

Mansion Row Historic District

History

The Mansion Row Historic District was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1983. It is significant for its association with the development of New Albany, and for its excellent examples of 19th century commercial and residential architecture. Although the National Register district extends west to State Street and includes both commercial and residential properties, the locally designated district is somewhat smaller and largely residential in character.

The homes in the Mansion Row Historic District reflect New Albany's growth and development. Most of the oldest remaining residences are executed in the restrained Federal style. A good example of the style is found at 815 East Main Street. Later residences became more elaborate as the city grew and prospered; Upper High Street, later renamed East Main Street, was the fashionable address for New Albany's 19th

century elite. The Isaac P. Smith House (513 East Main Street), built 1847, is an outstanding representation of the Greek Revival style. Smith was a prominent local architect and builder.

The Sloan-Bicknell-Paris House (600 East Main Street) is fine example of the Italianate style. It was built for John Sloan, a distinguished physician. A pristine example of the Italian Villa style may be seen at 1003 East Main Street. This house was built for Victor Pepin in 1851, and was later occupied by the family of August Barth, a local tanner.

One of the state's wealthiest men lived in the Second Empire residence at 714 East Main Street, built in 1873. Washington C. DePauw was involved in banking, grain dealing and iron and glass manufacturing. DePauw University in Greencastle was renamed for him because of his contributions to the institution.



*Mansion Row
in 1913*

William S. Culbertson, another of the state's leading citizens and philanthropists, built his Second Empire mansion at 916 East Main Street. The mansion, which was constructed from 1867-69, is now owned by the Indiana Department of Natural Resources and interpreted as a state historic site. The Culbertson family was also involved with two other properties within the Mansion Row district: the home at 904 East Main Street was constructed 1886-87 as a wedding present for Culbertson's son Samuel, who later became president of Churchill Downs. In 1873, Culbertson financed the construction of the 'Old Ladies Home' at 704 East Main Street to house indigent widows.

The development of the Mansion Row district also continued into the 20th century, as vacant lots were infilled and large yards were subdivided. The district includes several notable examples of early 20th century architectural styles, including a c.1920 Craftsman style house at 1305 East Main Street and a Colonial Revival style residence built in 1927 on the site of the former DePauw College for Young Ladies (808 East Main).

In addition to the residences, the Mansion Row district also contains religious and industrial architecture. One of the significant churches in the historic district is St. Paul's Episcopal Church (East 11th and Market streets). It was built in 1896 in the Gothic Revival architectural style.

The local district was expanded in 2003 to include the area between the railroad tracks and the floodwall. This area, now largely vacant, was once the epicenter of New Albany industry. Shipyards, glassworks, tanneries, and mills all operated along the Ohio River. Star Glass Works was founded in the 1860s and manufactured the first plate glass in the nation. At one time the complex included several buildings on a 30-acre site, but now only one remains. The McDonald grain elevator, constructed in 1909 and now abandoned, is another significant reminder of the riverfront's former industrial importance.

The loss of Holy Trinity Church (its school building and convent are shown here) on East Market Street in a 1975 fire had a significant impact on the Mansion Row district.



Map

