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SPECIAL READER FAVORITES ISSUE

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*Amish Crib Quilt. Ohio. Circa 1920.
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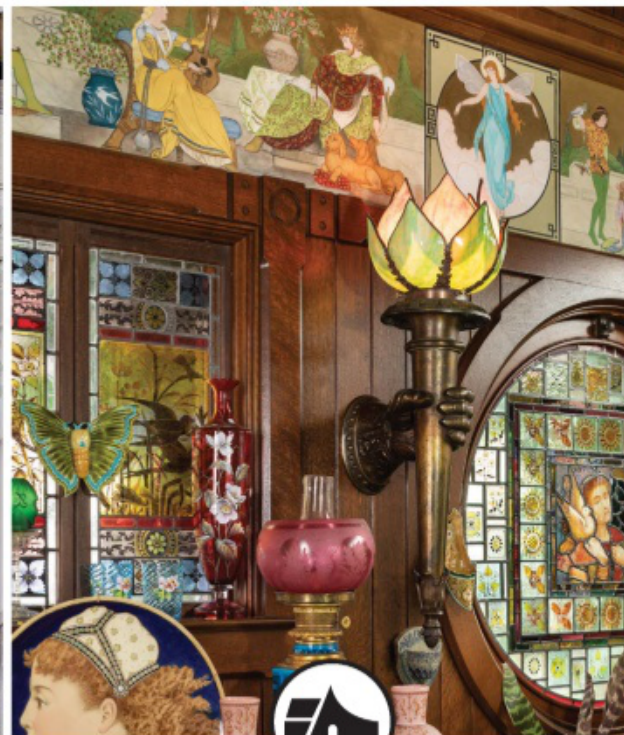
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ON THE COVER This unique house in Seattle has such curb appeal, it attracts photographers and creates traffic jams.
PHOTO BY WILLIAM WRIGHT. SEE PAGE 58.



The first issue of OHJ as a newsletter, in 1973, and its evolution to date.

Looking forward & back

A quick timeline: OHJ started in “brownstone Brooklyn,” in 1973, its debut coinciding with that era’s Back to the City movement. The early OHJ was a 12-page, typewritten, DIY newsletter, punched with three holes in order to be archived in a three-ring binder. Coverage eventually expanded beyond row houses and Victorians to old houses built 1690–1940 (now 1970), in all parts of the country. The first color cover—and first paid advertising—came in 1986, sparking a “bring back the holes” wail from long-time subscribers. Several iterations followed, then Active Interest Media became this magazine’s owner in 2007. I’m still here! The magazines *Old-House Journal* and *Old-House Interiors* (founded in 1995) merged as OHJ, in 2013.

We’ve got special things planned for our 50th year. First up, by reader demand, is the long-awaited tour of Brian Coleman’s Victorian house. Tantalizing fragments have appeared in various articles over the years; now we give it a full feature. (Even more photos can be found online.) It most certainly belongs in this our Annual Reader Favorites issue, which is filled with reader picks, projects brought to you by jury or popular vote, a couple of all-time favorites, and extra pages of products chosen by the editors—especially

Mary Ellen Polson, our serial restorer with good taste, who is always on the lookout. Throughout the year, social-media views, Likes, and comments weigh into what we decide to shoot and ultimately feature in the year-end issue.

I put together the DESIGN story about smart budgeting by looking back at oft-repeated advice in issues past. In the RESTORE section, OHJ continues its DIY, first-person narrative as we visit two women working on their homes. The second INSPIRE visit is quite different from Brian’s Victorian fantasy: it’s about historic preservation, not only of a house in jeopardy but also of its special interior. Enjoy!

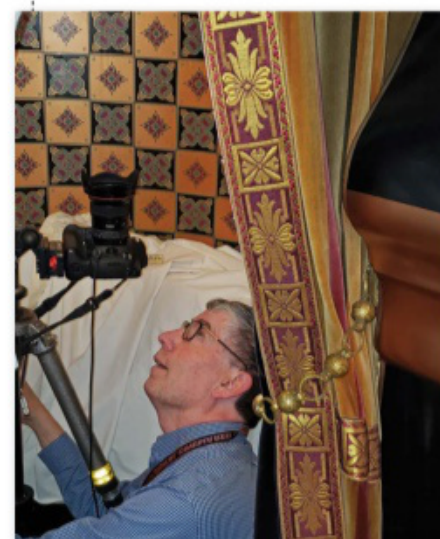


Mary Ellen Polson

SIDE NOTES

A DYNAMIC DUO

OHJ’s West Coast editor, Dr. Brian Coleman, has been in our court since 1996. A prolific scout and writer, he has also written 23 design books . . . this in addition to his primary career as a practicing psychiatrist. Over the years he’s worked with photographers who share Brian’s love of interior design and his careful attention to detail. (Perfectionism in this case being a *good* thing.) Perhaps his longest association has been with William Wright, who like Brian resides in Seattle. We’re featuring Brian’s own exuberant Victorian house in this issue, as we enter our 50th year. Bill Wright took the photos. We’re so grateful to them both. Thank you, too, to Doug Keister, Dan Mayers, Ed Addeo, Erik Kvalsvik, and John Neitzel, all Coleman collaborators whose work we’ve been proud to publish.



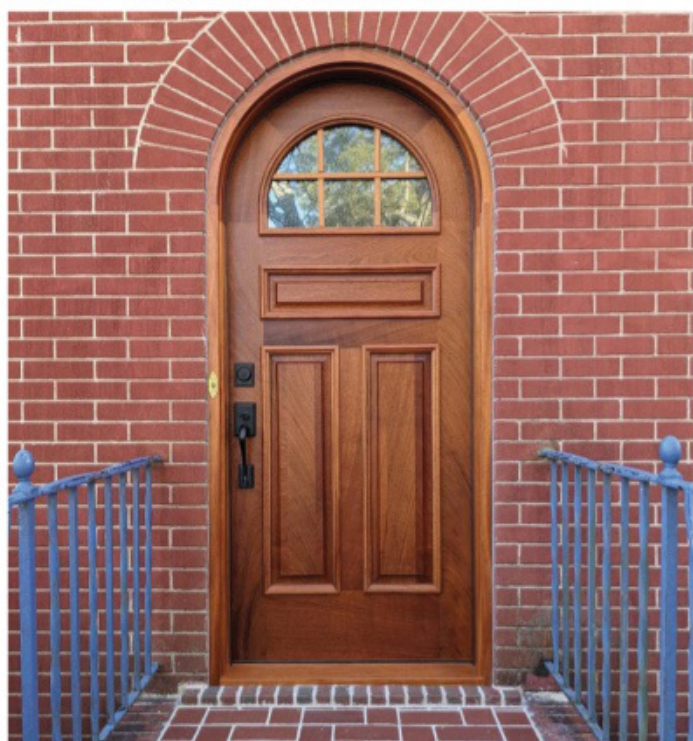
ABOVE Photographer Bill Wright squeezing past priceless antiques and velvet portieres to shoot the inside of the dome in the turret at Brian Coleman’s house.



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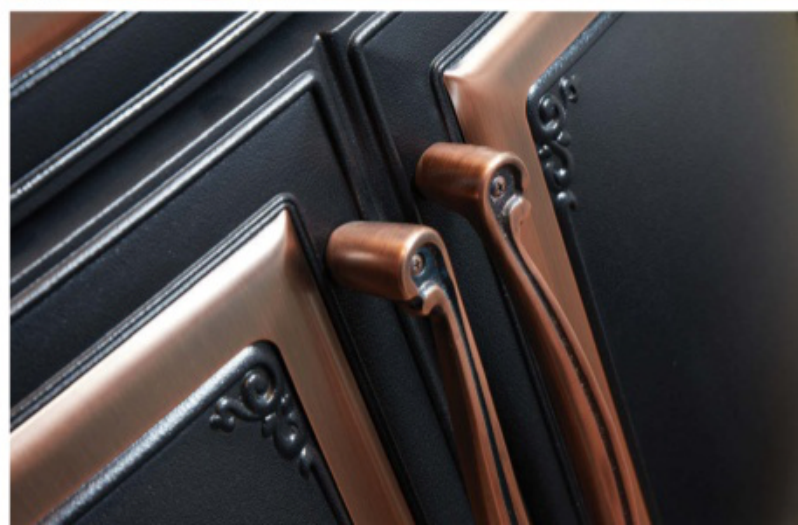
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Silver & White

Winter is the time for softly lit colors. **By Mary Ellen Polson**

1. SWIRLS OF SILVER

Quarried and fabricated underground in Vermont, Danby marble has a water absorption rate lower than many granites. Crystal Gray is unusual for its deep-color swirling patterns with touches of green and peach. About \$30 per sq. ft. for a 3 cm slab. Vermont Quarries, (802) 775-1065, vermontdanbymarble.com

2. ATMOSPHERIC LIGHTING

Suspended like softly falling globes of light, the Bocci 14 pendant chandelier is composed of between three and 26 cast-glass frosted spheres hanging from a round canopy. Each holds a low-voltage Xenon or LED lamp. \$1,275 and up. Hive Modern, (866) 663-4483, hivemodern.com

3. MEXICAN SILVER

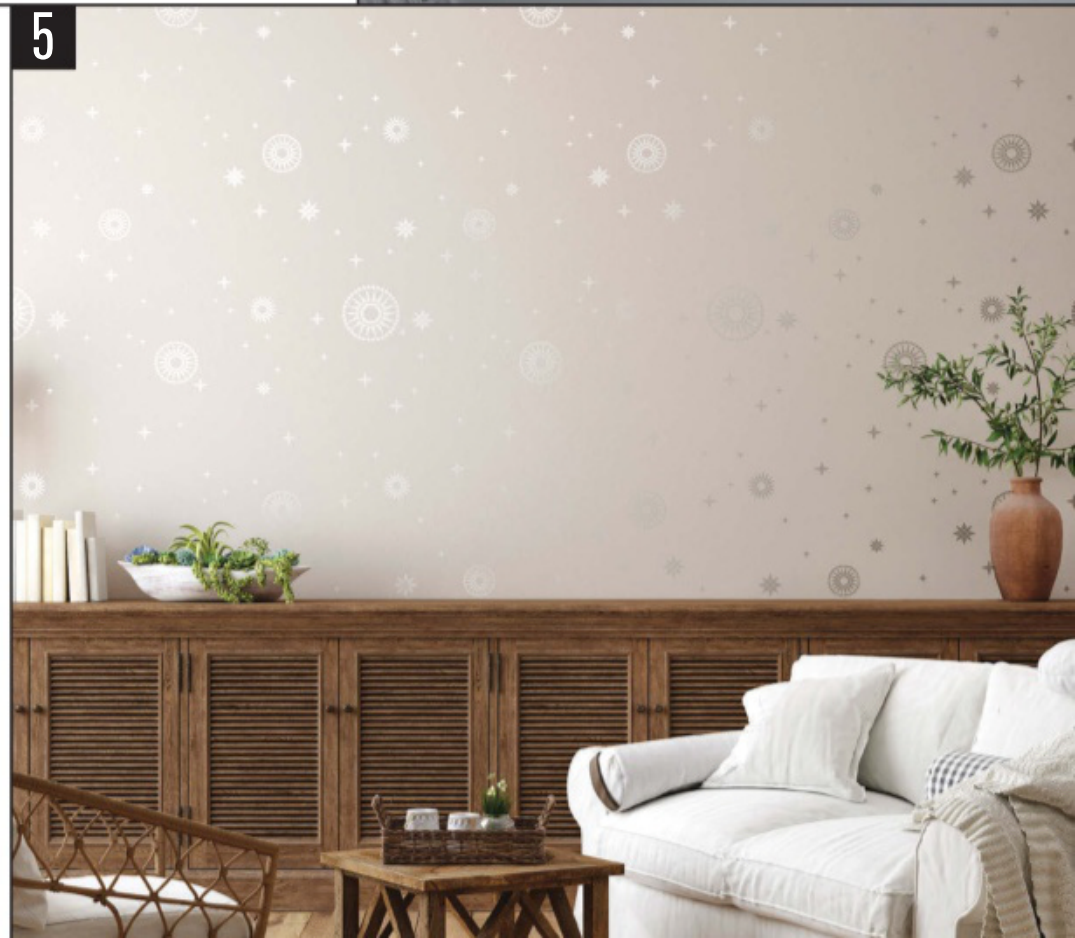
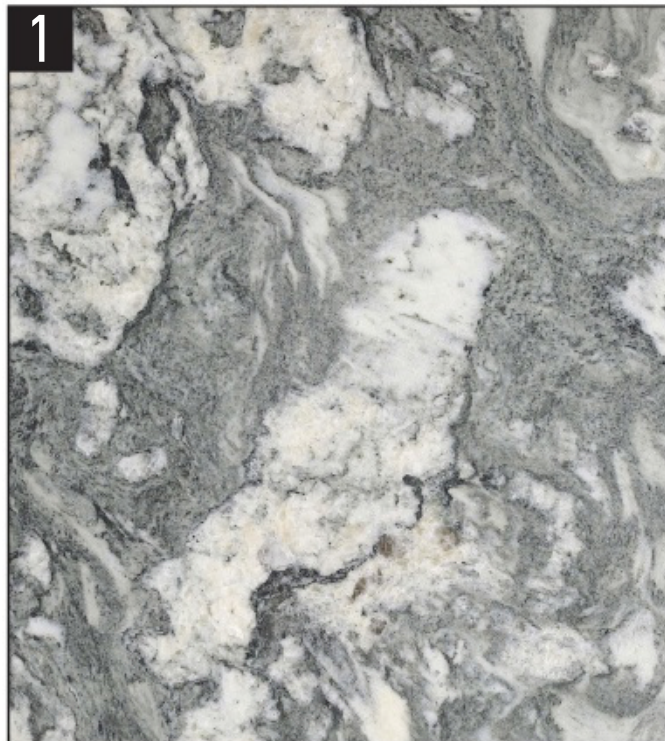
Named for the Mexican hill town synonymous with silverwork, the Taxco Vintage Jeweler drop-in sink is available in satin and polished stainless steel and two other finishes. It measures 22 1/2" long x 16 1/2" wide x 6 1/2" deep. \$945 and up. Linkasink, (602) 971-2502, linkasink.com

4. ICED CEILING

Lavish a historic ceiling missing key embellishments (or create an entirely new one) with decorative enrichments made from Signature plaster mouldings. Choose from a unique series of crowns, cornices, coves, bands, friezes, rosettes, and medallions. Call to discuss your project. J.P. Weaver, (818) 500-1740, jpweaver.com

5. CRYSTAL DECO

Shown in Moonlight, Stardust is taken from the stenciled motifs that once adorned the Cloud Club at the top of





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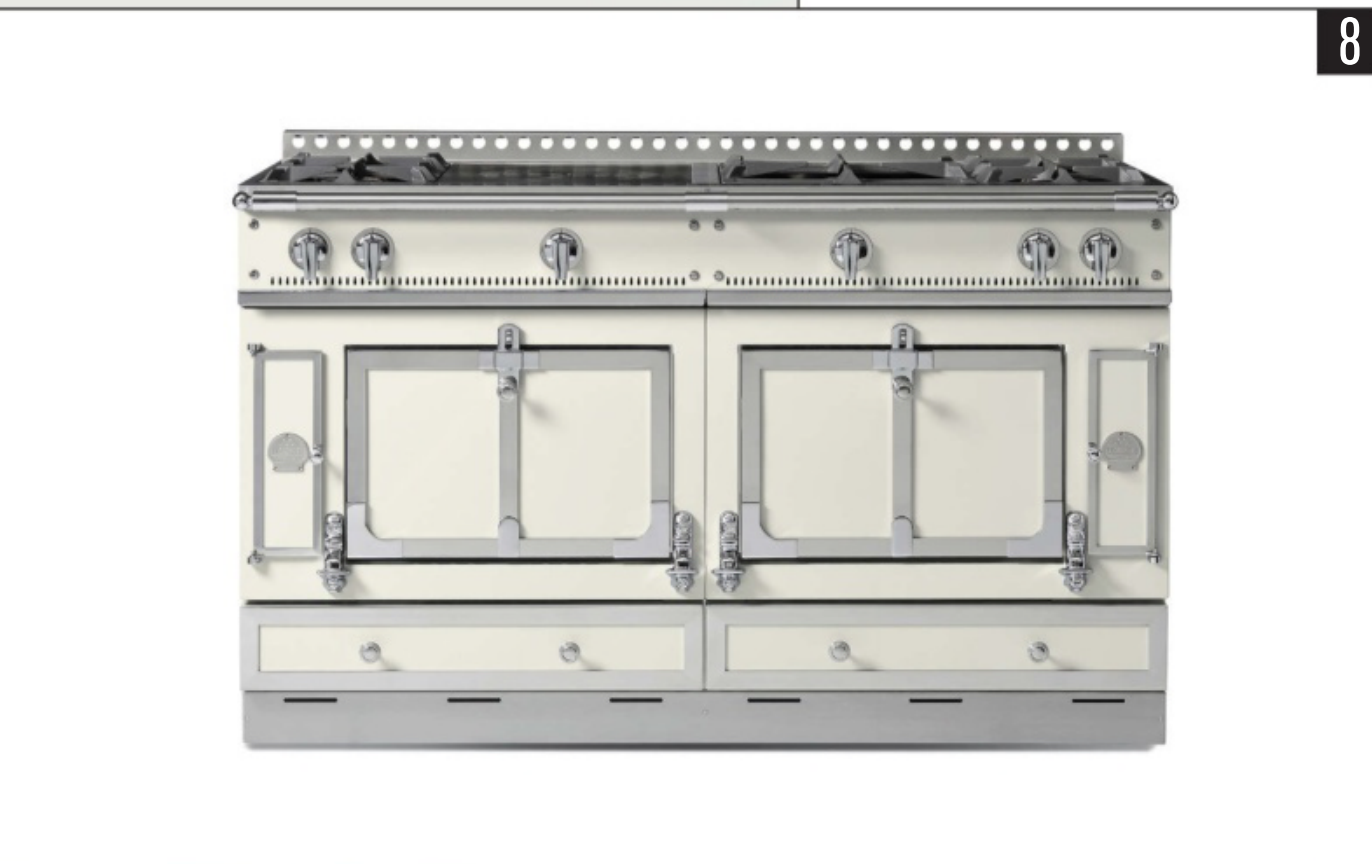
New York's Chrysler building. The Art Deco wallpaper is sold by the 30' roll. \$88 each. Bradbury & Bradbury, (707) 746-1900, bradbury.com

6. FIFTIES ELEGANCE

Available in several finishes including polished nickel (shown), the Chevron suite is made to order in solid brass, by Armac Martin. The pulls come in three sizes from 3" to 8". \$47.20 to \$74.66 each. Horton Brasses, (860) 635-4400, horton-brasses.com

7. A SILVER GLOW

Named for its size, the Lilliputian sconce is available in several finishes and can be plated with nickel, silver, copper, or gold. The sconce features realistic wax dripping on the faux candle mount. It measures 8" tall x 4" wide x 6 3/4" deep. As shown: \$1,464. Heritage Metalworks, (610) 518-3999, hmwpa.com



8

8. SILVER ON WHITE

Part of a new color collection by Martyn Lawrence Bullard, the Chateau 150 in Jerez White is trimmed with polished chrome. The 60" range is available in various fuel and range-top configurations. \$77,200. La Cornue, (877) 522-6768, lacornueusa.com



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9. MILK AND CHROME

The Studio set in bright chrome with a Waldorf crystal knob in white milk glass comes in both passage and deadbolt configurations. The plate measures 4" tall x 2 1/2" wide. Passage set: \$166.63. Deadbolt set: \$298.38. Nostalgic Warehouse, (800) 522-7336, nostalgicwarehouse.com

10. SCULPTURAL CURVES

The Walnut Grove chair is designed to enhance the visual contrast between the richness of its solid black-walnut frame and lush upholstery or leather. Shown in white upholstery, the chair measures 32" tall x 34 1/2" wide x 33" deep. \$2,859 and up. Stickley, stickley.com

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1. HERALDIC PLATE

The Gothic Revival pull plate in solid brass comes from an early-20th-century pattern in a bronze finish. Featuring pointed ogee arches, it measures 18" tall x 3 1/4" wide with a 2 1/2" projection. \$139 each. The Kings Bay, (800) 910-3497, thekingsbay.com

2. LIGHT THE DRAWBRIDGE

The Wexham porch light is loaded with intricate brass castings including arches, crosses, and scrolls. Available in three finishes including unlacquered brass, it measures 19" high x 4 3/8" wide x 12" deep. With butterscotch or white art glass: \$875. Vintage Hardware & Lighting, (360) 379-9030, vintagehardware.com

3. FOIL AND CUSP

Quatrefoils may be the defining motif of the Gothic Revival. The Quatrefoil mirror with white waxstone inlay is framed in antique gold and measures 30" x 30". Made by Maitland-Smith. \$806.51. Emma Mason, (212) 518-2752, emmamason.com

4. GOTHIC IN RELIEF

Figured with interlocking cusps and fleurs-de-lis, knobs and pulls from the Chateau collection are cast in pewter, in four finishes. Knobs are \$26.99 to \$42.99. Pulls (3" on center) are \$49.99 to \$58.95 each. Notting Hill Decorative Hardware, (262) 248-8890, nottinghill.usa.com

5. ON THE CUSP

Made by a furniture company founded in 1924, the Boheme Madera bed bench in Antwerp linen features a cusp-shaped scalloped apron, turned legs, and decorative bronze nailhead trim. The bench measures 56 1/2" wide x 17" deep x 19" tall. \$939 and up. Hooker Furniture, (276) 656-3335, hookerfurniture.com



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Stars & Stripes

Classic long-time favorites are for any time of year.

