The William H. Grogan House
Brevard, North Carolina

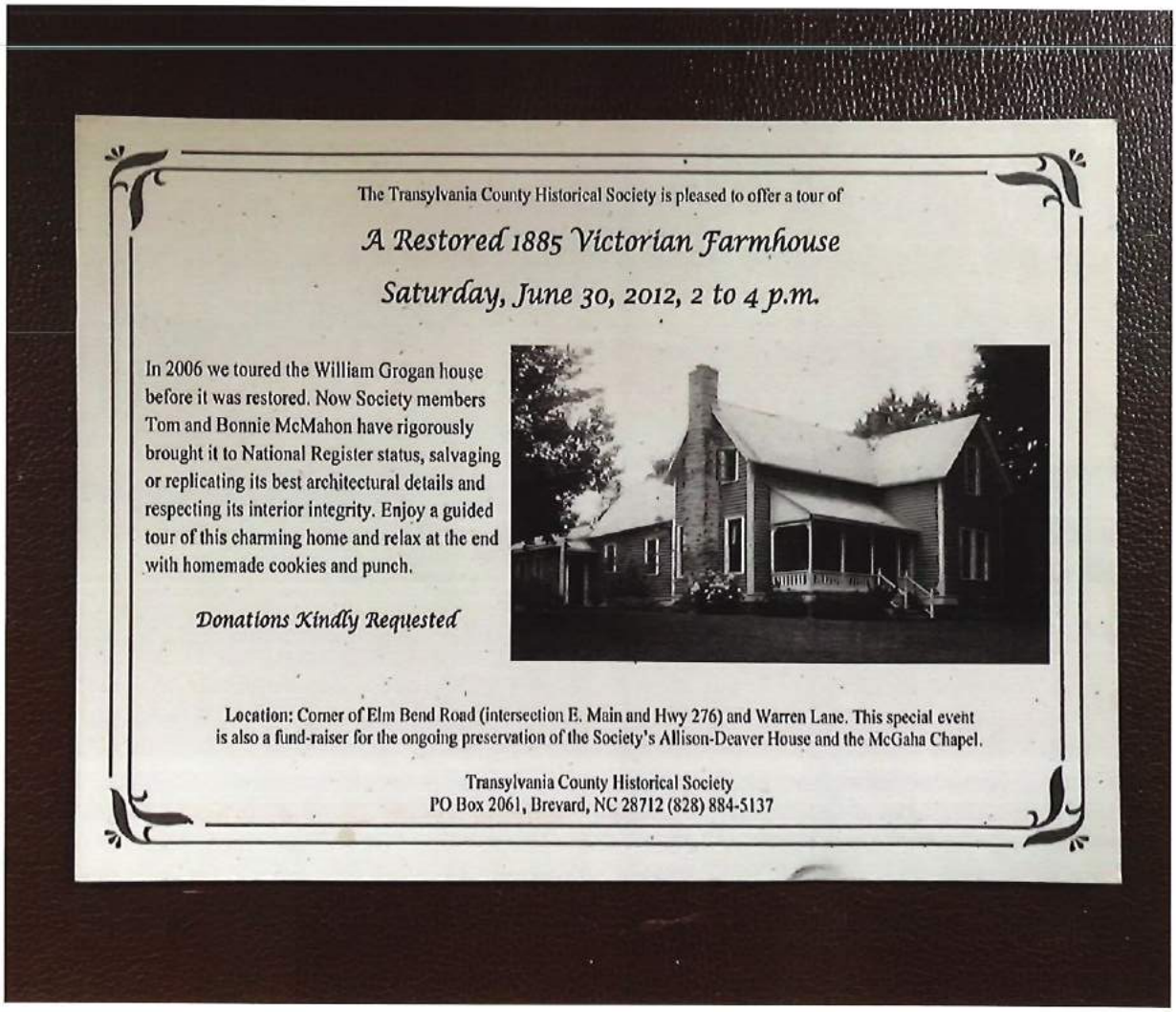
Near the time my wife and I moved to Brevard in 2005 from Hickory, the Transylvania County Historical Preservation Society held an open house to promote the sale of this house in hopes that someone might save it. It had actually been sold shortly after the open house, but the new owner became so overwhelmed with the amount of work required to save it that she very quickly decided to resell it. That's when we bought it. When purchased by us the house was unoccupied and had been vacant for a number of years.

It was something of a disappointment that no early photos of the house could be located, nor any information regarding its construction. The house is listed by the Transylvania County tax office as having been built in 1850, but nothing else has been found to substantiate that date. It was a surprise to later discover the year "1902" found in chalk beneath some original damaged weatherboards during removal and replacement. This was found on the east side of the house to the left of the bedroom window:

This photo of "1902" in chalk was taken before the replacement of damaged weatherboards.

Was "1902" chalked on the house to record its completed construction or was the home built 52 years earlier in 1850 as the tax records indicate? Could a part of the house have been built and taxed, but not completely finished until years later? The discrepancy is strange, and answers remain unknown.

In 2012 our renovation was mostly completed and we agreed to host an open house as a benefit drive:



The Transylvania County Historical Society is pleased to offer a tour of

A Restored 1885 Victorian Farmhouse

Saturday, June 30, 2012, 2 to 4 p.m.

