

What Might Have Been . . . by Greg McCroskery

Around 1977, my wife and I decided that it was time to quit paying rent and buy a house of our own. We wanted a good neighborhood to raise our two little daughters in, and began looking at homes in the Crestview and Wooten areas.

Our real estate agent told us about a beautiful home for sale at the corner of Woodrow Avenue and Richcreek Road -- the address was 1501 Richcreek Road. The asking price of \$42,500 was somewhat above what we were shooting for, but we decided to look at the house at our real estate agent's prompting.

The lot, landscaping, and architecture made the house a real showplace. But, I will never forget walking into that beautiful home. It was so spacious and inviting with a charm that was unique. One feature that stood out to me, and still does to this day, was the firewood storage box built in next to the fireplace. It had an outdoor access, so you could fill it from outside the house, and it could also be used for additional seating -- I wish I had that feature in my current home.

Ultimately, my wife and I decided that \$42,500 was about \$10,000 more mortgage debt than we wanted to take on, so we settled on a modest two-story home in Allandale Estates.

I've always had a bit of regret that we didn't choose to purchase the McKown House, and even more so now that there is the potential to lose that beautiful Crestview icon -- I pray that it doesn't happen.

The Manor House by Laura Smith

Though my interaction with the McKown House has not been with the owners, it has felt like it has been with people. When my husband and I moved to the neighborhood in 2006, we walked beside the McKown House as part of our circuit every night, jokingly referring to it as the "Manor House". The way that the trees, shrubs, and landscaping emulated the symmetry of stately architecture made us proud of the neighborhood's variety.

We would comment that most neighborhoods do not have the vitality from the different eras - the modern styles mixing next door to 1950 Craftsmen styles; and how this house did not fit into either category, but still belonged. The care put into the development obviously showed a person's love for a home, an ideal, and a promise for the future.

During the summer of no rain, and the subsequent years of disuse, the property showed signs of deterioration. This was beyond depressing for me and my husband; it felt like watching an older relative die. This bastion of style and twentieth century progress began looking sad, unwanted, and sick. Even the flagpole drooped. The place we once referred to as the Manor House began to represent a concern for our own property with the subsequent months of no rain, and no relief in sight.

I have never been into the McKown House. I have never met the owners - neither the current developers nor the people who lived there. I am not against progress in the neighborhood, either, but I know that this house was designed to be lived in and enjoyed, and could be lived in and enjoyed if it was allowed to be. Please allow this house to be bought by someone who wants to live in this house and appreciate it as an architectural symbol of hope for all of us in the neighborhood.

This Was My Home by Michelle James-Teggeman

My name is Michelle and I was born & raised here in Austin, Texas. This house is very special to me; in fact for me, it is the JAMES House for it was my home for many years. My grandparents, the James', bought this house in the 1970s, and sold it around 2004.

Before my grandparents bought this house, we lived down the street from it on Dwyce Drive. My grandfather had always loved and admired this house. When he found out it was for sale, he had to have it, and he got it. My grandmother and grandfather spent a lot of time and money on this house over the years. My grandmother hired contractors and remodeled the house making it even better. This house was her dream house, my home, and a beauty to many. My grandmother loved working in the yard and planting flowers every season. She put all her heart and soul into our home. Our home was immaculate inside and out and my grandmother took great pride in that. She loved to decorate and clean.

The holidays were the best. My grandmother would decorate every room in the house. It was awesome! I have so many wonderful memories growing up here. I remember many family gatherings, birthday parties, enjoying cookouts under the gazebo, and lots of swim parties...the biggest one being my high school graduation party.

This house is not just a house; it is a part of Austin, and the beautiful Crestview community. Please save this house that so many people know and love.

A Stately Crestview Mansion by Karen Alexander

I live in Wooten Park and have owned my home here for 40 years. I raised my children here, and now my grandchildren play in the same yard. I still have neighbors who already lived on Burrell when I bought the house in 1973!

Through the decades here, the McKown House has been a landmark. Historically, it has been by far the nicest, largest home in the area—the Crestview equivalent of a “mansion.”

Until very recently, it was always well maintained. I regularly passed by and admired it coming and going en route to the Crestview shopping center. It looked so stately with its large trees on that busy corner of Richcreek and Woodrow. Somehow, on hot summer days it always looked appealingly cooler than surrounding houses. I often wished to someday own it, or even to have an opportunity to explore the house and the grounds. I never knew R.J. McKown and his wife, but the beautiful home they built and cared for always intrigued me.

I urge you to preserve this beautiful home in Crestview and designate it as a historic landmark.

A Standout House by Kip Kosson

I grew up in the Crestview neighborhood at 1501 Cullen Avenue from 1964 to 1978. As a kid, I would ride my bike past this house every Sunday going to Crestview Baptist Church. I thought this was the most beautiful house, and I always thought how wonderful it would be to live in this house. This house stood out among all the other houses. I now live in New York City and every time I go back to Austin, I always drive by my childhood super house. It would be awful to see this house torn down; it is very much part of Austin. So much is changing in Austin; it is nice to go back and see some of my past still there.

Comments: This home is a treasure. Please protect it!

