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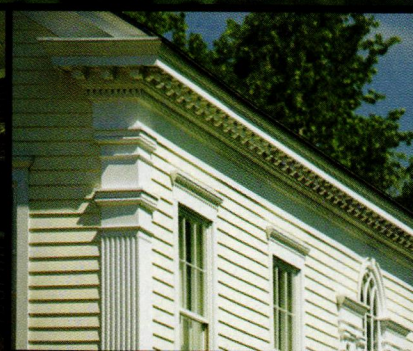
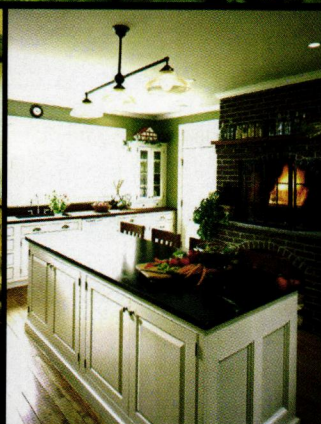
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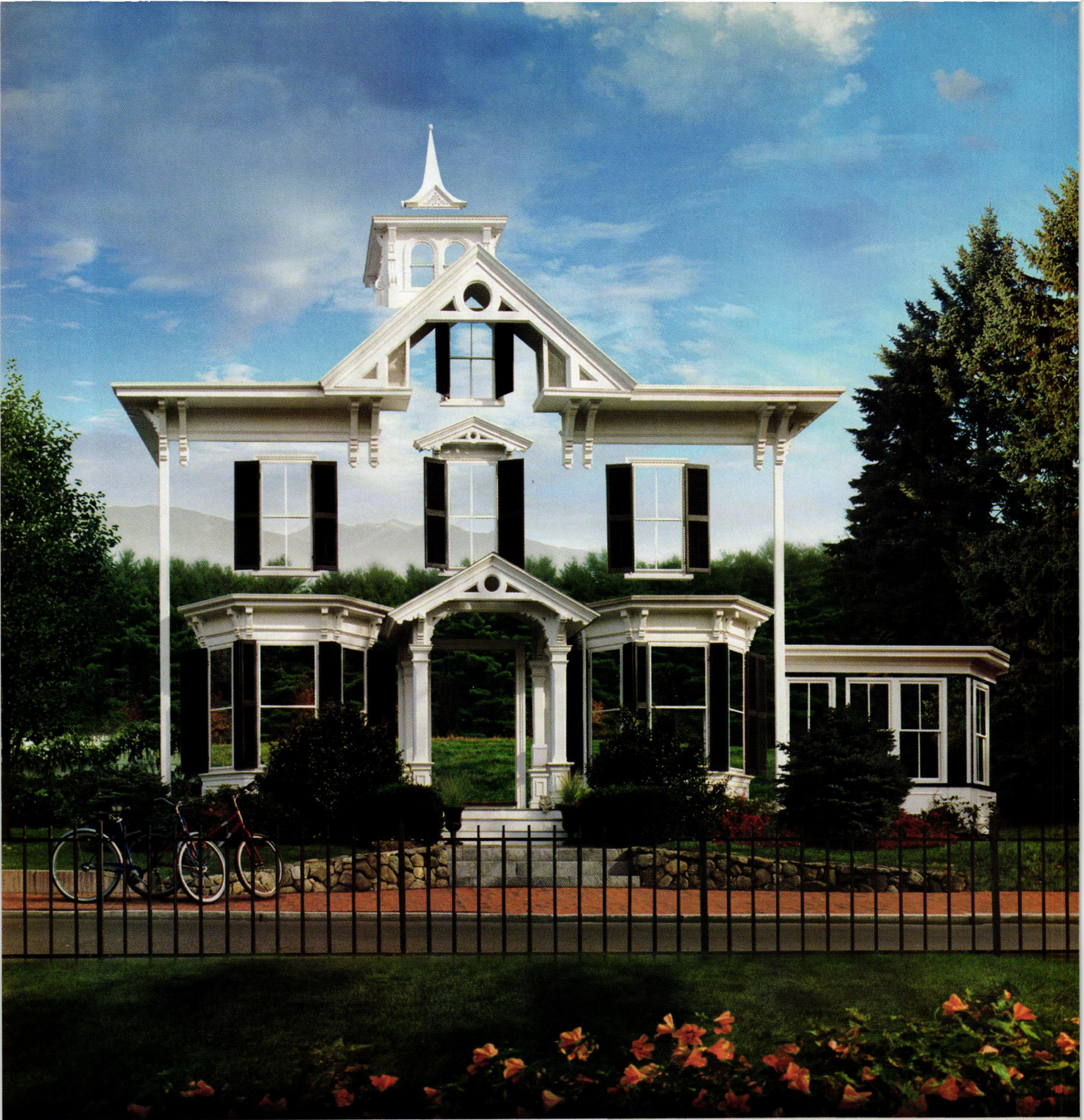
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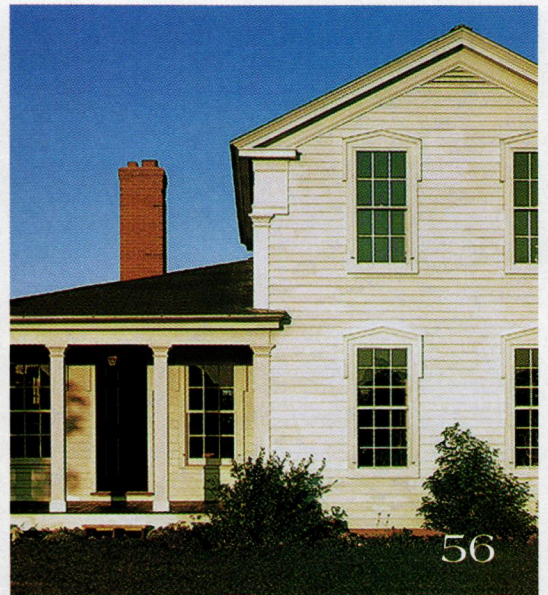
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Magazines, Conferences, Trade



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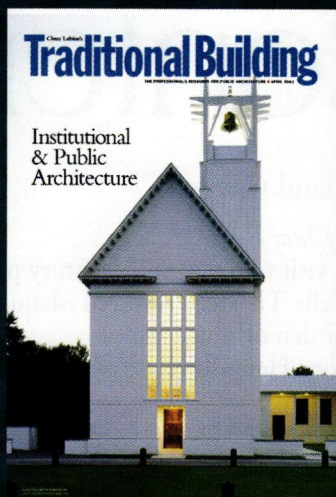
Restore Media LLC is the only publisher and conference producer dedicated to the traditional building market. The company's magazines, conferences, trade shows, websites and directories serve the information needs of architects, builders, developers, building owners, facilities managers, government agencies, interior designers, landscape architects, suppliers, preservationists, town planners, artisans, trades people and old house enthusiasts who work passionately to renovate and restore historic buildings or build new ones in a traditional style.

The traditional building market has emerged into a recognized and firmly established segment of the residential and commercial construction industry with more than \$170 billion in construction volume. From grass roots movements in America's historic neighborhoods to a government mandated National Historic Preservation Act, Americans have a heightened appreciation for our architectural heritage and are spending money to preserve and improve it.

Americans continue their love affair with traditional style architecture and traditional towns. An increasing number of new residential and non-residential buildings are designed to look historic. Whether a new old house built to fit into an existing neighborhood, a sympathetic addition to a 19th century courthouse or a traditional neighborhood development, these are buildings that call upon our architectural heritage, create a sense of place and make people feel good.

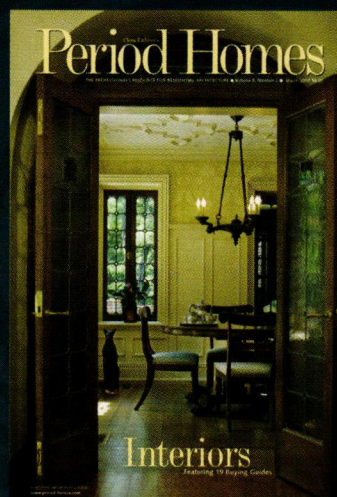
These buildings, the professionals and enthusiasts who design, build, renovate or restore them, and the products that go into them are the subject of Restore Media's magazine, conference, trade show, website and directory content.

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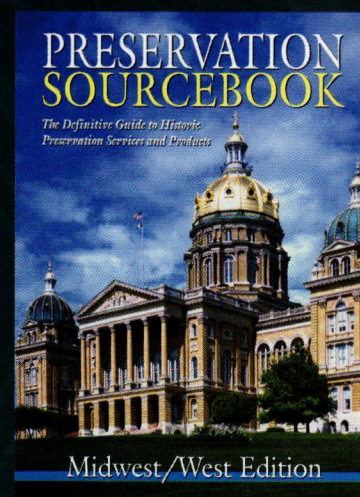
www.traditional-building.com

Traditional Building is a bi-monthly magazine edited for 55,000 professionals involved in restoring old buildings or designing and constructing new buildings in traditional styles. The audience includes architects, contractors, building owners, facilities managers, interior designers, developers, landscape architects, building managers, preservation planners, restoration consultants, and other professionals who need to know where to locate hard-to-find traditional-style products and services.



www.period-homes.com

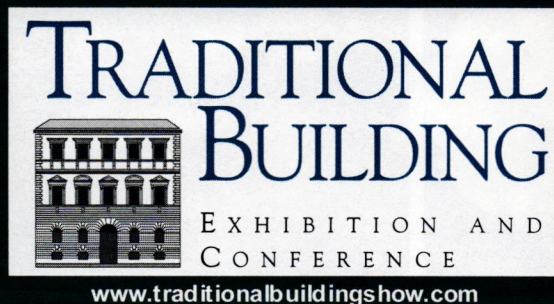
Period Homes, published 6 times a year, is edited for 45,000 professionals involved in residential restoration and renovation or the design and construction of new homes built in period styles. The magazine's audience includes architects, interior designers, custom builders, restoration and renovation contractors, developers, landscape architects, and other professionals who are looking for difficult-to-find historical products and services for residential projects.



www.preservationweb.com

Preservation Sourcebook is the definitive source for services and products to restore historic buildings, landscapes, and interiors. Each regional edition provides property owners and managers, architects, contractors, public officials and preservationists with a comprehensive directory of local and national resources.

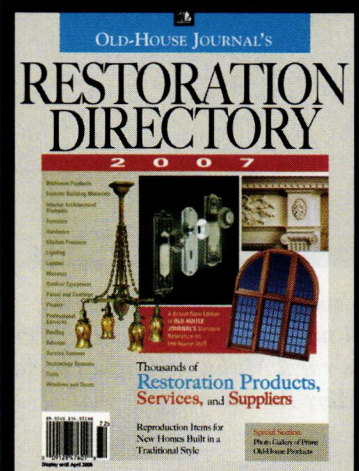
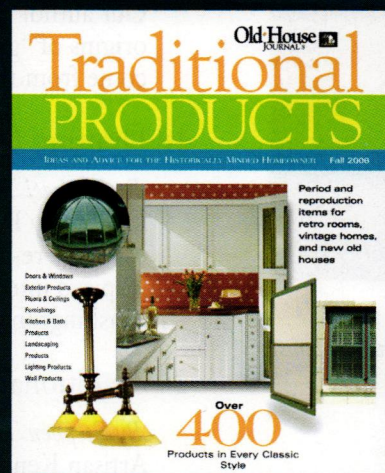
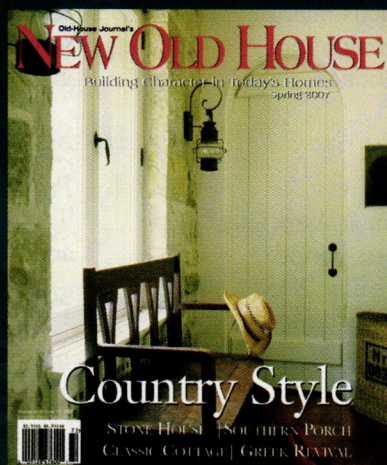
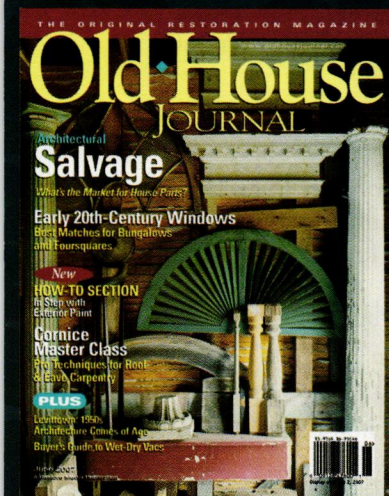
Shows, Websites, Directories



Where the Marketplace Meets

The Traditional Building Exhibition and Conference is the only national event for professionals who restore, renovate or preserve historic buildings or build new ones in a traditional style. Attendees include commercial, institutional and residential architects, contractors, planners, developers, building owners facilities managers, interior designers, landscape architects, renovators, trades people, artisans and enthusiasts. The Traditional Building Exhibition and Conference takes place twice a year, spring and fall. In spring, the show presents 85 seminars, workshops and special events as well as 300 exhibits to 6000 attendees from around the world. In the fall, a regional event, the trade show and education program attracts 3500.

Continuing Education Credits are offered from affiliated associations including AIA, ASID and APPA. Conference curriculum includes technical training, design, planning, installation, materials and management.



www.oldhousejournal.com

Old-House Journal is a bi-monthly special interest title for old-house owners and enthusiasts, as well as for professionals who restore and renovate older homes. OHJ, which has a total circulation of 110,000, is the only consumer magazine in the field that's strictly about owning, renovating, restoring, decorating, and maintaining homes built before 1960. OHJ was launched in 1973, which makes it the oldest publication in its category.

www.newoldhousemag.com

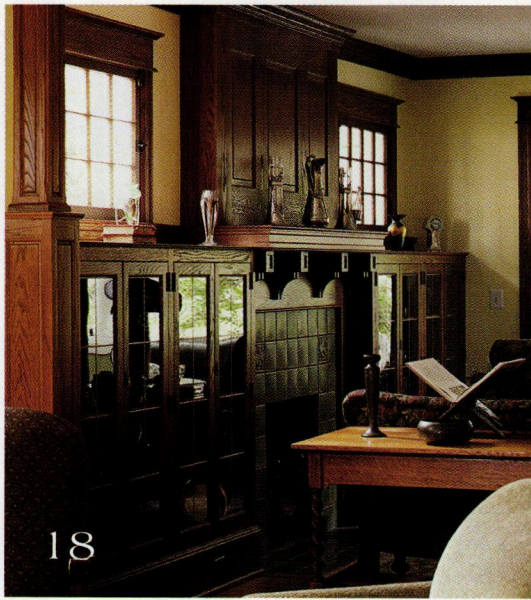
New Old House, the latest launch from Old-House Journal, covers the ever-widening world of new homes built to replicate the look and feel of classic American housing styles, including Arts & Crafts (bungalows), Foursquares, Shingle-style houses, and Victorians of all stripes. With newsstand distribution of 100,000, New Old House is loaded with eye-popping photography; it is a stunning addition to Restore Media's stable of publications.

www.oldhousejournal.com

Old-House Journal's Traditional Products is a comprehensive introduction to the subject, including everything from historically appropriate building materials to period pieces to modern substitutes. With newsstand distribution of 40,000, Traditional Products is loaded with inside tips and hundreds of product leads from the editors of Old-House Journal magazine. Traditional Products is a one-of-a-kind annual guide for restoration-minded consumers intent on remaking their old houses into living-like-new homes.

www.oldhousejournal.com

The annual Restoration Directory has a newsstand distribution of 40,000. It is the most authoritative and comprehensive guide to suppliers of products and services for old homes and old-house style. The Restoration Directory contains more than 500 categories of building products and over 2,000 companies that make everything from stained glass and antique bath fixtures to hardwood floors and heating systems.



