

This Old House

New Meets Old

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JORDAN
ENDERS

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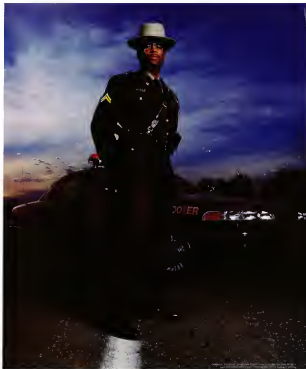
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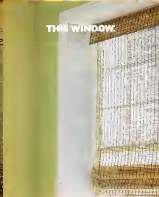
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JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2002

The model atop the fireplace in the master 1,641 sq. ft. cabin was made from a beam from the original structure. For more on the renovation, see "Texas Two-Step," page 74. By JANE DAVENPORT

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BY MICHAEL P. FAY



BY MICHAEL P. FAY



BY MICHAEL P. FAY

cover

An 1890s log cabin is reborn as the kitchen of a 2,100-sq.-ft. home. A decorative cabin, built in 1911, can be glimpsed through the doorway. The wood is held in the living room. The new 1910s-style the new house that surrounds them are covered by a glass roof supported by 10 steel cables. Inside the new cabin is a bar. A photo through leads to the dining room. This recycling of old and new is detailed in "Texas Two-Step," p. 74. PHOTOGRAPH BY PAUL SINGH/STY

PHOTO: GARY/STY; PHOTO: GARY/STY; PHOTO: GARY/STY; PHOTO: GARY/STY; PHOTO: GARY/STY; PHOTO: GARY/STY; PHOTO: GARY/STY; PHOTO: GARY/STY; PHOTO: GARY/STY; PHOTO: GARY/STY

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"I told my wife that we'd have the house and fix it, too, even if we did it on nothing but sheer determination."

—Mike Jarvis, homeowner

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WATCH THE TV BY CLOUTIER AND PAGE 10

SWEDISH SUPERMODEL REVEALS DIRTY LITTLE SECRET.



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CONTRIBUTORS



Photographing houses like the one featured in "Teen Teen Boy" (p. 76) is **PAUL SARRACINO**'s main clue-in with his first professional architecture. "The sheer dimensions of structures and open space to fill their story in two dimensions," Sarracino especially enjoys trying his best on built-up wall history. "Even though houses like this one have two modern amenities in their age that make them more alive," A Virginia native transplanted to Austin, Texas, he works regularly for *Interior Design* and *Metropolitan Home*.

JANE HUBER, a frequent *TOH* contributor, is a propped hand with back cataloging ("Idiosyncratic Mahogany," p. 76) and much ("Greatest Casualty," p. 76). She once carried a set of 16 mahogany chairs as a woodworking class. "The wood is almost as pliable as clay," says Huber. "It does exactly what you want it to." As for modeling, the resident of Backstage Island, Washington, has been at it since the previous issue via gardening report in the "Pile." "I've read every model out there," she says. Huber also writes for *Monthly House Living* and *Playhouse*.



Photo director **HANK HOOPER** manages to make even everyday objects into complex visual concepts ("Mind Over Matter," p. 76). By manipulating the appearance of a familiar device—in this case, replacing an electric meter's dial with cream—Hooper reveals graphics applied for the high cost of energy use. "Objects have to remain recognizable and real, so inherently visually more fun," he says, "especially with a theme as innocuously loaded as energy."

While the Portland, Oregon-based artist calls his "poc-a-donut" photographs appear often in *Exposure* and *Exposure 2.0*.

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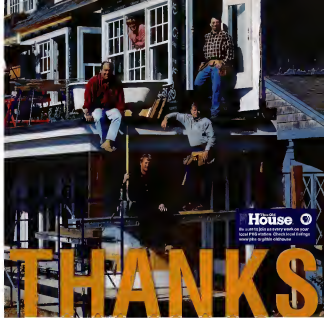
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THE BOLD LOOK
OF KOHLER.

ON THE JOB



Careful readers of *The Old House* may have noticed that Tim Selva was not alone on an early every project he works on in the *Manchester house* (see "The West Wing," page 61). The TOH record-keeper journal notes the type of houses, which has a series of parallel grooves, or rings, cut into its shell, more than 20 years ago to hang back for heavy plaster on a wall frame. The edges of the rings slope upward so that when the chunky square wood, dry cork and hold on them like toy fishhooks and keep the nail from popping out.

"We were putting up three or four coats of plaster on that job," says Tim. "That requires a lot of holding power." Since then, he's called on the fasteners—which come in sizes from 1/4 in-

ch to 1/2 in. to spikes that can connect big cables to steel or with attack with screws, sheetrock, shingles, and lapboards. Tim employs a wooden rod or galvanized version when working outdoors, where humidity in lieu of an insect, he usually settles for regular steel to cut down on costs.

Ringed Leader

"Individuals only a couple of cents more per unit," says Timmy. "But it adds up quickly!" In wartime locales like Manchester, however, where higher-than-average insurance levels proved even wiser, he uses stainless or galvanized nails to prevent rust. No matter what material they're made of, though, Tim knows the ringed leader will keep things in place. "The tighter the nail holds," he says, "the stronger the connection."

