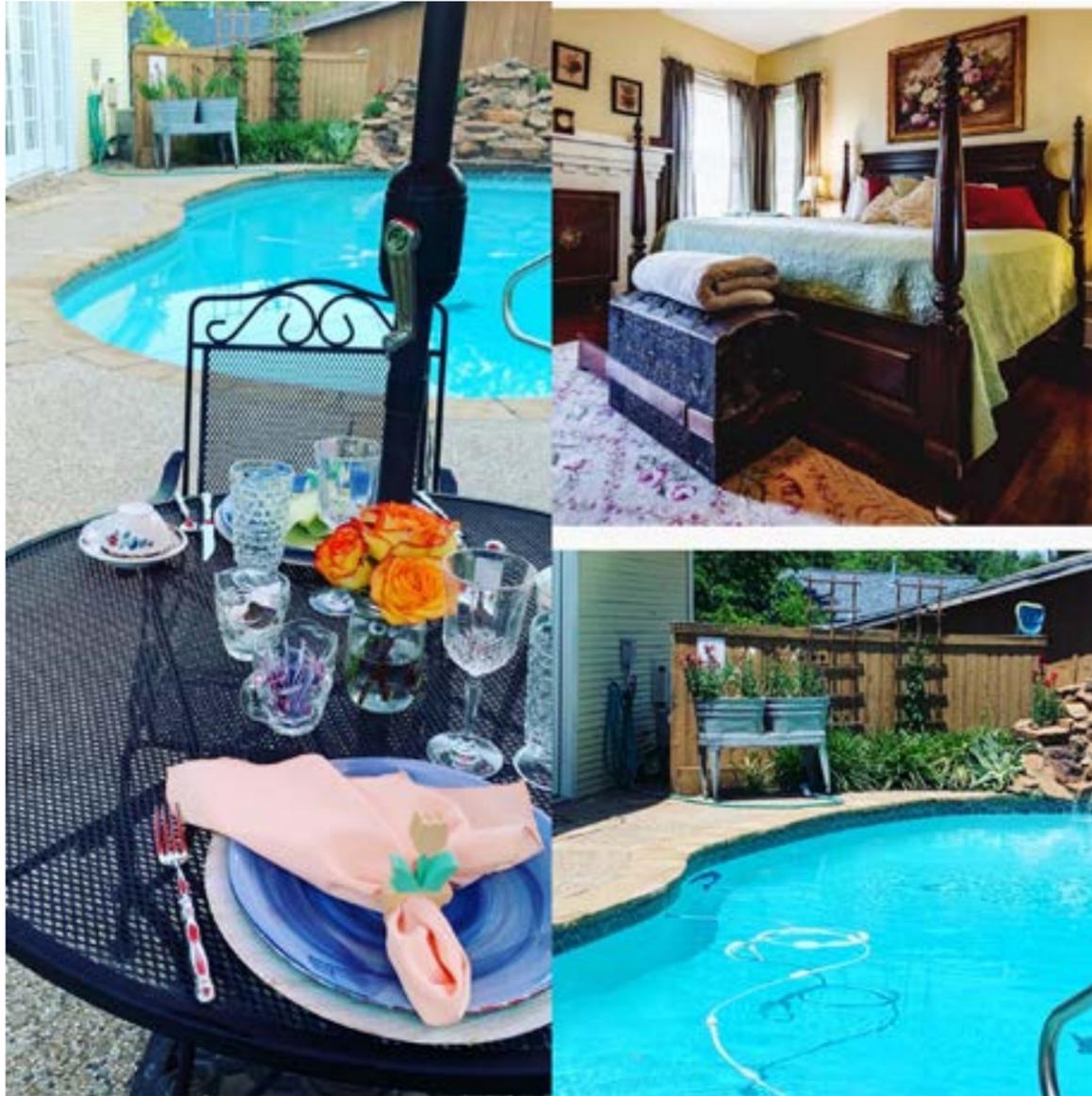


FAIRMOUNT

HOME TOUR EDITION 2020
THE FAIRMOUNT NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION



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PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Happy Father's Day and Happy Home Tour!

First, I hope you and yours are safe and healthy. What a different place we're all at now than we were at the beginning of the year when we published our last newsletter. For those outside of the neighborhood joining us for our first ever virtual/video-based home tour and digital home tour newsletter and booklet, let me just say welcome, and we're glad you're here. This year is our 38th Annual Fairmount Home Tour and may end up as one of the more memorable tours yet. While we are sad that we aren't able to see everyone and invite you into the neighborhood, I am extremely proud of the work that has happened behind the scenes to make sure we were able to offer something fun and of value during the current pandemic. The Home Tour committee has done everything with safety as our top priority, and has done the work of organizing the tour you're watching or about to watch while working from home, dealing with new technologies, and a whole lot of thinking outside of the box, and so they deserve a large round-of-applause. A major thank you to our Home Tour director Kristen McCurdy and to our Home Tour Volunteer Coordinator Kim Worley. Without their work, this wouldn't have been possible. I would also like to re-iterate that Home Tour is the Fairmount Neighborhood's largest fundraiser. It's how we're able to afford to keep low membership costs while also hosting social events (when it's safe again to do so), neighborhood infrastructure improvements, expanding our communication through printed newsletters on every door, and much more. So, while we are excited to be bringing this beautiful look into our community to the world for free, we also appreciate any donation of any amount you're able to contribute. A good reference, in my opinion, is that our day-of ticket costs were \$25, so for a donation of just one ticket, you can watch the video with your whole family. Or, if you live in Fairmount and haven't yet joined as a member, we would encourage you to take this opportunity to do so (and if you don't live in the neighborhood, you can also join as a Friend of Fairmount).

