

WESTMORLAND: A WALKING TOUR

GARDEN



LOT LINE

GROUND FLOOR PLAN HOUSE FOR HERBERT JAC

WESTMORLAND: A WALKING TOUR

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The Walking Tour

The sites in this booklet are arranged in roughly chronological order to facilitate viewers' understanding of the historical development of the neighborhood. The sites are identified by location on the map on the back cover of the booklet. Please be aware that all of the residential buildings on this tour are private homes and are not open to the public. Please view them from the sidewalk and be respectful of the privacy of their owners.

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History of Westmorland

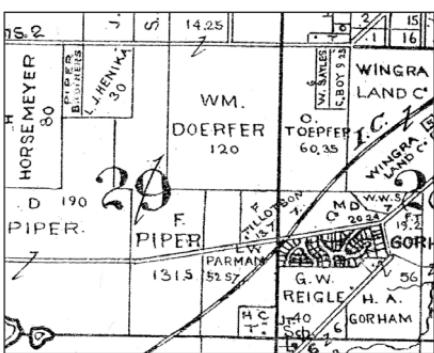
The diversity of housing in the Westmorland neighborhood typifies twentieth-century suburban development in Madison. Land in Westmorland was first subdivided for residential lots in 1916. Since then the 295-acre area has seen 887 lots developed from a total of twenty-three subdivision plats, which, while mainly residential, also contain some commercial and institutional properties. The majority of the subdividing occurred prior to 1960 with only one subdivision plat map being filed since then. Development of the neighborhood occurred slowly from 1916 through 1929, and the Great Depression hampered activities even more so. After World War II and through 1957, the speed of development increased dramatically. The housing stock varies widely, with Cape Cod, Colonial Revival, Tudor Revival, Bungalow, English Cottage, International, Prairie, and Ranch styles all represented in the neighborhood; the different types often exist alongside one another. Although some of this diversity may be accounted for by the piecemeal nature of the subdivision activities that occurred over time, it is also typical of twentieth-century Madison neighborhoods, which were usually developed by multiple builders working in a range of styles and house types.¹

After thousands of years of Native American occupation of land in this area, U.S. Government surveyors crisscrossed the prairie and oak savanna landscape in the 1830s to establish section corners in southern Wisconsin. The sale of government-owned land to private investors for \$1.25 per acre then began in August of 1835—even before the famous 1836 “Doty Plat” that would become the City of Madison.² About eighty years later the “suburbanization” of Westmorland would begin, as speculators purchased and sold parcels of land with the hope of making a large profit over a short period of time. The original owners of land that became Westmorland—including Alanson Sweet (75 acres), John Philetus Hilton (130 acres), and Phineas W. Leland (90 acres)—only possessed the land for one or two years. Speculators continued to buy and sell the land until the 1860s when those interested in farming began to obtain parcels. Some of the early landholders between 1880 and 1910 included Charles Baker, Benjamin Piper, G. Weber, C.E. Piper, William Doerfer, and Frederick Tillotson. These farm families began constructing houses and working the land during the 1890s. Three of these early farmhouses still survive today, including the F. Tillotson Farmhouse (3902 Odana Road, 1890), and

dwellings at 4214 Odana Road (1890) and 4337 Mineral Point Road (1896). Between 1900 and 1916, eight more houses were built along the few dirt roads that bounded and crossed the area. Otto Toepfer, Jr., for example, purchased the sixty-acre Baker farm in 1899 and built his own farmhouse in 1906 (see entry "B"). Toepfer then platted twenty-four acres of his property along Glenway Street in 1916 as part of the "West Wingra Addition.

This first Westmorland subdivision plat included ninety-five lots bordered by Glenway Street, Fern Court, Toepfer Avenue, and Birch Avenue. In 1926, Toepfer filed a second plat map that subdivided another six acres into twenty-three more residential lots along Glenway Street and parts of Birch and Euclid

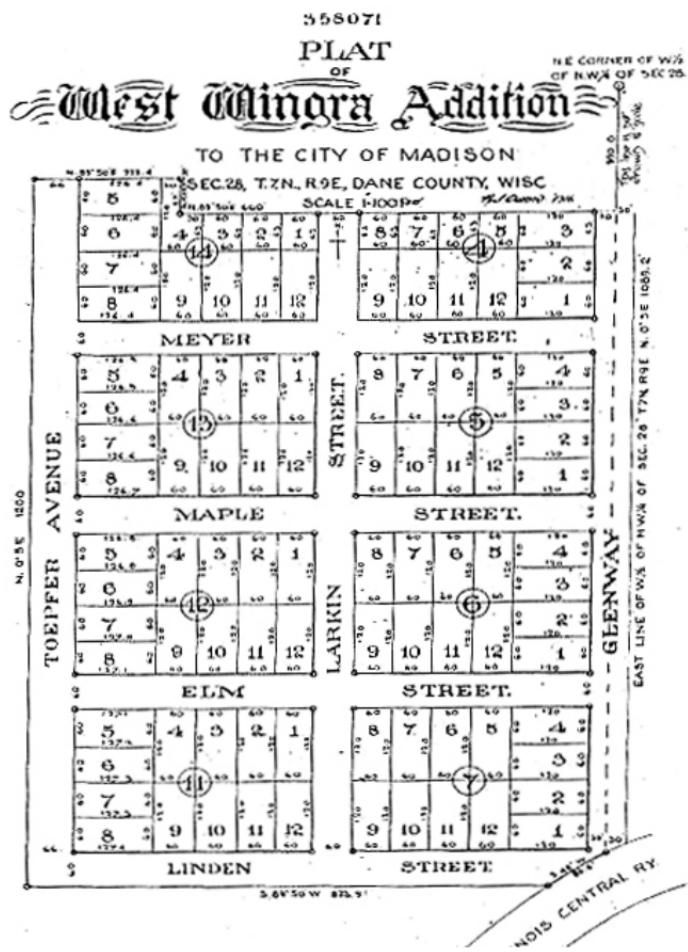
Avenues. Also in 1926, Toepfer sold a large part of his remaining farm to a local banker, A. O. Paunack, who formed the Westmorland Company to develop and sell 138 lots along Toepfer Avenue and the 4000 block of the streets between Mineral Point Road and Fern Court. Lots were being sold for \$750 to \$1,250. Advertisements placed in the local newspapers that attempted to attract homebuilders to the area described it as, "A beautiful location with city improvements in the path of Madison's westward growth."³



1911 Plat Map, showing lands that would become Westmorland owned by Otto Toepfer, William Doerfer, and others. Courtesy of the Wisconsin Historical Society.

is on the way to plat a small area of twenty lots on Paunack, Euclid, and Birch Avenues.