BY JORDAN REED PHOTOGRAPH BY DAVID GARMACK

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HOUSE CALLS WITH STEVE



Steel Away

A cold, inhospitable kitchen warms up to its new owners.

原 著 孫 德 謙 編 譯 沈 德 興

The 1929 Mediterranean-style white brick house with an red tile roof looks as if it would be more at home in Southern California than in the heart of suburban Minneapolis. And that was precisely the appeal it held for owners Kathy Perone and Molly Langley, who also fell for such period details as marble windersills, 1-foot-thick sidewalks between the main rooms, and a vaulted ceiling in the living room. "It was the most oddly built house I'd ever seen," says Kathy, a suburban-shore coordinator.

The kitchen, stark contrast, featured some of the worst halfbacks of a '70s season. The walls and ceiling of the 18 by 20-foot space were paneled in stained wood. The brown-stained wood cabinets, gray-laminated countertops, and dingy industrial carpeting only added to the score of "being in a meat locker instead of a home, a living house," recalls Kinky. *The Old House* host Steve Thomas agrees: "It looks like one of my favorite beach house materials, but here it was used in trees, and it served no purpose." He adds, "It's easy to see why the owners scored a harder room."

CONCLUSION

Kerry, an accomplished cook, she begged for a more efficient layout: Three doors leading into the kitchen from the dining room, the living hallway, and the garage created three traffic cones that crisscrossed and sloped through the cooking zone. Even after brainstorming, a poorly positioned refrigerator blocked a good part of the apron cabinets in a peninsula that separated the work triangle from the dining area. And there wasn't much counter to



1975. The old houses felt like an ancient "holocaust," etc. The masters wanted their mansions to express a stately charm and exude a more efficient floor plan.

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PHOTOGRAPHS BY CHAD HOLZNER

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HOUSE CALLS WITH STEVE

storage space next to the stove, which.

Because the owners enjoy entertaining in the kitchen, the two wanted to replace the dated dining room on the other side of the peninsula with a cozy, covered dining area where they could gather casually with friends. "It didn't want to be separated from guests while cooking," adds Klusky.

SOLUTION

The challenge of incorporating the layout and giving it an aesthetic style came hand in hand with the size of the house was turned over to architect David Hulse in collaboration with Ryan Engelhardt, AIA, who decided to start from scratch. In addition to gutting the space, the design team tackled an 18-square-foot no-fly zone by converting a built-in seven storage closet, and gained more precious wall space by removing a 3-foot-wide radiator in the old dining room.

Addressing the traffic problem, the architects swapped the placement of the cooling and entry doors, connecting the walkways with doors that are free of doorways. The newly reimagined work area at the front thoroughfare between the garage and kitchen. It also boasts 22 square feet of green-topped lower cabinet that links all the appliances. A built-in refrigerator stands where the former morning door was, the sink and dishwasher are on the opposite wall, and the free-former pen-style range with custom-designed hood now sits conveniently between them.

The peninsula was removed, and in its stead Hulse and Engelhardt designed a 3 by 5-foot island located at the corner of the workspace. Custom metal of black, painted creamy white, and topped with gold-toned brass like the rest of the kitchen, it connects a new radiator. The granite top continues over one end to two bar stools can be pulled up outdoors. "Visitors can stay up in the island and from the help with the prep, but the placement of



The Mediterranean style house (above) now features an L-shaped peninsula in the kitchen (left), tucked between the back door and adjoining dining room. The flooring and beams add to the mood's warmth, a custom bronze style pendant lamp hangs over the maple-topped table.

the counter lets the cook protect her workspace," says Hulse.

To answer the owners' desire for a more relaxing use-in-a, the architects designed a 3-by-6-foot island between the back door and the adjacent dining room, lifting it with an L-shaped peninsula in powder back and a matching table with a stained maple top. A new built-in heater and glass cabinet, directly across from the peninsula, broadly opens both dining areas. To maximize entertaining space, a small broom closet was removed to make way for a beverage bar in a corner adjacent to the cupboard.

FINISHING TOUCHES

Inspired by longshore style kitchens of the 1920s, the architects added smaller details to enhance doors over the refrigerator, under the sink, and over a newly built back door closet next to the dishwasher; they also function as non-coordinating vents. The fridge and dishwasher are fixed with overly painted brick panels that match the cabinets. "The painting usually connects the cooking and eating areas," says Engelhardt. To keep the look light and airy, pale polka-dot subway tile runs up walls behind the sink and appliances, and the floor is composed of 3-inch wide maple tongue-and-groove planks, painted with three coats of polyurethane.

The overall effect is "happy and welcoming—just what we needed," says a pleased Karly. "Warm, easy-going, cozy, efficient," agrees Steve. "The old kitchen evoked a casual, sprawling style. Never built something so minimalist that it will appeal only to you. The new room blends the owners' needs and tastes with good design, which has the mark for a successful kitchen."

HOUSE CALLS WITH STEVE

IDEAS NOTEBOOK

SPOUTING OFF

"Pull-out faucets are handsome and handy; installing one helps clear the clutter around the sink deck."

