

Restoration Project Completed at Burgwin-Wright

Written by Allen, Joy
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A grant from the Isabel James Lehto Foundation funded the most recent restoration project at the Burgwin-Wright House. The walls of the foyer, stairwell and upper hall received a fresh coat of paint following repairs to the plaster. The Headquarters House Committee chose lighter colors from the colonial era palette than those used previously for both the walls and trim. The new paint scheme better reflects sunlight and has brightened the space significantly.

In addition, decades of wax and other sealants were removed from the heart pine floors, uncovering the beautiful amber tones of the wood. Local craftsman Ken Earp and his crew

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performed the work, having recently completed a stunning whole-house restoration at Poplar Grove Plantation.

If able to obtain funding, staff and members of the Headquarters House Committee hope to restore the remaining rooms of the mansion in a similar fashion over the coming two years. Next on the agenda will be the parlor, library and sitting room located on the main floor.

The project's posthumous benefactor, the late Isabel Lehto, was a member of the North Carolina Society for more than 60 years, having joined the Dames in 1951, the same year that the Burgwin-Wright House opened its doors as a museum. A resident of Wilmington, Mrs. Lehto served as the Society's President from 1959-1964 and again from 1972-1973. She was the prime mover behind the establishment of an endowment for the Society's museum houses, making the first contribution to the fund and encouraging others to follow her example. Through the endowment and her foundation, Mrs. Lehto continues to support the organization to which she devoted herself wholeheartedly for the greater part of her life.

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