☆U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE: 1971—435-415/96

Home of Franklin D. Roosevelt

NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE • NEW YORK

ADMINISTRATION

The Home of Franklin D. Roosevelt National Historic Site is administered by the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior. A superintendent, whose address is Hyde Park, Dutchess County, NY 12538, is in immediate charge.

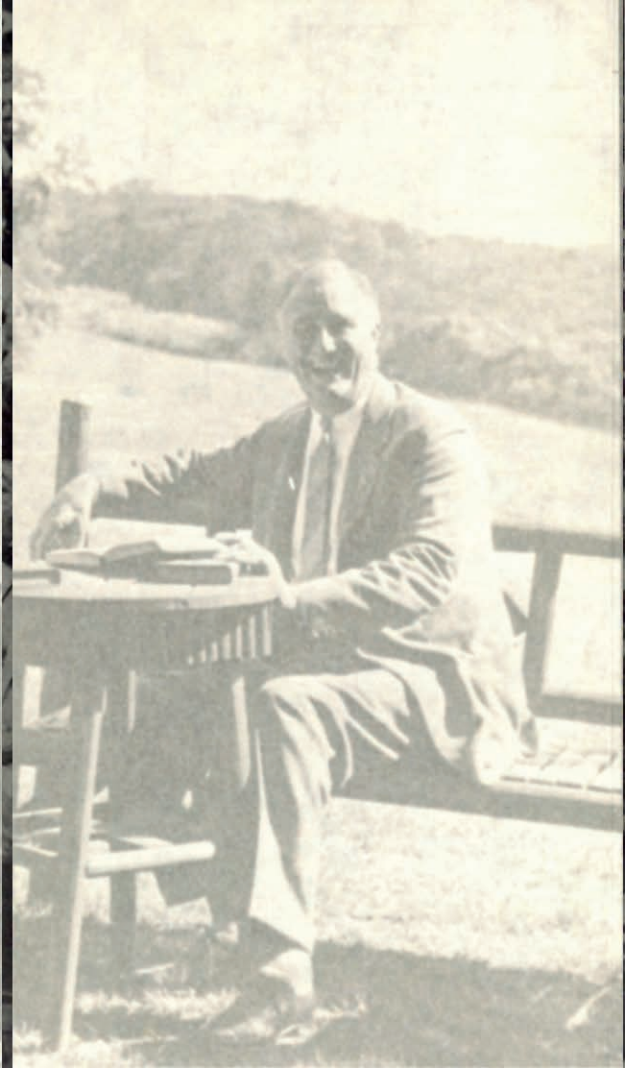
As the Nation's principal conservation agency, the Department of the Interior has basic responsibilities for water, fish, wildlife, mineral, land, park, and recreational resources. Indian and Territorial affairs are other major concerns of America's "Department of Natural Resources." The Department works to assure the wisest choice in managing all our resources so each will make its full contribution to a better United States—now and in the future.

U.S. Department of the Interior

National Park Service

"This is the house in which my husband was born and brought up. . . . He always felt that this was his home, and he loved the house and the view, the woods, special trees. . . ."

—Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt



Franklin D. Roosevelt, 32d President of the United States was born in this home on January 30, 1882. He was the only child of James and Sara Roosevelt.

Franklin Roosevelt spent much of his life here. Here Franklin—the toddler, the little boy, the young man—was shaped and grew to maturity. Here he brought his bride, Eleanor, in 1905, and here they raised their five children. From here he began his political career that stretched from the New York State Senate to the White House. Roosevelt was a State senator, 1911-13, Assistant Secretary of the Navy under Woodrow Wilson, 1913-20, and unsuccessful vice-presidential candidate in 1920. Then, in 1921, he contracted infantile paralysis. During his struggle to conquer the disease he spent much time here. He refused to become an invalid and reentered politics. He was elected Governor of New York in 1928 and 1930 and President of the United States in 1932. As Governor and President, he came here as often as he could for respite from the turmoil of public life. On April 15, 1945, 3 days after his death in Warm Springs, Ga., President Roosevelt was buried in the family rose garden. Seventeen years later, on November 10, 1962, Mrs. Roosevelt was buried beside the President.

THE HOME

The central part of the building, the oldest section, dates to the early 1800's. When James Roosevelt bought the house in 1867, it had a clapboard exterior.

The main house has undergone many renovations and additions with the passage of years. In 1916 it assumed its present form. The central part, its clapboards removed, was covered with stucco and fronted by a porch with a sweeping balustrade and a small colonnaded portico. On each end, the Roosevelts added a two-story wing.

