

Tour Stop #6 – 351 VanSickle Dr.



You may remember the name of Chris and Howard Reist as being on a home tour in the past. You would be correct. Their "Santa Manor" home had been on four previous tours. In 2008, due to Howard's declining health, Chris with friends designed a handicap home to meet Howard's health needs at 351 VanSickle Dr. The home may be modern in design but the interior is an eclectic mix of old, new and in-between furnishings.

As you enter their condominium, you are greeted with an open floor plan. On your right the front bedroom windows display glass fused artwork from a local artist and several pieces from Ireland. The striped wall was the creation of friend and artist "Oz" Rinckey. He also created the multi colored wall in the lower level. The Reist's like to entertain, so Chris designed the kitchen "big enough for two people to work in". As you notice there are lots of counter "work area" space, two ovens and lots of storage space. The glass door cupboards store three sets of dinnerware which are all used at times throughout the year.

The far wall in the living room displays a metal sculpture of the Lord's Last Supper, purchased in Mexico this last spring. In the corner, stands a grandfather clock which Chris's dad built. He was a master carpenter. Throughout the home, there are pieces he has made. The side board displays several pieces of Waterford crystal. Chris has traveled to Ireland and Scotland in the recent years enjoying a shopping trip to Waterford. Chris was happy for the free shipping offered. Howard maybe not so happy.

The Reist's are "collectors". Chris's passion is Christmas, especially Santa. She thinks she has in the neighbor of 1800 or so. Some years she has put up and decorated 12 trees. Howard enjoys Indian collectables and guns. Throughout the home you will see collections of Depression glass, toys, art and so much more.

In the sunroom with the view of the field and woods to the back window, and the favorite room of the house, Chris has displayed her finds from Ireland and Scotland. The painting is an original from artist

Phillip Gray, with whom she spent an afternoon. Another original of Phillip's is in the hallway by the master bedroom. Over the sofa are water color scenes from Edinburgh, Scotland, purchased from a street artist this last May.

The master bedroom houses several family pieces. The bowl and pitcher belonged to a great aunt of Chris's whom she is named after, Ursula. The "Gone with the Wind" two globed lamp was a favorite of Chris's mother. She loved pink roses. The marble top table is from Howard's aunt Peg. The blanket chest was made by Chris's dad. It is patterned after a Pennsylvania Dutch wedding chest. The painted panels are a copy of an original piece in Pennsylvania. The wardrobe in the corner was purchased at an auction sale years ago. -- It is a good thing it comes apart in 13 pieces for moving.

The home was designed with handicap needs in mind. All the doors are 36", it has a wheel in shower. All the doors are without deep thresholds so that a walker or wheelchair rolls easily in or out. The deck on the back is another room where picnics are enjoyed. The spa is most enjoyed in the winter months, with being able to see the stars or enjoy the falling of snowflakes.

As you move to the lower level, you will enter a southwest feel. Chris and Howard have traveled to Arizona several times in recent years. Chris has found Tubac's Artist Colony most exciting. Several pieces are from Tohono O'othham Indian artisans at Tubac. The spare bedroom is used frequently by the grandkids. The next room is Chris's studio. As an artist herself, it is nice to have a place to "make a mess" in. The grandchildren have several pieces of which they have painted on display in the room. The rifle on the long table was made here in Charlotte by the Uri Prindle family gunsmith works. The shop was located in the Peter Circle corner, downtown Charlotte.

Throughout the Reist's home there are memories of treasure hunts, family pieces and passions of collections. It is a home well lived in.

