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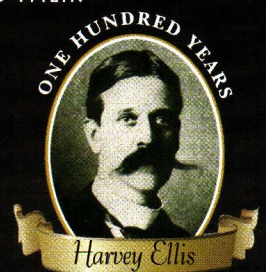
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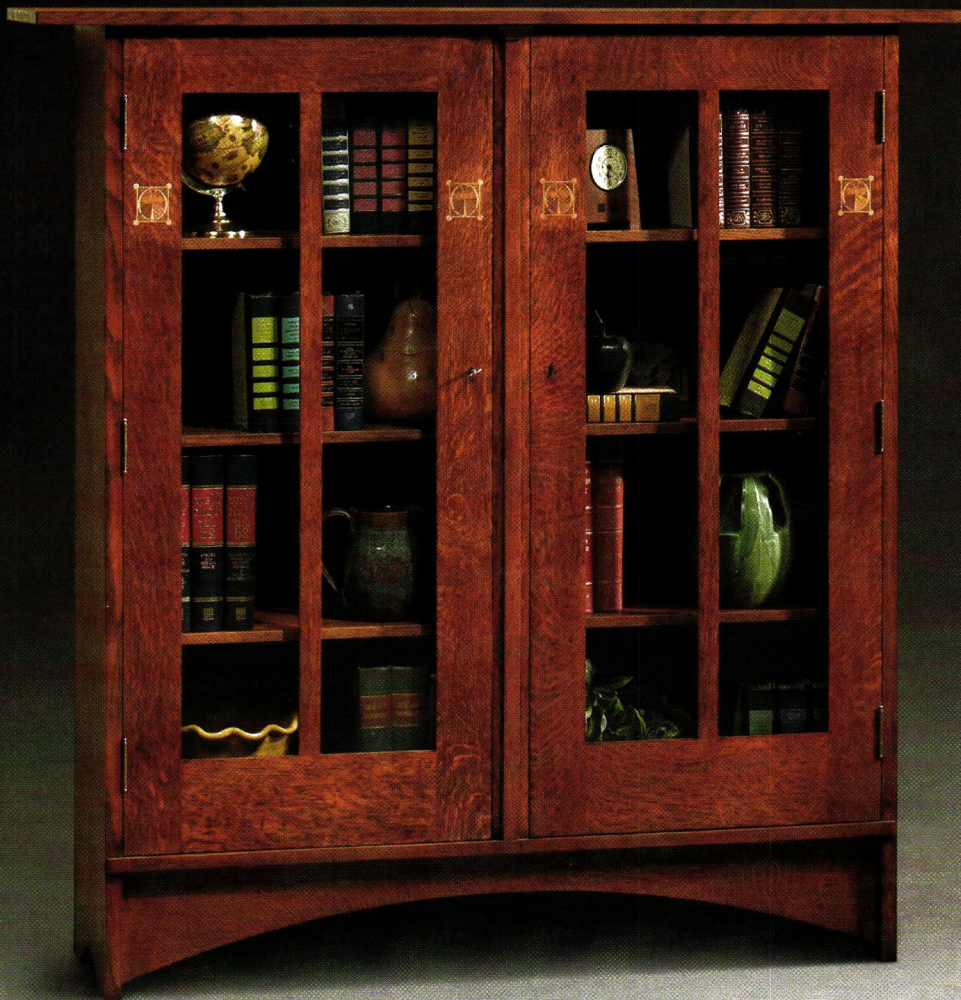
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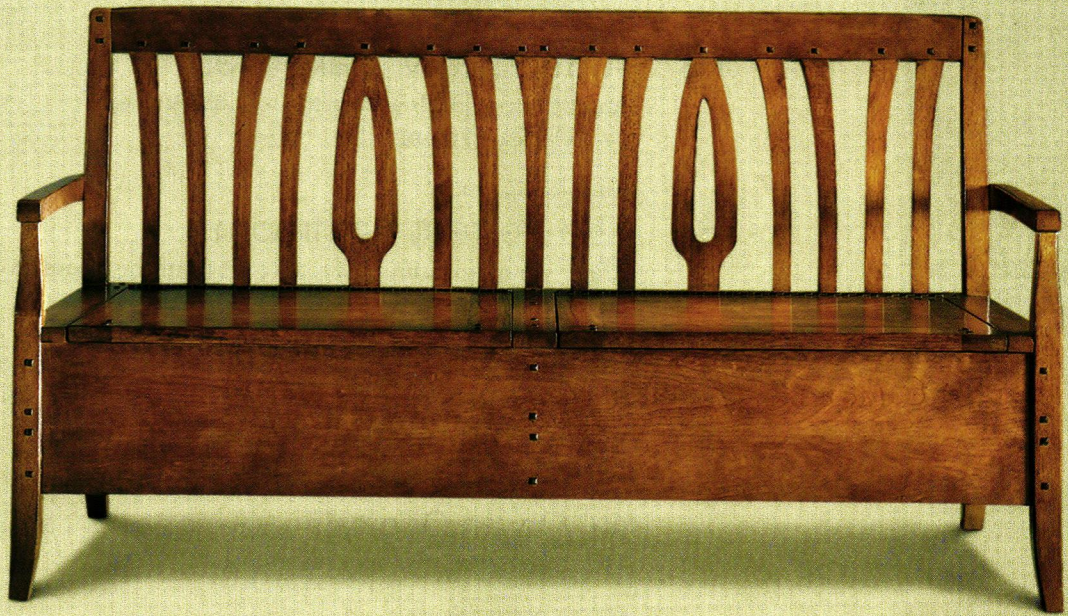


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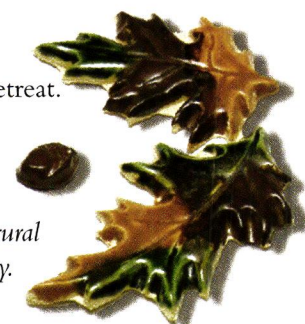
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ON THE COVER: *A custom-made vernacular fireplace is the frame for local antiques in an 1830s Greek Revival in rural New York. Cover photograph by Steve Gross & Susan Daley.*





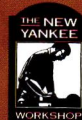
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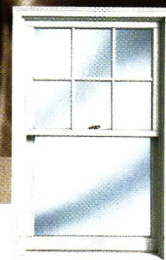
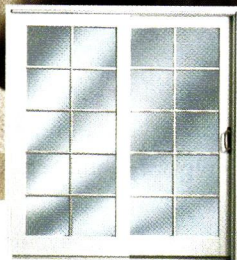
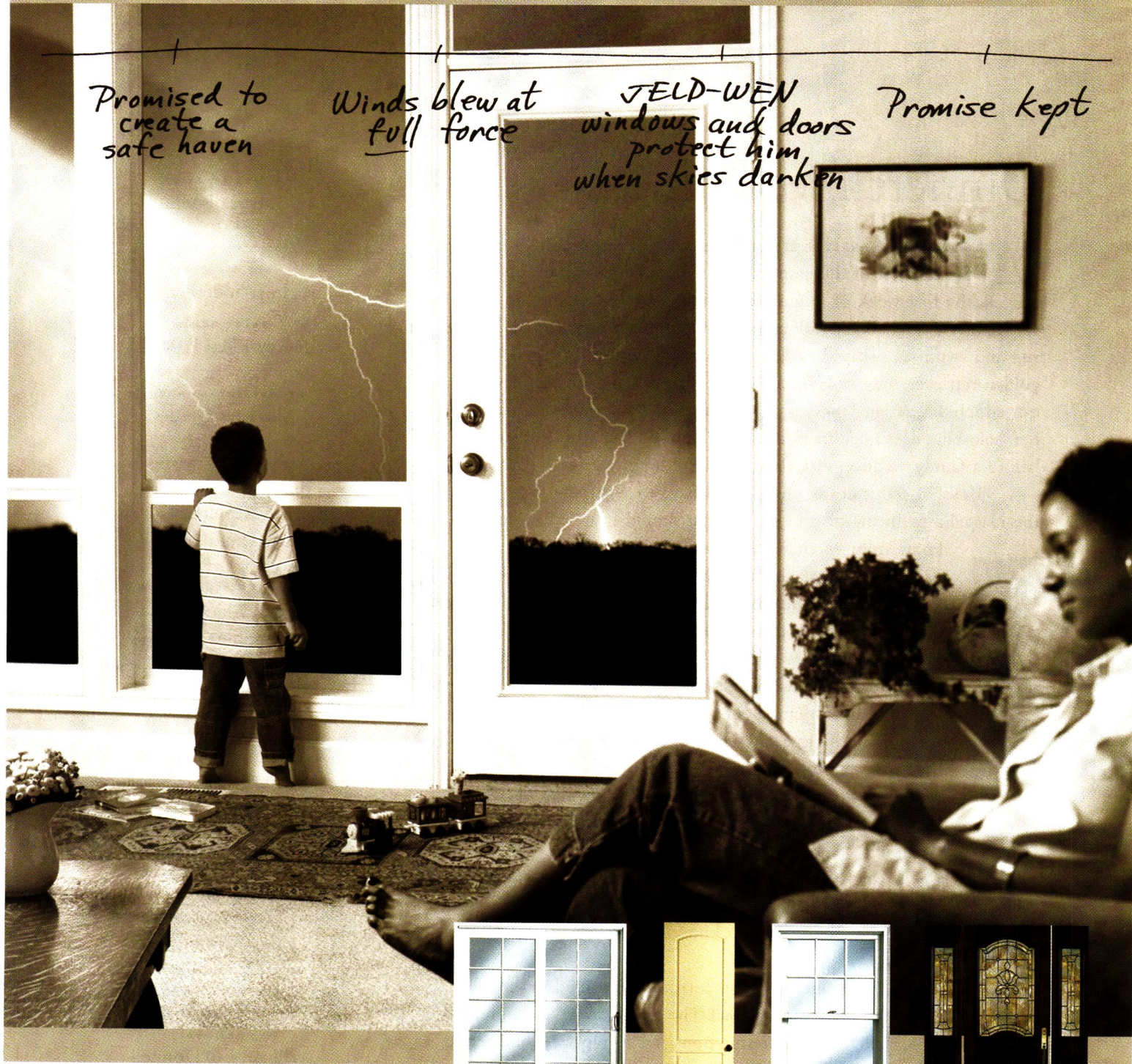


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VOLUME IX, NUMBER 5

Dinnertime, old house

AS THIS ISSUE ARRIVES in mailboxes and on newsstands, it is early fall in most of the country. But I am writing this during the first week of August, from home. Downstairs my boys are watching TV after dinner, lolling about in damp bathing trunks, having run and swum and skate-boarded and walked the dog. (Luke, our golden retriever, died in February at a happy old age. We still have our adopted Siberian Husky, Lizzie—Elizabeta Petrovna Volk, I renamed her, pale-blue eyes lined in black kohl.) I am finishing up this issue before a family vacation in California. We're leaving in four days.

"Boys!" I shout down the stairs. "I have to write the page in the magazine with my picture on it. What should I say?" You never know from whence inspiration may strike.

"Mama, tell them about fixing the church!" Peter answers. (You've heard it. Restoration of the first Universalist Church in America, \$64,000 to rent a scaffold, blah blah blah.) I am amazed—he has made a connection between Sunday school and Mom's job.

"Nah, tell 'em about the window," Will shouts. Aha, tonight's big excitement. As I cooked dinner, unawares, they were playing a game of chicken involving a thick rubber band and hand balls in ascending degrees of hardness.

In the parlor. Then, from my seat in the bathroom, I heard: "Mom?" "MOM?" "Mommy?!" "WHERE ARE YOU!?"

The largest pane of glass in the Queen Anne-style front door has a big round hole, radiating cracks. Shards on the porch. They were so contrite, I couldn't get angry . . . you know how you half-expect things like this, with kids.

So much in this house had been torn out or ruined in previous remodelings. But the door was original. The glass, wavy with a greenish cast, was 99 years old. I can get restoration glass to reglaze—but before we go away?

"That glass was a hundred years old," I say wearily to my friend, come to share iced tea on the patio.

"Hey, that's pretty good!" she says.

THE 2004 DESIGN CENTER SOURCEBOOK is out—it's gorgeous and lists even more companies and products than our first one! (See p.19.) Call (978) 283-3200 to order yours.



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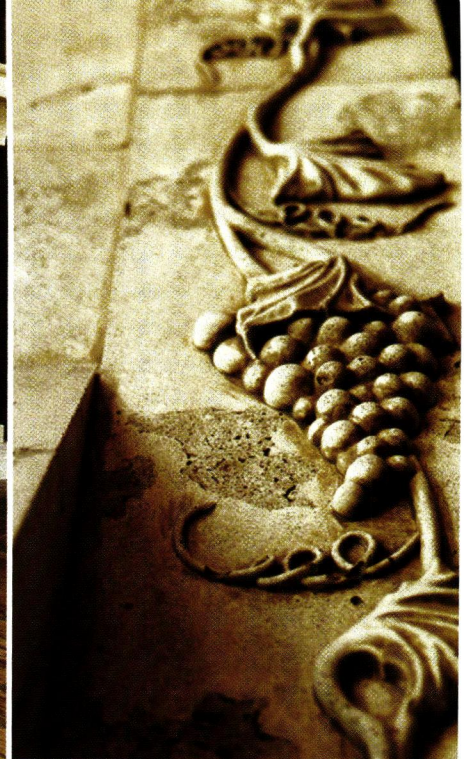
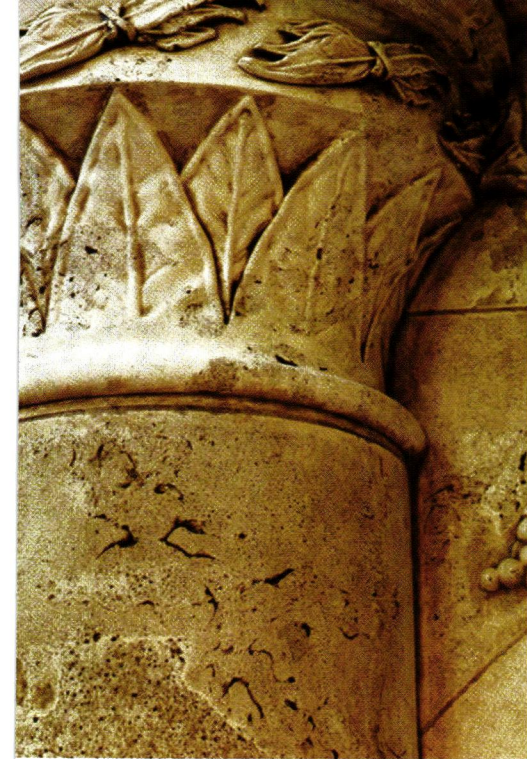
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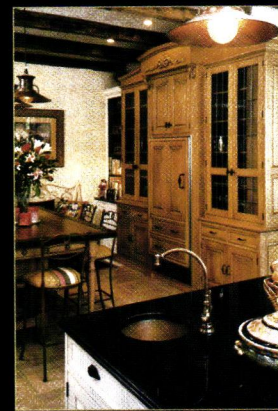
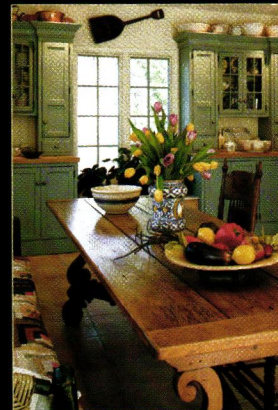
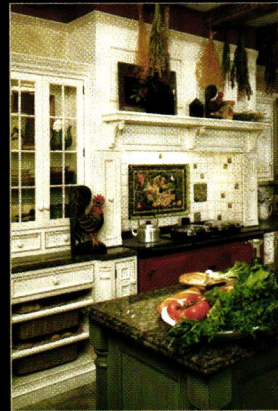
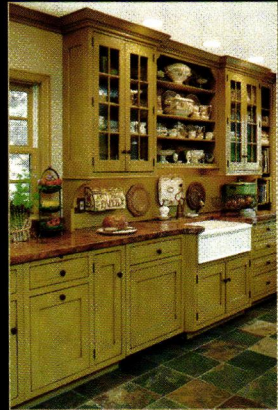
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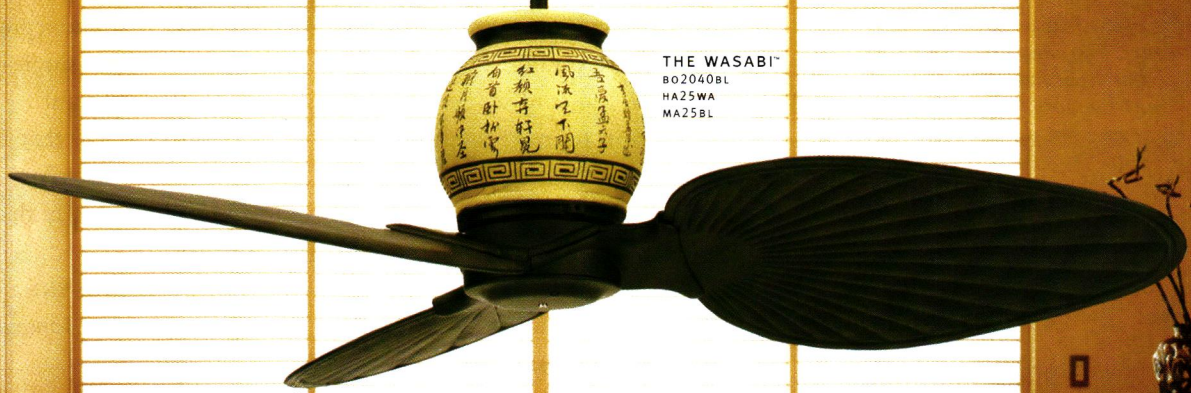
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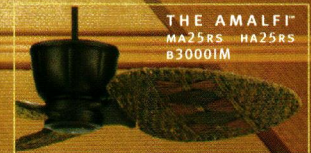
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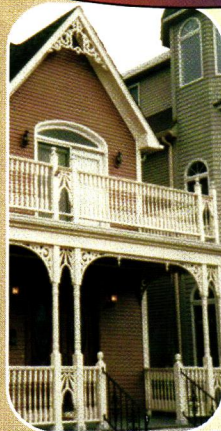
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SPENDING IT WELL

I WAS DELIGHTED to read the essay “Money Well Spent” in the September issue of *Old-House Interiors*. I am of [Ms. Hiller’s] philosophy and conviction in money matters. As Dolly Levi says in “Hello, Dolly!”: Money’s like manure; it’s no good unless it’s spread around.

I have been spreading money around since I opened my b&b here in Eastman, Georgia, in 1995. We hire regular help. We offer raises, vacations, and bonuses. We make no profit, but we break even (most of the time), and we have a tax break! As to purchases, we buy everything, if available, in local, downtown stores.

We have purchased two nondescript houses in the vicinity of the Inn, and we have redone the interiors to make them perfectly charming. We are stewards of the Inn, our own little frame house, and these two guest houses. One person who rents out housing here said, “Why are you doing all this?” He could not understand it!

I was impressed that [the author has] a master’s degree in religious ethics, and I wish [she] could influence my grandchildren.

—ANN DOBBS
Eastman, Georgia

WANTING MORE

A LETDOWN in this issue [July 2003] is the cover line that doesn’t deliver—“the next wave: ’20s–’30s–’40s.” This is a tantalizing subject and indeed could be a theme for an entire issue, as the size of the cover line rather im-

plies; but alas, the article in question consists only of two photos and one rather crowded page of copy and with its focus on a single source is almost more of a glorified sidebar than a complete article.

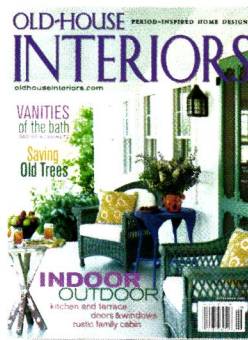
—JESSAMYN REEVES—BROWN
via email

YOU CAN’T JUDGE a book by its cover. Or in this case, a magazine by its headlines. While standing in line at Home Depot I saw emblazoned across your cover, “‘20s–’30s–’40s.” Ah ha! I thought, finally something for me, an owner of a 1946 post-war bungalow. Wow, what a disappointment to get home and see that the headline represented nothing more than a single-page summary of information!

You may feel that this is your “best issue ever,” [EDITOR’S WELCOME, p. 10] but I would say that it is your worst ever.

—SUSANNA HOUWEN
Vancouver, Canada

AH, COVER LINES! A summary in three words for the newsstand browser. That one referred not only to the introduction to the period (a “glorified sidebar” being one answer to scarce pages), but also to the eight-page feature called “A Storybook Cottage” running before it. I felt that having a national magazine define a 20th-century period as worthy of restoration made both the cover line and the short essay important. Barely a handful of publishable examples from this period have come my way; that issue was a request for more! —P. POORE



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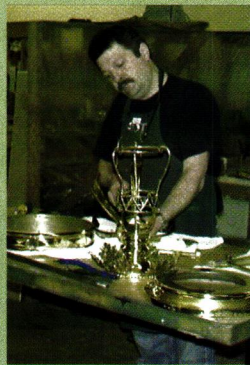
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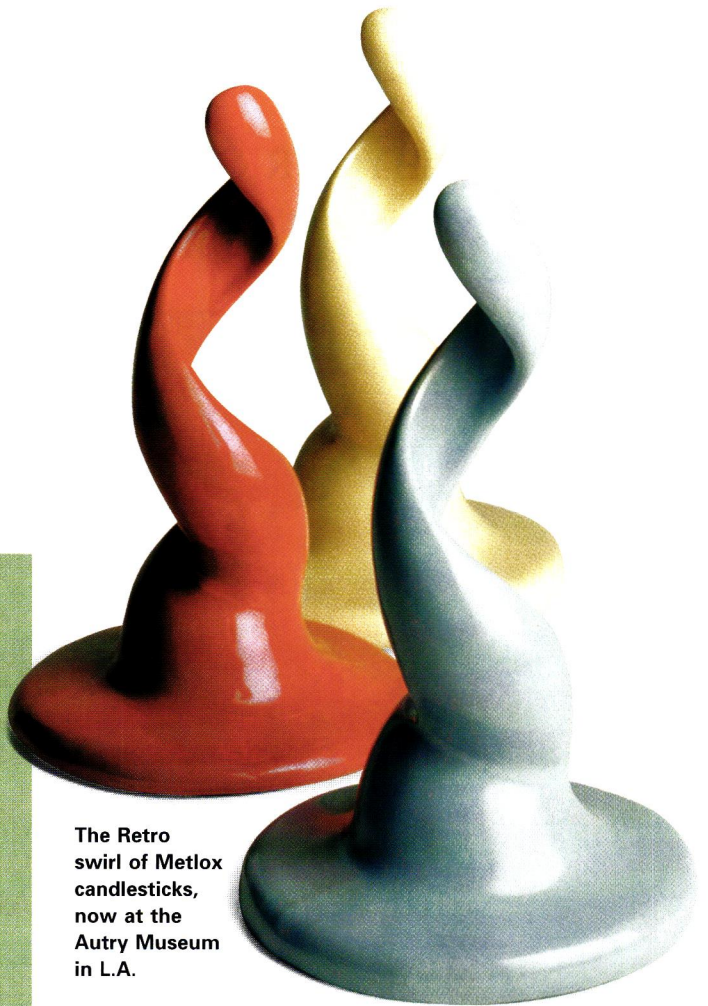
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news & VIEWS

TIM MAPLES has had some form of silver between his fingers since his first after-school job as a polisher with a local silversmith. Since 1981, Tim has gained a national reputation for his undetectable silver restorations and expertise in matching original patina and finish. While tea sets and candelabra are his bread and butter, Tim restores everything from museum quality Georgian silver to ornate brass beds. Tim's tips for caring for your silver? The most important one is to *use* your silver. And hand washing with a light dishwashing soap is the best prevention for tarnish. Use a gentle, liquid silver polish. Never leave water or flowers in a silver vase for more than a day or two, and never store salt in your shakers. Keep your silver wrapped in cloth; plastic will condense silver's chief enemy, moisture. Omega Silversmithing Inc. (425) 822-3727. —BDC



Rather than merely resilvering damaged silverplate, Maples restores fine pieces with quadruple plating.



The Retro swirl of Metlox candlesticks, now at the Autry Museum in L.A.

California Cool

California is the home of innovations ranging from iMacs to modernist pottery. You can see some of the best examples of the latter at the exhibit, "California Pottery: From Missions to Modernism," through Jan. 25 at the Autry Museum of Western Heritage in Los Angeles.

In the early decades of the 20th century, the state's fresh contributions to American design were the result of a unique interaction of cultures in the United States: Mexican, Spanish-

Moorish, Chinese, and Japanese. The first great cultural fusion in California pottery occurred during the 1915 Panama-California International Exposition in San Diego, when architect Bertram Goodhue chose to ornament the exposition's Balboa Park buildings with glazed tiles featuring Spanish-Moorish geometric designs. Almost immediately, California designers reconfigured those traditional patterns and replaced the pale Hispano-Moresque tones with saturated [continued on page 18]

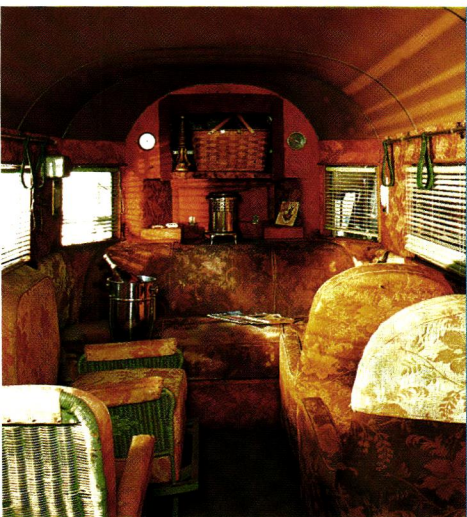
“One late-19th-century writer suggested that Nantucket was a ‘quaint old place’ with ‘odd-looking specimens of architecture’ that are ‘shingled, shangled, shongled, and shungled’.”
—from the Introduction, *Sea-Captains’ Houses and Rose-Covered Cottages* [Universe, 2003]



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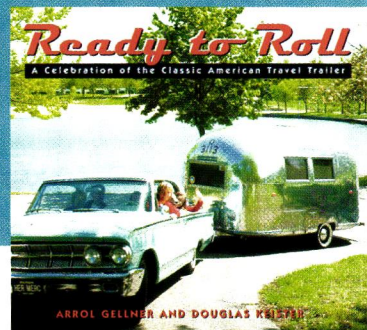
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Ready to Hit the Road

There's a new kind of vintage bungalow out there, and it's a gas. In "Ready to Roll: A Celebration of the Classic American Travel Trailer," Arrol Gellner and Douglas Keister take to the byways of middle America in search of "bread loaves," "teardrops," and two-toned "canned hams" in this lavishly illustrated meander through the open roads of the mid-20th-century. Equipped with such amenities as gumwood paneling, open-air pop-tops (the Thirties' answer to the sleeping porch), and diminutive kitchens, it's no wonder these road warriors are classics. From Viking Studio Books, through your bookstore.