1. CEILING STAR

The Star flush-mount fixture has a bit of Sputnik in it. Designed with variable-length star points, 14 1/2" wide x 2 1/2" deep, it's an excellent choice for low ceilings and small spaces. In four finishes: \$519. Stoffer Home, (616) 401-4406, stofferhome.com

2. GEOMETRIC FIELD

Bees and Stars is taken from a pattern found on an early-American bandbox. The pattern, dating to 1800–1815, creates a bold geometric framework for bees and six-pointed stars. The block-printed paper is sold in 33' rolls at \$500 each. Adelphi Paper Hangings, (518) 284-9066, adelhipaperhangings.com

3. PASTEL LINES

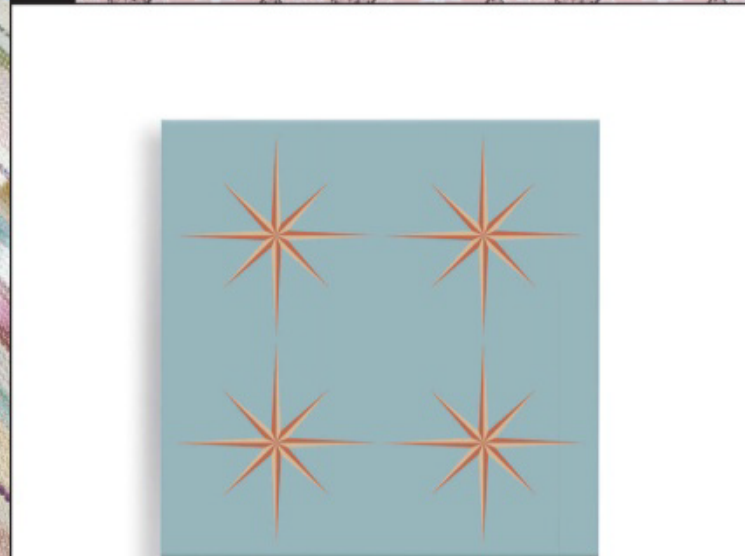
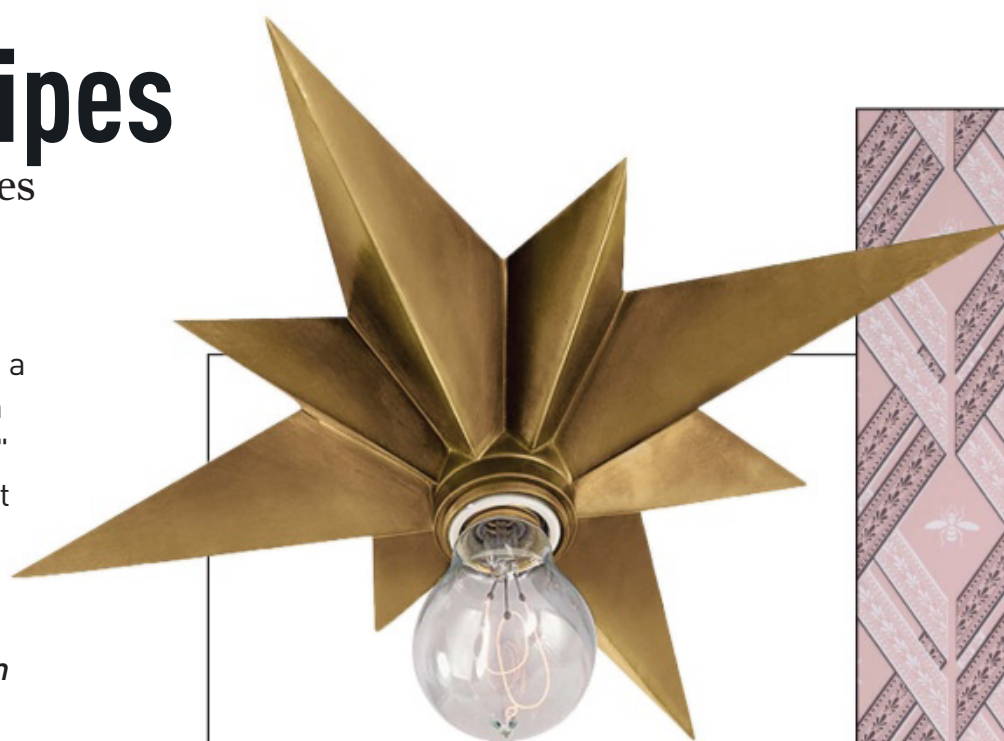
Based on a historic textile, the cotton Jefferson Stripe rug is flat-woven in rose, mustard, blue-green, and beige stripes. It's available in standard widths up to 12' wide in any length and also comes as a runner. A 6' x 9' rug is \$1,242. Woodard & Greenstein, (800) 332-7847, woodardweave.com

4. STARBURST TILE

The Four Star ceramic tile in Blue with Suntan features contrasting two-tone starbursts in each corner. In a matte or gloss finish, patterns coordinate with solid field tile. \$25 each. Make it Mid-Century, (844) 696-6462, makeitmidcentury.com

5. BLACK STRIPE

This maker of authentic reproduction subway tile gets all the details correct—from crisp, tight edges to their gloss, satin, and crackle glazes. Field tile comes in all the classic shapes; also flat liners and coved,





6



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radius, and bullnose edge pieces. Call for pricing. Subway Ceramics, (888) 387-3280, subwaytile.com

6. POINTS OF THE COMPASS

The round side table with a compass-star inlay is composed of solid woods with cherry, maple, and walnut veneers. The table measures 16" in diameter and 24" tall. Assembly required; \$269 through distributors. Butler Specialty, (773) 221-1200, butlerspecialty.net

7. STARRY BELL JAR

Recalling the inverted glass bell pendants of the Federal era, the Hampton etched-star bell pendant has a hand-blown glass shade decorated with wheel-cut stars. The large version is 28" high x 12 1/4" wide. In brass and three other finishes: \$1,316. House of Antique Hardware, (888) 223-2545, houseofantiquehardware.com

8. BEAR IN BAMBOO

Upright green bamboo creates stripes against the red ground of the Panda Panda tile (also in green on green). The 6" x 8" tile is a collaboration between the tilemaker and Charley Harper Art Studio. \$117. Motawi Tileworks, (734) 213-0017, motawi.com

9. TIGER STRIPE

The Barringer striped cabinet knob recalls the swirling brown porcelain door knobs made in Bennington, Vermont, in the mid-19th century. The 1 1/4" wide knobs come in a choice of antique brass, oil-rubbed bronze, and black iron bases; \$14 each. Signature Hardware, (855) 715-1800, signaturehardware.com

10. BIG BRASS BED

Featuring sturdy uprights with finials, the solid-brass Sleigh bed creates a rhythmic pattern of stripes as sunlight passes through the frame. The antique-brass finish will continue to gain patina. \$3,339 to \$3,899. Charles P. Rogers, (800) 582-6229, charlesprogers.com



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Houses 1955–1980

Contemporary, Mid-century Modern, or Rustic, these newer old houses are hot sellers.



Colleen Resendiz, Benefit Realty, benefit-realty.com

BROOKFIELD, WI / \$1,350,000

Built in 1960 of cedar, local stone, and glass, this architect-designed Contemporary features lofty beamed ceilings, multiple glazed areas, an original tiled sauna, a built-in bar, and a sensitively restored kitchen.



Jake Tjernell, Professional Realty Services Sequim, professionalrealtyservices.com

EQUIM, WA / \$649,000

With the best of two worlds, this spacious, 1978 A-frame has a log and shiplap exterior with an open, knotty-pine interior. A floating staircase leads to bedrooms with exposed cross beams, plus a desk with built-ins.



Spencer Gerondale, Keller Williams Memorial, har.com

HOUSTON, TX / \$635,000

This Texas-sized Eichler Modern from 1965 is loaded with iconic architectural details, from terrazzo floors to exposed beams that pierce the building envelope through floor-to-ceiling windows. It has many intact features including the kitchen.



David Emerson, ColdwellBankerHomes.com

PALM SPRINGS, CA / \$1,400,000

Clean, rectangular lines and sensitive updates characterize this 1962 Mid-century Modern home. Features include a Mondrian-inspired entry wall, breeze-block dividers, and a kidney-shaped pool.



Rhonda Gibbons, Savvy & Co., savvyandcompany.com

CHARLOTTE, NC / \$829,900

The boxy, low-slung façade of this 1956 Modernist Ranch opens to two original levels inside. Original features include beamed ceilings, a brick-lined living room, clerestory and horizontal windows, and a Malm-style, freestanding fireplace.



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LIVING YESTERDAY'S AMERICAN DREAM

Our 1964 house has hardly changed, right down to how we live. We like it that way. **By Sal, Diane, and Kelly Scalogna**

Our little mid-century house may seem understated, but that's because it was intended to be. It's a quaint Levitt house inconspicuous among others on a quiet street. Within our walls, though, time stopped somewhere between the end of WWII and the moon landing. Frank Sinatra is playing on the phonograph; a photo of President Kennedy sits on an end table, and reruns of "The Donna Reed Show" broadcast from a square television-set in a mahogany Philco cabinet. A CorningWare percolator brews on the electric burner, under the 1963 Puritron range hood, with the unmistakable sound of a rotary telephone being dialed in the

background. We live with wall-to-wall broadloom, the faint sound of a ticking clock, and vintage appliances labeled Sunbeam and General Electric. (Do you remember?)

We raised our daughter here. Very few in her generation have experienced how her parents and grandparents lived. We wanted to give her that gift. As a newly married couple, we shared a dream to recreate the wonderful childhoods we had. As children of the 1970s, we held many traditions and memories close at heart. Our childhood homes, along with those of aunts, uncles, and grandparents, seemed magical. We don't have words to describe

the feeling, but to say there was safety, comfort, and intrigue for us in those houses of memory.

We looked at dozens of houses. Our search brought us to Stony Brook, Long Island—a quiet, mid-century suburban town with neighborhood parks and tree-lined streets. Tucked away in an old development we found the perfect L-shape, three-bedroom ranch. It was built in 1964 by William J. Levitt & Sons, the famous postwar developer. The house was nearly original with practically no updates. Many aspects reminded us of "Leave it to Beaver," "Bewitched," and "The Wonder Years." The house was

ABOVE The 1964 house is little changed, although the landscape has matured. **INSET** Diane, Kelly, and Sal.



The Buckingham

THE RANCHER COMBINES natural stone with cedar and asbestos shingles to achieve a distinctive exterior charm. There is a special sheltered area at the front door which opens to a gracious entrance foyer. Directly through the foyer there is a big 19 x 25 1/2 foot living room with adjoining dining area. There are three large bedrooms and two ceramic tile baths. The master bedroom has its own private bath. To the left of the entrance foyer, through the dining area, there is a family recreation room where an insulated window-wall slides open to the back lawn. A col-

orful U-shaped kitchen off the family room is equipped with a push-button electric range and a 13.3 cu. ft. refrigerator. The metal wall and base cabinets are easy to clean and will not warp. A laundry-utility room at the back of the attached garage is equipped with an automatic Filter-flor washer and matching dryer. It is accessible from the garage or the house. All kitchen and laundry appliances are included in the price of the house. Every single one of them by General Electric.

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Price

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Cash required

\$172

Monthly payments

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LEFT (archival) A period ad for The Buckingham, a Levitt model. **ABOVE** Living rooms exude mid-century luxury with wall-to-wall carpeting and overstuffed furniture. **RIGHT** The table is set with inherited and found objects, all functional and most dating to the 1940s-60s.

BELOW One record player is a ca. 1960 electric Hi-Fi. **BOTTOM LEFT** At night, the lighted dial on the Zenith radio has an amber light to accompany Tommy Dorsey's music.





LEFT A patio at the rear provides private family space, a concept integral to mid-century houses.

BELOW In the kitchen, the layout, cabinets, tile floor, and range hood are original. Of course, there is a wall-hung rotary phone.

BOTTOM A Victrola crank phonograph player is in its original cabinet.



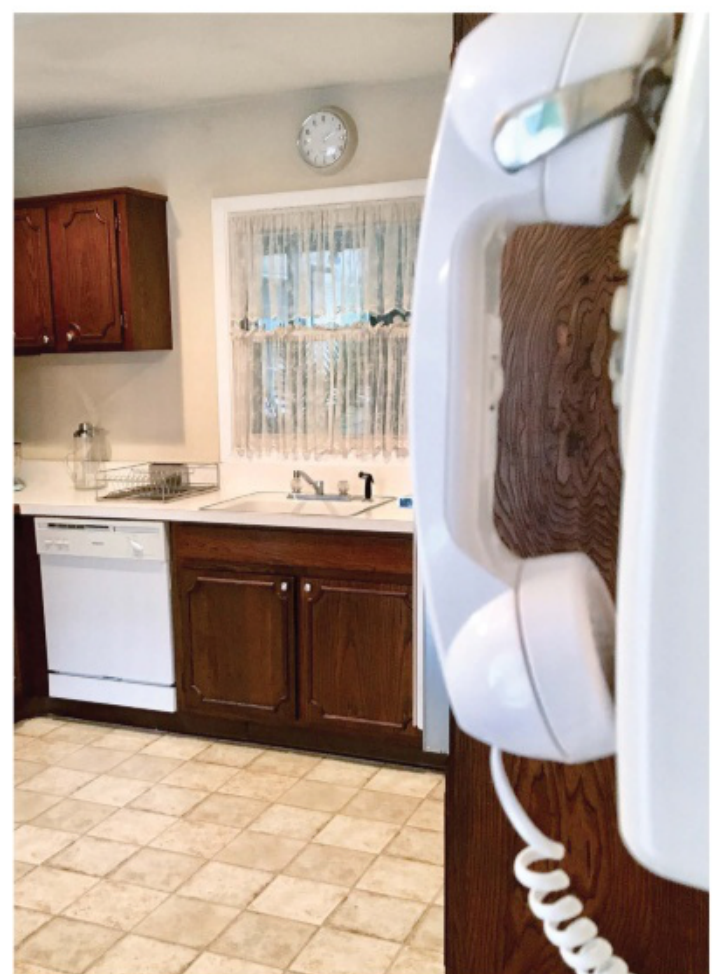
LEFT (from top)) Kelly Scalogna grew up in the unchanged house • Rotary-dial telephones and analog clocks work fine, as do the mid-century appliances and even the older record players.

empty but we knew the layout, shape of the rooms, and original features were a foundation for our vision. We kept everything that was original including the wood windows, tile floors, kitchen cabinets, kitchen range hood, and light switches.

After painting and laying wall-to-wall carpeting, we were ready to decorate. We wouldn't limit ourselves to a moment in time, but instead allowed a range of furnishings dating from the 1940s through the 1960s. To accommodate the different eras, we stayed with the same materials and colors throughout the small house. Furniture, lighting, and decorative objects were either inherited from family or friends, or found in antiques shops on the east end of Long Island and Nassau County's North Shore. Many of the vintage books, records, and paintings came from Connecticut and Massachusetts.

Visitors think this is a special place, especially during the holidays when we recapture past traditions. These days it feels as if much of the past is disappearing. But it's alive behind our front door.

FOR RESOURCES, SEE PAGE 87.





Don't Overspend on Energy Efficient Windows

Both replacement and storm windows block drafts, increase energy efficiency, and add soundproofing. How do they stack up against each other when it comes to convenience, cost, and preserving your home's aesthetic?

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Shown: Inspired Collections / Capitol Hill

DESIGNING ON A BUDGET

From readers and editors,
**10 ways to renovate
and decorate** without
spending a fortune.

page 22



WATCHARA/ADOBE STOCK

22

10 BUDGET-SAVVY TIPS: PLAN AHEAD TO SAVE MONEY
Along with a reliance on paint and vintage pieces,
common sense and keeping it simple go a long way.

+

**28 THEY STILL MAKE
30 VINTAGE VISION
32 KITCHENS + BATHS**



FRONT DOOR MAKEOVERS

Rejuvenate a worn entry or add new personality with a punch of color. Historically, the front door was often done in an accent color, different from body and trim. Upgrade lighting or hardware.





LEFT The stenciled “rug” in this dining room became the focal point, for the cost of talent and some paint. Barter with an artistic friend!

OPPOSITE A Greek Revival entry illustrates curb appeal without expense or fuss. The scheme is simple yet bold, with a strong accent on the door, suitable torch lights, and seasonal color.

10 BUDGET-SAVVY TIPS *Plan ahead to save money.*

Culled from readers and editors over the years, here are 10 nuggets to help you renovate and decorate without spending a fortune. Taken together, they suggest both a timeline (plan ahead!) and an approach (listen to the house). Take your time. Seek advice from other renovators, reliable contractors, and a designer who can help you avoid pitfalls. ■ Old houses need renovation and system upgrades, which aren’t cheap. Still, an old house may offer other advantages. The quality of materials—hardwood, three-coat plaster, double-hung windows, wood wainscoting—means that elements last and are meant to be repaired, not replaced. An unfitted kitchen with multiple counter surfaces and a linoleum floor is more budget-friendly than most. Comfortably imperfect, layered with history, old houses take well to eclectic mixing. **BY PATRICIA POORE**



LEFT In an old New England house, the long-ago slate sink found in the basement was set on a simple, painted base cabinet in the unfitted but perfectly functional kitchen.

OPPOSITE (top) To avoid do-overs, don't even think about interior work until the roof is sound, chimneys inspected and clean, and any additions planned. (bottom) Paint can enliven inexpensive furniture—or unite mismatched chairs when all are repainted the same color.

No. 2 **SAVE** in the kitchen

Best budget advice: **Don't add on if you don't have to!** A designer can make the room more efficient; you can use a pantry or a closet in the mudroom for extra storage. If possible, don't move plumbing lines, as that's a big expense that steals from your design budget. • Unless they are unsalvageable, **keep and upgrade existing cabinets**, or at least some of them. Wood and MDF cabinets can be painted or refinished; you can add glazing to upper doors or change out the hardware. **Control the cabinetry cost by adding a freestanding piece or building in a hutch or dresser;** vintage pieces are less expensive than semi-custom cabinets. Use open shelving instead of a second run of uppers. • **Mid-priced appliances are fine; affordable manmade materials and production tile** look good when appropriately detailed.

No. 1 PRE-PLAN EVERYTHING

This is the only way to set a budget and stick to it. • Planning the sequence of work avoids do-overs, as when beautiful finishes are ruined by a roof leak that should have been dealt with first. • Research your building codes: that dormer may be too high, the new garage too close to the property line. • If you want to incorporate salvaged items, you need measured plans to accommodate them in the renovation or building process. • You'll avoid having to make last-minute choices and paying extra shipping fees.

One piece of advice that pops up year after year: Live in the house, preferably through all seasons, before you start planning big changes. These include knocking down walls, moving plumbing lines, gutting the kitchen, and adding on—all of them expensive renovations that you want to be very sure about before you hire a designer or contractor, let alone begin demolition. During that year, as you note how you actually use the rooms, you will almost certainly change your mind about early assumptions and pre-conceptions. [text cont. on page 26]



3

THINK LONG TERM

Good materials and workmanship cost more upfront. But they almost always save money over time. Renovation labor is expensive in any case, and the work is disruptive. Don't create a repeat cycle. **Choose long-lived roofing, as labor is most of the cost.** Judiciously select PVC or composite lumber for exterior elements that fail; the material is expensive but you won't be replacing the eaves or lattice every five years. • Conversely, **don't fall for "upgrades" that won't pay back for decades**, such as new triple-glazed windows. Spend less instead on caulk and storm panels. • **Avoid trends** for big-ticket items. Timeless is easier to live with.



4

BUY REMNANTS

It's expensive to place a big order for something new, whether that's tile or wallpaper. Shop for remnants and returns. Buy a remnant of natural marble to inset as a pastry board. On-sale broadloom can be cut and bound for a stair runner. The end of a bolt can be used for a Roman shade or curtain. Look for a rejected tile order.

No. 5 Rely on Paint Color

Paint is the ultimate cosmetic, and inexpensive if you do it yourself. **Upgrade curb appeal by painting the front door or shutters.** Inside, choosing historical colors gives a period-appropriate base to rooms. **You can use paint colors instead of mouldings or wallpaper to divide walls** (suggesting a dado or a frieze). Stenciling (painting a design through a cutout template) is less expensive than wallpapering. **Do you have mismatched furniture in the dining room or on the porch? Paint everything the same color** to create a cohesive set. Old furniture can be repurposed with new paint, whether in one color or decorated with striping, sponging, or free-hand designs. When it comes time to paint the exterior, use paint colors and placement to highlight (or fix) proportions and make even a bland house worth a second look.



Make Smart Substitutions Not every room needs a handmade oriental carpet. Solid-surface countertops are cheaper than stone and maintenance-free. Linoleum and commercial tile are budget-friendly and adaptable. Outside, using PVC and composites instead of wood makes sense in wet areas.



ABOVE Real linoleum is a fine, historical product and often a DIY job.

No. 7

DIY—SOMETIMES

Common DIY projects include light demolition, prep work and painting, minor plaster repair, batt insulation, basic wallpapering, and wood window repairs. First weigh the investment in tools. • If it requires a license or certification, don't do it yourself. Stay away from plumbing and electrical, foundation and roof work.

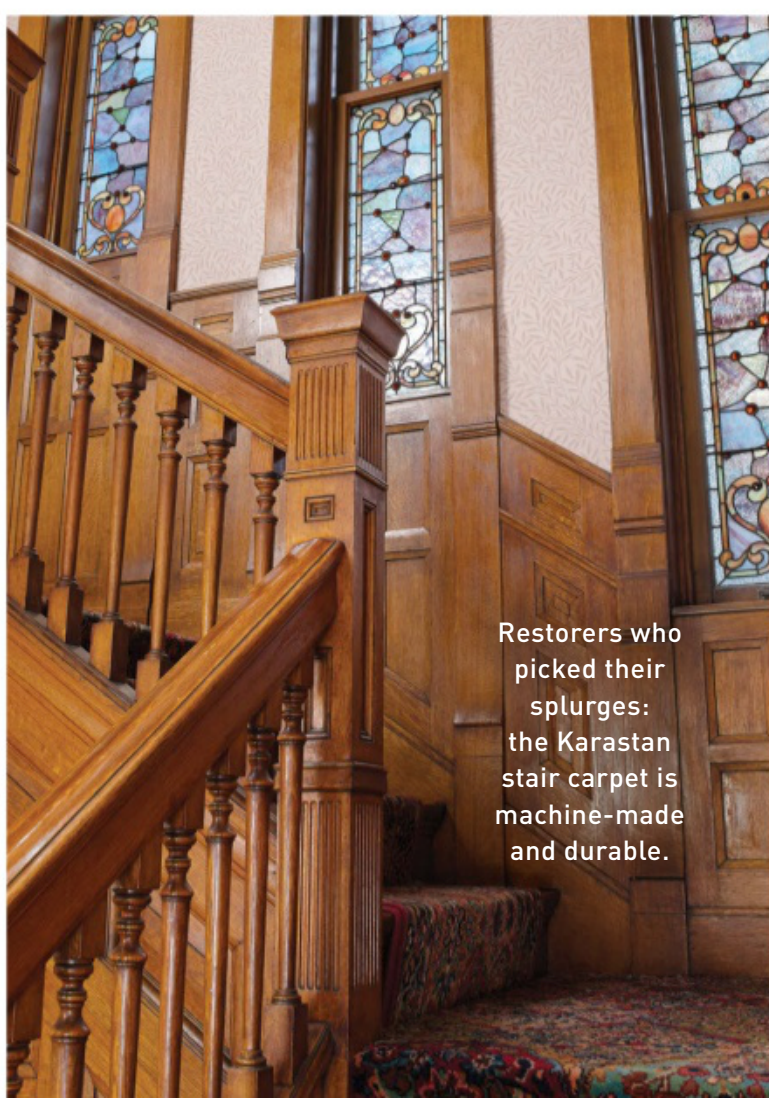
No. 8

USE SALVAGE

Sometimes the item is cheaper than if bought new; other times, **salvage introduces a unique focal point or history** into the house. Just be sure to plan ahead to incorporate large pieces, and carry measurements with you. **New-old stock is another category;** some dealers specialize in never-used period hardware. • **Not all salvage is purchased.** You can, for example, salvage attic floorboards to patch floors downstairs.

