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for good

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April 2009

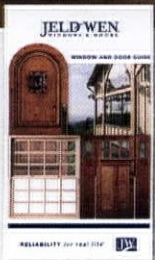
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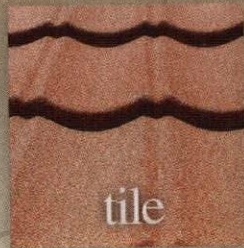
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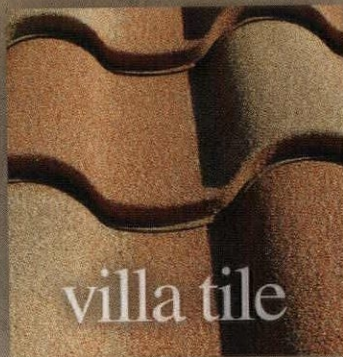
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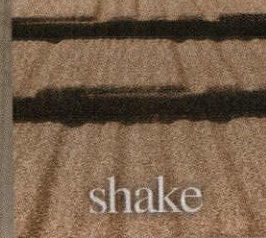
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By THE OHJ EDITORIAL STAFF



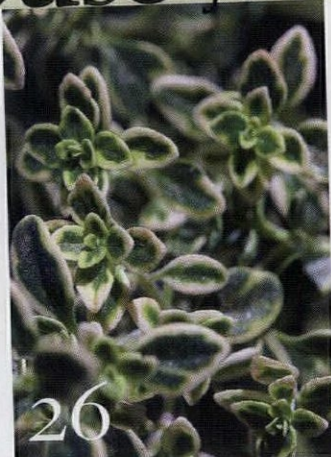
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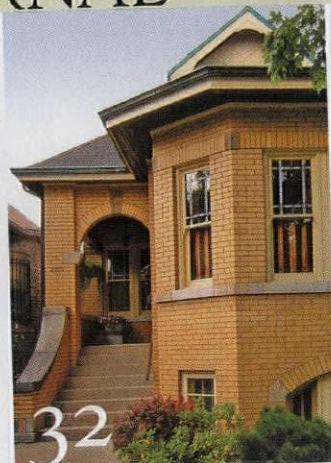
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Cover:
 Photo by Richard McNamee. Salvaged items and period tile treatments highlight a new kitchen in a 1909 Seattle bungalow. Story page 58.

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RICHARD MCNAMÉE PHOTO

Salvage Salvation

Whether you're looking for that perfect vintage farmhouse sink (like the one on page 60) or a hulking antique desk you can convert into an island (like the one on page 58), architectural salvage can help old-house kitchens retain their charm. Consult our state-by-state directory to find a store in your area, and let the hunt begin!

A Trip Through Time

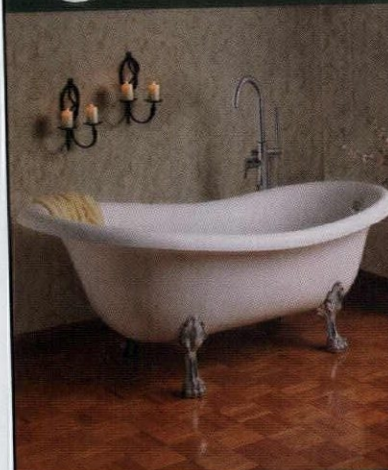
When it comes to recreating period-perfect kitchen details, inspiration can be hard to come by—unless you know where to look. We're spotlighting a slew of house museums whose kitchens (from the most basic 18th-century spaces to the "modernized" kitchens of the 1930s and '40s) offer inspiration for the taking.

Connecting on Kitchens

Before you start restoring your own kitchen, get the inside scoop on all the joys and pains of kitchen remodeling. On MyOldHouseJournal.com, we're rounding up the best restoration blogs on the 'net—chock full of inspiring before-and-after photos and been-there-done-that advice. And while you're there, stop by our forums to check out conversations on everything from restoring and installing old appliances to determining what time period is appropriate for your kitchen.

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editor's note

Recipes for Renewal



ANYONE WHO'S EVER TACKLED even a simple restoration project knows how many choices are involved: Recreate the wood's original finish, or preserve the one that's been worn and warmed through years of use? Patch the tile, or try to match it? Strip the wallpaper, or save it at all costs? When it comes to working on kitchens, the decisions can be especially overwhelming. Do you return the space to its original appearance, its initial "modernization," or somewhere in between? And how do you narrow down your

choices from today's abundant selections? Kitchens are often one of the hardest rooms to work on because there are so many materials available and so many possible directions to pursue. To help you through this maze of choices, we've devoted more than half of this issue to old-house kitchens.

In Insider (see page 58), we look at kitchens from three very different houses: a high-style Arts & Crafts, a transitional Victorian, and a bungalow. In each case, the homeowners started out with a specific wish list that ended up guiding the whole project. We also explore a classic 1920s workspace and show modern products you can use to recreate its look and feel (see "Anatomy of an Old-House Kitchen," page 34); pay another visit to Frank Lloyd Wright's Willey house in Minneapolis, where an exacting kitchen restoration required some creativity in sourcing materials (see "The Wright Choice," page 40); and learn how today's sophisticated computer software can help cook up new kitchen designs (see "The Virtual Kitchen," page 54). If your kitchen wish list only involves spicing up your recipes, check out our Outside the Old House on traditional herb gardens (see page 26).

On the hard-at-work front, we delve into subjects off of the beaten path. Mold may not be anyone's favorite topic, but folks who have it will want to know how to get rid of it—contributing editor Noelle Lord tells us (see "Mold Management," page 66). And traditional fasteners may not be exciting, but they work well on a range of repairs, if you choose the right ones (see "Fast Facts on Fasteners," page 44).

If bungalows are your passion, you won't want to miss this issue's Old-House Living, featuring a woodwork-laden home in Texas, or Preservation Perspectives, which delivers the scoop on innovative programs at the Historic Chicago Bungalow Association. And speaking of bungalows, if you have a mostly original bungalow kitchen (preferably one with unpainted woodwork and a lack of stainless steel appliances), take note: regular OHJ contributor Jane Powell is working on an update of her classic book *Bungalow Kitchens*, and is seeking kitchens to photograph. If yours fits the bill, contact Jane directly (and send snapshots) at hsdressng@aol.com.

daposporos@homebuyerpubs.com

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A photograph of a dining room. In the center, a wooden table is set with a meal including a cake on a green stand, a bowl of salad, plates of bread, cheese, and a pitcher of beer. A hanging light fixture with a tiered metal shade is positioned above the table. The background features a green wall and two large windows with wooden frames. The text "Every home is full of stories. Every story has a highlight." is centered on the wall.

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letters

Italianates A to Z

I'm always enchanted with any article on Victorian style, architecture, and history, so I loved "Viva Italianate" [Style, November/December '08]. While you mentioned many common Italianate details, I wanted to point out another: the tower.



Our house in Port Hope, Michigan [left], is a grand example. Looking at some of the plan books for this period, there are always prints of an Italianate with a tower, as well as houses with belvederes or cupolas.

Our home was built in 1866 by my great-grandfather, and I am the fourth generation living in the house. Viva Italianate!

Dean Smith
Port Hope, Michigan

We agree that towers are one of the more striking features of Italianate design. We'll be featuring a story on the restoration of an Italianate tower in an upcoming issue—be sure to look out for it! —Eds.

A Historic Encounter

I just received the January/February '09 issue of OHJ, and was surprised to see a familiar face in your Old-House Living article ["Village Life"]. In 2006, my family attended a festival at the American Independence Museum in Exeter, New Hampshire. While my son and I were touring the Ladd-Gilman House, we happened upon none other than Thomas Jefferson himself, aka Bill Barker. As you might imagine, a reenactor from a British regiment meeting the author of the Declaration of Independence led to an interesting conversation. My 9-year-old son, meanwhile, was in awe, as he had just studied the American Revolution in school.

I enjoyed reading about the wonderful restoration, and Bill's antiques and memorabilia. What great place to live—I only hope someday we can fully restore our 1790 Federal farmhouse to such a condition.

Winston S. Stone
Capt. & Lt. Col. ret., First Guards in America 1776-1783
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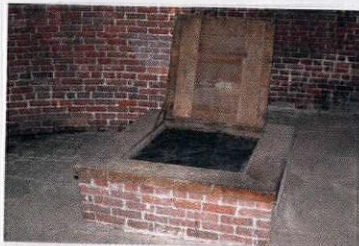
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Victorian Vents

After reading the letter asking about a strange air vent on the exterior of a Victorian [Ask OH], November/December '08], I wanted to share pictures of a similar fixture on our home. Our circa-1890 Victorian has a "well" under the front porch [below], which is the source of air for a series of

tunnels under the basement floor, all servicing large vertical ducts [above, bottom] that lead to horizontally mounted radiators [above, top] beneath, or proximal to, floor registers. It seems like inventive ways of heating and cooling our homes would make a good subject for a future article. I would also love to know if it's possible to adapt these tunnels and ducts to modern, more efficient uses.



Leigh A. Webb
Franklin, New
Hampshire

Reader Tip of the Month

I read "Wraparound Storage" [November/December '08] with much interest, having just completed a similar project on my own 1890s Foursquare. The article talked about using drywall on the ceiling; however, I knew I couldn't get drywall into my attic without many cuts due to winding stairs, so I used 2x4 suspended ceiling panels screwed directly into the rafters. I then nailed 1/4" strips over the seams. This was much easier to install than drywall, with much less dust. I also used pegboard at the top of the ceiling to allow air to circulate between the roof, insulation, and ceiling panels.

Jim Wohler
Junction City, Kansas

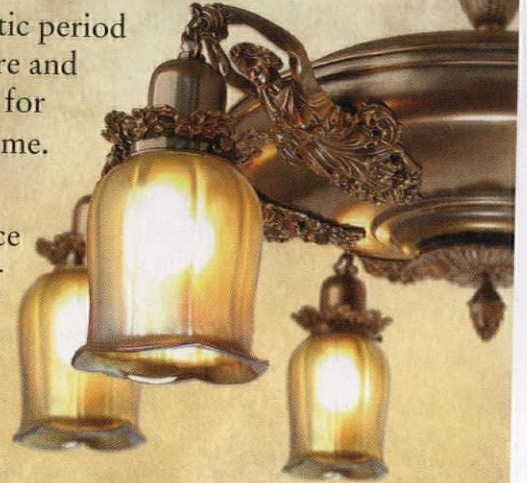
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By CLARE MARTIN

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Old-House Fair

The Old-House Fair returns again to the Germantown Friends School with exhibits, hands-on demonstrations, and presentations geared toward taking care of old houses. (215) 546-1146; preservationalliance.com

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Historic Virginia Garden Week

More than 200 historic private homes and gardens will be open for public tours; landscapes date from the mid-17th century to present day, and proceeds will benefit preservation efforts. (804) 644-7776; vagardenweek.org

APRIL 24-MAY 3
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Spring Festival

The seaside Victorian town's annual spring festival will feature special house tours, food and wine tastings, artist demonstrations, and craft fairs. (609) 884-5404; capemaymac.org

ON THE RADAR

LEEDing the Way

AT ITS ANNUAL CONFERENCE in November, the U.S. Green Building Council unveiled LEED 2009, a revamped version of its Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design rating system for green buildings. Thanks to input from the National Trust's Sustainable Preservation Coalition, the new changes to LEED—including weighted credits that reflect impact on a building's entire life cycle—will make the system more friendly to rehabs of older buildings. While that's good news for historic preservation as a whole, the new LEED standards are only applicable to commercial properties—so where does that leave owners of historic homes who are also looking to "go green" in their restoration projects?

While USGBC's LEED for Homes program is still geared at new construction, it has taken strides in recognizing the merits of updating existing buildings: Last year, in conjunction with the American Society of Interior Designers, USGBC introduced REGREEN, a free, comprehensive set of sustainable remodeling guidelines for homeowners.

"There are 120 million existing homes in the



Salvage can play a key role in eco-friendly restorations.

PHOTO COURTESY OF OHMEGA SALVAGE

U.S., most of which could benefit from some sort of 'greening,'" observes Nate Kredich, vice president of residential market development for USGBC.

The 180-page document features a room-by-room analysis that runs through essential energy-saving and sustainability issues to consider, followed by a list of almost 200 green design strategies. Because there's no certification program attached to REGREEN, homeowners are free to pick and choose the suggestions that work best for them. Old-house-friendly practices outlined in the guidelines include choosing reclaimed flooring and incorporating architectural salvage and antiques.

The number-one green practice that all homeowners should follow, according to Nate? Getting an energy audit. "It will give you a baseline of how efficiently your home heats and cools," he says, "and from there, you can pinpoint areas that need to be addressed."

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For more information on the REGREEN program or to download a copy of the guidelines, visit regreenprogram.org.

OLD-HOUSE RESOURCE

Collector's Call

There's no doubt that the sleek cordless phones lining store shelves today boast an astounding number of features, but they tend to be somewhat lacking in the charm department—especially if you're looking to cap off a period-perfect restoration. If you find yourself longing for the muted click-click-click that only a rotary phone can provide, you're not alone. Enter Jonathan Finder, a Pittsburgh doctor and old-phone aficionado who founded the web site Oldphones.com more than a decade ago as a marketplace for antique telephones. But these telephonic classics—ranging from the ubiquitous black desk phones of the 1940s and '50s (like the Western



Electric one above) to the candy-colored "donut" phones of the '70s—are not just conversation pieces. Finder restores every phone he sells (about 1,000 a year) to full functionality. "It's a lot of work," says the collector-turned-online-retailer, "but it's a labor of love." For more information, visit oldphones.com.

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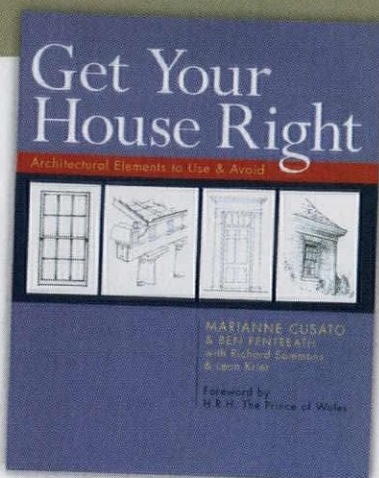
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Trim Your Trees

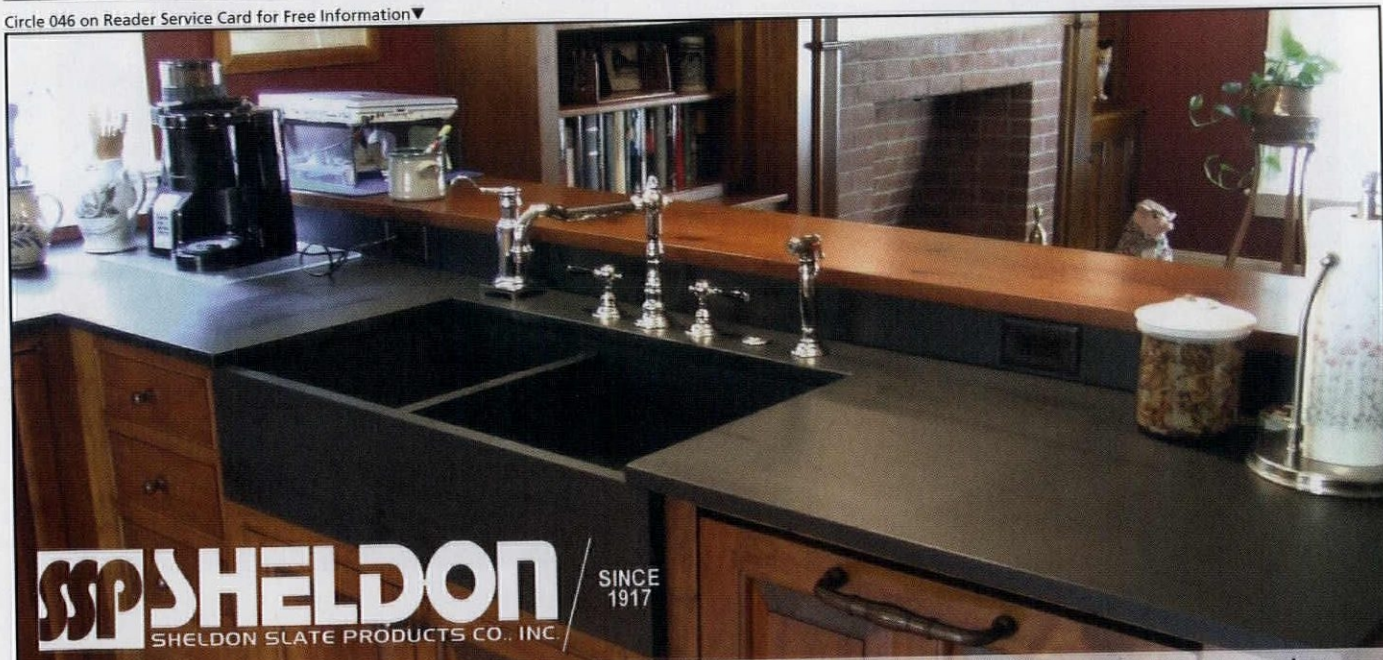
Those darling buds of May will soon be making an appearance—and if any tree or shrub branches are hanging over your roof or rubbing up against your siding, the new leaves will help funnel unwanted moisture toward your home. Nip those errant branches in the bud now, before the leaves arrive to obscure your view. Small branches can be trimmed with clippers; when removing larger ones, start by taking off any twigs blocking access to your work area. You'll need to make three separate cuts on each branch: a shallow undercut about 6" from the trunk to separate the bark and keep the branch from splitting and peeling, a full cut 6" beyond the undercut to get rid of the bulk of the branch, and a final cut to remove the stub. Keep in mind that any branches located near power lines should be removed professionally.

BOOKS IN BRIEF

We've all seen them—houses that, for whatever reason, just don't feel right. Sometimes the error in judgment is obvious (and worthy of a place on OHJ's Remuddling page), but more often than not, it's the most subtle of missteps that can throw a house off. It's these tiny gaffes that Marianne Cusato (with assistance from fellow architects Ben Pentreath, Richard Sammons, and Leon Krier) attempts to rectify in her book *Get Your House Right: Architectural Details to Use and Avoid*. The architect, best known for the traditionally styled "Katrina Cottage" home kits she designed for New Orleans residents as an alternative to FEMA trailers, explains how concepts like proportion, balance, and structural feasibility affect every aspect of a building's composition. Aided by clearly labeled drawings and straightforward checklists, she helps demystify the myriad rules of classical architecture. While the text is primarily aimed at those building new homes in a traditional style, its comprehensive advice on everything from choosing the correct columns to properly placing dormers also will be a boon for those looking to add or replace traditional elements on existing homes. Will Cusato's book engender a world completely free of remuddlings? Probably not, but it's an excellent start.



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historic retreats



The Governor Hotel

One of the Pacific Northwest's finest landmarks offers history at every turn.

BY DEMETRA APOSPOROS

Buildings, especially those on the National Register, don't often have more than one architectural style. The Governor Hotel in Portland, Oregon, however, has a true split personality. On one side, it showcases a range of Arts & Crafts elements. On the other, it's an exact copy of a 16th-century classical Italian building. So how did these two distinctive faces—initially separate buildings spanning the same block—come to be one complementary structure?

The Governor Hotel began life in 1909 as The Seward, one of Portland's finest establishments, promoted as "the hotel of quiet elegance." Designed by Oregon's first State Architect, William C. Knighton, it features his signature bell-shaped architectural elements throughout, on the interior woodwork, columns, and fireplace mantels. The Seward was considered one of the most

unusual designs of its day, thanks to its integrity of design and mix of handcrafted woodwork, terracotta, and stained glass. It's also known for the tall, geometric figures resembling robots that Knighton perched atop the building. "I've had kids on tour refer to them as Transformers," says Jason Staats, chief concierge of The Governor, who adds that the design was very futur-

ABOVE: The Governor's grand main entrance (left) is a tribute to classical architecture, complete with pilasters, columns, carvings, and Greek key detailing, while the building's back side (right) blends less formal early-20th-century and Arts & Crafts details, and is often referred to as one of the last "handmade" buildings in the country.

istic for its time. The figures actually show influences of the Austrian Secessionist movement, a European school of thought contemporaneous to the Arts & Crafts.

The other side of the hotel was built in 1923 as the Portland Elks Lodge, designed by architects Houghtaling and Dougan to resemble Rome's Farnese Palace, which was created largely by Michelangelo. "In the 1920s, fraternal organizations wanted to show how legitimate they were by adopting classical languages," says Barry Smith, project architect for The Governor's 2003 restoration. Showcasing inlaid marble, coffered ceilings, polychrome tile, and frescoes, the lodge space is fluent in classicism. The Elks lost the lodge in the Depression, and like so many grand buildings, it fell on hard



FAR LEFT: The elaborate plaster detailing on the walls and ceiling of the Grand Ballroom, unearthed during the 2003 restoration, had been hidden by a two-story structure of office cubicles built inside the cavernous space.

LEFT: A stained glass dome above the reception desk took cues from an original that spent decades in storage before being restored and returned to its proper place above Jake's Restaurant.

ABOVE: The opulent main lobby's coffered ceiling needed just a few touch-ups on its bronzing.

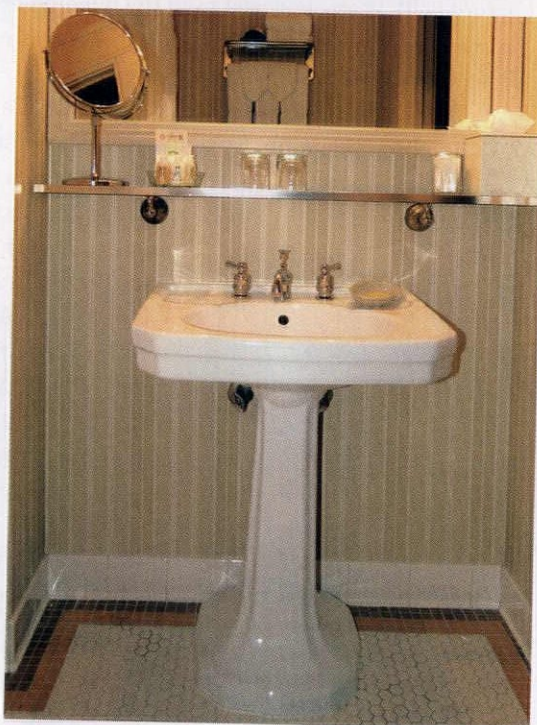
PHOTOS: COURTESY OF THE GOVERNOR HOTEL

times for a number of years. It housed soldiers during World War II, and one of its ballrooms served as a military induction center. "Hundreds of men went through the grand ballroom in their briefs, getting registered," says Staats. Decades later, a two-story office space was erected inside the same room, complete with cubicles and a tiny shaft elevator. "There was actually a 39'-tall concrete and steel building inside the grand ballroom," explains Smith. "Luckily it was installed off of the walls, so the plaster detailing was largely preserved—I think the architect who created it had some sensitivity about historic buildings."

