

TOP JOB

LeSueur, Minnesota

And I Would Prep 500 Hours... Restoring a Stick Victorian

▲ Nick Slavik has wanted to paint this house for years — and this was his year.

Crew

Steve Edgerton, Brandon Nickolay, Gabby Kretchmer, Cole Nickolay, Steven Sessions, Brady Davis, Alex St.Germain, Shane Dooley, Aron Yingling, Levi Kahl, Tina Kerber, Jason Rosser, Ben Larson, Nick Slavik, Andy Hull, Austin Poole, Logan Biren, Dan Musil

Key Products

- Sherwin-Williams products used throughout.



TOP JOB or not, Nick Slavik was already a winner. “I’ve known this house since I was a small child,” he said. “I always wanted a chance to get my hands on it, and this was the year!” Slavik loves to put those hands to historic restoration, and this house, he explained, was one of the finest examples of Stick Victorian architecture (prevalent from 1860 to 1890) in the area. “We were given the opportunity to bring character back to the house through color,” he said. “The entire company, from apprentices to master craftsmen, focused heavily on maintenance and repair through woodworking and glass repair.” Slavik assembled a talented crew, one big enough to get the project done in the client’s time frame.

To start, the house took over 500 hours of prep, all under the watchful eye of a client who had lived in and loved the house most of her life. Whether the painting or the customer was the bigger challenge in this job is still up for debate. “The client was a very hard-driving person,” said Slavik. “As with most historic restorations, this was an exercise in keeping a client happy. It took a lot of trust-building to get this project, and it took daily communication to maintain that trust. She has lived in the home for 50-plus years and has taken care of it herself all those years.



▲ Along with the overall project, doors and windows demanded a lot of attention to detail.

She is the type of client to chew up and spit out underprepared contractors.”

In no mood to be chewed and spat, Slavik and team made sure that his childhood dream wouldn’t turn into a nightmare. Fortunately, along with his love for historic homes comes a love and understanding of their homeowners. “We’re specially set up for this high amount of client communication; we’re happy to do it!” he said. “Each day started with a meeting with the client and a list of requests and verifications. We were organized; we had a project plan for each day and guided her expertly through the process. Communication with the client was the most important part of the entire job.”

Fortunately, it was not their first go-round at this, and Slavik drew on his prior experience. “We have a tried-

and-true exterior historic restoration coatings system — prep all surfaces, address all carpentry needs with our in-house restoration carpenter, then slather the entire home with a heavy layer of water based primer,” he said. “We then make any additional repairs, apply sealant where needed, apply restoration epoxy where needed, then cover all surfaces with two coats of Sherwin-Williams Duration Flat Exterior or its Porch and Floor Enamel. We also repair and reglaze historic windows, and in this case, we re-created quite a few rotten or missing historic details. When possible, we utilized salvaged wood.”

And there were benefits for the passersby. “As far as I can tell,” said Slavik, “this is the first time in 150 years this home has had a trim color.” **APC**



▲ Safety was paramount in reaching the upper floors.



▲ Lifts brought the crew to the upper floors.