No. 9

Attend Estate Sales Big old houses need furniture. New furniture is expensive. Antique and vintage furniture often costs less, even if pieces need touchups or upholstery. Live auctions and estate sales are your friends! All prices are reflected at local auctions. You can find chandeliers, hand-woven rugs, kitchen utensils, Victorian lamps, Fiestaware, artwork—not just furniture.



Restorers who picked their splurges: the Karastan stair carpet is machine-made and durable.

Have a master plan—then decide where you will save or splurge. A few good decisions, made early, might buy you that art tile or refurbished vintage stove you've always wanted. Factor in incidental costs—dumpster rental, permits, a color consultant. Remember “the mushroom factor,” when projects grow: Renovating your kitchen might involve redoing a powder room and necessitate upgrading the deck outside, so allow money for those.

When choosing a contractor, don't necessarily go with the lowest bidder; a low bid may signal sub-par workmanship, materials, oversight, or itemization. The more detailed the bid, the more likely you are to come in on (well, near) budget.

One caution: Although almost all OHJ readers do at least some renovation work themselves, do-it-yourself can lead to expense. Contractors tell stories about jobs that involved redoing the client homeowner's DIY work—often at greater expense than if the pros had been called in at the start. When it comes to big jobs and especially anything that might cause real damage if done wrong, be realistic about your skills and patience. In all cases, consider the investment you'll have to make in new and specialty tools. Don't forget safety.



FURNITURE STYLE CLASSICS

Choose some basics that work across eras and architectural styles: Windsor chairs, a roll-arm sofa ... brass beds and Shaker rockers ... mid-century leather. You won't have to start over if you move.

No.

10

BUY FURNITURE CLASSICS

Classic, small-scale pieces mix and match well and will probably find a place in another room or the next house. Avoid oddball pieces and sofas that don't fit through the average doorway. **Quality furniture is a worthwhile investment:** it looks good, ages well, and can be reupholstered. It's fine to buy just one piece a year or as budget allows. You might buy less expensive furniture—say, wood rockers, wicker, a bench, vintage bits—to use in the living room now, then **relocate them to a sunroom or porch when you're ready** to buy more substantial pieces for the main rooms. Know the underlying style of the house. You don't have to embrace period decorating; but **be aware of compatibility and proportion to select furnishings** that will always look right for the space.



THEY STILL MAKE...

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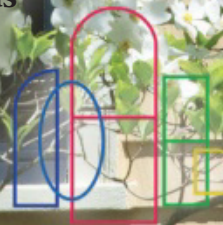
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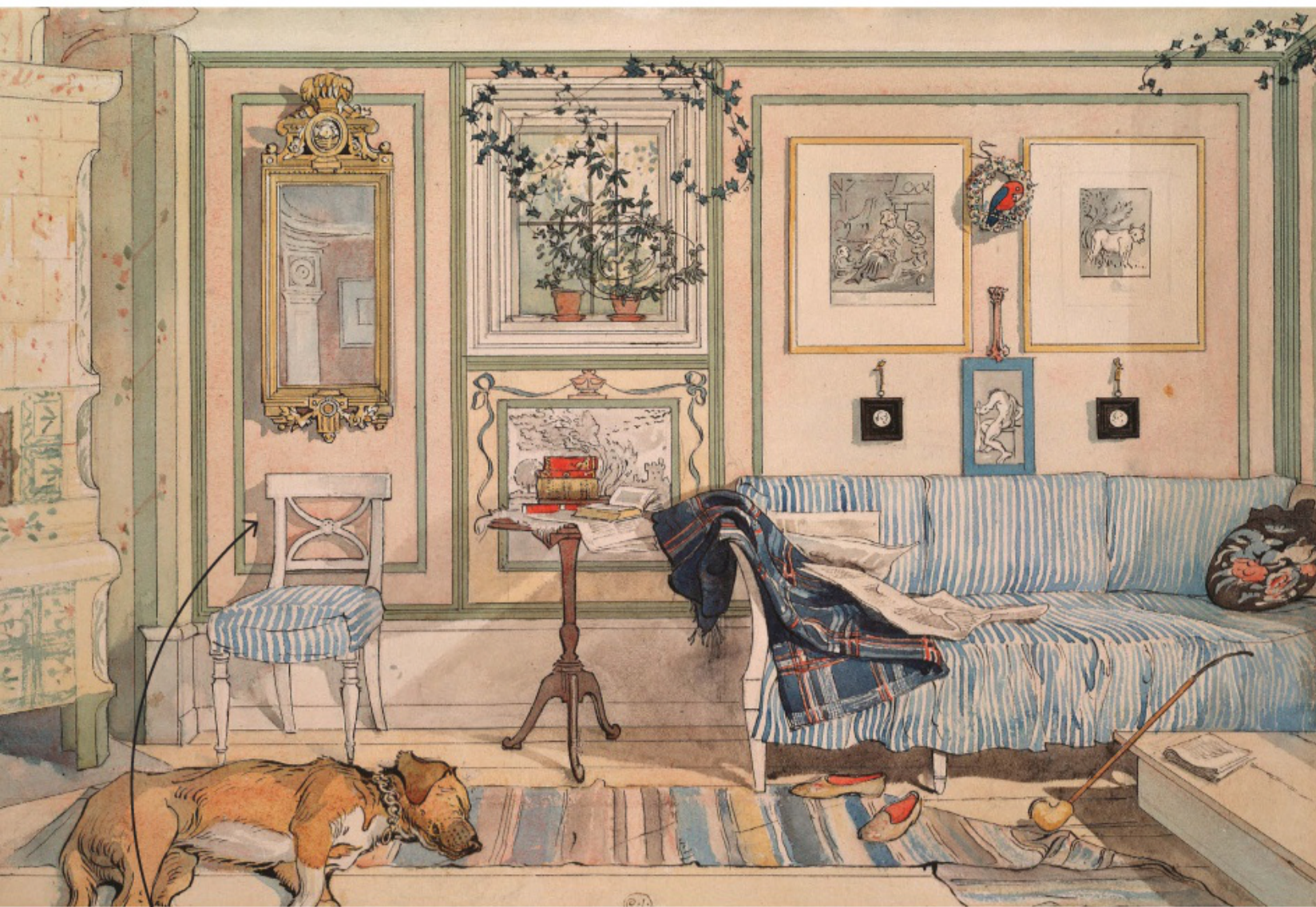


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"Cosy Corner" Watercolor, 1894

A painting by the Swedish artist Carl Larsson, from his At Home series.



Pale furniture, simple textiles, panel moulding on the walls, and the ornate wall mirror are hall-marks of revived Gustavian style.



Wisteria's Gustavian Dining Chair is made of distressed wood painted white, pale grey, or black, and comes with a natural linen cushion. The hand-made country-style chair is 37" high. It's \$525 plus an import handling fee of \$30. wisteria.com



Flat-woven carpets, used throughout the 19th century, are timeless. This is Blue Creek, #219, from Woodard & Greenstein, who offer 75 historical designs. Cotton rugs are hand-loomed and -dyed; \$23 per sq.ft. woodardweave.com



The minimalist Barton Sofa from Serena & Lily is shown in Perennials® Pinstripe performance fabric in French Blue, one of many upholstery choices. Four frame colors include pale and medium greys. It's bench-made in North Carolina, in widths 84", 96", and 108"; starting at \$3,998. serenaandlily.com

Larsson's candid paintings of the family home Lilla Hyttnäs, in Sundborn, brought Swedish Arts & Crafts style to the world.



A Scandinavian tiled masonry stove is a rarity here. But Woodstock Soapstone Company

makes the Fireview, marrying natural soapstone to cast iron (with five color options) in a design based on Victorian stoves of the 1860s. Firebrick and soapstone continue to radiate heat long after the fire dies down. It is sized to be a primary heat source for areas 900-1600 sq.ft.: \$3,750. woodstove.com



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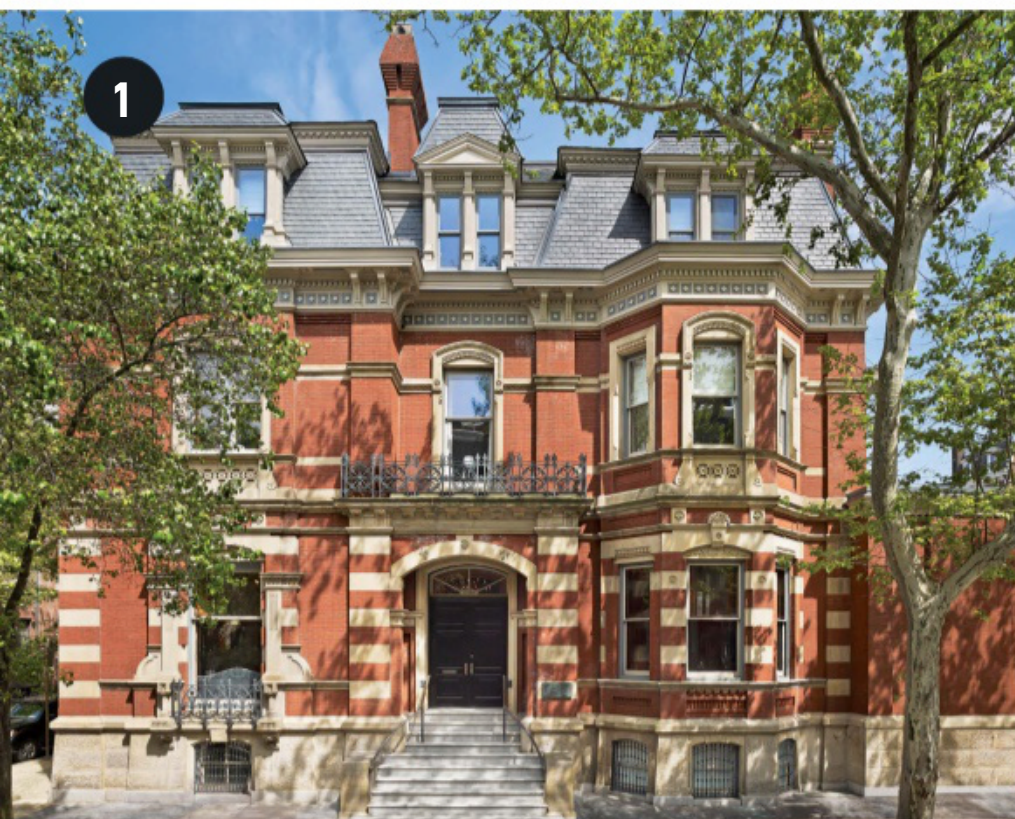
Estate Style for a Mansion

An important 1874 house gets an estate kitchen. **Halkin/Mason Photography**

Even a mansion can present with a badly remodeled kitchen. The George C. Thomas House is a historic Victorian home in Philadelphia's Rittenhouse Square. "Its kitchen and master bathroom were at first our prime focus," says architect Spence Kass. The floor plan was redesigned for the kitchen. Two separate rooms and a pantry became the main kitchen, made airy with the addition of a raised ceiling. It includes a breakfast room, and opens to a family room/conservatory with a wall of double-glazed French doors.

Historical integrity is balanced with modern convenience. New cabinets and white subway tiles (with traditional grey grout), along with high-end appliances, join Victorian details and 19th-century antiques. The big copper teakettle was once signage for a tea shop. A trammel (for holding pots over an open fire) hangs next to an antique station clock.

Kass worked with Philadelphia kitchen designer Joanne Hudson. Functional specifications include a Sub-Zero fridge with glass doors and a La Cornue range and hood. None of it looks jarringly modern, given the authenticity of the room. The project won the Preservation Achievement Award from The Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia.



1. FOR THE ARCHITECTURE

With the interior designed by noted Philadelphia architect Frank Furness, the 1874 urban mansion dates to an era when kitchens were big to accommodate many preparation tasks and a house staff. This three-storey house measures almost 14,000 square feet.

2. UTILITARIAN BEAUTY

Now considered luxury materials, white tile and an inlaid marble floor are timeless, long-lived, and scrubbable. A tin ceiling, the subway tiles, and black-and-white flooring all play into the Victorian-inspired commercial aesthetic.



3

4

3. A WALL OF GLASS

New double-glazed windows in the kitchen and floor-to-ceiling windows and glass doors in the breakfast room and family room are rigorously simple with an almost commercial sensibility.

4. A FAMILY SPACE

The generous new family room is located directly off the breakfast space near the kitchen. A wide cased opening between rooms provides separation for changes in finish materials on walls, floors, and ceilings.



BE INSPIRED...

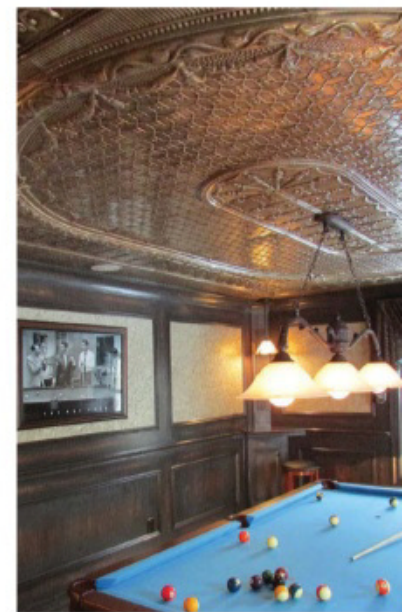
The Keating 14" Heritage Aged Zinc or Brass Pendant from Hinkley Lighting interprets the factory pendant.

It features overscaled cast knobs and a ribbed shade in a choice of finish. Max height is 47 1/4"; \$499 direct, hinkleylightinglights.com



The Riveting Industrial Oversized Clock has an open frame to let the wall show or to allow a background of choice. It is metal and measures 60" with a 2" projection; needs one AA battery: \$757 from Shades of Light, shadesoflight.com

In business since 1898, W.F. Norman offers not only paintable tin-plated steel but also copper, brass, and zinc ceilings. Copper and brass may be ordered raw, cleaned, or already polished and clear-coated. They offer 140 historical designs of ceiling tile. Prices per panel or ornament are shown on the website: wfnorman.com





Hotel Amenities in the Country

New baths in a renovated Shingle Style house are clean and crisp yet warmly inviting. **By Patricia Poore**

Even the bathrooms are perfection in this turn-of-the-century summer house reimagined and expanded by architect John B. Murray. His work always combines classical elegance with his respect for the vernacular.

This seaside home is at the eastern end of Long Island in New York. The renovation was extensive, as the interior had been stripped of character. Murray's design for the primary bathroom is spare, white, and serene. Yet the room remains country-comfortable, owing to the light-filled window bay, softening details, and stained oak flooring. From the built-ins to the floating tub in the bay, this feels like a furnished room. Hotel-worthy amenities include double lavatories, a seated vanity, and separate bathtub and shower areas. The enameled-cast iron Kohler tub is the focal point. A shower with a glass door tucks in on the opposite end of the long room.

The powder room (shown below) echoes Murray's use of classical elegance (the curved cabinet and revival sconces), deluxe amenities (a marble sink counter and oversized mirror), and country informality (the wood wainscot and a subtle wallcovering that's actually a map of the area).



1. ROOM FOR THE VERNACULAR

Elegant as the bathrooms are, they are not urban spaces. The whimsical wallcovering in the powder room is a map. Beadboard wainscots rather than tile lend a country-Victorian air.

2. QUIET SERENITY

Not quite monotone, a white room is given depth and warmth by the dark floor of reclaimed oak, the tonal celadon paint on walls, and the soft, reflective shine of nickel fittings.

3. ELEGANT CHOICES

From the marble counters to the alabaster light fixture, simplicity of form and color keeps rooms from looking oversized.

4. ALWAYS THE CLASSICS

The architect says: "I love the idea of soft antique floorboards with the refinement of the millwork, the watery sensibility of the stone, the white of the porcelain tub. It's a nice palette. I think it's very lovely."



3

BE INSPIRED...

The Rohl Country Bath wall-mounted **tub filler with hand shower** (#A1401) is available in five finishes, including satin nickel and bright brass. Starting at \$1,161 through showrooms and online retailers. houseofrohl.com



Brasslight Gallery offers different style families of **alabaster (natural stone) lighting**. This is the 'Palladian' carved pendant with solid-brass fittings. For three candelabra bulbs (incandescent, CFL, or LED); chain-hung available, bowls 12"-24" dia. The 16" bowl as shown is \$1,390. brasslightgallery.com

Embroidered starfish and coral embellish these 'Beachcomber' **towel sets**, each comprising a bath towel, hand towel, and washcloth. The cotton-velour, celadon-color towels have decorative stitching; \$53.99 per set. touchofclass.com



4



For a custom look, consider the 'De Soto' model vanity in bright white or other colors, from James Martin. Cabinets are made from North American birch; a full plinth base is behind bracket feet. An optional 22" makeup counter connects vanities. Countertops in marble, Silestone quartz, or solid surface. Custom pricing. jamesmartinfurniture.com

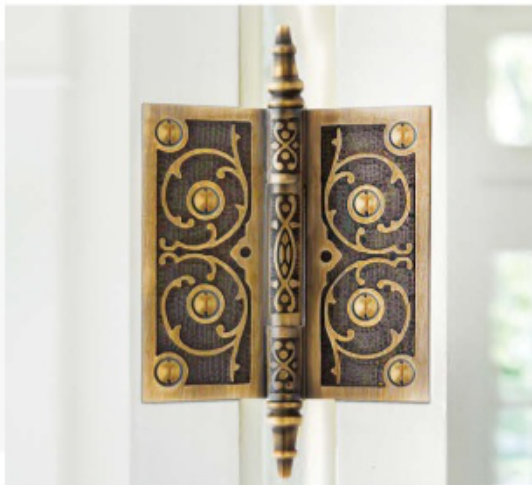


Dramatic Door Updates

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If your hinges are rusted or painted over, consider upgrading to vintage designs in solid brass. Opt for classic ball tips or decorative steeple tips, in a finish to match your decor.



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Replacing worn doorknobs is an easy update with maximum impact. Whether you favor ornate period looks or bright, sparkling crystal, your doors will shine!



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RESTORE

Decorative Greek keys under the stair treads were stripped with low heat, to remove failing latex over oil-based paint. Even paint-grade woodwork may need to be stripped.

STRIPPING WOOD TODAY

DIYers reveal **BEST PRACTICES** for removing paint or varnish from flat and contoured surfaces. **page 38**

38

STRIPPING WOODWORK: ADVICE FROM TWO PROJECTS
It's nobody's favorite job, but new formulations have made it less hazardous yet effective.

+

44 TOOLS + MATERIALS
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54 OLD HOUSE DIYer





Stripping paint from woodwork is on the list of most-hated restoration jobs. It's among the most hazardous, too. Fortunately, you no longer have to strip door casings or painted balusters with such hazardous chemicals as methylene chloride, nor should you blast them with high heat. Recent years have brought gentler methods that are just as effective, safer for DIYers, and easier on the wood itself.

BY STACY GRINSFELDER & GINA BELLOUS

STRIPPING WOODWORK

Advice from Two Projects



It's a rare house that doesn't have a drop of paint

on original quarter-sawn oak or Douglas fir woodwork. Conversely, many homes built before 1950 were trimmed with wood that was specifically paint-grade—meaning it is supposed to be painted. The trouble comes in when incompatible paints or finishes (literally) gum up the works. Surface problems are legion (calcimine paint, anyone?) Here, we'll explore how two different homeowners approached the stripping process. In the first house, a late-19th-century transitional Colonial Revival, Stacy Grinsfelder struggles with an incompatible coating over paint-grade wood. In the second project, Gina Bellous laboriously strips casings, doors, and baseboards in an 1895 Queen Anne. Her goal is to stain and varnish the hand-stripped wood. (That's a story we plan to publish in a future issue). —MARY ELLEN POLSON

Used properly, non-solvent chemical strippers lighten the work of hand-stripping paint-encrusted woodwork.

