

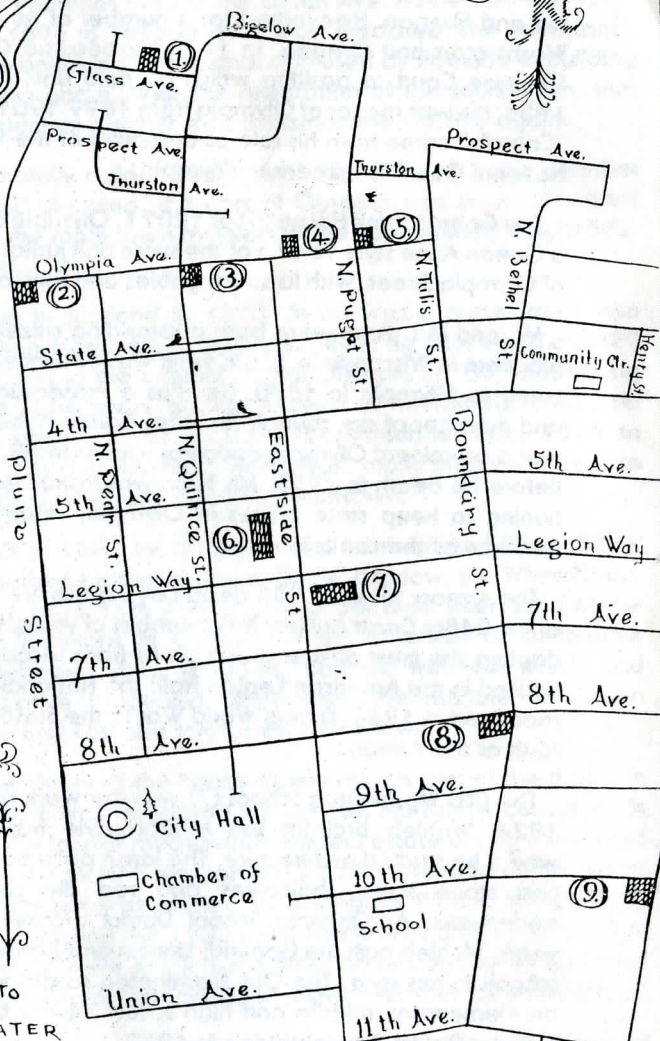
VICTORIAN OLYMPIA



WALKING TOUR

VICTORIAN OLYMPIA

BUDD
INLET



To
TOWN

To
TUMWATER



Those elegant houses of the past—the Victorians—bring a wave of nostalgia with their gingerbread decoration, balconies, turrets and gewgaws. Carpenters wove lacey magic into the prestigious residences that flourished around the turn of the century.

The Eastside of Olympia has a number of those ornate homes and a lot of history is tied to their decoration as well. As an early residential area of Olympia, the Eastside presents a meter of prosperous times in Olympia. The two public buildings on the tour, the Armory and Old Washington School are part of the legacy of Olympia's premier architect, Joseph Wohleb.

One of the central houses and characters to the development of Eastside Olympia and indeed to the development of the Territory and State of Washington was Daniel Bigelow whose home (1) begins the tour.

Arriving in Olympia (then Smithfield) in 1851, Daniel Richardson Bigelow came armed with an outstanding education as a graduate of Harvard Law School, a devout belief in Methodism and a deep conviction in equality of races and sexes. He used these considerable qualifications to launch the then budding Territory of Washington and the infant city of Olympia.

As a delegate to the Oregon Territorial Legislature, he was called upon to codify Territorial laws in 1853. Bigelow also served for many years in the Washington Territorial Legislature and held public office as Treasurer, Auditor, and Prosecuting Attorney. His name figures prominently in many of the early legal deliberations of our area.

A believer in temperance and women's suffrage, he helped to implement the latter cause in 1884 and 1886 when women voted in Washington Territory.

Bigelow's own sound training brought out his conviction in education. He served as Superintendent of County Schools and school board member, as well as a founding member of private schools including the Olympia Collegiate Institute (2).

The Bigelow House at 918 E. Glass is a gothic revival style built by D. R. Bigelow in 1854 for his bride, Elizabeth White, an early school teacher. One of the oldest frame houses of the Northwest, the house has been a continuous residence for the Bigelow family since it was constructed. It has been placed on the National Register of Historic Places. Many neighboring homes are built on the Bigelow Donation Claim of 350 acres.

Daniel Bigelow continued to be a community leader until his death in 1904, the oldest survivor of the first Territorial Legislature.

(2) The Olympia Collegiate Institute which stood on this site was constructed in 1887, the descendant of two other institutions of higher learning, all of which were supported by the Methodist Episcopal Church. The first of these schools, founded in 1858 was the Puget Sound Wesleyan Institute located at Union and Washington in Olympia as the Puget Sound Wesleyan Institute. This was followed by the Olympia Union Academy organized in 1869 which continued until the Olympia Collegiate Institute was founded in 1883. Daniel Bigelow was a member of the Boards of Trustees of all three institutions and aided in the building of OCI near his home in 1887.

