

LaGrange Area Historical Society  
Walking Tours of the LaGrange Historic District – Tour #5



**1 100 South Ashland** is a Victorian house with an interesting polygonal bay. Built in 1895, it is known as the Dr. E.S. Detweiler House, after its original owner, who practiced in La Grange for over 25 years. By 1910 the house was owned by W.M. Lemon, who practiced dentistry here for over 50 years. His brother Willis also began an illustrious medical career in La Grange and later became head of the department of chest medicine at Mayo Clinic and was considered an international authority on lung diseases.



**2 114 South Ashland** was the home of La Grange pioneer John S. White, who was the oldest resident of La Grange when he died in 1931 at the age of 95. The house is a Queen Anne that features a second floor turret with a decorative finial.



**3 118 South Ashland** was the home of Philip M. Coates, who began fighting the Civil War with Generals Sherman and Bentley when he was only fifteen years old. When he died in 1935 at the age of 88, Mr. Coates was the last surviving member of the G.A.R. Hiram McClintock post.



**4 150 South Ashland** First Presbyterian Church of La Grange, built in 1912, features a series of colorful memorial chapel stained glass windows. The chancel window was designed and fabricated in France by Gabriel Loire of Chartres, whose international reputation also earned him commissions in Egypt, Scotland, Germany, and San Francisco.

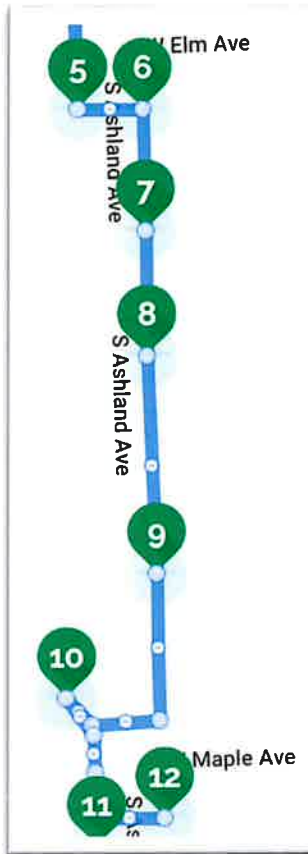


**5 200 South Ashland** is an excellent example of a simplified Queen Anne. The decorative fishscaling in the gables and fishscaled beltcourse between the first and second floors are architectural details of note. There has been little alteration to the original.



**6 201 South Ashland** was the home of General Thomas Reynolds in 1893 and later of the Meyers family. The home is a Tudor-influenced vernacular. Note the unusual sidelights.

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**213 South Ashland** is a Victorian house. Notice the dentilwork cornice, fishscaling in the gable, and front bay with cutaway brackets.



8

**217 South Ashland** was owned by Professor F.E. Sanford, who was superintendent of District 102 schools for 27 years beginning in 1890. Later it became the home of Walter Dierks, a president of the Telephone Pioneers of America.



9

**225 South Ashland** was built in 1892 and was first owned by Ayers and Mary Lundy, who became among the village's most prominent citizens. Lundy was an engineer for Edison General Electric Company. In 1891 he joined with Frederick Sargent, an associate of Thomas Edison and a Village resident, to found the firm of Sargent and Lundy, which has become the largest consulting engineer firm in the world. Note the unusual beveled glass parlor transom and the geometrically-designed window of the front door.



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**240 South Ashland** is a Victorian house that once was the residence of Wilson Silsby, who became director of Pathe Films in 1911. Mr. Silsby's adopted son Clifford was a designer for Mary Pickford.



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**300 South Ashland** is a Queen Anne Victorian of unique character. Of particular interest is the wraparound porch with full classical column supports. The home belonged to Lucy Ellen Windsor, who was president of the Chicago Association of the Woman's Board of Missions of the Interior. Which embraced the missionary societies of fifty-four churches. Later the house was owned by Reverend Ira W. Allen, pastor of the Presbyterian church and president of the board of trustees of Blackburn College and Collinsville, Illinois.