Mexican colors. During the glory years of the 1920 and '30s, more than 600 companies produced art tile and pottery in the state.

The innovations continued after World War II, when J. A. Bauer, Gladding, McBean/Franciscan, Metlox, Vernon Kilns, and other California potteries added modernist designs to their lines. The show includes the work of such figures as famed tile maker Ernest Batchelder, eminent painter/illustrator Rockwell

Kent, and acclaimed ceramic designers Beatrice Wood, Barbara Willis, and Eva Zeisel. Autry Museum of Western Heritage, (323) 667-2000, autry-museum.org

San Diego Modern

Tours of San Diego homes designed by several architectural icons of the Modernism movement, including Sim Bruce Richards, Craig Ellwood, and Richard Neutra, are part of the first-ever San Diego Modernism

Weekend Oct 10-12. Ninety-four-year-old Julius Shulman, the legendary architectural photographer, will lecture on his impressions of San Diego architecture. Sponsored by Save Our Heritage Organization and *San Diego Magazine*, other events include receptions, a vintage trailer show, and a three-day Modernism Exhibition at the Civic Concourse. For more information, contact SOHO, (619) 297-7511, sohosandiego.org

—TOM SHESS

Dames on Parade

The tiny city of Lambertville, a New Jersey art and antiques mecca, is architecturally arrested sometime around the year 1873. Many of the attached row houses here are modest, but you'll see some of the town's grandest dames on the Autumn House Tour Oct.19. Tickets are available from the Lambertville Historical Society, lambertville-historicalsociety.org



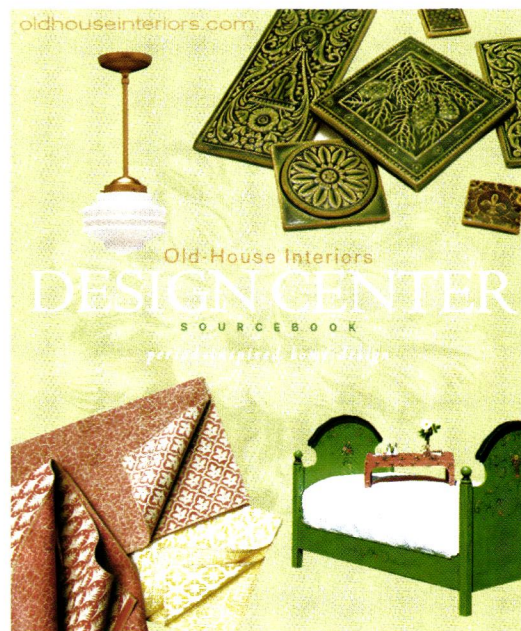
OPEN HOUSE Yin Yu Tang is a 200-year-old Chinese merchant's house, disassembled at its original site in the Anhui Province and reassembled on the grounds of the Peabody Essex Museum in Salem, Mass. This 4,500-square-foot example of Huizhou architecture, a fortress-like structure built around a central courtyard, housed generations of the Huang family until the 1980s; their furnishings and papers came with the house. Wondrous elements include stepped parapets known as horsehead walls, carved stone column bases, mortise-and-tenon timber framing, intricately carved wood screens, and, over the main entrance, a hood of

brick and tile embellished with carved birds and lotus flowers. Salem's China Trade ship owners, who built splendid Federal mansions, traded with Chinese merchants like the Huangs. Yin Yu Tang, Peabody-Essex Museum, East India Square, Salem, MA 01970, (866) 745-1876, pem.org



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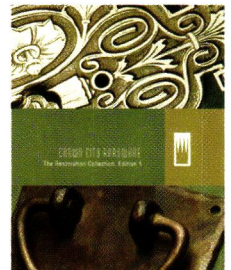
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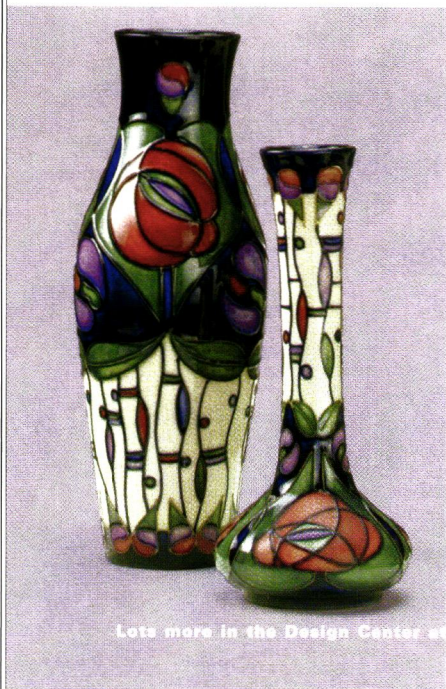


Moorcroft Meets Mackintosh

Known for its rich glazes and beautiful English Arts and Crafts designs, Moorcroft Pottery is highly collectible today. A full series in the style of Charles Rennie Mackintosh is available, priced from \$98 to \$570 each. Contact Alimadia Gallery, (507) 645-1651, alimadia.com

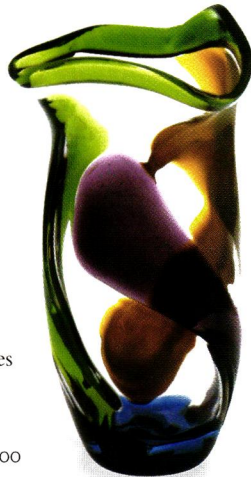
Light in Onyx

Onyx is thought to boost regeneration and happiness. Its luminous qualities also make it idea for tile. Available in a full palette of colors, the Onyx Collection is priced from \$12.75 to \$14 per square foot. Contact Westminster Ceramics, (661) 326-0249, westminsterceramics.com



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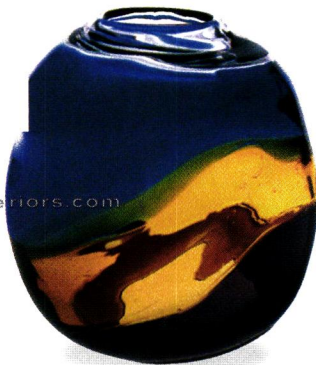
Primary Colors

Fabled glass designer Wayne Husted designed the Olana series in the late 1950s or early '60s. The boldly colored abstract compositions sell for \$400 to \$700 each. Contact Blenko Glass, (877) 425-3656, blenkoglass.com

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Modern Days

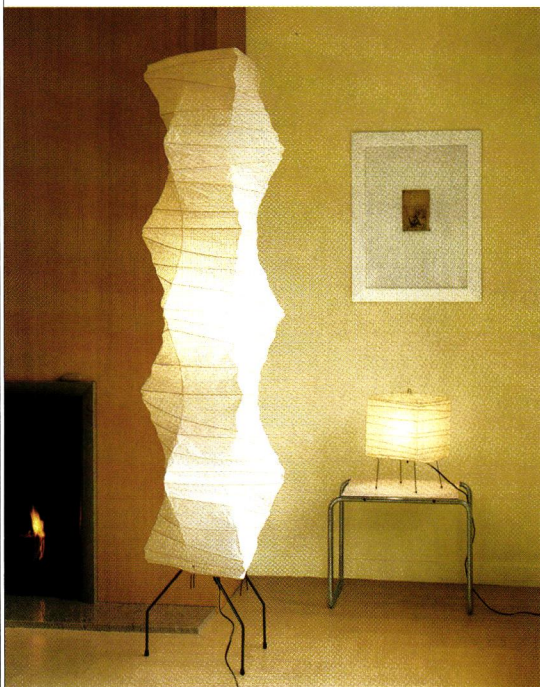


Mod School

Jazz up a hallway or kitchen with these satin nickel fixtures with vintage painted shades. Fitted with the reverse-cake shade, the Julliard sells for \$154. The Colby pendant is \$178. Both from Schoolhouse Electric, (800) 630-7113, schoolhouseelectric.com

Floating on Air

This sleek platform bed recalls the designs of George Nelson and other Modernists. In a hand-rubbed espresso finish, the queen size is \$1,299; the king retails for \$1,599. From Charles P. Rogers, (800) 561-0467, charlesprogers.com



Column of Light

Isamu Noguchi loved working in forms that suggested light and weightlessness. His Akari Freeform column floor lamp is still in production. Measuring 74" by 18" wide, it's available for \$750 from Design Within Reach, (800) 944-2233, dwr.com



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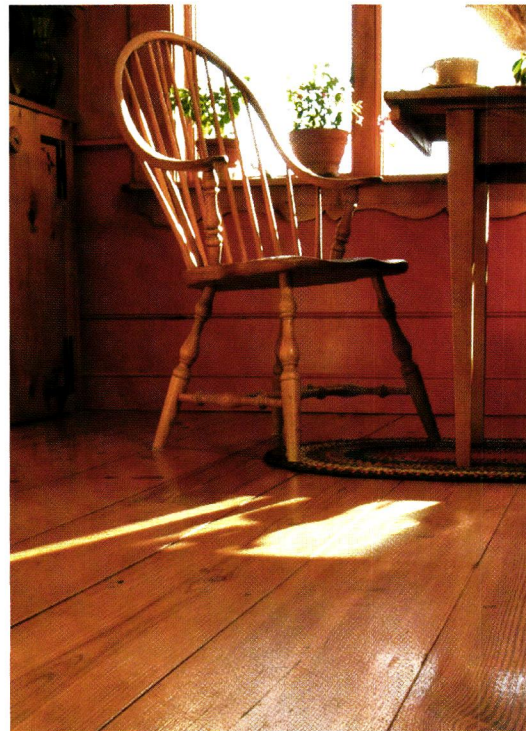
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♦ Pie O My!

The top of the Philadelphia Chippendale piecrust tea table is made from one extraordinary piece of figured wood. The "crust" is integral. Tables of this quality begin at \$25,000 from Kinloch Woodworking, (610) 347-2070, Kinlochwoodworking.com

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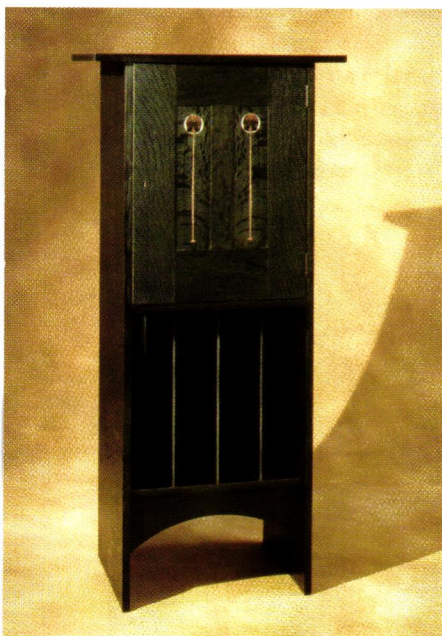
Column on Call

The PolyStone load-bearing column fits in just about anywhere—especially in a 5' 6" size that's ideal for bookcase, island, or countertop dividers. Crisply defined and correctly proportioned, the 8" diameter columns sell for \$139 to \$175 each from Chadsworth's 1.800.Columns, (800) 426-2118, columns.com

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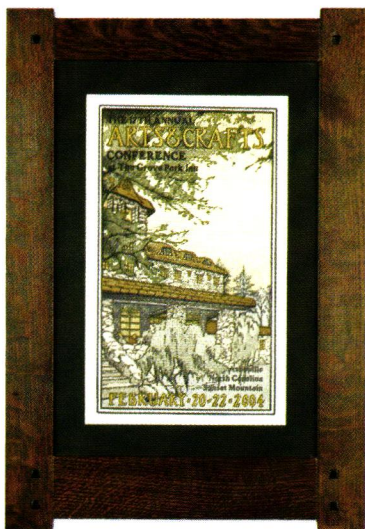
Shades of Barkcloth

Palm fronds and the floral equivalent of hibiscus recall the glory days of barkcloth, the fab Forties fabric. The floral Wilshire and Melrose Stripe are printed on faux linen. Sold through the trade; they retail for about \$23.50 per yard from Stacy Garcia, (845) 426-0756.



Making Music

Jeffrey Franke started building Stickley reproductions in 1995. The Harvey Ellis inlaid music cabinet is handmade from old-growth quartersawn oak with pewter, copper, and veneer inlay. The range is \$9,750 to \$11,500. Call (612) 824-6184.

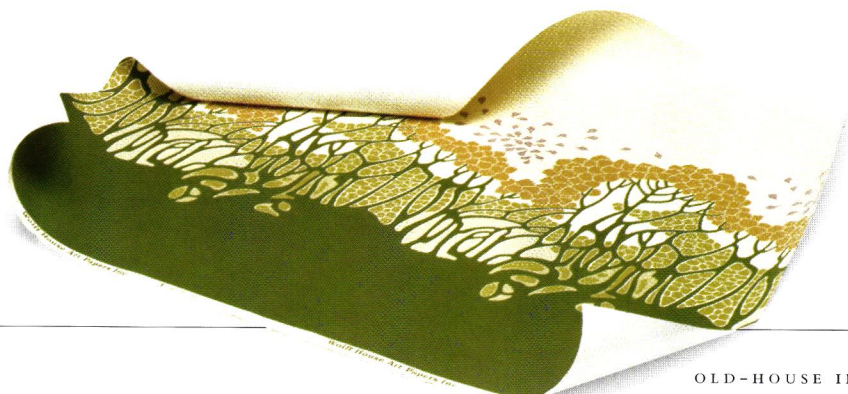


Framed

Mitchell Andrus handcrafts frames, mirrors, plate racks, doorbells, and other small furnishings to order, using traditional Arts and Crafts joinery techniques. Wood species include quartersawn white oak, cherry, and mahogany. Contact (908) 647-7442, mitchellandrus.com

Into the Woods

This stylized landscape border is based on a circa 1890-1900 German Art Nouveau design. With a 15 1/2" repeat, the frieze can be installed 22" to 28" deep. It's \$34 per yard from Wolff House Art Papers, (740) 392-4947, wolffhouseartpapers.com





Sea Tile ◀

California artist Terry Bray casts her own sedimentary fossils in cast bronze from hand-carved sculptures. Tiles in the Oceanic series range from \$65 to \$110 per piece. The 4" high numbers are \$60 each. Contact (805) 987-8365, tbrayart.com

More than Zero ▶

Warm up almost any part of the house with the Sequoia zero-clearance fireplace. EPA-certified, the insert retails for about \$2,700. The cast-iron face kit is \$399. For a dealer, contact Vermont Castings, (905) 670-7777, vermontcastings.com

Wonder Loomed ▶

Founded in 1898 and revived a century later, Donegal Carpets still looms every carpet to order, hand-knotted with up to 20 or more knots per inch. Prices begin at about \$2,000 per square yard. Contact (011) 44 353 733 1688, donegalcarpets.com



Web of Light

Add a touch of Halloween to your house year round with the Craftsman Fulton Spider Web pendant. In beige iridescent art glass and a verdigris finish, it retails for \$465. From Meyda Tiffany, (800) 222-4009, meyda.com

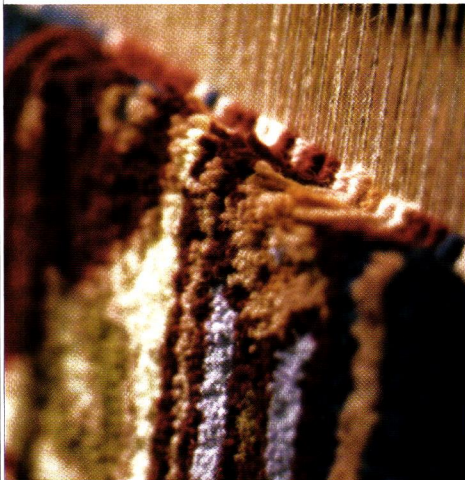
Victorian Holiday ▶

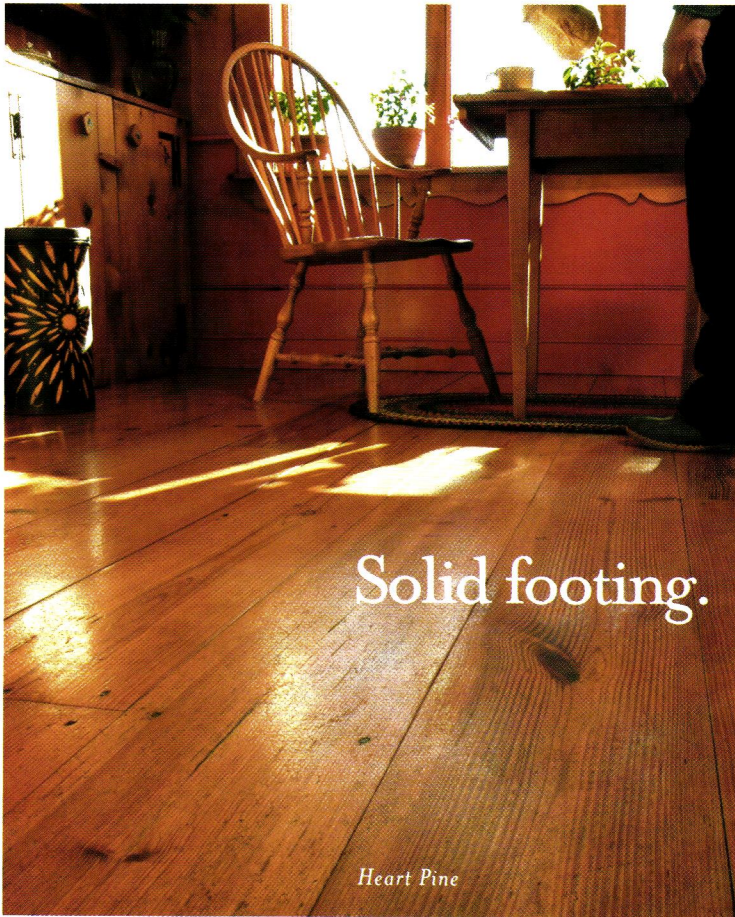
Handmade from century-old die-cuts, vintage rope tinsel, and old glass ornaments, these Victorian-inspired holiday ornaments are truly one-of-a-kind. Prices range from about \$50 to \$200 from Dresden Star Ornaments, (707) 786-4113, victorianornaments.com



Petite Perfection ▶

A diminutive rendition of an 18th-century Louix XIV fixture, the Renaissance is one of several new "tiny" crystal chandeliers by Schonbek. Measuring 14 1/2" in diameter, it retails for \$1,495. For a dealer, contact (800) 836-1892, schonbek.com





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A Pirate's Loot

BY THOMAS J. O'GORMAN

HA VE YOU EVER been to a salvage yard? If you haven't, you are really missing out. If you have, well, then you know what I'm talking about. They are kind of like a cross between a Hollywood prop department and an elephant burial ground. A warehouse of treasure, but a strange environment. It's not your usual antiques shop. Nothing is demure, everything seems big. A brawny atmosphere pervades the air, bouncing off the columns and steeples, cornices and chandeliers hanging like Christmas ornaments from riggings overhead. A most curious breeze blows here, made up of the musty air of the past and the fresh air of discovery.

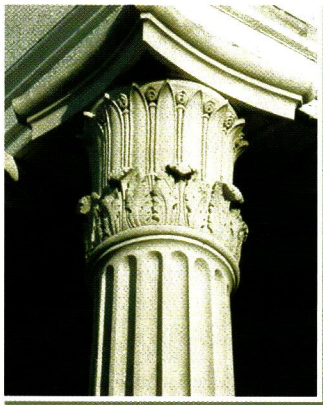
Salvage centers are becoming more and more popular in many parts of the world. Their prominence tells you two things. First, there must be a market for all this stuff. Second, there must be something churning up all this loot. "When we build, let us think we build forever," the aesthete John Ruskin implored his Victorian counterparts. Sadly, there is more poetry in his words than practicality. Still, long before the wrecking ball swings, the architectural elements of another time are now carefully removed. A seemingly endless supply of wainscotting, windows, doors, knobs, knockers, tubs, tiles, pediments, and pillars rise up in the figurative dust.

It is easy to find art on palace walls, chapel ceilings, and the temperature-controlled galleries of modern museums. However, a more resolute spirit is needed to hunt for it in the back lots and loft rooms of salvage centers. You can spot it in a carefully carved corbel or the graceful swirl of an Ionic column's capital. Art is present in the battered finish of an old table that was so purposefully built long and broad. A walk through a salvage center is a passage through a museum without any guards. All about you are remnants of artistic achievement, piled on tables and stacked against the walls.

Walking among such treasure recalls the storage caves of Long John Silver and Bluebeard. Strewn about is the encrusted ornament of simple country life and elegant urban living. A ghostly flavor rides the air above the relics of another time and place. Some chimney pots and a garden gate might be all that remain of a once-proud house. In this atmosphere, customers learn about architecture. In the yards and warehouses, it is easy to acquire a comfortable working knowledge of the historical eras of design—while you uncover examples that may be the perfect bit of salvage for your home.

Good architecture not only provides shelter and safety, but also enlivens our shared [continued on page 30]

Choice bits gleaned from once-proud buildings await new homes and new uses: a terra-cotta "Y" and an aluminum "C;" 19th-century cast iron; a three-piece terra-cotta frieze of griffins and a lyre; and a Welsh terra-cotta pedestal and urn.



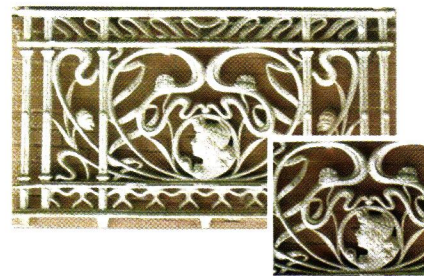
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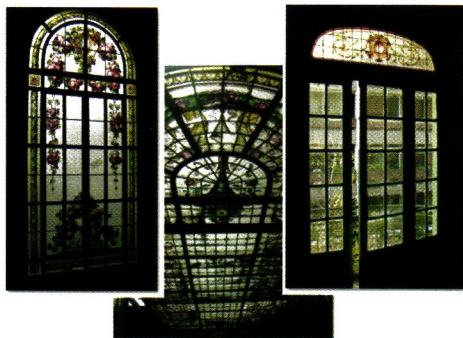
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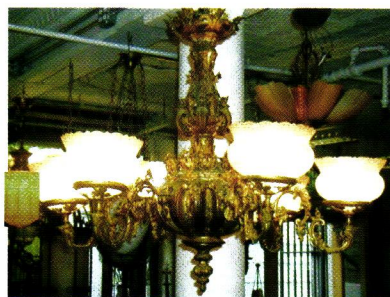
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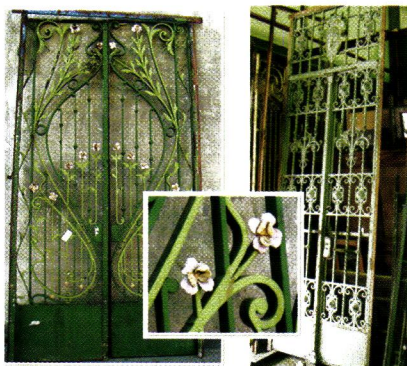
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Rom 5:8 "But God commends His love to us in this, that we being yet sinners, Christ died on behalf of us."

experience of beauty and perfection in the world. It certainly did that for Thomas Jefferson and founding fathers of the American Republic, who looked upon architecture as a vehicle for transmitting culture and embodying the ideals of the nation. Jefferson's passion for Greek temples was a paradigm for larger issues of human civility.

When the movement to revive the treasured Gothic style of Britain's chivalrous past was first taking root in the 19th century, it was with the belief that such architecture would impart a piece of their heroic past again into the hearts and souls of the British people. Gothic Revival was not just a trend or fashion, but also a way of life. It is no accident that the splendid seat of Britain's parliamentary government is designed in the style of its most noble and fabled past.

No one knows exactly when the first collector reclaimed a piece

of architectural salvage [as art rather than necessity]. But there are plenty of instances throughout history when prominent figures, motivated by taste, greed, or the need to retrieve a piece of the past, carried home some remnant of appealing design. Napoleon did it in Egypt. William Randolph Hearst brought remnants of the past to California.

FROM THE USELESSLY EXOTIC to the prosaically functional, the materials and craftsmanship of the past are being re-

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discovered. Relics of past eras of architectural fashion have found their way into the realm of today's modern and urbane seeking to create the perfect space. People who once did not know an oriel from an Oreo are fast becoming connoisseurs of rediscovered architectural salvage. Recovered architecture can be as simple as a doorknob, as elegant as a stone column for use in the garden, or as grand as a hand-carved oak staircase that becomes the centerpiece of a new home.

At least three factors have helped bring about the remarkable expansion in the market of artifacts. First is a bright spirit of eclecticism—the mixing of styles that may contrast or complement. It is once again an element of popular taste, freely encouraging the use of rescued items of salvage. For instance, I've seen a very successful room that mixed French doors with a dusty 18th-century legacy, contemporary American furniture, Victorian mirrors, and tables of Prairie-School design. The free mixing of such styles denotes a fresh appreciation for the

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rare and one-of-a-kind. A strong sense of historic preservation becomes an abiding partner in this fashionable understanding of design.

Second, the expense of true craftsmanship—and sometimes its unavailability—is an incentive to use architectural salvage. Some elements provide artistry and a quality of materials no longer available to the public. The cost of fabricating from scratch such fittings for home use is excessive. Reuse makes sense. Preservation protects items of historical value, while keeping remodeling or construction costs down.

