

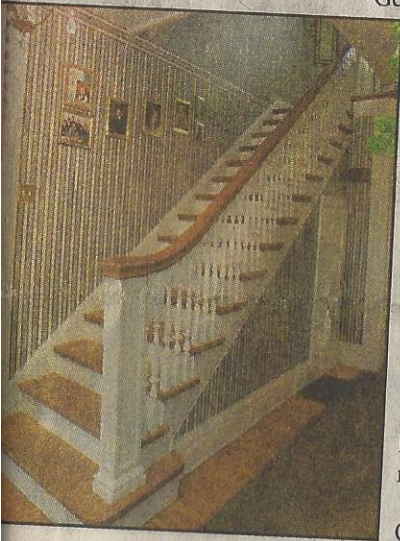
Dee and Steve Adams have gone to great lengths to preserve their historic home at 318 S. 18th

By Ruth Hultz

Herald Whig Staff Writer

Dee and Steve Adams' historic home at 318 S. 18th — one of the oldest houses in Quincy — has a rich architectural history.

Clues to its past and the many changes it has experienced are scattered throughout the house.



Ghosts of former doorways, pine flooring covered by oak flooring and exposed original brick in the kitchen make the four-bedroom house an interesting historical puzzle.

The house was constructed in stages, starting in 1836 as a three-room house when 18th Street was named Orange Street. It was built for field worker George Macken on the back of the John Wood orchard. Stone thresholds from the original three-room house remain as a reminder of its original shape.

The three-room section of the house still sports the plain, pine door and window trim of a field worker's cottage. Neighborhood folklore says the basement beams were gathered from the riverfront — recycled from a frame that corralled logs being floated down the river.

Quincy Preservation Commission research sug-

gests the home's south section and entire upstairs were added around 1846.

The wide, heavily profiled trim throughout the house, the Greek key door trim in the parlor and a grand staircase suggest a family of some wealth enlarged the house.

The beams in the kitchen addition are said to have come from the old high school at 12th and Maine, which was demolished in the 1930s.

In 1926, then-owners Guido and Mary Janes added the Georgian/Colonial Revival features and made changes to the windows. Mrs. Janes had the iron gate shipped to Quincy from New Orleans.

Steve and Dee Adams have gone to great lengths to preserve



A look at the Dee and Steve Adams home at 318 S. 18th. Building on the historic house started in 1836.

H-W Photos/Michael Kipley



the home. To paint and wallpaper the two-story stairwell area, they rigged a narrow scaffold with ladders and boards. Dee said working on the scaffolding was scary at first and, although she got used to it, she always made sure someone was home when she worked there.

When they couldn't find a professional to take on the job of stripping, caulking and painting the home's wide frieze, cornice and brackets, the Adams did a three-month stint on outside scaffolding.

Tying a rope around his waist and attaching it to the chimney for safety, Steve also re-tarred the metal roof.

The brick needed cleaning and Steve said he knew sandblasting was too hard on brick

and mortar, so he rented a power washer to clean the brick and remove just enough white paint to achieve the dappled look he wanted.

With the massive amounts of work Dee has undertaken in the seven years they've owned the house, it's hard to believe she had wanted a new house.

She has stripped, sanded and repainted the trim in all but one room. She spent one whole winter stripping each of the 72 Georgian-style balusters. She said it was "not fun" but thinking about how nice it would be when it was finished kept her at it.

Often starting right after Christmas each year, the Adamses have stripped plenty of wallpaper and redecorated throughout the house, remodeled a bathroom, and added new heating and air conditioning.

Looking back at all the work they have done on their home, the Adamses say, "We were crazy."

AT A GLANCE

Address: 318 S. 18th.

Date of Construction: Circa 1836, 1846.

Architectural Features:

The original style was Italianate with low hip roof, wide cornice with decorative brackets and windows in the frieze band on the north, floor to ceiling windows with stone lintels and sills, segmental pedimented arch over side door. A Colonial Revival facelift in the 1920s reflected changing fashion and included panes added to the long windows, a Colonial entry having top and side lights with diamond panes, a portico with modillions and dentils at the cornice with fluted columns with Corinthian capitols.