

*507 West Church Street
Carl & Barbara Vallely*

The first feature you'll notice on this three-story stucco home is its street-side appearance. The street-facing side of the home has a large, brick chimney, repeating the brick work along the bottom portion of the wall, and has five, side-by-side multi-paned windows. The front, proper entrance, is located on the eastern side of the house and features, what owners Carl and Barbara refer to as "the best room in their home during nice weather", a beautiful open loggia with large Doric columns, tile flooring, richly stained beadboard ceiling, and exposed overhanging beams. This part of the house also has two sets of exterior multi-paned French doors, and a floor to ceiling multi-paned bay. The exterior façade, painted tan with dark trim, takes on an old world English manor house look due to Tudor-style architectural elements and lush ivy growing along its walls. According to Barbara, the house has fifty-two windows throughout! The couple purchased their 151 year-old house in 1979—the day before they were married. To celebrate their nuptials, they decided to hold their wedding reception inside their new house. They have also hosted their daughter's wedding and comfortably accommodated 125 guests. Today, they are opening the first floor of their home to our holiday tour goers.

As a little back story for you, the house was erected on land from the original Hoffman Estate that made up a 140-acre farm that bordered what is now Walnut, Hoffman, and Seventh Streets and went southward to the Chemung River. As the acreage was subdivided between the years 1850-1890, this house, although it was much more modest at the time, was built for George Cooke and his family. It changed hands in 1881 when Cooke's widow sold it to an Elmira depot clerk by the name of Isaac S. Marshall. Native Elmiran John R. Van Campen, a lawyer with an insurance and real estate business, purchased the house in 1905 when it underwent an extensive remodel which included a large addition. The family went to Europe while this took place. Another addition, which included the living room, came about in 1914. At the time, the parcel of land the house sat upon included the entire corner lot of West Church and Walnut Streets. Van Campen, a charter member of the Elmira Country Club, owned numerous properties in Elmira as well as a downtown building that bore his family name. The house remained in the Van Campen family until its sale in 1971.

Guests of today's tour will enter through a double set of French doors from a vestibule, with checkered floor and white textured wallpaper and bordering blue accents, and into the reception room which served as the main parlor of the original dwelling. From this vantage point, the true beauty of this historic home unfolds before you. Notice the unique features such as the quartersawn oak doors, detailed woodwork including wide crown molding with picture rail, and grand staircase with first floor bench, oak hardwood flooring, and the curved-corner walls. The ceiling is painted crisp white with boxed hardwood moldings. Carl explained how the house took its current shape through three stages of growing taller and wider. While cleaning the attic, they came across the original blueprints for the remodel. Carl says the attic likely served as the planning center during construction. In order to support the wide expanse

of the room and hold the second and third stories' weight, a massive beam had to be installed to strengthen the framing. Also found in the house were construction plans to turn the full size attic space into servants' quarters.

Located to the right of the reception room is the living room. It has a centered brick constructed wood-burning fireplace with cherry mantel and carved mantel braces and features built in benches on either side. The ceiling has exposed beams. Some of the larger beams have intricate corbels where they meet the wall. Period light fixtures hang from the ceiling. This room also repeats the curved wall corners seen in the reception room. While completing renovations, Carl and Barbara try to retain the original lap and plaster walls whenever possible.

Entering back into the reception room and just past the vestibule, you will find a small room aptly named the music room since it holds an antique piano. An archway opens to a bay with floor to ceiling, double-hung twelve-over-twelve pane windows and overlooks the loggia. The wood trim is painted off-white and has tone on tone damask print wallpaper.

The next room is their large dining room with beamed ceiling, a built-in cabinet with leaded glass door, and floral wallpaper with a gold metallic background. Carl and Barbara like to entertain and their dining room table can easily accommodate a crowd of sixteen and it isn't uncommon for them to have additional guests seated in other rooms around the house. The flooring shows evidence of the growing pains the house underwent based on the two types of boards; the original plank flooring meets up with the more modern milled hardwood addition. The plank flooring would have been part of the former common room which is now partitioned by a wall that forms a butler's pantry and a half bath on the other side. The butler's pantry features exposed shelving, shiplap walls, a dry goods bin, and the original Van Campen family safe. Carl joked, "The safe came with the house!" Not something one could easily move while packing. The hall and pantry space also allows access to the first floor powder room.

