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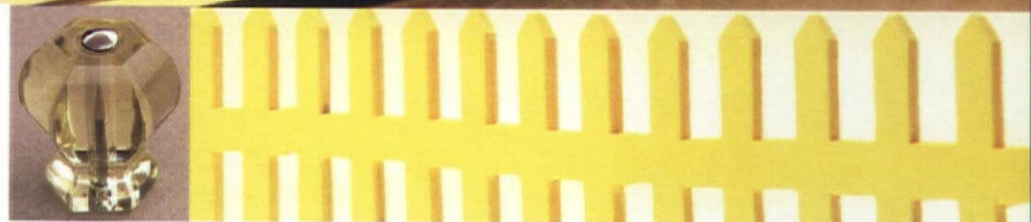


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"GET LOST IN THE COLORFUL DETAILS."

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ON THE COVER: Gleaming fittings and a soaking tub are hallmarks of comfort, then and now.

Cover photograph by Chris Drake, Red Cover.

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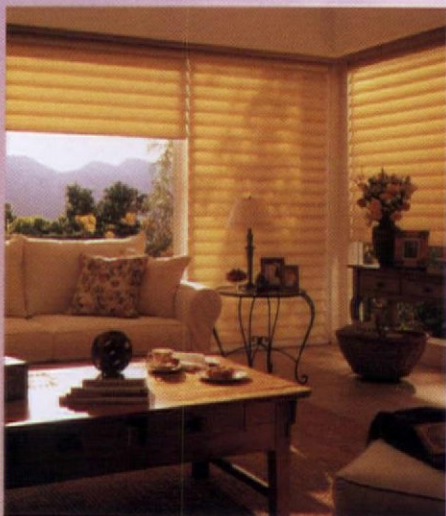
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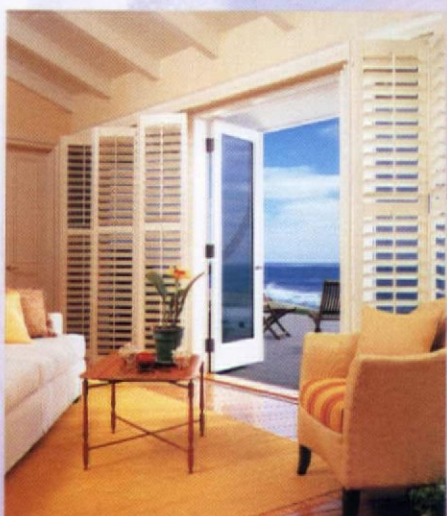
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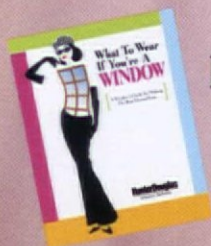
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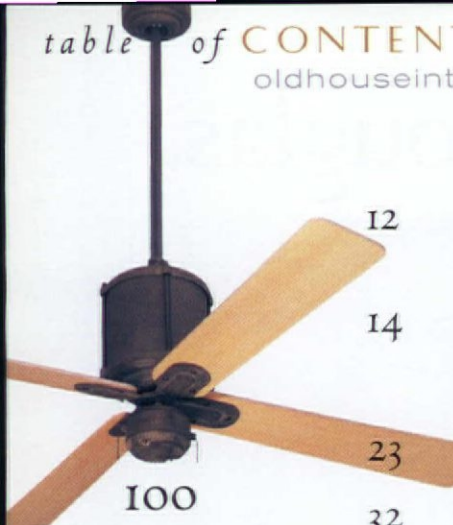
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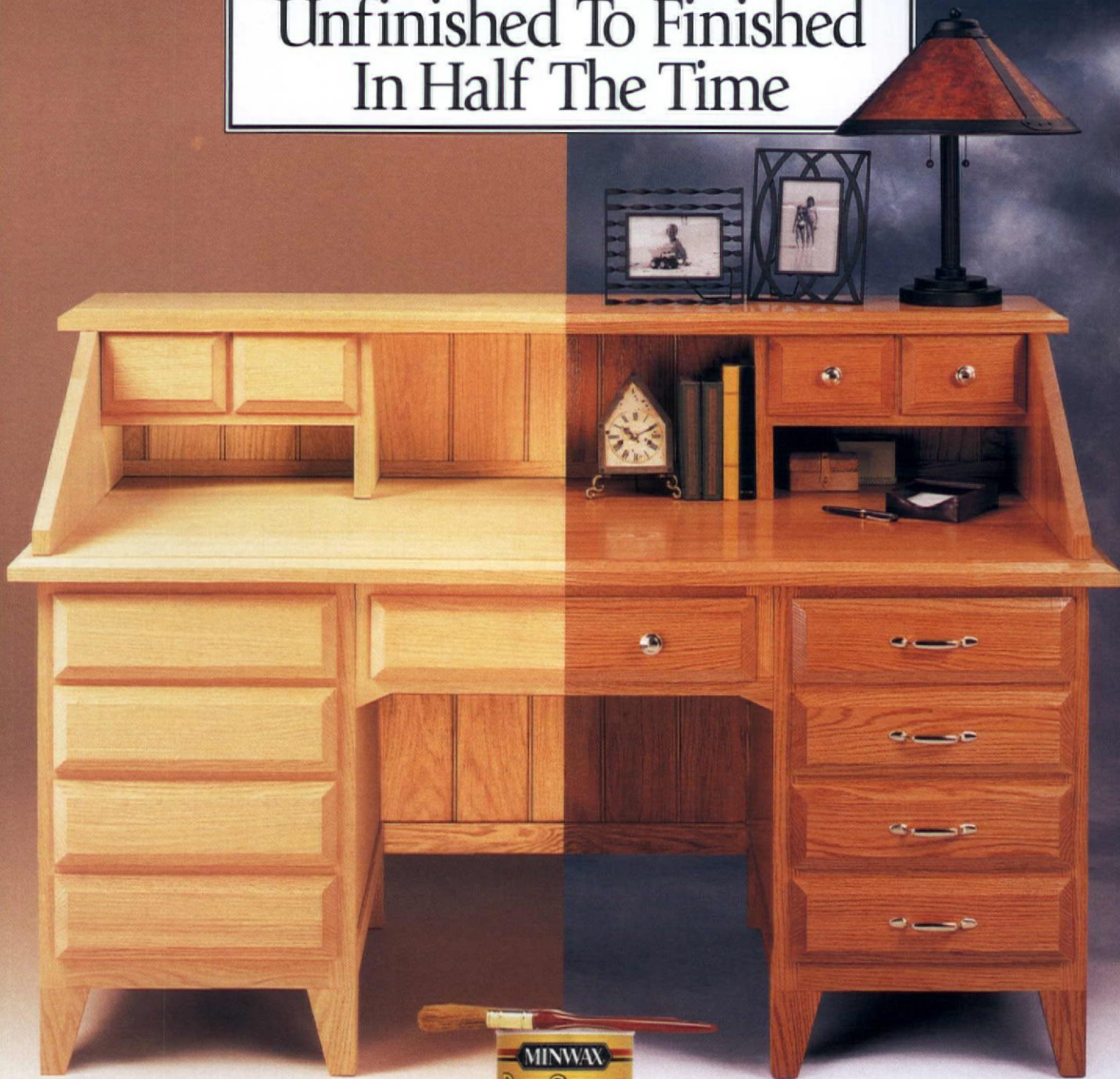
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On learning to relax

WHILE I WAS RESTORING AND DECORATING my own house, I sweated out too many decisions. Few things seemed easy: is beadboard too informal in the living room? Can you use Windsor chairs in an Arts and Crafts house? Is that green "English" enough? Will a baby grand actually fit? Do I want muted colors for trim, or is that too dull for our grey weather? Oh, I don't know, I don't know!

But I've noticed that, when it comes to *other* people's houses, I'm more imaginative and unafraid. I can tell what color they should paint the outside. I can barely restrain myself from rearranging their furniture. ("Come *on*—how can you not see that the desk needs to swivel 90°?") Such definitive insights come to me almost immediately—my first clue. In other people's houses, my first impression is usually a good one, based on some combination of knowledge, experience, preferences, and intuition. My imagination is free, and so is my advice. After all, what's it to me? I won't have to pay for it or live with it. I'm . . . relaxed about it.

Back at home, I am not relaxed. How can I be, when I have already made some (expensive) mistakes? But wait—in almost every case, the mistakes came after second-guessing! The times I went with my first idea, (the obvious one), it usually worked: a big table for the long dining room, with tall chairs to create enclosure; woodsy bungalow friezes and indestructible Mission chests in the boys' rooms (added 1910). Tentative moves resulted in mistakes, as when I decided to buy a small sofa for the living room, because I didn't want to commit to a big piece as my first purchase in the room. (That loveseat has no presence, and it's uncomfortable.) I'm glad I had this insight, because I'm not quite done buying furniture.

My renovation days are over—as evidenced by my ability to handle mice as a decorative motif [p. 130]. Time was, that page would've given me shivers. I do apologize to those of you still battling critters.



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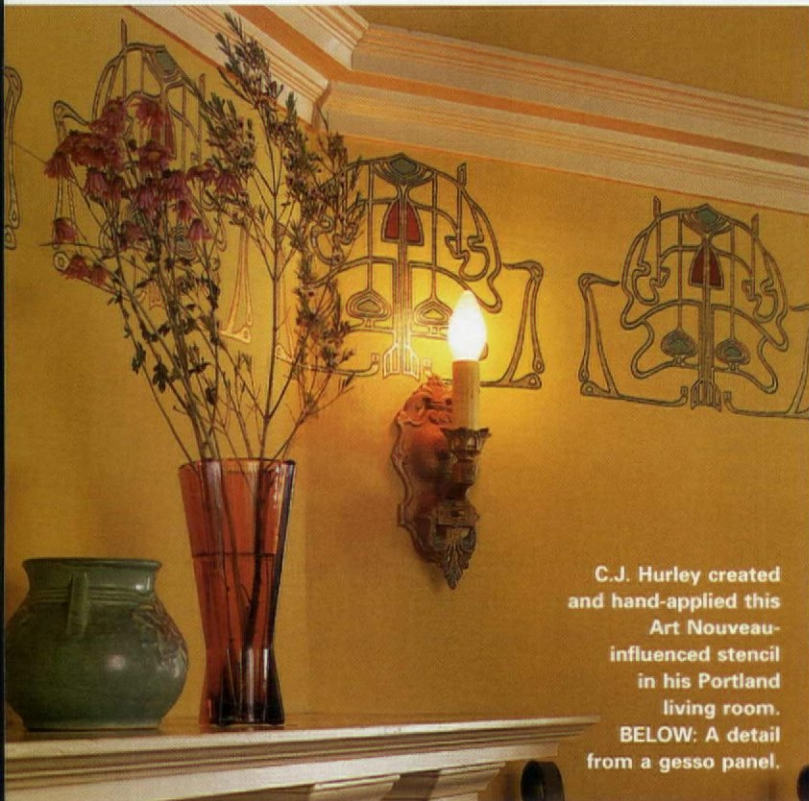
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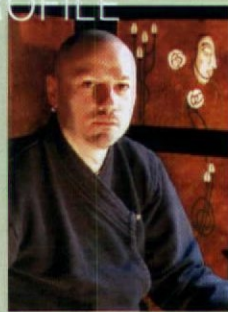


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C.J. Hurley created and hand-applied this Art Nouveau-influenced stencil in his Portland living room. BELOW: A detail from a gesso panel.



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which no frieze border exists. Arthurian-themed, tapestry-like gesso panels in various media hang in arched, Tudor Revival niches in the living room. Even the watercolors hanging on the walls are hand-painted Hurley originals. Trained in fine art, Hurley is clearly channeling the spirit of Margaret Macdonald, Charles Rennie Mackintosh's less-famous wife, in his Arthurian gesso panels. Where Macdonald tube-lined designs on her panels by squeezing gesso (a sort of plaster slurry) out of a pastry tube, Hurley creates similar effects with twine. Other elements of the panel are created in paint, glass, ceramics, and hand-hammered metalwork. "Like Charles and like Margaret, I want the raised line to integrate the entire design sensibility of the interior space, so I get the same wispy, free-flowing lines

that I would get when stenciling a wall or leading a glass window," he says. Custom panels cost \$3,000 to \$7,000, a relative bargain considering the time involved in creating these one-of-a-kind works of art. C.J. can create a total environment in your home, too.

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Talking Quilts

With their strong, graphic patterns and bountiful fabrics, quilts are colorful expressions of Americana, a functional form of home decoration. A new show at the American Folk Art Museum challenges visitors to consider quilts in terms that go far beyond the concepts of drunkard's path or tumbling blocks. "Talking Quilts" features coverlets that incorporate words into the design. The show is selective, with only 20 pieces. Although many of the quilts are highly graphic, it's impossible to miss the message, whether the text is buried in the design or

more obvious, like Lena Moore's quilt from 1930, which spells out the 23rd Psalm in block letters. Through Sept. 5 at the American Folk Art Museum, 45 West 53rd St., New York, NY, 10019, (212) 265-1040, folkartmuseum.org

Four to a Bed

Public television's version of reality TV has sent 21st-century families back to Edwardian England in "The 1900 House" and to 1880s Montana in "Frontier House." If you thought living in the recent past was tough, wait 'til you see what "Colonial House" has in store. The eight-part series, set in 1628 and filmed in coastal Maine, is a production of Thirteen/WNET New York. The 26 participants endure rustic living conditions, disagreeable weather, and back-breaking labor as they grapple with rigid class and gender roles—not to mention bi-monthly baths. The series debuts May 17 on PBS channels throughout the country. Check local listings, or visit pbs.org/wnet/colonialhouse

“ Nobody ever seems to have lamented the monotony or uniformity of a tree, but our neighborhoods are found needing to be . . . 'relieved of monotony.' . . . so each house in new suburbs [gets] its own particular skin-deep style.” ” —Richard Neutra, quoted in *Neutra: Complete Works* by Barbara Mac Lamprecht (Taschen, 2000)



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Plastic World

Two simultaneous exhibits at the Minneapolis Museum of Art explore the medium of plastic, the miracle synthetic that's now old enough to be nostalgic and collectible. "Bakelite: Art through Chemistry" turns the focus on Bakelite, the world's first totally synthetic thermosetting plastic. Smooth and pliable in molten form, Bakelite was the perfect medium for designs that could be molded or sculpted—the essence of Streamline Modern design. It appeared in household products like radios, jewelry, and kitchenware. A concurrent exhibit, "Just One Word: Plastics," alludes to the world Benjamin Braddock might have helped create had he not pursued Mrs. Robinson (and her daughter) in "The Graduate." Thirty-five years after Benjamin got that famous tip, the future of plastics has never been brighter. Kaleidoscopic colors, transparent forms, and remarkable tensile strength are just a few of the qualities that should make for a continuing plastics revival. Both exhibits run through Feb. 27, 2005. Minneapolis Museum of Art, 2400 Third Ave. South, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55404, (612) 870-3200, artsmia.org

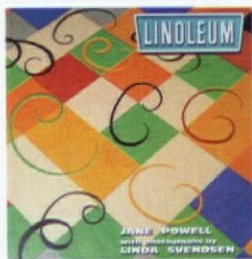
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- **WRIGHT PLUS HOUSE WALK** May 15, Oak Park, IL, (708) 848-1976, wrightplus.org
- **MARIMEKKO: FABRICS, FASHION, ARCHITECTURE** March 12–May 16, Embassy of Finland, Washington, D.C., (202) 298-5886, finland.org
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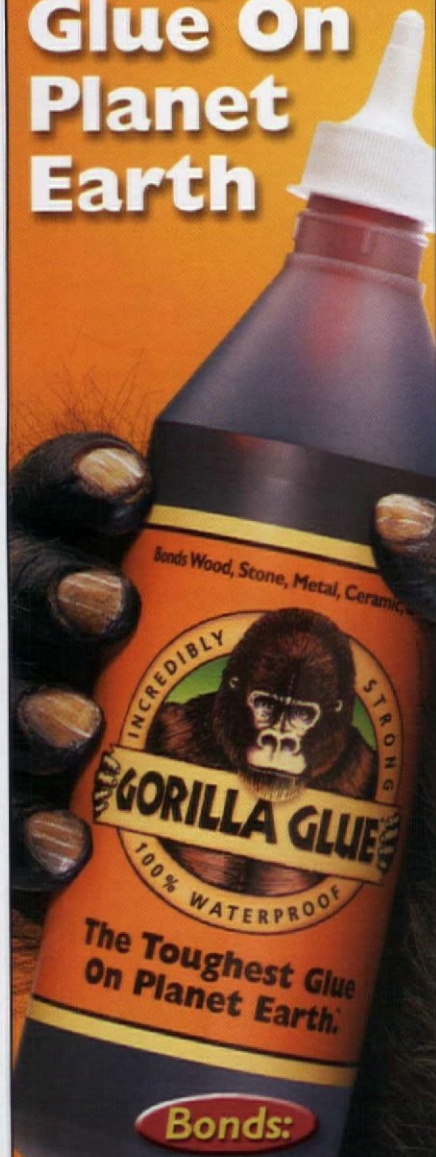


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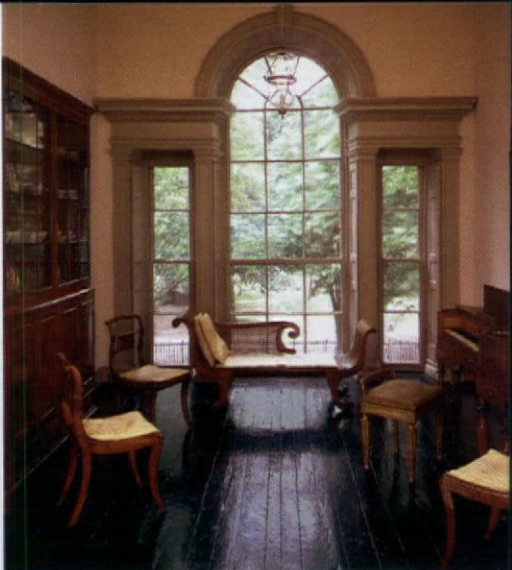
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RIGHT: An interior parlor at Lemon Hill, graced by a dramatic Palladian window and furnished with period originals from the Philadelphia Museum of Art. **BELOW:** Lemon Hill is one of several extraordinary houses in Philadelphia's historic Fairmount Park.



OPEN HOUSE

High above Pennsylvania's Schuylkill River, Robert Morris and his fellow merchant-aristocrats sought refuge from sultry Philadelphia summers in superb country estates. When Morris went bankrupt in 1799, businessman Henry Pratt purchased a portion of his property, including a "large & Elegant Green House" famous for its lemon trees. Pratt name his new villa, completed in 1800, **Lemon Hill**. The Adamesque Federal beauty is renowned for its central bay of three elegant oval rooms stacked one above the other, replete with mahogany doors and mantels curved to follow the lines of the walls. Also exceptional is the floor-to-ceiling Palladian window that lights the second floor passage, and the Federal-period furnishings from the collections of the Philadelphia Museum of Art. On Pratt's death in 1838, Lemon Hill was acquired by the city of Philadelphia, the first of the Schuylkill River estates to be added to the grounds of the Waterworks in the formation of **Fairmount Park**. The Fairmount Park Houses are considered the country's most significant assemblage of 18th- and early-19th-century domestic architecture. Lemon Hill is open Wednesday-Sunday, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., April 1 through mid-December. Lemon Hill, Sedgely & Lemon Hill Drives, East Fairmount Park, Philadelphia PA 19132, (215) 232-4337, philamuseum.org. —CATHERINE LUNDIE

Seductive Furniture

Fashion and the furnishing arts are inextricably intertwined. "Dangerous Liaisons: Fashion and Furniture in the 18th Century," at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, explores a fascinating aspect of this connection. Set in the Met's French period rooms, the show juxtaposes the ways in which fashionably dressed women and men negotiated late-18th-century interiors. Just imagine the coquettish sway of a Polonoise dress among the drop-leaf tables! For good measure, a mannequin raises the hem of her dress next to a side table that transforms into a vanity through mechanisms similar to those concealed in the dress. "Dangerous Liaisons," April 29-Aug. 8, Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1000 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10028 (212) 535-7710, metmuseum.org

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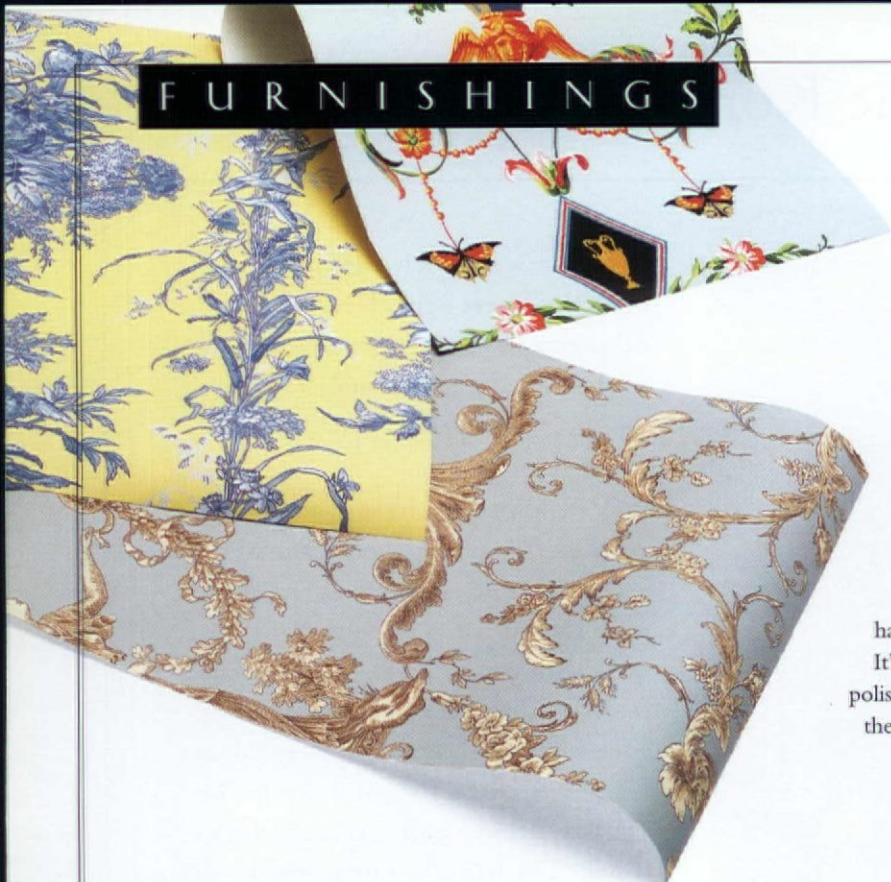
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FURNISHINGS