John McKenna, Sr., another early developer of Westmorland, purchased a large portion of platted and unplatte lands in Westmorland from Toepfer during the mid 1920s. He then subdivided the land, and sold his four-hundred-plus empty lots to the Westmorland Company. During the late 1920s, in an attempt to attract more buyers, the Westmorland Company purchased the twenty-acre William Doerfer farm, and built the nine-hole Westmorland Golf Course on land bordered by Mineral Point Road, Holly Avenue, Tokay Boulevard, and Caromar Drive. The company then constructed stone gates on Westmorland Boulevard at Mineral Point Road to serve as the grand entrance



West Wingra Addition Plat Map (filed by Otto Toepfer), 1916. Courtesy of the Wisconsin Historical Society.

for the golf course. Sales of Westmorland lots continued at a slow pace during the 1920s, with only fourteen houses being built between 1917 and 1929 on 276 available lots.

Another early resident of Westmorland was Henry Meyer, who built a home for his family on Glenway Street in 1910 and then purchased a number of lots and built fourteen houses between 1917 and 1928 on side streets

between Glenway Street and Toepfer Avenue. The housing styles provided by Meyer included bungalows, Cape Cods, English Cottages, and Tudor Revivals. In other parts of Westmorland, Toepfer and Paunack were encouraging the construction of more traditional houses that copied those in the nearby affluent suburbs of West Lawn and Nakoma and the Villages of Shorewood Hills and Maple Bluff.

Despite efforts to market and sell lots, Westmorland grew at a slow rate during the 1930s even though lot prices dropped to \$300-\$400 due to the Great Depression. Between 1929 and 1939, only seventy houses were built on Westmorland lots. During the Depression years, local architects and builders experimented with new domestic designs in an attempt to attract buyers. Frank Lloyd Wright designed and built his first model Usonian dwelling on a Toepfer Avenue lot (see entry "G"). Other Madison-based architects designed International-style houses on Paunack and Toepfer Avenues (see entry "I") and a Prairie-style dwelling on Euclid Avenue (see entry "H"). Those that still possessed the monetary means built Tudor Revival and Colonial Revival houses in Westmorland. Other dwellings that were built during the 1930s included modest bungalow (Craftsman), Cape Cod, English Cottage, and some Sears Catalog examples.

Toward the end of the Great Depression, a mini-explosion of home construction occurred in Westmorland when eighty-seven houses were built. Following the entrance of the United States into World War II in December of 1941, and the diversion of building materials to the war effort, home construction once again slowed in Westmorland. Only 36 new houses were constructed during the war years from 1942 until 1945. Two major events in Westmorland history occurred during the early 1940s, however. In April of 1941, a neighborhood association was formed, one of the first in the Madison area. The group still functions today, serving the residents of the neighborhood by organizing social events and representing the neighborhood with the City of Madison government. Secondly, the seven and one half acre Westmorland neighborhood park was established from land declared tax delinquent in 1943 (see entry "L").

The end of World War II and the return of veterans who needed housing for their new families created a major housing construction boom in the neighborhood. Additional areas were subdivided and another 139 houses were built between 1946 and 1948. On May 14, 1948, the Westmorland neighborhood,

previously within the boundaries of the Town of Madison, was annexed to the City of Madison. With city services now available to the area, a huge building boom coincided with the beginning of the baby boom generation. From 1949 until 1957, a total of 465 new houses were occupied by young families in the Westmorland area; 1950 was the peak year when 81 homes were under construction.

Page Two

THE WISCONSIN STATE JOURNAL

Sunday, May 11, 1930

YOU WILL NEVER REGRET BUILDING A HOME IN
WESTMORLAND
 "IN THE PATH OF MADISON'S WESTWARD GROWTH"

Westmorland Offers You Every Distinctive Advantage

[This highly restricted and rapidly growing suburb presents you every possible advantage of distinction. Overlooking picturesque lakes, the healthful, sweeping landscape offers a setting for the most discriminating and beautiful surroundings. Convenient to West Side High and Dodgeon schools—all within 10 minutes of the Capitol square. Golf course?—on either side. City water, gas and electricity, every restriction—wide concrete streets.

The Homes Illustrated Here Are A Few of Many to Be Built in Westmorland this Spring



New Home of Mr. and Mrs. W. E. Parr

INVEST WITH SAFETY

To own a home in Westmorland is to invest in the future. The security in view of the ever increasing land values in the path of Madison's westward growth.



New Home of Mr. and Mrs. Vernon H. Kahl

Increasing Land Values

The steady increase in Madison land values during the past 10 years is a true indication of the increment that may be expected by resident owners in Westmorland.



This English style home to be constructed for sale by Ed Nelson

PAYING RENT?

Are you planning for a sound future? Your rent receipts applied on the permanent investment of a home of your own in Westmorland offers you ownership as Madison's most rapidly growing communities.



