



WELCOME TO

ANSONBOROUGH

AREA REHABILITATION PROJECT OF
HISTORIC CHARLESTON FOUNDATION

BACKGROUND

Today you are seeing the early results of a plan conceived, financed and administered by Historic Charleston Foundation, a local non-profit organization with headquarters in the Nathaniel Russell House, 51 Meeting Street.

The basic goal of the Foundation, established in 1947 by Charlestonians, is practical contemporary use, rather than destruction and replacement, of the large number of Colonial and Early American buildings still standing in Charleston - that give our city the unique flavor and beauty which attracts visitors from all over the world, and is a constant source of pleasure and pride to its own citizens.

With the accent on use, not simple preservation in a museum sense, the Foundation is acting through a concept of area rehabilitation, financed by a "revolving fund".

Ansonborough is the pioneer project under this concept.

It was begun in the spring of 1959, with the acquisition of the first of thirteen properties in a three block area. Of the total of thirteen houses bought or donated up to now, three have been sold for restoration by private purchasers, one sold after restoration by the Foundation and one is currently offered for sale as a complete restoration. Four others are scheduled for restoration by the Foundation, but may be sold at any time to purchasers wishing to do restoration themselves. Two large houses are being rented in apartments, one small modern frame house was razed to re-establish the garden of another residence, and one small but interesting building was so badly damaged by the tornado of September, 1960, that it had to be taken down. This property was incorporated with the next-door house, to make room for a larger and handsomer garden.

THE "REVOLVING" FUND

The Ansonborough Project is being financed by Foundation money given it by gifts and bequests of individuals and foundations. Because of the non-profit, cultural and educational character of the Foundation's work, gifts to it are income-tax deductible.

The fund is called a "revolving" one because the properties purchased and restored by the Foundation are all either resold or rented, and part of the original outlays are recovered to be used again and again on other properties in Ansonborough or, eventually, in other areas of predominately early architecture.

The Foundation recognizes, of course, that resales, especially in the stages of rehabilitation of a run-down area, may often be at a loss. This deficit is considered the contribution of the Foundation - and of its benefactors - to the cultural heritage of our city and our nation. The basic reason for the Foundation's existence is to take the financial burden of "showing the way" to practical modern use of fine old buildings before it is too late.

Because of the Foundation's efforts in Ansonborough, private purchasers have already acquired three houses in the area, from owners other than the Foundation, which they intend to restore as residences.

The Foundation office, telephone RAYmond 3-1168, is glad at any time to provide information on the sale of its properties. It also has considerable information on the availability of other excellent old houses in the area. Brokers are protected, and the Foundation works closely with local real estate firms to keep them abreast of the project.

What to see in the Ansonborough area....



332 East Bay Street



44 Society Street



42 Society Street

As you can see from the map the area can easily be covered on foot. You will find a stroll through the entire area interesting, and will note that the facades of most of the blocks therein are virtually unchanged from ante-bellum times.

Below are properties directly connected with Foundation's project which we urge you to see or visit:

44 SOCIETY STREET, Isaac Reeves House, c. 1840, restored as single family house with all modern conveniences, now for sale by the Foundation. Read Barnes, A.I.A. Architect; S.C. Poston & Co., Contractor. This remodeling is just completed, the entire house is OPEN TO THE PUBLIC TODAY.

42 SOCIETY STREET, Mrs. Julianna Dupre's House, c. 1854, restored as a single family house by the Foundation and recently sold to Mr. and Mrs. Blake Middleton as their residence. Mr. Barnes, Architect; H.A. DeCosta and Sons, Contractor. This house with the exception of the third floor OPEN TO THE PUBLIC TODAY.

40 SOCIETY STREET, Mrs. Julianna Dupre's House, c. 1834, purchased by the Foundation in 1959, rented in apartments pending restoration or sale. NOT OPEN.

56 SOCIETY STREET, Dr. Joseph Johnson's House, c. 1840, purchased by the Foundation in 1960. Notable interiors with spacious drawing rooms. Held for sale as a single family residence. NOT OPEN.

66 ANSON STREET, purchased by the Foundation 1960, interesting treatment of brick porch columns. Grounds enlarged by addition of property at 64 Anson, razed after extensive damage suffered during tornadoes of Hurricane Donna. Property leased pending sale either before or after restoration. NOT OPEN.

63 ANSON STREET, small brick house, known as Mrs. Stephen Robinson's outbuilding. Built immediately after fire of 1838. Purchased in 1959, being held for sale either before or after restoration. NOT OPEN.

71 ANSON STREET, the Thomas Doughty House, built in 1805 in an essentially Adam style, much fine detailed woodwork. Note strapped gable. Sold by Foundation to Mr. and Mrs. Peter Manigault, who have restored it. NOT OPEN.