It was this building within a building that turned the restorative tide.

"The owner of Grand Heritage Hotels got a peek behind the office walls, and realized what a treasure was there—that's what made him decide to buy the hotel," explains Staats.

"When he saw the bones of the room, he said, 'Why isn't this



ABOVE: Baths in guest rooms on the Seward side of the building replicate originals found in that hotel, complete with hand-placed hexagonal floor tiles.

space a great ballroom, like it wants to be?" says Smith.

The massive restoration, led by Smith, included removing the cubicles, updating the major systems, finessing seamless connections between the two buildings (first joined in the 1980s), and moving the hotel's reception desk from the Seward side to the Elks side to create a better flow. The biggest challenges, Smith says, involved adding modern requirements in a way that didn't adversely impact the historic details. "We had to add lights in the ballrooms so they could be used, but we didn't want them to overpower the spaces. So we hid them in the reveals to make it appear that they had always been there." The lighting nicely complements the liberated 40'-tall Corinthian columns and pilasters that ring the room.

To make the relocated reception area blend seamlessly, Smith's team looked to the building for clues. "We copied the reception desk from the marble base of the Vault Room, which was the Elks' money exchange area, and we decided to put a dome over it." The stained-glass dome mimics an original installed over

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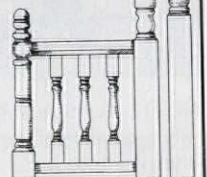
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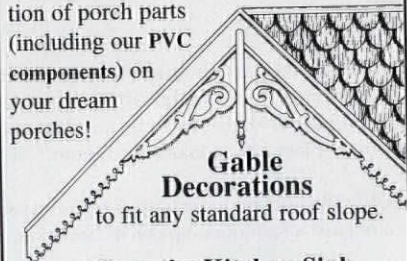
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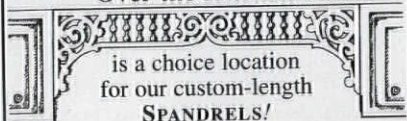
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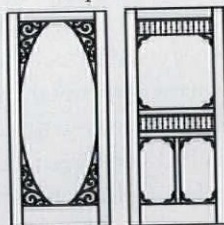
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historic retreats



LEFT: Frescoes line the vaulted ceiling of the Renaissance Room, an area where Elks Club members frequently held dinners (inset).

Jake's Restaurant, which fronts the Seward side of the building. That dome has a famous story itself. Believed to have been designed by Knighton personally (it shows his signature bell), it was removed from the building by long-term tenants and luckily kept in storage for nearly two decades before it was restored and returned to its original location in 1990.

Today, the hotel is an architectural wonder. From the impressive entry lobby boasting bronzed ceiling medallions, to the upstairs meeting rooms full of frescoes

and statuary, to the rich woodwork and oversized murals depicting the journey of Lewis and Clark (Portland was a stop on their trail), the hotel offers up history and period-appropriate architectural detail at every turn. And let's not forget those unusual rooftop figures, which are both memorable and mysterious, and which seem to make a lasting impression on everyone who sees them—especially Staats, who has a theory about their significance.



ABOVE: Angular figures resembling modern-day robots ring the top of the Seward side, and have become one of the hotel's most famous features.

“Personally, I think they were sentinels of some sort, like gargoyles, that were placed on the building to watch over and protect it.”

You could argue that they've done a good job. 🏠

The Governor Hotel
614 SW 11th Avenue
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Room rates vary greatly by type and by season. During the winter, standard rooms average \$139 per night, and suites go for \$289. In the high season, standard rooms average \$239, suites \$389. This year, special rates celebrating the hotel's 100th anniversary also can be found.

TRIVIA: Several films have been shot inside the Governor, including *My Own Private Idaho* (1991) and *Body of Evidence* (1993).

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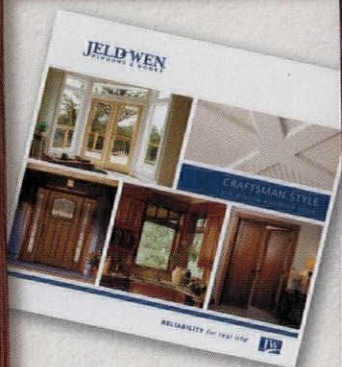
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NOELLE LORD PHOTO

Restorer's Cat's Paw

*Simple yet versatile,
this no-frills hand tool is
a must-have for any
old-house restorer.*

BY NOELLE LORD

So many tools today are designed to entice with high-tech features that it's easy to forget that the best tools for restoring old houses are often the simplest ones.

Take the Restorer's Cat's Paw—based on a traditional Japanese tool, it combines a nail-pulling cat's paw and a small tack hammer on one end, and a thin pry bar on the other. Until you've used one of these nifty little guys, it's difficult to appreciate just how useful they really are.

Where to Use It

Usually made of solid steel, the Restorer's Cat's Paw offers powerful leverage in a small package to remove embedded, headless, or rusted-in nails. The hammer head has two sharp prongs with a V-shaped groove to grasp

onto the shank of a nail or a nail head. The other side of the nail puller end is designed to double as a tack hammer or striking head for your larger hammer, just in case the nail needs a little persuasion.

The cat's paw side can function as a down-and-dirty nail puller; how you use it depends on how careful you need to be with

the wood surface, and whether you need to save the nail. If you're trying to save the nails, go easy, as this little dynamo is strong enough to break the shank of smaller nails.

When saving the molding is key and the nails are disposable, the tight grab of the V-notch makes pulling finish nails out of the backside of molding a snap. Attempting to pull a nail out from the surface can disturb the wood fibers or finish buildup that have molded around it, so removing the nail from the back of molding is much less destructive to the wood surface—and this tool does the trick.

The fine edge of the pry bar side allows you get under almost anything without making a mark. You can score paint with ease, remove fussy moldings without damaging them, separate miter joints, and ease off painted-in hardware and architectural elements undetectably.

The Bottom Line

What it lacks in bells and whistles, the Restorer's Cat's Paw makes up for with sheer versatility. It's the perfect housewarming gift for the new old-house owner—even a novice restorer will find many uses for this handy tool. 🏠



OHJ contributing editor Noelle Lord is a writer, consultant, and teacher who shares her passion for old buildings through Old House C.P.R., Inc.

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AD80 REV 109

ask ohj

Q My 1871 house was built with soft brick. I'm working on repointing the brickwork myself, and I'd heard that I should seal or waterproof it when I'm finished. I don't want to damage the older bricks—what is the proper procedure for repointing and sealing them?

A **Ray Tschoepe:** Bricks, particularly older ones, are porous ceramics that expand slightly as they absorb moisture. Ideally, they should expand against a yielding mortar that is flexible enough to move with the brickwork. For older bricks, this accommodating mortar is almost always lime-based. Limes and natural cements provide a flexibility that modern Portland cement-based mortar mixes—which came into use at the end of the 19th century—do not. In fact, Portland cement mortars can cure to a level of hardness that restricts the movement of individual bricks, which can stress the faces of older bricks to the point of fracturing and flaking.

Even if your brickwork has been pointed properly over the years, you still might see isolated erosion on the surface of some bricks, but don't assume that this means all of the bricks are failing. What we often forget is that water (in the form of rain) enters brick not only from the outside face, but also through common trouble spots like roof leaks or cracks in the caulking between windows and doors. In addition, condensing water vapor from inside the house can collect on the interior face of the brick. When the system is operating properly, this moisture fills the pores in the brick and mortar before evaporating completely through the outside surface and into the air.

Sealing the surface of the brick and mortar risks unbalancing this system. Coatings usually do a reasonably good

An understanding of how older bricks work is crucial when performing repairs.



RAY TSCHOEPE PHOTO

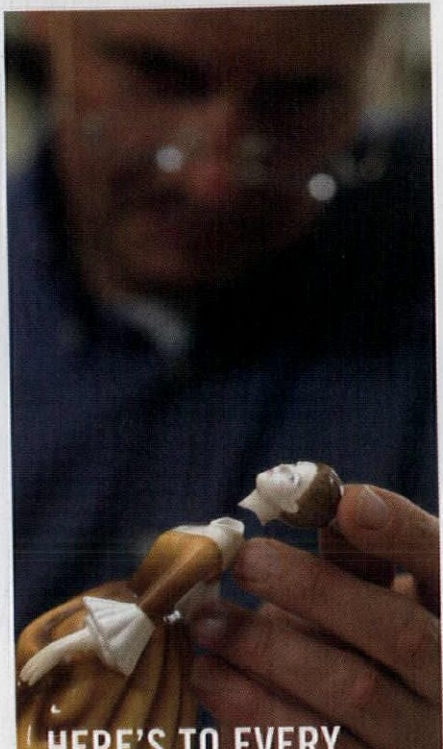
job of keeping outside water out, but they also have the unintended consequence of restricting the normal route of evaporating water. When this water cannot evaporate, it is subject to freeze/thaw cycles. The bricks also can accumulate salt deposits under their surface (called "subflorescence") as a result of such coatings, which can eventually fracture the face of the brick. So the best coating for brickwork often is no coating at all.

However, sometimes there are bricks that, despite our best efforts, continue to spall and develop surface cavities. In this case, a coating might help delay major repairs. Keep in mind that any coating applied to the surface of the brick and mortar must be breathable—that is, able to freely transfer air and water vapor without admitting liquid. For this reason, you should avoid modern silicone-based products in favor of traditional solutions like limewashes. If you do paint brickwork with a modern breathable coating, be forewarned. They can be fairly expensive, must be reapplied regularly, and even the clear coatings can alter the color of the brick. 🏠



OHJ contributing editor Ray Tschoepe is the director of conservation at the Fairmount Park Historic Preservation Trust in Philadelphia.

Have questions about your old house? We'd love to answer them in future issues. Please send your questions to Ask OHJ, 4125 Lafayette Center Dr., Suite 100, Chantilly, VA 20151 or by e-mail to OHJEditorial@homebuyerpubs.com.

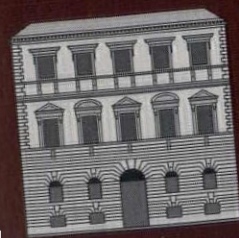


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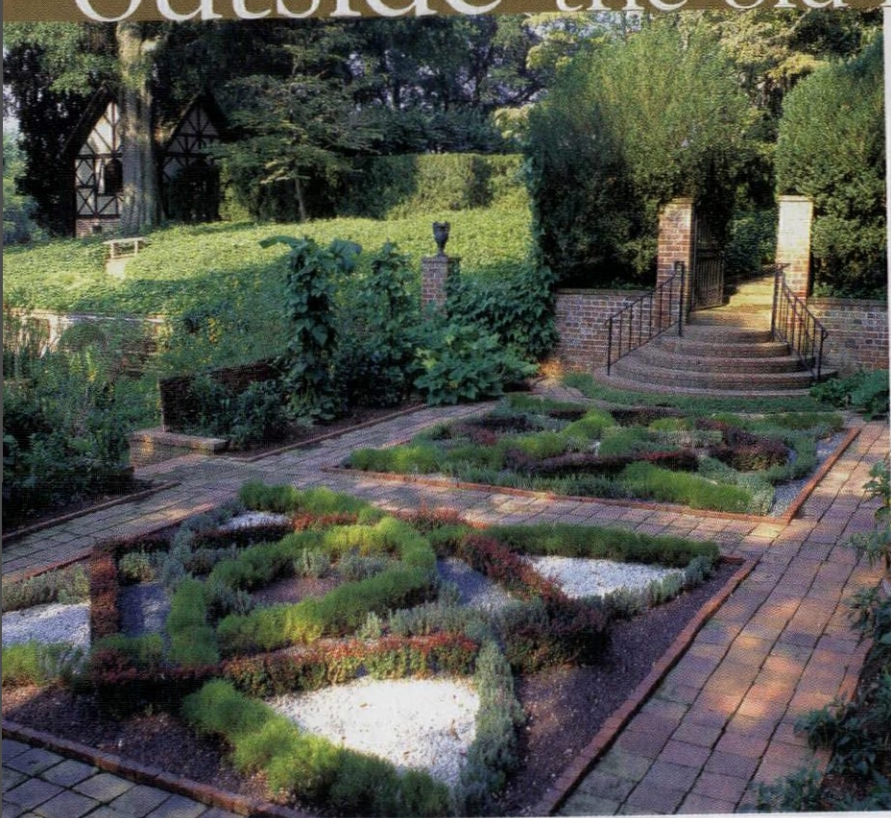
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outside the old house



The Classic Herb Garden

Symmetry and color combine to make a landscape to cherish through the generations.

By JO ANN GARDNER

The American herb revival movement was influenced greatly by Montague Free's knot garden designed for the 1939 World's Fair in New York. Although the movement was small, it had a major impact on herb-garden design.

Now when we hear the term "herb garden," what comes to mind is a formal, geometric layout of hedged beds with dissecting paths, loosely based on ancient forms and filled with aromatic perennial herbs whose green, silvery, and bluish foliage shows off against a dark earthen background. The garden usually is ornamented at its center with a sundial or statue. Such a planting, popular for decades, has been accepted as the classic herb garden.

Within this basic plan there is room for interpretation, as long as the prin-

ciple of symmetry—the heart of any classic garden design—is kept in mind. A dwarf boxwood hedge or a low, dry-stacked stone wall can be used to enclose and define the garden. Aged brick, gravel, or paving stones make attractive paths. Choose whatever material complements other structures on your property, especially the house, but keep in mind that these materials comprise the garden's permanent "bones." To add a splash of color, at the base of a sundial, consider a low bed of flowers or place a large urn at the

LEFT: The two open knot designs in The Knot Garden at Agecroft Hall in Richmond, Virginia, are typical of a garden dating back 400 years. Germander, English lavender, and green santolina create the patterns. **RIGHT:** In Woodinville, Washington, The Herbfarm Restaurant's gardens and farm supply diners with an ever-changing harvest of common and unusual ingredients.

garden's center, filled with annuals.

The traditional plants of the classic herb garden love sun and are protected from prolonged heat and drought by the small size of their leaves in green species, by a covering of silky hairs in silver plants, or by a coating of powdery wax among the blues. They require sharp drainage, so amend the soil if necessary with grit or coarse sand. Plants are woody, like miniature shrubs, and should be pruned back to allow new growth in spring. Later, cut back spent flowering stems. With a few exceptions, plants are hardy to Zone 4; less-hardy types should spend the winter indoors. All attract bees, butterflies, or hummingbirds to their small but plentiful blooms.



LEFT TO RIGHT: AGGECROFT HALL PHOTO BY RON ZIMMERMAN; THE PRATT MUSEUM PHOTO: GARDEN COTTAGE AT THE GREEN PHOTO BY BILL JENSEN; NANTUCKET HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION PHOTO BY KATHRINA PEARL

LEFT: The intricate knot at San Clemente, California's Garden Cottage at the Green B&B is composed of four plants: the outside square is variegated boxwood; the circle, English boxwood; the semicircles, silver and green santolina; and the diamond, rosemary. **RIGHT, TOP:** The 19th-century Pratt Museum Herb Garden appeals to visitors for its design, fragrance, color, and texture. **RIGHT, BOTTOM:** The kitchen garden at Nantucket's Oldest House is a reconstruction of a circa-1700 herb and vegetable garden. It's maintained with an organic philosophy and boasts 50 varieties of herbs.

The classic herb garden fits into any landscape and never goes out of style. Plus, it really is a garden for every season: From the first blush of spring to the dead of winter, when snow outlines its paths, hedges, and the plants within, we can truly appreciate the herb garden's simple but effective structure and the enduring elegance of its design. To get your herb garden started, begin with these timeless plant choices.

Common herbs and how to nurture them:



Botanical name: *Hyssopus officinalis*

Common name: Hyssop

Sun exposure: ☀️

Attributes: This glossy-leaved plant grows to 2' and produces 6" spikes of tiny flowers, usually purplish but occasionally pink or white. The whole plant has a peppery, pungent, and slightly minty aroma similar to thyme.

Uses & care: Since the time of Hippocrates, hyssop has been used to soothe coughs and bronchitis and was once a staple of monastery plantings and Tudor knot gardens because it's easy to trim. For this reason, it makes a nice hedge, but flowers will be sacrificed.



Botanical name: *Rosmarinus officinalis*

(upright variety), *Rosmarinus officinalis* 'Prostratus' (trailing variety)

Common name: Rosemary

Sun exposure: ☀️

Attributes: Leathery, needle-like leaves have a piney aroma. Flowers are usually blue (sometimes pink or white) and are borne in clusters near the top of the stem. Upright rosemary can grow to 4'. Trailing rosemary has brighter blue flowers and is low-growing and wide-spreading. Hardy from Zones 7 to 10, except for the cultivar 'Arp,' which may tolerate Zone 6 with protection.

Uses & care: Rosemary has been used to stimulate the memory, soothe nerves, and relieve headaches. In cooking, it's associated with grilling meats such as lamb, beef, and pork. Prune to shape.



Botanical name: *Thymus vulgaris*

Common name: Thyme

Sun exposure: ☀️

Attributes: Grows upright from 6" to 12" and has a peppery-mint flavor. Its small, pale-pink flowers are borne in profusion in summer and may last all season. On lemon thyme (*T. xcitriodora*), leaves are bright green with hints of gold, the flowers are pale lilac, and the whole plant is intensely lemon-scented.

Uses & care: Traditionally used in meat dishes and sauces. Creeping thymes (*T. praecox* subsp. *arcticus* and *T. pulegoides*) are smothered in blooms in early summer and bear foot traffic, so they can be planted between paving stones. This robust plant is easy to maintain with excellent drainage. If the soil is too moist, it tends to rot.

outside the old house



Botanical name: *Teucrium chamaedrys*

Common name: Germander

Sun exposure: ☀

Attributes: Glossy-leaved and growing up to 12", its small pink flowers bloom in summer. Tree germander (*T. fruticans*), a perennial from Zones 7 to 10, reaches 6'. Its tall, tree-like form, with gray-green foliage and Wedgwood blue flowers, is arresting in a large tub.

Uses & care: Once used to treat gout, germander is a neat addition for low edging in knot gardens or as space divider in a large herb garden, but its flowers must be sacrificed to maintain the herb as an edger.

Botanical name: *Salvia officinalis*

Common name: Sage

Sun exposure: ☀

Attributes: This gray/green-leaved plant with a pebbly texture grows 2½' tall, and, in its second season, it bears terminal spikes of violet-blue flowers. Its intensely aromatic foliage is lemony and slightly bitter.

Uses & care: In ancient times, sage was used to treat everything from warts to infertility. As a culinary herb, its savory foliage is used to flavor meat, stuffing, and cheeses. To encourage growth, prune sage frequently. Once it becomes woody and less productive (about three to four years), it will need to be replaced.

Botanical name: *Santolina chamaecyparissus*

Common names: Gray santolina, lavender cotton

Sun exposure: ☀

Attributes: Hardy from Zones 6 to 9, gray santolina grows 18" to 24" tall and is wide-spreading. Its camphor-scented foliage is so intricately serrated it looks like upright coral. In summer, mounds of foliage are crowned by golden buttons on 6" stems. 'Nana' is a dwarf variety.

Uses & care: Traditionally used as a hedge plant in knot gardens and as a moth repellent, the aromatic leaves are sometimes used to flavor broths. Prune back santolina gently in spring and after flowering; shorten foliage to maintain its form.

LEFT TO RIGHT: KAREN BUSSOLINI (PHOTO); PROVEN WINNERS (PHOTO); KAREN BUSSOLINI (PHOTO)

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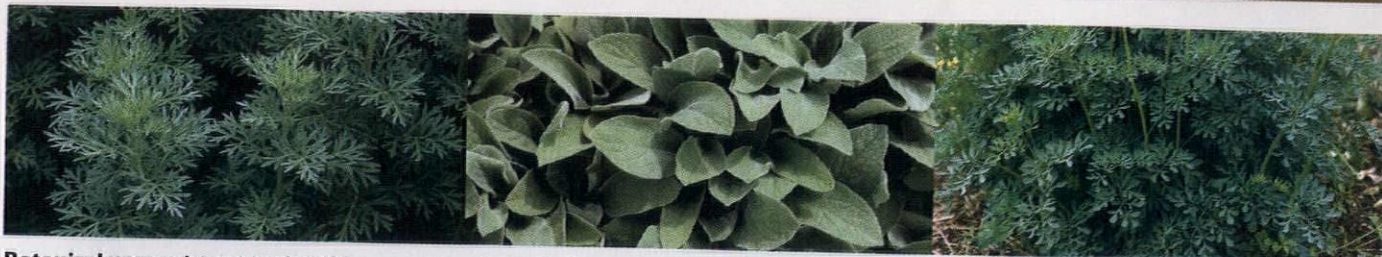
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Botanical name: *Artemisia absinthium*

Common name: Wormwood

Sun exposure: ☀️

Attributes: The stems are straight, tall (upwards of 4'), and silvery-green with deeply lobed, velvety, greenish-gray leaves. Its flowers are pale yellow and tubular. 'Lambrook Silver,' hardy to Zone 5, is more compact.

Uses & care: Famous for flavoring absinthe and vermouth, it's also an excellent moth repellent. Historically it was used as an herbal tonic for stomachaches and as an antiseptic. When pruning, don't cut back flowering stems until you see new foliage sprouting from the base of the plant.

Botanical name: *Stachys byzantina*

Common name: Lamb's ears

Sun exposure: ☀️ ☁️

Attributes: Unlike shrubby herbs, fuzzy, silvery lamb's ears is soft-stemmed. In summer, woolly stems send up blooms of small, tubular, mauve flowers. 'Silver Carpet' is a vigorous non-blooming cultivar.

Uses & care: Its woolly leaves were traditionally used as a primitive bandage to clot blood on light wounds ("woundwort" is a common nickname). Low-lying foliage forms mats that act as effective edgers. Lamb's ears can self-seed profusely and requires very little maintenance aside from deadheading.

