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The Moore House

Cecil Jenkins

Patrick H. and Agatha Moore purchased a lot on Walker Street in 1893 and began construction of a home which was the family residence for many years. The January 10, 1894 Mercury states that, "the new ten room brick house being built on Walker Street by Mr. P. H. Moore is now being covered."

The exterior and interior walls are of brick and range in thickness from ten to eighteen inches. Tongue and groove heart of pine flooring is used throughout the house. Indications are that the interior woodwork was originally stained and varnished. The 1913 Sanborn map shows a small two bay carriage house at the rear of the lot. The house style is Italianate Victoria.

The front entry is into a foyer with an entrance to each side of the house. The receiving room and two bedrooms are on one side and the parlor, dining room, and kitchen are on the other. The woodwork in the foyer, parlor, receiving room, and dining room is more elaborate. The doorway between the parlor and dining room is eight feet by eight feet with four folding doors having four panels each. There are four fireplaces downstairs and two upstairs. The stairway is located in the receiving room. The ceilings are eleven feet in height; the walls and ceilings are plastered. All doorways include a transom. The upstairs has three large rooms.





The 1900 census listed Agatha Moore as a widowed head of household residing in the house with her seven children who ranged in age from eight to twenty-one. The oldest son was a typesetter and five of the children in the eight to sixteen year age range were in school. The 1910 census also listed Agatha as the head of household. Four of her children, a son-in-law, and two grandchildren lived with her. The son-in-law was a pharmacist and one single daughter was a bookkeeper at the courthouse.

Owners between 1914 and 1954 were Paul Speake, John C. and James H. McAnelly, and the McAnelly heirs. Niles A. Prestage, Sr. purchased the property in July 1954. A 1968 appraisal described the house as three apartments. The carriage house had been converted into a garage, which the appraisal described as a substandard duplex apartment.



The house was altered significantly. The original period Victorian porch was replaced with a large unusual wrap around porch. A portion of the porch was later converted into two additional rooms of rental space and resulted in an unusual frontal appearance. Also, the red exterior brick walls were painted white. Major interior alterations were made throughout the house. Most ceilings were lowered and many walls were added. One ceiling was even converted into a chalet type ceiling.

Space in the large kitchen was converted into two narrow baths for the two downstairs apartments. The woodwork was painted many times over the years. However, most of the ornate trim and woodwork was saved because it was covered and protected by the added walls.

The property was sold again in 1989 and restoration began. A pre-purchase professional inspection accurately identified the major problem areas. The first priority was removal of the added walls and lowered ceilings which revealed extensive damage to plastered ceilings and some plastered walls.



The electrical and plumbing systems were completely replaced. High efficiency heating and cooling systems were installed. All walls and ceilings have been repaired and painted white until decorating beings. The kitchen has been restored to its original size and equipped with new cabinets and appliances. Two new downstairs baths have been located elsewhere.

The upstairs has been converted into a master suite consisting of a sitting room, bedroom, walk-in closet, dressing room, and bath. Carpet that was glued to the wood floors has been removed, revealing floors that are attractive after cleaning and touch up. The garage apartment has been converted back into a two car garage. Future plans include interior decorating, painting the exterior and restoring the porch to its original configuration.





Behind the scene support is an important factor in what has been accomplished on the house the past two years. Harvie Jones has provided advice and guidance. Linda Bayer Allen of the City Planning Commission provided the initial information and guidance critical to collecting historical information on the Moore family and the house. Finally, the continuous enthusiasm and encouragement of the residents of Old Town have been a source of motivation and enjoyment.

Cecil Jenkins is a native of Florence, Alabama which was his residence, except for military service, until moving to Huntsville in 1967. He has a Bachelor's Degree in Mathematics and Masters Degrees in Engineering and Business Administration. He is manager of Software Quality Assurance at Chrysler's Pentastor Electronics where he has been employed for twenty years. His primary leisure activities are genealogy, flying, and running.