Third, salvage is more readily available. From the



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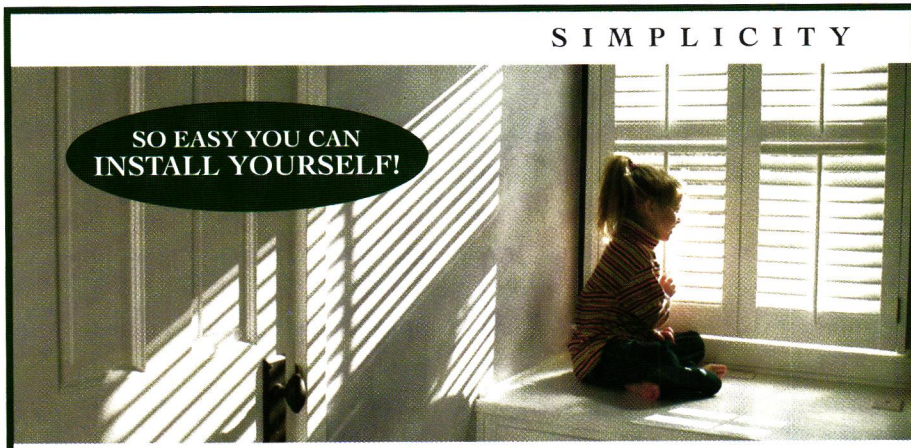
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The Ins and Outs of Salvage HUNTING

Keep at it! Salvage searching isn't like buying a tie; it can take longer than buying a car. ■ Remember this: Most purchases are final. ■ If you need something shipped, you may have to deal directly with the freight company. ■ Bring your own tape measure. ■ Go to a big search engine and type "salvage," "architectural salvage," or your exact need ("cast iron urns"). You'll be surprised what comes up. ■ Don't be afraid to mix styles and periods. ■ Write down and carry with you the important dimensions of your site: ceiling heights, door widths, fireplace opening, window dimensions. ■ You can tear your dress on a wire chair. You will probably get dirty. Dress appropriately. ■ If a piece has artistic value, good design, and personal appeal, you will probably be able to make it work somewhere. ■ Put big mirrors in small rooms. ■ If you can learn the names of imported beers, you can learn what to call things. Bass, Guinness, Beck's, St. Pauli Girl, Dos Equis. Doric, Ionic, Corinthian, Tuscan, Composite. See?

Highlands of Scotland and cobbles of Provence to the shaded mansions of New England, items are being re-discovered. Finials and newels are considered too marketable to throw away. Ultimately, this is about style and taste. Remarkably, door hinges and towel hooks, fire grates and garden urns are emblems of beauty, especially as they settle into new environments. ✦

This essay was adapted from the Introduction to the author's book NEW SPACES FROM SALVAGE [Barron's Educ., 2002], which is rich in photographs of interiors that incorporate salvage.

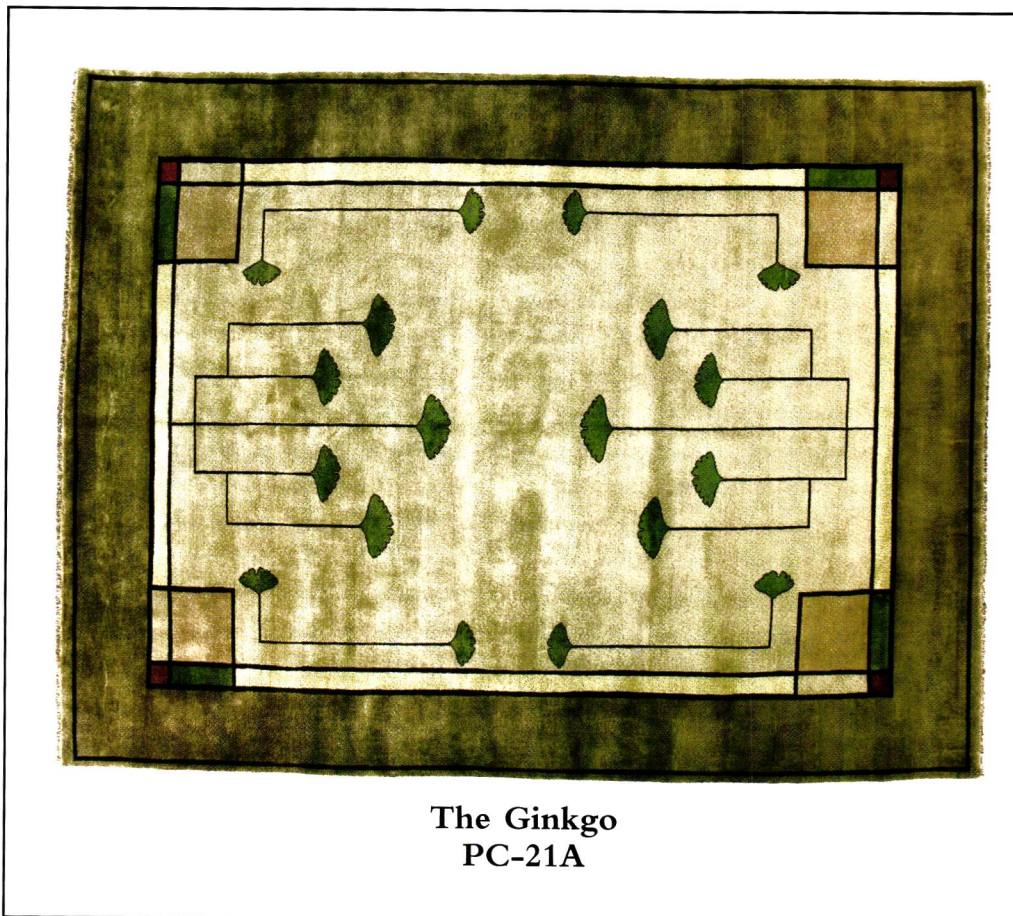


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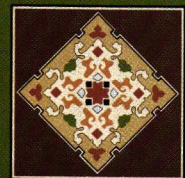
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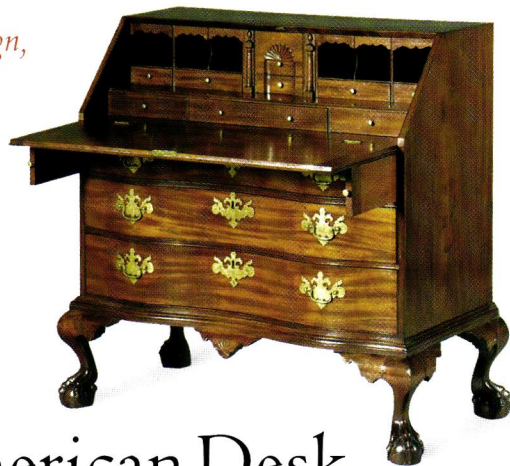
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The earliest American desks were strongly influenced by English design, but by the time American cabinetmaking came into its own, they fully reflected American taste.



The Great American Desk

BY AMY GALE

AN EARLY American desk is a true trophy piece. Often selling for hundreds of thousands of dollars at auction, early secretaries and desks are feats of fine cabinetmaking, in the best 18th-century sense of the term. These carefully balanced, high-style compositions usually incorporate not only the working part of the desk—its slant or tambour top concealing a well-ordered arrangement of intricate slots and drawers but also a chest or stand to support the desk, and perhaps, a pedimented bookcase rising effortlessly from the midsection of the piece.

Before about 1750, such fine desks were rare in colonial America. Styles lagged behind the times: the William and Mary style, which ended in England around 1702, was popular in America between roughly that date and 1725. Queen Anne, named after a monarch who died in 1714, didn't come into vogue here for nearly a decade.

The origins of the high-style desks of the late-18th century can be traced to the modest portable desk, a shallow box fitted with a slanted writing surface that lifted up to store papers or writing instruments. Attaching the desk to a stand and adding two bottom drawers resulted in one of the most popular desks in America in the 18th and early-19th centuries: the desk-on-frame. Like the portable desk, the interior was furnished with pigeon holes or drawers, while a few had cleverly concealed secret compartments.

A more sophisticated variation of the desk-on-frame—the slant-front desk—began appearing in America early in the 18th century. The slant-front desk evolved from the bureau-cabinet, a fall-front desk popular in the William and Mary period. More graceful and less angular than its predecessor, the slant-top folded down to create a writing surface with easy [continued on page 36]



TOP: (left) Shell and pediment carving on a reproduction secretary by Kinloch Woodworking. (right) A serpentine-front desk made about 1770. **ABOVE:** Carved rosettes and finials adorn Lonnie Bird's reproduction Chippendale secretary.

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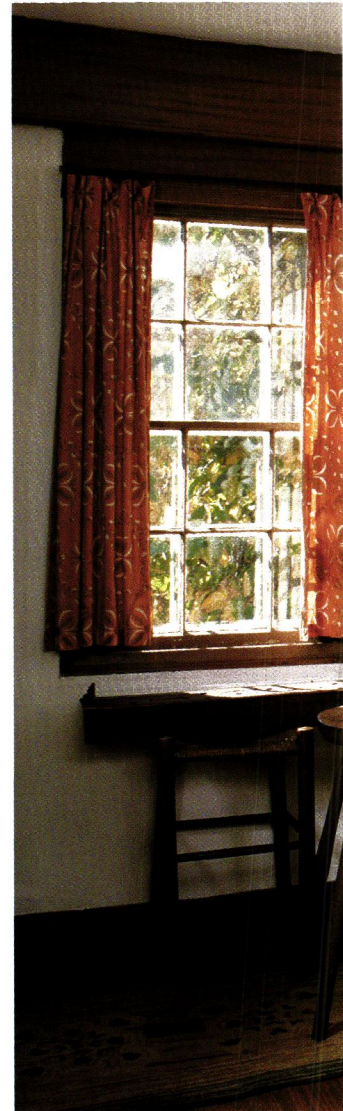
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Attaching a portable desk to a stand and adding two bottom drawers resulted in one of the most popular desks in America in the 18th and early-19th centuries: the desk-on-frame.



LEFT: A Queen Anne slant-front desk with cabriole legs. **RIGHT:** A circa 1750 desk-on-frame at Cogswell's Grant in Essex, Massachusetts.

LEFT: A Federal-style mahogany desk and bookcase with inlaid veneer and glazed bookcase doors. **RIGHT:** A cylinder-front desk in figured mahogany, also Federal style.



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access to stepped-back cubbyholes, slots, and drawers for pens and papers. In more robust examples, the frame morphed into a chest with as many as three drawers. Finer versions often had sliding pull-outs flanking the top drawer that gave the desk level support.

The arrival of the Queen Anne era about 1725 ushered in a style of furniture that was tall yet graceful, substantial, yet light in appearance. Resting on slender, curving cabriole legs with pad feet, a skirted Queen Anne desk with multiple drawers looked far lighter than its William and Mary predecessor, with its busy turned legs, ball or bun feet, and top-heavy, slant-lidded box. While Queen Anne pieces did not lack for ornamentation (carved shells, fans,

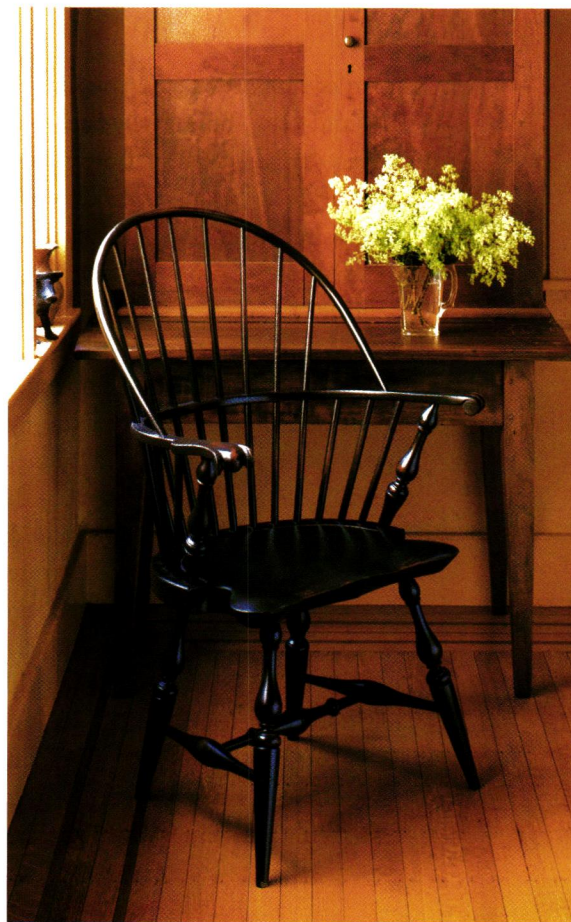
and inlaid stars were common motifs), the skirting, feet, and even hardware worked together to balance the composition into a seamless whole.

Nowhere was this seemingly effortless effect so apparent as in the secretary bookcase. Found only in the wealthiest homes, this style of desk was so rare and desirable that it often figured as a prop in 18th-century male portraiture. Consisting of a slant-front desk over three or four drawers, the desk supported a high bookcase enclosed with paneled doors, often finished at the top with a pediment. Visual height was a highly desired characteristic: in one example at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, a pedimented Queen Anne secretary is more than 7 feet tall, but measures only 30 inches wide. All of the ele-



ments of the desk work to emphasize the sense of height and balance, from the low bracket feet and symmetrically arranged tiers of drawers and scalloped slots, to the final broken pediment at the top.

By 1760, a desire for increased opulence began to alter the Queen Anne style, especially under the newly fashionable French Rococo, Gothic, and Chinese influences. The style that evolved became known as Chippendale, after the famous English furniture designer whose patternbook, *The Gentleman and Cabinet-Maker's Director*, was published in 1754. Desks and secretaries became more robust, substantial, and heavily ornamented, with design elements conceived as part of the piece, rather than applied decoration. Carving, especially in the



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form of scalloped shells, fans and the ball-and-claw foot, reached its apex. Where earlier desks had often been created from locally available woods such as maple and tulip poplar, cabinetmakers working in the Chippendale style preferred rich imported woods like mahogany.

Several types of Chippendale desks played with tricks of the eye in terms of shaping and the cabinetmaker's art. In what is probably the earliest of these, the block-front desk, the chest portion is composed of three vertical sections, with a recessed center flanked by two raised sections. A more sophisticated variation on this idea was the serpentine desk, a shape in which the front of the desk undulates, with concave sections flanking a convex center. A third form,

swags replaced S- and C-shaped curves, and patriotic symbols appeared along with classical Greco-Roman motifs.

Federal innovations included the secretary drawer, which superseded the slant-front desk. In what appeared to be a three-drawer chest, the top drawer folded down to form a flat writing surface, exposing a bank of small drawers and pigeonholes inside. If the secretary was topped by a bookcase, glass doors now replaced the colonial-era panels. Ladies' desks took a smaller, more delicate form, often supported by long, tapering legs. The top drawer folded out onto sliding supports; instead of a false front, the pigeonholes and cubbies were concealed behind sliding tambour doors. Yet another Federal innovation taken from the English patternbooks was

Ladies' desks took a smaller, more delicate form.

The top drawer folded out onto sliding supports; pigeonholes and cubbies were concealed behind sliding tambour doors.

especially popular in Boston, was bombé, a French term that means the lines of the pieces are swollen on the sides and front. (The vernacular term is the homely "kettle," according to Wendy Cooper, the Lois F. & Henry S. McNeil Senior Curator of Furniture at Winterthur.)

The Federal style (1785-1820) marked a sharp break from prevailing furniture idioms, especially the Rococo. American cabinetmakers quickly took to the Neoclassical designs in pattern books published by George Hepplewhite (1788) and Thomas Sheraton (1791 and 1794). Cabinetmakers who had been carving shells and ball-and-claw feet for half a century embraced the newly fashionable veneer and inlay techniques. Elegant reeding and delicate

the cylinder desk, in which the ingeniously conceived rounded lid rolled out of the way to expose the writing surface and cubbies.

By the early 19th century, desks were no longer rare and unusual in American homes. Inventories counted them in the parlor, library, bedroom, and dressing room. Writing surfaces were often concealed in other furnishings, so that a moderately prosperous household might easily own more than a half dozen pieces of writing furniture. In a single century, Americans had transformed the simple portable desk into a series of furniture masterpieces. Isn't it ironic that at the beginning of the 21st century, the laptop is once again in vogue? ♦

AMY GALE is a writer in New York City.



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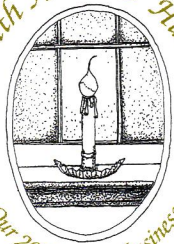


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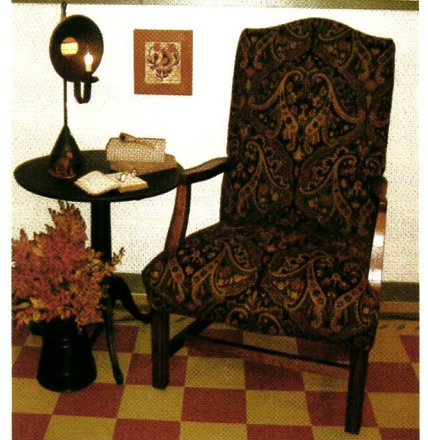


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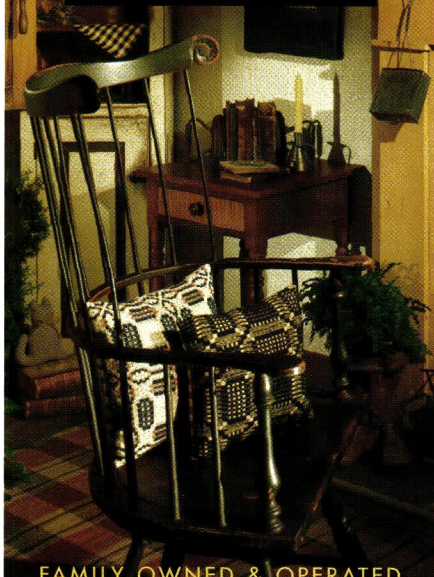
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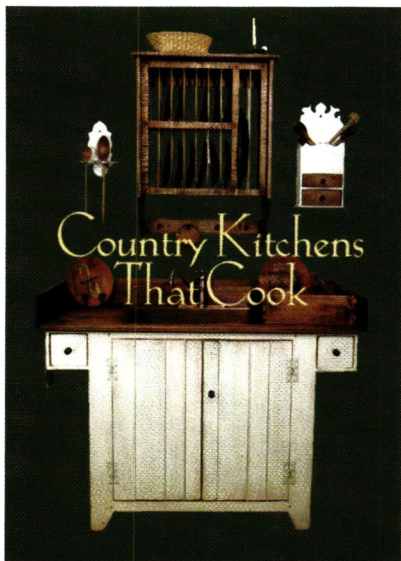
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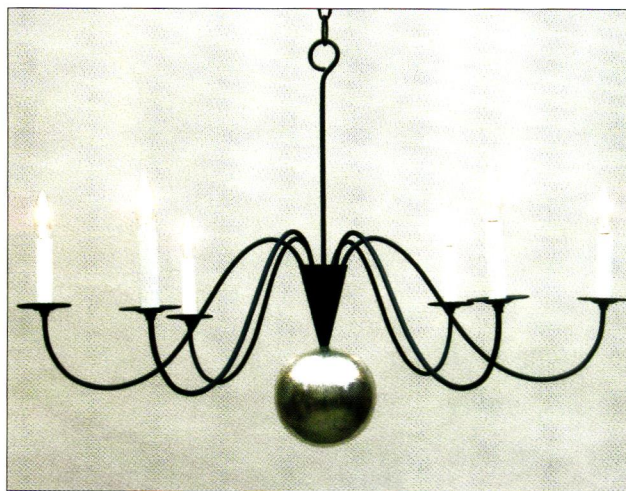
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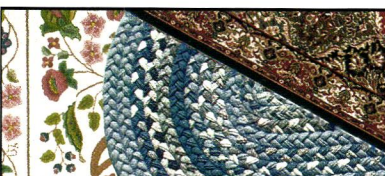
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What makes a countertop or backsplash look right in an old-house kitchen? While you can't go wrong with the time-tested classics, newer materials can work, too.

IT'S BECOME A CLICHÉ, but it's true: trendy materials, especially for counters and backsplashes, tend to date a kitchen in terms of recent history. Consider that solid-surfacing places a kitchen squarely in the 1980s, while glossy granite countertops are so 1990s. Before you plan your kitchen around the hottest look in granite, lava, or laminate, consider how you'll feel about it in five years. Will you still love your countertop once you've



Classic Kitchen Work Surfaces

BY MARY ELLEN POLSON

seen it in the ladies' room at the Pittsburgh airport?

The characteristics that make work surfaces transcend time aren't always obvious. Whether you choose a dense, impervious stone like granite or soapstone, a polymer composite like Silestone or Corian, or a laminate like Formica or Wilsonart, you're all but guaranteed to get easy care, durability, and longevity. (Even laminates can hold up for decades if they're not abused: the tomato-red laminate countertops in my kitchen will soon celebrate their 50th birthday.) The question isn't whether your counters and backsplashes will wear

out, it's whether you—and those who come after you—will tire of them before that happens.

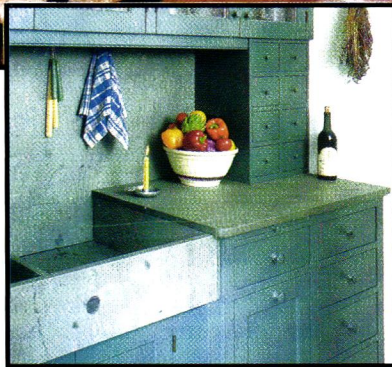
What's timeless for one house may not be timeless in another. For houses built before 1900 or so, for instance, natural materials including soapstone, marble, slate, and wood are the hands-down classics. Colors were seldom flashy: you'll never go wrong with a countertop that's soapstone grey or slate blue. And though slate and soapstone are the oldest of countertop materials, they are hardly rustic: many fabricators will precision-cut an integral sink, with or without a matching backsplash, in

configurations that closely follow early American dry and wet sink configurations, but are blissfully worry-free. You should be aware, however, that all counter-grade stones require some sort of sealer; soapstone needs regular treatment with mineral oil until the surface is fully oxidized. As for marble, most aren't considered suitable for counters in wet areas like kitchens, but they make beautiful backsplashes. (Many architectural salvage dealers will cut and in some cases recondition old marble slabs for backsplashes; for leads, see "A Pirate's Loot," pp. 28-32.) There are also many [continued on page 44]

Are they wood, or are they laminate? It really doesn't matter in this kitchen, which combines turn-of-the-20th-century elements like flat-panel cabinetry, a plate rail, drainboard sink, and a plain white tile backsplash.



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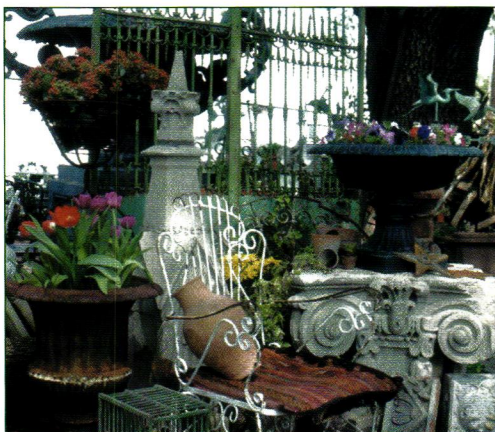


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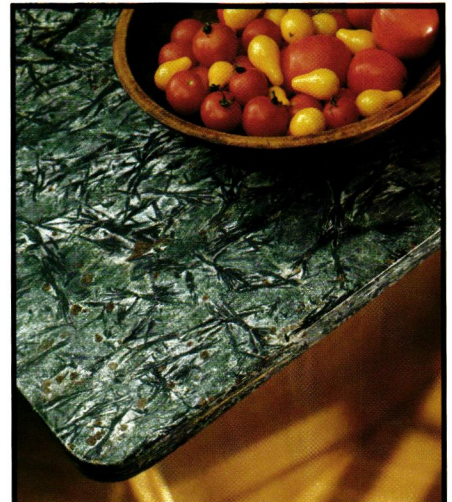
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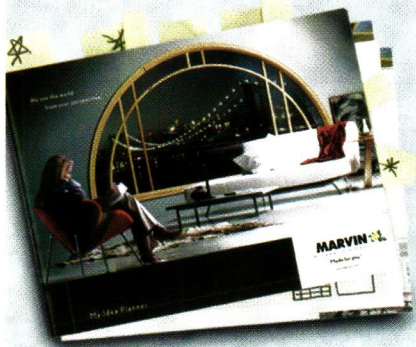
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beautiful counter-grade granites that mimic the appearance of grey- or blue-veined white marble.

Early wood counters were often made of a single piece of wood; modern techniques make it possible to bond several pieces of a water-resistant wood like mahogany or teak into a seamless surface. Another traditional choice is butcherblock, which is engineered to minimize wood's natural tendency to expand and contract. You still shouldn't put a wood counter too close to the sink; it's best as a topper for an island or work table, like the butcherblocks offered by John Boos & Co.

If stone is out of reach, you can find laminates that bear a strong resemblance to natural stone for \$3 per square foot or less. The wood look-alikes tend to be less successful, but

Today's metal counters are usually custom fabricated, but there's a ready source for metal backsplashes in the form of pressed-metal sheets better known as tin ceiling tiles.

all the major manufacturers offer them. Trimming laminate or solid surfacing material with edging will give the surface a weightier appearance at minimal additional cost. To make a look-alike laminate look more like slate, soapstone, or granite, opt for a beveled or moulding-profile treatment in a hardwood like cherry. Your contractor or counter installer should be able to handle this detail for you.

While the possibilities for 20th-century kitchens are much broader—ceramic tile, wood, metal, stone, and laminates are all in play—having so many choices means there's a much greater chance of going astray. Look to the style of your house for clues to early materials and colors, especially if you have remnants of an



ABOVE: Ashfield Stone, a dense schist harvested by the company of the same name in the Massachusetts Berkshires. This boldly patterned example would also work in a mid-century kitchen. **RIGHT:** Fossils add character and movement to a dark-grey limestone from Ireland, from Frances McCormack Stone.

original kitchen.

At the turn of the century, metal countertops such as zinc, tin, or copper appeared in American homes, prefiguring the use of stainless steel a few decades later. Today's metal counters are usually custom fabricated, but there's a ready source for metal backsplashes in the form of pressed-metal sheets better known as tin ceiling tiles. Decorative as well as relatively inexpensive, a pressed-metal pattern can quickly give the most out-of-sync kitchen a period feel.

