HISTORIC DESIGNATION STUDY REPORT
July 2014
as
CORRECTED

I. NAME

Historic: Jacob Nunnemacher Estate

Common Name: Evergreen Hotel /Wildenberg Hotel

II. LOCATION **3774 South 27th Street**

Legal Description - Tax Key No. 552993800
LANDS in SW ¼ SEC 18-6-22 N 199' of S 894" of E 409.19" of W 489.19" TID #76
NOTE: This designation applies only to the building that served as the Nunnemacher Residence / Wildenberg Hotel and not the remainder of the property that constitutes this tax key

III. CLASSIFICATION Building

IV. OWNER City of Milwaukee
809 North Broadway
Milwaukee, WI 53202

ALDERMAN Ald. Terry Witkowski 13th Aldermanic District

NOMINATOR Ald. Terry Witkowski

V. YEAR BUILT 1856 (Tax Rolls 1853 through 1876; Conversation with Harry Nunnemacher July 11, 2014)

ARCHITECT: Unknown

VI. PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

THE AREA

The Jacob Nunnemacher Estate / Wildenberg Hotel is located on the city's southwest side approximately 5 ½ miles from the Central Business District. Originally known as the Kilbourn Road, South 27th Street is a major traffic arterial. It has served as a thoroughfare connecting Chicago and Green Bay since the 19th century and is alternately known as Highway 41. As late as 1950, the area was predominantly agricultural with small farms and open lands well as woods. Some residential development had occurred west of South 27th Street both north and south of Oklahoma Avenue. Some scattered manufacturers and commercial businesses, such

as taverns, custard stands and roller rinks, developed along the thoroughfare and tourist camps or motels could be found as well.

Today South 27th Street is lined with strip malls, convenience stores, restaurants and big box stores. The impetus for the commercialization came with the construction of Southgate Shopping Center (later Southgate Mall) which opened with 20 stores in 1951 on the west side of South 27th Street. It was Milwaukee's first satellite shopping center outside of the downtown and was soon followed by Bayshore (1954), Capital Court (1956) and Mayfair (1958). Southgate attracted consumers from all over southeast Wisconsin and led to the construction of movie theaters and a host of smaller businesses in the area. A major anchor, Gimbel's Department Store, came to the mall in 1954. It was in that year as well, that the remaining unincorporated portions of the Town of Lake were annexed into the City of Milwaukee.

Southgate remained competitive until challenged by the larger Southridge Mall in 1970. Boston Store replaced Gimbel's in 1986 and Wal-Mart demolished most of the old Southgate to build its own megastore in 2000.

All of this activity was playing out across the street and surrounding what remained of the once extensive Nunnemacher estate. The estate's grand house remains today, in an altered state, as the only remnant of the early rural character of the area. It has a very interesting story to tell about Jacob Nunnemacher and his life and times.

Description

The Jacob Nunnemacher Estate / Wildenberg Hotel consists of a rectangular, hip roof, cream brick residential building of Italianate Style that has a two-story central block flanked by one-story wings that are inset slightly from the main block. The house is set back from South 27th Street and the main facade faces west. It was once part of a multi-acre holding that now consists of an 81,382 square foot site. The once-landscaped front lawn has been replaced with asphalt paving. The grade had been raised to the level of the front door stoop.

The hip roof extends out from the body of the house and feature brackets below which is a fascia in which ventilating grills are placed. Brackets and fascia are still extant at each side wing and at the rear of the main block of the house. Brick chimneys extend from the north and south slopes of the roof. They appear to have been rebuilt and altered over time. Historic images show the house to have had a cupola although it has been removed.

The foundation was raised above grade with basement windows set into segmental openings. It was set off from the first story by a belt course of tooled stone, at least on the principal façade. As mentioned above, the grade was raised at the front façade up to the level of the stone belt course from the entry to the south wing so the foundation and basement windows are only visible in portions of the building.

In keeping with the house's Italianate Style, the center bay of the 3-bay facade projects slightly from the main block of the house and is somewhat more embellished. The first and second stories are separated by a brick belt course. The corners of the first story are designed to appear as pilasters with adjacent walls recessed slightly and ornamented with corbelling. The entrance is centered in the middle bay and features an opening flanked by sidelights and an arched transom.

The second story of the center bay features a recessed center, framed by simple pilasters and featuring ornamental corbelling at the top. A large arched window opening was centered in this bay. It was highly ornamented with an elaborate hood. It has been bricked up leaving room for a short sash window. In front of the window is signage that reads "Ed Wildenberg" and "The

Evergreen" [recently removed]. The remaining windows on the facade are symmetrically placed. The second story window openings have been bricked down and feature paired, short, one-over-one sash. The windows to either side of the entry door, in the main block of the house, have different glazing patterns with the long sash to the left or north being original. To the right or south of the entry is an opening filled with a 20-light window.

There are windows in each of the two side wings. The ones to the right or south have been altered and filled with a 20-light glass block. The openings to the left or north feature wood lintels, wood sills and pairs of narrow casement/French windows that have early glass, thin muntins and latch hardware that show them to be original to the 1850s. The larger projecting lintels with drop finials have been removed from these windows.

The north façade features two windows in downsized openings on the second story. The north wing, at the first story, features one original casement/French windows, and a partially original window on the east face that is mostly filled in with glass block but retains its original lintel. The northeast corner of the north wing is clad with board and batten siding into which modern windows have been inserted.

The south façade has downsized windows in the upper story and downsized windows with glass block windows in the south wing. This wing also features ventilating equipment and air conditioners either projecting through the glass block or adjacent to the window openings.

The rear or east façade has five windows on the second story, each of which has been blocked down and filled with modern one over one sash. Window openings on the first story have likewise been filled in with modern windows installed. A one-story concrete block structure has been constructed as an entry or vestibule at the center of the east façade. It has a hood over a pair of entry doors and glass block windows. To either side are various metal and wood storage sheds either attached or placed against the main house. At the south wing a shallow aluminum-sided bump-out is attached directly to the building and had a concrete block foundation. This bump-out features a single one-over-one modern sash.

A large recent-era porch now stretches across most of the front of the main block of the house. It has a flat, projecting roof and four courses of horizontal sheathing from which a pitched roof extends. This pitched roof is supported by four metal posts.

The arched opening of the main entry features a fine decorative keystone and the interior shallow foyer is richly paneled. The arched transom features the word “Evergreen” painted onto the glass along with three evergreen trees.

Various details show the house to have been expensive and well-designed when constructed. Fine cream brick was used for the exterior cladding. A tooled stone belt course divides the foundation from the first story. Unusual corbelling is used at the front to create depth and shadow line. Windows were tall and at the first story, extended from floor to ceiling to allow access outside. The central second story window had tracery-like muntins and was larger than the rest and had a highly decorative hood. The interior features carved stone mantels and ornamental plaster at the ceiling. The prominent newel post and balusters are still intact at the main staircase and it extends all the way to the attic.

Alterations to the house appear to have been made primarily before this area was annexed into the city of Milwaukee in 1954 or else permits were not taken out for the work. There are no permits for the window alterations, the construction of the current front porch or various additions at the rear. Most of the existing permits and violations deal with the adjacent trailer park.

Although the alterations are dramatic they are all reversible. The house itself is structurally sound.

The grounds to the north and to the rear or east are currently occupied by vacant house trailers. The tenants / owners have been relocated and the City, now owner, will be removing those structures or scrapping them out for salvage in the near future.

Although the interior of the house is not part of the historic designation it still retains both front parlors with marble fireplace surrounds and ornamental plaster ceilings hidden behind ceiling tiles, as well as a grand staircase.

HISTORY OF JACOB NUNNEMACHER (June 23, 1819-November 28, 1876)

Jacob Nunnemacher was born in Bad-Burg, near the city of Basel Switzerland. He immigrated to Milwaukee in 1842 at the age of 23 and later arranged for his father Gaudenz, and brothers Henry and Anton to join him. Jacob married Catherine Bagenbruch in 1843 and eventually had five children: Herman (September 11, 1845 – December 14, 1906), Rudolph, Jacob, Robert, and Marie Schmidt (died 1944 in suburban Berlin). (Conard, volume 2 pages 328-329; Conversation with Harry Nunnemacher on July 9 and July 11 2014)

Jacob trained and became a journeyman butcher in the old country and worked with several concerns in Milwaukee before saving up enough money to open his own successful meat market. An ad in the 1854-1855 city directory indicated he was located in the First Ward Market Hall and that it was a place "where a good assortment can always be found." Jacob's brother Anton worked in the butcher shop with him. Jacob's brother Henry operated the Swiss House or Swiss Home, a hotel at the northwest corner of Water Street and Biddle where "Emigrants [sic] and Farmers will find a good home and charges reasonable." A few years later Henry went on to become a grading contractor. (City directories)

Jacob lived across from Market Hall at the southwest corner of today's North Water Street and East Wells Street. The business later moved to this corner when the old market was converted into Milwaukee's first permanent City Hall in 1860. By this time, Jacob had replaced the original low wooden building with a substantial 3-story brick building on the site in 1852. It was later enlarged and known as the Wellington Hotel/Grand Central Hotel. Eventually the site would house the Blatz Hotel. Jacob had a keen business sense and invested heavily in real estate. It was said "like Midas of old, all he touched turned into gold." (Obituary Jacob Nunnemacher, Milwaukee Sentinel Wednesday November 29, 1876 page 5 column 1; Conard, volume 2 pages 328-329)

One example of Jacob's more civic activity, carried out partially at his own expense, was the filling in of the deep bayou or inlet behind his property on Water Street. The bayou extended north past today's Juneau Avenue and created an island in the middle of the Milwaukee River.

