

## EDMONDS HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

# THE PRESERVATIONIST

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## THE PALMER HOUSE

The Palmer House, an excellent example of Queen Anne style, was constructed in 1895 at 820 Maple Street for Dr. W. C. Palmer, a local dentist. Dr. Palmer lived in the house until 1914 when he moved to California in poor health. The next year he moved to Baltimore Maryland where he died on June 17, 1915.

After the Palmers moved, the house was rented for a short time to Matt Engels. Engels quickly became a prominent citizen. He was elected mayor in 1922 and served for two years. In 1929 he again served the public as Edmonds Fire Chief.

In late 1919 or early 1920 the house was purchased by James and Nell Telfer in a "tax sale". Mr. Telfer was something of a local character, with a thick Scottish brogue. He worked as a tailor at Frederick and Nelson, was a Mason, and his picture still hangs in the Edmonds Masonic Temple. Nell worked for the Edmonds School District.

In 1950 the Telfers sold the house to the Jenkins family for \$11,000. They recalled



**The Palmer House (left), circa 1910.** (photo courtesy of the Edmonds Historic Museum)

that Edmonds realtor Larry Hubbard got them a "great deal".

When the house was built in 1895 Maple St. didn't reach it and the house was connected to Dayton via a boardwalk.

Even in 1950 Maple Street was a dirt road and not connected to Dayton via Eighth Avenue as today. The Jenkins children Phil, Carole, Tom, and Marilyn forged a trail through the forested hill between Maple and

Dayton as a short cut to the Edmonds Grade School (now the Francis Anderson Center) to save walking down to Seventh.

On the east side of the house was a natural spring and pond that became a beloved summer playground for the Jenkins children. But winter didn't mean an end to play. The house had a huge attic, reached by a flight of stairs from the brothers' bedroom closet. The girls remember their brothers creating

haunted houses in the attic with bed sheets, and running a string from the attic window down into the yard to "fly" their model airplanes. They recall the chalk inscription from 1895 on a beam in the attic which says "The Old Man's digging in the Ditch, 1895, WMV." The inscription remains to this day, but the author is unknown. Their mother warned them not to touch it in case the house was one day "historic". They still remember lying awake and



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The mission of The Edmonds Historic Preservation Commission is to actively encourage the conservation and retention of the city's historic resources through initiating and maintaining a register of historic places. Toward this end, the Commission works to raise community awareness of the city's history and historic resources and serves as the city's primary resource in matters of history, historic planning, and preservation.

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listening to the sound of cars rumbling over the wooden planks of the old Edmonds ferry dock.

The lot was large and the family had chickens, ducks, geese, a dog and cats. Their mother would kill the chickens, boil them with feathers still on, and have the girls pluck the feathers. To this day they still remember the smell of boiling chickens. The girls recall two geese, Napoleon and Josephine, who became Thanksgiving and Christmas dinners respectively! It was a real homestead, remembered fondly by the children as "The house that made me".

Carole still lives in Edmonds 60 years later, just a block or so from the house.

The Jenkins subdivided the lot before selling the house to Jack and Betty Cooper in late 1965. Mr. Jack Cooper was the Edmonds Fire Chief and the father of Mike Cooper,



The Palmer House today, the current home of Mayor Mike Cooper and his family.

per, current Mayor and former Edmonds and Shoreline firefighter.

Mayor Cooper is proud to be the second Edmonds mayor, to occupy the house. "Being in public service to Edmonds while living in one of its best known historic homes is a great honor," Mayor Cooper says. "Being part of Edmonds' rich history makes me doubly proud."

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Starting at the turn of the century the steamer City of Everett made three daily round trips between Seattle, Edmonds and Everett. But better roads meant fewer boat passengers, the service was discontinued, and the City of Everett was sunk in Lake Union in 1967.

(photo courtesy of The Edmonds Historical Museum)