

## Historic Homes

By Haily Hanna

Historic buildings offer rich resources to help trace the development of a community. Both, the Robert L. Dulaney house of Marshall, Illinois, and the blacksmith shop in Clarksville, Illinois, were built in the late 1800's and reflected the styles of the times. These buildings provided strong roots for our community and family ties to develop.



Construction on the first, the Robert L. Dulaney house, was started in 1862 and finished in 1864. The house stayed in the Dulaney family until 1957. The architectural style of the house is Italianate, marked by the long narrow look and elongated windows with high arches above them. This style was extremely popular during the 1800's. The house is entirely brick except for a few wooden additions. The house was one of the first houses in Marshall to have running water. The house possessed a large metal-lined wooden tank on its third floor. The tank was filled with sand, gravel and charcoal; these acted as a filtering system. The tank was attached to the rain gutters. When there was an overflow, the house had running water. This tank is one of the few left in this part of the country. The house itself consists of thirteen rooms, two and a half baths, and three full stories. The original house also included a servants' quarter. The house itself has eight fireplaces, and most are still used today. Also, on the third floor is a small area in the wall that has never been painted. Will + Edie 1875 is written in this area, and no one has ever tampered with it. On the second floor there is even an original doorknocker that the servants had used.

The house's owner, Mr. Dulaney, was very active in politics and for many years was the president and chairman of the state prison system. This accounts for the beautiful marble carving over the fireplaces which, was carved by a criminal in the Joliet prison. Mr. Dulaney also founded the Dulaney Bank of Marshall and was one the first in this area to attend and graduate from college.



Mr. Macey, the current owner, moved in with his wife in 1975. They had lived in Marshall before and had been living in the Chicago area when they heard from Mr. Macey's father that the house was available. The Macey's moved in on September of 1975 and started working on its National Register listing in 1995. When they started to redecorate the house, they wanted to make it look like it might have when it was new. Most of the furniture is antique, and most light fixtures are original. They chose peacock wallpaper because of the significance that peacocks meant hospitality. Mr. Macey told me that

all the fireplaces were original and that the windows were all from before the 1900's. The windows themselves are called six over six because in that time large pieces of glass were hard to come by. Right before the 1900's, Queen Ann style took over and the bottom windows were switched to very large pieces of glass. At one time, the house also had a north wing. This, however, was removed when the children of the Dulaney family started moving out. The porch on the house now is not original. Mr. Macey was not sure when it was put in or what was there before, but the porch was not an original part of the house. The only major restoration had been the wiring. When the Macey's moved in, the wiring was all original as it had been in the 1900's. The house was listed on the National Register in May of 1997. The total application for the register was 34 pages, a 60-slide demo, and 57 black and white pictures. The Macey's received a certificate and bought a brass plate to put on the house.

Secondly, I researched the blacksmith shop. It was built in 1874 and was owned by three generations of Millhouses. The first of the Millhouse lineage was Frederick Millhouse, who came from Germany and later founded the shop with the rest of his family. The second was John George Millhouse and then the third, John Wesley Millhouse. All three worked and owned the blacksmith shop. The building itself was two stories high and was complete with two forges downstairs. The upstairs was used for meetings, such as the Oddfellows and the Civil War Veterans. The blacksmith shop was an Italianate style and even had a dirt floor. The blacksmith shop was listed on the National Register on May 12, 1987.

The building was purchased by the Oddfellows in 1904, and later bought back by John Wesley Millhouse who happened to be a member of the Oddfellows. John Wesley worked in the shop until about 1966, when he passed away. Many times he was not even paid for his services. Mrs. Martha Buckner, daughter of John Wesley Millhouse showed me old tab books that described the work that her father had done for someone and how much he charged for such work. Most items were less than 85 cents. Most work done might have been filling wagon tires, making a horseshoe, or even sharpening discs for the farmers.

Just a year ago, as the blacksmith shop was deteriorating, Martha and some friends tried to raise money to restore the shop. The National Register promised to match the funds they raised. All and all 3,000 dollars was raised. Yet when it came time for them to receive money from the state, they were turned down. This resulted in the shop being tom down in October of 1997. After the shop was tom down all the money raised was returned. The shop could have been saved and maybe have been the sight of a living history. Sadly, the shop lies in ruin today despite so many efforts to save it.

Both The Robert L. Dulaney house and the blacksmith shop were Italianate buildings constructed in the late 1800's and hold great historical importance to our community and city. One you can still see today, and one, unfortunately, we are no longer able to admire and appreciate. Both, however, were added to the National Register and into the hearts of the community around them.