

Room by Room~Front Hall



View from the upstairs landing to the front hall

Welcome to the Room by Room series where I feature one room of our historic home in detail. Whether you call it a foyer, entryway or front hall, this is the area where you enter our home after you step through the front door. We are so blessed that this space is a good size ~ 12 feet by 16 feet.

The Front Door



Outside of Front Door

I do believe this door is original to our home which is nearly 110 years old. This 6 raised panel solid wood door is a generous 4 feet wide and has the original brass hardware and ball tip final hinges. Just a quick note that the topiary cypress trees are faux and can be found [here](#).



Front door inside view-Valentine's Dinner 2020

On either side of the door are side lights with 6 mullioned sections, which allows the eastern or morning sun into the front hall.

The Staircase



The staircase with sisal runner

Once you cross the front door threshold, you are directly across from the staircase. The front entry acts as the center of a wheel with spokes leading to the several different areas of the house. The staircase leads to the second story and bedroom quarters. The mahogany handrail is worn smooth by many

trips up and down the stairs over the past 10 decades. Memories are embedded in that railing and often, when my hand glides down it in the morning, I think of all the other people who have touched it during their lifetimes.

The Living Room



View to the living room

Once inside the front hall, and on your left, the wide opening to the living room gives you a glimpse of many original features, like the coffered ceiling. To read more about our living room, click [here](#).

The Dining Room



View to the dining room

Off to the right, opposite the living room, is the entrance into the dining room. During the home's restoration, we discovered original pocket doors hidden in the walls. What a find!



Pocket Doors discovered during restoration

The Powder Room

Adjacent to the staircase are two 5 panel doors~one leading to the small powder room; the other to the hall closet.



Doors to powder room and hall closet

Before the restoration, this powder room was hardly functional. I recall a toilet seat with a celestial horoscope design on it and a full size vanity. It was impossible to sit

without bumping your knees against the sink. However, we did keep the original push button toilet which allows for a nice hearty flush.



Since this room is so small, a tiny Kallista sink and custom scaled-down vanity is designed for the space.



A peek into the powder room

Hall Closet

The other door is the hall coat closet (funny as we rarely wear coats here in Phoenix) that serves as a storage closet for many of my linens.



Hall closet is storage for tablecloths/napkins

To see more fun storage tips and information on this closet, like a pulley system for lampshades, click on my post about this odd-sized closet [here](#).

Hidden Storage



Hidden storage

Another very unique feature in the front hall is the hidden space under the staircase. Not only is there a large area to store all my pillows and table leaves, but there is easy access to the powder room plumbing. On a rope and pulley system, the raised panel slides down below the floor.

To see more about this unusual yet clever space, click [here](#).

Hall Table



Petticoat or Pier table

The burl wood hall table with the mirror below is something I always refer to as a petticoat table. According to the Clermont State Historical Site, the reason behind referring to this as a petticoat table is a myth. According to the story, these mirrors are called “petticoat mirrors” and are installed to allow ladies to check to make sure that their petticoats were not showing beneath their skirts. Often located in hallways, where a woman would be entering or leaving a house, it seems sensible.



Mirror inserted in table

However, this is called a pier table. The purpose of the mirrors is decorative. Reflecting light around a room on highly-polished surfaces, including mirrors, glass, crystal pendants on chandeliers, or fine wood surfaces, was a way of demonstrating wealth.

Regardless whether it is a petticoat or pier table, I have never seen another one like it and I have no idea how old it is.

Other Unique Features



Original brass vents

Our home did not have any central air conditioning, but we did utilize the existing heating vents to retrofit the house with a modern heating and cooling system. The beautiful heating grates had been painted over in dated shades of pastel blue and pink. In order to bring them back to their original beauty, we found a resource to brass plate them.

The hardwood floor is original Canadian beech and is so solid

and sturdy.



Architectural details

There are some interesting architectural details only found in the front hall. Angular corbels and trim detail delineates the transition from the hall and staircase unique.



New light fixture

Much to our dismay, the previous owners took all the original light fixtures. Selecting the right scale and style is a bit challenging, but this one works. The crystals tie into the much more elegant chandelier in the adjacent dining room. I cannot recall the resource for this.



Cross Stitch Prayer

Hard to believe that I did this cross stitch over 43 years ago...yikes. It hangs in our front hall, where we strive to open our doors to joy and love.



Front Hall table; flowers from @thebouqs.com

In the center of the front hall is a carved antique small drop leaf table. Typically I like to have fresh flowers and candles on this table. Our house rule is that the first 3 rooms (living room, dining room and front hall) of the house remain clean at all times. The rest of the house is fair game!

Thank you for joining me today for another episode of Room by Room. Have a happy Wednesday! Today I am picking up 60 lbs. of Roma tomatoes~you know what I'll be doing this weekend!

Mary

