



**Garden and Carriage House of the Isaac Motte Dart House
54 Montagu Street
c. 1823
Residence of Dr. And Mrs. Eugene G. Johnson**

1997

Enter north door, look in kitchen and return to living room, exit south door to garden..

This property, inherited by Jane Harleston Rutledge, wife of Edward Rutledge, was purchased by Isaac Motte Dart in 1801. He built the main house known as 54 Montagu Street sometime between 1806 and 1809.

The notable Gothic revival carriage house to the rear of the property is thought to have been constructed c. 1823. Many Charleston dependency buildings of the first half of the nineteenth century are executed in the gothic revival taste, an architectural conceit of the period. Other surviving examples include the buildings behind the Aiken-Rhett House, now a museum property of Historic Charleston Foundation and open to the public, the Capers-Motte House (69 Church Street) and the William Aiken House (456 King Street). This dependency could be the earliest of those listed.

The current owners purchased the property in 1993 and for many years previously it had been used for institutional purposes. The carriage house was a shell, derelict with no heating or plumbing. The wooden addition from the 1940's was open and had vines crawling through it.

The building is quite solid with brick walls 14 inches thick, yet fanciful with a facade punctuated with decorative quatrefoil windows trimmed in white marble. The brick work is exceedingly fine and the owners have added a window at the carriage door entrance to match the pane design of the side windows. Note the pointed window arches on each side. The roof is composed of old slate tiles.

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LIVING ROOM/DINING ROOM

The owners decided to make use of this giant space as one living/dining room. Both stairways are new constructions as well as the fireplace whose design is based on one in a kitchen house on Church Street. Present wood floor was found under a layer of linoleum. Original floor was undoubtedly earthen since this was a stable/carriage house.

Plate rack, French, with buffet base, found at a plantation on the Ashley River near the current northern boundary of Charleston.

Coromandel lacquer screen - six panels divided into two sets was purchased by owner when stationed in the far East.

Chest, Korean, also purchased when the owner when stationed in the far East.

Gate-leg table, oak, early 18th century

"Mule" chest - top lifts up, a good storage piece

Bougainvillea in clay pots on the window sills.

The owners lived here while the main house was being renovated. Today it is used as a bed and breakfast facility. One stairway leads to a master bedroom and the other to two smaller bedrooms. It is called Wortham House after Wortham Hall in Diss England, the ancestral home of the owner's grandmother. (There may be a photograph of it displayed.)

KITCHEN

The two pine pieces are 19th century. This kitchen was created in the 1940's frame addition.

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GARDEN

This area was formerly an asphalt parking lot. After the hard surface had been removed, sixteen truck loads of 12 yards each of top soil were spread to provide a planting base. The garden plan was devised by the owner and executed by him except for the brick work. He also did all the planting with the exception of the boxwood hedges.

Circular bed: Penta

Side beds: Buddleia, Salvia, Rose standards, Daisies, Italian cypress, and Lithum Tea Olive in front of living room window.

There are Crepe Myrtle trees at property corners. And a Yew hedge at the driveway.

In the parking area: old Hollies, native Azaleas, Loquat, Spirea, and a Willow tree

In the "Mushroom garden" all the blooms are white. There are Bush roses on corners. Ancient water oak tree, and a Lady Banksia Rose covers pergola.

The teak bench is a design of Sir Edwin Lutyens, an English architect who worked with Gertrude Jekyll the great gardener of the early 20th century.

Chicken wire lines wooden property fence on the west which allows covering vine to attach more rapidly.

The owner's goal is to have a cutting garden as well as a decorative one.

Invite visitors to enjoy the vista and repose of this wonderful green oasis.