

THE HERITAGE SOCIETY OF AUSTIN PRESENTS

The  
Jewels  
of  
Castle  
Hill



HERITAGE  
HOMES TOUR

# Old West Austin

## AN ORIGINAL SMART GROWTH NEIGHBORHOOD

James Herve Raymond (1817-1897) was one of the great Texans of his day. The native New Yorker was Treasurer of both the Republic and State of Texas, and was one of Austin's most noted early capitalists. In 1848-49 he bought 200 acres west of Austin in a rolling wilderness just west of Shoal Creek and built a log house. In 1854 that was replaced by an elegant Greek Revival mansion (razed 1924) designed and built by Master Builder Abner Cook near the northwest corner of 6th St. & Lamar (once Pecan & Ruiz Streets).

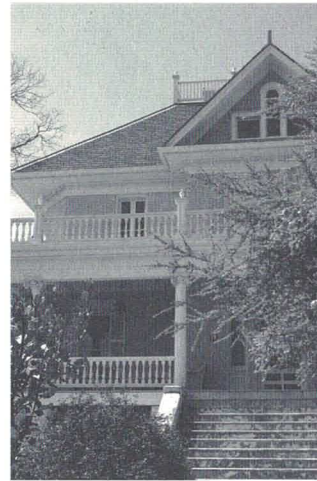
After the Civil War, Raymond began developing his property. In 1870, he sold 32 acres at the northeastern corner of his property for the creation of Texas Military Institute, the design of which was said to have been based on Virginia Military Institute. That closed in 1879, but even the remaining fragment of the Castle is of transcendent importance in West Austin. Raymond also platted a modest residential subdivision, Raymond Heights, in the vicinity of Treaty Oak. But west of his home he created Raymond Plateau, a remarkable series of 5-10 acre lots for the construction of suburban villas, following East Coast precedents. In the 1870s to 90s, these were built north of 6th St. on a rise above the Colorado River: A. J. Jernigan, Judge David Sheeks, Rev. Richmond Smoot, James Raymond Johnston and Mayor Joseph Nalle built fine homes, and of these only the grandest, the Nalle mansion, has been lost.

The subsequent subdivision and resubdivision of the Raymond property is the story of the present day West Line Historic District, listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2005. While some neighborhoods are notable for their uniformity and short window of development, the West Line (named for the streetcar that once followed 6th St.) is remarkable for its diversity. Largely residential, its historic houses range from modest to grand, and present a Whitman's Sampler of architectural styles from the 1870s to the present — Italianate, Eastlake, Colonial Revival, Craftsman, Tudor Revival, Ranch and Minimal Traditional are among the architectural styles and variants represented.

Generally known as Old West Austin, the Historic District is arguably more popular than ever. The architectural diversity and scale, mature vegetation, urban amenities and convenience to downtown make it attractive to both longtime resident and newcomers alike. The neighborhood(s) face challenges from those who would replace smaller old houses with large modern houses, development pressures from downtown, traffic and taxes. But it is hoped that formal recognition of the rich architecture and history of the area as an historic district, the presence of a strong neighborhood association and residents' determination to preserve the diverse character of the area will protect existing resources and ensure changes are sympathetic in the century to come.

*Peter Flagg Maxson, Architectural Historian*

*The following House Photos by J.C. Schmeil and House Histories by Marty Moulthrop, unless noted otherwise.*



## MARY PERRY TAYLOR HOUSE

608 Baylor Street

c. 1904

Sited along a ridge overlooking downtown Austin, the Mary Perry Taylor House is a large and handsome house and a good example of Queen Anne style. It was built in 1904 for Mary Ball Perry and Howard H. Taylor, both of whom were from prominent Texas families. Her uncle was Galveston capitalist George Ball and her grandfather, Buford J. Smith, ran the Austin Female Collegiate Institute nearby. His grandfather, lime kiln owner Peter Calder Taylor, owned large parts of present-day West Austin and West Lake Hills. The newlyweds selected a tract in the fledgling Raymond Heights addition, once associated with the Abner Cook-designed James Raymond plantation house on 6<sup>th</sup> Street. The Taylor home and a very similar one next door built for Mrs. Taylor's mother, Lucy Smith Perry, were likely designed and constructed by Master Builder George Fiegl, who designed similar homes for members of the Bremond and Robinson families.