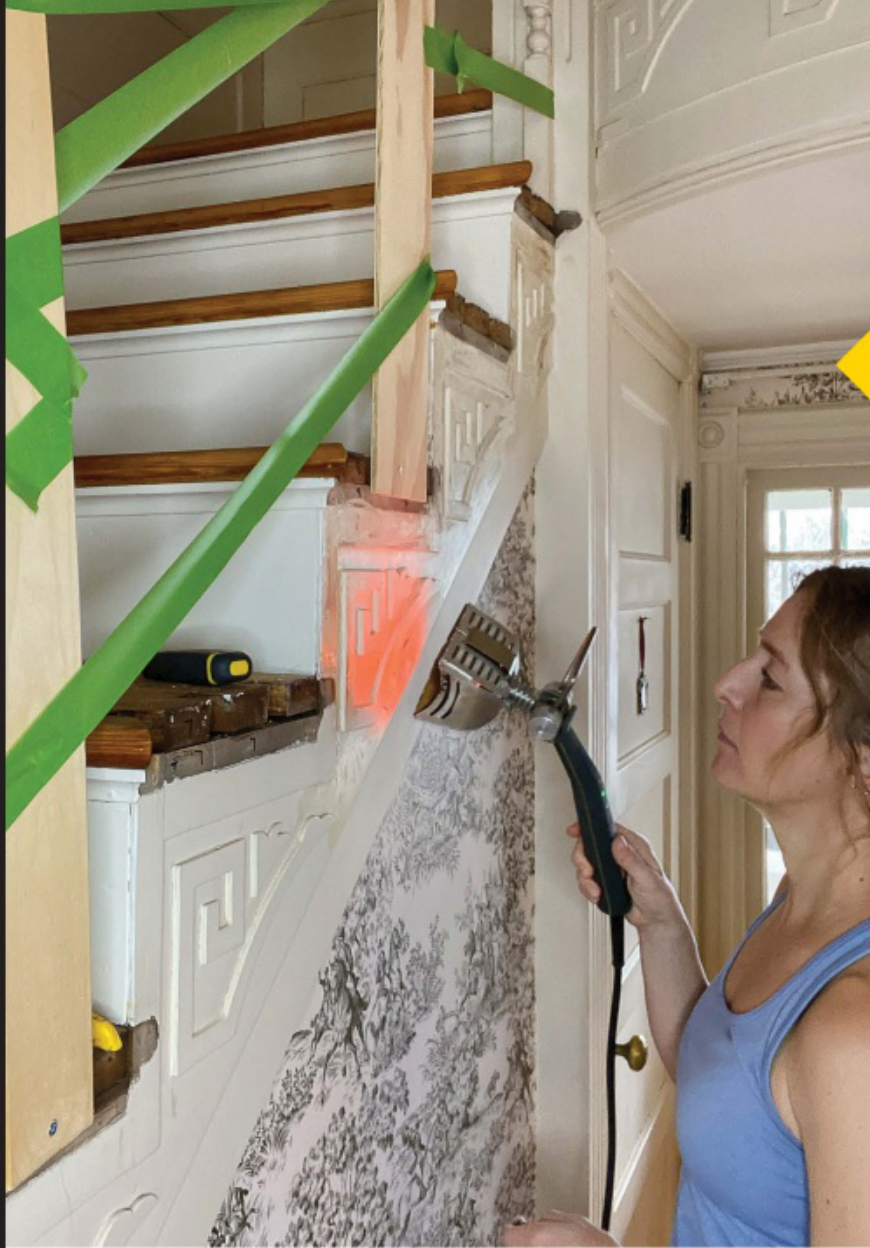
→ ***“When I passed my Cobra infrared paint remover across these gorgeous accents today, I heard a cracking sound and areas of latex paint popped right off. I think it’s the staircase’s way of giving me a gift, since the balusters are going to be such a pain in the neck to repair and reinstall.”***

—STACY GRINSFELDER

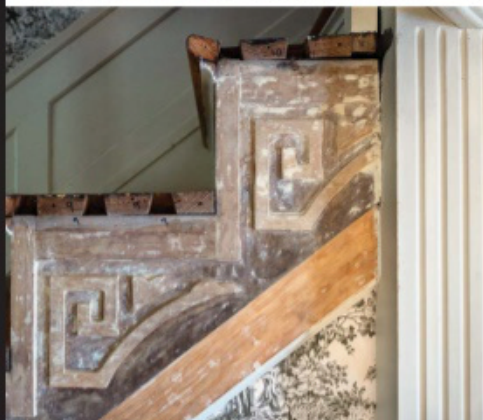
stripping PAINT-GRADE WOOD

The grand entry staircase is one of the jewels of my 1895 transitional Colonial Revival home. After my husband and I refinished the stair treads and landings, as part of a floor-refinishing project, the shabby condition of the balusters (which have three distinct turned patterns) stood out. Fashioned from paint-grade Douglas fir, the balusters, wainscot, and decorative tread trim had been given a quick coat of latex over old oil-based, shortly before we moved in. The paint began to crack and flake almost immediately.

All the stair elements were meant to be painted, but there was no way to remove the failing latex without disturbing the oil-based paint underneath. I considered sending the balusters out for dip-stripping, going so far as to make an appointment with a stripper in a nearby state. For the uninitiated, this is a method of stripping old paint and varnish off wood or metal by dipping elements in a vat of chemical stripper that may contain methylene chloride or other caustic chemicals. The dipped pieces emerge ready (after neutralizing and sometimes sanding) for refinishing. It is an aggressive method of stripping wood, but useful for something like my turned balusters, which have so many [text cont. on page 42]



The gentle heat from a Cobra infrared heater loosens paint without releasing toxic fumes, including lead.



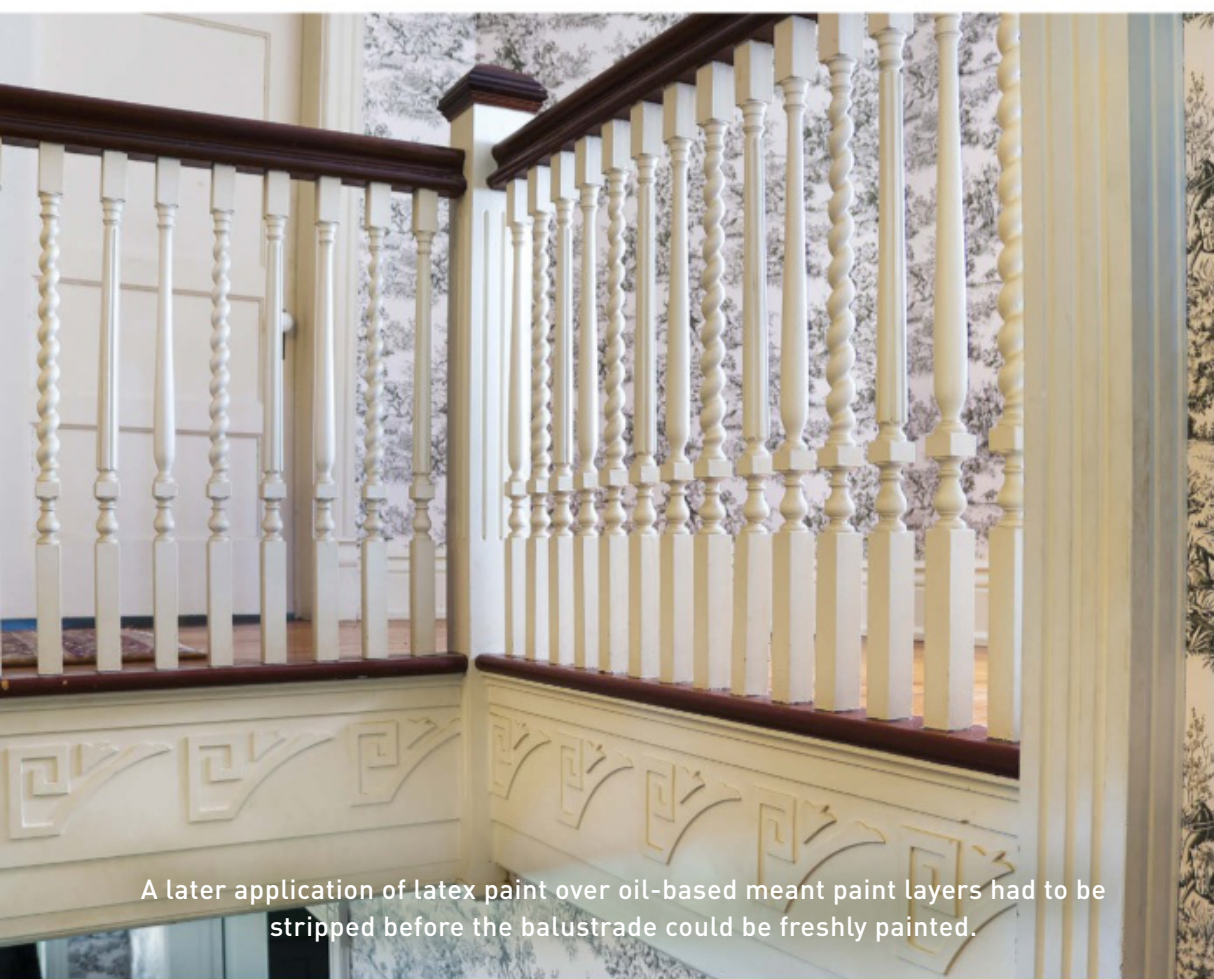
STRIPPING details

Since the Greek-key detail beneath the treads is flat and the oil-based layers now mostly gone, I stripped the paint using a Cobra infrared paint remover and a scraper, keeping the tool moving on the uniform surface. (This didn’t work well on the balusters because they are dry and spongy—I’ve found infrared heat relies on oil and moisture in the paint to work effectively. The time it took the Cobra to work on the balusters increased the risk of scorching.) The rest of the process is similar to methods used for the turned balusters, including scrubbing down with mineral spirits, allowing the wood to dry, then picking out the residue. with various tools and brushes.

LEFT (top to bottom) Latex paint pops and chips away from older oil-based coats on the decorative key detail on the spandrels. • Partially removed paint after the first pass. The low heat causes the paint to bubble and soften. • The stair after treatment with infrared heat and a cleaning with mineral spirits.

STACY GRINSFELDER

Stripping *Turned Elements* My stripping method is laborious but not difficult. **All it takes is time and patience.** For the turned balusters, **I first soften the paint using a stripper** such as Peel Away or Smart Strip and cover it with wax paper, for about 24 hours. **Then I remove most of the Peel Away using an offset-handle, nylon-bristle brush** (e.g. Allway Tools) meant for stripping or grouting. **I scrub the wood** with mineral spirits and a clean dishwashing brush and allow it to dry completely. The remaining **residue becomes powdery when dry**, so it's easy to scrape it out of the curves, cracks, and crevices. **I wear a P100 respirator and use a HEPA shop vac.** I rely on a variety of tools, from crevice and dental tools to a flat-head screwdriver. **Finally, I sand down surfaces** using 120- or 220-grit sandpaper, depending on whether the wood feels spongy or solid. —S.G.



A later application of latex paint over oil-based meant paint layers had to be stripped before the balustrade could be freshly painted.

- **one** Damage ranged from the obvious, to screw and nail heads hidden under layers of paint. Repairs became part of our ongoing restoration.
- **two** Balusters ready for stripping.
- **three** Balusters in various states of stripping and repair.
- **four** Completely stripped and sanded, these balusters are ready for primer and eventual reinstallation.



1



2



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4

THE PRO TIP

We've all become familiar with masks, but the nomenclature is confusing when you're dealing with home toxins. An N100 mask filters out lead, asbestos, and smoke. A P100 mask filters out those and oil-based aerosols. For old lead paint, choose the P100. —MEP

→ STRIPtech

Since the early years of OHJ, stripping technology has evolved—from caustic, high-VOC chemical strippers and heat guns to more earth-friendly methods today. At least one chemical giant makes stripping alternatives that vary in makeup from those containing some caustics to other products that contain almost none. Here are some of the options for the DIY stripping arsenal, with tips on how to assess them. ■ **Chemical Strippers** Avoid any paint stripper that contains highly toxic solvents including methylene chloride or N-Methyl-2-pyrrolidone (NMP). Overexposure can cause damage to the eyes, internal organs, and nervous system, and may cause cancer or even death. Read the specifications of any stripper under consideration to see what toxins it contains. In any case, wear a protective respirator, eyewear, and gloves if you suspect the stripper contains hazardous chemicals. Ventilate the area.

■ **Non-solvent Strippers** Much more friendly to the environment, your skin, and your nose, solvent-free strippers can effectively remove multiple layers of caked-on paint and varnish, but they're not as fast as more caustic products. Strippers including **Dumond Chemical's Smart Strip** (Advanced and Pro formulations) and **WB Barr's CitriStrip** are among the lowest in toxicity, but both can cause skin irritation and are dangerous to the eyes. ■ **Infrared Heat Tools** These tools are the environmentally friendly heirs to the old heat gun. Good ones are expensive, but they safely and effectively soften and liquefy old paint formulations (including lead paint) at temperatures between 400 and 600 degrees F. This is lower than the temperature (900 to 1000 degrees F) at which the lead in paint turns into invisible toxic fumes. When using an infrared heater, wear heat-protective gloves, eye protection, and a respirator. Dispose of any suspected lead paint properly and legally. —MEP

nooks and crannies.

For good reason, my state of New York and several others ban the practice as an environmental hazard. Already uneasy about the dipping process and worried about the fragile condition of the soft-wood balusters, I changed my mind. My friend John Rodgers of Phoenix Preservation had pointed out that the chemicals could potentially alter the wood surface so that paint would not adhere properly.

One baluster at a time, I experimented with chemical strippers. While liquid stripper removed most of the paint, the application of gentle heat from a Cobra infrared paint removal tool worked just as well. Since the latex never bonded to the oil-based layers, it came off without much muscle. I started using the Cobra on the Greek-key accents, and the latex layer crackled and practically leapt off the wood. —STACY GRINSFELDER

Stacy's TOOL KIT

- **Allway Nylon Bristle Brush** allwaytools.com
- **Atlin Cabinet Card Scrapers** atlintools.com
- **Eco-Strip Boomerang Scraper** eco-strip.com
- **3M P100 Respirator** 3M.com
- **Lumberton Detail Sanding Sticks** lumbertonstore.com

Stacy Grinsfelder writes at BlakeHillHouse.com and hosts the podcast "True Tales from Old Houses": truetalesfromoldhouses.com



TOP Gina Bellous applies stripper with a paint brush, working it into the entire surface. **ABOVE** She then covers it carefully with household wax paper, taking care to remove bubbles. **BELOW** After the stripper does its work, it peels away from the trim easily with a putty knife, leaving only small amounts of residue.

OPPOSITE (middle) To pick out any remaining paint in crevices, Bellous uses an array of tools, including dental picks, a Husky contour scraper tool with six different heads, a soft painter's brush, and hand-held sandpaper. • (btm.) Bellous has stripped all of the trim on the top floor of her Queen Anne home.



stripping VARNISHED WOOD

The wood trim in my 1895 Queen Anne was never meant to be painted, but it came to me with six to eight gloppy coats of paint. Since all the original plaster was failing and had to come down, I carefully salvaged and stored the pine and Douglas fir doors, baseboards, and door and window casings before the drywall went in. I strip woodwork in my free time, eventually getting it to where I can apply fresh stain and shellac. The project is taking years, but that hasn't stopped me.

Early on I discovered that most of the trim had been sanded before painting. That decades-old prep work made the paint really stick to the wood. In one room, I was overjoyed to discover woodwork that hadn't been sanded before it was painted. After I applied stripper, multiple coats of paint just slid off the old varnish, leaving very little paint behind. Over time, I've streamlined the stripping process so that it's efficient, if still time consuming.

I begin by applying a thick layer of stripper (usually Smart Strip, a low-toxicity stripper that's odor-free and stays in place well) over a piece of trim, such as a door casing or baseboard. I cover the stripper with ordinary wax paper or plastic to keep the stripper from drying out.

After about 24 hours, I remove the old paint with a putty knife that's a little dull so that there's less chance of gouges. The paint comes off easily all the way to the varnish layer. To remove paint from crevices, I carefully angle the putty knife

sideways to remove as much material possible without damaging the wood.

If any residue remains, I use a bristle brush dipped in a little water to clean it away. The water slightly raises the grain, but the wood will be sanded before it receives stain and varnish. A quick wipe with a damp rag removes any remaining stripper. The wood feels clean and squeaky to the touch once it's thoroughly clean.

I pick out any remaining paint from cracks and crevices, with a series of tools, before the wood dries, using mineral spirits to help loosen it if it's stubborn. This is very labor intensive! Dark bits of stain and shellac left untouched by the stripper are often embedded under the paint, so I pick them out bit by bit using the contour scraper with a sharp point. It's a slow and delicate process. I make sure to get all the paint out of the crevices before it dries. Then I sand flat areas with an orbital sander. I sand contoured areas by hand. —GINA BELLOUS

Gina Bellous is restoring an 1895 Queen Anne and blogs about her work at "Victorian By the Bay": [instagram.com/victorianbythebay](https://www.instagram.com/victorianbythebay)

Bellous's stripping setup for millwork includes sawhorses and a floor covering so that gloppy stripped-paint residue won't harm the flooring.



“About ready to give up all this endless paint stripping, I wondered if the house appreciated all the work I was doing. At that moment, I turned away to rinse my scrubber—and when I turned back, I was shocked to see a perfectly drawn heart on the freshly stripped wood. Do I have a kindred spirit in my house?” —GINA BELLOUS



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4. DRY SCRAPER

The Proscraper's ergonomic body attaches easily to most standard shop vacs. Use a HEPA vacuum and it converts to an EPA-approved dry scraper for paint. It's equipped with a tungsten-carbide blade secured with Torx T10 screws. \$41.97. SRS Hardware, (401) 954-9431, srshardware.com

5. TEST SMART

The paint stripper that works best may vary depending on wood species, paint buildup, or relief. The Paint Removal Test Kit comes with samples of Peel Away 1, Smart Strip, Smart Strip Pro, and tools needed for a successful patch test. \$34.78. Dumond Global, (609) 655-7700, dumondchemicals.com



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Rescue of a Tudor Door

The arch-top entry door, a signature piece of the century-old Tudor Revival house, was in bad shape. A local carpenter made expert repairs.

By Terry Marcellin-Little



When we first visited the house, four years ago, we noticed signs of damage to the front door. Surrounded by stone quoins, the door has a fixed, leaded-glass window that depicts a hand-painted crest of the family who built it, in the mid-1920s. The door is faced in oak on the exterior with massive decorative strap hinges and coordinating entry hardware. Inside, the door is paneled in walnut.

The bottom rail was suspect. Even from a distance, you could see that the door had previously been repaired, and not well. The extent of the damage was not immediately obvious, though. We moved in and put the repair on our to-do list.

Other projects took precedence

(including a flood in the basement that necessitated an extensive drainage overhaul), so we didn't get to the door right away. This is our main entrance, used daily, so it wasn't long before we noticed that the varnish was delaminating and peeling along the lower third of the door, a sign of water intrusion.

The half-round copper gutter above the door was not well adjusted and not snugged to the slate. Rainwater had been running between the roof and the gutter, creating a thin wall of water that hit the limestone door sill below. The water bounced up onto the door, then percolated into the wood where the varnish was peeling away. The old, dry end-grain

ABOVE Once endangered and now repaired, the graceful arch-top door is ready for the next hundred years. **INSET** Before repairs, the author turned the improvised covering over the door into a Halloween decoration.

of the vertical panels above the bottom rail were soaking up water, too, creating significant, almost hidden wood rot.

We began by fixing the gutter, to eliminate water leakage. Then we removed the strap hinge from the lower part of the door and sent the bottom rail to a local wood shop recommended to us by a contractor familiar with the house. The bottom rail was too far gone to save, and our carpenter, Ricardo Martinez, also proposed replacing the [cont. on page 48]

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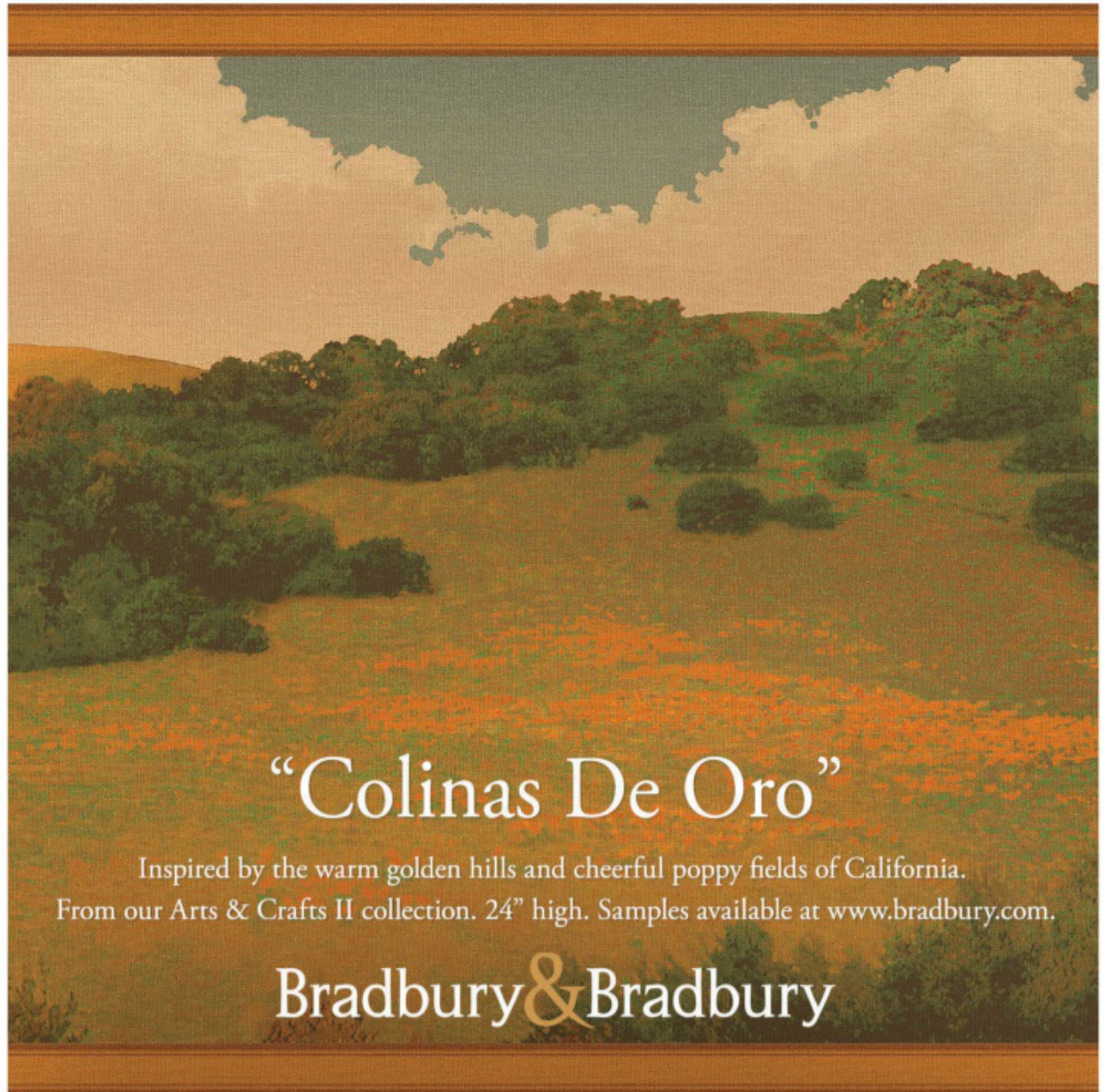
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With its arched top and glazing, this hardwood door would have been expensive to replace. A seasoned carpenter will understand the joinery to make repairs.

