

National Register of Historic Places Inventory -- Nomination Form

Note: This information is taken from the application form submitted to the National Register of Historic places. Specific structures are linked to photos of those properties, when available.

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Description

The corporation line of Dayton remained essentially as originally established until 1868 when several large additions including the Huffman Historic District were annexed. This annexation, in conjunction with the establishment of the Third Street Railway Company in 1869, was the impetus which led to the rapid development of the Huffman District during the 1870s and 80s. The character of the neighborhood had been established by 1900 and very few residential structures were built after that time. Although major alterations have been made to many of the homes in the area, especially to the smaller ones, there are few residences which could not be restored to the original character. The only significant commercial intrusions are along East Third Street on the north edge of the district.

The individual streets of the district will be described beginning at Bell Street which is the first north-south street, and proceeding down each of the north-south streets from the north to the south. Then east-west streets will be described from east to west.

Bell Street, the eastern boundary of the district, consists primarily of small homes of vernacular design with Romanesque, Classical and Eastlake influences. The original occupants of the houses were blue-collar workers, craftsmen and artisans. Many of these homes have been altered but restoration is taking place along the street and with proper care, the homes will be rehabilitated to their original conditions. Although most of these structures are brick, frame homes are interspersed among them.

The next street which runs north to south is Linden Avenue. It is a tree-lined street and many of the homes reflect the affluence of the original builders. William P. Huffman, who platted much of the district, built homes for two of his children on this street. A variety of styles and superior artistry are exhibited and especially on the end of the street between Third and Fourth, several buildings are of such architectural significance that they could be nominated to the National Register individually on their own merit.

The iron fence at 35 Linden, a home built for William P. Huffman's son, William, is cited by the Montgomery County Landmark Committee as being one of the best examples of its kind in Dayton.

The Dryden Home at 49 Linden Avenue is in outstanding condition. This lovely Victorian Italianate Villa, built for Charles Huffman in 1869, has a three-part facade with advancing central pavilion and recessed doorway. The door detail of 1911 includes an excellent wrought iron screen and beveled art glass sidelights. The three-bay porch has a wrought iron rail and ceramic deck. There is a wide box cornice with laminated brackets, paneling and attic windows in the frieze. The central pavilion is crowned by a semi-circular pediment with the date 1869. The hip roof has a frame two-bay cupola with semi-circular 2/2 double hung sash windows, brackets and finial. There are four inside wall chimneys with corbelled caps and chimney pots. There is a one-story polygonal bay on the left side. The lot is

surrounded by a brick wall with a stone cap and includes a carriage house also built in 1869 and, as is true of the rest of the property, is in excellent condition.

The interior of the house includes an open dog-leg staircase, shouldered moulding around the doorway which surrounds a five-panel door, peach and leaf plaster moulding in many of the rooms and classical cove cornice in others. The fireplaces are semi-circular marble Victorian fireplaces with sculptured cartouche. The polygonal bay is paneled on the inside. There is also a turn-of-the-century Neo-Classic corner cupboard and plate rail. Each of the downstairs rooms has a central rosette on the ceiling.

The Kirby House at 54 Linden is an outstanding Queen Anne in Eastlake and Shingle mode. Built in c.1886, the right bay advances with the polygonal bay on the first level having art glass transoms and a three-part window on the second level. The central doorway has a rather plain Eastlake surround. The left bay is semi-circular with an amazing art glass transom. The veranda covers the left two bays and continues onto the left side with turned table legged pillars with structural brackets having pierced panels, turned frieze, dentil cornice, pediment over the steps and gazebo-like circular corner arrangement. The Shingle-styled upper story is skirted. On the left is a square tower on a receding plane with peaked roof and finial. The eave is a moulded cove cornice and over the right two bays are complex intersecting pediments with decorated raking and horizontal cornice, petal-like decoration and varied texture and windows. The roof is pitched with interior decorative chimneys.

