



Teucer House, 3 Cedar Avenue, Pembroke



An early photograph of Teucer House when it was a private residence.

Courtesy of the National Museum of Bermuda

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This is part of a series of architectural articles by the Bermuda National Trust that will highlight some of Bermuda's endangered historic buildings.

Teucer House is located on the northwest portion of the eight-acre Dellwood property. Owned by Captain William Smith and his sister Mary this estate was not included in the lands purchased for the new town of Hamilton that was incorporated in 1793. It remains today outside the City of Hamilton boundary. The old house Dellwood is now part of the school campus.



Teucer House was called “a typical Bermuda home” when it was photographed by Robert E.M. Bain in 1907.

Courtesy of Bermuda Archives



Teucer House was built around 1903 by Cecil Hamilton Tucker whose parents and sisters lived at Dellwood. In the early 20th century Cedar Avenue was one of the prettiest streets in Bermuda and therefore a prestigious address. With its grand proportions, spacious verandahs, five bedrooms, two bathrooms, two large reception rooms and a library, Teucer House was an impressive residence.

Cecil Hamilton Tucker, like his father James, was a civil servant. He ended his career as Colonial Postmaster. After his death in 1933 his widow Sara went to live with her sister-in-law Grace Tucker at Dellwood until 1937 when that property was sold to the Bermuda Government in order that a school for white children be established on the site. Both women then moved to Teucer House where Sara died in 1939. Grace sold Teucer House and 1½ acres for £6,000 in 1943 to Charles Harry Monks, the owner and operator of Colonial Theatres. His plans included adding an open-air movie theatre as well as garage/gas station as he anticipated the increased popularity of automobiles in Bermuda. The Garden Theatre opened in July 1944 but the gas station never materialized. Harry and his family lived at Teucer House until March 1955 when it was advertised for sale.



Teucer House was in good condition and used by a government department when it was photographed in 2006. In the early 1900s the dormer windows for the three attic rooms would have been a relatively new feature in Bermuda houses The upper verandah had been enclosed after 1955.

Bermuda National Trust Collection

In April 1955 the House of Assembly approved the purchase of Teucer House to assist in the development of Dellwood school. The disastrous fire at the Hamilton Hotel in December 1955 caused a change of plans as many government offices housed there were displaced. The Board of



Education was located at Teucer House until 1970 when it was moved to the old wing at King Edward Memorial Hospital. Later that year the building was occupied by the Youth Health Education Development Department and Teen Services under Mrs Olga Scott.

By 2011 Teucer House had been empty for several years and was deteriorating badly. The inevitable happened in October 2013 when the abandoned building caught fire and took more than three hours to bring under control. The fire services later confirmed that arson had been ruled out; however the presence of squatters undoubtedly contributed to the cause of the blaze.



Teucer House suffered extensive damage from fire in October 2013.

In 2015, in an attempt to reduce the need for rented office space, Government submitted plans to renovate Teucer House that included the removal of the roof, internal walls, doors and partitions and the restoration of the building to its original state. Work never started and in 2019 Government put out request for an Expression of Interest for the Development or Renovation of Teucer House. A planning application was submitted to turn the building into tourist accommodation and in 2021 the plans for a boutique guesthouse were approved by Planning.

Here we are in 2023 and Government once again has advertised for interested parties to redevelop Teucer House. Granted that Cedar Avenue is not the desirable location that it was a hundred years ago, surely this once handsome building can be restored and serve a useful purpose?



Sources: *Bermuda's Architectural Heritage Series: Pembroke*; articles from *The Royal Gazette* included those of 10 Apr 1926, 7 Dec 1933, 18 Jan 1941, 9 Sep 1943, 9 Mar 1955, 21 Apr 1955, 23 Nov 2011, 24 Mar 2015, 27 Jan 2016.