New Home of Mr. and Mrs. George L. Joachin

MAY WE SUGGEST

That you drive through Westmorland with us and see for yourself how the picturesque sweeping surroundings will make your home a pleasure to live in—and an obligation to see invite your inquiries.



New Home of Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Schlimm

For Further Information Please Phone

FAIRCHILD 931

OFFICE—232 STATE ST.

J. V. REILLY

W. R. FISHER

Ad for Westmorland, *Wisconsin State Journal* (11 May 1930). Courtesy of Madison Newspapers.

Westmorland's post-war residential expansion included seven Lustron houses (see entry "N") constructed of a steel frame and with steel enamel-coated panels on the exterior and interior walls. Home construction was also aided by the hosting of the Fourth Annual Parade of Homes in Westmorland in 1954. The Parade showcased nineteen houses built south of Odana Road on Anthony, Rolla, and Somerset Lanes. The entire area south of Odana Road was subdivided and quickly built out between 1954 and 1960; most were Ranch style dwellings.

Commercial development that served the 1950s subdivision occurred at the northeastern and southwestern corners of Westmorland. The Glenway Shopping area on Speedway and Mineral Point Roads was built in 1955, and the Midvale Shopping Plaza (now the Sequoia Commons development) opened on Midvale Boulevard on 1957. In addition, schools for the baby boomers opened in Westmorland at the same time. Our Lady Queen of Peace parochial school (see entry "O") opened in 1949, and the Midvale Elementary Public School (see entry "P") in 1951. Five churches of various denominations that served the area were dedicated between 1947 and 1957. By 1960, the Westmorland neighborhood was almost fully developed. Only sixty-three more houses were constructed in Westmorland after 1958, with the last completed in 2001.

Westmorland remains a vibrant, popular neighborhood; approximately thirty to thirty-five houses are sold every year most within a month of being listed. The neighborhood provides a combination of an internationally renowned landmark, the Frank Lloyd Wright-designed Usonian house, unique architect-designed homes, and vernacular architectural styles. The Westmorland Neighborhood Association continues as a very active organization in supporting residents, and schedules many social events. Members of an active neighborhood history committee, organized in 2002, prepare articles for the six annual issues of the newsletter, *The Westmorland Courier*, the group also published a complete history of the neighborhood in 2011. In June of 2011, the history committee co-sponsored a walking tour of the neighborhood with Historic Madison, Inc.

Endnotes

- 1 Much of this essay is abstracted from *Westmorland: A Great Place to Live* (Madison: Westmorland Neighborhood Association, 2011).
- 2 Plat Map, City of Madison, 1836. Wisconsin Historical Society, WHi-11709.
- 3 Ad for Westmorland, *Capital Times* (June 1928).

Westmorland House Typology

The following pages contain charts indicating common house types in the Westmorland neighborhood. The illustrations do not represent actual houses found in the neighborhood; rather, they are schematic representations that indicate common forms and features of dwellings lining the streets of Westmorland. Typical facades and floor plans suggest telltale features of each house type, although undoubtedly actual houses in Westmorland often represent a mix of different types. Readers may find the illustrations helpful in interpreting other houses in Westmorland besides those identified in this walking tour.

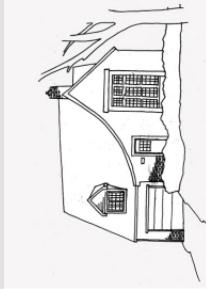
The Westmorland House Typology shows the great variety of housing types in the neighborhood. Such variety is partly due to the extended period of construction of homes in the neighborhood—but it is also due to the way in which Westmorland was developed. Although a series of developers was responsible for the subdividing of lots in the neighborhood (see “History of Westmorland” overview), none of these men built houses on these lots for speculative resale. Because the lots were sold to individuals who hired their own builders, those owners could choose the house form they desired.

The earliest homeowners in Westmorland who purchased lots in the subdivisions chose revival styles, particularly the style known as the “Old English” or “Tudor” Revival. This style was among a handful of revival styles popular throughout the United States during the period between the World Wars; other common revival modes included the Colonial and Mission Revivals (though these seem to have been less popular in Madison than elsewhere). Beginning during the 1930s and into the 1940s, Westmorland property owners showed quite diverse taste; some chose more modern house forms and styles (such as the Prairie or International Styles) whereas others chose more traditional forms that were updated versions of historical revivals (such as the “Colonial” and “Cape Cod” types). After World War II, the Ranch and Split-Level types dominated, which can especially be seen in “New Westmorland” (the western section of the neighborhood).

WESTMORLAND HOUSE TYPOLOGY

English Cottage/Tudor, 1920-1940

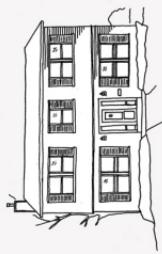
Dominant revival style in the neighborhood during early phases of development. Plans based on dominant closed plan revival types with some nod to open planning of bungalow house types. Exteriors reveal regional variation with dominance of cream-city brick and Lannon stone, and occasionally some profile style features.



Facade

Colonial, 1940 - 1940

Colonial house forms are another revival type in the neighborhood, loosely inspired by New England colonial houses. They usually have a central entry with staircase, flanked by living spaces and occasionally bedrooms on the first floor, with a kitchen at the rear and additional spaces in the second story. Often built in sets in the neighborhood, usually with attached porches. Local fair with limestone and cream city bricks accompany the colonial style features (including pedimented entries).



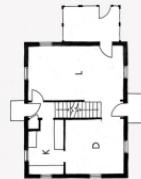
Facade

Cape Cod, 1935-1940

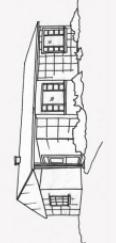
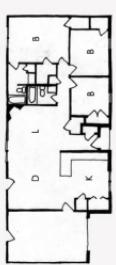
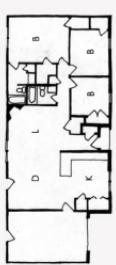
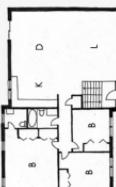
Cape Cods are the one-and-one-half-story version of the colonial, like the two-story "colonial," they tend to have a lobby entry with rooms on either side but can have at least one bedroom on the first floor. Many upper half-stories include sleeping spaces. Cape Cods can have attached garages, but often the garage is separate (especially in earlier examples).



