

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.

Stair hall and powder room

-Powder room was converted from under the stairs closet and the walls are hand painted -

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

Family Room and Enclosed Piazza**Guest Room****Upstairs Sitting Room**

-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

Dining Room

*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

Garden

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