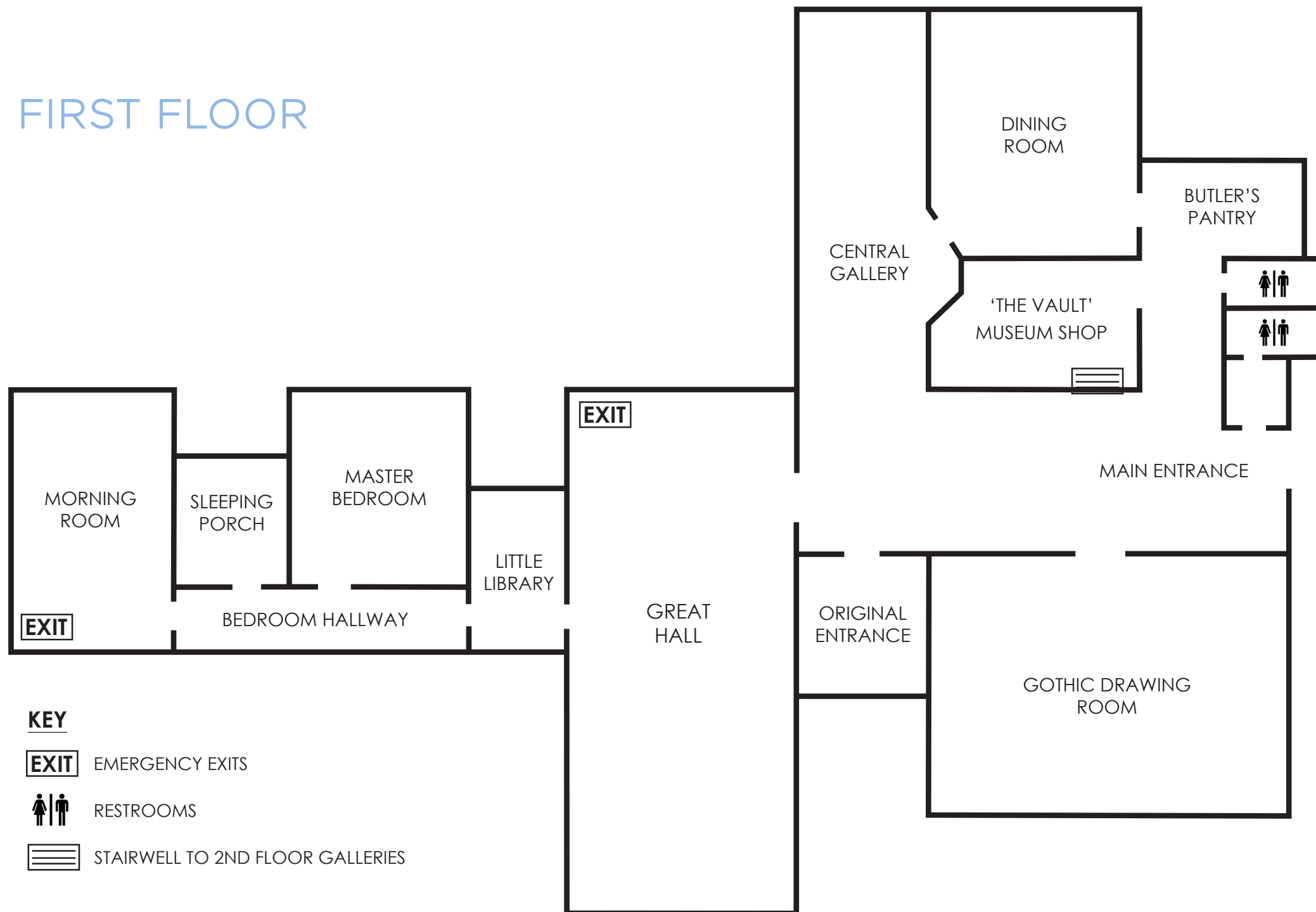


FIRST FLOOR



GOTHIC DRAWING ROOM

Your tour begins in the Gothic Drawing Room, also known as the Music Room. This room was designed in 1922 by Frank R. Watson. The entire room was constructed in Philadelphia, disassembled, shipped to Norfolk by rail car, and assembled on site. The room was host to many music concerts featuring the custom-built Steinway piano and Moeller player and pipe organ. This room suffered a devastating fire in 2003 when workers left oil-soaked rags on a bench overnight. The rags spontaneously combusted and intense heat destroyed the original rood screen (the ornate carving to the right of the fireplace) as well as several carved beams and panels. Extensive repairs and a team of conservators brought the room back to life in just two years.

CENTRAL GALLERY

The Central Gallery was added to the home in 1937. At the end of the hall is a stately life-size portrait of Mrs. Sloane painted by Ernest Ipsen. As you turn right and walk towards the view of the water, take a minute to admire the East Gallery's 6th century marble Buddha.

BUTLER'S PANTRY

The Butler's Pantry was originally a private area of the house used by Mrs. Sloane's house staff. The Sloanes typically employed a maid, a chauffeur, a cook and a groundskeeper. The glass-fronted cabinets contain a display of Mrs. Sloane's formal and everyday china including patterns from Lenox, Noritake and many more.

DINING ROOM

Just off the East Gallery is the richly appointed Dining Room. With its spectacular water views and custom wooden paneling, this room played host to many distinguished artists in the 1920s. The blue Persian carpet was woven especially for Mrs. Sloane in the millefleur, or million flowers style, and the suite of dining furniture was carved to order by Swedish woodcarver Karl von Rydingsvard.

GREAT HALL

Built in 1908 by English master craftsman Charles Woodsend (who oversaw all Hermitage architectural projects), this room was the main living area of the Sloanes' original five-room summer cottage. In 1916 Mrs. Sloane

