



## Century Homes Tour October 24, 2026

### Brief Descriptions of Homes on Tour

#### The McLagan-Black House

##### **East Argonne**

The former "History House" is a familiar Kirkwood Landmark. It was acquired by the Kirkwood Historical Society in 1972 for its headquarters and museum and sold to the current owners in 1992 which allowed the Society to purchase Mudd's Grove. Prior to 1972 it was known as the "Steamboat House." Trimmings and a perforated parapet resembling a boat deck railing are reminiscent of the steamboats that plied the river in this area. The house has been included in numerous house tours over the years, particularly during Kirkwood's centennial celebration in 1965. It was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2002.

The house is an example of Steamboat Gothic and Italianate Victorian architecture featuring cypress wood siding cut and beveled to resemble stone. The striking tower, common to Italianate mansions, serves no other function than to enhance aesthetics. Originally there was also a carriage house, barn, icehouse, four cisterns, and a pond. The owners have completed numerous improvements throughout the home. The pool area was added in 2023.

#### The Nipher House

##### **North Harrison**

Built around 1907, this English Tudor Revival home was constructed for Francis Eugene Nipher, a physics professor at Washington University in St. Louis. Nipher (1847–1926) taught at Washington University for forty years. In 1877 he organized Missouri's state weather service, that eventually grew into the National Weather Service.

Nipher and his wife, Matilda, had five children — a son and four daughters. In the 1920s, an addition and dividing wall was built for his daughters giving the house two front and rear entrances, so it functioned essentially as a duplex. One of his daughters lived on in the house for some years afterward. A neighboring family recalls she was still there when they moved in next door. The neighbor later bought the contents of the house after she died and donated the Nipher collection to the Kirkwood Historical Society. The house stayed in the Nipher family for decades after Nipher's death. In 1971 it was sold to William Garesche and remained with the Garesche family until 2013, when Virginia Garesche sold it to its current owners, which are only the third owning family in the house's history.

The current "un-duplexed" the home, restores its original floor plan, and adds a kitchen, hearth room, and main-floor master suite, along with an attached garage. The house is a local Kirkwood landmark (#82 in the Kirkwood Landmark Book) and was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 2002. Kirkwood also honors Nipher through the Nipher Middle School, built in 1921–22.

#### The Pollard House

##### **North Harrison**

Built in 1903, we discover another Nipher connection. This home was built for one of Francis E. Nipher's daughters, who with her spouse raised their family there. The style of the home is a departure from the traditional Victorian era. This American Four-Square feature symmetric facades, large covered front porches, and classic decorative molding. Of note is that one of the daughters (a granddaughter to Professor Nipher) married Harland Gould, one of the founding members of the Kirkwood Historical Society.

## The William Claus House

### North Kirkwood Road

This classic Colonial Revival was built in 1920 and was originally part of a large farm. The current owners purchased the home in 2008, drawn in by the spacious living and dining rooms, rich with details of the crown molding, wainscoting, fireplace, bookcase and window seat. Replacing the front door and all the hard wood on the first floor was completed shortly after they moved in.

A major addition was completed in 2022 with a 2-story expansion. Important to the owners was that the original design features were continued into the addition. Crown molding baseboards were replicated for the new kitchen and breakfast room, as well as introducing lots of light into the new space. The second floor added a full bath, ensuite to the primary bedroom. The addition had to provide some additional support so that the staircase, embellished with brass decorative detailed balusters, would not have to be replaced. In the kitchen you can see the columns added to the island to provide this support.

In the Kirkwood Historical Review 1984-1994 a reference is made to 8 houses which were not named in Kirkwood Landmarks, included this home, because of extensive remodeling which made their early character hard to recognize. They date the original structure to be circa 1855. No pictures have been found of the original structure.

### North Clay Avenue

This Colonial Revival-style Cape Cod house was built in 1912 and has evolved from that time to today with several additions and improvements. The living and dining rooms on the first floor are believed to be original to the house, as are the rooms on the second floor. Upon purchasing the home in 2010, the owners spent several months doing interior renovations, to update and enhance the charm they sought. They have added a side sunroom and porch as well as expanding and updating the kitchen. This charming home is resplendent with wonderful décor, cozy warmth and inviting memorabilia. The owner's attention to details is seen throughout their home.

### Tour Details:

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| <h2><b>Kirkwood Historical Society<br/>Century Homes Tour</b></h2> <p><b>Saturday, October 24, 2026 1-4PM</b></p>  <p><b>Tour 5 historic homes that have graced Kirkwood for over 100 years.</b></p> <p><b>Get Maps &amp; Booties at Mudd's Grove</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 10.23.26: 1-4PM</li><li>• 10.24.26: 12:00-2:00 PM</li></ul> | <h2><b><u>Get Tickets</u></b></h2> <p><b><u>In Person at Mudd's Grove:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Now through 10.24.26 at 2PM</b><br/><b>Fridays from 1-4 PM. Cash or Check</b></li><li>• <b>10.24.26: 12-2PM Cash or Check</b></li></ul> <p><b><u>Digital:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Anytime through the code</li></ul>  <p><b>Proceeds Support the Save Mudd's Grove Campaign</b></p> |
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<https://kirkwoodhistoricalsociety.app.neoncrm.com/nx/portal/neonevents/events?path=%2Fportal%2Fevents%2F58385>