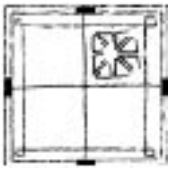
UNIFIED VISION

THE ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN OF THE PRAIRIE SCHOOL

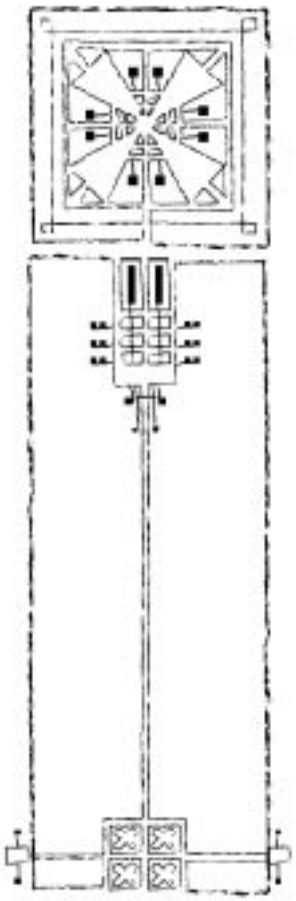
THE MINNEAPOLIS INSTITUTE OF ARTS

ARCHITECTURAL TOUR:



MINNEAPOLIS SOUTH

This tour has 10 stops featuring 15 houses and 1 church.
Approximate distance: 14 miles
Approximate time: 1 - 2 1/2 hours



Book ended by Purcell and Feick's splendid Stewart Memorial Church and four later speculative houses by Purcell the Minneapolis South tour presents a range of Prairie School gems Large and small the structures reflect the flexibility of the architects while being unified by common elements Included is the C T Backus House considered the best example of the small open plan

Several of these stops are enhanced with audio interviews This printed tour guide will tell you when to call ( ) to hear the recordings on your cell phone	Look for this icon:

DIRECTIONS TO THE FIRST STOP:

Starting Point:
The Minneapolis Institute of Arts
rd Avenue South Minneapolis

Free general admission to the museum every day

Tuesday	a m	p m
Wednesday	a m	p m
Thursday	a m	p m
Friday	a m	p m
Saturday	a m	p m
Sunday	a m	p m
Monday	Closed	

The Institute is closed Thanksgiving Christmas and July

Destination: **Stewart Memorial Presbyterian Church**

- Start out going West on TH ST E towards STEVENS AVE (miles)
- Turn LEFT onto STEVENS AVE S (miles)
- Turn RIGHT onto ND ST (miles)
- Look for **EAST** **ND ST** on the corner to the right

STEWART MEMORIAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Stop #1

116 East 32nd Street
Minneapolis

THE MINNEAPOLIS INSTITUTE OF ARTS

Architects: Purcell and Feick
Year: 1909 - 10

Call (612) 870-6446 and press 2 to hear a recorded interview with Clifton Johns, Chairman of the Board of Trustees. (4 minutes, 34 seconds)

Stewart Memorial Presbyterian Church (now Redeemer Missionary Baptist Church) is one of the few Prairie School churches ever constructed. It is considered the first modern church in Minnesota and one of the first progressive structures in the Twin Cities. Purcell's revolutionary design clearly demonstrates Louis Sullivan's adage that "form follows function." With its cubic form, flat roof, large windows, broad eaves, and lack of a steeple, it was an unconventional form for a church at that time.

Purcell justified the absence of a bell tower as a way to save money and to imply that modern communication had rendered such a feature obsolete. The small neighborhood congregation held its services at a set time every Sunday, and if emergency information had to be conveyed, it could be done by telephone.

The church's cubic form is reflected in the main worship space inside. The square area has a balcony on the south side, as opposed to the conventional cross-shaped nave and transept. This floor plan allowed the entire congregation to be close to the celebrant during the service.

