

HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION
DEMOLITION AND RELOCATION PERMITS
MAY 1, 2024
PR-2024-039098; GF-2024-043965
2806 PECOS STREET

PROPOSAL

Demolish a ca. 1972 house.

ARCHITECTURE

Two-story Classical Revival house with red brick cladding, multilight windows, and thin columns supporting a partial-width pedimented gable.

RESEARCH

The house on 2806 Pecos Street was constructed in 1972 by Barbara and W. Chapman Byrd, with the help of Ted Attal Construction Company. The Byrds designed the building themselves and participated hands-on in its construction, with Barbara Byrd's uncle Ted Attal and his construction crew supervising the build. Neither of the Byrds was a construction professional; Barbara was a homemaker and Chapman a criminal defense lawyer.

PROPERTY EVALUATION

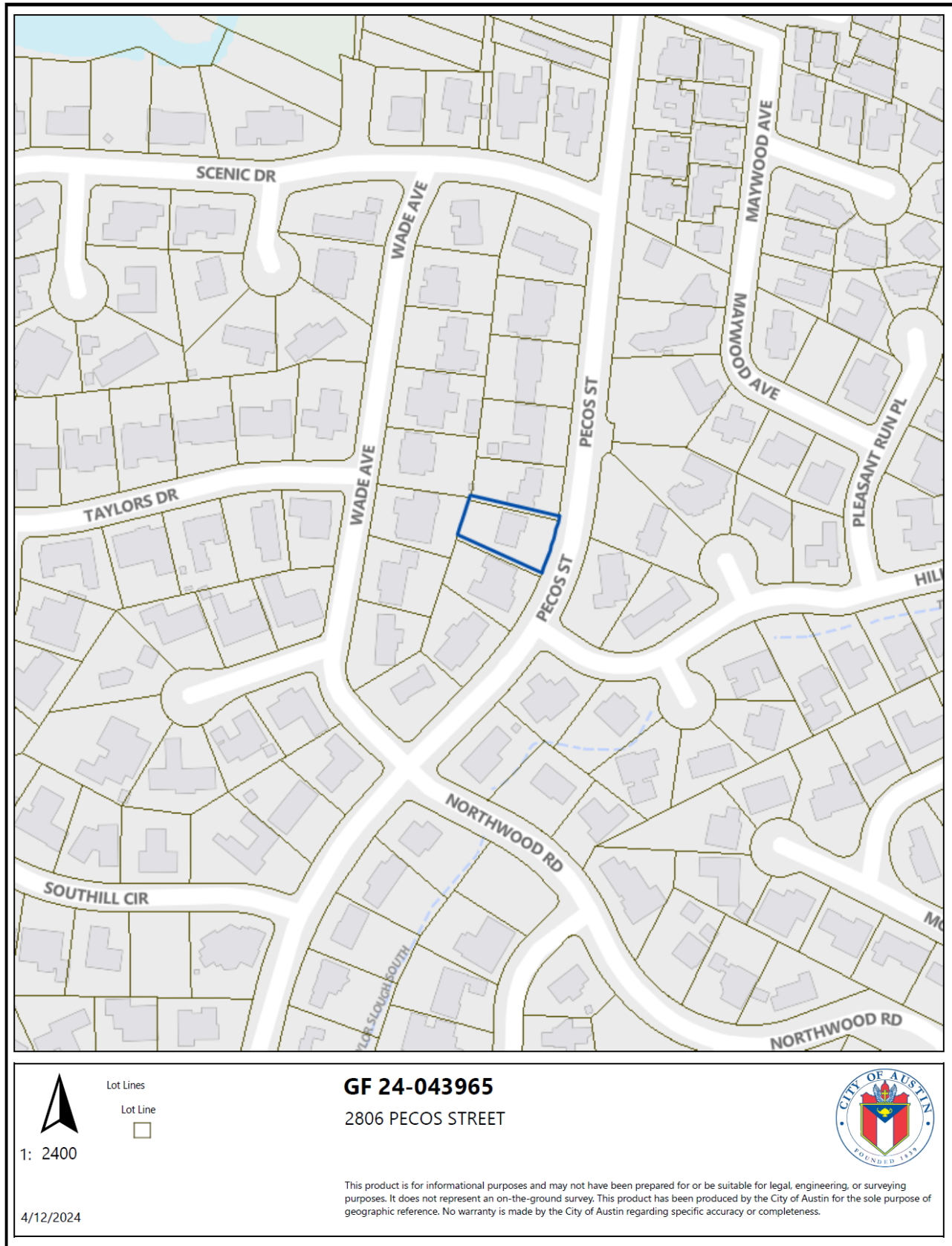
Designation Criteria—Historic Landmark

- 1) The building is more than 50 years old.
- 2) The building appears to retain high integrity.
- 3) Properties must meet two criteria for landmark designation (LDC §25-2-352). Staff has evaluated the property and determined that it does not meet two criteria for landmark designation:
 - a. Architecture. The building, displaying Classical and Colonial Revival stylistic elements, was designed and constructed by its first owners, who—though not professionals themselves—employed the help of family member Ted Attal's construction company.
 - b. Historical association. The property does not appear to have significant historical associations.
 - c. Archaeology. The property was not evaluated for its potential to yield significant data concerning the human history or prehistory of the region.
 - d. Community value. The property does not appear to possess a unique location, physical characteristic, or significant feature that contributes to the character, image, or cultural identity of the city, the neighborhood, or a particular demographic group.
 - e. Landscape feature. The property is not a significant natural or designed landscape with artistic, aesthetic, cultural, or historical value to the city.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Encourage rehabilitation and adaptive reuse but release the permit upon completion of a City of Austin Documentation Package.

LOCATION MAP



PROPERTY INFORMATION*Photos*



Demolition permit application, 2024

Historical Information



BARBARA AND CHAPMAN BYRD TOAST THEIR NEW HOUSE
It took six months of hard work, but they built it themselves

By DOTTIE FISH