Howard Taylor was a photographer and later a distributor for Racine Tires; however, the marriage was not successful and after their divorce Mary Taylor retained the home, which had been her separate property since its construction. When she died in 1940, the property was inherited by her son, Howard, Jr., his wife, Julia Robinson, and their only child, Mary Perry Taylor, who inherited the property in 1961.

Professor Mary Perry Taylor was a noted artist, art historian and educator, and her home retained its historic character to a remarkable degree. Many furnishings remained in the same position as in 1920s photographs and she was very proud of her family home. She was presented a preservation award from the Heritage Society of Austin in 1994. When she died in 2000, the contents were dispersed and the property was sold by her heirs. It was acquired by Nicole and Tyson Tuttle, who had earlier restored a house in Hyde Park. Although it retained a high degree of design integrity, the house had deteriorated over its 90-year lifespan. With the guidance of architect Mell Lawrence, designer Fern Santini and contractor Joe Pinnelli, the systems of the house have been updated to 21<sup>st</sup> century standards, a tired 1960s kitchen replaced, and historic elements reconstructed, such as the widow's walk atop the house and the retaining wall in front. The original attic has been turned into a master bedroom suite, with skylights and a hatch leading out to the widow's walk. A large two-story glass-in porch was installed in the rear; the structure stands in the same footprint as the screened porch it replaced. A new fireplace in the kitchen makes use of an existing chimney flue in the basement. Note the longleaf pine floors in the entry, as well as the grand staircase with built-in bench — all of which are original features. This stately Edwardian home has found new life in its second century. The owners have been sensitive to the fine line between historic and modern — and it shows.

## WILLIAM GREEN HILL HOUSE

910 Blanco Street

c. 1890



William Green Hill was born into a prominent Austin family in 1853. He married Ella Sanders in 1882 and their family grew to include four children. Mr. Hill worked for the railroads and at the State Capitol for many years. In 1890 the Hills had this large frame cottage built, situated on a hillside to catch the breezes. There was a center hallway, with two rooms on each side, and front and rear porches. The house featured three fireplaces, one in the parlor and one in each bedroom, plus a chimney for the wood stove in the kitchen. In 1895, the Hills added two rooms to accommodate Mrs. Hill's father, Rev. B. B. Sanders, who had just retired and come to live with them. In the 1930s, the original stable was removed and replaced by a garage, and a bathroom was added to the house. In 1960, after his sister's death, son Wilbur, who had been born in the home, took it over. He added another bathroom and had several closets built in, and the house was converted to a duplex.

Subsequent owners returned it to a single-family residence and in the 1980s the kitchen was updated. The current owners acquired the home in 1999 and found that their first project needed to be insulating the walls. With the help of cabinetmaker Tony Kramer, who found a supply of old longleaf pine, they remodeled the kitchen and added a family room on the rear. Many original features remain, including interior wood trim, longleaf pine flooring, transoms, and two of the fireplaces.

The William Green Hill House boasts a State of Texas Historic Landmark designation. Thanks to the loving care of several generations of the Hill family, as well as subsequent owners, this home continues to be a fine example of historic preservation at its best.



## BARNHILL HOUSE

1100 Castle Hill Court

c. 1927

Historic records are sketchy on this house. Street addresses in the neighborhood were subject to change until the mid-1930's, as alleys became streets and house numbers were adjusted to accommodate new structures being built. Anecdotal evidence suggests the house may date to 1927. City Directories show that there was a house at this location in 1929 and that it was occupied by Aubry and Grace Davis.