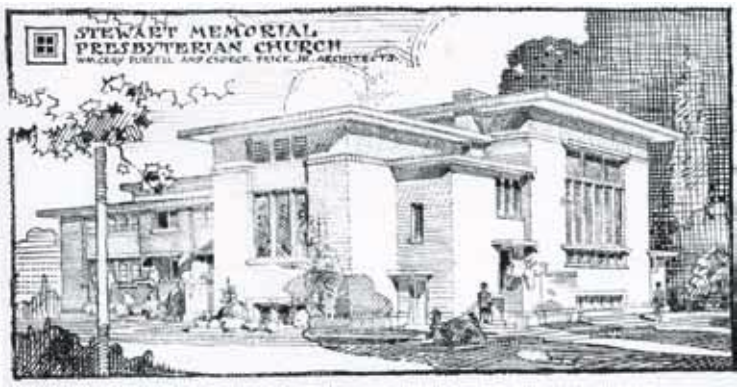
Purcell used continuous wood trim on the walls and ceiling to unify the interior. Simple cruciform designs are the main ornament, along with

geometric electroliers, or electric chandeliers, featuring bare bulbs, still novel at the time. The most spectacular elements of this flexible space are the large, sliding west walls that now open from the main space to a two-story atrium surrounded by classrooms and offices. These glass pocket doors were walled over until the congregation could afford to build an education wing. Purcell and Feick anticipated this addition, which another firm designed and executed in 1915. The church was extensively restored in 2000.

When looking at any of these buildings in person, please respect the privacy of the people who live and work in them.

HISTORIC IMAGES:

Interior
Stewart Memorial Presbyterian Church (now Redeemer Missionary Baptist Church), Minneapolis
Photo: Northwest Architectural Archives



Drawing
Stewart Memorial Presbyterian Church (now Redeemer Missionary Baptist Church), Minneapolis
Drawing: Northwest Architectural Archives

DIRECTIONS TO THE NEXT STOP:

Destination:
Fritz Carlson House

- Turn around to go East on 32ND ST E towards STEVENS AVE S. (0.04 miles)
- Turn RIGHT onto STEVENS AVE S. (0.74 miles)
- Turn LEFT onto E 38TH ST. (1.23 miles)
- Turn LEFT onto 17TH AVE S. (0.23 miles)
- Look for **3612 17TH AVE S** on the left side of the street.

FRITZ CARLSON HOUSE

Stop #2

3612 17th Avenue South
Minneapolis

THE MINNEAPOLIS INSTITUTE OF ARTS

Architects: Purcell and Elmslie
Year: 1916 - 17

Purcell and Elmslie designed this house for their young Swedish foreman as a wedding gift; Purcell recalled, "He came to me saying that he was about to be married, and wanted to build a little house for himself, but he would not live in anything that we had not designed." Purcell reorganized his and Elmslie's basic house type based upon prior experience with similar homes, such as the Goetzenberger House (See Lakes of the Isles Tour). The result is a simple yet satisfying two-story, gabled-roof house with interior areas arranged around a brick fireplace. Inside are specially created bronze-and-glass lighting fixtures.

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HISTORIC IMAGES:

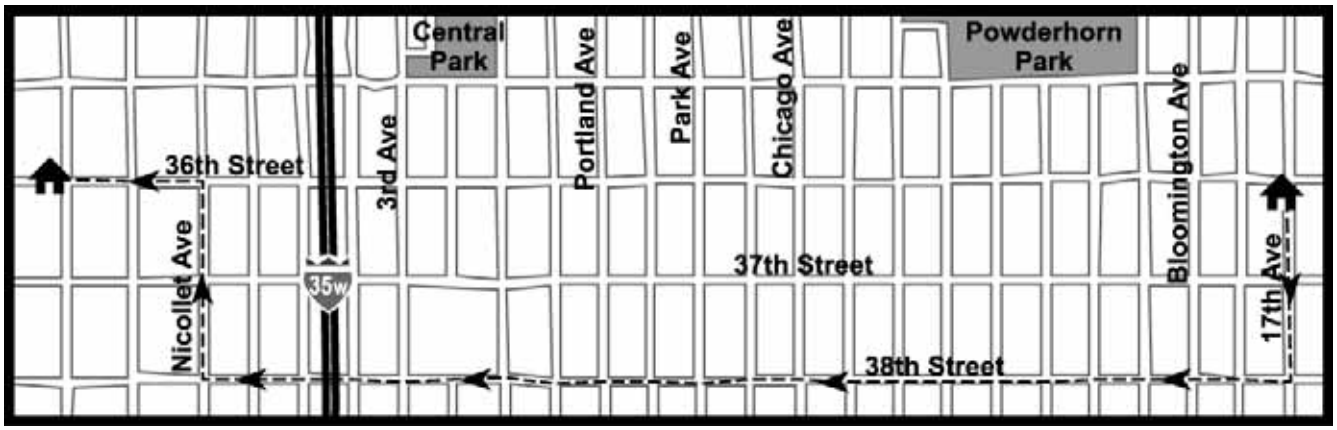
Living room
Fritz Carlson House,
Minneapolis
Photo: Northwest Architectural Archives

