

Building 117: Officer's Quarters



Front (southeast) facade, April 2019

Construction Date: 1906

Current Use: Vacant

Historic Use: Residential (Officer's Quarters)

Square Feet: 7,732 (+2,216 SF basement)

Condition: Fair¹

Prior Cost Estimates: \$1,546,400²; \$740,000–\$925,000³

Building Typology: n/a

Building Evolution: The building exterior appears to have been altered in the 1930s, with brick entry vestibules added at the southwest corners.

¹ Hamilton Anderson Associates, 2015.

² For rehabilitation; Hamilton Anderson Associates, 2015.

³ For rehabilitation and conversion to exhibit center or office use; SmithGroup, 2008.

Concrete bases on the front porches suggest they may also have been added in the 1930s.

When the building was remodeled as a museum in the 1970s, a number of interior changes were made. This includes addition and removal of partitions, extensive ceiling changes for HVAC ductwork, door openings closed, new openings constructed, and considerable original detail removed or destroyed. New restrooms were added on the second floor. Like most buildings at Historic Fort Wayne, the building interior had also been remodeled during the WPA work of the 1930s.

Interior Description: This structure, originally built as officers housing, is two-and-one-half stories with full basement. In the 1970s it was altered again for museum exhibit space on the first and second floors. Each unit's first floor originally consisted of an entrance vestibule, "L" shaped front hall with an open stair to the second floor. In addition there was a dining room, pantry, kitchen, lavatory, and rear stair hall that served from the basement to the attic. Three bedrooms were located on the second floor along with a full three-piece bathroom. Today, the two main floors have fully plastered walls and ceilings. All original plaster and woodwork was removed and replaced in 1935-39. For museum use new heating and air conditioning were introduced that resulted in major alterations to walls and particularly ceilings. Many other alterations were made for museum use. Although the museum display cases and much of the exhibit lighting is still in place, all interpretive exhibits have been removed. Primary floors are wood, most of which has been carpeted. Newer restrooms are floored with vinyl tile.

General Condition: This building is in poor condition, according to a 2015 report. A condition assessment conducted in 2008 identifies rusted lintels, mortar in poor condition with many open joints, deteriorated chimney mortar, deteriorated front porch masonry, wood trim in fair or good condition, deteriorated gutters with leaders missing, paint in poor condition, main roof in poor condition with some damage to structure, porch roofs in poor condition with deteriorated column bases and concrete steps. The building has suffered additional deterioration since 2008.

Utilities: None

Character-defining Features: Significant exterior features include: red brick and tinted mortar, coursed ashlar limestone foundation, eaves with crown molding, wood cornices, cruciform plan with front gable and subordinate cross gable, jack-arched window openings with

limestone sills, overall fenestration pattern and window muntin configurations, hip roof porches with wood elements.

Most interior character-defining features were removed during the 1970s.

An interior inspection was not conducted in 2020 due to building condition.

References: Additional background information, including both 2008 and 2015 conditions assessments referenced above, and National Register of Historic Places documentation, is available at detroitmi.gov/historicfortwayne.

See next page for floor plan.

