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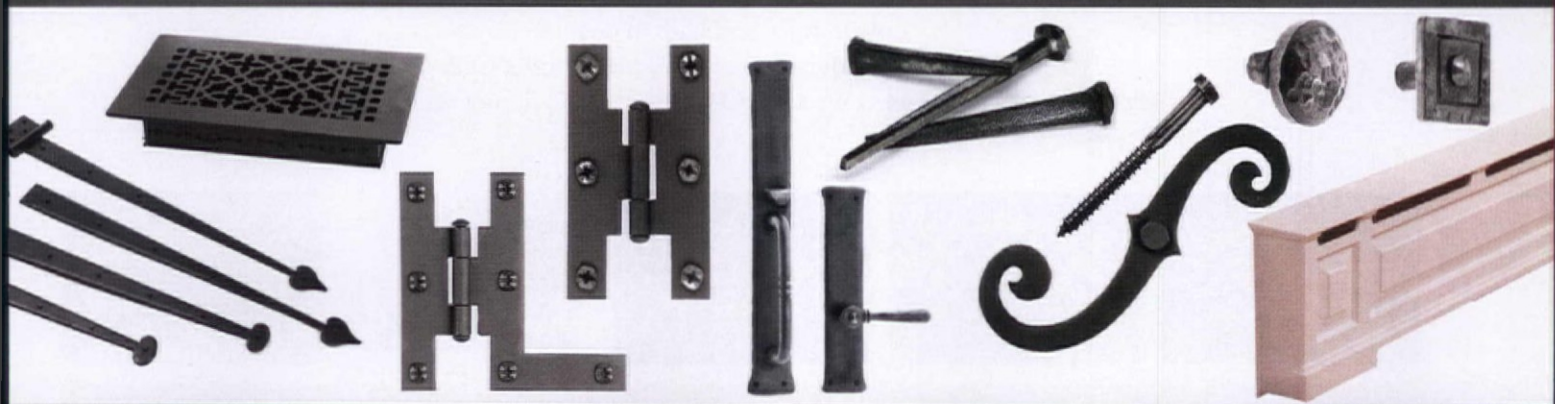
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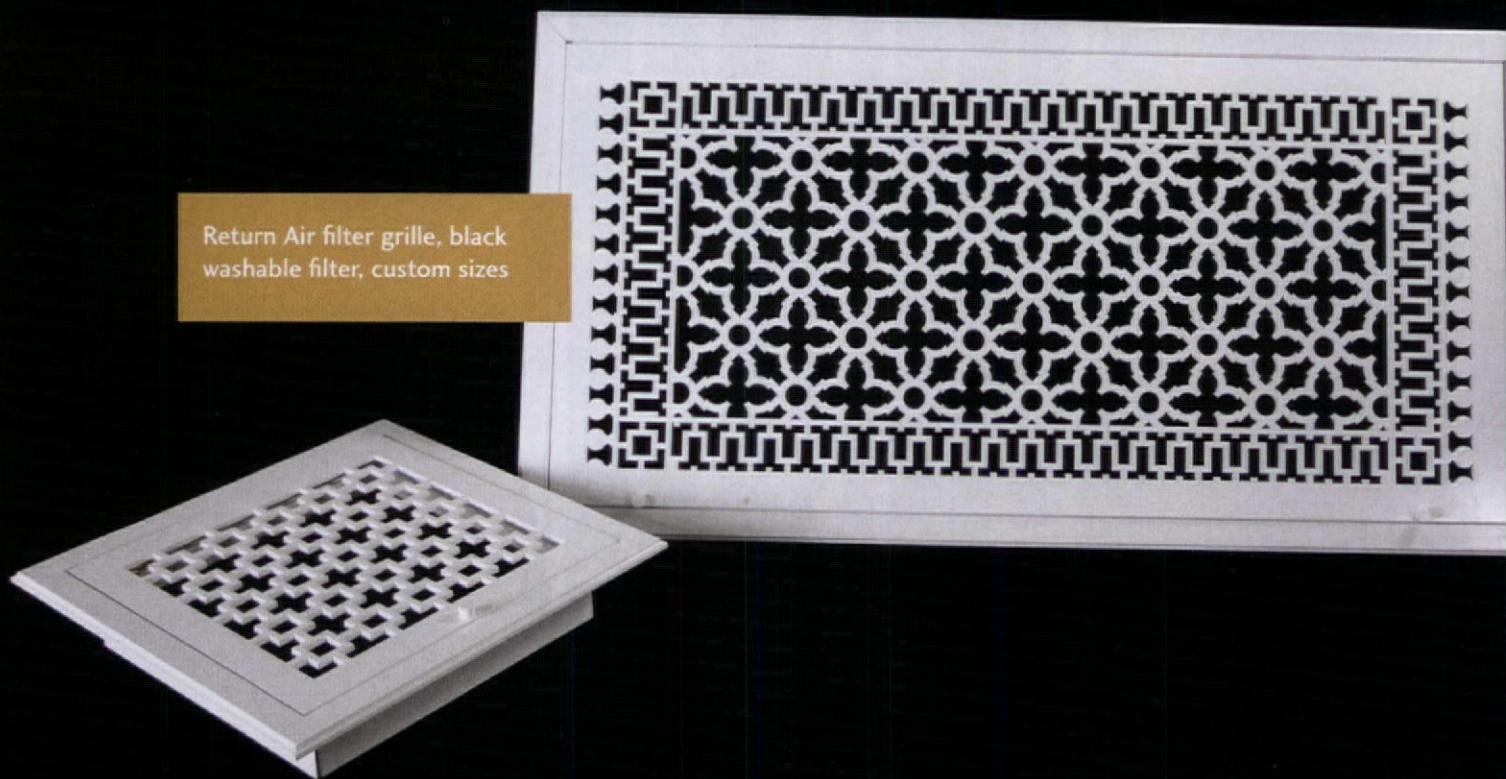
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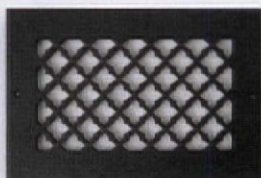
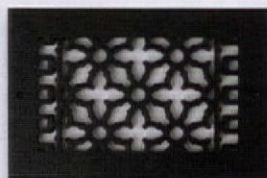
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Photo by Dave Burk and Hedrich Blessing
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Low Impact

When it comes to designing or renovating a house today, reducing our impact on the environment should be built into the plan. Traditional architecture embraces many aspects of sustainability simply by the design principles it follows. Designers and architects site houses to take advantage of passive solar and materials are locally sourced from the region when possible. These elements create energy efficiency, high thermal performance, little waste, and aesthetically pleasing buildings. So whether renovating an old house or building new, we should think in terms of the house being around for the next 100 years without being a burden on our energy resources or the natural environment.

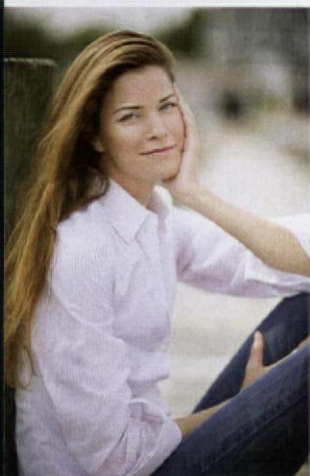
Of special note in this issue of *New Old House* is the house and barn renovated by Austin Disston Patterson in New Canaan, Connecticut—the effort resulted in a 2015 AIA/CT Alice Washburn honorable mention for restoration. Mac Patterson sees this design as an example of where tradition meets sustainability. It goes beyond the renovation of an old home and its outbuildings to include the greater landscape, gardens, and vegetable and herb crops. Capturing rainwater, a solar array in the garden, and a windmill are all elements of sustainable design on the property. “It was a much broader, deeper pursuit of that concept, which also made it very interesting to do,” he says. The firm’s sensitivity to the landscape creates harmony in their projects. “The entire property is weaved into one and becomes one sustainable package.

In Chicago, Cohen & Hacker Architects designs a new house comfortable in the context of the surrounding traditional 1930s houses. The three-story house carries the same visual beauty of the enclave and the defining lannon stone, yet has its own quiet identity. On its lakefront setting, the house has a stately presence, and the ordering of its elements, from the trim to the bands of windows reflect the beauty of traditional design.

In Rhode Island, Keith LaBlanc designs gorgeous natural gardens around an old Shingle-style oceanfront cottage with new porches designed by Hammer Architects. The result is a serene landscape that honors its seaside setting and takes into account the fragile coastal environment.

Nancy E. Berry
Editor

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- Carmen & Russ



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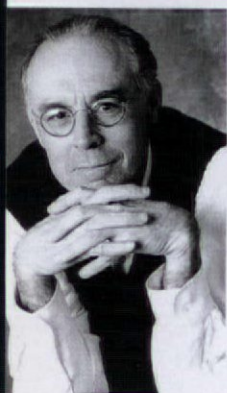


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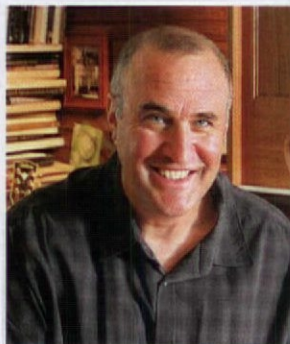
Mary Grauerholz is a freelance feature writer who focuses on sustainability, architecture, health, and food. In her previous career as a journalist, Grauerholz won many awards for project management, editing, and writing. Since then, she has written for a variety of magazines, newspapers, and websites, including *The Boston Globe*, *Cape Cod Home*, *Spirituality & Health*, and *Suffolk University Alumni Magazine*. She lives on Cape Cod.



Michael Weishan is host emeritus of PBS's *The Victory Garden* 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 three acres of gardens.



For more than 30 years, **Eric Roth** has been capturing life through the lens, which has guided him on local, national, and international journeys. He has shot for such publications as *Traditional Home*, *Metropolitan Home*, *Elle Decor*, and *Coastal Living*. He lives in Topsfield, Massachusetts, and has two lovely daughters.



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Warm Welcome

Treat guests to a traditionally styled entry.

BY JENNIFER SPERRY

It's where a family's private world collides with the public realm, where strangers are greeted with caution and visitors warmly met. It is designed to impress with architectural detail while always remaining in proportion to a home's facade. As Steven Hendricks, owner of Historic Doors in Pennsylvania explains, "A successful doorway is a microcosm of a building's entire design."

In light of the front entry's historic

role as a status symbol, with handcrafted architectural flourishes abounding, it's not surprising that achieving a successful new traditional entryway is no small task. This is why homeowners and even architects often rely on dedicated custom door manufacturers, who bring to the table specs and molding profiles culled from historic homes, well-equipped woodshops, access to top-grade woods and traditional glass types and an eye for critical details.

DOOR STYLE

"From a historical perspective, in the New World, door styles would have been on the rustic side simply because homeowners then were pioneers," says Hendricks. "But at the same time, these pioneers came from cultures with highly developed and sophisticated architectural styles in full flower.

"As American culture became more of a civilization than a pioneer environment," he adds, "citizens



Left to right: HeartWood Fine Windows and Doors custom designs period-appropriate entryways. Historic Doors created this Dutch door for a stone house in Pennsylvania. Many architects are inspired by 18th-century entryways such as this one in Beacon Hill, Boston.

began using architectural symbols to convey not just wealth and status but also more humane communications, such as “This is how you approach my building.” A logical design hierarchy also differentiated the formal front entry from more utilitarian entrances.

America’s earliest doors were plank-style, with vertical boards held together by horizontal battens. Or, if defense was crucial, cross-boarding provided even more security. When

the Georgian style took hold, the familiar raised-panel door became popular. It represented a technological improvement over plank-style in that its floating panels remained airtight while still allowing for wood’s seasonal expansion and contraction.

Each architectural movement boasts its own influence on front entries, with many adding complexities such as top and side transoms as well as fanlights. Tim Forster of Heart-

Wood Fine Windows and Doors in Rochester, New York, notes that his company’s “Door Idea Book” contains up to 850 door styles. “You can search on our website using key words like Dutch or Gothic and you’ll get pages of results to review,” he explains. “Architects with an account can also download CAD elevations.”

