

# ZONING CHANGE REVIEW SHEET

**CASE NUMBER:** C14H-2013-0008

**HLC DATE:**

October 28, 2013

**PC DATE:**

November 12, 2013

**APPLICANT:** Curtis and Nina Batts, owners; City of Austin.

**HISTORIC NAME:** Ethel Pearl's Beauty Shop

**WATERSHED:** Waller Creek

**ADDRESS OF PROPOSED ZONING CHANGE:** 1504 E. 11<sup>th</sup> Street

**ZONING FROM:** SF-3-NP to SF-3-H-NP

**SUMMARY STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** Staff recommends the proposed zoning change from single family residence, neighborhood plan (SF-3-NP) combining district to single family residence – Historic Landmark – neighborhood plan (SF-3-H-NP) combining district zoning.

**QUALIFICATIONS FOR LANDMARK DESIGNATION:**

The house has been a center of African-American life in East Austin – until the early 1950s, it was exclusively a residence, but when the house was purchased by Curtis and Ethel Pearl Batts in 1950, it became her beauty salon, and a gathering place for African-American women in the days of segregation in Austin.

**HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION ACTION:** Recommended the proposed zoning change from SF-3-NP to SF-3-H-NP. Vote: 6-0 (Galindo absent).

**PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION:** Recommended the proposed zoning change from SF-3-NP to SF-3-H-NP. Vote: 7-0 (Chimenti absent; Hernandez off-dais).

**DEPARTMENT COMMENTS:** The house is not listed in any City survey.

C14H-2013-0008

1504 E. 11<sup>th</sup> Street

Project: Ethel's Beauty Salon

SF-3-NP to SF-3-H-NP

October 9, 2013 – Kathleen Fox, Comprehensive Planning

This zoning case is located on the northeast corner of Angelina Street and E. 11<sup>th</sup> Street and contains a small one story single family house situated on a .06 acre parcel. This property is located within the boundaries of the Central East Austin Neighborhood Plan area. Surrounding land uses includes single family houses to the north, east and west and the Texas State Cemetery to the south. The request is for historic preservation zoning.

**Central East Austin Neighborhood Plan (CEANP)**

The CEANP Future Land Use Map designates this property as residential. The following Goals and Priorities are highly supportive of historic preservation zoning in the CEANP:

**Goal 1** - Preserve, restore, and recognize historic resources and other unique neighborhood features. (pg. 7)

**Goal 7** - Respect the historic, ethnic and cultural character of the neighborhoods of Central East Austin (pg. 4)

Top Ten CEANP Planning Priority

**Priority 6.** Recommend that eligible historic districts identified in the "Historic Resources Survey of East Austin" report be established as local historic districts per the City's proposed local districts ordinance. (p 5)

**Imagine Austin (IACP)**

Austin's historic assets include neighborhoods, buildings, and sites reflecting Austin's cultural, ethnic, social, economic, political, and architectural history, many of which lack formal historic designation. Designated historic resources include National Register properties and districts, Texas Historic Landmarks, Austin's Historic Landmark designation, and Local Historic Districts. In addition, Austin has many cultural resources lacking formal historic designation—public art, cultural centers, museums, institutions, buildings, landscapes, and iconic businesses and buildings. Austin is also home to a number of museums and research libraries (p 116). The following IACP policies support historic preservation:

- **LUT P38.** Preserve and interpret historic resources (those objects, buildings, structures, sites, places, or districts with historic, cultural, or aesthetic significance) in Austin for residents and visitors.
- **LUT P41.** Protect historic buildings, structures, sites, places, and districts in neighborhoods throughout the City.
- **LUT P42.** Retain the character of National Register and local Historic Districts and ensure that development and redevelopment is compatible with historic resources and character.
- **C P12.** Construct, sustain, and grow Austin's multicultural and artistic heritage from African American, Hispanic, Asian, and other ethnic and culturally-specific groups as the city develops and grows.

Based on the CEANP Goals that support protecting historic areas in the planning area, and the Imagine Austin policies above that support protecting and preserving historic neighborhoods, staff believes that this proposed historic zoning request is supported by the Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan.

**CITY COUNCIL DATE:** December 12, 2013

**ACTION:**

**ORDINANCE READINGS:** 1<sup>ST</sup> 2<sup>ND</sup> 3<sup>RD</sup>

**ORDINANCE NUMBER:**

**CASE MANAGER:** Steve Sadowsky

**PHONE:** 974-6454

**NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATION:** Organization of Central East Austin Neighborhoods.

**BASIS FOR RECOMMENDATION:**

**Architecture:**

One-story, rectangular-plan, hipped-roof, frame dwelling with a now-enclosed partial-width independent porch; single and paired 1:1 fenestration.

**Historical Associations:**

Research indicates conflicting dates for the construction of the house – the 1910-11 city directory shows it to be the home of Samuel Mackey, a porter at the old Sutor Hotel saloon in the 300 block of Congress Avenue, but deed records indicate that Samuel Mackey executed a mechanic's lien to the Nalle Lumber Company in 1912 for the construction of the house – but it is clear that the house was built some time between 1910 and 1912. Samuel Mackey had purchased the property in 1907, so it may be that he lived in an earlier house before the construction of this house.

