

Emsland Hall Queen Anne Commercial Built ca. 1897

According to the Quincy City Directories, this small, two-story, combination commercial and residential building, built around the turn of the century at the northern limits of the city of Quincy, was briefly operated by

John B. Buchheit and Andrew Sturm as a saloon. By 1900, however, it had become the location of Henry B. Schnelten's German "*Gastwirtschaft*", serving the many German immigrant residents of the north side both home-cooked food and his home-made *weissenkorn*.

Henry B. Schnelten was born in the northwestern German maritime districts in 1867 and sent to America by his father at age 19 to escape inscription into the Kaiser's army. His dream had been to open a traditional "music hall saloon" in his adopted American home. Here he found the ideal site for his endeavor on the city's north side.

Inside, Henry installed a large wooden-walled social hall, excellent for acoustics, and a slightly raised stage at the back of the building. In addition, the exterior of the building was decorated with narrow false wrought iron balconies below the second floor windows and other elaborate trim in the German tradition.

Henry and his wife Angela lovingly ran the popular hall until Angela's ill health forced her to retire, at which time Henry sold the business. Over the years the building passed through a number of hands, falling into severe disrepair. However, that all changed when Henry and Angela's great niece, Hedwig "Hedy" Schnel Elligsen, who had immigrated to America in December, 1949, and her family purchased the building nearly half a century later.

This building, near the corner of 8th and Locust, was the third purchased by Hedy, her husband Philip and their children. Initially they were convinced that because of its condition, it would have to be demolished. But when Hedy found an early photograph of her great-uncle standing proudly in front of "Henry's Place", their view changed. Spending nearly four years on the restoration, the Elligsens found original woodwork, bar back, and flooring which they were able to save and incorporate into the present hall.

The hall also features family treasures, such as Hedy's 19th Century Germany-built piano sent to her at great labor and expense by her old country cousins. Family photographs decorate the walls, as well as a large collection of nutcrackers, traditional ceramics, beer steins and mugs. Phillip Elligsen constructed the family-style dining tables. He lovingly hand finished them to a mirror shine revealing the glowing heart of the heavy plank wood. Preserved in the hall is a thick marble slab bakery prep-table top from Hedy's nearby traditional German bakery (now closed), which she operated from 1982 through 1989.



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