Botanical name: *Ruta graveolens*

Common name: Rue

Sun exposure: ☀️

Attributes: As a blue-leaved plant, rue offers striking contrast among greens and silvers. Rue grows to 3' with lacy foliage along its stems. In mid-summer, plants produce small, long-lasting, bright yellow flowers. 'Blue Mound' is desirable for its deeper blue foliage and lower, more mounding form.

Uses & care: Rue is poisonous if ingested, but its reputation as an herb is rooted in its use as a charm against evil spirits, thanks to its pungent, unpleasant smell. Mature plants' leaves can cause skin irritation. Wear gloves when handling. 🧤

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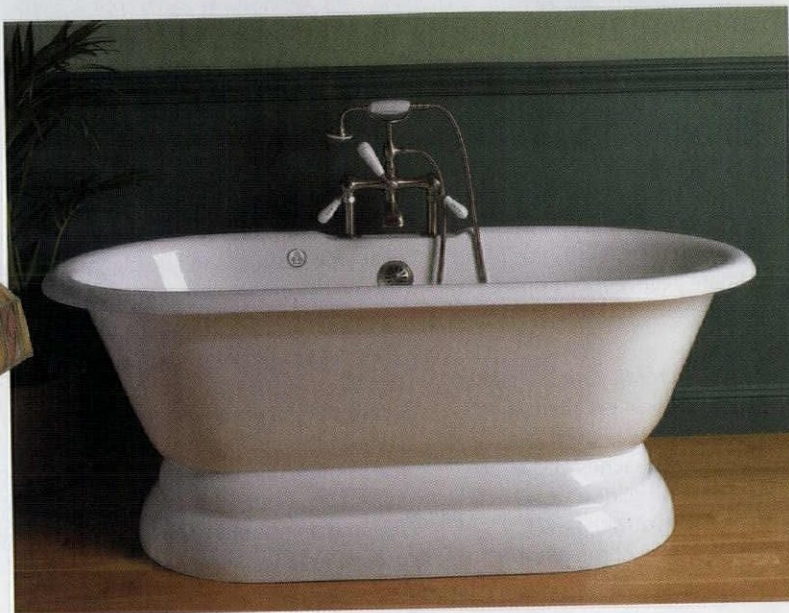
By CLARE MARTIN

A traditional tub gets a luxurious upgrade, and hardware receives an Atomic Age blast. Plus, details to help round out Arts & Crafts interiors.



Coming Up Roses

For Scottish painter, architect, and designer Charles Rennie Mackintosh, flowers were an oft-used motif—and the fluid lines of his geometrically styled rose have become an iconic Arts & Crafts symbol. Meyda pays homage to the designer's signature image with a new stained-glass lamp that showcases the rose amidst contrasting shades of cream, honey, and green. Tied together by a streamlined mahogany bronze-finished base, the pitch-perfect reproduction lamp will blend seamlessly with pricier Arts & Crafts antiques. \$504. Call (800) 222-4009, or visit meyda.com.



Catching Air

Old-house owners have long had a tough choice to make when it comes to selecting a bathtub: Go for period authenticity with a claw-foot or pedestal, or no-holds-barred luxury with a modern whirlpool? Sunrise Specialty has put this dilemma to rest with their new Airbath system, which incorporates an 18-jet whirlpool function within their traditionally styled pedestal-base dual bathtubs. With bubbles that stream from tiny holes on the tub's bottom and an unobtrusively small control panel, the Airbath proves that luxury and historical accuracy don't have to be mutually exclusive. From \$4,400 to \$4,650. Call (510) 729-7277, or visit sunrisespecialty.com.



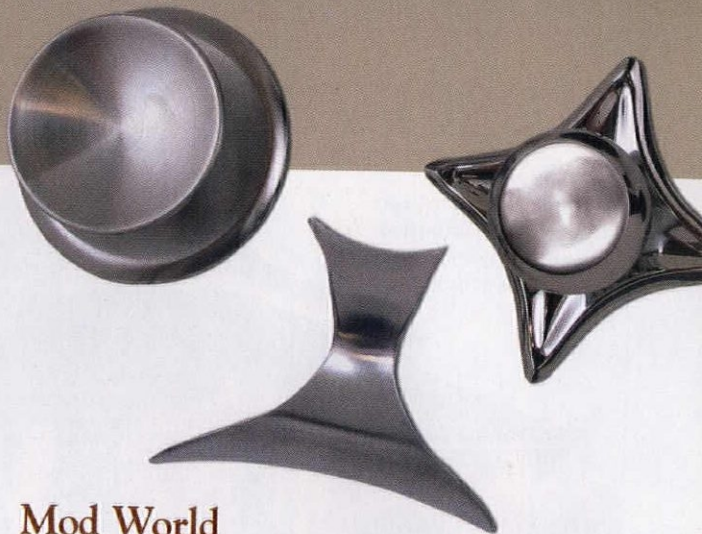
Rustic Revival

Inspired by a childhood spent in his family's blacksmithing shop, Sonoma Forge designer Steve Rosenblatt sought to carry the age-old craft into a new century. The company's CIXX Collection—which encompasses sink and tub faucets, a shower set, and a range of accessories—relies solely on the timeless beauty of hand-hammered metal for decoration. Its angular lines, hand-wrought finish, and lack of ornamentation put the collection perfectly in line with Arts & Crafts ideals, although its rustic aesthetic could fit just as well in primitive vernacular houses. From \$320 to \$1,950. Call (800) 330-5553, or visit sonomaforge.com.



Great Grilles

Part utilitarian, part decorative, wire grilles have long pulled double duty on cabinet faces: Their open-weave formwork allows air to circulate through the cabinet (which is crucial for applications like radiator covers) while also providing an ornamental contrast to the surrounding wood. Outwater's collection of woven wire grilles makes blending form and function a snap—almost 50 different patterns are available in a range of sizes and finishes, and also can be custom-cut. Layering two different patterns (as on the radiator cover at left) opens up even more decorative options. Prices start at approximately \$82 for a 3' x 4' sheet. Call (800) 631-8375, or visit outwatercatalogs.com.



Mod World

If you find yourself watching reruns of mid-century TV classics like *Bewitched* and *I Dream of Jeannie* just to drool over the décor, you're in luck. Satellite, the mod offshoot of reproduction-lighting firm Rejuvenation, has introduced a series of cabinet knobs and pulls inspired by the groovy shapes of the Atomic Age. The offerings—influenced by meticulously researched vintage finds—include everything from roadster-inspired chevron pulls to spherical knobs that pay homage to heralded modern designers like George Nelson. Prices range from \$4 (for solo knobs and pulls) to \$7 (for knobs with corresponding backplates). Call (888) 401-1900, or visit satellitemodern.com.

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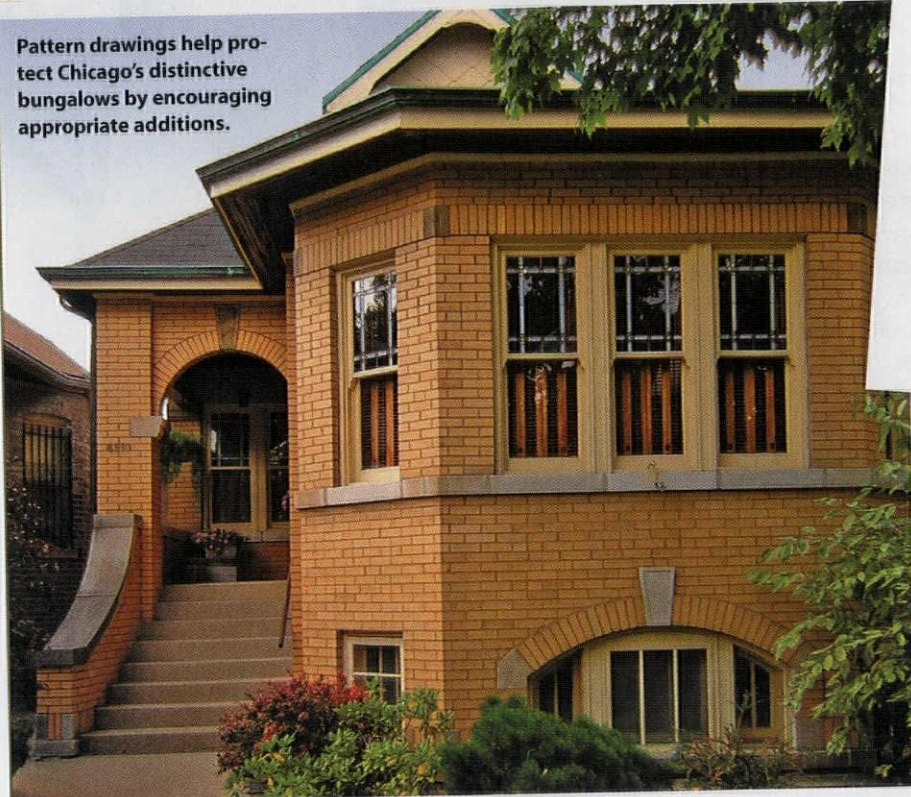
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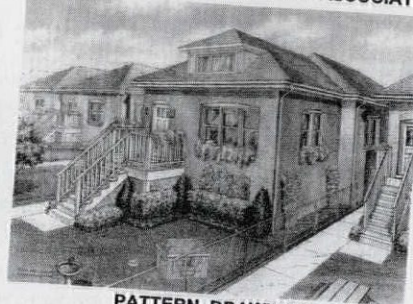


preservation perspectives

Pattern drawings help protect Chicago's distinctive bungalows by encouraging appropriate additions.



HISTORIC CHICAGO BUNGALOW ASSOCIATION



PATTERN DRAWINGS
"REAR ADDITION"

we were going to provide loans for restoration, folks would follow the guidelines—they couldn't put minarets on their bungalows anymore.

DA: Who came up with the drawings, and how did you choose the projects?

AC: We had done a model block in Chicago Lawn in 2002, in a fairly poor part of the neighborhood, where we had several examples of how to rehab a building and put on a proper addition, and we found that people had a tremendous amount of interest in them. Our inspiration for the pattern drawings was the Sears mail order houses, and the fact that they came with everything you needed to pull off the job. So we thought we'd hearken back to a good idea: Provide people all the tools they need to do the job right.

Those of us working on the model block put our heads together to come up with the top four most common additions, based on the challenges of modern life. We categorized them as the classic, for real traditionalists interested in restoring their homes; the young professional, who has a growing family and needs more space; the home office; and the handicapped accessible—important for both our age-in-place population and for people with family moving in after a death. The architect working with us was Scott Sonoc, and his team created the drawings.

Restoration by Design

The Historic Chicago Bungalow Association sells architectural pattern drawings to help stem the tide of teardowns in the city's bungalow belt. Annette Conti, HCBA's Executive Director, explains how the program works, and how it came to be. **BY DEMETRA APOSPOROS**



BOB NICK PHOTO

DEMETRA APOSPOROS: How did the pattern drawings program get started?

ANNETTE CONTI: It's an outgrowth of our Bungalow Initiative, spearheaded by Mayor Richard Daley, which attempted to address two main concerns. First, during the 1990s, a large number of historic brick homes were being torn down in bungalow neighborhoods and replaced with three-story buildings. Second, there was a real neglect of the older structures that had built the city, especially the bungalow homes that form a ring around the city center, known as the bungalow

belt. Our main concern was to get people's attention and make them see that bungalows are an incredible resource and treasure. We decided it wasn't enough to get nice articles written; we needed to create the resources for people interested in rehabbing these homes to get the job done, so we put together the Historic Chicago Bungalow Initiative. It offers homebuyers and owners ideas about preservation and its importance, and also provides the financial, technical, and educational incentives to achieve restoration. We wanted to be sure that if

HISTORIC CHICAGO BUNGALOW ASSOCIATION PHOTOS

Our inspiration for the pattern drawings was the Sears mail order houses, and the fact that they came with everything you needed to pull off the job.

DA: What do the drawings include?

AC: They include a set of black-and-white architectural drawings, information about required permitting, a site plan, demolition plan, and floor plan—each with model drawings and examples, as well as a place to insert specific dimensions. They also include detailed guides for cost estimating (material inventories, cost worksheets) so homeowners can realistically plan for their renovation.

DA: That's a lot of information for just \$10.

AC: We wanted to make it a seamless process with the homeowner in mind. We were really trying to empower the homeowner with as much knowledge as possible, and reduce their cost of investment.

DA: What types of additions are the most popular?

AC: The most popular way to adapt bungalows is to use the space on the second floor. When these houses were built, the concept was that you would grow into them—there are usually two or three bedrooms and an unfinished attic. It's the attic space that realtors sold to homeowners, with the idea that as your family grew, you could finish off the attic. This is where the bungalows started to change, especially in the 1960s, when many very poor additions and dormers were added. Today the building codes are more stringent, so such additions are being built better. Homeowners are also getting more information about the process and how to approach it.

DA: What sorts of financial incentives do you offer homeowners?

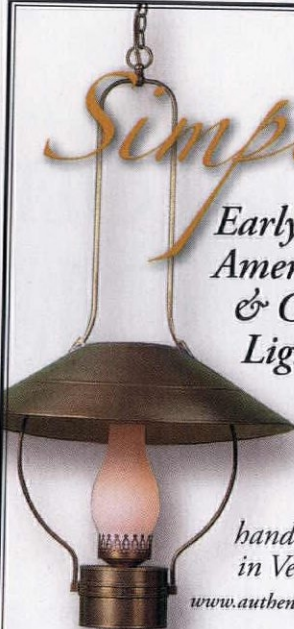
AC: We believe our members want to save their bungalows and preserve them for

future generations. If you're going to restore your windows, you're going to think about saving the home. After the excitement of saving woodwork or stained glass, the next thought is going to be, 'How can I afford to heat this house?' That's why it's important for people to insulate and weatherize their bungalows, and why it makes sense to provide funding for green improvements. We have grant funding up to \$6,000 for insulation and air sealing. This covers, for the most part, a 75-percent reimbursement for the total project cost. If the estimate from a weatherization contractor is \$8,000, homeowners receive the full \$6,000. It's really marrying the funding to what people are interested in—energy savings and green affordability. We also offer special bungalow rehab loans that allow owners to make needed changes at affordable rates, and receive federal income tax reductions at the same time.

DA: How successful has the program been, and how much interest has there been in the pattern drawings?


AC: We've sold a few thousand over the years. I think there's going to be a bump in interest in 2009 because of the general housing crisis, and the fact that most folks aren't interested in selling their home, but are looking to make it work for them as much as they can. There is nothing more cost-effective than staying in a home, making it energy efficient, and adapting it to your needs. As for general success, the Brookings Institution has called the Bungalow Initiative the most comprehensive single-family housing initiative in the country. 🏠

For more information on this and other HCBA programs, visit chicagobungalow.org.



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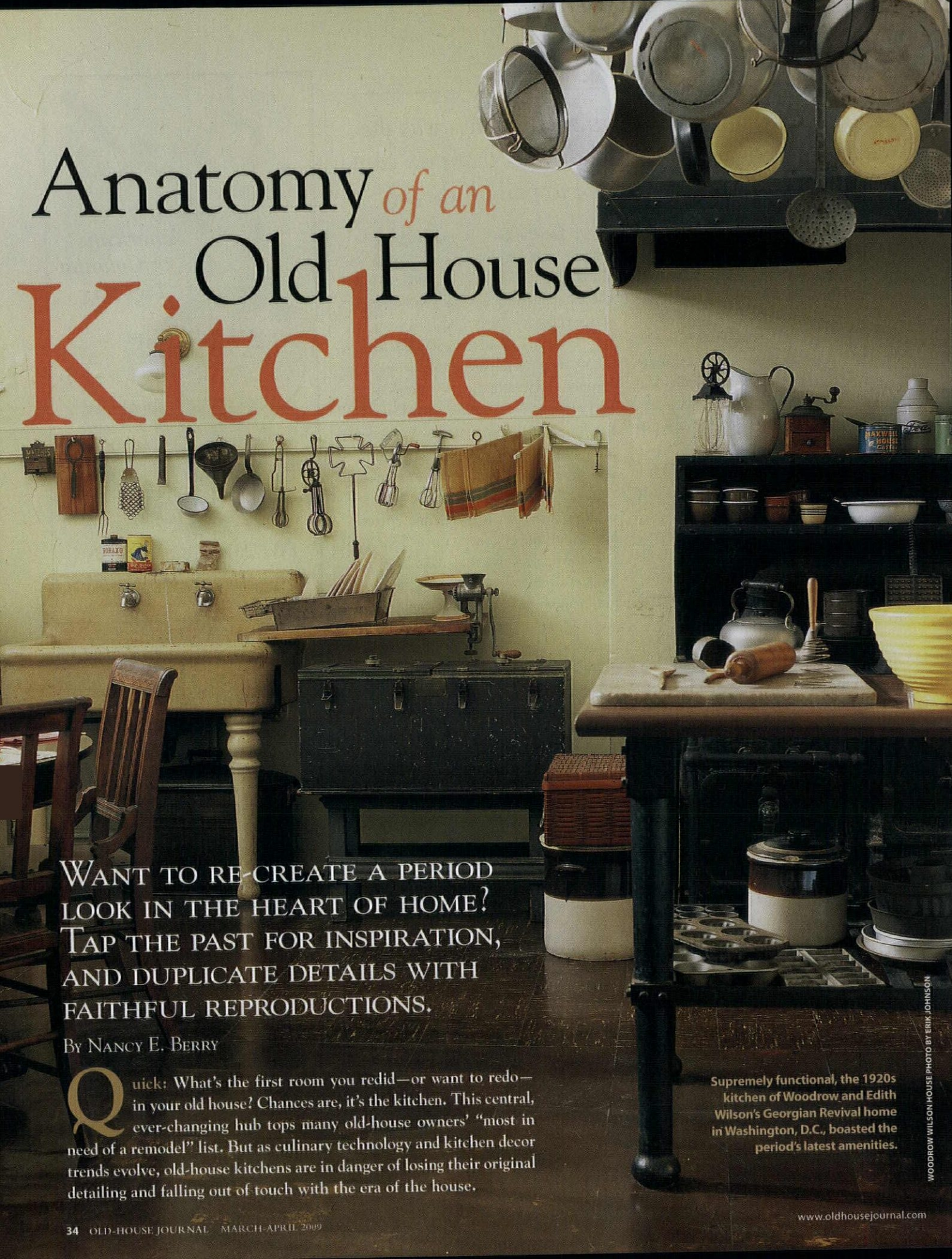
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Anatomy *of an* Old House Kitchen

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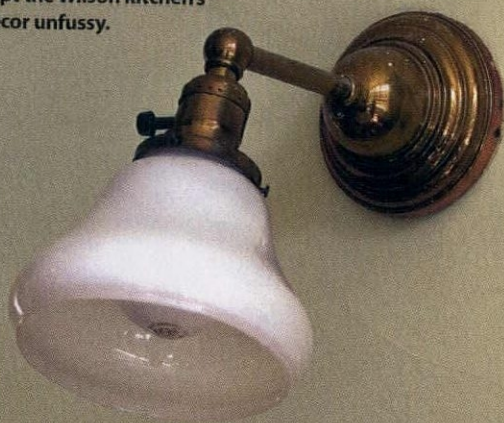
By NANCY E. BERRY

Quick: What's the first room you redid—or want to redo—in your old house? Chances are, it's the kitchen. This central, ever-changing hub tops many old-house owners' "most in need of a remodel" list. But as culinary technology and kitchen decor trends evolve, old-house kitchens are in danger of losing their original detailing and falling out of touch with the era of the house.

Supremely functional, the 1920s kitchen of Woodrow and Edith Wilson's Georgian Revival home in Washington, D.C., boasted the period's latest amenities.

WOODROW WILSON HOUSE PHOTO BY ERIK JOHNSON

Details like muted green paint and simple sconces with bell-shaped shades kept the Wilson kitchen's décor unfussy.

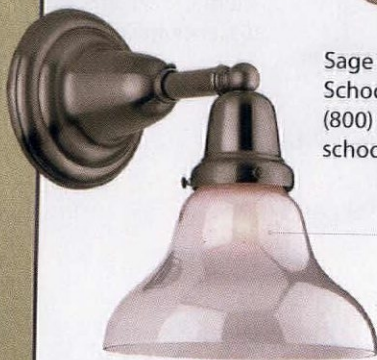


Lighting

Village single sconce, Urban Archaeology, (212) 431-4646; urbanarchaeology.com



Sage single sconce, Schoolhouse Electric, (800) 630-7113; schoolhouseelectric.com



Umpqua classic electric wall bracket, Rejuvenation, (888) 401-1900; rejuvenation.com



While we wouldn't want to return to the days of stoking a coal-burning stove, fetching water from an outdoor well, or prepping food without the customary work triangle, we do want spaces that lend a sense of nostalgia and history. If you're trying to re-create a period look in your kitchen, it is possible to gain a sense of authenticity without sacrificing convenience and comfort. The lovingly restored kitchens of house museums—such as the Woodrow Wilson House in Washington, D.C.—provide an excellent opportunity to gather clues on how older kitchens functioned and to match up reproduction details.

Design Direction

After leaving the White House, Woodrow and Edith Wilson moved into a Georgian Revival house designed by Waddy Butler Wood, an architect known for his grand homes. Their 22-room mansion has been perfectly preserved just as it was when the Wilsons lived there, from 1921 to 1924. Knowing she wanted the house to eventually become a museum honoring her husband, Edith photographed and documented each room extensively—including the kitchen.

Wood was a master at designing homes that fit well into their climate and allowed for passive cooling and heating, and this ability can be seen throughout the Wilson house, especially in the kitchen. The cavernous kitchen is said to be one of the most comfortable rooms in the house, in part because of its cool, basement-level locale. High ceilings and operable transom windows over doors allow for air circulation. The top windowpanes of the four nine-over-nine double-hung windows are corrugated to diffuse sunlight, which also helps keep the room cooler. A food storage pantry (or larder) is located here, and it too has a window to allow cool

air to circulate. Although Wood's design creates a chilly space, the sink, stove, and icebox are spread throughout the room, which meant the Wilsons' servants, Mary and Isaac Scott, would keep warm hustling from work station to work station.

Ahead-of-the-Time Amenities

The Wilson kitchen's features were cutting-edge for the day. Among the many bells and whistles were a servant's call box, intercom speaker, and dumbwaiter. Mary Scott cooked the couple's meals on a commercial-grade, coal-burning, cast-iron Duparquet, Huot & Moneuse Co. stove, which was later converted to gas. The massive stove's range burner and two ovens came in handy when Mary prepared dinners for heads of state and other visiting dignitaries. An equally gargantuan barrel-shaped metal range hood with a ventilated stovepipe carried cooking odors and heat outdoors. A 6' enameled worktable crowned by a large iron pot rack provided plenty of space for food prep near the stove.

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c2paint.com

Green Ground
Farrow & Ball
(888) 571-1121
farrow-ball.com



Pot Rack

Hammered steel 3' oval,
Enclume, (877) 362-
5863; enclume.com



Sink

Farmhouse drainboard
sink with legs, Sign of
the Crab, (916) 638-2722;
signofthecrab.com

Country kitchen sink, American Standard,
(800) 442-1902; americanstandard-us.com



Harborview utility
sink, Kohler, (800)
456-4537; kohler.com



WOODROW WILSON HOUSE PHOTO BY ERIK JOHNSON

Massive nine-over-nine windows allow light to flood the basement kitchen, but corrugated upper panes keep the space cool. RIGHT: The two-oven stove made preparing large dinners easier.



WOODROW WILSON HOUSE PHOTO BY ERIK JOHNSON



Another of the kitchen's luxuries was its hot and cold running water, a rarity during a period in which only about one out of four American kitchens had sinks with piped-in plumbing. The water flows into not one but two enameled cast-iron sinks with traditional wall-mounted faucets—one for prepping food and the other for washing pots and pans. (A third sink, designed for washing fragile china, is located in the butler's pantry off the main dining room upstairs. It's made of zinc, which, as a softer metal, won't chip dropped plates as easily as other surfaces.) Next to the kitchen stove is a food warmer—the equivalent of a modern-day microwave. Two round stones placed inside would retain heat for long periods of time and keep food warm until ready to serve. Because of the distance from the kitchen to the dining room upstairs, another warming oven was located in the butler's pantry. A large, metal-lined wooden icebox with three storage chests stands near the rear entrance to the kitchen so ice could be delivered easily.

Finishing Touches

Although the Wilsons' kitchen had the latest technologies, the room was, like all kitchens of the period, fairly unadorned. After all, it wasn't a public space—it was used strictly by the servants for

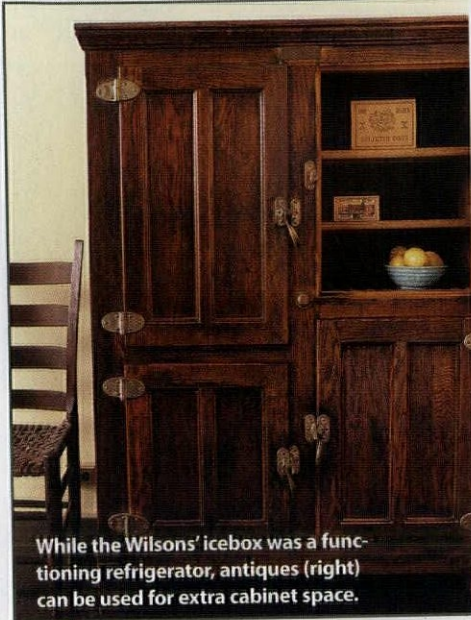
Range

Two-oven electric cooker, AGA, (800) 471-0392; agasales.com



Chateau range, La Cornue, (800) 892-4040; purcellmurray.com



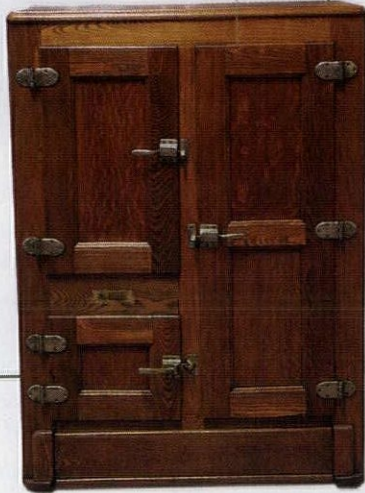


Icebox

Leonard 1921 oak icebox,
Harp Gallery, (866) 733-7115;
harpgallery.com

While the Wilsons' icebox was a functioning refrigerator, antiques (right) can be used for extra cabinet space.

WOODROW WILSON HOUSE PHOTO BY ERIK JOHNSON



cooking and cleaning. However, the few aesthetic details reflect the prevailing trends of the day. The walls are painted a light green, a popular kitchen color in the 1920s and '30s. The linoleum flooring was also common in kitchens because it is durable, easy to clean, comfortable on the feet, and gentle on dropped dishes. Only a few squares of linoleum have been replaced over the life of the house—all in front of the stove, due to wear over time. Doorknobs made of white porcelain—considered a “hygienic” material—are found on the service side of the kitchen doors, but more expensive oval nickel-plated knobs appear on the public side.

Pendant and wall-mounted lighting fixtures feature simple white bell shades with antique brass finishes. The trim is plain and strictly utilitarian: a band of molding set above the height of the sinks is punctuated by small hooks for hanging utensils and dish towels. The most decorative item in the room is a wall cabinet with

sliding paned glass doors. The cabinet houses the Wilsons' day ware—blue-and-white heirloom china that came from Edith's family.

Creating the Look

As inspiring as the Wilsons' kitchen is, most of us are reluctant to give up modern-day amenities like cabinet and counter space and the latest in cooking technology. So how can you create a kitchen that is period-appropriate but still offers plenty of creature comforts? Start with historically inspired design choices and add the right reproduction appliances and accessories, and you can turn back the clock without losing today's conveniences.

When planning your kitchen, take a few tips from the Wilsons' architect. Take advantage of cross breezes and door transoms when possible. Skip the center island in favor of a freestanding worktable. Instead of solid cabinets, try mixing open shelving and glass-front cabinets to evoke an old-fashioned feel. For added storage, re-create the butler's pantry by installing a walk-in pantry with open shelving.

Many items popular in the early 20th century are coming back into vogue, making it easier than ever to mimic period details. Take linoleum: As a sustainable material (its main ingredients, linseed oil and wood flour, are renewable resources), it's experiencing a resurgence on kitchen floors, with several historically based patterns and colors available. High-end, multiple-oven ranges built with today's kitchen-centric households in mind can replicate the look of the Wilsons' professional-grade cooker.

And don't forget the small details that go a long way in cre-



Cabinetry

WOODROW WILSON HOUSE PHOTO BY ERIK JOHNSON



Town & Country built-in, Plain & Fancy Cabinetry, (800) 447-9006; plainfancycabinetry.com

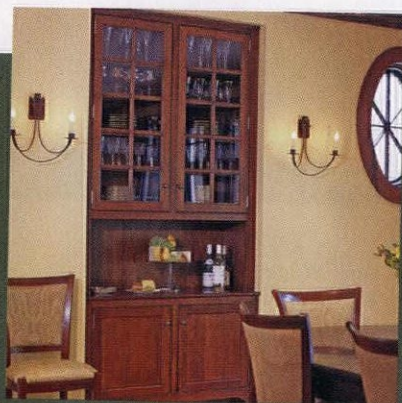
Flooring

Marmoleum in Dry Point,
Forbo, (866) 627-6538;
themarmoleumstore.com

Marmorette in Oak Brown,
Armstrong, (800) 233-3823;
armstrong.com

ating a historically appropriate look. Porcelain doorknobs and simple, bell-shaped shades are available from a number of manufacturers specializing in historic reproductions. Similarly, reproduction farmhouse sinks are relatively easy to find—or consider purchasing an antique version from a salvage shop to add age and patina to the space. Another way to incorporate authenticity in a kitchen is by adding antiques such as iceboxes—instead of holding perishables, they can be used as extra cabinet space for dry goods or cleaning supplies. Remember, when creating a period-inspired kitchen, the goal isn't to completely replicate kitchens of the past, but rather to design a welcoming space that both reflects the age of your home and accommodates today's needs. 🏠

Nancy E. Berry is the editor of New Old House magazine. She is currently restoring an 1870s Queen Anne on Cape Cod.



Cherry built-in with Canterbury doors,
Crown Point Cabinetry, (800) 999-4994;
crownpointcabinetry.com



Victorian quarter-sawn oak built-ins,
Kennebec Company, (207) 443-2131;
kennebeccompany.com



"Hygienic" materials such as porcelain doorknobs and linoleum flooring were used throughout the Wilsons' kitchen.

WOODROW WILSON HOUSE PHOTO BY ERIK JOHNSON

Hardware

White porcelain knob, Van
Dyke's Restorers, (800)
787-3355; vandykes.com


White porcelain knob, Liz's
Antique Hardware, (323)
939-4403; lahardware.com

Cast iron vertical rim set with
porcelain knobs, House of Antique
Hardware, (888) 223-2545;
houseofantiquehardware.com

Re-creating a different time period in your kitchen? Find your inspiration in our guide to other house-museum kitchens, spanning from the 18th century to the 1940s.

OldHouseJournal.com

FAR LEFT: A built-in cabinet with sliding glass doors housed Edith Wilson's collection of heirloom blue-and-white china, providing a rare adornment to the utilitarian kitchen.



The WRIGHT CHOICE

ATTENTION TO ORIGINAL DETAILS
HELPS BRING A FRANK LLOYD
WRIGHT KITCHEN BACK TO LIFE.

BY RICHARD L. KRONICK ♦ PHOTOS BY STEVE SIKORA

The kitchen in Frank Lloyd Wright's 1934 Willey House in Minneapolis is a grandparent of today's popular kitchen-as-gathering-place design. Though the Willey kitchen is small (only about 10' x 11'), Wright connected it to the living room via a plate glass wall and a Dutch door—a bit of social engineering that contrasted with most kitchens of the day, which were separated from public rooms as much as possible.



Frank Lloyd Wright designed the Willey kitchen with a wall of plate glass windows and a door adjoining the living room, features that put the space on display in a way unusual for its time. As a result, homeowners Steve Sikora and Lynette Erickson-Sikora were extra careful about restoring the room's period appearance.

Steaming and Bending Trim

When Steve Sikora and Lynette Erickson-Sikora purchased the house in 2002 and set their sights on a total restoration [see “Restoring Wright,” Sept/Oct ’08 OHJ], they found a kitchen that bore little resemblance to the original. A previous owner’s remodel had left the kitchen awash in 1970s components, including birch-veneer cabinets, off-the-shelf hardware, Formica countertops, a faux-brick tile floor, and copper-tone appliances. Because of the glass wall, Steve points out, “The kitchen isn’t just on display—it’s the focal point of the living room,” so restoring the original feel was important. Based on Wright’s drawings, published photos, and surviving correspondence between Wright and Nancy Willey, the original homeowner, the Sikoras and master carpenter Stafford Norris sleuthed out every detail of the original kitchen. Then they scoured the globe for vintage materials and fixtures, or commissioned new ones to precisely match the originals.

What’s Old Is New

A bank of cabinets runs continuously from the living room into the kitchen, seemingly cutting through the plate glass wall. On the living room side, the cabinets—like all other visible wood in the house—are made of cypress. To restore the wall’s continuity and return the kitchen to its original look, the birch-veneer kitchen cabinets had to go. “Materials in the ’70s kitchen were determined as much by budget as by taste,” notes Steve.

In a stroke of luck, Norris discovered about half of the discarded and disassembled original kitchen—doors, drawers, chunks of counter, and pieces of cabinets—piled in a storage area above the garage. “I think the ’70s workers did a careful job of disassembling the old kitchen because they thought everything might be reused someday,” Norris says. Just as carefully, he labeled and pieced together the boards to determine the original dimensions and joinery methods.

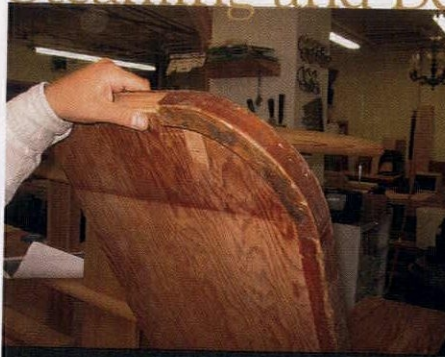
For pieces in good enough shape to be

returned to their original positions—two drawer fronts and a set of open shelves—Norris removed the finish with a gentle alcohol-based stripper. All other pieces had to be resurfaced, which Norris accomplished by running the wood through either a planer or a drum sanding machine. “The sanding process reduced the thickness slightly,” says Norris. “There would have been a mismatch if I tried to join that wood to new pieces.” Subsequently, most of the original wood was repurposed as shelving. To fill in the missing pieces, Norris and Steve hunted for wild cypress. After many calls and some rejected material, they found old-growth red tidewater cypress, one of a dozen or so common cypress varieties, in Florida.

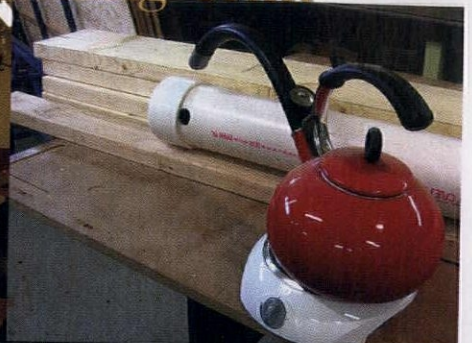
In the original kitchen, all face frames, carcasses, and shelf components were solid cypress, while the cupboard doors were cypress-veneered plywood. Norris faithfully matched these materials. To cut veneer, he

used his table saw with a fine-tooth blade. He made himself a jig to hold veneer pieces flat and steady as they went through the saw. After laying out edge-matched veneer pieces, he taped them together with blue painter’s tape and applied one-part veneer glue with a rotary applicator. “The applicator makes it go fast,” Norris says. “The glue starts to set up pretty quick, so you don’t have much time.” It’s necessary to veneer both sides of the plywood, he explains. “Otherwise, the combination of the curl of the veneer and the moisture in the glue would warp the plywood.” Finally, he placed the panels in a vacuum table overnight to cure.

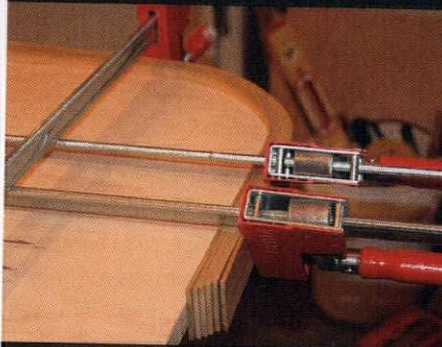
The veneer pattern in the kitchen is called “cathedral structure.” It is the result of slicing flitches—the thick beams from which veneer is cut—at a slight angle to their length. This produces a series of nested V’s on the face of the veneer, one of the most desirable patterns.



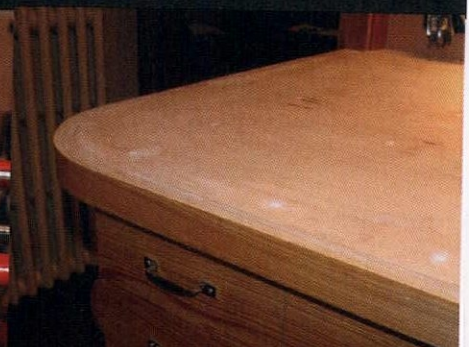
THE ORIGINAL COUNTER’S CURVED EDGE came to life through an innovative process used by Norris.



First, he steamed cypress using a teakettle and a length of plumbing pipe (with holes drilled for steam inlet and pressure-release outlet).



Once the wood was flexible after steaming for a couple of hours, Norris clamped it to the original piece to duplicate the curve’s radius.



After curing, the completed counter regained the look and feel of the 1930s version, and was ready to be topped with linoleum.



Master carpenter Stafford Norris carefully matches up wood veneer.

Innovative Thinking

Norris deviated in some ways from the joinery methods of his 1930s predecessors. Instead of nailing the cabinet carcasses to the face frames, he used modern biscuit joinery to avoid color variations between the cypress (which darkens over time) and the putty-filled nail holes. Another difference appears on the only curved part of the face frame, a short piece that forms a rounded corner of the counter. The original face-frame curve was made by sawing and shaping a straight piece of lumber. To avoid showing end grain, Norris replaced the original with a piece of bent cypress

created via a homemade wood-bending apparatus. His steam chamber was a 4' length of plumbing pipe with removable end caps and two holes drilled in the side: a steam inlet and a pressure-relief outlet. Steam generated by a teakettle was ducted to the hole in the plumbing pipe by a length of rubber hose. After the wood was made flexible by steaming for a couple of hours, Norris clamped it to the original piece to duplicate the curve's radius.

To match the new cypress pieces to reused originals, Norris applied colored shellac. He then gave all visible surfaces two coats of polyurethane varnish, a finish Frank Lloyd Wright might have speci-

fied if it had existed in 1934. The result is remarkable consistency. A slight darkening around tiny dings and dents is the only thing that distinguishes the 1934 wood from the new pieces.

Finishing Touches

Though many of the original slim, faceted, Art Deco drawer pulls and cabinet handles survived, most were bent and scratched. When Steve was unable to find off-the-shelf replacements, he turned to Gail Grabow, a Minneapolis jewelry artist. Grabow used the lost wax process to make about 50 handles for cabinets throughout the house. She began by forming silicone rubber molds around several original handles. Then she sliced the molds in half, removed the handles, and glued the halves back together. Next, using a wax injection machine, she filled the molds with liquid wax. After the wax had solidified, Grabow removed the molds and carefully enlarged the wax replicas in all dimensions. This was necessary, she says, because "there's about 1 to 3 percent shrinkage in the wax and another 5 to 7 percent shrinkage in the metal. If I didn't do this, the finished handles wouldn't fit the cabinet screw holds." She sent the enlarged wax replicas to a foundry, where they were sprayed with liquid ceramic material to make molds that would stand up to molten metal. Once the ceramic had hardened, the wax was heated and drained out, and molten silicon bronze was poured into the molds. After cooling, the new handles were finished and chrome plated.

New deep red "battleship linoleum," which had been used on the original countertops and floors, proved to be one of the hardest-to-find materials. The linoleum's dried-out, cracked remains were found attached to hunks of the countertop in the garage. "Battleship" is a trade designation for thick, heavy-duty linoleum; it is still made in the original color—but only in Germany. After many persistent phone calls, Norris found two rolls of the precious material in a linoleum warehouse in the U.S. Before installing the lino-

Cabinet Pulls

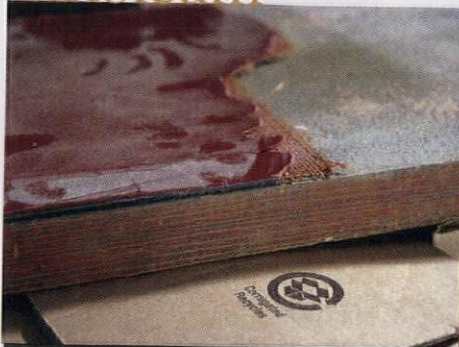


CABINET PULLS were recreated using a lost wax process. Molds (at right) produced rough pulls, which were then polished (at left).



After the final step of chrome plating, the new handles were indistinguishable from originals.

Linoleum



DEEP RED "BATTLESHIP LINOLEUM" proved to be the most difficult element to locate, but the team's persistence finally won out.



Before installation, Norris meticulously trimmed the linoleum to size, making cutouts where the counter intersects electrical outlets.



The finished countertop's coved back seamlessly curves up the wall and jogs around a built-in telephone nook.

leum on the floor, workers resurfaced the original subfloor by pouring a thin layer of self-leveling concrete. To duplicate the original look of the back of the counter, where the linoleum curves up seamlessly and becomes the backsplash, the installation team first nailed a piece of coved wood into the corner to use as a form. They cut heavy paper templates exactly 2" shorter all around than the finished dimension of the linoleum, a tactic that avoided inaccuracies introduced by the paper curling against the walls. When the team cut the linoleum to size, they added those 2" back.

The most sensational elements in the kitchen are the gleaming porcelain refrigerator and stove, which Steve located with help from The Old Appliance Club. They closely match the originals, shown in photos of the house published in a 1938 issue of *Architectural Forum*. When Steve found the vintage G.E. refrigerator (called a "Monitor Top" because of its top-mounted compressor) and Hotpoint "Automatic" range, they were in excellent condition and working perfectly. The appliances are the icing on the cake in a kitchen that's a window on real life as lived in the 1930s, as envisioned by an architectural genius. 🏠

Richard L. Kronick is a Minneapolis-based architectural historian who often lectures on and gives tours of Prairie School buildings. The Willey house can be visited by appointment; contact Steve Sikora at thewilleyhouse.com.



Classic retro appliances from G.E. and Hotpoint resemble the originals featured in a 1938 magazine spread, and complete the kitchen's period perspective.



A bevy of fasteners secure the elaborate Samuel Yellin-designed hinges of the Fiske Doors, which prominently front Philadelphia's St. Mark's Episcopal Church.

LARA BEAVEN PHOTO

Fast Facts on Fasteners

UNDERSTANDING HOW FASTENERS WORK AND HOW THEY WERE TRADITIONALLY USED IS THE FIRST STEP TO CHOOSING THE RIGHT ONE FOR YOUR CARPENTRY PROJECT.

By RAY TSCHOEPE

When tackling carpentry projects in our older homes, we can choose from a vast array of fasteners to hold wooden elements together. Most of these fasteners can be readily found at the nearest home center, where shelves full of nails and screws seem to come in endless varieties. How can we make sense of all these selections and determine which is the best fit for a specific task? It helps to start with some historical background on traditional fasteners. Knowing how they evolved, how they were used traditionally, and even how they hold things together is critical to understanding that not all fasteners are created equal.

HISTORIC HIGHLIGHTS

Two hundred and fifty years ago, when homeowners and builders needed to join two or more pieces of wood together, they had several types of fasteners at their disposal, and each was used for a different purpose. Large timbers were almost always joined with treenails or trunnels, which we know today as pegs. Smaller planks and boards were commonly joined with handmade nails. These wrought nails were used on everything from flooring to cabi-

net hinges. Blacksmiths would carefully fashion a variety of nails and customize their heads, depending on their intended use—nails with tiny, flat heads, for example, were used to fix trim in place, while nails with hook- or L-shaped heads were used to fasten flooring. During this time, handmade screws, which were individually filed and pointed, were also produced in limited quantities. These were generally used only on cabinetry and furniture.



RAY TSCHOEPE PHOTOS

In the 18th century, hand-wrought nails—like the ones visible on the unpainted siding of this house—were the fastener of choice for carpenters aiming to securely join smaller wooden elements.

LEFT: Trimhead screws can be a good substitute for finishing nails (second from right). **RIGHT:** Hand-wrought nails (near right) and machine-cut versions.



RAYTSCHOEPE PHOTOS

NAILS OR SCREWS?

As a general rule of thumb, you should always replace nails and screws with similar fasteners, particularly if you are completing a faithful restoration. While this seems like simple advice, it's sometimes tempting to swap one out for the other. For example, whenever I encounter interior stop moldings on windows that are secured with nails, I consider replacing the nails with screws, because windows need regular maintenance that usually requires removing one or both sashes. Screws make this job easier.

All fasteners are usually available in bright (uncoated), galvanized, or stainless steel. For outdoor use, choose the most corrosion-resistant material you can find. Stainless steel nails are significantly more resistant, but can be considerably more expensive. In addition, while almost all hardware departments will carry galvanized nails, many sizes and styles of stainless steel nails have to be mail-ordered. Also, be sure to match the metal to the wood. Certain species of wood (redwoods and cedar) react with galvanized nails to produce staining and corrosion. In this case, stainless steel is the best choice. And although copper nails are considered appropriate for roofing, copper corrodes quickly in the presence of the tannins contained in split oak shingles. Here, galvanized or, better still, stainless steel is preferred.

BELOW: Avoid nails that are ridged (bottom) or cut with a screw-like spiral (top) whenever possible; they damage wood as they are removed.



As a general rule of thumb, always replace nails and screws with similar fasteners—especially when completing a faithful restoration.

By the late 18th century, mass-produced nails—cut by machine from sheets of iron—were introduced. As a result of their low cost and ready availability, they quickly supplanted hand-wrought versions. Several years later, machine-made screws also appeared, which greatly increased their use as anchors for all types of hardware. It wasn't until the late 1840s, though, that machine-made screws with pointed heads arrived, thanks to new technology that made it possible to turn a pointed thread.

(The earliest machine-produced screws had flat bottoms.) Craftsmen quickly realized that these worked better than flat-bottomed screws, so the new screws found widespread and rapid acceptance. By the middle of the 19th century, the Industrial Revolution enabled another fastener innovation—manufactured nails cut from long reels of extruded iron (and later steel) wire, which could be produced more quickly and cheaply.

The homebuilding industry became increasingly dependent on these to fasten together new balloon and platform framing systems, but elsewhere, wire nails did not immediately replace cut nails. Craftsmen from roofers to trim carpenters abandoned cut nails reluctantly, so the process took more than half a century. It is not uncommon to find houses built with cut nails during the first half of the 20th century, because many carpenters were convinced of their superior holding power. A look at the way nails hold wood helps explain the preference (see "Staying Power," opposite page).

SCREW STRATEGIES

Screws do two things very well: They hold securely, allowing you to adjust how tightly materials are connected, and they can be repeatedly installed and removed. Screws also are invaluable when either the material you're fastening or the substrate you're connecting it to will be damaged by the pounding of a hammer on a nail. (A plaster wall, for example, is much less damaged by the driving of a screw than the pounding of a nail).

Trimhead screws, which were introduced in the past 20 years, leave only a small head showing, so they can sometimes be used in place of finishing nails. They make an excellent way to secure stop moldings, but there can be a dark side to using a screw where it isn't expected or where the head is intentionally countersunk and filled for painting. Someday a future homeowner

will be prying apart that molding and encounter your hidden line of screws, which will either splinter the wood as it is separated, or require hours of time spent hunting for and removing the hidden fasteners. As old-house owners, we have a responsibility to those who follow us, and all of our repairs should be readily apparent—even through paint—and easily reversible. I sink trimhead screws so their head is just flush with the wood's surface. Once painted, the tiny square recesses left behind will clue future craftsman in to the fact that screws join the materials. To enhance the visual appeal of a traditional house, try using slotted screws, which were the type most readily available until the mid-1920s.



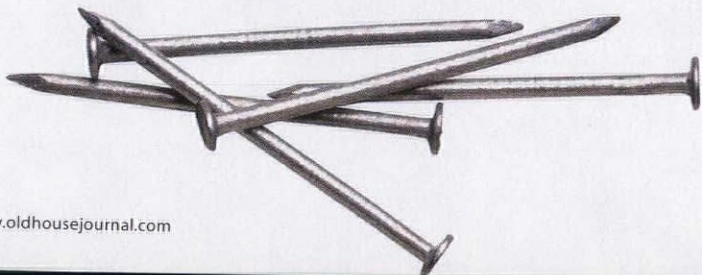
RIGHT: When trimhead screws are sunk so that their heads are flush with the wood, only tiny squares remain visible after painting. **LEFT:** Slotted screws can add traditional visual appeal.



NAIL KNOW-HOW

Nails are relatively inexpensive, can be installed quickly, and hold securely. For this reason, they have been the fastener of choice in homebuilding since about 1830. To this day, they remain the fastener relied on most by homebuilders. Where nails are used, reversibility is implied. Almost all nails can be removed simply by prying. There are, however, some varieties designed to resist pull-out, such as cement-coated nails, in which the heat generated from the friction of driving the nail momentarily liquefies an adhesive that keeps the nail in place. Other nails have shanks that are ridged or cut with a screw-like spiral. Both types damage wood as they are removed, and should be avoided whenever possible.

To retain the visual appeal of your 18th- or 19th-century house, consider using reproduction nails. These are usually cut nails that can be finished with either a "rosehead" (a blacksmith-styled shallow pyramidal head once used on nails that attached hardware or flooring) or a flat head characteristic of original cut nails.



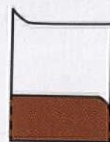
Staying Power

Many homeowners (and even some professionals) are unclear about how nails hold wood together. It's actually the wood—



not the nail or the head—that does the holding. Driving a nail into a piece of wood forces the wood fibers to tear. The direction the nail travels orients the fibers downward, pressed tightly against the nail's shank. The greater the surface area of the nail, the greater the number of locking fibers, hence the superior holding power of cut or wrought nails.

cut nail



wire nail



Torn wood fibers press tightly against a nail's shaft (above). Cut nails (far left) have more surface area, hence better holding power.

■ Area of maximum holding power

RAYTSCHOEPE ILLUSTRATIONS

The Selenys' circa-1909 Craftsman bungalow is located in the Fairmont/Southside District of Fort Worth. The neighborhood was placed on the National Register in 1990.

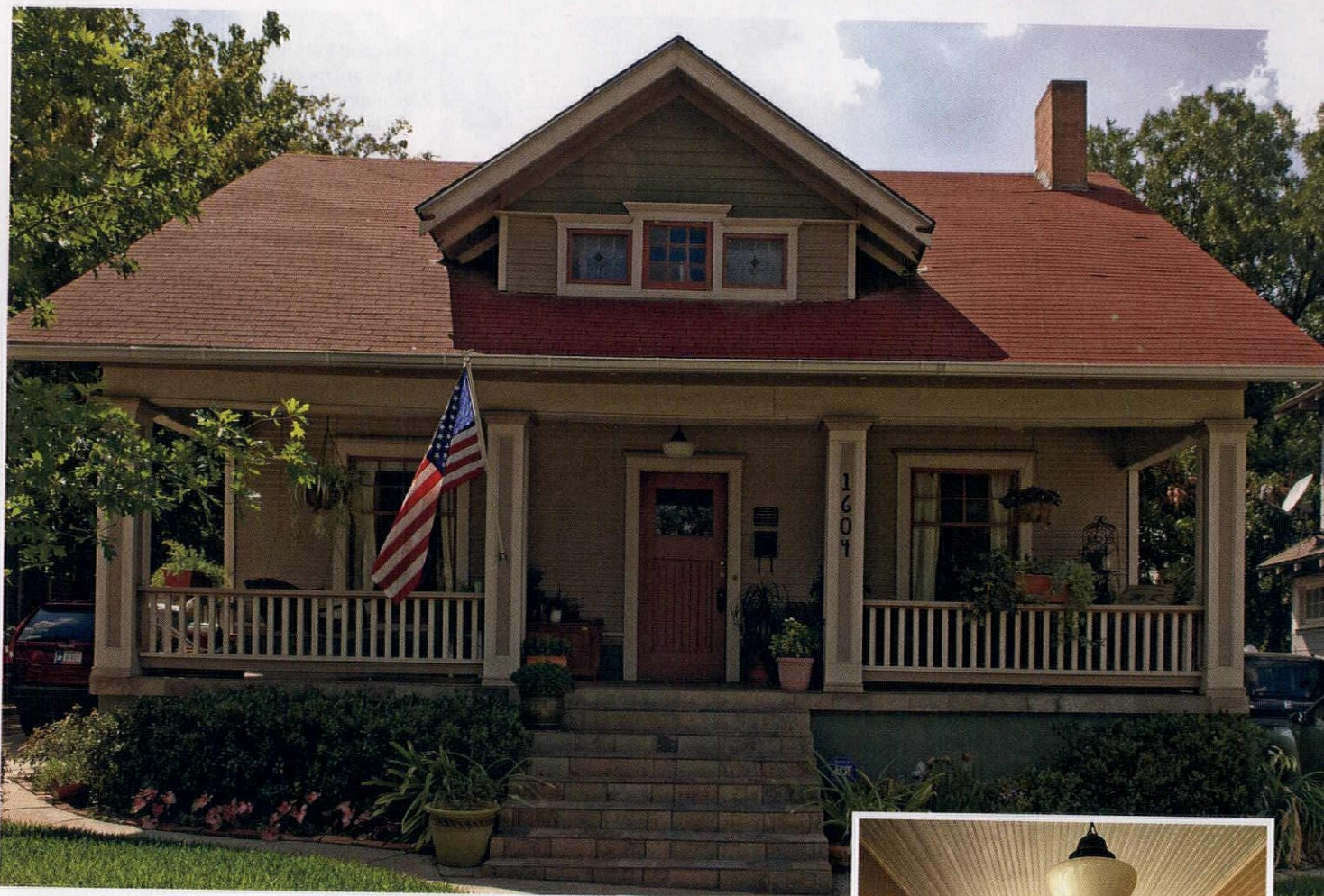
The Young in the Old

FOR A BUDDING FAMILY
IN FORT WORTH, TEXAS,
LIVING IN A HISTORIC
HOUSE IS JUST BETTER.

BY BETH GOULART

PHOTOGRAPHS BY VAN DITTHAVONG

"Why on Earth would you live in an old house?" a coworker innocently asked Alex Seleny soon after he started a new job last year. He'd found himself in an inevitable conversation about home maintenance—this one happened to be about the wisdom of watering concrete-slab foundations. When Alex had revealed that his own house is a centenarian, the others expressed surprise verging on horror, he recalls.



“Well, first of all, the location is great,” Alex, a web developer, began. The home he shares with wife, Kathleen, and toddler son, Noah, in the Fairmount neighborhood of Fort Worth, Texas, is a five-minute drive from downtown. “The other thing is that, well, you know,” he remembers stalling to ease them into a concept they clearly weren’t familiar with, “when they built these houses, slabs didn’t exist.”

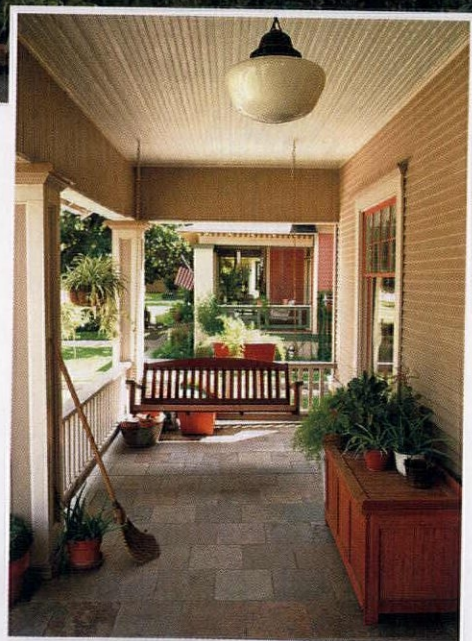
A classic Craftsman bungalow, the Selenys’ home was constructed on a pier-and-beam foundation. Their house’s official birthday escaped the historical record, but it first appeared in the 1910-1911 City Directory, and land records indicate that the plot changed hands in 1908. So, Alex and Kathleen surmise that construction probably began that year, perhaps finishing in 1909.

When the newly married couple began their search for a home in 2001, this house met their major criteria: It had a front porch

and a fireplace. It did not have a swimming pool. It had three bedrooms and two bathrooms—or, at least, the potential for two bathrooms. And, most important, it was livable. They were ready and willing to restore a house, but they needed to live in it from the get-go.

In the beginning, Alex and Kathleen weren’t actively looking for an old house. “Cowtown” was the fastest-growing large city in the country between 2000 and 2006, so many of its homes are in new subdivisions. But Alex preferred old houses, having spent his early childhood in a 1920s English Tudor in Fort Worth’s historic Ryan Place neighborhood. And Kathleen, whose father was an Army officer, grew up in many houses all over the world. However, her favorites—from Suffolk, England, to San Antonio, Texas—were the old ones.

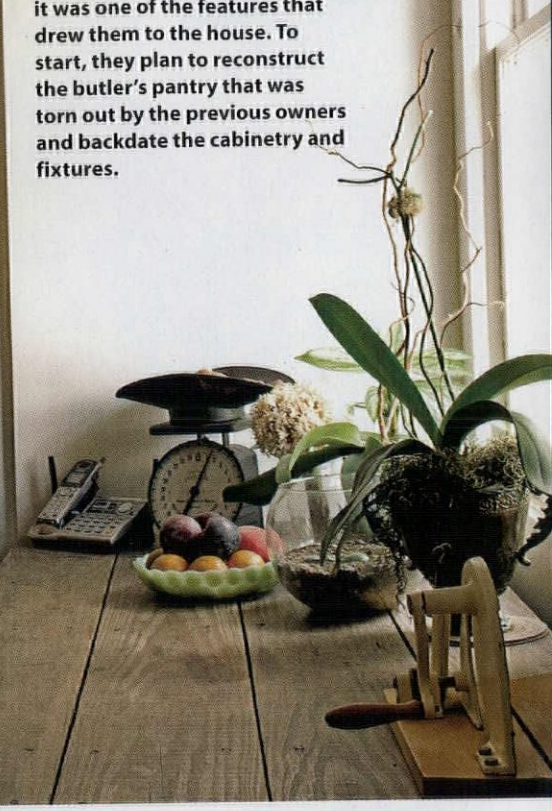
“We had looked at a lot in Fairmount,” says Kathleen, who works in systems support at Burlington Northern Santa Fe in down-



ABOVE: Growing up, Alex and Kathleen spent their respective childhoods in the warm embrace of old, historic homes, so when the time came for them to lay down roots of their own, a vintage house, like this early 20th-century Craftsman, felt right. **INSET:** The porch’s white beadboard ceiling and slate-tile floor create a cool, shaded outdoor room to combat the sweltering Texas heat.



Alex and Kathleen's restoration plans are far from finished. For example, they haven't touched the large kitchen yet, though it was one of the features that drew them to the house. To start, they plan to reconstruct the butler's pantry that was torn out by the previous owners and backdate the cabinetry and fixtures.



Another task on the Selenys' kitchen to-do list is to re-chrome their 1936 Chambers stove.

town Fort Worth. Developed for the most part between 1890 and 1938, Fairmount was a thriving, middle-class neighborhood for decades before a post-war middle-class flight to the suburbs left it behind. By the time Alex and Kathleen were born in the 1970s, Fairmount's historic homes were woefully neglected and its crime rate was sky-high. But by the 1980s, a resurgence was underway. Today the neighborhood is a trove of historic houses in need of restoration—a price many newcomers are willing to pay in exchange for affordability at close range to downtown.

The majority of Fairmount's houses are single-story bungalows, a design configuration that can create challenges for the 21st-century family. "What's a big 'gotcha' in Fairmount," says Kathleen, "is the attic conversions." Over the years, many homeowners finished out bungalow attics to add more living space on a second floor, but most didn't achieve suitable height for walking around. In this house, however,

the former residents had managed to incorporate plenty of headroom in an upstairs master bedroom. And as if in anticipation of Alex and Kathleen's needs, on a door to then unfinished attic space upstairs, the sellers had hung a sign that read, "home of the future master bath." (Today, Alex wistfully calls that "a twenty-thousand-dollar sign.")

Sealing the deal for Kathleen was the fact that this house's original woodwork was not only intact, but also unpainted. "In so many houses," she says, "the previous owners have painted everything white. So when we walked in and saw that the beautiful bookcases, the colonnade, the trim, and all of the box beams were untouched, we thought to ourselves, 'Wow. We've found something special.'"

That's not to say the house didn't harbor plenty of opportunities for restoration, though. In the seven years they've lived there, Alex and Kathleen have ripped up carpeting and layers of linoleum in the



The fact that the original woodwork was not only intact but unpainted was one of the things that most appealed to Kathleen about this house. But the dining room, shown here and below, was the first space they restored. The couple removed Victorian-style, tea-stained rose wallpaper and added period-appropriate wainscoting.

downstairs bedrooms, retrofitted a hallway, and gotten the original pocket doors and windows sliding again. Additionally, they worked with professionals to build that upstairs bathroom in period style and convert another small room off the upstairs master bedroom into a nursery.

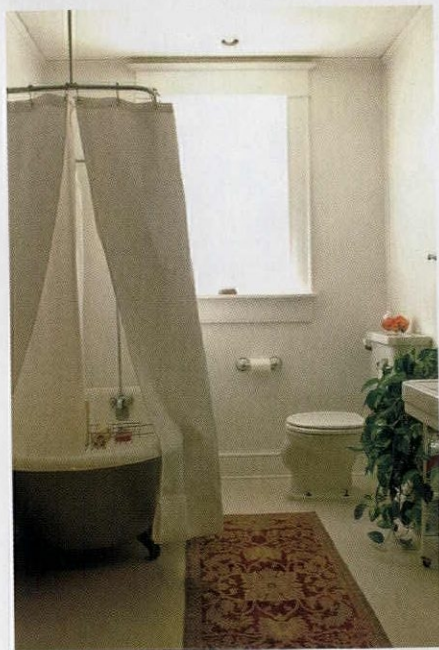
But the initial room Alex and Kathleen tackled after moving in was the dining room. The Victorian-style, tea-stained rose wallpaper that they describe as “hideous” and “Laura-Ashley-on-LSD” was so distasteful, it had to go first. They planned to strip the wallpaper and paint. It would take “you know, a day or two,” says Alex. But the wallpaper clung to paneling, itself likely hung in the 1970s and eventually painted red. Then, presumably to make the wallpaper lay smoothly, white caulking had been piped into the grooves between the panels. “So then it was red-and-white candy stripes,” says Kathleen. They quickly reassessed their plans for the room, ultimately deciding to cover the paneling instead of removing it.

Having loved a magazine photo of a dining room with wainscoting abutting a plate rail, Kathleen wanted to get that look in her own home. They found a carpenter up to the task of building the wainscoting, then called on their next-door neighbor, a tile-smith by trade, for a lesson in hanging drywall. “We had to pay someone else to float and tape because we were disastrous at that,” says Kathleen, but she stands by their drywalling skills, citing





An earth-toned, tree-motif tile by potter Laird Plumleigh was the inspiration behind the fireplace's restoration. The surrounding tiles are handmade Epro ceramic squares.



ABOVE: White, bright, and intentionally simple, the focal point of the main-level bathroom is undoubtedly the claw-foot tub. The couple plans to restore the dropped ceiling to its original height.

a technique of cutting a single piece to fit each of a door frame's top corners to avoid cracking—something the professionals later neglected to do in the living room, where cracks have begun to appear.

Very soon after moving in, the Selenys found a period fireplace insert at a neighborhood shop that caters to old-home restoration. "Historically, it had a coal-burning fireplace," says Kathleen, "so it's very, very shallow, which makes it tough to figure out how to update it." Its brick façade had been painted many times, and it was surrounded with "sort of '80s kitchen tile" when the Selenys inherited it. At some point, a gas line had been run to it, then disconnected.

When they finally addressed the fireplace in 2006, they wanted an Arts & Crafts look. Batchelder tile came to mind, but its price tag was prohibitive. A California tile potter named Laird Plumleigh gave them a workable alternative. They fell in love with one of his tile motifs, a mural of trees in an

earth-toned landscape that includes a light-mustard tone the color of the room's walls and, the Selenys believe, the house's original exterior color. They filled out the rest of the design with handmade Epro ceramic tile in complementary colors. "We had it laid out on the floor like a jigsaw puzzle," says Kathleen. "We'd bring friends over and ask them, 'Do you like this?' 'Do you like that?'" After settling on a layout, they hired the tile-smith next door to install it, as well as the insert, which they'd had restored by a specialist who worked out of a hardware store a couple of miles away.

The next restoration project for the Selenys is "the very unsexy foundation work," as Kathleen describes it. Although their pier-and-beam foundation has held up much better over the years than the concrete slabs Alex's coworkers discussed watering that day, the old-fashioned system needs occasional attention, too. "I'll do shimming and such, just as things shift," says Alex. "But we're at a point now where some of our



Most bungalows don't have enough headroom in the attic to allow it to be converted into livable square footage. Alex and Kathleen lucked out—their second level has plenty of space for their bedroom and baby Noah's crib (inset).

piers have to be taken out and re-poured," which is a job he's happy to call in the professionals to complete. They plan to spray insulation into the foundation while they're down there, also, to add structural support in addition to helping manage energy bills.

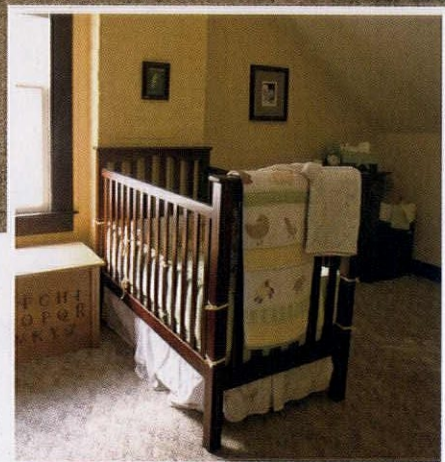
Alex and Kathleen aren't sure exactly what they'll do after that, but restoring the wainscoting and the ceiling, which was dropped by a previous owner, in the downstairs bathroom and the butler's pantry off the kitchen are both contenders. Smaller jobs fill out a to-do list, too: The 1936 Chambers stove in the kitchen, an auction find by previous owners, needs to be re-chromed. And soon they'll have collected enough five-panel doors to justify a trip to the stripper before they stain them to match originals and replace contemporary ones erroneously installed upstairs.