Drawing
Fritz Carlson House,
Minneapolis
Photo: Northwest Architectural Archives

DIRECTIONS TO THE NEXT STOP:

Destination: **C.T. Backus House**

- Turn around to South on 17TH AVE S towards 37TH ST E. (0.23 miles)
- Turn RIGHT onto 38TH ST E. (1.35 miles)
- Turn RIGHT onto NICOLLET AVE S. (0.25 miles)
- Turn LEFT onto W 36TH ST. (0.19 miles)
- Look for **212 WEST 36TH STREET** on the right side of the street.



C.T. BACKUS HOUSE

Stop #3

212 West 36th Street
Minneapolis

THE MINNEAPOLIS INSTITUTE OF ARTS

Architects: Purcell and Elmslie
Year: 1915

Call (612) 870-6446 and press 9 to hear a recorded interview with Rolf Anderson, current owner of the C.T. Backus House. (2 minutes, 22 seconds)

Charles Backus, a piano tuner who occasionally worked for the Purcells, asked Purcell if his firm could design an affordable house for him along the same lines as Purcell's own home on Lake Place. Rising to the challenge, Purcell designed a charming, functional house costing just $2,992; at the time, the average home cost less than $3,000, while Purcell's own home cost $14,000. The house is generally considered the best example of Purcell and Elmslie's small open plans, with its characteristic low roofline, overhanging eaves, bands of windows, and off-center entryway. The stucco is original and has never been painted over. Although the nearly square house is only twenty-five by twenty-seven feet, its unique open plan creates the feeling of a much larger interior space. Purcell incorporated built-in shelves and benches, and even created a special place for Backus's piano so it would be the first thing visitors saw when they entered the house. The interior of the house has been only slightly altered.

C.T. BACKUS HOUSE

When looking at any of these buildings in person, please respect the privacy of the people who live and work in them.

HISTORIC PHOTOS:

Front
C.T. Backus House,
Minneapolis
Photo: Northwest Architectural Archives

Back
C.T. Backus House,
Minneapolis
Photo: Northwest Architectural Archives

DIRECTIONS TO THE NEXT STOP:

Destination:
Maurice I. Wolf House

- Continue West on W 36TH ST towards S PLEASANT AVE. (0.56 miles)
- Turn LEFT onto KINGS HWY/S DUPONT AVE. (0.65 miles)
- Make a u-turn at W 42ND ST.
- Look for **4109 DUPONT AVE S** on the right side of the street.

MAURICE I. WOLF HOUSE

Stop #4

4109 Dupont Avenue South
Minneapolis

THE MINNEAPOLIS INSTITUTE OF ARTS

Architects: Purcell, Feick, and Elmslie
Year: 1912 - 13

This two-story hipped roof residence is similar to other Purcell and Elmslie designs from the period, such as the Adair house in Owatonna (see Greater Minnesota tour). It is a large box with a characteristic side entry, front living room, and rear dining and kitchen areas. Decorative details highlight the front window areas on both floors. The client had the house constructed without the architects' supervision, and as a result all their specified details were not carried out.

