



Little did Maurice Hardwick realize when he bought the house at 2436 College 39 years ago that the house would someday be a part of a local historic district.

H-W Photos/Jeanne Long

Homeowner had no idea that one day house at 2436 College would be part of historic district

By Ruth Hultz

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When Maurice Hardwick moved into the house at 2436 College Avenue 39 years ago, he had no idea it would someday be a historic house.

He didn't give much thought to its unusual cube shape, the complete absence of ornamentation or that it was constructed of concrete.

"We just thought that it would meet our needs — the size of our family," Hardwick said. "We had two daughters. And we liked the neighborhood.

It's close to the shopping center (mall)."

Today, Hardwick's house is in the middle of Quincy's newest local historic district — Zwick Row of Art Moderne houses.

There are five Art Moderne houses in the new local historic district. The houses were built by the Bauhaus-Zwick Construction Co. in 1939.

Christian and Louis Zwick came to Quincy from Germany and formed the Bauhaus-Zwick Construction Co. with Christian's father-in-law. The men used Germany's progressive ideas of architecture in designing and building the homes.

The Art Moderne style became popular in the 1930s when people were looking toward technology and streamlined transportation to pull the country out of the Depression.

The original houses were 750 square feet with a full basement. The walls were built of 2 1/2-inch reinforced concrete over 2-by-6 studs filled in with wire and stucco. The flat roofs have their own drainage system with only one

downspout.

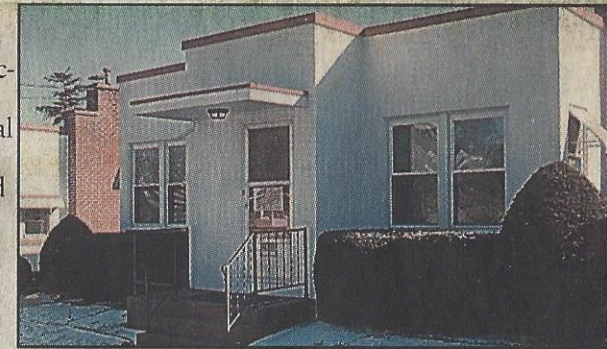
Hardwick said the Bauhaus-Zwick Construction Co. built a great house. Other than normal maintenance, the house has been trouble-free and the flat roof has never leaked. Hardwick has taken care of all the upkeep himself.

"If I didn't know how to do it, I would figure it out," he said.

One big job Hardwick tackled was replacing the house's original windows, "just because I got tired of washing the storms." He installed the 18 insulated windows himself. "But I didn't change the appearance of the house," Hardwick said.

Hardwick's home has a one-room addition that is indistinguishable from the original house. The Art Moderne house is larger than it appears from the street. An ample living room and dining room stretch across the front of the house and three comfortable-size bedrooms comprise the back of the house.

A notable feature of the front rooms is the thick curved wall between the living room and dining room. The curved wall is repeated on the fireplace wall and incorporates built-in shelves where Hardwick displays his Checker competition trophies.



The kitchen is compact but is amazing in its clever use of space. The original wooden cabinets have curved edges which echo the curves in the front rooms. The cabinets are ceiling height and provide a surprising amount of storage in a small space. Countertops are cut diagonally by the doors to use every single inch of space in this post-Depression house.

SPRING EXHIBIT

The Gardner Museum of Architecture and Design's spring exhibit "Sleek and Speedy: Art Moderne and Streamline Design" opens March 8 with galleries full of photos and displays of Art Moderne architecture and other "sleek and speedy" memorabilia.