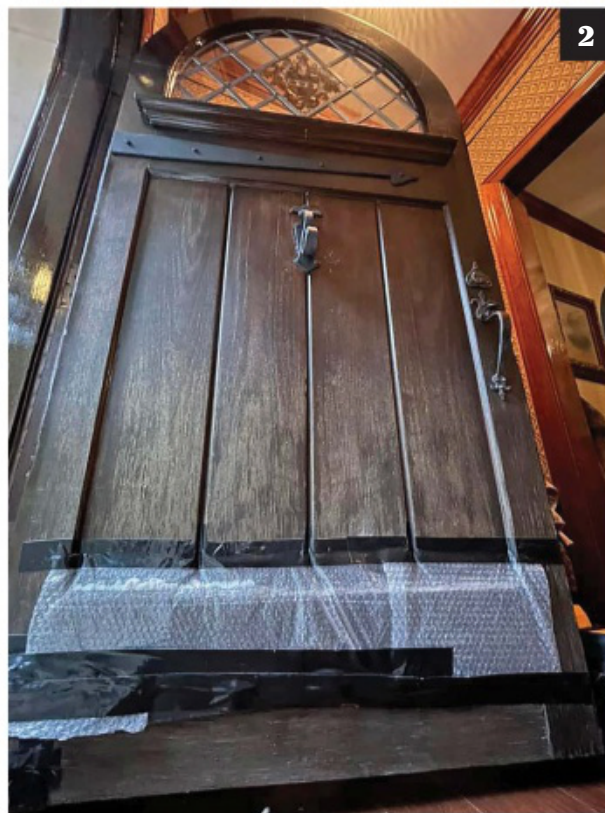
four vertical inset panels, which were similarly damaged.

Martinez and his team carefully matched the wood on both sides of the door using the same species and similar grain: oak on the exterior, walnut veneer on the interior. To add strength and structural stability, the oak and walnut facings were sandwiched together over a dimensionally stable core, similar to the ones used in modern, high-end door construction.

After the repairs were made, Ricardo and his helpers carefully test-hung the door to make sure it fit properly. Then they finish-sanded and stained the wood to match the existing stain on the older parts of the door.

Now, it's almost impossible to tell that the door was ever endangered. A custom-built, protective storm door is on the way, too—ensuring that the restored door will be protected for years to come.

FOR RESOURCES, SEE PAGE 87.



1. In 2021, the finish on the bottom of the door showed signs of swelling and delamination.
2. By fall, the damage was so pronounced the owner had protected it with plastic wrap.
3. Once the bottom rail was removed, the extent of interior rot was obvious.
4. Repairs to the door included replacing the bottom rail and all four vertical panels with wood carefully matched to the original.
5. Ricardo Martinez and Eric Gutierrez test-fit the door before final sanding and stain matching.

stain surpasses paint Traditional wood panel doors are designed to shrink and swell with changes in temperature and humidity. This makes for a longer-lived element, but the construction technique can lead to open-grain issues **when bare wood at the seams and joints is exposed to the weather**, weakening the integrity of the finish and ultimately the wood itself. ● The most forgiving and easily refreshed coating is stain. Apply stain on all sides of the door including the top and bottom. Take special care where joints meet: **saturate the seam or joint heavily with the stain before applying finish coats**. If the door has been painted, choose a flexible alkyd exterior coating. Avoid marine varnishes or any other finish that is inflexible once cured. —*Mary Ellen Polson*



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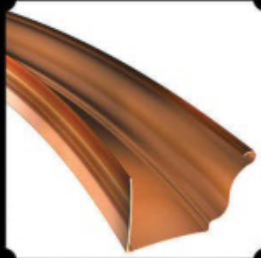
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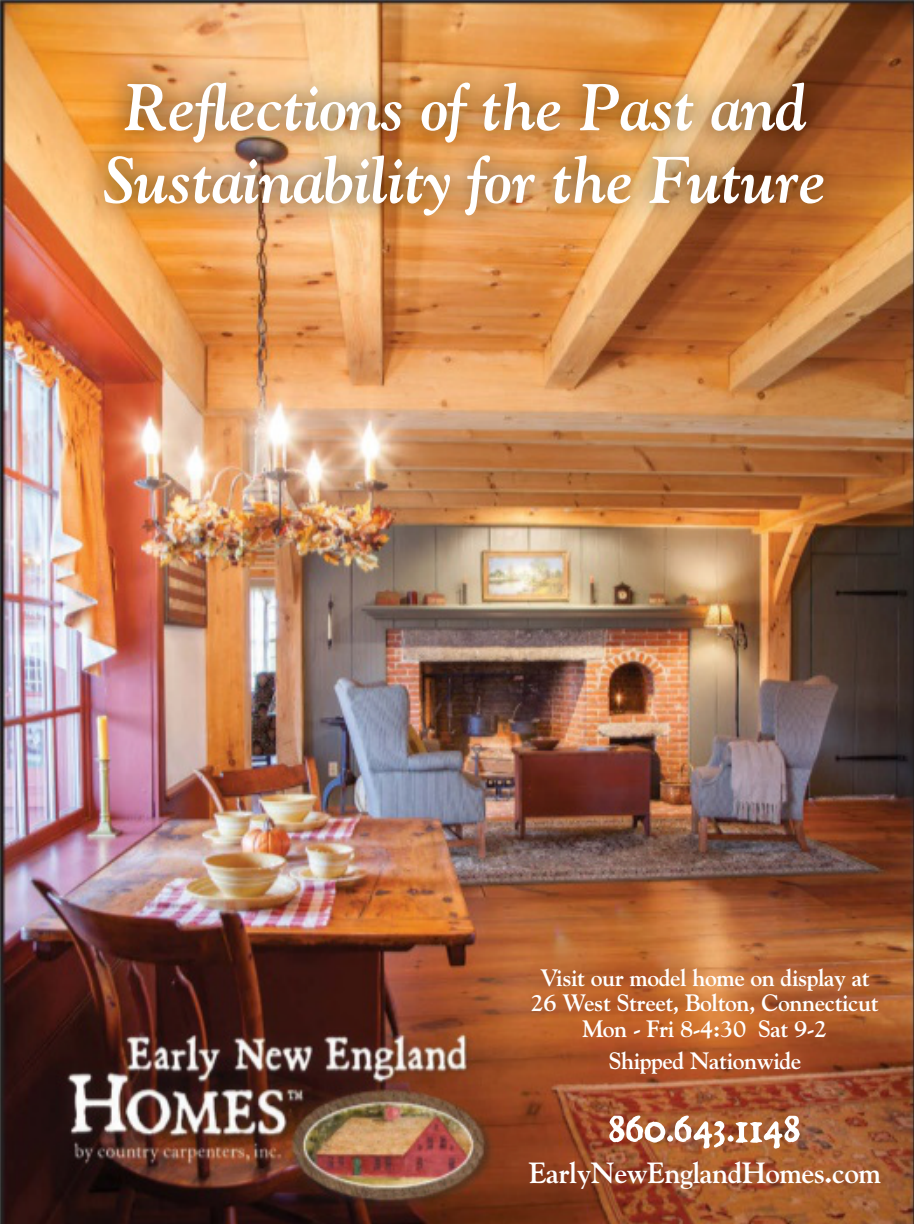
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SALVAGE IT



A fragment of terra cotta designed by George Elmslie for the 1936 Thomas A. Edison School in Hammond, Indiana, features his signature Flying V ornament. It is displayed with brass chargers of the Arts & Crafts period. **INSET** Heavy, ornamental terra cotta fragments await slicing down.

The Cost

Already-finished pieces run **\$250 to \$1,250**, usually dependent on the size.

the process

1. CUTTING

Each piece of terra cotta is carefully cut down with a circular saw, using a diamond blade. The cut leaves the ornamental façade of the piece 2" to 3" deep. Cold water from a spray bottle is applied throughout the process to reduce the heat created by the blade; that also prevents chipping and clears away dust.

Start by clamping the terra cotta fragment alongside a straightedge so that straight cuts can be made, freehand, with the saw. Measure, then slowly cut through the terra cotta in ½" passes, until the blade is set as deep as possible. (If necessary, flip the piece over to cut from the other side). Repeat passes, until the terra cotta has been sliced cleanly through.



Terra-Cotta Bits

Demolition leftovers become sculptural art for use indoors, not only in the garden. **By Brian D. Coleman**



You've seen the salvaged terra cotta pieces that come from demolished buildings. But how to repurpose them so you can enjoy their beauty and craftsmanship? Most are too large and heavy to hang, so they end up as slowly spalling garden ornaments. So Architectural Artifacts of St. Louis and Architectural Antiques in Minneapolis have come up with a clever solution: slice down the awkward pieces into usable sizes.

This terra cotta was salvaged from a 1936 school building designed by George Grant Elmslie, in Hammond, Indiana.

GEORGE GRANT

ELMSLIE (1869–1952),

a Scottish-born American architect, was a luminary of the Prairie School. He worked with architects Frank Lloyd Wright and Louis Sullivan, for whom he was chief draftsman, and later with William Gray Purcell. Elmslie's ornamental designs primarily are seen on commercial buildings in the Midwest.



2. HANGING

French cleats are a simple and effective system for hanging such things as wall cabinets, heavy mirrors—or terra cotta. On a table saw, a plywood board $\frac{3}{4}$ " thick and 4" to 6" wide is cut in half on a 45-degree angle. Use safety precautions: have someone on each end of the board, and use a push stick with a handle to keep hands away from the blade, as cutting on a 45-degree angle creates torque that may move the board. Make sure the cut is clean and

straight, with flat, parallel surfaces that will slide into each other. (Or cut two separate boards.) One board is screwed into the wall through studs. The mating side of the cleat is screwed into the terra cotta, with Tapcon anchors; it's ready to hang.



OPPOSITE BOTTOM A circular saw is used to slice the terra cotta into smaller, lighter-weight pieces. **ABOVE** Terra cotta (upside-down here) is attached to the wall with the use of a French cleat.

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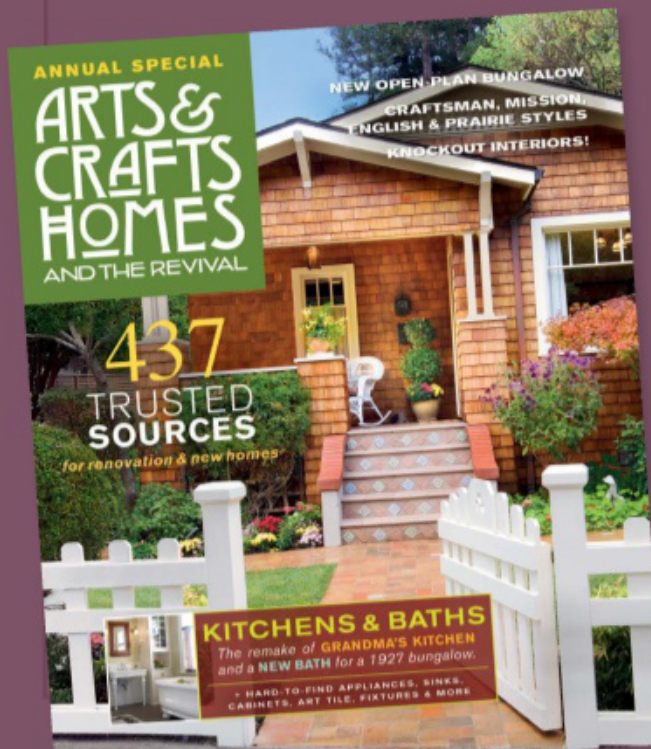


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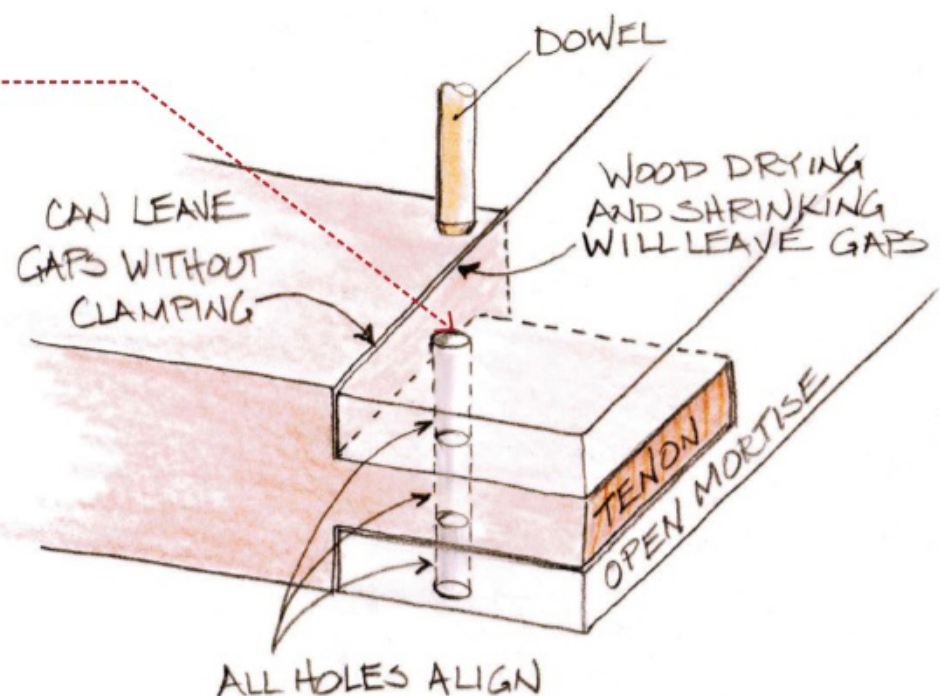
When Drawboring Joints

Typically, traditional joinery relied on wooden fasteners in the form of dowels or trunnels (tree nails) instead of glues and screws. From window sashes to timber framing, joints relied on the squared section of one element fitting into the appropriately sized squared opening of its mate: the common mortise-and-tenon joint. An open-mortise version, used in constructing door and window jambs as well as in framing, is called a bridle joint. The goal is a tight fit that functions well even in the face of the drying and subsequent shrinking of its wooden elements. Drawboring is a technique that strengthens a mortise-and-tenon joint with a mechanical interlock. **By Ray Tschoepe**

WRONG WAY

SIMPLE DOWELING

Making tight joints in new construction can be challenging. Sometimes clamping is not possible or practical when assembling rafters or large door and window jambs. The quickest method of fastening requires simply boring through all of the layers (the mortise and then tenon) and inserting a wood dowel. This method usually leaves some play in the joint, which will increase significantly as the wood shrinks.

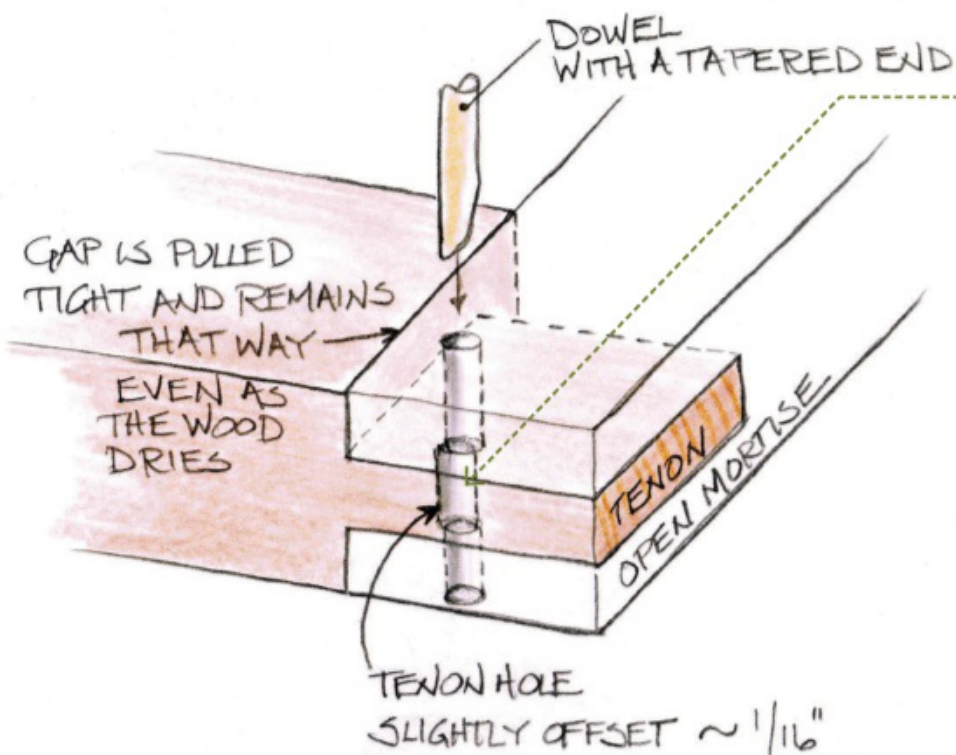


RIGHT WAY

A PEGGED TENON

Here, a mortise-and-tenon joint is secured with a dowel through slightly misaligned holes. In essence, you bore a hole through both walls of the mortise, then bore a separate hole through the tenon, closer to the shoulder of the tenon. When you assemble the joint and drive a stout peg through the offset holes, the peg draws the joint tight. The process:

Carefully fit the pieces and assemble the joint. Using a brad point or Forstner bit, drill through one side of the mortise until the bit just touches the tenon. Disassemble the joint and continue drilling through the other side of the mortise. Now bore the tenon with a center point located a bit closer to the shoulder ($\frac{1}{16}$ " for sash). For larger timbers, increase the offset some. Reassemble the joint and drive in a partially tapered dowel.



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Insulate & Ventilate

Retrofitting insulation is an efficient, cost-effective method for improving comfort and reducing energy costs in an old house. **By Patricia Poore**

THE ENVELOPE

Attention to the building envelope (roof, walls, windows) is as important as attention to upgrading the HVAC system. Roof or attic insulation is easy and a cost-efficient upgrade.

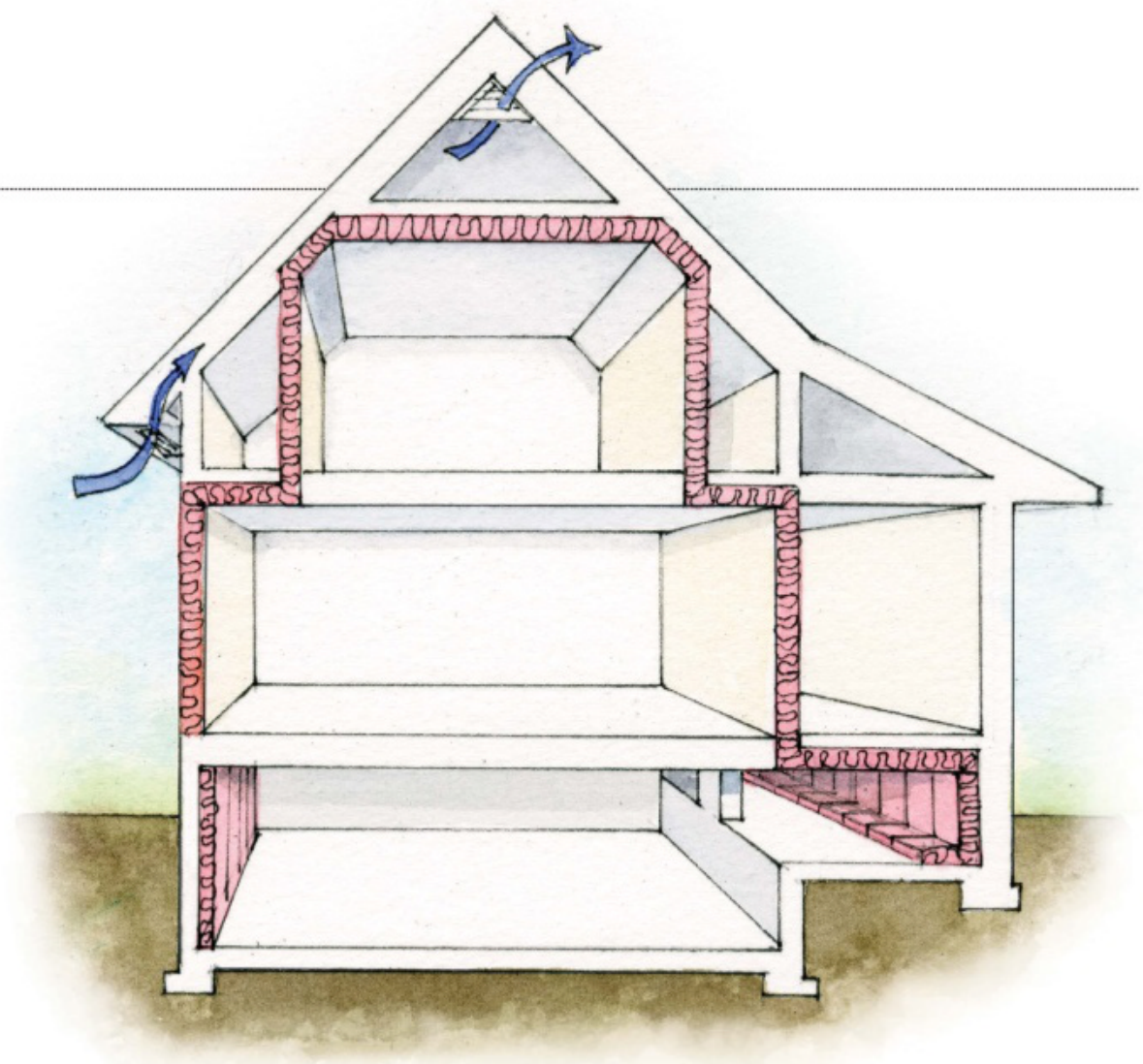
Next, blocking infiltration with caulk and weather stripping, while tedious, is often the single most cost-effective solution in leaky old houses. The work is often do-it-yourself. The best weather stripping (doors and windows) is the recessed, carpenter-installed variety. Less expensive types may be obtrusive or need yearly renewal.