72 ANSON STREET, the Benjamin Simons Neufville House, built about 1846. Spacious brick house with unusually handsome drawing rooms on second floor. Garden enlarged by addition of property at 68 Anson where Foundation razed a modern frame building. Fence and gates recently completed by Foundation. Under contract of sale to Lieutenant and Mrs. James A. Meacham, who plan to restore the house as their residence. NOT OPEN.

55 LAURENS STREET, James Jersey House, built 1818. This unusual and handsome mansion, which faces the street and seems more characteristic of early Boston or Providence than of piazza-conscious Charleston, is the property of Mr. John D. Muller, a member of the Board of Directors of Historic Charleston Foundation. Mr. Muller who lives in another old dwelling he has restored on the other side of the city, has recently restored this house in apartments. The restored carriage house, kitchen building, and an apartment on the first floor, one on the second, and a patio apartment OPEN TO THE PUBLIC TODAY.

48 LAURENS STREET, built by Simon Jude Chancognie, about 1815. Very fine example of Charleston single house in the Adam tradition. Note detail on piazzas. Beautiful interiors, and splendid Adam style marble mantel. Purchased by Foundation and sold to Dr. and Mrs. James O'Hear, who are modernizing it for their residence. NOT OPEN.

332 EAST BAY, the Robert Primerose House, built about 1817, an unusually imposing Regency mansion, given the Foundation by an anonymous friend with funds for exterior repairs. The Foundation has completed the renovation of a spacious apartment on the entire second floor. Another gift resulting in the renovation of the main floor apartment was recently received. Repairs are underway here. Both floors will be open; it is interesting to note the work in progress and the original colors and decorations found on the walls. Dawson Engineering Company, Contractors. OPEN TODAY.

329 EAST BAY, the Gadsden House, built in 1800. The house and its restoration and modernization given the Foundation by Mr. and Mrs. Charles Woodward of Philadelphia. Mrs. Woodward is the former Elizabeth Gadsden of Charleston. This splendid Adam mansion has been completely restored by Jack C. Muller of the David LeRoy Parrott, Architectural Firm; H.A. DeCosta, Contractor. There are three apartments, one to each floor in the main house; one in the kitchen building. All are rented. The handsome arched stair hall and the garden, now being developed, will be OPEN TODAY.

This ends our tour of Ansonborough. The Trustees of the Foundation hope that this visit to these reclaimed buildings will serve as inspiration, encouragement, and example, for other restorations throughout the entire city. Two types of restorations have been shown, the rehabilitation of smaller houses into single family residences, the adaptation of larger mansions into comfortable, elegant and convenient apartments.



71 Anson Street



48 Laurens Street



72 Anson Street

ANSONBOROUGH

In the early years of the 18th century, a British naval officer named George Anson was stationed in Charles Town, as commander of an anti-piracy patrol. While here, he won in a card game a sizeable piece of land running roughly from the present corner of George and Meeting Streets to the Cooper River.

Anson later commanded a brilliantly successful around-the-world raid against the Spanish treasure fleets, was made an admiral and then First Lord of the Admiralty. But even while so busily engaged in his profession, through astute absentee management he made a tidy profit on his luck at cards by subdividing the Charles Town property. Two of the original streets then laid out still bear his names - George and Anson - and the general area has ever since been known as "Ansonborough".

As now used by the Foundation in connection with its project, "Ansonborough" applies to an area bounded by Hasell, Meeting, George, Laurens and East Bay Streets, plus the portion of East Bay between Laurens and Calhoun.

This area was chosen by the Foundation as its first project primarily because it is one of Charleston's richest remaining concentrations of early architecture. It contains the oldest dwelling in the entire city (the 1712 William Rhett House at 54 Hasell St.), a few other 18th-century houses, and a number of very early 19th century houses in the highly sophisticated Adam style. But because of a disastrous fire in 1838, most of its buildings date from the 1840's.

In all, it contains more than 100 pre-Civil War houses, plus two churches and one public building (the first public city high school, at 55 Society Street).

Another factor in the choice of the area was that from one of the finest residential areas in ante-bellum Charleston, it had gradually declined to a point where tenements and slums were beginning to predominate. It was felt that a few more years of deterioration would have meant irretrievable loss of its fine architecture.

Other deciding factors were a large number of medium and small sized houses which are especially adaptable to modern living, a general predominance of unusually large and shady yards, and proximity to the major shopping streets of Charleston. It was felt that these qualities provided excellent potential for a "downtown" residential area with advantages many house-hunters now seem to prefer to the suburban living which has been so popular since World War II.

NUMBERED RECTANGLES REPRESENT
DWELLINGS OWNED BY HISTORIC
CHARLESTON FOUNDATION. SHADED
RECTANGLES REPRESENT DWELLINGS
THAT ARE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC.