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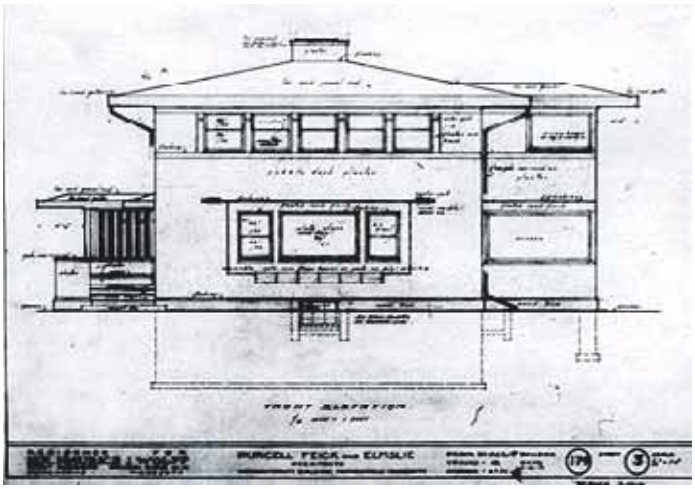
HISTORIC PHOTOS:

Maurice I. Wolf House,
Minneapolis
Photo: Northwest Architectural Archives

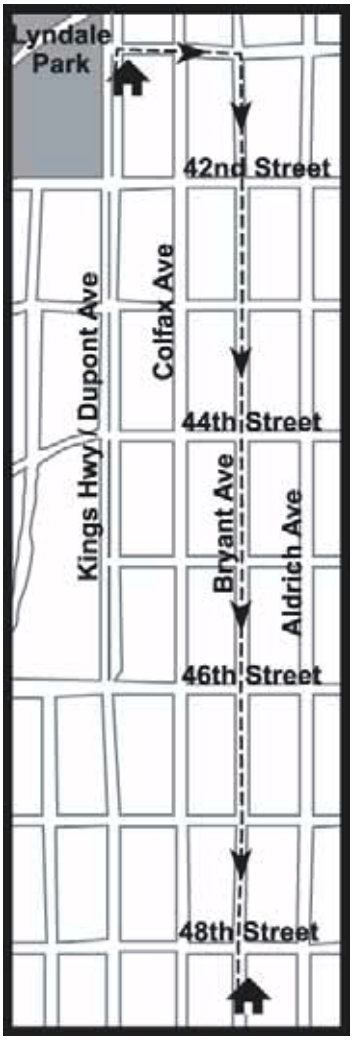


Drawing
Maurice I. Wolf House,
Minneapolis
Photo: Northwest Architectural Archives

DIRECTIONS TO THE NEXT STOP:

Destination: **Paul Mueller Studio**

- Continue North on KINGS HWY/S DUPONT AVE towards 41ST ST W. (0.11 miles)
- Turn RIGHT onto 41ST ST W. (0.13 miles)
- Turn RIGHT onto BRYANT AVE S. (0.79 miles)
- Look for **4835 BRYANT AVENUE SOUTH** on the left side of the street, in the wooded area.



PAUL MUELLER STUDIO

Stop #5

4835 Bryant Avenue South
Minneapolis

THE MINNEAPOLIS INSTITUTE OF ARTS

Architects: Purcell, Feick, and Emslie
Year: 1910 - 11

In 1910, Paul Mueller approached the firm of Purcell, Feick, and Elmslie about designing a home for him and his wife and a studio for his new landscape-architecture practice. Elmslie designed the studio first, incorporating the same three-sided tower form used in both the Powers House and the Decker House garage. The tuck-under garage was excavated at a later date.

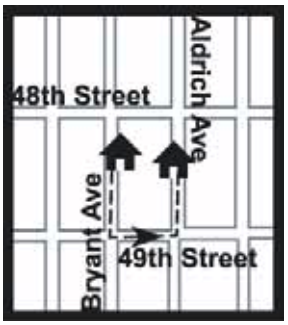
When looking at any of these buildings in person, please respect the privacy of the people who live and work in them.

HISTORIC PHOTOS:

Paul Mueller Studio,
Minneapolis
Photo: Northwest Architectural Archives

Paul Mueller Studio,
Minneapolis
Photo: Northwest Architectural Archives

RELATED HOUSE OF INTEREST:



- Go South on BRYANT AVE S towards 49TH ST W. (0.04 miles)
- Turn LEFT onto 49TH ST W. (0.06 miles)
- Turn LEFT onto ALDRICH AVE S. (0.06 miles)
- Look for **4844 ALDRICH AVENUE SOUTH** on the left side of the street.

