



Figure 1. Graycliff exterior.

Preserving Graycliff: An Examination of the Colors, Fabrics and Furniture of the Frank Lloyd Wright Designed Summer Residence of Isabelle Martin

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Abstract

Information was gathered in a study of the interior color scheme, fabrics and furniture of the Frank Lloyd Wright designed house Graycliff. The house is situated on a cliff overlooking Lake Erie in Derby, New York. It was designed by Wright in 1926 for Isabelle Martin, the wife of the industrialist Darwin Martin. Wright designed both freestanding and built-in furniture for the house interior and also suggested colors and fabrics.

Extensive written documentation and original photographs found in the archives of the State University of New York at Buffalo have been utilized to determine the colors, materials and furniture original to the house. Physical evidence found on the remaining original furniture, moldings and upholstered pillows provides information about finishes, construction and show cover fabrics. Information on historic methods and materials from the period is provided for comparison with the physical evidence along with scientific analysis of finishes. The conservation treatment methods are also discussed. This technical and historical information is helpful for conservators and curators to better understand the materials and construction used in Frank Lloyd Wright designs during this time period. It also promotes the proper care and conservation treatment of these objects while preserving original finishes and the historic intent of the house.

Introduction

Graycliff was the summer estate of Isabelle R. and Darwin D. Martin and is located on the cliffs above Lake Erie in Derby, New York, fourteen miles south of Buffalo. The house received its name from the gray shale cliffs it overlooks. Darwin Martin provided Wright with many commissions, including a residence for Martin and his wife and family built in 1906 in Buffalo, New York. Martin requested that their summer house be designed for his wife Isabelle. Isabelle's feeling was that their Buffalo home was too dark and requested that the summer home be filled with "floods of light and sunshine."¹

The house was first occupied in 1928. Within the grounds are three structures completed between 1926 and 1931. These are the main house, a smaller house with a garage and the boiler house supplying hot water to the heating systems of the two larger buildings. These three buildings and a connecting wall were stuccoed and tinted with raw sienna described by Isabelle Martin as the "color of a deer's dew lap."²

The Martin's daughter, Margaret Foster, and her family moved into the garage apartment in 1930 after the stock market crash of 1929. The Foster house has four bedrooms with its living floor on the second story, above the original garage. It was built between 1926 and 1929 and was originally conceived as the servant's living quarters. After Darwin died, the Martin Family lived together at Graycliff until Isabelle died in 1945. The house was left abandoned until the Piarist Fathers, a teaching order of Hungarian priests, purchased the house in 1951. The Fathers made some structural additions and added buildings on the grounds, but overall the main structures were left intact. The Piarist Fathers sold the estate to the Gray-cliff Conservancy in 1999. The Conservancy is a not-for-profit organization that intends to restore the complex to its 1929 appearance. Graycliff is now listed on the State and National Historic Registers of Historic Houses.

Design and Furnishings

Graycliff was one of only five buildings completed by Wright between 1925 and 1935. It displays a transition from the Prairie Style to Usonian incorporating elements of both.³ Prairie style elements include the use of carefully placed trim made of a single species of wood throughout the house. The merging of entire rooms and the use of cypress rather than oak is more typical of the Usonian style. Frank Lloyd Wright used the unique location as an opportunity to demonstrate his theories of organic architecture and incorporated the elements of the environment into the house's design. In the chimney, stones found along the cliffs were used. Some of these stones contained iron oxide, giving the appearance of rusting as they age. Wright also recommended that the driveway have gravel that was "very yellow if you have to stain it with iron rust."⁴ Diamond shapes, found in the natural formation of slate along the lakeshore, are seen throughout the house in the stones, light fixtures and windows. The large downstairs living space has many windows filling the space with light. Wright chose Lupton metal casement windows and French doors to allow in as much light as possible. In an Architectural Record article he stated that "glass and light are two forms of the same thing."⁵ The windows and doors in the living room allow one to see through the house to the lake.

