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PHOTOGRAPHS BY TONY GIAMMARINO

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BY BRIAN D. COLEMAN

PHOTOGRAPHS BY WILLIAM WRIGHT

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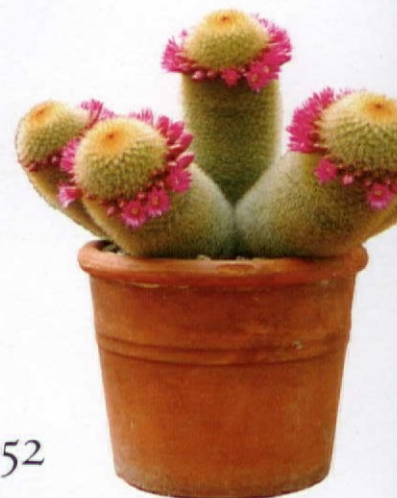
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Examples of outdoor living rooms, from the Thousand Islands in the St. Lawrence.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JAMES SCHERZI

ON THE COVER: *Antique wicker makes a summer dining spot amidst Tuscan columns, on a porch overlooking the St. Lawrence River. Cover photograph by James Scherzi.*

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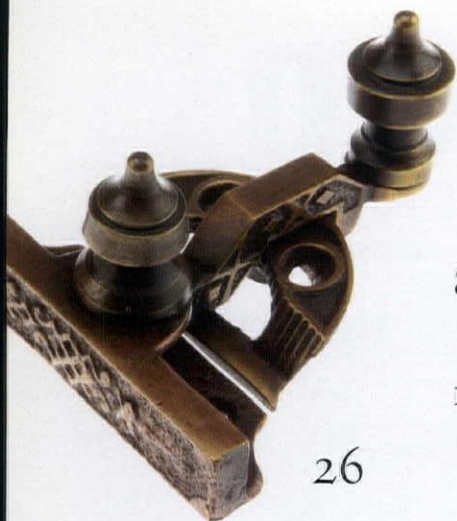
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Light-hearted Gothic

"GOTHIC IS THE architecture of passion, not perfection," wrote the editor during the very first year of *Old-House Interiors*. "Gothic is an embrace of the random, the unfathomable, of mystery and decay! It is the opposite of the symmetrical, ordered, rational language of the Classical. Gothic is an architecture of extremes." My goodness.

The editor was me and, yes, pointy exuberance does bring out the purple prose in me. If it's Gothic and it's architecture, I like it, no matter if I'm praying in Salisbury, or studying at Princeton, or cycling past a board-and-batten cottage on the Hudson. I find it all . . . *exalting!* . . . and can see in it no relation whatsoever to the Goth of studded leather and black fingernails.

Nowhere is Gothic sweeter, though, than in its 19th-century American incarnation. Tastemaker A.J. Downing and his collaborator, architect A.J. Davis, advocated for romance, in both their fine suburban villas and their "carpenter's Gothic" cottages for the countryside. These were true American houses—of wood, not masonry—and with comfortable porches, which added yet another venue for sawn ornament and the gingerbread so beloved by Victorians. When a style comes to America, it is always delivered with a twist—one typically cheerful, confident, and expansive.

Now a new Gothic residence that is part villa and part cottage has been built in North Carolina (p. 38). An artful and personal home, it's everything sweet and lovely about American Gothic. But, if cusping bargeboards are not your thing, check out just how period-perfect the 1950s can be (p. 46). A couple of Mid-century Modern mavens produced an interior that goes with the unchanged exterior. Calmly neutral, comfortably spare, rooms also include a dash of humor.



The music of Gothic on a porch.



A handwritten signature of Patricia Poore in green ink. The signature is cursive and stylized, with a large initial 'P'.

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The sitting room is furnished with reproduction Morris chairs, a gas-electric chandelier, and a Victorian settee. (Wallpaper and ephemera still to come.)



The fixtures in the bathroom are original, as is the restored granite floor.

furnishing the space, which will be authentically “cluttered.” Plans are in the works to open the rooms for limited tours, and to rent the suite out to university guests on a nightly basis. Fees benefit student scholarships. fdrsuite.org — MEP

“The sitting room is large enough for two desks & the bedrooms and bath room are light and airy. The ceilings are very high.”

—FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT, IN A LETTER TO HIS PARENTS DATED JAN. 9, 1900.

New Deal at an Old Dorm

When Franklin Delano Roosevelt entered Harvard in 1900, he and his roommate, Lathrop Brown, moved into a four-room suite in the newest and most luxurious building available: Westmorly Court, a Tudor Revival row house with central heat, electricity, and an indoor pool.

Roosevelt graduated in 1904, and despite a century of use in what is still a university dormitory, the layout of the FDR suite is remarkably intact. When landscape designer and author Michael Weishan (Harvard '86) discovered that the suite still existed, he offered to help re-create the décor from Roosevelt's era. The FDR Suite Foundation was born. “This is my present to the university, about a half-million dollars worth of labor,” the former host of PBS's “The Victory Garden” told *The New York Times*.

Roosevelt's correspondence with his mother provides clues. Mrs. Roosevelt wrote that she had ordered “two big rugs, blue and red,” as well as small rugs, sheets, blankets, and spreads. Later, she would ask her son “if you have your Morris Chair and if the cushions are high and fit well.”

Roosevelt personalized the space by renting a piano and adding a “dog” tobacco jar (FDR asked his mother to bring it from Hyde Park), sporting prints, and photographs. The FDR Suite Foundation is almost done



PROFILE

In 1989, **TINA WALTERS** was working as a sales executive for an electronics distributor when the family-owned company was sold to a multi-billion-dollar corporation. Tina felt she quickly lost touch with the part of the job she enjoyed most: working directly with clients. Then in her early 30s, she quit her job to indulge her inner woodworker by building period-style screen doors. Touchstone Woodworks is celebrating its 20th anniversary this year.

“There's something really healing and satisfying about making something beautiful with your hands,” says Tina, who hit on a niche market with staying power.

Every door is built to order, in solid mahogany, with interchangeable screens and glass and period-appropriate hardware. With more than 70 styles available, doors can be customized to any period. “The door should absolutely look tailor-made for that home,” she says. “There are so many houses out there that have really ugly screen doors. It just ruins the look of the house.”

Tina built all of the doors herself for the first three years, but now there are three workers in the shop. Touchstone recently introduced panels that can be used to create an enclosed, three-season porch. The porch panels are “the same 1¼” mahogany mortise-and-tenon joinery, but instead of putting it in front of a door, you're creating a room with it,” Tina says.

The shop is still on the six-acre property Walters owns outside of Cleveland, Ohio. “I walk down a path to work every morning, and I get to bring my dogs with me. This is where I'm happy and where I want to be.” Touchstone Woodworks, (330) 297-1313, touchstonewoodworks.com — MEP



FROM TOP: Tina Walters turned an ability to work with her hands into a small business that's thriving in its 20th year. A fretwork detail on the Hudson, one of 70 styles available in mahogany. Mark Zaher and Dan Mars at work in the shop; the door on the table is the Old Lace pattern.



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Sneak Peek

Historic Seattle is offering a rare tour of a Mediterranean Revival house in Seattle's Capitol Hill neighborhood Aug. 29. Designed by the architecture firm of Schack, Young, and Myers, the stucco and tile house was built in 1922 for George and Augusta Seibert. Constructed of solid concrete and steel, the house marries what was once cutting-edge technology to one of the most romantic Revival styles of the early 20th century. After years of deferred maintenance, the three-story house has recently undergone a complete renovation. The exact location will be announced one week before the event. Historic Seattle, (206) 622-6952, historicseattle.org

OPEN HOUSE

Swedish immigrant and newspaper baron Swan J. Turnblad created more than a personal legacy when he and his wife, Christina, built the chateau-esque

Turnblad Mansion between 1903 and 1910 in Minneapolis. After humble beginnings as a typesetter for several Swedish-language newspapers in Minnesota, Turnblad rose to become the successful publisher of the *Svenska Amerikanska Posten*, the first Swedish-language paper to use both the Linotype machine and a duplex rotary color printing press, enabling the creation of color illustrations (in 1903). ■ Minneapolis architects Christopher A. Boehme and Victor Cordella designed the 33-room limestone mansion,

which cost an estimated \$1.5 million to complete. The property includes a two-story grand entrance hall, carved stonework and woodwork, sculpted ceilings, and 11 floor-to-ceiling *kakelugnar* (Swedish porcelain tile stoves). Now hosting period rooms and exhibit galleries, the house is open frequently for tours, exhibitions, and community events like the annual "Midsommar" celebration. ■ As Turnblad had long planned, the mansion became the home of what is now the American Swedish Institute in 1929. "Many persons may have wondered what a small family like ours, a family which had not great social ambitions, wanted with so big a house," he was quoted as saying.

ABOVE: The chateau-esque Turnblad Mansion, home of the American Swedish Institute, took seven years to complete. **BELOW:** Czech-American sculptor Albin Polasek designed and carved the African mahogany fireplace mantel and flanking figures in the Grand Hall. **RIGHT:** A Rococo Revival porcelain tile stove, or *kakelugnar*, made in Stockholm in 1881.



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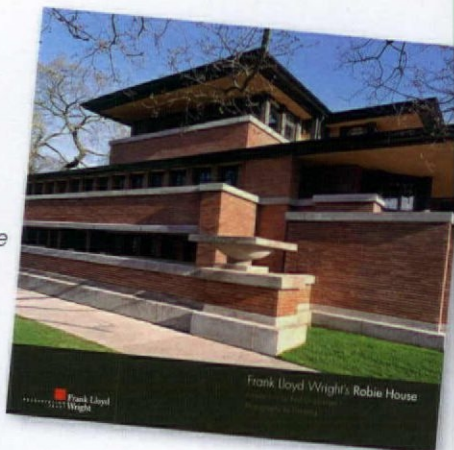
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Robie at 100

Unquestionably one of Frank Lloyd Wright's seminal creations, the Robie House in Chicago turns 100 this year. As part of an ongoing celebration, the Frank Lloyd Wright Preservation Trust has released *Frank Lloyd Wright's Robie House*, a photographic essay documenting the quintessential Prairie Style structure. The 48-page book is packed with historical photos, new color photography by architectural photographer Tim Long, and includes a forward by Pulitzer Prize-winner Paul Goldberger, architecture critic for *The New Yorker*. *Frank Lloyd Wright's Robie House*, Marquand Books, 2010, \$19.95, (877) 848-3559, shopwright.org



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▪ **DEARBORN AND STIMSON-GREEN RESIDENCES TOUR**, Aug. 10, Seattle, WA. Historic Seattle, (206) 622-6952, historicseattle.org

