

DATE: May 4, 2009

Preservation Spirit Award

Preservation of Wilson held its annual membership appreciation Garden Party on Sunday, May 3rd at the home of Sandra and Garland Homes. New this year was the presentation of the Preservation Spirit Award given to Gaynell Stallings in recognition to the valuable contribution that has been made to the Old Wilson Historic District with the purchase and future restoration of the Darden-Douglas House located at 315 West Green Street.

After sitting vacant and threatened with continued deterioration, Wilson's 1902 Darden Douglas House has been sold. When completed, the house will be converted into a special events facility for weddings, receptions, parties and business socials, with a full service commercial kitchen. Gaynell Stallings proudly says "I have a vision."

Gaynell is no stranger to this type of project. She has restored historic homes in Savannah, GA, and Annapolis, MD. The Savannah property was her first project. She then purchased and restored three more homes in Annapolis, MD, on Market Street, one of the most historic streets in downtown near the Annapolis waterfront. The last property she restored in Annapolis was the last condemned property in the city. HGTV did a segment on the project on their TV show "Old Homes Restored," giving Stallings's work national attention.

Gaynell is the owner of Park Place Interiors and this makes the fifth historic property that Stallings owns in Wilson's five National Register of Historic Districts.

The Preservation Spirit Award is presented to individuals that have demonstrated an outstanding commitment to promoting historic preservation in Wilson County, North Carolina.