Similarly, in the 1990s, Historic Doors began assembling its own collection of recorded entries, which



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For clients in the tri-state area, the Bendheim showroom located at the heart of Tribeca in New York City is worth a visit. With over 2,000 samples of specialty glass in more than 2,500 square feet of space, the showroom has been called a candy store for architects. To provide hands-on experience, the glass is displayed in a variety of contexts including wall mounted, in a backsplash, or inserted into a tray to be viewed through different lighting such as halogen, fluorescent, and incandescent.

Homeowners living in other parts of the country can browse the Bendheim Cabinet Glass website, which offers more than 150 glass options for the home, handy do-it-yourself instructions and an easy checkout process. The EcoGlass Coral for instance, pictured here, is available in three glass types, including the Laminated Safety glass option, which is $\frac{3}{8}$ " thick and will hold fragments together upon impact making it perfect for entryway sidelights and transoms. For more information, visit bendheim.com.

includes more than 200 measured drawings from the Historic American Buildings Survey collection. These drawings, catalogued by architectural style, include all of the molding profiles used to compose each doorway as well as building elevations.

Although the finished project is a tremendous resource, it's not meant as a product catalog by any means. "Most of the designs are more ornate than people would choose or be able to afford," says Hendricks. "But the examples provide good rules of thumb regarding molding profiles and proportions."

Coordinating an entry door with a house's windows is a consideration as well. "Having door muntin bars, glass options, and casing details match a home's windows is an important part of getting a building to look architecturally correct," says Andy Keeffe of Vermont-based Green Mountain

Window. "Often, when doors and windows are purchased from a different company, a discerning eye can tell that something seems 'off' on the building."

CONSTRUCTION & MATERIALS

An entry door that impresses with historic appropriateness is as much about construction as it is style.

As opposed to common market doors with doweled joinery, truly authentic new-old doors benefit from age old mortise-and-tenon construction. The Cooper Group, which operates both Maurer and Shepherd Joiners and Deschenes & Cooper Architectural Millwork, specializes in historic restorations and prioritizes mortise and tenon construction. "Our shop has over 1,800 molding profiles and we also offer full design services with realistic three-dimensional renderings," says owner Brian Cooper.

Specifying the type of wood used to construct a traditional door is a vital step, not only in terms of appearance but also for longevity. "South American mahogany is the benchmark for door and window building because it's very stable, it has low-margin shrinks and swells, it has dimensional stability and an inherent resistance to bacteria and bugs," says Forster, who warns that not every wood on the market labeled mahogany is part of this genus.

Quartersawn white oak, which is indigenous to the Northeast and also Canada, and American black cherry are also popular wood types. A manufacturer like HeartWood is capable of working with a variety of woods, depending on customer preference, such as butternut, teak, cypress, and cedar. Reclaimed woods are also an excellent option.

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Left to right: Green Mountain Window in Vermont builds custom doors and windows. HeartWood can match any era. Architect Sandy Vitzthum creates a welcoming porch for this Vermont farmhouse.

And there are even more details to consider. True divided lights, with a variety of glasses, from bulls-eye to beveled, are an important part of the new-old equation. A solid wood sill, whether crafted from mahogany or even fir or pine for paint-grade doors, and hardware add polish to a period look.

SCALE

Historically, doors had to accommodate everything from furniture to large parcels of firewood to hoop skirts, which is why double doors were sometimes used. “We’ve found through our research of early American doors that 40” was a common size, in comparison to today’s 36” stock exterior door,” says Hendricks. “A classical rule of thumb when designing doors is to use double squares, which is why 40” x 80” gives a nice proportion, versus today’s 36” x 80” stock exterior door.”

Meanwhile, door thickness can be all over the place. “Modern standards, in terms of how the hardware manufacturers have summarized things for us, are an 1¾” or 2¼”. We have a general rule of thumb that a door up to 36”

wide can be 1¾” thick unless it’s taller than 7’, which is when we recommend going to 2¼”.”

But the beauty of a custom door is that anything is possible. As an example, HeartWood Fine Windows and Doors recently crafted a custom round-top door with tongue-and-groove paneling that measures 4’ x 8’, is 3” thick, and weighs 300 pounds. Its knocker is 7” in diameter and its handle probably weighs more than 50 pounds.

PORCHES & PORTICOS

There are a variety of benefits to enveloping a front door with an outdoor vestibule, and there is a great deal of historic precedent as well. “Porches were not terribly common until the 1840s, when Americans became more and more obsessed with etiquette and the veranda became popular,” says Vermont-based architect Sandra Vitzthum.

In terms of etiquette, porches are very welcoming because they protect guests from unpleasant outdoor elements. But architecturally, they represent a zone of mediated scale. “You go

from the huge scale of a front yard or street to the much smaller, more embracing scale of an interior. The porch mediates this transition so that it’s not such an abrupt change. It’s also a form of politeness: giving people the chance to adjust to scale.”

And while a porch’s design should be appropriate to the rest of the house, there are examples of differing yet complementary styles from later-edition porches. For example, you might see an Italianate or Gothic porch on an earlier house, notes the architect, “and that’s OK.”

As Hendricks points out in his own essay on historic doors titled *Point of Entry*, “Specifiers of wood doors should be mindful of exposure to the elements. Protecting the door with a porch or hood, or by setting it back within the exterior wall, were all design elements employed in earlier times to help maintain the entry.”

Keeping a wooden door safe from UV light and water requires regular maintenance but the rewards are lasting and the effect is timeless. **NOH**

For Resources, see page 72.



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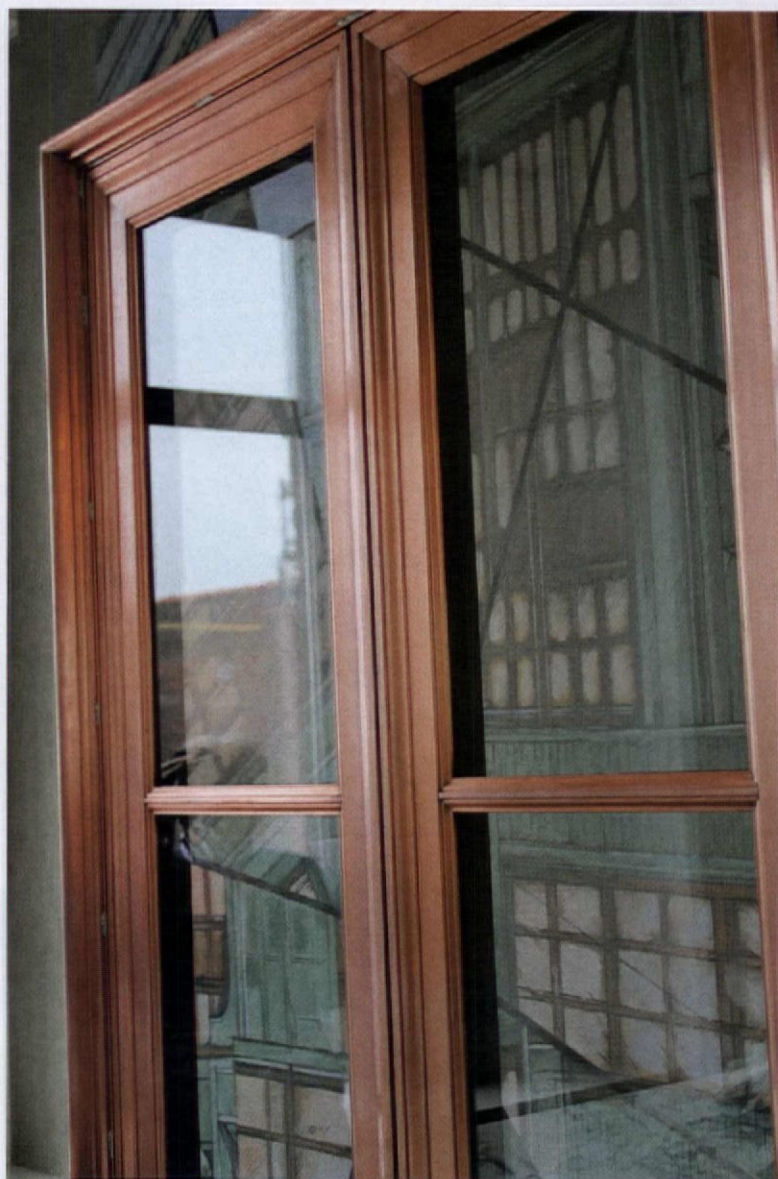
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Carpenter Crafts

Steve Benson designs impeccable custom windows and doors in Vermont.

BY STEPHEN T. SPEWOCK

“During college, carpentry was my favorite way to earn money to stay in school,” says Steve Benson, president and owner of J.S. Benson Woodworking & Design, in Middlebury, Vermont. “Both my father and grandfather were skilled carpenters,” he says, “so I grew up around it.”

But after spending six years in college studying everything from fine

art to architecture to mechanical drawing to engineering to environmental design, Steve Benson took a job with Energy Bank in Cambridge, Massachusetts, performing energy audits and retrofits. “We engineered residential and commercial solar hot water installations,” remembers Steve. “I was head of the wood shop remaking customers’ doors and windows.”

When the federal energy and solar tax credits ceased in 1981, Steve rented shop space in Somerville, Massachusetts, where he produced architectural millwork, doors and windows. One project was a small Japanese garden in the Back Bay.

In recognition of this accomplishment, the Boston Society of Landscape Architects awarded Steve a merit award.





Benson's projects run the gamut from small farmhouses to grand mansions with Palladian windows.

Shortly after whetting his appetite in the carpentry field, he began commuting to Vermont and working as an apprentice for a window craftsman. "I had met an associate at an open house who ran a one-man window shop," he recalls, "and I would drive up to work a four-day-a-week apprenticeship." And after nine months, he made the move to the Green Mountain State.

After settling outside Brattleboro, Steve took on a contract building Zone VI large-format collapsible field cameras. "No one was able to meet the required tolerances," he explains. "So I attempted making them out of re-sawn 16/4 pattern grade mahogany." Steve made his own custom pin routing jigs out of aluminum to maintain consistent quality.

Steve also took on various woodworking projects, eventually moving his shop into the old Jacob Estey Organ Factory building—a 17,000-square-foot, three-story, post-and-beam structure with original freight elevator. By 1997, he was able to purchase the building, and quickly added a biomass combustion furnace. "In the spirit of sustainability, we bought a briquette press and began heating the entire structure with wood waste," beams Steve. "Our oil bill eventually went to near zero."

With sustainability an important factor when executing a project, Steve quickly built a reputation as crafting custom high-end doors, windows, furniture, and cabinetry. "Everything we do is handcrafted to exacting standards for truly one-of-a-kind results," he says.

Steve was approached by Disney of Japan to build some doors and windows for the Victorian Block of the theme park. Yet his initial drawings were met with some resistance. "Apparently they fabricated their joinery differently due to strict earthquake tolerances," recounts Steve. "Initially, it was difficult to understand. But after a while, I realized I really liked their engineering approach better," he admitted, "and I decided to build our mortise-and-tenon joints the same way."



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Steve Benson shortly after college.
Right: Bowed windows for a formal living room.



Another learning experience came while designing and building all the copper-clad windows for the Fitz-Roy building in New York City—a new, 12-story, high Art Deco project in Manhattan. “Our ‘Kalamein’ (copper clad) windows are highly regarded as the resurrection of a lost art,” he proclaims. “Copper or bronze maintain eight times the longevity of aluminum flashing—which is like stepping over a dollar to save a dime.”

When it comes to lumber selection, J.S. Benson works closely with the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), an organization devoted to preventing deforestation and to locate and utilize sustainably harvested woods. “We’ll use other hardwoods, including antique reclaimed lumber if design specifications call for it,” he says. “But we’ve long been strong proponents of responsible forestry and eco-friendly manufacturing pro-

cesses whenever possible.”

By 2013, Steve struck an agreement with Connor Homes of Middlebury, Vermont, to join forces. “I had met Mike Connor and was impressed with his work,” says Steve. “We had built doors and windows for some of his projects from time to time, and the opportunity for us to co-join both our operations under one roof evolved.”

Today that one roof is rather large, including a 118,000-square-foot production shop with most all of the molding, trim, and finish work performed by state-of-the-art equipment that can efficiently replicate any desired historic period or architectural style in every detail.

Additionally, both companies benefit from the plethora of Yankee craftsmen from the surrounding areas who pride themselves in skilled woodworking. “We have four master carpenters, about the same number of

journeymen, and eager apprentices in various disciplines,” says Steve.