moved this room 90 degrees to make room for the East wing. The figures hovering on each side of both hearths are kitchen witches—an old English tradition meant to keep evil spirits from entering through the chimney. The figures on either side of the doorways are called satyrs—half goat and half man. The custom light fixtures and hardware were handcrafted by E.F. Caldwell and Samuel Yellin. The Great Hall is now home to the majority of Mrs. Sloane's East Asian collection, one of the largest collections of Asian art and artifacts in the Southeast.

LITTLE LIBRARY

The Little Library, once home to hundreds of leather-bound books, was made into a display area in 1947. The case on the right displays a selection of Chinese snuff bottles carved from coral, lapis, jade and mixed agates. Subsequent cases contain Peking glass such as the bulbous yellow vase carved with flowers and birds, and a pair of blue bowls with flaring rims.

MASTER BEDROOM

Added in 1916, the master bedroom features one of the most beautiful custom-designed plaster ceilings at the Hermitage. The open portion of the paneled wall, called a clerestory,

served as a way to keep air flowing through the bedroom on balmy summer nights before air conditioning. The window you see in the left-hand wall leads to the sleeping porch; this was originally an exterior window that was maintained for purposes of air circulation after renovations in 1936.

BEDROOM HALLWAY

Along with the entire first floor of the East Wing, the bedroom hallway was constructed by W. and J. Sloane Co. from New York City in 1916. Notice the painting on the beams overhead, as well as the doors leading into each room. The closed doorway leads to Mr. Sloane's private bathroom, currently off display.

MORNING ROOM

This was Mrs. Sloane's treasured private space. The room is spacious and beautifully fitted with linenfold paneling, a poured plaster ceiling and large windows overlooking the river and gardens. The raised alcove was Mrs. Sloane's breakfast area, and in her lifetime overlooked her formal English-style rose garden. The cases on the right contain a small scalloped Japanese Satsuma bowl that was the first item of the Sloane collection. The tapestries on the far walls are 16th century Flemish.