

WINDWEHEN HOME

CONTEXT:

In 1910, Dr. Carl Victor (C.V.) Windwehen built the Queen Anne Style home at 257 East Bridge Street in New Braunfels, Comal County, Texas, as a wedding gift to his new bride, Miss Lina Anita von Coreth. (PHOTOS #1, #2, #3) Miss Coreth came from a wealthy, long-time New Braunfels family that had emigrated from Germany in the 1840s when New Braunfels was founded. Dr. Windwehen, a dentist, would practice dentistry in New Braunfels for 40 years. After the death of Dr. Windwehen, Lina lived in the home until her death at the age of 90 at which time the home was sold to Merry and Joel Saegert. Dr. and Mrs. Windwehen preserved the home during their 65 years in residence and the preservation has continued to this day by the current owners. The home was built just after the turn of the century, a time that afforded luxurious homes of this type for the affluent. The arrival of the railroads in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries spurred an economic boom in the area. The railways brought prosperity, connecting local farmers, ranchers, and business owners to other regional, state and national markets. New Braunfels emerged as one of south central Texas' significant markets and the population increased. The arrival of the railroad also resulted in a shift in building techniques from the use of local resources and simple building techniques to more decorative techniques involving prefabricated millwork, imported building materials and use of modern architectural trends and styles.¹ The Windwehen home represents a shift away from the 1800 style of home building of the early settlers toward standard forms and styles popular across the United States. In Comal County, the use of the Queen Anne Style of home from ca. 1885 to ca. 1910, is generally related to the arrival of the railroad.²

OVERVIEW:

DR. CARL VICTOR WINDWEHEN:

Dr. C.V. Windwehen was born in Washington County, Texas, on July 18, 1878, to Henry and Ida Windwehen. His primary schooling took place in Washington County and higher education at Blinn College in Brenham, Texas. He attended the Tulane Dental College in New Orleans and passed the Texas State Board of Dental Examiners on January 12, 1898. His dental career began in Cooper and Greenville, Texas, and then continued in Lockhart, Texas, after his marriage to Miss Charlotte Stocker of Fayette County in 1902. One daughter, Stella, was born to C.V. and Charlotte. After the death of Charlotte in 1905, C.V. moved with daughter, Stella, and his mother, Ida, to New Braunfels.³ In the September 1, 1906, New Braunfels edition of the Southwestern Telegraph and

Telephone Company directory, Dr. Windwehen's office is listed and was possibly the only dentist in New Braunfels.⁴ In the early 1910 Comal County Census, C.V.'s mother, Ida Windwehen, is listed as head of the household, age 56, with C.V. Windwehen as son, age 31 and granddaughter Stella Windwehen, age six.⁵ It is unknown where mother, son and granddaughter lived prior to the 1910 home's construction.

MISS LINA A. CORETH:

On August 24, 1910, C.V. married Miss Lina Coreth.⁶ (PHOTO #4) Lina was born on May 29, 1885, to Minna Zesch and Franz Coreth in Comal County just outside of New Braunfels. Lina's father, Franz, was born in Houston in 1846. Her grandfather, Ernst von Coreth, an Austrian nobleman, had just come from Europe with his wife Agnes Erler, where they subsequently traveled to New Braunfels and settled near their Mission Hill property on Wald Road. Ernst had obtained the Mission Hill property from friend, John O. Meusebach, who was the Adelsverein (German Immigration Company) Commissioner General. Ernst had a daughter, Agnes (who was named after her mother and was Lina's aunt), who would later marry Meusebach.⁷

Lina grew up at Mission Hill, but attended school in New Braunfels. Friends would often visit the Mission Hill family ranch on weekends to ride horses and gather dewberries. The three mile buggy ride from the ranch to school took about thirty minutes. Lina completed grade school and high school in eight years. After graduating from school in New Braunfels, Lina took additional correspondence courses. Lina loved flowers, weaving, playing bridge, cooking, ceramics, oil painting and watercolor. Her gardens were beautiful.⁸ Lina had an older sister, Agnes Coreth Altgelt (there were 3 generations of women named Agnes), born January 26, 1884, a younger brother, Rudolph George Rochette Coreth, born January 3, 1892, and possibly two younger siblings that died at an early age.⁹