With a project schedule booked through 2017, Steve reflects on his journey. “My main job today is design. Nowadays, I delegate hands-on woodworking,” he says. “It’s the natural long-term evolution of any company.” He enjoys researching, designing, and developing high-end products.

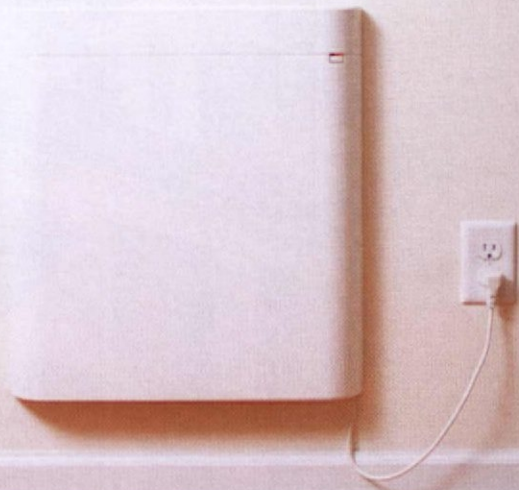
“I love the history of the craft, the different eras, and historic preservation,” he says. “We recently did a job that called for bowed glass panes for triple-hung windows that fold up into the ceiling,” he recalls. “It took a tremendous amount of thought and engineering: creative problem solving of the highest order.” NOH

Steve Spewock is a freelance writer living and working on Cape Cod.

For Resources, see page 72.

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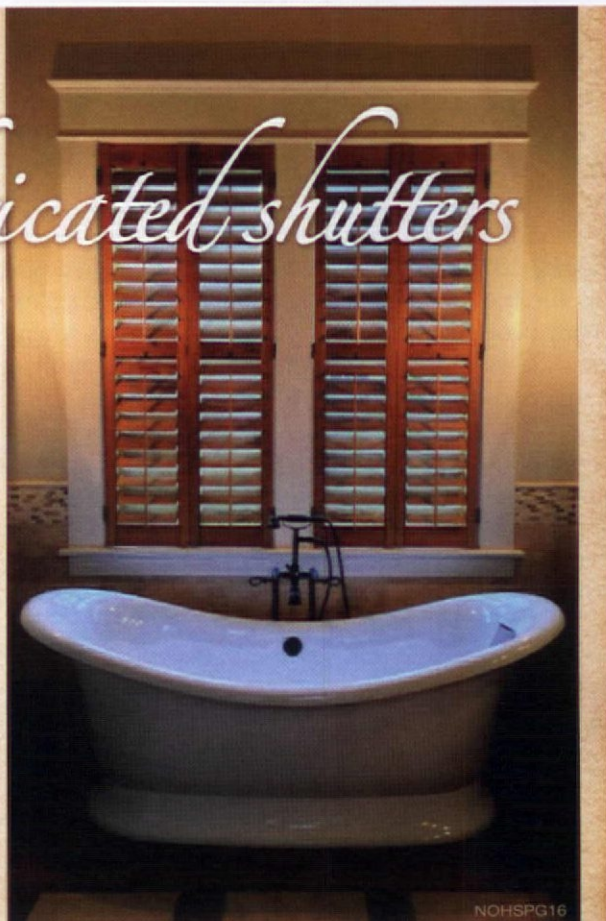
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The principal interest in boxwood was for making topiary in Roman gardens: easily sheared, box was more than likely the principal component of most of these elaborate living sculptures. The garden was designed by Gregory Lombardi Design in Cambridge, Massachusetts.



Living History

Discovering ancient plantings for American gardens.

BY MICHAEL WEISHAN

If you live in a traditionally styled home, chances are that you have an appreciation for history. But while many people know, at least generally, that the Doric column in your dining room derives from ancient Greece, or that your Arts and Crafts bungalow is the product of a popular movement against industrialization in the late nineteenth century, most people don't realize there is an equally rich and extensive history to be found outdoors.

Take for instance, the yew, so ubiquitous in American landscapes that "common" is part of its moniker. Few appreciate that the yew is actually one of the oldest plant families extant on the globe. The ten or so modern members of the *Taxus* genus can trace their roots back to fossils found in rocks of the Triassic Period, 200 million years

ago. Surviving eons of tremendous climatic changes, the mighty yew reached its peak just after the last Ice Age, when European forests consisted primarily of giant yews. Then along came man. Just when our association with yews started is unclear, but as far back as the dawn of history yews were worshipped for their great size and age, becoming associated with death and rebirth in several cultures, including that of the Greeks, Romans, and Celts. This connection with death is not without cause: the plant's botanical name, *Taxus*, comes from the Greek *taxon*, or toxin. Almost every part of this plant is poisonous if consumed. The Romans used the yew in their burial rights, and the Celts planted yews, often in circles and groups mimicking their stone constructions,

to mark holy sites. It's interesting to note that many of the ancient yews that today so picturesquely dot English churchyards may actually predate the Christian buildings now surrounding them, having previously marked the spot of primeval pagan rituals. As a matter of fact, this past summer, I visited the Fortingall Yew in Scotland. Dominating one corner of the church burial ground, it's estimated to be 3,000 years old.

Or how about that spring favorite, the lilac (*Syringa vulgaris*)? 500 years ago, there wasn't a single one growing anywhere in Western Europe or North America. Lilacs first enter our horticultural lexicon when the Austrian ambassador noticed the very first recorded specimen growing in the Constantinople garden of Suleiman the Magnifi-

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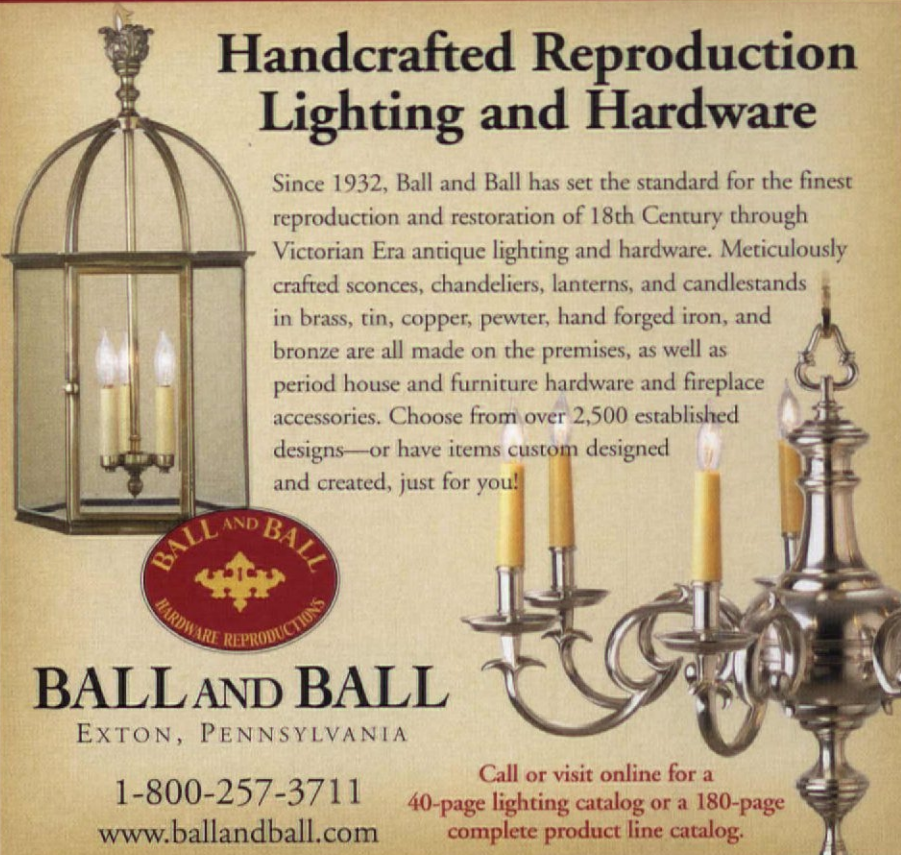


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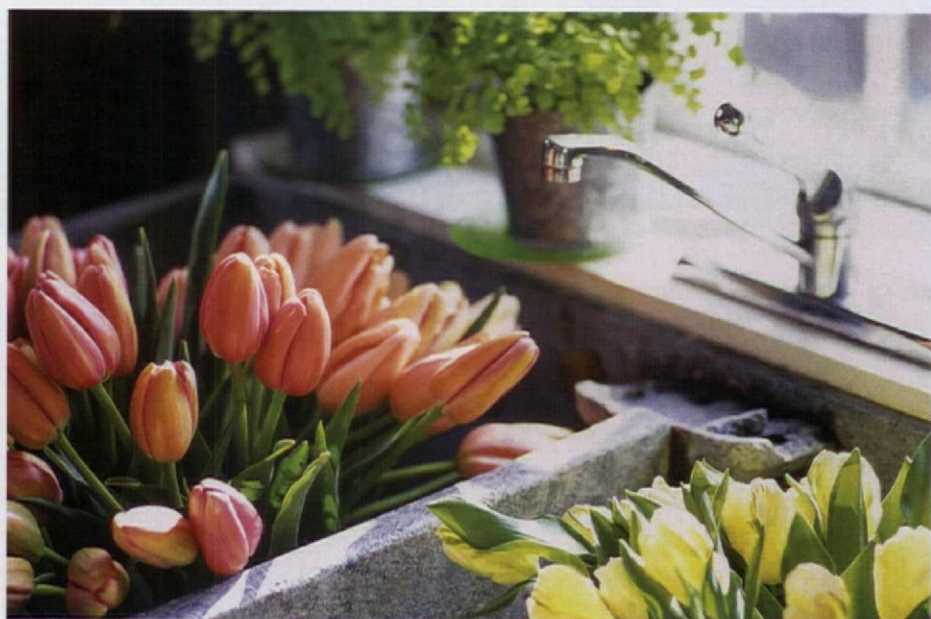
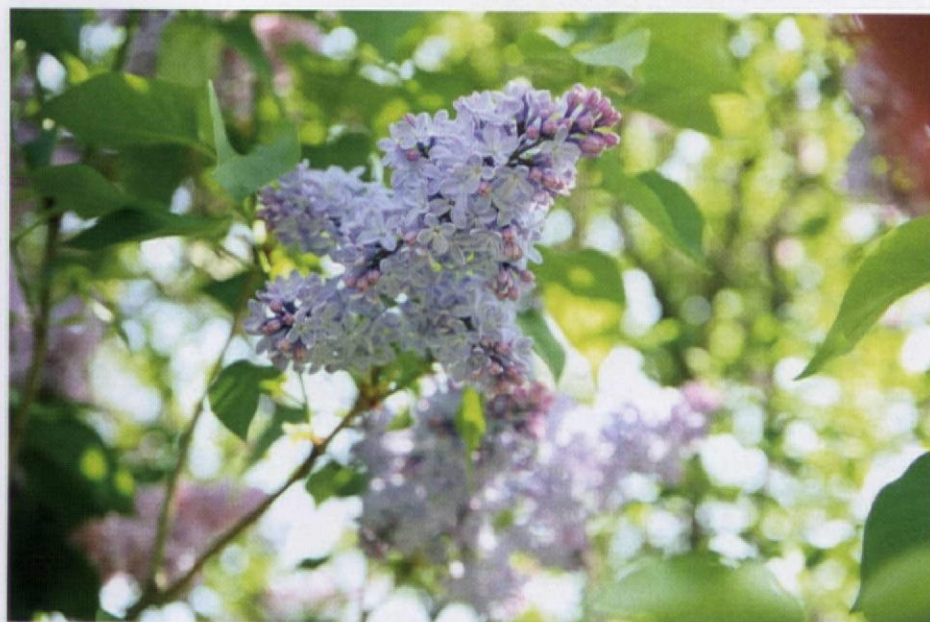
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Clockwise, from top left: Lilacs first enter our horticultural lexicon when the Austrian ambassador noticed the very first recorded specimen growing in the Constantinople garden of Suleiman the Magnificent. He brought a cutting home with him to Vienna in 1562, and the plant became revered for its intoxicating scent. Tulips (another Turkish import, like the lilac) became prized by the Dutch in the early seventeenth century.

cent. He brought a cutting home with him to Vienna in 1562, and within just a few years the plant had a wide following among the horticultural cognoscenti of Europe, revered for its scent. Within a century lilacs were everywhere—including in pots on decks of sailing vessels heading for the New World, and later still, in covered wagons heading for the American frontier. So beloved, in fact, was this shrub that sociologists still use the lilac to track migration patterns across the West. Long after farm structures have turned to dust, ancient clumps of lilac still thrive to mark the spot of former homesteads.