Isabelle spent many summers at the Lake Placid Club in the Adirondacks and wanted to bring that feeling to Graycliff. Hickory benches were placed in the yard. In Martin's journal there is a notation for hickory bark seats 16" x 60" and 18" x 54"⁶ and there are benches in a few of the original photographs. In a letter from Mrs. Martin to Wright, written from the Lake Placid Club, she requested the living room furniture to be willow furniture. She also stated that she wanted "bright hangings, flowers, fountains, maybe a bird" and did not want decorative glass.⁷

The molding and Wright-designed furniture in the house are made of solid cypress and cypress veneer. In a telegram to Mrs. Martin, Wright suggests

southern cypress for the exterior and interior trim.⁸ Wright preferred wood to look as if there was no finish on it. One coat of white shellac and Johnson's floor wax was suggested (see Scientific Analysis).⁹ The Wright-designed furniture was made in the Buffalo area. In an interview with Dorothy Martin taken in 1973 she stated, "I can tell you that Nelson Montgomery made the furniture for the country house." Mr. Montgomery was also interviewed and stated that, "Mr. Wright would draw things on shingles and give it to me to make and I threw away about 25 of those shingles."¹⁰ The remaining pieces of Wright's furniture at the house include one rectangular table, a hexagon-shaped table with two lower shelves, a radiator cover and two built-in cabinets. There are original built-in kitchen and pantry cabinets not designed by Wright, but are made with cypress and may have been built by the Montgomery Company as well.

Wright also approved of the use of wicker furniture. He agreed that attractive reed furniture may be found and stated, "except for a few overstuffed chairs about the fire place and perhaps some gaily painted dining room chairs, your entire furniture might be in that summer light material."¹¹ Wright suggests in a letter to Mrs. Martin to see the Ypsilanti Reed Furniture Company exhibit on Park Avenue.¹² The only original wicker remaining from the house is a willow table painted in black and gold and a matching chair. The chair is currently in the Darwin Martin Collection and stored at the Peebles Island Conservation Center in Waterford, New York. It appears to have been overpainted with a red glaze at some point with original black and gold paint underneath. There is a yellow satin seat cushion attached that appears to be silk with a cotton warp. The chair and table are included in original photographs of the Graycliff interior.

Wright also made suggestions for rugs and fabrics in the house. A reference to chenille rugs was found in the correspondence. Wright asked if he should design a rug and have Sloane weave it.¹³ The early photos show rugs that cover the floor that could possibly be chenille, but they appear to be monotone without any patterns on them. There are also floor length curtains in the original photographs. In the correspondence Wright wrote, "I will send samples of Orinoka fabrics for hangings and coverings."¹⁴ A notation in Darwin Martin's memorandum book lists, "...silk by the bolt samples of non-fading rough, heavy, Japanesque appearing. For window curtaining in varying shades of the flame color sweet pea, salmon, burnt orange and gold, inexpensive for country, not thin flimsy silk."¹⁵ There are several textile objects from the house in the collection at the State University of New York at Buffalo Archives. These include floor length curtains made of natural colored fibers (possibly jute) with a diagonal red pattern. There are also several half-length gold-colored curtains. There are two pillows in the collection with their original show covers as seen in early photographs. One pillow is a wool, rust-colored corduroy and the other is linen with an orange, yellow and green zigzag pattern. There is also an embroidered linen runner believed to be original to the house and brightly colored silk wall hangings. One wall hanging has a Chinese pattern and the other is labeled "Arizona," with a reversible pattern of palm trees.

Historic Information on Furnishings of the Period

By 1909, small shut up rooms without light and air were understood to be unhealthy. The term “living room” was defined as a downstairs room that gave a pleasant atmosphere for daily use rather than the formality of an old-fashioned parlor of the 19th century.¹⁶ This living space provided an area to display furniture that was both fashionable and comfortable. Simpler elements of design captured the popular trend of expressing the individuality and the character of the family. Upholstery with fringe and tassels were deemed unsanitary.

Colonial revival furniture had been popular since 1890. The 1924 opening of the Metropolitan Museum of Art’s Early American wing further enhanced this trend. The wealthy rejected contemporary styles at this time, and if original antiques were too expensive, expert copies could be purchased. In 1925, the Exposition Internationale des Arts Decoratifs et Industriels Modernes Paris proved a catalyst for design reform. A traveling exhibit of modern French furniture came to the U.S., exposing Americans to contemporary design. In 1927 and 1928, Macy’s and Lord and Taylor had exhibitions of modern furniture and decorative arts. Upholstery incorporated abstract “futuristic” patterns that included vivid stripes, block designs and colorful plaids.¹⁷

