



The Molly Brown House Museum

The Victorian House

Victorian architecture, named during the reign of England's Queen Victoria (1837-1901), became popular in the United States in the mid-nineteenth century. Many people in this era regarded their homes as status symbols. Building a large, impressive house was a measure of success and social prominence. Victorian houses were designed with entertaining and hospitality in mind.

Most Victorian houses had distinctive color schemes and exterior features, including balconies, curves, arches, fancy brackets, columns, and unique and large windows. On the front porch of the Brown's house, Margaret installed two lion statues and two sphinxes to impress visitors and show her love of travel. There is also a relief of Alexander the Great entering Babylon, which was to represent the triumphal entry of pioneers into Colorado.



Lion and Sphinx



Anaglypta wallpaper and the Turkish corner

The interiors of Victorian houses were elaborately decorated and filled to the brim with fancy furnishings. Carved and painted moldings and painted plaster decorations caught the light from gas lamps and later, electrical lights. Large stained glass windows added to the colorful decorations.

It was typical to see floral carpets, anaglypta wallpaper, colorful painted walls, velvet and lace curtains, overstuffed chairs, tufted ottomans, marble-topped tables, candelabras, chandeliers, and carved sideboards. One might also see many potted plants, bronze statues, marble figures, and works of art. The Turkish corner with patterned drapery, a small sofa and animals skins was also very popular to show a love of comfort and



Stained glass window



Dining room plaster decoration

During this time period, a growing wealthy class of people developed and built large Victorian houses as a show of their wealth and social status. Yet, not everyone lived in an impressive Victorian house. Smaller houses with Victorian features were built for a growing population.



The Formal Parlor

Create Your Own Stained “Glass”

At Home Activity

Supplies:

Wax Paper

Glue sticks or glue

Tissue paper

Colored paper or Construction Paper

1. Decide on your design. Trace the design onto one piece of the wax paper, or print out and place the image behind the wax paper as you work.
2. Cover the entire design area with glue stick.
3. Tear off small pieces of tissue paper and press them onto the waxed paper. Continue doing this until your design is done.
4. Next, place the other piece of waxed paper on top of the finished design. Using the image as a guide, cover the area where the design is with glue stick, then flip the waxed paper over and press down onto the tissue paper.
5. Cut out your design.
6. Using colored paper or construction paper, cut out a border or a frame and glue it onto your design.
7. Punch a hole in the top and hang with string, or tape onto a window.

Enjoy!