Facade



By Anna Andrijewski & Rowan Davidson

<p>Prairie, 1935-1940.</p> <p>Prairie forms are inspired mainly by Frank Lloyd Wright and Madison followers such as William Kaiser. Low lying horizontal form and sprawling plans characterize these houses, which often intermix features with ranch and split level forms. Dominant use of local woods and stone (including Laramie stone) and flat roofs.</p>	 
<p>International Style/moderne/deco, 1935-1950.</p> <p>International style houses are the rarest but nonetheless present in his neighborhood. Like Prairie houses, they are low-lying in height and some have flat roofs, but they tend to have more open interiors and sparse detailing. Often made use of modern materials including steel, as with Lutzen houses.</p>	 
<p>Ranch, 1940-1960.</p> <p>One story, rambling plan with open communal living spaces, often built on a living-room/dining/kitchen configuration, separated from bedroom spaces. Neighborhood examples tend to be fairly compact with 2-3 bedrooms and nearly always have attached one-car garages. Later examples sometimes had family room spaces and two car garages.</p>	 
<p>Split Level, 1955-1965.</p> <p>Split levels become popular in the mid-1950's in Westminster and Madison generally. They are characterized by zoning different areas of domestic activities by floor level. Common variations include the split entry and the banked "walk out" type. Many split levels in Westminster have Prairie detailing.</p>	 

By Anna Andziejewski & Rowan Davidson

**William R. Warren Stable and Barn, 1860s
(converted to a house ca. 1938)
4010 Paunack Avenue**

The oldest structure still standing in Westmorland dates to the 1860s. The cut sandstone-walled building was originally built as a stable and barn over one-hundred-fifty years ago by William R. Warren, who owned the eighty acres that stretched from Mineral Point Road to south of the future Illinois Central Railroad grade (built in 1887) and from Glenway Street to the current Westmorland Boulevard. (There also is a small storage shed from the same era built with rough sandstone walls that now stands in the backyard at 3822 Paunack Avenue in another section of the former Warren farm.) Otto Toepfer, Jr., purchased the property with the barn in 1899 and built his home at 4001 Mineral Point Road—adjacent to the barn—in 1906. In 1930, Toepfer sold both the house and barn to a prominent Madison banker, A.O. Paunack.



William R. Warren Stable and Barn. Photo by Tom Martinelli, June 2012.

The Paunack family occupied the home on Mineral Point Road and owned the adjacent barn until September of 1937, when Professor James March and his wife, Mildred (Billie), purchased the property and moved their young family into the former Toepfer home. The Marches converted the barn to a residence around 1938 and rented it out beginning in 1939. During the late 1940s, the Marches added a wood-frame addition to the east side. The current owners of the home offered it as a stop on Historic Madison's Alternate Parade of Homes event in Westmorland on June 5, 2011.

Otto Toepfer House, 1906 4001 Mineral Point Road

One of the earliest standing houses in Westmorland—and certainly the most grand—is the Otto Toepfer House at the corner of Mineral Point Road and Toepfer Avenue. The imposing two-and-one-half story, seven-bedroom brick house measures 3,927 square feet in size, making it still the largest house in Westmorland. Built by J.H. Findorff and Sons, the house can be characterized as a foursquare house form, having a roughly square floor plan and two-and-one-half story height. The low roof pitch and pyramidal dormers as well as the one-story front porch are typical of modern progressive styles found elsewhere in Madison during the early twentieth century.

Toepfer acquired sixty acres on which to farm and build his house in 1899 in conjunction with his brother, who later sold his interest to Otto. At the time, the property on which the house stands was part of the Charles Baker Sunnyside Farm, bounded by present-day Mineral Point Road, Westmorland Boulevard, Tokay Boulevard, and Glenway Street. The current house (the former William R. Warren stable and barn) at 4010 Paunack was once part of this property. Toepfer likely purchased this land with an eye toward development. Along with A.O. Paunack, Toepfer was responsible for much of the pre-World War II development of Westmorland. Today Toepfer is known as the “father of Westmorland” and his house as the “Toepfer Mansion.”



Otto Toepfer House. Photo by Anna Vemer Andrzejewski, 2012.

The large house was befitting Toepfer's status as a land developer and political figure. In addition to playing a key part in the development of Westmorland, Toepfer served on the Town of Madison Board for ten years, as a Dane County Supervisor for nineteen years, and as an elected state assemblyman (beginning in 1939).

Village Bar (formerly general store), opened 1928 3801 Mineral Point Road

Westmorland's version of "Cheers," where "everyone knows your name," has been located at the corner of Mineral Point Road and Glenway Street for over eighty years. The bar is a classic Wisconsin tavern decorated with sports memorabilia—mainly associated with the Green Bay Packers and University of Wisconsin Badgers—adorning the interior.

The building in which the current Village Bar resides began as a single-family home located on the north side of the 1500 block of University Avenue and directly across from the College of Engineering at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Since the house was scheduled for demolition to make room for a new campus building, Theodore Herling moved the house to its present location in 1928 by using a team of horses to pull the house along Speedway Road.

After moving the structure, Herling sold the building to his son, W.H. (Bill) Herling, who opened a general store there. Upon the appeal of Prohibition in 1933, Herling added a small bar in the corner of the store; thus "Herling's Tavern" was born. The tavern was nicknamed "Windy Corners" by regular customers due to the winds that blow in Mineral Point Road and across Glenway Golf Course (which opened in 1927). Despite being passed through many owners and being renamed multiple times, it has continuously operated as a neighborhood tavern.