Wicker furniture had been in use since the mid-19th century. In 1850s New York, stylish furniture made from rattan was in vogue. Late Victorian wicker was art furniture for the middle class. Commonly used in resorts, wicker was also popular because it reminded one of relaxation. The stresses of Victorian life caused people to view vacations as essential to their mental health. Nervousness was declared a national menace between 1890 and 1915. Forest vacations were recommended and people believed in the curative power of trees. Summers in the Adirondacks, the Maine wilderness and the Rockies were believed to restore psychic equilibrium. Wicker was used in these great camps and rustic settings. As well as being comfortable and fashionable, wicker was also seen as an answer to sanitary concerns. In the 1920s, wicker again became popular. Considered modern, it was seen as cool, comfortable, elegant and because of its summery look, reminded one of leisure. By 1928, modern stick wicker was the rage. Most of the furniture found in the early Graycliff photographs including the one remaining table, appears to be stick wicker. Stick wicker possessed a sleek geometric look that was very up to date and was used for inside or outside seating.¹⁸ A 1930 B. Altman & Company ad from *International Studio* magazine describes summer furniture in rattan, reed and willow sold in suites that cost \$135–\$1,095.

Early original Graycliff photos show fiber furniture used outside in the yard. In 1904, fiber was produced as a wicker substitute from paper twisted around a wire core and sized with glue. Its construction led people to describe it as almost indestructible. Although it was a cheaper product, it looked expensive. The Chicago firm Karpan was the first to weave diamond check patterns in backs of furniture. By 1924 brightly painted lozenge designs were popular. The lozenge

was a standard of the Lloyd Company as well.¹⁹ By 1925, reed furniture was offered in black, scarlet, gold, green, orange and gray. There were also more costly and diverse options such as yellow-green and bronze, red-gold or green with lavender overtones.

Chenille carpets were popular in the twenties. Chenille is from the French word meaning “caterpillar.” A furry ribbon is used as a weft forming the surface nap protruding throughout the warp threads. The backing is typically heavy wool. The tighter the weave the more expensive the carpet.²⁰ A Mohawk ad in a May, 1930 *International Studio* states that “Mohawk Chenille brings luxury and distinction.” The ad goes on to describe how Mohawk’s skilled colorists can match rugs to any desired shade in standard widths up to 30 feet in a variety of grades and pile depths. Mohawk also claimed to make individual designs.

Summer rugs, manufactured in various materials including fiber paper pulp twisted into yarn combined with wool, sisal, cotton or coconut fibers, were also popular. A *House Beautiful* article from 1929 describes “Rugs for the Summer Home” in linen, grass or cocoa fiber. The article also lists linen rugs made up to 12 feet wide with a wool weft that gave the appearance of a tapestry weave.

In the late twenties, modern rooms were decorated with corduroy and coarsely woven modern fabrics. Stripes were considered more suitable for upholstery than curtains. While informal fabrics included linen, chintzes, and inexpensive and cheerful materials, silk, damasks, satins, and brocades were considered formal fabrics. A Schumacher ad from a 1928 *House Beautiful* describes imported fabrics with triangles and zigzags in prints or subtle weavings. The ad suggests using the following palate: henna, salmon, rose, green, brown, and yellow. The increase in the use of upholstery, including padded cushion backs and cushioned or inner-spring seats, changed the look of wicker in the twenties.²¹ Upholstery textiles are described in a 1928 *House Beautiful* ad as “available in modern weave and design.” Schumacher, in a June, 1928 ad, describes fabrics as “colorful, but not costly.” A hammock-stripped linen that is “vaguely loose-woven” in bright colors is suggested to go with willow-ware and reed.

In a 1929 *House Beautiful* ad, colors for curtains include plaid-designed voile in yellow, green and nasturtium red and sea foam georgette or other sheer materials hung in full folds. A Schumacher ad from 1929 suggests gold net for curtains. Also described is an Aztec stripe in sturdy jute, a material described as used by Rodier for drapery fabrics. They had a natural color ground with crimson, vert, poppy, lacquer or jade stripes. In a 1930 *International Studio*, Orinoka advertised colorfast draperies guaranteed sun and tub-fast.

In a 1929 *House Beautiful* article, “New linens for the Summer Home,” linen is used for table runners. Linens sent from Spain, Italy, and Sweden had bands of drawn work and embroidery. Colors included blue, salmon, rose, cream and natural shades.

