

businesses at the time not just taverns. Kneisler may have selected a large lot size in order to run a small outdoor beer garden, a smaller version of what he had managed at Schlitz's Union Park for four years. The Sanborn Fire Insurance Map for 1910 shows a long, one-story frame structure toward the back of the property. It likely had something to do with Kneisler's interest in raising and showing chickens as well as dogs. He won second place for a White Plymouth Rock cock he exhibited at the Milwaukee Feathered Stock Association meeting as reported in the Milwaukee Journal December 23, 1899. It was said "from a fancier's standpoint the exhibit has brought together a better bred lot of stock than has been seen in many years." Pigeons were also included in the judging. (Milwaukee Journal, 1899 Saturday December 23, Page 3; E-mail correspondence with Beth Hildebrand)

Sophia Carolina
The Kneisler family that occupied the tavern's apartment included, in addition to William C., his wife Wilhelmine/Minnie Hafemeister whom he had married in 1881. They had four children: Alfred William Edgar, born February 23, 1886, Irene born August 1888, Herbert Walter born December 18, 1891 and Norma Eugenie Estella born December 28, 1896. *EGON*

In the column about activities in Bay View in 1895, the Milwaukee Sentinel reported that the Kneisler's entertained "about twenty young friends in honor of their daughter's Irene [sic], birthday last Thursday [Thursday August 23rd]." She would have been around seven years old at the time.

Oral history has it that William C. Kneisler remained active in politics or at least made his saloon available at his new place for political discussions and gatherings associated with local elections. The Sentinel reported that a public meeting would be held at Kneisler's sponsored by the Socialist Labor Party on Sunday October 16, 1898. The topic was a lecture by Thomas Keinard of New York entitled "The Power of the Ballot in the Hands of the Working People."

The family experienced a number of deaths while owning the property. Wilhelmine/Minnie died in 1902 at the age of 47. Son Alfred William Edgar died on September 5, 1902 at the age of 16. Daughter Norma Eugenie Estella died in 1907 at age 10. Michael Horne in his June 3, 2015 article for Urban Milwaukee indicates that Alfred died of tuberculosis and Norma died of an infection from a scrape occasioned by a skating accident. (Michael Horne, "Kneisler's White House, City's Most Historic?", Urban Milwaukee, June 3, 2015)

The U.S. Census of 1910 shows that only Herbert and Irene were living at the building with their father William. The census shows that Herbert (age 18) worked as a "crater" at the Harvester Works. It appears that he tried his hand at a number of professions. He was listed in the directories as a barkeeper in 1907, a patternmaker in 1908, an electrician in 1910, a tube-roller in 1913-1916, and a foreman in 1918-1919. His sister Irene (age 21) had no occupation in 1910 but presumably kept house. She later married Rudolph E. Zahn and had children William, Norma and Betty. Betty would marry Raymond S. Hildebrand. The children would factor into the ownership of the building in later years. *F.*

William C. Kneisler died on April 27, 1919 right at the onset of Prohibition. His son Herbert took over the family business and it was soon listed as a soft drink parlor in the directories. In the 1920 U. S. Census, however, Herbert is listed as a saloonkeeper. Local oral history indicates that Kneisler's like many saloons continued dispensing alcohol throughout Prohibition. Herbert married Jessie B. Hammes when both were 23 years old, in 1914. City directories show them living with the senior Kneisler in the apartment above the saloon.

It is not known exactly when the building took on the nickname "The White House". The building had always been painted white with contrasting dark color sash and front gable shingles as seen in a historic image of the building. In a 1941 article in The Bay View Observer, the building was referred to as The Capitol, a nickname "known throughout the district." (Erwin F. Zillman, So You Will Know, a compilation narrated and edited by Erwin F. Zillman, Milwaukee: The Milwaukee Publishers, Inc., 1966, page 43) In an undated article, "Memories of Bay View", part of the Jaunts with Jamie series, it was said the two turrets

or "towers" (as they were called in the article) led to the White House name (although the actual White House had no towers) but it could also have been a result of its being a rendezvous for politicians. The nominator of this property, John Ebersol recalls that politicians Norman Hundt and Ted Wedemeyer used the premises as an informal "headquarters" or gathering spot in which to watch the election tallies come in and get posted on the chalkboard once hanging inside. Wedemeyer became the district alderman in 1936.

Herbert had a long tenure running the White House. Like all taverns re-opening after the repeal of Prohibition, Kneisler's required an occupancy permit. It was dated June 18, 1934 and indicated the place employed two male and one female employee. Zillman's article from 1941 mentioned that Herbert had a "loyal understudy", Roy Link, who had been there six years and "whose presence enables the bulky proprietor to enter into the civic and fraternal spirit of the community." (Zillman, page 43)

In addition to tending bar, Herbert was a member of the Kilbourn Masonic Lodge No. 3 as well as a member of Wisconsin Scottish Rite Bodies and the Tripoli Shrine. Michael Horne reported that his last years were spent in a wheelchair following the loss of his legs to diabetes. Herbert died on Saturday, June 23, 1973 at the age of 81. After his death the family leased the bar operations to the former manager of the South Shore Yacht Club's bar. (Wisconsin Inventory of Historic Places, 2900 South Kinnickinnic Avenue, prepared by Thomas Beckman, February 1, 1975) The business was taken over by his niece Betty and her husband Raymond F. Hildebrand (daughter of Herbert's sister Irene) and their son ^{R. SCOTT} Scott Hildebrand and daughter ^{FYI Freda was married name now divorced} Beth Freda ^{Hildebrand}

The property was under the ownership of William Zahn and his sisters Betty Hildebrand and Norma Paulsen in 1976. Documents in 1993 show Raymond F. Hildebrand and William Zahn were owners and in later years the property went back and forth to Karen Miller and Dawn H. Salopek, and various Hildebrand and Zahn trusts and estates before the property was sold on land contract to Sean Raffaelli and Donald Raffaelli, BUGSME LLC in December 29, 2006. On January 3, 2018 the property was sold once again to HCl Properties, whose contact is David Griffith.

The Kneisler Tavern Building has remained in near original condition over its history on both interior and exterior but recent years have seen an erosion of its architectural integrity, the most significant of which was the application of vinyl siding in 2017.

Surviving permit records begin in 1933 although records should have gone back to the time of construction.

Permit show that a ladies toilet room was added in 1933 thought to be the small addition along the southeasterly facade. Fire damage in the amount of \$3,000 was repaired in December, 1934. A 72-inch tall fence was added in 1956. An unsafe and dilapidated one story frame shed was demolished in 1958, probably the shed that appeared in the 1910 Sanborn Map. In 1974 there were orders to install proper exit door hardware, paint the dormers and provide proper drainage and a dust free surface for the parking area located along the Kinnickinnic Avenue portion of the property. The matter continued into 1977 when the lot was paved at an estimated cost of \$3,000. Cedar board fencing was installed in 1982. In 1992 a rear volley ball court (along Ellen and Estes Streets) became a matter of contention since such recreational use was not permitted in a Local Business District. The Board of Zoning Appeals granted a one-year variance on October 1, 1992 to allow the volleyball court. As a condition, the court needed to be moved as far east as possible on the property and required a fence so as to prevent balls from being hit into the public right of way and street. The Commissioner of Public Works James Kaminski had recommended against closing off Ellen Street during the frequently held games. The variance was renewed through the 1990s and today the volleyball court is still in place.

Permit records do not document the most significant changes that occurred to the building. The most obvious have been the alterations to the storefront windows. The three along Kinnickinnic Avenue and