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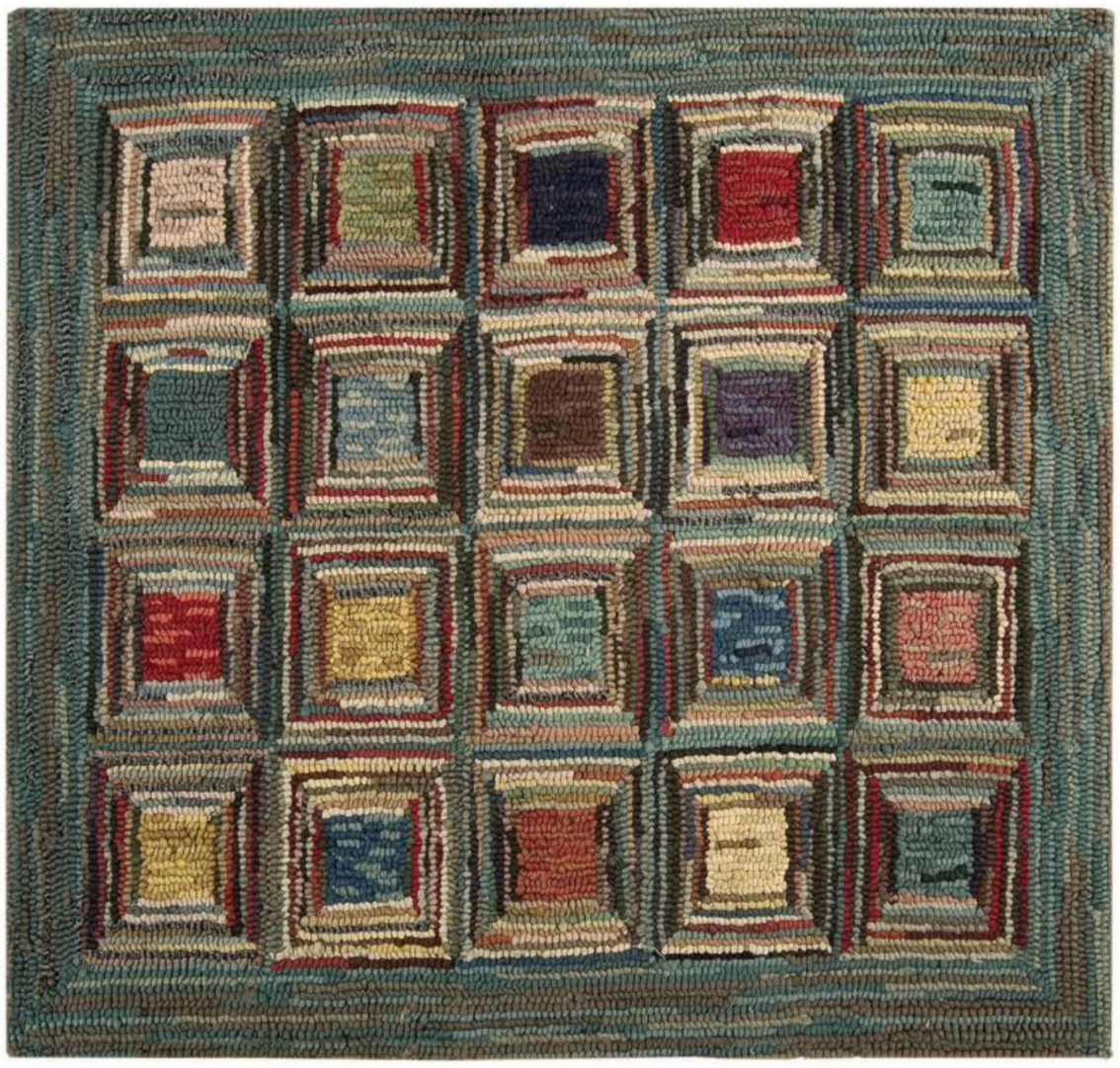
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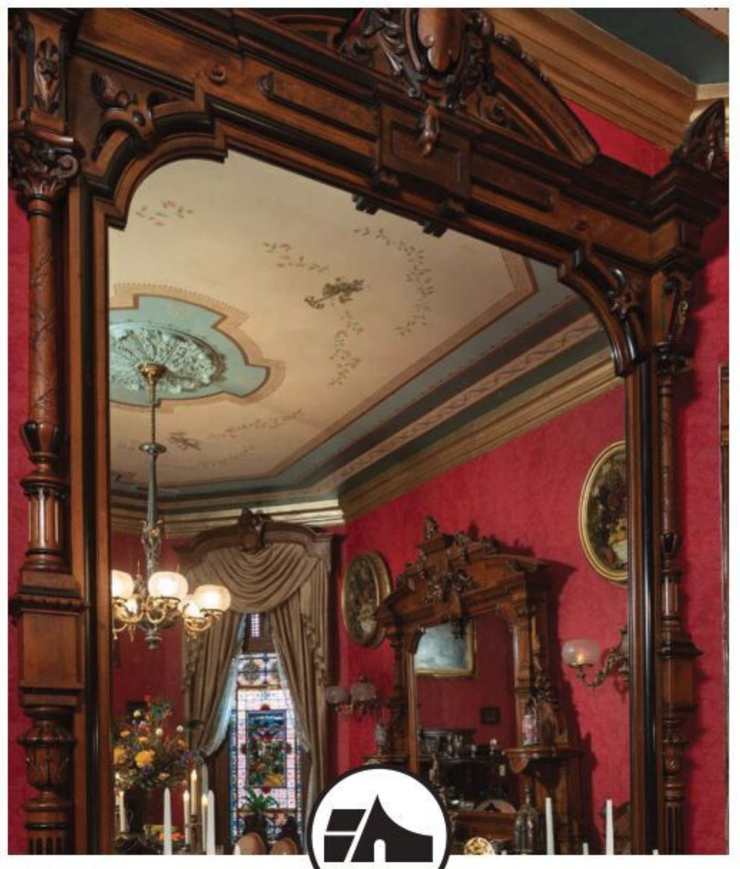
OLD HOUSE JOURNAL

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APRIL 2022







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ON THE COVER The owners prepare monthly "Colonial dinners" using the 1790 fireplace that remains in the stone house's recently renovated kitchen. **PHOTO BY GRIDLEY + GRAVES. SEE PAGE 70.**

What's better than old houses? The owners!

Photo shoots aren't all fun and games. Sometimes the homeowners aren't ready after all. (A room half-painted! The septic tank unexpectedly dug up!) Our photographers have been known to arrive with vacuum cleaners and mops, not just with fruit and flowers. "Once we were asked to wait for an hour on the porch, next to garbage ready for pickup, while the frantic owner got ready," says one writer. Generally speaking, though, photo shoots come with a bonus: meeting old-house people in their natural habitat.

"People ask me why I like writing articles," says West Coast editor Dr. Brian Coleman, who has a parallel career as a practicing psychiatrist. "I tell them, it's the homeowners. I get to meet fascinating, inspiring people."

It takes generosity to open one's home to camera equipment. Many owners go further, cooking a meal for the crew, or even arranging a dinner party. "When we shot the Ponders' Victorian house in St. Louis," Brian says, "they pulled out all the stops. Besides me and [photographer] Bill Wright, the Ponders invited three other St. Louis owners whose homes we've photographed in the past few years. The wonderful meal took place in their opulent dining room."

Over my own 40-plus years in this field, I've always found that old-house people are standouts. They have eclectic interests and a well-honed sense of place. They are doers, not complainers, who leave things better than they found them. Then again, I'm always intrigued by how an old house affects its occupants. A certain mood is inevitable when dinner is served on a walnut table beneath a gaslight-era chandelier, for example. Pantries, back stairs, screen doors, and operable transoms all lead to subtle behaviors that echo the past lives of previous residents.

Do old houses create great people, or do great people prefer old houses?



ABOVE Author Brian Coleman (foreground, left) raises a toast to hosts and friends at a Victorian dinner party in St. Louis. Among those at the table: Shelley Donaho, Gerry Fisher, and Joy Christensen (owners of homes previously featured); the Ponders (in this issue); and antiques-dealer Andrew Van Styn.

WILLIAM WRIGHT

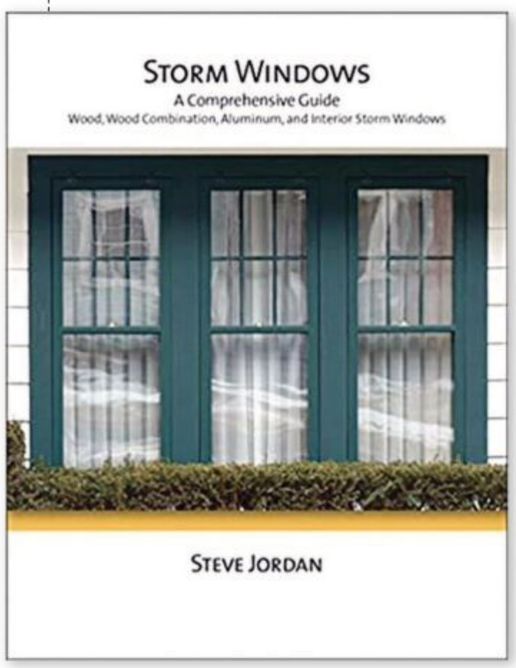
SIDE NOTES

STORM WINDOWS—EXPLAINED IN FULL

Storm windows (secondary glazing) are a key to making old windows as efficient as anything new on the market. In most cases, we don't need to replace windows that have already lasted a hundred years with expensive yet inferior units that fail in 10 or 20 years.

Storm windows can be complicated, though: exterior or interior? wood or aluminum? fixed or combination? Long-time OHJ contributor Steve Jordan, a veteran restoration contractor, has written a book that lays out all the options and answers. It's the new companion to Jordan's acclaimed *Window Sash Bible*, which explains in depth how to maintain and repair primary wood windows.

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These beautiful furnishings and crafts have roots in Germany and the Low Countries. **By Mary Ellen Polson**

1. SLIP-DECORATED

The "Flowers" oval bowl is made using Pennsylvania German sgraffito techniques. After partial drying, it's covered with white clay (slip), into which a design is scratched, revealing the red clay underneath. With food-safe glazes, $85. Wilz Pottery, (215) 260-1133, ***wilzpottery.com***



2. AUTHENTICALLY DUTCH

In traditional blue and white, these hand-painted tiles are handmade in Holland with tin glazing techniques dating to 1598. Tiles typically measure about 5" x 5". Custom designs are available. Field tile: $8.50 to $14.50 each. Decos: $35.75 to $89 each. Dutch Tile, (860) 567-1350, ***dutchtile.com***



3. SUPPORTING PLAYER

A streamlined version of an 18th-century Pennsylvania-Dutch trestle table, the Franklin rests on broad pedestal feet and has a massive center stretcher. In four sizes, with leaf options and a choice of woods, cost is $4,200 and up. Simply Amish, (217) 268-4504, ***simplyamish.com***



4. BIRD AND TULIP

"Tulip Tree with Checkered Birds" is digitally reproduced from an original pen-and-ink drawing by fraktur artist Teresa Hicks, a descendant of Pennsylvania Germans. The frame is faux-finished to create the look of grained wood; it's $75. Studio in the Hollow, (203) 262-6474, ***studiointhehollow.etsy.com***



5. GOLDFINCH HEX

The Pennsylvania-Dutch "Distlefink" hex sign features lovebirds and tulips. Made from ¼" plywood, each sign is primed and gessoed before it's painted with acrylics and sealed for indoor or outdoor use. In 16", 20", and 24" rounds; $200 to $380. Hexy Shop, ***hexyshop.etsy.com***



Cook's Choice

Options unexpected or unusual for outfitting the kitchen.

1. FLAMING CORAL

The Midcentury Metro all-gas range in custom Living Coral has a color-matched skirt and trim. Power output for the four burners ranges from 8,000 to 15,000 BTUs; $5,745. Elmira Stove Works, (800) 295-8498, *elmirastoveworks.com*

1



2. GOOD MEASURE

Made in Liverpool since the 1920s, the Tala Cook's measure shows American and English cups and pints; imperial, metric, and fluid measurements—handy for following recipes in old cookbooks. The cup is tinplate and stands 5 ½" tall; $22.95. Christopher Kimball's Milk Street, *store.177milkstreet.com*

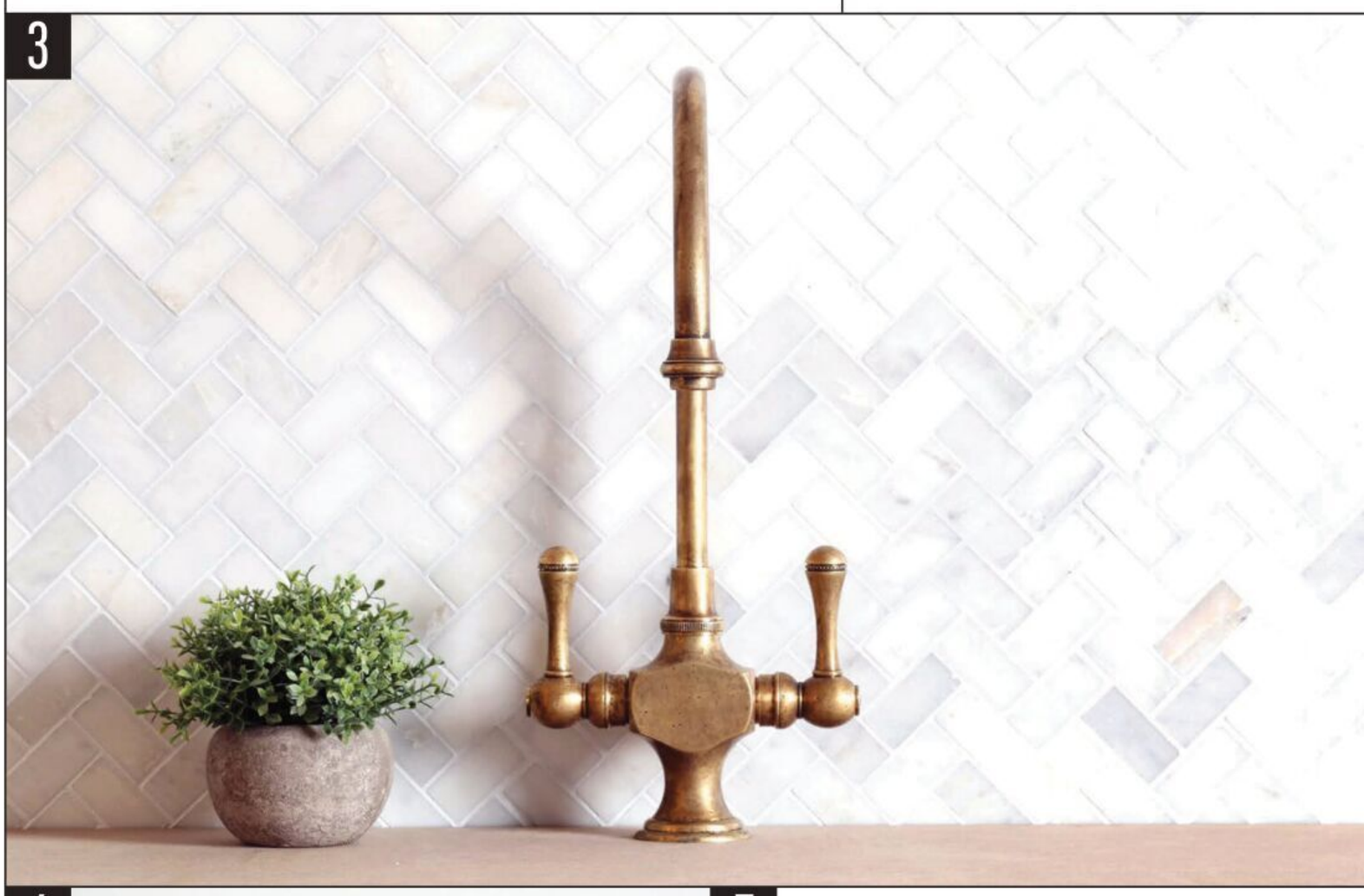
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3. MADE IN VERMONT

Beautifully proportioned, the single-hole levered kitchen faucet features a hand-aged brass finish. The stem swivels side to side and is 15" tall x 10" deep. The handmade faucet comes with a matching drain. $1,350. Atmosphyre, (802) 949-7247, *atmosphyre.com*

3



4. SHAKER GRACE

Hanging from a maple Shaker peg rail, the two-door cupboard in tiger maple is 18 ¼" tall x 32 ½" wide x 8" deep. The beaded peg rail comes in lengths from 2' to 10'. Cupboard: $1,195. Peg rail: $59 to $350. Shaker Shoppe, (717) 626-9461, *shakershoppe.com*

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5. FLORAL TO GOTHIC

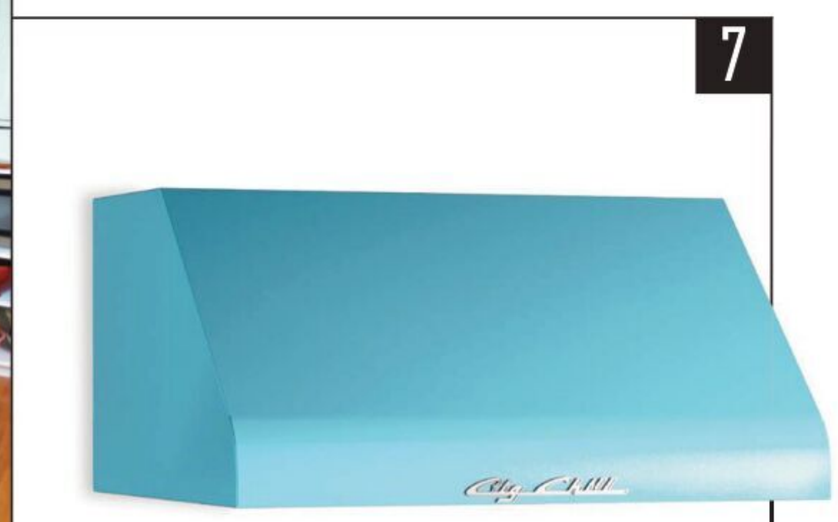
The Eastlake Gothic, Rope and Roses, and Floral Victorian bin pulls in heavy cast brass reproduce the look and feel of Victorian cabinet pulls. Widths range from 4" to 4 ½". All are available in four finishes, for $22.09 to $25.09 each. House of Antique Hardware, (888) 223-2545, *houseofantiquehardware.com*

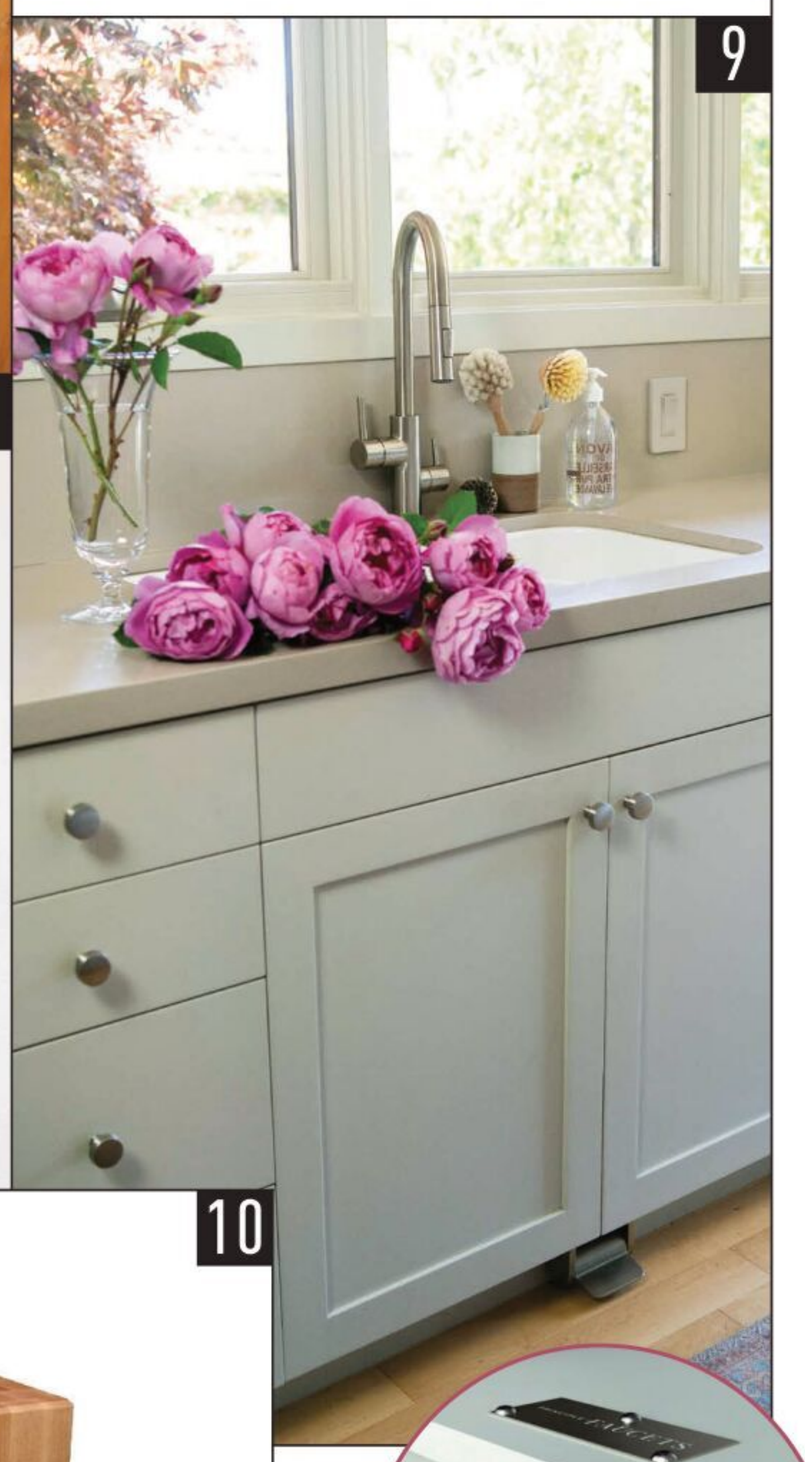
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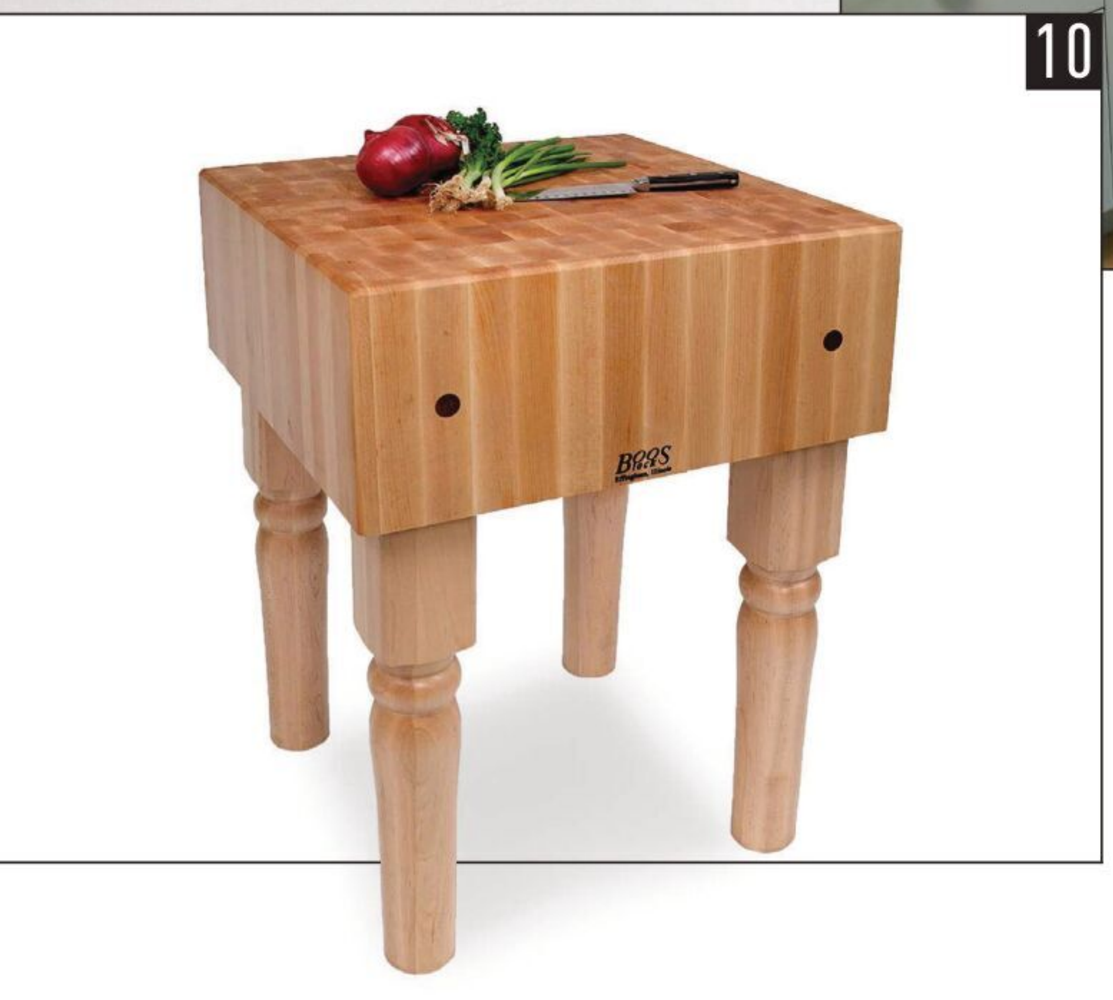














6. KITCHEN QUARRY

Slate in kitchens goes back centuries. Still quarried in New England, slate for each sink or counter from this American fabricator is unique. Colors range from grey, black, red, and green to mottled green and purple. Countertops are $75 per sq. ft. and up. Sheldon Slate, (207) 997-3615, ***sheldonslate.com***

7. BLUE AND MORE

The Retro range hood in stainless steel comes in seven standard and hundreds of custom colors. The 600-cubic-feet-per-minute exhaust can be mounted for external, rear, reversible top, or recirculation venting. The hood is 30" x 10" high and projects 15". It's $1,695. Big Chill, (877) 842-3269, ***bigchill.com***

8. MUCHO MOLE

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9. HANDS-FREE CLEAN

Turn any kitchen-sink faucet into a water-saving, hands-free device. The Step System uses a foot pedal at the base of the sink cabinet; integrates easily into existing plumbing and with most faucets. Step kit: $400 to $450. Coordinating faucets: $800 to $900. Principle Faucets, (888) 293-2203, ***principlefaucets.com***

10. SINCE 1887

This AB butcher block will be the workhorse of the kitchen. The 10"-thick hard rock maple block stands on turned legs, with an overall height of 34". Finished in food-safe beeswax, the end-grain butcher-block top is 18" x 18". Casters available; $1,388 and up. John Boos, (888) 431-2667, ***johnboos.com***

Delicious Cottages

Who doesn't love a cottage, whatever the style? Romance characterizes these examples.

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Suzanne K. Haslup, Meybohm, meybohm.com

AIKEN, SC / $599,000

Swallow Dip was built as a "winter colony" cottage, around 1890. Larger than it looks, it has heart-pine floors, transom windows over doors, original built-ins, two baths with clawfoot tubs, and a swing on the verandah.


Peter Patout, Talbot Historic Properties, peterpatout.com

GREENVILLE, MS / $130,000

Beautifully proportioned, Wetherbee House is a nearly intact gable-and-wing folk Greek Revival built on a center-hall plan. Inside, find high ceilings, original plaster walls, full-length windows, and multiple period fireplace surrounds.


Sherri Breaux, Compass, compass.com

HUTTO, TX / $940,000

With a dramatic pyramidal tin-clad roof and a colonnaded wraparound porch, this 1920s bungalow has gable dormers on three exposures. Details include shiplap walls and original floors, plus a clawfoot tub in the oversized primary bathroom.


Sandy Royce, Royce Real Estate, roycerealestate.net

ASHLAND, OR / $1,775,000

Built by a prosperous hardware merchant in 1889, this Queen Anne with distinctive ornamental fretwork boasts an extraordinary staircase graced with carved fans and flowers. Mantels are incised with mottos or vines and leaves. Mosaic tile in the bath.


Jen Harvey, Berkshire Property Agents, berkshirepropertyagents.com

SALISBURY, CT / $519,000

What was built in 1842 as a Greek Revival cottage has mellowed with the later addition of side wings and Italianate brackets. Inside find wide-plank floors, plank doors with vintage hardware, and exposed beams.

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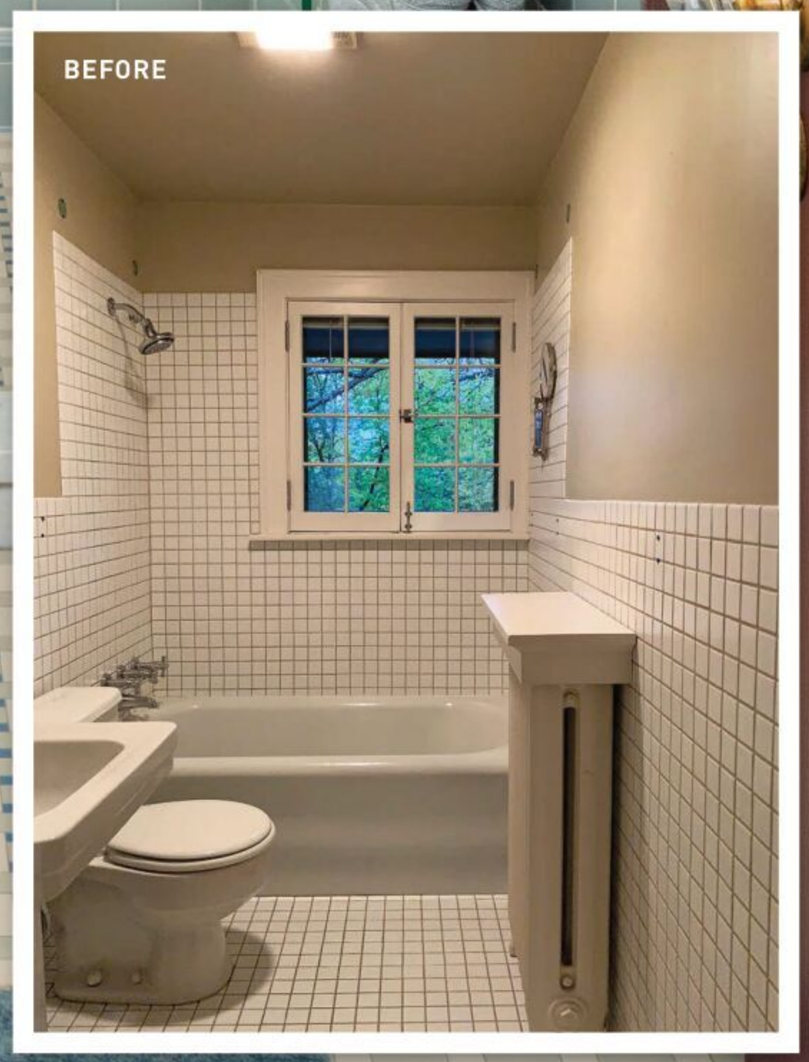
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SUCCESS!