Women's Staff
Back in January, 2004, the lot was just a field full of caliche and weeds. The only

redeeming feature visible on a dreary winter day was the plentiful groves of oak trees scattered around the lot. But Chapman and Barbara



YARD LANDSCAPING STILL IN PROGRESS
Chapman laid the walkway

They Built It Themselves

From a Field to a Colonial Home

Byrd spotted a battered For Sale sign hidden among the brambles and saw the possibilities in the property.

The Byrds had a dream — a four-bedroom, two-story colonial house they wanted to build. They are both Austin High graduates and wanted to come back here from San Antonio, and they'd looked all over Travis County for a place to put their new home.

When they said they wanted to build, they meant just that. No building crews were going to be hired, no carpenters to do all the work. Chapman and Barbara were going to build the house themselves, guided by her uncle, Ted Attal, a contractor.

So they bought the land. And the transformation began.

"It was a lot of hard work," says Chapman, sitting on the sofa by the fireplace in his new, carpeted, not-suit-finished living room. "We started Jan. 1, even though it was a holiday. And we put in every spare minute until we got it done."

Neither of the Byrds had ever built anything before, but they were about to learn — "the hard way, from experience," laughs Chapman.

They had designed the house and Barbara's sister had drawn it. Then they gave the pictures to Attal, who agreed to help them. He started figuring and measuring, and bought the lumber. Work began in earnest. Chapman, Barbara, Attal and other relatives began sawing and nailing together the walls of the house. Meanwhile, the men put in the steel and forms for the foundation.

It was cold, and hot pots of coffee saw them through the 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. work. They were all tired. Chapman and Barbara had to come each weekend from San Antonio, where he practiced law. Attal had his business to attend to during the week.

"It was almost totally a weekend job," says Chapman, looking tired just from remembering.

"It was really wearing."

says Barbara. "At first, we were so enthusiastic. Everyone was running around, yelling and nailing things in place. By the time we were finished, we were exhausted and had to force ourselves to come out here and work."

By the middle of February, the foundation was ready and the walls, all coded and numbered by room and direction, were put together.

