

Bethinking of Old Orleans

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HOUSE TOUR SLATED

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On Saturday, June 3, 1989 the Cobblestone Society will present a tour of eight historic homes in Albion and vicinity from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. Tickets on the day of the tour may be purchased beginning at 11:00 a.m. either at the Pullman Memorial Universalist Church in Albion where a light lunch will be available, or at the Cobblestone Museum Complex in Childs. The price of the tour will include all seven buildings at the museum which will be open at 11 a.m. for viewing.

One of the eight homes on the tour will be the one pictured here at 146 East State Street in Albion. It is now owned by Mark Dudwick and Richard Morica who also operate Albion Antiques which is located in the adjoining carriage barn. Mark and Richard moved to Albion from Batavia around a year ago when they purchased this residence belonging to former Albion Mayor Donald Brace. Prior to the Brace's ownership of the home it was the residence of Clifton and Nellie Nestle for many years. Many people will recall that last summer a most spectacular array of Impatiens plants adorned the frontlawn of this dwelling. However, if you think that was spectacular, just wait till the day of the tour when you can see the interior. The floral statement outside was only a small indication of what's to behold inside.

Although Mark and Richard are dealers, they are also first-rate collectors, selecting rare and exquisite antiques and beautiful decorative appointments for their home. The interior photo shown here, is just a sample of what is in store. It shows a corner of the parlor including a turn of the century fireplace, the mantel which is laden with

two front windows is a curio cabinet filled with bisque figures of hummingbirds. All of the furnishings are enhanced in this room with rose terra-cotta colored walls for a background. When you visit here you will notice that throughout the house there are innumerable antique clocks, all in working condition.

Although somewhat disguised, the original part of this house is surely a very early structure in Albion, perhaps dating to the early 1830s or before. In 1849 it was purchased from M.T. Huff by Andrew Wall who owned and operated a bakery, ice house and candle business in downtown Albion. In 1897 the house became the property of W. Crawford Ramsdale who had married Ellen Wall, the daughter of Andrew Wall. W.C. Ramsdale was elected County Judge and served in that position from 1896-1901 and was also elected District Attorney in 1907. He died in 1921. It was the Ramsdales who enlarged the house in 1897 and gave it the architectural character which remains today. They were responsible for building the large front porch, open staircase, two working fireplaces and the second story on the east wing of the house.

More recently, Mark and Richard have remodeled a kind of unsightly backroom and woodshed into an attractive breakfast room which overlooks the back lawn. Here, one sees the carriage barn which once doubled many years ago as a horse stable and now functions as an antique shop. The central focal point in the back lawn however, is a pretty gazebo which lends a Victorian quality to the landscape architecture, thus coordinating the



(Photos by Geo. Callard)