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# OLDHOUSE

## JOURNAL

OCTOBER 2000

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Magazine

### Restoring a Queen Anne The Second Time Around

# KITCHENS

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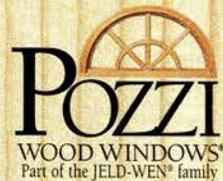


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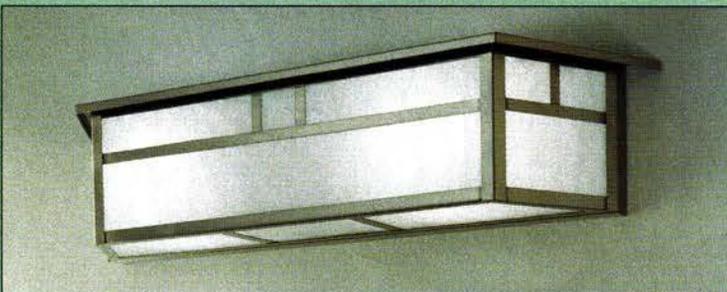
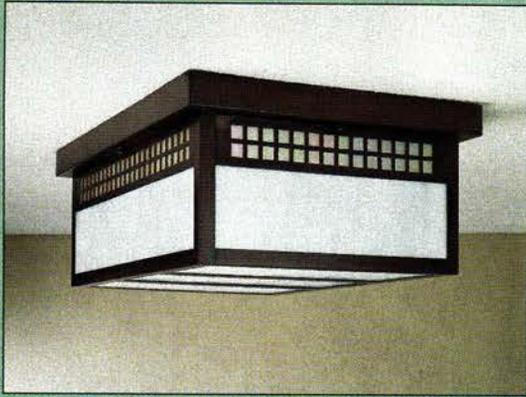
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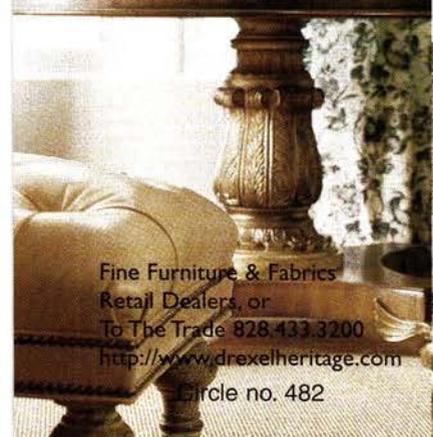
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# C O N T E N T S

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VOL. XXVII, NO. 5  
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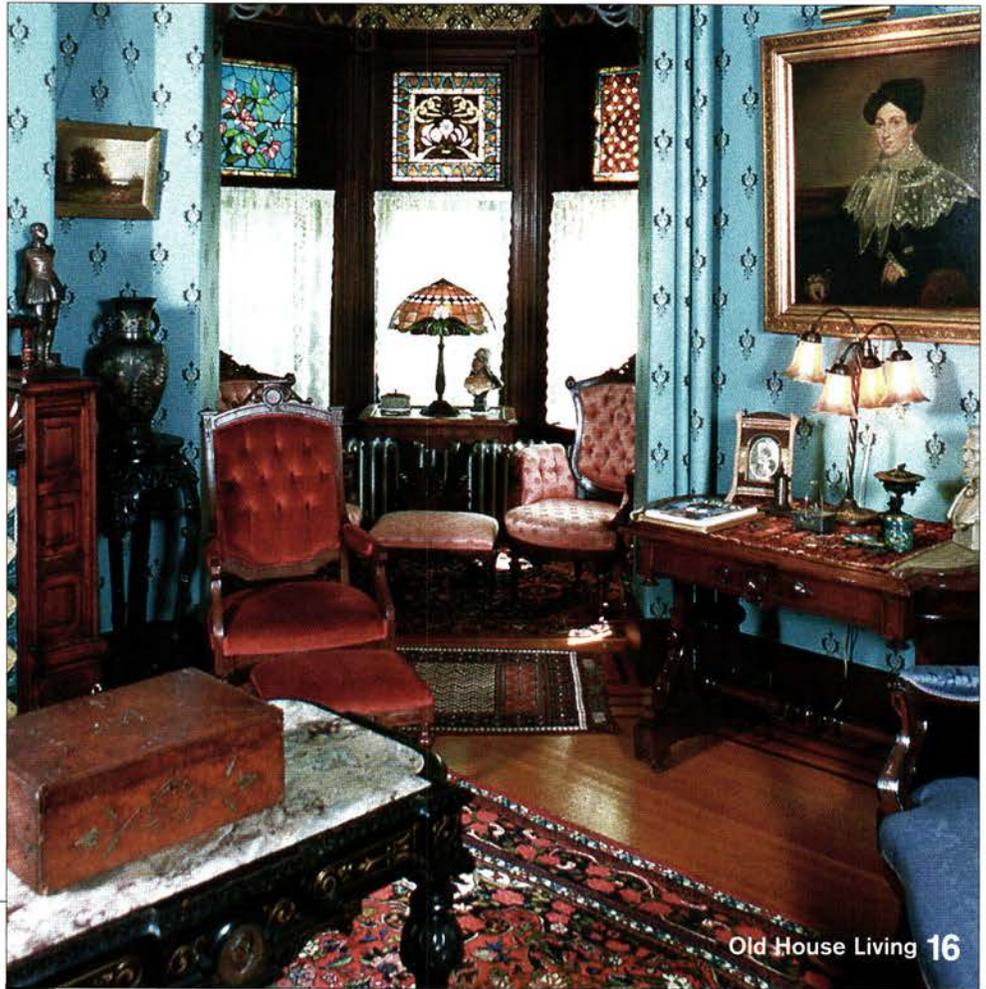
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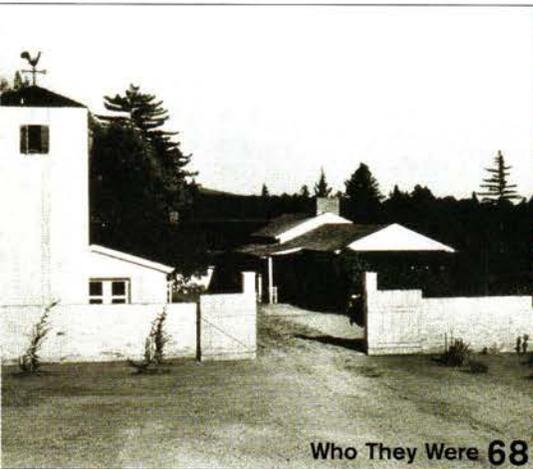
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Who They Were 68

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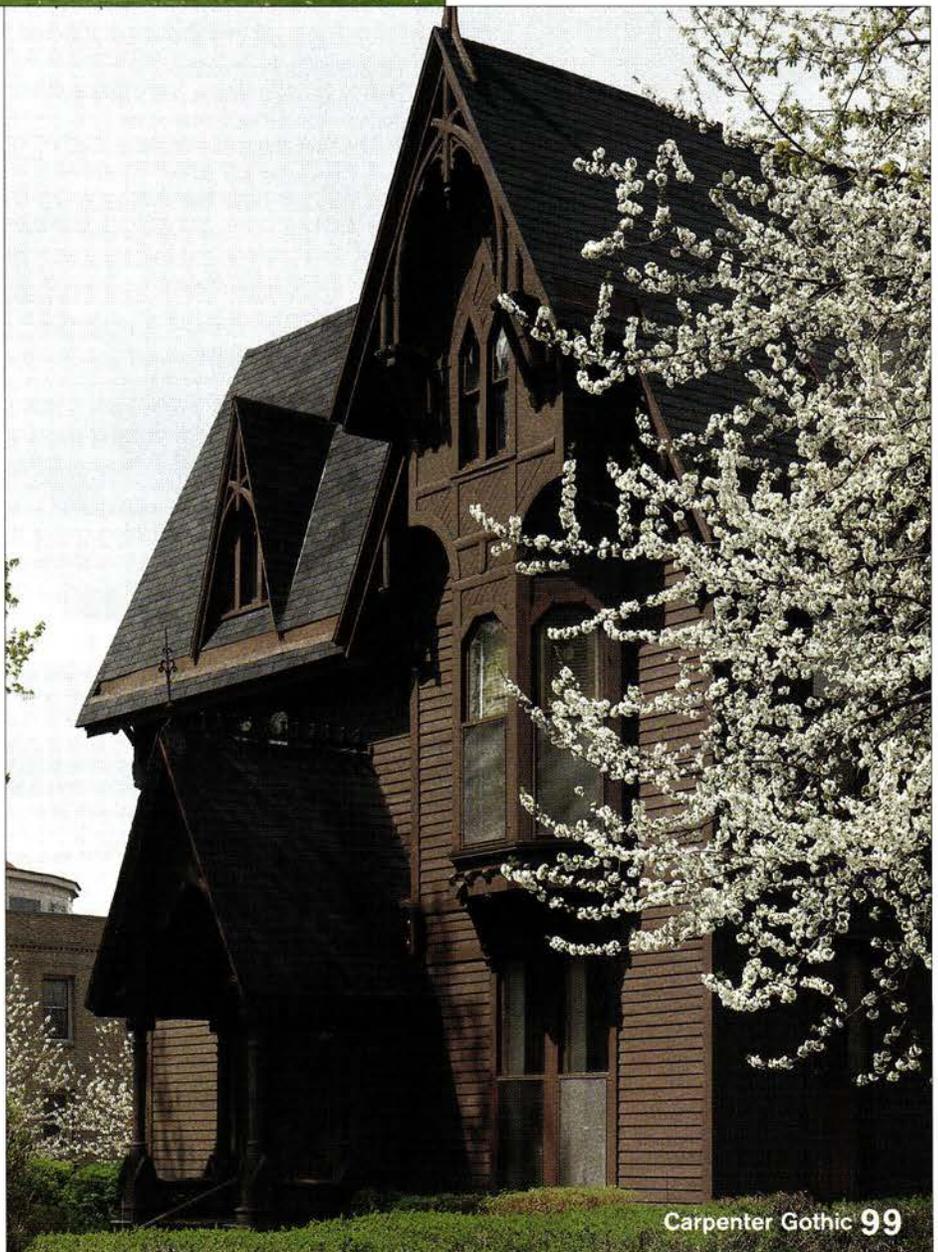
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*Towns of the Prairie School; Oak Park and environs hold some of the best historic houses in the Chicago area.*

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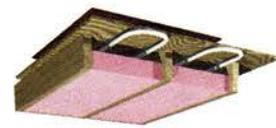
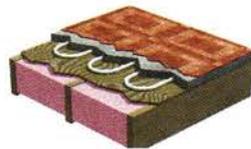
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## Porch Country

**S**PRING MAY BE THE TIME when a young man's mind turns to flights of fancy, but late summer is the season for porches. There's no better place to mix with friends and family, or talk to neighbors and watch the world go by from the commanding station of a wicker-seated rocker.

Porches are the character-defining feature of many historic house styles, and they generally are the mark of an old house. Buildings designed in the Modern mode of the mid-20th century typically eschewed porches of any kind, and it's only recently that they've started to reappear in new residential construction. The revival would seem to be long overdue, because the porch comes in so many shapes and flavors, there isn't at least one incarnation for everybody's taste. A glimpse at some of the various names and origins helps explain why.

*Piazza*—In Italy, a piazza is an open, public space encircled by buildings, but the term is also applied to a long covered arcade supported by columns. When Americans became infatuated with Italian design motifs in the mid-19th century, piazza was applied broadly to a variety of open-air house appendages.

*Portico*—In classical architecture, this is the roofed entrance to a temple. Usually built with a pediment and open on three sides, a portico is always supported by columns. In fact, the number of columns defines the portico's style. In old houses, the term portico is best reserved for a small

entry porch on a classically styled building.

*Porte Cochere*—Perhaps the porch created with most specific purpose in mind, the porte cochere is a carriage porch built over a driveway or path so that guests can travel from carriage to building while still being protected overhead by a roof. Unlikely as it may seem, the porte cochere survived into this century, where it served early automobiles on houses as modest as bungalows.

*Verandah*—This roofed, open gallery or balcony extending along the outside of the house has its origins in the Hindi varanda, a feature designed for outdoor living in hot climates. Exported to England and then to Victorian America, it generally became any similar open gallery that extended across at least two sides of the building.

Not long ago, I caught up with a good neighbor of mine, a friend who lives a short distance up the road. In addition to having the same name, we share an appreciation of pine trees and the pleasures of rural living, and often exchange letters and books.

This visit I meant to pass a note on to Gordon, but didn't have it quite at hand. "No problem," he replied, "the next time you're up, drop it off in the mailbox or leave it on the porch. This is porch country, you know."

# OLDHOUSE JOURNAL

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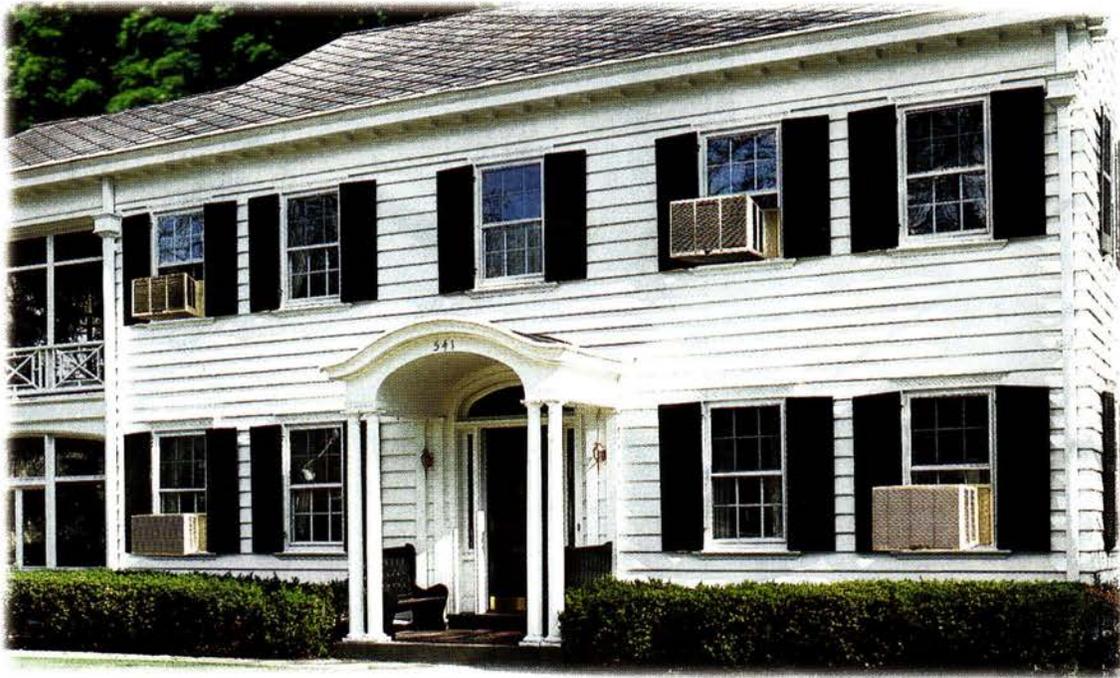
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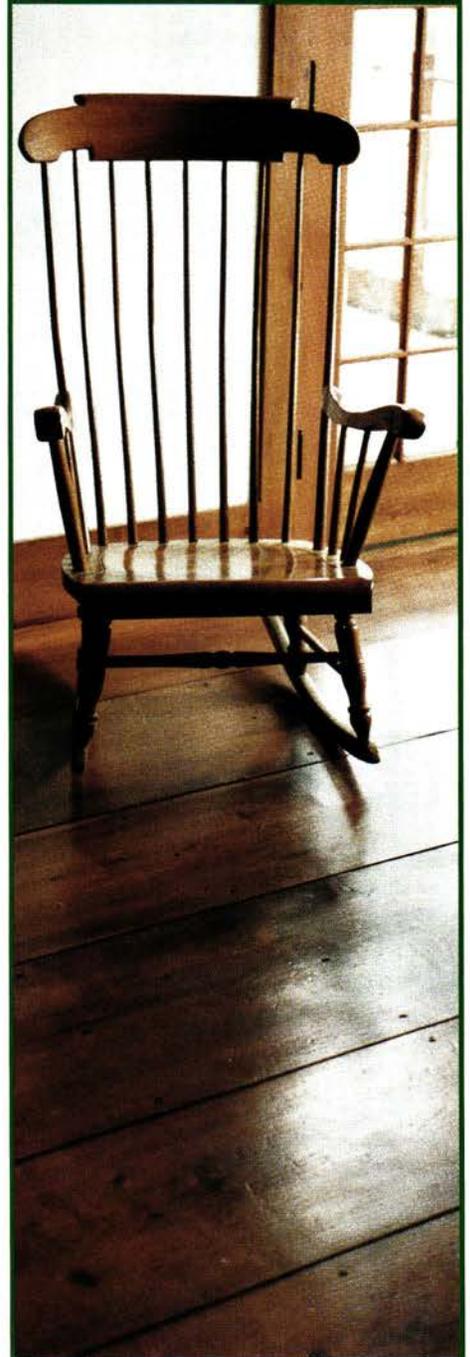


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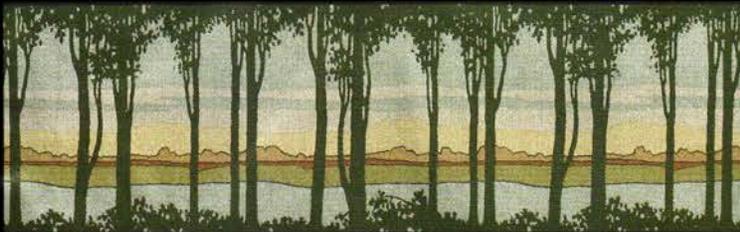
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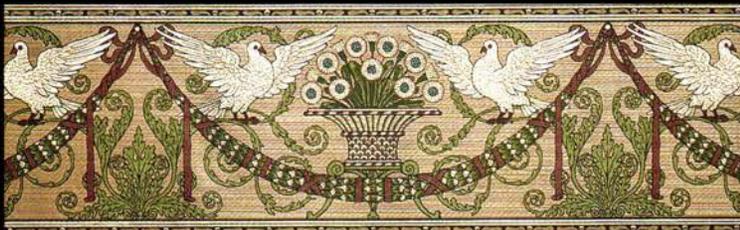
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**BOFFO IN BUFFALO**

UNTIL LAST OCTOBER, your August article about historic buildings in Buffalo would have surprised me. Living near Pittsburg, I was familiar with H.H. Richardson's great works here. I knew his geographically closest structure was the Asylum in Buffalo. On a crisp Saturday morning, my wife and I headed north to visit it, with the hope of seeing Sullivan's and Wright's buildings in the bargain.

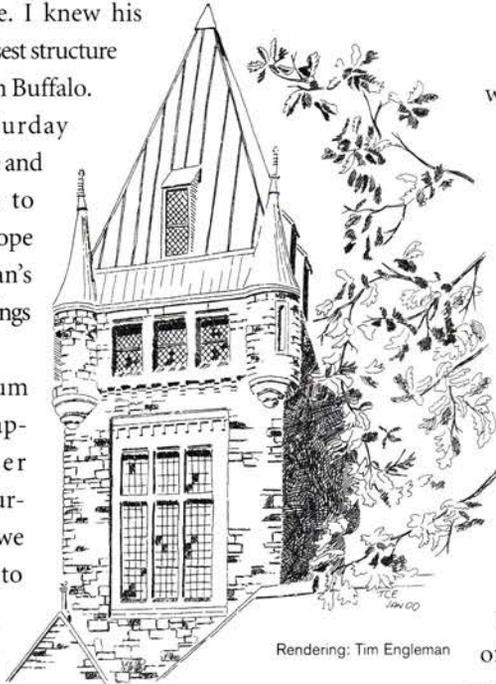
The Asylum did not disappoint—another Richardson tour-de-force. As we pulled up to Wright's Martin House, my attention

was drawn diagonally across the intersection. There was a jewel of a Richardsonian Romanesque church. The Church of the Good Shepherd is skillfully proportioned with a delightful tower, fronted by a hip-roofed entry. What is more, the rectory is connected to, and seamlessly blended with, the church in the Shingle Style. This combination of related architectural styles was inspired. I took a roll of film and later made this pen-and-ink rendering, which I sent to the congregation.

A little investigation revealed the designers as Marling and Burdett. I should not have been surprised to find that Herbert C. Burdett had been an assistant in Richardson's office. As HHR died tragically at age forty-six, Burdett died at thirty-six. Had he lived, surely he would have produced many memorable designs. Having experienced the work of Alden, Longfellow, White, McKim, two Rutans,

Coolidge, Russell, Shepley and now Burdett, it is clear to me that Richardson was not only a master, but a master teacher.

—TIM ENGLEMAN  
Saxonburg, Penn.



Rendering: Tim Engleman

WE WERE BOTH surprised and delighted to read Steve Jordan's article "Off to Buffalo" in this month's issue, and we wanted to thank you for showcasing western New York in such a positive light. We hope that Mr. Jordan's article will serve as yet another vehicle by which our citizens can convey to local officials the importance of preserving the history and architectural integrity of our beautiful city.

Your magazine is a wonderful resource for us personally, as we continue the restoration of our 1925 Foursquare home. Keep up the good work.

—KEVIN AND AMY SWITALSKI  
Buffalo, New York

**AT YOUR DISPOSAL**

ABOUT THE TIME I was thinking of writing to suggest that *Old-House Journal* should include more nitty-gritty articles, the July/August issue arrived at my door - with "The Care of Septic Systems." Barry Chalofsky is right. Folks with sewers never have to worry about the condition of a septic system the way anyone buying or selling a house in the country does. Thanks for some down-to-earth information and sticking to your restoration guns.

—ANN CHAMBERS  
Oakland, Calif.  
*continued on page 16*

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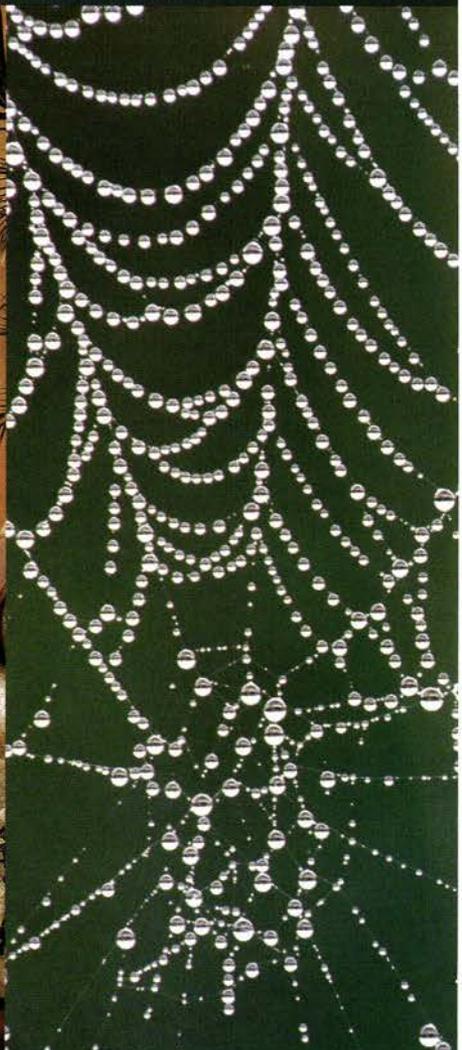
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LETTERS

**POCKET FULL OF MIRACLES**

WHEN THE AUGUST ISSUE of *Old-House Journal* arrived I was immediately drawn to the phrase "Pocket Doors" on the cover. Our 1886 house sports two double and two single pocket doors, but sadly one has been trapped in the wall since we purchased the building seven years ago.

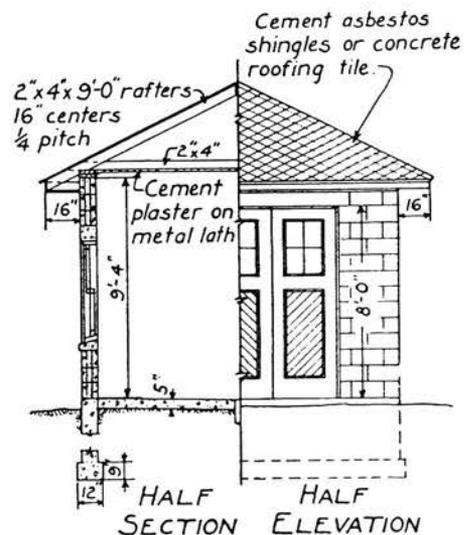
Within minutes I read Mary Ellen Polson's article and determined that my doors are the single roller style. Getting out a gooseneck lamp and a step stool, I began as instructed to "look for the obvious." I was sure that no one had nailed the door in the open position (our house has only had three owners), therefore settling was probably the culprit. With my light in hand, I noticed that the moulding at the top had indeed shifted and appeared to be holding the top of the door back. Using a

small piece of plywood to pound on, I got out the hammer and tapped the moulding back to its original position. Miracles! Out popped the door! Many thanks for helping to solve this old-house problem.

—MECHELLE ZUPPANN  
*Coldwater, Mich.*

**GOOD GARAGE JUDGEMENT**

HERE'S AN ADDENDUM to your accurate response to the reader inquiring about garages appropriate to old homes (ADVISOR July/Aug 2000). Among my books is a collection of pamphlets published in the 1920s by the Portland Cement Association, in an effort to provide information that would encourage more use of their product. As a county agricultural agent back then, my father received this pamphlet and much other such information.



One of the pamphlets is "Concrete for Farm Buildings," showing a layout of freestanding, one-car garages (above). They certainly give the style and dimensions thought appropriate at that time for



this utilitarian back-yard necessity. One might suppose that such work paid well judging from the girth of the mason in the photos! I'm glad to see a return to more of the practical how-to articles that make your journal so much better than others.

—DONALD L. MCKINSEY, SR.  
*Columbia, So. Carolina*

#### TEARS FOR TEARDOWNS

AFTER READING the Journal feature on "teardowns," I felt compelled to send you a few words I recently noted about a similar situation in my community.

For the first time in a long while I had the chance to visit some of my community's residential backwaters, areas decent and quiet whose better days had come and gone. The hustle and bustle of busy families raising children is now

replaced by retirees or transient tenants, with no ability or commitment to maintaining the integrity of these modest houses. As I drove down the street, my eyes met a view of vacant lots, like so many missing teeth. Instead of historic cottages there were pastel monoliths with no architectural past, present, or future relevance. The few remaining originals reminded me of a senior community where the residents face a new empty bed as another soul passes away.

If we are looking for reasons behind the moral changes between the America of yesterday and today, I think one need look no farther than the types of homes in which we raise our children. Growing up in impersonal boxes, each one synonymous with any other in any given nondescript community, it is no

wonder we are rootless and estranged from reasonable social interaction.

—SYLVIA DOHNAL  
*Arcadia, Calif*

#### TUDOR TIPOFF

REGARDING YOUR SYNOPSIS of American Tudor (Style Gatefold, July/August 00), permit me to point out that Elizabeth I was the last Tudor to rule England. James I, who succeeded Elizabeth, was a Stuart (from Scotland). Never again would England be ruled by a Tudor or a Plantagenet.

—RICHARD P. REECE, AVID READER  
*Berlin Heights, Ohio*

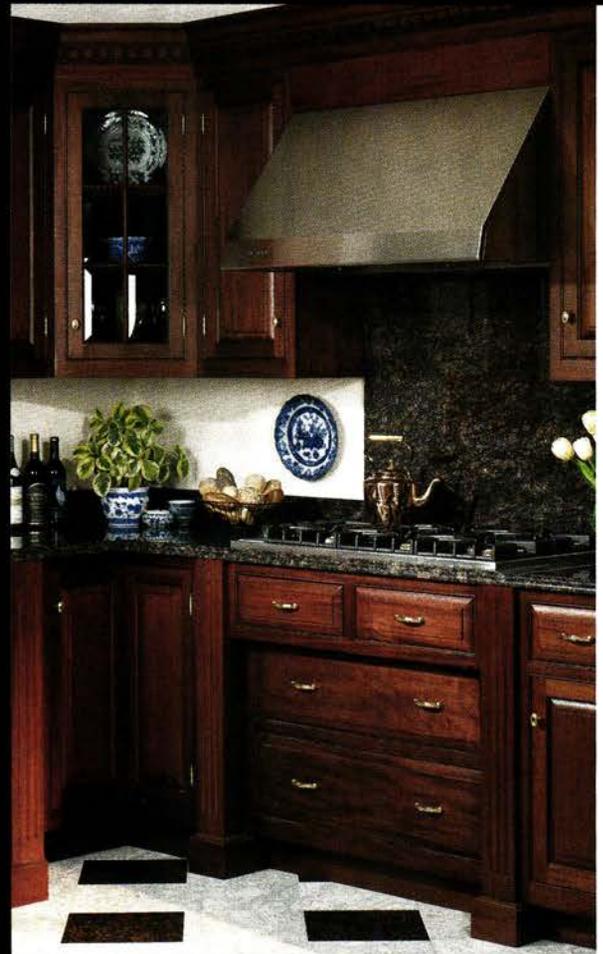
**CORRECTION:** The RotoZip Revolution saw pictured in the July/August 2000 Old-House Products (page 92) was misidentified. The manufacturer's suggested price for the tool is \$139. The number to call for more information is 877-ROTOZIP.

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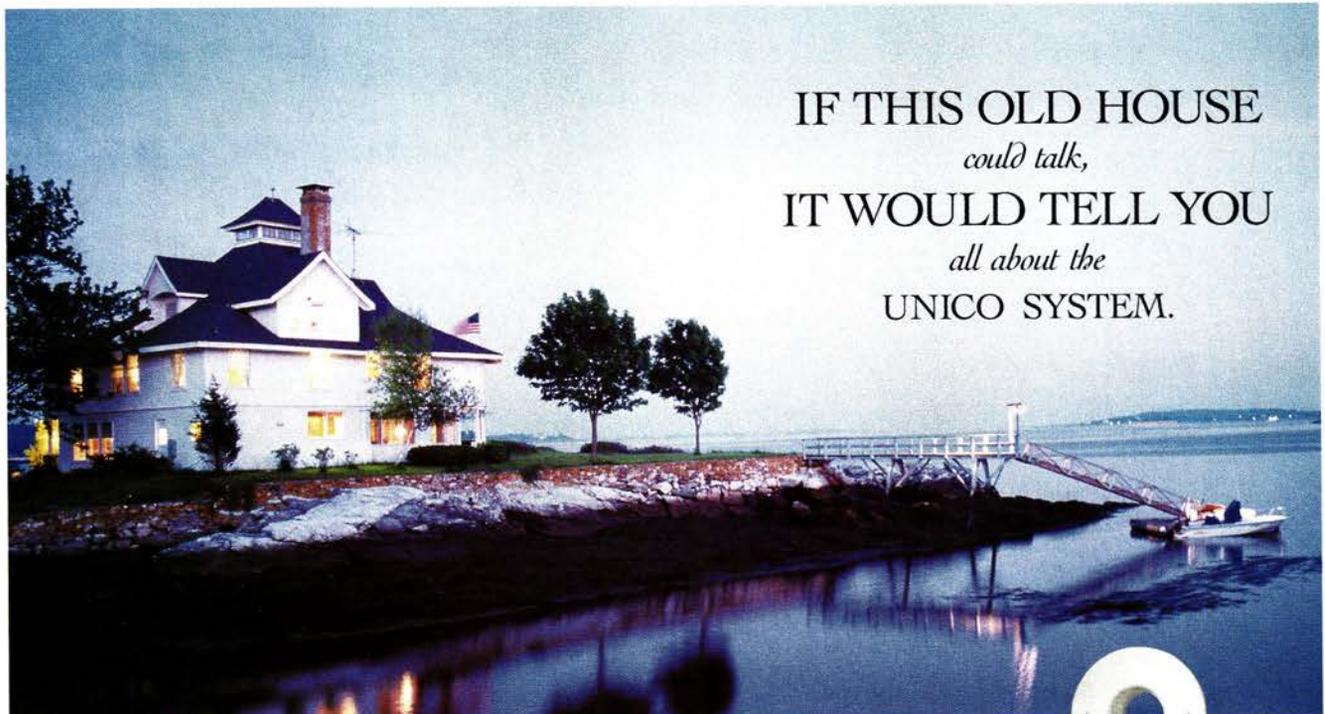
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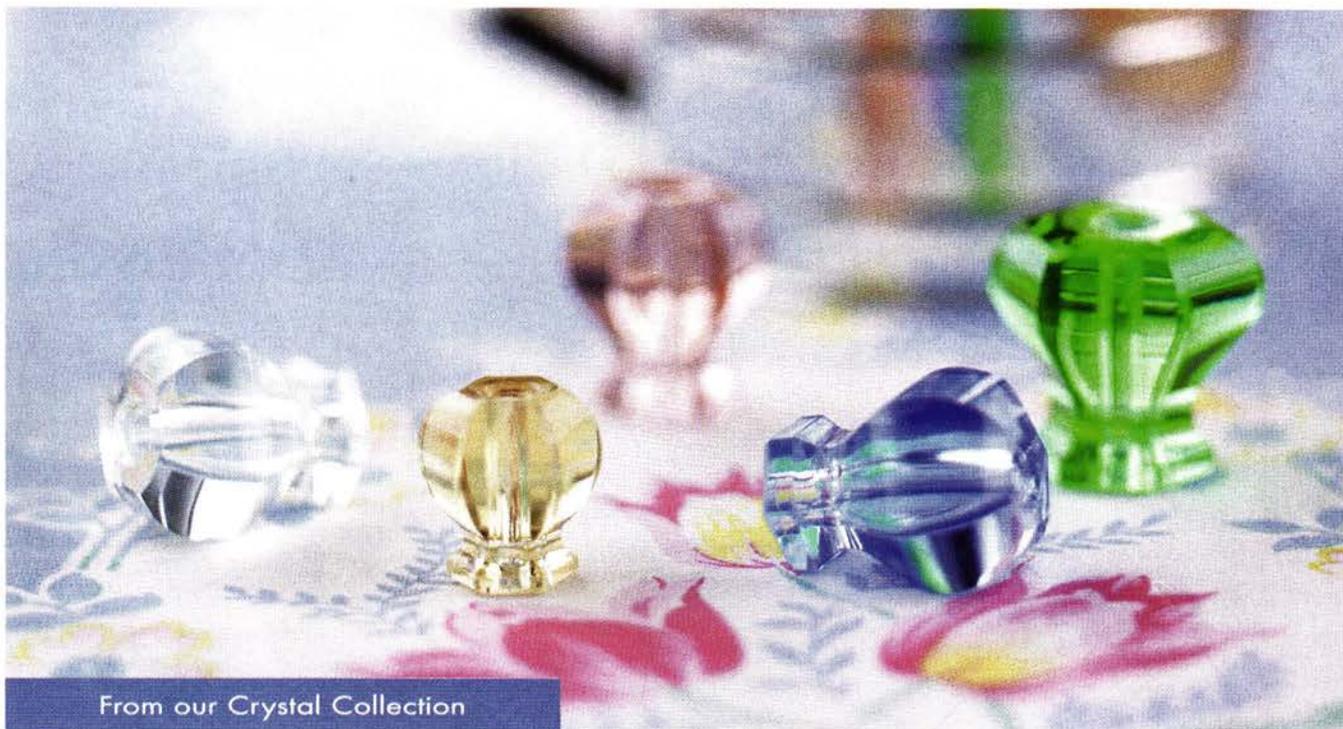
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## Second Time Around *by Mary Ellen Polson*

If you live in an old house long enough, the first restoration is history, and a second restoration becomes inevitable. "We hadn't painted the outside since 1977," says Merry Boone, "so it was long overdue."