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The Italianate style.

Cover photo by Erik Kvalsvik
A simple kitchen in a Greek Revival new old house in rural Michigan designed by architect Marc Rueter.



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Summerhouse



Simple. Relaxed. Uncluttered. These are a few adjectives that come to mind when I think of summerhouses—special places we can't wait to escape to when the weather takes a turn for the better.

Growing up in Massachusetts, I spent many lazy July and August days at family coastal cottages. In Hull at Aunt Gloria's 1920s weathered cedar-shingled house—its front porch offering views out to the sea—Uncle Paul remembers counting the rotations of Boston Light from his bedroom and never quite making it to 100 before drifting off to sleep coddled by the salt air. At Auntie Jen's 1940s cottage colony in Dennis, complete with knotty pine walls and rustic fireplaces, my cousins Nancy and Paula and I spent rainy days sitting around the kitchen table listening to Aunt Jen's tales of Boston in the 1930s, playing cards, or just reading. And at Uncle Joe and John's fishing cabin on Hinckley Pond in Harwich, a single-story, three-room structure clad in horizontal boards, there was no running water or electricity—making the summer experience all the more novel.

One element these dwellings share is a respect of place. They don't compete with or detract from the environment

but rather sit quietly in their surroundings. Built of local materials and with economy of size, they offer comfort and ease to their seasonal occupants.

In this issue, we'll visit summerhouses across the country that fit into their regional surroundings. Architects William Curtis and Russell Windham were approached by a client to create a fishing lodge on a defunct Montana ranch. The architects listened to the landscape and the culture of this Big Sky Country to create an appropriate design. They chose to revitalize the old log cabins and barns on the property for the fishing retreat. On the Massachusetts island of Martha's Vineyard, Mark Hutker Architects restored a cottage compound for a family. The firm created additions to the structures while honoring the original design. Architect Marc Rueter designed a pared-down Greek Revival on a farm in rural Michigan. The simple vernacular creates a warm and welcoming haven. We hope this issue affords you ideas and inspiration for your own haven—be it a summer retreat or your year-round residence.

Nancy E. Berry, Editor

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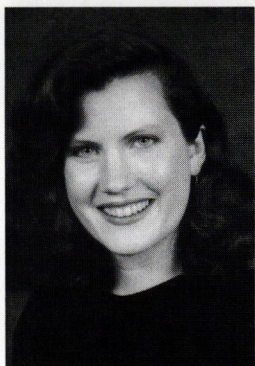
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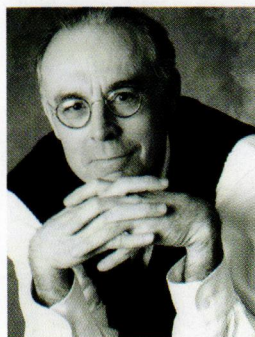
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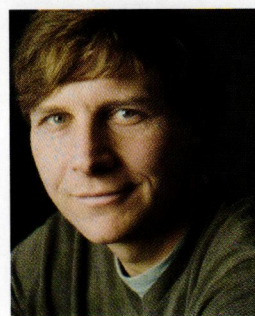
Christine G.H. Franck is a designer and educator with a practice in New York City. She is the former director of the academic programs of the Institute of Classical Architecture &

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



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

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



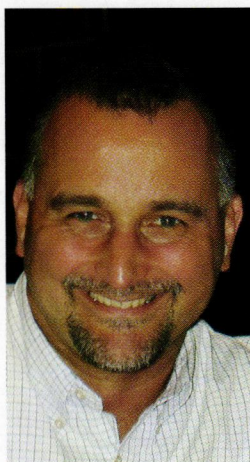
Logan Ward has written about architecture and historic preservation for the *New York Times*, *House Beautiful*, *Cottage Living*, and many other magazines. In 2000, he and

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



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

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



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

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

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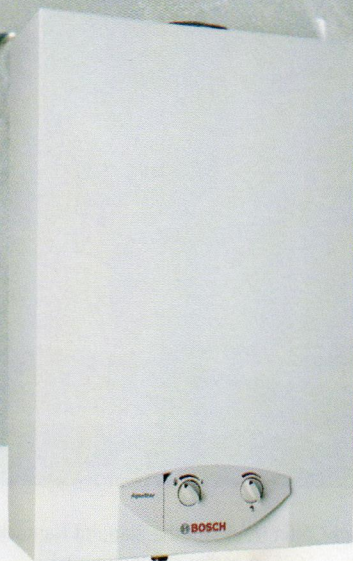
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Original Green

TEXT BY RUSSELL VERSACI

Eco-friendly design can take a lesson from this country's first houses.

Amid all the talk about green building, one important fact is being overlooked: Traditional building was green well before anyone coined the term.

Now I don't have an axe to grind here—far from it. I believe in the wisdom and benefits of sustainable building and environmental stewardship. I just think that it's easier to be green by following the rules of tradition.

I've been pondering how traditional architects can deal with the requirements of LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) developed by the U.S. Green Building Council. In the wake of LEED, the profession is rushing to establish its green credentials, and every other architect is becoming LEED-certified. But is all the fuss really necessary?

A little thinking made me realize that traditional architecture is green by nature, so we traditionalists have been there all along. Traditional building respects the power of nature, uses materials wisely, and knows its place. Traditional buildings are built in harmony with the world around them in a system that architect Steven Mouzon calls "original green."

Mouzon thinks the current state of green thinking is "techno-green" rather than "commonsense green," and I agree. We are scrambling to apply engineering solutions—high-efficiency appliances, low-wattage lightbulbs, reprocessed materials, and insulation upgrades—to the problems of environmental degradation. Although important steps, these high-tech alternatives are the ones getting all the attention.

But while techno-green solves environmental problems with modern-day work-arounds, commonsense green avoids



HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY JACK E. BOUCHER, PHOTOGRAPHER

problems from the start. Traditional building does right by the environment by building wisely—respecting the land, adapting to climate, using native materials, harnessing sunlight and shade, and conserving resources by using them over again.

Across early America the regional traditions of home building occurred naturally as the first settlers built homes carefully adapted to their place. Adaptation was a necessity because there was no technology to fall back on. So home builders took a measure of the land and its climate, used whatever resources were close at hand, and invented designs

The Jethro Coffin House on the island of Nantucket was built in 1686. A center chimney provides warmth to all the rooms for the northern climate.

to provide the most protection and comfort for their families. Repeated over generations, these design solutions became traditions.

Traditional home building began by responding to climate and setting. In the cold North, houses were placed so that a hillside buffered them against winter winds. They faced south to be warmed by the heat of the sun while surrounding trees provided shade in the summer. In the sultry humidity of the South, houses

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Magnolia Mound in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, built in the 1790s, offers a deep front porch and several doors and windows for cross ventilation during the region's hot summers.

were raised up off the ground to allow air to circulate underneath them and prevent rot. In the hot, arid Southwest, houses were made of thick adobe walls that provided thermal mass to temper the heat and keep the interior cool.

In early America, resources were abundant, so conservation was less a necessity than a matter of practicality. Builders used natural materials that were readily at hand because transporting from afar was not an option. New Englanders harvested the endless forests to make houses of oak timbers and split pine shingles, and Pennsylvanians stacked fieldstones cleared from newly plowed fields into stone walls. Stands of longleaf pine and red clay provided wood and brick for the plantations of the Carolina Low Country. In the bayous of Louisiana, houses were made of cypress timbers filled in with a mud and moss plaster called bousillage to insulate the walls.

Out of necessity traditional floor plans were adapted to the weather. The classic New England saltbox was designed around a huge central chimney with fireplaces on three sides to radiate heat and warm the entire house in win-

ter. Most of Charleston's houses were only one room deep to let breezes pass through, with a double porch called a piazza facing east to attract prevailing winds. The Creole cottages of Louisiana had rows of French doors across the front to draw ventilation into the open interior, with no hallways to block the flow of air. In the mild climate of California Spanish casas were planned around a central patio lined with covered porches called corredors that were open-air halls connecting rooms.

Most design features were intended to provide protection and comfort in direct response to the environment. Porches, a device designed to shade the house and temper the heat of the sun are a classic example. There were few in New England because the climate ranged from mild to cold and the culture of porches never developed. The front porch was a necessity in the South where it usually stretched across the whole facade to provide a shady retreat, outdoor gathering place, and summer sleeping porch. The loggias of St. Augustine were covered porches built into the north wall of Spanish casas as a cool terrace shielded from the southern sun.

Traditional builders were also conscientious recyclers. Certain building materials were precious because they required serious human energy to make. In the Southwest, wooden roof beams called *vigas* were dragged off distant hill-sides never to be discarded, and when an adobe house came down, its *vigas* were recycled. Virginians made houses fastened together with hand-forged iron nails that they were unwilling to part with. When they moved, they burned down their wooden houses to salvage the nails. The frugal Pennsylvania Dutch never tore down their early log cabins, instead attaching new stone additions to add much-needed living space. Historically, almost no construction materials went to waste, and what did become firewood for the stove rather than trash for the landfill.

This catalog of innovative methods in traditional building is large and still relevant. Many provide valuable lessons in home building that are attuned to climate and place, though some, like building log cabins or insulating walls with bousillage, are no longer practical. Nevertheless, we have good reason to remember time-tested traditions developed by past generations when we build with the climate, the land, and its natural resources in mind.

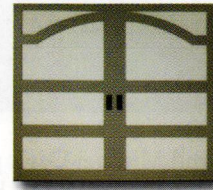
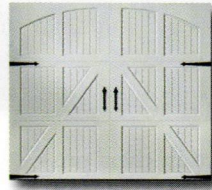
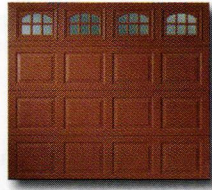
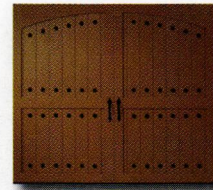
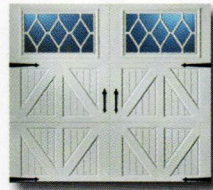
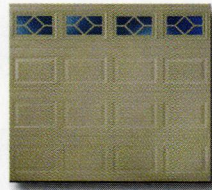
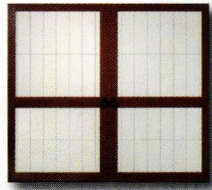
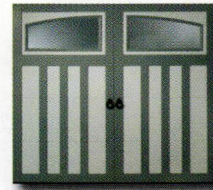
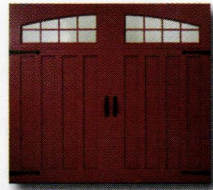
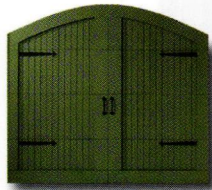
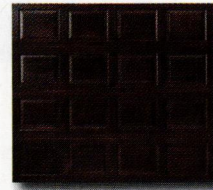
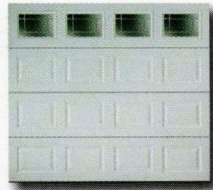
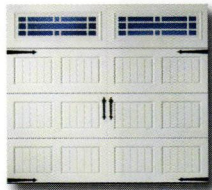
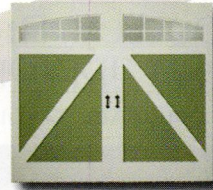
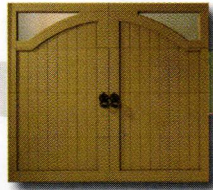
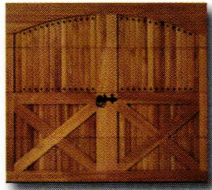
The landscape is still the same, and should be respected with a house whose footprint accommodates its topography and natural features. Climate is forever challenging, urging us to reach back to building solutions that deal with it in passive ways that conserve energy. Scarce resources and transportation costs compel us to use materials made close to home whenever possible. And we have the problem of large numbers of households, so every step we take to build green will be magnified a hundredfold.

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Re-creating the Past

C. Dudley Brown & Associates does some sleuthing to design appropriate interiors for this early-1900s house.

TEXT BY MICHAEL TARDIF PHOTOS BY ERIK KVALSVIK



C. Dudley Brown & Associates reinvented the interior of this early-1900s house in Washington, D.C., using Arts and Crafts elements.

Kristin and Michael Davis purchased their stucco-clad Prairie style home in 1997, one of dozens that had been built in Washington, D.C.'s Cleveland Park neighborhood at the height of the style's popularity in the early-twentieth century.

Many of the homes survive in their pristine original condition, with few alterations beyond the expected kitchen and bath upgrades. Like most surviving Prairie-style homes, those in Cleveland Park are surrounded by tall trees and other

mature vegetation, and their characteristically oversized windows open onto shady summer views accentuated by deep roof overhangs and broad front porches.

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A local millshop re-created the original windows as well as built this handsome bookcase and fireplace mantel. The Davises have period pieces for the interiors.

lazy summers to the interiors of these homes, an effect that is both psychologically and physically cooling—the perfect design for comfortable living in a hot, humid climate in the days before air conditioning. In the winter, these houses are transformed by large fireplaces and naturally finished oak cabinetry, floors, and trim that glow in the soft interior light of the season, creating warm and comfy spaces with plenty of room for a Christmas tree as large as a child’s imagination.

The Davises, however, found the best attributes of their new home somewhat compromised by circa 1970 renovations that reached for a considerably different aesthetic. On the first floor, oak millwork and plaster walls had been

painted white. Two windows to either side of the living room fireplace had been obscured by wall-to-wall and floor-to-ceiling bookcases. In the dining room, the wood muntins of the triple-sash clerestory window in the shallow bay—the spot typically reserved for a large buffet or sideboard—had been removed, each sash fitted with a single pane of glass and painted shut. A long low bookcase extended the entire length of the living and dining room interior wall, completing the “art gallery” effect that a previous owner intended.

Despite the white-painted walls, the interior had become dark. Kristin and Michael immediately set about restoring the original character of the house. The shag carpeting in the entry hall was the first thing to go. “We closed on March 6,” Kristin recalls. “The carpeting was gone by March 7.” Kristen searched the

Web and, among the possible local designers, discovered C. Dudley Brown & Associates. Unbeknownst to the Davises, Brown was one of Washington’s first and remained one of its most prominent professional interior designers, a man with a colorful and illustrious career that reached nearly as far back as their house.