Continuous Revival

Re-creations of 18th-century wallpaper designs were popular in homes of the 1920s. Three fresh renewals include Pompadour (top), Jazzette (middle), and Biltmore (bottom). Prices range from \$30 to \$80 per single roll. Contact Thibaut, (800) 223-0704, thibautdesign.com

Sculptured Light

Play up your Jazz Age bones in a hall or foyer with the Winston pendant. It's available in old gold, antique brown, polished and waxed brass, and nickel. With the shade shown, it costs \$144. (Nickel is \$27 extra.) Contact Revival Lighting, (509) 747-4552, revivallighting.com



Home Style, Circa 1929

Perfectly Deco

Fitted with a crystal knob, the Deco entry set captures the quintessential spirit of the 1920s. It's available in several finishes and doorknob styles. As shown, the set lists for \$85. For a dealer, contact Nostalgic Warehouse, (800) 522-7336, nostalgicwarehouse.com



Up, Up, and Away

Frank Lloyd Wright designed Liberty Balloons for a magazine cover circa 1927. Re-interpreted as a rug in wool and silk, prices begin at \$2,000 for a 4' x 6' version. Sizes go up to 10' x 14'. Contact Alimadia Gallery, (507) 645-1651, alimadia.com



Tufted Luxury

Turn a room into a '20s gentleman's library with this tufted Chesterfield-style sofa. It measures 28" high, 90" long, and 40" deep. Suggested retail in mink leather is \$3,479. Contact Natuzzi, (800) 262-9063, natuzzi.com





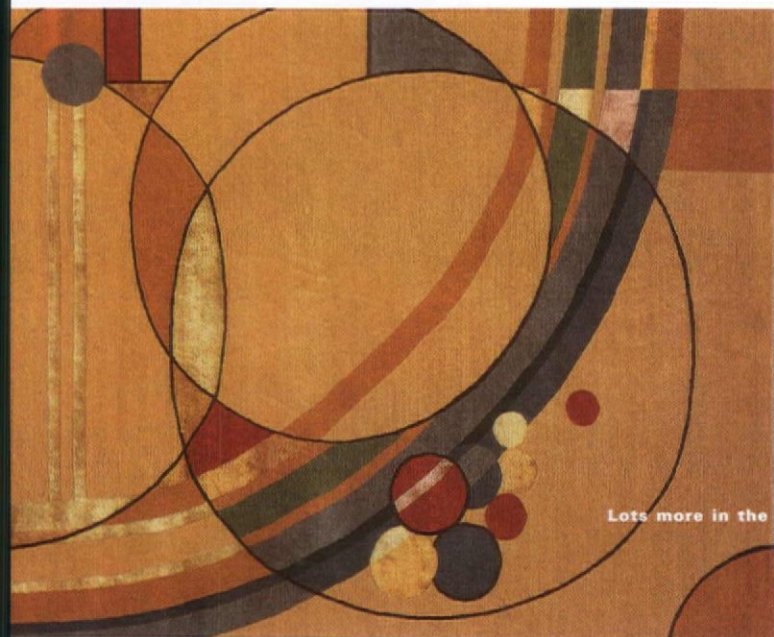
◆ Dinner at Eight ◆

Featuring a remarkable slide mechanism that conceals extra leaves, the Art Deco-inspired Rosemont table seats up to 12 people. With a parquet top, it's \$4,950. The matching chairs are \$675 each. All from Paul Downs Cabinetmakers, (610) 664-9902, pauldowns.com



◆ Geometric Lace

Metropol made its debut in a 1930s film. This 12-point Art Deco lace pattern comes in lengths from 36" to 84". The panels are 38" wide. Also available by the yard, it's priced at \$48 to \$78 per panel. From London Lace, (800) 926-5223, londonlace.com



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◆ Cottage Style

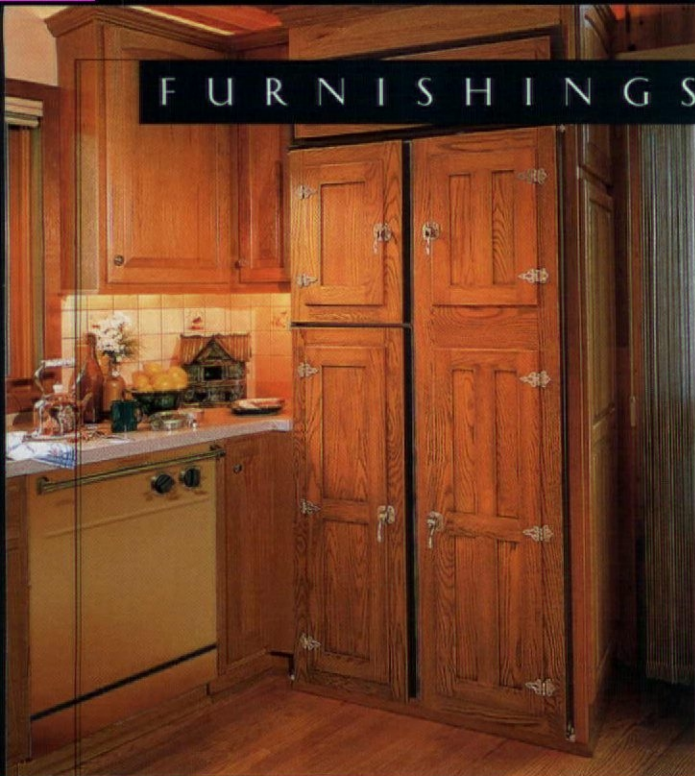
The Mackinac is just the sort of soft, comfy chair that's been in the same spot since FDR was president —only it's new. It's \$990 from Guest Cottage, (828) 328-1831, guestcottagefurniture.com

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FURNISHINGS



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This built-in, three-zone 36" refrigerator can accept custom-designed panels that match any cabinet style. Each zone has its own thermostat. Contact Northland Kitchen Appliance, (800) 223-3900, northlandnka.com

Morris in Wool

Beth Russell has adapted William Morris's Strawberry Thief design in four variations. The 13" x 17" set uses Appleton crewel wools. Your choice of design is \$170, including enough wool for a chair seat. Contact Ehrman Tapestry, (888) 826-8600, chrmantapestry.com



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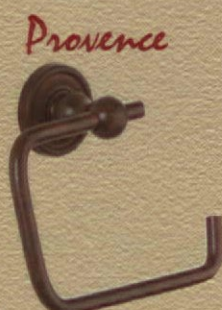
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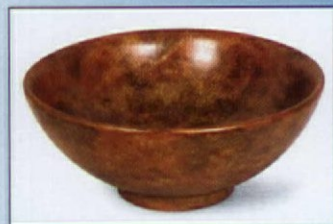


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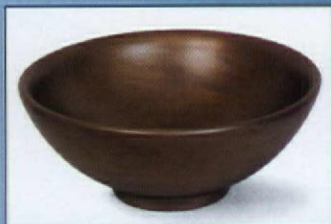
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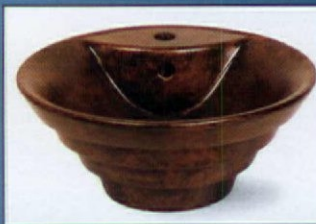
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tradition & comfort for the modern bath

Storage solutions that are beautiful and convenient are as essential to the bath

as the sink, shower, and commode. | BY MARY ELLEN POLSON

WE CALL THEM accessories, but towel rods, cubbies, sconces, and mirrors are really bath essentials. After all, a towel rod is an especially handy kind of storage for an item used every day—and an opportunity to add style. Other ingenious conveniences we lump into the “accessory” category come with historical pedigree. The wire caddy that bridges the tub is Victorian, for instance, as is the accordion-pull shaving mirror. The medicine cabinet is a clever steal from turn-of-the-

20th-century apothecary shops. Even if your bath is no bigger than a walk-in closet, a few choice accessories will bring the stylish allure of the past into a room brimming with comfort and charm.

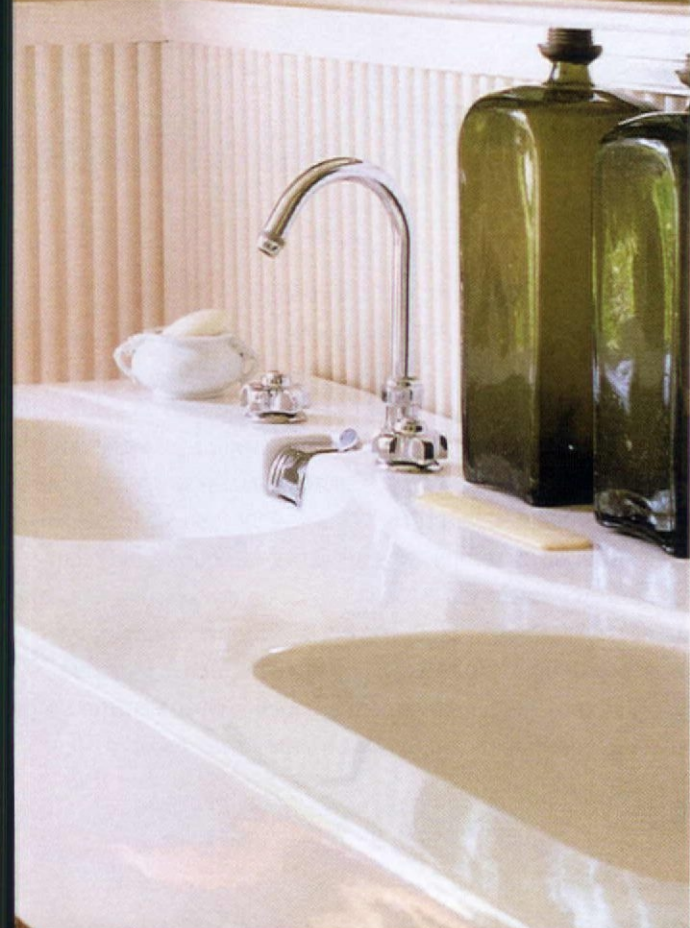
For bulkier items you want to keep within reach but out of sight, consider a vanity built to resemble a fine piece of period furniture, like those offered by Antique Sink, Helms-stown, and Welling, Davis & Co. There's no longer a need to convert

Think of accessories as an elegant way to add storage to a period bath. Accent your choices and complement the décor with splashes of bright color, in the form of a charming porcelain dish or a nosegay of flowers.





ABOVE: Hide towels in plain sight on an open rack. **BELOW:** Stash towels, soaps, and brushes in a small freestanding cabinet. **LEFT:** Tulip-shaped sconce lighting, vintage glass bottles, and a classically inspired mirror lend period presence to this vivid bath.



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cabinets, accessories) ■ **LB BRASS** (718)

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MAC THE ANTIQUE PLUMBER (800) 916-2284,

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ductions) ■ **MOTIV** (803) 547-5786,

motiv.us (period-inspired) ■ **ROHL** (800)

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■ **STONE RIVER BRONZE** (435) 755-8100,

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■ **CROWN POINT CABINETRY** (800) 999-4994, crown-point.com (period-style cabinet)

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LEFT: (top) Hang accessories in a pleasing arrangement, like artwork. Despite the lack of a cabinet, there are plenty of places to store necessities here, from the vintage medicine chest to the towel bar under the sink. **(bottom)** Use the recesses between wall studs to add shelving in a small bath.

a real antique; custom-built pieces have just as much fine detail and can accept modern plumbing fixtures without sacrificing vital cabinet space. (They'll also perform better in a wet space like a bath.) If you have the room and budget, of course, you can install an entire wall of cabinets in any style and finish. Cabinetmakers better known for their kitchen design, such as Crown Point, Quality Custom Cabinetry, and Kennebec, also offer built-ins for any room in the house, including the bath.

Many smaller baths lack a linen closet. Turn this lack of storage to decorative advantage. Roll or neatly fold snowy white or colorful bath towels and store them on a rack or in an open basket; display perfume, cosmetics, and soaps in vintage jewel-tone glass containers on a shelf or countertop. Hide the ibuprofen and Band-Aids in a period-look medicine cabinet. Many architectural salvage dealers offer refurbished versions, complete with glass shelves, chrome trim, and a beveled-glass mirror. Or buy a dead ringer for an original: Wood Essentials and Omega Too both make bath cabinets in the style of the early-20th century.

While a good vintage mirror—or even a period-look picture frame fitted with glass—can be pressed into service in the bath, many new mirrors are inspired by Victorian, Arts and Crafts, and Art Deco designs. Ginger's tilting "Circa" mirror evokes the style of the Belle Epoque; its nickel-trimmed Empire and Metro



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mirrors would look perfect in a Twenties bath.

The choices for lighting are almost bewilderingly vast. Some period-inspired reproductions patterned after Neoclassical, Edwardian, and Art Deco designs are offered in entire suites, like those from bath-accessory specialists Ginger and Motiv. While you may be tempted to go with vintage sconces, keep in mind that new fixtures are often rated for use in wet areas, and buy accordingly.

As for rods, rings, and other metal accessories, you can never have enough—especially for towel storage. Don't limit yourself to walls, however. It's possible to outfit a clawfoot tub with half-a-dozen wire baskets, from bath caddies large enough to support the Manhattan phone book to tiny wire racks sized for a sliver of soap. Play up the age and style of your house with accessories that capture the essence of the era: ornate brass or nickel for Victorian-era dwellings, chrome for houses built in the 1930s or later, wrought iron for Colonial and Spanish or Mediterranean Revival homes. As for the Forties, Motiv's "City 212" collection includes metal-trimmed acrylic towel rods, evocative of then-so-trendy Lucite accessories. For the bath that already has everything, Clawfoot Supply offers a nifty earthquake handle, imprinted with the legend, "Hold Until Quake Stops." Just the thing for a grab bar if you live along a fault line. ✦

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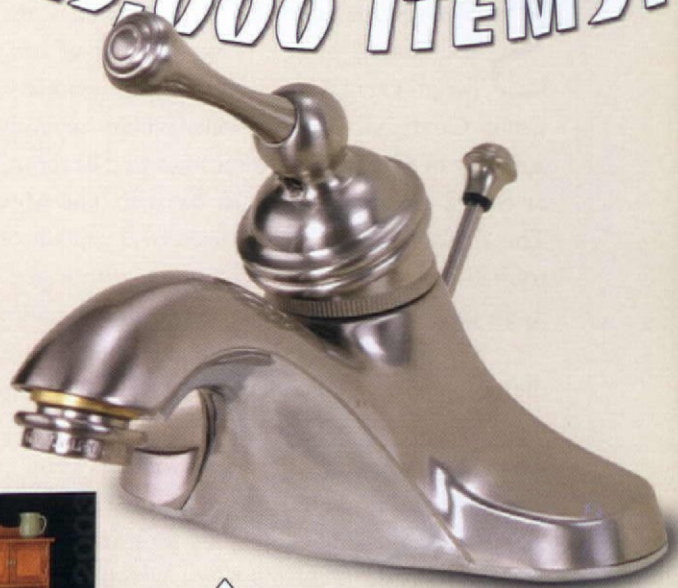


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Oaky-Dokey

Our writer travels to the mecca of all things dark and rectangular. BY DAN COOPER

SOMEHOW, WILDMUFFIN had acquired seats for me and Butchy on the private aircraft of her current design client. Our destination: the annual Arts and Crafts Conference in Asheville, where anybody who's anybody in Arts and Crafts must go to talk about, to buy, or to sell anything having to do with The Movement. The airplane, one of several used by a captain of industry, had the weekend off. Wildmuffin rummaged stealthily in the seat pockets, looking for insider-trading tips.

We landed and cabbled to the hotel. There it was, the immense rocky facade of the Grove Park Inn looming before us, its red-tiled roof an acre of restless undulation. The winding hallways of the sprawling complex would be my home for the next three days . . . during which time, if the past were any indication, I would not emerge to bask in the relative warmth of North Carolina's winter. Rows of hooded dormer windows stared accusingly at me. For the Grove Park Inn knows that I am not a True Believer, and that I should have left the crossing of its stony threshold to someone more worthy.

I don't mean to say that I have no respect for the importance of the Arts and Crafts Movement in the pantheon of American design. I call myself a non-believer only because, unlike everyone else on this pilgrimage, I have not taken the Arts and Crafts Movement into my heart; that is, I have not accepted it as

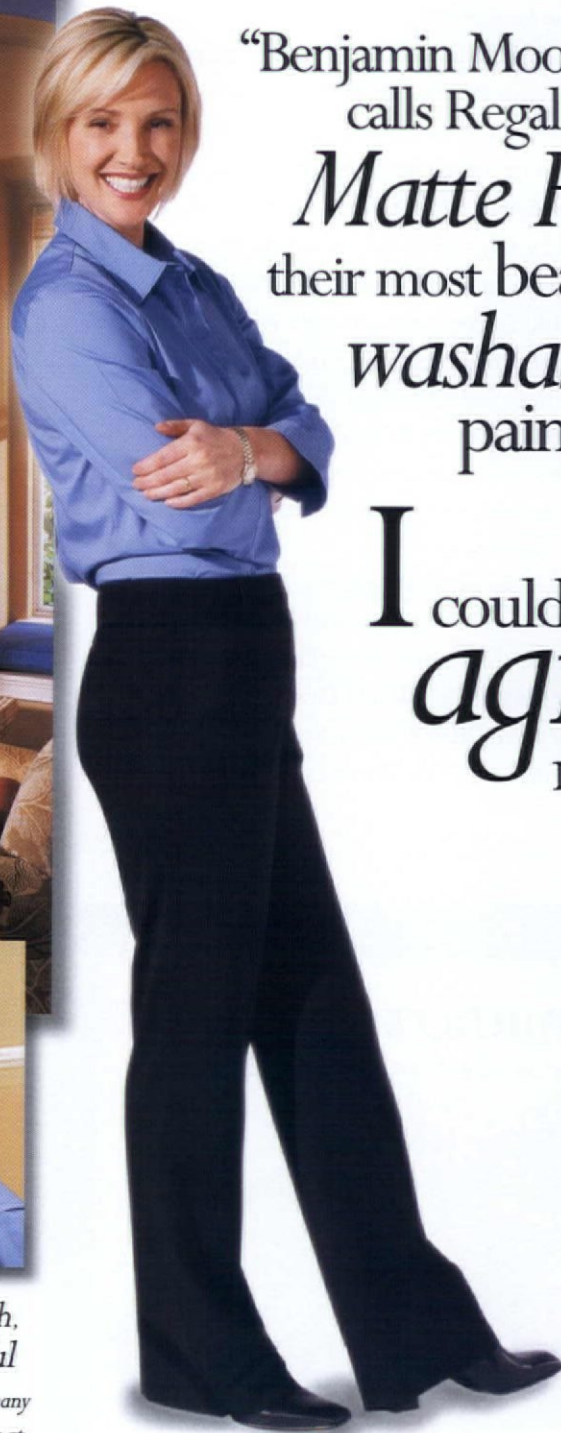
my Personal Style. I'm more an Aesthetic kind of guy.

For attendees, The Movement (i.e., American Arts and Crafts, a.k.a. Craftsman or Mission) stands for much more than austere oak furniture and amorphous green pottery. It is a belief system. For believers, The Movement is a pure, holistic approach to design. There are, expectedly, detractors—who will tell you that The Movement's parameters for What Is Correct are fascistic. Some of us acknowledge the dirty little secret The Movement avoids: that, even in 1900, not everyone furnished their homes exclusively from one catalog. If they ever did, or do, we should brace ourselves now for the 2104 IKEA conference. [*ed. note: It could happen.*]

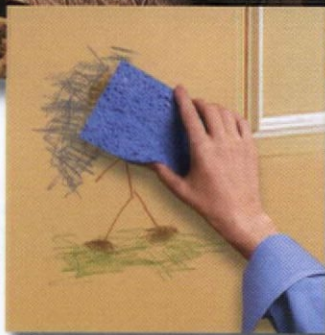
And then there's Butchy. Butchy revels in his role as lone voice in the wilderness preaching the gospel of the Anglican Branch of Arts and Crafts according to Saint Voysey. Regarded with deep suspicion in this country, this sect has created a cross-Atlantic schism that is the Ramones/Sex Pistols rivalry of the antiques world; Butchy is Johnny Rotten in a smock. At a previous year's conference, after a lecture on the origins of the Movement, Butchy had to be escorted from the room by security. The Q&A session had turned ugly with him screaming at the speaker about "it all started in England with William Morris if not actually in the 1840s as a reaction to the Industrial Revolution."

