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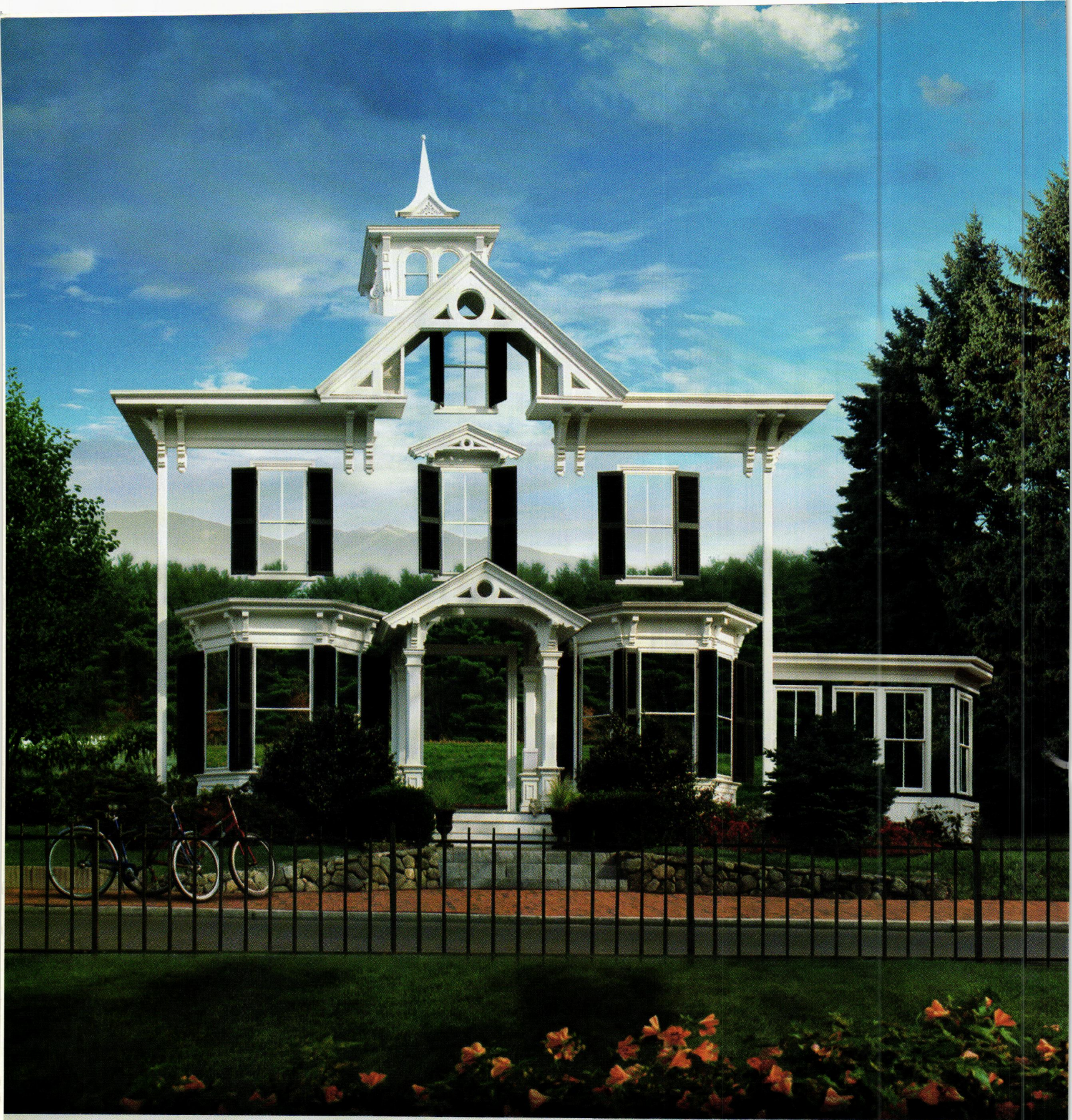


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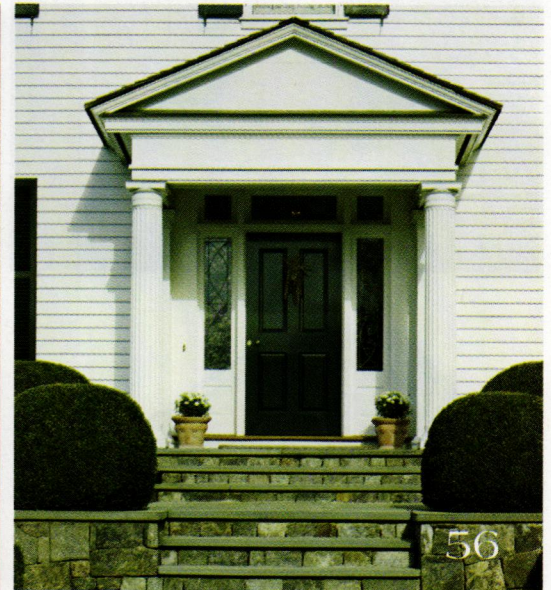
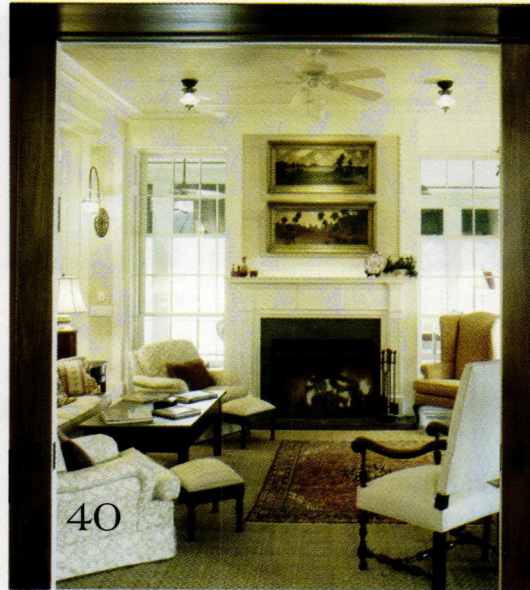
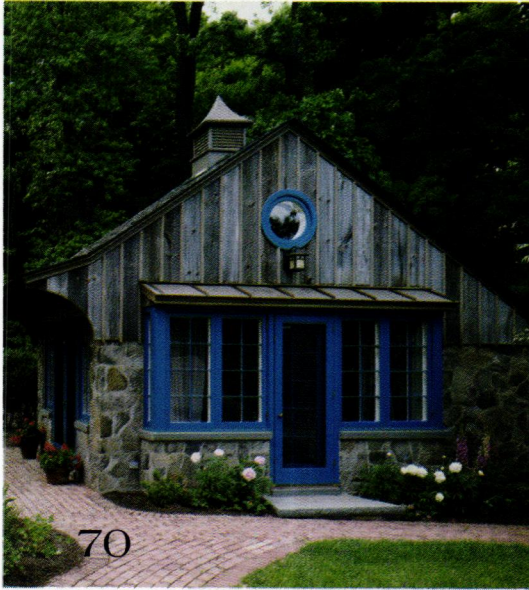
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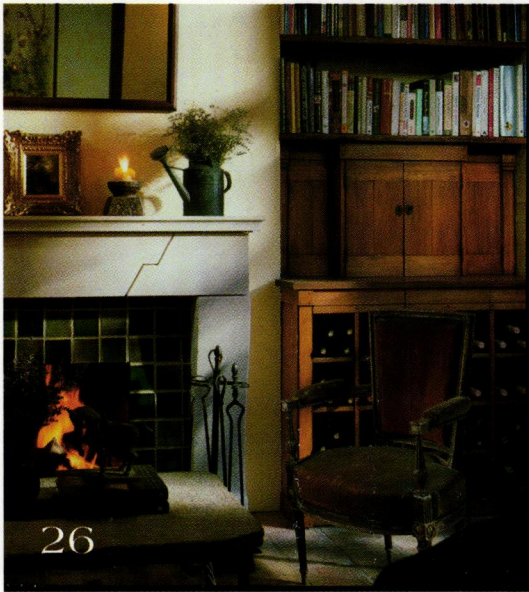
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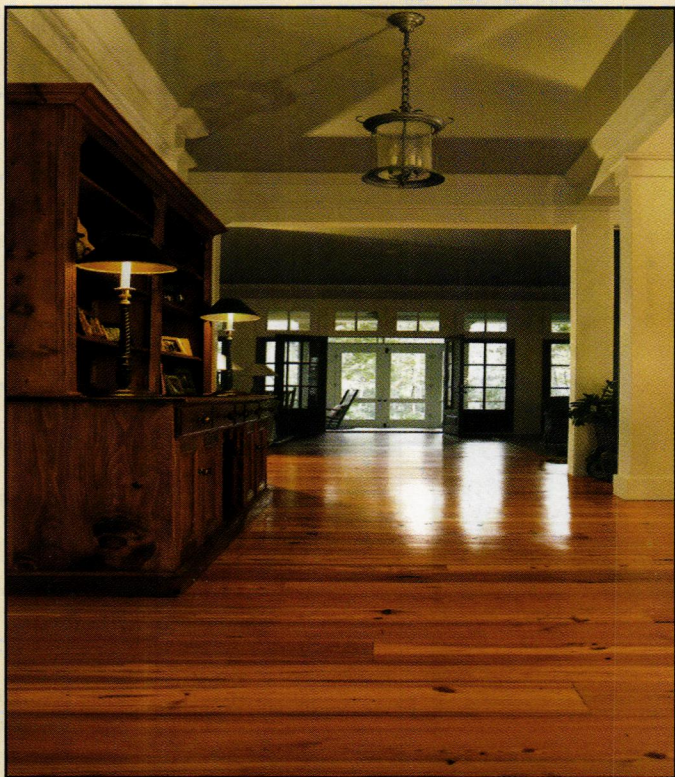
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Affordable Design



Contrary to popular belief, good traditional design doesn't have to come with a high price tag. Look at the success of last year's Katrina Cottage designed by Marianne Cusato in response to the need for emergency housing after Hurricane Katrina. The vernacular cottage (reminiscent of a Louisiana shotgun house) blueprints are today sold to the masses through Lowe's. The design complements rather than competes with its environment: Its beautifully proportioned windows and welcoming porch offer good traditional design without an enormous cost.

We'll see in this issue of *New Old House* (page 52) other low-cost venues for traditional design. The Institute of Classical Architecture & Classical America and Habitat for Humanity International have partnered to create *A Pattern Book for Neighborly Houses*, a guide devoted to promoting classical design in affordable housing. As architect Richard Cameron, who conceived the design, states, "Shelter and good design don't have to be mutually exclusive." The focus of the plans is to create houses with proper proportion and scale. And although the designs may be simple,

Habitat for Humanity house, they have integrity.

Another philanthropic endeavor featured in this issue (page 16) is Operation Comeback, a program started in 1987 by the Preservation Resources Center (PRC) of New Orleans. The PRC restores vacant houses around the city, thus providing first-time buyers an opportunity to purchase a home. This past summer, PRC partnered with architect and preservationist David Dillard and the Traditional Building Exhibition and Conference to revive a historical home damaged in Hurricane Katrina. The house will be open to the public during the Traditional Building show, October 16–20, and will demonstrate how old houses can be saved through proper restoration and renovation techniques.

In Design Details (page 26), author Cathleen McCarthy interviews Anne Fairfax of Fairfax & Sammons, who explains how incorporating salvaged materials into your new old house project can actually save you money. Now who says you can't have champagne taste on a beer budget?

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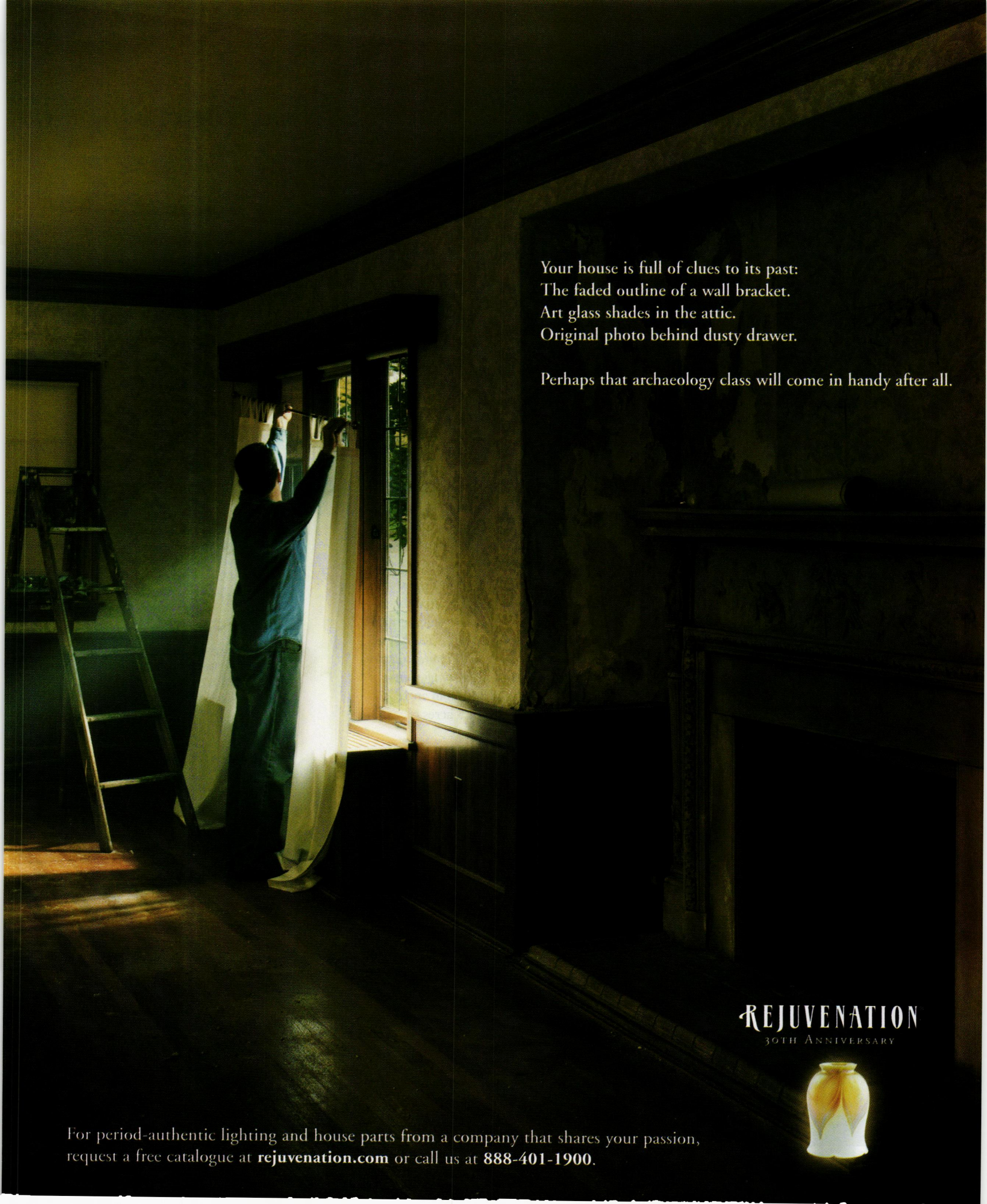


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Your house is full of clues to its past:
The faded outline of a wall bracket.
Art glass shades in the attic.
Original photo behind dusty drawer.

Perhaps that archaeology class will come in handy after all.

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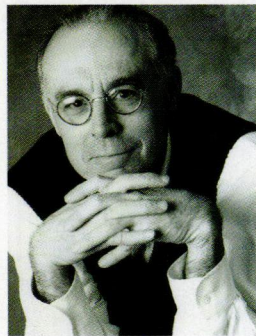


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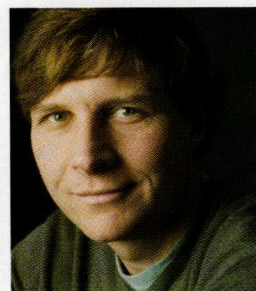
Christine G.H. Franck is a designer and educator with a practice in New York City. She is the former director of the academic programs of the Institute of Classical

Architecture & Classical America (ICA&CA). She sits on the board of directors of the ICA&CA and the management committee of INTBAU and holds a master of architecture from the University of Notre Dame. She was honored by the Prince of Wales with the first Public Service Award of the Prince's Foundation for her outstanding contribution to the study of architecture and design.



Editor-at-Large **Russell Versaci** is a residential architect who has spent two decades designing traditional houses. He attended the Harvard University

Graduate School of Design in 1973 and received his graduate degree from the University of Pennsylvania Graduate School of Fine Arts in 1979. He has designed traditional country houses, cottages, and farmhouses, as well as restorations and significant additions to period homes. Also an author, Versaci's debut book is titled *Creating a New Old House* (Taunton Press, 2003).



Logan Ward has written about architecture and historic preservation for the *New York Times*, *House Beautiful*, *Cottage Living*, and

many other magazines. In 2000, he and his family moved from Brooklyn to Swoope, Virginia, to re-create the life of 1900s dirt farmers, the subject of his recently released memoir, *See You in a Hundred Years: Four Seasons in Forgotten America*. Logan now lives with his wife and two children in Staunton, Virginia.



Garden writer **Michael Weishan** is host emeritus of PBS's "The Victory Garden" in 2001 and has shared his design tips, expert advice, and trademark sense of humor with

gardeners of all levels. In addition to heading his own design firm, Michael Weishan & Associates, which specializes in historically based landscapes, he has written for numerous national magazines and periodicals and authored three books: *The New Traditional Garden*, *From a Victorian Garden*, and the *Victory Garden Gardening Guide*. Weishan lives west of Boston in an 1852 farmhouse surrounded by 3 acres of gardens.



Michael Tardif developed a passion for new old houses over a 15-year career as a project architect designing homes in Boston and on Cape Cod. Now editorial director of Design Byline in Bethesda,

Maryland, he writes regularly about architecture, design firm management, sustainable design, and design and construction technology. His first book, *Financial Management for Design Professionals: The Path to Profitability*, co-authored with Steve L. Wintner, AIA, was published by Kaplan Publishing in December 2006.

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Rest in Peace

TEXT BY RUSSELL VERSACI

Supersized homes are on the decline across the country.

Hallelujah! This just in: The National Association of Home Builders has announced the demise of the McMansion ... or at least a halt in the supersizing of the American home.