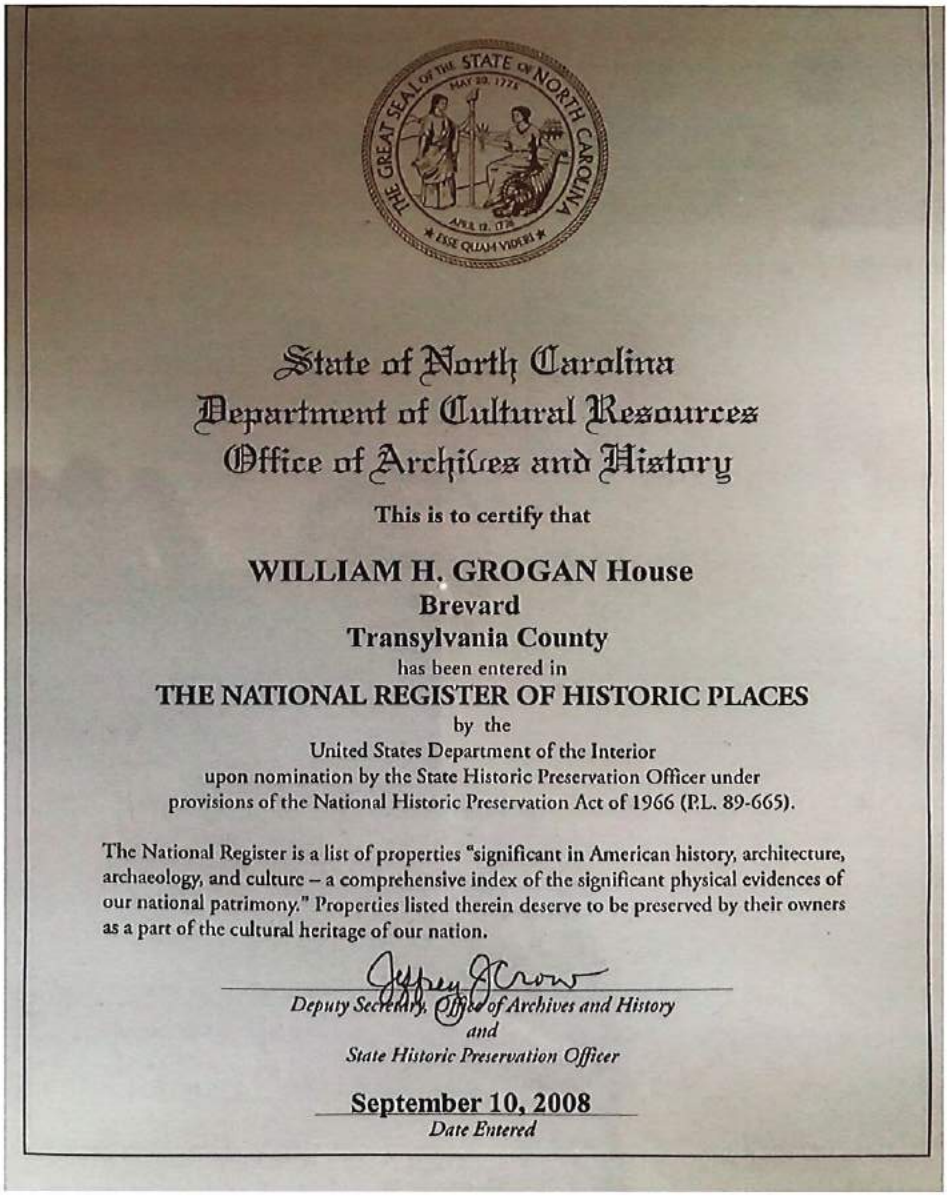
In 2006 we toured the William Grogan house before it was restored. Now Society members Tom and Bonnie McMahon have rigorously brought it to National Register status, salvaging or replicating its best architectural details and respecting its interior integrity. Enjoy a guided tour of this charming home and relax at the end with homemade cookies and punch.

Donations Kindly Requested

Location: Corner of Elm Bend Road (intersection E. Main and Hwy 276) and Warren Lane. This special event is also a fund-raiser for the ongoing preservation of the Society's Allison-Deaver House and the McGaha Chapel.

Transylvania County Historical Society
PO Box 2061, Brevard, NC 28712 (828) 884-5137

The house is now listed on the National Register of Historic Places as the William H. Grogan house (named for the original owner).



State of North Carolina
Department of Cultural Resources
Office of Archives and History

This is to certify that

WILLIAM H. GROGAN House
Brevard
Transylvania County
has been entered in
THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
by the
United States Department of the Interior
upon nomination by the State Historic Preservation Officer under
provisions of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (P.L. 89-665).

The National Register is a list of properties "significant in American history, architecture, archaeology, and culture – a comprehensive index of the significant physical evidences of our national patrimony." Properties listed therein deserve to be preserved by their owners as a part of the cultural heritage of our nation.

Deputy Secretary, Office of Archives and History
and
State Historic Preservation Officer

September 10, 2008
Date Entered

While there is extensive documentation that was submitted to achieve the listing, there is still more information regarding the renovation of the house that may be of interest to future owners of this house or persons interested in historical buildings of Transylvania County, NC. This document chronicles the renovation of the house which was mostly completed in the first three years of our ownership.

FOYER

Foyer staircase and closet at the top of the stairs.

Foyer renovations were comparatively minimal. The floors, front door, beadboard ceiling, ceiling light fixture, and door casings remain unchanged. The storage closet under the stairs is now restored to its original purpose by removing a large cold air return duct which ran from the den to the furnace room via this closet. Flooring was cut from the closet to permit foundation repairs, and then replaced. The wooden sewing thread spool which serves as the closet door knob was left in place. Perhaps it was installed in the bygone era of Coates, Inc., a thread manufacturing plant once active in Brevard. Regardless, it serves as a quaint reminder of earlier times. Also unchanged is the staircase, handrail and the small window on the stair landing. Of note is the very low handrail at the top of the stairs. It was likely quite adequate back when people were generally of shorter stature. The foyer walls are all original lath and plaster, but did require repairs to cracks which resulted from the house settling over many decades.

Several "remodels" in the foyer areas were omitted during the renovation. The chair rail molding on the wall opposite the handrails and the bifold door closet which consumed the upper foyer were both completely

removed to restore the area to its original design. Also removed was the 5 panel door in the lower foyer which led to the downstairs bedroom. (It was later reinstalled in a new bedroom wall which was built to allow space for the new powder room.) The door leading to the original furnace room on the east end of the lower foyer was removed. The photo shows a furnace air return grate installed in the middle of that door. A matching 15 lite passage door was placed in the foyer doorway to the den, where there were vestiges of there having once been a door of some type. These 2 doors were purchased from a local architectural salvage store, cut to size, and fitted with period-correct matching knobs and rim lock hardware. The only other changes in the foyer were the required addition of 2 cold air returns for the new HVAC system. One is on the ceiling upstairs, and the other is on the south wall of the lower foyer.

Foyer staircase and top of the stairs after renovation.

DEN


Den facing north and east with sheets of paneling removed.

This room is something of an architectural anomaly compared to the rest of the house. The baseboards are simple in design, and the door and window casements are fashioned from beadboard. Also this is the only room with beadboard walls. Even the hand crafted fireplace mantle has three beadboard pieces on it. As if that was not quite enough, the original ceiling was beadboard too! Many long lengths of this original poplar beadboard were damaged when vertical channels about 6 inches wide were slashed where needed to install house wiring. Apparently the homeowner at that time didn't care for the beadboard, as they covered it up with 4X8 sheets of ¼ inch wall paneling typical of mid 20th century homes. Faint vertical dirt lines are visible in the photos where the sheets of recently removed paneling butted against each other.