THE SITE

Franklin Roosevelt's home was designated a National Historic Site on January 15, 1944. A gift from President Roosevelt, the site then consisted of 33 acres containing the home, outbuildings, and the grave site. The Secretary of the Interior accepted title to the area on November 21, 1945, when Mrs. Roosevelt and her children waived their life interests in the house and grounds. The site was formally dedicated on April 12, 1946, the first anniversary of the President's death, and now contains 188 acres.

At Hyde Park, Franklin Roosevelt accepts the 1920 vice-presidential nomination of his party.

Home of Franklin D. Roosevelt
National Historic Site
Hyde Park, N.Y.

He particularly admired the beautiful view, as did everyone, from the terrace at the southern end of the house. One stepped out long French windows from the living-room-library and onto a green lawn. Many times in summer, when I would be told that "the family was on the lawn," I approached through the library and saw through the open door an unforgettable picture: Mrs. Sara Roosevelt, in a soft, light summery dress with ruffles, her hair charmingly curled, sitting in a wicker chair and reading; Mrs. Roosevelt, in a white dress and white tennis shoes with a velvet band around her head to keep the hair from blowing, sitting with her long-legged, graceful posture in a low chair and knitting, always knitting; Roosevelt looking off down the river at the view he admired, with a book, often unopened, in one hand, and a walking stick in the other; dogs playing near by, and children romping a little farther down the lawn. The scene was like a Currier and Ives print of Life along the Hudson.

—Frances Perkins
The Roosevelt I Knew

GUIDE TO THE HOUSE

First Floor

President Roosevelt referred to this *Office* as his "Summer White House." Here on June 20, 1942, the President and the British Prime Minister, Winston Churchill, signed the historic agreement that resulted in the world's first atomic bomb. Also from this room, on November 6, 1944, Roosevelt broadcast his last campaign speech which led to his fourth term as President.

The family's interests and way of life are evident immediately upon entering the *Main Hall.* A few large pieces of furniture dominate this room and the walls are covered with pictures, most of them naval prints. Directly to the left of the entranceway stands a massive oak wardrobe, and, immediately before the door, an 18th-century grandfather clock. James and Sara Roosevelt purchased these pieces in the Netherlands in 1881.

Against the wall, just to the left of the clock, stands a large sideboard that James Roosevelt bought in Italy in 1869. In the southeast corner of the hall is a life-size bronze statue of Franklin D. Roosevelt at the age of 29, done by Prince Paul Troubetzkoy in 1911. Directly behind the statue is a wall case that holds many birds Franklin collected when he was 11 years old.

The south hallway leads past the *Snuggery,* Mrs. Sara Delano Roosevelt's writing and sitting room, to the *Living Room,* which occupies the lower floor of the south wing. In this spacious room the family played, read, and entertained.

The two fireplace portraits are of Roosevelt ancestors. Over the left fireplace is the Gilbert Stuart portrait of Issac Roosevelt, the President's great-great-grandfather, who was active in the Revolutionary War, a member of the State constitutional convention, a State senator, and a member of the State convention which ratified the Constitution of the United States. Over the right fireplace is a portrait of Franklin's great-grandfather, James Roosevelt, who was a New York City merchant, a State assemblyman, an alderman, and the first of the family to settle in Dutchess County in 1819.

Ellen Emmett Rand painted the large portrait of Franklin D. Roosevelt at Hyde Park in 1932. The two highback leather chairs at the left end of the room were Franklin Roosevelt's when he was Governor of New York. He received a chair for each of his 2-year terms. He always sat in the one on the left.

The *Dresden Room* takes its name from the delicately wrought Dresden chandelier and mantel set that James Roosevelt purchased in Germany in 1866. The rug is an Aubusson. Sara Roosevelt chose the floral drapes and matching upholstery in 1939, shortly before the King and Queen of England visited here.

Quiet now, the *Dining Room* often buzzed with the dinner chatter of growing children and the conversation of distinguished guests. On election nights, F.D.R. and his political associates filled this room with smoke as they tallied voting returns.