The Benjamin N. Beaver Queen Anne double across the street at 55-61 Linden has a left center bay, and on the first story has a mullion window with iron cap and incised decoration, a moulded frame and a border of art glass in the upper sash. The second story has a pair of windows with a terra-cotta sculptured panel between, joined by an incised iron lintel supported on four corbelled brick brackets. The gable above has a series of paired brackets and a constricted decorated pediment with finial and sculptured panels between the four corbelled brick brackets. On the left is an entranceway in a re-entrant angle off a two-story Eastlake porch. On the right is the entranceway to the right side living unit with an Eastlake porch having turned pillars, turned lattice-work ballister and Frieze, and gauged brackets. There is a mullion window above. On the far right is a one-story component with two windows having iron caps and an Eastlake decorated porch above. The roof is truncated hip with wall gables and multiple chimneys with corbelled caps. The house was built in 1884.

Huffman Avenue

Huffman School, at 100 Huffman Avenue, was built in 1875 on land donated by William P. Huffman and is the oldest elementary school building in the city of Dayton. This High Victorian Gothic brick structure has a central pavilion, stone Victorian Gothic surround, complex centrapointed arch and panels. The central recessed door has side lights. The second level has mullion windows with half column mullion and triple arches tied together with a semi-circular cornice. All windows are connected by stone string courses. The third level has double mullion windows with 1/2 column mullions and High Victorian Gothic arched panels. The remaining bays have variously decorated central tower and mansard roof. The building sits on a high rockfaced stone foundation with water table.

The block south from the school is particularly representative of the vernacular workingmen's homes in the district.

Ringgold Street

At 21 Ringgold is an outstanding fence, well preserved with elaborately decorated columns with petal forms, spirals, finial tops and spear-shaped decorative ballisters. There is also a wrought iron scroll gate.

The house at 34 Ringgold, c.1870, is a house typical of Eastlake patterns in Dayton. The advancing right bay has a boxed bay with mullion windows on the first floor and mullion windows with Eastlake surround on the second floor. The front gable end is highly decorated with busy moulding, shingles and a triangular multi-paned window and decorated vergeboards. The elaborate porch has table leg pillars, turned lattice work, sweeping brackets with finials, gouged and incised decoration.

116 Ringgold is a Victorian Italianate of typical pattern with three bays, left two bays advancing, having stone lintels with drops and stone bracketed sills. The porch in the re-entrant angle on the right has transom doorways. The porch in the re-entrant angle on the right has transom doorways. The porch on the left has carved and moulded pillars, structural brackets, pendant scroll sawn decoration and incised decorated panels. The elaborate metal boxed eaves have closed gables with brackets and frieze with decorated panels.

June Street

The Joseph Wortman House, built in 1890 at June Street is a late Queen Anne with typical massing. The porch is Neo-Classic with a combination of brick piers and pillars and decorative cornice. The doorway in the second bay has a stone lintel and sidelights of art glass. The left bay is semi-circular. The right bay advances with mullion windows, set in an advancing plane of brick that has stone belts and diagonal brick panels. The gables are decorative using small windows, stone trim, relief decoration in the tympanums and heavily moulded raking cornice. Elaborately paneled and corbelled chimneys form advancing panels of the gables on the pavilions. The house is in excellent condition both inside and out. The interior is a veritable museum as the current owner has resided there since 1918 and has changed nothing by way of the interior design.

Terry Street

44 South Terry, the George Ahlers house, was built in 1871. It is typical of the one-story cottages of Dayton, with two central bays advancing, stone foundation water table, and doors on the left re-entrant angle with outsized heavily moulded metal caps. The elongated windows are 2/2 double hung sash with elongated moulded and incised metal caps and tone sills. The eaves extend sloping with a narrow frieze. Roof is pitched with asphalt shingles. The house is representative of a breed of small excellent cottage living units found throughout eastern Dayton.

East Third Street

This street, which is the northern boundary of the district, is a broad and very busy main thoroughfare, having both residential and business structures. It is the only street which is seriously intruded, but there are many houses of architectural and historical significance which are still standing and in good condition.

