

Sword Gate property sells for \$4.3 million

■ **HISTORIC HOUSE:** A real-estate agent said the two pieces of property purchased by an unnamed buyer will be combined into one private residence as before.

By **JOHN P. McDERMOTT**
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A private investor has purchased the historic Sword Gate House at 32 Legare St. and an adjacent former inn at 111 Tradd St. for \$4.3 million.

As part of a planned renovation, the out-of-state buyer, identified only as Bear Lake Realty Co., plans to rejoin the two properties.

"They will be combined together as a private residence," said real estate broker Calvert W. Huffines of The Huffines Co., which handled the sale. "The new owner is pleased to put the property back together again as it once was."

While declining to identify the buyer, Huffines described him as "a conservationist and preservationist" who was traveling in Ireland Thursday.

"I can assure you the properties will never be in better hands," Huffines said.

The Sword Gate buildings were sold by a pair of Bahamas-based companies formed by British entrepreneur Peter J. de Savary. He paid \$4.3 million for the properties south of Broad Street in July 1998, according to county real estate records.

Around the same time de Savary



Staff Photo by Brad Nettles

The Sword Gate House on Legare Street was sold again along with an adjacent inn.

acquired Cherokee Plantation in Colleton County for \$13 million. He and several investors are converting the 3,700-acre tract in Yemassee into an exclusive 50-member

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sporting retreat.

Last year, de Savary told The Post and Courier that he bought the Sword Gate properties to use as his family's downtown residence and as an urban "outpost" for Cherokee members during overnight trips to Charleston. He decided to sell the buildings and buy a smaller downtown home after scuttling the outpost idea.

De Savary is traveling in Europe and was unavailable for comment Thursday, Huffines said.

Built before 1810, the Legare Street portion of the property takes its name from its elaborate wrought-iron gates, which incorporate a sword and spear design scheme.

The three-story house was converted into an elite girls school by the 1820s, and, more recently, it has evolved into a popular tourist attraction. It is unclear when its brick wing was separated and subdivided to create the Sword Gate Inn, which was closed about 18 months ago.

Huffines said the new owner has no plans to reopen the bed and breakfast.

"This will remove the Sword Gate from commercial use," he said.

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