

Wiley Estate/ St. Joseph's Heritage
63 Carrie Street



Year Built: 1910

Added to Heritage Register: October 26, 2009

Description:

Structurally, the Manor House is in much the same shape as it was in 1910, with only minor changes. However, its function is completely different. Bought in 1939 by Bishop Dignan for the Sister of St Joseph, the main floor now houses the Alzheimer Day Program, while the upstairs houses the Day Program offices and the Community Outreach Team for Older Adults.

Everything in the bathrooms is covered in marble, and every other room in the house boasts its own fireplace. The third floor was once a huge ballroom with alcoves for the orchestra and Tudor mahogany beams lining the ceiling.

The house was erected in 1910 by Mr. Franklin S. Wiley, a shipping magnate, lumber businessman, and nephew of Port Arthur's first mayor. He chose the highest point of land in Port Arthur on which to build his new home, and at the turn of the century, the site provided an unmarred view of the city and Lake Superior.

The Wiley home contains many interesting features, apart from the architecture alone. This house is valued for its very good aesthetics and is built in Neo-Classical and Gothic Revival styles of architecture. The most prominent and significant features of this house include a massive two storey portico on the front façade supported by ashlar columns. The limestone exterior, quarried from the Dorion-Pass Lake area, contains, upon close inspection, the outlines of countless fossils. The bathrooms feature the first showers seen in Thunder Bay. Balustrades, trim and walls are made from a variety of hardwood, imported from Britain at the turn of the century. The beautiful twin, hand carved oak staircase is one of the homes prominent features.

The depression - and its effect on the price of primary resources which were the source of Mr. Wiley's income - wiped away the family fortune and forced them to sell at first their specially crafted furnishings and finally their home. The result of Mr. Wiley's Lavishness and years of construction time, the Wiley Mansion stands as a testament to what the combination of workmanship and money can create.