

The 33rd Annual
**Hyde Park Historic
HOMES TOUR**

June 20 - 21, 2009

Presented by

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The 33rd Annual Hyde Park Historic Homes Tour

Welcome to the 2009 Hyde Park Historic Homes Tour! This year's Homes Tour is a cause for celebration. The Homes Tour went on a sabbatical last year, but thanks to the strong commitment of the Homes Tour Committee, Hyde Park homeowners, and the many sponsors the tradition will continue. Words cannot express our appreciation of these Hyde Park homeowners, volunteers, and sponsors who provided us the chance once more to celebrate the neighborhood's heritage and history.

This year's theme is "If These Floors Could Talk". The houses chosen this year show the dedication of homeowners to renovate and restore the houses while maintaining integrity and originality. As you tour the neighborhood, you can imagine the events that occurred and the discussions that were held within the homes and outside on the front porches. A front porch may beautify a façade, but it also served as a medium to catch up on events with your close neighbors before the existence of the internet or cell phones. Hyde Park strives to continue in preserving these patterns of daily life and this sense of community through historic preservation.

So, on behalf of the 2009 Homes Tour Committee, please enjoy the weekend strolling up and down the Avenues under the tree canopies, visiting the selected homes on the tour, shopping, and savoring the neighborly atmosphere.

We are glad you are here!

David Conner, President
Hyde Park Neighborhood Association

The Hill-Midkiff House

302 W. 44th Street

Owners: Mike McHone and Sharyn Hamm

The floors of the Hill-Midkiff House have many stories to tell. Several interesting people have owned it, and it has been renovated several times, including two moves.

Its story begins in the West University area of Austin at what is today 2104 Pearl Street.

The first record of the lot was in 1888, according to the very old and crumbling Lot and Division Record Books kept in the basement of the Austin History Center. Then Frank W. Hill owned and lived in the house which was valued at \$1350.00 with the legal description of "75 X 151 ft., OLT 25, Div. D". The Austin City Directory shows the address as "ws (west side) of Pearl btw (between) West 19th and 22nd Streets." Mr. Hill and his brother opened a grocery business at 1010 Congress known as Hill and Hill, Provisions, Groceries, and Feed. As he became more prosperous and his family grew, Mr. Hill moved to the countryside, five miles southeast of the Courthouse. He sold the house about 1904 to Dr. J. F. Horton, a physician, who lived there with his family for a year or two. At that time the house was valued at \$1170.00.

After a couple of years, Dr. Horton sold the house to Leonidas Warren Payne, Jr., who had moved to Austin with his family to join the faculty at the University of Texas as an Instructor in English. Although he was raised in Auburn, Alabama, he had received his Ph.D. degree from the University of Pennsylvania in 1904. At UT, he became full professor of English by 1919 and was one of the first teachers of American literature. He and John Lomax founded the Texas Folklore Society in 1909, and then Dr. Payne became its first president. He was very influential in fostering the talents of Texas writers such as J. Frank Dobie, and maintained long friendships with American writers, Robert Frost, and Carl Sandburg. He was one of the first critics to appreciate the work of E.E. Cummings.

Dr. Payne and his family occupied this house until around 1924 when it was moved from 2104 Pearl Street to the back of their lot to face West 21st Street, #806. The Paynes built a new home at 2104 Pearl where the Hill-Midkiff House had stood. Now this lovely Classic Victorian house had a new owner, Mrs. E.N. (Grace) Throop, at a new address.

The next owner, Frank Morris Midkiff, was a reporter with The Austin Statesman newspaper and became City Editor in 1932. About 1939, the house number changed to 905 W. 21st Street. He owned the house until his death in 1967, when his daughter-in-law, Mrs. Peter O. Midkiff, lived there about five years. Finally, in 1976, Mike McHone, a real estate investor, and his wife, Sharyn Hamm, bought this



historic house and came to love and care for it. Over the years they rented it out and lived in it between 1980 and 1984. Finally, in 2005, it was threatened with demolition to make way for a new apartment complex that would encompass the entire block. So Mike and Sharyn decided to save their historic home by moving it once again to 302 W. 44th Street here in Hyde Park.

