Architect, Engineer and Builder magazine.

2 395 West State Street

Built by Samuel DeForeest circa 1881-99, this Italianate home was influenced by the octagonal style. True pioneers, the DeForeest family (which alternated between single and double e's) originated in New Jersey, where Samuel was born. His grandfather, Abram, served under George Washington in the Revolutionary War. Samuel's father, Gershom, made the trip to Mercer County in 1832 with his wife and 8 children by team and wagon. It took six weeks. He rented a piece of land and a log cabin just over the Ohio line. He later bought 157 acres in Trumbull County and became a successful farmer. Samuel, too, went into farming. In 1880, he and his family lived in Brookfield, Ohio. It is unclear when they moved to the city house. A brick-lined well about 3 feet across is in the floor of the kitchen at the rear of the house.

Samuel's brother, William, made the family a household name. In 1868, he founded the Pioneer Music House, one of the biggest music stores in the region, selling pianos and musical instruments. Around 1906, they added Buick, Pontiac, and Cadillac automobiles.



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3 371 West State Street

In the summer of 1884, James Vincent Rose bought this one-third-acre property from James W. McClean and had this Late Queen Anne mansion built. Rose learned the brick mason's trade in his native New Castle. He came to Sharon in 1883 and bought the fire-brick works, later founding the Sharon Fire Brick Co. with his son, William G. Rose. It produced fire brick and red brick at its plants in Sharon (Vine Avenue at Canal Street) and in Masury, where the streetcar amusement park called Roseville Park (later Idlewild) took its name. In 1904, he started another company in Oakland, California to make magnesite fire bricks. It was heavily damaged in the 1906 earthquake, however, that plant ceased operations in 1908. Rose served as Supreme Vice President of the Protected Home Circle fraternal insurance organization in Sharon from its founding in 1886 to 1905. He served on the Sharon Borough Council at one time. In 1911, Rose was summoned by death after battling an illness for three years. The mansion is the "queen" of the West Hill with its highly ornate exterior of brick and wood-frame, wraparound front porch, art-glass, and huge foundation stones. The most unusual feature is the "bee hive" roofed corner turret with a third floor balcony, offering great views of downtown.

4 357 West State Street

An example of the transition from Queen Anne to the simplified Eastern Stick style, this mansion was built by William McIntyre circa 1890. McIntyre was a stonecutter responsible for building much of the Valley. Note the stone front porch and wood brackets.

5 347 West State Street

Perry L. Williams, a shoemaker by trade, opened a shop downtown in 1843 that became Sharon's first ready-made shoe store in the early 1860s. By 1919, it was Sharon's oldest business and being run as P. L. Williams and Sons, the sons being Martin and George. George was one of the "Three Musketeers" golfers. Sharon friends John "Jock" Murchie, George Martin, and John Carley were so named by John W. Jones, a Baltimore sportswriter, who wrote a poem about the aged golfers after seeing them play in Pinehurst, NY. It has been several apartments since 1952.

This residence, built circa 1891, is an example of Queen Anne architecture with influences of the Shingle style. Prominent, shingle-covered gables, a full-width porch with classic revival columns and dentils, and an upper story bay window with a castellation motif are featured.

6 333 West State Street

John Carley, Vice President of Wallis and Carley Co., a contracting and lumber/builders supplier, had this excellent example of the Queen Anne style built in 1883. Carley was also President of the Merchants and Manufacturers National Bank and charter member of the Sharon Social Fishing Club on Lake Muskoka, Ontario. Around 1903, a yellow-brick carriage house and stables was built behind the home where their horses and automobiles were maintained with service staff likely living upstairs. The mansion is one of the finest examples of the Queen Anne style in the city with its projection bays, a two-story front porch and balcony, octagonal turret, a variety of siding styles and colors, and grand size. Beginning in 1807, the land from First Baptist Church next door to Logan Avenue and from West State to A Street was the city's graveyard. In 1868, burials were ban within city limits, and in 1876, graves were moved and the land sold.

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7 300 West State Street

This Georgian Revival mansion was built in 1912 by Grace T. Perkins, heiress to the fortune of General Simon Perkins and his wife, Laura Norton. Simon Perkins was born in Akron, Ohio and was a banker, Civil War soldier, manufacturer, and one of Sharon's best-known residents. He invested in blast furnaces, a gas and water company, and was President of the Sharon Railway Co. The family had one of the first automobiles in the city. His wife, Laura Norton, was part of the General Joel B. Curtis family that began the coal mining industry in Sharon. In 1910, the 1870s Curtis wood-frame mansion that stood on this site burned to the ground. Simon Perkins died in 1911. The estate consists of 6.8 acres with a quaint brick gatehouse at the entrance and an 1889 brick carriage house near the rear of the property. The 16-room mansion was designed by noted Pittsburgh architects, MacClure and Spahr, for \$75,000. The grounds were complete with an apple orchard, grape arbor, and gardens with rare flora from Perkins' travels. Miss Perkins was well-liked by the community. She opened the grounds for sled riding and Easter egg hunts. Through the years she had many service staff, gardeners, and chauffeurs. In July of 1959, the Donald V. Sawhill Charitable Foundation bought the property for use by organizations such as the United Way. The value of the donation in 1959 was \$250,000. The home is Flemish bond brick construction with a symmetrical façade, Palladian windows, arched entrance porch, arched side porch, dormers, keystones over windows, and quoining. The windows have the original hinged shutters. The roof is slate. The interior and outbuildings retain their integrity.