Thank you, and enjoy the tour!

David Weuste
Fairmount Neighborhood Association Board President



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JOIN THE NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION BOARD

This August we will be electing our new board officers to join us in helping to keep Fairmount the best neighborhood in Fort Worth and to help us shape the community for the future. Below are the board positions (and the terms) we are needing to fill. And an early thank you to all of our outgoing board members who've helped to lead and guide us to this point. To be eligible to be a Board member, you must be a voting Association member in good standing. If you are interested, or you would like to nominate someone you feel might be a good fit, please send an email to president@historicfairmount.com. Each of these directors benefits greatly from committee members, so if you don't think you're able to be a board member, but still want to help the neighborhood and be more involved, please send an email to president@historicfairmount.com. Anyone is eligible to be a committee member.

Director of Finance (2 Year Term)

Keep an accurate receipts and expenditures, coordinate and oversee collection of funds, make disbursements of funds and deposit all funds in the name of the Fairmount Association in financial institutions as designated by the Board. Present an accurate financial statement at every regular meeting of the Association, and at other times when requested by the President or the Board. Submit all vouchers, receipts, canceled checks and other records to an auditing committee for annual review, no more than 15 days following the committee appointment. Have custody of all records relating to the Association, including copies of financial records and arrange an annual audit of the Association's finances with a Certified Public Account. Maintain a list of location and custodian of all Association assets. Submit all records to an auditing committee for annual review, no more than 15 days following the committee appointment.

Director of Promotions (1 Year Term)

Oversee the Annual Home Tour. Be responsible for training of an Assistant (who is appointed by the Board and approved by the General Membership) to take over this office in the future. Promote development in the neighborhood.

Director of Preservation (2 Year Term)

Oversee Historic District Issues and Guidelines and the Historic Preservation Committee. Serve as liaison from the Association to the HCLC, and other Historic Agencies, as well as with the Archivist.

Director of Communications (2 Year Term)

Be responsible for the editing, publication and distribution of the monthly newsletter and other printed material as needed as well as the development and collection of newsletter advertising income. Oversee notification of members of meetings and other activities by voice, written or other electronic communication. Act as a public information officer for the association and coordinate with the media. Be responsible for the website. Oversee the "Yard of The Month" project.

Director of Public Safety (2 Year Term)

Act as liaison to City Crime Prevention organizations such as Citizens on Patrol and Crime Watch. Act as liaison to Fort Worth Police and Fire Departments and emergency medical services.

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Fire Station Park expansion final design now underway. Your support is needed.



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1817 Fairmount Ave., C.1909- **Popko/ Jacobus Home**

Built in 1909-1910 by contractor Charles M. Butcher, this low wide bungalow with Prairie style and Craftsman influences was tagged “substandard” by the city of Fort Worth and slated for possible demolition less than two decades ago. Butcher, his wife Josie, and their three kids lived in the home with a widowed English teacher, an actual butcher, and two other boarders. Boarders paid rent and lived in rooms within the same house while also sharing meals at breakfast and dinner, and the one bathroom in the house.

Butcher and his family lived there only a year while he built a larger home for himself down the street at 1831 Fairmount, which the family moved into in 1911. Next door was another house Charles Butcher built for his father and fellow carpenter, Lewis. Butcher went on to form Butcher and Sweeney Contractors, building several mansions in Ryan Place including the huge John C. Ryan home on Elizabeth Blvd., and several iconic Fort Worth structures including Arlington Heights High School, Polytechnic High School, and TCU Stadium.

Investor and home restoration expert Jim Johnson of Fairmount Homes purchased the nearly condemned house in 2002 and finished its total renovation by 2004. Current owners Charles Jacobus and Angelo Popko purchased the home in late 2006 and live here with

their son Zachary. Arts and Crafts era details like the beamed ceilings and bookcase-flanked brick hearth blend in harmony with a house full of wonderful family antiques and original art, much of it made by family members. In front of the fireplace sits Angela’s grandfather’s simple oak mission rocker. The equally wonderfully simple mid-century coffee table was made by Charles’ grandfather, Dick Dodge, an artist and illustrator from New York, who also created several modernist “heads” out of cardboard about the same period, also seen in the home. Other works by Dodge throughout the house include a beautiful 1938 oil painting of Los Angeles viewed through trees from one of the hills, and a watercolor of the Chattam shores on Cape Cod.