They'll limit their restoration work, though, to make sure they don't spend more than they can realistically hope to recoup, should they decide to sell. For though their

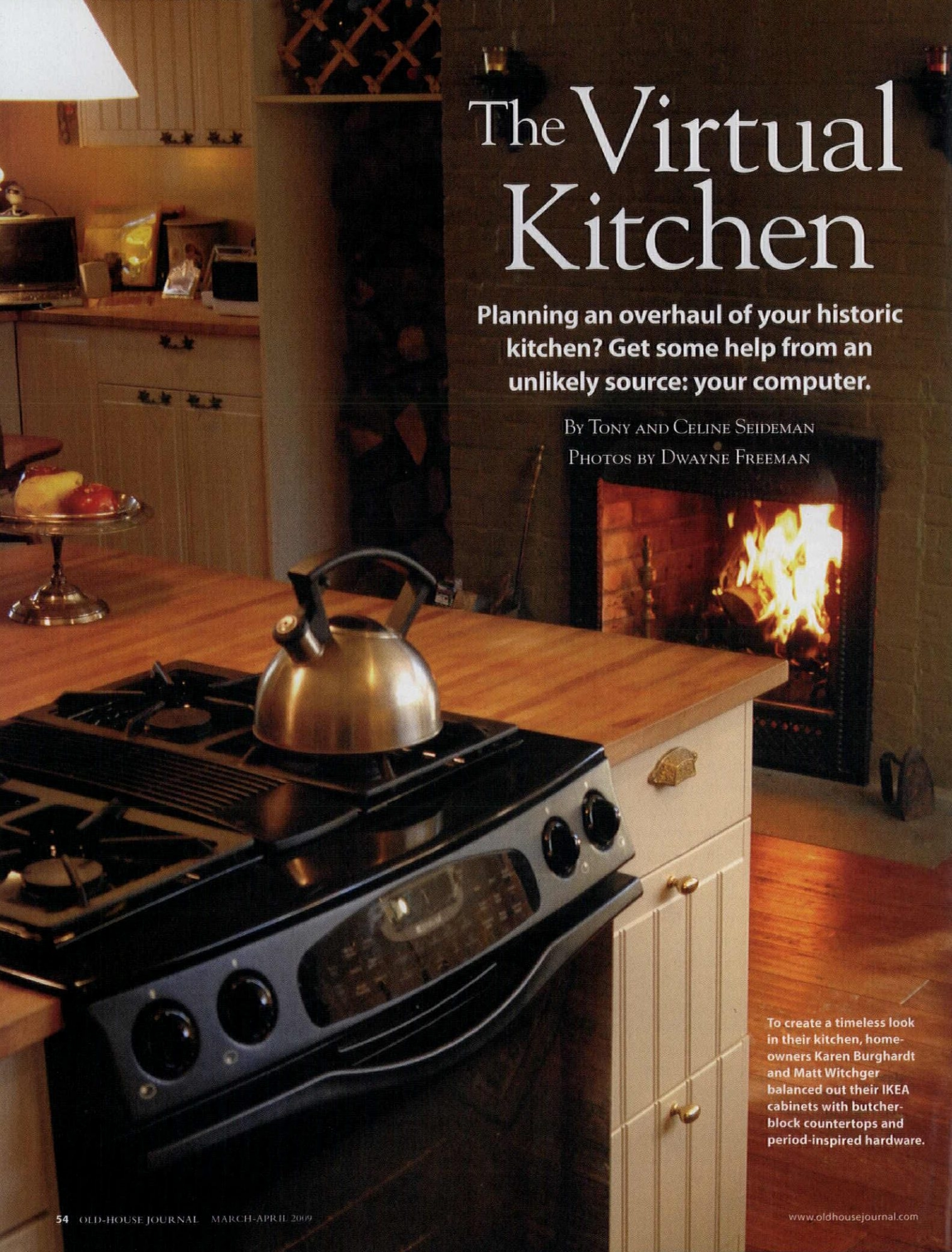
love of this old house runs deep, eventually they hope to give Noah a sibling. That will mean moving him out of the nursery and into a downstairs bedroom—an idea his mother doesn't embrace. "I feel very uncomfortable with the thought of him downstairs and us upstairs," she says. "That puts chills down my spine." So a house with all the bedrooms on the same floor could woo her away from this one.

No matter where life takes them next, the Selenys know they want to live in an old home. "A lot of what this house symbolizes for us as far as a lifestyle is that we're traditionalists," says Kathleen. "We sit down to meals. Nobody misses dinner. It harkens back to the traditional American family, which is hard to come by these days."

Alex was gentle with his new coworkers who wondered why he'd ever want to live in an old house. But in his own mind, he has no doubts about why he and Kathleen made that choice. "My answer's simple," he says. "Because it's better." 🏠



Soon, Alex and Kathleen will have collected enough five-panel doors to replace the contemporary ones the previous owners erroneously installed upstairs.



The Virtual Kitchen

Planning an overhaul of your historic kitchen? Get some help from an unlikely source: your computer.

BY TONY AND CELINE SEIDEMAN
PHOTOS BY DWAYNE FREEMAN

To create a timeless look in their kitchen, homeowners Karen Burghardt and Matt Witchger balanced out their IKEA cabinets with butcher-block countertops and period-inspired hardware.

Karen Burghart's 50-year-old kitchen was housed in a 100-year-old addition to her 150-year-old house in Peekskill, New York. The room was bedraggled and weary and inefficiently designed, so there was no doubt that she and her husband, Matt Witchger, needed to do a complete redesign. Their challenge? Coming up with a plan that effectively used every inch of available space and reinforced the charm of their pre-Civil War residence.

Karen had done the usual homework of visiting kitchen cabinet designers, builders, and stores, but the prices were stretching her budget beyond its limits—and besides, she couldn't get a real sense of what her dream kitchen would look like.

But through Internet research, Matt and Karen came up with an unexpected solution: IKEA. Although much of the selection at the Danish big-box store was more suitable for a cutting-edge office park than a historic home, Karen and Matt were able to track down a few cabinet styles that, with a little adjustment, could fit right into the style they were trying to create.

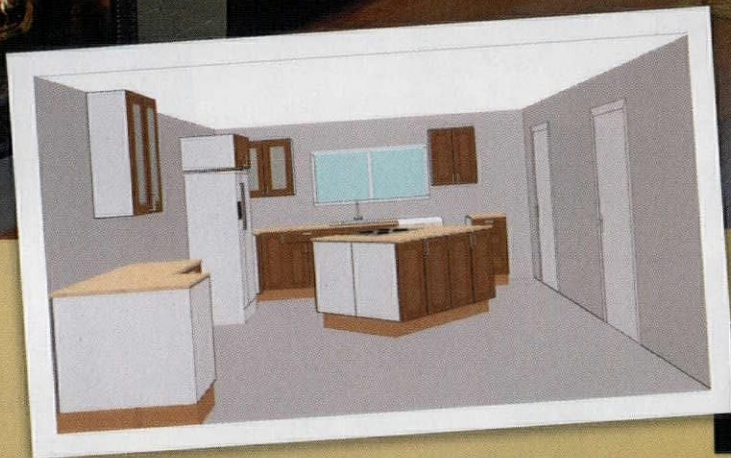
More important, IKEA had something else: a sleekly designed, easy-to-learn "kitchen planning tool" that allowed the couple to preview their kitchen on the computer before they ever spent a dime on cabinetry. Karen was thrilled with its capabilities, which allowed her to mix and match different style combinations on a three-dimensional digital model of her kitchen.

"It was fun to use," she says. "You can drop things in and take

The IKEA software's two-dimensional layout mode was essential for mapping out traffic-flow patterns and work-triangle placement in Karen and Matt's kitchen.



Using the IKEA software's 3-D view (below) allowed Karen and Matt to see their new kitchen before buying cabinets.



Digital Design 101

Ready to start pointing and clicking your way to a new kitchen? These basic steps will help you get the most out of your software:

- ◆ **Measure twice, input once.** Nothing is more important than getting the measurements right when you're using kitchen design software.
- ◆ **When measuring, keep in mind that in older houses, right angles are a rarity.** Expect spaces to be several inches out of true, and make sure to account for that.
- ◆ **Place doors and windows accurately.** Especially if you're not using custom cabinets, you'll waste time and money if you're off by even a couple of inches. Make sure you know how wide your moldings are and how high your windows are. (You might not be dealing with right angles here, either.)
- ◆ **Watch out for fixtures, and keep an eye on the little things.** The last thing you want is to open a cabinet door and have it whacked off its hinges by your ceiling fan.
- ◆ **Know your local building codes.** There are rules and regulations that govern the placement of outlets, especially in environments where water and electricity could come in close contact. Talk with your local building department before you start putting things in the wrong place.
- ◆ **Try a demo version.** Many software packages allow you to take a free test drive, so do it. You don't want to spend money on a program and then find it doesn't fit your needs.

them out really easily. It makes it tremendously simple. If you want cream cabinets, click your mouse. If you want brown, just click again."

And, as opposed to previewing cabinets in a store, the possibilities are virtually endless. No store can stock every single combination possible, Karen points out. "Even though it's cyberspace, and it's not perfect,"

she says, "it made a huge difference when we were designing our kitchen."

Software Solutions

There's a reason why pencil and paper have become passé in the world of architecture and design: Computer-aided design systems are making it easier than ever for people to take raw concepts and turn them

into detailed representations of what they want. Not only are computerized drafting programs faster and more efficient, but plans created using standard platforms like AutoCAD also can be shared easily between different parties involved in the renovation process.

"When I first came here about six years ago, they were still drawing everything by

hand," says Randy Thoms of Stamford, Connecticut-based Kitchens by Dean. "Now, we have an AutoCAD system in both of our showrooms and four or five AutoCAD draftspeople in place."

Like most things in the digital world, the variety and complexity of the different programs available can make choosing and dealing with kitchen design software difficult. Adding to the challenge is the fact that there are untold numbers of kitchen cabinet brands, styles, types, and moldings—not to mention a vast number of appliances, too. In general, though, kitchen design software can be divided into three basic categories:

Business-oriented packages. In the software world, one program often comes to dominate an industry, and architects swear by AutoCAD (the acronym stands for computer-aided design). While firms may still do basic layout sketching by hand, "We pretty much do all our drafting in a CAD format," says Stephen Tilly of the respected historic architectural firm Stephen Tilly Associates. "We'll also use programs like Adobe Photoshop to help people visualize materials and color and lighting," he adds.

Purely professional setups such as AutoCAD provide detailed layouts that are wonderfully useful for architects, but consumers might find them confusing and frustrating. In part, that's because AutoCAD is targeted at a professional market, so it has none of the shortcuts or simplifications that characterize consumer-oriented packages.

AutoCAD designs also are made to be read by professionals, which means they're usually 2-D and thus won't give the same sense of visualization to those who aren't used to reading architectural drawings.

Then there's the final professional-level roadblock: price. AutoCAD lists for \$1,200—a pretty hefty sum for the average homeowner, considering the steep learning curve for people outside the design industry.

Basic consumer-oriented packages. Fortunately, the basic features of AutoCAD have been scaled down into user-friendly, consumer-oriented packages that allow you to create similar layouts without the extensive training or steep price tag. Although these programs are usually easier to learn than AutoCAD, it's helpful if you have some familiarity with computers and design software.

One of the more important attributes to watch for when choosing a consumer package is whether it can work with symbol libraries. Many cabinet manufacturers have created libraries of symbols that are compatible with key programs so users can plug in symbols that represent different sizes, shapes, and styles. This will allow you to skip the difficult and time-consuming experience of individually drawing each cabinet.

"The more specific you can get, the better," advises Laura Hammond of Hammond Interior Design, which has offices in New York and Pennsylvania. "If you can go online and find a symbol—say, for a particular brand of an oven range—that's an important factor."

Kitchen Design Packages

PROFESSIONAL: AutoCAD

- ◆ **Pros:** design industry standard; creates super-detailed renderings
- ◆ **Cons:** expensive; steep learning curve
- ◆ **For more information:** (800) 964-6432; autodesk.com

BASIC CONSUMER: BETTER HOMES AND GARDENS HOME DESIGN SOFTWARE

- ◆ **Pros:** fairly easy to use; has an extensive library of symbols, and can import manufacturers' symbols
- ◆ **Cons:** professionals might have a hard time reading the renderings; it's not free (though cost is moderate)
- ◆ **For more information:** (800) 805-0374; homedesignersoftware.com

PRODUCT-SPECIFIC: IKEA KITCHEN PLANNING TOOL

- ◆ **Pros:** free; simple to learn
- ◆ **Cons:** only works with IKEA products; won't provide designers with specific elevation info
- ◆ **For more information:** (800) 434-4532; ikea.com/ms/en_us/rooms_ideas/kitchen/download1.html



Product-specific kitchen design packages. Yes, it's free and easy to use, but the IKEA program used by Karen and Matt comes with a very specific, very deliberate limitation: It only works with IKEA cabinets. Users cannot create new cabinets or insert cabinets from other manufacturers. If you want any shape, size, or type of cabinet that's not in IKEA's inventory, you're out of luck.

"You're sort of stuck with whatever repertoire is built into the software," Tilly says. This can prove especially burdensome when it comes to dealing with older homes, which often have unusual layouts that demand creative solutions beyond the capabilities of product-specific packages.

"The software can push you toward conventional solutions that may not be appropriate for the historic house you're working on," Tilly says.

Another problem is that plans generated in product-specific packages may be easy for consumers to understand, but lack the specific measurements and symbols required by professionals. "You can't get the kind of elevation details you want with a drag-and-drop program," explains Thoms.

On the other hand, you can't beat the free price tag—especially if you're just starting to dream about redoing your kitchen. 🏠

Regular OHJ contributors Tony and Celine Seidman are working to restore a 1903 transitional Victorian in Peekskill, New York.

Find more homeowner advice in our roundup of restoration blogs.

OldHouseJournal.com

OLD-HOUSE INSIDER

Kitchen Confidential

THREE TURN-OF-THE-CENTURY KITCHENS GET REVAMPED
WITH CLEVERLY DISGUISED MODERN AMENITIES AND
THOUGHTFUL PERIOD TOUCHES.

BY THE OHJ EDITORIAL STAFF



victorian

For Bruce and Melanie Rosenbaum, it all started with the stove. The salvage-loving couple was on one of their regular pilgrimages to the Brimfield Antique Show in central Massachusetts when they met David Erickson of Erickson's Antique Stoves. He sold them a decorative potbelly stove from the late 1800s (which now sits on a hearth in the revamped kitchen of their 1901 transitional Victorian), and also mentioned another appliance he was restoring: a center-firebox, double-oven Defiance wood-burning stove from the J.L. Mott Company.

"It was a really deluxe model for its day," Erickson notes. As soon as Bruce and Melanie saw it, they were sold.

"I thought it would be the perfect centerpiece for our kitchen," says Bruce.

Not only did it become the focal point of the room, but the refurbished stove—which Erickson converted to run on electricity and fitted with a modern Miele cooktop selected by the couple—also set the tone for the entire kitchen renovation.

"We decided on a theme of adaptive reuse," says Bruce. "We wanted to try to keep as much as possible, and then find salvage or antique items and restore or repurpose them."

So while the massive stove waited patiently in the basement, Bruce and Melanie began hunting for other one-of-a-kind items. While they did select a few new pieces (including the Elmira refrigerator and the black beadboard cabinet faces), most of their eclectic kitchen is fur-

nished with salvage, from the stained-glass windows above the hearth to the school desk that serves as storage for the dog's food.

One serendipitous discovery was the printer's desk that became an island: Bruce came across it in one of the salvage stores he frequents, where the owner was using it as a work bench. The owner was willing to sell the desk, but in the few days it took Bruce to mull over the purchase, someone else snapped it up.

"We started looking at other options, but nothing was really as nice," says Bruce. Then, a few weeks later, he came across the original desk in another salvage store. "They had bought it to resell, and let me buy it for the price I had negotiated with the first guy."

The Rosenbaums also gathered accessories to complement their unique stove: a reproduction range hood and a copper tank, both of which were featured in a drawing of the stove that appeared in an original ad.

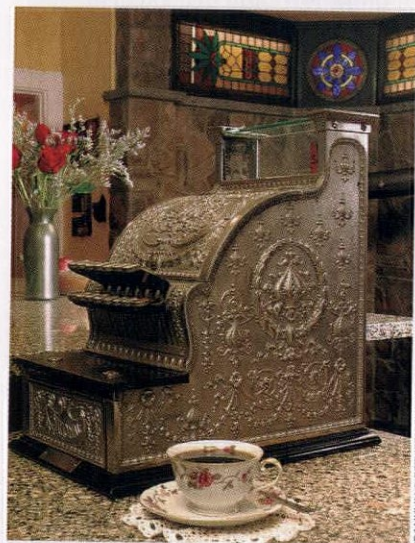
"The hood is an exact copy of a period hood from the turn of the century," Erickson says. The nickel-plated rounded corners were fabricated from an original pattern, into which Erickson custom-fit the panels and modern ventilation equipment.

The copper tank is another variation on the adaptive-reuse theme: While it originally would have been used to heat water, the tank now houses a water-filtration system, giving Bruce and Melanie (and their dog, whose copper bowl sits below the tank) easy access to drinking water.

The Rosenbaums' old-meets-new redesign not only provided the springboard for ModVic, their Victorian-restoration business, but also gave the couple a more welcoming space that fits perfectly with the era of their house.

"The kitchen wasn't bad to begin with, but it just wasn't our idea of a period Victorian kitchen," says Bruce. "Now we spend a lot of time in here—eating, entertaining, watching TV. It's become the centerpiece of our home."

PRODUCTS: 1890s Mott's Defiance stove with Miele 42" electric cooktop and custom range hood, Erickson's Antique Stoves; Bridgewood cabinets in cherry beadboard with distressed black stain, Kitchen Tune-Up; 1898 French door refrigerator, Elmira Stove Works; 1880s printer's desk (as island), Nor'east Architectural Antiques; Sheffield engineered quartz countertops, Cambria; National Cash Register Model 313, eBay; Stained glass restoration, Norwood Glass; Cultured stone (on hearth wall), Cultured Masonry.



ABOVE, TOP: David Erickson used the stove's central firebox to disguise the wiring and controls for the new electric cooktop.

ABOVE, BOTTOM: "We joke with our guests that we're going to charge them for the nice dinner they just had," says Bruce of the antique cash register that sits on the island.

OPPOSITE: Cast-iron barstools salvaged from a local restaurant belly up to the printer's desk-turned-island.

bungalow

Scott and Renee Davis had lived with their lackluster kitchen for years. Scott had bought their 1909 bungalow in Seattle's Roosevelt-Ravenna neighborhood in 1986, while he was still in college, and Renee moved in after they were married in 1991. But as the years passed, the couple's growing family (they now have two daughters) and burgeoning interest in Arts & Crafts pottery sparked ideas for a kitchen overhaul.

"They needed a much more functional house to live in," says designer Alexandra Gorny of WAI Gorny, who at the time lived near the Davises and assisted them in turning the space into a sunny, 1920s-inspired kitchen.

The first order of business: rearranging the layout to give the family more room to maneuver. An inconveniently placed fridge and island were impeding traffic flow, while cabinet and counter space was practically nonexistent. The island was scrapped, and, says Alexandra, "we swapped a door and a window to bring traffic straight through the kitchen. By doing that, we tripled the workspace."

They also created an ideal showcase for a few of the couple's prized finds: a yellow Lacanche range ("That was my dream stove—I'd had the brochure for years," Renee says) and a massive double-drainboard farmhouse sink that Scott scored at a salvage store for a mere \$200.

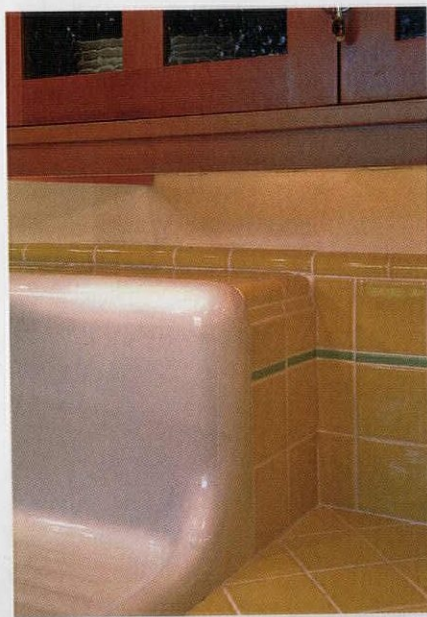
"Scott had it in the back of his truck and drove it over so Alexandra could see it," Renee remembers. "She took one look at it and said, 'How big do you think your kitchen is?'"

PRODUCTS:

Cluny range in Provence Yellow, Lacanche; CR 3 refrigerator, Müller-Möbelfabrikation; Double-drainboard farmhouse sink, Second Use; Custom cabinets, Danny Uno; Custom tile, Ann Sacks; Rhone pendant light fixtures (similar to shown), Rejuvenation; Brass bin pulls, House of Antique Hardware.



The cubbies above the cabinets were specially designed to hold Renee's two golden-hued Bauer bowls. A custom-matched Jadite green tile border breaks up the expanse of yellow in the kitchen.



RICHARD MCNAMEE PHOTOS

But thanks to the revamped layout, the sink fits perfectly, surrounded by Arts & Crafts-style built-in cabinets made by local cabinetmaker Danny Uno.

"They didn't really have cabinets back then," Alexandra points out, "so he created all of the cabinetry to look like pieces of furniture, with large legs and slatted doors."

To anchor the vibrantly hued appliances, Renee chose yellow tile countertops bordered in a Jadite-green band.

"The stove and the refrigerator are based on a European color chart, which is slightly different," she explains. So she took a finish sample from the stove and a piece of Jadite pottery from her collection to Ann Sacks, where they were able to match both colors.

"I could've chosen a different color for the appliances," she says, "but I have this thing about yellow. I grew up with a yellow kitchen, and I just think they're bright and sunny."



FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Ann Sacks: annsacks.com
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"I do a lot of canning, and wanted to be able to put big pots on the stove—even two at a time," says Renee of her choice of the professional-grade Lacanche range.

arts & crafts

When Pamela and Gerard Zytnicki moved into their grand 1907 Arts & Crafts house in Seattle in 1998, they didn't feel rushed to make changes in the kitchen. "It took us awhile to remodel the kitchen," says Pamela, "because I loved the period charm and features." It wasn't until recently, after their old stove went on the fritz, that they decided to undertake the project, calling on the architect who had already helped them restore much of their home's interior, Larry Johnson of The Johnson Partnership. "Gerard is a true gourmet and he's also Parisian," says Larry, "so I had a hunch he'd want a French stove. The La Cornue fit into the existing spot, and it became our starting point." An added bonus, says Pamela, was the unit's lack of electrical components. "We wanted a stove that didn't have electronic parts, and this one is pretty manual."

The appliance's vibrant color was inspired by the house itself. "The red is based on the color of the 1940s linoleum floor," Pamela says. The hue appears not only as a coved border on the floor, but also on the countertops as a pencil tile accent that wraps around the walls and sinks. "The sink has a radius edge—it's not square, so we had to figure out how to turn the tile around it," says Larry. The soap dish inset into the wall was Pamela's idea. "I had seen



ABOVE: The La Cornue range was the starting point for the kitchen's redesign; its color closely resembles the shade of the original linoleum floor.

RIGHT: The Dutch door opening into the mudroom was designed to keep pets and children from going outside while letting breezes in.

a lot of examples from the period, and I thought it would be cool to have one there." To her surprise, when the contractors opened up the wall, they discovered there had been a soap dish there initially, in the exact same spot.

The kitchen is small, and a remodel during the 1940s had created some awkward spaces—like a butler's pantry-turned-eating area that was encroached upon by the dining room's swinging door. "We tweaked the space for better flow," Larry explains, "opening up the butler's pantry but keeping its curved wall," one of many design touches that maintains the 1940s feel. Other period-appropriate additions include perforated wire fronting the cabinet beneath the sink, exact copies of the earlier cabinets, and a Dutch door in the mudroom. "We matched the appearance of the old door, but now it keeps the dog inside when the bottom's closed and still allows them to catch a



ANDREW BUCHANAN PHOTOS

nice breeze," says Larry.

"We really have tried to be true to the house," says Pamela. "We kept the original styling completely, just added a little modernity." 🏠

PRODUCTS: Cornu Fé 110 range in Cabaret Red, La Cornue; Range hood with custom panels, Vent-A-Hood; Model RB491-700 refrigerator with custom panel door, Gaggenau; Custom cabinets, Wood Specialties; Dishwasher, Miele; Model 540-LDL9CP faucets, Chicago Faucets; Quatro Alcove sink, Whitehaus; Zodiac Bianco Carrara countertops, DuPont; 3x6 backsplash tile in Meringue and 1x6 accent tile in Claret, Iron Gate Tile; Marmoleum flooring in Papyrus White and Sangria, Forbo.

Want to incorporate salvage items in your kitchen remodel? Check out our state-by-state directory of architectural salvage stores to get started.

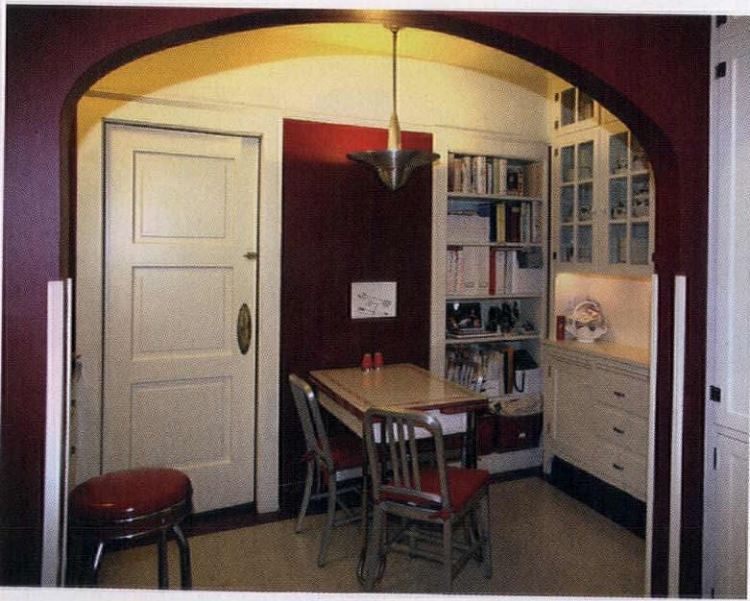
OldHouseJournal.com



ABOVE: While the backsplash is tile, the countertops are a faux marble that mimics era authenticity while adding maintenance ease. "We wanted to have a tile-like surface that's durable, because we like to cook," says Pamela.

RIGHT: The floor border jogs around architectural elements, adding to the period feel.

BELOW: To create more usable space in the former butler's pantry, the team from The Johnson Partnership turned an unused doorway into a bookcase.



BOTTOM LEFT: GERARD ZYTNICKI PHOTO

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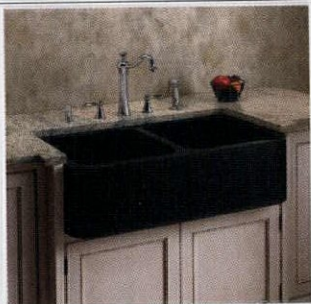
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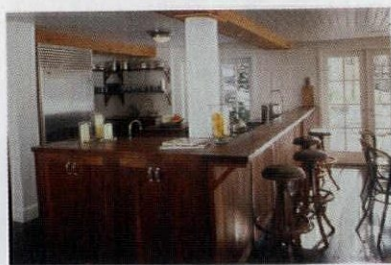
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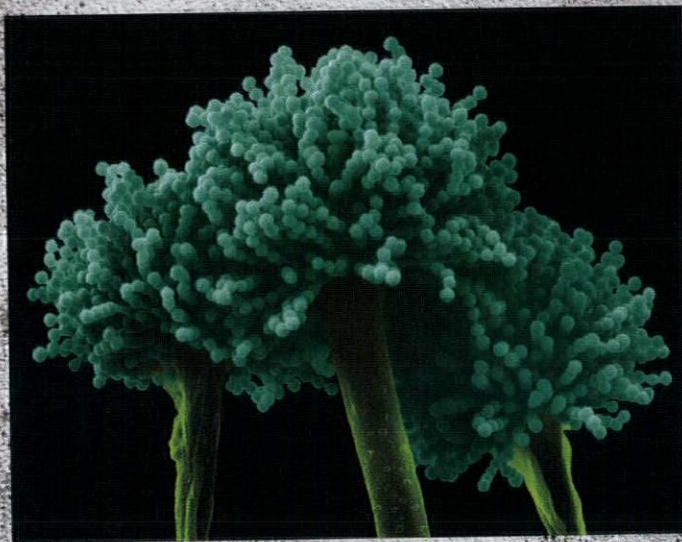
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Mold Management



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HERE'S WHAT TO DO WHEN
MOLD TAKES HOLD.

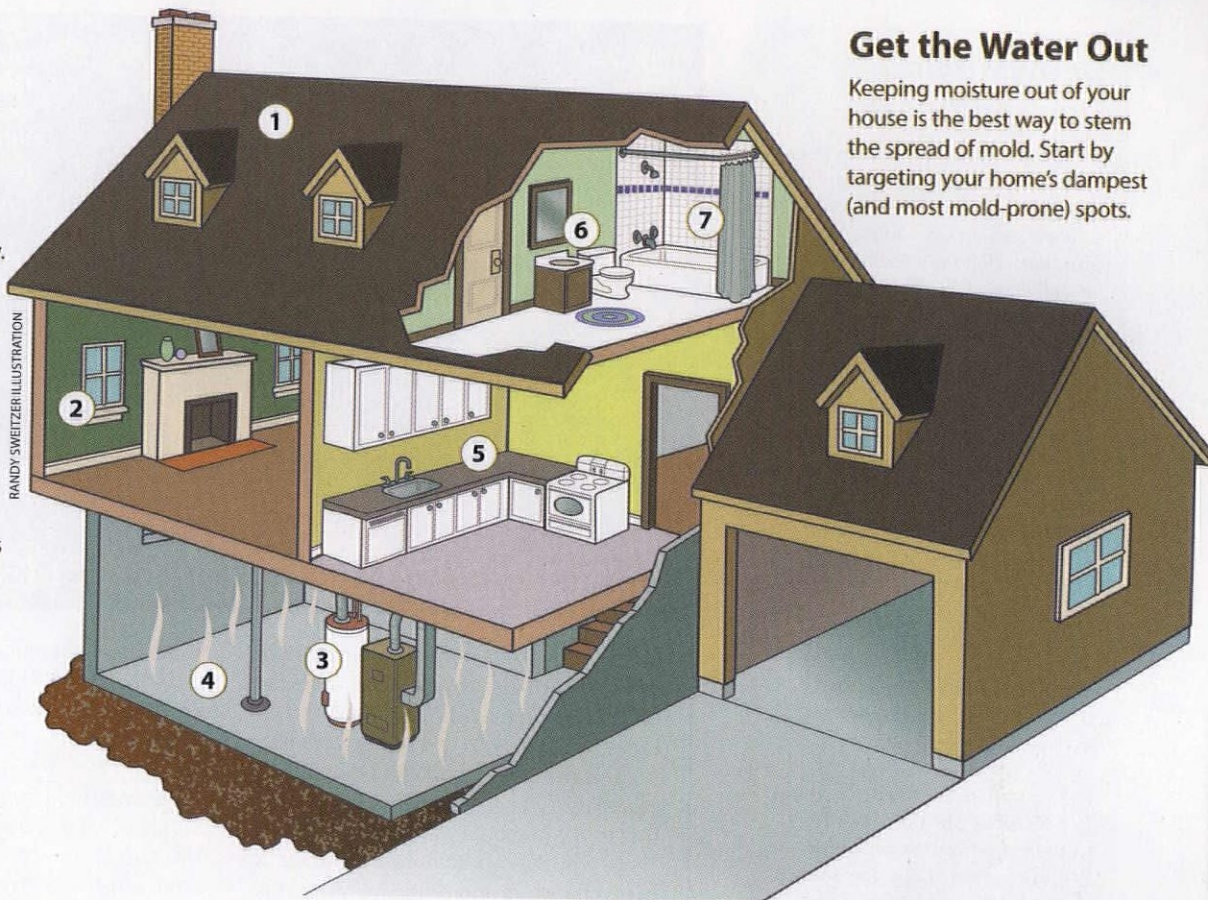
◆ BY NOELLE LORD ◆

Mold helps convert grapes to wine, milk curd to the blue cheese that goes well with wine, and has even contributed to life-saving medical breakthroughs like penicillin. For all the good some mold can do, however, just as many species can cause serious damage. Mold doesn't discriminate based on the time of year, cleanliness of a house, or, for the most part, geographical location; it's rare to find a home without any trace of mold. Mold spores—microscopic reproductive “seeds”—can travel inside on people and pets or through windows and doors. They live particularly well in damp or humid areas such as basements, kitchens, and bathrooms, and spread easily throughout the rest of a building. Mold isn't a subject to ignore—these organisms present not only health concerns, but also serious risks to vulnerable building materials. Mold can trap moisture and ruin all things wood, and some varieties can even eat through organic materials like paints and finishes.

LEFT: Mold grows on a ceiling due to water infiltration from a chimney flashing leak. INSET: Under a microscope, the mold variety *Aspergillus versicolor* shows many minute particles on each tentacle.

NOELLE LORD/PHOTO

- 1** Ensure the roof is watertight and properly ventilated.
- 2** Clean cold-weather condensation off window sills immediately.
- 3** Check mechanical equipment for leaks, and insulate pipes.
- 4** Install proper foundation drainage, and use dehumidifiers.
- 5** Wipe kitchen surfaces dry, and check regularly for plumbing leaks.
- 6** Keep bathroom surfaces as dry as possible, and watch for condensation.
- 7** Seal showers with silicone caulk, and toss moldy shower curtains.



Get the Water Out

Keeping moisture out of your house is the best way to stem the spread of mold. Start by targeting your home's dampest (and most mold-prone) spots.

Since old houses tend to harbor the environments that help mold thrive, the more you know about this common household invader, the more able you'll be to keep it at bay.

Mold Makeup

Molds are microscopic fungi that grow year-round and thrive in any damp, warm, or humid environment. Mildew, which is marked by its strong odor, is technically a species of mold. Mold you can see, usually as black, brown, or green spots, is just the tip of the proverbial iceberg—such visible areas are spore-producing colonies that release millions of airborne particles throughout your house. Some species even have “tentacles” that reach behind the scenes, stretching a dozen feet or more. From basements to bathrooms, kitchens to crawlspaces, it's impossible to avoid mold completely.

Like any living organism, mold needs the proper environment and nutrients to survive. The most effective way to stem its spread is to eliminate (or limit) the conditions that foster its growth and create an inhospitable environment by removing water infiltration and getting rid of excess moisture in your home.

Discouraging Mold

Several basic precautions can discourage mold growth in your home. During moist, humid months, always run basement dehumidifiers. Empty dehumidifier basins regularly, or have them drain continuously to avoid creating additional hotspots for mold growth. In the wintertime, keep humidifiers free from growth by regularly cleaning

Health Concerns

For many adults, children, and even pets, mold triggers potentially serious respiratory health issues. If allergy symptoms don't end when seasons change, mold spores or other fungi may be the problem. The symptoms are very similar to those from other allergens: sneezing, itching, nasal discharge, congestion, and dry skin. Mold spores also can reach the lungs, causing asthma or another serious illness called allergic bronchopulmonary aspergillosis. Mold allergies can trigger symptoms over the entire summer if outdoor molds are the cause, or year-round if indoor molds are to blame. Symptoms that worsen in a damp or moldy room like a basement may suggest a mold allergy.

removable reservoirs. Use a teaspoon to a tablespoon of bleach in the reservoir water and swish it around (or let it set if mold growth is present), then rinse well and fill with fresh water. Adequately ventilate your house, and quickly repair any plumbing leaks. Clean surfaces regularly—particularly those in high-moisture areas—with mold-killing products containing fungicide. Additionally, it's not a bad idea to have your furnace ductwork professionally cleaned periodically. Make sure any carpets in bathrooms and basements can be lifted out and aired (avoid large rugs or wall-to-wall carpeting altogether in these areas), and use vacuum cleaners and air conditioners with HEPA (high efficiency particulate air) filters.

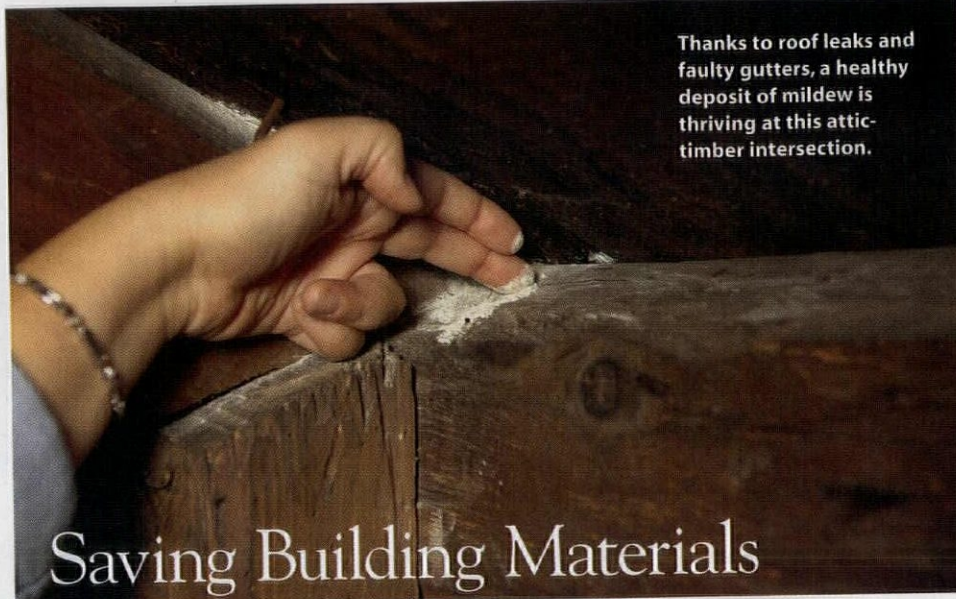
Fans placed strategically in basements, living areas, and

Demystifying Dehumidifiers

Using a dehumidifier in your basement is a relatively simple and inexpensive way to effectively prevent many excess moisture problems. Dehumidifiers work by pulling air into the machine and over open refrigeration coils, where moisture in the air condenses and drips into a collection pan. Most machines are designed with a float mechanism that turns the machine off when the water collection level gets too high. Standing water, however, can promote mold growth, so make it a daily habit to empty the pan (two or more times a day is a good rule), or set up a positive drain by running a piece of garden hose into a drain, sewer line, or sump pump hole in your basement. Work to keep the humidity in your basement between 50 and 60 percent.

Dehumidifiers are sized according to how many pints of water they can remove from the air within a 24-hour period. It's important not to purchase an undersized unit. To ensure that you buy a unit of the right capacity, consider not only the square footage of your area but also the severity of the dampness. A moderately damp room demands much less dehumidifying than a cellar of the same size with visible water penetration. Don't forget to bring square-footage information with you to the store; it is essential in getting the right size machine. Though new units are energy efficient, you will see a slight impact on your electric bill, so it pays to get a greater-capacity unit that has to run less.

Expect to pay around \$200 for high-quality machines, which can come in a variety of capacities and grades. Some industrial suppliers (such as Grainger's Industrial Supply) also sell to homeowners and will have higher quality models than the average retailer. (Professional models also can operate at lower temperatures—down to 40 degrees, versus 50 degrees for the average residential unit.) In my experience, a high-end dehumidifier not only offers better dependability and longevity, but also is quieter.



Thanks to roof leaks and faulty gutters, a healthy deposit of mildew is thriving at this attic-timber intersection.

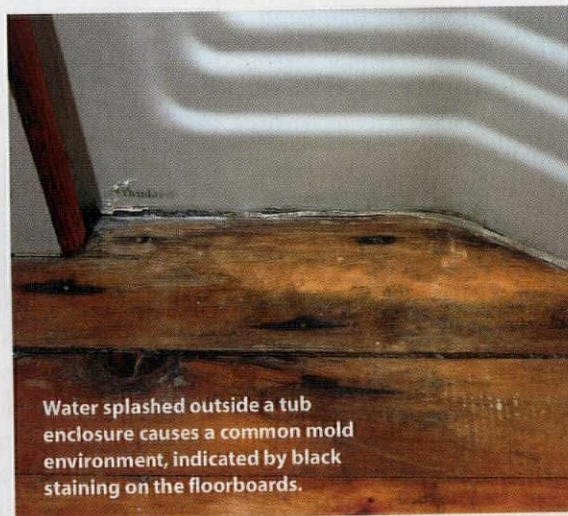
Saving Building Materials

Moisture creates a prime environment for mold and also destroys wood, finishes, and other building materials by enabling rot. Excess mold growth can add organisms capable of eating wood and other building materials to the mix, and together they can threaten your home's structural stability. That's why it's important to work to reduce excess moisture and eliminate water infiltration into your home.

Excess moisture is often evidenced by surfaces that feel damp, and areas that appear darker than surrounding materials. Water condensation on windows, toilet tanks, or plumbing pipes is another sign of excess moisture trapped in the building. Pay close attention to any plumbing leaks, standing exterior water, or water stains appearing on surfaces, as well as dark green or black

spotted areas that indicate the obvious growth of mold. Mildew, a form of mold, grows most commonly as a fuzzy white buildup.

To remove mold from surfaces, use a 1:1 to 1:3 bleach-and-water solution (or a mold-killing cleanser with fungicide) and a good scrub brush. Bleach is the old standby, but it's not tolerated by everyone. It also strips the color from the mold, making it harder to see. Other fungicides or professional mold remediation companies might be worth considering. When launching serious remediation efforts, regardless of the product chosen, always wear proper protection, including a respirator mask, gloves, and eye protection. Also remember never to mix bleach with ammonia-containing products, as the two can form a toxic gas.



Water splashed outside a tub enclosure causes a common mold environment, indicated by black staining on the floorboards.

The EPA recommends getting professional help if the mold in your house covers more than 10 square feet, but this isn't feasible for everybody. Keep in mind that professional mold remediation efforts can include extreme measures like tearing out walls. As a steward of old houses, I always try to save historic fabric wherever possible, and am wary of such tactics. I suggest starting with the measures outlined here to see if you can rectify the problem before considering destroying any original building materials.

attics encourage cross-ventilation and help release heat and humidity. I have small circulating fans permanently operating in my 228-year-old basement to steadily stir the air, and run a dehumidifier year-round. All bathrooms with tubs or showers should have a working exhaust fan. Make sure the fans vent to the outdoors—it's common to find older exhaust fans blowing moisture out of bathrooms and into kitchens or other areas of the house (attics and basements) where the moisture gets trapped, thus contributing to mold growth.

Warm, dry summer days are a perfect time to give your basement and house a good airing out for the day (but close windows up again before overnight dew accumulates). Proper ventilation of a building is key to letting moisture move through and out so it doesn't become trapped and begin its path of destruction.

