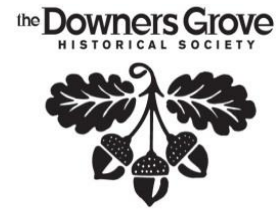




DOWNERS GROVE HISTORIC HOME PROGRAM



The Downers Grove Museum and the Downers Grove Historical Society are proud to present the Downers Grove Historic Home Program. This Program aims to preserve the history and integrity of Downers Grove's homes and educate the community about research and preservation. A home must be at least fifty years old to apply for recognition. This packet describes the requirements that need to be met in order for a home to be recognized by the Museum and the Historical Society and for an owner to be entitled to purchase a Historic Home Program plaque.

The Downers Grove Historic Home Program is not affiliated with the Village of Downers Grove's Historic Landmark Program. The Downers Grove Historic Home Program is strictly honorary and does not limit the homeowner from making alterations to the home. Additionally, the Program does not qualify homeowners for any type of financial incentives such as property tax assessment freezes or tax rebates.

RESEARCHING YOUR HOME'S HISTORY

Start your research by writing down what you know about your home already. Use a notebook or blank sheet of paper to write your name at the top along with the years you have resided in your home. Below your name, write the name of the person you bought the property from and any additional information you may know. Do you know how long they lived there? If you are uncertain how long they owned the property, leave a space so you can fill it in once you discover the information.

If you do not have any more information about your home, that is okay. You can ask your neighbors if they knew any families who lived in your home. Although neighbors may not be able to give you exact years, they can at least give you a name to look up during your research process. Once you gather what you can on your own, start utilizing the resources listed on the next page.

See Appendix A on Page 4 for a glossary of home research terms.

RESOURCES AVAILABLE FOR HISTORIC HOME RESEARCH

- [Village of Downers Grove's GIS Historic Resources Map](#)¹ historic information about properties collected as part of past Village surveys.
- [Village of Downers Grove's Architectural Styles Guide](#)² – physical copies at Village and available online
- [Downers Grove Museum](#)³ (831 Maple Avenue) – city directories, phone books, DuPage County atlases, general historical documents & research materials, local family histories, limited photographs of historic homes and streets
- [Downers Grove Public Library](#)⁴ (1050 Curtiss Street) – other city directories and phone books, historical books, Sanborn Maps (online), DG Reporter on microfilm
- [DuPage County Office of Records](#)⁵ (421 N. County Farm Road, Wheaton) – deed books and records, mortgage records (Records after 1961 [available online](#)⁶)
- [DuPage County Office of the County Clerk](#)⁷ (421 N. County Farm Road, Wheaton) – tax records (all digitized [online at this address](#)⁸)
- [DuPage County Historical Museum](#)⁹ (102 E. Wesley St., Wheaton) and [Naper Settlement](#)¹⁰ (523 S. Webster St., Naperville) – information and documents about 19th century individuals and families from DuPage County
- Family History Websites – <http://www.ancestry.com> (Free at DG Library) and <http://familysearch.org> (Free with account) – Census records, birth and death records, federal land sales records
- [Newspapers.com](#), [GenealogyBank.com](#), [Illinois Digital Archives](#)¹¹, and [Illinois Digital Newspaper Collections](#)¹² - other online sources for information on families and individuals

¹<http://vdg.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=d6291e93f9834c7ab8ce6bf58b74efe9>

² <http://www.downers.us/govt/historic-preservation/dg-architectural-guide>

³ <http://www.dgparks.org/places-to-go/the-museum>

⁴ <https://www.dglibrary.org/>

⁵ <https://www.dupageco.org/recorder/>

⁶ <https://www.dupageco.org/Recorder/OnlineDocs/>

⁷ <https://www.dupageco.org/countyclerk/>

⁸ <http://www.dupageco.org/CountyClerk/TaxHistorySearch/>

⁹ <https://dupagemuseum.org/>

¹⁰ <http://www.napersettlement.org/>

¹¹ <http://www.idaillinois.org/>

¹² <http://idnc.library.illinois.edu/>

REQUIRED INFORMATION:

To research your home, you will need to know its property description. It will be listed on the deed to your house (if you cannot access the physical one, you can find it using the DuPage County Office of Records' online document portal that is mentioned on page 2). The property description can also be found on a Plat of Survey for your house.

Example of a Property Description:

Lot 1 in C.B. Blodgett Homestead Subdivision in Downers Grove, a Subdivision of part of Lot 4, in Assessors Subdivision in Section 8, Township 38 North, Range 11, East of the Third Principal Meridian

You should also write down your property's Property Index Number (PIN). This can be found on a property tax bill or a deed. You can also search the County Clerk's online Property Lookup Page: <https://www.dupageco.org/PropertyInfo/PropertyLookUp.aspx>.