It seems that in 2007 the tipping point has finally come. The average home has settled in—or at least hunkered down—at 2,450 square feet, and home forecasters for the pro builders don't think it's going to get any bigger anytime soon.

This is a remarkable year in our country for this and another great course change in the American psyche. The July 4 cover of the *New Yorker* featured the Statue of Liberty bearing a torch lit by a compact fluorescent light bulb against a background of green—not the color of money, but of environmental conservation. In an astonishing confluence of events, the death of the McMansion and the rise of environmental awareness are linked inextricably in a year when everything seems to have changed.

Before we get too excited, though, we should consult history for a reality check. In America, cycles of big houses and wasteful excess have come and gone. The drive to do better than our next-door neighbor is our national anthem, and we are not the first generation to decry tasteless conspicuous consumption. In the 1920s H. L. Mencken wrote about the arrivistes of his day in his essay

“The Libido for the Ugly:”

Here was wealth beyond imagination—and here were human habitations so abominable that they would have disgusted a race of alley cats. ... By the hundreds and thousands these abominable houses cover the bare hillsides, like gravestones in some gigantic and decaying cemetery.



HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

His words could describe any affluent American suburb in the twenty-first century. Clearly, the present day is not America's first encounter with the big house ideal, and perhaps not its last.

In colonial America, tastes in houses changed dramatically between the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. By the 1720s, the modest vernacular homes built by prosperous farmers in the original 13 colonies began to be replaced by formal, elegant Georgian manor houses of refined detail and elaborate furnishings. No expense was spared in creating the illusion of genteel taste and elegant manners in imitation of the finest of London society.

In eighteenth-century Georgian

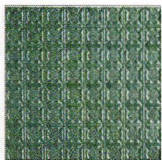
Linden Place in Bristol, Rhode Island, is a Federal-style home built in 1810.

America, the average house of the better classes grew in size by three to four times the average yeoman's farmhouse of the early colonial era. No longer a simple shelter, the house had become a symbol of status and, more importantly, of gentility. Donning new layers of sophistication, the big house became a purpose-driven cultural phenomenon.

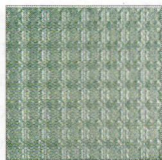
In the land of opportunity, the aspiring gentry class has always tried to rise above the masses, with the nouveaux riches seeking validation in houses that scream “we have arrived.” But today's notion of the big house is different than that of our forefathers. Today it's a vacu-



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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

Mount Peasant, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

ous substitute for refinement, a shell without substance.

While putting on airs is not new to America, putting on airs just for the hell of it *is* new. Today, we have forsaken the pursuit of gentility in favor of appearance alone, and that's what separates McMansions past and present. As one proud contemporary McMansioner says of his newly built behemoth, "Let's face it. I did it because I can." Today's new money suffers from the arrogance of affluence.

There will be a comeuppance. The beginnings of change were signaled late last year when America's self-styled luxury McMansion builders like Toll Brothers and Pulte Homes began offloading stock after reading the tea leaves and not liking what they saw: that the future of the McMansion community looks bleak. And in casual conversations with builder-developer friends, I now hear the words "downsizing" and "sustainability" peppering the discussion with a frequency unthinkable just a year ago.

None of this comes as a surprise to traditionalists who have championed smaller and more sustainable houses for

years. To many, the mushrooming of fatuous square feet has never made sense. A huge house doesn't buy a more gracious, refined life filled with good things. It merely buys the right to build, furnish, heat, cool, clean, and maintain useless space for the sake of bragging rights.

According to cultural sage Jim Kunstler, another reckoning is near. In the past half-century we have created a suburban mess of "house burgers" based on cheap energy that cannot possibly be sustained. The warning bells began to sound when the world's oil production started to ebb sometime late last century. As the flow of fossil fuels declines by roughly 3 percent a year, within 50 years we will simply run out of gas. And while scientists scramble to invent alternative energy to maintain the myth of suburban America, it is delusional thinking. In the suburbs, we won't be able to keep all the big houses going, let alone fuel all the SUVs to get back and forth in.

The depletion of fossil fuels is hitting just as America's baby boomers approach retirement age, and many of those who have built McMansions are becoming empty nesters. In their new

circumstances, they're finding their supersized homes to be white elephants, unsuited to their changing personal values and family situations. At long last they are looking for fewer gates, more green living, walkability, neighborliness, and houses with more character and soul.

The downside of McMansion mania will hit us hard. No matter how big the house, McMansioners live in the kitchen, family room, and bedroom just like the rest of us. The surplus space is pure waste, mere storage for the spoils of recreational shopping.

Eventually the 10,000-square-foot house will become an outmoded relic, with no buyers and no one left to impress. The gated community will become a suburban slum, littered with abandoned SUVs—and who will clean up the mess?

If the depletion of fossil fuels and the death spiral of the McMansion are bad news, then I pray for more bad news to stimulate a great awakening. For as the allure of the McMansion withers, a new old house will offer the perfect alternative.

Guided by historic precedent, a new old house is smaller and wiser by nature, based on need, not size. It's built with natural materials and designed to suit climate and topography in a thoughtful response to location. As a result, it leaves a smaller environmental footprint. Even in the most sophisticated houses, craftsmanship and care in building trump sheer bulk. Fatuous pretension has no place in a new old house.

Maybe I am indulging in wishful thinking here, and maybe 2007 is just a lull in the inexorable supersizing of America's homes. But I choose to think not. Maybe, as the nation comes to its senses, big houses and cheap gas will fade into history. Maybe Americans will begin to find more value in living well than in living large. And maybe we'll see the rebirth of houses with soul, tailored for gracious family living and endowed with beauty, where less is actually more.

Maybe 2007 will be the year of the birth of the next big trend in American living—the new old house. Now that's worth wishing for. **NOH**

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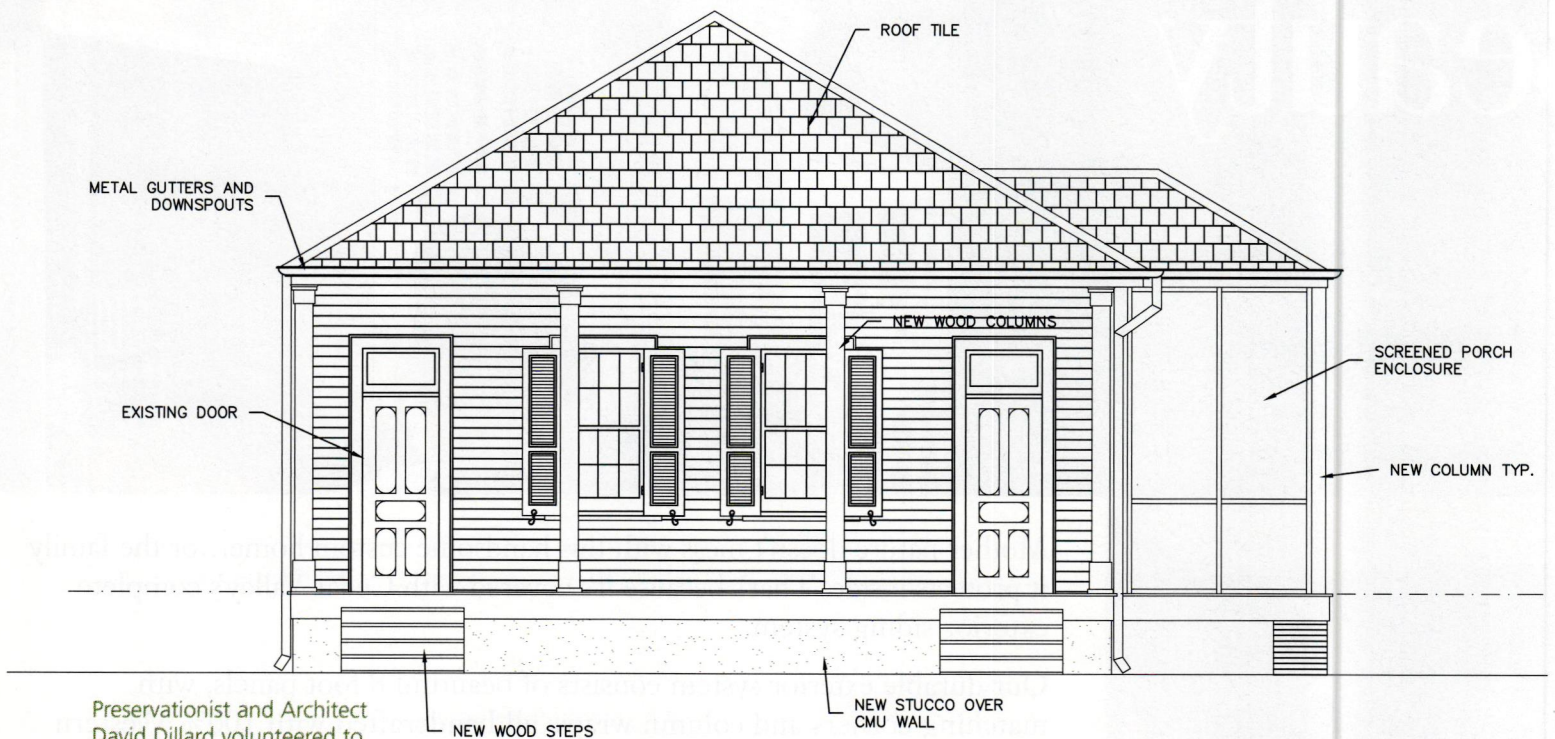
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House of Hope

The Preservation Resources Center of New Orleans saves another house through its Operation Comeback program.

TEXT BY LOGAN WARD



Preservationist and Architect David Dillard volunteered to help fully restore an 1870 shotgun house damaged in Hurricane Katrina.

1 North-Front Elevation
A2.1 3/16" = 1'-0"

To most, the cute little shotgun house on Dauphine Street in the Ninth Ward of New Orleans was a hopeless case. The winds of Hurricane Katrina had shoved a 60-ton pecan tree onto its roof. Then the levee broke, flooding the home with the foul waters of the Industrial Canal. For a year it sat, tree through the roof, roof open to the rains, the whole structure fodder for the region's infamous Formosan termites, which can eat a house to the ground. When David

Dillard saw the home, however, he did not flinch: "You can look at a house like that and say it's a goner, or you can look at it and say, 'Well, we've lost 12 roof rafters. Let's cut some new ones, redeck the roof and get this house back in shape.'"

Dillard is a local preservation architect. He volunteered to help Preservation Resources Center (PRC) of New Orleans and the Traditional Building Exhibition and Conference

with a complete rehabilitation of the house at 4804 Dauphine Street in the neighborhood of Holy Cross. For years, PRC has run a program called Operation Comeback, through which the organization buys and saves threatened historical homes. This home, called the Operation Comeback Demonstration House, will be on display at the Traditional Building Exhibition and Conference in New Orleans in October. Nearly complete, the home is a textbook example of a first-



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The house on Dauphine Street is in the process of being restored thanks to PRC, the Traditional Building Exhibition and Conference, architect David Dillard, and the projects many sponsors who donated materials.

rate restoration. “We want to show the neighborhood that you can save even the most severely damaged buildings,” says Aimee Charbonneau, PRC’s Building Rehabilitation Specialist. Her message: “Bring this one back, and you can bring back anything.”

Shortly after the house at 4804 Dauphine Street was built in 1870, New Orleans experienced a pinnacle of economic development, which led to the construction of many fine homes in a variety of styles, from ornate Italianate homes to creole cottages to shotgun houses (long and narrow with several rooms in a row and no hallways; fire a shotgun from the front door through the back door and you won’t hit a thing). “There was an influx of fantastic craftsmen,” explains Dillard, “including architects and building tradesmen, like carpenters and plasterers, from places like Italy and Ireland.”

For more than a century, many of those wonderful old homes survived in neighborhoods like Holy Cross, Gentilly, Broadmoor, Marigny, and Bywater. But Hurricane Katrina was a big blow, destroying more than 200,000 homes and 18,000 commercial and public buildings in Louisiana. The devastation overwhelmed many homeowners.

“The attitude of a lot of developers and architects is tear it down and build something new,” Dillard says, “but when you do, you lose the historic connections.”

Take this house, for example. It may look like a simple single-story frame house, but its construction technique, unique to New Orleans, reveals much about local history. It’s a bargeboard house, made not with wall studs, but with long, wide, and thick planks salvaged from Mississippi River barges. Standing on end, the inch-and-a-half thick boards function as load-bearing walls (and give extra protection from flying projectiles during Gulf Coast hurricanes). The barges were built up north of virgin fir and floated downriver. With no way to return the barges upriver, the boats were broken up and their recycled wood used for the construction of shotgun shacks and creole cottages, what Dillard calls one of “the original green buildings.”

After conducting historical research to determine which elements of the house were original and what was missing, Dillard proposed a plan to repair the roof and bring the house up to modern-day standards while preserving its history. The house is located in the Holy Cross local historic district, so the plan had to follow strict preservation guidelines and

pass a review by the Historic Districts Landmark Commission. “Although it had been altered over years, it had quite a bit of historic fabric,” says Charbonneau. The guidelines specified that, wherever possible, original fabric—chimneys, flooring, weatherboards, door and window casings, window sashes—must be repaired and reused rather than replaced. Since the front porch columns were missing, having been replaced by steel posts, the team was able to use a comparable substitute material, in this case a cast-resin column that is almost impossible to distinguish from wood (plus it doesn’t rot or appeal to hungry termites).

Dillard added a screened porch onto the side where his research turned up evidence of what was once a breezeway. He removed a nonoriginal shed addition tacked onto the rear of the building, restoring the original doorways at the rear. And he altered the floor plan slightly to create a gracious 2 bedroom, 2 bath single family home. A future plan is to add a two-story outbuilding to take advantage of the large side yard and views of the river levee. On the first level would be a potting shed and storage area. The second level would be an outdoor viewing platform enclosed with operable louvered shutters and a hipped roof to match the main structure.

When visitors pour into the Operation Comeback Demonstration House this October, their jaws will drop when they compare the before pictures to the shotgun house now standing at 4804 Dauphine Street No tree. No roof hole. No signs of flooding.

“We want to draw attention to this neighborhood,” says Dillard. “This is an incredible opportunity for people who love historic homes to see how they can restore them properly.” On a broader level, they’ll learn about human resolve. “We’ve seen a lot of disasters in this city,” adds Dillard. “There’s a tradition of survival in New Orleans. I think as much as anything, Katrina created opportunity.”

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DRAFTING BOARD

Old House, New Technology

Even preservation purists understand the benefits that come from certain new materials and technologies: modern kitchen appliances, for instance, and electrical wiring. While it's important to follow the preservation rule of thumb that says you should repair and reuse any original materials, such as window sashes, moldings, and porch railings, sometimes it makes sense to take advantage of modern science to make your old house function better and last longer. Here are some modern upgrades that were incorporated into the Operation Comeback Demonstration House.

Cast columns. Since the home's front porch columns were missing—replaced with steel posts—architect David Dillard had the freedom to choose a like material to match the appearance of the original wood columns. Instead of wood, which rots and is susceptible to bug infestation, he chose a cast-resin product from HB&G in Troy, Alabama. "They look fantastic, and they're better in the long run," he says.

Synthetic clay roof tiles. Natural roofing materials, such as slate, are exorbitantly expensive. Fiberglass roofing tiles carry no historical significance at all. Dillard's choice was a manmade clay tile that looks great and is warranted for 75 years.

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Hurricane clips. These are a low-tech must for roofs in hurricane-prone regions like the Gulf Coast.

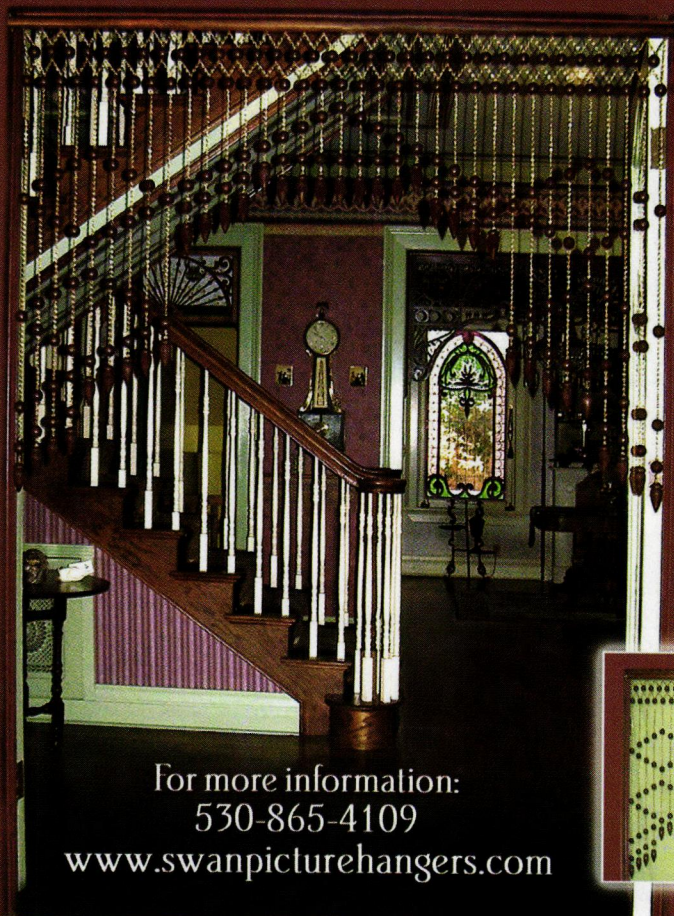
Spray-in foam insulation. Energy-efficiency makes good sense. Period. Especially when it does not compromise the historic fabric of a home. **NOH**

Logan Ward is a freelance writer who lives in Virginia.

For Resources, see page 79.

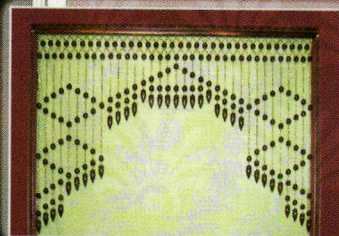
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Sky's the Limit

TEXT BY STEPHEN T. SPEWOCK
PHOTOS BY RUSS MEZIKOVSKY

How one New England roofer has turned time-honored skills into a modern-day business.



Above Marc Green creates roofs in copper and slate. Marc's son Alex is now an apprentice at Custom Copper and Slate. *Opposite* The copper roof Green installed is aging to a tawny brown.