Minor rearranging provided elbow room in the 45-square-foot bath—even 10% makes a difference in a small room. **INSET** (before) The bath had last been remodeled in the 1980s. **OPPOSITE** The mirrored door is painted the tile color. (far right, from top) Tile frames the medicine cabinet. • A vintage celing fixture adds a note of whimsy. • Custom casement doors protect the window in the shower.











TRUE BLUE REDO

In a Prairie-style house, the bland 1980s bath is redesigned for comfort, and with a 1920s vibe. **By Michael Crull / Photos by Rich Michell**

Here in the Twin Cities and beyond, thousands of wonderful old bathrooms survive from the 1920s and '30s. You know the ones: period tile, pedestal sink, Art Deco lighting—also clogged pipes, a tub but no shower, the window in the wrong place. The same problems plagued our main bathroom.

Our 1922 house was purchased as a fixer upper. Some years ago, we did a very necessary kitchen renovation, and added a powder room at that time. (My husband, David Heide, is principal in David Heide Design Studio, and I'm the firm's senior interior designer.) As built, the house had only one bathroom, upstairs. It's just 9' x 5'4" and had accommodated an entire family.

Functional but inelegant and cramped, it had been remodeled in the late 1980s. I reimagined it as a simple but subtly glamorous 1920s space.

We borrowed several inches from the adjacent hallway, allowing a more generous and symmetrical shower area. We gave up

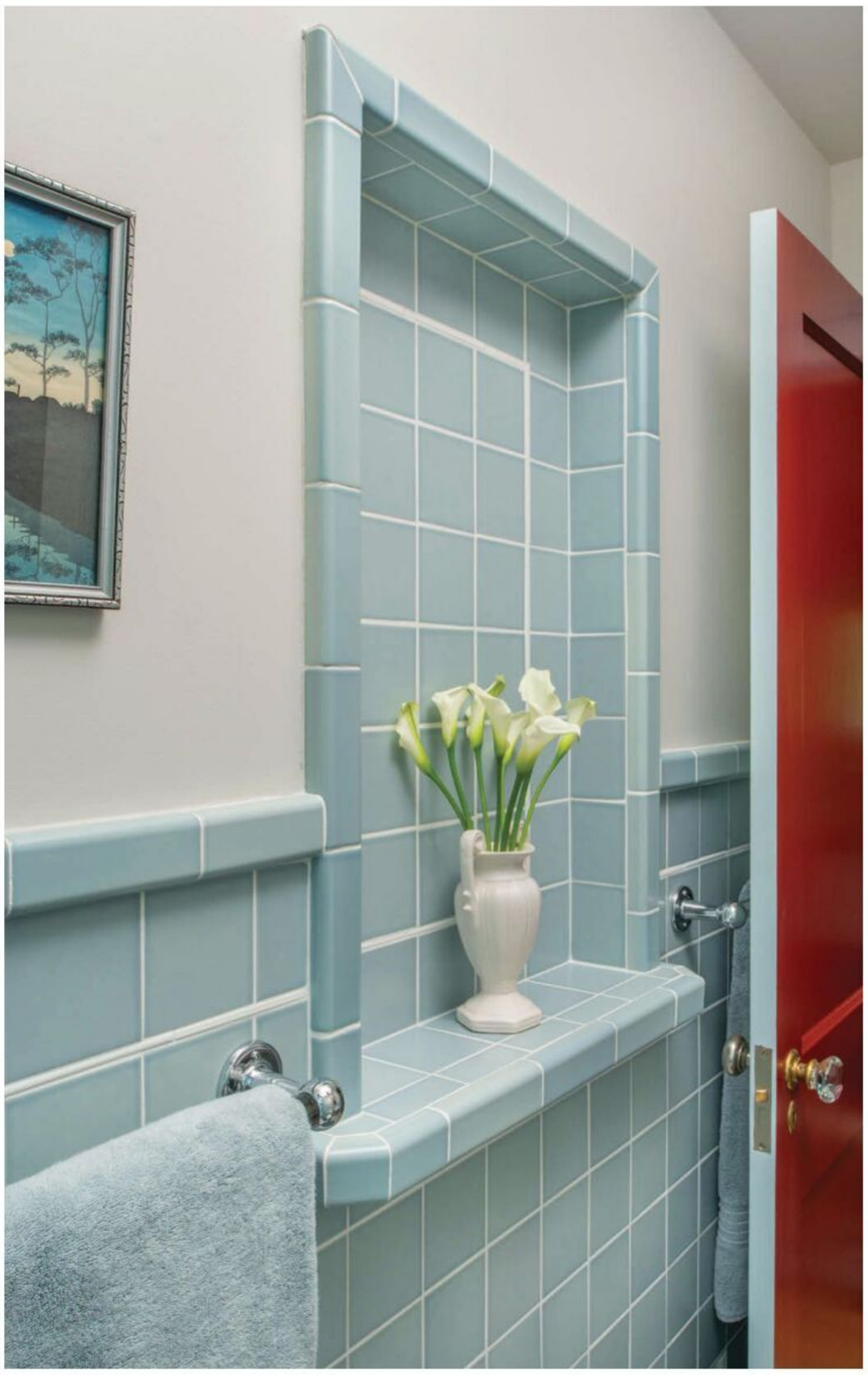


THE POWDER ROOM

In the same house, the powder room (below) is in the kitchen addition at the rear, an earlier design for their own home by David Heide and Michael Crull. Unlike the tiled upstairs bath, this room used by guests is done in a more "furnished" style, seamlessly flowing into the living spaces. It shares an Arts & Crafts-era palette with the exterior of the 1922 Prairie-style house.

Black wall paint and tiles from Mission Tile West in Derby Brown complement the strong architecture of the room.





LEFT Taking the place of a floor radiator, a recessed niche with a shelf is decorative while adding a bit of counter space. **FAR LEFT** (top) A new paint scheme brings out the best in the 1922 home, which before had been done up in green and white. The off-center entry block softens the cubic massing. (bottom) In the powder room downstairs, the painted cabinet was designed by the Heide studio.

the only bathtub in the house, and we see our clients often doing the same thing. The new shower is more generous than the tub was, and has an integrated seat.

We really wanted to get away from the sanitary-white-bath concept. Color was introduced in the 1920s, first in tile. We also decided to ignore the current mania for grey. We found tile shards during demolition that suggest the original tile was green. But, as David puts it, "blue speaks to us, it's peaceful and calm and watery."

Tile is used not only on the floor and walls, but also as trim around the casement windows and medicine cabinet. Decoration is minimal, addressing the small size of the room.

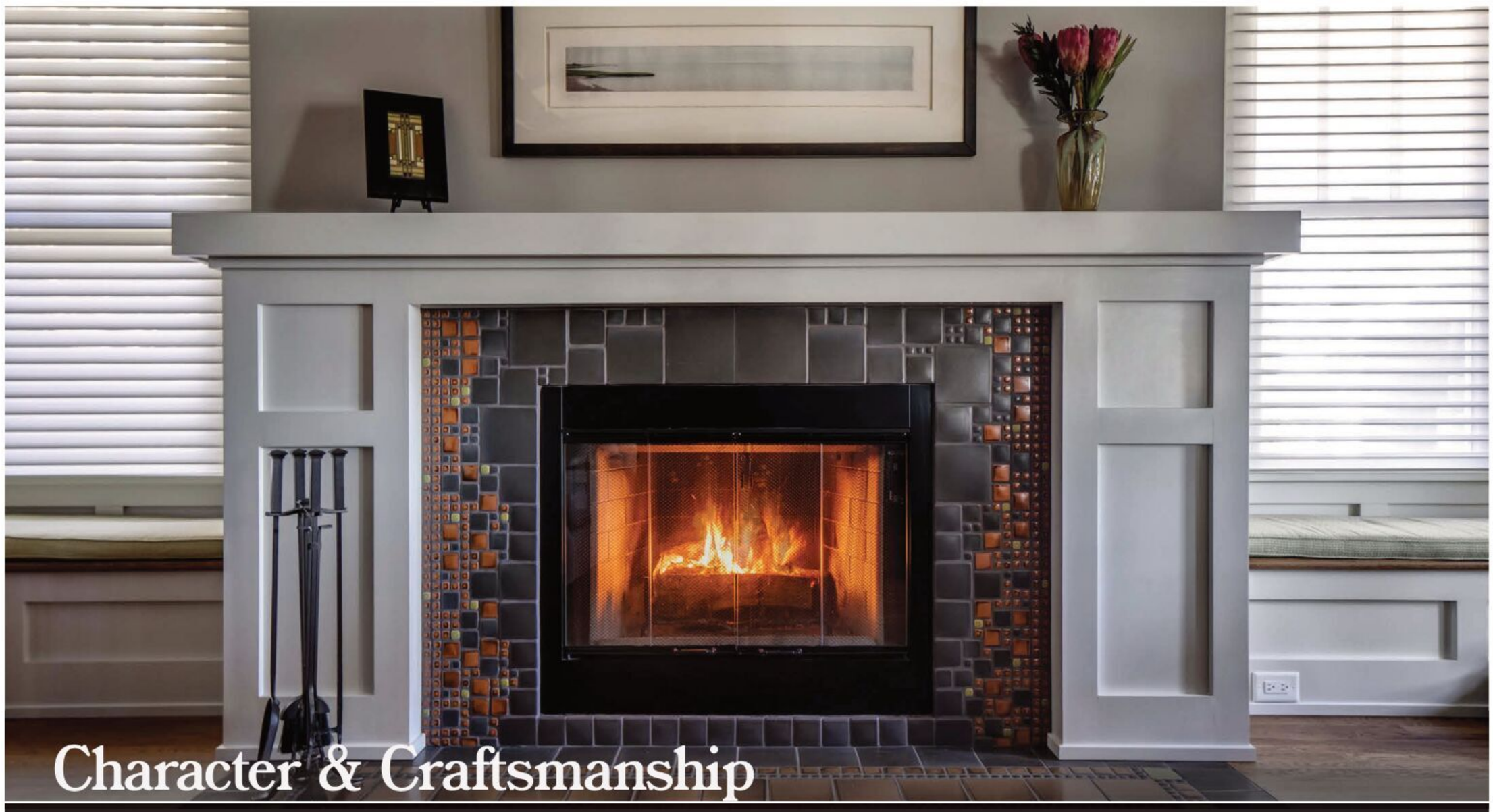
The bath isn't showy, but we did obsess over details. Casement windows over the tub—which now are in the shower—had had an inward swing. They were re-engineered as outward-opening windows with a pull-across, interior screen that retracts invisibly into the right-hand jamb. Small, hinged glass doors protect the wood windows from shower water. (The glass is textured for privacy.) The tile trim is waterproof. All in all, that shower area is the most expensive three feet of any construction we've done!

Towel bars are glass and fixtures are period-correct chrome. Crystal knobs echo originals on second-floor bedroom doors. Antique Art Deco sconces flank the medicine cabinet over the original sink. The ceiling fixture is vintage, featuring a reverse-painted glass collar surrounding a conical glass shade.

We removed the bulky radiator in favor of a low-profile, wall-mounted Runtal unit that takes up no floor space. The shelf over the radiator had been, if nothing else, useful countertop space. In its place is a nook set into the wall; the marble shelf displays a vase of flowers but can also hold a guest's toiletries.

WILLIAM WRIGHT (FAR LEFT, TOP & BTM.)

FOR RESOURCES, SEE PAGE 87.



MOTAWI TILEWORKS

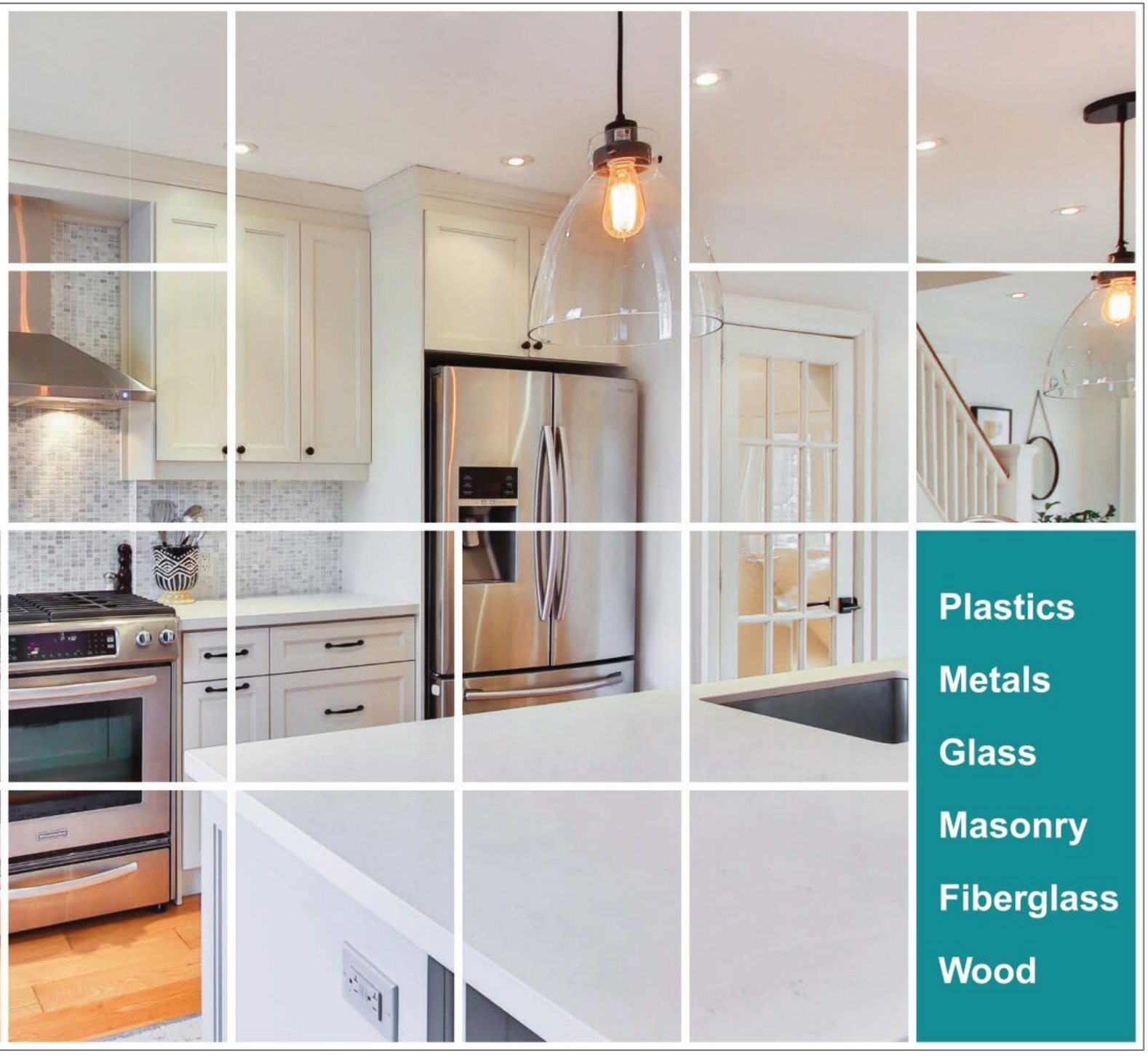
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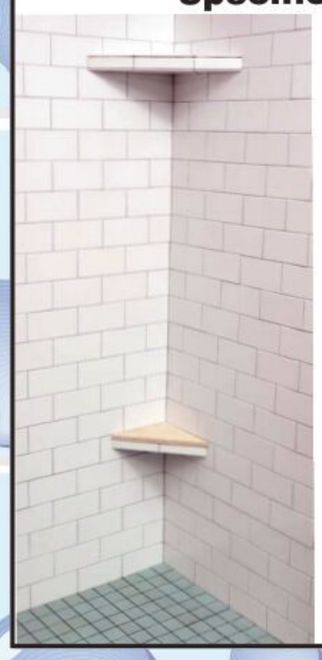
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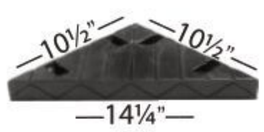
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DESIGN



ON THE **FENCE** QUESTION

MARK A BOUNDARY, BLOCK A VIEW, OR ACT AS ORNAMENT?

+ metal fences then & now; decorative styles.

page 22

RANDY O'ROURKE FOR FRANK SHIRLEY ARCHITECTS

Multiple fence styles were used to organize this property on Boston's North Shore: This picket fence is softened by planted beds. Another curves around the pool, while a tall privacy fence masks the auto court.

22 **GOOD FENCES BY DESIGN:** FUNCTION AND STYLE
Their design vocabulary is vast, and many earlier fences are long gone. Here are some guidelines for today.

+

28 THEY STILL MAKE
30 VINTAGE VISION
32 KITCHENS + BATHS

A BOUNDARY, NOT BARRICADE

Unlike the "de-fences" of old, domestic fencing often acts as a discreet property marker or just ornament. Functionally, fences protect flowers and keep dogs at bay.

It looks like New England, but this house near Minneapolis was built in a holdover Greek Revival style ca. 1900. The handsome new fence is modeled on one visible in an archival photo that shows the road and front yard.

Because their historical architectural vocabulary is vast, fences are best designed starting with function. Then consider the material, the period and style, and installation.

BY PATRICIA POORE



GOOD FENCES by design

For picket fences alone, the history is immensely varied. Design changed with the era and from region to region. In the 18th century, New England fences were architectural statements with classical details and carvings. Victorian fences were as fanciful as the era's wooden gingerbread. You can find documentation in old builders' catalogs, or perhaps at a museum house, but most historic fences are long gone. Today, consider the site and your goals: Is the fence meant as a subtle boundary marker, as an ornament, or to block an unfortunate view?

ABOVE Near Camden, Maine, fancy-top pickets and heavy posts and rails distinguish a Federal-style picket fence set over granite plinths. The property includes a 200-year-old landmark house. **RIGHT** During the 18th century, exquisite details echoing classical Greek and Roman architecture were used for urban fences, such as this one in Massachusetts.



BRIAN VANDEN BRINK (TOP); KEN DRUSE (RIGHT); ANDREA RUGG FOR TREHUS ARCHITECTS (OPP.)

FENCES OF WOOD

ABOVE A trellis top section trains wisteria and breaks up the mass of a privacy fence in Rockport, Mass. A dining area is hidden just behind the old kitchen addition. **BELOW** All trellis, this fence by Garden Structure looks like a period pergola.

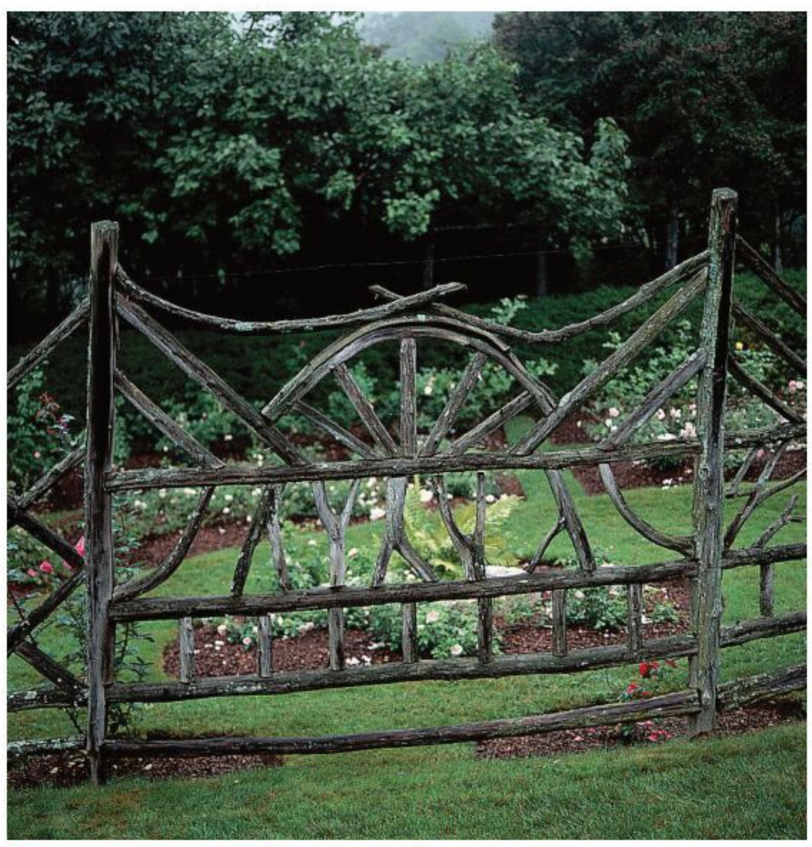


Today's suburban wood fences generally fall into one of three types: **picket, trellis or lattice, and privacy.** Ranging from 2' to 5' tall, picket fences can be plain or fancy. Pickets may be sawn for different profiles at the top. A standard pyramidal post cap often suffices, but other caps are urns or Gothic spires. **Picket fences mark the boundary of a small yard, and are often used in front of a house, near the sidewalk.** • Used with climbing vines, lattice fences only partially obscure the view while allowing wind to pass through. These work well as garden and patio fences. • Taller privacy fences obscure views of the road or a neighbor and are used for protection against intruders, wind, and noise. **A privacy fence with lattice in the top section is an attractive compromise.**

GREG PREMRU (TOP); COURTESY GARDENSTRUCTURE.COM

WOOD FENCES of the purely functional type are still in use: stockade fencing, split-rail, post-and-rail, zigzag, and so on. Most of these, built inexpensively, simply marked a property line or corralled livestock. Picket fences are what most of us think of when we imagine a wood fence. These evolved from the stockade fence but generally are considered ornamental. A picket fence can mark a property line, act as a backdrop for garden beds, and provide winter interest. A simple picket fence with an integrated, fancier gate or entry arbor is often the best bet, both aesthetically and budget-wise.

What we call a privacy fence was considered a good choice for inhibiting a bad view or ensuring privacy. Period writing advises that tall fences be of "subdued color" and "partly concealed" by plantings. Any lattice panels had lath or slats set not on the diagonal, but rather perpendicular with square openings, small or large. "When you design a large fence, over 6' high and exposed to the wind, every aspect has to be overbuilt," cautions Lawrence Winterburn of Garden Structure in Toronto—who is at work on a "fence bible" that will include plans.







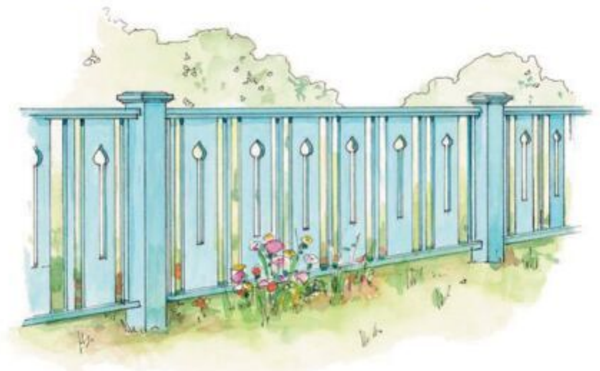


ABOVE (clockwise from top left) Rustic fencing surrounds flower gardens at Mohonk Mountain House, New Paltz, N.Y. • Matching the fence, a gate includes peekaboo windows, in California. • Used to corral cattle, "worm" fencing, quick to build, was also called snake, zigzag, or Virginia rail fence. (Mowing is difficult.) • Classic pointed white pickets and roses.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY ROB LEANNA; CLOCKWISE: KEN DRUSE; DOUG KEISTER; WILLIAM WRIGHT; V. J. MATTHEW/ADOBE STOCK

FENCES 1895–1940

Styles for Colonial Revival homes, Arts & Crafts bungalows, English cottages, and American Foursquares.



Cutout boards for fences, as with window shutters, have storybook appeal for chalets and Dutch Colonials.



Screen over privacy: handsome and utilitarian, lattice over boards is appropriate for most styles. (Kirsch–Korff design.)



Asian inspiration: horizontal emphasis and roof caps in a redwood fence by Bear Creek Lumber.



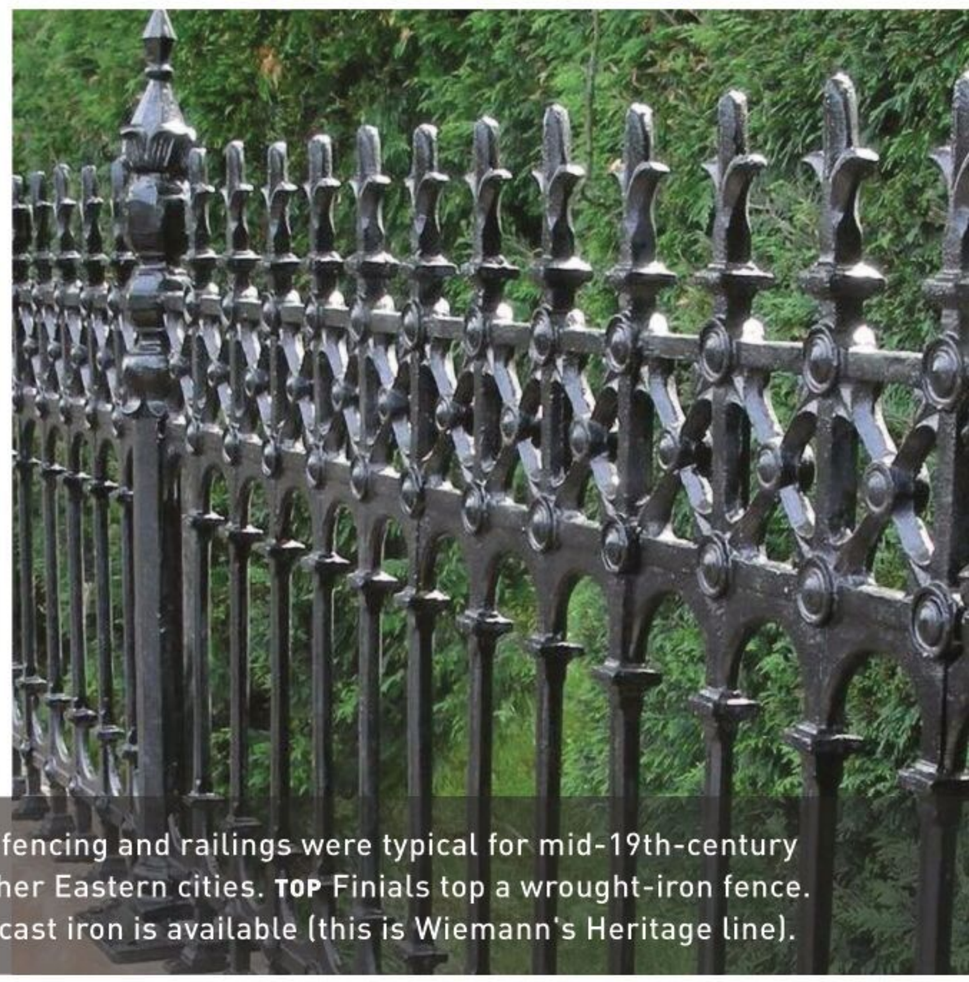
English A&C: fence panels match a gate inspired by architect C.F.A. Voysey.



White-painted open lattice with urn finials and a cottage gate: enduring Colonial Revival.







LEFT Somewhat austere iron fencing and railings were typical for mid-19th-century row houses in Boston and other Eastern cities. **TOP** Finials top a wrought-iron fence. **ABOVE** For landmark homes, cast iron is available (this is Wiemann's Heritage line).

the METAL fence

With the exception of iron entry gates on large estates and plantations, iron fencing was primarily urban, and often took the form of railings along stairs and around a tiny front yard. Some cities are known for their iron fences: Charleston, Savannah, and New Orleans come to mind, as do the monumental cast-iron newels and balustrades of brownstone Brooklyn, which emulated stone at far less cost. Most iron fences date to the Victorian era; they were deemed "too formidable" for bungalow lots.

Earlier metal fences were made of wrought iron, malleable enough to form into scrolls and even ornaments. Cast iron came a bit later. It is brittle but good in compression, and rusts more slowly than wrought iron; even so it needs to be kept painted. Steel began to displace iron fencing at the end of the 19th century, when composite fencing made up of steel and malleable iron—the precursor of chain-link fencing—was widely marketed for use on farms and household yards. Many iron fences were sacrificed during World War II, when they were melted down in scrap drives.

For the companies today offering metal fences, much of the business is for railings, driveway gates, and pool enclosures. "Ours can be made in aluminum, steel, bronze, cast iron, or stainless steel, depending on the design," says William Mogavero of Bill's Custom Metal in Woodbury, N.Y.

Before you put up a tall fence, check local zoning laws and building codes. Fences over five or six feet may require a permit, as might fences in designated conservation areas. If you want a new fence to last more than a decade, be sure to follow best standards for construction in your climate zone: for wood species, wind load, posts buried in cement below the frost line, rails and post caps that shed water, joinery, fasteners, and finish.

Modern PVC fences with hollow posts and snap-together components are disallowed in many historic districts. With a plastic sheen, they tend to come only in a harsh white. As they become brittle and crack, they look unkempt—unlike weathered wood, which has a more romantic patina. A better bet is a fence with structural components and those that touch the ground made of painted PVC lumber, with pickets or boards in wood.

JSTOCK/ADOBESTOCK (LEFT); JOSÉ 16/ADOBE STOCK (TOP); COURTESY WIEMANN METALCRAFT, WMCRAFT.COM

More Online Many sources: **oldhouseonline.com/gardens-and-exteriors/fencing-sources/**



RIGHT The formal, classical fence at the King Caesar House in Duxbury, Mass., is an architectural embellishment that echoes the style and symmetry of the 1809 Federal-period house. The inward curve is welcoming and softens the rectilinear facade.

matching the fence to the house

The highly ornamental iron fences in New Orleans' Vieux Carré would look ridiculous around a saltbox or ranch. Note regional standards and such details as porch trim and stair railings. • **For fences near the house, proportion is as important as style.** Consider height, the mass or apparent "weight" of the fence, and symmetry. A front-yard fence should be subservient to the façade and not fight the architecture, as by appearing taller than the porch or first-floor windows. • A wood fence may be left to weather or painted or stained in naturalistic colors or dark green. **White and off-white fences are Colonial Revival classics.**



LEFT Quite plain but with varied heights, this fence echoes the bungalow's style and color. **RIGHT** A tall privacy fence by Garden Structure includes vertical trellis panels. With or without vines, the graphic style is appropriate for 20th-century homes from Tudor Revival to Mid-century Modern.

