

162 South State

This Elgin mansion is the 1992 "Restoration in Progress." Quite impressive in size and detail, one of its former uses was as a sanitarium for the aged, infirm and chronically ill.

It was built circa 1880 for John McNeil, an Elgin businessman who grew up in Scotland and made his fortune in the grocery business. Although his wholesale grocery house in Chicago was

His house was originally two stories, with the third story being added after the turn of the century. If you look carefully, and have an eye for this sort of thing, you will notice that the house is of the Colonial Revival style, with the third-story and tower adding the Queen Anne stylistic influence.

As you tour this ten-bedroom home with four fireplaces and two grand staircases, you get an idea of the wealth Mr. McNeil accumulated. His family occupied the home until 1930, and the next owner was a Dr. George A. Weirick, who used the massive structure to house his business.

Known as "Dr. Weirick's Rest Home," a business card found in the home lists it as the ideal place for the ill, with the "latest methods of treatment, as well as electric shock."

The house is an architectural delight with its columned porches, hipped roof and large dentils. The interior is also a treat, especially the muraled dining room and elegant entry hall.

The new owners have plans for a bed and breakfast inn, complete with a formal dining room available for private parties, weddings and such. Perhaps the next time you are in this house, it will be as an overnight guest!



a national company, John chose to stay in Elgin, and had his home built on 1-1/2 acres along "Millionaire's Row." For 35 years, he took the Milwaukee Road to Chicago and back each day. So prominent a citizen was McNeil, that the conductor slowed down the train at National Street so he could hop off and walk home from there rather than from the station at Chicago Street.