Mackey was born in Texas, and worked as a porter, bootblack, and shoeshine man during his life. After his wife, Ruth, died in 1924, Samuel Mackey continued to live here until around 1931, when he moved to a smaller house on E. 11<sup>th</sup> Street. He died in 1963. Louis Johnson, who was the yardman, and later chauffeur for Commodore E.H. Perry and his family, lived here from around 1931 to around 1940. Samuel Mackey sold the house to Curtis and Ethel Pearl Batts in 1950. Curtis Batts had been a truck driver for Sears before going into the U.S. Army and marrying Ethel Pearl Batts, formerly of Bastrop, Texas. He later became a truck driver for H.M. Oetting Furniture, which was located at 13<sup>th</sup> and Lavaca Streets and was noted for its line of fine furnishings. He married Ethel Pearl Eastland of Bastrop in 1943, while he was still in the Army. Ethel worked as a maid during those years, but began working in beauty salons, both as a shampoo girl in white salons as well as in African-American salons, such as Edmondson's at 11<sup>th</sup> and Chicon Streets, and the Julia Ann Beauty Salon on E. 10<sup>th</sup> Street. By 1954, she had opened Ethel Pearl's Beauty Salon in this house, and went to Prairie

View A&M University for cosmetology classes, receiving her certification as a licensed beautician from the Crescent School of Beauty of Austin in 1957, the same year that her husband died of cancer. Ethel Pearl's Beauty Salon was one of several African-American beauty shops that opened in East Austin, as African-American women were denied service in shops that catered exclusively to whites. Ethel Pearl's shop typified the response of the city's African-American community to segregated business practices, where they were not allowed in to white service businesses throughout the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Typical of the African-American businesses in Austin, Ethel Pearl's Beauty Salon became something of a community center and gathering place for African-American women, and further represented the growth of the segregated African-American economy in Austin, where women were now able to afford luxuries such as beauty services and hairdressing. Ethel Pearl Batts always believed in presenting herself elegantly, and was known to sport blonde hair in the latest fashion. She also believed that African-American women should have the benefit of hair and beauty services so that they could present themselves well and get ahead in their personal, social, and business lives, even at a time when white Austin businesses routinely discriminated against African-American customers and clients.

Establishing a legitimate beauty salon in the African-American community also meant that operators such as Ethel Pearl Batts were subject to increased scrutiny and regulations by the authorities. Mrs. Batts constructed the necessary improvements in her home to house the beauty salon in accordance with city and state regulations to maintain her business license. She was also a crusader for civil rights and equal treatment for African-Americans in the crucial years of the late 1950s and early 1960s. Family members recall that Mrs. Batts would stage her own sit-ins at Woolworth's lunch counter in downtown Austin, when the store refused to serve African-American customers. Ethel Pearl Batts remembered all too well the hurtful discrimination she had been subjected to as a girl in Bastrop, and fought in her own way to provide beauty services for her African-American clientele, including many Huston-Tillotson College students, so that they would feel proud of themselves and work to right the civil wrongs so ingrained in Southern society at that time.

**PARCEL NO.:** 0206090207

**LEGAL DESCRIPTION:** The east 47 feet of Lot 5 and the east 47 feet of the south 10 feet of Lot 6, Outlot 61, Division B.

**ESTIMATED ANNUAL TAX ABATEMENT:** \$2,054 (owner-occupied); city portion: \$575; \$1,032 (income-producing); city portion: \$287.

**APPRAISED VALUE:** \$166,786

**PRESENT USE:** Residence

**CONDITION:** Excellent

**PRESENT OWNERS:** Curtis and Nina Batts

**DATE BUILT:** ca. 1910

**ALTERATIONS/ADDITIONS:** A rear addition was made to the house in 1962; vinyl siding and solar screens were applied to the house in 2007.

**ORIGINAL OWNER(S):** Samuel and Ruth Mackey (1907)

**OTHER HISTORICAL DESIGNATIONS:** None.

**HISTORIC ZONING**

**ZONING CASE#: C14H-2013-0008**

**LEGEND:**

- SUBJECT TRACT
- PENDING CASE
- ZONING BOUNDARY

**Scale:** 1" = 200'

**City of Austin**

This product is for informational purposes and may not have been prepared for or be suitable for legal engineering, or surveying purposes. It does not represent an on-the-ground survey and represents only the approximate relative location of property boundaries.

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1504 E. 11<sup>th</sup> Street  
ca. 1910



## OCCUPANCY HISTORY

### 1504 E. 11<sup>th</sup> Street

City Directory Research, Austin History Center  
By City Historic Preservation Office  
October, 2013

- 1992            Ethel P. Batts, owner  
Child care, State of Texas
- 1985-86        Ethel P. Batts, owner  
No occupation listed
- 1981            Ethel P. Batts, owner  
Operator, Anderson Lane Beauty Salon (Elmo Sledge, proprietor), 1817 W.  
Anderson Lane.
- 1977            Ethel P. Batts, owner  
Proprietor, Ethel Pearl Beauty Salon (at the house)
- 1973            Ethel P. Batts, owner  
Proprietor, Ethel Pearl Beauty Salon (at the house)
- 1968            Ethel P. Batts, owner  
Proprietor, Ethel Pearl Beauty Salon (at the house)
- 1962            Ethel P. Batts, owner  
Proprietor, Ethel Pearl Beauty Salon (at the house)
- 1959            C. Curtis and Ethel P. Batts, owners  
C. Curtis:        Laborer  
Ethel:            Proprietor, Ethel Pearl Beauty Salon (at the house)
- 1955            C. Curtis and Ethel P. Batts, owners  
C. Curtis:        Truck driver, H.M. Oetting Furniture Company, 13<sup>th</sup> and Lavaca  
Streets.  
Ethel:            Proprietor, Ethel Pearl Beauty Salon (at the house).
- 1952            Matthew and Gertrude Curry, renters  
Laborer  
NOTE: Curtis and Ethel Batts are listed at 1606 E. 4<sup>th</sup> Street; he was a driver for  
H.M. Oetting Furniture Company (13<sup>th</sup> and Lavaca Streets); she was an operator  
at the Julia Ann Beauty Shop (Julia A. Earls, proprietor), 1620 E. 10<sup>th</sup> Street.
- 1949            Thomas Price, renter  
Laborer, Southern Union Gas Company, 422 Congress Avenue.  
NOTE: Curtis and Ethel Batts are listed at 1606 E. 4<sup>th</sup> Street; he was a laborer;  
she had no occupation listed.
- 1947            James D. and Guybret Alexander, renters  
Employed by the Alpha Tau Omega Fraternity, 601 W. 24<sup>th</sup> Street.  
NOTE: Curtis and Ethel Batts are listed at 1606 E. 4<sup>th</sup> Street; he was a helper at  
Oetting Furniture, 13<sup>th</sup> and Lavaca Streets; she was an operator at Edmondson's  
Beauty Parlor (Josephine Edmondson, proprietor), 1100 Chicon Street.