12

**301 South Ashland** is a Queen Anne. The notable details include the turret top with decorative circular shingles and windows with ornamental muntins, circular shingles in gables, Palladian Style stairwell window on the north facade, and fishscaling on the former.

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**304 South Ashland** was the home of Frederic L. Goff, who became Village Attorney in 1910.



**324 South Ashland** This Foursquare was the home of June Zimmerman, an internationally recognized classic dancer and teacher. Using the professional name of Xenia Zarina, she performed in operas, motion pictures, theaters, and ballets, and taught all over the world during the 1920's and 1930's. Ms. Zimmerman's dance studies and performances began at LTHS and continued in many countries, including Mexico, France, Japan, Bali, Cambodia, Thailand, India, and Egypt. During World War II she was appointed dance instructor in the Royal Court in Tehran and performed for the guests of the Royal Pahlavi family.



**405 South Ashland** is a "farmhouse" of excellent design quality. Note the exceptional cross gabled clapboard coach house.



**409 South Ashland** was the home of a La Grange Pioneer family. Mary E. Thompson came to La Grange in 1892 with her husband George and lived in the Village until her death in 1957.

**431 South Ashland** is believed to have been owned, during the 1930's or 1940's, by Mendum Bedloe, a cousin of the famous Barrymore theatrical family. Neighbors recall the Barrymores' having visited their cousins when performing in Chicago.

The Bedloes were also descendants of another famous family, the one for which Bedloe Island in New York Harbor was named. The island once housed Fort Wood, which was built during the war of 1812. It became the site of a gift for the people of France - the Statue of Liberty. Frederic Auguste Bartholdi chose the site, and Alexandre Gustave Eiffel built the supporting framework for the 1885 assembling of this "Lady of Liberty." In 1956 Bedloe Island was re-named Liberty Island. The house is a simplified Queen Anne.





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**315 South Catherine** Matt Nelson, builder of many Foursquare houses in la Grange, came to La Grange in 1906 and lived in this example of his work from 1908-1912.



**323 South Catherine** in 1916 Dr. H.C. Dewey, prominent La Grange dentist, moved from this home to the Northrup house at 231 South Waiola. Information about Mr. Dewey can be found in Tour #2. This home was designed for Dr. Dewey by architect R.C. Fletcher in 1905.



**337 S. Catherine** Mr. and Mrs. T.T. Watson moved from Chicago to LaGrange in 1917. After attending the University of Chicago, their son, William Weldon Watson became a contributor to the creation of the atom bomb.



**340 S. Catherine** belonged to William Hulsberg, a carpenter/contractor who came to LaGrange to build wooden sidewalks for F.D. Cossitt.



**417 South Catherine** was the site of Croak's dairy. William A. Croak belonged to the original Chamber of Commerce.



**441 South Catherine** was the home of Fritz Krohn, a member of La Grange's first volunteer fire department.



**445 South Catherine** was the home of Walter P. Hill (1868-1945), who arrived in La Grange in 1882 from Rochester, N.Y., As part of a family that included nine children. This pioneer La Grange family was active in the Congregational Church. In 1920, Mr Hill moved to Mackinac Island, where he operated a resort, Bennett Hall, for 25 years. Others in his family, however, remained in La Grange.

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**105 S. Catherine** once belonged to Paul Augustinus, who was best known in La Grange as the first “village forester.” For several years he carried on an educational campaign urging the care of fine old trees.



**124 South Catherine** was the home of Earl R. Lind, president of the Better Business Bureau of Chicago and Illinois. He served three terms as Village Trustee. The home is a foursquare. Notice the front door with sidelights.



**220 South Catherine** Charles A. Whitney, born in 1854, established residence in La Grange in 1881. In 1884 he began the Suburban News, a weekly paper, the first between Chicago and Aurora. Mr. Whitney sold the house to the family of A.D. French.

Mr. French, a descendant of an English family that settled in Virginia before 1700, served as the Village Fire Marshall from 1893-1897. This vernacular house displays a full wraparound porch with half classical columns on limestone supports.