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WE ENTERED the Vanderbilt hallway, site of the contemporary-crafts exhibit. Wildmuffin, ostensibly there to purchase furnishings for her winged client, spied a partner-in-crime and dragged him, yelping and splashing coffee, away to plot. It seems the two have been in negotiations with a factory in China to reproduce the fancifully carved chairs designed by Charles Rohlf. Wildmuffin was giddy about the quality and delirious about the price-point, but she still couldn't get a straight answer about the use of prison labor and thus negotiations had broken down. But the temptation would not go away; Wildmuffin had envisioned a Rohlf in every Bungalow (even after Butchy and I warned her that the only people who like Rohlf are architects, curators, and antiques dealers who have his pieces in their inventory).

The floor was by now swarming with wheeler-dealers, with revered authorities-on-the-subject-ofs, and, most visibly, with recent converts to The Movement, easily identified by their "What Would Gustav Do?" bracelets. "Butchy," I marveled, "this is like a Star Trek convention without the pointy ears!" As Trekkies speak reverentially

of Kirk, Spock, and Bones, so here are invoked the prophets Stickley, Greene, Hubbard, and Wright.

Butchy and I strolled over to the booth of our friends from Anaheim, Gaijin-San and his wife Japansy. Each had reason to be here, but they appeared harried, as they had brought their newborn daughter Amaebi to the show. Japansy creates and sells exquisitely intricate, folded-paper miniatures of famous Arts and Crafts buildings, the most popular being her rendition of the Gamble House. The name of her business is Multiple Origami.

Gaijin-San, better known as Gai, is a much-in-demand lecturer, for he has the ability to make the most potentially tedious subject riveting. This year he would speak on the concentrations of ammonia solutions used to fume oak, the chemical process that gave furniture its Mission Glow. Gai, who had been limited to only one slide carousel, would somehow make it so engrossing that his charges would emerge from the hall seeking drums of industrial-strength ammonia. Gai has groupies, unlike the average groupie, his truly want him for his mind. The Gaijinettes erratically circled Japansy's booth like rabid

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raccoons, inching closer whenever it looked like Gai might grant them an audience. We exchanged brief pleasantries, as Japansy was in the midst of selling a Missionary tissue-paper Taliesin in purple and orange.

In the very next booth, standing proudly behind his wares, was Rod Fischer of Square Peg. Rod specializes in hand-carving exact replacement pegs for Mission furniture. Be they flush-mounted, chamfered, squared or rounded, he painstakingly cuts them out of tiger oak, mahogany, and ebony. Rod is typical of many of the show's vendors who devote their lives to preserving some small facet of The Movement by reproducing it with the original methods and materials. Ironically, those for whom their craft is an avocation dream of retiring from soul-crushing day jobs so they can ply their wares full-time, while those for whom this work provides sole income can only dream of paying their mortgages and heating bills in the same month.

We completed our traverse, anticipating evening drinks at the bar in the Great Hall, where we would brag of our exploits and sneer at the idiocy of our various com-

petitors. Afterwards we would retire to our respective rooms to rest up, for the Antique Show was tomorrow.

Held in the Grand Ballroom, the Antique Show is the main event of the conference. In the morning we stood pacing and stomping like cattle, edging closer to the tightly closed double doors. Every hand clasped a cell phone, and every conversation had the *gravitas* normally reserved for disarmament talks.

Once inside, Butchy insisted on racing over to the dealers know as The Weasels, partners whose eyes had grown squinty from a life spent looking over their hunched shoulders. The Weasels purportedly had the actual flush lever from one of Saint Voysey's toilets, and Butchy was determined to possess it, as his life's work is to re-create an entire Voysey house piece by piece. He already has a disassembled butler's pantry in storage, and about two-thirds of a Welsh slate roof lies stacked on skids in his barn.

The dealers here reserve the best of their Arts and Crafts inventory for this annual weekend—and all live in mortal fear of being stuck with The Turd. The Turd is



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an object that has arrived here as a show-stopping piece but whose provenance or integrity becomes besmirched, usually through a whispering campaign by a rival dealer. This leaves the unfortunate original dealer with a greatly devalued hot potato that has to be quietly de-accessioned.

It was beginning to seem that this year The Weasels would become the chagrined Bearers of the Turd. They had bought a Gustav Stickley dining table at auction, coupled it with two matching chairs from their kitchen, and then attempted to assemble a set of six chairs via two other dealers and eBay. But the odd chairs had straggled in the day before they were to load the truck, and none of the finishes quite matched. They'd labored through the night rubbing everything down with steel wool, only to have created a rather worn-out looking set. The Weasels had then decided to punt, basting all the pieces with copious amounts of Old English scratch cover.

They'd almost gotten away with it when a vengeful dealer, The Troll, waiting for the moment a prospective Pigeon pulled out his checkbook, slinked over. In his white shirt, he leaned against the table. With much exaggerated clucking and gesturing towards the sticky brown stains now on his clothing, he proclaimed in a loud voice that the set was "goeey." The Pigeon's checkbook leapt back into his blazer pocket and he fled the booth.

The Troll only considered this payback, for just last year he had been Turded by the Weasels when they'd intimated that his L&JG sideboard had a dubious platerack on it (well, most of it was original). The Weasels had done this to draw attention away from the replacement hardware on their own identical piece.

Butchy decided to pounce. Taking advantage of the dealers' new concern about paying for their hotel room, he low-balled the panicking Weasels and emerged beaming from the booth, having spent a mere \$1500 for a piece of an old toilet. This being the only English object of note at the show, Butchy followed me for the rest of the day as we trudged through the show's Oaken Forest.

I was Craftsmanned out. I vowed to spend the morning in the G.P.I.'s luxurious spa, fantasizing about Anglo-Japanese interiors whilst being massaged. Wildmuffin would undoubtedly still be searching for The Deal, and Butchy would redouble efforts in his Quixotic crusade to deliver the Missionaries from their smug ignorance of the decorative arts before 1900. ♦

DAN COOPER is an interior designer of period rooms. He claims that he made this all up, and yet it's pretty much true.



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Evolution of the Morris Chair

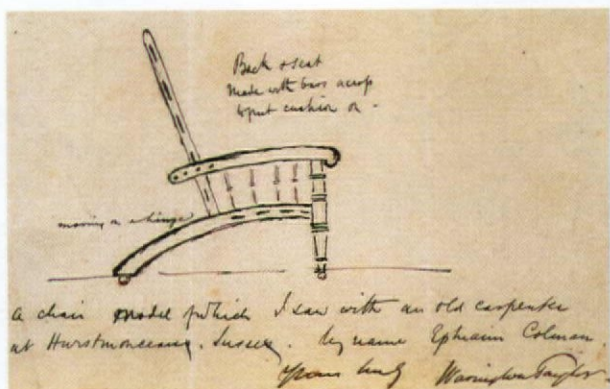
BY KEVIN P. RODEL

The first Morris chair was produced in 1865 after a vernacular design. Within years, dozens if not hundreds of adjustable-back chairs were being produced.

IN THE BEGINNING we had rocks and the occasional fallen tree, usually randomly located and fixed in place. A few weeks after the invention of the wheel, some sapient creature tied this new concept of mobility to the human need to sit and thus invented the chair. Not much developed for a long, long time: Chairs were movable, chair backs were fixed. This abruptly changed one fine day in 1865.

It was three years after the founding of the firm of Morris, Marshall, Faulkner & Co. in London. Success had come quickly and by 1865 the firm had several new members, among them business manager Warrington Taylor. While visiting a number of small cabinet shops in Sussex that

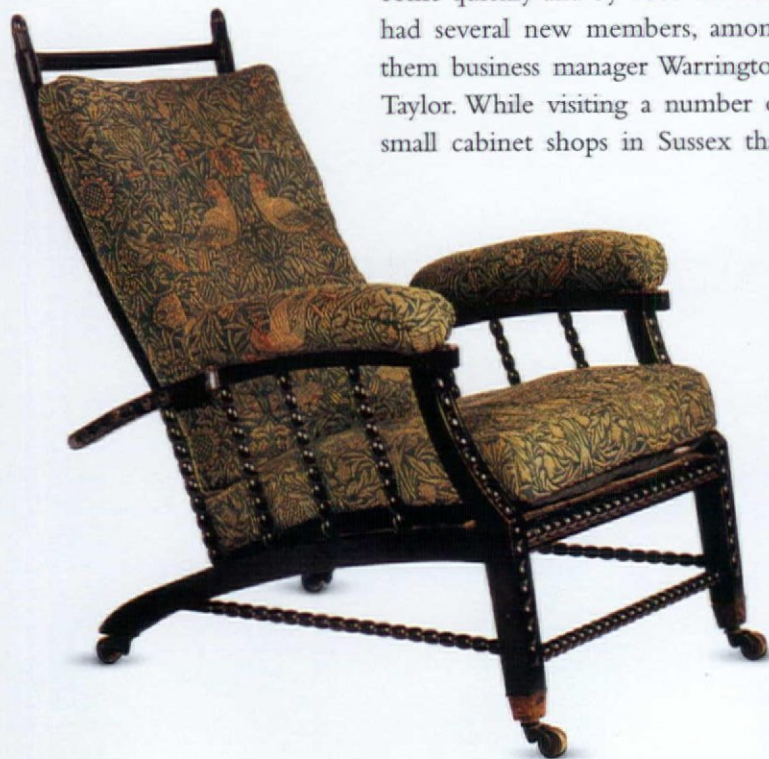
year, Warrington came across a chair that intrigued him. He made a quick sketch of the design and sent it along to the firm's chief designer, architect Philip Webb. With a few modifica-

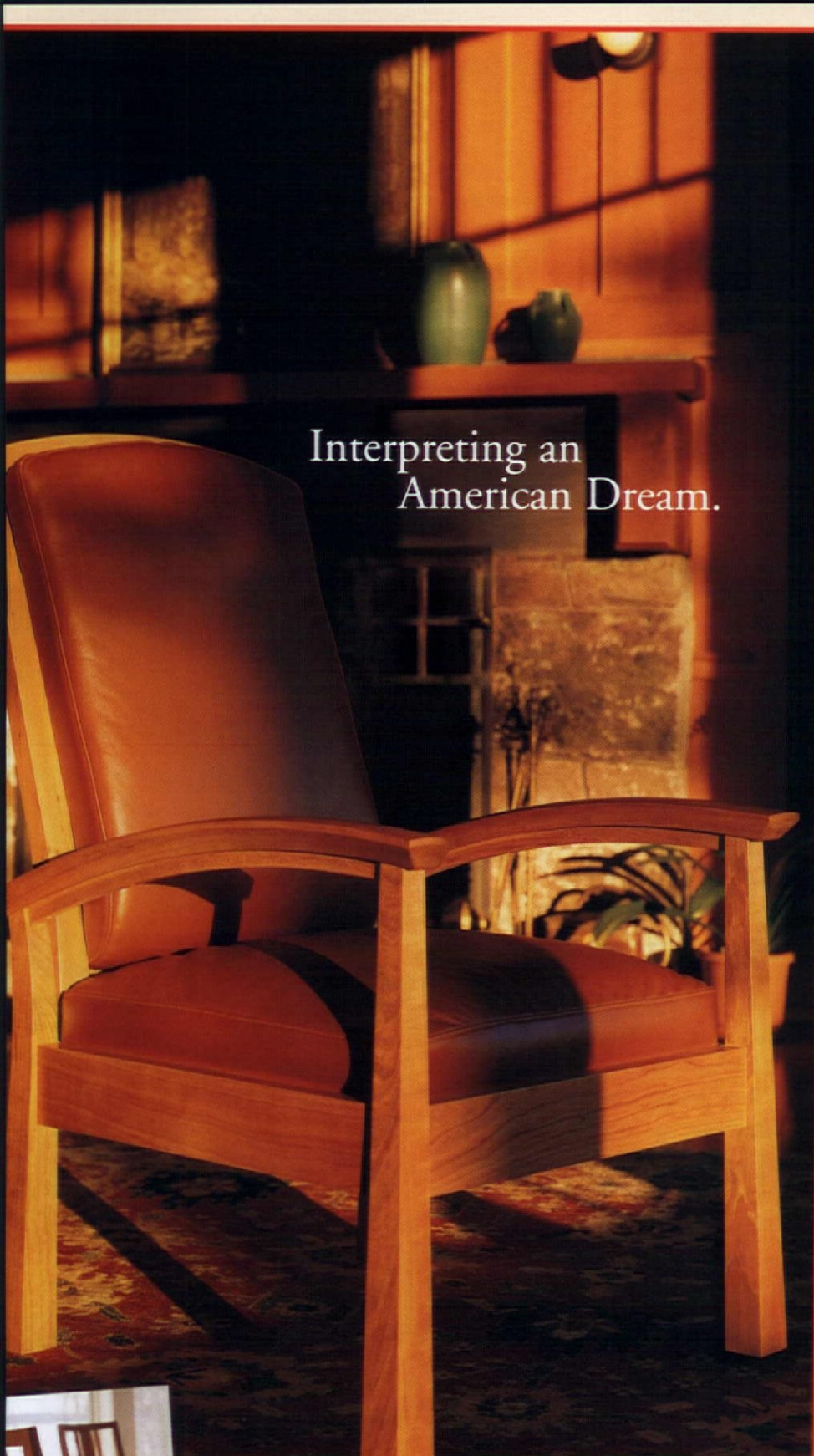


tions by Webb, the chair was put into production and the reclining chair—ever since known as the Morris chair—was born. It remained a staple in the Morris & Co. line until the firm closed its doors in 1940.

Within years of the first chair, dozens if not hundreds of versions of the Morris chair were being produced in factories and small shops from Vienna to San Francisco, making the reclining chair as ubiquitous as, well, rocks, [continued on page 46]

ABOVE: This rough sketch of an adjustable-back chair by an employee of Morris & Co. led to the design of the famous Morris chair. **LEFT:** The sketch was passed along to Philip Webb, at the time the Company's chief designer, and put into production in 1865.





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A typically American interpretation (left) by the Roycroft Shops demonstrates that many manufacturers were working in woods other than white oak: it's curly maple.



Joseph McHugh's "McHugh Mission" Morris chair (center) has a more English aesthetic with its Mackmurdo feet and Tudoresque cross-bracing. The early L. & J.G. Stickley Co. version (right) features carved panels with a tobacco leaf motif.



The rapid proliferation of the Morris chair can be credited to two simple attributes of its design. All Morris chairs have an adjustable back, a feature adaptable to almost any vocabulary. And Morris chairs are comfortable.

The MORRIS CHAIR Today

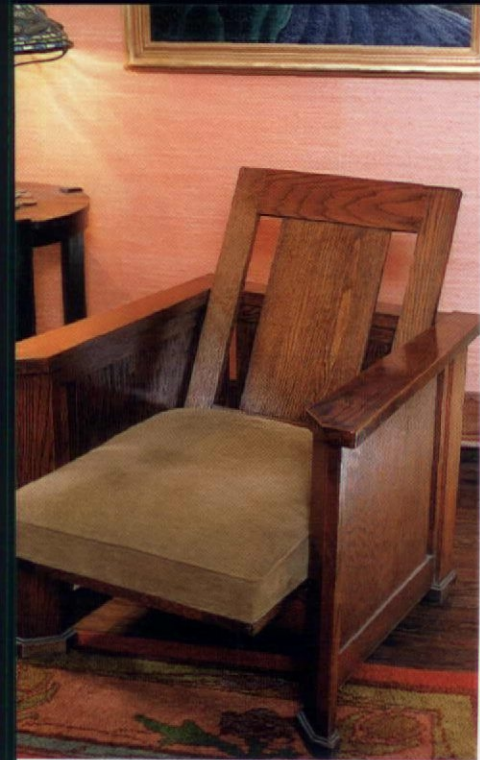
The Morris chair is fast becoming as popular today as it was a hundred years ago. New ones in a wide variety of forms are available from large manufacturers and small custom shops. Prices range from \$1,200–\$4,000.

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but quite a bit more comfortable.

All Morris chairs have an adjustable back, a construction detail that is highly adaptable to almost any design vocabulary. They are comfortable because they are cushioned . . . all of them. For the sake of clarity and design study, a Morris chair is often photographed partially clothed, that is, with the back cushion removed (or even naked, with no cushions). But from the beginning, seat and back cushions were standard.

Early in the 20th century, every Arts and Crafts furniture manufacturer worth his salt had his catalog peppered with Morris chair variations. There were bow-armed, flat-armed, and slant-armed models, even cushioned-armed versions, but never an un-armed version. The stylistic influences ranged from Jugendstil, as in some of the American maker Charles Limbert's designs, to Prairie School, as in the box-like forms of both Frank



"All artists love William Morris." No small praise considering they're the words of Frank Lloyd Wright. Wright's version of the Morris chair, translated into a Prairie School form, was made by the John W. Ayers Co. of Chicago about 1904.

Lloyd Wright and Purcell & Elmslie. Hybrid forms combined Gustav Stickley's slatted Craftsman style with Prairie versions to produce the very popular spindle forms.

With few exceptions, the Morris chair in the United States tended to reflect the national personality—sturdy, reliable, predictable, and unsophisticated. As it evolved in England and Europe, it tended to be delicate and highly variable, as if self-conscious of its own styling. The American Morris chair was made of any of the commonly used woods of the day, though it was and still is most frequently rendered in quartersawn white oak. Cushions were available in many leather colors and textiles. Morris chairs in England and on the Continent seemed to have evolved exclusively with fabric cushions. I have yet to spot a Morris chair in leather from across the Atlantic.

The reclining mechanism is



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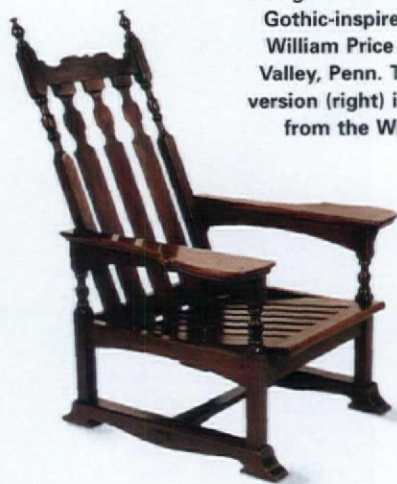
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Design extremes: The hand-crafted, Gothic-inspired interpretation by William Price was made at Rose Valley, Penn. The machine-crafted version (right) is the "Sitzmaschine," from the Wiener Werkstatte.



Whether Victorian, Arts and Crafts, or Modern, a Morris chair is the obvious alternative to the design-challenged recliner for a period interior.

strictly low-tech—none of the complex levers, springs, or on-board sensors of the La-Z-Boy recliner. The back is simply hinged where it meets the seat bottom and supported from behind where it meets the arms, either by a continuous bar or by two pegs inserted into holes in the arms. The reclinee was thereby required to get a minimum amount of healthy exercise by getting out of the chair and perambulating around to the back to make adjustments.

Two of my own favorite Morris chair designs represent the extremes to which this form was taken—extremes not just of design and appearance but also of methods and philosophy of work. One chair, designed by William Price, was built entirely by skilled craftsmen in the small furniture shop that was part of the Rose Valley Community outside of Philadelphia. Price's formal design vocabulary required considerable handwork and knowledge of the cabinetmaker's trade. The back adjusting mechanism was clever and different.

The back was *fixed* where it met the arms. The seat bottom was not fixed but rested on a frame and, when pulled forward, would cause the back to pivot or recline. This did eliminate the possibility of any exercise but, since none of Price's chairs ever were put into production on any scale, their lazy-boy design did little to damage the gene pool.

The other extreme chair is the "Sitzmaschine" by the Viennese designer Josef Hoffmann. He had no aversion to using machines to do what they did best, which was to make identical parts with great precision. (Like Morris, Hoffmann was opposed to using machines to mimic handwork.) The "Sitzmaschine" is a perfect example of how machinery, once wildly misdirected, could be, finally, brought under the guiding control of the designer-craftsman. ✦

KEVIN P. RODEL [kevinrodel.com] lives in Maine, where he usually builds furniture, occasionally teaches and writes and, once in a while, rearranges rocks.

