

# EVERY HOUSE HAS A STORY

Kaufman hopes historical Pomerene House will find a new owner who shares his passion for history

By Dave Mast  
TheBargainHunter.com

The Pomerene House in Berlin has always held a very special place in the heart of Stanley Kaufman.

Ever since he was a young boy, Kaufman has been intrigued by the old home that is perched between Sommers' General Store and Millie Dindot's near the intersection of state Routes 62 and 39.

He has fought hard to keep the house built by Peter Pomerene in 1879 relevant and renovated throughout the decades since purchasing it, but with the home now up for sale, his hope is that someone will see the value of the property from a historical perspective and continue to maintain the Holmes County historical landmark home as a connection to a time long gone by.

Kaufman said he has had an interest in the old house since he was in grade school and in high school, he began doing interviews with people in the community to learn more about the Pomerene family and the house.

"It's such a beautiful home and such a big part of our county's history," Kaufman said. "For whatever reason, it really caught my eye when I was young and I have been working to restore it and keep it in good shape ever since. My hope is that maybe a group will come forward and purchase the home and keep it as a historical marker."

Peter Pomerene was a wealthy physi-

cian whose family's name is ingrained in Holmes County. One of his sons, Atlee Pomerene, grew up in the home and became a prominent United States senator. Other siblings were successful in the medical world and Pomerene Hospital gets its moniker from his son, Joel Pomerene.

When Kaufman purchased the home for \$20,000 in 1971, he was a young man with a dream of seeing the historic house

**“For whatever reason, it really caught my eye when I was young and I have been working to restore it and keep it in good shape ever since.”**

*Stanley Kaufman*

remain something special that the people of Holmes County would embellish as a historic marker.

He has spent the past five decades continuing his passion for seeing the home preserved. He had to work past people who wanted it razed and made into a parking lot. The property has seen a number of families live in the home

over the decades and several businesses have called the property home.

While families and business have come and gone, Kaufman's zeal to preserve the Pomerene House has never wavered.

Kaufman said the house has undergone many changes over the decades, but he has diligently sought out photographs so he could restore the home as closely as possible to its original look. That work has included tearing off aluminum siding, replacing wood and repainting the home to its original color and a massive undertaking of replacing the balcony that adorns the second floor that was taken down when a front porch was built.

The Victorian-style house was Berlin's grand home when built by Peter Pomerene. The cost to build it was \$4,000 in 1879, a number that was quite a bit during that era. In fact, Kaufman said that amount matched Pomerene's income that year.

The family spared no expense, adorning the house with decorative buttresses, intricate and ornate moldings inside and outside, furnishing the house with high-quality furniture throughout.

Over the years, Kaufman has located missing parts of the house, including the original shutters that had been stored in a barn for many years. The parlor in particular is a fascinating part of the home's allure. Some of the original furniture from the home remains in the parlor, including an old cradle that was made in Berlin.

The house remains one of the few structures along Berlin Main Street that hasn't been altered and rebuilt into a business.

"I would love to see someone purchase it who values historic structures and see it used as a cultural arts center and a landmark of one of our county's most influential families," Kaufman said.

The Pomerene House continues to draw the attention of visitors, many of whom stop and take photos in front of the old Victorian-style home, Kaufman said that while he has owned the house for 50 years, he would love to see it serv-

U.S. Senator Atlee Pomerene was one of 11 siblings to grow up in the Berlin house built by their father, Peter Pomerene, in 1879.



ing as a historical marker for the next half-century and more.

Kaufman's passion for historical homes doesn't stop with the Pomerene House. He also owned the Wise House, a home near Charm, which was torn down several years ago. The remnant of that historic home, which was also on the National Register of Historic Places, was razed and is currently in storage. Original

owner Peter Wise was the grandfather of Senator Atlee Pomerene.

"These historic homes are a connection to our past and are important" Kaufman said. "I am leaving all of the original furniture in the house, which only adds to the allure of the home."

The Pomerene House is currently listed with Kaufman Realty & Auction through real estate agent Pedro Guzman.



Back in the early 1970s, Stanley Kaufman purchased the Pomerene House for \$20,000. The home built by Peter Pomerene is on the National Register of Historic Places. Today, the home of former U.S. senator Atlee Pomerene has been restored by Stanley Kaufman to match the original house built in 1879 as closely as possible. The house is for sale and Kaufman is hoping that its new owner will preserve the historical home.

Submitted