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# 1999 HISTORIC HYDE PARK HOMES TOUR

THE HANCOCK RECREATION CENTER  
(Fourth Austin Country Club House)  
811 East 41st Street

THE STANLEY & EMILY FINCH HOUSE  
3312 Duval

THE BARKER ESTATE  
3215 Duval

THE FREDERIC & ESTELLE MORSE HOUSE  
3126 Duval

THE ORIGINAL AUSTIN COUNTRY CLUB HOUSE  
(Reinli-McIver House)  
512 East 39th Street

THE WEED HOUSE  
4110 Avenue G

THE PAGE-GILBERT HOUSE  
3913 Avenue G

*Present this booklet for admission to the tour homes.  
Please, no food, beverages, strollers or photography inside the tour homes.*

## WELCOME TO THE NEIGHBORHOOD...

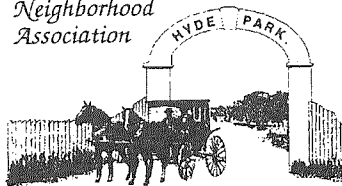
Thank you for joining us on the 23rd annual Historic Hyde Park Homes Tour. This year's tour recognizes our neighborhood's connection to the Hancock Recreation Center, now celebrating its 100th anniversary. Originally, this location served as the site of the Austin Country Club & Golf Course.

In a nod to the center's upscale roots, we have included several of the area's more majestic homes on this year's tour. Wandering these rooms and grounds, one catches a whiff of past grandeur: a world where privilege and graciousness were taken for granted and life moved at a stately pace that no amount of modern wealth could recapture.

But elegance gave way to egalitarianism. What was once a country club has now been transformed into a popular city recreation center. The ballroom that used to hold white-gloved tea dances now hosts kids' karate classes, evening folk dance clinics, seniors' exercise groups and potluck suppers. Area families enjoy the center's growing youth programs and local golfers still tee up for a quick nine holes at Hancock's public golf course.

One of the joys of living in Hyde Park is its spirit of neighborliness and we are especially lucky to have a neighbor like the Hancock Recreation Center &

*The Hyde Park  
Neighborhood  
Association*



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Golf Course. In recognition of that fact, the Hyde Park Neighborhood Association has chosen to donate a portion of this year's tour proceeds to the center. We extend a special thanks to Hancock's wonderful staff for all their hard work on behalf of the community and offer our warmest congratulations on a great first century!

Suzee Brooks, Ann S. Graham, Susan Moffat  
Co-presidents, Hyde Park Neighborhood Association, 1999



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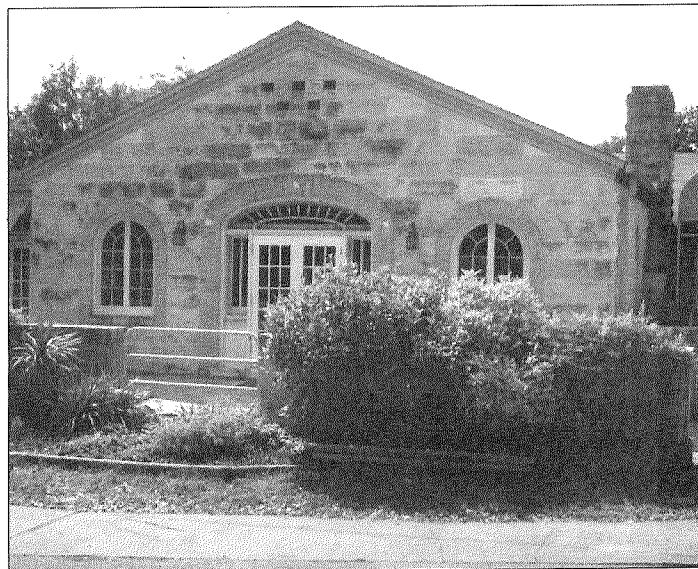
# 1 HANCOCK RECREATION CENTER

## FOURTH AUSTIN COUNTRY CLUB HOUSE

811 EAST 41ST STREET

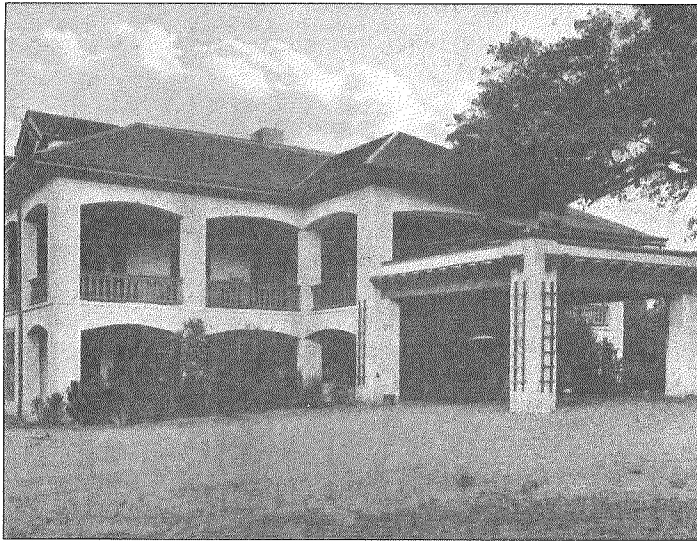
THE HANCOCK RECREATION CENTER BUILDING, STARTING point of this year's Homes Tour, is an expanded version of the clubhouse built in 1934 by the Austin Country Club. This is the third Hancock clubhouse on the site, and the fourth in Austin. The original clubhouse is now the McIver House (1899), also on this year's tour. In 1908, a new, larger clubhouse was built on the current site. After fire damage in 1914, the building was reconstructed and enlarged to accommodate the country club's larger membership. In 1934, fire struck again. When trustees discovered that the building's insurance policy fell far short of covering the replacement cost, enterprising members turned to the University of Texas. At the time, UT's Old Main building (built in 1883) was being torn down. Brick and stone from that building were salvaged and recycled in the clubhouse remodel to form a small, stone villa.

