

Spokane Register of Historic Places Nomination

Spokane City/County Historic Preservation Office, City Hall, Sixth Floor
808 W. Spokane Falls Boulevard, Spokane, WA 99201

1. Name of Property

Historic Name **DANSON-CHASE HOUSE**

2. Location

Street & Number 746 East 23rd Avenue
City, State, Zip Code Spokane, WA 99203
Parcel Number 35294.0701

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agricultural	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both		<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> residential
	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes, restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes, unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other

4. Owner of Property

Name Jeffrey & Martha Eilertsen
Street & Number 746 East 23rd Avenue
City, State, Zip Code Spokane, WA 99203
Telephone Number/E-mail mheilertsen@hotmail.com, 474-0036

5. Location of Legal Description

Courthouse, Registry of Deeds Spokane County Courthouse
Street Number 1116 West Broadway
City, State, Zip Code Spokane, WA 99260
County Spokane

6. Representation of Existing Surveys

Title City of Spokane Historic Landmarks Survey
Date Federal____ State____ County____ Local 1979
Location of Survey Records Spokane Historic Preservation Office

Final draft reviewed by SHLC on July 16, 2008

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(see nomination, section 8)

Condition
 excellent
 good
 fair
 deteriorated
 ruins
 unexposed

Check One
 unaltered
 altered
Check One
 original site
 moved & date _____

8. Spokane Register Categories and Statement of Significance

Applicable Spokane Register of Historic Places Categories: Mark "x" on one or more for the categories that qualify the property for the Spokane Register listing:

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of Spokane history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory history.

Narrative statement of significance is found on one or more continuation sheets.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography is found on one or more continuation sheets.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property	Less than one acre.
Verbal Boundary Description	Manito Park 2 nd Addition, Block 15, Lot 1
Verbal Boundary Justification	Nominated property includes entire parcel and urban legal description.

11. Form Prepared By

Name and Title	Linda Yeomans, Consultant
Organization	Historic Preservation Planning
Street, City, State, Zip Code	501 West 27 th Avenue, Spokane, WA 99203
Telephone Number	509-456-3828
Email Address	lindayeomans@comcast.net
Date Final Nomination Heard	July 16, 2008

12. Additional Documentation

Map	City/County of Spokane current plat map.
Photographs and Slides	Black & white prints, color images on CD

13. Signature of Owner(s)

Name

Jan R. Steh...

Name

14. For Official Use Only

Date Received

Attest

Date Heard

8/8/08

City Clerk

Kevin R. P...

Commission Decision

Approved as to Form

Assistant City Attorney

Michael R. P...

Council/Board Action

Approved

Date

8/8/08



We hereby certify that this property has been listed in the Spokane Register of Historic Places.

City of Spokane

or

CHAIR, Spokane County Commissioners

CHAIR, Spokane City/County Historic Landmarks Commission

Kristen Guggin

11/26/2008

OFFICER, Spokane City/County Historic Preservation Officer

Spokane City/County Historic Preservation Office

Sixth Floor, City Hall, W. 808 Spokane Falls Boulevard, Spokane, WA 99201

PROPERTY DESCRIPTION

Built in 1931, and listed in 1997 on the National Register of Historic Places as a contributing property of the Rockwood National Register Historic District in Spokane, WA, the Danson-Chase House is a fine example of the Tudor Revival style with English cottage “Storybook” influence.¹ Larger than most surrounding lots in the district, the site on which the Danson-Chase House is built comprises over one-third of an acre and wraps around the southwest corner of Twenty-Third Avenue and Garfield Road, a prominent neighborhood intersection in the center of the Rockwood neighborhood. Tudor Revival style-defining features manifested at the Danson-Chase house include the home’s one and one-half story side-gable house form, asymmetrical design, steeply pitched roof, multiple prominent front-facing gables, massive brick chimney, recessed front entrance, multi-paned windows, and textured “raked” brick veneer. Whimsical cottage and storybook-style influence is artfully displayed in prominent and decorative architectural details such as a steeply pitched center-projecting front-facing cross-gable with a tall, narrow, leaded-glass diamond-paned “Rapine window” in the gable peak; an arched front entrance with a deeply recessed corbelled brick surround; a small black wrought-iron “peek-a-boo” window in an arched mahogany front door; a tall stepped front-facing chimney with decorative pilasters and corbelled chimney caps; and a rubblemix face of black basalt at the foundation wall. Interior Tudor Revival-style features are illustrated by a solid oak hardwood floor, mahogany doors and woodwork which have been burnished to a rich patina, a focal-point fireplace in the living room, and glazed ceramic tile at the fireplace and in the bathroom. Gold, green, and aquamarine colors applied to fanciful *bas relief* designs are depicted in the mottled ceramic tiles. A single-car garage is located behind the home in the southeast corner of the property. Built in 1931 with designs and materials that mimic the house, the garage is clad with textured raked brick veneer and has a very steeply pitched roof with a prominent front-facing gable. The entire parcel upon which the house and garage are built is surrounded on three sides by an original black basalt retaining wall which is made of particularly culled vesicular basalt, a defining feature of the property. Two original vesicular black basalt pedestal birdbaths were also constructed along with the rock retaining wall, and are located in front of the east and south elevations of the house. The Danson-Chase House, garage, and rock retaining wall are well-preserved and retain excellent exterior architectural integrity in original location, design, materials, workmanship, and association as an early 20th-century single-family property built in 1931 in the Rockwood National Register Historic District.

CURRENT APPEARANCE & CONDITION***Site***

The Danson-Chase House is located in the Manito Park Second Addition on Lot 1, Block 15, at the southwest corner of South Garfield Road and East Twenty-Third Avenue in the south half of the Rockwood National Register Historic District. The pie-shaped lot

¹ Gellner, Arrol and Douglas Keister. *Storybook Style: America’s Whimsical Homes of the Twenties*. New York: Penguin Group, 2001. pp. 1-19.

loosely resembles a triangle and measures 150 feet at its east border at Garfield Road, 102 feet at its north border at Twenty-Third Avenue, 140 feet at its west border adjacent next to a historic single-family home, and 40 feet at its south border adjacent next to a historic single-family home for a total of 0.31 acres.² The building site is elevated about four feet above street and sidewalk grade at the northeast corner and is surrounded by a black basalt rock retaining wall at the north, east, and south borders of the property. The house is built in the center of the lot, faces north, and is framed by mature evergreen and deciduous trees, a manicured lawn, and the basalt rock retaining wall. A single-car garage is located just behind the house in the far southwest corner of the lot. A paved concrete driveway extends from Garfield Road west to the east face of the garage. The Danson-Chase House is surrounded by historically and architecturally prominent homes which were built during the first four decades of the 20th century and are designated contributing resources in the Rockwood National Register Historic District.

