

Tour Monroe's Historic Homes on July 28

The Monroe Historical Society is presenting its third Historic Homes Tour Saturday, July 28 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. The event



Ballard House, 1912

is a fundraiser for the nonprofit historical society with all proceeds going to maintain the museum and keep it operating as a free attraction and resource in the community.

Seven homes are on this self-guided, rain or shine tour and begins at the 1908 City Hall Building and the Historic Museum at 207 E. Main St. Tickets are \$15 and can be purchased at www.brownpapertickets.com or the day of the tour at the museum. Those who purchase tickets online will receive a tour guide and map which will serve as admission to the homes.

Most of the homeowners will be at their homes during the tour to answer questions about their restoration efforts. Refreshments will be available at the museum.

For more information call 360-217-7223 or visit www.monroehistoricalsociety.org.

Dishmaker House, 1928 604 W. Main Street

Jeff and Kristie Amsberry

This English Tudor is one of Monroe's most elegant homes. Built by George Dishmaker, it once featured a fountain in back and gardens just as beautiful as the house itself. After George's death, his wife sold the house to the Minor family who raised four daughters there, then Didi (Janice) McCloud had a floral business and wedding venue. It was purchased by Jeff and Kristie Amsberry in 2005.

The unique home boasts original flooring, woodwork, tile floors and other special features such as a greenhouse

attached to the dining room and a wall safe. Its wrought iron stair railing and original ornate radiators add to its charm. The plantings are

original to the 1920s when George built the house and designed the gardens.

The Donow House, 1912 328 N. Madison St.

Michael and Vina Donow

Michael and Vina Donow have owned this 2 bdrm. bungalow since 2005



Rich House, 1906

when they bought it from Les Nagel. It is a Sears Kit Home. These kit houses sold primarily through mail order. Sears reported that more than 70,000 of these homes were sold in North America between 1908



Streisguth House, 1903

and 1940. Purchased as a complete building kit, these homes could be completed

in just a month and in 1912 it would have cost approximately \$700. The Donows have made many changes to the century-old home, but always with an eye toward retaining its original charm and character. They also installed six solar panels on the roof which have eliminated heating costs. The Donows have recently painted the house a bright coral and have one of the most well-tended gardens on the block.

The Ballard House, 1912 334 S. Madison St.

Cason and Natalee Ballard

Cason and Natalee Ballard bought this distinctive 3-story craftsman in 2016. Natalee walked through the downstairs and within 10 minutes told Cason "I want this house."

The home's many unique features include a cement

driveway entrance under the house (now finished as a basement), the original brick fireplace and original floors. This turn-of-the-century charmer is larger than it looks from the street, with nearly 2,700 sq. feet, 4 bdrms.

and 3 baths.

The Rich House, 1906 1103 W. Main Street

Leonard Rich

One of the largest homes on the tour, this 4 bdrm. home is graced with an impressive columned front porch, elegant foyer and stair railing and a visible curved second story railing. At one time it was surrounded by pasture for a nearby dairy farm. Lenny Rich purchased the home in 2016 and has been



Dishmaker House, 1928

painstakingly restoring it one project at a time. The floors and moldings are original and the original old barn is still in back of the home, currently being used as a shop.

The Reardon House, 1905 221 North Madison

Heidi and Carl Fix

This craftsman-style home is almost 2,000 sq. ft. with 4 bdrms. and 2 baths. It was owned by the well-known Reardon/Hammond family for over 80 years. Heidi Fix has been making the most of its unique history and style for the past 21 years, filling it with vintage furniture and historic items. The home features trim salvaged from Seattle's Coliseum Theatre. Don't miss the 1960s stove-oven combo in the kitchen! That, and the original trim and molding, were the reasons Heidi wanted the house. A large old-growth stump is still visible in the basement, evidence of the clearing that was done before the house was built. The side yard contains a pond and many vintage plantings.

Streisguth House, 1903 522 S. Lewis St.

Wendy Keene and Tim Schultz

This home is back by popular demand from the 2017 tour. Owned by the Streisguth family for almost 70 years, it is a very well-known and loved landmark in the community. Wendy Keene and Tim Schultz have owned it since 2013 and have made many improvements including renovating a downstairs bathroom and restoring the front and back

porches. The once-neglected yard and gardens are now a visual oasis. They completely renovated the back yard this year. "We put in new sod and Tim designed several walkways with repurposed materials," said Wendy. "We planted many more plants and redesigned several new areas."

Johnson House, 1905 314 Elizabeth Street

Wan-chi Pungh

Landscape designer Wan-chi Pungh bought this home last year after looking for a house that was not a "cookie cutter." She certainly got what she was looking for in this 113-year-old house that has been thoroughly updated for the 21st century. With an interior that looks like a

brand new house, the grand old home is now getting a new lease on life.

Monroe City Hall Building, 1908

207 E. Main Street

Monroe's original City Hall Building is now the home of the Monroe Historical Society, but when it was built it served as a police station, jail, firehouse, city hall, council chambers and court. Later, the second floor housed Monroe's first library. Firemen also lived on the second floor and used a brass pole to slide downstairs when the alarm sounded. The 1908 jail cell is virtually untouched and is now part of the museum.



Reardon House, 1905, pictured above being prepped for a new coat of paint.



Johnson House, 1905



Donow House, 1912



Monroe City Hall Building, 1908. The photo shows firemen from 1940.