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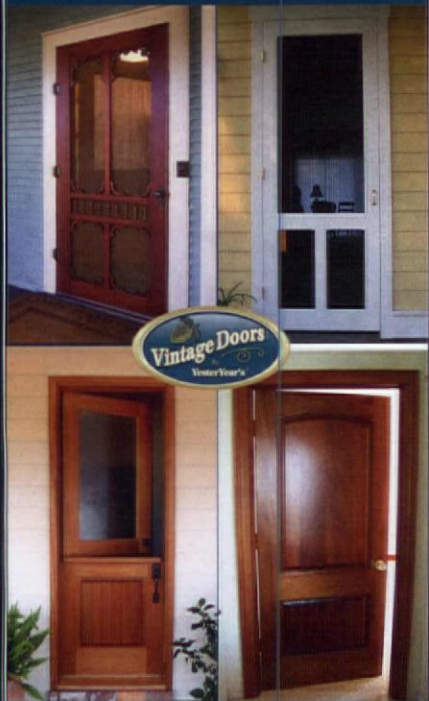
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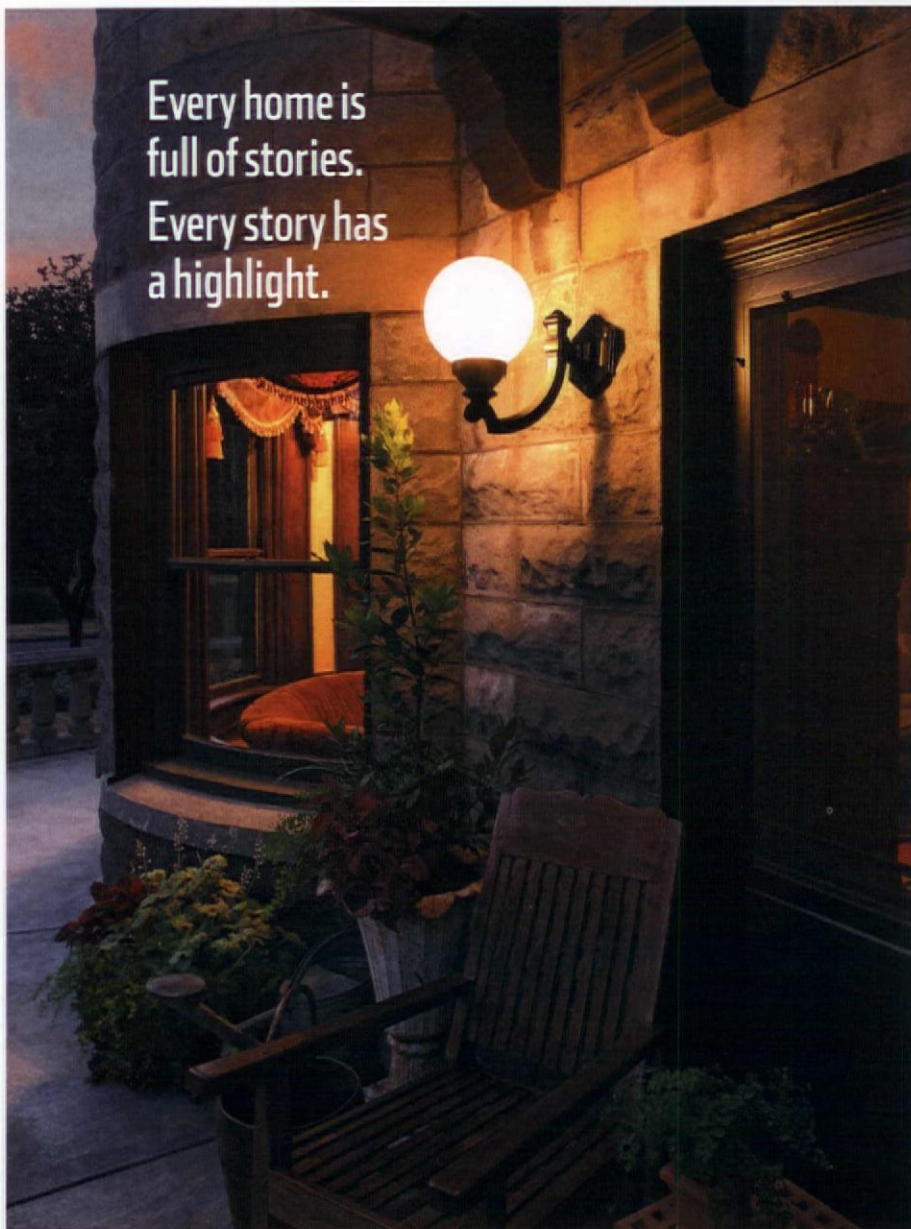


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Cusp and Arch

The Stratford series' Gothic arch shape and many cusp variations bear a striking resemblance to a medieval cathedral door. These artisan-quality pieces are sold as a passage set (two knobs and two plates) and are made to order. From Crown City Hardware, (800) 950-1047, restoration.com



Gothic Cottage

♦ Gothic Find ♦

Discovered on the walls of a modest 1865 Gothic Revival villa in Victoria, British Columbia, Gothic Leaves is printed on vintage surface print machines. The paper retails for about \$238 per double roll (33"). Sales help benefit Canadian heritage conservation projects. From Historic Style, (250) 592-4916, historicstyle.com



♦ Abbey on the Porch ♦

The graceful quatrefoil shapes of the Abbey Collection are crafted of decay-resistant cypress. In summery colors, the set is composed of a 72" x 40" table and six chairs (two arm, four side). Chairs are also sold separately. The set is \$3,495. From Charleston Gardens, (866) 469-0118, charlestongardens.com



♦ An Alice Fantasy

The characters in Voysey's Alice in Wonderland wallpaper are based on John Tenniel's illustrations for the 1865 Lewis Carroll classic, drawn at the height of the Gothic Revival. The paper measures 21" with a single vertical repeat. A single 30' roll is \$210. From Trustworth Studios, (508) 746-1847, trustworth.com



Peaked Lantern ◀

The lantern shape and wavy "waterfall" glass mark the Stonehaven's medieval origins. The 10"-wide stem-mount exterior fixture comes with a windowpane (shown) or crosscut overlay. In the aged verdigris finish, prices begin at \$920. From Brass Light Gallery, (800) 243-9595, brasslight.com



◀ Heavenward

Obelisks like this pointed Gothic design make ideal focal points for a cottage garden. In architectural cast stone, the piece weighs a hefty 578 pounds. It measures 71" high x 18" wide. Price is \$1,523. From Haddonstone, (856) 931-7011, haddonstone.com

Castle or Cottage? ▶

Blacksmiths Steve and David Kayne will forge any hardware design to your specifications. The 4" ring and plate of the Gothic Cross door knocker show the subtle variations of hand-wrought work. The piece retails for \$250. From Kayne & Son Custom Hardware, (828) 667-8868, customforgedhardware.com



Gothic Altar ♥

Featuring tapering, cusped arches and a row of quatrefoils on the stretcher, the Gothic Arched Console in pine has a dark brown finish. It measures 57" wide x 15" deep x 35 1/2" high. The piece costs \$999 (plus a \$100 surcharge). From Wisteria, (800) 320-9757, wisteria.com



♥ Bargeboard Beauty ♥

No Gothic cottage is complete without a bit of carpenter's lace in the gable. Long, sloping curls; cusps; and fleurs de lis are classic bargeboard motifs. This 78" frame has them all and then some. It's \$525 from Empire Woodworks, (800) 360-2119, empirewoodworks.com



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BATHS

for old houses

HUNDREDS OF PHOTOS of new and remodeled bathrooms come across my desk every year. Many of them (including those in new houses) have a retro look, with clawfoot tub, gutsy medicine cabinet built into the woodwork, and acres of white subway tile. What's odd is that this model is not always appropriate in renovation—even though century-old bathrooms inspired the look. The look is consistent, while old houses are individual, with different styles and quirks.

All this occurred to me as I was shown recent projects by the Chicago architecture firm of Greene & Proppe Design. Their bathrooms—and every one is different—have a furnished quality. (Four GPD baths are shown on these pages.) Each bathroom reflects the house it's in, because the house itself provided style cues. That's true in a tiny jewel-box of a powder room designed for a Victorian Queen Anne, and also in a more expansive revival bathroom in an addition.



RIGHT: The graphic tile floor, wood wainscot, and period moldings make up a muscular treatment in a 1910 Prairie Style house—then there's the surprise of that antique mirror. [Greene & Proppe Design] **LEFT:** A true bungalow-era bathroom: the three porcelain fixtures tightly grouped, with linen drawers built into a wall, a hex-tile floor, and freestanding furniture.





STEVE GROSS & SUSAN DALEY (OPPOSITE)
CHRIS TOPHER CLARK (CENTER)
WILLIAM WRIGHT (THIS PAGE)

THOSE VERY RETRO, WHITE-TILE BATHS ARE ATTRACTIVE, BUT MAY NOT SUIT EVERY OLD HOUSE. THESE BATHROOMS ARE UNIQUE.

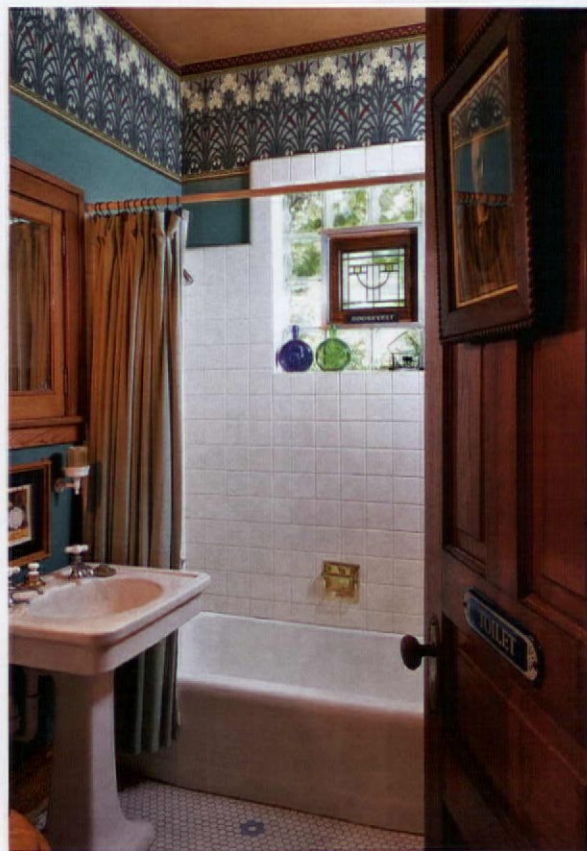
BY PATRICIA POORE



ABOVE: It's probably the multi-part wall treatment (used above a wood wainscot) that makes this bathroom so suited to the 1901 transitional house. The hex-tile floor, footed tub, and roller shade with lace curtain complete the coherent look.



ABOVE: Owners kept it simple in a new Saltbox. A shelf holds the overflow of a stoneware collection. **RIGHT:** This Chicago bathroom has a historical feel done up in a dark wood wainscot and checkerboard floor. Art and mirror hang from a picture molding, a nice detail. [Greene & Proppe Design] **BELOW:** This renewed bathroom, not untypical for ca. 1905–1930, is dressed up for an urban house with a stained-glass panel in the window and an English frieze from Bradbury.



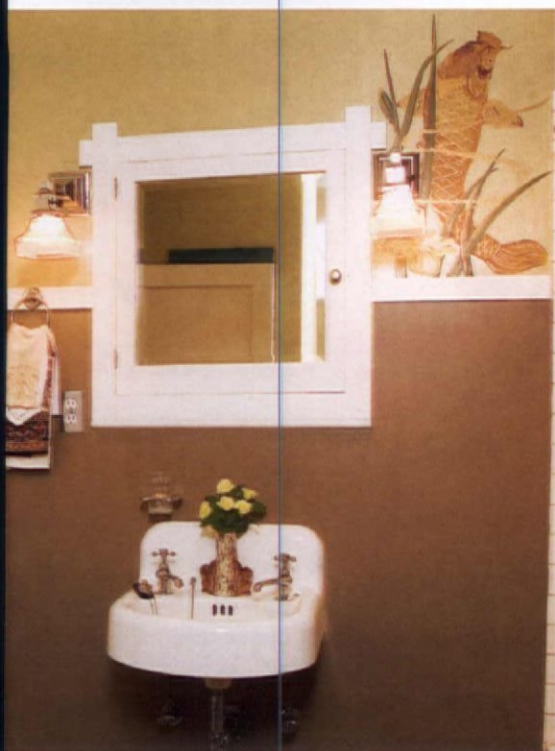
Bathrooms are remodeled and updated regularly, so it's not unusual to find modern fixtures with old floor tile.

In all of the bathrooms shown, character is more important than fidelity to one period. Bathrooms are remodeled and updated regularly, and other reasons for change come into play. When a servants' bath, for example, is remade as a powder room for guests, it will end up fancier than the original. Notice, however, that suitable bathrooms are most often of reasonable size. They remain in their original location, or are fitted into a traditional floor plan.