With today's technological advances, it's rare when anything remains the same—if even for a day, let alone a year. The evolving world of do-it-yourself construction is no different: transforming many of us into pull-and-replace automatons, waging war on the skilled craftsmen who continue to persevere in preserving the skills and techniques of their craft passed down from generation to generation.

Fortunately, some trades continue to survive this attack. One such area is that of custom metal roofing. Rarely seen up close and personal—mostly due to being on the top of our homes and thus removed from our immediate line of site—custom metal roofing remains an old craft where the tools and materials haven't changed over the years.

For at least the last 27 of those, Marc Green of Custom Copper and Slate in Medfield, Massachusetts, has stood



apart, gaining respect in the field of “tin-knocking,” or those who work in the medium of metal roofing.

The Apprenticeship

While a junior in high school, Green enrolled himself in a metal shop class where he learned to make metal frames, boxes, and fixtures—a proving ground to hone valuable techniques of working with metal.

With his newly acquired skills, he apprenticed during the summers with the Metal Trades Union in Boston, finding a home in the Cornice Shop, where those with accelerated abilities encamped around the tops of Boston’s oldest buildings repairing ribbing, shelves, and one-of-a-kind details, or tying new flashing into old roofing.

It took Green the next four years to learn all aspects of the various tools and materials required to perform the tasks

on any given work site—and another six years of consistent repetition to get comfortable enough to oversee some of the larger jobs. After ten years of hard work, he began to reap the fruits of his labor: the security of prevailing wages, insurance, paid vacations, a vested pension. Yet the desire to own and operate his own business kept growing.

So he began moonlighting. After securing a steady stream of customers, Green started back to school at night where he could grab a class here and there in business management—all with an eye toward becoming more proficient at eventually running his own company.

“Surprisingly, the time in the classroom gave me more of an appreciation for what I do for a living,” says Green. “I realized that business is all about relationships—whether you’re selling product or services to a client, acting as a general contractor, providing input to an archi-

tect’s designs, or responding to a property manager’s emergency leak—it’s all about being able to talk to people and respond to their needs.”

A Business is Born

After 18 years in the trade, he began his own business with his wife, Sharon, whom he had met on a few job sites. “I was really impressed—she did all the heat and A/C ventilation ductwork, which is pretty technical stuff compared to roofing,” says Green. After getting to know each other, they discovered another common dream: wanting to own and operate their own business. So they agreed to start a company together—with Sharon acting as sole proprietor.

The couple bids for residential, commercial, and government work—including historical restorations. In addition to being sole proprietor, Sharon handles all the office work: filing, doing

bid submittal, scheduling, keeping financial records.

As corporate officer, Green does all the fieldwork: meeting with customers, estimating bids, recruiting employees, assembling and managing crews, coordinating material and labor at different job sites, meeting with boards and trustees for restoration jobs. "Getting to the top of a ladder these days is actually a welcome break: no phones, no clients, no headaches—just me with my hand tools, bending copper or fitting slate."

Moving Forward

As the business found its way through multiple cycles of growing pains, the couple realized the need to set performance and financial goals for the company. By doing so, they could measure their progress and make necessary adjustments to enhance both productivity and profitability, thus bolstering the business.

"We also told each other that no matter what happens, we would not dwell on mistakes or bad turns but would keep looking and moving forward; that if we worked hard enough we wouldn't have to worry about where we stood or where we were headed."

Today the company maintains six full-time employees. During the summer months—the onslaught of peak season—they might hire on as many as 12 people full-time, depending on project volume, size, and complexity.

In fact, they most recently finished an intricate project south of Boston: replacing the entire copper dome of St. Catherine's Greek Orthodox Church. No small task, as the dome measured 35 feet in diameter with the base of the dome almost 70 feet off the ground and the top of the dome another 15 feet higher. Each individual 20-foot panel that bowed in the middle and tapered at the ends had to be formed on the ground and then hoisted into position to be custom fitted and soldered in place.

Diversification of Product

As roofing enters the new millennium, there has been a steady increase in the use of metal—whether red copper, lead-coated copper, or steel—the most popu-

lar being red copper. "There is no replacement for copper. Other materials continue to evolve, but copper continues to remain the same. It has withstood centuries of use as both the most durable and aesthetic," says Green.

Soft to roll, easy to bend, quick to solder, it conforms to any shape for any purpose—whether fitting some flashing or building a custom cupola. The beautiful shine of the red copper eventually gives way to a rich brown, ultimately evolving to a deep green patina—all dependent on exterior forces of the sun, rain, snow, and cold.

In addition to the copper, Green also specializes in installing and repairing slate roofs, which comprises up to 30 percent of his business. Popular throughout New England, the first slate roofs were actually reused ballast from ships sailing over from Europe in the seventeenth century. "Some of the best slate in the world came over from Wales," Green claims. "It has a deep purple hue and has incredible durability—some of those old roofs still exist today without any repairs or replacement."

Today the industry seems to have pulled back a bit, due most in part to the high cost associated with a slate roof. There is a limited supply of the material, which tends to drive prices up—not to mention the amount of labor required to both procure and install it, which is tedious and sometimes dangerous work. Despite the inherent challenges, Green is a big fan. "I just love the idea of working with a natural product that can go right on your roof after sitting in the ground for 60 million years. It is amazing how diverse and varied its colors are even when the slate comes from the same vein." Early on, names for the colors were given in association with the areas the slate was quarried: Washington Red is from Washington City, New York, and Munson Black is from Munson, Maine.

Another big draw to being chosen by discerning clients and architects alike: reusability. In a culture of growing environmental concerns, slate not only lasts for the longest period of time, but it can also be salvaged and reused time and time again, thus, cutting down on the



Green also makes copper gutter systems.

amount of construction debris heading to landfills throughout the country.

Green knows that the concerns of the environmental impact from construction debris disposal are valid. To cut back on the problem, he foresees a growing trend in sustainable homes through solar power. "Technology continues to push the envelope with solar panels—either interlocking or rolled—that can be easily installed on all roof surfaces," he says.

"The energy generated will not only heat and cool your home but also allow you to park your electric car in the garage and plug it into the roof to recharge," says Green. Does he think he'll see it in his lifetime? More than likely, but whether he installs it is another question.

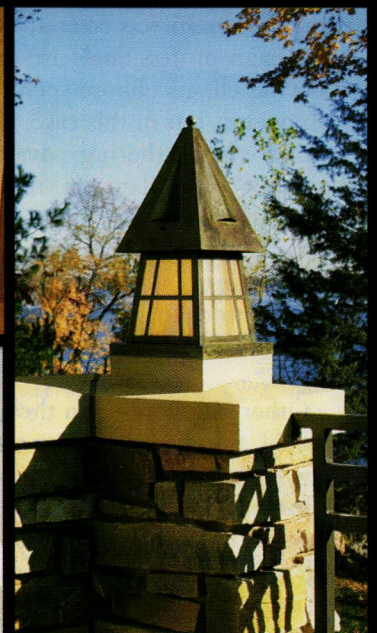
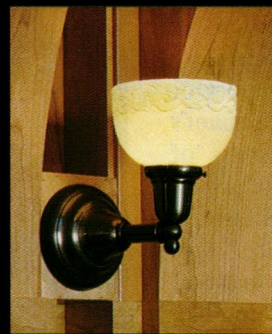
"I'm just a working man. Over time I've learned all that really matters is having a passion for the work. The day I wake up and the passion is gone, I'll just roll over and stay in bed." And if the house he falls asleep in has a roof he installed, he's sure to sleep soundly for years to come. **NOH**

Stephen T. Spewock is a freelance writer living in Boston.

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Salvaging History

TEXT BY CATHLEEN MCCARTHY
PHOTOS BY DURSTON SAYLOR

Architectural salvage can save money and environmental impact while providing historical character.

Not long ago, a client of Fairfax & Sammons Architects found some beautiful antique French doors posted on the Internet and drove to a salvage yard in Pennsylvania to pick them up. Complete with original frames and hardware, the doors became a central design element of the rustic-chic apartment in Greenwich Village the architects created for her.

Design professionals are often leery of having clients choose such important components, but in this case, the client's hunting and gathering saved tens of thousands of dollars on reproduction doors. "My client had beautiful taste, a real vision, and a lot of confidence," says architect Ann Fairfax. "It takes trust in both directions to pull off something like that, but the doors really made the project."

Other salvage used in the apartment included antique beams set in the wall above the doors and reclaimed French roofing tile in the floors, bought from Country Floors in Manhattan. "There is a salvage aspect to most renovations we do," says Fairfax. "Sometimes we even salvage plumbing fixtures and fittings. Something like 60 percent of our landfills are filled with debris from renovations, so we try to convince owners to reuse these things whenever possible."

Antique fireplace mantels—among the first things "pickers" remove from old homes scheduled for demolition—provide a strong dose of historical character to a period-style home. John Milner Architects in Chadds Ford, Pennsylvania, often uses reclaimed Georgian mantelpieces in both farm-

Fairfax & Sammons incorporated these French doors opening onto a garden in a New York City project.

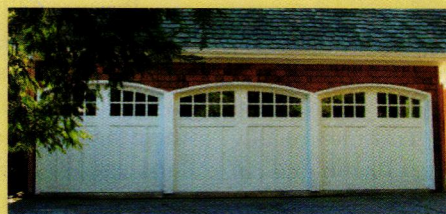




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Fairfax & Sammons mixes new and old with the use of a new limestone chimney and a salvaged bookcase and wine storage unit.

houses and town houses. Elegant hand-carved mantelpieces with denticulated cornices and punched work are readily available nearby, some originated in homes that once lined the Delaware River in Philadelphia. "We buy only from reputable dealers who wouldn't tear things out of an existing house," says John Milner's partner Mary Werner

DeNadai, FAIA.

Because Milner has been in business for three decades and is known for historic, renovations, the firm often gets calls from people looking to dismantle their barns or empty their attics. Not long ago, someone called looking to sell some old white oak flooring found in the attic of their Quaker meetinghouse. Milner and DeNadai purchased and stored the wood for a future project. "Some of the planks are 18 inches wide,"

says DeNadai. "They came from old-growth trees, probably from the 1700s. Virgin wood had so much more integrity than the new-growth wood available today. It's harder, holds up better, and has less tendency to absorb water and warp."

Milner and DeNadai sometimes use resawed antique timber from old barns, usually purchased from Sylvan Brandt of Lititz, Pennsylvania, "It's sometimes difficult to find good "resawn" flooring," she cautions. "If not stored properly, wide planks can cup, meaning curl up, which can't always be repaired. You have to be very careful about that."

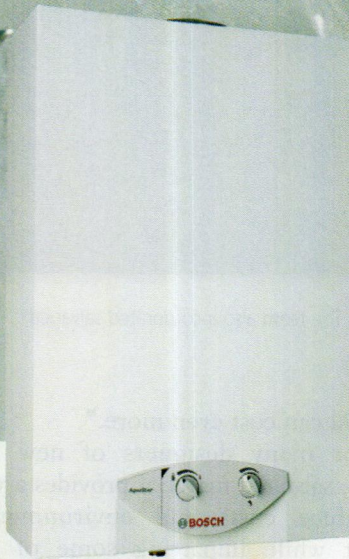
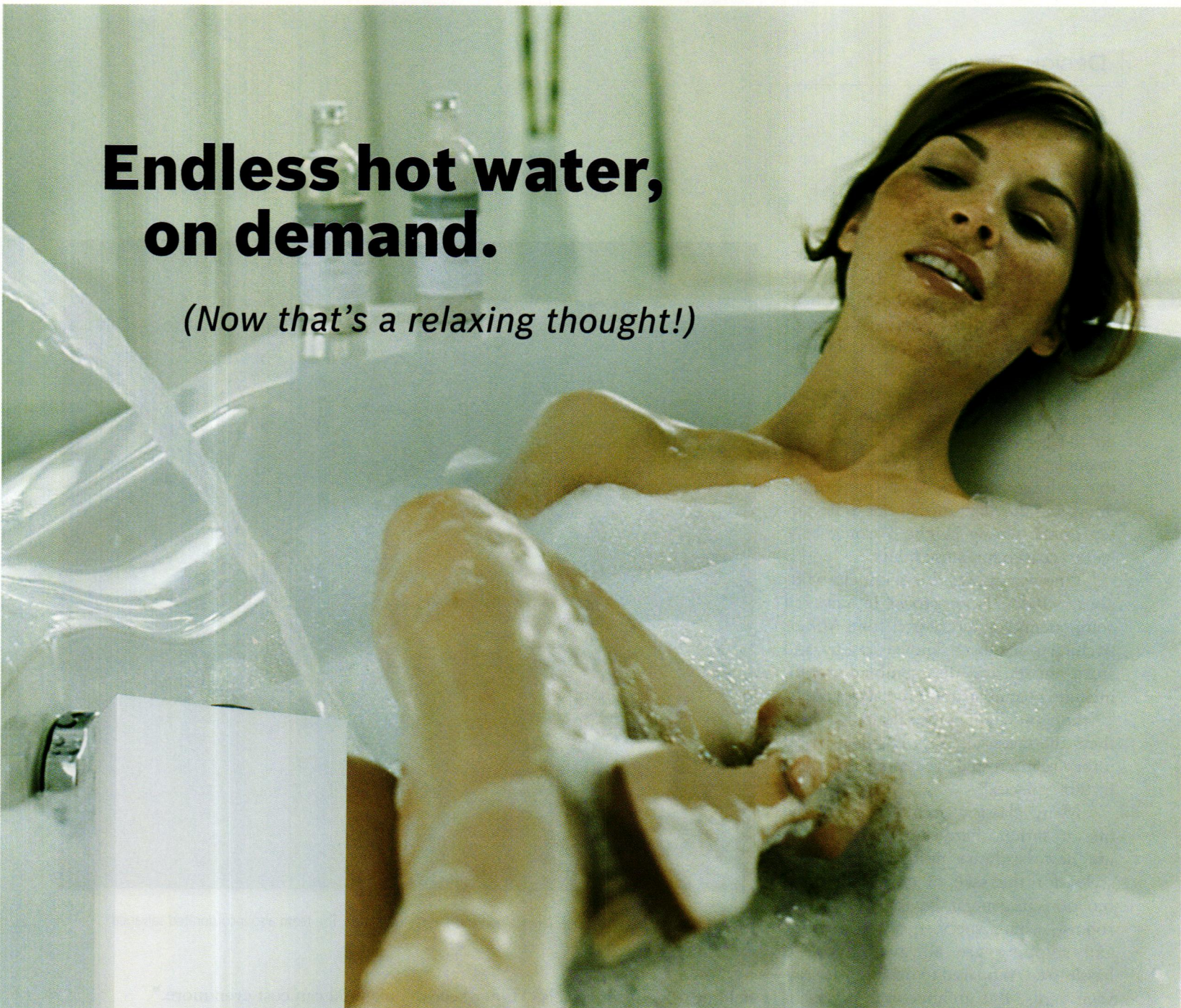
New York architect Gil Schafer III uses wood from old barns to re-create the rustic look of elegant rural farmhouses, but he avoids resawed timber. "When you use recut antique wood, you get the denser, more beautiful grain of trees that were growing for hundreds of years, but you lose all the surface character," says Schafer. "When old wood is cut like new lumber, it has no patina. It's sanded so smooth by a big drum sander that it loses that wonderful rippling effect floors had when they were hand-sanded and—planed. We try to hand-sand each board to maintain that variation in surface so it catches the light in a nice way." Schafer gets much of his salvaged flooring from Antique & Vintage Woods in Pine Plains, New York, and BABA Wood of North Carolina.

For ceilings, Schafer also uses barn beams and siding from Conklin's in Susquehanna, Pennsylvania. "First and foremost, salvaged wood gives a sense of age to new houses. We try to use it not as an isolated artifact but as an integral component, as with the whole ceiling or floor," Schafer says, adding that there is usually no cost savings. "In fact, it adds cost the way we do it, but it's worth it. Our clients are increasingly interested in sustainability, so it is nice to reuse a building material rather than cut down more trees."

As Fairfax's client proved with her French doors, salvage *can* reduce costs in

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some instances. “The Internet has certainly made it a lot easier to find salvage,” says Fairfax, who buys much of hers at the Manhattan retail outlet of Olde Good Things, a salvage operation based in Scranton, Pennsylvania. “The problem with using reclaimed materials is in the search. Hiring your architect to do the legwork can get expensive. For example, if I had spent a day traveling to that salvage yard to find the French doors and they had turned out to be rotten or the wrong height, I would have had to charge for those hours.”

One way to avoid last-minute wild-goose chases is to stockpile salvaged components for future use. John Milner Architects has been known to buy and store an entire disassembled room, including paneling and fireplace mantels. “If the right client comes along, we show them the material,” says DeNadai, “and if they’re interested, we design a room to fit those pieces.”

Many classical architects draw the line at antique hardware, preferring to use new hardware designed in period styles for the sake of consistency and function. In general, buying from showrooms—where specs, quality, quantity, and shipping are all guaranteed—is hassle-free compared to dealing with salvage yards. But architectural salvage is often much cheaper than custom reproductions. One architect lost a mantelpiece to another bidder for \$1,500, but his client insisted on having an exact reproduction made—for \$10,500.

The most cost-effective and environmentally friendly salvage comes from recycling materials on-site. In several projects, Schafer has used stone from excavated fieldstone walls in the veneer of homes. “Instead of going out and quarrying more stone, we’re using the same indigenous material used to build the original homes in the area,” he says.

John Milner Architects recently created an archway over a recessed stone fountain with materials excavated from a



Salvaged beams were used over the kitchen to create a loft space. The team also incorporated salvaged windows into the space.

field nearby. In his travels, Milner keeps an eye out for interesting salvage. If he comes across something spectacular like a carved marble or limestone mantel in Europe, he contacts clients in the States. If someone is interested, he has the material shipped. While vacationing in France recently, Milner came across some antique French limestone floor pavers and hand-carved seventeenth-century doors that ended up in a wine cellar he was designing in Pennsylvania. “The cellar’s newer components are very contemporary, so the contrast is quite dramatic,” says DeNadai. “With this kind of salvage, you’re buying priceless, one-of-a-kind things that could never be reproduced. It’s not inexpensive, but new

material can cost even more.”