Merry and husband Jim moved into their magnificent Queen Anne in the McKnight Historic District of Springfield, Massachusetts in 1976.

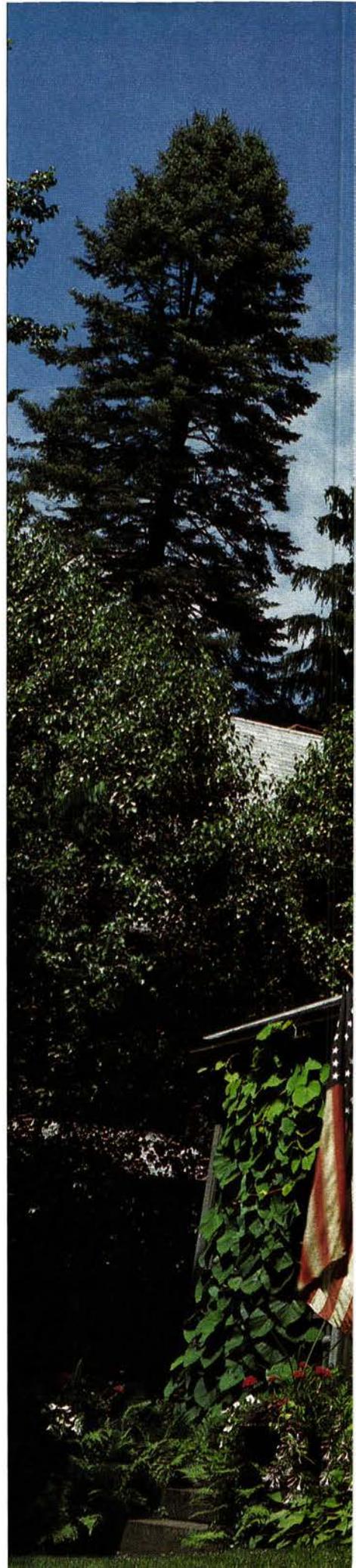
This restoration will be different from the one chronicled in *Old-House Journal* in 1982. In the mid-1970s, the Boones were childless 30-year-olds who didn't mind cooking on a hot plate, or schlepping over to a neighbor's house to take a shower. Jim thought nothing of scrambling over the steep slate roof with handmade storm windows under his free arm, and Merry changed her babies' diapers on the Hoosier's porcelain countertop.

Like most of us these days, the Boones have slightly more disposable income than time for restoration



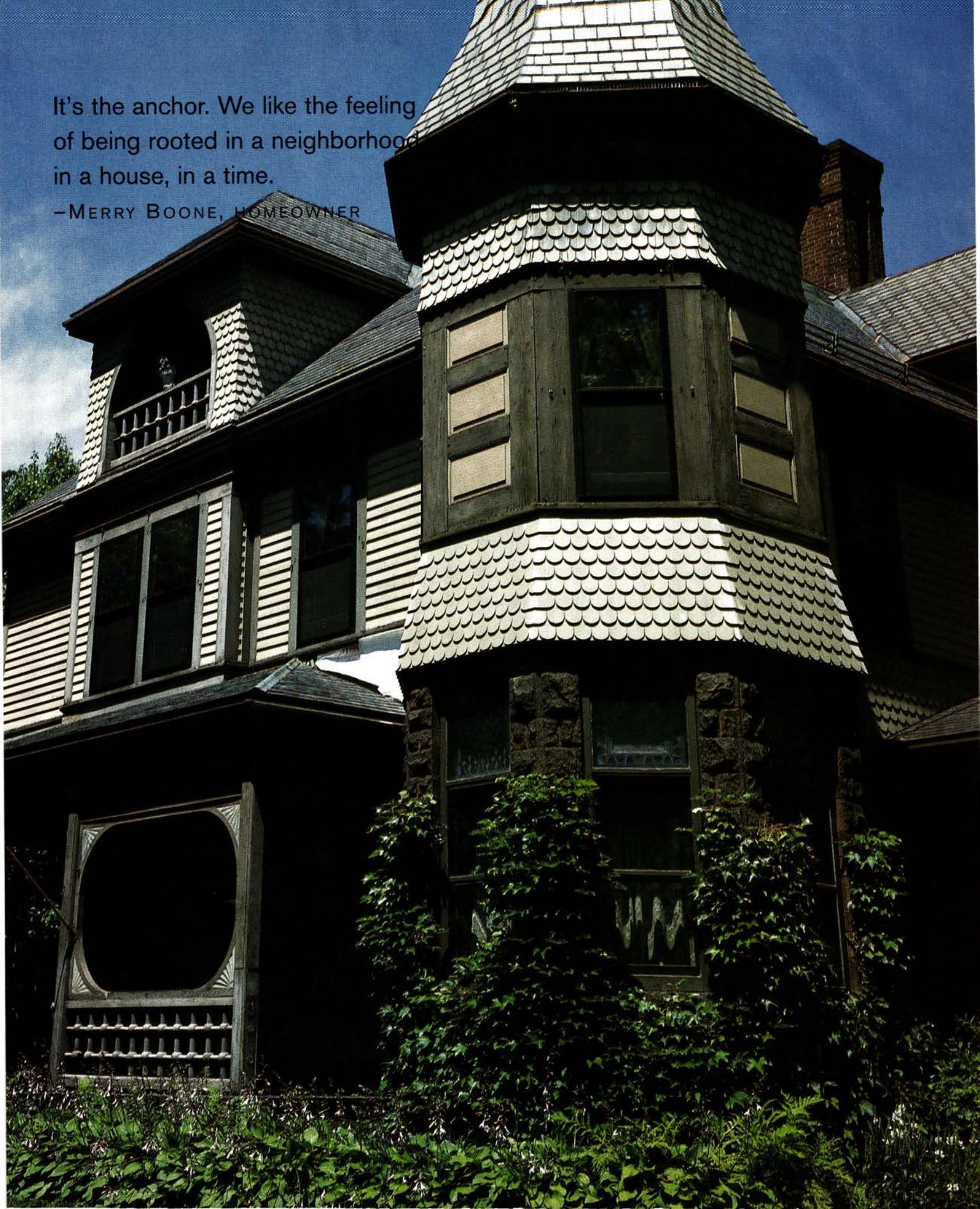
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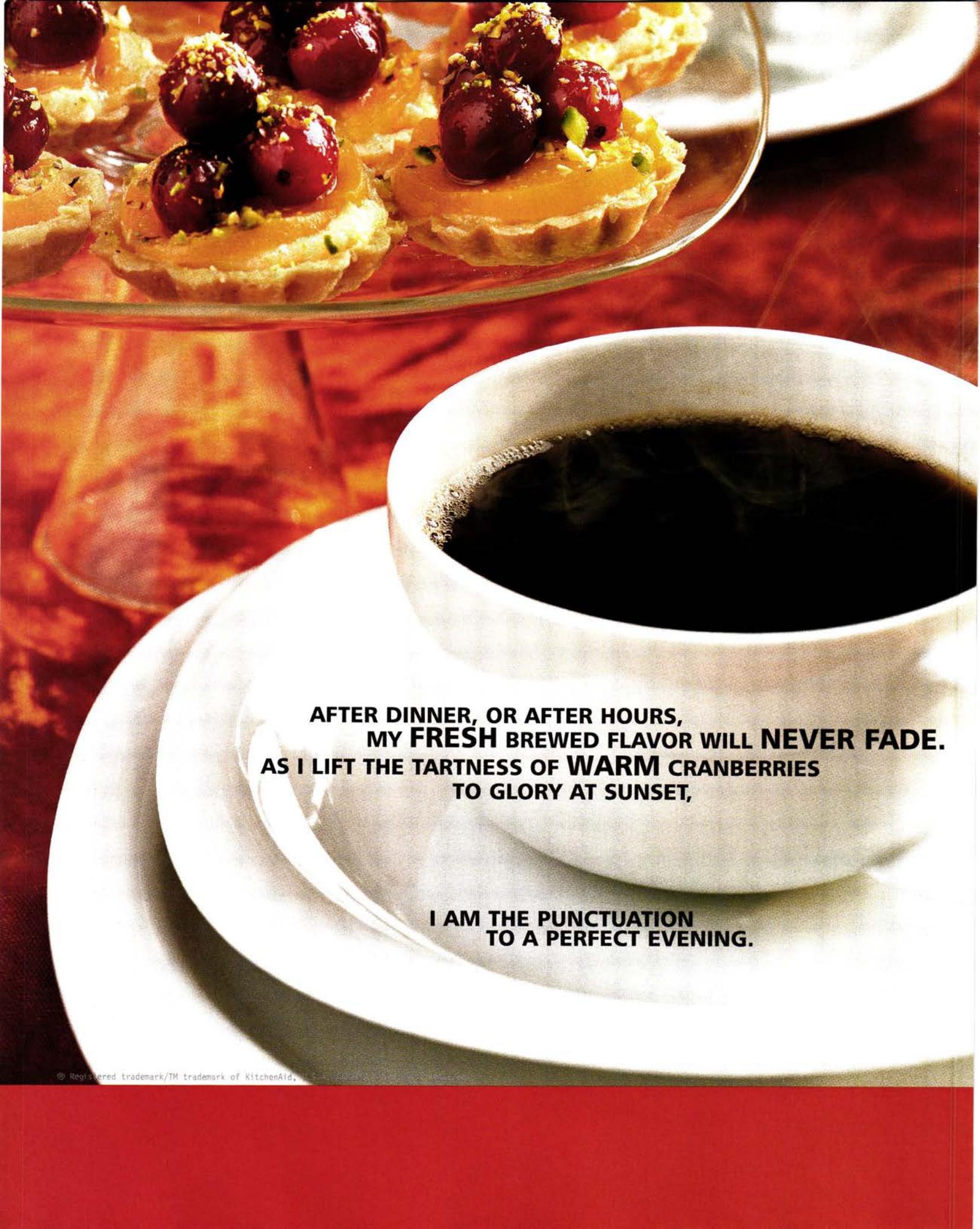
Jim and Merry Boone have no intention of leaving the Queen Anne they and sons Wilson and Gage call home after nearly a quarter century.



It's the anchor. We like the feeling  
of being rooted in a neighborhood  
in a house, in a time.

—MERRY BOONE, HOMEOWNER



A close-up photograph of a white ceramic coffee cup filled with dark coffee, sitting on a matching white saucer. In the background, a glass pedestal plate holds several small, round tarts with a golden-brown crust, topped with a yellow spread and fresh cranberries. The scene is set on a dark red, textured surface, possibly a tablecloth. The lighting is warm and focused on the coffee cup.

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The kitchen is so authentic that a visitor once asked Merry where she really did the cooking. The family uses the 70-year-old stove and refrigerator every day. Far right: The living room, papered with Bradbury & Bradbury wallpapers, is furnished with family heirlooms. Near right: The entry foyer, with its intact newel post and potted ferns, is a real-photo postcard for Victorian living.



## ANGLO-JAPANESE QUEEN ANNE

**OWNERS:** Jim and Merry Boone

**LOCATION:** Springfield, Massachusetts

**DATE OF HOUSE:** 1887

**KIDS:** Wilson, 14, Gage, 16

**ON-GOING PROJECTS:**

Reconstructing the built-in gutter system, which "should have been done 25 years ago," according to Jim, but nevertheless survived for a quarter century.

**OF INTEREST:** When the granddaughter of one of the first owners came for a visit, she met her namesake, Evelyn, the family cat. (The Boones have a tradition of naming pets after previous owners of the house.)

work. The couple and their two teenage sons are just as likely to be on vacation as on-site when the paperhangers or wood-working contractor arrives. "We push the furniture into the center of the room, or move it out," says Merry, a first-grade school teacher. "And then leave town."

While several rooms are due for ceiling repairs and fresh wallpaper ("After 15 or 20 years, the paper just gets tired," Merry says), the Boones are midway through a long-term plan to rebuild the gutter system encircling the house from the soffit out. "Our contractor can't give us all his time," says Jim, a guidance counselor. "So we've spread the work out over a three-year period."

While some sections were redone in the 1970s along with skirting and decorative work, most of the gutters remained in place. "They were dirty, rotting, and grow-

ing things," Jim says, "but we got 25 years out of them."

In addition to the structural work, the job will entail removing all of the clapboard and fishscale shingle banding and duplicating the pieces exactly. When the work is finished, Jim says, the house "will look like it would have originally."

That's an important distinction, because the original exterior restoration was far from ideal. "The restoration movement was barely in existence in the 1970s, and there weren't many people around who knew the skills," Jim says. "Now there are so many more people who are doing quality restoration work."

Although the Boone's home is furnished with Victorian antiques and family heirlooms, there have been a few concessions—mostly for the boys, whose bedroom walls sport posters of Dr. Evil and

# C l a s s i c C r a f t s m a n



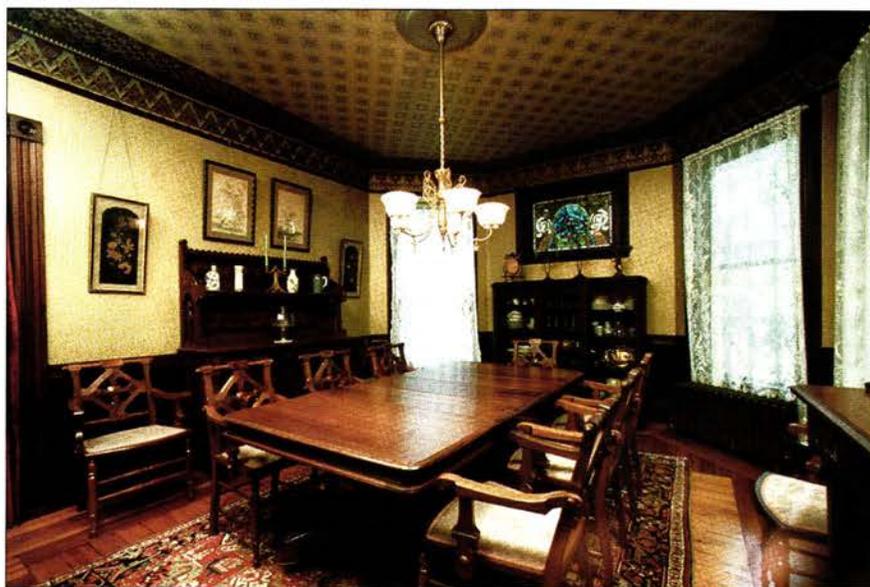
Our round dining table, pictured here with the V-back arm and side chairs, is a true replication of the Gustav Stickley # 634. This table can be extended to 10' with the addition of up to 5 leaves.

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Above: Like any Victorian house worthy of the name, the Boone's Queen Anne has a formal dining room replete with papered ceiling. Right: The guest bedroom, furnished with a simple iron bed.



Korn between the converted gaslight sconces. Otherwise, the Boones live in their home much as the Victorians would have, reserving the downstairs parlors for more formal entertainments, and adapting the upstairs sitting room as a family room.

The kitchen is as close to authentic as you're likely to see in a Victorian house. In the '70s, it was easy to pick up now-rare appliances and fixtures. Once the plumber got over the initial shock of installing a tank top toilet rather than tearing it out, "he started to leave fixtures on our back porch," Merry says.

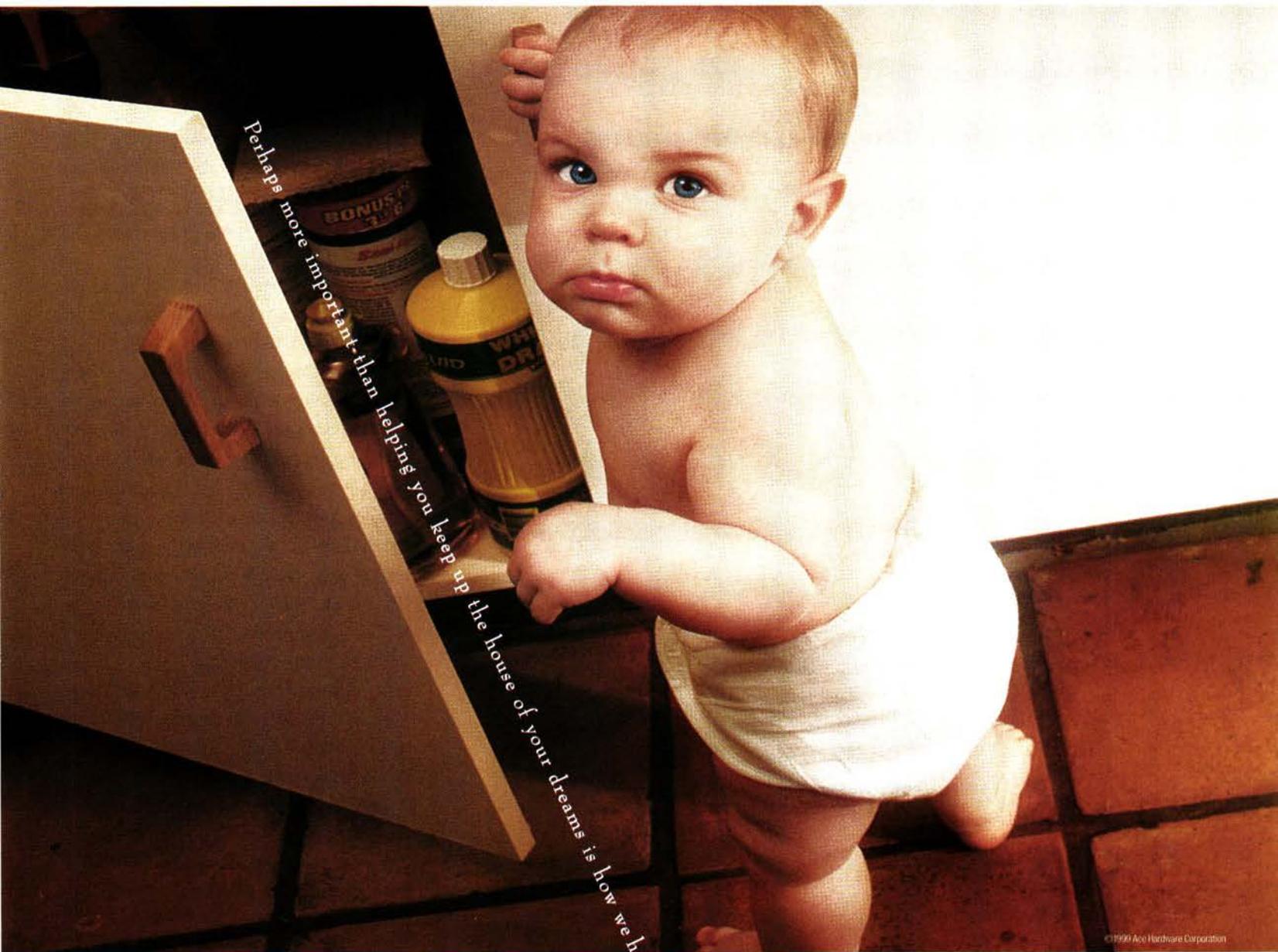
The Boones still use the 1927 Monitor Top refrigerator and 1926 Clark Jewel every day. Although the oven has no thermostat to regulate the temperature, "I have known for years what 350 degrees looks like just by looking at the flame," Merry says.

While the early owners of the house would have had servants, the Boones do their own cooking—in marked contrast to Victorian times. When Mary Evelyn Bosworth Smith, a member of the family who had owned the house for 50 years, came for a visit, the Boones were surprised to learn that she'd never set foot in the kitchen. "She always stayed in the parlor whenever she came to the house as a child," Jim says. "For all we know her grandmother never went into the kitchen either."

Even today, some folks have a hard time grasping the idea that an authentic kitchen can also be a working kitchen. On house tour about a decade ago, one woman was fascinated by the slate sink, lack of kitchen cabinets, and antique appliances. "Then she perked right up and asked me, where's your other kitchen?" Merry says. "She was really blown away when she found out we didn't

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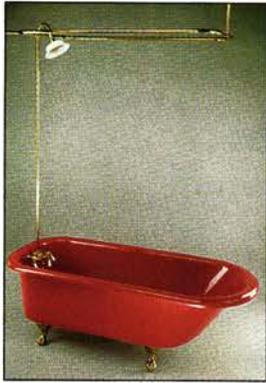
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Suburbia in the 19th century ran on horsepower, and the Boones have a carriage house too, which they recently finished restoring for the second time.

have one. To her, this was an intriguing house museum kitchen. It was hard for her to fathom that we used it every day."

The Boones were among the first old-house pioneers in McKnight, the largest intact wood-frame Victorian neighborhood in New England. The world has changed radically since the '70s, but if anything, the Boones have become acutely attuned to the rhythms of the house in the larger context of a neighborhood and community. "It's the anchor," Merry says. "We like the feeling of being rooted in a neighborhood, in a house, in a time."

Once their own restoration was complete in the mid-1980s, the Boones began to buy houses nearby and restore them. The first was on a prominent corner, and it drew enough interest to encourage others to buy and restore houses in the neighborhood. Now turnouts at neighborhood parties sometimes reach 200 people. These gatherings—often held at the Boones' capacious house—tend to be inclusive, friendly affairs. "If there's a new face in the crowd," Jim says, "everyone knows that it's a neighbor they've yet to meet."

At one recent party, the Boones, who are in their mid-50s, found themselves chatting with newcomers who were in their mid-30s. "They were talking about how lucky they were to have found this place," Merry says. "Everybody feels connected." 🐾

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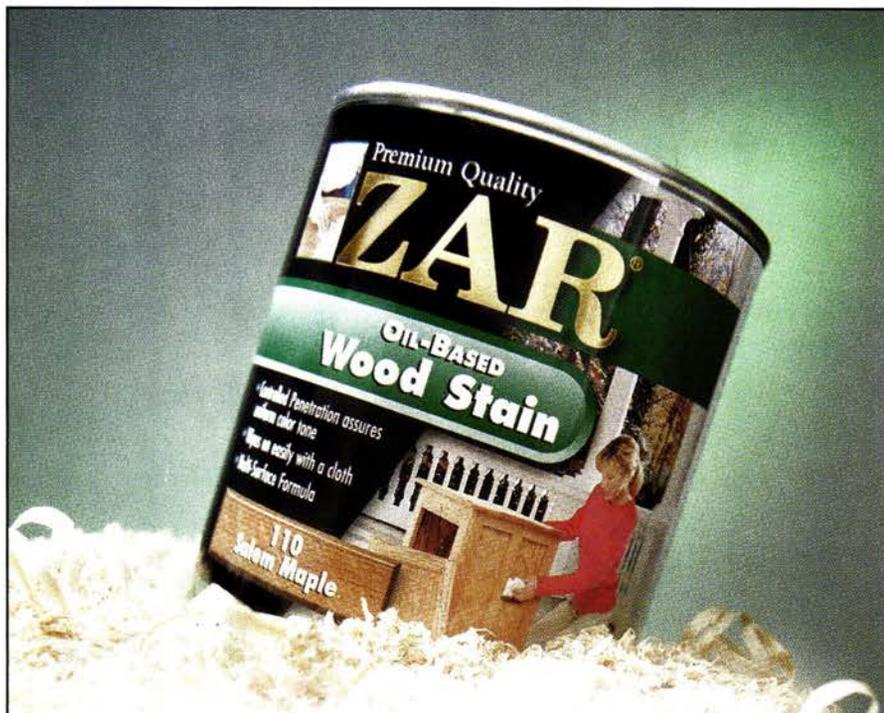
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# JOURNAL

OLDHOUSE

## Tooling Down the Information Superhighway

Old houses and antique hand tools go together. While there's nothing more hands-on for traditional carpentry than the feel of an 80-year-old smoothing plane, these days there are other ways to fill out your tool collection than taking a Sunday drive in antique country.

If you're a hand-tool freak who can't pass a salvage dealer without stopping in for a rummage around the tool bin, you should find the vast resources for old, rare, and hard-to-find tools on the Internet irresistible. The best deals aren't on amazon.com or ebay. Here's a sampling to get you started.

■ The Museum of Woodworking Tools, [www.antiqutools.com](http://www.antiqutools.com), offers online exhibits (one recent show

is "Tools of Vietnam") and permanent collections (19th- and 20th-century English shoulder) curated by antique tool experts.

Even though you can't handle these tools, you can see them close up: just click on the item to get a larger, sharper image. The inevitable store sells fine reproductions of classic woodworking tools,

*continued on page 40*

### Linoleum is Back!

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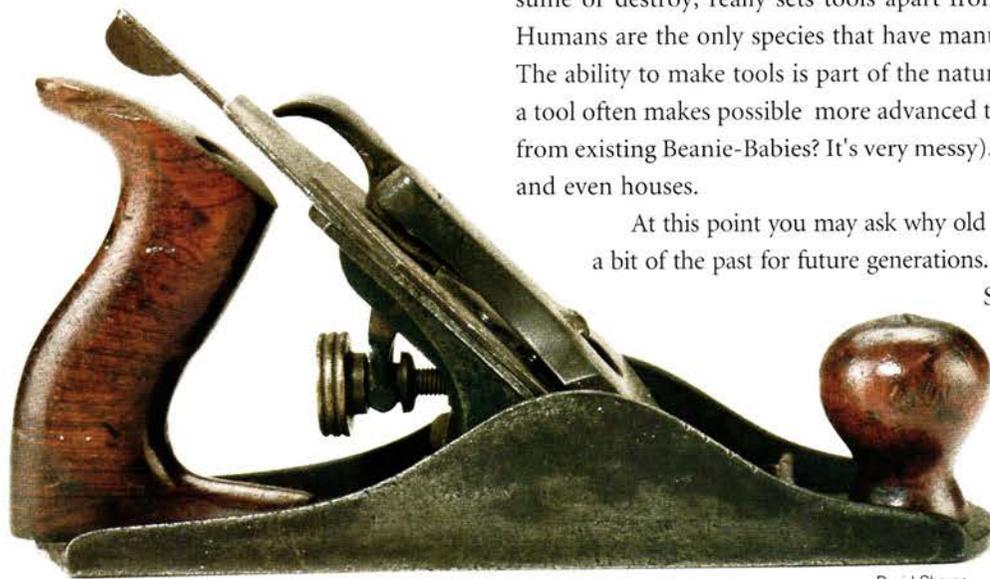
## B&B Focus THE DOCTOR'S INN B&B, KENTON, OHIO

Built in 1899, the Doctor's Inn B&B is a house with history. Owners Bill and Annetta Ward hadn't planned to fall in love with the towered Queen Anne, but the search for a furniture auction led the couple find the property, then for sale. "We took one look at it and said to one another, 'we'll buy it,' recalls Bill Ward. Named after the original builders and owners, Doctor Jesse Snodgrass and family, the house was still structurally sound in 1985, when the Wards came upon it. After minor repairs and remodeling—made much easier with the help of original blueprints and materials found within the building—the Doctor's Inn B&B was ready and open for business.



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**Among the most famous collectible hand tools are the planes of Cesar Chelor, a freed black man working in Wrentham, Massachusetts who died in 1784. A Chelor plane commanded as much as \$2,600 at auction in the 1980s.**



David Sharpe

spare parts for Stanley planes, books, and shop accessories.

- The Superior Works, [www.supertool.com](http://www.supertool.com). Founded by self-described former “software dork” and tool fanatic Patrick Leach, this is the place for information about Stanley planes. Old and new tools for sale, with instant gratification in the form of images only on new tools. Leach will e-mail you info on the oldies until you cry uncle (his choice of words).

- Bob Kaune Antique and Used Tools for Collectors and Woodworkers, [www.antique-used-tools.com](http://www.antique-used-tools.com). Based out of Washington State, Bob Kaune has been in the antique tool business since 1982. The site offers an extensive inventory of

used and antique tools for sale, as well as antique parts for those who want to restore a treasured heirloom. Useful nov-



David Sharpe

## Why Collect Tools?

ONE OF THE THINGS that make the world a fascinating place is that people differ in their interests and hobbies. What intensely absorbs one person may seem boring or ridiculous to the next. For example, I have never understood why people collect Beanie-Babies, but my daughters love them. They don't understand my desire to collect tools either, but I'm glad for the diversity. If everyone collected the same things, it would be a lot harder to complete a collection!

So, why collect tools? What's the attraction? I'm sure the answer differs depending upon who you talk to, but tools appeal to me on several levels. Foremost, they are useful; you can build things with them. The ability to create, rather than simply consume or destroy, really sets tools apart from many other collectibles in my opinion. Humans are the only species that have manufactured tools to solve specific problems. The ability to make tools is part of the nature of being human. In fact, the creation of a tool often makes possible more advanced tools. (Ever try creating a new Beanie-Baby from existing Beanie-Babies? It's very messy). Tools are necessary to give us paper, glass, and even houses.

At this point you may ask why old tools? Some collectors may wish to preserve a bit of the past for future generations. Some may collect as a financial investment.

Some collect tools to use them, to create things with them. Others perceive tools as works of art, or as fascinating mechanical design specimens. Whatever the reason, collecting old tools offers a goal that requires patience and time to achieve, and I think the lessons learned from doing so are invaluable. —STEVE JOHNSON

elties include a page of Stanley trademarks from the 1870s to the present, and "Seldom Seen," a showcase for rare tools. A recent item: a Stanley Steel-Case Rabbet Plane (No. 80) dating to 1875.

■ Union Hill Antique Tools, [www.tooltimer.com](http://www.tooltimer.com) and [www.turners.org](http://www.turners.org). Steve Johnson, who has equal passion for antique tools and the Internet, offers two sites: [tooltimer.com](http://tooltimer.com) specializes in planes, lathes, and rulers, and [turners.org](http://turners.org) focuses on ornamental woodturning tools.

■ Martin J. Donnelly Antique Tools, [www.mjdtools.com](http://www.mjdtools.com). Large inventory of high quality collectible tools is updated twice a week. The site has a built-in search engine that quickly returns results. The bookshop has an unusually large number of titles.

■ Vintage Saws, [www.vintagesaws.com](http://www.vintagesaws.com). Peter Taran's inventory includes a wide range of 19th- and 20th-century saws made by premiere manufacturer Henry Disston and Sons, as well as legendary names like Simonds, Atkins, Richardson, Peace, and Bishop. Extra features include a saw-filing primer and a page of collectible saws (a recent item: an 1840 26" saw by Henry Disston and Sons (No. 76).

■ Neanderthal Haven, [www.wvforum.com/htools](http://www.wvforum.com/htools). Part of the Badger Pond Woodworking site, this chat room for hand-tool junkies has a search function so that you can quickly locate discussions and individuals with knowledge—or at least an opinion—on the merits of various hand tools.

■ Jon Zimmer's Antique Tools, [www.teleport.com/~jonz](http://www.teleport.com/~jonz). Based in Portland, Oregon, Zimmer's is one of the earliest web sites for antique tools. The site offers a large inventory of late-19th century tools, from augers to spokeshaves.

■ The Electronic Neanderthal, [www.cs.cmu.edu/~alf/en/en.html](http://www.cs.cmu.edu/~alf/en/en.html). A great resource to get you to other links, especially antique tool dealers (large and small), tool collector groups, events, and tool lore.

## Bark Up? Bark Down?

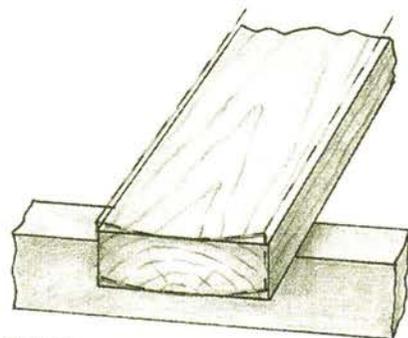
It's a beautiful weekend, perfect for your porch step repair project. You've carefully selected good lumber, the right nails, quality primer and paint. Then the hum of your saw and tapping of your hammer beckons your neighbor over to review your work and the first thing he says is, "You're installing those step treads wrong side up." Is he right? Does it matter? Should your care?

It all depends on who you ask. The bark up, bark down question has been debated by carpenters for years. Ideally, we'd always use quarter-sawn lumber with vertical grain for its stability, moisture resistance, and good paint retention. The trouble is, these days vertical-grained lumber is either very expensive or, sad to say, impossible to find at any price. The common alternative is plain-sawn lumber where the boards are sawn tangentially to the tree trunk to produce the largest quantity of lumber from a single log. Unfortunately, lumber cut this way is more likely to shrink, cup, and warp. The upshot is, deciding how to correctly install plain-sawn lumber—that is, where to lay what was originally the bark side of the log—can be as important as your choice of materials.

The arguments for each possible installation go something like this. (1) Bark side up to prevent the wood from cupping and the grain from raising (see drawings at right) (2) Bark side down to prevent cupping; or bark side down to avoid splitting edges. (3) An alternating pattern of boards installed bark up, then bark down. And the winner is . . .

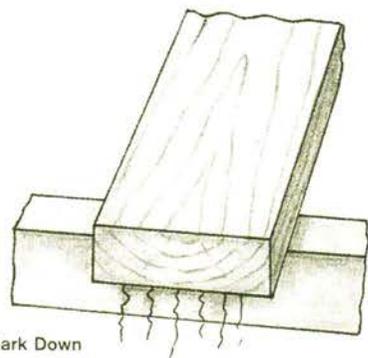
Actually, there is no one method that's always best. However, most carpenters we've talked to prefer to install plain-sawn planks bark side down. Since moisture invariably collects under your porch, deck, or steps, the heat of the sun tends to pull this moisture up through the backside of the boards. If boards are installed bark down, their tendency to cup towards the bark side is mitigated by the effects of the sun and moisture, thereby producing a smoother surface than if installed bark up.