The first meeting did not go well. “The first time he came in the house I wanted to throw him out,” says Mike Davis. “I didn’t want to work with him because he was so opinionated.” Brown closely examined various details and declared them unfit. “There used to be mullions in these windows. You can see where the chair rail used to be. And these hollow-core doors—they’re all wrong,” he said. The Davises soon realized, however, that Brown’s keen eye was exactly what they needed, while his dis-

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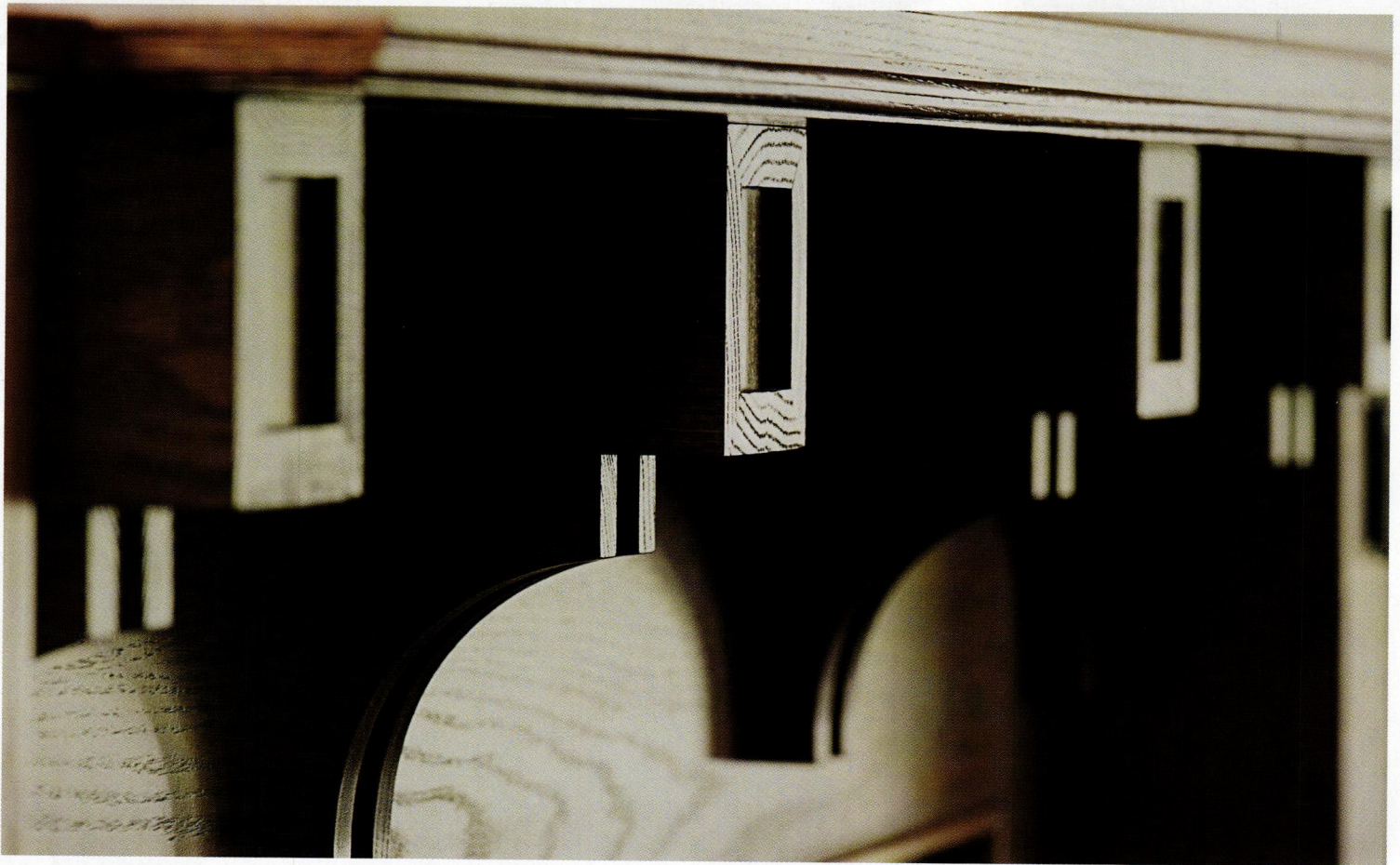
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Brown pulled details from “ghosts” left behind on existing elements, such as the newel-post, crown molding, and window profiles, to create the new cabinets and mantelpiece details.

dainful tone was directed not at them but at the very things that they themselves disdained.

Brown’s longtime associate, Jan Lufton, also an accomplished interior designer, deftly managed the project and attended to many important details. “We saw what we wanted in magazines,” says Mike. “Natural wood, lots of windows, a nice fireplace. We showed it to Dudley and Jan, and they just ran with it. Their attention to detail was amazing.”

With many original details missing, Brown picked up clues wherever he could find them—the surviving stair newel-posts, sections of crown molding—to design entirely new cabinetry and woodwork in harmony with the original char-

acter of the home. The original oak floors, worn beyond salvage, were replaced with new oak floors finished in tung oil. Surviving door casings and the newel-posts of the front hall stair were stripped and refinished.

It is Brown and Lufton’s inventive new work, however, that recaptured the soul of the house. The windows to either side of the living room fireplace were restored, complemented by an entirely new ensemble of oak bookcases, new wood trim, and new mantel that look as though they have always been there. It was impossible to tell just how the dining room and living room had originally been separated, but Brown and Lufton, using the entry hall newel-posts as models, created a new cased opening framed by half-height oak walls topped by half-height columns. The two rooms remain open to one another, yet discretely defined.

The work was executed by Jack Chase and Mark Zang of Ware House Woodworkers, Chase’s Gloucester, Virginia-based woodworking and cabinetry company. In addition to the cabinet and trim work, Chase and Zang painstakingly re-created the muntins in the original sashes of the dining room clerestory windows and replaced the offending hollow-core doors throughout the first floor with new handmade oak doors custom-stained to match the woodwork. The result of this collaboration of skillful designers and master craftsmen is a seamless blend of old and new. The house once again captures the timeless essence of a summer day or a winter night, embracing the seasons as few modern homes can. *NOH*

Michael Tardif is editorial director of Design Byline in Bethesda, Maryland.

For Resources, see page 81.

One Tough Beauty



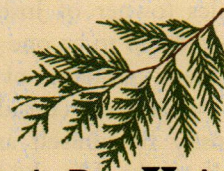
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Where Angels Tread

Ornamental plaster takes on a heavenly quality under the creative hand of Ken Wildes.

TEXT BY STEPHEN T. SPEWOCK PHOTOS BY ERIC ROTH



Above Decorative plasterer Ken Wildes pours plaster into molds. *Left*

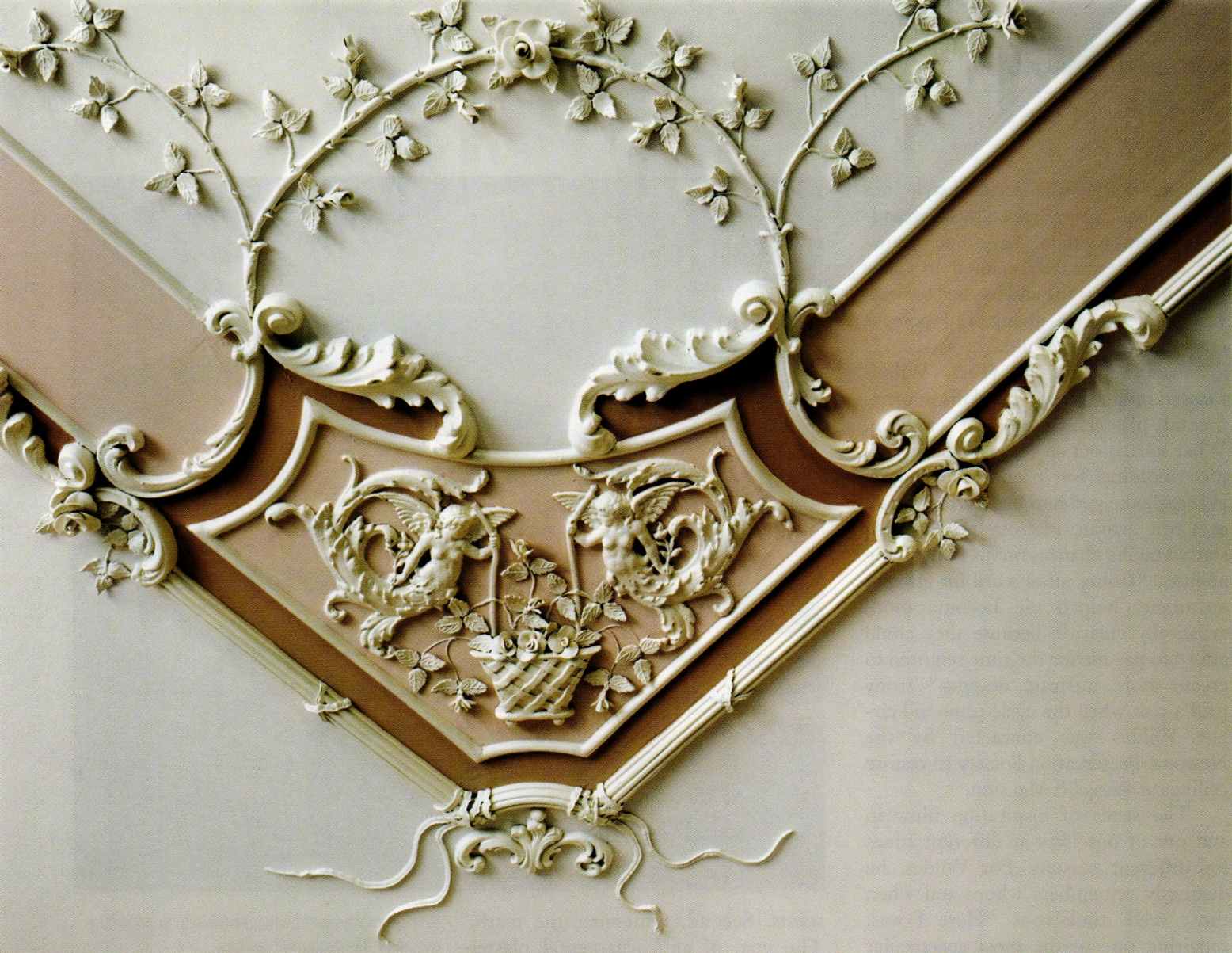
A variety of delicate molded pieces.

Opposite A section of a ceiling designed and executed by Wildes in Massachusetts.

His company's website bestows on Ken Wildes the self-proclaimed title of the "Master of Plaster," conjuring up visions of some carnival character who pitched a tent just outside the city limits for this weekend's show. Yet after further inspection, all the jokes and comparisons fall by the wayside as you review the countless examples of his prolific work, becoming transported into a realm of disbelief that all this magnificent beauty in front of your eyes was created by one man's bare hands.

You have just entered the world of Ken Wildes (owner of Joshua & Co.) who is considered to be one of the leading ornamental plasterers of our time—especially when you consider that he works mostly by himself and is completely self-taught. His ability to create designs incorporating any one or a combination of period styles—Edwardian, Baroque, Federal, Venetian, Louis (XIV, XV, and XVI)—has brought him nation-





al recognition and acclaim. Even the *New York Times* recently paid compliment, calling his work “plaster worthy of an angel...creating a feeling of stepping back in time.”

Humble Beginnings

After leaving high school in 1970, Wildes worked for a local company assembling chairs. One morning while thumbing a ride to the factory, he was picked up by a contractor who offered him a hard-cash raise to hang drywall. The next day Wildes jumped in with both feet, hanging sheets, stretching tape, mixing joint compound, and troweling on the mixture. Five years later, after learning all aspects of the business—and usually doing most of the work—he branched out on his own. By hiring laborers to haul and hang the sheets, he was able to concentrate more on mixing plaster to create unique, decorative ceilings. “I get the same

charge today looking at a wide open ceiling that I got 30 years ago. It’s like a big canvas ready for me to create my next masterpiece,” says Wildes.

As word spread of his talents, larger and more complex jobs started presenting themselves, and each was accomplished with growing creative fervor. “The ideas just keep coming from inside, and I was always able to create a theme or style that fit the space.” Deriving great satisfaction and pleasure through the work, Wildes taught himself how to overcome many of the design challenges with good old-fashioned brainstorming. “Every job has many inherent problems to overcome. The trick is to not dwell on them, focus your entire mind and efforts on the task at hand, and then let it all go. Eventually, the answer you’re looking for comes back to you.”

In 1989, the bottom fell out of the construction industry in New England,

forcing Wildes to take on skim coat plastering to make ends meet. Using a type of drywall (called “blue board”) that accepts plaster without the plaster readily drying out, special premixed plaster is then uniformly spread over all the drywall with a long smooth trowel—a technique so difficult it’s described by many in the trades as akin to “buttering the barn with a sheet of plywood.” Wildes became obsessed with the new medium that was much easier to mix and apply than joint compound, realizing it could allow him to create more ornamental designs of the highest quality.

True Inspiration

To cultivate his inspirations, Wildes took a tour of the Rosecliff Mansion in Newport, Rhode Island. Staring up toward the 24-foot-high ceilings, he remembers being overwhelmed by the exquisite detail and finish, wanting to

incorporate the same intricate style into his own work. “I was raised by my grandparents, and we didn’t have much growing up. I desperately wanted to make something of my life and learned to work very hard, always giving 150 percent effort in everything I did,” he says.

For the next 10 years, Wildes focused on developing his skills in ornamental plaster design and creation. What started out as a medallion or cornice molding for friends and family eventually helped him build a reputation as a true artisan, whereby more clients started taking chances on his blossoming abilities. “Doing more work for affluent customers helped me become more artistically creative, because they could afford to pay me for the time required to create more intricate designs.” Irony paid a visit when the cycle came full circle: Wildes was contacted by the Newport Preservation Society to restore ceilings at Rosecliff Mansion.

The seeds of inspiration blow in and out of our lives at different times for different reasons. For Wildes, he distinctly remembers where and when those seeds took root. “Here I was, repairing one of the most spectacular national treasures [Rosecliff] thinking back to my senior year in high school when I wasn’t good at studying and suffered academically. So I decided to try a ceramics course. At the end of the semester, the teacher commented that I was really good at it and should try to do something with my talent. And I’ve never forgotten that.”

Since finishing Rosecliff in 2002, real progress in the craft has grown exponentially, in part due to high-end work but also because Wildes really loves what he does. “No two jobs are the same. I can use the same styles with different finishes or the same finishes with different styles—however I’m inspired depending on the requirements of the project.”

Taking Shape

When asked how he prepares for a project, Wildes is quick to point out two rules of thumb. “First, try to accomplish whatever it is that the client



wants. Second, remember the math.” The goal of any ornamental plasterwork is to create a spatial relationship with correct sense of scale, having each section complementing the whole. Correct sense of scale depends on the size of space to work with—in both breadth (square footage) and depth (volume)—which dictates the number of sections, geometry of connections, and space between ornaments.

The work itself is labor intensive and time-consuming—not recommended for those with short attention spans. To get that realistic look, Wildes hand-makes every small piece, say a rosebud, out of clay, which holds more detail and form than molded counterparts. For “run-in-place” pieces, Ken makes separate plaster molds and then places them together to create a continual pattern, caulking all the seams using a pastry bag full of plaster. Considering that a 7-foot x 9-foot ceiling medallion has over 2,000 individual pieces, it becomes clear how intense the process can be—somewhat

Wildes employs paint when possible to enhance the design of his decorative ceilings.

like assembling a jigsaw puzzle where you’re making all the pieces as you go along and putting them together without a picture to go from.

To finish off the work, Wildes takes into consideration a multitude of other variables that will ultimately impact how the work will be viewed, such as volume, paint, and light. If the ceilings are low, that means less distance to the viewer, therefore requiring a smaller relief. If the ceilings are high, then there is more room for the relief, which can be brought farther down into the room’s space. “To avoid weight issues, the maximum thickness of plaster is only 1 to 1 1/2 inches. I’ll use scrap drywall to build up depth, anchoring to ceiling joists or strapping with screws. It gives the same look with much less weight, which is much less dangerous considering a 3-foot section of built-up cornice molding could easily weigh 50 pounds.”

