

Historic Bukacek home a lakeside showplace

By June Winters
Home staff writer

"When I wake up in the morning and look out my window, it's like being on a houseboat."

That's the way Roxanne Bukacek, Pell City High School art teacher, says she feels when she looks out over beautiful Logan Martin Lake from the window of the master bedroom.

Lakeside living is nothing new for Ms. Bukacek, though. She was born and raised on the banks of the Coosa River before the water was dammed to create the majestic lake.

Ms. Bukacek left Riverside and moved to Birmingham to attend the University of Alabama at Birmingham, and even stayed in the "big city" for several years.

She moved back to Riverside in 1986, when she learned the "old homeplace" was for sale.

The Bukacek home was built in 1872 for the town doctor. Riverside was a logging town, and the sawmill needed a doctor, she said.

"About the only way they could attract a doctor to the small town was to build a very nice house for him," she said.

When the sawmill closed, the doc-

the rooms in her home soft shades of yellow and green with hand-stenciled borders.

There are twin parlors to the left of the foyer, with an interesting spool-work inset above the double doors separating the two rooms.

Ms. Bukacek is especially proud of a handmade chess table in the second parlor, a creation of her great-grandfather Alois Bukacek.

The dining room, kitchen and den area of the house were added by Ms. Bukacek's uncles after the house was bought by the family.

In the kitchen area, Ms. Bukacek used blue and white checked curtains, with hints of blue used in other places. Cabinets are a stark white.

One of the Bukacek brothers was an electrician, and he installed lights that switch on and off as the cabinet doors are opened and closed.

Two exceptionally large pull-out work boards are installed under the kitchen counters.

The kitchen holds many treasures from the past, and Ms. Bukacek says most of them were found in the barn. There's an old minnow scoop, a set of miniature drawers, wooden breadbox, handmade rolling pin and potato masher, all hand carved by Ms. Bukacek's great-grandfather

and one side of the store was the post office.

Ms. Bukacek asked for the post office and uses the mailboxes as a wine rack. There's even an old sign still attached to the wall that declares if you steal the post office pen, you can be fined \$500 and could serve up to one year in jail!

An antique armoire in the den belonged to her great-grandfather, and she uses his old tool chest as a coffee table in this area.

A guest bedroom and bath are located just off the den.

There's a small foyer at the head of the stairs and another bedroom to the left.

On the right of the foyer is where Ms. Bukacek has put most of her effort in creating modern conveniences without disturbing too much of the old qualities of the house.

The master bedroom overlooks the lake, and the view is breathtaking.

Ms. Bukacek added a beautiful bath adjacent to this bedroom, declaring that she used "every stick of wood taken out in another place."

"When I took the door out that led from the second floor and installed a stained glass window in that part of the bathroom area, I couldn't come

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FOR MOVED AWAY, and Ms. Bukaook's

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"About the only way they could attract a doctor to the small town was to build a very nice house for him," she said.

When the sawmill closed, the doctor moved away, and Ms. Bukacek's grandfather, Joe Bukacek, bought the house and deeded it to his father, Alois Bukacek. An immigrant from Czechoslovakia, the elder Bukacek was a graduate of the University of Prague. His trade was intricate wood carving.

He and his wife, Bubby, settled in Chicago, Ill., where Alois Bukacek designed and finished the interiors of passenger trains.

The harsh winters of the Chicago area proved to be too much for the couple's new baby, and they decided to move South, settling in the Riverside area, near Czech friends.

Alois Bukacek continued his woodworking trade and raised his family there, and as far as anyone knows, Ms. Bukacek's father was the only child born in the house.

The house was sold in 1974 because none of the Bukacek clan was interested in living there.

Ms. Bukacek says even then she wanted to live in the house, but college and career made it impossible.

During the time the house was out of the family ownership, it had several lives. It was even a quaint tea room at one time.

It was a grand day for Roxanne Bukacek when she learned she could buy the family home, and she happily moved back to Riverside.

The warmth and the charm of the old has been expertly blended with modern conveniences under the hands of this owner. The expert workmanship in original construction is evident in every room.