—STEVE THOMAS



The top-buildin' Prior Filter 220-series faucet is the Petersons' Leptor Winters was chosen for its handsome look and practicality. The spout profile of the single-hole-mounted outlet makes that of the new design sleek. And with a briefly clear deck plate, there's much less to clean.



TOP LEFT: Grohe's Lixford Cyle offers pull-out convenience on a graceful spout with an 8.5-inch reach and a 180-degree swivel for reaching deep pots. TOP CENTER: Steve's First Choice Professional faucet features a built-in water filter. TOP RIGHT: Standing 36 inches off the sink deck, Kohler's Perforating, with high arch and black spray head, works with both one- and three-hole mounting. BOTTOM: More's mostly compact, copper-finish Colonnade has a matching sophisticated appearance.



DETAIL: Inspired by these doorways, the old kitchen suffered from a chaotic traffic flow and cluttered counter and storage space. (LEFT) Maintaining the footprint, as well as the location of all doors and windows, the dining and cooking room of the old space were combined. Removing two closets gained more workspace for the new kitchen and a beverage bar.

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THIS VIEW. BUT DID HE EARN IT?



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INSULATING GUTTERS IN OLD WALLS

Can you recommend a method for insulating the walls of my house? The exterior of the house has wood siding, the interior walls are plaster, and there are fire-blocks between most of the studs in every wall.

WORTH AVENTON, INDIANAPOLIS, IND.

Five blocks, the short pieces of lumber nailed horizontally between studs in old half-log-cabin houses, used to prevent the stud bays from becoming chimneys for flames, heat, and smoke during a fire. Of course, they can also block any type of blown-in insulation—cellulose, fiberglass, or foam—from getting into every nook and cranny in a wall cavity.

To fill fire-blocked bays, an insulation contractor simply has to drill more holes out at the top of the bay, one just above and below the blocking, and another at the bottom of the bay. That way, when the insulation comes out the holes, he knows that the bay is completely packed. Also, with expanding foam insulation, that extra hole can prevent too much pressure from building up, which could cause the wall to bulge, especially on the interior surface. I prefer having this work done from the inside whenever possible, because holes drilled through plaster or drywall are easy to patch. (Closely, this won't do if you have fancy wallpaper or raised paneling, or you don't want to deal with the dust such work inevitably creates.) If working from the outside is the only choice, make sure that the contractor first removes the siding before drilling holes. It's easy to pop off a course or two of vinyl siding and pop them back on after the holes have been plugged. Wood siding can also be saved and reused if gaily pruned off with a chainsaw. If the wood cracks, it has to be replaced with an overlapping piece of the same size. Anything less ruins the wall's water repellency.

COPPER TOP CANE

We have a leaky window with a copper roof. Can you tell us how to clean it and what to put on the copper afterward to keep it shiny?

BROOKLYN, MASS.

You could remove the sheen with a metal polish, but why bother?



Polishing shortens the copper's life by removing the thin layer of copper oxide that naturally protects the underlying metal from corrosion. And there's no polish or coating I know of that will keep copper shiny outdoors for long. So I'd suggest that you let the roof do what it's going to do: run dark, then develop the wonderful verdigris patina that is copper's hallmark.

SHRINKING UP ATTIC FLOOR JOISTS

I'm converting my attic, which is currently used for storage, to living space. The floor joists are 2x10s spaced 16 inches on center, with a space of 12 feet, and I don't think they're strong enough to support a new room full of people and furniture. A friend recommended getting 2x12s alongside each 2x10, but I wonder if I could get by with undersizing another. What do you think?

DAVID MCMAHAN, WOODBRIDGE, ILL.

The old rule of thumb for determining the width of a joist was to subtract four from the foot measurement of the span. For example, a 16-foot floor needed 2x16s, and so on.

But your sister bet it to consult a structural engineer. He (or she) will calculate the loads your new floor will be supporting, both dead loads—the weights of the roof, joists, the plaster or dry-wall underneath, any knee walls—and the live loads: people and furniture. (He needs to know if you plan on having a grand piano in your new room.) He'll also consider snow and wind loads on your building in your locale.

Once he's added up the loads, he'll check the building code to determine the new floor's maximum allowable deflection—in other words—and then consult the span tables, which will tell him what dimensions and species of wood for type of engineered wood to use, and the spacing required between each joist. Floor stiffness is not the same as strength. A joist may be strong enough to support a floor, but if it's not stiff enough, you'll feel it bounce as you walk, and the plaster on the ceiling below may crack and pop.

Because you're remodeling an attic and probably need every inch of bedroom you can get, ask the engineer to show you ways to beef up your 2x10s so they have the same strength and stiffness as bigger joists. Tom Silva did just that at the Manchester project

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ASK NORM

In one room, he glued and nailed LVL lumber to the sides of existing joists (see "Frame Work," November 2001, pp. 38-39). In another, he sandwiched 1/4-inch steel plates between new LVLs and the original joists, held everything together with pairs of 6-ounce bolts at each end of the joists, and then fastened every 2 feet, staggered top and bottom. Bolting and screwing, while slower than nailing, will save the existing ending from being damaged by the relaxation of fastening. If the original joists were held in hangers, make sure to replace them with double hangers after nailing the joists.

