



HISTORIC CHICAGO
BUNGALOW ASSOCIATION



When Julia Morris started looking for a new home in the mid-1990s, she was searching for a small place. Her children were grown, and she didn't need much space. From the front, the Austin bungalow looked modest enough, but when she looked inside, Julia discovered the secret of Chicago bungalows. "The best thing about the house," Julia says, "is that it's so large. To look at it from the street you would never know."

Ernest J. Braucher, a local residential architect who built thousands of Chicago bungalows along the bungalow belt, designed Julia's charming yellow brick bungalow. One of the few bungalows on the block, the house was originally owned by John F. Willis, a Finnish bricklayer who had immigrated to the United States with his wife and three children

in 1909. Willis purchased the vacant lot on Parkside from Theodore H. Myers in March of 1927. In April, he applied for a permit to build a 1 ½ story residence at an estimated cost of \$7000. By August, the house was completed and the Willis family moved to the growing community of Austin. Named for Henry Austin, who first purchased and subdivided land in the area in 1865, the community of Austinville was a typical railroad suburb until Chicago annexed it in 1889.

The neighborhood grew steadily until the end of World War I, when a post-war economic boom caused residential development to skyrocket. Apartment and commercial buildings replaced single-family homes on major streets like Chicago and Division, and duplexes and two-flats began to fill in the residential streets. Scattered among these multi-unit residential buildings were bungalows like the Willis's.

John & Louise Willis were 53 years old when he built his bungalow. His wife, Louise, was 58. In 1930, the couple's three unmarried children were living in the bungalow as well: John, 25, held a job as a post office clerk; Darling, 24, was a stenographer at a piano company, and Alf, 22, was a stock clerk at a mail order house. In 1948, John Willis passed the house on to his daughter, who had by then married to become Darling Osterlund. In 1964, the Osterlunds sold the bungalow to Daniel Daverin. The property changed hands several times during the 1980s before it was purchased by the Department of Housing and Urban Development in 1988. Julia Morris bought the property from former owner Rex Sidor in 1995.

Julia has changed little since moving in almost ten years ago. She learned about the Historic Chicago Bungalow Initiatives through a friend, and is planning on taking advantage of the Initiative's incentive programs to make improvements to her bungalow. "I'd like to repair the windows and finish out the attic," Julia says. "It's nice to know that there are programs to help me do that."