After marriage to C.V. Windwehen (PHOTO #5) and a honeymoon to Mexico City,¹⁰ Lina and C.V. settled into their new opulent Queen Anne home where daughters Mabel (Faust) and Florence (Eikel) would be born.¹¹ (PHOTOS #6, #7) In the 1920 Comal County Census, Carl V. Windwehen, age 41, was listed as a Dentist and head of the household with Minna (Lina), age 34, as wife; Stella, age 16, as daughter; Mabel, age five, as daughter; and Florence, age one, as daughter.¹² Carl Victor Windwehen died at home on July 23, 1946, at the age of 68, following a long series of illnesses. Lina Coreth Windwehen lived to the age of 90, and died on December 12, 1975.¹³ Mrs. Windwehen owned the home until her death. The home and property known as Lot

234 and New City Block 2013, City of New Braunfels, Comal County, Texas, was sold to Merry and Joel Saegert on June 15, 1976, for the sum of \$22,400.¹⁴

WINDWEHEN HOME AND SURROUNDING PROPERTY:

According to Oscar Haas, the only structure on the lot prior to the Windwehen Home was a “shack not worth saving”. The lot #234 was an original New Braunfels lot deeded to Theodore Herber at the founding of New Braunfels.¹⁵ C.V. Windwehen bought the property on March 17, 1910, from the heirs of Anna Soefje for the sum of \$2400.¹⁶ The home proudly displays the New Braunfels 150 Jahre (150th Year Anniversary of the founding of New Braunfels), German Heritage Center of Texas plaque signifying that the property is one of significance and indicating that it was an original town lot.¹⁷ The home has also been awarded the Historic Landmark designation by the City of New Braunfels.¹⁸ The 1910 home continues to be domestic in use. It is unfortunately unknown who the actual home builder was or from where the materials were obtained.

The home is a Queen Anne, modified L-plan with a center passage, wood frame construction on pier and beam. (PHOTO #8 collage) The original wall façade is primarily, double drop, pine siding #117, with three bays on three of the four sides of the home. It has a hipped roof with dormer gables. The roofing materials are embossed shingles and the front porch has boxed metal gutters. The home is one story with an extensive attic that was finished in 1989, to include two bedrooms, a sewing room and a bathroom. There are two brick chimneys visible from the outside, however, the chimneys were originally used for pot-bellied stoves that are no longer used and the interior walls are sealed. The original windows are fixed, wood sash, casement and double hung. The original front door is a single door with transom and sidelights. The front porch has a shed roof, classical columns, and spindle-work. An extension was added to the porch along with solarium (sleeping porch) and nursery sometime between 1910 and 1920, on the left side of the house. This addition was a necessary enlargement with the birth of the Windwehen children.¹⁹ The home maintains the original outer walls of its 1910 construction with the exception of the 1910-1920 addition. The addition of a Palladian window on the back wall offers a view from the kitchen into the backyard. There is a partial concrete basement, 10 ft. by 17 ft. with access from the first floor. (PHOTO #9) At one time, the home was heated by a coal-burning stove located in the basement and the coal chutes are still visible on the back exterior wall of the home. (PHOTO #10) The heating system was converted to natural gas in the 1940s, electric central heat in 1978, and electric central air was added in 1982.

There are currently three outbuildings present on the property. The washhouse located directly behind the home was built in 1910 and still has the date etched in the flooring at the entrance. It is constructed of wood frame with a shed porch. The dimensions are 12 ft. by 20 ft. with a 6.5 ft. by 18 ft. porch. Located on the porch is the original fireplace, chimney, and washtub used for clothes washing. (PHOTO #11) There is a garage on the north side behind the home that is 18 ft. by 12 ft. It is also wood frame construction. It is unknown when the garage was built, however, visible in the garage is knob and tube electrical wiring and a hand-blown light bulb. (PHOTO #12) The third building is 25 ft. by 32 ft. and is a combination sunroom and two-car garage that was built in the 1980s. This structure was built where the Windwehen family tennis court was located at the back fence. (PHOTO #13) There are extensive gardens on the property that are still maintained by the Saegerts. Mrs. Windwehen was an avid gardener and member of garden clubs.