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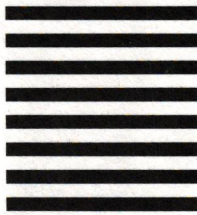
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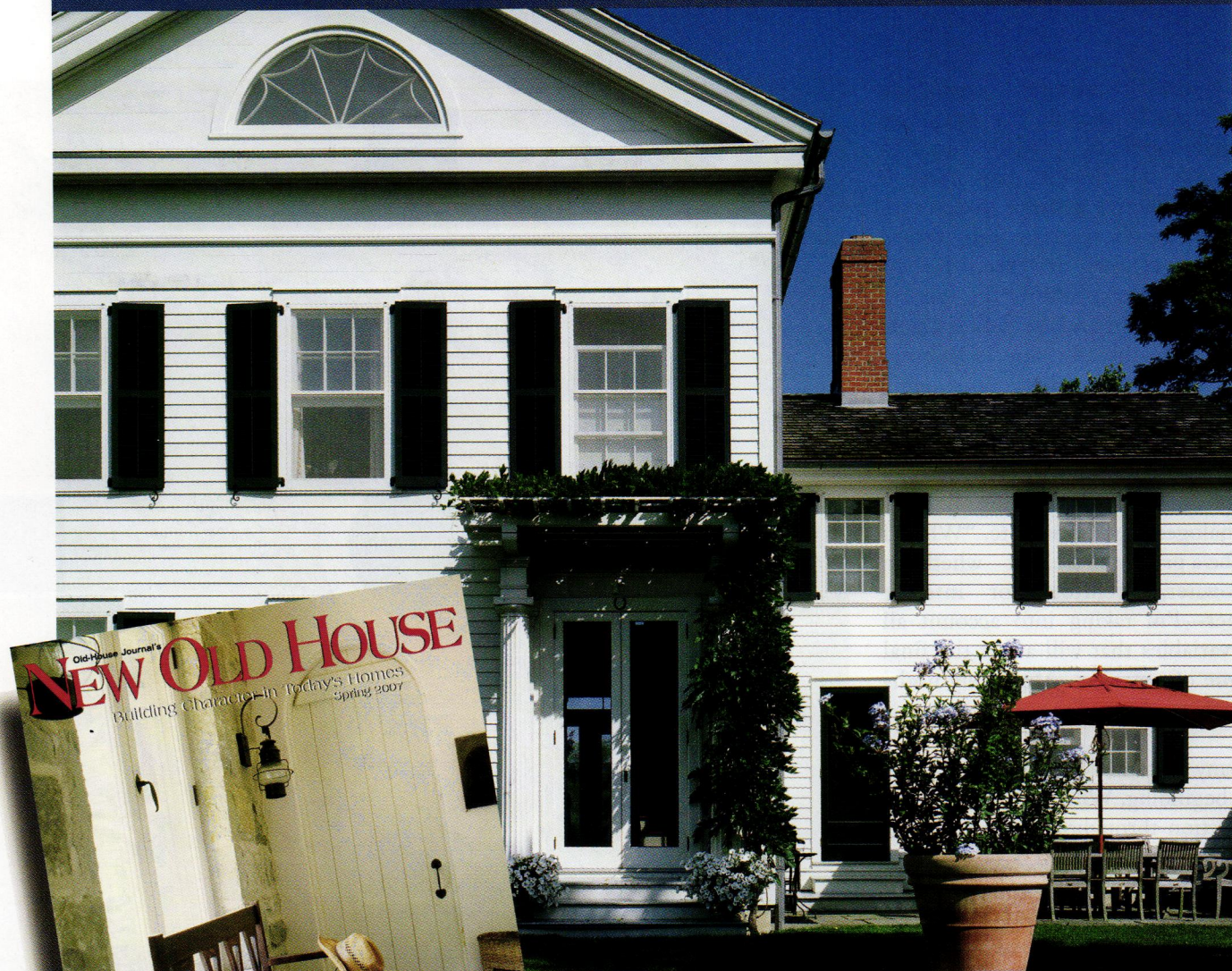
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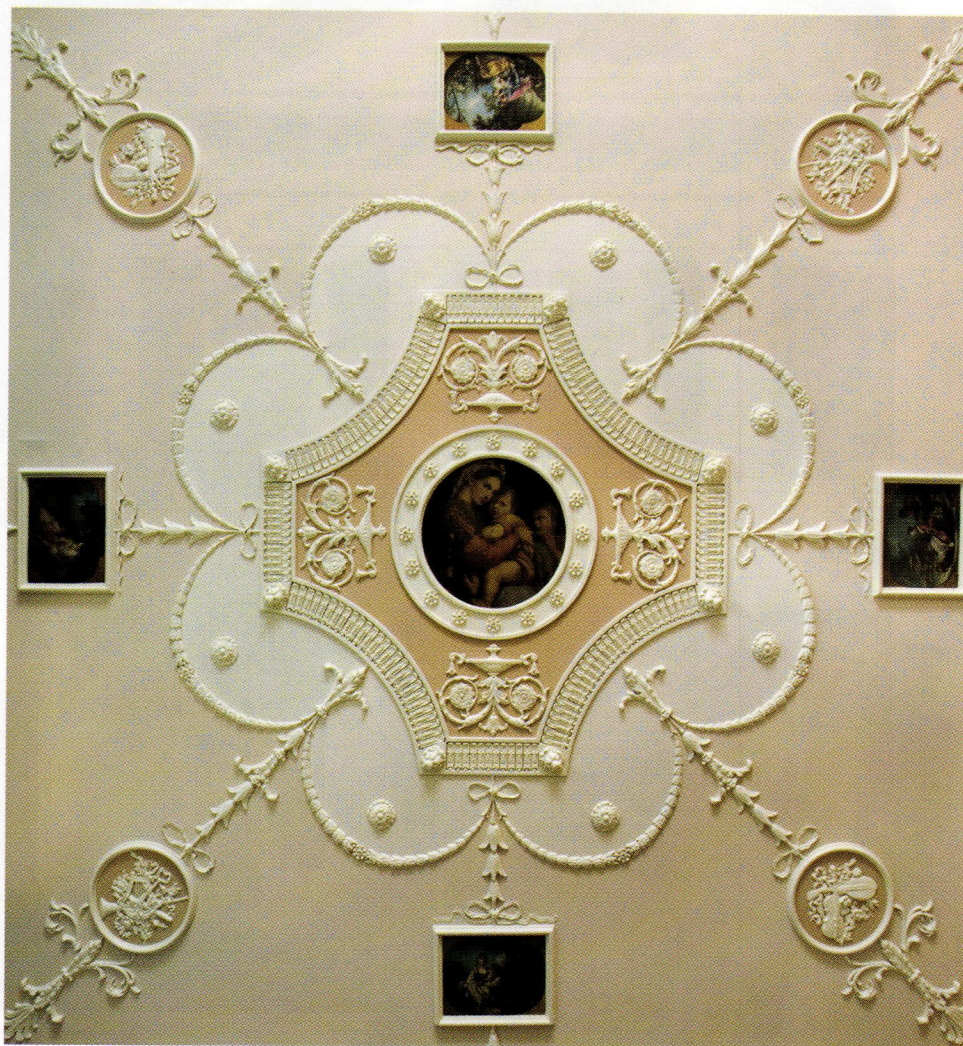
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If you think making the ornamental pieces might be tedious, just try painting them—something Wildes does to help offset the design. The paint is especially effective in large spaces with high ceilings. “I tend to lean toward [eighteenth-century architect] Robert Adam-style work, where the plaster remains very light and the field is painted very dark—usually blue.” Different paint finishes (flat, gloss, pearl, etc.) also create different effects—especially when combined with different light sources, varying from natural light to all sorts of indoor types: reading, fluorescent, halogen, spot, area, etc. “When I describe a project to a client—whether a homeowner, architect, or interior designer—I’m taking into account all these variables that will affect the final outcome of a project. Absolutely nothing is left to chance.”

Company Matters

In the beginning, Wildes did mostly new construction throughout New England. Over time, his reputation has called him to New York and New Jersey, while his website (www.plasterart.com) has piqued interest in Illinois, Tennessee, Florida, and as far away as Arizona. Today he takes on repair, restoration, and renovation work for ceilings, walls, panels, moldings, and medallions. To accommodate the growing demands on any given project, Wildes has enlisted the help of some well-groomed apprentices: his own sons. “I probably have 20 years left, at best, and would love to see my sons take over and carry on while I can still teach them all I know about the craft.”

The company is actually named after his first son, Joshua, who passed away only 12 hours after birth. “It was my way of honoring his memory, feeling that the company could grow in his name.” The second born, Jacob, now 27, is not as involved currently, but he has worked with Wildes in the past. The third son, Benjamin, is 22 and has been working for the past five years, bearing a lot of the physical burdens of the craft: mixing the plaster and making all the castings. “Having Benjamin do a lot of the time-



consuming prep work has allowed me to focus more on the creative design aspect of a project. This is where the company has really advanced just in the past five years.” Lastly is Ken Jr., who at 18 wants to join the company right after graduating from high school. “He has a good eye for design and will fit right in, if he wants to,” says Wildes.

Craftsman for Life

For craftspeople, it’s all about the process. This is especially true for Wildes. Now, at 56 years old, he feels the same way he did when he started out. “The key is to keep working. I like the work—I need the work. The hardest part of any project is when I walk away and realize the job is done and I won’t see it again.”

He takes one last inventory of his tools and molds, packs everything up, and heads back to home base in

Inspired by eighteenth-century architect Robert Adam, Wildes designed this ceiling using picture insets, which include the four seasons and the Madonna and child.

Newport, Rhode Island, contemplating the intricacies of the next big project on the schedule, pondering how he’ll capture the unseen beauty in a client’s unfinished space. “If you work too hard on one thing for too long, sometimes it doesn’t work out. Sometimes you just have to let go, and all the answers come back to work themselves out,” explains Wildes, spoken as if he overheard some of those angels overhead giving out advice. **NOH**

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

For information on Joshua & Co., visit www.plasterart.com.



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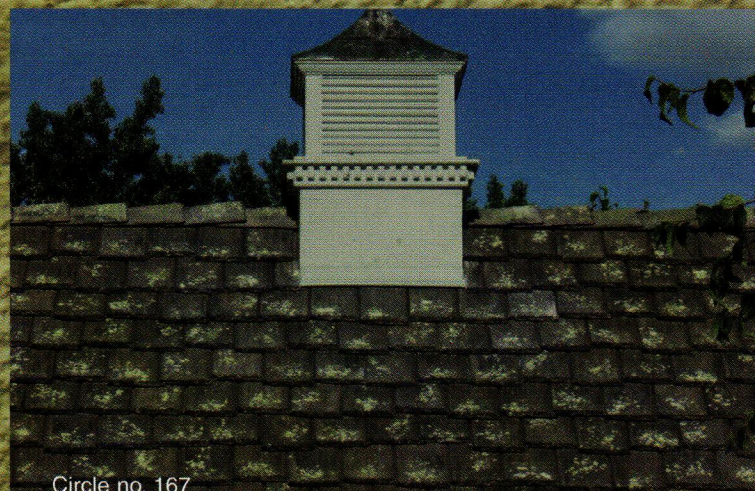
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**Patent Pending*



Beautiful Beadboard

TEXT BY BETHANY LYTTLE

Once used only to cover walls in service areas, this quaint covering has proven itself to be a viable alternative in all rooms of the house.

On a summer afternoon, the gentle rhythm and quiet repetition of a lake's waves lapping against the shore possess a universal appeal. Beadboard, with its repetitive series of vertical boards, has a similar effect. The material immediately evokes feelings of comfort and nostalgia. Widely associated (particularly in North America) with cottage living, beadboard is America's visual cue to relax.

"It's true," says Stephen Vanze of Barnes Vanze Architects. "Just envision a porch with a flat plywood ceiling. Then envision the same porch with a ceiling finished in beadboard. The reaction is completely different—and resoundingly positive. Immediately, we envision lazy afternoons beneath its shelter."

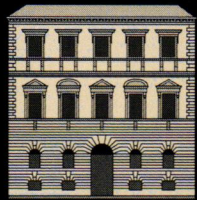
Beloved though it has become, beadboard was originally valued for its utilitarian properties, not its design potential. "With the advent of milling machines in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries," explains Brantley Ellzey, of Brantley Ellzey Design, "mass production became possible, keeping costs low." Far from being viewed as a decorative home-finishing material, beadboard was incorporated into houses to save both money and time. Informal areas of a house that would not be visible to guests—pantries, servants' quarters, attics, and back stairwells—were lined with the vertical siding. And ceilings, including porch ceilings, were lined with the wood boards. Even much of what we think of as classic wainscoting was originally designed to protect plaster walls that might otherwise have required constant repair.

Barnes Vanze Architects incorporated beadboard into this stair hall in a Maine cottage.



SAM GRAY

TRADITIONAL BUILDING



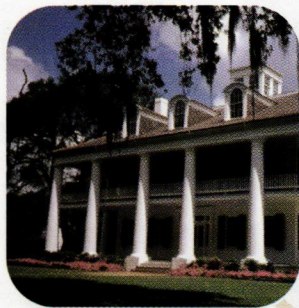
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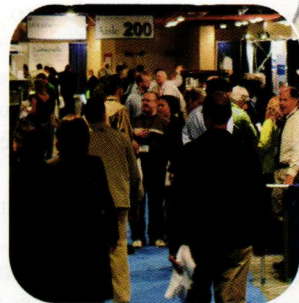
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PHOTOS THIS PAGE BY ERIC ROTH



Perhaps because its lines impart such texture, depth, and sense of scale to a surface, the material gradually garnered aesthetic favor, and by the 1920s and 1930s, it was making its way into slightly more refined wall panels, coffered and pie-style porch ceilings, and semiformal dining areas.

Bringing It Home

Modern residential architecture is embracing beadboard in updated and quietly innovative ways. “Indeed, it is ironic that the very material that was once dismissed as a cost-effective quick fix has become valued in the luxury market,” says Ellzey. “But this doesn’t mean it isn’t still important to keep its humbler origins in mind. A visually casual material, beadboard is still most appropriately suited to spaces such as family rooms, kitchens, bathrooms, nicely designed mudrooms or entryways, and, of course, outside on porches.” It’s at its best when used in cottage-style, Shingle-style, and other home designs that draw on the purest forms of American architectural vernacular.

Ruth Bennett of the Classic Group in Concord, Massachusetts, recently used beadboard in a project, integrating

the boards into the design in a variety of ways without losing sight of the material’s ability to impart a sense of visual continuity. The result was a relaxed-looking home. “We used beadboard on the ceilings in the family room and kitchen and also used it to line the walls of the pantry,” she says. In all cases, traditional 1 x 6 boards were used, and in all instances, the material was painted off-white for uniformity. “For texture and variation, we coffered the ceiling in the kitchen and then filled in the areas with beadboard. The rhythm of the boards accentuates the smooth texture of the flush-face cabinetry.” The back wall of the pantry, also painted off-white, is exposed with open shelves. Here, the boards were hung vertically, not horizontally, for subdued interest. In fact, understated design choices like these have a way of giving a room a certain casual elegance. While simultaneously acknowledging the past, the “twists” in design demonstrate a willingness to embrace the present.

