Texas Historical Commission staff (AD), 12/11/2008
Official Texas Historical Medallion and 16" x 12" plaque without post for attachment to brick
Comal County (Job #08CM01) *Subject (Atlas) UTM: 14 584687E 3286031N*
Location: New Braunfels, 161 S. Castell Ave.

HINMANN HOUSE

THIS HOME'S ARCHITECTURE REFLECTS THE GERMAN INFLUENCE OF MANY OF THE AREA'S EARLY STRUCTURES. HEINRICH HINMANN PURCHASED THE PROPERTY IN JULY 1855, AND HE AND HIS WIFE TERESE (SICKOLD) RAISED TEN CHILDREN HERE. THE HOME DATES FROM CIRCA 1868 AND REMAINED A FAMILY RESIDENCE FOR MORE THAN A CENTURY, ALTHOUGH DR. A.J. HINMANN CONVERTED INTERIOR SPACES FOR HIS MEDICAL PRACTICE IN THE 1920s. THE TWO-STORY HOUSE IS BUILT OF LOAD-BEARING MASONRY WITH A LOW-SLOPING ROOF. HAND-TOOLED LIMESTONE BLOCKS FORM REGULAR COURSES AND HEAVY LINTELS AND SILLS, AND SQUARE WOOD COLUMNS SUPPORT A GALLERY PORCH WITH GEOMETRIC DESIGN RAILINGS.

RECORDED TEXAS HISTORIC LANDMARK – 2008

MARKER IS PROPERTY OF THE STATE OF TEXAS

Heinrich Hinmann House

Context

Located at 161 S. Castell Avenue, in downtown New Braunfels, Texas about two blocks from the Main Plaza is a two-story limestone house, the Heinrich Hinmann House. It is located in the middle of two old city blocks (lots 75 and 76) that were replatted in 1999.[1] The house sits in a small oasis of grass and mature trees facing Castell Avenue in the middle of a paved parking lot behind the bank, which faces San Antonio Street.

Overview

The builder of the Hinmann House is unknown but he was believed to be an immigrant stonemason trained in the traditional construction methods of Germany. The house with its two level porches is of the classical revival style; it and the property remained the same in appearance for the next 39 years although some modification was done to the detached kitchen building at the rear of the house. No exact date was found as to when the house was constructed.

The land where the Hinmann House is located today was once the home to a blacksmith shop and log house built in 1845 by Peter Arnold. A family head or male adult each would receive one town lot. The majority of the lots had a street frontage of 100 German feet (equal to about 96 English feet), and a depth of 200 German feet. Peter Arnold drew lot number 76, the site of the present house.[2] In July 1855, Peter Arnold, a blacksmith according to the 1850 census, and his wife Catrina sold Lot 76 to Heinrich Hinmann, another Blacksmith, for $550[3].

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[1] Comal County Clerk's Office Plat Records, Replat of Lot 75 & Lot 76: March 11, 1999; Vol. 13, p. 2.
[2] Haas, Oscar, History of New Braunfels and Comal County, Texas, 1844-1946, The Steck Company, Austin, Texas, Copyright 1968.
[3] Comal County Clerk's Office Land Deeds, Book D, pp. 406-7.

Although the property was sold only to Heinrich Hinmann, he had married Therese Sickold on February 8, 1854.[4] The Mayor of New Braunfels, as acting Justice of the Peace, conducted the ceremony.

The 1860, 1870, and 1880 U.S. Census listed Hinmann as a blacksmith with his wife Theresa whose entire family grew to ten children of whom only eight grew to adulthood.[5] The children were Heinrich, Adolph, Ottilie, Alexander, Karl, Friedrich (Fritz), Ernst, Gustav, Agusta, and Emilie.

In the Tax rolls of 1867[6] Heinrich Hinmann's valued property is noted as $330.00 with a listing of one horse and two cows. In the 1868 tax roll it appears that Heinrich's valued property is increased to $1200.00. Both entries list Lot 76. In the easily read 1870 tax roll Heinrich's value is listed as $1300, still including a listing of Lot 76.

Lot 75 was sold to Heinrich Hinmann, by Marianna Meixner and others, on June 11, 1872.[7]

On October 28, 1876[8], Heinrich Hinmann signed a deed of gift of the property over to his wife, Therese Hinmann. The property description includes both Lots 75 and 76.

