

when it was built in 1861, Jean says, the building's style was intended to be clean, straightforward and serviceable.

Although its Victorian origins and stately European features lend an air of historic dignity, Jean and her siblings Jim, Jack, and Julie remember it as "a house that has been well used" by children roller skating through the parlor and sliding down the tall, curving banister.

Built for the Mathew B. Finlay family, the house has attracted stories from its beginning. Finlay liked to relate the tale of walking into town to learn the fate of Fort Sumter on the very day his fine home was completed.

The builders are assumed to be Eaton Littlefield and George Baughman, who built a similar Norwood/Morgan/Wells House at 421 Jersey that served for many years as the headquarters of the Quincy YWCA.

Built for \$10,000, it was the second most expensive home built in Quincy that year; John Wood's octagon house, also constructed by Baughman and Littlefield, cost 10 times that amount.

John and Lillian Brown Inghram bought the place in 1916 for \$8,000, which might seem a bargain. However, Lillian's spending on their imposing residence was apparently the subject of some concern for Jean's grandfather.

Described by her grandchildren as "a dynamo," Lillian Brown Inghram was widely admired as a teacher of piano and voice. "Since her time, the front room has always been a music room," Jean says, and the living room also features her grand piano.

"Our grandmother was ahead of her time in many ways," Jean says. "She insulated the attic and made a point to acquire items of potential historic significance."

The brass fender and screen that sit before the living room's marble fireplace were purchased from the Bull estate; the andirons belonged to a 19th-century Quincy actor named McVay. The living room in particular is graced with many



fine antique pieces from the Brown and Inghram families, including some from their ancestral home in England.

The home's stairway was built by Robert Norris, Jean's great-great-grandfather, who also constructed the pews in Quincy's old Congregational Church. One of the pews now stands in the expansive hall on the second floor which features four tall and spacious bedrooms in the front of the house and a smaller back bedroom in the service wing typical of the Italiante style.

Lillian Inghram had firm opinions about design and didn't mind acting on them. She removed the ornate carving that surrounded the semi-circular arched front door with striking rectangular sidelights.

Jean's mother also recalled someone's attempt to take down a circle of gilded molding in the dining room. "Fortunately

ly they failed," Jean says.

Over the years, her grandparents added two baths to the home, and her parents "virtually stripped the place bare" in 1960 to replace parts of the kitchen, add a patio, and restore the home's Victorian décor.

Perhaps mindful of his father's stern comments on household spending, Jean's father maintained a careful log of expenditures on the house, which has become a valuable resource in documenting its history.

Jean's children represent the fourth generation to live in this home, which is remembered as a happy place to grow up.

Jean, Jim, Jack, and Julie recall the ever-busy back door, the breezy side porch and the fun of having their own



H-W Photos/Philip Carlson

The living room of the house at 1617 Hampshire, at top, is where the Inghram siblings, pictured above clockwise beginning at lower left is Julie, Jack, Jim and Jean, grew up.

"crow's nest" in the cupola as a place to play. "Our dad brought us up here to sit on the window ledge and watch the Sputniks pass over," Jean recalls with a smile.

While it may seem like a showplace or a slice of architectural history, she remembers her home as a warm and lively place: "This house has always been about family," she said.