Now the real work began! Because the house on 21st Street was surrounded by low-lying power lines, the house had to be cut in half -- horizontally! The second floor was cut loose from the first floor, lifted above the power lines, and the first floor was slid under the power lines. Their extremely capable craftsman carpenter had a challenging job of reattaching the two halves and doing his best work to make the floors level and the walls plumb. His handiwork is evident as the house now looks perfectly restored.

The primary changes that had been made to the original house included enclosing the front sleeping and entrance porches and adding the one you see today which looks as though it could have been the original. Secondly, the back porch has been recently closed in to allow for a breakfast room and larger, updated kitchen, but the original French doors to the old porch remain. Upstairs, the extension of the back porch allowed for enlarging the master bedroom and adding a marvelous updated luxury bath. The third major change involved adding some interior walls to create a downstairs bath and enlarge the kitchen, interrupting the original front to back breezeway that ran the length of the house. However, with two HVAC units, that cooling feature is no longer necessary.

Mike and Sharyn have put their expertise, skill and devotion into keeping the historic features of their home while making it as comfortable and energy efficient as any new home built today. It is a joy to visit and explore.

The Kieschnick House

4405 Avenue D

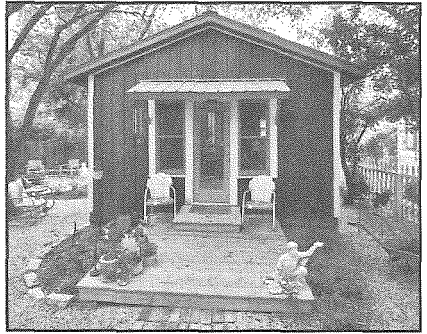
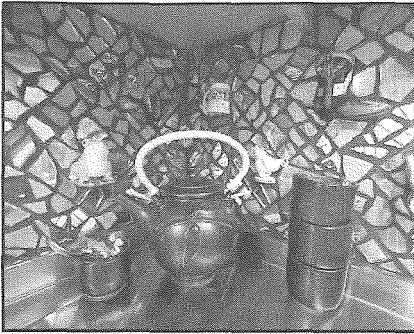
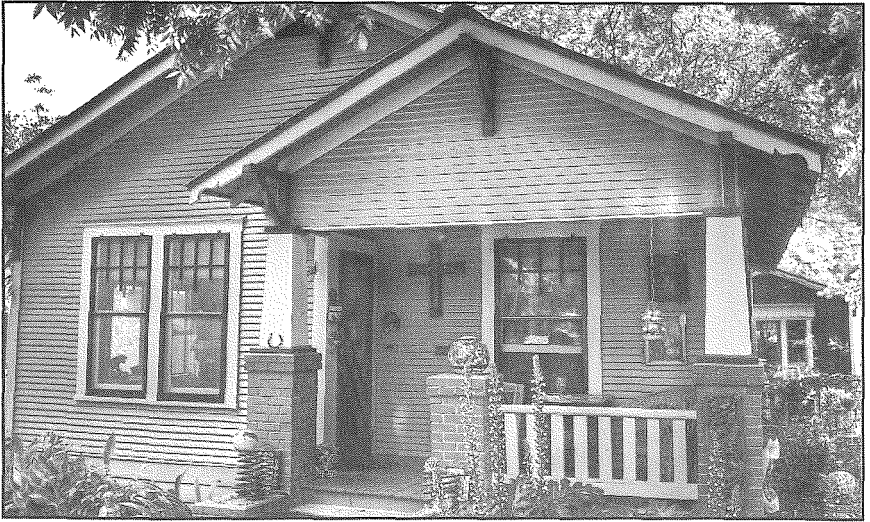
Owner: Arlinda Abbott

While today the Kieschnick House is one of the most exuberant and colorful in Hyde Park, when acquired by owner Arlinda Abbott it had had 18 years of deferred maintenance and was painted dead white inside and out. "I'm not afraid of color" notes Arlinda, who has used it vigorously and effectively.

The house first appears in Austin City Directories in 1927 as the home of Benjamin M. White, Manager of the Greenwood Drug Store on Congress Ave., and his wife, Velma. By the 1930 directory, it had been acquired by Samuel John Kieschnick (1899-1972) and his wife, Erna (1903-1979), and it would remain in their ownership until their death. Sam was a native of Lee County, Texas, a member of a large family. His parents were born in Germany. The 1930 US Census also identifies their daughter Mildred, who later inherited the property and eventually sold it to the present owner.