At its most conventional, beadboard is presented vertically. But irregular spaces demand special consideration and almost always result in delightful adaptations. “In a bay area, for instance, one

Left beadboard is a perfect addition to a new old bathroom. *Above* Beadboard painted light blue was a popular porch ceiling choice for traditional houses.

might follow the rhythm and outline of the bay. In a turret, one might arrange the boards into pie segments,” explains Vanze. Though valued for the ease with which it can cover expansive areas, beadboard, when used where there are corners, crevices, angles, and curves, emerges as a wonderfully dramatic design statement.

Beadboard Primer

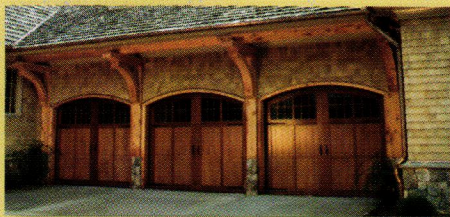
Beadboard is, as its appearance and name suggest, a series of boards, typically milled from softwoods (though certainly hardwoods, such as mahogany can be used and stained to bring out their tone and luster), which are subsequently lined up and fit together, in tongue-and-groove fashion. The gaps between the boards are designed to facilitate the expansion and contraction associated with changes in climate and temperature. However, to hide this swelling and shrinking, a “bead” is carved into the edges and faces of the boards, effectively cloaking the gaps in an aesthetically pleasing way. These bead profiles vary in



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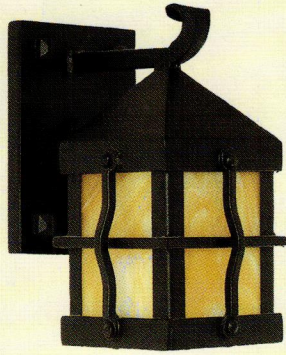
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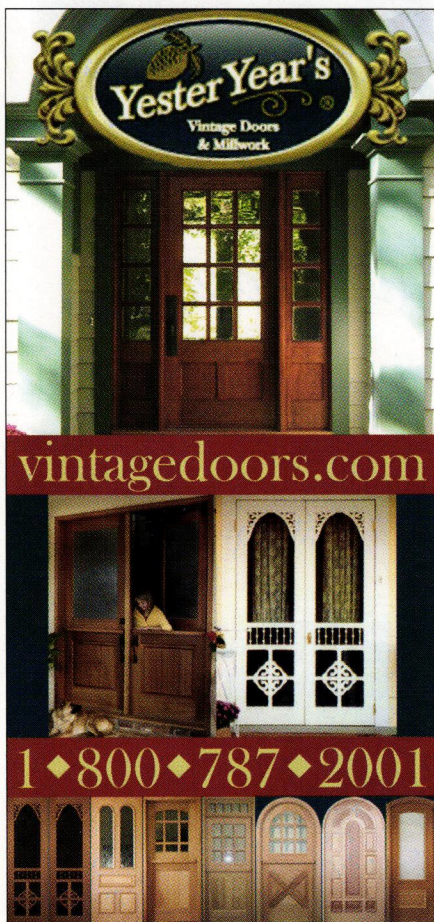


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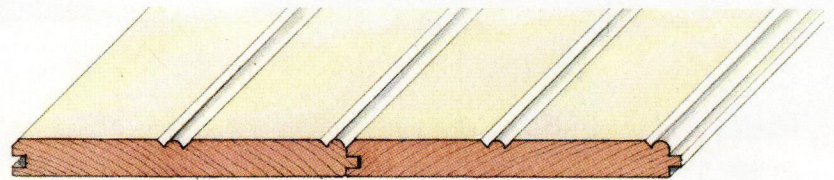
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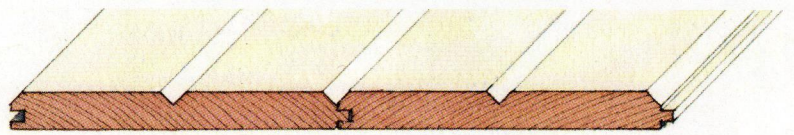
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DESIGN DETAILS

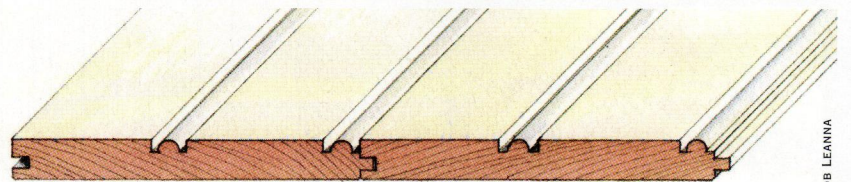
Beadboard Profiles



V-bead



V-groove



Custom standard

ROB LEANNA

style, and being aware of available types can be an important part of customizing a design.

V-bead—As its name suggests, a V-bead has a “V” shape that is covered with a half-round.

V-groove—In this style, the grooves are carved into the wood. Both of these styles are considered historical, making them best for existing situations that require seamless renovations or for new houses that are designed in keeping with a specific historical period.

Custom standard—Characterized by a half-round bead on a rectangular groove, this look is larger in scale, so you get more shade and shadow and more of a visual accent with respect to the actual beading.

Getting the Look

Beadboard is available in both indoor and outdoor (treated) woods. Though traditionally tongue-and-groove, it is also available in sheets. Sheet-style boarding is often less likely to have blemishes or imperfections, while tongue-and-groove offers a crisper line. “If you plan to use the tongue-and-groove boards, I always recommend selecting the boards one by one,” says

Ellzey. “The process is more labor intensive and time-consuming, but in the end you’ll have a series of boards without knots or imperfections.”

Before selecting the material, decide whether the beadboard will be stained or painted. Painting creates the easy-going look we’ve come to love, while staining articulates best the craftsmanship we associate with the material. Typically, sheet-style boarding is less suited to staining than tongue-and-groove boards. Sheet-style beadboard responds beautifully to paint, however, keeping wall surfaces looking uniform without drawing undue attention to themselves.

This Way and That

Whether you choose to use beadboard in new ways, such as running it on the diagonal or incorporating it into a High Victorian look by creating wall panels, or to create a box beam ceiling, this all-American favorite suggests old-fashioned comfort and carefree living. And that, like the boards themselves, is a tradition worth repeating. **NOH**

Bethany Lyttle is a freelance writer living in New York.

For Resources, see page 81.

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& Traditional Materials

Secret Gardens

A look at appropriate methods for creating privacy in your outdoor landscape.

TEXT BY MICHAEL WEISHAN PHOTOS BY ERIC ROTH

As summer rolls around and people move outdoors to enjoy the fine weather, clients inevitably ask me about ways to increase privacy. Essentially, there are three options to block unsightly views or to enclose an area from prying eyes: fencing, hedges, or screen plantings. These choices are not necessarily interchangeable, and which you select depends upon a set of design criteria entirely specific to your property.

Let's tackle the subject of fencing first, because it's probably the most difficult of the three for the beginning gardener. The primary key to success is remembering that fencing was originally conceived either as a means to keep something in, such as livestock, or as a means to keep something out, such as roving animals or unwanted visitors. As such, fences had to start and end at some logical point to provide the desired containment, and they still need to do so today, if they are to make visual sense in our landscapes. While this may seem self-evident, you would be amazed how often this premise is forgotten in the design of today's yards. A quick tour of almost any neighborhood will reveal instance after instance of the odd fence panel or two thrown up willy-nilly to block out a particular view, stranded in the middle of the landscape. Once you start looking around, you'll also find fences that start along the side of the drive or garden bed and after a short run mysteriously end, almost as if the builder had run out of lumber. To be effective in delineating a boundary or providing privacy, fences can't just start and stop at random. They must begin and end in a way that complements and corresponds to the rest of the landscape. If an isolated element is needed to block a particu-



lar view, then a screen planting should be used instead.

The second key to success when erecting a fence is taking care to choose a fencing style that matches your house. A fence is, in essence, an extension of your home's architecture into the garden, and as such needs a similar look and feel. For example: If you're building a

Boston-based Horst Buchanan Architects chose a decorative white fence that echoes the Victorian era Queen Anne-style home to create a private side yard garden.

rustic-style farmhouse, you would want to choose a fence that reflects that same spirit—perhaps a picket or rail fence that's painted to match your home. Or in the case of an urban Victorian town



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house, you might opt for an intricate wooden or iron design. Also keep in mind that, historically, as architectural styles evolved, fencing styles developed along with them, so chances are there is a fencing type that matches your home pretty closely. And while there is probably no single “right” option for your house, there can unfortunately be numerous bad choices for any given home. The message here is that it pays to shop around and familiarize yourself with various design options. If you can’t find just what you need, consider ordering a custom-built fence that echoes a particular architectural element found on your house, such as a porch rail, bracket, or stair baluster.

Finally, don’t buy cheap fencing. Good fences are expensive: There’s absolutely no getting around that. Cheap fences are just an illusion. They don’t last, and since a huge portion of the fence’s cost is in installation and maintenance, you will find yourself paying twice what you would have if only you had installed a good fence in the first place. Excellent fencing options come in wood (naturally rot-resistant materials like cedar, or treated products), metal (iron and aluminum), and now even vinyl, which looks like wood, comes in several colors, and has the great advantage of never needing to be painted.

The alternative to erecting a fence is to use tall plant materials that will create a sense of privacy or block an ugly view. Here you have two options. The first is to plant a straight row of a single-species—a hedge—that will essentially act as a living fence. The other alternative is to plant a nonlinear grouping of different species—a screen planting—that works in combination to form a barrier. Each has its advantages and disadvantages.

Hedges are ideal for situations where a narrow border is desired, either to shield a particular area or to delineate a space within the garden. Hedges also have certain advantages over fences. First of all, as living material, hedges are



much softer and less imposing than fencing, making hedges the appropriate choice where a more delicate effect is required. Also, hedges can reach heights far greater than any fence in situations where a really tall border is needed.

While almost any kind of plant with an upright habit can be used to form a hedge, some work better than others. First, ask yourself some questions: How tall and how wide do you want your hedge to grow? Do you want an evergreen or deciduous border? Do you want a formal (clipped) or informal (natural) look? At its most basic, selecting the right hedge plant is a simple process of elimination using these three criteria. Simply decide on

This patio, designed by Ned Jalbert, is bordered by a variety of screen plantings for an intimate, private dining area.

your maximum height and width (finding a species that closely fits your parameters will save many hours of tedious pruning); then choose between evergreen or deciduous material and then between a formal or informal look. Under most circumstances, your options within any given growing zone will generally be limited to three or four possibilities.

Probably the most important key to achieving a successful hedge is being realistic about how much ground space you have to devote and how large the plants you choose will ultimately grow.

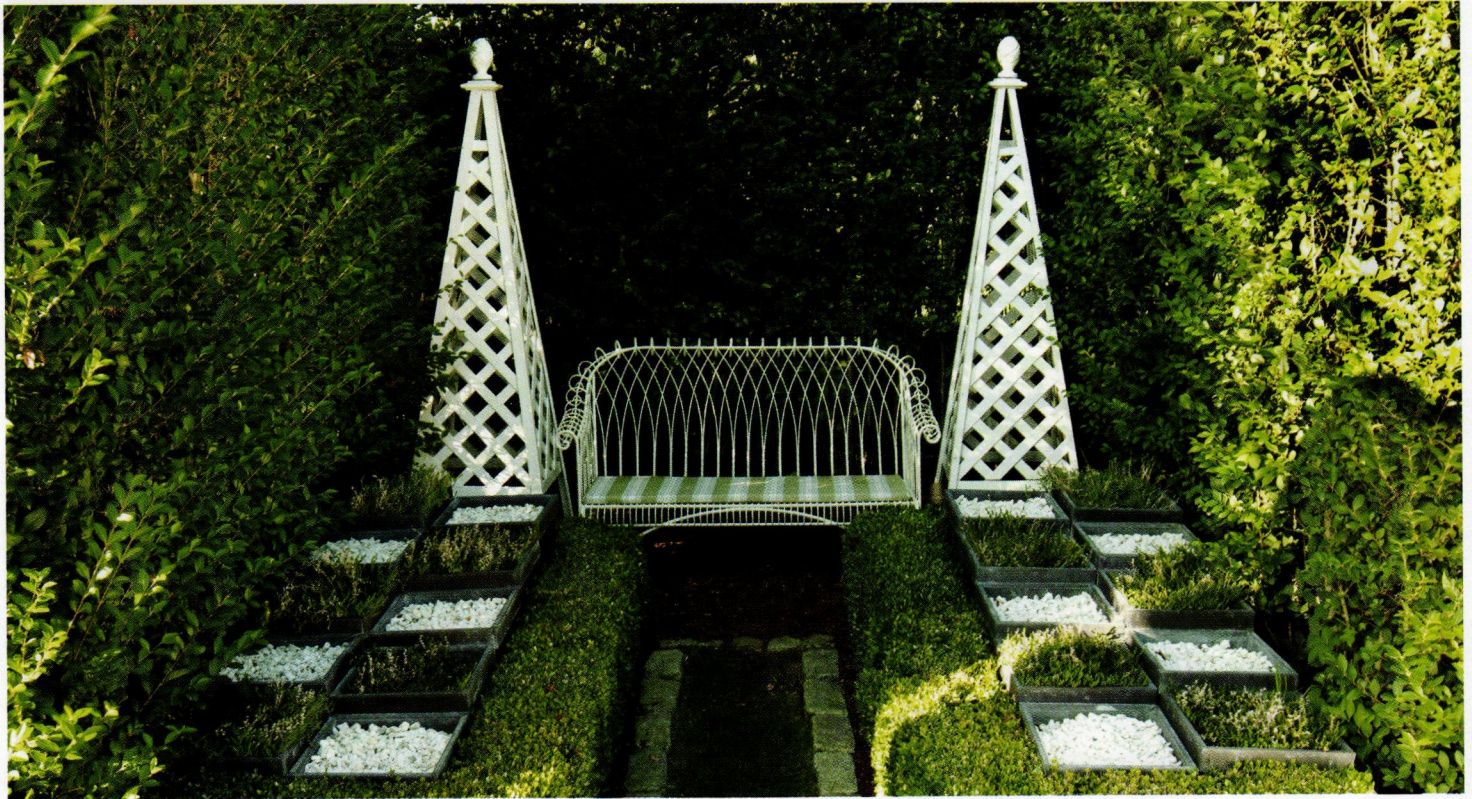
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Many people, looking at, say, a small yew or upright juniper in the garden center, pay little or no attention to the label that reads “reaches 25 feet tall and wide.” If you choose to ignore such instructions, rest assured it will be at your peril. As certain as the return of summer each year, these shrubs will ultimately grow to their intended height, and at best, you’ll be confronted with a constant battle to keep these green giants in check. At worst, you’ll be forced to begin the process all over again at great expense—only this time with more suitable material.

Also, remember that hedges, just like fences, need to start and end at logical points in the landscape—a straight row of shrubs floating in the middle of a lawn looks just as ridiculous as that stranded panel or two of fencing. This requirement for a coherent line, however, often conflicts with a hedging demand of another kind: To do their best, hedges need light from both sides, as well as consistent light, water, and soil conditions *over the full length of their run*. If a portion of the hedge is subjected to different con-

ditions than the rest, the result will be an extremely spotty and ineffectual barrier. Often, design and hedge demands are impossible to reconcile, and in situations like this, fencing becomes the better choice.