Garage

As recorded in a Spokane City building permit, the Danson-Chase garage was built in 1931 along with the house and rock retaining wall. The garage measures 16 feet wide, 22 feet deep, and faces east. It has a steeply pitched front-facing gable roof, is clad with raked brick veneer, and has an overhead metal garage door at the east façade. A pedestrian door opens into the garage at the north elevation, and a small multi-paned window is located next east of the door. The roof is covered with composition shingles and the foundation is made of poured concrete. Well-preserved, the garage is being nominated to the Spokane Register of Historic Places as a contributing historic resource of the property.

Basalt Rock Retaining Wall

A prominent defining feature of the property is a 192-foot-long rock retaining wall constructed in 1931. The wall is made of vesicular black basalt, measures from two to four feet in height, and rings the property along the south, east, and north perimeters. Although there are areas with exposed mortar at joints between rocks, the wall was originally constructed using the dry stack method with blind mortar joints hidden between and behind face rocks. Decorative features of the rock wall include a course of pointed rocks at the top of the wall which resembles the pointed pickets of a picket fence, massive square gate posts which mark the front porch and driveway entrances, random vesicles (holes) that pit the black basalt rock, and the wall's curved design as it wraps around the large pie-shaped corner lot. The wall is in good to excellent condition and is being nominated to the Spokane Register of Historic Places as a contributing historic resource of the property.

House Exterior

The Danson-Chase House is a one and one-half-story dwelling with an irregular rectangular footprint. The house faces northeast and measures 37 feet wide and 34 feet

² Spokane County Assessor Records. Spokane County Courthouse, Spokane, WA.

deep. It supports a steeply pitched cross-gable roof with composition shingles. A small brick chimney rises from the south center roof slope, and a large prominent chimney is located at the north façade of the house. The roof has a shallow overhang with boxed eaves and cornice returns in gable ends. Except for dormers, the house is completely clad with a veneer of raked red bricks laid in stretcher bond with deep concave mortar joints (the deep joints prominently define the outline of the masonry veneer by producing dark shadows around each brick). A watertable is formed with a course of vertically placed bricks which ring the perimeter of the house and separate the first floor from a black basalt rubblemix foundation. Fenestration patterns are asymmetrical and include a combination of mostly original leaded-glass fixed, leaded-glass casement, and 6/1 and 8/1 multi-paned double-hung wood-sash windows with original wavy glazing. Window sills are made of brick.

North Facade

The property features at least two distinct focal points: 1) the rock retaining wall, and 2) the north face of the house. The home's north façade is distinguished with an asymmetrical design, a steeply pitched cross-gable roof with a front-facing steeply pitched center projecting cross-gable, and a prominent massive brick chimney which is located in the west ell formed by the projecting cross-gable. The roof is covered with composition shingles and supports two wood shingle-clad, front-facing gabled dormers on either side of the center cross-gable. Reminiscent of massive brick chimneys seen in 19th-century British row houses and English countryside estates, the chimney on the Danson-Chase House is made of red raked brick and is prominently large, tall, and stepped with a recessed panel design. The chimney rises past the center cross-gable and has a large corbelled chimney cap. The entire north façade of the house is clad in textured raked red brick with prominent concave mortar joints. The foundation wall is made of poured concrete with vesicular black basalt rubblemix face rock. A watertable course of vertical bricks separates the first floor of the house from the rubblemix foundation. The center projecting cross-gable has an arched recessed front entrance with a corbelled brick surround, a tall narrow leaded-glass diamond-paned casement window next east of the front entrance, and another tall narrow leaded-glass diamond-paned casement window above the door in the center of the gable peak. An original wrought-iron and glass porch light is attached to the wall next west of the front entrance, and an original brass mailbox is inset in the wall next east of the front entrance. An 8/1 multi-paned double-hung wood-sash window pair is located west of the center projecting cross-gable, and another matching window pair is located east of the cross-gable. A concrete walkway curves from steps in the rock retaining wall south through a manicured lawn to concrete steps that lead up to a concrete porch at the front entrance.

East Elevation

Although it is hidden by mature evergreen and deciduous trees and an evergreen hedge, the east elevation of the house faces Garfield Road and might be considered a secondary façade elevation of the property. The east elevation is distinguished with a cross-gable

roof and a lower projecting cross-gable which both are articulated with cornice returns. A multi-paned single-hung wood-sash tripartite window is located next north of the back entrance at the first floor, an 8/1 multi-paned double-hung wood-sash window pair is located north of the cross-gable at the first floor, and a narrow 6/1 multi-paned double-hung wood-sash window is located at the second floor in the gable field. A small narrow louvered vent is located in each of the two gable peaks. The east elevation is completely clad with raked red brick while the foundation is made of vesicular black basalt face rock.

South Elevation

The south, rear elevation is, like the rest of the home, clad with red raked brick veneer at the first and second floors, and vesicular black basalt face rock at the foundation. It is distinguished with a cross-gable which extends nine feet out from the planar wall surface. The cross-gable has cornice returns, a 6/1 multi-paned window pair at the first floor, and a narrow arched door in the gable field at the second floor. A protective storm window covers the second-floor door, and an original wrought-iron porch light is located above the entrance (originally, the door opened out onto a black wrought-iron balcony which was attached to the house but removed in 1949). The foundation has three basement windows, all original metal-sash pivot units.

