

A House With Many Names, It Has A Lot Of History

By: LaVonne Redding

While researching the house across from Blue Eagle Lake owned by the Courtney and Rachel Rutherford family, one discovers the love for the home that has transcended generations. After being the lucky custodians of the home for over 22 years, and raising three kids there, they have come to feel a connection for the property that is hard to explain. Their children are Christian, Lily and Dalton, all three have attended or are attending Barnesville schools.

The Rutherford family have made updates in the kitchen, basement, dining room and bathrooms. Also, the attic has been converted, with a little help, into a bedroom for their daughter Lily. It was an office for the previous owner. Along the way,

they tried to keep the integrity of the home's history by respecting the original structure and craftsmanship.

The couple purchased the home from Richard (Dick) and Nancy Knutson, who owned the home for 20 years. During those years of ownership, the Knutsons renovated and tried to restore the home to its previous glory.

When Richard and Nancy bought the house in the late 1970s it had been abandoned for quite some time. The couple fixed a hole in the roof first (secretly, before inspection to secure a loan) and then set out to complete the inside. With original plaster in place, the home was mostly wallpapered. A few rooms have been updated with sheetrock and paint now, but much of that wallpaper still remains.

The Knutsons also went about refinishing the original wood work, replacing portions that weren't salvageable. That included built-ins in the dining room and pocket doors that partition the living and dining rooms.

It is safe to say they chose the house because it had good bones. A current country song has a line that says, "The house don't fall when the bones are good." The bones of this house have proven to be more than good. When the Rutherford family were converting their heating system to propane and off peak electric, a contractor burnt up a new drill trying to go through the solid beams above the rock foundation.

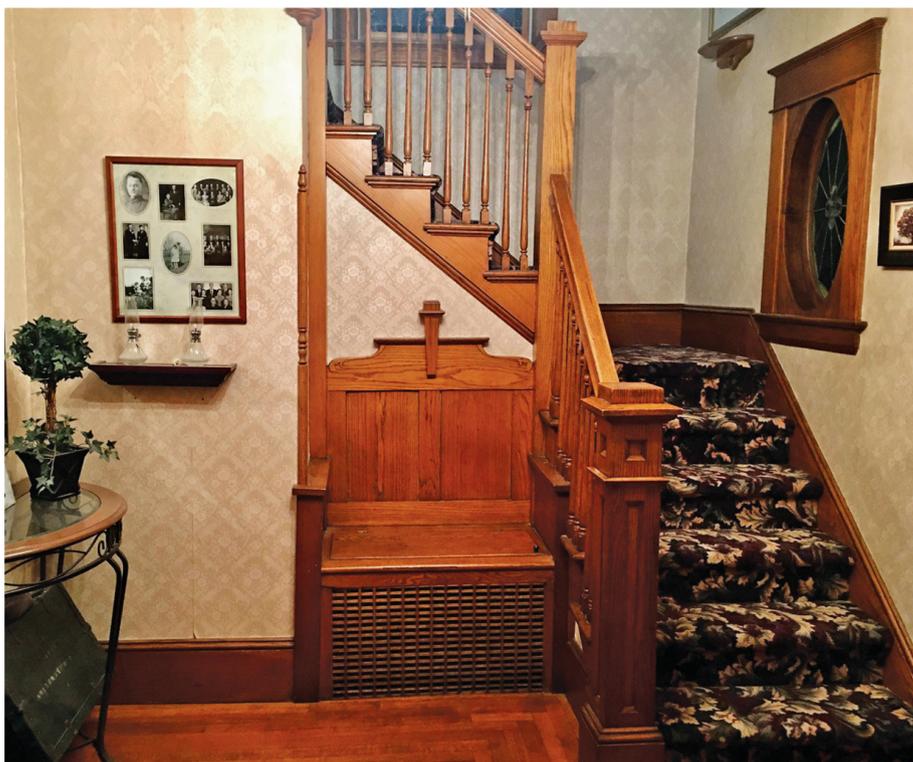
The house seems somewhat of a maze at first when you start to walk from room to room, discovering new



The exterior of the Rutherford/Knutson/Trovaten home has seen changes over the last century. The original porch has been enclosed, the second story balcony remains.



This picture of the home's front room shows the architectural features that encompass the windows. This feature extends above to a bedroom on the second floor.



Most of the two-story entryway staircase is original wood. Richard Knutson was a gifted carpenter who took the time to preserve as much of the home's wood work, including this built-in bench, floors and windows.

and intriguing items around the next corner. The home has a total of five staircases, starting in the basement. One set goes up to the kitchen and the other leads up to an outside backdoor. There are two on the main floor, one in the front two-story entry way and another back (or butler's) staircase from the kitchen. Going up to the attic is a set of stairs just off to the side of the ones that come up from the front entry way.

When the house was purchased by the Knutsons, the back yard contained a carriage house and then sloped down towards Whiskey Creek. Richard and Nancy deconstructed the carriage house and built the current garage with lumber salvaged from it. After taking it down, the yard was partially filled in to level it off before there is a dropoff on the backside of the property as it approaches the creek.

It is rumored that there is a time capsule hidden under one of these sets of stairs. Nancy Knutson told a story to the Rutherford family once that they had found it in an undisclosed location during a renovation of one of the staircases. They opened it, inspected the contents, added to it and then placed it back in its hiding spot to be found by another lucky owner. The Rutherford family have yet to locate the time capsule, but anticipate the possibility.

The options of who placed the time capsule aren't few. Before the Knutson's purchase of the home, it had been owned by one of the

railroads. They bought it from one of their employees who had been relocated. The property was left vacant long enough to have windows broken out and the roof to become dilapidated to the point of a large hole being created in it.

Prior to the railroad employee, the house was occupied by a multi-generational family of owners. This expanse of ownership is often referenced by name when identifying the house. The "Trovaten" house was first purchased by Austen and Betsy Trovaten. The couple raised their three children in the home, living there for many years. Austen Trovaten came into possession of

the property from the Fisch family, who were early settlers and business owners in Barnesville. One of the first car dealerships in Barnesville was founded by A. A. Trovaten during the early 1900s.

Later on their son, T. Marven Trovaten, and his wife, Margaret, bought the property from his parents. The couple had no children. Margaret and Marven Trovaten were both employed by the City of Barnesville, with Marven serving as city clerk for 35 years beginning in 1935.

The home was built by the J.

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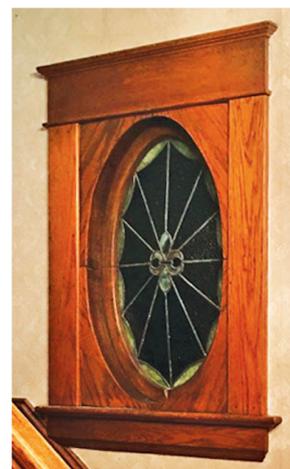
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It is believed Richard Knutson, the previous homeowner, may have created this stain glass window. It was not original to the home.



This stain glass window is one of two oval windows original to the Rutherford's home. Richard Knutson preserved this and another similar window.



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