A framed lithograph of the Ship Bangalore hangs in the kitchen. The three-masted 1880s cargo ship was commanded for a time by Charles’ great grandfather, Captain Phineas Banning Blanchard. Through the kitchen windows, the modest little house out back where boarders once lived can be seen. The long narrow structure appears in the 1910 Sanborn Insurance Maps as a stable for a horse and buggy, and the same structure later in the 1951 Sanborns remodeled as a dwelling and garage. Many homes from 1910 and earlier in Fairmount had stables on the property. Streetcar lines were not common until just about that time forward, so residents had to “get to town” by carriage, as cars were somewhat rare on the dirt streets until closer to WWI.

FAIRMOUNT

HOME TOUR 2020

FEATURING STACY LUECKER PHOTOGRAPHS



The Fairmount Neighborhood Association proudly presents its 38th Annual Tour of Historic Homes! Though we missed seeing all of you in person for Mother’s Day this year, we’re thrilled to “virtually” share with you many of our most charming and unique homes via the comfort and convenience of your own tech. Just click play and enjoy exploring five beautiful houses, two bungalows undergoing renovation, and Southside Preservation Hall.

There is no set “ticket price” to enjoy this year’s Home Tour. We understand the stresses that Covid 19 has placed on many of our beloved attendees. All we ask is that if you are able, that you might make a donation at historicfairmount.com/donate to help ensure that we can fund the Fairmount Home Tour again next year. (Home Tour is Fairmount’s largest fundraiser of the year, and it helps support our neighborhood’s infrastructure, parks, schools, and arts programs, and neighborhood events). Thank you so much for joining us, and we look forward to seeing all of you again happy, healthy and IN-PERSON next year!





2252 6th Ave., c. 2008- **The Holland Home**

Completed in 2008, this foursquare style home with Craftsman details was built by Joe Frank as a spec home for sale. Frank built several detailed new 'period' homes throughout Fairmount in the first decade of the new century. The home was purposely designed to look like a Craftsman style foursquare with an upstairs porch added a few years after, then filled in with two rooms and a balcony space

remaining in the center, a process that would've happened over its first twenty years or so had it actually been built in 1910. The gabled dormer with knee braces, exposed rafter tails, and tapered columns refer to that Arts and Crafts era home aesthetic of a hundred years earlier.

Brian and Margaret Holland moved here in 2017. Brian is a realtor with a passion for vintage vinyl and the older stereo equipment they were played on. Margaret works at the Baylor Scott and White Family practice on Magnolia and has been one of the hero's on the front lines of the Covid-19 crisis. Over the living room fireplace hangs a water color of the Nashville skyline, and over the mantle in the master bedroom is a painting of Ravello, Italy where the couple was married in 2012.

1808 Fairmount Ave., c.1908- **The Fonville home**

In 1995 this home was so completely abused, burned out and hopeless, that neighbors were sure, despite the protections of the newly formed historic district, it would either be torn down or fall over. Around 1999 the home was purchased by the first person trying to save it, Sheri Di Franca. Di Franca saves it from demolition. The house was sold again to owners who fixed it up but did a series of



"remuddlings" as well. Through a series of owners until now, the home has undergone changes for the better, with renovations in 2010 bringing back its charm and original character.

Local rail history runs deep in this urban late Queen Anne style home. Frank Barzillai Parker, born in Ohio and a trainmaster for the local Frisco Line, and his wife Emma, were first owners. They lived in the house until 1919 when Charles C. Clark and family purchased the home for \$4200, buying the home from a workmate, Frank Parker. Clark also worked on the Frisco Line, which ran down 8th Avenue, as a locomotive engineer. Clark and Parker were also both born in the Midwest and during the U.S. Civil War. During the decades of Fairmount's existence, almost one-third of its residents worked for local railroads and most of those for the Frisco Line.

Their youngest child, Charles Clark, jr., was born in the home in the upstairs front bedroom when his mother was 44 and his father 58 years old. Charlie as he's known, is now 95 and living in Southern California.

The home once had a two-story garage in back with a small apartment on top. It was rented out to the family maid and Charlie's nanny, Mattie. Many families had servants and other employees who lived on their property. Charlie shared a photo of him and Mattie, his favorite person in the world at the time, holding a beaming 3 year old Charlie.

Current owners Kyle and Katie Fonville purchased 1808 Fairmount in 2018. They have used antiques and flea market finds in decor to keep the historic charm and continue the stewardship of this unique home through its second century.

1916 5th Ave., c.1921- **The Fowler home**

This frame bungalow with heavy brick piers and porte cochere extending off the front porch was typical in new bungalow neighborhoods spreading westward from Fairmount after WWI. Many porte cocheres were added to houses in Fairmount around this time because of the uptick in production of a new kind of transport, the automobile. This one was original and along with the rest of the house first belonged to Alfred Evens Priest, manager of Fort Worth





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Oil Exchange. Alfred and wife Fern and their two children lived here until his death at age 58 in 1948.

Their son Dale was listed as an artist in the 1936 city directory. A photo from the 1932 Central High School yearbook shows him in his Company "B" ROTC troop, second row, center. By 1940, Dale had moved to New York and was employed by showman Billy Rose, famous Broadway producer and promoter who was hired by Amon Carter to manage and stage the famous Casa Manana 1936 Texas Centennial theater production.