Windows should be addressed. Old, unmaintained sash is probably loose, allowing infiltration and escape of conditioned air. Once infiltration is addressed, tackle convection (which causes drafts as cooled air sinks after it hits single glazing) by adding interior secondary glazing, exterior storm windows, or night insulation (e.g., shades with air baffles).

INSULATION

Insulating the attic/roof is always a good idea—it's like giving your house a warm hat. This retrofit carries low risk. Trying to insulate the *walls* of an old house is often not easy and may even create problems. In cold parts of the country, mois-

Old houses were built for the particular climate: high ceilings and breezeways in the South, compact with a central masonry core in the North. Wood shutters and porches mitigate infiltration and solar gain. Siting was probably purposeful, as was the planting of evergreen and deciduous trees for best advantage. An old house can be made much more efficient at conserving energy while remaining safe and livable.

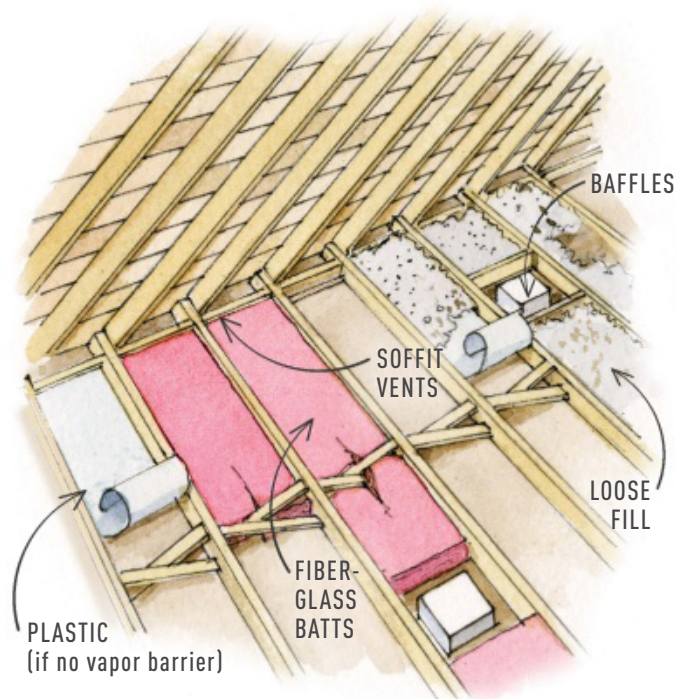


ture condensation, produced by insulation with a missing or poorly installed vapor barrier, can result in issues worse than moderate heat loss—from peeling paint outside to rotted framing and insects.

The best time to insulate walls is when you have access to the inside of the cavity, during work on either the exterior sheathing or the interior finish. If you're replacing wood siding or tearing out failed plaster, take the opportunity to add fiberglass blankets (batts) or foam board

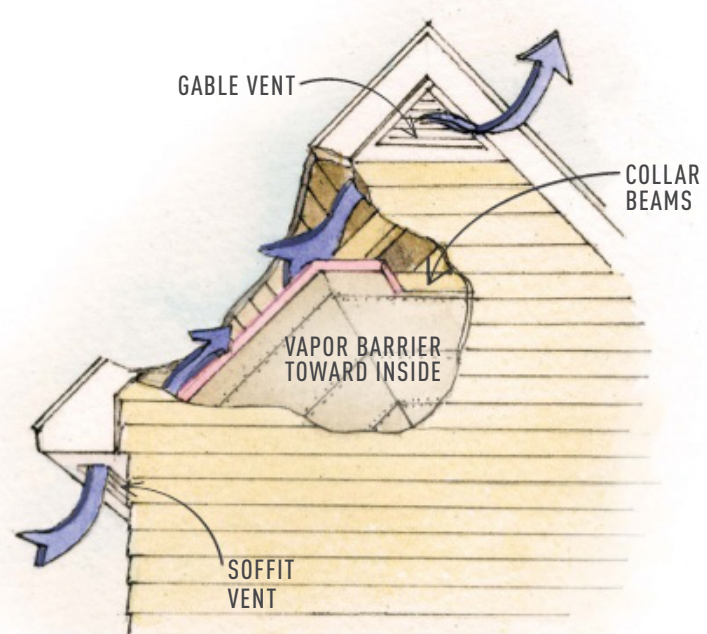
in every cavity, along with a continuous polyethylene vapor barrier toward the warm side. Leave an air space for ventilation on the outside of the insulation.

Remember that do-it-yourself insulating involves close contact with unfriendly materials. You don't want to inhale or come in skin contact with fiberglass or rock wool. Wear a surgical mask, safety goggles, gloves, and loose clothing. After work, take a cool shower right away and wash work clothes separately.



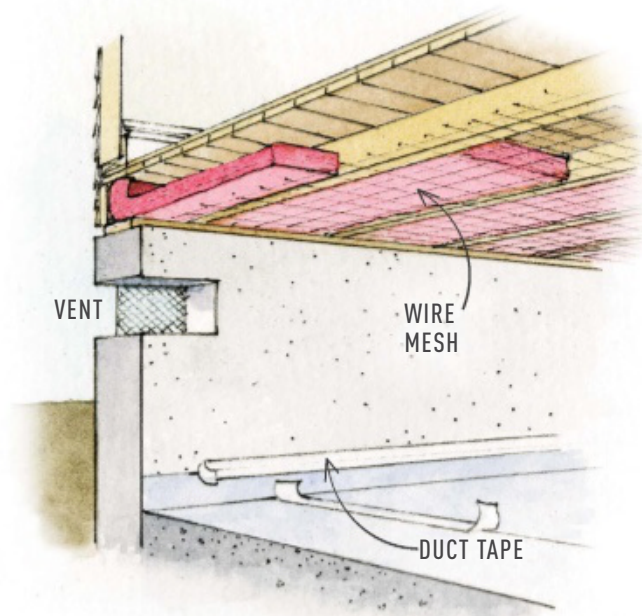
UNFINISHED ATTIC

When possible, attic space should be insulated between joists, when there is no flooring. On the left in the drawing: fiberglass or rock-wool insulation batts. On the right: alternatively, loose fill (mineral wool or cellulose) poured over 6 mil polyethylene sheeting.



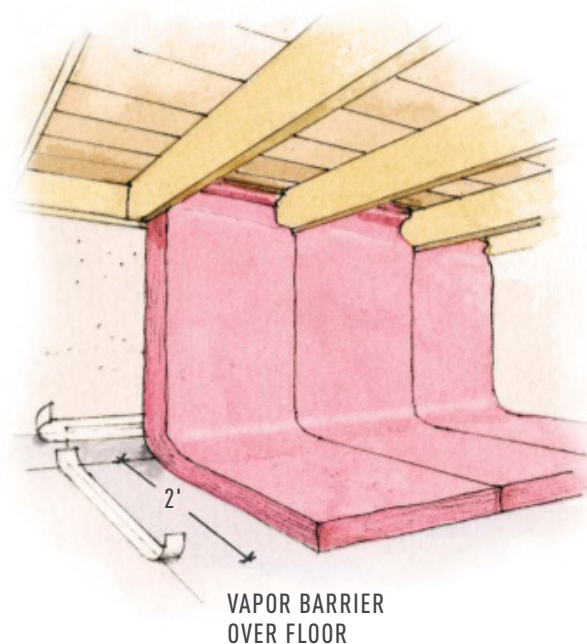
FLOORED ATTIC

Insulate between roof rafters only when there is no access between joists. Ventilation between insulation and exterior sheathing is all-important. The vapor barrier goes toward the inside. Flanges stapled to rafters and collar beams, as pictured, provides a nearly continuous vapor barrier.



UNHEATED CRAWL SPACE

Place plastic on the ground; tape seams with duct tape, or overlap by 6". Vapor barrier faces heated room above. Shown: Suspended batts are not in direct contact with subflooring. Block ends to prevent vapor entering space between insulation and subfloor. Some manuals advise no air space, but in retrofitting some vapor penetration and convection is inevitable either way.



HEATED CRAWL SPACE

This insulation method is not recommended if the crawl space is wet, or in areas of extreme cold, such as Alaska and northern Minnesota: foundation heaving could result. Again, place a continuous vapor barrier over the floor.

wall insulation CAUTIONS

Even after other steps have been taken, in some climates, it will still be cost-effective to insulate side walls with blown-in loose fill. If you decide to do this, follow these guidelines:

- Choose a contractor carefully. Be sure they're licensed and experienced, and seek recommendations. Most utility companies offer free consultations.
- Ventilate the exterior. A side-wall drilling tool neatly ventilates the exterior wall,

usually without penetrating the sheathing. Little plastic vents are virtually invisible. Or drive wedges under clapboards.

- Don't insulate exterior walls of the kitchen, baths, or laundry unless you have mitigated water vapor in these rooms.

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The round window was commissioned; another comes from a Victorian fire screen.

58

MY VICTORIAN FANTASY

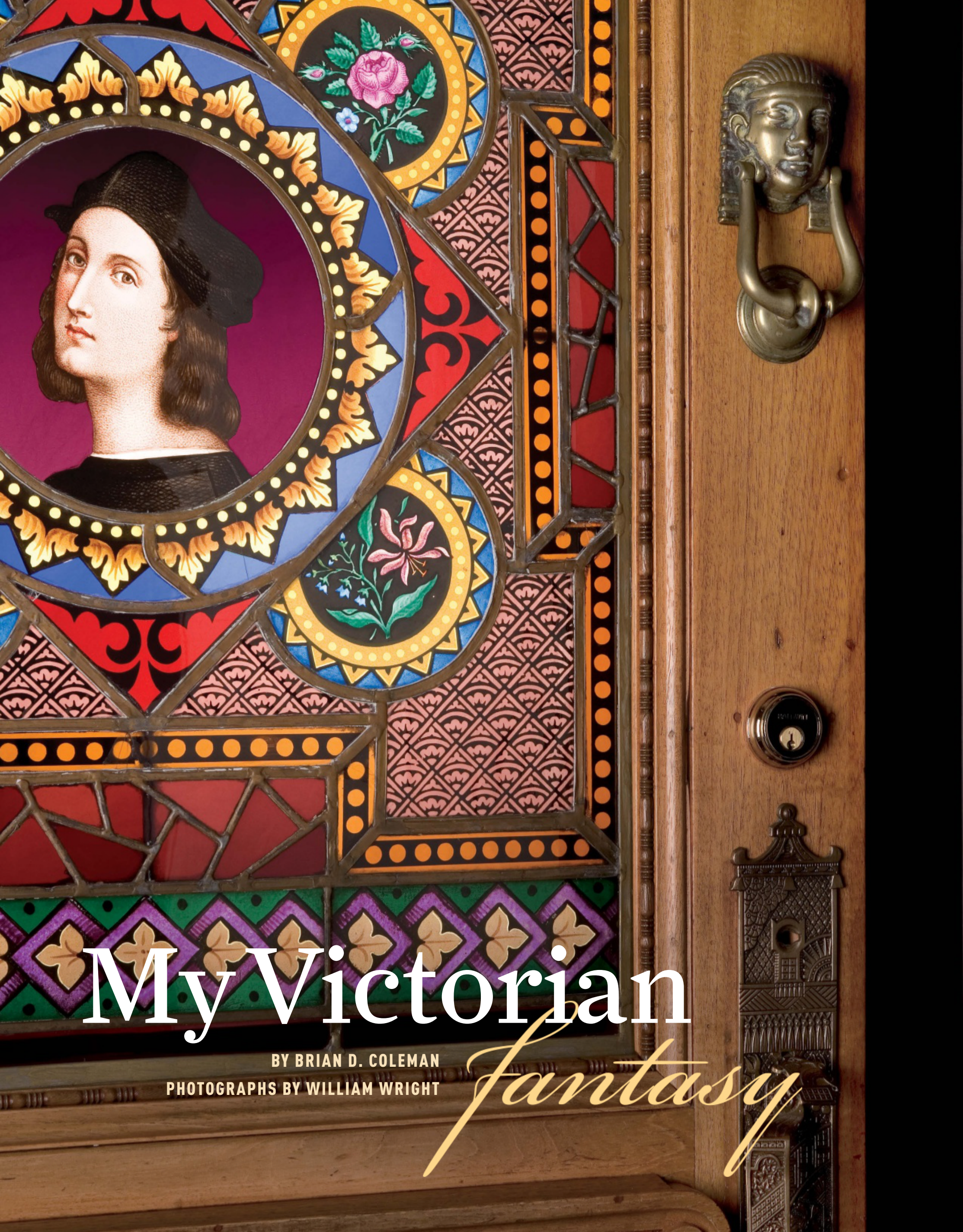
Restoration of a modest house stoked the wild imagination of our West Coast editor. **+ CARDIFF CASTLE**

74

THE MOTT HOUSE, A SEASHORE COTTAGE

The ocean was claiming this historic property when Patrick Clark came along. **+ PROFILE OF AN ARTIST**





My Victorian

BY BRIAN D. COLEMAN
PHOTOGRAPHS BY WILLIAM WRIGHT

Fantasy



The storybook house got arches at windows and imaginative carvings. The added turret has stained-glass windows and a Latin motto roughly meaning “the more the better.”

The author, an OHJ editor, has written 23 books on design—a career that began when he transformed this house into a high-style Queen Anne dreamscape utterly of the period and fancifully landscaped.

growing up in the 1960s, my afternoons and summer vacations were spent working in a small bookstore run by an elderly Russian lady named Anna Blom, who paid me in “Wizard of Oz” books. Those stories of fantasy left a lasting impression. When it was time to buy my forever home, I found a place that gave my imagination free reign: a rather plain house on Seattle’s Queen Anne Hill. • Built in 1906, the house was a simple, gabled Victorian. Inside, details including fir woodwork and oak floors showed a transition toward Arts & Crafts. Time had taken a toll; by 1986, it had been covered decades earlier with white vinyl siding outlined in black trim. Hardwood floors were hidden beneath dirty green carpeting. The only bath, upstairs, had a blue toilet and pink wallpaper installed upside down. The kitchen was harvest gold, avocado, and brown.

OPPOSITE The front door is inset with a ca. 1875 stained-glass panel representing Raphael. Inside and out, all of the hardware and lighting is antique and of the Victorian period.

More Online

Even more photos:
**oldhouseonline.
com/house-tours/
Coleman-Victorian-
fantasy/**



LEFT Brian Coleman on the front steps with Yorkies Nonnie and Minnie. **ABOVE** Wallpapered walls and ceiling with ornate patterns decorate the first landing on the way upstairs. **OPPOSITE** A newel-post light with a silverplated stork, ca. 1870, lights the staircase.

THE HOUSE WAS, HOWEVER, STRUCTURALLY SOUND and had good “bones”: A wide, open staircase greets visitors in the entry hall; the rich, aged fir woodwork had never been painted; original pocket doors still divide the living and dining rooms; a leaded-glass, built-in buffet with window seats runs across the back of the dining room. From day one, the daylight basement was clean and dry and had been partially finished with room for a second bath and even a kitchen.

I started with the basics—replumbing out to the street, updating electrical, and insulating the attic. The yard was planted with colorful annuals and perennials. Then I began to decorate. Out went the green wall-to-wall; the oak floors with their mahagonay borders were sanded and refinished. As first impressions are important, I found a ca. 1890 front door of oak inset with a stained-glass panel of Raphael to properly greet guests. I hung a ca. 1880 brass chandelier with multicolored shades in the center hall and added a custom burgundy-and-gold wallpaper of passion flowers from Christopher Hyland, topped by a hand-painted frieze of twirling vines. In the Victorian spirit, no surface was left plain.



ALL AUTHENTIC

Portières made up from Victorian textiles are hung on both sides of the pocket doors. The pillows and beaded footstools are vintage, as are textiles used for upholstery.



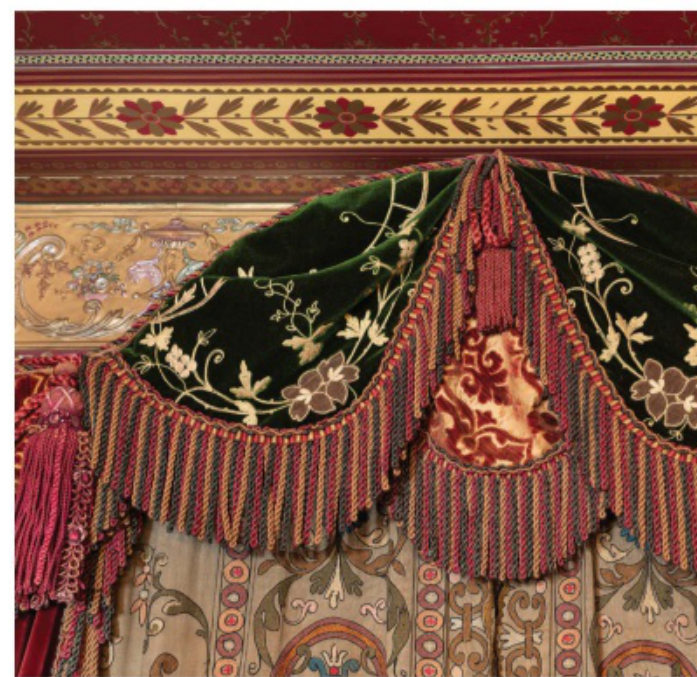
ABOVE Parian figures lend a studious air to a desktop. **RIGHT** In the conservatory, multihued Victorian art glass rests in front of a ca. 1875 hand-painted stained-glass window by G.E. Cooke. **TOP** Elaborate drapery made with Victorian textiles rise to a polychromed Lincrusta (embossed) frieze.

The ceiling was ornamented with a patterned fill outlined by a Persian foliate border from Schumacher, all 40 yards of paper patiently cut out by hand. Inspired by the peacock perched on the staircase in London's 1880s Leighton House, I found a grand peacock in full display to preside over the upper staircase.

Continuing with a late-19th-century aesthetic, the parlor was papered in 'Summer Street Damask', a golden 1885 pattern from J.R. Burrows, above which hangs a Lincrusta frieze polychromed in sparkling silver, green, and gold. Vintage textiles were used throughout for upholstery: burgundy, green, and gold voided velvets for a tête-à-tête; an 1870s multicolored Kashmir shawl for an ebonized gentleman's chair; a beaded, royal-purple Turkish embroidered panel for the seat of a carved stork chair.

At first I papered the parlor ceiling in a simple cracked-ice design, but soon decided that was not sufficiently elaborate. A few years later, I redid the ceiling in a complex design of multiple patterns anchored with corner blocks of sparrows in flight—a favorite Anglo-Japanese motif celebrating nature.

The opulent dinners of the age became a theme in the dining room. Walls were covered with 'Persis' [text cont. on page 67]



OPPOSITE The living room is filled with vintage textiles (also used to upholster the furniture), pillows and beaded footstools. The dining room is seen beyond.