Many early-20th-century kitchens were finished to wainscot height in "sanitary" white ceramic tile. In the 1920s and '30s, new shapes like hexes, squares, dominos, and basketweaves introduced contrast and splashes of

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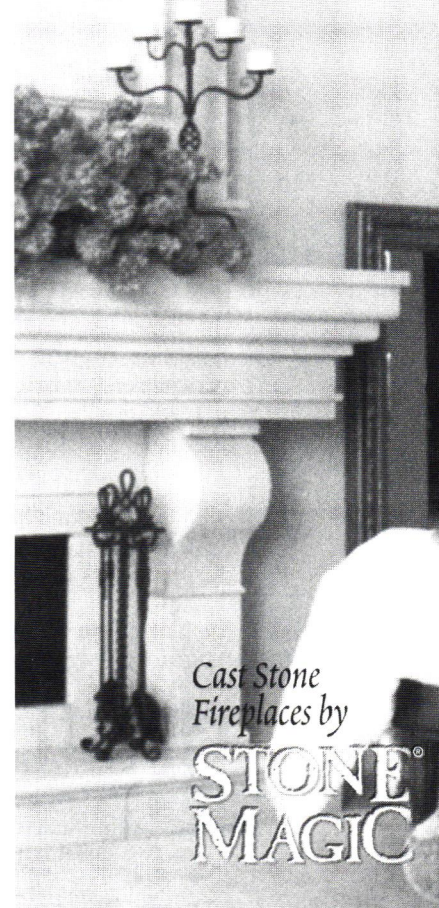
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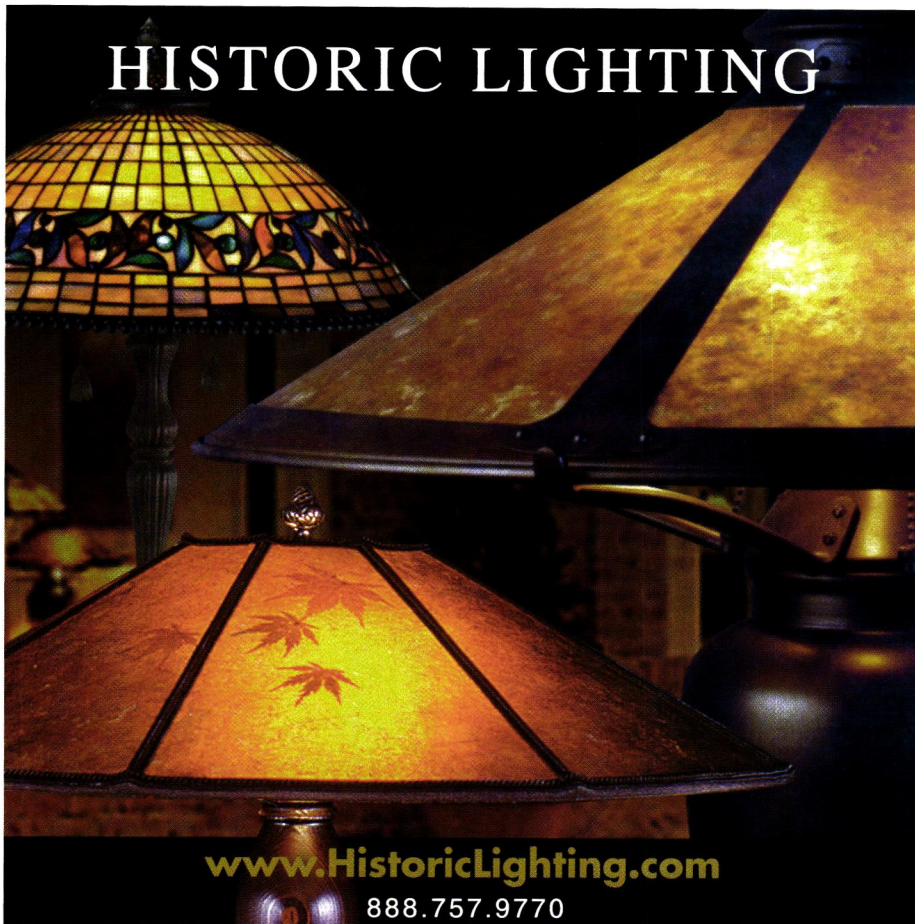
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color. Soft greens, blues, lilacs, pinks, and yellows were combined with neutral accents, especially along the counter's edge. Specialty tiles including box cap and ogee edging. The narrow 6" sizzle strip made its debut as a linear accent on backsplashes.

Since most art tile made in the early part of the century was intended for wall treatments, it seems appropriate to consider decorative handmade tiles for backsplashes and wainscots. Use them judiciously: vividly patterned or bas relief tiles are best used as accents, perhaps alternating with a solid color in a frieze-like line against a background of coordinated field tile. Another approach to art tiles, which today tend to come in suites of interchangeable shapes and complementary colors, is to "build" them architecturally. Plan your backsplash or wainscot much as you would architectural trim on a wall, working up from the baseboard to the frieze and crown moulding.

In the end, work surfaces in many vintage 20th-century kitchens were finished in solid and parti-colored materials: linoleum in the early decades; laminates at mid-century. Surprisingly, it can be hard to find good replications for the classics of the Fifties, including the tomato-soup-red pattern in my kitchen. Most of the solid colors offered come in a tasteful palette of contemporary neutrals; Formica includes two bold reds, Spectrum and Stop. WilsonArt offers the confetti-spattered "Amusement" and a Sock-it-to-me Sixties laminate appropriately called "Flower Power." Ironically, you're more likely to find better pattern and color choices for confetti-like patterns with solid-surface materials and the new quartz-composition synthetics, which often look like: terrazzo! ✦

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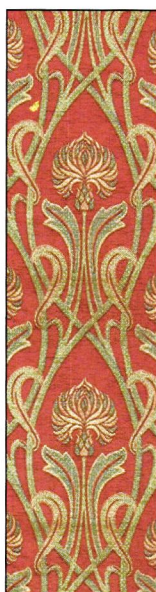
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BY THE SIDE OF THE ROAD

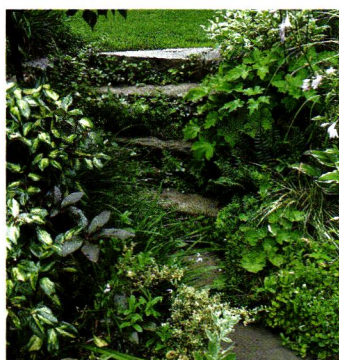
An 1830s summer retreat in rural New York gets a country-fresh makeover as a year-round home.

(page 50) ▶



PASSEMENTERIE

A silken fringe is the perfect finish for Victorian drapery and upholstery. Our author tells how to find and use the best. (page 72) ▶



THE PERFECT BATHROOM

As our bath contest winners prove, sometimes the best original bathrooms were built only yesterday. (page 60) ▶



HOW TO DO THE LATE VICTORIAN PARLOR

Creating a mysterious, overcrowded, and eclectic late-Victorian home means taking the edicts of Charles Eastlake to heart. (page 65) ▶

A GARDEN AT SAG HARBOR

On the eastern edge of Long Island, the owner of an 1835 Greek Revival tends a lush landscape. (page 76) ▶



SIMPLE FURNISHINGS, STRONG COLORS, AND A PERSONAL CELEBRATION OF THE LOCAL PAST INFORM A RAMBLING COUNTRY HOUSE IN NEW YORK'S MOHAWK VALLEY.



By the Side of the Road

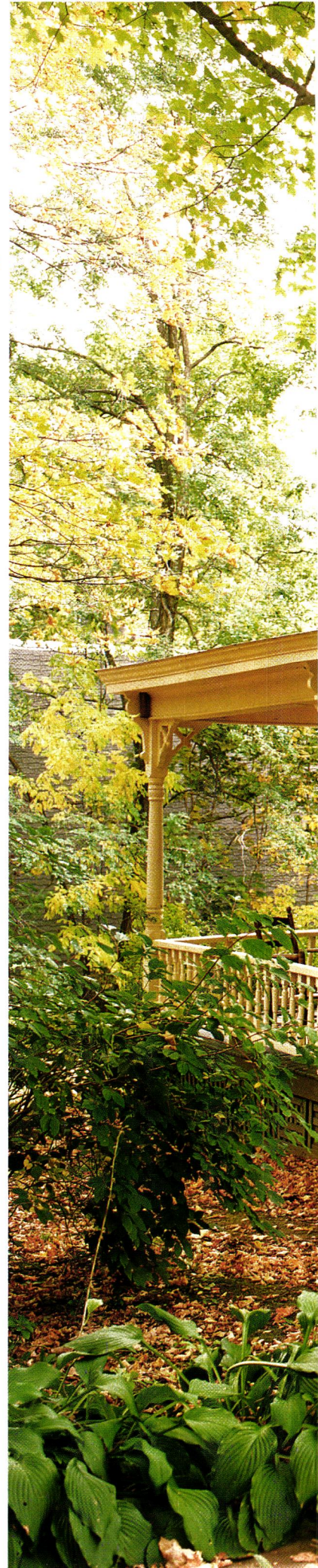
BY REGINA COLE | PHOTOGRAPHS BY STEVE GROSS & SUSAN DALEY

AN ENDEARING SYMBOL of the American small town, this house wants only a Norman Rockwell character on the porch to complete the picture. It fronts Pavilion Street in the historic village of Sharon Springs, New York. "We think it was built as a summer house in the 1830s," speculates Garth Roberts, who owns the house along with Doug Plummer. "That was when Americans started to come here to

'take the waters', à la Baden-Baden, and the first big resort hotel, the Pavilion, was built."

Old Route 20, the pre-Thruway road across New York State, connects a string of towns that speak of the time when urbanites first fled the cities during summer. The mineral waters still flow in Sharon Springs. Although modern vacationing Americans mostly prefer mountain biking

ABOVE: Corn, gourds, and asters celebrate fall, but the National Register plaque is evergreen. **RIGHT:** Doug and Garth's country home is a vernacular Greek Revival house shaded by a row of sugar maple trees, probably planted when the house was built.







ABOVE: Even new construction looks comfortably settled here; the owners installed the fireplace when they bought the house. **BELOW:** (from left) The porch that wraps around two sides of the house was a Victorian addition. Once a small guest room, the office holds personal objects. The enlarged dining room is flooded with light pouring into south-facing windows.



and shopping to bathing in and drinking from mineral-rich springs, others, like Doug and Garth, are drawn to the natural beauty and the sense of history and permanence here. Like many visitors, their initial weekend forays from big-city careers became longer and more purposeful. When the two resettled here, they first ran a bakery/café. Then, in 1996, they bought this house. “We had thought of running it as a bed-and-breakfast inn,” Garth says. “With all its bedrooms, this house was perfect, though a bit run-down. But then we bought the American Hotel [another historic Sharon Springs hostelry], so the house became our home.”

“A bit run-down” turned out to be an understatement. Though mostly sound, the house required new roofs, new electrical systems, new plaster, and a clear-eyed look at the way 1880s and early-20th-century additions had altered it.

“I liked the scale of the house. Rambling—well, actually, it was sort of a rabbit warren,” laughs Garth. “They’d stuck a lot of rooms onto the back; some were little larger than walk-in closets. We removed doors, opened it up without removing walls, so now there are six bedrooms instead of ten or twelve. The house still has an interesting cohesiveness, despite all the additions.”

It also has—in addition to that Rockwell-esque façade facing the street—a glorious view. “The house overlooks the Mohawk Valley. On a clear day, the Adirondack State Park is so beautifully visible. We may even be able to see the Green Mountains.”

IN DECORATING their home, Garth and Doug used the view as a focal point. The dining room, which looks out at the mountains to the north, is dom-



ABOVE: In the music room, a piano once played by Rubinstein keeps company with unassuming but comfortable local furniture. **BELOW:** The mural painted above the wainscot replicates the view out the dining room windows, with a few personal additions.





ABOVE: The homeowners' unabashed use of color enlivens a simple guest bedroom. It is one of a number of small rooms added sometime after the house was new.



inated by a mural painted above the wainscot by local artist Mike Stiles. It celebrates Sharon Springs' past and present: among its whimsical elements are houses and barns long gone from the surrounding hillsides, a famous local stone house, Doug and Garth with their dog, Jasper, and an image of one of the Hasidic Jews who, for many years, made Sharon Springs their vacation destination. "He's walking out of the woods with his hat and cane, right at the edge of the trees so you don't immediately see him," Garth explains.

"After all," adds Doug. "For a while, this house was a *Kuch-aleine*—

a Yiddish term for an inn that's got a stove or hot plate in every room, designed for guests who keep Kosher."

Their generous use of saturated colors is another inspiration from the area. "In this part of the world, you need colors because it's grey so much of the time," says Garth, who claims credit for the interior design. "I start with the fabric for each room, and pull the colors out of that.

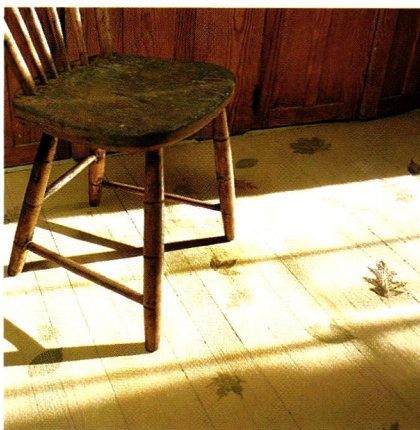
"Someone walked in once and said, 'You certainly are guys,' because of the strong colors. We have 19 different paint colors in this house."

Simple country furniture from area antique shops supplements fam-

ily pieces and objects with personal meaning, like Doug's grandmother's Hoosier cabinet and Garth's Steinway baby grand piano. Placed in a front room that was a bedroom, and is now called the music room, the piano was once played by Arthur Rubinstein. But it's the only piece in the house that claims such a lofty lineage.

"We have flea-market stuff," says Garth. "We bought locally made furniture that we liked; there's nothing contemporary in the house except for some new lighting fixtures and a few new rugs."

An area cabinetmaker installed new living room built-ins. An orig-



CLOCKWISE: (from top left) Green yellow ware and moose pitchers adorn a step-back cupboard in the dining room. The owners stripped and restored this original kitchen built-in; the Hoosier is a family heirloom. The freshly painted kitchen floor, scattered with stenciled leaves.

ABOVE: The floor, the cabinets, and the stove were there; what's new is lots of paint and a little less wall.
RIGHT: Some furniture, like the wood and metal kitchen table, came with the house. Doug inherited the Hoosier from his grandmother, who used to change his father's diapers on the slide-out shelf.

inal built-in kitchen cabinet painted canary yellow turned out to be an elegantly simple piece, once stripped of its garish decoration. And, because the kitchen floor had once been stained by spilled kerosene, Doug and Garth painted it, then stenciled it with autumn leaves. The inspiration for that? "A picture in *Old-House Interiors*," they answer, grinning. ✦





LEFT: Period-perfect details and bold color have turned the house into a showpiece. **BELOW:** Houses like this 1928 builder's semi-bungalow are often not seen as restoration-worthy properties. Flanked by two Arts and Crafts-style houses, this one was ripe for improvement. **OPPOSITE:** Framed by well-proportioned windows, a new, vent-free gas fireplace replaces the awkward free-standing stove in the living room.

Working with architect Michael Klement, owners of this Craftsman-influenced house in Ann Arbor remade an overlooked property. | by Patricia Poore photographs by Stanley Livingston



A Bungalow MAKEOVER

AFTER YEARS OF NEGLECT, the 1928 semi-bungalow had a badly deteriorated exterior. In fact, the entire front porch, from the footings to the existing rafters, had to go. The interior was not much better. A series of alterations over time had denuded the front rooms of both character and a sense of privacy.

Jerry Duprey and Mark Uhen wanted a makeover that would transform their “carpenter Craftsman” home into a detail-laden Arts and

Crafts bungalow. Architect Michael Klement and builder Bruce Curtis of Washtenaw Woodwrights gave them just that, at a cost of about \$170 per square foot. “Our careful study of authentic, period Bungalow and Arts and Crafts design generated the clustered, cross-tied column theme that would become a unifying element of the design, inside and out,” Klement explains.

Inside, first-floor spaces were reorganized, leading to the reloca-

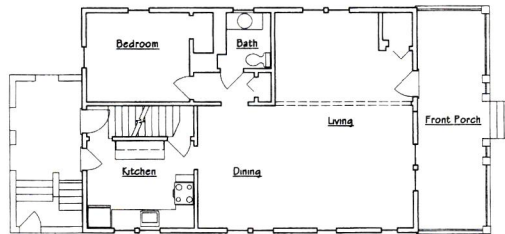
tion of the front door. New beams were added to fix structural concerns. Authentic, period-style lighting fixtures, hardware, and wallpapers complete the interior.

“There’s no reason why a renovation can’t solve circulation and space-planning problems,” Klement says. “Using period-style details doesn’t preclude a contemporary use of the space.” This house does indeed have all the charm of an intact original. ✦

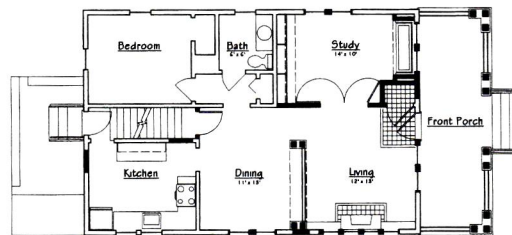


A TRADITIONAL Arrangement

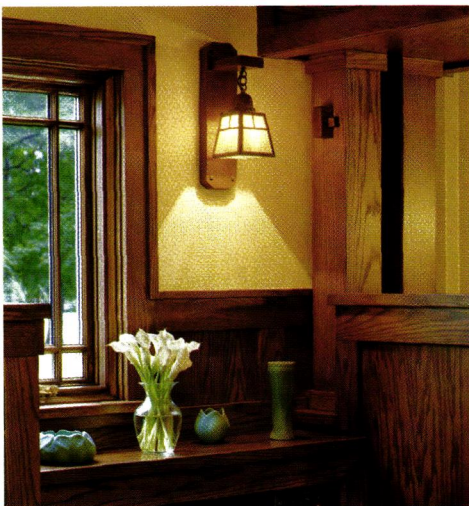
The common areas in the house had been opened up in previous renovations, stripping the rooms of style and character. The owners kept the open feeling, but recast the L-shaped space into three distinct rooms. Future plans include converting three tiny bedrooms and a bath on the second floor into a master suite and small guest room.



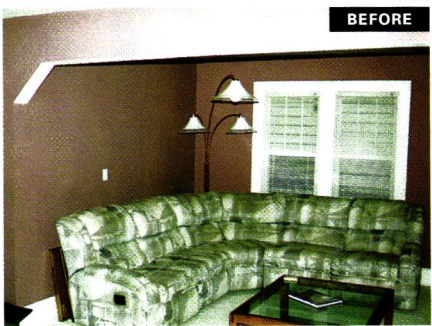
1st Floor FLOORPLAN BEFORE

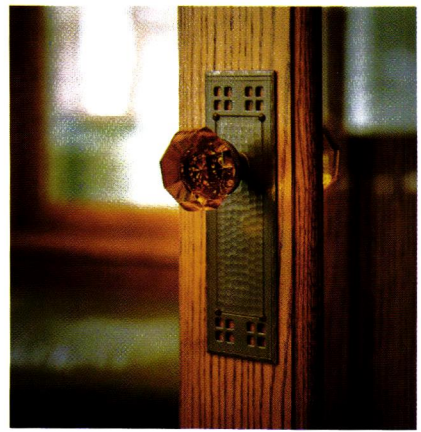


1st Floor FLOORPLAN AFTER



ABOVE: "Bookend" returns on the screen wall between the living and dining rooms support double clustered and cross-tied columns. **BELOW:** Relocating the front door to the center of the house allowed the architect to carve out a getaway study.

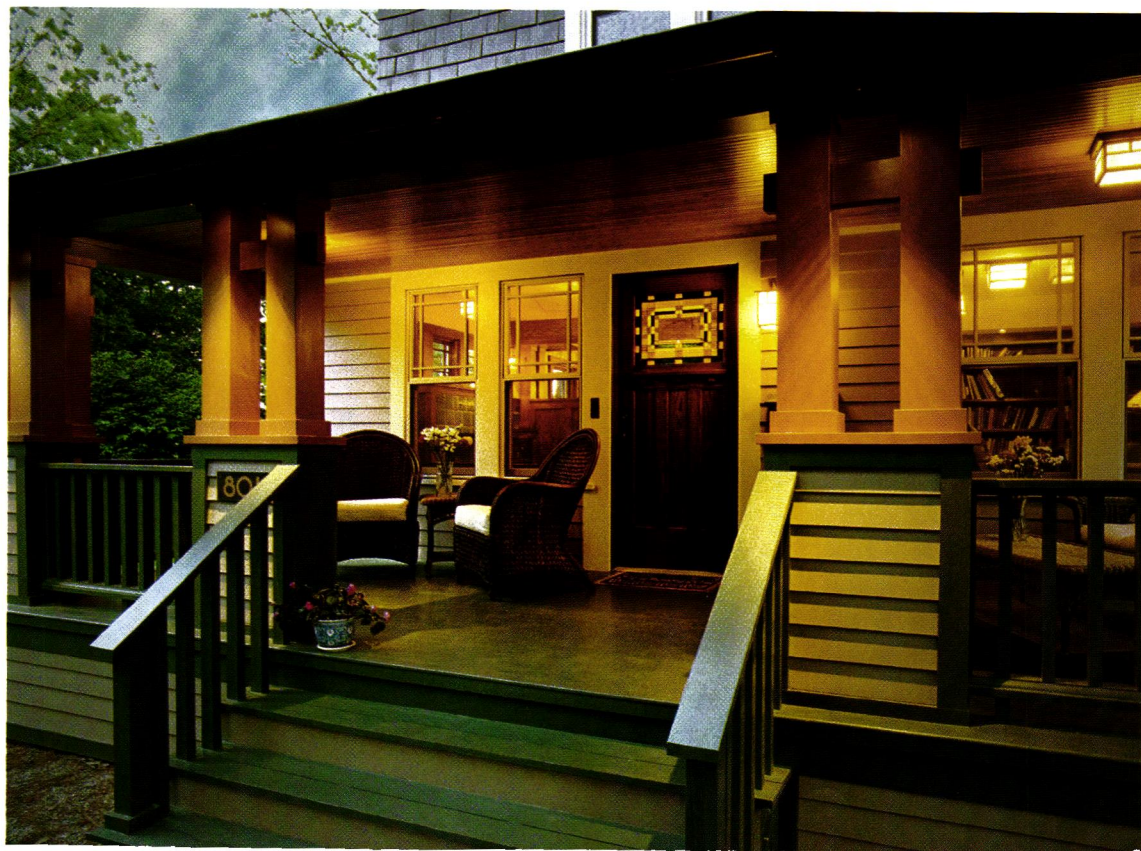




ABOVE: The renovation didn't skimp on small details like true-to-period crystal doorknobs and hammered backplates. **BELOW:** Handmade, custom-fired clay tiles accent the fireplace and reappear immediately inside the new front door.



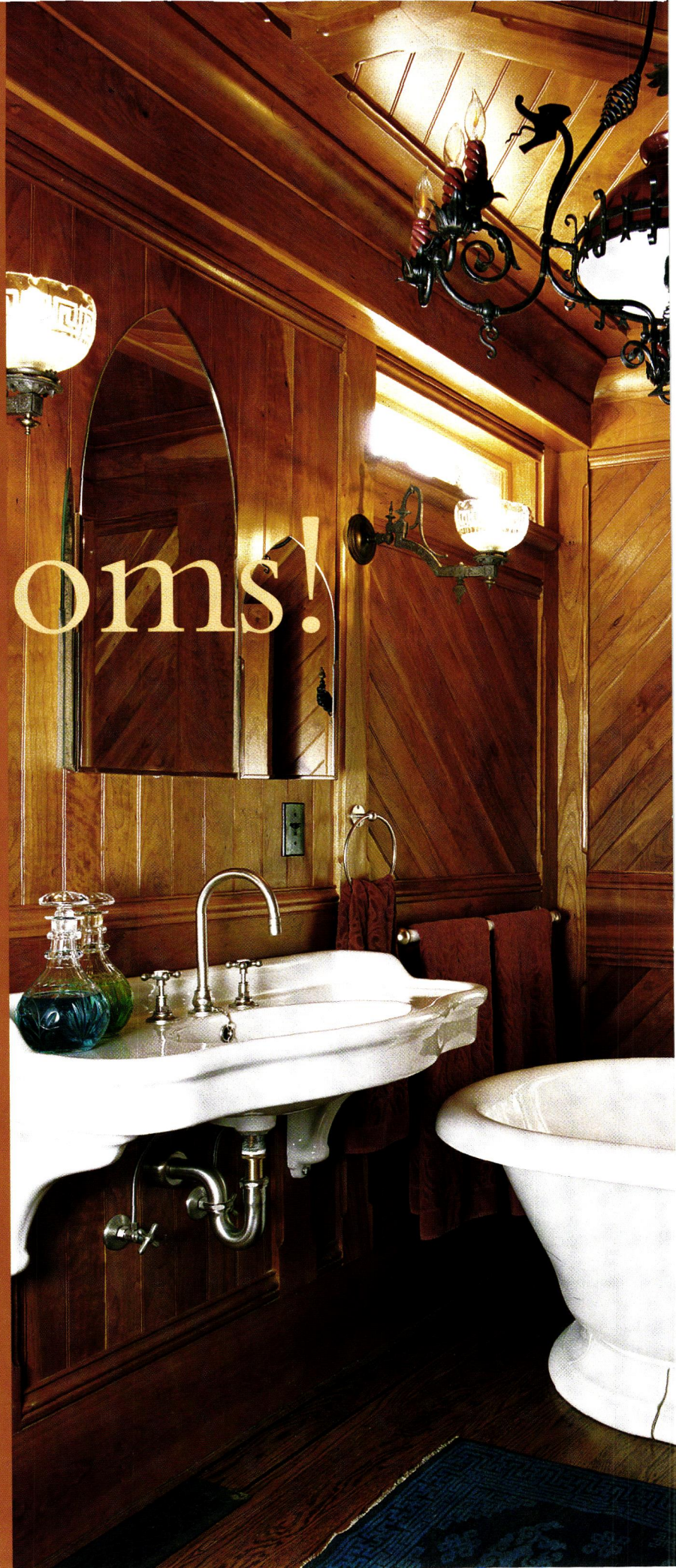
RIGHT: Carefully proportioned new railings and boxed column bases lend solidity and provide a sense of enclosure on the porch. Special accent lighting at night brings out the detailing and forms of the column assemblies. **ABOVE:** The formal dining room was separated from the adjacent family space with a paneled, three-quarter-height wall. It serves both as a space-dividing element and as built-in furniture.