Second Floor

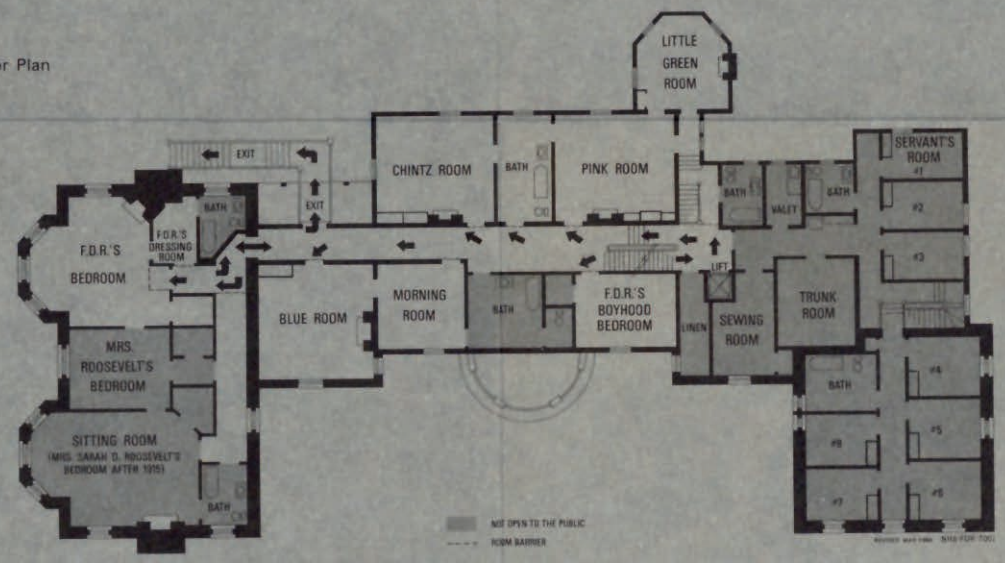
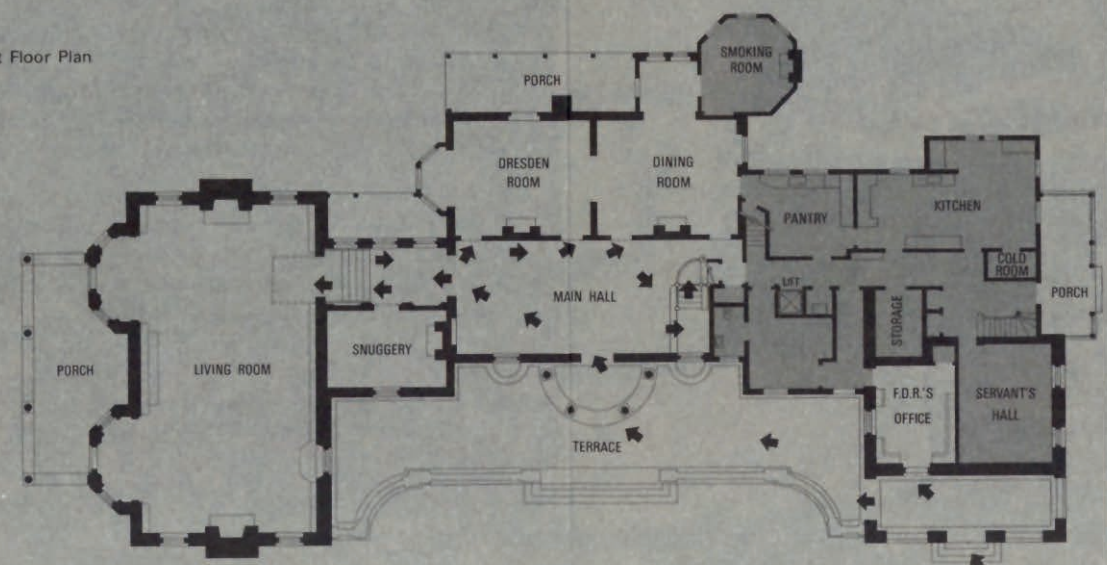
Young Franklin used the *Boyhood Bedroom,* as did his sons. The many notables who visited the Roosevelts used the *Blue* and *Morning Rooms* and the rooms on the river side of the hall. Roosevelt was born in the *Blue Room,* the master bedroom of the house prior to the 1916 expansion.

At the end of the hallway, in the stone wing over the living room, is *F.D.R.'s Bedroom,* which contains his favorite pictures, naval prints, and family photographs. The leash and blanket of the President's dog, Fala, are on the Scottie's own chair. Scattered about the room are the books and magazines that were here at the time of Roosevelt's last visit in March 1945.

F.D.R. LIBRARY

Next to the site is the Franklin D. Roosevelt Library, administered by the National Archives and Record Service. The museum section contains the President's study, his ship models, gifts from foreign rulers, and special exhibits about the lives and careers of Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt.

Second Floor Plan



First Floor Plan