

Consideration of the Permanent Historic Designation of the Lamers Building, 832 S. 5th Street ZND May 23, 2023



221861

Resolution relating to the Permanent Historic
Designation of the Lamers Building at 830 -
832 S. 5th Street, in the 12th Ald. District.



830-832 S. 5th Street (354 Grove Street, old)

1883, Andrew Elleson, architect

Constructed for Mathias Lamers as a rental property.

Nominated by current owner Celine Farrell

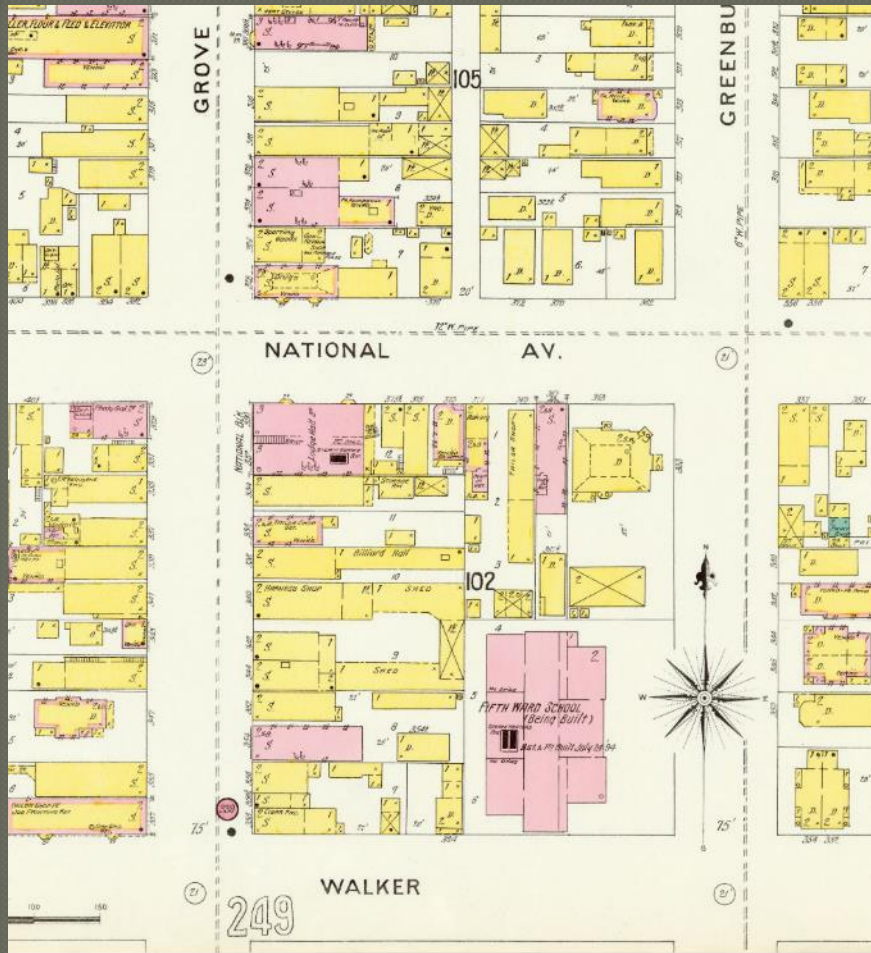


830-832 S. 5th Street (354 Grove Street, old)

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Mathias Lamers

- Born in Holland, 1827
- Learned shoemaking craft in Holland
- 1855 - moved to Milwaukee
- 1860 – purchased 352 & 354 Grove Street for \$1,000 & constructed a shop-home at 352 Grove St. shortly thereafter
- Built subject property 1883 as a rental

