

# Shaker Heights: The Harmony of Diversity

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Shaker Landmark Weekend 2004

September 11 and 12

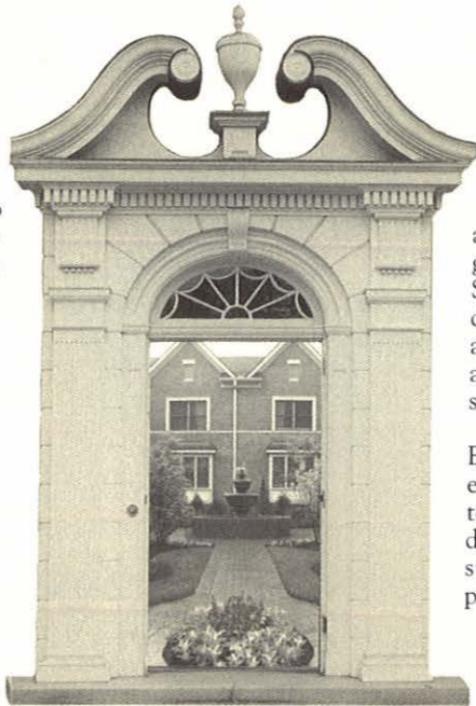


## Shaker Heights:

New and old residents alike agree that two key reasons they make Shaker Heights their home are the strength of its neighborhoods and the beauty of its homes. The 2004 Landmark Weekend celebrates and honors this proud heritage – the rich diversity of residents, cultures and beautiful homes.

The establishment of Shaker Heights can be traced back to two brothers - Oris Paxton (O.P.) and Mantis James (M.J.) Van Sweringen. The Van Sweringens required that each house be architecturally unique. Because of this, most of the homes within Shaker Heights are not exact replicas of a particular architectural style. The house may have a dominant style, but small details of differing styles have been interjected, creating an architectural richness unique to each home. Also, the Van Sweringens promoted the use of natural and textured materials for all construction.

Shaker Village was incorporated in 1912. As one company owned Shaker Village, its development could be strictly controlled. Each residential development had to be approved by the Van Sweringen



## The Harmony of Diversity

Land Company. To ensure the quality of homes being built, as well as to assist architects with this approval process, design guidelines were established. The Van Sweringens required that new homes be designed by an architect, meet the published architectural standards, and be reviewed by an architectural review board – a process that is still followed today.

Early planning made Shaker Heights socio-economically diverse. Since then, it has worked to become religiously, ethnically, and racially diverse as well. It has made a commitment to sustaining a quality community, through preservation of its history, environment and architectural treasures. The community maintains excellent schools, and quality housing. Shaker Heights is a leader among first suburbs, working proactively to increase investment in the community, and to retain residents.

The Shaker Heights Landmark Commission tours celebrate the quality and distinctive character of Shaker's architecture. This year's 22<sup>nd</sup> annual tour features nine properties that represent a diversity of housing types, styles, sizes and locations throughout the community. A townhouse, two condominiums, a two-family home and five single-family homes are highlighted this year.



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## 19827 CHAGRIN BOULEVARD

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Sussex Courts Townhomes  
Built 2001  
Architect: City Architecture  
Builder: Heartland Developers

Sussex Courts consists of forty-six luxury single-family attached townhomes reflecting the detailing and classic design language that are hallmarks of the City's residential architecture. Sussex Courts was designed to complement both the fine detail and the traditional Tudor style found within the City. The brownstone development provides engaging new architecture that adds to the charm and dignity of its surroundings.

This housing development offers six different designs, ranging in size from 1700 to 2900 square feet. Tudor detailing, varying rooflines, bay windows, and chimneys all add architectural interest to the facade of the townhomes. Unique entry courts and outdoor spaces, including private courtyards and roof terraces, provide additional living space and add to the open feel of these homes.

The homeowners committed themselves to the purchase of this unit having seen only the blueprints. Their choice, the two-story *Fairmount*, with its first floor master suite and spacious living area with cathedral ceilings has been a happy one. The living room opens out into the kitchen, dining area and a den. The upstairs features two full-sized bedrooms with a connecting bathroom and loft.

Originally, apartment buildings were prohibited in Shaker Village. In the late 1920's, the Van Sweringens recognized the need for density to fully support use of the rapid transit system, and set aside areas of the village specifically for apartments and two-family homes. Built along the main thoroughfares, the rental properties were required to meet established Shaker standards of quality architecture and craftsmanship.

Architect Alfred Harris was stationed in Europe during World War I, where exposure to English and French architecture influenced him greatly. Harris believed that English architecture could be showcased in this country through construction of a large apartment complex. He planned an ambitious series of apartments designed to resemble a large English village.

