

ARCHITECTURAL/HISTORICAL SURVEY

DAVENPORT, IOWA

The Architects Office  
 Wehner, Nowysz, Pottschull and Pfiffner  
 801 day building, Iowa city Iowa 52240

DAVENPORT COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT  
 IOWA DIVISION OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION

SITE # 82-10-PY-702 MAP # 3

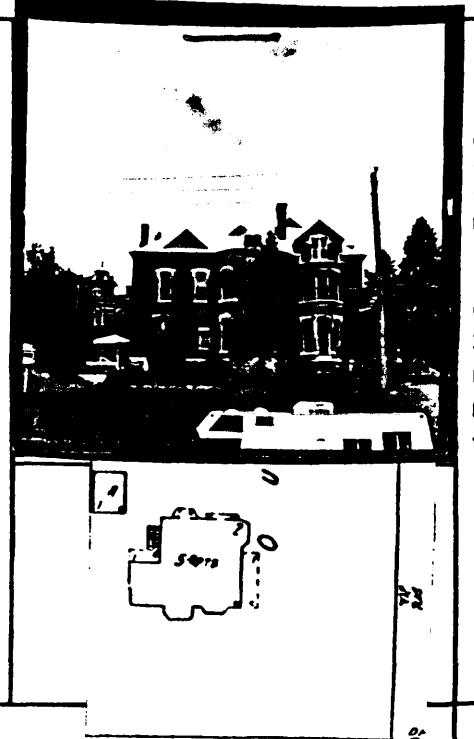
HIST. DIST. \_\_\_\_\_

NAME Nicholas J. Kuhnen House (H) C

ADDRESS 702 Perry St.

LEGAL DES. LeClaire's 2nd E 1/2 of the S 150' of  
SUB-DIVISION 17 OL  
BLOCK PARCEL SUB-PARCEL

UTM 15 71021520145191940 ACREAGE -1 ZONE C-4  
EASTING NORTHING  
 (Contract) OWNER Iowa General Housing Ltd c/o Donald E. Neiman  
 (Deed) 119 High Street, Des Moines 50309  
 TITLE H. S.D. Fenton/Esther J. Fenton  
(IF DIFF)



DESCRIPTION

FORM 2 1/2 stories, low hipped roof, many projecting bays & dormers CONST. DATE 1887-89  
 MATERIALS Brick, stone, wood ARCH STYLE Vernac. Italianate  
 FENESTRATION Various, segmental and flat arches, slab lintels  
 DIST. FEATURES See below  
 ALTERATIONS \_\_\_\_\_  
 SITE & RELATED STR. Large corner lot

STATEMENT

The Kuhnen House illustrates the long popularity of the Italianate style in Davenport. Where earlier manifestations of the style tended toward a simplicity derived from the Greek Revival, the Kuhnen House is rich with high Victorian embellishment, variety of window treatment, polychrome exterior achieved through brick and stone; the many projecting bays and triangular roof dormers

John Ross, Architect

SOURCES

Oszuscik, p. 315

P L E A S E S E E ARCHITECTURE

**SIGNIFICANCE**

This was the residence of Nicholas Kuhnen, an important cigar manufacturer and wholesale jobber in Davenport from before the Civil War until after 1900.

HISTORY

**DESCRIPTION**

Nicholas Kuhnen, a Prussian immigrant, opened a small retail tobacco concern in Davenport shortly after arriving in 1854. Making his own cigars, Kuhnen's early success allowed him to open a wholesale operation a few years later. In 1863, Kuhnen distributed free tobacco seed to local farmers to encourage experimentation with tobacco cultivation. The experiment was not successful, since farmers found the care of the plants too troublesome. Kuhnen's operation grew during the 1870's and during the 1880's, he was acknowledged as the leading cigar manufacturer north of St. Louis and west of Chicago, intermittently employing up to 500 hands. The unstable working situation, low wages, long hours, and poor working conditions lead to labor unrest in local cigar factories. In 1882 cigar operatives organized a strike against the Kuhnen factory. (See continuation sheet)

**SOURCES**

Richter, August, "A True History of Scott County," Davenport Democrat, August 20, 1922.  
 "Cigar Manufacturing Here Ranks Third in West, Lead Gained in Civil War Years,"  
 "Centennial and Fiftieth Anniversary Edition," Davenport Times, July 11, 1936.  
 Tillinghast, B.F. Three Cities and Their Industrial Interests, Davenport: Glass and Hoover, 1883.  
 History of Scott County Iowa, Chicago: Inter-State Publishing Co., 1882.

ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIAN: Martha Bowers | HISTORIAN: MARLYS SVENDSEN - ROESLER | SURVEY COMP 1981

**EVALUATION**

**ARCHITECTURAL**

- I. ARCH. EVALUATION Good
- II. ENVIR. STATURE Incident
- III. INT. OF CONTEXT Fair
- IV. INT. OF FABRIC Good

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE:  
 NAT.  STATE  LOCAL  N. ELIG.

**HISTORICAL**

- I. THEME(S) OF SIGNIFICANCE:  
 A. PRIMARY \_\_\_\_\_  
 B. SECONDARY \_\_\_\_\_

II. LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE:  
 NAT.  STATE  LOCAL

III. N.R.H.P.  
 ELIGIBLE  NOT ELIGIBLE

**HISTORIC DISTRICT CLASSIFICATION**

A.  B.  C.

**FOR DIVISION OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION USE ONLY**

1. DATE RECEIVED \_\_\_\_\_

2. DATE OF STAFF EVALUATION \_\_\_\_\_

	A. ARCHITECTURAL	B. HISTORICAL
ELIGIBLE FOR N.R.H.P.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
NOT ELIGIBLE FOR N.R.H.P.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3. N.R.H.P. ACTION

A. STATE REVIEW COMM.	APP. <input type="checkbox"/>	DISAPP. <input type="checkbox"/>	TABLED <input type="checkbox"/>	DATE _____
B. FEDERAL REVIEW	APP. <input type="checkbox"/>	DISAPP. <input type="checkbox"/>	TABLED <input type="checkbox"/>	DATE _____

4. D.H.P. SOURCES

<input type="checkbox"/> COUNTY RESOURCES	<input type="checkbox"/> DET. OF ELIGIBILITY
<input type="checkbox"/> W'SHIELD SURVEY	<input type="checkbox"/> R. B. C. _____
<input type="checkbox"/> N.R.H.P.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DAVENPORT A/H SURVEY
<input type="checkbox"/> GRANT _____	<input type="checkbox"/> _____

5. SUBJECT TRACES \_\_\_\_\_

6. PHOTO  
82-10-1668-3 N & E Elev.  
82-10-1690, 8, 9

The Architects Office

Wehner, Nowysz, Pottschull and Pfiffner  
801 day building, iowa city, iowa 50240DAVENPORT COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT  
IOWA DIVISION OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION

# 82 - 10 - PY 702

Description (Continued)

The company's 92 workers including 40 women, struck for a time, eventually breaking out of fear. In late 1885, the union fervor peaked among cigar workers after an outside union organizer from the International Cigar Makers came to Davenport. In January, 1886, Kuhnen's was hit with a union organized boycott. The boycott was directed against his product and dealers of his cigars. It was headed by Knights of Labor leader and avowed socialist, Peter Knickrehm. The boycott damaged Kuhnen's trade for some time.

Kuhnen's business ceased after 1900. It was eventually taken over by Alex Anderson and Frank Rhoades and later by Smith, Reimers and Company.

Sources (Continued)

"The First Boycott in Davenport," Davenport: Boycott Committee, January 10, 1886.

