

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED FEB 29 1980

DATE ENTERED MAY 7 1980

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORMSEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS**1** NAME *Sunnyhill Home*

HISTORIC

Day, Dr. Fisk Holbrook, House

AND/OR COMMON

Sunnyhill Home (preferred)

LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

8000 West Milwaukee Avenue

CITY, TOWN

Wauwatosa

STATE

Wisconsin

VICINITY OF

CODE

55

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Fourth

COUNTY

Milwaukee

CODE

079

CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

☐ DISTRICT☒ BUILDING(S)☐ STRUCTURE☐ SITE☐ OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

☐ PUBLIC☒ PRIVATE☐ BOTH

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

☐ IN PROCESS☐ BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

☒ OCCUPIED☐ UNOCCUPIED☐ WORK IN PROGRESS

ACCESSIBLE

☐ YES: RESTRICTED☐ YES: UNRESTRICTED☐ NO

PRESENT USE

☐ AGRICULTURE☐ COMMERCIAL☐ EDUCATIONAL☐ ENTERTAINMENT☐ GOVERNMENT☐ INDUSTRIAL☐ MILITARY☐ MUSEUM☐ PARK☒ PRIVATE RESIDENCE☐ RELIGIOUS☐ SCIENTIFIC☐ TRANSPORTATION☐ OTHER:

OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Miss Florence Rust

STREET & NUMBER

3025 West Highland Boulevard

CITY, TOWN

Milwaukee

VICINITY OF

STATE

Wisconsin 53208

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Milwaukee County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

901 North Ninth Street

CITY, TOWN

Milwaukee

STATE

Wisconsin 53233

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Wisconsin Inventory of Historic Places

DATE

1976

☐ FEDERAL ☒ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☐ LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

State Historical Society of Wisconsin

CITY, TOWN

Madison

STATE

Wisconsin

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

___ EXCELLENT
___ GOOD
☒ FAIR

___ DETERIORATED
___ RUINS
___ UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

___ UNALTERED
☒ ALTERED

CHECK ONE

☒ ORIGINAL SITE
___ MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Day house is a two-and-one-half story Victorian eclectic structure set on the largest (1.62 acres) residential lot in the city of Wauwatosa. It is set back 194.79 feet from the lot line and is sited on the high point of a gently sloping hill.

The property, although abused and neglected since the 1930's, still retains much of the original plantings.

The house is constructed of Cream City brick (now painted) set on a roughly dressed Wauwatosa limestone foundation. With only a few minor exceptions the masonry shows no settling or cracking and the mortar joints are so sound as to require little tuckpointing. The scroll-sawn pine pseudo-timberwork and ornament in the gables is in a remarkably good state of preservation. The three original brick chimneys are missing from two to six of their top courses and are badly in need of rebuilding, but enough remains to dictate the proper design for restoration.

The original structure is irregularly massed and is covered by a complex roof. Not counting the change in pitch on the bottom one-fourth of the major slopes, there are 44 facets to the design. The main body of the structure is capped with a low-pitched pyramid off the edges of which run the ridges of three gables. The tower is distinguished with a straight-sided mansard roof with a flat top deck, one pitched gable and three jerkin-headed dormers.

The south (front) facade is divided into three bays. The first (west) bay projects slightly ahead of the adjacent central tower and the east bay (one side of the almost square main block of the house) is set back four feet from the tower. The east and west bays, and the south face of the tower are distinguished by elaborate stick-style gables with scroll-cut ornament in pine.

The tower, which rises a full story above the roof ridges, is internally divided into five levels with windows at each level. It is the tower which has suffered the greatest architectural loss over the years. Originally there was an elaborate wooden balcony accessible from the pair of third floor tower windows. The Mansard roof was covered with colored, sawn, cedar shingles laid in geometric patterns. (The present roof is an imitation slate of poor scale) There was originally a cast iron cresting on the tower deck.

A modern brick room now replaces the original wooden front porch which had ornate stick-style construction similar to the surviving gables. Another porch, on the southeast corner, was removed around 1940.

The eastern half of the south front is further distinguished by a two-story half-octagon bay window with engaged columns and scroll-cut ornament panels. With the exception of a few triangular heads, most of the windows have segmental arches.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

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During a 10 year period beginning in the 1930's, the house was abandoned and severely vandalized. This, and unsympathetic alterations, have left the interior in poor condition. Only the treads of the two-story, 1/4 circular staircase remain--hidden behind remodelings.

One incised marble fireplace mantel has been reconstructed from the remains of two. Many of the original floors are covered with later hardwood. Fortunately most of the deeply molded pine door and window casings survive under heavy paint. Two sets of sliding doors, with original hardware and in good operating condition, separate the principal first floor rooms from the central entrance hall. A later steam heating system has introduced pipes and radiators throughout the house.