The Fowlers purchased their home in 2019 and installed a new garage with period details at the end of the driveway to house their vintage automobiles. One of the automobiles is pictured under the porte cochere, a 1978 Westfalia. Inside the house, some the period details remain with a minimalist modern touch added. A few of the original items include the porcelain bathroom tub, the fireplace in the living room now refitted with gas logs, the shiplap ceiling, and some of the original cabinets were left in the kitchen update to retain a touch of historic charm.



2212 5th Ave., C.1920- Home of Larry and Janet Nicoludis

This unique two-story home was built as an upstairs/ downstairs duplex in 1920-21. The numerous connected bands of windows and exposed rafter tails under a low wide roofline lend themselves to both the Prairie and Craftsman styles. The home has a unique original back staircase and a huge upstairs master bath. The house sat as the ugly stepsister on the lot until the restoration of the matching prairie inspired front porch in 2007.

First residents Richard W. and Carolyn Stewart Rogers moved in 1922. He was a solicitor for the Texas Employers Insurance Assn. The birth certificate of their son Richard Jr. in 1923 shows them living at 2212 5th Avenue.

By late that year Baylor Lewis Agerton and his sister Mollie Agerton, moved in and both apartments were occupied. He was a lawyer and partner in Bryant, Wade and Agerton and a life long bachelor. Mollie was also single, as school teachers were required to be at the time, and taught English at nearby Daggett School.

By 1928 Mollie and her sister Myrna Agerton, an English teacher at Polytechnic high school, were living in the home with Mollie listed as owner. The house was valued at \$10,000 in 1930, a very high value during the Great Depression.

The current owners purchased it in 2017 and have done many renovations through the home to make it what it is today. They have lived in 22 states and have collected work from many artists which are showcased through their home. They even have a piece from Fairmount neighbor Hester Bend, featured upstairs. Owner Janet, is also a craftsman as well, making bird houses and garden totems that are featured in her yard.



1519 Lipscomb St., Southside Preservation Hall, Built 1910-1955

Amazingly, it only took ten minutes for three Fairmount neighbors to save an extraordinary French Gothic Revival sanctuary, a beautiful 1950s mid century Chapel, a ballroom, and a multi-story educational building from total annihilation and removal. But a lot of wringing of hands and deal making had led up to that short meeting in the spring of 1995 at Fort Worth City Hall that handed over all the former Central Methodist Church buildings, by then abused, neglected and crumbling structures owned by the Panther Boys Club, to a newly formed non profit organization, the Southside Preservation Association.

Under the leadership of Jeff Gibbons and Rose Lynn Scott, the collection of buildings became known as Southside Preservation Hall, and restoration was begun by enthusiastic neighbors, volunteers from throughout the city, and many long hours put in by community service workers. The chapel, which had windows shattered, ceiling beams laying on the floor and walls covered in graffiti, was restored first so that

it could be used for weddings to begin generating income. It was renamed The Rose Chapel. Dedications were sold for each of the new stained glass windows made in stained glass classes held in the basement. The perfect mid-century pews we're salvaged from a similar demolished church and dedications were sold for those as well. The 'new' pipe organ donated by Fairmount Neighborhood Association founding member Naomi Roper was actually a period instrument also from the late 50s, perfectly fitting for its new home.

The 1920s fellowship hall with its raised stage at the rear of the complex was renovated into the Flamingo Ballroom, hosting swing dances and big bands that continue today. The four story education bldg, also added in the 20s, was once very close to completely renovated but suffered a huge fire in 2008. The structure remains sound but the fire and smoke damaged most all the interior.

The crown jewel yet to be restored is the 1910 French Gothic style Sanctuary. The oldest building of the group, it's beautiful barrel shaped fluer-de-lis patterned tin ceiling was discovered under 1970s acoustic tiles. The huge hollow triptychs of classical columns hide structural brick column supports. These huge wooden column covers went missing just days before the takeover deal was struck. The thief that broke into the vacant building to steal them tried selling them to Fairmount's local architectural salvage dealer, Ralph Watterson, of the Old Home Supply. Ralph recognized them and rescued them for the organization and they were quickly returned to Southside Preservation Hall.

Southside Preservation Association now subsists on the income generated by ballroom events and weddings in the chapel. Donations are also often received, but much more money needs to be raised and much work is left to do. The potential alone for the amazing sanctuary holds many possibilities including a superb local theatre or stunning art space. The education building could be offices for local charities and preservation organizations.





1945 6th Ave., c.1913- **The Tucker-McDermott Home**

These two homes next door to each other belonged to the Ferguson & Powers families for many decades before being purchased by the current owners now bringing them new life. 1941 only had two owners and 1945 had been in the same family since 1917. Michael and Stan Tucker-McDermott were contacted by the Ferguson family after the recent passing of Betty Ferguson, who lived at 1941 with her husband, Temple, since the 1960s. Michael had known Betty when both were docents at the Fort Worth Zoo in the 1980s and 90s. Michael is the current Director of Historic Preservation in Fairmount and was amazed to see that 1945 6th had been in the Powers family, relatives of the Fergusons, since 1917 and had never been touched or altered, a rare find these days. In fact, the home was full of all the original furniture and household items that W.O. Powers had moved in with his family one hundred and three years ago.