LUSH GARDENS complete the tableau



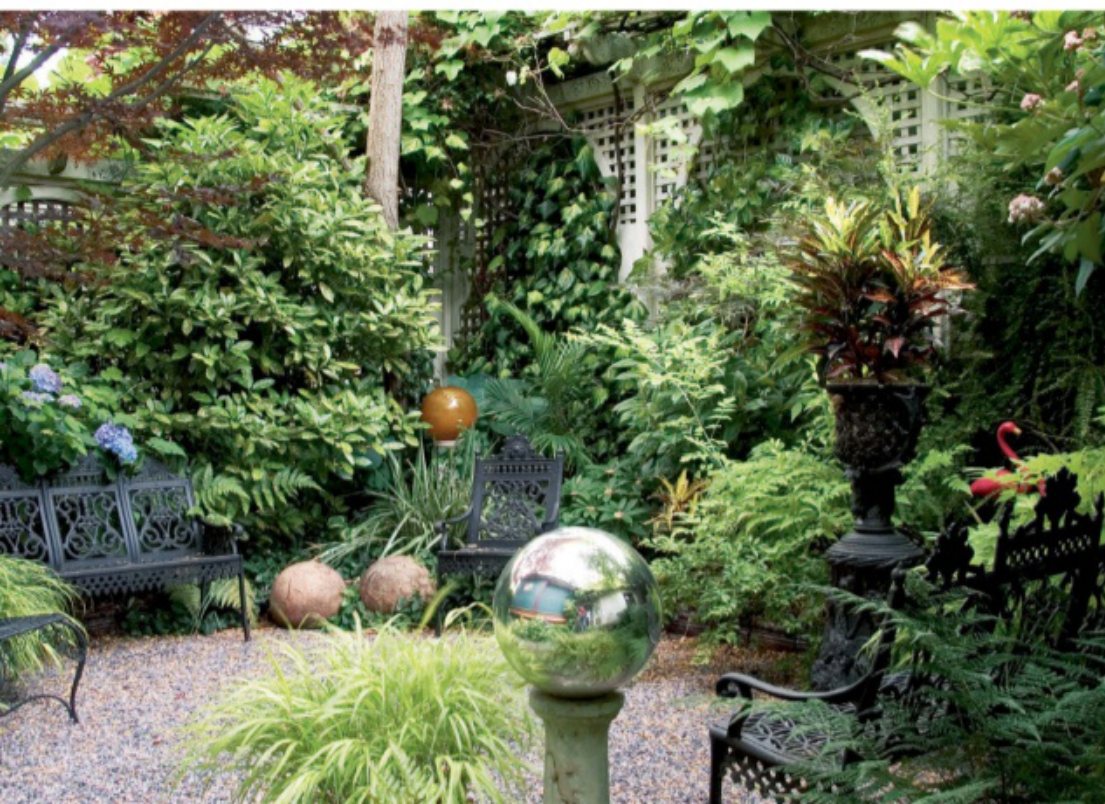
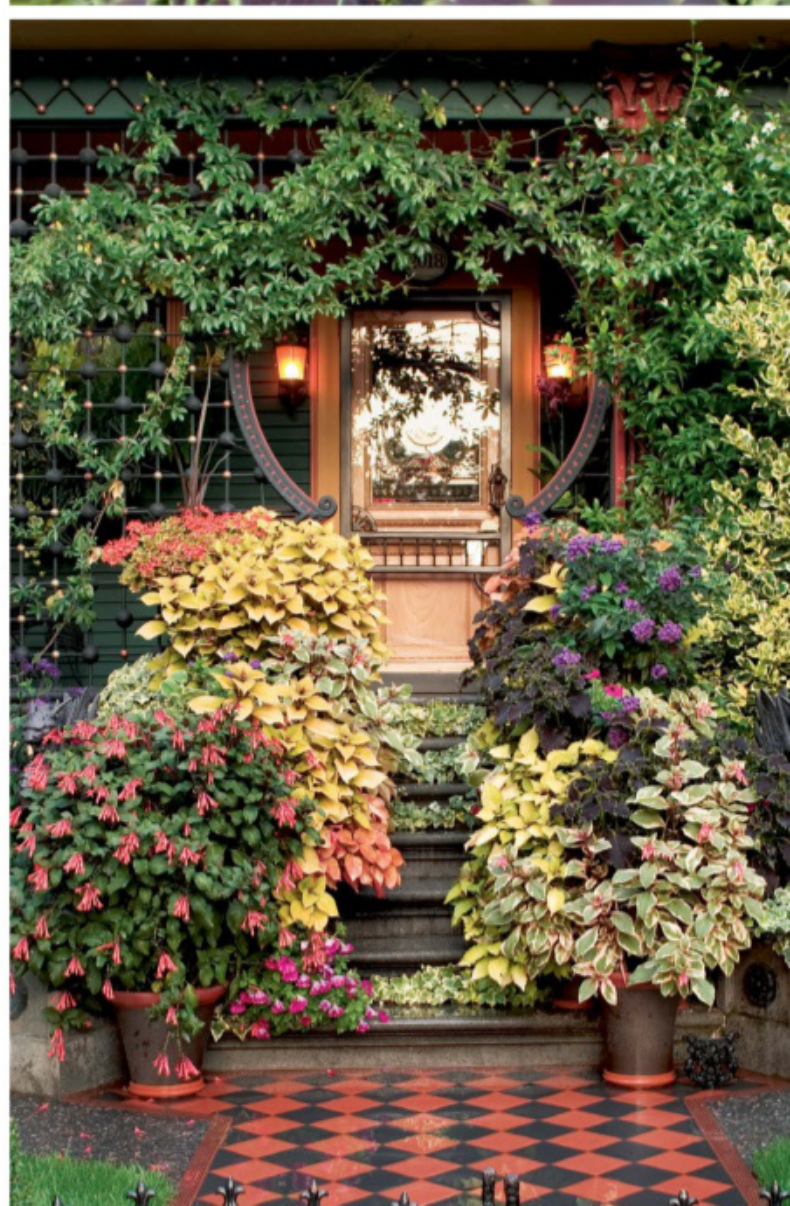
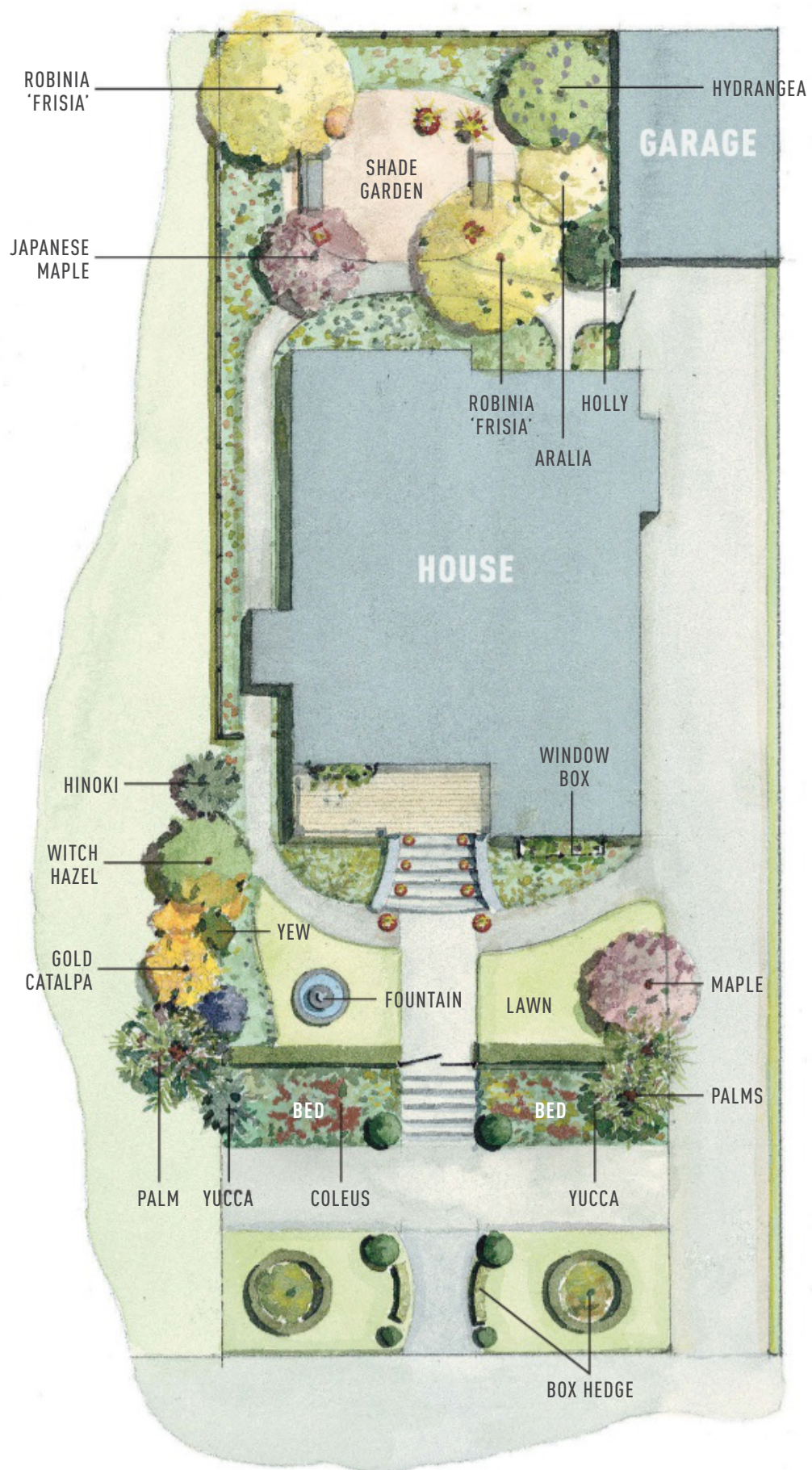
When I bought the house it was covered in white vinyl siding; the yard consisted of dead grass and broken bottles. The sole survivor was a surprisingly virulent holly that covered the front yard in perpetual shade. I could live with vinyl siding much longer than I could stand an unattractive landscape. And so, joined by landscape designers Charles Price and Glenn Withey, we attacked the yard. After the white siding was removed and the fall palette introduced, our first planting scheme gave way to a more sophisticated one that suits the house as it is now.

Variegated English holly trees (Ilex aquifolium) have been pruned into conical accents. Seattle was built on a series of hills, and many of its homes had front-yard slopes for planting, often later replaced with low-

maintenance rock gardens or walls. I chose to keep my front slopes intact as planting beds. We created a scheme of admittedly high-maintenance, seasonal plantings. Fall and spring are nice with winter pansies and a few bulbs, but the yard is in its prime during the summer, when we plant it out in vibrant swaths of color.

The narrow side yard on the north, which never sees direct sun, was planted with hostas 'Halcyon' and 'Regal Splendor', both relatively bug-proof. Different evergreen and herbaceous ferns as well as variegated Persian ivy fill in the planting beds alongside the house. I gave up trying to keep a lawn alive in the backyard shade and replaced it with a more practical ellipse of colored gravel bordered with antique clay edging tiles. —BDC

ABOVE Quite a scene: curb, sidewalk, slope, lawn, stoop, then porch, all decorated with plants to complement the whimsical house. Two conical hollies anchor the front garden, along with balls of boxwood and a dwarf-boxwood hedge. **LEFT** An arched lattice encloses the private yard. **OPPOSITE** (far right, from top) Assorted coleus on the slope. • Dahlia 'Moonfire'. • *Heliotropium arborescens* with burgundy coleus (in a pot). • English geometric tiles set in mortar lead to the front-porch entry.



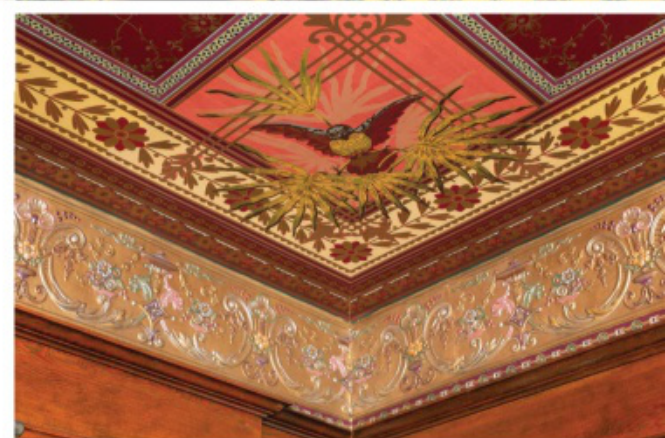
LEFT The backyard is a serene shade garden. Spiky *Iris foetidissima* 'Variegata', *Rubus cockburnianus*, and *Aucuba japonica* provide a pleasing backdrop for terra-cotta balls and iron furniture.

A photograph of an ornate interior room. On the left, a large, detailed peacock stands with its tail feathers fanned. In the center, a Moorish-arched doorway is framed by red and gold curtains. A large, red, spherical lantern with white floral patterns hangs from the ceiling. To the right, a painting of a woman in a green dress is visible. The room is filled with various decorative objects, including a hookah, a large brass vessel, and a patterned rug. The walls are covered in intricate, colorful wallpaper.

A Moorish-arched doorway leads into the turret from the Turkish room. The checkerboard wallpaper in the turret was hand-silkscreened from an 1890s wallpaper-catalog pattern. Far Eastern and oriental objects fill these rooms.



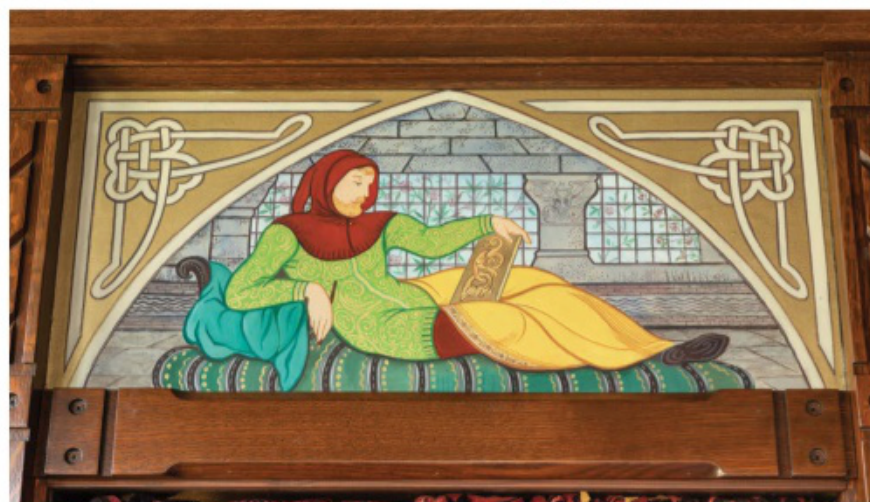
CLOCKWISE (from left) The carved crocodiles and baby inspired by a motif at Cardiff Castle are visible in this earlier photo of the window box. • Looking up to the turret dome. • Ceiling corners feature sparrows in flight, a favorite Anglo-Japanese motif. • In the conservatory, a detail of the hand-painted frieze of medieval fairytale figures.



my pilgrimage PLACES

Writing design books and magazine articles can be a dangerous occupation: We see great homes full of elements that we want to incorporate into our own! My favorites:

- **18 STAFFORD TERRACE, the Linley Sambourne House, London, England.** The Italianate town-house with preserved Aesthetic interiors was the home and studio of the *Punch* cartoonist. rbkc.gov.uk/museums/sambourne-house
- **COHEN BRAY HOUSE, Oakland, Cal.** This utterly original Eastlake Victorian also has some rooms remodeled in Craftsman style after the 1906 earthquake. cohenbrayhouse.org
- **CARDIFF CASTLE, Cardiff, Wales.** A true medieval castle that was transformed into a Gothic Revival fantasy during the Victorian era. cardiffcastle.com
- **KELMSCOTT MANOR, West Oxfordshire, U.K.** The 16th-century limestone manor house in the English Cotswolds was the country home of William Morris, who drew inspiration from its “unspoilt authenticity.” sal.org.uk/kelmscott-manor
- **LEIGHTON HOUSE, London, England.** The studio home of celebrated Victorian painter Frederick Leighton has elaborate orientalist and Aesthetic interiors. rbkc.gov.uk/museums/leighton-house
- **MARK TWAIN HOUSE, Hartford, Conn.** The author Samuel Clemens’ 1874 home has a stunning Aesthetic Movement interior designed by Associated Artists (L.C. Tiffany, Candace Wheeler, et al). marktwainhouse.org



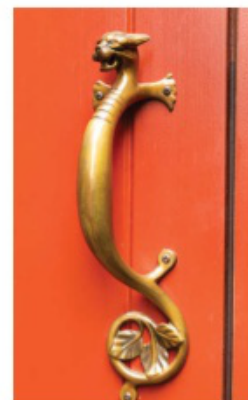
Wall’, an English Aesthetic Movement paper with sprays of eucalyptus leaves and gilt blossoms on a gold ground; the polychromed Lincrusta frieze from the parlor repeats here. The original buffet’s leaded-glass doors were given a facelift with a spiderweb design replicated from a similar buffet in a ca. 1900 house in Portland. Windows in the small bay were swagged with Victorian voided velvets; I added roller shades, painted with a scene of the house, for privacy. I am a firm believer in Victorian excess, so soon every surface (dining table, buffet, plate rail) was filled with sets of brown and white transferware, gleaming silverplate, and multihued art glass and stemware.

Noting that my rooms were becoming High Victorian spaces, I realized the white vinyl siding outside had to go. We installed a red composition-shingle roof accented with a decorative floral pattern on the lower gables. A turret, I was sure, would be the right thing to upgrade the architecture, so I added one. Its painted Latin motto, *Quo Amplius Eo Amplius*, means something like “more beyond plenty”—indeed. Sunflowers, sea serpents, and owl heads were carved in mahogany to withstand Seattle’s wet climate; polychromed, they decorate the upper gables. The paint scheme is a fall palette of hunter green, gold, red, and black.



GARAGE | summerhouse

The old garage had been sorely neglected; when its roof began to collapse and a racoon had babies inside, it was time to restore it. I got carried away, creating a Victorian Gothic summerhouse with arched front doors and decorated gables. The



brass gargoyle handles are vintage. For the Eastlake interior, we added carved beams and deeply stained paneling. Period lighting and stained glass welcome visitors. Across the north façade, glass doors open to the shady backyard.

ABOVE The Reformed Gothic summerhouse features new, arched doors and stained-glass windows in the gables. **RIGHT** Substantial hand-carved beams anchor the ceiling; stained-glass windows provide privacy from the neighbors on the south; tiled steps lead up to glass doors to the garden. **INSET** All of the lighting and hardware is antique, dating to the late Victorian era.

I tore out the 1970s rear kitchen to replace it with something more suitable: a Victorian conservatory. (My new, authentic re-creation kitchen in the English basement was not completed in time for this photo shoot, but stay tuned.) A set of four English stained-glass panels, ca. 1880, depicting colorful birds in a marsh, were turned into doors installed across the back of the room, opening to a small balcony overlooking the garden. A stained-glass firescreen by G.E. Cook, ca. 1875, was dismantled and recast as a window along the north wall, blocking a view to the house next door. Inspired by the Gothic Revival Jefferson Marketplace Library in New York City, I added a round, stained-glass window. An octagonal Fiske aquarium, ca. 1870, with a cast-iron base of stately storks now centers the room, adding humidity for the plants.

The back staircase leading from the conservatory to the basement was a sorry passageway. Inspired by the wonderful woodwork in the 1880s Cohen Bray House in Oakland, I lined the walls with oak paneling bordered by hand-carved sunflowers, with substantial carved braces framing the ceiling.





CRANBERRY GLASS

A sliding pocket door inset with antique, etched cranberry glass leads from the front hall to the conservatory. That space was formerly the kitchen.

UTTERLY AESTHETIC

This artful pocket door leads to the basement from the conservatory; a hand-painted frieze based on Victorian artist J. Moyr Smith's fairytale designs enlivens dark paneling.

The interior evokes the Aesthetic Movement sensibilities of the 1870s–1880s. Tile, woodwork, stained glass, finishes, furniture, and collectibles date to that period.



ABOVE The red-and-white middle bedroom has embroidered pillows and a 1905 signature quilt. **INSET** The people who worked on the quilt embroidered it with their names.

Upstairs, more stained glass was added to the window in the upper hall landing with a multi-hued, checkered and foliate panel by William MacPherson, ca. 1880, and the glass draped with ca. 1870 Turkey-red linen panels adorned with pearl and jet beads. A marble statue of Marguerite and Faust on the landing set an appropriately classical tone.

The front bedroom has become an exotic Turkish retreat. The turret room was papered with a hand-silkscreened pattern from an 1890s wallpaper catalog. Undulating checkerboard squares are ringed above by four hand-painted panels from Edward Burne-Jones's Pre-Raphaelite story of Pygmalion and Galatea. Far Eastern textiles and treasures fill the room.

The middle bedroom is simpler, for guests. Tucked into the eaves, the main bath was restored with a 19th-century ribcage shower, an elephant-trunk toilet, and a marble pedestal sink.

RIGHT (from top) A vintage ribcage shower was added in the all-authentic upstairs bath. • A Heywood Wakefield wicker corner chair rests beneath an ebonized wall cabinet in the upper hall; the red-and-white bedroom is glimpsed beyond. • In the conservatory, a tiled alcove holds an antique cast-iron sink used for watering plants. The Eastlake paneling has carved details.



INSPIRATION FOR A FANTASY

A VISIT TO A WELSH CASTLE CHANGED MY HOUSE—AND MY LIFE. By Brian D. Coleman

➞ People ask what inspired me to create such an unusual house: Is it meant to conjure a haunted house, a dream, Hansel and Gretel? The truth is, Cardiff Castle started it all. This storybook place in Wales goes back to medieval times but was restored, in the High Victorian 1870s, by the 3rd Marquess of Bute—who shares my birth date. We have a psychic connection! —B.D.C.

Cardiff Castle, located in historic Cardiff, Wales, is one of the most elaborate and whimsical buildings of the Victorian age.

It is the creation of John Patrick Crichton-Stuart, the wealthy 3rd Marquess of Bute, who had the guidance of the eccentric architect William Burges. The castle was built on the site of a Roman keep and fortress that dates back 2,000 years. The castle itself was constructed in 1420, providing a strategic post at the mouth of the River Taff. By the time the 1st Marquess of Bute inherited the property, in 1766, it had been allowed to fall into a decaying medieval ruin. The 1st Marquess began an extensive rebuilding program; in the 1770s he employed the famous garden designer Lancelot “Capability” Brown to landscape the surrounding park.

The 2nd Marquess of Bute took occupancy of the castle in 1814 but spent his energies on the port of Cardiff, using the region’s coal mines and the technologies of the Industrial Revolution to turn Cardiff into one of the world’s largest 19th-century ports. When the 2nd Marquess died suddenly, in 1848, he left a vast fortune to his widow, Sophia, and to his six-month-old son, the “richest baby in Britain”.

JOHN PATRICK CRICHTON-STUART (aka 3rd Marquess, Earl of Windsor, and Baron Cardiff) spent a lonely, sheltered childhood in Cardiff Castle. Indulged by

his mother, he was taken to concerts and theater and traveled abroad, where he showed an early fascination with cathedrals and churches. Orphaned at age 12, in 1859, the young Lord Bute was soon the subject of bitter fights by his guardians. By the time he entered Oxford in 1865, he’d become fascinated with religion and history. The young Marquess soon became a passionate medievalist, reflecting the era’s fascination with the “purer” values of the Middle Ages, which was sweeping mid-19th-century England, inspired by such architects as Pugin.

Fortunately for Lord Bute, his trustees had done an admirable job managing his assets, and when he turned 21 on September 16, 1868, the 3rd Marquess inherited one of the largest fortunes in Victorian England. The Marquess assumed his responsibilities to the town of Cardiff and began his rebuilding of Cardiff Castle.

Introduced to William Burges in 1865, when the Marquess was 18, the young Lord Bute found much in common with the Gothic Revival architect. Burges was a fervent advocate of medieval design, which he felt was “uncontaminated by industrialism.” Lord Bute shared the sentiment, even though his fortune was based upon the industrialization of Cardiff’s port. Japanese, Turkish, and other foreign cultures were favored for their fanciful and exotic designs. Burges’ rich interiors decorated in deep colors, stained glass,



ABOVE The gilded ceiling in the Winter Smoking Room led to the author’s color scheme.

TOP The Castle’s park was landscaped in the 1770s by garden designer Capability Brown.

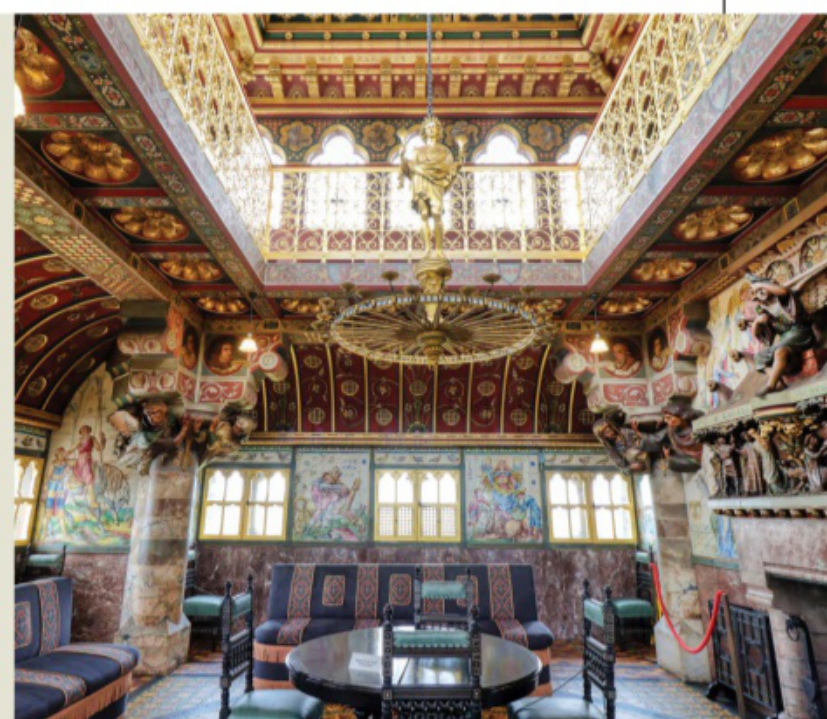
textiles, and hand painting were in direct contrast to the popular classicism that he termed “the dark ages of art.”

William Burges was an expensive architect to hire, and consequently most of his commissions were for churches or public buildings. Approached by Lord Bute in 1869 to restore his ancestral Castle at Cardiff, Burges took the commission, which lasted until Burges’ death 16 years later.

COURTESY CARDIFF CASTLE; YANTONG WANG/ALAMY (CTR. ABOVE); ISAAC IVANOV/WIKIPEDIA (OPP. BTM.)



ABOVE The Library, in the 15th-century section, features the names of famous literary figures; carvings of animals, from field mice to monkeys, enliven the decor. **BELOW** A gilded croc chases a cherub in the Octagon Tower. **BOTTOM** The Summer Smoking Room in the Clock Tower.



channeling **BURGES** William Burges' rich, glowing interiors are laden with stained glass, sumptuous textiles, and painting in red, gold, and green, highlighted with gilding. Recognizing my own sensibilities at the Castle, I too said yes to stained glass (added in nearly every window and in many doors and cabinets). I've collected and had fabricated opulent textiles that include velvet portières, swagged drapery, and layered rugs. Rich-red and deep-green with gilded accents is my dominant color scheme, outside and in. Inspired by Burges' allegorical and historical themes, I designed a Turkish room in the new turret, with a hand-painted frieze telling the story of Pygmalion and Galatea. • The carved crocodile chasing a cherub across my window box was inspired by this one in a Cardiff stairwell. My home is smaller than a castle, but I've filled every inch of it. —B.D.C.

rooms that **INSPIRE**

➤ **The Winter Smoking Room** is a tour-de-force of Victorian Gothic design. Every square inch is covered with elaborately painted and decorated patterns, murals, and allegorical themes of Time.

➤ **The Summer Smoking Room**, a two-storey aerie in the Clock Tower, has been called one of the most elaborate rooms in England (right). Presided over by an enormous gilded Sun God chandelier, the room is

decorated around the theme of summer pleasures.

➤ **The Arab Room** Carved by hand and decorated in gold leaf, the Arab Room ceiling is based on a similar, Islamic "stalactite" ceiling in Sicily.

➤ **The Banqueting Hall** The enormous Banqueting Hall is decorated with scenes of the Castle's past, from the time of William the Conqueror.

➤ **Lord Bute's Bedroom** is based upon Biblical themes relating to his name saint,

St. John the Evangelist. The elaborately carved and gilded ceiling is inset with beveled mirrors to reflect the name John in Greek.

➤ **The Nursery** is decorated with a tile frieze of figures ranging from Ali Baba to Robinson Crusoe. The Nursery was staffed by its own nurse and two nursery maids, one Welsh and one French, who spoke to the Bute children only in their native languages.

The Mott House

AN ARTIST'S COTTAGE THEN AND NOW: Long home to artist-owners, the vernacular beach house sits on the shore at Far Rockaway, a half-forgotten part of Queens in New York. Now it's safe from the tide.

STORY AND PHOTOGRAPHS BY STEVE GROSS & SUSAN DALEY



The dining table and chairs were made from old church pews. This is the window the owner pried from a ruined ballroom in Austria: "I held onto it for 35 years." **INSET** Patrick Clark, homeowner, conservator, and stained-glass artist. **RIGHT** The Richard Mott House sits amidst sea grass.



“**G**etting up in the morning, I’d rush downstairs before work—and step into a foot or so of icy-cold Jamaica Bay water,” says Patrick

Clark, who rescued this 1880s shingled cottage set close to the shore. “I hadn’t seen the water myself until after I bought the house and lived here.” His vernacular house, surrounded by wild sea grasses, sits in the lowest elevation in Rockaway, which is the far-flung, seaside corner of Queens, a borough of New York City.

Every month, with the new moon, high tide would bring bay water into the house; a few hours later, it drained back out. “It was pretty obvious I had to raise the house,” Patrick says, “but I had no idea how to make that happen.” Clark, a renowned stained-glass conservator and artist, was working on a window commission in Southampton, Long Island, when the solution occurred to him. He saw a large mansion being jacked onto railroad ties. Patrick needed the house-raising contractor for nearly two years before he finally agreed to come out to Far Rockaway.

The complicated operation involved raising the cottage 12 feet in the air, then building a new, six-foot-tall cinder-block foundation to lower it down upon. “Once the house was raised, I had 30 truckloads of fill and topsoil delivered, to raise grade about three feet around the house and throughout the entire yard,” Patrick explains.

Patrick acquired the weather-beaten cottage, known as the Richard Mott House, in 1997, and has been working on it since. Built by descendants of the wealthy Mott family dating to Colonial times, the house became an art studio



for son Richard. Far Rockaway, a marshy area once replete with yacht clubs and fox hunts, was a fashionable Victorian resort during the 19th century, with elaborate homes, casinos, and nightclubs. Today it is more wildlife refuge, a somewhat forgotten part of New York.

The interior was in poor condition, yet Richard Mott's wall paintings of woodland scenes and rocky coasts had survived intact. Patrick discovered an untouched portfolio of Mott's drawings, hidden in a concealed compartment. Although only one original stained-glass window remained, Patrick has since added 26 new ones he created himself, often from salvage or a fragment. "Each has a past life and a spirit of its own; they contain pieces from a Vienna Woods forest hut and even a cathedral," he says.

As a teen, Patrick enjoyed rummaging about abandoned villas in the Austrian countryside, where his nuclear-engineer father was stationed. "Before that I lived in Richland, Washington, a prairie town built from scratch in the late 1940s," he

RIGHT The Great Room with a view to the bedroom. The built-in daybed is original. The Tiffany-style lamp was made by homeowner Patrick Clark. **ABOVE** A Victorian velvet sofa and chair anchor the Great Room. **BELOW** The Great Room opens at the top of the stairs; the built-in cupboard/seat is original.



THE WALL PAINTINGS

Previous owner Richard Mott's wall paintings of woodland and coast had somehow survived, as had much of the green-stained woodwork. Patrick Clark has added his own artistry.



TOP Glass fishing-net floats sit in the Great Room window with a view to Jamaica Bay.
ABOVE Through very old, wavy glass, the mirage-like view of Manhattan is a surprise.
BELOW Richard Mott's seascape painting is framed by mouldings in the entry hall.





ABOVE In the first-floor bath, the decorative sink basin was restored.

RIGHT Lit by a stained-glass skylight, the second-floor bedroom has original Mott wall paintings. **LEFT** The bedroom's chest of drawers is also built into the woodwork.



RIGHT Cooper, “a gentle and intelligent dog,” surveys the large dining room; the stove room is beyond. **BOTTOM** A coal stove remains in the small room beside the entry hall; white tiles were restored and the hearth tiles are antique Delft. **OPPOSITE** (bottom) A window seat and wicker chair lend a homey welcome in the entry hall. The green stain on woodwork is original.



recounts. “There were few old buildings and no stained glass. But, when my family moved to Vienna, when I was 14, I became intoxicated with the architecture and rich-toned stained glass of Imperial Vienna.”

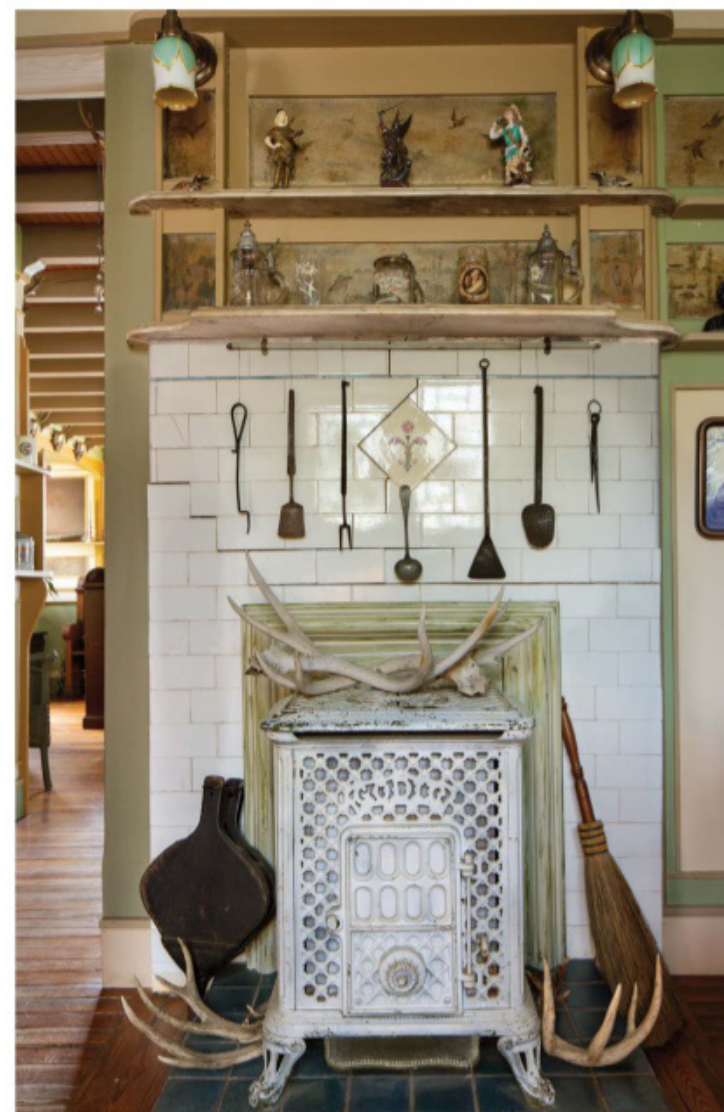
One particular floral medallion, which he pried out of a battered ballroom door, “became the fountainhead of my career. I was determined to restore it myself. So, after college, I learned stained glass just so I could repair that window.”

That window today is in Patrick’s dining-room wall, where a medieval look prevails, given a beamed ceiling and heavy chairs that Patrick constructed from oak pews he rescued from a chapel in Manhattan. Austrian influence also explains the exuberant displays of antlers and beer steins, along with religious icons and ornamental objects emblematic of old-Europe hunting lodges. The house fits the Wiener Werkstatte concept of a “Gesamtkunstwerk”: a total work of art, with architecture, glass, ceramics, paintings, and furniture all beautifully crafted.

Saltwater had preserved beams and structure, but wood on the ground floor had rotted away. On the floor, a broken cement slab showed dirt through the cracks. Patrick hunted down 150-year-old hardwood floorboards at a salvage yard in New Jersey. “I didn’t want the floor to look new, so we sanded each strip separately before nailing; that way, each strip would be a little off-plane.”

The first-floor ceiling was very low, so he decided to raise it ten inches. He restored tile behind the coal-burning stove, using “same-period tiles salvaged from a nearby demolished house, and adding some 17th-century Delft tile.”

Patrick speculates the cottage may have been built by a shipbuilder; nautical details include snug, built in furniture. It’s one of very few historic cottages left in the Rockaways. “I hope to build a place on the property that will be part of a museum—an education center where students learn about the interconnections among art, the marine environment, and local history.”





LEFT Clark's Sunlites Stained Glass studio is in Rockaway Beach, Queens, New York. **BELOW** Shelves hold an inventory of sheet glass, which Clark uses in constructing windows. **BOTTOM** Patrick Clark at work in his studio, restoring an original Louis Comfort Tiffany skylight window.

VISIONS IN STAINED GLASS

CONSERVATION, RESTORATION, NEW WORK. By Steve Gross & Susan Daley



Glass artist Patrick Clark lives in a historic beach cottage that boasts stained glass original to the house, salvaged, and new. (See previous story.) Since 1987, Clark has been restoring and re-creating stained-glass works in his high-ceilinged workshop, which has membership in the New York Landmarks Conservancy Professional Circle. Clark's studio, in Rockaway Beach, is Sunlites Stained Glass, specializing in custom design and fabrication of art glass, both residential and ecclesiastical. A visionary who has won accolades for his work in this ancient art form, Clark has completed restoration projects for more than 100 religious houses of worship; he has made new stained glass for St. Patrick's Cathedral.

If he isn't on site, atop a scaffold, Clark is on any given day in his studio, perhaps restoring an original Tiffany skylight for a rectory, or the windows from a Victorian-era mansion. He also creates new glass art for homeowners, who might ask him to translate their personal-favorite artwork by Chagall or Picasso into windows.

Clark incorporates many different types of glass, in dazzling colors, the work painstakingly assembled with meticulous hand-crafting: "I might have six or eight different types in one window."

When Clark was commissioned to design a memorial at Tribute Park for the 57 Rockaway Beach residents who died in the September 11th attacks, he chose to create a gazebo with a unique curved dome of hand-chipped faceted glass, with a star and engraved name for each of the deceased.

Clark uses everything from traditional "antique glass" from Germany, France, and England to bits of sea-polished beach glass he picks up along the shore. Sometimes he adds in shards from his collection of extremely valuable Louis Comfort Tiffany glass. In the early 1900s, L. C. Tiffany's glass factory was nearby in Corona, Queens, where Tiffany manufactured his patented, iridescent "Favrile" glass. Here artisans including Clara Driscoll designed and made the famed Tiffany lamps, before the factory shut down, in 1932.

SUNLITES STAINED GLASS, ROCKAWAY BEACH, N.Y.: (718) 634-3397, glaspadrik@aol.com



ABOVE A commission in memory of Rockway residents who died on September 11th, the glass-domed gazebo is in Tribute Park, in Rockaway.





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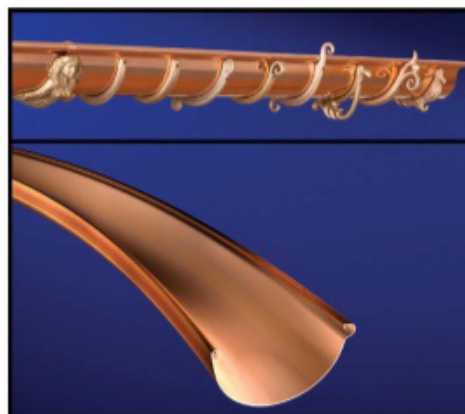


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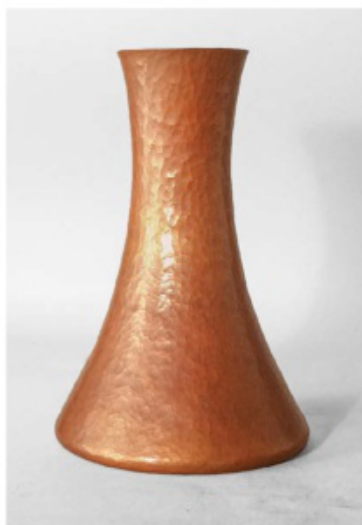


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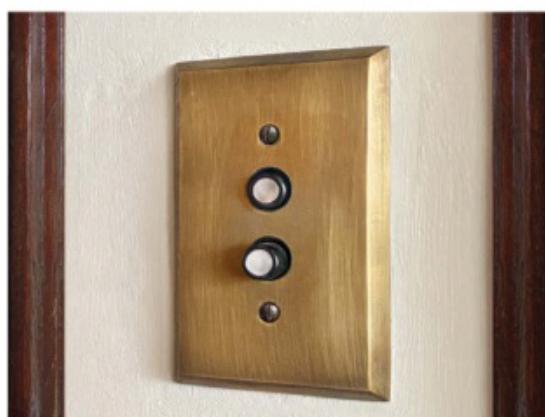
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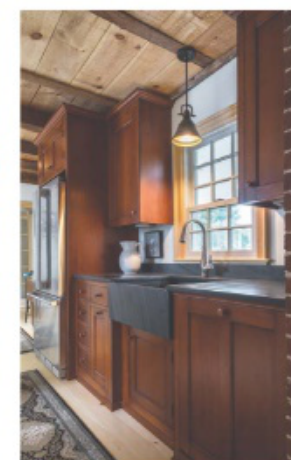
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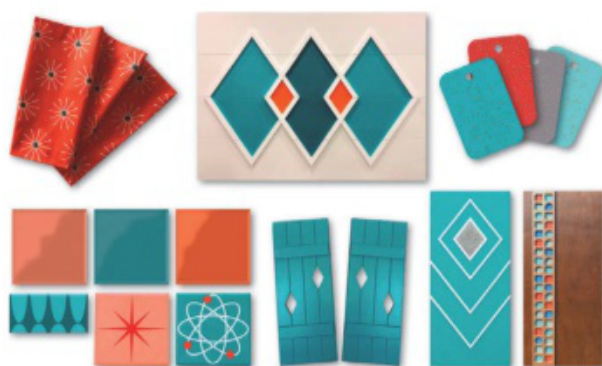
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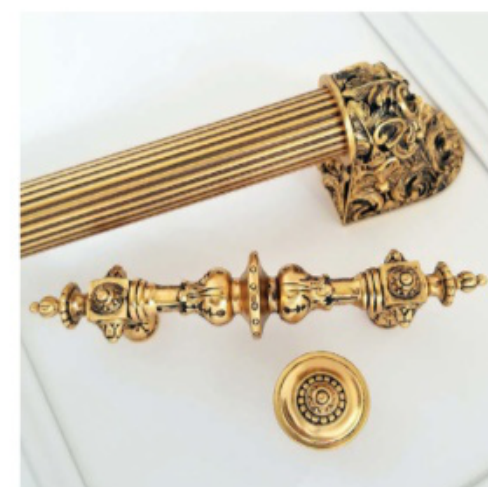
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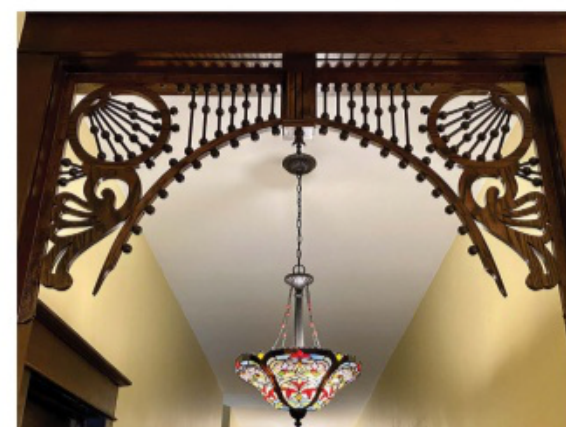
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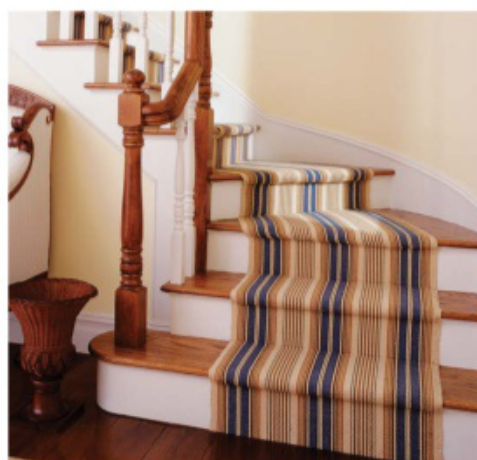
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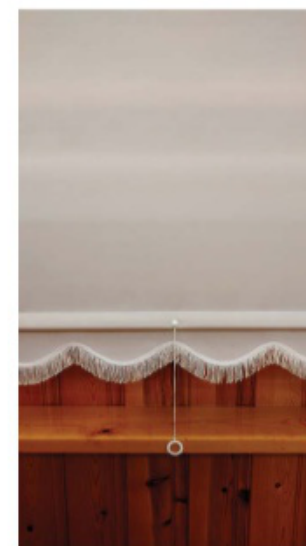
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p. 25 **CHAIRS** From artist/interior designer **Susan Sargent**: susansargent.com. See her book *The Comfort of Color* (Bulfinch).

p. 27 **ARCHITECT** John Altobello, Cambridge, MA: johnaltobelloarchitecture.com

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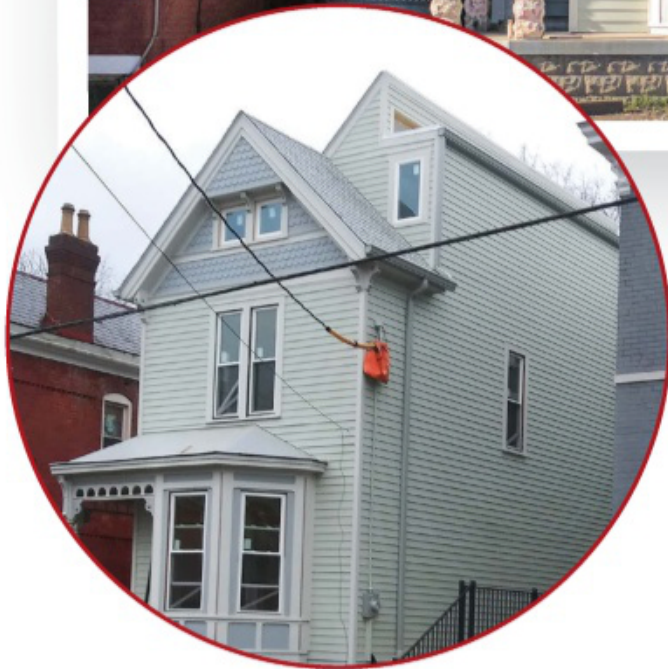
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“Seriously, why would someone design a roofline like that?”

—Joseph Pentangelo

FLIPPER FIASCO

This one's a stumper. It's a late Queen Anne house in Cincinnati. Essentially, the side wall was extended upward by a half storey, adding space on the third floor. But why the odd framing for a narrow clerestory window across the top? It makes for an odd roofline when viewed straight-on. Note there are no other windows on the top floor, and only one on the side of the second floor. It looks like original windows were replaced at the same time.

Here's what our reader told us: "I live near this house. When the new roof addition was being framed, neighbors were venturing guesses about what on earth the flippers were doing! We're not thrilled with the outcome.

"As you can see, they added a second half gable/half box to the ridgeline. It's obvious it's not original, as another house on the street is identical to this one—or at least it used to be.

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