All beadboard was removed from the walls and ceiling for structural repair, new wiring and insulation. The ceiling was badly sagging due to the use of undersized joists in the floor above, so it was removed and new lumber was sistered to the original bowed joists to achieve a flat (albeit slightly lower) ceiling. Then the salvaged beadboard from the ceiling was used to replace

damaged lengths on the walls during the reinstallation. A new sheet rock ceiling was installed.

Returning this room to a semblance of its original condition was a challenge. Like all rooms on the north side of the house, the den suffered from lack of sunshine needed to dry out roof leaks and high humidity over the years. Its north side sill beams and wall studs were badly rotted. All of this required replacement, to include replacing the improperly small-sized 2 north wall windows which were likely installed in the 1970s or so judging from their more modern construction. The photos that follow highlight the repair and replace process for this room.

Den walls and ceiling stripped to studs. New framing to the left of the fireplace had just been completed before this photo was taken. The rough-in is resized to accept a larger, correct size window that matches the original one facing the front porch. The modified framing from the smaller, modern window on the right awaits replacement. New HVAC duct on the ceiling is seen in place. Wiring is visible at ceiling level, waiting to be routed to the fireplace sconces and the electrical outlets.

Closeup top right view of the previous photo showing rot on the right corner post. Rot on the North wall studs at floor level (not shown) was equally as bad. All were of course replaced. One wonders how this part of the house was still standing!

It was not possible to locate commercially available replacement windows for either side of the fireplace that matched the remaining original window facing the front porch. An Asheville woodworking shop was contracted to replicate the window sashes, and new frames were constructed on site.

Window sashes and frame components precut on site are shown ready for assembly and installation to the left and right side of the Den fireplace.

When installed these two new windows were virtually indistinguishable from the original, although they are single hung vs. original double hung.

To maintain authenticity the window frames were designed to accept original style sash weights with ropes and pulleys.

The fireplace hearth was partially caved in with two hearthstones missing. Stone retainers were built beneath the house to contain the earth upon which the hearth was then repaired. The damage to the hearth was repaired using replacement stones as needed. Unfortunately the mantle had originally been built with its sides penetrating the hearth and extending into the earth. Of course in time wood rot ruined the bottom ends, so several inches had to be cut off to salvage the original mantlepiece. To maintain the original height of the mantle when reinstalled, two new plinth stones were mortared onto the hearth for it to rest upon.

A few final notes on this room:
The bead board wall above the mantle, when reinstalled, was bumped out slightly to accommodate wiring for the newly added sconces. While old in style, the sconces and matching ceiling fixture are new.
A former owner had added a small closet in the Southwest corner of the room. It was removed to return the room to its original appearance.
The removal process revealed some of the original interior paint which was a drab olive hue.

Remains of the den closet, exposing original olive paint. This photo also shows the bead board which was originally on the ceiling.

The doorway in the East wall of the den opened to the kitchen. It had a slab luan door from an earlier remodel which was removed. The doorway was recased with proper woodwork on each side, but without a door. Because there is no door it was not necessary to install a ducted cold air return to the HVAC unit located in the back hall.

Den north wall after renovation

A natural gas line was run to this fireplace and gas logs were installed. (The same holds true for the parlor fireplace.) This allows for the use of fireplaces with vent free gas logs only, because the original unlined chimneys would be otherwise unsafe to use.

The den and foyer saw the most settling over time so the floors are uneven. Foundation work did not restore it to level, as doing so would have risked structural damage. The den's baseboard height was therefore trimmed to sit parallel to the level bead line of the reinstalled beadboard.

DOWNSTAIRS BEDROOM AND POWDER ROOM


Downstairs bedroom views: Southeast corner (left) and west wall (right). (Photo on the left was taken before drop ceiling removal.)

The original downstairs bedroom measured roughly 13 feet square, with 2 windows and 2 closets as seen in the above photos. Notice in the above left photo that the ceiling rests immediately on top of the window casings. This was a clear indication that the ceiling had been dropped to accommodate plumbing when an upstairs bathroom had been installed sometime in the past.

Removal of the dropped ceiling revealed it's 2X4 framework and plumbing.

This overhead ceiling framework was removed and new plumbing for the upstairs bath was properly nested between the ceiling joists. A new ceiling was installed flush to the original, thus recapturing lost room height. Also as part of the renovation a new wall was added on the north side of the bedroom to create space for a powder room. By extending the new powder room wall across the entire width of the bedroom a new bedroom entrance was created. It was an intentional design decision to place a new powder room with its door in a neutral space outside the bedroom, providing convenient access to either overnight guests or daytime visitors. The bedroom closet on the right in the above photo is now incorporated into the neutral space, which allows it to serve as a general purpose coat closet.

Bedroom door framing, facing NW.