Village Bar. Photo by Tom Martinelli, 2010.



Stone Gates, 1928-29

Westmorland Boulevard and Mineral Point Road

A sturdy pair of stone gates marks the main entrance to the Westmorland neighborhood. In December of 1926, the Westmorland Company—one of a series of Westmorland developers—hatched plans to develop a section of the neighborhood just south of Mineral Point Road. The group planned Westmorland Boulevard with a wide median and built the stone gates in hopes of attracting buyers and to serve as the main entrance to the newly opened Westmorland Golf Course just west of the gates. The form of the gates recalled that of stone gates in the nearby Nakoma neighborhood, with its fashionable homes dating to the late 1910s and early 1920s. Unfortunately, the Westmorland Company's plans came at the onset of the Great Depression; despite the grand aspirations symbolized by the gates, the subdivision failed to materialize as quickly as its founders had hoped.

The gates were built of local sandstone, perhaps from the stone quarry located about a half mile away. Originally the gates were designed with wrought iron signage and lanterns in the openings in the stonework. The Westmorland Neighborhood Association is planning to reproduce the lanterns during 2012.

**Westmorland Boulevard
Stone Gates, 1930. Photo by
Angus B. McVicar. Courtesy
of the Wisconsin Historical
Society, WHi-20682.**



Stone Gates. Photo by Tom Martinelli, June 2012.



B.M. Backus House, 1928-29**4015 Paunack Avenue**

Built just prior to the onset of the Great Depression, the B.M. Backus House is an example of a Tudor Revival style dwelling. The Tudor Revival was the dominant style for houses erected during the initial residential development of Westmorland in the 1920s, perhaps to emulate the nearby Nakoma neighborhood where the style was also popular. Standing on a larger lot not far from the Paunack Avenue intersection with Westmorland Boulevard, the Backus House suggests that aspirations that early developers such as Toepfer and Paunack had when they subdivided land in Westmorland during the 1910s and 1920s.

Tudor Revival was one of several historic revival styles that were popular in domestic architecture in the U.S. between the World Wars. Tudor revival features in the Backus House include its irregular, picturesque floor plan, complex steeply pitched roof, and decorative ornament. The use of rough cut Lannon stone on trim and in the chimney are also features of the style, as are the half timbered wood elements in the front facing gable. Original wood windows—including some paired casement windows—survive on the first and second floors.

The house was built for B.M. Backus, the vice-president of Commercial National Bank. The house was promoted in advertisements for the Westmorland Company, including one in the *Capital Times* on June 3, 1928. This ad



B.M. Backus House. Photo by Tom Martinelli, 2010.

includes personal testimony by Backus as to why he chose to build his home in Westmorland. Backus described the location as an ideal distance from downtown—convenient enough yet at some distance removed—and also boasted of the beautiful views afforded by the elevated location overlooking the lakes.

Leonard and Francis Tranchita House, 1948-49**4021 Paunack Avenue**

The Tranchita House is an example of a post-World War II Colonial, which, along with the Ranch, represented a popular type of house in the neighborhood during the late 1940s and 1950s. It is one of multiple examples along the 4000 block of Paunack Avenue, all of which were built during the fifteen-year period between 1945 and 1960.

Although the form varies significantly, Colonials are unified in terms of their two-story, side-gabled form, which keeps communal living areas on the first floor (usually with the formal living space in front, and dining and cooking spaces to the rear) and private sleeping areas on the second. The Tranchita House is an example of a “side entrance” plan, whereas other examples—including several Colonials across the street—display a central entrance plan. Usually the entrances lead into a stairhall, behind which is the kitchen and/or dining area. Other common features include a projecting second floor jetty (seen in other examples on Paunack) and accent stone, such as the Lannon stone on the first floor of the Tranchita House, especially around the slightly projecting entrance foyer.

The house was built in 1948-49 for Leonard and Francis Tranchita by local builder B.F. Killian. Killian specialized in low-cost, custom built dwellings in the postwar period, especially Ranches and Colonials. The Tranchitas lived

in the house until 1956, when John K. Walsh, a local contractor, and his wife, Lucille, bought it. Although now clad in vinyl siding, the house is otherwise fairly unchanged, and retains its original eight-over-eight wood windows and an original front picture window.



Leonard and Francis Tranchita House. Photo by Tom Martinelli, 2012.

Katherine and Herbert Jacobs House (first Usonian house), 1937 441 Toepfer Avenue

This is one of a handful of architect-designed houses in Westmorland. The dwelling was constructed in 1937 for Katherine and Herbert Jacobs, who enlisted Frank Lloyd Wright to construct them a low-cost “Usonian” house—something Wright envisioned as a housing form appropriate for middle-class Americans. The first Jacobs House was a prototype for later Usonians. Covering two subdivision lots, the Jacobs House employs an L-shape plan, with the living-dining-kitchen area in the main block and a bedroom wing off the back. Wright also designed the house’s interior furnishings, including built-ins, furniture, and lighting, much of which survives or has been restored.

The Jacobs House presented a new challenge for Wright, who was accustomed to building artistically, but not necessarily cost-efficiently. At the Jacobs House, Wright experimented with cutting costs by using a carport (instead of a garage) and by building the house on a slab foundation, with only a small crawl



Katherine and Herbert Jacobs House. Photo by Anna Vemer Andrzejewski, 2012.

space for mechanicals. The house also reflected Wright's organic philosophy, given that it followed the land's topographic variations and turned its windows away from the street to enhance family privacy. Wright's specific vision for greater Usonia was a utopian-like neighborhood located away from the city center. While never fully realized, Usonian dwellings hold national significance, with the initial one (Jacobs I) being recognized as the first of hundreds of similar houses designed by Wright during the middle of the twentieth century. Wright later built a second house for the Jacobs's near Middleton.