> "Mr. Nunnemacher conceived the idea of filling this unsightly stream, dislodged the old fisherman who had squatted at the lower end of the Island, pulled down the bridge that led to the swing bridge, and began the work of grading the branch out of existence. His neighbors caught part of his enthusiasm, and in a few years, the land was reclaimed. Part of the Grand Opera-house now rests over the bed of the bayou and the Nunnemacher Block opposite it, on Oneida Street." (Obituary Jacob Nunnemacher, Milwaukee Sentinel Wednesday November 29, 1876 page 5 column 1)

When the bayou was filled in, the island became part of the shore and River Street was laid out along the banks. (Obituary Jacob Nunnemacher, Milwaukee Sentinel Wednesday November 29, 1876 page 5 column 1)

Jacob was also responsible for the construction of the Grand Opera House Block built in 1870, housing a theater as well as offices used by his sons. Jacob was not involved in the operations

of the theater which were handled by his sons. This theater was later acquired by Captain Pabst in 1890, destroyed by fire in 1895 and replaced with the current Pabst Theater. Jacob eventually came to own all of the property on both sides of today's East Wells Street between Water Street and the bridge.

Jacob would later move his residence out of the quarters above his Water Street shop after acquiring Byron Kilbourn's former home at the northwest corner of Fourth Street and West Wisconsin Avenue in 1868 at a cost of $18,000. The large dwelling had been constructed in 1856 at a cost of $20,000 and designed by architects Mygatt & Schmidtner. By 1871 Jacob was having it altered into commodious stores so this is a clue that he was no longer using the old Kilbourn house as a residence. (Annual Report of the Commerce, Manufactures, Public Improvements and Railroad System of Milwaukee for the Year 1856: Milwaukee: Daily Sentinel Steam Press, 1857, page 9; Milwaukee City Directories; Milwaukee Sentinel 1868 March 16 page 1 column 5 and Milwaukee Sentinel 1871 October 23 page 4 column 3)

In addition to the city property, Jacob was said to have owned some 1400 acres of suburban property at the time of his death. One of Jacob's more lucrative ventures was the distillery he operated on his property in the Town of Lake in Section 18.

NUNNEMACHER OWNERSHIP TOWN OF LAKE December 24, 1853 through November 28, 1876

Nunnemacher first ventured into Section 18 in the Town of Lake in 1853. This Section is today bounded by South 20th Street, South 27th Street, West Morgan Avenue and West Howard Avenue. Jacob purchased 120 acres from Dennis S. and Hetty Cady on December 24th that year at a cost of $4,000. He also assumed an existing mortgage of $2,000. Jacob was the fourth owner of this land at the time of purchase. His ownership encompassed the south three quarters of the Southwest Quarter of Section 18. (Deeds volume 40 page 398) He must have immediately begun making improvements. Descendent Harry Nunnemacher indicates that Jacob was a good businessman and that getting his business up and running at the farm would have taken precedent over building a fine house. (Conversation with Harry Nunnemacher July 9 and 11, 2014)

It is not known for certain when the large Italianate style house that is the subject of this nomination was built. Family history relates that Jacob Nunnemacher built his Town of Lake residence in 1856. There are no records of an architect. It is a substantial cream brick building and was a very full blown example of the style for this time. Not many Italianate residences were being built at this time locally. As historic documents and photos show it was more common to see examples of the Greek Revival or, the by now, more old-fashioned Federal Style being constructed in this decade before the Civil War. One notable example of the Italianate Style during this decade was the large Villa Uhrig, built as a summer home for St. Louis brewer Franz Joseph Uhrig in 1856 and designed by architects Mygatt and Schmidtner. It still stands today at 1724 North 34th Street. An associate of Jacob's, Leopold Wirth said years later that Jacob had lived on his farm since before the war. A friend of 30 years, General Winkler, stated also in later years that he was not sure when Jacob moved to the farm. City directories show Jacob living in the old Byron Kilbourn house, in Milwaukee, from 1868 through 1871. It seems likely that Jacob used the Town of Lake residence as a summer or periodic retreat in the early years and afterwards came to live there on a permanent basis. (Milwaukee Sentinel 1876 March 29 page 2 column 2 and March 30 page 2 column 2; E-mail correspondence and conversations with Harry Nunnemacher July 9, 10,11, 2014)

ITALIANATE STYLE

The Italianate Style is characterized in its early phases by a blocky cubic form with hip roof, and sometimes, but not always, a front pediment. The eaves are wide and feature brackets that

could be modest in form or elaborate with scroll sawn detail and drop finials. Often the façade features a center projecting bay with main entry. Windows are symmetrically arranged about this entry and could be rectangular, segmentally arched or fully arched in form. Often there is a combination of window types and sometimes the center window of the second story is either larger or displays more or different ornamental detail. In this early period, windows of the first story often extend from floor to ceiling and are either casement/French door type (opening in) or sash (upward moving). In either instance the windows are meant to allow access to a porch or balcony. Porches can extend across the full façade or just extend across the entry bay. Porch posts typically rest on plinths and are arranged in pairs with abstract detail and chamfered corners. Often there is a prominent cupola centered on the roof, not just an ornamental detail but a way to help with the ventilation of the house. Some cupolas on more expensive houses were large enough for seating areas and functioned almost like small rooms. Entry doors could be paired and were centered in a wide opening. Sometimes the earlier form of single entry door was used and framed with sidelights and a transom. Cladding material included brick, clapboards or even stone. The Italianate Style was popular across the country from the 1830s/1840s through the 1880s.

The Wisconsin State Historic Preservation Office has 3,729 examples of the style identified in state-wide surveys in its Architecture and History Inventory. The style appears from the 1850s through the 1880s in Wisconsin with a few very late examples showing up in the less urban portions of the state. Some of the examples from outside Milwaukee include the Samuel A. Pond House at 101 West Main Street in Albany (1855) the Charles H. Parker House at 231 Roosevelt Street in Beloit (1856), the Abraham Briggs Bowen House at 1010 Bayshore Drive in Oshkosh (1856), the Elisha Morrow House at 345 S. Adams Street in Green Bay (1857), the George N. Lyman House (Republican House) at 303 Blackburn Street in Ripon (1857), and R. A. Loveland House at 220 S. Jackson Street in Janesville (1861),

Some examples exhibit the synthesis of the Italianate into earlier forms like the Greek Revival as at the Dr. M. N. Barber House at 419 Washington Street in Watertown (1855). Some show later alterations that included Gothic or Queen Anne Style details.

Milwaukee examples from the 1850s in addition to Villa Uhrig mentioned above include the house in the Brewers Hill Historic District at 1824 North 2nd Street (1855), and the George W. Peckham House at 1029 North Marshall Street (1855 with later alterations).

Another form of the Italianate was the Italianate Villa that was a more rambling, asymmetrical form with intersecting gable roofed wings and tall towers along with projecting bays. Examples of these in Milwaukee appear to have been constructed chiefly in the 1870s.

THE DISTILLERY AND FARM

While the day-to-day activity of the Nunnemacher estate may never be known in detail, fragments about the operations and about the character of Jacob and his sons are revealed in the accounts of numerous witnesses who testified in the Whisky Ring trial to be discussed later in the report. There is often contradictory information but enough consistency to give a general picture of life on the estate.

It is known that Jacob or “Jake” or “the old man” as he was called, constructed a distillery on the property very soon after acquiring his property. There might be two reasons to account for this. Descendent Harry Nunnemacher said that distilling was a natural outcome for Jacob. His father had grown grapes in the old country so Jacob was familiar with distilling and it also made sense to get two products out of a summer’s crop, grain that went to the distillery and the distilling leftovers or slops that got fed to the cattle. Tax rolls for the Town of Lake show the property was valued at $300 for tax purposes in 1853 when Jacob purchased the land and

jumped to $900 by 1855. (Tax rolls are missing for 1854) To corroborate this information, a November 14, 1855 Milwaukee Sentinel article reported that Nunnemacher and Hyer's distillery on the Kilbourn Road in the Town of Lake was burned to the ground. The loss was estimated at $8,000 and the property was uninsured. A little boy carrying a candle came too close to the still and the vapors ignited. He managed to escape. Son Rudolph Nunnemacher also indicated the distillery, they called the Kinnickinnic, was built in 1855 and burned down and rebuilt in 1857. (Milwaukee Sentinel 1855 November 14 page 3 column 1, and 1876 April 4 page 2 column 2; Conversation with Harry Nunnemacher July 11, 2014)

The distillery was said to have four fermenting tubs/tanks and employed up to 25 men. It was said to have had the largest still in the district outside of the Menomonee Distillery in the Menomonee Valley. The Menomonee was run by Jacob's son Herman in certain years. (Milwaukee Sentinel 1876 March 25 page 5 column 2 and Milwaukee Sentinel 1876 April 5 page 2 column 1; Testimony of H. A. Valentine Milwaukee Sentinel 1876 March 29 page 2 column 1) Water to cool the tanks came from a creek that fed a cistern. The cistern supplied the tanks and was pumped dry twice a day due to the constant use. An artesian well was in the process of being drilled in 1876. (Testimony August Lew Milwaukee Sentinel 1876 Apr 1 page 3 column 2)