The Van Aken Towers are a beautiful example of Jacobethan Revival architecture, which originated from early English and European precedents, while translating many elements of the Queen Anne style into brick, slate, and stone. Masonry with a lighter stone trim around window and door frames, quoins, parapets, rounded archways and other decorative details characterize the building's exterior style.

The two featured units open to a two-story living room with beautiful furnishings and original leaded glass windows. Notice how differently the two suites use the space: One is light and airy, with traditional decor while the other is dark and dramatic and rich in texture and color.



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## 16300 VAN AKEN BOULEVARD

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**Van Aken Towers Condominiums**

**Built December 1930**

**Architect: Alfred Wilson Harris Sr.**

**Builder: A.W. Palmer**



## **17619 WINSLOW ROAD**

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**Two-Family Home**  
**Built November 1925**  
**Architect: Brooke and Burrows**  
**Builder: H.P. Hirth**

Palatial homes for wealthy families were not the only homes built in the quickly developing Shaker Village. The Van Sweringens, when creating the zoning ordinance, designated specific areas of the village for smaller single-family homes as well as for two-family homes. Families of all income ranges had an opportunity to live in Shaker Village.

Shaker's two-family homes were designed with one front entrance to appear more like a single-family home. In this way, the Winslow Road area, consisting primarily of two-family residences, resembles the single-family neighborhoods elsewhere in Shaker. Quality and design standards were applied to these structures, as elsewhere, and the result is uniquely Shaker Heights. There are approximately 1,000 two-family properties in the City.

This is a typical frame home, clad in cedar shake siding. The house has been modified to accommodate the owner's live-work situation. The downstairs office was formerly the living room of the lower unit. In addition, there is a two-bedroom rental unit on the first floor. A contemporary style has been infused throughout the home.



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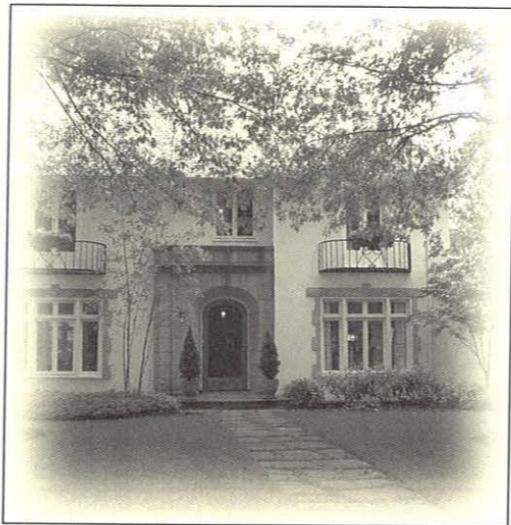
## 3695 LYTLE ROAD

Single Family Home  
Built August 1929  
Architect: R. Moulthrop  
Builder: Anton Hejl

Attention to the design and construction standards of smaller homes was maintained in the developing community. Shaker Village Standards reads, “the architectural expression will be as carefully considered as in the higher priced sections.”

This modest, single-family home was no exception. Peering through the trees at the home’s facade, one finds a great example of Colonial Revival architecture. The following features identify the home’s architectural style: an accentuated front door with broken triangular pediments and supporting pilasters, symmetrically balanced windows and a center door, double hung windows, a side gabled roof, and ornate brickwork above first story windows.

With only 1800 square feet of living space, the exquisite gardens in the back yard provide additional space to enjoy. Hemlock trees screen the rear yard, while dogwoods, locust, and apple trees frame the house. Glowing landscape lights illuminate the private sanctuary and make the driveway virtually invisible.

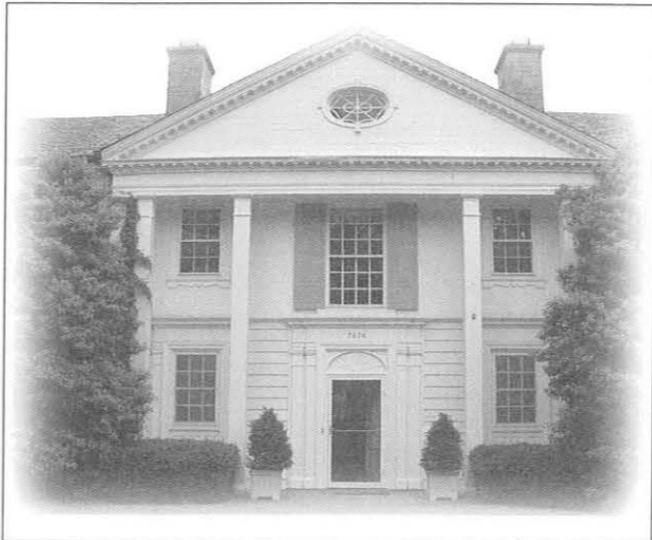


## 2996 MONTGOMERY ROAD

Single Family Home  
Built November 1925  
Architect: Walter Smith  
Builder: Keys and Treuhaft

This single-family home was designed in the French Eclectic style. Most symmetrical French Eclectic homes in the United States were built between 1915 and 1945. A defining architectural feature of the home is its tall, steeply pitched hip roof. Stucco wall cladding and stone trim frame the leaded glass casement windows, which are typical of this style. The front door is set in a simple arched opening, surrounded by stone. Note the decorative wrought iron railings on the second story balconies.