Of course, a good job requires good carpentry practices too. Always use enough of the appropriate nails adequately spaced to secure the boards to the framing. Plus, when possible, prime, paint, or seal all sides of the lumber to prevent the wood from absorbing excessive moisture on its hidden side. — STEVE JORDAN



**Bark up**

Since a plain-sawn board will shrink and deform opposite to the curve of the annual growth rings (dotted lines), installing it bark up tends to produce a cupped surface.



**Bark Down**

The same plain-sawn board installed bark down will still want to deform, but moisture from below (wavy lines) will also swell wood fibers on this side, counteracting any cupping.

Illustrations by Kathy Bray

## Experiencing the Arts & Crafts

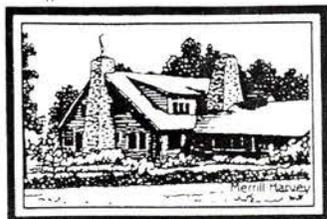
**S**urround yourself with the aesthetics and lifestyle of the Arts & Crafts this fall at one of the shrines of the movement, The Stickley Museum at Craftsman Farms in central New Jersey. On September 23 and 24, "Living the Arts & Crafts Lifestyle" returns to the National Landmark home of Gustav Stickley for a celebration of a man's mission and a people's work.

At the turn of the 20th century, Gustav Stickley devoted his career to developing houses and home furnishings that are pleasant, durable, and conducive to the kind life he believed Americans wanted. He encouraged people to live a

simple life, and felt he could help by providing decorating ideas and objects that celebrated home and family. A century later, the annual symposium continues to carry out Stickley's mission.

Over two days "Living the Arts &

Crafts Lifestyle V" will present a wide variety of activities, both indoors and outdoors. Lecture subjects include architect Harvey Ellis (presented by Jill Thomas-Clark), Glass in the Home (Michael E. Clark), and Arts & Crafts Architecture (Gordon Bock). Attendees won't want to miss the Artisan Fair filled with exhibitions by visiting craftspeople who work within the tradition of the Arts & Crafts movement as well as their wares available for purchase. There are tours of Craftsman Farms explaining the ongoing restoration, or "The House Beautiful" - an event where families are taught activities and tools for enhancing the Arts & Crafts House. Saturday night brings the 2000 benefit dinner and silent auction, with proceeds going benefit The Craftsman Farms Foundation. For admission information or registration, call (973) 540-1165 or visit [www.parsippany.net/craftsmanfarms.html](http://www.parsippany.net/craftsmanfarms.html)



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James Massey

### THE FLATTENED ARCH

If the seminal invention of ancient Rome is the segmental (semicircular or semi-ovoid) arch, then its medieval twin is the Gothic (pointed) arch. Two curved members that meet at an apex, the Gothic arch was the building block of the dark ages, and the basis of vaults in countless cathedrals. In the hands of Gothic Revival designers, however, the pointed arch became a decorative form far beyond its structural uses. In windows it was repeated or compressed solely to play up the church-like effect. In porches, conversely, it was often stretched beyond the bounds of practical support to produce a subtle, inspiring camber—the flattened arch.

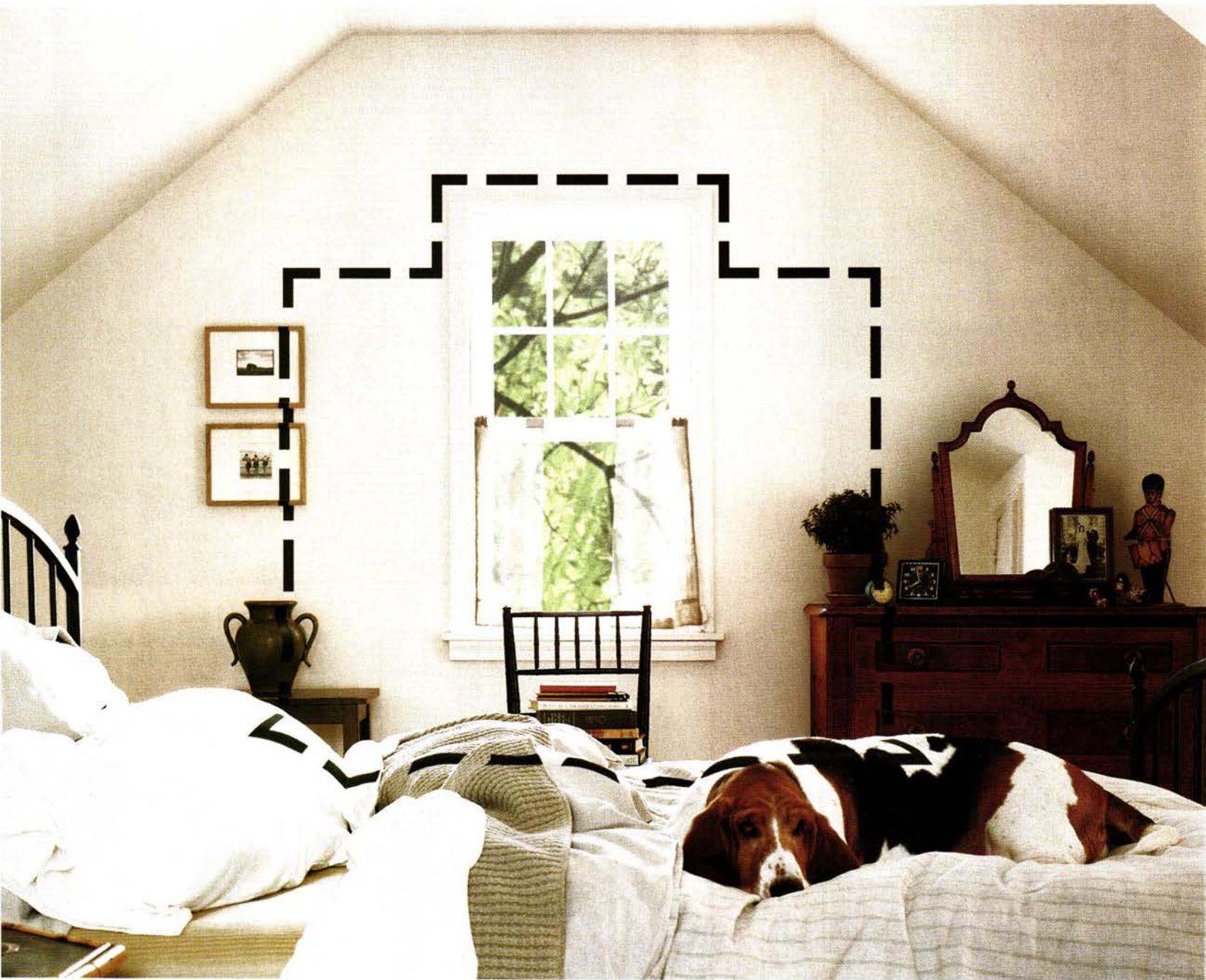
### Speaking of Sites

No less an authority than Forbes magazine saluted Old House Journal Online recently, including it among editor's picks for their "Best of the Web" issue (May 22, 2000). Described as providing the visitor with a "wonderful gateway" into the realm of period houses and their upkeep, the OHJ site [www.oldhousejournal.com](http://www.oldhousejournal.com) (formerly [www.dovetale.com](http://www.dovetale.com)) was noted as one "rich with resources" for finding and buying renovation materials and services.

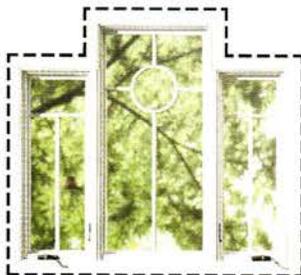
A favorite part was the 2,000-company-strong directory, which impressed Forbes as the strength of the site. They called it "A deep product catalog [that] lets users track down architectural oddities." Not ready to take content at face value, they did their homework too. Their search under "newel posts" yielded 71 results - just about enough to build a Victorian stairway to heaven.



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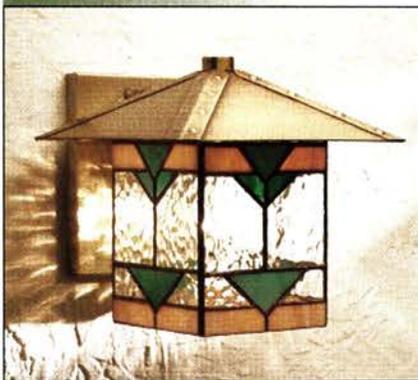
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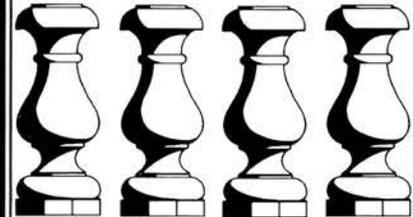
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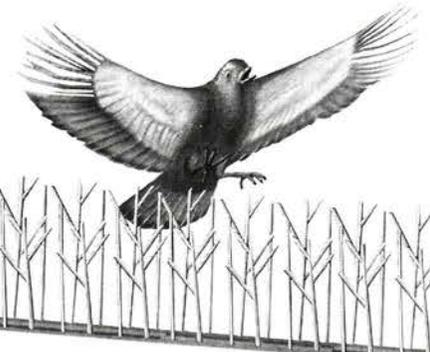


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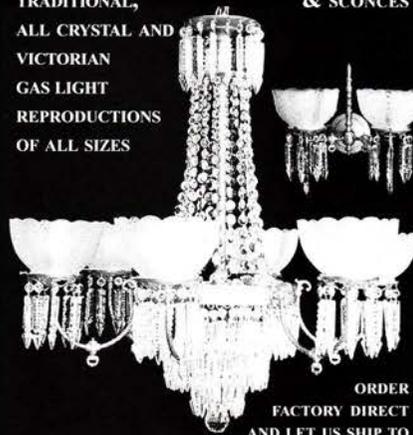
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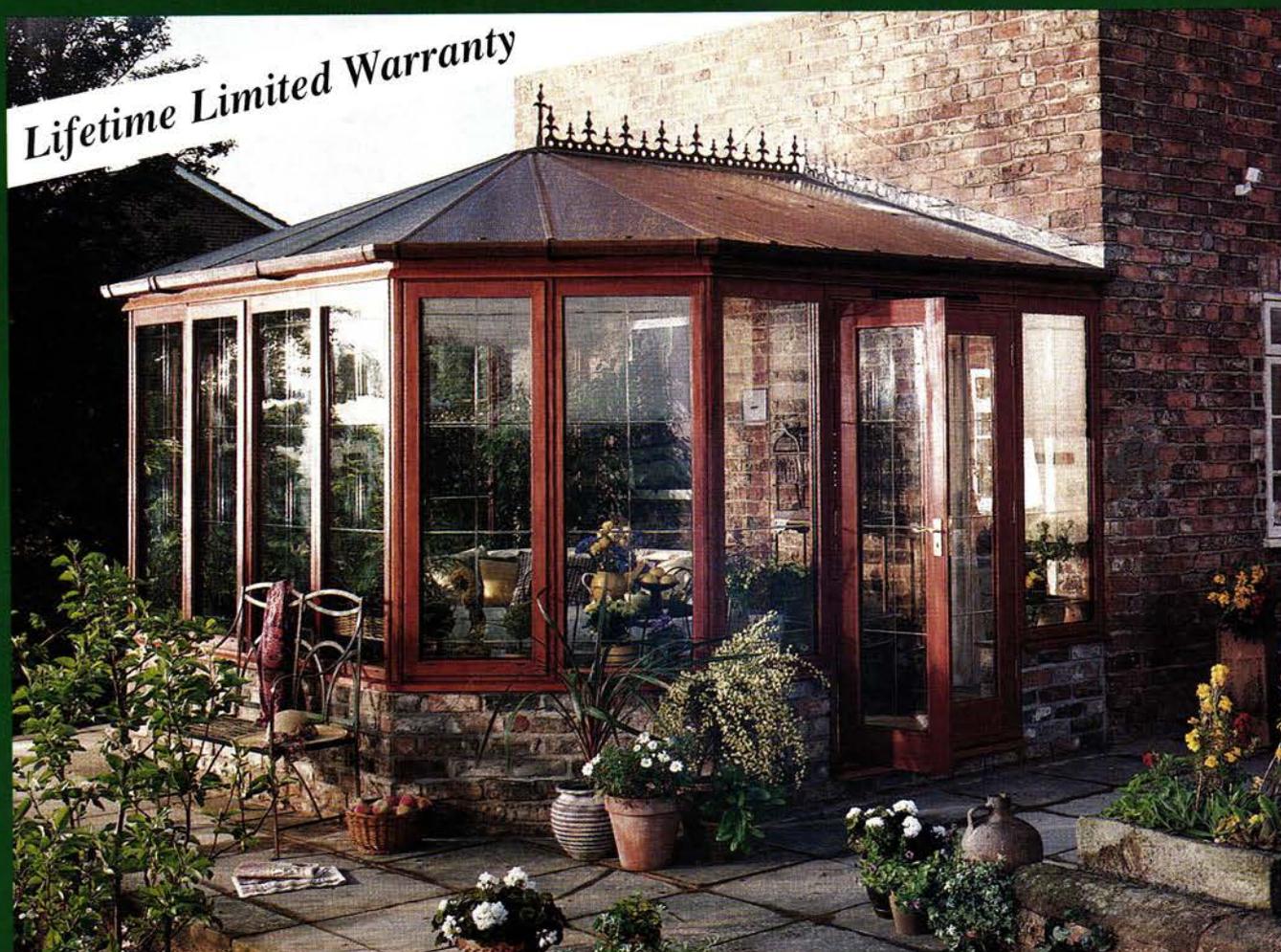
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## In Grandmother's Garden *by JoAnn Gardner* PHOTOS BY KEN DRUSE

**SOFT, DEEPLY SCENTED,** and overflowing with colorful perennials and native plants, the Grandmother's Garden is one of the most enduring concepts in garden-making. This perennially popular garden style emerged at the end of the 19th century as a uniquely American synthesis of the English cottage garden and the colonial settler's gardens. While its antecedents were planted to be practical as well as beautiful, the point of the Grandmother's Garden was sheer loveliness.

The idea of a loosely organized garden inspired by the past began to take shape as early as 1850, even while most gardeners cultivated formal Victorian bedding schemes set with fashionable exotics. As the 1876 centennial drew near, Americans saw all things colonial in an attractive new light, from houses and furnishings to clothing and gardens. In contrast to the rapid pace of life in the Industrial Age, the Grandmother's Garden offered a tranquil oasis of unchanging, familiar beauty.

Everything about the garden was soft. Dominated by pastels, plantings tended toward hardy perennials, self-sown annuals, and native plants informally arranged within rectangular, box-bordered beds. The hallmarks of such a garden were not recent imports from the tropics but the beloved plants of the past: peonies, roses, delphinium, sweetly scented pinks, unimproved wild lilies, Canterbury bells, perfumed heliotrope, and old



varieties of iris, with hollyhocks towering over all. "In our garden the same flowers shoulder each other comfortably and crowd each other a little year after year," penned garden writer Alice Morse Earle early in the 20th century. "They look . . . like long-established neighbors, like old family friends, not as if they had just moved in and didn't know each other's names and faces."

### **A Garden Originator**

CELIA THAXTER brilliantly realized the new ideal in the 1890s. Her romantic garden on Appledore Island off the coast of Maine filled

Easily reaching 10' in height, hollyhocks flourish near walls and fences. Single- or double-blossomed, they come in a rainbow of colors including white, yellow, rose, purple, and the rare black type revived by Celia Thaxter.

The kissing cousin of the English cottage garden, the Grandmother's Garden collects an abundance of flowers and vines in a setting of rustic simplicity.



colonial-style, plank-bordered beds with Old World flowers. Thaxter's garden was an intimate, extended part of the house. It began with the porch, nearly covered in vines, and ended at the sea. Although her garden was small (50' long by 15' wide), she crowded a mix of annuals and perennials into every inch of space. Thaxter arranged plantings for contrast of color and form by repeating and massing favorite plantings.

In true Colonial Revival style, Thaxter divided her garden into a series of plank-enclosed beds separated by



A large tub of nasturtiums near the doorway greets people coming and going.

access paths and enclosed by a simple board fence. She never combined more than four kinds of plants in one bed, allowing each type maximum room to grow during the short island season. Plants clambered high on judiciously placed trellises, and Thaxter planted species for a succession of bloom. While the garden was highly structured, the overall impression was one of artless beauty.

Although Thaxter sought out and revived old plants, such as the rare black hollyhock, like most gardeners she was keen to grow new varieties. Every winter she pored over plant and seed catalogs. Never before had so many different plants been available to American gardeners—hardy hostas from Asia and tender annuals like nasturtiums and morning glories from the tropics. New hybrids abounded, among them the lush-flowered Bourbon and Hybrid Perpetual Roses. These beauties evoked the past but, unlike the old-garden roses, had the advantage of blooming throughout the summer. The new, large-flowered Clematis jackmanii (introduced in 1860) also found a home in Thaxter's garden. As the concept of a Grandmother's Garden relaxed to include new plant introductions and a growing tide of hybrids, plank-enclosed beds gave way to flowing borders. Bleeding heart, with its arching stems laden with perfect rosy hearts, and Bridal wreath spirea, covered

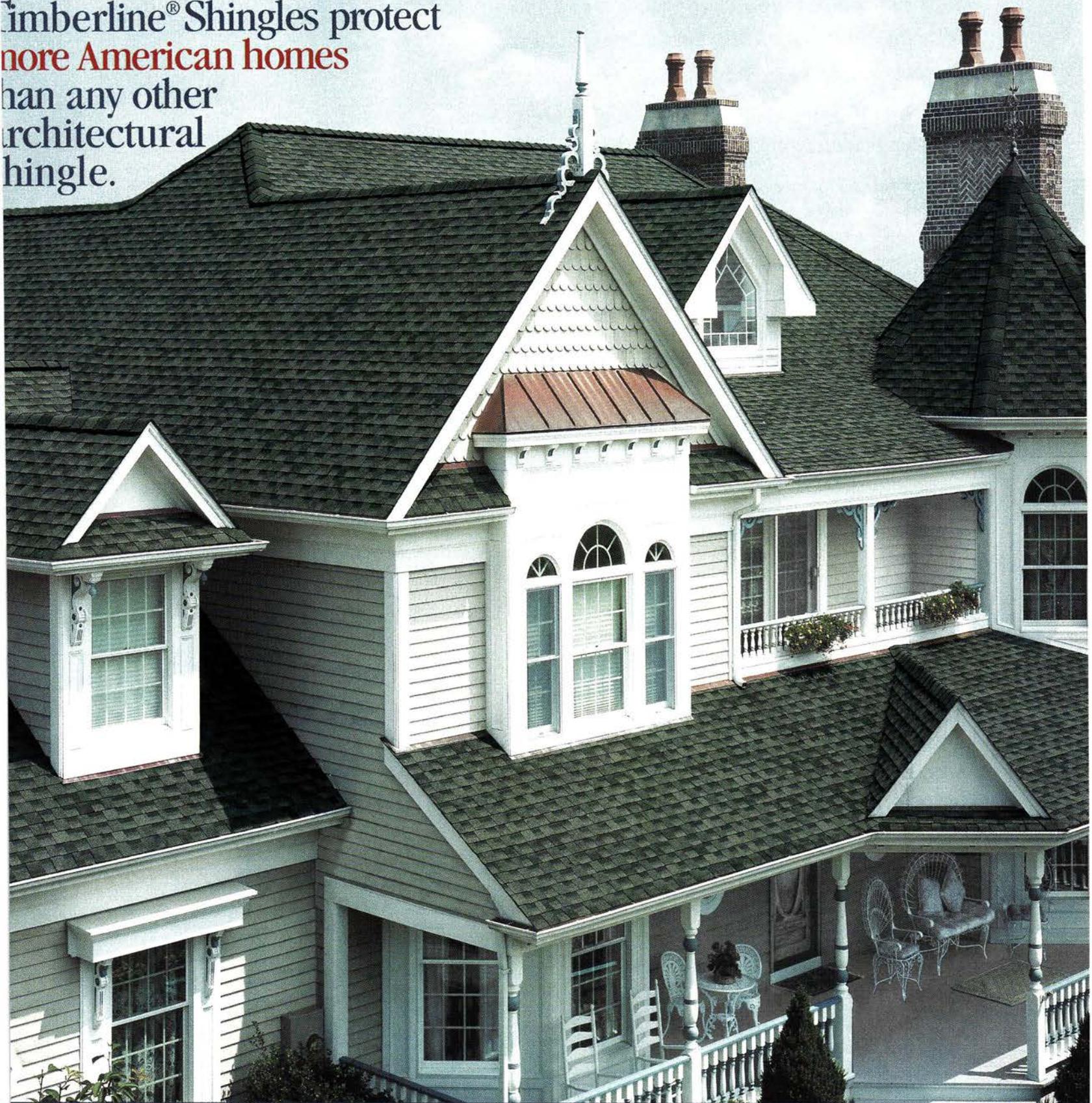


It takes all kinds to make the world go 'round—and to make a Grandmother's Garden, which welcomes both annuals and perennials of all colors. Clockwise from top: Old-fashioned white peonies grow to gorgeous effect; red and pink sweet peas were among the annuals Celia Thaxter favored; opium poppies, which grow up to 4' feet tall with blossoms up to 5" wide, add a spark of flame red; the white tiger lily blooms in late summer.



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*"In our garden the same flowers shoulder each other comfortably and crowd each other a little year after year. They look . . . like long-established neighbors, like old family friends, not as if they had just moved in and didn't know each other's names and faces."*—Alice Morse Earle, ca. 1900



Every garden needs a dash of tiger lily color.

in a multitude of white buttons, became synonymous with the Grandmother's Garden in the 20th century.

**Grandmother's Favorites**

OF SPECIAL INTEREST TODAY are the annuals Thaxter loved: poppies, petunias, nasturtiums, and sweet peas. The

silky, pastel poppies known as Shirley are descended from a variant of the wild red corn poppy (*Papaver rhoeas*). Although it only began to appear in the 1880s, Shirley seemed to carry an old-fashioned mystique as soon as it was introduced. Thaxter loved the unimproved, flame-red corn poppy, which she grew in beds with lavender and wallflowers, bordered by China asters.

Today's petunias are among the most hybridized annuals, but many old varieties are enjoying a comeback. Whatever

**FLOWERS FOR A GRANDMOTHER'S GARDEN**

**ANNUALS**

- Bachelor's button . . . . . *Centaurea cyanus*
- Balsam . . . . . *Impatiens balsamina*\*
- Calendula . . . . . *Calendula officinalis*
- Clarkia\*
- Cosmos . . . . . *Cosmos bipinnatus*
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- Heliotrope . . . . . *Heliotropium arborescens*
- Marigold . . . . . *Tagetes tenuifolia*
- Moonflower . . . . . *Ipomea alba*
- Morning Glory . . . . . *Ipomea purpurea*
- Nasturtium . . . . . *Tropaeolum majus*
- Nicotiana . . . . . *Nicotiana glauca*
- Petunia . . . . . *Petunia integrifolia; Petunia hybrida*
- Poppy . . . . . *Papaver rhoeas; Papaver somniferum*
- Sweet Pea . . . . . *Lathyrus odoratus*
- Sweet Alyssum . . . . . *Lobularia maritima*

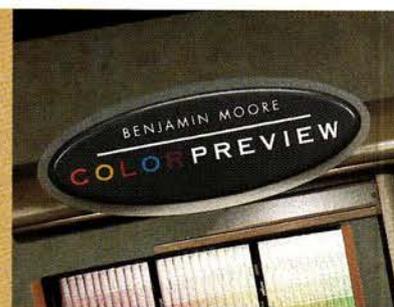
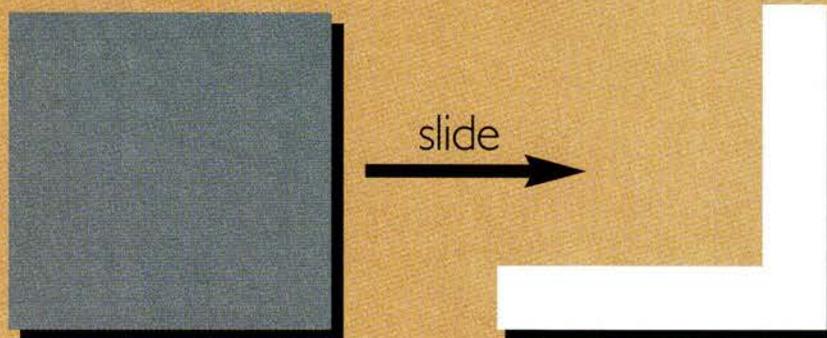
**BIENNIALS**

- Black hollyhock . . . . . *Alcea rosea 'Nigra'*
- Black-eyed Susan\* . . . . . *Rudbeckia hirta*
- Canterbury Bells . . . . . *Campanula medium*
- Dame's Rocket . . . . . *Hesperis matronalis*
- Feverfew . . . . . *Tanacetum parthenium*
- Hollyhock . . . . . *Alcea rosea*
- Rose Campion . . . . . *Lychnis coronaria*

**PERENNIALS**

- \*Bee Balm . . . . . *Monarda didyma*
- \*Butterfly Weed . . . . . *Asclepias tuberosa*
- Corfu Lily . . . . . *Hosta plantaginea*
- Delphinium . . . . . *Delphinium hybrida*

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 Maxima'  
 Tiger Lily . . . . . Lilium lancifolium

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 Weigela . . . . . Weigela florida

\*Native plants

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JOANN GARDNER is the author of The Heirloom Garden, to be reissued by Garden Way in 2001.

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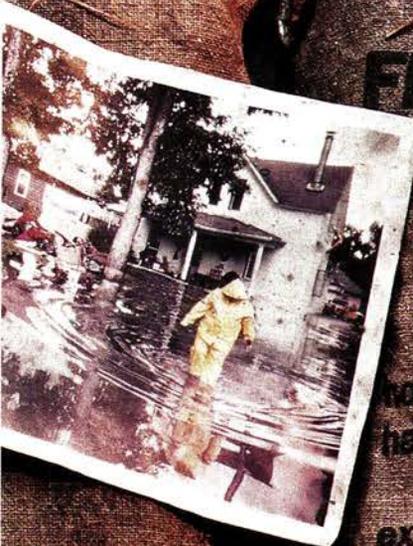
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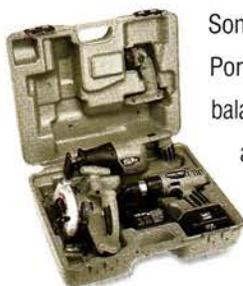


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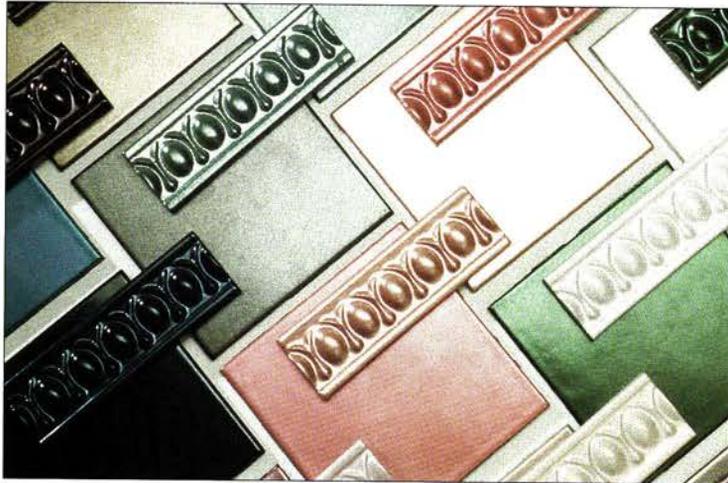


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Before



After

Photos courtesy of Liz Courtney



## Toward Better Gutters *by William T. Cox Jr.*

SOME PEOPLE I'VE MET FEEL that attached gutters, the most common kind, are better removed than improved, but nothing could be further from the truth. Gutters are the heart of the roof drainage system that conducts tons of water away from the roofing, siding, foundation, and, ultimately, the basement. Important as they are, gutters are only effective if they can carry water—which means keeping them clean and intact through regular maintenance.

### Inspection and Cleaning

CLEANLINESS IS VITAL to gutter performance. Accumulations of dirt, plant material, and roofing debris reduce the cross-sectional area of the gutter and therefore its water-carrying capacity. Debris build-up also traps moisture that will rot wood gutters and corrode metals. To keep gutters clean, inspect them at least twice a year—ideally in early spring (to correct ice damage before the rainy season begins) and late fall (to clear fallen leaves in preparation for winter).

For inspection, you'll need a stout extension ladder fitted with a standoff bar that holds the ladder several inches off the building. Gutters are designed to support only water, and a human bobbing up and down on the rim is enough to crush the best guttering. If your old house is large, look into renting a

"cherry-picker" one-man lift for around \$80 per day. For cleaning, bring a small rake to help move debris, or you can buy a long-handled gutter-cleaning tool made for this purpose. Otherwise, hands and a garden hose fitted with a jet nozzle do the best job. Add a rain suit, face shield, and gloves if gutter muck makes you squeamish.

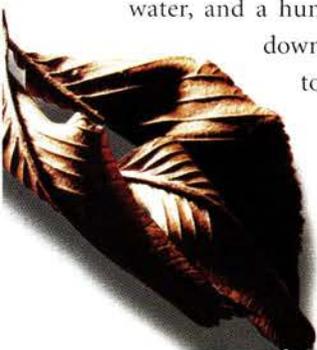
Check the gutter for leaks, deterioration (rust, corrosion, or rot) and failing joints. Look for damaged gutter supports, downspouts, and downspout screens. Then run some water in the gutter. If water pools away from the downspout (usually because storm damage has shifted the gutter), adjust the hangers. Technically, gutter pitch is a function of roof area, gutter size, and regional rainfall, but a drop of 1" for every 12" of length is a good rule of thumb. While a steep pitch speeds drainage, in long gutters it tends to make the house look out-of-level.

Make sure downspouts discharge their water at least 10' away from the foundation. Use leaders that swing up and out of the way when you get ready to cut the grass, or install subsurface piping that carries the water to open ground, such as a culvert. Never allow gutters to discharge into a septic tank or storm sewer, which is illegal in most com-



Photos: Top, David Sharpe. Above, Gordon Bock

**Above:** When gutters become gardens, water washes over the rim instead of through the downspout, leading to splashback or moisture damage at the foundation line. **Top:** Basket strainers are inexpensive accessories for keeping downspouts clear.



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Circle no. 451

## OLD HOUSE MECHANIC

munities. They also should not dump water on a sidewalk or driveway, where it can freeze into an ice hazard.

### Types and Upkeep

COPPER IS THE MOST EXPENSIVE COMMON gutter material, but it is very durable and practically maintenance-free. Over time, copper reacts with the atmosphere and oxidizes to a gray-green patina. This patina not only trims out the house like tinsel on a Christmas tree, it protects the metal from corrosion, so copper gutters never need painting except for aesthetic reasons.

Galvanized steel gutters in half-round styles are often classed as commercial grade today, but they have been used for over 125 years and are widely appropriate for old houses. Even with galvanizing, these gutters require protection with good-quality metal paint, especially inside the trough. When new, however, galvanized steel gutters carry a thin coat of oil that prevents proper paint bonding. If you want to paint before installation, first wash the metal with vinegar to remove the oil and etch the surface. Otherwise hang the gutter, then postpone painting for a year while Mother Nature etches the surface for you.

I must confess I have never worked on wood gutters, but they're still fairly common in New England and the Pacific Northwest. Made of Douglas fir, cypress, or redwood, they finish the eave with a cornice-like effect. You can paint exteriors to match the building trim, but you must coat interiors for durability. Make it a yearly ritual to clean and wash the trough, then let the wood thoroughly dry. Afterward, brush on a good grade of water-repellent sealer, wood preservative, or a 50-50 mixture of both. Seal any cracks in joints or leaks with butyl rubber caulking.

Never coat the insides of wood or metal gutters with used motor oil, asphalt or tar roofing cement, or elastomeric paints. These coatings can trap moisture against wood or even react with metals.

Snow and ice dams can pull the best-fastened gutter to the

ground. If you find a hard winter has loosened spikes (large nails) and ferrules (metal sleeves) to the point where they don't grab their holes anymore, try gutter screws. These fasteners come in 7" and 8" lengths with



*Jazz Drywall*  
Clogged gutters also retain moisture that destroys troughs, such as in the wood gutter, causing paint failure and wood rot at eaves and walls.

square-drive heads. To retrofit a gutter, remove the spike, but keep the ferrule and run the screw in slightly to one side of the old hole. Then fill the old hole with caulking. Brackets tend to be stronger as long as they're spaced adequately. Generally, brackets, spikes, or hangers should be no more than 48" apart; 36" where snow loads are heavy. Also make sure that the highest point of the gutter hangs below the roof plane so that snow slides off the eaves without taking the gutter with it.

Basket strainers that slip into the gutter outlet are time-tested devices for keeping debris out of the downspout—but only if cleaned regularly and replaced when damaged. Screens over the gutter offer less predictable results. In some cases, screens merely collect leaves on top, which defeats the purpose of the gutter while allowing fine debris to sift into the trough, where it never washes out. The shedding patterns of your trees will tell you which gutters need the most attention. For example, my house is surrounded by 40-year-old Eastern white pines. Since they drop an avalanche of needles in the fall, sometimes I have to broom the roof clean just to find the gutters.