1944-45	Abbie J. McGarritty, owner Widow, Benjamin McGarritty No occupation listed NOTE: Curtis and Ethel Batts are listed at 1606 E. 4 <sup>th</sup> Street; he was in the U.S. Army; she had no occupation listed.
1941	Kelly and Hazel Robinson, renters Laborer NOTE: Curtis and Ethel Batts are not listed in the directory.
1939	Louis Johnson, owner No occupation listed NOTE: The address is listed as 1304 E. 11 <sup>th</sup> Street. NOTE: Curtis Batts (Ethel is not listed) was a warehouseman for Sears, who lived in the rear of 1505 E. 7 <sup>th</sup> Street.
1937	Louis Johnson, owner No occupation listed NOTE: The address is listed as 1304 E. 11 <sup>th</sup> Street.
1935	Louis Johnson, owner Chauffeur NOTE: The address is listed at 1304 E. 11 <sup>th</sup> Street.
1932-33	Louis Johnson, owner No occupation listed NOTE: The address is listed as 1304 E. 11 <sup>th</sup> Street. NOTE: Samuel Mackey is listed at 1502 E. 11 <sup>th</sup> Street, which was listed as being between Angelina and Comal Streets, but which does not appear on the 1935 Sanborn map.
1930-31	Samuel Mackey (colored), owner No occupation listed NOTE: The address is listed as 1306 E. 11 <sup>th</sup> Street.
1929	Samuel Mackey (colored), owner Porter NOTE: The address is listed as 1306 E. 11 <sup>th</sup> Street.
1927	Myer and Julia Nobles (colored), renters Porter NOTE: The address is listed as 1306 E. 11 <sup>th</sup> Street.
1924	Samuel and Ruth Mackey (colored), owners No occupation listed NOTE: The address is listed as 1306 E. 11 <sup>th</sup> Street.
1922	Samuel and Ruth Mackey (colored), owners No occupation listed NOTE: The address is listed as 1306 E. 11 <sup>th</sup> Street.
1920	Samuel and Ruth Mackey (colored), owners Laborer NOTE: The address is listed as 1306 E. 11 <sup>th</sup> Street.
1918	Samuel and Ruth Mackey (colored), owners



Shoe shine

NOTE: The address is listed as 1306 E. 11<sup>th</sup> Street.

- 1916 Samuel Mackey (colored)  
Shoe shiner, 304 Congress Avenue.  
NOTE: The address is listed as 1306 E. 11<sup>th</sup> Street.
- 1914 Samuel Mackey (colored)  
Porter, William Frank Howard, proprietor, Austin Branch, Lone Star Brewing Company, 206-08 W. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street; and proprietor of a saloon, 304 Congress Avenue.  
NOTE: The address is listed as 1306 E. 11<sup>th</sup> Street.
- 1912-13 Samuel Mackey (colored)  
Porter  
NOTE: The address is listed as 1306 E. 11<sup>th</sup> Street.
- 1910-11 Samuel Mackey (colored)  
Porter  
NOTE: The address is listed as 1306 E. 11<sup>th</sup> Street.
- 1909-10 No houses are listed between San Bernard and Angelina Streets on E. 11<sup>th</sup> Street.  
NOTE: Samuel Mackey is listed as a porter at the Sutor Hotel, 304-06 Congress Avenue; he lived at 916 E. 10<sup>th</sup> Street.

#### **BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES:**

##### **Samuel and Ruth Mackey (ca. 1910 – ca. 1931)**

Samuel Mackey appears in the 1930 U.S. Census as the owner of the house at 1306 E. 11<sup>th</sup> Street, which was worth \$1,000. He was a 50-year old Texas-born widower who worked as a hotel porter. With him lived Myer Nobles, a 35-year old porter at the State Capitol, and his wife, Julia, 30, a maid for a private family. The 1920 U.S. Census shows Sam and Ruth Mackey as the owners of the house at 1306 E. 11<sup>th</sup> Street; he was a porter. Ruth Mackey, who was 35 at the time, had been born in Illinois, and was a laundress for a private family. They had two children: Sam, Jr., and Pearl. Next door to them at 1304 E. 11<sup>th</sup> Street, lived Louis Johnson, a chauffeur for E.H. Perry.

The 1910 U.S. Census shows Samuel and Ruth Mackey at 1306 E. 11<sup>th</sup> Street. He was a porter in a saloon.