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210. Name: Carrie Kilpatrick on Oct 22, 2013
Comments: As a neighbor, I would be devastated to see this iconic home torn down.
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211. Name: Lucile Boerner on Oct 23, 2013
Comments:
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212. Name: Vera Steedley on Oct 23, 2013
Comments:
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213. Name: Ella Mae Williams on Oct 23, 2013
Comments:
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214. Name: Virginia Rose on Oct 23, 2013
Comments: I, too, live on Richcreek Rd., two blocks from the McKown house. It truly defines one of the three major streets in this precious community.
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215. Name: Anonymous on Oct 23, 2013
Comments: The McKown House has been a cornerstone of residential beauty in the Crestview neighborhood for as long as I can remember. It would be a great loss to the local community in particular, and Austin as a whole, if it is demolished!
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216. Name: Allison Drish on Oct 24, 2013
Comments:
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217. Name: Carla G Guthrie on Oct 24, 2013
Comments:
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218. Name: Jeannine Harvey on Oct 24, 2013
Comments:
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219. Name: Holly Riker on Oct 24, 2013
Comments:
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220. Name: Krista Nielsen on Oct 24, 2013
Comments:
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221. Name: Todd Pruner on Oct 24, 2013
Comments:
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222. Name: Dottie First on Oct 24, 2013
Comments:
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223. Name: Ana Cantu on Oct 24, 2013
Comments: In a neighborhood of mostly modest houses, the McKown house is probably the grandest home in Crestview. It has so much character and is in the heart of the neighborhood – it should be preserved. Don't tear it down!
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224. Name: Shelly Patten Hemingson on Oct 24, 2013
Comments: I grew up at 1704 Richcreek. My childhood best friend, Michelle grew up in this house. I spent much of my childhood playing here. PLEASE do not let this important piece of Crestview history be destroyed.
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225. Name: Jessica Murray on Oct 24, 2013
Comments:
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226. Name: Karen Alexander on Oct 24, 2013
Comments: I urge The Historic Landmark Commission to preserve the McKown House in Crestview and designate it as an historic

landmark.

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227. Name: Kelly Gillen on Oct 24, 2013
Comments:
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228. Name: Denise Dailey on Oct 24, 2013
Comments:
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229. Name: Gwen Corley on Oct 25, 2013
Comments:
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230. Name: Michelle James-teggeman on Oct 25, 2013
Comments: I was born & raised here in Austin, TX.
I was raised in this special beautiful house.
This house had to be saved
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231. Name: Lori Ann Gomez on Oct 25, 2013
Comments:
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232. Name: Anonymous on Oct 25, 2013
Comments: Please save this beautiful house. It is a part of Austin.
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233. Name: Anonymous on Oct 25, 2013
Comments: I LOVE this house. It is a beautiful & special part of Austin.
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234. Name: Kevin Cochran on Oct 25, 2013
Comments:
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235. Name: Allison Laymon on Oct 25, 2013
Comments: I lived in Crestview for 5 years on Karen and loved seeing that house in my daily runs.
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236. Name: Kelley on Oct 25, 2013
Comments: Please save this house! I live in one of the outlying suburbs, but my work takes me past this beautiful home several times a week. Homes like this one, which is such a standout among the others in Crestview, should be preserved, not sacrificed to make way for overpriced condos. Put the condos downtown and leave the grass and the trees and the home for a homeowner who respects all of those things. I am sure there is another rich Californian who could afford to buy it and update it, but keep it the solid anchor of beauty and history that it is. Save McKown House!
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237. Name: Regina Ross on Oct 25, 2013
Comments:
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238. Name: Emily Hibbs on Oct 25, 2013
Comments:
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239. Name: Raymond on Oct 25, 2013
Comments: We've lived in this neighborhood for more than 20 years. It would be nice to have a significant historical landmark in our neighborhood. We've seen quite a few houses in this area torn down in order to build new houses. Before the McMansion law came into effect, builders would build monstrosities in place of the former old house. Let's not have another monster in the neighborhood.
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240. Name: David Conner on Oct 26, 2013
Comments: Chair Hyde Park Development Review Committee - will support !
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241. Name: Jolene Kiobassa on Oct 26, 2013
Comments:
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242. Name: Mary Alice Appleman on Oct 27, 2013

Comments:

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243. Name: Kip Cosson on Oct 27, 2013
Comments: I grew up in the area at 1501 Cullen from 1964 to 1978 and this was my childhood fantasy house, please don't tear it down, so much of Austin has changed, let's keep some of our history for others to enjoy!
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244. Name: N.S.Hartman on Oct 27, 2013
Comments:
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245. Name: Bonnie Carter on Oct 28, 2013
Comments: I didn't realize how many people like myself, have dreamed of living in this house! It is beautiful. The stately home serves to anchor our neighborhood.
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246. Name: Ana on Oct 28, 2013
Comments: I don't agree with the duplex's to be built that would stand out in the neighborhood. You can remodel the house but to build duplex's is not right for this neighborhood.
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247. Name: Loretta Lang on Oct 28, 2013
Comments: please do not destroy this landmark in Crestview.
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248. Name: John Lang on Oct 28, 2013
Comments: please save the house! it is a part of crestview's history.
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249. Name: David B Hartman on Oct 28, 2013
Comments:
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250. Name: Gregory Smith on Oct 28, 2013
Comments:
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