



53 Tradd Street

Charleston, South Carolina

ALTHOUGH A LARGE NUMBER of Charleston homes are centuries old, most are far from crumbling and dilapidated. In fact, many have been updated with modern and often lavish features. And they all come with rich histories that add to their character and enhance their charm. A great example is at 53 Tradd Street in the residential neighborhood known as South of Broad.

Built in 1735, the home is one of the oldest surviving buildings in Charleston's Historic District. Its original owner was Richard Tradd, whose son Robert was the first European male born in Charleston.

The structure, known as the Hext Tenements, was built by Johns Island planter Alexander Hext, a member of the Commons House of Assembly. He first used the building as a rental duplex, thus the name tenement. Hext left the property to his sisters, Mary Harvey and Elizabeth Seabrook Saxby.

Elizabeth's husband, George Saxby, whose many vocations included merchant and rice planter, also served

briefly as inspector of stamp duties. The position did nothing for his popularity, and, before he could return home to Charleston after landing the job, he was burned in effigy, and his home was ransacked. He and his wife Elizabeth left for England, never to return, and, in 1782, his home at 53 Tradd was confiscated by the newly formed government of South Carolina.

The home eventually was sold to Bazile Lanneau, a tanner from the French colony of Acadia. His son, Bazile Lanneau Jr., inherited the home but sold it in 1838. The property changed hands several times before it was purchased by Mary S. Wilson, a general contractor who began renovating the home. The Wilsons sold the property to Henry and Jacqueline Conner, and the Crawford family bought it in the 1980s and updated it once more.

Although 53 Tradd today is equipped with an array of modern conveniences, it still retains much of its original bones and features, including the original wide-plank heart pine floors. The home was built in the Charleston single style,

but, over the years, it has been modified. For example, the stairway, as well as the kitchen house that was originally attached to the home, have been moved.

According to real estate agent Marilynn Durkee, who recently sold the home at 53 Tradd, its main appeal is that although its historic features date back

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300 years, the home has been updated "to the nines," boasting upscale commercial grade appliances and beautifully renovated bathrooms.

"It is truly a home of luxury," she says, "but one of its most appealing aspects is, of course, its location."

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