

KEYSTONE HOUSE



Fig. 1.
Keystone
House 1970.
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The Keystone House was built in 1853 by Englishman "Squire" William Petherick, restored in the mid 1940s by Mrs. Freda Keys Winterble, and sold to the University through The Wisconsin Alumni Foundation (WARF) in 1966. The house is now the home of the Max Kade Institute for German-American Studies.

The Keystone House was built in 1853 as a farm house by an English lawyer and gentleman farmer "Squire" William J. Petherick, who came to Madison's west edge after living on Johnson Street and in Sun Prairie. He had the house built of local sandstone and timber. Petherick chose the site because he believed that State Street would eventually be extended straight to the west and pass by his front door.¹

The Petherick family lived there until William's death in 1873. The house then passed into the hands of several owners, in whose possession it was divided into flats and gradually deteriorated. In 1943 the house and thirty-acre lot were purchased by Mrs. Freda Keys Winterble. Under the oversight of local architect Frank Riley, Mrs. Winterble restored the house as nearly as possible to its original condition. Mrs. Winterble, whose children were grown, was a prominent citizen and often allowed her house (which she named "Keystone house" after her family name of Keys) to be used for public gatherings, such as concerts on the lawn by the Pro Arte Quartet.²

Mrs. Winterble first approached the University about selling the property in 1960 but funds

were unavailable. Again in 1965 she suggested that the University purchase the property, since it would be needed for the proposed development of the new medical center.³ Since funds were still not readily available, the University asked WARF to purchase the property. They did so for \$110,000 in October 1965, and in the summer of 1968 donated the property to the regents of the University.⁴ The University intended the house to be used as a president's or chancellor's house, but beginning in 1970 assigned it as office and conference space for a succession of small programs, the first of which was the University of Wisconsin Arts Council. It is currently occupied by the Max Kade Institute for German American Studies.⁵ In 1972 the house was designated a Dane County Historical Landmark and outfitted with a bronze plaque, which misspells Petherick's name as "Pethrick."⁶

1) *Wisconsin State Journal*, December 12, 1976 p. 6, sec. 7.

2) Freda Keys Winterble, interview by Mrs. Fannie Taylor, summer 1970, copy in University Archives Subject file "Keystone House".

3) Freda K. Winterble to Dr. Peter L. Eichman, July 28, 1965.

4) C. A. Engman to Fred Harvey Harrington, April 26, 1966. For date of real estate transactions, see Dane County Register of Deeds Records, Deed Record #1145983, dated October 26, 1965, recorded October 28, 1965, and Deed Record #1221804, a quit claim deed dated July 30, 1968.

5) Records of University Space Management Office.

6) See Dane County Register of Deeds Vol. 18, p. 495. Assignment: Charles Farrigan and wife to William J. *Petherick*, June 7, 1853.