West Elevation

The west elevation of the house features the home's cross-gable roof, cornice returns, symmetrical fenestration patterns with three pairs of 6/1 multi-paned double-hung wood-sash windows (two at the first floor and one in the gable field), a small narrow louvered vent in the gable peak, raked red brick veneer at the first and second floors, and rubblemix vesicular black basalt face rock over a poured concrete foundation wall. A watertable separates the foundation from the first floor and is formed by a course of vertically oriented bricks.

House Interior

According to Spokane County Tax Assessor records, the first floor of the house contains 1,408 square feet, the second floor contains 940 square feet, and the basement contains 600 square feet of finished space. At the front entrance on the north façade, an arched door made of Philippine mahogany hardwood³ opens into a small vestibule. The door is original and retains an original black wrought-iron "peek-a-boo" safety window and an original metal door handle and hardware. The vestibule opens east into a small cloakroom which is illuminated by a small narrow multi-paned casement window. A built-in bench seat is located opposite the window in the cloakroom. Another built-in bench seat is located on the cloakroom's west wall by the door and has a lift-top with a recessed brass ring pull. Like the door, the woodwork and built-ins are made of

³ Specifications for the Danson-Chase House were written by architect, George Rasque, in 1931, and specify the front door as "Phillipine mahogany hardwood." Eilertsen Collection, Jeff & Martha Eilertsen, 746 E. 23rd Avenue, Spokane, WA.

Philippine mahogany hardwood. The floor in the vestibule and cloakroom is covered with glazed ceramic tile.

The vestibule opens south into a large living room/dining room which spans the entire width of the house from east to west. A wide arched spandrel helps separate the living room from the dining room. A small arched recessed bay is located next south of the spandrel in the living room and holds a built-in cabinet. A fireplace is located in the center of the north wall in the living room and is considered a focal point of the room. Unique to the Danson-Chase House, the fireplace mantel, surround, and hearth are all made of glazed ceramic tile. The tile is colored with soft hues of gold, rust-brown, tan, and aquamarine, and is comprised of squares and rectangles in random sizes from two to six-inches. The woodwork in the living and dining room is mahogany, the floor is oak hardwood, and the walls and ceilings are original lathe-and-plaster construction.

The living room opens south to a central interior hallway on the first floor which leads north to a bathroom, west to a bedroom in the northwest corner of the house, west to a bedroom at the center west wall, and south to a kitchen in the southwest corner of the house. The hallway also contains an enclosed stairway that ascends to the second floor. The bathroom on the first floor contains original white porcelain fixtures, glazed ceramic tile floor, and glazed ceramic tile wainscoting around the walls and bathtub enclosure. The tiled wainscoting features soft and tan and green-colored tiles that are embellished with a wave pattern and round bull nose ledge at the upper edge of the wainscoting. The kitchen was remodeled in 2007 with built-in wood casework, a granite-like countertop, a built-in bookcase, and a built-in window seat by the back door. The floor in the hall, two bedrooms, and kitchen is made of oak hardwood, the woodwork features a combination of painted and finished mahogany and fruitwood, and the walls and ceilings are mostly original lathe-and-plaster construction.

The second floor has a long hallway which opens to a bedroom in the northeast corner of the house, a bedroom in the northwest corner, and a small office or sewing room at the south wall. A small arched door opens to the exterior from the south wall of the office/sewing room; this door originally opened onto a wrought-iron balcony which was removed in 1949. A storage room with a built-in linen closet is located along the east wall on the second floor, and a full bathroom is located between the two bedrooms. The bathroom retains original built-in cupboards and cabinets along the north wall.

The basement is partially finished with a family room, bedroom, and also contains a laundry room, mechanical room, and storage. The house is heated by the original hot water radiator system which was fired by oil but is now fired by gas. The basement floor is poured concrete.

ORIGINAL APPEARANCE & SUBSEQUENT MODIFICATIONS

The original appearance of the Danson-Chase House is pictured in c. 1931 blueprints which were produced by the home's architect, George M. Rasque.⁴ The house was built as per Rasque's plans and specifications, and retains nearly all of the original designs depicted on the plans. Exterior exceptions include a missing wrought-iron balcony at the second floor at the back of the house (south elevation), a back entrance which was enclosed at the southeast corner of the house, and a composition roof which replaced an original wood shingle roof. Interior exceptions include remodels in the northwest first-floor bedroom, kitchen, back porch entrance, and second-floor bathroom.

Changes to the house include the following:

- 1949* Wood stairs were built under an original wrought-iron balcony at the rear, west elevation of the house.
- 1953* The wood stairs and the wrought-iron balcony were removed. A glass window was installed over the door at the second floor where the balcony was attached.
- 1970s* The kitchen and upstairs bathroom were remodeled.
- 1993* A composition roof was installed. The exterior trim was repainted.
- 2007* The kitchen was remodeled which included window replacements on the east wall and south elevations (a tripartite window with three multi-paned wood-sash units was replaced and a single multi-paned wood-sash unit was replaced—all new windows are multi-paned single-hung wood-sash units which are near duplications of the original windows they replaced). A recessed back porch at the southeast corner of the house was enclosed and has a new wood door. The interior of the house was repainted. An oak hardwood floor was installed in the kitchen.

The Danson-Chase House is in excellent condition and retains excellent exterior integrity in original location, design, materials, workmanship, and association as a single-family home built in 1931 in the Rockwood National Register Historic District.

⁴ Original blueprints and specifications from 1931 are owned by Jeff & Martha Eilertsen, current homeowners of the Danson-Chase House.

Areas of Significance	Architecture, Neighborhood Development
Period of Significance	1931-1953
Built Date	1931
Architect	George M. Rasque
Builder	Peter J. Young

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Built in 1931, the Danson-Chase House is a fine depiction of the Tudor Revival style with English cottage “Storybook” influence. The property was listed in 1997 on the National Register of Historic Places as a contributing resource of the Rockwood National Register Historic District, one of Spokane’s most historically and architecturally prominent residential neighborhoods. The house was built for Robert J. Danson, a noted Spokane attorney, and his wife, Ethel E. Danson, and was owned by the Danson-Chase family for more than 20 years.⁵ Robert Danson founded and organized at least four law firms in Spokane and was noted for his “work in the courts,” “individual merit,” and “resourcefulness” in the “capable management of...business interests and investments.”⁶ The Danson-Chase House was constructed by Spokane contractor, Peter J. Young, and was designed by George M. Rasque, a prominent Spokane architect who was responsible for many schools, colleges, and government-funded commissions in Eastern Washington and the Northwest. During a period of significance from 1931 to 1958, the Danson-Chase House achieved importance in the area of significance, “architecture,” as an excellent example of the English cottage Tudor Revival style, and as an example of the work of Spokane architect, George Rasque. Historically and architecturally significant, the Danson-Chase House is nominated to the Spokane Register of Historic Places under Category C.

