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Bricks and Mortar and More

"This Old House" By Dr. Wayne Marty

(map illustration on page 3)

During the first half of the Westmar history, the campus boundaries were relatively stable at a campus size of four blocks. Following WWII (1945) additional property was acquired that provided space for the GI "Huts", Memorial and Koehler dorms, Eastview Apartments, and the Library. During this postwar, 15 year, period there were also six "across the street" homes that were acquired. All of these were wood frame homes so there is a slight deviation from the "Bricks and Mortar" theme of this series. These homes on the periphery of the campus provided versatile space and could be reassigned as needed to provide faculty housing, student housing or even assigned for limited or special academic use. Obtaining accurate information about the history and use of these houses has been difficult because they usually were not "headline" facilities that showed up in the yearbooks and Gleams but they were very important for significant or short periods of time.

Two houses east of the "on campus" football field were acquired in 1946 and were located on the unpaved portion of 3rd Ave SE that connected the gym to the south 12th street boundary of the 4 block campus. In the 50's and early 60's the two houses were the homes for the families of Richard Skinner, Superintendent of Buildings and Grounds (daughter, JoAnn Skinner Schleis, our WAFA Communications Director), lived in #1 house from 1959 to 1962, Merlin Dipert, Mathematics Professor, Harold Brady, Registrar, Clayton Feis, Business Professor and perhaps others. The houses became student residences for one or more years in the mid 60's. Mrs. Clayton Feis recalls that their house (#2) where they lived from 1957 to 1963 was burned and used for LeMars Fire Dept. training after they moved out. #1 was also removed in the 60's to provide space for the construction of the Centennial Men's Dorm.

The Thornton House (#3) on 2nd Ave. SE was acquired in 1954. The name may be related to the Thornton Family from Montana. At least four members of that family attended Western Union College in the 30's and 40's. It was used as a piano teaching studio for Frank Jewett and Faculty housing for the families of Jim Zottnick, (Education) ('58-'59), Ted Rebstock, (Chemistry) ('59-'64), and Alice Kruse, (English), (basement '59). Married students, Don and Marilyn Birmingham lived in the basement for a short time and some women students used the space in the early '60s. For 10 years ('65-'75) Freddie Goodchild, (Superintendent of Buildings and Grounds) and family lived in the house with their five children and for some of the time they also housed two nephews as part of the family. When the Goodchild's moved to the Bachman House (#5) the Thornton House was sold to Westmar



faculty member, Jan Heckroth, (Home Economics). Although now privately owned, it changed ownership a number of times within the Westmar Family – Patrick (English) and his wife Chris (nurse) White, and Charles and Mary (Chaplain) Pope. Several private title changes have occurred since the Pope occupancy.

The Schulenburg House (#4) history is best described as “mysteries and maybes”. The house was acquired by the college in 1947 and in the early '50s was occupied by the Francis Boelter (Religion) family. It may have been used for student housing during the later '50s. Rebstocks, as neighbors in the Thornton house, remember married students Paul and Beverly Bailey as residents in '62-'63, followed by faculty member Oscar Schinkle (Sociology) and family. Some think it was used for faculty offices and for the campus nursing facility (maybe with Gertrude Zinn as the nurse) for some years and probably used for student housing in the early '70s. The origin of the Schulenberg name is not known and knowledge of its past use is shaky but its current use has been certain and constant since 1975 when it was purchased from the college by the Tim and Jane Clarey family who reside in it to this day.

The Bachman House (#5) probably named in honor of Walter E. Bachman, President of York College from '47 to '53, was acquired from the Sumner Koch family in 1962.

Nancy Blumer Anderson was one of the eleven senior girls that moved in for the '62-'63 year. Others were Karen Schultz, Kathy Paetznick, Gertrude Menefee, Beth Fiend, Norma Pickett, Beverly Sol, Arlene Hett, Karen Ferguson, Delilah Reeken and Ardeth Mason. It is reported that a major criteria for selection was “the girls must have out of state boyfriends and/or not be a part of the local dating scene,” These houses were not built to be student housing. Nancy reports that some of the main floor pocket doors had broken “stops: and when the MEN IN THE HOUSE alarm was sounded, the sliding doors were rapidly closed but would sometimes fly on by the stopping point leaving the young ladies more exposed than desired. By '64-'65 the Bachman house had changed to Men's housing. About '70, the house became the location

specifically for Home Economics women students who were enrolled in the Home Management Course under direction of Professor Eva Larson. This continued until '75 when the Goodchild family moved from the Thornton House to the Bachman house. Goodchild's purchased the house in '79 and sold it back to the college in '91 when it became the residence for Dr. Kamijo, Japanese student advisor. The house was sold to a private family in '96.



The Koth House (#6) gets its name from the Koth family that lived in the house from '46 – '54 when they sold it to Westmar. Clayton Koth, a Frigidaire salesman, purchased the house in '46 from Clara Frolkey, the widow of Rex Frolkey, the unusual married student of the '20's that was written about in the Aug. 2009 Wafa Newsletter. (see Wafa website to view this newsletter) All four Koth children attended Westmar and Clayton became a “salesman” for Westmar by becoming the Director of Development in '62. Dr. and Mrs. Merrill Davis lived in the house for some years and in the fall of '59 it changed to women's housing when eight women moved in. They were

