The Howard W. Humphrey House is situated on a narrow lot of land facing south onto Main Street. Trees, growing close to the house, mark the western boundary. A neighboring house on the east is clearly visible.
This Queen Anne-style house features steep crossing gables and a square tower. All windows are one-over-one sash. Gable ends on the south, west, and east exhibit cut work designs in the gable peaks of the main block and front portico, and decorative vergeboards. Fish scale shingles surround the attic-story windows set in the gable peaks. The tower features fish scale shingles, diagonal siding, and a dual-pitched pyramidal roof. The south elevation displays a one-story porch which shields the main entry and wide bay window. The porch features square posts, cut work brackets, balustrade, and a lattice base. The east elevation features a two-story bay and shed-roofed projection.

Howard W. Humphrey was born in 1854 to Russell and Aurelia (Driggs) Humphrey, formerly of Barkhamstead, Connecticut. Several of his siblings' births, recorded in Farmington Vital Records, indicate that the family moved to the area by 1849 when Russell Humphrey began manufacturing tin spoons in Unionville. During the 1870s Howard joined his father in the manufacturing business and eventually succeeded him. By 1886 he erected a new shop for his firm, the H.W. Humphrey Company, renowned for their washers. In 1887 he purchased a ½ acre lot of land from Frank A. Tryon (FLR 68:325). In June of 1888 a mortgage mentioned the "land with a dwelling," dating construction between 1887-88 (FLR 63:465). The property was transferred to Ella J. (Hunt) Humphrey, his wife, in 1908, well before Howard's death in 1924 (FLR 76:149-150). After Ella's death in 1936, the property passed to her daughter Norma Humphrey Bailey (FLR 91:512). The house remains in the family today.

The Howard W. Humphrey House is historically significant through its associations with four generations of the Humphrey family. Architecturally the house exhibits excellent Queen Anne-style features.
60 Main Street

Built: 1887/88          For: Howard W. Humphrey

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Owners

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Frank A. Tryon
8-11-1887 Howard W. Humphrey
8-19-1908 Ella J. Humphrey
5-12-1936 Norma Humphrey Bailey
12-1-1967 Alma Bailey Taylor

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In August 1887 Howard Humphrey bought ¼ acre of land from Frank Tryon (68-325); this house was built on that lot between then and June 1888, when the property was mortgaged "with buildings" to the Farmington Savings Bank (63-465). A prior mortgage in October 1887 does not mention the house, but the amount was substantial enough to suggest that the house may have been built in the autumn of 1887. In 1895 Humphrey bought a small 15' strip of land from the estate of Frank Tryon (70-516); this piece started "18 inches from the stable annexed to Samuel Edgerton's barn" and ran over to Lovely street. The property has remained the same since 1895; see the map below for the above transactions.

In 1908 Howard Humphrey transferred ownership of this house to his wife Ella (76-149,150). After her death in 1934, it passed to their daughter Norma Humphrey Bailey. When Mrs. Bailey died in 1964, it became the property of her daughter Alma Bailey Taylor. So the house has been owned by three generations of the same family for nearly a century.
Russell Humphrey, Howard Humphrey, and H.W. Humphrey Co.

Howard Humphrey's father Russell started the family business in Unionville some time during the 1840s. The first town record to mention it is a mortgage in 1848, from Russell Humphrey to Luther T. Parsons, for the machinery "formerly owned by Allen Porter" used to make iron spoons, plus a shop for tinning spoons, located on land owned by Norton, Cowles, & Bidwell (49-455). The location of the shop is not specified, but it is believed to have been on the site of the old Pierpont & Tolles wood screw factory on Perry Street. James Cowles's history of Unionville in Trumbull's "History of Hartford County" (1886), says that Humphrey's spoon business was begun there. The 1850 Industry Census lists Russell Humphrey as making hardware and iron spoons.

The second phase of the business, making washers, seems to have begun in 1853. In April of that year, Humphrey and Augustus Fuller mortgaged to Cowles two pieces of land with buildings, the machinery and shop mentioned above, plus two washer presses (53-23). Three weeks later, Humphrey and Fuller gave another mortgage to Cowles, this time for 1/2 acre of land with a wheel pit, plus a frame for a manufactory and building materials (53-45). This piece of land was on the river on Mill Street, about where the Pioneer Steel Mill factory is now. A further mortgage was given to Cowles in July for the same property, now described as having "a spoon manufactory building and wheel house" (53-76). These records are followed by a lien filed in September by Luther T. Parsons against Humphrey and Fuller for work done in erecting a manufactory and wheel house (51-370). These records confirm Papper's statement in Mabel Hurlburt's "Town Clerks and their Times" that Humphrey occupied the Pierpont & Tolles factory for a while, then moved to the upper story of "the Nut Shop". This factory became the Nut Shop in September 1854, when James Cowles sold it to Dwight Langdon (53-333); it was described then as being between the manufactories leased to Norman Allen and Albert Hill.
Howard Humphrey was born in 1854 and joined his father in the family business, probably during the 1870s; he succeeded his father some time in the early 1880s. The 1870 Industry Census lists the company as making tin spoons, brass and tin ferrules, tin washers, and "rivet caps." The 1880 Census says only that they made hardware. In 1884 Howard Humphrey bought a piece of land on the southeast corner of Water Street from Hiram & Maria Clark, land formerly owned by the American Plow Co. (68-100). Howard must have built a new shop soon after that, because both Cowles and Pepper mention it in their histories. Cowles says that it was built "in the past year." Pepper says that in 1866 Howard succeeded Russell and built a new shop at the mouth of Roaring Brook. Pepper's date is inaccurate and probably should be 1886. In Raymond Brown's "Early Manufacturing in Unionville," he says that a fire destroyed the plant on Mill Street and a new factory was built in 1886 at the lower east end of Water Street.

Mr. Brown's paper also says that Humphrey had an almost exclusive local trade in paper boxes and that young people used to go to the factory to buy colored paper to cut and make into paper chains for Christmas decorations. The paper box business was started some time between 1880 and 1902, when it is mentioned as one of Humphrey's products in the Report of the Inspector of Factories. The business was continued by Howard Humphrey's son-in-law Joseph Bailey until the 1955 flood.

So the Humphrey family business lasted over 100 years and produced tin spoons, washers, hardware, and paper boxes.

**Genealogy**

**Howard W. Humphrey:** b.2-24-1854, son of Russell & Aurelia Driggs Humphrey; d. 12-29-1924

**Ella Hunt Humphrey:** b.7-15-1850 in East Otis, Mass., dau of Artemus & Sarah Phelps Hunt; d.7-15-1934

child - Norma Louise, see below

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**Norma Louise Humphrey Bailey:** b.10-24-1883; m.6-6-1906 to Joseph J. Bailey; d.11-26-1964

**Joseph J. Bailey:** b.7-9-1883, son of Joseph & Emma Smith Bailey; d.8-13-1952

child - Alma Emma, see below

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**Alma Emma Bailey Taylor:** b.2-23-1914; m. Frank T. Taylor 6-23-1941; Frank T. Taylor: b. 1912/13 in Liverpool, England, son of James & Louise Hallett Taylor

children - Robert Bruce, b. 5-2-1945

Philip Bailey, b. 6-25-1948