

ANNA'S HOUSE

Aaron Friedman's granddaughter Anna was born and raised in Atlanta, Georgia. Aaron took photos of the exterior of a modern French manor style house that he spotted while visiting Anna and her family in Atlanta and used those photos as the design basis for "Anna's House." As reported by Marion Valentino in *The Mobile Press Register*, the original house is a sprawling 110 feet across the front, but Friedman compressed the layout of Anna's House to 68 inches (equivalent to 68 feet).¹



"Anna's House"

The exterior facades of the house are stucco that Friedman made from a mixture of plaster of paris and sand. The house is painted a light pink color with off-white trim. The roof is made of gray asphalt shingles in miniature scale. The double front doors feature etched glass panels, with brass coach lights mounted on each side. The exterior is bordered by planter beds with evergreen shrubs and tiny flowers in full bloom. Two brass birdbaths stand on the grassy lawn in front.



Front Entry

The entry to Anna's House features a landing with three semi-circular steps made of alternating walnut and birch veneer flooring leading down to the main living area. A round pedestal table topped with delicate flowers in a vase rests on a round needlepoint rug made by Sarah Friedman. A crystal chandelier hangs above.

Black wrought iron railings flank the steps leading down to the living area. These railings match the black wrought iron spiral staircase that leads up to the second floor.

Built-in shelves on either side of the front doors and on either side of the arched window in the second floor landing hold miniature vases, figurines, clocks, crystal animals, and other decorative treasures. The Friedmans placed miniature family photographs on the walls of the upstairs landing.

The living area is arranged on one side of the first floor entry and the dining room and kitchen are on the other side. As reported in the *Press-Register* article, the floors in the entry, living area, and dining room are made of walnut veneer strips that Friedman glued down one strip at a time, sanded, sealed, and finished with a polyurethane varnish.²

The living area is decorated with salmon-pink wallpaper and a needlepoint rug made by Sarah Friedman in colors that complement the wall coverings. Sheer curtains ensure privacy while letting light into the room. Two sofas and an easy chair are covered with tan upholstery. Magazines and books on an end table await the casual reader. A framed portrait of Anna hangs over the mantle of the floor-to-ceiling fireplace, which is painted the same off-white shade as the other wood trim in this part of the house.



Living Area



Aaron Friedman points out some of the details of “Anna’s House.” *Photo courtesy of Alabama Department of Archives and History. Donated by Alabama Media Group. Photo by Mary Hattler, Mobile Press-Register.*

Friedman installed French doors on either side of the fireplace to provide access to the sunny Florida room. This room is filled with white wicker furniture. The seat cushions are covered in pale pink and green upholstery that blends perfectly with the light oak flooring and beige wallpaper. Even the blades of the ceiling fan have delicate floral designs that match the upholstery and wall hangings. The lush houseplants in pots on wicker stands or baskets hanging from the ceiling clearly enjoy the bright sunshine that pours in through the large arched windows in this room.



Dining Room

Dark mahogany furniture, off-white wallpaper and matching upholstery on the seat cushions create a formal environment in dining room. The furniture includes a Queen Anne style dining table and chairs, breakfront, and sideboard. Sarah Friedman made another needlepoint rug in colors that complement the wall coverings and brighten the floor beneath the dining table. A silver tea service is placed atop the sideboard and a silver candelabra stands on a side table.

In the kitchen, bright white cabinets are set against walls covered in a whimsical duck and flower patterned fabric. The Friedmans and Pearl Brook used the same fabric to create the skirt on the breakfast table, the cushions on the black ladder back chairs, and the trim on the café curtains. The table is set for dinner for two,

with a cake ready for a celebration. A Tiffany-style stained glass light fixture hangs above the table. Friedman hand laid the orange and brown tile kitchen floor. The kitchen is equipped with a Cuisinart and coffeemaker. A bag of groceries has been set on the kitchen counter, next to a coffee mug imprinted with Anna's name and a rainbow design.



Kitchen

The second floor of Anna's house has two bedrooms, each with an adjoining bathroom, which are situated on either side of the upstairs landing. The off-white bed, armoire, dressing table and bench in one bedroom are decorated with a delicate painted floral pattern in keeping with the French manor style of the exterior architecture. The Friedmans created a warm feeling in this room with peach-toned carpeting and wallpaper. The wallpaper repeats the floral pattern painted on the furniture. Delicate lace serves as the bedspread and bolster cover, and one of Sarah Friedman's cross-stitched pillows completes the arrangement.