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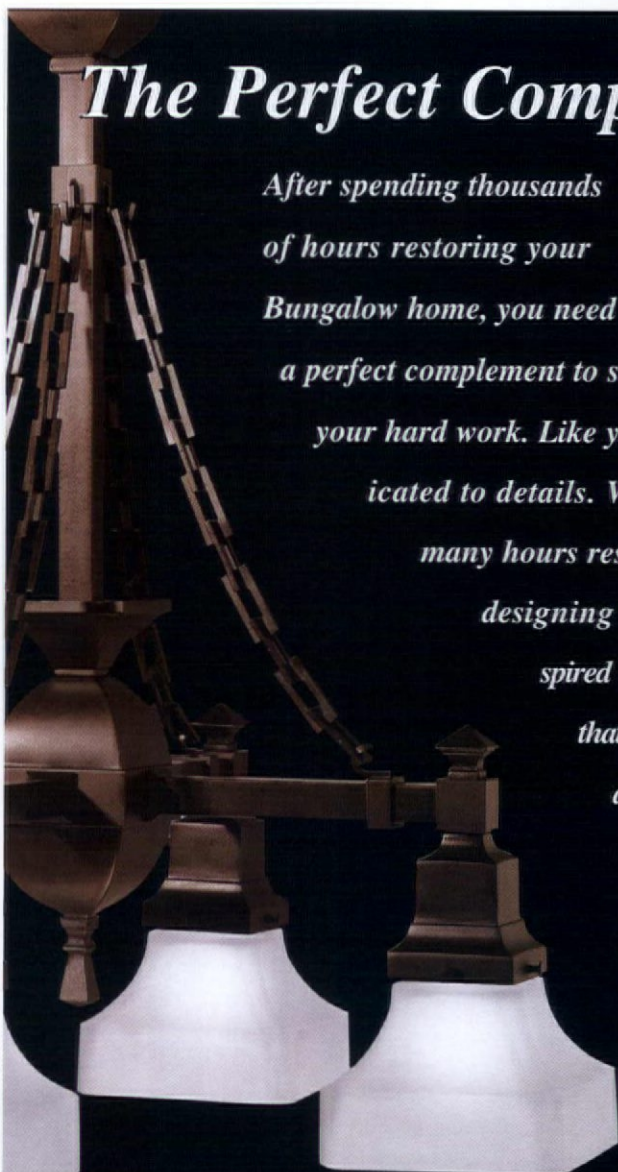
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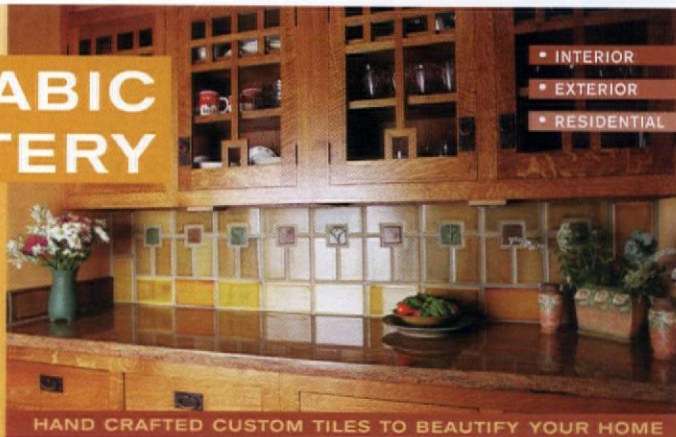
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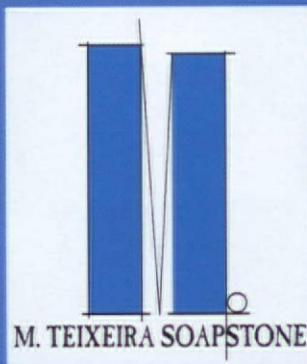


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Fir beadboard glows in an 1893 Catskills cottage. Its staircase is made of birch logs. **RIGHT:** Two diminutive gingerbread cottages at Oak Bluffs in Martha's Vineyard.



A Cottage Reaction

EVERYBODY needs balance. That's what I concluded on being informed that, in the same season and with the same publisher, writers I see covering the most high-style and opulent Victorian homes were coming out with books about . . . cottages. Hmmm.

Since I didn't have to go far to find one, I decided to ask a psychiatrist his opinion of this reaction behavior. Did you know that Brian Coleman, Victorian-house maven and

author of the florid *Vintage Victorian Textiles* [Schiffer], is Brian Coleman, M.D., a practicing psychiatrist in Seattle? He's not talking; he claims that he and photographer Douglas Keister "just wanted to give credit to some exquisite smaller houses that are great examples of period architecture. I know it sounds corny," he adds, "but the best part of doing the [cottages] book was meeting homeowners all over the country who have a passion for preservation."

What do you know: celebrated Victorian-house writers getting their kicks from new books about the lure of rustic cabins and little cottages. Time for a vacation?

BY PATRICIA POORE

The book, out this spring, is called *Classic Cottages*. A certain country mood connects all the houses shown, which actually range from rustic cabins to grand “cottages” in Newport. “Who can resist the appeal of a sweet little house, surrounded by wild roses, at the end of cobblestone lane?” nostalgically asks the jacket copy. “The archetype envelops both the medieval Cotswold cottage and the American colonial Cape Cod, the first type of cottage architecture in the United States.” You’ll also find bungalows, a thatched stone hut, and Victorian gingerbread cottages.

More pointed in its mission is another new book, also from *Old-House Interiors* writers. *Cabin Kitchens & Baths*, by Franklin and Esther Schmidt, was written more for the log-house and vacation-home reader. “Everyone dreams of a getaway cabin,” Franklin and Esther sigh in the Introduction. These are not period houses. Still, the authors brought their good taste (undoubtedly honed by



Timeless design is evident in the new cabins—along with surprises like black-painted cabinets in an urbane kitchen in the woods, or glass block used with vintage bath fixtures.



their knowledge of period styles) to their choices and to styling and photography. You’ll find inspiration for summer-house, country, and colonial-inspired kitchens and baths. Chapters describe kitchen furnishings, appliances, and décor; and bathrooms.

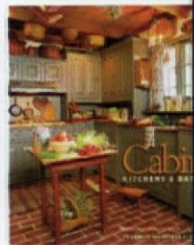
“Cabin” refers to a small, rough building made of wood; “cottage” is a one-storey home. Hardly the high-style urban residences these writers often describe. They seem to agree, however, that cottages and cabins are “less about roughing it and more about informal, relaxing spaces where we spend time away from our formal lives.” Can you empathize? ✦



Classic Cottages Simple, Romantic Homes by Brian D. Coleman; photographed by Douglas Keister; Gibbs Smith, Apr. 2004. Hardcover, 160 pages, \$39.95. Through your bookstore.

Cabin Kitchens & Baths

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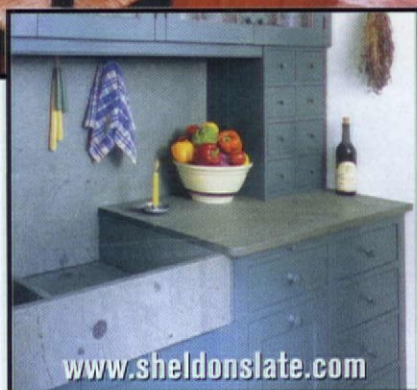
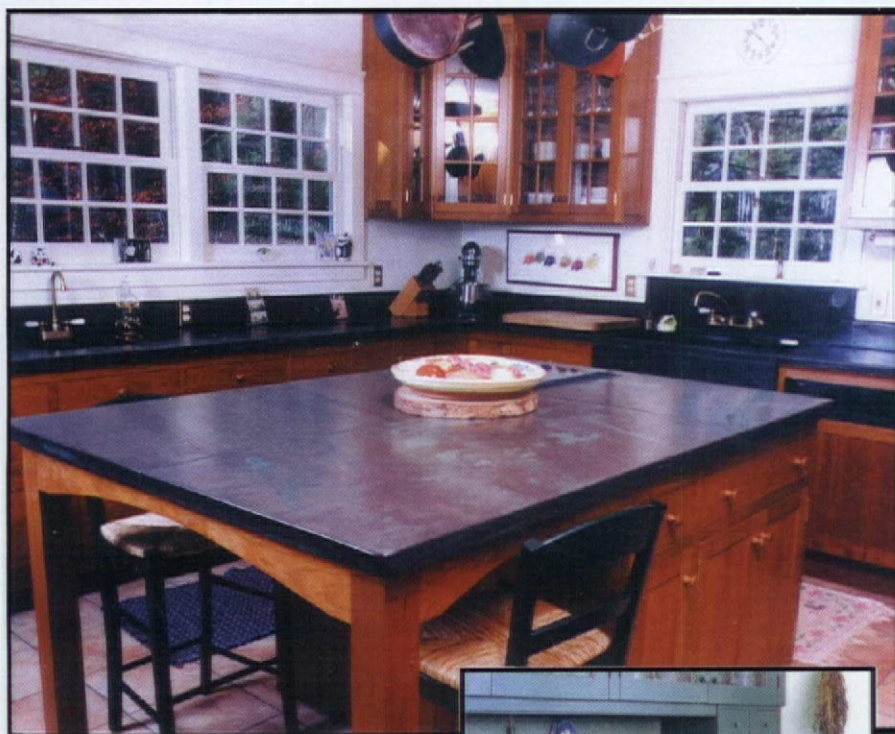


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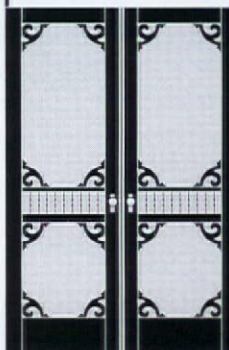
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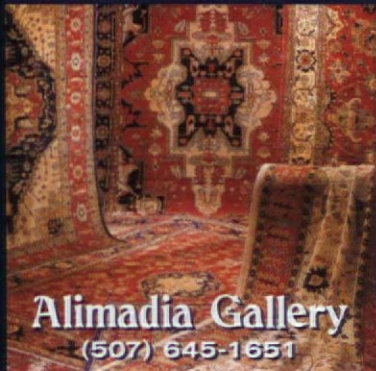
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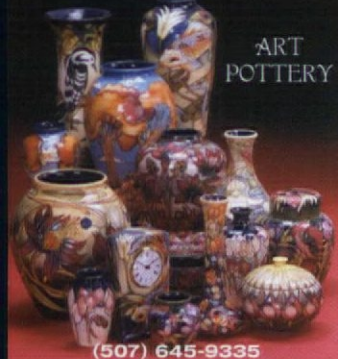


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Circle no. 51

This astonishing, original Arts and Crafts interior in rural Indiana recently came to the attention of the author.

LET'S FACE IT: Although we're inundated with modern interpretations of the Arts and Crafts interior, how many of us have ever had the opportunity to step inside a completely original house from that period—one that was never remodeled, restored, or "improved"? One step through the door of this unretouched house of 1910, and the 21st century disappears behind you. Every room on the ground floor retains original period colors and offers a treasure trove of painted decoration. Even without furniture and fabrics, these rooms are eloquent



The Way It Was: 1910

BY BRUCE BRADBURY

in their evocation of the period.

Of particular note are the friezes, or wide decorative bands encircling the tops of the walls, as well as the rich color schemes in blue, green, and ochre on the glazed and stippled walls. In both living room and dining room, ceilings, too, retain their stenciled decorations. There's more stenciling in the central hallway, with repeating panels that continue up the stairs. That's something rarely seen today, but typical of the era.

The soft light that suffuses the interior during the day is in contrast to the bright lighting of contemporary interiors. At night, the house becomes even more magical, as orig-

inal electrical wiring and fixtures wash walls and ceilings with pools of low-wattage amber light.

Once water-damaged and endangered, the house has recently been sold to owners who were drawn to its unique, original features. It is under the protection of the Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana. ✦

► **ADDITIONAL DETAILS** from this interior await when you go to the new "Discoveries" section at bradbury.com. And we'd love to hear from you if you've discovered original patterns or colors from the Victorian or Arts and Crafts eras. Please contact us directly: discoveries@bradbury.com



Designed by Brubaker & Stern (Indianapolis) for a clay-tile baron, the house has a Foursquare shape enhanced by a projecting gable in the Mission style.



ABOVE: A fine-woven, painted burlap fills vainscot panels in the dining room. The grapevine frieze was hand painted. Through the doorway you'll catch a glimpse of the hallway stenciling. **BELOW:** (and opposite) A broad, hand-painted landscape frieze surmounts built-in bookcases in the library, echoing the blue-green colors of the fireplace tiles. Gracefully stenciled roses cascade in the corners.



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Fabric on the Walls BY BRIAN COLEMAN

THE USE of upholstered walls hasn't been common in this country. Since the 18th century, a few fine homes have had silks or damasks on the walls, and Arts and Crafts walls sometimes were lined with linen or burlap. But we've seen nothing to compare to the rich damask hung on the Medicis' 16th-century walls, or Napoleon's canopied bedroom ceilings, his luxurious reminder of military tents. Even Queen Victoria had the walls and ceiling of her

private railroad car completely covered in button-tufted silk.

Today there's a bit of a resurgence in the use of fabric-covered walls. Anne Marie Sherlag, one of Chicago's most popular wall upholsterers, explains that fabric adds warmth and softness to a room, muffles sounds, and creates an intimate and attractive space. Fabric can hide unattractive paneling, cracked plaster, even exposed bricks. (Walls to be upholstered should be level and clean, with no



TOP: Silk damask on walls and sofa in an English-inspired parlor. **ABOVE:** Scalamandré re-created a silk and linen brocatelle from period photos for restoration of the Venetian dining room (Chick Austin House, 1930, Hartford, Conn.).



The drapery swag, Petitsin, p.42

Originals by **J.P.WEAVER**

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RIGHT: Six courses of ornamental moulding embellish this tub enclosure in the style of a French antique bath cabinet. The floral centerpiece is RMF 2095, 8½" in height by 13" in width.



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BELOW: This historic overpanel was inspired by a famous piece from the Palais Fontainebleau. JPW has recreated the illusion using "Petitsin". The panel can be extrapolated to varying widths. The height of the main panel is about 9 to 10 inches.

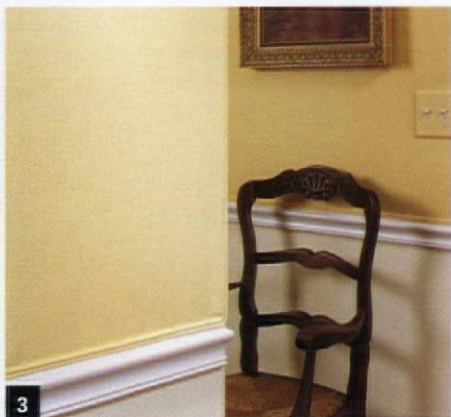


RIGHT: A gold silk and linen brocatelle was woven by Scalamandré for an Aesthetic interior in New York; portières have bands of damask and a black silk lampas.

moisture problems. Make sure systems behind the walls are up to date—wiring, for example!

Most installers advocate fabric use in bedrooms, powder rooms (without bath or shower), dining rooms, and entry halls; it's not practical in kitchens and baths, but standard in home theaters. Fabric on walls is a more expensive treatment than wallpaper. Costs vary widely, but you can expect to pay (on average) \$10,000 to \$15,000 for a medium-size room.

Denver upholsterer PJ Bergin advocates the use of natural fibers—linen, cotton, and wool—as these are more stable and soil-resistant than silk. If you do use silk, PJ suggests having a knit backing applied to the fabric first, which will decrease sagging as



APPLICATION

Fabric is today routinely applied over mildew-resistant polyester batting (instead of the traditional felt). Batting can be applied to the wall with $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch staples or a hot-glue gun, but many installers prefer to attach 1 by $1\frac{1}{4}$ -inch furring strips around wall edges. Batting is then attached to the wooden strips. To avoid the padded-cell look, don't use thick batting. ■ Fabric is sewn into sections, which are then stapled onto batting, with the staples concealed beneath a welt or cording. A self-welt is cotton cord wrapped in the same fabric. ■ It may be advantageous to wrap panels with fabric, then attach the panels to the walls. Some installers use a short-cut in small



rooms, attaching cotton flannel or $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch batting to the wall, leaving a 1-inch margin around the edges to which the final fabric is hot-glued or stapled. Snap systems use an inter-locking jaw system of PVC grids to hold fabric in place; the fabric can be removed for cleaning.

1: Anne Marie Sherlag cuts a textured cotton on the bias for double-welt cording. **2:** The fabric is wrapped around cotton cord and sewn. **3:** The edging on the wall.

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Cords, trims, and woven braids can all be used to finish an upholstered wall; wider trims are appropriate to larger scale.

the fabric expands with moisture in the air. Consider that matching precisely a tight plaid or delicate pattern may be a headache. Order an extra four to five yards, as dye lots vary and it may be impossible to match fabric later if a section is damaged. Shirred fabric involves gathering the fabric into soft pleats on the top and bottom and then mounting it to the wall.

Scalamandré's restoration design director, Julie Kaminska, says that fabrics that go directly from work-room to wall may droop several inches after installation. Although it may not always be practical, in a museum-quality job the installer would only *pin* the bottoms of fabric panels, then return several months later to finish.

Water and sunlight are, of course, enemies of fabric. Maintain your walls by brushing every few months with a soft whisk-broom, and vacuuming with minimal suction. Washington, D.C., installer Al Soussan uses Wrinkle Rid, an alcohol-based spray that takes out wrinkles on natural fibers. It's best to treat *before* installation with soil repellents. Still, Al intends to cautiously spray ScotchGard on the already-installed silk damask walls of the Senate dining room—the untreated fabric was hung, on deadline, just before the Inaugural. ✦

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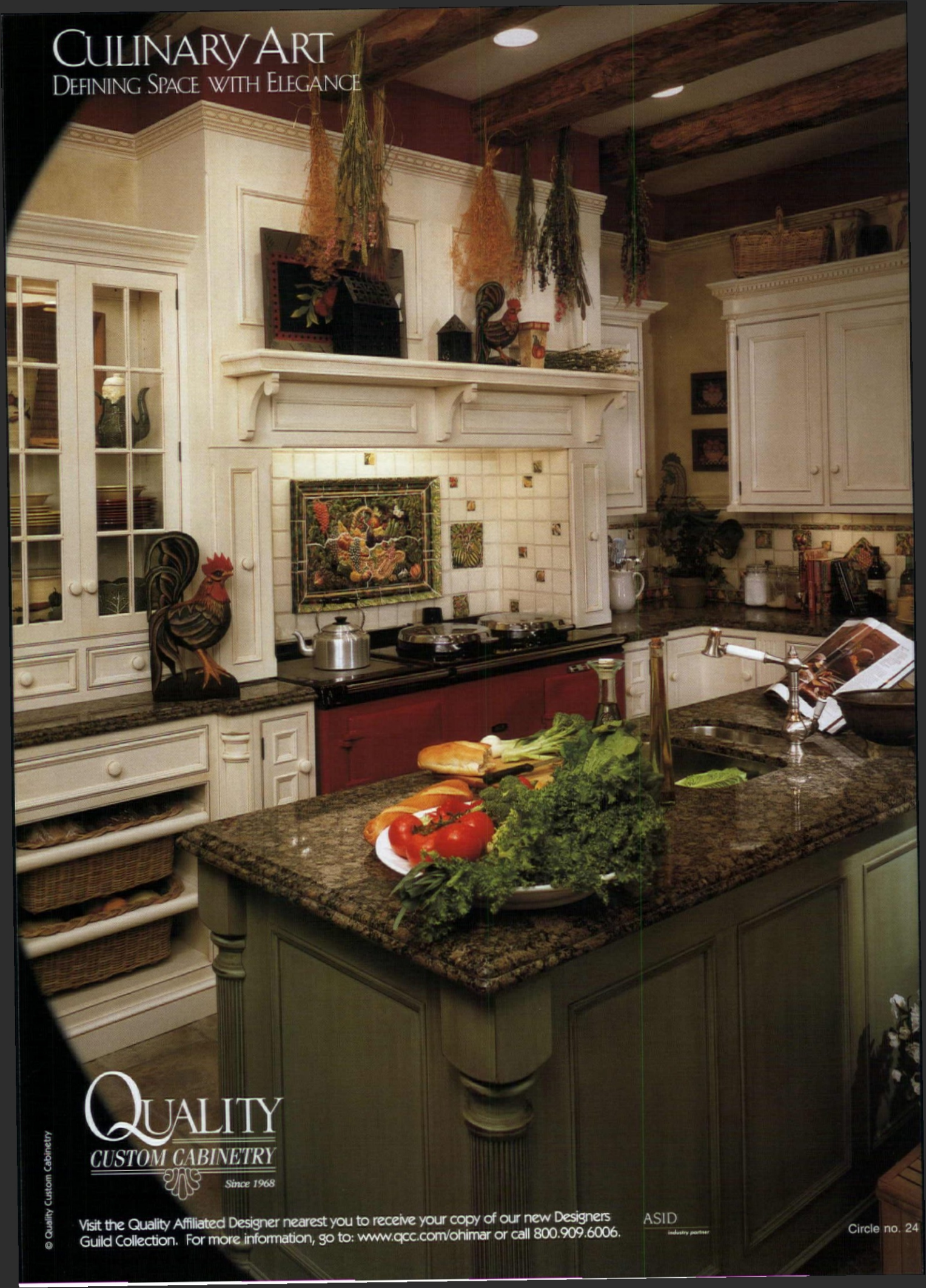
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BARTOW-PELL

The lovely neoclassical architecture and furnishings of this Greek Revival gem survive from old New York. (page 89) ♣

VICTORIAN DRAMA

Generations of appreciative owners have maintained this 1891 house in all its eclectic grandeur. (page 68) ♣



TENDERLY KEPT

Volunteers keep the woodland, rock garden, and herbaceous border of a remarkable property. (page 84) ♣



AN AMERICAN FOURSQUARE

This story has lots of happy lessons: on early-20th-century style, good use of reproductions, details that count. Most of all: "Build it well, and it will sell." (page 73) ♣

APPROACHING FURNITURE

We know from surveys and our own experience that buying good furniture can be scary. Here's how to begin to think about it. (page 80)





CEDAR CREST'S VICTORIAN DRAMA

With her cozy opulence and a heady dose of historical eclecticism, this house has quite a personality—which has won the hearts of owners for the past 113 years.

WRITTEN AND PHOTOGRAPHED BY ESTHER & FRANKLIN SCHMIDT

HOW MANY PURCHASERS of old houses have luck on their side the way the Wightmans did when they found Cedar Crest? The couple were searching for perfection and they found it: a unique Victorian *grande dame* in Asheville, North Carolina. It had no “improvements” to undo: no parti-

tions to remove or bearing walls to replace, no over-painted woodwork to strip, no mantelpieces to research. The 6500-square-foot house still had its magnificent carved wood paneling, its hardwood mouldings and fireplaces, and its stellar stained-glass windows. Sensitive decorated and al-



A massive brick fireplace inspired by the Arts and Crafts Movement anchors the grand Front Hall.
OPPOSITE: The exterior, which the owners intend to repaint in a polychrome Victorian scheme pending research, is an exuberant mix of Queen Anne with allusions to the Italianate, Gothic, and Stick styles.



