VOL 7, ISSUE 3

July/August 2011



Braeswood New

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Tree Trimming Neighborhood Power Lines

Davey Tree Co. has been contracted with Centerpoint Energy to trim power lines in Old Braeswood. This work is being overseen by a professional forester. If you have questions or need to speak with a company representative, please contact Bob Maldonado at 713-945-4251.

High Density Ordinance Under Consideration

The City of Houston is currently considering an amendment to the development ordinance (Chapter 42) that would prevent situations like the Ashby High Rise from occurring in residential neighborhoods. The ordinance draft encourages buildings over 75' in height to be located on major thoroughfares, transit corridors (rail), and in designated Major Activity Centers. New buildings over 75' in height located on local or collector streets would have buffer requirements from single-family: 50' distance from the common property line for any building or mechanical equipment and a sloped height limit starting at 100'.

While the ordinance would not apply to properties across Main St., it would help diminish intrusion by large scale buildings in unrestricted parts of the neighborhood. Visit the Planning Dept. website at http://www.houstontx.gov/planning/ to view the proposal and for a presentation explaining the main points of this new ordinance.

Garden Club Donates Dog Station at Park



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For years residents have asked why we don't have a depository for dog droppings. The Old Braeswood Garden Club decided to do something about this request and has paid for the new dog station on Morningside alongside Old Braeswood Park. The station was installed by the City of Houston Park's Department.

As many of you will attest, this installation is long overdue. With so many dog owners in the neighborhood, to say nothing of those at the apartments on Greenbriar and area townhomes and condominiums, the park has been a pit stop for dozens of pets each day.

Please help us keep our neighborhood clean and beautiful by cleaning up after your pet. We hope that everyone who walks their dog will now clean up after them because the bags and depository are available.

Donations of bags are needed. Please save your newspaper and grocery bags and place them in the green boxes on the front or the silver cylinder at the back of the station.

A big Thank You to the Old Braeswood Garden Club and its thoughtful members!

This article highlights two houses that were among the first to be built in Old Braeswood, 7319 Greenbriar St. and 2305 Glen Haven Blvd. The first has just been put up for sale and the other may soon be on the market. Both are mentioned by Stephen Fox in Braeswood, An Architectural History.



2305 Glen Haven Blvd. is undergoing renovation.

The house at 2305 Glen Haven Blvd. first appears in the City Directory in 1930, occupied by the Rev. J. N. R. Score, who was then Pastor of St. Paul's Methodist Church. This makes the house yet another OB house connected to Walter William Fondren, Sr., the co-founder of Humble Oil Company, predecessor to Exxon. Fondren was a member of St. Paul's and had contributed \$50,000 for building a new church at Fannin and Bissonnet. The church was still under construction when Rev. Score moved onto Glen Haven. In 1939, Rev. Score returned to Houston to join 3 bishops in conducting funeral services for Fondren in the completed church.

After Rev. Score, the house was occupied by a series of other pastors of St. Paul's: Rev. Stephen S. McKenney and his wife, Maggie (their cook, Phillip Conway, occupied the garage apartment); Rev. Dawson C. Bryan; and Rev. Albert P. Shirkey, and his wife, Leona.

St. Paul's sold the house in 1951 to John H. Wishmick and his wife, Phyliss. He was the branch manager of Witco Carbon Co., subsequently merged into Chemtura Corporation. They were followed by John H. Moyer and his wife, Mary. He was a physician at Baylor Medical College.

Purchasing from the Moyers in 1960 was James N. and Betty Frierson. James was a hand surgeon in a group practice, Liles, Frierson & Wolf. The Friersons are now deceased. The house currently undergoes renovation and may be on the market soon.

The Greenbriar house first appears in the Houston City Directory of 1929-30 and was owned by Herman C. Malsch and his wife, Ada. Mr. Malsch was vice-president of The Cargill Company (a printing company) and treasurer of Parke Engraving Company. (Initially, the house appeared as 7320 Greenbriar St. Then, in about 1940, the numbering was changed and the house was designated as 7319 Greenbriar St.)

The Malsches remained in the house until it was purchased in 1940 by George H. and Helen Echols. George was a drilling contractor with an office in the Sterling Building at 608 Fannin.