**222 South Catherine** was the home of Ms. Margaret Menelly, who was principal of Cossitt School in 1921, and of Mrs. Leona Larimore, who was principal of Cossitt School in 1929.



**226 South Catherine** was the home of Andrew R. Case, a veteran of the Spanish American War, Boxer Rebellion, Philippine insurrection, Chicago Fire Department, and La Grange Police Department.

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**307 W. Harris** “The Daleshire De Luxe Apartments” were built in 1929. Among the prominent residents was John M. Riel, a nationally known lumberman and president of the Keith Lumber Company of Chicago. Another significant resident was Miss Lowell Bates, owner of the McAllister-Schoen Department Stores in Hinsdale and La Grange.



**2 South Catherine** is the “Strasser House,” a Victorian Second Empire house of excellent architectural quality, it is unique, for it is the only unaltered house of this style in the historic District. This landmark house has a mansard roof, heavily bracketed cornice, parlor and front door transom with stained glass, and a second story square tower with painted roof and decorative finial.

In 1893 J. M. Strasser became superintendent of the Automatic-Telephone Company, the first telephone service in La Grange. He was also vice-president of the Association of Commerce.

At one point in its history, the house was occupied by a family who rented pony rides to children for 25 cents an hour.

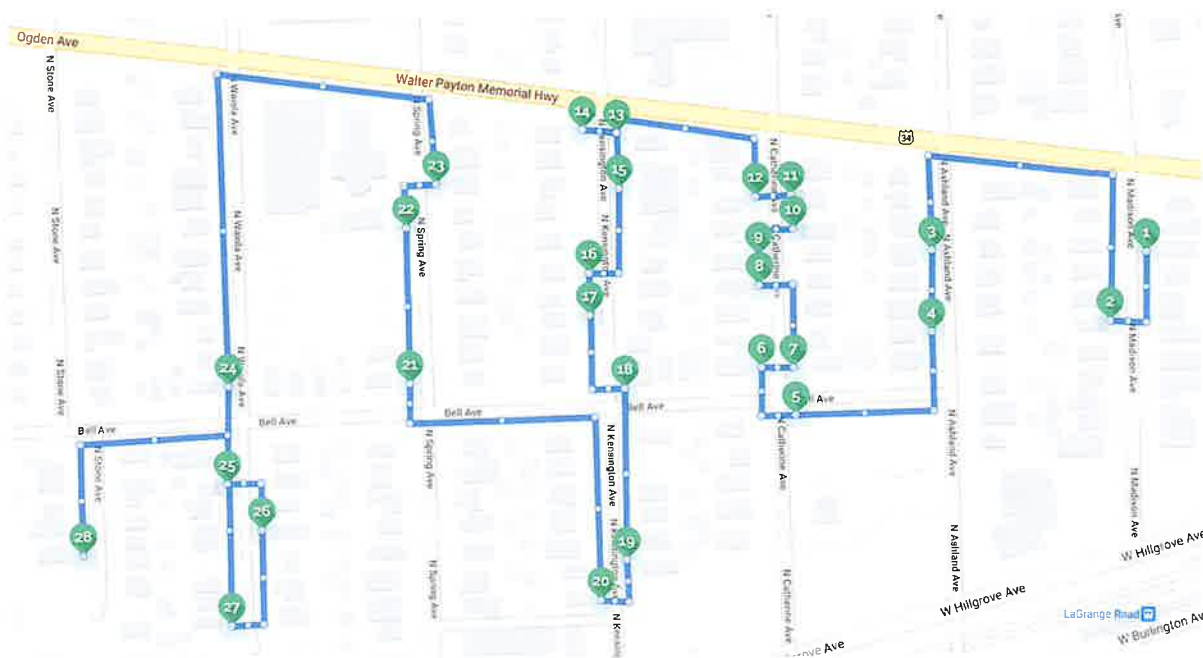


**11 South Catherine** was the home of William Loomis, who started the Citizen newspaper in 1905. Mr. Loomis dedicated himself to his publication and the Village and took a leading role in community affairs and the development of the business district.



