

**Approximate boundaries:**  
**N**-W. McKinley Ave; **S**-I-794 East;  
**E**-Milwaukee River; **W**-I-43

# DOWNTOWN *West Town*

## NEIGHBORHOOD DESCRIPTION

West Town (also known as Kilbourn Town) is home to major public and cultural institutions. The neighborhood houses the central branch of the Milwaukee Public Library, County Courthouse, Fiserv Forum, Milwaukee Public Museum, Turner Hall, and the Wisconsin Center, to name just some. The few free-standing houses in the area are either 19th century Tudor or Queen Annes. Residential housing tends to be large multi-unit apartments or condos.

Old World Third Street (today's Martin Luther King Drive) is one of the main business and entertainment centers of the neighborhood and has predominantly 19th century commercial buildings that rarely rise above three stories. The rest of the neighborhood is mostly commercial buildings, public and governmental institutions, and entertainment and sports complexes.

The neighborhood's topography is varied. A hill rises steeply west of 7th Street to the freeway. The streets mainly follow a grid pattern except for North Plankinton that angles east following the path of the Milwaukee River. The main green space is Pere Marquette Park that parallels the river just east of Martin Luther King Drive. See neighborhood photos below.

## HISTORY

West Town owes its founding to Byron Kilbourn who arrived in in 1834 and claimed land on the west bank of the Milwaukee River on today's Juneau Avenue. Kilbourn had already been involved with real estate in Sheboygan and Manitowoc and from the start seemed to have a very ambitious agenda. Freehanded with bribes and corruption, Kilbourn managed some enterprises that were later exposed for illegal dealings. But populations were already settling in his West Town development area.

### Early populations

The earliest groups to make their homes in West Town were Germans and Irish. While many Yankees from New England and New York came to the Milwaukee area, most built homes northeast of West Town in the area that became known as Yankee Hill. Germans began arriving in large numbers in the 1840s before Milwaukee was even a city. So many settled in the developing city, that when Solomon Juneau became Milwaukee's first mayor in 1846, the inaugural address was printed in both English and German. As today, the Germans were remarkably diverse in cultural practices, social class, and religion.

While some Irish had been in the United States prior to the American Revolution, a large wave of Irish immigrants arrived during and shortly after the Irish Potato Famine of 1845 to 1852. Many of those who came to Milwaukee took jobs in the Third Ward. Many others found homes in the East and West Town areas. The Irish and the Germans tended to settle in West Town and elsewhere in Milwaukee in their own colonies.



Today's neighborhood-Turner Hall

A very interesting resident—neither German, Yankee, nor Irish—lived in West Town from 1919 to 1921. See profile below.

### **Spotlight on West Town resident (early 1900s)**

*(Information found on public records at Ancestry.com)*

#### **Golda Mabowehz Meir<sup>i</sup>**



Born in Russia to parents Morris and Bella Mabowehz, Golda grew up on Milwaukee's Near North Side. Her family first settled on 6th and Walnut Street on the border of today's Hay Market and Hillside neighborhoods in the years following the turn of the 20th century. There the family lived in the building where they ran a grocery store. In her later memoirs Golda wrote about the excitement of being in Milwaukee with the great department stores like Schuster's and the endless procession of cars, trolleys and shiny bicycles on the street. In the neighborhood, Golda attended Fourth Street Grade School (today's Golda Meir School). She actually began her activism at the school

when she organized a fundraiser to pay for her classmates' textbooks.

Golda's family soon moved deeper into today's Hillside neighborhood--at 2136 N. 10th Street, where Golda began attending North Division High School. During this time she met and became romantically involved with Morris Myerson (name later changed to Meir), who worked as a painter and a writer. Both became very interested in Zionism. With her parents urging her to avoid marrying too early, Golda went on to college and graduated from Milwaukee Normal School—today the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. Following graduation, she took a job at the Milwaukee Public Library for 20 cents an hour.

She and Morris married. They rented their first unit in the Hillside neighborhood and in 1919 moved to 13th and Juneau (then Chestnut Street) in today's West Town neighborhood. In spring of 1921, Golda and Morris left Milwaukee for Palestine, determined to play a salient role in the struggle for a Jewish homeland.

The rest of Golda's story is history. She became chief negotiator between the Jews of Palestine and the British Mandatory Authority. When Israel was officially established in 1948, she served as Minister of Labour and Foreign Minister, and was elected Prime Minister of Israel in 1969.

To this day, Golda Meir is regarded as one of the most remarkable world leaders in history.

Other interesting residents also became leaders on the world stage. See the profile of the MacArthur family below.