The inside of the home consists of a central corridor with a parlor, dining room and kitchen on the right, with living room, solarium (sleeping porch), bathroom and bedroom/bathroom combination on the left. (PHOTO #14) The first floor is approximately 2,500 square feet. Towards the back of the house extending from the central corridor, is a back entry that has a wrap-around staircase. Originally there was a steep staircase accessing the attic. When the attic was finished, the staircase was remodeled. (PHOTO #15) The pine floors have been refinished and linoleum removed. The cheesecloth with wallpaper has been removed and replaced with drywall and wainscoting. (PHOTO #16) Most of the doors and transoms are original and the tiger striped hardware remains along with several light fixtures. In the 1940s, craftsman style built-in cabinets and shelves were added to the dining room and living area. The indoor bathroom (bath 2) is original to the structure.²⁰ The kitchen was remodeled in 1983 along with the first floor bedroom, adding closets and a laundry area.

Grandson Jerry Faust remembers the home from the 1950s. After entering the front door, the living room or parlor was on the right with a large opening to the formal dining room and then the kitchen. The entry hall had bookshelves and the piano along with tables and chairs. From the entry hall, the master bedroom was on the left, the bathroom with separate room for the toilet and then the second bedroom. The sleeping porch was to the left of the front bedroom. Jerome's Oma (Lina) called it the sleeping porch because in the summer, everybody slept there as there were beds there all of the time (there was no air-conditioning).²¹ (PHOTOS #17, #18) Granddaughter Kay

Faust Specht recalls that Oma had at least four, white, wrought-iron beds on the sleeping porch and she could hear the Catholic Church bells ring at night and remembered the blooming Queen's Crown. Kay reported that all of Oma's babies were born in the house, two daughters and a little boy who died at birth. Daughters Stella and Florence were both married in the parlor. Kay was present at Florence's wedding and remembered that it was wartime and Florence wore a street-length dress and had an orchid corsage. She recalls many candles. Kay's mom, Mabel, was married in the Methodist Church but had the reception at the house. Kay's mother told her about Opa making agarita wine in a large barrel in the basement and sometimes beer. Everyone in the house was awakened one night by a sound like gunshots, only to discover it was the tops popping off of Opa's homemade beer. Kay's mother (Mabel) told stories of how Opa played Santa and the girls never saw the Christmas tree until Christmas Eve. Opa set out the presents, lit the tree and would ring a bell and then slip out before the door was opened by the girls. Kay recalls beautiful, formal dinners in the home at the large, oak table, set with a white damask cloth, silver, crystal and fine china. A large, tiffany-type chandelier hung over the beautiful table. The feelings of family bonding and enjoying German traditions were very strong.²² Granddaughter Carol Faust Patton recalls that she and Oma would have tea (except it was coffee) parties in the afternoon. Oma had a beautiful demitasse collection and Carol was allowed to select the special one she wanted to use that day. Oma would pour milk, a little sugar and even a smaller amount of coffee left over from breakfast into the cup. They would sit at the small table in the kitchen and have a "Kaffee Klatsch" (German meaning coffee talk). Carol was fortunate to inherit the demitasse collection and has it on display in her home on one of the bookcase/secretary pieces that was in the hallway of Oma's home.²³ Grandson, John D. Eikel, also recalls sleeping on the screened porch when he and his sister, Sue, would spend the night with their Oma. This was in the mid to late 1950's and Oma was then a widow. The basement left a big impression on him also. He remembers the coal stove with a duct that brought the heat to each room in the house and it reminded him of a huge spider at the time. As he got older, he would walk down to Hollmig's Drive-In and pick up hamburgers for dinner with his Oma. His fondest memory is when he and his new wife, Sherri, actually lived in the back of the house which had been converted into a small apartment. It was the summer of 1972 and the apartment had a bedroom, bath and small kitchen. During the school year, Oma rented the apartment to a schoolteacher that taught in the Canyon School District. While living there, Oma

had a small table set up in her bedroom where they would play dominoes. It was a time of sweet memories for the three of them.²⁴

SIGNIFICANCE:

The Windwehen Home is associated with the lives of the Windwehen family who were significant in the history of New Braunfels and embodies distinctive characteristics of a type of construction during the turn-of-the-century period of development in New Braunfels history. It represents a period of home building that occurred at the turn of the century resulting from a change in the economy and industry in Texas and America. The home was built with modern conveniences such as indoor lighting and plumbing. It is in an excellent state of repair and maintains the external appearance from the time it was built with the early addition of the sunroom (sleeping porch). The home is an exemplary model of preservation.