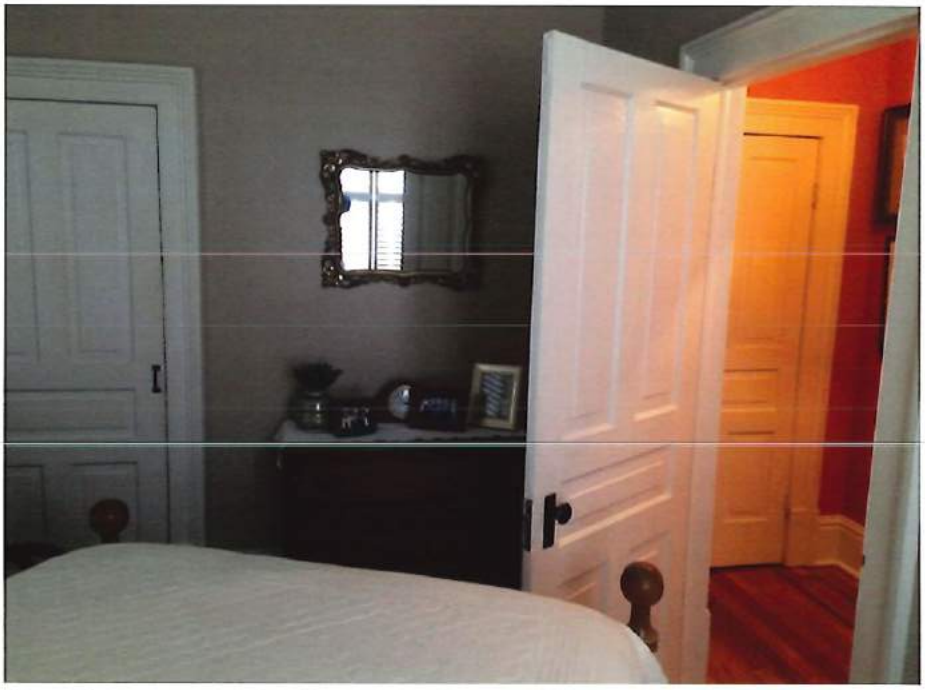
Power room framing, facing NE

A few words are in order about the two closets. The left closet (the one remaining in the bedroom) is original to the house. As part of the renovation the left side of it was boxed in to provide an HVAC chase. Gas line and air ducts run from under the house and through this chase to the HVAC unit in the upstairs mechanical room. The right closet (now opposite the newly constructed powder room) appears original but is believed to have been added shortly after the original construction. This belief is driven by the discovery of a smoothly rounded outside plaster corner imbedded beneath the existing (newer) plaster, running vertically at roughly the left edge of the door casing (no photo available). A small bit

of this was exposed briefly during removal of the dropped ceiling. It is not visible today as the corner is again hidden beneath the repaired wall above the door casing. This smoothly rounded outside corner suggests there may have been a very short hallway, just the depth of the closet, between the bedroom and the parlor. Enclosing the hallway on the parlor side and placement of a door on the bedroom side created this closet, or so it is believed. Regardless, the closet has been there for a very, very long time as evidenced by the wear and tear on the woodwork and countless coats of paint. If you go in the parlor and thump on the wall to the left of the fireplace, it responds with the hollow thud of sheet rock rather than the solid feel of lath and plaster. This is added confirmation that this closet was not part of the original construction.

These latest renovations resulted in a downsizing of the bedroom in favor of gaining a downstairs powder room for general use by the household. It was considered a matter of practical necessity. Note that the baseboard molding in the new powder room is of a more basic style to differentiate it as being a new modification to the house. Salvaged baseboard on the new wall outside the powder room was reinstalled to be consistent in appearance with the baseboard along the adjacent old walls.

A final note: There are 3 plugged holes in the floor near the sink, so there was obviously a sink installed in the original bedroom at some point in the past. The grain of the wooden plugs suggests properly sized tree branches were cut into pucks and glued into the holes; a novel bit of carpentry! (Beneath the house are capped pipe stubs that fed a sink.) There is another larger filled hole to the right of the sink pedestal that may have been from an even earlier wash basin drain. A cast iron drain line originates directly beneath, and exits the dirt bank on the east property line, roughly 10 yards from the northeast corner of the property.



The downstairs bedroom after renovation. This photo shows how the new bedroom wall separates the two closets.

The new powder room.

PARLOR


Facing NE into the foyer and facing NW onto the front porch.

The parlor was found to be in good original condition. Aside from skim coating the plaster ceiling and installing a new doorway threshold, all that was required to bring this room into presentable shape was replacing a newer ceiling fixture with a proper antique fixture, refinishing the floor and painting the room. The teal blue color is nearly identical to old paint found under a switch plate.

A note on the double mantle: This fancy feature of the parlor was likely selected from a mail order catalog of home items (such as Sears and Roebuck) when the home was originally built. The small egg and dart features and turned posts are signs of factory production.

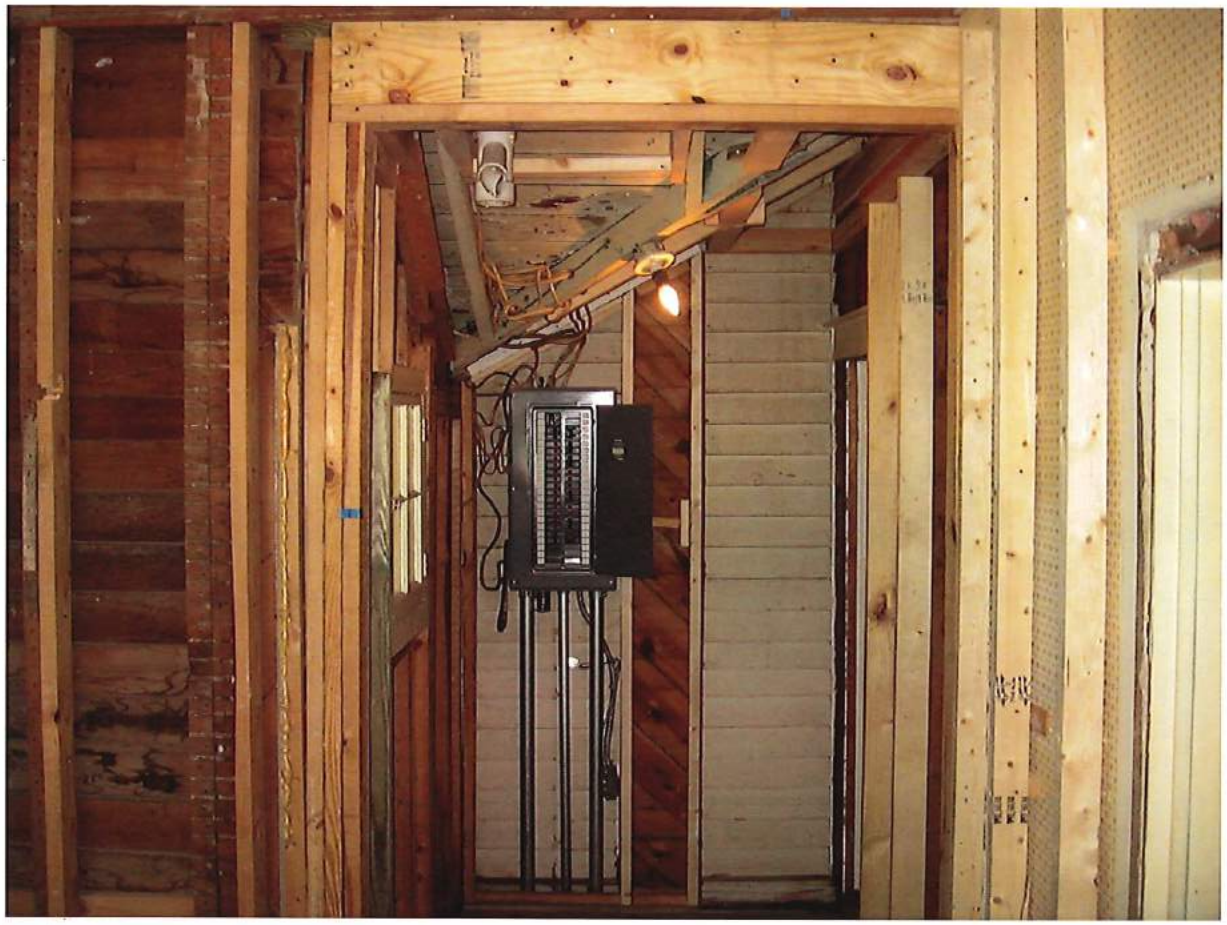

Completed Parlor

SHORT HALL BEHIND THE STAIRCASE.