The former Gentlemen's Smoking Room (above and below) includes a 1913 tiger-oak player piano. The window treatment was embellished with beads taken from a Victorian textile. Woodwork here was refurbished to reveal the golden oak. English Aesthetic wallpaper is from Schumacher (pattern not known). **RIGHT:** Victorian Revival papers perfectly complement the rich patina of the dining-room woodwork. All fireplaces are original.



The 1890s Cedar Crest's National Register designation calls it Queen Anne, which fits the period, its massing, and the spindework porches. But Gothic and Stick styles are in evidence—and what about the Mansard tower and Renaissance window hoods? ■ Historical eclecticism was embraced in the 1890s as Americans without heirlooms but with new money borrowed a past from Europe. Rooms inside range from English baronial to Baroque. "It's the perfect house for me," asserts Rita Wightman, who says her own living quarters have always been eclectic. ■ Local legend has it that artisans working on the Biltmore Estate did some of the work here. That may be another reason this house is over the top in quality and exuberant use of ornament.



ABOVE: In the Parlor with its 12-foot ceiling, the Baroque mantel is the house's drop-dead piece. It is surrounded by carved oak in the cornice, wainscot, and door surrounds. Complementary period furnishings have been kept simple to give the woodwork center stage. **LEFT:** Bedrooms are variously outfitted in 1890s Renaissance Revival, Empire, and Eastlake modes. This one, The Study, was a home office for the original owner. The brass bed dates to the 1880s. Wallpaper is by York; bedding is contemporary in a Victorian style.

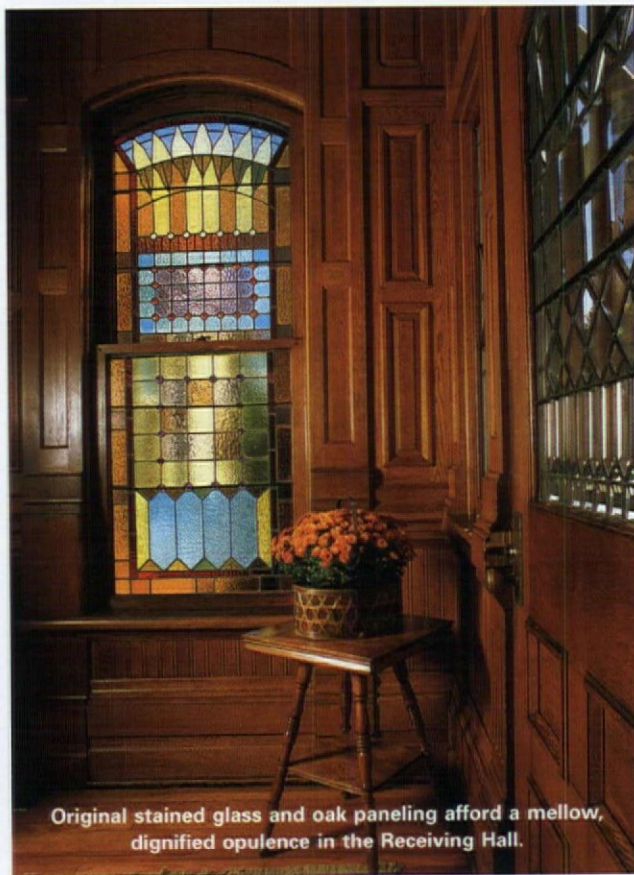
most completely furnished by its previous owner, Cedar Crest wasn't just in move-in condition. It was a turnkey proposition for Bruce and Rita Wightman's dream business, a historic bed-and-breakfast inn. The big house on four landscaped acres had charm, grace—and, for the marketing-oriented Wightmans, a business-friendly location. It overlooks a busy street and is located just minutes from the Biltmore Estate, one of Asheville's great visitor draws.

Opulent and elegant details, inside and out, have been lovingly maintained by captivated owners since the beginning. The mansion was built with turn-of-the-century boom money for the family of William E. Breese, and has been home to a succession of well-heeled Asheville families. It did, however, have other incarnations—as, for example, a tuberculosis sanitarium from

successful in their color choices, too, basing them on the tonal quality of the oak woodwork. In a few rooms, the previous owners painstakingly removed darkened varnish, restoring

torian pieces to furniture from the 1930s. The original gasoliers are long gone, but most of the lighting has been replaced with fixtures of the gaslight and early-electric eras. Carpets and some furniture, especially in guest rooms, are reproductions, but much of the furniture in the house is antique. The Wightmans and the much-appreciated previous owners had the help of a local designer. Sheila Wallace, who also teaches interior decorating, frequently brings her classes to view the impressive period house.

Nowadays, Rita and Bruce Wightman continue to research and restore the property. An upcoming project is exterior painting in a period-appropriate scheme based on old photos and paint analysis. "There's so much embellishment you can't even see because of the all-white scheme," Rita



Original stained glass and oak paneling afford a mellow, dignified opulence in the Receiving Hall.

The owners just previous to the Wightmans took great care in researching period appropriateness for the furnishings, upholstery, and wallpaper patterns. They were very successful in their color choices too.

1927 to 1932. In 1939, then-owners the Paige family fell on hard financial times. But Mrs. Paige was smitten with the old house and did everything in her power to keep the property in the family. To raise funds, she operated a tourist home here, yet she never altered the interior.

The owners just previous to the Wightmans took great care in researching period appropriateness for the furnishings, upholstery, and wallpaper patterns. They were very suc-

cessful in their color choices, too; in these, textiles have a green base to enhance the yellow in the wood. Where the carved wood retains its darkened patina, as in the dining room, it is complemented by the deep coloration of Bradbury and Bradbury and William Morris wallpapers.

AS IS USUALLY the case in grand old family homes, furnishings date from different periods. At Cedar Crest, furnishings range from 1890s carved Vic-

explains. The right colors will bring out trim, verandahs, and brackets.

It's all worth it, because Cedar Crest has a power of enchantment. Business bustles and the house, in its 114th year, still beguiles. ✦

The Wightmans love to share their wonderful house with guests. Contact the CEDAR CREST VICTORIAN INN (674 Biltmore Ave., Asheville, N.C.) at (800) 252-0310, or "visit" at cedarcrestvictorianinn.com

SUMMER of 1920?



“Why, I’ve never noticed that old house before . . .”

THE DEAL was simple enough. We’d bought a fixer-upper that came with an attached vacant lot. Now our restoration was finished, and had even appeared in the newspaper and on TV. We sold the house. After we paid the contractors (and, in turn, were paid by the new owners), we were left with an on-paper loss—but free-and-clear title to the vacant lot. So all we had to do was sell the lot to realize a profit.

But there was a catch: The lot was directly opposite our own house, which we’ve lovingly restored over a period of 19 years. We are not interested in moving. So we found ourselves in a ‘til-death-do-us-part scenario, fretting over who-would-build-what across the street.

A neighbor suggested we call builder Pat Parker. He was gruff over the phone and had little interest in buying the lot if we put any restric-

tions on it. Still, before I could hang up, Pat made me promise to drive by a couple of his completed houses. My wife Cathy and I did—and, in both cases, we had trouble figuring out which project was his, as all the houses looked at least 80 years old. Matching up the addresses he’d given us, we could see that, indeed, his seemed remarkably well preserved (and had no paint build-up!). When he finally described what he had in

Defying real-estate norms, the beautifully detailed house sold

mind for our lot—tall ceilings, solid doors, a full front porch, grass running up the middle of the driveway, period colors—we knew we had met a fellow old-house nut. When he told us he'd cover the floors in soft Douglas fir (the primary wood used here until about 1905 or 1910), we were convinced he was, like us, one step away from a medical diagnosis of obsessive-compulsive disorder.

Pat Parker's finished, 2003 American Foursquare defies conventional wisdom. It sold for far beyond the \$200-per-square-foot cap that neighborhood real-estate agents consider the borderline between extreme optimism and losing touch with reality. (Our neighborhood is—how shall I say this tactfully?—modest.) This is



The house sure looks like it was built in 1919 ... but, actually, the author staged the photo on p. 73, placing builder Pat Parker in the driveway with a 1920s car. Above, the true colors at completion in 2003. **RIGHT:** Plain interior trim is true to the period: stained fir, like the woodwork found in old Portland houses. Furnishings are reproductions.



fast enough) at an above-market price.

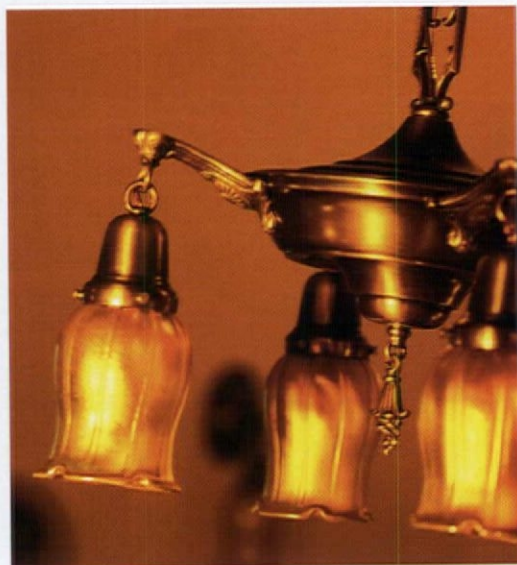


PRESERVATION in PORTLAND

A city of half a million, Portland, Ore., has seen an old-house boom over the past 25 years. Unquestionably, one force behind this has been Jim Kelly, the amiable founder of Rejuvenation, which started as a salvage yard and now employs 200 people to sell

restoration products nationwide. Kelly describes a major shift in attitude. Residents made excuses for having an older house in the 1970s, but today they boast about their Bungalows. Rejuvenation

provides them with tangible resources, but Kelly claims education has been the most important factor. Lecture series by societies such as the Preservation League of Portland have raised public awareness and sophistication. Homeowners have become more secure, confident of restoring in a spirit of "respectful eclecticism" that combines the best of the past with the products and knowledge of the present.



ABOVE: Built-ins, a panel wainscot, and the period-appropriate wall bracket, table lamp, and cabinet hardware (Rejuvenation) make this brand-new space feel 80 years old. **FAR LEFT:** Early-20th-century accoutrements accompany a reproduction art-glass table lamp and birch buffet. **LEFT:** The reproduction chandelier is typical of early-1920s fixtures. (The "Brooklyn," Rejuvenation.)



Details keep a modern kitchen from being an anachronism: nickel finishes instead of chrome, wood sash and fir floor instead of vinyl, countertops of tile rather than polished granite. Note flush-mounted upper cabinet doors and period hardware.

Even before 1920, some people paid extra for oak flooring in main rooms. But it's all about perception: oak floors "read" modern, while fir connotes the Portland of long ago.

the tale of how Pat was able to build in enough quality to successfully challenge the myth that only four things count in real estate: location, location, location, and square footage.

Amazingly, most builders believe that to be cost-effective, they must build sill-less windows and use vinyl sash—with snap-in muntins to make a large piece of glass look as though it's made of many small panes.

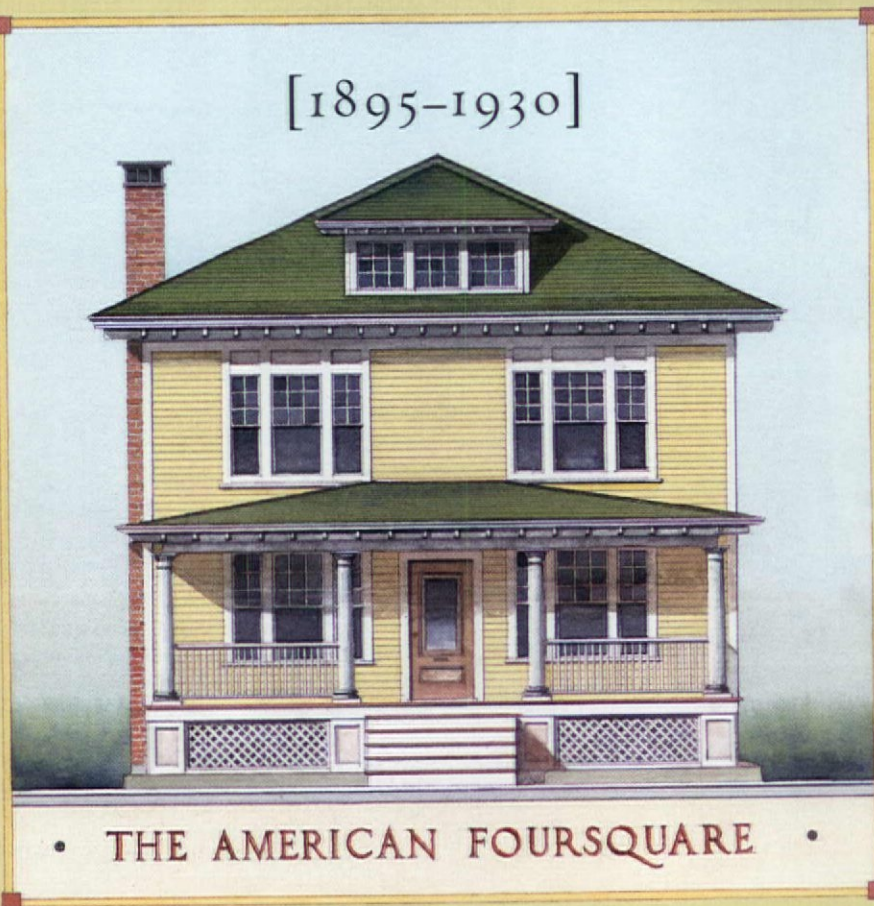
(Ironically, some of the early-20th-century styles being copied never had more than one pane of glass per sash.) Using wood sash and real window sills, Pat is proving that the difference in upfront cost translates directly into a much higher sale price. Similarly, most builders consider wood siding too costly, but once again, the difference from vinyl converts directly into increased home value.

Pat Parker chose to build a single-family house, though filling the lot with two town houses would have increased his profit. "This house was built for love, not just money." It shows in the details. The slight softening of the angle of the roof over the eaves gains a bit more light—a scarce commodity in a city nicknamed Puddletown. It also allows for an entablature between window tops and

BUILDERS called it “truly American . . . the square-type of modern home,” “massive” and “conservative.” This familiar house got recognition and a name in 1982, in an *Old-House Journal* article by Clem Labine and Patricia Poore. It’s the American Foursquare. ■ The epitome of the post-Victorian “comfortable house,” the Foursquare is all about dignified self-containment. The new style was suited to smaller lots, prefab parts, and the housing boom. ■ The Foursquare seemed to spring up almost overnight. There were none in 1890. By 1910, thousands had been built.

The **HALLMARKS**

- **BOXY SHAPE** It’s nearly a cube (practicality usually dictated a slightly greater depth than width), with two full storeys and an attic often made livable by large dormers.
- **HIPPED ROOF** Exceptions exist, but most Foursquares have a hipped or steep, pyramidal roof.
- **WIDE PORCH** The piazza normally extends the full width of the front, with a wide stair and entry either at the center or to one side.
- **LARGE WINDOWS** Grouped windows became popular with this style, admitting plenty of light.
- **QUIET STYLE** Yes, there are Foursquares with art glass, bays, and tiled roofs, but in general the “style” of the house was quietly announced in the use of simplified motifs—A&C, Prairie, or Colonial.



Foursquares
INSIDE

Economy suggested the cube shape, which yields the most interior space for money spent on land, foundation, framing, and roof. The resulting interior layout is classical and

pleasing. Houses normally had four rooms on the first floor (hall, parlor, dining, kitchen) and four bedrooms plus a bath upstairs. Built-ins such as bookcases and window seats were popular; for houses purchased from a planbook company, room-

dividing colonnades and kitchen cabinets could be ordered. ■ Furnishing style changed with the times. Craftsman interiors—oak furniture, mica lamps—would have been common in the first wave, with Colonial Revival and Jazz Age styles later. —ED.



From Aladdin Homes Catalog #33, ©1922

Variants on STYLE

The debate rages: Is "foursquare" a house type or a style? When you can narrow down a building phenomenon to a period of 25 years, what's the difference? There's no mistaking these houses for earlier cube forms like the Georgian Manor or the Italian Villa.



ARTISTIC: Craftsman tenets were incorporated in the early wave, 1900-1915: boxed posts, exposed rafter tails. Some of these examples could almost be called "bungalow in a box."



PRAIRIE: Many Foursquares throughout the Midwest incorporated the "modern" motifs of the region: horizontal banding, porch with a slab roof, geometric ornament, and "Prairie" art glass after F.L.W.



CLASSIC: Houses like this might be called Free Classic: note the Palladian-style window and oval "cameo." (The use of stone is vernacular; this house is in Penn.) After 1915, most examples could be termed Colonial Revival.

roof, which adds to the period feel.

Pat found a loophole in the law that states new handrails and balustrades must have a minimum height of 36". He built his porch floor close enough to the ground to allow a legal, 30"-high balustrade that fits the style and proportions. Noting that people don't garage their cars anyway in the mild climate, Pat built old-fashioned garage doors that make passersby smile.

Pat reminds us that, in the early 20th century, homes were not necessarily "period." He was building a Foursquare, but not an archetype. "In those days, each builder put a little of himself into the house. I do the same." Note, for example, the unique use of black downspouts, a feature generally considered an architectural no-no (both

atomic eras), and, more recently, period hardware and bath fittings. But locals think of the store as a great resource for almost anything an old house needs, even reproduction furniture. Rejuvenation's chief interior designer, Dawn Breese, took up the challenge of furnishing the new interior to ca. 1920.

Foursquares were built throughout the first quarter of the 20th century. At the beginning of that period, Arts and Crafts furniture would have been in vogue. "Rejuve," as it's known locally, could have supplied us with almost anything, including Stickley furniture and related accoutrements. So why did we opt for a post-Craftsman, 1920s look? The builder sees his creation as a "late" rather than an "early" Foursquare. The differences

"I'm trying to get the most beauty for the money—not to exactly duplicate the past," says the builder. Neighbors and potential buyers agree that he achieved his goals.

then and now) that somehow adds to the appearance. For all the authenticity in his work, Pat Parker does not consider himself a purist. Drywall was used instead of plaster, sanded in places to look like a plaster finish common to many early-20th-century homes. To avoid the endless failure associated with painted porch floors, Pat used a modern stain instead.

WHEN THESE PHOTOS were taken, the house was newly minted and not yet occupied. We were helped by local supplier Rejuvenation, Inc. The company's national reputation rests on its lighting fixtures (gaslight through

between a 1905 and a 1920 Foursquare are subtle, such as shorter interior baseboards and the use of Colonial Revival soffits instead of exposed rafter tails. The decision to approximate 1920 made my job easier—as hard as it was to get the perfect Twenties car to park in the driveway, I wondered how I'd find a 1903 Stanley Steamer to borrow for the afternoon! ✦

STEVE AUSTIN and his wife Cathy Hitchcock own Austin & Hitchcock Restorations in Portland, Ore.: (503) 235-9691. Their design and kitchen restoration projects were featured in our Summer 1996 and May 2001 issues.

SPECIAL THANKS TO BUILDER PAT PARKER (503/788-0603), TO JOHN CLINE FOR THE LOAN OF HIS '25 CHEVROLET TOURING CAR, AND TO REJUVENATION'S CEO MARY ROBERTS AND DESIGNER DAWN BREESE. SEE P.128 FOR MORE INFORMATION.

How to Get Comfortable Finding FURNITURE

Afraid of spending that much money on something you can't visualize until you get it home? Try a few flexible rules.

by Patricia Poore & Mary Ellen Polson

Why is furniture so scary? Surveys tell us that readers are ready enough to spend money on just about anything from toilets to rugs, and to answer "yes" to almost every question we ask regarding future plans: New roof? *Yes*. Kitchen remodeling? *Yes*. Tile installation? *Yes*. Landscaping? *Yes*. Furniture? *Maybe later*. Here in the office we've been doing some confessing of our own. "When it comes to our readers, the high rollers buy antiques and the rest live with stuff that doesn't jibe with the care they've put into restoration and finishes," Patricia began, then, amazed, admitted, "—oh good grief, that sounds like me!" (Three boys and a dog—she's going to buy good furniture?) Inga Soderberg rolled her eyes and told us her humiliating secret: "After waiting 16 weeks for the sofa I'd dreamed of ordering for years, I realized I made a terrible mistake and I'm sending it back, even though that's going to cost me big-time." Mary Ellen Polson admits, "My decorating scheme seems to be based on falling in love with unrelated objects, one at a time."

For nine years we've run a historical-styles department called "Furniture Focus," partly for our own edification. But let's get even

more basic; here, and in future articles, we will try to demystify the actual planning and purchase of furnishings: buying pieces over time; how to decide on a look; proportions made simple; antiques vs. reproductions.

We're not chastising the old-house crowd, however, for our fear of furniture. We should acknowledge two things. First, antique furniture really is a compelling choice, especially if we've run in horror from some of the new furniture lines we've seen. Second, the industry is more interested in selling suites of *very* large furniture to people building *very* large houses in Texas. The scale of many furniture pieces has actually changed.

buy hardworking classics: Good furniture is not cheap—a reason to avoid mistakes. The more you furnish with classic, adaptable pieces, the fewer oddball pieces you'll get stuck with. By oddball, we don't mean unusual favorites or family heirlooms—more like the sofa that can't move because it won't fit through any doorways. Sofas, wing chairs, small tables, and chests should be classic (whatever their style vocabulary) and modestly scaled. That way, they can move from living room to bedroom to library

Large rooms with high ceilings demand sizeable furniture: this one has three sofas! Although most of these furnishings are comfortably contemporary-traditional, unusual side chairs were added to play off the dramatic beams and arched doorway; they unify the room.



as your living space evolves, or if you change houses. (Consider custom-made slipcovers for upholstered pieces.) Have you noticed that *no* furniture is cheap, not even the obese and poorly constructed discount stuff

sold on the highway?