Design guidelines for an appropriate bathroom start with a simple layout of three fixtures, traditional materials like wood and tile, and a mix of freestanding and built-in furniture. Include salvage or an antique to keep the room from looking all-new. Some old-house bathrooms are entirely utilitarian; others pick up colors and style from surrounding rooms. Ignore trends, and let the house guide you. ✦

THANKS TO Thom Greene, architect and principal of Greene & Proppe Design: gpdchicago.com

RIGHT: Inspired by the rest of the Shingle Style house, the new revival bathroom features bead-board wainscot, period wall treatments and moldings, fine lighting fixtures, and furniture-like sink consoles. Bradbury's Arts & Crafts pendant frieze visually lowers the vaulted ceiling. [Greene & Proppe Design]



ABOVE: Plain plaster walls, an original wall-hung sink, and linoleum tiles are truer to this 1915 bungalow than are many of today's uber-retro baths. The current owner's freehand painting of koi affordably emulates a popular wallpaper motif. **RIGHT:** In a Victorian Queen Anne, an elegant new powder room fits into a tiny space; the stone countertop curves to allow door clearance. [Greene & Proppe Design]

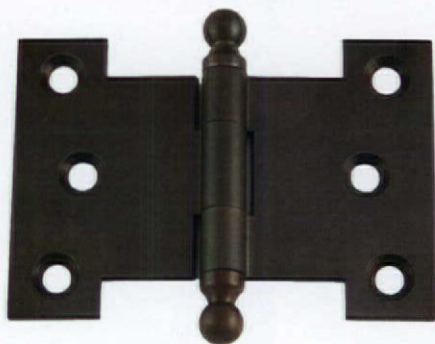




LEFT: Casement fastener in antique finish, from Crown City Hardware. **RIGHT:** Inside-swung 'Parliament Hinge' for casement windows, also from Crown City.



ABOVE: Brass sash lock with ball finial, from Walter Phelps. **RIGHT:** New pulley hardware for double-hung sash, also from Phelps.



Window Hardware 101

BY BRIAN D. COLEMAN

WHAT'S NOT TO KNOW? Old double-hungs are simple, so getting the right replacement hardware should be easy. But not so fast: some hardware experts and builders say that the window hardware should come first in both restoration and new construction. It may be easier to design trim and millwork around the window's workings. And installing this hardware the right way is critical.

Over the years hardware has taken a beating from humidity, sunlight, and coats of paint; it's not uncommon to find it corroded or damaged beyond repair. If you need to

replace a sash lock or lift, trace a template of it with pencil and paper, making sure to include the screw holes. When you install the new hardware, you can use the old holes, but be sure to select screws slightly longer than the originals so they penetrate into new wood. Alternatively, Bill Rigby (Wm. J. Rigby Co.) suggests fashioning wooden plugs, gluing them into the old screw holes, and putting new screws into them.

Wood sashes warp and settle and rarely are aligned perfectly. Old sash locks often don't close completely. Don't force the lock shut, as you'll end up damaging it or the sash. A tip from

Kip Beatty (Crown City Hardware): a little beeswax rubbed onto the sides of the sashes helps them slide up and down smoothly. For security, Walter Phelps makes a ventilation lock that allows a double-hung sash to open a few inches but still remain safely locked.

Old (and old-fashioned) hardware fits best on old windows. But you can get traditional elegance with energy-efficient new windows, too. Try William Phelps's Model LK281 sash lock, which has a strike narrow enough for use with insulated glass.

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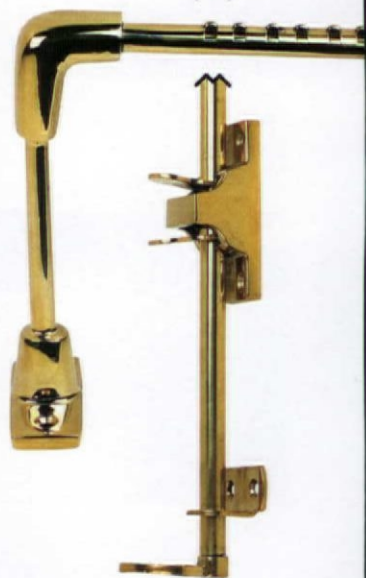
www.traditionalbuildingshow.com



LEFT: Ornate Victorian swing-arm sash lock, reproduced in cast brass by House of Antique Hardware.



LEFT: Aesthetic-style transom hook and brass fastener, from Crown City. **TOP:** Vintage cast-bronze ca. 1860 Boston-pattern sash lock, from Wm. J. Rigby. **ABOVE:** Bronze sash lift, from Signature Hardware. **RIGHT:** Transom operator, from House of Antique Hardware.



posed to the elements; the best are made of stainless steel or bronze. Crown City's 'Parliament Hinge' has been one of the company's bestsellers for over two decades: built like a standard butt hinge, its barrel extends outward to allow the window to swing inside, clearing any projecting molding and opening flat against the wall. With security a concern, many homeowners now take the precau-

tion of having their casement hinges "NRP"ed. Jon Eaton (House of Antique Hardware) explains that means making the pin non-removable, by drilling a set screw from the inside of the hinge into the pin so that it can't be pulled from outside.

NOW, WHERE TO FIND this hardware? The hardware universe is huge, but once you've narrowed your search



Vintage cup-style and hook-style sash lifts, in original packaging, from William J. Rigby.

Old (and old-fashioned) hardware fits best on old windows. But you can get **traditional elegance** with energy-efficient new windows, too.

down to a window latch for *this* window of *this* period in *this* metal, it may seem you'll never find the right thing. Not at the local hardware store or big-box emporium, at least.

Some of the hardware shown may seem arcane, but all of it has old-house application for existing windows. A transom operator—and they are so often absent—is a wand assembly that makes it possible to open and close the high transom window over a door. A sash lock pulls top and bottom window sashes together and locks them shut; originals may have been plain cast iron or highly decorated brass. A sash stay keeps the window sash open by producing tension against the outer frame, when it's mounted on

the side of the sash.

Happily, though, you can find what you need, whether it's decorative window pulls with Eastlake incising, or functional casement-window hardware for a prewar building. If you need just one or two pieces that "go with" hardware already in your house, try an architectural salvage dealer. If you need multiples of the same pieces, use reproductions based on antique originals. Crown City Hardware, for example, offers three styles of Victorian window locks, and six of sash lifts, including a recessed one. Rejuvenation has a ten-inch casement adjuster with pins. These and the other not-so-secret sources listed at right are a big help. ♦

SOURCES

Traditional window hardware is still made; here's where to get it:

- **ACORN MANUFACTURING**
(800) 835-0121, acornmfg.com
sash locks and shutter hinges
 - **ARCHITECTURAL RESOURCE CENTER**
(800) 370-8808, aresource.com
custom window & door hardware
 - **BLAINE WINDOW HARDWARE**
(800) 678-1919, blainewindow.com
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 - **CROWN CITY HARDWARE**
(800) 950-1047, restoration.com
full selection of reproductions
 - **EUROPEAN HARDWARE & FINISHES**
(800) 643-7237, gerberhinge.com
sash stays & latches
 - **HAMILTON SINKLER** (866) 900-3326, hamiltonsinkler.com *fine sash lifts & locks, lever catches*
 - **HOUSE OF ANTIQUE HARDWARE**
(888) 223-2545, hoah.biz *authentic reproduction hardware*
 - **MICHAEL COLDREN CO.** (410) 287-2082, coldrencompany.com *historically accurate window & shutter hardware*
 - **PHELPS COMPANY** (802) 257-4314, phelpscountry.com *specialist in window hardware*
 - **PULLMAN MFG. CO.** (585) 334-1350, pullmanmfg.com *counterbalances*
 - **REJUVENATION** (888) 401-1900, rejuvenation.com *sash hardware, casement fasteners & adjusters*
 - **SIGNATURE HARDWARE** (866) 855-2284, signaturehardware.com *lifts & locks*
- Or buy unique antique hardware:
- **HISTORIC HOUSEPARTS** (888) 558-2329, historichouseparts.com *antique & reproduction hardware*
 - **WEB WILSON** (800) 508-0022, webwilson.com *fine antique hardware*
 - **WILLIAM J. RIGBY** (607) 547-1900, wjmrigby.com *unused (vintage) builder's hardware 1860-1960*

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The Desecration of Houses

BY SANDY MCLENDON

WHEN EDITH WHARTON wrote *The Decoration of Houses* in 1898, she laid down the law. Houses were to be *suitable*, by which she meant comfortable, lacking in pretension, and, above all, architecturally coherent. Now understand, Wharton didn't always abide by her own gospel. Her book inveighs, long and loud, against wallpapers, yet she used them generously at The Mount, her own house in Lenox, Massachusetts.

Essentially, Wharton had it right. Houses should be all one thing, whether that one thing is a correctly observed academic style or a (well-informed) personal vision. If she were to come back and visit us today, I suspect this whole generation of homeowners would be in for a tongue-lashing: suitability and coherence would be found lacking.

At least in part, that's because today's big-box home-improvement stores make it likely that a well-intentioned but uninformed owner will emerge from a spending spree laden with doors, windows, and doo-dads that are the opposite of suitable. You see the results everywhere. There's the perfectly nice '50s ranch tarted up with a Victorian "stained-glass" door, along with Olde Colonial shutters. And the Craftsman bungalow that has vinyl replacement windows with a period-defying muntin grid pressed between panes of low-e glass. Or a steel entry door with ain't-foolin'-nobody panel moldings—and maybe a fanlight built right in. Everyone

knows that proper fanlights live *above* the door.

It wasn't always this way. When America began to see old houses as historic back in the 1970s, it was hard to get the elements needed for restoration. Home improvement wasn't yet a DIY proposition. Actually, house-wrecking firms were among the rare sources for the bits and pieces needed to put an old place back in shape. It worked pretty well. Elements were authentic and suitable, being from local old houses. And the people who ran architectural-antiques businesses knew their architecture and history; their personalized advice deterred many a homeowner from doing something rash.

What's confounding about today's home-improvement marketplace is that manufacturers have given us a wealth of choices, and improved their products, only to have those products misused. Historical flooring, siding, light fixtures, bathtubs, kitchen cabinets, and a host of other products are now reproduced, many with a stunning level of fidelity to the originals, in a range of pricing. So why are so many houses bedizened with exactly the wrong things? Probably because it's too easy: You can walk into a store, pick up whatever strikes your fancy, swipe your credit card, go home, and install your purchase without anyone ever asking what *kind* of house it is.

A house with an unmuddled character keeps its value and is an asset to the historical record, and to the street. Why spend money on new stuff that will just take away



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PATRICIA POORE, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

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from all that? Consider these basic tactics to keep purchases, and your renovation, in concert with the house.

▪ **IF YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT STYLE YOUR HOUSE IS, FIND OUT.**


Often, it's obvious that you have a Colonial or a Victorian. But some houses, especially those that were previously remodeled, are not so easy to read. Magazines like this help, and so do local resources like the historical society and even real-estate professionals.

▪ **WITH RARE EXCEPTIONS, STICK WITH THE STYLE YOU HAVE.** It is possible to "make over" a house of one architectural style to resemble another. *Old-House Interiors'* sister publication, *Arts & Crafts Homes*, has shown simple suburban ranches successfully reborn as Craftsman houses, for example. Such extensive changes take a lot of money, time, and advice—as from an architect. (And you'll want to be sure the house isn't already significant and not a candidate for remodeling.) If you have a passion and the resources, go for it. But remember that changing the front door or adding some trim will not turn one style into another, and may detract from the coherence of the house.

▪ **CONSIDER CONSULTING A STUDENT IF YOU CAN'T AFFORD AN ARCHITECT.** Many universities have a school of architecture. Post a notice in the school newspaper, dean's office, or online, seeking informed advice. Their interest in the subject and their desire for real-world experience suggest that students may work cheap. Remember they are not licensed and they have limited experience, but they can probably read the house and help you choose appropriately.

Why are so many houses bedizened with the wrong things? Probably because there are too many options and not enough knowledge.

▪ **STEAL FROM THE BEST.** Somewhere in town there's a beautifully restored (or original) gem that is a lot like what your house *could* be—if only. Or you've seen a similar house, unmarred, in a book. It's okay to copy. Notice details, from siding to porch trim. Notice its historical coherence, the excellent fixtures, the professionally specified color scheme. You've heard that good taste



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cannot be taught, and there's a lot of truth to that. But it can be stolen.

