

Historic Homes - 212 S Mears

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According to an 1877 plat map, M. R. Stephens was listed as the owner of this land and house. He reportedly came to this area as early as 1868.

Information from the 1870 Census indicated that Milton R. Stephens, his wife Susan and their eight children were living in Whitehall at the time. Their children included: Elisha (1851-?); Susan (1853-1888); John Milton (1856-1888); Louisa (1857-1935); Elwin C. (1860-1938); Mariah Jane (1862-1943); Anna Eliza (1865-?); and Horace M. (1867-?)

In 1880 the census showed most of them were still in the area, but they were now living on Colby Street. Milton was working as a drayman.

Milton R. died 8 November 1884 as a result of an accident. It seems that he was descending the stairway at the rear of the European Hotel, when he lost his balance and fell heavily to the landing beneath. He was then picked up and taken to his home, where he later died.

His wife stayed in the Whitehall area until her death on 24 September 1892. It is not known where either of them were buried.

In April 1910 it was reported that Lynn Gee was remodeling the Stephens' house into a modern residence.

Lynn Burdett Gee was born in Whitehall on 5 January 1886. He married Ruby Swarthout on 8 Jun 1907 in Kalamazoo. They adopted a son, Foster Stevens (1921-1970).

In 1910 while they were living somewhere on Colby Street, it was reported that Lynn was remodeling the former Stephens' house into a modern residence.

Lynn was the sponsoring influence for the building of the Masonic Temple. He drew the plans for the building himself and then saw that the job was carried out to completion.

According to the 1920 and 1930 census, they were living in the house at 212 Mears.

He was associated with his brother Carl and the Gee Funeral home. In 1931 he was instrumental in building a brick house on Mears with the idea of eventually converting part of it into a funeral home. Unfortunately, he became ill and died before having a chance to realize his plan. Lynn died on 18 November 1931.

Eighteen years later, in 1949, the house on Mears became the Purdy Funeral Home, and then Clock, and now Beacon Cremation & Funeral Services.

Ruby died in December 1962, and is buried in Oakhurst Cemetery along with Lynn.

Dr. Joseph A. Murphy came to the White Lake area in 1944 where he opened his office as a Physician & Surgeon in November of that year.

Murphy was born 21 January 1910 in Boston. He attended the Kansas City College of Osteopathic Medicine where he graduated specializing in Ophthalmology.

In 1945 Murphy was appointed City Health Officer by the City Council.

In April 1952, the Whitehall Chamber of Council honored Dr. Murphy when it was announced that he planned to leave the area to train in a hospital in the East to specialize in ear, eye, nose and throat diseases. During his absence, Dr. John W. Long took over Dr. Murphy's practice.

On 4 April 1953, Dr. J. A. Murphy married Mrs. Gladys A. (ne Seastrom) Waters (1913-1999) in Muskegon Heights.

In October 1954, Mr. Murphy returned to the area where he opened an office in the Lyman Block in Muskegon. He also had his office in Whitehall with limited hours in his specialty. His General Practice patients were seen by his associate Dr. N. D. Krohn.

Dr. Murphy died at a Muskegon Nursing Home on 25 September 1974. (His obit appeared in the White Lake Observer – The Observer & Interurban - on 2 October 1974 –Page 8)

The Moon's – Dave and his wife Jean lived in the house in the 1990's. From 1993-1999 records indicated that they lived at this address.

Dave Dahlstrom and his wife Clare lived in the house when he was a partner in Pitkin's Drug store.

David Immanuel Dahlstrom was born 2 May 1898 in Whitehall. He married Clare Richardson on 17 April 1929.

In Feb 1920, C. G. Pitkin sold the business to his son Clarence E. Pitkin and David I. Dahlstrom, who had been a clerk of the firm for the past 6 years.

??? In 1930, Dahlstrom was listed as a retired druggist. In 1940 & 1950 they were living on South Baldwin.

In 1960, Dave Dahlstrom was one of three Pitkin pharmacists along with Lynn Carr and Don Nordlund. In October 1964, Don Nordland and Lynn Carr purchased the business from Dave Dahlstrom and Norman Pitkin, grandson of the founder.

In November 2024 the house was purchased by Dan Zuniga. The new owners' plans were to fix what's broken and let the next owners restore it how they like. The current owner repaired walls, doors, floors and replaced windows. All of the drop ceilings were removed and the original ceilings repaired. Walls were painted and woodwork polished. No changes were made to the layout, cabinets or the bathrooms. The house also has a 2-story carriage house/garage.

These are just a few of the residents who called this house their home in the past, and there will certainly be more to come in the future.