The short hall used to be part of the back porch and was not a hall at all! It was a furnace room, created when a small part at the west end of the back porch was enclosed, featuring a small 2 over 2 hinged window which remains today.

Removal of the furnace allowed for the creation of the short hall. Note the window which remains today.

The furnace at the time of renovation serviced only the first floor rooms. The main duct trunk ran through the wall into the closet under the stairs and then through the floor to the crawl space. Ducts then ran beneath the house to the different rooms of the first floor. The upstairs rooms must have been quite cool in winter, with the only heat being that which naturally rose up the staircase.



Short hall as viewed from the dining area during renovation. The exterior door framing had been covered up when this end of the porch had been enclosed to create a furnace room. Renovation as shown included removing the door frame and surrounding wall to create a short hall leading to the foyer, thus repurposing the furnace room space.

The furnace room entry door was at the rear of the foyer and was a solid 5 panel exterior door with the center panel knocked out and replaced with a metal cold air return grate. After removal it was repurposed by cutting it into 2 pieces with the taller paneled half becoming the hatch door to the attic crawl space, and the shorter paneled half becoming the closet ceiling hatch to the space above the master bedroom. A salvaged 15 lite door was installed to replace the furnace room door, matching the one installed between the foyer and den.

All flooring and some sill beams in the short hall also required replacement

because of extreme rot, likely from long standing roof leaks. The pine flooring in this hall is salvage from another old building (same as kitchen flooring) and is a proper match. The full-width uncased opening in the newly created short hall was originally part of the south wall of the dining area. Once removed, the benefit of having access to the south side of the house without having to travel through the den became immediately apparent so the rotted section of wall was not replaced.

Finished short hall. The small 2 over 2 hinged window remains in the same place.

As a final note, much new wiring, gas line, and water line are squeezed into the short hall ceiling and emerge in the attic. This was the most direct way to provide utilities to the kitchen, master bath and furnace.

KITCHEN AND DINING ROOM

The kitchen and dining room renovations are best grouped together for reasons which will become obvious in reviewing their evolution over the years. This now open space was once comprised of three rooms formed by two interior walls. The laundry room and the ½ bath were on the east side of an interior wall containing the embedded chimney.

View into the old laundry room. The ½ bath is out of view to the left.

During renovation a doorway was cut behind the hot water tank to create access to the garage, which ultimately was included as living space for the pantry, new laundry area, and master bedroom en suite.
Although these two small rooms and their interior walls were demolished, the exterior door shown to the right opening onto the back porch is still in

place as it was originally. This is an unusually short door. Several inches had been cut off the bottom of the door prior to installation. When the plaster was removed from the surrounding wall during renovation, it was clear that the rough-in framing was done specifically to fit this shortened door.

With the lath and plaster removed the framing for the short door to the back porch is seen as completely original. Also seen here are new studs sistered to the originals for a plumb drywall installation as well as furring strips for a new ceiling installation to cover up the damaged original.

Maybe the short door was salvaged, or purchased used as a cost savings? This seems to be the only plausible reason for using such an odd sized door. As part of the renovation the original rough-in could have been resized and the door replaced with one of standard dimensions, but instead it was kept as is, being an original curiosity of the house.

This interior wall was removed. The chimney is embedded in the wall. The laundry and ½ bath are through the doorway. The kitchen oven and cooktop (removed before this photo) were built-ins just left of the doorway. That's a chrome dishwasher knob at the far left beneath the countertop. The backsplash was a glued-on faux brick veneer.

Outside access to the kitchen was via the back porch door into the laundry, then through the doorway into the kitchen. This wall was removed to achieve balanced space utilization for the renovated kitchen and dining areas.

View facing north. The short double window was replaced with an original sized single 6 over 6 window. The refrigerator was located on the wall to the left (not shown).

Short double window shown during demolition. Remnants of the lower part of the original single window's framing can be seen just beneath it.

The new kitchen/dining interior rough-in has been completed and awaits cabinets and finish work. Two new doorways were cut into what was originally the exterior east side of the house. The doorway on the left leads to the back hall. The ½ bath used to be just in front of this doorway. In front of the doorway to the right was the old clothes washer and hot water tank. It leads past the new laundry area and pantry then into the master bedroom en suite.

The kitchen chimney is also noteworthy. Roughly 5 feet above the floor the chimney material transitions from stone to brick. Is this brick portion original to the house? No doubt, because the exposed sides of the chimney are parged with a thick, finish coat of plaster. (These 3 sides have been boxed in for appearances sake and are hidden from view.) If the upper portion of the chimney was reconstructed at a later date there would be signs of replastering at the 5 foot mark, but there is not. The only plausible

reason for building with both stone and brick is one of economy: simply that stone was free. The 2 flue points into the chimney (one from each side) are above the stone thus suggesting the stone is just a pier upon which the brick chimney rests. Being such an interesting feature, the unplastered side was left exposed. If one uses a flashlight to see into the void at the edges of the wood enclosure, the vertical edge of the parged plaster encasement can be seen. The edge of the plaster is seen about 4 inches back from the west side of the chimney. All unplastered areas of the chimney were once buried in the original wall. The chimney was obviously plastered after the wall was constructed. This chimney is still functional, albeit not for its originally intended purpose. The present range exhaust fan hood is ducted into the original flue access point on the west side of the chimney. The access point on the east side is capped off under the wood encasement and is not used.

