

HISTORY, UPGRADES & IMPROVEMENTS

5900 Ostrander Road, Oakland

History

The Speagle House was built in 1961 for the family of Mr. and Mrs. Harold Speagle. Harold G. Speagle and Marjorie K. Speagle were the owners of H.G. Speagle Construction Company, and Speagle Construction, Ltd., a prominent general contracting company involved in the construction (or reconstruction) of many East Bay businesses including Neldom's Bakery, both gymnasiums at Oakland Tech, Oakland Metropolitan Yacht Club, St. Stephens church in Orinda and St. Anselm's Episcopal in Lafayette.

In the late 50's Mr. and Mrs. Speagle met brothers Henry and George Nakahara of Nakahara and Nakahara, AIA, a leading architecture firm at the time; credits include several buildings for Berkeley Unified School District and the Berkeley Buddhist Temple. Together they worked on a personal teahouse project in Piedmont which created the inspiration for the Speagle House.

The landscaping was designed by landscape architect Morio Iwamoto. Mrs. Speagle's uncle, Howard Gilkey, provided the design for the pond and water feature. Mr. Gilkey was renowned for his water feature designs and is most notably known for founding the California Spring Garden Show, as well as designing the Cleveland Cascades at Lake Merritt and the Woodminster Amphitheater and Cascade at Joaquin Miller Park.

In 2012, shortly after the passing of Mrs. Speagle, there was a fire in the laundry room, which spread into many parts of the home; the cause of the fire is still unknown. Mrs. Speagle's granddaughter, the current owner, was home at the time. The fire department was quick to respond and was able to save the home, but not without damage. The laundry room, workshop, kitchen, dining room, living room, master bedroom, hallways, and upstairs hallway were damaged, and subsequently rebuilt.

The house was rebuilt with permits and in accordance with the original plans, which were not destroyed in the fire. While the home was able to retain the original look the systems were updated.

Brought to the family home at just 3 days old, the granddaughter still lives there today. She has many fond memories, including watching the landing on the moon from the family room, playing with her twin brother on a play structure that used to be under the redwood tree, and amazing cocktail parties for friends and business partners that filled the house with love and good times. As the daughter of a local minister, Mrs. Speagle also loved the holidays and the house was especially bright during those times.

So many stories and memories were created in The Speagle House; now it is time for a new family to create their own memories.

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UPGRADES & IMPROVEMENTS

- Floors on main level and master bath are Karndean Vinyl tiles
- LED perimeter lighting above windows
- The Arizona flagstone surrounding the fireplace was hand-surfaced by a member of the family; each piece is between 3" and 5" deep
- All interior doors (except laundry, study and kitchen), closet doors and hallway built-in are birch
- The Tokonoma in the living room (alcove next to the fireplace) and the Fusuma (sliding doors) and two built-ins in the dining room are made of a combination of redwood core and imported Japanese teak
- Most wallpaper panels, including those leading into the master bedroom, are imported Japanese papers (one section, replaced after the fire, is vinyl)
- The wall covering opposite the fireplace in the master bedroom is spun linen from Denmark
- All wooden accents, trim and beams are a combination of redwood core and imported Japanese teak (treads under main staircase are also redwood core)
- Carpet is Tuftex cut-pile carpet
- Accordion door into the sewing room was a gift from the Pella family (of Pella Windows), who were family friends
- The Japanese sunken tub in the master bath was either the 4th or 5th permitted sunken tub in Oakland
- The wine cellar could also be used as a fallout shelter as there is an air shaft
- Citrus trees including meyer lemon, orange, dwarf orange, dwarf lime, apple
- Exterior siding is redwood
- Kitchen, laundry and entire ground floor were gutted to studs; upstairs hallway, all walls/ceiling facing the upstairs hallway rebuilt 2013-2015
- New electrical, plumbing and heating installed 2013-2014
- Interior painted in March 2018
- Exterior painted in 2015