Frank Lloyd Wright Furniture Construction and Materials History

Finish

Although shellac was suggested as a furniture finish by Frank Lloyd Wright, analysis of samples from his furniture identified a mixture of shellac and cellulose nitrate (see Scientific Analysis). Cellulose nitrate coatings, commercially developed immediately after World War I, were used as furniture finishes by 1927. In a 1927 *Architectural Forum* article, lacquer was said to be the “super-finish” of today.²² By itself, cellulose nitrate has poor durability, poor gloss and poor adhesion. Resins, plasticizers, and softeners were added to correct these problems. The resins improved gloss and adhesion, reducing the number of coats required. Linseed and castor oils served two functions; as plasticizers, they eased application, and as lubricants they prevented earlier coats from being lifted by subsequent brushings.²³

Construction

The original furniture designed by Frank Lloyd Wright is constructed of solid cypress, veneer, and plywood. Cypress while inexpensive, and resistant to decay and insect damage, is also very soft and not recommended for flooring. Because it does not warp and twist it is recommended for kitchens where there is continuous exposure to moisture and heat. Wright’s furniture uses both tongue-and-groove joints and mortise-and-tenon construction.

The tables have decorative veneer that appears to have been cut with a rotary lathe. The rotary lathe, a relatively modern method of cutting veneer in 1927, was used to produce approximately 90% of the veneers at the time. First, logs were usually steamed or soaked to make the wood easy to cut, then rotated against a cutting knife. This produced pliable veneers free from brittleness. Figured veneers produced commercially ranged in thickness from $\frac{1}{32}$ " to $\frac{1}{16}$ ".²⁴

Furniture made from plywood was argued to be superior to furniture made with solid wood. Believed to be stronger because of the alternating grain, it also allowed a surface wood of superior grain and figure that gave an artistic effect. Lumber-core plywood construction prevented warping, making it preferable for tabletops. Boards were placed next to each other and veneer was placed on either side with alternating grain. Heavy lumber core permitted doweling and dovetailing. The thicker the crossbands, the more durable it was. Plywood had a high strength-weight ratio, and was resistant to splitting and impact.²⁵ Modernists saw plywood as a contemporary material that might be used to demonstrate the design ideals of truth to materials and form following function. Designers and Architects such as Alvar Aalto, Gerrit Reitveld, Gerald Summers and Marcel Breuer all experimented with plywoods. In 1927 the designer Shirley Wainwright introduced laminated board into her designs. She described the use of plywood as, “a vogue for a simpler type of furniture depending, for decorative interest, on choice veneers rather than on moldings, carving or fanciful contours.”²⁶ The Paris Exposition of Modern Decorative Arts was a display of the

Modernist movement interpreted by European artists of 1925. Furnishings were designed to relate to the architecture of the interior with a harmonious theme. Ply-wood was used in door-facings, wall-paneling and even in ceilings. Beautiful veneers were decorative features of interiors and furniture.²⁷ In a 1927 *Architectural Record* article, Frank Lloyd Wright *Architectural Record* article, Frank Lloyd Wright *Architectural Record* comments on the use of modern technology by stating that, “the machine is the architect’s tool whether he likes it or not. Unless he masters it, the machine has mastered him.”²⁸

Adhesive

The adhesive used for Wright’s plywood furniture was probably casein. Casein glue was first developed by Allied governments during WWI as an adhesive for aircraft plywood. Advertised as waterproof and superior to earlier glues, it grew in popularity in the 1920s and 30s.

Casein was composed of milk protein precipitated by sulfuric acid and hydrochloric acid. It was dried and pulverized and combined with lime and other chemicals. Latex or blood albumin glue was added to deter growth of organisms.²⁸ Casein provided a much more waterproof glue than the vegetable or animal glues available at the time. It also set very quickly.

Scientific Analysis and Evaluation

Finish samples were taken from the radiator cover, living room table, hexagon-shaped table and a cabinet and molding in the kitchen. Fourier Transform Infrared micro-spectroscopy was performed on these samples by Conservation Scientist Kate Duffy at the Williamstown Conservation Center. The results of the analysis found both shellac and cellulose nitrate in the finish on the free standing furniture, and shellac on the kitchen cabinets and moldings.

Conservation Treatment

The treatment of these objects included structural and surface repair as well as finish work. Treatments performed were as minimally intrusive as possible. The overall goal was to allow the pieces to appear aged but well cared for.

