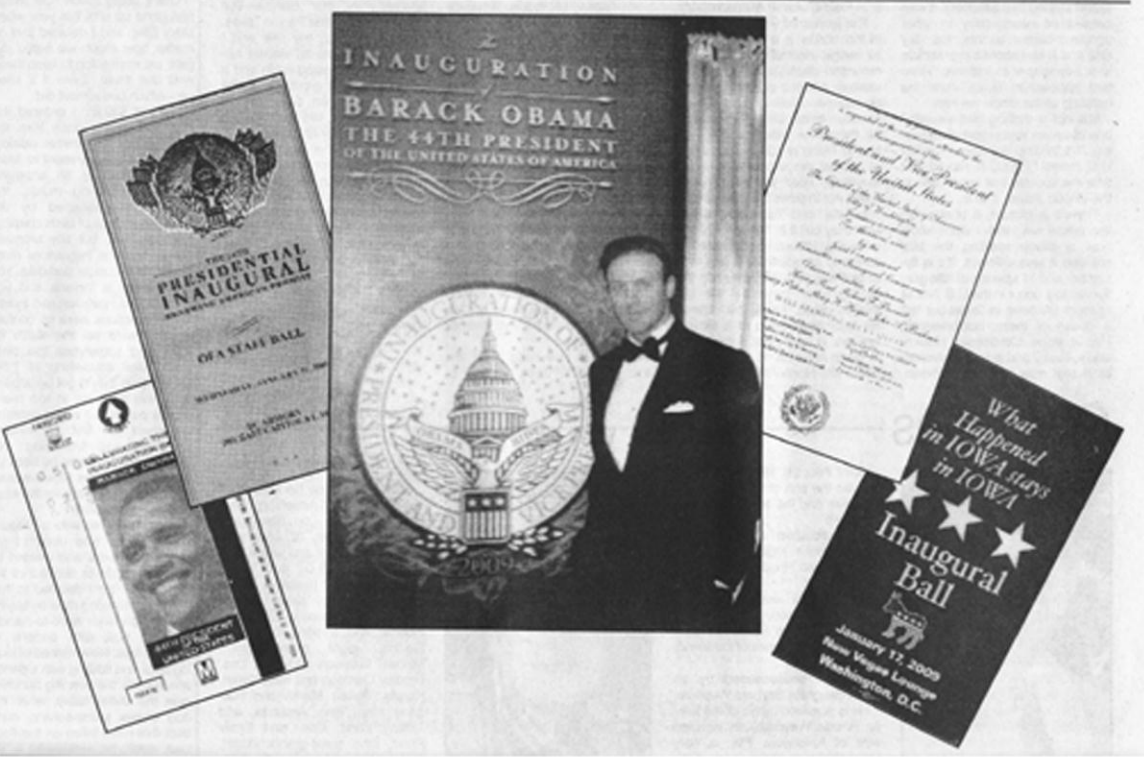


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# Buy an old house. . . go to the Presidential Inauguration

**By EMILY WEST**  
**Tribune Correspondent**  
 It's just a natural progression of events, right?  
 Buy an old house. Fix it up. Meet the family of the previous owner. Go to the presidential inauguration.  
 Well, maybe except for the last part.  
 That is, more or less, what happened for Shawn Clements of Kempton. After purchasing a vacant Victorian home on the outskirts of Kempton about five years ago, he began to remodel and restore it. After researching its previous owners, he found that the Dunhams, who built the home and lived in it for many years were the ancestors of Barack Obama.  
 On May 3, Obama, his wife and two daughters and an entourage of Secret Servicemen and reporters stopped by while on a presidential campaign tour of central Indiana.

That meeting and other contacts resulted in an invitation for Clements to Obama's inauguration and many other activities in Washington D.C. this week.  
 Clements left for Washington on Saturday, attended concerts and met Bruce Springsteen.  
 Averaging about four hours of sleep a night, he attended a variety of parties and activities, including three balls and a visit to the Philippine embassy, before returning home to Kempton Thursday.  
 "It's been a whirlwind," Clements said Friday. "I had an unbelievable time."  
 In addition to Springsteen, Clements also met Hillary Clinton and had his photo taken with her.  
 Clinton asked Clements if he had worked on her campaign.  
 "I said 'no', but I live very close to Clinton County," he joked. "She said, 'that will do'. She said we're all one now. She was really cool."  
 The staff ball was a "major pro-

duction," with a jumbo video screen continuously showing photos from the campaign trail across America. The Obamas and Vice President Joe Biden and his wife attended. Clements had the opportunity to speak to them as well.  
 "It was just a fantastic time," he said.  
 But, the highlight of the trip was the inauguration Tuesday, Clements said. Crowds were huge and security was tight. It took approximately four hours to pass through several security checkpoints.  
 "I fought that fight with two million of my closest friends," he said of the friendly crowd.  
 At one point, while pressed into a rigid line, a mother called out she could not find her three-year-old daughter. Police were outside the area and people were unable to walk around to look for the girl. Word was passed from person to person down the line about the lost

girl, and members of the crowd called out her name. Soon she was located, lifted up and passed hand to hand above the heads of those crowded in line. Clements said the little girl looked as if she was having the time of her life.  
 Once through the checkpoints, Clements found himself seated 100 yards away from the new president and great-great-great-grandson of the builder of his home.  
 The mood of the crowd was very optimistic.  
 "There was such a unity there and people were so happy. Everybody was so polite and were patting each other on the back," Clements said. "The vibe was so positive."  
 While in the capitol, Clements found people were interested in his home in Tipton County. He had prepared a compilation of articles and photos written about the Durham house.

"It played big out there," he said. "People read every article."  
 Plans for his home now include the possibility of forming a not-for-profit organization with an educational outreach focusing on history.  
 Clements stressed there is more to the house than the tie to Obama, noting its architectural elements and the fact it is built on the former Miami Indian reservation.  
 "The house has always had some sort of community involvement," Clements said, noting former resident Riley Durham was a member of the state general assembly. "I would like to keep that going."  
 Meetings with other interested parties are planned with the possibility of opening the house to the public this spring.  
 More information on the restoration of the Dunham home and Obama's connection to it can be found at:  
[www.thedunhamhouse.com](http://www.thedunhamhouse.com).



## Inauguration activities

Shawn Clements of Kempton made the trip to Washington, D.C. for President Barack Obama's inauguration ceremonies. While there, Clements had his photo taken with Hillary Clinton, above. Clements also shares the "Give Bush the Boot" activity picture with The Tipton County Tribune readers (at left).

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