**SAMUEL MACKEY**

Funeral services for Samuel Mackey will be held Saturday at 3:30 p.m. at Ebenezer Baptist Church. Rev. Robert L. Rowe will officiate. Burial will be in Plummers Cemetery under direction of King-Tears Mortuary.

Mackey is survived by a son, Samuel Mackey Jr., of East St. Louis, Ill.; two sisters, Miss Lordie Mackey and Miss Martha Mackey of Austin, and brother, Albert Mackey of Austin.

Funeral notice for Samuel Mackey  
Austin American-Statesman, November 30, 1963

**Louis Johnson (ca. 1931 – ca. 1940)**

Louis Johnson is listed in the 1930 U.S. Census as living in the home of his brother-in-law, Washington Barrow, at 1304 E. 11<sup>th</sup> Street, which was likely located just to the west of the house later owned and occupied by Curtis and Ethel Batts. Louis Johnson was then 35, had been born in Texas, and was a chauffeur for a private family. City directory records show that Louis Johnson was the chauffeur for E.H. Perry, a prominent cotton merchant, and had been working for Perry since at least 1920, when the Perry family still lived at 1002 Lavaca Street. The 1930-31 city directory shows Louis Johnson living with Washington Barrow, who had no occupation listed in the directory. The 1930 census report shows Washington Barrow to have been a 47-year old Texas-born general laborer. His wife, Eva, 27, was a laundress for a private family.

The 1920 U.S. Census shows Louis and Georgia Johnson at 1304 E. 11<sup>th</sup> Street, which would have been just to the west of the house later owned and occupied by Curtis and Ethel Batts, as it historically bore an address of 1306 E. 11<sup>th</sup> Street. Louis Johnson was a chauffeur for a private family; Georgia Johnson had no occupation listed.

**LOUIS JOHNSON**

Funeral for Louis Johnson will be held at 4 p.m. Wednesday at Metropolitan AME Church with Rev. X. L. Williams officiating. Burial will be in Evergreen Cemetery by Fuller-Sheffield Funeral Service, Inc.

Survivors include two nephews, Louis M. Barrow, Austin, and Louis Johnson, Fresno, Calif.; a step-sister, Mrs. Olevia Dennie of Chicago, Ill.

Funeral notice for Louis Johnson  
Austin American, March 14, 1967

### **The Biography of Ethel Pearl Batts**

Ethel Pearl Batts was born to Mr. Joe Eastland and Amanda McClain Eastland on July 18, 1914. Ethel Pearl was a fraternal twin. Her place of birth was on the east side of Bastrop, Texas behind highway 95. Her dad was a cook at one of the restaurants in the downtown area of Bastrop, Texas. Her mother was a homemaker. Ethel was born in the farm like environment of which she learned many domesticated skills. One of the most prevalent jobs for African American women during this era was domestic servants (maids). Ethel was a young lady with great beauty and sought to explore the avenues of discovering her aspirations. Bastrop, Texas was known for its mistreatment of African Americans during this time as was many Texas towns. Ethel would tell stories of how the White men would come and rustle her father's cattle and take them away, while her father would stand there with no ability to defend his right or his property. Ethel did not want to be the person that settled for this type of ill-treatment; she wanted a better life for herself and her children.

Ethel did complete her education in the Bastrop Schools for African Americans during this time. She became a domestic worker in the Austin area as she tried to pursue her dreams in the big city. She spoke of ill-treatment by her employers as a young lady working as a maid. She was a woman of great strength and courage of which she would be tested by many of life's challenges. She met and married Curtis C. Batts on January 8, 1943. To this union was born three children; Gracie Mae Batts, Curtis C. Batts Jr, and Andrew Clark Batts. Her husband Curtis Batts was in the armed forces at the time of their matrimony. During their earlier years of marriage she would continue her work as a maid. Curtis later earned his honorable discharge from the armed forces on December 7, 1945. Curtis went on to pursue employment as a truck driver with H.M. Oetting. During this time Curtis and Ethel resided at; 1606 East 4<sup>th</sup> St. Austin, Texas (Travis County).

Curtis and Ethel started their family with the birth of Gracie Mae Batts (August 31, 1948), Curtis C. Batts Jr. (May 05, 1949) and Andrew Clark Batts (June 20, 1950). She was a diligent worker in the home and a maid during the earlier years of her marriage.

On May 29, 1950, Curtis and Ethel purchased the property at '1504 East 11<sup>th</sup> St. The residence was in need of repairs during this time, so Curtis and Ethel would do minimal repairs while still residing at 1606 East 4<sup>th</sup> St.. After completing some of the major repairs to the residence, Curtis and Ethel moved into their homestead. There would be ongoing alterations and renovations done to the residence as they could afford.

Ethel had a strength that was immeasurable during this time of her life; marrying, giving birth to three children within three years and purchasing a home. She had a

determination that her siblings stood in awe and her husband was just trying to keep the uncharted pace that had been set before him.

After moving into their new residence, Ethel decided that she would continue her domestic work and go to Prairie View A&M University for Cosmetology courses on weekends to pursue her dream of becoming a beautician. As a new wife and mother of three, pursuing her dream of becoming a beautician put every ounce of her being to the ultimate test.

As she pressed through these difficult times of pioneering a path that was un-chartered by African American women, she experienced devastating losses. During these transitional years Ethel became the care-taker of father (Joe Eastland) up until his death in February of 1955. Ethel's daughter Gracie Mae died in the year of 1957. On December 18, 1957 the love of her life (Curtis) died of carcinoma.