The Kieschnick House is the quintessential Hyde Park bungalow. As an asymmetrical, frame mid-1920s house with inset porch, it was likely designed and built by the Calcacieu Lumber Company or a similar concern. While the basic formula is similar to a thousand other contemporaneous bungalows in Austin, Arlinda has given it a very distinctive personality through largely cosmetic treatment. An exception is the fine, mirrored backsplash which she crafted in the kitchen.

Her collections are varied and interesting. "Texotica" including antiques from Texas, Old & New Mexico, quilts, funky religious objects, shoes, folk art and bluebonnet paintings ornament the inside of the house and bottle trees, native plants, vintage lawn furniture and water elements create outdoor rooms surrounding the house. Yet the historic fabric of the house has been respected, demonstrating that radical changes are not needed to personalize and reinterpret an 80+ year old house.



The McMillen-Falk House

4213 Avenue D

Owners: Douglas and Michelle Paris-White

Luther McMillen, a contractor, is listed as the first owner of 4213 Avenue D in the 1916 city directory, but the most well-known resident of this address moved here in the 1940s and lived at the house, which was then about half the size it is now, until his death in 1989. Bibb Falk, who was born in Austin in 1899, was the head baseball coach for the University of Texas from 1940 until 1967; Disch-Falk Field is named for him and Falk's own coach, Billy Disch. During Falk's tenure as coach, the team won two National Championships and 20 Southwest Conference championships. Before becoming UT's baseball coach, Falk replaced "Shoeless Joe" Jackson on the Chicago White Sox after Jackson was banished from baseball for his involvement in the sport's infamous gambling scandal of 1920. During his time with the White Sox, Falk became second only to Babe Ruth as the top batter in the American League. Falk was known for his "crusty demeanor and salty vocabulary," as the Online Handbook of Texas puts it. A few years after he retired, Falk was asked by Cliff Gustafson, who had replaced him as the baseball coach at UT, how baseball had changed over the years. Gustafson asked him what he thought his batting average would be against modern-day pitchers. Falk paused, then said, "Oh, about .270 or .280," which surprised Gustafson because Falk wasn't exactly known for his modesty. "There's that much difference?" Gustafson replied. "Hell no," Falk said, "but I'm 75 years old."

For a man who never seemed to lack for self-confidence, Falk didn't have an overwhelming grandiosity about him; he could easily have moved into a larger, more



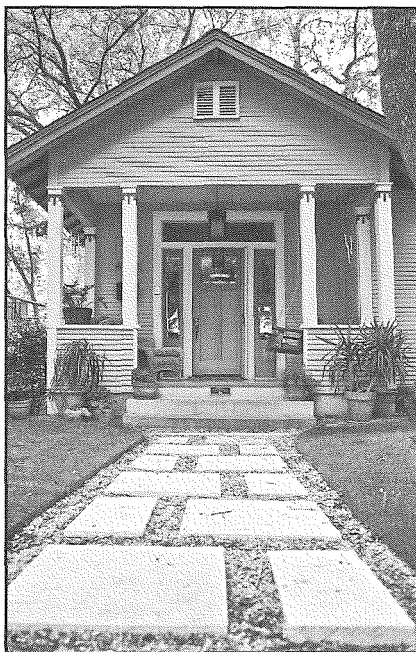
expensive house but his home and the neighborhood meant too much to him to ever leave. In fact, Falk's reluctance to leave the neighborhood is one of the reasons the City of Austin decided in April to designate the house as a City Historic Landmark property. The house is also listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

But that's not the only reason the house earned Landmark status. The home's owners have taken pains to meticulously honor the house's original Craftsman bungalow structure while ensuring that the work required to add 1,100 square feet to the house in 2008 was done so in an environmentally responsible manner. You will easily notice the abundant natural lighting the owners highlight in the back of the house, particularly in

the master bedroom and in the second living room, with its stunning, 15-foot wall of glass bi-fold doors that open out onto the expansive deck, whose star attraction is the century-old ash tree. Vehko Architecture's work on the 2008 additions to the home allow for abundant natural ventilation and minimal use of artificial heating and cooling.