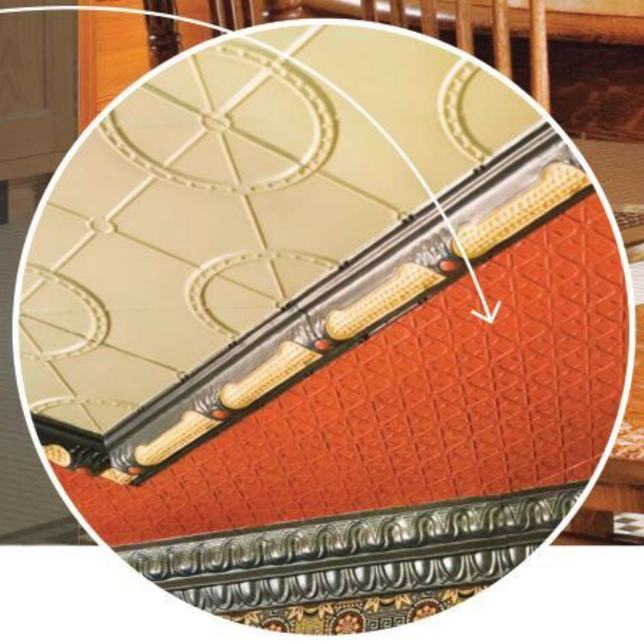


PAUL ROCHELEAU (TOP); DOUG KEISTER (BTM. LEFT); COURTESY GARDENSTRUCTURE.COM

TIN CEILINGS

More correctly, they were made of tin-plated steel, and later of steel, stainless steel, zinc, or aluminum. An economical alternative to decorative plaster, they were sold as a fire- and vermin-proof finish. In the 1880s, most installations were commercial, but during their height of popularity, ca. 1895–1915, homeowners used metal to cover damaged plaster or add detail in the kitchen. Hand-operated machinery was used to press the pattern into the metal; W.F. Norman, a Missouri company founded in 1898, still uses their old equipment. More recent manufacturers use hydraulic presses.

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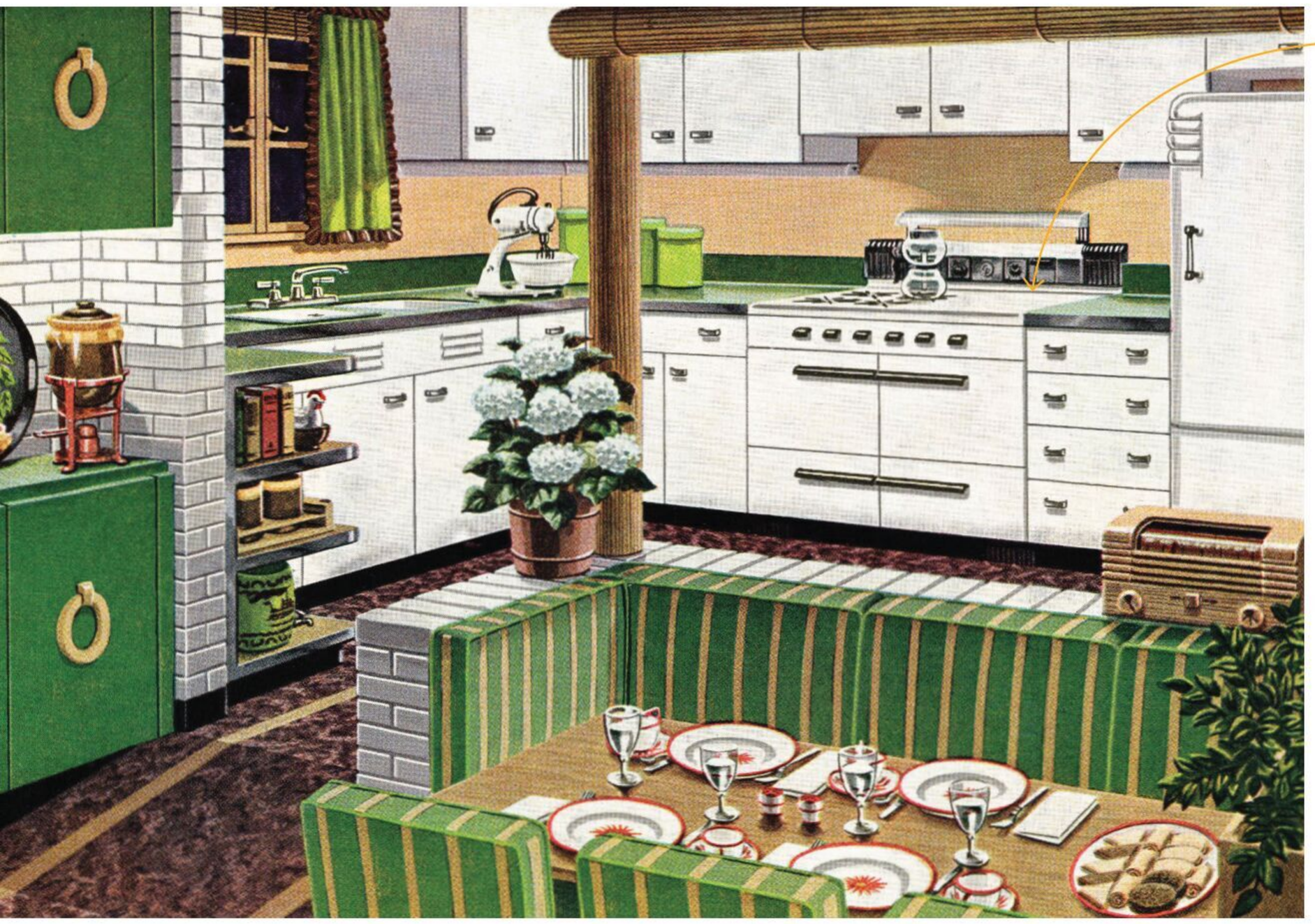


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"Old House, New Kitchen," 1946

From an American Gas Association advertisement, in *House Beautiful* magazine.



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Laxmi Stripe Parakeet from Kravet is a sophisticated play on the green and yellow striped fabric on the banquette in the illustration. The linen–cotton fabric has a 9" repeat. ***kravet.com*** It's $104.30 per yard through ***onlinefabricstore.com***

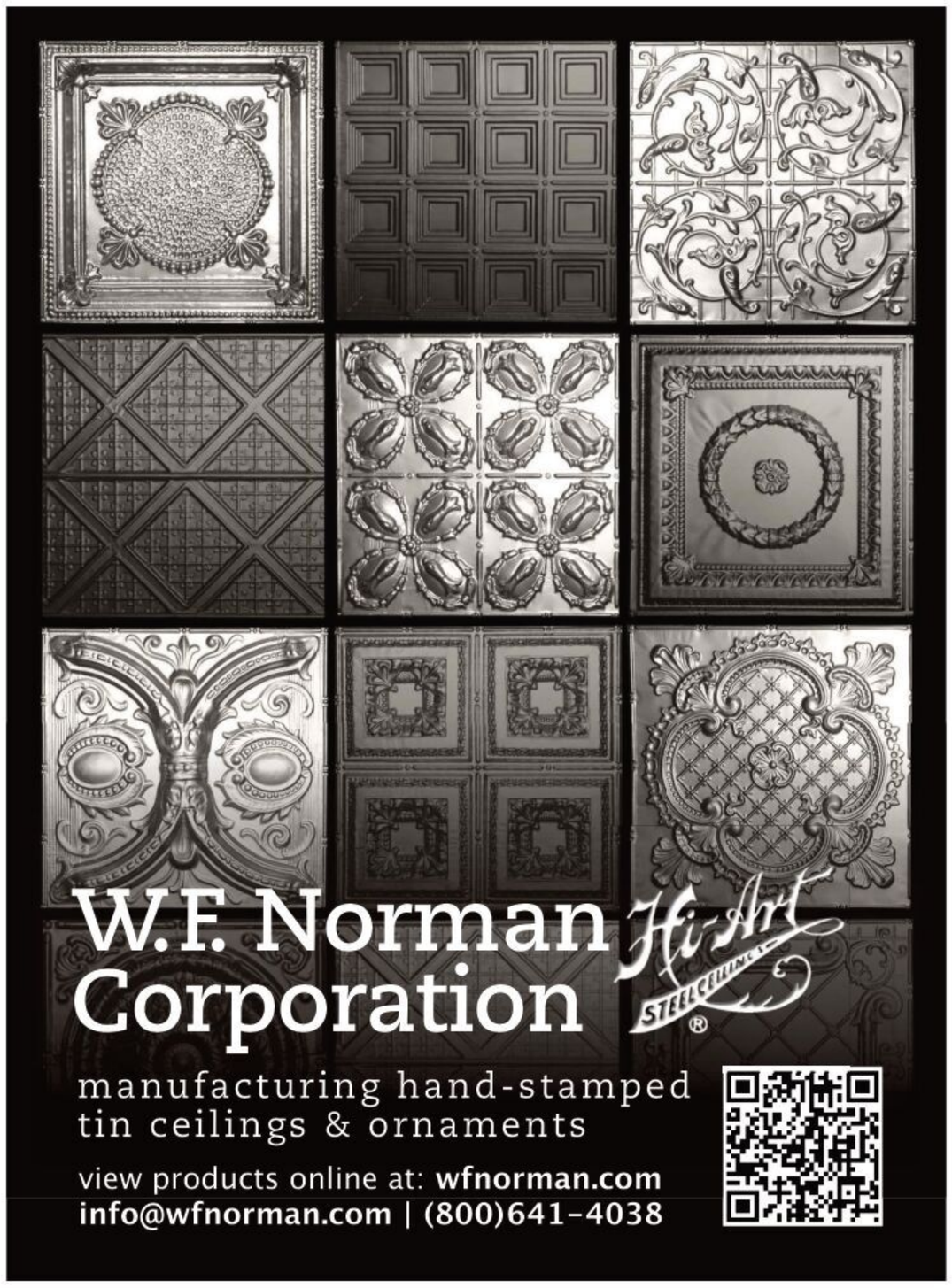
Reminiscent of colorful metal canisters that brightened kitchens of the 1930s and '40s, the Hay Sowden tin is available in mint, pink, and yellow. At $8.50 each, these make excellent tins for coffee, tea, or dry foods. ***us.hay.com***





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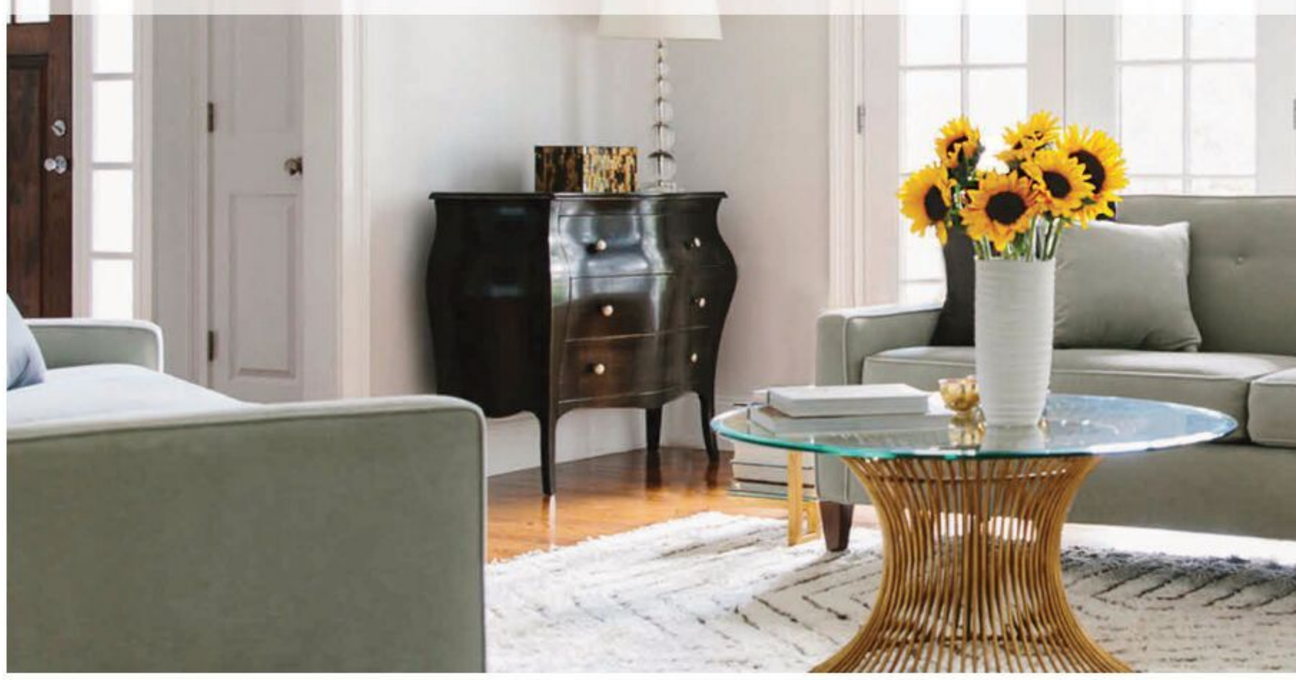


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A New Kitchen Meant to Be

Family furniture and a motif from the house add personality to a light-filled kitchen. **By Patricia Poore**

In remodeling the kitchen for a Prairie-style Sears kit home built in 1925, "the objectives were (a) to have the kitchen match the style of the house; (b) to leave walls where they were; (c) to salvage what we could of the room," says architect Howard Miller, a principal at Seattle's Studio TJP.

The existing kitchen was inefficient. An eating nook occupied the space where the red table and baking station are now; that area was partitioned from the kitchen by a bank of upper and lower cabinets that blocked light. "We left the kitchen sink where it was," Miller explains. No square footage was added. The window over the breakfast table is new. Flooring is original.

Appliances and sink are along the east wall. "One of the owners installed the tile himself, wearing a Fair Isle sweater, and didn't get a drop of adhesive on it," Miller says. On the opposite side, cabinets run in a L-shape along the west wall and part of the north wall. Upper cabinets are dressed up with a cutout tulip design taken from a stylized, Arts & Crafts-era motif in the stained-glass sidelights at the entry door. The motif repeats on the floor, where wood stain was carefully applied to a pattern incised into the wood.





1. THE MOTIF
When stained-glass cabinet fronts proved to be "fabulously expensive," the designers came up with a cutout tulip motif that echoes existing stained glass at the entry. A laser cutter inscribed the routered pattern.

2. TILE BACKSPLASH
Glossy green subway tile from Ann Sacks is used as a high wainscot on the working side of the kitchen, forming an easy-to-clean backsplash behind the sink and range. Beadboard on the opposite wall is painted in the same color.

JIM HOUSTON

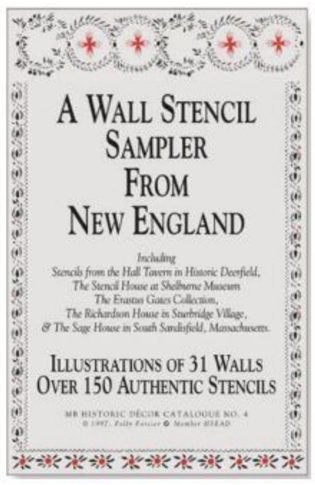
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With a nostalgic design, Kohler's 'Artifacts' single-hole kitchen **faucet with a high-arch swing** spout comes in a polished-chrome finish (shown), stainless, or oil-rubbed bronze. About $505–732 through online sellers. ***us.kohler.com***



An ageless Windsor with a **Scandinavian flavor** makes the H17 chair suitable for settings from farmhouse through Mid-century Modern. In 13 colors including red, the wood chair is sold only in pairs, for $168/pr. ($204/pr. for natural wood). ***royaldesign.com***



Stencil historian and artist Polly Forcier offers **downloadable catalogs** of stencil designs: Moses Eaton and Rufus Porter, floor and wall stencils and, more recently, Epoch Designs Victorian patterns. MB Historic Décor is now owned by Forcier's daughter Vivian Bisbee. Find catalogs, stencils, floorcloths, and paints at ***mbhistoricdecor.com***

The Belwith–Keeler 'Vintage 1900' round cabinet **knob has a retro look** suitable for kitchens 1920s–40s. Solid brass in a satin brass, polished or satin nickel, or black iron finish, the 1 3/16" knobs are $10.09 each. ***vandykes.com***



3

3. TRADITIONS

Perimeter counters are soapstone, anchoring the traditional black-and-white scheme. The island is topped with true butcher block. Although it can be used as a cutting surface, the owners prefer to preserve it by using cutting boards.

4. PERSONAL TOUCH

The red dining set pops against pale-green accents in the black-and-white room. "I first sat at that table Thanksgiving weekend 1949, at my uncle's home in Seattle," the owner remembers. He believes it dates to before 1929.



4



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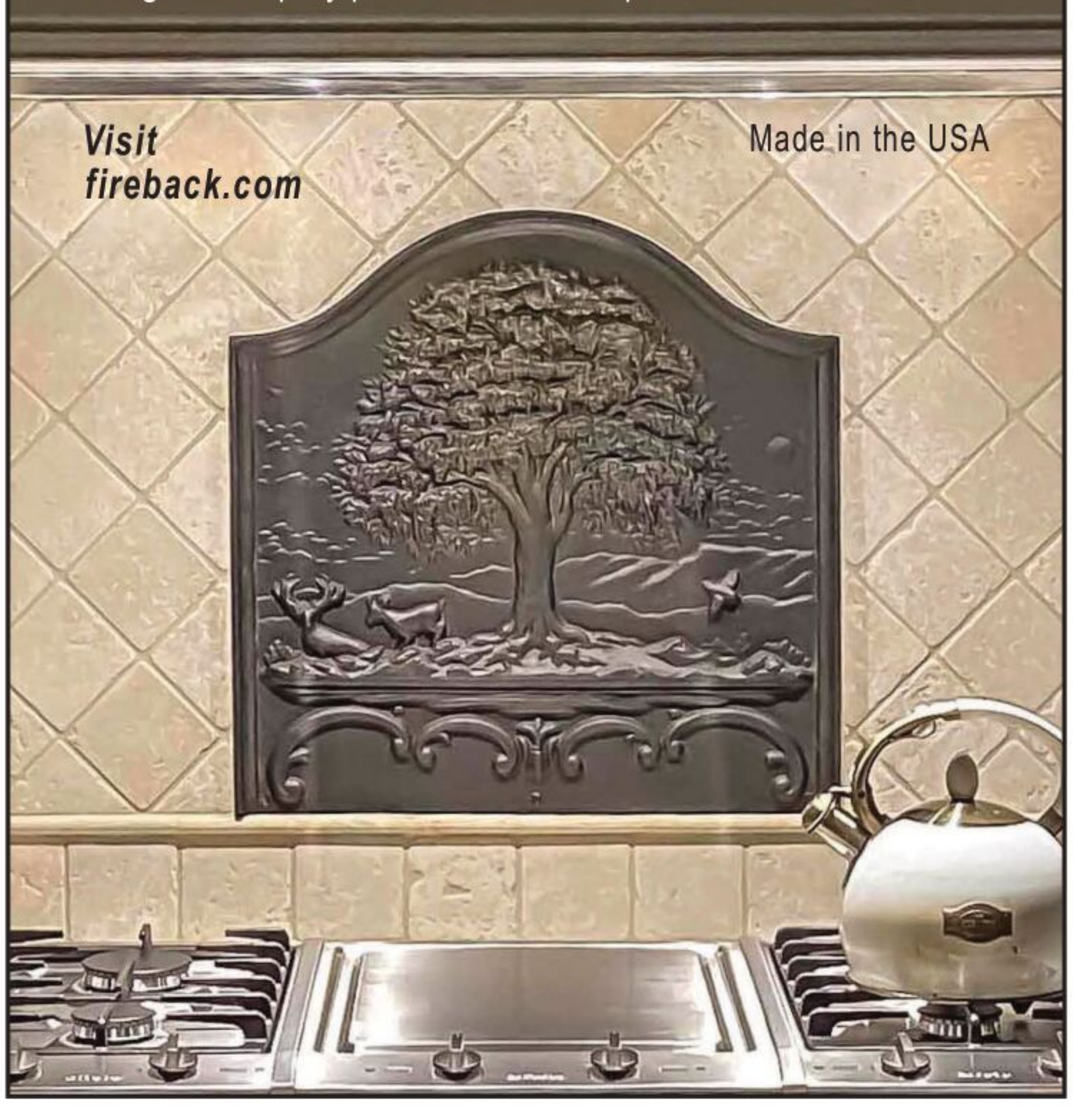
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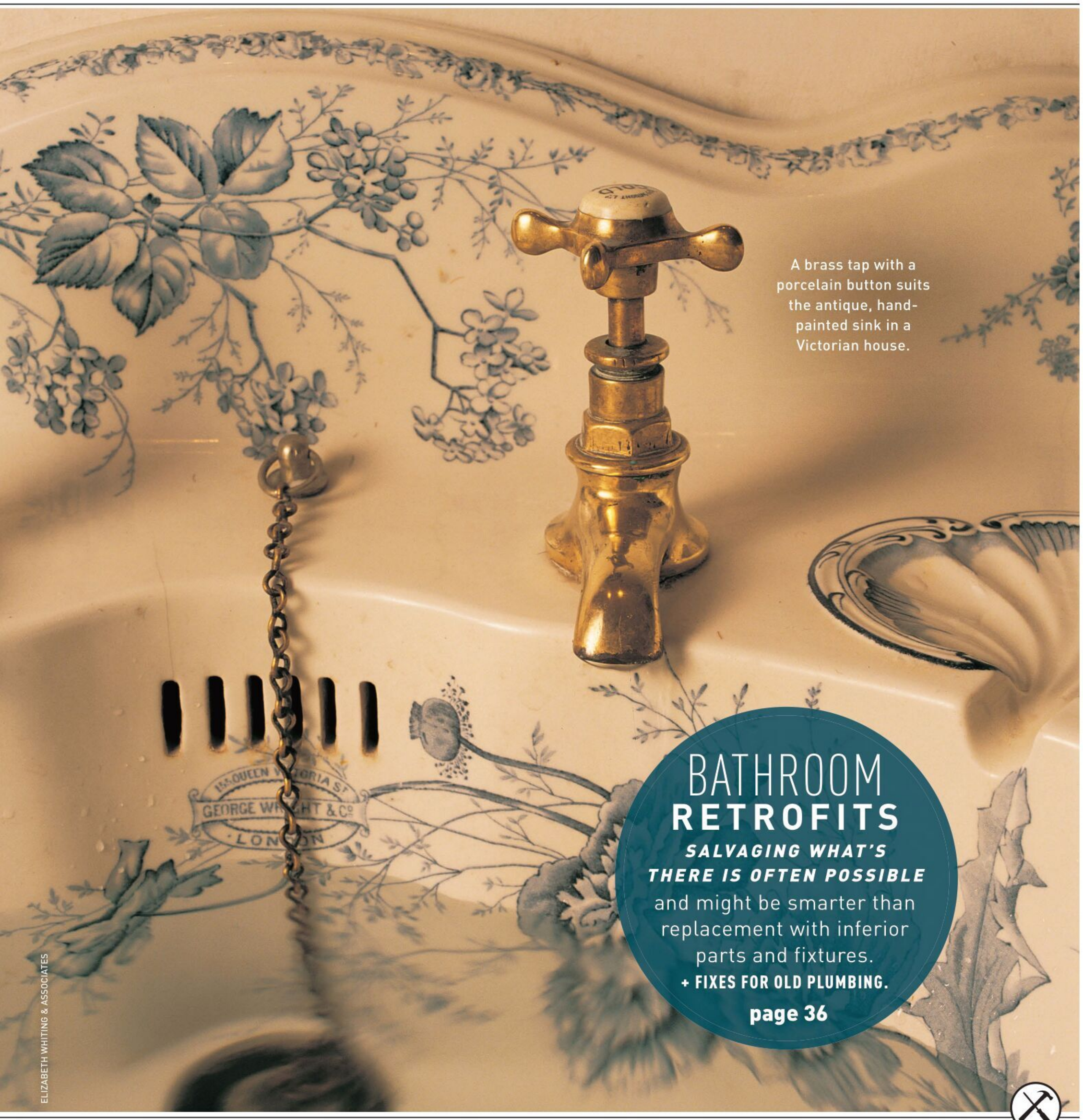
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RESTORE



A brass tap with a porcelain button suits the antique, hand-painted sink in a Victorian house.

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BATHROOM RETROFITS

SALVAGING WHAT'S THERE IS OFTEN POSSIBLE and might be smarter than replacement with inferior parts and fixtures.

+ FIXES FOR OLD PLUMBING.

page 36

36 **BATHROOM FIXES:** PLUMBING KNOW-HOW
Think twice before changing out old fixtures, as they may be fixable—and new ones not as good.

+

43 TOOLS + MATERIALS
44 KNOW-HOW
48 SALVAGE IT
50 OLD HOUSE DIYer
52 DO THIS, NOT THAT
55 SCREWED UP

Bathroom Retrofits & other plumbing fixes



Professional restoration can rejuvenate an aging plumbing apparatus such as a standing-waste tub filler, by filling pinhole leaks and machining any missing or broken parts. Replating (here, brushed nickel) is the crowning touch. **INSET** Covered with built-up oxidation, a standing waste tub filler and other assorted parts await restoration and replating.

Think it's time to change out old plumbing fixtures for new ones? Not so fast. Restoration may be the smarter, better route.

BY MARY ELLEN POLSON



An elephant-trunk toilet with raised ornamentation. Quirky old single-tap faucets marked Hot and Cold. A tower drain tub filler with crazed or cracked porcelain buttons. If you have any such fixtures or fittings in your bathroom, count yourself lucky. As with most old things, however, these nearly irreplaceable antiques may be somewhat the worse for wear after a century of use. That doesn't mean it's time to rip them out and replace them.

ABOVE The bathroom in an 1840s farmhouse is sensitively remodeled to reflect the period around 1900. The walls are clad in beadboard, the marble sink and long clawfoot tub are salvage, and faucets on both tub and sink are replated vintage fittings.

GROSS & DALEY PHOTO; COURTESY BATHROOM MACHINERIES (OPP.)



A vintage, heavily ornamented Mott toilet bowl, now ready for reuse.

THE PRO TIP

Supply lines should be of the finest material you can afford—preferably copper—*as they provide water for drinking, cooking, and bathing.* ***PVC is fine for drain lines****, which carry away used water (although they make more noise when the toilet is flushed).*

While lead use has been restricted since the 1920s, lead still turns up in older homes. If you find you've inherited lead piping—lead pipes are dark grey and turn silver when scratched—do have those pipes removed and replaced.

"With a little bit of service and maintenance, the stuff made 80 or 100 years ago will run for another hundred years," says John Vienop, responsible for machining and assembly at Bathroom Machineries, a California bathroom-fixture restoration and supply shop. "Pretty much anything you buy today, you're lucky to get 10 years out of it."

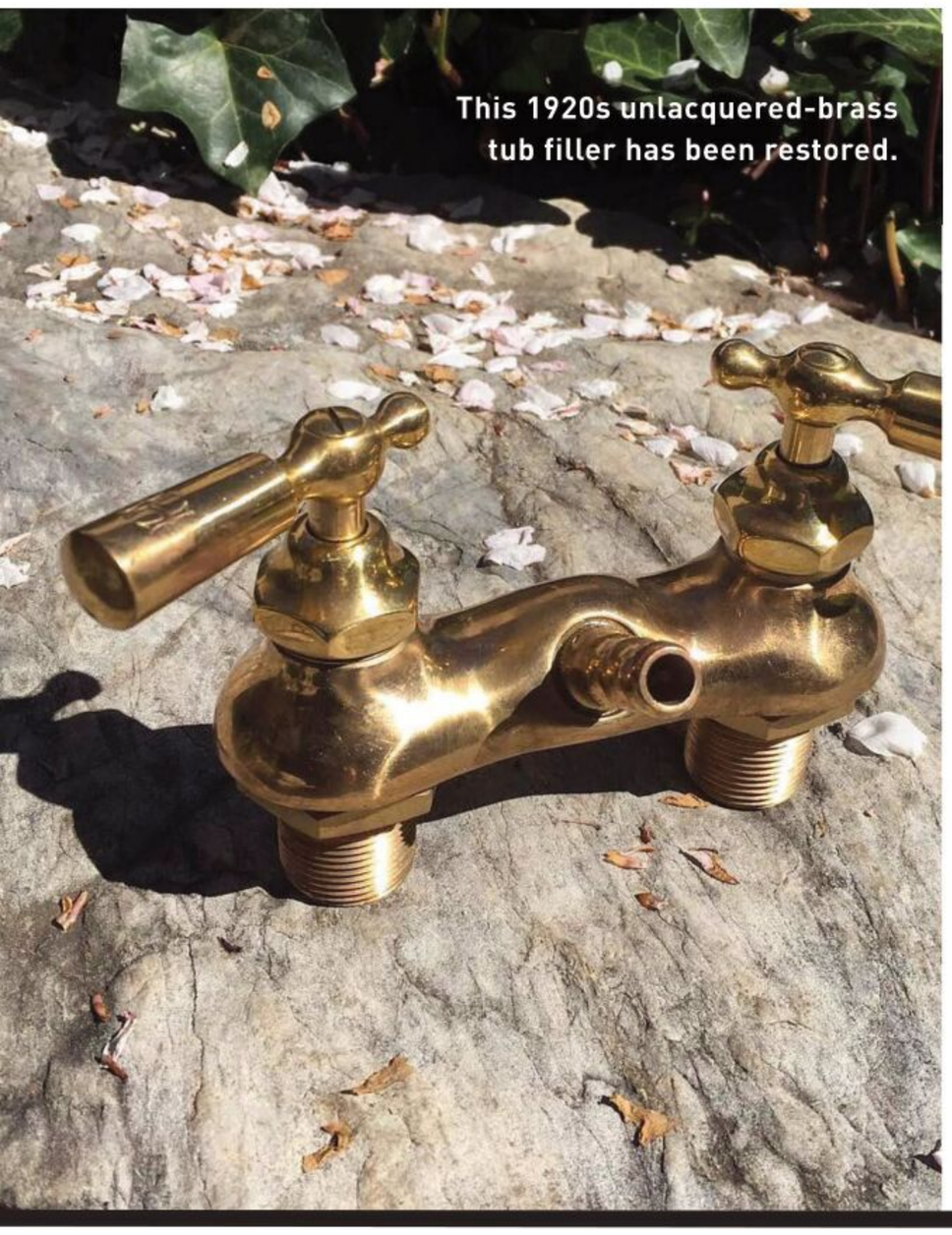
That goes for fixtures such as sinks, toilets, and bathtubs as well as fittings such as tub fillers and lavatory taps. Century-old faucets may be worn to bare brass gone greenish-grey and fixtures may be cracked, chipped, or crazed, but there's nothing else like them—perhaps one reason why there's a booming market for J. L. Mott pedestal sinks and earthenware tubs.

As an example, Vienop says, he recently lifted a 1911 sink basin in the shop. "The thing weighs 110 pounds without the stand. It's never going to break unless you drop it. A modern sink of equivalent size is 40 pounds. On a good day."

Even replacement parts for vintage fixtures aren't made as well as the originals, says Lydia Scheller, who co-owns Bathroom Machineries with her husband, Jim Freeman. "We're finding that porcelain handles made now are lighter and, for lack of a better word, crumblier. They don't have the substance that vintage porcelain handles have."

That said, however, some vintage plumbing fixtures dating to after World War II were made with zinc as a base material instead of brass. Those corrode to the point where the original parts aren't salvageable, Vienop cautions.

Most plumbers will tell you it's impossible to get parts for what's missing or broken in your bathroom—even when many of those parts are still available at salvage dealers or venerable hardware stores. Walter Parker of The Old School Plumber typically cherry-picks replacement parts from his 5,000-square-foot plumbing collection, which at the moment includes 10 rib-cage (aka needle) showers. Because the plumbing apparatus is so unwieldy, most were [*cont. on page 42*]



This 1920s unlacquered-brass tub filler has been restored.

mixed **PLUMBING**

Many houses have a mix: supply lines of brass, galvanized (zinc-coated) iron, and copper. Vents are traditionally cast iron, drain lines increasingly made of PVC (polyvinyl chloride).