The interior wall removal was not warmly embraced by the visiting representatives of the NC Historic Preservation Office in Asheville, but they thankfully allowed it conditional upon installing a clear and permanent physical reference as to where the wall once stood. What appears to be a boxed beam on the ceiling marks the exact location of the former wall. This is nothing more than the reference marker they required. It serves no functional purpose.

These original rooms have seen much change. First was the smaller room on the east side of the chimney. Its east wall was originally a solid, exterior wall of the house with a window behind where the refrigerator is today. The original clapboard was left in place when a 2 ½ car garage was added to the house (sometime around 1980?). Clapboard was left on this former exterior wall as a reminder of what once was the back of the original house. Even the original window location has been left in tact and can be seen on the west wall of the laundry closet.
There once was another exterior door and it was located at today's kitchen sink. Stripping the walls of lath and plaster for framing repair revealed the rough-in for this earlier exterior door.
It is believed this small room may have originally been a kitchen. A wood

(or coal) cook stove would have been vented through the flue opening in the chimney's east side. With the two original exterior doors opening into this little room there there may have been space for a small table and chairs, but not much else. This little kitchen space (if that's what it really was) later became home to a ½ bath (where the kitchen sink is today) and a laundry room. The clothes dryer/washer set were located about where the refrigerator is today. All of this was demolished as part of renovation. Also part of the demolition and repair was removal of rotted floor and subfloor in the kitchen.

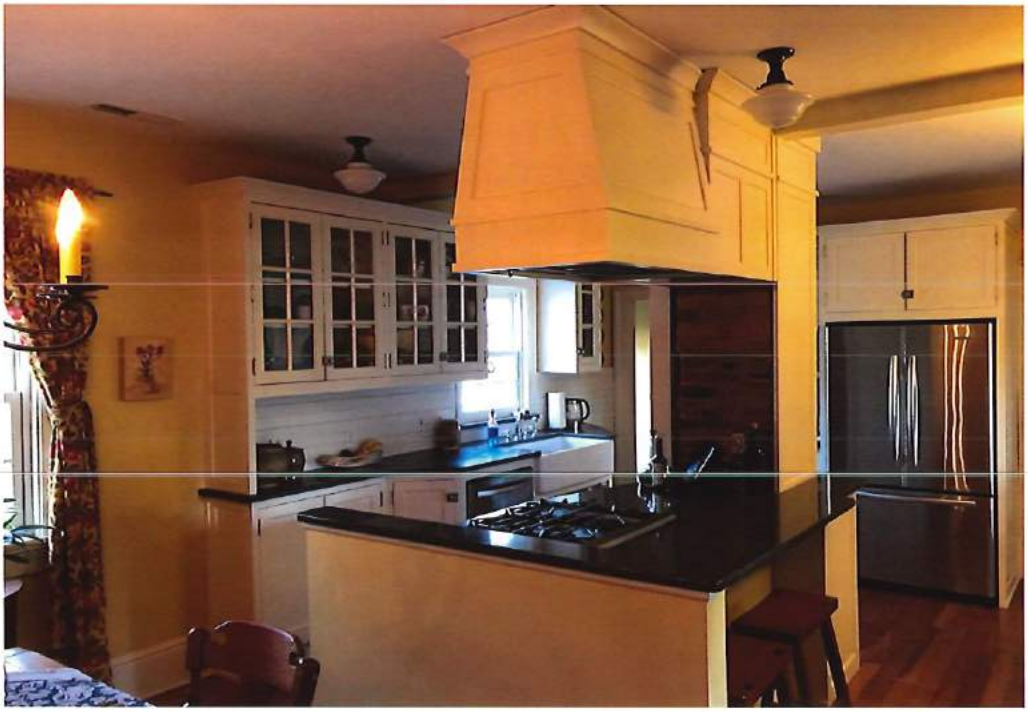
During demolition this ell area of the house (now kitchen and dining) was found to be racked over an inch out of plumb in places. To get the interior walls back in plumb, new wall studs were sistered to existing ones before sheetrock was installed. Plaster was not removed from the ceiling, but flatness was achieved using tapered furring strips and fresh sheetrock.

Pine flooring east of the two pine floor boards running in a north-south orientation (one by the chimney, the other by the stove) are salvaged floorboards from another old building.

All kitchen cabinets are custom made and a new farm sink was installed to reflect a period-correct design. The glass panes in the upper cabinets were salvaged from old, rotting window sashes found under the house. Note the imperfections in the panes. Appliance and countertop choices were a matter of practicality, but with a nod to unobtrusive design.

The west side of the chimney is now the dining area and part of the kitchen. This entire space was the original dining room (later an eat-in kitchen) and was originally heated with some type of wood or coal stove that vented into the chimney. The floor in this area is original to the house. The new dining light fixture complements the overall design.

All baseboards, and door and window casing in today's kitchen-dining area are new, but constructed to match the original style as closely as possible. All windows are new as well, with the exception of the one in the south wall that faces the porch. This is easily identifiable as an original window by the delicate mullions and the imperfections in the glass panes.



Kitchen as viewed from the den.

Dining area viewed from the back porch door.

BACK HALL AND MECHANICAL CLOSET

The back hall and the mechanical closet were framed into the northwest corner of the garage. The unmortared brick floor rests on the concrete pad of the garage. The bricks were formerly laid just outside the door as a short sidewalk. The exterior door is in this same location, but the hinging reversed as to swing into the house. The door itself is of a different style than the other exterior doors. It was probably a salvaged door put back into use when the garage was built. A mechanical closet was created during framing to contain the HVAC unit serving the kitchen, dining, den and master bedroom en suite. Extra storage space was created above the air returns. Baseboard in the back hall is from salvaged pieces found on site.

LAUNDRY AND PANTRY

These areas are on either side of the hallway to the en suite. Space limitation necessitated a stacked washer/dryer. The hot water heater is gas fired and serves the laundry, kitchen and master bath. Shelving was added wherever possible.

The new pantry was constructed for more kitchen storage. A door to the back porch from the garage was once in place on what is now the west wall of the pantry. After it's removal it was reused as the door for the upstairs bathroom closet.

MASTER BEDROOM EN SUITE

A new doorway cut into the east side of the house offers access to the garage, much of which was converted into the en suite.