The VFW Post at 1720 E. Third Street, c.1870, is an early Georgian Revival influence with a high rockfaced stone foundation. The central entranceway has a Neo-Classic Revival porch with triple columns at the corner supported on stone piers. The doorway itself is Federal influenced with elliptical fanlight and side panels, the upper part of which is decorative leaded glass. To each side are bowed bays with three-part sash windows having an architectural surround and multiple lights in the upper sash. The second level has a shingle skirt and moulded cornice. It has polygonal bays on brackets on each side and a mullion window in the center with shouldered molding surround. The shingled gable has a palladian window. The wide eaves are box corniced with modillions and frieze, and the raking cornice has modillions and frieze. Extension shingles on the right and left are Queen Anne in character.

The Robert M. Nevin brick home at 1802 East Third, built in 1869, is Second Empire influence with three bays, the right two bays advancing. A recessed doorway in the center bay has a paneled and bracketed frontispiece and paneled soffit. The three-part window on the right has leaded decorative glass in the side lights. The wooden veranda has turned pillars with Eastlake scroll sawn detail which starts in the left re-entrant angle then circles onto the facade corner by a semi-circular gazebo-like structure and continues across the front with Byzantine-like detail. The elongated windows on the second level are 2/2 double hung sash with incised stone lintels on brackets and sills. The heavy eaves have a box cornice, pairs of laminated brackets with finials, and paneled frieze. The roof is mansard with rail and Neo-Classic dormers.

The Lydia Huffman Hedges home at 1916-18 East Third Street is another of the homes built in 1870 by William P. Huffman for his children. The Queen Anne house sits on a high rockfaced stone foundation which extends into the porch railing of an Ionic Neo-Classic porch. On the first level, the central doorway of double doors is recessed with a polygonal bay on the left having a decorative art glassed transom window. The right bay is a circular tower with cove roof and finial. The second level has an advancing frame polygonal bay in the center and diagonal corner on the left. There are wide eaves with scrolled consoles, dentils and a wide entablature. The Shingle style one-half story has a recessed porch with doorway with multi-paned sash side windows. An oval window is in the gable end. The raking cornice has modillions and dentils.

Fourth Street

The Dr. A.E. Jenner home at 1633 E. Fourth St. sits on a side hill with a retaining wall and iron fence. It is High Victorian Italianate with a doorway on the right and a classical influenced frontispiece. The windows have retained in part their 6/6 double hung sash and have iron shaped decorated caps. The pitched roof projects with sloping eaves and has a paneled soffit.

The E.H. Brownell home at 1701 E. Fourth is brick with a Classic Revival porch, Doric columns, cornice pediment over steps with incised decoration in a tympanum. Windows are 1/1 double hung sash with stone lintels and sills and a wide bracketed box cornice and frieze. It is built up on a dais behind an interesting stone retaining wall which extends for more than half the block. There is a deep recessed doorway with paneled soffit and heavily moulded two-panel doors.

Centre Street

The houses on Centre Street are primarily small frame homes, with some brick ones interspersed. These houses were primarily built and lived in by craftsmen and artisans. In an effort to make the homes more attractive, or make them appear more ostentatious, many have been altered. However, a careful analysis of the situation indicates that the great majority of the homes could be rehabilitated with a minimum of effort and expense. Many of the homes have very unique characteristics, but detailed descriptions have not been included due to the extensive alterations.

Fifth Street

The Neo-Classic gas station, c. 1920, which is now serving as a used car lot, is typical of the many stations of the same type which were built in the period. This is the only station of the type remaining in Dayton and serves as a landmark. Under uncounted layers of paint are sandstone columns and limestone random ashlar.

The Simms Neighborhood Center at 2160 E. Fifth Street was built in 1912 as one of the Carnegie Libraries. Of Neo-Classic influence, it is a five-bay brick building on a high rockfaced foundation. A central pavilion with doorway on the groundlevel has representational side lights with interrupted stone cornice with segmental pediment. Scrolled column bases support pilasters on the second level with a triple mullion window that has a large transom. Above is a stone cornice and semi-circular wall dormer with modillions and a port hole window. To each side are two pilastered bays with recessed panel and mullion windows in which the transoms have been blinded. The eaves are box corniced. The hip roof is sheathed in curved tile. The chimneys are massive piers, one interior to the left rear and one inside on the right.