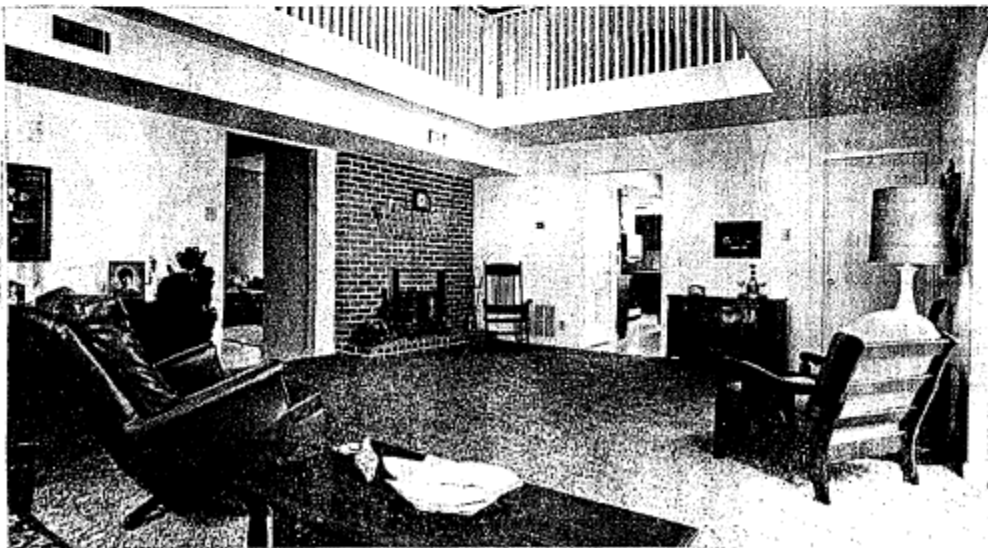
"So we loaded them all on a flatbed truck and brought them over here. Then we assembled, just like a jigsaw puzzle," Barbara says.

Work continued. Saws and sanders were brought to the house to facilitate finishing chores.

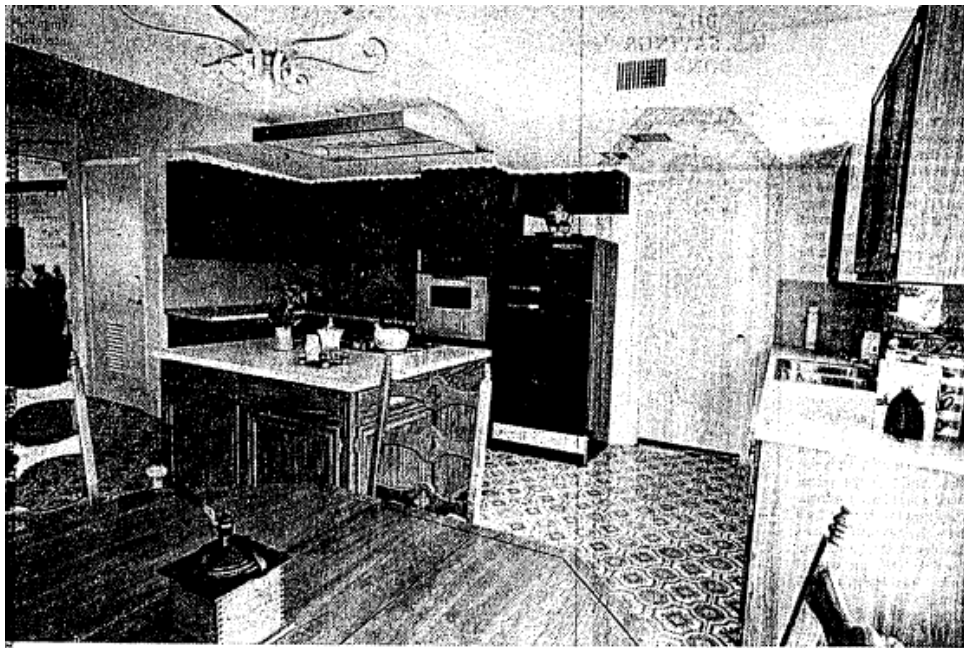
Mishaps, humorous in retrospect, weren't funny then.

