

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places

Cedar Bough Place Historic District

DESCRIPTION

The Cedar Bough Place Historic District is a residential neighborhood located along the short, private street of Cedar Bough Place in the city of New Albany, Indiana. The district contains dwellings constructed from 1883 to ca. 1920. The majority of these dwellings represent Queen Anne or vernacular Folk Victorian styles in gabled ell or pyramid square forms. The district also contains a few examples of the Bungalow/Craftsman style and the American Foursquare design. The district contains a total of twenty-five primary buildings, of which 100% are considered to be contributing to the character of the district. In addition to the primary buildings, there are eight contributing outbuildings and ten non-contributing outbuildings. Dwellings in the district retain a high degree of integrity of design, materials, and workmanship. Alterations are minimal and are largely limited to some applications of synthetic siding materials and minor porch alterations. There are no modern intrusions or infill within the district, and the block retains a strong sense of time and place as a turn-of-the-century neighborhood.

The Cedar Bough neighborhood developed in the late nineteenth century at the end of a long prosperous era. During the 1870s and 1880s, New Albany experienced substantial industrial development and growth. The establishment of several successful manufacturing enterprises led to increased population and growth and a favorable economic climate. Neighborhoods began to emerge as individual landowners platted lots of their property for individual sale. The block of Cedar Bough Place was developed around 1890 by Andros Huncilman, a real estate developer who owned the surrounding five acre lot. The neighborhood developed over the following two decades with the majority of homes constructed between 1891 and 1905.

The Cedar Bough Place Historic District is situated in a larger residential area approximately one-half mile northeast of the city's downtown commercial district and approximately three-fourths of a mile north of the Ohio River. The street is one block in length and runs between Ekin and Beeler Avenues. Throughout its history, Cedar Bough Place has remained a private road with individual lot lines extending to the middle of the street. At both the north and south ends of the block are brick and stone walls that frame the neighborhood and create a barrier to prevent cross traffic. The northern barrier consists of two stone walls connected by a central

wrought iron panel. This cuts the street off from vehicular traffic and makes it a dead-end. The southern end of the street has two brick walls with wrought iron detailing that provide a narrow passage for a single vehicle.

The earliest dwellings constructed in the district were built in the Queen Anne style. The first five dwellings constructed in the district other than the original Huncilman House were built in the Queen Anne style, which was a popular residential style across the nation during the late nineteenth century. This style typically features an asymmetrical facade, steeply pitched roofs with projecting gable bays, and wraparound porches. The Queen Anne style is also characterized by its decorative detailing and ornamentation. Milled porch posts and spindlework detailing are especially common as is the use of wood shingles in gable fields and/or upper facades. Examples of this house style in the Cedar Bough Place Historic District include the Bradley-Gwin-Janes House at 831 Cedar Bough Place and the Browning-Dennis House at 843 Cedar Bough Place. These dwellings were built in 1891 and 1892 respectively and feature decorative porches, milled woodwork, stained glass windows, and patterned shingles. The Browning-Dennis House also features a corner tower, another common feature of the Queen Anne style.

The majority of the dwellings in the district were built in vernacular Folk Victorian forms, which were commonly constructed throughout the region during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The most common of these is the gabled ell form, which features a projecting gable bay on the main façade, decorative porches, and one or more primary entrances. Detailing generally reflects that of the Queen Anne style and often features milled porch posts and spindlework. Examples of this house form were built in the district between 1902 and 1910. They include the Bentley-Kahl-Conti House at 811 Cedar Bough Place, which was constructed in 1904 and features a wraparound porch with milled posts and woodwork, and cutaway bays on the side elevations. Another representative example is the Hemmer-Hock House at 808 Cedar Bough Place. This 1905 dwelling also has a wraparound porch, and decorative details include stained glass windows and a leaded glass and wood door.

The district also features a few examples of the pyramid square house form. This common vernacular design is characterized by a square house plan with a hipped or pyramidal roof. These dwellings were often built with decorative porches on the main façade and with dormers at the roofline. A good example of this design is the Emil Kiel House at 836 Cedar Bough Place. Built in 1908, this dwelling has a hipped roof and an incised full-width porch with decorative concrete columns. At the roofline is a hipped roof dormer.

One example of the American Foursquare design was built in the district in 1912. This house form is a hipped roof, two-story dwelling with four primary rooms on each floor. This type of dwelling often features influences of the Colonial Revival style and typically features a dormer

at the roofline, a full-width or wraparound porch, and an accentuated main entrance. The dwelling at 821 Cedar Bough Place is a representative example of this popular early twentieth-century design. It features a hipped roof with a hipped roof dormer, a full-width porch, and a bay window.

