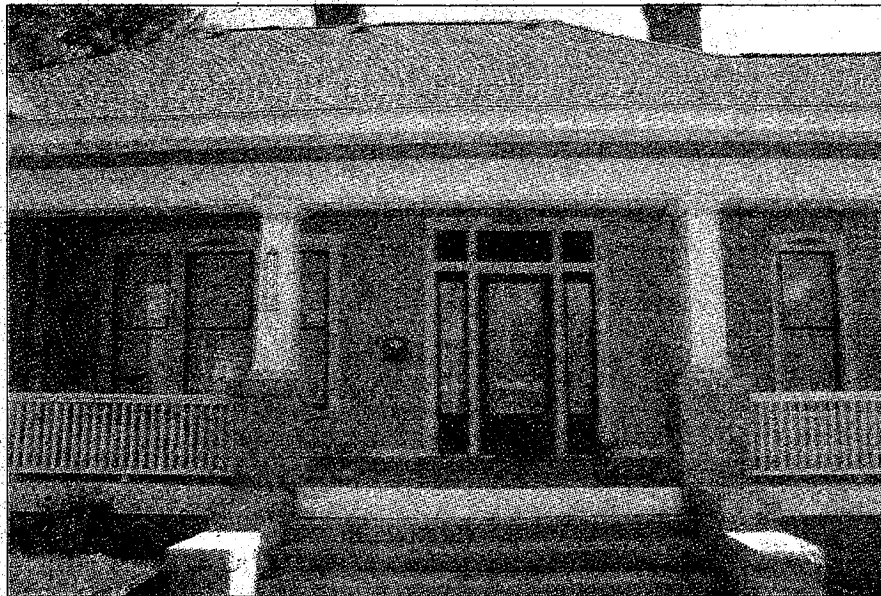


YOUR COMMUNITY



JOHN J. LAWSON HOUSE

Preservation Durham

DURHAM — Tiffany Elder is a well-known figure in the Burch Avenue neighborhood, due in no small part to her restoration of the James J. Lawson house, at 802 Burch Avenue, a veritable gateway to the neighborhood on the northwest corner of Burch and Buchanan.

The house was constructed as early as 1903 for James J. Lawson, a railroad foreman and owner of the J.J. Lawson & Company grocery on West Main Street. Lawson employed a number of residents of the Burch Avenue neighborhood as clerks in the store and remained in the house at least through the 1940s. However, by the time Tiffany purchased the property in 2007, it was so neglected that it was arguably a candidate for demolition.

The following fall, when she started to renovate, she was faced with extensive foundation and masonry reconstruction, in overgrown and unruly land-

scape, and repair of the roof in several locations. Through all of that, Elder kept her focus on this diamond in the rough.

Despite setbacks like having all five of the original mantels stolen out of the house shortly after the loan closing, she was determined to do this renovation right. She resourcefully found period-appropriate replacement mantels in Greensboro and Mebane. The original woodwork throughout the house was restored — from decorative hand-turned trim to original pine floors. The house's all-but-one original windows were restored and most of the interior transoms are again fully functioning. Following Hurricane Fran, a portion of the roof over the enclosed rear porch had been damaged beyond repair, prompting the previous owners to simply block the door, leaving the room exposed to the elements for more than a decade. Although past the point of saving, Elder used the same foundation bricks and proportions to reconstruct a breezy

screened porch.

While preserving the past, Tiffany was also mindful of the future. Some of the sustainable and energy-efficient features she included were increased insulation throughout the home, a dual-zone, high SEER central HVAC system, and a tankless on-demand hot water heater. She also minimized waste through general preservation — reusing salvaged materials like flooring, siding, windows, mantels and the like. Elder has proven that being “green” doesn’t mean jeopardizing historic fabric.

During the 14-month renovation, one of her mottoes was, “nothing a few cans of paint and six figures can’t fix.” Her positive attitude and hard work are contagious. She has inspired her neighbors and has already begun work on a second project in the neighborhood. For her enthusiasm toward the neighborhood and commitment to preservation, we would like to present Tiffany Elder with the George and Mary Pyne Preservation Award.

SAVING PIECES OF HISTORY

Preservation Durham is 35 years old.

To help celebrate, The Herald-Sun each week is featuring a 2009 winner of the George and Mary Pyne Preservation Awards and the Preservation Durham Neighborhood Conservation Awards.

Preservation Durham has been saving houses and memories in Durham since 1974, when its first major projects were the establishment of the Historic Preservation Commission and the Downtown Historic District.

Since then it has helped to preserve the Carolina Theatre, the Old St. Joseph’s A.M.E. Church and Historic Stagville. It moved and saved the Stanford L. Warren House, helped to save City Place, and moved the Pegram House.

Recently it has focused its sights on facilitating preservation projects throughout the county, from the Rougemont Train Depot, to the historic structures in the East Durham Historic District, to the Hollow Rock Store.

Since 1976, Preservation Durham has observed the annual tradition of bestowing awards for excellence in the renovation and restoration of historic buildings and sites throughout Durham County.

Watch The Herald-Sun for announcements of Preservation Durham’s 35th anniversary activities through June. In the meantime, visit www.preservationdurham.org to learn how you can become involved in creating the next 35 years of preservation achievements.

Ghost Building Tour set for Oct. 31

Preservation Durham

Tourbooks will be

DURHAM — Join Preservation Durham on Oct. 31 for a Ghost Building Tour. Otis, 112 S. Duke Street

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Center for Bipolar Disorder Research

John L. Beyer, MD