Companies that advertise on TV don't represent your only choices. Ignore them and seek out the good stuff (kiln-dried wood, hand-tied construction, down-wrapped foam cushions), whether from major manufacturers or cabinet shops. You may want to hire a decorator to walk you through a to-the-trade design center, especially for expensive anchor pieces such

as beds, sofas, or dining table. All that said, don't be afraid to "fall in love" with a special piece now and then. The occasional unrelated piece is wonderful in a well-considered scheme.

consider the period:

Furnishing in sync with the date and design vocabulary of the house is a shortcut to non-faddish rooms that "look right." Your house is giving you clues, so take them. Seek out suppliers that do reproduction, traditional, or adapted styles. (This magazine and our website Design Center can certainly help:

This room is period-inspired but not slavish. It pulls together even though each piece is upholstered in a different fabric. Don't settle for this year's fabrics; experiment with textiles of varying textures and patterns in the same palette.



Start somewhere; vignettes are those “tight shots” you see in magazines—not the whole room, but rather a little grouping that works.

oldhouseinteriors.com) Be reassured that every piece need not be an heirloom. You can, over time, acquire a few key antiques. Fill in and assure sturdy comfort with good repros (or adaptations), as these are customizable, not fragile, and readily available.

scale furniture to the room:

Think in terms of volume—that is, the width, length, and height of your room—before you shop. The footprint of a gabled attic room may technically be large enough to hold a king-size bed, but once you’ve wrestled that baby up the stairs (good luck with the box spring), it looks all wrong under the sloped ceiling and, when you get out of bed, you hit your head. Large, high-ceilinged rooms can stand up to (demand) pieces of greater size

and scale, like tall armoires, highboys, and massive sideboards. In smaller, low-ceilinged rooms, less is more; edit out one or two pieces, take a leaf out of the table, and the room may work better for it. Consider how pieces relate to each other, not only in size, but also in materials, colors, and textures. The sofa and largest chair shouldn’t dominate or squeeze out the other pieces. Vary sizes: introduce small, beautiful pieces like a period side chair or table. Still not sure what works and what doesn’t? *Take snapshots of the room from several angles.* You’ll instantly see what works, and what stands out like a sore thumb.

think in vignettes: In other words, you gotta start somewhere. Vignettes are those “tight shots” you see in magazines—not the whole room, but rather a little grouping: easy chair/table/lamp tucked into a corner, or tall plants placed on either side of a wicker settle on a long wall. It may sound risky to furnish one area without considering the rest of the

room. But this approach really works quite well. Some spaces are easier to “see” furnished than others. You already may have a good sense of what would look right at the stair landing, or between your bed and the window, even if furnishing the room as a whole is daunting. When you go ahead with the vignette, three things happen: (1) With limited expense, you get a pleasing vignette. (2) What you’ve chosen sets a style and mood to direct the rest of the furnishing. (3) You limit and define the size and placement of other pieces in the room, by process of (space) elimination. Some ideas for room-starter vignettes: a table in the hall (consider a lamp and hung artwork as well); built-ins or scaled furniture for a window bay; a well-lit reading corner; seating near the fireplace.

unify, diversify with fabrics: If you’ve wandered through a home-furnishings store lately, you’ve probably noticed that fabric choices and color palettes are limited (twill, leather, velvet; beige and blue, with lime for the more daring). With a little effort, you can create a room that has more diversity. Decide first on a basic color—preferably from something already in the room, like an oriental rug. Then shop for upholstered pieces at stores that offer a wide selection of fabrics (including traditional patterns). Create a theme with your first fabric choice, ideally for a large piece. Choose secondary textiles that complement and balance your first choice. This isn’t as hard as it seems: If you’ve chosen a stripe with two or three colors as the primary fabric, for instance, your secondary choices include solids and solid-color patterned fabrics (like jacquards) in any of the sofa colors; or stripes of different widths, but in the same colors; or patterns (like florals) that pick up colors in the primary fabric or elsewhere in the room. Take samples home! ✦

Tenderly Kept

WOODLAND, ROCK GARDEN, AND HERBACEOUS BORDER

SURVIVE AND THRIVE THANKS TO A BAND OF VOLUNTEERS.

BY VICKI JOHNSON | PHOTOGRAPHS BY KEN DRUSE





W

E CAN THANK one family's vision for a remarkable New Hampshire property that offers visitors a rare gift: an exquisite garden in the heart of a federal preserve. Overlooking Lake Sunapee, The John Hay National Wildlife Refuge was once the summer home of John Milton Hay, who was Abraham Lincoln's private secretary and, later, Ambassador to Great Britain and Secretary of State.

Because the property reminded him of Scottish upland, Hay named his thousand acres "The Fells." When his son, Clarence Hay, inherited the property at his father's death in 1905, he and his wife Alice Appleton Hay

Old photos guided the restoration of the 100x10-foot perennial border with hollyhocks, *Astrantia major*, Foerster's delphinium, pink *Malva moschata*, nepeta, and *Alchemilla mollis*.

INSET: *Cornus kousa* blooms in the courtyard. **ABOVE:** Water from a natural stream is piped over an urn framed by a magnificent *Hydrangea anomala* 'Petiolaris'.



TOP: Landscape manager Jeffrey Good added hinges to the bottom of the reproduced trellises, so that they can be pulled away from the house for painting. Japanese wisteria and clematis 'Comtesse de Bouchard' grow on it, over a cloud of feverfew and larkspur. **ABOVE:** Visible here are dianthus, sedum, and wooly thyme; *Calluna vulgaris* seeds itself around the garden and is potted up and sold as 'Fells Heritage'. **RIGHT:** Sedum and *Digitalis ambigua* grow beside the lily pond in the rock garden created during the '20s and '30s. The naturalistic landscape consists of stones carefully placed by Italian masons.

worked with the architect Prentice Sanger to remodel and upgrade the main house, and it became the estate as it is recognized today. They also began gardening in earnest.

During the 1920s and '30s, Alice Hay created a large perennial border and rose garden near the house. Clarence Hay worked with Italian stone masons to build a rock garden and stone walls from local granite. The result is an extraordinary, natural-looking creation. "We garden this space today in his spirit," says Jeffrey Good, Land-

scape Manager and gardener at The Fells. "[That mandate] is 'find interesting plants and try to grow them. If they fail, move them to another place. If they die, try something else.'"

Good and his band of dedicated volunteers have wisely allowed the garden to participate in its own evolution. "There is an area where sun-loving plants used to grow, but trees have grown up over time and now shade-loving plants thrive there. It is very gently maintained, and is known to many as the Secret Garden."

The perennial border was treated to a true restoration. The rock garden's renovation is ongoing, with reference to photographs and Hay's detailed records of the 600 different species he brought to his garden.

TO SAFEGUARD the preservation of the land, John Hay's descendants first donated 675 acres to the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests, and, later, 164 additional acres to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Operating through a Memorandum of Understanding with the federal agency, the Friends of the John Hay National Wildlife Refuge, a local non-profit organization, oversees The Fells, 62 acres in the Refuge

that comprise house and gardens. The former estate is maintained as a wildlife preserve and yet is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. It is forever protected from development, including a mile-long stretch of waterfront.

Adds Good: "Bill Noble, our first manager, did a remarkable job of getting the restoration started. The (national) Garden Conservancy has offered valuable advice and financial support from the start."

Educational programs offered at the Refuge are centered on history, gardening, and forest stewardship—or, in grandson and naturalist John Hay II's words, "understanding the natural world and our place within it." ✦



ABOVE: The large pine is a "historical marker," as it appears in many old photographs. Lavender, gentians, and a glowing butterfly flower, *Asclepias tuberosa*, grow in this quarter. **LEFT:** A statue of Hebe, cup-bearer to the gods.

BELOW: "I'm not sure people recognize this area as garden, but it is!" explains Jeffrey Good. The quarter-mile entrance is meticulously weeded from the gravel into the woods, affording space to native blueberry, 'princess pine,' and mosses.





A Greek Revival Accent Bartow-Pell

A ca.1840 mansion in the Bronx is a neoclassical reminder that this borough of New York City was once a country retreat.

BY GLADYS MONTGOMERY JONES

PHOTOGRAPHS BY STEVE GROSS & SUSAN DALEY

THE WORLD has since grown up around the Bartow-Pell mansion: the Bronx's Orchard Beach is just across the way, and there's a landfill nearby. The beach's stone buildings are made from materials salvaged from neighboring mansions that met the wrecking ball in the 20th century. Walk the shoreline, and you'll kick chunks of salmon-colored brick, sandstone, and marble from structures less fortunate than the Bartow-Pell, which has been preserved as part of The Historic House Trust of New York City.

Built circa 1840 by publisher

Robert Bartow on land granted in 1666 to his ancestor Thomas Pell, the mansion was a year-round home for Bartow's large family. Located in what was then considered "the country," it was within commuting distance of Manhattan by carriage, coach, train, and boat. The architecture offers a bittersweet family record: While the woodwork in the south parlor bears carvings of American eagles, the north parlor features cherubim thought to memorialize two Bartow children who died, probably of influenza, during the mansion's construction. "It's a humanizing detail," notes Robert



OPPOSITE: The south parlor's early-19th-century furnishings include a pianoforte by well-known maker William Geib, and a French, ormolu-decorated tripod table and chairs. **LEFT:** The garden façade shows a central block with flanking wings, a neoclassical design recalling the work of 16th-century architect Andrea Palladio. Renovators in 1915-18 added the fanlight transoms.



Engel, the museum's executive director, "particularly because, with its impressive interior and large service wing, the house was obviously intended for entertaining."

The Bartow-Pell's design evolved from 18th-century English Georgian precedents, and a similar "Plan and Elevation for a house which is intended for a country situation" appears in Asher Benjamin's *American Builder's Companion* of 1806. Now the

TOP LEFT: The north parlor's carpet is a reproduction from period pointpapers. **TOP RIGHT:** (and bottom left) Upstairs reception room: Over the only black marble mantel hangs a tabernacle-style looking glass ca.1830. Scroll arm sofas were popular throughout the neoclassical period. **BOTTOM RIGHT:** The double parlors were designed for entertaining.

lone reminder of a historic neighborhood of neoclassical residences, the Bartow-Pell survived because it became part of Pelham-Bay Park, created in 1888. After some hard times,

the International Garden Club made an arrangement in 1914 to adopt the house, and the architectural firm Delano & Aldrich undertook its renovation.

Among their changes was the addition of arched transoms on the triple-sash windows in the orangerie facing Long Island Sound. The architects respected key interior features: the symmetrical floor plan [documented in the *Historic American*



Buildings survey at <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/pp/hhquery.html>], double parlor, 13-foot ceilings, hanging staircase, and the rich vocabulary of ornamentation.

In 1946, the Garden Club decided to open the house as a museum and hired Joseph Downs, curator of the Henry Francis Dupont Winterthur Museum in Delaware, to decorate it. His faced a familiar challenge: he lacked information about original furnishings (the Bartows had taken every-

The elliptical hanging staircase makes a spiral sweep from the west wall of the grand entry hall to the attic. Its elegant, curvilinear form is a hallmark of neoclassical design.

thing out of the house in 1888), and the 1915-18 renovation, by removing historic wallpapers, had compromised physical evidence. Downs used what evidence he did have. For instance, the pale blue paint in the double parlor and the family dining room's "ashes of rose" hue replicate the ear-

liest paints found on the plaster.

To furnish the house, Downs worked from informed conjecture, tapping New York City museum collections for American and French Empire antiques that a family of the Bartows' wealth and position might have owned. Topping the list of pieces now in the house are those by two of New York's most influential early-19th-century cabinetmakers: Parisian-emigré Honoré Lannuier and Scots-



In the family dining room, a Moses Yale Beach sideboard stands beneath his grandchildren's portrait by James Shegogue. The ca. 1820 monteith (vessel for wine glasses), the only Italian neoclassical piece in the house, sits on a Colonial Revival table.

A boldly detailed Greek Revival door surround stands out against the family dining room's original "ashes of rose" wall color, believed in the 19th century to aid digestion. A cast-iron stove with neoclassical ornamentation sits in the entry hall beyond.



born Duncan Phyfe. The ca.-1815, ormolu-decorated Lannuier bedstead is the only documented Lannuier bed in America with its original crown. As accomplished, but perhaps more storied, is the family dining room's sideboard by Moses Yale Beach, a cabinetmaker who worked in Springfield, Mass., until 1835, when he bought an interest in the fabled New York *Sun* newspaper. Beach wrote about Phyfe: "Commenced in Fulton Street

TOP LEFT: (and bottom right) An Honoré Lannuier bed with its original crown and the lyre-back chair attributed Duncan Phyfe represent the finest 19th-century New York craftsmanship. **TOP RIGHT:** (and bottom left) The miniature Empire bureau was found in a consignment shop by an eagle-eyed curator. Dresser is ca.1790, chair ca.1850.

... a poor cabinetmaker, and now [1845] has the largest and most fashionable establishment in the country."

The Bartow-Pell's exemplary period interior is the result of an

artful combination of decorative objects, reproductions, and lucky finds. The Brussels carpets (available today from J.R. Burrows in the U.S.) are reproductions from pointpapers (weave templates) in the Woodward Grosvenor & Co. archive at Kiddeminster, England. Argand, astral, and penumbra lamps include both period examples and ca.-1900 Colonial Revival reproductions (most electrified). ✦
PLEASE SEE p.128 for resources.

HOLLYWOOD secrets

Set Decorators' Tips for Period Rooms

Using a few tricks, set decorators create an impression of a time, a place, and a psychology. Their methods may give you ideas for setting your own stage at home. | **BY BRIAN D. COLEMAN**

IMAGINE A DECORATOR who not only agrees to follow your budget to the letter (or number), but also delivers the finished project on the very date promised. Sound too good to be true—something for the movies, perhaps? Exactly: this is how movies are made, with the invaluable help of set decorators.

Not to be confused with production or set designers, who help in the overall design and construction of the set, set decorators are responsible for adding finishing touches that provide “the psychology” for the scene. Carefully aged walls, distressed fabrics with the threads ever-so-slightly pulled out to avoid appearing too new, amber light bulbs placed in the lamps for a mellow glow—these are some of the tricks they use.

These well-versed professionals are under tremendous pressure to stick to budget and timetables closely; if they don't, they're quickly out of a job. Set decorators' secrets aren't always directly applicable to furnishing a period house, but their insights can help you think creatively. I talked to several of them in Los Angeles and New York.

Do your homework, says Rosemary Brandenburg. Research is a big part of the secret for coming in on budget, says the woman who just completed Eddie Murphy's new film, “The Haunted Mansion.” Rosemary employed several research assistants, who spent their time every day calling across the country, doing everything from tracking down bargains on reproduction 19th-century textiles [Brandenburg recommends Archive Edition Textiles, on the web: archiveedition.com] to finding out how to make Victorian desserts [after library research, the elaborate desserts were re-created by the head pastry chef at the Four Seasons in Beverly Hills]. Although the rest of us can't afford a research staff for our projects, doing a little homework can have a big impact on the budget.

Think color first, urges set decorator David Smith, who says color is critical to a room's character. This is not an expensive decision; used creatively, color is a simple way to change or enhance the ambiance. David (just back from Rio,



from “Cider House Rules”
A bureau in the son's bedroom points to the 1940s. (Toy soldiers, trophies, and war memorabilia from Jagg Antiques, Holyoke, Mass. [413/533-7650]) Walnut bureau was a thrift-store find. Striped be and cream wallpaper from Schumacher.



BETH RUBINO

from *"Something's Gotta Give"*

The dhurrie rug was resized for the set. (Many carpet stores will resize a rug.) Sofas had their backs cut down. Glass transoms bring a period element to new construction.

Amy Pascal, Chairman of Columbia Pictures, subsequently bought this set and made it her office!

from *"Original Sin"*

Set in 1880s Havana, the movie was filmed in a 19th-century hacienda in Mexico City. Antique gold brocade was found locally. Walls were upholstered in green silk damask and valances in rose velvet added. Restricting the palette to gold, green, and red balances the large space. For continuity, mismatched chairs were upholstered in the same silk damask. A massive Baccarat crystal chandelier anchors the space. Palm branches are a typical Victorian touch.





DENISE PIZZINI

◀ from *"The Italian Job"* ▶

Set suggests a spacious, old, multi-generational apartment overlooking the canals in Venice. Windows appearing to open onto the canal are made of glass rondels with painted "lead." Amber backlighting gives the appearance of evening. Large double doors are hollow core with moulding glued on. Antique furniture was recovered with inexpensive silk from the Silk Trading Co. [silktradingcompany.com]. Pedestal was faux-painted to look like distressed marble. Fireplace was constructed from wood and faux-painted to look like marble, with painted black "soot streaks" to lend age.

where he was creating a 1930s New York Art Deco hotel lobby for a movie) avoids harsh or glaring colors, as they appear too new, and looks for products with an amber or a pink cast to add instant patina. For example, to create the feel of a room at the end of the day, he hung simple, gold sheers from Wal-Mart at the windows, and then painted the walls rosy pink, creating a warm afternoon glow perfect for the scene.

David ages materials by applying glazes to dull their finish. Thus, when an episode of "NYPD Blue" called for an old bathroom, he used Restoration Hardware's vintage-look, nickel-plated towel bars, further "aging" them by applying a nicotine glaze made of asphaltum (an oily, dark brownish-yellow pigment found at artist-supply stores) thinned with kerosene, which could be wiped off afterwards. Another of David's favorite tips for color is to use colored light

bulbs, such as yellow or pink, to soften the light. He swears by Streaks and Tips hairspray, sprayed on a light bulb for instant atmosphere. (It's water soluble and washes off.)

Get personal by using childhood awards, grandmother's old quilt, family photos, even stacks of books—another easy way to lend character and interest without spending a lot of money. Daryn Goodall, President of the Set Decorators Society of America, reminds us that details tell us story and give a room personality.

To sharpen the eyes of student interns, he gives them the assignment of photographing several different bedside nightstands—which may hold a pair of eyeglasses, a group of family photos, a recent novel, or maybe just an alarm clock—then he asks them to describe the people by their possessions. (What does your nightstand say?)

▶ from *"Thirteen Days"*

This set evokes Kennedy Chief of Staff Kevin O'Donnell's office. Colors are cool and monochromatic to recall the feel of a black-and-white photo. The blue sofa "ca. 1962" came from a St. Vincent de Paul thrift store. Sheers are from a department store; Sixties-style lamp from a local consignment shop; low-pile carpet adds to the institutional look. Papers were mimeographed rather than xeroxed. Box beams are fakes.





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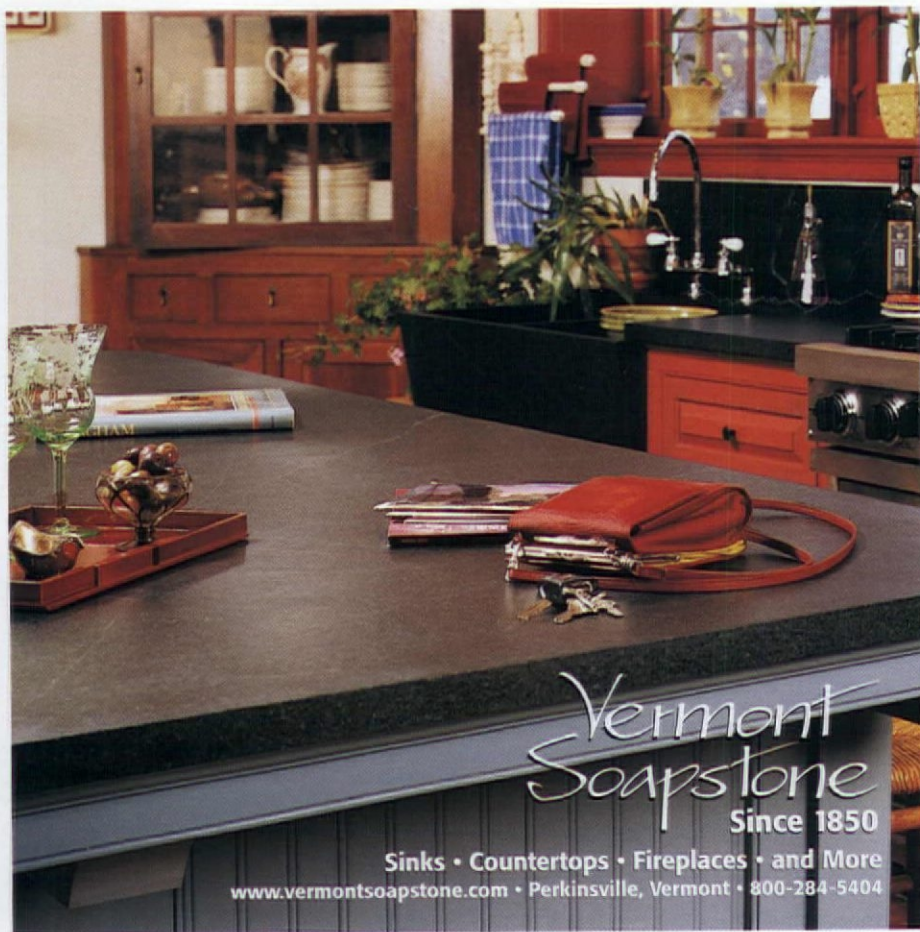


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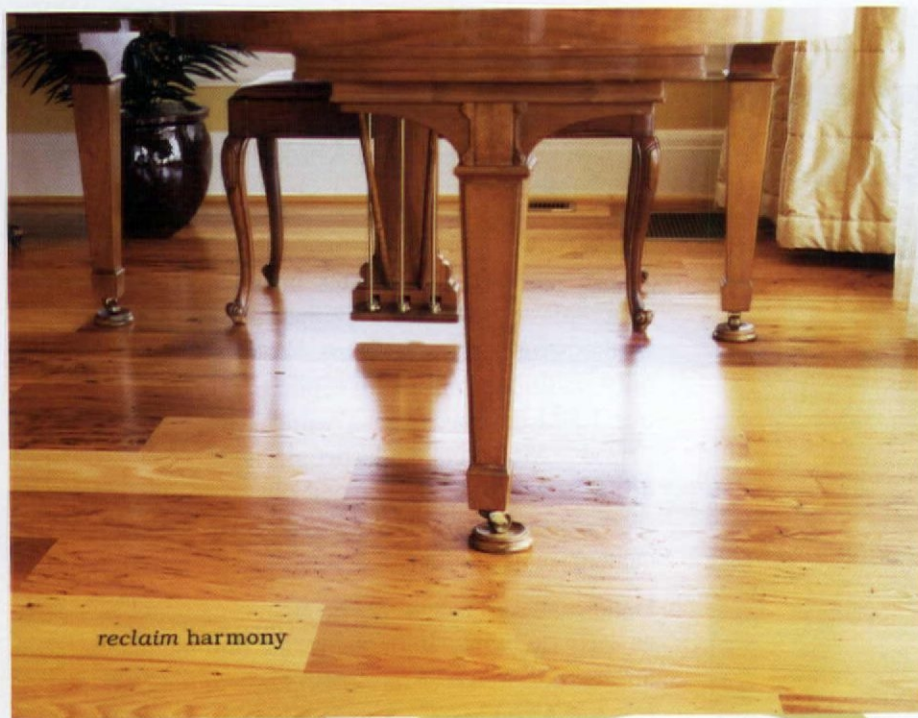
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ROSEMARY BRANDENBURG

from "The Haunted Mansion"

A 19th-century library, designed around the theme of a Victorian "curiosities" cabinet: specimens from nature, odd artifacts, scientific instruments. The curvy sofa is from Disney's 1954 production of "20,000 Leagues Under the Sea." The Nourisan carpet recalls Victorian encaustic tiles [Kas/Rug Warehouse, Culver City, CT, rugwarehouse.com].



