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To: "jeffrey E." <jeevacation@gmail.com>
Subject: Brandon update St Thomas
Date: Fri, 01 May 2015 15:49:59 +0000

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Begin forwarded message:

Date: May 1, 2015 at 11:41:53 AM EDT
Subject: St Thomas
From: Brandon Thompson <[REDACTED]>
To: Richard Kahn <[REDACTED]>

Dear Mr. Kahn,

We are, Bart and I, back in Tarrytown.

For the first time I discussed the Library with Mr. Epstein. For the first time I know what he expects from me. You see, I graduated from the Academy of Fine Arts, with Master's degree in Arts. I had two years course in the Interior Design. We have to study English, French, Italian and other Interiors. I am tending to a Classical Design if I have free hand to do this.

Going to St. Thomas without any previous instructions, I was working sort of blind. So it was with this work. Mr. Epstein created tortoise shell design on the bases that support the columns, which is a very nice detail in the Library. Since the cabinets have the same frame design, I was under impression, I will continue this design on the cabinet doors as well to tie everything together.

He told me he does not want this; as he calls it "Color Noise". The other thing was the molds on the baseboard. The molds changed the color of the wood and Bart and I, worked really hard (mind you this is an old oak, very hard wood) to sand all the surfaces down until the beige color was again visible. The color of the base was effected by molds so deeply, that I decide to go with it. I applied the whitish color to match the rest. To make this practical, I tended to finish the top with some "better" finish so the wood would be protected from easy damage.

The base color was so much better than the top, and I did not liked the color of the top myself, but not having the air-brush, I could not finish this the way I wanted to.

I can only tell you, we directed too much energy the wrong way. We worked hard but by the end I had very little to show. We did a lot prep work, which is good, but I was not prepared well for presentation. In my own eyes, I did very poorly. I did however mock up presentation with tortoise shell on the doors, my 15 minutes brush work (again, I would do a great job, have I had an air-brush with me) on two doors. Mr. Epstein favorably commented the work but he said not to continue it. Again, having no proper tools and materials made me complete handicap on this job.

I also introduced some color on the columns. Mr. Epstein looked at the colors and said absolutely no colors, but than looked at the parrot I slightly colored and he said two columns can be colored at the window.

Not knowing which way to go, I colored one column with some green. Well, if this would evoke Art Nouveau Style. He definitely did not like it.

I just tried many ways to find out what he actually like, so right now, I have much better idea and I will proceed with some confidence.

Very important, the mold problem.

It will not go away. The duct supplying the cool air was black. It consisted of black powder, a mold growth, which was dispersed into the air. This have to be eliminated.

Mr. Epstein asked me whether to Ozone it. In a way is a good idea to kill the mold when is fresh and a little. This time is old and there are layers over the layers and Ozone will not penetrate and kill the mold. I would suggest to change the duct now. Important factor in this is thee Relative Humidity Control.

Gentleman came over one day before Mr. Epstein arrival to the Island, and he looked closely into my eyes. I did not budge when he try to tell me the Relative Humidity is at 55 degrees. The paper we placed on the floor for protection wrinkled in two days. It must be more humid than he thinks.

Apart from regulating Relative Humidity issue, killing the mold, exchanging the ducts from the AC unit to the Library, I would strongly support placing the Silica Gel under the cabinets. We tried to dry these areas by shooting dry air from the hair-dryer, but I know this is temporary fix. If this would be up to me, I could purchase Relative Humidity Meter (a good RH meter is about \$200.-)and check the RH every day. It will take couple minutes, just to press the button and read the result.

I would place the Silica Gel under the cabinets to keep these spaces dry.

The Silica Gel comes in a crystal clear form. When absorbs the moisture from environment, turns into a purple color. What is good about it, it will not extract the moisture back. You have to bake it for 30-45 minutes and re-use it again and again. There are couple guys there, that would be willing to learn and operate these simple procedures. It will take couple minutes to read the RH Meter and write it down into the diary. Place the Silica Gel and check it every weekend and if necessary bake it and replace it anew. I think there is young man TJ ? that I think could do this work well.

Apart from the stress I went through on the account that I did not know which way to go with restoration, the trip was very pleasant. Peoples are very nice and always ready to help. Ann is very good manager and has very good grip on the crew. Daphne is a very devoted to her work and always inquiring about the needs of others. Jermaine, Carlos and Ramon strike me like they are always ready to help. Mr. Epstein assembled a very good and dedicated peoples to work with.

Please, let me know if you have any question.

Brandon

PS I do not read what I write, so please excuse my mistakes.