ATTACHMENT #1: Site map and 1922 Sanborn maps

ATTACHMENT #2: Deed record with property description

ATTACHMENT #3: Floor plan

ATTACHMENT #4-8: Exterior Photos

Narrative, site map and floor plan compiled by Merry and Joel Saegert, Bob Warnecke, Sami Devillier, Gay Wimberley and Karen Boyd.

¹ Hardy-Heck-Moore (HHM), Comal County Historic Resources Survey, June 2013, p. 25-26.

² HHM, p. 52.

³ *The New Braunfels Herald* 1946 Windwehen Obituary from the Sophienburg Archives.

⁴ *The Southwestern Telegraph and Telephone Company*, September 1, 1906 New Braunfels directory from the Sophienburg Archives.

⁵ Comal County 1910 Census, Sophienburg Archives.

⁶ Comal County Marriage Book "I" 1904-1912, Sophienburg Archives.

⁷ King, Irene Marshall, *John O. Meusebach German Colonizer in Texas*, University of Texas Press, Austin and London, page 125.

⁸ Jones, Betty *New Braunfels Herald-Zeitung* 1973 article "Hobbies, Travels, History Fill Mrs. Windwehen's Life".

⁹ Ernst Coreth Family Book, Sophienburg Archives.

¹⁰ Jones *Herald-Zeitung* article.

¹¹ Ernst Coreth Family Book, Sophienburg Archives.

¹² Comal County 1920 Census, Sophienburg Archives.

¹³ Comal Cemetery Book, Sophienburg Archives, p. 23.

¹⁴ Comal County Warranty Deed vol 240, pages 138-140, no. 148255.

¹⁵ Oscar Haas, local New Braunfels historian, interview by Merry and Joel Saegert in the 1970s.

¹⁶ Comal County Warranty Deed #428, pages 563-566.

¹⁷ Plaque affixed near front door in celebration of the 150th Anniversary of the founding of New Braunfels.

¹⁸ City of New Braunfels Historic Landmark Plaque affixed near front door.

¹⁹ Isabel Ludwig, neighbor, interview by Merry and Joel Saegert in 1976 and Sanborn map, 1922 shows the addition, Sophienburg Archives.

²⁰ Isabel Ludwig, neighbor, interview by Merry and Joel Saegert in 1976.

²¹ Jerome Faust, grandson, recollections, August 2013.

²² Kay Faust Specht, granddaughter recollections, August 2013.

²³ Carol Faust Patton, granddaughter, recollections, August 2013.

²⁴ John D. Eikel, grandson, recollections, August 2013.

PHOTO #1 View of 1910 home prior to 1910-1920 addition with Dr. and Mrs. Windwehen in the auto called "Tin Lizzie"



PHOTO #2 View of 1910 home prior to the addition



PHOTO #3 View of the home after the addition of the 1910-1920 sunroom(sleeping porch) and bedroom