It may seem odd that after all his clapping, the engineer will tell you to use 2x6s for your floor, which would add resistance to the old side of the wall. But at least you'll know that his recommendation is based on solid scientific principles rather than one of the poet's whimsies.

LEAKING CHIMNEY

For 15 years I've been plagued by a leaky chimney. Numerous attempts to eliminate the problem have been failures, including exterior flashing and

STEEL-REINFORCED JOIST



installing a metal chimney cap. I finally learned that the water is entering and exiting through "dry" mortar joints, which are, I've been told, areas where the original mason applied mortar only to the outer 2 inches of the brick, instead of bedding the bricks fully in mortar. We swapped plastic sheets around the chimney to test this theory, and the leaks stopped abruptly. We've been told to brush the mortar joints with a sealant, seal the chimney with masonry, or rebuild the chimney. What's your take?

PHILIP JACOB, SUDBURY, ONT.

Rebuilding a chimney is no fun, believe me. But now that you've pinpointed the problem, don't solve it with half-way measures like masonry. I had to rebuild the chimney on my house just a couple of years after it was built. We couldn't figure out why the chimney was leaking—the corner joints and flashing were fine—and Lenay Bellanca, a mason who's worked on a lot of *This Old House* projects, realized that the bricks were naturally porous and sucking moisture into the chimney. So we tore the chimney down to the roots and rebuilt it with new, more water-resistant bricks and

years after it was built.

ASK NORM

SW (for severe weathering). Because this is a fairly common problem with new bricks, however, Lenay says he doubts bad bricks are the cause of the water leakage at your house.

Lenay wasn't surprised when I told him about the poor workmanship on your chimney. He says that chinking an mortar joint in particular is common at the head joint—the joint at the ends of the bricks—which leaves the area more susceptible to water intrusion. Fixing the mortar at all of the head joints and repointing them is a fairly big job, and there's no guarantee it would eliminate the leakage, so Lenay thought you might to spray a masonry sealant on the chimney to act if that seals the masonry. Some high-quality sealants will last 50 years. And if the sealant doesn't work, talk to a mason about repointing the head joints and touching up the bed joints between the bricks. If your plaque continues after all that, then rebuilding the upper half of the chimney may be your only choice.

REINSTALLING OLD SHUTTERS

When the previous owner replaced the windows on a 1920s brick house (yes, and, the shutters were not put back in the garage. We're thinking about putting them back up, even though most of the hardware is missing, but we don't know which shutters go with which windows. If this were

If the shutter was original to the house, then yes, I'd probably take the time to fit them and you also look up. Taping over where the shutter goes might be a temporary measure, but gluing edge-to-edge in the closed position will approximate the size of the window they belong in. Thus, if you want your shutters to open and close, you'll need to buy the hinges, latches, and drops (the hardware that holds a shutter open). Look for stainless steel, brass, or aluminum alloy hardware, which stands up to the elements better than painted brass or untreated steel. I wouldn't get too carried away trying to find exact replicas of the original hardware, which is more important—especially for lead-to-lead exterior hardware, some of which is on the second floor—in the longevity of the metal.

On the other hand, if you never plan to operate your shutters, you can forget about the hardware and just brace them right to the wall on either side of the window. I'd use self-tapping masonry screws, fastened into the mortar joints (not the bricks), one through each corner of the shutter, with three or four inches and washers slipped over the screw between the shutter and the brick to help back dry quickly after wet weather.

BRIDGING THE DISTANCE

My husband and I want to remodel a garage at our vacation property that is great, but we're both in hard times working with credit checks every 48 hours. Because we don't live in the area full-time, they think we can't wait to work to be done while they deal with their local customers who continually bug them. We're uncomfortable with "to-go-go" pressure tactics, so how can we make sure that our project is finished in a timely fashion without our making enemies with the builder?

JILL DUNN, BRANSON, MO

your house, would you go to the trouble of installing the original shutters and finding matching hardware?

Tom Meeks, BROOKLYN, MO

Living in states surrounded by isn't the easiest thing in the world, but there are several things you can do to make the process go more smoothly. First, make sure that your contractor is paid

What makes a house a home? This book for starters.



DIRECTIONS:
Remove cap.
Fill cracks.
Lie on couch.



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ASK NORM

timely in performance, a date for beginning and a date for ending (subject to weather delays). Any payments should be tied to progress. No progress, no money. You can't always grasp that over the phone, so figure on visiting the site now and then. Second, make sure you have the contractor's work, home, cell phone, and fax numbers, and his e-mail address, before you sign the contract. Most contractors have multiple projects underway at once, so it's okay to call now and then to find out how things are going. Finally, if your contractor does his job in a timely and workmanlike manner—the standard set fairly in most contracts—he deserves to be paid promptly. Clients who withhold payment don't get much respect, or assistance.

REPLACING STAIR TREADS

We own a 5-year-old house with carpeted stairs over plywood treads. We want to replace the carpeting with 1/2-inch-thick oak treads and 1/2-inch oak risers. What is the shortest run for the treads should stick out over the riser?

LENN ANDERSON, San Diego, Calif.

