

36 Murray Boulevard Full-Scale Model
Notes, May 6, 2015

One-twelfth replica

Exact scale model: 1" = 1'

Constructed 1983-1985 by Palmer Gaillard, Jr.

Took 1,000 hours

John McCrady helped flute the columns

Electrified (12 volt)

Fully furnished with some custom-made pieces (and expensive pieces)

Working windows

Piece of slate from the original portico used at the entry of the model

Measurements

47" (sides) by 44.5"

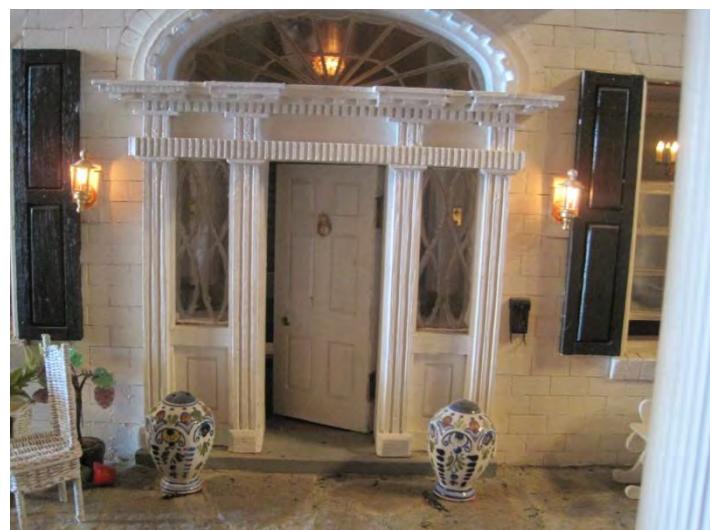
Highest point is 40.5"

Portico projects 10.5" extending 7.5" more with the front steps

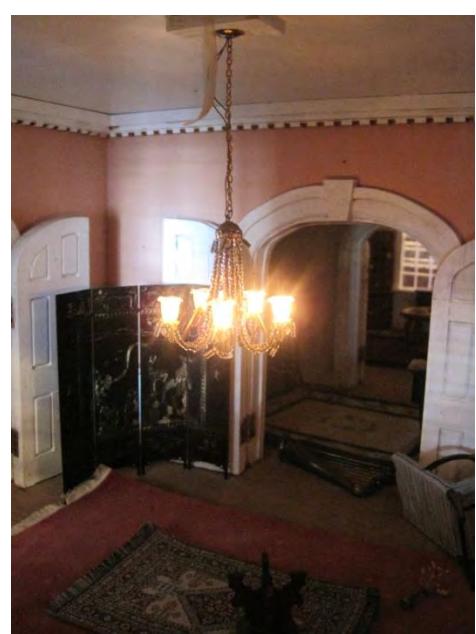
Sits on a table (also available): 49" x 67" x 35" (H)

See News & Courier article 8/11/1985

Photos







Scale model built of boulevard home

By THOMAS R. WARING
Special Writer

FRANCES ADELE Baker Turnage grew up in the house her father, the late Dr. Archibald E. Baker Jr., built in 1938 at 36 Murray Blvd.

Though she has not lived there since her first marriage in 1949 to the late Charles Robertson Allen Jr., she continues to cherish a sentimental attachment to the Southern colonial residence overlooking the Ashley River. Now she has a scale model miniature reproduction (one inch to the foot) of 36 Murray Blvd. in her present residence at 13 Country Club Drive.

The miniature house was built as a gift by J. Palmer Gaillard Jr., former mayor of Charleston and a lifelong friend of the family. Gaillard is a sparetime craftsman in a home workshop. This is his fifth dolls' house. Two previous houses were given to his grandchildren, and two others were donated to St. Philip's Episcopal Church to be raffled off in fund-raising campaigns.