Above: Bedroom #1. Below: Bathroom #1

Aaron and Sarah chose a striking black-and-white color pattern for the adjoining bathroom. Deep-pile black carpeting sets off bright white cabinets with black trim and white wallpaper with large black polka dots. The ivory-toned porcelain tub, sink, and toilet are outfitted with gold fixtures. Mirrored tiles covering portions of two walls add depth and dimension to this room. Sarah Friedman made the thick white towels with black and gold trim hanging next to the tub and seen in an open cabinet. She also monogrammed Anna's initials on hand towels placed next to the sink.



The bedroom and bath on the other side of the house are finished in a blue and white color scheme. The Friedmans used white fabric with pastel colored hearts for the bedspreads, upholstery on a chair, and as the covering on the dressing table and accompanying bench in this room. Cross-stitched pillows made by Sarah

Friedman are arranged on the beds and a book and reading glasses have been left on the night stand. Translucent stained glass panels with blue and purple swirls inserted on either side and above the doorway between the bedroom and bathroom follow the angles of the roof pitch above. These panels and another one on the opposite (exterior) wall allow light into the bathroom while preserving privacy in this room. The bathroom fixtures are pink marble with gold fixtures and were made in England. The base of the sink is fashioned in a fish-and-seashell design.



Above: Bedroom #2. Below: Bathroom #2

Sarah Friedman made the cross-stitched pillows and needlepoint rugs seen throughout Anna’s House. As quoted in the *Press Register* article, Aaron Friedman stated, “My son, Jere, a former cabinetmaker, helped me in redesigning the original house to scale. He was also my consultant on roof line problems.” Pearl Brook made many of the curtains, drapes, bedspreads, flower arrangements, and other accessories that can be seen throughout the house.³



According to the *Press-Register*, it took Friedman eight months to build and furnish Anna’s House.⁴ He completed this house in 1988.

Information compiled by Jere Friedman. All photos by Jere Friedman unless otherwise noted.
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Sources:

- Valentino, Marion. “Dollhouse brings builder satisfaction.” *The Mobile Press Register* 17 April, 1988: F-2. Print.
- Fields, Mary Durland. “Grandfather’s Gallery.” *Nutshell News* Jan. 1993: 36-41. Print.

Endnotes:

¹ Valentino, Marion. “Dollhouse brings builder satisfaction.” *The Mobile Press Register* 17 April, 1988: F-2. Print.

² *ibid.*

³ *ibid.*

⁴ *ibid.*

Additional photos of Anna's House:



Rear view of Anna's House. *Photo by Priscilla Verigan*



Above and below: Front Entry, Spiral Staircase, and Living Area





Another view of the Entry and Spiral Staircase *Photo by Priscilla Verigan*



Above: Upstairs Landing. Below: Family photos on walls of Upstairs Landing



Dining Room



Above: Details of Kitchen. Below: Florida Room





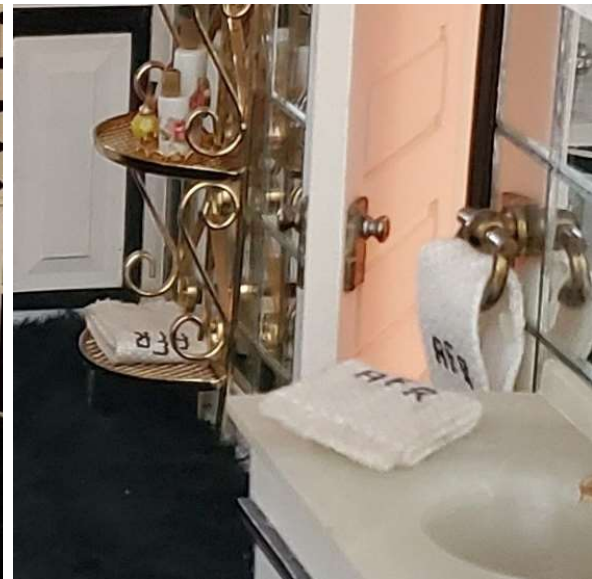
Another view of Bedroom #1



Another view of Bedroom #2



Detail of Bathroom #1



Detail of Bathroom #1 showing monogrammed hand towels by Sarah Friedman *Photo by Priscilla Verigan*