HISTORIC CONTEXT

The Rockwood National Register Historic District

Spokane’s rich architectural legacy includes several residential neighborhoods which represent different eras and historic associations. Aptly named for its wooded rocky bluffs, the Rockwood National Register Historic District is unparalleled for its geologic features and open spaces which were carefully preserved by the Olmsted Brothers architectural landscape firm in their design for the neighborhood. Steep slopes, curvilinear streets, and a series of green spaces in the area formed the setting for a variety of homes with architectural styles that were reflective of Spokane’s residential designers and builders through the first half of the 20th century. As the residential choice of many of the area’s most prominent citizens, the Rockwood National Register Historic District was and continues to be the chosen home of civic and business leaders of regional and national importance.

⁵ Ethel Danson married William Chase after R. J. Danson’s death in 1932.

⁶ Durham, N. W. *Spokane and the Spokane Country, De Lux Edition*. Spokane: Clarke Publishing, 1912, pp. 257-8.

In 1903, real estate investors Jay P. Graves, Fred B. Grinnell, and their associates organized a real estate development company called the Spokane-Washington Improvement Company. Through the company, they purchased wooded, hilly, and rocky acreage in the area which was to become the Rockwood National Register Historic District. They hired the Olmsted Brothers architectural landscape firm and began platting lots for residential construction. The Olmsteds used the rough, hilly, basaltic topography to their advantage, designed curvilinear streets that wound around outcroppings and planted trees in the parking strips of each roadway. The first houses built in the area were erected mostly along the northern-most stretch of Rockwood Boulevard during the years from 1905 to 1915 as large, sometimes grandiose homes. By the 1920s and 1930s, however, smaller dwellings were constructed uphill and south of Rockwood Boulevard in the vicinity of intersecting numbered streets and Garfield Road, an arterial thoroughfare which traverses the center of the southern half of the neighborhood. Fronting the intersection of Garfield Road and Twenty-Third Avenue, the Danson-Chase House was one such home built during the 1930s as a tangible demonstration of this later development phase in the Rockwood National Register Historic District.

For its historic and architectural significance in the context of “Historic Residential Neighborhoods in Spokane,” the Rockwood National Register Historic District was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1997, and the Danson-Chase House was included as a contributing property of the district. In the smaller context of the “Rockwood National Register Historic District,” the Danson-Chase House is historically significant for its specific association with the development and settlement of the Rockwood neighborhood, and exists as a tangible demonstration of the type, modern style, use, and high-quality domestic architecture that was planned for the neighborhood by its developers in 1910. As recorded on Spokane County warranty deed 384071, book 307, page 288, the “foregoing covenants...run with the land and bind not only the purchaser but also the subsequent owners thereof.”⁷ The covenants state:

1. That “no residence shall be erected upon said lot that shall cost less than \$4,000,”
2. That each residence shall be of “modern style of architecture,”
3. That “no outhouse or barn shall be erected and used as a dwelling before the construction of the main dwelling house,”
4. That “no building erected...shall be used for business purposes of any kind,”
5. That “no building shall be erected less than 35 feet from the front line of lot on street which building shall face,”
6. That “no outbuilding shall be erected less than five feet from sidelines of lots,”
7. That “any stable or garage which shall be built on any of this property must conform to the style of architecture of the dwelling on the same lot on which it is located,”

⁷ Warranty deed #384071, book 307, page 288. Spokane County Courthouse, Spokane, WA.

8. That “no apartment house, tenement house, flat building, lodging house or hotel shall ever be erected upon this lot, nor shall any building constructed thereon ever be conducted or used for any of such purposes.”⁸

As a contributing historic resource of the Rockwood National Register Historic District, the Danson-Chase House is a *specific example* of the type, modern style, use, and high-quality domestic architecture mandated by the restrictive covenants. Built in 1931, the Danson-Chase House cost \$14,000 and the garage cost \$1,000 as reported on a 1931 Spokane city building permit,⁹ a sum which exceeded the minimum \$4,000 cost requirement established in 1910, and which is about three to four times more than the average price of construction for that type and size of home built during the 1930s.¹⁰ In reference to the covenant item which mandated a “modern style of architecture” be used for homes in the Rockwood neighborhood, the Danson-Chase House is a fine representation of the 1920s-30s Tudor Revival style with whimsical Storybook influence—a “then modern” architectural genre which was applied to small cottage-like homes, especially during the style’s popularity peak in the 1920s-30s. A garage was built behind the Danson-Chase House and conforms to the covenant requirement that specifies the garage be designed and built in “the style of architecture of the dwelling” and on the same lot on which the house is located.¹¹ To satisfy the covenant’s use requirement, the Danson-Chase House was originally designed and built to be used as a single-family home and continues to serve in that capacity today. In summary, the Danson-Chase House is an individual expression of the neighborhood’s specific covenants and, together with other contributing historic homes that surround it in the Rockwood National Register Historic District, is an example of the neighborhood’s prominent architectural and historic significance and National Register designation as a landmark residential district in Spokane, WA.

Robert J. Danson and Ethel Danson Chase

In 1914, Robert J. Danson secured a mortgage for \$1,000 and purchased Lot 1, Block 15 in the Second Addition to Manito Park at the southwest intersection of Garfield Road and Twenty-Third Avenue. Although he bought the property in 1914, Danson waited 17 years until he improved it in 1931. During this time, he lived with his first wife, Ella Lilly Danson, at 1306 S. Adams Street where they raised five children: Ella, Robert, Ethel, May, and Michal Danson. After Lilly Danson’s death in 1922, Robert Danson married Ethel E. Danson with whom he continued to reside in the house on Adams Street until 1931, at which time they commissioned the Danson-Chase House built at 746 E. Twenty-Third Avenue in the Rockwood neighborhood.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Spokane City building permit #38472-3, dated 16 April 1931. Spokane City Hall, Spokane, WA.

