

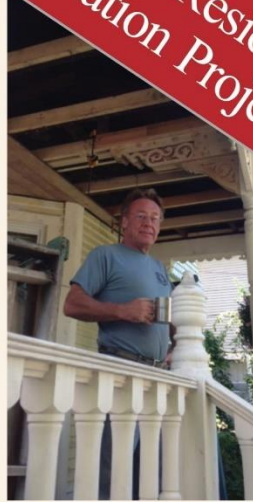


Office of *BARNS INTO BIRDHOUSES*
Queen Anne Residence, 144 Fitzhugh SE, Grand Rapids MI
Award, Outstanding Residential Preservation Project
Grand Rapids Historic Commission, March 2022
Ford Victoria Model A, Courtesy Dick Dorato
Photo Courtesy, Daniel Van Duinen

HPC
2022

AWARD WINNER

Outstanding Residential
Preservation Project



John Guertin & Irene Franowicz 144 Fitzhugh St. SE

144 Fitzhugh is a lovely Queen Anne style house dating to circa 1890. The house has been home to several families over the years including Charles H. Suess a machinist for Truman Smith Company and George Burleson a Special Officer with the Grand Rapids Police Department.

Over the years the house managed to retain many of its historic features and charm, but still experienced a level of deterioration and alteration which included loss of the historic front porch elements.

When John & Irene purchased the property, they began a multi-decade labor of love to restore this home to its former glory. Even though the house is not located in a historic district they went above and beyond in their endeavor to replace missing and deteriorated

shingles, scroll work, moldings, interior cove molding, kitchen cabinets, and the front porch. When they found that the elements, they needed were not available at stores, John took it upon himself to create each item and when possible, to source from salvage companies going so far as Canada to find porch columns that replicated the ones that used to exist on the house. What they could not source or make themselves they had custom crafted, such as the porch spindles. They have made it their goal to restore the home as authentically as possible and have done an amazing job in the process. The house looks as good or possibly even better than the day it was constructed, a true testament to their artistic abilities, persistence, and fortitude. Even their quaint personal touches such as the custom-made porch swing and fencing are period correct.



Restoration of Front Porch
Award, Grand Rapids Historic Commission, March 2022
Photo Courtesy, Daniel Van Duinen



Restoration of Front Porch, Street View



Reproduction of Queen Anne Style Fence
Photo courtesy, Daniel Van Duinen



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