Before the advent of copper plumbing in the late 1920s, brass tended to be used for supply lines in the East and galvanized iron was more prevalent elsewhere, says Walter Parker of The Old School Plumber. Over time, the zinc on galvanized pipes erodes, leading to slow drainage and lower water pressure. Pipes become brittle and susceptible to breakage. When Parker worked at the 1914 Pittock Mansion, in Portland, Oregon, he found (and replaced) galvanized pipes with threads so rotten that simply touching a pipe separated it from the rest of the plumbing.

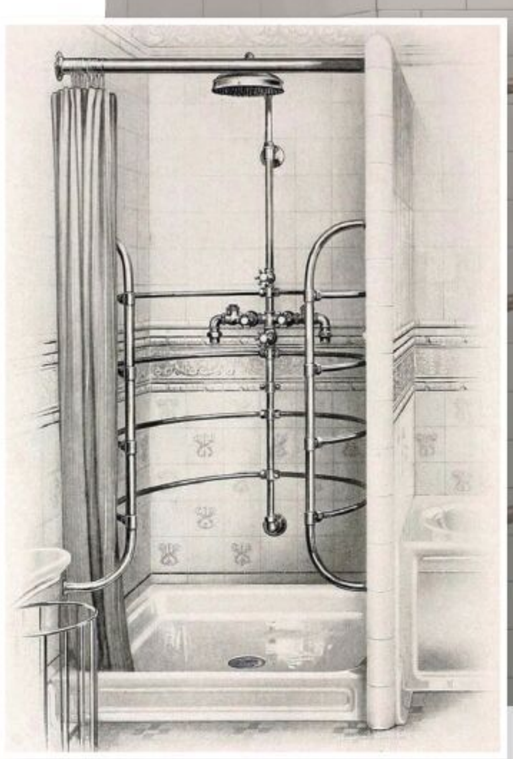
Brass does not corrode as aggressively as galvanized iron, but it does not have the longevity of copper. "Copper water pipes, soldered correctly, will last 100 years," Parker says. "That's not a guess. It's proven."

That's not the case with PVC, which is best used for drain lines. Galvanic corrosion still takes place—where brass fittings make contact with steel clamps, for example. Even copper may corrode in areas with acidic water. Add a neutralizing system to balance the pH.

RETROFITTING A FIXTURE

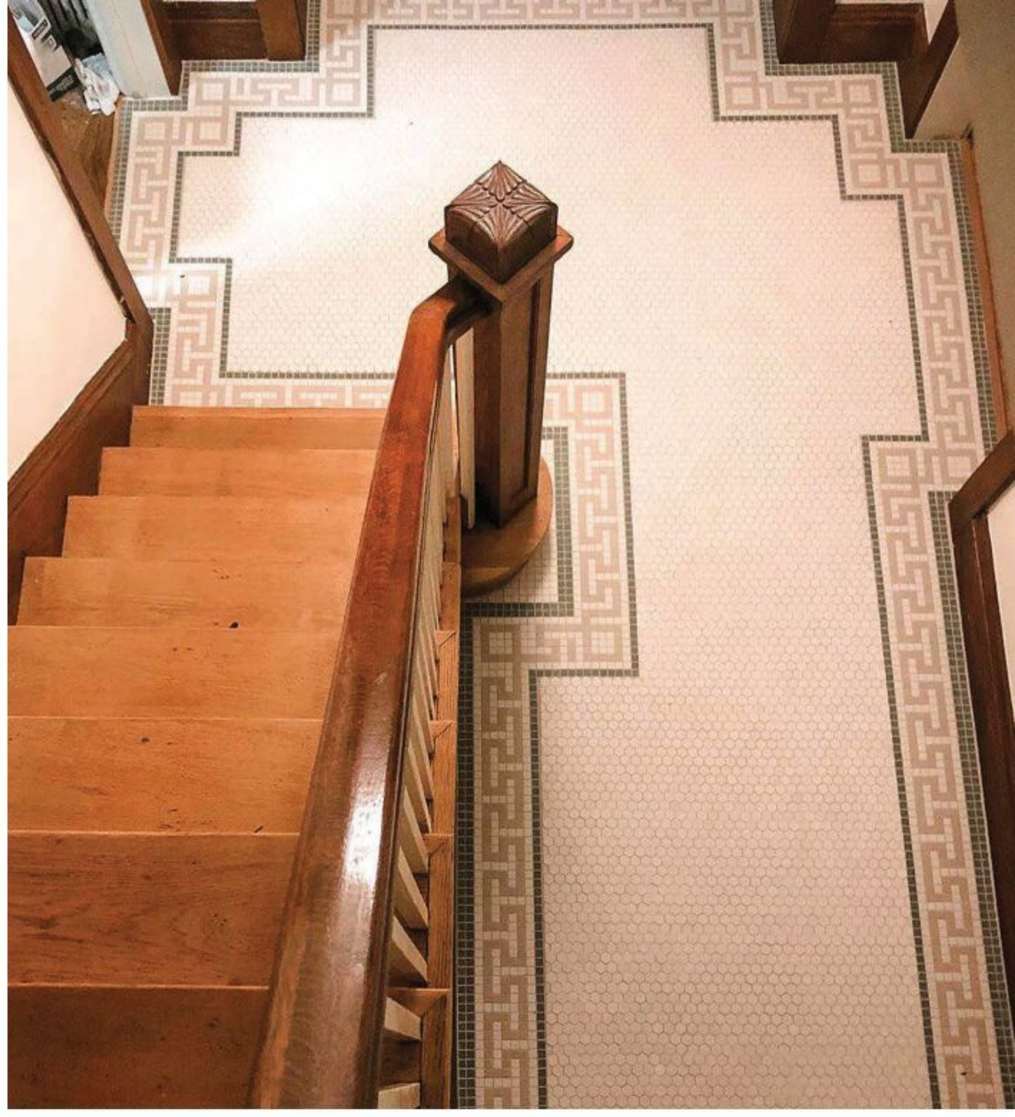
First, decide whether you want that needle shower or Fuller lav set reconditioned, or fully restored. At Bathroom Machineries, **customers typically opt for full restoration**, where the finish on a given piece is stripped down to bare brass, polished, and replated. Other restorers, notably The Old School Plumber and the Plumbing Geek, offer reconditioning, where function is fully restored but the exterior patina remains much the same after corrosion removal and cleanup. **When components of a given fixture no longer match, either because of earlier repairs or different exposure conditions, it's possible to replicate patina.** Brian Marrone (the Plumbing Geek), for instance, was asked to refurbish a standing waste assembly where one of two risers was nickel plated while the other was brass. To make them match, the nickel-plated riser was stripped and polished, then fumed with sulfur (don't try this at home) to re-create the look of dull brass found on the original brass riser.

The new owners of an 1892 Neoclassical home surrounded the original rib-cage shower with other period fixtures. INSET An illustration of a needle or "rib-cage" showerbath. Because of their size, such showers were rarely assembled until they arrived on site.



COURTESY BATHROOM MACHINERIES (TOP); WILLIAM WRIGHT; COURTESY VINTAGE PLUMBING (OPP.)



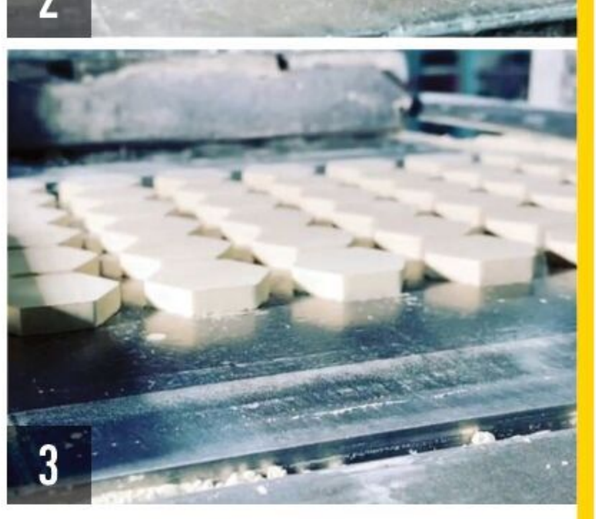




1



2



3

step one The die, the "cookie cutter" part of the tile-making operation, ready for a batch of dry mix.

step two With the dough in place, the hydraulic press bears down.

step three The press retreats, leaving crisp-edged hexagonal tiles ready for firing.

SHOPTOUR: AMERICAN RESTORATION TILE

When American Restoration Tile founder Bryan Byrd died suddenly five years ago, his two daughters were faced with a choice: let the family business go, or run it themselves. ● Erin Byrd Oliver and Rachel Byrd Silvestri chose to keep it going. "We thought we owed it to the employees to at least give their jobs a chance," says Oliver, who deals with clients and sales while Silvestri runs production and human resources, and finesses the trickier designs. The company is in Mabelvale, Arkansas.

Five years on, the sisters are more than happy with their decision. Business is booming, and the number of employees has doubled. "We've made about three times as much tile this year as Dad did in 2016," Oliver says.

Colloquially known as ART, the company makes the small, flat tiles called mosaics. In specific shapes such square, hexagon, and penny round, the tiles lend themselves to a wide array of patterns (usually on a white ground), from stars and flowers to geometrics and intricate borders.

Like mosaic tile made between 1885 and 1945, all ART tile is unglazed, full-body porcelain, meaning the color runs straight through the tile from top to bottom. The tops are perfectly flat without bevels or cushions. Grout lines are thin—a hygienic response to the late-19th-century "sanitary" movement. Tiles are small, and ¼" thick without exception.

Both women say making tile is "a lot like making cookies." Raw materials for each color are mixed dry in a large mixer, with just enough water added to make the clay pressable. The tiles are formed under pressure, then fired. One batch yields about 30 square feet of tile.

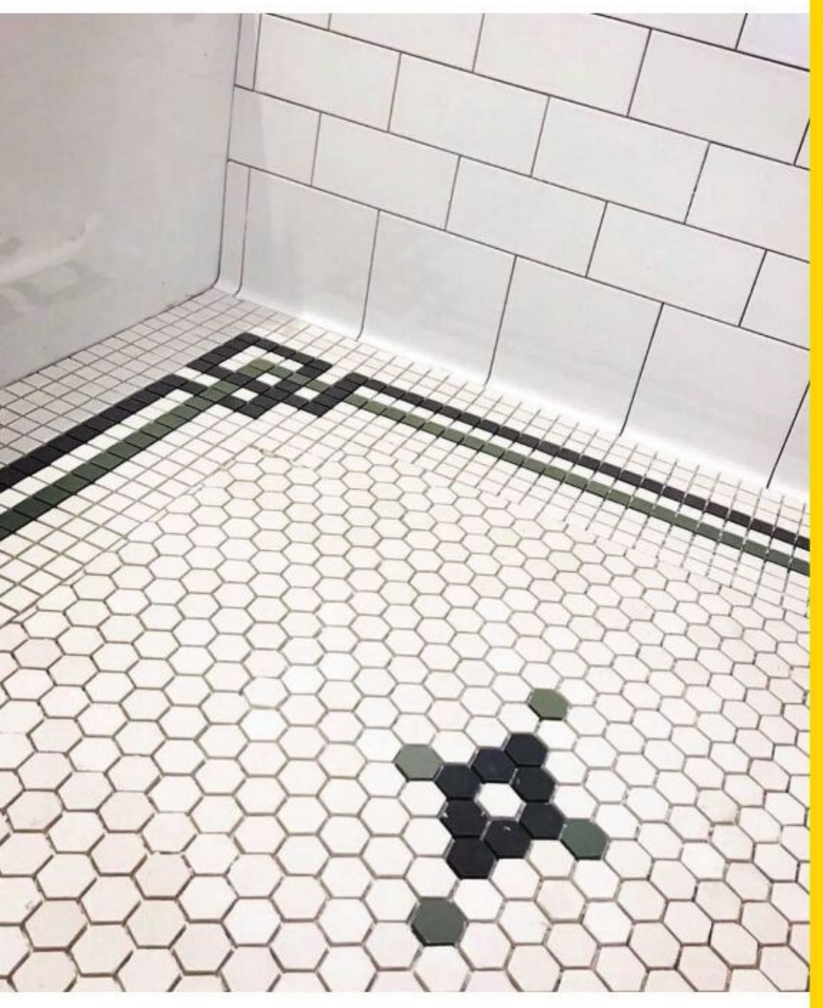
The small-batch process may be one reason there's always a long lead time at ART. Affordable compared to hand-pressed art tiles, mosaic tiles are typically priced at $38 to $40 per sq. ft. About 75% is sold to owners of old houses, for new work and patching, with the rest going to new-builds and to commercial or institutional clients.

"Nine people touch each tile before it heads out the door," Erin Oliver says. "It's not that we're doing anything magical. It's that we take the time to do it right," using traditional specifications.

WALTER PARKER (OPP. TOP)

More Online Bathroom floors: **oldhouseonline.com/kitchens-and-baths-articles/hard-working-floors-best-bets-bathrooms/**

BELOW A white Arts & Crafts-era bath gets some color and a period pattern from an interlocking border and black and green "stars." **BOTTOM** A strong floral border surrounds a white hex ground with "daisy" accents. **OPPOSITE** (left) Rachel Byrd Silvestri (on the left) and Erin Byrd Oliver are the second-generation owners of American Restoration Tile. Their father, Bryan Byrd, started the company in 2001. • (right) A formal mosaic floor in the entry of a Victorian-era townhouse.





RIGHT From a restoration by Walter Parker: This is a fully restored sink assembly with hot- and cold-water turnoffs and a P-trap in the drain. Considered more sanitary, exposed plumbing was common in the early-20th century.



Wood develops a patina as it gets old; **plumbing develops leaks**.

—GARY FEUERSTEIN, P.E., *OLD-HOUSE JOURNAL*, AUG./SEPT. 1983.

THE IMPORTANCE OF **venting**

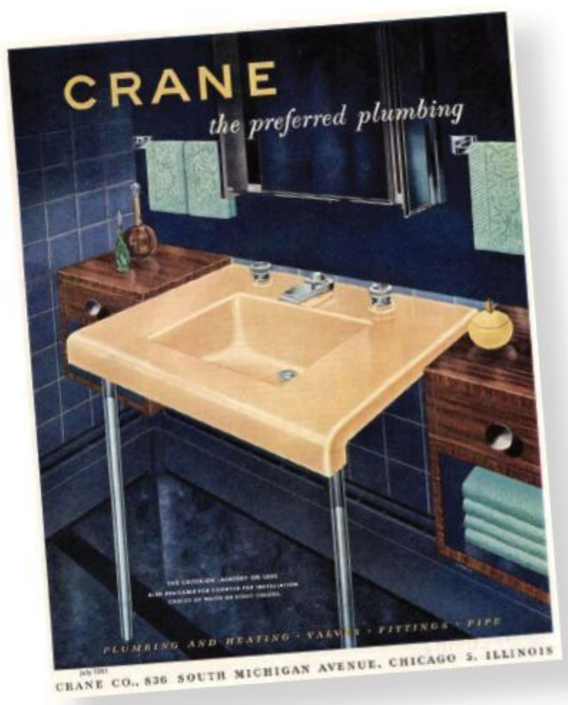
Venting is essential to healthy plumbing. Drain lines that connect to the sewer or septic tank must seal as wastewater leaves the pipes, or you may experience unpleasant—sometimes dangerous—smells. • **The mechanism that does the work here is the lowly trap.** The most familiar form is the P-trap, that bend in the pipes beneath the kitchen or bathroom sink. (Other, usually hidden, traps form seals as wastewater leaves the shower, tub, or toilet.) • **The bend allows water and waste to flow through, but traps a small amount of water after each use. This forms a seal that keeps vapors from sewer or septic lines from backing up into the house.** A trap also allows gases to depart through vent pipes (those cast-iron behemoths usually found in walls). **If the house lacks vent pipes** (some older homes were built without them), **the gases have nowhere to escap**e and can push the liquid in the trap into the waste system, destroying the seal. Instead of venting outside, fumes enter the house. Gases include explosive methane, so a bad smell is the least of the dangers.

SURGICAL **repairs**

The best restoration plumbers are able to repair plumbing in walls and ceilings without damaging the tile. Since most of the plumbing comes up through the floor, it's less disruptive to get access through the ceiling below, even if the plumbing is embedded in cement, says Walter Parker, The Old School Plumber. He uses similar precision techniques to restack old waste pipes in walls. He figures if a client doesn't have to spend $10,000 to retile a bathroom, the extra money can be applied to retrofitting vintage fixtures—his specialty.







ABOVE A freshly replated standing-waste tub filler and rolled-rim tub form the centerpiece of a bathroom filled with restored bath fittings and accessories.
LEFT A ca. 1900 porcelain toilet has been retrofitted with a custom mahogany toilet tank and seat.
FAR LEFT If you must have a Crane Criterion sink in your Mid-century Modern bathroom, make sure it comes with Crane's faucet set. No other faucet will fit!

assembled on site by plumbers of the era.

Occasionally Parker has to scramble to find a specific part, like the 1890 new-old stock J. L. Mott shower pan he installed for Karla Pearlstein ["The Rescue of Firehouse 17," OHJ December 2021]. The rib-cage shower was slightly too big to fit the pan, so he shortened and re-bent all eight of the ribs. Needle showers are treasured for therapeutic whole-body sprays flowing from hundreds of perforations along the ribs. If you've never experienced a needle shower, Parker explains that "it's like having 1,200 feathers hit you all at the same time."

Vintage parts are often sturdier and longer-lived than contemporary replacements. As an example, Parker mentioned using an 80-year-old J. L. Mott rubber gasket that was still in perfect condition, on a project a few years back.

Knowing what will work and what won't often requires expert advice. From pictures alone, a layman can't necessarily spot the cracks that mean a fixture is unusable: that's why it's important to buy from a reputable salvage dealer. If possible, see the sink or tub in person before you buy. Then there's the question of whether the mechanical parts are still functional. Valves, especially, take the most wear because they regulate the inflow and outflow of water. Threaded pipe fittings, the oldest joining method for plumbing faucets, can vary widely in early fixtures—from as few as three or four threads per inch up to 30 or 40.

"In pre-World War I faucets, there were no standards," Vienop says. "Different manufacturers had proprietary thread pitches, so you had to buy everything from that manufacturer."

The same may hold for fixtures and fittings. One popular post-World War II Crane sink, the Criterion, accepts only a Crane Criterion faucet; no other faucet will work. "Probably once a month, we get someone who has designed everything in the bathroom around a sink, and the installation is all done," says Scheller. "They come to us and say, 'I just need a faucet'."

So do your homework. When you buy a vintage fixture, get the fittings, too, if they are functional and in good condition. Otherwise, you may have an extensive search ahead. Persevere, when even a trusted plumber says it can't be done for a lack of a part. "Plumbers, we're finding, are not really hip to what parts are available," says Scheller, of Bathroom Machineries. "I'm always really happy when I can save a customer from having to remodel their bathroom for lack of a $100 part."

COURTESY BATHROOM MACHINERIES

FOR RESOURCES, SEE PAGE 87.

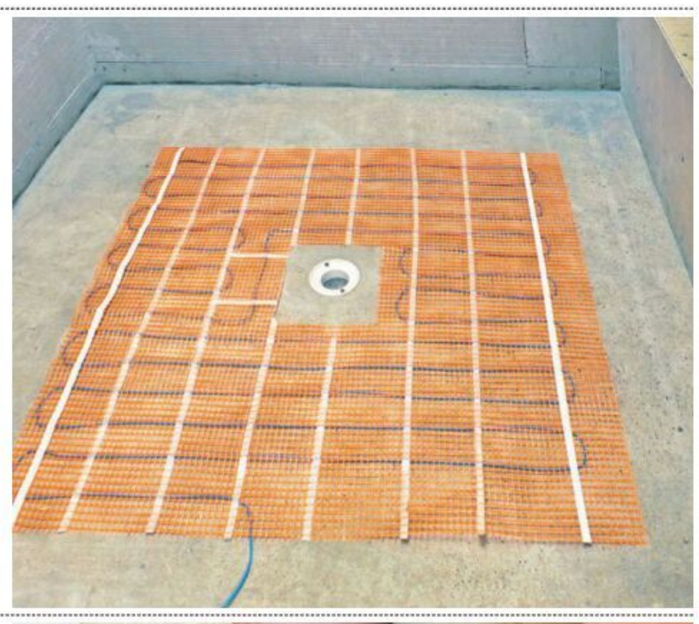
plumber's friends

Ingenious aids for getting deep into bath reno or improving the outcome.



Bite Through Copper

The M12 copper pipe and tube cutter with a lithium-ion battery automatically adjusts to piping from ⅜" to 1" in diameter. Capable of 200 cuts on a single charge, it works in spaces with as little as 1½" of clearance. Including battery, $199. Northern Tool, (800) 838-0516, **northerntool.com**



Ah, Warmth

You'll be more comfortable, and the floor will dry faster, with the ShowerMat, an electric, open-weave heating mat. The mats bond easily to any substrate and come in 36"x 60" and 48"x 48" sizes. About $262 each, from SunTouch, (888) 432-8932, **suntouch.com**



Deep Access

Loosen and tighten nuts and pipes in tight or hard-to-reach spaces with the Pro Telescoping basin wrench with a 180° pivoting head. The large, spring-loaded jaw has a capacity of ⅜" to 1¼" and automatically adjusts to size as it slides into place: $19.99. HAUTMEC, **hautmectools.com**



Auto Auger

Clean out clogged drain lines with an electric drain auger with autofeed and lock settings. The cordless, lithium battery-powered device clears pipes from ¾" to 2" in diameter. It works on complex S and L pipes, too. About $93. Populo Tools, (866) 300-3311, **facebook.com/populotools**



Digital Snake

Locate the source of plumbing obstructions and more with this 5 megapixel borescope inspection camera that relays high-definition images to most smart phones. Equipped with six LEDs, the Wi-Fi-enabled, 16½' semi-rigid cable is waterproof: $49.99. DEPSTECH, **depstech.com**

Getting Rid of Ants

They're a wonder of nature, but you might not want them in your kitchen. Or tunneling through walls. **By Brian D. Coleman**



Common household brown ants sip at a sweet poison. **BELOW** Carpenter ants chew through wood while making tunnels and nests. **RIGHT** Western Exterminator Co. created this excellent identification chart.

I didn't pay much attention, at first, to the stray ant on my kitchen counter. It must have come in through an open window. Soon I noticed several more, and worrisome trails leading to cupboards. When I opened the microwave oven and found it full of ants feasting on breakfast crumbs, I knew it was time to take action.

Ants are everywhere: they've been around since the Cretaceous Period, 130 million years ago, and it is estimated there are over 10,000 kinds of ants on the planet, with over 700 types in the U.S. alone. Pavement ants are the most common (those tiny, dark brown or black ants that nest beneath cracks in the cement). Others, too, are common pests: fire ants, sugar ants, odiferous ants, and (old-house shudder) carpenter ants.



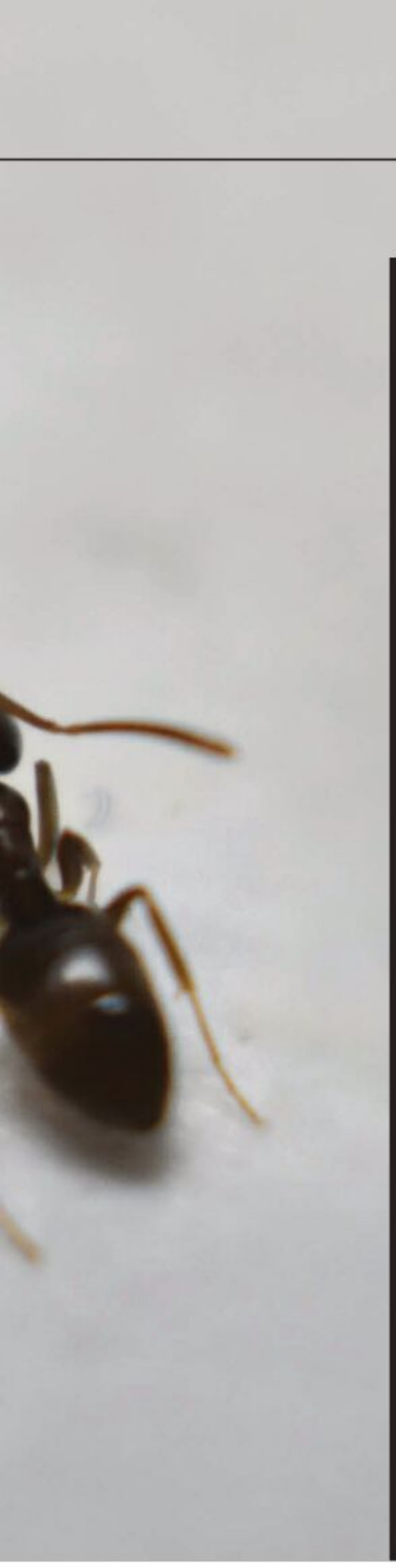
The first step in dealing with ants is to figure out where they're coming from. Ants can squeeze through the minutest opening in the wall or foundation, leaving a pheromone trail for other ants to follow. Any crack in concrete, wood, or plaster is an open door. If your foundation has no vapor barrier, they can burrow up inside. Ants are smarter than we realize. Overhead cables, utility lines, and pipes provide handy bridges for them to enter your home through openings in the siding or roofing.

I had a vintage, pull-chain doorbell that I'd installed on the front porch. The ants didn't bother to ring before marching inside through the chain's tiny hole in the siding. Doors and windows, even when they're shut, provide points of entry through small gaps in the frames—especially when there is any rot, as moisture attracts ants. Air-conditioning units in windows are another point of entry. Houseplants, laundry, and furnishings that have been outside may bring in ants, so inspect them thoroughly.

Ants come inside looking for the basics: food, water, and shelter. That's why they're seen most frequently in the kitchen, and in areas with poor circulation and standing water: bathrooms, basements, and crawl spaces. It may seem simple to remove them from visible areas, but ants can burrow deep inside walls and floors, building nests that are difficult to find and remove.

The first step is simply to make the house less attractive to ants. Fix foundation problems. Update the seals and caulking around doors, windows, and A/C units. Fix leaky pipes, clogged drains, and dripping faucets. Sweep up crumbs in the kitchen, clean the ovens; don't leave standing water in the

DIANE/ADOBE STOCK; BANKSPHOTOS/ISTOCK VIA GETTY IMAGES; COURTESY WESTERNEXTERMINATOR.COM (OPP.)



ANTS AND THEIR APPETITES

It's important to distinguish what type of ant has invaded.

	Carpenter	Field	Pavement	Odorous House
Appearance				
Description	Black/dark brown 1/4 - 1/2" Yellow hairs on abdomen	Black and red 1/8 - 1/4" Rounded front and backside	Dark red/brown or black 1/8" Long, raised arms	Black/dark brown 1/8 - 1/16" Smells when crushed
Food Source	Other insects (dead or alive), honeydew, sugar, food grease	Honeydew, dead insects, sweets, spilled liquids	Fruit, honeydew, seeds, insects, meats, bread, cheese	Sugary foods, honey, food grease, spills
Habitat	Decaying moist wood, trees and structures	Fields, yards, along fences, near trees and buildings	Sidewalks, patios, driveways—areas with little vegetation	Wall voids near heat source

bathroom. If you find ants while cleaning, wipe down surfaces with vinegar to remove their pheromone trail.

The two methods of eradication are repellents, and baits or traps. Repellents deter ants from entering; apply them at doors and windows or other openings. Homemade deterrents include chalk lines, talcum powder, vinegar, coffee grounds, cinnamon, chili pepper, cloves, and cucumbers. Peppermint, lavender, and eucalyptus essential oils also are distasteful to ants. If you already have an infestation, however, the insects usually will find another route! Repellents work best as a preventive measure.

Ant baits are a longer-term solution. The poinsonous bait is taken back to the nest, then consumed by the rest of the colony. Bait is often set in ant traps: small enclosures that the ants can enter and then exit with the bait. You must use the right bait for the right ant species.

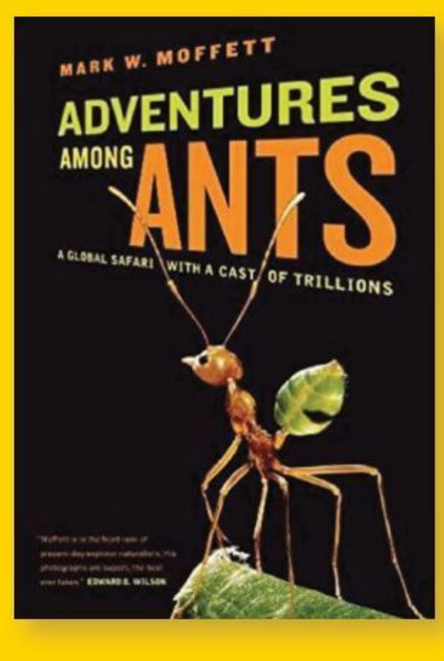
Ants may become resistant to one bait, so rotating it every few weeks is helpful. Don't disrupt the ant trails when

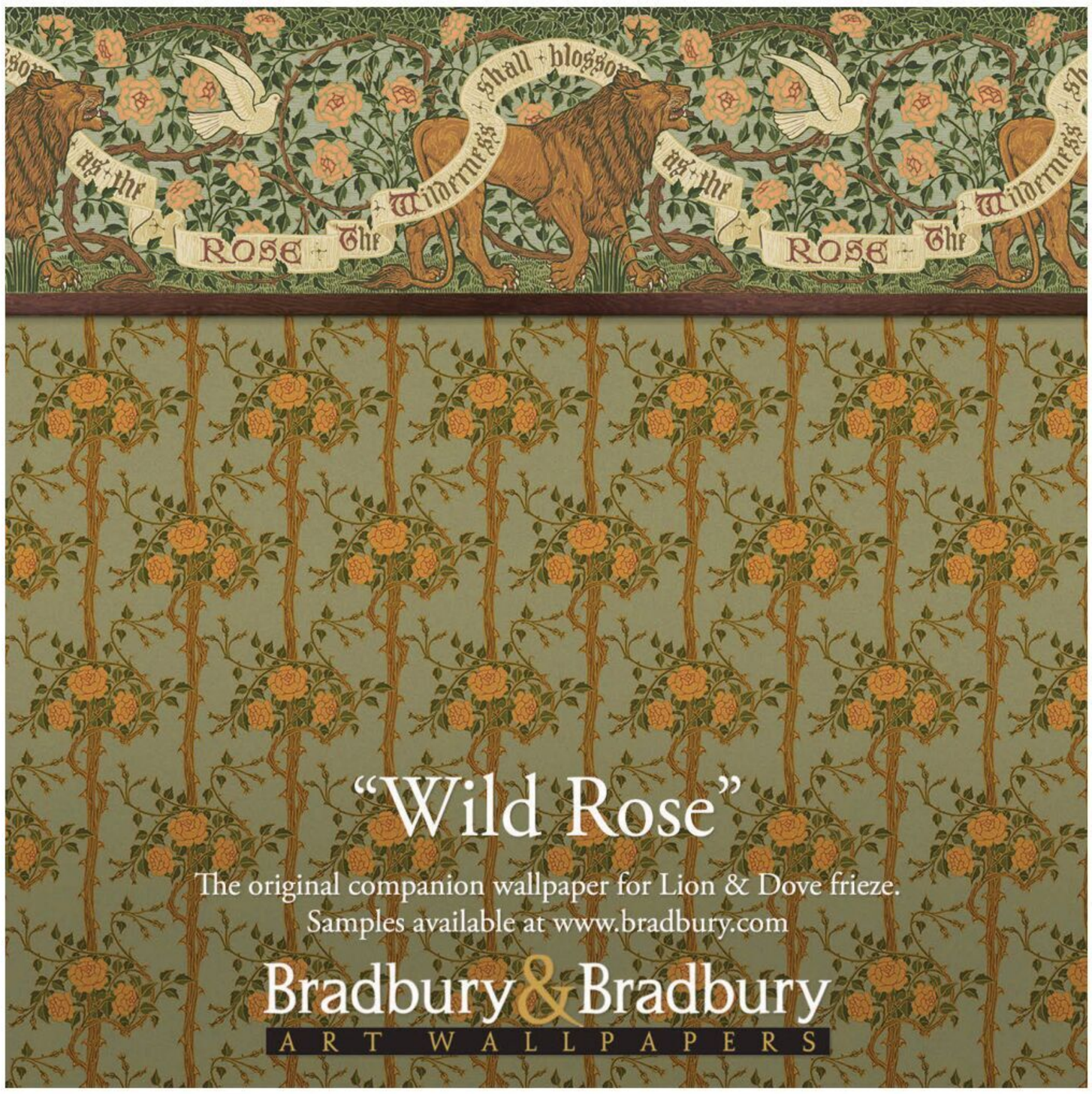
But wait! Ants are important.