For many designers of new old homes, salvaged material provides a way to reduce costs and environmental impact while imparting some of the authenticity and craftsmanship of historic homes. “Our clients come to us because they love old houses but want their house to function like a brand-new one,” says Schafer. “Materials like antique wood and stone help bring old house character without impacting function.” NOH

Cathleen McCarthy is a freelance writer living in Philadelphia.

For Resources, see page 79



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Circle no. 167



Beautiful Bulbs

Autumn is the perfect time to plant these out-of-the-ordinary annuals.

TEXT BY MICHAEL WEISHAN

Thomas Jefferson, at age 66, once wrote to a friend “Though an old man, I am but a young gardener.” Having reached three-quarters of Jefferson’s years, I find that I can agree with his sentiments whole-heartedly. It’s amazing how much you continue to learn to garden as you garden, and even more surprising is how much your horticultural taste alters in the process. Take spring bulbs for instance. Before, in my gardening “yut,” all that mattered to me was punch: lots of bright bands in broad, bold strokes, perfectly personified by hundreds of daffodils pirouetting in the breeze. But as I’ve matured, my preferences have begun to shift. Most noticeably, I no longer have much tolerance for all that slowly decaying foliage that many species like narcissus carry right into high summer. The problem, of course, is that if you attempt to clean up the mess before Mother Nature has her way, you remove the bulb’s ability to store energy for next season. The result is that you’re often stuck with masses of withering leaves right into August, making for a very untidy garden, especially in small urban or suburban spaces where every square foot counts.

Secondly, as I’ve grown older I seem to have acquired a case of yellow fatigue—everywhere you turn in the spring bulb garden you find this same blaring color. Instead, these days I’m much more attracted to a subtle palette: pale pink, white, and that most elusive color in the spring border, blue. Blue is a wonderful hue, one that gently merges brighter shades and provides the perfect foil to competing yellows and golds. The problem is that blue is not all that common in the spring garden, unless you know where to look. Here are four of my



favorite blue bulbs, which not only introduce a delightful element of cerulean into the landscape but also possess the extremely welcome habit of tidily retiring their foliage after flowering.

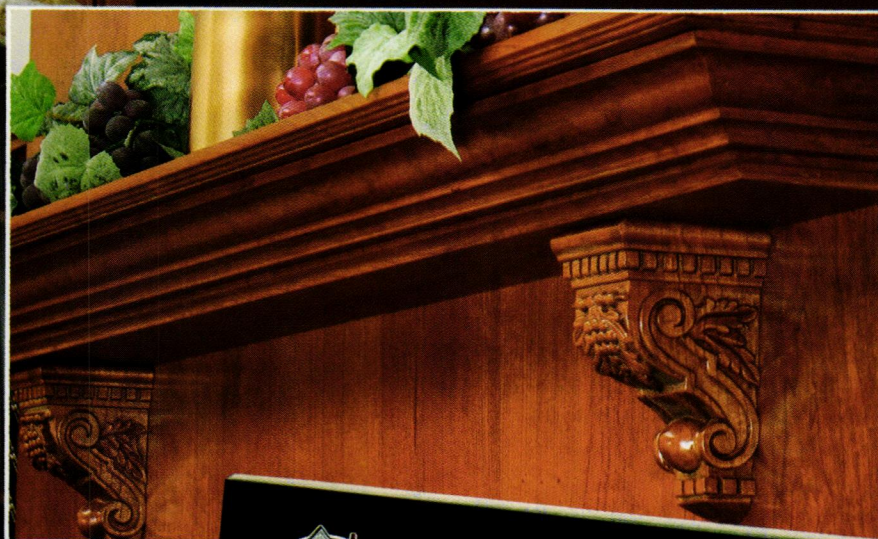
Chionodoxa spp. **Glory of the Snow**

This accommodating species, originally native to the mountains of Turkey and

Chionodoxa spp. *Glory in the Snow* appears in the garden well before the first signs of warm weather approaching.

Greece, deserves to be far better known than it is. For what other bulb, when left to its own devices, will soon spread by seed to form a veritable blue carpet in your backyard? *Glory of the Snow* is a

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direct translation of the Greek, from *chion* "snow" and *doxa* "glory," reflecting quite accurately its habit of appearing long before the weather has warmed. Growing only 4–6" high, chionodoxa is perfect for planting in areas that are sunny in spring—such as under deciduous trees—but shady later on in the year, mixed and mingled among other bulbs and perennials. White forms are also available. Hardy to Zone 4.

***Camassia* spp. Meadow Hyacinth**

This American native is the star of the late spring border, for just as you think the bulb show is completely over in early June, suddenly the 24" flower stalks of camassia burst forth, blanketing the garden in sheets of blue—a small miracle that has the added benefit of covering the messy exit of many of their less considerate bulb cousins. Camassia derives its name from the Native American *quamash*, testifying to the bulb's importance as a food source for the indigenous peoples of the Pacific Northwest. Camassia prefers a sunny site with ample moisture and humus. White and violet forms are also available. Hardy to Zone 4 or 5.

***Hyacinthoides* spp. Bluebells**

Now here's a plant that's almost impossible to kill, has great flower and foliage, and will grow in shade. So why don't we see more of it in American gardens? Perhaps part of the problem is a considerable perplexity in the nomenclature: The species has variously been called *Scilla*, *Agraphis*, *Endymion*, and finally now *Hyacinthoides*, which means "Hyacinth-like." Several subspecies and cultivars, almost inevitably confused in the trade, also add to the problem. Whatever the correct label, the English wised up to the glories of *hyacinthoides* long ago, and this Mediterranean native is now naturalized throughout the woods and pastures of Great Britain, where its annual flowering almost constitutes a national event. This is one of the few bulbs you really can't get enough of, as



bluebells look better when massed in large drifts. Here in my garden, I've teamed them with late emerging perennials like hosta, which makes for a terrific combination, as the bluebells' foliage, though not as persistent as daffodils, does linger a bit longer than I would like. Planted in this manner, the bluebells flower, then the hosta rise over them to gracefully hide their departure. Growing about 12" high, bluebells are hardy to Zone 4 or 5. Pink, white, and dark blue forms are also available.

Ipheion

Here's a species whose name—of unknown derivation—is as unfamiliar as

Camassia spp. Meadow Hyacinth blooms late in the spring and is a wonderful border plant.

its flower to stateside gardeners. That's a shame, for like bluebells, this South American native is well known in Europe. Growing about 8" tall, the lilac-blue flowers resemble those of paperwhites and are lightly scented. (The leaves, curiously enough, smell like garlic when crushed—a great incentive to tread carefully in the garden.) A touch invasive in warm climates, *ipheion* will spread rapidly where winters are mild and is useful for filling in between shrubs such as rhododendrons and azaleas.



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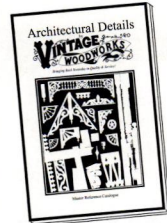
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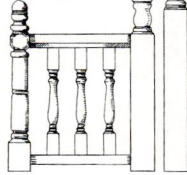
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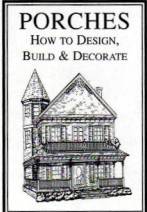
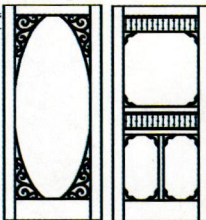


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HEIRLOOM GARDENS



Above left Bluebells are hardy plant and will even grow in shade. Above right Ipheion's foliage appears in the fall and can bloom from winter to late spring depending on your time zone.

Ipheion differs from the other bulbs listed here in that the foliage often appears in the fall. Bloom time is anywhere from winter to late spring, depending on your location. Purple, white, violet, and lavender cultivars exist. Hardy to Zone 6.

Finally, a word of general bulb advice. Remember that although all these species are labeled "spring" bulbs, the term refers to the flowering, not planting time. Spring bulbs are only available in the fall, for autumn planting. Though the exact methodology varies by species, in general, most bulbs are set three to four times deeper than their diameter and benefit from good garden soil supplemented with a handful of bone meal or super phosphate mixed in. While planting can occur anytime until the ground freezes (and many's the occasion I've been running around the yard madly scraping off a coating of snow to plant the last of my bulbs), waiting to the last moment both noticeably increases your blood pressure and noticeably decreases your chances of success next spring. It's

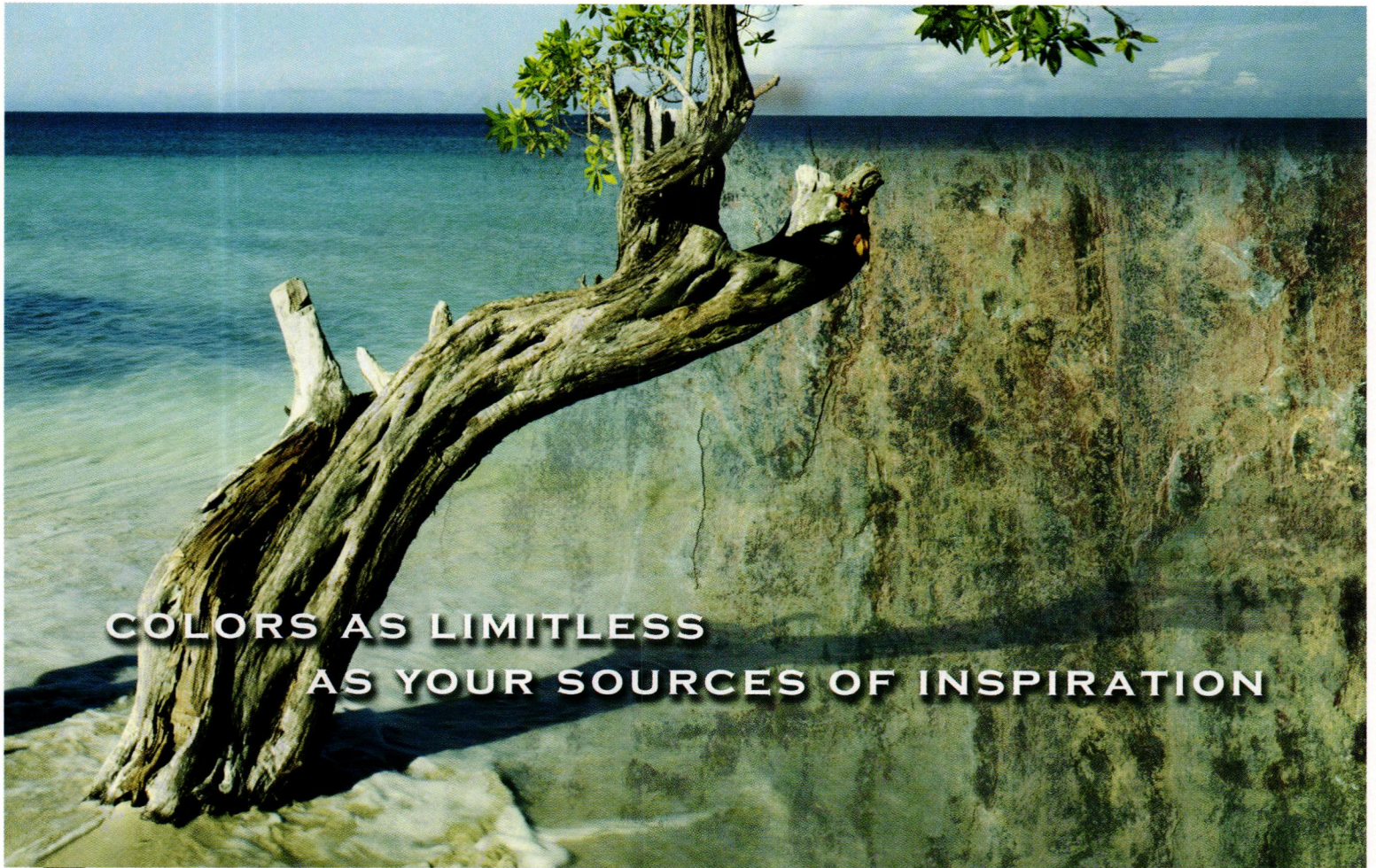
much better to plant your bulbs just after the first frost, when the ground is still warm and workable and the bulbs have sufficient time to develop healthy roots before winter sets in. **NOH**

Sources: Brent and Becky's Bulbs, brentandbeckysbulbs.com, and McClure and Zimmerman, mzbulb.com, both carry the varieties listed above as well as many other delectable cultivars. Experiment and enjoy!

For further reading: John Bryon's titled *Bulbs* (Timber Press, 2002) is the definitive volume on all things bulb related.

Michael Weishan is a freelance writer and owner of Michael Weishan & Associates. He has authored many books including: The New Traditional Garden, and The Victory Garden Gardening Guide. Weishan lives west of Boston surrounded by 3 acres of gardens.

For Resources, see page 79.



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Historically Inspired Hardware

A look at what's hot in knobs, levers, and handles for the new old house.

PRODUCED BY NANCY E. BERRY

1 Delicate Oval

This oval-shaped knob is a reproduction from a nineteenth-century design. Made by E. R. Butler & Co. www.erbutler.com



1

2 Bennington Brown

This antique brown porcelain knob was popular in country houses in the mid-nineteenth century. Restoration Resources in Boston is a great place to find antique pieces. www.restorationresources.com



2

3 Mid-Century Modern

This collection of hardware from Baldwin's Estate line is a handsome addition to mid-century Modern houses that are now becoming classics themselves. www.baldwinhardware.com



3

4 Knock, Knock

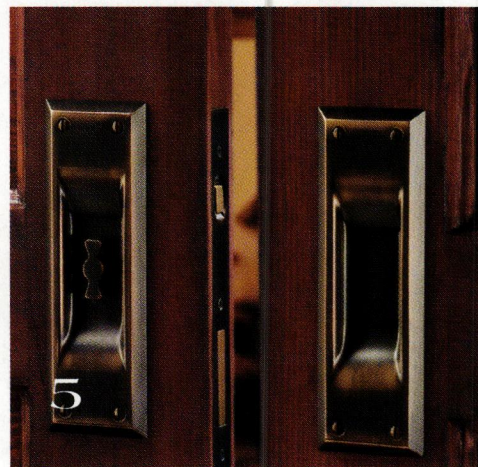
E. R. Butler recreates this stunning doorknocker from the Regency period. It would look perfect on any Classical new old house. Shown here in solid brass. www.erbutler.com



4

5 Pocket Hardware

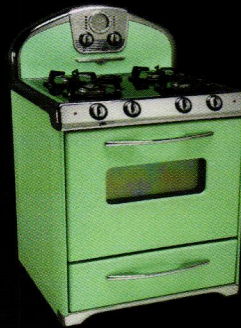
Rejuvenation has just added early twentieth-century pocket door hardware to its collection for this fall. The hardware here is shown in a bronze finish. www.rejuvenation.com



5

For more information, see page 79.

A TASTE FOR THE EXTRAORDINARY



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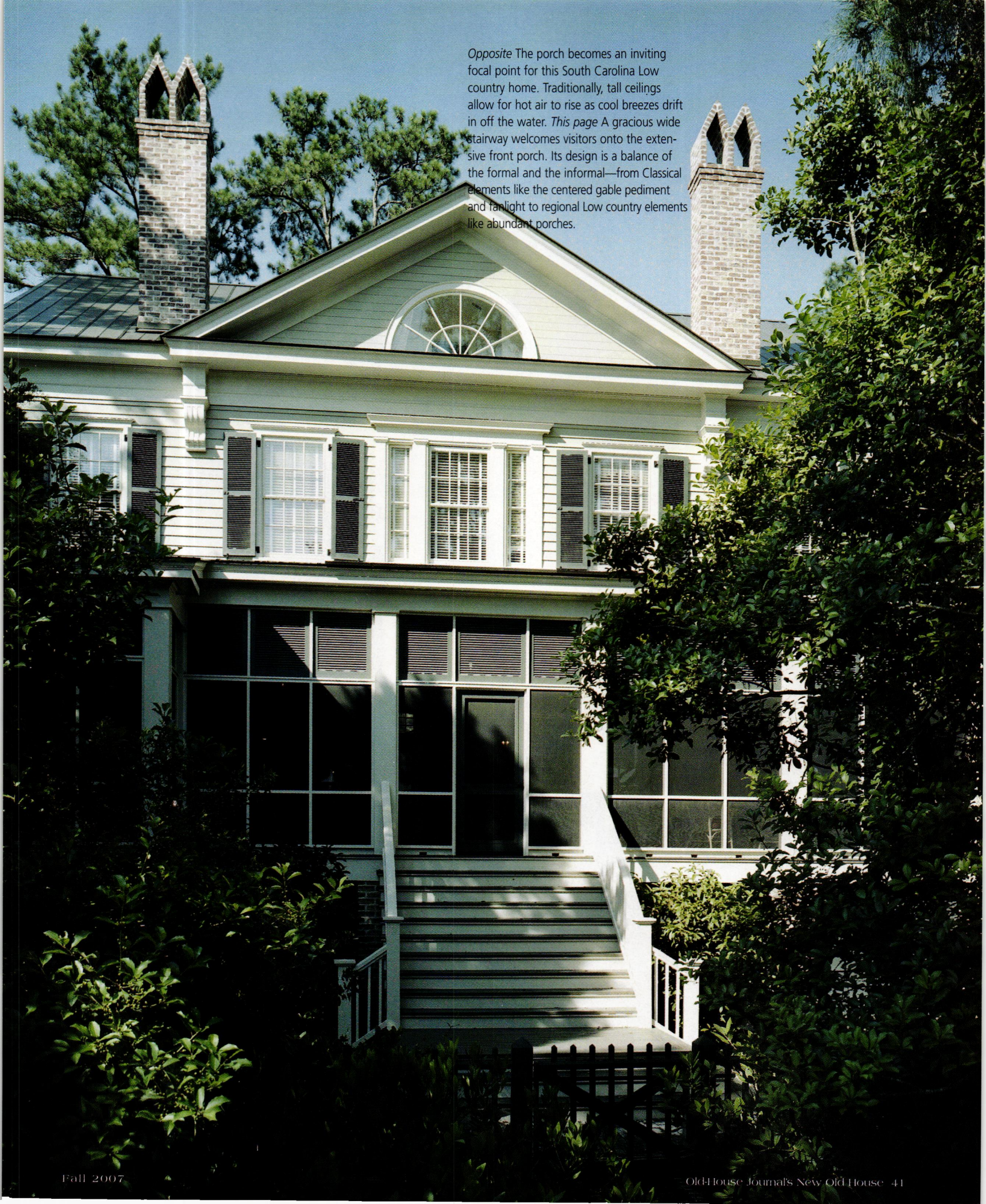
Carolina Living

Historical Concepts calls on regional style to create a Southern dwelling.