The final option for creating privacy is a screen planting. Like hedges, screen plantings use woody plants to block unwanted views, but unlike hedges, screen plantings are thick, multilayered compositions made up of a number of different species. Screen plantings generally aren’t strictly linear either (though they *do* need to begin and end, like hedges, at a logical place in the landscape). Instead, they generally vary considerably in depth (as well as height) from one end to the other, depending on the plant materials used and the requirements of the design. This flexibility makes them especially ideal for tricky situations where growing conditions differ from one end of the planting to the other.

The downside to screen plantings is that the incorporation of multiple species requires significantly more space than

This highly stylized formal composition has a mixture of tall and short hedges to create texture and layers in this small seaside garden.

would a hedge. Screen plantings are also considerably more difficult than hedges to lay out and plant. If a screen planting seems the correct option for your yard, it’s probably wise to seek professional design advice. And speaking of advice, be sure that whichever option you choose to create privacy on your property—hedge, fence or screen planting—you have a well thought out landscape plan in hand before you begin. The old adage of “plan twice, plant once” is totally true, and following this advice could very well mean the difference between enjoying this summer from the comforts of your chair or spending needless hours behind a pick and shovel. **NOH**

This article was adapted from Michael Weishan’s latest book, The Victory Garden Companion. To purchase his book or for more information on Michael, please visit www.michaelweishan.com.

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A look at what's hot in windows and doors for New Old Houses.

PRODUCED BY NANCY E. BERRY

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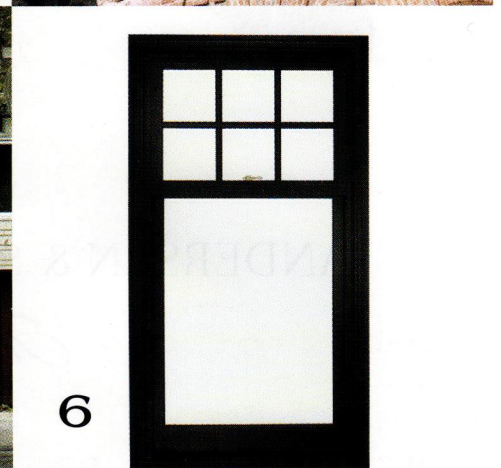
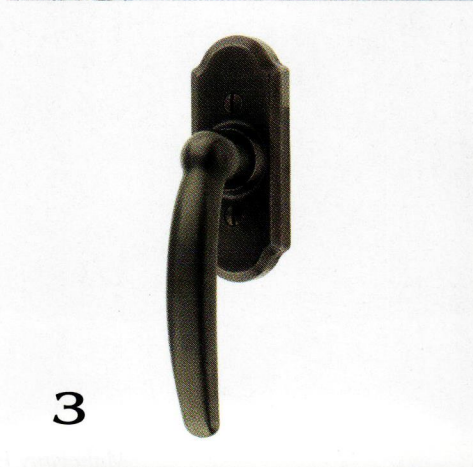
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For more information, see page 81.



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Architects William Curtis and Russell Winchard renovated a group of old ranch buildings in Montana. A horse barn became a game room, another barn became a fishing shack, and the blacksmith shop became a service area for the electrical systems.



Rocky Mountain Retreat

Architects William Curtis and Russell Windham revive a Montana ranch.

TEXT BY LOGAN WARD PHOTOS BY ERIK KVALSVIK





JS
Big Sky Country was working its magic on Houston architects William Curtis and Russell Windham. Their client had bought a Montana ranch, and the ranch manager was giving them a tour of the spread. "It's the most heroic landscape in the world. We were seduced by it," says Curtis. "We were standing on a mountaintop at one point, talking excitedly about how great it would be to put a house there, when the ranch manager, one of these sullen ex-rodeo-riding cowboys, said, 'See where all those houses and barns are down there? That's where your house is going to go.'" You can't get to the mountaintop in the winter, the Montanan explained. It's cold, and the wind blows a hundred miles an hour. The buildings need to be close together. If it's 26 below zero, you're not going to run from one to another. "He put us in our place," Curtis admits. "But that gave us respect for how difficult it is to live in that environment."

It also reminded them of a guiding principle. Whenever the pair approaches any design project, they ask a central question: Is it appropriate? That goes for style, scale, color, furnishings, landscaping, and more. Once they began to understand what was appropriate for a Montana ranch, given the weather and social history of the region, a vision began to form about how to achieve their client's goals.

Their client wanted a vacation home and fishing retreat, but he also wanted to maintain the working ranch. But what do you do when you're faced with an existing collection of almost two dozen structures, from a modest 1940s log house to barns and tumbledown sheds of all shapes, sizes, and functions? The

architects knew that if they tore everything down and added a big house and a garage, they would no longer have a ranch, just a house with a garage. "Russell and I are not troubled when a modest solution emerges," Curtis says. "We don't have to do that clichéd response. If we're going to do a log cabin, it doesn't have to be 35,000 square feet." The context was already so strong that "to be more demonstrative would have been out of place." And then there was the experience itself. "If you live in a 20,000-square-foot house in River Oaks in Houston, why do you want to go to Colorado or Montana and sit in another 20,000-square-foot house that has exactly the same amenities, only rendered in log?" Luckily for them, the client also wanted the changes to be appropriate.

The plan? They would rehabilitate the modest main house and "edit" the outbuildings down to half a dozen, maintaining the ranch's function and feel. "Like so many things that happen over time and that are not architecturally inclined, the outbuildings were junky and confused," says Curtis. So the pair removed buildings and moved roads to reinforce the idea of a ranch that might have been in its infancy, with buildings yet to come. It was as if they went back in time to improve on history.

Opposite The architects refurbished the main log cabin into a cozy country retreat. The walls are interior logs stained a warm golden amber. *This page* Furnishings are kept simple, and the massive fireplace is a made of locally quarried stone.





Then they renovated the horse barn and transformed it into a saloon and game room, with hewn-timber rafters and king-post trusses in the ceiling and rough sawn wall paneling to resemble a traditional barn finish. They converted the blacksmith shop to a service building housing electrical power boxes and generators. Near the river that flows through the compound, another structure became a fishing shack fitted out with cabinets and hooks for hanging waders.

The pair had their work cut out for them with the main house, known as River House. A small, one-and-a-half-story WPA-era structure built of unexceptional lodgepole logs, it had low ceilings and no fine detailing. Curtis and Windham spruced up the peeled-log exterior, replacing the lime-and-sand chinking. They ripped off a lean-to shed in the rear and added a bright new breakfast porch, with windows facing the river. Just inside the front door, they added a beefy timber-and-plank staircase that gives the room a rich character. They updated the fireplaces by stacking rustic blocks of Colorado moss rock, which fit together tightly without an exposed mortar joint.

“Log homes can be dark, plodding, heavy, and out of proportion,” says Windham. “We wanted the living room to be an inviting, comfortable space.” For a balance of fresh and cozy, the architects had the interior logs stained a golden amber and installed salvaged oak flooring in random widths. They added a bright red rug and painted the ceiling off-white. In other rooms, such as the dining room, walls are not log but rather 8-inch-wide horizontal planks painted celery to contrast with the

dark beadboard ceiling. The plank molding around the doors is as simple as it gets—and appropriate for a house of this style.

Curtis and Windham also designed the interiors, making inspired choices such as schoolhouse light fixtures and even bare-bulb Edison fixtures with pull cords to give the place a consistent 1940s vintage feel while also meeting today’s building codes. The furniture is a collection of old and new pieces—some of which they designed—including antler-stand tables, painted tables and dressers, leather chairs, and iron beds, all chosen for their western charm. The level of appropriateness extends even to the visitor. “If you’re standing in the house in a blue blazer, you’re out of place,” Curtis says. “But if you have a nice western shirt on and boots and belt, you’re part of the experience.”

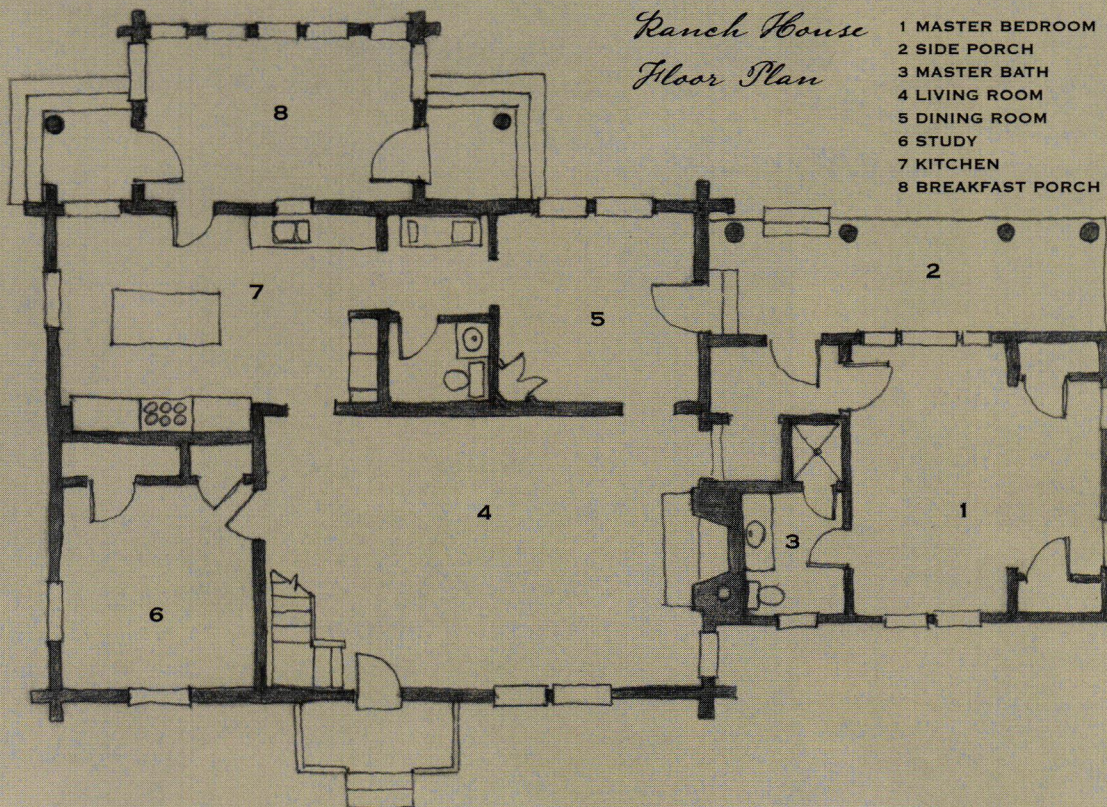
“That sense of what’s appropriate goes back to the beginning, when we stood on that mountain,” he says. “We looked down and [with a little help] realized ‘that’s where our project is, because that’s where it has always been.’ If you’re open enough to observe, sometimes projects will tell you what they want to be.” **NOH**

Logan Ward is a freelance writer living in Virginia.

All images are from Creating a New Old House by Russell Versaci (Taunton Press, 2003), rereleased in paperback this summer.

Opposite The dining room is finished in 8-inch wide horizontal planks painted a celery color, which contrasts with the dark beadboard ceiling. Below left Windows open from the kitchen onto a breezy porch. Below right The guest room is truly rustic with its exposed log beams and vertical board walls.





Above The architects renovated the horse barn, turning it into a saloon and game room. The room is finished with hand-hewn-timber rafters and rough sawn wall paneling.
 Opposite The collection of buildings sits modestly against the Big Sky Country landscape.



Why Modest Works

Curtis and Windham could have built big. But when it comes to log homes, big is more traditionally associated with the East Coast Adirondack “cottages” built by the early-twentieth-century robber barons. Curtis and Windham needed to work in the context of a ranch in cold and windy Montana. Early ranches were simple low-slung affairs, often square, with additions tacked on in a telescoping manner.

But working within the historical context has its advantages. “In this case, an incredible richness emerged out of the modest scale,” explains Curtis. “Nothing was competing to be the biggest thing. How could we have integrated a big lodge when we had buildings that were already hierarchically the most important buildings? Layering another hierarchy on top wouldn’t have made sense.” Originally, that’s what the owner wanted—a lodge. He was going to make the renovated River House

into a guesthouse. But he recognized that everything was working together and that to insert something other than a similarly scaled building into that context would have been inappropriate.

Besides, the owner loved the feel of the place. “It’s so successful because it’s completely comfortable,” says Curtis. “Anybody is comfortable there. Senator so-and-so is comfortable there. The sister-in-law of one of the ranch managers who got married there is comfortable there. It’s not a place where the artifacts in it are precious or the architecture we built was precious. We didn’t start with anything particularly exquisite, but we realized there was virtue in its modesty.”

“We have a saying around our office,” adds Windham. “Design it to look inevitable, not like an architect did it. That ranch is not just authentic-looking. It’s got real soul to it.”

For Resources, see page 81.

Below left A view of the kitchen island and casement windows beyond designed by Elizabeth Peck Holmes. *Below right* Holmes incorporated built-in furniture into the space such as this hutch and window seat. *Opposite* The kitchen cabinetry is painted a creamy white to contrast with the oak floors.

Kitchen Addition

Elizabeth Peck Holmes designs a bright, organized kitchen for an active family in Palo Alto, California.

TEXT BY APRIL PAFFRATH PHOTOS BY MARCO PROZZO







When each previous decade has brought an addition or refurbishment to a house, new homeowners can be plagued by a mishmash of styles and odd-flowing rooms. Once the minuscule kitchen or the expansions of decades past no longer work with modern needs, you need to bring your old house into the new decade. Homeowners who decide to redo a house engage in a kind of archeology of bathroom, kitchen, and living spaces, sifting through seemingly ancient styles in search of the true design of the house, settling on what their modern uses actually require. This approach to commonsense design also holds great promise for those not working through years of add-ons. For one family in California, bringing all the errant bits of the house together means more than unifying the design; it means modernizing the kitchen and putting all of the family's modern needs in their places, all the while keeping the look and appeal of the old house.

Elizabeth Peck Holmes is the designer who revamped this early 1900 house in Palo Alto, California, and revived its historic design and style. "The kitchen was originally a small group of rooms in the back of the home," says Holmes. "The traditional layout—entertaining rooms at the front and service rooms at the back—did not work for the casual lifestyle of the client." A 1970s family room located between the garage and the house disrupted the interior space. "The family wanted better access to rooms and wanted to be able to use the garage. They wanted a mudroom, a pantry, and a kitchen that worked,"

says Holmes. The family is very active, and they needed a house to support their lifestyle as well as a kitchen that could be used for rapid refueling of kids in dire need of snacks.

Although Holmes designed the interiors and made countless detail drawings to incorporate ideas and plans, she laughingly says that "nearly everyone, from the youngest son to the postman, had an input on the house design." The owner, Fern Mandelbaum, was extraordinarily involved in the design. "She was a very participatory person through the entire process," says Holmes. Mandelbaum would canvass her wide circle of friends for ideas, clever uses of space, and the best products. "We would go over to people's houses and look at colors and cabinetry. She would ask everyone she knew what kind of appliances they had, get a consensus, and then do her own research on top of that," says Holmes. "She is people-oriented and likes to learn from others." The end result is that every space and every material was thoroughly considered.