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Dare to dye, Connecticut-based decorator Beth Rubino suggests. She's a devotee of dyeing fabrics and even paper for an instant patina. The process is simple: Strain tea (or coffee) grounds through a cheesecloth and steep them in water until the color is right, then slowly dip your fabric into the water. (Test a corner first.) You can even do this in a top-loading washing machine.

Make a cheap copy for a quick fix—a concept from Beth Rubino. It's not a permanent solution, but it's the germ of an idea: When she couldn't afford floor tile for a shoot in Mexico, Beth had color Xerox copies made of tiles, which she then pasted to the floor and polyurethaned! ♦

VISIT the Set Decorator's Society of America at setdecorators.org



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IN THE MIDST of gut-wrenching renovation, I planned my someday kitchen, imagined the period-style bathroom I would add, the leather chairs and wicker porch swing and Morris fabrics I would buy. Period design became my passion, which I share with you in the pages of **OLD-HOUSE INTERIORS**. There's nothing stuffy about decorating history, nothing to limit you. On the contrary, it's artful, quirky, bursting with ideas I couldn't dream up on my most creative day. Armed with knowledge about the period and style of your house, you'll create a personal interior that will stand the test of time . . . an approach far superior to the fad-conscious advice given in other magazines. Join me. I promise you something different!



PATRICIA POORE, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

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OLD-HOUSE
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The Only Magazine Devoted to Period-Inspired Home Design.

Keeping an older house cool usually requires more ingenuity than simply switching on the air conditioner.

Yes, you can install window units, but an old house deserves more sensitive treatment.



Cool It! BY MARY ELLEN POLSON

AH, SUMMER. Anyone who lived through the winter of 2004 probably can't wait to feel the heat. But who needs the humidity? If this is the year you've planned to add air conditioning or other cooling options to your home, the choices are legion.

AIR CONDITIONING Old houses often lack the duct work for standard air conditioning, but two old-house favorites—SpacePak and Unico—get around that with their clever mini-duct systems. You'll still need a sizeable amount of room in an attic or closet for the cooling unit, but the flexible mini-ducts snake through walls and ceiling studs to put cool air right where you need it. Another good option is Mitsubishi Electric's Mr. Slim system, which requires no

ductwork and won't block your precious windows. Like a heat pump, the cooling unit is outside; it's connected to one or more fan units (up to four) that mount on interior walls. Mitsubishi's new City Multi series is the same idea on a larger scale: an 80,000-Btu unit can support up to 16 air-conditioning units. That's good news for apartment dwellers who can persuade the landlord or condo board to install one in an older building.

VENTILATION Circulation helps cool a house, and ceiling fans really do make a difference. A number of companies offer styles to suit every era, along with your choice of wood or metal blades. If only the authentic will do, Woolen Mill Fan Company makes belt-and-pulley and direct-drive fan reproductions in iron,

aluminum, or bronze, with mahogany blades. Here's another tip: open the front door and let the breeze flow in through your new screen door. While many of the screen-door makers listed on page 102 specialize in either Victorian or Arts and Crafts designs, most offer a full range of styles to suit homes built between 1870 and 1940; screendoors.com offers whimsical designs reminiscent of Adirondack camps.

KEEP THE HEAT OUT Thick walls, deep eaves, and high ceilings are all reasons why old houses feel cooler in hot weather than more modern buildings. You can help your house cool it by shielding windows that get strong sunlight (such as western exposures) with window furnishings and shutters. [text continued on page 104]

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Motor Assembly
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(FPH81RS)



WALL UNIT
Motor Assembly
(FPH210PW) shown
with Wall Unit
(FPH61BL)



FLOOR/DESK UNIT
Motor Assembly (FPH210PB)
shown with Floor/Desk
Unit (FPH41BL)



PEDESTAL UNIT
Motor Assembly
(FPH210AC) shown
with Pedestal Unit
(FPH21BL) and
Custom Carved
Post (FPH70CP)

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There are ceiling fans to suit almost every style and era. **TOP:** The brushed-aluminum Cirrus Hugger fan is reminiscent of Forties Streamline styles. **RIGHT:** The Industry recalls the early 20th century. Both from The Modern Fan Company.

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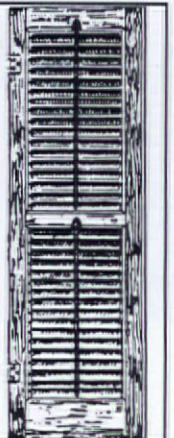
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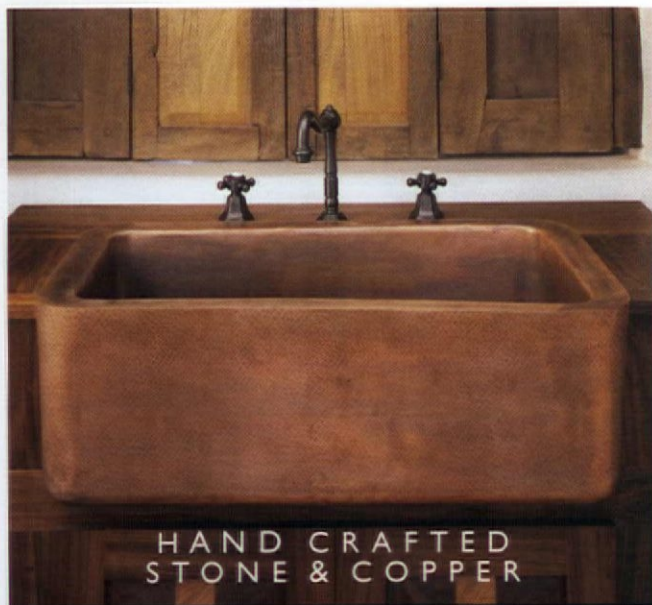
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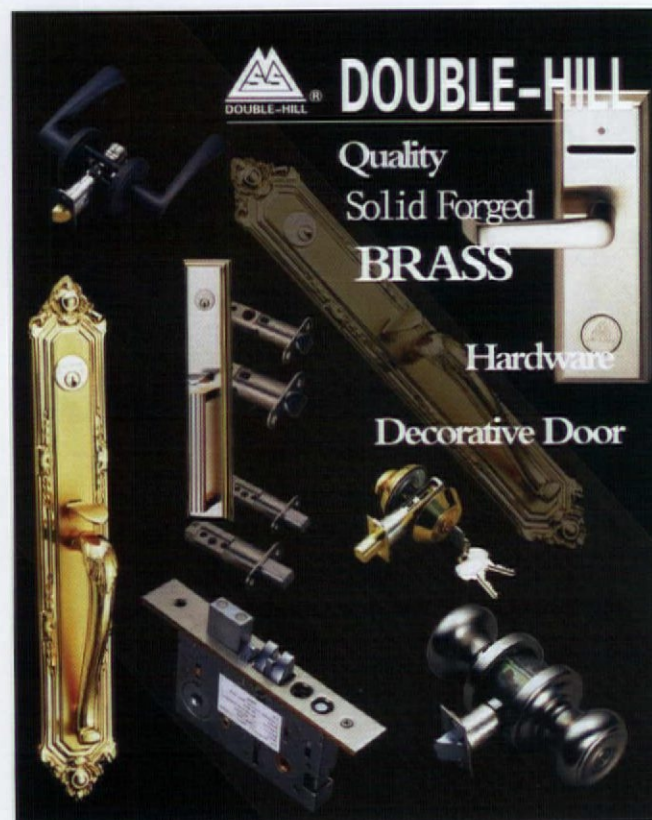
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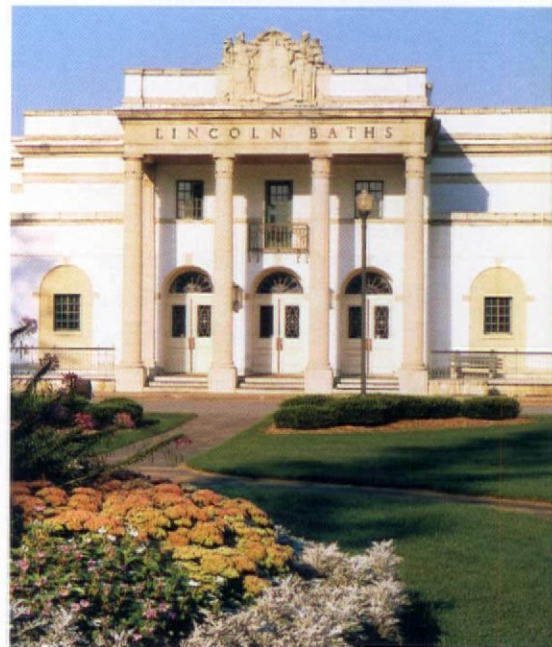
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To Saratoga Springs

BY DAN COOPER



CLOCKWISE: (from top left) The History Museum is a good place to start; downtown boasts historic architecture like the Collamer Building; the Lincoln Baths dates to the 1930s; Saratoga Race Course.



CITY FOLK began to journey here during the 1800s to “take the cure” at mineral spas fed by the naturally carbonated springs in the area. As Saratoga’s popularity increased, other more man-made diversions appeared, notably horseback races and casino gambling. The city’s website today proudly features the motto “Health, History, Horses”—a civic update of one 19th-century writer’s famous charge: “society, sport and sin.”

Often regarded as a summer playground of the rich and/or famous, Saratoga Springs (today about 45 minutes north of Albany) is a remarkable destination for aficionados of things historic. The appeal goes beyond horse racing and mineral baths. For the historical traveler, a focal point is the **SARATOGA SPRINGS HISTORY MUSEUM**, situated in the center of town at the edge of Congress Park in the old Canfield Casino building. A magnificent 1870 Second Empire

Often regarded as a summer playground of the rich and/or famous, Saratoga Springs in New York is a remarkable destination for aficionados of things historic.



LEFT: Rooftop detail of the 1873 Batcheller Mansion. **ABOVE:** The “castle” at Yaddo may not be open to the public, but the gardens are, and worth a visit. **RIGHT:** The city of 26,000 is near the six-million-acre Adirondack Park.

SITES & CONTACTS

Especially if you are planning an off-season visit, call ahead for hours and the calendar of events.

- **CITY OF SARATOGA SPRINGS**

saratoga-springs.org

- **LINCOLN MINERAL BATHS** (518) 583-2880 gideonputnam.com

- **NATIONAL MUSEUM OF RACING**

AND HALL OF FAME (518) 584-0400 racingmuseum.org

- **SARATOGA AUTOMOBILE MUSEUM** (518) 587-1935 saratogaautomuseum.com

- **SARATOGA NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK** (518) 664-9821 ext.224 nps.gov/sara

- **SARATOGA SPA STATE PARK** (518) 584-2535

- **SARATOGA SPRINGS HISTORY MUSEUM** (518) 584-6920 saratogasprings-historymuseum.org

- **YADDO GARDEN ASSOCIATION** (518) 584-0746 yaddo.org

building, it is now the home of the local historical society and exhibits a collection of Victorian-era Belter furniture, a Tiffany window, and vaulted dining-room ceiling adorned with symbols of the zodiac in stained glass.

As with any historic city or town, the best way to discover Saratoga Springs’ subtle delights is to spend a good portion of a day on foot, not only to visit publicized attractions, but also so that you may stumble upon exceptional architecture both civic and residential. My tour takes you outward from the center. Especially east of center, you’ll find houses exhibiting the finer flourishes of the late-19th century. (The city boasts 900 National Register listings.) One of the most impressive is now a bed-and-breakfast inn: the breathtakingly ornate **BATCHELLER MANSION** of 1873, located at 20 Circular Street.

Continue your foot travel along the commercial area of North Broadway—past the **ADELPHI HOTEL**, a restored Italianate building featuring a three-storey loggia and fanciful lobby. Here,



along with restaurants and shops, are antiques stores with wares that span the decades. A short walk across the park will lead you to the **REGENT STREET ANTIQUE CENTER**, a group shop in an old school building.

As we go farther afield, time to switch to horseless carriage—and a side trip to the **SARATOGA AUTOMOBILE MUSEUM**. It has a collection of classic automobiles including a 1915 Brewster, a 1931 Pierce-Arrow, and many other pre- and post-World War II vehicles. Housed in a neoclassical brick building, it is open from May through October.

For those fascinated with the ponies: **THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF RACING AND HALL OF FAME** leads attendees through the history of thoroughbred racing with paintings, trophies, and paraphernalia dedicated to the Sport of Kings. *[continued on page 110]*



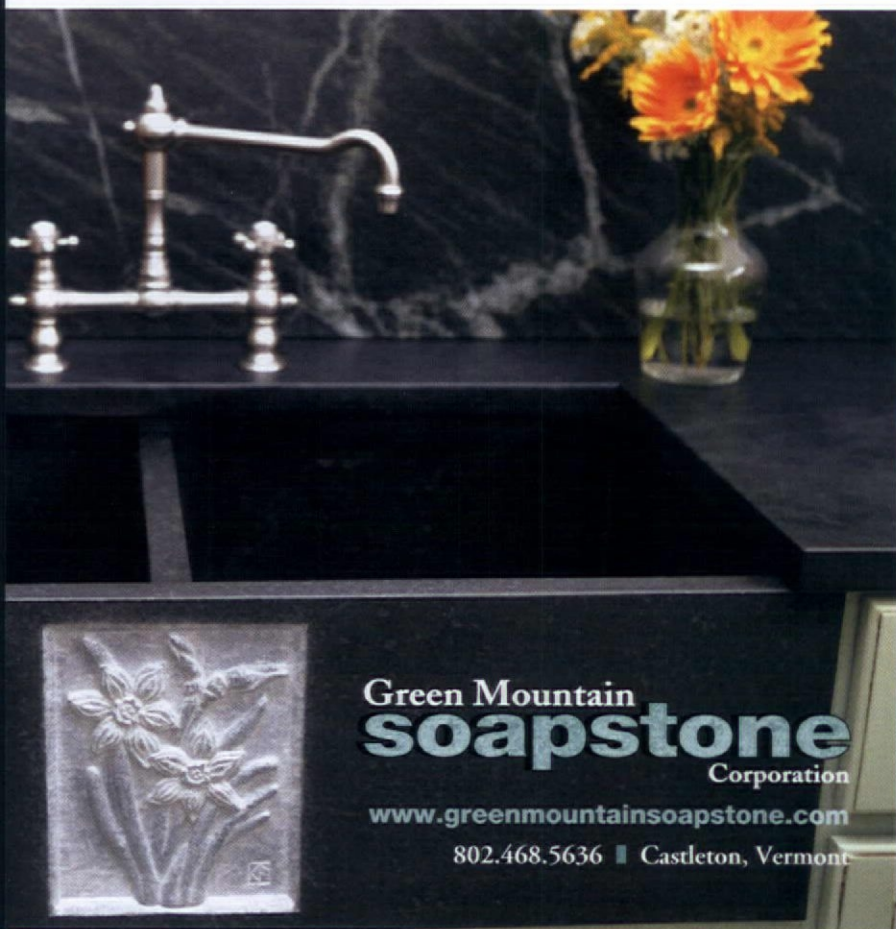
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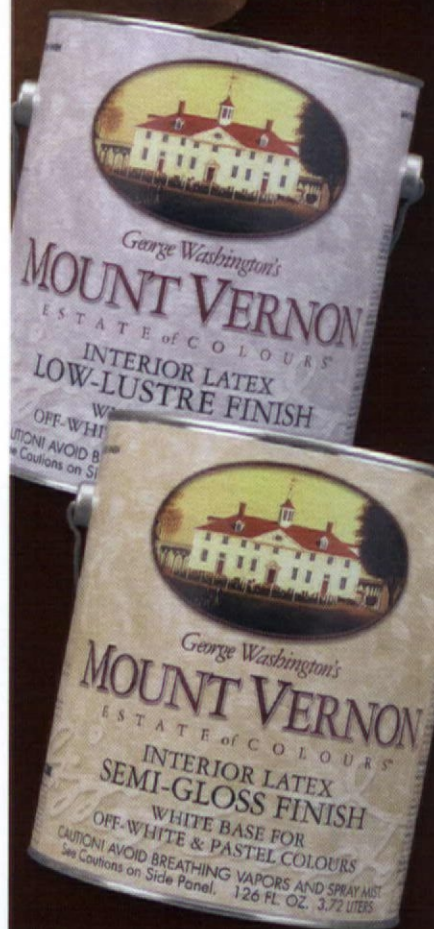
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Saratoga's therapeutic legacy is maintained in part by the **LINCOLN BATHS**, where you may still partake of the cure in its original 1930s building. You may be soothed with a traditional mineral water bath, or select the more contemporary facial, heated stone massage, or algae body wrap. The Baths are located in the **SARATOGA SPA STATE PARK**, which includes the nationally known Saratoga Performing Arts Center, the Spa Little Theater, the National Museum of Dance, and the **GIDEON PUTNAM HOTEL**. The park also caters to physical recreation, and includes golf courses, picnic areas, and walking trails. There's ice skating and cross-country skiing in wintertime; Winterfest is held during the first weekend in February.

IF THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR era is more to your interest, you'll want to visit the **SARATOGA NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK** eight miles away in Stillwater, New York. The four-square-mile area was the site of the 1777 battle of Saratoga, the first major American military victory over the British Army.

The August racing season may be the usual highlight of Saratoga's calendar, but other times of year are a better bet for the historical traveler. It will be easier to get hotel and restaurant reservations, and you will more likely experience a genteel weekend sojourn, in the nineteenth-century manner. ✦



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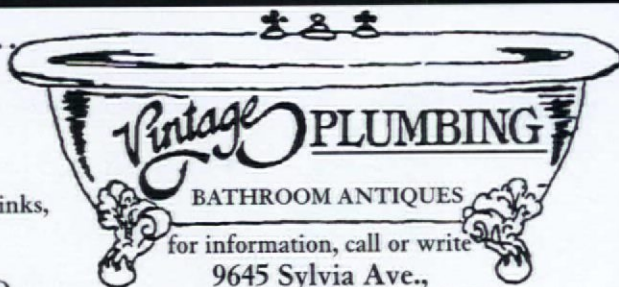
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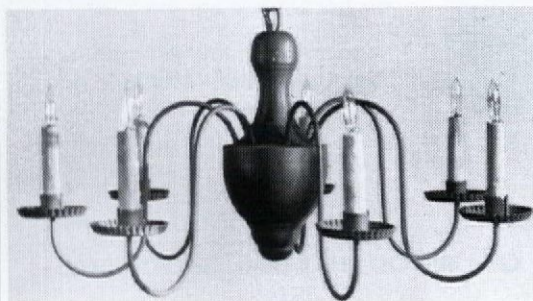
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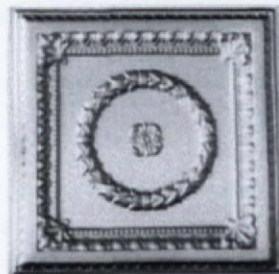
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DIALOG

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STAINED GLASS SAVVY

THE ARTICLE "Using Stained Glass" missed a very valuable resource by not mentioning the Stained Glass Association of America, a national association in existence for about 100 years. A yearly source book is available [800/888-7422] that lists numerous accredited, full-service studios. As there were some misleading statements in the article, those interested in becoming proficient in restoring old stained glass would be well served to read Preservation Brief #33, which can be downloaded from 2.cr.nps.gov/tps/briefs/brief33.htm, or ask SGAA about their booklet *Conservation and Restoration of Historic Stained Glass*.

—BARBARA KRUEGER
Hartland, Mich.