Ethel was stricken with grief, but in the year of 1957 she completed the class requirements to receive her certification as a licensed beautician from The Crescent School of Beauty in Austin, Texas. During this era of extreme prejudices and segregation Ethel worked as a *shampoo girl* in the white beauty shops. She did not have the means to own and operate her own shop. However there was an under current of ambition and future plans of having her own shop.

Some of the newly graduated African American beauticians within the area would work at the Tip-Top Beauty Shop on East 6<sup>th</sup> St. as *shampoo girls*. The Crescent School of Beauty opened for business in 1945 at which time there would be African American women that would complete the requirements as cosmetologist. This profession in the African American community was greatly admired and respected by all. This profession would birth a class of women dedicated to the community of black women in exploring their beauty.

We know that during this time it was difficult for African Americans to obtain business loans. So the state of Texas would allow beauticians to set up beauty shops within their own homes. However there were restrictions on how this in-home beauty shop would be constructed. There would have to be a dividing wall between the beauty shop and the living residence. There would also have to be a separate entrance door to the beauty shop. Some of the beautician would add a separate building on the property. So the African American beauticians started to construct in-home beauty shops and add on buildings to their property. Some of the in-home beauty shops during this time were: The Two Sister Beauty Salon on the corner of East 11th St. and Chicon, Eula Williams Beauty Salon at 3004 E. 18<sup>th</sup> St. and Ethel Pearls Beauty Salon at 1504 E. 11<sup>th</sup> St. There were others that were housed in homes; Ms. Freeman's Beauty Salon and Minnie's Beauty Salon. All of which were located on the east side of Austin. Then there were those beauticians that could not afford home renovations to their house, so they boot-legged in their homes in the kitchen area. They would use the cooking stoves for heating their hot-irons and curling rods. The Texas Association of Cosmetology was very strict on inspecting the African American in-home Beauty Shops and would come into the shops



un-announced to make sure that the operation was in compliance of all rules and regulations. At the end of the inspection the shops would be graded on the appearance and sanitation of all equipment. Also in compliance with the laws of the Cosmetology Association the beautician's license had to be renewed yearly.

The reputation of this profession was honorable to the village of East Austinites and during these times of new and evolving hair do's beauticians could have a very lucrative income. As a beautician it was very important that they continue in attending educational seminars and training on new techniques in hair-do's and advancing products on the market. The Prairie View Annual Trade Show would host these events every year. Ethel was very intentional on attending this trade show every year. Mrs. Batts would always attend the Ebony Fashion Shows at the Palmer Auditorium to remain current on the fashions of that time. As a woman of great beauty she would subscribe to beauty magazines on all types of hair. Her signature style was blonde. She always sported a blonde hair-do. It is believed that she took on styles that were years ahead of her time. She loved versatility in the different types of hair-do's for people of all races. She did not restrict herself to the African American race because during her tenure as a beautician she would often be called to fill in at Parkers Beauty Salon& Store on Anderson lane (Austin, Texas).

The climate of the in-home beauty shops was very interesting in the 1950's. The beauticians were stylist, beauty advisors, home-makers, cooks, marriage and family counselors, community activist, disciplinarians, church workers and socialites. When you entered the beauty shop establishments you would need to prepare yourself for many different orders of the day. During this era, times were hard for many of the patrons so they would do whatever they could for the beautician to discount their services. They would trade meat, cleaners' services and other services or products that were available to them. Some of the patrons may "shell peas" while waiting for their appointment time. Some of them may bring their wares for sell or bargain. The entertainment in the beauty shop was the talk of community affairs, Soap operas on the radio and concerns of the African American plight. This was a village.

The black beauticians were not always willing and trained to style white people's hair, so they reserve themselves to being "*shampoo girls*" in the white salons. There was an undercurrent of classes in the African American Community. The light skinned blacks were looked upon more favorably than the darker-skinned blacks. There were also terms used to classify the hair texture; good hair and kinky hair. The light skinned blacks mostly had good hair, whereas the darker skinned blacks would have a more course and kinky texture of hair. The beautician would have to diagnose the type of hair and use special products to press (hot-iron), hot-curl, hot wave or perm the hair. Some of the beauticians would even make there own hair grease and sell it to there patrons. We know that Madam C.J. Walker was one of the well known entrepreneurs in black hair products during the 1900's. There were many beauticians during this time that would experiment in making there own products. The African American hair plight was very challenging because we did not like the natural texture of our hair. The African Americans were

constantly challenged with hair styles and products that would make them look sociably acceptable.

The beauticians were in great demand in the East Austin area. The 1900's was an evolution period for the African Americans with segregation and integration at the helm of political upheaval. This was also an era of African American Socialites evolving. There were all types of celebrations in the East Austin area. The church growth was increasing. There were African American Pageants being held at Rosewood. The Huston-Tillotson College (African American College) was housed in East Austin and there were on-going celebrations and functions. During the mid-to late 1950's various clubs and organizations were being birth for African Americans as we embraced the liberation to be and exist freely in the United States of America. During this time and era the entrepreneurship of beauticians experienced a phenomenal growth in their business. There was not very much advertising going on. The clientele would increase simply by word of mouth.

Mrs. Batts was well known by the young girls attending the Huston-Tillotson College and they would frequent her beauty salon. The in-home salons could start their work hours at 6:00am up to 12:00am. These hours of operation could vary depending on the events of the week or holidays.

In the 1950's a wash/hot-press and curl could cost \$3.00. In earlier years the same service could cost as little as \$1.50. You must realize that they did not have much overhead especially if the shop was in their home. This was a very lucrative business and considering the benefits of this profession of working at home and caring for your own children.