Chase Jones and Robin Fueling are no amateurs either when it comes to renovating old homes. They purchased 1941 at the same time as 1945 sold and this is their third home restoration together and Robin's seventh in Fairmount. Both sets of owners have always loved to restore and preserve as much of the old character and historic details as possible when restoring their own homes as well as all they've redone to resell.

1941 and 1945 6th Ave both first appear in the Fort Worth city directory in 1914. Both were likely built on speculation by the same builder and have the exact same footprint but with different roof forms. Both have similar porches, same columns, and similar interior layouts with a few slight variations. Robert C. Martin, a banker at the First National Bank, bought 1941 6th about 1915. Meanwhile,

William O. Powers, a conductor on the nearby Frisco Rail line, his wife Elizabeth, and their daughters Vera May, Marie and Harriet moved into 1945 about a year and a half later. The Martins became good friends with the Powers and wound up leaving their house to the Powers family.

Inside the Powers house, all the original stained woodwork and built ins remain unchanged, complete with one of the largest built in sideboards known in Fairmount, along with its original leaded glass doors. Michael and Stan saved some of the original kitchen cabinets to redo as well as the 110 year old kitchen table repurposed in the new breakfast nook. On the dining room plate rail sits a set of hand-painted china actually done by Marie Powers in for her mother Elizabeth in 1918. And on the impressive fireplace mantle sits a board with 100 years of keepsakes glued to it by daughters Marie and Harriet who both lived in the home until the 1990s.

In the Ferguson home at 1941, the original fireplace and bookcases in the living room and the built in cabinets and sideboard in the dining room remain, as well as the plate rail. A wonderful original dining room "pan-o-lier" will be rewired and reinstalled. The original leaded glass for the bookcases and the sideboard was removed decades ago but was found out back in the old servants quarters. A very primitive bathroom installed for the help in the back corner of the garage still remains. Finally, a family piece from the Victorian era was purchased by Robin and Chase and sits in 1941— an oak chifferobe from the Powers house next door.



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YARD OF THE MONTH April 2020



Photograph by Stacy Luecker



April 2020 Winner of Yard of the Month is the Gaither Family of 1319 S. Adams. Angela and Patrick Gaither purchased the house in December 2007, where they were later joined by son Henry and daughter Alice. The home was built as a new construction on a vacant lot, using plans for a 1935 Craftsman bungalow recommended by Historic Fort Worth. The builder, Alastair Glen Mace (1945-2013), also added their matching garage and apt. in 2012. Angela Gaither says Glen Mace was “fully committed to making the infill construction historically accurate, inside and out!” She also reports that Mace once lived in Paris and worked on the Pompidou Center, a modernist landmark built in 1977 on an

“inside out” plan with the pipes, electrical, and scaffolding all visible on the outside.

Sadly, the Fairmount photo archives do not currently have a picture of the original 20th century house at 1319 S Adams. The 1910 Sanborn fire maps show that 1319 Welch (as S. Adams was then called) was a vacant lot, with two-story homes on either side. 1319 was a one-story home by the late 1930’s, remaining a single-family dwelling as the flanking structures became boarding houses during the Great Depression. C B Webster, a Field Employee at the WPA Soil Conservation Office, owned 1319 S. Adams in the 1940’s. Webster had previously run a seed store which went under

during the Depression (uscensus.gov). (April 2019’s winner, Laura Kobetich, also had a house on Hurley previously owned by a soil conservation officer, Sidney Britt.) During WWII, C B Webster was in charge of grass maintenance at Meacham Field where he worked “in cooperation with the Eighth Service Command of the US Army.” He wrote several treatises on native and drought-tolerant grasses during the war to plant in Oklahoma and Texas (US Dept of Soil Conservation Summaries, vol. 5, 1947). The 1951 Sanborn Fire maps show a medical clinic on the corner of S. Adams and Magnolia, in the space currently occupied by Gus’ Fried Chicken. The former Kent and Company “Space” at 1309 was a domicile, and 1315 (a new commercial building housing Timely MD, a company offering online mental health counseling to college students) was a 2-story cement block apartment building with smaller apartments made from renovated stables out back.

Gaither reports that she “had wanted to live in a yellow house since she was a little girl,” so she selected Valspar’s cheeriest butter hue, “Mark Twain Yellow,” for the exterior. She sewed the black and white striped awning shades herself, which proved a huge help muting the setting sun in their West-facing house, and provided a bit of privacy and sound buffering from a changing urban landscape as restaurants and bars opened nearby on Magnolia. Like many homeowners who purchase a new construction, the Gaithers had no garden at all when they moved in, and not much budget left to create one after making such a major investment. First, they planted the boxwood shrubs and Juniper trees in front. Gradually, they added a line of Texas Red Buds in the parkway as part of a “Retree Fairmount” initiative. Currently, the house’s cheerful paint color is matched by banks of 100 daffodils, secretly planted by a friend before they moved in Dec. 2007, which appeared as a welcome surprise the spring of 2008. Angela reports, “they make me

smile every year.” She continued to add few varieties of over the past 12 years. The daffodils are off-set by the greenish grey of Dusty Miller, a type of artemisia which will set out mustardy yellow blooms in the heat of summer. Purple irises circle a pecan tree on the driveway: they come from Gaither’s grandmother’s farmhouse “which is no longer standing”; Gaither also displays ornamental metal iris garden art as a tribute to her grandmother. Gaither writes, “I always add pansies and winter rye grass for color during the winter and early spring. I find this to drastically improve my outlook during bleak winter days. Everything else is a perennial, which has to be drought tolerant.” The yard contains a variety of lilies, Texas sage, salvia, coneflower, lantanas, butterfly bush, star jasmine, sedum, Chinese fringe flower, clematis vine, and there is a fall blooming aster variety called ‘Henry’ after their son.

