



(Staff Photo by Bill Jordan)

73 East Bay St.

Do You Know Your Charleston?

'Ugly Duckling' Renovated

By ROBERT P. STOCKTON

The house at 73 East Bay St., long considered the "ugly duckling" of the Rainbow Row neighborhood, has been transformed into a swan through a recent renovation.

Built sometime between 1918 and 1920 by Dr. Julius C. Sosnowski, the house was recently bought and renovated by landscape architect Robert C. Chesnut.

Sosnowski, a physician, purchased the property on July 10, 1918, from George H. Moffett and Laurence M. Pinckney for \$9,000.

There was on the property at the time a three-story brick house dating from sometime before 1835, when the executors of Adam Tunno's estate sold the property to John McNellage.

According to tradition, the three-story brick house burned and was replaced by Sosnowski with the present two-story brick house, built on the old foundations.

This tradition is substantiated

by an inspection of the basement of the present house, where the modern brick is laid on an older foundation of Carolina grey brick.

Before Sosnowski acquired the property, it housed the grocery store and residence of Harry P. Pettibone and his wife, Jessie.

Sosnowski, who lived with his wife, Kathryn M. Sosnowski, next door at 71 East Bay, built 73 East Bay as a rental unit, and initially it was occupied by U.S. Navy Lt. Harry Y. Cunningham and his wife, Helen.

Seventy-one and 73 East Bay were given a similar appearance by Sosnowski, although 71 is a three-story building and 73 is a two-story building.

Both buildings were faced with a dark reddish-brown brick, considered fashionable at the time, and were given piazzas with arches springing from massive brick pillars, and battlemented terraces on the upper levels.

The battlement motif was carried over into a masonry band across the roof parapet.

Sosnowski also related the two

houses by building a bathroom for each house in a second-story bridge over the passageway leading to the garden of 73 East Bay. When Chesnut acquired 73 East Bay, the plumbing for his bathroom was still located at 71 East Bay.

Sosnowski sold 73 East Bay on July 30, 1920, to J. Roy Jones, who sold it on Sept. 25, 1945, to Anne P. Fishburne, who sold it to Chesnut.

A plat accompanying the deed shows the present house, two stories of brick, with the piazza in front, the bathroom extending across the passageway, and a one-story brick outbuilding in the rear.

Inspection of the outbuilding reveals brick laid in American (common) bond, indicating the structure dates from the mid-19th century. A second story was added to the outbuilding after 1920.

Seventy-three East Bay retained its original appearance until the recent renovation.

Seventy-one East Bay, however, was remodeled about 1930

by the architectural firm of Simons and Lapham for Mrs. Nicholas Roosevelt.

During that remodeling, the piazzas of 71 East Bay were enclosed, with the arched openings between the brick pillars becoming round-headed windows, and an iron balcony being strung across the front on the second level.

Chesnut, in his recent renovation of 73 East Bay, stuccoed the dark brown brick but retained the original architectural details of the brickwork.

The piazza was transformed into a garden, entered through a decorative cast iron gate. The remaining arches of the piazza will eventually be enclosed with ironwork also.

In the interior, Chesnut retained all the original early 20th-century "Colonial Revival" architectural details of the main house, with the exception of replacing the plain "stick" balustrade of the staircase with a "Chinese Chippendale" railing.

In the rear, the 19th-century brick outbuilding awaits restoration at a later date.