Remodeled to current state 1901

1904

THE PROPRIETORS OF ONE OF MILWAUKEE'S BEST
EQUIPPED SHOE STORES EXPRESS THEIR OPINION
ON STORE NEWS ADVERTISING

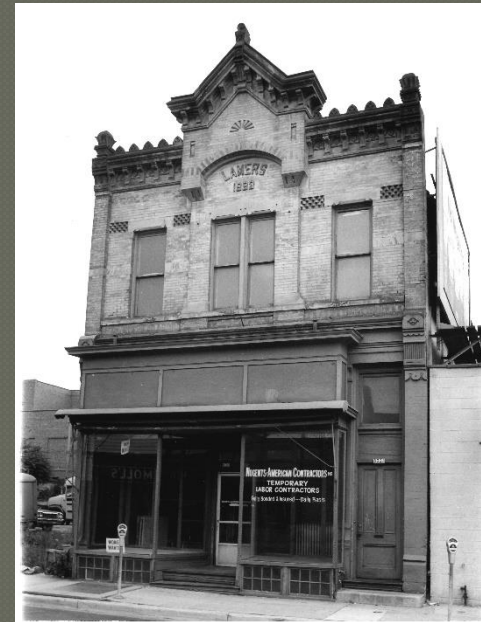


"We do not hesitate in the least to state that our advertising investment in the "What You Want and Where to Find It" columns has brought about satisfactory returns, for we frequently learn from our customers direct that they see our little advertisements in "The Journal."

Lamers Brothers conduct a large shoe store on Grove St., making a specialty of fine and medium grades of Men's, Ladies' and Children's footwear. Being one of the oldest shoe firms on the South side, they are perfectly familiar with the requirements of their trade. On account of the excellent quality of the goods they carry and the moderate prices at which they are sold they have little trouble in maintaining the trade once gained, and they number among their list of customers many who have been regular patrons for years and years. Their efforts now are bent on adding to their clientele and in reaching out for new business they find advertising an important factor.

STORE OF LAMERS BROS., 34 GROVE ST.
FIRE SHOES.

1973



5/23/2023

Death Follows Talk at School

Bernard Lamers, Business Man of South Side, Succumbs

After speaking before pupils of Holy Trinity school about 4 p. m. Tuesday, his sixty-third birthday anniversary, Bernard Lamers, 712 South side business man, fell dead as he stepped from the platform. He had just spoken briefly in presenting \$15 prize money to school children for attending the 1928 Same Fourth celebration.



Mr. Lamers was born at 534 Grove st., now the site of Lamers Brothers shoe store. John P. Lamers, a brother, is the other member of the firm.

Surviving are his widow, Mrs. Ida Lamers; two daughters, Mrs. Marie Hoerres and Mrs. Clarissa Anderson; a sister, Mrs. Anna Järschow; two brothers, John and Emil, and three grandchildren, all of Milwaukee.

Mr. Lamers was a former secretary of the Milwaukee Retail Shoe Dealers' association. He also was secretary of Holy Trinity court No. 83, Catholic Order of Foresters, and belonged to St. Joseph's, Benevolent society, Holy Name society of Sacred Heart church and the Knights of Pythias.

John P. M. Lamers, Ex-Shoe Man, Dies

John P. M. Lamers, 71, a son of Dutch emigrants who came to America from Holland in 1857, died Monday at 4:15 p. m. at his home, 1223 S. Tenth st.

Operated shoe store until 1929



Since 'Dad never said girls can't do everything,' Celine Farrell, a Milwaukee artist, spent 10 years renovating the Lamers Building in Walker's Point to its original 19th century splendor.

With much of the work now completed, the rest of the century 'belongs to me.'

Mathias Lamers would be proud

The large brick building has come full circle from the days of Mathias Lamers, a local cobbler of the last century.

In 1883, when Lamers had it built, it sat in the midst of a prosperous commercial area known as Walker's Point. Lamers was Dutch, a member of one of the many groups of immigrants — English, German, Irish, Norwegian — that settled in that area.

Over the years, however, the Walker's Point neighborhood deteriorated, going downhill quickly after the Great Depression. It wasn't until the 1970s that recovery began, bolstered by the listing of Walker's Point on the National Register of Historic Places in 1978. That made it eligible for federal and state funding for renovation.

But the recovery of Mathias Lamers' building was underway by then. It had started in 1973, when Celine Farrell bought the building at 830-32 S. 5th St.

Farrell, a widely known artist, began spiffing it up with new paint and an extensive renovation program.

Today, Mathias Lamers' building houses her spacious art studio, two specialty shops and the small, cozy apartment she shares with her much-touted companion, Anja, a German shepherd.

An upstairs hallway, with 10-foot ceilings, is adorned with black and white photographs of dancers and actresses, leading the way to Farrell's apartment at the back of the building.