The Jacobs House became a Madison City Landmark in 1974, although at that time it was in need of extensive restoration. Today, the house is fully restored, a process that began after James Dennis, a Professor in the Department of Art History at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, purchased the home in 1983. Dennis maintained Wright's original design with little deviation. In addition to its local landmark status, the house was designated a National Historic Landmark in 2003 and is currently under consideration for nomination to the World Heritage list.



Rear elevation of the Katherine and Herbert Jacobs House. Photo from *Architectural Forum* 68 (January 1938): 80. Courtesy of University of Wisconsin-Madison Libraries.

James Wilkie House, 1938 3909 Euclid Avenue

The year after Frank Lloyd Wright built the Katherine and Herbert Jacobs House at 441 Toepper, William Kaeser built a strikingly similar house just around the corner at 3909 Euclid Avenue. Although Kaeser began his professional career as Madison's first city planner in 1935, he left that position a few years later to devote his attention exclusively to architectural design. Inspired by the ideals of the Wright's organic architecture, Kaeser designed many structures emulating Wright's buildings, especially his Usonian houses.

The plan of the James Wilkie House closely follows that of the Jacobs House. Both the Wilkie and Jacobs Houses are constructed on L-shaped plans, with the living areas in the main blocks distinguished from the bedrooms in the ell. Both dwellings also turn away from the street with the large windows lighting the living areas oriented toward the private back yards. Although Wright intended his house as a low-cost middle-class home, Kaeser's was even more about cost efficiency; the Wilkie house is downscaled in size as well as materials. Both homes have flat roofs, wide overhanging eaves, and window banding—hallmarks of Wright's prairie style that became pervasive in the work of his Madison followers during the twentieth century.



James Wilkie House. Photo by Anna Vemer Andrzejewski, 2012.

Elmer Brunsell House, 1937 442 Toepfer Avenue

A handful of dwellings built in the International Style are found in Westmorland, including a significant, if modified, example at 442 Toepfer Avenue. Originally, a modest, one-story dwelling, the house was designed by local architects Beatty and Strang and built by brothers Elmer and William Brunsell in 1937. Beatty and Strang often partnered with Brunsell Lumber and Millworks—a local building supply company run by the Brunsell brothers—but this particular house is especially interesting as it was built for Elmer Brunsell's family.

Aside from being designed by well-respected architects, many of the houses designed in the International Style in Madison during the Great Depression were marketed as modest, low-cost houses. These homes were typically one or two stories with two or three bedrooms, allowing for variations and opportunities for expansion. According to a *Wisconsin State Journal* article from 1930, the chance for new homebuyers to purchase a cost-effective home that also allowed for expansion was a very attractive feature in designs by firms who worked in the International Style, including Beatty and Strang.

The house received a significant change in 2008, when the owners built a second story to accommodate the needs of their growing family. They preserved the open character of the floor plan as well as some of the interior details. One particularly interesting feature are the interior doorways, which use a quarter round molding for finish rather than casings—a strategy which saved costs as well as contributed to a streamlined interior.



Elmer Brunsell House. Photo by Tom Martinelli, 2011.



Elmer Brunsell House prior to 2008 renovations. Photo by Tom Martinelli, 2008.

Paul and Evelyn Trimble House, 1939 446 Toepfer Avenue

The Trimble House is an intact example of a Cape Cod house, which is a common form found throughout Westmorland. This was a nationally popular revival form, which found favor amongst middle-class populations throughout the twentieth century.

This example—built in 1939—is a larger form than many others in the neighborhood, but has classic Cape Cod features. This includes the centrally placed entrance door, the façade roof dormers, and six-over-six pane double-hung windows. These features loosely refer to colonial New England dwellings, to which the house label “Cape Cod” refers. This example also has a basement level garage, which suggests the importance of the automobile in the home during the middle third of the twentieth century (when garages were increasingly incorporated into the body of the house itself rather than as free-standing structures).

The house was built by Paul and Evelyn Trimble, who lived in the house for over thirty years. Paul worked as a clerk for many years, including for a period for the Brunsell Brothers, one of whom—Elmer—was his immediate next door neighbor (see Elmer Brunsell House entry). This highly intact example of a vernacular house form represents an interesting contrast to its architect-designed neighbors, the Brunsell and Jacobs Houses.



Paul and Evelyn Trimble House. Photo by Anna Vemer Andrzejewski, 2012.

Sears Catalog Houses in Westmorland

425 Holly Avenue (1932) and 4021 Winnemac (1939)

Although the heyday of homebuilding in Westmorland was after World War II, a handful of dwellings were built during the 1930s, including two "Sears Catalog Homes"—at 425 Holly Avenue and 4021 Winnemac Avenue. Their presence illustrates the diversity of the Westmorland neighborhood, showing that architect- and builder-designed houses stood alongside national prefabricated types, even before World War II.

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The framing of all Modern Homes meets the most rigid building codes and the requirements of the U. S. Bureau of Standards. Platform type of construction is recommended by the U. S. Government Department of Commerce as the safest type for residential construction.

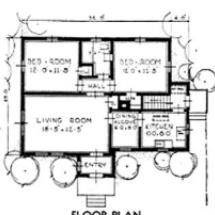
This attractive little home, although classed as a four-room house, really has five-room efficiency on account of the dining alcove which accommodates a drop leaf table and four chairs. Just a cozy place for a small family to enjoy their meals. The front of the plan is devoted to living room, dining alcove, kitchen and the access to the cutting platform.

A plastered arch is used in the opening between the living room and small hall which connects the two rooms and the refrigerator platform.

The home is planned for a full excavation, providing plenty of space for heating plant, laundry, fruit room and full storage.

EXTERIOR FEATURES

Side walls covered with 24-inch clear Royal Red Cedar shingles, finished with one dip coat and one brush coat of Super quality stain. Clear moldings and button type shutters and front door.



