

# We Do Love Our New Home in Our Old House!

Shelley Wilkinson

My husband and I are relatively new to the neighborhood, buying our house, which we have named "Old Blue," in August of 2019. We signed papers on our second wedding anniversary, finalizing the purchase of what is our dream home - a light blue 1903 American Foursquare, complete with the wrap around porch, columns and historical plaque marking the front door.



We had been searching for quite a while and noticed the difference between the caliber of houses in our prior neighborhood and the North Slope Historic District - the styles of homes, the craftsmanship, and the front porches! And neighbors who have the same pride in ownership that we do.

As with any new living space, we got to work on the interior, making it our own as winter set in. We continue to fall in love with the tall ceilings, wide hallways, and pocket doors. We are lucky in that every piece of hardware is original to the home and perfectly matches each other. We giggle when we give our family and friends tours, pointing out the original wallpaper that was left inside each closet, and explain that picture rail has an actual purpose.

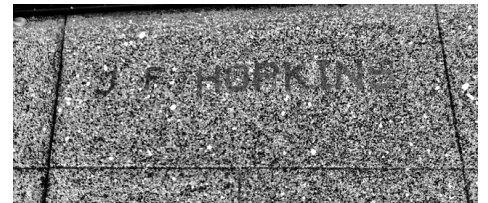
The sunshine this March and implementation of social distancing allowed for time outside. The prior owner had left various outdoor rugs that were in solid condition at the base of each stair case leading up to the porch. We chose to use them as-is until we started our projects, which included ripping out many hedges that flanked the front walkway. This was messy work and dirt was flying.

It was time to lift up some rugs so they could be cleaned and start fresh.

We started researching the history of our home after we toured it, and thanks to those who came before us, it was not very difficult to find information on the builder. In fact, I decided to take an excerpt from "History of the Puget Sound Country" Vol. II and have it printed onto canvas so that those who visit our front "parlor" can read a brief glimpse of the house history. The book gives in great detail the life story of *J.F Hopkins, a prominent druggist in our area who had the home built in 1903.*

I yanked up the large rug that had pieces of moss growing into it, disappointed that the removal of the rug would require a good pressure washing of the surrounding area. I noticed the faintest trace of a letter stamped into the concrete that had been

covered by the rug. I became excited, calling my husband over to verify that, in fact, we were



looking at the name of our builder J.F. Hopkins, etched into the concrete.

How many years had that rug been in place? How many families who had occupied our house walked over this etching, unbeknownst to them, to reach the front door? I pressure washed the next day, the name becoming more and more visible as the spring sunshine dried away the moisture. Due to the heavy grime I was washing away, I wouldn't be surprised if it had been 50+ years since it had last been cleaned, if ever.

This is why we love our historic home and the neighborhood it belongs to. New-builds don't give you many surprises, and the walls don't tell stories. In turn, our new neighbors have the same passions as we do and they celebrated with us that we had made such a neat and unexpected find. The North Slope Historic District has given us a dreamy welcome and we are happy to call it our home.