

INTERIORS

Wood Flooring and Trim



Most heritage homes feature wood flooring and trim. Many feature panelling, wainscoting, and elaborate staircases. Almost all wood was finished in a stain and varnish combination that allowed the grain of the wood to show through.

Over decades styles changed. Wall-to-wall carpet covered many an oak floor. Trim and staircases were painted over often to “brighten up” a room, and to cover a worn or damaged finish.

As always, when original finishes have been kept, proper maintenance can help avoid the cost of re-finishing.

Re-claiming or restoring wood finishes can be expensive if done professionally, and very time-consuming for a do-it-yourself project.

The results, however are both rewarding and long-lasting.

For those who want to do the work, many resources are available, online and at building supply stores.

<http://www.bobvila.com/articles/2222-wood-flooring-101/#.VktOUludL8s>

<http://www.bobvila.com/articles/how-to-refinish-hardwood-floors/#.VktN9oudL8s>



WALL COVERINGS

Lath & plaster walls covered with wallpaper were the standard in most well-built homes a century ago.

Many owners over the years have opted to “modernize” walls with gyproc and finish with paint.

Working with original lath and plaster however wall is still an option for those who want to maintain maximum historical integrity. As always, many online resources are available for the do-it-yourselfer, and there are still craftsmen out there who specialize in restoring and re-creating original walls.

<http://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/21-flat-plaster.htm>

Should one want to duplicate the wallpaper in a heritage home, there are businesses that specialize in that as well. As with many aspects of restoration, archival photos are valuable. When removing old wallpaper, saving a sample will help recreate a look with authenticity.

http://www.nps.gov/parkhistory/online_books/tpsd/wallpaper/sec3.htm

HARDWARE

Hardware may seem the smallest of details, but it is essential to the overall character of heritage buildings. If you are fortunate enough to have original hardware pieces in your home, make your best effort to keep and maintain them. If you need to replace missing or broken pieces, you might locate them from an architectural salvage operation, or from cottages being demolished. Alternatively, there are good contemporary reproductions available. If you are not sure what to look for, neighbours' homes are likely to have similar pieces.



An antique door handle like this would be much-missed if it were replaced.

