

Historic Houses - Valley View

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C1908-1916 – Mr. & Mrs. Frank M. Crane on the porch of their home.

Frank M. Crane came to the White Lake area around 1898 from Chicago where he was a manager for Montgomery Wards.

William Thieman of Montague sold his farm, tools, and nearly all his livestock to Frank Crane in August 1898. By 1901, the farmhouse, which is located on Stanton Blvd., was greatly improved, and Mrs. Crane christened it "Crane's Nest". In 1903 a beautiful rustic summer home was built on the premises of the Cranes, presumably on the front of the existing farmhouse. With this red brick addition to the farmhouse the residence is sometimes referred to as the "Red Brick Farmhouse".

In March 1907, Frank Crane invested in some valuable real estate in the village of Montague when he bought Block 36 – the lakefront property of Mrs. E. L. Dodge. Mr. Crane expected to build a house on this property.

In March 1908, F. M. Crane bought the house of a Dr. Johnson at Coon Creek and had it moved to his block near the W. E. Osmon residence on Prospect Street (now known as Old Channel Trail). Crane remodeled it into a modern dwelling.

Mr. & Mrs. Crane moved into the new house on Prospect Street in November 1908. And they continued to own and use the residence on Stanton known as "Crane's Nest".

Frank Mark Crane was born in Lowell, Massachusetts in September 1841. He married his first wife Adelaide Gage in 1866 and they had 6 children. His second wife was Anna Wadsworth-Hutchins whom he married in 1894. Anna W. H. Crane died in Montague in May 1916. Frank M. Crane died in Muskegon in August 1916.

In 1922, three sisters, Nan, Irene and Elizabeth Power, bought the late Frank Crane residence on Prospect Street. In August 1923, they named their place "Valley View Cottage".

Anabel "Nan" Power was born in 1869. Her sister Irene was born in 1874. Elizabeth Jane was born in 1881.

In early 1932 Rose Power-Hurd and her husband Alva came to live with the sisters. Unfortunately, about 5 months after settling in, Rose died in July. Rose's husband Alva continued to live in the house with his sisters-in-law until November 1933 when he passed away. Rose and Alva are both buried in Oak Grove Cemetery. In September 1940, Elizabeth died and is buried in Oak Grove Cemetery as well.

The two remaining Power sisters owned the house until November 1950 when Irene and Nan moved back to Skokie, IL where they made their home.

In 1953, James Johnson's name was associated with the house. In the March 12, 1953, obituary of George Williams, it mentioned that Mr. & Mrs. Williams had been living in an upstairs apartment at the James Johnson home at 8411 Old Channel Trail.

In 1955 and 56, the house was listed for sale and featured as a spacious 10-room home, including an apartment, overlooking White Lake.

In the February 1965 obituary of Martin Kropf survivors were listed his wife Shirley and a daughter Susan. In 1966 Shirley married Everett Lehman and they made their home on Whitney Street. By 1972, daughter Susan Kropf of 8411 Old Channel Trail was married to Marine sergeant John W. Potter. So sometime between 1966 and 1972 it seems that the Everett Lehman family moved into 8411 Old Channel Trail.

The house doesn't seem to be mentioned in the news again until January and February 1990 when it was advertised for sale.

The current owners, Rod & Maggie Vanderstelt, purchased the house in August 1990, and have been lovingly taking care of it.