

111 N. PORTER

Bungalow
Built 1914

While not being shown as a typical tour site, this house is rehab in progress and a gallery of Elgin memorabilia. The house was built in 1914 by Clarence Bishop, a Chicago businessman. At the same time, he constructed the large house to the south of this one. Bishop lived in the larger home until about 1930. The smaller home was rented out. Over the years this cozy little bungalow had several residents, most of whom stayed between five and 15 years each.

About 10 years ago, the interior was remodeled and some of the original bungalow details removed. Jeff White and his wife recently purchased the property as a smaller size home for retirement. They are restoring some of the lost details and repairing damage from frozen pipes before moving in.

The Whites are avid collectors of all things Elgin and have set up a small display for the tour. Many of the items are advertising memorabilia from local companies. When created, the advertisements were intended to be attention-getters, but little thought was given to them becoming collectible, or a reflection of popular culture. Today, however, they evoke a bygone era with products and services that have largely disappeared from the marketplace. Framed and displayed as works of art,

they are both interesting historical artifacts and clues about the daily life of Elgin residents back when this neighborhood was young.

Architectural Notes

This handsome bungalow is a classic design of the 1910s. Bungalows are one, or one-and-a-half, story residences with gently pitched roofs and wide overhanging eaves. They usually have either full, or partial-width, front porches. With the home's narrow side facing the street, bungalows were well-adapted to the lot size found in most urban areas. Whole cities, or large portions of them, were built with bungalow-style homes during the first two decades of the 20th century. In this neighborhood, where half the structures were erected in the 1880s, bungalows filled in the empty lots found here and there.

The clapboard siding on this home is an important detail. The shadow lines created by the narrow clapboards give the building a long and horizontal appearance. There are abundant windows, especially along the south façade allowing sunlight to fill the interior spaces. The bedrooms, with fewer windows, are on the north side of the house, an ideal arrangement for privacy. The wing walls around the front steps, the bay window and small rear-entry vestibule on the south side give the home just enough architectural interest to make the design special. The house is placed a few extra steps up from street level which helps keep it from being dwarfed by its larger neighbors. Overall, it is a well-executed design for a modestly sized and priced home.

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