Wicker table (fig. 2): The wicker table is H 22 $\frac{3}{8}$ ” x L 24 $\frac{3}{4}$ ” x D 13 $\frac{1}{4}$ ”. The table is decorated with a base layer of yellow paint followed by a layer of either black or bronze paint. A glossy clear coating on top of the paint appears to be a cellulose nitrate lacquer. The coating was soluble in acetone and fluoresced greenish-yellow with a hand-held UV light. The top is missing and what remains is unfinished plywood screwed into place from underneath with four screws. There is no sign of where a top may have originally been attached, and it may have been a removable tray. The table is constructed with small finishing nails and bound with cane in some areas. The legs are turned, hard wood dowels. There was considerable flaking of the paint before treatment. The treatment included carefully cleaning the paint with water and mineral spirits and applying a layer of Soluvar varnish to consolidate areas of loose paint.



Figure 2. Wicker table (willow ware). After treatment.

Built-in kitchen and pantry cabinets: There are six original built-in kitchen and pantry cabinets in the house made of cypress and poplar (identified by eye only). They vary in size and have a range of elements including drawers, solid doors, glass doors and shelves. There are chromed handles $4 \frac{1}{16}$ " wide on each drawer and a glass knob on one of each set of doors. There are also moldings $2 \frac{3}{4}$ " wide in the kitchen and pantry. The cabinets and moldings are covered in several layers of white paint above a clear finish. Fourier Transform Infrared Analysis testing was done on samples of the clear finish and it was found to be shellac. Solvent testing was performed to formulate a paint removal system for future treatment. Three of the paint layers were easily removed using Citrustrip. The paint layer above the clear coating, however, was not easily removed. A formula using the chelating agent EDTA was suggested by architectural paint conservator Susan Buck. This allowed the removal of the last layer of paint without disrupting the shellac layer.

Frank Lloyd Wright Designed Furniture

Living room table: (*fig. 3*) The living room table is H 28" x L $52 \frac{1}{16}$ " x D 24". It is made of solid cypress (by eye), veneer and plywood lumber core with a clear finish. The lumber core interior, appears to be constructed of oak boards with cypress veneer. There is a lower shelf $\frac{7}{8}$ " thick that is made of two boards joined with tongue-and-groove construction and glue. There are two sets of four legs. Each leg is $26 \frac{5}{8}$ " tall, $2 \frac{13}{16}$ " wide and $\frac{13}{16}$ " thick. The inner legs are perpendicular to the outside legs. Inside these legs are four more vertical



Figure 3. Frank Lloyd Wright designed living room table. After treatment.

boards 21 1/2" high with the same thickness and width as the outer legs. These vertical boards are parallel to the outer legs at the four corners. The glue failed between the two boards making up the shelf. The veneer also became detached along the entire length of each long edge of the tabletop, one short edge and partially underneath the top. The top was covered with many scrapes and gouges and there were large losses on the feet of the inner set of legs. The finish had been highly worn on the top and lower shelf, but the finish on the legs was intact. The boards of the shelf and the areas of delaminating veneer were glued back together with hot hide glue. Losses in the wood were filled with Araldite carvable epoxy using a hot hide glue barrier layer. These were inpainted with acrylic paints as well as dry pigments and shellac to match the surrounding area. The finish was cleaned with mineral spirits. Alcohol was used selectively to remove darkened areas. Soluvar varnish was used to resaturate areas of dry worn finish and to even the gloss. The legs were lightly cleaned with mineral spirits and were waxed using paste wax made of carnauba and bees wax.

Hexagon tables: There are two hexagon shaped tables on display in the house. One is believed to be original and the other a copy, due to differences in materials, finish and construction techniques.

Original hexagon table (fig. 4): This original table is H 24" x L 22" x D 22". The top is a hexagon shape 22" wide. There is a middle shelf 14" wide and 1/2" thick and a lower shelf 19" wide and 1/2" thick. There are six legs 22 13/16" tall 2 13/16" wide and 7/16" thick. The feet taper on the inside to 1 3/8". The top is lumber core with rotary cut decorative veneer. The lower shelves are joined with tongue-and-groove. There



Figure 4. Frank Lloyd Wright designed hexagon-shaped table. After treatment.

is a brace screwed under the top, possibly to prevent warping. With a hand held UV light the finish fluoresced yellowish green with reddish undertones. The finish had darkened considerably in most areas. The table was cleaned with mineral spirits. Alcohol was used selectively to remove darkened areas of finish. Bits of paper were adhered to the top and lower shelves and these were removed with water and alcohol. Small spots of white paint, splattered on the top and lower shelves, were removed mechanically with a metal spatula. The top and

shelves were resaturated with a layer of Soluvar varnish. Any losses in the finish were inpainted using acrylic paints and shellac. The finish on the legs is in good condition and only received a layer of carnauba and bees wax.

