



1 GRISWOLD SERVICE STATION- 5504 NW RADIAL HIGHWAY

HISTORY: The home of James A. Howard, a pioneer and mayor of Benson was originally on this site.. Howard's daughter Mildred lived in the house after his death. He continued the real estate business until the home was razed to construct this service station. The switch from residential to commercial use was the result of development of the Northwest Radial Highway in 1957 to speed traffic from downtown to housing areas northwest of Benson. The new station was built in 1963 as a Skelly Oil Company service station and is one of the last prefabricated Skelly stations standing. William G. Skelly founded the Skelly Oil Company in 1919 and the company became one of the largest and most successful oil companies in the world. Skelly Oil merged with Getty Oil in 1977 was acquired by Texaco, Inc. In 1984 becoming a Texaco service station. The building was constructed using prefabricated materials and is representative of service stations being built during this time.

The owner plans to restore the exterior and reveal the original color which included a bright red continuous band along the base of the building. The exterior porcelain coated and embossed metal panels have been painted a lighter color than the original, as still seen on the smooth interior panels. It was designed with a flat roof and simple clean lines which reflect the popularity of the Modern and International styles of architecture. The Texaco emblem is displayed on a large raised pylon.

INTERIOR TOURS



2 RESIDENCE - 2943 NORTH 58TH STREET

HISTORY: In 1923, this two and a half story Craftsman home was built for John Lewis Corbaley and his family. Corbaley had the initial "C" cut and mounted to the exterior of the south side on the brick chimney. He started off as a dry goods merchant, but then became shoe salesman and repaired shoes. One of his stores was located on Maple Street. Evidence of the family business and a possible shoe repair area is located in the sloping backyard beneath the current garage. Members of the Corbaley family lived in the house until 1960. A secondary Tudor influence is evident from the exterior in the false half-timbering. The exterior surface of the house is a combination of brick, clapboard, and stucco. The front façade features a partial width porch with roof supported by tapered square columns made of brick. There are also decorative braces under the gables and windows with three vertical panes over one large pane. A large picture window was added to the east side of the home for an elderly occupant to view the backyard.

The current owners purchased the house in February and have been uncovering features as they make it functional for a family. They are sensitive to the historic nature of the house. Projects have included the removal of carpet from the living room and stairway to reveal hardwood floors in excellent condition, removal of inappropriate wallpaper, and painting of the interior. Future projects include renovating the kitchen and restoring the radiators back to their original color.

3 RESIDENCE - 2510 NORTH 56TH STREET

HISTORY: This two and a half story residence on the Omaha Country Club golf course was built as a summer home for attorney Francis Brogan in 1902. The home was designed in the Prairie style and features a hipped roof with hipped dormers, square porch supports, and a one-story porch. The exterior is sheathed in wooden shingles which create bands emphasizing the horizontal nature of the style. The overall footprint and form is considered an American Foursquare, a simple square broken up to create an efficient, standardized, and economical home upon which a variety of decorative details could be applied. The interior features simple trim-work and many built-ins including the butler's pantry. There is an original marble sink in the upstairs bathroom. French doors open out to the porch and interior windows pivot to provide excellent cross ventilation. Existing evidence reveals there was a fire in the home resulting in the replacement of the wooden trim with slight detailing with plain boards. The carpet was taken up to reveal pine flooring. The current owners purchased the property in 2002 and they repainted, updated the plumbing and electrical systems, and put in central heat and air. They have other projects on the horizon.