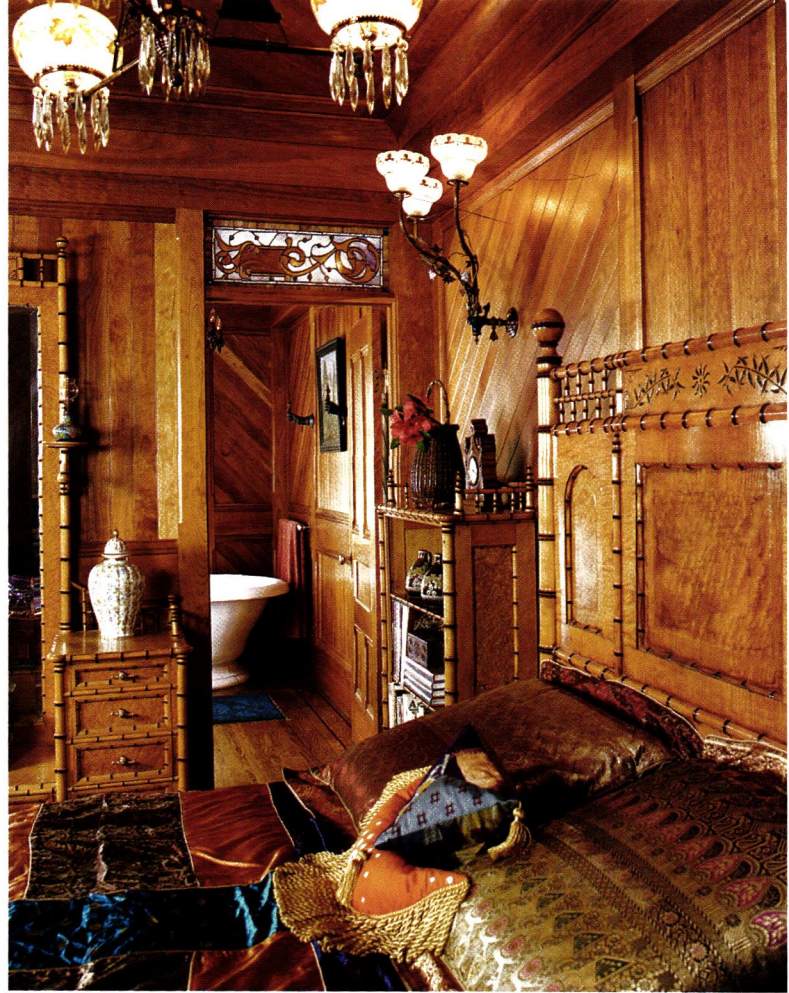


Three winners—
from timeless classicism
to Victorian exuberance:
here are readers'

bathrooms!

NOT TOO LONG AGO, the bathroom was nobody's business when it came to restoration. The parlor got a period treatment. The exterior, absolutely. But the bathroom was torn out, to be refitted with clean, modern tile and a shower-bath, and usually to be made much larger. Things have changed. An old-fashioned bath has become the favored style, even in new construction. Every one of the entries to the *Old-House Interiors* Bathroom Contest might have been a winner; all were sensitive to the period and style of the house, and many made use of an antique fixture or two. As often as a spa bath was created out of reconfigured space, owners elected to make do with the original plan. Both approaches resulted in splendid rooms. • A big thank-you goes to our Contest Sponsors: Minwax, Berkeley Mills, Marvin Windows and Doors, and Nostalgic Warehouse. • Our Home Office winner will appear in the next issue.





OVER *the* TOP

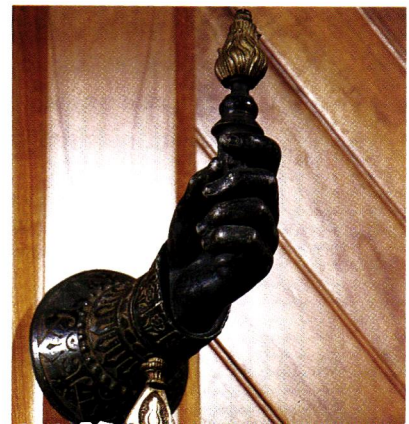
Inspired by an 1880s renovation.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY DAVID DUNCAN LIVINGSTON

John and Leslie Koelsch co-existed peacefully in an 825-square-foot 1886 cottage for 25 years before transforming their basement into a Stick-Style Victorian master suite with a matching bath addition. The couple patterned their cherry-paneled extravaganza after a similar late-19th-century treatment in the Sanford-Covell House in Newport, Rhode Island, that they'd seen in *Old-House Interiors* [Summer 1997]. After upgrading the old foundation to meet code in earthquake-prone San Francisco, the Koelsches realized another benefit: "No more shaking when the bus goes by!"

LEFT: The new Roman tub and wall-hung pedestal sink are romantically lit by a circa 1880 10-light gas chandelier and 1870 Hollins etched-glass sconces.

TOP: The paneled bedroom, furnished with a ca. 1870 faux bamboo suite made by R.J. Horner, leads into the inner sanctum. **RIGHT:** A ca. 1870-1880 hand bracket sconce.





OASIS

Classical symmetry, always in style.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY DAVID DUNCAN LIVINGSTON

Closing off an extra door to eliminate a pass-through circulation pattern and installing a deep soaking tub as the focal point transformed a dated bath into a restful retreat. A triptych of leaded-glass windows over the tub and casement windows over a Gothic-detailed cabinet provide abundant light and complete privacy. The restrained, Prairie-influenced tulip design brings the soft colors in the room into focus. Lozenge-shaped "subway" tile in the shower and a low beadboard wainscot lend a period feel, as do bevel-edged, marble-topped countertops.

TOP: Lynn and Steve Pearson's Craftsman-style house in San Francisco. **ABOVE:** Interior designer Lou Ann Bauer helped the Pearsons turn a bath into a relaxing getaway.





ABOVE: The double sconce is a reproduction of a period design from Brass Light Gallery. **LEFT:** Good proportions and placement make this bath remodel a success. Note the furniture-quality details in the cabinetry, which incorporate scrolled, wave-like brackets into the design. **BELOW:** Practical as well as beautiful, this bath tucks a stacking washer-dryer into a closet finished with turn-of-the-century-style Arts and Crafts doors.

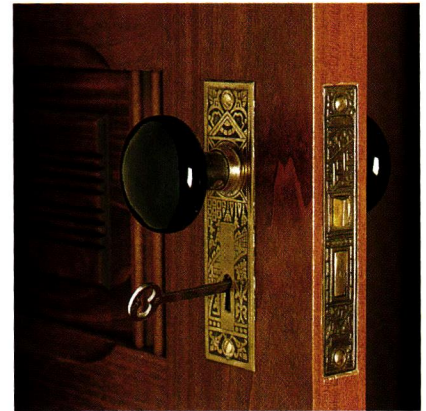




LEFT: The Queen Anne window in the Mullin's new bath is vintage; the trim moulding around it is new.

ABOVE: The Eastlake-style house in Nevada City, California, took 10 years to plan and build.

BELOW: Vintage hardware, with a skeleton key. **BOTTOM:** The Mullin family on the front porch of their newly built Eastlake cottage.



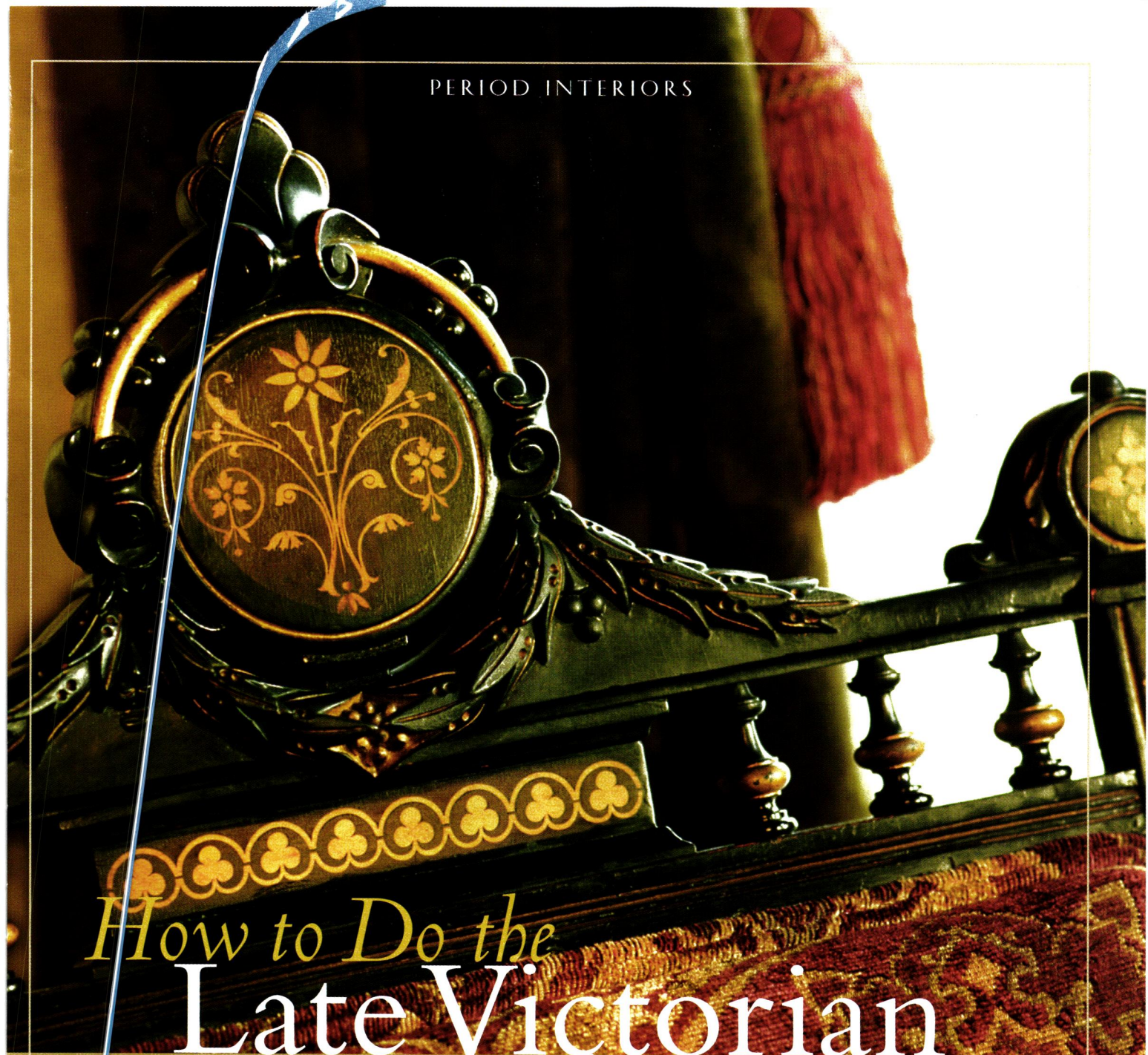
Oh, an ORIGINAL!

Antique fixtures in a brand-new room.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JIM BECKETT

The bathroom looks just as you would expect of an 1880s Eastlake cottage: true-to-period doors, mouldings, and wainscot, with fixtures from a slightly later date. While it's true that the high-tank toilet dates to 1890, and the clawfoot tub and marble-topped sink to the early 20th century, all other finishes in the room—including the 1" hex tile—are new. Contractor H. Dennis Peterson replicated the poplar woodwork from scratch, then stained and finished it with hand-mixed shellac. Everything is bandbox perfect.





How to Do the Late Victorian Parlor

BY STEVE AUSTIN

PHOTOGRAPHS BY PHILIP CLAYTON-THOMPSON / STYLED BY DONNA PIZZI

AS MACHINERY replaced handwork in the 19th century, prices for household items plummeted. By the 1870s most Americans could afford to decorate their parlors with endless stuff.

Aesthetic Movement furniture was usually ebonized and often featured inlaid marquetry, which increased its cost.

With little restraint, housewives filled every last nook and cranny with lambrequins, plaster busts, frilly lampshades, chromolithographs, overstuffed furniture, and endless bric-a-brac.

At the same time (1872), Charles Eastlake's *Hints on Household Taste* reached our shores. Had he been more

frank, Eastlake would have called his book *Demands on Household Taste*. His hellfire-and-brimstone sermon on decorating portrayed the furniture of the times as "egregiously and utterly bad," and its carvings as "generally spiritless in design, and always worthless in execution." He made equally dis-



RIGHT: The former parlor of Victorian Interiors' Gary Yuschalk and Larkin Mayo combines tripartite wall division, papered ceiling, oriental rug, and over-the-top drapery for a picture-perfect look.

OPPOSITE: The author's parlor, by Steve and his wife Cathie Hitchcock, is a time warp of Late Victorian parlor details.

comparing remarks about other aspects of interior decoration (he had, however, the discretion to avoid saying "... nowhere on earth is taste in matters of decorative art so depraved as it is in America"—a quote from his contemporary, Christopher Dresser).

In sweeter language, Eastlake also sang the praises of William Morris, oriental rugs, encaustic tiles, portières, and separate wallpapers for the frieze (between cornice and picture rail), the fill (between picture rail and chair rail), and the dado (between chair rail and baseboard).



*The Late Victorian parlor was the synthesis of these disparate ideas—
an exuberant hodgepodge of industrially produced objects with a handful of tasteful design
concepts adapted from Eastlake's directives.*

Overnight, *Hints on Household Taste* became the American decorating bible. Much like Bible readers, though, the followers of Eastlake took their liberties. Furniture makers saw his ideas as a way to cut costs, by replacing the hand-carved ogee curves and ornament that had previously covered much Rococo furniture with straight boards cut and incised by machines. Housewives, too, disobeyed Eastlake's law. For example, he referred to knickknacks as "that heterogeneous assemblage of modern rubbish." Yet those low-priced, mass-produced items in the Sears catalog were just too tempting to pass up.

The Late Victorian parlor was the synthesis of these disparate ideas—
an exuberant hodgepodge of

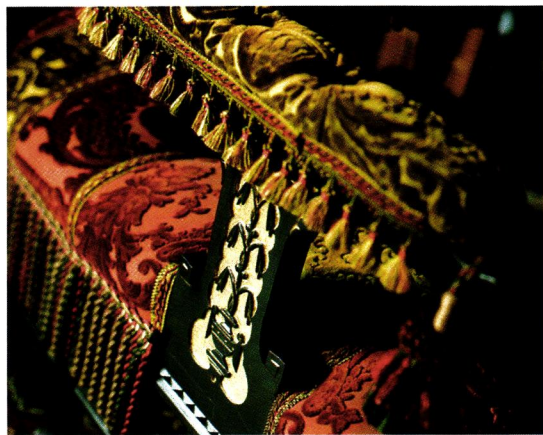
industrially produced objects with a handful of tasteful design concepts adapted from Eastlake's directives. Only 30 years ago, Victorian was considered the epitome of bad taste. Why the change of heart? Our predecessors, after all, really did go too far. Today, though, the richness of the Late Victorian parlor has become the great escape from the "timid and bloodless" interiors that succeeded it, to quote Charlotte Gere in her book *Nineteenth Century Decoration*.

HOW DOES TODAY'S homeowner reconstruct these mysterious, overcrowded rooms so filled with romance? You come across stellar examples of Victorian Revival rooms. They achieved the right look (1) by

avoiding the decorating stereotypes of modern times—white ceilings, plain walls, solids, modern furniture arrangement—and (2) by embracing Late Victorian clichés—decorated ceilings, multi-treatment walls, use of pattern, and too much stuff. Briefly, here are the basics:

Floors were typically covered with oriental rugs with just a bit of wood showing around the edges. Many old rugs have survived. The best prices for these antiques are now to be found on the Internet, but a potential minefield of mistakes lurks, so buyer beware. (Antique rugs on eBay can be found for \$2,000—but you must be an educated and patient buyer.) Modern reproductions, particularly the handmade rugs, only

If antique handmade rugs are not in the budget, an authentic look can be achieved with old machine-made Karastan rugs, often available for just a few hundred dollars on eBay. Like today, many oriental-style rugs were machine-made during the late 19th century.



Reproduction textiles cannot match the exuberance of pristine Victorian-era upholstery. **OPPOSITE:** An antique portière is used for privacy and to add a dash of mystery.

rarely look like their antique counterparts. If antique handmade rugs are not in the budget, an authentic look can be achieved with old machine-made Karastan rugs, often available for just a few hundred dollars on eBay. Like today, many oriental-style rugs were machine-made during the late 19th century.

In reality, probably half the ceilings in Late Victorian parlors were painted white. (It's true. Page through books featuring photos of 19th-century American interiors.) But don't you do it! A white ceiling, ubiquitous now for decades, reads

"modern" to our eyes. An authentic ceiling-decoration scheme of the period—anything but white—is essential to the archetypal Late Victorian parlor. Decorative plasterwork, such as cornice moulding and a ceiling medallion, is stunning. For less cost and great effect, you might use papers specially reproduced for parlor ceilings. Or consider stenciling (if you're handy, have spare time, and are willing to paint over your mistakes); as a do-it-yourself project, it's almost free. (Then again, my own stenciled parlor ceiling cost me nine months of spare time. My wife says it was worth it, but she wasn't the one frequenting the chiropractor.)

Similarly, plain-painted walls don't read "Late Victorian" to our eyes. Great reproduction wallpapers are readily available. Some of them form tripartite designs, including separate frieze, fill, and dado papers as prescribed by Eastlake and other tastemakers.

Then, what to put on top of those wallpapers? *Stuff*, and lots of it. In the famous London parlor of *Punch* cartoonist Linley-Sambourne, the walls are so thoroughly covered that some of the original William Morris paper was applied only in the spaces *between* the pictures as a way to cut papering costs. Cover your walls with old photos, paintings, and engravings, but also consider adding a few items that are *exclusively* Victorian. My favorite is a framed "flowers" made from a dear departed called it "hair art." Today most peo-

A List of DON'TS

All the hints in my article are "DOs." But "DON'Ts" can be deliciously opinionated. This would be my first "don't": Don't get me started! I'm not arrogant, I just know too much. Here I go (till the editor stops me):

- **DON'T** display teddy bears with pink ribbons around their necks. (Teddy Roosevelt, for whom the bears are named, did not become President until nearly a year after Queen Victoria died. Besides, they look ridiculous.)
- **DON'T** use cheap cotton or nylon machine-made area rugs. (Bare floors are better.)
- **DON'T** buy too-florid or too-delicate papers that have no grounding in Victorian design, but simply look

"old-fashioned." Plenty of companies specialize in reproduced Victorian or Victorian Revival papers, in a wide range of designs and looks.

- **DON'T** buy hardware and fixtures with a shiny brass finish. Brass should be unlacquered so that it will develop patina.
- **DON'T** fill the room with 100-watt bulbs. At the very least, install dimmers.
- **DON'T** buy ersatz Rococo reproduction furniture, which looks

doubly out of place in a late-Victorian room.

- **DON'T** use an excess of red—you'll end up re-creating the Hollywood bordello look.
- **DON'T** fall into modern conventions with curtains and drapery—no 16-inch valances.
- **DON'T** let modern sensibility result in the gallery look: uncluttered, ~~with~~ choice pieces on display. The sparse rooms would have suggested poverty during Victorian times.



SOURCES

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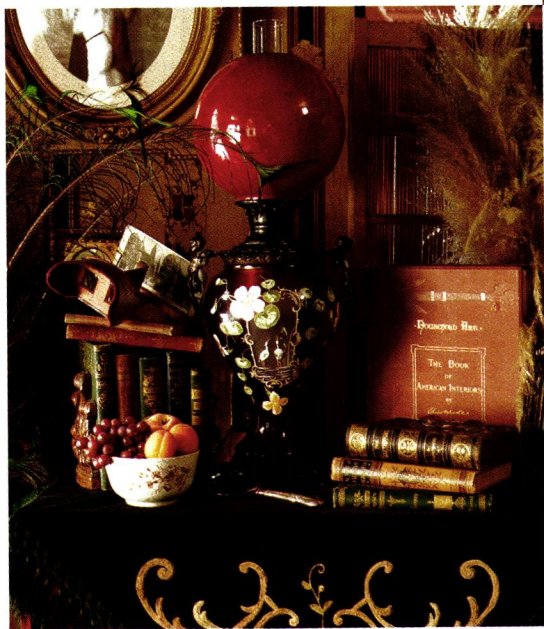
LEFT: Peacock feathers, stereopticon, old picture frame, kerosene lamp, pampas grass, and an arrangement of classic decorating books are clichés that pin this setting to the period.

ABOVE: With vintage drapery and lace, this room captures the feel of the quintessential Late Victorian parlor.

ple call it “gross,” but there’s hardly a better way to transmigrate your parlor back in time. Another nice touch is the addition of a Parian bust of an old fuddy-duddy astride a decorative shelf adorned with a piece of antique fringe applied for the sole purpose of collecting dust. Soooo Victorian!

Whether antique or reproduction, light fixtures for urban or suburban homes predating the early 1890s should be gasoliers. Combination gas–electric fixtures were rare before the 1890s but rapidly became common, and stayed that way until at least 1910. A few electric-only fixtures began to appear before 1900. Old photos suggest that, after 1910, electric-only fixtures became the predominant lighting in cities. Throughout the late-Victorian period and beyond, kerosene lamps illuminated rural American parlors.

Learn to distinguish earlier





An authentic ceiling-decoration scheme of the period—anything but white—is essential to the archetypal Late Victorian parlor.

Victorian furniture—Empire, Rococo, Gothic, and Renaissance—from those styles truly designed for the Late Victorian Parlor: Neo-Grec, Eastlake, Aesthetic Movement, Turkish, Anglo-Japanese, even Chinese. Go light on the former group to concentrate on the latter. Add an old piano; tall uprights with ornate cases were the rage. Pianos and tables were often covered with fringed fabrics.

By 1877, arbiters of taste Henry Williams and “Mrs. Jones” told read-

ers, “. . . the tasteful little tête-a-têtes that now dot the spaces of modern parlors are so much prettier [than center tables].” Not everyone listened. Center tables were still found in some parlors in 1900.

Leave a few authentic 19th-century books and magazines lying around. Particularly classy is an old copy of *The Decorator and Furnisher*, which is just what *Old-House Interiors* fans would have been reading back then. Toss in a stereopticon

REPRODUCTION LIGHTING

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and a few peacock feathers. For icing add lace curtains overlaid with drapery and *voilà*—you're in a time warp, ready to adjust your corset or polish your mustache and mourn President Garfield. ✦

Old-house consultants STEVE AUSTIN and his wife, CATHY HITCHCOCK, own *Austin & Hitchcock Restorations in Portland, Oregon* (503/235-9691). Their work was featured in our Summer 1996 and May 2001 issues.

PERIOD ACCENTS



CLOCKWISE: (from top left) A hand-tied silk fringe, finished with jade roosters, turtles, and a Chinese symbol of good luck. Late-19th-century chenille ball fringe, found at a flea market. A corded tassel, handmade for the restoration of the White House of the Confederacy. Tassel, cord, and figured silk made only for the White House. Hand-woven trim tassels, individually hand-tied around a wood core. An elaborate tassel is a costly custom order. A deep braided fringe, suitable for edging the bottom of a sofa or ottoman.



Think of the luxurious, regally colored tassels, fringes, rosettes, and other trimmings collectively known as passementerie as enrichments for your drapes, pillows, and upholstered furniture.

BY BRIAN D. COLEMAN



The Ps and Qs of **passementerie**

I'D BEEN HESITATING for months, looking at samples until I was cross-eyed, unable to find the right thing. One day I came across several yards of knotted fringe, antique, in an Isnik blue. I knew it was right for my Gothic Revival armchair—and, having chosen the trim, everything fell into place. I was able to pick a coordinating silk from Scalamandré. That chair is now the centerpiece of my parlor.

“Think fringe first,” agrees Bob Bitter, president of Scalamandré, the oldest and largest silk and trimmings manufacturer in the country. Although trim has traditionally been the finishing touch, Bitter says that many jobs he oversees actually start with the fringe and tassels, as these elements are often the most expensive and involve the most lead time.

Passementerie, derived from

French and Italian roots meaning “hand,” refers to upholstery trimmings—that is, fringes, tassels, gimps, frogs, rosettes, and tiebacks. Present for several millennia (tassels have been found in the tombs of the Egyptian pharaohs), silk passementerie was thought to have migrated with the Moors from North Africa and the Turkish Ottoman Empire to Spain and then France during the Middle Ages. Napoleon had a weakness for shimmering gold braids and gimp on his uniforms. A symbol of wealth, silk cords and tassels were applied to anything and everything by the 1880s. Even William Morris’s comparatively simple wall hangings and textiles made use of rich woolen fringes.

You do not have to have a Victorian interior to appreciate passementerie. Just ask JZ Knight, who



LEFT: Lustrous spools of silk in a rainbow of colors at the Scalamandr  mill in Long Island City. **RIGHT:** Pale blue silk drapes with an overhanging swagged valance are accented with matching double-tasseled fringe and tiebacks.



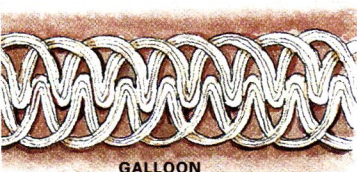
TOP: Amir Baig of Scalamandr  hand-plaits cotton yarn with silk in "Cord Alley." **FAR RIGHT:** The author's Gothic Revival arm-chair, upholstered with antique fringe and Capard, a Scalamandr  silk.