But even the lilac loses to the boxwood in terms of sheer garden staying power. Common box (*Buxus sempervirens*) has been in Western gardens so long that there is some doubt as to where the plant was originally native. Certainly its origins lay in somewhere in continental Europe, but the plant was so much admired by the Romans that they very quickly spread it to the four corners of their Empire. Their principal interest in boxwood was for making topiary, a common feature in Roman gardens: easily sheared, box was more than likely the principal component of most of these elaborate living sculptures.

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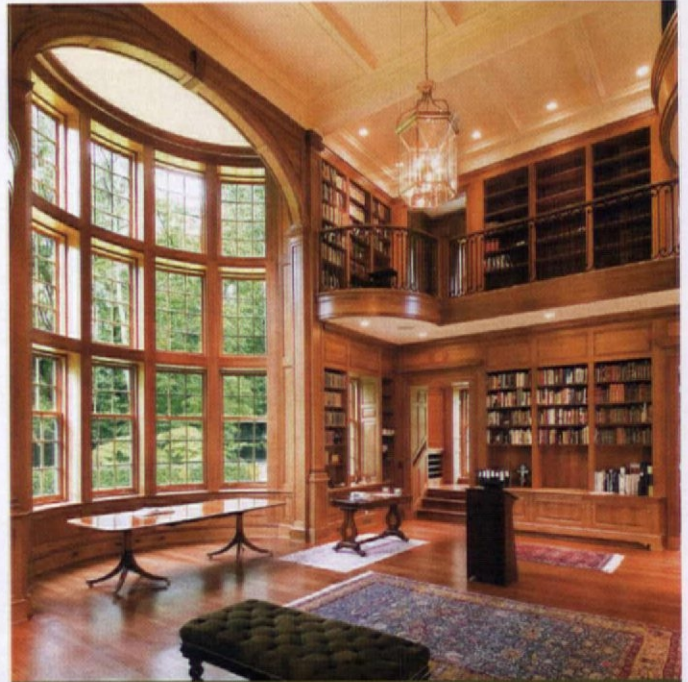
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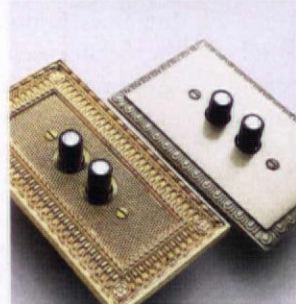
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The ten or so modern members of the Yew can trace their roots back to fossils found in rocks of the Triassic Period, 200 million years ago. The garden is designed by Gregory Lombardi Design based in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

With the fall of the Roman Empire, and with it the collapse of ornamental gardening, the cultivation of box was neglected, but the hardy little shrub simply shrugged off the loss of its more formal surroundings and escaped back into the countryside, waiting for civilization to return. And return it eventually did: the “rediscovered” boxwood became the dominant feature in many Tudor gardens, with the inevitable backlash such horticultural monopolies often inspire. Complaining that the gardens of the day were “stuffed too thick with box,” many landscape designers of the late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century ruthlessly ripped out centuries old parterres and other box patterns, to be replaced with

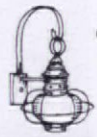
more “modern” shrubs and flowers. Once again the durable boxwood just shrugged off these changes in garden fashion: it was far too valuable and useful in the garden to be banished for very long, and sure enough, by the early twentieth-century, boxwood had made a triumphant return to European gardening scene, where it remains extremely popular to this day.

Fascinating stories like this abound: the dahlia for instance was first imported from the New World as a potential food source, like the potato. (Never mind that it tasted like aspirin.) Tomatoes were once thought poisonous and used only for decorative plantings. The chrysanthemum was so revered in Japan that only it could only be grown with

permission of the Emperor, on pain of death. The merry daffodil, that cheerful harbinger of spring, was considered by ancient Egyptians to be the flower of death, and in fact, every part of it is poisonous. Tulips (another Turkish import, like the lilac) became so prized by the Dutch in the early seventeenth century that rampant speculation in bulb futures caused a nationwide economic collapse...and on, and on.

So next time you're in a historical mood, you might find it worthwhile to “dig” a little deeper into background of some of the plants that surround you. You'll find fascinating tales of explorers, adventurers, scientists saints and scoundrels—all right there in your own backyard. **NOH**

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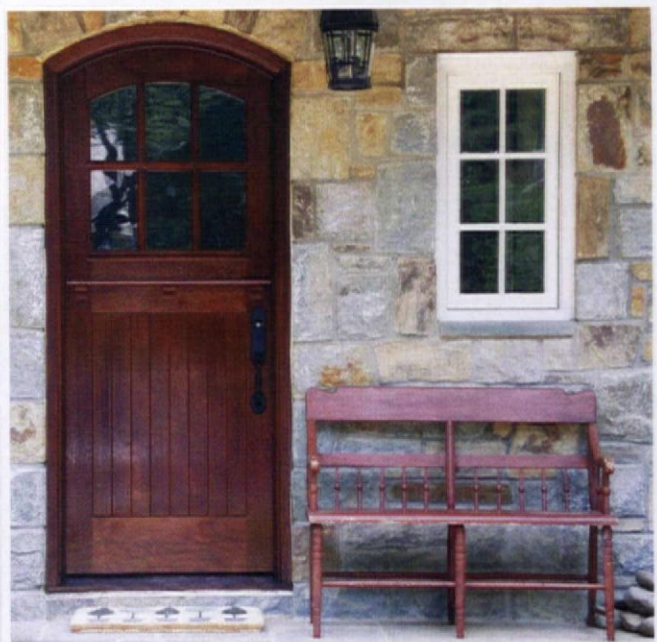
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BY ANNABEL HSIN



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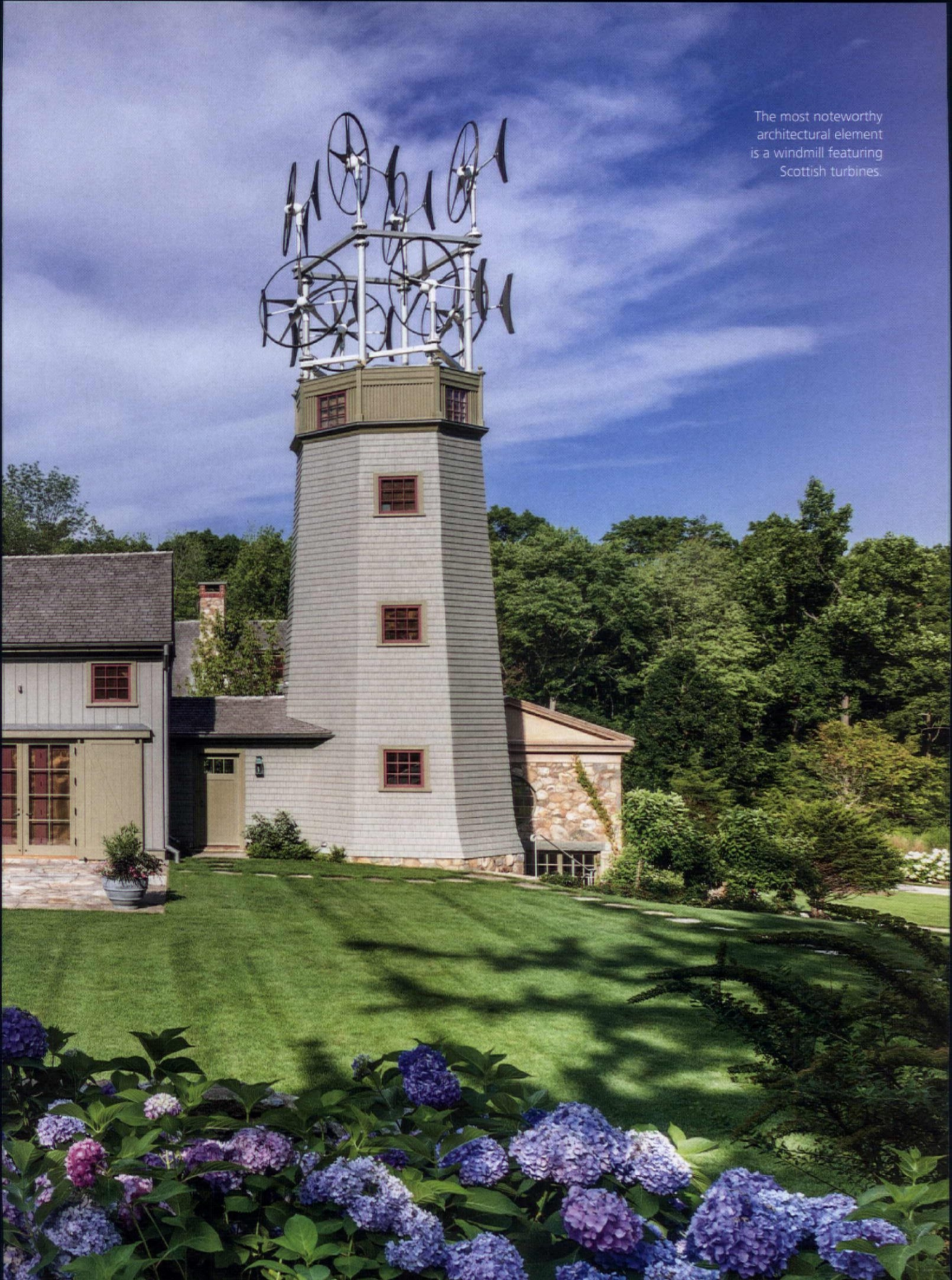
Going Home

Reimagining a client's boyhood home, Austin Patterson Disston Architects and landscape architect Diane Devore create a self-sustaining compound meant for multiple generations.

BY KILEY JACQUES



The most noteworthy architectural element is a windmill featuring Scottish turbines.





A top a hill in New Canaan, Connecticut, overlooking Long Island Sound, a sprawling nine-acre property teems with life. It is the kind of place that bestows a feeling of well-being on those who visit. A Japanese maple-lined drive, terraced and parterre gardens, magnificent old Norway spruce trees, wildflower-filled meadows, and rolling topography hem the main house and its outbuildings, making for a successful—and inspired—assemblage.

Nearly six years ago, an ailing father had the client returning to his childhood home—one that had fallen into a state of grave disrepair. Originally a working farm, the now-owner wanted to honor its agricultural heritage with a focus on sustainability. By planting organic gardens and orchards, restoring native wetlands, and incorporating geothermal wells, solar panels, wind turbines, and roof gardens, the team set his ideas into motion. According to Mac Patterson, AIA, the client wanted to “bring the property up to today’s standards and beyond so that it is sustainable through the next century.”



The client is in the shipping business so he selected nautically themed Zuber wallpaper depicting trading seaports for the entry hall. The kitchen is housed in a new rear addition and features a breakfast nook that looks out to a cherished maple tree. The wood-paneled family room ties nicely to the exterior landscape with its natural hues.







Above: The formal dining room, like many of the rooms in the house, was designed to create a sense of spaciousness while remaining period appropriate. Opposite: What was once a small bedroom to the central hallway now serves as a small seating area; a relaxed family room enjoys terraced views of the landscape designed by Diane Devore.

Toward that end, pesticides were removed from the soil; a greenhouse was added for growing produce and herbs year round; high-grade doors, double-paned windows, and eco-friendly insulation were used to ensure energy savings; solar panels were implemented to heat (and cool) the chemical-free, fresh-water pool with a reverse osmosis and natural filtration system; and water cisterns were set up to collect rain water for irrigation.

Landscape architect Diane Devore viewed the entire project as one framed by permaculture. She designed the grounds such that the gardens most used are nearest the house—the herbs are by the kitchen, the vegetables are close to the caretaker's home, etc. Then, moving into the landscape, there are the meadowlands, the apple orchard, berry brambles, and ultimately the wetlands. "There are these five phases of permaculture.... With all the efforts to make everything organic, it is going to continue to grow and evolve," says Devore.

