

The Sutherland-Wilson family

lived on this farm for six generations—from the time Langford Sutherland purchased it in 1832 until 2000. This family may have been continuous residents of the township longer than any other.



The farmstead is significant because of its historic association with this early pioneering family, and because it preserves both the appearance of structures and construction methods employed as Washtenaw County was being settled.

The Sutherland house is one of the best surviving examples in the county of a one-and-one-half New England cottage in the Greek Revival mode. The dwelling is representative of the synthesis of folk house form and stylistic fashion, which occurred in the transitional period when folk housing traditions were being supplanted by national house types. The combination of Doric columns and square columns on the front porch is unusual as well as illustrative of the syncretic character of the house.



Much of the original detailing of the home has been preserved. The house evidently remained in its original state for well over a hundred years. Plumbing and electricity were not installed until 1958, and the chandeliers in both the dining room and entrance hall originally were fueled by kerosene.



Although the interior floor plan has been altered somewhat, the Greek Revival door surrounds, the large, “columned” parlor, and the extant central hallway and cherry wood staircase appear much as they did at the time of construction.

The main beam in the basement of the house is hand hewed out of solid walnut — 10 inches wide by 7 1/2 inches thick. The floor joists are notched into the beam four inches to fit level with the floor. These also are solid walnut two inches wide by 7 1/2 inches high.



The beams in the barn are of similar construction, and the roof “trusses” consist of round logs, hand hewed on one side to support the roof boards. The outbuildings are very old, although their exact dates of construction remain uncertain.



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