

## Old Homes of Fair Oaks

Jim Pearce

8025 Sunset Ave



Owners:

1895 – Rosetta Russell

1900 – John Rasmussen

1910 – James Cunningham

19?? – Ed Gaucher

1945 – Lyle Harris

19?? – Marion & Stu Jansen

1900 – Masterson Family

This old farmhouse, now mostly hidden behind a hedge on Sunset Avenue west of Fair Oaks Boulevard, was built about 1897. It shows on our 1901 geologic map, and when undergoing renovation the owners found the walls insulated with wads of 1897 San Jose newspaper pages. What's not certain is who built the house.

Like many early properties in Fair Oaks, ownership was an investment. Absentee owners would buy acreage, have orchards planted and build a farmhouse that would be rented out to a local farmer.

This property, about five acres on the north border of the Fair Oaks Colony, was originally bought by Rosetta Russell of Chicago, but there is no indication she ever came to Fair Oaks.

The property turned over several times from 1896 to 1900, at which time it was purchased by John Rasmussen, a hotel and saloon owner in Sacramento City. Again, there is no indication he ever lived there. A fortunate entry in the Memories book states that the home was rented out for about a year in 1906 to the Frank Vincent family. His sons refer to the home as the Rasmussen House.

In 1919, James Cunningham, pipeline boss for the Fair Oaks Irrigation District, bought the property. He ran for Justice of the Peace in eastern Sacramento in 1915 and is known to the old-timers as “Judge Cunningham.” He died in 1921.



The photo above shows the house around 1910, with the home at far right, the Blanchard cherry orchards in bloom at front and citrus orchards to the rear.

In 2000, the Masterson family purchased the property and have spent the last 20 years renovating and adding to the property, including adding a three car garage, completely rebuilding the swimming pool and redecorating the house. It is currently for sale, listed for \$899,000. For complete information and a virtual tour, Google the address and go to Zillow.com.