The house is of the English Cottage style popular in this country in the 1920's and 1930's. Characterized by steeply pitched roofs, cross gables, large chimneys and stucco, brick, stone or half-timbered exterior walls, the small houses of this style fit squarely into the vogue for the picturesque prevalent at the time. The steeply sloping site into which this house was nestled lent itself to the style's additional characteristic which was asymmetry of plan and facade.

One entered, as one does today, on the main/upper level. A small entry hall, two bedrooms, one bath and living room (at location of current kitchen/dining) were connected by stairs to a lower level with dining room and kitchen. By the early 1970's the house had been converted to a duplex with downstairs converted to efficiency apartment and a counter added across the south end of the main level living room to serve kitchen needs for that unit. Subsequent remodels created a new living room on the west side of the house and added a couple small rooms in the attic.

The current owners acquired the house in 1997 and, with a growing family, soon faced the need to either enlarge it or give it up. Working with Austin architect, Jay Farrell, they added to the house without compromising its character or charm. The downstairs apartment was incorporated into the main house, becoming laundry room and guest room. On the main level the old bedroom portion of the house was enlarged and became the new living room, while the existing living room was reconfigured to be a master suite with support areas and a small study added as new spaces on the west and north sides of the house. On the top level, the east bedroom was enlarged and the west bedroom was given a new dormer which created more space and light while providing necessary egress required by code. A full bath was added at this level. A deck over the original garage serves as an exterior "room" and contributes to the house's livability.

By Jay Farrell

## BONES-STOKES HOUSE

*1107 W. Ninth Street*

c. 1909



This Craftsman-influenced frame house first belonged to Omar D. Bones, who was a salesman for a beef packing business, Armour & Company. By 1916 he had sold the home to the Stokes family, which consisted of Julia Stokes, widow of John Stokes, and her two children, Edward and Agnes. In 1920, records show that Edward had married (Ruby) and was working as cashier at the American Railway Express Agency. Miss Agnes, who resided here with her brother and his wife, was a longtime seamstress at E. M. Scarbrough & Sons department store. After Ruby died, Edward married Jewel sometime in the 1950s; she remained in the house after both Edward and Agnes died, until her death in 1996 at the age of 101. The present owner bought the house that same year from her niece.

It was in the 1960s, after Edward's death, that Jewel increased the size of the living room by having the front window pushed out, taking part of the front porch. She later took in part of the side and back porches to expand a sleeping room into a full-sized bedroom. Originally, the porch wrapped all the way around the house, except for the west side. The present owners have recently completed an extensive remodeling of the kitchen, opening it onto the dining room.

Thanks to generations of tender, loving care, we're able to say Happy 100th Birthday to a handsome home!



## MCBRIDE-KNUDSEN HOUSE

*1109 West 10th Street*

c. 1896

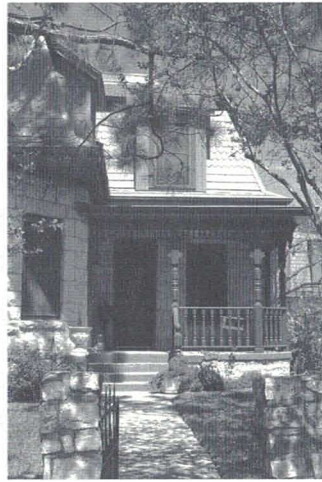
Nick Dawson was a Pennsylvanian who came to Austin in 1851 and became a builder, contractor and real estate agent. He was an organizer and early member of the Austin Home Builders Association. He built stone houses in South Austin, as well as similar houses here in the Castle Hill area. Dawson acquired this lot in 1896 with the intent to build a one-story stone residence on it; he sold it to Douglas McBride a few months later. McBride, a messenger with Wells Fargo and Company, owned the house until 1902. Several years later it was purchased by painter and paper-hanger Rasmus Knudsen and the house was to remain in the Knudsen family from 1907 to 1985. For most of these years the home was a rental, and housed a succession of students, State workers, a lawyer, an optician, writers, clerks, meat packers, and teachers.