■ **ACCEPT FEW SUBSTITUTES.** It is almost impossible to avoid using a few substitute materials. Some of them, in fact, like synthetic terra cotta, make restoration doable and practical. Look at these modern materials with a very critical eye, though. Improper use can cheapen the house. The best rule-of-thumb I know is to restrict their use to those instances where you really cannot tell the difference between the imitation and the real. Or use the modern material in a modern way, not as a stand-in.

■ **BEWARE OF FASHION.** As you renovate, you'll find yourself ripping out those "what were they *thinking?*" elements. Maybe it's 1960s grooved plywood paneling, or a Disco-era Mediterranean vinyl floor in orange and brown, or a 1980s wallpaper that has no relationship to the house. These things may have been the last word at the time, but now they look ridiculous. Sure, some of today's fashions will stand the test of time; as a natural material, granite for countertops is likely to be among them. But other trends will bring up that dreaded word

"dated" in as few as five years. So be careful.

■ **SIMPLER IS USUALLY BETTER.** It's a funny thing: As you descend the price scale, the more likely it is that you'll find goofy "enhancement." Cheap "Victorian" replacement doors have more curlicues than the Victorians would have tolerated. Substitute siding has embossed "wood grain" that screams it's fake. Choosing the simplest of elements, consistent with the existing architecture, pays off in dignity.

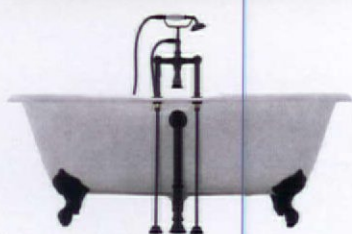
■ **STICK TO REVERSIBLE CHANGES IF POSSIBLE.** Once original elements are tossed in the Dumpster, they're gone forever, and putting them back may be cost-prohibitive. Shorn or remodeled with incorrect elements, the house becomes less attractive to buyers with an eye for history and quality. Window replacement is one example. Windows are being replaced in staggering numbers, too often with units that miss on style, size, or quality. For many old houses, weatherstripping and storm windows will generate close to the same savings, with a quicker payback. Such add-ons can be replaced or upgraded without harm to the original fabric. †

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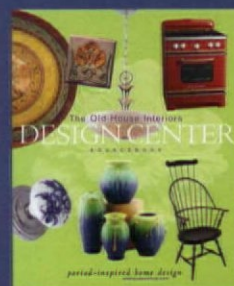
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SUMMER'S PORCH

The porch becomes a furnished outdoor room during summers in the Thousand Islands. (page 60) ♣

A COTTAGE GOTHIC RESIDENCE

The architect of a new house in North Carolina tells how the landscape, and A.J. Downing, inspired its design. (page 38) ♣



MATTERS OF LOCATION

A hilly, unkempt site in San Diego is remade as stunning, low-water gardens with dry streambeds, potted succulents, and surprise spaces. (page 52) ♣



BACK TO MID CENTURY

Fifties kitsch adds humor to an otherwise sophisticated interior of balanced neutrals and open-space comfort. (page 46) ♣

BACK HALL, BACK STAIR

Ideas for reclaiming the forgotten space out of public view: art on the landing, hidden storage, a dumb-waiter, perhaps? (page 56)





OUTSIDE CHAPEL HILL, North Carolina, the farmland is lush but quiet, as it is often shrouded in mist. Its beauty is infused with a deep, almost romantic, sadness, even though a century and a half has passed since the tragedies of the Civil War. When I first visited these rolling hills to see them, my clients, Judy and Larry, talked about orchards, gardens, and retreat. Their son is a chef passionate about local food. Cultivated by this family for less than a year, the property with two ponds already was producing figs, apples, cider, berries, and fish. The neighbor's dairy herd grazed nearby.

How fitting that our early discussions about the house came from surveying the land. I had brought with me Andrew Jackson Downing's book, *Victorian Cottage Residences*, to share his vision and directions for a picturesque farm in the Romantic vein. So many of Downing's principles—accentuating the land's contours, careful construction of views, soft and organic compositions, native plants—still resonate today.

As Judy and Larry absorbed Downing's ideas about landscape, we began to design the residence, which is properly a foil in the landscape. We wondered why there are so few Gothic villas in



ABOVE: With flushboard siding, the main block picks up Downing's high style, modeled on British medieval stone manors. Windows are "labelled," meaning they have squared wooden hoodmolds that mimic dripstones in masonry construction. The breezeway is true post-and-beam construction. **TOP LEFT:** A garden trellis matches window sash color on the rear; the garage wing is to the right. **RIGHT:** The view from the master bedroom looks past the entry to the dining area.





A COTTAGE RESIDENCE with gothic appeal

The architect tells how a Romantic landscape, and Downing himself, inspired the design of this new cottage residence filled with color and life.

BY SANDRA VITZTHUM | PHOTOGRAPHS BY TONY GIAMMARINO



LEFT: The staircase is anchored by a salvaged 1891 newel post. A drab wardrobe sitting forgotten in an antiques store became a colorful accent with a local artist's interpretation of Pre-Raphaelite painting. The rug is from Company C.

North Carolina...but eventually we found some tucked away in quiet villages. We admired the comfortable relationship of these Gothic cottages with their gardens, and we took delight in their exuberant details. Judy commented that American Gothic feels casual yet dignified, maybe even a little bit wise.

The house is modeled, somewhat, on the frontispiece of another Downing book, *The Architecture of Country Houses*. We gave the H-shaped main house a proper entry

and an expansive back porch. The main house has two wings, one for the master suite and one for the garage. The main house has flushboard siding and label molding (square hoodmolds) over the windows—from high-style or “villa” Downing—while the wings are finished with board-and-batten siding and their windows have hoods or pent roofs over them—from vernacular or “cottage” Downing.

Similarly, the main roof is slate, and the wings have standing-seam

metal roofs. The main house has cusped bargeboards (made of mahogany and marine-grade plywood) with fanciful ogee curves, while the wings have plainer sawn boards at the eaves. Pinnacles, pendants, and other elaborate details of the period don't appear, as this house leans more toward cottage than urban villa.

THE HOUSE at Starberry Farm has a definite character: sleepy in the morning, then abuzz when it's filled with people. The dwelling holds



ABOVE: The dine-in kitchen has a sitting area in the bay window. The cabinet came from Antiques & Interiors in High Point, N.C. The mantelpiece actually hides a television and storage. Chandeliers and the mudroom door are salvage. The sofa is upholstered in Uzbek suzanis from ABC Carpet & Home.

remarkable artifacts—painted stick furniture and large collage murals, sumptuous chandeliers, and bright rugs. Each piece has a story, and together they bring the house to life. In concert with the fondness for local food, Larry and Judy have a deep commitment to local art.

Visitors to the cottage are welcomed in the front hall, which sets the tone. Beside a salvaged Victorian newel post is the imposing Four Seasons cabinet. It was a drab wardrobe that had sat for months in an antiques

BELOW: The understated country entrance has lattice posts and a simple spanning arch made of steel. The owners found a pair of 250-year old Gothic doors with original hardware from a cathedral in England, which had been exported to Lynchburg, Virginia. The heavy lanterns were found on eBay. Antique stick furniture is from the Catskills.







ABOVE: With its antique mantelpiece, the daughter's bedroom departs from rusticity. The iron four-poster bed is an antique. **RIGHT:** The "cottage" bedroom has board-and-batten siding and window hoods. **BOTTOM:** The sewing/guest room has space-saving bunks.



ABOVE: The master bath is in the house's rustic wing. Beams and flush-boards are primary decoration. A Kohler tub is mounted in a mahogany deck. The antique chair was reupholstered, and the pendant light is from Old California Lantern. **INSET:** The washstand was once a dining-room sideboard. The owner found a Kohler sink that suits the room. Two Thai windows were refitted as mirrors. **LEFT:** The master bedroom features Balinese windows and rich fabrics. Midway down the hall, a salvaged Gothic door opens to the powder room.



THE ART

Whitewashed board walls—quietly dramatic and alive—provide the perfect backdrop for the eclectic collection, ranging from Louis Icart to Howard Finster, brought together over 20 years. ■ Purchased at local shows or directly from the artists, folk art dominates. Several doors-as-canvas pieces by missionary Mary Proctor depict her as a child with her grandmother's wise sayings. Paintings of farm life are by Tidewater Virginia artist Danny Doughty. The five-panel "Angels with Mirrors" was created by Paul Flack. In foyer and bedroom, stylized landscapes are a calming counterpoint to the colorful folk art. ■ Judy's choices, including a lithograph of women quilting hung above a Gee's Bend quilt, make up a theme of women's lives. Even the wine cellar boasts abstract oils from Larry's collection.



ABOVE: Lined with shelves and window seats, the den overlooking the pond is more descriptively called the Winter Room. Its mantel (resized for code-compliance with the gas fireplace) came from the Plaza Hotel in New York City. The painting is "Angels with Mirrors," purchased at the Fearington (N.C.) Folk Art Festival. **LEFT:** The living room mixes vintage Uzbekistani wedding clothes (suzanis) with original upholstery on antique pieces and new designer fabrics. **OPPOSITE:** In the kitchen, the AGA cooker is one of the new dual-fuel models. The fancy cabinet is Moroccan; tiles designed by Judy were made in Argentina.





Whitewashed **board walls** tie the kitchen to other rooms. The kitchen extends to include a dining room and sitting area; it is furnished with pieces **classic and exotic**—an enameled AGA cooker, a painted cabinet from Morocco.

store. A local artist painted the panels with a Pre-Raphaelite nod.

Judy wanted a warm, cozy room for use during the winter. The den, which looks over the pond, was fitted with bookshelves and built-in window seats; she calls it the Winter Room. Its mantel was salvaged from the old Plaza Hotel in Manhattan. Salvage was, in fact, used throughout the house: the kitchen ceiling is made of

reclaimed beadboard from the Lucky Strike warehouse in Durham. Beams are from a demolished Vermont farmhouse; they were fumigated after they arrived on site. Flooring throughout the house is chestnut oak salvaged from a Jim Beam warehouse in Kentucky. The newel post in the stair hall, quirky chandeliers, mantelpieces, cabinets, a neoclassical sideboard that became a sink console—all of these

salvaged items add history and surprise to the furnishings. ✦

FOR RESOURCES, SEE P. 67.

SANDRA VITZTHUM is a classically trained, licensed architect whose designs consider local climate, individual needs, energy conservation, and the crafts. Work has taken her from her native Vermont to Bali with many stops in between. See projects at sandravitzthum.com



back to mid century

TWO GRAPHIC DESIGNERS WITH AN EYE FOR FIFTIES KITSCH CREATE
A SURPRISINGLY SOPHISTICATED INTERIOR OF BALANCED NEUTRALS
IN OPEN-SPACE COMFORT. **BY BRIAN D. COLEMAN | PHOTOGRAPHS BY WILLIAM WRIGHT**

WHAT KIND OF HOUSE do you buy when you've acquired an impressive collection of mid-century furnishings? Jon and Karen Wippich were clear about what they didn't want: no hopeless fixer-upper, no hollow-core doors, no aluminum replacement windows that won't budge. The house had to be close to downtown Portland, Oregon, where they work as graphic designers for their own company, Dot Zero Design. The right house would showcase, but not be overwhelmed by, their tag-sale collection of ceramic

ballerinas and chalkware heads, bright Fiestaware bowls, figural matador and clown lamps, and a bookcase full of jolly red-plastic Santas.

Then again, Karen and Jon had trained eyes and were old hands at making silk purses out of sows' ears. When this 1956 ranch hit the market, they made an offer on day one. Sure, it needed work. The bathroom had been remodeled in the 1980s (remember those thick "golden oak" switchplates?). The fluorescent-lit kitchen of broken beige tile and plywood cabinets needed total re-

The rug's abstract design echoes the mid-50s, rectilinear coffee table. The fireplace, in neat Roman brick, was in working order. (The painting is by homeowner Karen Wippich.) The modest house has a fabulous view of Mount Hood and the valley. **OPPOSITE:** The 1956 house remains as-built, with Roman brick and cedar lap siding. **INSET:** Karen and Jon Wippich had fun creating a graphic interior.