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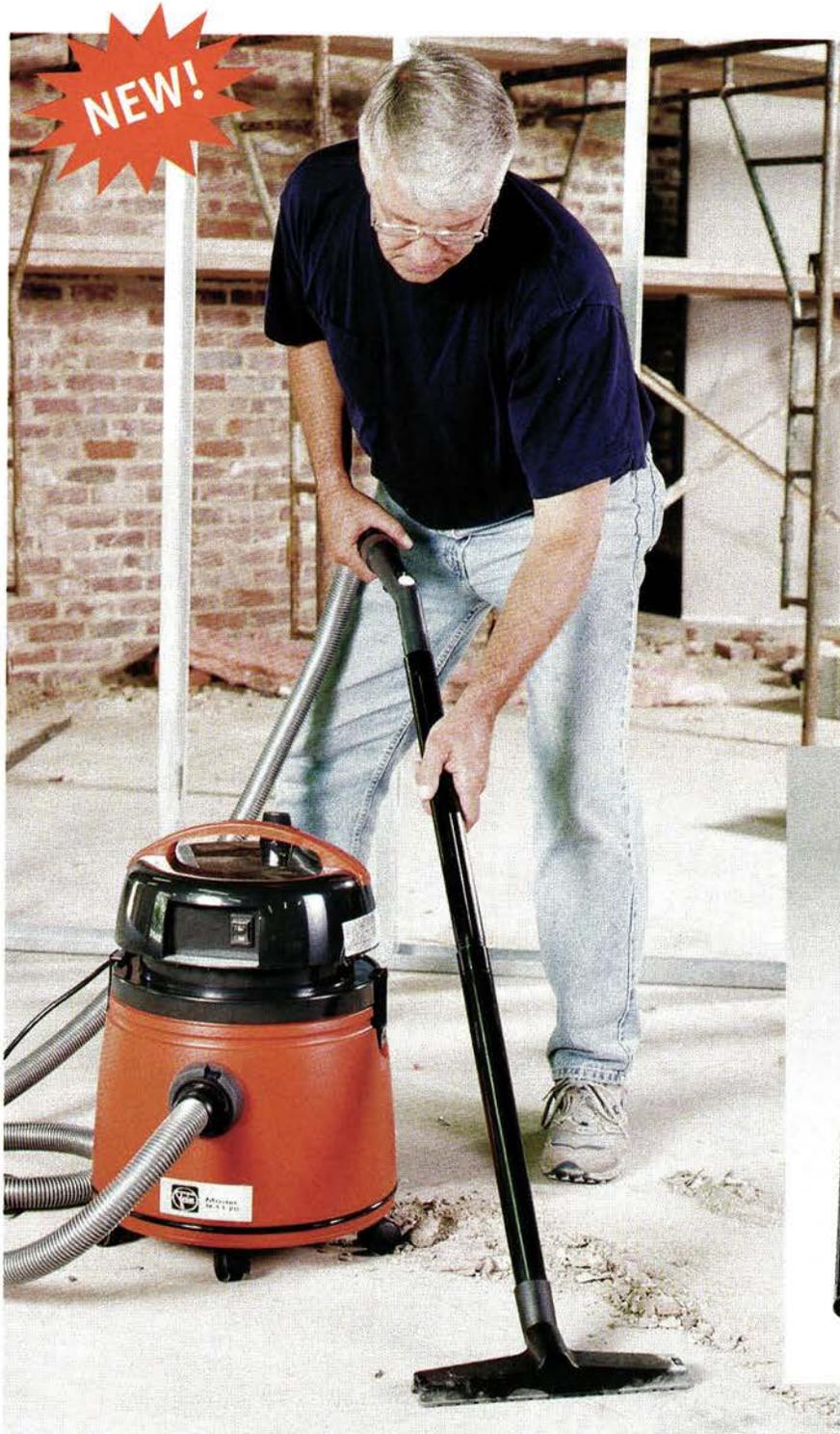
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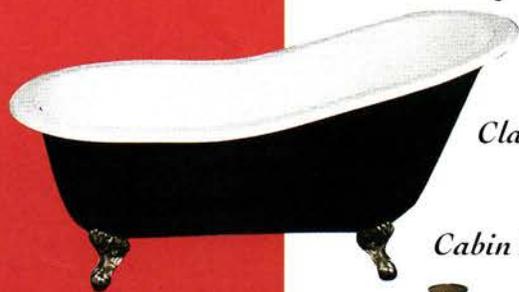
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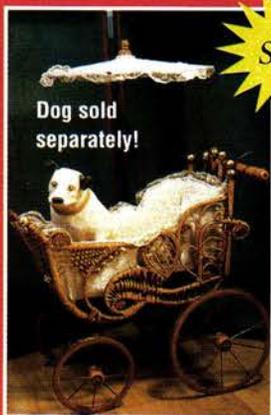


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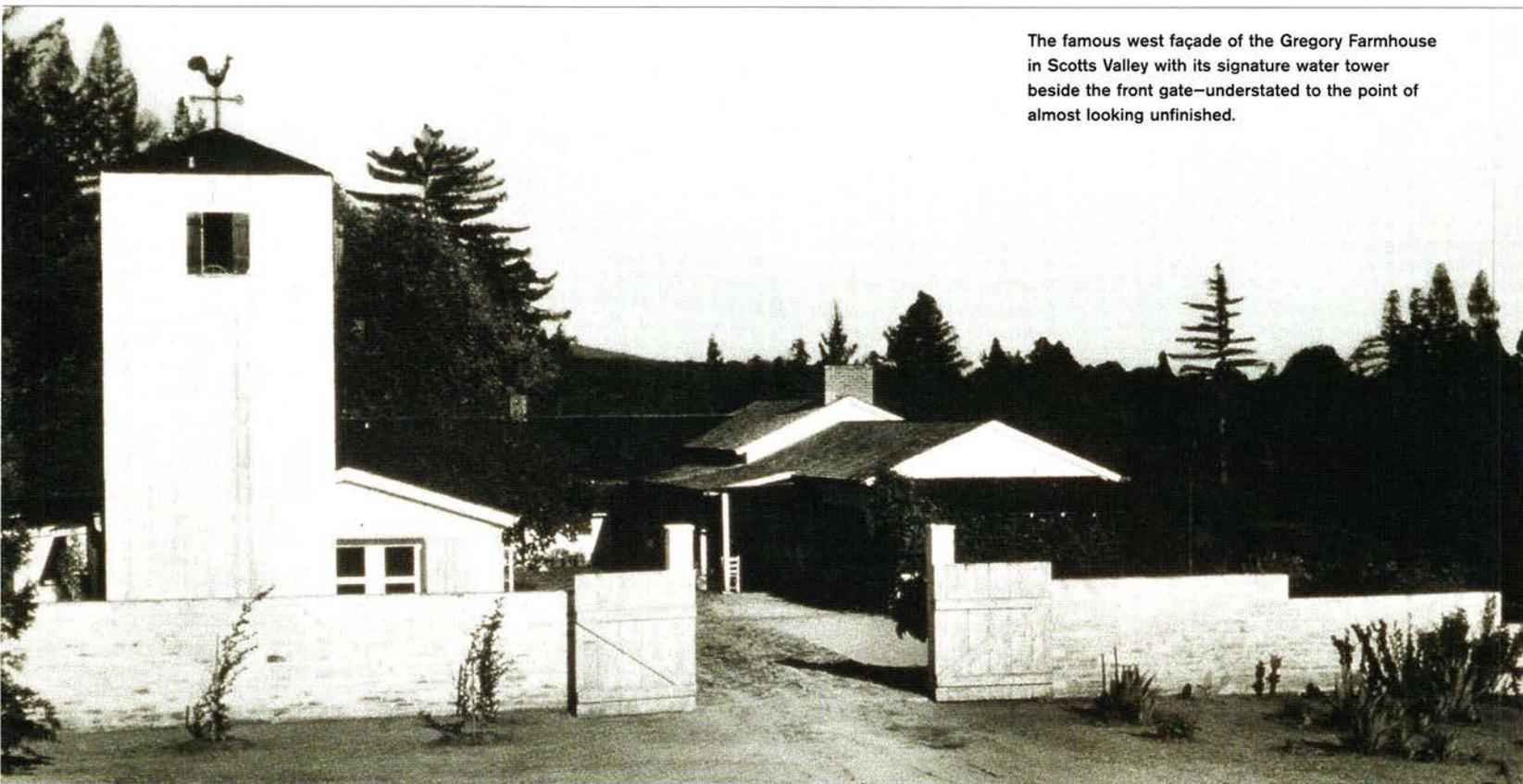
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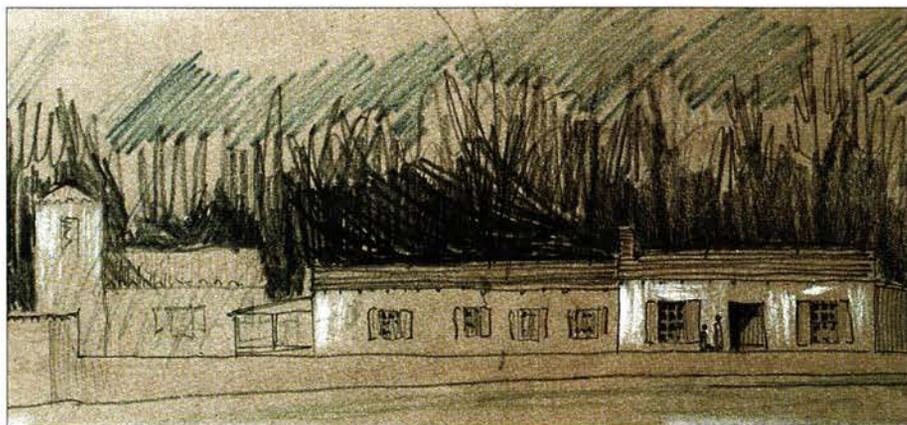


The famous west façade of the Gregory Farmhouse in Scotts Valley with its signature water tower beside the front gate—understated to the point of almost looking unfinished.

Courtesy Daniel Gregory



William Wurster in the late 1950s.



Courtesy Daniel Gregory



Courtesy Daniel Gregory

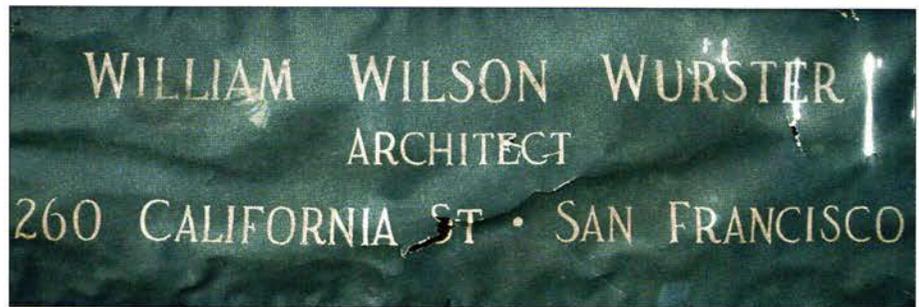
Above: Wurster's color pencil sketch shows the extent of the complex  
Left: Boards and rafters alone create the mood of the Farmhouse living room, ca. 1930.

All other photos and illustrations courtesy William W. Wurster/Wurster, Bernard & Emmons Collection, Environmental Design Archives, University of California, Berkeley.

# The Zen and Sensibility of William Wurster *by Daniel Gregory*

IN THIS AGE of “dotcom economics,” when money made or lost is the talk of the land and glossy coffee-table style books are full of kitchens buttered in granite or zinc, we may yet see a return to the concept of simplicity. Certainly the publishing world seems to think so, with the recent debut of magazines titled *Real Simple* and *Space*. If a reaction is in the future, then it's a good time to spotlight an architect like California's William Wilson Wurster. His work in the 1930s, '40s, and '50s embodied a Zen-like aesthetic of what you might call “assertive modesty” that influenced the design of houses in the Modern era from coast to coast.

Born in the Central Valley town of Stockton in 1895, “Redwood Bill” Wurster, as he was known, became the Bay Area's most famous architect, both as a designer of houses, and as the co-founder of the College of Environmental Design at the University of California at Berkley. He received the American Institute of Architects' highest honor, the Gold Medal, in 1969, and died in 1973. Though his San Francisco firm—ultimately known as Wurster, Bernardi & Emmons—designed a wide range of building types, the houses really made him famous. Often constructed of local materials like wood or adobe—though he also employed concrete block and large expanses of glass—they expressed strong indoor-outdoor relationships and were, in Bill's words, “modest



Courtesy Daniel Gregory

and simple structures...for the client and not in our own image.” The best of them express a paradoxical nature: both regional and contemporary, where ordinary materials like plywood are used in an elegant, artful way. His wife, the city planner Catherine Bauer, once said “There's nobody like Bill to make a \$90,000 house look like a \$10,000 house.”

Wurster's designs still provoke contradictory reactions. After visiting his Gregory Farmhouse, a Monterey-influenced courtyard house built for my grandmother in 1928, one guest responded: “I feel I've taken a sentimental journey to a place I never knew.” Another said: “So where is the architecture?” And some years ago, at an exhibition on Wurster at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, I overheard one woman say to another: “Well, my house is much prettier than these houses.” Another woman told her husband: “Now let's go over to Home Depot so this afternoon you can start remodeling the bathroom.” The husband ruefully replied: “We

*Trained in the tradition of the Beaux Arts, but influenced by the Depression, William Wurster showed a generation how to build remarkable buildings with common materials.*



Left: The sheer crystal courtyard of the 1962 Coleman house in Pacific Heights shows Wurster's spare, but sophisticated handling of glass. Right: Wurster's 1934 Randall house in Santa Cruz is based on the Monterey House tradition of central California and a good example of his respect for vernacular architecture.

BUILT IN A DAY  
 WHEN THE AVERAGE NEW  
 HOUSE WAS A COOKBOOK  
 REVIVAL IN EITHER  
 THE TUDOR, SPANISH, OR  
 COLONIAL MODE, THE  
 GREGORY FARMHOUSE WAS  
 REFRESHINGLY TIMELESS  
 AND IMMEDIATELY NOTICED.  
 WIDELY PUBLISHED, IT  
 LAUNCHED CAREER OF  
 WURSTER, THEN IN HIS  
 EARLY THIRTIES.

should never have come to this exhibition.”

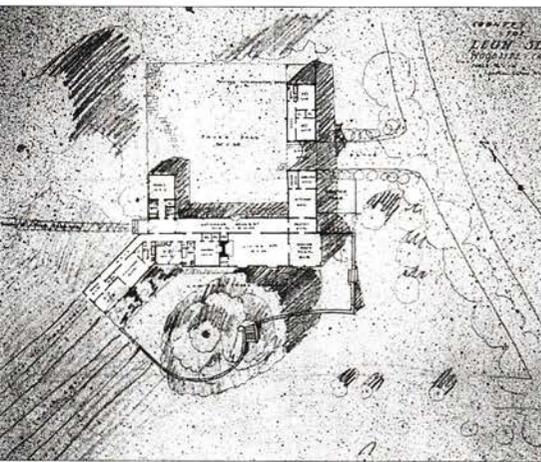
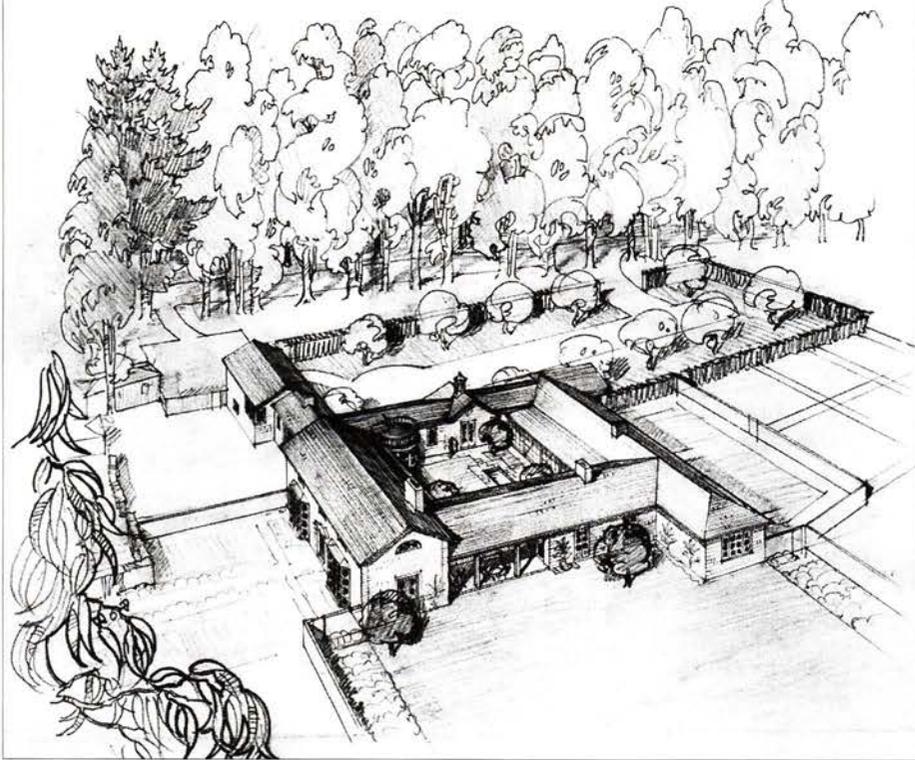
Indeed, many of Wurster's houses resemble the “before” pictures you often see in shelter magazines, thus inspiring that yearning to remodel. They are not about rich or exotic materials and vivid new sculptural forms, but about ordinary materials very carefully worked. His houses address the particulars of climate, site, and client use in a straightforward, pragmatic manner. At the Dearborn Clark beach house at Aptos, of 1937, outdoor living and wind control were prime concerns. These requirements are beautifully expressed with the symmetrical glass wings flanking the big sliding barn doors to the living room. It's a modern machine for sunning, but built of rustic redwood and barn door hardware, not sleek steel and smooth white stucco like a villa by Richard Neutra or Le Corbusier.

As might be expected, Frank Lloyd Wright was not a big fan. Bill's oral history, recorded for the Bancroft Library at the University of California by Suzanne Reiss, captures some marvelous Wright-Wurster moments. A few weeks before Wright died, he telephoned Wurster and said: “Well, Bill,

we don't see enough of each other—not that I like anything you do, but I like you, and we ought to get together and talk architecture.” Bill replied “We certainly should. What about right now?” Wright said: “No. “I'm on my way someplace. But I just wanted to say hello.” With Wurster, Wright was always provocative, playing the Chesire Cat to Wurster's Alice in Redwoodland. Wright attempted to get a rise out of him whenever they met. “Well, Bill,” he said another time, “your roofs leak too. They tell me that after the first rains sometimes you don't come into the office for a day or two.”

Though Wurster's work embodied such Wrightian principles as continuity between indoor and outdoor space, careful siting, and a dedication to expressing the nature of materials, it did so with restraint. Wurster ultimately arrived at his Modernity by a process of simplification, not by inventing wholly new shapes and forms. His houses were Modern in their functional approach to clients' needs, but they did not loudly proclaim their individuality.

In 1936, Wurster explained his basic philosophy of design to The Architectural



Wurster had a great interest in site. The George Pope house (1936) opens to several kinds of outdoor space. The courtyard of the Sloss house (1931) takes its cue from early ranchos.

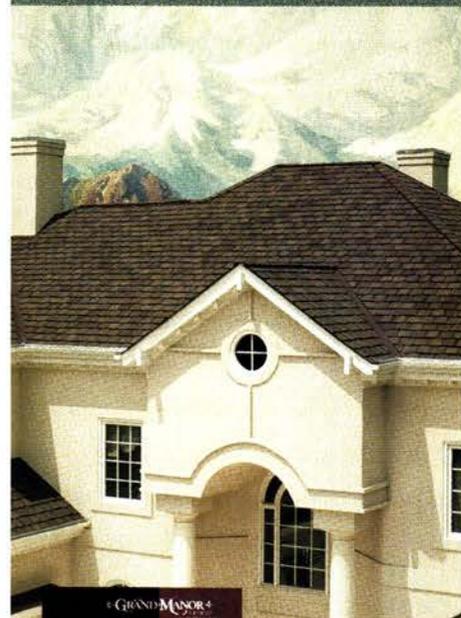
Forum: "I have never believed in proselytizing, so feel I have no mission to put over any given expression on any client. I like to work on direct, honest solutions, avoiding exotic materials, using indigenous things so that there is no affectation and the best is obtained for the money. Always do a thing from the positive side—never do so-called Modern merely to be against what has been—to have sloping roofs if it comes naturally and there be no need of use—to have decks where it seems desirable. To make the outside garden easily accessible—to have appropriate materials—keeping the tempo sympathetic with the life and the size—and expenditure."

The Depression played an important role in promoting the studied lack of

ostentation that became a Wurster hallmark, because economic reality made it almost impossible to build in the traditional architectural styles that were so labor-intensive and dependant on richness of detail for their effect. In other words, simplicity became a necessity if one were to build at all. Unlike a less original architect, however, who might have tried to produce the appearance of traditional architecture on a smaller budget, Wurster seized upon the concept of simplicity and made it into a conscious esthetic. Restraint was what clients wanted and restraint was what he gave them. He once wrote: "Architecture is not a goal. Architecture is for life and pleasure and work and for people. The picture frame and not the picture." His houses helped opened the door to what became known as California living. It was the simple life with carbonation.

DANIEL P. GREGORY, PH.D. is an architectural historian and senior editor for architecture and design at *Sunset* magazine.

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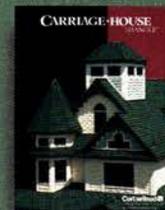
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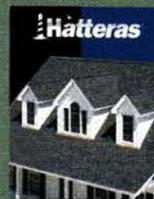
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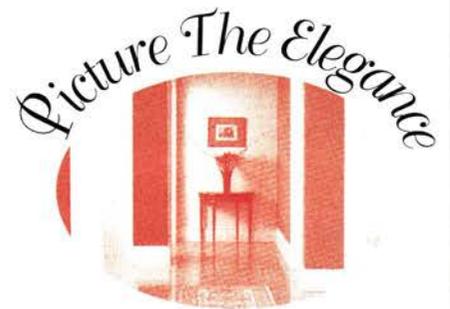
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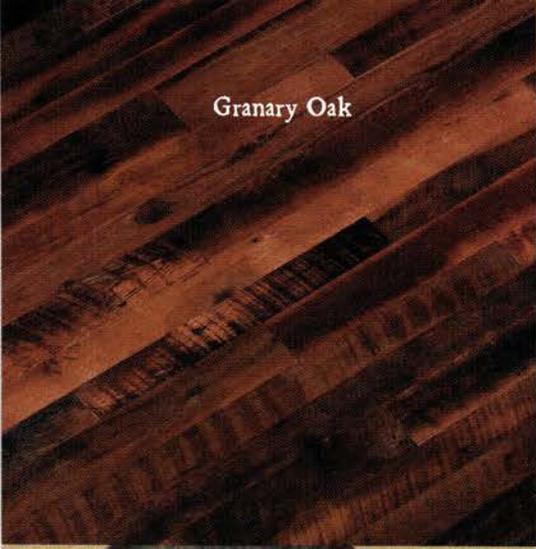
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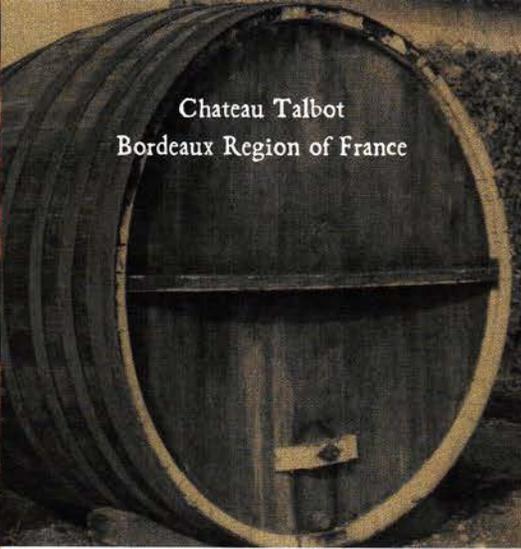
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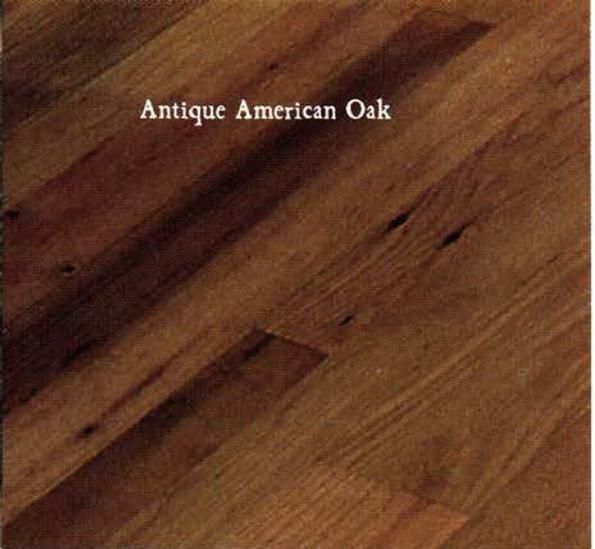
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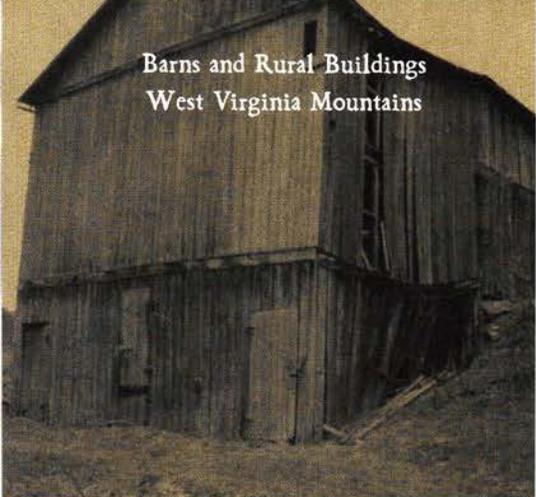
Granary Oak



Chateau Talbot  
Bordeaux Region of France



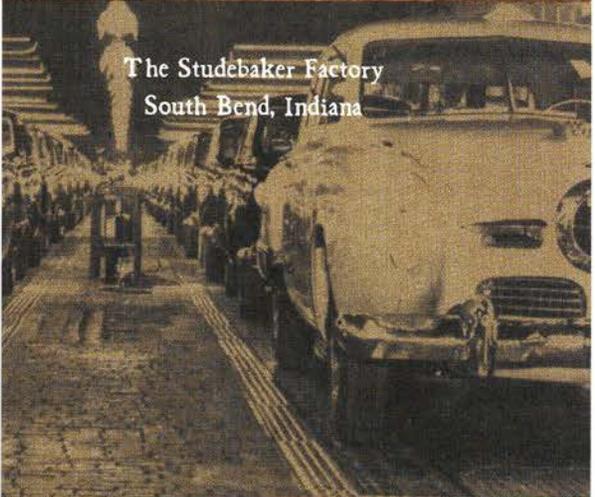
Antique American Oak



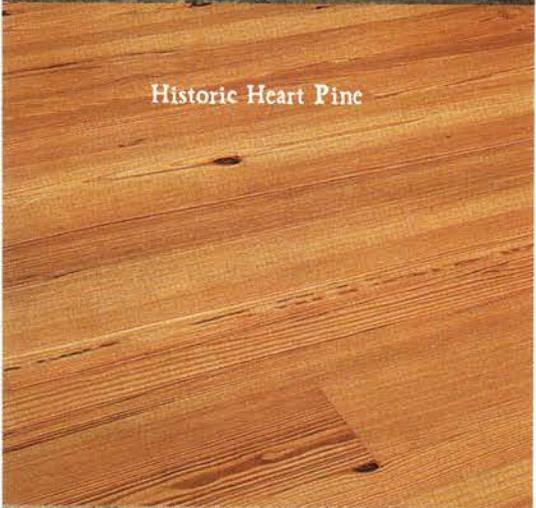
Barns and Rural Buildings  
West Virginia Mountains

## Every Floor Has A Story To Tell

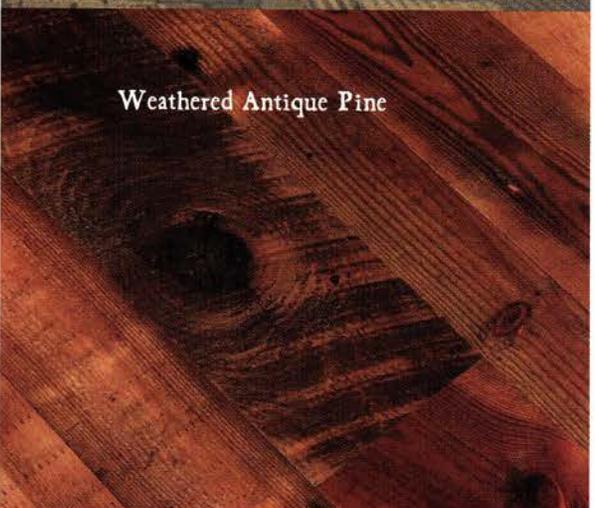
Antique wood reclaimed from  
century old buildings,  
barns and maritime structures  
for wide plank flooring,  
beams, millwork  
and architectural accents



The Studebaker Factory  
South Bend, Indiana



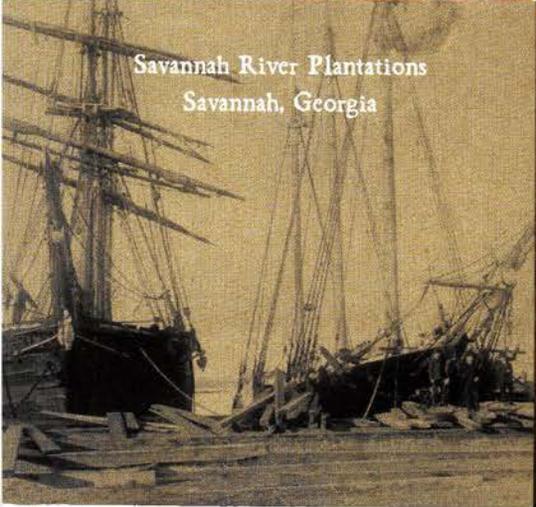
Historic Heart Pine



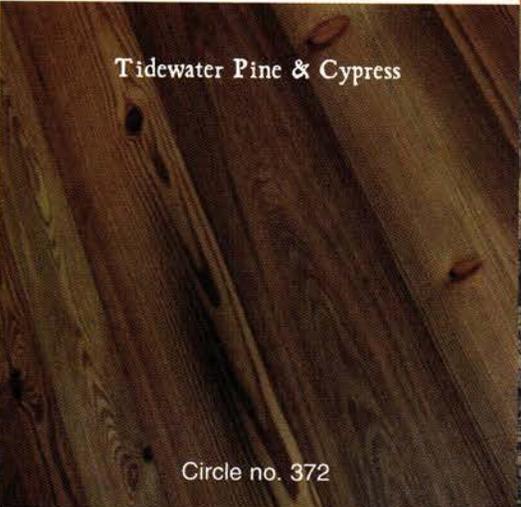
Weathered Antique Pine

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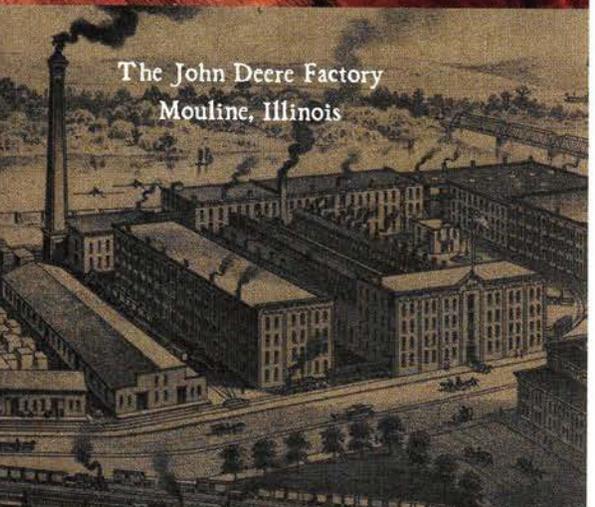
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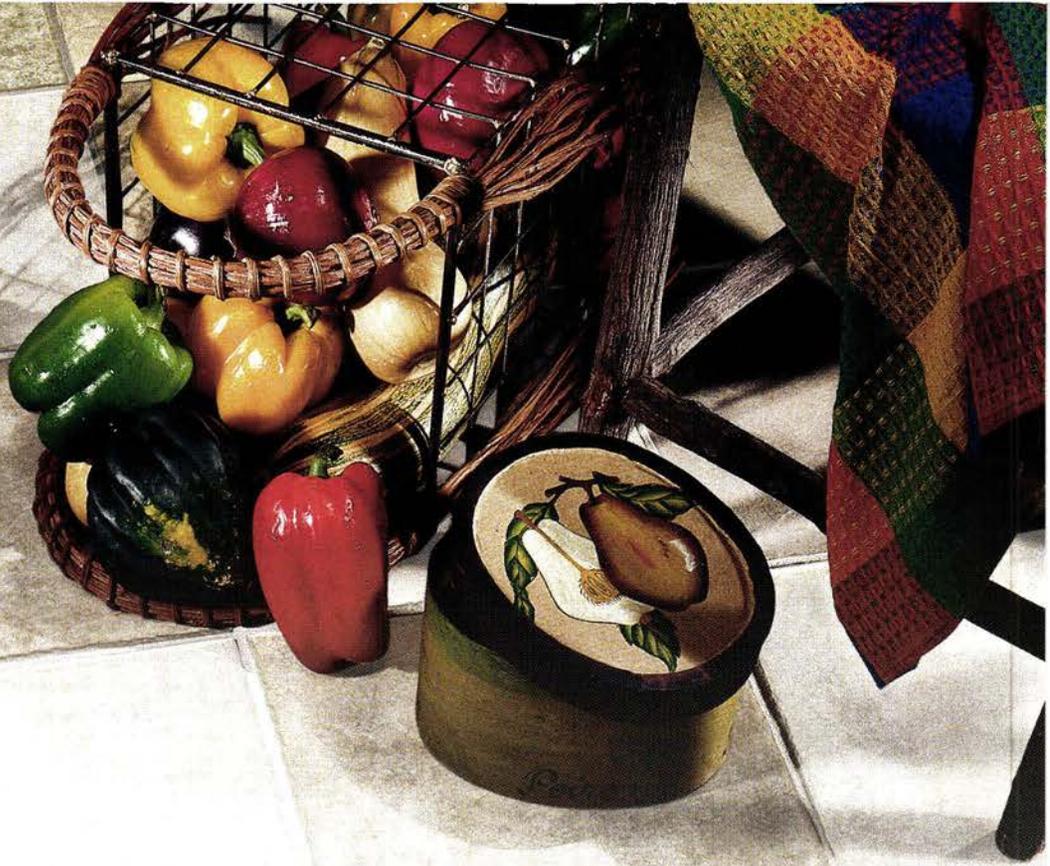
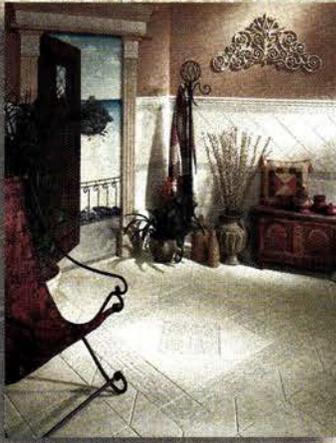
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# OLDHOUSE JOURNAL



*“Removed from its perch, a little worse for wear but basically sound, the 165-year old console clearly appeared much bigger and heavier than anyone had guessed. It was all nailed together with cut nails. The question was what to do next.”*

—page 94

## September/October 2000

“Baking cabinets also were the source of a new, thriving industry somewhere between conventional furniture and millwork manufacturing. Early giants such as Hoosier, which lent its name to the entire class of products, made their cabinets in a variety of models and distributed them essentially complete from a central plant in Indiana. So successful was the baking cabinet idea that by the late 1920s Hoosier and its competitors were building cabinets so large they covered an entire wall.”