The SCALAMANDR  Story

MANUFACTURERS OF the best in silk fabrics and passementerie, the company was founded in 1929 by a young Italian immigrant named Franco Scalamandr , in an old brick textile mill in Long Island City, New York. By the 1930s, Scalamandr  had become known for the fine quality of its silks, and was asked by William Randolph Hearst to reproduce an antique brocattelle for his castle at San Simeon. Franco was delighted to help, building a special loom for the project. Soon Scalamandr  had established a reputation as the leader in historical reproduction textiles and trims, contributing to projects including the White House and Philadelphia's Town Hall. Still family-owned and -operated, Scalamandr  is one of the few companies still laboriously hand-making tassels and trim for custom orders and restoration projects worldwide. [scalamandre.com; sold to the trade]



A GLOSSARY of trim



GALLOON

BRAIDS OR GALLOONS

Flat, narrow, woven textiles, 5/8" to 4" in width, used to cover staples or nails, or applied to the edges of drapery or upholstery. **CORDS AND ROPES** Cords are plied yarns that are twisted together. When the diameter exceeds 1" it is called a rope. Cords are used on

furniture and cushions, usually with a tape sewn onto the edge of the cord so it can be inserted into the seams of the upholstery.



ROPE

ROSETTES, BOWS, TUFTS, AND FROGS

Rosettes are handmade fabrics that have been concentrically gathered to resemble a rose, and are used on the corners of cushions, swags, and



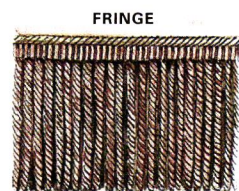
FROG

tassels. *Bows* are made of multiple loops in the shape of a bow, and applied on swags, valances, and with other trimmings. *Tufts* are circular groupings of yarn that have been looped and banded at the center; the ends are

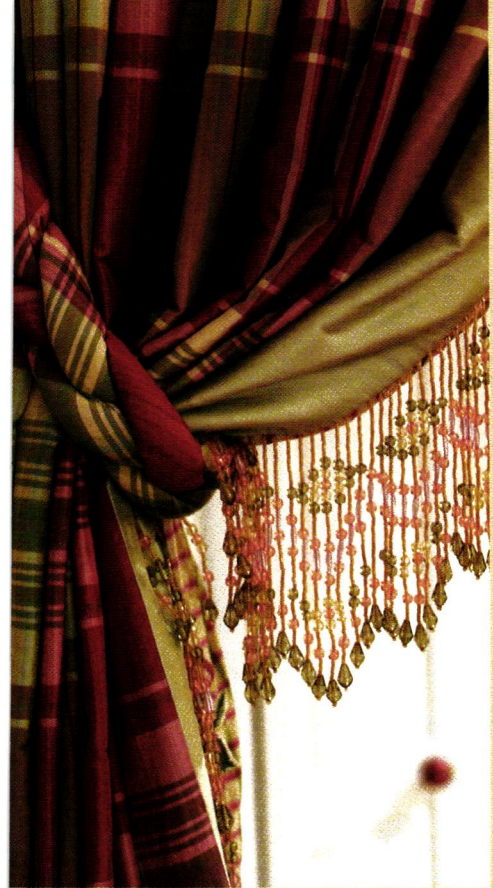
sometimes cut. Tufts can be used on upholstery and other ornamentation. *Frogs* are wrapped cord or silk-covered wire made into a series of loops, often combined with tassels, used like rosettes. **TASSELS** Hanging trim with a head and skirt of cut yarn or bullion cord. Tassels are often combined with other trim and used on the corners of pillows or furniture. **TIEBACKS** Used to hold back drapery panels, they are made with cords, either single or

double stranded, and often have tassels at the ends.

FRINGE A narrow woven or knitted fabric with a heading and attached skirt. Fringe can vary in length from 1" to 12" or more. *Bullion* fringe is thicker fringe made of looped cords which are twisted together.



FRINGE



LEFT: (top) Inexpensive and colorful, beaded lamp fringe on JZ Knight's plaid portières offers a fresh, cheerful look. (bottom) Simple tasseled fringe lines the leading edges of striped Scalamandré silk drapes, gathered in the center with a matching silk tieback



RIGHT: At the Scalamandré mill, decorative fringes are still tied by hand.



has filled her Georgian-style home with opulent Scalamandré silk curtains and fringe. "Watch as long strands of silk fringe rustle when they catch the breeze through an open window," she says, "and their colors shimmer in the light." JZ's advice is, don't skimp! Fringe should billow, puddle, drape, and drag for full effect.

The most common mistake when applying trimmings is underscaling, adds Mark Failor of Scalamandré. That colors must match per-

for the last step; otherwise, it may not lie smoothly on the fabric and can pucker. Think big, Sam reinforces; contrary to what many advise, larger-scaled trimmings in a small room will actually give the space more depth and make it seem more important.

Although antique trim is nice to use, it can be difficult to work with, advises Carol Tate, who specializes in period fabrics and pillow construction. Often trim will "wander," especially on mohairs and vel-

Trim doesn't have to be expensive . . . combine a narrow gimp from India with more expensive silk tassels or cording to create the look of hand-tied trim at a fraction of the cost.

fectly is another common fallacy. Like jewelry enhancing a beautiful dress, trimmings should bring out a fabric's colors in complementary tones. Matching red trim tends to disappear on dark red drapes, for example, while a complementary but contrasting trim color, such as a deep forest green, provides a jewel-like accent.

APPLYING TRIM is an art, but there are a few tricks of the trade. Sam Yazolino, who operates a curtain and fabrics workshop, advises making a mock-up to test out your trim and curtain fabric combinations before spending a lot of money on an order. Always save your fringe application

for the last step; otherwise, it may not lie smoothly on the fabric and can pucker. Think big, Sam reinforces; contrary to what many advise, larger-scaled trimmings in a small room will actually give the space more depth and make it seem more important.

Although antique trim is nice to use, it can be difficult to work with, advises Carol Tate, who specializes in period fabrics and pillow construction. Often trim will "wander," especially on mohairs and vel-

Trim doesn't have to be expensive. You can combine an inexpensive, narrow gimp from China or India with more expensive silk tassels or cording to create the look of hand-tied trim at a fraction of the cost. Be creative and use unorthodox elements such as beads or small pieces of jewelry to add sparkle and interest. ✦



A Garden
at SAG HARBOR

LOIS UNDERHILL CREATED A BEAUTIFUL, OLD-FASHIONED GARDEN
AROUND THE HISTORIC RETAINING WALL THAT ANCHORS A WHALING-ERA PROPERTY.

BY VICKI JOHNSON | PHOTOGRAPHS BY KEN DRUSE

ASK LOIS BEACHY UNDERHILL about the stone wall in her beautiful garden, and her eyes sparkle. She turns simple facts into a touching human drama as she tells the story of the whaler who laid those stones more than 150 years ago.

Ms. Underhill spent her professional life as an advertising executive, but her deep passion is history, in which she has a degree. Her Greek

Revival house, circa 1835, sits on a hill in the historic village of Sag Harbor, New York. Ideally situated on the eastern end of Long Island, Sag Harbor was a thriving whaling port for more than a century. George Howell, whose position as cooper aboard whaling ships provided his family with a comfortable standard of living, bought this house sometime in the 1840s. He invested \$3,000, a large

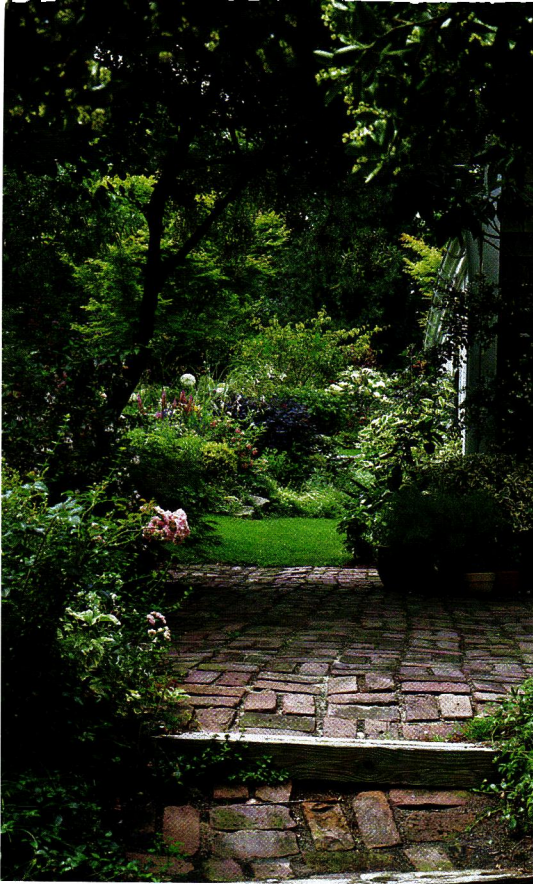
sum at the time, improving and enlarging his home.

Howell built an addition, adding a kitchen and well room. In doing so, he had to carve into the hill and build a retaining wall—the wall that now serves as a backbone to the Underhill garden. Howell used the handiest material available, ballast stone from the great cargo vessels that sailed out of Sag Harbor.



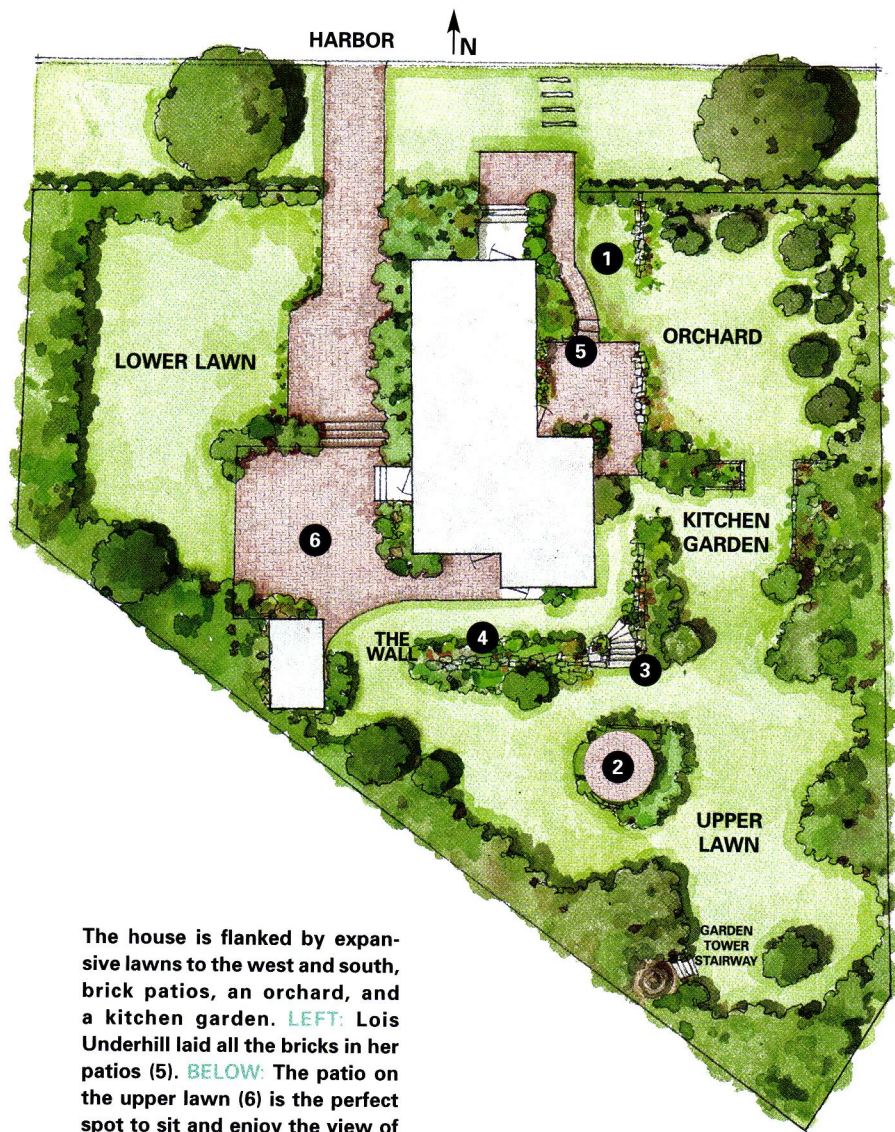
CLOCKWISE: (from upper left) The view from the entrance to the garden (at 1 on map, p. 78), framed by the spreading euonymus 'Manhattan'. Another view (at 2) takes in the house and a glimpse of harbor. Stone steps (3) laid by George Howell, a cooper who owned the house in the 1840s, may be 19th-century ballast stone. The old stone wall (4), overflowing with *Hydrangea aborescens* 'Annabelle'.



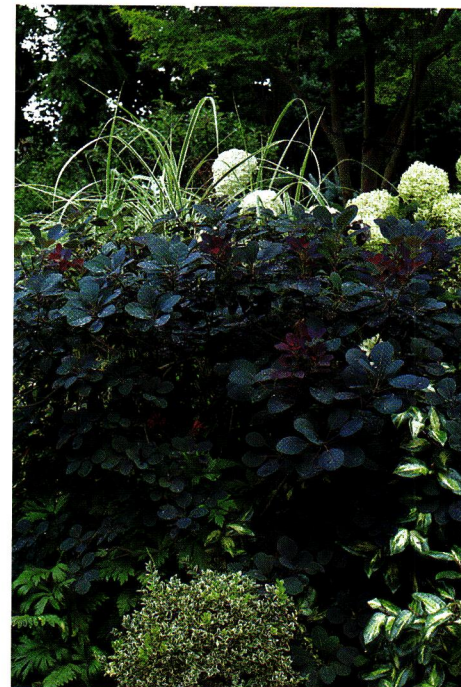


Lois Underhill purchased the property in 1967, and says that, for 22 years, she and her husband “were strictly weekend people; I was not a gardener.” In fact, for some of those years she kept busy writing what would become a critically acclaimed book—*The Woman Who Ran for President: The Many Lives of Victoria Woodhull*. But when the couple moved permanently to Sag Harbor, Ms. Underhill looked around at the struggling apple trees and shrubs and thought, “Ooh! There’s a lot that could be done with a garden here!” It was hard for a novice to know where to start. “Because the property is an odd, triangular lot on a hill, I was not at all sure how to put things together,” she remembers.

One thing Lois Underhill was certain of, however: She did not want to impose a contemporary aesthetic on a historic property. Reading the works of Russell Page, Ruth B. Dean, and Gertrude Jekyll, among others, Ms. Underhill [continued on page 80]



The house is flanked by expansive lawns to the west and south, brick patios, an orchard, and a kitchen garden. **LEFT:** Lois Underhill laid all the bricks in her patios (5). **BELOW:** The patio on the upper lawn (6) is the perfect spot to sit and enjoy the view of the harbor. **RIGHT:** *Cotinus* ‘Royal Purple,’ near the kitchen garden.





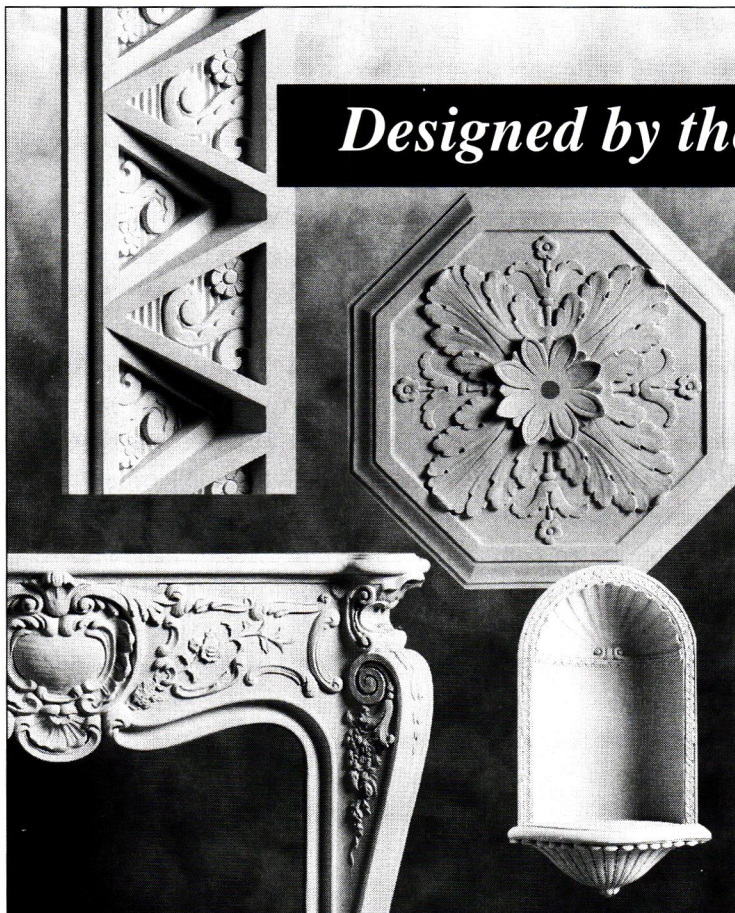
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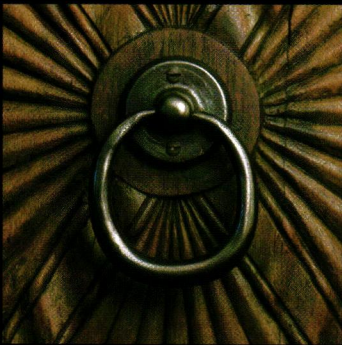
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With a vivid mixture of evergreens, deciduous shrubs, and flowers, Underhill has created a richly textured border that undulates along and softens the property line.

decided to create a formal layout with symmetrical brick terraces (which she installed herself), following the lines of the house, with flower beds above and behind the stone wall. On the steeper slope above the wall, she created undulating beds with shrubs and trees to soften and disguise the triangular outline of the property. No documentation that Howell or his family maintained a garden survives. But there is some evidence that there may have been an orchard at the top of the hill. Here, Ms. Underhill has included a collection of ornamental fruit trees in her scheme.

This owner has since remodeled the addition that Howell built, adding windows to bring the garden indoors. From her kitchen table in late summer, the view includes blue lace-cap hydrangeas, Casablanca lilies just opening, 'Mrs. J. D. Fredericks' fuchsia (which she over-winters in her basement), bronze fennel, fern-leaf lavenders, and "lots and lots of 'Annabelle' hydrangea!"

The garden also incorporates

some of the uncommon *Salvia uliginosa*: "It is late getting started, but it has such a lovely, sky-blue color and airy look to it, I plant it every year." She has also planted several red-leaved trees and shrubs to "break up all the green"—such as *Cercis canadensis*, *Cotinus 'Royal Purple'*, along with the variegated Korean dogwoods *Cornus kousa 'Gold Star'*, 'Lustgarten Weeping', and 'Variegata'.

Her research and garden work have brought Lois Underhill closer to George Howell, the figure most associated with her historic house. She has come to admire his enterprising nature. "His is a sad story," she recounts. "When the bottom fell out of whaling, George lost a great deal. With a wife and children to support, he booked passage on one of the first ships bound for the California gold rush—where he actually did quite well. He chose to come home . . . tragically, on the return voyage home he fell ill and died. Whenever I look at that wonderful wall, I think of George Howell." ✦



...AND ON.

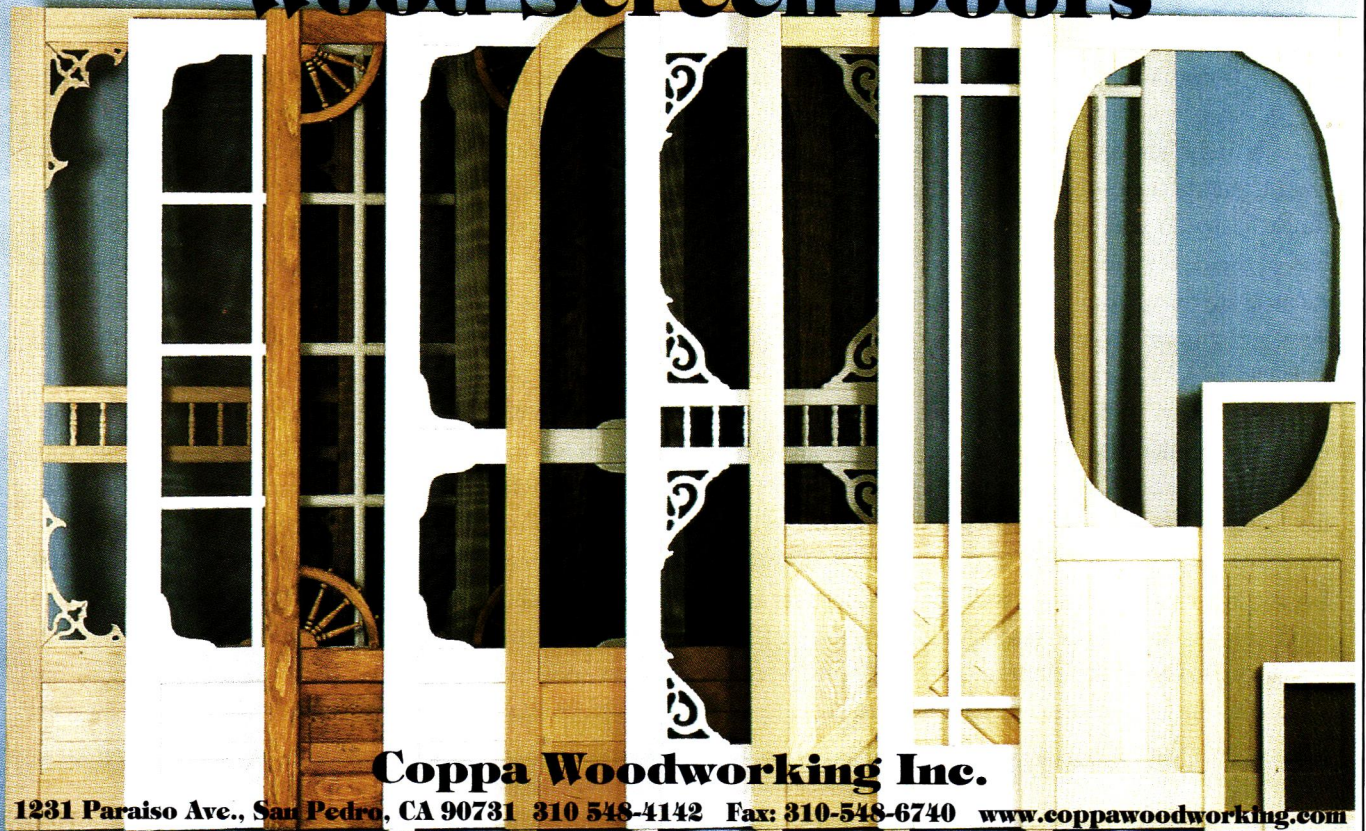
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Heating and cooling vents and returns can stand out like a sore thumb in a period home, but there are ways to make them disappear. Fortunately, you can play up the fireplace.

The Aesthetics of Warmth BY MARY ELLEN POLSON

ADDING a supplementary heat source—or installing an entirely new system—can pose nagging aesthetics problems in an old house. How do you get the exposed bits of the new system, which might include anything from small circular vents to a floor-to-ceiling radiator, to blend in to a period interior?

Blessedly, radiant flooring is completely under cover. Whole-house heating and cooling systems suitable for retrofits, like the mini-duct systems from Unico and SpacePak, tuck largely out of sight behind walls or inside closets and crawl spaces. But what to do about the outlets? The white circular vents are only 4" across,

but they can stand out against dark woodwork or patterned wallpaper. The solution is simple enough: simply paint or paper over the sleeve, or cover it with circular trim moulding (visit the Design Center at oldhouseinteriors.com and enter the key word "moulding.")

Speaking of outlets and vent returns, there's no reason to live with the bare-bones aluminum or steel grids you probably inherited when you moved into your house. Stock and custom-made grilles and register covers are available in just about every size and material you can imagine, from cast bronze to solid oak, hand-hammered copper to paintable

composition. Historical Arts & Casting even offers grilles by such prestigious designers as Frank Lloyd Wright and Louis H. Sullivan.

What about those cast-iron tubular radiators? Some people love these icons of Victorian living, others hate them—especially if they're noisy. If you're in the latter category, there are several possible ways of dealing with them. If it's the looks that offend you, consider radiator covers. Several companies offer units in either enameled metal and woods; some enclosures offer period-look detailing. You can also replace your radiators with good-looking baseboard units that all but disappear [text continued on page 86]

Remarkably, it's easier than ever to re-create a Victorian fireplace, complete with coal grate, cast-iron surround, and a carved mantel.

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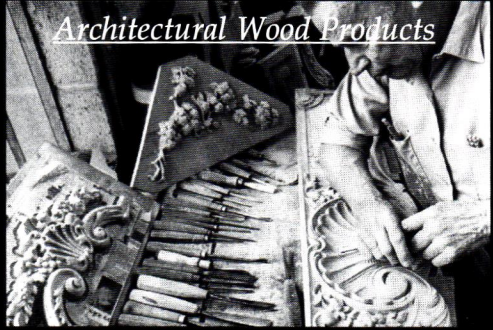
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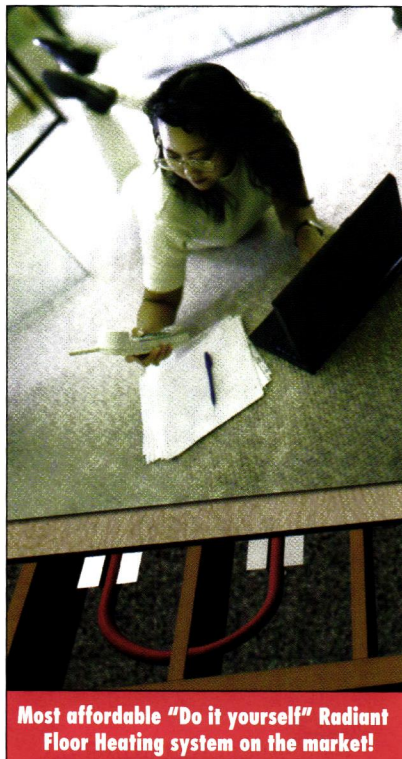
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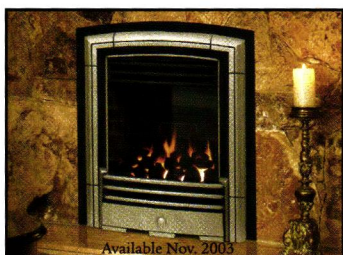
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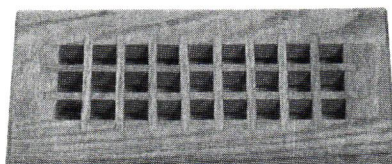
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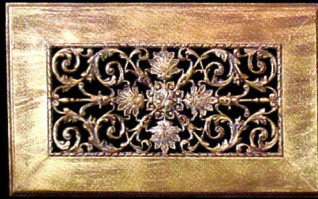
once installed. And for those who love their radiators and are looking for more, Burnham offers an authentic, embossed reproduction cast-iron called the Classic. (If you're fortunate enough to own any fancy embossed radiators, dress them up with a coat of silver or gold. Use rust-resistant spray paint.)