TEXT BY SALLY LAMOTTE CRANE PHOTOS BY RICHARD LEO JOHNSON



Opposite The porch becomes an inviting focal point for this South Carolina Low country home. Traditionally, tall ceilings allow for hot air to rise as cool breezes drift in off the water. *This page* A gracious wide stairway welcomes visitors onto the extensive front porch. Its design is a balance of the formal and the informal—from Classical elements like the centered gable pediment and fanlight to regional Low country elements like abundant porches.







Spring Island, once an isolated sea island in South Carolina Low country midway between Hilton Head and the historic town of Beaufort, is now a private community of roughly 200 families who maintain a strong ethic dedicated to preserving its natural environment. Encircled by the Colleton and Chechessee Rivers, almost 40 percent of the island's 3,000 acres has been set aside as a nature preserve overseen by the Spring Island Trust and three staff naturalists.

In this bucolic setting, a New Jersey family built a three-story vacation home—part Classical and part Low country vernacular in style—that fully embraces its natural surroundings, inviting bird songs and river breezes onto their gracious wrap-around screen porch and, when its triple-hung windows are fully raised, into their prime living and dining spaces.

Upon buying their lot, perched on a bluff overlooking Chechessee River, the homeowners turned to Historical Concepts of Peachtree City, Georgia, an architectural firm that works on a collaborative team basis, blending traditional styles with the design needs of modern living. “We design houses that meet expectations of contemporary lifestyles, but we want it to look from the outside that it has been there all along,” says architect Aaron Daily, a partner who served as project manager leading the design team.

Daily, along with Jim Strickland, firm founder and design principal, and four other team members looked to historic Charleston architecture for partial inspiration for addressing the unique needs of this pie-shaped lot. Just over a quarter acre in size, the Spring Island site seemed a natural fit for the Charleston “single house with side porch” style of residence, especially adapting such traits as placing the house sideways with its narrow end facing the driveway and relying on lengthy, prominent porches for both home entry and for living space.

Rather than facing the street, historic Charleston “single houses” were typically one room deep and were situated sideways facing their gardens, with their back ends against a side property line, allowing for the maximum use of a tight lot space. Their narrow sides faced the street, and entry was from a street doorway onto a long porch or “piazza” that went the length of the house. Serving as a transitional element between a house and its cultivated garden, the piazza was essentially an outdoor room, providing shade in the subtropical heat and ven-

An open floor plan allows for great flow between the dining, foyer, and prime living spaces. When fully opened, the triple-hung windows allow passage onto the porch beyond, providing exceptional circulation while entertaining. The formal entry is balanced by the more informal, contemporary floor plan.



Left A view of the living room space from the paneled library—its pocket doors can shut to provide solitude to engrossed readers. An elegant fireplace anchors the conversational area of the room. Right A formal Palladian window provides extensive light to the second-floor landing; its two side-facing panels hold unexpected faux mirrors. Below The entry level stairs descend to a garage and storage level.







tilation with evening sea breezes.

Regional Low country architecture also influenced the style of this Spring Island residence. "We took that theme," says Daily, "and used extensive porches, windows, and a reliance on subtle, essential building materials that blend with the natural landscape." Throughout the 4,300-square-foot house, they used solid wood frame and panel walls, antique heart pine floors, cypress doors, and clapboard siding.

"The design for this house was essentially lot-driven," says Daily. Narrower at the front and with a tight setback on one side, the lot allowed the architects only a limited footprint on which to place an ambitious number of rooms to meet the homeowners' needs. The result was to build upward, creating three stories of living space. The ground level, because of flood plain restrictions, was limited to parking and storage underneath the main living space.

One particular challenge the architects faced was how to incorporate a grand stairway while also achieving the room sizes that the homeowners desired within this small building footprint. Their creative solution was to build a cantilever stairway that protrudes out from the back wall on the main floor level, encroaching upon the setback, to achieve an impressive staircase. A classical Palladian window graces the second-floor landing complete with cleverly mirrored faux windows on either side, reflecting light into unexpected spaces.

Other classical features abound—the centered gable pediment with fanlight on the front facade, the traditional front door with transom and sidelights, the exterior three-part windows, and the six traditional, triple-hung windows that lead from the dining and living spaces to the screened porch. When the two lower sashes are fully opened, their 7-foot clearance allows passage between the spaces, nearly doubling the amount of living space. While formal in nature, many of the classical elements blend comfortably with the more relaxed, contemporary open floor plan, which allows great flow through the living, foyer, and dining spaces. By simplifying many of the classical details, such as in the subtle pilasters and square columns, the home becomes more informal. "We describe it as casual elegance," says Daily. "We use a lot of flat pieces of trim with maybe a little bead detail, kind of a hint of the classical elements."

A library and adjacent sun room offer more private space to the homeowners, both avid readers. Also on the first floor, the kitchen, described by Daily as a "casual cook's" kitchen, provides views of a community boat landing below. On the sec-

The homeowners desired the kitchen to be modest in scale, more of a "casual cook's kitchen" according to project architect, Aaron Daily. Meals are eaten in the adjacent dining room or on the screen porch. The kitchen provides views of a small community boat landing situated below.





ond floor is the master suite, including a porch with views of the river, and two smaller guest bedrooms with baths. The third, or attic floor, with its painted floor design, provides two bedrooms with French doors that open up to create a large suite with a shared bath. From this informal setting, the river views are spectacular.

Included among this home's unique design features are the enclosed porches that project from the sides and rear of the building. While the main mass of the structure is clad in clapboard, Daily says, "These porches are enclosed in simplified flat trim and wood boards butted together. We make it look as if the porch was added on later. We call it 'generational architecture,' in which we make up a fictional history of how a house has grown over time. It allows us the freedom to depart from the style of the main body of the house—to change the style and scale of it. Our goal is to build houses that give the impression of having been there a long time."

"We make sure that we adhere to traditional details for traditional styles," says Daily. "We ensure that the foundation and chimney bricks are set properly, that the mortar is the right color, and that it is wiped away in the fashion that it would have been years ago. We are adamant that the window sills are the proper thickness and are built the old way. At all costs, we try to avoid the house looking new."


Daily says that the wood used throughout the house, the reclaimed, rough-sawed heart pine on the floors and the yellow pine, poplar, and cypress used for walls and doors, "addresses the senses when you walk into this house and gives it the feel of an old home. How it looks, feels, and smells—all of that comes into play."

Historical Concepts only works with a select group of contractors. "They are not builders, but craftspeople," says the architect. "They take the time and energy to do it right, and they have helped perpetuate our reputation." The builder of this Spring Island home is Clements Construction of Frogmore, South Carolina. **NOH**

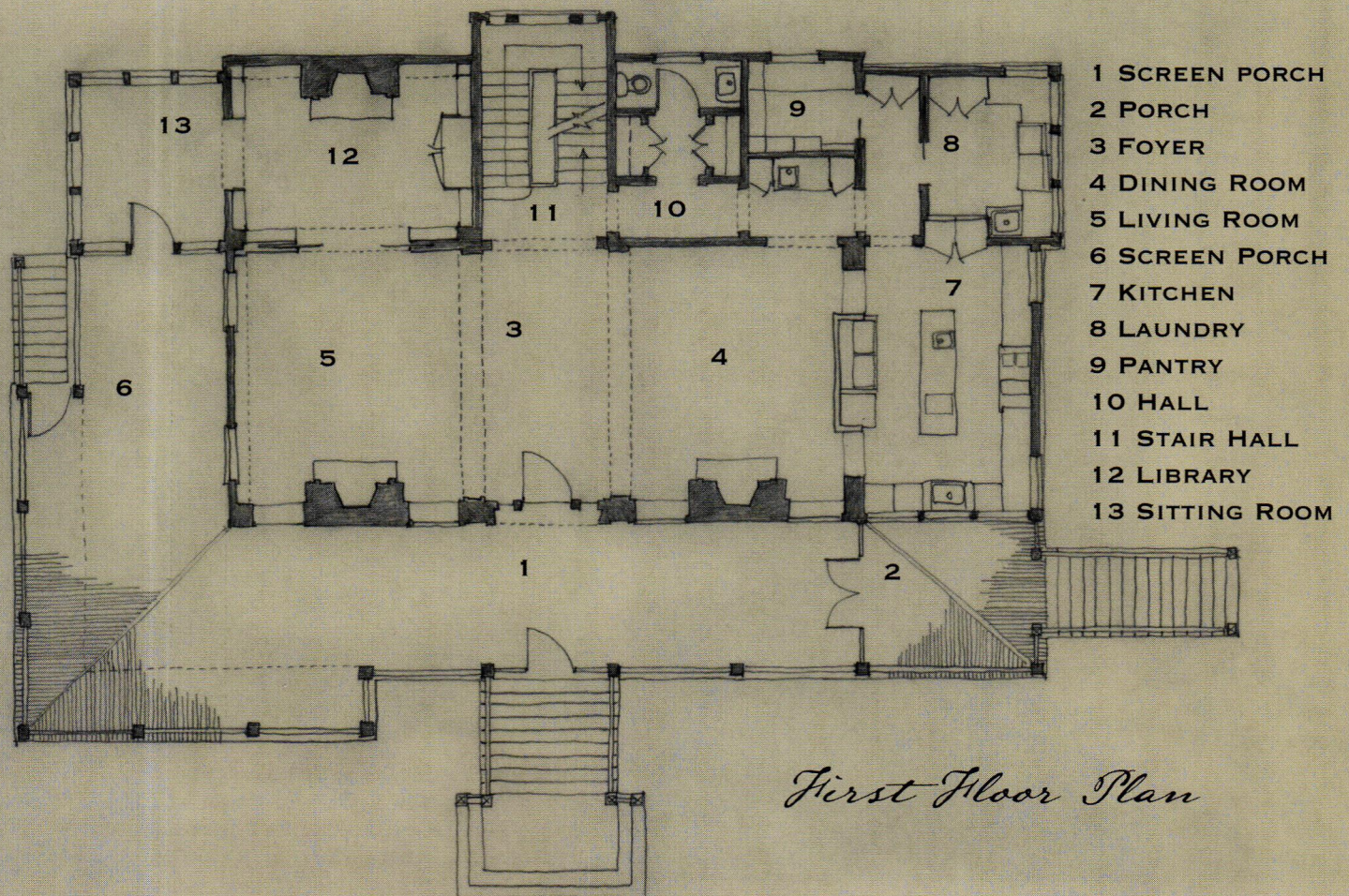
Sally LaMotte Crane is a freelance writer and editor who lives along the coast of Maine.

For Resources, see page 79.

Three bedrooms are situated on the second floor level, each with a private bath. *Opposite* In the first guest room, built-in cabinets and a window seat provide a transition into the bath space. *Upper left* The texture of the rough-sawed, heart pine floors used throughout the house really stands out in the master bath, which is suffused with natural light and provides a fine view. *Bottom left* Alongside the fireplace, several cozy reading spaces can be enjoyed in the second guest room.



A large seating area on the ground floor creates one of several "outdoor rooms" along the shoreline of Chechessee River. Louvers above the screens help block direct sunlight and vent warm air as it rises. *Right* This riverside view of the home emphasizes the wraparound screened porch below and the private second-story porch attached to the master suite above. *Far left* The homeowners often enjoy early morning coffee on their private porch overlooking the river.

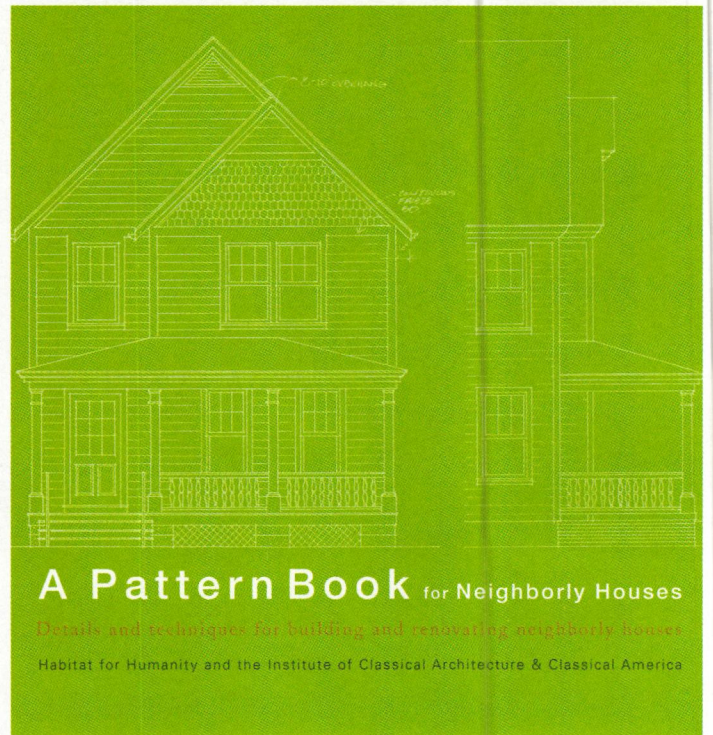


By the Book

TEXT BY BETHANY LYTTLE PHOTOS BY ANDY OLENICK



The Institute of Classical Architecture & Classical America teams with Habitat for Humanity to create a pattern book for affordable housing.



This page and opposite This modest but well-proportioned Greek Revival farmhouse in Rochester, New York, is one of the first houses built using the pattern book developed by Habitat for Humanity and the Institute of Classical Architecture & Classical America. The pattern book will be published this fall.



*S*ituated overlooking a charming town square in the historic Susan B. Anthony neighborhood of Rochester, New York, is a house whose classic columns and wraparound porch invite appreciative glances from neighbors and passersby. With its Greek Revival architectural details, the dwelling appears to have been here for decades. In truth, it is less than a year old. And what's more, it was built by female volunteers in only six months.

Seamlessly integrated into a neighborhood of houses that date to the turn of the twentieth century, the three-bedroom, 1,400-square-foot house, which cost about \$90,000 to build, is the product of a partnership between Habitat for Humanity International (HFHI) and the Institute of Classical Architecture & Classical America (ICA&CA). "The goal of the project," says Paul Gunther, president of ICA&CA, "is to usher the nobility, practicality, beauty, and dignity of classical design into the realm of affordable housing." The idea, which was initially funded by a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts, incorporates the strictures and standards set out by Habitat for Humanity International but elaborates on design elements in ways that result in a house that contributes to community development by enhancing the neighborhood in which it is built.

To date, Habitat houses have been built with an emphasis on shelter. "What we recognized early on in the project was that shelter and good design needn't be mutually exclusive," says New York City architect Richard Cameron of Ariel, LLC,

who conceived the design. "We were committed to finding a way to develop a well-designed house that could be offered at a Habitat price point." The design inspiration began with small Greek Revival farmhouses, which can be found in great numbers in areas of Upstate New York. "These houses are simple in style, but they have a real presence and an abiding authority," explains Cameron. "The style emphasizes proportion and scale rather than complex geometries, something that's important not only to a budget but to the volunteers, most of whom are taught on-site to do construction for the first time."

For architects who typically work with a budget of about \$1,000 per square foot, designing for \$80 per square foot was a challenge. Off-the-shelf rather than custom components had to be used, and all of the windows, doors, and flooring were stock. But in the end, attention to balance and proportion resulted in a house that anyone would be pleased to inhabit. "From the very first day, it made us so happy," says homeowner Nilsa Rivera, 24, the local resident who was selected to live there with her young daughter and fiance. Commenting on the vitality implicit in the lives now lived in this house, Gunther comments: "Nothing is more exciting than taking something out of the realm of ideas and into real-world applications. Habitat is an extraordinary organization, and it's so exciting to be able to contribute in new ways to its vision."

Beginning in fall 2007, this exciting new approach to affordable living spaces that are traditional and classically inspired will be made accessible in the form of a pattern book,



which will feature hundreds of classical building designs for use by HFHI affiliates and, eventually, the general population. The *Pattern Book* will serve as a resource for anyone seeking practical yet beautiful architectural solutions on a tight budget. In its pages, designs, blueprints, and instruction via an electronic course offered through Habitat University will be made available. Designed to fit within the contextual profile of local stylistic vernaculars, the homes found in these pages are designed to enhance the neighborhoods in which they are built, express respect for local preservation efforts, and lend an element of beauty to the everyday experiences of the eventual homeowners.

Ray Gindroz, founder of Urban Design Associates, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, who is a national leader in innovative urban planning and the revival of pattern books, is directing this aspect of the project along with principal and key contributor, Eric Osth. "The pattern book is a way to give people ownership, to get them involved in the design," says Osth. "Pattern books have a rich and ancient history that dates back thousands of years. Whether one is hearkening to Vitruvius or to the Sears Houses of more recent decades, these books disseminate the basic principles of style and design."

A Pattern Book for Neighborly Houses, which will be broken into chapters by architectural and regional style, will also include landscaping tips, site guidance, and density considerations. The book will be distributed at no charge to all Habitat affiliates, as well as to public and private community development agencies and individual policymakers who affect local

land use at various levels of authority. Its pages will include step-by-step instructions for identifying the appropriate building types for a given neighborhood or location, images of exemplary existing houses and designs of new prototypes, and a variety of plans, styles, and motifs that can be selected for application. In addition, it will include a discussion of the role that individual houses play in the creation of neighborhoods, local traditions, and neighborhood profiles.

Eventually, the book will also be available to the general public online as a downloadable file, something that Osth considers timely. "By 2030, the United States is expected to double its square footage in building, and the majority of that building will occur in the middle and affordable housing market level. So we see this as an opportunity to create walkable, sustainable neighborhoods with genuine senses of community."


The Rochester house is at the forefront of this movement. In the early evening light, with its windows aglow (symbols of its relevance and vitality) it's difficult to imagine a nicer place to call home. "When you design a harmonious structure, it will have a certain feeling," says Cameron. "Whether its columns are inexpensive or expensive, the reference to antiquity remains, and in the hierarchy of buildings, this house shares a commonality with even the grandest architectural wonders." ^{NOH}

Bethany Lyttle is a freelance writer living in New York.

For more information, visit www.theclassicist.org.



This page The pattern book will show how Habitat houses can be designed to fit into existing neighborhoods. *Opposite* This bungalow-style Habitat for Humanity house is one example of how these new houses can blend into older communities.

