



The History of 3911 Avenue G

This wonderful Craftsman bungalow was built in 1923 by Elgin and Anna Williams who are the first listed occupants in the Austin City Directory. It was one of many bungalows that were often nestled between the larger existing Victorian homes in Hyde Park. And this bungalow was surrounded by the beautiful large homes on three sides that have been maintained and are still here today for all to enjoy. The bungalow was typical in design: small living room, dining room, kitchen, two bedrooms with a bath leading from a short hallway and, of course, the ubiquitous front porch along with a small garage in the back yard.

The Williams lived there only three years when it changed hands in 1927 and had a series of short term occupants until 1947 when Loebel Ware bought it. He was a teacher at Bickler Junior High School and lived there until he sold the house in 1967. It was probably during that time that the front porch was enclosed in order to enlarge the living room, shown by the color change in the long leaf pine floor where the original front wall stood.

If the "floors could talk" in this house, beginning in the late 60s it would have some juicy tales to tell. There were a series of occupants in the 60s and 70s when the neighborhood fell into the hands of drug dealers. One neighbor remembers the rumor that the house was partitioned and 21 people were stuffed into the house at one time. Legend has it that the back yard grew a forest of bamboo.

From 1978 to 1984, the one famous occupant, Bill Oliver, and his friend, Elaine Huser, lived there. As a singer-songwriter, he and his band were dubbed the "Environmental Troubadours" by Time magazine in 1989 because he wrote and performed songs for the growing environmental movement. Rivers were his personal passion, so he could be seen floating on Lady Bird Lake and singing to protect its quality. He still lives in Austin today and continues to support the green world as "Mr. Habitat."

In 1985, a new owner and Geology PhD candidate, Emilio Flores Espinoza, remodeled the house, adding a sunroom in the back and creating a master suite with a walk-in closet and second bath. It must have been very dramatic with a Jacuzzi bathtub, black ceramic tile, and a skylight in the vaulted ceiling. The living room was shocking with a suite of armor welcoming guests.



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The next owner occupant was Bob L. Cave, a real eccentric bachelor who enjoyed throwing knives at the trees in the front yard. You might see wounds in the trees even now. Bob sold it to Angela and Kelly Miller who then sold it to Eric Stumberg in 1998.

It was still the typical Hyde Park bungalow both inside and out. Eric fell in love with the friendly, front porch ambiance of the neighborhood and his interesting neighbors.. As his business grew, he wanted a "new" house that reflected his contemporary tastes but was reluctant to leave the historic neighborhood. So, he decided to remodel while honoring his neighbors and leaving his space better than he found it. He enlisted the help of architect and longtime friend, Burton Baldrige of Burton Baldrige, Architects. The old garage was about to collapse, so they demolished it to make way for the construction of a modestly scaled modern studio casita in the back yard where the original garage stood. All but hidden from the street front, the steel framed studio features cladding of zinc and Massaranduba, Venetian plaster from Eric's friend, Sloan Hauser, copious glass partitions, and a travertine floor. After that was completed, he moved into it so they could begin the transformation of the inside of the main house. They carried some of the same design features from the studio to the main house, such as the horizontal striation of the Massaranduba wood on the studio exterior to the front and back porches of the main house.

During Eric's remodel, many "Green" features were used: tankless, on-demand water heaters, no-VOC paint by Sherwin Williams, wood flooring repaired with long leaf pine reclaimed from an old barn, the introduction of insulated glass units into the original sashes, polycynene and cellulose insulation, and scraps of Massaranduba from the front porch for the vanity and seating in the front bath.

Today you see the marvelous way the exterior of the house remains true to the history of Hyde Park while the interior has been totally transformed with sleek contemporary lines, stainless steel in the kitchen, and completely updated baths. Other than a new front deck and custom fabricated Douglas fir door, the front of the house remains virtually unchanged. This house is a great example of how historic homes can be remodeled to reflect the contemporary tastes of today without destroying the historic exterior.



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Projects

2019-

All new vents and duct system (Wave)

2022-

2022 Summer Project with Chris Haynes - Wildcreek Custom Renovations

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- Remodel of both bathrooms
- All new windows
- Interior painting of the entire home
- Exterior painting of the entire home
- New vent hood in kitchen
- Replace entire HVAC system using Austin Star Services – Jon Esquivel 512-514-3266
 - The work scope that we performed was a variable capacity unit (to handle load matching and the right amount of air flow in rooms throughout the different season)
 - MERV 16 filtration “IQAir Perfect 16” (this was to handle allergens and pollen at a premium hepa filtration)
 - On demand ventilation with VOC/CO2 sensor (ASHRAE 62.2 standard)
 - On demand dehumidification SantaFe dehumidifier (need calculations to determine proper dehumidifier).
 - Pollutant source control (Panasonic humidity sensing exhaust fans), properly installed kitchen exhaust with adequate make up air).
 - Building pressures (under 3 ACH for building enclosure for new construction under 2PA between bedrooms) (this is required to control the home with not bringing pollutants in from the outside.

2023-

Tankless water heater installed in June in the main house and the casita