MUELLER HOUSE

4844 Aldrich Avenue South
Minneapolis

Architect: Paul Mueller
Year: 1912 - 13

Although Paul Mueller was satisfied with Purcell and Elmslie's studio design, he decided to construct an English half-timber house instead of the one they proposed. Purcell expressed his usual disdain for "period style architecture" when he later wrote, "This was hardly related to either the economics or the spiritual content of our times and, indeed, is not a very good weather resisting form of construction. . . . Saddest of all, it turned out just an ordinary house, and as always in design by borrowed style forms, the dwelling spoke with none of the charm and grace which Mueller had expected would arrive from Elizabethan England. . . . The Charm Fled, to England Back."

DIRECTIONS TO THE NEXT STOP:

Destination: **Charles Parker House**

- Continue North on ALDRICH AVE S towards 48TH ST W. (0.06 miles)
- Turn LEFT onto 48TH ST W. (0.12 miles)
- Turn LEFT onto COLFAX AVE S. (0.04 miles)
- Look for **4829 COLFAX AVENUE SOUTH** on the left side of the street.

CHARLES PARKER HOUSE

Stop #6

4829 Colfax Avenue South
Minneapolis

THE MINNEAPOLIS INSTITUTE OF ARTS

Architects: Purcell, Feick, and Elmslie
Year: 1912 - 13

One of the firm's larger homes, the Parker House is oriented around a high-pitched roof. The stucco façade reads like a two-dimensional mass, its surface broken only by bands of windows and a semicircular sawed-wood ornament above the doorway. The ingenious windows on the porch to the left of the entry drop directly down into the basement below when not in use.

When looking at any of these buildings in person, please respect the privacy of the people who live and work in them.

HISTORIC PHOTOS:

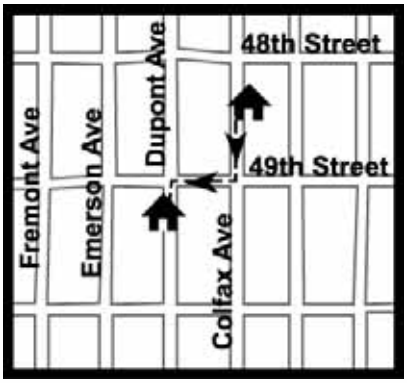
Charles Parker House,
Minneapolis
Photo: Northwest Architectural Archives

Charles Parker House,
Minneapolis
Photo: Northwest Architectural Archives

DIRECTIONS TO THE NEXT STOP:

Destination: **Harold E. Hineline House**

- Continue South on COLFAX AVE S towards 49TH ST W. (0.04 miles)
- Turn RIGHT onto 49TH ST W. (0.19 miles)
- Turn LEFT onto DUPONT AVE S. (0.12 miles)
- Look for **4920 DUPONT AVENUE SOUTH** on the right side of the street.



Stop #7

THE MINNEAPOLIS INSTITUTE OF ARTS

These three houses were designed in the firm's early years -- Purcell and Feick established their firm in 1908 and were joined by Elmslie in 1910. The larger size and close proximity of the homes to Lake Harriet indicate the relative wealth and progressive taste of the firm's clientele prior to World War I.

When looking at any of these buildings in person, please respect the privacy of the people who live and work in them.

#1: HAROLD E. HINELINE HOUSE

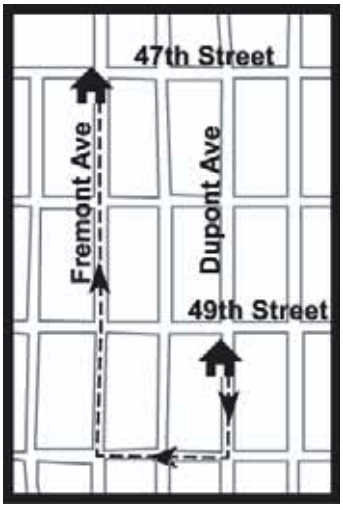
4920 Colfax Avenue South
Minneapolis

Architects: Purcell, Feick, and Elmslie
Year: 1910

DIRECTIONS TO THE SECOND HOUSE:

Destination: **Lyman E. Wakefield House**

- Continue South on DUPONT AVE S towards 50TH ST W. (0.14 miles)
- Turn RIGHT onto 50TH ST W. (0.19 miles)
- Turn RIGHT onto FREMONT AVE S. (0.24 miles)
- Look for **4700 FREMONT AVENUE SOUTH** on the left side of the street.



