

A LITTLE ABOUT THE HOUSE

Because this house was built prior to air conditioning it has some unique features that helped compensate for the hot humid summers. The transoms over the doors helped move the rising hot air on out of the house.

The area where the kitchen nook and the laundry room are now located was originally a screened in porch, and there was another screened in porch upstairs in the area that has become the walk-in closets for the two back bedrooms. That porch was closed off and lined with built-in bookcases, then later divided with a temporary wall to serve as the two closets.

During the hottest nights of the summer the entire family would sleep on the screened in porch upstairs where the south breeze blowing in from the Gulf of Mexico would give them some relief from the heat. All the bedrooms upstairs except one had connecting doors that would be opened to allow air flow between the rooms, making it a little more comfortable to sleep on the nights they were not sleeping on the porch.

The front bedroom on the westside did not have a connecting door. This was Aunt Mary's room where she was given her well-deserved private space. Aunt Mary had been a slave who chose to stay with the family after emancipation. I found a family Bible in the attic documenting family history dating back to 1837. In it was an emotional tribute written to Aunt Mary on the day she died, expressing deep gratitude to her for raising four generations of the Wilson family, the family who originally built this house.

I was fortunate enough to walk through this house with Anne, the woman who grew up here, and whose mother was raised in this house by Aunt Mary. Anne's daughter brought her from the nursing home to see the house one last time. Anne told me of wall-to-wall girls giggling through many nights of slumber parties in the middle bedroom, of hours spent in the attic playing games, and of how I just wouldn't believe the number of boys she flirted with while leaning over the railing of the front porch. Anne's wedding reception was in this house.

All the old forgotten photos, letters and post cards containing bits and pieces of family history along with the old family Bible, all of which I found in the attic have been passed onto family members who had no idea such items existed. Anne's memories as she walked through the house surrounded by her family were passed on too.

Anne was enjoying briefly reliving and sharing these old memories, when she suddenly turned to me and said, "I'm on my way out. It's time for new memories to be made in this house." I couldn't agree more.