At home with President Dixon

Maggie Wooten
Staff Reporter

The University Residence has a personality all its own, but small personal touches reflect its new owner. Barbara Dixon's additions of family photographs and a grand piano suggest she is becoming comfortable amid the formal furnishings of the residence.

"I usually say it is the University Residence, but I had the privilege of living there while I was president," Dixon said.

Dixon moved into the house in 1993, located at 706 S. Kirk Street, which is called the President's House, but the official name is the University Residence. The University purchased the house for the University president in 1867 for $61,000.

"Something catch me the other day. What is the biggest perk of being a president? and my answer was, 'I have no more worries about homeowner's insurance,'" Dixon said.

Junior Brian O'Day said she has never been inside the residence but wants to live there.

"I think she should be president of the University someday, so I can live there," O'Day said.

"I think it is the prettiest house in Kirksville," Dixon said.

Dixon said the location of the house is prime because "I don't have to walk back and forth from the residence to the University." Dixon said, "I can walk downtown if I want. It's in the heart of town, I can walk to Cumberland & Courts." Throughout the year, Dixon hosts many receptions and dinner parties. She said hosting the events makes living in the house a little impersonal because it is the center of activity.

"It is a little like living in a fish bowl," Dixon said. "Being president helps get rid of that feeling that I'm in the fish bowl."

Dixon said that when she is home, she 'seldom downstairs because she wants to keep that area ready for the public.'

"I'm up most of the time because I want the house to stay neat," Dixon said.

She said she is planning to decorate the master bedroom in a modern style.

"I tend not to do things in a really ornate style," Dixon said. "I like things that are a little simple and more comfort- ing." Dixon said.

The third floor of the house is called the ballroom. It doubles as a storage room and a guest room, but Dixon said she could make a nice study or playroom.

"It is just a room 44 feet by 13 by a half foot," Dixon said.

The basement of the house is empty except for a few storage rooms. At one time, the basement was used for music quarters.

"They do all of their cooking and eating here," Dixon said. "When we do a party here at the house, students come and they feel all of their things belong in the garage. All I have to do is get my car out of the way." Dixon said she is cautious since she moved into the house.

"The three-car garage was stripped to a small two-car garage when the residence garage space shrank to a small two-car garage in 1937 so the garage doors are narrower. She said cars were narrower when the garage was constructed in 1937 so the garage doors are narrower. The three-car garage was stripped to a small two-car garage when the residence garage space shrank to a small two-car garage in 1937 so the garage doors are narrower.

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Dixon left the position of president at Western and brought it home. Dixon said, "When we do a party here at the house, students come and they feel all of their things belong in the garage. All I have to do is get my car out of the way." Dixon said she is cautious since she moved into the house.

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