The well-known entomologist Mark Moffett is known as Dr. Bugs. Here's what he has to say:

"Our Friend, the Ant! *Okay, that won't sound right to most of you. But many of the ants that invade American kitchens in numbers are likely to be "invasives"—aggressive species that came from afar, and worthy of their status as pests. The native ants of American forest and meadow generally do a lot of good. These little social wonders kill pests, aerate the soil, give seeds the opportunity to germinate by burying them in soil, and even pollinate some of our flowers. 'Go to the ant, thou sluggard, consider her ways and be wise', advised King Solomon, and I agree."*

Moffett's book *Adventures Among Ants* describes the roles of ants in wonderful detail, as he takes us around the globe to provide details on how ants display strikingly human behaviors, though at a different scale and faster tempo. Spectacular close-up photographs shrink us down to size and offer new perspective. **doctorbugs.com**








"Sugar ants" love sweets.

natural baits

Homemade bait can be as effective as manufactured products and save money. Note that borax is a poison, not to be ingested or inhaled; wear a mask and gloves when handling it.

→ **BORAX + SUGAR** Borax is lethal to ants, disrupting their digestive system, but they won't eat it alone; it must be mixed with a favorite food.

***Mix 1 cup water, 2 tablespoons borax, and 2 cups sugar** in a saucepan and boil for three minutes; let cool. The thick, sweet paste is then placed on a plate near infested areas.*

→ **BORAX + PEANUT BUTTER** Some ants prefer fat and protein over sugar. If sugar didn't work, try this:

***Mix 2 tablespoons borax with enough peanut butter** to make a thick paste, and leave it on a plate near ants.*

→ **DISH SOAP + OIL** Either spray the solution on the ants, or leave it in bowl: the ants are attracted to the oil and soap, but when they try to drink they are trapped and drown.

Mix 1 quart water, 1 teaspoon cooking oil, and 1 teaspoon dish soap.

→ **BAKING SODA + POWDERED SUGAR** Baking soda disrupts the digestive system of ants, slowly killing them. Add powdered sugar to make it palatable, and they'll take the bait back to the colony.

***Mix equal parts soda and sugar** and place it in a shallow dish near the ants.*

using bait, as you want them to carry it to the nest.

Carpenter ants chew wood, turning it into sawdust that rots. In the forest, this creates compost. In a house, it's highly destructive. Attracted by moisture, carpenter ants nest in rotted windowsills and exterior walls. Find the nest and destroy it, by removing it and all wet or decayed material, and sometimes using insecticide. Call an exterminator if the extent of the colony isn't clear. (He may drill holes to puff boric acid into walls.) Managing water incursion is the first step to repelling ants.

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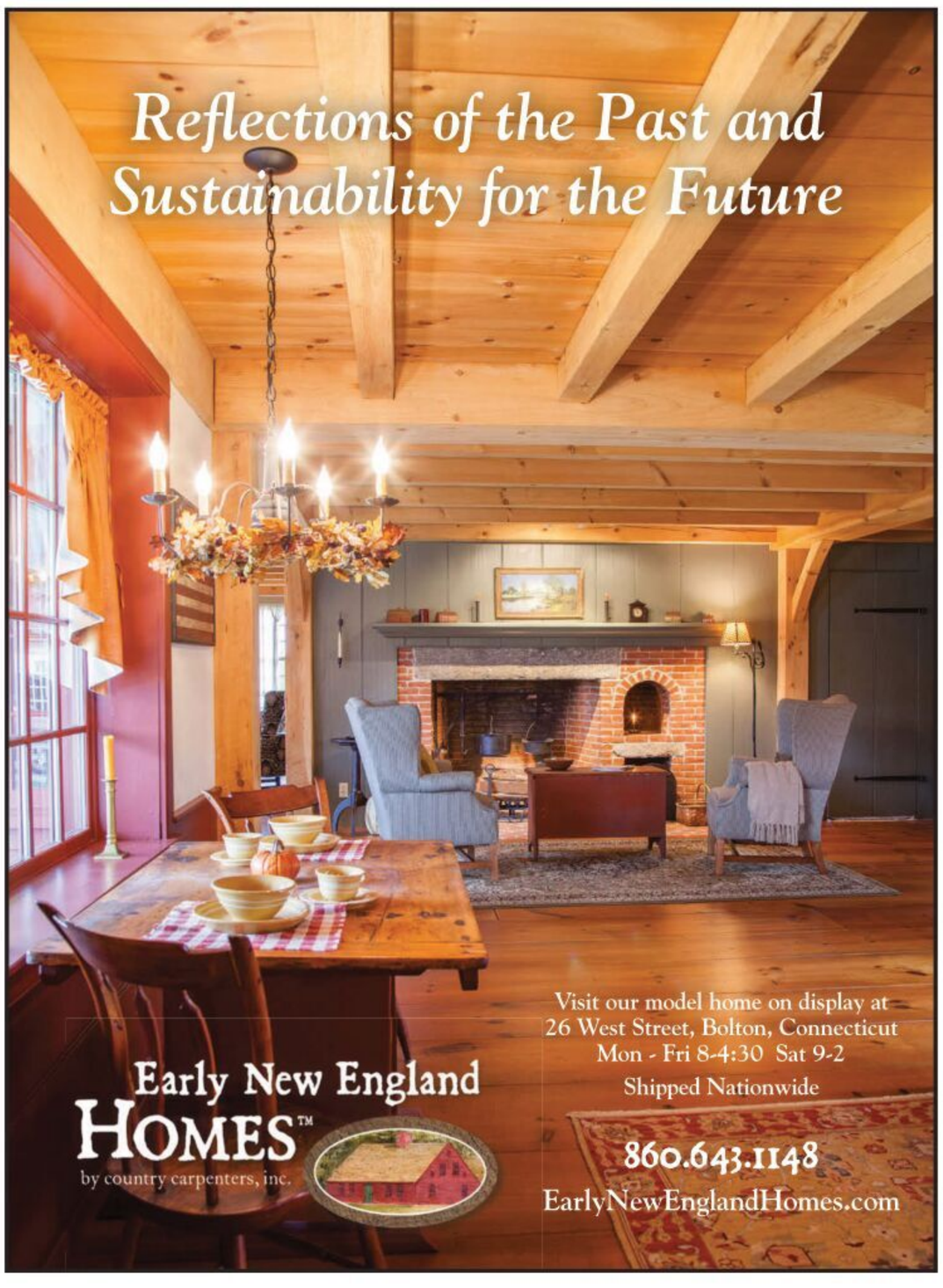
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Reflections of the Past and Sustainability for the Future

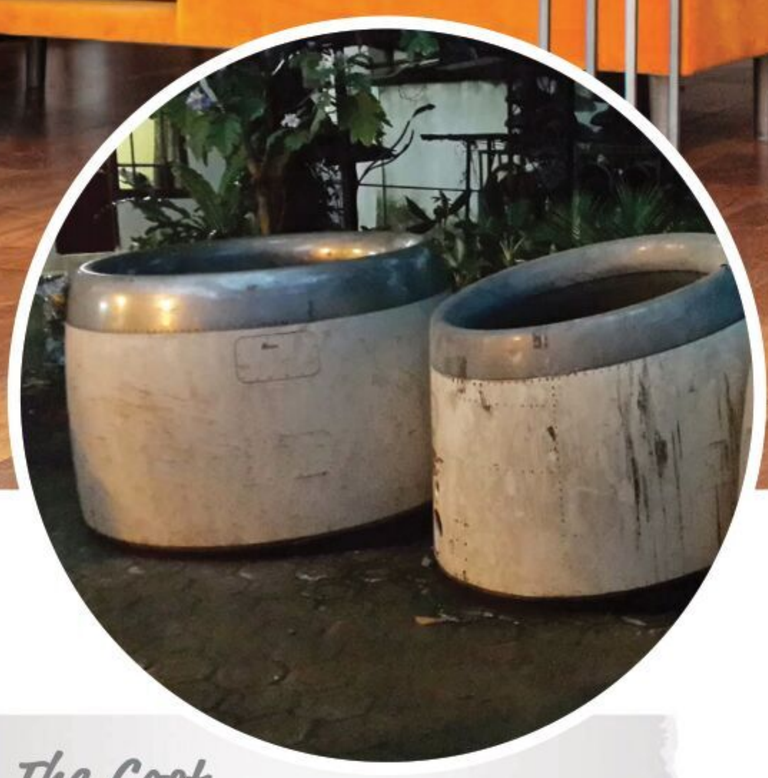


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The 'Cowling Chair' is a surprisingly comfortable, industrial-modern piece made from a salvaged jet-engine cover. **INSET** Salvaged jet-engine cowlings before stripping.

The Cowling Chair

With a pedigreed salvage provenance, these chairs turn industrial junk into industrial design. **By Brian D. Coleman**

Without knowing quite what they would do with them, brothers Ben and Harry Tucker bought several Boeing 737 cowlings early last year. (A cowling is the removable cover of a jet engine.) They'd started a company called Plane Industries, which gave new life to salvaged airplane parts: fuselages made into clocks, doors repurposed as coffee tables. One hot summer afternoon they caught their father resting inside one of the engine covers. Remembering Eero Aarnio's Ball Chair design of 1963, they had their concept.

the story of the cowling chair

This is not a DIY project, so we're summarizing Plane Industries' process:

A raw cowling salvaged from a local airfield is trimmed down, the excess honeycomb cut off until just the exterior metal ring is left. Then, three fiberglass molds are fabricated: one for the seat, and a pair to create each half of the seat back.

An intricate, 18 m. plywood frame is cut with a CNC router, in three different segments for the interior of the chair, and attached to the cowling. Plywood is laminated to create six different curved seating inserts for the interior of the chair, which are then upholstered with 2" foam and covered with black Alcantara, a suede-like synthetic fabric.

The fiberglass shell is then meticulously fit onto the frame and cowling—a laborious process that involves fitting over 300 bolts and also sanding and shaping the molded fiberglass; it can take up to two weeks. Then the shell is sprayed in the customer's choice of color, black being the most popular.

Once the shell and interior are complete, the cowling is temporarily detached from the wooden frame and shell, and work on the metal exterior begins. The metal is sanded from 80 grit to ultra-fine 800 grit, then polished three times for a mirror finish. The polished cowling case is reattached, the upholstered plywood fitted inside, and the painted fiberglass shell given its final, post-finishing fit onto the cowling. A welded steel stand supports the chair, which weighs over 500 pounds and stands six feet tall.

Reminiscent of mid-century design, with a unique salvage story, the cowling chairs are a hit. The U.K. workshop ships them to the U.S. and Australia, Mexico and the Bahamas, and beyond.

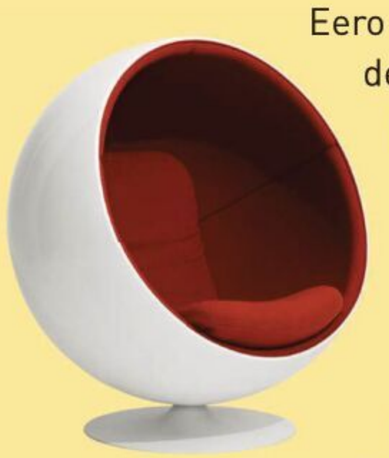
The Cost

RETAIL COST OF A CHAIR — £16,000 ($21,000)

COURTESY PLANE INDUSTRIES

THE BALL CHAIR
& OTHER PODS

A classic of industrial design, the Ball Chair (aka Globe or Global chair) was created in 1963 by Finnish designer Eero Aarnio. Quoting the designer: "We had no proper big chair, so I decided to make one. ... After some drawing I noticed that the shape of the chair had become so simple that it was merely a ball. I pinned the full-scale drawing on the wall and sat in the chair. ... My wife drew the course of my head on the wall. This is how I determined the height of the chair. Since I aimed at a ball shape, the other lines were easy to draw, just remembering that the chair would have to fit through a doorway.



BALL CHAIR

"After this I made the first prototype myself using an inside mold, made using the same principle as a glider fuselage or wing. I covered the plywood body mold with wet paper and laminated the surface with fiberglass, rubbed down the outside, removed the mold from inside, had it upholstered, and added the leg. The naming part of the chair was easy."

Like other pod chairs, the Ball chair is a room within a room, but one that swivels and so is connected to its surroundings. Today the Aarnio Ball Chair, Arne Jacobsen's Egg Chair (Copenhagen, 1958), and the elongated Egg Pod or Easter Egg Chair (Scandinavian, 1968) have been reissued. All are related to the Womb Chair, designed for Knoll in 1948 by Eero Saarinen. Depending on authenticity and materials chosen, prices for all range from about $995 to $17,800.



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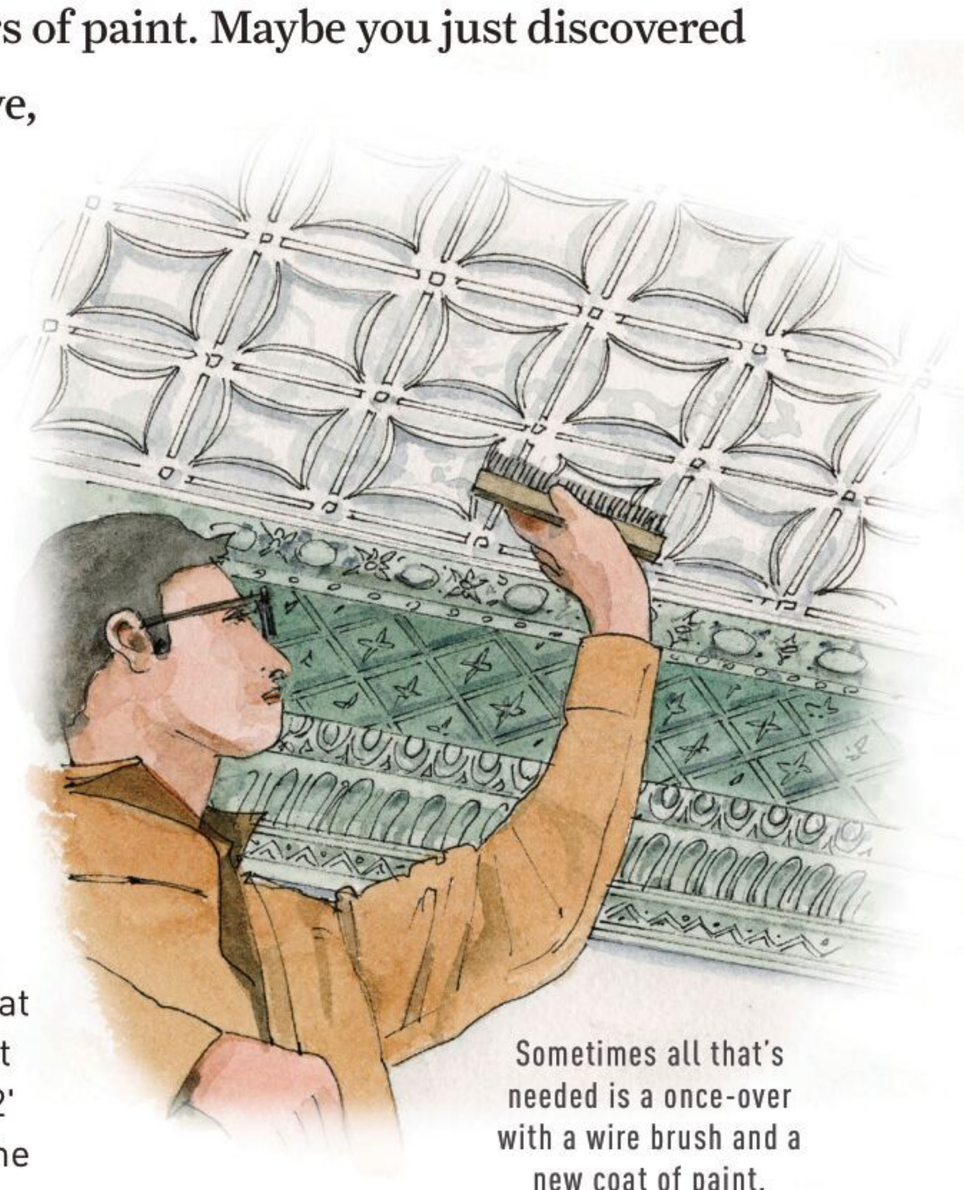
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Repairing Metal Ceilings

Tin-plate or steel, metal ceilings remain popular because they are inexpensive and highly decorative. The only enemy is rust.

By Mary Ellen Polson

Corroded patches may be worrisome, showing up on your old "tin ceiling" . . . or its embossed detail might be obscured by too many layers of paint. Maybe you just discovered an old one, too pretty to remove, beneath a dropped ceiling—but it's seen better days. Take heart, as most cleaning and repair tasks are low-tech and do-it-yourself.



Sometimes all that's needed is a once-over with a wire brush and a new coat of paint.



USE STEEL WOOL

PREP + DE-RUST

A revival that started in the 1990s saw metal ceilings embracing their industrial essence—finished not with paint, but with a clear coating that allowed the steel, aluminum, or brass to shine. Historically, though, tin ceilings were painted so that the ornament might mimic decorative plasterwork. Sealing the surface as well as seams, paint also affords protection against rust.

To remove a buildup of excess paint, try going over the surface with a wire brush. The metal is not particularly thick, so remove only loose material. Use a 1" wire brush of medium stiffness, using just enough muscle to dislodge loose paint without gouging. You can try a medium-bristle rotary brush in a power drill, hand brushing in the corners.

Paint applied before 1971 probably contains lead, so take all precautions.

Another method is to use a wire loop, great for removing paint that isn't well bonded to the steel. Make a loop at the end of length of flexible, 16-gauge construction wire, fastened at the bottom. This "bat" should be about the length of a flyswatter. Working in 2' square sections, bat the ceiling with the tool, and loose paint should come down.

To remove rust, rub with medium steel wool or aluminum-oxide sandpaper.

REPAIR + FILL

Fill separated seams and holes smaller than a dime with paintable acrylic-latex caulk that contains silicone. For larger holes, try repairing the damaged area

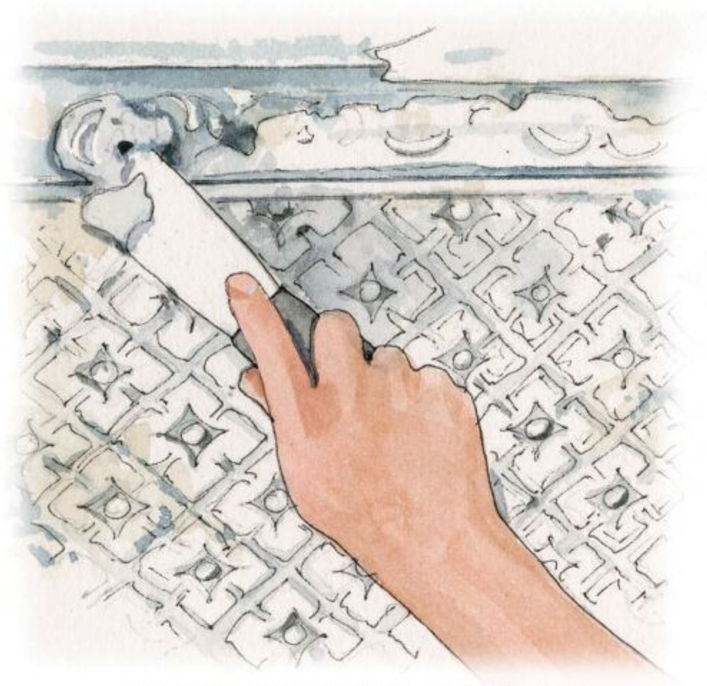


CAULK EDGES & MINOR DAMAGE

with polyester auto-body filler, readily available at auto-supply and hardware stores. It's a two-part material (but not an epoxy); after it has been mixed and applied, it will begin to set up. While it's in the soft, rubbery state, you can shave and carve it with a "cheese-grater" blade, following the lines of ornament. When it has fully hardened, sand it smooth. Read the manufacturer's directions and experiment with the filler before attempting any large or very visible repairs. (It's possible to mold a small replacement section, using filler along with a mold-making kit from a hobby store, but you'll need to experiment with techniques to cast and then attach the patch.)

Metal patching is another option. Use a piece of salvaged sheet metal or, in patterned areas, a scrap of ceiling. Make the patch about 2" larger than the hole; fold the edges under ½" and cut corners

ILLUSTRATIONS BY ROB LEANNA



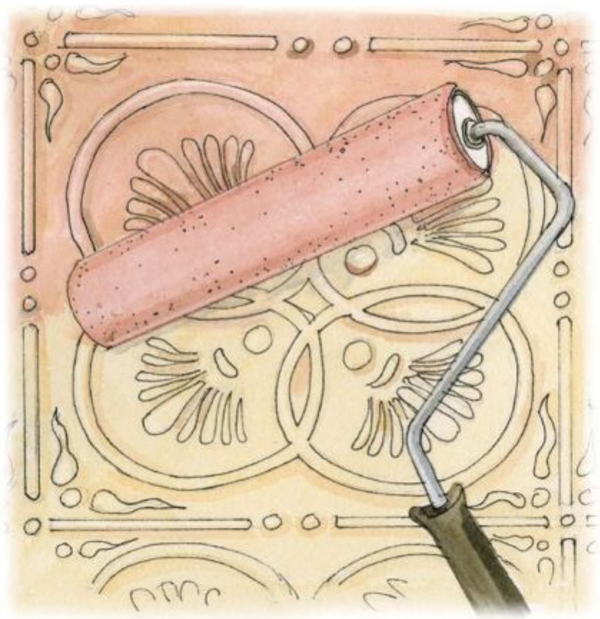
FILL HOLES WITH AUTO-BODY PUTTY.

off at an angle with tin snips. Affix the patch in place and attach with pop rivets. Is the damage extensive? Many of the original patterns are still being made and sections may be ordered. (See p. 87.)

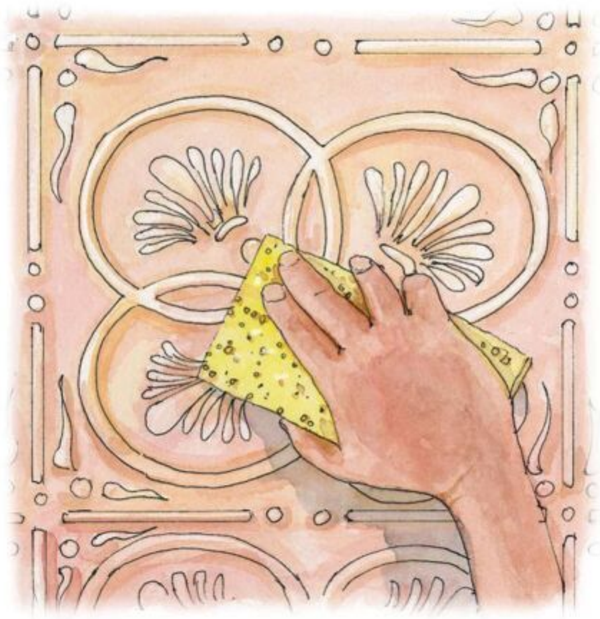
CLEAN + PRIME

Go over the ceiling with a brush attachment on the vacuum cleaner, to remove any steel wool fibers. Then wipe the whole thing down with mineral spirits. Never use water. Brand-new metal ceiling may be ordered in non-rusting copper or brass, or with a factory-applied finish. But an old ceiling will demand a painted finish. If you have exposed any bare metal, seal the whole thing by applying an oil-based, metal-compatible primer coat.

FINISH OPTIONS



STEP ONE:
APPLY FINISH COAT OVER BASE COAT.



STEP TWO:
WIPE RAISED AREAS TO HIGHLIGHT.

Apply two coats of a compatible finish paint, applying the paint thinly to avoid buildup in the recesses. Don't use water-based paint. Don't paint in high humidity. A ¾" roller should have sufficient nap for a ceiling with ½" relief.

You might consider a decorative treatment. Polychromy uses different hues to bring out the overall design in a ceiling with a field section, borders, enrichment (filler), and the crown or cornice moulding. You can "pick out" certain ornamental bits, change color or tint section to section, or use glazes.

An easy way to show off the embossed relief is simply wiping to expose a color laid underneath, which then becomes highlights. Complementary colors will create a lively scheme. Using a tint and shade of the same or similar hue often works best.

As your first finish coat, apply, over the whole area, what will be the highlight color. Allow it to dry thoroughly. Apply your second color over it, working the paint well into the deeper impressions. Now, using a pliable sponge or soft cloth, quickly wipe the wet paint off the raised areas you want to highlight.

what about stripping?

Sometimes the overpainting on an old ceiling is so thick, it has obliterated the details, is failing over large sections, or is covering rust that needs to be removed. In such cases, you might want to consider stripping the paint. This is a terrible job: the surface is overhead, making work dangerous and fatiguing, and the embossed surface is hard to scrape. Assume you won't get all the paint off; it's okay, no one inspects the ceiling too closely.

Start by mechanically removing whatever paint you can: with a putty knife, scrapers, wire brushes, and steel wool. Stubborn spots that remain should be attacked with a chemical stripping agent. (A heat gun is not a good choice, as the metal ceiling absorbs heat, keeping the paint from melting.) Buy a semi-paste stripper thickened to stay on an inverted surface; you can thicken it even more by adding a bit of cornstarch.

Be sure to ventilate the room and wear a safety mask. A low scaffold—say, a plank laid over two saw horses, with a guard rail attached at chest height—will be safer and less tiring than using a ladder.

Rinse with mineral spirits and immediately apply an alkyd or oil primer recommended for use on metal.