**209 West Cossitt** is an excellent Victorian which has had little alteration over the years. Like all homes marked with asterisks, this one is of great architectural importance to the Village.

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**Welcome to the La Grange Historic District Tours**

The Village of La Grange was incorporated in 1879, just nine years after its founder, Franklin D. Cossitt, began his program of organizing a quality residential community. The success of his plan has continued to be a source of civic pride and has resulted in the enduring attractiveness and stability of the community. According to architect Wilbert R. Hasbrouck, “Village of La Grange Historic District as a well preserved suburban community with excellent examples of domestic architecture dating from the late 19th century to the early 20th century.” In his statement requesting that the La Grange Historic District be nominated to the National Register of Historic Places, architect Hasbrouck wrote:

*“In its totality, the La Grange Historic District represents a period of architectural development of high artistic value and significance to the history of the region. Furthermore, the buildings have survived intact while continuing to be used for their original purpose.”*

All tours include commentary about the history and style of the buildings, which represent a variety of architectural styles and which were often designed by such notables as Frank Lloyd Wright, J. C. Llewellyn, E. H. Turnock, and J.N. Tilden.

In order to limit the length of each tour, the Society has highlighted only homes of the very highest degree of historical and architectural significance. However, the beauty of the Village lies in the overall quality of all of its residences. If you have an extra few minutes to devote to your tour, you might also want to study some of these other fine houses.



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**41 North Madison** is an outstanding example of the Victorian/Queen Anne style and has undergone little alteration since its construction. Of note are the two-story corner turret with conical roof and simple finial, the extensive use of fishscale shingles in the turret and bales, and a fishscaled beltcourse between the first and second floors.



**34 North Madison** is a vernacular house with Queen Anne influences. It was the home of Bert E. Gordon, for whom member of the LTHS staff, serving as a track coach and as an administrator. He was a La Grange trustee from 1921-1922, served as commissioner of La Grange's first Park District Board for 18 years, was president of the Kiwanis Club, and was active in the fund-raising drive which led to the construction of the West Suburban YMCA.



**50 North Ashland** was the home of Richard "Uncle Dick" Evans, who was the oldest living La Grange resident in 1929. His stories about the early days of the Village, when wolves chased him as he rode his horse, made him an interesting companion. He was born in England in 1838 and came to America as a baby of 10 months. He worked for "Long John Wentworth" and was a drummer boy for General Sam Houston.



**38 North Ashland** The owner of this vernacular home, J.H. Ritenhouse, invented the automatic garage door opener, which was exhibited in the Travel and Transport Building at the 1933 World's Fair.



**21 North Catherine - First Baptist Church.** In 1924 the present structure replaced the original one which had been built in 1886 and was erected in the English Gothic Style. The church was started in 1884, when F.D. Cossitt, the "founding father" of the community, gave the congregation the lots on which to build their church. There are lovely stained glass windows in the Sanctuary and the Chapel. Over the entrance is a representation of the Cross, Star of Hope, and Ship of the Church.



**100 North Catherine** is an excellent Queen Anne Victorian. The original Owner was J. Pasmore.



**101 North Catherine** This excellent Victorian originally belonged to T. Brown. Notable architectural elements include polygonal bays and an unusual dome. The house also has belonged to Dr. J.A. Linnell, who arrived in La Grange in 1902, and to State Representative and Mrs. John W. Farley.



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**114 North Catherine** is an excellent Victorian. The original owner was W. Teeters.



**118 North Catherine** was the home of Olin Q. Holman, who lived in La Grange from 1897-1934. Mr. Holman repaired Victorians.



**123 North Catherine** was the vernacular home of Fred E. Nagel. Mr. Nagel began to work for International Harvester in 1897 and remained an executive for the firm until his retirement 43 years later. He became one of the best informed industrial real estate men in Chicago.