The home's exterior simplicity is complemented by its richly decorated interior. Beautiful fabrics and colors draw visitors from room to room. A major renovation eliminated the load-bearing wall between the kitchen and the breakfast nook to create a new, open and airy, classically detailed space.

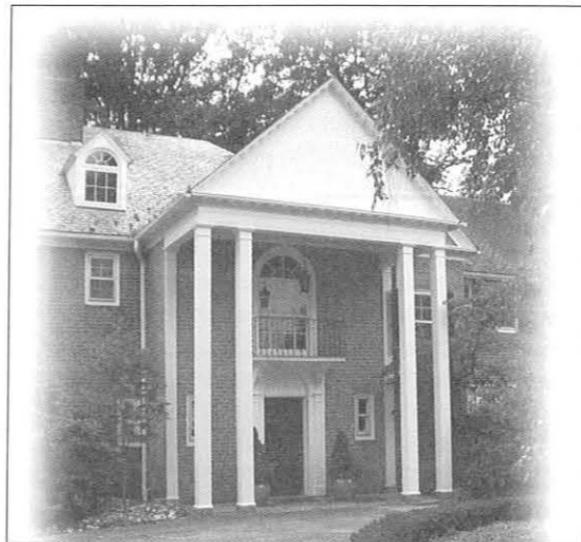


### **2676 EATON ROAD**

Single Family Home  
Built March 1929  
Architect: Harold B. Burdick  
Builder: W.H. Shepherd Sons and Co.

This Eaton Road single-family home is a variant of the Georgian Revival style. Upon pulling into the drive, one's eye is drawn up to the centered front gable and recessed, central pavilion. Decorative dentil moldings and an elliptical window above the front entry make this the point of interest on the home. There is a rigid symmetry to the home; the windows are aligned both vertically and horizontally, decorative pilasters frame and balance the front entry, and the chimneys are placed in such a way that they contribute to the overall symmetry. There is nothing small when it comes to this 5,000 square foot home.

A majority of the improvements to this home can be found in the kitchen and the bathrooms. More recently, the current homeowners added the mudroom, the half bath off of the kitchen, and the outdoor porch behind the kitchen. Original ceramic tile walls in the kitchen have been preserved. An island and upgraded sink and countertops have been added in the butler's pantry.



### **18201 NORTH PARK BOULEVARD**

Single Family Home  
Built October 1924  
Architect: Howell and Thomas  
Builder: Robb Clapp

During Shaker's peak period of development by the Van Sweringens, the firm of Howell and Thomas was one of the leading architectural firms in Cleveland. They designed a number of larger residences and dozens of beautiful homes in the Heights area between 1915 and 1930.

This elegant Georgian home illustrates the lovely, rustic setting and elegant landscaping of many Shaker homes. A number of renovations have been made to this home by its enthusiastic do-it-yourself homeowners.

Plastering a brick wall in the former screened-in porch transformed it to a family room. Columns from Lorain Avenue antique shops form the bookshelf/cabinets in the living room that also serve as radiator covers. The master suite has "his" and "hers" bathrooms, tiled in slate with decorative glass tile accents and more Lorain Avenue finds, such as cabinet doors and a marble sink. The "hers" sink cabinet has been fashioned from an antique door header.



## 3290 DORCHESTER ROAD

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Single Family Home  
Built September 1927  
Architect: P.R. Brooke  
Builder: W.G. Gregg