Finally, whenever you're completing a restoration project, repainting, or exposing older bare wood, always give surfaces a good washing with a fungicide or a 1:1 to 1:3 bleach-and-water solution (followed by a clean water rinse) to kill any existing growth. This quick precaution is well worth it, even if you don't see any obvious mold growth—if you remove wallpaper and leave any mold growing on underlying plaster, or fail to properly wash woodwork or exterior siding before repainting, mold can eat through your finishing products from the underside and cause all of your hard work to fail. 🏠

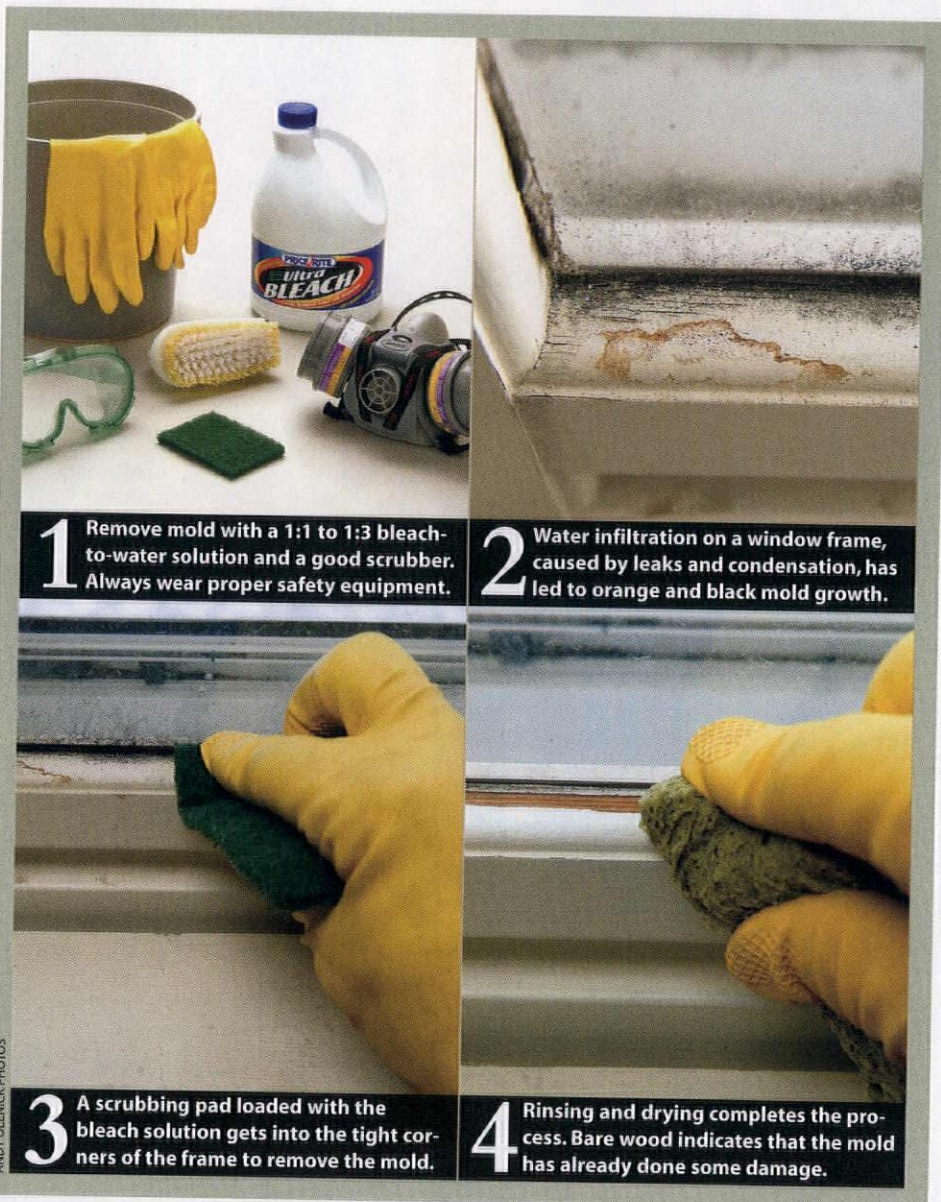
Contributing Editor Noelle Lord operates Old House C.P.R., Inc. (oldhousecpr.com) and shares her passion for older buildings through consulting, teaching, and writing.

Further Reading

Good online resources for mold information include:

The Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America; aafa.org

The Environmental Protection Agency; epa.gov/mold



1 Remove mold with a 1:1 to 1:3 bleach-to-water solution and a good scrubber. Always wear proper safety equipment.

2 Water infiltration on a window frame, caused by leaks and condensation, has led to orange and black mold growth.

3 A scrubbing pad loaded with the bleach solution gets into the tight corners of the frame to remove the mold.

4 Rinsing and drying completes the process. Bare wood indicates that the mold has already done some damage.

Tips for Reducing Indoor Mold

- ◆ Keep humidity levels between 50 and 60 percent with good ventilation and dehumidifiers, especially in kitchens and bathrooms. Air conditioning with HEPA filtration will trap spores before they reach the indoors.
- ◆ Quickly repair plumbing leaks.
- ◆ Do not carpet bathrooms and basements.
- ◆ Make sure your home has adequate ventilation.
- ◆ Regularly clean hard surfaces with mold-killing products. Fungi thrive on the soap film left on tile, grout, and even shower curtains.
- ◆ Allergy and asthma sufferers can be particularly sensitive to cleaning products and should avoid direct use. After cleaning, properly ventilate spaces before re-entry. Always follow all product precautions and usage directions.

Information from The Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America



STYLE

Colonial Charm

Just outside Washington, D.C., the Virginia waterfront town of Alexandria manages to preserve its architectural heritage amid a bustling contemporary setting.

STORY AND PHOTOS BY JAMES C. MASSEY AND SHIRLEY MAXWELL

Alexandria, Virginia, is a dense and walkable little city on the Potomac River, just south of Washington, D.C. Founded in 1749, when Alexandria was a thriving tobacco port in a British colony, it is renowned as George Washington's hometown (his Mount Vernon estate is located just a few miles south of the heart of the city), and it still harbors a varied array of pre-Revolutionary War houses.

However, even experts have to look closely to spot the genuine articles. Time and an early 20th-century penchant for "colonialization" can make it hard to sort out the centuries here—but it's always worth the effort.

That's because, despite its mercantile past, Alexandria has always been, first and foremost, a city of houses. In fact, its Old and Historic District was among the first of its ilk to gain local, state, and federal recognition. And, given the attractions its celebrated Old Town streets hold for tourists, politicians, and history buffs, you never know what—or whom—you may bump into while you're house-gazing.

Alexandria's visitors' center, the Ramsay House, is one of its premier colonial treasures. The gambrel-roofed wooden building started life on an unknown site some distance away from its present corner location in the heart of Old Town. It was built circa 1724 as the residence of one of Alexandria's founders and moved to its current site around 1748. It was reconstructed in 1956, incorporating the remains of the original house and using archeological and photographic documentation to recreate an authentic picture of a prosperous colonial Virginia home. Its high stone-and-brick basement and massive-but-shapely exterior chimney are hallmarks of its type.

Nearby, the Carlyle House, now a historic house museum, offers yet another—and much grander—version of colonial prosperity. The stately Georgian Palladian stone mansion was erected in 1751-53 by John Carlyle, a wealthy Scottish immigrant, within sight of his busy riverfront warehouses. The Carlyle House was perhaps Virginia's most impressive urban home outside of the colonial capital at Williamsburg, and the smooth, ashlar stonework is unique in Alexandria. A symmetrical façade anchored by an impressive projecting pavilion—with stone quoins at the corners of the main block and pavilion, and surrounding a gracefully arched entrance—gives the big house a stylish dignity that reflects its Scottish heritage.



OPPOSITE: In 1798, merchants lived above these stores on lower King Street, still a bustling area. THIS PAGE: Attenuated columns add elegance to the entry porch of this 1786 house on Fairfax Street.

The Carlyle House's flanking outbuildings have long since vanished—along with its other outbuildings—probably in the mid-19th century, when the house was obscured by the erection of Alexandria's most up-to-date hotel in its front yard. The hotel was demolished, and the house was restored in 1976. Visitors, who are often surprised by the sparsely planted front grounds (representative of 18th-century landscaping practices), are charmed by the lushly terraced rear garden.

Economical Spaces

The size and isolation of the Carlyle House were far from the norm in Alexandria. Much more common was the simple three-bay row house, similar to those in other old East Coast cities like New York, Baltimore, and Philadelphia. This economical use of

RIGHT: One of Alexandria's earliest houses, built around 1775, awaits paint on likely original wide side boards. **BELOW:** The first published map of the town, created by George Gilpin in 1798. Dotted diagonal lines show the portion briefly included in the newly established District of Columbia.



Georgian or Federal?

Walk through the tree-lined streets of Alexandria, Virginia, and you'll notice scores of Georgian buildings. But how can you distinguish them from their closely related Federal cousins? The most telling clues are windows and doors.

Windows in Georgian homes usually are double-hung, six-over-six-paned, with flat-arch lintels and keystones and plain sills. They tend to be wider, with more prominently projecting surrounds and muntins, than later, Federal-style windows, and they tend to occupy more of the wall space. Similarly, the Flemish-bond brick and wide mortar joints on Georgian houses are more eye-catching than the quiet, smooth-surfaced, almost invisibly jointed Federal house.

Doorways in Georgian houses are usually decorative, with prominent moldings. They are often recessed, providing a sheltered, if narrow, entryway. The paneled doors usually incorporate rectangular or semicircular fanlights (rather than the elliptical ones on many Federal houses), but less often with sidelights.

land was exactly what the city's early planners had in mind when they issued the 1751 regulation requiring that houses be built all the way to the street. Brick sidewalks now occupy part of the old cobblestone street frontage, but the effect is just what was intended. Only a few short stretches of the cobblestone streets still survive (fortunately, for the safety of drivers and pedestrians!).

This early law is what gives Old Town its sense of architectural order, with block after block of unbroken rows of narrow houses punctuated by the occasional cobblestone alley or the even more rare—and highly coveted—side garden on an adjoining lot.

The brick party wall—i.e., one wall shared by two houses—was commonplace in Alexandria construction for many reasons. First, it allowed tight development, with no wasted space between houses. It also made for sturdy construction, since the framing of each house was actually built into, as opposed to merely abutting, the walls of its neighbors. And, most important, it provided a relatively fireproof separation between houses.

In fact, it would be hard to overemphasize the importance of brick as a construction material in 18th-century Alexandria. There

Alexandria's Old Town is filled with a mix of large brick houses built for businessmen and many small frame workers' houses—all now restored and prized by preservationists. The old brick sidewalks are typical of the area.

are, of course, frame houses in Old Town. However, in such a densely built area, fire was (and still is) a major concern, and wooden houses are more vulnerable to fire than masonry ones.

Even brick houses are not immune to flames, however. Captains' Row, a block of pre-Revolutionary Alexandria houses built on filled land near the waterfront, is evidence of that sad fact. A wild, wind-driven conflagration in the spring of 1827 burned or severely damaged the line of houses that had sheltered sea-going merchants. After the fire, some were reconstructed in their original Georgian form, while others were replaced with more up-to-date Federal-style residences. Subsequent owners, eager to establish or enhance their homes' venerability in the Colonial Revival period, sometimes "earliered up" their properties by adding Georgian-style details, especially dormers and fancy entrances, and/or removing evidence of later construction.

Just as masonry buildings have been significant in Alexandria's architectural past and present, slate roofs are also important features, for their weather- and fire-resistance as well as their stylish appearance. Slate was an especially appropriate roofing choice because Virginia is a slate-producing area.



Georgian Statements

The Georgian townhouses of Alexandria are soothingly consistent in form. They are narrow buildings, generally three bays in width, with a side-hall floor plan that places the front door at an outer edge of the building's front wall and the interior staircase along a party or exterior wall. (Very occasionally, the entrance is on the side of the house.) They are two, two and a half, or even three stories in height. Rooflines slope toward the front of the lot, so almost no gable ends face the street.

There is almost always a rear service wing that is slightly lower than the main block. The wing has a side-sloping shed roof that might join the wing of the neighboring house at the top of the slope, thus making a single gable end that faces the rear of the lot.

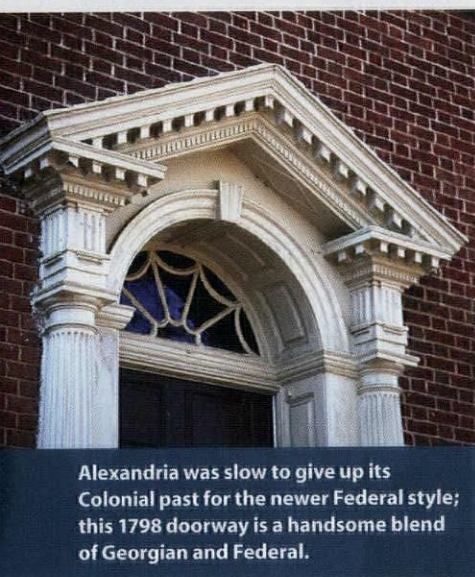
This practice of shed-roofed rear wings led to an Alexandria oddity called the Flounder House. Owners, who were required to start construction within a specific time period after purchasing their lots, often built the wing first, in the appropriate spot at the rear of the lot, intending to add the main block of the house later. Sometimes, however, the main block never materialized. That led to a few non-conforming half-houses with side-sloping roofs and (whoops!) front yards, despite the setback prohibition.

One of the less visible charms of Old

Town is its gardens, which are usually, though not always, behind the house, enclosed by the close-set buildings, garden walls, and fences. These are disappearing as owners take advantage of the deep rear yards to enlarge their residences.

The survival of Alexandria's architectural heritage has been due largely to the fact that it never experienced the rapid growth spurts that decimated historic areas of other, more commerce- and industry-oriented cities. Soon eclipsed as a port by the more favorably situated Georgetown, Alexandria seemed to slumber through the 19th century and into the 20th, until house-hunting Depression-era New Dealers brought it back to life. Since then, its charm has only blossomed. 🏡

RIGHT, TOP: This 1800 Georgian house was one of Alexandria's early restorations. **RIGHT, BOTTOM:** The curved stone steps and platform, accented with an ornate cast-iron railing, are distinguished mid-19th-century additions to this Prince Street house.



Alexandria was slow to give up its Colonial past for the newer Federal style; this 1798 doorway is a handsome blend of Georgian and Federal.





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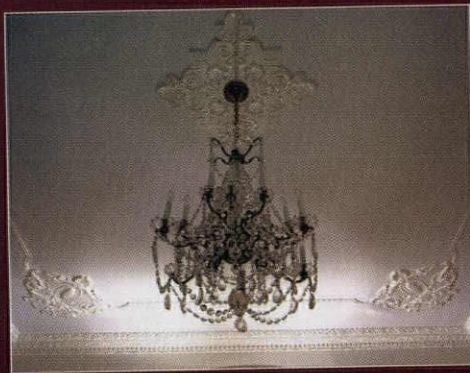
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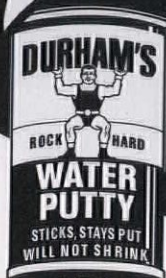
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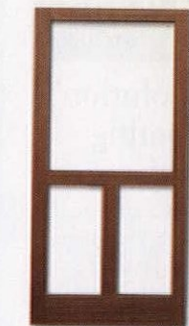
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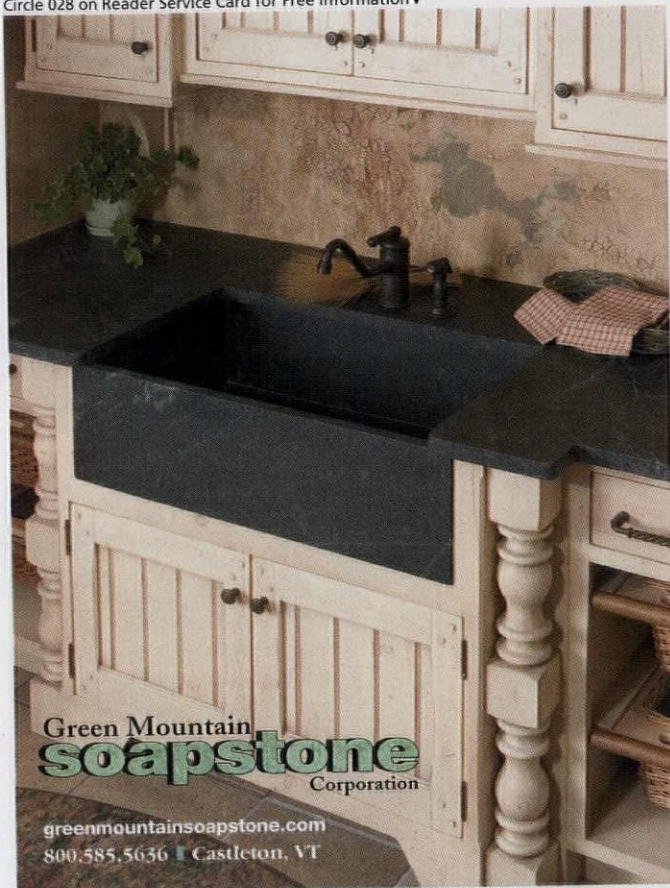
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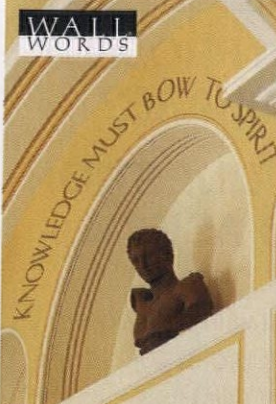
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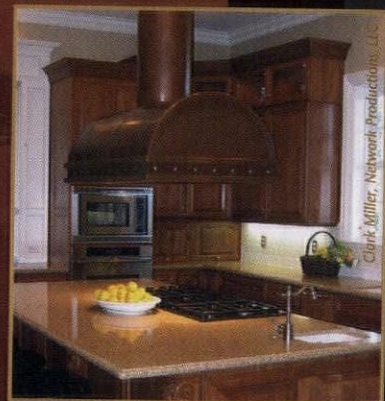
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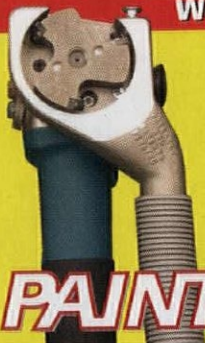
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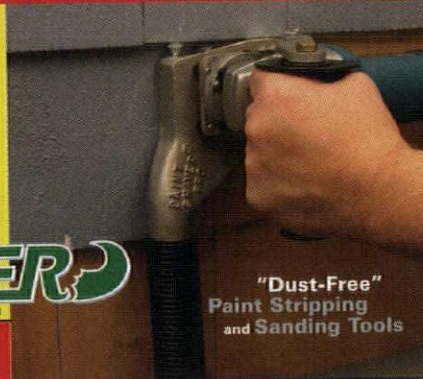


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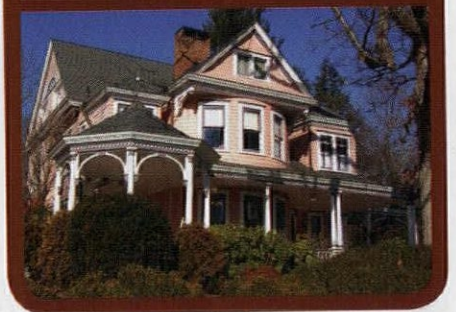
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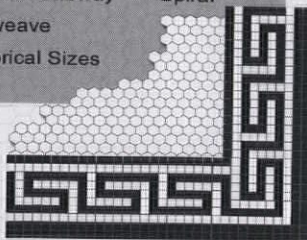
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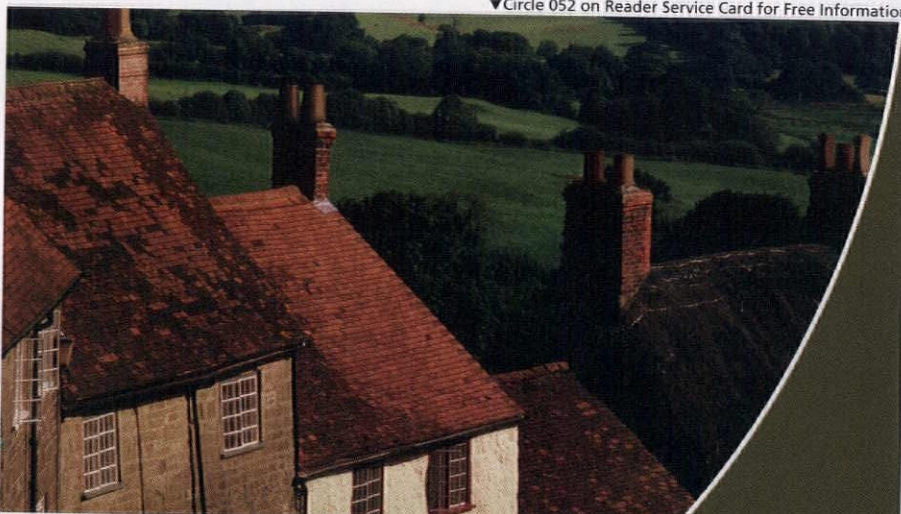
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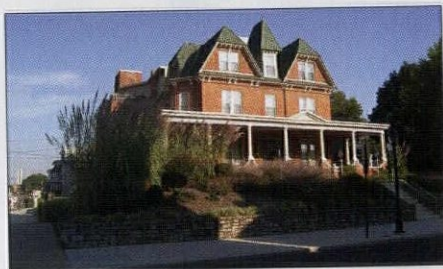
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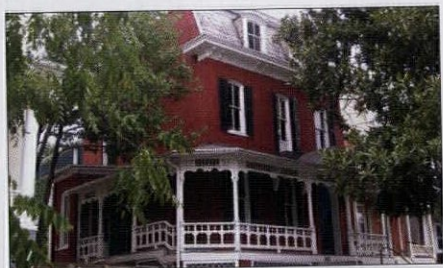
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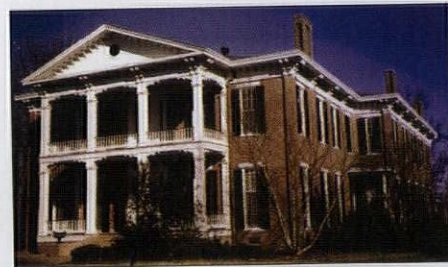
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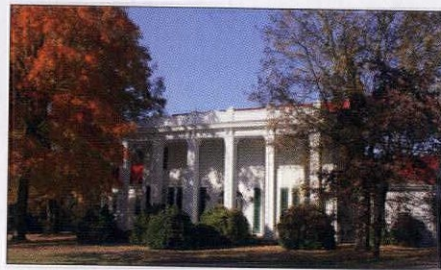
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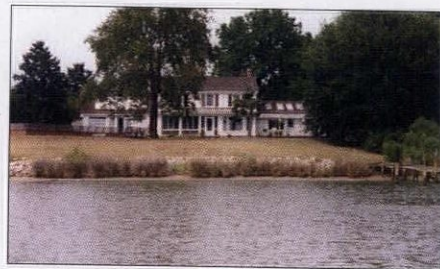
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SOMETIMES, OLD HOUSES CAN RESEMBLE ACTORS attempting to expand their repertoire by taking on meatier parts. Take these two Colonial Revival homes, located in the same neighborhood, as an example. One house (right) remains firmly in character, with its small entry porch propped up by Ionic columns and topped by a delicate balustrade; original six-over-one windows also appear as if on cue. On the other house (left), columns project into a colonnade across an expansive front porch that's now a supporting player to a new upstairs room, while the windows—now one-over-one—have lost their distinctive lines.

"They put a box on top of their front porch!" laments our contributor. It seems that when old houses undergo role changes, their defining features can sometimes get upstaged. 🏠

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