The next room is the kitchen where guests can find the original staircase which would have been used during the Van Campen years by the household staff. What looks like a small cabinet door on the shared wall with the dining room opens to show it is actually a pass-through for serving. Kitchen renovations came about in 2013 when a "simple" ceiling project turned into a \$25,000 major home repair project. That was when they discovered the entire old chimney system (that extends through all three floors) was sinking. As that was torn out and the house reinforced, literally from the foundation up, salvaged bricks were later used to create a mantel for a modern gas insert fireplace. This focal point feature compliments the cozy feel of the room with its white cabinets, red walls, and stainless steel appliances.

Carl and Barbara have a deep fondness for the Greater Elmira area and keep involved in community organizations focused on the preservation of architectural treasures and promoting the rich history of its bygone days.

*653 Euclid Avenue
Terry McCormick*

This classic 1895 Georgian-style Colonial home was designed by the Elmira-based architectural firm of Pierce & Bickford for Hovey Copley. The façade, with its five across-the-front windows and balanced grand front entry, displays the exact symmetry in design that is ubiquitous with Georgian Colonials. It features a hip roof with central accent gable and attic dormers on each side. The home had a stacked first and second floor porch at the time of its construction, but the second floor porch was removed at some point. It features a Dutch-style door with leaded glass sidelights and built-in benches, with flip up storage, on either side.

The home was purchased five years ago and is currently offered for sale by the McCormick family. Terry explained that the home's former owner had invested countless hours and money into restoring the home to what you see before you today, but did undergo some minor changes in decorating choices, such as paint and wallcoverings, to better fit Terry's family's tastes. From the very moment you step inside the vestibule and into its foyer, with open grand staircase, you will fall in love with the recessed ceramic tile fireplace, built-in benches, and oak paneling. Included in the paneling are several hidden storage drawers and the benches also flip up for additional storage. One of the benches also features a blanket cabinet. Terry tells us that the house offers unique storage spaces throughout due to the architects' insistence to get the maximum use out of every design nuance. Facing the front door, you will see yet another set of built-in benches on either side of the vestibule. These benches mirror the porch benches and also offer flip up storage. The flooring is oak hardwood and features a parquet border known as log cabin pattern. The entire layout of the room is designed with household entertaining in mind. Hovey Copley was deeply involved in public service; serving as a City Alderman, Chemung County Clerk, and a New York State Assemblyman to Chemung County. While Terry showed us this majestic room, she told us she has envisioned Copley addressing his guests from the second floor staircase landing. Call it an echo from the past. Picture a turn of the century Christmas party taking place with guests assembled below and dressed to the nines, when their City Alderman takes his place on the landing, raises his glass, and gives a festive toast.

The living room is located to the left of the staircase and features a gorgeous stained glass accent window, a single pocket door to close off the foyer, and an angled fireplace. The mantel features a green ceramic tile front with two portrait tiles in the upper corners. The identity of the young girl represented in these tiles is a mystery. Although the room now has an open floor plan with the dining room, the original blueprints show that a wall with bookcases and pocket doors used to exist between the two rooms. This would also explain the difference in flooring layout between the two rooms. The butler's pantry has a spring-loaded serving door for easy serving access to the dining room as well as a work desk and multiple built-in cabinets. The kitchen features the original cabinets and modern updates including stainless steel appliances. Off from the kitchen is the rear servants' staircase. As you continue around, there is a large half-bath with laundry and a short hallway into the foyer. The front room to

the left is the family's music room. The floor plan flows to allow movement around the entire first floor. The upstairs features five large bedrooms and two bathrooms. The flooring is a wider plank yellow pine. At one time, a former owner installed a wall along the second floor overlook to create a maid's quarters where she had a designated bedroom, kitchen/living room, and bathroom all to herself. The wall has since been removed as well as the wall-mounted cabinets inside the old kitchen. Terry's daughter's bedroom is in the former kitchen and still has the drop down ironing board inside a cabinet to the left of the door. Each room has a large closet and most include built-in dressers and shelving. The blue bathroom is original to a 1940's remodel. Other original items are the brass hanger outside of the bathroom and the door knocker inside the front bedroom.