The environmentally friendly elements of the home's addition also include a thermal envelope and sealed attic, no- or low-VOC paints, a tankless water heater, IceStone countertops made of recycled glass, a drought-resistant grass hybrid named Celebration in the front yard with low-water plantings, a dual-flush toilet, and flooring reclaimed from a former dance floor in Caldwell. In fact, aficionados of the neighborhood's wine bar *Vino Vino*, at 42nd & Guadalupe, will notice that the wood in this home is the same as that at *Vino Vino* – the bar's owner gave the extra, unneeded wood to the home's owners, who easily put it to use. Be sure to check out the home's tornado room – the children's bathroom with the environmentally sustainable Mar-moleum orange flooring. The bathroom rests on a 30-inch-deep slab, detached from the rest of the house, with steel walls and Internet and phone jacks underneath the sink.

"We believe the house should become a Landmark as it is a stunning example of the most prevalent architectural style in the neighborhood," city staff wrote in their recommendation that the house earn Landmark status. The house is "a testament to the value that the neighborhood held for a famous man of significant financial means exceeding pursuits of grander living."



The Rhodes House

4111 Avenue D

Owners: Andy and Paula Rhodes

The house at 4111 Avenue D first appears in city records in 1931, when a Mrs. M.L. Pearson paid the city \$12 to hook the house up to the public sewer system; the house and the one just to the north of it were built at the same time and were actually relative latecomers to the block. In 1927, there were people living at 4110 and 4112 and the Hyde Park Christian Church was actively holding services at 4115. Throughout the Great Depression, 4111 Avenue D housed a number of different people, including a man who was the city's chief meter repairman. It should come as no surprise given the hardships of the Great Depression and the neighborhood's working class history, but as late as 1942, four people, not all of whom were related, lived in this house, which was half the size of the one you're standing in now.

The residents who have done the most for the house are undoubtedly the home's current owners, Andy and Paula Rhodes. Paula, an architect who has a consulting firm, designed the home's renovations and additions; the Rhodeses have doubled the house's original 960 square feet at the back of the house by creating an upstairs master bedroom and kitchen and family room in a way that painstakingly respects the home's history and the environment. The Rhodeses came to own the home after Paula's mother, who used to live in Hyde Park, called them after taking a walk down the street in 1998 and seeing a For Sale sign; the house was on the market for one day before the Rhodeses made an offer on it. Architecture and history flow through this family's veins: Paula's first cousin is Ted Flato, the co-owner of prestigious Lake Flato Architects in San Antonio, and she's the descendant of Captain James Shaw, who fought in the Battle of San Jacinto. Andy is the managing editor for the Texas Historical Commission's magazine, *The Medallion*, and is the recent author of *Moon Texas*, a comprehensive travel guide to the entire state.

The Rhodeses have added a new pier and beam structure to the house and a HVAC system, entirely rewired the home from its original cloth electrical cords, and put in new plumbing. The kitchen countertops are made of Silestone, a kind of crushed stone, and the kitchen island is Plyboo, a pressed bamboo. Look at the bold design of the kitchen floor, which is an environmentally sustainable flooring called Marmoleum. Made from pine tree resins, wood flour, and linseed oil, Marmoleum has no toxic chemicals or volatile organic compounds (VOC's). It is also naturally anti-bacterial because of the oxidation of the linseed oil in the Marmoleum over its lifetime. Be sure to notice the striking recycled 8', 6" windows that look out onto the family's backyard; the windows are saved and recycled from an earlier use in the house and serve as a resonant echo from before the home was even built – although windows can now be ordered in almost any form a homeowner desires, the four-over-four design of the



panes ceased to be a popular design element around 1915. The backyard had been in a state of severe disuse until the Rhodeses took action. “It’s nice to reclaim this small part of our property,” they say.