On February 21, 1899, Heinrich Hinmann died of apoplexy and pneumonia.[9]

In 1913 a quitclaim deed was recorded. Listed as grantors were Henry Hinmann, Adolf Hinmann, Ernst Hinmann, Bertha Hinmann (widow of Alex Hinman). A.J. Hinmann, Homer Hinmann, and Laura Estess (nee Hinmann) joined with husband Ezra Estess, sole and only children of said Bertha Hinmann and Alex (deceased). Also joined in the document were

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[4] Comal County Clerk's Office Marriage Records, Book B, p. 46.
[5] Haas, Oscar, History of New Braunfels and Comal County, Texas, 1844-1946, p. 272, The 8th U.S. Census: 1860 of Comal County
[6] Comal County Tax Rolls 1867-70, New Braunfels Public Library.
[7] Comal County Clerk's Office Land Deeds, Book L, pp. 299-301.
[8] Ibid, Book N, pp. 131-132.
[9] Comal County Clerk's Office, Cemetery Records compiled by the Genealogy Society.

Augusta Schindler (nee Hinmann) and husband Frank Schindler and Emma Schleyer (nee Hinmann) joined by her husband, Ed Schleyer. Also Charley Hinmann and Gustav Hinmann of Victoria County.

This quit claim deed[10] grantors "quit claimed" all of their rights of Lot 76 over to Therese Hinmann, widow of Heinrich Hinmann. The deed was signed on the 29th of September in 1913.

On October 1,1913, Therese Hinmann granted to Dr. Alexander J. Hinmann, Lot 76.[11] Although Lot 75 was mentioned it was only used as part of the description of adjoining Lot 76. The document is a warranty deed with vendor's lien.

It appears that the quitclaim deed was dated before the warranty deed with vendor's lien, but the vendor's lien was recorded before the quitclaim deed. The quitclaim deed required many signatures from all of the family members and it is conceivable that the quitclaim deed recording was delayed to complete all of the signatures.

In November 1916, Therese Hinmann signed a release of the 1913 vendor's lien to Dr. A.J. Hinmann.[12]

In August 1961, Audrey Hinman (sic), widow and executrix of the estate of A.J. Hinman (sic), deceased granted to Amy Hinman Smith and Genevieve Hinman Harriman as trustees the property known as Dr. & Mrs. A.J. Hinman homestead property, Lot 76 & part of Lot 77. The property is bounded by Lot 75 on the southeast; Lot 75 was not included in the conveyance.[13]

[10] Comal County Clerk's Office Deed Records, Book 34, pp 584-586
[11] Ibid, Book 34, p. 280.
[12] Comal County Clerk's Office Land Records, Comal County Court House, Book 37, pp. 163-164.
[13] Comal County Clerk's Office Deed Records, Vol. 135, p. 509.

In May 1969, Amy Hinman Smith and Genevieve Hinman Harriman granted as trustees Lot 76 to New Braunfels National Bank.[14] The Hinman House was sold to the First National Bank of New Braunfels in 1958. The bank underwent ownership and name changes in the 1980s. Currently the bank name is Chase Bank.

In 1999, a replat was filed of Lot 75 and Lot 76, New City Block 1004 and established Lots 75A and 76A. The Hinmann Homestead is located on Lot 75A.[15]

On May 11, 1999, Chase Bank, formally known as: Texas Commerce Bank, formally known as: First National Bank of New Braunfels granted (by special warranty deed) the Hinmann House to the Braunfels Foundation Trust, it's present owner.[16] Sanborn Insurance Company created well-described maps of New Braunfels beginning in 1885. The grouping of Sanborn maps for the years 1885, 1891, 1896, and 1902 give a fairly accurate picture of the changes to the Hinmann House and property as well during the 19th century.

The rectangular plan had overall dimensions of 40'5" by 38'8" with later rear and side editions. The original two-story house had a small cellar and a detached kitchen in the rear. The foundations featured mortared stonewalls to a depth below the cellar floor and with the still beneath the ballroom floor being supported by stone piers. The wall construction continued up to the second story made of 20-inch thick stone masonry of squared hammered dressed native limestone. The stone was laid up with lime mortar joints in ashlars courses.[17] The first floor is supported using 7 x 7 inch roughhewn joists, which are mortised into 10 x 10 inch sills on a 3 foot

[14] Ibid, Vol. 170, pp 142-143.
[15] Comal County Map/Plat Records, Vol. 13, p. 2.
[16] Comal County Clerk's Records, Doc. # 9906012403
[17] Sanborn Maps Online, New Braunfels, TX, June 1885, September 1891, June 1896, March 1902

6 inch center. The HABS survey was prepared in 1972 when the joists for the second floor and attic were not accessible.[18]

The house began undergoing more modifications by the year 1907 indicated by the connection of the detached kitchen by a breezeway.[19] The renovations mentioned were completed while the home was owned by then widow of Heinrich Hinmann after his death in 1899.

After 1913, when the house was owned by Dr. A. J. Hinman, the renovations continued with the enclosure and transformation of this breezeway into an enclosed addition in 1922. The previous enclosure by 1930 had become a two-story addition with a bay type window addition on the southeastern side of the house. The northwestern side of the original house was given a first floor extended bay window and an additional entrance. In addition, the interior of the original house was remodeled and the front first floor rooms became Dr. Hinman's offices. The original Hinmann House was largely preserved intact as well as the originally detached kitchen.