As stated before, 653 Euclid Avenue is currently offered for sale and is listed through broker Shane Searfoss of Signature Properties. For more information or to set up an appointment, please contact Shane at (607) 796-9817 Extension 222.

373 West First Street Capriotti Properties

Perhaps one of the greatest aspects of attending the Near Westside Neighborhood Association' holiday home tours (besides knowing the cost of your ticket helps to support a truly wonderful organization) is getting to see the before and after unveiling of a Capriotti Properties' project. Those of you who may have attended last year's tour will remember the dilapidated condition of this former diamond in the rough that had just started to receive rehabilitation attention. The bottom two apartments are open for the tour and will allow guests to enter through the front door and exit from the rear.

This Queen Anne-style double house, with three forward facing gables, double covered porches and double covered terraces was built in 1890, and was converted into four apartments during the early 1900's. Occupants have included traveling representatives for the Star-Gazette, a clerk for the American Sales Book Company, and a conductor of the Pennsylvania Railroad. F. E. Roney was a dealer of Shamrock Radio Sets and ran his business from the home in 1926. The property's most historically famous owner would have been Frederick "Fritz" Schweppe who died in 1892, but the building, known as Schweppe Apartments, remained deeded to F. & H. Schweppe Company, a business he ran with his brother, Henry, until July 1919 when it was sold to George A. Dudley. Frederick was a well-respected fresco painter, who was initially sent to Elmira from New York City by his boss, to fresco the Second National Bank. He is also credited with painting the fresco inside of the former Elmira Opera House which, at the time of its opening, was praised in the Elmira Gazette with, "It is doubtful if there is a finer theater outside of New York or Chicago and the stage is one of the largest ever built," as reprinted in the Star-Gazette.

Capriotti Properties purchased the building in 2014 after it had sat vacant for fifteen years. Renovations began on the outside which included replacing 40% of the cedar siding,

partially replacing the roof, replacing entire front porches and second floor balconies, and installing new doors and windows. The next major task came with leveling the structure. Floors and stairways were bowed and required jacking up and reinforcing beams as well as leveling shared ceiling/floor joists for the second floor. Once those tasks were completed, they began gutting the interior (most of the lap and plaster walls were beyond repair) to conduct updates and replacements of electrical, plumbing, and heating issues. After that, energy efficient insulation was added and then drywall and painting began. Engineered hardwood floors were installed in the living rooms and bedrooms, the bathroom received ceramic tiles, and high quality linoleum went into the kitchens. Despite the poor condition of the windows, most of the window casing could be saved. They even reproduced the rosette pattern found on the top corners of the existing wood framing when they replaced unsalvageable pieces. The finishing touches came with the installation of crown moldings.

The front porch opens into a four foot by four foot vestibule. Between the new steel door with Victorian-style oval window and the stationary transom window, plenty of natural light makes its way indoors. The layout is mirrored side by side on the first and second levels: eat-in kitchen, living room, and side by side bedroom and bathroom. The only difference between the first and second floor units would be the rear mud rooms both first floor apartments have. The kitchens have oak cabinetry with high quality granite-looking Formica, block glass backsplashes, and stainless steel appliances. The bathrooms have white cabinetry with granite tops and full tubs with sliding glass doors. Each unit has its own stack washer and dryer unit conveniently located inside a closet. Plenty of planning was involved to maximize storage and closet space. The wall colors chosen for each room offers a sophisticated, modern look that does not detract from the architecture. As always, another homerun rehabilitation from Jim and his crew at Capriotti Properties!