Working on a limited budget and doing much of the work themselves, Jon and Karen started in the kitchen, pulling up pink-and-white linoleum

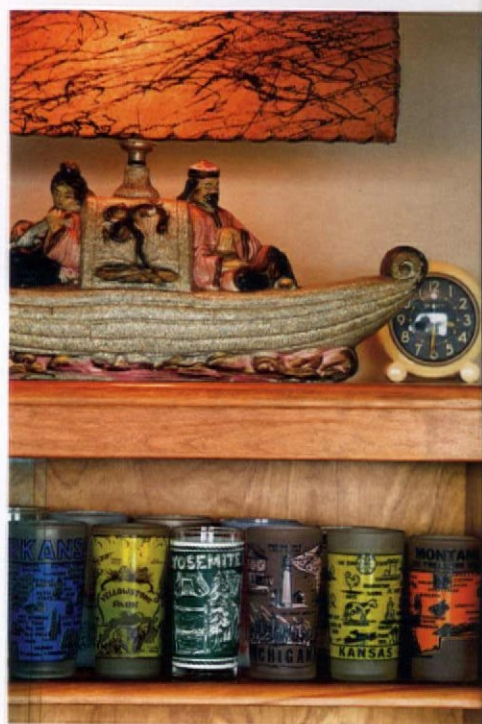
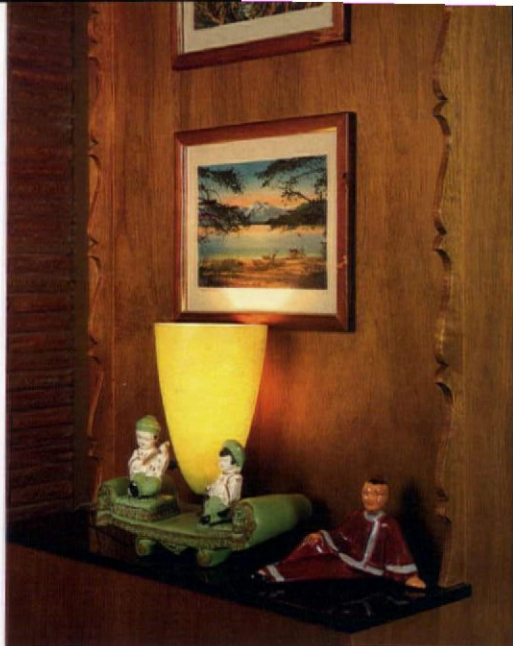
The dining-room end of the main room features a mid-50s oak table and chairs, and a mid-century wood floor lamp.

placement. Sill, original oak floors were in good condition, Roman-brick fireplaces anchored the main rooms, and the backyard patio was vintage. The living room's picture window afforded a sweeping easterly view of Mount Hood and the Willamette River Valley.

WORKING ON A LIMITED BUDGET and doing much of the work themselves, Jon and Karen started in the kitchen, tearing out cheap cabinets and deteriorated countertops, pulling up pink-and-white linoleum, hauling out the

1970s harvest-gold fridge. They ordered new cabinets, only to find the finished pieces would not fit through the 29"-wide kitchen doorway. Rather than cut them in half, as the supplier suggested, the couple returned the cabinets, took the hit, and measured more carefully.

Now, mottled gray laminate counters (Iron Legacy from Wilsonart) set off a Black Galaxy granite backsplash—a sophisticated '50s scheme. Period-perfect ribbed metal edging finishes the curving countertops. A faceted glass shade found at a salvage shop has replaced



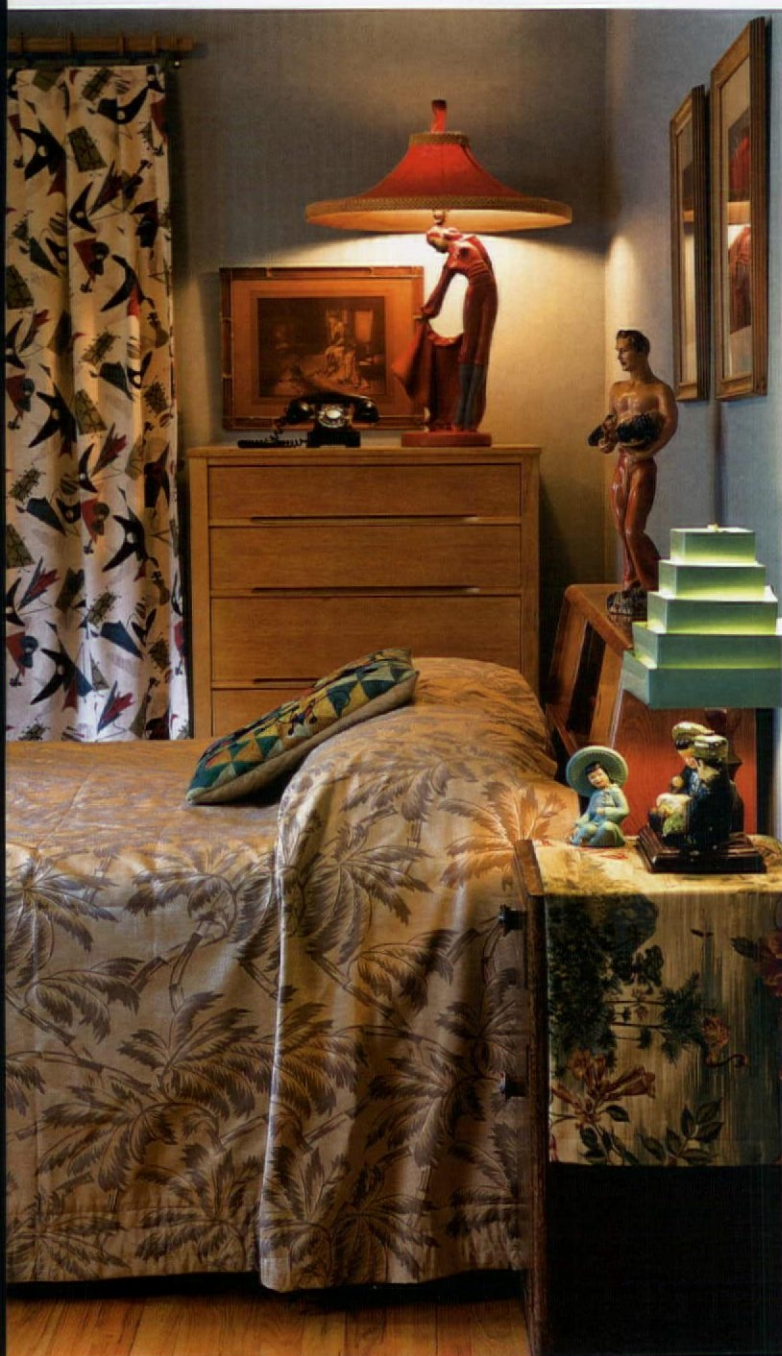
CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: An Indiana Glass 'Snowflake' breakfast set and a turquoise Fiestaware salt shaker sit on the Deco dinette table. On the wall that divides living and dining rooms, a mahogany bookshelf was remade, with a granite shelf for art and figurines. A figural lamp illuminates states' souvenir drinking glasses of the '40s and '50s on the dining-room buffet. Period color marks the kitchen, especially the cherry-red vinyl of the chrome dinette set; vintage bowls in turquoise, celery green, and sunshine yellow are a foil for the gray and black countertop area.

The right house would showcase, but not be overwhelmed by, their tag-sale collection of ceramic ballerinas and chalkware heads, bright Fiestaware bowls, and figural matadors and clowns.



ABOVE: A Heywood-Wakefield corner table nestles in the living room between a 1940s couch and matching chair, both reupholstered in bark cloth of a very soft mocha brown.

LEFT: In the bedroom, walls were painted a restful blue (a custom mix). The blond Heywood-Wakefield bedroom set, which had belonged to Karen's parents, has an appreciative new home. Bark-cloth curtains are printed with boomerangs.



fluorescent lights overhead. Also on the main level, the bathroom got a makeover. The tub needed just a good scrubbing once the fiberglass shower surround was removed. Italian porcelain tiles from Casalgrande make up the floor, the countertop, and the tub surround. Walls above the sink (which had been a curiously unflattering yellow) got a coat of Miller Paints' Light Tan.

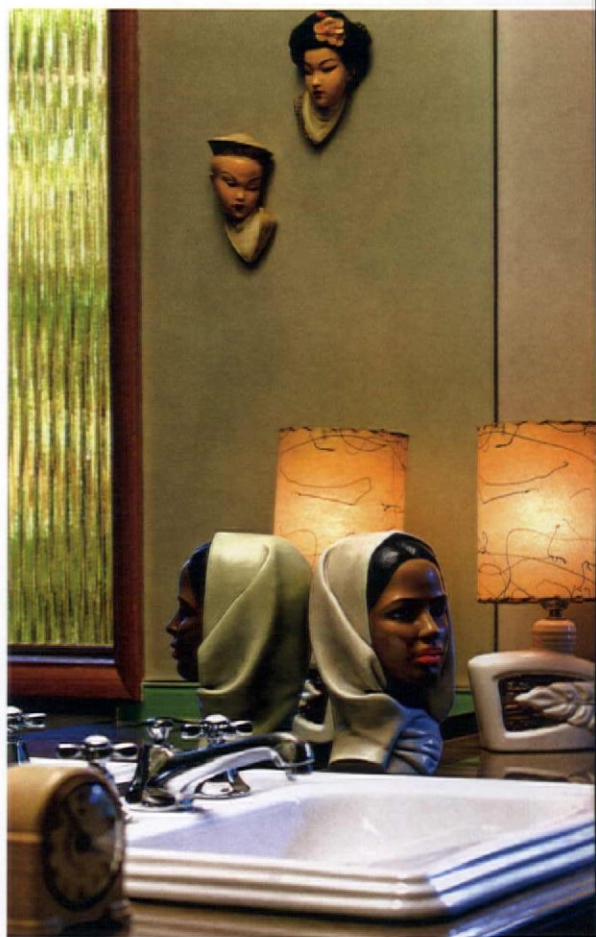
A handsome fireplace in Roman brick anchors the open floor plan of the living and dining rooms. Here walls are painted Miller's Chocolate Brown and Light Tan to complement oak floors and brick fireplace. Period-appropriate furnishings include a wheat-colored Heywood-Wakefield dining-room hutch, and a Heywood-Wakefield corner table nestled between an angular, but comfortable, 1940s couch and matching chair. These have been reupholstered in mocha-brown bark cloth. An abstract area rug in neutral grays holds the arrangement. ✦

IS FIFTIES FAB— and Important?

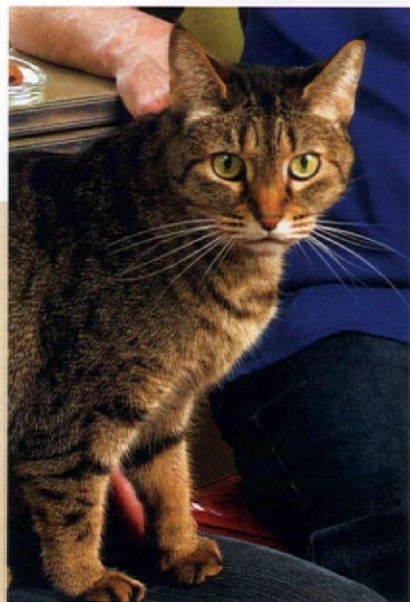
I've heard it said among the old-house crowd that the 1950s are not an important design period. True, the mid twentieth century remains a clear memory for some of us, but we should realize that the era was pivotal. Young servicemen were returning from overseas, hungry for a fresh start, and anything seemed possible. Humphrey Bogart and Katharine Hepburn starred in *African Queen* on the silver screen while *Guys and Dolls* opened on Broadway. Consumerism boomed as people began buying for the first time in over a decade; their exuberant materialism was proof of the economic power of the victorious United States. In newly created suburbs, postwar houses—ranches and split-levels and Contemporaries—were comfortable and affordable, and the baby boom began.

