



The History of the Institute's Home on Delaware Avenue

Historical points of interest:

The first recorded deed for the property is dated 1811. The current building was built in 1854 by **Thomas and Julia Stocking**, with a later addition erected by the Catholic Church in the early 1950's.

After the Stockings, the house was lived in by five notable Buffalo residents:

In 1868, **Noyes Darrow** bought the house. He was the builder of the first luxury apartments in Buffalo (located on Washington St. behind the present Brisbane Building).

In 1895, the mansion was sold to **William Hoyt**, district attorney and a leading Buffalo lawyer. He represented the railroad interests of the Vanderbilts and taught at the University of Buffalo Law School-holding his classes in the paneled downstairs room. He was a friend of President Grover Cleveland. It was Mrs. Hoyt who had the exterior brick painted white-a condition that lasted 90 years (through seven re-paintings).

Edwin Thomas bought the mansion in 1912. He was the manufacturer of the Thomas Flyer, the first limousine type automobile, which won the international auto race from NY to Paris via Siberia.

In 1914, the house was purchased by **Charles Sears**, who would later serve on the New York State Supreme Court.

The mansion's final private owner, in 1925, was **Daniel Kenefick**, a Justice of the New York Supreme Court who was the guiding force behind the 1928 Buffalo City Charter. He was also president of the New York State Bar Association. During this period, Roswell Park served as one of the trustees of the property.

After Judge Kenefick's death in 1950, the property was donated to the **Archdiocese of Buffalo**. In order to house the priests and brothers who were teaching at nearby Bishop Fallon High School, the Church constructed the rear portion of the building in the early 1950's.

When the high school closed in 1970's, the building sat empty for a time, and was then purchased by the **Himalayan Institute of Buffalo** in 1979.

The Himalayan Institute of Buffalo is a non-profit organization that teaches yoga, meditation, and holistic health. It was founded in 1974 by the noted Indian teacher, Swami Rama of the Himalayas, and it is a branch of the Himalayan International Institute located in the Pocono Mountains, not far from Scranton, PA.

The layout of rooms was modified both by the Catholic Church and by the Institute. The primary change was to open the downstairs into larger spaces (the current bookstore was used as a chapel; the current classroom was originally divided into a dining room and paneled sitting room). Other significant changes included enlarging the second floor classroom, opening the servants' quarters above the kitchen into a library, and adding a second stairway to the third floor (which eliminated easy access to the cupola on the roof).

The building, including the addition in the back, has 34 rooms. The original structure was heated by a gas fireplace in each room. Ten of those fireplaces still remain, although the gas was shut off long ago.

A solarium on the south side has had various uses, but easy access to it was blocked when the servants' stairway leading from the kitchen was remodeled to make it safer to climb.

The third floor of the house contains four large bedrooms and a bath.

Volunteers contribute to the maintenance of the building and grounds. Currently, there are three residents who live in the building year-round.

Himalayan Institute of Buffalo | 841 Delaware Ave., Buffalo, NY 14209

P: (716) 883-2223 | W: hibuffalo.org | E: info@hibuffalo.org