*107 Grove Street
Sarah & James Wellington*

Home is where the heart is and that sentiment greets you at the door of Sarah and James Wellington's 1890 Eastlake-style Victorian home. The home's exterior is a classic example of construction trends of the late 1800's. Also known as "Stick Style", the name refers to the transition from standard post and beam construction to milled lumber with precision cuts. Noteworthy architectural elements include: the combination of narrow clapboard and fish scale siding, multi-gabled slate roof with turned-wood spires, wide covered front porch with detailed spindle railings, the mid-landing cantilever window seat with decorative braces, and the second story covered balcony. The home was recently painted in a four color scheme with dark green, light green, tan, and mustard used to cleverly highlight the grand details of this gorgeous Victorian.

The couple met during their sophomore year of college at St. Bonaventure University. James was in Army ROTC and Sarah was on the lacrosse team. While they have

lived in larger cities during the beginning of their relationship, they knew Elmira was where they wanted to plant their roots. Since purchasing their house four years ago, they have welcomed a son and daughter to their family. Sarah explained that the house was completely move-in-ready due to the extensive work by the previous owners. Upon moving in, Sarah and James updated interior paint colors to lighter tones and have continued with projects to make the house more energy efficient. Working towards a green-friendly house is of utmost importance to them. Once they are completed, Sarah would like to remodel the second floor bathroom. In the past, their decorating style leaned more towards the modern look found at Ikea, but since purchasing their home, they have embraced the elegant design of the architecture and are happy to be adding family antiques to provide period touches. One such piece you will see once inside the foyer is the cherry parlor table with marble top and Victorian rose carving that once belonged to her grandmother.

The front entry, although a reproduction, has a period-looking storm door that was installed by the previous owners and protects the original oak door with its full plate window and original hardware. Oak framed sidelights embrace the doors and allow in plenty of outdoor light. The foyer, with grand staircase, gives visitors their first glimpse of the splendor only a Victorian house built in that era can provide. The house has its original cast iron radiators with ornate French Rococo scrolling detail which were restored and painted silver. Several units have Blandford-style oak covers. Underfoot, the golden oak hardwood floors are original and found throughout the majority of the home. The staircase features oak paneling, a mid-landing with small window seat, stained glass windows, an accent ocular window, and an antique, wall-mounted light fixture. While the second floor of the house is not open for today's tour, Sarah and James encourage tour guests to explore the staircase. Another architectural spectacle are the Ionic columns (topped off with decorative spiral scrolls known as a volute) and placed on tall horizontal pedestal bases with entablatures (spans the ceiling like a beam) that provide interior room segmentation between the foyer, front parlor, and living room. The fixed plate glass picture windows measure a whopping 59" wide and 68" high. All of this 19th century elegance under ten foot ceilings!

The front parlor, to the left of the foyer, is primarily reserved for the younger members of the Wellington family where they have a work desk for activities. During the holidays, this room houses their 9' Christmas tree. The living room has an oak mantel fireplace with ceramic tile accents around the firebox and on the hearth. Although nonfunctional at this time, we can all agree that it provides the perfect focal point to the room—especially decked out in its festive garland. The dining room, with its box beam ceiling and textured wallpaper applied to the recessed space, has built-in cabinets made out of rich cherry. For today's tour, Sarah has the table set for the holidays with her Grandparents' Noritake china they acquired when stationed in Japan while her grandfather served in the United States Air Force. The kitchen area, accessed from the dining room has two distinct spaces. Located to the right is where the original kitchen once stood, but has been converted into a handy butler's pantry and shares the built-in cherry cabinets with the dining room and provides access from either side. A laundry area was created in the space that formerly housed the stove. To the rear right of the

pantry is the servants' staircase. The kitchen and pantry has engineered bamboo flooring for an updated look to complement the stainless steel appliances, cherry cabinetry, peninsula-style bar, and box beam ceiling with pressed tin squares. Sarah and James thank you for visiting and invite you to enjoy some refreshments while you investigate the design details of their wonderful Near Westside home.

