

Simple, strong, substantial

The Schlipmanns' American Foursquare house a great place to raise a family

By Ruth Hultz

Herald-Whig Staff Writer

Many families have lived in the spacious, solid, no-frills American Foursquare house at the corner of 13th and College. Grocer Bernard Berter built the home for his wife and five boys in the early 1900s.

Foursquare homes were popular in the early 1900s, often called "every man's dwelling." The uncomplicated, efficient house was advertised as "the most house for the least money." Mail-order catalogs sold plans and materials for the home for \$2,500.

For the last 25 years, the house has been the home of Mike and Linda Schlipmann. Even though the Foursquare, or "Prairie Box," is characterized as practical and efficient, the Schlipmanns have always appreciated the large, cheerful home for the many "luxuries" it offers.

One luxury is the incredible amount of

AT A GLANCE

■ **Original owner:** Bernard and Elizabeth Berter. Berter had a grocery store at 640 N. 12th St. He was one of 141 grocers in Quincy in 1915.

■ **Date of Construction:** 1915

■ **Architectural features:** low pitched roof with hipped dormers, square footprint, limestone foundation and porch piers, off-center front door, full width front porch with square posts, Prairie-style double hung three-over-one windows, two-story bay area.

space the Foursquare afforded the family and its three growing boys. That was one aspect of the house that attracted Linda immediately.

"If I was going to be home all the time with my kids, I figured I'd have a lot of room," Linda said. As it worked out, there were always a lot of neighborhood kids gathered at the Schlipmanns', so they needed every inch of space they had.

"It was the place to be," Linda said. "The backyard was a permanent dust bowl. There were permanent (baseball) base spots."

Originally the house had a large living room and dining room, but a past owner removed the wall between the two rooms, creating one living area that is almost the depth of the house. This was just fine with Mike and Linda, as they wanted their boys to have plenty of room to play.

"We wanted them to really live in it," Linda said. She remembers one bunking party when the boys took the pictures off the living room walls so they could play indoor soccer. Mike put a basketball hoop above the kitchen door so the boys could shoot hoops.

Another luxury of the large home is its many windows. Sunlight floods every room. The three big bedrooms were another plus for the family, because the three boys could easily share one until they were ready for their own.

The full front porch, which is a hallmark of the Foursquare, gave the boys a place to play cars and trucks in all weather.

The spacious kitchen was the Schlipmanns' first project 25 years ago. The homey kitchen is a favorite gathering place for friends and relatives. Mike and Linda updated the cabinets and installed a ceramic tile floor. Mike retiled the first-floor bathroom and stripped all the cypress trim in the living room. Linda



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The Schlipmanns recently stripped and re-wallpapered the stairway area.

watched the boys so he could do the messy job. They also stripped old wallpaper from each room, renting a steamer to make the big job a little easier.

Today, the Schlipmanns are enjoying redecorating their home. Recently they stripped and re-wallpapered the stairway area, made improvements in the kitchen, and still have more redecorating plans for their warm family home.

Although they have more than enough room now that their children have homes of their own, they plan to stay at the corner of 13th and College. Their children are frequent visitors and besides, son Dan has told them: "Don't sell that house."

Foursquare houses are known for their large rooms with large windows that let in the natural light.

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Michael Kipley