—page 84



*“New technology and good design allow period kitchens to have ample light—where it’s needed—without being out of context with the style of the house.”*

—page 76

MORE THAN EVER BEFORE, NEW TECHNOLOGY AND GOOD DESIGN

ALLOW PERIOD KITCHENS TO HAVE AMPLE LIGHT—WHERE IT'S NEEDED—

WITHOUT BEING OUT OF CONTEXT WITH THE STYLE OF THE HOUSE.

# Shedding **N E W** on Old Kitchens

By Carolyn Murray

**F**OLKS WHO REHABILITATE an old-house kitchen often breeze past one of the most important concerns—the lighting. It's a common oversight because lighting technology is little understood by homeowners, and lighting's potential for enhancing kitchen ambiance is often missed by architects and designers. Then, too, homeowners mistakenly believe that they have to forego a kitchen that looks of a period with the rest of the house in order to use it in a contemporary way. The truth is that with good design, common sense, and some of the latest lighting technology, your kitchen can remain the center of life in your house while providing plenty of light for your work.

Even though kitchens and electric light go back over 100 years (see sidebar on page 80), none of the historic approaches will provide adequate light for the way we live today. The question, then, is how to achieve an improved quality of light while maintaining or restoring the period ambiance of your kitchen. The answer is so basic that we often miss it: Put the light where you need it. When it comes to meeting the lighting requirements of kitchens, "there is no single light fixture that can perform all the functions," according to Randall Whitehead of Lighting Design Services in San Francisco. Instead, there needs to be layers of light.

## Lighting Types and Terms

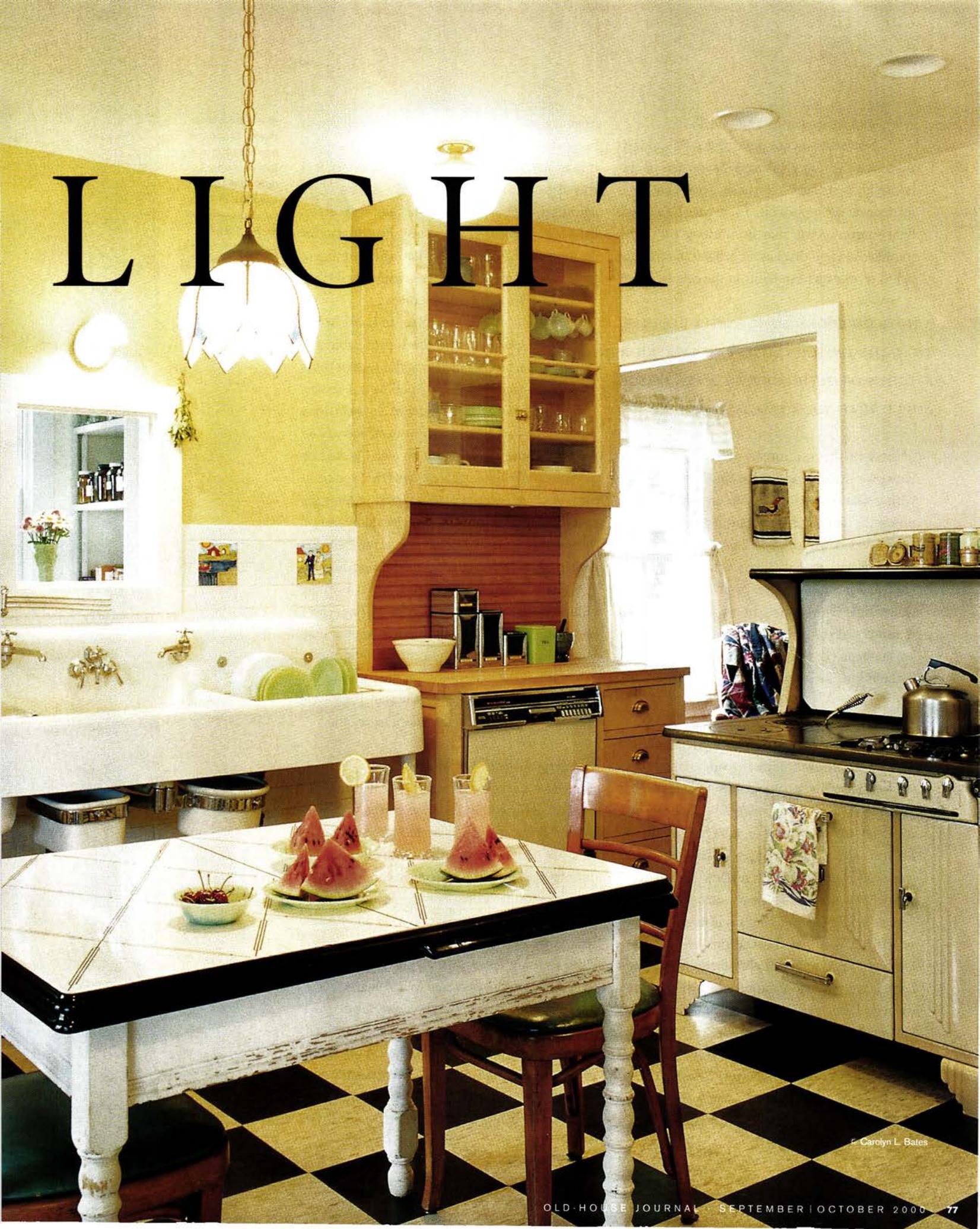
THERE ARE THREE major types of lighting that you can layer to illuminate a kitchen. The first, ambient light, is the general light in the room. Good ambient light allows you to work safely while giving the room its period look. The second, task light, provides higher and more-focused levels of light to a particular work area. The third, accent light, is even more focused and highlights objects or areas you want to show off, such as artwork, glassware, or special pottery.

It also helps to understand some common terms people throw around when they discuss lighting. The luminaire is the light fixture, and a lamp is what most people know as a light bulb. Light has color, which is measured in degrees Kelvin and commonly summed up as being either cool or warm. The higher the temperature, the more white the light. Incandescent lamps normally produce light from 2,600K to 3,100K in temperature, a range that has a lot of yellow in it. Fluorescent lamps vary in color from 3,000K to 4,200K. Their higher numbers represent the "cool white" lamps sold in hardware stores that tend towards the blues. Fluorescent light has come a long way in the last five years, expanding tremendously in color range and installation flexibility. There are dimmable compact fluorescents, electronic ballasts that eliminate flick-

Why flood a kitchen that's clearly from the 1930s with Disco-era downlights? Instead, use the original milk-glass ceiling and sink fixtures to provide authentic ambient light, while almost invisible can lights stand ready to shine on the stove.



# LIGHT



© Carolyn L. Bates

ering, and tubes as tiny as a pencil.

Now that you grasp the basics, let's address the unique lighting challenges that owners of old-house kitchens face. Very likely, your lighting is inadequate or unpleasant. There may be a single light source, or you may be working with a remuddled kitchen that has track lights, fluorescent lights, or recessed can lights in the ceiling. If any

**A NOTE ON CODES: SOME STATES REQUIRE THAT THE SWITCH CLOSEST TO THE DOOR IN A KITCHEN OR BATH CONTROL A FLUORESCENT LIGHT. CHECK WITH YOUR ELECTRICIAN.**

of these are the case, you are probably working in your own shadow most of the time. You may have wiring that is not up to code or insufficient to power the light levels you want. You may want to keep a wonderful original light fixture, but it is too small for modern needs or doesn't provide enough light. Your ceilings could be really low or really high. Or you may be working with solid masonry walls or pristine lath and plaster that you are loathe to cut into for wiring. Rest easy. There are solutions for all of these challenges.

### **Ambient Options**

HOW DO YOU USE the three lighting types of light to most effectively illuminate your kitchen? Let's start with the fundamentals. Since ambient light's purpose is limited to safety and appearance, don't try to make it serve as task light. If you do, you will actually end up with less light where you need it—on the work surface. The reason is that when you stand at the counter, you will cast a shadow on your work from any light source above or behind you (see illustrations on page 80). However, since ambient light functions as general light, it will provide the means to give the room its period look. This is where you show off that vintage pendant or ceiling-mounted fixture that is historically appropriate for your house. Moreover, it's possible to reproduce a favorite light fixture so you have the number of luminaires you need to achieve good scale and sufficient light. (Or you

might reuse it in a mud room, small hallway, or powder room.) Whatever the fixture, you can place it over a table, in the center of the room, or in a run of two or more if the kitchen is long. Then control the circuit on a dimmer for a variety of light levels. Dimmers are especially effective for creating a welcoming and flattering environment for family and friends when you open your kitchen to the rest of the house.

Another place to locate ambient light is at the top of cabinetry. Consider installing fluorescent tubes (now made as small as a T-2 size, about the diameter of a pencil), low-voltage light strips, or wall sconces on the soffit above the cabinets (an idea I picked up in Whitehead's book *Lighten Up*). Or, if your ceiling is very high, you can mount lighting along the inside of a crown moulding to create a glow around the perimeter of the ceiling. When the ceiling is high, hang your pendant light fixtures about 7' to 7' 6" above the floor. This lends a warm, more human scale to the room. If your ceiling is very low, flush-mounted ceiling fixtures are the only possibility for light in the center of the room. When this is the case, minimize the use of upper cabinets, and put sconces on the wall at about 6' high to make the room feel more balanced.

### **Taking Light to Task**

THE NEXT LAYER to tackle is task lighting—in essence, getting light to shine where you need it. First think about where you need the highest levels of light to see what you are doing, then put a light source there. The most common practice is to mount fluorescent tubes along the bottom of the upper cabinets. This is an effective approach but not the only option. Other possibilities for under-cabinet lighting are halogen light strips and low-voltage "puck" lights. Looking much like their hockey namesakes, puck lights are housings about 2 5/8" in diameter by as little as 7/8" thick that hold tiny reflector bulbs. They recess into the plywood or composite board used to make the cabinets but give off a fair amount of heat, so don't store perishable food-

In a large kitchen devoid of cabinets and the opportunities they offer to hide light sources in soffits, multiple pendants hanging to the 7' level contribute ambient light and ambiance, while period sconces direct task light to work areas over counters, stove, and sink.

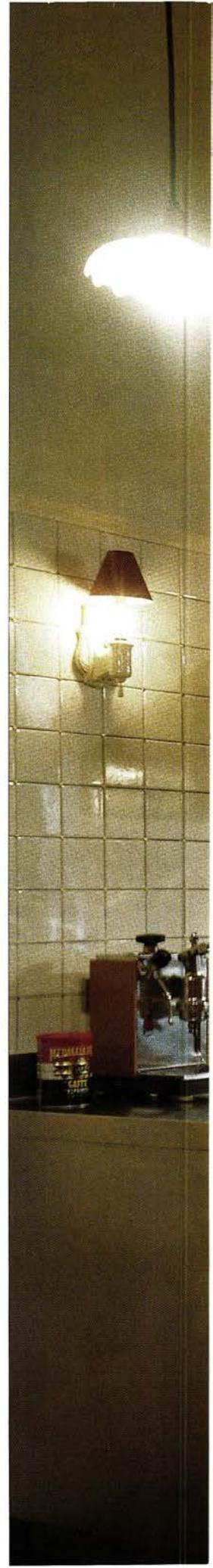




Photo: Dub Rogers

## Lighting in a Flash

If your house was built before Thomas Edison perfected the incandescent lamp in 1879, there is no chance it originally had electric light in the kitchen.

However, if the kitchen had power between 1880 and 1920, the lighting was probably a bare, shadeless lamp—usually hanging from center ceiling on a cloth-covered wire—with a filament glowing through unfrosted glass. Some electric light fixtures made between 1900 and 1935 surrounded the lamp in milk-glass diffusers of various shapes. By the 1930s, kitchens began to sprout a single flush-mounted ceiling fixture in the center of the room. This scheme remained the norm until the 1970s, when homeowners switched to fluorescent lights to save energy and track lighting to increase the amount of light in the room. In the 1980s, architects and homeowners began to fill the room with a grid of recessed downlights, which improved the level but not the quality of light in the kitchen.



stuffs directly above them. A technology rarely considered for this application, but which has definite benefits, is fiber optics. Fiber optic strip lights, for example, give off no heat at all. Fiber optics works by carrying light along hair-thin filaments of glass. The light source, which can be either an MR16 up to 250 watts or a 400-watt metal halide bulb, is kept in an illuminator—a separate housing that is located in a pantry or closet. This installation makes changing bulbs or repairs delightfully simple.

With under-cabinet lighting, be sure to consider the nature of the surface material it will illuminate. If the surface is glossy, as in stainless steel and polished marble or granite, the counter will become a mirror reflecting the image of the light source. You'll avoid this problem if you aim the light on the backsplash—unless that is glossy too. Always bring the fixture forward and block the face so it doesn't shine in your eyes when you sit at a nearby table.

Suppose you need light on a countertop where there are no upper cabinets. Two solutions come to mind. One is mounting wall sconces so they cast light down toward the counter. The other is discriminating use of recessed downlights. When you choose downlights, be sure they have housings with small apertures (openings). Also, make sure the color inside the housing and on the trim blends with the ceiling. For example, for a white ceiling you might pick a low-voltage downlight in a 4" aperture with white trim and inside. Mount downlights no more than 18" from the wall so they shine on the counter, not on your head. The MR16 lamp should be a flood type—that is, one that covers about a 40-degree spread. Your electrician can help you determine how many downlights you will need, but be careful not to overdo it. These fixtures are anachronisms in any historic period and best kept to a strict minimum.

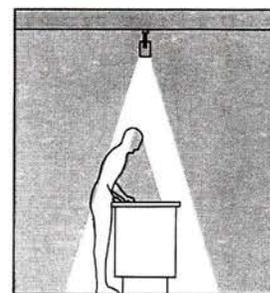
Where else do you need task light? How about in closets, pantries, cabinets, or drawers? Here take advantage of small light sources, such as appliance bulbs or fiber optic heads, mounted inside these spaces and controlled with a momentary contact

In this kitchen, semi-indirect bowls provide ambient light over the island, aided by a discreet pair of recessed can lights in the ceiling. Counter task light, however, comes from under-cabinet fixtures. Note the glazed upper cabinets—a good place for accent lights.

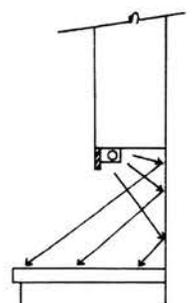


## Location, Location, Location

When it comes to kitchens, what matters most is not the quantity of light you supply, but where you put it.



Historical issues aside, track lighting fixtures do not make good sources of task light because they leave the user working in their own shadow.



To avoid the reflection of undercabinet lights in shiny counter materials, aim the light at the backsplash so the light hits the counter at an angle.

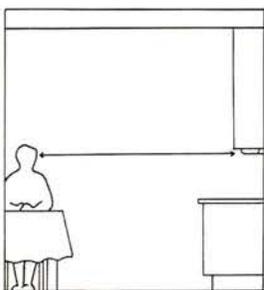


Photo: Michael Bruk

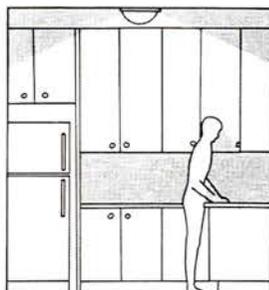
## Watts and Wiring

Before you can plan your lighting, you need to evaluate the kitchen's electrical service and wiring. Each circuit that serves the kitchen should provide about 20 percent more electrical power than you plan to use. So, if you have a circuit that serves one light fixture rated for a maximum 100-watt lamp, your service should provide a minimum of 120 watts. Multiply 120 times the number of light fixtures you will put on that circuit, and you have calculated how much electrical capacity that circuit needs. Now, add the wattage necessary for appliances, both small and large, computers, outlets, and so on. You can see that kitchens consume a lot of electricity. Consult a licensed electrician to be sure your service is adequate for your needs. He or she will also help you bring your wiring up to your local code.

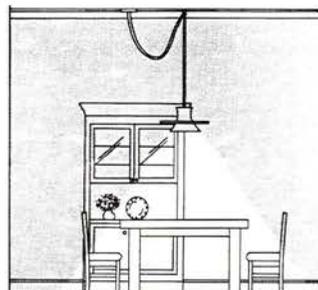
While we're on the subject of wiring, how do you get electricity around the room without disturbing walls? One technique is to conceal it in a channel routed in the backs of mouldings, such as baseboards, chair rails, door or window casings, picture rails, or coves. Run the wiring inside the mouldings as much as possible. A designer, architect, or even a talented electrician can design a system that will avoid lengths of exposed wire anywhere in the room. When lighting cabinets, run the wiring along a channel cut into the back of the unit



When mounted at the back of the cabinet, task lights can produce a glare obvious to people seated nearby. The solution is to move the light forward and use a baffle.



A ceiling fixture mounted in the center of the kitchen cannot supply effective task light at counters because the user's body puts the workspace in shadow.



The height at which you suspend a ceiling fixture has a direct bearing upon the angle or spread of light it supplies, and thereby its effectiveness as ambient light.

Illustrations from *Lighten Up* by Randall Whitehead.

or jamb switch. When you open the space, the light goes on; when you close it, the light goes off. The result is very efficient and effective.

### Artful Accents

THE THIRD LAYER of light is accent lighting—a type that can add ambiance to your kitchen very effectively. Think of the glass cabinets you plan

systems. Fiber optics is more expensive. Fluorescent lighting provides the most light for the least money but has its limitations.

Before making a decision about what will work best for your own project, review all the possibilities with a lighting designer, a knowledgeable interior designer or architect, or a reputable electrician. Since a lot of these products and ideas are relatively new, be prepared for a little research too. Most important, remember that you don't have to overlight the kitchen to achieve good lighting. By lighting your work, not the top of your head, you can get the light levels you need while enhancing the charm of your period kitchen. 🏠

*Carolyn Murray is the principal of Heritage Design Group based in San Francisco; (415-922-8404). Order Lighten Up by Randall Whitehead from Lightsource Publishers (415-626-1277).*

The tops of cabinets provide another effective hiding place for light sources, such as fluorescents. Other creative ideas are hanging period pendants low enough to function as task lights over the island, or even lighting the insides of drawers.



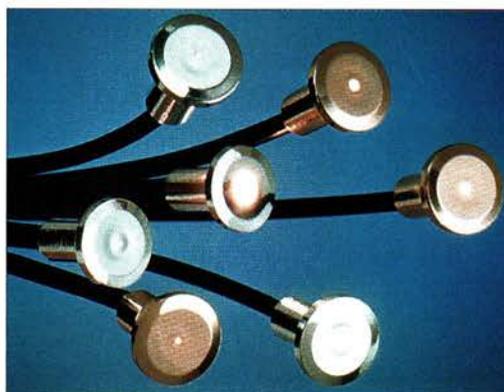
A COMPACT FLUORESCENT LAMP USES ONLY 15 WATTS OF POWER BUT PROVIDES ABOUT THE SAME AMOUNT OF LIGHT AS A 60-WATT LAMP, CAN BE DIMMED, COSTS ABOUT \$4.50, AND LASTS 10,000 HOURS.

to install. Lighting them with dimmable "puck" lights, strip lights, or fiber optics can add a warm glow to the room. If you prefer solid shelving rather than glass, follow Whitehead's advice: Rout out about 1" of the back of the shelf and install a light strip behind it. This creates a glow that runs up and down, plus it gives you back-lighting for your glass objects. You can also employ accent lighting to draw the eye to certain objects, like art or collections, or to accent a texture on a wall—perhaps old brick or stone that tells the story of your house. Accent lighting is the only type where you should consider track lights. These fixtures are now available as low-profile tracks (2" thick) and with very small heads. They do attract attention to themselves, however, and give off a lot of heat, so use them sparingly. A better solution is fiber optics. With very small heads and no heat or ultraviolet emissions, they are ideal for lighting valuable objects.

The ideas presented here vary greatly in up-front price tags, but long-term cost is relative to efficiency. For example, the typical 100-watt light bulb costs around 50 cents and lasts about 700 hours—roughly 29 days of constant use. The T-2 fluorescent tubes mentioned above cost about \$2.80 yet last about 22,000 hours. That translates into 916 days, or nearly 3 years. Another item to consider for efficiency and energy savings is the compact fluorescent. Standard line-voltage light fixtures cost less than low-voltage (6- to 24-volt)

### Technology in the Background

In recent years manufacturers have perfected lighting sources that are thinner, lighter, brighter, and cooler than traditional equipment, and easier than ever to slip unnoticed into historical kitchens.



FIBER OPTICS carry light on glass rods that employ low-profile, recessible heads while the actual source is located many inches away.



TRACK LIGHTS, while always surface mounted, can be more adaptable to period architecture in miniature sizes and low-voltage systems.



Photo courtesy A + H Architecture, P.C.

## SUPPLIERS

### LOW PROFILE FIXTURES

**HAFELE**  
151 Vermont St., #9  
San Francisco, CA 94103  
415-241-9176  
Sub-miniature  
fluorescents, "puck" lights.  
Circle 16 on resource card.

**HERA LIGHTING L.P.**  
6659 Peachtree Industrial Blvd.,  
Suite M  
Norcross, GA 30092  
800-336-4372  
"Puck" lights.  
Circle 17 on resource card.

**W.A.C. LIGHTING**  
615 South St.  
Garden City, NY 11530  
800-526-2588  
Under-cabinet halogen lights.  
Circle 18 on resource card.

### PERIOD FIXTURES

**AMERICAN HOME SUPPLY**  
191 Lost Lake Lane  
Campbell, CA 95008  
(408) 246-1962  
Circle 19 on resource card.

**ARROYO CRAFTSMAN**  
4509 Little John St.  
Baldwin Park, CA 91706  
(888) 227-7696  
Circle 20 on resource card.

**BRASS LIGHT GALLERY**  
131 S. First St.  
Milwaukee, WI 53204  
(800) 243-9595  
Circle 21 on resource card.

**CONCORD LIGHTING**  
1176 Morena Boulevard  
San Diego, CA 92110  
(619) 275-2303  
Circle 22 on resource card.

**HISTORIC LIGHTING**  
114 East Lemon Ave.  
Old Town Monrovia, CA 91016  
(626) 303-4899  
Circle 23 on resource card.

**REJUVENATION LAMP & FIXTURE  
CO.**  
1100 SE Grand Ave.  
Portland, OR 97214  
(888) 343-8548  
Circle 24 on resource card.

**ROY ELECTRIC CO. INC.**  
22 Elm St.  
Westfield, NJ 07090  
(800) 366-3347  
Circle 25 on resource card.

**OLD CALIFORNIA LANTERN CO.**  
975 N. Enterprise St.  
Orange, CA 92867  
(800) 577-6679  
Circle 26 on resource card.



**PUCK LIGHTS** provide focused task light from a housing that is recessed into cabinet soffits.

**HALOGEN LIGHT BARS** can provide a warmer, brighter, source of undercabinet task light than fluorescents in only an inch of space.





Images: Gordon Bock Collection

# *a* Century of

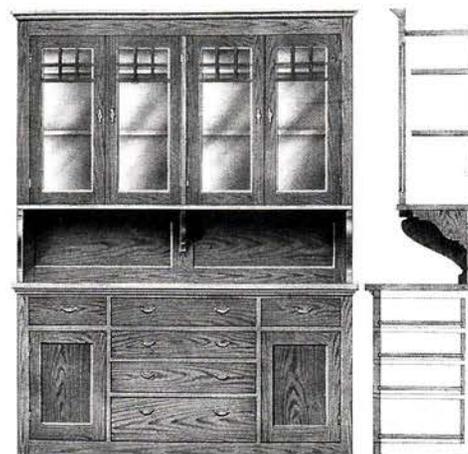


THE STREAMLINED, COHERENT CABINETS OF  
MID-20TH CENTURY KITCHENS HAS ITS ORIGINS IN  
WOODWORK BUILT FOR BUTLERS AND BAKERS.

**W**ERE THERE KITCHENS BEFORE CABINETS? The words are so closely tied in our minds, as well as our tongues, that it's hard to believe there once was one without the other. If the truth be told though, the kitchen cabinets most of us grew up date only from the early years of this century, and cabinets built specifically for the processes of "domestic engineering" only became common shortly before that. Since cabinets are key design features in kitchens of any period—indeed they dominate most modern kitchens—understanding where they came from and what they looked like can be a practical guide for evoking a particular era in an old house.

### The Pantry Dresser

THROUGH MOST OF THE 19TH CENTURY, and well into the 20th century, kitchens were basically bare, open workrooms equipped with a range for cooking, tables for food preparation, and perhaps a modest sink or washing area—all essentially freestanding pieces of legged "furniture." Stationary cabinetwork, if it existed at all, was to be found in the pantry, that combination storage/preparation room in suburban houses positioned between the kitchen proper and the dining room. Called pantry dressers, these cabinets were large, built-in affairs that typically housed china behind glass doors on top,



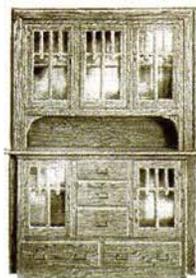
Above: Often oak and always large, pantry dressers could be custom-crafted or ordered knocked-down from millworks catalogs. Left: By the mid 1940s, building a modern kitchen meant picking modules to link into two horizontal rows of integral cabinets

# Cabinets

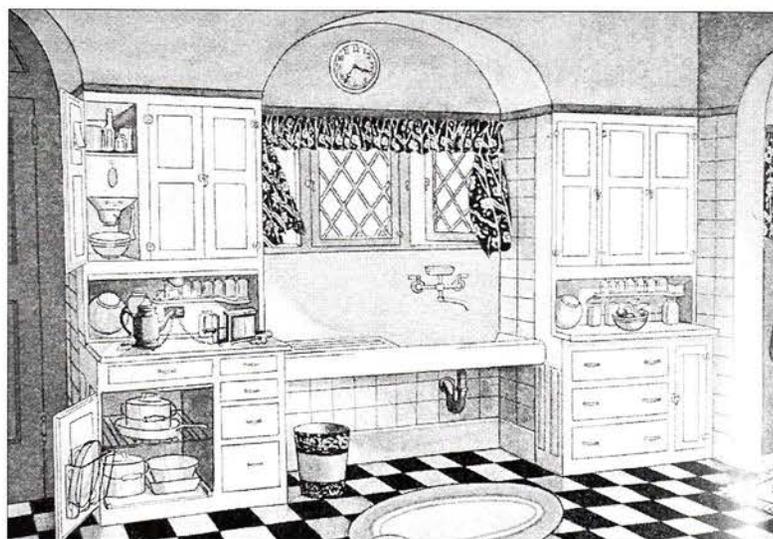
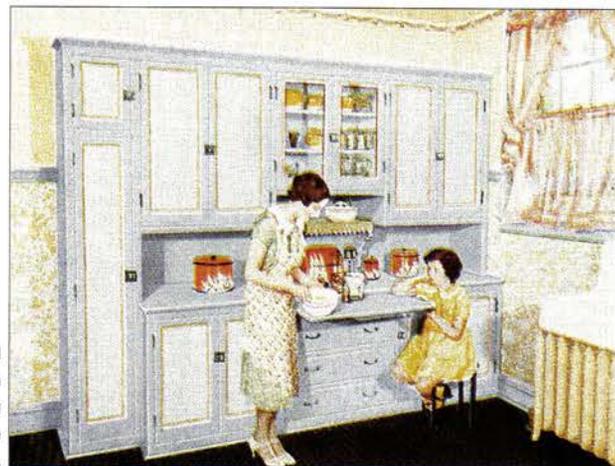
By Gordon Bock



Kitchen dressers, such as these 1924 models, bore close resemblance to their pantry predecessors, except that top cabinets tended to be shallower, and bottom cabinets often included utilitarian bins for grains or potatoes.



This monolithic wall of drawers and doors from the 1930s is actually an expanded version of the freestanding Hoosier-style baking cabinet. Note the pull-out counter shelf.



In 1928 the Napanee company advertised this pair of prefab cabinets designed to fit on either side of a sink—an efficient, up-to-date arrangement that presaged the shift to a continuous, wall-length work surface.

flatware and other equipment below. Counters and possibly a butler's sink provided space to prepare meals before serving, and clean-up after dining was over.

Running wall-to-wall in length, as well as floor-to-ceiling in height, dressers were nearly institutional in construction. Victorian pantry dressers were typically built of varnished hardwoods using flush doors and drawers in the bottom half, glazed doors above. They could be custom-made on site, but were just as easily ordered as standard millwork products from lumberyards.

As the formal butler or maid's pantry started to disappear as houses shrank after 1910

or so, pantry dressers in reduced form began to migrate into the kitchen. No longer bounded by walls, they sprouted shaped brackets at the counter level to support the upper cabinet. As their purpose shifted from meal preparation and tool storage to actual cooking and baking, shelves in the upper cabinets often became narrower to provide easier access to foodstuffs, and the "counter shelf" grew broader to provide more workspace. Top drawers in the bottom cabinet still held utensils and tools, but more likely the lowest levels were reserved for one or more large cupboards to store flour or root vegetables. Construction was

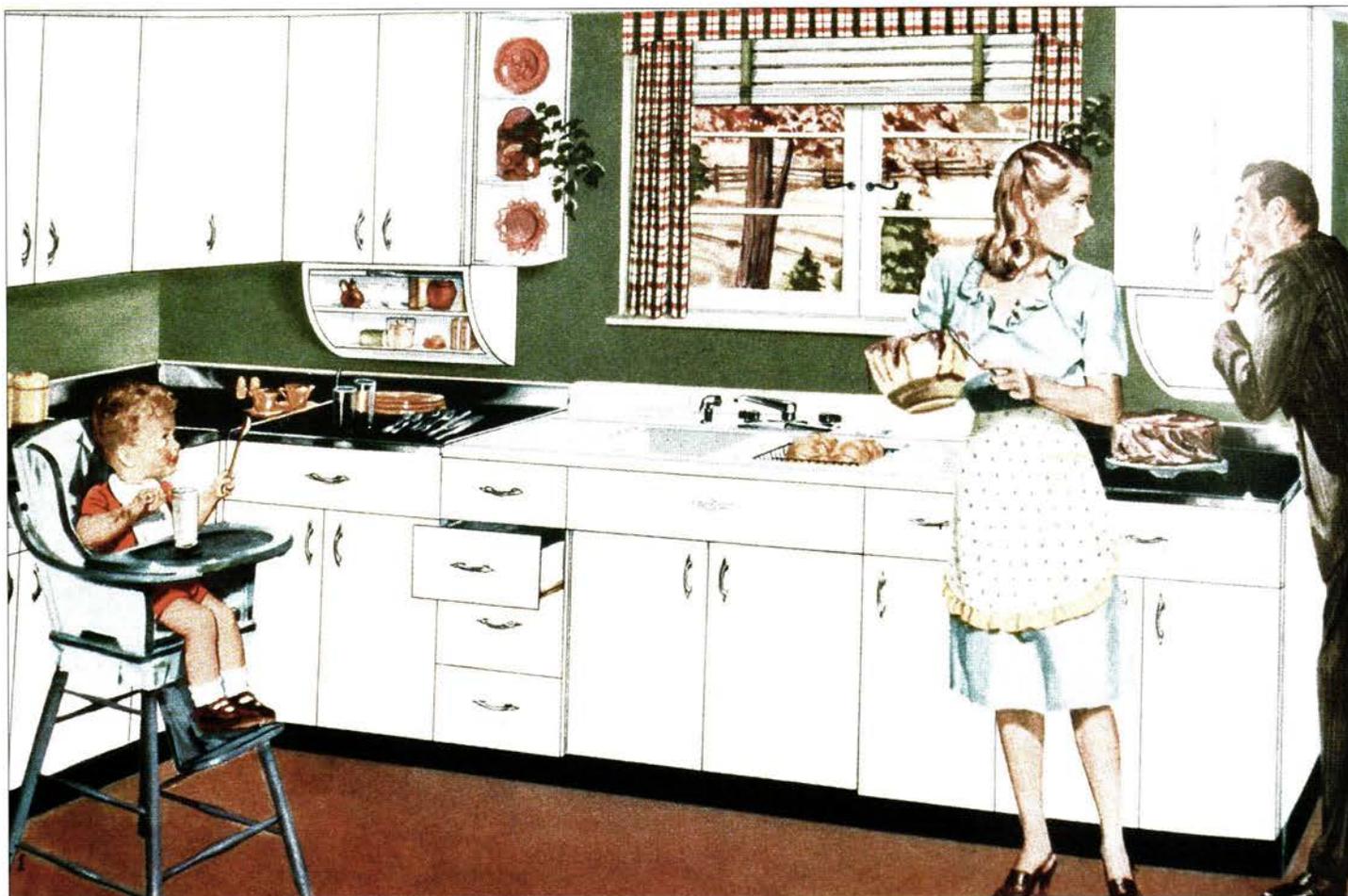
still wood, but perhaps painted rather than varnished. Builders even experimented with more durable and sanitary counter coverings such as sheet metal and linoleum.

### Baking Cabinets

THE PANTRY DRESSER WAS NOT the only cabinet type to lay the groundwork for the modern kitchen cabinet. Coming from another direction—the furniture tradition within the kitchen itself—was the baking cabinet idea. As early as the 1890s the furniture manufacturing industry was marketing ready-made baking tables through mail-order purveyors such as Sears, Roebuck

and Montgomery Ward. Basically four-legged tables with large, half-round drawers (for raising dough) and broad tops (for rolling dough), these tables were intended to make baking more efficient through the use of specifically designed equipment.

By 1905 the baking table had caught on at a rapid rate and evolved into an upright cabinet and a new type of kitchen convenience. Promoted as "scientifically" designed work centers, baking cabinets were closer to self-contained assembly lines with drawers, shelves, sifters, and shakers for every phase of the baking process. The waist-level work surface was an enam-



By 1945, cabinets were modules of unitized dimensions that produced a uniform wall of doors and drawers above and below a continuous counter—one that assimilated the sink, stove, dishwasher, and any other appliance in its path.

eled metal counter deep enough to sit at, and often incorporating a pull-out shelf. Storage bins above the counter were shallow and relatively high, providing plenty space and light for work. Drawers and cupboards below stood on short legs providing comfortable toe space.

Baking cabinets also were the source of a new, thriving industry somewhere between conventional furniture and mill-work manufacturing. Early giants such as Hoosier, which lent its name to the entire class of products, made their cabinets in a variety of models and distributed them essentially complete from a central plant in In-

diana. So successful was the baking cabinet idea that by the late 1920s Hoosier and its competitors were building cabinets so large they covered an entire wall, and incorporated many of the storage and preparation functions of the whole kitchen—far removed from the original, movable baking cabinet or table.