The Cedar Bough Place Historic District also contains a few examples of the Craftsman/Bungalow style. These were the last homes built on the block with construction dates in 1910, 1912 and ca. 1920. The Craftsman/Bungalow style was one of the most popular residential architectural styles throughout the country in the early twentieth century. Common features of this style include a horizontal form with wide eaves, exposed roof rafters, and large porches with tapered columns and column piers or pedestals. Windows in these dwellings commonly have decorative upper sashes often in various geometric designs. The dwelling at 816 Cedar Bough Place was built in the Bungalow style ca. 1912. The house has a full-width porch with tapered wood columns on brick piers and features leaded glass windows and a Craftsman style door. The Ferdinand T. Kahler Sr. House at 837 Cedar Bough place also reflects the Bungalow Craftsman style. Its interesting design includes a second story sleeping room, which was a common feature of the "Airplane" Bungalow design. This subtype typically has a one-room, second story section with bands of multiple windows and were common in warm climate areas.

Today, the Cedar Bough Place Historic District retains much of its late nineteenth and early twentieth century appearance. Properties within the district are owner-occupied and many have undergone sensitive rehabilitation in recent years. Dwellings largely retain their original forms and plans, and they possess a strong degree of architectural integrity. The district is a well-defined neighborhood that continues to convey a keen sense of time and place.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Historical Overview

The Cedar Bough Place Historic District began to emerge as an upper- to middle-class neighborhood in the late nineteenth century. Its development reflects the growth and prosperity of New Albany at the end of a prosperous era, as well as its resurgence following a period of economic difficulty. In the decades following the Civil War, New Albany developed a richly diverse industrial base that initiated and supported an increasingly wealthy upper and middle class. The closure of its leading manufacturer combined with the economic depression of the 1890s brought a sharp halt to the city's prosperity, and numerous skilled workers left the city. New industries and opportunities, however, emerged in the new century and the city began to expand.

New Albany, Indiana was founded in 1813 by Joel, Nathaniel and Abner Scribner, three brothers from New York who came to the region with the goal of establishing a new town. They selected lands just below the Falls of the Ohio, a navigational barrier where the river drops some twenty-six feet over a two-and one-half mile section. The town of Louisville, Kentucky, founded in 1780, lay across the river to the south, and the recently established settlements of Clarksville and Jeffersonville, founded in 1794 and 1802, were to the east.

The Scribner brothers purchased approximately 800 acres for \$8,000 and began to clear the surrounding dense forests in March 1813. They selected the upper bank for the townsite and named it New Albany in honor of the capital of their native state of New York. The Scribners made fast work of establishing the town, which was soon platted with spacious lots, wide roads, and areas for markets, schools, churches, and public squares. The original town plat extended from the river to Oak Street and between East Fifth and West Fifth. A road was surveyed to connect with the Old Buffalo Trace, a widely-used migration and trade route, and a sawmill was established. By November 1813, the brothers were advertising the sale of lots in newspapers throughout the northeast.

Indiana became a state in 1816, and New Albany incorporated as a town the following year. Initially, New Albany was a part of Clark County. In order to help promote the growth and importance of their town, the Scribners embarked on a campaign to create a new county of which New Albany would be the county seat. Their efforts were successful, and Floyd County was established March 4, 1819, out of portions of Clark and Harrison Counties. With land set aside for a county courthouse and other public buildings, New Albany was declared the county seat. After clearing some financial hurdles the courthouse was completed in 1824.

New Albany grew quickly and by 1819 had approximately 1,000 residents and 150 houses. The town's position along the busy Ohio River made it an ideal shipping port, and in combination with an abundance of timber resources made it a profitable center for the shipbuilding industry. Ship builders Shreve and Blair produced the city's first steamboat, the *Ohio*, in 1818, and as river trade traffic increased, New Albany became a top producer of these vessels, which carried regional goods to markets in New Orleans. Steamboat building quickly became the basis of the local economy as the riverfront area developed with shipyards and related industrial sites such as lumber yards, foundries, and mills. Commercial development took place along Main, Market, and Spring Streets and by the mid-1830s included numerous dry goods stores, groceries, hardware shops, drug stores and saloons. Residential development occurred to the west and northeast of the commercial district.