***557 & 559 Grove Street
Sarah Vallely – Katie Boland***

Sisters Sarah Vallely and Katie Boland purchased their 1890 double house in 2015. Along with being neighbors, the ladies also spend their working hours together at Katie's Near Westside eatery, Horigan's Tavern. Over the past year, Katie has been able to work on various remodeling projects inside her space at 559. Inside Sarah's residence at 557, the busy mother of two young children has tackled projects as time permits and also when necessity calls. No matter the restoration phase, I think we can all agree that their homes have lots of character and offer endless possibilities.

The house's primary construction of brick, with roof line dental detail and decorative arches above the windows, has a lovely covered front porch that is divided by a center banister. The porch has a beadboard ceiling, brick bases with tapered wooden shafts, and closed off balustrade that offers nice touches to this classic Victorian design. The outdoor seating area offers them the perfect place to enjoy their Grove Street neighborhood. Fitting in with the timeframe and similar style of numerous other homes throughout Elmira, Sarah and Katie believe the double house supplied housing units for employees of the Richardson & Co.'s Boot and Shoe Factory, formerly located on Railroad Avenue and Market Street in Elmira. Richardson & Co. was founded in 1861 and remained a business of distinction and community economic support until 1908. At the height of its production time, 1,600 pair of shoes were manufactured daily. Their first class quality shoes could be found in retail stores across New York as well as in Pennsylvania, Ohio, New Jersey, Michigan, and Illinois courtesy of their hardworking traveling salesmen. Some of the former residents of this double house include: Elmira School No. Five teacher M. Cillian Van Buren resided at 557 around the year 1898 and Captain Hiram W. Caulking and his wife, Mary Ann, resided at 559 around the year 1879. Captain Caulking, who served in Pennsylvania's 57th Regiment Infantry Company D, fought for the Union in many battles including Fredericksburg, Gettysburg, and Appomattox Courthouse.

Starting the tour with Sarah's home, which has a mirror image floor plan to her sister's home, guests will walk into a rather spacious and long entryway with ten foot ceilings and open staircase to the second floor. The front door, with its large center pane and eight smaller accent panes, appears to be original to the house. Hardwood flooring runs throughout most of the two homes as well as wide baseboard trim. Sarah's living room has a nice bay with two large windows facing the street. The kitchen is reached through the dining room area and is

Sarah's current project, where she has already installed engineered hardwood flooring, added a colorful backsplash behind the sink, painted her bottom cabinets a soothing blue, freshened up the top cabinets in a crisp white and removed the cabinet doors for an open look. She also acquired an antique Roper gas range that dates back to the 1940's. A small half-bath has been put in where the former walk-in pantry used to be. Upstairs, the space holds three generous bedrooms, and a full bath. The bathroom area provided Sarah with one of those unplanned necessity remodels mentioned above. A water leak on the second floor demanded major plumbing repairs and lots of pesky demoing just to get to the "hidden" problem. That's when Sarah remodeled her upstairs bathroom and put in finishing touches like subway tiles along the walls of the tub and shower surround and black and white floor tiles in a pinwheel pattern.

Moving on to Katie's home, her half has been completely repainted to match her style. An antique pendant light fixture, from her parents' home on West Church Street, hangs in the entryway where she chose a soothing gray color for the walls and crisp white for the trim. The rooms located to the right include a music room, with a baby grand piano, and living room space where she has used a smoky blue wall color and coordinated a gray accent wall in the same shade as the entryway. Her dining room, accessed through a large double opening from the living room, can easily accommodate six to eight dinner guests around its cherry table. Her kitchen is equipped with new stainless steel appliances and white cabinets that provide a more modern look. Even with those modern touches, you will see many of the original fixtures from when the house was built. From wrought iron heater grates to built-in cupboards, the residences show off their Near Westside historical origins.

