

Jesse & Judy Burnett

Introduction to Jesse & Judy Burnett: Jesse's roots in Avon go back to the early 1920s when his parents moved here. He grew up here and in Florida. Over the years Jesse and Judy have been active in the Optimist Club and the Avon Junior Athletic Association, among other things. They were interviewed by Dick and Betty Richmond, also long-time residents of Avon.

Burnett Home Reconstruction

Dick Richmond: We're sitting in your house, which is a reconstruction of your mother, Ruth Burnett's, home. Would you tell us something about this and about how this all came about?

Jesse: The original home was built in 1836 where Irvin Union Bank now stands...At the time of my mother's death, we had a lot of discussion about what to do with the old house; obviously, it was historically significant. I was taken to a meeting of the Hendricks County Historical Association and [the subject of] the old house came up. Eventually, the idea of historical reconstruction evolved and that's what we've done.

We've taken the major portion of the old house, with the exception of the kitchen...and literally recreated it...with a few minor variations. [We've] taken all the fireplaces, all the chandeliers, all the furniture, everything that we could, including the columns off the front porch...and recreated the 1836 house...

Betty Richmond: What is the history of the original house...?

Jesse: The original land was given or granted by Andrew Jackson to a veteran of the War of 1812 by the name, I think, of John Wilson...He never built anything there himself...He sold it to a man by the name of Richardson, who raised his family there...

When my mother moved out here in 1927, 36 was a dirt road. The main road was 1050 East [so] the front of the house faced [that way]...

Betty: ...there was a time when you thought you might just [move] the house?

Jesse: We talked about a number of things. They said...[it couldn't be moved more] than back [deeper] on the same property...It couldn't just have been remodeled in the sense that you take a 1978 home and remodel it. It just wouldn't have worked. So we did the next best thing. We tore it down and took what we could and literally re-built the main part of the house...

The biggest thing was the widening of US 36, which everybody thought was a disaster...It took out the old bridge that crossed the creek at the front of the house...things didn't really start happening in Avon until Alfred Clark's heirs sold the Clark Farm to Meijer...That was the first real change...Before that, it was farm country. I mean, the Clark Farm went all the way to the county line. They were a fixture around here as long as my parents were.