At the beginning, however, traffic noise was an immediate concern. "It was almost the starting point of the project...to try to figure out how to create a tranquil, peaceful setting," notes Devore, who addressed the problem with rills—a series of disappearing and reappearing waterfalls—to create pleasant white noise. Next, as the orchard was highly important to the client, she put in disease-resistant varieties. Then came the berry patches, the green roof for vegetable beds on one of the two three-bay garages, and a space on the lower level for root crops. In terms of the wetlands restoration effort, she wanted them to be "an asset to the property" so a boardwalk was built over the wettest areas; invasive trees, like locust, were removed and replaced with native oaks and smaller flowering trees. The result is a path system via which strollers can experience the specialized habitat. Furthermore, Devore dealt with remnant lead and arsenic from pesticide applications by grading every-

This page: The barn was dismantled and rebuilt to create a modern structure with original interiors. Opposite: The barn was designed to serve as a social gathering and entertaining space.





thing down to where they planted species known to absorb toxins (phytoremediation). Working with a botanist, they also chose a wildflower mix with long tap roots to draw contaminants from the soil.

Architecturally, the 9,950-square-foot 1920s Colonial Revival main house—a 2014 New Canaan Preservation Society Award winner—was completely renovated and added to. The team started by cleaning up the site and getting rid of “things that had no meaning,” says Patterson. Poorly done add-ons were removed and replaced with new spaces that made more sense, like the rear addition built for the new kitchen, breakfast room, family room, pantry, and master bedroom suite above. Further demolition included a carriage barn that once sat “uncomfortably” beside the house. “It was like a looming hulk of a thing that had been so sliced and diced and added to that it was a worthless building,” recalls Patterson. A second barn (circa

1850s), the caretaker’s cottage, and the greenhouse were moved away from the house so it wouldn’t feel crowded by outbuildings. The team also worked with land contours to set those structures lower so as not to dwarf the house. By doing so, they consequently opened everything up to the expansive back yard.

The house comprises the main stair hall with sitting area; a formal living room and a wood-paneled family room, both of which have terraces; a dining room; four bedrooms with baths; a kitchen with breakfast nook, pantry, and potting area; a big front porch; and an attic gym and spa. Many of the original interior spaces were altered to enhance the feeling of spaciousness. For instance, upstairs, they opened what was once a small bedroom to the central hallway, and it now serves as a little sitting area where people can look out toward the Sound. Patterson particularly enjoyed working on the entry: “The whole sequence—coming in the front



door and looking down to the staircase and the window above it—being able to open it all up...it works so nicely and has such a great period feel to it. It's all about it being a generous household; it has a wonderful openness to it.”

He also values the new kitchen design, which includes a food pantry, an adjacent potting room, and beyond the back Dutch door, an herb garden, where views to the distant fields can be enjoyed. Throughout the house, but from those places in particular, there are many “terrific little vignettes,” says Patterson. Another is seen from the breakfast area, which peers out onto a grand old maple tree. “We centered everything on the view line to that tree,” he notes.

All the interior detailing including the millwork was done by Patterson’s team. They rebuilt the front door and redid the lead work; they also added more paneling in the entry. “This is the house the client grew up in. He wanted memories of all [those things]. He didn’t want it to change in that respect. We wanted to bring it up to speed but make it much more friendly and open, though still recognizable.”

Of special note is the barn, which was laboriously dismantled and rebuilt to create a modern structure with original interiors—an effort which resulted in a 2015 AIA/CT Alice Washburn honorable mention for restoration.

Above: Terraced and parterre gardens unify the landscape, which also features less-formal elements such as an apple orchard, berry brambles, and wetlands. Opposite: Landscape architect Diane Devore used disappearing and reappearing waterfalls to create pleasant white noise.





The 1920s Colonial Revival main house is a New Canaan Restoration Society Award winner. Once crowded with dilapidated outbuildings and add-ons, the main house now stands singularly, enjoying an intentional openness.





“This is everything—everything I hoped it would be. And it’s for everybody.”

Many of the tenons needed replacing due to weather damage. “The whole intention was to save every single piece of siding and every single piece of roofing and plank and skip sheathing—all of that went back,” explains Patterson. Designed to be a space for entertaining, he refers to it as “the party barn” with “an internal vignette.”

Also noteworthy is an on-site windmill—a nod to one the client remembers from his childhood, which had pumped water on the property. The one standing today features Scottish turbines that generate electricity. “We basically made an active mobile out of the thing by mounting them all together,” muses Patterson. “We always refer to it as the egg beater.” On average, it generates 12 kilowatts, which essentially means “it spins the meter backward.”

Of the entire project, Patterson says: “It was about making places for family members who were coming up for the weekend—so they could hang out by themselves or partake in the bigger churnings of the household.” He notes what the client and his family enjoy most about the new old home is “the ongoing seasonal shift of the whole place.” Summer yields vegetables and herbs. Come fall, the apples ripen in the orchard. The pool is solar heated in the spring and kept cool as temperatures climb. “It has a sort of self-created ecosystem of its own,” he says, noting how the client referenced his growing family every step of the way. “He wanted to be sure everybody felt like they could use it as if it was their house. It wasn’t his house.”

Upon the project’s completion, the client hosted a large party during which he made a toast: “This is everything—everything I hoped it would be. And it’s for everybody.” Which, of course, was his intention all along. NOH

Kiley Jacques is a freelance writer living in Massachusetts.

For Resources, see page 72.

PORCH *with a* View



The Shingle-style home by Hammer Architects is a harmonious blend of formal elements belonging to the 20th century and those that enhance modern coastal living.



When Hammer Architects added a spacious new porch to an old Watch Hill home, they created interesting opportunities for landscape architect Keith LeBlanc.

BY KILEY JACQUES | PHOTOS BY KEITH LEBLANC



The voluminous porch enjoys full views of the ocean as well as new perennial borders featuring a blend of native and cultivated plant species.

WATCH HILL, RHODE ISLAND,

has a lot of period houses, built at the turn of the century, with staff and servant quarters,” notes Keith LeBlanc, principal at LeBlanc Jones Landscape Architects. They were intended to serve as summer homes “with a little more of a formal nod.” This turn-of-the-twentieth-century, Shingle-style home by Hammer Architects is no exception.

From the beginning, LeBlanc and his team aimed to preserve the historic nature of the house while simultaneously updating its environs to accommodate modern coastal living. To do so, he notes, is “the fine line we walk as designers.” The home sits one lot inland from the waterfront proper, with Manatuck Beach at the end of street. Suffice it say, the view to the ocean was paramount.

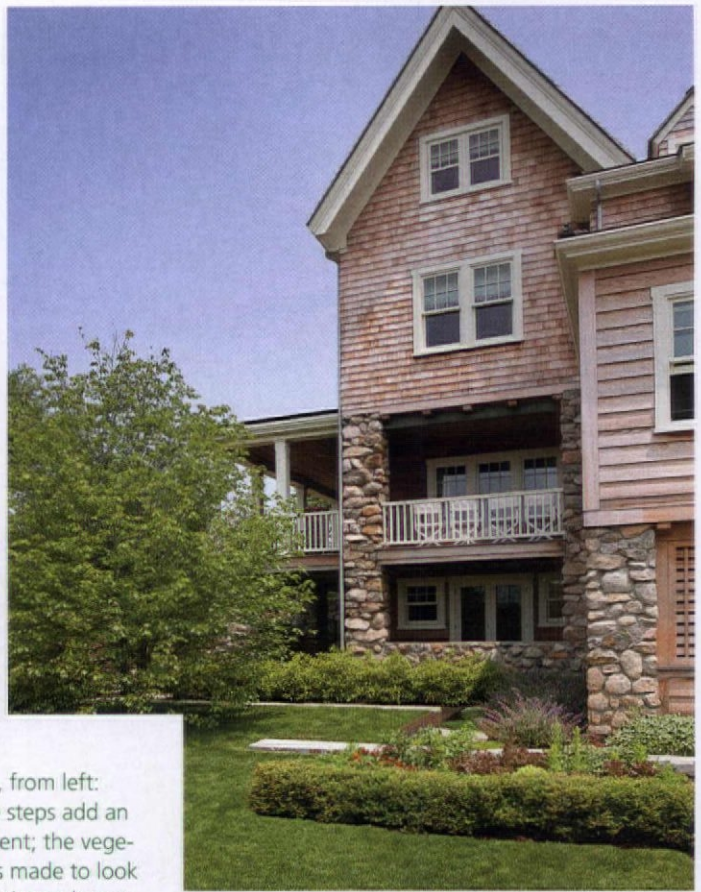
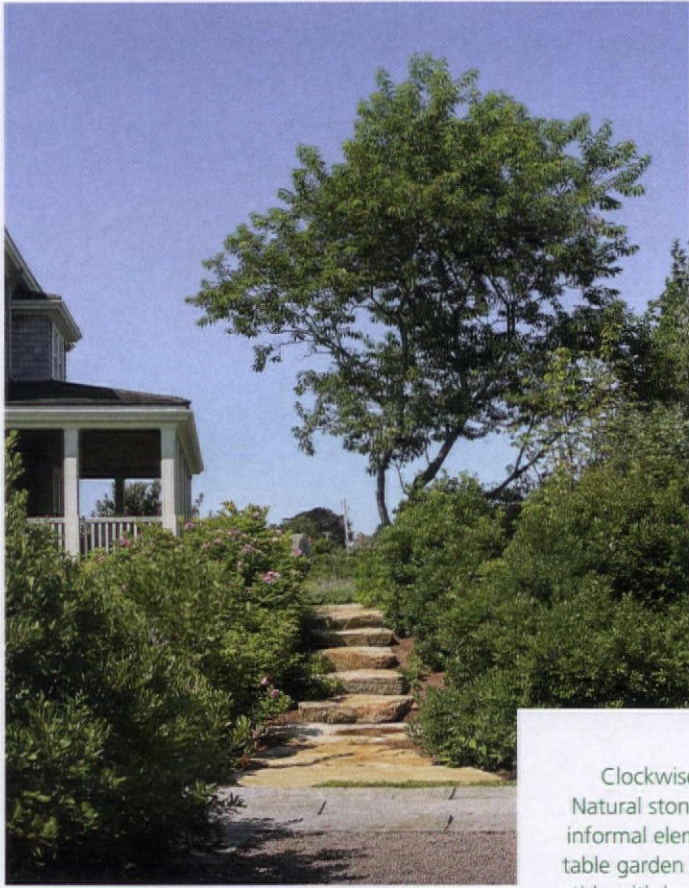
The architects had wrapped a new porch around the side of the house to be able to open up the interior layout. “With that new addition, and wanting to keep the ocean view open, that’s how the approach worked,” notes LeBlanc. “It’s really a minimal garden directly in front of the house—it’s more about being on the porch and looking out.”