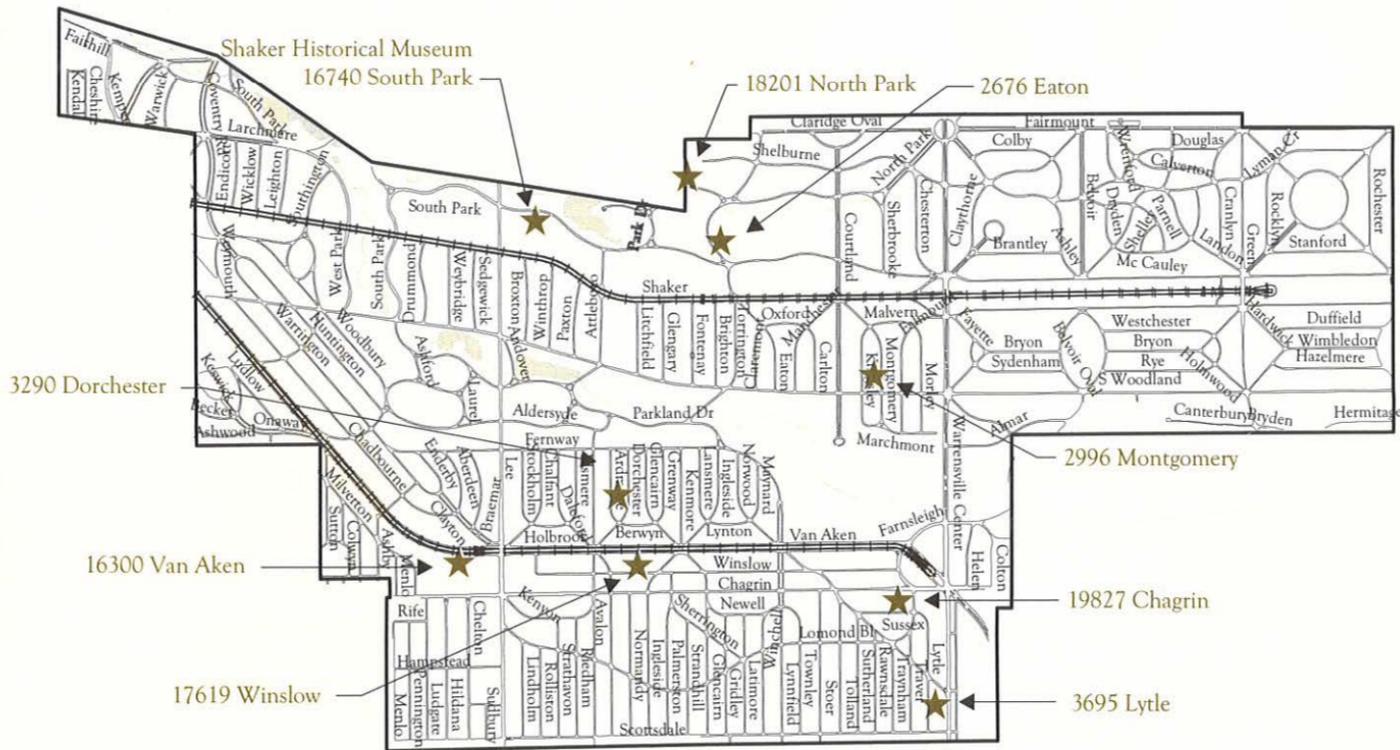
This single-family home in the Fernway neighborhood defies traditional colonial symmetry with an offset main entry. More typical of this style however, are the columns at the front door as well as the fanlight overhead. Double-hung windows of multiple panes add to the simple, classical detailing evident on this house and in the surrounding neighborhood.

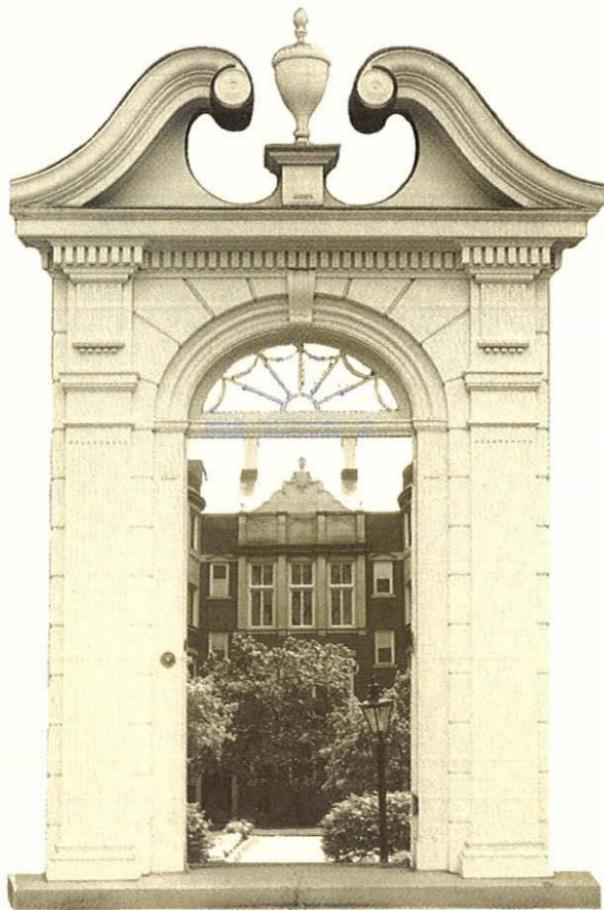
The use of rich colors and classic décor give each room of this Dorchester home a life of its own. At the same time that a large family room was added, a new use for the screened-in porch on the side of the home was discovered. It is now an elegantly paneled bar/butler's pantry connecting the living room and family room.

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