## Spotlight on West Town family (early 1900s)

*(Information found on public records at Ancestry.com)*

### The MacArthurs

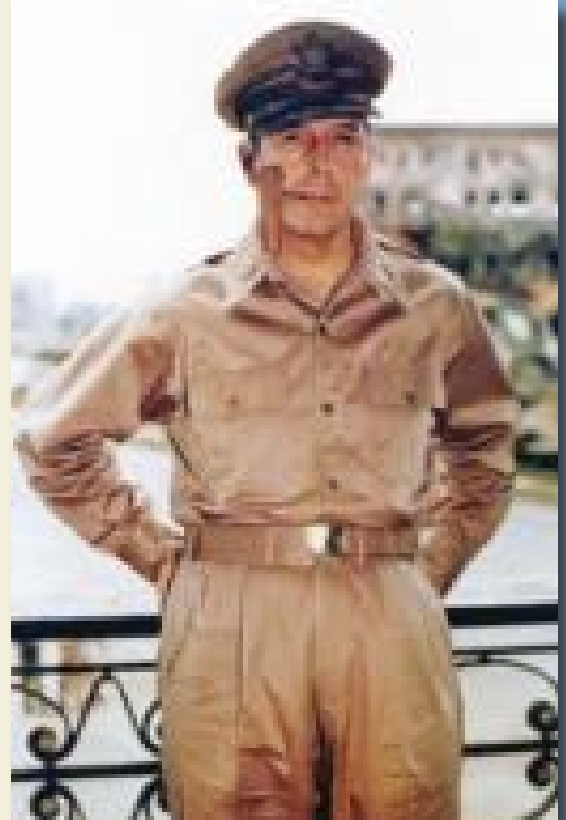
Three generations of the famed MacArthur family had deep Milwaukee roots with connections specifically to the West Town and Yankee Hill neighborhoods.

Arthur MacArthur Sr. was a Scottish immigrant who arrived in the United States in 1815. He and his family first settled in Massachusetts where he studied law and was admitted to the bar. McArthur married Aurelia Belcher and the family moved to Milwaukee. McArthur set up a law office in the 1st Ward, where he quickly rose to political prominence. In 1851 he was elected City Attorney. In 1856 he served four days as Governor of Wisconsin, during a time of political upheaval. He later served a full term as Lieutenant Governor of Wisconsin, then two terms as judge of the 2nd Wisconsin Circuit Court, and by 1870 was appointed Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the District of Columbia by Ulysses S. Grant.

His oldest son, Arthur MacArthur Jr., born in 1845, set his sights on the military. He served in the Civil War and received the Congressional Medal of Honor for bravery at the battle of Missionary Ridge. Arthur Jr. rose to the position of full colonel and made the military his lifelong career. Married to Mary Pickney Hardy, he advanced to the position of military governor in the Philippines. In 1909, he retired from the military and the family returned to Milwaukee, where he rented a house on Marshall Street in the Yankee Hill neighborhood. In 1910, he and Mary were living comfortably with two servants and were also being looked after by third son Douglas, who himself was building a decorated career in the military. Arthur Jr. died in 1912.

Douglas MacArthur (see right<sup>iii</sup>), was born in 1880, while his father was stationed in Arkansas. He had spent time in Milwaukee prior to attending to his father. He lived for a time at Milwaukee's Plankinton Hotel in today's West Town neighborhood while he was studying for the entrance exam to West Point. A marker there today acknowledges the tenure of MacArthur at the hotel.

Graduating at the top of his West Point class, Douglas went on to become Army Chief of Staff in 1930 and Commanding General of the U.S. Army Forces in the Far East during World War II. He was also a recipient of the Congressional Medal of Honor for his service in the Philippines campaign. He retired from duty in 1951 and died in 1964. He was married to Louise Cromwell Brooks and later to Jean Faircloth.



Yet another multi-generational family of fame once lived in the West Town neighborhood. See below.

## West Town profile (early 1900s)

### The Mitchells

The Mitchell family made significant contributions to Milwaukee, the State of Wisconsin, and the nation. They have important ties to the West Town and General Mitchell International Airport neighborhoods.

The first Mitchell family that settled in today's West Town neighborhood was that of Alexander and Martha Reed Mitchell. An immigrant from Scotland at age 22, Alexander rose to prominence very quickly in Milwaukee. He founded the Marine bank, sat on numerous boards of directors, and served two terms in the House of Representatives between 1871 and 1875. Over his lifetime he built the ornate mansion that stands today at 900 West Wisconsin Avenue (today's Wisconsin Club, see photo below).

His only child, John Lendum Mitchell, born 1842, was raised in the Mitchell mansion. He followed in his father's footsteps in his accomplishments, which included military service in the Civil War, two terms in the Wisconsin State Senate, president of the Milwaukee Public School Board, two years in the United States Congress, and one term in the United States Senate.

Probably the best known of the Mitchells was "Billy," son of John Lendum and Harriet Mitchell (*see photo<sup>iii</sup> to right*). His legacy was expanding the use of air power in the U.S. military. Born in 1879, he enlisted in the army while still in college in order to serve in the Spanish-American War. Deciding on a military career, he also served in World War I and increasingly began to recognize the importance of aviation in battle. He learned to fly at his own expense. Mitchell rose to the ranks of Brigadier general and made Chief of Air Service of the Group of Armies, the top aviation command. However, his insistent claims of air superiority over the sea led to confrontations with the U.S. Navy and his superiors. He was eventually tried by court-martial and found guilty of insubordination.

When Mitchell resigned from service in 1926, he continued his advocacy for increased air power in the military—a position that was eventually accepted in the United States military. Because of his relentless struggle in the history of aviation and his family ties to Milwaukee, The Milwaukee County Board voted in 1941 to change the name of the county-operated airport to General Mitchell Field (later changed to General Mitchell International Airport).