A two-story white Colonial Revival house with a portico, dark shutters, and a stone chimney. The house features a classic entry portico with a pediment supported by four white columns. The windows are adorned with dark shutters. A stone chimney is visible on the roof. The house is surrounded by a lush green lawn and manicured shrubs.

One hallmark of a newer Colonial Revival-style home is its entry portico with a classically influenced set of columns, and a door with a transom flanked by sidelight windows. The newer bluestone steps and retaining walls look "as if" modern renovations were made to the 1870 Colonial. *Opposite* The classic Colonial siding is clapboard; it has a simple profile and more refined look than other types of siding. The Weekses' home is entirely faced with white clapboard to give it a clean silhouette against a lush country landscape.

An Old New England Tale



A nostalgic aura settles over this new and eclectic Connecticut Colonial Revival-style home designed by Austin Patterson Disston Architects.

TEXT BY MARILYN ZELINSKY-SYARTO PHOTOS BY JONATHAN WALLEN



Not every town in Connecticut retains its old-fashioned charm as well as Wilton. It's a relief to drive into this conservative community after passing through other nearby New England towns taken over by new construction, which typically dominates the landscape rather than naturally nests in the peaks and valleys. An older home has a distinguishable way of looking as if its architecture evolved over time. As a family's wealth and stature increased, so did the number of its home's stories, wings, and rooms. Yet, somehow, the additions of an antique home nestle together to form a complex history that looks solidly rooted in its landscape. A new home down the street, however, may have as many stories, wings, and rooms as its more established neighbor, but the entire house is often built at the same time, usually with an awkward scale and quality-challenged materials cobbled together (thanks in part to the discretion of a time- and money-strapped developer) to create a structure that seems to jut up and out of its immature landscaping.

But one Connecticut homeowner refused to go that route with new construction and instead opted to have a home carefully designed and integrated into the scenery to emulate the charm and ease of scale of the New England Colonial house in which he grew up in.

The Colonial's character, which is understood by many to be the ideal symbol of where a family takes root and has a stable, traditional American upbringing, was never lost on homeowner Joshua Weeks, and he wanted the same for his own children. The first step Weeks took in realizing his vision was to drive around the surrounding towns with architect Stuart Disston, principal architect, with Austin Patterson Disston, to drink in the visual elements of traditional eighteenth-century New England homes. After hours spent driving throughout Fairfield, Ridgefield, Wilton, and other Fairfield County communities rich with historical Colonial, Georgian, and Federal buildings, they sat down to review books (better known as "bibles" in many an architect's office) in Disston's library from the National Historic Society, such as *Spirit of New England*, *Village Architecture of Early New England: A Treasury of Fine*

Opposite Antique oak floors grace the Georgian- and Adamesque-inspired foyer. As a fictional family's wealth grew, an architect would have added more elaborate trim, such as the boldly fluted Doric pilasters and chair rails. The Weekses entertain often in this formal dining space. The massive bay window was crafted with traditional true divided lights, meaning each glass piece is an individual straight pane versus using the more contemporary method of installing one entire piece of bowed glass. Simple antique furniture, such as this card table, graces each room throughout the home.





Construction Design, and Miniature Rooms: The Thorne Rooms at the Art Institute of Chicago. By marrying ideas from both books and road trips, Disston and Weeks buttoned down elements of an 1870s Colonial Revival–style home that would ultimately emerge on a vacant rolling hill overlooking a reservoir in the middle of Wilton.

The home is a mix of classic Colonial elements, and looks as if it's been a well-kept local fixture that has evolved its simple antiqued texture over the past century. It's built on a loosely defined "as if" story. The home began as an eighteenth-century farmhouse that morphed into a Colonial Revival home—the most popular style in America's history that took root in the late 1870s—and then into its present state "as if" the family or subsequent homeowners prospered over time, explains Disston. "Historically, it means that the house's dressed-up features, such as its elegant portico and more formal architectural detailing and elements inside and out, would have been added later on," the architect adds.

In the unceremonious "as if" story of the Weekses' house, initially the structure would have begun its life in the early to mid-1880s as a single-depth main house that then expanded to a double depth with an ell extending out the side of the original volume—a reflection of the newly prospering lifestyle of the homeowners. New England "additive architecture," or continuous additions, mean the house would take on a rambling look as time marched forward. The additive look and feel to the Weekses' house means, there were no strict rules in its design. "For example, the number of windowlights varies throughout the home—there are 6-over-6, 8-over-8, and 12-over-12," says Disston. "The home's design is more eclectic in nature than academically defined, just as you find typical additive architecture in New England."

However, true to Colonial farmhouse form, the central volume is emphasized in size and detail more than its smaller additions extending from the main home's sides. The connector and back wing drop down in scale, have lower roof lines and less ornamentation, and are set back a few feet from the main facade. The outbuilding, which is a high-tech garage disguised as a post-and-beam barn also follows the same form. Though the exact vernacular of the house is purposely vague, the white clapboard siding ties together what looks like several generations of additions.

Inside, the make-believe history of the home continues

Opposite The study is painted a hunter green and has a view of a serene pond. *This page above* The mantel surround in the study has colonial detailing. *Below* The kitchen is designed in traditional to farmhouse style; however if the kitchen were kept historically accurate, the space would have been much larger with a massive hearth, explains Disston. The walls are surfaced with classic white subway tile.



The Weekses enjoy their pristine backyard—complete with a heated inground pool. Note the detailed brick work on the two chimneys.







Narrow French doors appear less modern in their look, especially with a transom and sidelights.

with a blend of classic elements from earlier Georgian and Adam styles. The interiors are dressed up, says Disston, to emulate the growing prosperity of the fictional farmhouse homeowner. Prosperity in the 1800s would have created a demand for architects and millworkers to create these more elaborate details found indoors. The interior foyer is influenced by elements that are at once Adamesque, Georgian, and even Greek Revival with classically influenced fluted flat columns framing wide entries and traditional hurricane lamps gracing its vaulted ceiling. As part of the additive architectural story, the breakfast room at the back of the home, with its huge bay window, would have been built on in the 1940s, along with a sunroom addition topped by a Georgian-style balustraded deck of the master bedroom, which overlooks the reservoir.

As with most new old homes, the Weekses' house is packed with modern-day amenities, such as a full media room, game room, and a private bath with each bedroom, including details such as halogen and high hat lights. Even the family room is situated close to the kitchen in keeping with most of today's homeowners' preferences. But the most modern—and necessary—amenity is the barn, which serves as a garage outfitted with automatic lifts to accommodate several cars. Weeks preferred that the garage retreat from the front of the house and not become the focal point of the structure. Today's new homes celebrate the garage with volumes that tend to overpower the main house, placed in prominent positions as a way to show the modern family's perceived wealth.

The Weekses' home is new, but it's a house with integrity and rich with appropriate historical interpretations crafted from the finest quality materials, which tied together allows a twenty-first-century family to live in what looks like a vestige from the eighteenth century. For the Weekses, living with history did not mean living in cramped and inefficient rooms. "If we followed a strict historical pattern, we would have limited the program requirements of the house that were needed for this family's lifestyle," says Disston. "But with additive architecture, we were able to adapt new construction so it looks like it naturally grew over time." **NOH**

Marilyn Zelinsky-Syarto is a freelance home design writer and editor living in Connecticut.

For Resources, see page 79.

Above The front of this Colonial is clearly more formal than the back, where an informal atmosphere is created with what looks to be a "newly added" bluestone patio and sets of French doors. The window placements on the back of older Colonials with numerous additions are more relaxed than in the front of the house. *Below* There is not a nail in the framing of the outbuilding. Since the homeowner owns an auto dealership, naturally, he collects cars. The barn is a garage that includes a well-oiled lift mechanism that allows him to house eight to nine cars at once in the space.



Kitchen Detail

Ankie Barnes of Barnes Vanze Architects in Washington, D.C., creates a new old kitchen in Maryland drawing on traditional elements.

TEXT BY JENNIFER SPERRY PHOTOS BY MARCO PROZZO



This page The kitchen is bright and cheery with a farmhouse table center stage. *Opposite* Barnes Vanze chose to cover the walls with beadboard painted a light blue to offset the china.





After deciding to make their 1876 Maryland home a permanent residence, the owners knew a kitchen update was in order. “They wanted to upgrade but also to keep the kitchen in spirit with the old house and surrounding land. They did not want a built-in, modern kitchen; they wanted it to feel like a room,” explains principal architect Ankie Barnes of Barnes Vanze Architects in Washington, D.C., who designed aspects of the kitchen renovation as well as other additions/renovations to the house and a new outbuilding on the property.

One quick glance around the completed kitchen reveals mismatched antique chairs, a generous farmhouse table, a Currier and Ives print, and a vintage chandelier, among other curiosities. A closer inspection unearths state-of-the-art appliances, such as a Viking range and Sub-Zero fridge, proving that the charming space is in fact a kitchen—not a living or dining room. It is this initial uncertainty, this hesitation, regarding the room’s identity that proves the owners and architect achieved their goal of a modern kitchen visually rooted in the property’s historical, atmosphere.

Located on Maryland’s eastern shore, the tidewater farmhouse has evolved over the years from its one-room-wide core courtesy of additions and a Gothic renovation in the 1900s. “We wanted the kitchen, too, to look as though it had changed and developed over time,” says the owner. The success of this endeavor is evident in the details, which exhibit a subtle blend of design periods: Mahogany counters are reminiscent of the traditional butler’s pantries in late Victorian and bungalow homes and an ironware collection, old-fashioned washstand,

and chicken and rooster prints reflect the farmhouse identity. The Williamsburg “Galt House” blue paint in the alcove playfully hints at the Victorian tendency to paint porch ceilings blue, and adds a dose of warm color appropriate to a country interior.

In designing the alcove scullery, it was important to Barnes that the kitchen remain a cohesive space exposed on opposite sides to the outdoors. He and the owners decided against siting the cabinetry in a separate room in order to maintain the home’s long, narrow tail of expansion. “On Maryland’s eastern shore, it’s hot and humid in the summer, and traditionally houses were built one-room deep for the purpose of cross ventilation,” he explains. “You can spot newer construction in the area because the houses are two or more rooms deep.”

Additional layout caveats included a spot for Great Aunt Jessie’s rocking chair and enough room for the family to sit down for dinner. The kitchen table, made to the homeowner’s specifications by McMartin & Beggins Furniture Makers, is multipurpose. It takes the place of an island. The owner designed it as a working table “where you can sit down and snap beans” while also acting as a kitchen table. “It’s a wonderful place to eat in the winter near the stove,” she adds.

Various design decisions kept the functional kitchen, populated by high-end appliances, from looking like a sleek commercial space. The Sub-Zero fridge (built into the wall), Asko dishwasher, and two Sub-Zero refrigerator drawers blend into the off-white painted cabinetry in the alcove via paneled fronts. The stature of the six-burner Viking range with griddle, on the



other hand, is slightly reminiscent of a late-nineteenth-century stove: “After people switched from cooking in a hearth, the stove was a distinct piece of furniture,” says Barnes. “Flanked by minimal cabinetry, the Viking stove and hood together act almost like an armoire; they have a presence.”

The modest scullery contains cabinetry and a porcelain sink, which took the place of an older enclosed porch addition. A lack of upper cabinets downplays the alcove’s functionality, maintaining the kitchen’s living room–like feel. Open shelving on either end allows for the display of chosen collections and the storage of everyday dishes. Cleverly designed removable drawers surrounding the sink house cooking implements. Items that do not require immediate access are stored in pantries—the farmhouse has two, one with a rolling ladder.

To conceal a bearing beam just before the alcove, Barnes designed a wooden arch that incorporates squares of diagonal beadboard patterned after under-stair paneling in the oldest part of the house. Hand-milled and painted, the arch not only represents the kitchen’s former layout, it also acts as a boundary: Only those willing to pitch in with meal preparation are welcome in the scullery. “The kitchen’s open floor space allows for flexibility and informality,” points out Barnes. “Half a dozen people can be in the kitchen and be part of the prep work and discussions without disturbing the cook.”

Overall, this new old kitchen is a study in balance, with modern conveniences counteracted by historical touches. Newly milled cabinets are completed by brass pulls that purposefully lack a shiny coating. Work lights under the open

Opposite far left The range is reminiscent of stoves of the Victorian era.

Opposite left The dishwasher is disguised behind a cabinet. Above the counter tops are a rich Mahogany. The “cubbies” next to the farmhouse sink are removable for easy cleaning.

shelving and three downlights over the work surfaces are contrasted by an antique chandelier reclaimed from a Philadelphia dining room. The modernity of the exposed Viking appliances is softened by the owner’s collection of miniature pans and an antique tray displayed on a beadboard backsplash. Even the custom farmhouse table is constructed out of reclaimed wood from a barn.

Just as the kitchen blends historic, and up-to-date elements, its occupants frequently span generations as well: Family is often coming and going, including four grandchildren under the age of five. “We’ve even had a 90-year-old at one end of the table and a 3-year-old at the other,” laughs the owner, whose penchant for pairing new with old is seemingly not limited to kitchen design. **NOH**

Jennifer Sperry is a freelance writer living in New Bedford, Massachusetts.

Barnze Vanze Architects; www.barnzevanze.com

For Resources, see page 79.



Fairfax & Sammons restored a 1920s cottage for Arthur and Linda Collins. Whitewashed walls and antique furnishings are reminiscent of the English Arts and Crafts style made popular by William Morris in the late 1800s.



A Writer's Residence

Fairfax & Sammons restores a 1920s cottage above
the Hudson River in New York.

TEXT BY MARY MIERS PHOTOS BY DURSTON SAYLOR
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The dining room has rustic beams, a whitewashed exposed chimney, and country antiques. The breakfast room overlooks the Hudson River. Its Baroque screen has been in place since the house was built in the 1920s.

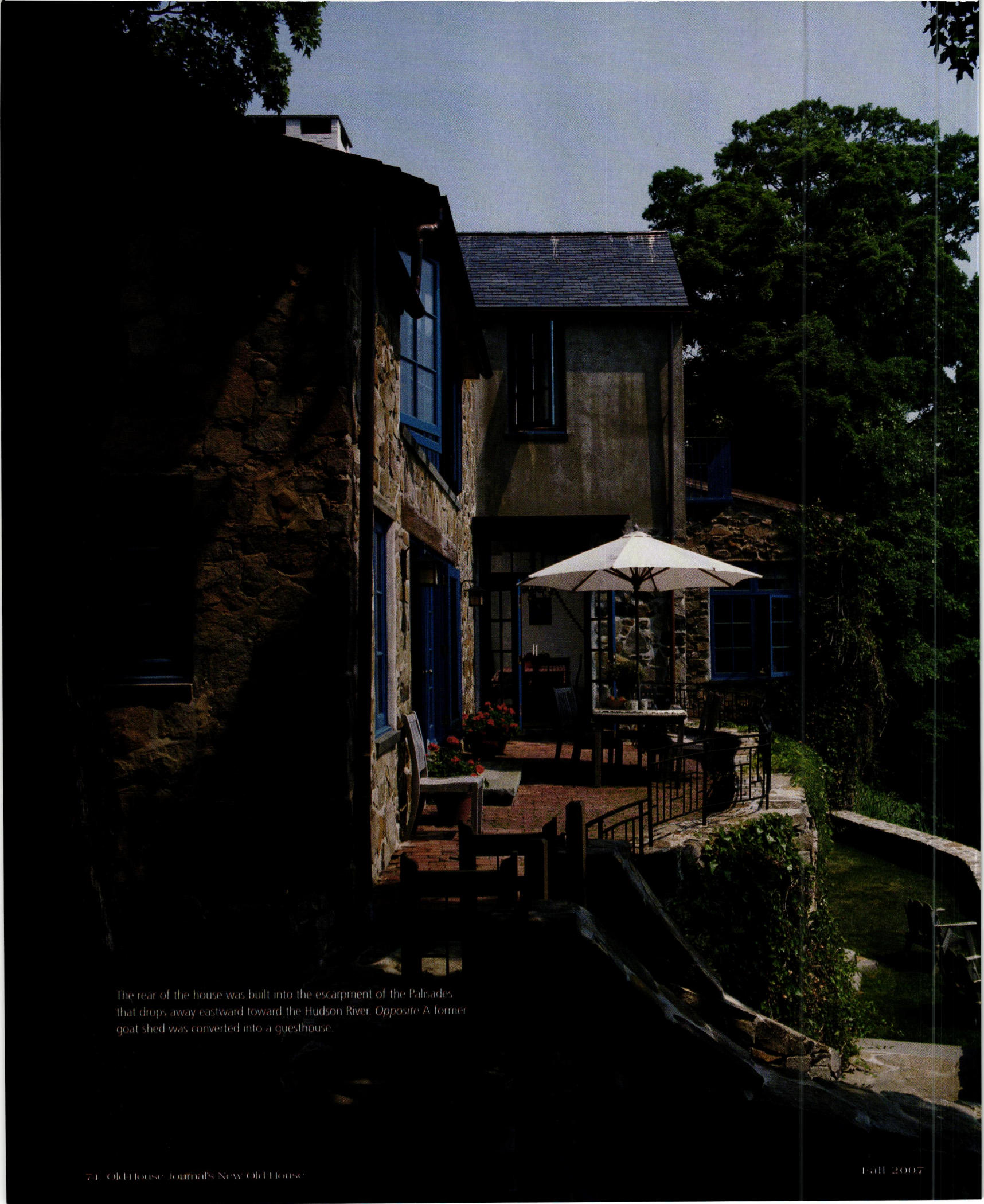


Such is the rustic charm of this weekend getaway that it might be mistaken for an old farmhouse far from the city. But it is, in fact, just 35 miles from Broadway and was built as a simple weekend cottage in the 1920s. The house stands perched on the edge of that dramatic wooded scarp known as Palisades, which overlooks the Hudson River from the west.

The present owners are Arthur Collins, a retired professor of philosophy, and his wife, Linda, a fiction writer who grew up in the neighboring town. They asked architectural firm Fairfax & Sammons to enlarge Sneden's Landing in a sympathetic manner to create a comfortable weekend escape from the city and a place where they could work in peace.

The building is of a smaller scale and more modest than many of the firm's other projects, but it gave Richard Sammons the opportunity to indulge his interest in vernacular buildings that have the ring of traditional craftsmanship, in sympathy with the owners' own tastes. The Arts and Crafts spirit of the place is expressed in the bare "flag wall" masonry, the picturesque grouping of ranges of differing heights, the asymmetrical fenestration and prominent chimney stacks, and the carved front door, which is set into a round-arched opening beneath an elongated eyebrow canopy.

