



HISTORIC CHICAGO BUNGALOW ASSOCIATION



Chicago's Southwest community of West Lawn is known to be a "melting pot" of a neighborhood, due to the consistent flux of nationalities that have moved in and out since the 1930's. Many people are established as long-time residents. There are blocks of Chicago bungalows mixed among many single family homes. Alice and Steve Puskiewicz have lived here in their bungalow for close to 20 years.

"What attracted us to this house was that the woodwork was still in its original state, unpainted. All of the ceiling moldings, even in the bedrooms, were still intact and unpainted as well, which was really unusual. We had been house hunting for about one year, so we saw quite a few bungalows in un-original condition. Also, the house had forced air heating, which saves a lot of space within the rooms, as opposed to radiator heat."

The original owner of the house, Ole Nielsen, and contractor John Jensen worked together to build the home in 1927 (there is no architect to record). Nielsen seemed to own numerous lots on the block and then sold this bungalow's two lot parcel in December of 1927. The original cost was estimated at \$7,500. The concrete foundation was poured in December and construction finished around March of 1928.

The bungalow's first residents, the Rempert family, lived in the home until 1932. Records show that Mr. Rempert sold the home to Robert Owens, who shortly after had transferred ownership of the bungalow to the Chicago Historical Society.

Although this bungalow saw several other families move through before Alice and Steve finally made it their own in 1988, the Puskiewicz family has kept wonderful care of the home since then. All of the windows on the first floor have been restored. Work in the attic includes window work as well as blown-in insulation under the attic floorboards. They received an energy savings grant in 2004 from HCBA for their 99.6% efficient furnace.



The Puskiewicz's have also been very careful to maintain the bungalow's interior character. All of the interior colors are classic bungalow colors. The couple have refinished the doors and woodwork in their kitchen and restored the plaster walls in the bedrooms, bathroom, and kitchen.

The sanded wood floors in the living and dining areas are in great shape for their age, and the original wood trim is well-preserved. Just this past summer Steve was able to locate the original electrical boxes that were plastered over and returned the front room to the original lighting scheme of wall sconces.



On the exterior, Steve had to reconstruct both brick knee walls on the front stoop due to problems related to soft mortar, and was lucky enough to find a mortar to match the existing. The Arts and Crafts reproduction concrete planter urns were purchased from a craftsman the couple saw at the Bungalow Expo. The bungalow's original front planter box had been given to the previous owner's brother, but Steve arranged for it to be returned to its rightful place.

The Puskiewicz's built a new garage in 1998 and landscaped the front and back yard following the HCBA's Landscaping Guidelines. They removed overgrown hedges and planted Pia Hydrangea, Halcyon Hosta, Japanese Maple, Japanese Painted Ferns, Green Mountain Hybrid Boxwood, Plum Perfect Day Lilly, and Tiarella Foam Flowers.

Steve and Alice had wanted to live in a bungalow for a long time before moving in here, and as seen from the tender loving care their home has received, this bungalow is lucky to have them.