*West Water Street Row Houses
Featuring 395 W Water Street
Capriotti Properties
Restoration-in-Progress*

*For some of you, today will mark your second visit to this project site since they were part of the 2013 *Homes for the Holidays* tour. Back then, they had only recently been purchased and the extent of their work included clearing out dumpster loads of trash and securing flooring and hanging caution tape to make it safe for tour-goer foot traffic. We can't wait for you to see how far they've come! After being vacant since 2006, Capriotti Properties purchased the three, multiple resident, double row houses with the goal of returning them to their glory days of Georgian Colonial excellence. Initial restoration began in autumn 2014 and has proven to be a slow process between other projects, weather, and the severity of damage. As Jim Capriotti explained, the three units, while all in need of major restoration attention, were in varying degrees of despair. The buildings went from poor, 389-391, to poorer, 393-395, to worst, 397-399. In fact, 397-399 was in such bad shape from roof-related water damage, all of the interior walls needed to be pulled out and the entire roof, including rafters*

and framing, needed to be replaced. The rear exterior wall had so much water damage they had to replace all of the rear window and door arches.

Built in 1877, the row houses, were constructed of shale bricks manufactured by J. Phillip Weyer. The bricks were produced in Weyer's kilns located on Newtown Creek. The row home opened for today's tour has a five bay façade, a mansard roof with slate shingles, gabled windows on the third floor, and a pedimented main door surround. The original front porch was removed between 1903 and 1918. A step ahead in modern conveniences of other residences in the city, these row homes were some of the first to have running water and gas that supplied both heat and light. They were constructed as employee housing units for the management staff of the former Richardson & Co.'s Boot and Shoe Factory, formerly located on Railroad Avenue and Market Street in Elmira. Richardson & Co. was founded in 1861 and remained a business of distinction and community economic support until 1908. At the height of its production time, 1,600 pair of shoes were manufactured daily. Their first class quality shoes could be found in retail stores across New York as well as in Pennsylvania, Ohio, New Jersey, Michigan, and Illinois courtesy of their hardworking traveling salesmen.

Starting with the progress of the restoration project, the exteriors of each house are done. This entailed the time-consuming process of repointing all of the brick masonry because it was too far gone as well as repointing the blue rock foundation masonry and, where they needed to be replaced, put in new blocks and stuccoed over them. Not one to skimp on details, they included recreating the chisel marks of the blue stone in the stucco as they went along. Outside trim, from casements to soffits and dental details were repaired or outright replaced. Basement windows were replaced with MDF panels for security reasons. Three new front doors, measuring 3'X7', patio doors with full glass for each rear balcony, and 116 new windows needed to be ordered and installed. Each unit will have their own private 10'X16' deck which will offer tenants the perfect view of the Chemung River. Each deck will be fitted with a fire ladder and an emergency latch that cannot be accessed from below for security. While planning the original project, Mr. Capriotti wanted to install windows to the rear wall of each unit, but decided not to break into the walls of the older buildings for structural integrity reasons. The front steps on each building are ten feet wide. The originals had concrete bases, wrought iron railings, and blue stone caps for each step tread. These have been renovated to look as original as possible. Finishing out the exterior restoration, all three houses were painted.

At the time the holiday tour brochures were written, it was Mr. Capriotti's hope to have at least one unit completed or, most likely, close to completion for today's guests. Due to the extreme amount of work the project has required, the construction timeline has been pushed back to accommodate. Even so, guests will have the opportunity to see the tremendous transformation these forgotten row houses have undergone. All have plumbing, electric, and heating completed. The houses have two units on each floor that are separated by a central staircase. Each unit is set up in a shotgun style design starting with a living room and a two-tiered bar opening to the kitchen that will allow seating, a bathroom, and a single bedroom with ample room for a seating area. The kitchens will come equipped with new appliances

including a dishwasher. The bathrooms will have double sinks and a full size tub with shower. Each unit will also come with a stacked washer and dryer combo.

While the West Water Street row houses may not be totally completed, Mr. Capriotti has assured us he will invite us back next year to see the end results—and we can't wait!