Old Main's elegant legacy includes the chiseled stone, best seen on the east and north sides of the building, and the arched, brick-



FOURTH CLUB HOUSE, AUSTIN COUNTRY CLUB

photo by Carol Cohen Burton



THIRD CLUB HOUSE, AUSTIN COUNTRY CLUB

bordered windows and center door on the second level. Details includes the simple stonework pattern under the roof ridge and the stone scrollwork above the pro shop door.

The new clubhouse was used as a golf pro shop as well as for dances and other social events by the private Austin Country Club until 1946, when the city acquired the golf course. In 1963 yet another fire damaged the clubhouse. The building was repaired, and the kitchen remodeled into a classroom. Since then, other renovations have been completed that allow for the many and varied activities of Hancock Recreation Center today.

The Austin Country Club was founded here 100 years ago. While the Dallas and Galveston Country clubs are older, their original sites have been redeveloped. Thus, golf has been played here longer than anywhere in Texas.



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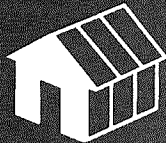
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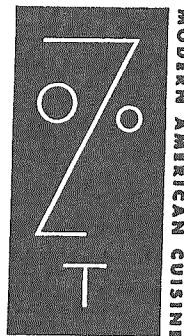
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# 2 THE STANLEY AND EMILY FINCH HOUSE

## 3312 DUVAL STREET

PASSERSBY ADMIRING THE IMPOSING, WHITE-COLUMNED estates on Duval might initially overlook the house at 3312, with its subdued colors and unpretentious features. But a closer look reveals one of Austin's finest examples of a 1920s Colonial Revival home. It was built for Stanley Phister Finch and his wife, Emily Rice Finch.

The Finch family constructed several notable Austin homes. The Prairie School-influenced Finch-Krueger House at 3300 Duval was built for Professor Finch's parents, Howell and Mary Stanley Finch. Stanley grew up in Austin and later taught in the University of Texas Civil Engineering Department from 1905 until 1952. Emily Rice Finch was a prominent civic leader and a founding member of The Junior League of Austin. When the couple were newly wed, Stanley's mother presented the couple with a tract of land on Duval. To design their house, the Finches engaged a colleague of Stanley's, architecture professor Raymond Everett. Everett designed most of his houses over his summer break; as a result, they were relatively few in number, but of outstanding quality. The house cost \$13,500 to build.

The Colonial Revival design was a popular choice among Austin



photo by Carol Cohen Burton

home builders at the time. In keeping with that style is the home's symmetrical facade, featuring a 4-foot-wide front door with side lites, all crowned by a graceful fanlight. The first and second-floor windows, with working louvered shutters, mirror each other. Over the years, changes to the exterior have been few: In 1945 the south porch was enclosed and a bay window was added to the north; later a matching bay window was added to the south side of the house.

The house stayed in the Finch family until the mid-90s, when current owners Larry and Barbara Di Donato bought the house. A relative whose hobby is restoration finishes painted all the rooms in the house. Meanwhile, the owners immediately tackled an unexpected borer infestation of the magnolia, elm, and live oak trees in the yard. They then proceeded to make structural and other old-house repairs, an activity they are vigorously engaged in to this day.

The welcoming front door does not disappoint: On either side of the generous foyer are graceful arched doorways to rooms that are both elegant and comfortable. The fine living room mantel and surrounding paneling is copied from a room in the American Wing of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. The photograph in that room is of Barbara's great-grandfather, a newspaperman-adventurer. Other photos throughout the house are of other relatives (Barbara traces her family to the Massachusetts Bay colony). The dining room contains family china and silver—and a servant's bell under the carpet. The light fixture in the cozy breakfast room is original; the connecting kitchen, remodeled in the 1950s, includes GE double ovens from that

era. Upstairs, each of the three bedrooms has a connecting bath; a sleeping porch sits over the first-floor sunroom.

One of the most remarkable aspects of the Finch House is its landscaping, which is largely unchanged from the original plan. Historic landscapes are very fragile. As a result, a yard with original landscaping intact is a rare and precious thing, as it tells us much about historical landscaping practices.

Emily Finch had an active interest in gardening; she introduced some plants shortly after the house was completed. In 1941, the Finches commissioned noted landscape architect Coatsworth Pickney to create a plan for the house. Pickney's design included the low, circular boxwood garden to the south of the house; the back-yard hedges with brick serpentine edging; and a terrace made of Austin common brick on the west side of the house. The plan also included the fountain near the north end of the terrace. Conservationists, avert your eyes: Water which was piped into the inverted metal fish ran through its body, out its mouth-spout—and down a concrete channel into the street.

The current owners have many plans, chief among which is to take their time, as Larry says, "...to do the job right. We are going to be here the rest of our lives: We have a long time to restore this home just the way we want it to be."

The Finch House was recently designated an Official Texas Historical Landmark by the Texas Historical Commission, but the marker has not yet been cast.

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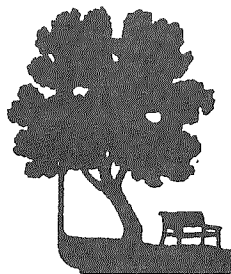
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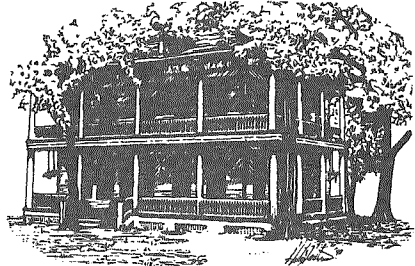


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# 3 THE BARKER ESTATE

## 3215 DUVAL

"THE BEST EXAMPLE OF GEORGIAN REVIVAL ARCHITECTURE in Austin" is how Blake Alexander of the University of Texas Architecture School describes the pristine structure at 3215 Duval. Yet early one morning in the spring of 1982, demolition workers arrived on the site and proceeded to cart away doors, windows, and chandeliers.