In the design world, Streamline, Machine Age, and International Styles were lean and stark; Modernism was perhaps too unadorned, and serious, for the average householder. In reaction, perhaps, to those staid architectural statements, playful "kitsch," even then a tongue-in-cheek statement, appeared. Hula-dancer lamps, circus performers and matadors, Sputnik-era clocks, and colorful bark cloth printed with boomerangs: all of these softened the new interiors.

Then again, the '50s era was not only optimistic but also simple and compliant—think of Joe McCarthy's hunt for Communists, "American Bandstand," and "Leave It to Beaver." It was a necessary setup for the freewheeling decade to come. —BDC

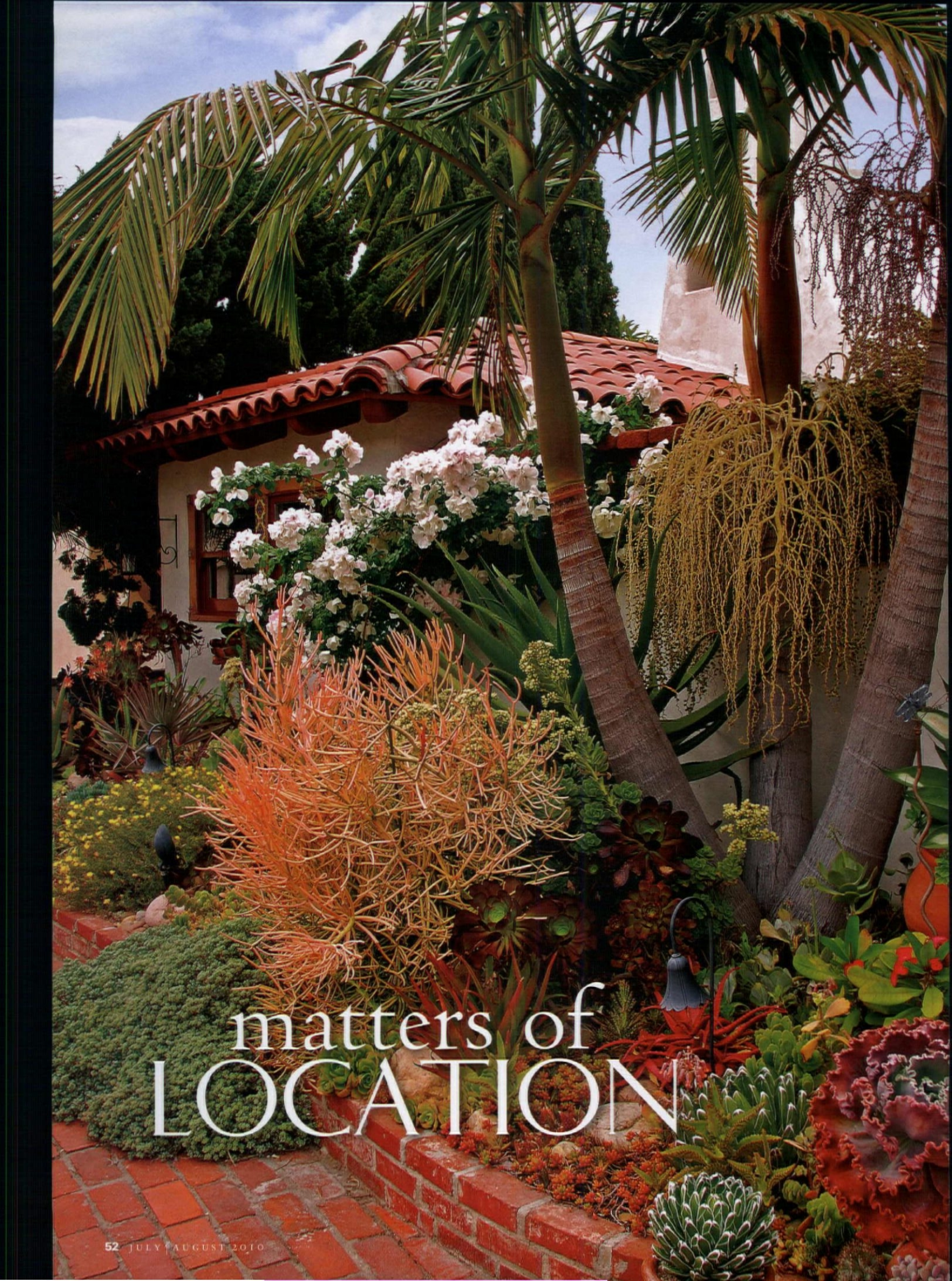


ABOVE: The undulating, reeded-glass window was carefully preserved in the downstairs bathroom. More 1950s chalkware, including Asian heads and pirouetting ballerinas, hangs on the neutral walls. **LEFT:** Matador Lamp, Reglor of California, 1951. **BELOW:** Timeless yet modern: Zero the cat.



FIFTIES sources

- **BARK CLOTH** An online resource with a wide range of period designs: barkclothhawaii.com
- **FIFTIES SUPPORT GROUP** A blog with info and resources: hildadeschutter.blogspot.com
- **KITSCH COLLECTIBLES** Everything from vintage Tiki salad bowls to retro lighting: 1950.com
- **LAMINATE COUNTERTOPS** Retro selection of laminates for kitchen and bath counters, floors, and walls: wilsonart.com
- **PORCELAIN TILES** Glazed Italian tiles: casalgrandepanda.com



matters of
LOCATION



The hilly, unkempt site wasn't his first choice, but Jim Bishop used its limitations to create a stunning, low-water landscape with rock-strewn dry streambeds, tile-decorated garden rooms, potted succulents, and meandering steps.

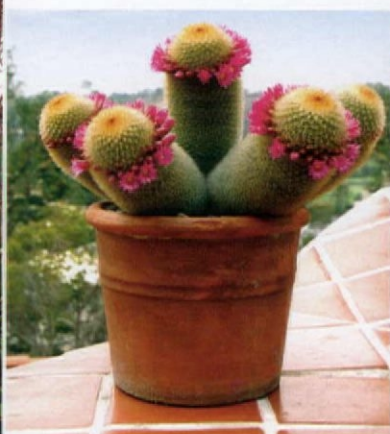
AN AVID AND THOUGHTFUL GARDENER, Jim Bishop searched for two years, in San Diego, for the right house in the right spot. He and his partner Scott Borden wanted to be as far from the freeway as possible, and they hoped to avoid those steeply sloped back yards at the edge of a canyon. They sought a well-designed house with a functional layout, in good shape. Location won, however, and in 1998 they chose the Mission Hills District, and their original wish list went out the window.

The house they found, built in 1938, hadn't been maintained for a decade, and earlier alterations left a lot to be desired. What had been presented as a sunken bathtub, for example, was discovered to have fallen partially through the floor. The landscape was even more of a mess. For a 1970s swimming pool built into the hillside, a 15'-tall, 40'-long white stucco wall had been constructed halfway down the slope and all the way across the property. The pool had

OPPOSITE: Water-wise palms and succulents look so right with the Mission architecture, it's hard to imagine a lawn and clipped shrubs here. **ABOVE:** Potted cacti and succulents grow year-round on the patio beyond the back door. **RIGHT:** Steps lead to the house from the lower garden—a planting opportunity for towering coral *Echium wildpretti* on the right, and a pink *Alstroemeria* hybrid pushing out from the lavender stars of Serbian bellflower.



WRITTEN AND PHOTOGRAPHED BY KEN DRUSE



LEFT TO RIGHT: Bishop created a dry streambed using stones excavated when the patio was built. The view from the *casita* takes in a garden room on the site of the collapsed swimming pool. A blooming *Mammillaria* cactus sits on the patio parapet. Purple flowers burst from the easy-to-grow succulent ground cover *Oscularia deltoids*. **OPP.** **TOP:** Meandering steps make the hillside, now cleared of invasive eucalyptus, accessible.

slipped off its footings in ensuing years. Eucalyptus trees had been allowed to grow tall, blocking the ocean view. These invasive, oil-rich trees add to the fire hazard in a city prone to such disaster. The trees, and the pool, would have to go.

The stabilized pool was filled with soil and decomposed granite, pumped down from the street. Its concrete deck was broken up, and pieces became small retaining walls for what would be a terraced garden on the hillside. "You can't see the concrete anymore—it's all grown over," Bishop beams.

The impact of the enormous retaining wall bisecting the property had to be diminished. On one side, the partners built a tower for a spiral staircase that would allow access from the patio and house to garden rooms below. At the other end, raised planting beds were built against the wall to visually shorten it. The site of the former pool is now a garden that can be viewed from the *casita*, a little guesthouse with a fireplace, arched windows, and wall tiles. Some of the blue and yellow tiles were imported from Spain, others purchased in Mexico. Tiles are a theme throughout the garden.

Excavation to redo the patio yielded stones for two dry creek beds that Jim Bishop constructed. (Even that old bathtub was recycled, as part of a fountain whose water music mitigates traffic noise.) With fifty trees removed, the garden flows down the hill, through pathways and plantings—and to spaces that await new projects. ✦



practicality and the **SENSE OF PLACE**

It's the notion that makes a shady wildflower garden so right for a New England woodland, or ornamental grasses appropriate on a Midwest prairie. "Sense of place" means suitability, and also may refer to a garden that goes with the period and style of a house and its location. A conscientious gardener like Jim Bishop also considers the limits of the local climate. San Diego continues to have irrigated lawns—a landscape convention surely out of place where annual rainfall may be as low as six inches. Bishop has turned instead to succulents, palms, bulbs, drought-tolerant ground covers, natives, and plants from arid regions around the world. "The climate of San Diego is a lot like the climate of South Africa," he says.

Jim Bishop's passion grew into a vocation: he founded Bishop Garden Design in 2006, with the motto, "Creating water-wise, living works of art." Water restrictions have led some local people to give up some or all of their lawns. "Most are putting in flagstone with ground covers that use less water," Jim says. Inspired by their neighbor, however, some have turned to self-reliant succulents and even cacti. What once was considered prickly is becoming the new trend. Bishop says that means more appropriate landscape design in San Diego, aesthetically and ecologically speaking.

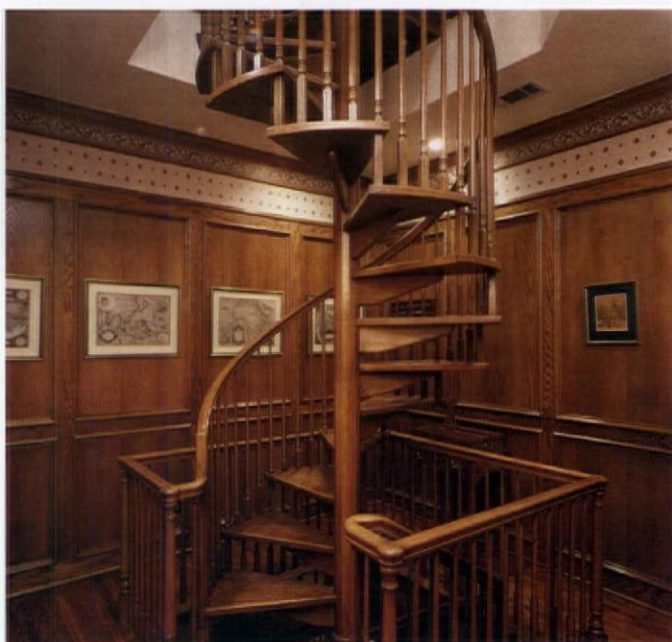
LEFT: The vine *Thunbergia alata* 'Yellow Star' links the tower by color to base plantings. The stair tower [right] is across the patio from the main house.





ABOVE: Upstairs, unused space in an alcove became a window seat with needed storage and a welcoming character in a make-over by designer Julia West. **BELOW:** This wood stairway by Stairways Inc. opens up the third floor in a traditional house.

TOP: The unused end of a hall can become an art gallery with objects freestanding or against the walls, as in designer Barry Dixon's home. **ABOVE:** Farrow & Ball's soft Blue Gray (and oil paintings) turn a dead end into a contemplative gallery.



BACK HALL, BACK STAIRS

Reclaiming forgotten space.