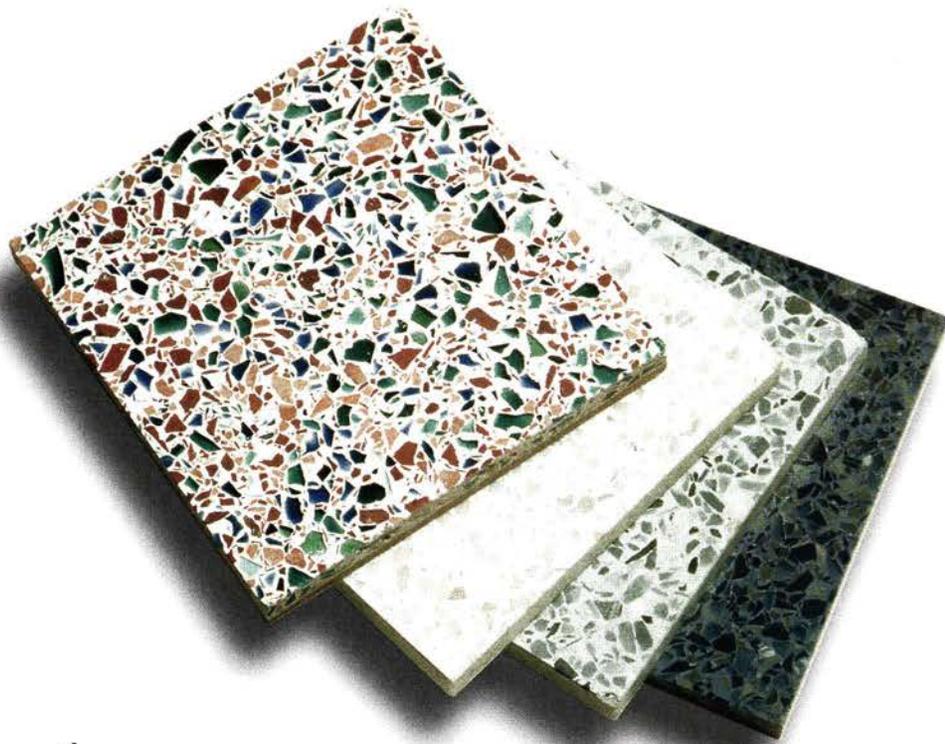
### Modules and Continuous Counters

Ultimately, the idea of a single, all-purpose, integrated cabinet lost appeal with kitchen minded homeowners, and was pretty much passé by the 1940s. The concept of unitized cabinet construction and distribution,

however, took firm hold with manufacturers and new form in the decades to come. As early as the late 1920s, companies like Kitchen Maid and Napanee were marketing standardized cabinet units that could be assembled into a variety of configurations to suit the kitchen space or user. These units, now built of sheet metal as well as wood, were designed fit around other kitchen fixtures, such as refrigerators, cookstoves, and sinks, in an attempt to minimize the steps needed to access any section of the ensemble.

While sections were often stacked in a vertical configuration that still echoed the look

of Victorian pantry dressers, by the 1930s it was common to see early modular cabinets flanking either side of a large sink under the ubiquitous kitchen window. The dual counters connected by a double-basin sink with ample drainboards created, in effect, a single, unbroken horizontal work surface, and subtly influenced the design of cabinets to come. After 1940, the kitchen of the future would not look like a series of floor-to-ceiling lockers punctuated by iron appliances, but a seamless, uniform chain of cabinets, stove, and sinks running horizontally around the room—the continuous countertop kitchen of the 1950s and '60. 



# Terrazzo

VERSATILE, LONG-WEARING, AND EASY TO CARE FOR, TERRAZZO IS THE PERFECT INDOOR-OUTDOOR FLOORING FOR MODERN HOMES. WOULD IT SURPRISE YOU TO KNOW THAT ITS ORIGINS ARE OLDER THAN ROME?

*By Mary Ellen Polson*

**T**ERRAZZO IS SOMETHING OF A chameleon. The darling of posh, plate-glass Art Deco interiors later became a flooring favorite in the Sun Belt, where tract developers poured and smoothed it for houses from Florida to California in the 1950s and '60s. Yet 20th-century terrazzo is a direct descendant of the ancient art of mosaic.

In the 20th century, terrazzo came into its own as a quintessential Modern

flooring material. Primarily composed of marble or stone chips embedded in concrete or cement, terrazzo is poured or cast into place, allowed to cure, ground smooth, and then polished to a high sheen. Terrazzo looks equally at home in an 18th-century Venetian palazzo or a 1940s Richard Neutra house.

## **A Checkered Past**

ALTHOUGH THE ANCIENT Romans get

most of the credit for developing mosaic into a high art form, the Egyptians were actually first to hand-set pieces of stone, glass, or ceramics in a mortar bed to create a decorative pattern. One early Roman method—beautifully revived and possibly surpassed during the Renaissance—involved setting small pieces of broken marble, porphyry, or travertine into a cement base in the form of pictorial scenes. The Romans also



The smooth plane of a terrazzo floor with its rectangular grid of control joints perfectly complemented early Modern residential designs.

Photos: (above) Julius Shulman; (far left) David Sharpe

adapted mosaic to create linear borders of repeating patterns, such as egg-and-dart, acanthus leaf, and Greek key. Another style of mosaic, in which thin sections of marble were cut and set into a larger field to form geometric designs, anticipated marquetry. In Venice, where mosaic never went completely out of style, 15th-century mosaic workers began to use leftover marble chips to surface the terraces around their living quar-

ters. When they learned to embed the gravel into a mortar base, terrazzo (from the Italian for terrace) was born.

Laborers muscled early terrazzo floors smooth with a hand stone and later a gallera, essentially a pumice-grinding stone attached to a long handle. By the 18th century, craftsmen were sealing floors with goat's milk, which brought out the vivid color of the marble. While early forms of terrazzo weren't unknown in



Both mosaics and terrazzo have been adapted to the rise and fall of staircases since Roman times. The inlaid mosaic is from Artistic Tile.

Courtesy Artistic Tile

In Sun Belt states like Florida and California, terrazzo was the perfect floor to create an extension from indoors to the outside. The terrazzo in the foreground of this late 1950s home is a rusticated version of the concrete and stone material.



*Though the basic techniques and materials of terrazzo are unchanged since ancient times, it became newly popular at the turn of the 20th century when modern portland cement and motorized surfacers speeded production.*

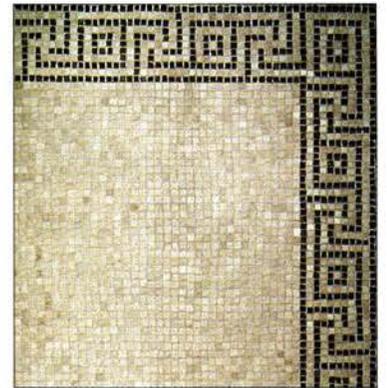
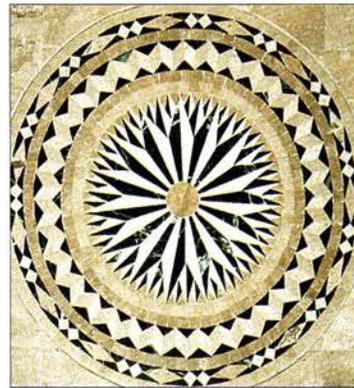
18th-century America (George Washington specified terrazzo for several rooms at Mt. Vernon), “concrete mosaic,” or modern terrazzo, didn’t debut until the 1890s. Terrazzo graces the floors of many early 20th century estates in warm weather climates, including The Breakers in Palm Beach. By the 1920s, the electric grinding machine had replaced the gallera, and builders were using brass (and later zinc) divider strips to minimize the potential for cracking—incidentally paving the way for the creation of intricate field and border patterns that brought terrazzo back full

circle to its mosaic origins.

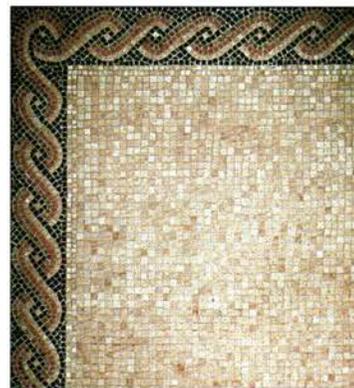
Terrazzo’s sleek, easy-care surface made it ideal for Art Deco interiors, and terrazzo quickly became a standard flooring material in apartment house lobbies, public buildings, hospitals, airports, and schools. After World War II, architect Richard Neutra began specifying terrazzo in his cutting-edge Modern designs. By the late 1950s and early ‘60s, terrazzo had emerged as an economical means of whole-house flooring for the slab construction of single-family houses in rapidly developing Sun Belt states,



Julius Shulman



Where does the mosaic end, and terrazzo begin? Clockwise from top left: A flower box mosaic tile pattern and a marquetry-style inlaid marble mosaic, both from Artistic Tile; a Greek key border and specially commissioned sun and moon mosaic, both from Paris Ceramics; a tumbled stone mosaic from Artistic Tile; Paris Ceramic's Ishtar border mosaic; a terrazzo block pattern from Artistic Tile; and a custom-designed bird mosaic from Paris Ceramics.



Photos (above) courtesy Paris Ceramics and Artistic Tile

especially Florida and California.

### A Modern System

TERRAZZO IS TRADITIONALLY composed of 2 parts marble chips or other stone aggregate to 1 part portland cement, held together with just enough water to work the cookie-like dough into place. Additional marble chips are sprinkled over the surface so that a minimum of 70% marble shows through on the finished surface.

While the mortar bed can be tinted almost any color, the National Terrazzo

### Tiptop Terrazzo

Keeping a terrazzo floor beautiful is largely a matter of common sense. Like any stone floor, the terrazzo should be sealed with a commercial penetrating sealer formulated specifically for terrazzo. Keep in mind that the mortar is most susceptible to stains; epoxy matrixes less so. Always use neutral cleaners (pH between 7 and 10), and keep the floor wet while you clean, so that dirt isn't reabsorbed. If you've inherited a floor with a stain, first determine the nature of the stain. For instance, if the stain is water-based, water will remove it.

- For alcohol-based stains (i.e., wine or iodine), treat the stain with a clear alcohol (i.e., white wine or rubbing alcohol).
- If the stain is acid-based, use an alkali cleaner to neutralize it. Conversely, treat an alkali-based stain with an acidic cleaner, such as white vinegar.
- Clean greasy stains like crayon or wax with soap.
- Using hot solutions on blood, milk, or other stains that contain albumin. The heat will cook the albumin, increasing the likelihood that the stain will bond to the surface.

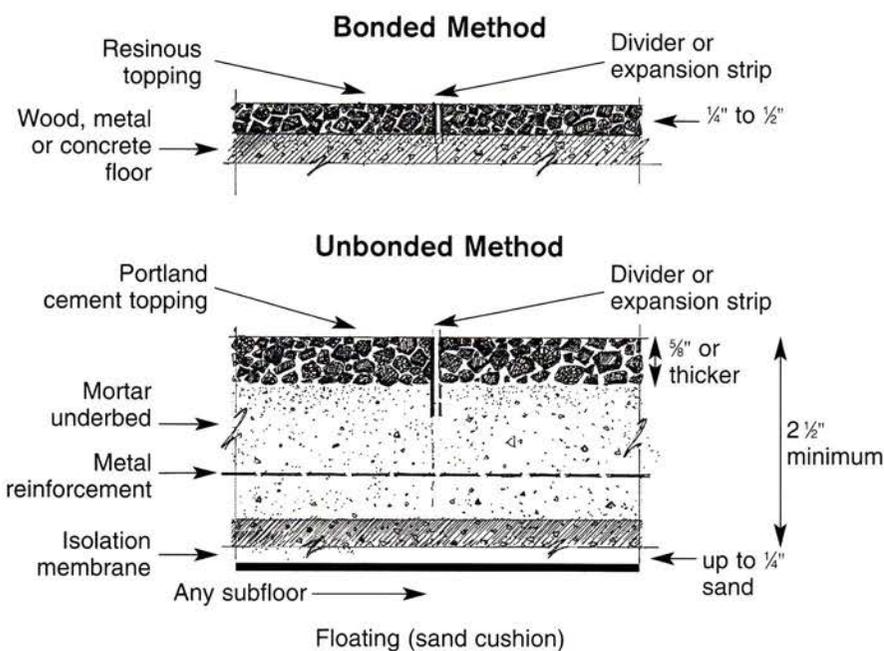


Illustration: Rob Leanna

## Bonding With Terrazzo

Terrazzo floors are either bonded to the subfloor, or unbonded. The unbonded method is historically the most crack-resistant, because the mortar underbed and terrazzo topping float over a cushion of sand. As the illustration above shows, this method creates a floor that's up to 3" thick.

Workers spread a thin layer of sand over a subfloor, then lay down tar paper or polyethylene as a slip sheet. They pour in a reinforced mortar underbed, and anchor divider strips no more than 6' apart into the pad (which can be 2" or more thick) before it sets. "Every divider strip you put into the mortar bed acts as a control strip," says Fred Morgan, president of DePaoli Mosaic Co. in Boston. "That will take care of 99 percent of the structural movement."

At least a day later, the workers pour in a 1/2" terrazzo finish layer to a level just slightly above the finish floor elevation. The floor must cure for four or five days before it is ground and polished.

Probably the most popular of the several bonded methods of installing

terrazzo is the thinset system.

Depending on the composition of the binder, thinset terrazzo can be 1/4" to 1/2" thick, making it adaptable in more situations.

The least expensive of the thinsets is the monolithic system, in which a 1/2" layer of terrazzo is poured over an acid-washed concrete slab. There's a catch, though: "If you get movement below the concrete, the terrazzo will easily crack," Morgan says. Usually any settling occurs within a year after installation, and the installer can grout the damaged areas to match. Monolithic systems are sometimes chemically bonded to the mortar underbed.

The thinnest of the thinsets have resinous (epoxy) bases. A 1/4" epoxy resin terrazzo has about twice the crack resistance of a cement-based terrazzo matrix. It's also about three times as resistant to chemicals and stains. The only drawback is that its thinness limits the size of marble chips in the mix. If you want larger chips, there's also a 3/8" resinous terrazzo.

and Mosaic Association, established in 1931, specifies standard color palettes for terrazzo, which can be adapted to suit individual needs. Even the aggregate chips come in standard sizes—from 1 (1/8" to 1/4") to 8 (1" to 1 1/8").

As a material, terrazzo can be poured in place or precast, making it adaptable for stairs or other architectural uses. There are several methods of laying a terrazzo floor, but most fall into one of two categories: bonded or unbonded (see sidebar at left). Once the underlayment is down, installing, curing, grinding, and polishing the terrazzo finish layer takes several days to complete.

After the underbed has hardened for at least 12 to 24 hours, workers clean the slab with water, and may apply a diluted solution of muriatic acid to prevent algae growth. The ingredients for the terrazzo topping are carefully mixed in the correct proportions. After the mixture is poured and spread, it's immediately compressed with a 300-pound roller to pack in the chips. The workers spread more chips over the surface and ply the roller again to further compact the matrix and force out air bubbles.

Portland-cement matrixes cure for three to seven days; epoxy blends cure for at least two. In a method that's somewhat akin to sanding a floor, a 500-pound grinding machine equipped with 24-grit carborundum or diamond stones slowly moves over the surface, which is constantly kept wet. Since the compression roller tends to bring the flat planes of the marble chips to the surface, the grinder's job is easier than you might think, says Fred Morgan, president of DePaoli Mosaic Co. in Boston. "Hopefully, you only have to go down about 1/16."

After several passes, the stones are replaced with finer, 80-grit stones, and the sheen of the finished terrazzo floor begins to emerge. In cement-based systems, the workers then skim-coat the surface with a



Mosaics are composed of tiny pieces of stone called tesserae, laid in intricate patterns that suggest three-dimensional images, as in the custom pattern at left. The 1" x 1" tesserae in the image at bottom left has been reclaimed from buildings near Jerusalem that date to the Roman era.



*Because it was seamless, and therefore devoid of joints that could hide dirt and germs, terrazzo was considered a sanitary flooring material and a favorite for institutional applications by the 1920s.*

layer of cement grout, which fills in any voids and protects the floor against casual scratching before the final, 110- or 220-grit polishing. The polished floor is washed and sealed with multiple coats of a water-based acrylic floor finish and sealer.

Although a well-made terrazzo floor is capable of lasting for decades (if not centuries), any terrazzo floor will crack if settling or significant expansion or contraction occurs in the support system. That's true regardless of the installation method. Settling and contraction can be significant problems in areas

where houses were built on fill, such as Florida's finger developments in the early 1960s. Most cracks occur near the metal divider strips intended as control joints, where they're likely to be less noticeable. If the damage to an existing terrazzo floor is fairly minimal, you may want to live with it. Repairing terrazzo isn't cheap: patch jobs begin at about \$1,200, says DePaoli's Fred Morgan. Fortunately, 20th-century terrazzo is a standardized material. It's possible to get a reasonably close match by approximating the components of the original mix. 

## SUPPLIERS

For a terrazzo contractor in your area, contact the National Terrazzo & Mosaic Foundation, 110 E. Market St., Suite 200-A, Leesburg, VA 20176 (800) 323-9736, [www.ntma.com](http://www.ntma.com).

**AMERICAN MARAZZI TILE**  
359 Clay Rd., Sunnyvale, TX 75182, (972) 226-0110,  
[www.am-marazzi.com](http://www.am-marazzi.com)  
Circle 27 on resource card.

**ANN SACKS TILE & STONE**  
8120 NE 33rd Dr., Portland, OR 97211, (800) 278-8453  
[www.annsacks.com](http://www.annsacks.com)  
Circle 28 on resource card.

**ARTISTIC TILE**  
79 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10003, (212) 727-9331  
Circle 29 on resource card.

**CROSSVILLE CERAMICS CO.**  
P.O. Box 1168, Crossville, TN 38557, (931) 484-2110  
[www.crossville-ceramics.com](http://www.crossville-ceramics.com)  
Circle 30 on resource card.

**DALTILE**  
7834 Hawn Freeway, Dallas, TX 75217, (800) 933-8453  
[www.daltile.com](http://www.daltile.com)  
Circle 31 on resource card.

**DEPAOLI MOSAIC CO.**  
126 Magazine St., Boston, MA 02119, (617) 445-2381  
[www.depaolimosaic.com](http://www.depaolimosaic.com)  
Circle 32 on resource card.

**FLORIDA TILE**  
P.O. Box 447, Lakeland, FL 33802, (800) FLA-TILE  
[www.FLTILE.com](http://www.FLTILE.com)  
Circle 33 on resource card.

**MOSAICS AND MOSAIC TILE**  
**PARIS CERAMICS**  
150 E. 58th St., 7th floor, New York, NY 10155  
(212) 644 2782  
[www.parisceramics.com](http://www.parisceramics.com)  
Circle 34 on resource card.

**PORPHYRY USA INC.**  
20973 Trade Center Way, Naples, FL 34109  
(941) 591-1433  
Circle 35 on resource card.

**SENECA TILES INC.**  
7100 So. Country Rd. 23, Attica, OH 44807  
(800) 426-4335  
[www.senecatiles.com](http://www.senecatiles.com)  
Circle 36 on resource card.

**TERRA DESIGNS**  
P.O. Box 913, Dover, NJ 07802-0913, (973) 328-1135  
Circle 37 on resource card.

**TERRAZZO & MARBLE SUPPLY COMPANIES**  
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# Bringing Back *a* Bracket

By Steve Jordan

*In 1835*  
IN 1835 BENJAMIN CAMPBELL decided to build a new home in the fashionable Corn Hill district of Rochester, New York. Befitting his success as a local merchant, he wanted to build in the latest architectural style. Since most houses of that era were collaborations between the homeowner and a carpenter/builder, rather than the work of an architect in the modern sense, Campbell chose a design from one of the first American planbooks: *The Modern Builder's Guide* by Minard Lafever (1833).

Campbell configured his house with several interesting features. Although oriented in a temple-front plan typical of the Greek Revival style, it has no front entrance. Instead, a row of tall windows flank the front portico wall, while the entrance opens modestly on the side of the building. Above a secondary side entrance and over an inset porch the builder installed a large scrolled console—a thick, ornamental bracket with parallel, plane sides—to create the illusion of support.

Some 163 years later, painters working on the house, now a museum owned by the Landmark Society of Western New York, noted the console's poor condition: loose floral carvings, missing elements, and details obscured by layers of thick, brittle paint. As supervisor for this project, I knew that I would have to make many of the repairs myself to keep the costs down. Here's some of the techniques we used to re-

vive the console so it remains a defining element of this landmark house.

## Delicate Conditions

THAT FALL OF 1998, the painters also reported multiple layers of caulking and fillers hiding an ever-widening 1" gap between the eave soffit and the console. Clearly, parts were moving and cosmetic fixes were not an option. Knowing that concealing the problem with another bead of caulk might doom the console to a catastrophic fall, the society hired a local preservation contractor to remove it.

As Ted Robinson and Karla Miller of Kirkwall Construction picked, pried, and poked from their scaffold, it became evident that the console was now hanging by two ancient bolts attached to makeshift attic framing. Since the installer had peened over the threads to prevent the nuts from moving, Ted and Karla simply cut them with a hacksaw. Next they fitted braces to the scaffold to catch the console if it fell suddenly—no one had any idea what it weighed—and lowered it to the ground with ropes.

Removed from its perch, a little worse for wear but basically sound, the console clearly appeared much bigger and heavier than anyone had guessed. The builder had made the frame out of  $\frac{3}{4}$  stock (1½" thick) with  $\frac{3}{4}$  (1" thick) decorative pieces nailed to the sides. He cut the outermost scroll curve from solid stock,

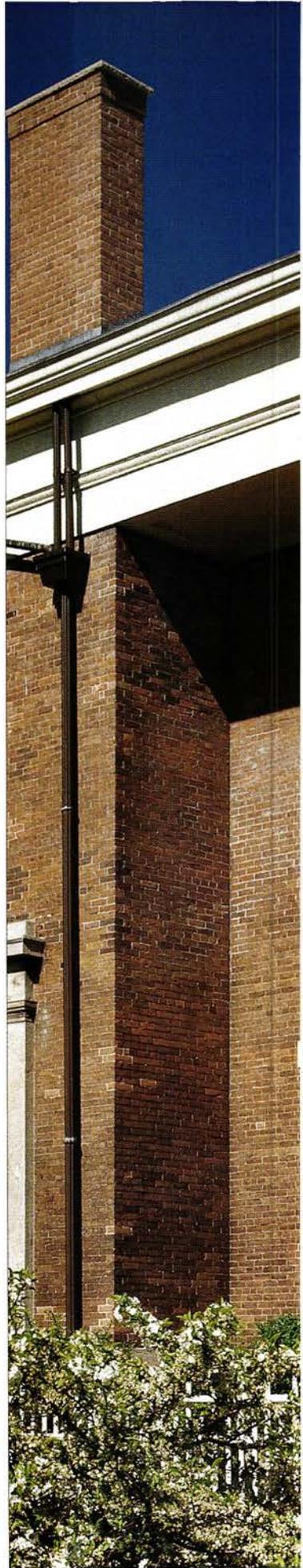




Photo: Andy Olenick. All other photos: Steve Jordan



Left: Perched two storeys above the side entrance, the console's rich carvings shone clearly, but their condition was hard to judge. Above: On the way back up it took two men to carry the massive console.

but formed the long curve by kerfing the backside. It was all nailed together with cut nails. The question was what to do next.

### The Problems of Paint

WE MOVED THE CONSOLE to our barn where staff landscape gardener Beverly Gibson heat-stripped as much of the paint as possible. The paint was very thick and difficult to remove down to bare wood due to the applied ornamentation. Even with pounds of paint now in a bag it was apparent that the console needed much more stripping.

Heat stripping and sanding are generally adequate preparation if a surface is to be repainted. However, many projects require a follow-up with chemical stripping when the wood needs to be clean enough for stains or clear finishes. In this case, the oldest coats of paint were so rough and hard that I felt it best to remove everything. After all, it probably won't be unmounted again for another 100 years.

With this in mind, we shifted the console to Phil Carrol's finishing shop where we removed the remaining paint using a flow-over system and bristle brushes. In this commercial strip-shop method the operator sprays chemicals from 55-gallon drums over the furniture or architectural items in a large steel tank. Theoretically, the system recirculates the excess stripper that flows off the object. We used sol-



I removed the nailed-on details with a mallet. Other relief designs are carved into the body.



Even after two paint strippings I had to clean carved crevices with picks and knives.



Saturating the console surface and relief elements with epoxy consolidant added integrity to the wood.



Before rehangng the console with threaded rods, Ted Robinson reinforced the heavy plank frame.

## SUPPLIERS

Epoxy consolidants and fillers.

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vent-based chemicals—all toxic and best reserved for the controlled ventilation environment of a commercial shop—because they do not raise the wood grain and do not require neutralizing. Caustic-based chemicals, the alternative, usually raise the grain and, if not appropriately neutralized, can adversely affect the subsequent paint job.

We cleaned the console with denatured alcohol to remove any sludge left from the stripper and help wash away any waxes. (Solvent strippers often include wax to slow down their evaporation.) After allowing the woodwork to dry, I sanded the intact portions.

## Weary Woodwork

IN ITS BIRTHDAY SUIT the console didn't look so good. There were warped and missing carvings, rotten framing, and wide cracks in the body of the scroll. The various pieces were originally attached to the scroll with small cut nails and hide glue. Unfortunately, well-meaning painters had "repaired" many with large nails, splitting them into two, four, and even ten smaller pieces.

Slowly, I removed each element, labeling the pieces and their locations with a pencil. The carved elements were either hanging by oversized nails or stuck tight by coats of paint and rusty original nails. Working gently, I first broke the paint bond between each element and the body using a leather mallet and wood chisel. Next, taking a mini prybar I gingerly lifted around all sides. Afterwards, I was able to slowly work the element and nail up, then push the element back down, and finally pull the nail out with nippers.

The carved elements were pine, and while not rotten, had become very dry, porous, and

weathered. There was surface degradation from years of exposure, plus moisture had worked its way in behind many elements. Sanding them back to a bright, sound substrate was not possible. Prior to the advent of manmade resins, restorers might have used a mixture of boiled linseed oil, turpentine, and a little spar varnish to reinforce the weathered fibers into a paintable surface. I chose epoxy consolidants because they have proven very successful for this application. They cure quickly and hard, and are formulated to use with epoxy putty. Working with inexpensive throw-away bristle paint brushes, I saturated all sides of the removed elements and the outside of the console body after the wood was completely dry, well sanded, and vacuumed.

As I reassembled my console puzzle, I fashioned thin, small pieces and filled small voids using epoxy putty. In some areas, I simply pushed the epoxy filler into the voids and smoothed out the surface with a soft cotton rag and epoxy thinner. This was not suitable for large voids however because epoxy shrinks slightly. In these cases, I roughly shaped the putty to the element slightly oversize, then sanded the patch down later. As a precaution, I secured each piece in place with epoxy adhesive, then anchored them with hot-dipped galvanized finish nails set into pre-drilled holes. Afterwards, I filled the countersunk heads with oil putty and skuffed all epoxied areas with 100-grit sandpaper to provide "tooth" for better bonding of the primer coat.

## Finishing Touches

IN ORDER TO REPLICATE the several missing carved elements, I was lucky to have ideal



To carve missing elements I transferred the designs from historic drawings to cardboard.



I attached the new elements with epoxy and nails, then bridged voids with epoxy filler.



Even after decades of exposure, fresh paint brings out the classical elegance of the scrolls.

references: one side of the console that had not been severely exposed to the weather plus Lafever's guide book illustration and HABS measured drawings. Initially, I considered having a local woodcarving club make the elements, but I decided to sculpt the pieces myself using a rotary power tool. After all, it's a rare restoration project that demands the use of hand tools in lieu of modern power tools. I began by creating a paper or cardboard template of the missing element. Then I cut out a rough form using a jig saw (a scroll saw would have been better) leaving enough wood at one end to use as a handle so I could easily hold the piece while working on it.

When all the new and old pieces were re-assembled, I primed the console with two coats of exterior oil-based primer and finished it with two coats of oil-based house paint. The repairs were not invisible, but more than acceptable considering that the console hangs 25' feet over the porch. The initial damage to the console was due to roof leaks and exposure, but later damage was the result of good intentions by people inexperienced in preservation work. In the future, careful instructions for minor repairs and maintenance of this important, but fragile feature will be a part of every painting. For now the console is safely and elegantly lodged back in its home. Protected by a new copper roof and guarded by the Landmark Society, we expect it to last another 165 years. 🏠

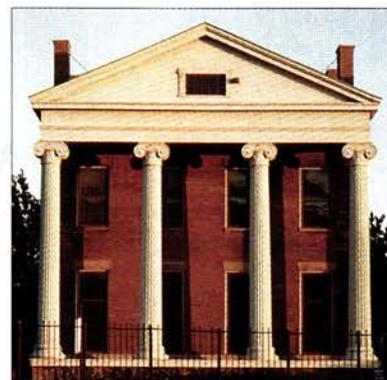
*Contributing Editor Steve Jordan, the Rehab Advisor for the Landmark Society from 1991 until 1999, is now a building conservator for Bero Associates Architects in Rochester, New York.*

## Building by the Book

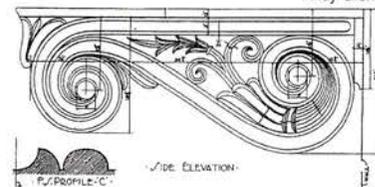
What makes Campbell's house remarkable is that it follows Minard Lafever's illustrations so closely. Without knowing which came first, the house or the book, one might guess the house was actually designed and built before Lafever incorporated all its details into his book. Perhaps Campbell liked the book's Greek Revival details, which conveyed the exact image of classical confidence he desired. Or maybe Campbell had met Lafever, who had left nearby Geneva, New York to make a name for himself in New York City as a successful architect and author.

Whatever the reason, Lafever's interpretation of the Greek style, featuring stately temple fronts with fluted columns, lavish interiors with plaster moldings, and intricate carved wooden details, was the perfect choice. Now known as the Campbell-Whittlesey House, it is owned and operated by the Landmark Society of Western New York and is hailed as one of the finest Greek Revival house museums in the nation.

The Campbell-Whittlesey House is located in Rochester, New York and is open for tours in the spring, summer, and fall. For more information call (716) 546-7029.



Andy Olenick

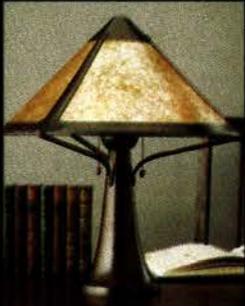


Top: Columns and a triangular pediment complete the temple front of Campbell's house. Above: The console as documented in the 1930s (Historic American Buildings Survey).

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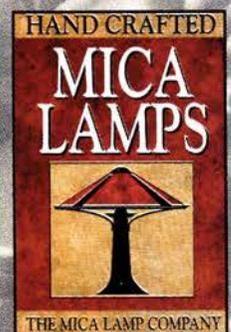
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# CARPENTER GOTHIC

*Irregular, anti-classical, and broodingly interesting, Carpenter Gothic put a new, residential spin on church architecture.*

With its striking oriel and decorative eave trusses, so popular in later Carpenter Gothic houses, the 1878 William Cogswell house in Rochester, New York is an ideal example of the transition to Stick Style.





DR. HARTWELL CARVER HOUSE (1853)  
PITTSFORD, NEW YORK

Besides the characteristic steep roofs, vergeboards, and board-and-batten siding, this house shows a new freedom in arranging gables to create opportunities for rooms, nooks, closets, and other interesting spaces.

Andy Olenick

In the wake of the new republic's first national style, Greek Revival, America caught another historical wave: Gothic Revival. Inspired in England by, among other influences, the theories of A.W.N. Pugin and the novels of Sir Walter Scott, the Gothic Revival was an attempt to revive the "purer" standards of medieval architecture. Exported to America as early as 1799, the style became the height of fashion in the 1840s, especially in the stone or stucco villas of architect Alexander Jackson Davis. Fitting for a land rich in timber, however, many of the smaller and most charming examples sprang from the talented hands of anonymous carpenter-builders — hence the name Carpenter Gothic.

The time had never been better for manipulating wood into the chiseled churchlike forms of the Gothic idiom. New steam-powered sawmills provided ample raw material for vertical board-and-batten siding, the style's hallmark cladding. Whirring bandsaws could cut fretwork ornament with previously unheard-of speed and intricacy. Plans and details were widely available in the books of Gothic popularizer Andrew Jackson Downing and his architect collaborator, Calvert Vaux.

Underneath its fanciful gingerbread ornament, Carpenter Gothic represented a fundamental shift in house design. Compared with timber framing, the new system of balloon framing with mill-sawn lumber made possible thinner, lighter walls, and thus more flexibility in design. These houses often ignored the severe symmetrical massing of classical styles, such as Georgian and Greek Revival, in favor of off-center forms and complex interior spaces. Inventive and picturesque, Carpenter Gothic led the way to the Stick Style and the full bloom of Victorian houses in the 1880s.



# CARPENTER GOTHIC

[1840-1865]



# Home Is Where The Office Is

Turn an old attic into a modern office.



Working from home is no longer a trend: it's an everyday reality for millions.

Consequently, more and more of us are searching for space around the house to turn into an office. Fortunately, most homes have unused space that can be readily converted – basements and attics lead the list.

The attic of this late 19<sup>th</sup> century Gothic house was ideal: separated from the rest of the household, with plenty of room, good light and lots of architectural detail.

But its wood paneling and molding were dried out and damaged after years of neglect, and making the room functional without compromising its vintage charm would be a challenge.

Solution: The walls and moldings were cleaned and revived with Minwax® and Formby's® products, restoring the wood's natural beauty.

Nevertheless, this is an office, so function is crucial. Ornate

furnishings would have been impractical; instead, practical, stylish pieces were chosen, such as the contemporary glass-topped desk, to lighten the look and make for a better work environment. A cool rattan chair, plus wicker-trimmed shelves and a wicker box that serves as a file cabinet, balance the warmth of the beautiful woodwork.

**MINWAX**



BASICS

## Sash Window Clinic

Maintaining the Mechanics of Double-Hung Windows

by William T. Cox Jr.

