

# THE WALES-COULEHAN HOUSE

No. 5 • The Collier Residence • 701 Spruce Street



*This lovely Victorian Country frame house is 100 years old this year. Photo: Historic Boulder Collection.*

## Architecture

This Victorian Country frame house, 100 years old this year, features an asymmetrical façade with front porch pillars. The simplicity of this wonderful house reminds us that the Mapleton Historic District is a mixture of grand homes and those that are less pretentious. This is due to the mixture of the early homeowners: lawyers, doctors, merchants, and relocated farmers. These settlers tended to duplicate houses from their original homeland, which gives Mapleton Hill its eclectic mixture of housing styles. While outside, note the huge Norway spruce, the carriage house once used for stabling horses, and the playhouse which is a former chicken coop.

## Interior

The house's interior has undergone recent renovation with great attention given to maintaining the original character of the house. The new kitchen was added and features painted wood cabinets with glass panes, and granite countertops; the original kitchen is now an office. The stairwell and the fireplace mantle in the living room have

been restored to their former beauty. The staircase leading to the master suite on the third floor is new, copied from the original on the floor below. Other features to note in the house are the claw-foot tub in the master bath with its fresh porcelain and brass feet, and the newly refurbished brass light fixtures, hinges and doorknobs.

## Early Homeowners

Mr. and Mrs. George Edward Wales bought the property in 1889, built the home and sold it in 1901 to Charles and Clarissa Coulehan. Charles, a hay and grain merchant who owned a store in the 1100 block of Pearl, died in 1924. Charles' daughter, Anne (by Charles' first marriage) married in 1925 and she and her husband lived in the house with Clarissa. Clarissa died in 1945 leaving a lifetime trust for Anne with the stipulation that upon Anne's death the residue of the estate would go to the City of Boulder for public parks maintenance. Anne sold the house in 1964, and died in the early 1970s leaving \$168,000 to C.U. for research projects or the construction of a non-denominational chapel. Noted local historian Phyllis Smith and her husband lived here for many years. There were two owners between Anne and the Colliers, the present homeowners who bought the house in May of this year.



*Individual home illustrations by Paul Schultz.*

## The Wales-Coulehan House

The desire to restore their home to the way it looked when it was built caused Eugene and Phyllis Smith to spend hours removing layers of old wallpaper and stripping woodwork of old paint and varnish. The removal of wallpaper sometimes involved as many as seven layers; in one room, the Smiths found an old bed sheet pasted to the wall beneath the paper.

The house at 701 Spruce Street is a large, frame farm-type home, with little exterior embellishment except the pillars on the front porch. The interior, however, has handsome parquet flooring in the living room, and decorative woodwork throughout the house.

A carriage house, once used for stabling horses, is behind the house. A former chicken coop has been turned into a children's play house. In the front yard is a huge Norway spruce.

The land was part of the original Tourtellot and Squires Addition, and later part of the J. Alden Smith Subdivision. George Edward Wales and his wife Georgiana purchased the property in August 1889 and built their home shortly afterward. In January 1901, the Wales sold to Charles and Clarissa Coulehan.

Charles Coulehan was born in Sheboygan, Wisconsin, and came to Boulder in the late 1870s. In 1882, he married Nellie F. Barker, daughter of Andrew Barker. An early Boulder stone mason, Barker had come to Boulder County in 1862. He settled first in Valmont and later moved to Boulder. His work included the stone masonry on the original Congregational Church building on Pine Street, at the present site of the Parks and Recreation Department building.

Nellie Barker Coulehan died in 1887, leaving a two-year-old daughter, Anne. In 1889, Charles married Clarissa Graves, a native of Weld County, Colorado. The Graves family lived in Magnolia for a number of years while Clarissa's father worked in the mines. Clarissa attended school in Magnolia. Later, when she was 16, she began teaching school at Hygiene, a community southwest of Longmont, and taught there until her marriage to Coulehan.

Charles Coulehan and his brother James were

pioneer Boulder hay and grain merchants. They operated a store in the middle of the 1100 block of Pearl Street. Charles Coulehan died in 1924.

In October 1925, Anne Coulehan married George Andrus, a writer and journalist whom she had met while visiting friends in New York. The couple made their home with Clarissa Coulehan. After Andrus' death in 1935, Anne continued to live with her stepmother.

Clarissa died in 1945. In her will, she provided a lifetime trust for Anne with the stipulation that upon Anne's death the residue of the estate would go to the City of Boulder to help maintain the city's public parks. This was the first time a citizen had left such a bequest to the city.

Anne Andrus sold her home in 1964 to Warren and Allene Cash. In 1969 they sold to the Smiths. When Mrs. Andrus died in the early 1970s she left \$168,000 to the University of Colorado to be used for construction of a nonsectarian chapel or to be used for research projects.