The rear addition enclosure between the kitchen and house was a framed construction. In addition, the window sash in the house had been replaced with yet accurate replacements. The original six over six pattern of sash was maintained but utilizing heavier muntins. The window openings have stone lintels above and projecting stone sills.

The original roof pitch had not been changed from a 2 in 12-pitch with the ridged roof being covered in raised rib sheet metal and painted red. The two-story addition has a similar roof and the first floor kitchen wing an asphalted shingle roof replacement. The cornice and eaves are classical inn style, projecting 12 inches on the gable ends and 20 inches on the front eaves.

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[18] Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS TEX, 46-NEBRA, 7-). Survey number HABS TX-3253. Library of Congress, Prints and Photograph Division, Washington, D.C. 20540 USA (http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/hhh.tx0131).

[19] Sanborn Maps Online, New Braunfels, TX, October 1907, March 1912, February 1922, and August 1930.

The posts of the front porch are seemed to be original but the second floor porch railings and trim had been replaced. The six columns, solid wood 8-1/2 inch square, have simplified classical bases and caps. The end posts support heavy wood beams which carry the load of the stone masonry triangle above the porch ends. The floor of the lower porch is of flagging, squared limestone in a random pattern. The wood railing of the second story porch is of an interesting design of geometric pattern.

The interior renovations done during the period of ownership by Dr. A.H. Hinman also involved altering the original floor plan. "There is evidence that before remodeling there was a central stair hall (sic). It appears that on either side of the stair hall (sic) there were two rooms, one large and one small. When the partitions of the stair hall (sic) were removed, perhaps in the 1920s, a new stair was built in the north corner of the house.[20] The frame additions were probably built at that time. Dr. Hinman used the larger ballroom for his medical practice. The original stairway was most likely a single run, were as, the replacement is of a C-form type with winders.

The original plank flooring has been laid over with 2-1/2 inch oak flooring. The cellar has been given a concrete floor.

The ceiling and walls have been remodeled in the following ways. The ballroom and upstairs bedrooms are covered. The covering is a plaster type with a heavy "Spanish daubed" finish. The first floor ceilings are 10 feet 7 inches and second floor ceiling height come to 9 feet 9 inches.

The house was most likely heated with wood burning stoves but there is no evidence of early chimneys. The large fireplace with its flue and chimney near the center of the house were additions of the 20th century.

[20] Historic American Buildings Survey

The interior doors are all replacements of the original doors in the house when it was built. The existing interior doors are typical two panel mill stock doors.

The only original door to the Hinmann House is the second level porch entry door. The six-foot masonry opening has a pair of two panel doors with a decorative narrow transom above the entry. The main entrance door on the first floor is today a heavily molded door of Spanish style design.

The Hinmann House remained much the same as it was in 1930 through the early 1949. Dr. A.H. Hinman did make improvements and a small addition to the northeast corner of the house in the rear. This renovation was indicated in the two floor plans included in the HABS survey file TEX-3253.[21] The blueprints done for the HABS survey were dated 1972 and would indicate the last additions to the Hinman House by the last Hinman owner, which were completed between 1949 and 1958. The bank owners, from the purchase date of the Hinmann House, have made no further additions to the exterior of the house. However, during the bank ownership in the 1970s the additions to the rear of the Hinmann House made prior to 1958 were removed as was the then attached kitchen of the original home. Thus, the Hinmann house was returned to the original exterior except for the alcove addition to the northwest side of the house indicated in the February 1922 Sanborn map. The rear portion of the property is used as parking for the bank's customers and the house is well maintained and occupied by Communities in Schools of South Central Texas, Inc., a non-profit school retention agency.

In the early 2000s the interior second story was restored with the original wood floor, ceiling and walls repaired and used as expanded offices today for the same agency.

Significance

[21] Sanborn Maps Online, August 1930-December 1949.

The Hinmann family owned the property for a total of 103 years from 1855 until 1958. The house was family home during most of that time until Dr. A. J. Hinman remodeled the home to accommodate his medical practice. Whenever he had an emergency during the night, Dr. Hinmann would see the patients in the "plant room" which is still located on the west side of the house. He would lock the door to the house and open the outside door to see his patients.[22]

After the Hinmann House was bought by the bank, it continued to be used in service for the community. It was used as a meeting place for businesses and events for agencies like the local Girl Scouts during the 1970s. The Hinmann House is located in the center of the community and is used as a landmark by local residents.

Today the building houses an agency that helps south Texas youth stay in school. Every month visitors come into the Hinmann House to ask about the history of the house or to share stories of their connection to the Hinmann House. The Hinmann House would be enhanced by the bestowing of a historical marker.

[22] Frueholz conversation, January 10, 2008.

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Conversation with Fred Frueholz, MD, January 10, 2008.

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