The kitchen range is directly opposite the house's main entry. The cherry cabinet that butts against the island looks like an antique that luckily fits just so in the middle of the kitchen. The cabinet holds serving pieces and is slightly taller than the island itself, shielding the six-burner Viking stove from view as visitors enter the house. Mandelbaum decided ahead of time what spaces she needed for pots and pans, food, and appliances, as well as what storage she would need, so everything could be designed just for their specific purposes. The island is a collec-



tion of precise drawers and cabinets, as well as a microwave that is placed under the counter for child-friendly snack accessibility. The precision of storage leads to an economy of space that was lauded in an upcoming book *The New Bungalow Kitchen* by Peter LaBau (The Taunton Press 2007), which highlights the kitchen.

Because space is tight, each area has to serve multiple uses. From the beginning, the cabinets were destined for exact purposes, from holding appliances to snacks to breakfast food. The doorway from the kitchen to the dining room is flanked by two hutches. The one to the right of the archway, adjacent to the mudroom, is jokingly called “Grand Central” because of its heavy use and importance. It has a desk space, file drawers, and a spot to post invitations and school notices. On the other side of the archway is a thinner, but matching, hutch. It hides appliances on the counter and holds the breakfast cereal boxes and accoutrements, as well as a drawer created just for the specific kind of snacks that the kids can grab on their way into the house from the mudroom. On the opposite side of the kitchen, a white hutch holds the coffee maker and other appliances. Every item in the kitchen has a bespoke space, just the right size and with its daily use considered by the owner and the designer.

“We had a number of windows replaced,” says Holmes. The French casement windows above the black granite countertop swing open. The farmhouse faucet and sink sits in the

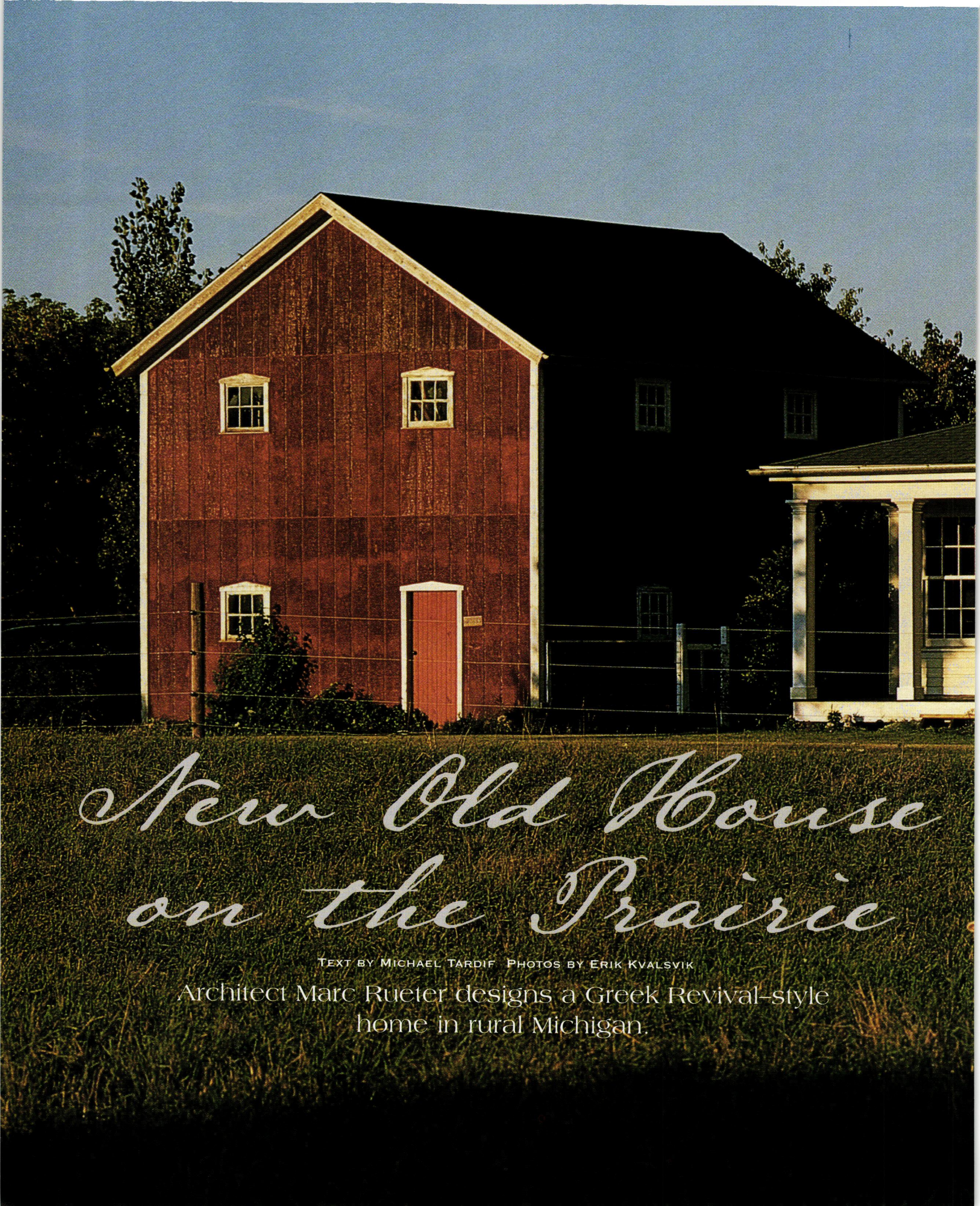
Opposite A row of casement windows over the counter admit light as well as cool breezes into the space. Above Holmes incorporated an office into the kitchen for Mandelbaum. A paned door leads to an outdoor dining area.

middle of that counter, which overlooks the big lawn where the kids play. To the right is a conveniently placed door to the back porch, where they barbeque.

Even with all of its modern conveniences, the kitchen does not look out of place in the old house. Decades from now, future homeowners will not have to reconcile kitchen modernity with the house style because Mandelbaum did her research, planned well, and Holmes paid attention—to not only the detailed spaces that every item required but also the continuity with the rest of the house. “The floors are oak,” says Holmes “in order to match the feeling in the rest of the house.” The doors, trim, and accents match throughout the house, even in the kitchen. “You’re not supposed to know it’s an addition when you’re in it,” says Holmes. The lighting above the cabinets and hutches casts upward to subtly brighten the space and highlight the classic ceiling touches. Holmes installed a picture rail because the rest of the house has one, and the coved ceiling with two tones creates an atmosphere that says it is not a cutting-edge kitchen but part of a home. **NOH**

April Paffrath is a freelance writer who lives in Cambridge.

For Resources, see page 81.



New Old House on the Prairie

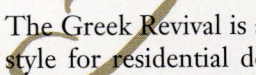
TEXT BY MICHAEL TARDIF PHOTOS BY ERIK KVALSVIK

Architect Marc Rueter designs a Greek Revival-style home in rural Michigan.



The new Greek Revival style house on this working farm in Michigan draws inspiration from the region's early houses. Note the stark, pared-down elements of the design: a simple gable front with no formal entry.





The Greek Revival is arguably the most popular and enduring style for residential design in American history. Other styles come and go, but the Greek Revival, which made its first appearance in the early 1800s, has held a special place in the popular imagination ever since. It never quite goes out of style.

For people longing for a new old house, the Greek Revival is a perfect fit. The very concept of a new old house always presents a challenge of authenticity: At what point does a new twenty-first-century home—built of traditional materials and methods but incorporating modern technology and conveniences—cross the line into a Disney-like replica? It is a dilemma that every new old house owner and architect faces, except, perhaps, those who choose the Greek Revival. That's because the Greek Revival is—and has always been—all about adapting a formal style loaded with philosophical meaning to the practical realities of everyday life.

At the turn of the nineteenth century, political and philosophical leaders of our young and fragile nation—the sole representative democracy on the planet—looked to historical models of government for signposts that we were on an enduring and righteous path. They found it in the ancient Greek city-states. Imperfect as those political models later proved themselves to be, they satisfied a profound psychic need of the time for a validating precedent. The surviving architecture of ancient Greece, with its simple forms, crisp clean lines, minimal ornaments (or so we initially thought), and ennobling civic spirit, appealed very strongly to American sensibilities of practicality, endurance, patriotism, and civic engagement. In typical American fashion, we domesticated the ancient, formal, and imposing style by using humble materials of wood and brick in place of stone, adapting the scale to a variety of civic and domestic building types, and poking through the rigid, formally ritualistic temple forms with doors, windows, and chimneys to create useful, comfortable buildings and homes. The Greek Revival looks “just right” to us, whether it is used for a courthouse, a bank, or a farmhouse. It became embedded in our souls in the nineteenth century and has remained there ever since.

It helped also that in many cases, carpenters and craftsmen could build in the style with the simplest of skills. The understated rectangular shapes and gable roofs were already common, and the original stone details were easily created and applied—often in simplified form—to buildings that we had been building for nearly 200 years. It is possible, too, that the Greek Revival evokes in us something deeper. A typical child's

Opposite The sitting room's fireplace and cabinetry were inspired by early Greek Revival homes in the area. The house is heated with radiant flooring. *Above* Nine-over-nine panes on the first floor are surrounded by simple window casings topped with a pediment. *Below* The entry of the home is through a door on the side porch opposed to a formal front entryway.





drawing of a house contains the essential elements of a Greek Revival house: a two-story structure with a gable roof, a row of windows at the first and second floors, a front door in the middle or to one side, and smoke curling up out of a roof-top chimney.

The home that architect Marc Rueter designed for Steve and Anna Easudes on 25 acres in rural Michigan contains these bare, childlike elements of the Greek Revival style. The main part of the house is the quintessential two-story gable-end, shallow-roof rectangle, with single-story “additions” to the side and rear, a typical farmhouse adaptation of the Greek Revival. The detailing is simple, almost severe. Two large nine-over-nine pane double-hung windows at the first and second floors are the only openings on the “formal” front gable end; there are no columns, no front porch, and no front door in this part of the house. Instead, the formal entrance is to the side, in the single-story wing, modestly tucked beneath the roof of a farmer’s porch. The broad side of the house away from the barn is even simpler, with large windows at the first floor only. At the second floor, small attic-type windows are punched into the deep, simply detailed entablature just below the eaves. These bare elements of form and detail, together with thin pilasters at the building corners, matching square columns at the farmer’s porch, and a crisply detailed raking cornice, anchor the house firmly in the Greek Revival style, even though the arrangement might be uncommon. Pedimented hoods over each large window are the only elements of decorative exuberance.

The Easudeses opted for genuine single-pane double-hung windows and true divided lights with wooden muntins, a commitment to authenticity that comes with the semiannual task of putting up and taking down storm windows and screens, but which goes a long way toward preserving the true original character of the style.

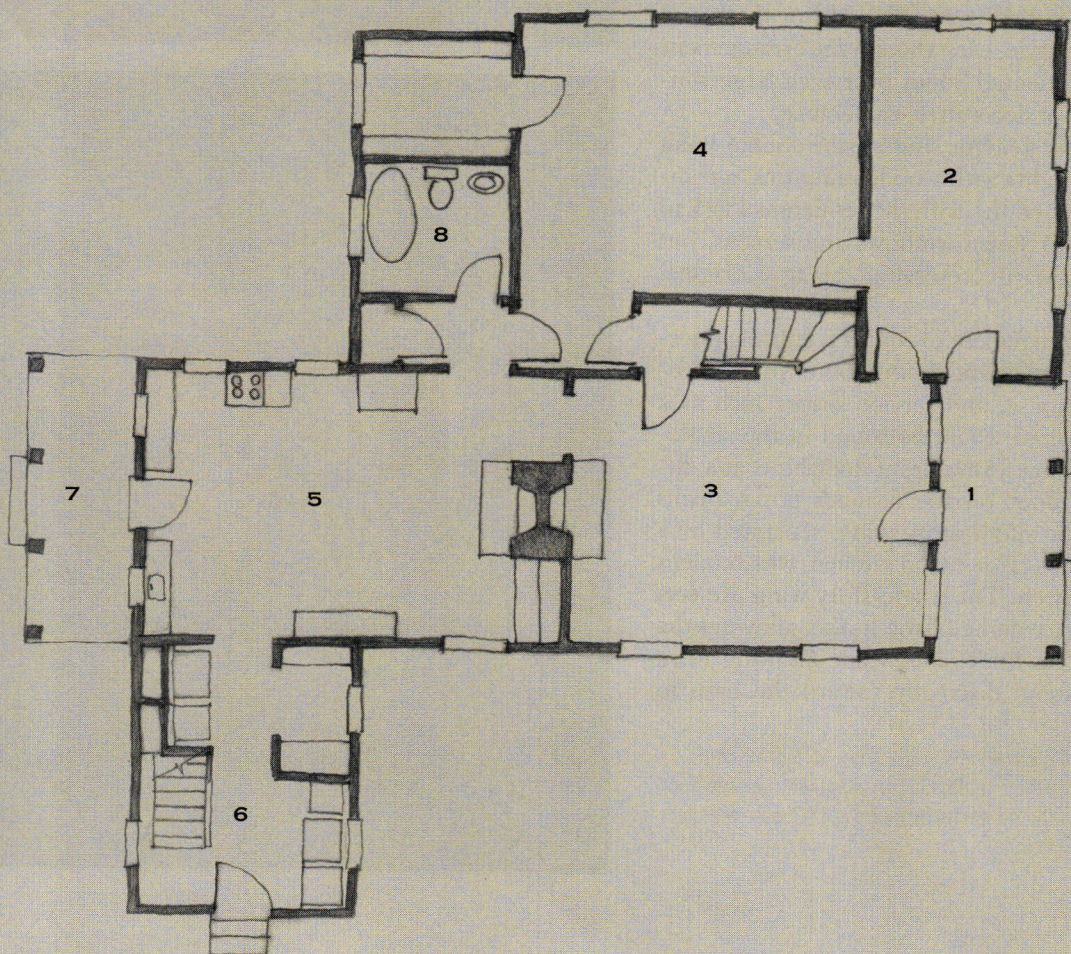
On the interior, the arrangement of rooms is entirely unexpected. Typically, a formal parlor and dining room would occupy the main part of the house, and service spaces such as a kitchen, pantry, and mudroom would be found in the single-story wings. Here, the missing formal front door hints at a different arrangement. The door on the farmer’s porch opens directly into a parlor in the single-story wing, separated by a double-sided fireplace from a large eat-in kitchen, which opens in the rear onto another porch. The single-story wing projects beyond the main two-story volume of the house, allowing the kitchen to have windows on three sides while allowing for a generous mudroom to extend discreetly toward the barn in

Opposite The Easudeses wanted all the elements in the house to feel authentic. They chose to incorporate a 1920s stove into the kitchen along with salvage flooring. *Right top and bottom* Other authentic elements found in the house are the rim locks and brown Bennington knobs.





Opposite The Easudeses raise sheep on the farm. The Greek Revival windows are spaced evenly along the clapboard. Left The mudroom entry also has elements of the Greek Revival style such as the gable pediment and door hood.



*Greek Revival
Floor Plan*

- 1 PORCH
- 2 STUDY
- 3 PARLOR
- 4 MASTER BEDROOM
- 5 KITCHEN
- 6 MUDROOM
- 7 PORCH
- 8 MASTER BATH



another single-story wing at the rear.