A Mrs. William G. Priester (no husband listed) lived there briefly, followed by Henry B. and Helen Desenberg, who lived there through 1955. Henry was a sales manager for Beard and Stone Electric Company, an auto parts distributor that got folded into the predecessor of Gulf & Western Corporation.

Mrs. Carmen M. Davis, listed as "babysitter," the widow of William P. Davis, lived there a short time, followed in 1960 by Allen C. Gracey, Jr., and his wife, Genevieve. He was a broker for Shields Realty Company. The Graceys left, renting it briefly to Thomas G. Avant, an engineer for Humble Oil Company, and returned to reoccupy it in 1968. Then, in 1973, Dr. Frank R. Denman, a physician with the Surgical Clinic of Houston moved in, living there through 1975.

In 1977, the house was purchased by Kenneth B. and Ginger Jackson. Kenneth, a special agent for the FBI, died in June of 2010. Ginger, who was an office manager for a physician in the medical center, now lives with a niece in Katy.

(Continued on Page 3.)



7319 Greenbriar is for sale and eagerly awaiting renovation.

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This house is one of perhaps only two Old Braeswoodhouses to have a basement. It is further distinguished by its entrance, which is set at an angle to Greenbriar and to all who pass through Old Braeswood on that thoroughfare. It stands as a reminder of our history and of the unique character of our neighborhood. Currently on the market, the house awaits someone who wants an original Braeswood house and a piece of Houston's past. It is an opportunity for combining a new interior with a historic exterior. Hopefully, it can be saved.

[This is the 18th article in a continuing series on houses and people in Old Braeswood. Suggestions for future columns are welcome.]

A House in Old Braeswood is Now Officially Historic



Susan and Leonard Teich pose in front of their house at 2240 Glen Haven Blvd., the first house in Old Braeswood to get Houston Historic Landmark Designation. The house was the subject of Susan's first article in her series Your House Has a History, appearing in the OB newsletter in October 2007. Colorful Texas legislator Mad Dog Mengden grew up in the house. The Teichs invite you to come by and see the historic designation plaque now displayed in front.

Susan and Len Teich, at 2240 Glen Haven Blvd., are now the first Old Braeswood homeowners whose house is designated a Houston Historic Landmark by the City of Houston. Their house was the subject of the first of Susan's newsletter articles under the heading *Your House Has a History*, appearing in the October 2007 issue. It was the childhood home of colorful Texas politician Mad Dog Mengden. They invite you to come by to see the plaque. Susan will email, to anyone who requests it, the nominating report prepared by the Houston Planning Department and submitted to Houston City Council. Susan shares tips on getting your home designated in the column to the right of this article.

Steps To Getting Houston Historic Landmark Designation by Susan Teich

Do initial research to find a reason that your house qualifies (your house has architectural significance or a significant event occurred there or a significant person lived there).

Then ask the Houston City Planning Department if you might qualify for designation. A good contact is Diana DuCroz, Senior Planner, Diana.DuCroz@houstontx.gov or (713) 837-7924.

If Planning gives you encouragement, complete your research and turn it over to them. If you email me (steich1@comcast.net), I will gladly reply with two attachments: 1) the research report that I submitted to the Planning Department, and 2) the ensuing report prepared by Planning for HAHC. That will give you some idea of what you need to supply and of what Planning will supply.

The Planning Department will expand on your research and write a report for submission by them to the Houston Architectural and Historical Commission (HAHC).

The HAHC will schedule a public hearing at which you may (but do not need to) be present. At the hearing, someone from the Planning Department describes the reasons that the house should be designated and asks the HAHC to recommend to Houston City Council that it be designated. Members of the HAHC may ask questions.

If HAHC approves, it makes a recommendation for designation to City Council.

City Council then puts the recommendation on its agenda. At the Council meeting, someone from the Planning Department again puts forth the nomination and Council votes. Again, you may (but do not need to) be present. Again, Council members may ask questions before a vote is taken.

Once you get designation, you may order a plaque for the outside of your house. There can be tax advantages to historic landmark designation. If they apply, they are not automatic, but are applied for after designation is given.