8 109 N. Irvine Avenue

"The Implacable Foe of the U.S. Steel Corporation" and "One Man Who's Not Afraid of the Steel Trust" are just two of the nicknames for John Stevenson Jr., who came from Scotland in 1848. While managing New Castle Nail and Wire Co., he commissioned New Castle architect Sidney Foulk to design a \$100,000 residence suitable for his standing. Returning from a European vacation, he found his partners had sold his company to U.S. Steel, leaving him no executive role. He decided to leave New Castle, but no one would buy his home, so in 1900 he moved the mansion stone by stone to Sharon. Paying \$20,000 for the Boyce property which extended to the top of the West Hill overlooking downtown, it took 55 rail cars to move the thousands of pink sandstone blocks. They were numbered for reassembly which took a year to complete. The floor plan was reversed and rooms were added. The cost of the move was \$100,000. Stevenson became a partner with Frank H. Buhl, a multi-millionaire industrialist, but his mills were bought out too. He invested in Standard Tank Car Co. and founded Driggs-Seabury Ordnance Co., which made weapons during World War I and a small car, the Twombly. It later became Savage Arms Co. then Westinghouse Electric Corp. Andrew Carnegie and President Taft were entertained in the home. Stevenson died in 1938; the Church of the Sacred Heart bought it in 1944. The Carriage Hill Apartments were built at the bottom of the hill, removing most of the unique foliage and ornate iron gates. Greenhouses were present on the grounds of the estate at one time. A showplace of wealth, the mansion is Richardsonian Romanesque in style featuring a pink sandstone asymmetrical façade, arched porches and porte cochere, and parapeted gables. A large tower and carved figures in the stone are present. Inside, magnificent fireplaces, wood and plasterwork remain. It's presently being restored.

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9 359 East Silver Street

Built in 1866 by George Boyce, construction engineer for the Erie Extension Canal, this fine example of the Italianate style retains much of its integrity such as porches, doors, and interior finishes of ornate wood and black marble mantels. The retaining wall is likely canal stone.

10 252 East State Street

Elizabeth E. Haywood, the widow of ex-State Treasurer Benjamin Haywood, who died in 1899, had this Colonial Revival mansion built circa 1901. It was designed by noted Youngstown architects Charles Owsley and Louis Boucherle. As spelled out in her will, after death in 1924 the house became the Elizabeth E. Haywood Home for Retired Presbyterian Ministers, capable of accommodating almost a dozen couples.

11 264 East State Street

This wood-frame Second Empire mansion was built circa 1886 by Alexander McDowell. He studied law, but never practiced. During the Civil War, he served in the Union Army in the 121st Regiment of Pennsylvania Volunteers, becoming a brevet major. He was elected as a Republican to the 53rd Congress, Clerk of the House of Representatives from 1895-1911, and a delegate to the Republican National Conventions in 1900, 1904, and 1908. A well-known citizen of Sharon, he founded the McDowell National Bank. The mansion featured decorative brackets under an ornamental cornice, a tower with a convex mansard roof, and 26 rooms from cellar to the attic. A small carriage house used to sit at the back left where the parking is now.

12 290 East State Street

One of the finest examples of the American Movement, this Prairie and Renaissance Revival style mansion was built circa 1892-98 by William Wallis, President of Wallis and Carley Co., a contracting and lumber/builders supplier. The details of the front porch are exquisite. Note the brackets under the eaves and quoining. It originally had a terracotta tile roof.

13 300 East State Street

Built by William Wallis as a wedding gift to his son Thomas, this Neoclassical-inspired house was built about 1901. The brick and Palladian windows are of interest. Thomas J. Wallis was the Vice President of Wallis and Carley Co.

14 322 East State Street

Dr. Thomas Elliott lived in a grand Queen Anne style mansion in the grassy lot next door. In this Queen Anne mansion, Dr. Elliott maintained a private hospital. It was built circa 1899 and resembles the Carley mansion (333 West State Street). The second floor balconies have been enclosed, but the tower and chimneys still maintain original details.