This was a gold mine for Mrs. Batts and so many others that shared her passion. It was a time and place that should go down in history of Black Beauticians surviving the American plight with a phenomenal success. African American Beauticians did not go out business because they tapped in on a service that would always be needed and respected.

***May the legacy of the African American Beauticians live on for the services and beauty they provided to all.***

### **Memoirs of Ethel P. Batts**

Ms. Batts was a woman in her own right. She was a woman that set goals beyond her time, circumstances, race, educational disparities, financial inadequacies and social injustices. There were many obstacles for her to overcome in pursuit of her dreams beyond the humble beginnings of Bastrop, Texas. The climate of Bastrop, Texas was just as divided and segregated as any other Texas town during her adolescent and early adult years. She often spoke of the segregated areas of her child-hood town. At one time she spoke of the fact that if she was walking in the down-town area and a white person was on the same side-walk, the African American would have to move onto the street and allow un-interrupted passage for the white person. In this time and era she was conscience of her place and stayed in her lane but dreamed far beyond the boundaries that had been set for this African American Girl.

Ms. Batts was born to a family of seven-teen children. During the birthing years of her siblings, African Americans were not privileged to any prenatal care or even in-home visits from physicians. Most of her siblings were delivered by mid-wives. Due to the lack of medical care eight of her siblings died at birth or as toddlers. It was as though death, despair, ill-treatment and disappointment was a normal order of the day. She drew strength from all that she had witness in her adolescent and early adult years. There was no time to be weak and fall apart at life's challenges, she took a stand and refused to be defeated.

As her siblings took a serious assessment of the life in Bastrop, Texas and the menial work that was available for African Americans, they began to migrate to other states and Texas towns. As stated in our history the white immigrant workers were in constant competition for jobs as was the ex-slaves, so therefore the Great Migration to other progressive areas for African Americans was a must.

Ms. Batts siblings got wind of the jobs that were available in the state of Illinois for African Americans and four of her siblings relocated to Chicago, Illinois. Her siblings were a part of the great migration of Black Southerners during the years of 1910 to 1960's. There were better opportunities for Blacks during this time in Illinois. She had two brothers to move to Texarkana and become cooks as a continuing legacy of their father. There were two sisters who moved to San Antonio, Texas to pursue their nursing training. Ms. Batts remained true to her dream of becoming a stylist (beautician) and did not waiver even with the continuing movement of her siblings.

As she pursued her career as a beautician she would work in other in-home beauty shops of African- Americans. One of my elderly neighbors as a child remembered Ms. Batts working in her mother's shop (The Two Sister's Beauty Salon) and reminisced about how kind she was to children. Ms. Batts loved children and often spoke of how they are so innocent and not corrupted by the world. She nurtured children whenever they were in her presence. She sought out jobs in her semi-retirement years in child-care. She worked in a child-care capacity with Mental Health and Retardation. She also worked as a Foster Grand-Parent. Her love for children never ceased to amaze us.



The college students at Huston-Tillotson College would get their hair done at Ms. Batts beauty shop and most of them admired her love for children. There was a young lady that was attending Huston-Tillotson College from the Virgin Islands (St. Thomas) who had a toddler and needed someone to care for him while she attended college. Ms. Batts took the toddler in (Eugene Joseph) and cared for him during his mom's four-years of college. Eugene continued to stay with Ms. Batts through grade school and considered her as his surrogate grandmother. She was a woman that extended her love to the young and old with words of encouragement and wisdom.

As we know in most beauty shops there is a constant stream of gossip, but this was not the order of the day for Ms. Batts. Ms. Batts would study her patrons and listen intensively to their comments on life's challenges and order up a "*Life Skill*" lesson for the day. She was not a person that would see you headed for disaster and allow you to walk right into it head on; she would share her wisdom with anyone who had an ear to hear.

These were some of her famous quotes:

1. *I cannot live in hell and die and go to hell; that is just too much hell for me.*
2. *You reap what you sow. You cannot go out there and plant apples and expect oranges to come up.*
3. *It pays to treat people right.*
4. *There are three sides to every story; yours, mind and the truth.*
5. *A good deed is never lost.*

Ms. Batts was a "*Pioneer*" in her own right. When you addressed her in any social setting; *her name was always Mrs. Batts*. She was a woman that demanded respect as well as respecting others.

Ms. Batts business clientele from Huston-Tillotson College, Greater Mount Zion Baptist Church, Ebenezer Baptist Church as well other surrounding churches put her in the upper class social setting. Her social affiliations would always be noted as those persons that were "*High Class*." She did not associate with "*Low Class*" people because of her profession, social values, community status and her aspiration to rise above her humble beginnings. Her definition of "*High Class*" was a people that pulled from their past the strength and determination to make a better life for the generations to come and to excel far beyond the limitations of racial disparity. Her definition of "*Low Class*" was a people that licked their wounds of the past and refused to move forward with a determination to better themselves in the face of adversity. She refused to resort to a "*that will do spirit*."

As an African American woman of great beauty she did not shy away from the public eye. When she would attend formal social gatherings her formal dresses were just astonishing and well fitted. She was always conscious of her figure and knew that all eyes were on her when she would enter the room. Ms. Batts refused not to be seen and recognized. She was a constant advertisement for her business and a walking bill-board

of beauty, class and self-respect at all times. She stayed abreast of the current fashions by subscribing to Ebony magazines and attending the Ebony fashion shows.

On her Mondays off she would dress up in conservative attire just to attend to her errands in downtown Austin, Texas. During the summer months while her sons were out of school she would dress them up for a much anticipated trip to the down town area. After the death of her husband, her only mode of transportation was the bus or walking. Most of the people in East Austin were not privileged to go down town for any type of outing; but for Ms. Batts this was a weekly treat or was it.