2240 Glen Haven Blvd..

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"Steps To Researching Your House For Historic Designation by Susan Teich

- 1) Start with the web page at www.har.com for the property in question. That will give you the year in which the house purportedly was built (often in error).
- 2) Then go to Clayton Library for Genealogical Research, a branch of the Houston Public Library System. Location: 5300 Caroline, Telephone: (832) 393-2600, Website: http://www.houstonlibrary.org/clayton

Trained staff are available for help. The City Directories, available on microfiche on the second floor, will give you an uninterrupted line of occupancy for the house through 1964. Searching the names of the occupants gives you information about what they did for a living. For years from 1964 to the present, you may use the directories at Clayton House, the building next door.

- 3) Once you have a timeline of the residents of the house, then hit the Internet. Google the names with "Houston" and see what you get. Search also by names of the companies where the various occupants of the house worked.
- 4) Use newspaper obituaries (Houston Post and Houston Chronicle). The librarians at Clayton Library can help you find a date of death, and then you may access archival newspapers on microfilm at the Central Library downtown.
- 5) Another resource is The Texas Room at the Julia Ideson Library (Houston Metropolitan Research Center), next door to the Central Library.
- 6) Interviews with longstanding residents of Old Braeswood are helpful.
- 7) Your house may be mentioned in Stephen Fox's book *Braeswood, An Architectural History.*
- 8) Lastly, you can pin down the line of actual ownership of the house by going to the deed records. These records used to be kept in book form. In the 1960s, the County Clerk's Office converted to microfilm. The records in books are kept in a warehouse, open to the public, at 102a San Jacinto St. The clerks there are very helpful and will photocopy pages for you on the spot at a nominal charge.

The microfilmed deed records (which go back to the 19th century) are the only deed records for title transfers in the last 50 years. They are found at 201 Caroline St. on the third floor. For questions, call the Records Department at (713) 755-6899.

Myths About Historic Designation

MYTH 1: I'll never be allowed to change anything about the house if it is designated as a historic landmark.

Wrong. Anything goes as far as changes made inside the house (e.g., remodeling the kitchen, moving walls, etc.) Changes to the outside can be done after application is made to the Houston Architectural and Historical Commission (HAHC). If HAHC does not approve a proposed

change to the outside, then the change may still be made after a three month waiting period. In fact, after the three month wait, the house can even be demolished (unfortunately). Only houses receiving Protected Landmark Designation, a separate designation given at the request of the homeowner, are protected from demolition.

MYTH 1: If I ever want to sell my house, no one will buy it if it has historic designation.

Wrong. Many people are drawn to our neighborhood precisely because of the ambience provided by our stately older houses. Many people enjoy

owning, and living in, a piece of Houston's history. Historic designation contributes to preserving the character of our neighborhood, its chief asset along with its location. Three months is not a long time to wait, after applying to HAHC, before making changes to a house. It can easily take that long to review bids and get financing. And, if HAHC approves the proposed changes, there is no wait at all.

New Resident Directory Underway — update your information today

Every two years Old Braeswood POA publishes a resident directory. This summer we are compiling resident information collected from your annual membership forms. We have received updates from about 60% of all neighbors, but many of you have not yet replied. The directory will be published soon, so please submit your form as soon as possible. You can find a form on our website in the Membership section. Please return your completed form to us or send an email with your information and updates to info@oldbraeswood.com. With your permission, we will publish up to two email addresses per household. You may also submit a home number and up to two alternate telephone numbers. Forms can be faxed to 713-807-1790 or mailed to the address on the back of this newsletter.

Sponsors are also needed. Please consider promoting your business in the directory. Family sponsorships are also welcome. Help spread the word to your favorite contractors and area businesses. Rates are \$35 for a business card size ad; \$100 for a half page; \$200 for a full page; \$300 for the inside covers. The back cover is available for \$500.

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2011 Membership listing — Thanks for your support!

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WELCOME

Neighbors

Carmen W. Landrau Adorno & Edwin Rodriguez Reyes

2101 Glen Haven

Josh & Emily Schaffer

2409 Maroneal

Leslie Walker

2349 Blue Bonnet

Jennifer & Panayiotis Xenophontos

2535 Maroneal

Crime Report

2-Jun 2300 Blue Bonnet Attempted burglary

27-Jun 2300 Underwood

Burglary /Bike

27-Jun 2400 Gramercy – Burglary

25-Jun 2300 Glen Haven

Burglary/constr. materials

Visit www.houstontx.gov/police for more information and to view the new interactive crime map.