The house is entered through a gabled central block that runs back to the steeply terraced riverfront, where its walls rise from the "living" rock. To the right of the entrance stair hall is a barnlike range containing, on the ground floor, the living room, and in the roof space above, Linda's writing studio, which was created out of several rooms. The interiors—simply but stylishly furnished with exposed ceiling joists and limewashed walls throughout—hint at a bohemian artist's retreat. In the upstairs studio, bare wooden floors are accented with dazzling red and blue rugs woven by Marsh Arabs in Iraq. The long whitewashed living room has a large unadorned fireplace at one end; an inscription, which translates from Latin as "frequent friends are the ornament of the house," is carved into the beam above. The room is sparsely decorated, with contemporary paintings by friends and relatives (including the owners' son, Jacob Collins, a well-known artist), pieces of well-crafted wooden furniture, and rugs laid over bare brick floors. The brick flows out uninterrupted to merge with the paving of the riverside terrace, creating a strong visual link between the inner and outer spaces.



The rear of the house was built into the escarpment of the Palisades that drops away eastward toward the Hudson River. *Opposite* A former goat shed was converted into a guesthouse.




The central range was heightened to accommodate a master bedroom suite on the upper floor, with a balcony overlooking the Hudson. The open roof structure includes the features of a large oculus in the apex of the gable, which faces east toward the river to catch the morning sun. The dining room below, with old oak furniture from England, continues the rustic theme, with a projecting chimney breast of whitewashed stepped bricks and a low beam ceiling. To the north is a lower extension, with a beautiful river view. This contains the kitchen and a breakfast/sitting room and study, separated by a tall Spanish Baroque timber screen. The screen was a feature of the original house, and its height dictated the ceiling level in these rooms.

In the garden, which slopes down from the road to the terraced cliff edge on which the house is sited, the architects have had fun with a former goat shed. They have converted it into a guest annex—a quaint, half-timbered eye-catcher in an English Arts and Crafts style, with a pretty oculus and louvered fleche. With the help of two gardeners, Linda Collins has cultivated one acre of the garden with English-style borders filled with tulips, irises, and other plants as colorful as the neighbors' peacocks, leaving the other acre as a natural woodland setting for the house and garden. **NOH**

Mary Miers is a writer, architectural historian, and historic buildings conservationist. She is currently the architectural writer at "Country Life," a British magazine founded in 1897.


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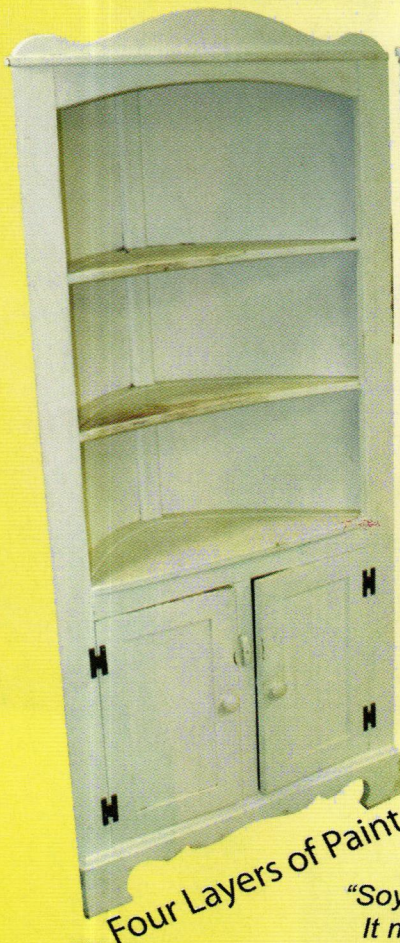
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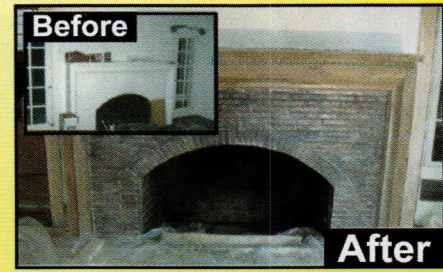
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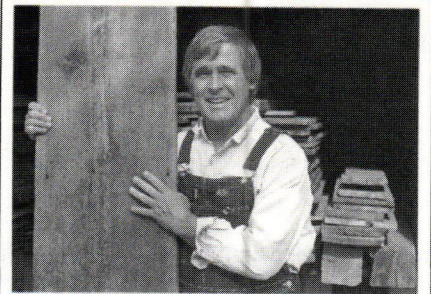
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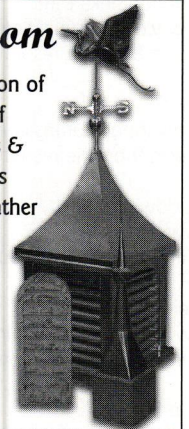
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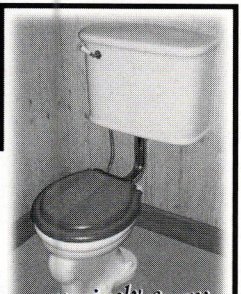
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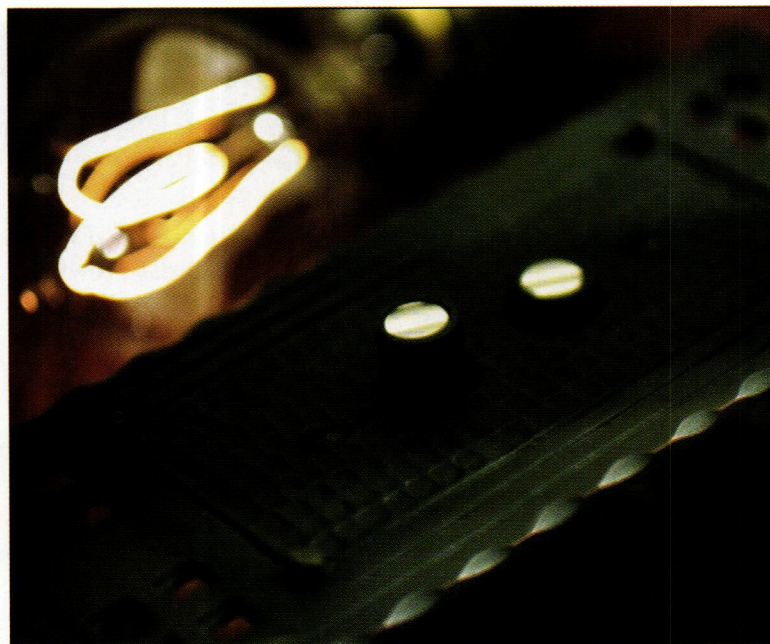


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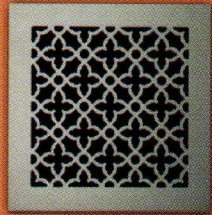
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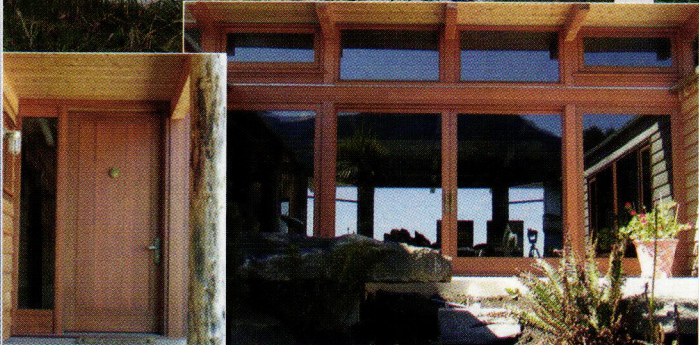
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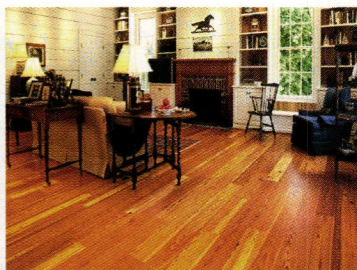
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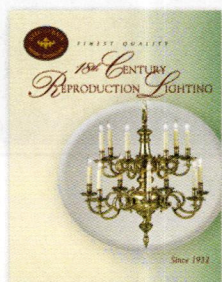
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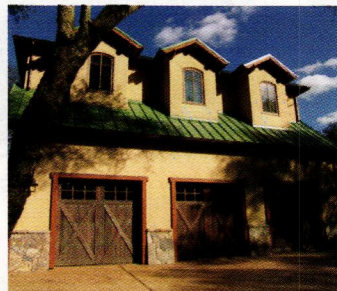
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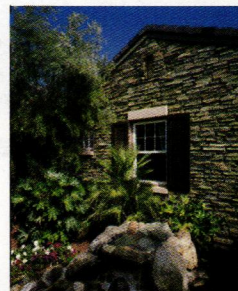
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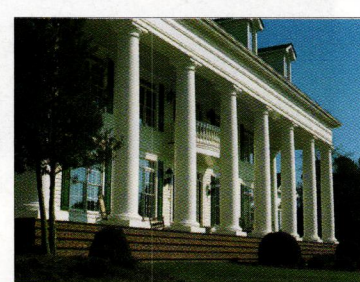
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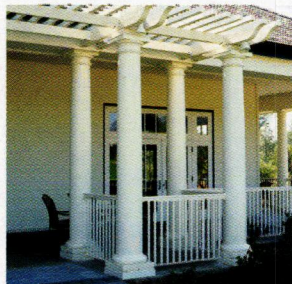
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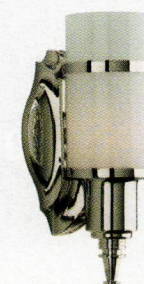
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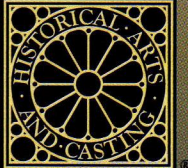
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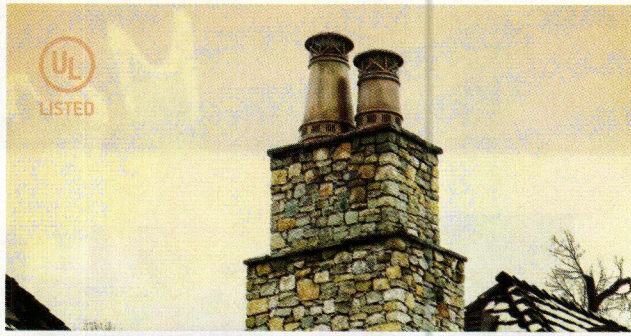
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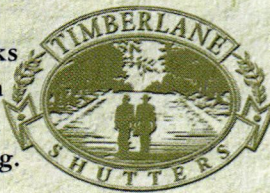
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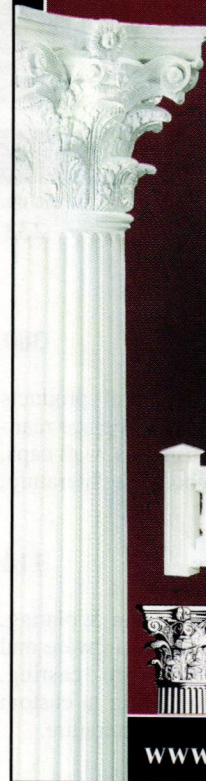


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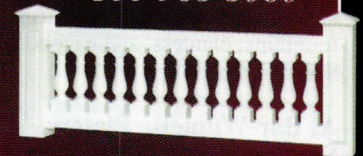
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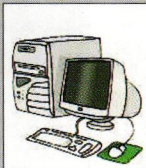


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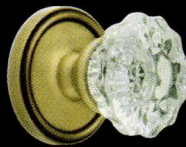
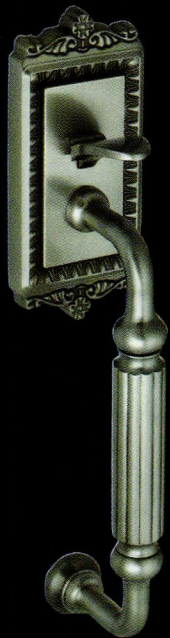
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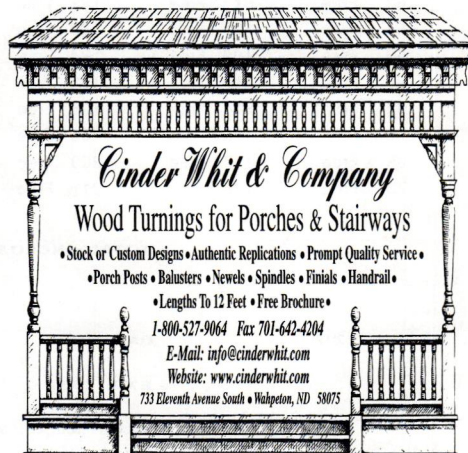
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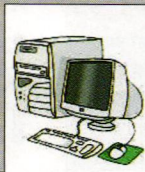
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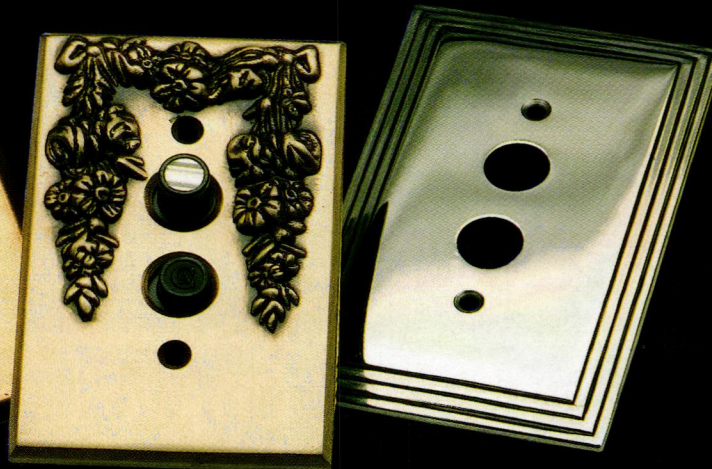
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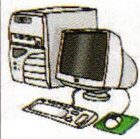
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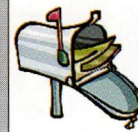
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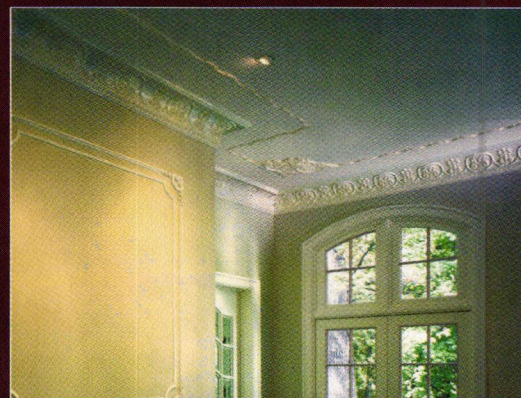
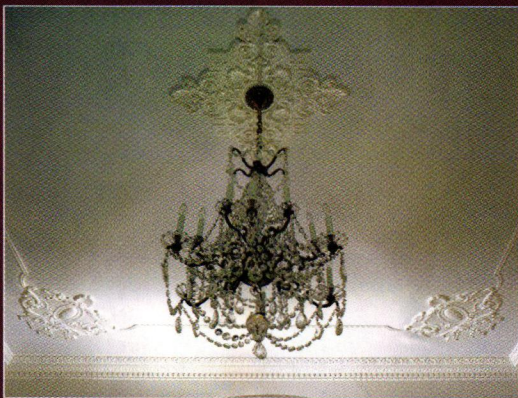
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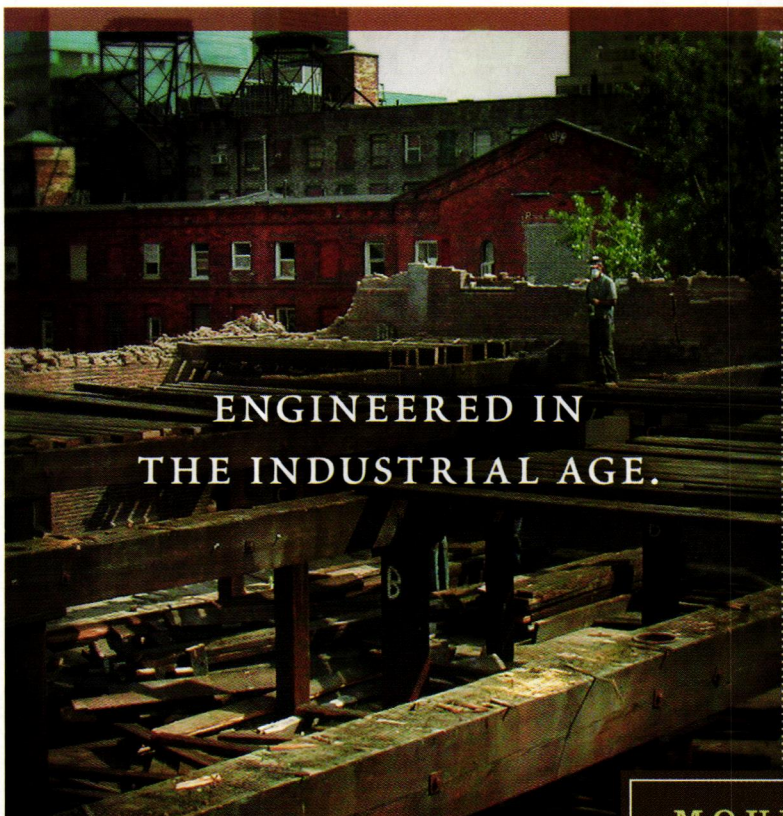
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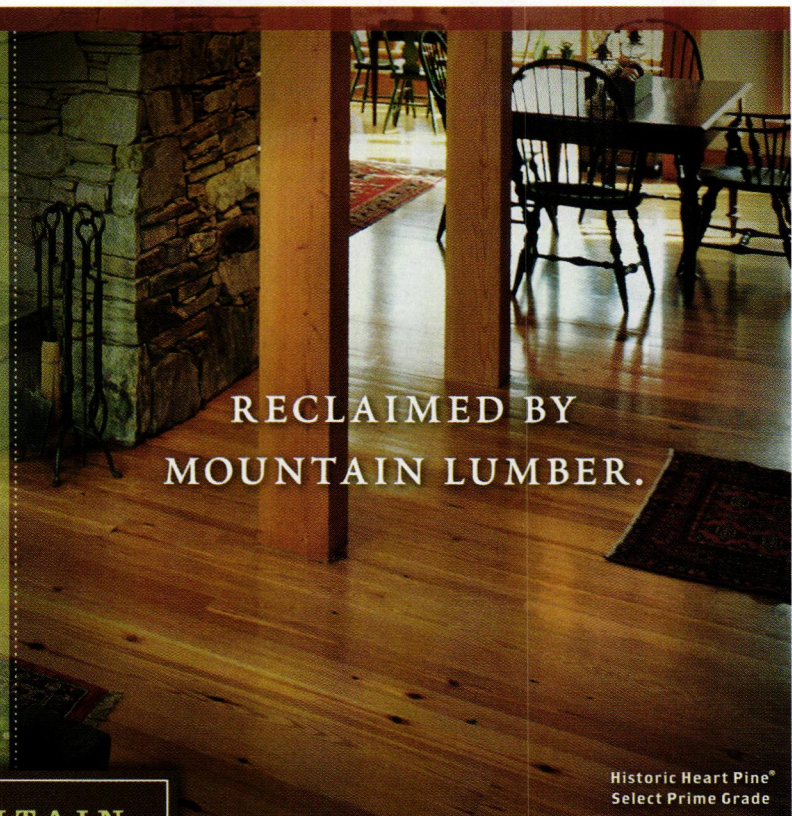
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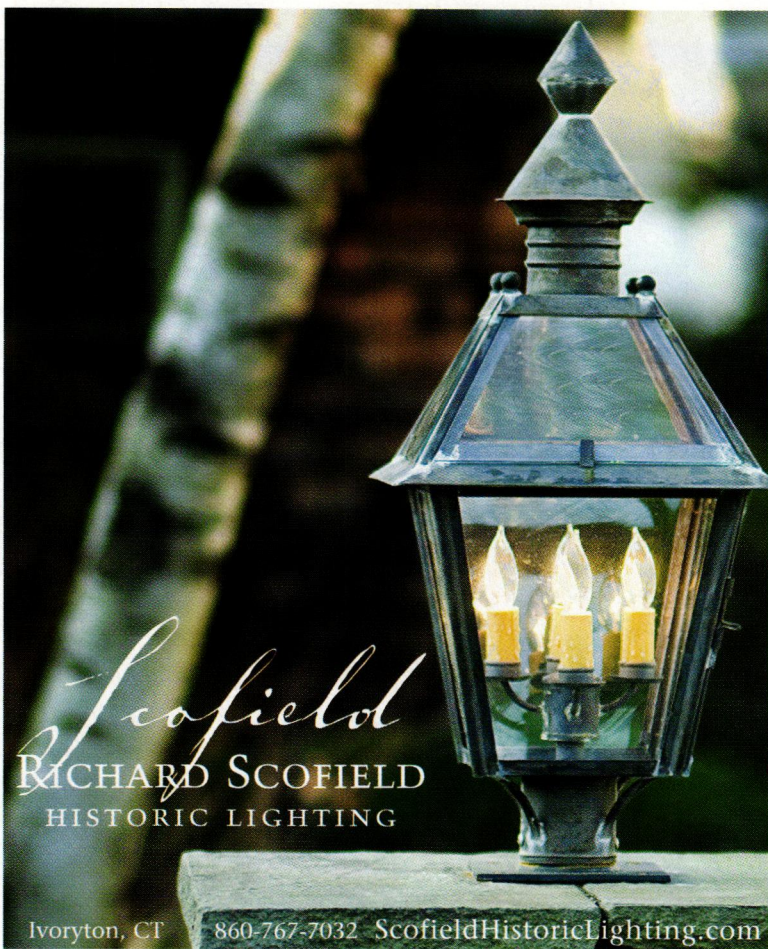
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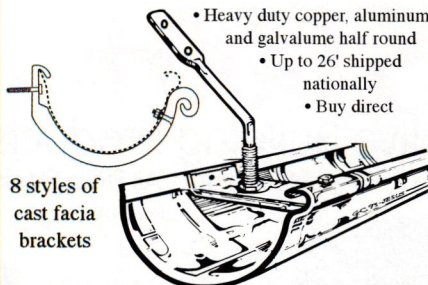
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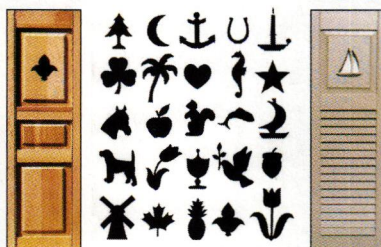
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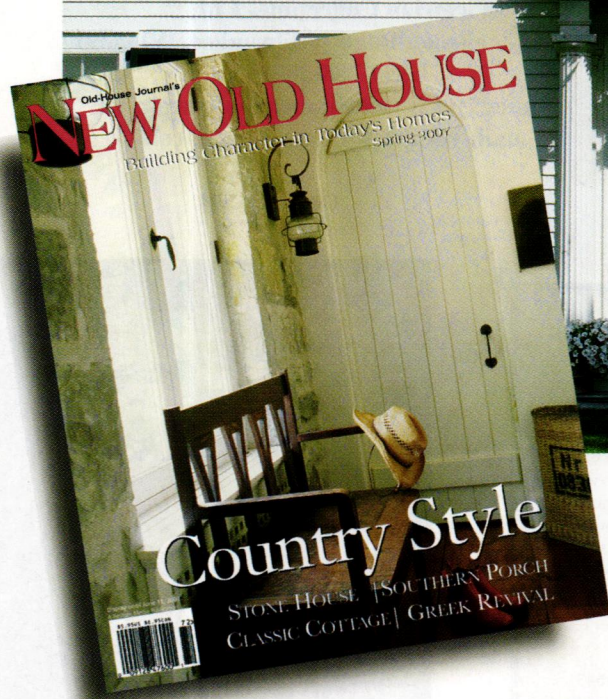


