



DAN ZACHMAN

Southern Belles: Macon's Bungalow Heaven

BY KIM ZACHMAN

FOR YEARS, MY HUSBAND AND I lusted after the grand old neighborhoods near downtown Atlanta, but were dismayed at the high cost of a three bedroom, one-bath bungalow. When a job transfer came five years ago, we left the suburban sprawl of Atlanta for Macon, Ga., only 90 miles south.

Besides the immense difference in the pace of life, we were also stunned by the housing prices, and excited to discover that in Macon we could afford to live in a historic neighborhood in an authentic 1920s bungalow. After a few months of searching, we found our neoclassical bungalow completely renovated and ready for us to move in. We signed on the dotted line and haven't looked back.

PHOTOS BY COWAN PHOTOGRAPHY, EXCEPT WHERE NOTED.



Southern Heritage

Macon is proud of its history and historical architecture, and works hard to preserve its many gems. Thanks to the very diligent Macon Heritage Foundation, the town has 10 districts listed on the National



CLARK STALLINGS

A REAL VINEVILLE "FAMILY": CRAIG BURKHALTER AND YVONNE STUART ON THEIR FRONT STEPS WITH THE AUTHOR'S DAUGHTER, ABBY ZACHMAN, AND BOY-NEXT-DOOR JIMMY HERNANDEZ, HOLDING TOOTLES THE PUPPY.

Register of Historic Places. Our neighborhood, the Vineville Historic District, is a premier bungalow neighborhood conveniently located two miles northwest of downtown Macon.

Originally farmland dotted with large plantation homes, Vineville became one of Macon's first subdivisions in the early 20th century. Between 1890 and 1930, developers started building the compact, economical bungalows that surged in popularity all across the country.

There is an interesting mix of bungalow styles in the Vineville neighborhood. The California style is commonly seen with stucco, wood siding or brick exteriors. Tudor, Arts and Crafts, Georgian, Queen Anne and Colonial Revival examples are



SCOTT HACKLER

THE AUTHOR'S 1922 VINEVILLE BUNGALOW.



CLARK STALLINGS

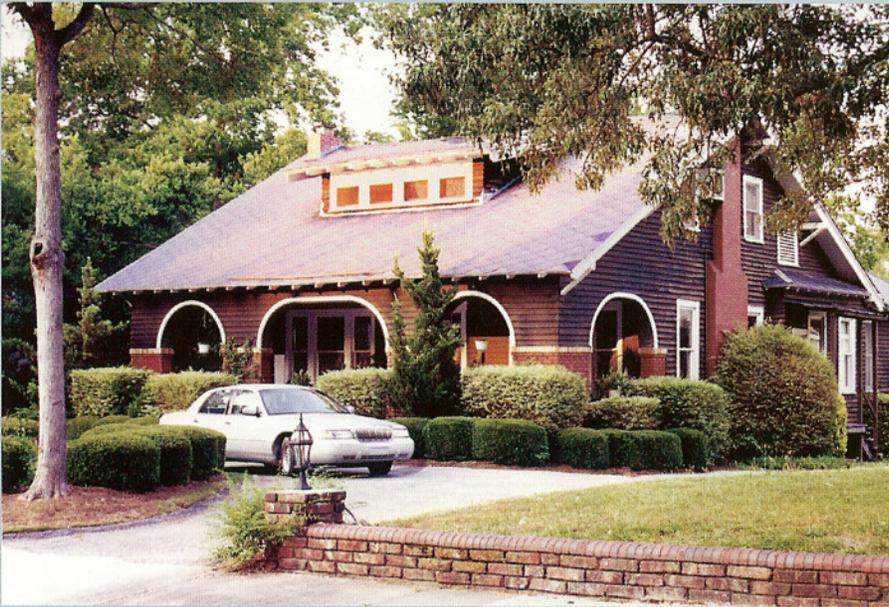


JACQUE HARDY



KIM ZACHMAN





also prevalent. In addition to the bungalows, the original plantation homes make an impression in the neighborhood. When the roads were being constructed for the new subdivisions, these old manor houses were turned 90 degrees on their foundations to face the new streets. It makes for an interesting streetscape to see a towering three-story gingerbread Victorian sandwiched between two California bungalows.

Hot New Market

The last decade has seen a lot of young couples move into Vineville and revamp the aging houses. Now, since most of the homes have been updated with new electrical wiring, plumbing and central heat and air, Vineville is becoming one of the hottest real estate markets in the city. Who wouldn't want a modernized bungalow in a quiet, established neighborhood?

Although many residents tend to be young couples in their first homes, a new trend is empty nesters, who are ready to downsize and love the proximity to downtown. Marsha Boltz and Jude Rabideau moved into their Tudor bungalow 10 years ago after relocating from Florida. Marsha says,

“The houses aren't rubber stamped, they have a lot of character. We were also drawn to the quality of construction and the ambiance of the older homes. The central hall in bungalows makes for a smooth, flowing traffic pattern. They're great houses to have parties in because your guests can flow more than one way.”

Some young couples move to bigger houses after they start families, but others just can't seem to tear



Who wouldn't want a modernized bungalow in an established neighborhood?



CLARK STALLINGS



SCOTT HACKLER



CLARK STALLINGS

AMY STALLINGS, WHO GREW UP IN VINEVILLE, AND DAUGHTER CATY IN FRONT OF THEIR CLASSIC BUNGALOW.

Bungalows are attractive to people from all walks of life.

themselves away. Amy Stallings grew up in the Vineville neighborhood. When she and her husband Jim started searching for their first home, it seemed natural to look at Vineville’s bungalows. Their first house was a 1,500-square-foot bungalow on Buford Place, which was perfect for them and their infant son, Clark. Then daughter Caty came along and it didn’t seem large enough. Just two blocks away, a classic Arts and Crafts bungalow came on the market.

Amy remembers her first impression of their second house: “It was a dog. I couldn’t imagine anyone buying it!” A real estate agent prevailed upon them to see it again and this time the exposed beams, built-in bookcases and quality construction won them over. After scraping away seven layers of wallpaper and refinishing the wood floors and wood trim, they realized what true beauty lay beneath decades of neglect.

With a total of 16 years of bungalow living in Vineville, the Stallings have no plans to move. “It’s so convenient to school and work,” Amy says. “Besides, we love our old house.”

In addition to the shady, tree-lined streets, wide sidewalks, and personable houses, Vineville also hooks its residents into a lifelong love affair with an active neighborhood association that sponsors monthly social activities. “Because bungalows are attractive to people from all walks of life, the Vineville Neighborhood Association (VNA) serves as a conduit between residents, who might not have anything else in common,”



KIM ZACHMAN



SCOTT HACKLER

says Janis Haley, president of VNA. Fun and food might be in the forefront, but VNA is also a serious watchdog group that fiercely guards its historical integrity and keeps a sharp eye on local government decisions that might impact the neighborhood.

What makes Vineville such a special place? I thought about that one pleasant spring evening as I sat rocking on my front porch, admiring the glorious cherry trees and dogwoods in bloom. As I greeted dog walkers, waved to joggers and chatted with couples pushing baby strollers, I came to this conclusion: The quaint and adorable bungalows make the neighborhood attractive, but it's the wonderful people who love their bungalows that make it a special place to live. fb

Kim Zachman is a freelance writer and the archivist of the Vineville Neighborhood Association. She also wrote "The Azalea Project" in Issue No. 33.



DAN ZACHMAN

THE VINEVILLE NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION MEMBERS AT ONE OF THEIR MONTHLY GET-TOGETHERS.