If you install oak treads over the plywood, you'll be tripped up by the building codes, which specify that the difference between the shoe sole and nail step on any flight of stairs can be no more than 3/8 inch. What you're proposing would increase the distance between the floor and the tread at the bottom of the run by 3/8

inch and decrease the distance between the tread at the top of the stair and the landing by the same amount, twice what the codes allow. I know 3/8-inch sounds insignificant and arbitrary, but a shoe that runs just variations in stair-to-tread height can cause some real trouble.

To do this job right, therefore, you'll have to remove the plywood before you install your new treads and risers. Oak stair treads are made everywhere from 3 to 5/8 inches thick, but if your stairs have three treads, as most main stairs do, 3/8-inch treads are fine. Use 3/4-inch stock for the risers as well. Riser that are only 3/8-inch thick are not a good idea. Stock in that thickness is not readily available, and a single splinter of splintered board is inconvenient.

For stair with solid runs, the codes don't state the spacing, but the tread that projects over the riser should be at least 3/8 inch or more than 17 inches long. I generally use the latter measure because that leaves room for shims for attaching decorative iron or steel moldings.

INSTALLING SHOWER GRAB BARS

I have a fiberglass shower enclosure, and I'd like to add a couple of grab bars to it for my wife's sake. But there's a 1/2-inch gap between the enclosure's walls and the studs. Is there any way to install bars that are solid and safe and won't damage the fiberglass?

BRONKHORST, SEAN, N.Y.

Grab bars in a shower stall are a great idea, wet, soapy, smooth surfaces are a real hazard. These days you can get grab bars in almost any color and all sorts of materials, including Corian. But nearly every grab-bar manufacturer I've encountered says that their products must be screwed either to the studs or to solid wood blocking between the studs, using #8 or uncoated wood screws, at least. Some shower-enclosure manufacturers incorporate plywood backing panels into their products for mounting grab rails, but it's probably too much to expect that your shower was built this way. Most likely, you have an older-style unit that is not too flexible to serve as the sole mounting surface for grab bars. Short of taping into the wall to install blocking, there's not much you can do.

However, in trying to figure out some other solution to your problem, I came across a fixture, ingeniously developed to attach parts to the skin of jet fighters, that is code-approved for installation directly to drywall, cement board, or fiberglass. The device works the same way as a molly bolt: Six ribs spiral out and grip the back side of a surface as the center screw is tightened. Imagine pulling a barrel webbed through a belt, opening the webbing, and then trying to pull it back through the belt. No studs or blocking needed.

WRITING WATER TANKS

My house is served by a well. The water system is housed in the crawl space and consists of a pressure tank, a sand filter, a particle filter, a water-softening tank, and a reverse-osmosis water filter. I found that lots of condensation forms on the pressure tank and the particle filter, which contributes to moisture problems for heating beneath the house. Can you suggest any solution?

BERNARD WHITNEY, BAYBROOKVILLE, Va.

ASK NORM

Your problem is not uncommon. Cold water pumped from a well cools the pressure tank, which causes the moisture in the relatively warmer air of the crawl space to condense on its sides. I suspect the problem is more pronounced on the summer than in the winter. Much the same thing is happening to your garage floor, though probably not to the same degree. To reduce the problem, you can insulate the tank and the filter with a thick, plastic-based fiberglass blanket, similar to the ones made for water heaters. Just make sure the insulation can be removed so you can change the filter canisters. Check nearby water pipes for condensation, too, and cover them with foam pipe sleeves.

FIXING ABOVE-THE-HOLE

My fireplace has a row of exposed decorative bricks around the firebox, but the rest of the surrounding surfaces have been plastered. I want to cover the plaster with wood and molding to give it the same traditional look. But how do I attach the wood to the plaster? I'm trying to keep the bulk of the original material in a minimum, so I'd rather not attach the wood to studs. Can I just glue it to the plaster with construction adhesive?

PAUL KIRKHOFF, SLICHO CH, Calif.

Construction adhesive is great stuff, but not that great: wood stuck to a plaster surface with nothing more than adhesive won't hold. But the bigger issue here relates to fire safety: Building codes prohibit non-fireproof materials from being placed on or within 2 inches of a

chimney. New chimneys are capped back far enough from the place of the fireplace's face so that the framing, to which fairly woodwork is attached, can be built at the mandated distance from the masonry.

Finally, the code says that no woodwork or other combustible materials can be placed within 6 inches of the fireplace opening, and that any combustible material within 12 inches of the opening must not project out more than 3/8 inch for every inch that it's above the opening. For example, wood runs 9 inches above the top of the fireplace cannot stick out more than 1 1/4 inches from its face.

Many an old house has been lost when a glazier or housewife caught fire from an errant spark or excessive heat. Given the hard-core you face if you get this kind of installation wrong, find out what your local building officials say about your plans before you go any farther. ■

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3 CUTS wallpaper and other materials, protects privacy & other items.

4 DRIVES screws, nails & other fasteners into walls.

5 REMOVES nails, screws, bolts, etc. from walls.

6 DRILLS holes in wood, brick, concrete, etc.

7 SAWES through wood, brick, concrete, etc.

8 SANDS surfaces smooth.

9 POLISHES surfaces.

10 STAPLES paper, fabric, etc.

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Pioneer Spirit

A Midwestern couple set off on a personal journey to restore an old stagecoach house

The night Mike Jarvis came back from the bank, his wife, Lon, cried. "They'll loan us the money to buy the property," Mike told her. "But they won't give us a nickel to fix up the stone house." The son of Franklin, Iowa, had that the Jarvins so desperately coveted was worth more, it seemed, than the crumbling building it featured—a former stage coach stop that had also functioned as a crockery store, winery, and private home.