The original 8.5-acre site was eventually subdivided by Day into six parcels. The Sunnyhill lot still retains some suggestion of the estate-like quality of the grounds. An early photograph (1876) captured the lushness of the original landscaping, with a shrub-lined drive winding up the hill to the front porch across a tree-shaded lawn. To the north of the house a two-story plus attic brick barn with jerkin-head roof and cupola was constructed. The stone foundation of the original stable/barn (c. 1874) survives about 100 feet east-northeast of the house. A later frame garage, in dilapidated condition, has been built within the old foundation. An old limestone hitching post remains around 35 feet southeast of the southeast corner of the house.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD		AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY) Assoc-	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		iated with locally prominent person	

SPECIFIC DATES 1874-5¹

BUILDER/ARCHITECT James Douglas²

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Day house is important both historically and architecturally. It is the third and last (and only remaining) residence built by a man who was once regarded as Wauwatosa's most prominent citizen. Architecturally it has one of the tallest and most picturesque towers in Milwaukee County. It is sited beautifully on a large, wooded, hilltop. Wauwatosa was Milwaukee's first suburb but, unlike those along the lakeshore, it was never a place for great estates or palatial homes. The Day house, with its stable/barn, two grass tennis courts, vegetable and flower gardens, was set on an 8.67 acre lot and was perhaps the only true mansion the area had until the late 1880's.

History

Dr. Fisk Holbrook Day was born in Richmond, New York in 1826. His father, Rev. Warren Day, was a close friend of Daniel Webster. "His mother Lydia Holbrook Day when young was an intimate friend and schoolmate of William Cullen Bryant."³ Day graduated from the Jefferson Medical College in Philadelphia and, after practicing medicine a few years in New York State, he moved to Wauwatosa with his parents.

Dr. Day served not only as a pioneer country doctor, but as the appointed physician for the Milwaukee County Hospital, the Poor Farm and the Insane Asylum. Unofficially he was interested in architecture, astronomy, botany and archaeology. As an amateur geologist and paleontologist he gained national recognition. He personally knew, and often supplied specimens to, many of the country's most prominent scientists. Today his fossils and geological specimens can be found in such collections as those at the Smithsonian Institution, Harvard University and Chicago's Field Museum. At least two Milwaukee area fossils have been named after Dr. Day.⁴

As a member of numerous medical and scientific societies he gave lectures, wrote for publications and entertained countless professionals in his home. Professor Alexander Agassiz, from the Museum of Comparative Zoology at Harvard, visited this house to evaluate the collection which he would eventually purchase.

The Days raised four daughters, each of whom distinguished herself in writing, art or music. By 1892, after Mrs. Day's death, the doctor and all of his daughters were gone. Day moved to Lansing, Michigan where he died in 1903. Abe S. Austin purchased the house and one-fourth of the property in 1895. It has since been owned by his family until the death of Abe Austin Jr. in 1979.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

see continuation sheet

UTM NOT VERIFIED

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1.62

UTM REFERENCES Quadrangle Name: Wauwatosa, Wis.

Scale: 1:24000

A 16 417520 4767000
ZONE EASTING NORTHING
C

B
ZONE EASTING NORTHING
D

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The east 223.10 feet of lot 3 in F. H. Days subdivision, being a subdivision of a part of the SE 1/4 of Section 21, T 7N, R 21E, excepting the south 33 feet for street purposes.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

H. Russell Zimmermann Curator

ORGANIZATION

Wisconsin Architectural Archive

DATE

November 30, 1979

STREET & NUMBER

814 West Wisconsin Avenue

TELEPHONE

414-278-3897

CITY OR TOWN

Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53233

STATE

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL X

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

Richard M. Munn

TITLE

Director, State Historical Society of Wisconsin

DATE

2/27/80

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I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

W. Ray Luce

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE

5/7/80

ATTEST:

Kristin O'Connell

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

4/21/80

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Architecture

With its picturesque irregularities and silhouettes, the Day house is an effective representative of Victorian-era eclecticism, bearing strains of Italianate, Second Empire, and Gothic domestic styles. With the exception of two missing porches and a third floor balcony, the house's exterior is almost completely intact. The stick-style pseudo-timberwork in the gables is a better-than-average example of that design style and its condition is remarkably fine. The relationship of the house to the site is important. Although there are now 19 buildings on the original 8.67-acre lot, the remaining parcel on which the house stands is still an impressive piece of land for Wauwatosa and it gives a proper open space and majesty to the structure.

While there is no irrefutable proof of the architect, the circumstantial evidence builds a strong case for Milwaukee's James Douglas.^{1, 2} Also compare with two known Douglas designs for the same period: (1) Gilbert E. Collins residence, 1363 North Prospect Avenue, Milwaukee; (2) George Washington Van Brunt residence, highway 18 just east of Dousman, Waukesha County, (now razed).

1 Town of Wauwatosa tax rolls - 1874-1876 (Milwaukee Public Library)
James Douglas Ledgers and Day Books - 1873-1879 (Annabel Douglas MacArthur)
Stereopticon slide owned by Day's family (Samuel Riggs, Dallas, Texas)

2 Zimmerman, H. Russell, Dedication of the Historical Marker Plaque on the Fisk Holbrook Day Residence (Wauwatosa, 1979), p. 12

3 Flower, Frank A., History of Milwaukee, Wisconsin (Chicago, 1881), p. 1640

4. Mikulic, Donald, research papers for thesis on the Geology of Southeastern Wisconsin, Oregon State University, Department of Geology, 1979

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9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Bulletin of the Wisconsin Natural History Society vol. 9, No.4, Oct. 1911

Day, Dr. F.H. Journal for the year 1862

Flower, Frank A. History of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, Chicago, 1881

Frank, Dr. Louis Medical History of Milwaukee , Milwaukee, 1915

Lansing Journal Lansing, Michigan 6/1/1903

Milwaukee Sentinel 33 references between 1/12/1858 and 8/18/1889

Wauwatosa News 6/6/1903