¹⁰ A study of four similar Tudor Revival cottages clad with brick and built during the 1930s revealed construction costs from \$3,000 to \$4,000.

¹¹ Ibid.

Robert J. Danson was born in 1857 in Wisconsin where he studied law. He received further education and legal experience in Iowa and was admitted to the bar in 1881. He worked in Iowa for some years and then came to Spokane in 1890. In Spokane, Danson founded and organized at different times at least four law firms which were known as Prather & Danson, Danson & Huneke, and Danson & Williams. In 1911, the firm grew to include R. J. Danson's son, Robert W. Danson, and the practice was called Danson, Williams & Danson.¹² Noted Spokane historian, N. W. Durham (*Spokane and the Spokane Country*), wrote in 1912 that R. J. Danson's law practice was "extensive and of an important character" and that "in the work of the courts, Robert J. Danson is proving himself the peer of the ablest members of the Spokane bar."¹³ In addition to his professional accomplishments, R. J. Danson was also noted for his business and social activities as an organizer of the Pasco Reclamation Company, a trustee of Washington Trust Company (now Washington Trust Bank) and the Union Park Bank, and a member of the Scottish Rite, El Katif Temple, Spokane Club, and the Spokane Country Club. Durham applauded Danson when he said that "in a profession where advancement depends entirely upon individual merit and ability...[Danson] has worked his way constantly upward and at the same time, has proven his resourcefulness in his capable management of other business interests and investments."¹⁴

In 1932, less than one year after Robert & Ethel Danson moved into the Danson-Chase House, Robert Danson died. His widow, Ethel Danson, continued to live alone in the home for a few years but by 1934, the house was occupied from 1934 to 1937 by Georgia & Donald Corbett, a physician with offices in the Paulsen Building in downtown Spokane, and in 1937 by Rose & Richard Ruehle, a "special representative" for the manufacture of explosives at the DuPont DeNemours Company, Inc.¹⁵ It appears that Ethel Danson leased her home to the Corbett and Ruehle families as they were never recorded as owners of the property. By 1938, Ethel Danson had married William E. Chase, president of Chase Engineering Company, and for the next 15 years, William & Ethel Chase lived in the Danson-Chase House.

Subsequent Homeowners

In 1953, John & Ruth Forehand bought the Danson-Chase House for \$20,000. In 1971, they sold the property to William & Elaine Boyd. The Boyds sold the property two years later to Thomas & Laurie Connolly. In 2000, John & Martina Simms bought the house for \$262,000, and in 2007, the current owners, Jeffrey & Martha Eilertsen, bought the property for \$484,500.¹⁶

¹² The Williams noted in the law firm's name refers to James A. Williams, first owner of the James & Corinne Williams House at 1225 W. Nineteenth Avenue. The property is individually listed on the Spokane, Washington State, and National Registers of Historic Places.

¹³ Durham, p. 257.

¹⁴ Ibid, p. 258.

¹⁵ Spokane city directories.

¹⁶ Public records, Spokane County Courthouse, Spokane, WA.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

Category C

Category C of the Spokane Register of Historic Places refers to properties that are significant for their physical design or construction, including such elements as architecture, landscape architecture, engineering, and artwork. “To be eligible” for register listing under Category C, “a property must meet at least one of the following requirements:”¹⁷

- Embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction
- Represent the work of a master
- Possess high artistic value

Embodying distinctive characteristics of the Tudor Revival style and English cottage “Storybook” influence, the Danson-Chase House is architecturally significant and is nominated to the Spokane Register under Category C.

Tudor Revival Style & Storybook Influence

Tudor Revival Style

Architectural historians, Lee & Virginia McAlester, explain that the popular name for the Tudor Revival style is “historically imprecise, since relatively few examples closely mimic the architectural characteristics of Tudor (early 16th-century) England.” Instead, they say, “the style is loosely based on a variety of late Medieval English prototypes, ranging from thatch-roofed folk cottages to grand manor houses. These traditions are feely mixed in their American Eclectic expressions but are united by an emphasis on steeply pitched, front-facing gables which, although absent on many English prototypes, are almost universally present as a dominant façade element in Tudor [Revival style] houses.”¹⁸ The Tudor Revival style was a dominant tradition of domestic building in America from about 1890 to 1940. During the 1920s and 1930s, the style became fashionable for smaller homes which took on an English cottage appearance with the implementation of Storybook influence.

Style-defining elements and features of the Tudor Revival style include:

- Built dates between 1890 and 1940
- Steeply pitched roof
- Usually one or more prominent front-facing steeply pitched cross-gables and/or dormers
- Decorative (not structural) half-timbering which is evident in about 50% of examples
- Tall, narrow windows, usually in multiple groups
- Multi-paned glazing, sometimes with leaded mullions
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¹⁷ Bulletin #15, p. 18.

¹⁸ McAlester, Lee & Virginia. *A Field Guide to American Houses*. New York: Knopf, 1989, pp. 354-58.

