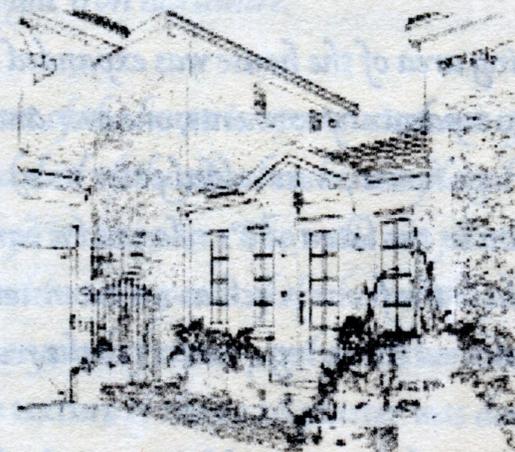
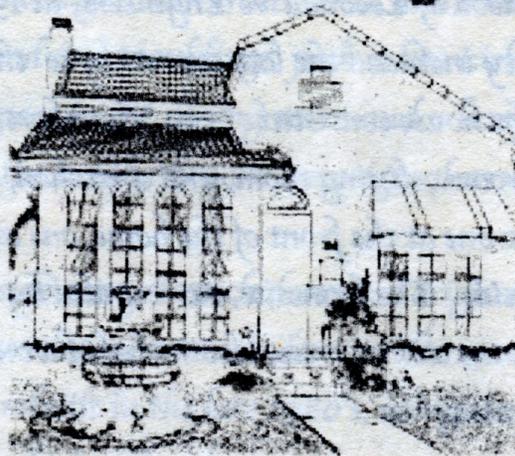


Triangle Inn Association

Open House

July 18, 2004

2-5 p.m.



The Scott-Wimmers House

326 Pedro Street

1926

History

The original bungalow-style house at 326 Pedro Street was built by the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers, in 1926. The original property included the lots currently to the east and west of the home. The house consisted of two "chambers," one bathroom, a den, a living room, dining room, and a kitchen, and three outdoor porches: one at the front of the home, one at the rear, and one at the west side. The homesite, surrounded by Australian pine and suriname cherry trees, also included a one-story, two-bay carriage house.

In time, the living area of the house was expanded to enclose the porches, and two separate apartments, one over and the other to the rear of the carriage house, were added prior to 1942. Another major renovation in the late 1980's relocated a bank of one-story windows to include the front porch as an extension of the living room, and demolished the living quarters to the rear of the garage.

The square footage of the original house was doubled in 2003 with the completion of the addition of both a master and guest suite, great room, office space, laundry facilities, and an additional bathroom. A privacy wall was added at that time to enclose the property.

Features

Original to the home are the white oak wood floors, single-panel doors with glass octagon door-knobs, coral and limestone fireplace, plaster crown and cove mouldings, peek-a-boo niche, and archways. Sconces in the dining room and a hanging wrought iron fixture in the new bathroom are original as well.

The front and side entry French doors are original to the home.

The wooden French casement windows in the 1926 part of the home had been rebuilt in the late 1980's, using the original glass panes and wrought iron hardware.

The original part of the home is constructed out of cedar and pine planking; a good deal of the pine has been replaced due to extensive termite damage prior to 1989. The walls are plaster and lathe construction, and in some parts of the home, the plaster is 8 inches thick. While a myriad of repair and patchwork can be noted on the interior, the texture of the 1926 plaster was done with horse tail fibers.

Every feasible effort, within the budget, was made on the 2003 addition to match features of the original interior and exterior of the home.

Homeowners, Then and Now

According to City of Venice tax records, the original homeowner of 326 Pedro Street was George Raymond Wucherypfening. The BLE took over ownership in 1927, probably due to tax default. In 1932, Mr. and Mrs. J.H. Scott, who relocated from Columbus, Ohio, purchased the home from the BLE. Mr. Scott worked for the BLE's insurance and pension department. The Scotts lived at 326 for 10 years; not much is known about them.

The home's longest and most prominent owner was H.N. "Bud" Wimmers, who came to Venice from Cleveland, Ohio, to be the BLE's paymaster in 1926. His wife Mildred shortly followed. They had one daughter named Patricia. The Wimmers' originally lived on Pensacola Road, and bought 326 Pedro Street from the Scott estate because it was a good deal with a lot of adjacent land and rental property.

Mr. Wimmers was appointed to Venice's first City Council by Governor John Martin in 1927. He lost his bid for reelection to the Council in 1928.

The Wimmers' were one of the only families to remain in Venice after the boomtimes. During that time, Mr. Wimmers opened Venice's first real estate agency, and operated it out of his office on Miami Avenue. This business still exists today.

Patsy Wimmers moved to Pedro Street when she was in high school. She occupied the carriage house apartment during that time and was the envy of all of her friends. Patsy left Venice shortly after high school and has since relocated to Rustell, Georgia. Our family was delighted to "find" her last spring, and, along with her husband Jim Strinson, Pat visited us at "our" home. This was a great honor!

Mildred Wimmers died in the early 1960's, and Mr. Wimmers remarried Martha Morrow and lived with her at 326 until his death from cancer in 1975. The home was sold in 1978 and changed hands several times. A law firm purchased the property in the 1980's, with the hope of gaining a zoning variance to make the house office space. This did not occur, and the home sat vacant for several years, falling into a state of disrepair. In 1989, Tom and Dee Stephenson purchased the home and are credited for not only "saving" the house, but also for inspiring the rebirth of Pedro Street as a historic district. They later subdivided the property and sold the lots to the east and west of the house. This is why the addresses on Pedro Street are not chronological!

Our family purchased 326 in 2001, after admiring it on the outside on drives and walks for several years. We have made the vast majority of infrastructure and aesthetic renovations that you see today. We now consider our "big" work to be completed, although we know that we will always have maintenance issues to monitor. Compared to some other historic homes in Venice, we feel that our proximity to downtown makes our home "the best!"

Landscape

Almost all of the existing landscape features were installed since our ownership of 326 Pedro Street. Exceptions include, of course, the towering Washingtonian palms which line Pedro Street (these were planted by the BJE in 1926), and the queen palms which line the driveway.

The front landscape, which features two "postage stamp" grassy areas, have been enhanced since our ownership with the installation of a new walk (with "fossils"), a fountain, and flowering plants added for color. The large Cuban Laurel tree, which used to be a part of this property, belongs to our neighbors. Original photos of our house do not include this towering tree, so it is less than 78 years old. Although impressive in size, it has caused our house much structural damage through the years and requires a great deal of maintenance.

When we purchased 326, the backyard was large, with overgrown palm and bamboo thickets. This was cleared for the 2003 addition. We recently completed the backyard to include the privacy wall, brick courtyards and alley, pergola, in-the-ground spa, shellbeds, gates, and grassy area. The brick is reclaimed from Chicago, and the wrought iron gate and features are all salvage pieces we retrofitted for their present purposes.

We spent two years envisioning and designing our gardens. Among our favorite landscape plants is the hibiscus, which is the city flower of Venice. We have over 20 varieties. Our yard also includes many species of native and exotic butterfly larval and nectar plants, including milkwed, passion and pipe vines, porterweed, Mayan spinach and cassia trees, and salvias. Backyard shellbeds are dotted with different iris species, citrus trees, and a hanging orchid garden. Thunbergia, alamaanda, queen's wreath, and delcehampia vines climb throughout the yard.

Thank you for visiting our home!

David, Shari, Tali, & Mariska Ursel

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