

In 1894, Alvin Bushnell Bell purchased plans for his Victorian cottage from architect George F. Barber of Knoxville, Tennessee. It was a "kit" house, popular in that era, milled in Tennessee and shipped to Iowa to be assembled by the contractor William Bassett. Construction spanned one year. Six months were allowed for exterior work and six more were devoted to the interior. Bell sold the house to L.J. Kolb in 1911 and it remained in that families possession until it was sold to the Kee family in 1976.

Restoration has been an arduous yet rewarding task. We have kept in touch with the state historical department which has aided us in the remaining true to the original time period while making necessary allowances for modern life. When we bought the house it had been split into a duplex. Our first task was to return it to a single family dwelling. Doorways your walk through today were walls for many years.

Next we focused on structural necessities. A new heat plant was installed and wiring and plumbing were updated. We stripped and refinished much of the woodwork and repaired the plaster. We have replaced tile ceiling and added picture rail, installed wainscoting, created back porch cabinetry and done some floor work.

Exterior restoration commenced with a new roof and gutter system. Aluminum siding was removed exposing much of the original ornamentation. Drip cap, window sills and missing details were replaced and a five color paint scheme was applied. This was a long process as we did one side per year. The house was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1978 which insures its continued preservation.

The front porch originally wrapped around to the bay window on the south side. The second story front porch and the two back porches were open when the house was built and were closed shortly after 1911. The foyer floor cost less than \$200 installed in 1895 and commonly came as a kit from the mills in Indiana. Most of the interior woodwork is quarter sawn oak with yellow pin making up the lesser rooms. In order to match both dining room and foyer, the 5' by 8' sliding door between the rooms features different panel patterns on each side.

The larger door between the dining and living rooms was missing. We were able to salvage one nearly big enough, when the Bockwoldt house was torn down. We had it made to size, installed and refinished.

The little house in the backyard was originally the caretaker's shed in the Glidden Cemetery. It was moved here in 1978.

The year 2012 was a very exciting year for this house. First came a new cedar shingle roof with copper flashing. It was installed by the same contractor who roofed the house in 1980.

The lightning rods came down and we polished 117 years worth of weather from the copper. We replaced the missing glass balls with restoration ones, and replaced the glass in the weather vane. One of the rods was broken. We replaced it with a larger more ornate rod centered at the front of the house. We were surprised when the weather vane on the restored rod matched the original one at the back of the house nearly exactly. The house now has six working lightening rods.

Former owners built the house to the south on the same lot, and when they divided the lot to sell, they sold the driveway and the carriage house with the smaller house. In 2012 we were able to buy the property, sell the smaller house and keep the driveway and carriage house with this property.

Work on the carriage house commenced. We replaced floorboards, exposed the original doors to the south and replaced windows with the original ones work was done on the foundation and the carriage house was painted five colors to match the house.

We would like to thank the late Sylvan Goeser for sharing his knowledge and skills of the past, the late Erwin Christensen for his commitment and attention to detail, Jeff Lawhead for his craftsmanship and Ray Kacmarynski for using his many skills to help to maintain the integrity of the house.

We appreciate your interest in our home. We feel it reflects 117 years of our proud Midwestern heritage.

Francie Hutcheson & Family