Getting the 1,500-pound marble tub upstairs wasn't easy. "We had to take out the wall by the staircase — we didn't have the sheetrock on yet, thankfully — so we could get the tub up here," says Barbara. "I had to leave the house. I could just see it slipping off the ropes and shattering into thousands of pieces."

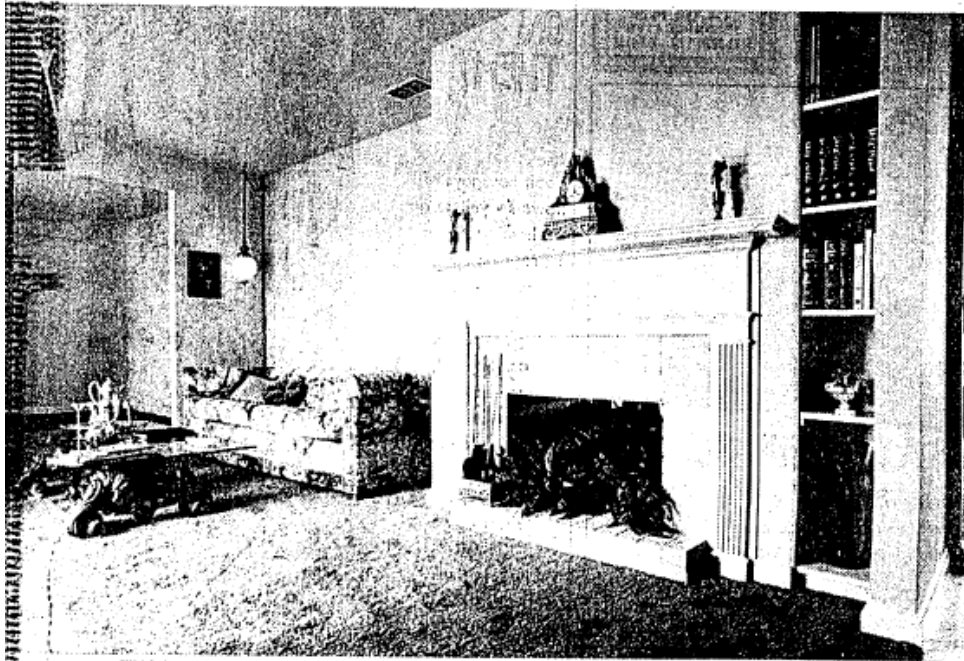
"It was also really scary



COOL BLUE DOMINATES THE SPACIOUS FAMILY ROOM IN THE BYRDS' HOME
Barbara chose all the colors; Chapman hand-cut each slat on the lunister above



PLENTY OF WINDOWS MAKE THE ROOMY KITCHEN A PLEASURE TO COOK IN
It's a good thing, too, because Barbara says culinary delights are her hobby



WARM GOLD AND BRIGHT GREEN ACCENT THE LIVING ROOM AND DINING AREA
The dual fireplace also serves the family room, and a door provides kitchen access

By **DOTTIE FISH**
Women's Staff
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partner in the new firm of Byrd and Ferris, worked about four days a week on the house.

"And we spent hours shoveling out pounds of caliche and sawdust," says Barbara ruefully.

Landscaping also had to be done. Once Chapman and Attal had put in the driveway and sidewalk, there was still a lot to do. (See COLONIAL Page F15)

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lawn to plant on the sloping front yard. The Byrds did that themselves, too.

The oaks, luckily, were still there. Attal had figured a way to angle the house on the lot so not a single tree had to be cut. And Barbara made sure none were damaged.

"I went around tying blue ribbons to all the trees to make sure the construction didn't get them," she laughs. "And they're all here."

Barbara chose all the colors and decorated the house herself.

"I had to go from place to place to pick out the carpet, the bathroom fixtures, the tile — everything. I was in the car for a month getting bids until I came up with what Uncle Ted thought was the right price. And they'd give me a little bitty piece of wallpaper, then I'd get it on the wall and it'd look totally different."

Then, one day, the Byrds looked around and the house was finished. They started to move in Aug. 20.

"I can't believe it's really finished," sighs Barbara. There are still finishing touches. Barbara hasn't had time to get all the furniture or curtains she wants to fill out the rooms, but the main work is done.