### Commercial corridors

One of the earliest commercial corridors to develop in West Town was North 3rd Street (today's Martin Luther King Drive). Germans dominated the area and nearly all shopkeepers, German or not, knew they needed to speak German to succeed.



Another commercial corridor developed on West Wisconsin Avenue (known first as Spring Street and, at a later period, Grand Avenue). West Wisconsin Avenue and East Wisconsin Avenue attracted very different kinds of merchants and professionals. East Wisconsin Avenue had become the center for brokerage houses, law firms, banks, insurance offices, expensive boutiques, and wholesaler contractors (see [East Town neighborhood](#)). West Wisconsin Avenue attracted more retail stores and entertainment enterprises. The latter tended to be vaudeville halls at the end of the 19th century and movie theaters in the 20th century.

### *West Wisconsin (then Grand) Avenue in the 1920s*

Most of the buildings on East Wisconsin Avenue and the eastern section of West Wisconsin Avenue (then Grand Avenue) in 1926 housed offices. The buildings from West 6th Street to 10th Street were usually homes to shops and apartments that were more designed to serve residents in and around today's West Town neighborhood.

<i>Addresses on W. Grand Ave. between 6th and 10th in 1926</i>	<i>Names of businesses and organizations from Milwaukee City Directory</i>
601	Avenue Fashion Shop Inc.
602-15	New Hampshire Block Apartments
604	Master Music Company (James H. Drake)
605	Sakols Inc. Cloaks and Suits
606	Herman Zarne Tailor
607	Max Bernstein Sporting Goods
608	Erwin H. Nehring Baker
619	Telesphere C. Bergeron Restaurant
612-14	Merkle Chevrolet Auto
612-18	Central Market Apartments
613	Alex Kahn Shoe Repair
615	J & R Motor Supply Company
617-19	Jersey Lunch Company
618	Paris Shoe Repairing and Hat Shop James E. Campbell Restaurant
620	Peterson's Art & Gift Shop
621	Mary H. Chesebro Milliner
623	Spencerian Business College
624	James Santa Cigars
625	Walker Musical Exchange
626	Norman Apartments

<i>Addresses on W. Grand Ave. between 6th and 10th in 1926</i>	<i>Names of businesses and organizations from Milwaukee City Directory</i>
628	Isadore Savitt Furs
630	Abe Brown Company Drugs
631	Gether Piano Company Gail F. Carrigan Dentist William J. Scolland Physician
700-02	Jesse A Smith Auto
701-03	Piggly Wiggly Corporation Groceries
704-08	Netter Heiser & Company Inc. Auto Dealers Badger Finance Company
707	M. L.'s Sandwich Shop
709	The Kamera Shop
710	James Sigel Restaurant
711	Wisconsin Commercial Academy
713	Kraus & Koken Painters
715	Hamilton Corset Shop
717	Samuel Zarne Tailor
718	Milwaukee Pet Stock Store Orange Express & Transfer Company
720	Behan Stationery Store Mrs. Bertha Ackley Hairdresser
721	Kraase's Inc. Oil Burners AC Kraase Manufacturing Company Oil Pilots Jungblut's Fountain Pen Shop Wicke Garage Co. (in back)
722	Sanitary Dye Works
724	Fannie's Restaurant
726	Alvin R. Dressler Confectionary
728	Campbell Laundry Company
730	Wood's Laundry
731	Max Mueller Barber Grand Avenue Shop
732	Louis H. Herro Confectionary Shop
733	The Different Shop Ladies Furnishings
735	Corrective Shoe Shop

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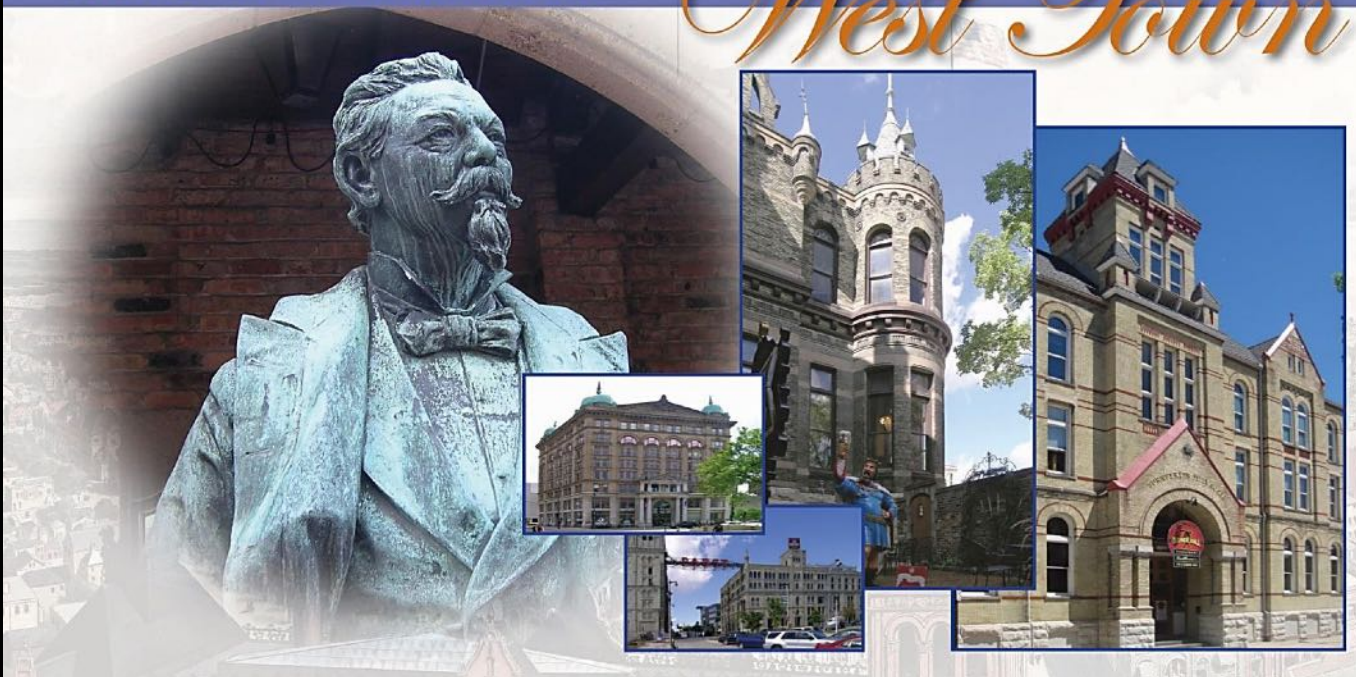
# The Milwaukee Neighborhood Poster Series