PHOTO #4 Lina Coreth 1910 photo



PHOTO #5 C.V. and Lina Windwehen 1910 photo



PHOTO #6 Daughters Florence, Stella and Mabel In 1928



PHOTO #7 Lina with daughter Mabel



PHOTO #8 Collage of 2013 photos of the exterior



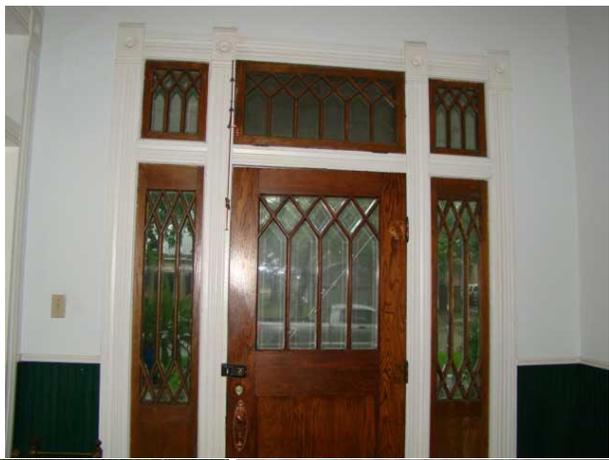


PHOTO #9 Unfinished basement



PHOTO #10 Coal chute



PHOTO #11 Collage of 1910 wash house



PHOTO #12 Original ca. 1910 garage





Ceiling in ca. 1910 garage with wiring and bulb

PHOTO #13 Sunroom and 2 car garage built in the 1980s

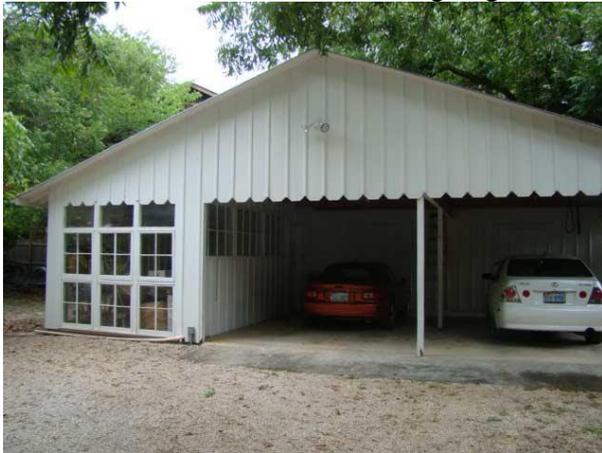


PHOTO #14 Collage of interior of the first floor



Center hall just inside entry



Parlor with interior of front bay window



Dining Room



Kitchen





Living room/sunroom



Original Bathroom (bath 2 in floor plan)

PHOTO #15 Staircase to finished attic along with attic photos

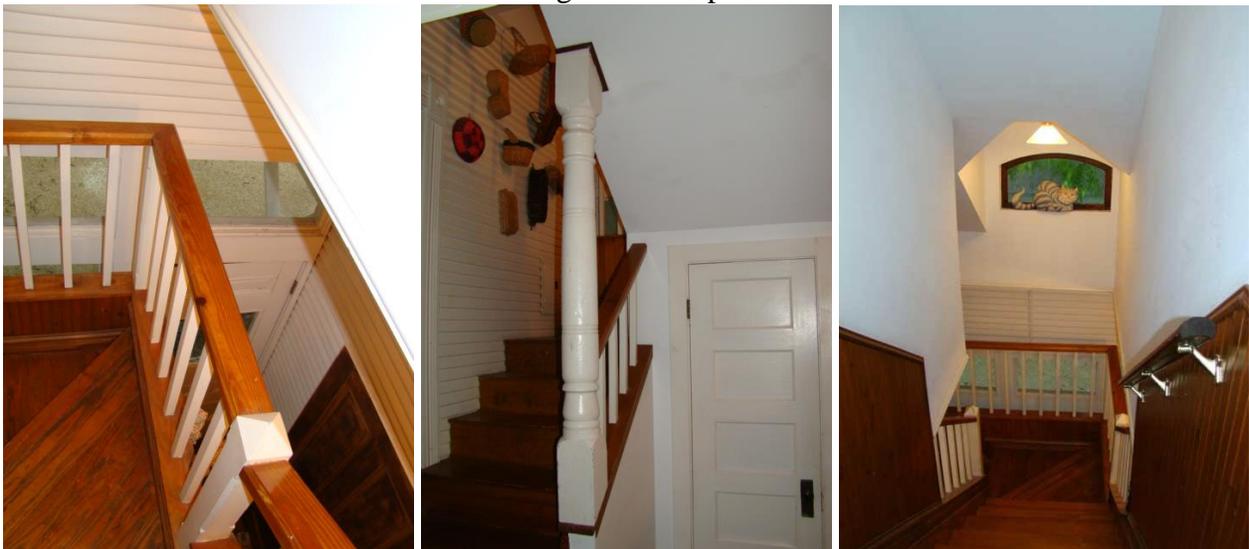




PHOTO #16 Doors and transoms



PHOTO #17 Lina Windwehen playing the piano in entry hall PHOTO #18 Bookshelf in hall way