By 1830, New Albany was the largest town in Indiana with a population of 2,079. It continued to grow over the next decade and incorporated as a city in 1839. An 1838 magazine described New Albany as the "largest and most commercial business point in the state." In 1847, New

Albany gained its first railroad with the construction of the New Albany and Salem line, which was completed in 1851. This new transportation system boosted the city's already flourishing trade and further promoted its status as a commercial and shipping center. Railroad repair shops were located in New Albany, and the local depot spawned the construction of several hotels. The line was extended to Michigan City by 1854 and later became the Louisville, New Albany & Chicago Railroad.

Steamboat building, however, continued to be the leading industry with 353 boats built in New Albany between 1825 and 1867. In 1850, the industry generated a million dollars a year. Additional industries such as foundries and tobacco factories also produced around a million dollars annually, while wholesalers and merchants generated another three million dollars per year. The city contained seven financial institutions and had over 120 shops and stores. Around 1,200 homes lined the streets to house its population of over 8,000. During the 1850s, the city limits roughly doubled with annexation of lands to the west, north and east. The city's prosperity created a sizeable wealthy class, which constructed a number of large, elegant homes along East Main Street. Working class housing emerged to the west and northeast of the commercial area, and middle- and upper-class housing arose to the north as the city continued to grow.

Prior to the Civil War the steamboat industry began to falter. While the building of these vessels remained an important part of the local economy into the war years, the golden age of the steamboat was passing due to the increasing importance and effectiveness of railroads. In New Albany, production of steamboats peaked in 1856 when twenty-two ships were produced in the city. Second only to Pittsburgh in boatbuilding on the Ohio, New Albany was home to six shipbuilders who employed some 225 carpenters, shipwrights, and laborers, and supported several related industries including five foundries, and numerous cabin builders and furniture makers. But the number of railroad lines, which were not limited to river access, were on the rise and gradually became the preferred shipping transportation method. The Civil War hastened the decline of the local shipbuilding industry in New Albany due to the city's strong commercial ties to southern markets. Contracts from southern states on which the industry depended came to a halt. The city produced only five boats between 1861 and 1863. After experiencing a minor resurgence in 1864-1865 when a total of sixteen vessels were built, the industry quickly declined and never recovered.

In the years following the Civil War, New Albany redefined itself with a new, more diverse industrial base. By the 1880s, the city once again was experiencing an era of prosperity as extensive manufacturing development provided jobs, strengthened the economy, and spurred growth of the city. Furniture manufacturers, breweries, tanneries, and producers of soap, candles, tobacco, pottery, and marble all contributed to the local economy. Chief among the

new industrial developments were textile mills, iron works, and the manufacture of plate glass. The Ohio Falls Iron Works and New Albany Rail Mill were founded ca. 1865 and employed 600 workers in the 1880s. New Albany Woolen and Cotton Mills, located on Vincennes Street, was the largest textile operation in the Midwest and employed 800 workers.

By far the largest and most important plant in New Albany was the American Plate Glass Works. Established in 1865 as the New Albany Glass Works by John B. Ford, the firm initially produced bottles and jars, but soon also became a pioneer in the manufacture of plate glass. The company was the first to produce plate glass in the United States and installed the first American-made plate glass in a New Albany tailor shop in 1870. By the 1880s, under Washington C. DePauw, the American Plate Glass Works was the largest factory of its type in the country and employed over 1,200 individuals. It occupied over thirty acres along the riverbank and had its own power plant, water works, barge line, foundries, warehouses, sawmill, and box factory.

These numerous concerns resulted in an increase in New Albany manufacturing sales from \$2 million in 1868 to \$20 million in the 1880s. The city experienced a number of improvements during these boom years. By 1882, five railroad lines traveled through the city, and in 1886 the Kentucky and Indiana (K&I) bridge was constructed across the Ohio River to accommodate rail traffic. Telephone service arrived in the city in 1883, and electricity followed in 1887. The city's mule-driven street car system, established in 1867, was expanded to eastern industrial development along Vincennes Street.

The success of area industries created an era of great prosperity in New Albany. Many of its leading businessmen and industrialists became quite wealthy, and the city was home to some of the richest families in the state. Times were good throughout the 1880s, and many new homes and communities were established as the city grew. It was common for investors to purchase lands for resale or to divide large acreages into small individual parcels for neighborhood development. It was in this positive economic climate that Cedar Bough Place was developed.

The area of land that became Cedar Bough was part of some seventy-five acres owned by the Loughrey family in the early nineteenth century. In 1836, Margaret Loughrey had the land divided into twenty lots ranging from around two to eleven acres. By the mid-1850s, seven of these lots had been divided into small individual parcels and developed as residential neighborhoods. At this time, the five-acre lot No. 6 of the Loughrey plat, which later became the Cedar Bough neighborhood, belonged to Hezekiah Beeler. Lots to the east and west of the Beeler lot remained undeveloped, but the city had expanded to the southern edge of these properties, and several acres north of the lots had also been developed.