The side and back gardens are reserved for practical purposes: kids’ playscape, and an area for their large Doberman. After laying sod three times, and seeing it torn up and tracked in by kids and pets, they decided to put in a mud-reducing gravel pit for play, which they will eventually convert to a succulent bed as the kids outgrow it. Last year, Angela’s Valentine’s Day present from her family was a raised, tiered garden bed on the South-facing aspect of the house, which looks on to a pretty vacant lot punctuated by boxwoods and trees, which sometimes hosts Christmas and Halloween displays. The Gaithers grew collard greens in the south bed through the winter and Angela credits “at least part of my kids’ love for vegetables to this little garden. We have some kitchen herbs planted to the side of it, and it’s fun to send the kids out to get things for cooking, and see what they come back with.”

Our thanks for their beautiful yard, and a gift card for \$30 to Stir Crazy Baked Goods, go to the Gaithers.

YARD OF THE MONTH May 2020



Photographs by Stacy Luecker



widowed young early in WWII, Arthur at 33 and Johnnie Lu as a teenaged mother, and each brought children from previous marriages: Johnnie Lu's sons Ken and Rick Cope, and Arthur's daughters Roberta and Cynthia Husted. Arthur's daughter Roberta and his late wife Minnie Dorsett tragically died at just 27 years of age (Minnie in 1941, Roberta in 1966). Johnnie Lu was a native of Alvarado, TX, who moved

(May Yard of the Month continued on page 23)



May 2020 Yard of the Month award goes to Ryan and Natalie Campbell, who have owned their home at 2227 College Ave since 2014. According to Tarrant County Deed cards, the bungalow was built in 1938, though the family was given an earlier date of 1914 at the time of purchase, and the Tarrant tax assessor estimates 1925. It's possible that a series of homes built on the site were lost to fire or demolition. The house as it exists today -- a 1-story structure of about 1700 square feet -- is recorded in the 1951 Sanborn fire maps, along with two smaller dwellings in the back, labeled 2227 1/2 and 2227 1/3 (no longer there). 2227 College is a sweet white bungalow of mixed architectural influences, with an azalea-pink 6-lite front door, square columns, a pitched roof, and a front porch the width of the house. The Campbells have added some decorator's touches to the front porch,

including an oversized black metal wall-mount mailbox, a crystal chandelier, and an extra-deep plantation-style daybed porch swing with pillows and stuffed animals. Heavy concrete planters frame the front steps, usually planted with a tall topiary plant. The pink floral wreath on the front door, and hundreds of blooming bulbs make the house the embodiment of spring, and a wonderful promise of rebirth for a neighborhood.

The first listed owner on the deed card is H. F. Walthall, a banker whose prominent family moved from Chesterfield, VA to Texas in the 1830's (Texas Christian Advocate, 1886; Texas Bankers' Encyclopedia, 1921). The home's longest-lasting residents were Arthur Robert Husted (1908-1989) and Johnnie Lu Manis Husted (1925-2014) whose family owned 2227 College from 1962-2002. Arthur and Johnnie were both



YARD OF THE MONTH

June 2020



Photographs by Stacy Luecker



June 2020 Yard of the Month winners are Max Krochmal and Courtney Wait of 1509 S. Lake St. The Krochmal-Wait home is tucked behind the Fairmount community garden on the corner of Maddox and Lake. Max and Courtney bought their home in 2011 from David and Victoria Gabriel. Max had just begun a tenure-track job in the History Dept. at Texas Christian University, and Courtney, now an Assistant Principal in the FWISD, was beginning a doctoral program in Education. Among the features they loved about the home were its unusual yellow brick siding with sparkling flecks, four chimneys, and exceptional black tile ornamentation on two exterior chimneys. Since purchasing the house, Max and Courtney have been joined by son Elijah and daughter Rayna, while also completing degrees, earning tenure, and publishing on the Civil Rights Movement in Texas (Krochmal, Blue Texas, UNC Press, 2016). Max co-founded the Comparative Race and Ethnic Studies department at TCU, and runs

an NEH-backed oral history project, Civil Rights in Black and Brown which provides free access to interviews with leaders of the Chicano/a, LGBT and Black Rights movements, such as Opal Lee, founder of the Tarrant County Black History and Genealogical Society and the author of Juneteenth: A Children's Story.