Rich paneling of prickly pine is used in the entrance hall, and all the floors and windows are original to the house.

Ms. Bukacek has painted most of

doors are opened and closed.

Two exceptionally large pull-out work boards are installed under the kitchen counters.

The kitchen holds many treasures from the past, and Ms. Bukacek says most of them were found in the barn. There's an old minnow scoop, a set of miniature drawers, wooden breadbox, handmade rolling pin and potato masher, all hand carved by Ms. Bukacek's great-grandfather.

Ms. Bukacek is especially proud of the "old Riverside post office" that separates her kitchen and den area.

Her grandfather and grandmother, Joe and Annie Mae Bukacek, owned and operated a grocery store in Riverside (which is now Bill's Marina)

of the old qualities

The master bedroom has a view of the lake, and the wing.

Ms. Bukacek has a bathroom adjacent to the dining room, clarifying that she used the wood taken out in

"When I took the floor from the second floor, I stained glass window in the bathroom area. I came up with an idea of a door. Suddenly it occurred to me there was a brick fireplace in the master bedroom mantle." Presto! The

See Bukacek, P



The dining room was added by Ms. Bukacek's u

Lakeside living

Bukacek

From Page 10

came up with the perfect mantle — made from the beautiful prickly pine door.

The original ladder that leads to the second attic in the house is still a part of the new bathroom decor, and a gleaming white Jacuzzi adds the modern touch.

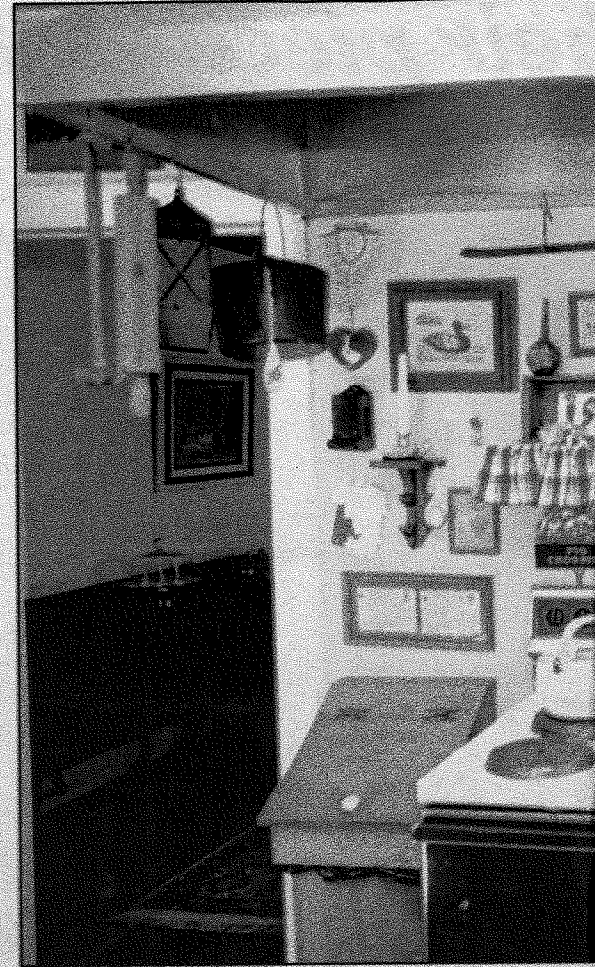
Outside, there are terraces and retaining walls built by Ms. Bukacek's uncles that have been converted into flower boxes. The old washhouse and greenhouse still stand out back.

Grounds around the home are immaculately groomed by the owner, and her latest project is adding a gazebo.

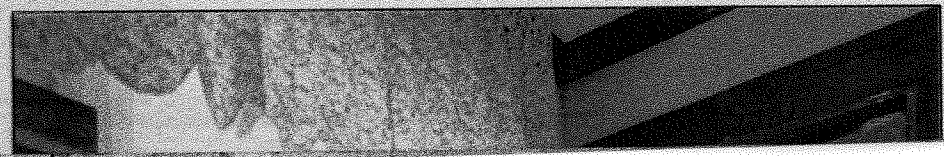
She and her mother, Virginia Posey, built a lovely brick patio in the back of the house, and Ms. Bukacek has moved huge slabs of cement to create pretty walkways from one area to another.