- Massive, prominent chimneys, sometimes crowned with corbelling and decorative chimney pots
- Brick, stone, stucco wall cladding (wood shingles are rare)
- Parapeted gables
- Recessed front entrance (in Tudor times it was important to protect and secure homes from invasion and weather)
- Interior woodwork and floors with rich hand-rubbed finishes
- Focal point fireplaces with brick, stone, tile, stucco surrounds and hearths

Storybook Influence

Beginning with San Diego's Panama-California Exposition in 1915 and memories of European architecture from returning World War I GIs, a long-running craze for European revival styles surged into popularity in America, and authentically executed period revival homes became legion during the 1920s. The elements of exaggeration, artifice, and humor were added to the pot of period revival architecture, resulting in a style that evoked storybook Hansel & Gretel-type homes and dwellings. It is no surprise that the most theatrical of all homes of this type were built in Hollywood, America's capital for make-believe. An exaggerated look of antiquity was esteemed and achieved through irregular lines, rough textures, a weather-beaten look, roof shingles set in wave patterns, eyebrow and "Rapunzel" windows, "natural" products (stone, brick, slate, ceramic tile, wood shingles, stucco, leaded glass, hand-wrought iron), and steeply pitched roof lines with overhanging eaves and "catslide" roof designs. The whole idea of the Storybook influence applied to Tudor Revival-style homes was to transport one back to bucolic happy times in Tudor England and to the slate and thatch-roofed cottages that dot the English countryside. Storybook designs were widespread in America during the 1920s and 1930s and were used for homes, apartment "row" houses, Hollywood set designs, actor's homes, and in illustrations in children's books, puzzles, toys, and greeting cards.¹⁹

Style-defining elements and features of the Storybook influence include:

- Built dates were popular especially during the 1920s and 1930s
- Tudor Revival-style house forms, features, and finishes were used
- Pronounced and especially prominent steepness in roof pitches
- Catslide roofs
- Irregular roofing material: thatch or thatch look-alikes, rolled composition shingles, slate, rock, wood shingles, clay—some with wave patterns and some with rolled edges
- Very tall, narrow windows, sometimes called "Rapunzel" windows, often leaded
- Windows with irregular glazing (wavy glass), sometimes "bottle glass" made of the round bottoms of bottles

¹⁹ Gellner, Arrol and Douglas Keister. *Storybook Style: America's Whimsical Homes of the Twenties*. New York: Penguin Putnam, 2001.

- Exterior cladding of brick, stone, stucco, or combinations of two or three which produce a look of antiquity or age
- Clinker brick, sometimes with cobbles or formed as a rubblemix with river or field rock
- River rock and field stone used at roofs, walls, foundations, steps, and retaining walls
- Battered walls, tapered chimneys, and catslide roofs all combined to give the illusion of age or antiquity

Set back from a curved black basalt rock retaining wall which encloses a pie-shaped lot, the Danson-Chase House is hidden among tall evergreen and deciduous trees like a cottage in the woods. Tudor Revival-style and Storybook influence features at the Danson-Chase House include the home's built date of 1931, compact cottage-like house form (in contrast to a large rambling manor house), steeply pitched roof, very steeply pitched front-facing gable, recessed front entrance, wrought iron safety peek-a-boo window in front door, tall narrow multi-paned windows, tall leaded-glass "Rapunzel" windows with diamond panes, textured raked brick veneer with deep mortar joints, basalt rock foundation, prominent front-facing tapered chimney, interior Philippine mahogany woodwork, oak flooring, focal point fireplace with glazed ceramic tile, and arched spandrels and inset interior bays. Mimicking the Danson-Chase House in style and materials, a steeply pitched front-gable roof garage is located behind the house and looks more like a children's play house than a garage. The entire location, setting, and Tudor Revival style and Storybook influence used for the Danson-Chase House render it an excellent example of the Tudor Revival and Storybook genres.

George M. Rasque, Architect (1891-1977)

George M. Rasque was born in 1891 in Madison, Wisconsin, came to Spokane in 1923, practiced architecture for 50 years, and died in October 1977. He worked for the prominent Spokane architectural firm of Whitehouse & Price but after a few years, left the firm to start his own architectural practice. According to a National Register nomination written for Ritzville High School, Rasque was widely recognized as "one of Spokane's and the Pacific Northwest's most productive and best known architects." He was responsible for the design of at least 60 schools which were built throughout Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and Montana. He also designed or helped design many government-funded commissions, including college dormitories, the Spokane International Airport, Eastern State Hospital, Spokane Medical Center Building, VA Hospital, and the Washington State Penitentiary in Walla Walla. Documented private residential homes designed by Rasque include the Brazeau House at 3315 N. Dale Road in Millwood, the Bankson House at 3414 N. Milton, the Dr. Corbett House at 835 E. Overbluff Road, and the Danson-Chase House at 746 E. Twenty-Third Avenue. Rasque's knowledge of period revival-style homes was keen as illustrated in the Italian Renaissance style of the Brazeau House and in the Tudor Revival style of the Dr. Corbett House and the Danson-Chase House. With a five-decade long professional career in

Spokane, there are undoubtedly many other homes which were designed by Rasque and built in the area. As evidenced by his many city, county, and state commissions for schools and public buildings, Rasque was certainly a prominent, accomplished architect.

Summary

The Danson-Chase House achieved importance during a period of significance from 1931 to 1958 in the areas of significance, "architecture." The property is a fine rendition of the Tudor Revival style with Storybook influence, is a good example of the work of George M. Rasque, a prominent Spokane architect, and is nominated to the Spokane Register of Historic Places under Category C.