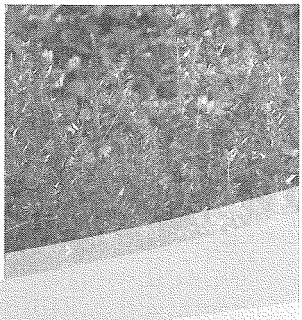
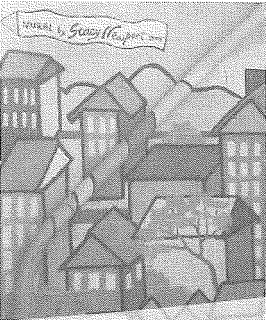
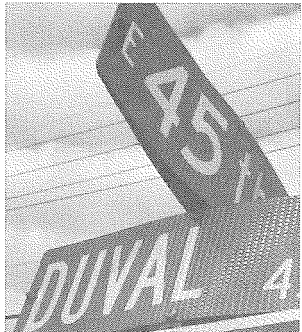
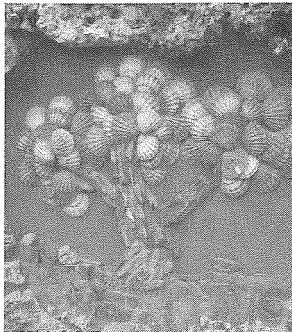
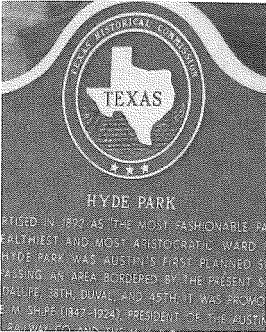
The five-panel door to the couple’s bedroom was originally the house’s back door. Notice the way natural light suffuses the bathroom and the ingenious way the mirror is hung in the bathroom.

But the back area of the home isn’t the only area that has been renovated – the couple kept the home’s original bathtub in their two sons’ shared bathroom on the first floor and kept the existing sink but made the sink more kid- and environmentally-friendly by replacing the two hot and cold faucets with just one faucet. And the vibrant color of seven-year-old Max’s bedroom, to the east of the bathroom? The wise parents let Max choose that color himself.

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Molly and Dave Jensen

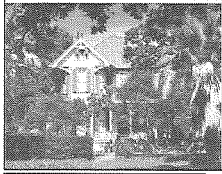
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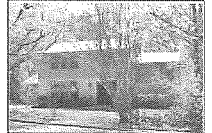
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The Williams-Ware House

3911 Avenue G

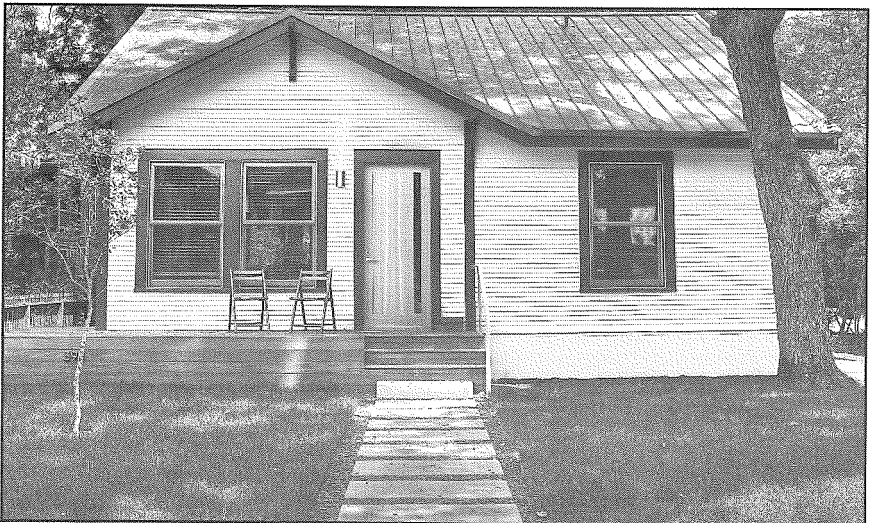
Owner: Eric Stumberg

This wonderful Craftsman bungalow was built in 1923 by Elgin and Anna Williams who are the first listed occupants in the Austin City Directory. It was one of many bungalows that were often nestled between the larger existing Victorian homes in Hyde Park. And this bungalow was surrounded by the beautiful large homes on three sides that have been maintained and are still here today for all to enjoy. The bungalow was typical in design: small living room, dining room, kitchen, two bedrooms with a bath between leading from a short hallway, and, of course, the ubiquitous front porch along with a small garage in the back yard.

The Williams lived there only three years when it changed hands in 1927 and had a series of short term occupants until 1947 when Loebel Ware bought it. He was a teacher at Bickler Junior High School and lived there until he sold the house in 1967. It was probably during that time that the front porch was enclosed in order to enlarge the living room, shown by the color change in the long leaf pine floor where the original front wall stood.