Sign up for Old Braeswood eBlasts and Crime Alerts

Would you like to receive up to the minute news and crime alerts electronically? To subscribe to eNews and Crime Alerts, send your email address to us at info@OldBraeswood.com or call the Old Braeswood office at 713-807-1787.

Spring Garden of the Season Winner!



GORGEOUS – a luscious, colorful, diverse yard to behold this spring. 2201 Maroneal pops with color and all types and sizes of flowers each spring. It is a yard that needs to be recognized.. The Garden Club has selected this yard for the award for "SPRING YARD OF THE SEASON"

Please Water Your Trees

As our region's unprecedented drought continues, please remember to water your trees regularly. Thirsty trees can become stressed and drop limbs and leaves. Some have already died, and more will follow if they do not receive adequate water. Young trees planted in the past few years are especially at risk of dying. Houston's City Forestry Division warns that older trees are also at risk, though problems caused by the drought may not become apparent for 1 to 3 years. If you have a young tree in front of your home that is not connected to automatic irrigation, please make arrangements to keep it watered this summer. Ideally, young trees should receive a gallon of water per caliper inch of trunk (trunk diameter) daily during this extreme hot weather. Older trees may need more than that. Experts recommend slow watering using a 5 gallon bucket with a hole at the edge for younger trees. One tree savvy Old Braeswood neighbor advises that having two buckets (one with a hole and one without) which

allows you to refill your bucket efficiently. Please give your thirsty trees a drink. If you have questions for the Tree Committee, please call 713-807-1787.

Young trees planted on Kirby and Holcombe are being watered by Trees for Houston. If you would like to contribute to this service please send your check c/o OBPOA, PO Box 541346, Houston, TX 77524. Please note "OBPOA Fund" in the memo. Thanks in advance for our help keeping Old Braeswood's trees alive and healthy!



Submit plans for review before beginning construction or any exterior alteration

Old Braeswood's deed restrictions require that all alterations to homes be approved in writing prior to construction or implementation. Not only must plans for new construction of homes, garages, fences and other outdoor structures be reviewed, but changes such as window replacement, new siding, addition of solar panels, garage door replacements and new fences, must also be approved. In a nutshell, anything that impacts the exterior of your home in any way must be reviewed and approved prior to construction. For a plan review application, please contact info@OldBraeswood.com or call the office at 713-807-1787. Construction projects that begin without approval will be assessed a fee of \$500.



Join our Yahoo Group

This is a real time group where you can send messages to other members without delay. The Yahoo group has been very helpful for tracking down lost pets and has even been used to help the RACS Constables Patrol track down thieves.

The Yahoo group is not related to the eNews and crime alert service. Visit this link to get started:

http://groups.yahoo.com/group/OldBraeswoodNeighbors/.

Garden Club seeks new members



The Old Braeswood Garden Club, organized in 1939, welcomes all women in Old Braeswood to join the Garden Club. Our motto is "Friendship." Actual gardening is not required. To join, please call President Christine Infante at 713-667-3675.

Recycling & Trash Schedule

Household Trash: Tuesdays
Yard Waste Tuesdays
Heavy Trash 1st Monday
Recycling Alt. Tuesdays
(July 6 & 19, Aug. 2, 16 & 30, Sept. 13 & 27)



In accordance with Chapter 39 of the City's Code of Ordinances, trash may not be set on the curb for collection before 6 p.m. of the day preceding pick up. Please remind your yard service not to leave bags on the curb during the week. Please also remind crews not to blow leaves or other debris into the storm sewers, as this clogs the system and creates the perfect conditions for mosquitoes—and is against the law. For more trash rules, visit www.houstontx.gov/solidwaste.

SAVE THE DATE!

Old Braeswood
Night Out
6 – 9 p.m. Tues.
October 4, 2011

Meet with neighbors on your block at 6 p.m. and join us in the Park at 7 p.m. for ice cream.

2011 OBPOA Officers & Chairpersons

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED