

# Getting to Know Your Neighbor –

*Jeffrey Wade and his Home* (On the Houston Heights Holiday Home Tour, 2010)



Jeffrey Wade moved to Houston 1980 from Cape Code's sleepy village of Wellfleet, armed with his "five-year plan" to try Houston and its enviable job market. He quickly landed a job and began to find friends in his newly discovered city. It wasn't long before his "plan" began to fade, as he fell in love with the city's southern hospitality and mild winters.

"I've enjoyed a varied career in industries like oil & gas, investment, heavy construction, and high-tech with roles equally varied in accounting, information systems, software development, management and marketing," says Jeffrey. He is



currently a marketing professional for the Hewlett-Packard corporation.

Wade and his partner, Allen Mitchell, moved to The Heights in 1986. They bought their first home on Harvard Street, and over time kindly and lovingly restored it back into a beautiful dwelling. After Mitchell's death in 1994, Wade continued to work on the home, ultimately deciding he wanted to find a new home-ownership project.

On a Sunday afternoon drive, he found exactly what he was looking for – a vacant home at 1432 Tulane – with only exterior walls, a roof and a few dozen resident pigeons. It had earned the nickname "la casa de los pichones" from various neighbors on the block. However, Wade knew he was on the right path. In a two-year project, he finished his new home, which today provides an entertainment venue for him and his cadre of friends.

I liked two things about this house – it had a nice open feeling and even more importantly the house was a blank slate. It had stud walls on the interior but nothing else and you could see from one end to the other. I kept the floor plan pretty



always making everything from scratch and baking endless fruit tarts, cakes and casseroles for our youth-related fund raising activities.



much intact but completely redesigned the kitchen for entertaining with the kind of appliances I had always wanted, and to be more open to the family room. The family room steps down for a 13'5" ceiling and has a built-in entertainment center with almost no footprint, even though it holds a 52" HDTV and entertainment system.

The kitchen serves as its centerpiece. "I love to cook and I think much of that comes from my parents. Feeding five children, I can remember my Mom



*From my Dad, I can remember the big baked hams for Easter, roast beef and Yorkshire pudding on very special occasions, golden Thanksgiving turkeys and of course his locally-famous potato salad for cookouts in the summer.*



If there is one thing I have learned over the years is that the kitchen is the heart of your home. And with this house, I saw the opportunity to create that place where I really could cook and entertain in a nice, open space. "My taste in art is just as varied! I don't really have a style, which is apparent from what I do collect, and it varies from "garage art" created over a couple of weekend with a friend, to pastels, prints, carvings, to handmade rugs and knitted items from my family. And, just like its owner, the house conveys a sense of elegance, yet makes you feel uncommonly comfortable at the same time. A successful salvation and restoration of an old home.