If the "floors could talk" in this house, beginning in the late 60s it would have some juicy tales to tell. There were a series of occupants in the 60s and 70s when the neighborhood fell into disrepair. One neighbor remembers the rumor that the house was partitioned and 21 people were stuffed into the house at one time. Legend has it that the back yard grew a forest of bamboo.

From 1978 to 1984, the one famous occupant, Bill Oliver, and his friend, Elaine Huser, lived there. As a singer-song writer, he and his band were dubbed the "Envi-



ronmental Troubadours” by Time magazine in 1989 because he wrote and performed songs for the growing environmental movement. Rivers were his personal passion, so he could be seen floating on Lady Bird Lake and singing to protect it’s quality. He still lives in Austin today and continues support for the green world as “Mr. Habitat.”

In 1985, a new owner and Geology PhD candidate, Emilio Flores Expinoza, remodeled the house, adding a sunroom in the back and creating a master suite with walk-in closet and second bath. It must have been very dramatic with a Jacuzzi bathtub, black ceramic tile, and a skylight in the vaulted ceiling. The living room was shocking with a suite of armor welcoming guests.

The next owner occupant was Bob L. Cave, a real eccentric bachelor who enjoyed throwing knives at the trees in the front yard. You might see wounds in the trees even now. Bob sold to Angela and Kelly Miller who then sold it to Eric Stumberg in 1998.

At last this old house would have an owner worthy of it! It was still the typical Hyde Park bungalow both inside and out. Eric fell in love with the friendly, front porch ambiance of the neighborhood and his interesting neighbors. He established a new company in 2000, Tengo Internet, which provides wireless service to RV parks. As his business grew, he wanted a “new” house that reflected his contemporary tastes but was reluctant to leave the historic neighborhood. So, he decided to remodel while honoring his neighbors and leaving his space better than he found it. He enlisted the help of architect and longtime friend, Burton Baldrige of Burton Baldrige, Architects. The old garage was about to collapse, so they demolished it to make way for the construction of a modestly scaled modern studio casita in the back yard where the original garage stood. All but hidden from the street front, the steel framed studio features cladding of zinc and Massaranduba, Venetian plaster from Eric’s friend, Sloan Hauser, copious glass partitions, and a travertine floor. After that was completed, he moved into it so they could begin the transformation of inside of the main house. They carried some of the same design features from the studio to the main house, such as the horizontal striation of the Massaranduba wood on the studio exterior to the front and back porches of the main house.

During Eric’s remodel, many “Green” features were used: tankless, on-demand water heaters, no-VOC paint by Sherwin Williams, wood flooring repaired with long leaf pine reclaimed from an old barn, the introduction of insulated glass units into the original sashes, polycynene and cellulose insulation, and scraps of Massaranduba from the front porch for the vanity and seating in the front bath.

Today you see the marvelous way the exterior of the house remains true to the history of Hyde Park while the interior has been totally transformed with sleek contemporary lines, stainless steel in the kitchen, and completely updated baths. Other than a new front deck and custom fabricated Douglas fir door, the front of the house remains virtually unchanged. This house is a great example of how historic homes can be remodeled to reflect the contemporary taste of today while acknowledging the historic exterior.

The Schenken-Oatman House

311 West 41st Street

Owner: Wanda Penn

The story of the rescue and restoration of this home by a partnership of concerned Hyde Park residents is well known. The home first appeared in its “before” state on the 2007 Homes Tour and is presented this year, proudly restored and protected as an official City of Austin Historic Landmark.

This home was built by Adalbert Schenken, the first American-born member of a proud family which traces its roots to Quedlinburg, Germany, where it continues to hold periodic reunions of family members from the world over.

The home first appears on Austin records in 1909, four years after Adalbert’s cousin, Robert Koch, won the 1905 Nobel Prize for medicine. When he was a boy, Adalbert’s father disappeared mysteriously during a trip to Germany in 1868. After a time, his mother remarried. Adalbert’s new stepfather, Charles Buechner, was a printer by trade, a craftsman in the mold of his Germanic contemporaries and neighbors, woodcarver Peter Mansbendel and iron artisan Fortunat Weigl. All were members of Saengerrunde, the German singing society still active here, its headquarters and meeting hall adjacent to the society’s property, Scholz Garten.

