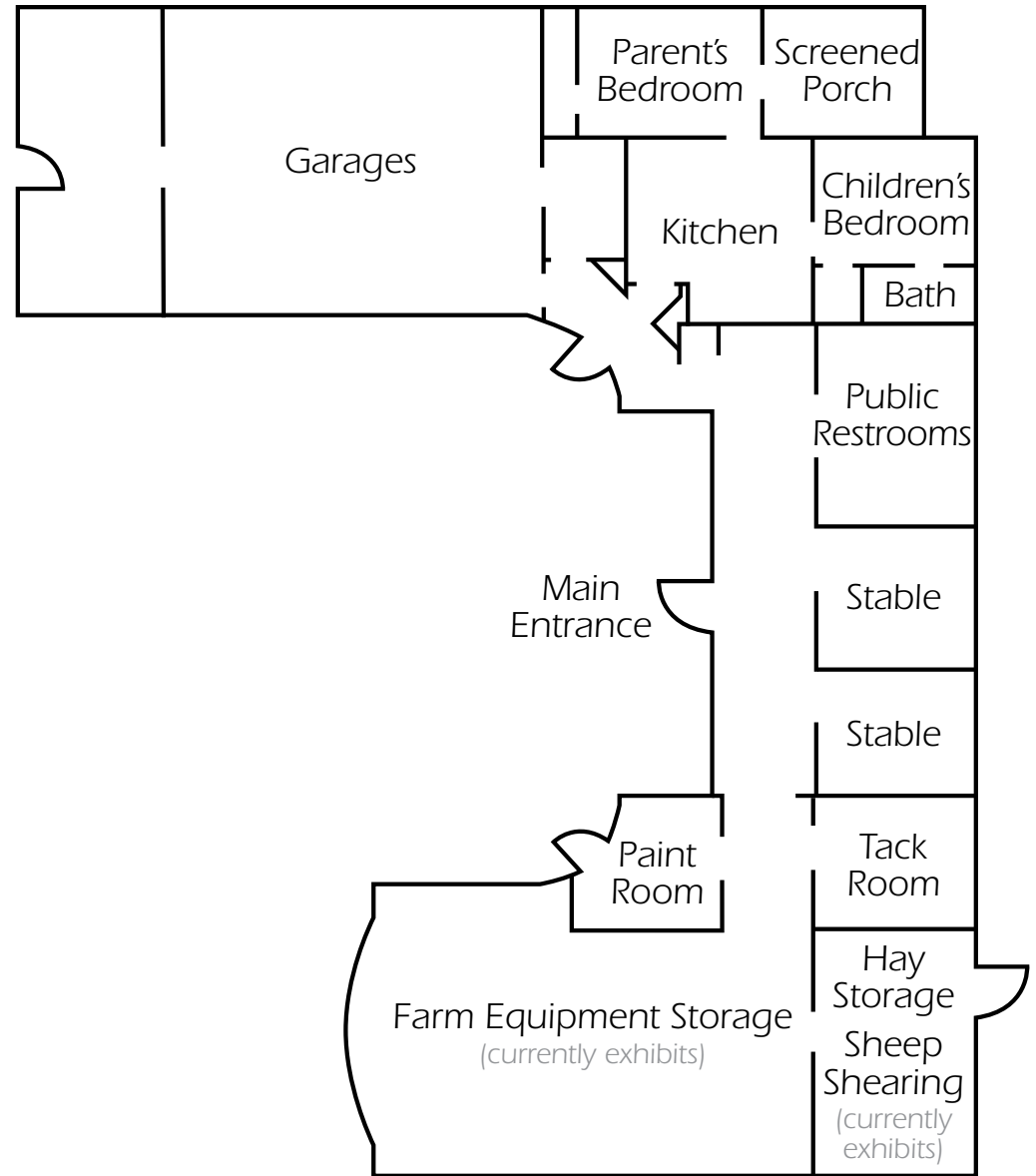
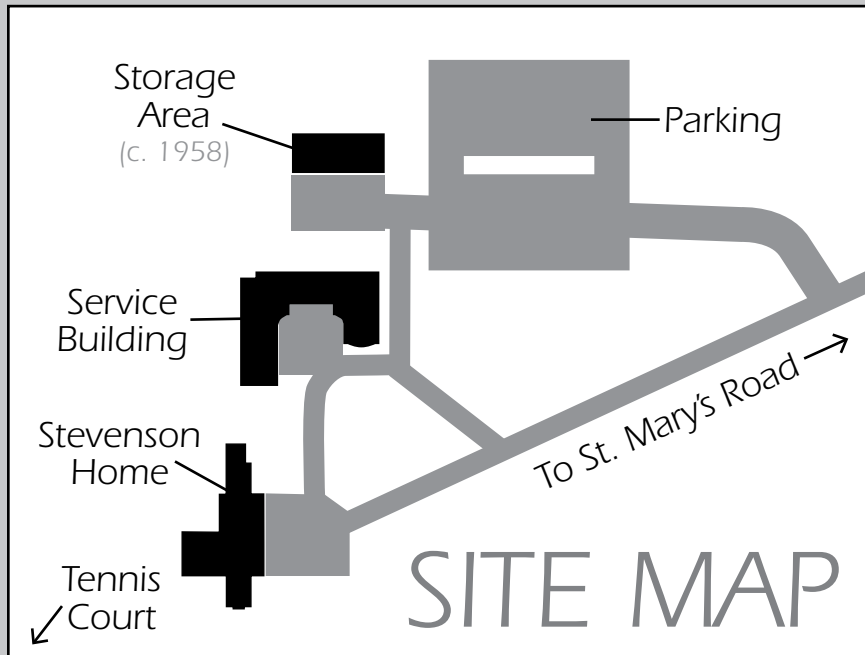