Tax Roll evaluation in the 1850s shows steady increases with the only decrease following the financial panic of 1857: 1856 ($1,600), 1857 ($4,200), 1858 ($2,500), 1859 ($5,040), 1861 ($7,600). Since the assessments exceeded neighboring agricultural land it is clear that the distillery was a big part of the operations on the estate. (Town of Lake tax rolls)

In addition to the distillery, the property served as a full working farm. Grain was grown and harvested; livestock was raised, fattened and sent to slaughter. By the 1870s there were said to be somewhere around 25 to 30 men at the farm. Most of the workers were said to Pomeranians or Mecklenburgers. It was also thought that Jacob sub-let part of the land. A postcard from the 20th century with the name Evergreen Camp shows an overview of the property from an undated period. The image of the grounds was likely made during the period of Jacob's ownership. The overview image shows the house, the distillery with smoke stacks, and numerous barns and outbuildings. Insets show a long row of cattle feeding inside a building and stacks of barrels in the warehouse. The distillery's office is given at the corner of E. Water and Oneida Streets, today's North Water and East Wells Streets. We do know there was a mill on the property to grind grain for the distillery and that there were stables. The stables were estimated to be 30 to 40 feet from the distillery. The house was said to be 100 feet from the stables and 800 feet from the distillery.

We also know that distillery workers and probably farm hands were housed and fed on the grounds and as late as 1932, a dining hall building was said to have still been standing. There is some confusing information about how the workers were fed. Some accounts said that the government inspectors and other distillery workers took their meals or "board" at Jacob's house but then slept elsewhere on the grounds. It does seem unlikely that average working hands would dine in the big house, particularly when a dedicated, wooden dining hall with call bell was known to be part of the property. Perhaps only the government workers ate with Jacob since they were of higher status. ("A Pioneer Distillery Is Now a Tourist Camp", Milwaukee Journal, Sunday July 31, 1932; Milwaukee Sentinel Thursday 1875 October 21 page 2 column 1; Conversation with Harry Nunnemacher July 11, 2014; Testimony of W. H. Roddis Milwaukee Sentinel 1876 March 25, page 5 column 2; testimony of George Walther Milwaukee Sentinel 1876 March 27 page 2 column 2)

Livestock was an important part of the farm. In the early years the livestock went to Jacob's meat market. He is said to have made annual fall trips to Texas to buy several carloads of steers. There were reported anywhere from 300 to 700 head of cattle and from 400 to 800 hogs and pigs on the property at different times. They were housed in four cattle barns and out in various pens on the grounds. ("A Pioneer Distillery is Now a Tourist Camp", Milwaukee Journal,

Sunday July 31, 1931; Testimony of John Golding Milwaukee Sentinel 1875 October 21 page 2 column 1; Testimony of H. A. Valentine Milwaukee Sentinel 1876 March 29 page 2 column 1; Testimony of August Lew Milwaukee Sentinel 1876 April 1 page 3 column2; Testimony of Albert Kollatz Milwaukee Sentinel 1876 April 3 page 2 column1; Testimony of Festus Stone Milwaukee Sentinel 1876 April 4 page 2 column1; Testimony of Christian Moeller Milwaukee Sentinel 1876 April 4 page 2 column1)

The livestock was fed the slops or leftovers from the fermenting process and fattened up before sent to slaughter. Other nearby farmers were known to have purchased the slops for feed as well. Although the slops mostly went to feed cattle, it appears that some was allowed to run off. Residents along Root Creek complained of the pollution; the creek ran only 25 to 30 feet north of the distillery. (Milwaukee Sentinel 1876 April 1 page 3 column1 and April 4 page 2 column 2; "A Pioneer Distillery Is Now a Tourist Camp", Milwaukee Journal, Sunday July 31, 1932;)

In this era before environmental protection, slops and cattle refuse were routinely flushed into waterways at other locations. Jacob's son Hermann and his partner Mr. Wirth got into difficulties with Milwaukee's Board of Health when their distillery in the Menomonee Valley was cited along with other businesses for polluting the Burnham Canal in the valley. Remediation included shipping the slops by schooner and dumping the waste into Lake Michigan and dredging the canal. (Milwaukee Sentinel 1874 June 3 page 8 column 1 and June 19 page 8 column 1)

1860s

The 1860s were a time of prosperity for Jacob, despite the Civil War, but also saw the beginning of difficulties with the Federal government over taxes as the decade advanced.

On October 28, 1862, Jacob expanded his property in Section 18 by purchasing 200 addition acres directly north of his original holdings. This meant he now owned all of the property fronting Kilbourn Road / South 27th Street between today's Morgan and Howard Avenues. The seller was Charlotte Quentin who was the legatee of John Christian Charles Quentin, deceased. Jacob paid $9,000 for the property and assumed an $8,000 existing mortgage on the land. Those 200 acres were valued at $1,300 for tax purposes. There is no mention in the deed of buildings, livestock or crops but it is assumed that the land was farmed and would be used for crops or else heavily wooded as was mentioned in some recollections about this part of the Town of Lake. Jacob's original 120 acres were valued at $7,600, evidence of the successful distilling operation. In this year Jacob's personal property was valued at $3,230, the highest in all of the Town of Lake. (Deeds volume 73 page 616, Town of Lake Tax Rolls 1862)

Tax rolls for the combined properties show: 1863 ($17,600), 1864 ($17,600), 1865 ($16,456), 1866 ($16,456). The original acreage on which the distillery stood, however, was still valued at more than twice his new purchase. (Town of Lake Tax Rolls 1863-1866)

On March 2, 1866 Jacob purchased the half interest of P. B. Peckham in the northeast quarter of Section 18. Jacob soon after purchased the other half interest in the northeast quarter from T. Tobin on June 5, 1866. This amounted to an additional 160 acres that fronts Morgan Avenue west of South 20th Street. Jacob now owned fully three fourths of the entire Section 18. His combined 480 acres are valued at $ 19, 440 for tax purposes with his original parcel still holding the highest value. This completed his purchases in Section 18. We do know from later deeds he owned property elsewhere in suburban Milwaukee. (Deeds volume 94 page 299, volume 94 page 529)

THE WHISKY RING PART I

While the 18th century saw the Whiskey Rebellion, the 19th century witnessed the Whisky Ring. Taxation of alcohol products and especially spirits was one of the most important sources of

revenue for the Federal government in the days before income taxes. Taxation on spirits was increased in 1862 to help fund the war and it is said that within a couple of years, the liquor taxes accounted for one-third of the Federal revenue. There were government employees examining every phase of the distilling and distribution process to make sure producers were giving their share to the government. The system was easily corrupted as each step of the process was open to bribery from distillers to storekeeper, gaugers, rectifiers and Internal Revenue agents. The corruption was said to be a widespread and "normal" part of doing business. It became a national scandal that went right to President Grant's office.

Federal expenses due to the Civil War were enormous and the liquor taxes were "raised very high, in some cases to eight times the price of the liquor." While the crisis broke open with a series of raids in 1875, there was also activity in the years preceding that time. (Web Site www.infoplease.com/encyclopedia/history/whiskey-ring.html and Web Site http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Whiskey_Ring, accessed July 10, 2014)

An example of this pre-1870s activity involved Jacob Nunnemacher in the later years of the 1860s. The Milwaukee Sentinel reported on extensive revenue frauds on August 15, 1867 and indicated that there was sufficient evidence for the government to seize the "extensive distillery" of Jacob Nunnemacher near the city limits as well as the refinery of George Winner & Co. on West Water Street. The value of the seizures was said to be the largest yet at $150,000 and that the amount of the fraud was not specifically known but was probably in the range of $75,000 to $80,000. The following month, on September 6, 1867, Nunnemacher and Winner gave bonds so that their property could be released and on September 16 the following year the paper said the distilleries of O'Neill and Nunnemacher were "set to running yesterday." (Milwaukee Sentinel 1867 August 15 page 1 column 4 and September 6 page 1 column 4 and Milwaukee Sentinel 1868 September 16 page 1 column 4)

THE 1870S

Recovering from his brush with the law, Jacob undertook an expansion of the distillery building in 1870 by constructing a substantial two-story brick addition to the east and north sides of the building. The east wing measured 50 by 60 feet and housed the engines. There were no partitions between the engines and the distillery proper. The fermenting room was located in the north wing a portion of which was a government bonded warehouse. The stills were situated in the northeast corner of the old building in full view of the engine room whose floor was some feet lower than the distillery space. (Testimony of H. A. Valentine Milwaukee Sentinel 1876 March 29 page 2 column1)

But catastrophe struck Jacob's distillery once again. An explosion rocked the building on January 1, 1874 and was thought initially to have been caused by a boiler explosion. Damage included the collapse of the engine room walls, the roof and the iron smokestacks. The two foot thick north partition wall was "forced" into the fermenting room and the north portion of that roof was threatening to fall in. Jacob had several injured men taken to the boarding house on the estate to await medical assistance. The still itself had been the cause of the disaster. It was said to be thirty feet in height with four compartments. Its complete destruction could not allow for an assessment of cause. Damages were estimated at around $15,000, the entire amount to be burdened by Jacob since his sons Herman and Robert were said to be only operating the distillery. The paper reported that the distillery would soon be in running order as Jacob had 500 cattle that fed mostly on the slops from the distilling process so he was motivated to do repairs as soon as possible. He had already left for Chicago to buy a replacement still by the time of the article. The three men injured in the blast all recovered. (Milwaukee Sentinel 1874 Saturday January 3 page 8 column 3) Rebuilding may have been still in progress a year later. The Sentinel reported that Jacob had thilmanized 70,000 feet of lumber for "his new distillery" on April 30, 1875. (Milwaukee Sentinel 1875 April 30 page 8 column 2). This process, named after Waldemar Thilmany, impregnated wood with sulphate of copper and chloride of barium. It

made wood decay resistant and was one process that was being used for wooden blocks used in street paving.