FLOOR PLAN

"Parkside" Model Sears House, 1934. <http://www.antiquehomestyle.com/plans/sears/1936sears/36searsparkside.htm> (accessed 1 March 2012).

By some estimates Sears sold between 75,000 and 100,000 houses during its “Modern Homes” program between 1908 and 1940. At least 447 different models were available during this thirty-two year period. Homeowners could “customize” their houses from these models, choosing exterior finish, cabinetry, hardware, plumbing, and so forth. Sears would mass-produce the items necessary to build the house; set up the financing; and ship all precut parts and components to the building site.

The house at 425 Holly, constructed in 1932, was a “Colchester” model, built right after its introduction in the catalog. It was a two-story English Tudor four-bedroom model, considerably larger (over 2,000 square feet) than other Sears models, such as the Cape Cod. The house at 4021 Winnemac was built in 1939 as the “Parkside” Sears model, first introduced in 1933. It is a one-story with two bedrooms, kitchen, small dining alcove, living room, and one bathroom.



Sears House at 4021 Winnemac Avenue. Photo by Anna Vemer Andrzejewski, 2012.

Westmorland Park and Rock Garden, 1944 Near Intersection of Holly Avenue and St. Clair Street

A significant amenity to the Westmorland neighborhood is the public park, which was dedicated in 1944. The Town of Madison Board began considering a park in the neighborhood around 1941. An article in a September 1941 issue of the *Capital Times* reported on the park approval process and noted the lobbying efforts of Westmorland residents, including Herb Jacobs—owner of the Jacobs House—who was President of the Westmorland Community Association at the time. The park was eventually approved by the Town of Madison under the stipulation that Westmorland residents cover a proportion of construction costs. Despite the financial difficulties of the time, the neighborhood's residents came together to fund the purchase of the land by making five-dollar payments to the Westmorland Community Association.

Since its development, Westmorland Park has served as a rich cultural landscape for the neighborhood. Ball fields, a playground, and a picnic shelter are located in the park. Annual events such as the Fourth of July parade and picnic occur in the park. A rock garden was planned and built by the City of Madison in 1953, at the same time the park became part of the City of Madison.



Westmorland Park. Photo by Tom Martinelli, 2010.



Gale and Zona VandeBerg House, 1950-51

533 Gately Terrace

The Gale and Zona VandeBerg House is one of several structures in Westmorland by the renowned Madison builder Marshall Erdman (1922-1995). Built in the early 1950s, the house represents a transitional moment in Erdman's career—from a builder of postwar veterans housing to more middle-class homes inspired by his mentor, Frank Lloyd Wright. At the time he built the VandeBerg House, Erdman was completing his duties as contractor for Wright's Unitarian Meeting House.

Erdman's domestic work was typically “mass produced.” The VandeBerg House, however, seems to be an anomaly, and may have been either a custom design or a “test case” for one of Erdman’s later projects. Like many Erdman houses it follows popular conventions of the time, being a one-story Ranch house with an integrated garage, dominant living room windows, and corner windows. However, it also adopts elements, however loosely, from Wright’s domestic architecture, including the nearby Jacobs House. This may be seen in the relatively secluded entrance, large chimney massing, and the wide overhanging eaves. The plan also loosely emulates Usonian conventions, having the communal living areas distinguished from the more private spaces of the home.

Although initially built and occupied in 1951 by Gerald Alvin LePage, a Professor in the School of Medicine at the University of Wisconsin, the house was occupied for over fifty years by Gale and Zona VandeBerg. Gale was a pioneering figure in the development of Extension education in the United States



Gale and Zona VandeBerg House. Photo by Tom Martinelli, 2012.

as a faculty member at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He retired from the University in 1983 to spend more time with his wife, Zona, and their children and grandchildren. Recent owners have kept the appearance of the house largely intact.

Lustron Houses in Westmorland, 1949-50

In addition to architect- and builder-designed homes, Westmorland also contains examples of “Lustron Homes”—prefabricated houses produced by the Lustron Corporation of Columbus, Ohio. These steel houses were built in Madison between 1949 and 1950 by J.H. Findorff and Sons. Even though the Lustron Corporation went bankrupt in 1950 after producing around 2,000 of the 30,000 residences they had anticipated selling, these homes are significant for their aspirations to mass produce housing during the post World War II era when demand was high in the wake of the Great Depression and the flood of returning GI's in need of housing.

There are at least twenty-two Lustrons still found in the Madison area, seven of which are located in Westmorland. The Robert and Jane McBurney House—at 505 South Owen Drive—is an intact example. The house is a blue, Westchester two-bedroom deluxe model, measuring 31 by 35 feet; the Westchester was one of the Lustron Corporation’s most popular models. The house is built on a steel frame with square porcelain-enamaled panels on the interior and exterior. This example also features original aluminum windows and a steel roof. Robert and Jane McBurney built the Lustron in 1949, when Robert was an Assistant Professor at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. When the current owner purchased the house in 1996, he restored the dwelling using features from another Lustron he purchased for this purpose.

Other Lustron homes in Westmorland—all Westchesters—are located at 3810 St. Clair Street, 534 Glenway Street, 513 South Owen Drive, 548 South Owen Drive, 537 Gately Terrace, and 418 Critchell Terrace. They show the corporation’s range of colors for the models, which included blue, tan, yellow, green, and pink. According to the neighborhood’s local history, all of its Lustron homes were constructed in 1949, at the end of the corporation’s home-production activities.



Robert and Jane McBurney House. Photo by Anna Vemer Andrzejewski, 2012.

