



HISTORIC CHICAGO  
BUNGALOW ASSOCIATION

The Portage Park community is well known for its substantial stock of Chicago Bungalows. Once part of the Town of Jefferson, Portage Park was annexed by the city of Chicago in 1889. Soon after the annexation, commercial and transportation development spurred the rapid growth of the community and by the 1930s Portage Park was an established neighborhood of predominately single family residences, most of which are Chicago bungalows.



The story of this house began in 1926. Michael Wellov, a local carpenter and contractor, built the bungalow after purchasing the lot from banker Edward Stephans. Wellov sold the home in 1928 to James R. Johnson who would hold title to this bungalow for the next 16 years. Johnson, a Danish immigrant, was the Vice President of the Irving Park Dairy Company. He lived in the Portage Park bungalow with his wife Ingeborg, son Malfrek, and daughter Viola. In 1942, Charles F. Donahue and his wife Olinda purchased the property from the Johnson's. Arthur & Florence Hagney, purchased the bungalow in 1965 and 11 years later the Ledermann family, the present owner's, bought the property.

On a chilly December day in 1976, the Ledermanns toured Portage Park in search of a new home. Recently married they were looking to move from an apartment in Portage Park into a house. The realtor pulled up to a stunning yellow brick corner bungalow with a matching garage. It had great promise from the outside and once inside they immediately fell in love. They had looked at many other homes, but this was definitely the gem they were seeking. The bungalow features a working fireplace, stained glass windows, plaster crown moldings in the living room and wood crown moldings in the dining room, cedar lined closets and a cement tile roof just to name a few amenities.

The front façade features a handsome round bay of stained glass casement windows and decorative brickwork. Above the windows is a simple banding of bricks where three courses step out to create a subtle and streamlined decorative motif. The yellow face brick extends to the side of the home, typical of many corner bungalows. All of the original double hung wood windows remain with two vertical muntins on the upper sash. Graceful arches surround the porch and entryway to the front door.



The original door opens into a nice sized foyer. On the main floor is the living room with a working fireplace, the dining room, which has a decorative fireplace, a master bedroom, and two small bedrooms. The kitchen showcases the original white subway tile with a simple art deco decorative black banding running the perimeter of the room. One wall of the kitchen features the original built in cabinets complete with a pull out enamel cutting board. It also has the original built in icebox now converted into cabinet space and the original sink. Situated off the kitchen is a small, sunny breakfast room that overlooks a well-groomed garden. The bathroom also maintains its original sink and tiles. Upstairs, the attic is partially finished with one bedroom, but has enough space left for storage.

As with most corner lots there is a very small backyard. Mrs. Ledermann has developed this small space it into a nicely landscaped cozy retreat. Hosta, Rose of Sharon and Clematis are just a few of the plants used to create an intimate sitting place for the spring and summer months.

The Ledermanns love their bungalow and the neighborhood of Portage Park. “It has a homey feeling”, says Mr. Ledermann, “it’s more than a bungalow and we love it.” Their home was certified as a Historic Chicago Bungalow in September 2001.

