

**HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION  
NOVEMBER 17, 2014  
DEMOLITION AND RELOCATION PERMITS  
HDP-2014-0885  
1823 W. 39<sup>TH</sup> STREET**

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**PROPOSAL**

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Demolish a ca. 1935 house.

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**ARCHITECTURE**

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One-story, rectangular-plan, pyramidal hipped-roof, frame house with a central, partial-width, front-gabled independent porch with scalloped fascia and on plain, square wood posts; single and paired 1:1 fenestration with 3:1 wood screens.

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**RESEARCH**

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The house was built in 1935 by Mrs. Noyes D. Smith, the wife of a prominent Austin businessman, who was in the coal and fuel business, as an investment property. The first occupants of the house were Ronald and Mae DeVies, who are not listed as the owners of the house until the directory of 1937. Ronald DeVies had grown up in Cement City, a poor suburb on the west side of Dallas, and worked as a tester for the Texas Portland Cement Company in Cement City. He then worked as a tester for another company, moved to Houston in the late 1920s, and moved into this house when he moved to Austin in the early 1930s. He worked as a laboratory assistant for the State Highway Department, and continued in that occupation even after moving back to Houston after World War II. Ronald and Mae DeVies lived here until around 1943. The house was then rented in the mid-1940s, the owned by Coleman and Margie Hammons in the late 1940s. Howard and Ethel B. Morrison owned and occupied the house in the late 1940s and early 1950s. Coleman Hammons was a linotype operator for the American-Statesman. From the mid-1950s onward, the house had a succession of owners and renters, including an Air Force couple, a city firefighter, and an urban planner for the state.

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**STAFF COMMENTS**

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The house is not listed in any City survey.

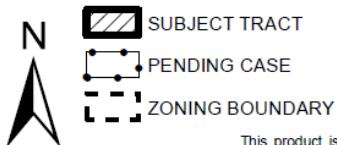
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**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

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Encourage rehabilitation and re-use if possible; then relocation over demolition, but in any case of removal, completion of a City of Austin Documentation Package, consisting of photographs of all elevations, a dimensioned sketch plan, and a narrative history, for archiving at the Austin History Center.

## LOCATION MAP



1" = 162'

## NOTIFICATIONS

CASE#: HDP-2014-0885  
LOCATION: 1823 W 39th St.

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.

This product has been produced by CTM for the sole purpose of geographic reference. No warranty is made by the City of Austin regarding specific accuracy or completeness.



1823 W. 39<sup>th</sup> Street  
ca. 1935



## OCCUPANCY HISTORY

1823 W. 39<sup>th</sup> Street

City Directory Research, Austin History Center  
By City Historic Preservation Office  
October, 2014

1992	Robert A. Freytag, renter No occupation listed NOTE: The directory indicates that Robert A. Freytag was a new resident at this address.
1985-86	Karl and Carolyn Shefelman, owners No occupation listed NOTE: The directory indicates that Karl and Carolyn Shefelman were new residents at this address.
1981	Ken King, owner No occupation listed
1977	Ken King, owner No occupation listed
1973	Steven and Darvey James, owners Employed in Urban Planning, State of Texas
1968	Clarence W. and Lora York, renters

	City firefighter
1962	Max D. and Margaret Tully, renters Max: Attendant, State Hospital Margaret: Attendant, State Hospital
1959	Orell and Della J. Simpson, renters U.S. Air Force
1955	James C. and Catherine Sanders, renters James: Student, Nixon-Clay Business College, 119-A W. 8 <sup>th</sup> Street. Catherine: Office secretary, James H. Aldridge Company, insurance, 503 E. 15 <sup>th</sup> Street.
1952	Howard T. Morrison, owner Printer, Austin <u>American-Statesman</u> newspaper
1949	Howard T. and Ethel B. Morrison, owners Linotype operator, Austin <u>American-Statesman</u> newspaper
1947	Coleman N. and Margie Hammons, owners No occupation listed
1944-45	Fred J. and Freida Otto, renters Foreman
1941	Ronald L. and Mae DeVies, owners Laboratory assistant, State Highway Department
1939	Ronald L. and Mae DeVies, owners Laboratory assistant, State Highway Department
1937	Ronald L. DeVies, owner Student, University of Texas
1935	Ronald L. and Mae DeVies (not listed as owners) Laboratory assistant, State Highway Department
1932-33	The address is not listed in the directory. NOTE: Ronald L. and Mae DeVies are not listed in the directory.

## BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

### Ronald L. and Mae DeVies (ca. 1935 – ca. 1943)

Ronald L. and Mae DeVies appear in the 1940 U.S. Census as the owners of this house, which was worth \$3,500. Ronald DeVies was 39, had been born in Texas, and was a tester for the State Highway Department. Mae DeVies was 33, had been born in Arkansas, and had no occupation listed. They had a 3-year old son, Ronald DeVies, Jr. The 1910 U.S. Census shows Ronald DeVies as the 9-year old son of Allie DeVies, a 29-year old dressmaker in Cement City, a poor suburb in West Dallas, Texas. Ronald's father was not listed with the rest of the family, but the census report indicates that he had been born in Scotland. City directories indicate that he had lived in Cement City, West Dallas in the early 1920s, where he was a tester for the Texas Portland Cement Company and a chemist for the Pittsburgh Testing Laboratory; then in Houston in the late 1920s, where he was a tester for the Pittsburgh Testing laboratory of Texas, before moving to Austin. He moved back to Houston after World War II, where he

worked as an inspector for the State Highway Department there. Ronald DeVies died in Harris County, Texas in 1994; there was no obituary in the Austin newspapers.

### Coleman and Margie Hammons (ca. 1946 – ca. 1948)

Coleman N. Hammons appears in the 1940 U.S. Census as the 15-year old son of Walter M. and Nellie May Hammons, who owned their home in Dallas. Walter M. Hammons was a foreman for a bridge construction company; no other family member had an occupation listed.

Unless the Plumbing is done in strict accordance with City Ordinances, do not turn on the water.

## PERMIT FOR WATER SERVICE

AUSTIN, TEXAS No. 2468 160

M. Mrs. Noyes D. Smith Address 1823 W. 39th

Plumber Missell Size of Tap 1/2 Date 1-18-35

CHANGED TO 6 MAIN AND RENEWED  
SERVICE WITH 3/4 COPPER ON 8-9873 Foreman's Report

Date of Connection 2/5/35

Size of Tap Made 3/4

Size Service Made 1/2

Size Main Tapped 2"

From Front Prop. Line to Curb Cock 9'6"

From S. Prop. Line to Curb Cock 6'8"

Location of Meter at curb

Type of Box 1/2" 10x6

Depth of Main in St. 15"

Depth of Service Line 18"

From Curb Cock to Tap on Main 4'2"

Checked by Engr. Dept. R.H.H. - 2-20-35

No. Fittings	Size	Material	Remarks
1	Curb Cock	5/8"	
1	Elbow	3/4"	
1	St. Elbow	3/4"	
1	Bushing	3/4"	
1	Reducer	3/4"	
1	Pipe	27"	
1	Lead Comp.		
1	Nipples	3/4"	
1	Union	3/4"	
1	Plug		
1	TEE		
1	Stop		
1	Box		
1	Lid		
1	Valves		
1	Reg. No.		

Foreman's Signature Bennett

Water service permit to Mrs. Noyes D. Smith for this address (1935)

Howard T. Morrison

1823 West 39th St.

160

6

11

Oakmont Heights Annex #2

Enclose rear porch.

47624 2-26-51

\$1600.00

Owner

3

Building permit to Howard T. Morrison to enclose the rear porch (1951)

Howard T. Morrison	1823 West 39th St.			
160	6	11	-	-
Oakmont Heights Annex #2				
Erect open carport.				
49049 9-12-51			\$365.00	
Day labor				

Building permit to Howard T. Morrison to erect an open carport (1951)