Researched and designed by local artist, Rick Petrie

24" x 18", framed posters of select Milwaukee neighborhoods. Each: \$90 (free shipping)

MILWAUKEE NEIGHBORHOODS:

# West Town



West Town (also known as Kilbourn Town) is home to major public and cultural institutions. The neighborhood houses the central branch of the Milwaukee Public Library, County Courthouse, Milwaukee Public Museum, Turner Hall, and the Wisconsin Center, to name just some.

West Town owes its founding to Byron Kilbourn who came to town in 1834 and claimed land on the west bank of the Milwaukee River on today's Juneau Avenue.

The earliest groups to make their homes in West Town were Germans and Irish. Germans began arriving in large numbers in the 1840s before Milwaukee was even a city. So many settled in the developing city that when Solomon Juneau became Milwaukee's first mayor in 1846, the inaugural address was printed in both English and German.

One of the earliest commercial corridors to develop in West Town was North 3rd Street (today's Old World Third Street). Another commercial corridor developed on West Wisconsin Avenue (known first as Spring Street and, at a later period, Grand Avenue). West Wisconsin Avenue attracted more retail stores and entertainment enterprises.

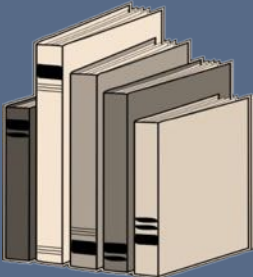
In the 1960s freeway development cleared large areas of land and removed many historic buildings in the neighborhood, replacing them with parking lots as well as the highway. It was during this time that the West Town area—particularly around Wisconsin Avenue—began to decline.

The 1980s saw some revival. The Grand Avenue Mall opened in 1982 with over 80 specialty stores and the largest food court in Wisconsin. Marquette University began to take over buildings and turn them into student housing. By the

mid-1980s, citizens' attitudes began to change about freeways, in part due to the New Urbanism movement stressing walkable streets that rose in popularity about this time.

Like many Milwaukee neighborhoods, the current population in West Town reflects its history. Did the New Urbanism influence walking patterns in this neighborhood? Apparently yes, as nearly 4 in 10 residents say they walk to work, which is over seven times the proportion of Milwaukeeans generally.

The land at the site of what was to be the Park East freeway is being developed as mall that houses a new Milwaukee Bucks arena and new amenities that include sports, residential, and office uses. The arena site is designed to link with active development on all sides, including Old World Third Street, Schlotzsky's Park, the Milwaukee Riverfront, Water Street, and the Wisconsin Center.



## MECAH Publishing

*Milwaukee Ethnic Collection of Arts and Humanities*

<http://mecamilwaukee.com/Artwork.html>

<i>Addresses on W. Grand Ave. between 6th and 10th in 1926</i>	<i>Names of businesses and organizations from Milwaukee City Directory</i>
800-14	Milwaukee Public Library
801	Steinfuhr & Krivanek Tailors
803	JJ Dougherty Company Auto Suppliers
805	Frank Biagi Confectioner
807	Stark Apartments
809	Sondlo Motor Company
811	Anast Kallas Barber
811-13	Mozart Apartments
813	The Square Tailoring Company
814-26	Public Museum
815	William Gershon Tailor
815-17	St. James Court Apartments
825	St. James Parish House
827	St. James Episcopal Church
900-28	Wisconsin Club
909	Hotel Aberdeen
929	Calvary Presbyterian Church