It is known from later accounts that Milwaukee architect Henry Messmer worked on the design of the distillery. He said that a copy of the plans was hanging in the office and that when changes were made he made a supplement to the plans. Messmer worked under the orders of Jacob's son Robert. We do know Messmer did work for Jacob's son Herman in 1874 when Herman and Wirth's Menomonee Brewery was being rebuilt or altered in the Menomonee Valley. Messmer has started his career in Milwaukee in 1873 and was a Swiss native like Jacob. (Milwaukee Sentinel 1874 April 18 page 8 column 3 and 1876 April 5 page 2 column 2)

THE WHISKEY RING PART II

Corruption in the nationwide distilling industry had reached a high point by 1875. After years of surveillance by the Internal Revenue Department and officers of the Secret Service, simultaneous surprise raids were carried out in multiple cities on May 10, 1875. Those cities included Milwaukee, Peoria, Chicago, St. Louis, and Cincinnati among others. Seizures of premises were the result of watching for anything suspicious in the way of unpaid taxes, refilling of barrels and "the hundred and one little tricks and frauds of the trade, of which the virtuous reader is happily ignorant." Seized in the Milwaukee were the rectifying house of A. Schoenfeld, the Menomonee Distillery valued at $15,000 (now owned by Robert Kiewert), Jacob Nunnemacher's Kinnickinnic Distillery valued at $15,000, Thomas O'Neill's distillery in the Town of Lake valued at $10,000, Louis Rindskopf's distillery Town of Lake valued at $20,000, Charles Grau's Distillery Town of Milwaukee valued at $10,000 F. Bergenthal's distillery Town of Milwaukee valued at $10,000 and Rindskopf Brothers' rectifying house valued at $15,000. It was speculated that nearly all the other Milwaukee area distillers and rectifiers would also be seized as well. (Milwaukee Sentinel 1875 May 11 page 1 column 3) Distillers were mostly involved in "adjusting " the amount of grain used, refilling barrels but only counting them once and moving barrels to unsanctioned warehouses to avoid being counted.

Government seizure of records and product was not a benign activity and violence of the type seen in the prohibition-era drama The Untouchables was common. At Jacob's distillery, a government agent was posted to protect the distillery's records. Five men challenged the agent and demanded the papers. At this point the agent "drew a revolver, and told them that the first man who took another step would have the top of his head blown off." Two of other men pulled revolvers and threatened to shoot the agent. Eventually the men went off but later had the secret service agent arrested by local authorities. The unnamed men eventually returned to remove the books and any proof of the distillery's activities. At the Menomonee Distillery a similar situation ensued with agents having to force their way into the premise at gunpoint. Other premises were broken into by agents and owners complained that they would not have been refused admittance if they had just asked. (Milwaukee Sentinel 1875 May 11 page 1 column 3)

Jacob Nunnemacher's case began in the fall of 1875 and resumed in the spring of 1876. His testimony was taken on October 20, 1875. In his testimony he stated he had run a distillery since 1852 [although the deeds show he did not acquire his property until the end of December 1853]. He also stated that he had 1,000 acres of land but he personally had done only farming and not distilling since 1874. The crux of the case involved whether or not he did indeed lease the distillery to his sons Robert and Herman and how much he knew of their goings on. Many of the former workers and government agents, who were guilty of taking kick-backs, testified about the under reporting and removal of barrels at Nunnemacher's premises. Robert Nunnemacher had kept the books and paid employees and Herman Nunnemacher had managed the operations. Robert lived on the estate at this time while Herman lived in the city. (Testimony of John E. Fitzgerald Milwaukee Sentinel March 24 page 2 column 1)

Numerous witnesses were called in the spring of 1876, and the case received at least two to three columns in the Sentinel on a daily basis. On March 29, 1876 one of the headlines read "The Trial of Jacob Nunnemacher Dragging its Slow Length Along." Another read "The Tedious Trial of Jacob Nunnemacher Drawing to a Close." (Milwaukee Sentinel 1876 March 29 page 2 column 1 and April 11 page 2 column 1)

The prosecuting attorney Mr. McKenney, summed up to the jury by saying that whether or not Jacob had had a pecuniary interest in the distillery, if he rented teams to the managers (his sons) and was aware of what was going on, he was guilty. It would have been difficult for Jacob not to have known what was going on so close to his residence. He also pointed out that many of the fellow distillers called to testify, and also indicted, had already pleaded guilty to defrauding the government.

The Sentinel reported that the jury came in with a verdict of not guilty on three counts (illicit removal of spirits) and guilty on the count of conspiracy to defraud the government. "The defendant seemed surprised at the verdict, but bore it with his usual equanimity."(Milwaukee Sentinel 1876 April 12 page 2 column 1)

Although Jacob's attorney asked for a new trial, that was denied. While awaiting the court's review it was reported that President Grant had pardoned an ex-gauger (government employee) jailed at Waupun.

Leniency in Jacob's sentencing was requested due to an unspecified medical condition that would worsen with imprisonment. The prominent physicians H. Nauman, E. B. Wolcott and Alfred S. Spearman submitted a letter on his behalf citing his poor health.

Judge Dyer sentenced Jacob to five months imprisonment in the County jail and a fine of $10,000. "Mr. Nunnemacher took his sentence like a little man and sat down with a sigh of relief." (Milwaukee Sentinel 1876 April 12 page 2 column 1; April 13 page 2column 1; April 26 page 1 column 6; May 26 page 4 column 4; May 24 page 3 column 1; May 27 page 8 column 4; May 30 page 4 column 4; June 13 page 2 column 1)

Jacob was incarcerated and the press reported that he celebrated his 58th birthday in jail. (Milwaukee Sentinel 1876 June 23 page 8 column 2) His pardon, from President Grant, arrived on July 31, 1876 after he had been in jail seven weeks. Old age and feeble health had been cited as reasons for the pardon. Jacob was accompanied out of prison by his sons Rudolph, Jake Jr., and Robert. He was reported as working on the fall harvest at his farm in the Town of Lake a few days later. He later spent time out east and visited the Centennial Exposition. (Milwaukee Sentinel 1876 July 31 page 8 column 1 and August 1 page 4 column 6)

Other pardons were expected for the many Milwaukee distillers and rectifiers indicted. President Grant's support of the whisky investigations began to wane, however, when his private secretary General Orville E. Babcock was indicted as a member of the ring.

Interestingly, during the trial, sons Herman and Robert were in Europe and young son Jake was in Hot Springs due to his inflammatory rheumatism. Son Rudolph said they were avoiding trial. Three of the four sons had judgments entered against them.

Robert eventually showed up in court to plead guilty. He was 21 years old and most of the frauds had taken place when he was a minor. Judge Dyer sentenced him to one day's imprisonment and a fine of $10,000. "Robert smiled a happy smile and went to the Marshal's office, where he signed a check for the amount of his fine. His imprisonment was reduced to three hours, which he spent in the Marshal's office. At 4 P.M. he was a free citizen." (Milwaukee Sentinel 1876 July 10 page 2 column 1)

"The great whisky exile and traveler in foreign lands, Herman Nunnemacher, came voluntarily into the United States Court yesterday, and gave himself up to be dealt with by outraged justice." A warrant for Herman had been issued in 1875 but he was not found and there were reports of him in Europe, Detroit and then at the Centennial [exposition]. It was said he was there to throw himself at the mercy of the court and his attorney stated that Herman was certainly less guilty than some of the other prominent men who received light or no punishment. Herman was sentenced to three months in jail and a fine of $2,500 on October 2, 1876. A request to trade a larger fine for the prison sentence was turned down. Herman was later released on October 27th after a successful petition by physicians who asked that he be released to tend to his father Jacob. Jacob was said to be suffering from inflammation of the brain, a condition made worse by his imprisonment. Herman paid his fine and was released. (Milwaukee Sentinel 1876 October 3 page 8 column 1;October 13 page 8 column 2; October 28 page 8 column 1)

Nunnemacher descendent Harry Nunnemacher suggests that Herman and Robert may have gone to Europe to join and look after their mother and sister who were on the continent at that time. It is possible that the sons counted on their father's good name to escape conviction and did not see the need to stand by him during the scandal. The above reports and sentencing seem to discount that the European trip was primarily to care for his mother and sister. (Conversation with Harry Nunnemacher July 11, 2014)