As stated by her eldest son, this trip would start with great expectations for them as little boys in the late 1950's early 1960's but disappointment was inevitable. Woolsworth Department store located on the corner of 6<sup>th</sup> and Congress was frequented by Ms. Batts and her boys. She would shop there for various items and then proceed to the café area for a lunch. Ms. Batts and the boys would seat themselves at the food bar or a table for service. They were ignored by the café workers and never served. She would continue her trips to Woolsworth Department store for shopping and lunch every Monday until the Civil Rights Act considered it non-constitutional to deny food service to African Americans.

Ms. Batts participated in her own "*Sit in*" protest for Civil Rights. She was not only a pioneer in the East Austin area of Beauticians, but also a citizen who stood against the injustices of her people.

Ms. Batts set a standard and lived a legacy for all African American women and girls to glean from. She did not allow her humble beginnings as a "*Negro Girl*" in Bastrop, Texas to dictate or discourage her from becoming one of the most well respected "*African American Beauticians*" in the East Austin area.



***Ethel Pearl Eastland Batts***

***Born: July 18, 1914—December 18, 1957***

***Curtis C. Batts***

***Born: March 17, 1917—December 18, 1957***



***Curtis C. Batts and Ethel Pearl Eastland***

***United in Holy Matrimony***



## **Ethel Pearl Batts**

In Bastrop County, Bastrop, Texas, a daughter was born to Mr. and Mrs. Joe Eastland on July 18, 1914, and God in his Divine Providence called her home on Sunday, December 10, 2000, at 1:30 p.m.

Mrs. Batts confessed hope in Christ at an early age and was a devoted member at the Greater Mount Zion Baptist Church until her health began to fail.

She was married to Mr. Curtis C. Batts, on January 8, 1943, and to this union two children were born.

She leaves to mourn two sons and their wives, Curtis C. Batts Jr., and wife, Nina L. Batts, Andrew Clark Batts and wife, Debra Batts, both of Austin, Texas; one brother; Morgan Eastland, of Bellwood, Illinois; four grandsons, Curtis C. Batts III, Derrick Batts, Farrell Batts, and Michael; two granddaughters, Tiffany Batts and Autumn Batts; and an adopted son, Eugene Joseph; a host of nieces, nephews and other relatives and friends.

Her parents, husband, one daughter, five sisters and two brothers preceded her in death.

Funeral services will be held at 11.00 a.m., Friday, December 15, 2000, in the Colonial Chapel of Cook-Walden Funeral Home, 6100 N. Lamar, with the Reverend N.W. Bacon officiating. Interment will follow at Evergreen Cemetery.



6100 North Lamar  
512/454-5611

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Obituary of Ethel Pearl Batts  
Austin American-Statesman, December 14, 2000

**Batts, Ethel Pearl, Beauty Salon**  
**1504 E. 11<sup>th</sup> St.**  
**Rector Subdivision**  
**Austin, Texas**

**Historical Account of Property listed above:** (Copies of documents provided)

December 29, 1841----- The Republic of Texas granted twenty-nine and one half acres to Samuel Whiting and his heirs forever. Property described being Lot number Sixty One (No.61) in Division (B). (Document page #1).

There were constantly buying, selling and of plots of this twenty-nine and one half acres from the year of October 4, 1872 up to June 13, 1873 when the land was sold to James Rector which is why it is now called **Rector Subdivision**.

Mr. James Rector purchased the four ((4) acres of this land from L.K. Miller ET UX on June 13, 1873 for \$1400 (Gold dollars). (Document page #24)

Mr. James Rector in possession of this land failed to pay the delinquent taxes in the amount of \$2.10 for the year of 1884. The time of paying the taxes had expired. A legal notice was sent to Mr. James Rector of which he did not comply. On this date of July 7, 1885 the Four (4) acres of property was auctioned off and A.W. Terrell would bid only \$2.10. There was an accrued penalty due to delinquent taxes in the amount of \$5.75 of which Mr. Terrell would also be responsible for. So Mr. Terrell paid a total of \$7.75 to acquire the Four (4) acres of land described in Block No. Sixty One (61) in Division B of the City of Austin and the County of Travis. (Document page #26).

Mr. James Rector experienced another levy on taxes of property to Mr. Chas L. Lundell on September 5, 1885 for taxes unpaid for the year of 1884. The taxes were on the same parcel of land in the amount of \$11.35 with a penalty charge of \$5.75. Mr. Charles Lundell acquired the property for the total summed amount of \$17.10. (Document page#28).

Mr. James Rector died November 27, 1886. On March 30, 1887 Mrs. L.T. Rector became the Executrix of the Estate of James E. Rector. Mrs. Lilia T. Rector applied for Temporary Letters of Administration on March 30, 1887. (Document page #30).