15 334 East State Street

Thomas Tanner was the President of the Sharon and State Line Railroad Company in 1888. While it is uncertain that this gentleman was married to Mrs. Elma A. Tanner, she was the widow of a Thomas Tanner. She purchased this property on August 15, 1898 from the Porter and Forker families and presumably built this house on her own as she was listed as a widow. The home is a Folk Victorian-style structure with decorative shingling in the gables with false half-timbering, dentils, medallions, art glass windows, and full-width porch. Note the detailed brackets under the eaves.

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16 370 East State Street

Frederick W. and Carrie Koehler had this Queen Anne mansion commissioned on March 23, 1902; it was completed on July 1, 1903. Miller & Ford, an architectural firm from Youngstown, Ohio, designed the home with associate architect, C. R. Dennison. It was featured in the *Ohio Architect, Engineer and Builder* trade publication. Wallis and Carley Co. were the contractors, and John Koehl was the foreman. Koehler was a jeweler, banker, and later personal secretary to Frank Buhl. He was heavily involved in the Free Masons both in Sharon and Pittsburgh. The house features an engaged turret, leaded and stained glass, a wraparound porch, and some of the finest woodwork. It has been extensively restored and enlarged in the rear by the current owners who bought it in 2003.

17 381 East State Street

"Dead boys like dead men, tell no tales" read the ransom note for 8-year-old "Billy" Whitla in March 1909. One of the finest examples of the Queen Anne style in the city, this mansion, designed by Youngstown architect Charles H. Owsley, was built circa 1890 by James P. and Isabella "Bella" F. Whitla. Whitla was a prominent lawyer and President of the First National Bank, who married Isabella Forker, the sister of Julia F. Buhl. They had two children, Selina and William F. "Billy," who was kidnapped and taken to Cleveland. He was returned safely. The mansion is an irregular plan wood-frame house with an arched, highly ornamented wraparound porch. The turret is in the center of the façade with stained glass transoms of wreaths over the grand staircase inside. The mansion has been restored.

18 395 East State Street

The Colonial Revival mansion of William "Billy" F. and Eleanore T. Whitla was built circa 1924. After being returned from his kidnappers, Billy grew up to follow in his father's footsteps and become a lawyer, admitted into the Mercer County bar in 1926, the day his father died. In December 1932, Whitla died of pneumonia. Mrs. Whitla lived in the mansion until her passing at the age of 93 in 1994. The house has been restored and has key hallmarks of the style like a symmetrical façade, hinged shutters, and pedimented entry.

19 422 East State Street

Built in 1891-96 for \$60,000 by multi-millionaire industrialist and philanthropist, Frank Henry Buhl, this Richardsonian Romanesque mansion is the finest house in the Valley. It was a wedding present to his wife, Julia Forker of the coal mining family. Making millions of dollars as a captain of the steel industry, Buhl became a financier and land developer in Minnesota, Idaho, and the Philippines. The Buhls donated much of their wealth back to the Valley like the Buhl Club and Buhl Park. In 1918, \$2 million was donated to France and Belgium for war relief. In 1918, Buhl died; Julia passed in 1936 leaving the house to her nephew. Built of ashlar sandstone, the 16,000+ square foot mansion was designed by Charles H. Owsley. 150 Italian stonemasons were employed to build the mansion. In return for their work, the Buhls helped them gain citizenship here. The home was outfitted with the most exquisite woodwork, rococo plasterwork, Tiffany stained glass windows, and rare items from their travels abroad. The grounds of the estate included gardens, a conservatory, indoor pool, carriage house and stables, automobile garages, and a gardener's cottage. The mansion is on the National Registry of Historic Places and was restored into a hotel and spa. Tours may be available.

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21 555 East State Street

James M. Willson began making furniture back in 1845 with his company lasting until the 1990s. This mansion, built in 1875 and designed by architect A. Kanengeiser. Wallis and Carley, successors to Faas, Kanengeiser & Co., contractors, built the home as one of its first jobs. Multiple greenhouses and stables were on the property. In 1949, L. Trevor "Buss" Sample bought the property and turned it into a funeral home and residence. What is now Sample & O'Donnell Funeral Home dates back to 1891. The home is built of brick with wood bay windows and porches. Originally, it had 10 rooms and 6 fireplaces. Note the arched stone hoods over the windows, stained or leaded glass, and numerous chimneys with decorative chimney pots. Brackets under the eaves are detailed and ornate. An original wrought iron fence surrounds the property, installed between 1875-77. The three-story entry tower is striking with its mansard roof, brickwork, brackets and a wrought iron tiara on the roofline.

22 941 East State Street

This Dutch Colonial Revival mansion was built in 1910-11 by William G. and Alice Kranz. Kranz was from Cleveland and Vice President of National Malleable and Steel Castings Co. The mansion was designed by Averill & Adams, architects from Washington D.C., and cost \$18,000 to build. A. Wishart & Sons Company were the contractors with William McIntyre & Sons completing the brick and stonework. It was featured in *The American Architect* magazine in 1911. This home became a new standard in residential architecture on the East Hill, showing the true power and wealth of the steel industry in the Shenango Valley.

