

Heritage

Historic houses dot this area

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By David Litogot
special writer

A recent news item: The Junior League of Detroit is going to restore the 138-year-old Sibley House on Jefferson Avenue and use it for offices and conferences.

The Sibley House, named for Solomon Sibley, Detroit's first mayor, is the city's only surviving Greek Revival home.

Congratulations should be forwarded to Detroit for preserving its lone Greek Revival home. The Motor City had 250 of these architectural gems in 1800 but due to "progress" and "urban renewal" only the Sibley house has been saved.

Greek Revival architecture was brought to Michigan in the early 1800s by a wave of immigration from western New York state, where it was a popular style of building. The Greek Revival design is a classical form with columns, pedimented gables and wide, fancy rim called entablatures crowning the columns and walls. The columns could be real or just for decoration. Sometimes, pilasters are used. These are flattened columns that emerge from a wall.

The architectural style was popular with banks and government buildings in the East. But here in Michigan, the tasteful home builder used it to show off his wealth and status. The Greek Revival home might be rectangular or L-shaped. The roofs tend to be of low pitch. Dormers are rare. Transoms above the main doors are common.

If you would like to see evidence of the design, you need not travel to Detroit, but look about you. The Farmington area has 29 such homes on its historical lists. There are five in the city of Farmington and 15 in the Farmington Hills historical district.

They are listed here so you can give yourself a tour someday:

- **CITY OF FARMINGTON**
 - The Loomis-Leonard House, 33309 Shilawassee, built in 1850-1856.
 - The Hudson-Peel House, 33436 Shilawassee, 1844.
 - The William Power-Parker House, 34002 Shilawassee, 1851.
 - The Milton Botsford-Walker House, 33341 Shilawassee, 1840s.
 - The First Post Office, 23927 Farmington, 1825.
- **CITY OF FARMINGTON HILLS**
 - The Aldrich House, 31110 11 Mile, 1842.
 - The John Garfield House, 35810 13 Mile, 1831-1838.
 - The Lemuel Botsford House, 24414 Farmington, 1837.
 - The Philbrick Tavern, 26007 Power, 1827.
 - The Steven Yerkes-Rogers House, 39040 Nine Mile, 1834.
 - The Theron Murray House, 30943 Halsted, 1833.
 - The David Simmonds House, 22000 Haggerty, 1843.
 - The Clarenceville Blacksmith Shop, 21024 Ontario, 1840.
 - The Universalist-Unitarian Church, Halsted, 1853.
 - The Silas Green House, 10 Mile near Inkster, 1840.

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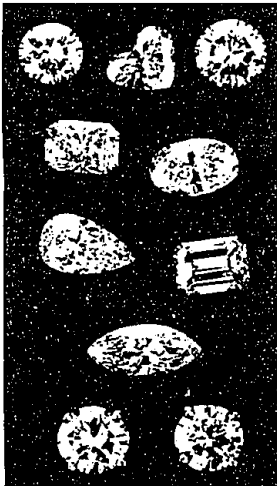
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