Our Lady Queen of Peace Elementary School, 1948-49 (with multiple additions) 418 Holly Avenue

Beginning in 1945, west-side Catholics worked on starting a new parish and constructing a multipurpose building in Westmorland, which would include an elementary school. The Arch-Diocese of Milwaukee purchased the five and one half acres of what was formerly part of the Westmorland Golf Course for this purpose in 1944. Groundbreaking was held on July 18, 1948, and Our Lady Queen of Peace Elementary opened its doors to students on September 12, 1949.

At its opening, the school enrolled 234 students in grades 1-8 (around 45-50 students per classroom). The original building—erected by Fritz Construction Company and designed by the local architectural firm of Weiler and Strang—housed five classrooms on the first floor (with two grades combined in each room), living quarters for the Sinsinewa Dominicans Order of Sisters that agreed to staff the school, and a multipurpose room in the basement. The school population increased rapidly during the early 1950s, necessitating construction of a two-room addition and conversion of the Sisters' living quarters on the second floor into classrooms—both of which occurred in 1951 (the living quarters were moved to a house the Parish purchased at the corner of Westmorland Blvd. and Euclid Avenue). Other additions followed in the 1950s and early 1960s; enrollment peaked at 780 in 1961/62.

Despite a dip in enrollment to a low of 354 in 1973, Queen of Peace Elementary has remained a strong presence in the Westmorland neighborhood (and Madison's west side more broadly). A major \$5.2 million parish building program in 1995 added classrooms, science lab, computer lab, expanded library space, meeting rooms, new school offices, and full size gymnasium. The school now houses nearly 500 students in grades K-8 (including a 4K program) taught by a faculty of fifty.



Our Lady Queen of Peace Elementary School, Addition, Holly Avenue. Photo by Tom Martinelli, 1996.

Midvale Elementary School, 1950-51

502 Caromar Drive

Midvale Elementary School opened its doors to 514 students—in grades Kindergarten through 6th—on September 10, 1951. The opening signified the growth of the Westmorland neighborhood (and Madison's west side suburbs more broadly) during the post World War II years. Buildings such as Midvale School were necessary to accommodate the young children—later dubbed “baby boomers”—of the growing number of new suburban homeowners.

Discussion for a Westmorland school began in 1938 amongst a group of area residents even though at the time, the neighborhood was part of the Town of Madison. In October of 1945, Madison's city council—anticipating growth in the area—voted to purchase 8.8 acres of land, then outside the city limits, between Caromar Drive and Midvale Blvd. from Dorothy Jones Frautschi for \$14,000. District administrators began earnestly planning for the “Westmorland School” in 1948. The final cost was \$723,000.

Midvale School, designed by the local architectural firm of Weiler and Strang, was touted at the time for its efficiency and modernity. Built of concrete block, the exterior was faced with brick. The interior was painted in a pastel color scheme originally, which L. Irene Buck—Art Director for Madison Schools who had worked at Taliesin—believed fostered learning. Glass block above plate glass windows was another modern design feature intended to enhance learning by diffusing light in the classrooms. The school originally contained an office suite, eighteen classrooms distributed on the first and second floors, a basement-level lunch room/auditorium, first floor gymnasium (with locker rooms), and rooms for special classes in home economics, art, music, workshop, and science. Since 1984, the school has housed Kindergarten through 2nd grade classes, with upper elementary students, in 3rd through 5th grade, traveling to Lincoln Elementary (Midvale's partner school).



Midvale Elementary School. Photo by Tom Martinelli, 2010.

1954 Parade of Homes

Anthony Lane, Rolla Lane, Somerset Lane, and Odana Road

The 4th annual Parade of Homes was held in Westmorland in September of 1954 in an area south of the intersection of Odana Road and Anthony Lane. Sponsored by the Madison Area Builders Association, these annual events offered homeowners a chance to see the latest innovations in home-building and interior decor. The focus was on mid-century modern styling, new building materials, and innovative, integrated home lighting. Given its location in a growing middle-class suburb, the 1954 parade catered to home-buyers who wanted to live a modern, suburban lifestyle.

Although the local builders responsible for the houses touted their individual distinctiveness, the dwellings collectively display features common throughout much postwar domestic architecture in Westmorland. All houses featured in the 1954 Parade were one-story Ranch dwellings. Most have L-shaped plans, in which the living area was set off from a perpendicularly placed bedroom “ell.” Picture windows are found on the fronts of the houses (facing the street) or in some cases facing the backyard to bring in the outdoors. Lannon Stone or cream city brick accents adorn the exterior walls. And all houses have prominent one-, and in some cases two-, car integrated garages.

Narratives about the houses in the 1954 Plan Book advocate their suitability for “easy living” in the suburbs, particularly in terms of how features facilitated the lives of suburban women. A three-bedroom house by E.O. Dahl, for example, was advertised as featuring “living from the women’s angle,” particularly for its first floor laundry and two-car garage (one stall was presumably for the second family car). Another house by Miller Industries was so designed as to make “house work a pleasure.”

Westmorland also boasted a house in the first Madison Parade of Homes in 1951. The house at 555 Glenn Drive was a “model home” that year, which featured eight homes throughout the City.



Cover of 1954 Parade of Homes Guide.

Supporter's Information

The Madison Trust for Historic Preservation offers a guided tour of the Westmorland neighborhood during their summer tour season. For information please visit madisonpreservation.org/tours. Contact info (608-441-8864, madisonpreservation.org.



This project is supported by the Dane County Cultural Affairs Commission.



Westmorland Neighborhood Association

The Westmorland Neighborhood Association continues as a very active organization in supporting residents, and schedules many social events. Members of an active neighborhood history committee, organized in 2002, prepare articles for the six annual issues of the neighborhood newsletter, *The Westmorland Courier*; the group also published a complete history of the neighborhood in 2011. In June of 2011, the history committee co-sponsored a walking tour of the neighborhood with Historic Madison.

For more information, visit <http://www.westmorland-neighborhood.net>.

WESTMORLAND

a walking tour