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Getting the 1,500-pound marble sunken tub upstairs wasn't easy. "We had to take out the wall by the staircase — we didn't have the sheetrock on yet, thankfully — so we could get the tub up here," says Barbara. "I had to leave the house. I could just see it slipping off the ropes and shattering into thousands of pieces."

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when they were working on the rafters over the garage," Barbara remembers. "The south side of the house is three stories, and there were Chapman and Uncle Ted hanging up there in the rafters. It was a long way down."

Gradually the house began to take shape.

"Relatives and friends were great to help us all they could," says Chapman. "Whenever we could corner them, we did — and put hammers in their hands."

By the first part of May, the walls and windows were all in place. They moved to Austin, and work progressed faster. The job wasn't over, though, and the temperature rose faster than the house. The Byrds had to leave the windows open to get whatever breeze they could. Chapman a

A tour of the house tells visitors how big a job it was.

Entering under colonial columns and coming through the front door, one realizes how large the house is. To the left is a large living room, carpeted in gold, and beyond it is the formal dining room. To the right is a guest bedroom.

But a visitor is enticed into the family room by the cool blue shag carpet, seen from the entryway. Once in, the ceiling towers two stories above, enhancing the airy feeling of the house. The brick dual fireplace is connected to the living room, too.

The kitchen is a housewife's dream — big, but not rambling, with a work area and range in the center to

separate the dining nook. There's plenty of cabinet space, and windows brighten the room. Barbara doesn't have to say, but she does anyway, that she loves to cook: "It's my hobby."

Nut-Filled Cakes 'Lebanese Delight'

The Lebanese are renowned for their cooking, and Mrs. Chapman Byrd is no exception.

Many of her recipes were handed down from her grandmother, who came from Tripoli. And one of her favorites is Mamool, nut-filled cakes, which will be featured at Friday's Heritage Bake Sale, which begins at 10 a.m. in the 1886 Lunchroom and Socializing Parlor in the Driskill Hotel.

Although most Lebanese dishes take hours to prepare, Mrs. Byrd says Mamool isn't as complicated as most of the traditional foods.

Her attorney husband and two children, Mark, 5, and Brandy, 3, have all the advantages of Mrs. Byrd's gourmet cooking skills. But she laughingly remembers that she wasn't always so adept.

Her mother taught her to cook. But one day, she was making cabbage rolls on her own, and didn't blanch the cabbage leaves enough. So when she tried to fill and roll them like cigars, they fell apart — spilling the filling everywhere.

The trials are over now, however, and Mrs. Byrd is a regular cook for the annual Labor Day convention, where all the Lebanese families in the area gather to listen to Arabic

music and eat the traditional food.

Mamool

Filling:

1 cup pecans or English walnuts, finely chopped
1-3 cup sugar
1½ t. rosewater (found at liquor store) or substitute vanilla

1 T. butter

Combine all ingredients.

Dough:

2 cups flour
1 cup instant cream of wheat
2 T. sugar
1 cup clarified butter or unsalted butter
1 T. milk
1 T. powdered sugar

Combine flour, cream of wheat, sugar and butter. Add milk and knead well. Form dough into small patties. Flatten patty in palm of hand.

Fill with 1 tablespoon of filling and cover with another flattened patty. Close edges by fluting as you would for a pie edge or use a fork and press edges together. The patties should be about ¼ inch thick.

Bake on cookie sheets in 350-degree preheated oven until the bottom sides are light brown. Then place the cakes under broiler only long enough to brown very lightly. When cool, sprinkle with powdered sugar.

affords a pretty view from the plentiful windows at the second level.

"I'm glad we went through with it," Chapman laughs. "But I wouldn't want to do it again."

"I think we appreciate the house more," says Barbara. "When you buy a home, you tend to criticize all the little things you find wrong. This way, we realize the problems that were involved with each feature of the house. Every foot of it has our work in it. We love it more because of that."

Gong up the stairs is a pleasure with the lovely bannisters, which extend around the walkway overlooking the living room on all sides. Chapman cut each slat himself, and put the bannister together by hand.