Mr. Lilia T.Rector was the administrator over the land acquired by her husband James E. Rector from the date of March 30, 1887 to March 5, 1898. There were many land transactions orchestrated by her during this time. According to the Title Documentation her last transaction was to Mr. Theodore D. Rand on the date of March 5, 1898. (Document page #50)



Mr. Theo D. Rand took possession of the land and controlled its holdings until from March 5, 1898 to December 17, 1900 at which time he sold the property (Block sixty one (61) Lots # (6), (7), (8), (9) and (16), to GM Brass. (Document page #51)

GM Brass ET UX remained in possession of this land until March 25, 1907 at which time he sold Lot (5) and Lot (6) Sub-division of outlet 61, Division B to Sam Mackey. (Document page #61)

Sam Mackey was married to Ruth Robertson on August 30, 1900 in Austin, Texas. So he acquired this land seven years after he had married Ruth Robertson. (Document page #66)

Sam Mackey ET UX to and with Nallie and Company on October 5, 1912 entered into a Mechanic's Lien agreement to construct a building on Lot No. five (5) of outlet 61, Division (B). The amount of the note was \$127.25 plus interest. This note was paid in full on February 21, 1913 at which time Sam Mackey was released from this lien. This was the first known entry of a building being constructed on this plot of land. The note was paid in full

(Document pages # 69, 70 and 71) Some of the copies are not readable, but the dates legible with

Sam Mackey and John E. Schieffer entered into a Mechanic's Lein agreement on March 16, 1937 for the construction and improvements on the existing structure in the amount of \$161.23. This note was paid in full on February 12, 1940.

(Document pages #72, 73, 74, 75, 76 and 77).

Ruth Mackey, Sam Mackey's wife died intestate during the year of 1924 in Travis county, Texas. Ruth Mackey and Samuel Mackey had four (4) children by the names of:

- (1) L. J. Mackey, a boy, who died during the year of 1918 in Travis County, Texas, with out having been married;
- (2) Willie Mackey, who died during the year of 1919 in Travis County, Texas, and without having been married.
- (3) Pearl Mackey, a girl, who died in Travis County, Texas, during year 1925 without having been married.
- (4) Samuel Mackey, Jr., a boy, now living in East St. Louis, Illinois.

(This Affidavit was dated November 8, 1947 and filed on June 9, 1950).

(Document page #1 of Abstract of Title No. 8129)



On May 29, 1950, Sam Mackey sold Lots Nos. Five (5) and Six (6) in Rector's Sub-division of Outlet No. Sixty-one (61) in Division "B" in the City of Austin, Travis County Texas to Curtis C. Batts and Ethel Pearl Batts. These lots were sold for the sum of \$2000.00 and financed by Austin Savings and Loan Association.  
(Document pages # 3, 4 and 5).

On June 7, 1950, Curtis Batts and wife, Ethel Pearl Batts secured a Deed of Trust on Lots No. five (5) and six (6) in outlet No. 61 in Division B in the City of Austin, Travis County, Texas.  
(Documents page #9, 10 and 11).

On March 11, 1953 a building permit was requested for the repair of 1504 E. 11<sup>th</sup> in the amount of \$1500.00. The contractor was Roy Peterson.

On June 1, 1960 there was another building permit issued for 1504 E. 11<sup>th</sup> for repairs on the sleeping porch in the amount of \$35.00. The contractor was Babe Eastland.

Mrs Ethel Batts was continuing improvements on this residence even though she had experienced the devastating loss of her parents, husband and daughter. On September 4, 1962 she received a letter from the Board of Adjustments to improve the existing condition of the residence. The residence was in need of an increase in the living area and there was a water problem that needed to be resolved. Ethel Pearl Batts requested a variance to erect an open attached carport on a lot in a "B" Residence and Second Height and Area district, with a rear yard of 3 feet instead of the required 5 feet. Mrs Batts stated that she wanted to add 2 feet to the rear of her house plus the carport. The carport would have a flat roof supported by two posts on the north side. It would be three feet from the property line. The Board granted the development request with an understanding that the carport would never be enclosed. The Building Inspector had initially denied the request and the Board of Adjustments reverse the inspector's decision.  
(Supporting Documentation Exhibits A&B)

As a result of the Board of Adjustments approval on September 14, 1962 there was the above mentioned improvements of a Carport added to the rear of the residence, a half bath was added, replaced the sheet rock, repaired the flooring and leveled the house. Mrs. Ethel Batts was very intentional on improving the appearance of her residence.

A document submitted from the Department of Public Works requested payment of \$174.59 for the pavement of Angelina Street. As assumed Angelina was a dirt road up to its completion date of March 15, 1962. This notice was dated September 30, 1963. Then on February 1, 1964, the Department of Public Works sent another notice for collection and offered installments to pay the balance of \$174.59 in full.  
(Supporting Documentation Exhibits C&D)

There was fire damage done to this structure and after searching files extensively at the Austin History Center I was unable to obtain a record of this fire. The Fire Marshals records back to 1958 did not record this fire. According to the son (Curtis C. Batts Jr.)

the fire happened around 1961. The fire damaged the east back corner of the residence burning the back bedroom area. Mrs. Batts stated that a lantern started the fire. The insurance company failed to pay the stated amount and Mrs. Batts had to take out home-improvements loans to repair her residence. After this loss she took out loans totaling \$5842.60 (\$2593.68) 7/19/62 and (\$3248.92) 7/25/63. These incremental loans indicate that there were ongoing repairs to this residence. The reconstruction of the in-home beauty salon was also a part of the repairs.

During this time Mrs. Batts met the structural requirements of an in-home business. There were walls constructed separating the beauty shop from the residence. There were windows within the beauty shop area that would allow her to view the activity within her home. Her children were never home alone because she was always there with them even when she was at work in her salon.

After Mrs. Batts death on December 10, 2000 and the legal finality of her will in November of 2006; Curtis C. Batts Jr. and Nina L. Batts became sole owners of the property. In January of 2007 renovations of the property started to take place with vinyl siding, replacement of doors, updating flooring, painting of indoors/outdoors and miscellaneous repairs throughout the residence. The once know beauty shop became a sitting room with an entrance into the casual living area.