

East Dallas was the only naturally integrated area in Dallas giving our children the opportunity we wanted.

6. Following World War II, people began moving out of the grand homes on and near Swiss Avenue. These larger houses required too much staff, and they were too large to air condition. Air conditioning units not requiring big cooling towers had not been developed. People moved out of their homes and sold them to developers to wait out the 75 year deed restriction or turned them into multifamily dwellings or, just left the homes vacant and for sale for years.

7. During the Post World War II era, the Swiss Avenue area was deteriorating. Cars were jacked up in front of houses and window screens were falling off windows. Many homes had already been bought by developers for future construction of high rise apartments, which they planned to develop as soon as the 75 year deed restrictions expired that had been placed on the properties in the early 1900's.

8. The house we bought at 5731 Swiss was a wreck—a commune had been living in it for many years. They had painted the walls saffron pink and black and lights had been removed. We actually paid for the lot only.

9. We did not hire anyone to help us make the house livable—30 members of our family and several DISD administrators with whom I worked at the Administration building on Ross Avenue came on weekends and painted the house and redid doors, etc. We restored the house in this manner for about 3 months—working on the weekends with volunteers. We moved into the house in February of 1971 after the December 1970 purchase.

10. Except for the Aldredge House at 5500 Swiss Avenue, most of the other homes on Swiss Avenue were in bad shape. Wallace Savage, Virginia McAlester's father (Dallas' youngest mayor in the late '40s) had a study undertaken by SMU graduate students on the architectural value of the 200 plus houses in the area. Shortly after we moved in, he invited all the neighborhood residents to his home in 1971 to share this survey with us. Wallace Savage was a great "convincer". WE WERE DETERMINED TO SAVE THIS NEIGHBORHOOD—these historically unique and valuable homes!

11. Eleven of us met and made a plan—it was the first of many meetings we would have in the neighborhood. It started out as a trip to City Council to ask that a post office being built at the end of Swiss Avenue be in keeping with the architecture of the neighborhood because we intended to save these homes and have an historic district. The City Council initially turned our request down.

12. We divided the district into blocks— my husband and I had the first 2 blocks from Fitzhugh—to "work". Mike Brown, an architect who was also a graphic artist, designed the weekly messages for the district: "You won't have to redo all your homes at 1000's of dollars if we become an Historic District." "You will still be able to have renters if we become a Historic District." "You won't lose the value of your home if we become a Historic District." "You won't have to redo the inside or outside of your home if we become a Historic District."

13. Meanwhile—there was the need to convince the entire City to support us. I worked in the resource center of Mountain View College at the time; we had a graphic arts staff put together something not many people even knew how to do in the early

1970's—a 2 projector slide show with a dissolve unit to move from frame to frame and cassette tape music to help our marketing efforts. We presented our slide show all over Dallas many times. All the while, the Aldredge House was the rock—the anchor—the thing we all pointed to. Aldredge House was the center piece.

14. Our neighbors, the Vastines, housed an attorney who had developed the New Orleans City Code for the French Quarter, Jacob Morrison—the brother of the New Orleans Mayor. He stayed on Swiss Avenue for many days going to City Hall every day and working with Wei Ming Lu, the Dallas city director of the Urban Plan department, to write our historic district ordinance. There were, of course, no historic districts in Dallas at the time.

15. We had a significant public relations and education campaign for a year. We then selected a day to go back to City Hall. Along with the rest of the group that were to become the founders of the Historic Preservation League, we made our presentation. Only one person from the Swiss Avenue neighborhood objected. Architecture groups, civic groups, and people throughout Dallas were there to support us. We were unanimously granted “Historic” status, and our beautiful homes would be forever saved!

16. We became the first Historic District in Dallas. The Savages received contributions from each of us—we gave \$1000 dollars, a lot of money in the 1970's. Wallace Savage, with the support from Lakewood Bank, along with the other founders, invested this money in the neighboring areas, buying houses, having them restored, and then selling them to reinvest the earnings. We saved much of the deteriorating surrounding neighborhoods.

17. We formed the Historic Preservation League—now Preservation Dallas, and preservation in Dallas was born.

18. We believe we are the caretakers of our homes for future generations. It would not exist were it not for the entire City. We still make our home on Swiss Avenue available to groups many times a year because we feel like it belongs to the entire City. We have hosted a wide array of events at our home, everything from large political gatherings to meet Nancy Palosi, the former Speaker of the House, to a private lunch with Laura Bush. We have hosted more non-profits than I can remember, and we regularly have annual Christmas parties not only to raise money for charities and politicians, but also to have festive events for many groups, including Reconciliation Outreach, which houses and rehabilitates ex-offenders, and the Ross Avenue 24-hour club for recovering drug addicts. We have an annual tea for 100 plus high school aged young women from all over the state who come by busses for IGNITE, an organization dedicated to helping young females consider public service as an elected official in their future. If we are expecting 50 or 60 people or more, we hire a valet service. We have had 3 weddings (one using a big tent in the back yard which we own and have loaned to our neighbors from time to time), two memorial services, and an immersion baptism in our home as well. We have a PA system we use in the back yard when we have meetings outside, and outside back yard speakers for music which we play. Ours is a home which is often open with many events. Many of our neighbors on Swiss Avenue also host both small and large events throughout the year; facilitating parties and fundraisers is a defining