Local real estate broker Andros Huncilman purchased lot No. 6 of the Loughrey plat in April of 1883. Huncilman and his family lived in a two-story, frame dwelling on the property that was built prior to 1883. This dwelling remains as the oldest house in the district at 839 Cedar Bough Place. Local tradition states that this house was moved to its current location from a nearby farm. No documentation has been found to support this; however, an 1889 plat of a portion of the adjacent lot No. 5 of the Loughrey plat does show the outline of a house of similar configuration. What is known is that the house on Cedar Bough either was built on or moved to the Huncilman property by 1890.

Andros Huncilman began to sell off portions of his lot in the early 1890s. At this time New Albany economy was still riding high on its successful industrial development. The Huncilman House sat at the northern end of the property on the west side of the street. In 1891, the first two dwellings other than the Huncilman House, were constructed also on the west side of the street (819 and 831). The following year, two more dwellings were built on the west side (815 and 843), and a third was constructed on the opposite side of the street at what is now 830 Cedar Bough Place. Each of these five dwellings was built in the ornamental Queen Anne style, which was a widely popular residential architectural style of the period. These large spacious homes with decorative detailing such as stained glass windows, milled woodwork, and patterned shingles reflected the opulent times occurring in the city. Those who had these homes constructed were successful business and professional men. They included prominent attorney Evan Stotsenburg, commercial merchant Benjamin Bull, and bank executive Lawrence Bradley.

Shortly after the initial development of Cedar Bough Place, New Albany's prosperous economy plummeted. By the late 1880s local iron and textile industries were in trouble due to market changes and growing competition, and the discovery of natural gas, an inexpensive fuel source, in north-central Indiana threatened the production of plate glass. In 1887, one of the city's wealthiest men and leading benefactor of local enterprise, banker and industrialist Washington C. DePauw, passed away and could no longer come to the rescue of failing businesses. These events were followed by a nationwide six-year economic depression beginning in 1893. New Albany's industry could not keep up and the closing of its largest manufacturer, DePauw Glass Works, in June 1893 proved devastating to the local economy. Over 4,000 residents, many of them skilled laborers, left the city resulting in the first decrease in its population since its founding. The population dropped from 21,059 in 1890 to 16,500 in 1893, and approximately twenty-five percent of the houses in the city stood vacant for the remainder of the decade. With this economic downturn, construction on Cedar Bough stopped, and it was a full decade before another dwelling was built on the street.

New Albany gradually recovered from the downward turn of the 1890s, and during the first decade of the twentieth century the production of veneer, plywood, and paneling emerged as a new leading industry to boost the local economy. The region's plentiful timber resources, available work force, and ample shipping facilities helped to support this new industry as several companies were established. One of the city's first woodworking plants was the Wood-Mosaic Corporation, founded in 1898, which specialized in cut flooring. Arthur Stout established the Indiana Veneer and Panel Company in New Albany in 1901 and others soon followed. John N. Roberts and James Conner began a veneer cutting plant in 1904, and in 1907 E. V. Knight founded the New Albany Veneering Company. The Hoosier Panel Company followed in 1915. The new industry proved successful, and by 1920 the city was the nation's largest producer of plywood and Knight's New Albany Veneering Company became the largest veneer plant in the world.

With a new uplift in the local economy, construction once again took off on Cedar Bough Place. In the ten years between 1902 and 1912, sixteen more houses were built along the street. The vast majority of these dwellings were built in vernacular Folk Victorian house forms, primarily gabled ell plans with a few examples of the pyramid square design. The size and scale of these homes reflect not only fashionable trends of the era, but also demonstrate the more restrained, and perhaps cautious economic climate of the post depression years. While the Queen Anne dwellings of the earlier, more prosperous era, were large, two- to two and one-half story structures with copious ornamentation, the dwellings of the early twentieth century were slightly more modest in comparison. The Folk Victorian styles tend to be one- to one and one-half stories in height, and have similar, but limited, ornamentation. The latest dwellings constructed in the neighborhood during this period were built in 1910 and 1912 and reflect the Craftsman/Bungalow style and the American Foursquare design. The Craftsman/Bungalow style was one of the most popular residential architectural styles of the early twentieth century, and the American Foursquare is a subtype of the Colonial Revival style that was commonly built during the 1910s and 1920s. Construction of these designs on Cedar Bough reflects shifting architectural trends and preferences.