#2: LYMAN E. WAKEFIELD HOUSE
4700 Fremont Avenue South
Minneapolis

Architects: Purcell, Feick, and Elmslie
Year: 1911

DIRECTIONS TO THE THIRD HOUSE:

Destination: **Mrs. Terrance W. McCosker House**

- Continue North on FREMONT AVE S towards 47TH ST W. (0.01 miles)
- Turn LEFT onto 47TH ST W. (0.16 miles)
- Turn RIGHT onto E LAKE HARRIET PKWY. (0.09 miles)
- Look for **4615 EAST LAKE HARRIET PARKWAY** on the right side of the street.

#3: MRS. TERRANCE W. MCCOSKER HOUSE

4615 Lake Harriet Parkway
Minneapolis

Architects: Purcell and Feick
Year: 1909

DIRECTIONS TO THE NEXT STOP:

Destination: **Charles Wiethoff House**

- Continue Northeast on E LAKE HARRIET PKWY towards W 46TH ST/KINGS HWY. (0.03 miles)
- Turn RIGHT onto W 46TH ST/KINGS HWY. (0.04 miles)
- Turn RIGHT onto HUMBOLDT AVE S. (0.01 miles)
- Look for **4609 HUMBOLDT AVENUE SOUTH** on the left side of the street.

CHARLES WIETHOFF HOUSE

Stop #8

4609 Humboldt Avenue South
Minneapolis

THE MINNEAPOLIS INSTITUTE OF ARTS

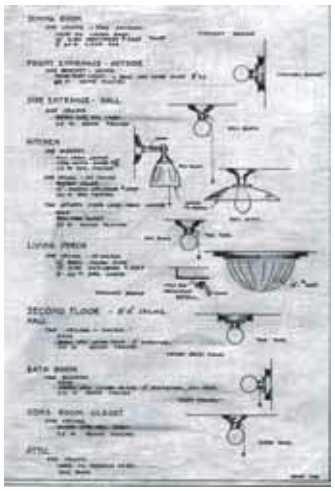
Architects: Purcell and Elmslie
Year: 1917

This late wood and stucco design by Purcell and Elmslie features a pitched roof--a favorite element of Purcell's more typical of Craftsman homes--with the gable end facing the street (and echoed in the entry). The firm designed the home with many fine details, including a fireplace with an arched brick opening, leaded-glass casement windows on the upper story, and glass and bronze half-globe light fixtures.

When looking at any of these buildings in person, please respect the privacy of the people who live and work in them.

HISTORIC PHOTOS:

Charles Wiethoff House,
Minneapolis
Photo: Northwest Architectural Archives

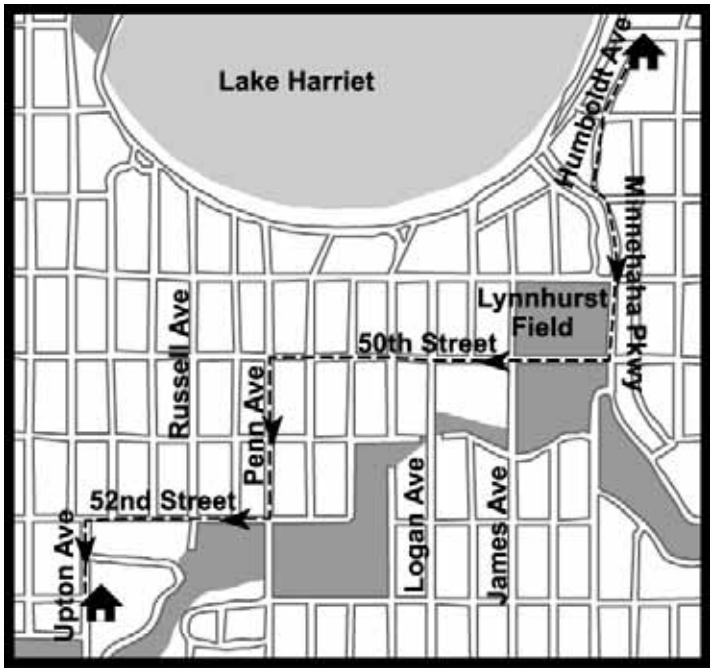


Drawings for light fixtures
Charles Wiethoff House,
Minneapolis
Photo: Northwest Architectural Archives

DIRECTIONS TO THE NEXT STOP:

Destination: **Peterson House**

- Continue South on HUMBOLDT AVE S towards 47TH ST W. (0.24 miles)
- Turn LEFT onto W MINNEHAHA PKWY. (0.27 miles)
- Turn RIGHT onto 50TH ST W. (0.52 miles)
- Turn LEFT onto S PENN AVE. (0.25 miles)
- Turn RIGHT onto 52ND ST W. (0.29 miles)
- Turn LEFT onto UPTON AVE S. (0.12 miles)
- Turn LEFT onto RED CEDAR LANE. (0.01 miles)
- Look for **3 RED CEDAR LANE** on the right side of the street.



PETERSON HOUSE

Stop #9

3 Red Cedar Lane
Minneapolis

THE MINNEAPOLIS INSTITUTE OF ARTS

Architect: William Gray Purcell
Year: 1927 - 28

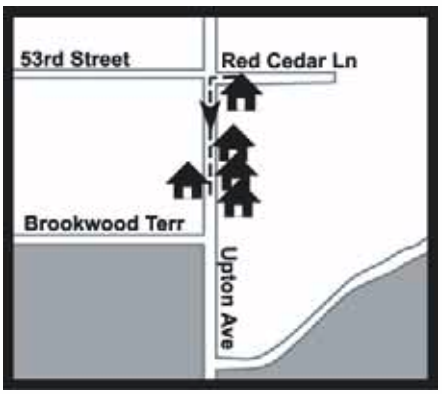
Purcell designed this house for the developer H.M. Peterson, who commissioned him also to design nine speculative houses nearby (see next tour stop). Purcell had not only left Minneapolis by this time but also had given up the Prairie School style, which now was out of fashion. He did, however, continue to follow progressive design ideas. The house, which has the feel of an English cottage, is built on a lot that slopes down to Minnehaha Creek. The full lower floor is partially built into the hill behind the house, which features such Prairie School-style details as art-glass windows and garage doors and the segmented arch popularized by George Maher. Architect John Jager, a friend of Purcell, planned Red Cedar Lane, named for the coniferous trees planted along the short street that remain green throughout the year. Jager's own home was 6 Red Cedar Lane.

When looking at any of these buildings in person, please respect the privacy of the people who live and work in them.

DIRECTIONS TO THE NEXT STOP:

Destination: **Speculative Houses**

- Turn around to go West on RED CEDAR LANE towards UPTON AVE S. (0.02 miles)
- Turn LEFT on UPTON AVE S. (0.02 miles)
- Look for **5309, 5315, 5319 UPTON AVENUE SOUTH** on the left side of the street and **5312 UPTON AVENUE SOUTH** on the right side of the street.



FOUR SPECULATIVE HOUSES

Stop #10

THE MINNEAPOLIS INSTITUTE OF ARTS

Purcell designed these houses from Portland, Oregon, in partnership with his former Purcell and Elmslie draftsman Frederick Strauel, who still lived in Minneapolis. They are part of a larger group (nine in all) that were designed and built as speculative housing, meaning they were planned and constructed with no client in mind. They are Purcell's interpretation of the period revival styles popular at the time-basically suggestive of English Tudor-although their layouts reflect his characteristic attention to function.

When looking at any of these buildings in person, please respect the privacy of the people who live and work in them.

#1
5309 Upton Avenue South
Minneapolis

Architects: William Gray Purcell with Frederick Strauel
Year: 1932