An example of a PIN: 09-08-316-003-000.

It is necessary to have this information because your address may have changed over time, but your property's description and PIN has not.

RECOMMENDED RESEARCH STEPS:

1. **City Directories/Phone Books** - Look up your address in the Museum and Library's city directories and phone books, which date as far back as 1903. The directories list past residents of your home and sometimes they will list the person's occupation. See Appendix B to find out which years the Museum and Library have.
2. **Atlases** - Look at DuPage County atlases at the Museum, which can show you where your property is and if it was divided up into sections. Learning if your property was divided into sections is important because it can explain some land transactions that took place, which you will learn more about once you begin to look at property tax records.
3. **Online Deed Records** – Use the Office of the Recorder's online portal to find digital deeds and mortgage records related to your home as far back as 1961. Write down who lived in your home. Grantors and Grantees will be listed on each deed (see Appendix A for definitions)

Note: Addresses in Downers Grove changed in 1927 to adapt to Chicago's address system. If you do not know your property's old address, it will be difficult to look at directories prior to 1927. However, if the old owner of your property was there prior to 1927, you can look at the 1925-1926 city directories and learn your old address number.

RECOMMENDED RESEARCH STEPS (CONT.):

4. **Deed Books and Mortgage Records**– Visit the County Office of Records and look at Grantor /Grantee books to find records further back than 1961. These show transactions between previous buyers and sellers of your property and will provide you with an accurate date of when your property was sold. Write these down using the charts on that page.
5. **Tax Records** - Property tax records are important to your research because they validate a time frame when your home was most likely built. If a home or building was built, the assessed value of the property should typically increase for the year after it was completed. However, keep in mind that an increase does not always mean a home or building was erected, but it is important to document that increase.
6. **Historical Information** – Use historical records from the Museum, Library, and family history websites to find any information you can on your house’s past owners and historical significance.
7. **Architectural Classification** – Use the Village of Downers Grove’s Architectural Style Guide and other books or online resources to determine what architectural style(s) and/or vernacular form(s) your home matches (see Appendix A for descriptions of these terms).

APPENDIX A: GLOSSARY OF HOME RESEARCH TERMS

- **Architectural Style** – “High style” or professional architectural classification that exhibits defined characteristics related to a house’s overall exterior design, materials use, articulation, and other architectural features.
- **Book** - The number of the book where the document is filed
- **Chain of Ownership** - A chain of ownership is the sequence of historical transfers of title to a property. The "chain" runs from the present owner back to the original owner of the property.
- **Consideration** - Payment for the transfer of the Deed
- **Deed (D)** - Legal document stating ownership or transfer of property
- **Document Number** - Number assigned to a deed, mortgage, or other legal document
- **File Date** - The date the document is filed with the County Recorder.
- **Grantee** - Buyer of property
- **Grantor** - Seller of property
- **Instrument** - The type of document. Warranty Deed (WD), Trust Deed (TD), Deed (D), etc.
- **Instrument Date** - The date the document was signed
- **Page** - The page in the book where the document is filed
- **PIN** - Property Index Number or PIN. A numerical code for the legal description of a piece of land as it has been defined for the purposes of real estate taxation

- **Quit Claim Deed** - A quit claim deed conveys to the grantee all of the grantor's interest in and title to the property.
- **Trust Deed (TD)** - A Deed of Trust is an agreement between a lender & a borrower to give the property to a neutral third party who will serve as a trustee. The trustee holds the property until the borrower pays off the debt.
- **Vernacular Building Form/Type** – An architectural classification defined by the overall massing and shape, interior space configuration and function, and materials.
- **Warranty Deed (WD)** - A warranty deed conveys to the grantee all of the grantor's interest in and title to the property.

APPENDIX B: CITY AND TELEPHONE DIRECTORIES

City Directories at the Downers Grove Museum: 1903, 1905, 1907, 1908, 1910, 1911, 1916, 1922, 1923, 1926, 1927, 1935, 1938-41, 1944, 1945, 1951, 1952

Telephone Directories at the Downers Grove Museum: 1923, 1926, 1933-1935, 1938-1943, 1945-1949, 1951-1969, 1976, 1980-1986, 1988-1989, 1992-2007, 2012-2013

Telephone Directories at the Downers Grove Library: 1909, 1910, 1916, 1924-1929, 1931-1956, 1958, 1975, 1976, 1978-1983, 1985-2016

HISTORIC HOME PROGRAM APPLICATION

APPLICANT INFORMATION

Name of Applicant(s): _____

Phone Number: _____ Email: _____

Signature of Applicant 1: _____ Date: _____

Signature of Applicant 1: _____ Date: _____

Name(s) of Research Assistant(s): _____

HOUSE INFORMATION

Address: _____
Street Zip Code

PIN: _____

Property Description:

HOUSE HISTORY

(Use "Property Deed Research," "Property Tax Assessments Research," and "Mortgage Transaction Research" starting on page 12 to complete the rest of the application)

Year Built: _____

Original Owner(s): _____

Preferred Name for House*: _____

*Usually the name of the first, or most important, owner(s). Example: "The Charles Blodgett House"

PHOTOGRAPH

Please attach a non-returnable current photograph of your home and if you have any old photographs, please attach a copy of those as well.

