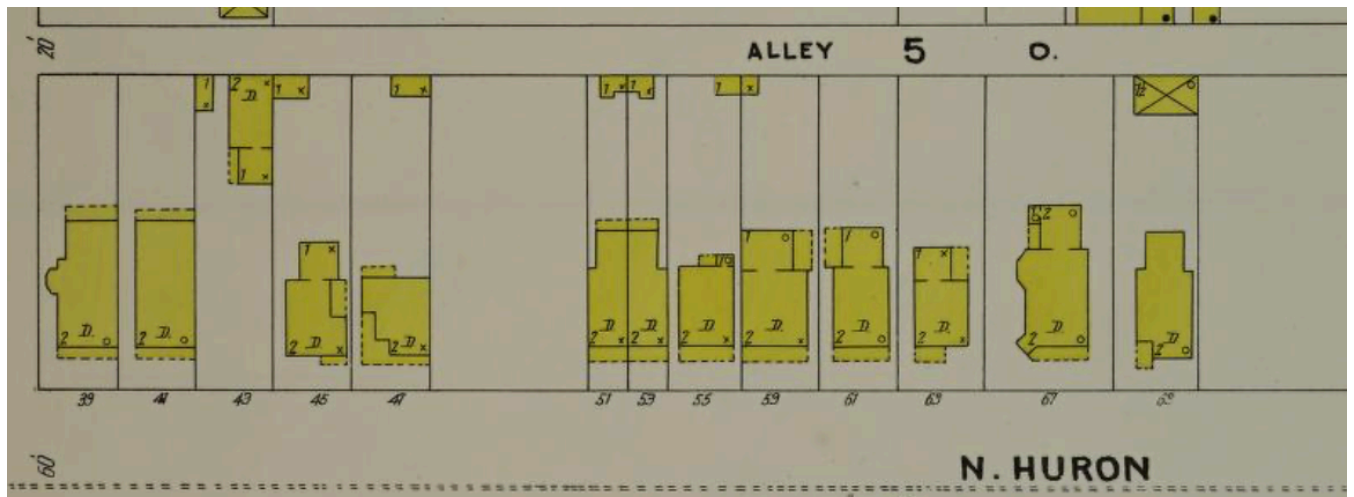




219 North Huron Street

Deed and city directory records suggest that this house was built by 1896 by William T. Higgins and his wife Mary (nee Walters). Higgins had purchased the property in late 1889 and first appears at this address (then known as #59 North Huron) in the 1896 Wheeling City Directory. Higgins (1865 - 1937) was born in Bridgeport, Ohio, and worked as a watchmaker for jeweler Jacob W. Grubb. Two sons were born to the couple while they lived at this address – James Walters Higgins (1898 – 1975) and Dr. Eugene L. Higgins (1904 – 1988). The family moved to Cleveland, Ohio, around 1915, where William Higgins worked as an optometrist. It appears that all four were buried in Lake View Cemetery, Cleveland.



1902 Sanborn Insurance Map, showing the property address as 59 N. Huron (fifth house from the right). The house is a “contributing structure” in the Wheeling Island National Historic District

Oakley E. Bethel (1883 – 1977) and his wife Helen (nee Depew, 1887 – 1975) purchased the property in late 1919. Over the years, city directories and census records list Bethel’s occupation as “salesman”, “commercial traveler for a confectioner,” “broker,” and “salesman for Fidelity Insurance Company.” The 1940 census states that he had a 8th grade education. His World War I draft registration describes him as being tall, of medium build, and having brown eyes and hair. He died at age 93 in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida.

Fred C. and Caroline Higgins briefly owned the property from 1946 to 1948. No further information and no connections to William T. Higgins were found.

William M. Gompers and his wife Sara (“Sally,” nee Moore, 1922-2002) purchased the property in the summer of 1948. During World War II, Gompers (1919 – 1972) served as a Staff Sergeant in the U.S. Army 6th Infantry from 1941 to 1945. At the time of his draft registration, he listed his employer as Wheeling Steel. According to the 1950 census, he worked as a salesman for a tire and rubber company. Following William Gompers’ death, the property was left to his widow, Sara.

In 2002, the deed shows the owners as Sara J. Gompers and Janet A. Taylor (perhaps a daughter), and by 2003, following the death of Sara Gompers, the owners listed were Janet A. and Ronald G. Taylor. The Taylors sold the property to the current owners, Carmel and Lyle Sanders, in 2024.

Prepared by Jeanne Finstein, Friends of Wheeling
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Sources:

- Ancestry.com
- FindaGrave.com
- National Register Listing – Wheeling Island Historic District
- Ohio County Assessor Records
- Ohio County Census Records
- Ohio County Deed Records
- Ohio County Draft Records
- Wheeling City Directories