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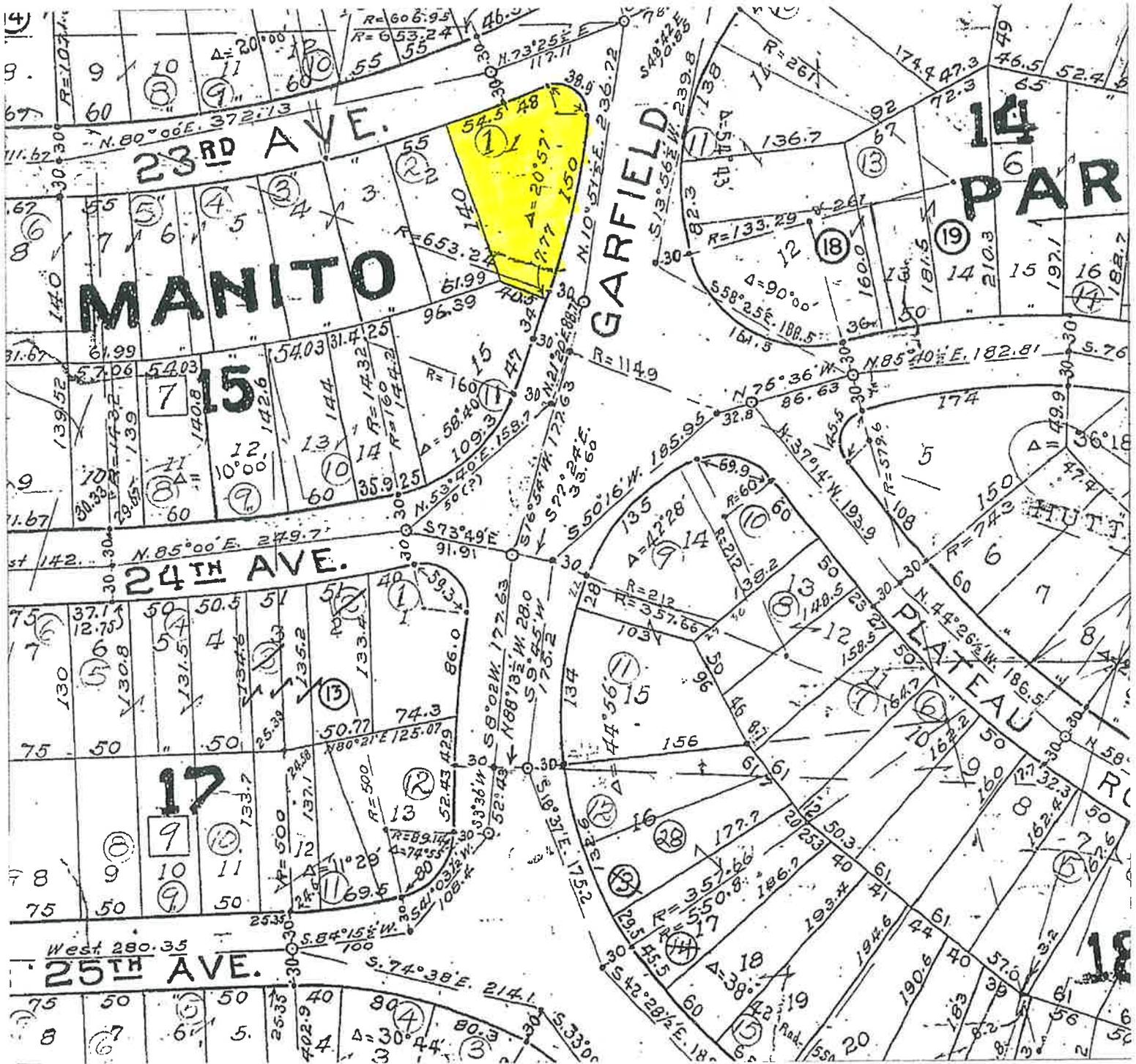
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Spokane County public records. Spokane County Courthouse, Spokane, WA.

Spokane City/County Register of Historic Places Nomination Continuation Sheet
DANSON-CHASE HOUSE Section 10

Plat Map

Spokane County Plat Map of property in 2008.



Spokane City/County Register of Historic Places Nomination Continuation Sheet
DANSON-CHASE HOUSE

Section 10

Plat Map

Spokane County Plat Map of property in 2008.



Spokane City/County Register of Historic Places Nomination Continuation Sheet
DANSON-CHASE HOUSE **Section 10**

Photo 1
Photo 2

Tax assessor photo from 1960 of north façade of house.
North façade of house in 2008.



Spokane City/County Register of Historic Places Nomination Continuation Sheet
DANSON-CHASE HOUSE **Section 10**

Photos 3 and 4 North façade of house in 2008.



Spokane City/County Register of Historic Places Nomination Continuation Sheet
DANSON-CHASE HOUSE **Section 10**

Photos 5 and 6

2008 photos of front door detail



Spokane City/County Register of Historic Places Nomination Continuation Sheet
DANSON-CHASE HOUSE **Section 10**

Photos 7 and 8 West elevation of house in 2008.



Spokane City/County Register of Historic Places Nomination Continuation Sheet
DANSON-CHASE HOUSE **Section 10**

Photo 9
Photo 10

South elevation of house in 2008.
East elevation of house in 2008.



Spokane City/County Register of Historic Places Nomination Continuation Sheet
DANSON-CHASE HOUSE **Section 10**

- Photo 11 East façade of garage in 2008.
Photo 12 Northwest corner of garage in 2008.



Spokane City/County Register of Historic Places Nomination Continuation Sheet
DANSON-CHASE HOUSE **Section 10**

Photo 13 Basalt rock birdbath in 2008.

Photo 14 Basalt rock retaining wall, northwest corner of property.





