

The Face of Fillmore

By Sherry Shepard

Since my interest in the old homes in Fillmore began some sixteen years ago as I started writing the Face of Fillmore, I have watched the face of some of those homes change along with the times.

One prominent home on Main Street is a great example of what tender loving care can do to preserve a home and improve its looks.

Built in the 1870's and 1880's, the home on the northeast corner of Main and First South was a showplace from the very beginning. It was originally the home of Joseph V. Robison, son of Joseph Robison who built the home at the Spinning Wheel Motel – the first stone building outside of the fort.

The home was a major construction project with lumber coming from Cherry and Strawberry Canyons on the mountain east of Fillmore with the finish lumber coming from Parowan. Hans Hansen was the general contractor and contracted the building for \$1000. His crew consisted of his sons, John, George and Albert as well as William and Josiah Gibbs and Alec Forte. The structure was put together with pegs and later on nails, as it took three years to build. The lime was burned in the canyon east of Fillmore by Jesse Milgate and the plastering done by John Ashman. The iron hardware was built mostly by local blacksmiths Christian Beauregard and John Jackson, Sr.

Joseph came to Fillmore in 1884 but left a year later on a mission. When he returned, he was a prominent citizen, being elected as mayor three times, and also was a state senator, probate judge and a member of the stake presidency.

Following Joseph's death in 1914, Albert Robison, the youngest son ran the Robison Hotel for many years, raising his family there. In 1921, Albert sold the hotel to Andrew and Mary Alice Christensen who were from Kanosh. She was a mid-wife and nurse.

Early during World War II, Dr. Evans approached the Christensen's about turning the hotel into a maternity home. There was no hospital in town and help was needed. Improvements were made and the maternity home began. Estimates are that there were from 500 to 900 babies born there in the next few years.

George Robison, the son of Albert, and his wife Hattie Christensen Robison and their children lived in the upstairs part of this time.

Since that time the hotel/home has been owned by Helen Winget, Karen George, Lee and Kay Davis, and now belongs to the Kevin Orton family.

Throughout its history there have been up's and down's related to the house. During its heyday, tradition has it that Brigham Young always stayed in the front-facing bedroom with its spacious balcony. This may have been the point from which he addressed the crowds in Fillmore. At other times, as the pictures attest, the building has fallen into disrepair, then been refurbished again by a new owner.

Many of us remember this building as the large white house on Main Street, but even that description doesn't fit anymore as an attractive coat of gray paint with dark shutters and white trim has greatly enhanced the home's look.



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