**127 North Catherine** has had two prominent owners. The first, D.E. Haman, was chairman of the Finance Committee of the Board of Trustees and Village Trustee from 1905-1909. The Second, Col. W.N. Curtis, became Commander of American Legion Post #41 in 1925. Mr. Curtis was also La Grange Chief of Police, president of the Chicago Export manager's Club, president of the Civic Club, member of the Board of Education, and Village Trustee from 1931-1936.



**126 North Catherine** has undergone a moderate amount of alteration, but remains an excellent Victorian of great importance to the neighborhood. Of particular note are the lovely leaded glass windows on the facade.



**137 North Kensington Grace & Truth Gospel Chapel** was cited as being of excellent architectural quality. The tower is reminiscent of the Romanesque style of the 9th and 10th centuries, and the narrow windows with pointed arches are characteristic of the Gothic style made famous by Cathedrals such as Notre Dame of Paris.



**138 North Kensington** is an excellent Victorian that has been altered little over the years. Noted details include the extended eaves with exposed rafter ends.



**125 North Kensington** was once called North School or Second School and is a fine example of a Victorian stone building. It was built in 1893.

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**16 North Kensington** Among the lovely architectural details of this Queen Anne Victorian house are the porch gable with garland and wreath ornamental panel and front gables with three variation shingles and projecting lattice windows with diagonal muntins. In addition, the stairwell on the north side has a bay with leaded, beveled glass windows.



**17 North Kensington** This Queen Anne Victorian home is notable for its full, wraparound front porch with turned Queen Anne posts and decorative cutout balustrade. It also has beveled glass in the parlor transom window and a second story window, fishscaling, and rounded shingles in the gable and dorms.



**101 North Kensington** Believers assembly purchased this property from Victory Missionary Baptist Church in 1995. The site has also been the home of several other religious denominations, including the Victory Missionary Baptists Church, the Swedish Evangelical Mission Church, and the La Grange Bible Church.



**19 North Kensington** is an excellent Queen Anne with extensive stained glass (vestibule, parlor, and second floor facade transom), a fishscaled beltcourse, and fishscaling in the gables.



**16 North Kensington** is an American Foursquare. Notable are the decorative diamond-shaped muntins in the upper sash of the second story windows. Among the residents was Martha Davis Levin, a missionary in China and Japan and a nurse in American hospitals in Europe during World War I.



**100 North Spring** This simplified Queen Anne was built c. 1890, and exhibits fishscale shingles in the gables.



**124 North Spring St. Francis Xavier Roman Catholic Church** In 1891 Franklin Cossitt donated land for church and rectory building, which were built in 1892. That structure was replaced in 1930. The new church, designed by Architect Joseph McCarthy, can house 800 people in a space without interior pillars to obstruct their view. There is a dome at the coxexture of the nave and two transepts, as well as many lovely stained glass windows. The church is a blend of elements of many architectural styles, including Corinthian (from ancient Greece) capitals on the columns of the facade, a Moorish motif in the transoms above the three exterior entrance doors, and a floor plan based on that of the ancient Roman basilica. Also of interest are the leaded-glass doors leading to the interior space from the entry.

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**135 North Spring** is a Queen Anne Victorian of excellent quality. Notable are the two various shingles in the gables and the second floor corner turret/bay with conical roof.



**102 North Waiola** was built in 1893. Notable are the steeply sloped roof lines, cedar scallops, and sunbursts at the second story bay windows.



**50 North Waiola** belonged to Christina Gilman Siep, who moved to La Grange with her husband Nathias in 1892.



**41 North Waiola** was the home of Burton McClain and Catherine Bales McClain. The Bales family settled in La Grange in 1885, after having lived in Germany and Kenosha, Wisconsin.



**30 North Waiola** is a vernacular home that belonged to Helen Marie Siep Hengles, who came to the area in 1889 from Germany.



**46 North Stone** was the home of Edward Dore (1865-1933), who came to La Grange in 1886 to work with the Burlington and Quincy Railroad.

The Society hopes that you have enjoyed your walk through this portion of the Historic District. Visit our website at [www.lagrangehistory.org](http://www.lagrangehistory.org) for information on membership and other programming.