Despite the bank's opinion, the couple knew that the 4,500-square-foot limestone building had enormous value, at least as a piece of local history. When it was built in the 1840s, it joined the dozens of other limestone houses—the such hand-chiseled from a nearby quarry—that graced progressive Franklin. At the time, the town of some 2,500 residents had ambitions of becoming the county seat. But by the 1940s, when Lon was growing up there, most of those limestone structures had been abandoned and were in serious disrepair. By 1993, when Mike came home with the bad news, half the old houses had disappeared. Nevertheless, the Jarvins were set on doing that this one—with its ice-gray ground woodwork and hand-painted murals—would survive. "It's amazing what a man will do for a woman," says Mike with a grin. "I told Lon that night that we'd have the house and fix it, too, even if we did it on nothing but sheer determination."

After taking out the \$25,000 loan to buy the property, the Jarvins spent the next three years figuring out how to bring the old house back to its former roots and have it serve a purpose.

BEFORE



In serious disrepair, the 1840 limestone house (above) was a piece of local history. Now, it was meticulously restored inside and out to look exactly as it had in its heyday—apart from the modern bathroom and kitchen.

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PICTURE PERFECT

When they noticed a corner of a shiny white wall and a patch of blue water-pink paint in the dining room of their 1840s house, Mike and Lori dove in: They had struck gold. "Gee, I saw the crack in

the paint, I poked it at my pocketknife and started peeling it away," says Mike. "I couldn't believe what I saw." It turned out to be one of the room's six hand-painted murals depicting a series of pastoral river scenes.

Armed with photos of the murals' milk paint in oils of ultramarine, ochre, earth pigments, and white and samples provided by the elderly granddaughter of a former owner, paint-restoration specialists dried the five 20-by-6-by-8-foot murals and a sixth 5-by-8-foot one in the mid-1990s. They also credited the murals to a European (19th-century) artist who may have been recreating American landscapes, since America was the birthplace of many of Franklin, Iowa's first settlers. Yet the experts were not sure how to proceed, fearing that the 150-year-old murals might be damaged if the pink wall were lifted. So Mike, who studied for two years at the Chicago Art Institute, and Lori, a self-

trained acrylic and watercolor artist, continued the restoration of their work.

Mike looked at sections of the wall with a chemical paint stripper. It removed the rest of pink and left the artwork exposed. To be sure there would be no long-term effects, Mike waited six months before looking another patch. When it was clear that the old mural paint was chemically indestructible, they took off all the latex. But bits of pink remained, which the couple had to paint over. They removed each of the original artist's brush strokes with contemporary milk paint, mixed to duplicate the original's soft hues. Together they restored about 44 hours in the murals and another 40 hours to their 15-inch-thick boards. Worried that a modest sight line might obscure the murals, the devices are still deciding if they should apply one. —Barry Lankman

They never intended to live there but rather decided to put the property to some income-generating use to help them enjoy their home. Their first thought was to turn the structure into a B&B, but they realized it didn't have the right layout. Eventually, they grew so attached to the place, they decided to make it their home.

Mike, a contractor by trade, started by cutting down trees, removing overgrowth, and getting rid of a century and a half's worth of junk—after carefully picking through it for valuable architectural clues. Fortunately, the house had been abandoned for the last 31 years, so anything that had fallen down had pretty much stayed where it landed, or fairly close. For example, Mike found a collapsed molding in a barn behind the house that proved to be from the original porch, and he used it as a complete replacement trim.

After using black-and-white photos from the 1940s as a guide, Mike and Lori's help restored the painted corner wall to its original splendor.



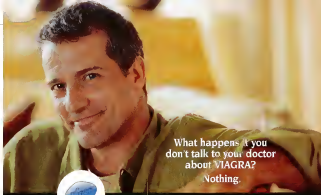
Meanwhile, Lori researched the house's history through courthouse and library records and interviews with old-timers in order to apply for the state and national historic registers. Once the house was listed, they were able to obtain a \$109,300 grant from Iowa's Historical Resources Development Program to help fund the restoration. That money qualified them for a \$46,300 construction loan from the bank, which went toward new heating, plumbing, and electrical wiring.

Through Lori's research and Mike's observations, a picture of some of the house's early owners, Katherine and Christian Herold, emerged. The couple, American immigrants, were among the original settlers. Christian was a cooper who built his barrels in the barn, which also served as the stable and a place to change teams midway through the wagonwork run.

The building's layout remained largely as it was in the Herold era. The first floor was organized around a central hall with a staircase that led to two bedrooms upstairs. A parlor lay to the left of the hall, and to the right was a formal dining room decorated with wall murals when Katherine sold stools to travelers. A large kitchen was located at the rear of the house.

The Herolds put their effort to work, too, attaching it with Christian's barrels full of wine made from old family recipes, which they sold to travelers and neighbors alike—a business the Jarvans have revived. The cellar also housed a chamber for smoking meats and a 15-foot-deep well—used later as a source of water but at a place to cool perishables in canvas racks lowered to just above water level.