#### Notes from census and other public records:

- The shops on this stretch of Grand Avenue really show the changing times. There are oil burner and corset shops on the same blocks as automobile service shops.
- Like most Milwaukee neighborhoods prior to 1970, few shopkeepers had attended high school. Most were also immigrants or children of immigrants.
- Herman Zarne, the tailor, was a German immigrant living on Cramer.
- Max Bernstein, with the sporting goods store, was a Jewish immigrant from Russia. He had been a bicycle repairman before hanging out his own shingle.
- Erwin H. Nehring, the baker, was the grandson of German immigrants. He'd been raised in Minnesota and completed the 8th grade.
- Telesphere C. Bergeron, with the restaurant, was the son of French Canadian immigrants. There is no record of him ever attending school.
- Alex Kahn, with the shoe repair shop, was a Jewish immigrant from Russia. He had completed the 4th grade.
- James E. Campbell, with the coffee shop, must have been pretty successful. Records show he was running that shop for about 20 years by 1926. He owned a home on Lake Drive in Shorewood. No information could be found on his ethnic background or education.



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# *Announcing* **Milwaukee's ethnic guide**

A literal stroll through neighborhoods where Milwaukee's ethnic groups settled

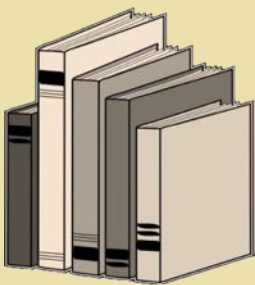
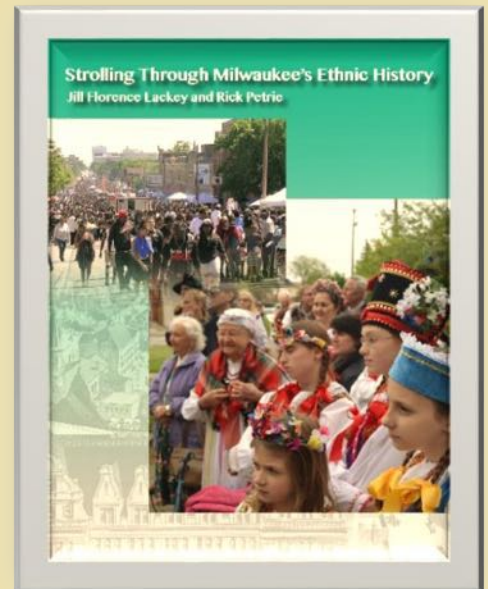
Dr. Jill Florence Lackey and Rick Petrie

## *Strolling through Milwaukee's Ethnic History*

Chapters taking place in Lincoln Village, Walker's Point, Third Ward, Halyard Park, East Town, Lake Park, Jones Island, West Town, Riverwest

An "up close and personal" look at local ethnic life by directing readers to the neighborhoods and venues where the groups left their marks. *Strolling* brings readers directly into their experiences, whether it involves ambling through the environments they built or participating in contemporary ethnic activities.

Ethnic groups covered: Milwaukee Germans, Irish, African Americans, Italians, Mexicans, French, English, Norwegians, Jews, Hmong, North American Indians, Scots/Scots Irish, Czechs/Slovaks, Kashubes, Greeks, Puerto Ricans, and Burmese.



**MECAH Publishing**

*Milwaukee Ethnic Collection of Arts and Humanities*

<http://mecahmilwaukee.com/NonFiction.html>

*"Strolling through Milwaukee's Ethnic History* is an intriguing guide to the ethnic history in our midst and a colorful reminder that Milwaukee has always been a city of newcomers."  
- John Gurda

- Mary Chesebro (nee Laper), the milliner, was the daughter of Prussian immigrants. She had completed the 4th grade.
- Spencerian Business College was founded by Robert Spencer. It operated independently for 111 years before it merged with Concordia College in 1976.
- No information was found on Netter Heiser, and whether or not his family might have founded Heiser Ford.
- Samuel Zarne, the tailor, was the younger brother of Herman Zarne, also a tailor a block away (see above).
- Bertha Ackley, the hairdresser, was the daughter of German immigrants. She apparently had her hairdressing shop in the house where she lived. Her husband was a carpenter.
- Louis H. Herro, with the confectionary shop, was a Syrian immigrant living on Highland Avenue where other Syrians had settled (see Avenues West neighborhood). He had completed the 8th grade, and by 1940 he operated a tavern.
- The Norman was an apartment building built in 1888. It was owned by Miller Brewery for a time to house its out-of-town clients. The building fell into disrepair by the middle of the 20th century and in 1991 burned to the ground, killing four people, including two children.
- Frank Biagi, with the confectionary, was an Italian immigrant who lived on N. 29th Street. He had completed the 8th grade.
- William Gershon, the tailor, was a Russian immigrant. He was an anomaly on the street because he had completed high school.

### **West Town Random Resident (1920s)**

*Name selected randomly from the 1926 City Directory in the West Town area (photo and other information found in public records on Ancestry.com)*

#### **Raye Annette Torrey**

Raye Torrey spent virtually her entire life at The Norman, a once lavish apartment building with a winding staircase, five floors, and carved wood wainscoting along the walls that extended to the ceiling. The Norman, built in 1888, and once owned by Miller Brewing as an exclusive site to house its out-of-town clients, may have been past its prime in 1926, but probably still projected prestige and stateliness. Each of the very spacious units (some extending across an entire story) had intricate moldings, high ceilings, fireplaces, and brass fixtures.

