

Historic Preservation Commission

2013 Fall Property of the Season

55 Van Buren Street

The Oswego Historic Preservation Commission is proud to present 55 Van Buren Street as the Fall 2013 Property of the Season. This home constructed in 1905 for Mr. Charles S. Barker and his wife Mary, was moved circa 1970 from its original location at the corner of Jefferson Street and Chicago Road to its current address. This well maintained home has a wrap-around front porch with a unique corner entrance. The hipped roof has two dormer windows each with a diamond patterned wood muntin. The diamond-patterned window style is continued onto the wrap-around porch. Changes to the home include the removal of the original stone side entrance to the porch when it was moved, the rear porch was enclosed in 1989, and the exterior was resided in 2002. The roofline was altered at some point after the home was relocated.



Charles S. Barker was an enterprising young man. From 1903 to 1905 he moved up the ranks from junior partner in Foran and Barker to running his own business, Barker Brothers, with his brother from Washington D.C. Barker Brothers sold all kinds of goods from prunes to tobacco to steaks. In the spring of 1905 while an Oswego Village Trustee, Charles Barker bought the lot at the north east corner of Jefferson Street and Chicago Road. At the time, there were numerous houses being built around the village and the Kendall County Record Newspaper reported on their progress. April 26th the record reported, "The C.S. Barker house excavation near the old Loucks house is underway." Updates on the progress of the house continued all summer long until the Record reported November 26th, "Charles S. Barker and family moved into their new and up to date constructed and furnished residence Thursday." The Barker's lived there for a few years until they sold the home to Mr. and Mrs. George Kessinger.

Later, Mr. and Mrs. Norval Tripp bought the home and raised their sons Richard and Robert there. Mr. Tripp, like Charles Barker, was a member of the Oswego Village Board. He was also a partner in the Herren and Tripp Real Estate Office on Washington St. Influential in local politics and business, he was appointed the first President of the Oswego Better Business Association. In 1956 Mr. Tripp had the residence rezoned from Residential single-family (R-1) to Business (B-2). In 1969 the Tripp's began the process of selling the land to Marclely Oil Company of Aurora. The Record noted on June 26, 1969, "The Marclely Oil Co. of Aurora has recently purchased the Norval Tripp property at the intersection of Jefferson Street and Chicago Road. Plans call for an ultra-modern Mobil service station." The Marcleys ran into a bit of a snag getting the zoning changed for their station, and the Record reported in October, 1969, that two homeowners, who lived near the proposed station, objected to the redevelopment.



Shortly after the sale to Marclely Oil, the home was moved to its current location. The home now sits on Lots 1 and 2 of Block 5 in Loucks and Stafford's Addition. Since the 1970s, the home has been owned by Ray and Alice Abens, Gordon and Julia McNulty, Edwin Boddy, and currently, Gayle Szymanski.

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