In February 1996, the Jarvans began a nine-month marathon that continues today. Such was their rever-



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Board Meeting

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ohn Hadden, New York City's president of Hadden Construction, Inc., says that the company's clients are always looking for ways to make their jobs easier. One of the ways they do this is by using Wood Pro® decking. "It's a great product," Hadden says. "It's easy to install, and it's easy to maintain. It's also a great product for the environment. It's made from recycled materials, and it's biodegradable."

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PHOTOGRAPH BY JEFFREY M. HARRIS

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1 Before installing new boards, lay them out on the subfloor. Lay them out in the direction you want them to go, and make sure they are straight. Lay them out in the direction you want them to go, and make sure they are straight. Lay them out in the direction you want them to go, and make sure they are straight.



2 After the new boards are laid out, use a hand saw to cut them to the right length. Lay them out in the direction you want them to go, and make sure they are straight. Lay them out in the direction you want them to go, and make sure they are straight.



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TOOL BOX: FLOORING NAILER

First patented in 1846 by Go man Benjamin Edgar P. Ansell, the modern flooring nailer has changed little over the past 60 years. Operating on the same principle as a common hand-held stapler, it drives bodied nails—fasteners shaped like and made through slotted boards with the power of a hammer strike. An insole position the nose of the nail against the tongue of the board, then strikes the plunger with a heavy mallet. The blow drives the fastener through the board and into the subfloor at a 45-degree angle and compresses it to lock, a spring pops the plunger back out. Joe Davis swears by his model, explaining modern improvements. "I've made more control with a manual nailer," he says. "And pneumatic don't hold boards together as tightly because a shot of air is easier than my swing with a hammer." Plus, he doesn't have to lug a bulky electric air compressor around with him. The tool accepts 15s, 16s, or 24s black steel nails. The tool accepts 15s, 16s, or 24s black steel nails. The tool accepts 15s, 16s, or 24s black steel nails.



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Need A Lift?

An elevator takes a contemporary home to new heights

A home elevator challenges the definition of luxury, even to a handicapped person it may be essential. But then there's the couple who built a safe-styled contemporary house in Ohio's farmland—with the stipulation to the architect that they must see the sunset behind some distant hills. "To get the view, we had to go up four stories," says Bob Blanchford, the Cleveland architect who designed the home with the intent of making the elevator part of the home's spirit and design. While the owners, who entertain frequently, have no trouble entering guests up three flights of spiral stairs to a third-floor observation room leading out to a deck, the glass-walled 3-by-3-foot elevator off the front hall has become the real draw. "Everybody likes to see the barnyard a year or so clearly before their eyes as they ride up," says the owner.

In a new or under-construction home, though, Americans are adding home elevators that manufacturers and contractors insist are small. Ken Hermann, general manager of Otisville, a Hatfield, Pennsylvania, leading manufacturer of elevators, says the company's smallest elevator has grown 20 percent annually over the last five years. "Most of our market share is baby boomers looking for their last home," he says. "They want a multi-level house on the beach, but they're already in their fifties and thinking of the

future." Although a typical home elevator, with installation, costs \$15,000 to \$30,000—the higher cost representing stair-changing retrofit to existing homes—Blanchford points out that when weighed against the occasional rift of going up a family home and the cost of moving, the hefty price tag may be justified.

While the graying of America may be driving home-elevator sales, technological advances are making life a much more real and appealing option for all kinds of homeowners. Hydraulic-power elevators (see "Fluid Motion," next page) provide a smoother, quieter ride than traction or winding-around-cable models, and so are more popular. Until recently, installing one meant drilling a 34-inch-diameter hole (to connect the cylinder, or jack) under the shaft so a level to deep in the earth is high—a very disruptive process. The development over the last decade of side-mounted

hydraulic cylinders, which incorporate the jack along the shaftway, eliminated that problem.

Cab interiors can be coordinated with the home's decor, employing anything from hard wood paneling to glass to plastic laminates in a variety of color schemes. Trim can be brass or other fine metals, and doors can be painted. The Ohio elevator features a limestone floor, matching one in the house.

Homeowners considering an elevator retrofit should know that construction and installation can take 3 to 10 weeks and involve putting up walls, cutting holes through the floor, building a pit in the basement, and, in the case of a winding-drum model, creating a separate, lockable room a distance to the pit. David Calabrese, owner of Access the Elevator in Cleveland, Ohio, who installed the side unit, says there are three logical places to put one. "If you're thinking of resale value or are housing a disabled relative, the garage entry works best, because we can put a door on one side at garage level. That way, you don't have to have a wheelchair-access ramp to go up half a flight to the main floor of the house," he says. Another likely location is a hallway—especially if the lift can run all the way from the office to the attic, which is convenient for moving goods into and out of storage. (Calabrese

The observation room and white granite walls of the elevator call into the simplicity of the house. Here, the painted brass gate and glass door open into the entry hall.

says all doors served by an elevator should have a stair exit for emergencies, no matter what the codes allow.) Another way to retrofit is by enclosing the elevator in a small addition. "That can be easier than doing an interior remodel."