The original storefront at 2101 E. Fifth has been retained.

Significance

This district is the most representative sampling within the city of the architecture of the late nineteenth century including blue-collar, artisan, merchant and managerial class residences within an identifiable geographic area. The socio-economic character of the original residents is unusually well-preserved in this concentration of housing representing the period 1870-1890. The history of the district is typical of the neighborhood booster-developer pattern of growth characteristics of Dayton's expansion during the nineteenth century.

If it were possible to move oneself back into the era during which the Huffman Historic District was developing and stroll casually down the streets of the district, the opportunity would be afforded to meet many of the people who were responsible for the development of Dayton itself. William P. Huffman surfaces as the single most important individual in the district's development. A banker and real-estate developer, Mr. Huffman made the area accessible to the general business district by developing the Third Street Railway. He donated the land for the Linden Avenue Baptist Church and for Huffman School (the oldest elementary school building in Dayton), and in order to make the land desirable, he built homes in the area for three of his children, William, Charles, and Lydia, who were prominent on the Dayton social scene. His daughter Anna also lived in the district at 73 Linden after which this house was donated to the Linden Avenue Baptist Church as a parsonage. Mr.

Huffman also purchased the Davis Sewing Machine Company, which was located in New York and moved it, along with approximately 50 employees and their families, to Dayton -- again in order to create a market for his land.

He donated land for the Third Street Baptist Church and for the Widow's Home, built to serve the widows Civil War victims. (These last two are not located in the district.) Mr. Huffman was a second generation Daytonian. His father built the first stone house in Dayton and members of the Huffman family have continued to be major innovators in the city.

William P. was president of both the Second and Third National Banks and a trustee of the waterworks. When the city created a board of city commissioners, William Huffman was one of the first members, and the installation of sewage systems and street paving in the city were largely due to Mr. Huffman's leadership.

He was manager of the Cooper Hydraulic Co. and of the National Improvement Co., director of the City National Bank and the Davis Sewing Machine Co., and was president of the Miami Building and Loan Association. Mr. Huffman was a major contributor to the growth and development of Dayton.

The first resident of 54 Linden Ave was John Kirby who came to Dayton to organize and be general manager of Dayton Manufacturing Company (1883), one of Dayton's premier industries. A self-made man who rose from the bottom rank of labor, he represents an interesting ambivalence between concern for the working man and opposition to organized labor, specifically the A.F.L.

While in Adrian, Michigan, he organized the Working Man's Mutual Aid Association. As manager of Dayton Manufacturing, Kirby was active in several management organizations opposed to organized labor, including serving as president on the Dayton Employers Association and the National Association of Manufacturers.

The secretary-treasurer at Barney and Smith was J. Frank Kiefaber, who, along with his brother J.C., lived in several houses throughout the district. In 1887, J.C. bought the house at 35 Huffman Ave. and both of the brothers lived there until 1894, when Frank moved. The home remained in the hands of J.C. or his wife, Nancy, until 1926. Both men were active in the religious, social and political realms of the community and the Kiefaber name is a well-known and well-respected one in Dayton.

Other prominent business, social and political leaders who lived within the area were:

Benjamin N. Beaver, who lived at 55-61 Linden, was the co-founder of the firm Beaver and Butt, which was one of the largest firms in the city. Specializing in general construction, planning, millwork and the manufacture of general building materials, they had contracts extending into neighboring states. They employed as many as 500 men when they rebuilt the Lebanon Public Hall in 1877-78. In Dayton, they built the Kuhns Building and rebuilt the Turner Opera House (now the Victory Theatre) into Music Hall following a disastrous fire in 1869. Both of these buildings are on the National Register. They also did the carpentry work for St. Paul's Methodist Episcopal Church (now St. Paul United Methodist Church), which is within the district. The interior of Mr. Beaver's house reflects the quality of craftsmanship and of style in the decorative woodwork.

Another builder, Philip E. Gilbert, built and lived in the house at 65 Linden. Mr. Gilbert, in the year 1878 built 165 houses. Besides residences, he built the Central Baptist Church, Sacred Heart Church, Dayton Manufacturing, Barney Block, Davis Sewing Machine and others. He organized and was president of the Miami Building and Loan, was a tax commissioner, member of the board of education and superintendent of the Sunday School at the Linden Avenue Baptist Church.