If it weren't for members of two neighborhood associations who arrived early that morning to halt the demolition, condominiums would most likely occupy the site today. That Saturday, protesters from the Hyde Park and North University neighborhood associations worked frantically to secure a temporary restraining order; meanwhile, a friend phoned architectural antiques dealer Whit Hanks about the event. Hanks, who was in a cooking class at the time, thought he might be interested in buying the house's columns. He drove by Sunday morning and was "flabbergasted that such a house would be torn down." By Tuesday, his interest expanded considerably beyond the columns, Hanks signed a contract to buy the house. He and his family subsequently moved in, renovated the house, and lived there for several years. Some sixty years earlier, the house had its beginnings when businessman Ben M. Barker commissioned Hugo F. Kuehne, arguably Austin's lead-

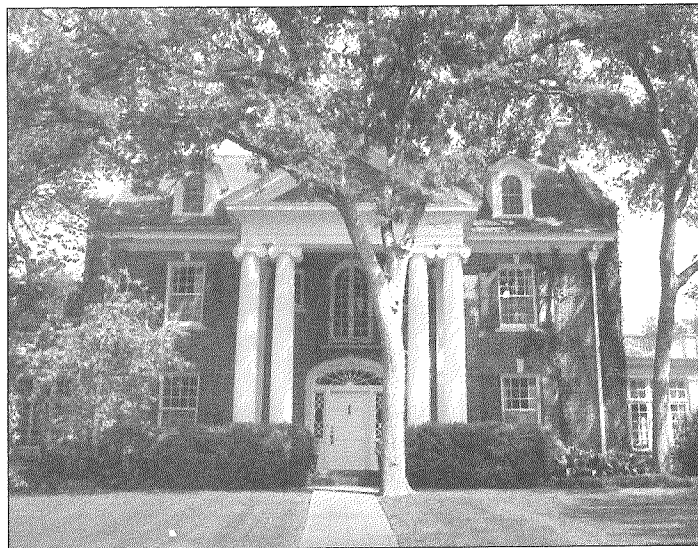


photo by Carol Cohen Burton

kitchen lacks any place to store food: the Eggers, who redesigned it, ate out every night. Next to the kitchen is the present-day breakfast room, which was originally the library. The screened wraparound porch contains a ceiling fan original to the house and—a novelty at the time—a painted concrete floor.

Furniture throughout the house was collected by the current

ing architect of the time, to build a residence for his family. Kuehne was known for the present-day Austin History Center as well as other numerous Austin structures, including many homes on Duval Street. Barker was a prominent Austinite with a remarkably varied career: he was a bookkeeper for UT, owned a car dealership, and served as Chamber of Commerce president and later as a City Council member.

The Barker family sold the house to Whit Hanks, who sold it to James Eggers in the late 1980s. Eggers, who had degrees in law and medicine and was a fine amateur pianist, lived in just one room of the house for a time; the house contained little furniture other than his piano. After James married, the couple remodeled the kitchen and painted the rooms various vivid colors. In 1993 the Eggers sold the house to Mike Mullin and Kathleen Monahan, who together with their daughter moved from a house in nearby Aldridge Place.

Kuehne's exterior design—unchanged to this day—features a symmetrical facade with a central portico featuring four Ionic columns. Situated on more than an acre of land and framed by magnificent trees, the house exemplifies Kuehne's mastery of scale and proportion: The tall facade and the park-like front lawn seem in perfect balance. Records show Barker paid \$27,906.72 upon its completion.

Inside, the ground-floor rooms have the original oak floors and moulding. Eleven-foot ceilings and rooms that flow into one another create a sense of harmony that matches the house's interior. There are surprises, too, like the tiny Card Room in the northwest corner of the house. Another curiosity is the fact that the

owners over the years; the leaded glass piece in the foyer is a bookcase converted into a coat closet.

On the second floor are three bedrooms and two baths; the master bath was created by opening up the original two walk-in closets. The sleeping porch is enclosed by original jalousie windows. On the attic level is a spacious, stunning study, with a beamed ceiling, ash bookcases and woodwork, and inviting alcoves.

Outside, Kuehne's original plans called for the construction of a porté cocheré to the side of the house. Instead, Barker created a pea gravel parking-lot, where he parked his dealership cars. The current owners replaced the lot with a swimming pool and created the beautiful surrounding garden.

**"If it weren't for members  
of two neighborhood  
associations..., condominiums  
would likely occupy the  
site today."**



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## Hyde Park Neighborhood Association General Meeting

July 12, 1999

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Hyde Park United Methodist Church  
4001 Speedway

(Note: HPNA's general meetings normally take place on the first Monday of every month, however, due to July 4th Holiday Weekend, the meeting is moved to the second Monday in July.)

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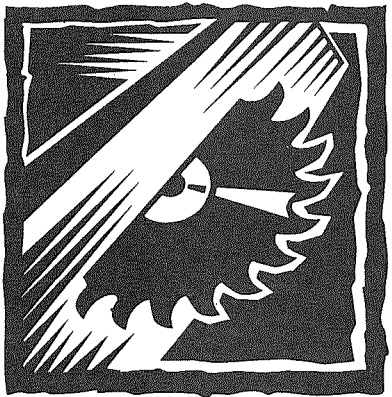
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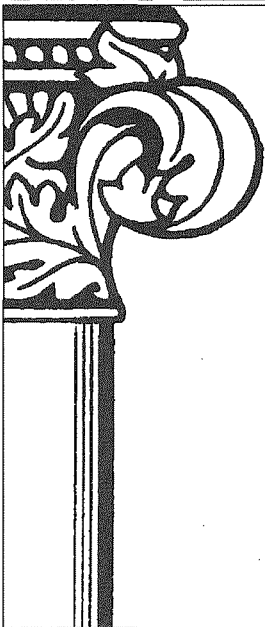
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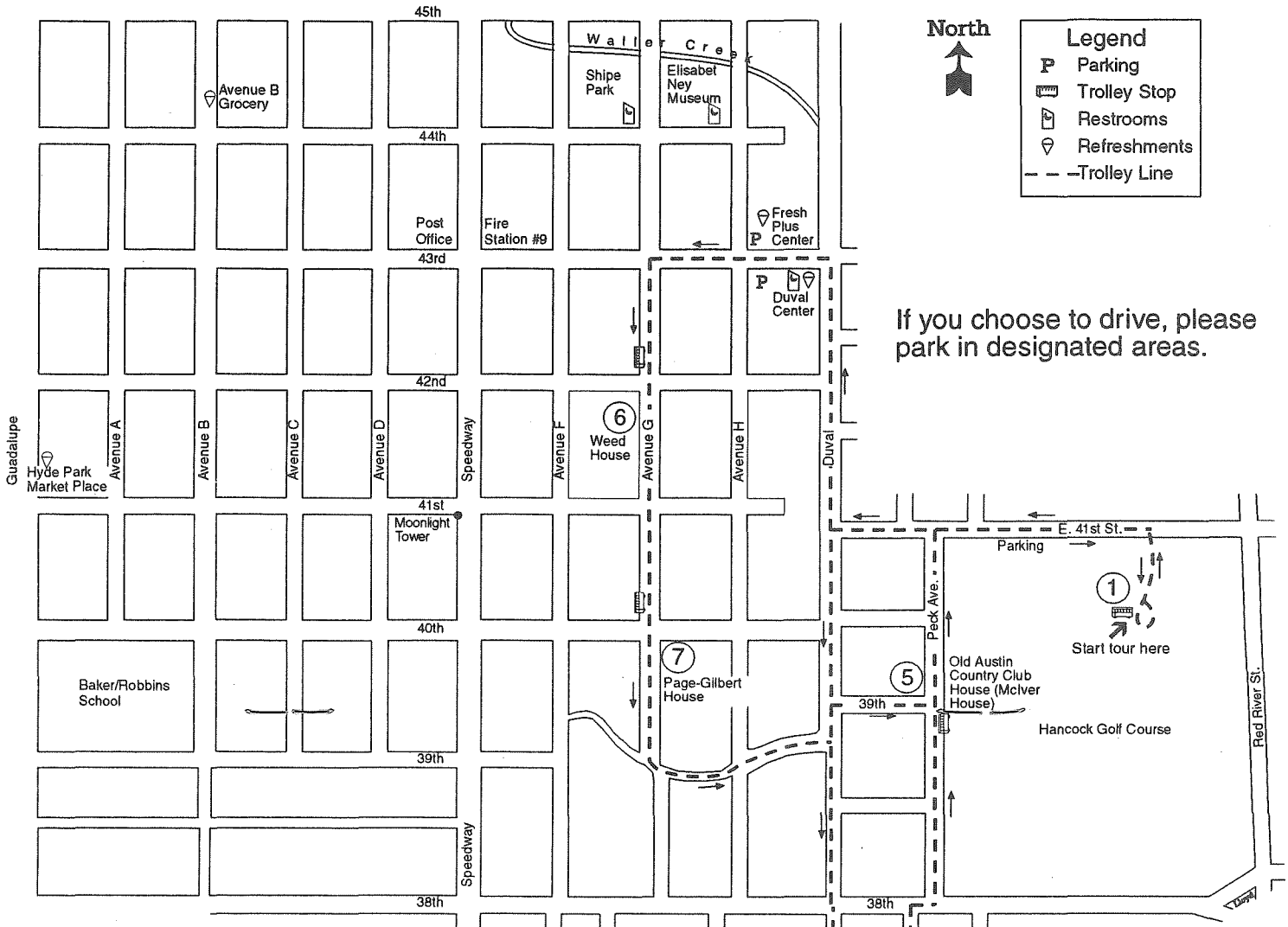


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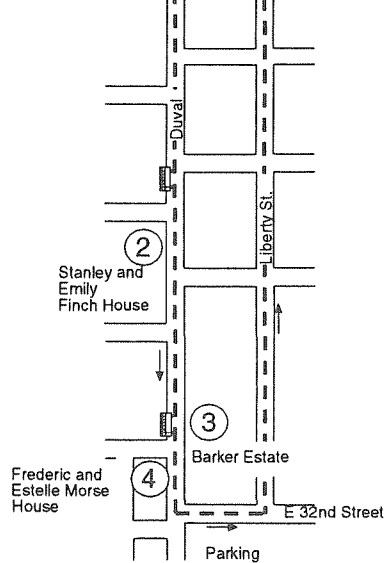
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# 1999 Historic Hyde Park Homes Tour



If you choose to drive, please park in designated areas.