4 ALOHA RESIDENCE- 2320 NORTH 56TH STREET

HISTORY: This two and a half story residence located on the Omaha Country Club golf course was originally built in 1901 for telegraph pioneer Colonel John J. Dickey as a summer home. He modeled the home after residential architecture he admired in Hawaii during his military career and even named the home "Aloha". In 1903, it was purchased by Abraham Lincoln Reed, son of Omaha real estate developer Byron Reed, as a summer home. It was enlarged and remodeled into the Reed's permanent residence. This Shingle Style residence creates the effect of a complex shape enclosed within a smooth surface which unifies the irregularity of the house. Decorative detailing is sparingly used. In addition to the shingled surface, the house features an extensive porch, an irregular and steeply pitched roof line with cross gables and a gable front, multi-level eaves, shed dormers, and a sleeping porch. The "Aloha" has 5,300 square feet of living space. The interior features a mahogany staircase and multi-paned windows as well as a mid-century modern kitchen by St. Charles Kitchens of Omaha which appeared in the company's national advertising. The current owners have converted the half story into an additional bedroom with oak trim and built-in storage. The home's architecture, site, and early owners give it important significance to the history of Benson and Omaha.

5 RESIDENCE- 2346 NORTH 60TH AVENUE

HISTORY: This two and a half story residence was originally built for Catherine McCreary, granddaughter of Edward Creighton. McCreary raised her family of four children in the home, none of whom ever married and continued living in the house until their deaths. Built on two lots in 1906, the exterior of the home has an elevated wrap-around porch with paired classical columns. The unique interior of the home features two columns between the entryway and front parlor, pocket doors between the front parlor and dining room, bay area in dining room, wooden floors on the main level, nine foot ceilings, radiator heat, and original leaded glass windows. The interior features a William Morris border, a Bradbury and Bradbury border, and a hand stenciled ceiling. Unfortunately, the home has been clad in vinyl siding, which Landmarks does not recommend for historic homes. In some cases vinyl siding can protect beautiful wood siding underneath which can be a pleasure for owners to find and reveal. Overall, the owners of this 103 year old home have kept it true to its architectural design. There have only been four owners of this home. This American Classic Four-square is a timeless Benson treasure.

6 HARGISS STRINGED INSTRUMENTS- 6061 MAPLE STREET (TOUR AND HISTORIC PHOTO EXHIBIT BY JOHN HARGISS)

HISTORY: This mixed use building was constructed in the Folk Victorian style around 1901 for Mike J. Chalupsky and his family. Originally, the building was one of the tallest in Benson with an upper frame section serving as a residence and the ground floor serving as a store, the Fair Store, which sold clothing and dry goods. At some point, the second story was mostly removed. Existing remnants include the floor and some wallpaper. Current owner, Mr. Hargiss, has studied historic photographs and conducted hands-on investigation. He removed plywood from the front façade to uncover the band of small windows, decorative woodwork including the dentils, and Victorian spindlework. From his research, Hargiss has replicated the paterae, the small medallions that are carved into the wooden corner blocks, and woodwork for other areas of his store and workspace. The building is still mixed use with the residential space in the rear in what was originally a carriage house. The building houses a collection of photographs and items relating the history of Benson. Many of these are displayed and hung on the walls. Of particular interest are advertisements for the Fair Store, historic street scenes, and a letter hand written and signed by Erastus A. Benson, the founder.

7 SORENSON BUILDING- 6104 MAPLE STREET (TOUR AND OMAHA BY DESIGN OPEN HOUSE)

HISTORY: This Neoclassical commercial building was originally built by John Sorenson in 1913 as a saloon. The building has served several functions over the years including an auditorium and a billiard hall. Dentists and physicians occupied second floor spaces. In 1943, a dry goods store moved out and the building began its tenure as Topp's, a family owned store which became a well known upper scale women's store with new Art Deco style interior and exterior elements. In 1970, Topp's relocated and was replaced by the Junior League's Jumble Shop. In 1994, the current owner decided to retain the Art Deco feel of the interior while creating usable office space. Interior curves were kept and

cubicles were designed with stepped partitions. Bookshelves have replaced clothing displays creating a library and conference room with a fireplace in the rear of the building that is sensitive to the interior style. Appropriate light fixtures were purchased and hung on the walls to create an after-five feel. Storefront display areas, once graced with Topp's mannequins, now display items of the owner's artistic creativity. Today, there is an upscale apartment on the top floor that offers 2,500 square feet of living space.