The OCI educated hundreds of Puget Sound residents with commercial and "normal" or college courses of study included with a regimen of daily chapel. In the late 1880's about 150 pupils and six faculty were at the Institute. By the end of the 1893 school year, OCI closed its doors because of difficult financial times and the advent of state universities. OCI was a predecessor of the University of Puget Sound and in 1907 housed Pacific Lutheran Seminary which later suffered a fire in 1915 and merged with the Tacoma school.

Three significant Victorian houses line Olympia Street. The Judge Frank Rudkin House (3) at 1005 E. Olympia was built in 1905. An imposing home, its impressive entryway porch has ornate pillars and an offset oval window near the door. It is crowned by steep return gables and a fanlight gracing the west side second floor.

Judge Rudkin, a native of Ohio; was admitted to the bar in Yakima in 1887 and was named a Superior Court Judge in 1901 there. He served in the Washington Supreme Court from 1905 to 1911 serving as chief judge from 1909 to 1911. He was a circuit judge from 1911 to 1923 in Spokane where he was a Federal District Judge until his death in 1931.

(4) One of the most ornate of the area's homes, the house at 1106 E. Olympia was built in 1891. The confectionery exterior is matched by fine interior appointments of Italian tile and wood paneling. Captain C. S. Reinhart purchased the house in 1906.

Born in Olympia in 1856, Reinhart was educated in California and Oregon. He worked for a number of newspapers in Washington and Oregon. In 1893 he became Clerk of the Supreme Court, a position which he held until his death in 1934. He was mayor of Olympia from 1899-1901. His title of "Captain" came from his role as organizer of the Washington National Guard Regiment in Olympia.

The George Funk House (5) at 1202 E. Olympia ca. 1906, is a Queen Anne style version of the successful judicial residence of Olympia Street, with its steep gables and fishscale shingles.

Mr. and Mrs. Funk were both outstanding citizens of Olympia. Born in Wisconsin in 1865, Funk was educated there and came to Olympia in 1890. He was a Prosecuting Attorney and member of city council. His wife, Goldie Robertson Funk, was a prominent Olympia educator, clubwoman, and writer. Before his death in 1955, Mr. Funk was instrumental in petitioning to keep state offices in Olympia, retaining its prominence as the capital.

The Armory (6) is a 1938 design by Joseph Wohleb. Home of the 248th Coast Artillery for a number of years, the building displays the crest of that group on its front facade. Formerly housed in the American Legion Hall, the National Guard was mobilized in 1943. During World War II, the State Militia held forth at the Armory.

The Old Washington School (7) was the work of Wohleb in 1924. Wohleb brought this mission style from California where he studied architecture. The large palladian windows, cast stone insets, balconies and red tile roof are his trademarks. As Olympia School District architect for many years, Wohleb built the Garfield, Lincoln and Roosevelt annex schools in this style. The Old Washington school was used as an elementary, middle and high school before being taken over by District Administration in 1970.

Built during the optimistic days of 1893, the Charles Patnude House (8) at 1239 Eighth Ave. shows the embellishment added to the pioneer gothic style with its bracketed porches, bay windows and unique jigsaw trim. The house, listed on the National Register of Historic Places is now undergoing restoration.

Charles Patnude came to Olympia from Wisconsin in the 1880's. A builder by trade, he was involved in the construction of many Olympia buildings. A bricklayer, plasterer and mason, he owned one of the first incorporated businesses in Olympia. The foundation of the house was built with bricks from a yard where the Armory now stands.

The Patnudes lived in the Eighth Ave. house only two years from 1893 to 1895 when it was foreclosed. The importance of the house is the workmanship used by Patnude in building his own home. With the restoration of the foundation, trim and original porches that craftsmanship will live again.

Originally called "Swantown" after John M. Swan who first platted the area, this part of Olympia was once separated from the main town by inlets of the Sound which reached far inland.

Born in Scotland in 1823, Swan was a nurseryman who came to Washington Territory in 1849. He later layed out 320 sites next to the original plat of Olympia in 1855-56. During those same years, he was Assessor of Internal Revenue and was later a Thurston County Commissioner from 1876 to 1882. As a nurseryman, he brought many plants and trees to Olympia which still stand in "Swantown."

Built in 1893 by carpenter and lumberman William White who was a brother-in-law to Daniel Bigelow, the White House (9) at 1431 11th Ave. is one of the most interesting of the high Victorians in Olympia. From its tower to decorative vergeboards, bay windows, bullseye fretwork porch and decorative bracketed timberwork, the mixture of Queen Anne and Eastlake styles delight the eye.

The history of the house closely mirrors that of the times. In 1895, it was foreclosed by Oregon Mortgage Company as was the fate of much Northwest real estate during those hard times. By 1910 it was sold for \$5,500 and around the turn of the century was owned by Theodore Brown, an Olympia mayor. During the 1930's, the house was divided into apartments as were many large older homes and its unused third floor ballroom dismantled to provide lumber for outbuildings.

The house was recently placed on the State Register of Historic Places and is open by appointment when its owners share their collection of antiques and history of the house for tours.

This brochure was produced by a POSSCA (Patrons of South Sound Cultural Activities) grant. Text by Shanna Stevenson; art by B. J. Packard. Copyright, 1981.