

Historic home on the move

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Davie · As their historic, childhood home started to move, the four Osterhoudt sisters wept Saturday to see their life's memories carried off. The house, built from a kit sold by Sears, sat on a flatbed trailer, and Saturday started its three-day journey to the Old Davie School Historical Museum about four blocks away.

"When it started moving, I started crying," said Sharron Smith, the oldest sister, who now lives in Acworth, Ga. "I keep saying, 'It's just a house and I have the memories, but it's not just a house.'"

More than 50 people watched as the house began its move. It will be placed to the east of the Viele house, built in 1912, and behind the Old Davie School, where the late Beulah Osterhoudt, known as Bettye, taught first grade for 25 years. She and her late husband, Jacob Osterhoudt, known as Bud, bought the home in 1958. They were the third owners.

Pioneer families that settled in Zona, which is now the town of Davie, built the house at 6890 Griffin Road about nine decades ago. The town's tax book records on it start in 1925.

Before the house was moved, the family, friends and town officials enjoyed a picnic-style brunch on the grounds of the home. At 12:30 p.m., workers started to hook the house up to special equipment used to pull it to the museum.

The move is slow, about 50 feet at a time through the rural landscape and over a canal to its final resting place. The use of the house is undetermined, but it could become an art gallery, a gift shop or the starting place for a historical tour.

Linda Cummings, the second oldest daughter, is comforted by the fact that she, her children and others can still enjoy the house.

"I want people to be able to go in and feel the warmth, everyone came here and loved to come for a visit," said Cummings, of Hollywood, who lived in the house until the 2-acre property was sold to developers in May. "I am teary, these are my roots."

Over the years, other would-be buyers made offers, but the family rejected them until now.

"We made the preservation of the house a stipulation of the sale, we were not going to sell it to someone who would have flattened it," said Melanie Rand, the third oldest sister, who lives in Guyton, Ga.

No longer will Bettye's handmade stockings hang from the fireplace. No more hide-and-seek will be played by children or stories told of wolves lurking in the dark L-shaped closet. Christmas parties will no longer take place inside the home.

"I know it will never be the same again," said youngest sister Natalie Osterhoudt of Davie. "It will be tough driving up and down Griffin Road."

The property will be added to 29 acres Klemow Inc. bought from Dwight A. Viele for a mixed-use development, called Lakeside Village. Construction is set to begin in January and take about 18 months.

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