1509 S. Lake was originally built in 1910 for Miss Lillian May Burton (1891-1944), by her parents, John Watson Burton and his wife Lucy "Lulu" Emma Darter Burton. The 1910 Sanborn Fire maps show a wood frame building with stables in the back yard. By 1920, the distinctive shimmering gold brick was added to the home's façade. A 1934 HOLC loan -- part of FDR's New Deal to limit foreclosures during the Great Depression -- allowed the addition of 400 square feet to the original domicile, as well as the renovation of the former back stables into a two-story house with a separate apartment, with an address of 1258 W. Maddox. All over 1930's

Fairmount, density was up as homeowners took in boarders, renters, WPA workers and soldiers, as a response to both financial exigencies and patriotic impulses. Throughout the Great Depression, Lillie May rented 1258 W. Maddox, the 1400-square foot rear house, to Bernise and Mattie Roberts, a tire salesman and a beautician, and the 220-square foot apartment to Harvey Fox, a watchmaker from New York.

The Burtons, who owned and ran Burtonville Ranch for many years, are buried in the Pioneers Rest Cemetery at 820 Samuels Ave. in Fort Worth. Lillie May was just nineteen and a recent graduate of Fort Worth High School, now the Parker Commons apartments at 1015 S. Jennings, when she took possession of her new home. Lillie, who never married, was a musician, dancer, playwright and actor who gave solo recitals from Wichita to San Diego from the age of 6. Lillie May appeared frequently in the "Society Pages" of the Fort Worth Star Telegram, where she was described as "a young lady of a charming personality" and many artistic gifts. In addition to piano recitals, she wrote and performed one-act plays and monologues ("Uncle Josh's Trip to New York," being one award-winner, possibly inspired by tenant Harvey Fox's stories of the big Apple). Lillie May was also the designated "prose poet" of the Monday Book Club's Shakespeare Society and co-hosted Shakespeare's birthday party every April on "Quality Hill," the bluff over the Trinity river containing the Ball-Edelman-McFarland House where Fort Worth's Cattle Barons lived (Fort Worth Star Telegram). By the time of the 1940 census, Lillie May's parents JW and Lula, then in their 80's, were renting out their 40-acre ranch and 5-bedroom house in the Rosen Heights neighborhood for \$15 a month, and were living with Lillie May in Fairmount (Fort Worth Star Telegram). The Burton's second son, Luther, a 50-year-old tile maker, also moved in with his sister and parents after a divorce in the 1930's. Luther's tile shop was at 234 S. Sylvania Ave., where Martin House Brewery is currently housed: it's likely that the unusual black tile ornamentation on the two exterior chimneys comes from Luther Burton's shop. A third child, brother W. C., had married and moved to Houston.

In the nine years that they've been in the home, Courtney and Max have experimented with the landscaping and hardscaping to find what works for them. Two constants have been their commitment to drought-tolerant and native plants. Max writes, "We were tired of fighting grass and weeds, especially in the long side yard along Maddox Ave. Courtney had spent a bazillion hours fighting them before surrendering." Around 2012, they experimented with seed bombing the front yard with wildflowers. Though the profusion of wildflowers was glorious, Max says, "our only real success was in planting trees. When we first moved in, we



Miss Lillie May Burton, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Burton, who accompanied by her mother left Wednesday for a tour in the West including Denver, Salt Lake City, San Francisco and Los Angeles. Miss Burton graduated this term from the High School and is an accomplished musician.



Miss Lillian May Burton, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Burton, who will

sion of wildflowers was glorious, Max says, “our only real success was in planting trees. When we first moved in, we bought a bunch of cheap, tiny fruit trees from Costco and planted them in the side yard and now we get thousands of delicious nectarines every spring.” The birds of Fairmount also enjoy the fallen fruit on Maddox Ave, and Max and Courtney’s dogs enjoy keeping an eye on the activities from the bedroom windows. In the front, Max and Courtney planted a redbud and a beautiful live oak after removing an unwanted hackberry. They also tried a vegetable garden in the back, but “didn’t have enough sunlight, and our backyard and dirt driveway flooded whenever it rained,” leading to wet roots for herbs and vegetables that require good drainage.

Like many Fairmounters, Max and Courtney first had to resolve their hardscaping before they could finalize plantings. Max writes, “Much of our design is hardscape, and we really love our two back patios and the circular steppingstones. We also removed some cheap wood railings and balustrades that someone had tacked on to the front porch so that we could fully enjoy our new garden.” Embarking on their current landscaping project was an “accident” that resulted when they decided to pave the driveway and add gutters to the house to help with the pooling rain and mud. “We added a new back patio near the house, and that led us to decide that it was time to overhaul everything else.” With drip irrigation, patio lights, a cedar new privacy fence, and other improvements in place, they hired Cassel Landscape Architects, a company owned by Courtney’s sister and her husband, to design the front and side garden plantings in Fall 2018 (<http://cassellandscape.com/>). Courtney writes that Cassel Landscape “created a comprehensive plan for the entire property based on our goals of having drought-tolerant native plants that would require minimal irrigation and low maintenance. Although they are based in Austin, they visited our house and carefully evaluated the grading, soil, and light in every corner

of the yard and created a design and recommended specific plants that we could include. Cassel Landscape Architects are the best and would love more business in Fairmount!” The dominant features of the new front gardens are multiple examples of a few Texas natives, with concentrations on four-nerve daisy (*tetraneris scaposa*) – which also goes by the colorful names “sneezeweed” and “bitterweed” -- Mexican feather grass, and purple skullcaps (*skulletaria wrightii*), a member of the mint family so named ‘because their blooms resemble tiny Medieval helmets’ (Joshee, 2002). If you’re visiting the Fairmount community garden, walk around the Maddox entrance to peep at the Krochmal family’s waterwise and beautiful gardens. You might walk away with some ideas you want to try at home.

