

Marland's Grand Home 1940-1960 Part 1

PARIS FURNITURE STORE FAMILY RESIDES AT 1000 E. GRAND AVENUE

The 1940s brought a new and different era to the Marland Grand Home. The Dan Moran family of CONOCO Oil Company fame had moved out, and the Paris furniture family had moved into the home. J.G. and Jessie Paris owned and operated a large furniture store on Grand Avenue. The Paris Furniture Company began in 1922 moving to a more recent Grand Avenue address in 1927. Providing the Paris family their new, large Spanish Colonial furniture store building downtown was E.W. Marland, coincidentally the original builder of the now Paris home. The store building was designed by John Duncan Forsyth and patterned after Marshall-Fields of Chicago. Forsyth was also the architect of Marland's second mansion in Ponca City, "The Refuge" located at 901 Monument.

Jay Paris and his brother, Glen, ran the family furniture business employing twelve salesmen, one of which was Stan Dunham, President Barrack Obama's maternal grandfather. Jessie Paris also helped to establish the business and had a reputation of being an efficient and organized business woman. Jay and Jessie Paris had one daughter named Patricia Ladd Paris, "Pat," who was raised in the home.

The Paris family also owned and operated a ranch in Osage County. Jay Paris purchased a special horse named "Duke" for his daughter Pat. The horse was kept at the ranch, but brought to town for special occasions like parades and to pull the family carriage, which could be converted for snow in the winter by applying runners in place of the wheels. It was kept in the carriage house on the west end of the property. Above the carriage house was an apartment with living space, a bedroom, kitchen, and bath. During the years of the WWII DARR flight school in Ponca City, some of the British soldiers who were in training locally lived in this apartment.

First Floor

Supporting the community and carrying on another Marland tradition, Jay Paris was active in the local Lion's Club, an organization that E.W. Marland had been the first president of in the 1920s. Jessie Paris participated in the local PEO and 20th Century women's clubs. No doubt all three organizations met in the Paris home on occasion. "The home was an open come and go type place," recalls Pat. "Many people enjoyed coming over and spending time there."

After the family moved into the home they added many fine furnishings, particularly several antique pieces which they had acquired through their business. The European Chippendale-styled dining room furniture collection, still at the home today, is exquisite. It fills in the formal dining space. The present office area of the home was used as an informal dining and breakfast space. At the time there had been no bathroom on the 1st floor, so one was added utilizing space taken out of a next door powder room which held only a fainting couch and laundry chute. The Paris family enjoyed the sunroom as much as the Marland family did in the 1920s. Pat wrote her name on the back side of the north set of sunroom's French doors unbeknownst to her parents. The name "PAT" is still there today as a nostalgic reminder of the family's occupation. Pat hosted many sleepovers and swimming parties at the house. She recalls one of her best friends, Pat Purdue (Evans), accompanying her on most of her girlfriend adventures. "My friends

and I would dance out on the terrace during our sleepovers,” said Pat. Dancing on the terrace was also one of E.W. Marland’s adopted niece Lydie’s favorite activities in the 1920s.