

The McDowell House *(formerly known as the Paxton House)*

This Craftsman style house was built in 1918 by John H. and Ella McDowell. It has remained remarkably intact over the years. During the 1920s, it was owned by the Schneider family, Charles F. Ristine, and the Dawes family who lived in it from 1926 until 1942. Other owners include Cole, Rehnberg, and J.C. and Barbara Lamping. In 1958, it was purchased by Frederic W. and Gloria Jean Ecker. Thomas E. Paxton bought the house in 1964. It was sold to the City of Bellevue in 1988.

The house was originally part of a five-acre parcel that included an orchard with cherry trees, berries, grapes, and other fruit trees. The farm was known as Cherry Hill and High Ridge Farm. The house features a recessed porch along the front (west) façade and a river rock (cobblestone) chimney on the south wall. It exhibits several features of Craftsman style houses including multi-paned wood windows, overhanging eaves, and the rustic river rock chimney.

The McDowell House is one of the few existing houses in the Wilburton area that retains its original integrity. It is separated from the historic town of Wilburton, which is several blocks to the south, and features small modest bungalow structures. The cedar lumber used to build the house came from the nearby Wilburton Mill, which was closing around the time the house was being built. The prominent hillside location of the McDowell House, its proximity to the railroad tracks, and pleasant, secluded 25,000 square foot lot add to the significance of the house.



This attractive Craftsman style residence has changed very little since it was built in 1918. It features a large recessed porch that extends the length of the front (west) façade, a shed dormer with three multi-paned casement windows on the front façade, and a gable roofed dormer with double hung windows on the rear (east) façade. The river rock chimney and cladding on the east side of the structure match the gateposts at either end of the driveway. The wrought iron gates have been removed. A small porch is located on the northeast corner off the kitchen. The house is nearly square in shape, measuring approximately 34' x 38'. There is a room that extends six feet to the south on the southeast corner of the house. This may not be original, although the windows match the rest of the house.

Most of the windows appear to be original, although there are some fixed plate glass windows that may have been added later. The west façade features multi-paned wood casement windows, and the other facades generally have double hung wood windows, with multi-paned upper panels. The front door, which may be original, features six small panes of glass and wooden decoration. There are sidelight windows on either side of the front door. The recessed porch formerly had hanging windows on the south side to keep out the rain.

The living room features interesting painted woodwork, box beam and beadboard ceilings, and a brick fireplace. The narrow staircase has not been altered, and many of the closets have windows, including one downstairs interior closet, which preciously provided light into a pantry area. An interior staircase into the basement is not original.

There was also a small dilapidated structure on the east side of the house that may have served as a well house. A metal windmill was also formerly located adjacent to the pumphouse. The garage was demolished after the property was purchased by the City of Bellevue. A barn that dated from the 1940s or 1950s has also been razed.



The grounds were beautifully re-landscaped in 2003 and are open to the public for enjoyment. The house currently serves as the Administrative Offices for the Eastside Heritage Center.

For more information, contact the Eastside Heritage Center at 425-450-1049 or visit www.eastsideheritagecenter.org