Adlai E. Stevenson

HISTORIC HOME

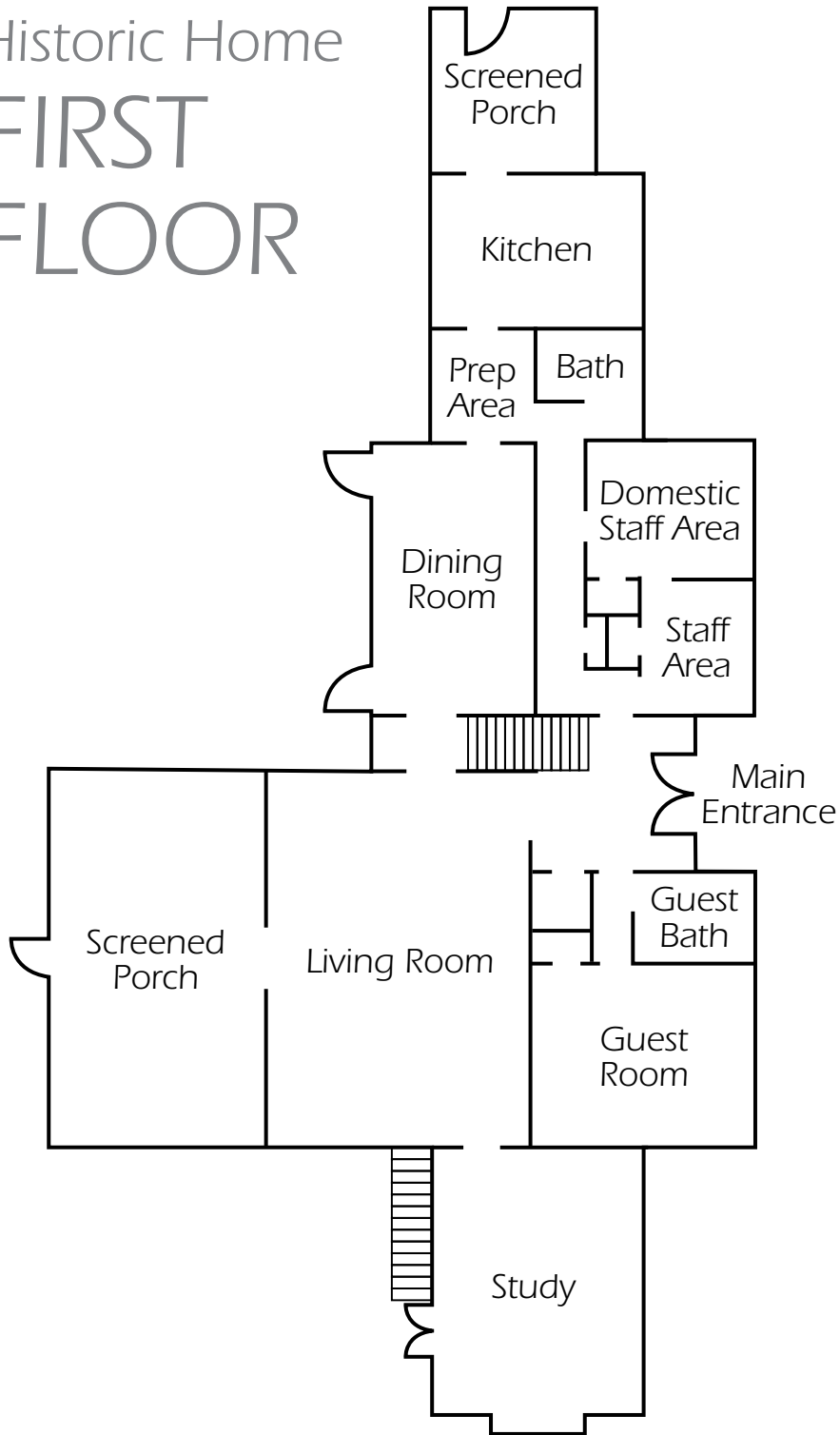
Adlai E. Stevenson II and his wife Ellen Borden purchased 70 acres on this site in 1935. The 'Farm' as Stevenson affectionately called it, was the only house that he ever owned and throughout his adult life it remained the place to which he would always return. This was a place where he could escape from his hectic political life; where he could come to think, write, and reflect. Stevenson took walks around the property, rode horses and fished, ice skated and canoed on the Des Plaines River. He also loved to help with work around the farm alongside the caretaker and farm manager Frank Holland.

