



The Face of Fillmore

By Sherry Shepard
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The Face of Fillmore this week highlights Tracy and Lynette Keel's home at 30 North 100 West. This home has undergone an amazing facelift in recent months, which had everyone in the community watching the construction progress. Early in the summer crews were busy working on the flat roof of the house, then a large number of trusses were delivered and many of us wondered where they could put so many. Within a matter of a few days, all of the trusses were up and the roof was being shingled. The once flat roofed home now sports a steep pitched roof with two attractive dormer windows.

The Keel's purchased the home in 1990 from Kurt Wright and his sister Linda Baugh. Their parents had built it in about 1955. It was an attractive home in the latest modern architecture.



The floor plan is an unusual one with five levels. The main floor contains the living room and kitchen. The next level up contains three bedrooms and two baths. Directly below that level is the family room, laundry room and a bedroom and farther down are two bedrooms and a bath as well as a bomb shelter. The newly constructed dormer windows look out from an upstairs living space that is not yet finished but will be useful in the future.

The Wright's lived in the home for 35 years and made many family memories there. Linda tells of the year she was a senior and on the decorating committee for the senior ball. The Wright's had just added an awning the full length of the back of the home. In the backyard there was a large old barn where the committee

decided to store the tumbleweeds they were going to spray with glitter as decorations for the dance. One evening a crew of students loaded a dump truck full of tumbleweeds and brought them to the Wright home. As they were pulling into the backyard, the dump truck caught the edge of the awning and ripped it off the house. Linda recalled she looked around to find herself standing there alone. All of the others had run away from the scene before Mr. Wright had a chance to react.

In the 1970's the Wright home played an important role in one of the most bizarre manhunts our area has ever seen. Two African American men who had committed an armed robbery and assault were trying to make their escape from the law in Las Vegas. Their car ran out of gas at the rest stop near Cove Fort, so they carjacked another one from a young couple who they locked in the trunk of the disabled car. Then the two drove on to Fillmore, where they were arrested.

At that time the jail was a small square building behind the courthouse. During the night they managed to get the door of the cell open and when Sheriff Bryant Crosland came that Sunday morning to bring their breakfast, they knocked him out and made their escape. Crossing Center Street, they attempted to hide in the next block where Mr. and Mrs. Wright lived.

Fillmore was an even more quiet town at that point than it is now, and the Wright's felt safe in not locking their doors. This allowed the culprits to enter and take them hostage. The couple was tied up in their upstairs bedroom using Mr. Wright's neckties instead of rope.

Meanwhile, back at the jail, the sheriff was awake and had summoned help from the jeep posse and his deputies. Thanks to a tip about their whereabouts, the block was surrounded and the search was on. Early morning Relief Society and Priesthood Meeting were in session at the LDS Second Ward Chapel as armed men searched the yards and buildings on the same block.

Duane Baugh, Wrights' son in law, was returning home from a meeting at the Stake Center, when he saw the posse and went to check on the Wright's. The door was locked, which immediately sent up a red flag. He rang the bell and the door opened. One of the men stepped from behind it and grabbed Duane's suit coat sleeve, which literally tore off in the struggle. Duane went running into the street to get help. The two men escaped through a rear door and into the yard. While trying to hide in a garden, one of the men was shot under his arm, and they were recaptured.

During this time Mr. Wright had also been able to free himself and climbed out the back window to get help. Mrs. Wright heard footsteps on the stairs and was extremely relieved to see Ken Hare there to rescue her.

The incident is not without a few comical moments. Mrs. Wright was always a "take charge" kind of person. During their capture, she told one of the culprits that she didn't want her Sunday roast to burn and he promptly when downstairs and turned off the stove. As the men looked for other clothes to change into, one chose Mr. Wright's new suit, which she told him he couldn't wear, because it was new. It was returned to the closet. Perhaps the funniest moment was when Duane asked the intruder at the door who he was and he told Duane he was a family relative.

Golden Wright was the principal of Millard High School for a time and then was Superintendent of Schools in Millard County. He served one full term as mayor of Fillmore and was in his second term at the time of his death. He had accompanied Roy Olpin to the semi final football game against Delta in Payson. Mr. Olpin announced the games and Mr. Wright gave him information about the players. This was a partnership that attended every game. The announcer's booth was a platform high on a pedestal overlooking the field. During the game, Mr. Wright suffered a fatal heart attack. Ironically, after the game he was scheduled to attend a banquet in Salt Lake City where he was being honored for his service as mayor of Fillmore.

Mrs. Wright passed away a few years later. She taught English at Millard High and was a great asset to the community in general.

With the Keel's now in this home, once again the excitement of teenagers is heard as Tracy and Lynnette enjoy the home with their four children. Our thanks to them for improving their home and thus helping beautify our community.

