



## Yearlong job earned Nickel Bros. reputation for moving and preserving historic structures



(Above) The Abbott House as it looked prior to the restoration/relocation process. A stucco finish had been applied to the exterior of the building. Before Nickel Bros. House Moving, Ltd., began work with the customer, Bell Construction stripped and cleaned out the building, removed fireplaces, removed gypoc and stucco, removed rock work from the building, removed the furnace and hot water heater from the basement and removed non-bearing walls and stairs in the basement.

Bell Construction was required to excavate around the building and clear a parking lot east of the building. Nickel Bros. installed crossbeams and elevated the structure 3–4 feet in order for Bell Construction to remove the perimeter foundation. Nickel Bros. then installed the main beams and wheels under the building and relocated the structure to a parking lot, rotating the building 90 degrees to clear the site. A requirement of the project was that the building could never leave the site. This photo shows the building being returned to the original location for placement on piers and caisson built by Bell Construction.

By JACK E. BRYMER, SR., Contributing Editor

**T**he biggest challenge to Nickel Brothers' bid on what appeared to be a rather complex job in moving and preserving an historic structure in Vancouver's central city was not the dollar amount. Rather, it was convincing the successful contractor that Nickel Bros' plan to move, hold and reset the house using Nickel Bros beams and equipment would do the job.

The historic building was the Abbott House, built in 1897 for Harry B. Abbott, the first superintendent of The Pacific Division of the Canadian Pacific Railway, who also was a prominent figure in the development of Vancouver. The house was located in the heart of the West End's 'Blueblood Alley,' Vancouver's first prestigious residential neighborhood.

The structure was originally wood lap siding and cedar shingles. It featured a curved bay facing Georgia Street with overhanging eaves and a central gable below which was a remarkable art glass window that extended a large porch with round columns and a wood railing.

The house's restoration and the re-orientation of a period garden were completed in 1997 as part of...

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**Building is in place on piers and caisson.**



**Building situated at the corner of the project with cross and main beams in full view.**