

711 McCulloch Street
Raleigh, NC 27603
4/22/2011

Our house was built in 1908, by John Coffey, a prominent builder in Raleigh between 1900 and 1929 (Bishir, Brown, Lounsbury and Wood, 1990)ⁱ. It was constructed on a corner lot close to the original Montfort Hall as the Coffeys' own residence. One of the first houses built in the new Boylan Heights development chartered in 1907, the quality of construction and the interesting design reflects the fact that Coffey had access to a range of materials and amenities. The Coffey family has shared many stories about their life in the house between 1908 and 1969.

When the Coffey's purchased their first car in 1916, a garage was added. Prior to 1928 the yard was planted with fruit trees. An original fig tree still stands outside the back door. In 1928, as the family grew, a large addition was added on the east side of the house. The addition had a separate entrance to two apartments, one upstairs and one down, for use by their children's families.

The house has a walkup attic and a generous front porch that wraps around the north and west sides of the house. Three original stained glass windows face McCulloch St. On the first floor, the front door opens into a small vestibule with an original bench with a hinged seat for storage. A swinging door leads to a spacious central hall. Off the hall are a 'music' room, living room, dining room, each with a fireplace (John Coffey's name is inscribed on the back of the mantle in the living room) with original mantles, and kitchen. A number of features in the house are mission/craftsman style. Two 9' hardwood pocket doors have original finish and hardware. The remaining doors have transom windows. Upstairs there is a tiny 'smoking porch' off the family room. The house still has its original slate roof and huge built in attic fan.

Susan Parry and John Montgomery purchased the home in 1993 from Mr. Graylon Raynor, the second owner of the home, when the neighborhood saw a resurgence of young families moving in. Parry and Montgomery completely restored the home for their family, protecting and highlighting as many of the original features as possible, including the original heart pine and oak floors, stained woodwork, brass hardware and original window glass. Although the downstairs retains most of its original layout, they added a master bedroom by connecting the second story of the 1928 addition to the central hall upstairs making a total of 5 bedrooms. The original downstairs apartment has been maintained as a one bedroom 'grandmother' apartment and has been home to young students, artists and attorneys during our time here. In 1998 the house won the Anthemion Award recognizing the quality of its restoration. In 2007 it was on a house tour celebrating the 100th anniversary of Boylan Heights and it has been painted many times by Raleigh artists drawn by its gracious architecture and pretty urban yard. The block of McCulloch St. in front the house has hosted a long succession of neighborhood graduation parades, summer camp activities and May Day festivities.

ⁱ Architects and Builders in North Carolina