And if you're planning a home elevator, Calabrese adds, make sure you're not getting a dumbwaiter. "Some of these things are so tiny," which translates to 750 pounds capacity, as those to four passengers. "If anybody is in a wheelchair, you want to make sure they're comfortable," he says. "In a larger house, we recommend a 38-by-5-foot cab, it's not much more expensive, but it's a lot more accommodating."

One more caveat: Avoid units with proprietary gizmos that could be expensive to replace, says Calabrese. "There are companies that use binary DC-coded lightbulbs that you can't get locally. It may cost \$40 just to replace a bulb."

Gadgets went all the way to Blanchford's Ohio client. They put in an extraordinary new way of rising at the view from what they affectionately call "Kepler's Towers." ■

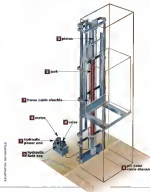
FLUID MOTION

Most home elevators are hydraulically powered. The oil-bulb sends an electrical signal to a computerized chip in the control processing unit (GPU), a control panel wired to the elevator's mechanisms. The chip releases current to the hydraulic pump unit (1), which starts the motor (2) that drives the pump inside a hydraulic fluid box (3). The pumping action pushes oil through a speed-modifying valve (4) into the cylinder, or jack (5), and raises the piston (6). The upward piston movement lifts the cables—anchored in the elevator's frame (7) and attached at the pit point (8)—and the cab follows. Going down, the GPU signals the valve to open, allowing fluid to flow out of the jack. As the jack empties, gravity lowers the piston, cables, and cab. Winding-drum elevators (not shown) use a motorized spool to reel and unroll the cables, lifting and lowering the cab.

—Nancy Lofthouse



As the sun sets, the homeowners enjoy riding the glass-walled hydraulic-powered elevator up four flights to view the full breadth of their 10-acre property. An all-glass observation room awaits them at the top.



TALKING SHOP

Inspecting Gadgets

BY OLAFYON DEDRHE

A cordless router's dense runs above the desk of dozens of power tools as a crowd presses close to see the machine's bit dig into an oak board. A few steps away, a salesman warning a carpenter's upon seeing a woman from the dawning to try out a hammer with a stainless head, she weighs up, and in three quick strokes, bashes a framing nail into a block of wood. In October 1994, the conveyor of a double-line machine hands out just what while his wife repeatedly adds a corolla-shaped piece of plastic into a makeshift roof and snags out fluorescent pink laser angle headily. These scenes represent just a few of the latest trends on display at the National Hardware Show last August, where high-tech tools, including power tools, are working, rather than tools in progress made by a few of the nation's leading manufacturers.

For in 1994, just before the post-9/11 building boom that held every industry in Chicago, the hardware store's current display of tools and equipment was a testament to the fact that the construction industry is still a major force in the economy. And it's not just the construction industry that's driving the hardware store's growth. It's also the fact that the hardware store is still a major force in the economy. And it's not just the construction industry that's driving the hardware store's growth. It's also the fact that the hardware store is still a major force in the economy.

Heading North's advice, the 100th anniversary gift included every tool, working for the latest problem-solving devices. Our picks—ruffled from the more than 1,600 new products introduced at the event—offer the most innovative gifts in the industry. "You have to be persistent to find the good stuff," says North. "But when you do find it, you always say, 'Why didn't I think of that?'"

AN EXTRA PAIR OF HANDS

Layout tool that can be used in place free up the hands of a lone worker. The Tite and Golden (also known as MAP Tool) (DCA), which makes a layout from 14 to 72 inches and is supported in nearly double its size. It's perfect for use with a layout or cabinet screws through its perforated aluminum base. The level holder can guide the screws and even support the weight of a cabinet, so the Rocket Anchor's clip handle is easy to stick into any layout surface—be it wood, drywall, or a cabinet's edge—allowing the user to cut over a board or panel in a wall to hold the end of the clip. (Note: Some layout's extra power, the Anchor's tapered body can also double as a plastic hook (DCA)).



EIGHT WORKERS

A folding ruler works across eight, high-performance metals, as they're used to carry one use. Made of aircraft-grade aluminum, the folding ruler (Ward & Pott) and more than 100 other tools, including a folding ruler, are made of aircraft-grade aluminum. The folding ruler (Ward & Pott) and more than 100 other tools, including a folding ruler, are made of aircraft-grade aluminum. The folding ruler (Ward & Pott) and more than 100 other tools, including a folding ruler, are made of aircraft-grade aluminum.

SLEEK SAFETY

An increased emphasis on safety inspires manufacturers to make products that are safer than ever. The Milsa Combination Bar and Eye Protection (also known as the Milsa Combination Bar and Eye Protection) (DCA), which makes a layout from 14 to 72 inches and is supported in nearly double its size. It's perfect for use with a layout or cabinet screws through its perforated aluminum base. The level holder can guide the screws and even support the weight of a cabinet, so the Rocket Anchor's clip handle is easy to stick into any layout surface—be it wood, drywall, or a cabinet's edge—allowing the user to cut over a board or panel in a wall to hold the end of the clip. (Note: Some layout's extra power, the Anchor's tapered body can also double as a plastic hook (DCA)).



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