

*Do not use any kind of tape
to tape runners to the floor,
to other runners or to
anything else.*



HISTORIC CHARLESTON FOUNDATION

WILLIAM ELLIOTT HOUSE
75 King Street
c. 1739
Residence of Mr. Antony M. Merck

2009

William Elliott, whose distinguished family began here as a brotherhood of builders, appears to have had this house built sometime in the 1730's, having obtained the lot in 1729. Simple, stalwart designing and decoration, robust walls, and such details as the exterior chimneys to the North and West, all point to an early date of building. Untouched by the great fires, this neighborhood began to grow about the same time that it became King Street in honor of George I.

The current owner has done some architectural/archeological research about the structure of the building which has resulted in an interesting conjecture. The house when first built may have been occupied by more than one family. Hidden door frames have been uncovered which could have served as entrances to two separate units. As the early settlement grew and King Street gained importance, the house was converted to a single family residence.

In recent restoration the stucco was removed, replaced and scored as it had been previously. This was not only a way to mimic a more elegant facade but it also protected the brick wall behind.

FRONT ROOM

The painted wall paneling had been stripped in earlier years and stained to emphasize its early Georgian detail. Twenty-six layers of paint were removed to get down to the cypress paneling. In the 18th c. all walls were painted unless the family could not afford it. The vertical sheathing panels are an unusual wall treatment.

The fireplaces throughout the house have been opened to their original configurations.

The work of contemporary artists which fill this room are from the collection of the owner who has a gallery, Ann Long Fine Art on Broad Street. They enhance this modest 18th century room with striking vitality and demonstrate a pleasing mixture of the old and the new.

Chairs, pair, Chinese wedding chairs
Lamps, with metal bases, and balloon shades accent the seating arrangement
Mirror, English, Chippendale style

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DINING ROOM

The owner theorizes from the simple board paneling and the large fireplace this was once a kitchen, one of 5 in this house! The tiles, uncovered when the fireplace was opened, are early English printed tiles

Mirror, English
Card table, Neo-classical, English
Chairs, pair, "fancy" painted style
Silver, family

The wall separating the dining room from the modern kitchen was the rear wall of the original house.

KITCHEN

The kitchen is located in the area called the hyphen. This open space, between the main house and the kitchen house was designated by city ordinance to prevent the spread of a kitchen fire. It evolved into the logical location of a modern hi-tech kitchen. This one came by container ship from Germany and was installed in working order by one person in three days. (Bulthaup Kitchen) (kitchen number 2).

The brick wall behind the cupboards is the rear of the kitchen house fireplace.

DOCENT – WARN VISITORS TO WATCH FLOOR LEVEL – it changes

KITCHEN HOUSE

The original floor plan showed a front and rear room each with a fireplace and a central stairway separating the two. It has been converted into a comfortable, sunny family room overlooking the garden. The large fireplace can be counted as kitchen number 3. The fireplace on end wall has a baking oven (kitchen number 4)

Chests, pair, mahogany, English
Library table, with elaborate columned base, English
Mirror, girandole, giltwood
Decoys, a collection of shore birds
Pair of canvasback birds
Painting, oil, by Alexander Pope (1849-1924)

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BACK HALL

This is a recent addition which contains the stairway to the second floor and a small kitchen (number 5).

Print, by Alexander Pope, a bird

GARDEN

The trees in the quadrant are: Parrotia (Ironwood tree) in NW area, and Prunus First Lady – a relatively new type of cherry tree – SE area, also in the SE area is an Evergreen maple.

The NE area has Chinese fringe which the owner brought from his nursery, Specialty Trees on Yonges Island, SC. Note the long, low limb of Pittosporum.

Use the driveway to return to street. One side of the gate will be open.