In fact, most of the gardens were approached from that perspective: on the porch, viewing the ocean; on the porch, looking toward the front yard; on the porch, enjoying the new garden (a perennial and shrub mixed border in front of

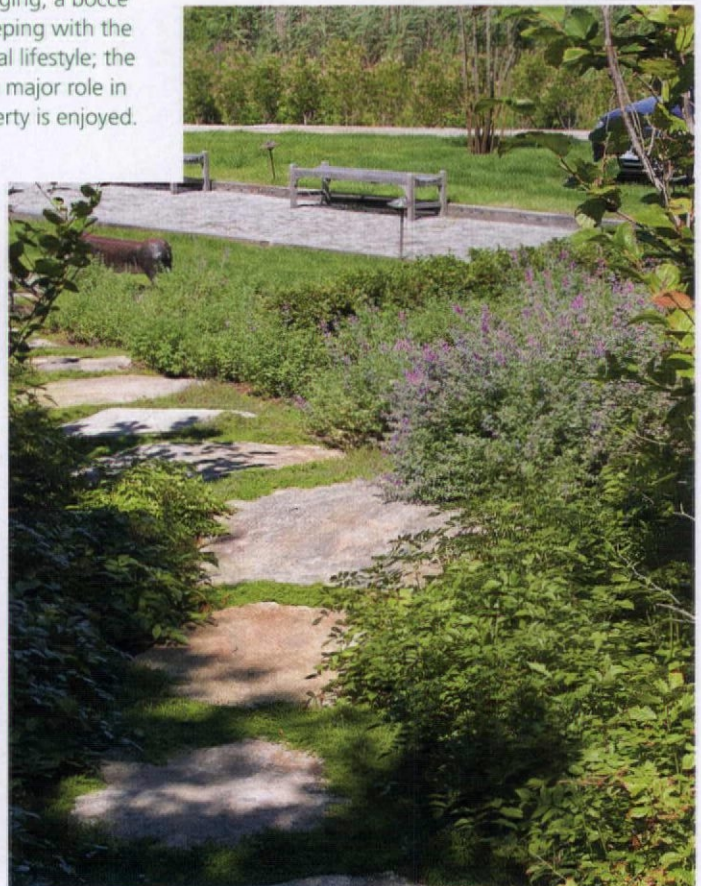
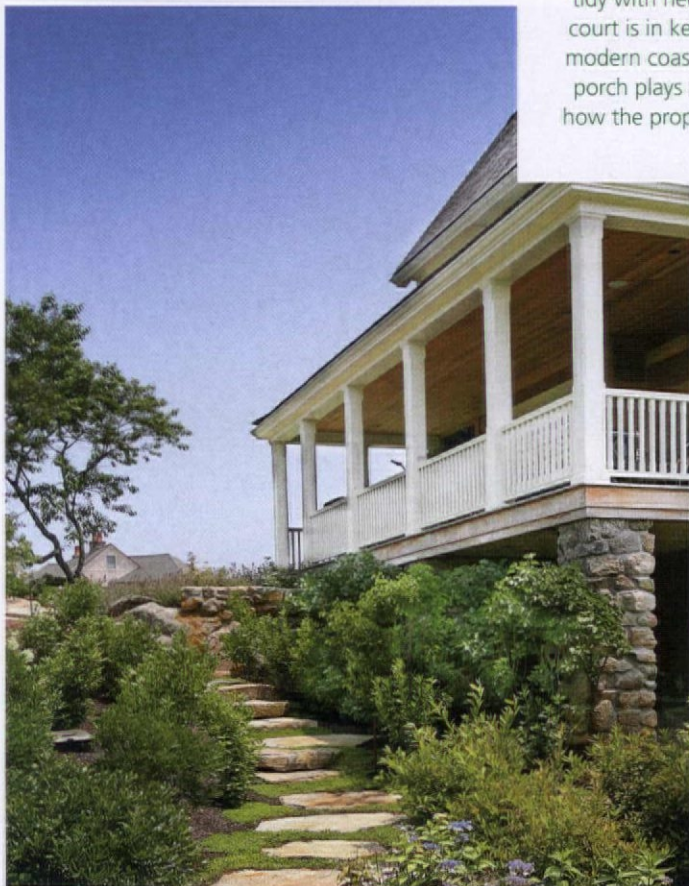
a tightly clipped privet hedge)—it was all designed so as not to disrupt vistas seen from the elevated porch.

Throughout the landscape, architectonic plantings are softened with naturalistic borders, made so with the incorporation of native species. “We like to interject native plants, even though they are not as showy,” says LeBlanc, noting, in this case, they are beach-side appropriate. “It really helps the garden fit into a more natural environment.” Adjacent to an isolated freshwater wetland, the plant palette along the naturalized edges of the property includes native plants that can take wet and salty seaside conditions, such as *Acer rubrum* (red maple), *Ilex verticillata* (winterberry holly), and *Clethra alnifolia* (summer sweet). Of the front-side plantings LeBlanc says: “We didn’t want [them] to be so strikingly different.” Hence, the mix of natives with more ornamental species. “To be consistent, we picked out spots for interjecting non-native perennials.”

A new stone wall in the front yard helped create a plinth of lawn that was then hemmed with curvilinear planted beds. Naturalistic stairs descend a slope from the house to the backyard, complementing the building’s stone cladding. The team opted to keep a crisp privet hedge for screening the street, as well as to frame the less tame plantings. To the south side, they applied the formal language of the architec-

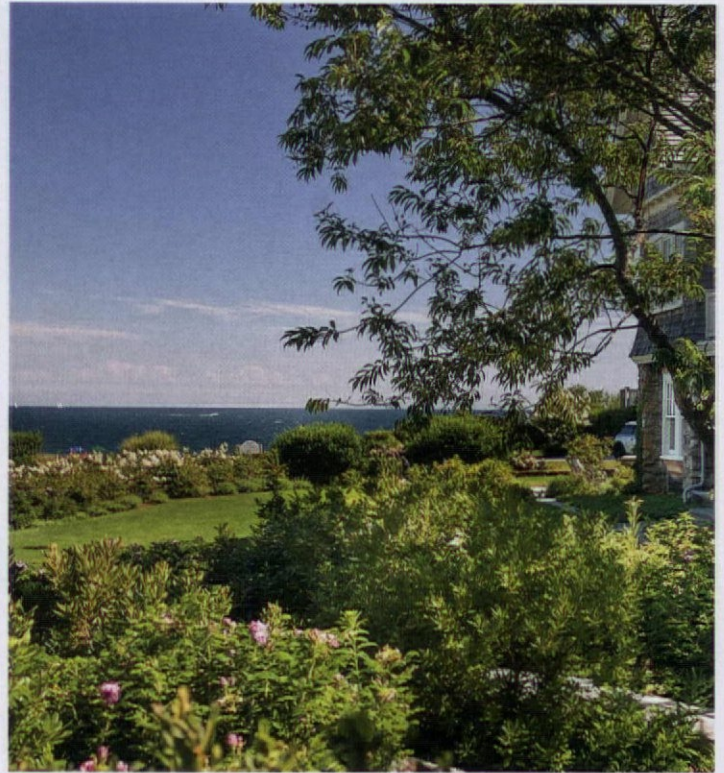


Clockwise, from left:
Natural stone steps add an informal element; the vegetable garden is made to look tidy with hedging; a bocce court is in keeping with the modern coastal lifestyle; the porch plays a major role in how the property is enjoyed.





The property's varied characteristics evoke a sense of leisure and recreation. From the bocce court to the L-shaped porch to the transitional spaces—all work together to encourage social gathering.





Above: Having both a front and rear drive, the clients are able to accommodate multiple guests without their vehicles interrupting the views out to the ocean—an intentional design element on the part of LeBlanc Jones Landscape Architects.

ture to a new bocce court and vegetable garden. “As landscape architects we know [vegetable gardens] sometimes get kind of messy,” notes LeBlanc. The hedges add a structural element and link it with the larger landscape and design. “It can be as messy as it wants to be and still look good.”

FORMAL ENTRY

Upon arrival, guests ascend a more formal entry that respects the formality of the house in terms of symmetry. “We had two approaches: One is a more formal, a straight-on shot up the front steps to the house. The other is a more leisurely, stacked-stone approach that goes through plantings and approaches on the side of the new front porch.”

One of the project’s major challenges was getting a septic system in place. The wetland setback includes half of the back yard, making siting it there an impossibility. “Part of that adaptation of the front was to install a garden in front of the hedge we were keeping.” Thereby disguising the septic system’s “impertinences.”

Unique to the property is a rear drive, in addition to the front driveway, which enables the clients to tuck their cars to the back to accommodate guest parking. They also relocated the original drive and parking area to the edge of the lot—where they would not break the sight lines to the ocean—and screened them with native plants. “Parking is at

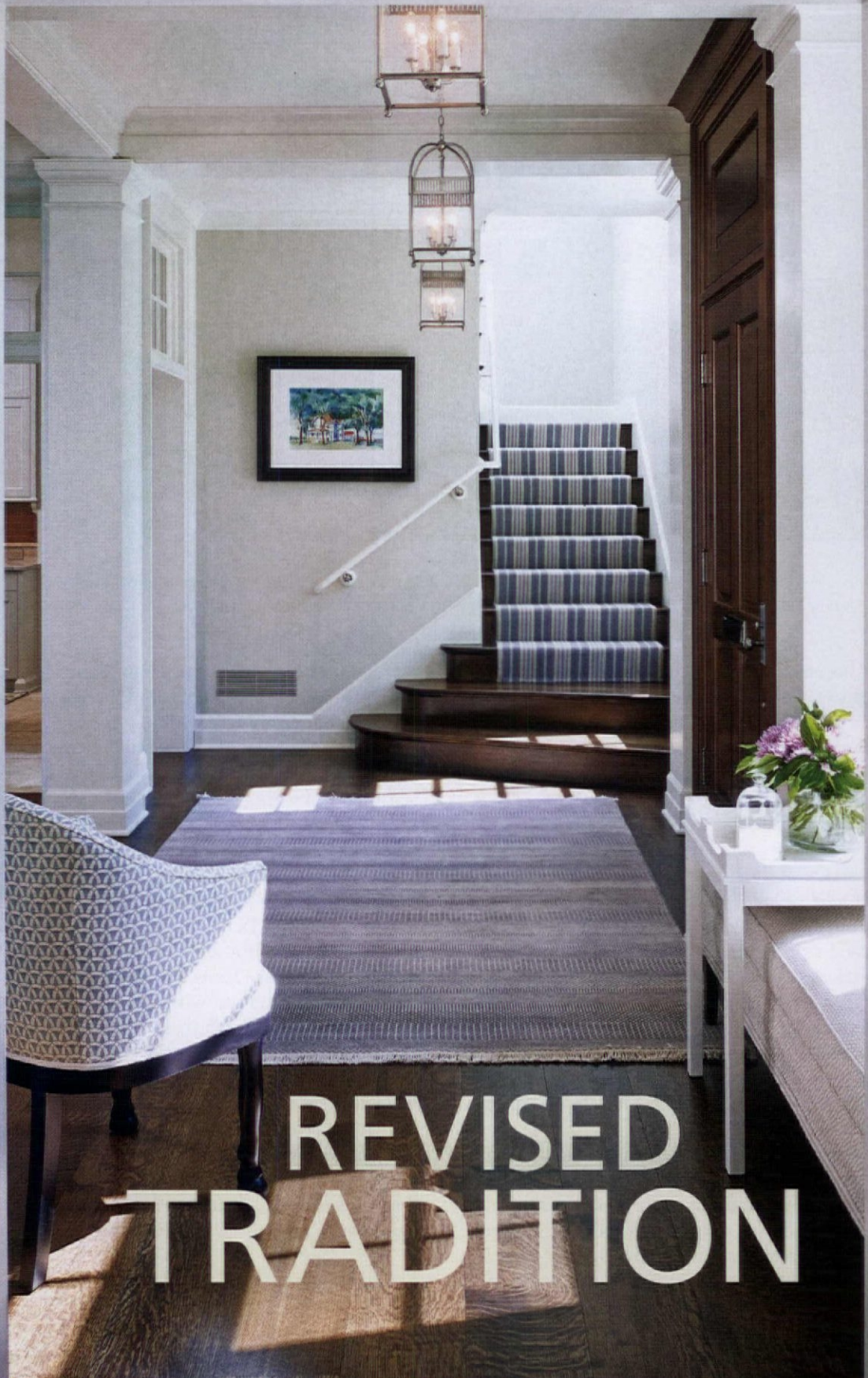
a premium here,” notes LeBlanc. “Having a dual driveway in the front and the back meant that we didn’t need to take up the whole front yard with [a driveway].”

To be sure, no space was wasted. Because the lot is “so house-centric,” they decided to make use of a side slope as a separate sitting area—one not associated with the porch or the house. The “hillside,” being higher than the front porch, lent itself to becoming “a cleared area in the grove,” and offers a different perspective of the ocean. “Prior to us working on the site, it was just a grove of weeds and heavy undergrowth.”


What strikes LeBlanc about the project is “this respect for the old house.” The beach is not a formal location, yet the house leans that way. The informality of its locale, in combination with a relaxed planting design and the wrap-around porch makes the property comfortable and inviting, as a beach house should be. “I think that is the major difference between what was there before and what is there now.” **NOH**

Kiley Jacques is a freelance writer living on Boston’s North Shore. Her background includes 22 years as a professional gardener—the last six of which were spent managing a historic rose garden at Seattle’s Woodland Park Zoo.

For Resources, see page 72.



REVISED
TRADITION



BY MARY GRAUERHOLZ
PHOTOS BY DAVE BURK/
HEDRICH BLESSING

Cohen & Hacker Architects
designs a new house on
Chicago's North Shore.



The entryway of the home retains the surround from the original residence. Right: The back of the house, near the beach, is more casual.