Our thanks, and a \$30 gift card to Stir Crazy Baked Goods, go to Max and Courtney, Eli and Rayna.

Source: *Fort Worth Star Telegram, 1916 and 1944.*

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(*May Yard of the Month continued*)

to Fort Worth during WWII to find clerical work with the WPA, but Arthur Husted’s parents moved from Oklahoma in the 1890’s to operate a cab company in Fort Worth using carriages they bought for \$3000 in 1894 from Cincinnati. The Husted’s were married for 48 years and were members of Travis Avenue Baptist Church on Berry for over 50 years. Arthur’s daughter Cynthia inherited the home on College in 2002 and sold it in 2008.

Ryan Campbell has done all the landscaping work himself as a “labor of love for his family.” The first thing Ryan did was to dig a French drain system around the house and bring in yards of dirt and three pallets of river rock to change the slope and drainage pattern of the back yard. While back-breaking work, this effort helps preserve not only the garden, but also the pier and beam foundation, by preventing standing water under the house. Next, Ryan took inspiration from a trip to Martha’s Vineyard, where antique brick roads and paths are common, to install a serpentine path from reclaimed bricks that leads from the front porch to the backyard trampoline and porch. When the Campbells purchased the house, the landscaping suffered from erosion and neglect. They report “there were 2 Crape Myrtles that were pruned down to their trunks and a greyish unidentifiable tree in the back yard.” The mystery tree turned out to be a Tree of Heaven (*ailanthus altissima*), also known as Chinese Sumac. They are considered invasive in the Midwestern US, but are uncommon here in North Texas, according to three Arborists who came to check the tree’s stability. The Campbells love the Tree of Heaven: “It looks like something out of Jurassic Park!” Ryan writes.

With the major hardscaping tasks managed, Ryan next moved on to planting, beginning with 60 boxwood shrubs

“over 50 years old” that he transplanted from another home. Miraculously, only 1 of the 60 died in the removal, and the remainder currently hug the West and Southern-facing sides of the house. Next, he planted 5 Crape Myrtles, 2 in the parkway and 3 on the southern side of the house, and 2 peach trees, one for each of their children. For Christmas 2019, Natalie and the kids left for vacation a few days earlier than Ryan, so he used the time to plant 200 tulips and 500 daffodils, to surprise for the rest of the family when the bulbs sprouted in February. Additional plantings include 12 Hydrangea bushes, including one Texas-hardy Oakleaf hydrangea, 3 dogwood trees (*cornus florida*), a viburnum shrub, and a Japanese maple (*acer palmatum*).

Ryan purchases all of his plants from Mike’s Garden Center on Crowley Road, which he finds offer “unbeatable prices and customer service.” He concentrates on 80% perennials and 20% annuals in his purchases. He did have a bad experience with the drought-tolerant zoysia palisade grass, but only because their three-year-old son left the garden hose on all night and flooded the new sod. The zoysia developed “all sorts of diseases” so they ripped it out after a year and replaced it with turf grass, a reliable ground cover for their small children to play on.

Our thanks, and a \$30 gift card to Stir Crazy Baked Goods on Magnolia Ave, go to the Campbells.

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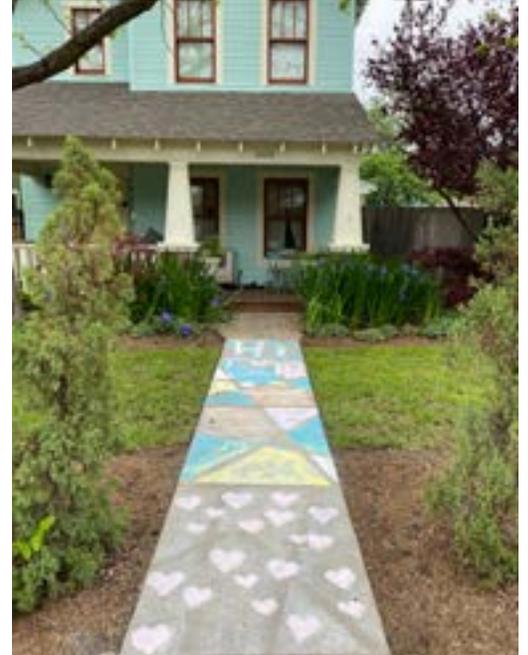
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FAIRMOUNT BACKPAGE



Top left: Fairmount Community Garden blooming with flowers and vegetables. Right top: Neighbors leave encouraging pictures and messages on the sidewalks for everyone to enjoy and to be encouraged by. Bottom left: What would Fairmount be without all the porch kitties? They really can enjoy themselves no matter the state of the world. Bottom right: B. Radley Club leaves hidden treasures for area kids to find. All you have to do is leave something thoughtful or imaginative for others to discover and pocket.