



This historic All Saints Chapel was moved in Raleigh, NC in 2006.

LIKE FATHER, LIKE SON

Son of an IASM founding member takes over as president

As a lad of only five to six years of age, Mike Blake watched as his father, Charlie, moved a house in their neighborhood. People gathered on the sidewalk watching as the house went by.

“I thought something great was going on and my father was leading the way,” he recalled. “From that point on, I knew that I would be a house mover.”

Now, 48 years later, as a third generation company member, Blake takes over as president of the International Association of Structural Movers (IASM) which his father, Charlie, helped lead the way in organizing.

Charlie had spent two and half years on occupational duty in Italy during WWII. Part of the time, he was in an engineering regiment and received some training in bridge building. After his discharge, he worked a year or so as a carpenter before entering North Carolina State University (UNSC) on the GI Bill. He graduated in 1951 with a degree in Chemical Engineering.

Unfortunately, the only jobs available at the time were outside the United States. His wife, Helen, was expecting their first child and they did not



Penny R. and D. Michael Blake

Mike is a third generation mover of the company and is President of Blake Moving Company located in Greensboro, NC.

By **CHARLIE & MIKE BLAKE**, Contributors, and **JACK E. BRYMER, SR.**, Contributing Editor

want to move abroad. His father, C.O. Blake, was in the land grading business so he went home to Greensboro and worked for his father while hoping for a local job offer.

There were three or four local house movers in Greensboro at the time that only “rolled” houses. Cone Mills Corporation had hundreds of employee houses and was selling them for \$1 per room to employees who would move them to their own lot.

Permits at the time limited the size to only fourteen feet wide. As a result, movers cut the four-room houses into two fourteen-foot sections and moved them on lowboys trailers rented from grading contractors. Charlie’s father began renting out his lowboy. Shortly thereafter, with Charlie running a crew, they began moving houses on their own.

“We built our first two load beams to haul houses on with single axle dollies in the rear,” Charlie recalled. “For cutting the house, hauling it and placing it back together on a lot, we charged \$350.”

As time passed and larger permits became available, they built dollies and heavier beams to move larger and larger houses. And in 1953, they moved their first brick house.

In 1966, Charlie bought out the house moving part of his father’s business and founded Blake Moving Company. It was chartered in 1967.

Sought to organize state association

Charlie began attempts to organize a house moving association in North Carolina almost immediately, but with little success until the South Carolina organization attempted to recruit more members in North Carolina. A few of the larger movers in North Carolina joined the South Carolina association until the North Carolina association became stronger. Later, the South Carolina association dissolved.

“I believe the North Carolina House Moving Association was one of the first state associations in the country,” Charlie recalled. “I was an officer and/or president of the association for several years.

“As movers around the country became organized in state associations, talk of...

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The 350-ton Blackwood House being relocated in Greensboro, NC in 1974.



A glass and cast iron steel greenhouse on the Bowman Gray Estate was relocated in 1982.