The three bedrooms upstairs are spacious — the master bedroom is light and airy as the rest of the house. The rooms for son Mark, 4, and daughter Brandy, 3, are further down the walkway, and a small study is opposite the bedroom. Animal wallpaper adorns the children's bath.

But the master bath is a dream. Marble stairs lead up to the tub that caused so much trouble a few months ago, giving it a sunken effect. The tub itself is extra large, and mirrors create the mood of ancient Greece. A stroll around the walkway reveals the family room below, and



MRS. CHAPMAN BYRD MIXES MAMMOOL.
It will be featured at Friday's Heritage Bake Sale

*DOTTIE FISH Women's Staff. The Austin Statesman (1921-1973); Austin, Tex.. 24 Sep 1972: F8.
The Austin Statesman (1921-1973); Austin, Tex.. 10 May 1973: A35.*

W. Chapman Byrd Obituary - Austin, TX

[dignitymemorial.com/obituaries/austin-tx/w-byrd-8209689](https://www.dignitymemorial.com/obituaries/austin-tx/w-byrd-8209689)

November 15, 1941 – December 20, 2016

On November 15, 1941, in Hillsboro, Texas, Rose and Weldon Byrd welcomed their first-born, Weldon Chapman Byrd. Growing up in Austin, Chapman attended Austin High School and the University of Texas where he received a bachelor's degree in business administration before attending St. Mary's University School of Law in San Antonio where he received his juris doctor degree.

Chapman was recently hospitalized for pneumonia. He unexpectedly passed away of apparent complications two days after release from the hospital on December 20, 2016, on his father's birthday.

Chapman is best remembered for his laughter, humor, kindness, extraordinary athletic ability, intellect (including his high IQ and photographic memory), strong work ethic, love of good food, but most of all his love for his wife and family. His fondest childhood memories were summers on the farm with his grandparents, where he learned the importance of hard work. Chapman married Barbara Marion in 1965 and, after graduating law school, established a law practice that endured for almost 30 years. Chapman had a brilliant mind which he devoted to the practice of law. He was among the first attorneys in Texas to be certified as a criminal law specialist. Chapman then found an interesting second career as a petroleum landman, for which he traveled all over the State of Texas, putting to good use his gentlemanly ways and knowledge of both law and negotiation. Chapman was very proud of the fact that at the age of 75 he worked full time and enjoyed the camaraderie of his colleagues.

Chapman was passionate about life. He loved supporting his Longhorns in all sports, and he also loved nature, gardening, the beach, Las Vegas, skydiving, roller coasters and his grandchildren. Chapman was known for his generosity towards others by always helping anyone in need—he never said no. Chapman's interests and skills were invested in the home he and Barbara established in Tarrytown. Indeed, he and Barbara's uncle actually constructed most of the house themselves in 1972. Another large accomplishment was the design and construction of an elaborate brick terrace to accommodate Barbara's gardening talents. Chapman could do anything.

Weldon Chapman Byrd is survived by his wife of 51 years and their children: Mark Byrd, Brandy Byrd Hallford (and husband Jerry), and Brittany Byrd Kruse (and husband Matt), and his grandchildren Jerald Hallford, Brodie Hallford, Devon Hallford, Hope Hallford, Lauren Kruse and John Kruse. He is also survived by his sister Judy Byrd Burnette (and husband Neil) and nieces Rosemary and Ashlee as well as a host of friends.

A memorial service will be held January 21, 2017, at two o'clock, at St. David's Episcopal Church, located at 301 East 8th Street, Austin, TX.

<https://www.dignitymemorial.com/obituaries/austin-tx/w-byrd-8209689>

Permits

OWNER W. Chapman Byrd ADDRESS 2806 Pecos Street
PLAT 171 LOT 5 BLK
SUBDIVISION Herman Brown Addn 2 Sec 3
OCCUPANCY Residence
BLD PERMIT #27654 DATE 2-14- 72 OWNERS ESTIMATE \$38,000.00
CONTRACTOR Ted Attal Const. Co. NO. OF FIXTURES 15
WATER TAP REC # 69923 SEWER TAP REC # 62185
2 story frm res w/ brk ven and basement garage
3898 sq.ft.