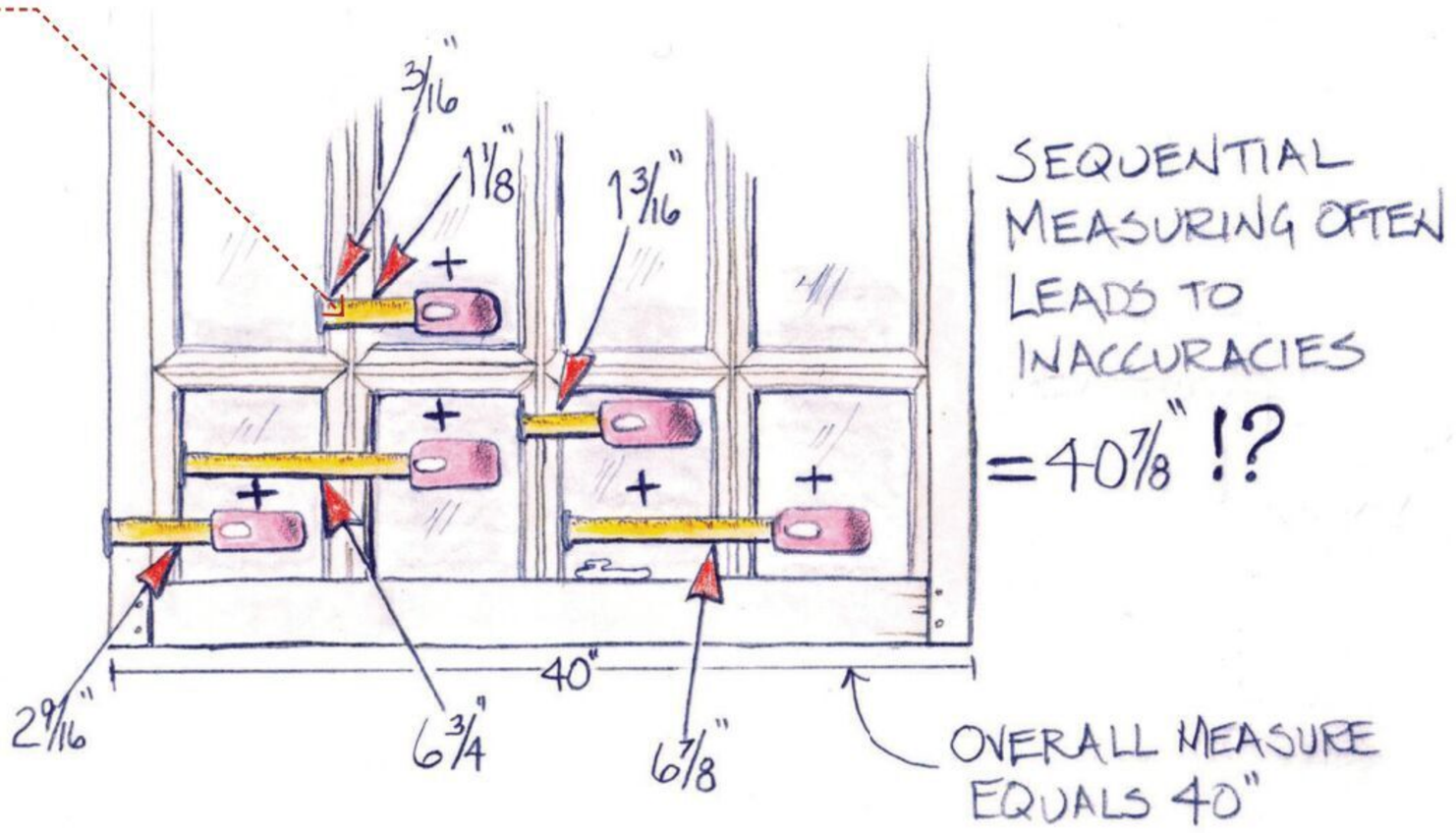
A Better Way to Measure

Every restorer will find it necessary to produce accurate measurements, usually for a scale drawing, whether of an architectural element, a room, or an entire floor. We're inclined to grab a tape measure or folding rule, then measure each element separately: the flat wall space, then the casing, then the window opening, etc. Dutifully, we transfer our separate measurements to a piece of graph paper or to the computer. Later we may discover that our overall measurement is off, the result of small inaccuracies introduced each time we moved the measuring device. Much better to run a long tape the length of the space, noting the cumulative measurement at each significant point. These interim measurements are easily—and accurately—transferred. **By Ray Tschoepe**

WRONG WAY

ACCUMULATING ERROR

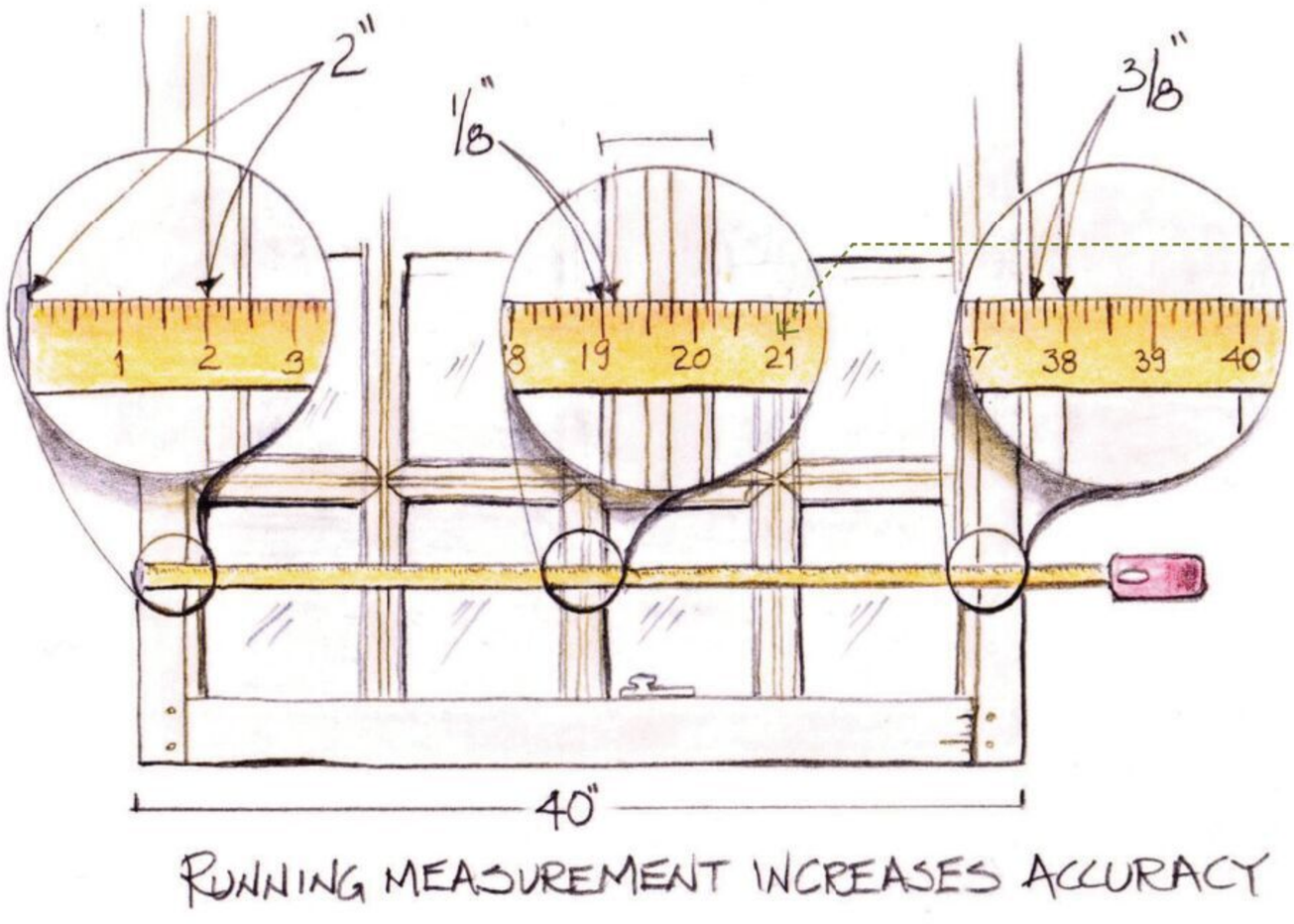
You'd think it would be easy to create a set of linear measurements for a room, a wall, a window. Yet, time and again, your overall picture will prove to be anything but accurate. More measurements equal more chances for a recording error. Significantly, each time you move your tape or ruler, you re-position it ever so slightly to the left or right of where the last measurement was taken. These fractional discrepancies can add up to a significant disagreement with the overall measurement.



RIGHT WAY

TAKE RUNNING MEASUREMENTS

Have a helper hold one end of the tape measure, if it cannot be fixed in place. At each significant point, carefully record the overall measure indicated on the tape. For moulded or recessed elements that are hard to align visually with the tape, use an adjustable square placed against the edge to bring the measurement to the tape. Record and transfer these measurements and feel confident in their overall accuracy.



ILLUSTRATIONS BY RAY TSCHOEPE

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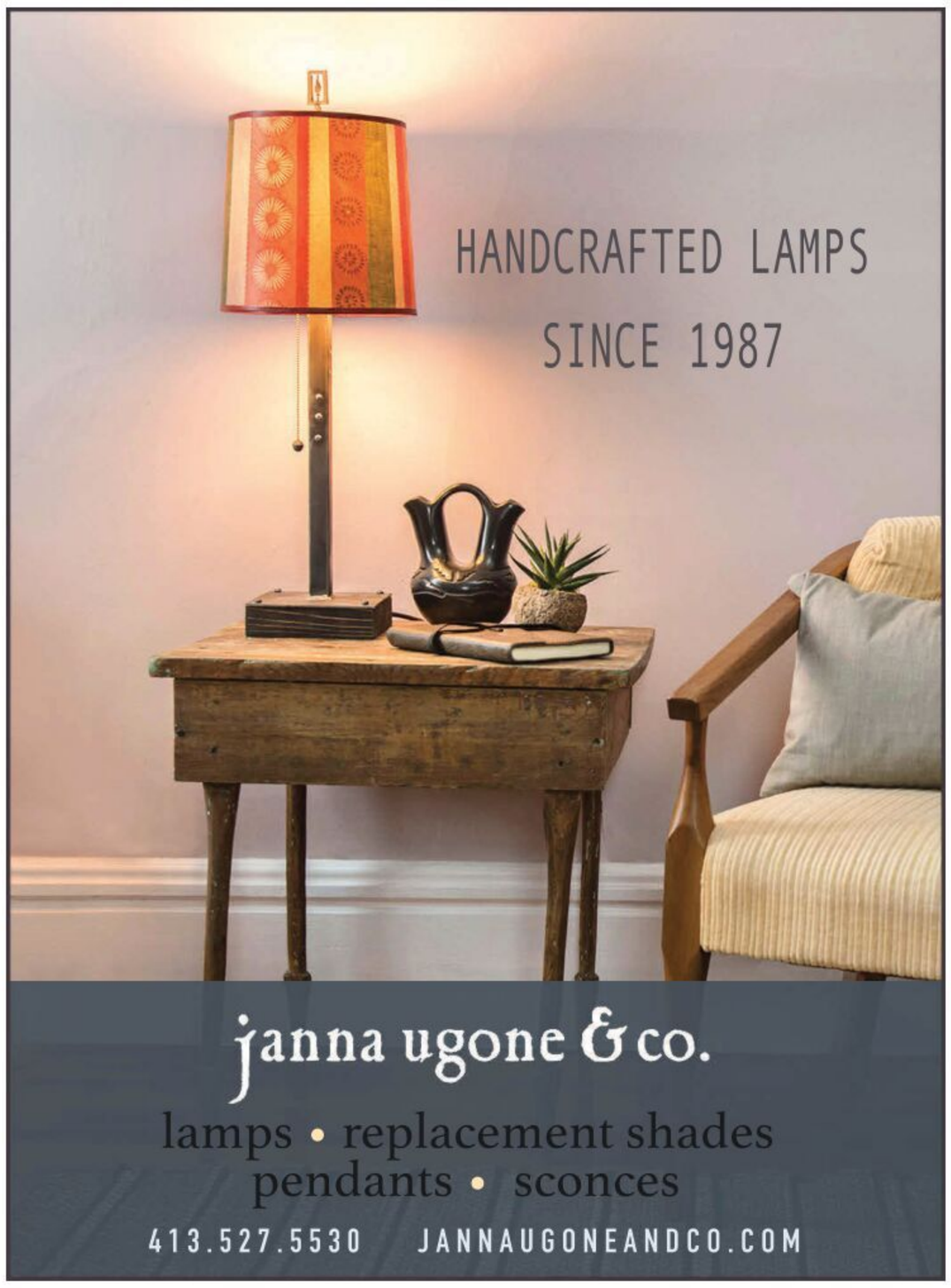
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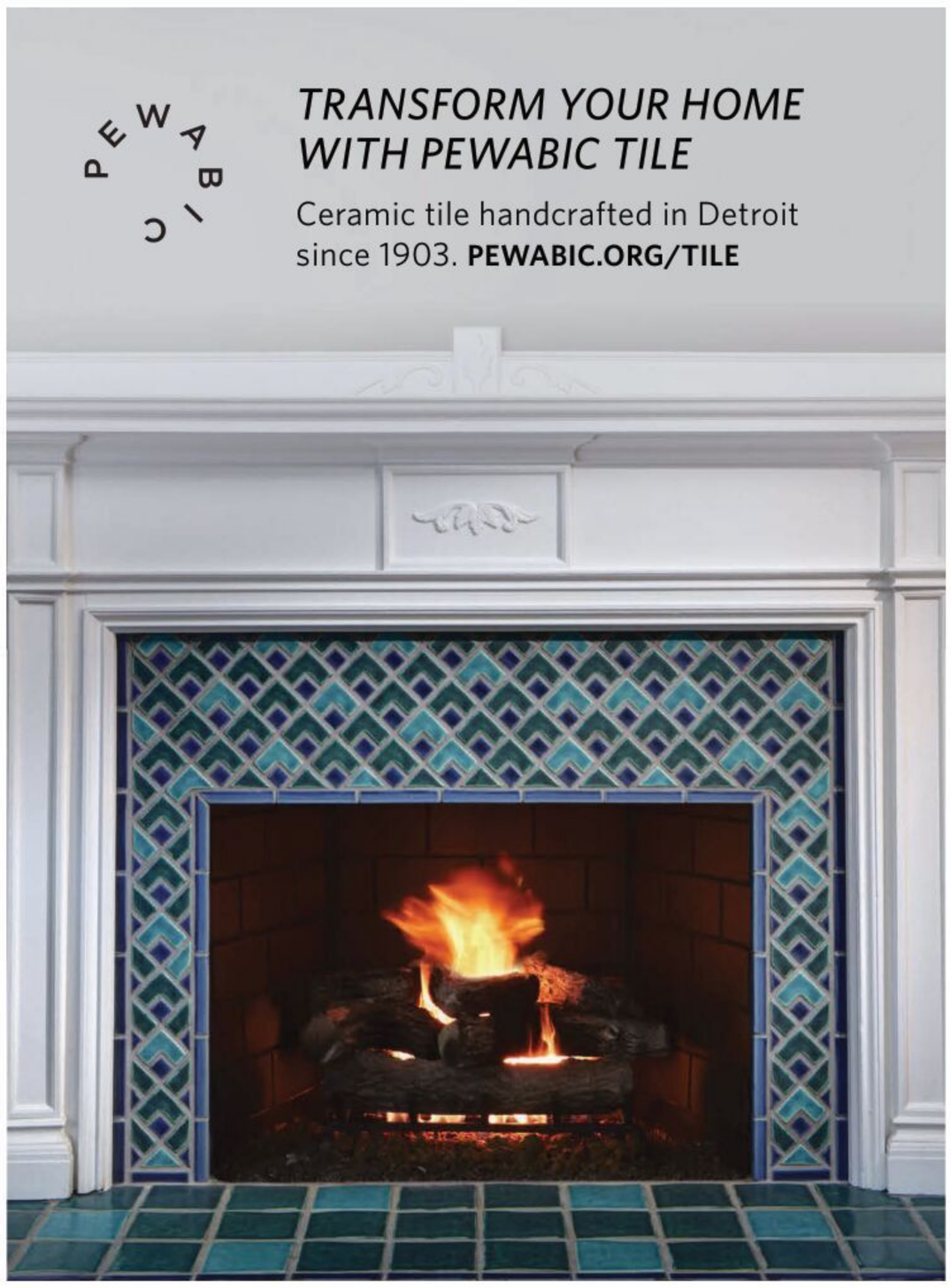
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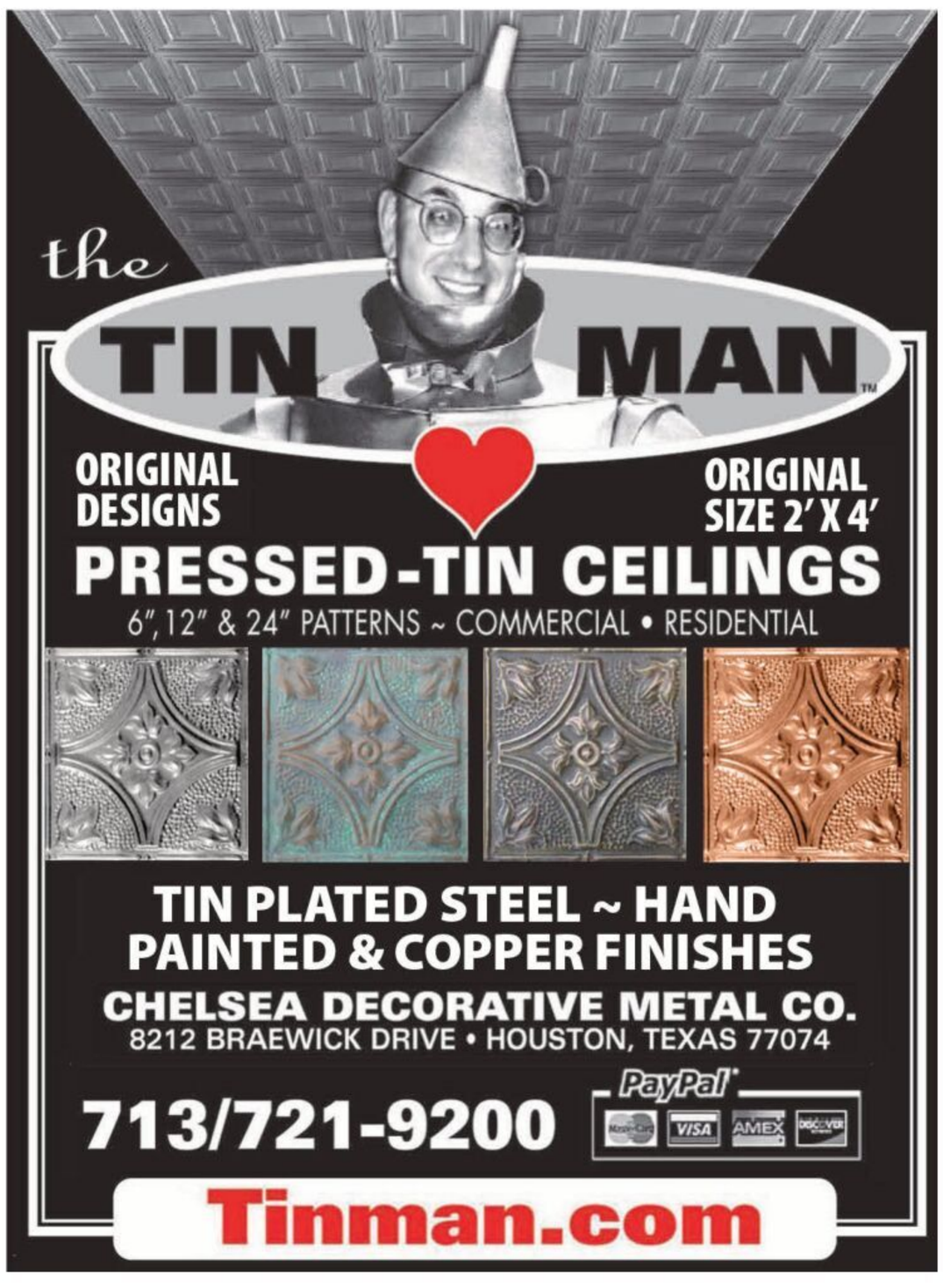
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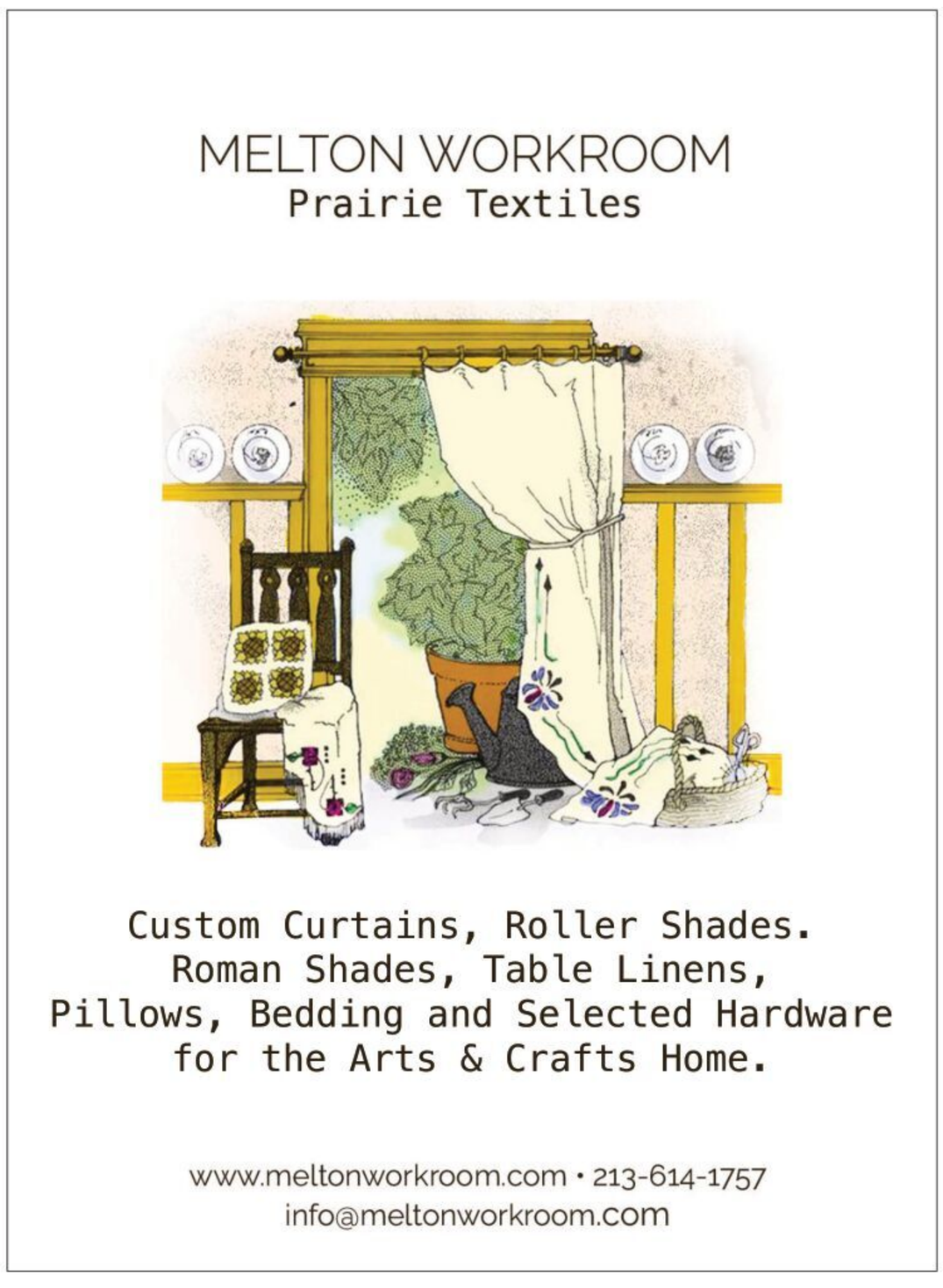


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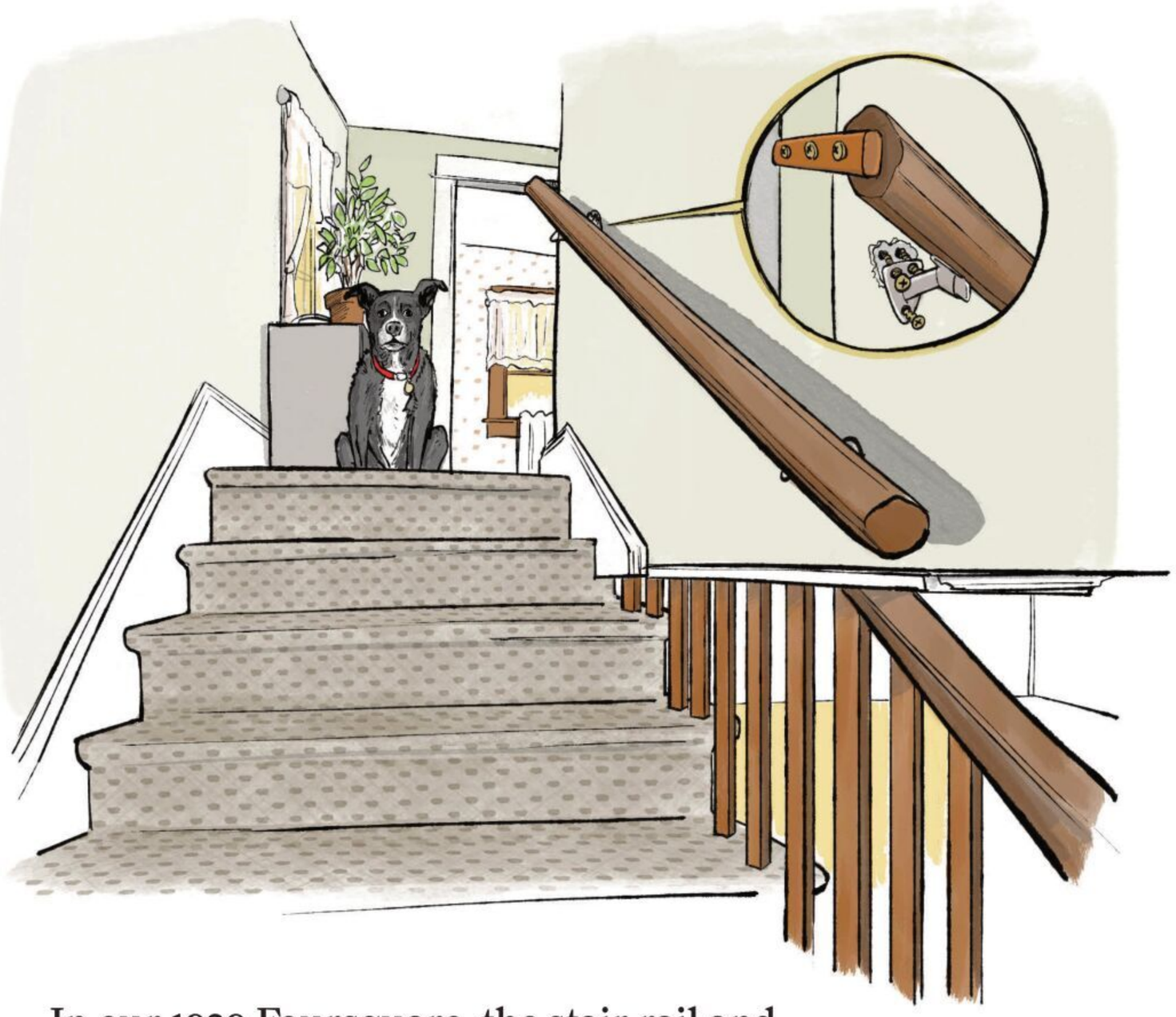

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“It’s almost spooky how the stair balustrade simply disappears into a wall. We didn’t focus on it when we bought the house, but now it bothers us.”



In our 1929 Foursquare, the stair rail and spindles mysteriously disappear into the living-room ceiling about halfway up. Someone added a separate handrail along the wall above, but installed it so poorly that the hardware has pulled out of the plaster. A bit of baseboard moulding remains at the top of the stair—but it’s chopped off at the transition point. What should it look like? ***—Lori and Steve Veverka***

ILLUSTRATION BY BRETT AFFRUNTI

Share Your Story!

What have you, your spouse, pet, contractor, previous owner (you get the picture) screwed up? Email us at **lviator@aimmedia.com**.

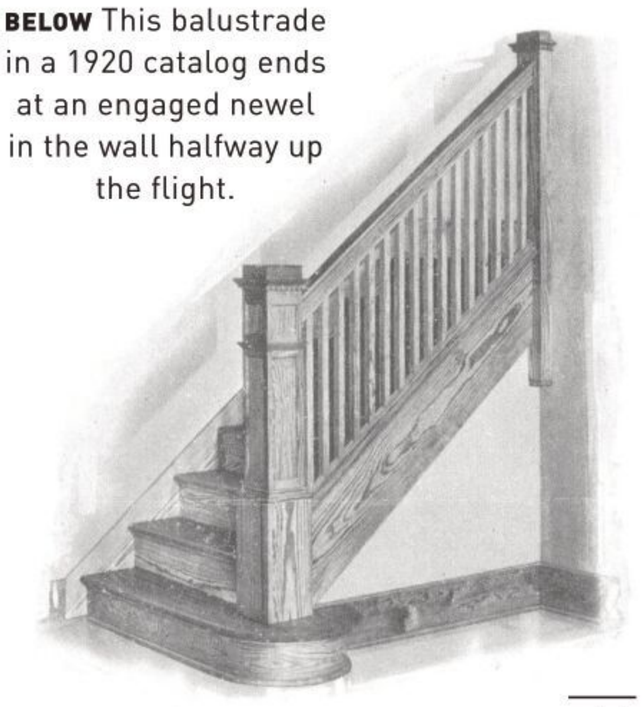
THE FIX

More than one mystery here! It appears that the stairs were widened at some point, except for the two just below the second-floor landing. (Why did they bother?) Another sign of change: The run ends at a truncated landing before a step-down turn just in front of the entry door, which appears original. The newel post looks like it’s been moved and altered, too. The chopped-off moulding ends in mid-air, yet judging from the built-up paint, it’s an original element.

It’s possible there was once an interim landing and dogleg turn in the staircase. Treads may have been widened during conversion to a straight run. Then all of the other alterations—including the unusual spindles that disappear into the ceiling—begin to make sense. The alteration may have happened when an original standing radiator was replaced with the cast-iron baseboard unit you have now, which required less depth.

You may get your answer when you rip out the carpet. Since you’re not ready to do that, look for evidence of the stairs’ original appearance—from the basement, in millworks catalogs, or in houses nearby with a similar date and floor plan. Meantime, fix that loose handrail as soon as possible, screwing the brackets into studs behind the wall.

BELOW This balustrade in a 1920 catalog ends at an engaged newel in the wall halfway up the flight.



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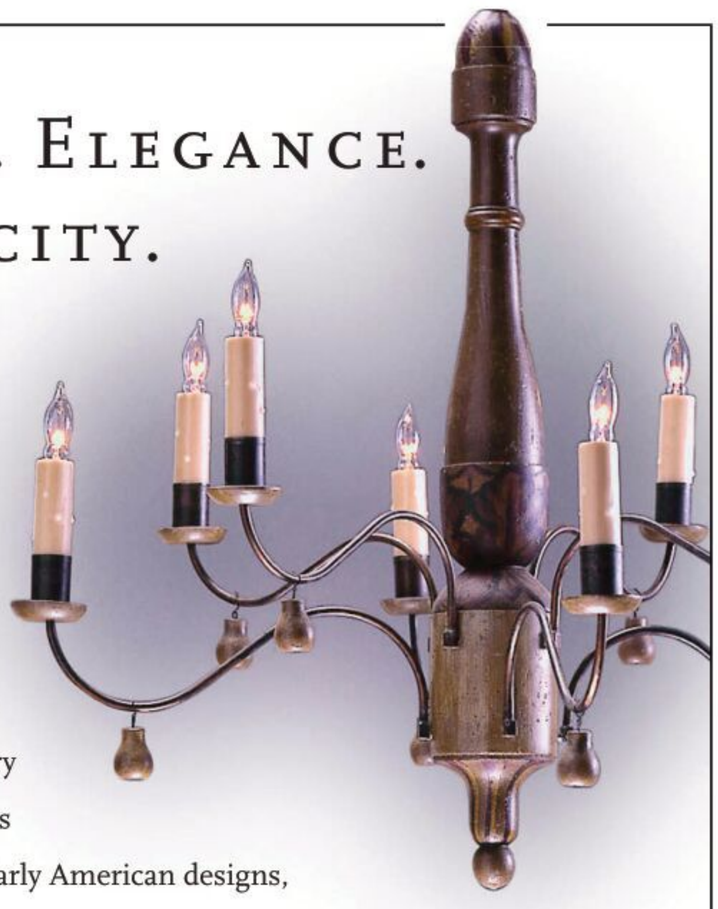
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INSPIRE

AN EFFUSIVE ODE TO VICTORIAN

AFTER MANY YEARS OF COLLECTING FURNISHINGS, a couple in St. Louis take on the restoration of a very fine, if neglected, 1886 gem. **page 58**

The richly appointed dining room is reflected in a burled-walnut pier mirror.

WILLIAM WRIGHT

58 **AUTHENTIC RESTORATION**
Second Empire extraordinaire.
+ HINTS FOR VICTORIAN BATHS

70 **A KITCHEN IN KEEPING**
Just right for a historic stone house.
+ PROFILE OF AN ARTIST

76 **VINTAGE CHARM**
A custom look in the kitchen.
+ BEHIND THE STOVE



RIGHT Homeowners Rick and Mary Lou Ponder in the parlor. **BELOW** The façade of the brick house is parged to resemble stone. The mansard roof, arches, console brackets, and an oriel are emblematic of French Second Empire style. The 1880s iron roof cresting came from the Brimfield (Mass.) antiques fair.



RESTORATION *Extraordinaire*

Remarkably authentic, the interior of this 1886 house in St. Louis is an effusive ode to all things Victorian. Now it serves as the ultimate backdrop to a lifetime collection. **BY BRIAN D. COLEMAN / PHOTOGRAPHS BY WILLIAM WRIGHT**

YEARS AGO, Rick Ponder bought a Victorian dining table at an estate sale, for $200. He needed chairs, then, to go with the table ... and so began his love of 19th-century design: the furniture, silver, ceramics, lighting. With growing collections, Rick and his wife, Mary Lou, searched for an appropriate stage. They'd visited many house museums, including the Campbell House in St. Louis, the Victoria Mansion in Portland, Maine, and the Lockwood–Mathews Mansion in Norwalk, Connecticut. Thus inspired, they looked for houses with 11- or 12-foot ceilings (at least), an original floor plan, and intact architectural elements.