Raye first showed up in the records at The Norman with her parents and a number of lodgers in 1920 at age 2. Her parents, of German and Irish ancestry, held the lease. They may have occupied one of the full-story units in The Norman. Some information is known about the lodgers in the 1920 and 1930 census records, during Raye's childhood and early adolescence. In 1930, Ray was 12 and her mother was then listed as widowed. Among the multi-cultural roomers over the years were six waitresses, one cook, two store clerks, two mechanics working for the railroad, and a Yiddish-speaking attorney and his wife. Although The Norman was at one time permitted as a mixed-use property, there was no restaurant at the building in the 1920s.



Raye may have really enjoyed her life growing up at The Norman, with her multi-cultural housemates and so many activities to access onglamorous Grand/Wisconsin Avenue. She graduated from Lincoln High School in the 1930s and a few years later married Arthur Fosse, an assistant clerk and a son of a Swedish immigrant father. Rather than moving to his neighborhood on the Near North Side, the couple chose to rent at The Norman where they had at least three children. Records show they were still there in the 1950s. Raye Torrey Fosse died in 1987, but no records were found on her whereabouts after the 1950s.

Development in West Town slowed considerably during the Great Depression and World War II. The western stretch of Wisconsin Avenue eventually returned to health in the late 1940s.

However, West Town itself would take on an entirely different appearance in the 1960s. Freeway development cleared large areas of land and removed many historic buildings in the neighborhood, replacing them with parking lots as well as the highway. Interstate-43 separated West Town from its neighbors of Marquette and Avenues West. Citizens began protesting—not just downtown but all over the city. Residents in Sherman Park achieved a major victory when they fought the creation of the Park West freeway, arguing that the county government was required to complete an impact statement before building. They won this battle and the freeway was never completed. Eventually downtown and East Side residents were also able to halt the building of the Park East freeway and the land clearing that extended into West Town. Freeway building slowed in the 1970s.

It was also during this time that the West Town area—particularly around Wisconsin Avenue—began to decline. A number of theaters closed and many of those that remained open often specialized in X-rated movies. Merchants left. Strip clubs and adult bookstores opened on blocks that had previously housed lunch counters. Once venerable (albeit past its prime) apartment buildings like The Norman became homes to young people seeking adventures in drugs and countercultural lifestyles. The once-vibrant downtown nightlife quieted, save for a few street people wandering in and out of 24-hour Dunkin' Donuts' shops.

The 1980s saw some revival. The Grand Avenue Mall opened in 1982 with over 80 specialty stores and the largest food court in Wisconsin. Marquette University began to take over buildings and turn them into student housing. By the mid-1980s, citizens' attitudes began to change about freeways, in part due to the New Urbanism movement stressing walkable streets that rose in popularity about this time. One of the champions and leaders of this movement was John Norquist, who served as mayor of Milwaukee between 1988 and 2004. During his tenure, many of his projects he promoted changed the look of West Town, including downtown housing, the 3.1-mile Riverwalk, and the Wisconsin Center (originally the Midwest Express Center). He also championed the removal of a 0.8 mile stretch of the Park East freeway, clearing the way for a later infill development.

How did all of this impact the current population makeup and practices of West Town?

### **Current populations (as of 2021)**

Like many Milwaukee neighborhoods, the current population in West Town reflects its history. Did the New Urbanism influence walking patterns in this neighborhood? Apparently yes, as nearly 4 in 10 residents say they walk to work, which is over seven times the proportion of Milwaukeeans generally.

And what is the state of the land at the site of the failed Park East freeway?

## The Deer District

Much of the site is today developing its own identity as a mall that houses a new Milwaukee Buck's arena and new amenities that include sports, residential, and office uses. The arena site of Fiserv Forum, located between North 4th (today's Vel Phillips Avenue) and North 6th Streets from West Highland to West Juneau Avenues, is designed to link with active development on all sides, including Old World Third Street (today's Martin Luther King Drive), Schlitz Park, the Milwaukee Riverfront, Water Street, and the Wisconsin Center.

The plaza at Fiserv Forum has become an instant success attracting as many as 15,000 residents a day to watch Bucks' playoff games and to enjoy many other programs offered on the plaza. One of the more intriguing programs is the German Christkindlmarket, that operates during the Christmas season, a partnership between the Milwaukee Bucks and the German American Chamber of the Midwest. The month-long holiday village features approximately 30 vendors in traditional candy-cane-striped, wooden huts.

See photos of Fiserv Forum and the Christkindlmarket below.

Did the neighborhood's history of retail shops and educational institutions influence today's occupations? Again, apparently yes, as the leading occupations cited by residents in West Town are in the fields of sales, education, and administration; and the number of people in the legal profession is over two times the number for Milwaukee generally.

Did the neighborhood's ethnic history influence its current makeup? Again, apparently yes. West Town has just over 4,000 residents and of these, over half are European American, with German and Irish ancestry cited most often. The three nearby institutions of higher learning—Milwaukee Area Technical College, Milwaukee School of Engineering, and Marquette University—may have also influenced West Town's ethnic makeup, as the neighborhood is home to a large number of indigenous Africans, Chinese, Koreans, and Asian Indians (often in this country for education). In addition, about 4 in 10 residents are African American or Latino (fairly evenly divided between those with Puerto Rican and Mexican ancestry).