FRIENDLY PRAISE

THE LATEST ISSUE arrived [March 2004] and it is truly spectacular. I want to live in a butler's pantry! The whole magazine is first rate. Congratulations.

—KEN DRUSE
author of *The Natural Garden and Making More Plants* (Clarkson Potter)
Newton, New Jersey

FLANNEL INTERLINING?

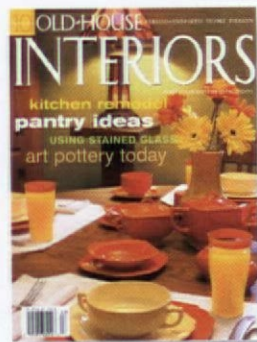
I LOVED the article ["The Right Dressing," March 2004]. Even though I live in a brand-new home, a modern interpretation of French Country style, I have large windows and unusual bays. I was surprised to read that flannel was used as an interlining. I have used muslin before. I am

using a polyester/viscose blend for my dining-room curtains. Since the fabric is fairly stiff, I am looking for ways to soften its drape. Also, I need to protect the room from strong early morning sun. Will the flannel help accomplish these things?

—JEAN BURZYNSKI
via email

Expert drapery maker Eliot Wright responds: A medium-weight cotton flannel (5–6 oz. per square yard) should be just the thing. A lighter weight would not support the "fairly stiff" fabric, and a heavier weight

would be more difficult to work with, and perhaps lend a heavier look. Flannel will definitely help with the morning sun; it is possible to use blackout lining as interlining (or as lining) if you want to block the sun, but doing so would stiffen rather than soften the hand of the fabric. Cotton flannel (54" wide in bleached white or natural) is produced specifically as a drapery interlining.



Brass-plated steel and copper-plated steel hooks are suitable for Arts and Crafts interiors; these are from Rejuvenation [888/401-1900, rejuvenation.com].



Hanging Pictures on the Wall?

I'm having trouble getting good advice about hanging pictures in a Craftsman house. We have wonderful picture moulding in all rooms and the brackets that hang from to it. But what was used to attach the pictures to the brackets—a copper wire, a dark-colored cord, or what? What was common at the turn of the last century? —SIMA KAHN, VIA EMAIL

Victorian picture-hanging—with stacked art, multiple cords, braiding in inverted Vs, tassels and rosettes—is better documented. It wasn't until after the 1920s that pictures were nailed directly into the wall. We happened across some old *Craftsman* illustrations that show framed art hung from a pair of straight-line chains at each side of the picture, going to plain metal hooks (what you call brackets) at the picture rail. Rejuvenation [888/401-1900, rejuvenation.com] has brass-plated steel and copper-plated steel hooks; Crown City Hardware [800/950-1047, restoration.com] has similar ones.

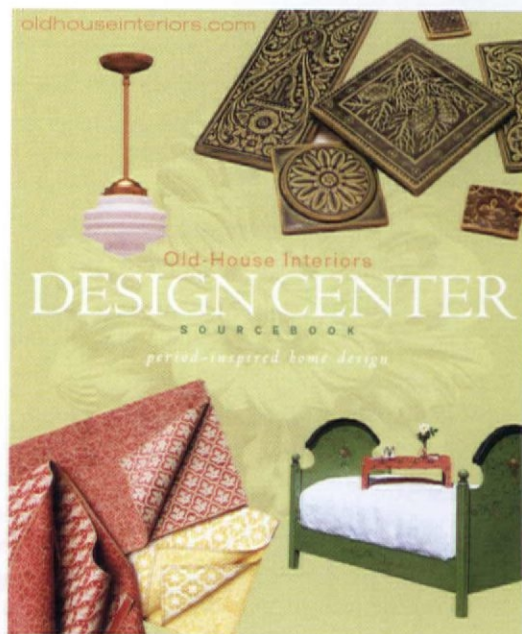
Terri Hartman at Liz's Antique Hardware [323/939-4403, lahardware.com] answers: "I just went through some period photos; it appears that a simple, small-gauge chain or wire was the hanger of choice. I saw quite a few examples of paintings simply resting on a picture rail, like plates on a plate rail."

David Berman, a historian of the English Arts and Crafts movement [Trustworth Studios, 508/746-1847, trustworth.com] writes: "Period pictures have a type of 'music wire' on the backs. Use chain for heavier pictures. A good modern choice is a bronze braided wire available from a framing supply. When the plating fails on steel it goes to a good brown color—just what the old ones I find look like. I buy new ones from commercial curtain suppliers."



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was inadvertently left out of our source list for "Hard to Find Hardware" in the Feb./March 2004 issue. The company offers door, cabinet, barn, and hinge hardware online and specializes in restoration, period, and handmade custom products.

REFORMED MODERNIST

MY WIFE AND I just bought a ca. 1872 cottage. I have always been an ultra-modernist (*Dwell* magazine; European design) but I have really changed with our new home. Two [earlier] issues had articles about realistic homes for real people on average budgets. [But] your January issue has succumbed to the same disappointing commercialism that HGTV has . . . you feature restorations that are grandiose and unrealistic. I urge you to get back to articles on homes that

are in the realm of possibility for some of us. There was a quaintness, charm, and independent spirit that attracted me to your magazine.

—GERALD GRAY
Fredonia, NY

I'm always on the lookout for good work done on a budget. Did you miss the pretty Portland bungalow done for \$5,000 and sweat equity [p.63]? (We've often been called quaint—mostly as a compliment, sometimes as an insult!) Please keep reading. —PATRICIA POORE

Sliding Hardware

I'm missing a piece of metal on the bottom of the sliding closet doors in my 60-year-old house. Do you know of a replacement source?

—ROSEMARY DEVINASPREE, TORRANCE, CALIF.

Mention hard-to-find door and window parts, and our first thought is Blaine Window and Door Hardware (800/678-1919, blainewindow.com). Their online store pictures thumbnails of various parts that might fit the bill. Since yours is a newer old house, you might also try L.E. Johnson Products (800/837-5664, johnsonhardware.com), which offers online diagrams for many door parts, including those for closet doors. —MARY ELLEN POLSON

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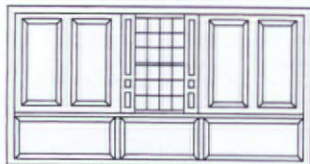
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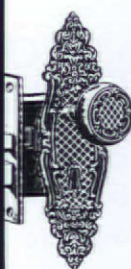
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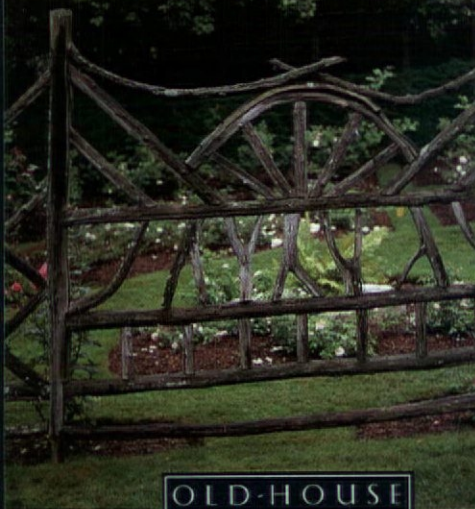
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BUDGET BRILLIANCE

JUST HAD TO SAY how impressed I am with Chris Wilson's house ["A Bungalow on a Budget," January 2004]. What an amazing little treasure he turned out on a limited budget—and with unlimited creativity. I can certainly appreciate his efforts, having faced some of the same demands and agonies when I renovated my own 1937 Cape Cod bungalow. I ended up gutting kitchen and bath, but tried to maintain the

integrity of the original. Much of the work was done by me and a tireless parade of my friends. I furnished the house with rescued items from my great-grandmother's farmhouse (1893) and corn barn—a challenge that proved to be its own reward, as Chris must know.

—TONY WATERS
Charleston, S.C.



Architect-Publishers' Legacy

The March 2004 issue has an article on the Hudson Valley house called Locust Lawn, which includes discussion of its architectural antecedents.

It is described as being inspired by "fine houses . . . in Washington and Virginia," and also credited to Hendrick Schoonmaker, builder, and one Mr. Cromwell, architect. That may be true, as far as it goes, but I suggest that the true source can be found in Plate LV of Asher Benjamin's *The American Builder's Companion*, first published in 1806, and so popular that it was reprinted through six editions over the next 21 years. Benjamin's publications were a powerful transmission source for the American "Federal" style. Later patternbook authors likewise kept the public and builders current on changing taste, such as Minard Lafever's books of the 1830s, which influenced Greek Revival-style building. Mid-19th-century authors including Downing left out much of the technical carpentry information that consumed many pages of



Plate LV. Feet to one Inch.

Asher Benjamin's works, concentrating instead on decorative concerns.

The time period of Locust Grove's construction is precisely at the mid-point of popularity for Benjamin's work. There is a very similar house, Fenwick Manor, in southern New Jersey. —JANET W. FOSTER CO-AUTHOR.

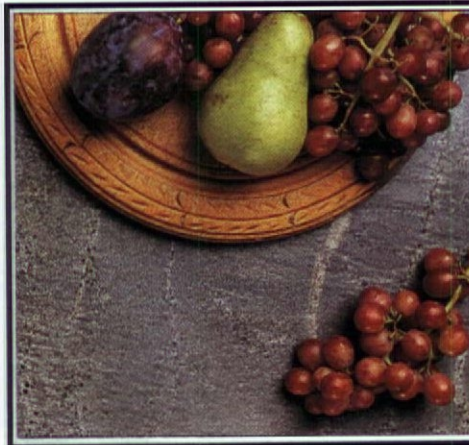
WITH ROBERT P. GUTER, OF *BUILDING BY THE BOOK: PATTERN-BOOK ARCHITECTURE IN NEW JERSEY* (RUTGERS UNIV. PRESS, 1992)

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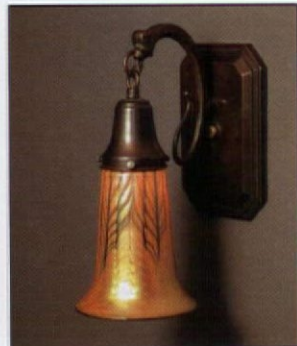
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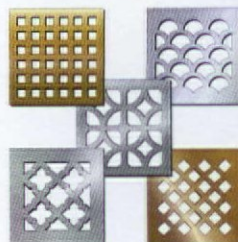
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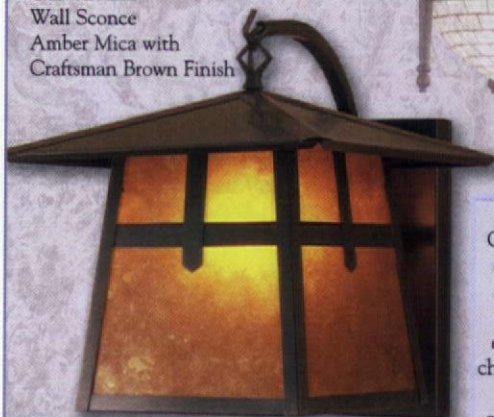
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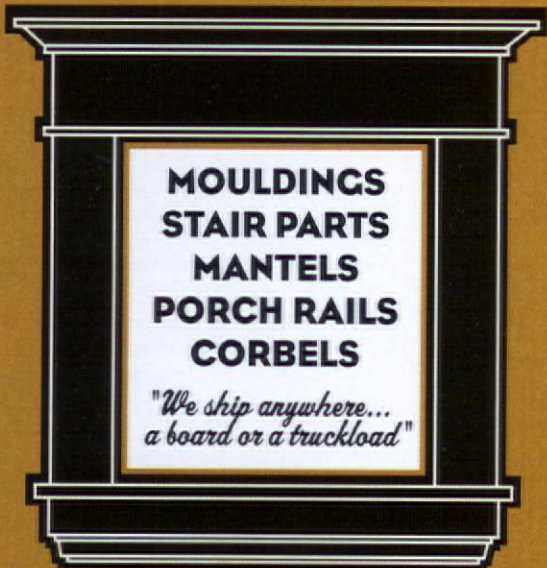
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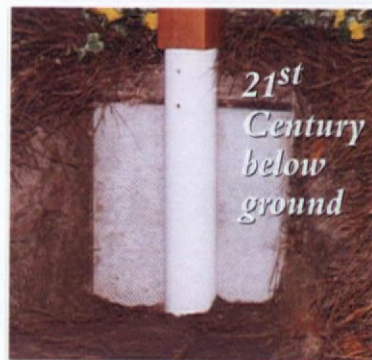
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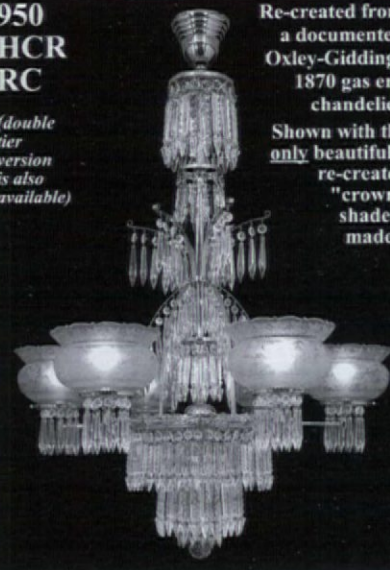
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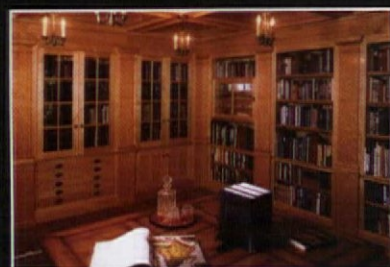
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The editors have compiled this section to give you more information about products and services in this issue. Objects not listed are generally available, or are family pieces or antiques.

Fabric on the Walls pp. 60-64

Scalamandré (NYC): 800/932-4361, scalamandre.com (to the trade). • Al Soussan, Washington, DC: wallsupholstered.com • PJ Bergin Textile Techniques, Inc., Denver: 303/744-3801 (to the trade) • Upholstered Walls by Anne Marie [Sherlag], Chicago: 847/202-0642, wallss@mindspring.com • Grid installation system: SnapTex at snaptex.com

Cedar Crest pp. 68-72

p. 70 Dining-room wallpapers from Bradbury and Bradbury Art Wallpapers (CA): 707/746-1900, bradbury.com Fill is Raspberry Bramble (Aesthetic Green series); frieze is Deer and Rabbit (Ashes of Rose) from Morris Woodland Roomset; ceiling from In the Dresser Tradition.

Summer of 1920 pp. 73-79

Pat Parker is principal at the design/build firm Parker House, Portland, OR: 503/788-0603, parkerhouseinfo.com • The new house was temporarily furnished by Rejuvenation Inc.: catalog sales 888/401-1900, rejuvenation.com; store at 11 SE Grand (corner of Grand & Taylor), Portland, OR 97214; 503/231-1900 p. 74-5 Rejuvenation's Portland store sells furniture, etc., retail. The company has just begun to sell upholstered (only) furniture via catalog. Rejuvenation Furniture is an exclusive line of sofas, chairs, ottomans, and loveseats "at an affordable price. All pieces have a sturdy hardwood alder frame and a sinuous spring system that provides longevity and stability." Cushions

are foam. The camelback "Lola" is a classic look from the late '20s to early '30s. Specs: Fabric La Paz, 48% poly/, 52% cotton, in colors Fog, Lagoon, Redwood, Walnut, Sienna. Sofa width 86"; loveseat width 64"; chair width 38"; ottoman width 20", ht. 16.5" p. 76 Birch buffet by Nichols & Stone, and art-glass lamp by Quoizel, avail. at store only; see above. • "The Brooklyn" chandelier, shown in burnished-antique finish with "gold tulip" hand-blown shades, is a repro. from Rejuvenation, avail. by catalog.

Bartow-Pell pp. 88-93

Reproduction mid-19th-century carpets through J.R. Burrows, Rockland, MA: 800/347-1795, burrows.com • The mansion is open year-round on Wed., Sat. and Sun., 12-4 pm, except some major holidays. Museum includes gardens open daily and a carriage house open Apr.-Oct. Admission \$2.50 adults; \$1.25 seniors and students: Pelham Bay Park, 895 Shore Road, Bronx, NY 10464; 718/885-1461, bartowpellmansionmuseum.org From Manhattan, subway Lexington IRT #6 to Pelham Bay Park; then Westchester Bee-Line Bus #45 (Mon.-Sat.) to Pelham Bridge Road. By car, exit Hutchinson River Pky. or New England Thruway at City Island/Orchard Beach. Follow exit to traffic circle. Exit circle onto Shore Road North. Follow 1/2 mile to gates on right. Parking avail.

Mouse Motif p. 130

The composition-stone garden ornament is from Lucca Statuary: luccastatuary.com

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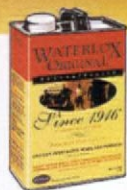


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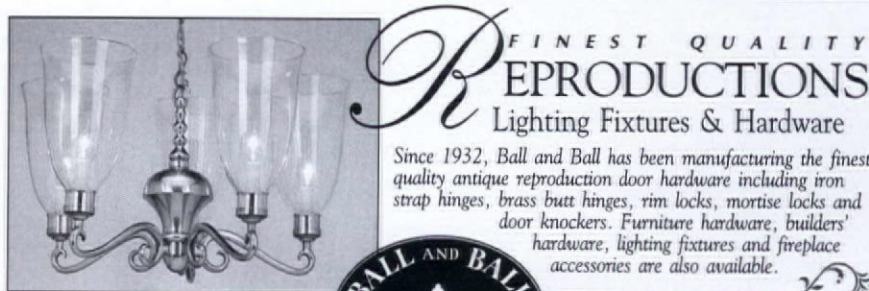
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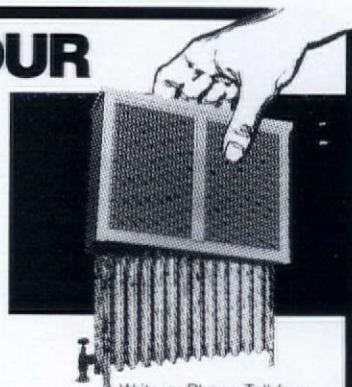
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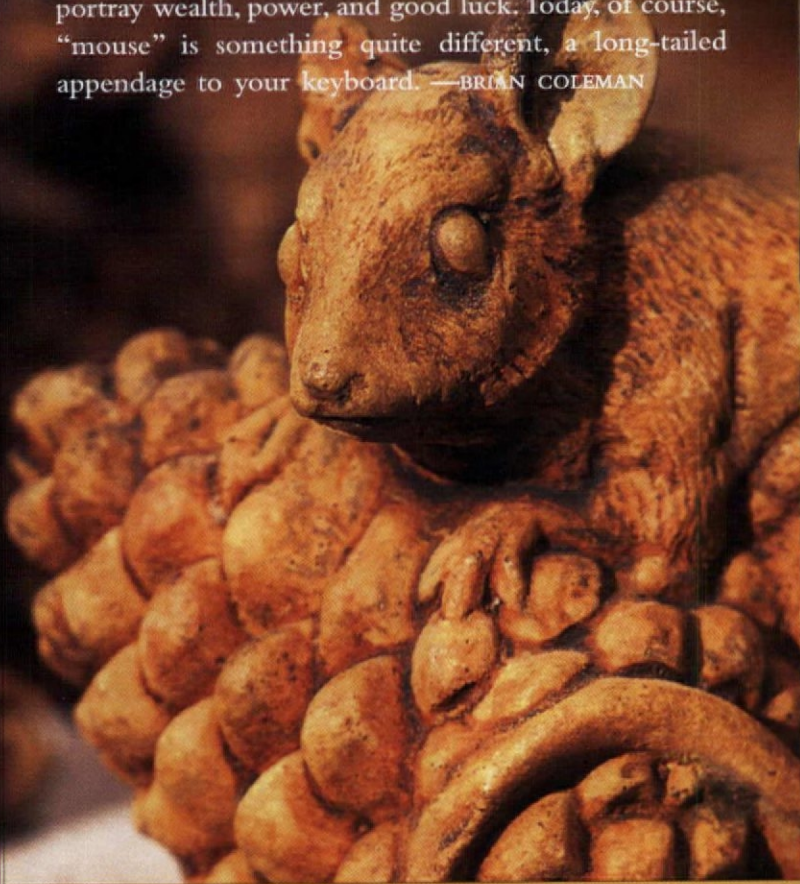
MOTIFS

Mouse

INTERESTING, isn't it, that although Walt Disney's creation of Mickey Mouse in 1923 created a wave of popularity for the little rodent, by the 1940s "mickey-mouse" already meant something silly or simplistic? Timidity and humility have long been associated with the harmless mouse. Yet mice can also stand for hypocrisy (in Judaism) or destruction (in Christianity). The relentless mouse connotes Satan's power when it is found gnawing at the Tree of Life in Christian art. Mice have been thought to be an animal form taken by witches. Plagues of mice were considered a punishment from God. ■ Then again, white mice were a sign of good luck in Roman times; in some Western European folk tales, they embodied the souls of unborn children. For centuries the mouse has symbolized innocence in nature: Think of nursery rhymes like "Hickory Dickory Dock," or the tales of Beatrix Potter. In oriental art, mice portray wealth, power, and good luck. Today, of course, "mouse" is something quite different, a long-tailed appendage to your keyboard. —BRIAN COLEMAN



ABOVE: Mice scamper in the vines of a Low Art Tile fireplace surround c. 1875. BELOW: Mice as the hunted in the wallpaper design "I Love Little Pussy" from English architect C. F. A. Voysey (1857–1941). BACKGROUND: Composition-stone mice scamper on a garden patio.



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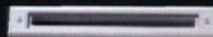
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