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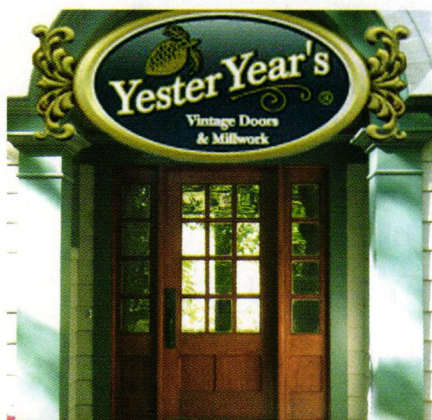
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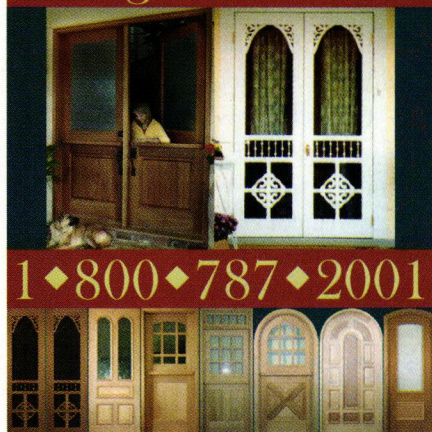
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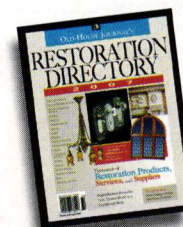
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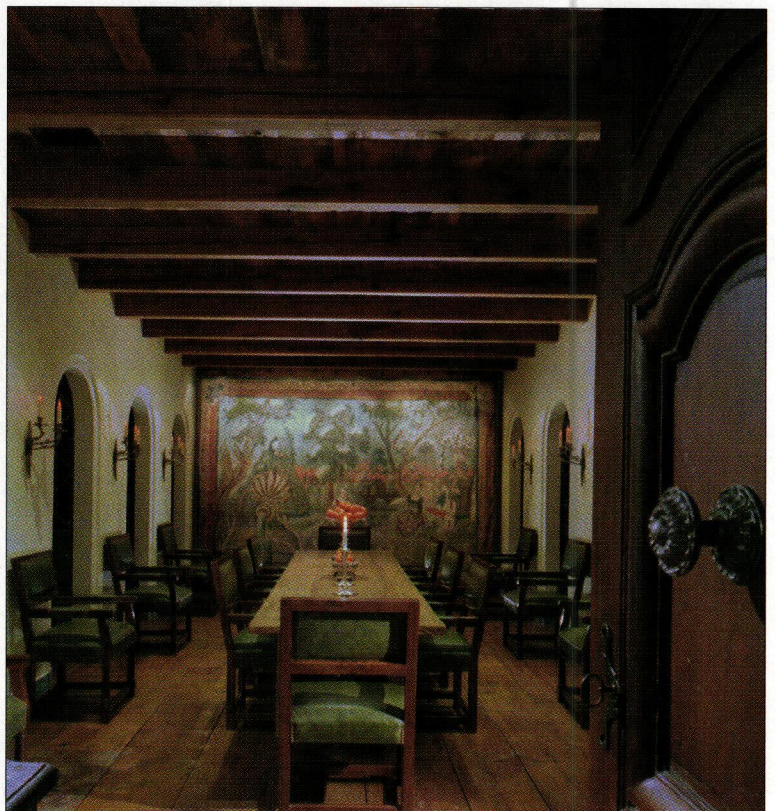
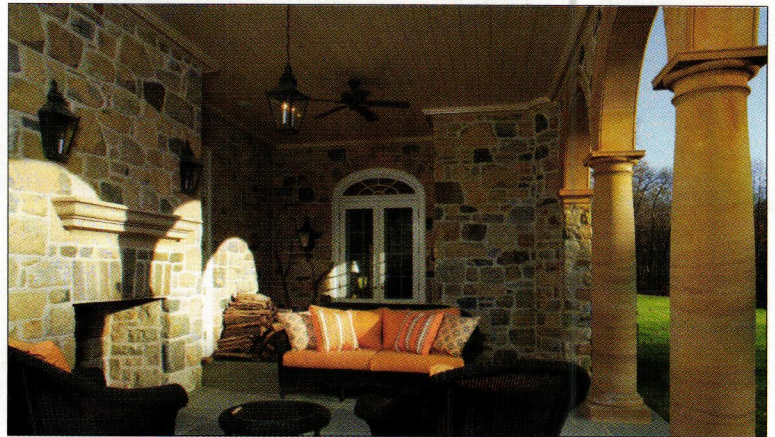
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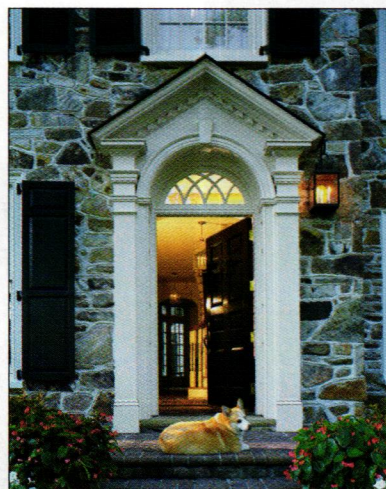
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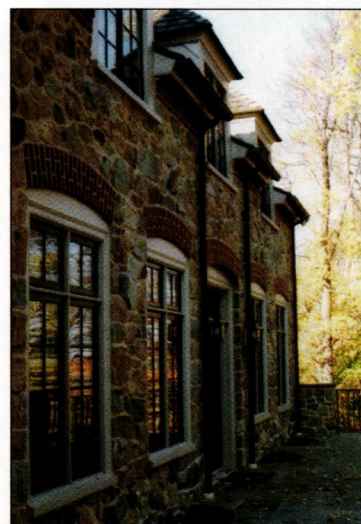
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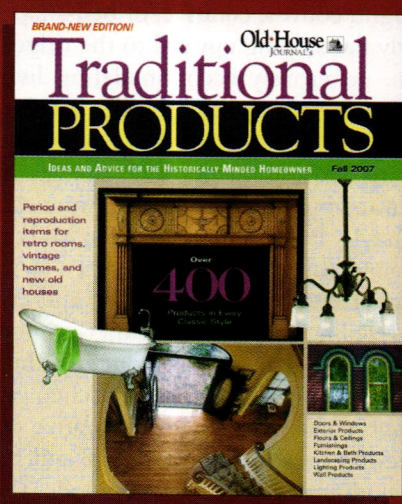
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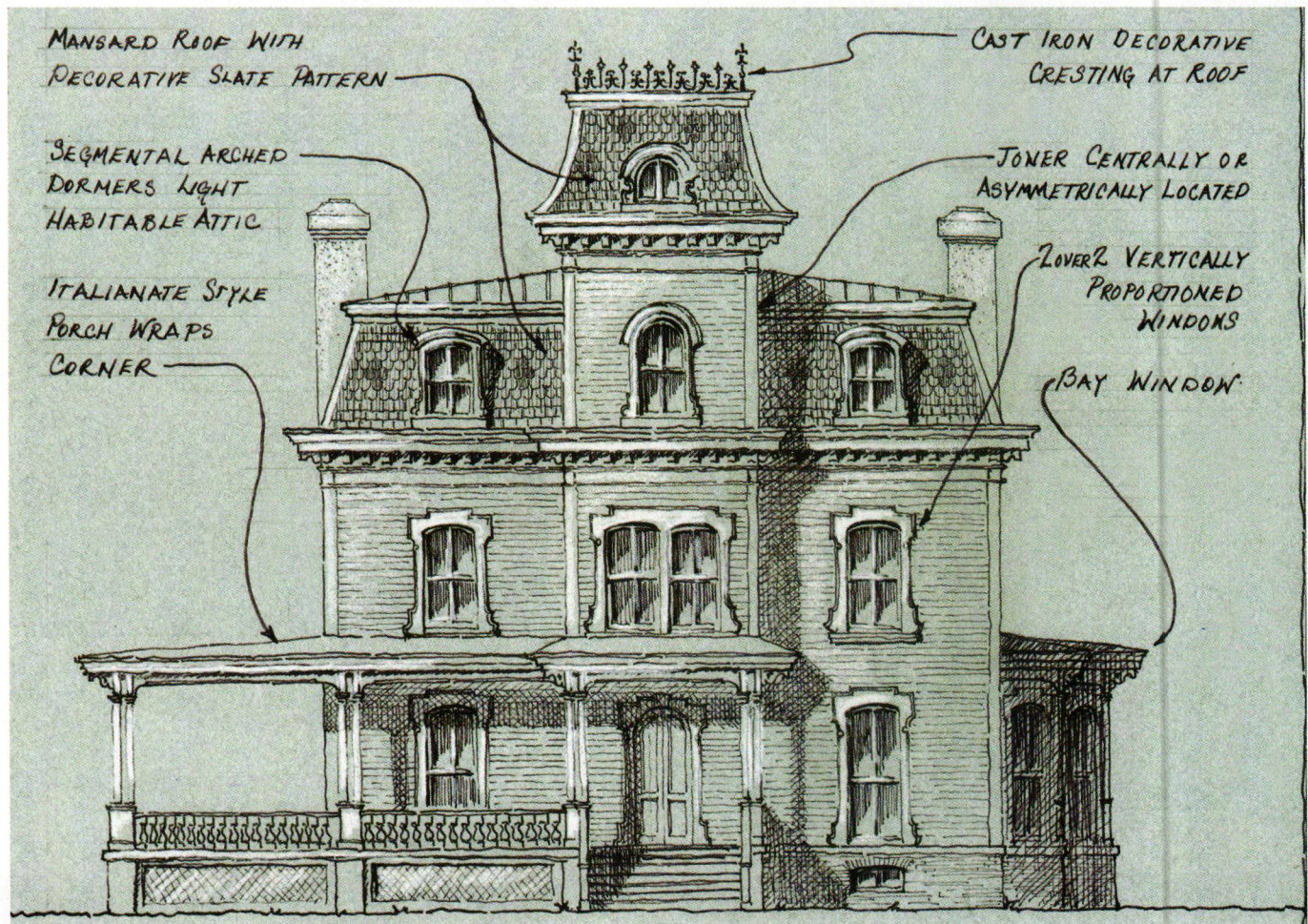
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The term Second Empire refers to the period in France from 1852–1870 when Napoleon III, nephew of Napoleon I, reestablished imperial rule by a *coup d'état*, thereby ending the Second Republic of 1848–1852. In an ambitious building campaign, Napoleon III appointed Baron Haussmann to oversee a vast program of work including modernization and improvements to living conditions through demolition and rebuilding, which turned Paris into an imperial capital replete with magnificent buildings. Haussmann created grand boulevards lined with trees and classical facades, all connected by *ronds-points* and interspersed with new parks. And throughout Paris sumptuous new buildings were erected.

Using classical forms popular during the reigns of Louis XIV and Napoleon I, Napoleon III and his architects visually evoked memories of those successful regimes, giving a sense of permanency to the new institutions and, by association, to the Second Empire itself. One building element used widely during this period, the mansard roof, would come to define the Second Empire style in America. François Mansart was a French architect during the seventeenth century who revived these steeply pitched roofs from their earlier use during the French Renaissance. Though not invented by him, this roof type was so

associated with Mansart it came to be called “mansard.” It’s a hipped roof with two pitches on each side, the first rising up steeply from the eave, straight, convex, concave, or bell-shaped, and the second being nearly flat sloping upward to the ridge. It was a practical roof form, generously accommodating living space in the attic and making it easy to expand older buildings by nearly a whole floor.

Popularized in the Paris Exposition of 1855, the Second Empire style quickly began to appear elsewhere. In America, it was viewed as a “modern” style. Predominating in the Midwest and the Northeast, but found throughout the country, it was popular from 1860 through 1880 for both domestic and civic architecture. It is characterized by a boxy mass, either symmetrical or not; square towers placed centrally along the main façade or asymmetrically in more complex massing schemes; a steep mansard roof commonly elaborated with decorative colored tiles, cast-iron filigree-like cresting and dormers; and segmental or round arched windows with decorative hoods. Like most of the eclectic styles running rampant in the second half of the nineteenth century, the Second Empire style was popularized in pattern books. With its fashion-forwardness, the Second Empire style reflected the heady years of the Gilded Age. ^{NOH}

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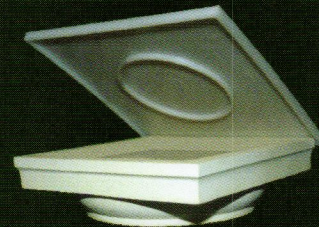


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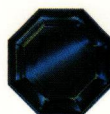
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