William Henry Payne, 68 Linden Ave., owned a business involved in the wholesale of upholstery and furniture and manufacturing supplies. Payne Fabrics still exists in Dayton.

Charles W. Raymond lived at 17 S. Terry and later purchased the house at 60 Linden,. Raymond was president of the C.W. Raymond Co., manufacturer of clay working machinery. Raymond invented a machine for pressing terra cotta and ornamental brick, which increased the production from 30 pieces per day to about 3,000 per day. Later he invented an improved power press for the manufacture of paving bricks, in which 10,000 bricks per day were produced. His inventions eventually led to a production of 200,000 bricks per day. Raymond's machinery was sold throughout the world and he became very wealthy, holding a great deal of real estate in Dayton and much "working" land in other states. Raymond was very socially prominent and religiously active, being one of the charter members of St. Paul's Methodist Episcopal Church. It is interesting to note that the homes in which Mr. Raymond lived were not brick, but frame and stone.

Dr. A.E. Jenner, 1633 E. Fourth Street, was a prominent physician in Dayton who also served as a state senator for two terms. Dr. Jenner served as a surgeon of the Fifth Ohio Regiment during the Civil War.

Nicholas Metz, 74 Huffman Avenue, was secretary of the Southern Ohio Mutual Benefit Association, owner of the Hydraulic Brewery and principal of one of the 12th district schools.

E.H. Brownell, who lived at 1701 E. Fourth Street, was the owner of the E.H. Brownell and Company firm and of Dayton Steam Boiler Works. Apparently, Mr. Brownell, who lived in Huntsville, Ohio, most of the time, found it necessary to live in Dayton for some reason between 1879 and 1886. He lived at 33 S. Terry and in 1879, moved away from the district in 1880 and moved back in 1884, staying at 1701 E. Fourth through 1886, when he went back to Huntsville.

Mr. Joseph Wortman, attorney, lived in and built the beautiful house at 36 June Street. He was an unsuccessful candidate for mayor of Dayton in 1891, at first winning by two votes and, upon a recount, losing by two votes. He served as tax commissioner, was one of the organizers of the Teutonia National Bank, was secretary and attorney of the Mechanics' Loan and Savings Association, and was largely identified with the development of the northern end of the city of Dayton.

Robert M. Nevin, 1802 E. Third Street, served as prosecuting attorney of Montgomery County and represented the Third Congressional District of Ohio in the United States Congress. His wife, Emma, was one of the original members of St. Paul's Methodist Episcopal Church.

The small cottage at 44 S. Terry was owned and lived in by George and Della Ahlers. Mr. Ahlers was a salesman. His son, Daniel, was manager of the Aeolian Co., a company which built the Duo Art reproducing piano, the Pianola player piano, the Weber, Steek, Wheelock and Stroud pianos, the Steinway pianola and the Aeolian pipe organ. The company

encompassed 12 factories, eight in the U.S. and four abroad. The also produced the Aeolian Vocalion (known as the greater phonograph) and Vocalion records.

In the 1885 city directory, there was listed an H.L. Huber, student, at 445 E. May, which would now be 1945 E Fourth St. This young man was then attending the Miami Commercial College. He went on to become the secretary of the Dayton Paper Novelty Co. The quote given about Mr. Huber in Drury's Dayton and Montgomery County History is descriptive of the majority of the men who lived in this district. Whether they AHD already created a reputation for themselves, were beginning to do so, or had not yet begun, they were willing to pay the price of concentrated effort, close application and unfaltering perseverance in order to win advancement and were gradually working their way upward.

The Huffman Historic District is a concentration of housing that has retained its historical character representing a period of 1870-1900 in Dayton, Ohio. The district is the heart of a definable established neighborhood. There is a vigorous neighborhood association infused with young blood that is working diligently to promote revitalization. The TALS neighborhood commercial district along Third Street and a large section of the residential area has been identified as a revitalization area by the city of Dayton.

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