The McBride-Knudsen House has not been altered externally compared to similar stone homes in the neighborhood. A glance at old photographs shows that roof lines, windows, doors and even porch details look much the same. Original features inside include woodwork, floors and most windows. In the late 1990s, a previous owner enclosed the rear porch, using wood siding and paint colors to match a previous addition. At that time all the trim was painted using historical colors. The kitchen has also been renovated; however, the owner believes that the corner cabinet is original to the house. The interior has been repainted using period colors.

## SIMMONS-GLASER HOUSE

1112 West Tenth Street

c. 1903

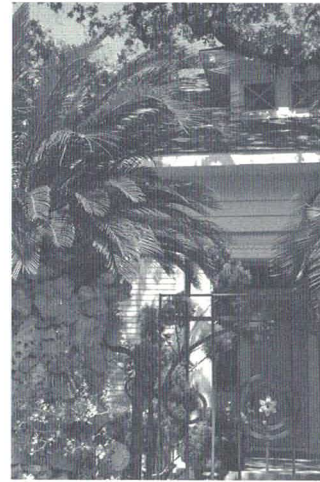


The land on which this home sits was part of the 1848 Raymond Tract; it subsequently was divided and subdivided by Charles H. Silliman and W. O. Hutchison. The owners have been unable to find any records of the actual date of construction or the identity of the builder; however, City Directory listings show that the first owner was attorney David E. Simmons and his wife Virgilia in 1903. After a succession of owners the house was acquired in 1913 by Samuel Adolph Glaser, who was an Austrian immigrant and a self-taught barber. He and his wife, Emma, and two children resided here for over twenty years. Emma ran a florist business from the house, aided by her son. Samuel was also a volunteer fireman and was known to be one of the finest musicians in the Protection Hose Company's band, and other local bands as well. He was a well-known barber and either owned or was associated with many barber shops in the city, including the first one at Camp Mabry. In 1937 Glaser lost the house in foreclosure. According to his daughter-in-law, he was more inclined to spend money on his shops than pay his mortgage. The house was owned and occupied from 1946 to 1973 by two sisters, after which it became a rental. It may have been during this time that it was made into a duplex.

When the present owners purchased it in 1995, they found that the house was no longer a duplex, but individual rooms were still rented out. They returned it to a single-family residence and opened the passageway from the downstairs hall into the dining room, as it had been originally. The original footprint of the structure had been altered by a previous owner with the addition of a one-story kitchen in the rear. Standing in the kitchen, one sees the original stone outer wall of the house, which is now the south wall of the kitchen. The present owners added a second story to this addition in 1996, creating two bedrooms and a bathroom. More recently, the kitchen has been remodeled, as have the master bedroom and bath.

Stylistically, The Simmons-Glaser House can be labeled Second Empire, due to its prominent mansard roof. The house retains various original features, such as longleaf pine floors, the stone wall in the kitchen and den, transoms over the exterior doors, and woodwork in the original rooms downstairs. The owners believe that the two front doors may be original, as well.

Although modified to accommodate life in the 21st century, this unique home has kept its vintage charm and character. Hats off to the owners!



## MARTIN-GLASS HOUSE

1208 West 12th Street

c. 1911

This distinctive cottage is said to have been built as a duplex "Sunday House" by two gentleman farmers in the early twentieth century. Such houses were a real convenience for prosperous farmers and ranchers. They came to town to do their shopping, banking, etc. on Saturday and then stayed overnight in the house so that they could attend church on Sunday morning before returning home. According to City Directories, the first known owner/occupant of the house was Charles Early Martin, who, with his father and brother, was in the agricultural supply business, selling seeds, chemicals, stock dip and poultry remedies. By 1927, Samuel and Annie Glass resided here and the house was to remain in their family for over 25 years. Glass was with C. A. Bradford Company, which dealt with paint, window glass and wall paper.