- ① Hancock Recreation Center and Golf Course  
Fourth Austin Country Club House  
811 East 41st St.
- ② The Stanley and Emily Finch House  
3312 Duval St.  
Barbara & Larry Di Donato
- ③ The Barker Estate  
3215 Duval St.  
Mike Mullin & Kathleen Monahan
- ④ The Frederic and Estelle Morse House  
3126 Duval St.  
Jeff and Pam Autrey
- ⑤ Old Austin Country Club House (Reinli-McIver House)  
512 E. 39th St.  
Bill & Kathy King
- ⑥ The Weed House  
4110 Avenue G  
I. Jay Aarons & Barbara Gibson
- ⑦ The Page-Gilbert House  
3913 Avenue G  
Wanda & Gary Penn



# 4 THE FREDERIC AND ESTELLE MORSE HOUSE

## 3126 DUVAL

ONE SUNDAY MORNING in 1993, Jeff and Pam Autrey drove by the house at 3126 Duval Street. As newlyweds, they had walked by the house almost every day; now it was for sale. "We called the realtor immediately and said 'We want to see the house right now.' By noon we knew we wanted it."

What started out as "just a lark" for the Autreys resulted in the purchase of the Morse house from the second owners. The house was commissioned in 1926 by Frederic and Estelle Morse. (Mr. Morse founded the Mutual Savings Association in 1920, which later evolved into First Texas Savings and Frost Bank.) The Morses



photo by Carol Cohen Burton

approached prominent Austin architect Hugo F. Kuehne—whose own home is on the northeast corner of 32nd and Duval—to design and build the house. Morse, an enthusiast of old Southern architecture, was naturally enamored of architect Abner Cook's Greek Revival homes of the mid 1800s. He was especially fond of the 1855 James H. Raymond House. When that home was demolished in 1924, Morse rescued some of the home's woodwork and two of its huge exterior columns. He then asked Kuehne to design a home patterned after the Raymond mansion.

The result is the Greek Revival inspired mansion you see today, the exterior little changed over the years. The site occupies an entire city block—a fitting context for the home's two-story temple front and imposing Doric columns (exact replicas of the Raymond House columns, thanks to the Calcasieu Lumber Company). The original interior of the mansion, in contrast, was surprisingly compact: The first floor, 30 x 30 feet, contained just a parlor, dining room, and small kitchen. The floors are oak (with the characteristic tight grain of oak from that period); ceilings measure 11 feet. The hand-carved fireplace mantel in the parlor as well as the balustrade and elaborate newel on the center stairway are from the Raymond House. (Legend has it that Sam Houston and Albert Sidney Johnston, both frequent visitors to the Raymond mansion, "had many a talk in the olden days" in front of the fireplace.) In

time, the Morses added two bedrooms, a bath, and a breakfast room (now the sunroom) to the first floor. These changes, as well as the addition of the elegant cherry-paneled elevator, made the house more livable as the couple grew older. The spacious south portico was used for the Morses' frequent coffee and cocktail parties.

Above the portico is a sleeping porch, which provided a magnificent view of the city before tall buildings partially obscured the vista; also on the second floor are three bedrooms and one bath, all with heartwood pine floors. Today the house is furnished largely with antiques from the owners' Texas ancestors, as well as paintings by relatives.

Outside, as you face the main entrance and look to the right, you can see a second set of front steps that once led to another mansion. That house burned down around 1920, and the Morses later bought the land to prevent condominiums from being built on the site. Just beyond is a carport added at the same time as the first-floor additions. To the left, under the portico, sits an enclosed garage—an innovation, as attached garages were almost unheard of at the time. In the southwest corner of the property, you can see one of the Raymond House columns. Just visible over the iron fence is the garage apartment Estelle Morse had built in the 1940s. Her student renters provided Mrs. Morse with "eggs and butter income," as she called it.

Until recently, the yard on this side of the house was a cedar grove. Estelle Morse loved to garden; with the assistance of a full-time gardener, she planted elephant ears, banana plants, azaleas, and poppies. The current owners also have landscaping as well as other projects in mind for the house. What began as a lark has clearly become a serious commitment, and a labor of love.

**“Morse, an enthusiast of old Southern architecture, was naturally enamored of architect Abner Cook’s Greek Revival homes of the mid 1800s.”**

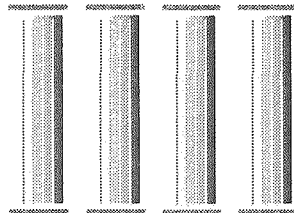


FREDERICK AND ESTELLE MORSE HOUSE, 1944

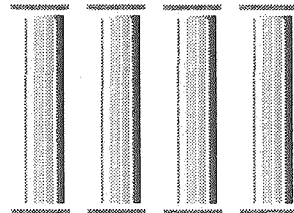


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# 5 ORIGINAL AUSTIN COUNTRY CLUB HOUSE

REINLI-MCIVER HOUSE  
512 E. 39TH STREET

THE AUSTIN COUNTRY CLUB WAS ESTABLISHED IN 1899 on the land now called the Hancock Golf Course, after Lewis Hancock, the Country Club's first president and a former mayor of Austin. The club house, a small, two-room structure with a front porch, was located on the grounds of the golf course, on the east side of Peck. In 1906, the country club sold the club house and two lots across the street on Ross (now East 39th Street) to Mrs. Emma Reinli for \$600. Mr. Reinli was apparently an employee of the club. The Reinlis had the club house moved to its present location and converted it into a residence.

The Reinlis lived in the former club house, making additions, until 1921, when they sold it to Edward and Clara Bauer, who owned it until 1937 and seem to have used it as a rental property. The property changed hands a number of times between 1937 and 1945, when it was sold to Claude S. McIver, a salesman, and his wife, Idalia. Mr. McIver died in 1947, and his widow lived on in the house until 1962. Arthur and Lola Larivee bought the house in 1963 and sold it to the present owners, Bill and Kathy King, in 1983.



photo by Carol Cohen Burton

Over the years, the old club house has undergone many metamorphoses. The original structure is only the front part of the present house: the porch—that did not originally have a railing, the large front room with its fireplace and high ceiling, and the room behind it—that is now divided into a family room and smaller-spaces including a hallway, storage closets, game room and bathroom. Of interest on the exterior is the stoop on the east front that used to lead to a door—no longer there—that opened directly into the second room, and a paving stone with the name “Reinli 1909,” recently unearthed in the garden next door. Notice also on the exterior of the chimney the bas-relief of a woman named “Beatrice.” Oral tradition has it that she was the young wife or daughter of a family who lived in the house in the 1930s and who died prematurely. An alternative explanation may be that an owner was a fan of Dante.