Adalbert attended the Texas German English Academy founded and operated by Jacob Bickler, who would also successfully propose a new University of Texas School of Pedagogy, later to become the UT College of Education. The Bickler family were fast friends with sculptor Elisabet Ney, and frequent guests at Ney’s studio, Formosa, now the Ney Museum.

In 1877, when he was 14, Adalbert withdrew from Bickler’s academy to follow his stepfather as a printer’s apprentice. For a number of years, the two worked together on *Texas Vorwaerts* (which means Texas Forward) and a number of other German-language publications catering to the thriving Texas German community. But as craftsmen skilled with the German-made presses of their time, Adalbert and his stepfather also produced English language work for the early Austin Von Boeckman-Jones publishing company and for the Austin American newspaper.



Adalbert and his wife, Mary, lived in this home until 1920, raising two sons, Al and Ralph, who would serve in the U.S. military during World War I.

Pearl Oatman, a widow and member of the prominent Norwood family, purchased the home in 1921. Oatman had sold a small farm in rural Travis County to her cousin, Bascomb Giles and used the



proceeds to put a down payment on a promissory note to the Schenken.

Several members of both the Schenken and Oatman families lived nearby and worked for the Texas General Land Office, some alongside William Sidney Porter, better known by his pen name, O. Henry. Giles would himself later become Texas Land Commissioner and was convicted in what became known as the Veterans Land Board Scandal of the 1950's.

Mrs. Oatman's daughter, also named Pearl, worked down 41st Street at the Austin State Hospital and both women were stalwart members of the congregation of Shettles Memorial (now Hyde Park United) Methodist Church.

The younger Pearl Oatman (later, Welch) was born in 1917 and grew up here. In her old age, she left this home and it stood forlornly vacant for more than a decade. The American Transitional style home was scarcely altered during its century, retaining nearly all its original architectural features under a sheath of tin siding. Recognizing its significance, a neighborhood partnership stepped in to purchase the home and save it from demolition after Mrs. Welch's death in 2005.

Of all the people who called this structure home, what became of the original homeowner, Adalbert Schenken? One of the Schenken family's favorite stories, passed down from generation to generation, was told to the rescue partnership by Adalbert's grandson, Wesley Schenken. After their service there during World War I, Adalbert and Mary's sons came home with glowing tales of California, a land of milk and honey that beckoned them to return. The couple, obviously wanting to be near their sons, agreed: The family would pull up stakes, sell the house and move to California. As the story goes, the family gathered around a map of California and randomly picked a destination, Adalbert, with eyes closed, put his finger on a town named Paradise. Taking this as an omen, they set out for Paradise, California, never to return.

Special Thanks

I must begin with recognizing our Presenting Sponsors, Suzanne Pringel of AvenueOne Properties and Steve Viklarek of State Farm Insurance. Their extraordinary support enables Hyde Park Neighborhood Association to continue to enhance our city. We also appreciate our Contributing Sponsors - Grande Communications and Lin Team - as they are critical to the Tour's success. I thank them as well as our Promotional Sponsors, who support the tour booklet.

The 2009 Hyde Park Homes Tour is impossible to imagine without the incredible talent and dedication of the Hyde Park community. It truly takes the skill and resources of a wide variety of folks to mount this production. First, I want to thank our home owners who have allowed us to showcase their homes – Mike McHone and Sharyn Hamm, Arlinda Abbott, Michelle Paris-White and Douglas White, Paula and Andy Rhodes, Eric Stumberg, and Wanda Penn. Without your generosity, there is no tour.

Likewise, the skills of our various chairs keep the tour on track. The remarkable ability and patience of Robin Silberling who developed and manned our website, created our tour booklet including editing and publishing, oversaw the posters, and handled the vagaries of the internet, is key. Thanks also to designer Maria Orozova of The Mod Studio who donated her time to design our poster and tickets this year. Recognition is also due Rice (Rusty) Jackson for his beautiful photographs of the houses. Special thanks also goes to our publicity/marketing director John Kerr for promoting the Tour. Tremendous gratitude is due our volunteer coordinator John Williams for making sure there are enough folks to man all the posts. Additional thanks is owed to John Paul Moore, our transportation coordinator, for making the tour buses fun and informative, to Elaine Valentour for organizing ticket sales, and to Deaton Bednar our party coordinator. Special appreciation is also needed for Carolyn Grimes who did a tremendous job securing our sponsors. I also want to note the long time support of Casa Verde Florist and Angero Holt for the beautiful flower arrangements.