The Martin-Glass House has pleasing proportions and a good sense of light. There are original "piano key" windows, as well as several original light fixtures in the home. The beautiful trees on this lot are noteworthy as well. As you enter the front gate, you will instantly understand that two gifted artisans live here. The rock gate and grotto in the front are unique, as are other rock creations in the back yard. The house retains its original two front entrances, and the current occupants use one side as an office and guest bedroom, while residing in the other side.

As this house approaches its 100th birthday, it is in good hands.

## WILLIAM PILLOW HOUSE

1407 West 9th Street

c. 1877



In late 1877, William Ashton Pillow and his wife built this two-story wood frame house on West 9th Street just west of an almost identical house belonging to his brother Benjamin. The Pillow tracts were part of Raymond Heights, land granted in 1849 to James H. Raymond. The two lots were at the rear of the property sold by Raymond to Dr. Richmond Smoot; his wife Sallie sold them to R. J. Loving as partial payment for building the Smoots' home, Flower Hill, which still stands at 6th and Pressler Streets. In September, 1877, William Pillow paid \$225 to Mr. Loving for this lot.

Built by local designer/contractors Sterzing and Struve, the house originally had six rooms, three brick fireplaces with common flue built by John Butler, a bay window and a front porch with gallery. The house was built of pine, using square nails, except for the cedar posts on which it rested. The door and window casings are plain, 5-inch pine boards, and the floors are well-seasoned tongue-and-groove. The home's style is Italianate and it boasts elaborate fretwork, cupolas, turrets, and finely turned posts and finials. Inside the Pillows splurged on a tall, thin, curving staircase and four closets, which were a rare feature for their time. The original kitchen with its own brick chimney for the stove, was separate, but connected to the main house by a passageway. They expanded the original footprint of the structure, adding an indoor kitchen and bathroom in the 1930s. The porch and gallery were replaced in 1939 with four square pine posts, and an upstairs bedroom was added in the rear in the 1970s.

The Pillow brothers ran the telegraph company in Austin; indeed, William Pillow was the youngest telegraph office manager in the company. The Pillows raised several children in the home, including two daughters who became life-long residents of Austin. Miss Eugenia studied interior design and home economics at UT and remained in the house until failing health forced her to sell it in 1972. Her sister Dorinda taught in Austin public schools for 47 years – Pillow School is named for her. It was because of the impending birth of Miss Dorinda in 1885 that William Pillow had a telephone installed in the home for the purpose of calling him the moment his child was born. It is believed that this was the first residence in Austin to have a telephone.

The current owners have lived here for 30 years. In that time they have removed the four square porch posts and, using old photographs of the house, replicated the original porch and gallery. One of the original closets, located beneath the staircase, is now a laundry room. The deteriorating foundation, as well as one of the fireplaces, was replaced. In the early 2000s there was an extensive kitchen remodel. The William Pillow House has received numerous awards over the years, starting with a Heritage Society Certificate of Appreciation to Miss Eugenia in 1968. It continues to be a well-preserved and much-loved home after 132 years.



## WEST AUSTIN FIRE COMPANY

1000-1004 Blanco Street

c. 1908

The West Austin Fire Company was established in May, 1905, and moved into its new two-bay building in 1908. The two-story building features brick detailing reflecting the skill of local brickmakers and masons. Romanesque Revival style is evident in the use of pilasters, arches and elaborate cornices.