Infinite care went into building the model of the Baker residence. Gaillard estimates he spent at least 4,000 hours on it, probably more. He had help from John McCrady, another amateur craftsman, in making and fluting the four columns that are a notable feature of the house. Mrs. Turnage painted the interior, and has collected miniature furnishings. The miniature house was moved in July to her Country Club home, and she still is collecting things to put in it.

The electric lights work from a 12-volt system, and the windows move up and down. Among the furnishings are a chandelier and a grand piano, which cost \$125 apiece. Numerous shops nowadays cater to doll house collectors, and some of the prices are high. The August issue of *Historic Preservation Magazine* contains an article captioned "Marvels in Miniature." — With their astonishing detail and big price tags, dolls' houses and tiny furnishings are for serious collectors, not kids."

THE ARTICLE SAYS that dolls' houses and miniature furnishings today, according to some observers, "rank behind coins, stamps and dolls as the most popular collectibles. Scores of museums across the country now display both antique and contemporary doll houses."

The National Association of Miniature Enthusiasts has 13,000 members, the article says. Two publications in the field have almost 100,000 sub-



scribers. Dolls' houses sell for \$10,000 up. The article describes a tiny grandfather clock that costs \$3,000. Miniature bakeries and hair salons have been found in Egyptian tombs. The earliest dolls' house on record was commissioned in 1558 by a Bavarian duke; it started what now is described as "a growing industry."

Born April 4, 1925, in the Baker Sanatorium named for her grandfather, the late Dr. Archibald E. Baker, Fronnie Turnage is a daughter of Dr. Baker Jr. and Ann Bissell Baker. She is one of three children. At age 3 she entered the kindergarten then operated by Ashley Hall, and after 15 years was graduated from the school in 1943. Barbara Bush, wife of the vice president, was a classmate. Mrs. Turnage's full name is Frances Adele, which was contracted to Frondele, and then to Fronnie, as she is now known.

PALMER GAILLARD started work on the model in April, 1983, and finished it in July, 1985. A fragment of flagstone from the floor of the front porch of 36 Murray Blvd. was used in the reproduction as a tiny memento. Stephen Thomas was the architect of the original house. The plans were drawn with the help of his associate, Marion B. Halsey. Ralph B. Simmons was the general contractor. A "Do You Know Your Charleston" article, published in *The News and Courier* Dec. 5, 1938, just before the Bakers moved into their new house, said:

"Mrs. Baker has taken a special interest in supervising every detail of construction, and has originated or adopted the ornamental features, em-

bodying attractive designs which she has seen in homes here and elsewhere."

After her mother's death, Mrs. Turnage sold the house for \$60,000 to Robert B. Russell, chairman of Ruscon Corp. Mrs. Cecil Russell, who died recently, was the last occupant. Gaillard at the time was connected with Ruscon, and when Russell learned that he was building the model, made the original plans available to him. The model is a duplicate both inside and outside.

When Gen. Mark W. Clark came to Charleston as president of The Citadel, he occupied 36 Murray Blvd. until the president's house on The Citadel campus was completed.

Mrs. Turnage worked for a time at Porgy and Bess dress shop. She also was secretary to Berkeley Grimball before the merger of the Gaud School and Porter Military Academy. Her first husband, Robbie Allen, died in 1959. Their children are Carl Montgomery Allen of Summerville; Ann Harris and Frances Sadler of Charleston, and Elizabeth Rodenberg of Mount Pleasant.

In 1969, Fronnie Baker Allen married retired Army Maj. Gen. Benjamin O. Turnage Jr. Mrs. Turnage plays golf, sews and works with ceramics. Gen. and Mrs. Turnage belong to Grace Episcopal Church.

(Thomas R. Waring is a retired editor of *The News and Courier* and *Evening Post*.)

A dolls' house

Fronnie Baker Turnage, who grew up in the Baker family residence at 36 Murray Blvd., inspects a scale model of the house built for her by former Mayor J. Palmer Gaillard. The other photograph shows the original house.