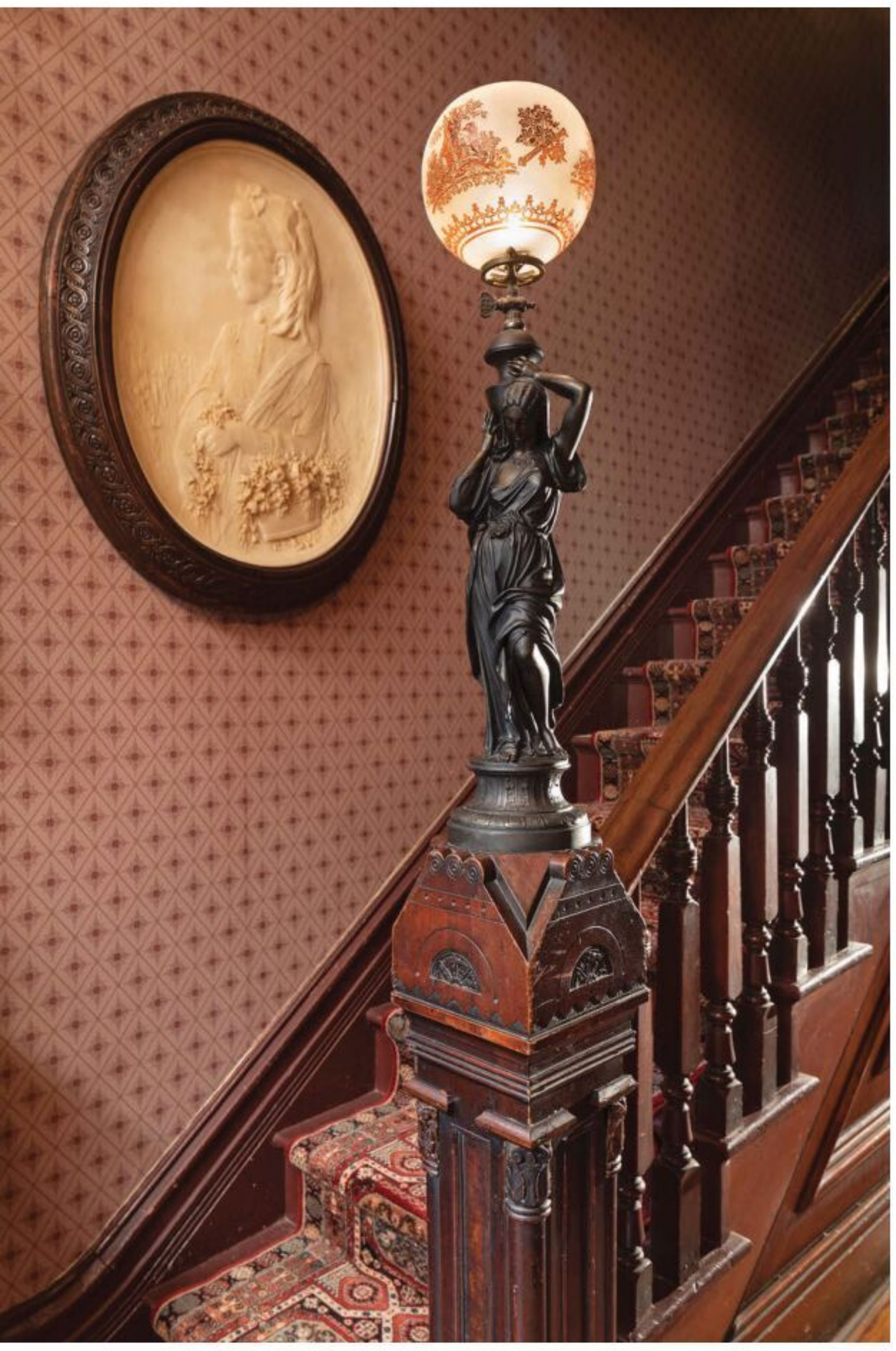
THE FRONT PARLOR

Glowing stained-glass windows add to the rich atmosphere; this one is framed by period window dressings. The frieze paper was found at auction.

TRUE TO PERIOD

The Cornelius & Baker brass and bronze chandelier has a gas line for the table lamp beneath, a common pre-electric setup in the 1870s,

Ceiling decoration in the parlor is an array of hand-stenciled, painted ornamentation in the Aesthetic manner of the 1870s–80s. Gilded wood mouldings organize the complex design.



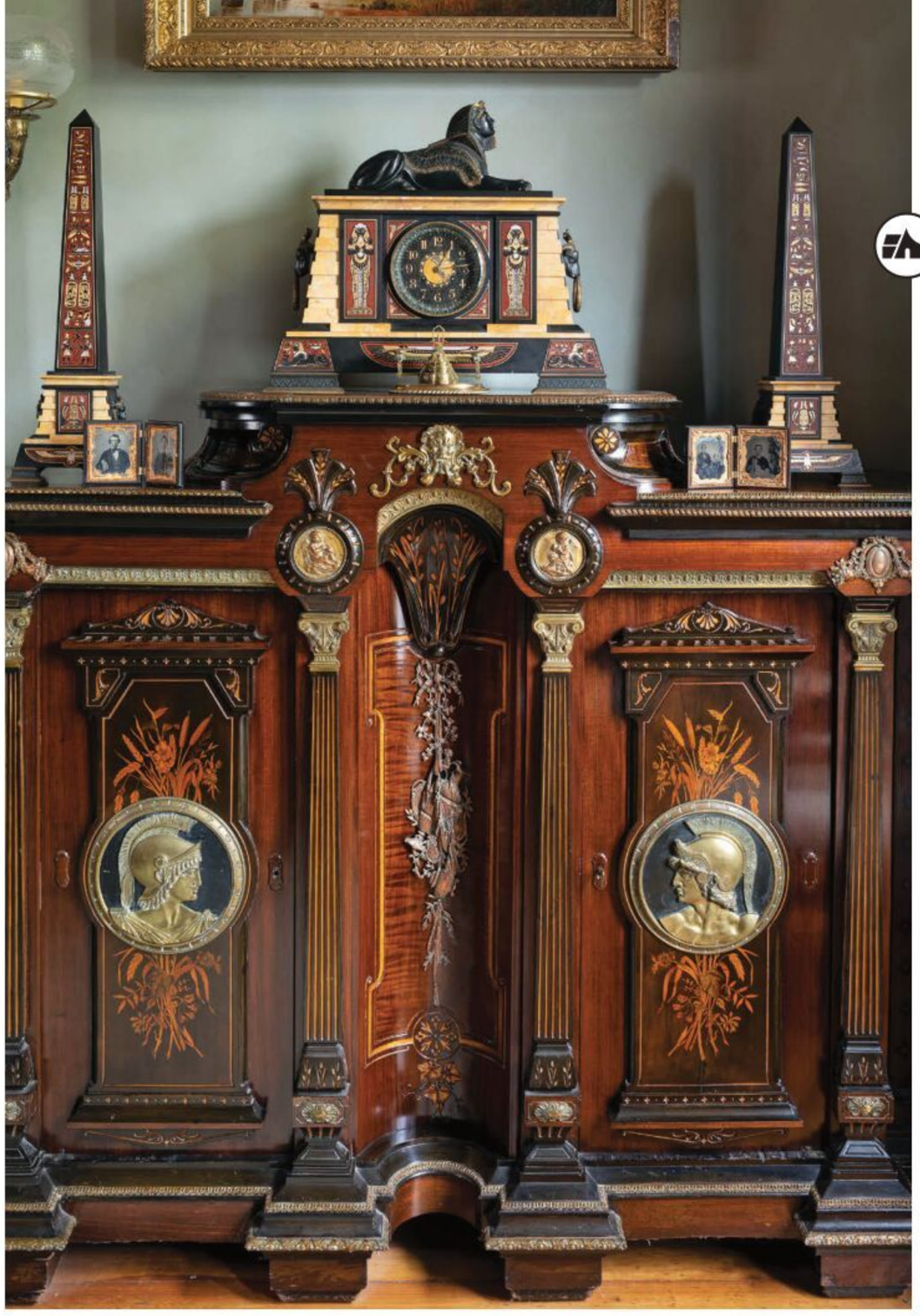


When they moved to St. Louis, in 2005, they focused their search on Lafayette Square, a historic neighborhood with over 350 Victorian-period Second Empire-style houses. The area had previously fallen on hard times, and many of the houses had been abandoned or converted for boarders. Rick and Mary Lou finally found the right one: It had in fact been a rooming house—27 people to one bathroom—but it still had charm. Built in 1886, the once-grand dame had its formal staircase, never-painted woodwork, original pocket doors and interior shutters, mantels and usable fireplaces.

A young couple had bought the place a decade earlier and redone electrical, plumbing, and HVAC systems. They'd refinished hardwood floors. Although they left the layout unaltered, they'd modernized the second floor with wall-to-wall carpeting and vinyl windows. They'd lowered the ceiling in the first-floor hall during plumbing upgrades. Due to water damage, they had drywalled over ceilings in the formal rooms, removing cast-plaster medallions. Every room was painted antiseptic white. All this would need attention.

ABOVE (left) The main staircase is anchored by a newel-post lamp depicting a Grecian maiden. • (right) The parlor ceiling is masterfully embellished with recent stenciling by a local artist. **BELOW** A collection of Mt. Washington Glass biscuit jars, ca. 1890, fills a hall cabinet. **OPPOSITE** The parlor centers on a Meeks marble-top Rococo table and parlor set.







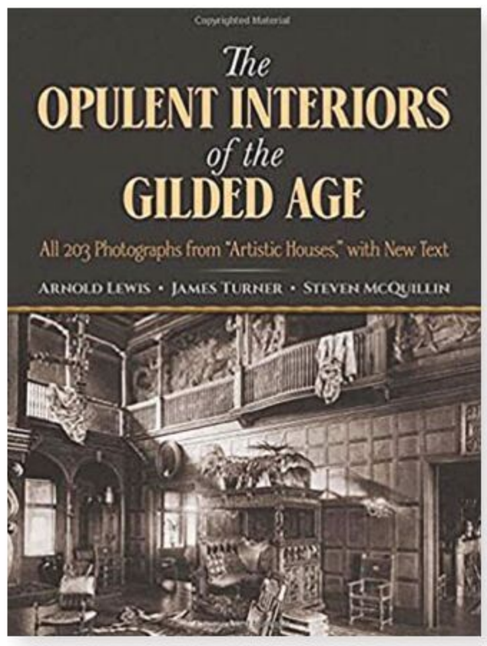
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A STUDY IN MAGNIFICENT *Excess*

The book *The Opulent Interiors of the Gilded Age* is a reprint of "Artistic Houses," a two-volume monograph published in 1883. It comprises more than 200 photographs of the rooms of the well-to-do (in Eastern and Midwestern cities), with commentary rewritten for today's audience. In addition to an introduction on the period's social and aesthetic trends, extensive captions for each plate include most of the information from the original descriptions, along with biographical comments on the homeowners and their families, comments on paintings and sculptures, present condition of the houses, and locations. Several versions of the reprint are available through online sellers.



ABOVE Photos reprinted from the 1883 volume show true rooms of the Victorian period, not the revival versions—and they are very opulent.

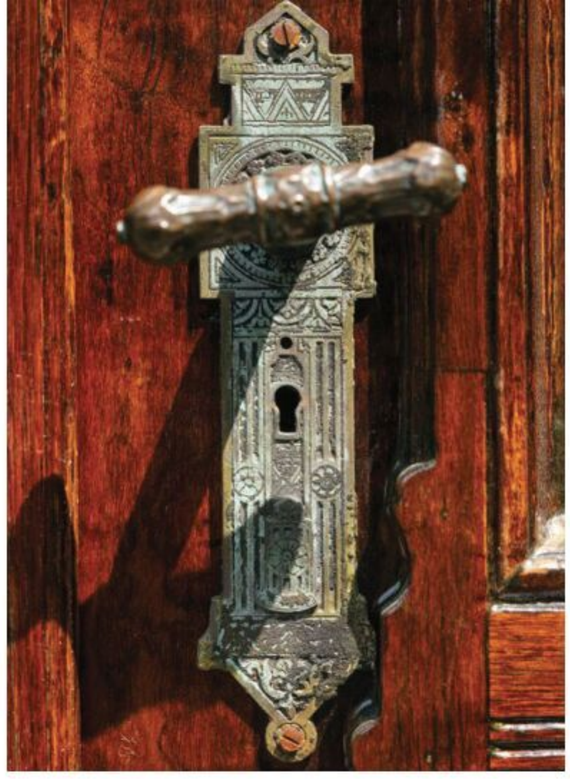
LEFT (top) An Egyptian Revival marble clock set sits on a ca. 1865 Renaissance Revival cabinet by Alexander Roux. • (bottom) Victorian ceramics are displayed on an immense (11'4" tall) rosewood étagère, its New York maker unknown. **OPPOSITE** Silk portières frame the opening from the parlor into the dining room.

ENVELOPED IN LUXURY

In the richly appointed dining room, the table is set with crystal stemware along with pink and gold Limoges china, ca. 1870.











LEFT & ABOVE (clockwise from below left) An iron gate opens on the brick path to the backyard. • The owners found a 19th-century, cast-iron fence for the front yard. • Fleur-de-lys finials on the iron fence are fitting for the French Second Empire house. • The ca. 1870s bronze doorbell pull on the front door still works. • A detail of the cast-iron fencing shows its intricate floral motif. **BELOW** Handsome double entry doors in Renaissance Revival style are period replacements for a set that had rotted away. • (inset) The vestibule retains its original encaustic tiles; both sets of doors are period replacements. **OPPOSITE** A cozy Arts & Crafts retreat, the family room is in the basement. One wall is recycled brick, and the fireplace satyr is terra cotta. A Stickley Brothers settee and a Limbert chair provide comfortable seating.



Outside, the slate roof needed repair, brick walls needed repointing. The front yard, neglected for decades, consisted of dead shrubby. Nevertheless, the Ponders felt this was the right house for a period restoration.

They tore out the upstairs carpeting and plywood underneath, only to find missing boards and decay. A neighbor supplied salvaged pine flooring for patching, and the floors were sanded and refinished. A second-floor bathroom, damaged by a leaking shower, was taken back to the studs and a modern bathroom installed for guest use.

The main bathroom had been painted eggplant-purple and laid with a green tile floor. It had to go. Having a Victorian bathroom was a priority, so once again Rick and Mary Lou started over. They salvaged blue-patterned encaustic tiles from a 19th-century church being demolished. They added a high-tank, pull-chain toilet and an antique sitz bath. The ca. 1890 clawfoot tub was professionally refinished.

Inspired by fancy "bath furnishings" in an 1888 plumbing catalog, Rick purchased a Victorian walnut armoire as salvage, then took it apart to build cabinetry for the room. The sink sits in a vintage sewing-machine cabinet topped with marble. An embossed metal ceiling and wainscoting came from W.F. Norman. The flashed ruby-glass window is the final touch.

To replace badly decayed entry doors, Mary Lou combed salvage websites to find a set of Renaissance Revival walnut doors with original bronze pulls and ornate brass hinges dated 1877. The second, interior set of doors have Grecian maidens etched into their glass panels.

RIGHT The bath is a Victorian re-creation with encaustic-tile floor, high-tank toilet, and tin wainscot and ceiling. Tub case and toilet tank cover were made from a salvaged walnut wardrobe.



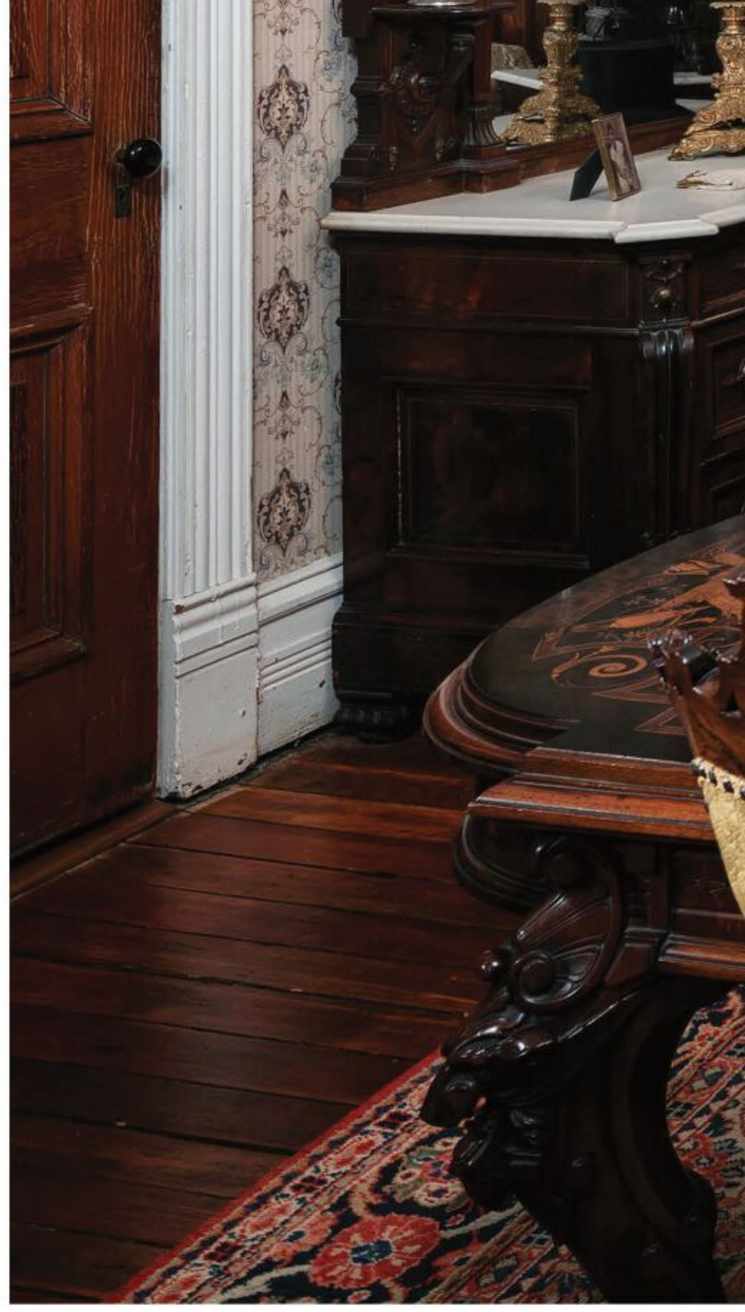
BELOW A "warrior" gas sconce has a cameo etched-glass shade of Roman warriors.



Inspired by elaborate ceilings they saw in the reissued Victorian-era book entitled *Opulent Interiors of the Gilded Age*, Rick and Mary Lou hired a local artist to stencil patterns, with faces depicting the four seasons and lettering for their initials. Renaissance and Rococo Revival furnishings in the room run from a Meeks marble-top center table and seven-piece rosewood parlor set to the impressively tall, carved rosewood étagère.

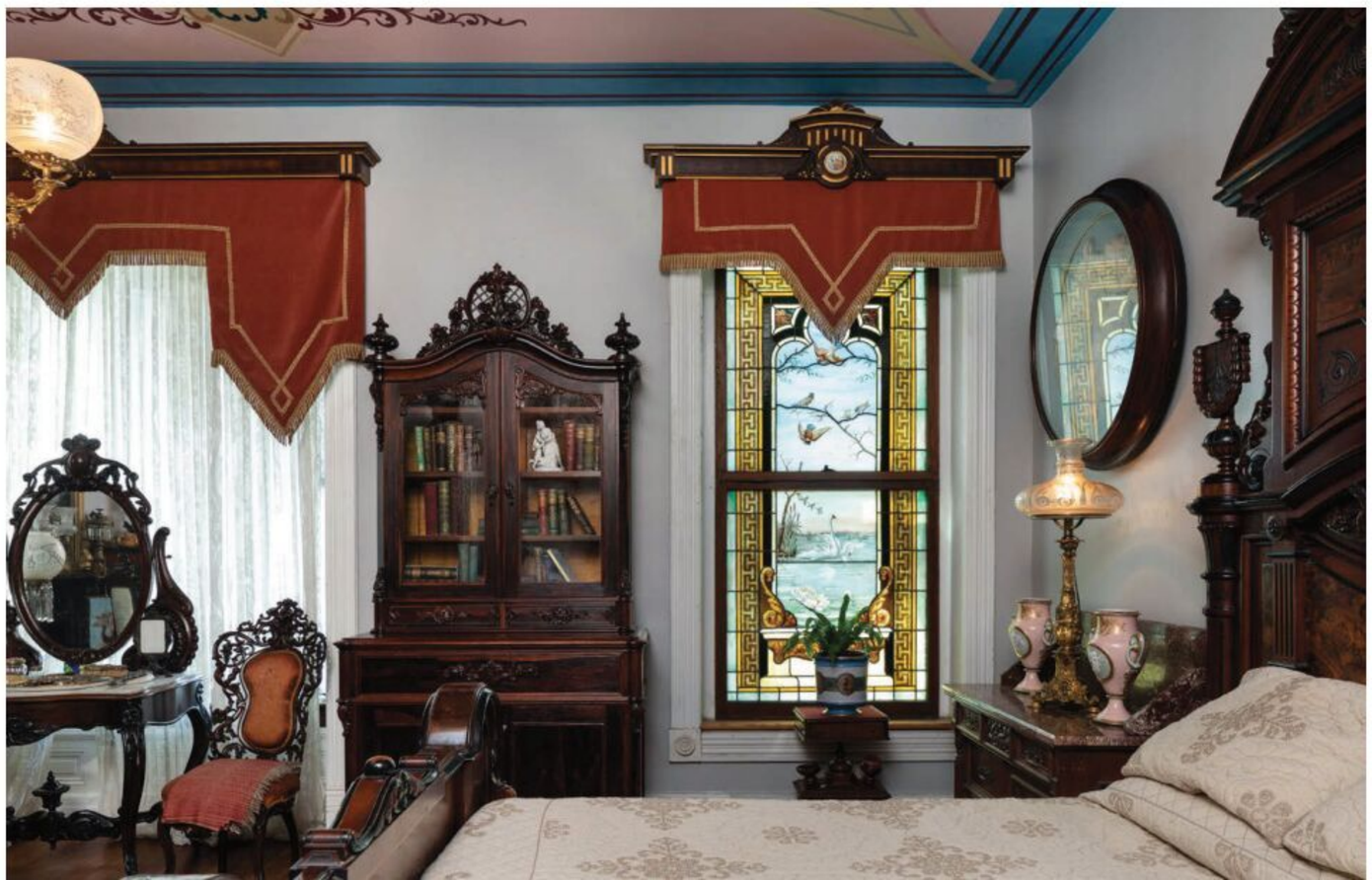
The dining room is richly colored with a Thibaut red damask on walls. The windows wear lace panels and swagged silk drapery. Impressive furnishings include a Herter Brothers side cabinet and an Egyptian Revival pier mirror.

After all the opulence, who wouldn't adore an Arts & Crafts family room? It's in the basement, once dank but now comfortable living space. The stone foundation was repointed, a new drain system installed, and a concrete slab poured over gravel. The encaustic tile floor was salvaged from an 1880s St. Louis infirmary. Red bricks from an estate sale became a feature wall.



THE BEDROOMS have been wallpapered in period patterns and furnished with Renaissance Revival antiques—including a ca. 1860 carved rosewood suite by Gustave Herter.

RIGHT The master bedroom has a Renaissance Revival bed and Rococo Revival pieces that include a delicate, laminated rosewood side chair.





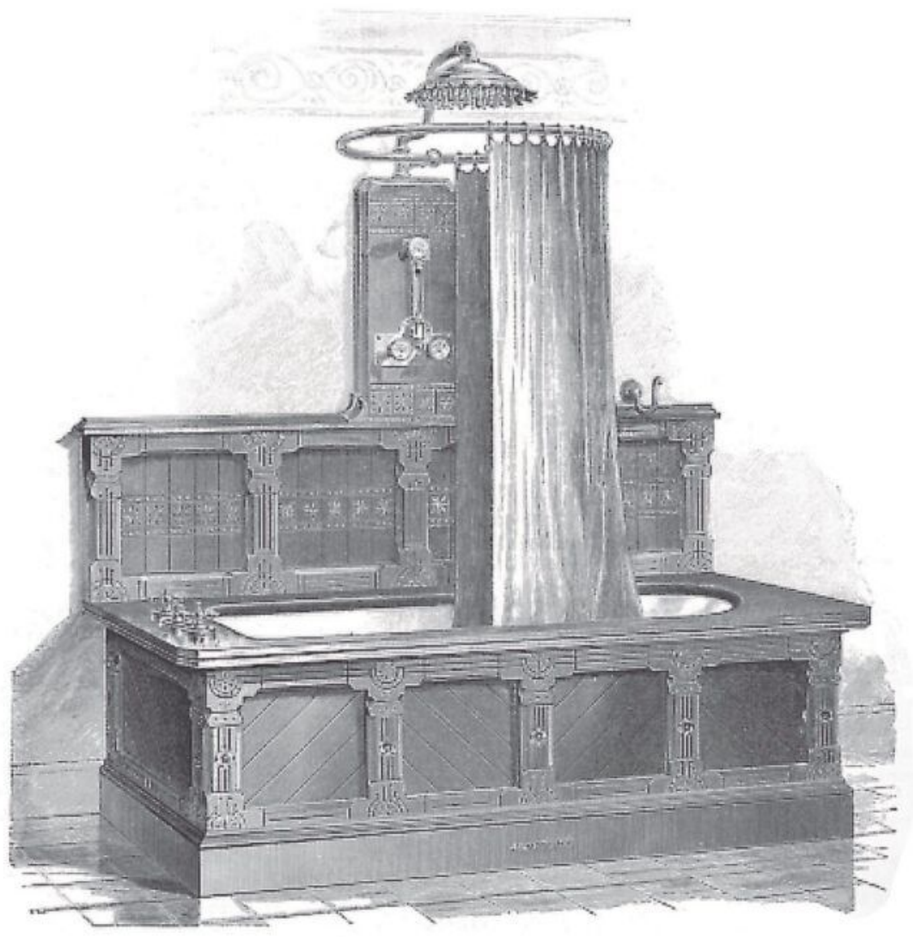
FOR RESOURCES, SEE PAGE 87.

HINTS FOR A VICTORIAN BATH

GO FULLY DECKED OUT OR KEEP IT SIMPLE. By Patricia Poore

If your house dates to about 1900 or earlier, a Victorian-inspired—or fancier Victorian Revival— bathroom are appropriate options. During the height of the 19th-century Victorian era, plumbing came indoors, first to the upper classes and in urban areas. That's when a bedroom in an earlier Federal or Greek Revival house might have been converted to a bath. The basin and pitcher familiar from the old days was now a sink bowl set into a plumbed dresser or vanity.

The bathrooms of the earliest adopters were, not surprisingly, large and lavishly furnished. Layout and decoration followed the conventions of other rooms: The walls had a wainscot (of wood or tile), fill, and frieze sections, if not wallpaper. Sinks and toilets were set into Elizabethan or Aesthetic cabinets sold by J. L. Mott Iron Works and other plumbing-fixture suppliers. A small rug, a chandelier, and paintings hung on the wall completed the outfitting of the room. By the late Teens, however, a general acceptance of germ theory had turned the bathroom into a sanitary white chamber of glossy surfaces and exposed plumbing.



Bathrooms were and still are remodeled and updated regularly, so it's not unusual to find a mix of periods: the original 1910 tiled floor with Art Deco lighting and a recent toilet. There's no need to tear out serviceable materials.

As with earlier houses, a Victorian-era bedchamber or storage room may have been taken over to become the indoor bathroom. To get this look, use elements that are (or could have been) original to the house: wall finishes, mouldings and casing trim, flooring, lighting. To that period background, add plumbing fixtures—it's up to you whether they are modern, salvaged, or period reproductions. With the popularity of reproduction console and pedestal sinks and clawfoot tubs, 1880s–1910s bathrooms are easy to simulate.

Design guidelines start with a simple layout of three fixtures, the use of such traditional materials as wood and tile, and a mix of freestanding and built-in furniture. Include salvage or an antique to keep the room from looking "too new."

Tile is a better choice for a main bathroom (near bedrooms). In a third-floor nursery or servants' quarters, walls more likely would have been clad in wood beadboard or shiplap, or even plaster scored to imitate tile. Similarly, wood was used more often in rural houses and summer homes. When there was "a toilet" downstairs, often it was literally only that, in a closet-like room near the back hall. Today's first-floor powder room begs a departure, of course. Wood paneling or tile and high-end fixtures, along with a decorative treatment on walls, are now the rule.

You can't go wrong if you follow these simple tips: Use white plumbing fixtures, either "revival style" or very plain. Choose brass or nickel fittings, not chrome or dark bronze. For flooring, go with wood, or white mosaic tile. Add a Victorian light fixture and a piece of antique furniture: a wicker chair, a Renaissance Revival framed mirror. Opt for a simple, period window dressing such as stained glass or louvered shutters; balloon shades or lace; a valance and swag with a roller shade. For an opulent look, decorate walls with wallpaper, Anaglypta, or a stenciled treatment.

No reason, of course, why such retro decorating can't be used along with double sinks, a steam bath, and a jetted tub. The indulgent spa bath and Victorian sensuality go together well.

ABOVE Early plumbing catalogs show entire suites of bath "furniture": tubs encased in raised paneling, hand-painted sink bowls set into Eastlake or Elizabethan Revival cabinets. **OPPOSITE** (bottom left) In a 1777 Georgian-era house, one second-floor chamber was later converted to a bathroom; reproduction wallpaper and textiles underlie the historical decorating. • (bottom right) This Eastlake-style bathroom clad in cherry was based on Victorian paneled rooms in the Stick Style Sanford–Covell House in Newport, R.I. The gaslight-era chandelier is ca. 1880, sconces 1870.

OPP., CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: GROSS & DALEY PHOTOGRAPHY; LINDA SVENDSEN ARCHIVE; WILLIAM WRIGHT; ERIC ROTH





LEFT The fabulous console sink with an ornate marble backsplash was cleaned up and retained, along with a clawfoot tub, during renovation of a Brooklyn brownstone. **ABOVE** A meticulously authentic reproduction bathroom in Seattle mixes still-available staples, including beaded-board wainscot and unglazed hexagonal floor tile, with real Victorian-era antiques: the ribcage or needle shower, a fancy toilet, and a sitzbath.





FOR RESOURCES, SEE PAGE 87.

For a Vernacular Stone House,

A Kitchen in Keeping

BELOW Built in 1790 by Quaker farmers, the stone house exemplifies a vernacular, eastern Pennsylvania style that is beloved. The main house is on the right; to the left is the spring house, where the original kitchen was located. In an earlier renovation this section became the living room and a back bedroom, with two chambers upstairs.



THE LADY OF THIS 1790 stone Bucks County farmhouse has worked on many buildings, but when it came to remodeling a kitchen in her own home, changes frightened her. Recalling the family's earlier work on the house, "I was young and scared," she says, smiling. "We did the kitchen in 1990, but I could not bring myself to follow my designer's advice. For the next 15 years I lived with the result. Finally, in 2016, I called him and said, 'okay, I'm ready.'"

The homeowners are a retired physician and his wife, who owns and manages rental real estate. They bought the 4,000-square-foot house in 1987. On the tax rolls by 1790, the original house was built by Quaker farmers. In the 1920s, it was renovated in a Colonial Revival spirit and a sunroom was added. In 1969, it became a rental property.

"When we bought the house," the wife says, "there was no kitchen, just some so-so appliances in an alcove. What had been the kitchen had become a living room. The plumbing and wiring were shot, there were dead birds in the toilets."