In the 1930s, a small enclave of homes rose up on Chicago's North Shore, creating a sublime neighborhood that backs onto picturesque dunes and beyond them, Lake Michigan. The houses—Tudor style with classical cut-stone entryways and exteriors of distinctive Wisconsin lannon stone—created a gracious architectural tone. Dense and mysterious, lannon stone was named for William Lannon, who settled in Wisconsin in the early 1800s and, as the legend goes, felt the stones spoke to him, urging him to build a house.

A quarter-century later, a builder filled one of the lots with a 1950s red brick Colonial, a rude interruption that degraded the neighborhood's identity and historic value. "It did not fit in at all," says Julie Hacker, principal with her husband, Stuart Cohen, of Cohen & Hacker Architects in Evanston, Illinois. When Cohen and Hacker entered the picture two years ago, a young couple had bought the property, razed the Colonial, and asked Hacker and Cohen—who have spent their careers collaborating in harmonic rhythm—to design a home that did justice to the neighborhood and honored the spirit of North Shore settlements.

Cohen and Hacker embraced the project. "The idea was to make the house comfortable in the context of the surrounding traditional 1930s houses," Cohen says. Today

the three-story house, in modern style, carries the same visual beauty of the enclave and the defining lannon stone, yet asserts its own quiet identity.

The focal point of the front exterior is the formal classical entryway: a dark wood front door surrounded by the same cut stone that defines the neighborhood, replete with carved stone brackets and an arched canopy. (The surround is the only thing remaining of the original house.)

The back of the house segues into a more casual statement, recognizing the presence of the beach and Lake Michigan. Treated as an interlocking volume, with a large screened porch with fireplace, spacious windows, and second-floor balcony, the backside's painted clapboard exterior takes full advantage of a landscape punctuated by dune grass, tall graceful trees, and a path that leads to the lake.

The house differs from the neighborhood in some exterior details. "Many of the roofs here are slate," Cohen explains. "We elected to have a shingle roof." And while most of the windows of the enclave's other homes are dark brown or black steel, this home's windows are white, again suggesting a bright, beachy tone. "We think of it as having traditional segments, but it may not be a definable style," Cohen says of the home. Its materiality and scale—making sure it fits with the surrounding houses—was the important





Cohen and Hacker designed the walnut cabinet-server, which opens to both the dining room and the kitchen. Right: A limestone floor and plentiful windows brighten the kitchen and family room.



The living room has a gracious piano alcove. Transom windows over the bookcases echo those opposite and bring light into the mudroom and side entryway.





“We’re very interested in big open floor plans, but we like to define the spaces within.”

point, Hacker adds. “We were not stylistically driven.”

Cohen and Hacker have a lilting, warm way of finishing each other’s sentences, sometimes even knowing what the other means before the speaker realizes it. This probably comes from working together for more than 30 years as a married couple, collaborating on architecture by day and going home together at night to a happy domestic life. Both bring their own expertise and impressive history to the partnership.

Before returning home to open a firm in Chicago and teach, Cohen worked in New York City for Richard Meier and Associates and Philip Johnson. He has received many awards for design excellence, including accolades from the American Institute of Architects, and Architectural Digest’s AD100, the magazine’s designation of the world’s top 100 residential architects.

Before she joined her husband’s firm, then Stuart Cohen and Associates in Chicago, Hacker was a project architect for Hammond, Beeby and Babka (now HBRA Architects) in Chicago. She has received the Chicago Women in Architecture Award and was elected to Fellowship in the American Institute of Architects in recognition of her con-





All the main rooms, including the master bedroom and balcony, offer views of Lake Michigan. Left: The second floor family sitting area is an extension of the stair landing.

tributions in the field of design.

The couple's expertise in art and history shows in the home's interior, in its soft, open lines and creative use of space. Cohen and Hacker designed an exquisite walnut server-cabinet as a room divider between the living room and kitchen. The cabinet, fabricated by Paoli Woodwork Inc. in Franklin Park, Illinois, is a work of art.

The first-floor's layout—living room, dining room, family room, kitchen with eating area, and powder room—is anchored by traditional vernacular elements: classical columns, beamed ceilings, and wide-cased openings with interior transom windows. Washed in light colors, the space is open and welcoming, perfect for the fundraisers the homeowners hold. The living room, to the left of the front vestibule, has a sweet piano alcove. "We're very interested in big open floor plans, but we like to define the spaces within," Hacker says, "so it doesn't feel overwhelming."

Upstairs are the master bedroom suite with study and two children's bedrooms. On the third floor, tucked under the eaves, is a guest suite.

The interior is united by a color scheme (in soft tones of blue, green, and taupe, a collaboration with the Chicago interior design firm Jamestomas, LLC) and wide-board oak floors with a dark walnut stain. The kitchen's limestone

floor, from Materials Marketing in Chicago, brightens the space and sets off the countertops.

Ingenious design elements open up interior and exterior views throughout the house. From the dining room table, for instance, there are views of the family room fireplace to the left and kitchen to the right, centered by the lovely walnut cabinetry with open glass that affords a view. Standing at the kitchen sink, there are views through the door to the dining room, and, by slightly turning, through the windows and French doors leading to the family room. "Having windows line up is one of those things we feel orients a person as they move through the house," Hacker says.

And every window on the home's back and north side leads to spectacular views of Lake Michigan. That is just one of the many reasons the house feels so naturally at home on its site. As a whole, along with its lakefront setting, the house exudes a quiet, stately presence. "It's the ordering of the elements, from the trim to the bands of windows," Cohen says, "that gives the house its calming presence." **NOH**

Mary Grauerholz is a freelance writer living in Massachusetts.

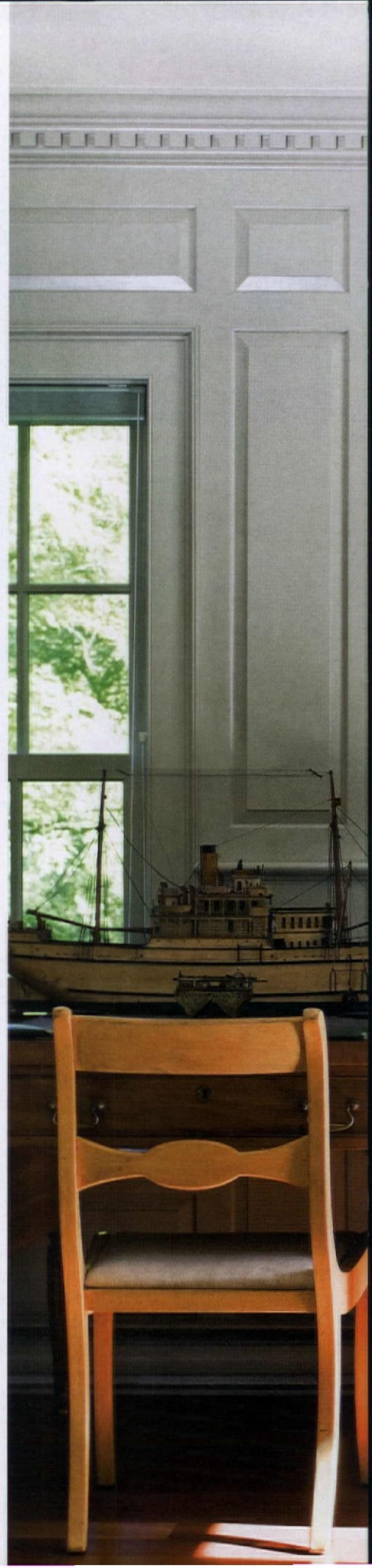
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One Home, Many Centuries

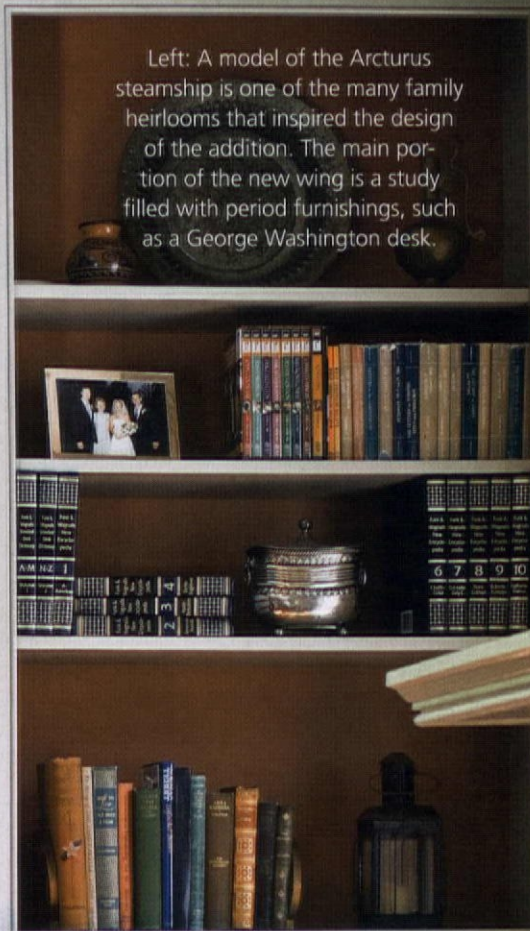
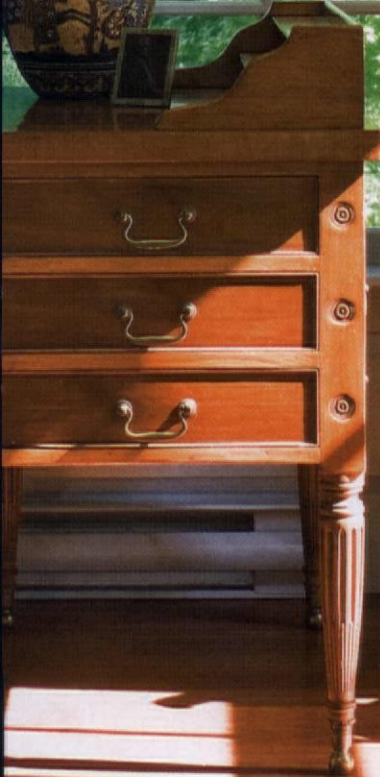
In Vermont, Connor Homes envisions a new addition to an existing farmhouse.

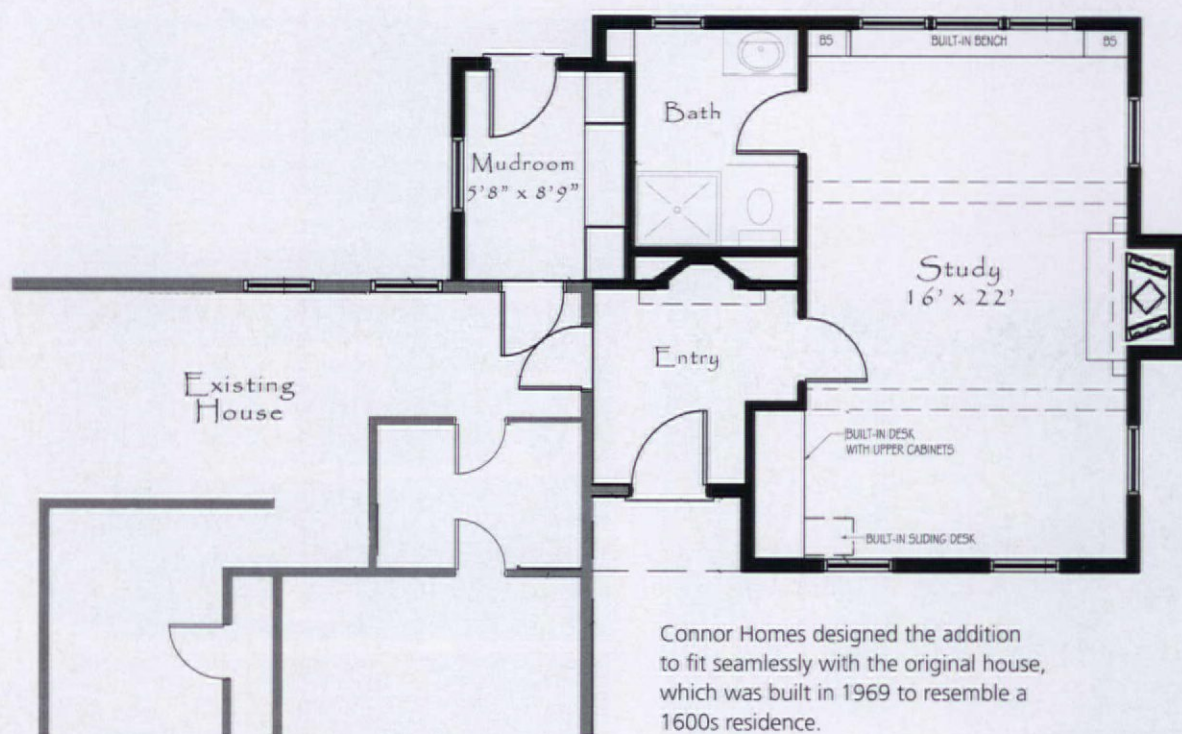
BY KATHERINE GUSTAFSON | PHOTOS BY JIM WESTPHALEN





Left: A model of the Arcturus steamship is one of the many family heirlooms that inspired the design of the addition. The main portion of the new wing is a study filled with period furnishings, such as a George Washington desk.