Much of the garage was repurposed during renovation to house a newly constructed en suite (master bedroom, bath and walk-in closet). The pantry, the laundry, a mechanical closet, and a back hall leading to an exterior door to the driveway were also included as part of the overall design of the repurposed garage space. Floor trusses were built on the garage pad during framing such that floors would be flush with the main level of the house (with the exception of the back hall and mechanical closet). Interior wall framing created all of these spaces within what once

was garage. Two new double hung windows were set close together in the bedroom wall, in a manner that repeats the window placement at the front of the house in the parlor. The ceiling is done in beadboard to repeat beadboard use on the foyer ceiling and den walls. Likewise beadboard door casings match those of the den. The ceiling rafters are actually the bottom of the engineered trusses of the garage. The metal plates used to make the trusses were parged with a thin coat of epoxy wood filler and sanded with feathered edges so as to be nearly invisible. The aforementioned applications of window placement and bead board were chosen to maintain architectural consistency throughout the house. This new addition achieved its intended purpose of enlarging the living area and providing a one floor living arrangement for the owners.

North-facing view from master bedroom into bath and closet.

UPSTAIRS BEDROOM

Entry door (left) before reversing. Closet (right) before demolition.

An odd shaped bedroom door was originally fitted to the narrow space between the slanted ceiling and the chimney. It was kept as found, but modified from right swing to left swing. This change kept the top of the door from striking the ceiling and causing damage. It now functions as it should, however the light switch is now located behind the door. (Relocating the switch during the renovation was not practical due to wall and ceiling framing constraints.) Installation of a ceiling fan light fixture with on/off pull cords eases the inconvenience.

Finished bedroom as viewed from entry.

UPSTAIRS BATHROOM

View just inside the bath door. The double vanity and its wall were removed. The toilet, not visible here, is in a nook at the far left rear. On the immediate left was a makeshift closet with double bifold louvered doors much like the ones removed from the upper foyer.

Partial view of the bathroom when the bedroom closet was removed to create a space for the mechanical room. The brick chimney for the Parlor fireplace, parged with mortar, is exposed.
The bathtub is seen in the back corner of the bathroom, and a fiberglass shower stall was located in front of the tub. The shower, as well as the bedroom closet, had been torn out prior to the taking of this photo.

This old upstairs bathroom was created at some indeterminate time and in a rather unusual layout, but it has been kept in the same location when renovated. The old bathroom was divided into two areas by building an interior wall bisecting the room. In the north side was a double vanity, the toilet and a closet. On the south side was a clawfoot bathtub and a fiberglass shower stall.

There was no indoor plumbing when the house was built. Judging by its size, the bathroom was another bedroom originally, or perhaps was simply an open dorm area without a wall between it and the adjacent bedroom. Changes over the decades make it quite impossible to tell for sure.

Upon renovation the partitioning wall, fiberglass shower, double vanity, and louvered door closet were all removed. A proper storage closet was built where the earlier closet was positioned. An electric hot water heater is situated in its rear to service this bathroom and the first floor powder room directly beneath. A small storage cubby was built on the south wall where the tub was positioned, and the tub then repositioned against the outside wall of the new storage cubby. The inside surface of the tub was professionally resurfaced in situ and all new fixtures installed. A period-correct pedestal sink was installed on the outside wall of the new storage closet. A new mechanical closet was built where the fiberglass shower had been, with necessary ceiling modifications to accommodate ductwork. This HVAC unit serves the entire upstairs of the house as well as the downstairs powder room, bedroom, and parlor.

Note the placement of common plywood as flooring in the storage closet. The original plank flooring was removed from this area and used to replace damaged flooring in the bedroom and bathroom, principally where the partitioning wall had been located and where the floor had been cut up to run wiring long ago.

The bathroom window facing east is clearly a replacement window. Because it is not visible from any street view replacement to something more original was not required by historic preservation listing requirements. While not architecturally correct, it remains largely hidden behind shutters and was considered not to be cost effective to replace.

Completed upstairs bathroom. The toilet is in the far left corner nook. The new closet's door is to the left of the sink. A small door to the new storage cubby is just right of the bathtub. The door to the mechanical room is opposite the near end of the bathtub out of view.

UPSTAIRS DEN

The upstairs den as purchased.

Mantle removed. Wiring and wall reframing for new windows completed.

The two windows straddle a space where an upstairs fireplace originally stood. This fireplace, however, must have fallen into extreme disrepair and had been torn out. To fill the void, a former owner had constructed a faux fireplace from plywood. A featureless mantle built from plain lumber was nailed to the wall. Nothing remained of the original hearth and the hole in the floor had been covered in plywood. It would have been prohibitively expensive to recreate an authentic stone fireplace, so the exposed stone and flue were filled with insulation, the entire wall sheetrocked, and the floor hole repaired. Before closing it all up, this upstairs fireplace's flue was observed to have been constructed running in parallel to the flue from the fireplace directly under it. It is remarkable how such a complex double flue was formed inside the chimney using rough fieldstone. It is a credit to the stonemasons who built it long ago.

Also missing from this room was the original floor. It was likely removed because undersized joists were originally used and the floor had developed a severe sag over time. To remove the floor sag, the former owner sistered new 2 X 4s to the sagging joists. They replaced the floor boards with plywood.

Cutting an attic hatch in the East wall allowed for access to a new storage space above the dining room.

Adding built in shelving along the west wall provides additional storage areas for the room.

New shelving in the finished upstairs den.

GARAGE

The garage addition had been sized for 2 cars plus some added work/storage space. Both garage doors were removed and the area behind them dedicated to the new en suite. The better of the two overhead doors was reworked for a pleasing appearance and reinstalled at the far east end with enough garage space remaining for a single car and some storage. The wall between the garage and en suite is fire rated per code requirements. The single door in the south wall was kept for convenient access from the garage to the back yard.

EXTERIOR

An exterior view as purchased. The north side required extensive renovation. The west (front) side required only faux shutter removal and new porch floorboard replacement.

A shed roof above the side door was installed after demolition of the earlier side porch addition. The T-111 siding was house-wrapped and furring strips are partially in place awaiting new clapboards. Note the placement of all new windows and the garage door.

The garage entry door under the porch was kept as an entry into the back hall of the house. The two overhead doors were removed, with all garage space behind them repurposed for expanding first floor home living space. The far left window was replaced with one overhead garage door to allow for a single car garage.