But the house, constructed of local fieldstone, was sound. And that's what posed a problem for the homeowner. The first time around, "I contacted Mark Slouf, a local builder specializing in the restoration of old houses," she explains. "We turned the sunroom into a family room and built a new kitchen where the original kitchen had been."

During the 1920s renovation, a wall had been removed to incorporate a back bedroom into what was becoming the living room. The 22 by 26-foot space was left with one end wall punctuated by three windows installed during the 1920s.

"Mark told me that the middle window should be removed to make space for the stove and hood vent. But cutting again into the old stone wall was too scary for me," says the homeowner. "Going against Mark's advice, we left that wall alone, and put the stove in the middle of the room, with a downdraft vent."

The mistake was immediately evident: "It cut the room in half," she admits.

A bold and insightful renovation put the kitchen back in its original location, and made the room fit the early house.

BY REGINA COLE
PHOTOS BY GRIDLEY + GRAVES

THE SENSIBILITY

Soapstone, which acquires patina, and distressed painted cabinets made of salvaged pine create a room perfect for the old stone house. The antique folk-decorated Schrank provided cues for style and color.

Like the countertops, the sink is soapstone, fashioned by a local company to the homeowner's specifications. After much searching, she found this faucet, which was made in France.



KEEPING-ROOM KITCHEN

A dining table now sits near the 1790 cooking fireplace. The newly created stove wall is composed of solid field-stone, two to three feet thick and matching the original stone exterior walls.



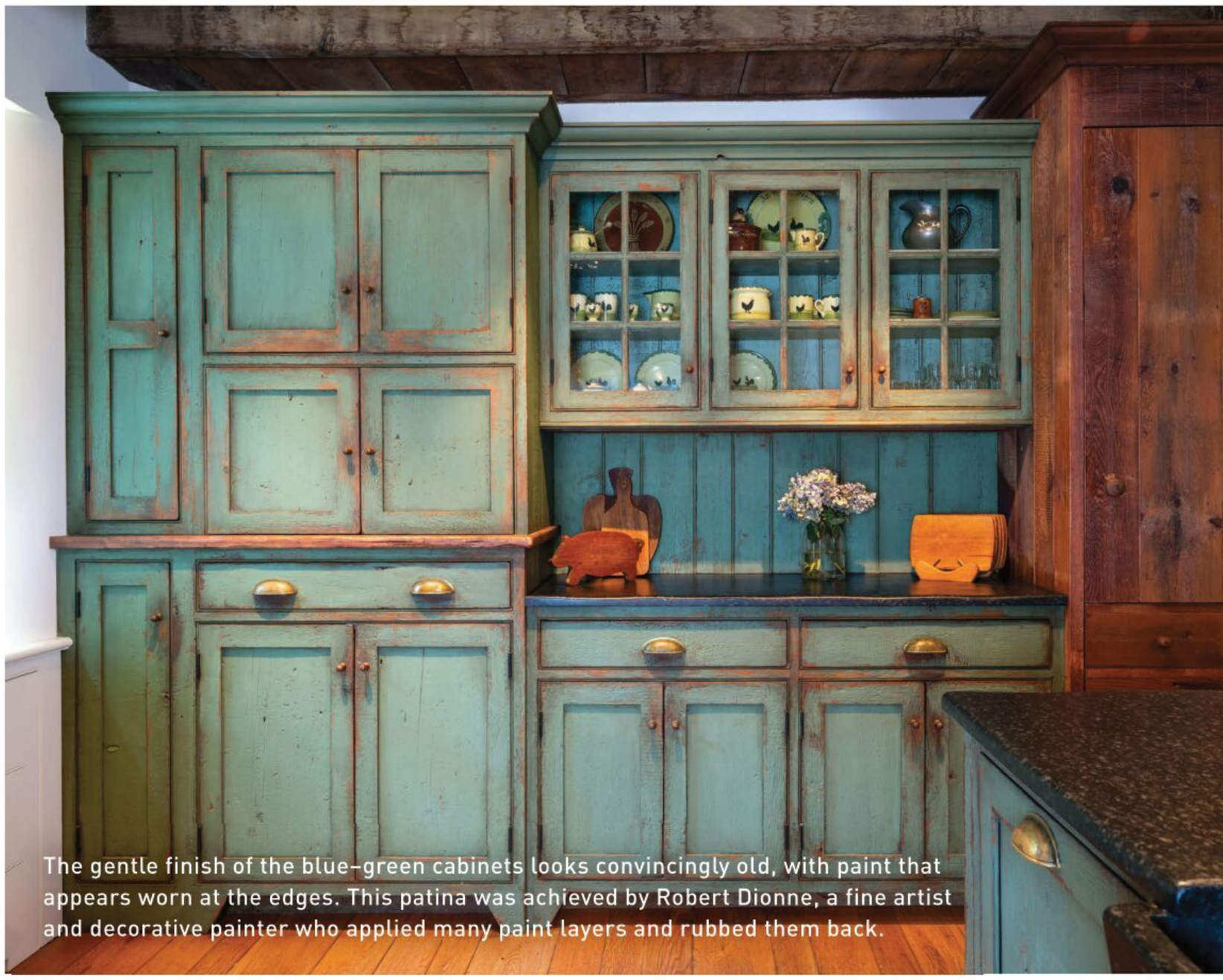


LEFT The kitchen table, built for a clothing store as a display piece, is where family and friends gather during Colonial dinners held monthly, for which the owners cook in the fireplace.
ABOVE Placing the stove and vent hood against the north wall was essential to the kitchen design, but it required cutting once again into an exterior wall to remove a window—a decision too daunting for the homeowner to make during her earlier renovation.
RIGHT Pewter vessels line the fireplace mantel. The homeowner found the original fireplace crane in the basement; it is back where it belongs.









The gentle finish of the blue-green cabinets looks convincingly old, with paint that appears worn at the edges. This patina was achieved by Robert Dionne, a fine artist and decorative painter who applied many paint layers and rubbed them back.

Recently, Mark Slouf headed up the second renovation, which created a kitchen that beautifully suits the 18th-century house. It's the result of "an emotional, aesthetic, and functional collaboration" among the owners, Slouf, the cabinetmakers, and decorative artist Robert Dionne. "This is my top favorite project, to date," says designer Cheryl Scerba-Cummings, who works with Levi Stoltzfus at Cabinets by CW. "From our first conversation, I felt that the homeowner and I aligned at a deep level, and I was honored to help deliver her dream."

For his part, "In historic [work], I especially like to use old materials," says Slouf, whose eponymous Custom Building and Design firm is located in West Chester, Pennsylvania. "Lancaster County has Amish builders who take down old barns piece by piece; they provided the antique pine boards we used for the cabinets."

The room's centerpiece is the eight-foot fireplace, once used for cooking and heating. Today it's a place to display antique pewter and iron cooking implements. The kitchen's new layout places a dining table in front of the fireplace.

"We found the table in a clothing store going out of business," the homeowner says. "Probably made for displaying goods in the store, it is longer and wider than ordinary farmhouse tables."

Design cues came from a German Schrank, a two-door cabinet decorated with folk painting. It's a precious piece from the homeowner's past: "My mother was a German immigrant," she says, "and I grew up bilingual. I took my junior year abroad in Germany and, when my husband and I were first married, we lived there, and we bought that antique piece."

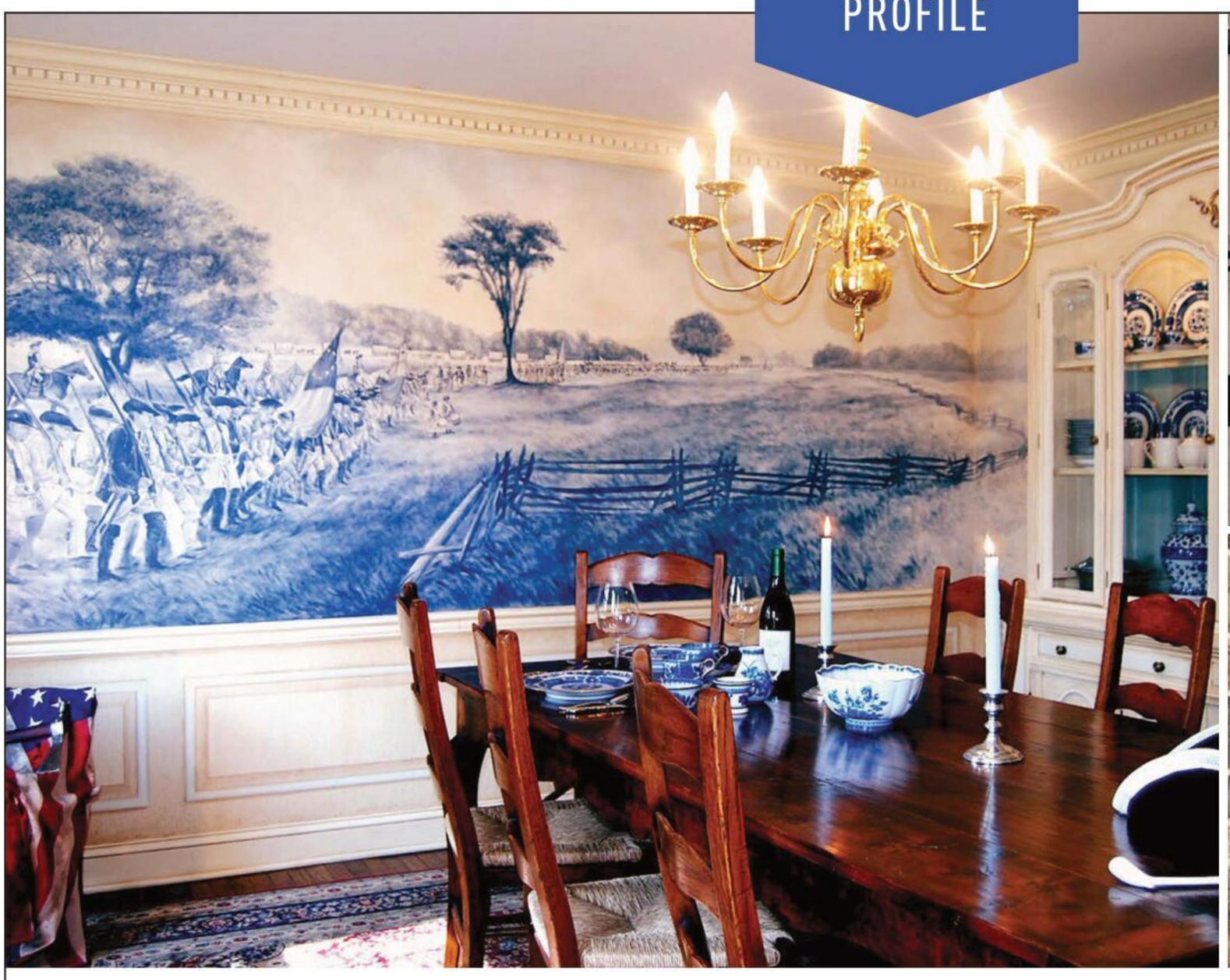
The Schrank suggested the palette, carried through in new cabinets colored a soft, teal blue. The paint was applied in layers and rubbed back to create a convincing aged look. Robert Dionne of Chadds Ford did the work. He specializes in what he calls "innovative re-creations of 'centuries-old' paint finishes."

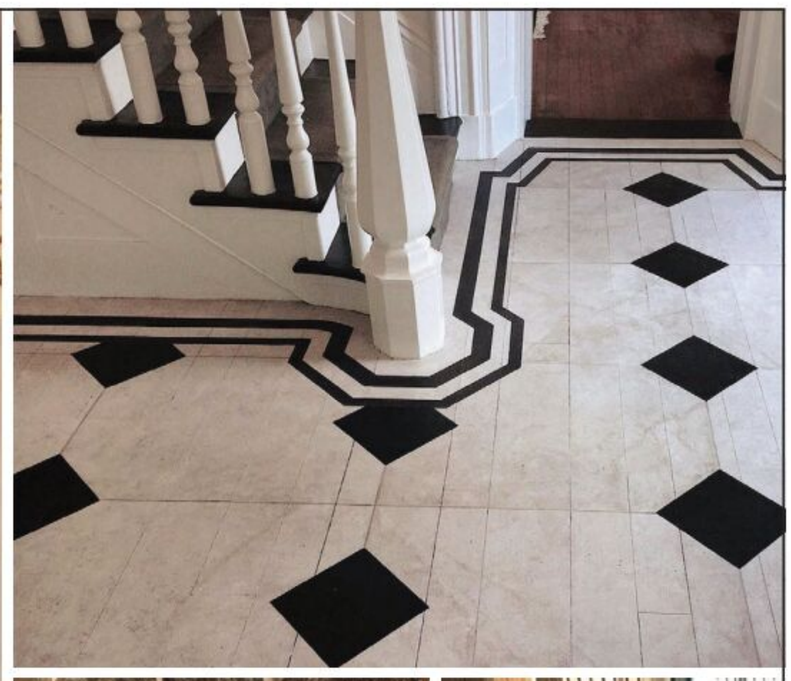
Between the Schrank and the painted cabinets, a modern refrigerator hides behind a reclaimed-pine door. A closet near the fireplace acts as the pantry. Soapstone counters add to the antique sensibility.

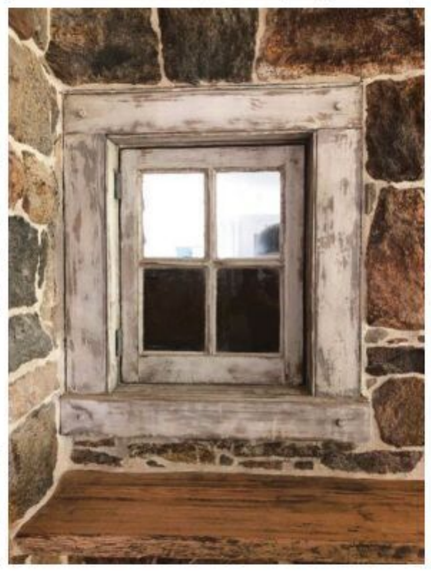
"I was conflicted about keeping the 1920s red-oak flooring," says the homeowner. "But Mark Slouf told me, 'Houses are allowed to change as they age,' so we kept them."

ABOVE The Schrank, which means closet, is a cherished antique found by the homeowners when they lived in Germany.
TOP The new kitchen has space for the fruits of lifelong collecting, including an 18th-century wall clock and an egg basket.

FOR RESOURCES, SEE PAGE 87.









MAKING THE NEW OLD AGAIN

A LOVE OF HISTORY THROUGH FINISHING & CONSERVATION WORK

Artist Robert Dionne lives 45 minutes from Philadelphia, in an equestrian countryside with a longstanding preservation ethic. Houses date to the 18th century; land is protected by easements; the area's renowned architects and skilled craftspeople respect the past. "I've been privileged to have worked in so many beautiful, historic homes," says Dionne, whose own fascination with history and patina goes back to childhood.

As a studio artist now with over 25 years in the decorative arts, Dionne understands design. "Most of my projects are within a collaboration among architect or designer, project manager, and client. I appreciate a team of good professionals," he says. But "I enjoy working directly with a client, providing design and color recommendations. The owner should be part of the creative process in their own living space." Plus, Dionne laughs, "I love animals. I sometimes think the clients' pets assume I'm there to entertain them."

He has worked (with John Milner Architects) on Longwood Gardens in Kennett Square, Penn., and its ca. 1740 Webb Farmhouse restoration, as well as Hickory Hill, the Kennedy-family house in McLean, Va. Most of Dionne's work is within a hundred-mile radius of home, although he occasionally flies to far-flung projects.

Some of the historic work involves using refurbished wood from different sources and suppliers. "So much research goes into finding out about historic finishing materials and techniques. On site, it may mean exploring the old house, looking behind walls or turning boards over in the attic to find the original finishes used 200 years ago."

Many historic-house restorations also involve new additions. Reclaimed materials are sometimes used for a better match, and Dionne is brought in to seamlessly blend new, reclaimed, and existing parts. Such newly built elements as millwork, cabinets, beams, and wood flooring might get a distressed treatment to "age" them.

Dionne has dabbled with a home-décor line, but "the emphasis—and demand—for me is the custom, hands-on work," he says. "Each project is different from the last. Murals are my most challenging and fulfilling commissions."

ROBERT DIONNE DECORATIVE ARTS & CONSERVATION SERVICES, CHADDS FORD, PENN., RDHOMECOLLECTION.COM

LEFT A dining-room mural was painted in celebration of the September 1777 Battle of Brandywine. In a palette of Delft blue and antique monochrome tones, the mural adds depth to the room. **TOP** Each painted floor is methodically laid out to complement the scale and the decoration of the room. **MIDDLE** Distressing creates a weather-beaten look in a new-old farmhouse. **FAR RIGHT** This finish required multiple paint and glaze applications, including chipped paint effects. **BELOW** Robert Dionne.



COURTESY ROBERT DIONNE

+

PERIOD LEADED GLASS

Simple cabinets from Airy Kitchens' New England line are period-friendly; for this project, some are painted and some stained, for a less fitted look. The leaded-glass design of upper cabinets was inspired by late-Victorian and Craftsman-era windows seen in local houses.



RIGHT No longer rusty, an old iron fireback, salvaged from another house and long stored in the basement, became a focal point as the backsplash behind the range. Art tiles decorate the backsplash near the sink.
OPPOSITE On upper cabinets in this run, the Shaker-style doors were customized with leaded-glass panels.

vintage Charm

Leaded glass, an antique iron fireback, and a pop of colorful art tile give a custom look to an affordable kitchen designed around ready-made cabinets in a period-inspired design. **By Patricia Poore / photos by Rebecca McAlpin**

The ca. 1920 row house, in the Fairmount neighborhood of Philadelphia, needed major repairs; it had been gutted by a fire in the 1970s. The subsequent remodeling made no attempt at a period look: "It was a DIY 'Mediterranean'-style job with tiled countertops and harvest-gold appliances," says homeowner Lynne Gery; she and her husband, Daniel Womer, bought the house in 1986. "I'd approached a few contractors over the years," Lynne explains, "but I never met anyone I felt comfortable with. So we procrastinated." • Lynne found Airy Kitchens through their Instagram posts. "They caught my eye because they were different from standard kitchen-designer renovations.







ABOVE, LEFT Opposite the banquette, an appliance hutch looks like a piece of furniture. **BELOW** The "hutch" opens to reveal small appliances, neatly hidden from view. **OPPOSITE** Like the leaded glass and art tiles, the banquette or eating nook suggests a kitchen design of the 1910s–20s. The bench is upholstered in 'Forest' (in Teal), a fabric design based on a William Morris tapestry.

I had the impression that [designer Sean Lewis] devised something original for each client." Airy Kitchens specializes in period-inspired design for old houses in the greater Philadelphia area. Lewis, the company's creative director and senior designer, told us that he feels "in sync with the restorations you show. I've been a big fan of *Old-House Journal* for a long time!"

Lynne wanted a timeless look with an Arts & Crafts influence, to go with the 1920s house and to showcase her collection of ceramics. "I asked for wood floors and more color in the tile, otherwise this design is all Sean," says Lynne. "He listened, but he also explained what wouldn't work. I'd initially wanted an island but it simply didn't fit in this space. He suggested the leaded-glass cabinets, corbel brackets, and banquette seating."

The custom look was made affordable with Airy Kitchens' New England line of ready-made cabinets, in cherry. It's a testament to how good standard cabinets can look, when they are of high quality and the overall design is sound. Multiple door styles and mouldings were used, in three of the firm's many paint and stain options. Most cabinets have Shaker Inset doors; the hutch is fitted with Colonial Inset doors.

"During our initial consultation," Sean Lewis says, "we noticed rusty old cast-iron panels in the basement. An antique fireback! We knew it would look great behind the range." Lynne explains that her late father had salvaged the iron fireback from an old farmhouse. Cleaned up, the fireback is a focal point.

FOR RESOURCES, SEE PAGE 87.

+

THE EATING NOOK

Tucked away outside the work triangle, a built-in banquette bench seat and a small dining table create an adaptable breakfast nook. Drawers underneath provide more storage, accessible without the need to remove the seat cushion. A hutch-like piece opposite holds a coffee bar.

BEHIND THE STOVE

FUNCTIONAL DECORATION CREATES A FOCAL POINT

The backsplash should be fireproof, watertight, and easy to clean (so think twice before using white grout or a very deep relief). Keep it simple, if the room is already busy—or make a range or stovetop the focus with a stunning backdrop.



SCULPTURAL STONE

In a newly built cabin meant to look as if it dates to the 1920s, the unique backsplash of Costa Esmeralda granite evokes the shape of chimney. Stone is heatproof and acquires patina; most varieties should be sealed when used this way. ***DAVID HEIDE DESIGN STUDIO, ST. PAUL, MINN.***



BRICK AND IRON

An antique fireback purchased in Paris is set into a full-height backsplash of rustic brick, which by itself would make a stunning focal point. The hood is zinc. Already wearing rustic patina, the whole assembly is fireproof. ***SARAH BLANK DESIGN STUDIO, GREENWICH, CONN.***



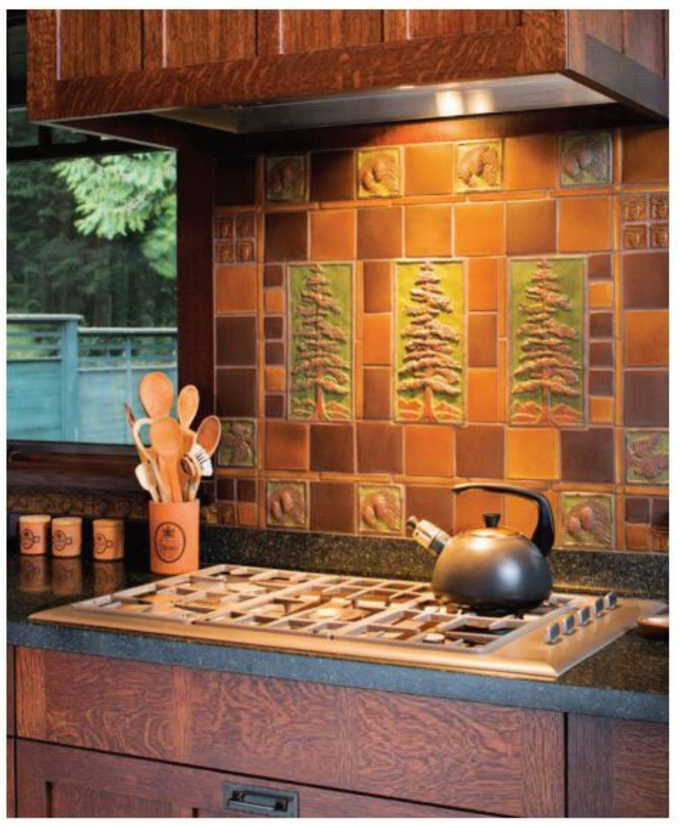
MATCHING THE HOOD

Stainless steel makes an unobtrusive, very functional (fireproof and wash-able) backsplash behind a range. Here, a sheet-metal backsplash is made to match the strapwork on the custom hood by Raw Urth Designs. ***CIRCLE DESIGN STUDIO, ROANOKE, VA.***



EMBOSSED METAL

Set into a full backsplash of lacquered tin-ceiling panels, a highly decorative inset panel draws attention to the stove alcove. The design vocabulary is Victorian Neoclassical. Metal is fire-proof and easy to wipe clean; steel should be sealed against rust. ***KRW DESIGN ASSOCIATES, BARRINGTON HILLS, ILL.***



TILED HEARTH

A modern cooktop gains hearth-like presence with an art-tile backsplash that brings the forest inside, and an oak-paneled vent hood matching custom Arts & Crafts cabinets. Motif tiles set high in an assembly of plain field tiles keeps the installation from looking busy.

CLOCKWISE (FROM TOP LEFT): SUSAN GILMORE; NEIL LANDINO; WILLIAM WRIGHT; NATHAN KIRKMAN/CAMERA DEPT.; KIP DAWKINS PHOTOGRAPHY

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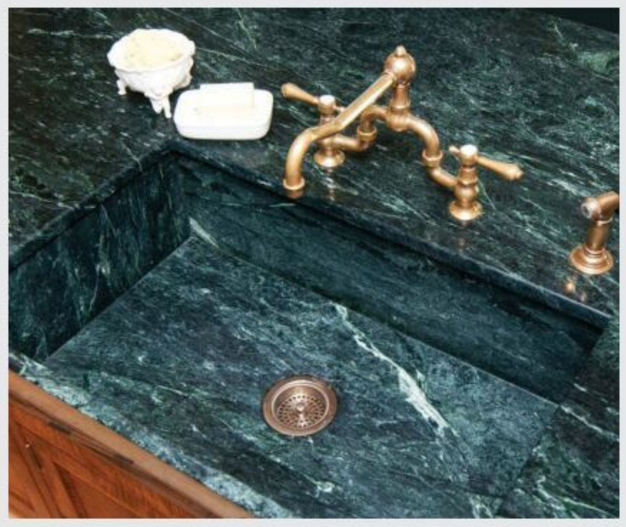
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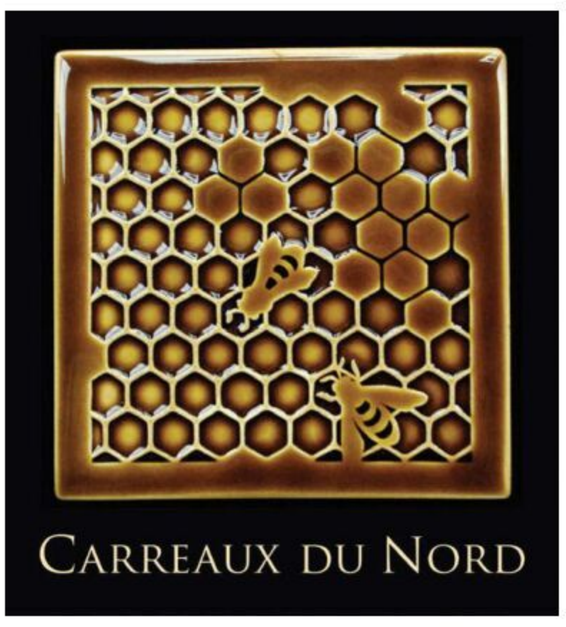
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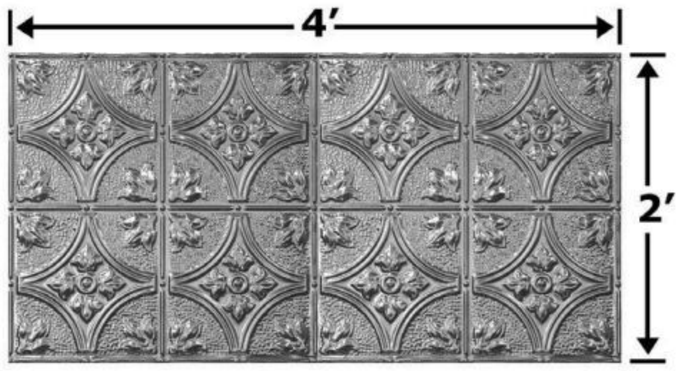
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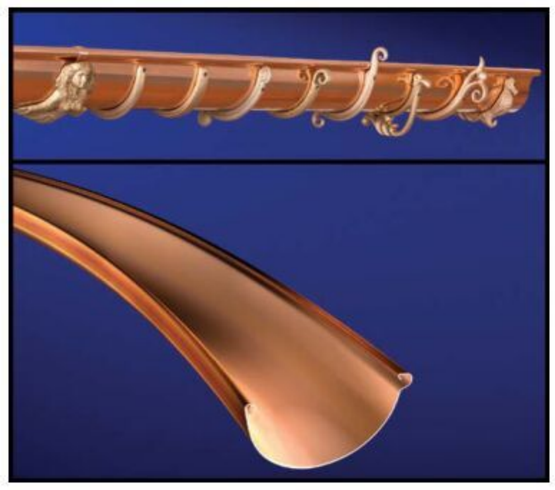
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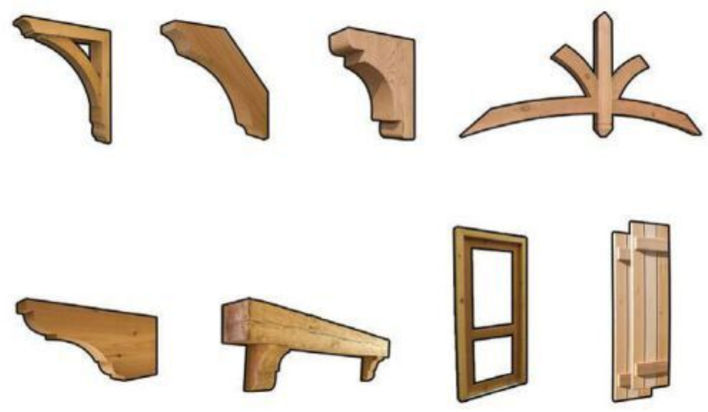
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DESIGNERS Ellen Mirro & Steve Campbell, **Studio TJP**, Seattle: studiotjp.com
GC **Buker Bespoke** bukerbespoke.com
CABINETS **Barker Cabinets** barkercabinets.com
CABINET HARDWARE **Van Dyke's Restorers** vandykes.com
SINK Whitehaven K-6487 and **FAUCET** Artifacts K-99266, both **Kohler** kohler.com
PENDANT LIGHT 'Rose City' **Rejuvenation** rejuvenation.com
TILE **Ann Sacks** annsacks.com

RETROFITTING BATHS

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RESTORATION BATH TILE
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WALLPAPER 'Dorian Damask' **Thibaut** thibaut design.com
BR WALLPAPER 'Bachelor Button' in Eucalyptus from Dresser I Roomset in Victorian collection **Bradbury & Bradbury** bradbury.com
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HARDWARE **Ball and Ball** ballandball.com • **Michael Coldren** coldrencompany.com
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Related Resources
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ROW HOUSE KITCHEN

DESIGN/CABINETS **Airy Kitchens** airykitchens.com
CORBELS cherry **Osborne** osbornewood.com
TILE **Motawi** motawi.com
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PENDANT LIGHT 'Eastmoreland' Aged Brass 14"opal shade **Rejuvenation** rejuvenation.com
FABRIC **Morris** morrisandco.sandersondesigngroup.com
TABLE **Great Windsor Chairs** greatwindsorchairs.com

Related Resources
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> “Best to ask for references before going in for a facelift.”
>
> —Rachel Hamilton





DO

Take care of the face; neighbors have to look at it! Keep up with wood porch and siding maintenance. For added space, consider a rear extension or dormer, if you can.

BUNKERED IN

In and around Pittsburgh, the vertical, cross-gabled house type is often referred to as Cottage Style. Built from the late Victorian era into the 1920s, it’s a simple type, although individual houses might show the influence of such styles as Gothic and Italianate. The clapboarded house above falls somewhere between Greek Revival (cornice returns, columns) and a late, Free Classic Queen Anne (full porch, corbeled chimney, two-storey bay on one side). It’s clear that its owners take pride in their old house.

“One of the great pleasures of living in an older home is having a front porch,” writes the area resident who snapped these photos, “for relaxing, or watching the parade of dog walkers.” That’s an amenity missing from the remodeled house, which has a blocky addition in front, faux stone siding, and replacement windows. It’s hard to believe the two houses once looked alike.

ROBERTA MARUSCHOCK

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