Ms. Bukacek and her pets are contented with life on the lake and says she wouldn't trade places with anyone.

"When you're tired or worried, you can just go sit on that pier and watch the water, and it always makes you feel good."



The kitchen blends old with new. Most of the tr



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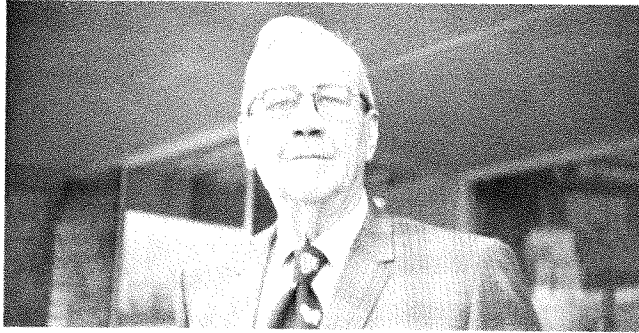
Again, we are indebted to the Merchants National Bank in Mobile for the excellent picture of Bienville Square under snow in Mobile one year ago this month.

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Lathrop-Hatten Was Large Turn-of-Century Lumber Manufacturer

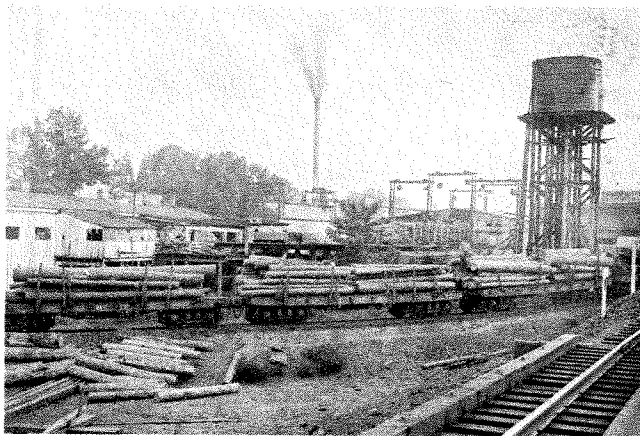
At a site many years submerged under the waters of Logan Martin Dam stood a large and bustling lumber firm known as Lathrop-Hatten Lumber Company. The town was Riverside and the Lathrop-Hatten mill



Mr. Leonard D. Housel, Sr.

stood on the banks of the Coosa River in St. Clair County.

Mr. Leonard D. Housel of Gordo, Alabama, passed



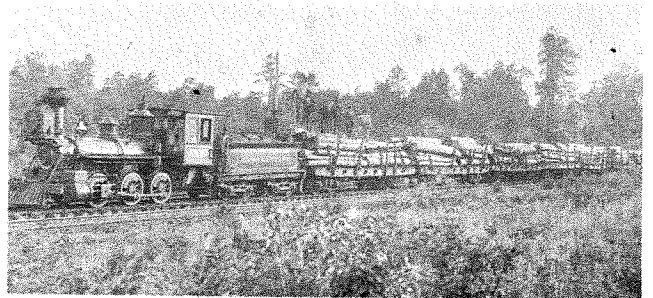
The Coosa River was just to the right of the millsite.

this information on to us along with the pictures of the subject firm taken about 1905. Mr. Housel relates that his late father, A. N. Housel, was a young farmer in Nebraska and lost a crop, then decided to go south and wound up working for Lathrop-Hatten.




Oxen and horses did the skidding. Mr. Lathrop stands on the right in suit.

AFA member, Mrs. Irvine Porter of Birmingham whose husband is in charge of the F. H. Lathrop estate, is the late Mr. Lathrop's granddaughter.



Railroad buffs will love this scene. Lathrop-Hatten Railway transported the logs to the mill and also the lumber to the Southern Railway line.

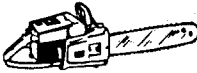


SMITH'S SHELL SERVICE

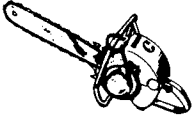
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