In addition to plywood and veneer production, other woodworking operations in New Albany produced furniture, tool handles, boxes, and baskets. Other industries also emerged during the early twentieth century, and area factories manufactured glue, fertilizer, and other products. By 1923 over forty major industrial plants were in operation in New Albany. For a short time a few New Albany businessmen tried their hand at manufacturing cars. The American Automobile Manufacturing Company (AAMC) was established in the old woolen mills factory on Vincennes Street in 1910. The site continued as a car manufacturing plant until 1917, during which time the ownership and name of the business changed five times. One of the owners of this enterprise was Cedar Bough resident Ferdinand Kahler, who also operated a furniture

factory. Kahler purchased the failing AAMC in 1912 and renamed it the Ohio Falls Motor Company. This firm produced around twenty cars called the Pilgrim before Kahler sold the business in 1914. Kahler then turned to a more established automobile maker, the Ford Motor Co., and began to produce car bodies for its Model T. The Kahler company was in business until 1926.

Ferdinand Kahler lived at 839 Cedar Bough Place, which was the original Huncilman House on the street. Kahler had purchased the home from Annis Huncilman, Andros Huncilman's widow, in 1903. He also purchased the adjacent lot and around 1920 constructed the final house on Cedar Bough Place. The Ferdinand Kahler House at 837 Cedar Bough Place was built in a unique Bungalow design that features a second story sleeping room. Kahler lived in the home the remainder of his life. Following his death in 1928, his widow continued to live in the house until 1932.

With the completion of the Kahler house ca. 1920, construction on Cedar Bough Place ended and the neighborhood attained the appearance that it has today. The Cedar Bough neighborhood was considered to be a prestigious address and residents were primarily of middle- to upper-classes. A postcard of the neighborhood from 1913 reveals its prominent status. In addition to those previously mentioned, residents of the street included dentist Arthur Coleman, tobacco manufacturer Emil Kiel, and Earl Gwin, president of the Second National Bank. Several residents operated their own businesses such as H. H. Collins, who owned a local shoe store, and Thomas Guthrie, owner of a wholesale paper and twine business. In addition to merchants, bankers, and lawyers, occupations of Cedar Bough Place residents over the years include jeweler, baker, paint salesman, cartoonist, chemist, school principal and teacher, artist, and bookkeeper. Another interesting resident was David Hock, who lived at 810 Cedar Bough Place and worked for Fidelity Roofing and Siding. Hock was an accomplished table tennis champion and eventually formed his own company, the Table Tennis Company, which manufactured equipment for the sport. Those who lived "on the Bough" often stayed loyal to the neighborhood. Many residents remained in their initial Cedar Bough Place houses for a long term, and many people on the street moved from one house on the street to another over the years.

During the early years of Cedar Bough Place, the city saw the expansion of its streetcar system and the development of an interurban line. The mule-powered streetcar system was expanded and electrified in 1893. In 1902 Sam Insull, former secretary to Thomas Edison, came to New Albany and purchased and reorganized utility companies. Insull also developed an interurban line which by 1908 linked the city to Indianapolis. Other improvements include the construction of a new K&I bridge to replace the original 1886 structure over the Ohio River. The city's population began to rise once again and reached nearly 23,000 by 1920.

Residents of Cedar Bough escaped relatively unscathed by the two natural disasters that struck New Albany in the early twentieth century. In 1917, a devastating tornado hit New Albany and caused severe damage throughout the city, resulting in the destruction of five factories and around 500 homes. Cedar Bough narrowly missed the brunt of the storm, which hit hard just a few blocks away. Ferd Kahler's furniture factory on Vincennes and Charlestown Road, however, was one of the many buildings the storm destroyed. Kahler rebuilt after the storm, doubling the size of the plant and its workforce. The city experienced its worst flood in January 1937 as the Ohio River rose out of its banks to a record 85.48 feet above flood stage. The flood caused over \$8 million in damage and left thousands seeking aid. Flood waters reached the southeast corner of the Cedar Bough neighborhood as nearby creeks and streams followed the Ohio's lead.

Cedar Bough Place continued to thrive through the late twentieth century. It continues to be a cohesive neighborhood today connected through its architectural design. During the late twentieth century, it passed through a period of decline as many of the dwellings became rental properties with some being divided into apartments. In recent years, however, the neighborhood has converted back to primarily single-family occupancy and ownership and there is a renewed interest in preserving the historic character of the neighborhood among residents. Dwellings within the district retain a high degree of their historic character and the neighborhood as a whole conveys a strong sense of time and place.