PHOTOS BY LIGHTSTREAM

**M**OST OLD HOUSES have scores of double-hung windows, and most windows are built to outlast the carpenters who installed them—if they are properly maintained. Unfortunately, past generations sometimes cared little about the moving parts of a wood window. In fact, it's tough after, say, 75 years of painting to recognize the removable parts, especially those that are badly neglected. Yet, when a window gets painted shut or the sashes loosen up, when weights fall or cords fray, knowing how to dismantle the parts of a wood sash window is half the repair battle. Here's a refresher course in maintaining the mechanical parts of a typical double-hung window, one of the easiest and most satisfying operations in old-house upkeep.



David Sharpe

**THE PERILS OF PAINT**

POOR PAINTING SKILLS destroy windows. It takes little more than one sloppy coat of paint to bind a sash in place as strong as any glue. Windows should always be painted in an open position and moved often to keep the sashes free while the paint dries.

To unstick a window that is paint bound, start with a sharp utility knife and gently score the joints between the sashes and stops. Do the same between the bottom rail and stool (the indoor equivalent of the sill). Don't attempt to cut through the paint on the first try. If you dare, most likely the tip of the blade will skate across the face of the stop, leaving you with a gash to repair. Instead, make light passes at first (a cautious approach that has saved many pieces of trim). As you cut, try pushing against the bottom sash stiles several times with your hand to help break the bond. Avoid using a pry bar at this stage as pry marks are nearly impossible to remove.

You may have to go outdoors and cut between the bottom sash and parting stops. Or try this trick. Run a long, thin, flat piece of metal like a saw blade or metal strapping between the bottom sash stile and parting stop at the top and bottom sash meeting rails. Still unsuccessful? Then remove the inside stops by carefully prying these mouldings from their jambs (see next section). If the sash still stays put, soften the paint with stripper and try again.

**REMOVING STOPS AND SASH**

STOPS ARE BUILT to be movable so you can pull the sash for service, as well as clean off overpaint. To remove stops without damaging the finish, first cut the paint at the joint with a utility knife. Then, get behind the stop on the channel side using nothing bigger than a 6" "trim" pry bar to avoid pry marks. Starting at the middle, pry the stop away from the jamb a little at a time along its full length, prying at or near the nails that typically hold them in



To pry off a stop molding, first score the paint or varnish at any joints. Next, carefully insert a broad putty knife into the joint and put a second knife behind it. Then slide a flat prybar (1) between the knives. While the knives protect the wood, carefully pry off the moulding near any nails. When the stop is loose, carefully bow it (2) to release the ends. Watch for miters and pockets.

place. These mouldings become quite brittle over time and will splinter if moved out too far in one spot. Also, nails rust here more than anywhere else in a house and hold very tightly. If you're unable to move the stop, look for screws. Some stops are fastened to the jamb with flat-head slotted brass screws and cup washers.

As you work the stop free, gently bow it in the middle to release the ends. Note how they are built. Many stops are mitered at the top, but they may also slip into pockets that will split the wood if you muscle the stop out. I've also found stops reinstalled upside down. When you remove the first stop completely, mark an "R" or "L" on the back near the top. Remove the finish nails by pulling them through the wood with nippers.

There are so many sash-and-stop designs you may consider becoming a detective instead of a carpenter. Some sashes have a slot cut the full length of the stile, which holds a crimped piece of galvanized tin nailed to the channel. Pulling

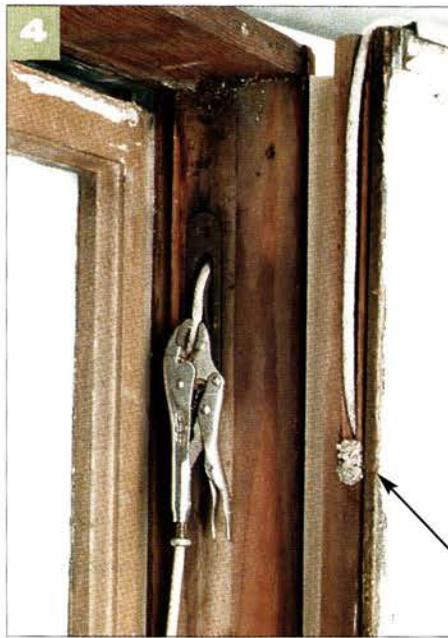


the top two nails should loosen the sash. (You may have to cut the rest of the nails to remove the metal strip in one piece.) Try using a 5" tapping knife to get behind the metal weatherstripping. Or, if you resort to tearing the metal out, replace it with 1 1/4" spring bronze weatherstripping.

**PARTING STRIPS**

WITH ONE STOP REMOVED, you should be able to cock the bottom sash out of the window frame so it dangles from two cords. Have your helper hold one side of the sash while you investigate how the cord is attached to the stile. The knotted end of the sash cord should sit in a pocket, perhaps secured with a nail. Before removing the cord, tie a slip knot near the pulley (or clamp the cord) to keep the weight from falling into the weight chamber, cord and all. If your windows are big enough to have chains, slip a nail through one of the links.

To remove a double-hung top sash, cut the paint between the top sash and the parting strip. The parting strip (or parting



With one stop off, there's enough clearance to lift and angle the sash out of the window (3). Before removing the sash, secure the weight with a knot or clamp (4); the cord end can easily pop out of the sash stile (see arrow, above).

bead) is a standard millwork item; if it breaks, you can replace it at your local lumber yard. Pick a side, then start prying the parting strip out near the sill using a pair of locking pliers to gently loosen the wood. It may be secured with two or three 6d box nails. Remove the nails as you pry, working the strip free up to the top sash, but, don't try to remove it completely at this time.

Now, slide the top sash down as far as it will go. Don't worry if it binds. Work the parting strip loose from the header down. The parting strip should twist out

of its gain (recess), freeing the top sash. For now you can leave the other strip in the jamb. Remove the sash cords the same way as described before, then scrape, glaze, and paint the two sashes as needed.

### WEIGHTS AND CORDS

WITH STOPS AND SASHES REMOVED, look for a small door sitting flush in the bottom of the sash channel. This door, usually secured with a single wood screw, will give you access to the weight pockets without having to remove the inside window trim. As you reach for the cords, note which

## BEYOND WEIGHTS

Though cord-and-weight systems have been used to hold up window sashes for more than two centuries, they're not the only way to go. A variety of devices—both old and recent—are available for securing sashes where weights are gone or never were.

### TAPE BALANCES

Also known as clock-spring balances, tape balances are spiral springs enclosed in a case the size of standard sash pulleys and carefully calibrated to balance the weight of the sash. They have been on the market since the 1890s, and are historically appropriate alternatives to weight systems where the weights are gone or the pockets have been filled with insulation.



### CONCEALED BALANCES

A mid-20th century retrofit device, these spring-loaded balances install in a plough in the sash stile, leaving no exposed hardware and keeping the original window appearance.



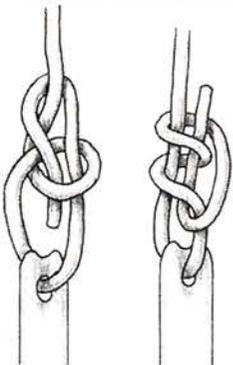
### SASH CAMS

Simple but effective, sash cams are cast iron catches that pivot on a wood screw to hold the sash at the desired height by friction. Low-tech and decidedly 19th century, original versions date to the 1860s and earlier.

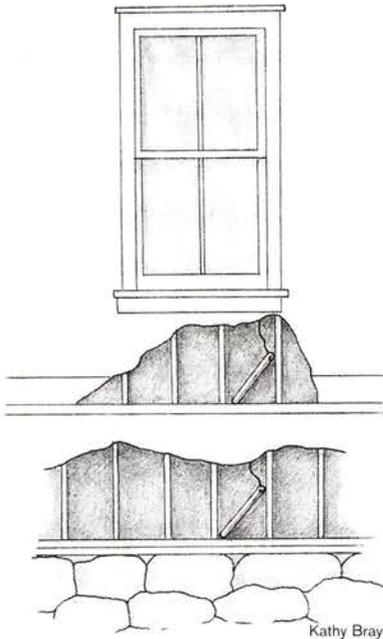


## Know Your Knots

Boy Scout skills aside, hitching the sash weight to the cord is an important step. If the weight hangs at any angle, it may bind in the pocket. If the knot slips, you'll lose the weight. Pros debate over the perfect knot, but the two at left are common for standard weights. You may also encounter patent-style weights designed for speedy installation using only an overhand knot.



Kathy Bray



Kathy Bray

## Runaway Weights

If your weights appear to have flown the coop, look just below the plaster behind a carefully removed baseboard. In the open walls of balloon-frame houses, weights will even drop all the way to the basement.

### SUPPLIERS

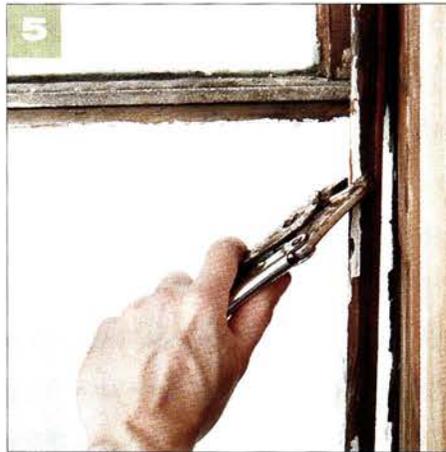
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To remove the parting bead, grasp it with locking pliers (5), then work the strip out from the notch in the upper sash meeting rail. Note that the bead may already be weak or worn at this point. Angled ends and a single wood screw secure the weight pocket door (6) and access to the weights.



weight goes with each sash. If you have, say, a six-over-two window pattern, the bottom sash may be the lighter of the two and will never stay down with the wrong weights tied to it.

Anytime the sash cord shows signs of wear or sloppy painting (which makes the fibers brittle), replace it with the best product you can find. True sash cord is braided cotton surrounding a cotton inner core. I've seen people use clothesline but it doesn't last. (Sunlight and heat destroy the plastic coating, making quite a mess.) Check the oldest hardware store in your town; they should sell sash cord by the foot or fifty foot coils and in sizes for the weights of residential windows—usually No. 7 (5 lbs. to 12 lbs.) or No. 8 (12 lbs. to 20 lbs.). Cut the new cord to the length of the old cord. If the cord is gone, measure from the knot pocket on the sash stile to the top rail, and from the window header to the sill. Adding these two measurements will approximate the length for the sash cord.

Feed the cord back over the pulleys, then tie an appropriate knot to hold the weight—usually either an overhand knot (for recessed holes) or a bowline or “sash knot” (for standard holes). If need be, you can use a snake (a string tied to a small weight) to get to the bottom of the weight chamber. Don't tie the weights so they bottom out on the sill or bind at the pulleys when the sash is moved from header to sill.

After you've scraped the sashes and stops free of paint build-up, reinstall the parts in reverse order. Some folks lightly wax the sash channels at this point with paraffin or bee's wax, but never use soap (it tends to stain). With sash in place, nail or screw the inside stops snug to the bottom sash, then slide the sash up to the header and secure the stops snug there, too. Check the stops again in a few months; seasonal humidity swings will affect stop-to-sash clearance. Last, slide your sashes up and down a few times to satisfy yourself that everything is in effortless working order. 🛠️

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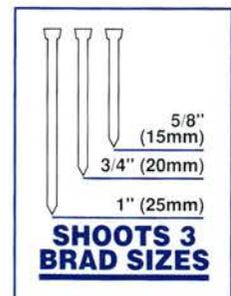
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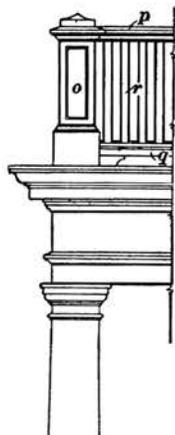
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# OLD HOUSE ADVISOR



Replacing the iron railing atop this semicircular entry porch would restore the featured part of the Colonial Revival house. Inset: typical balustrade details from 1930.



## MAKING AND ENTRANCE

Previous owners of our 1928 Colonial Revival house "updated" the entry porch with wrought iron supports and indoor/outdoor carpet. We've put back the Doric columns, but what's appropriate for the railing?

—GEORGIA C. MOHR  
ERIE, PENN.

FEDERAL AND ADAM STYLE HOUSES of the late 18th century, the models for your house, were often very austere buildings lacking any ornamental flourishes — except

at the front entrance. Here builders would lavish turned woodwork or decorative carvings on this all-important, character-defining focal point. Many entrances are relatively flat surrounds composed of cornices, pediments, and pilasters, but substantial porches supported by columns are just as typical. Since residents could access the porch roof through the central (often palladian) window, a balustrade made practical as well as architectural sense.

Porch balustrades usually follow the design of the roof balustrades found on

these buildings, but beyond this there are many variations. Rectangular porches frequently have ample square posts at corners. Here rectangular panels and turned or carved finials are common details. Semicircular porches such as yours might have posts over the columns, but the balustrade could just as easily be postless if the builder was able to engineer it that way.

## MOSSED OUT

The original concrete tile roof on our bungalow is covered with several types of moss. We've tried to kill and scrape it off with the usual approaches (bleach solution, moss-killing products) but to no avail. Any ideas?

—MICHAEL MCCARTHY  
LAKEWOOD, OHIO

SINCE THE USUAL strategies aren't mastering your moss, you may have to switch tactics. Investigate ammonium sulfamate -- available at garden supply stores, and recommended for killing moss on concrete. It leaves a white powder, but this is easily washed off. Mix the solution according to the manufacturer's directions and, as with all moss-killers, handle the chemicals carefully and avoid contact with other plants.

## INSPIRED BAGGING

When I wallpaper or paint a room, the door hardware inevitably ends up with drip marks from paste or paint, which can be tedious to clean. A useful trick I discovered to prevent the mess is to tie plastic sandwich bags over the knobs. The plastic protects the knobs and they are cheap enough to throw away when I'm done.

—BILL FARRIN  
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—MARY LARSEN  
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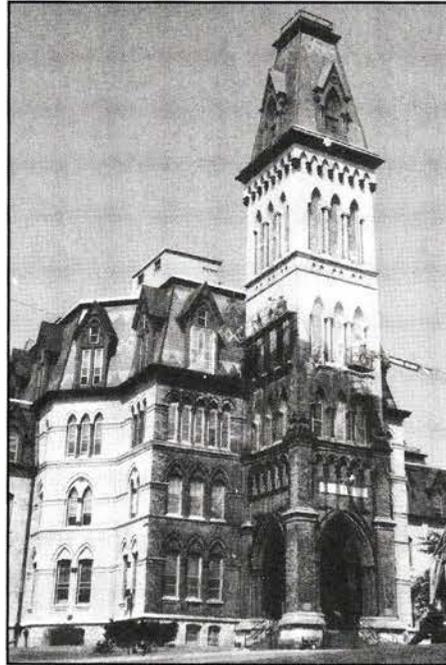


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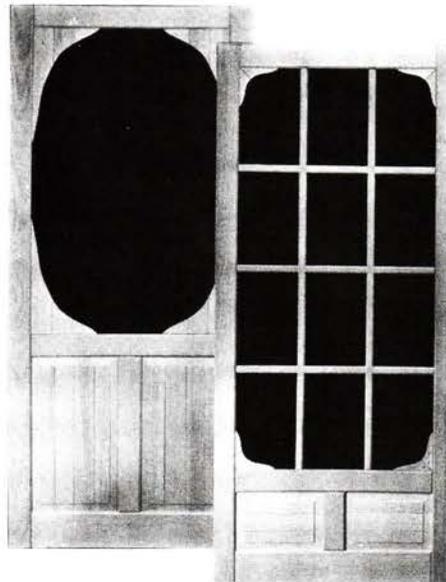
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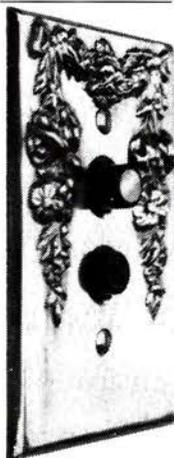


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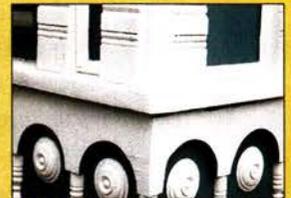
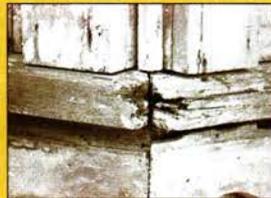
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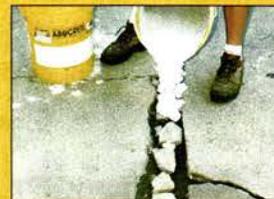
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By Andrea Moser

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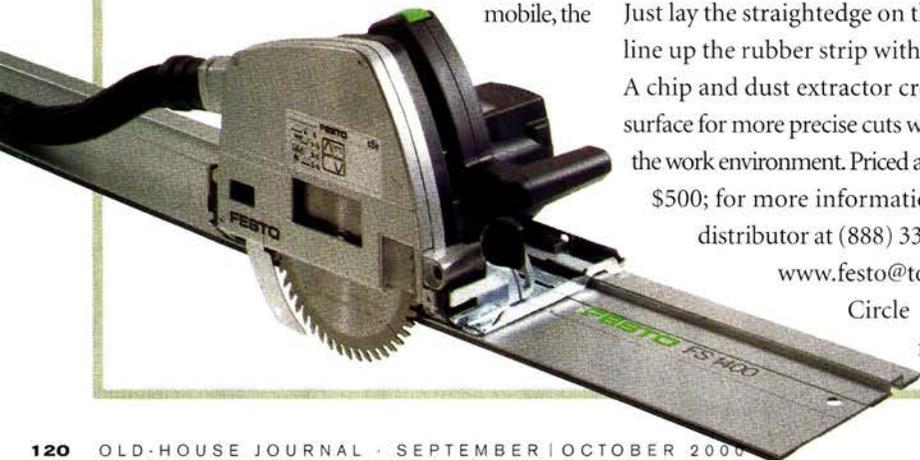


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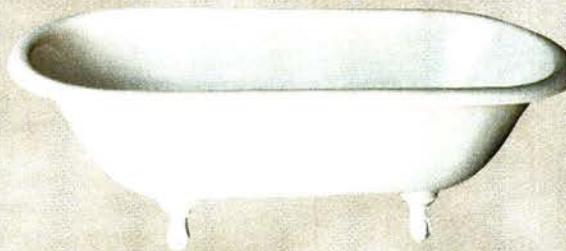
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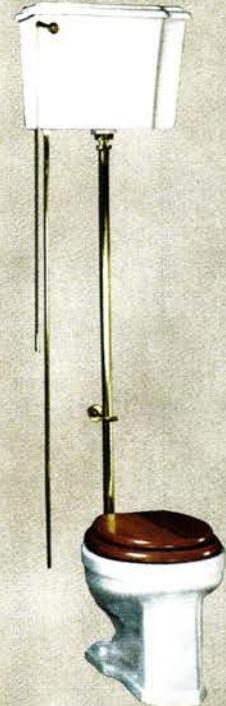
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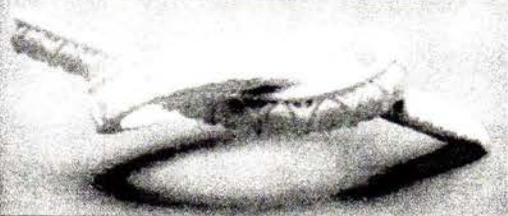
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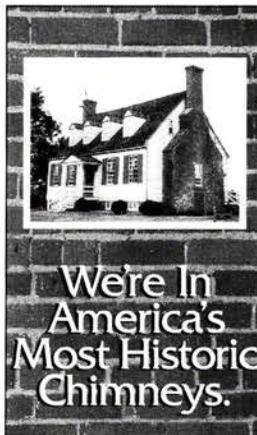
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George Brown

## Collecting the Functional

According to William Morris, we should have nothing in our houses we don't believe to be beautiful, or know to be useful. Here's two guides to delightfully practical house fittings that approach the appeal of artworks.

**P**ERSIAN RUGS have a long history as favorite floor coverings in old houses, complementing many house styles from the austere classicism of the Georgian style, to the exuberant complexity of Victorian era, to the spare aesthetics of the Arts & Crafts movement. Today, interest in Persian rugs is at a new high, especially as officials loosen up trade restrictions with Iran. As a consequence, guidebooks abound for those old-house lovers who wish to decorate their floors with this form of textile art. One of the classic references loaded with brilliant illustrations—over 400 in color!—is *Oriental Carpet Design, A Guide to Traditional Motifs, Patterns and Symbols* by P. R. J. Ford (published by Thames and Hudson Ltd., London). Another book with a much more specific focus, and a compact size, is *Tribal Rugs* by Jenny Housego, an easy-to-read guide to the peoples and traditions that make these remarkable textiles.

Persian rugs—often broadly referred to as oriental rugs—are most common in the form of finely woven floral carpets. Though made by hand, generally they are commercially manufactured urban and village goods intended for resale. Tribal rugs, on the other

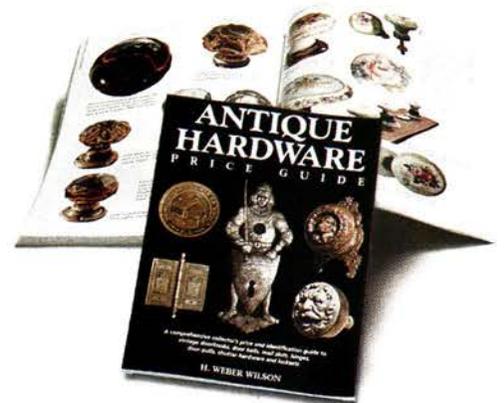
hand, are exclusively woven for home use, and represent a whole other tradition compared to their cousins. Furthermore, tribal rugs are generally not more than 100 years old, as they were discarded when worn out. The term tribal does not always mean migratory or nomadic either. Rather, it denotes peoples of similar ancestry. The tribal rug category also includes various other woven bits and pieces, such as camel-wear, bedding bags, and assorted coverings. These items, which tend to be smaller, are technically not rugs, but are made with similar patterns and methods.

Author Housego focuses her book on the tribes in Iran, providing a map that allows the reader to trace the geographic origins of various rugs. Each tribe is known for its hallmark designs and weaving style but, as she notes, attributing a tribal rug to a specific locale is not always so simple. A much larger area was once considered Persia, and a 70-year-old tribal rug, for example, could be from what is now known as Turkey, Iraq, or the Russian Caucasus. In this region, the last 100 years has not been a stable period, and many tribes have either moved or been uprooted for political or military reasons. Therefore a traditional weaving pattern in a rug may no longer be a reliable clue for the owner trying to find its origin.

One look at the 148 color prints in *Tribal Rugs* will bring home their distinctive characteristics, not the least of which is their

### TRIBAL RUGS

BY JENNY HOUSEGO  
ISBN 1-56656-218-X Interlink  
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(413) 582-7054



George Brown

### ANTIQUE HARDWARE PRICE GUIDE

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individuality. These textile treasures can also surprise the prospective buyer with their lively color range. A case in point is the small rug and pair of camel pieces this writer bought from a southern Iraqi bedouin tribe. The fuchsia, turquoise, and yellow designs were so strong they bordered on the psychedelic, yet all the dyes were made from natural materials, such plants and roots.

AN EVEN MORE FAMILIAR old-house appointment, and one that is gaining recognition as functional art, is American antique hardware. Also known as cast architectural fittings, these are the doorknobs, handles, hinges, door knockers, and bells that make every building work, and often make them more attractive in the process. Anyone interested in collecting in this growing field, or just plain curious about

the hardware they already own, will do well to pick up a copy of *Antique Hardware Price Guide*. Written by H. Weber Wilson, an expert in the field and early *Old-House Journal* contributor, this book is a comprehensive price and identification guide to the amazing world of vintage hardware, complete with market price ranges.

The idea of a market for century-old hinges may sound off-beat, but in an era when yesterday's building salvage has become today's architectural antique, some pieces of vintage hardware can sell for thousands of dollars. It is not hard to imagine an old-house owner neglecting valuable decorative hardware in their building simply by being unaware of its background. During a recent visit to small-town historic building, now a museum, a friend spotted the renowned "doggie doorknob," one of the finest examples of 19th century production metalworking, in the front hall. The docent had no idea that similar knobs sold for hundreds of dollars, or even that it was there. To a savvy bargain-hunter or a knowledgeable thief the "doggie" would have been easy prey.

Web Wilson divides the book into sections on manufacturers, hardware styles, hardware for doors, figural and emblematic hardware, and special discussions on doorknobs. Each chapter is chock full of black-and-white photos. A special color section displays outstanding hardware of serious collector quality, showcasing their excellent condition and often mesmerizing colors.

As a finale, Wilson adds a charming chapter called "They Loved the Lions" on what is probably the most popular animal motif of 19th century industrial artists. Featured here is the Ludwig Kreuzinger lion doorknob, a design patented in 1870 that represents the very best of American decorative hardware. It can fetch upwards of \$2,000 today. Apparently we love the lions too.

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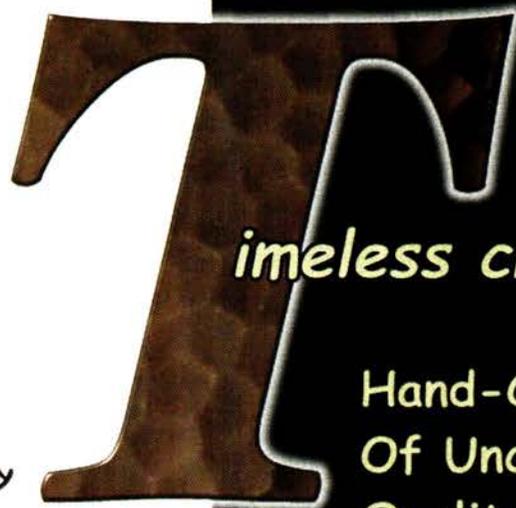
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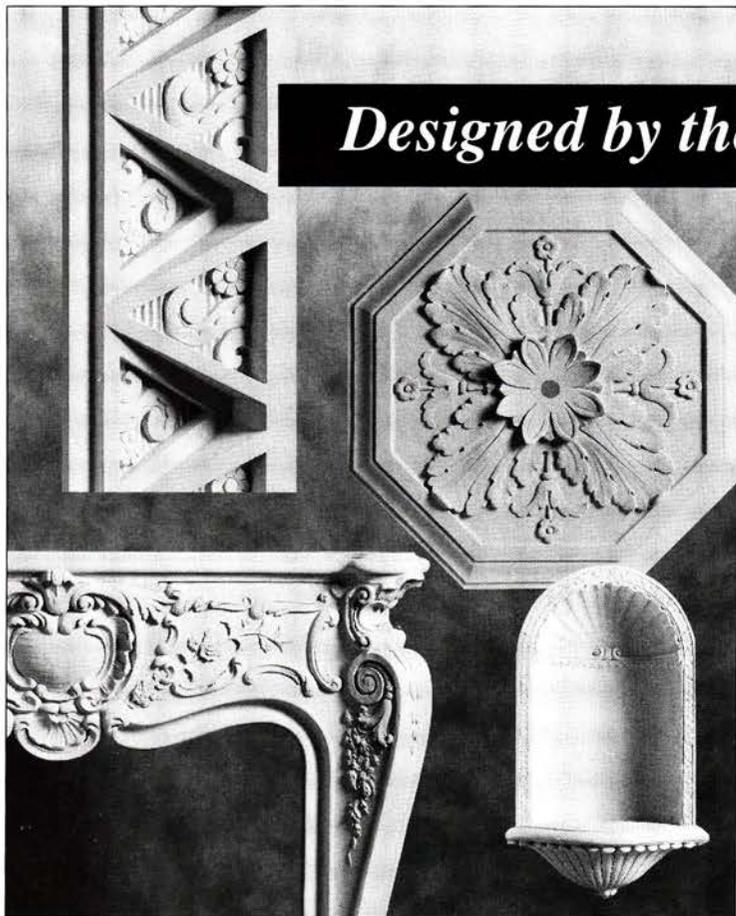
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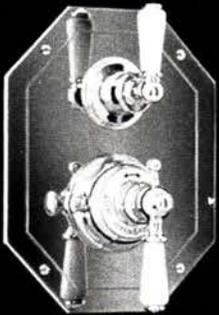
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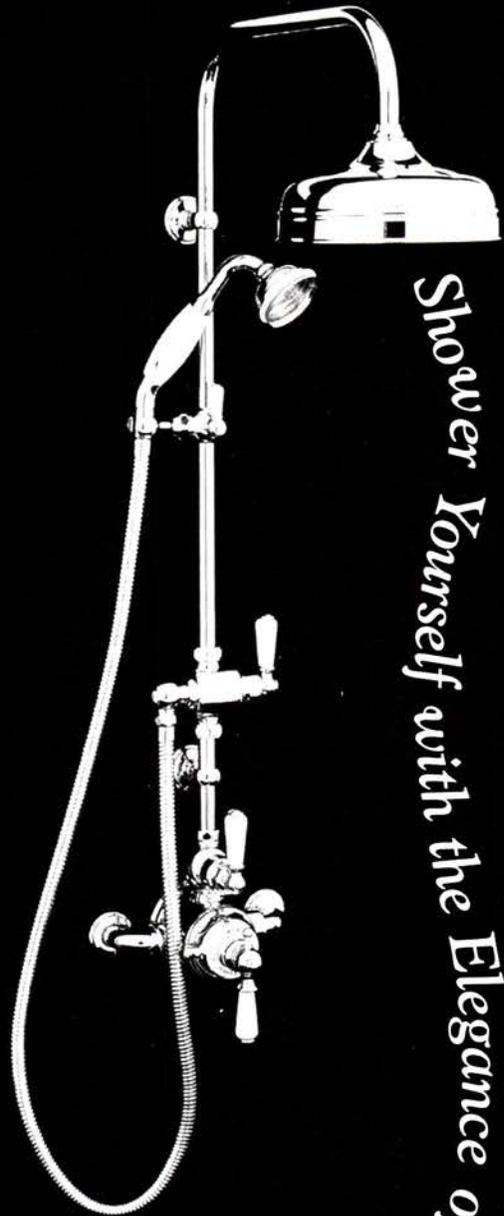
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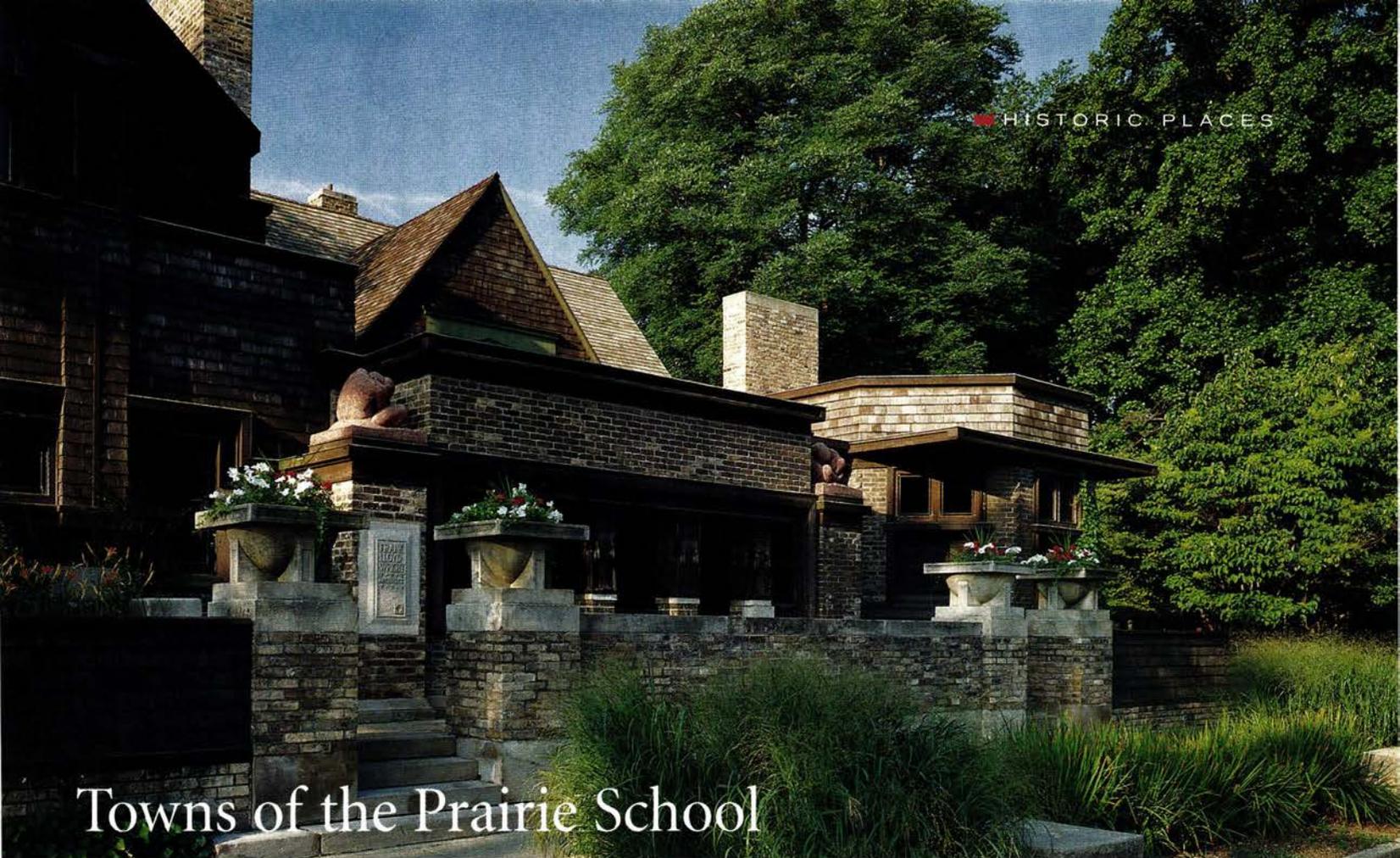
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Balthazar Korab

# Towns of the Prairie School

FROM THE GRACEFUL ARCHES of Louis Sullivan's Auditorium Theater to the futuristic-looking Marina City, Chicago has long been a destination to experience world-class architecture, but this heritage doesn't stop at the city limits. Three of Chicago's near western suburbs draw visitors to their own historic neighborhoods—enclaves rich with building styles and prime works of the architects who are collectively called the Prairie School.

Oak Park, River Forest, and Riverside owe their original growth spurts to the Chicago Fire of 1871. Following the conflagration, scores of Chicagoans sought a fresh start by moving to towns just outside the city. Many came to River Forest and neighboring Oak Park, which grew tenfold in population between 1870 and 1890. Luckily, Riverside was ready for residents in 1869 as one of the nation's first planned communities.