As an aside, one of the more interesting things to come out of the long trial was the discovery of a sinister plot to destroy government records. Milwaukee distillers had actually considered a scheme to destroy records for the case by blowing up the Newhall House Hotel and the Customs House. Chicago men proposed the deal, originally asking $100,000 for their efforts. After a series of meetings they agreed to drop their price to $30,000 but the Milwaukee men decided to drop the matter. (Milwaukee Sentinel 1876 February 4, page 4 column 5)

Jacob's spirits were said to have been shattered by the experience of the trial and imprisonment. The traveling did not help and he grew increasingly weaker in the fall, dying on November 28, 1876. The Sentinel referred to him as the "butcher millionaire." His wife and daughter, age 16, were not able to return home from Europe in time before his death. Burial took place from the Town of Lake home and the procession proceeded to the family burial plot in Forest Home Cemetery. It does not appear that religious services were held despite the fact that Jacob was Catholic and good friends with Archbishop Henni, also a native of Switzerland. Pall bearers included George Burnham, John Black, Nathan Pereles, Ferdinand Kuehn, William H. Lindwurm, Timothy Dore, Christian Ott and M. Von Baumbach. The eulogy was delivered by George Erdmann, former editor of The Herold. A bust of the late butcher millionaire was commissioned from sculptor Lohr in December. (Milwaukee Sentinel 1876 November 29, and 1876 December 9 page 8 column 2 and December 14, page 8 column 1 and December 18 page 8 column 3)

TRIMBORN OWNERSHIP FEBRUARY 28, 1877 TO SEPTEMBER 2, 1879

On October 16, 1876, shortly before Jacob became critically ill, he and his wife Catherina deeded their property in Section 18 along with property in Section 13 to Friederich Vogel of Milwaukee. Son Rudolph signed the document on behalf of his mother who was in Europe at the time. A day before Jacob's death, Vogel quit claimed the 400 acres in Section 18 to Rudolph Nunnemacher along with 70 acres in Section 13. The Sentinel reported that Jacob had not left a will but provided Rudolph with instructions on how the property was to be divided. Since daughter Marie was only 16 years of age it was Jacob's wish that the property would remain undivided until she reached her majority and that Rudolph would manage it. It was planned that Jacob's widow, daughter and youngest son Robert remain on their farm. It was

estimated that Jacob's city real estate was worth from one to three million dollars. (Milwaukee Sentinel 1877 May 21 page 3 column 2)

Some of the forecasted plans did not take place. It was reported that Mrs. Nunnemacher and her daughter, who had returned from the continent when Jacob died, were going back to Europe to stay in 1877. Numerous deed transactions between the various family members took place in January 1877 and on February 28, 1877, Rudolph and Pauline Nunnemacher sold Jacob's original 120 acres to Werner Trimborn for $30,000. (Deeds volume 151 page 502)

Trimborn was a highly respected pioneer of Milwaukee who was noted for his lime kilns and real estate holdings. Newspapers reported that the old Nunnemacher distillery had been leased again and that the Trimborns were outfitting it with an alcohol still, "the first in this district…to make finished goods." In January 1879 the distillery (referred to variously as Nunnemacher's or Kinnickinnic) was said to be in operation with Conrad Meiser in charge. (Milwaukee Sentinel 1878 October 14 page 8 column 2, October 16 page 8 column 3, and 1879 January 9 page 8 column 3)

Trimborn age 77, died on Wednesday July 30, 1879 following an illness of several months. Two months later, it was reported that the Trimborn heirs sold the "old Nunnemacher distillery out on the Kilbourn Road" to Henry Manschot for $30,000, the price paid by Trimborn. The article stated of the 120 acres sold, about three quarter was under cultivation. (Milwaukee Sentinel July 31 page 8 column 2 and September 1 page 8 column 2; Deeds volume 160 page 135)

HENRY A MANSCHOTT OWNERSHIP SEPTEMBER 2, 1879 TO OCTOBER 24, 1879

Henry Manschot had been the person who had taken over Jacob's portion of the original meat market. Manschot was in partnership with a Mr. Elser but dissolved this partnership when he purchased the old Nunnemacher estate. The Sentinel reported that Manschot retired to conduct his distillery while Elser would remain in charge of the market. (Milwaukee Sentinel 1879 September 18 page 8 column 4)

J. HERMANN RENDERING COMPANY / MILWAUKEE RENDERING COMPANY OCTOBER 24, 1879 TO OCTOBER 1, 1883

It is not clear what motivated Manschot to quit claim his 120 acres to the Joseph Hermann Rendering Company on October 24, 1879 just a month after his purchase. The deed indicates it contains all the stock [livestock] and personal property on the premises. If the newspapers were correct, Manschot might have run the distillery but turned over the cattle and livestock to the rendering firm. (Deeds volume 162 page 332)

The rendering company had come under the scrutiny of the Board of Health for offensive odors emanating from its glue works a mile south of the city limits. The Superintendent of Forest Home Cemetery had filed the complaint. The glue works soon was fitted up with condensers. The Hermann Rendering Company was said to have entered into a contract with Plankinton & Armour to render animals for them. In December 1881, the company renamed itself as the Milwaukee Rendering Company and Fred Vogel Jr. was elected president and Charles F. Pfister was elected secretary. Since Pfister and Vogel were involved in the largest tannery in the city, it seems quite likely that cattle and possibly hogs were still being raised on the old Nunnemacher grounds. (Milwaukee Sentinel 1878 March 28 page 2 column 6, March 27 page 8 column 3, and 1881 December 18 page 2 column 1 and December 23 page 7 column 1)

F. F. REIDEL OCTOBER 1, 1883 TO DECEMBER 30 1911

On October 1, 1883 Milwaukee Rendering Company sold the 120 acres to F. F. Riedel "together with all the buildings thereon", for $20,000 subject to an unpaid mortgage from Werner Trimborn. It is known that the property stayed a farm during the ownership of the Riedels. It is likely that any distilling had been abandoned during their ownership. Riedel had been one of the founders of the German-American Bank. (Conversations with Harry Nunnemacher July 9, 10, 11, 2014; Obituary of Mrs. Marie Retzer Milwaukee Journal Saturday November 28, 1936)

By the late 1880s, Riedel began selling off portions of the old Nunnemacher estate to three individuals: J. E. Freytag and wife (10 acres 1888), C. A. Fink and W. A. Meyer (10 acres 1889) and S. M. Green (80 ½ acres 1890). By 1891 Riedel was left with 19 ½ acres. (Deeds volume 246 page 407; volume 251 page 8; volume 270 Page 364)

WALTER STENZ DECEMBER 30, 1911 TO MAY 1, 1931

F. F. Reidel's widow Mathilda and children and heirs Lillie Kuehn, Martha Riedel, Marie Retzer, Mathilda Retzer, Frank A. Riedel and wife and Jennie Riedel (widow of Robert Riedel, deceased) sold the 19 ½ acres to Walter Stenz on December 30, 1911 for $785.71

Walter Stenz was a mail carrier who retired after 37 years of service around 1925. It is possible that he also used the property for farming or perhaps leased out the land. The 1924 personal property tax roll for the Town of Lake shows that Walter had 2 horses or mules, 2 cattle, 1 automobile and one wagon. Walter's wife Emily died in March 1941 at the age of 75. Her obituary states she and her family had moved to the "old Nunnemacher homestead" in 1912 and it was there she died. However, deeds indicate there was another house to the south of the old Nunnemacher house and the 1940 census shows her at 3782 South 27th Street living with her husband Walter and daughter Alva A. Schnetz and two grandchildren. The old Nunnemacher House was addresses at 3774 South 27th Street.

BRIDGET CZERWINSKI / DAUGHTER LOUISE NALENCE MAY 1, 1931 TO JANUARY 16, 1947

On May 1, 1931 the Stenz's transferred a small portion of their land to Bridget Czerwinski. The parcel is described as 199 feet by 290 feet (1.33 acres) at the northwest corner of the southwest quarter of section 18. The Stenz's retained right to the water from the artesian well on the premises. It is possible that this parcel held the Italianate house and that the reference to Emily Stanz dying at the homestead in 1941 referred to the larger parcel of land. The warranty deed goes on to state that the seller reserves the use and occupancy of the real estate and all rentals and income. From the time of the sale through 1936, Czerwinski's small parcel had twice the value of improvements of the Stenz's larger holdings. (Town of Lake Tax Rolls 1933 through 1936; Deeds volume 2734 page 140)

This transfer is very close in time with an article in the Milwaukee Journal dated July 31, 1932 with the headline "A Pioneer Distillery Is Now a Tourist Camp." Many articles like this are written to document changes that are occurring to a familiar landmark. The timing seems too coincidental. The article relates history of Jacob Nunnemacher from the recollections of Jacob's former bookkeeper, Henry Manschot. Without additional research it is not known whether this person is the son of the H. A. Manschot who owned the property earlier or was the same person who had once owned it. He was satisfied that Jacob was an honest man although graft and corruption was widespread since the tax on whiskey was greater than the amount for which it could be made and sold. Interestingly, many of the old buildings were still

standing in 1932, including the distillery, the dining hall, which had been moved and the fine old house "which still is in splendid condition." The four cattle barns were gone.

The 1940 census shows a Lewis J. Czerwinski with a Bridget as his wife living in the Town of Lake. It seems likely that they were the couple that built the small log cabins to the north and rear to take advantage of the tourist trade that utilized Highway 41. Another possibility is that the Stenz's installed the tourist cabins and wanted to turn them over to another owner.