23 959 East State Street

From its grand size to its formal wall and entry gate, this Tudor Revival mansion is the best example of the English Cottage subtype in the Valley. Minnie Bachman, widow of Morris Bachman, one of the most prominent leaders in the steel industry, who died December 11, 1910 at the age of 43 from an extended illness of typhoid fever and blood poisoning. In 1900, he organized the Sharon Steel Hoop Co. of which he was President. Sharon Steel Hoop Co. was a leader in producing semi-finished materials, hoops, bands, and cotton ties. This later became Sharon Steel Corp. He also was Vice President of Shenango Machine Co. in Sharon, the Griffin Manufacturing Co. in Erie, Director of the American Steel Foundries Co. in New York, President of the F. H. Buhl Club and the Sharon Country Club, and a Director for the Merchants and Manufacturers National Bank in Sharon. Bachman was a man of generous disposition and his charities were very extensive. The residence was designed by well-known architect, Charles F. Owsley of Youngstown, Ohio. It features brick and stucco construction, a false-thatched roof, an arched entry porch, a porte cochere, and a spacious front terrace that is the length of the façade. The tower is stunning, featuring castellation with decorative brickwork patterns and leaded glass windows depicting medieval characters. The home mimics the old English country estates and cottages for which this style is derived. An attached garage and carriage house were in the rear of the property.

24 150 Euclid Avenue

An uncommon Queen Anne design, this 1911 home was built by Charles H. Wiltsie, General Manager of the Fruit-Oil Co. which distributed hardware. It was designed by E. E. Clepper and featured in *The Ohio Architect, Engineer and Builder* trade publication in 1912. The details inside and out are magnificent.

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25 145 Euclid Avenue

The Huether brothers, John W. and Charles A., erected these twin houses in 1907. The Huether family owned a shoe store, started in 1859, which made, sold, and repaired shoes and boots. In 1882, John Reyer worked for the Huethers in their store, who shortly thereafter went on to start his own shoe store, which survives to this day. The houses were designed by Miller & Ford, Youngstown-based architects, and featured in *The Ohio Architect, Engineer and Builder* trade publication in 1907.

26 129 Euclid Avenue

Built in 1907 like its twin next door, this house was home to Charles A. and Catherine Huether of the Huether family shoe store. The homes are a Colonial Revival subtype called the Classic Box, similar to American Foursquare. Its known for hipped roofs, full-width porches, symmetry, and dormers. Note the scrollwork ornamentation of the front porch pediments and the terracotta ridge cresting on the rooflines.

27 101 Euclid Avenue

John Fahnlane Sr. became an engineer and moved to New Castle in the 1880s to assist in building and running several large plants. It was there he met Jennie Walls; they were married on Christmas Day 1890. The Fahnlines built this imposing brick mansion on four city lots in 1908. The family were pioneers for in 1898, they acquired the second automobile brought into Sharon and the first one to actually run in the borough. In 1912, the Society of American Florists officially registered the "Jennie Walls

Fahnlane" variety of canna and in 1914, specimens donated to the government were grown beside the Washington Monument, but the government pronounced it not showy enough. Their only son, John Jr., built an early ham radio receiver in a shack behind the house during World War I. In July 1929, John Jr. had an odd feeling about the stock market and sold his considerable holdings in U.S. Steel, just before the market collapsed. The wealth he preserved became the capital behind radio station WPIC, which went on the air in 1938. The station bucked convention with the novelty of having hourly newscasts and high-brow classical music. An FM station was added in 1947. The house is a great example of the transition from Queen Anne to Colonial Revival with wreath and garland motifs on the porch. Inside, fretwork and other details remain. A widow's walk was on the roof originally.

28 346 Prindle Street

Chauncey Nelson Prindle relocated to Sharon in 1851, having been born in Connecticut in 1820 and moving to Trumbull County, Ohio upon growing to maturity. When he arrived in Sharon he apprenticed as a butcher, then became a prominent grocer until 1870. He retired from active business to devote his time to this expansive property, the "Prindle Homestead." He was a lifelong Democrat, and in 1863, Prindle was on the borough council. He came to Sharon as a poor man but accumulated a large estate through the years. He was revered as an upstanding, substantial citizen at his time of death in 1888. This fine example of brick Italianate architecture has elements of Second Empire and Victorian Gothic styles. It sits prominently on a large tract of land, likely for farming when the home was built. The house had a cupola with excellent views from the top of Jennyburg Hill, a tin roof, 12 rooms, and 2 baths. Note the brackets at the cornice and front porch; the inside has integrity.