The house is a combination of Moderne and Prairie School styles, with Art Deco features. The Moderne elements can be seen in the simplicity of design, the symmetry of the home and use of geometric shapes. The Prairie School style can be seen in the use of natural materials and the incorporation of the landscape into the design.

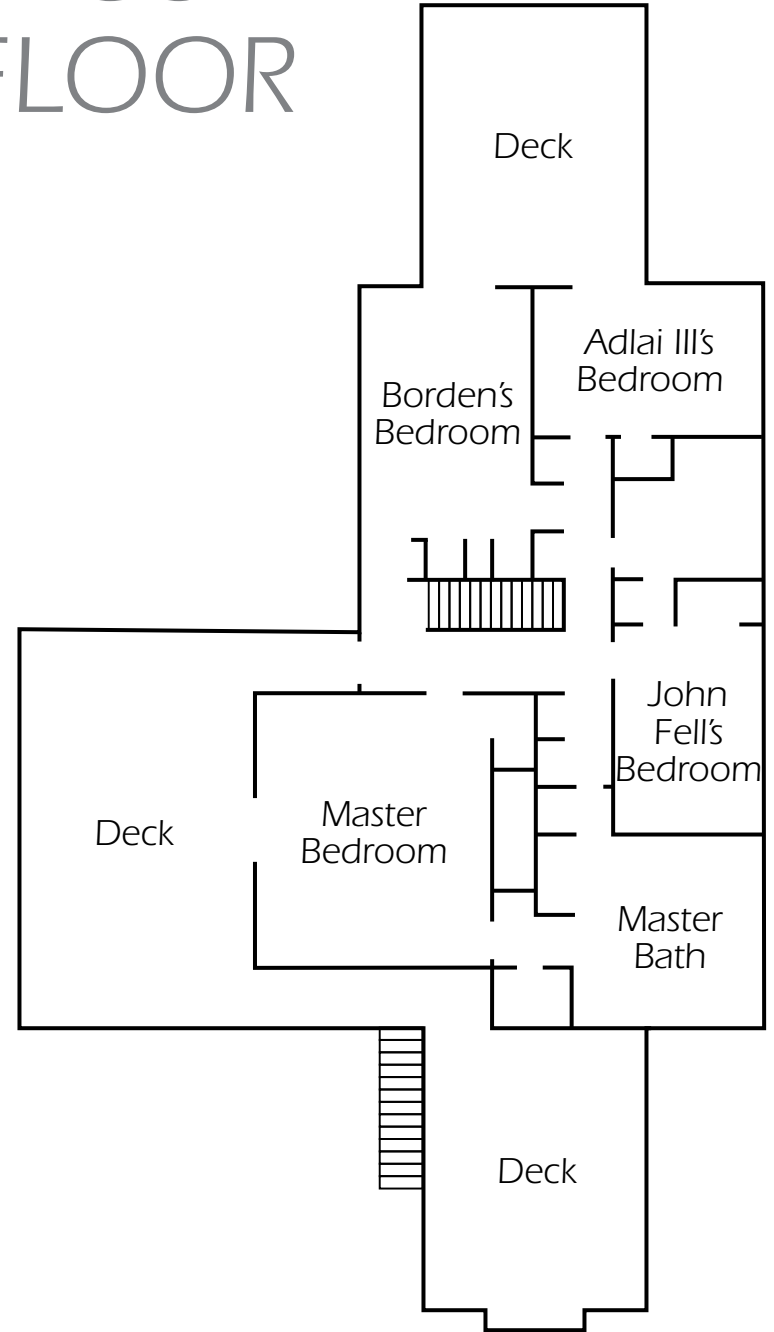


SERVICE BUILDING

Historic Home FIRST FLOOR



Historic Home SECOND FLOOR



FIRST FLOOR

Guest Room

Eleanor Roosevelt was a frequent guest to the home. She was a close friend and avid supporter of Stevenson during his 1952 and 1956 Presidential campaigns, and even encouraged him to run again in the election of 1960. Commenting on Stevenson she stated,

“Mr. Stevenson will remain a great figure in the country, whether he is nominated or not. Without any office, he is still the only one of the candidates who forces the knowledge upon you that he has entered a room even before he speaks.”

The guest bathroom near the guest bedroom has been remodeled since Stevenson lived here. At the time that he lived here the bathroom had a tub and shower on the east wall near the window.

Living Room & Screened-in Porch

This is where Stevenson would entertain his guests, such as journalist Edward R. Murrow, politicians George McGovern and Richard J. Daley, and actors such as Lauren Bacall, Alfred Lunt, and Lynne Fontaine.

John F. Kennedy also visited the home once in a famous meeting prior to the 1960 Democratic Convention. A Senator at the time, Kennedy was on his way back to Boston after winning the Oregon Primary when he stopped in Libertyville because he realized Stevenson's influence at the time and wanted his support. However, Kennedy left without it as Stevenson insisted on retaining a neutral position.

It was said that when Stevenson lived here one could see all the way to the Des Plaines River, which runs along the west edge of the property,

from the back of the house. Today the woods are more dense.

In the L-shaped gardens that you can see on either side of the back of the house, peonies and yews were planted, just like they are now. These are not the original plants.

Study

The study is the most famous room in the house. When Stevenson was at home, he spent the majority of his time in this room, as he was very devoted to his work, writing speeches and books, and meeting with colleagues and dignitaries.

This room is currently in the process of being refurbished. Here you can view many historic artifacts, including Stevenson's original desk and his cabinet chair from when he served as ambassador to the United Nations.

An interesting architectural feature to note are the cutouts behind either side of the fireplace. When Stevenson lived here, the window treatments included drapes which when opened, were completely concealed in these cutout areas so that the view outside would have been unobstructed.

Dining Room

This room provides a beautiful view of the back lawn. When it was in use, there was a table in the center of the room, and a mirror on the back wall so that guests on either side of the table could enjoy the view outside.

There are large folding doors on either end with very large screen doors, which when opened would have let the breeze in making it feel as if you were actually outside. The doors allowed one to walk out directly onto the lawn, in the manor of English

stately homes.