Automobile travel picked up considerably with the advent of more affordable vehicles and better roads. Numerous motels located along Highway 41. This may have been one of the earliest. These early tourist camps provided water, restrooms and a place to sleep and tourists did not have to camp out in farmers' fields or woods.

On January 16, 1947 the Czerwinski's daughter Louise Nalence quit claimed the property to her father, whose name is now Louis J. Lewis. Louise is listed as Bridget Lewis' only child and heir. In the UWM archives, the photo collection of Dennis Wierzba shows the interior of the house, the north front parlor, as a bar decorated with knotty pine paneling. It states that Louis J. Lewis was the owner. The photo is undated.

E. J. VANDEN WILDENBERG SEPTEMBER 11, 1954 AND JUNE 23, 1958 TO PRESENT

Interestingly, rather than Louis J. Lewis selling the property that is the subject of this nomination, various members of the Stenz family (Arthur J. Stanz and his wife Caroline, W. Raymond Stenz and his wife Evelyn, Irma Wasachek and Alva A.Schnetz) sell the parcel on land contract on April 15, 1954 to Edward J.Vanden Wildenberg for $6,000 with $500 due at signing and the balance to be paid in monthly installments. Conditions on the sale include the installation of a 60 inch high cyclone fence on the south property line with a planting screen "as long as the premises are used as a trailer camp" and that no trailer or outbuilding could be closer than 10 feet to the property line. It may be that Wildenberg had already been managing the premises and replaced the cabins with trailers or else was planning for trailers at this point in time. It is said that the cabins were eventually sold off and some were hauled away to serve as cottages elsewhere. It appears that the cabins may have been gone by the time of this deed. (Deeds volume 3355 page 588; Conversation with Harry Nunnemacher on July 10, 2014)

It appears that Wildenberg satisfied his land contract in 1958. He and his descendants ran the trailer camp on the site, had rooms for rent in the house and also continued the first story bar. The bar was relocated from the north parlor into the south parlor. In the Wierzba photos at the UWM archives, the earlier tavern run by Louis J. Lewis in the north parlor shows a corner of the window with its original pelmet. This feature is now gone. Most of today's appearance probably occurred during the Wildenberg years. (Deeds volume 3727 page 144).

The city of Milwaukee acquired the property on tax deed on August 16, 2013 and is now the owner. Relocating the occupants of the trailers and the tenants in the house has just recently been completed. Alderman Witkowski has requested that this building be preserved.

VII. SIGNIFICANCE

The Jacob Nunnemacher Estate is architecturally significant as one of the city's earlier Italianate buildings, built in 1856, and one of only a couple of extant examples of the country estates that once characterized the open lands around the growing metropolis of Milwaukee. One other example, comparable to the Nunnemacher Estate, is Villa Uhrig located at 1727 North 34th Street. Villa Uhrig was built as a summer home in 1856 and fronted the Lisbon Plank Road, a major roadway out of Milwaukee. Villa Uhrig is locally designated. Such homes took advantage of the proximity of Milwaukee and its commercial and cultural offerings yet were

far enough away from the city to allow the owners some respite from urban bustle. Most all of such country houses were demolished as development swept outward from Milwaukee's core.

The Italianate Style began to show up in Wisconsin in the 1850s but did not become widespread until the late 1860s. In the early decades there was often the incorporation of Italianate details with older styles such as the Greek Revival or the Federal. The Nunnemacher Estate / Wildenberg Hotel is an exceptionally full-blown example of the style, clearly the work of a master architect. Sharing traits with other Italianate houses of the 1850s are the blocky cubic form with hip roof, wide eaves, brackets, projecting center bay, full length front casement /French windows on the first story and a cupola. Neither family history nor the local papers of the day document who the designer was.

Although the Nunnemacher Estate / Wildenberg Hotel has been altered over time, it retains its original form, materials, roofline, and brackets as well as some interior features. It is recognizable as an Italianate residence and its scale is broader than examples in the city center. This house remains one of the oldest structures in the southwest part of the city. Alterations to the exterior are reversible.

The property is also significant for its association with Jacob Nunnemacher who was an important figure in Milwaukee's early years. He came to Milwaukee having trained as a butcher in the old country. He soon opened his first meat market and although he did not grow into a meat packing giant of the scale of Frederick Layton or Philip Armour or John Plankinton, Nunnemacher parleyed his earnings into significant real estate holdings. He was responsible for the Nunnemacher Grand Opera House, one location for the performances of German language theater. He reclaimed land along the Milwaukee River so that buildings could be constructed on what is now East Wells street between North Water Street and the Milwaukee River.

Nunnemacher’s work as a distiller, running the second largest operation in the Milwaukee area, showed his skill in managing a large estate where grain raised went into the distillery, the trees went to fire the tubs and then the leavings or slops were fed the cattle for his meat market. Nunnemacher’s conviction and jail sentence for whisky tax fraud during the nation-wide Whisky Ring scandal surprised Milwaukeeans and even years later he is associated with the Whisly Ring due to his convection and jail sentence. Even after his death, by which time he was considered one of the richest men in the state, the distillery continued to be called Nunnemacher’s although it was run by other owners. Jacob Nunnemacher started a dynasty, if you will, with sons Herman, Robert Rudolph, and Jacob Jr. all active in business, real estate and banking with descendants still active in Milwaukee today.

VIII. THE ARCHITECT

The architect has not yet been identified for the Nunnemacher Estate. Research is ongoing. Although aspects of the house appear to relate to the 1870s other evidence points to the 1850s.

The size of the house and its Italianate design would be very much in keeping with the houses known to have been built in the 1870s, some still extant, as the Robert Patrick Fitzgerald House at 1119 North Marshall Street built in 1874. The marble fireplaces with arched openings are of a type that was used for many years, particularly from the 1850s through the 1870s. However, a number of the details in the house point to a construction date in the 1850s such as the floor-to-ceiling casement/French windows that opened out to small balconies, no longer extant. The distinctive hardware with porcelain knobs also appear to pre-date the 1870’s. Family history relates that Jacob built his house in 1856.

Architects working in Milwaukee in the 1850s included J. Dillenberg, Boyington & Mix, Mygatt & Schmidtner and A. C. Nash. Mix did not move to the area until 1856, the same year the house was

constructed so that connection is interesting to speculate. The firm of Mygatt & Schmidtner is also a possibility since that firm designed Villa Uhrig that same year and Villa Uhrig is a high style example of the Italianate as is Jacob Nunnemacher's house.

SOURCES

Ancestry.com. U. S. Census Records 1900-1940.

Annual Report of the Commerce, Manufacture, Public Improvements and Railroad System of Milwaukee for the Year 1856. Milwaukee: Daily Sentinel Steam Press, 1857.

"A Pioneer Distillery is Now a Tourist Camp." Milwaukee Journal. Sunday July 31, 1932.

Conard, Howard Lewis. editor. History of Milwaukee County from its First Settlement to the Year 1895. Chicago: American Biographical Publishing Company, [1895]

Milwaukee City Building Permits. 3774 South 27th Street.

Milwaukee City Directories.

Milwaukee County Register of Deeds

Milwaukee Journal

Milwaukee Sentinel.

Nunnemacher, Harry. Conversations and e-mail correspondence between Harry Nunnemacher and Carlen Hatala. July 9,10,11, 2014.

Rascher's Fire Insurance Maps of the City of Milwaukee. Chicago: Rascher Fire Map Company, 1888.

Sanborn Insurance Maps of Milwaukee, Wisconsin. New York: Sanborn-Perris Map Co., 1894, 1910, 1910-1961.

Tax Rolls Town of Lake 1853 through 1936.

Whisky Ring website www.infoplease.com/encyclopedia/history/whiskey-ring.html, accessed July 10, 2014

Whisky Ring Web Site http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Whiskey_Ring, accessed July 10, 2014)

IX. STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Jacob Nunnemacher Estate / Wildenberg Hotel be given historic designation as a City of Milwaukee Historic Building as a result of its fulfillment of criteria e-3, e--5 and e-9 of the Historic Preservation Ordinance, Section 320-21(3) of the Milwaukee Code of Ordinances.

e-3 Its identification with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the culture and development of the city of Milwaukee

Jacob Nunnemacher was a prominent early settler who grew his meat market into a fortune through careful real estate investments. It is said that everything he touched turned to gold. He was responsible for the construction of the Nunnemacher Grand Opera House and other fine buildings in Milwaukee. He is most remembered for the large distillery works and cattle farm in the Town of Lake, now part of the city of Milwaukee. Other places associated with Jacob Nunnemacher such as his market, the theater, the hotel and earlier residences, have all been razed. This house remains to tell the story of an immigrant businessman, early distilling, large scale cattle operations and the evolution of agricultural land into a commercial district.