Because they tend to be the focal point of a room, fireplaces and wood- or gas-burning stoves pose their own aesthetic issues. Fitting an insert into an existing fireplace can be a real challenge, especially if your opening is about as tall as it is wide (36" x 36", for example). The wider fireplace inserts that are standard on the market won't fit it. Fortunately, several North American dealers specialize in fireplace retrofits for older homes. Valor, for example, offers period-look cast-iron fireplace inserts that fit older fireplace openings, including the Windsor, a Victorian arch-front gas model that "burns" coals. If you have no flue or a blocked flue, you'll be limited to vent-free gas or electric units; luckily, one of the most authentic early-Victorian looks is the freestanding English coal-grate. The exquisite grates or baskets hold coals that are actually loose, so that they can be arranged to create air pockets. The result is a more realistic flame.

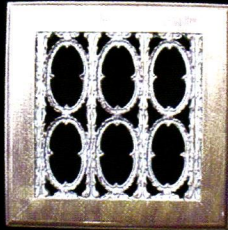
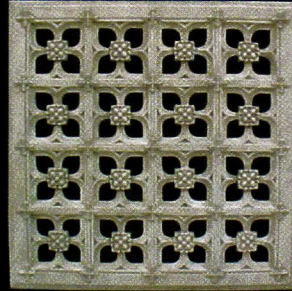
But a beautiful fireplace is about more than the appearance of the fire-box. You'll want some sort of surround, and certainly a mantel with period detailing. Fires of Tradition offers full trim packages, including narrow cast-iron grates bordered on either side by suites of tubelined tiles in Victorian and Art Nouveau motifs. Finish the entire composition with a period reproduction mantel in marble, slate, cast iron, cast-stone, resin or wood. ✦



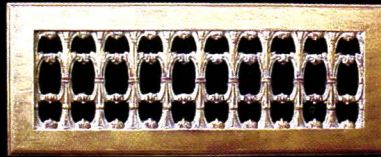
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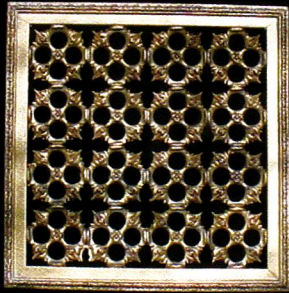


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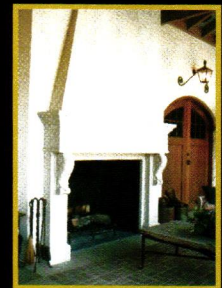
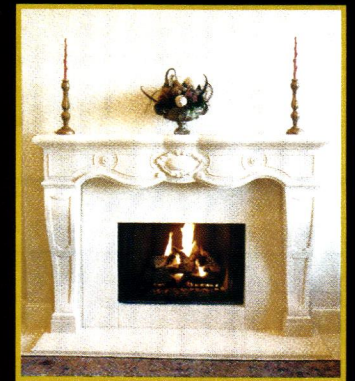
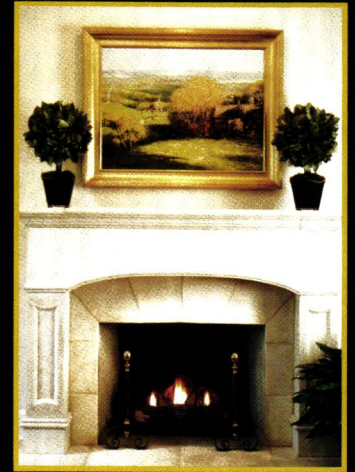
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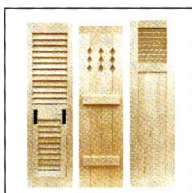


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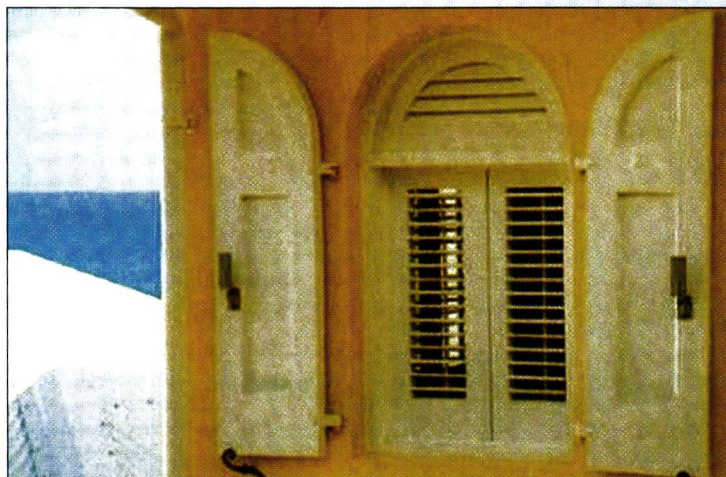


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The Forties and Fifties are getting serious attention and the best design of the period deserves all of it. The cream rises to the top, as is always the case with retrospectives.



American Dreams REVIEWED BY PATRICIA POORE

JOE EICHLER'S modernist, family-oriented houses bear no relation to the post-war boxes thrown up nationwide. They are, in fact, stunningly beautiful—more so now, to our eyes, than they were in their newness—and transcendent, built

LEFT: Maurice Jallot's swanky button-down wing chair from 1948. **ABOVE:** Eichler in California: the bliss of the new.



ERNIE BRAUN (TOP)
COURTESY GALERIE ÉRIC PHILIPPE,
PARIS (ABOVE)

with a philosophy that touched on the spiritual. European and American design of the 1940s, in furniture and houses, has a streamlined ornamentalism that is still fresh. Can it be long before restoration-minded householders buy up the houses of the era—not all of them stellar examples—and remake them, with the gift of hindsight, to be so much better than they were? That is just what happened in the Victorian and Arts and Crafts revivals.

There is no how-to book for re-creating the post-War in-

terior—yet. Those so interested will have to look to a crop of rather scholarly architectural tomes for a basic education in the design of the period. Top on my list is *Eichler/Modernism Rebuilds the American Dream* [Gibbs Smith, 2002]. Text-heavy and filled with black-and-white images, it's a book that captures the spirit of its subject. The reader comes away feeling uplifted by the dedication and genius of Joe Eichler, the developer who left a legacy of integrity in California. He was a pioneer,

RIGHT: Case Study House No. 9, designed by Charles Eames and Aero Saarinen in the late Forties. **BELOW:** An early plywood chair, manufactured by De Boer in 1948.



Eichler defied convention by hiring architects to design reasonably priced homes in a modern style. Through the 1950s and '60s, he was famous both for innovation and his social conscience.

socially as well as architecturally. Though his building career began at age 45, he nevertheless left 11,000 residences in progressive suburbs. Through the 1950s and '60s, he was famous both for innovation and his social conscience. (For one thing, Eichler's village-like developments were forthright in their policy of nondiscrimination.)

Not surprisingly, in its day Eichler's modernist style was embraced more warmly by the architectural press than by average homebuyers. Catherine Munson, Eichler Homes' first female salesperson in the late 1950s, is quoted as saying that the typical buyer was wary: many house shoppers, she said, "hated our designs." Though they found avid devotees in the Bay Area from the beginning, the designs were undisputably different and ahead of their time. Our eyes today see them

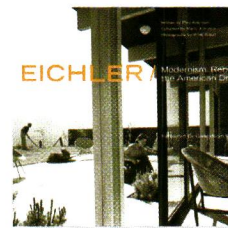
as classics, and so brilliant in function and form, it seems impossible that they were built as middle-class development housing.

"THE 1940S was a decade of contradictions in which designers pushed the clock's hands back and forth," the publisher tells us at the start of Anne Bony's *Furniture & Interiors of the 1940s* [Editions Flammarion, Paris]. This elegant book, with many of its photos in black and white, covers high-style design for furniture and interiors in Europe and America. The author divides her discussion among the Traditionalists (very French), the Moderns (Italians, Scandinavians, the Brits; Marcel Breuer and Walter Gropius in the U.S.), and the Heteroclitics (deviants?), where she includes Gio Ponti and Isamu Noguchi.

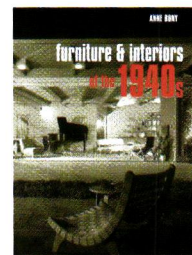
Some of the interiors are all

Hollywood, womblike in their draped ceilings and padded headboards. But there is something sumptuous about even the austere rooms. Furniture is shown throughout in close-ups and silhouettes. The juxtaposition of carefully finished rooms with the sculpted industrial forms of the age clinches the story of an energetic time. ✦

Eichler/Modernism Rebuilds the American Dream
by Paul Adamson,
photography by Ernie Braun; Gibbs Smith, 2002.
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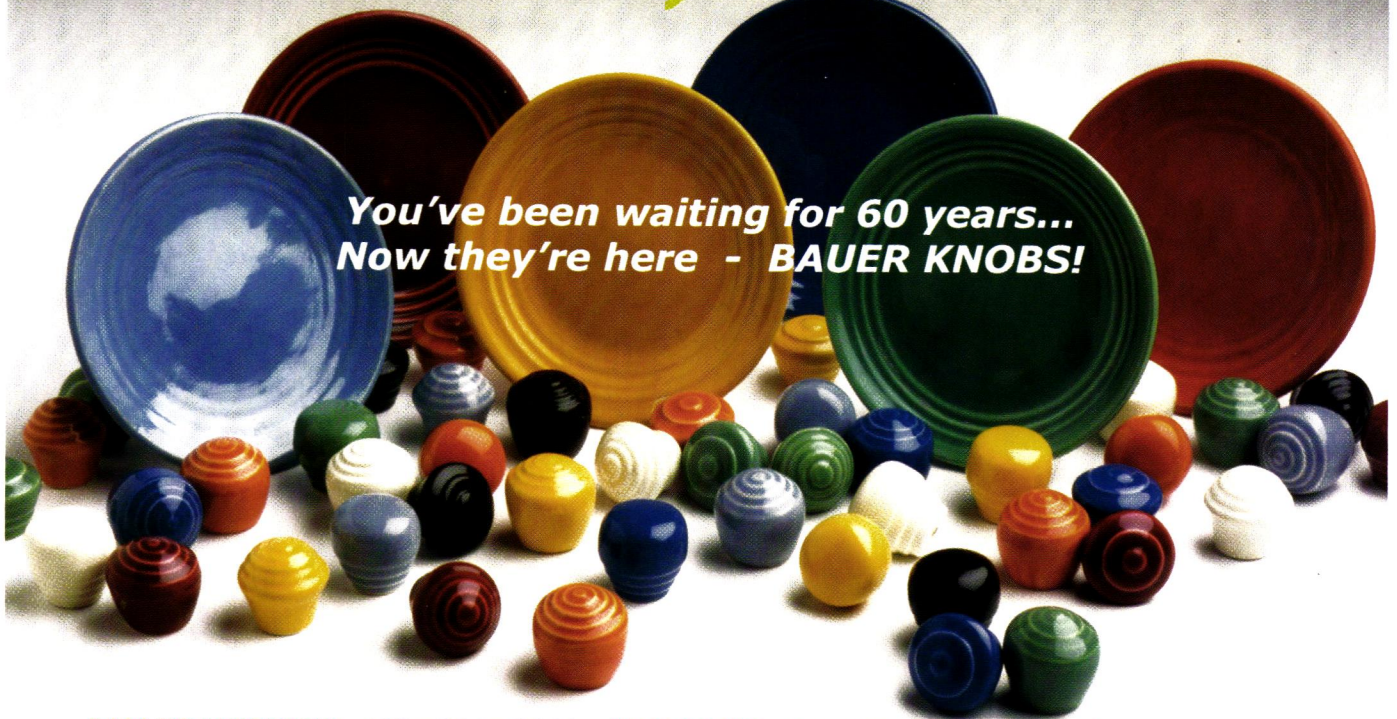


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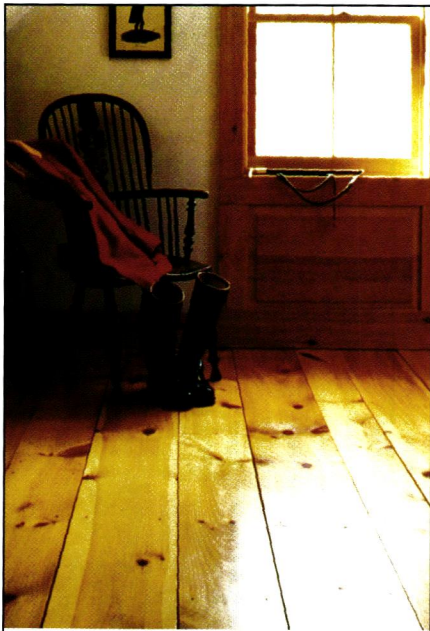
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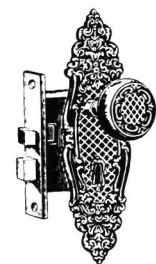
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Nantucket, ca. forever

“THE BUILT environment and fragile landscape are interwoven in a harmonious way on Nantucket,” writes architect Graham Gund. A strong preservation ethic going back to the 1890s, along with stringent development and design rules set forth during the 1930s, have helped preserve the Massachusetts island, despite pressures brought by 60,000 visitors a year. The appeal of the place is undeniable—and owes as much to its palpable history as to its stupendous natural beauty.

A new book titled *Sea Captains’*

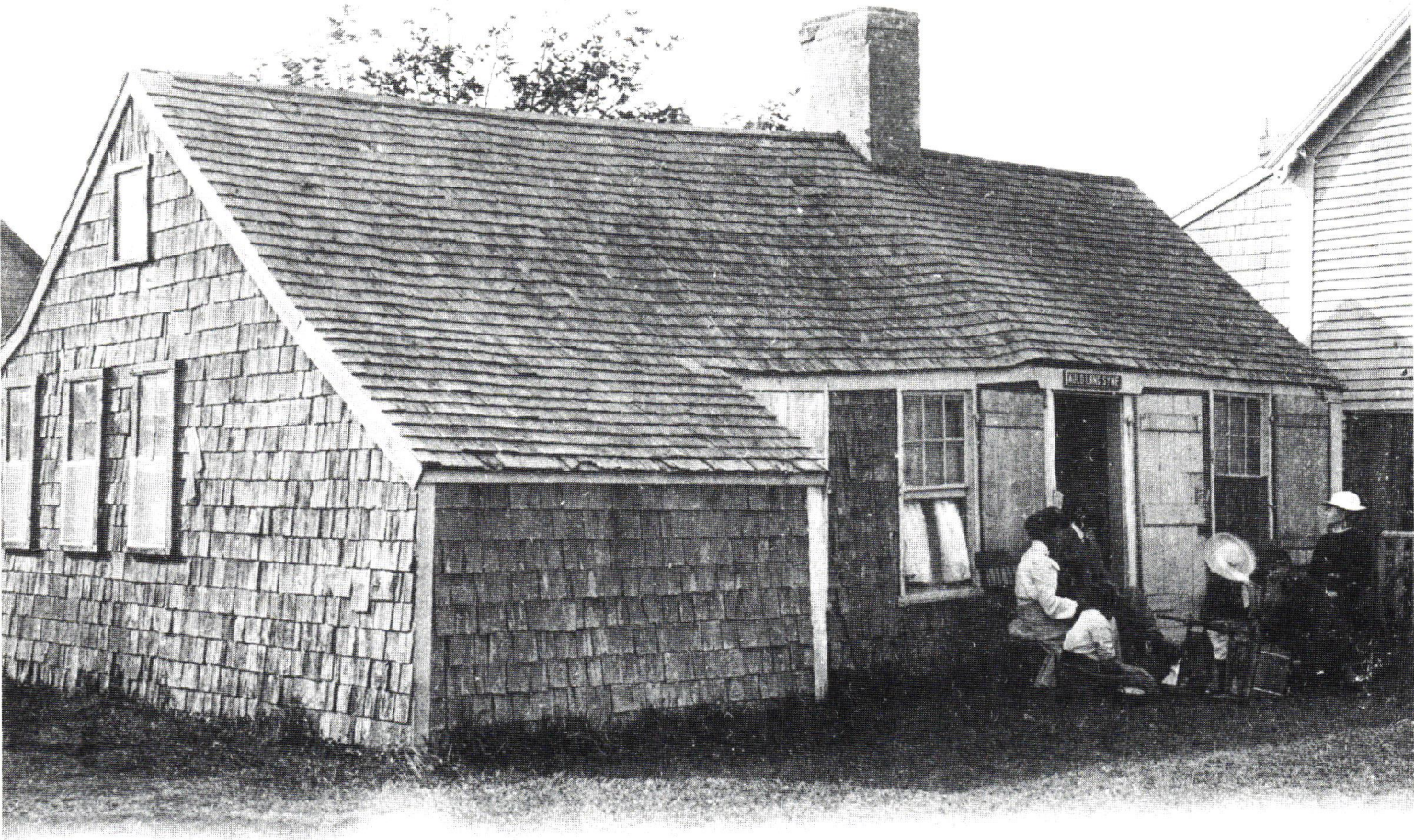
Houses and Rose-Covered Cottages reviews Nantucket’s architectural heritage. It is full of primary source material, archival photos (some shown here), and beautiful color photography showcasing 40 houses, which range from shingled beach shacks to Victorians and modern homes.

It’s impossible to write about an architectural legacy without writing about people and a strong sense of place, too. How true this is on Nantucket, that “precarious balance of land, sea, and buildings,” where the tide is as inexorable now as it

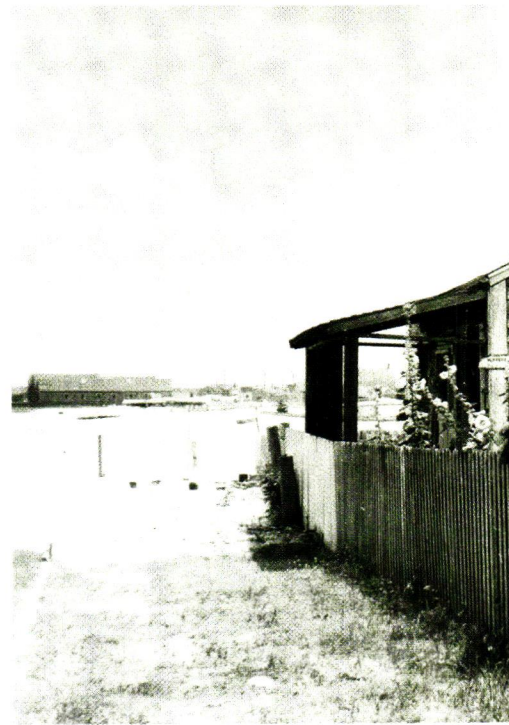
By the Victorian era, new construction had shifted from Nantucket Town to sites along the seashore. The first house at Beachside on Brant Point was this magnificent Queen Anne called Sandanwede, built in 1881.

was 300 years ago. If you’re an islander, a regular summer resident, or simply have fond memories from a long-ago visit, this volume belongs in your library—now and, especially, 50 or 100 years hence. The rest of us will find in it the “rush of the tide and the sweep of the sky,” the smell of the *rosa rugosa*, and a cherished history. ✦

An astounding 2,400 historic structures, including 800 pre-Civil War buildings, are extant on the island . . .



New York City actresses summering at the 'Sconset Actors' Colony, ca. 1905. From the 1890s until the 1920s, theater people on hiatus from New York's steamy summers gravitated to the old cottages of Siasconset. This is Nippintucket, one of the Underhill cottages, "some with such low ceilings you might be on a ship"



LEFT: There is nothing staid about this photo taken ca. 1890—not the Victorian embellishments of the building, not the mood of guests perched on the driveway piers and sitting on the porch roof! This was the Ocean View House Hotel, a favorite in 'Sconset Village.



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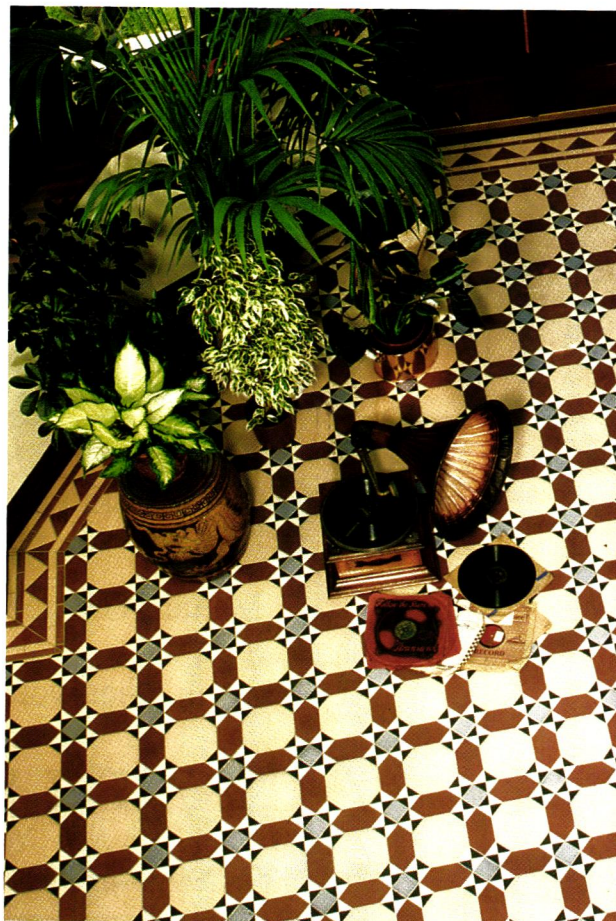
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LEFT: Built about 1675, "Auld Lang Syne" is thought to be the oldest house on Nantucket. This turn-of-the-20th-century view accentuates the strongly angled lines and small scale of this old whale cottage, which grew from one room to a T-shape plan.

BELOW: Shown ca. 1930, Water's Edge was one of the old fishing shanties converted into artists' studios during the Twenties. A patron from New Jersey renovated "an odd assortment of creaky old shingled shacks" into apartments with kitchenettes, bathrooms, and studio space, which she rented to artists for a low fee during the summer season.



ARCHIVAL PHOTOS used by permission of Universe Publishing (an imprint of Rizzoli), from their forthcoming book *Sea Captains' Houses and Rose-Covered Cottages, The Architectural Heritage of Nantucket Island* by Margaret Moore Booker, et al. The book contains many contemporary photos in color.



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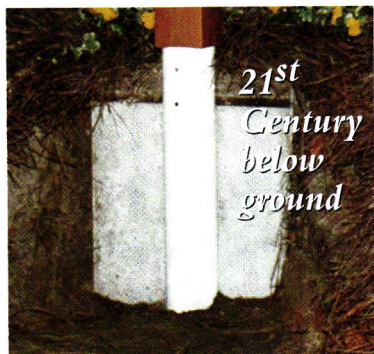
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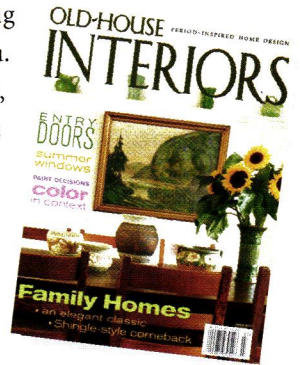
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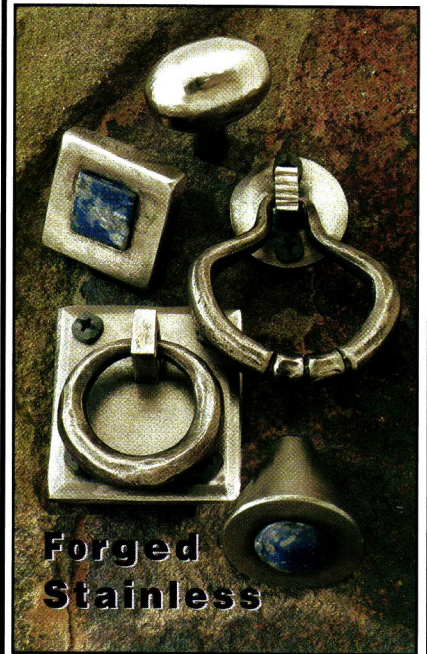
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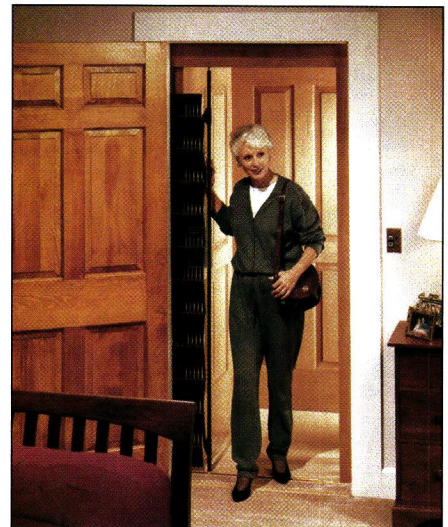
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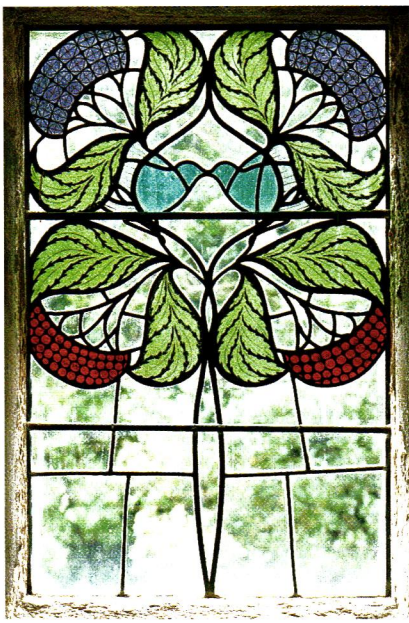
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Arts and Crafts in England

BY BRIAN D. COLEMAN



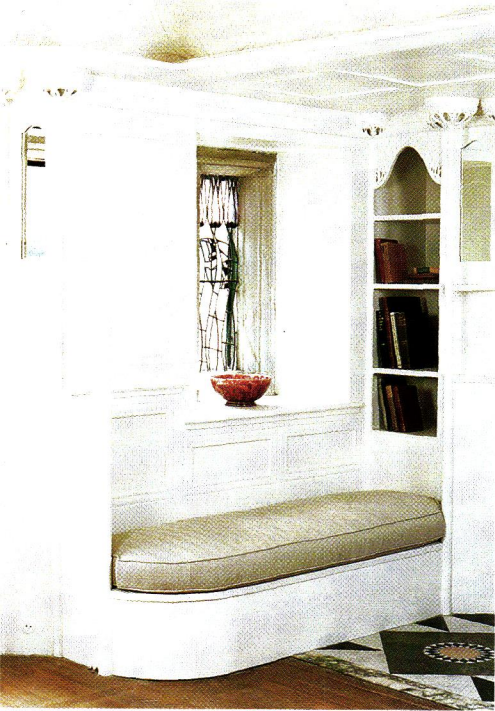
CLOCKWISE: (from top left) A Voysey design in a window at Blackwell. The Great Hall at Wightwick Manor. Original Morris papers and textiles at Wightwick Manor. Red House, William Morris's first home.

