



Louisville Historical Museum  
December 2007

**The Affolter House  
839 McKinley Avenue**

**Louisville Holiday Home Tour 2007**

This house was the home of a prominent Louisville attorney and State Senator, Edward Affolter, and his wife, Mattie. Edward (1876-1952) and Mattie (1875-1976) were very active members of the Louisville community and beyond. The Affolter family had the home for fifty years.

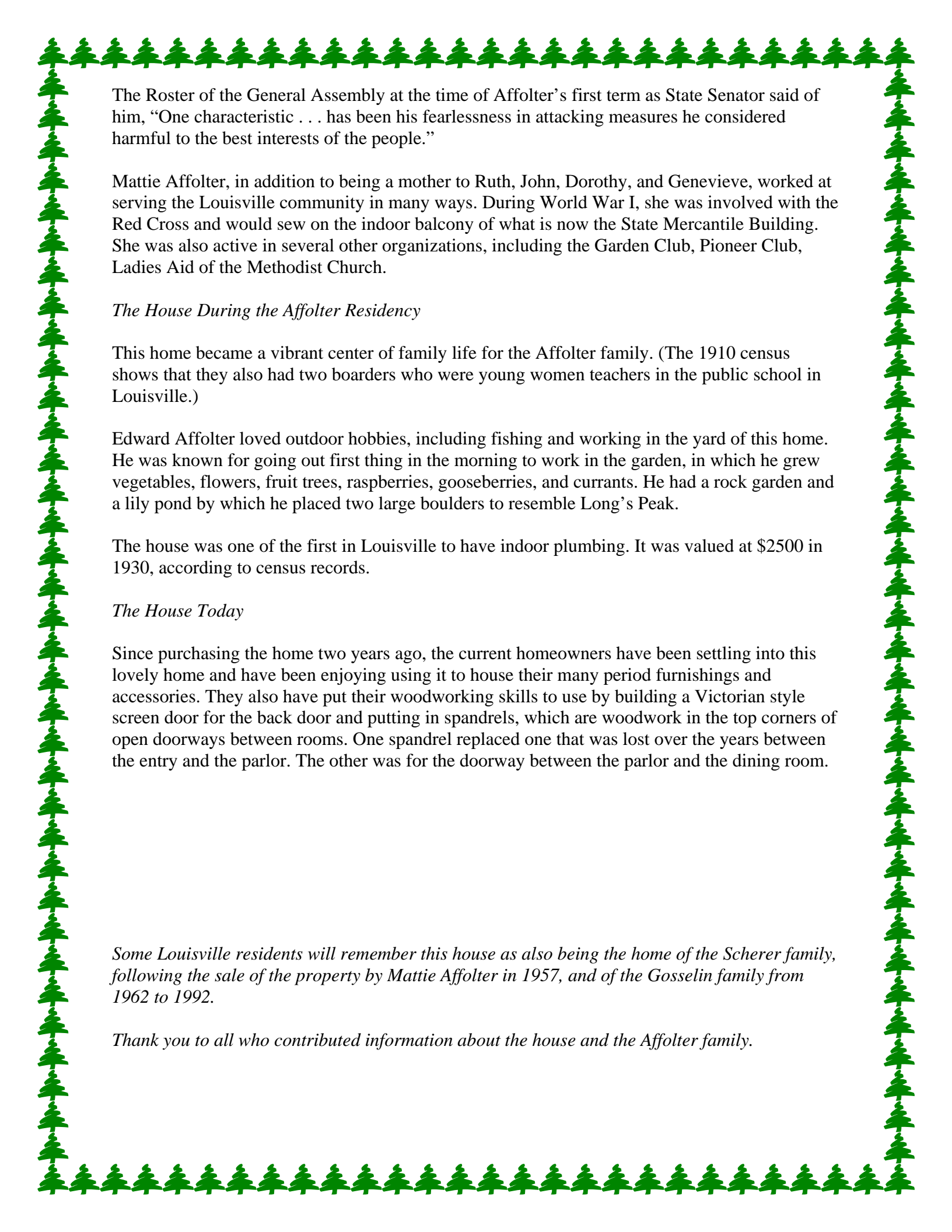
*Affolter Family*

The roots of the Affolter family go far back in Boulder County. Frederick Affolter was a Swiss immigrant who settled at Haystack Mountain near Longmont with other family members in the 1850s. Edward, Frederick's son, was born in 1876.

Edward and Mattie Jane Robinson met in Walden, Colorado where they were each visiting relatives and they married in 1903. Edward attended law school, graduated in 1906, and planned to join his brother John in the practice of law in Louisville. John was already a buyer and seller of real estate in Louisville in partnership with Dr. Charles Wolfer. However, John died of appendicitis while still a young man in 1907. Instead of joining John's practice, Edward ended up taking it over. He and Mattie also became the owners of property at McKinley and Walnut that had been owned by John Affolter and Charles Wolfer. Edward and Mattie had the home built on the property in 1910.

Edward's legal career included the following highlights:

- Served as State Senator representing Boulder County, 1912-1916 and 1932-1936
- As State Senator, helped to shape Colorado's government by co-authoring Colorado's Workmen's Compensation Act and playing a part in the establishment of Colorado's Fish & Game Commission
- Was the town attorney for Louisville for 26 years
- Had a law practice in Louisville in the rear of what is now the Huckleberry Restaurant building at 700 Main St., first renting space and then becoming the owner of the building
- Became an expert on coal mining litigation
- Was an authority on irrigation law due to his legal work for ditch companies in the area
- Following the destruction of the Old Boulder County Courthouse by fire in 1932, Affolter and others in east Boulder County attempted to have the County seat moved to Longmont. Following a political tug-of-war which resulted in the victory by the City of Boulder to keep the county seat in Boulder, Affolter was among the speakers at the dedication of the new courthouse.



The Roster of the General Assembly at the time of Affolter's first term as State Senator said of him, "One characteristic . . . has been his fearlessness in attacking measures he considered harmful to the best interests of the people."

Mattie Affolter, in addition to being a mother to Ruth, John, Dorothy, and Genevieve, worked at serving the Louisville community in many ways. During World War I, she was involved with the Red Cross and would sew on the indoor balcony of what is now the State Mercantile Building. She was also active in several other organizations, including the Garden Club, Pioneer Club, Ladies Aid of the Methodist Church.

#### *The House During the Affolter Residency*

This home became a vibrant center of family life for the Affolter family. (The 1910 census shows that they also had two boarders who were young women teachers in the public school in Louisville.)

Edward Affolter loved outdoor hobbies, including fishing and working in the yard of this home. He was known for going out first thing in the morning to work in the garden, in which he grew vegetables, flowers, fruit trees, raspberries, gooseberries, and currants. He had a rock garden and a lily pond by which he placed two large boulders to resemble Long's Peak.

The house was one of the first in Louisville to have indoor plumbing. It was valued at \$2500 in 1930, according to census records.

#### *The House Today*

Since purchasing the home two years ago, the current homeowners have been settling into this lovely home and have been enjoying using it to house their many period furnishings and accessories. They also have put their woodworking skills to use by building a Victorian style screen door for the back door and putting in spandrels, which are woodwork in the top corners of open doorways between rooms. One spandrel replaced one that was lost over the years between the entry and the parlor. The other was for the doorway between the parlor and the dining room.

*Some Louisville residents will remember this house as also being the home of the Scherer family, following the sale of the property by Mattie Affolter in 1957, and of the Gosselin family from 1962 to 1992.*

*Thank you to all who contributed information about the house and the Affolter family.*