

Ocracoke Island, on the Outer Banks of North Carolina, was first settled by Europeans in the mid 1700's. In 1759, at nearly 60 years old, William Howard purchased the entire island for £105, and moved here.

Over the years the village grew. Families built modest homes, a church was established, schools were built, and businesses flourished as shipping, fishing, and, eventually, tourism blossomed.

Many island homes in the nineteenth century were constructed from materials salvaged from schooners that wrecked on Ocracoke's beach. These and other historically significant structures are included in an area of approximately 200 acres around Silver Lake harbor. In 1990 the Ocracoke Historic District was established, with more than 200 contributing structures identified.

The Homer and Aliph Howard home is one of these contributing structures.

In 1893, Homer Howard (great-great-great grandson of William Howard) married Aliph Dean O'Neal (great-great-great-great granddaughter of William Howard). As a wedding present, Homer's father, James Howard, purchased a nearby small home and had it moved to his property on Howard Street.

(This house is being rehabilitated. As work proceeds, additional information and photos of the project will be posted here. Please scroll down, and check back periodically to follow our progress.)

You can click on most of the photos below to view a larger version.

The Homer & Aliph Howard Home, on the left, as it appeared ca. 1932, and, on the right, January, 2004:



This house is representative of the basic island home, the historic "story and a jump," a diminutive frame house, one and a half stories high. In typical fashion, it has a front porch and a one-story shed addition in the rear. It was built ca. 1860 for Thompson Bragg (born ca. 1837/38), who never married, and it originally sat where the School Road lies now, not

far from NC Highway 12.

Homer and Aliph Howard had 13 children. Although only eight of these children lived to attain maturity (listed below in bold type), all of them were born and reared in this 1000 square foot home. The house was heated, first by wood, and later by a kerosene space heater. There was no indoor plumbing and the kitchen was a separate building connected to the rear of the house by a wide wooden boardwalk. Aliph prepared meals on a cast iron wood-burning cook stove. Family members obtained water from a pitcher pump that was connected to a large round wooden cistern.

Name	Sex	Birth Date	Death Date
Aliph Dean O'Neal Howard	F (Mother)	March 19, 1876	December 13, 1950
Homer Howard	M (Father)	June 21, 1868	May 15, 1947
Agatha	F	May 11, 1894	March 11, 1986
Marvin Wyche	M	September 11, 1897	March 26, 1969
Failing H	M	November 04, 1899	July 14, 1900
Beatrice	F	March 04, 1901	Died at birth or soon after
James Enoch Evans	M	January 21, 1903	January 04, 1972
Cordelia Zilphia	F	October 26, 1905	January 21, 1923
Neva May	F	June 09, 1910	Died at birth or soon after
Lawton Wesley	M	May 16, 1908	April 19, 1993
Thelma Gray	F	October 10, 1911	March 23, 2002
Aliph Carena	F	May 13, 1915	July 22, 1915
Homer Rodheaver	M	December 23, 1912	July 13, 1917
Aliph Dean	F	September 26, 1918	October 12, 1918

Thelma Gray Howard Babb (Aliph & Homer's tenth child), a feisty, witty, active, and fun-loving woman who turned 91 years old in December of 2003, lives in Texas.

Homer & Aliph Howard with Thelma's daughter Becky (note round cistern behind Homer), 1939:



This house was sold outside of the family in the mid 1960's (about a decade after Aliph died), but Philip Howard, Homer and Aliph's grandson, bought the property again in 1990. Although several people have owned this house, and even more have lived in it, no truly major renovations were ever made.

In the mid-1930's the small open porch on the rear shed addition was converted to an indoor kitchen. And in the mid-1950's a small bathroom was added on the first floor, the roof was replaced, and plywood was nailed to all of the floors and to most of the walls and ceilings. Otherwise, few alterations were made. As a result, although the house shows the effects of nearly 150 years of wear from humans, critters, and storms, it remains remarkably well preserved.

In 2003 Philip obtained approval from the North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office for an historic rehabilitation of this significant island structure. Work was begun in January

2004.

Use the links at the top of the page to see a record of ongoing work done on the Homer & Aliph Howard home.

Check back periodically for additional photos and more information about the progress of this project.