The house was added to by the Reinlis and others over the years: a kitchen, bath, two bedrooms and a sleeping porch that was eventually enclosed to form a third bedroom—a common pattern in the neighborhood. A kitchen fire in the 1930s resulted in the collapse of the West wall of the family room—it was reattached at a slight angle. The construction of the back portion of the house was found to be so dilapidated that when the current owners decided to remodel in 1986, they opted to demolish all but the original structure and add the present kitchen, bathrooms, and three bedrooms. Of interest in this new part of the house are the Lone Star

corner mouldings in the door frames that reflect the character of the original structure, but whose design actually dates from the Texas sesquicentennial. The hickory flooring in the addition was salvaged from a skating rink, destroyed during the Memorial Day flood of 1981. The stained glass window in the master bath was a treasure found in an antique store.

The Kings have reworked the old club house with creativity and resourcefulness, and have achieved results that preserve its character while making it livable for a professional family with contemporary needs.

**‘Notice also on the exterior of the chimney the bas-relief of a woman named “Beatrice.” Oral tradition has it that she was the young wife or daughter of a family who lived in the house in the 1930s and who died prematurely.’**



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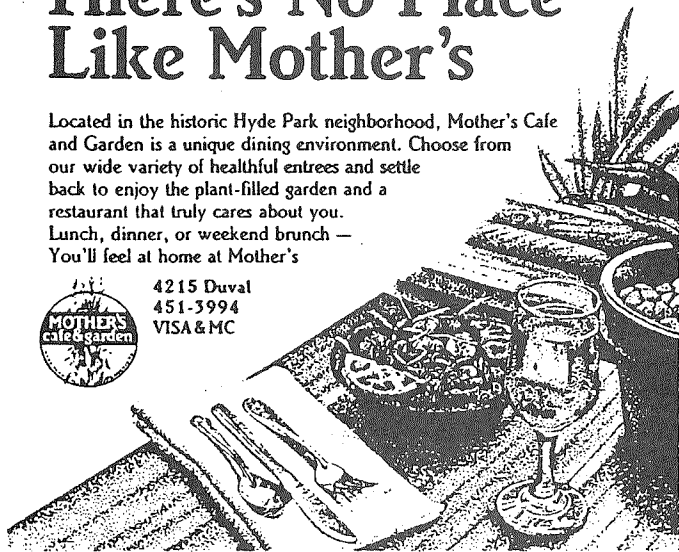
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# 6 THE WEED HOUSE

4110 AVENUE G

THE WEED HOUSE IS A CLASSIC HYDE PARK BUNGALOW that grew. Originally built about 1915 by undertaker Thurlow Weed and his wife, Agnes, the house had a gabled front porch, living room, dining room, kitchen, two bedrooms, a bath, and a sleeping porch upstairs. Craftsman touches included the mullioned windows, carefully detailed front entrance, built-in cabinetry in the dining room, and pocket door between the living and dining rooms.

According to the Weeds' only son, who visited the house and reminisced about his boyhood there, his grandmother lived with them in the front bedroom—now a study, where there was a coal-burning fireplace—which is still there, but no longer usable. They all slept upstairs in the sleeping porch in the hot weather. They had a chicken coop in the backyard, and kept a horse in the shed, which still exists. He also recalled helping to plant the pecan trees in the yard. He remembered riding the trolley into town, and he recalled the early airfield approximately where the intramural fields are today. Another feature of the property is the lovely, old redbud tree in the front yard that has been featured in Texas Highways magazine. Note that a painting of the tree in full blossom, by Jimmy



photo by Carol Cohen Burton

Jalapeno, hangs in the dining room.

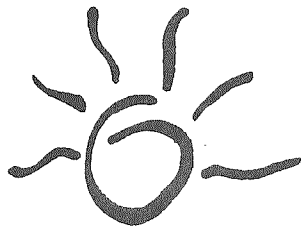
The Weeds sold the house in 1921 to a family named Smith. The Weeds' son then bought the house back in 1941 and lived in it until 1971 or '72. The property changed hands several times in the 1970s. One family added the bedroom and bath wing (now the master bedroom wing) on the east front of the house for their daughters. Dr. Sterling Fly, a former University of Texas regent, bought the house in the late '70s for his children to live in while they attended graduate school. The current owners, I. Jay Aarons and Barbara Gibson, acquired the property in 1984 from Dr. Fly.

The Aarons/Gibsons have made extensive renovations and additions to the house, the first in 1987, when they rebuilt the upstairs sleeping porch, raising the angle of the roof to open up space for a playroom, and adding two bedrooms and a bath for their sons. Over the years, they made other changes, including remodeling the downstairs bathrooms (the original bathtub remains in situ). In 1998, they undertook a major expansion of the house, with designs from Henry Wagner and Peter Flagg Maxson. They remodeled and opened up the kitchen, added a large family room, breakfast area, laundry room, a unique circular screened porch, and an unscreened back porch opening on to the boys' basketball court. A diagonal hallway leads from the dining room to the family room, keeping traffic out of the airy new kitchen with its deep green cab-

inets that match the trim on the exterior of the house. The new windows have mullion treatments that echo those of the original craftsman windows. Another striking feature is the stained glass windows forming a clerestory in the west wall of the family room. They came from an old church, were found in an antique shop in Fredericksburg, and the room was built to fit them rather than vice versa.