BECAUSE THEY WERE for hired hands and children (and later the housewife), the back hall and back stairs weren't very fancy. Often with unadorned walls and bare floors, they were passageways that stayed out of the public areas. Most of us no longer have servants, and we use the back hall regularly. Look again at these forgotten spaces—they may be good for storage, or for quirky statements.

Color is an easy way to update a tired passageway. For soothing calm, consider something like Farrow & Ball's Blue Gray, which changes with the light during the day, going from a diffused gray to a tinted blue. For the floor, designer Barry Dixon favors seagrass runners—they are durable, sound-absorbing, and neutral.

Because they are of smaller scale and are more intimate than the main stairway, back halls and stairs welcome an art gallery along their walls. You're closer to paintings as you ascend, and there's more wall space in a stairwell

to display larger pieces. (I mounted a stuffed peacock in mine!) Don't hesitate to hang art all the way to the ceiling, as it draws the eye upwards and make the space seem larger. The end of the hall need not terminate in a blank wall or

window. Add visual interest here with artwork on a stand, or a bookcase in the corner.

Staircase landings are too often overlooked. They should be interesting and welcoming, a spot to catch your breath or even sit. A small sofa and table, a chair tucked into the corner (perhaps with a corner cabinet above), even just a small bench and a pillow transform a landing into a room.

Because back stairs are traditionally service areas, dumbwaiters have been a staple since they

were introduced by Thomas Jefferson, who had several in his back hall at Monticello (to reduce his need for help during meals). The "Silent Servant" by Miller Manufacturing is a classic model, good for food and groceries, laundry,



by Brian D. Coleman

Simply painting the trim a period color turns this quiet back stair into an architectural statement. A mirror provides extra light.



firewood, and seasonal items such as boxes of Christmas ornaments. They are fitted with metal guiderails and precision-molded bearing guide shoes, so alignment problems (which often arise as the house settles) are eliminated. As the guide system also channels the counterweights, only one side of the car is needed for mechanics, so the dumbwaiter box can be opened on three sides.

For ease of operation, "Ascent" dumbwaiters by Summit Lifts feature durable, steel-panel walls and

doors that run on pre-installed, electric track systems with push-button operation. Powerlift Dumbwaiters has models that can hold up to 225 pounds and come prefabricated and ready to install in under an hour.

TO MAKE UNUSED space interesting and accessible, consider installing a spiral staircase. These are especially useful in renovations where space is at a premium. A minimum of 16 square feet is required for a 4'-diameter staircase; Marna Snitman of



TOP: A decorative steel and wood stair from Salter Spiral Stair fits in a small space. **ABOVE:** A "dragon's tail" is a whimsical coda on the stair runner: Barry Dixon added pizzazz to the otherwise undistinguished hall. **RIGHT:** A spiral-helix wood stair from York makes best use of a second-floor hall. **OPPOSITE:** Space no longer ignored: Below the stairs in a Seattle Tudor, the original dumbwaiter is joined by a neoclassical glass shade from Rejuvenation, Austrian antlers ca. 1890-1925, and antiques.




Steeptoe and Wife suggests retrofitting a pantry cupboard or closet. Remember that spiral staircases need 4' of space at the top for proper head clearance; removing one or two headers at the top of the stairs may be necessary. Floor load is another aspect to keep in mind: the closer the staircase is placed to an outside wall, the stronger the surrounding floor support will need to be. York Spiral Stair makes a striking double-helix design; with two handrails and a center post, it has more usable tread for comfort. ✦



RESOURCES ■ **BARRY DIXON INTERIORS**, traditional interior design: barrydixon.com ■ **GODDARD MANUFACTURING CO.**, steel and wooden spiral staircases: spiral-staircases.com ■ **JULIA WEST HOME**, designer furnishings in natural materials: juliawesthome.com ■ **MILLER MFG.**, simple, manually operated dumbwaiters: silentservant.com ■ **POWERLIFT DUMBWAITERS CORP.**, prefab laundry and firewood models: dumbwaiters.com ■ **SALTER SPIRAL STAIRS**, steel, wood, and iron stairs, and exterior stairs: salterspiralstair.com ■ **REJUVENATION**, functional "back hall" fixtures among their comprehensive selection: rejuvenation.com ■ **STAIRWAYS INC.**, stairs spiral and straight, wood and metal, and kits: stairswaysinc.com ■ **STEEPTOE & WIFE STAIRCASE SYSTEMS**, Victorian cast-iron spiral and straight stairs: steptoewife.com ■ **SUMMIT LIFTS INC.**, the Ascent dumbwaiter with a no-pulley drive system: summitdumbwaiters.com ■ **VINCENT WHITNEY (WHITCO)**, concealed, hand-powered dumbwaiters: vincentwhitney.com ■ **YORK SPIRAL STAIRS**, wood spiral stairs, including the wide double-helix type: yorkspiralstair.com

Summer's Porch

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JAMES SCHERZI



BETWEEN NEW YORK AND ONTARIO, in a remote region known as the Thousand Islands, an archipelago of close to 1,900 islands in the St. Lawrence River stretches roughly 50 miles. There remains a fantastical array of resort architecture on the river. A serendipitous spirit of summer resides here. A breezy, wide porch decorated with wicker is the primary place for enjoying the pleasures of the season. Cottages are generally sited high on the crest of an island, with dependencies such as icehouses and caretakers' quarters shielded from public view as one arrives by boat. Hospitality is legion, privacy is prized, and drop-ins from the mainland are infrequent.

—Kathleen Quigley in *The Summer Cottage*, *Retreats of the 1000 Islands*



CASUAL & COLORFUL

Bottle-green Adirondack chairs and white wicker furnishings are classics. But on one unassuming gabled cottage wearing the classic white-with-green-shutters scheme, the screened-in back porch is a riot of painted wood and wicker in red, yellow, and royal blue. On another house, trim and furniture painted to match creates a broom-clean backdrop for all the ephemera of summer recreation. In its natural color, wicker can look rustic or elegant.



OPPOSITE: Six generations of one family have enjoyed rocking on this porch at Occident, built in 1874. **TOP:** Bar Harbor-style wicker sets off the blue view and red geraniums at Casa Blanca, a grand cottage of 1892. **ABOVE:** White wicker chairs facing the water line the long veranda at Little Lehigh. **LEFT:** On Dashwood Island, wicker furniture original to the 1903 house defines a summer dining spot amidst Tuscan columns.



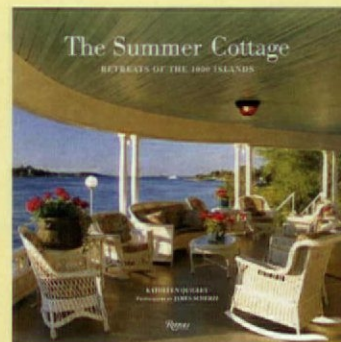
LEFT: At Birkinshaw (built in 1880), the original back porch is a shady spot that looks into the woods. **BELOW:** On Bluff Island, sunshine-yellow paint pulls together disparate pieces of outdoor furniture on a screened back porch.

ORIENTATION

Porches are about summer breezes, casual living, and, always, the view. On the St. Lawrence, house fronts are usually oriented towards the water. The front porch or veranda may be huge, as at Casa Blanca, a sprawling family compound that accommodates 35 guests. Corners are often treated as outdoor rooms complete with furniture, rugs, and a kerosene lamp. But sleeping porches and back porches offer a quiet spot in the shade.

Kathleen Quigley and James Scherzi have documented 24 places in the Thousand Islands in their new book *The Summer Cottage*. Houses range from Stick Style and Carpenter Gothic to Colonial Revival—along with two built in the 1990s. Inside and out, many retain the elements of summer architecture: beadboard and pine, gingerbread porches, painted furniture, and pool tables.

THE SUMMER COTTAGE:
Retreats of the 1000 Islands
Rizzoli, 2010
224 pages, \$45





Choosing replacement doors and windows that look right on the façade is one thing, but specifying new units that don't clash with interior woodwork may be an even greater challenge.

Windows, Doors—and the Décor BY MARY ELLEN POLSON

MOST DOORS and windows are sold on the basis of how they will look on the outside of the house. Manufacturers have stepped up their offerings in recent years, enticing prospective buyers with entry doors in dozens of wood species, and built-to-order windows in hundreds of stock and custom colors or wood tints. But how well do these products do when it comes to matching your interior décor, specifically existing casing and built-in elements like paneling?

For those with homes where all the trim is painted white, the choice is fairly simple. Once you've decided on the door profiles and window configurations, just pick the white finish that's the closest match (Jeld-Wen offers four different whites on its AuraLast windows and patio doors, for example). Or paint the primed wood yourself once the units are installed. Homeown-

ers with original chestnut paneling or gumwood window casings will probably need to compare and contrast wood species from several makers, then tweak the final finish with half a dozen stain possibilities before they're ready to place an order.

You may find too much choice when it comes to selecting an entry door. A single manufacturer may offer up to 50 door designs (although only one or two will likely be "right" for your style of house). Next, move on to woods (perhaps five to a dozen species, plus custom wood options). Finally, choose a finish from 40 or more color options and up to a dozen stains. That's before you've considered a selection of sidelights, fanlights, or stained-glass inserts, all of which are available from makers large and small.

The best way to ensure that a new door will coordinate well with existing woodwork is to choose wood

of the same species (preferably with the same cut and density), or a wood typical of the region where the house was built. Yesteryear's Vintage Doors offers doors in more than a dozen species that tend to be place- and period-specific, including both red and white quarter-sawn oak, Eastern white pine, poplar, and Douglas fir. If your home is architecturally significant or very early, custom work by a company that specializes in period millwork, like Maurer & Shepherd or The Period Door Company, might be the best option. Both can turn out unique styles that are difficult or impossible for mass manufacturers to make, like batten doors.

Typical choices for interior (or passage) doors include clear grades of pine, knotty alder or knotty pine, Douglas fir, oak, cherry, hemlock, poplar, and mahogany. If you prefer painted passage doors, molded fire-proof doors have never been more af-

LEFT: Does your décor include motifs in the style of Charles Rennie Mackintosh? Even a simple "Shaker"-style "T" door, like this one from Simpson Door, can be dressed up with leaded glass to coordinate. **RIGHT:** A Palladian window from Heartwood Fine Windows & Doors looks period-appropriate indoors and out.



It's now possible to match new doors to existing woodwork. This passage door is from Jeld-Wen's Premium Wood line.

fordable, with prices starting at slightly more than \$100 per unit. One of the most popular styles, alternately described as "Shaker" or "Craftsman," is a three-panel "T" door with a strong vertical stile that intersects with a rail at chest height. The door can be dressed up with dentils and glass inserts for exterior use, or stained or painted as an interior passage door.

A new option from Jeld-Wen allows the buyer to choose from four different molding profiles on raised- and flat-panel interior doors. They include two styles familiar to owners of period homes: beaded sticking, a treatment that adds a beading detail to raised-panel doors (common in Federal and Colonial Revival homes), and Craftsman sticking, a crisp, flat-panel edge found in Arts & Crafts homes.