DESCRIPTION OF HOME

Foundation:

___ Limestone ___ Field Stone ___ Brick ___ Concrete ___ Concrete Block

___ Other: _____

Exterior Walls:

___ Wood siding ___ Vinyl Siding ___ Stucco ___ Stone ___ Brick

___ Other: _____

Roof:

___ Asphalt ___ Wood ___ Metal ___ Other: _____

ARCHITECTURAL CLASSIFICATION

Architectural Style(s):

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Greek Revival | <input type="checkbox"/> Gothic Revival | <input type="checkbox"/> Italianate |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Queen Anne | <input type="checkbox"/> Colonial Revival | <input type="checkbox"/> Neoclassical Revival |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tudor Revival | <input type="checkbox"/> Dutch Colonial | <input type="checkbox"/> Craftsman |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prairie | <input type="checkbox"/> French Eclectic | <input type="checkbox"/> Spanish Revival |
| <input type="checkbox"/> International Style | <input type="checkbox"/> Minimal Traditional | <input type="checkbox"/> Neo Revival |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mid-century Modern | <input type="checkbox"/> Late Modern Eclectic | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |

Vernacular Building Form/Type(s):

- | | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gable-Front and Gabled Ell | <input type="checkbox"/> Foursquare | <input type="checkbox"/> Ranch |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Split Level | <input type="checkbox"/> Bungalow | |

Explain (if necessary):

ALTERATIONS:

Has your house been significantly altered beyond its original character?

- Yes No

Please list any known alterations to the exterior of your house:

CRITERIA

A home must be at least fifty years old to apply for recognition. Additionally, the following criteria will be used to determine if a home qualifies. Your home only needs to meet one of the criteria, but please check all that apply.

_____ Architectural Significance

_____ Historic Significance

_____ Significant Person

_____ Significant Architect or Builder

See details about each category on the following pages. Attach additional pages if the space provided is too small.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

If you believe your home possesses typical characteristics of an architectural style or vernacular form, please explain below.

Architectural Classification:

Typical features:

Features your home possesses:

HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE

If you believe your home has significant historical or cultural value, please explain in the space below. Please attach research sources as well.

SIGNIFICANT PERSON

If you believe your home was owned or occupied by a person (or people) of historic significance, use the table below to explain. Please attach research sources as well.

Person's (s') Name(s): _____

Years the person(s) resided in the home:

Person's(s') Significance:

SIGNIFICANT ARCHITECT

If you believe your home was designed or constructed by a notable architect, please explain below. Please attach research sources as well.

Architect's Name: _____

Architect's Significance:

SIGNIFICANT BUILDER

If you believe your home was designed or constructed by a notable builder, please explain below. Please attach research sources as well.

Builder's Name: _____

Builder's Significance:

PROPERTY DEED RESEARCH

Grantor (Seller)	Grantee (Buyer)	Date Filed	Amount Considered	Document # Book/Page #

PROPERTY TAX ASSESSMENTS RESEARCH

Year	Name	Valuation and Total Tax	Subdivision, Lot, and Block

MORTGAGE TRANSACTION RESEARCH

(This section is optional, but can help confirm your home's history and also verify, for instance, a Kit Home by Sears, Wardway, or Harris Brothers)

Mortgagor	Mortgagee	Date Filed	Consideration	Document # Book/Page #

SUBMITTING YOUR APPLICATION

After you have completed your research, bring in the completed worksheets to the Museum. The Museum Curator and the Historic Home Committee Chairperson will first review the application to ensure it's complete. After the initial review process, they will present your application to the Downers Grove Historic Home Program Committee, who will discuss and vote on approving your application.

Once your application is reviewed and approved, the Museum will keep a copy of your findings in the Museum's research library. The Museum and Downers Grove Historical Society will send you a letter informing you that your home is accepted and recognized. You will then be eligible to order for a plaque that has been specifically designed for the Historic Homes Program and has the Museum's and Historical Society's logos (The plaque is optional). In the event your application is not approved, you will be contacted to explain the reason(s) for the denial or to request additional information.

Thank you for expressing interest in our program and the history of your home. By filling out this application, you've preserved the history of your home for your friends and family, later owners of your home, and future generations to enjoy and learn from. You've also contributed to preserving the history of Downers Grove and its importance to local, state, and national history.