



310 South 16th Street  
Prairie Style • 1917  
Joseph and Julia VandenBoom House

Joseph H. VandenBoom, who was a partner in the lumber business with Henry Moller, built his Prairie Style house in 1917. The Prairie Style, whose most preeminent architect was Frank Lloyd Wright, was intended to reflect the flat broad prairies of the Midwest. George P. Behrensmeyer designed the house using his inverted triangle trademark on the outside and throughout the inside of the house.

The tapestry brick house has exposed cave supports, stone sills, and a gable roof. Notice the inverted triangle on the facade of the house. A deep porch on the north side leads to the large front door.

Near the entry area is an impressive oak staircase. The beamed ceilings are part of the woodwork that was hand selected by Joseph from the company's southern lumber mills for the house. The living room flows into the enclosed front porch through pairs of glass paned doors. The original hardwood floors in the living room and hall have been re-finished. The front porch was integrated as a part of the house in the 1930s. The large oval window was part of this renovation. The expansive fireplace has an oak mantel shelf and an inverted triangle-George Behrensmeyer's trademark.

The dining room continues the beamed ceiling and cove molding. The eating area and desk off the kitchen occupy space where the butler's pantry had been. The kitchen itself was redone by the current owners in 1990. The servant's staircase was removed to enlarge the space. Moving doors and a radiator created a more efficient work area. In the half bath the original medicine cabinet is still in place. Back at the staircase, take note of the inverted triangle, beveled blocks, and decorative insets.

On the second floor there are three bedrooms with cherry and mahogany trim. The third bedroom was originally a sun porch and the northeast bedroom was originally a den in the house plans. The variety of door knob hardware is noteworthy—one is milk glass, one is clear glass, and one is hammered metal.

Current owners, Robert and Fran Cook, were the first owners outside of the VandenBoom family to reside in the house on South 16th. They have personalized the home by displaying many family paintings and photographs throughout the house.

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