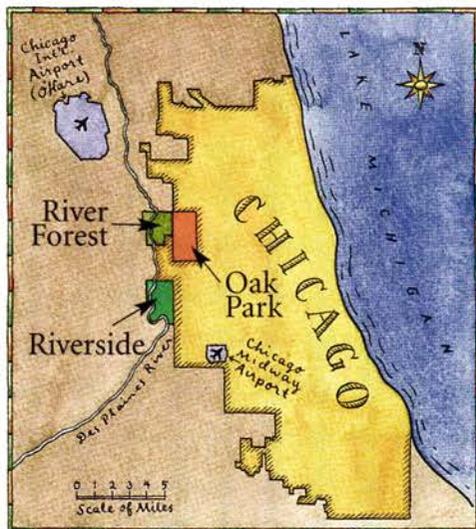
■ **OAK PARK.** It's impossible to ignore Frank Lloyd Wright when you're in Oak Park. No wonder. Wright began his career here, lived

in its heart for 20 years, and left an indelible mark on the town: 25 structures, the largest concentration of Wright buildings in the world. Seven of them are clustered within a few blocks of the Frank Lloyd Wright Home and Studio on Chicago Avenue.

Wright designed and built his Shingle-style-inspired home in 1889, when he was only 21. The future master architect expanded the complex several times, testing

*Superb examples of late 19th- and early 20th-century architecture from Wright and colleagues abound just outside the skyscraper mecca of Chicago.*

BY SARAH HOBAN



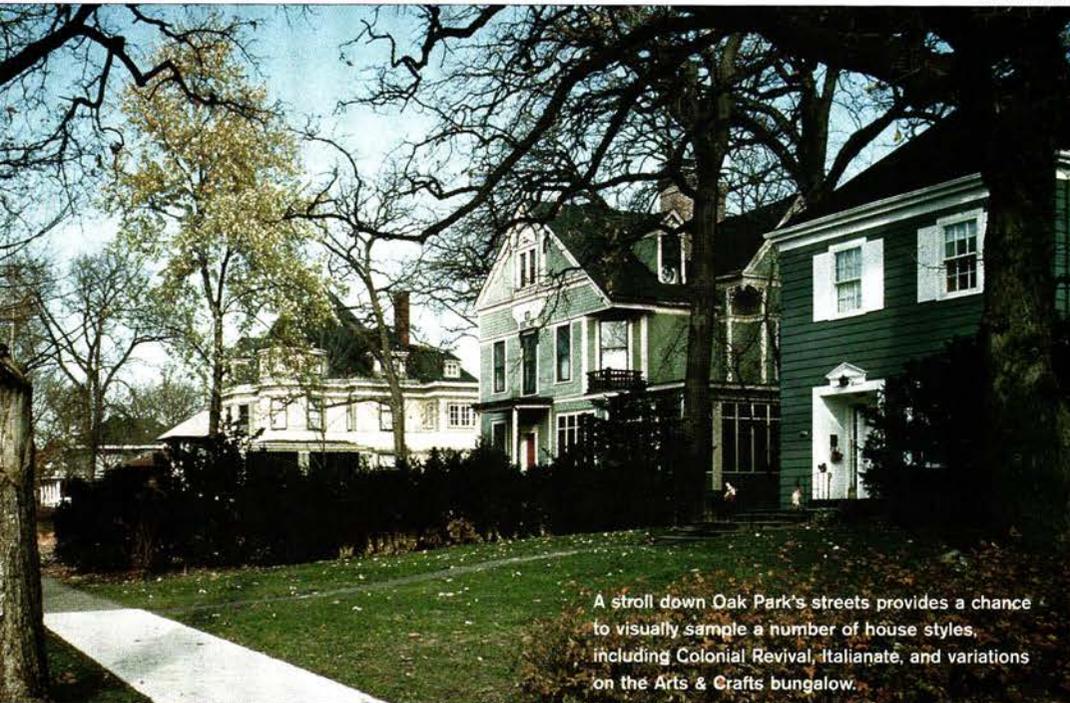
James Noel Smith

Frank Lloyd Wright's home and studio (above) in Oak Park metamorphoses from a Queen Anne residence to an innovative octagonal studio.

Wright tried a Tudor-medieval look for fit when he designed the Moore House in Oak Park.

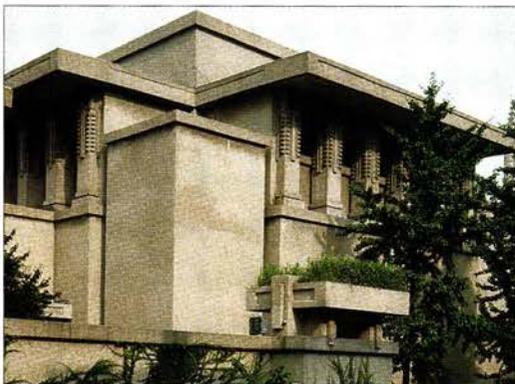


James Massey



A stroll down Oak Park's streets provides a chance to visually sample a number of house styles, including Colonial Revival, Italianate, and variations on the Arts & Crafts bungalow.

Balthazar Korab



Balthazar Korab

Above: The stark geometric structure of Wright's Unity Temple in Oak Park is an early example of poured concrete construction, a method he chose to keep costs down. Right: Natural light from the skylights and clerestory windows pours onto the judiciously positioned drafting table in the Frank Lloyd Wright Studio.



Balthazar Korab

ideas as his family and business aspirations grew. He added a ballroom-sized children's playroom—complete with art glass windows and skylight—in 1895 and an extensive studio annex in 1898. The Frank Lloyd Wright Home and Studio Foundation (708-848-1976) offers daily tours of the home and studio, as well as self-guided tours of Wright homes in Oak Park's historic district.

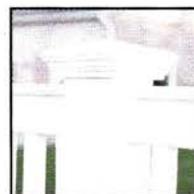
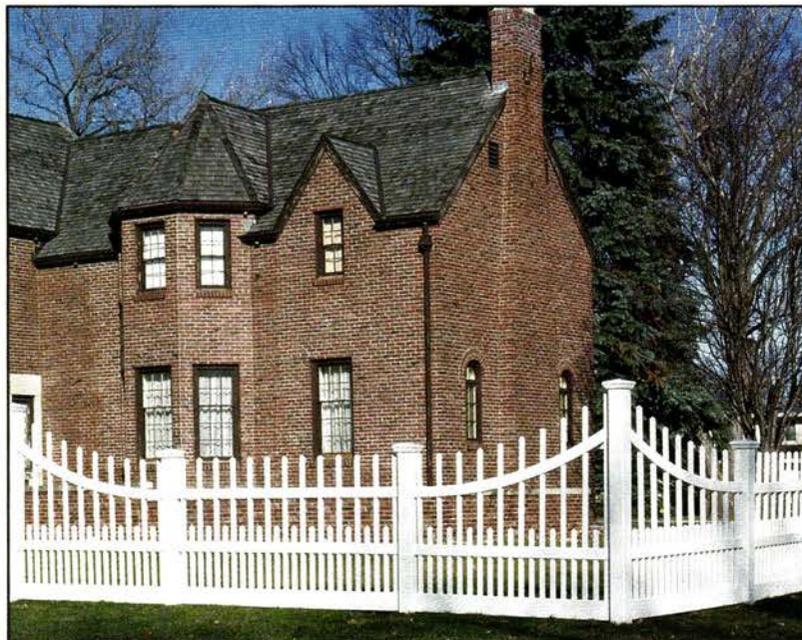
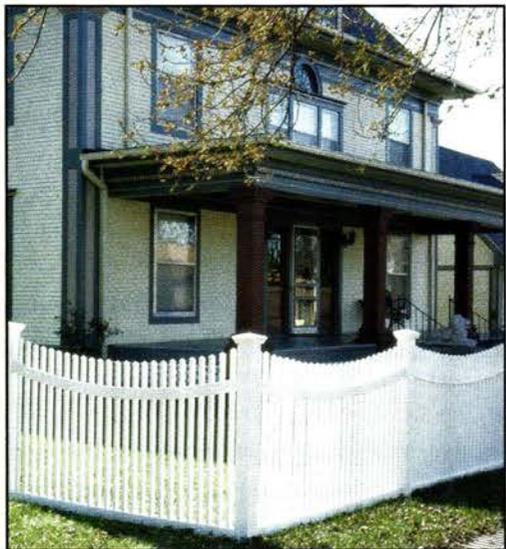
What impresses out-of-towners the most about Wright's Oak Park houses is their sheer variety. They range in style from Queen Annes, to a Tudor-medieval approach with steeply pitched roofs, to the long, low lines of the Prairie style for which he is famous. Not all of Wright's Oak Park commissions are single-family residences either. Unity Temple (1906-1908) on Lake Avenue near Kenilworth is a Unitarian-Universalist church he designed while a member of the congregation. The temple and the Home and Studio are the only two Wright-designed buildings in Oak Park open to the public; the remainder are private homes. However, in a town with 84,000 tourists a year, maintaining privacy can be tricky. The Frank Lloyd Wright Home and Studio Foundation works hard to urge visitors to appreciate the architecture from the sidewalk only—not up close in yards, porches, or entryways.

Wright wasn't the only innovative architect working in Oak Park, however. Just south of downtown is Pleasant Home, an 1897 Prairie-style mansion designed by George W. Maher. The National Register property is named for its site at the corner of Pleasant Street and Home Avenue. Oak Park is full of the work of Prairie School architects and builders, many of whom worked for or were influenced by Wright. The list includes John Van Bergen, Eben E. Roberts, Vernon S. Watson, Charles E. White Jr., and Robert C. Spencer.

Wright wasn't Oak Park's only famous resident, either. Ernest Hemingway was born in a Queen Anne on Oak Park

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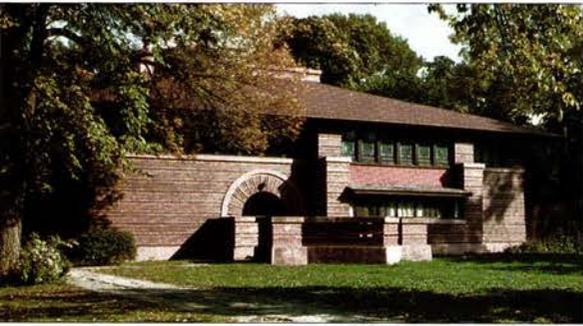


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Top: Wright used Roman brick in patterns for the Heurtley residence in Oak Park. Bottom: George W. Maher's Pleasant Home houses the Historical Society of Oak Park and River Forest.



Balthazar Korab

The Clooney Estate in Riverside originally included a low playhouse, built as a progressive school.

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Avenue in 1899. Legend has it that Hemingway's father stepped onto the porch and blew a trumpet to herald the arrival of his son. In 1993, the Ernest Hemingway Foundation bought the building and restored it in time for last year's centennial of the author's birth. The foundation offers tours several days a week (708-848-2222).

▪ **RIVER FOREST.** Abutting Oak Park to the west, River Forest boasts six Wright-designed houses and, like its neighbor, has many fine examples of late 19th- and early 20th-century homes. William Drummond, a student of Wright's, designed a number of Prairie-style houses and public buildings in River Forest. Robert C. Spencer, another Wright colleague, made his home there in a 1905 house on Park Avenue.

▪ **RIVERSIDE.** Traveling a few miles south along the meandering Des Plaines River brings you to Riverside, the idyllic legacy of Frederick Law Olmsted. The idea for a planned community that would blend rural atmosphere with city conveniences started with a group of local businessmen who contacted Olmsted's New York firm, Olmsted, Vaux, and Co., in the late 1860s. Olmsted designed the town with streets that follow the curve of the river and the contours of the terrain, rather than a traditional city grid. The entire village was des-

ignated a National Historic Landmark in 1970, and 56 buildings are local landmarks. Although today's Riverside is a close-in suburb, it retains the bucolic feel that Olmsted envisioned.

A spacious town green graces the center of the small downtown. It's next to the railroad station, a Prairie-style depot built in 1901 (the Burlington-Northern commuter train still stops there). The residential area south of downtown is where Olmsted's plan shows to full advantage, however. Wide lawns, grassy parkways, and gently curving streets frame an array of house styles, including Queen Anne, Arts & Crafts, Italianate, and Prairie. The only structure in Riverside built by Olmsted's firm is also in this neighborhood: an 1869 clapboard Gothic Revival house designed by Calvert Vaux.

There are a couple of Wright houses, of course, the most prominent being the Avery Cooney Estate, built in 1909. The original estate included a low playhouse on Fairbanks Road built as a progressive school and now privately owned. Wright praised the Cooney building highly, calling it "the most successful of my houses from my standpoint." Then again, with Wright, did anyone else's opinion matter? 🏠

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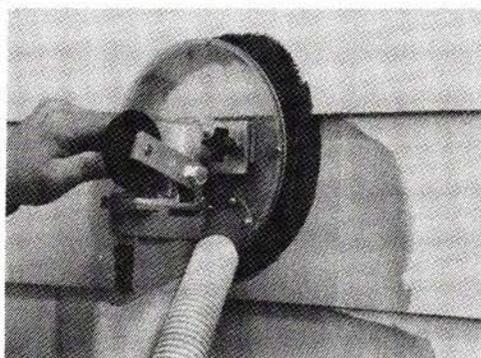
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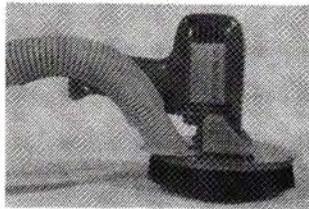


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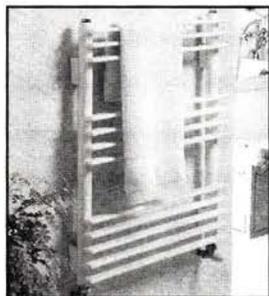
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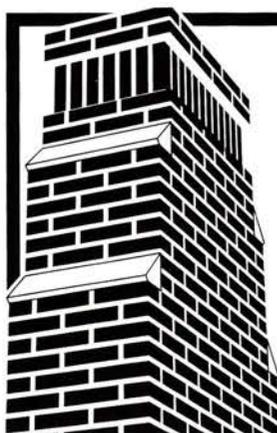


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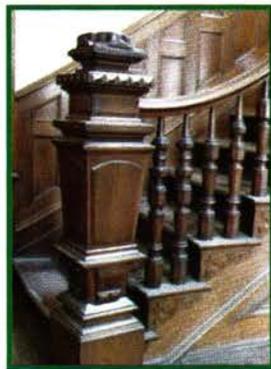
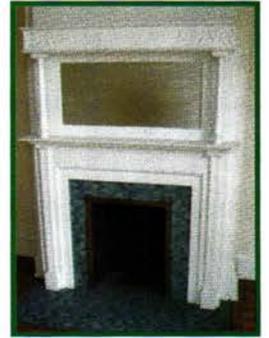
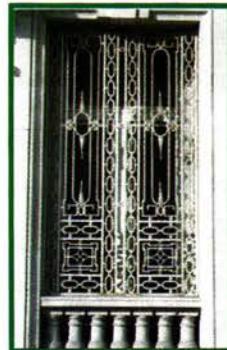
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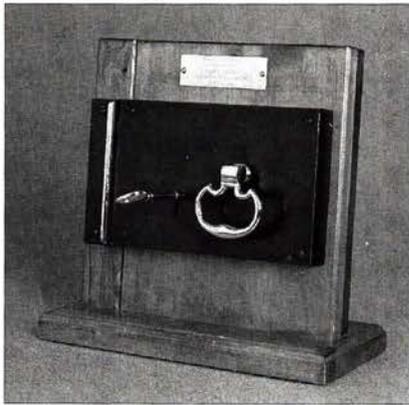
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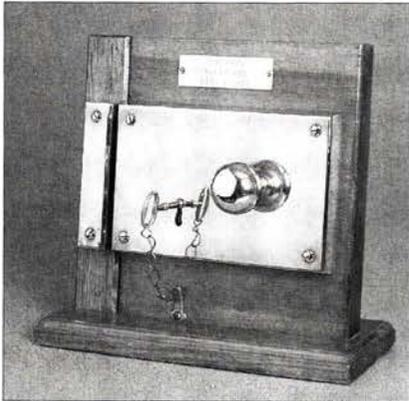
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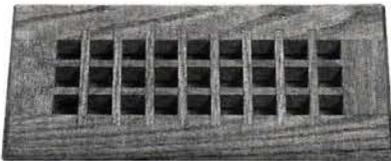
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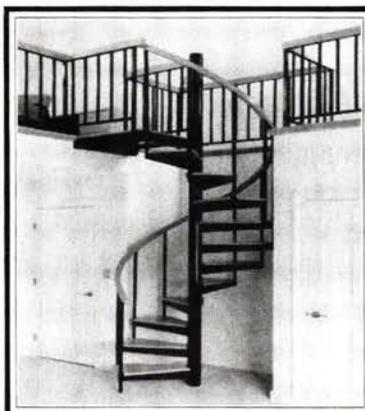
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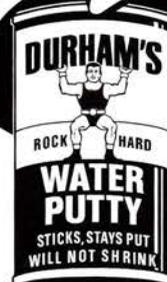
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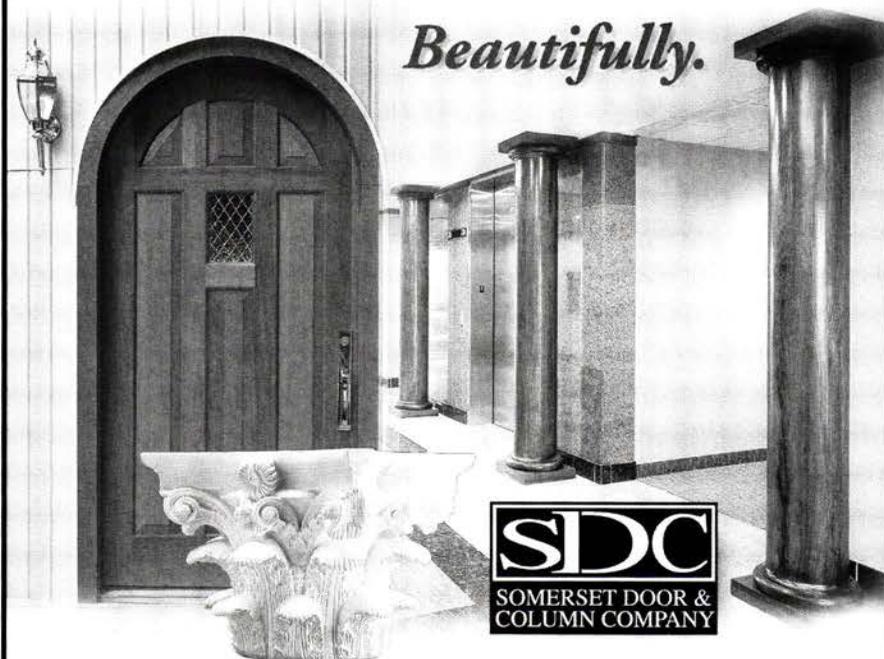
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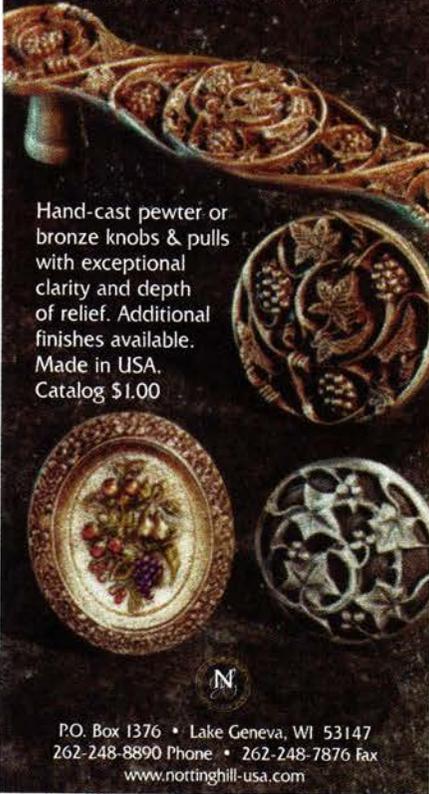
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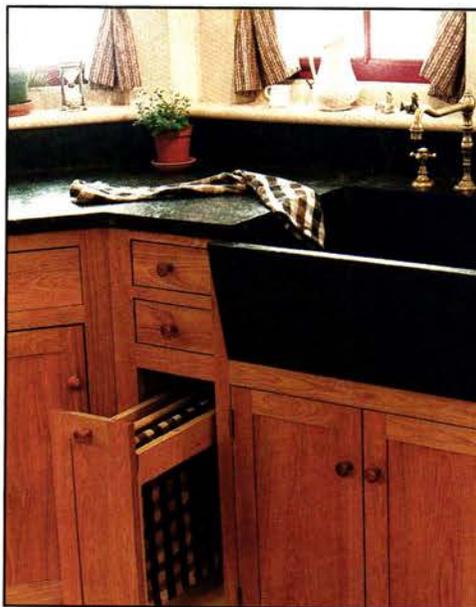


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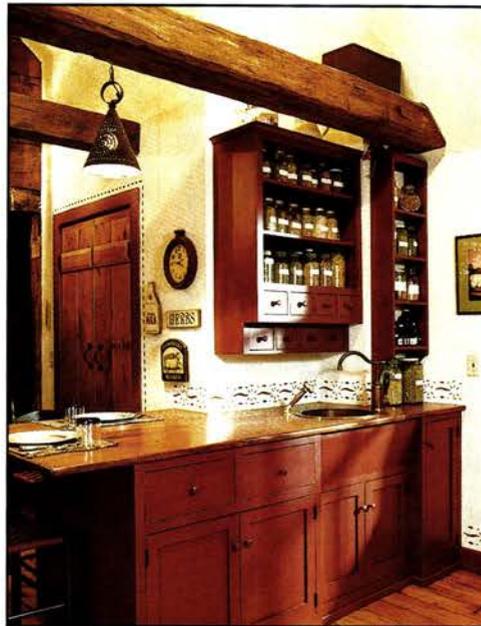
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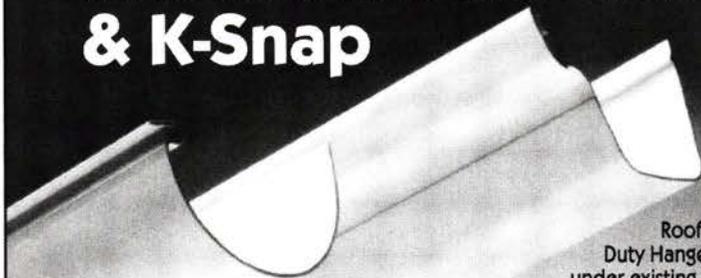
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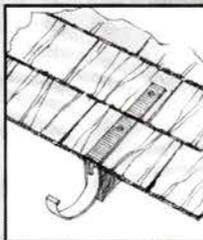
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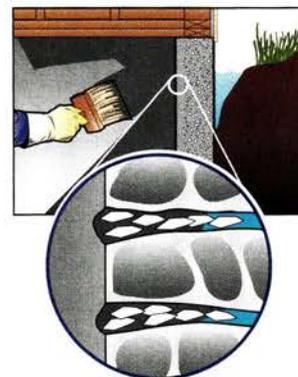
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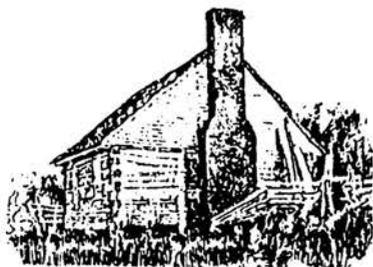
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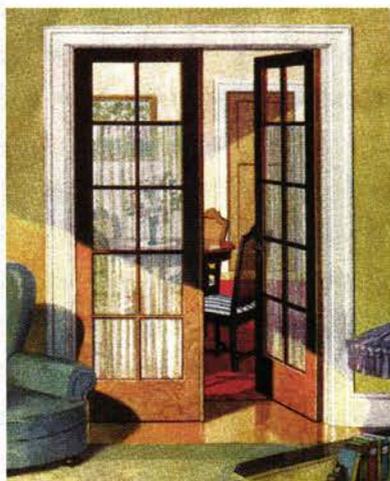
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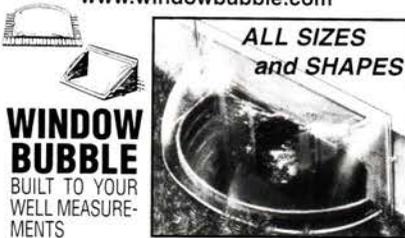


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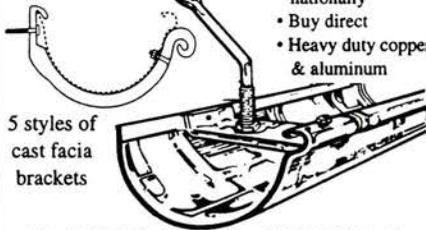
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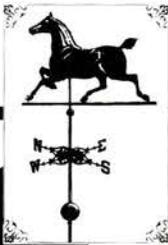
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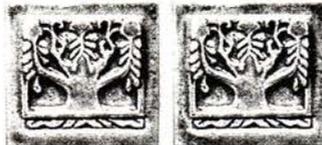
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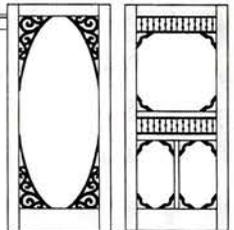
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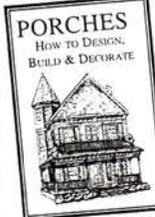
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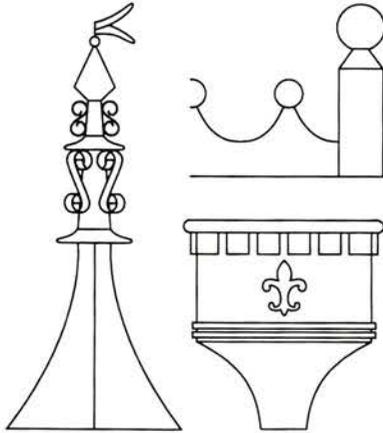


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**ANDOVER, MA-** Saturday, September 16, 10am-4pm: Andover Historical Society House and Garden Tour featuring homes and historical sites. Tickets cost \$15 in advance or \$20 on the day of the event. Proceeds to be used for public programs and improved access. Call Barbara Thibault at 978-475-2236, or Lynn Smiledge at 978-474-4698.

**MILWAUKEE, WI-** Prairie Influence ... Fall walking tour of eight historic Prairie School homes sponsored by historic Milwaukee Inc. Lecture discussing contributions of George Mann Niedecken, prairie school interior architect and Wright collaborator. Exhibitors showcase will feature Prairie and Arts & Crafts furnishings and accessories. For more information, please call 414-277-7795.

**HOUSTON, TX-** October 28 & 29: Fifth Annual Eastwood Historic Homes Tour. This year's tour will feature six vintage

Eastwood Homes dating from 1916 to 1938 in a rich variety of architectural styles. Eastwood, one of Houston's first master-planned subdivisions, was developed in 1913 and quickly became one of early Houston's most fashionable neighborhoods. This popular tour is sponsored by The Eastwood Historical Commission and Frost National Bank. Tour tickets are \$10 for entrance to all homes. For more information, contact Bill England at 713-926-6722.

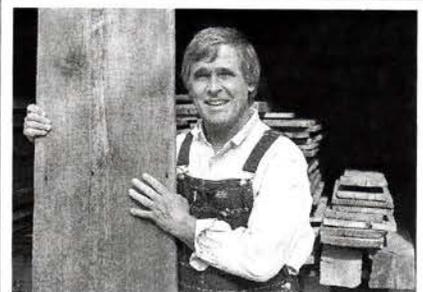
**NEWBURGH, NY-** December 10, 12 noon-5 pm: Annual Candlelight tour. Hosted by The Historical Society of Newburgh Bay and the Highlands. The self-guided tour will originate at Crawford House, Society Headquarters, at 189 Montgomery Street, Newburgh, NY. The tour features different homes and churches each year. Tickets are \$20 and are available at Crawford House before the tour. For tickets or further information, call 845-561-2585.

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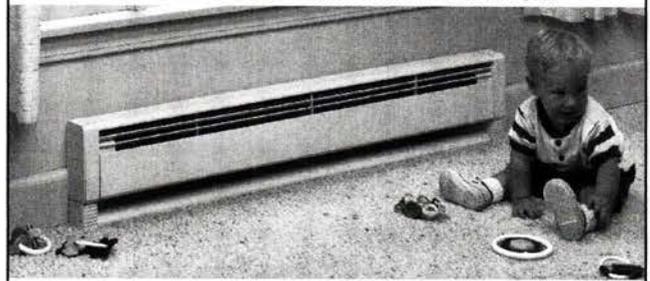
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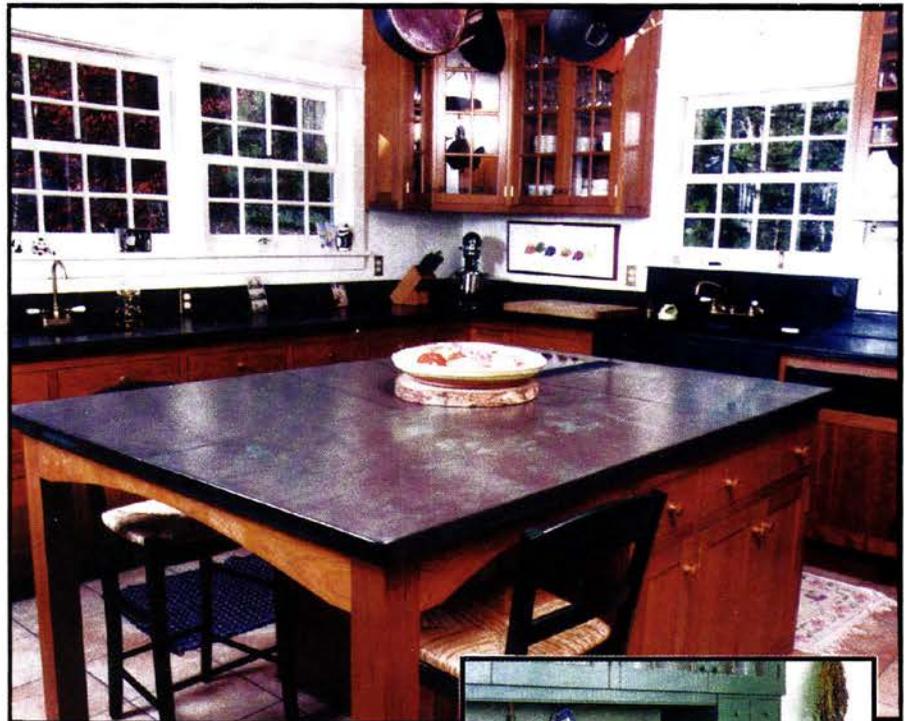
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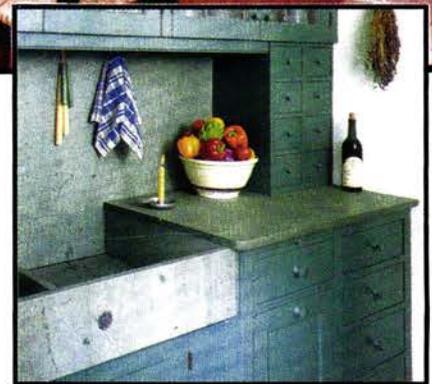
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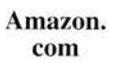
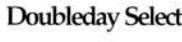
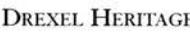
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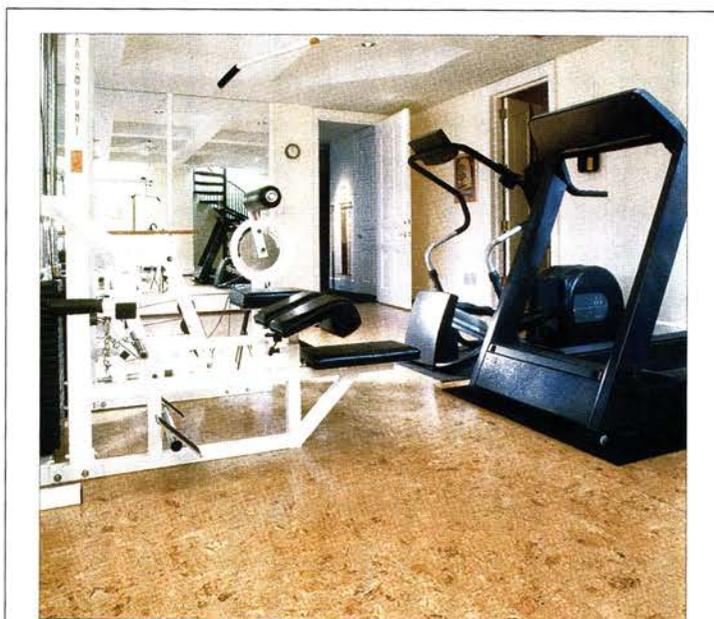
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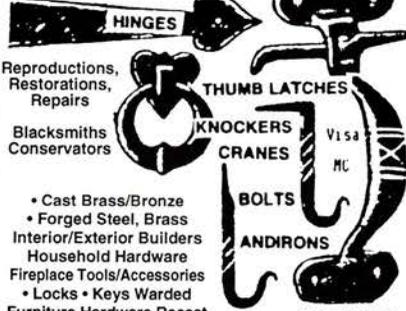


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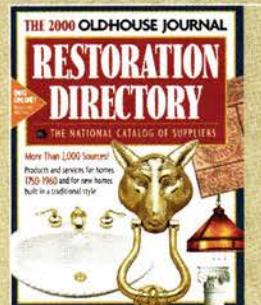
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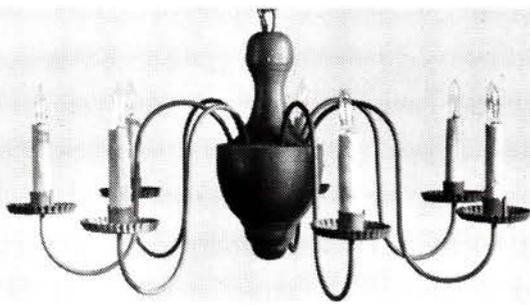
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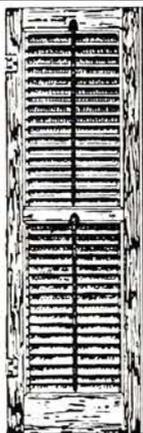
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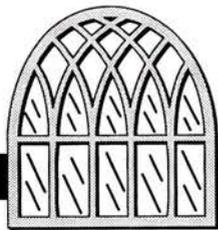
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