I'VE BEEN LUCKY enough to visit many of England's historic Arts and Crafts-period houses and museums, more so lately as I worked on my next book [*British Arts and Crafts At Its Best: The Albert Dawson Collection*; Schiffer Publishing, December 2003]. Having figured out an efficient itinerary, I want to share it with you, along with my favorite places and "must-sees." First of all, there are two important points to remember when touring in England.

The first is that you can never see it all—there are over 300 properties in the National Trust alone, as well as scores of others in English Heritage and other societies. So you should pick and choose carefully when planning a trip; I recommend 12 to 15 sites for a week's visit. The second consideration is transportation. Many of these houses are in rural areas and the charming, picturesque English countryside has little or no public transportation. So you must either



Here's an itinerary I've followed and can recommend—one that takes in a dozen or more wonderful Arts and Crafts sites in just a week. Fly into Gatwick . . .



AT LEFT: (left to right) Abstract floral columns frame an inglenook at Blackwell; a Persian-influenced De Morgan vase; Voysey's stylized floral andiron.

ROYAL OAK Foundation

One way to prepare for a trip to England while still in the States is to join the **ROYAL OAK FOUNDATION**, which is the American branch of England's National Trust. The Royal Oak sponsors a series of lectures, tours, and special events, focusing on historic art and architecture in England and the U.S. The Foundation regularly brings speakers over from England; I thoroughly enjoyed a recent lecture given by the well-known author Adrian Tinniswood on the Arts and Crafts Movement. Royal Oak publishes a quarterly newsletter with the latest events in England and the U.S., and offers a series of great guidebooks on everything from "Garden Tours of England" to "Special Places to Stay" (that one's my favorite). Go to royal-oak.org

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drive on the left side of the road (which, I admit, I am afraid to do), or take a train to the nearest city and then hire a taxi, which is time-consuming and expensive. OR you can hire a tour service such as Arts and Crafts Tours of Great Britain to take you to various sites, at a cost of approximately \$2,000 per week (which includes hotels and some meals). Here's an itinerary that I can recommend.

Fly into Gatwick Airport southwest of London. From there it is a 20-minute drive east to **STANDEN**. Designed by Philip Webb in 1893, Standen was decorated by Morris and Co. and is a superb example of their work. Take time to stroll through the lovely gardens. The following morning, an hour's drive from central London will take you to the suburb Bexleyheath, where it all began: You can see William Morris's **RED HOUSE**, which he and his friend, architect Philip Webb, designed as very young men in 1859. The romantic, medieval-looking brick dwelling is considered to be the very first Arts and Crafts house. Recently purchased



LONDON:

- Wm. Morris Gallery
- Wm. De Morgan Centre
- Leighton House
- Linley Sambourne House
- Red House

and restored by the National Trust, Red House is scheduled to reopen late this year.

In the afternoon, visit the east London suburb of Walthamstow, where the 18th-century Water House, now the **WILLIAM MORRIS GALLERY**, is located. Morris's childhood home from 1848 to 1856, it has been converted into the only public museum devoted entirely to his work.

The following morning, take in the newly opened **WILLIAM DE MORGAN CENTRE** [continued on page 104]

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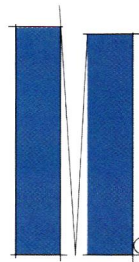
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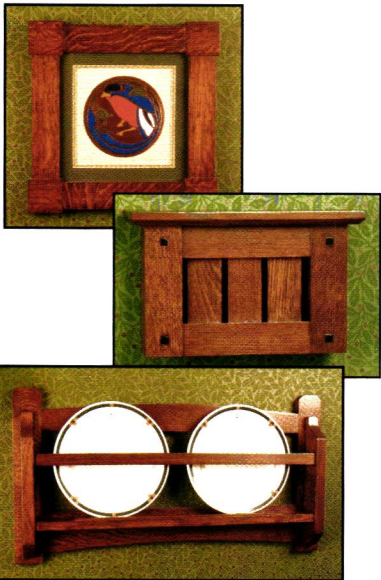
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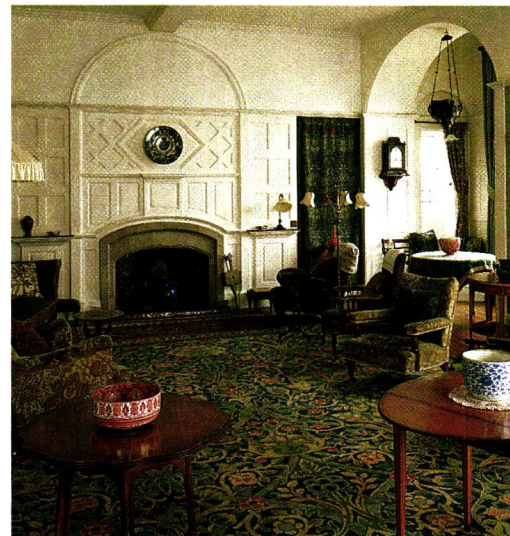
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in the west London district of Wandsworth for a breathtaking display of De Morgan's ceramics, set off by his wife Evelyn's luminous Pre-Raphaelite paintings. That afternoon plan a visit to **LEIGHTON HOUSE** in the fashionable central London neighborhood of Holland Park. This was Lord Frederick Leighton's home, built between 1864 and 1879 as a private palace of the arts. Its Arab Hall is the ultimate "Turkish nook," with antique Persian tiles and a frieze by Walter Crane. Several blocks away, in the same Holland Park neighborhood, is the **LINLEY SAMBOURNE HOUSE** at 18 Stafford Terrace. The 19th-century home of the famous *Punch* cartoonist, the house boasts 100-year-old Aesthetic Movement furnishings that have never been altered.

The next morning, drive about 90 minutes to Compton. Little has changed since 1905, when the Arts and Crafts **WATTS GALLERY** first opened to show the works of the famous painter George Frederic Watts. Next to the Gallery is the **WATTS CHAPEL**, an eccentric tour-de-force of Art Nouveau and Celtic designs. Back on the motorway, a 2- to 3-hour drive heading west brings you to the rolling hills and grey stone villages of the Cotswolds. Picturesque winding lanes bordered by hedges (watch out—it's easy to get lost) lead you to Morris's 16th-century Elizabethan country house, **KELMSCOTT MANOR**. The bucolic countryside inspired some of his most famous designs. **RODMARTON MANOR**, an hour's drive from Kelmscott, contains a wonderful collection of locally made Arts and Crafts furnishings.

Drive up to Cheltenham for the night. The following morning visit the **CHELTENHAM MUSEUM OF ARTS AND CRAFTS**, which displays works from the Cotswolds Arts and Crafts Movement.



The drawing room at Standen, designed by Philip Webb, features William Morris carpet and upholstery.

In the afternoon travel north to Wolverhampton (a 90-minute drive) to visit **WIGHTWICK MANOR**. Built in the 1880s in the picturesque, half-timbered Queen Anne style, Wightwick was furnished with many Morris wallpapers and textiles, as well as Pre-Raphaelite paintings and leaded glass. Another 90-minute drive to nearby Cheadle will bring you to **SAINT GILES CHURCH**. "Pugin's Little Gem" is one of the most beautiful Gothic churches in England.

The following morning, visit **MANCHESTER TOWN HALL**, designed by the famed Victorian architect Alfred Waterhouse (1868–1877). I loved the theme of bees throughout, symbol of Manchester's 19th-century mill workers. The **MANCHESTER CITY ART GALLERY** houses important Pre-Raphaelite paintings and Arts and Crafts furnishings.

A two-hour drive north to the Lake District will bring you to **BLACKWELL**, designed by the noted Arts and Crafts architect Baillie Scott in 1897 and considered one of the most superb extant examples of his work. ✦

CONTACT INFORMATION for houses listed can be found in Resources, p.118.

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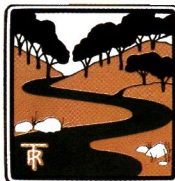
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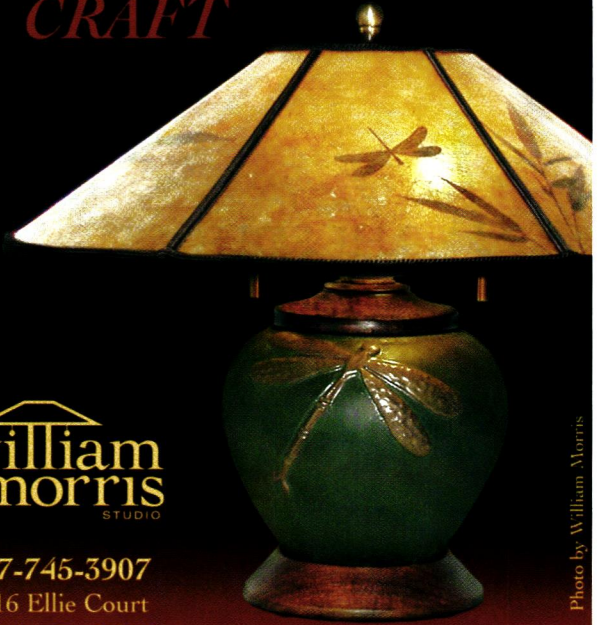
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ask THE EDITORS

The Deep, Dark Blues

I'd like to replicate a deep matte blue I've seen on colonial furniture as a dining room wall color. I particularly like the depth of color in combination with a non-shiny finish. How do I capture that effect?

—SHARON THOMAS
FAIRFAX, VIRGINIA

Early paints often included additions like lamp black to “grey down” the expensive and notoriously fickle natural blue pigments. In the absence of linseed oil, the dark, rich colors common on early New England country pieces were made from natural pigments mixed with buttermilk. The result was a richly colored paint that dried to a smooth, matte finish. Milk paint is still available today; Old Century Colors/Primrose Distributing offers what it calls simulated milk paint (a version that includes color stabilizers) in a shade called Dark Mallard Blue (800/222-3092, oldcenturycolors.com). For pure, unadulterated milk paint, try Old Fashioned Milk Paint's Soldier Blue or Federal Blue (978/448-6336, milkpaint.com). Another alternative is to match the shade you want to a historic color palette, like the one authorized by SPNEA from Color Guild International (303/751-5330, colorguild.com). Bowen Blue and Biloxi Blue, both on the Historic Colors of America color card, are close matches for the primitive hutch shown here. Specify a matte or flat finish.



Blue was a favorite color for painted furniture in early-19th-century New England. Old Shaker boxes and utensils amplify the sense of “old” color.

Kit Built

We just bought a 1928 center-hall Foursquare that may be a Sears house. Do you have any information on kit houses?

—MIKE, VIA E-MAIL

Houses ordered by mail were big business around the turn of the 20th century, when companies like Sears, Roebuck, Aladdin Homes, and Montgomery Ward sold kit homes by the rail-car load. Between 1908 and 1940, Sears alone sold more than 100,000 house kits to homeowners across the country. You can look for your plan in one of the following books, which are available in paperback from dealers

like Amazon (amazon.com) and Alibris (alibris.com). *Houses By Mail: A Guide to Houses from Sears, Roebuck and Company* by Katherine Cole Stevenson and H. Ward Jandl (1986) includes not only the original plans for some 400 homes, but sketches to indicate proposed exterior (and sometimes furnished interior) appearance. *The Houses That Sears Built; Everything You Ever Wanted To Know About Sears Catalog Homes*, by Rosemary Thornton (2002), contains rare catalog pictures of some “lost” Sears houses. As for decorating ideas for your 1928 home, keep reading this magazine! We'll be featuring many more houses from the Twenties, Thirties, and Forties in future issues.



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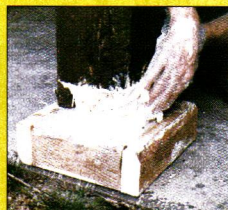
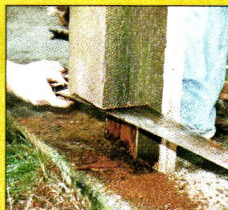
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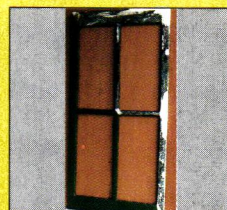
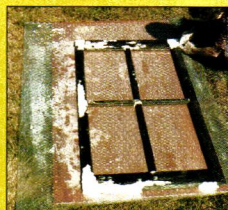
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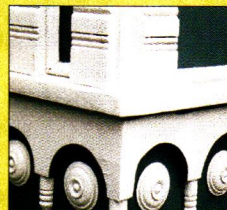
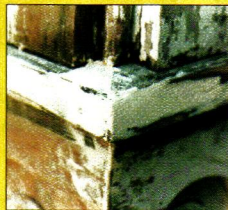
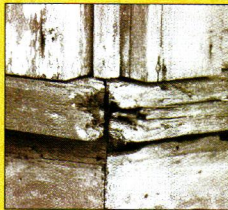
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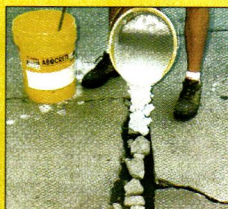
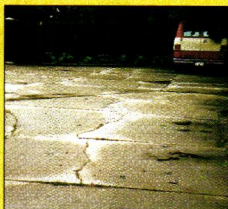
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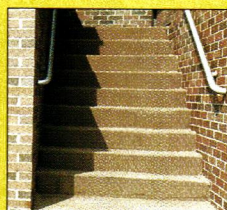
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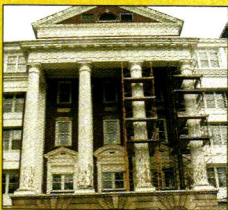
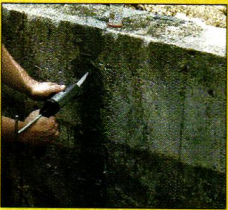
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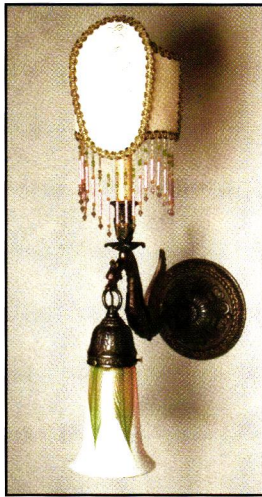
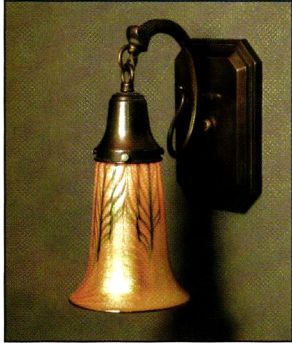
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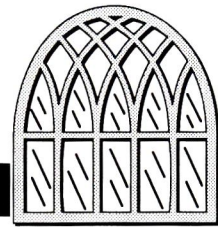
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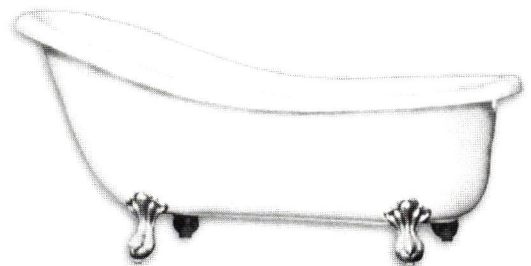
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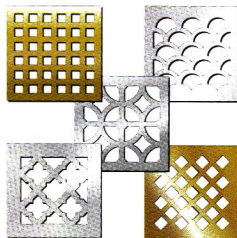
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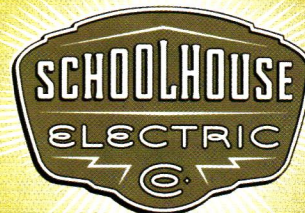
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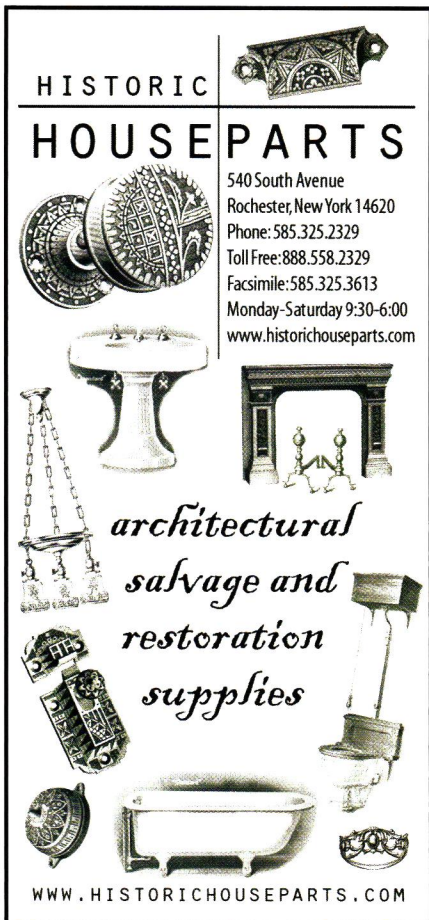
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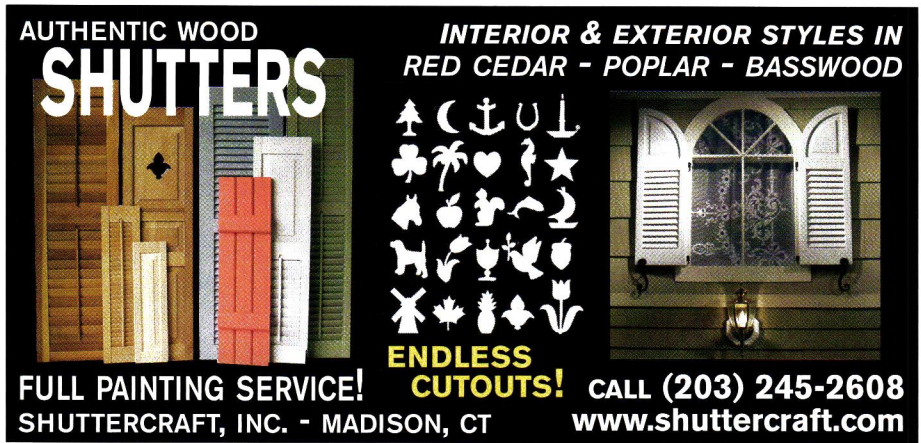
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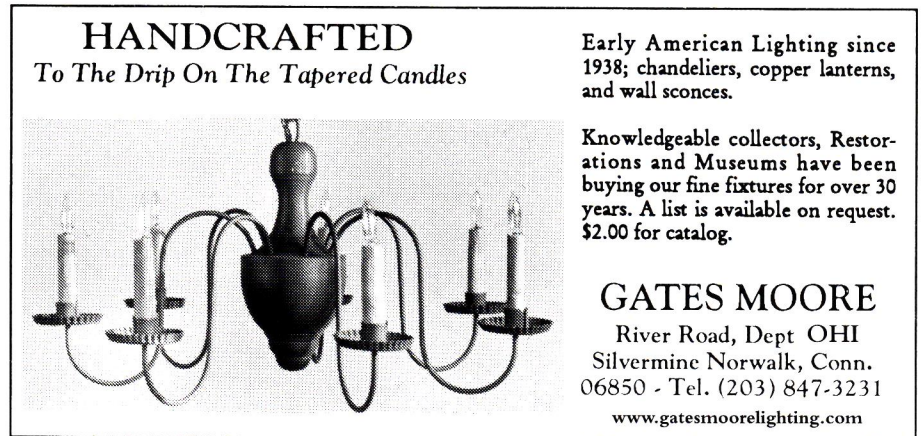
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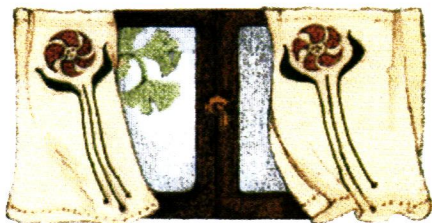
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Bathrooms, pp. 60-64

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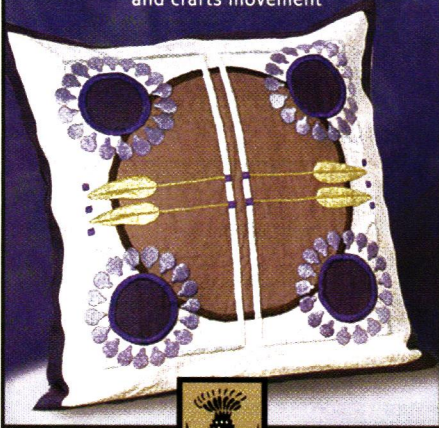
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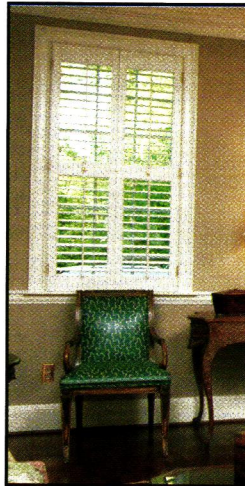
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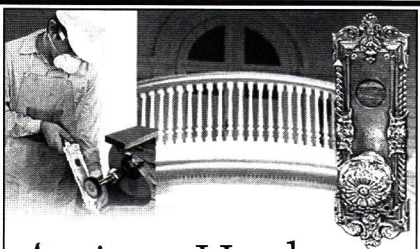
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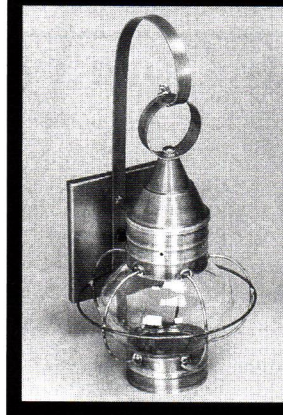
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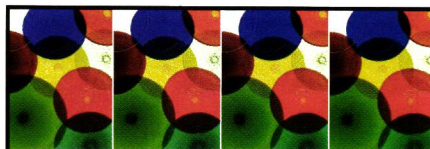
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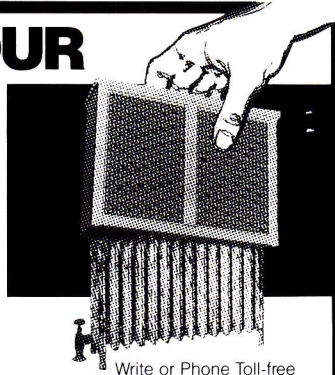
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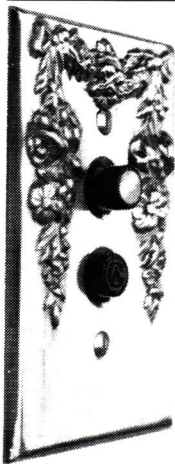
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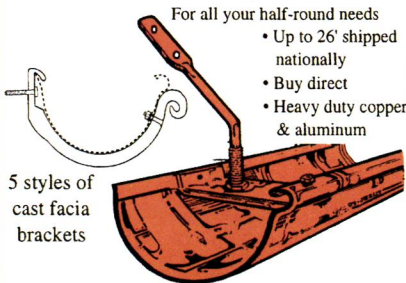
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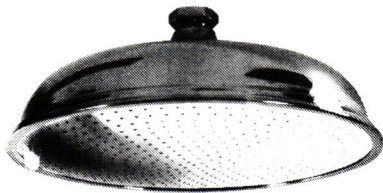
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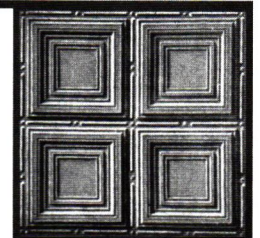
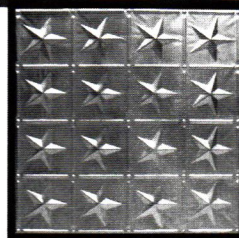
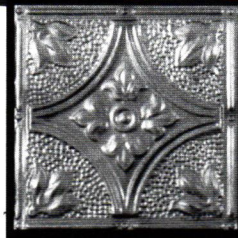
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MOTIFS



THE BUSY BEE symbolizes industry and diligence in many cultures. At one time, it was assumed that bees never slept, thus they were vigilant—and pure, too, feeding on honey and thought not to procreate. It's easy to see why the bee is associated with the Virgin Mary.

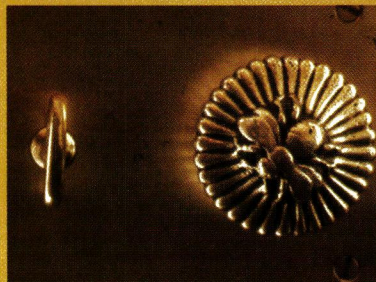
✦ Thrifty in storing their honey, bees have been used as motifs and logos for banking institutions. Disappearing in the winter but returning each spring, bees are symbols of hope

and resurrection. Bees have been used to represent assiduous Christian parishioners; the beehive has been a symbol of the Church. ✦ Bees signified the royalty and wealth of Napoleon, and were a common French decorative motif. By the time of Napoleon III, the “busy bee” was relegated to a symbol of workers. Similarly, bees were the symbol of mill workers in 19th-century Manchester, England. Representing faithfulness and communal nature, bees were popular as a motif for fraternal societies such as the Masons, and adopted by the Mormons as a meaningful decorative flourish. —BRIAN D. COLEMAN

Bees



TOP LEFT: A hand-painted beehive in a leaded-glass window. **RIGHT:** The bee-on-silk pillow fabric is replicated from a 19th-century French design. **BELOW:** Bee and flower door latch at Beehive House, the home of Brigham Young. **BKGRD:** J.R. Burrow's honeybee paper, based on a Candace Wheeler design.



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