

## Historic John B. Myers House For Sale

by Amanda Meyer

Located at 180 Dunn Road in Florissant, the Victorian-era Myers house still stands tall after surviving vandalism, fires, and many threats of demolition over the years. The fate of the house is uncertain once again now that it is back on the market.

Pennsylvania native John B. Myers had begun the construction of the house between the years of 1867 and 1869. When Myers died in 1869 of pneumonia at the age of 48, his wife, Adaline, had the house completed in accordance with Myers's original plans.

The 2-story Palladian-style home featured 12 rooms, with a fireplace in each one, a 2-story front portico, fresco paintings, and a widow's walk on the roof. Adaline Myers ran the 50-acre estate until she died in 1926. The property changed hands several times and was finally sold to the state in 1970 for \$75,000. The future of the house was uncertain with the construction of the I-170 interchange.

There were plans to tear the house down to make room for the expansion of the highway, but residents of Florissant banded together and with the help of Historic Florissant, Inc. fought to save the house from demolition. Highway plans were redrawn to accommodate the old house.

The house had been vacant for many years and had suffered vandalism and several fires. Many didn't think the house was worth saving. Historic Florissant, Inc., however, did believe it was worth saving and they purchased the home in 1974 for \$75,000 and they borrowed another \$125,000 for the restoration. The house was structurally sound, despite all the damage, but was in need of major plumbing and electrical work, a new tin roof, paint and plaster repair, and repairs to the 2<sup>nd</sup>-story side porch and the 2-story front portico.

Historic Florissant, Inc. also worked to have the house declared as a federal landmark. It was awarded a spot on the National Register of Historic Places on December 13, 1974. The barn, once known as Dirty Nelly's Tavern, was acquired in 1978. The house and barn were purchased from Historic Florissant, Inc. in 1986 by Charles "Chick" and Helen Argent. They were operators of the quilting and decorative supplies store Helen's Hen House.

After several fatal accidents occurred at I170/270 in the late 1990s and early 2000s, the highway was redesigned again to reduce the number of accidents and continue to preserve the old house.

Since the restoration of the house by Historic Florissant, Inc., it has been occupied by antique and craft shops. Today, just 2-3 acres of the original property remain and the house is still occupied by craft shops such as The Weaving Dept. and Helen's Hen House. The shops are open Monday-Saturday 10am-4pm. The barn is now vacant after the deli closed last November.

Although the house is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, there are no limitations placed on the properties by the state or federal governments, so the future of the house and the shops within is uncertain.

The house is for sale through Jeff Eisenberg & Associates, 314.721.5611.