Further appreciation goes to the writers, house captains, docents, Hyde Park Steering Committee, and all of the advertisers and sponsors of the Tour who make it the true community event that it always has been and will continue to be.

Barbara Gibson
2009 Homes Tour Chair

2009 Hyde Park Homes Tour Committee

The committee includes: John Paul Moore, John Kerr, Carolyn Grimes, John Williams, Robin Silberling, Elaine Valentour, Alan Marburger, Peter Maxson, Clay Smith, Sally Robey, Rusty Jackson, Kay Gooch, Mary La Touf, Angero Holt, Pam Morris, Deaton Bednar, Sharon Majors, David Conner, Dave Lyon, Joan Rivers, Michelle Paris-White, Denise Gerard, I. Jay Aarons, Carol Jackson, Dorothy Richter, Stan Kozinsky, Cynthia Lyons, Mark Fishman, Karen McGraw, Lorre Weidlich, and Barbara Gibson.



The Hyde Park Homes Tour is sponsored by the
Hyde Park Neighborhood Association.

Web site: www.austinhypark.org

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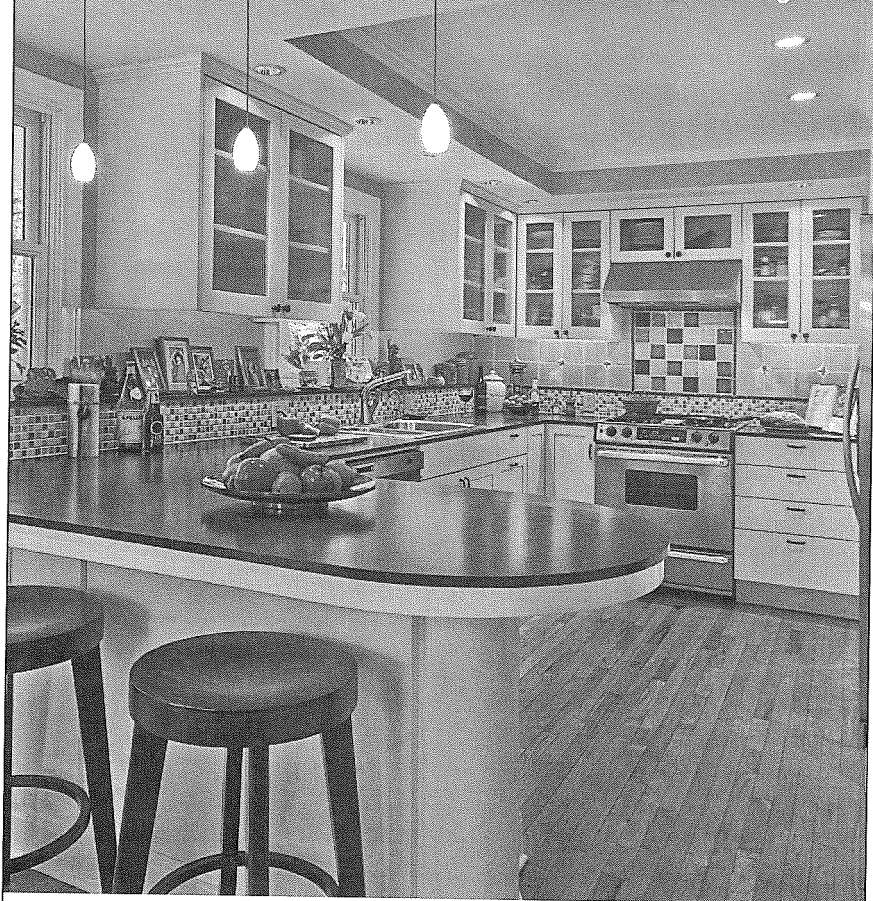
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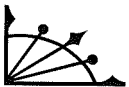
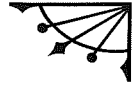


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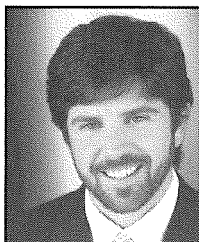


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| 5 | The Williams-Ware House | 3911 Avenue G | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
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