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ON THE COVER: *The appeal of a summer color palette, conditioned by the local customs of man and nature. Cover photograph by Michael Dunne/Elizabeth Whiting & Associates.*

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SUMMER 1999



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In Company

MY HUSBAND DOESN'T SHARE MY passion for architecture and design. Well, now, that is something of an understatement. He is suspicious of it, actually, equating it with consumerism—buying, buying: carpets, antiques, new art tiles. Who can blame him? after all, I'm running a glossy magazine, not throwing pots in a garret. When I gratefully placed all my very pretty house books on the new built-in bookshelves [seven years since we bought this house, finally unpacking boxes], my husband countered such a public display of shallowness with books on religion, Jungian psychology, ancient dance—dogeared books I found appallingly private. I had some of the same books in my dusty boxes. I wanted them in the bedroom.

My private passion has been, of course, quite public, shared with thousands, with freelance writers and advertisers. In fact, I have made it a livelihood. In that I'm lucky, I suppose. A dedicated amateur who found a paying way to stay in it. There are the usual compromises. I am persuaded to run an article because it is on a popular subject; to refrain from printing too many photos of decrepitude (I often like the 'before' pictures better). I encourage other voices in the magazine

who don't share my preference for preservation or, in the absence of anything left to preserve, then the personal. But for all the business realities I confront, I still am moved by much of what comes across my editorial desk. And here I find understanding company.

I have favorite architects and designers the way I have favorite writers. The ones who transcend wood or words to let Something else speak, whether through a chained fury or a serene calm. I have read books for the story and found myself in awe of the craft—*how* did she do that, get out of the way, create such a piercing view?

There are rooms like that, too. Consider the designer (a Whistler? a Sullivan?) whose work suggests probable human genius, but who once or twice soars high enough to shatter reality, like the Hallelujah chorus breaks us out of our appreciation to bring a flood of unexpected tears during Handel's *Messiah*.

Anyway, I did buy a lot of things during my restoration. I had no choice. Everything is new once. I imagine these things as old stuff used by my children's kids, who will like this house, but who won't think about it much.



Before kids: a new camera with a timer finds us on the night of the Brooklyn Museum Ball.

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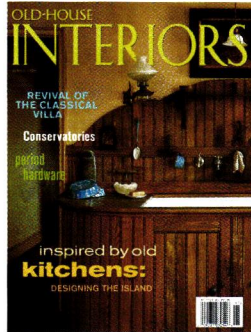
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Burlap How-To

DURING THE THREE YEARS THAT MY HUSBAND and I have been laboring to gently restore our 1922 Bungalow, we could not have had a more accurate, informative, or enjoyable magazine to guide our way.

I have become fascinated with the concept of burlap-covered wall panels that were period enhancements to many bungalow rooms in the 1920s. I would like to attempt a duplication. Can you provide some insight as to the exact type of fabric? Is it truly burlap or a type of wallpaper? Most importantly, is it glued directly to the plaster or is it sealed in some way once applied? I am thinking of this for the panels of my dining room wainscot,



between the vertical moulding strips.

A beautiful example of this type of treatment is in a home that you have featured in your magazine... I'm speaking of course of "Mariposa" in California. Although my little 1922 Bungalow is very modest in comparison to the classic "Mariposa" it does have some delusions of its own grandeur.

—CYNTHIA FRENCH
Syracuse, N. Y.

Fabrics suitable for Arts and Crafts walls have a dense weave with a slightly rough texture. Although lumped together under the heading "burlap" they include jute, hopsacking, Hessian, and linen union. At the turn of the century, woven wall fabrics were usually hung on finished plaster walls, but the newly invented and heavily advertised plaster wall-

board was considered a perfect surface to be "burlapped". To hang the burlap, put wheat-flour paste on the wall, then press the dry burlap onto the pasted surface. There are wallpapers that reproduce the look of gilded burlap; some find them easier to work with. Bradbury and Bradbury Art Wallpapers in Benicia, California is one supplier. You can call them at (707) 746-1900. However, real fabric applied to walls and ceilings is still an excellent way to furnish rooms in homes such as yours. —REGINA COLE

Beat Us to the Punch

REGARDING OLD-HOUSE INTERIORS SUMMER 1998, an article written by Regina Cole "Folk Art Underfoot": I have traveled Georgia over to find such a tool in the craft stores, and cannot find a punch needle. Is there anyway you all can help me acquire such a needle?

—BRENDA HARDAWAY
Decatur, Georgia



McAdoo Rugs (featured in the article) sells punch needles. They have two kinds in stock, and one of those is the kind they use in their own rug-making operation. You can contact them at 1 Pleasant Street, North Bennington, Vermont 05257; their telephone number is (802) 442-3563. There is also a website: www.mcadoo.com. —THE EDITORS



JOHN BALL

COMING UP

September 1999

Sunnyside, Washington Irving's Sleepy Hollow home in Tarrytown, New York, is one of the visits we'll make when *Old-House Interiors* increases its publication schedule to six times a year, starting with the upcoming issue ... We'll explore the Mediterranean Revivals of the 1920s ... Give some advice on how to buy an oriental rug ... Forms and function of 20th century electric light ... Louis fifteen, Louis sixteen: getting straight on French furniture styles.

corner in the midst of (in those days) a harsh New Jersey winter. The house and conservatory still remain.

As for the hardware, it is indeed beautiful, but why the flat and ugly Philips screws, which didn't come into use until the 1950s? Surely the Victorians would have preferred the standard, oval-head slotted variety.

—FREDERICK BRANCH
Bloomfield, N.J.

We'd like to thank the Oakland Museum of California for the use of the following photographs in the PROFILE "By Example Led," [Winter 1999]. From the Collection of the Oakland Museum of California: Portraits of Arthur and Lucia Mathews, from Archives. Desk, c. 1910: Gift of Mrs. Margaret Kleinhans. Covered Jar, c. 1910–1915: Gift of Concours d'Antiques, Art Guild. Portrait of a Young Red Haired Girl, 1910: Gift of Mr. Harold Wagner.

Points Well Taken

JUST A WORD OR TWO TO TELL YOU HOW much I enjoy your magazine, dropping whatever I am doing to read it from cover to cover ... even the ads.

The articles on conservatories and different period hardware [Spring 1999] were of particular interest. Back in the 1930s there was an 1890 Colonial Revival mansion located near us, with a large conservatory. We used to walk past on a snowy winter day to marvel at the flowers and palm trees that made a tropical paradise on that

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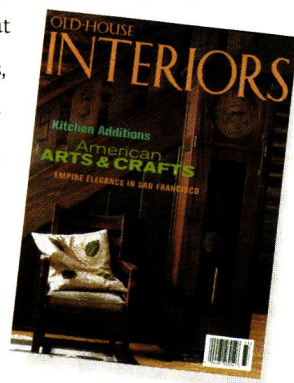
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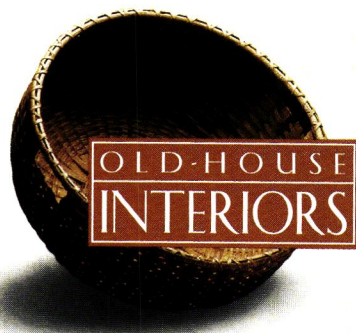
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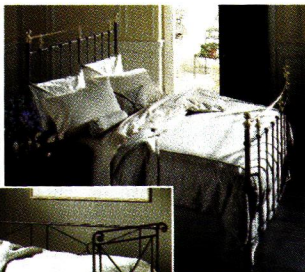


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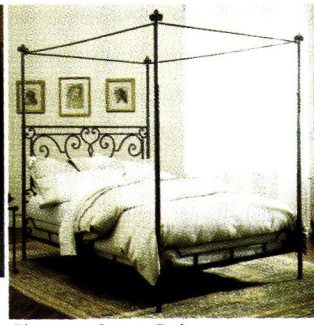
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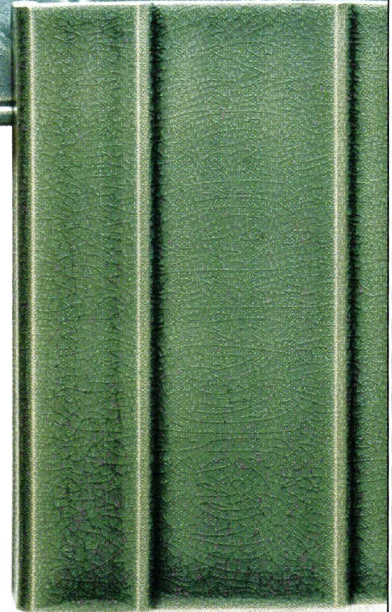
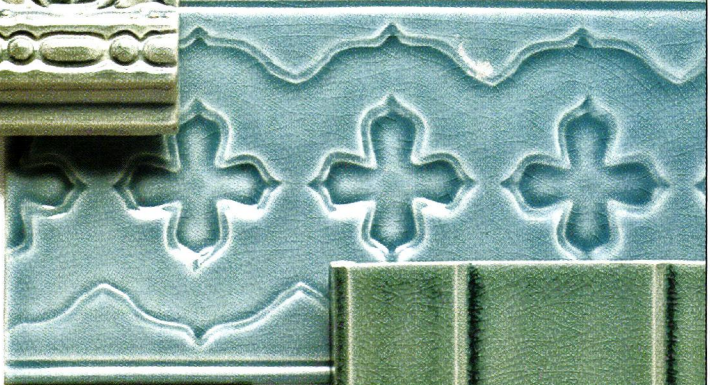
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For more information see page 110



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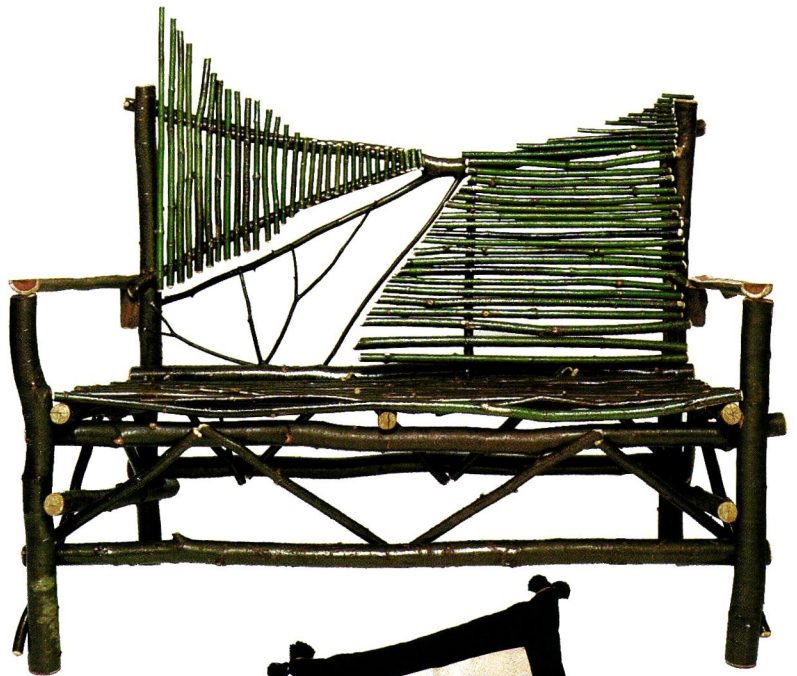


Rhythm of the Falling Rain

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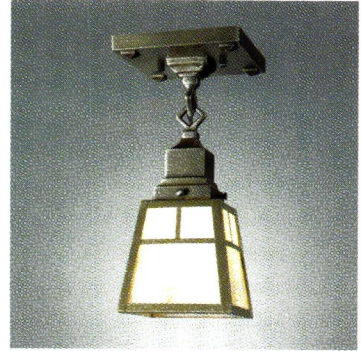




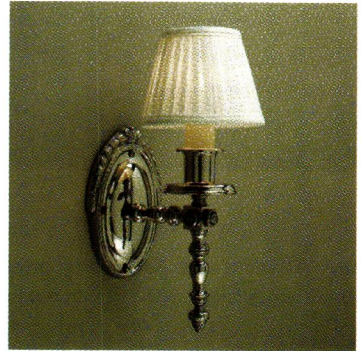
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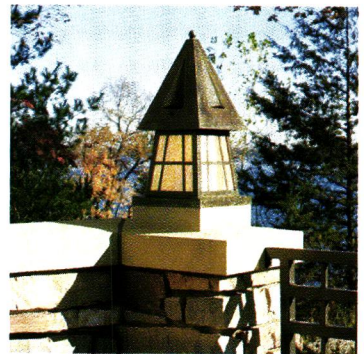
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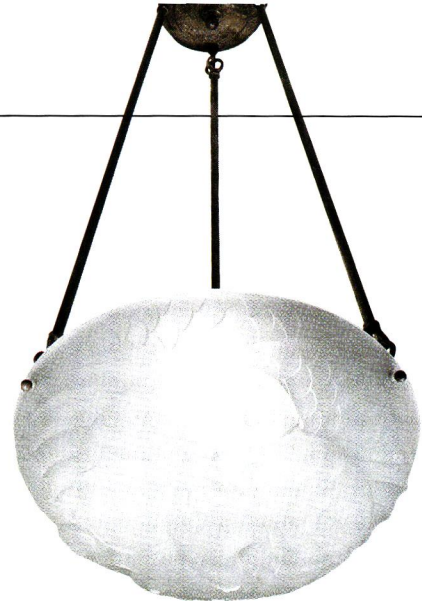
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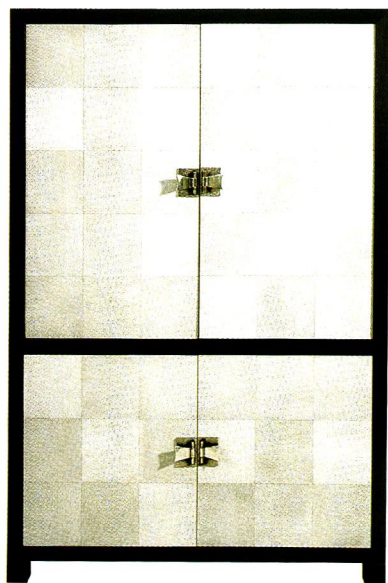


• Hues Bold and Delicate

The European Deco era was expressed in bold patterns and colors by Clarice Cliff. The pastel color sense of the time lives in a 1923 wallpaper whose stars recall Mercedes hood ornaments (designed around the same time).

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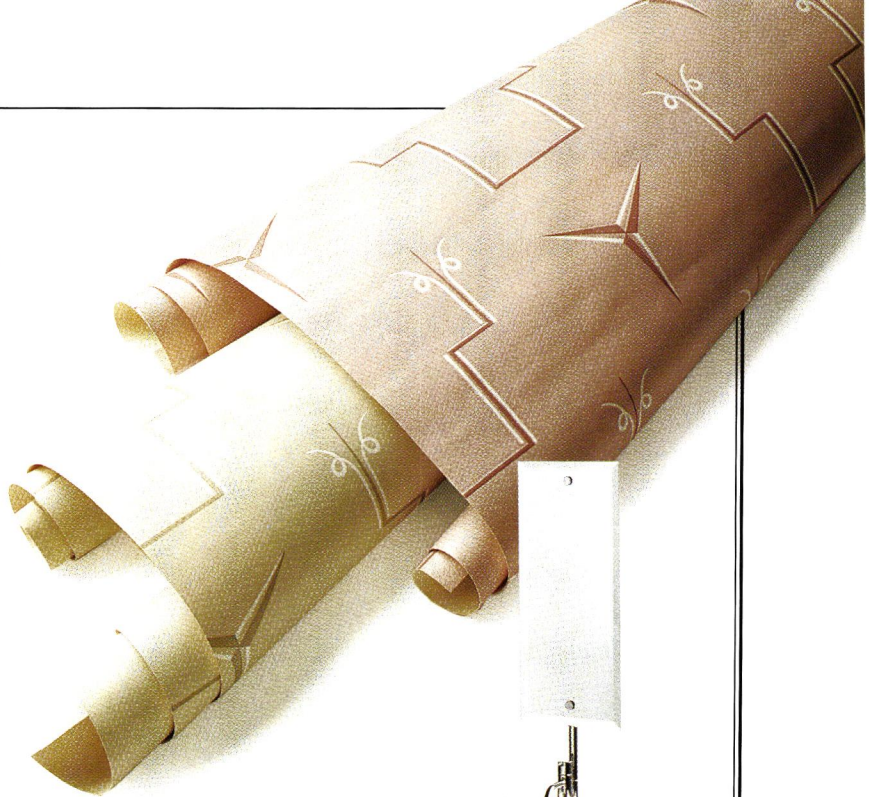


• Modern Times

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• Human Drama

The Art Deco period used the human figure as one of its principal design motifs, especially in lighting fixtures and decorative figurines. Art Deco Decor of Laguna Hills, California, features a large collection of reproduction pieces.

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Colors of the Past

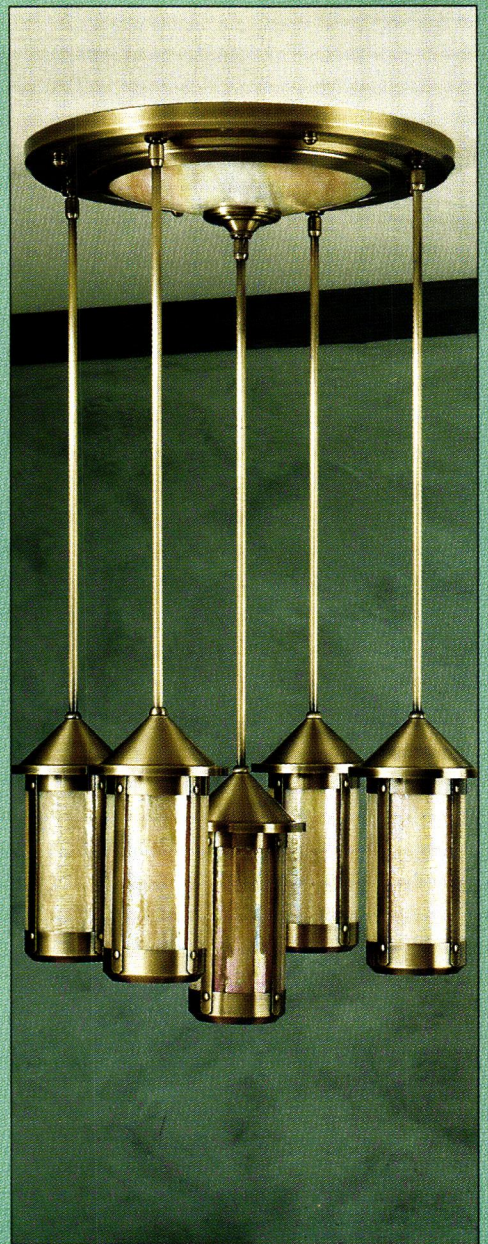
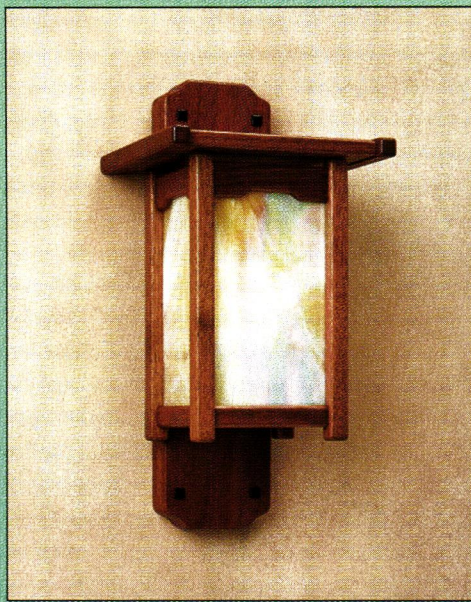
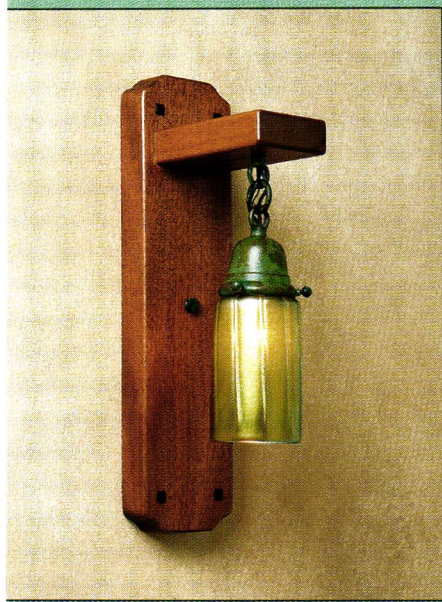
The Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities (SPNEA) not only has developed a line of historical paint colors, but they have also produced a chart telling you which colors are appropriate to which periods. For a color chart and distributor's list of the Historic Colors of America, call (800) 995-8885.



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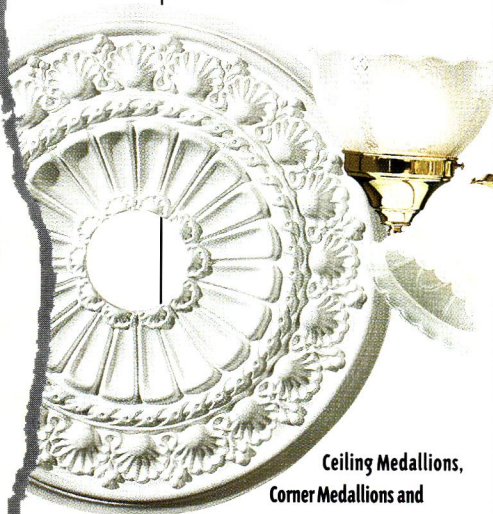
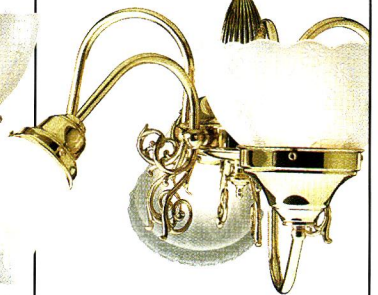
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The Kitchen

by Mona Simpson

THE HOUSE HAD A POLISHED DINING TABLE IN THE LIVING room, flanked by sconces, but it was a sham. I remember it opened out only twice, after funerals. It was much the same as the front door with its attendant coat closet and the Polynesian room in the basement, where joy-colored lights tinted dusty exotic cocktail glasses over the Kon-Tiki bar, and a mounted sailfish camouflaged the door to the root cellar. Probably, a slot machine reigned in the corner, stalled on a flush of pears. ~ These were relics, from an earlier, more boisterous time in the house's life, when guests parked on the long semicircular front drive, clacked and shushed in the front door, through the kitchen, down the stairs to dance in the Polynesian room, to the Merry Macs, Lawrence Welk, Benny Goodman, Guy Lombardo and His Royal Canadians. I have forgotten to mention that there was a Victrola and ledge of thick LPs. ~ That era was long over. By the time I lived there, it was a grandmother's house, with the unexpected jangly addition of children. We were left there for spells while our parents tried to untangle their forbiddingly adult lives. There were three of us. Sometimes just one of us would be there, sometimes two, sometimes all. Sometimes siblings, sometimes cousins. In my grandmother's presence we each became different in the house. We shared her bafflement toward our parents as we watched them drive away in their cars. It seemed our grandparents had never been so dangerously young. We didn't know yet if we would be.

We lived—most of our time—in the kitchen, around or beneath the table, which was aluminum and Formica in the style of the day, gray-flecked with tubu-

lar silver legs that felt good to tangle your feet around. ~ In the morning, we woke to the minute sounds of my grandmother, shuffling and dividing, dealing out her cards on that table. ~ Breakfast was what we wanted. Sometimes we wanted just pie from last night, my grandmother's one-crust fruit pies with their dark lace tops. Once in a while, there would be pancakes, currants warm and running inside, from the small bush outside.



When it was raining, she would have something called oefflaven already in the oven, in a cast-iron pan. More like a popover than a pancake, it rose with peaks of air, and she served it with powdered sugar and cinnamon. For years, afterward, we tried to find the recipe, but she had never written it down. Sometimes we didn't know what we wanted and then we got eggs, beautifully cooked, the ruffled waves centered on the green plate, with four even quarters of toast at the sides. Probably a whole generation of women were accomplished short-order cooks as my grandmother was, without ever considering it a skill.

The kitchen was a big, perfectly square room, the easiest configuration for symmetry and consoling order. The wreath of fluorescent light centered the ceiling exactly and stuttered on when you flicked the switches by either door. ~ The vast, white stove faced the deep kitchen sink and its window, which telescoped a deep yard and beyond that fields, which changed crops in the course of our lives there. First cow corn, then alfalfa, then hay. For a while after, nothing. Now, pavement. ~ The refrigerator faced the mangle, an obsolete, beautiful, white enamel four-legged trouser press, on which my grandmother kept her thriving African violets. ~ The two west corners were doors: one to a little

The old white sink was where we had our baths, one at a time. You watched the others, how strange they looked, older and dumb with wet-down hair.