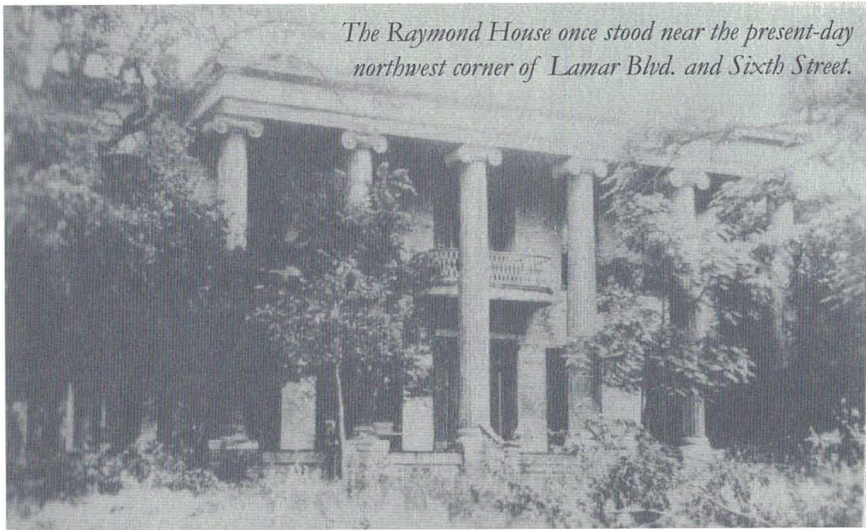
During the first part of the twentieth century fire stations were tightly woven into the economic, social and ethnic fabric of the city. The West Austin Fire Company's membership rosters featured many local luminaries of their times: Captain J. A. Turpin, Dr. H. B. Granberry, Theodore Ziller and others.

To keep pace with changing needs, various alterations have been made. There was extensive remodeling in 1984 and, again, in 2001, when accommodations for female firefighters, such as locker room, showers and toilets, were added.

In the 1980s, after almost 75 years of service, the West Austin Fire Company building was designated as a City of Austin Historic Landmark.



*The Raymond House once stood near the present-day northwest corner of Lamar Blvd. and Sixth Street.*



*Austin History Center*

*Please remember  
while inside the homes  
and fire station:*

No Smoking  
No Food or Drink  
No Photography  
No Strollers

### **MATHEWS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

A crown jewel of Old West Austin, is planning an oral history project. Eager to capture memories of students who have passed through the doors since their opening in September 1916, the Mathews Fund for Excellence would like to hear from alumni. If you would like to share your stories, please call 841-1516, or send an e-mail to MathewsFE@aol.com. Mathews can't wait to hear from you!



*609 West Lynn Street  
on April 5, 2005*

### **LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICTS HELP PRESERVE AUSTIN'S HISTORIC NEIGHBORHOODS**

In December 2004, the Austin City Council authorized the establishment of Local Historic Districts. These districts will be the most powerful tool to protect the character of our historic neighborhoods. Local Historic District status will help maintain the historic building stock and character of a neighborhood, along with other benefits, including providing a City property tax incentive for property owners who are rehabilitating buildings within the district.

Since the program's adoption, only one group, of approximately twelve that are attempting, has managed to complete the application process. Notably, that Harthan Street District in Old West Austin, while significant, is only one-block long. In February 2009, the Heritage Society requested that City Council consider revisions to the ordinance which establishes the criteria for neighborhoods to apply for district status. Austin's requirements for research and property owner sign-off far exceed that of our peer cities in Texas and the nation, and have created an unnecessary burden that is inconsistent with the Council goals when establishing the program.

**How You Can Help:** Please help save Austin's historic neighborhoods and join us in respectfully urging Council to revise the research and approval requirements of our ordinance to be in line with our peer cities. If you do not already receive our e-mail notifications, please sign up on our website to get our notices. You will be alerted when this item appears before City Council and will receive suggested text and contact information. To receive our e-mail notices and more information on what the Heritage Society is doing to help create Local Historic Districts, visit [www.heritagesocietyaustin.org](http://www.heritagesocietyaustin.org).

# The Jewels of Castle Hill

- A..... 1208 W. 12th St.  
 B..... 1100 Castle Hill Ct.  
 C..... 1000 Blanco St.  
 \*TOUR HEADQUARTERS  
 D..... 910 Blanco St.  
 E..... 1112 W. 10th St.  
 F..... 1109 W. 10th St.  
 G..... 1107 W. 9th St.  
 H..... 608 Baylor St.  
 I ..... 1407 W. 9th St.