Reproduction hexagon shaped table: This table is H 24 1/8" x L 22" x 1/16" D 22 1/6". The design of the table is identical to the original table with slight differences in measurement. There are also construction differences. The pieces making up the shelves are joined with straight splices glued together and no tongue-and-groove joints. The top veneer is made up of three pieces of wood rather than lumber core with one piece of veneer. The finish fluoresces yellowish green with no reddish undertones. The clear finish on this table is in good condition and the structure is stable. It did not receive conservation treatment.

Radiator cover: (*fig. 5*) The radiator cover is H 41" x L 40" x D 17 1/8". There are eighteen slats along the front and six on the sides. The slats are all 7/8" x 7/8" square and appear to be attached with mortise-and-tenon. The structural joints are also mortise-and-tenon. The mortise-and-tenon joints at the bottom front corners were broken apart. These were re-glued with animal hide glue. The top was covered with a tar like substance, which was removed using mineral spirits. Losses along the front spindles were filled with Araldite epoxy using a hot hide glue barrier layer. These fills were inpainted using acrylic paint, shellac and Soluvar varnish mixed with dry pigments.

Built-in cabinet: The cabinet is H 28" x L 52 1/16" D 24". It is built into a corner of the upstairs long hallway. There are two sets of two doors 71 1/4" tall,



Figure 5. Frank Lloyd Wright designed radiator cover. After treatment.

16 $\frac{1}{16}$ " wide and 1 $\frac{1}{8}$ " thick. There is one spring-loaded brass latch with an octagon shaped faceplate for each set of doors and two hinges on each door. Five shelves inside 10 $\frac{7}{8}$ " deep and 69" wide run along the length of the cabinet. There were losses in the wood on the proper right side where a phone system was attached. These losses were filled with Araldite and inpainted with acrylic paints, shellac and Soluvar varnish. Using a hand held UV light, the finish fluoresced yellowish-green with red undertones. There were light scratches around brass latches and on the shelves. The finish was cleaned using water and mineral spirits and waxed with carnauba and bees wax.

Built-in drawers and cupboard: The drawers and cupboard are H 90 $\frac{1}{2}$ " X L 48 $\frac{1}{2}$ " and are built into the second floor hall near the servants bedrooms. The cupboard on top is 53 $\frac{3}{4}$ " tall made up of two frame and panel constructed doors and three shelves inside. There is a spring-loaded brass latch with an octagonal shaped faceplate as well as two hinges on each door. The lower portion is 36" tall and made up of two drawers 44 $\frac{1}{8}$ " wide and 16" tall. The front of each drawer is attached with a rabbet join and nails. There are two brass pulls with a dark patina on each drawer. The clear finish appears similar to the other freestanding pieces. There were small losses and chips along the front of the drawers as well as a large loss $\frac{1}{2}$ " wide in the front of one shelf where the latch hit. There were also losses on the proper left inside where the shelves are held up using brackets placed into holes. These losses were filled using Araldite epoxy and inpainted using acrylics, shellac and

Solubar. There were some light scratches around the brass latch, on the drawer fronts and on the shelves. The finish was cleaned overall with water and mineral spirits and waxed using Carnauba and bees wax.

Conclusions

The above pages provide historic and physical information about the furniture and fabrics in Frank Lloyd Wright's Graycliff. The historical information on methods and materials is consistent with the physical evidence found at Graycliff. The methods of construction, including the use of decorative veneer, tongue-and-groove and lumber core are all typical of the period. Cellulose nitrate finish on furniture, a technological innovation of the twenties, was widely used in Graycliff. Wicker furniture, fabrics and rugs in the collection were found in historic references of the period. The gathered information assisted with the proper treatment and care of the objects, as well as the preservation of original materials. It also serves as a resource to help with the planning of future furnishings for the Graycliff House interior.

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