The covered porch as a sheltering entrance to the back hall (formerly garage) was not original to the house, and therefore removed as per request of the North Carolina Historic Preservation (NCHP) office. A few sections

of the 5-V crimp metal roofing had to be replaced where the covered entrance was removed. A small shed roof was built over the door as a more probable feature that would have been found on the house originally. It was built to mimic the style of the front porch roof. This is the only feature added to the exterior of the house and was recommended by the NCHP office. It is worth noting here that when damaged metal roof panels were being replaced the exposed topside of the roof rafters revealed countless nail holes, and that small pieces of wood roof shakes were found in the attic near the chimney. One must conclude that the original roof of the house was wood shakes. In all probability the tin roof was installed many decades ago, although it is not possible to say when this was done.

New clapboard, window casings, drip edge and skirt boards were installed as needed to match the original external design features of the house.

NCHP asked that 6 over 6 double hung windows be installed in the garage and ell extension for continuity of appearance of the house's exterior. They did insist all porch roofs be left with the rafters exposed. Exterior paint colors selected met with their approval.

South exterior view as purchased.

The south facing (back) porch had been partially enclosed at some point. This was removed in keeping with the original appearance.

Finished south exterior with patio addition. Two double hung windows were installed to brighten the new master bedroom.

Apart from the decades old garage addition and metal roof installation, the house's exterior now appears much as it did when first built over a century ago.

FOUNDATION AND FRAMING

The house rests on sill beams supported by stone piers. A few beams, especially on the north side of the house, had to be replaced due to rot and/or insect damage over the years.

Rotted beams at the stone chimney base before replacement

That said, the majority of the beams are in fine condition and are still in place. The original beams are a mixture of hand hewn logs and rough sawn beams. How this came to be is a curiosity. Perhaps it was just what was available at the time, or what could be afforded financially. The house framing also bears inconsistencies. The south side rooms were built using balloon framing, yet the north side den has a top plate capping the wall studs. In the downstairs den all beadboard was removed during renovation. One wall had studs on (roughly) 12 inch centers, another on 24 inch centers, and the wall common to the staircase was on 12 inch centers but the studs were installed sideways! Framing is a mixture of inconsistent widths, and some structural lumber supporting the staircase looks like random pieces. This probably accounts for the sag in the foyer floor. It was jacked up and braced during renovation, but the subcontractor doing the work was able to achieve just partial removal of the sag, out of fear that further jacking would result in unintended damage to walls and stairwell.

Rot on sill beams and floor joists in the northeast corner at doorway to the back hall.

Framing repairs as completed before insulation and subfloor installation. This photo predates the cutting of the doorway to the back hall. The old PVC drain line had once been added for a sink in the old ½ bath.

Not shown here are similar repairs made to the floor in the short hall. Also the floor joists supporting the upstairs bathtub were beefed up by sistering new joists in place when ceiling work was being done in the downstairs bedroom.

PLUMBING, ELECTRICAL, HVAC AND INSULATION

All plumbing in the house is new, meaning every feed line and fixture. The buried water line from the meter to the house was not replaced as there was no problem with it. The transition point from the main water line into the house's new plumbing is buried to the left side of the pier under the parlor double window. The pressure regulator and main water shutoff valve are in the front left corner of the hall closet. Of course there is a shutoff valve at the water meter too, which is located on the southwest corner of the lot.

All gas lines in the house are new, as are all gas appliances. Both dual-fuel furnaces, air conditioning units, thermostats and all ductwork are new.

The 200 amp electrical panel was in the home at the time of purchase. All internal house wiring is new with three known exceptions: wiring for the foyer lights, parlor ceiling light, and upstairs bedroom ceiling light. These lines were not accessible during renovation, are low amp demand (being ceiling lights only), and were deemed acceptable for use by the licensed electrical subcontractor who did the electrical work. The only light fixtures original to the house at the time of purchase were the two foyer ceiling lights, pantry light, and light outside the pantry. The switches and wall outlets are new. The 220V lines to the stove and clothes dryer are also new.

Energy efficient foam-in-place icynene insulation was added to the house in attics, and interior walls wherever new drywall was installed. It is easily seen in the attic ceilings. It is also installed under the house (including ensuite and kitchen before the flooring was installed). There is just one exception: the subcontractor could not manage to foam under the dining room floor due to extremely limited crawl space. The entire north wall of the house has been foamed, as well as the ensuite walls, south wall of kitchen-dining area, and west wall of the den.

It is important to note that all plumbing, electrical and HVAC work was completed by licensed contractors. Further to note is that this house renovation was completed under an owner-builder permit as issued by Transylvania County. All required in-process inspections and the final inspection were satisfactorily completed and passed.
As an added benefit it is now possible to gain substantial energy savings by closing the two foyer doors and setting the upstairs thermostat to 85 degrees in summer and 50 degrees in winter, as well as turning off the upstairs hot water heater. The house is opened up and used fully only if family and friends visit, even if just for an evening. Though there is heat loss through the single pane glass, the foamed house insulation coupled with minimal use of the upstairs HVAC and hot water heater results in utility bills far below the average single family home. This is verified by periodic utility usage reports as issued by Duke Power Co.

LANDSCAPING

The most dramatic changes to landscaping are the beautiful gardens all around the property. Two rain gardens were placed on the north side of the house to help manage rainfall runoff. Some trees on the property were removed because of damage, disease, or simply inappropriate placement. Solid fencing along the east and south property lines provide privacy. A stone patio with a barbeque fireplace was added to the back yard. The stone sidewalks leading to the front and side doors, as well as the stepping stones leading to the garage were added to maintain authenticity of a house of this era.

CONCLUSION

The Grogan House can be found at the corner of Elm Bend Road and Warren Lane in Brevard. Early Transylvania County documents referred to the house as being located on Lot 7, Elm Bend Road. Warren Lane was created decades after the house was built, and the address was then changed to 24 Warren Lane.

Through the acquisition of property over the early years the Grogans eventually grew the farm to approximately 81 acres, extending all the way back to Wilson Creek. All of the farmland was sold over the years. The old farmhouse is now surrounded by more modern homes and the remaining property has been annexed within the city limits.

In addition to being listed on the National Register of Historic Places the Grogan house is also listed as a local historic landmark of Transylvania County, so designated by the city/county Joint Historic Preservation Commission.

Bringing this old neglected house back to its glory days has been an adventure. If cared for properly it will serve for decades to come as a historic example of a typical Early American farmhouse of Western North Carolina.

The William H. Grogan House renovation project and this accompanying record of work were completed by Thomas and Bonnie McMahon, owners of the home.