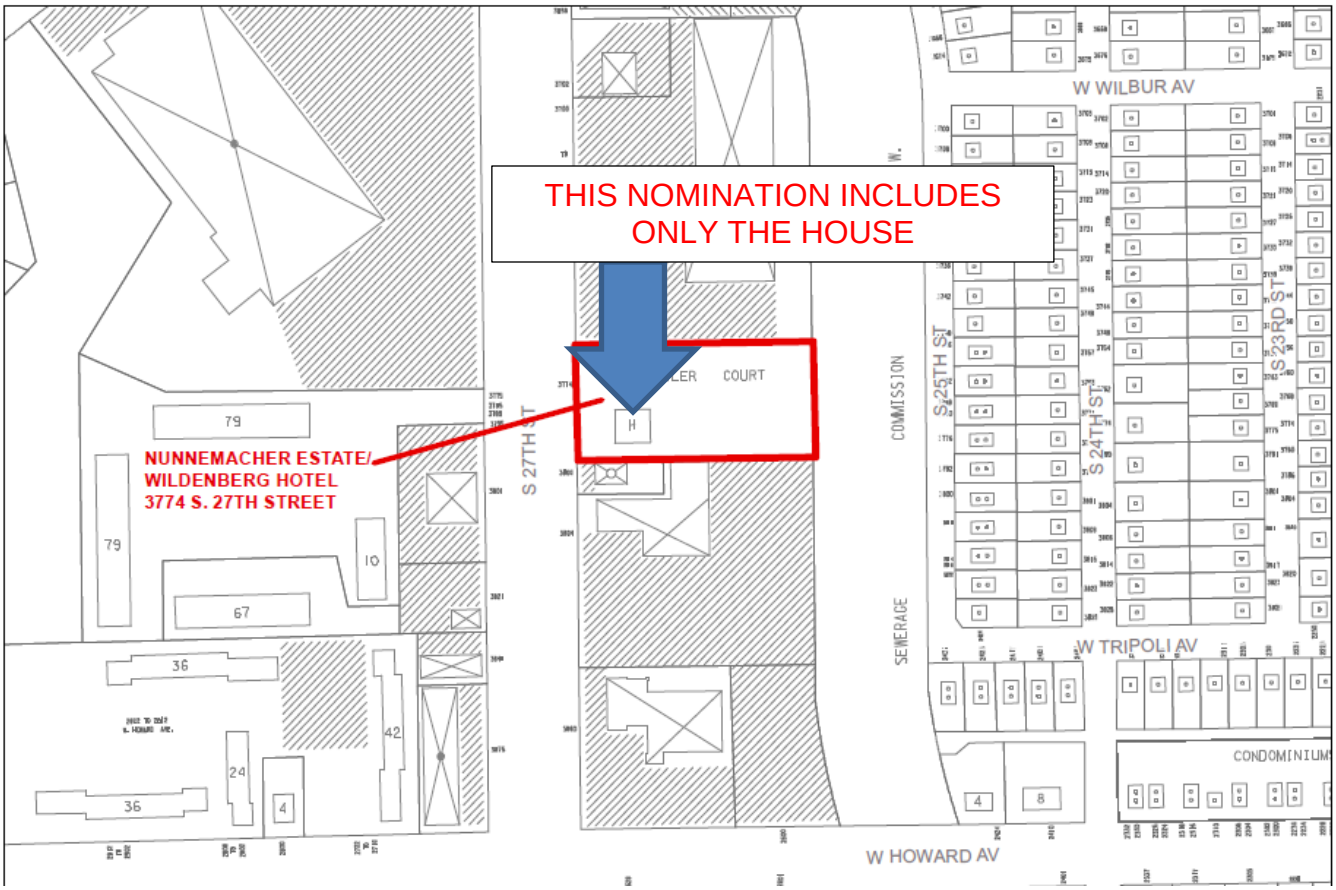
e-5. Its embodiment of the distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type or specimen.

The Jacob Nunnemacher Estate / Wildenberg Hotel is significant as an early example of the Italianate Style in Milwaukee. Not many examples of this style, this well executed, exist from the decade prior to the Civil War. The cubic proportions, cream brick, projecting entry bay, hip roof, brackets and early casement / French windows meant to access the outdoors on the first story all point to an 1850s construction date. Among the over 3,000 entries in the Architecture and History Inventory (AHI) at the State Historic Preservation Office, only a small number of survivors date from this decade and share those common features. Although altered, the Italianate Style is still recognizable in form, massing and details. The house still stands on its original site.

e-9 Its unique location as a singular physical characteristic which represents an established and familiar visual feature of a neighborhood, community or the city.

The Jacob Nunnemacher Estate / Wildenberg Hotel has always served as a point of reference on South 27th Street. The distillery and large farm with its numerous outbuildings and fine house were a significant development in this part of the Town of Lake and far exceeded the agricultural activities in the surrounding area. Articles still referenced this as the Nunnemacher property well into the 20th century. Due to the long period ownership under the Wildenberg family, the house's recent identity as the Wildenberg Hotel has made it known under that name for the last six and a half decades. Most Milwaukeeans know what building is being referenced when mentioning the Wildenberg Hotel and discussion of the building's history inevitably follows.

PROPOSED HISTORIC DESIGNATION
NUNNEMACHER ESTATE/WILDENBERG HOTEL - 3774 S. 27TH STREET



Preservation Guidelines
For the
Jacob Nunnemacher Estate / Wildenberg Hotel
as Corrected

The following preservation guidelines represent the principal concerns of the Historic Preservation Commission regarding the historic designation of the Jacob Nunnemacher Estate / Wildenberg Hotel. The intent of the commission is to preserve the historic, existing exterior features of the building and guide any changes and restorations that might be done on the exterior. *This nomination and preservation guidelines only include the historic building and not the surrounding land that makes up the present tax key.*

Building maintenance and restoration must follow accepted preservation practices as outlined below. Any exterior changes including repair of ornamental trim but exclusive of routine painting will require a Certificate of Appropriateness. Most certificates are issued on a staff-approved basis and only major new construction or alteration requests typically will go before the Historic Preservation commission. The Commission reserves the right to make final decisions based upon particular design submissions.

A. Roofs

Retain the roof shape. The installation of skylights where they would be visible from the street are not permitted as they would have a negative impact on the building. Skylights however may be added to roof slopes if they are not visible from the street or public right of way. No changes can be made to the roof shape which would alter the building height, the roofline or its pitch. Locate mechanical systems and vents on portions of the roof not visible at all from the public right of way and paint them out to minimize impact. If the building gets re-roofed, consultation with historic preservation staff is required to review and approve the new roofing material, flashing, and gutters. The minimum standard for re-roofing is a 3-tab asphalt shingle. The building may originally have had either a wood shingles roof or a standing seam metal roof. When choosing shingles, very light colors or very dark colors such as black are not permitted. Architectural shingles are permitted, but they must resemble wood shingles which may have been original to the house. Use of architectural or dimensional shingles is on a case-by-case basis as some of the products are not compatible with Victorian-era houses.

Built-in gutters were original to this house and must be retained or rebuilt.
Should a satellite dish be installed it should be placed where it is not visible from the street, preferably at the rear of the house. Removal of the rooftop chimneys is not permitted. Historic images show that both chimneys originally had corbelled brick tops. No rooftop construction or addition is allowed, as this would have a negative impact on the historic character and proportions of the building. Reconstruction of the original cupola on the roof is encourage but not required. The construction or installation of any other rooftop features requires review by Historic Preservation staff and a Certificate of Appropriateness.

The front porch on the west elevation is not original and can be removed. Historic photos show the original windows and front porch and in the event that new windows and a porch are built, they must follow the original design as closely as possible. (See historic photos that are part of this nomination).

B. Materials

1. Masonry

a. Unpainted brick or stone must not be painted or covered. Painting masonry is historically incorrect and could cause irreversible damage if it was decided to remove the paint at a later date. Covering masonry with other materials (wood, sheet metal, vinyl siding, etc.) is not allowed.

b. Re-point defective mortar by duplicating the original in color, hardness, texture, joint finish and joint width. See the masonry chapters in the books, As Good As New or Good For Business for explanations on why the use of a proper mortar mix is crucial to making lasting repairs that will not contribute to new deterioration of the masonry. Using much harder, contemporary Portland cement mortar will not make a lasting repair and can damage the historic brick and stone. Replaced mortar joints should be tooled to match the style of the original. Do not use mortar colors and pointing styles that were unavailable or were not used when the building was constructed. Consultation with historic preservation staff and a Certificate of Appropriateness is required before starting any re-pointing.

c. In the future should masonry cleaning be necessary it should be done only with the gentlest method possible. Sandblasting or high pressure water blasting or the use of other abrasive materials (baking soda, nut shells, dry ice, etc.) on limestone, pressed brick or cream brick surfaces is prohibited. This method of cleaning erodes the surface of the material and accelerates deterioration. The use of accepted chemical products to clean masonry is allowed and a test panel is required before general commencement of the work. Work should be done by experienced individuals as the chemical cleaning process can have a negative impact on the masonry. Consultation with historic preservation staff and a Certificate of Appropriateness is required before any cleaning would begin.

d. Repair or replace deteriorated masonry with new material that duplicates the old as closely as possible. The use of EIFS (exterior insulation and finish systems) which is synthetic stucco is not permitted. Consultation with historic preservation staff and a Certificate of Appropriateness is required before attempting work on the masonry

2. Wood/Metal

a. Retain original material, whenever possible. Do not remove architectural features that are essential to maintaining the building's character and appearance. The original trim around the original windows, the brackets and fascia are important features to be retained. Any original trim that is replaced must match exactly in terms of dimensions, profile and size.

b. Retain or replace deteriorated material with new material that duplicates the appearance of the old as closely as possible. Covering wood or metal with aluminum or vinyl or other substitute material is not permitted. Spot replacement or spot repair of any deteriorated elements is encouraged rather than complete removal and replication. Structural wood epoxies are suggested for the lasting

repair of damaged or decays areas of wood trim. Any new elements must replicate the pattern, dimension, spacing and material of the originals.