8 HOWARD BUILDING- 6105 MAPLE STREET (TOUR AND HISTORIC PHOTO EXHIBIT BY SAM G. SWANSON)

HISTORY: This two-story brick masonry building was constructed around 1904 for James Almond Howard who was born in Boynton, Illinois in 1865. Howard left home at the age of 14 and went to live with his older brother where he worked as a farmhand for a number of landowners until earning enough money to attend school at the Evergreen City Business College in Bloomington, Illinois. At the age of 18, he traveled to Fort Meade in the Dakota Territory (near the Black Hills of South Dakota) to work in a Post Traders store. Four years later he and his wife Zana settled in Benson and opened a general store on the southwest corner of 61st and Maple. Active in the political community, he served as mayor from 1906 through 1907 and was treasurer for the city in 1910. Howard became involved in the real estate, insurance, and the banking business, serving as president of the Bank of Benson. He later sold the Bank, but continued to work in real estate and insurance until he passed away in 1930. One of his three daughters, Mildred Howard, carried on his business after his death.

The vernacular commercial building exhibits Italian Renaissance symmetrical fenestration on the primary façade and a recessed entry. Details include full arched windows at the second floor with U-shaped crowns and decorative transoms, keystone variants, medallions and a molded cornice. When first constructed, the Bank of Benson occupied the west bay of the first floor and Benson Drug Store occupied the east bay. Benson's telephone exchange occupied the east side of the second floor and Dr. Loechner, had his office on the west. The building to the west at 6109 Maple Street was constructed after the 6105-07 building, between 1907 and 1912.

On display will be a sampling of images from the first seventy-five years of Benson. Many of the images were saved from the trash; others are from glass negatives discovered during the renovation of a nearby business.

9 BURKE'S PUB- 6117 MAPLE STREET

HISTORY: This two-part Commercial Block Vernacular building was constructed around 1900. Early first floor occupants were J.L. Peska and Sons Men's Furnishing Store and Samuel Kesselman's General Merchandise. In the early years, dentists and a physician occupied the second floor. City directory records indicate that the building was completely vacant during 1929. By the following year, the second floor of the building was being used for residential purposes. The same year, the first floor was occupied by the first of a eries bars and taverns that would occupy the building throughout the rest of its history including the Cornwell Bar and Café, Vic's Well Tavern and the R Bar.

The first floor storefront of this two-story building has been modified over time, but the door opening into a stair hall that leads up to the second floor has always remained along the western party wall. Three arched windows at the second floor level allow natural light to filter through the interior. The building also features a tin cornice, complete with brackets and a decorative frieze. It is interesting to note that the color and bond pattern of the brick masonry and window fenestration is almost identical to the adjacent building on the west. In addition to different modern storefront modifications made to each building, the tin cornices of each building are distinct. Although the size and scale of the cornice is similar on each building, the bracket and the frieze patterns are not. The owner has recently renovated the west bay of the main level as an expansion of the pub. Removing the lowered lay-in ceiling space revealed stamped tin ceilings and the tall volume of the original room.



2009

HISTORIC Restoration TOUR

SUNDAY, OCT. 11 1-5 P.M.



Benson Main Street Benson, Neb. From the collections of John Hargiss

TOUR MAP & TICKET \$10 OR 2 FOR \$15

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INTERIOR TOURS CONTINUED



10 BENSON LUMBER MILL- 2725 NORTH 62ND STREET (OPEN HOUSE)

HISTORY: The old mill including three buildings are still intact. The mill once had its own livery to care for the delivery horses. Today portions of the mill are used as a glass studio and tavern. Representatives from BioGlass and RePower Nebraska will be on site the day of the tour inside STUDIO ILLUMINATA. BioGlass is dedicated to the research, development and use of sustainable fuel sources for artglass making. RePower America advocates legislative change for more efficient energy use in America.

