

Winborn Lawton House
62 South Battery
c. 1830s
Residence of Nancy Klein

The property at 62 S. Battery is located in an area that was once near the edge of town along the Ashley River. The large Georgian residence next door at 64 S. Battery (William Gibbes House) was constructed in 1772 and had a large wharf fronting the property, extending far into the river. A smaller but wider wharf was built opposite this property by 1788 and there may have been a house located on this parcel which burned.

The property was purchased by Winborn Lawton in 1818 and the current house was built by 1837 when he transferred it to his son for “\$5, love and affection.” His son William M. Lawton is listed in the 1850 census as living here. The census lists 7 white people and 10 enslaved individuals.

The senior Lawton (1782-1861), was a wealthy planter and slave owner whose plantation was located on James Island. Lawton purchased what is now Lawton’s Plantation in 1848. An earlier house on the plantation built by the Heyward Family (c.1740) is thought to be the oldest house on James Island. Lawton died at the very start of the Civil War at age 79. Local legend says the plantation house was used as a hospital for black victims of smallpox during the Civil War. By the early 1900s, the Lawton Plantation became a dairy operation supplying Charleston with milk for decades.

This house was owned by the Bee and Lebby Families for the remainder of the 19th century. In 1909, owner W.G. Green spent \$3,000 on a front addition to the house. This added about 6-7 feet to the front façade and allowed construction of the bay window. Over the years, piazzas, or porches, located to the west have been infilled and turned into living space and a large addition in the rear accommodates a large modern kitchen.

Docent needs (9 total): 1 out front, 1 in foyer, 1 at top of stairs, 1 in family room, 1 in guest room and upstairs sitting room, 1 in downstairs living room, 1 in dining room, 1 in kitchen, 1 in garden

Background info for outside docent

Evolution of house -- The house dating to c. 1840s has been added onto several times and it can be challenging to see the evolution of the house into its current configuration. The front 6 feet of the house was added in 1909. Behind that area two rooms with fireplaces—this is the extent of the original house. One upstairs you can see the original hallway and stair configuration and both original fireboxes in rooms to either side.

The owner has her Masters in Chinese Art so you will see fantastic Asian antiques throughout the entire home. Flow is upstairs first then downstairs rooms to garden.

Stair hall and powder room

- Powder room was converted from under the stairs closet and the walls are hand painted
- In the stair hall there are Asian silks, one has 100 children embroidered

At top of stairs – take a right into the family roomtry to avoid standing on carpet

Family Room and Enclosed Piazza

- Chinese woodcarvings -Sculpture on side table is Alaskan fish and otter made of whale bone
- Italian mirror is hand blown Murano glass
- Send guests down enclosed piazza to the guest room*
- Coffee table was an old hibachi grill
- Large bowl and hand carved table are both Chinese

Guest Room

- headboard is 18th century Chinese bridal headboard
- kimono sashes
- Shanghai silks are based on paintings in the Forbidden City
- on side table is a Chinese lunchbox

Upstairs Sitting Room

- framed zebra silk scarf from Africa
- Chinese screen 18th century
- Chinese reverse paintings (painted on opposite side)
- the large exposed brick fireplace dates to original construction of the house

Send guests down stairs to docent who will direct them to the front living room

Living Room

Runner needed to protect carpet in this room

- vases are alabaster
- Chinese emperor's scepter above chest
- Chest is Chinese
- painting above mantle is from Ming Dynasty depicting an off to war scene

Dining Room

- French baroque china cabinet from CHS antique shop
- Japanese emperor and empress inside
- Chinese screen is late 17th century
- Dory clock is 90 lbs, only other one is in the Smithsonian
- birds above mantle are made of shell
- Galle French art glass vase in window
- Sculptures are from Thailand

*Note the original house ended at Dining room. Its been extended several times, you can see the end of an earlier addition with the exposed brick pier in the kitchen.

Kitchen/Hyphen

- cat picture is made of human hair
- small mosaics from the Vatican around door
- Child's headboard above Chinese cabinet
- Chinese paintings done on marble

Garden

- Indian Shiva statue
- Chinese fui dogs on pool
- Chinese window on wall
- original 1700s brick used through out

Go into garden and circle around the drive to the front, exit.