The little house that grew is an example of one way that a Hyde Park bungalow can be expanded and updated to meet the diverse needs of a growing family.

**"The Weed House is  
a classic Hyde Park  
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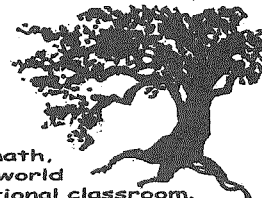
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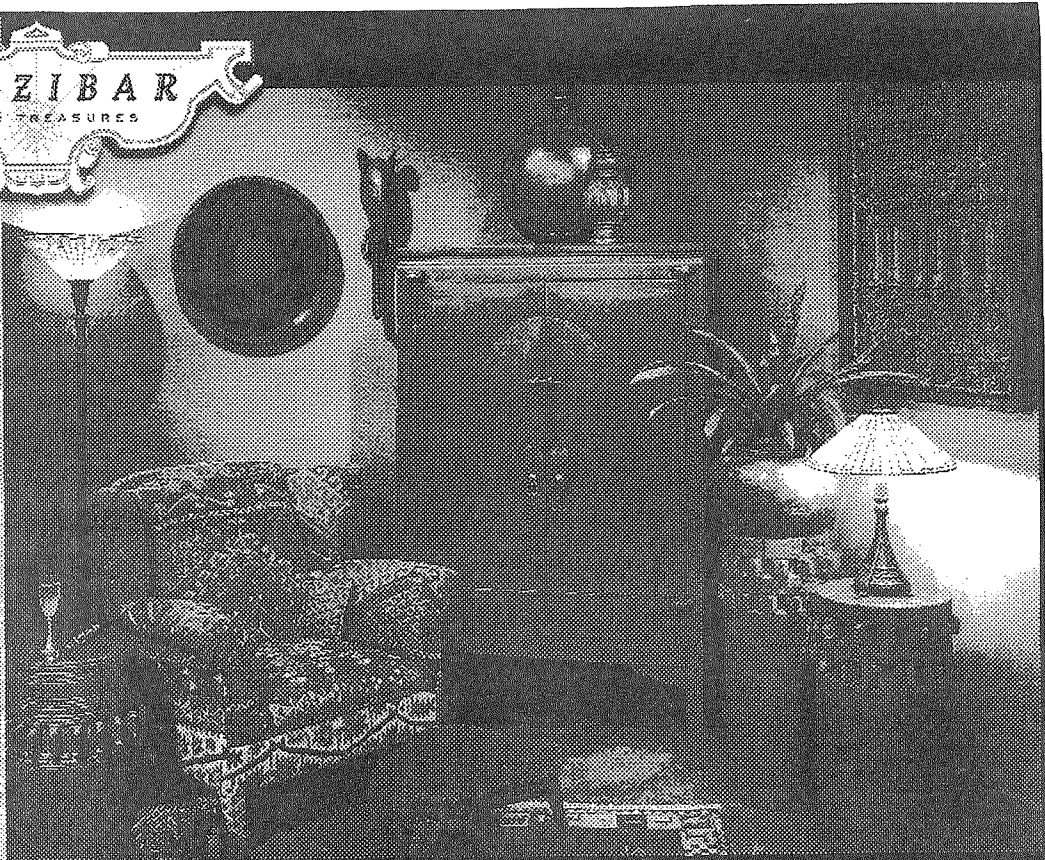


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# 7 THE PAGE-GILBERT HOUSE

3913 AVENUE G

ONE OF THE OLDEST HOUSES IN HYDE PARK, THIS unusual brick dwelling was designed and built in 1893 by Christopher H. Page with the help of a local contractor, William J. Sutton. Page was an English immigrant who had come to Austin in the 1880s to work as the chief stone mason on the new State Capitol building. The shingled front gable and the two-story corner porch and tower with a pyramidal roof echo the Queen Anne style of the time, but Page's design also includes masonry structural features such as the arched hoodmolds over the front windows and a string course separating the floors.

Page's son, Charles Henry Page, an architect (whose work includes in the Bailey-Houston House at 4110 Speedway), was the next owner of the property. Wade and Clara Border then purchased the house and lived there until 1933. Local lore has it that they raised chickens in the back yard, and their two daughters delivered eggs throughout the neighborhood. Letters of their younger daughter, Clara Louise, describe fireplaces in the living and dining rooms, later removed, and a two-story back porch that no longer exists



photo by Carol Cohen Burton

either. The house was sold to real estate agent John F. Gilbert in 1933. The Gilberts made extensive renovations, including a one-story brick addition at the back. Mr. Gilbert died in 1947, and his widow sold the property to the current owners, Gary and Wanda Penn, in 1977.

The Penns have made extensive, incremental renovations to the house, and have done so with an eye to recapturing its period style while making it fit modern needs. Central heating and air conditioning were installed, with some downstairs ceilings lowered to accommodate ducting, although the ceiling in the front parlor retains its original height. Woodwork throughout was stripped and refinished. Corner mouldings in the front parlor woodwork are original, but in the other rooms, corner mouldings were salvaged from elsewhere and installed. The wainscoting in the dining room was replaced, but matches the original woodwork. The kitchen was remodeled in the mid-1980s, with pine cabinetry designed to match the wood in the rest of the house. The pressed tin ceiling in the back addition is new, but was manufactured with old pressing machinery. Stained glass windows throughout the house are the products of Wanda's craftsmanship.

Upstairs, the front bedroom has recently been redecorated with fine Bradbury and Bradbury wall paper. Likely other Victorian homes in Austin once featured comparable robust wall treatments.

