

MINNESOTA HISTORIC PROPERTIES INVENTORY FORM

HISTORIC NAME: Ernest Osbeck House

COUNTY: Lincoln

80008540

CURRENT NAME:

CITY/TWP.: Lake Benton

LEGAL DESC.: The north 40 ft. of lot numbered 28 and all of lot numbered 29, of block numbered 7 of the town of Lake Benton in the city of Lake Benton, County of Lincoln, State of Minnesota.

ADDRESS: 106 South Fremont

CLASSIFICATION:

Building
 Structure _____
 Object _____
 District _____

CONDITION:

Excellent
 Good _____
 Fair _____
 Deteriorated _____

SIGNIFICANCE:

Local
 State _____
 National _____

THEME/S:

Primary Architecture
 Secondary Commerce
 Others _____

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC: Yes No _____ Restricted
 VISIBLE FROM THE ROAD: Yes No _____
 OCCUPIED: Yes No _____

PRESENT USE:
 Residence/antique shop

DATE CONSTRUCTED: 1896-97

ORIGINAL USE: Residence

ORIGINAL OWNER: Ernest Osbeck

ARCHITECT/BUILDER: John & Peter Anderson

OWNER'S NAME AND ADDRESS: Jack Burk
 106 South Fremont,
 Lake Benton, MN 56149

ACREAGE: Less than one acre

LOCAL CONTACT/ORG.: Lake Benton Historical Society
 Lake Benton, MN 56149

UTM REFERENCE:

Lake Benton, 7.5

FORM PREPARED BY: Susan Roth
 DATE: May 1980

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DESCRIPTION:

The Ernest Osbeck House is located on a large lot on Fremont Street in Lake Benton. The two story building is of irregular plan with a multi-gable roof and an octagonal corner tower with patterned shingles and finial. The two-thirds front porch has turned posts and incised spandrels. The building's surface is defined by horizontal and vertical wood bands. Ornamentation on the first floor includes two bay windows with pent roofs. The front gable is embellished by heavy barge boards and scroll sawn fretwork and patterned shingles. The oak and maple interior woodwork features Queen Anne and East Lake detailing including lower leaf geometric carving, gouged decoration, knobs, and ball and stick-work portiers. Stained or frosted glass is found in window and door transoms.

Also located on the property is a public privy built in ca. 1888 by the local school and moved to the present location in 1978. The building is a one story cubiform structure with clapboard siding and a hip roof covered with wood shingles. Ornamentation includes scroll sawn corner brackets with pendants and a frieze composed of tongue in groove boards. Four paneled doors on opposite sides of the building separate the mens' and womens' entrances. The building is to be repaired and the cupola/ventilator restored.

In 1978, a garage was built on the site of the original carriage house. The building is a one and one half story structure with a gable roof. Clapboard, board and batten, and shingle siding are utilized on the first and attic stories. Ornamentation includes scroll sawn fretwork in the gables and roof dormer, and the owner's monogram framed in a wood panel.

SIGNIFICANCE:

The Ernest Osbeck House is significant for its association with Ernest Osbeck, long time grocery merchant and commercial and social developer, and as one of the most prominent residential structures in the city of Lake Benton. Ernest Osbeck was born in Alvesta, Sweden in September 1859 and learned the grocery business from his uncle. He immigrated to the United States and arrived in Lake Benton in 1884, where he was employed at different jobs before entering the grocery business in 1885. He purchased his first grocery store in 1889 and remained in the business until his retirement in the late 1930s. Besides running a lucrative grocery business, Osbeck became one of the original organizers of the Lake Benton Co-op Creamery Association, the Co-op Grain Elevator Association, the Lake Benton Building and Loan Association, the Farmer's State Bank and the Lake Benton Opera House. In 1887, at a cost of \$3,600, he built a Queen Anne residence featuring the characteristic elements of irregular massing, intersecting roof line, and an octagonal turret. The house's modest but locally distinctive features and its location close to Lake Benton's central business district reflect the role Osbeck had in the commercial community. Its careful restoration, has strengthened its position as a local landmark.

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

A Sourvenir Lake Benton, Minnesota. Minneapolis: Wall & Haines, 1900.

"Ernest Osbeck Pioneer Grocer Buried Here," Lake Benton News, 9 June 1949,
p. 1.

Tasker, A.E., Early History of Lincoln County. Lake Benton News Print, 1936.