11 SAINT BERNARD CHURCH- 3601 NORTH 65TH STREET

HISTORY: St. Bernard was designed by local architect Leo A. Daly in a Spanish Renaissance Revival style. The cornerstone was set on August 20, 1939. The original exterior materials including the Spanish clay tile roof and brick and stone are all extant. Exterior renovations over the past five years included masonry tuck-pointing, window and a full roof restoration. All salvageable roof tiles were reinstalled over a new roofing underlayment in combination with matching replacement tiles supplied by Ludowici Roof Tile in Ohio. In the Early 1970's, Vatican II initiated many alterations to the Nave and Sanctuary interior including the painting of all interior plaster surfaces white, extending the raised sanctuary platform, installation of carpeting, and an air conditioning system. Within the past five years, the Parish has been restoring the Church to closer fit the original design intent and vision. By examining original photographs, the architects introduced new interior details, fixtures, patterns, and materials to match that of the original design. Future renovation projects will focus on the narthex and main entrance doors.

EXTERIOR TOURS



A RESIDENCE - 3108 NORTH 58TH STREET AND 3112 NORTH 58TH STREET (PORCH TOUR AND INFORMATION AT 3108)

HISTORY: This area was once part of the Charles H. Creighton Farm. In 1904 the land was platted and given the name Bensonhurst. At the entry to the block are the old pillars that marked the subdivision. No openings for side streets were laid out along this half mile stretch between Maple and Pratt Streets, creating the longest block in Douglas County. Between 1905 and 1915, Creighton built two almost identical Queen Anne style homes at 3108 and 3112 North 58th Street for his daughters. The house at 3112 North 58th Street was built first and has a smaller floor plan and slightly less ornamentation. Both homes are asymmetrical and feature restrained free classical porch columns and refined ornamentation rather than the more common Queen Anne spindlework and decorative half-timbering applied to the gables. The owners of 3108 North 58th Street have taken great measures to preserve the ornate woodwork inside the home while exhibiting their own tastes in design. At the beginning of the block is another Creighton home that was moved back to its present location at 2916 North 58th Street when the Northwest Radial Highway was constructed. Today, the building houses the Teen Challenge of the Midland.

B RESIDENCE - 2320 NORTH 60TH AVENUE

HISTORY: Carpenter John H. Siert and his wife built this home in 1922. It features a rectangular footprint, hipped asphalt roof and asymmetrical primary façade. The most prominent design element in this single-story Mission style home is the curved parapet with stone coping above the front door. This same parapet is repeated on the south façade. The building has a stucco finish which rises from the base, up to the cove at the closed eaves. The front door is flanked on either side by double hung windows. A continuous water table runs around the building serving as the sill for some of the windows. There is an arched wooden pergola and expressive arched window above the door.

C RESIDENCE - 2728 NORTH 60TH AVENUE

HISTORY: Carpenter John M. Meleen and his wife Anna M., both Swedish born immigrants, constructed this home in 1913. The home is a one-and-one-half-story Craftsman style wood shingle and clapboard building with a front-facing gable finished with a shingled wall surface pattern and open eaves are decorated with triangular-knee braces and exposed rafter tails. Wall dormers can be seen on both the north and south facades of the home which also exhibit shingled

wall surface patterns in the gable ends. Full-height double-hung nine-over-one wood windows are framed by wood trim and a Craftsman style door marks the entry. The full-width, front-facing porch gable is decorated with a board and batten wall surface pattern and boasts square wood posts with battered sides sit on brick piers.

Over the years the wood shingles and clapboards began to show their age. The current owner deliberated whether to repaint the home or install new vinyl siding. After much consideration they determined to repair the shingles and siding as necessary and repaint. This choice insured the historic character and integrity of the home which continues to contribute to the historic Benson neighborhood.

