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Priciest home in Charleston sells for \$21M — with lighting from ‘Gone With the Wind’

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At more than 10,000 square feet, the main house at 51 East Bay St. in Charleston is one of the largest residential properties in the area. It sold Oct. 31 for \$21.5 million, a new record.

KEEN EYE MARKETING/PROVIDED

CHARLESTON — This Halloween, a homeowner had a real treat when he purchased a \$21 million row house on East Bay Street, setting an all-time record for the highest-priced residential sale in the Holy City.

The 15,765-square-foot residence at 51 East Bay — spread among four buildings — is one of the largest single houses in the Historic District.

The price tag of \$21,028,560 blew past the previous record of \$18.25 million — set in February when U.S. Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent sold his restored [pink mansion](#) at 5 E. Battery.

The 51 East Bay transaction included some furnishings that changed hands in a separate bill of sale that bumped the closing contract to \$21.575 million. They included a pair of matching chandeliers in the main drawing room and dining room from the set of the 1939 production of “Gone with the Wind,” according to Charles Sullivan, founding partner of Carriage Properties, who represented the seller.



Matching chandeliers in the dining and drawing rooms, both conveyed in the sale, were from the set of 1939 movie “Gone With the Wind.”

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Built in the early 1800s, 51 East Bay — also known as the Casper Christian Schutt House — is three-and-a-half stories tall and has four bedrooms and four and a half bathrooms. It was previously owned by late retail mogul and longtime Charleston philanthropist Wayland H. Cato Jr., who purchased the property in 1992 for \$950,000, according to county records.

The house was originally constructed by Schutt, a German merchant, and today encompasses four structures — including a main residence, guest house converted from an original stable, a second guest house and an indoor pool. Together they have a total of eight bedrooms, seven bathrooms and two half-baths.

“The Catos, Wayland and his wife Marion, truly enjoyed the home for many years after the lengthy renovation, hosting dignitaries, guests and fundraisers,” Sullivan said. “Many a guest would jump at the offer to stay in the converted stable/guest house.”

Robertson Allen of The Cassina Group, represented the buyer, which was identified as Cameron LLC in public records. He said the property is one of the city's most admired and architecturally significant private residences and "underscores the strength of Charleston's real estate market."

The structure is known for its masonry design, intricate plasterwork and a signature elliptical staircase.



The house at 51 East Bay St. in Charleston was built in the 1800s by German merchant, Casper Christian Schutt.

KEEN EYE MARKETING/PROVIDED

"My clients were searching for a truly iconic home on the lower peninsula, somewhere that could grow with their family and reflect the character of Charleston," Allen said of the buyers. "The moment they stepped inside 51 East Bay, they were captivated by its profound sense of history."

Prominent past owners include the Lowndes family, who bought the home in 1836 and expanded the grounds with tiered piazzas and elegant formal gardens. Various family members owned the property until 1930.

In 1948, Orangeburg native Vince Moseley also notably purchased 51 East Bay St. He spent 30 years in various leadership roles at Medical University of South Carolina, where the home to the Office of Interprofessional Initiatives and the Office of Institutional Effectiveness are named in his honor.

Cato was the founder of Charlotte-based national fashion empire The Cato Corp. He bought the house in the 1990s “when the only residents of the properties were a few pigeons,” Sullivan said, and saved it from being converted into condominiums “during a period when almost any large property that came on the market was immediately purchased by developers to carve up into condos.”

Throughout his ownership, Cato restored the property with the help of local preservation specialists Richard Marks Restoration, Glenn Keyes Architects and Reggie Gibson Architects. Sullivan said while the grand staircase remained intact, the renovation included the plaster detailing, the gardens and outbuildings, as well as the main house itself.

Additions also included the first and only indoor “residential” pool in the Historic District, Sullivan noted.



The elliptical staircase at 51 East Bay St. is one of the most prominent features of the historic home.

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As for the upper end of the luxury market, Sullivan said the Charleston market has been very active this year with nine closings above \$10 million so far — and another two under contract. Of those sales, three in the historic district above \$15 million.

“Looking back, in 2024, the same number of homes closed above the \$10 million mark, but the average sale price was around \$10 million mark topping out at \$12 million,” Sullivan said. “This year the average sale price is closer to \$15 million, with 51 East Bay as the new high above \$21 million.”

The Charleston has seen a trove of big-ticket home sales as 2025 enters the back stretch.

The **\$14.2 million closing** for 8 54th Ave. set a new high for the Isle of Palms in April, while on Kiawah Island, 25 Surfsong Road fetched **\$16.5 million** in May.

October saw the second-highest residential transaction ever on Sullivan’s Island with the **\$13 million sale** of 2407 Atlantic Ave. The record was set in April when **2529 Atlantic sold for \$13.5 million**.

Mount Pleasant also recorded its second-highest single-family home sale recently when 202 Bank St. fetched **\$14 million**.

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