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746 E. 23rd Ave



740 E. 23 Ave





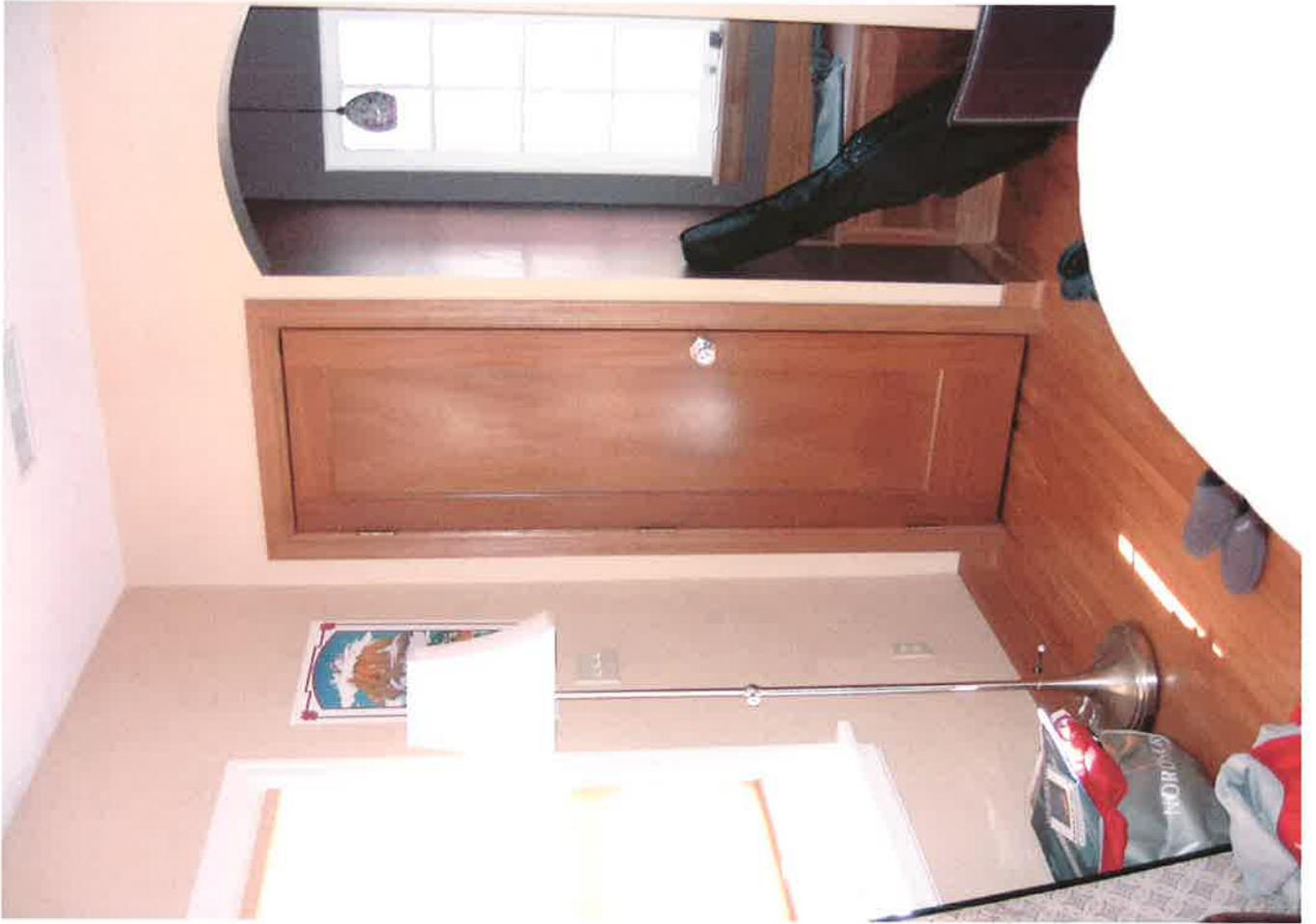
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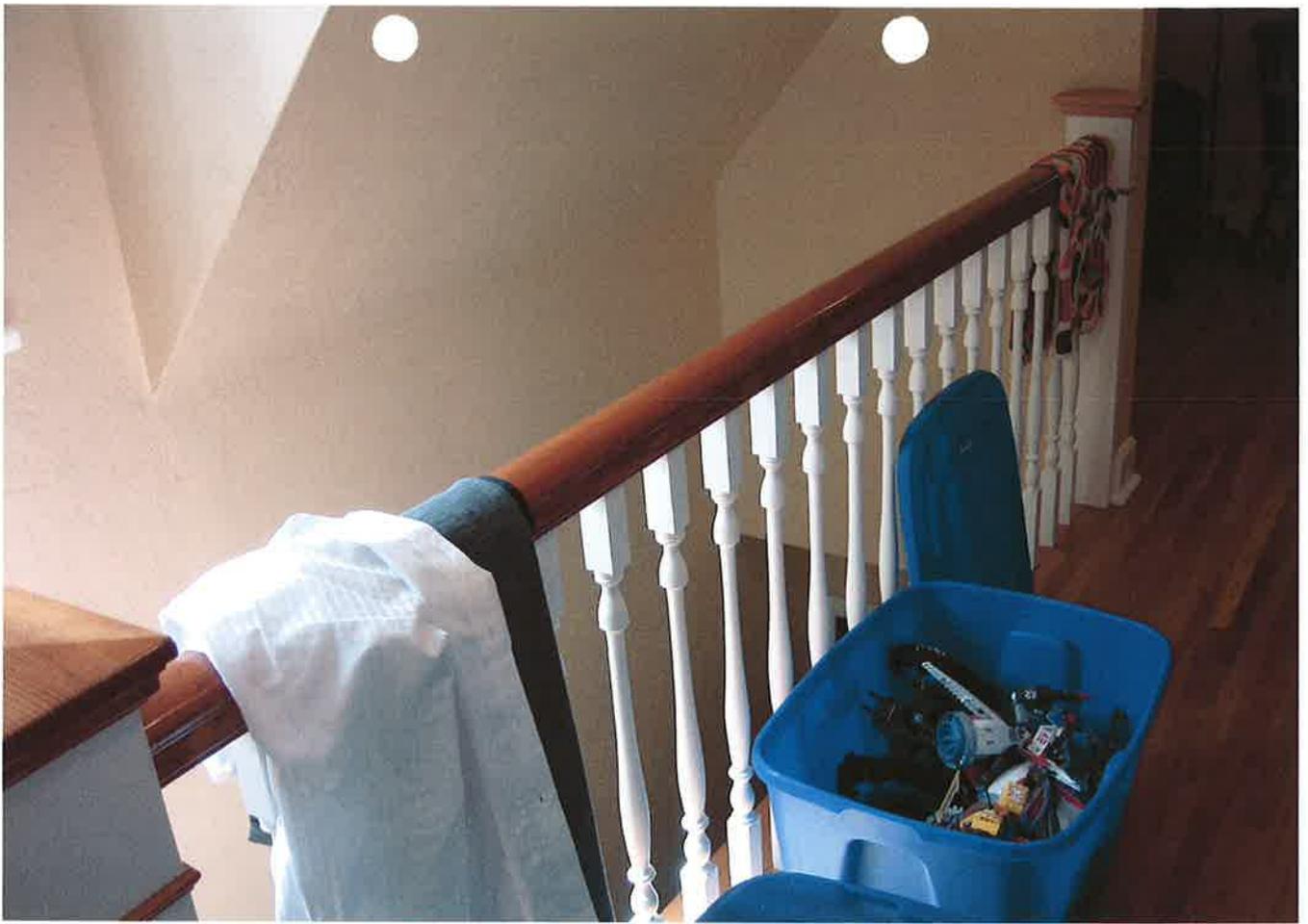


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