After raising three children in their three-story Cape Cod in Shelburne, Vermont, Tony Hall and his wife Cyndy decided it was time to make their home fit a new phase of life. With plans to retire from a career in financial planning, Hall wanted a home office where he could work, create art, and practice music. The couple also wanted the ability to retrofit to single-story living quarters should time or circumstance necessitate it.

But beyond such practical considerations, the Halls aimed to create a part of their home where they could display and enjoy a wealth of antique furniture they had inherited from Hall's family. Everything in the room—from the George Washington desk to the model of the Arcturus steamship—has emotional or historical significance.

The furnishings are so central to the space, in fact, that the Halls directed their design company, Connor Homes, to envision their new addition with the décor in mind.

The Halls built their home in 1969 to resemble a 1600s residence, complete with rough-hewn beams, dark wood floors, and, as Hall puts it, “a fireplace that looks like you’d put the kettle on and cook your meat.”

Forty years later, all of the Colonial decorations remain, but one room, a den, “has sort of morphed into an 1880s-style room, with electrified gaslights and an old desk that my grandfather made,” Hall says. His idea for the addition

was to fill in the missing century with a 1700s Georgian Colonial-inspired wing.

The Halls mocked-up their own design for the addition in CAD/CAM software, and sent it, along with photos of the furnishings, to Connor Homes, based in Middlebury, Vermont, a company that specializes in “new old homes”—recreating historic American architecture by combining modern construction techniques and component building methods with handmade craftsmanship and custom millwork.

“One of the goals was to be able to incorporate all of the stuff that I treasure in my life in regards to things—family things—into a space that would display it well,” says Hall. “I wanted the interior to match the quality of the furniture that I knew was going to go in it.”

Connor’s design team created plans for the interior and then worked with the Halls to refine the space around the display of Hall’s antiques. For example, the paneling over the mantel had to perfectly accommodate the painting from the home of Vermont’s first governor, Thomas Chittenden, which was to set the room’s color scheme.

Connor’s team of seasoned carpenters create a project’s components in its artisan woodworking factory. They fashion the exterior shell and interior millwork in panels and sections that can be trucked to the building site and erected and installed there by the client’s chosen contractor.

The interior components delivered by truck for the

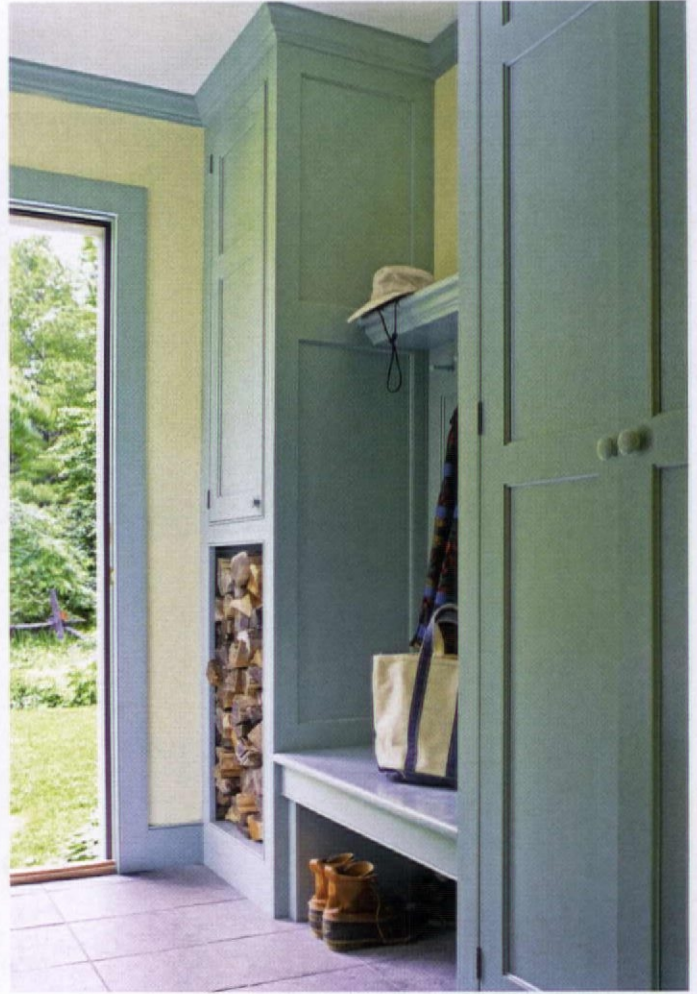






Left: The 1700s Georgian Colonial-style wing was inspired by the homeowners' collection of antique furniture and art. Above: Connor's craftsmen created the custom millwork in the company's Vermont workshop.





The addition combines historical elegance with modern practicality, incorporating both decorative and gas fireplaces (left), built-in bookcases and custom millwork (above left), and a mudroom that opens out onto a path to the garden (above right).

Hall's project included such substantial elements as a built-in desk and bookcases, and two paneled ceiling beams, along with the sections of raised paneling, chair rails, dentil moldings, and other millwork.

"They had to assemble it like a puzzle," says Hall. When complete, that "puzzle" included a 5'5" x 9' entryway with a brick ornamental fireplace, a 6'3" x 8'3" mudroom with a door leading out to the flower garden, the 16' x 21' office space, and a 6'4" x 9'6" bathroom.

Appending such a structure to an existing house always carries the risk of creating a mismatched look, but Connor is expert in maintaining historical accuracy and quality of aesthetics.

"We're always conscious of what we're trying to copy and make sure we don't take away from that," says David Auth, CEO of Connor Homes. "Window sizes, wall heights, the number of panes in the window; these are all specific to a period."

That being said, Connor designs for a modern audience, and many of its projects—including the Halls' proj-

ect—create spaces that would be unfamiliar to those living in the historic periods in question.

"If someone from 200 years ago walked into one of our houses they would probably be very surprised at the layout and disappointed because it wouldn't serve their needs," says Auth. "Old houses in northern places would have had a central chimney with rooms around it. It would have had a back kitchen. It would have had a birthing room. We don't get too many people asking us for a birthing room anymore."

For their part, the Halls find the mix of antique and modern in their new space a perfect match to the rest of the house. "It's as comfortable and as charming and as warm as I wanted it to be," says Hall. "It's functional. It's elegant. It just fits in perfectly."

And so do the George Washington desk, the Arcturus, and, framed precisely by the raised paneling above the mantel, the Chittenden landscape painting. **NOH**

For Resources, see page 72.

1



Newcomers

The latest products from choice design companies.

BY ANNABEL HSIN

2



3



1. Ellis Reproduction

Since 2000, renowned Arts & Crafts style furniture company Stickley has been releasing a unique Collector Edition piece that is only available for one year. Inspired by one of Stickley's craftsmen, the 2016 Collector Edition Harvey Ellis Console features a narrow footprint making it a versatile and functional piece that can serve as a hall console, sofa table or entertainment unit. It is available in solid quarter sawn white oak or solid cherry in selected hand-rubbed finishes.


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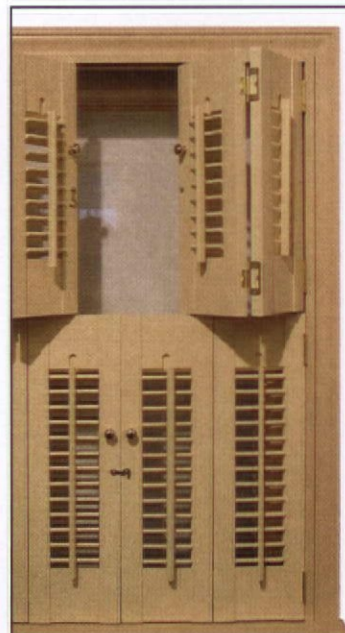


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GOING HOME, PAGE 34

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PORCH WITH A VIEW, PAGE 46

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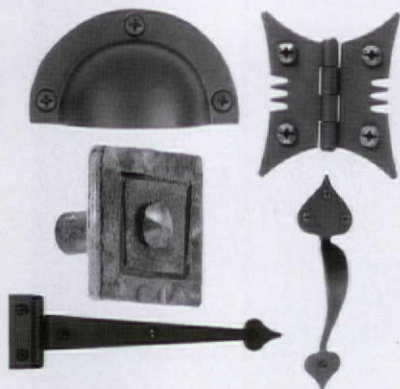
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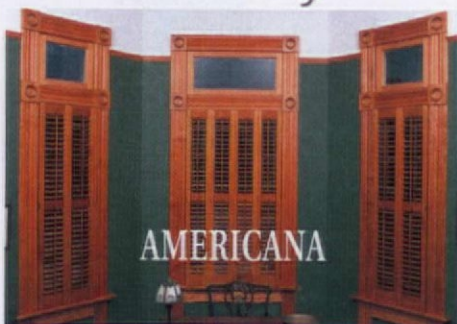


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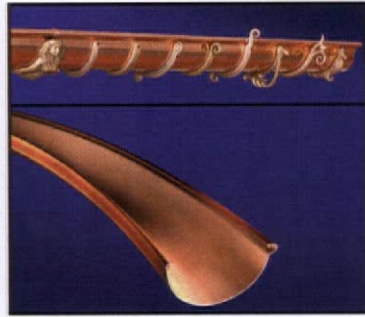
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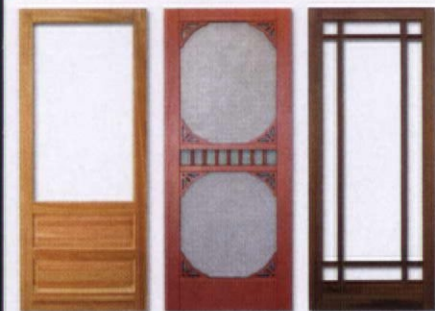
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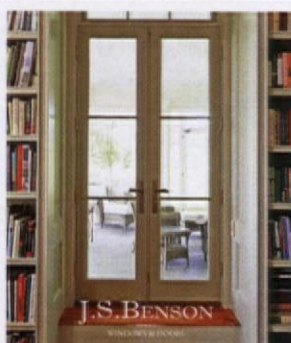
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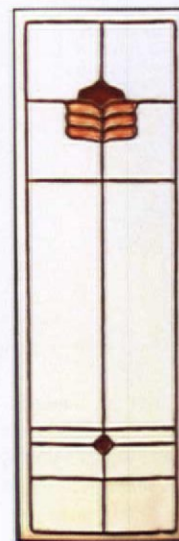


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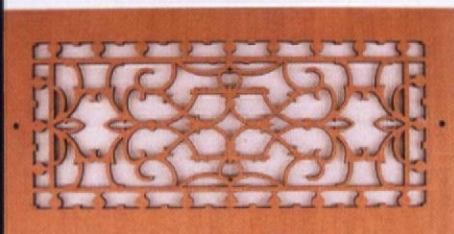


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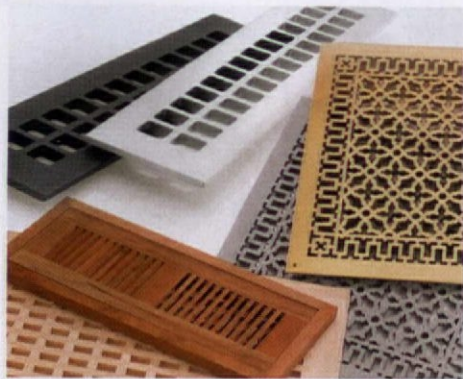
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