The button on the floor is believed to be a service call button, but it is not hooked up to anything today.

The light fixture is original, very simple. It would have provided a spotlight on the table centerpiece. The boys remember referring to it as the 'eye of God.'

Kitchen

First there is a prep/service area and then the kitchen. Here the flooring is not original but is similar to what was original to the house. The remaining remnant of this flooring is in the Master Bathroom upstairs. The tiling is also not original. The screened-in porch off the kitchen was solely used by the domestic staff. Adlai III does not recall ever stepping out onto that porch.

Domestic Staff Hallway

There was a housekeeper (husband and wife), as well as the equivalent of a nanny when Stevenson's sons were young. This area could either have been used as two bedrooms or as one bedroom and a sitting room, depending on who lived there.

To the right of the door at the end of the hallway that leads to the main entrance, there was a phone table in the corner. Originally, this was the only phone in the house, so you can imagine Stevenson standing there in the tight corner of the hallway talking on the phone. He did not have a phone in his study, which demonstrates a different time period and manner of communication.

SECOND FLOOR

Master Bedroom & Deck

This room was Stevenson's bedroom. Off this room is a large deck that wraps around the back of the house. From here one can also enjoy the beautiful view surrounding the house. Unlike the rest of the deck, which has open sides, one area is enclosed. This is because Stevenson liked to sun-bathe, but must have been concerned with his privacy as well as that of his neighbors. Adlai III planted the tree near the deck when he was a boy.

Master Bathroom

Everything in this room is original, from the fixtures to the floor. This is also the room where the most graphic evidence of Art Deco and Moderne style can be seen. Notice the curved shelves on either side of the mirrors, the symmetry of the shelves and drawers as well as the closets. There is even symmetry in the use of double sinks.

The floor length mirrors are an interesting feature to note because not only can you adjust the mirrors to get a better view of yourself, but they also light up. (Test out the mirror lights, to the lower right of the mirror under the shelf.)

Boys' Bedrooms

Down the hallway are the bedrooms of each of Stevenson's three sons. In the original house the boys did not have their own rooms, but that was added into the plans for the second. It is interesting to note that the rooms go in reverse birth order. The first bedroom on the right was John Fell's, the youngest son named in honor of Jesse Fell, Stevenson's Maternal Great-Grandfather, who was an advisor to Abraham Lincoln. The second room on the left was Borden's, the middle child named in honor of Ellen's side of the family. The last room on the end of the hallway was Adlai III's, the eldest.

SERVICE BUILDING

This building was built in 1937 and survived the fire that destroyed the first house. It was designed by the Lake Forest firm of Anderson and Ticknor and later additions were designed by the firm of Perkins, Wheeler, and Will, who designed the current home. The building includes the garage, horse stalls, tack room, hay storage and sheep shearing room, and plant start area, as well as the apartment of the caretaker and farm manager Frank Holland and his family.

Service Rooms

From the front, this building resembles a 1960s motel in many ways due to the Moderne style. Walking inside the building, the horse stalls are near the main entrance. Heading towards the right,

the tack room is on the left. The wooden beams projecting from the wall were used to store saddles for the horses. On the right, is the paint room. Next on the left is the hay storage and sheep shearing room. At the time that Stevenson lived here, sheep would roam the property. Holland would use the sheep and a push mower to maintain the lawns. Note the scratches on the door from one of Stevenson's dogs, each of whom were named after characters in King Arthur's Court.

Caretaker Apartment

On the west side of the building is the garage and the apartment of the Holland family. Frank Holland was the caretaker and farm manager from 1937-1963 and again after Stevenson's death from

1965-1970. He lived in the apartment attached to the service building with his wife Beatrice and their children Carol Ann and Jim. When Stevenson was at home, he would help Holland with work around the farm. Stevenson and Holland had a mutual respect for one another and considered each other almost like family. Clockwise on entering the apartment are the kitchen and sitting room, parents' bedroom, porch area, children's bedroom and the bathroom. Originally this area had a kitchen, two bedrooms and an outdoor porch. Later additions to this area included converting the porch into a third bedroom, and removing a third horse stall to add a living room area where the public restrooms now are located.