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Historic Pompano home celebrates its centennial with family fun



The 17-room Sample-McDougald home at 450 NE 10th Street in Pompano Beach will celebrate its centennial May 14-15. (Taimy Alvarez / Sun Sentinel)



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MAY 9, 2016, 12:27 PM

Happy birthday, Sample-McDougald House! You're older than the **Empire State Building**, the survivor of multiple hurricanes and still looking fine at 100.

Caretakers of one of South Florida's oldest original historic homes will celebrate with a catered gourmet barbecue dinner and auction Saturday, May 14, followed by a public Family Day party on Sunday, May 15.

Both events will be on the grounds of the Pompano Beach house and museum, an elegant, wide-porched structure that's been lovingly restored and decorated with period furniture.

Sunday's events will include an antique car and tractor display, pony rides, and blacksmithing and quilting demonstrations – nods to Pompano's agricultural past. When the house was built 100 years ago, almost all of Pompano's estimated 1,000 residents were somehow involved in farming, said Dan Hobby, the house's retired executive director who now is a volunteer.

"Pompano old-timers remember, as kids, driving by the house. Everyone thought it was magnificent," said Hobby.

All proceeds from the centennial celebration will go to the Sample-McDougald House Preservation Society, which maintains the property and manages its museum and event rentals. The McDougald family, who bought the home in 1943, donated it to the nonprofit in 1999 in hopes it would be restored and eventually opened to the public.

Melissa May, the society's new executive director, said the organization has just installed a three-dimensional AccuTour that will allow online visitors, as well as disabled people who can't walk up the stairs to the house's second story, to enjoy a tour.

The society is "moving from the mission of saving the house to... making it a community gathering place," said May. "We perceive ourselves as having an educational mission."

In that spirit, here are four things about the Sample-McDougald House that might surprise you:

Even if it looks fancy, it's a farmhouse: In 1916, Albert Neal Sample built the massive, 4,500-square-foot Georgian Revival house, patterned after a South Carolina home, to be near the fields where he planned to raise pineapples. But while the Samples were farmers, later switching from fruit to vegetable crops, they embellished their living space with refined touches like intricate molding and French doors.

"There was nothing like it in Pompano at the time," said Hobby. "It was an immense house for its day."

It's tough! Only a handful of wooden residential structures built before **Broward County's** first population boom in the 1920s have made it through decades of tropical storms, humidity and termites. Hobby credits the house's pristine condition to the fact that, over a century, it was owned by only two families: the Samples and the McDougalds, both who raised their families there and didn't tinker with its design.

It's mobile! Sample had his farm near Dixie Highway and the Florida East Coast Railroad tracks, to better ship his produce north for sale. The house was moved when taken over by the preservation society, however, to a city-owned lot the nonprofit could lease.

In one piece and pulled by a truck, it was inched three miles along Dixie Highway in the middle of the

night, May said, taking seven hours as people lined the streets to watch. The utility lines had to be raised so it could pass under.

It has a mysterious past: Despite its pristine historic condition, little is known about the house's early days, including who designed and built it. No Sample family documents regarding the house ever have been found, Hobby said.

It answers to other names: The property, on the National Registry of Historic Places since 2004, is listed as the Sample-McDougald House. But years ago, it also was called Pine Haven or Old Sample Estate.

The Sample-McDougald House Centennial Celebration fundraising dinner and auction from 5 to 10 p.m., Saturday at the house, 450 NE 10th St., Pompano Beach. Tickets are \$100 with proceeds going to the Sample-McDougald House Preservation Society. To purchase tickets: 754-307-5446 or go to www.samplemcdougaldhouse.com.

The centennial's Family Day will be held from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Sunday at the house. Tickets are \$10 at the door, children 12 and under free. No reservations required.

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