The neighborhood is also relatively young. Over 6 in 10 residents are under age 35, suggesting that this is a popular living area for young professionals and students. There are also significantly more men (by over one-third) than women in West Town.

Most residents are renters and nearly three-quarters of the rental units go for \$501 to \$1,500 a month. House and condo costs are relatively expensive. Select costs for nearly all the housing properties (e.g., mortgages, deeds of trust, contracts to purchase, taxes, insurance) are \$1,500 to \$2,000 a month.

Household incomes fall into a bimodal pattern, probably reflecting the large numbers of students and professionals living side-by-side in West Town. While over half of the residents hold bachelor's or graduate degrees (high for Milwaukee), over half also live in low and lower middle income households (with annual incomes under \$50,000). However, over one-third live in *upper middle* and *upper* income households (with annual incomes over \$75,001 and many over \$150,001)



Today's neighborhood-Wisconsin Club



## INTERESTING NEIGHBORHOOD FEATURES

- **Milwaukee County Historical Society**, at 910 N. N. Martin Luther King Drive (see in outings below)
- **Riverside Theater**, at 116 W. Wisconsin Ave.
- **Fiserv Forum**, at 1111 Vel R. Philips Ave. (formerly 4th Street)
- **BMO Harris Bradley Center**, at 1001 N. 4th St. (see in outings below)
- **Milwaukee Area Technical College**, at 800 W. State St.
- **Milwaukee County Courthouse**, at 901 N. 9th St.
- **Milwaukee Theater**, at 500 W. Kilbourn Ave.
- **Turner Hall**, at 1034 N. 4th St., built in 1882 and designed by Henry H. Koch, home to the Milwaukee Turners (see photo below).
- **Milwaukee Public Museum**, at 800 W. Wells (see in photos and outings below).

## RECURRING NEARBY OUTINGS (Health conditions permitting)

In the following section the website addresses have been eliminated due to technical problems with the various ways different web browsers display PDF files. Website information on these events is available through the book *Milwaukee Area Outings on the Cheap*. See below.

### SELF-GUIDED TOUR OF PABST MANSION DURING HOLIDAY SEASON

When?	Where?	Description and contact info	Admission
Mid Nov.-early Jan., Mon. thru Sat. 10:30am-3:15pm, Sun. 12-3:15pm	2000 W. Wisconsin Ave.	Opportunity to explore lavish mansion of Pabst Brewery tycoon decked out in holiday décor. Check website for other times.	unk

### HAGGERTY MUSEUM OF ART

When?	Where?	Description and contact info	Admission
Mon., Tue., Wed., Fri. 10am-4:30pm, Thu. 10am-8pm; Sun, 12-5pm	Marquette campus at corner of 13th & Clybourn Sts.	Permanent collections include Old Masters' prints, Ralph Steiner photos, Marc Chagall Bible series, Barbara Morgan photos, and Finnegan, Fishman, Tatalovich, and Rojzman collections.	Free

### CHUDNOW MUSEUM OF YESTERYEAR

When?	Where?	Description and contact info	Admission
Wed.-Sat. 10am-4pm, Sun. 12-4pm	839 N. 11th St.	Museum that features rooms, history, and artifacts collected between WWI and WWII.	unk

### MARQUETTE WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

When?	Where?	Description and contact info	Admission
Nov. thru late Feb. (regular season)	Al McGuire Center, 770 N. 12th St.	Marquette University women's basketball games.	unk

## MILWAUKEE PUBLIC MUSEUM

When?	Where?	Description and contact info	Admission
1 <sup>ST</sup> Thu. each month	800 W. Wells St.	Chance to visit one of the premier natural history and science facilities, world- renowned for its exhibits, collections, ongoing scientific research and educational exhibits.	Free (on date designated)

## CHRISTMAS PARADE

When?	Where?	Description and contact info	Admission
Mid to late Nov., Sat. 9:30am	Route begins at Astor & Kilbourn and travels west on Kilbourn to Martin Luther King Drive	Parade with marching bands, balloons, floats, celebrities, animals, and Santa.	Free

## MILWAUKEE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

When?	Where?	Description and contact info	Admission
Mon. thru Sat., 9:30am-5pm	910 N. Martin Luther King Drive	Permanent and rotating exhibits of Milwaukee County's history plus a research library.	unk

## MILWAUKEE HOLIDAY LIGHTS

When?	Where?	Description and contact info	Admission
Mid Nov. -late Dec., weekdays, 5-10pm	Cathedral Square, Pere Marquette Park, and Zeidler Union Square	Six-week festival to spread holiday spirit with animated light displays in the parks and hundreds of events.	Free

## RIVER RHYTHMS

When?	Where?	Description and contact info	Admission
Jun. thru Aug, Weds. 6:30-9pm	Pere Marquette Park, 900 N. Plankinton Ave.	Popular bands at riverside location.	Free