Windows typically come in fewer wood species, with pine and cedar the default options; higher-end manufacturers offer Douglas fir, mahogany, and other hardwoods. Custom windows can be made to match any wood you specify—for a price. If your installation will include new trimwork around the windows, look for a manufacturer with a variety of molded casing profiles. Heartwood Windows & Doors, for example, offers nearly 50 different profiles of 3" to 3½" interior casing. Any custom shop can whip up period replicas to match existing trim. ✦

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- **BELISLE ANCESTRAL DOORS & WINDOWS** (866) 851-5113, belislewindows.com
- **CRAFTSMANDOORS.COM** (866) 390-1574, craftsmandoors.com
- **CRESTVIEW DOORS** (866) 454-6302, crestviewdoors.com
- **GRABILL WINDOWS & DOORS** (810) 798-2817, grabillwindow.com
- **GREEN MOUNTAIN WINDOW CO.** (802) 747-6915, greenmountainwindow.com
- **HEARTWOOD FINE WINDOWS AND DOORS** (800) 321-8199, heartwoodwindowsanddoors.com
- **INTERNATIONAL DOOR & LATCH** (888) 686-3667, internationaldoor.com
- **JELD-WEN** (800) 535-3936, jeldwen.com
- **KOLBE & KOLBE MILLWORK CO.** (715) 842-5666, kolbe-kolbe.com
- **LAMSON-TAYLOR CUSTOM DOORS** (603) 835-2992, lamsontaylor.com
- **MADAWASKA** (800) 263-2358, madawaska-doors.com
- **MASONITE** (800) 663-3667, masonite.com
- **MCCOY MILLWORK** (888) 236-0995, mccoymillwork.com
- **PARRETT WINDOWS & DOORS** (800) 541-9527, parrettwindows.com
- **PINECREST** (612) 870-7071, pinecrestinc.com
- **SIMPSON DOOR** (800) 952-4057, simpsondoor.com
- **WEATHER SHIELD WINDOWS & DOORS** (800) 477-6808, weathershield.com
- **WOODHARBOR DOORS & CABINETY** (644) 423-0444, woodharbor.com
- **YARROW SASH & DOOR CO.** (877) 237-8650, yarrow.mb.ca

Crestview Doors make postwar-era doors and kits, like the Pasadena

87071, pinecrestinc.com

423-0444, woodharbor.com

CUSTOM & Historical Replications

- **ADAMS ARCHITECTURAL PRODUCTS** (888) 285-8120, adamsarch.com
- **ARCHITECTURAL COMPONENTS** (413) 367-9441, architecturalcomponentsinc.com
- **ARCHITECTURAL TRADITIONS** (520) 574-7374, architecturaltraditions.com
- **COYLE LUMBER & MILLWORK** (717) 243-4124, coylelumber.com
- **HISTORIC DOORS** (610) 756-6187, historicdoors.com
- **KINGSLAND COMPANY** (860) 542-6981, kingslandcompany.us
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- **THE PERIOD DOOR COMPANY** (978) 855-0644, thepериодdoorcompany.com
- **WOODSTONE** (800) 682-8223, woodstone.com
- **YESTERYEAR'S VINTAGE DOORS & MILLWORK** (800) 787-2001, vintagedoors.com



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- **CRAFTMASTER INTERIOR DOORS** (312) 382-8701, cmi-company.com
- **LYNDEN DOOR** (800) 631-DOOR, lynden-door.com
- **MAPLE GROVE RESTORATIONS** (860) 742-5432, maple-grove.com
- **SELECT INTERIOR DOOR** (585) 535-9900, selectcustomdoor.com

Screen & STORM Specialists

- **ALLIED WINDOW** (800) 445-5411, invisiblestorms.com
- **CLIMATE SEAL/ACOUSTICAL SURFACES** (877) 773-7379, climateseal.com
- **COLORADO HOUSE OF DOORS** (719) 539-4568
- **COPPA WOODWORKING** (310) 548-4142, coppawoodworking.com
- **INNERGLASS WINDOW SYSTEMS** (800) 743-6207, stormwindows.com
- **MON-RAY** (800) 544-3646, monray.com
- **POMPEI GLASS** (781) 395-8867, pompeiglass.com
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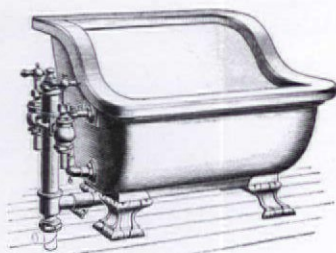
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Resource boxes are included in many articles. This additional information has been compiled by the editors. Items not listed are either widely available, out of production, family pieces, or antiques.

Desecration of Houses pp. 32-35

Writer and mid-century connoisseur Sandy McLendon is senior editor at *Modernism* magazine. See more of his writing at jetsetmodern.com

Gothic Appeal pp. 38-45

BUILDER DiRienzo Builders, LLC, Chapel Hill, NC: (919) 602-4708

• **SALVAGE BUILDING ELEMENTS** Mason Brothers Salvage, Essex Junction, VT: (802) 879-4221, greatsalvage.com

• **CEMENTBOARDS** by Certaineed: certaineed.com

• **EXTERIOR BATTENS** by MiraTEC: miratectrim.com

• **METAL LATTICE** by Beechwood Metalworks, Burlington, NC: beechwoodmetalworks.com

• **ROOFING** GAF TruSlate 2.0 system: truslate.com [or do web search]

• **GOthic TRIM** by Custom Millwork, Barre, VT: (802) 479-0401

• **WINDOWS** 'Ultimate' with custom-color frames and custom muntins by Marvin Windows & Doors: marvin.com

• **NEW DOORS** by Simpson Door: simpsondoor.com

• **FLOORING** by Select Forest Products, Chapel Hill, NC: (919) 967-1105, selectforest.com

INTERIOR

• **BATH LANTERN** '1040 Bridgeview Drive' for damp location with 'Fuchsia' filigree from Old California Lantern: oldcalifornia.com

• **KITCHEN STOVE** and refrigerator by AGA: aga-ranges.com

• **RUG** from Company C: companyc.com

• **ANTIQUES** from Antiques & Interiors, High Point, NC: (336) 884-0252, antint.com

• **CATSKILLS STICK FURNITURE** from Branching Out, Chapel Hill, NC: (919) 929-5755

• **DRAPERY** The Design Workshop, Carrboro, NC: (919) 968-1720, designworkshopandinteriors.com

• **UZBEKISTANI FABRICS** through ABC Carpet & Home: (212) 253-7039, abchome.com

Mid Century pp. 46-51

Five of the homeowners' favorite sources and help-sites are listed on p. 51. • Interior paint colors from Miller Paint Co., serving the Pacific Northwest: millerpaint.com • For more on Heywood-Wakefield furniture, see these books: *Heywood-Wakefield Blond: Depression to '50s* by Donna Baker [Schiffer]; *Heywood-Wakefield* by Harris Gertz [Schiffer]; *Danish Modern and Beyond: Scandinavian Inspired Furniture from Heywood-Wakefield* by Donna Baker [Schiffer].

Matters of Location pp. 52-55

Ken Druse is the author of many books on gardening, including *The Natural Garden*, *Making More Plants: The Science, Art, and Joy of Propagation*, and *Planthropology: The Myths, Mysteries, and Miracles of My Garden Favorites*. Don't miss his podcast *REAL DIRT* at kendruseraldirt.com To follow Ken's garden adventures on Twitter: <http://twitter.com/kendruse>

Inspired By p. 68

Mohonk Mountain House, in New Paltz, N.Y., is a sprawling resort hotel from the grand old days—part stone manor, part Shingle inn, part Swiss Chalet. Healthful mountain activities and hearty food (plus a spa and lake) keep guests busy; children happily accommodated. At least visit the website: mohonk.com • Shelburne Farms is a member-supported, nonprofit environmental education center and Landmark on Lake Champlain. Visitors enjoy walking trails, children's farmyard, inn, restaurant, property tours, and events. Shelburne Farms was created as a model agricultural estate in 1886 by William Seward and Lila Vanderbilt Webb. • The Inn at Shelburne Farms is an elegant getaway, complete with lakeside gardens and a billiards room. Open May–October. For more about the farm, go to shelburnefarms.org

INSPIRED BY



MEMORABLE BEADBOARD

MY HOUSE was built in 1917. The right place for our new kitchen—which had to be big enough to accommodate baking and catering—was in the 1970s addition. An unfortunate “period piece,” this space was a drywall box with a “cathedral ceiling” sporting exposed collar ties.

My solution (of course) was to look to the past—but not to residential architecture. Rather, I remembered two wonderful rooms from my travels, both suitable for a large, quasi-service room of the period. The first is the dining room at Mohonk Mountain House in New Paltz, N.Y. The other is the interior of the Coach Barn at Shelburne Farms in northern

Vermont. In both cases, vast rooms were fitted in tongue-and-groove beaded board, with matching door and window trim as well as wood beams, brackets, and corbels.

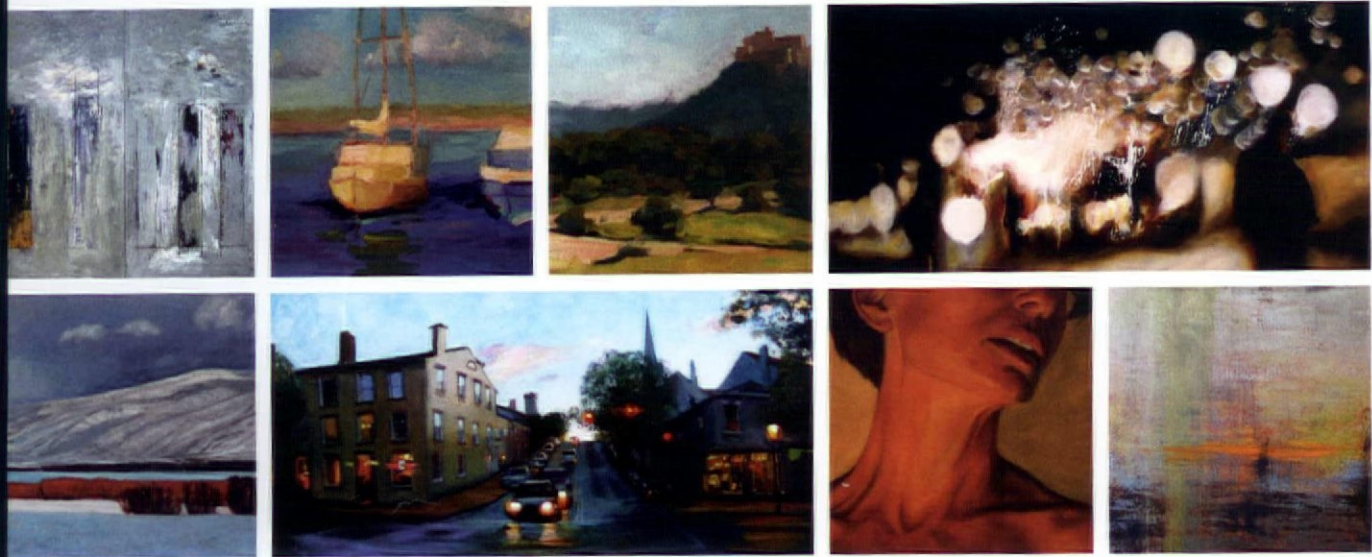
Those collar ties (and king posts), rough 2x6s, got a poplar sheathing, chamfered and stained to match the beadboard that I’d attached to walls and ceiling. I added heavy corbels, and overlaid the plain brick fireplace with tiles and more wood to bring the look back to an earlier time.

—DAN KUYPER, *Amherst, Mass.*

ABOVE: Our reader’s new baking kitchen, outfitted in beadboard and with clad collar ties. **BEFORE,** the added room was a ‘70s box. **RIGHT:** The vast yet cozy dining room at Mohonk Mountain house—his inspiration.



OLD-HOUSE INTERIORS (USPS 013-584) [ISSN 1079-3941] is published bi-monthly by Home Buyer Publications and Active Interest Media Inc. The known office of publication is located at 475 Sansome Street, Suite 850, San Francisco, CA 94111. The editorial office is located at 4125 Lafayette Center Drive, Suite 100, Chantilly, VA 20151; 703-222-9411; 800-826-3893; fax: 703-222-3209. Periodicals postage paid at San Francisco, CA, and additional offices. Volume XVI, Number 4. Postmaster: Send address changes to Old-House Interiors, P.O. Box 420235, Palm Coast, FL 32142-0235. For subscription questions or address changes, call 800-462-0211 (US only). Subscription rates: US \$29.95 per year; Canada \$37.95 per year; other countries \$43.95 per year. © Copyright 2010 by Cruz Bay Publishing, Inc., El Segundo, CA. This publication may not be reproduced, either in whole or part, in any form without written permission from the publisher. Printing by RR Donnelley, Strasburg, VA, USA.



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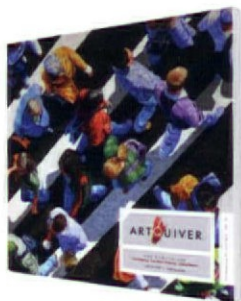
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