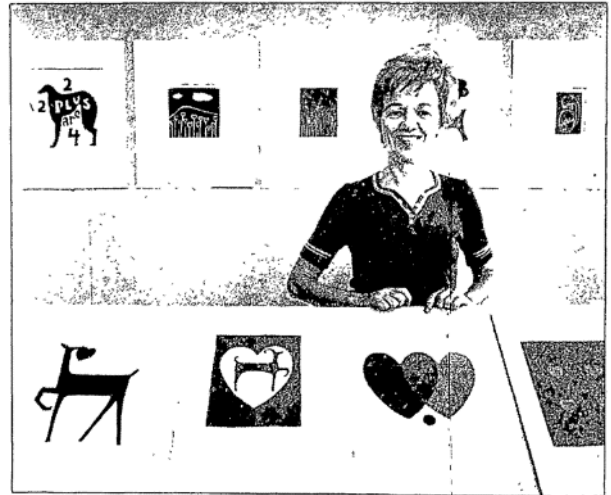
It is small but cozy, with a kitchen she painted her favorite color — lilac. She also has a rooony pantry, a combination living-sleeping room, and a shower room. Off the hallway outside the apartment is her "water closet," complete with skylight.

Farrell will show off her building during a birthday party she's giving this weekend, complete with a birthday cake baked in the shape of the building.

She said she bought it because it was architecturally sound.

Still, she recalled, it was "just to the point where water was getting in and some of the molding was popping out, but not where it was cracking. A lot of the work was cosmetic."

The petite and spirited woman did a lot of the surgery herself, picking up pointers from books and a home



Farrell posed with some of the whimsical prints she creates in her airy studio in her 100-year-old building.

Sentinel photos by Michael Sears

repair course she took at the Milwaukee Area Technical College. She also gathered fix-up tips from owners of home repair shops and repairmen by asking them questions.

"One of the problems women must get over is thinking of themselves as dumb women," she said, matter-of-factly.

"For each window in this place, I had to put in 10 hours of work before I even painted," she said. "The kitchen windows had been so damaged (by a former tenant). They put storm windows on the inside, put boards over these and plastered all around where the air came in."

A corner window had been covered with plywood and "nailed with the largest nail they could find, then caulked all around it," she said.

Farrell sanded and preserved the pine floors with a special resin.

Exterior work included stripping the bright green paint from the ornate ironwork on the Lamers Building's front.

Farrell also has transformed a barren back yard into a spot filled with greenery, herbs and flowers, as well as "bugs and occasionally naughty little boys who tromp through," she said good-naturedly.

Farrell enjoys talking about the history of her building, pointing out that Mathias Lamers was the grandfather of a widely known former Milwaukeean, William Lamers. For more than 30 years he was an assistant superintendent for the Milwaukee Public Schools. He retired in 1971 at the age of 70.

The building remained in the Lamers family until 1945, when it was sold to the publishers of a Slovenian newspaper. Farrell found some 1845 papers when she cleaned the downstairs to make way for her studio on the first floor in the back of the building.

There, she creates many of the silk screens and much of the metal work for which she's noted.

"An artist finds with her work that which she really likes about herself," she said.

She favors her "summer grasses" silk screen, done in bright green. It sums up the smell of hay and growing upon a farm outside of Madison, where, she said, she "became one with nature."

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Criteria

- e-1. Its exemplification and development of the cultural, economic, social or historic heritage of the city, state of Wisconsin or the United States. *Mercantile history of the second phase of Walkers Point*
- e-5. Its embodiment of distinguishing characteristic of an architectural type or specimen. *High integrity example of High Victorian Italianate Commercial*
- e-8. Its relationship to other distinctive areas which are eligible for preservation according to a plan based on a historic, cultural or architectural motif. *Identified as top priority for preservation in the original Walkers Point survey and contributes Walkers Point NRHD*

Staff recommends that the Lamers Building be given permanent historic designation as a City of Milwaukee Historic Site as a result of its fulfillment of criteria e-1, e-5, and e-8 of the Historic Preservation Ordinance, Section 320-21(3) of the Milwaukee Code of Ordinances.

5/23/2023