## OKTOBERFEST AT PERE MARQUETTE

When?	Where?	Description and contact info	Admission
Late Sep. to early Oct., Fri., Sat. opens noon, Sun. opens 10am	Pere Marquette Park and Marcus Center grounds	Opportunity to enjoy German food, beer, and music along Riverwalk.	Free

### SALVATION ARMY ANNUAL CHRISTMAS FEAST

When?	Where?	Description and contact info	Admission
Christmas Day, 11am-2:30pm	Wisconsin Center, 400 W. Wisconsin Ave.	Annual Christmas feast for every member of the community to partake, with Santa.	Free, but donation always welcome

### MARQUETTE GOLDEN EAGLES GAMES

When?	Where?	Description and contact info	Admission
Dec. thru late Feb. (regular season)	BMO Harris Bradley Center, 1001 N. 4th St.	Marquette University men's basketball games.	unk

Most of these outings are provided courtesy of MECAH Publishing. To access the book that provides nearly 600 outings—all priced under \$10—for the entire Greater Milwaukee area, go to <http://mecahmilwaukee.com/NonFiction.html>

### QUOTE(S) FROM RESIDENT

“I remember the Norman building before it burned down. I lived there when I was a student at Marquette, back in the early ‘80s. I was looking for a cheap apartment with a lot of bedrooms that could house several people. But when I saw that ad for that place I didn’t need others. I kid you not. I rented a three-bedroom apartment with a full dining room, enormous kitchen, living room with a non-working fireplace and bay window, moldings everywhere, and huge bathroom for \$220 a month. Oh, and that included heat! When I moved in, people used to say that it had once been a spectacular place where brewery tycoons put up their traveling clients. You could see hints of its greatness. There was an old fashioned iron-door elevator and a winding staircase that went up, maybe five floors. All the way up the walls was ornate dark woodwork. But the woodwork then had huge gaps where pieces had fallen off and about 50 years of dust settling on the rest of it. And forget the beauty of the winding staircase. Apparently someone had once jumped from a banister to commit suicide, so building owners had hung these huge slabs of unfinished plywood wall-to-wall as a kind of atrium around the third floor. So when you looked up you just saw this dirty old plywood ceiling. The whole place was a testament to how the city and developers had let downtown go for so many years.

“But I have to admit that I was shocked to find out later that it had burned down. When I was there, the manager had installed smoke alarms in every single room. Yes, every room. He said he’d misunderstood the owner’s orders but when he told him, the owner said it was always better to be safe. So the smoke alarms stayed. That didn’t mean that anyone changed the batteries though. When I lived there, my neighbor across the hall was a Jewish refugee who had run from the Nazis. She and her family had fled to China during World War II and then immigrated to America. I was glad that her name was not included in the dead, after the fire.”

*Anonymous*

“I remember moving downtown when I was 19. I wanted to take a little break in my education. I had this part time job and it gave me enough to rent a room at the YMCA on 9th and Wisconsin. This was 1963 and the Y was pretty new. It had a cafeteria, a grill, an upscale restaurant, a live theater, and lots of recreational rooms. At around 4 and 5 you’d see all the residents coming home from work—young professionals in suits and high heels. They’d eat their meals and then go out or stay behind and watch TV in one of the rec rooms. It was so absolutely thrilling to be downtown at that time. There was a theater on nearly every block. The Strand always seemed to have the best first-run movies. I saw the best movies that year—Mutiny on the Bounty, To Kill a Mockingbird. I saw a lot of bad ones too. People were on the streets until the wee hours of night. And the restaurants were everywhere. I went to the library nearly every day to read and brought in friends from out of town to visit the museum that was behind the library at that time. I stayed there about six months and had the time of my life.”

*Jill Florence Lackey*

*If you are a resident of the West Town neighborhood and would like to make an interesting observation about the area, please send an email to [JFLanthropologist@currently.com](mailto:JFLanthropologist@currently.com)*

## PHOTOS



Today's neighborhood-Houses on 9th & State (offices of St. Benedict the Moor Church)





Today's neighborhood-Martin Luther King Drive

Today's neighborhood-Milwaukee Public Museum exhibit



Today's neighborhood-Eleven 25 at Pabst – student housing





Today's neighborhood-Buildings of the old Pabst Brewery



Today's neighborhood-Trinity Lutheran Church,  
before and after the May 2018 fire



Today's neighborhood-Fiserv Forum



Today's neighborhood-  
Fear the Deer banner at City Hall



Today's neighborhood-  
Christkindlmarket on the  
Fiserv Forum plaza



Today's neighborhood-Deer District buildings on Martin Luther King Drive

For more information on Milwaukee neighborhoods, refer to John Gurda's *Milwaukee, City of Neighborhoods* and Jill Florence Lackey's and Rick Petrie's *Germans in Milwaukee: A neighborhood history*.

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<sup>i</sup> Photo attribution: [https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/8/88/Golda\\_Meir-Y.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/8/88/Golda_Meir-Y.jpg)

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Do you have great photos of this neighborhood? Are you a resident with an interesting quote about this neighborhood? Do you have recurring outings, additions, corrections, or general comments about this neighborhood? Please email your input to:

[JFLanthropologist@currently.com](mailto:JFLanthropologist@currently.com)