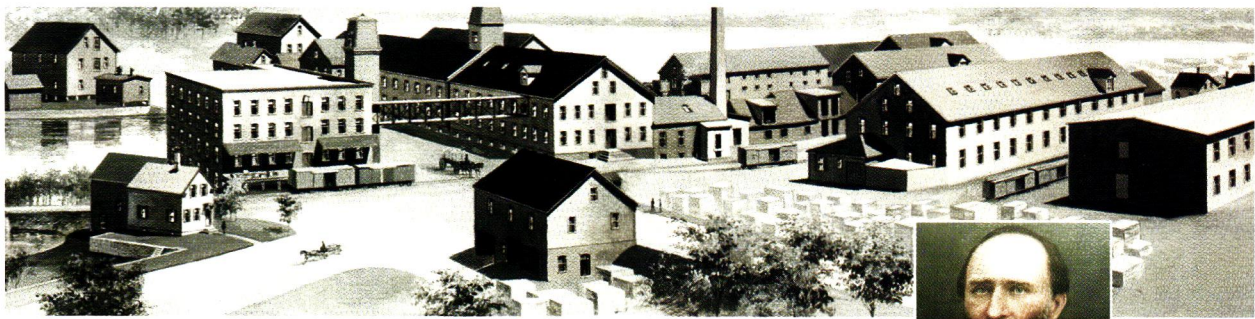
hall that gave onto the staircase, the living room, and more halls, to the den and downstairs bedroom; the other to the back entry, where the dog slept and my grandmother hung his long leashes and collar, and all our outdoor clothes. ~ The southeast corner held the evil closet with the broom and the wastepaper basket. We didn't have garbage exactly. Wastepaper was collected in a brown grocery bag with a neat cuff folded down from the top and burned outside every Friday night in a can. Food scraps were composted for the garden, and most everything else was collected in the garage until the day we drove out to the dump. ~ In the northeast corner, there was the telephone, a party line and the only one in the house, which rested on the counter. A chair resided between that counter and the refrigerator and somehow in that small recessed square, one felt a kind of privacy even as my grandmother moved over the stove and boys stood gulping milk, in one long drink. There was a drawer beneath the phone, with paper and three-inch sharpened pencils, old calendars, rubber bands, erasers, ancient grocery lists. ~ We fiddled with these things, talking to our parents on the phone, whispering, *When?* Yes. Steak. Blueberry. No. Everything here was fine. It was just that we wanted to go home. ~ I pictured where they were—the other side of time, a flatter light, bright things new. I was missing time even then.

The first few minutes after our parents, when we watched the car until it was gone or when they hung up, we took time to adjust. It was the country here. We heard the sounds of outside and no other people. And the sounds of machines. Electricity jolting the refrigerator and the electric clock. There was also a German carved cuckoo clock that chimed every quarter hour. The small radio. The regular ticking chirp of the baby goose in the corner. Soft, repetitive sounds, varieties of ticking. The gosling's peeping, not plaintive but soothing even to itself like the sound of knitting. My grandmother's shuffling and dealing. ~ Animals were always a part of our life there and they, too, lived in the kitchen. Our young parents bought us dogs and bunnies and baby ducks (one of which turned out to be a goose) on Easter, and when they were too much for us to take care of, they landed at my grandmother's house the same way we did. The bunny and the goose lived in the kitchen until they were big enough to go outside. The rabbit

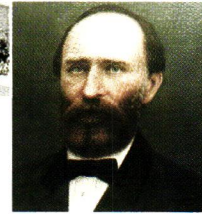
slept in my grandmother's old sock. The gosling had its own cardboard box, with holes just big enough for its beak. The goose grew huge soon. ~ Time went slow here between breakfast and lunch. For hours I'd draw under the kitchen table, when I was little, or tangle under the tent the white sheet made when my grandmother ironed, on the board that came out from the wall. Her nylons carried a dry burnt smell. ~ The boys and the animals always wanted to go outside and so I did too, at first to follow, then just for itself. My grandmother let us out when we wanted, as she did the dog. She remained in the kitchen while we ran. We would see her through the windows, doing the few chores left. Even in a house with children, my grandmother seemed to find herself with too much time between chores. She called us in for lunch.

Often at lunchtime, hoboes would come to the door from the 11:55, having made their way up the hill from the railroad. The train was regular. Somehow even the hoboes knew to use the back door. My grandmother didn't invite them in to sit down with us, but she'd fix them a plate of food to eat on the porch. Maybe a liverwurst sandwich divided into four on a square green plastic plate, which had once been a giveaway at the gas station. Plastic gives a taste to food. Her mother's German china, white plates as thin as watery paper, were stacked on her top cupboard boards so they looked like a tiered wedding cake, but she never used them. Not for us. When the hoboes left, she packed them another lunch in a paper bag, and included dented cans her cousin got free from the railroad company. ~ She baked in the afternoon in that kitchen, scattering flour right on the table. She collected hickory nuts and picked out their small soft meat, putting her glasses on to see right. ~ Dinner was a strange mix of work and convenience. It is hard to describe. There were always things fresh from the garden in summer, things pickled, mixed in with the bright variety of food from cans, packages, or frozen boxes. Many little bowls set out. What we liked. My cousin loved oranges, and when he was there, she sliced a bowlful for the table.

The old white sink was huge and where we had our baths. I remember the bitter shampoo rinsings under that spout. You sat with your knees [continued on page 26]



S. Bent circa 1900



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up and could see all the way to the copse of pine in the back, past lilacs, past my grandmother's garden, with its birdbath, its bleeding hearts, its lady's slippers. ~ We were washed one at a time, so you watched the others, how strange they looked, older and dumb with wet-down hair. ~ Before bed at night, the last thing, we sat barefoot at the table, eating a bowl of Special K, conscious of the clock. ~ Eventually, our parents all came back to claim us. Usually they ran in late in the day. They sat down, young again too—we forgot every time, this was their house first, before ours, it was the place they had been children. They ate their mother's warm pie, letting its intricacy unwind in the mouth, drinking milk the same as we had, but only now. They needed the other, what they found out far away, first.

THAT CLEAN ALUMINUM AND FORMICA oval was the scene of more important events than either the department store dining table in the living room or the French cherry wood round table from our great-grandmother, in the basement, on which my grandmother kept her tools. ~ We ate dinners there, regular summer daylight supper and Christmas dinner before midnight Mass. ~ My grandmother learned of her grandchildren there: one's dropout, an arrest, another's death. ~ I remember spying in the kitchen, opening the drawers—a changed room in a new light—when my grandmother was in the hospital. ~ She died in 1979. The house was worth, I believe, \$35,000.

For a while our parents kept it, then it was sold. A young couple lived there, and they were said to paint the walls funny colors. Once, visiting from graduate school in the

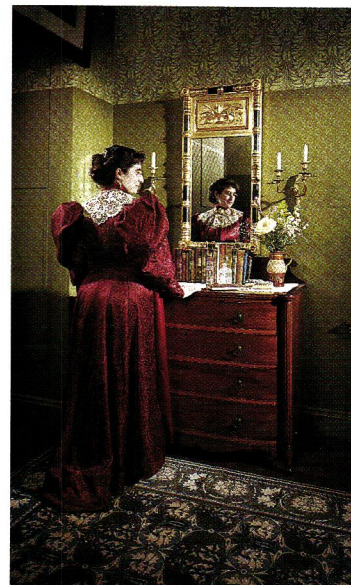
winter snow, I peeked inside through those kitchen windows on a Tuesday night and slipped off the drainpipe, wetting my East Coast big city shoes. The walls were painted red. A plaid couch. Except for appliances, the kitchen didn't seem to be a kitchen anymore. ~ Then, a few years later, the land was sold to a developer for a Wal-Mart. But before they could build they had to get rid of the house and especially the yard's tall, almost century-old trees. ~ The fire department used the house for its drills. They'd light it on fire, put it out, and start all over again. Neighbors across the street whom we'd known all our lives scavenged everything useful or valuable: the stove, the refrigerator, and the washer. ~ The woman across the road took out all the old crystal doorknobs with a screwdriver, carrying the haul in a hammock of her apron. My aunt would have liked to ask for one but felt afraid to. "Don't think she'd give it to me," she said. ~ Eventually the trees were burnt down, the house was empty, gone. Blacktop was laid.

Half the old neighbors are still there. Only the east side of the road was burned, razed, and rebuilt; the other houses are pretty much as they were in the forties and fifties, with many of the same people in them. They are waiting, I've been told, for the commercial development to obliterate them, too. They know enough to hold onto their land. ~ I've been back to my hometown several times since but I still haven't been out to see. ♦

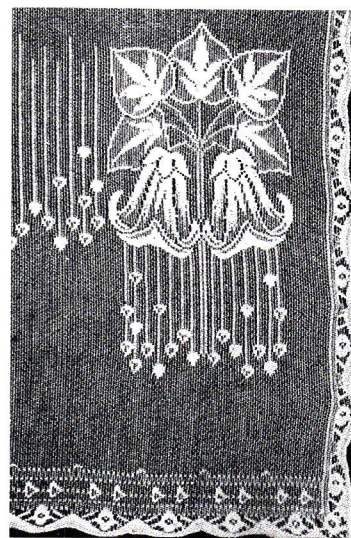
MONA SIMPSON writes short stories and novels, including *Anywhere But Here*. This essay was first published in *Home*, American Writers Remember Rooms of Their Own (Random House, 1995).

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PROFILE

"The house's history was immediately obvious the first time we walked in. In a funny way, that was what motivated me to buy it. The house needed to be saved."

—ELLEN KNELL



Changing Destiny

How Harvey and Ellen Knell are bringing back the Blacker House and writing a happy ending to a tawdry tale of greed. by Regina Cole

THE RAPE OF THE BLACKER House!" screamed the headlines. In private, admirers of Greene and Greene architecture wrung their hands and wept. No laws had been broken, but one of America's most revered architectural treasures had been desecrated.

It went like this: In 1985 a Texas antiques collector named Barton English bought the Blacker House, one of Charles and Henry Greene's "Ultimate Bungalows" in Pasadena, California. In three days, he removed about sixty lighting fixtures, stained glass windows, and door transoms, and sold them. Some of the lamps fetched \$100,000 each; one chandelier is said to have sold for a quarter of a million dollars. Reportedly, the selling price of the house, about \$1 million, was recouped in the sale of several fixtures.

When the local preservation community realized what was happening, the response was heartfelt and immediate. Citizens parked their cars at the end of the driveway and sat in them all night to prevent more pieces of the house from leaving. The City of Pasadena enacted an emergency ordinance which made it illegal to remove parts of historic properties.

But the damage had been done.

The Blacker House had been stripped of some of its most integral elements. More far-reaching, representatives of auction houses began to knock on the doors of other architecturally important homes, looking to buy pieces of them. A new, hereto unimagined era had dawned: now an important historic house might be seen as an amalgam of highly collectible parts.

Barton English never lived in the Blacker House. He soon sold it to a couple who, after making half-hearted attempts to furnish it, divorced. The biggest of the Greene and Greene

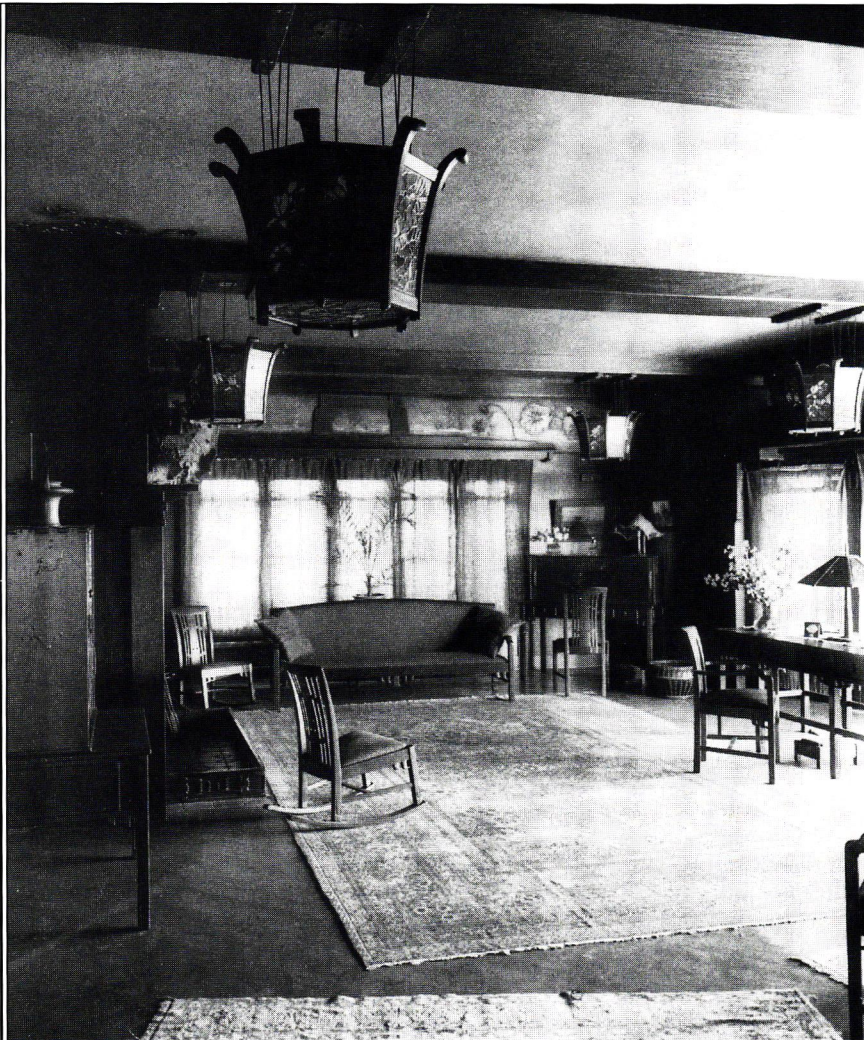
houses, the one that has been rumored to be Charles Sumner Greene's favorite, went on the market again.

Enter Ellen and Harvey Knell. The couple who turned this sad story around didn't set out to buy a Greene and Greene house; they weren't even committed to living in an old house. They house-hunted intermittently because, although they loved their beautifully designed, contemporary, post-and-beam house in Altadena, it didn't meet all their needs.

"I wanted a bigger dining room and more closets," [continued on page 32]



At 12,000 square feet, 20 rooms, and a previously unheard-of \$100,000 budget, the 1907 commission to design and build the Blacker House was the largest and most lavish for Charles and Henry Greene. It allowed exquisite and detailed workmanship and design features never before possible for the brothers.



THE WAY IT WAS

Charles and Henry Greene designed furniture specifically for the house, and they chose the accessories and oriental carpets in conjunction with Mr. and Mrs. Blacker. The furniture was sold at a yard sale in 1947. But when the art-glass front doors were literally stripped from the house and sold in 1985, preservationists and old-house lovers across the country felt the shock.

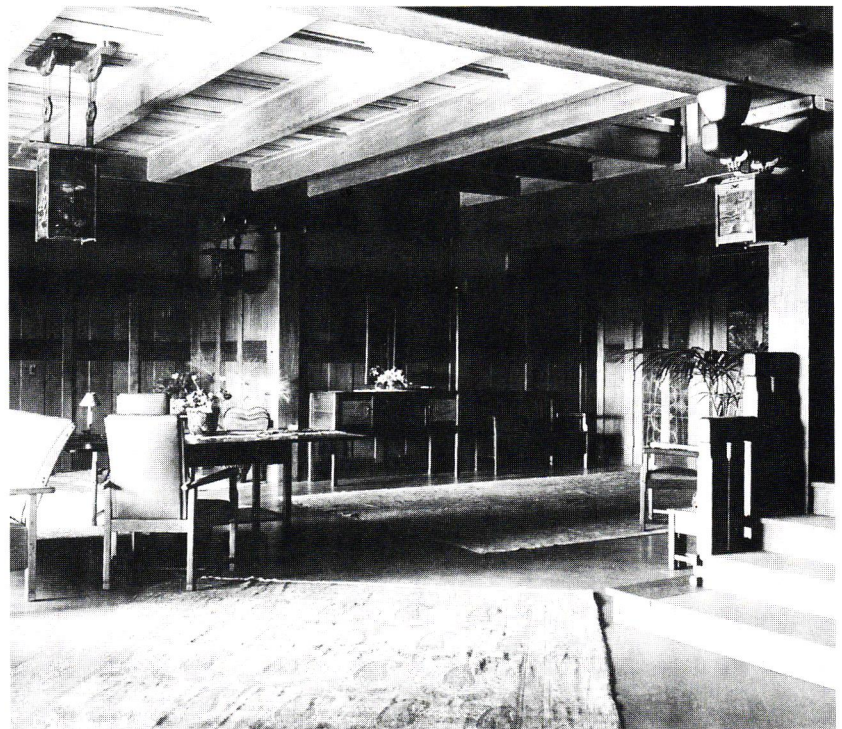
LEFT: The living room as it appeared when the Blackers lived here. **BELOW:** One of the reproduced lighting fixtures. **BOTTOM:** An early view of the interior shows the original doors.



A GLITTERING GALA

In October of 1998 the actor Brad Pitt hosted a party that celebrated the rebirth of the Blacker House.

FROM LEFT: Brad Pitt; Randell Makinson, restoration architect; Harvey Knell; Steven Sample, president, University of Southern California; Ellen Knell; Edward R. Bosley, Gamble House director; Candace Timme and Robert Timme, dean of the USC School of Architecture.



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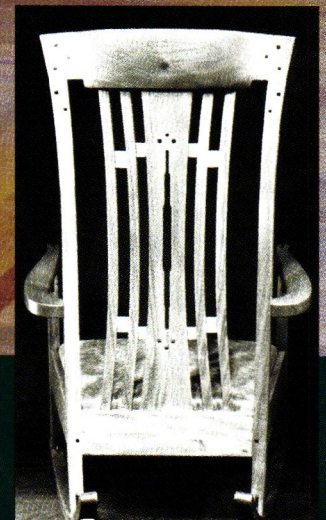


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Ellen Knell explains. But her husband adds that their former house had many valued qualities.

“Good design,” Harvey says, “is very important. And, I’m drawn to wood as a building material—it’s warm, sensual.”

In 1981, during one of their forays into the world of real estate, they saw a house they would have bought in a flash. “We were driving through Pasadena, chasing an open house,” Harvey Knell recalls. “We saw *this* house while parked in front. We didn’t know it was the Blacker House; we just loved it! But it was not for sale.”

In 1994, the Knells almost bought the Robinson House, another Greene and Greene house in Pasadena. “When it didn’t work out, I realized that Ellen had mentally

lectual firm to build their home, but after the 1906 San Francisco earthquake, they changed their minds and chose Charles and Henry Greene. The two had built a solid reputation with houses that married their own distinctive blending of Japanese design with Arts and Crafts ideals at the highest levels of craftsmanship. The Blacker commission was, at 12,000 square feet, their largest, and, at a budget of over \$100,000, the most lavish. It allowed exquisite and detailed workmanship and design features never before possible for the brothers. The Blacker House furniture, considered by many to be among the most beautiful objects of the Arts and Crafts movement, was sold on the front lawn in a yard sale in 1947. The original six-acre site was sub-

wood—they have always loved wooden sailboats. But, what really made this work was the fact that it was a team effort. It was a love affair.”

Between October 1994, when the Knells bought the house, and July of 1996, when they moved in, the team re-plumbed from the street to the house, put in a new sewer system, replaced the roof, installed a new electrical system, added air conditioning, installed new ebony-pegged electrical switches (electronically controlled), repaired rotted rafter tails, and sheathed the house in new redwood shingles.

“But the house was structurally sound,” Harvey Knell says with pride. “It was built so well, it was over-built.”

“This was an educational process for all the workers,” Randell

“We had talked about building a nice new house, but we would never be able to build anything approaching this level of design and construction,” says Harvey Knell.

moved in,” Harvey says. “Two weeks later the realtor called and said, ‘Guess what: the Blacker House is coming on the market. I know that’s the house you’ve always wanted.’”

By then, the Knells knew the story. “It was immediately obvious when you walked in and saw the naked light bulbs. In a funny way, that was what motivated me to buy it. The house needed to be saved,” Ellen adds.

And so Harvey and Ellen Knell, each of who had a demanding career, who had brought up three sons, and who had met at a youth convention when they were 16 years old, embarked on a new adventure: saving the Robert R. Blacker House.

Blacker had retired from the lumber business in Michigan when he and his wife Nellie decided to move to Pasadena for its climate. Originally they hired another archi-

divided. Maintenance was deferred and the elements took their toll. Then came the ignominious stripping of the art glass and lighting fixtures. By the time the Knells entered the picture, the Blacker House was a symbol of heartbreak.

“We had, over the years, talked about building a nice new house,” Harvey says. “But we would never be able to build anything approaching this level of design and construction. After the Robinson House purchase fell through, we wanted to buy an old house and bring it back.”

They hired noted Greene and Greene scholar and professor emeritus of the University of Southern California School of Architecture Randell Makinson to be the restoration architect. Joy animates his talk about the resulting partnership.

“They made all the decisions,” Mr. Makinson says. “They love

Makinson points out. “By taking off the shingles—they were not the original ones—we could do the wiring and plumbing from the outside, and not cut into any of the detailed interior paneling.”

When the original shakes were replaced during the 1960s, the replacements had been allowed to weather, as redwood will, to a black patina. The transparent green stain Greene and Greene first used in 1907 was no longer available. But the manufacturer, Cabot Stains of Newburyport, Massachusetts, is still in business. “They helped us formulate a batch of the same kind of stain. The workers dipped each shingle into it individually,” Mr. Makinson explains.

Many of the visitors who saw the reborn Blacker House last October noted the lovely color of the exterior. It’s the [continued on page 34]

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“When it all first happened,” Randell Makinson recalls, “Blacker House pieces were tainted—no reputable collector would buy them. After a few years, one New York collector bought one piece. That broke the ice and now they’re out there.”

first time a Greene and Greene house has been seen as the architects intended it to look since about the middle of the 20th century.

AMONG THE ISSUES RAISED BY THE STORY of the Blacker House is the ethical question underlying the collection of antiques: an object may have been dispersed when a house was destroyed, but then again, it may have been stripped.

“We have seen items for sale from this house,” says Ellen Knell. “And we have heard some *very* interesting stories.”

“The Getty Museum recently found out that it owns some pieces that were acquired less than ethically,” her husband continues. “They are returning them.”

“We are not experts on this issue,” Ellen says. “But I find it exciting that there is a change in the art world—an understanding, to start with.”

When word got out about the Knell’s restoration, some of the pieces removed in 1985 began to surface.

“A museum approached us with something from the house,” Harvey Knell says. “They said it should be returned to the house, but they also wanted a guarantee that it would never leave the house again.”

Harvey says, referring to Blacker House objects, “Some people didn’t know the origins of what they were buying. When they found out,

they moved to bring them back. Maybe it kind of validates that we are not nuts!” The couple laughs.

Lighting fixtures and pieces of glass from the house are in collections ranging from New York’s Metropolitan Museum of Art to private Arts and Crafts collectors. They surface at auctions periodically, where they fetch astronomical prices.

“When it all first happened,” Mr. Makinson recalls, “Blacker House pieces were tainted—no reputable collector would buy them. After a few years, one New York collector bought one piece. That



What this is really about is the restoration of an ideal. The Blacker House was the ultimate expression of Arts and Crafts ideals, sited to be an intrinsic part of the California landscape.

broke the ice and now they’re out there, being bought and sold the way antiques are. Yes, museums own them, but once they’ve gone beyond the first generation (of selling), you might as well have them in museums, where people can see them.”

It is important to note that the removal of the pieces was, at the time, not illegal. With the exception of rare ordinances like the one

passed by the City of Pasadena, private property owners in the United States are free to do what they wish with their houses and their contents.

“It was not illegal,” agrees Randell Makinson. “But it was reprehensible.”

Harvey Knell does not argue with the rights of property owners, in most cases. “Not all houses are national treasures,” he points out.

The Knells engaged master craftsman Jim Ipekjian of California to commission reproductions of the missing lighting fixtures. The house is an integrated whole again,

awaiting reproductions of the original furniture, which Ipekjian himself is making. In addition to the highly publicized celebration of last October (see page 30), the house is full of people again.

“We have a benefit at the house about once a month,” Ellen Knell says. “For the L.A. County Museum, the Mother’s Club Center, the Gamble House. It’s important that people see the house.”

The Knells say they have seen no ghosts in the house. But they talk about how, when a storm wind blew through the chimneys, the house made a sound “like one of those great, curved alpine horns.”

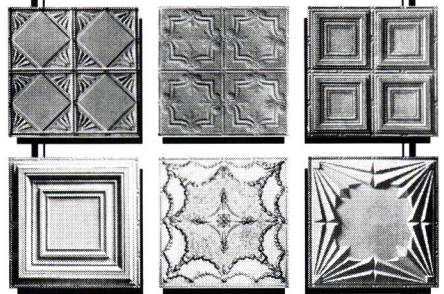
The Blacker House is also a home again. Harvey and Ellen and their two dogs live here contentedly. In fact, Harvey insists, “The next move for me is with a little duffel bag onto a sailboat. Or in a pine box.” ♦

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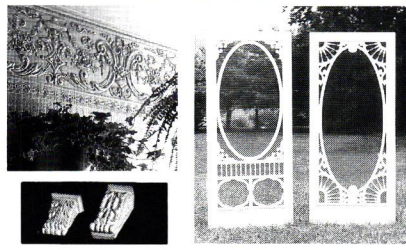
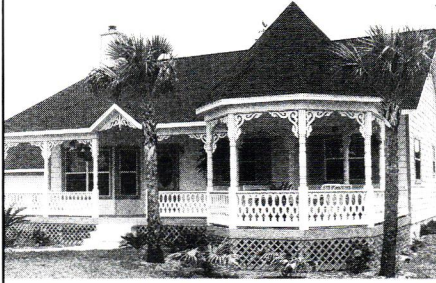
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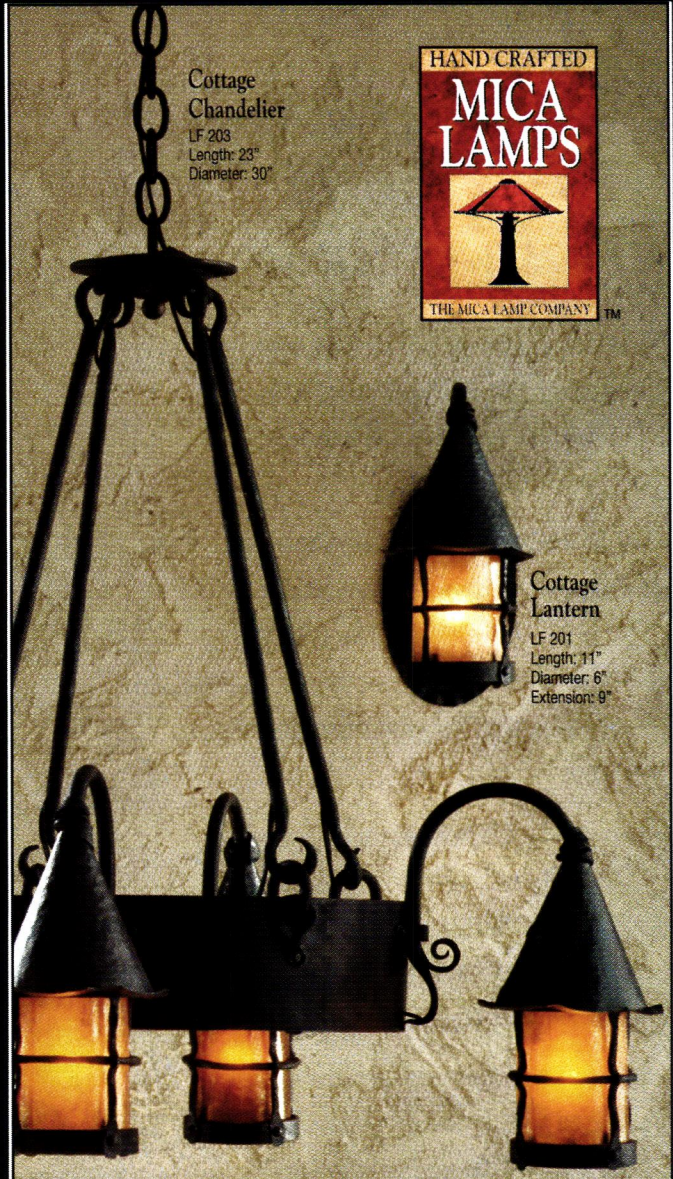
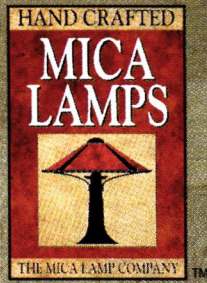
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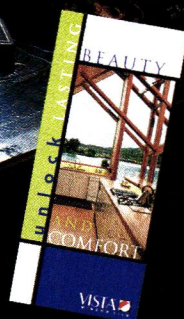
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SUMMER COTTAGES

Often it's the plain and simple houses that best tell the story of a region and its life. (page 38) ▶



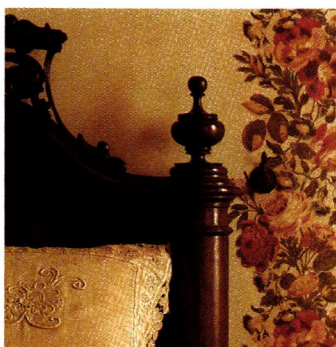
TERRACED GARDENS

Terraces are the elegant solution to a topographic challenge. A steep terrace garden in Seattle runs from formal symmetry to woodland. (page 74) ▶



VANITIES OF THE BATH

Unlike a reproduction pedestal sink, a period-style bath cabinet is hard to find. This design portfolio urges you to be creative. (page 68) ▶



REGIONAL PALETTES

Historic colors are almost by definition regional, reflecting indigenous pigments, ethnic origins, and the light. (page 78) ▶

ART DECO

Look closely at residential examples and you'll recognize Mackintosh and Maya; Arts and Crafts moving to Modernism. (page 52) ▶







These houses northeast of Montpelier, Vermont, were saved from fire and the bulldozer to be lived in and loved again. | photographs by Carolyn Bates



Sheltered in Vermont

WHO KNOWS HOW MANY LOVELY OLD houses have been lost because of indifference, neglect, ignorance, and lack of appreciation? And the lovely old houses we mourn aren't just the architectural treasures and historic monuments. Sometimes it is the humble vernacular houses that are little valued which are wholly intrinsic to an area's sense of place and time.

A pretty example is this little cluster of buildings. The main house was constructed on a steep hillside near Calais, Vermont, in the early 19th century by subsistence farmer Ezekiel Ball. The land was farmed without interruption until 1964, when the last farmer here auctioned off the house and all its contents. Local lore holds that he carried away only one frying pan and his boots. The next owner logged the land, found the crumbling old farmhouse an inconvenience, and intended

to bulldoze it. Instead, he sold it to an interim owner, who patched it up enough to serve as a temporary residence before moving on. By the time Pat Pritchett bought the unloved farmhouse in 1974, it had come perilously close to destruction. Pritchett, one of the owners of Vermont Vernacular Designs, saw the beauty under the decay, and he set out to make the New England Cape habitable again.

During his first couple of years there, he nearly froze to death. Uninsulated and inadequately heated, the house charmed him nonetheless. "The pantry, which dates to the mid or late 19th century, when the ell was added, is original. And there's lovely old cabinet work in the kitchen."

Pat installed two new bathrooms, put bedrooms into the attic, added dormers, put back the chimney, and re-installed the fireplaces. He rebuilt



ABOVE: When Pat Pritchett bought the house, he especially loved the pantry that had been created when the ell was added in the mid or late 19th century. **BELOW:** (from left) The 1875 barn is still in use. The gardens have grown uninterrupted since before this century. A new porch provides shade and a vantage point from which to view the countryside.





the wainscoting, reproduced the original sash windows, and rebuilt the porch on the ell.

The barn, which was built in 1875, is used traditionally—for storage and for animals. A cluster of small outbuildings, evidenced by old photographs, is long gone. There had also been a carriage barn close to the road, but it was bulldozed during the 1960s.

Another opportunity to save an old building presented itself in 1987, when what had originally been a one-room schoolhouse was abandoned and

endangered. “It was a real eyesore,” Pat says. “There was garbage everywhere, with smoldering mattresses about to ignite the whole thing.”

The schoolhouse stood close to the road during its original incarnation. In 1960, a team of oxen dragged it to its present location behind the farmhouse. By the time Pat bought it, it was a shell

ABOVE: The furnishings in the main house’s sitting room recall the early 19th century. **RIGHT:** The homeowner believes that his use of color has helped the house reclaim some of its original spirit.





ABOVE: When a new kitchen was installed, the old kitchen became a living room focused around the old wood-burning cookstove. **LEFT:** In the mudroom, the woodwork is butternut.

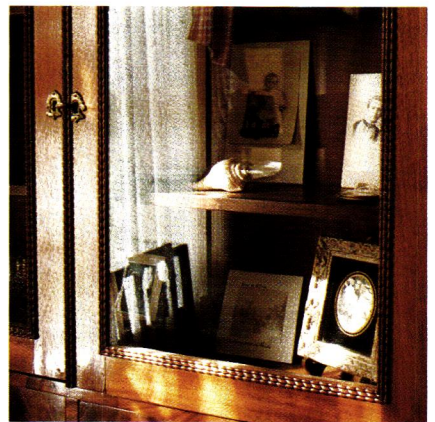
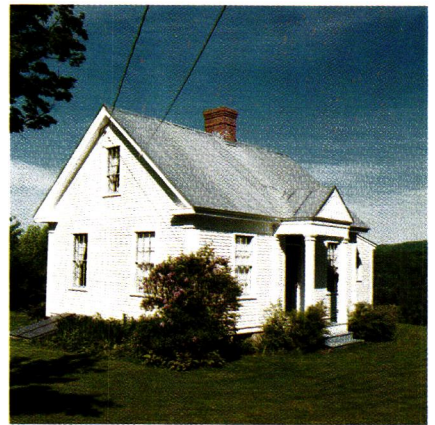


of a building. He used physical evidence and old photographs to determine the original profile, then he lowered the roof to re-establish its pitch. He added a breakfast ell, and the tiny house now serves as a guest house during the summer.

The gardens, which are surrounded by a picket fence, are perhaps the most authentic element here. Pat built a garden house during the 1980s; otherwise the plantings are much as they have been since before 1900. In traditional New England fashion, the vegetable garden is sited in the front yard. Pat is no subsistence farmer, but his little group of houses feels like a farmer's home again. ♦

The cottage out back

What had long ago been a one-room schoolhouse was rumored to also have served as the area post office. Today, the tiny building is a charming summer cottage. Small but period-appropriate rooms were created in a building that had been badly used. Two bedrooms are upstairs over a living room and a kitchen; and an ell was added to create a sunny breakfast room.



A Harbor Refuge

HARD BY THE SHINGLE BEACH NEXT TO A TINY NEW ENGLAND harbor is an unprepossessing cottage that embodies the sunniest qualities of summer homes: it has historic but somewhat vague origins, it is furnished with a mixture of meaningful antiques and casual furniture that create a relaxing ambiance, it is used seasonally by various family members, and has been well-loved by several generations of the same family. The harbor's commercial-



The porches at either end were added early in the 20th century, but the house's footprint is the same as it probably has been for two hundred years. RIGHT: From a porch, a view of the harbor.

fishing days are long gone, as are the area's salt-water farms which probably first spawned this house. A graveyard out back indicates that the house was probably built during the early 19th century; and that timing is borne out by the apparent age of the original beams on the living room ceiling. But even to tie the scattering of old graves to the house is speculative: the identities of early settlers on this coast have been lost to time.

BY REGINA COLE | PHOTOGRAPHS BY SANDY AGRAFIOTIS







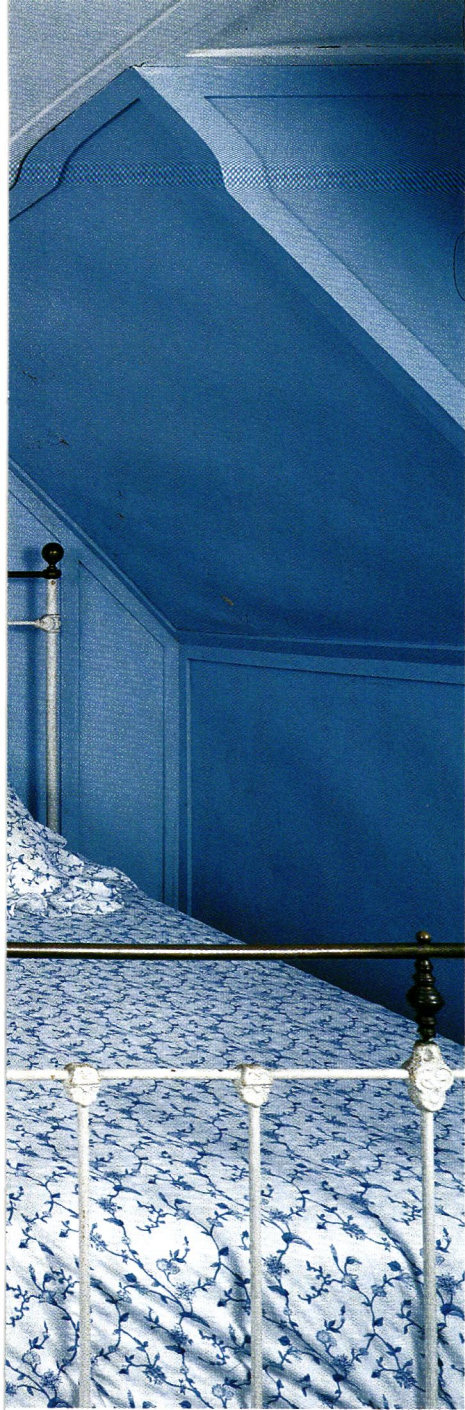
WHAT IS KNOWN IS THAT IN 1919 THE grandfather of the current owners bought what was a falling-down, abandoned farmhouse. He added a porch to either end, and installed a kitchen and a downstairs bathroom. He was also an early salvage artist. The local granite that floors the porches is seeing a second life, after a first as outdoor paving. He also appreciated the workmanship of the six-paneled doors that were routinely carted to the dump when old houses were remodeled in the Northeast. These doors, often

called “Christian doors” (because the six panels create cross designs), were used to panel the living room for walls both period-appropriate and quirky: upon inspection, what looks like historic paneling turns out to be different each time the pattern is repeated.

Family lore abounds. The upstairs bedrooms have ceilings most likely curved to provide a few extra inches of headroom. But the story that they were designed this way to simulate a ship’s cabin is infinitely more romantic. And the homeowners remember

when a millstone from a tidewater gristmill was pulled here by a team of oxen to become the front step.

During World War II the plentiful local sea moss was harvested and dried on the front lawn to make nitroglycerin. The children who’ve spent summers here, however, remember another use. “Sea moss pudding” is a long-time favorite with New England seaside dwellers, who boil it together with milk and sugar to produce a concoction the cookbooks more commonly refer to as *blancmange*. ♦



Maybe the bedroom ceiling was curved to create headroom, but family members believe it was done to simulate a ship's cabin.



ABOVE: The corner cupboard installed in the living room is one of the family's antique pieces that has become a part of the house. **BELOW:** The historic-looking, deeply incised wall paneling in the living room is, in reality, a collection of six-panel or "Christian" doors.





A rare settle and two matching arm chairs by the Shop of the Crafters furnish the living room. The bookcase, topped by a Rookwood vase, was made by L. & J. G. Stickley. Tony's mother made the needlepoint picture from an old unfinished kit.



CRAFTSMAN COURAGEOUS

TONY GRAY FIRST SAW ARTS AND CRAFTS FURNITURE ABOUT 15 years ago. "I thought it was the ugliest stuff I'd ever seen," he chuckles. "Tom and Cindy Edwards opened my eyes. Bruce Johnson moved here about then, he continued my education." | Johnson directs the annual Arts and Crafts Conference in Asheville, North Carolina, and the Edwardses are long-established area Arts and Crafts antiques dealers. Growing up in Charlotte, Tony Gray had not been exposed to the movement so popular again today.

BY REGINA COLE | PHOTOGRAPHS BY TIM BUCHMAN



TOP: Cedar logs cut on the site frame the front porch, with its comfortable and period-appropriate collection of Indiana Hickory furniture. **ABOVE:** Tony Gray's house is sited to overlook a small pond. Much of the clearing was created when Tony cut cedar and pine trees, which became building lumber. **INSET:** The drawing that was published over 90 years ago.



“THE SOUTH WAS POOR AT THE TURN OF THE century. There were no distributors for Stickley furniture.” But once his interest had been piqued, Tony scoured flea markets to start a collection of Arts and Crafts furniture, lighting fixtures, and textiles.

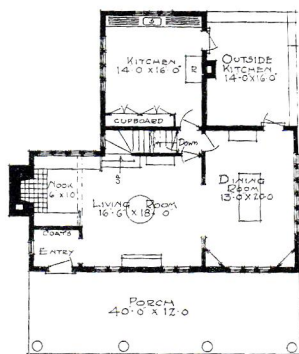
When he decided to build a house on a piece of land in Waxhaw, North Carolina, he turned to a reprint of *The Craftsman* magazine. A 1908 design by Gustav Stickley appealed to him, so he built his dream house, using the drawn picture and thumbnail floor plan. He had no blueprints, no published plans, no builder’s specs. Finished in 1992, the house has a first storey constructed of pine logs, and a post-and-beam and stucco second floor.

“Stickley’s plans were short on bathrooms; I made a master bath out of a sewing room. What he’d designated as a summer kitchen, I made into an enclosed back porch,” Tony says.

After he’d finished, a house in Charlotte looked eerily familiar.

“It was built from exactly the same plan, in 1912. It’s a mirror image of this house—everything is flipped. It’s been there all these years, but I never noticed it before.” ♦

ABOVE: Instead of a summer kitchen, Tony used this space for a screened porch. **RIGHT:** From the upstairs hall, a glimpse into a bedroom furnished with Renaissance Revival furniture. **BELOW:** The rudimentary plans used by Tony Gray.





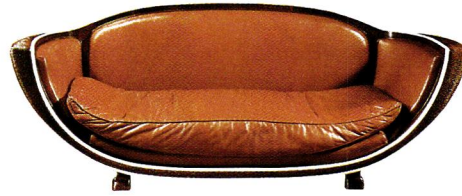
ABOVE: A Bradley and Hubbard lamp is flanked by a pair of L. & J.G. Stickley chairs. The tall case clock is of unknown origin. **RIGHT:** The inglenook is lined with Seneca tiles. **BELOW:** A sideboard made during Gustav Stickley's last years in the furniture business holds Rookwood pottery. The wall rack has reproduction Roycroft china.





Residential interiors in the Art Deco mode were rare, especially in the U.S. But the aesthetic was clearly a bridge, linking the last great design schools of the nineteenth century with machine-age Modernism.

WITH BOLD GEOMETRY AND VIVID COLORS, the Art Deco style exuded energy and optimism appropriate to the new century. A departure from the nineteenth century's preoccupation



with historic revivalism, and not launched by any sort of moralistic message (such as the Arts and Crafts Movement), the style was ultimately a statement about popular taste. The germination of Art Deco was spawned by a confluence of progressive European influences: *Jugendstil*, Germany's version of Art Nouveau, the Vienna Secession, and Charles Rennie Mackintosh and the Glasgow School. All active before 1910, these forward-thinking design movements started the trend toward Modernism that was to define the twentieth century. That momentum, however, was interrupted by World War I.



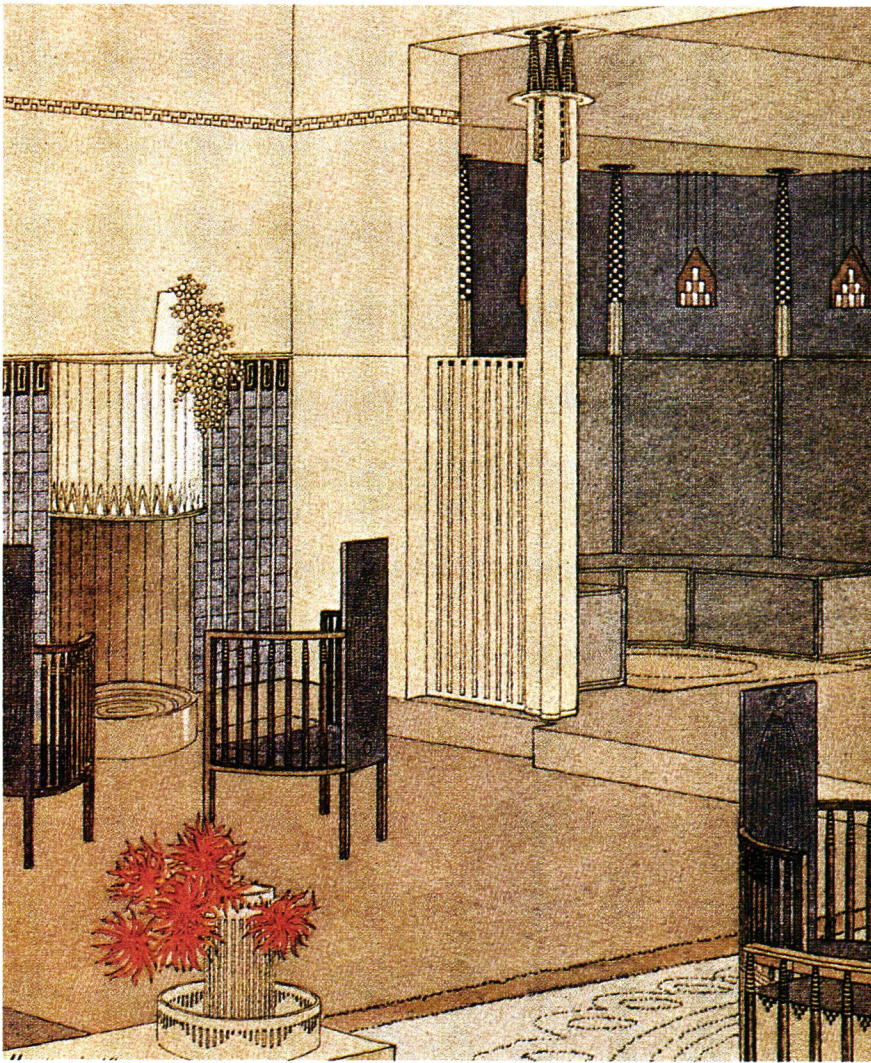
ART DECO

The beginnings of Art Deco itself are most often associated with France. The bold color palette and abstract floral forms that characterize early French Art Deco are traceable to the sensational theatrical sets and costumes of the Ballets Russes, whose imported dance productions became the rage

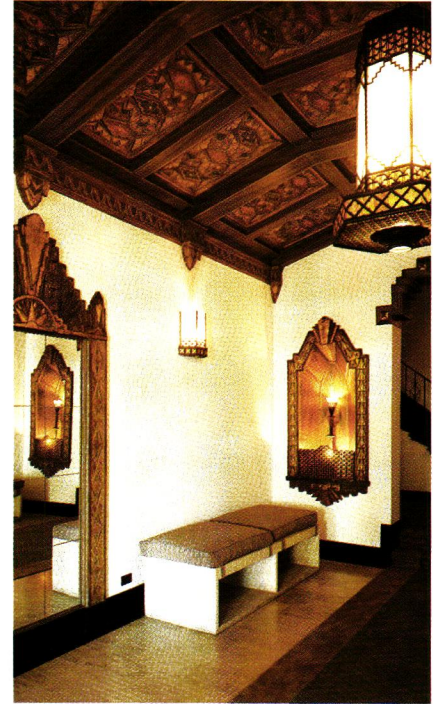
of Paris as early as 1909. When the country had finally recovered from the Great War, it reached back to those design inspirations when, in 1925, France presented "L'Exposition International des Arts Decoratifs and Industriels Modernes." The event led to the eventual, now-familiar abbreviation of "Art Deco" to describe the style it inspired. Wildly popular during the late 1920s and throughout the 1930s, it was ended by World War II. *by Paul Duchscherer*



OPPOSITE: The Indian Creek Hotel in Miami Beach was built in 1936 and furnished by Norman Bel Geddes. **THIS PAGE:** (from top) Marcel Coard's rosewood, ivory, and leather sofa. Female figures were prominent in the design of lighting fixtures. The red armchair incorporates reading lights set into the upper side panels and a silver ashtray embedded in the right arm.



LEFT: The important early influence of Mackintosh is immediately obvious in this 1909 ladies' room designed by Eliel Saarinen. **BELOW:** A San Francisco apartment building lobby shows the Mayan influence in American Art Deco. **BOTTOM:** The 1929 Art Deco studio of couturier Jacques Doucet. **OPPOSITE:** Robert Mallet-Stevens' work shows the progression from Mackintosh to Art Deco to Modernism. His 1930 sitting room shows a surprisingly contemporary marriage of these influences.



DECO HIGHLIGHTS

FURNITURE features a variety of contrasting veneers. Tables have tops with rounded corners supported by U-shaped bases. **TEXTILES** are lively, abstract geometric patterns and jaunty color schemes. **WALLPAPER** displays the style's obligatory geometry and unusual colors. Art Deco stenciling remains an inexpensive way to recreate the style today. **KITCHEN** and **BATHROOM** were probably the rooms most affected by Art Deco. Irresistible colored ceramic tile for floors and walls, with accents of stylish geometric-patterned borders, finally made the all-white bathroom obsolete. One of the best surviving applications of Art Deco design is in **LIGHTING FIXTURES**. Frosted-glass shades, inspired by the work of René Lalique, were popular. Chevrons and fans were applied to the backplates of interior **DOOR HARDWARE**. Eventually Art Deco forms were applied to everything from china, silverware and glassware to cabinet hardware made of metal and the new plastics.



THE FRENCH INTENDED TO SHOWCASE THE technological advances of the early 20th century, but also to help reclaim their waning reputation for aesthetic superiority in matters of style. A series of pavilions erected by prominent Parisian department stores were among the highlights of the 1925 Exposition. These compact, refined buildings showcased the talents of their in-house design departments. Most featured dramatic room settings, with custom-designed furniture of rare woods, stunning textiles, and brilliant lighting effects. A common thread was their use of flat, stylized floral motifs and crisply geometric forms.

Other design sources included Cubist paintings and African sculpture and textiles. A move away from literal forms was fueled by the public's admiration for (and confidence in) the precision of machines.



In its later phases, some sleeker examples that derived from the style were described as “Art Moderne” or “Modernist.” With a pared-down “machine aesthetic” expressed in metal and plastic, elements in the futuristic style ranged from architecture to small objects.

Back home in America, the cultural trends of the 'twenties, such as radio, motion pictures, and Jazz, had already made much of the public receptive to the new and “modern.” Trademark motifs (like stair-stepped forms and zigzag ornament) inspired its nickname, “Jazz Modern.”

In his post-Prairie period, the “textile block” houses of Frank Lloyd Wright were likened to the same influences shared by Art Deco design (particularly Meso-American architecture). Wright's work, however, was rarefied and individualistic rather than part of Art Deco's development.

Art Deco did influence high-rise buildings and some of our famous skyscrapers are cited as premier examples.

Almost overnight, the character of many downtowns changed from Beaux Arts Classicism towards a new Modernism. Used for many government buildings, variations of Art Deco also were applied to spectacular effect for large hotels, department stores, and escapist “movie palaces.”

Photo spreads of the Art Deco digs of such silver-screen stars as Marlene Dietrich or Jean Harlow propelled the style into an aura of luxurious fantasy. Soon sophisticated interiors used indirect lighting, exotic woods, tubular chrome furniture, plate-glass table tops, and zebra or leopard skins. Art Deco has, ever since, been linked to the Golden Age of Hollywood.

American department stores were

quick to offer inexpensive suites of Art Deco-inspired furniture. Comprehensive Art Deco interior design schemes, however, were never the norm for average American homes. Especially during the Great Depression, only the well-to-do could afford them. The few that were produced tended to be in lavish apartments in high-rise buildings.

Mass-produced Art Deco furniture was more popular with middle-class Europeans. In recent decades, vast quantities have been shipped here, especially from England and France. Most are middling-quality dining and bedroom pieces, among today's more affordable “antiques,” and are effective components of many Art Deco Revival rooms. ♦



OCEAN-LINER HOUSE

by *Laura Marshall Alavosus* | photographs by *Linda Svendsen*

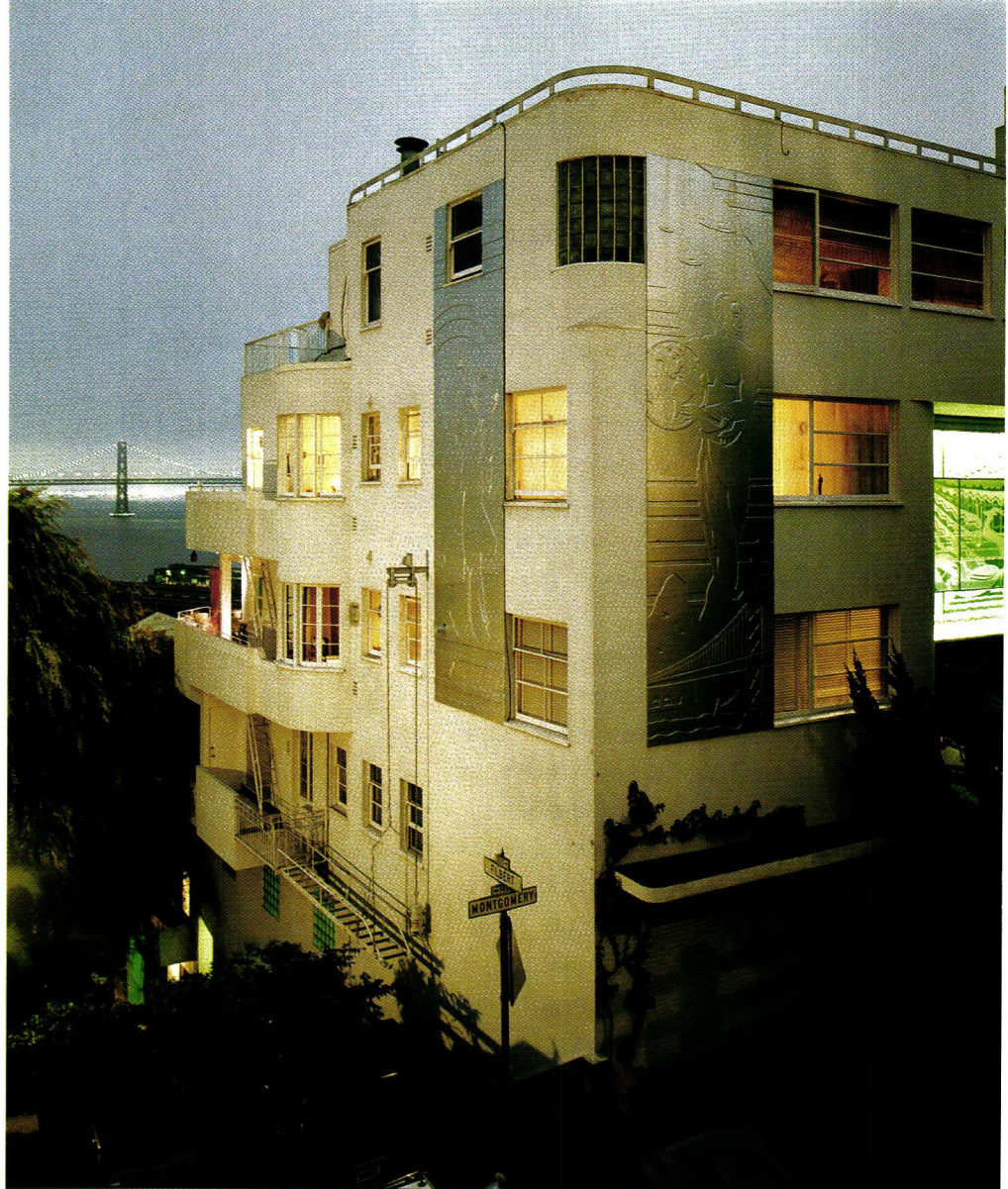
When they call this Art Deco-era building the "Ocean-Liner House," local residents are probably referring to the nautical motifs applied to the rounded exterior. For Americans outside of San Francisco, however, it is familiar as the setting for "Dark Passage," a 1946 movie starring Humphrey Bogart and Lauren Bacall. Here's how the owners of one unit have carried out the Art Deco theme to create a stylish home.

The builder's family added the glass-block elevator shaft in 1945. OPPOSITE: (from top) With spectacular views of San Francisco Bay, the Ocean-Liner House is a well-loved local landmark. A pair of French Art Deco floor lamps flank the living room fireplace.

AS I WALK DOWN THE FILBERT STEPS FROM the top of Telegraph Hill I see, shimmering in the sunlight, a white and silver building with curving lines. On a typical San Francisco morning, I might have missed it, its shimmer lost in the grey of fog. I stop to stare at large mythological and nautical images on the building's rounded corners, wondering (as many others have), "Where have I seen this before?" A life-size image of Humphrey Bogart peers out from behind the curtains of an upstairs window. That's it, I realize. Bogart and Bacall, 1946: *Dark Passage*. It's the apartment house from the movie.

Even without its Hollywood associations, the building on Montgomery Street is a standout. Built in 1937 by J.S. Malloch—whose family occupied its two penthouse apartments for years—it is a rare American example of residential Art Deco design. Local people call it the Ocean-Liner House, whether for its shape and its nautical imagery, or because the view beyond it is of ships sailing on San Francisco Bay, I don't know. Less poetic neighbors call it the Malloch Apartment House. Scott King and Dave Hurlbert call a portion of the second floor home.

When Scott first came across the Ocean-Liner House, it was being converted into condominiums after 45 years of uninterrupted use as a rental-apartment building. While exploring Telegraph Hill real estate in 1982, "I found this building. I must have seen *Dark Passage* as a kid, because I dimly

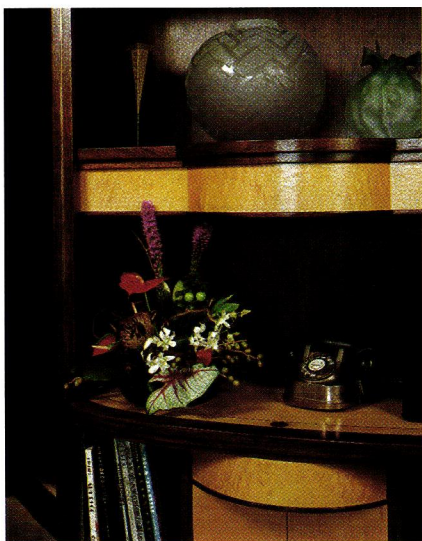


recalled seeing it before.”

The unit's interior was, for the most part, original. The damaged 1930s kitchen proved unsalvageable, however, and built-in bookcases installed by a previous tenant had to go. Scott hired architect-builder Nadav Eldar. They stripped the kitchen to the walls and agreed on a simple black-on-white design. Cabinet-maker Jeramy Bede built new cabinets and made pull-handles which set off the curving lines of cabinets, counters, and shelves.

“I liked Jeramy's work so much,” Scott says, “that I hired him to design and build bookshelves in the living room. Then I liked the bookshelves so much, I asked him to make tables for the living room.” Bede echoed the lines of the apartment's structure in bird's-eye maple, Brazilian mahogany, American walnut, and curly maple.

With the restoration nearly complete, Scott and Dave furnished the apartment with an antique sofa and chairs dating to the early 1930s, upholstered in rich red and black. The final missing piece was just the right pair of Art Deco floor lamps. A four-year search ended in Milan. “Both of us looked at them and said, ‘that's it!’” The lamps had come from the Savoy

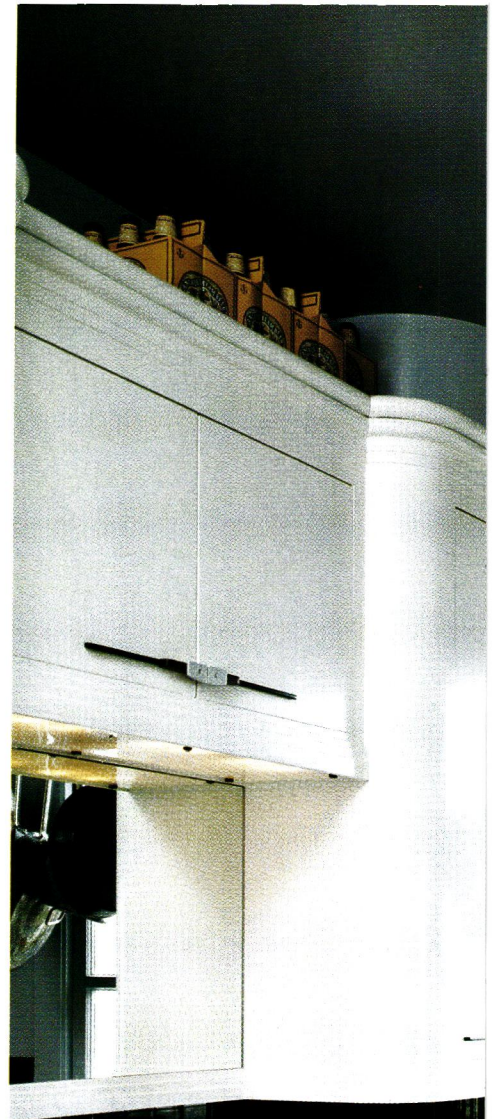




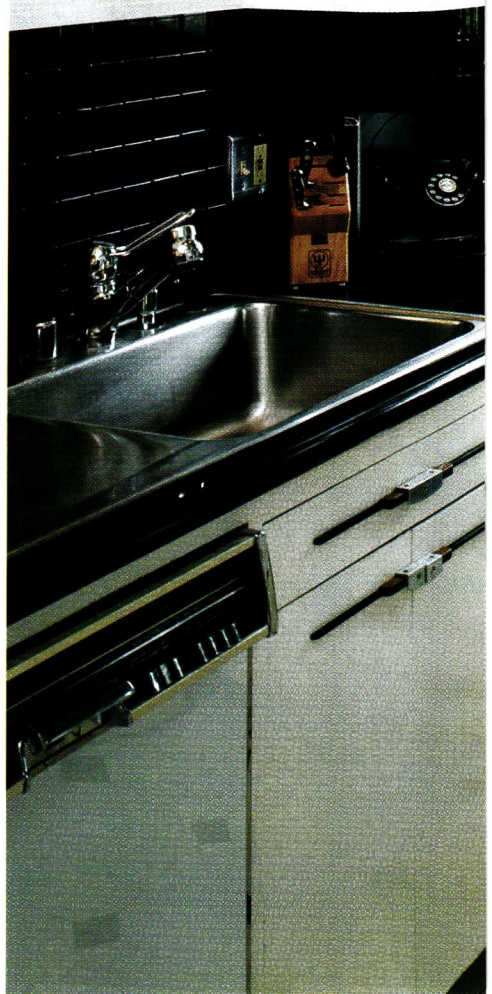
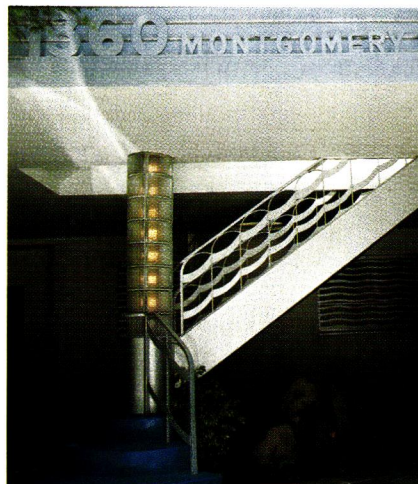
The focal point of the apartment is the living room with its 250-square-foot terrace overlooking the San Francisco Bay Bridge. Sliding doors are original, designed with three horizontal panels to perfectly frame the view from a seat in the living room. **OPPOSITE:** A living room vignette.



The original square tub in the bathroom is now enclosed with glass. The owners added a real ship's porthole in the ceiling of the shower; it casts green neon light. "Everything nautical is inherently Art Deco," says owner Scott King.



LEFT: The circular dining alcove off the living room is the perfect setting for Frank Lloyd Wright's Midway table and chairs in fire-engine red. A spotlight illuminates the art glass from beneath the glass table.
BELOW: Ocean motifs in the lobby.
RIGHT: The black-on-white color scheme, curved lines, and well-considered lighting in the renovated kitchen are Art Deco in styling, but contemporary in function.



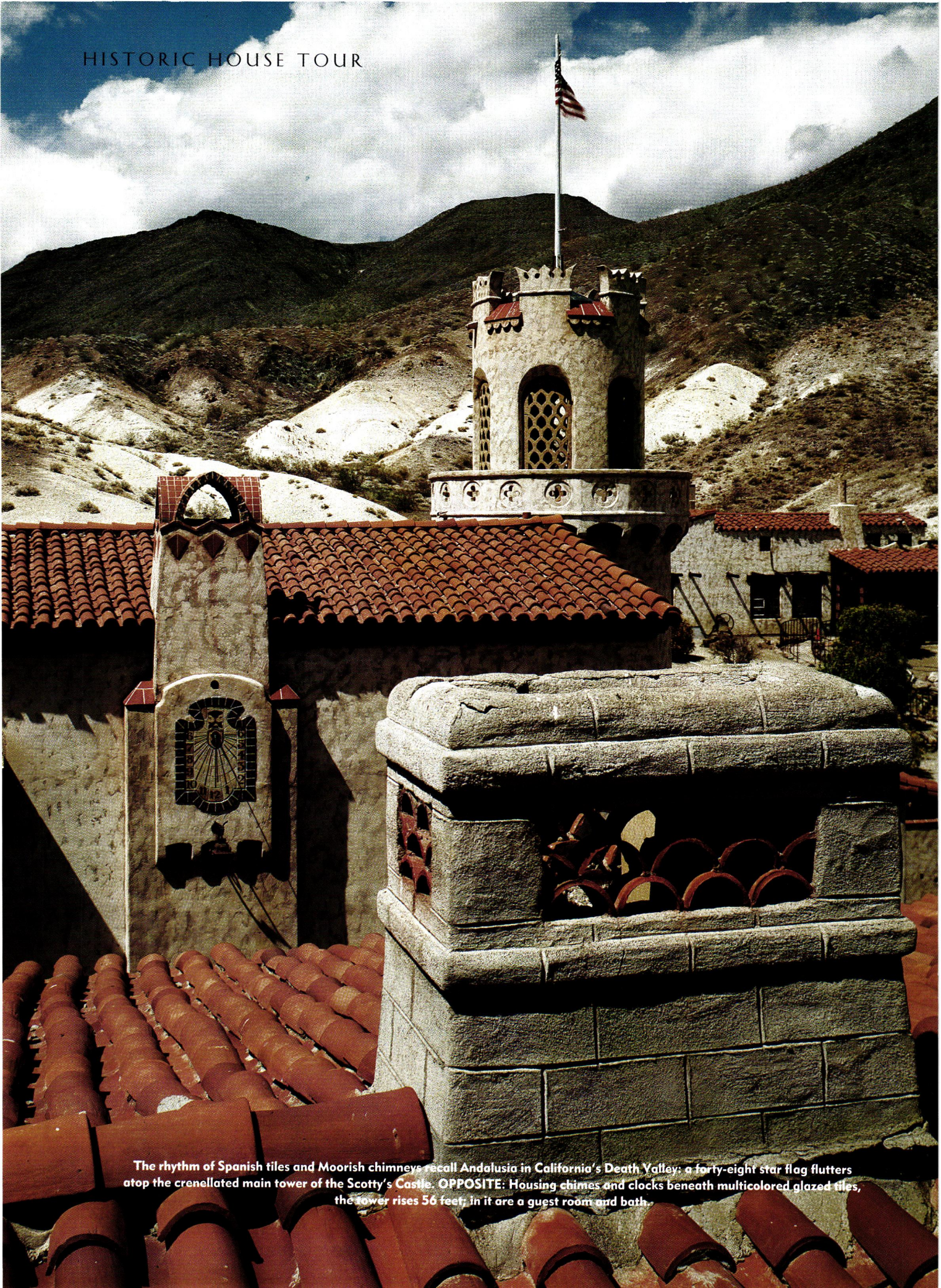


Hotel in Nice, France. "The metallic theme for this room is copperized brass," points out Scott. Lamps, andirons, an antique telephone, and other accent pieces in the room have this finish. Scott has a small collection of fine art glass from the period. But he takes particular pride in the large English walnut bar in a corner, a rare piece. "They didn't have many Deco bars outside of Hollywood, you know, because of Prohibition."

Finding an appropriate rug almost stumped them. Through a gallery they learned that a Swedish mill weaves reproductions of a 1929 Bauhaus design called "Cirkel." Their 10-foot-diameter carpet, designed by Bauhaus artist Ingegerd Torhamn, is the centerpiece of the living room. The color scheme evolved over time and trial. When Scott first found this building, the Maritime Museum on San Francisco's waterfront had just been restored to its original Art Deco colors. "A large room with a lot of glass was painted bright turquoise to make the wall disappear into the expansive ocean view. It was a little shocking, but it worked," Scott says. "So I tried it here, too." A few years later, though, Scott turned to a colorist friend for advice. The resulting softer grey palette with purple accent better complements the woodwork and copperized brass.

An unexpected water leak forced the re-building of the living room's walls and ceiling. But sometimes misfortune presents unexpected opportunities. Behind a plain façade, the ceiling is now packed with built-in lighting (including neon, of course), speakers, even a TV projector and screen. An oval light well in the hallway has three neon tubes—white, purple, and blue—around its base. Each color can be turned on separately; in combination the restful effect is of the night sky. ♦

HISTORIC HOUSE TOUR



The rhythm of Spanish tiles and Moorish chimneys recall Andalusia in California's Death Valley: a forty-eight star flag flutters atop the crenellated main tower of the Scotty's Castle. OPPOSITE: Housing chimes and clocks beneath multicolored glazed tiles, the tower rises 56 feet; in it are a guest room and bath.

Scotty's Castle



IF YOU'RE FORTUNATE, YOU WILL BE GREETED AT THE GATES by the chime of bells, clanging clear and far into the mythical desert landscape of California's Death Valley. The sheer isolation of Scotty's Castle makes even the journey there an improbable adventure. My

own quixotic path to the Castle began the night before in the surreal "medieval" ambience of the Excalibur Hotel in Las Vegas, which in retrospect could be described as a (rather inadequate) postmodern version of Scotty's Castle. *by Elmo Baca | photographs by Jack E. Boucher*

The eerie light in Death Valley still conjures the cruel mirages that doomed many a forty-niner. Blazing sunlight is masked by a pale blue atmospheric veil that disappears behind the tiny yellow blossoms of the mesquite bushes. Towering mountain ridges of the Panamint and Funeral Ranges dwarf the fleeting signs of life in the Valley. One is given ample opportunity to thirst for an oasis, any respite from the intimidating grandeur. The road rises dramatically from the sunken saltbeds, rolling and curving before a startling clump of shimmering Fremont cottonwood trees. Then, between the cottonwood branches, the stucco walls of the Castle float as if an illusion. The towers come into focus and the structure materializes: references to Camelot and Oz are perhaps not so far-fetched.

Spanish glory clearly inspired Albert Johnson, the owner of this folly and its

awesome vista through Grapevine Canyon. For Johnson, the sober engineer and insurance tycoon, Don Quixote was a favorite hero, and in his \$2 million "vacation home" (in pre-Depression dollars!), the Chicago millionaire realized a Castilian dream come true.

Johnson's own "Sancho Panza" was the larger-than-life Walter E. Scott, a broncobuster, would-be prospector, and spinner of yarns extraordinaire. Two nuggets of gold in Death Valley Scotty's hands became a fabulous lost mine, toward which the gregarious con artist encouraged "grubstake" investments by Johnson.

Ailing from asthma, Albert Johnson ventured west in 1909 to investigate his investment in Scotty's supposed mine. Camping in the arid Mojave and carousing with Scotty reinvigorated Johnson. By 1922 Johnson envisioned a permanent retreat here. Scotty's favorite camp-



Structures are an eclectic interpretation of gothic and romanesque forms; the silhouette is startlingly medieval.

site near a generous spring became the home of the impressive 12,000 square foot “castle,” which by 1931 was surrounded by a cluster of nine related buildings.

Johnson had commissioned conceptual drawings from Frank Lloyd Wright for the ranch circa 1925, but Wright’s plans for a modernist adobe Indian village didn’t suit Johnson. Construction engineer Matt Roy Thompson, a friend of Albert’s wife Bessie, was asked for design ideas. Thompson’s original drawings for a Spanish villa were inspired by the graceful arcades of Stanford University, where he and Bessie had become friends.

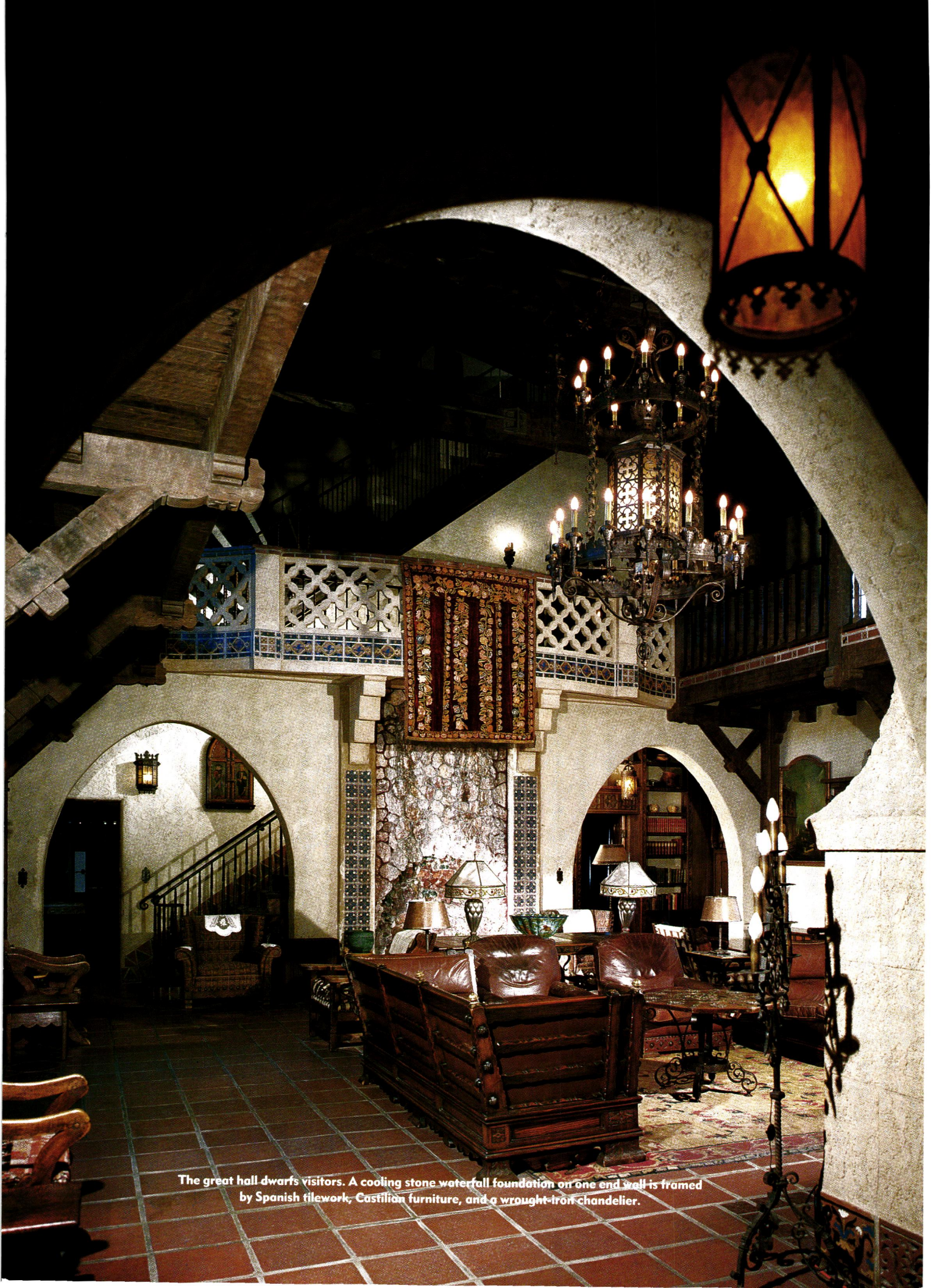
Johnson eventually hired three other designers to complete the complex. C. Alexander MacNeilledge directed

the overall planning of the Castle, and secured the services of master furniture builder John Lamont. To ensure the “Old World” Spanish flavor, Johnson hired a Hungarian architect, Martin de Dubovay, who specialized in detail work. Dubovay is mostly responsible for the interior design.

LONG ACCOMMODATING HIS IMPRESSIVE bulk, Scotty’s massive leather easy chair is well worn, as if he just left it. Lighting inside is dim, lending a dusky and masculine mood to the heavily carved redwood ceilings, doors, tapestries, and fine draperies. The great room exudes the glamour and personality of a Rudolph Valentino or an Errol Flynn. The architecture and decor have been described as Spanish Provincial,

but the interpretation is more complex, eclectic, and sumptuous than the term implies. The Castle is a fascinating study in the confluence of architecture, fantasy, personality, and high style. Johnson’s taste was overwhelmingly Spanish, but his love of Italian Renaissance painting and decorative art is also on lavish display. Tile throughout the mansion is Spanish with California and Craftsman influences apparent. Ceramics and rugs (woven in Majorca) are pervasively Spanish, in some rooms beautifully accented with baskets crafted by Paiute and Panamint Shoshone women.

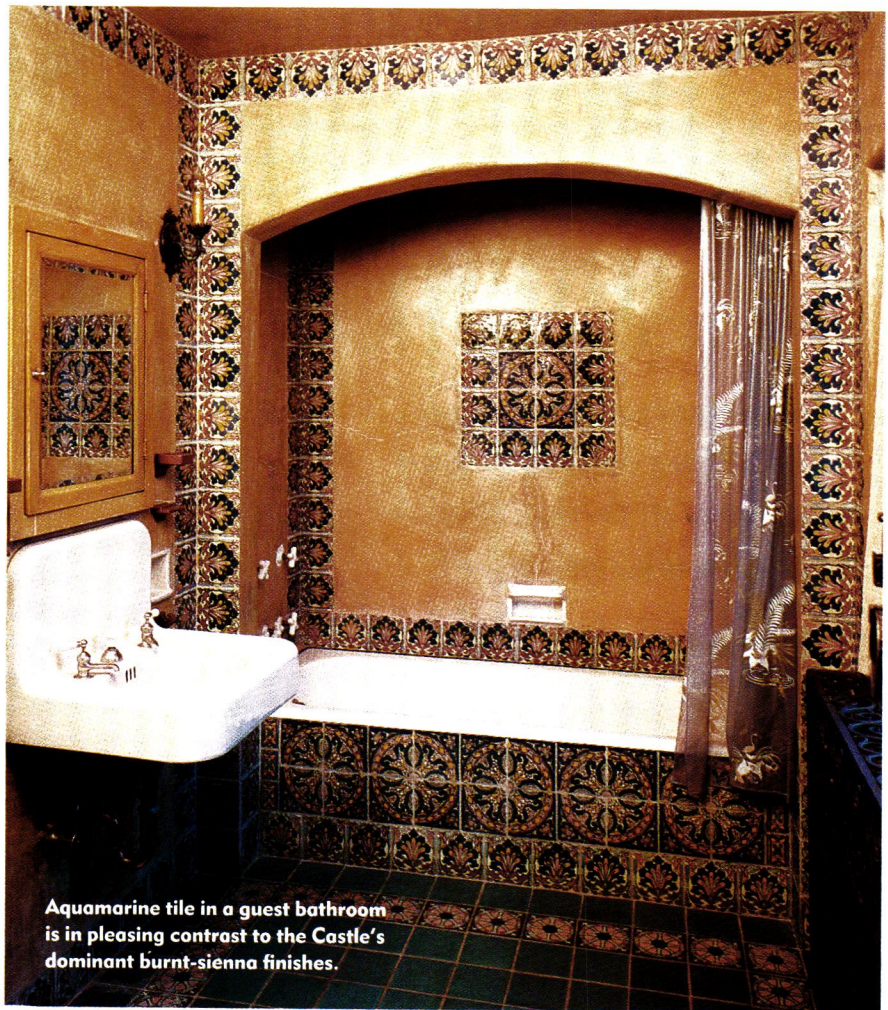
While Scotty’s Castle aspired to the ambiance of Spanish style inspired by Queen Isabella and Cervantes, its engineering and technology were thor-



The great hall dwarfs visitors. A cooling stone waterfall foundation on one end wall is framed by Spanish tilework, Castilian furniture, and a wrought-iron chandelier.



Carved redwood ceiling beams and leather chairs create intimate elegance. The formal Spanish dining room is anchored by a twelve-foot Renaissance walnut table. Handcarved shelves hold Spanish, Mexican, and Italian dinnerware.



Aquamarine tile in a guest bathroom is in pleasing contrast to the Castle's dominant burnt-sienna finishes.

oughly modern. Thick stone walls were simulated by the use of insulex, a powder that expands to twelve times its volume with water and dries into a porous stone-like substance. Solar panels heated the Castle's water; a Pelton wheel provided hydroelectric power.

THE CASTLE INSTANTLY BECAME KNOWN as "Scotty's" even though Albert Johnson created it. Johnson never seemed to mind Scotty's showboating and public relations stunts, which only seemed to enhance the outrageous legends of a secret gold mine. (Scotty even hinted that the huge pipe organ installed in the upstairs music room was intended to hide the noise of his mining operations going on beneath the house.)

The truth is, Albert Johnson loved Scotty and savored some of his fond-

est moments as the sidekick and silent partner of the Death Valley legend. "He pays me back in laughs" is how the real millionaire Johnson described their friendship.

Together, the straight-arrow tycoon and the fun-loving shyster endowed Death Valley with one of the West's most remarkable architectural landmarks. The three towers of the Castle are a beacon to all adventurers, and to explorers of never-never land. ♦

ELMO BACA is the author of *Romance of the Mission and Santa Fe Fantasy*; he's Director of New Mexico Main Street, a downtown revitalization program for the State of New Mexico. JACK E. BOUCHER is Supervisor of architectural photo documentation for the Historic American Buildings Survey.

IN THE PRESENT

VANITIES of the BATH

With rare exception, it is not possible to buy a period bathroom sink cabinet off the shelf. But it's great fun to design your own.

IN THE REPRODUCTIONS MARKET, THE PEDESTAL SINK is a symbol of the period bathroom. Historically, wall-hung sinks and bowls set into cabinets were more common, and popular for many more decades, than pedestals. But just try to buy a period-style sink cabinet! Most ready-made "vanities," kitschy in particleboard and laminate, have no place in a period house. | I faced this challenge last year. I wanted to suggest the house's 1904 date, and I wanted cabinets to hide the usual unattractive stuff. On both counts, pedestal sinks wouldn't do. My sink cabinets would have to be custom . . . and designing them was satisfying fun. *by Patricia Poore*



SANDY AGRAFIOTIS (TOP); JOHN VAUGHAN (LEFT); FRITZ VON DER SCHULENBURG (ABOVE, OPP. TOP & BOTTOM RIGHT); BRUCE MARTIN (OPP.)



OPPOSITE: (clockwise) Swedish handiwork in Maine; an antique Empire table plumbed in Milan; Victorian-era marble and faux bamboo designed by Victoria Hagan in Connecticut. **THIS PAGE:** (clockwise) A sink cupboard in a generous bathroom of functional necessities; the aristocratic past of the wet sink evidenced at Lauriston Castle, Edinburgh; traditional materials lend authenticity in a cabinet by The Kennebec Company.





The sink cabinet above was built at the turn of the century for the gentleman's "cloakroom" at an English country house. **BELOW:** (left) The materials chosen by designer Penny Poole exude glamour: marble, mahogany, crystal and gold. (right) In a tower bathroom on Long Island, Kohler sinks in modern twist on the wood and marble vanity.





For its inherent, clean appeal and its historical associations, the white bathroom never fails. Bright white and cream are lovely in the reproduction bathroom above; white enamel on boards evokes the country, as on this cupboard refitted for an old sink (below).

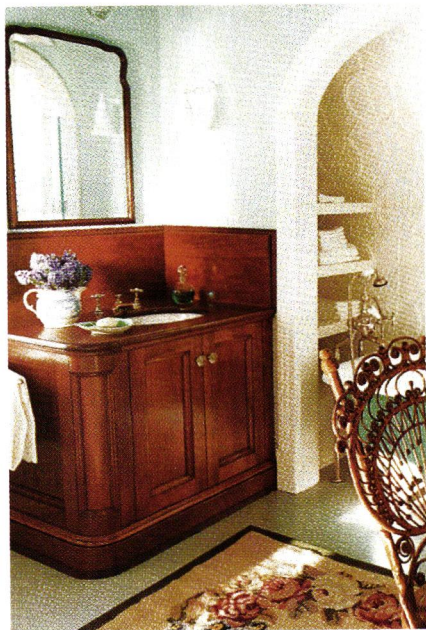
The necessarily limited range in reproductions begets a kind of sameness in new, period-style rooms. But when you're called upon to fashion your own, creativity precludes predictability.

In my case, no original bathrooms existed in the house (or, from what I could gather, anywhere in my neighborhood). Therefore I did what I wanted—within the bounds of budget and good taste, and with the constriction inherent in knowing way too much about old bathrooms. In the powder room, budget (I admit) suffered on

account of my insistence on historical fidelity. Since my days in brownstone Brooklyn, where built-in Victorian vanities grace the little dressing rooms between bed chambers, I have coveted a wood cabinet with a marble top. Dave Leonard at The Kennebec Company helped me design one appropriate to this house; it's plain and made of fir rather than mahogany or oak. (P.S.: It was the marble, which I had a local stoneyard dress and install, that broke the budget. It was worth it.)

We added a bathroom, too, when





The arresting sink cabinet dominates this interpretation of classic forms in Art Deco style—the perfect vocabulary for sophistication with functional comfort. **BELOW:** The lavatory with its furniture form and high backsplash is a sink housed in an old bar.

we moved into part of the attic. Its beaded boards glossy with orange shellac and low-ceilinged dormer nooks made these odd rooms look like a ship's cabin. Only half-consciously remembering a sink we'd seen on the historic schooner moored in Gloucester's inner harbor, we came up with a porcelain bowl over a mahogany top on a bow-fronted fir cabinet.

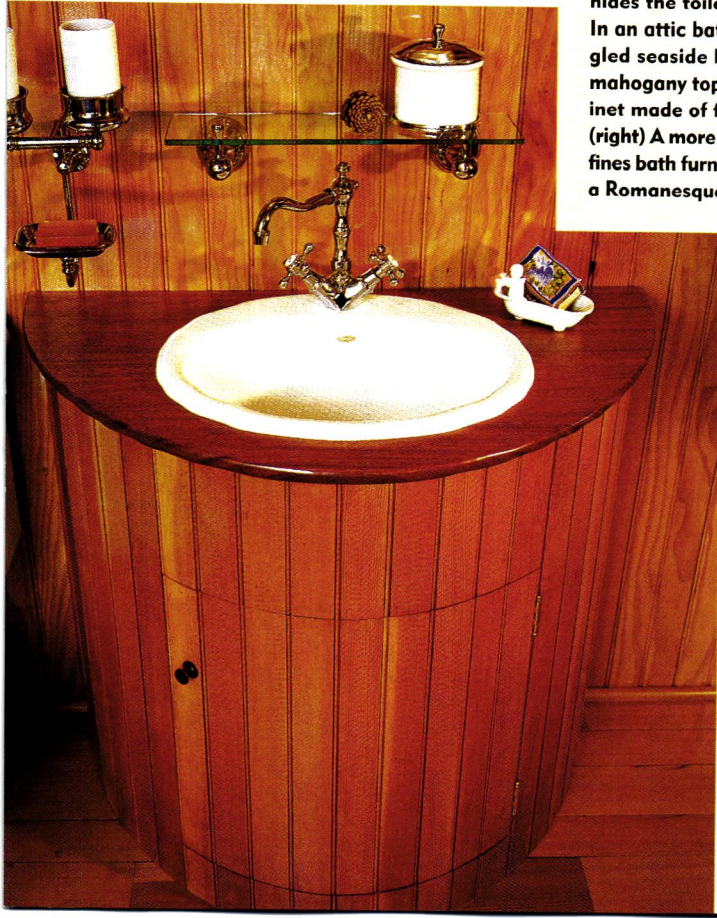
So, I've found, inspiration can be personal; it can come from a book or museum house (or museum boat!). Traditional, high quality materials are

timeless; wood and marble, porcelain, brass, and tile give a period feel even when used in a highly individual way. I prefer preservation when it's possible, wouldn't trash a respectable sink or a lamp that had survived, wouldn't demolish a good period bathroom. In new design, I gain confidence from knowing the date and style of a place, in noting proportions and degree of formality. But I have given myself permission to do what I truly like. The houses we so lovingly restore started, after all, as someone's personal vision. ♦

ELIZABETH WHITING & ASSOCIATES (ABOVE); MICHAEL MUNDY (LEFT); FRITZ VON DER SCHULENBURG (OPP. TOP); BRUCE MARTIN (OPP. LEFT); DAVID LIVINGSTON/BATHROOMS, © 1996 FRIEDMAN/FAIRFAX (OPP. RIGHT)



Simple design and good materials characterize a timeless lavatory (above). A caned chair hides the toilet. **BELOW:** (left) In an attic bathroom in a shingled seaside house, varnished mahogany tops a nautical cabinet made of fir beaded board. (right) A more elegant curve defines bath furniture painted with a Romanesque garden scene.





Garden on Queen Anne Hill

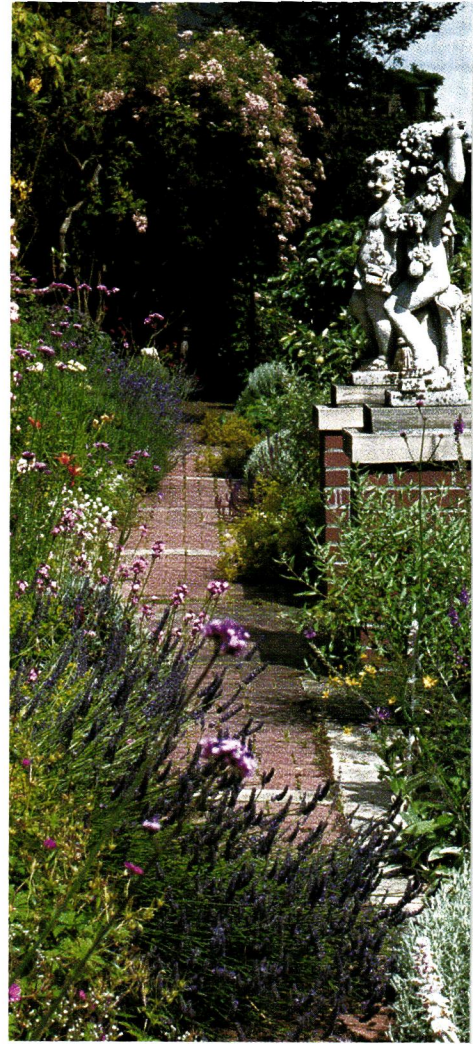
by Brian D. Coleman

photographs by Linda Svendsen

SEATTLE, WASHINGTON, WAS BUILT on a series of steep hills overlooking Puget Sound, and one of the most beautiful is Queen Anne Hill. In 1928, Seattle architect A.H. Albertson designed an elegant home on the south slope to take advantage of the sweeping vista below. The home presents a dignified front façade. The back, however, is something of a surprise, looking more like an Italian palazzo. The steeply sloping lot, measuring 200 by 200 feet, was initially reinforced in 1928 with large amounts of sand and a concrete retaining wall. Three terraced levels were carved into the hillside and planted



LEFT: From the south slope of Queen Anne Hill, the house commands breathtaking views. **ABOVE:** Two five-foot-tall, robin's-egg blue urns anchor the upper terrace.



THE TERRACED GARDEN

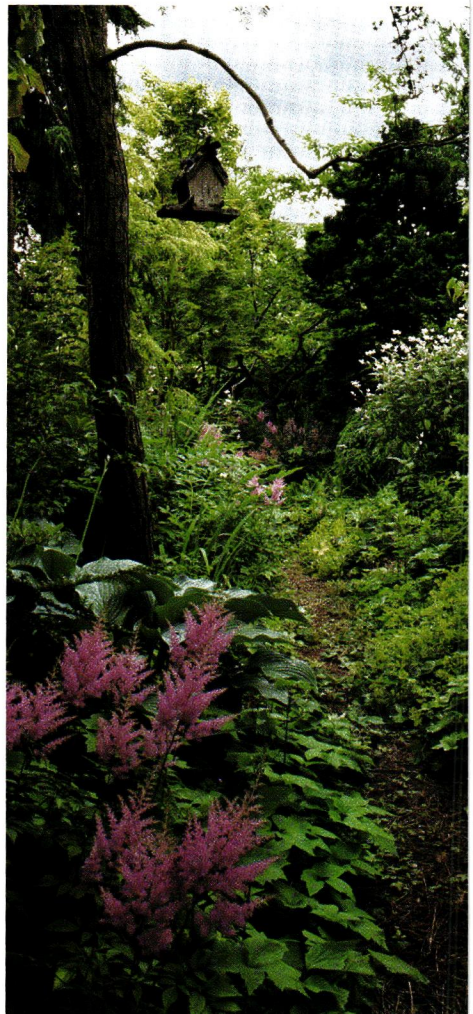
An elegant solution to a topographic challenge.

Cutting terraces into steep hillsides achieves two ends: it holds soil in place for planting, and it creates discrete areas which provide panoramic vistas. The first evidence of a terraced garden appears to have been at the Egyptian Queen Hatshepsut's temple to the god Amun, Lord of Thebes, in the 14th century B.C. A series of terrace platforms, built with stone retaining walls, were filled with rich earth from the Nile Valley floor and planted with ornamental trees, which were watered with underground pipes. Pliny the Younger espoused 'open' gardens that look out over the surrounding landscape. Hadrian's Villa at Pompeii made brilliant use of the concept, and it was an essential

feature of Italian Renaissance gardens. The ha-ha, or sunken fence, was a French military invention which transformed 18th-century English gardens.

Terracing was widely used in the New World because the Virginia plantation houses were invariably placed facing and above rivers, the main "roads" of the time. The famous terraced gardens and butterfly lakes of Middleton Place in Charleston, South Carolina (ABOVE) lead down to the Ashley River in formal echo of the plantation's rice fields. The design, created in 1740 by an unknown gardener, allows for glimpses of the plantation from the formal gardens.

PHOTO COURTESY OF MIDDLETON PLACE





with rhododendrons, yellow roses, ivies, and lawns.

Betty Balcom acquired the house in 1975. An antiques dealer, she was attracted initially to the home, but over the next twenty-three years, became a self-admitted “passionate” gardener. She has redefined the original terraces, dividing each into a separate and distinct garden. The upper terrace, adjacent to the house, is formal and symmetrical, reflecting the Italian look of the rear façade. A boxwood-bordered vegetable garden is centered around a contorted white birch. Beds of Hidecote lavender front a line of Peace roses which, in turn, are sheltered by the 70-year-old rhododendrons.

CLOCKWISE: (from top left) Mischievously grinning cherubs at the overlook on the middle terrace. Potted plants summer among the ivy. Winding stone steps lead down to a woodland glade on the lower level.



A terraced garden above the French Riveria, centered on an axis featuring an overlook, inspired the middle terrace. A semicircular stone and brick promontory, guarded by two garlanded cherubs, was built, and a perennial garden was planted.

Stone steps lead from the sunny perennial terrace into the deep shade of the lower woodlands terrace. Originally simply a lawn and privet hedge, Betty brought in ten mature specimen trees to screen the gardens from the neighbors: Golden Hemlock, Skyland Spruce, and a 30-foot Jack Pine lifted in by crane.

The woodlands terrace is still in development: the current project is to create a circular sitting area around a water basin, which is surrounded by hydrangeas and looks out to a serene view of the waters of Puget Sound. ♦



Egyptian blue. Prussian blue. Porch ceiling blue. Color not only suggests a hue, but a time and place. | by Mary Ellen Polson

REGIONAL PALETTES

ALTHOUGH LITTLE HAS BEEN written about the idea of regional color preferences, the idea makes intuitive sense. The brighter and more exotic the color, the better it stands up to the glaring light and deep shadows of a tropical climate.

When lighting is subtle and moody, darker colors reveal greater complexity and depth.

“Historic palettes are almost by definition regional,” says color and design consultant John Crosby Freeman. “For instance, there were regional and historical differences between the 18th-century palettes of colonial Charleston and New England.” Wealthy Charlestonians were much more influenced by European fashion than their New England counterparts. Reference points included not only London, but Italy. “Perhaps that’s why the Spoleto Festival has found a home in Charleston,” Freeman muses. “There’s a kind of Mediterranean feel about the place.”

Even today, colors in dim, cloudy New England trend toward the dark and subtle in both clothing and interior design. The farther south you go, the more vivid the colors. This connection holds in spite of a shared, predominately English color inheri-

es have historically been driven by fashion, religion, regionally available materials, expressions of status and wealth, and technology.

Some palettes, like the desert reds, Nile blues, and papyrus greens of ancient Egypt, are clear representations of a landscape. Others that seem just as natural—the red and blue-accented adobe palette of the American Southwest, for instance—gradually coalesced from a number of influences, some surprisingly recent.

For millennia, sources of color were either vegetable, mineral, or occasionally animal. Five thousand years ago, the Egyptians ground copper and sand together to create the turquoise color known as Egyptian blue. The first chemical color was Prussian blue, an 18th-century status symbol along the East Coast. George Washington lavished this distinctive colorant with a greenish cast on rooms at Mount Vernon, creating a robin’s egg blue for the west parlor and a soft-



tance. The historically correct pinks and tans of Spanish-influenced Florida are brighter still.

Beyond the obvious differences of light and color saturation, color choic-

OPPOSITE: “One could overemphasize the Puritan background of New Englanders, but they did have a sense of color,” says John Crosby Freeman, *The Color Doctor*. A favorite shade was olive green, easily made by combining common yellow ochre and lampblack. **THIS PAGE:** Deep red, a benchmark color in the Southwest, was introduced 300 years ago by the Spanish.

emerald verdigris in the large dining room. Since Prussian blues tend to fade over time, the First Trendsetter unwittingly helped spawn a taste for the subdued grey-greens of the early 19th century and later, the Colonial Revival.

Porch ceiling blue has been a favorite under the eaves of Southern porches since the last half of the 19th century. This intensely regional color—cool in the daytime, reflective at twilight—falls somewhere between azure and aquamarine. Perhaps it's a peculiarity of context or appearance, "but I've never encountered it in western Canada," says Stuart Stark, of Charles Rupert Designs in Victoria, British Columbia.

As a restoration consultant in the Pacific Northwest, Stark finds most historic paint color palettes frustrating to

The colors of Colonial Williamsburg, Virginia, have been reproduced since the 1930s, most accurately by Martin-Senour's newly released palette, "Williamsburg Interior Paint Colors." Other Southern palettes include Valspar's "Southern Heritage," designed by John Crosby Freeman, and



Southwest. For instance, Pale Mustard and Green Olive are kissing cousins of shades inside Wright's Oak Park, Illinois, home; the trilogy of Soft Grey, Oak Bark, and Quiet Green appears on the interior of Unity Temple, also in the Midwest. Both Oak Park and Taliesin West show evidence of Desert Sun. Mountain Red is a stand-in for one of Wright's signature "Western" colors, Cherokee Red.

If any U.S. region has a clearly defined color palette, it is probably the Southwest. Dominated by the variable reddish-browns of adobe, Pre-Columbian textile colors were limited to brown, white, and a greyish blue. Ironically, what we've come to think of as a Native American palette wasn't fully defined until the 18th century, when the Spanish introduced

Regional color variations may be vanishing. The only constant is the local environment, and given the influence of earthquakes and global warming, even that is subject to change.

work with because they are too regionally specific. "There's an overwhelming market in Federal-style colors because they come out of the Eastern United States," he says.

There is certainly a wealth of historic palettes for New England. Color Guild International's "Historic Colors of America" palette reflects authentic colors from 18th- and 19th-century buildings all over the region. Benjamin Moore's less intense "Historic Color Collection" has been a standard in both New England and the Mid-Atlantic for years. The Old-Fashioned Milk Paint Co.'s ready-to-mix dry paints offer a range of hues associated with colonial and Shaker furniture and interiors.

Bird Paint's soon-to-be-released "Authentic Colors of Historic Charleston" (see "Resources," p. 110).

Stark is right that well-defined color palettes for regions west of the Mississippi are hard to find. It's tempting to pick up the freshly re-issued "Frank Lloyd Wright Collection" color card from Martin Senour and call it a Western palette, but that would be wrong, says Penny Fowler, administrator of the Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation's Fine and Decorative Art Collections. "If anything, the colors are derived from nature, because that's the source Mr. Wright always used," Fowler says.

Arguably, many colors on this palette have ties to the Midwest and

ultramarine blue and deep red.

After about 1850, color palettes across the United States became more unified by an underlying fashion sense. The well-documented Victorian color palette allowed room for the expression of personal and regional color preferences. While Stark isn't convinced that there's enough information to define color palettes region by region, "I do believe there were pockets of availability and local fashion," he says.

The colors of building materials have local idiosyncrasies in every region. Bricks made from local clays

THIS PAGE: The Mid-Atlantic region's temperate light sets the stage for a full range of mellow colors. **OPPOSITE:** Coastal light plays well against soft blue-greys and whites.



Age Deepens The Character.

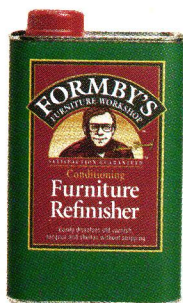
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can range from the medium red of British Columbia to the sandy yellows of Chicago. Stone houses literally take on the colors of the landscape. The woods used in shingles vary from region to region, and even weather differently, depending on whether the climate is damp or dry, warm or cold.

Until recently, even paint was likely to have a local component. Since ready-mixed paints weren't widely available until the 1880s, dry pigments were usually blended with locally derived minerals to create desired colors. Depending on the local source, an ocher-based red can vary from earthy brown to reddish purple, Stark says, making it "a real earth color."

Stark recalls reading a book by one late-19th-century pundit, who advocated sensitivity to nature in making color choices. Paint a Queen Anne house perched on a rocky point in dark earth colors, the book advised; paint the same house nestled into a leafy dell in pale greens and yellows. "The idea was that a house should be sympathetic to its immediate surroundings."

Perhaps that's why coastal regions are so often associated with the bluegreys and whites of the sea. In an age dominated by mass-marketing, regional color variations may be vanishing. The only constant is the local environment, and given the influence of earthquakes and global warming, even that is subject to change.

Freeman urges us to take advantage of advances in interior lighting that mimic the best nature has to offer. "In the late 20th century, there's no reason you can't explore any regional palette," Freeman says. "If the argument is that the quality of natural light makes some colors more attractive than others—and I believe that to be true—then you can have the colors you want because you can have the light you want." ♦

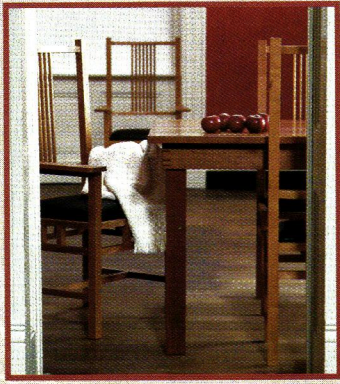
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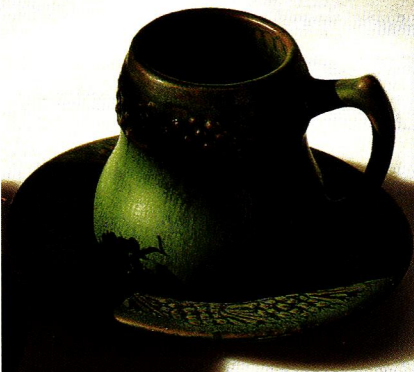


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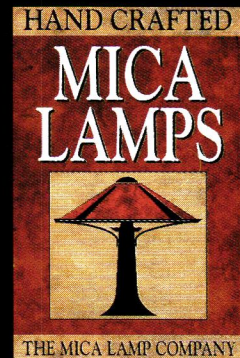
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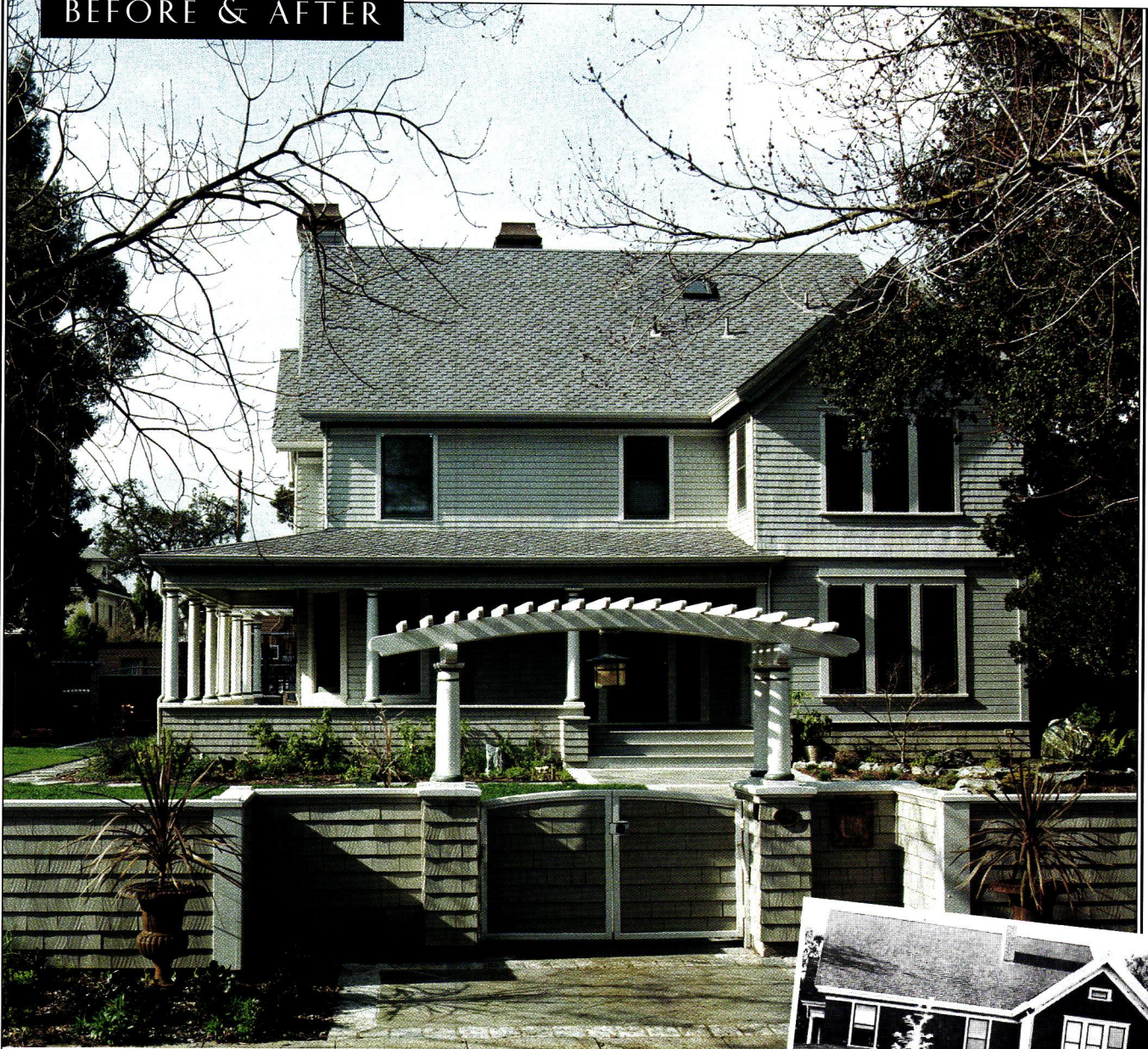
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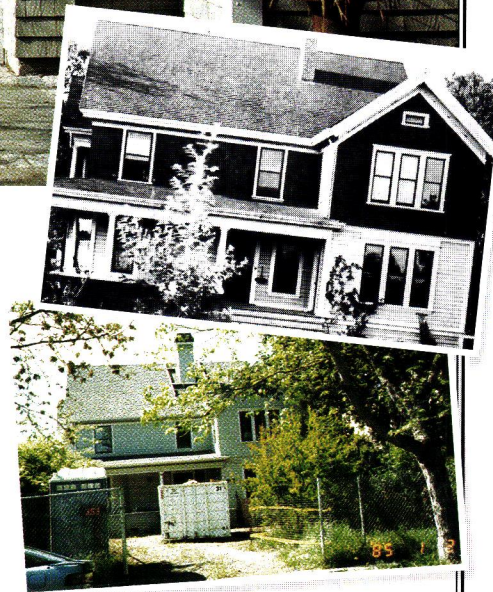
Requisite Renovation

by Regina Cole

KNOWING A HOUSE IS ESSENTIAL when it comes to making changes: we look to its construction date, style, history, and design elements for the guidance needed to create an integrated whole. In the case of this home in a historic district of Palo Alto known as "Professorville," only two clues survived. Research established its

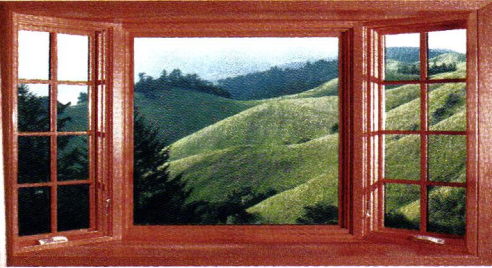
origin as 1897, and one newel post marked the foot of the stairs in an otherwise gutted interior.

The house had been derelict for many years. Someone bought it several years ago, restored the exterior, Sheetrocked new walls, and then died. A Craftsman sensibility had always appealed to today's homeowners, [Continued on page 88]



TOP: The new exterior was created by a previous owner, who did not live to finish the project. **ABOVE:** Marcia Miller found a photograph taken when the house was new, ca. 1897. **BELOW:** A rear view.

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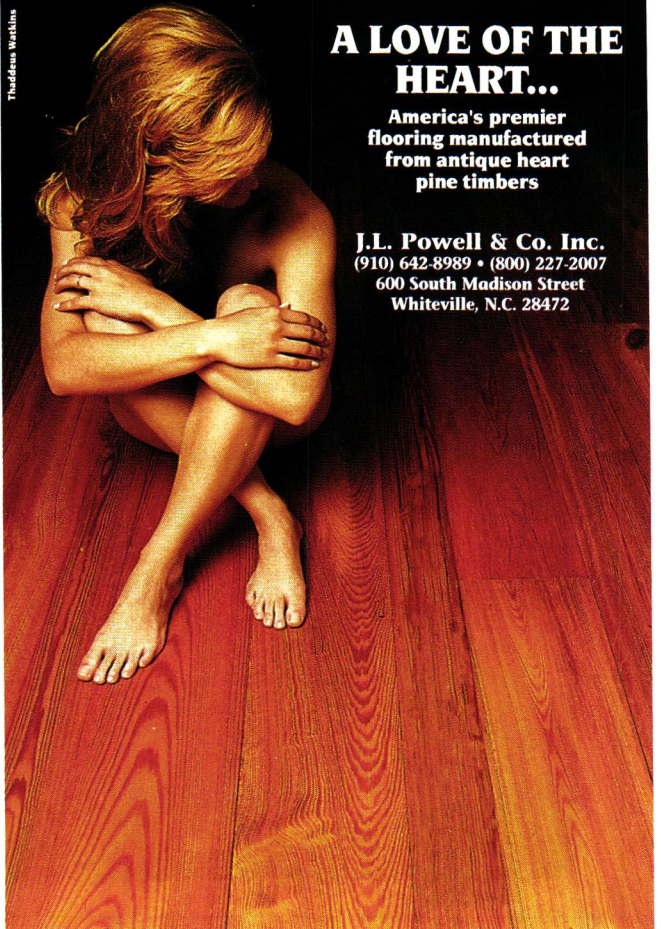
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ABOVE: A Thonet bentwood rocker in an upstairs room. **RIGHT:** The living room's focus is the fireplace, which is topped by a simple mantel and surrounded by traditional furniture.

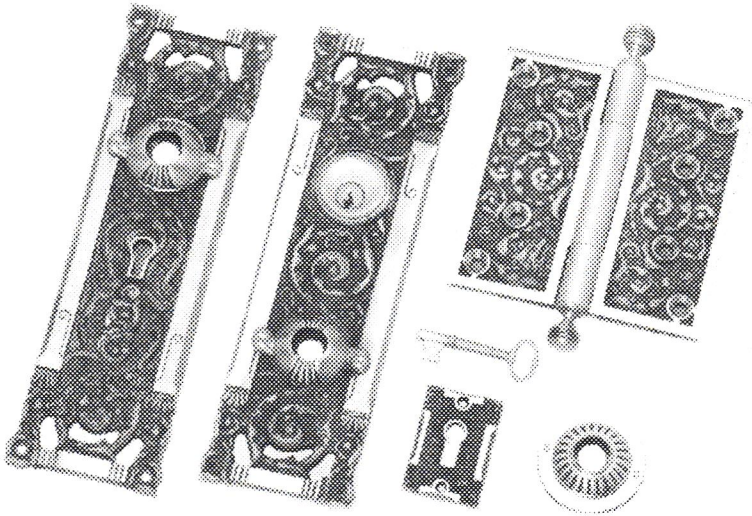
BELOW: In the dining room, leaded-glass doors in the upper built-in cabinets underscore the period styling.



IT'S GOOD TO HAVE CLUES, but few guided this renovation. New Sheetrock on studs was all the interior presented to the design team of Miller/Stein. Warm rooms rooted in history were created with guidance from the house's architecture, date of construction, and the homeowners' taste. Aesthetic Movement wallpapers, Colonial Revival furniture, turn-of-the-century lighting fixtures, and oriental carpets are the elements. The woodwork of the windows, walls, and ceilings is characteristic of both Queen Anne and Arts and Crafts houses.

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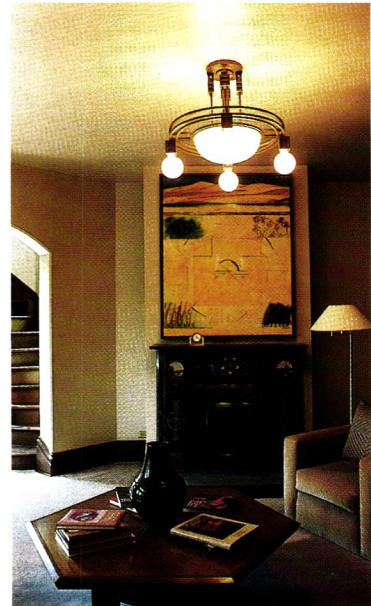
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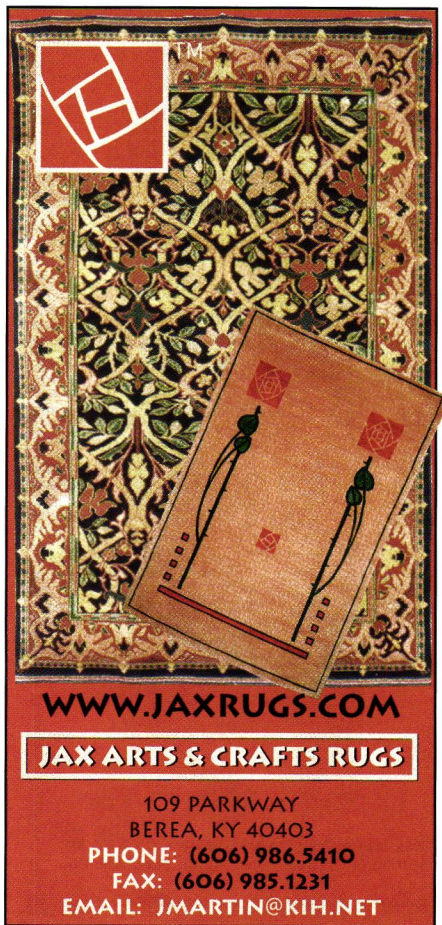


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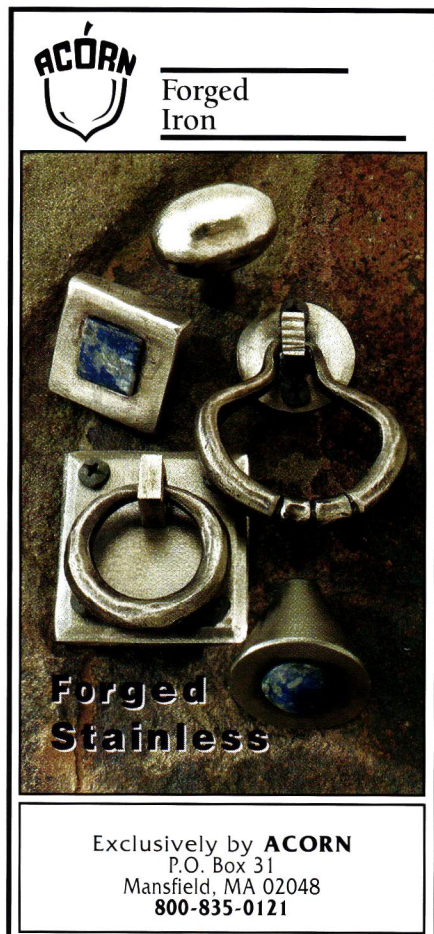


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The newel post that anchors the staircase somehow survived. It wasn't much, but it was enough to point to an Eastlake-influenced interior when the house was new.

who had tried to buy the house in the past. This was the only guidance they gave their designer when the house finally became theirs.

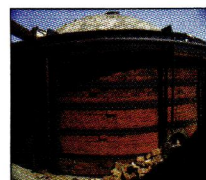
"We had never done a historic renovation, but our design philosophy is to respect the architecture of a building, and to fit the client's program into that," says Marcia Miller of Miller/Stein in Menlo Park, California. "We had no clues to the original interiors, only that single newel post, which is reinstalled at the base of the staircase."

Its late-19th century styling, as well as the house's placement in an

area where Stanford University professors built their homes at the time (hence the district's name), helped to drive a renovation that has created a transitional Victorian/Arts and Crafts interior. Vertically proportioned windows and rounded bays hint at Queen Anne architecture, and the turn-of-the-century sensibility is carried out with built-ins, coffered ceilings, reproduction wallpapers, and lighting fixtures.

There's no telling, really, what this house's interior was, once upon a time. But there's a good chance that it was a lot like this. ♦

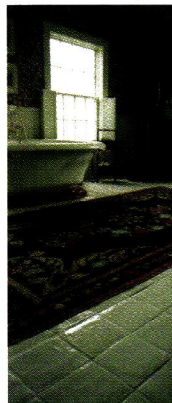
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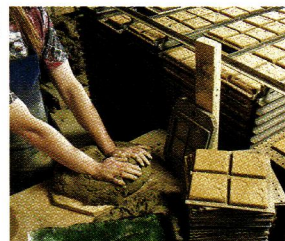
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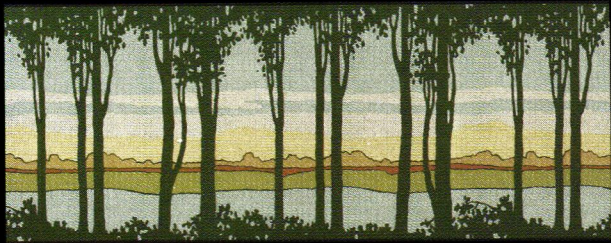
Utmost Grace

TWENTY YEARS CAN BE A LONG time. Long enough, in this case, for the work of architect brothers in early-20th-century California to move from academic esoterica to coffee-table display. In my early days in this field, when my concentration was preservation technology rather than design, I nevertheless spent many a lunch hour or Saturday afternoon poring over two slim books by then-curator Randell Makinson. One was on the architecture of Greene and Greene, the other on their furniture. [continued on page 92]

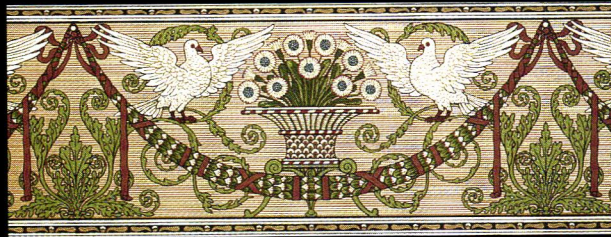
REVIEWED BY PATRICIA POORE

The Blacker House in Pasadena is a superb example of Greene and Greene's timber artistry and fascination with Japanese design and joinery. From *Greene & Greene Masterworks*; photograph by Alexander Vertikoff.

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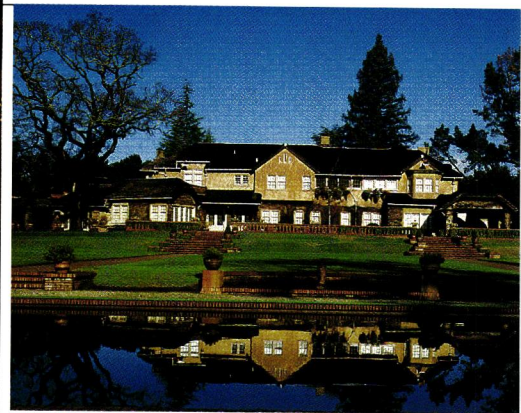
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LEFT: Inlaid steel marks a detail of the fireplace at the Thorsen house. **TOP:** Inspired by a trip to England, Charles Greene designed the Fleishhacker estate in northern California 1911. **ABOVE:** Charles and Henry Greene in the late 1940s.

THE BOOKS WERE PRINTED IN BLACK AND white, but I was satisfied (as we once were with B&W TV), having been introduced to something extraordinary and new to me. I simply could not believe how beautiful this work was, or how sinking into photos of the homey, strangely oriental interiors quieted my soul.

The early books have been in print for two decades. They have, finally, been joined by an exquisite, loving, and insightful new book by Mr. Makinson, the foremost authority on Greene and Greene. Having myself become more astute over time, I am familiar now with the various

schools of American Arts and Crafts, with California architecture and the Japanese influence on design. Still I was drawn into material new to me: unpublished work, anecdote and scholarly interpretation. I was particularly educated by the first chapter, which traces the architects' "search for direction" and lends context to their unique contribution. The trajectory of the brothers' work and their individual careers become clear—provided you can take your eyes from the stunning photographs to read the ambitious text.

Beautiful, too, but with a different mission is the book *Greene &*

Greene Masterworks, by Arts and Crafts historian Bruce Smith and the architectural photographer Alexander Vertikoff. This is, as implied, a photographic record of the famous commissions. The cadence and layout of the book seems to favor students of Arts and Crafts design looking for inspiration in the masterful details of Greene and Greene's work. The book, in fact, opens with a chapter on "the Greene & Greene style," cataloguing materials, staircases, joinery, lighting, fireplaces, etc. More than an inquiry into the sources of the brothers' work, the Bruce Smith book is a sub- [continued on page 94]

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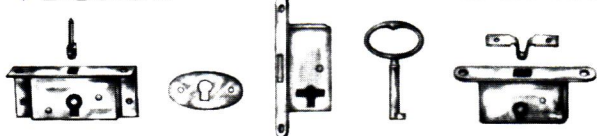


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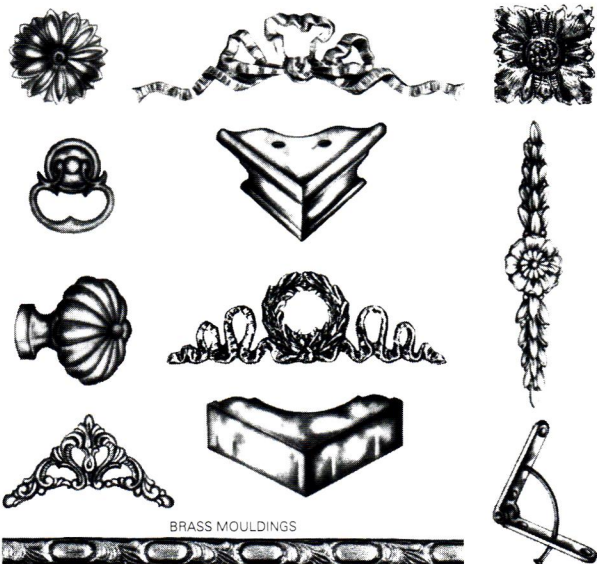
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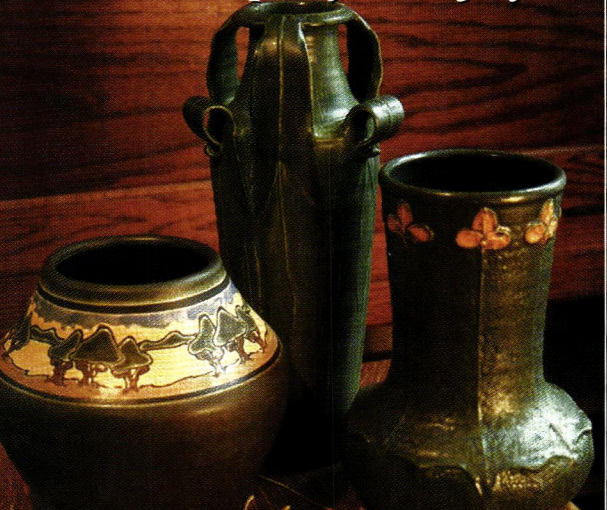
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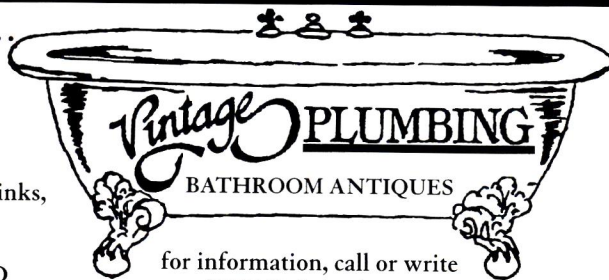
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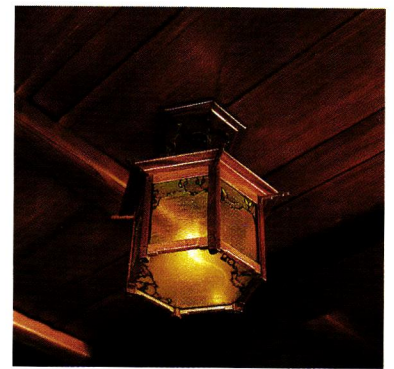
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Lamp (1906) in the Culbertson house dining room. Photograph from Greene & Greene by Randell L. Makinson.

jective walk through the houses today, albeit with a knowledgeable guide. There is a directness about the text, which favors description. The photos are expansive and well lit.

Published in the same year, two expensive books, each a labor of love: proof enough that the work of Greene and Greene transcends a "style," its era, and even architecture. Virtually unreplicable in our time, these houses are fine art. And like fine art they are worthy of reverence, and preservation, study and interpretation—even of chop-shop thievery. ♦

Greene & Greene

The Passion and the Legacy

by Randell L. Makinson

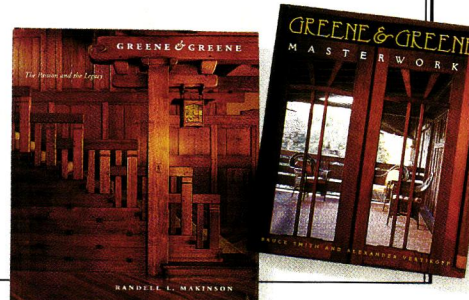
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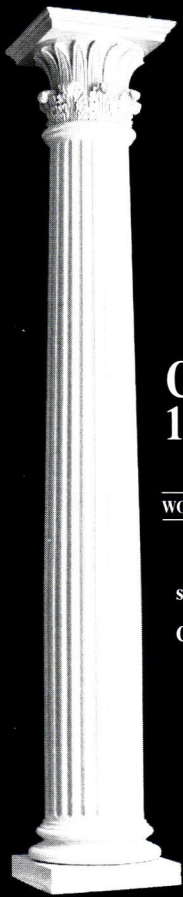
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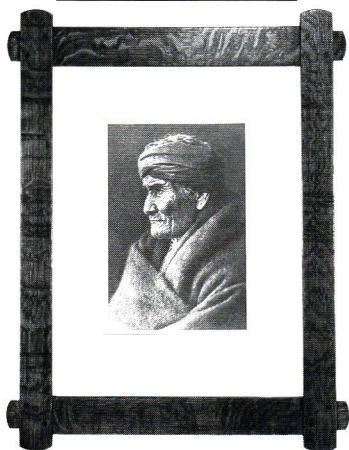
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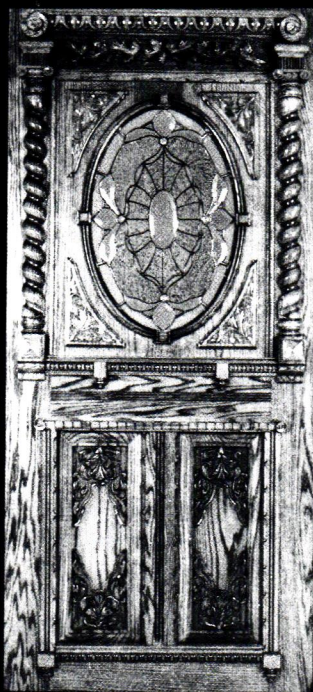
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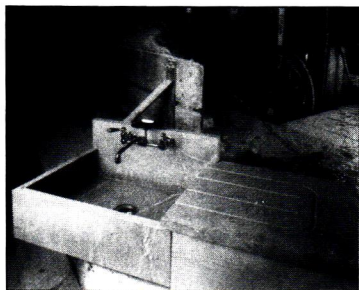
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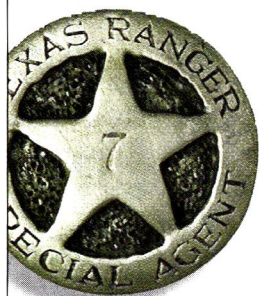
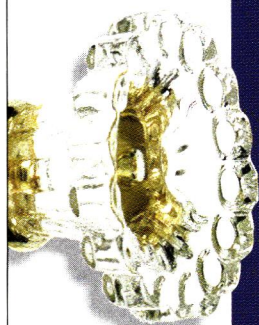
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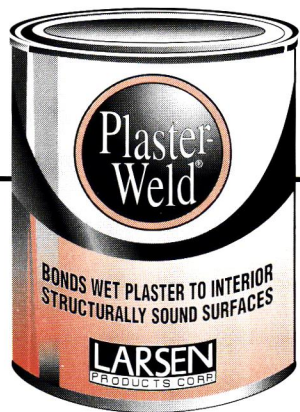
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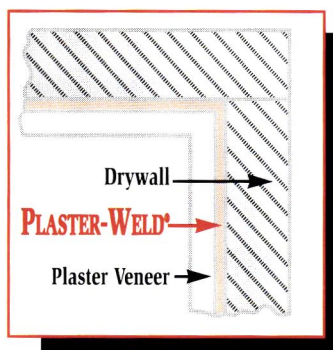


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But even in rooms with modern heat, chandeliers get dirty. Once a month, you should go over it with a feather duster. Then, once a year, give it a good cleaning."

Tim says, however, that this is something people can do themselves—with a few exceptions. "When candle wax has dripped onto the crystal, it is better to disassemble the pieces and send them to us for cleaning, since the drops may have to be heated to remove the wax. Also, very old chandeliers may have copper pins—the metal pieces holding the drops—or brittle pins, which need to be replaced. It is best to have such fixtures cleaned professionally."

If your chandelier is sound and free of wax, disassemble it and wash the pieces in a mild liquid detergent dissolved in very hot water. Dry them with a lint-free towel. Go over the body of the chandelier—first with a dry cloth, then a damp one. "The other way around produces streaks," Tim warns. Reassembling the chandelier is one part of this operation requiring some forethought.

"Many different components make up a crystal chandelier: festoons, accent pieces, hanging crystals. Take those off with the chandelier in place, and lay the pieces out in order," suggests Tim. "Or, if you have eight arms, take off seven, and leave one on to use it as a guide. Or, draw yourself a diagram."

I have a bolt of old dress fabric that probably dates to the 1950s. Can I use it to cover an armchair? The colors are perfect!

**Jane Kerrancho
Peoria, Illinois**

NO. DON'T BE TEMPTED TO USE A DRESS fabric for any furnishings purpose other than secondary trimming, no matter how attractive it may be. For upholstery projects, the fabric must be robust. For curtains it must have

a good drape; for cushions, be firm yet comfortable. Fabric made for clothing simply will not stand up to prolonged use, nor will it withstand the damaging effects of sunlight. Also, depending upon how your bolt of fabric has been stored for the past 45 years, its fibers may have weakened. Dress material that old could very well tear the first time somebody sits in the chair.

This may sound really weird, but I think I remember my grandmother, who was a wonderful baker, pulling a straw out of her kitchen broom to test her cakes. Could this possibly be a traditional use of brooms? My broom doesn't come apart so easily—not to mention how dirty it is!

**Miriam Shapiro
Swampscott, Mass.**

YOUR GRANDMOTHER KNEW THAT A broom straw has the right thickness and flexibility to insert into a baking cake to test for doneness. And while you could pluck your broom to the same end, it's better not to for reasons of hygiene (and the life of the broom). Also, modern broom straws are often treated with dyes you wouldn't want in your cakes.

The students at Berea College in Berea, Kentucky, provide an alternative. [Berea College is a unique liberal arts college which offers courses in broom making as well as woodcraft, weaving, ceramics, iron work and furniture making. For more information call (800) 347-3892 or visit their website at www.bereacollege.com.] Their "Cake Test Broom" is a 9½ inch-tall whisk broom with easily pluckable straws just the right length for judging cake doneness. It comes with a wooden handle and a handy rawhide hanging loop, and is available by mail-order through the King Arthur Flour Company's catalogue out of Norwich, Vermont. Call them at (800) 827-6836. ♦



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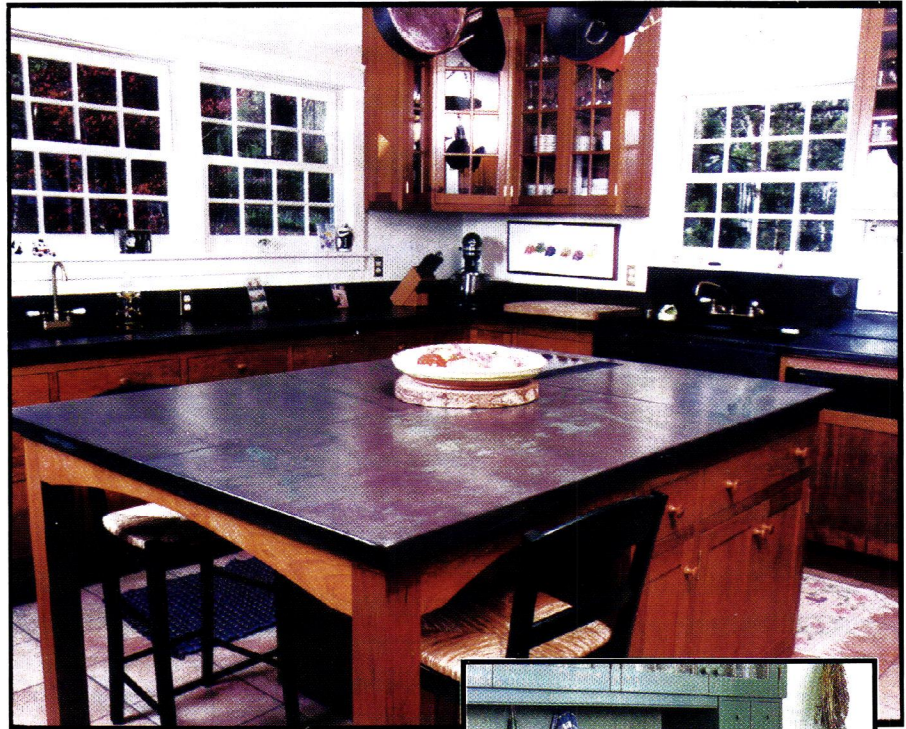
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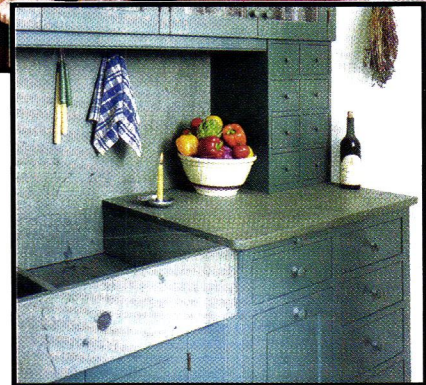
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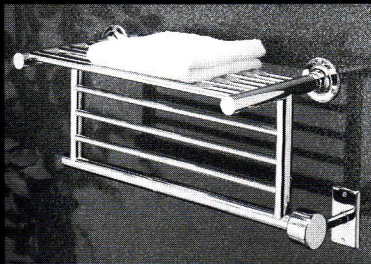
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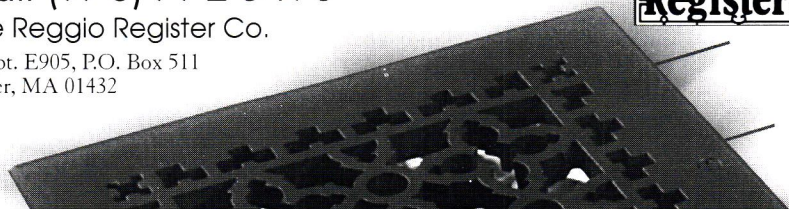
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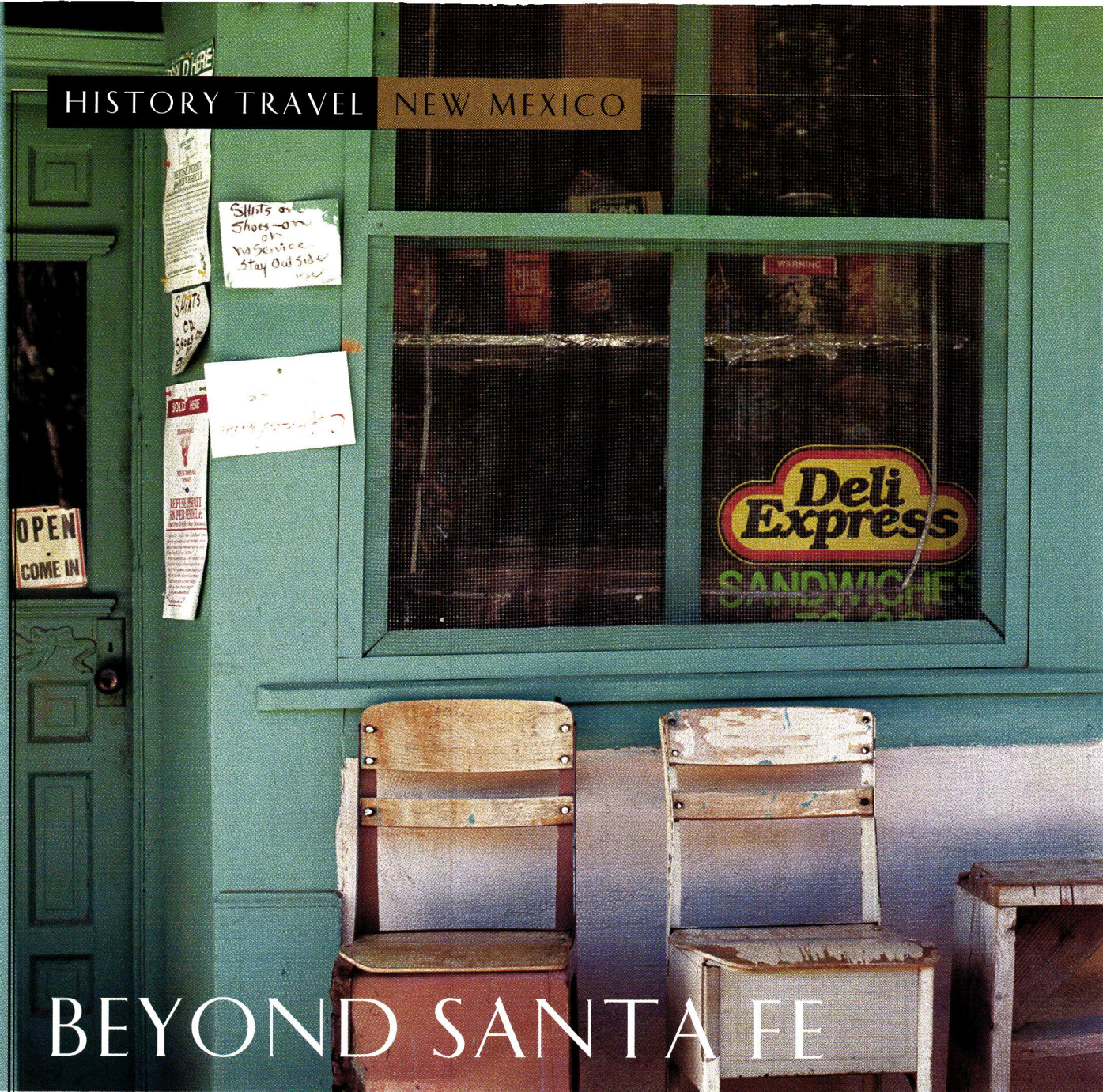
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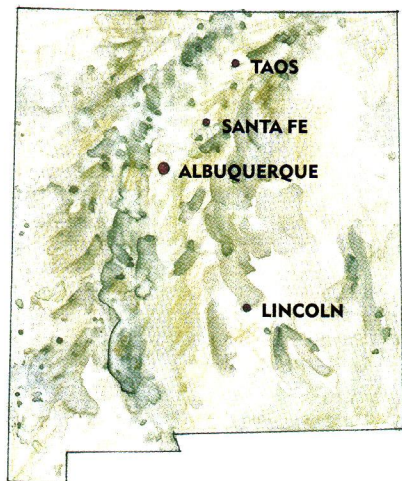
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BEYOND SANTA FE



FOR THE VISITOR TO ALBUQUERQUE or Santa Fe, sites off the beaten track are well worth a drive into the exceptional landscape of New Mexico. I'll describe for you my favorites, opined as a state native, a preservationist and writer, and as an inveterate traveler of roads less taken. First up: **LINCOLN COUNTY HERITAGE**. Drive three or four hours southeast into New Mexico's great cattle country near Texas. New Mexico's Lincoln County War of 1878 haunts the landscape of frontier and imagination. Lincoln might not mean much

except for the fact that William Bonney (aliases Henry Antrim, Kid Antrim, Billy Bonney, Billy the Kid) was a soldier in the "war" between the Murphey and Tunstall factions that claimed at least a dozen lives and terrorized this tiny village in southeastern New Mexico for several months in 1878.

Today Lincoln nestles peacefully within its lush valley, a collection of beautifully restored Territorial era (1848–1912) adobe cottages, saloons, and mercantile buildings. Several buildings can rightfully claim that

COCKES

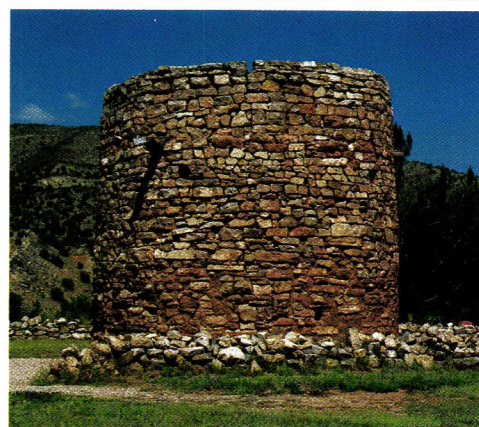
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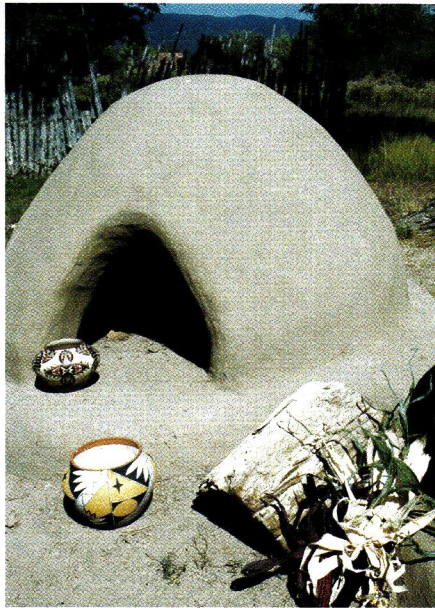
CLOCKWISE: (from left) Off the beaten track in Galisteo, outside of Santa Fe, a general store looks timeless. The prominent two-storey adobe building in Lincoln is the former Lincoln County Courthouse, from which Billy the Kid made his escape. In Lincoln, an old Spanish *torreon* was once a defense tower against Apache attacks. The Watson House dates to ca. 1870. It is one of nine state-owned buildings in Lincoln that have been restored to their Territorial appearance.



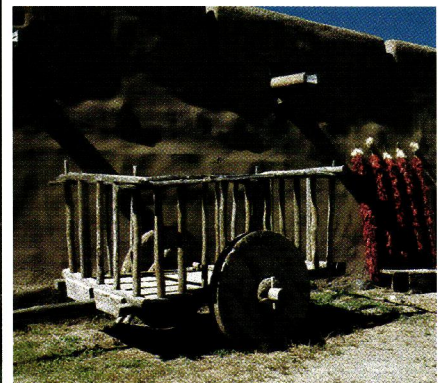
“Billy the Kid slept here,” but the (former) **LINCOLN COUNTY COURTHOUSE**, a majestic two-storey adobe, held the Kid under lock and key.

The Museum of New Mexico’s State Monuments Division has acquired nine landmark Lincoln structures (including the Courthouse), restoring them to their Territorial appearance. The State also owns the turn-of-the-century **TUNSTALL STORE** and the beautifully restored **SAN JUAN CHURCH**, the interior of which evokes the spare elegance of New Mexico parishes.





In Taos, the Martinez Hacienda and the Mabel Dodge home. Bathroom windows in the Dodge house were painted by D.H. Lawrence, one of Mabel Dodge's guests.



Also State-owned are the **FRESQUEZ STORE**, and the **WATSON HOUSE**.

The Lincoln County Historical Trust also owns several buildings, including the **WORTLEY HOTEL** and **DR. WOOD'S HOME**. Lincoln boasts about forty or fifty historic Territorial buildings, representing what most people consider the golden years of the West. A favorite local place to hide out is at the **CASA DE PETRON**, a historic inn originally built in the 1870s.

Lincoln is quiet and relatively isolated. Nearby, the village of **CAPITAN** (10 miles north) and the high mountain resort mecca of

RUIDOSO (45 miles west) offer gourmet restaurants.

Next: the **LEGENDARY HOUSES OF TAOS**. Follow the Rio Grande north from Santa Fe some seventy-five miles until the splendor of the Taos Valley stops you in your tracks. Nature lovers have worshipped for centuries in this modest New Mexico town with a name that reaches the heavens. Unlike Santa Fe, which has acquired a measure of urbanity, Taos retains its picturesque and quirky idiosyncrasies. In a few select realms, however (art, architecture, and spirituality among them), Taos is surprisingly sophisticated.

This intoxicating blend has attracted legendary visitors to the Taos Valley since before Francisco Vasquez de Coronado's explorers discovered Taos Pueblo in 1541.

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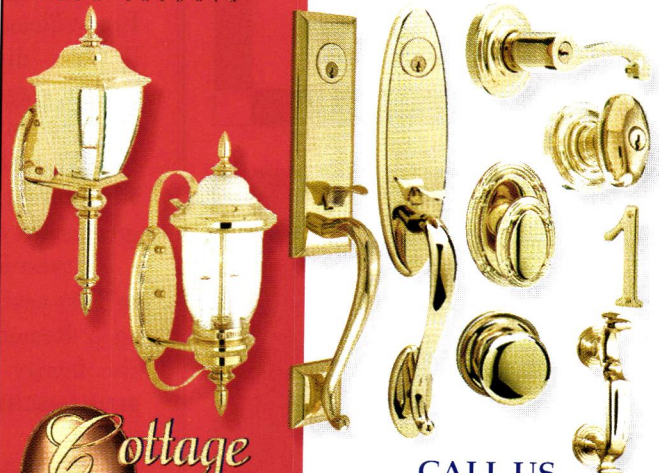
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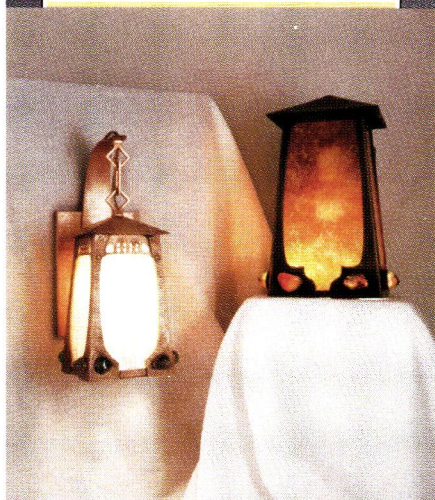
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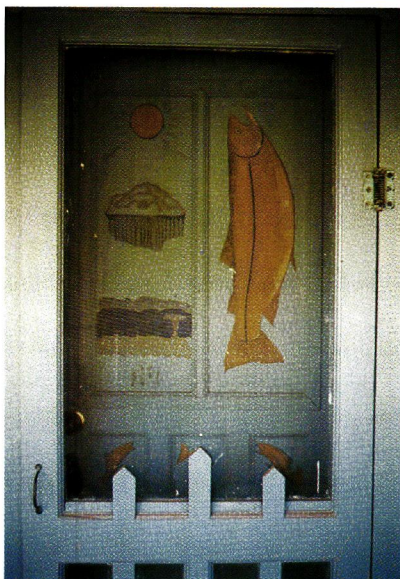
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TOP: The Martinez Hacienda kitchen. **LEFT:** The porch door at the Blumenschein House. **ABOVE:** In the parlor at Blumenschein house, now a museum.

brought American and European manufactured goods such as furniture, building materials, and textiles to the Spanish Southwest.

In 1898, New York artists Ernest Blumenschein and Bert Greer Phillips "discovered" Taos after a broken wagon wheel forced them into the tiny adobe village. Taos became a Shangri-la for creative adventurers, and one of America's greatest art colonies was founded.

Ernest Blumenschein returned to Taos nearly every summer until 1919. Remodeled and expanded by the family over the years, the **BLUMENSCHHEIN HOUSE** is now a museum.

Of all the splendid interiors in Taos, none surpasses the lovingly handcrafted masterpieces to be found

in the **NICOLAI FECHIN HOUSE**. Trained as a painter at St. Petersburg's Kazan Art School and the Imperial Academy, Fechin emigrated to New York in 1923 and arrived in Taos a year later. From 1927 to 1933, Fechin built a remarkable adobe house and studio, fusing Russian folk art icons with Spanish Colonial architectural forms.

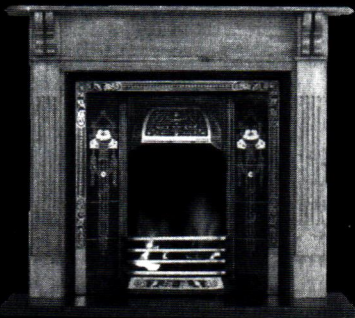
Interiors of the new luxury hotel adjacent to the Fechin House, **THE FECHIN INN**, are also worth a peek, having been interpreted in Fechin's style by contemporary Santa Fe craftsman Jeremy Morrelli.

Before arriving in Taos for the winter in 1916, Mabel Dodge had hosted one of New York's legendary salons in Greenwich Village. But, captivated by [continued on page 106]

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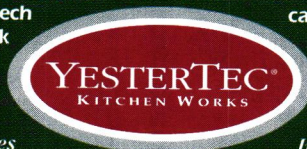
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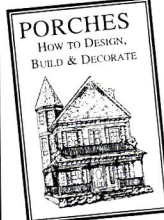
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TOP: Inside the Fechin House, a Taos house museum. Nicolai Fechin, a classically-trained Russian painter, built an adobe house and studio in Taos from 1927 to 1933. **RIGHT:** Examples of Fechin's folk art collection. **BOTTOM:** The patina of a carved wooden cabinet.



Taos, Mabel settled there by 1918, purchasing a 200-year-old, three-room *casita*. She then hired (her future husband) Tony Lujan from Taos Pueblo to supervise a crew of Pueblo workers to transform the place into a grand earthen retreat worthy of Mabel's generous hospitality.

Inspired by her previous experiences remodeling a Medici villa in Italy (with her second husband Edwin Dodge), Mabel's Taos home grew upward and outward, crowned by a glass solarium on the third floor. The expansive dining room has a splendid *latilla* ceiling painted in a Navajo rug design.

Mabel's house was the first to feature indoor plumbing in Taos,

and the nearly totally glazed bathroom on the second floor caused a local sensation when Mabel bathed in her claw-foot bathtub. D.H. Lawrence hand-painted designs on the bathroom windows, creating a filtered light effect, not to mention a measure of privacy for Mabel and her guests.

The house is filled with rooms sanctified by the extended stays of luminaries including Lawrence, Greta Garbo, Willa Cather, Ansel Adams, even Dennis Hopper (who edited *Easy Rider* here). Furnishings, art, books and, yes, even the walls themselves are reminders of the sublime appeal of Taos and its magical valley. —BY ELMO BACA ♦



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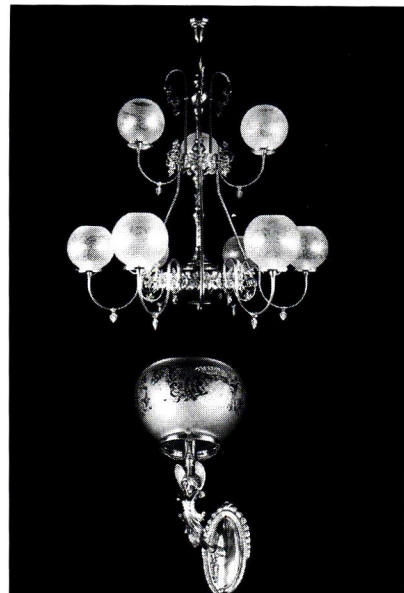
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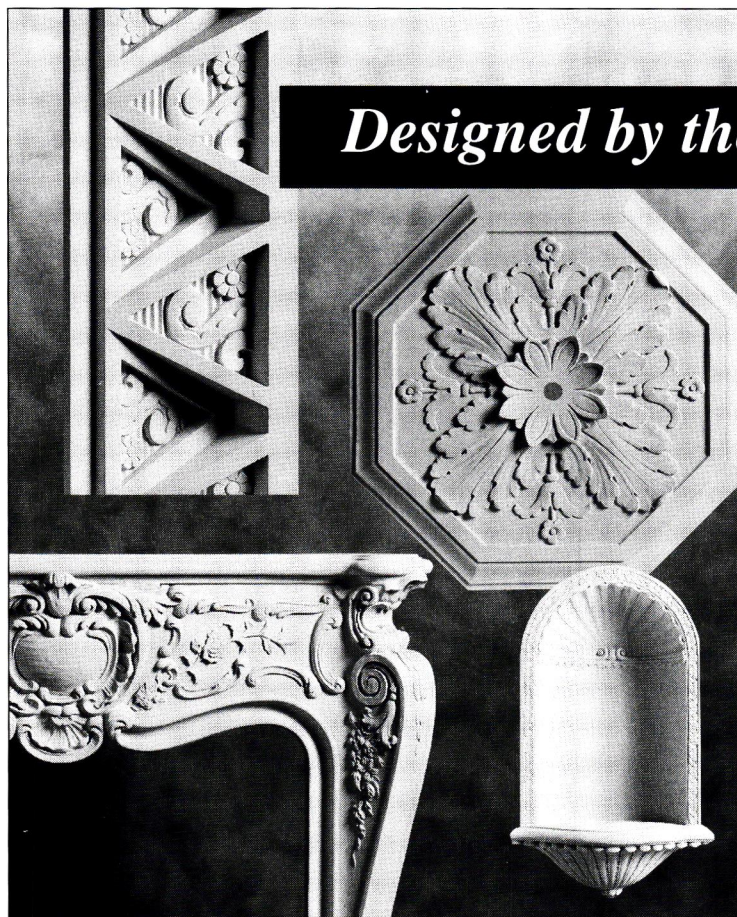
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Furnishings

pp. 13-18

p.13 MAPS catalog: www.mapsite.com. **p. 17** For Art Deco Decor catalog send \$8 to 23561 Ridge Route Dr., Laguna Hills, CA 92653.

The Kitchen

pp. 23-27

By Mona Simpson, excerpted from *Home-American Writers Remember Rooms of Their Own*. Edited by Sharon Sloan Fiffer and Steve Fiffer, Vintage Books, ©1995. Printed by permission of Random House, Inc. Call (800) 793-2665.

Changing Destiny

pp. 28-34

The Gamble House, 4 Westmoreland Pl., Pasadena, CA 91104 Tours Thurs.-Sun. 12pm-3pm. Call (626) 793-3334. ■ Ipekjian Custom Woodwork, Pasadena, Calif. (626) 792-5025. **p. 30** Glass fixtures by Buffalo Studios, Santa Ana, Calif. Catalog \$8. Call (949) 250-7333.

Sheltered in Vermont

pp. 38-43

Restoration by Vermont Vernacular Designs, Inc., RD #1, PO Box 108, East Calais, VT 05650. (800) 639-1796.

Craftsman Courageous

pp. 48-51

Specialists in Arts & Crafts furniture: Edwards Antiques & Collectibles, 89 Hillsboro St., Pittsboro, NC 27312. (919) 542-5649. **p. 51** Inglenook: Seneca Tiles, 7100 S. County Road, Suite 23, Attica, OH 44807. (800) 426-4335.

Scotty's Castle

pp. 62-67

Scotty's Castle, in Death Valley National Park, is open year-round. For tour info call (760) 786-2392.

Vanities of the Bath

pp. 68-73

Books: *Bathrooms* by Barbara Buchholz, ©1996 Friedman/Fairfax. *The Bathroom* by Diane Berger, ©1990 Abbeville Press. *Bathrooms* by Chris Casson Madden, photographs by John Vaughan, ©1996 Clarkson N. Potter, Inc. **p. 69** Bath cabinet by Kennebec Co., 1 Front Street, Bath, ME 04530. (207) 443-2131. Hardware by Horton Brasses, (860) 635-4400. Catalog \$4; website: www.horton-brasses.com. **p. 73** Drop-in sink bowl by Kohler Co., 444 Highland Dr., Kohler, WI 53044. Call (920) 457-4441 or www.kohlerco.com.

Garden on Queen Anne Hill

pp. 74-77

p. 76 Middleton Place is open daily 9am-5pm for public tours. Call (843) 556-6020.

Color Palette

pp. 78-81

New England: "Historic Colors of America" in coop. with the SPNEA. Call Color Guild International, (800) 995-8885. ■ The Old-Fashioned Milk Paint Co., (978) 448-6336. ■ **MID-ATLANTIC:** "Historic Color Collection," Benjamin Moore. Dealers: (800) 826-2623. ■ "Williamsburg Interior Paint Colors" from Martin-Senour, (800) 542-8468. ■ Forthcoming Philadelphia palette: M. A. Bruder & Sons, (610) 353-5100. ■ **South:** "Southern Heritage: Historic Colors of the Old South," Dealer info.: Valspar Corp. (847) 541-9000. ■ Forthcoming "Authentic Colors of Historic Charleston," a project of Historic Charleston Fdn. Call Bird Paints. (843) 722-1056. ■ **Midwest:** "Preservation Palette," Arts & Crafts colors from Sherwin-Williams. Dealer information (800) 4SHERWIN. ■ **Midwest and Southwest:** "Frank Lloyd Wright Collection," a revival of 1955 Taliesin palette from Martin-Senour. (800) 542-8468.

"Renewing the Sparkle"

pp. 96-98

Period lighting catalog \$5; King's Chandelier Co., P. O. Box 667, Dept. OE, Highway 14, Eden, NC 27288; (336) 623-6188.

Requisite Renovation

pp. 84-88

Marcia Miller, ASID, Steven Stein, ASID. 1160 Chestnut St., #201, Menlo Park, CA 94025. (650) 328-1610. **p. 84** Light fixtures, Arroyo Craftsman, 4509 Little John St., Baldwin Park, CA 91706. (818) 960-9411. **p. 86** Wing chairs: Isenhour through RJ Collection, 2 Henry Adams St., San Francisco, CA 94103. (415) 621-8524. ■ Lamps: Restoration Hardware, 281 University Ave., Palo Alto, CA 94301. (650) 328-4004. ■ Wallpaper: "Iris Frieze" and "Burlap Ceiling" by Bradbury & Bradbury, (707) 746-1900. ■ Tile: Ann Sacks Tile & Stone, 8120 NE 33rd Dr., Portland, OR 97211. (503) 281-7751. ■ Pendant light: Omega Too, 2204 San Pablo Ave., Berkeley, CA 94702. (510) 843-3636. ■ Wallpaper: "Marigold" and "Emelita's Frieze" by Bradbury & Bradbury, see above. **p. 88** Carpet runner: Couristan. (415) 861-3595. ■ Burgundy Lincrusta through Victorian Interiors, 575 Hayes St., San Francisco, CA 94102. (415) 431-7191.

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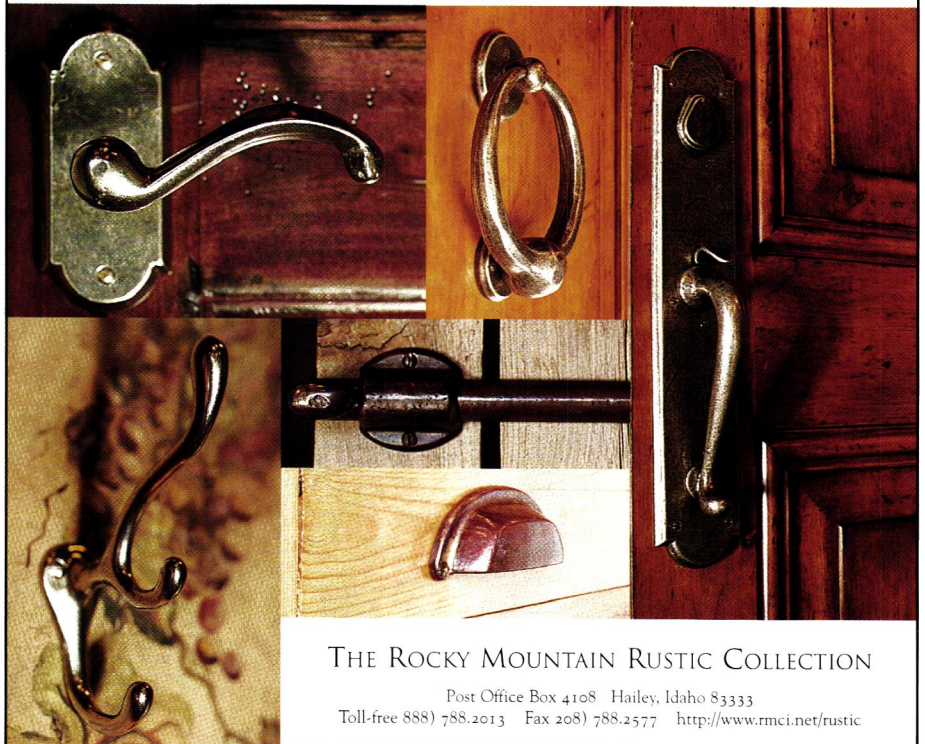
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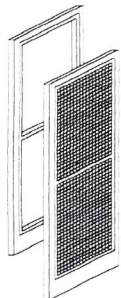
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American Decorative Arts Forum of Northern California, San Francisco. (415) 921-0701. JULY 13: Furniture Making in Western Connecticut, 1750-1800.

Connecticut

The Mark Twain House, Hartford. (860) 493-6411. THROUGH JUNE 1: Brilliant Ideas: The Designs of Louis Comfort Tiffany.

Delaware

Winterthur Museum, Garden & Library. (302) 888-4600. BEGINNING JUNE 19: Kids! 200 Years of Childhood.

Georgia

The Georgia Historical Society, Savannah. (912) 232-3411. MAY 21-23: Savannah Sojourn Antiques Show and Sale.

Illinois

The Art Institute of Chicago. (312) 443-3600. BEGINNING JUNE 5: Land of Winged Horsemen: Art in Poland, 1571-1764.
Glessner House Museum, Chicago. (312) 326-

1480. JULY 18: Too Beautiful to Be True: Burne-Jones, Morris, & Religious Imagery.

Kentucky

East Row Garden Club, Newport. (513) 588-4600. JUNE 19 & 20: 1999 Garden Walk.

Massachusetts

American Textile History Museum, Lowell. (978) 441-0400. JUNE 1: For Warmth and Beauty: Coverlets, Quilts and Bedcovers in the American Home.

Victorian Society in America, Boston. (617) 267-6338. JUNE 24: American Impressionism. JULY 22: Stained Glass Talk.

New Jersey

Liberty State Park, Jersey City. (212) 255-0020. JUNE 27: The Liberty Super Collectibles Expo.

New York

Chautauqua County Historical Society, Westfield. (716) 326-3511. JULY 26-28: 61st Westfield Antiques Show and Sale at Eason Hall.

Mohank Mountain House, New Paltz. (914) 255-1000. JULY 5-15: A Summer of Discovery.

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North Carolina

Old Salem, Winston-Salem. (336) 721-7300. JULY 4: 34th Annual Torchlight Procession.

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Historic Hudson Community Association, Newark. (800) 284-1313. JUNE 26: Historic Hudson Community Association Home & Garden Tour: Pull Up a Chair and Enjoy.

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The Victorian Society in America, Newport. (718) 721-6359. JUNE 4-13: The Nineteenth Annual American Summer School.

Virginia

Colonial Williamsburg Foundation. (800) 603-0948. BEGINNING IN JUNE: Learning Weeks in Archaeology.

Virginia Historical Society, Richmond. (804) 342-9665. BEGINNING JUNE 13: The Virginia Landscape.

Washington

Historic Seattle. (206) 622-6952. JUNE 13: Spring into Summer at the Boyer Residence.

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Taliesin Preservation Commission, Spring Green. (608) 588-7900. JUNE 5: Hillside Plus Tours. JUNE 19: Kids Day.



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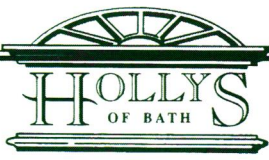
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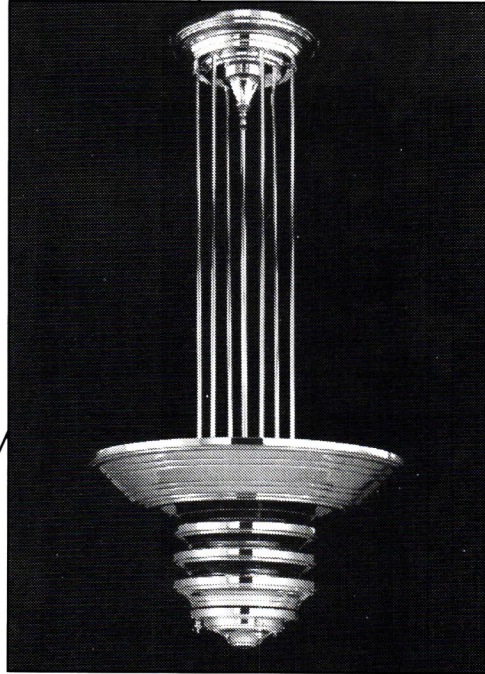
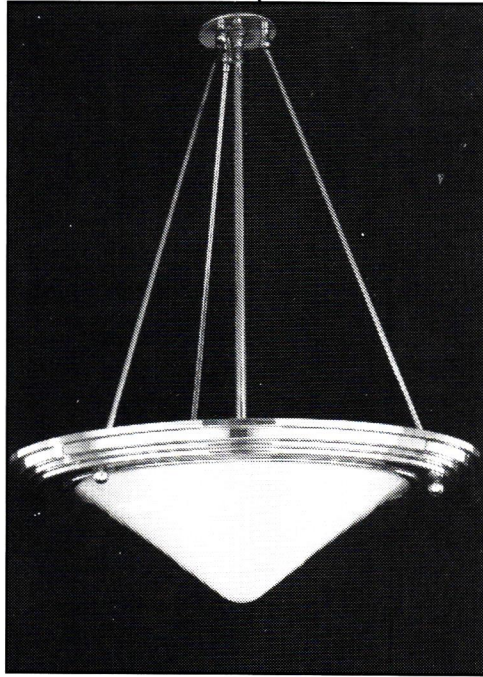
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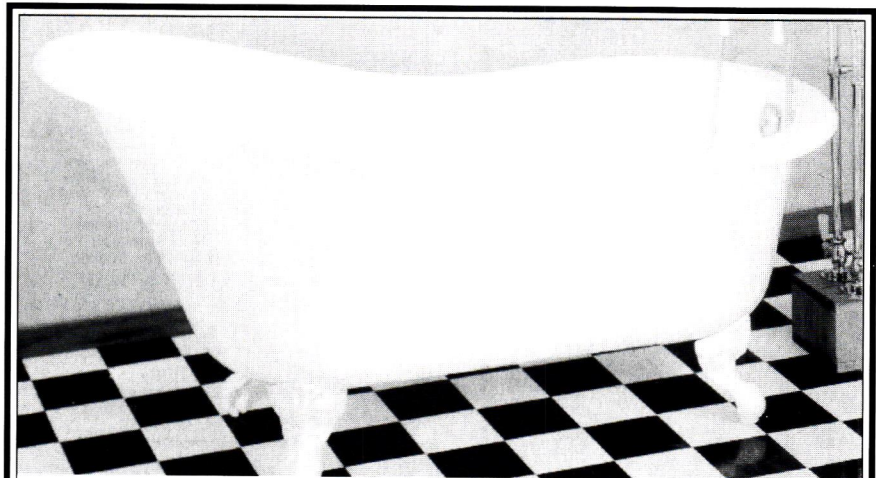
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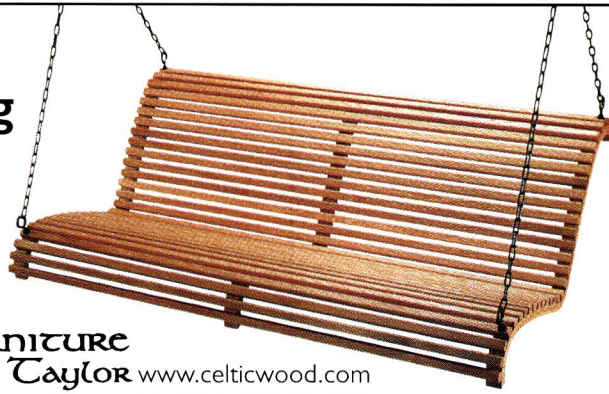
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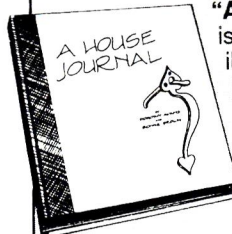
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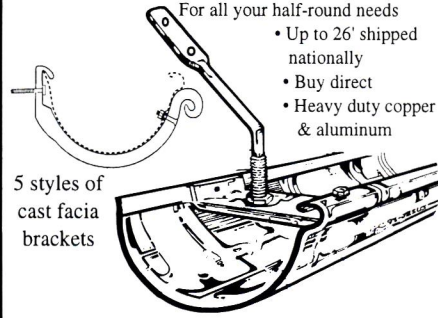
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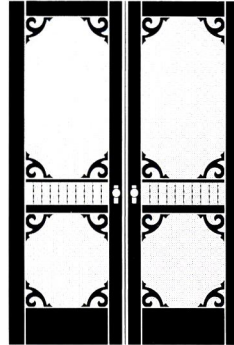
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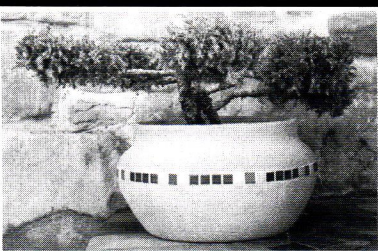
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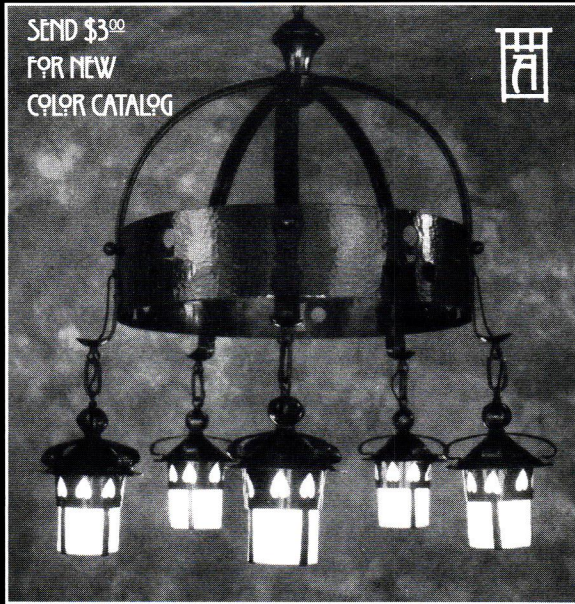
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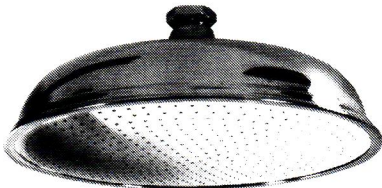


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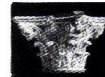
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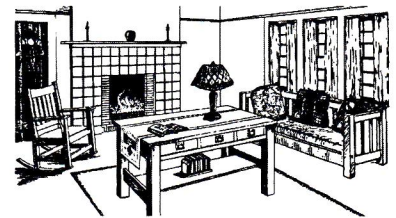
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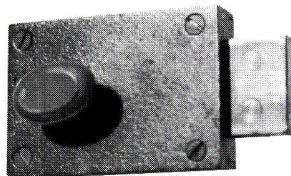
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