The middle bedroom has been converted into additional closet space and a sewing room. The French doors leading out to the deck from the back bedroom replace earlier windows. The Penns also added the back deck, matching its railing to that of the corner porch in front. The furniture and art work in the house show Wanda's assiduous collecting of period pieces, from the fireplace in the front bedroom, to lighting fixtures and old books and photographs. She admits to haunting garage and yard sales with a practiced eye for old treasures.

The Penns also replaced an older garage at the back of the property. The new garage has ornamental tin work by the contractor, Robert Phillips. They have recently landscaped and planted a vegetable and flower garden. Note that the red garden pump is, in reality, a tap—another modern adaptation of a period piece that is in keeping with the personality of this unique home and its owners.



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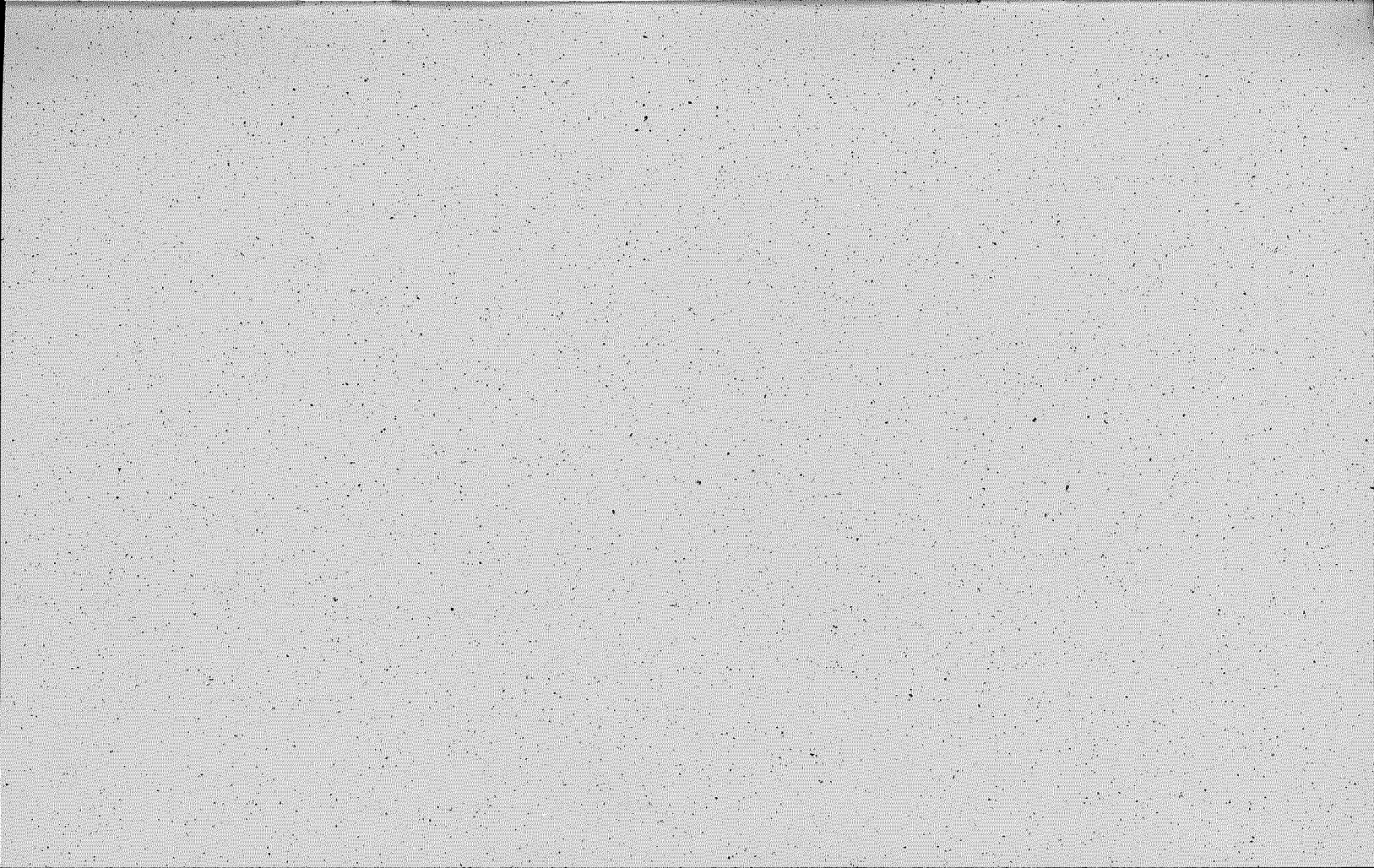
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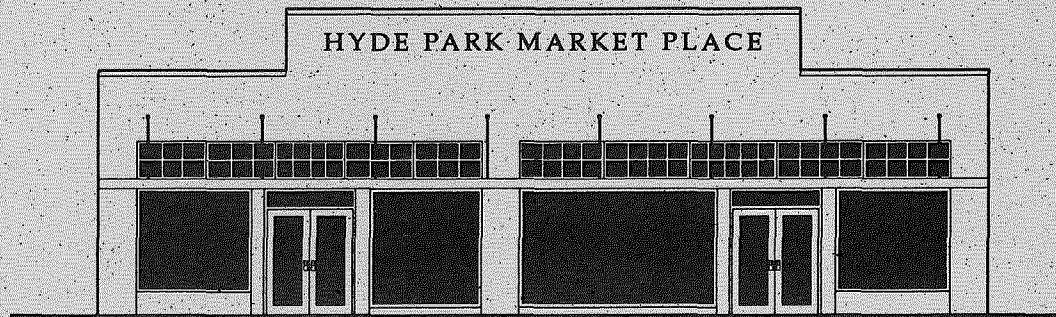
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