D POST OFFICE- 6223 MAPLE STREET

HISTORY: The Benson Postal Office was designed by the Public Buildings Administration, a unit of the Federal Works Agency, and was constructed in 1940 on a cost of \$97,000 by Midwest Construction Company of Minneapolis, MN. Plans for the building began in 1938 and at that time the federal government had appropriated approximately 4.4 million dollars for postal office projects throughout the state of Nebraska. This single-story Art Moderne building exhibits streamlined form and industrial design innovations reflecting a general trend toward aerodynamics and streamlining in automotive and industrial design. Smooth wall surfaces and the curved corner at the intersection of 63rd and Maple Streets serve as the most prominent design elements. Four Moderne columns rise the full height of the structure, from base to cornice, separating bands of windows at the corner. The building features two entrances, one facing Maple Street and the other facing 63rd Street. The windows are set in a horizontal orientation and a large skylight provides for natural daylight on the interior of the building.

E KREMER FUNERAL HOME- 6302 MAPLE STREET

HISTORY: The brick building that houses Kremer Funeral Home was constructed between 1910 and 1911 on the site of a previous 1892 church and was dedicated on May 29, 1911, as the Benson Methodist Episcopal Church. In 1930, the Benson Methodist Episcopal Church, Walnut Hill Methodist Episcopal Church, and the Centenary Methodist Episcopal Church merged to form St. Paul Methodist Episcopal Church and moved to their present location at 54th and Corby in 1931. The Kremer's purchased the building in 1935 and made some alterations. Originally, the church sanctuary on the second floor was entered by a large semicircular stairway on the exterior of the building at the southeast corner. The Kremer's made the ground floor the main chapel by removing the exterior staircase and adding a ground floor entrance. The Kremer Funeral Home formally opened on June 7, 1936, as advertised in the Omaha Bee News. The building is a combination of brick types and features such as decorative pediments applied to the brick over groupings of windows which suggest a Neoclassical temple front. The stained glass windows still give the building the appearance of a church.

REFERENCE NOTES FOR TOUR:



As you visit the sites on this year's tour, note that we have included a variety of project types including preservation, rehabilitation, restoration projects and construction. In the world of preservation, each has a slightly different meaning. The National Park Service Technical Preservation Services provides the following definitions:

- **Preservation** focuses on the maintenance and repair of existing historic materials and retention of a property's form as it has evolved over time.
- **Rehabilitation** acknowledges the need to alter or add to a historic property to meet continuing or changing uses while retaining the property's historic character.
- **Restoration** depicts a property at a particular period of time in its history while removing evidence of other periods.
- **Reconstruction** re-creates vanished or non-surviving portions of a property for interpretive purposes.

For more information on these definitions, visit the National Park Service web site at www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/standards_guidelines.htm



RULES AND GUIDELINES



- Admission is by ticket only, no exceptions.
- Infants and all children under seven are not permitted.
- Be aware that the homes are private homes and therefore generally not accessible. Needs of those with mobility impairments will be accommodated within the physical limits of the buildings and the availability of tour volunteers to provide assistance.
- Do not block driveways.
- Respect the owner's property. If a door is shut, do not open it. If a drawer is closed, do not open it.
- No smoking, eating or drinking while on private property.
- No photography.
- No pets.
- Do not use restrooms in private homes. (Restrooms for patrons are available at locations 8 and 11.)

- Booties may be required to be worn into the residence locations.

In consideration of the permission granted the tour participant to enter the buildings and premises on the tour, the tour participant hereby agrees to enter the tour buildings and premises at his or her own risk and hereby releases the respective property owner and Landmarks, Inc. from any and all claims or causes of action due to injury to person or property that may arise during the tour participant's presence on the tour buildings and premises. The tour participant further agrees to indemnify and hold harmless each property owner from any and all liability in the event of any injuries sustained or accidents occurring in the buildings or on premises.



4 AIA CEUs for those that sign in at a minimum of 7 interior sites