C. Windows and Doors

1. Retain existing window and door openings. The two pairs of windows on the first story of the west elevation to the north of the front door are original and should be restored as well as used as a guide for how to restore the remaining windows on the first story of the front elevation. Retain the existing configuration of panes, sash, surrounds and sills, except as necessary to restore them to the original condition. Do not make additional openings or changes in existing fenestration by enlarging or reducing window or door openings to fit new stock window sash or new stock door sizes. Do not change the size or configuration of the original window panes or sash. Use storm windows or protective glazing which have glazing configurations similar to the prime windows and which obscure the prime windows as little as possible. The use of structural wood epoxies is strongly encouraged to repair any minor damage or decay to wood windows.

2. Most of the windows currently visible on the building have been replaced with smaller units. A number of the original casement / French windows are still extant and must be retained. In the event any windows need to be replaced, consultation with Historic Preservation staff is required to determine appropriate glazing patterns. New glass must match the size of the historic glass. New windows must be made of wood. Do not fill in or cover openings with inappropriate materials such as glass block or concrete block. Glass block is permitted in basement windows on the rear elevation where they are not visible form the street Do not use modern style window units, such as horizontal sliding sash or casements, in place of double-hung sash or the substitution of units with glazing configurations not appropriate to the style of the building.

   Any original windows on the building must be retained and repaired. Vinyl, vinyl- clad, metal, and metal-clad or fiberglass prime window units are not permitted. Wood combination/storm screen units or fixed storm windows that fit the shape of the original opening are permitted. The front and rear doors have been replaced. Any replacement doors must be appropriate to the historic period of the building. Any changes to doors and windows, including installation of new doors and windows, require consultation with Historic Preservation staff and a Certificate of Appropriateness.

3. Steel bar security doors and window guards are generally not allowed where they are visible from the street. If permitted, the doors or grates must be of the simplest design and installed so as to be as unobtrusive as possible. A Certificate of Appropriateness is required for this type of installation.

D. Trim and Ornamentation

There should be no changes to the existing historic trim or ornamentation except as necessary to restore the building to its original condition. A replacement feature

must match the original member in terms of scale, design, color, and appearance. Existing historic trim, like the brackets, fascia, and front entrance transom must not be removed unless it is for the purpose of repair. Spot repair is preferable to wholesale replacement of details. Wood epoxy repair is often highly desirable for permanently repairing smaller areas of decay or damage to wood trim. The use of new wood with good to excellent natural decay resistance for any exterior restoration work is strongly encouraged. Consultation with Historic Preservation staff is required before any changes or repairs are made to the building.

E. Additions

No additions will be permitted on the front and side elevations as this would greatly alter the character of the building. The use of EIFS (exterior insulation and finish system) is not allowed for the exterior of any addition to the house.

The one-story concrete block addition on the east elevation is not original and can be removed. Two, wooden, shed-roofed additions on the east elevation are also not original and can be removed.

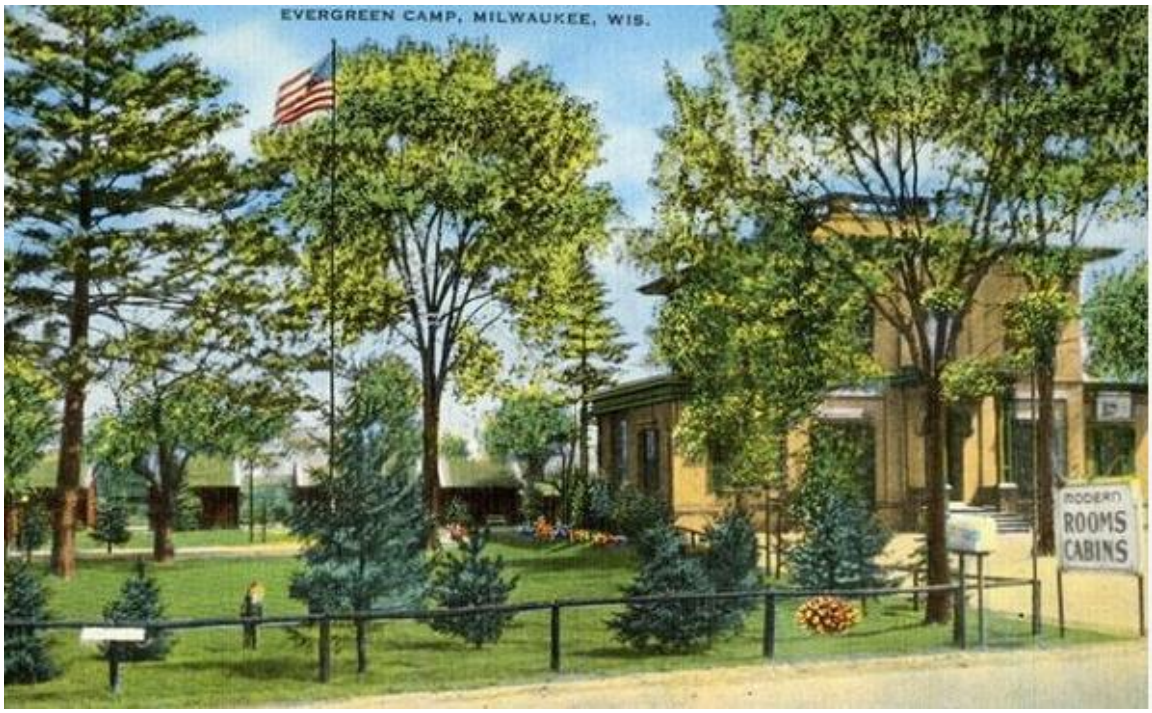
F. Signs/Exterior Lighting

The installation of any permanent exterior sign or light fixture on the front of the building shall require the approval of the Commission. Approval will be based on the compatibility of the proposed sign or light with the historic and architectural character of the building. Consultation with Historic Preservation staff is required to assist in the selection of exterior fixtures. Plastic internally-illuminated cabinet signs with a completely acrylic face are not permitted. A monument sign in front of the building is permitted but it must be Type A. (see the city's zoning code). Signs installed directly on the building should not exceed 25 square feet in order to protect the historic character of the building.

G. Guidelines for Demolition

Demolition is not encouraged and is generally not permissible, but there may be instances when demolition may be acceptable if approved by the Historic Preservation Commission. Exterior demolition on the house should be limited to the removal of the non-original additions on the rear of the building and the front porch. Subsection 11(h) of the ordinance, will be taken into consideration by the Commission when reviewing demolition requests.

Distillery c. 1930s



Evergreen Camp Postcard

Digital Image © 2004 University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Libraries

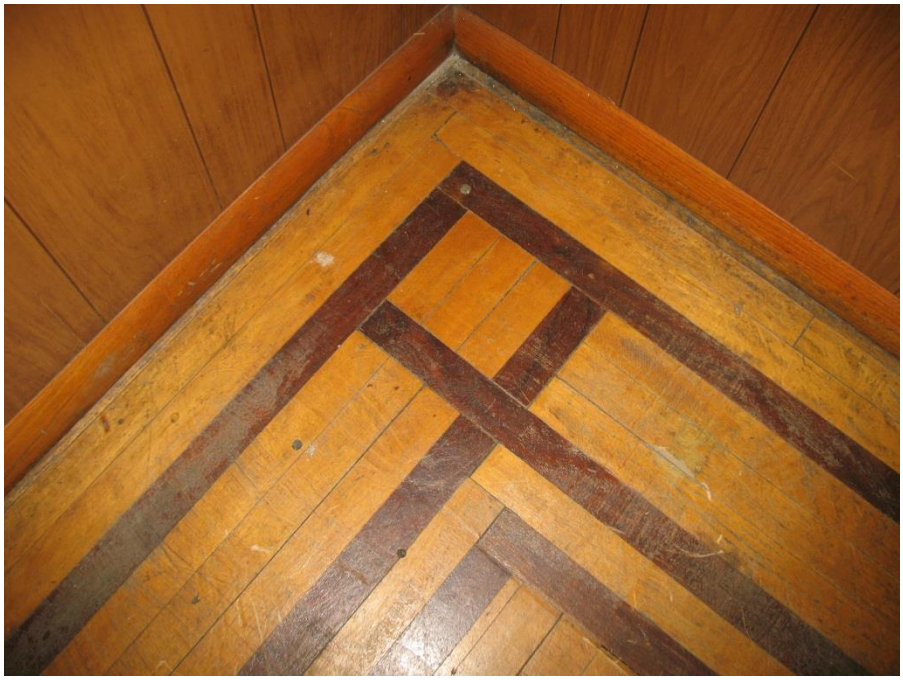
Evergreen Camp Postcard

Jacob Nunnemacher Estate / Wildenberg Hotel
Rear Elevation Looking Southwest

Above Entrance

Original Window

Fireplace South Parlor



Floor in North Parlor

Fireplace Bedroom

Front entrance from Interior