The main part of the house is given over to a master bedroom suite. The front of the house is occupied by a small study and the remainder by a large master bedroom, with the master bath and closet tucked into yet another rear single-story “addition.” The arrangement is a masterful adaptation of the formal nineteenth-century Greek Revival to informal twenty-first-century living, once again underscoring the adaptability and enduring character of the style. Though historical precedents would have suggested otherwise, it’s easy to see that this layout makes eminent good sense. The Easudeses enjoy a large master bedroom suite that is at once private and easily accessible to the more social rooms of the house, which have a much stronger relationship to the outdoors. The private study opens both onto the parlor and the farmer’s porch, and, when the door to the master bedroom is closed, becomes another social room.

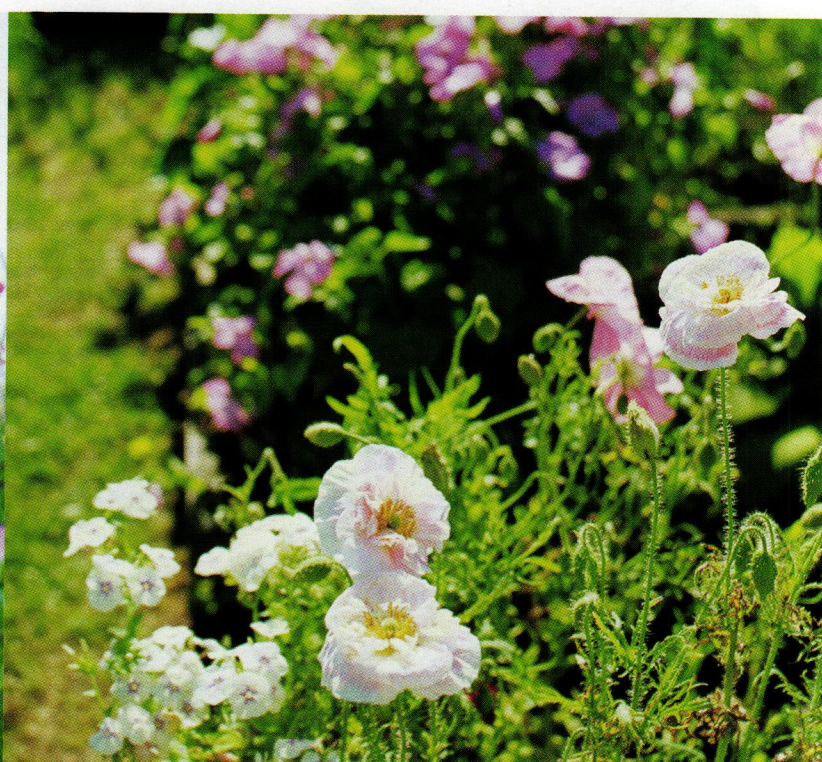
The interior detailing is also something of a surprise, more Colonial or Federal style than Greek Revival. But this, too, is an adaptation that one might find in historical Greek Revival farmhouses, whose homeowners wanted to convey a prosperous and fashionable social image while not spending more than necessary on decorative flourishes. Rueter and the Easudeses were

careful to keep modern intrusions to a minimum, even to the extent of using black Bakelite push-button light switches with brass plates and furnishing the kitchen with a vintage (but fully operational) circa 1920s porcelain Glazier gas range and an antique kitchen cabinet of the type manufactured by the Hoozier Cabinet Company in the early twentieth century. Details such as these come close to crossing the line—without stepping over it—from authenticity to replica, effectively creating the impression that modern conveniences were added to the nineteenth-century house when they first became available. In keeping with our long and illustrious history of the Greek Revival, this architect-homeowner team has demonstrated that the style can continue to adapt to changing needs and lifestyles for a long time to come. **NOH**

Michael Tardif is editorial director of Design Byline in Bethesda, Maryland.

All images from Creating a New Old House by Russell Versaci (Taunton Press 2003). Rereleased in paperback this summer.

For Resources, see page 81.



In the Gulf of Maine, where sky meets sea, lie the Isles of Shoals, haunted with graves of Spanish sailors and tales of pirate gold. The islands have names that give them shape—Smutty-Nose, Duck, Hog, and White (an acre of stone topped at the pinnacle with light). Poet Celia Loughton Thaxter's life on Appledore Island inspired her writing and her lifelong connection to the island's terrain. Her flower garden, celebrated in her book *An Island Garden*, drew visitors to the island until a fire destroyed the property. A century after she started her garden, John Kingsbury of Cornell University and a team of volunteers found the remnants of her sanctuary and re-created her summer garden, which began as a floral oasis in the rough, wind-whipped terrain.

In 1839, Thaxter's father took the post as lighthouse keeper on the Isles of Shoals. It was then that she arrived, at four years old, with her family on this desolate scrap of granite 10 miles off Portsmouth, New Hampshire. After eight years, her father built a hotel on Hog Island, which was renamed Appledore. In her early island life, Thaxter rejoiced in the simplest bits of green that grew in the fragile coastal ecosystem. At 16, she married Levi Thaxter, her father's business partner and her tutor. They left her beloved island for Massachusetts, although she would find her way back to her island haven from time to time. Thaxter often spent summers throughout her life helping her parents at Appledore, running the hotel and fostering a garden that was so loved that it still attracts visitors. Even though she moved to the mainland, Thaxter would forever take refuge in the Isles through her writing. Thaxter's poem of heartbreak over missing island life, "Land-locked," was published in the *Atlantic Monthly* magazine to fanfare in February 1860, launching her career as a writer. Recognition for her

work led to winters in the whirlwind of Boston's cultural climate of novelists, musicians, artists—many of whom enjoyed Appledore's seaside summers. She spent evenings with Willa Cather, Ralph Waldo Emerson, and Henry James. The *Atlantic Monthly* bought nearly every poem she wrote. Thaxter's musings on island life and on her garden brought fame and tourists to Appledore.

The summer of 1863 marked the likely beginning of Thaxter's famous garden, her green thumb applied to a small bed in front of her parents' new cottage, a garden she would enlarge over time. The garden was not large, just 15 by 50 feet. The beds were close together and overflowing with blossoms. In mid-March, flats of seedlings of every kind—sweet peas, poppies, marigolds, cornflowers, pansies—were packed into baskets and transported from her winter home to Appledore. Vines set down at the foot of the piazza climbed intertwined with masses of fragrant hops, and the piazza was transformed into a shady haven. Though she fought slugs, cutworms, and songbirds stealing seed, the cruelest fiend was the summer squall blackening sky and sea, wrenching huge drops from the heavens, wind fast and mean bending and breaking her beautiful flowers. As she writes, "The fair face of every flower salutes me with a silent joy that fills me with infinite content. All the cares, perplexities, and grief of existence, all the burdens of life slip from my shoulders and leave me with the heart of a little child that asks nothing beyond its present moment of innocent bliss."

Opposite and above John Kingsbury of Cornell University began to restore nineteenth-century poet Celia Thaxter's garden on the island of Appledore just off New Hampshire's coast in 1976. Kingsbury referenced Thaxter's book *An Island Garden* to re-create the floral scene. Today, the island is open to tours during the summer.

Island Garden

Nineteenth-century poet Celia Thaxter's island garden attracted fame in her time. A century after it began, it was resurrected—and has been growing every year since.

TEXT AND PHOTOS BY JANE BOOTH





Thaxter's cottage retreat and Appledore hotel burned to the ground in 1914 in a fire that swept quickly across the property, hurried along by the sea winds. The University of New Hampshire ran a zoological lab on the island in the 1930s until it was displaced by the U. S. government during WW II. Plundered by Mother Nature, vandals, and gulls, Appledore was in a sorry state by the mid-1960s when Dr. John Kingsbury of Cornell University began Shoals Marine Laboratory, working with Star Island Corporation (owner of Appledore) and the University of New Hampshire. Kingsbury, a small construction crew, student volunteers, and staff took on the giant task of renovating the properties and facilities. They cleared poison ivy forests (10-foot toxic vines with 4-inch trunks), brambles, and brush from old roads and buildings. They installed docks and moorings, added necessary sanitation facilities and utilities, and extensively renovated salvageable cottages. "The early years of our presence on Appledore were ones of bootstrap, shoestring complexion," says Kingsbury. "Later, as urgencies diminished, thoughts could turn to connecting the present with a rich historical past."

A year before her death in 1894, Thaxter wrote a loving testimony of her garden, published as *An Island Garden*, with illustrations by American Impressionist Childe Hassam. Kingsbury knew of the book, but his interest was piqued when

Clockwise from left Thaxter planted Hollyhock, sweet peas, *Salpiglossis* 'painted tongue,' California poppy, *Scabiosa* 'black night', and Shirley poppy in the garden. *Opposite left* Bright pink Hollyhocks grow along the wooden fence. *Opposite right* The island of Appledore has a rocky, rugged windswept terrain, so the summer garden needs extra care. Today, volunteers tend the garden. In fact, 20-year veteran volunteer Virginia Chisholm, now 83, still works in the summer garden.

a cutting of a night-blooming cereus with a history tracing directly to Thaxter appeared as a gift on Appledore. In 1976, when he decided to re-create the garden, the cottage grounds were covered in sumac and wild cherry. "Even so, with the help of Celia's granddaughter Rosamond Thaxter, who lived ashore at Kittery Point, identifying the intact foundation of Celia's cottage in the underbrush was easy," says Kingsbury, "and the location of her original garden, accurate to within a foot or so, could be marked out in front of it." He cleared the area where the garden once stood, discovering snowdrops, daylilies, and hops. "An attack by rototiller borrowed from ashore finished the job of soil preparation, and the garden was left fallow over winter," says Kingsbury. The following spring, some bulb flowers appeared in her garden. Later that summer, a vine grew where the back wall of the porch once was. Upon flowering, it turned out to be the hop vines that had shaded her garden. "The botanical reawakening of her garden was an immense joy to me and evoked a deep sense of oneness with Celia Thaxter



herself, despite the intervening 84 years from her death to the reappearance of the hops she herself planted,” says Kingsbury.

A plant list and garden scheme were included in *An Island Garden* at the suggestion of Thaxter’s close friend and fellow author Sarah Orne Jewett. With list and map in hand, and a donation from the Rye Beach Little Boars Head Garden Club, Kingsbury felt the garden could be re-created. Cornell University obtained similar seeds to those Thaxter had grown. A wide-board fence was installed, as in Thaxter’s day, to protect the garden from strong winds, which cross the island.

Virginia Chisholm, now 83, has tended the garden for over 20 years. She smiles, thinking back to her first day when a phone call announced an opportunity that was “now or never,” followed by helping hands waiting to load and unload a boat of the 500 plants sitting on the dock at Portsmouth. Chisholm planted the first garden alone but later received generous assistance from many volunteers, in particular Marjorie Duquenne, Mary Smith, and Priscilla Chellis.

The search continues for seeds and flowers mentioned in Thaxter’s book. Christopher Robarge of the University of New Hampshire, the garden’s unsung hero, directs the annual propagation of plants for the garden and installed the automated watering system (which works like a dream when the seagulls don’t attack it). Chisholm has passed the “Celia torch” to Summer 2007

Pamela and Mark Boutilier, who close their store, Appledore Arbor, one day a week in summer months for a day of dead-heading and weeding with Chisholm.

“Turnover Day” arrives the end of May. Mark Boutilier weed-whacks his way in while Pamela Boutilier and four other volunteers trail behind, carrying 10-pound buckets of well-rotted manure and compost. “Planting Day” follows a week later, and the volunteers return with 1,600 plants.

The century-old garden is gaining new life through the dedication of volunteers and the interest of visitors. The summer tours are almost always sold out, and the education and family programs at the Shoals Marine Laboratory are popular. Although the garden does not focus on the spring plants that Thaxter mentioned in her book—because Appledore is available for visits only in the summer—the goal of re-creating her garden is ever-growing. Kingsbury reissued *An Island Garden*, including an introduction he wrote about the revival of Thaxter’s garden, and keeps it in print to this day through Bullbrier Press. There is a persistent dream among volunteers bitten by the “Celia bug” to rebuild the cottage with its vine-covered piazza, a kind of vertical garden—a lush defining wall—as much a part of the garden as the flowers themselves. **NOH**

Jane Booth is a writer and photographer living in Vermont.



Summer Camp



These romantic modified Gothic Revival cottages in Oak Bluffs on Martha's Vineyard have been jointly renovated for use by a growing family and creatively united by a common courtyard. A front view of the exterior restoration highlights their harmonious profiles while celebrating the architectural differences found in the gable, truss, porch post, bracket, and railing details. The Blue cottage on the left is limited to summer use, while the Green cottage on the right is winterized. *Above right* White cedar shingles appear in contrasting random and diamond-shaped patterns. A decorative window hood deflects rain away from the Gothic-arched window. *Below right* Homeowner Sharon Robinson, daughter Bre, son-in-law Janszen, and daughter Erin relax on the front porch of the Green cottage.

With the help of Mark Hutker Architects, the Robinson family restores two gems on the island of Martha's Vineyard.

TEXT BY SALLY LAMOTTE CRANE ORIGINAL HOUSE PHOTOS BY JULIAN WASS KITCHEN ADDITION PHOTOS BY MEG BODNAR



During the mid-to-late nineteenth century, the Massachusetts seaside town of Oak Bluffs on the island of Martha's Vineyard was referred to as "Cottage City" for its profusion of romantic Carpenter Gothic or Gingerbread summer cottages. Ornate wooden architectural details trimmed their gables, balconies, and front porches in fanciful colors. Most were constructed upon tiny lots that once held family tents—summer quarters for New England Methodists attending camp meetings at the Tabernacle in Trinity Park. In that festive spirit, vacationers deliberately designed their Oak Bluffs' cottages to celebrate the interaction of family and community.

In a neighborhood beyond the Oak Bluffs camp meeting grounds, two larger Gothic Revival cottages sit perched side by side, reminiscent but more architecturally mature than their Gingerbread cousins. David and Sharon Robinson bought their 1869 cottage in 1965 as a summer home, complete with a mixture of furnishings that were original to the house, including a dining table seating 16 guests. They were the home's third owners. When the property next door became available in the mid-1990s, the Robinsons purchased it for use by their three grown children, their families, and friends. That was when they first approached the firm of Mark Hutker Architects on Martha's Vineyard for help in deciding how best to carefully renovate and unite both cottages.

"The goal was to relate both houses architecturally and functionally," says project architect Charles Orr. Orr and Hutker proposed additions to the rear of each structure as well as a shared courtyard—or outdoor room—between the two buildings. The Robinsons were clear that they wanted all renovations to be true to the character of the original architectural designs. "They wanted the changes to be seamless and not draw any attention," says Orr. "It was almost stealth architecture, so someone would come in and wonder if anybody had done anything there or not."

The cottages, now referred to as Green and Blue, had their original kitchens removed, with their replacements offering an extra bedroom above. The additions also have full foundations to house mechanical equipment and provide some storage. Meanwhile, the wooden piers on which the existing homes were built were replaced by concrete piers. "All of the electrical and mechanical systems had to be updated," says Orr. "Most importantly, we were set on bringing back what was original." The builders refinished, painted, or stained the original pine floors and preserved the original window sash and doors with

Left Project architects Charles Orr and Mark Hutker took great care to retain the original character of each room, particularly in preserving these stained glass doors opening onto a small balcony off the original master bedroom in the Green house. A second renovation during which these exterior walls were insulated from the inside has left the original space looking almost untouched. *Above right* Simple pie-shaped treads characterize this early ornamental stair in the front of the Green cottage. *Below right* Next to a small bay window in the dining room of the Green cottage, refreshments await guests.



One of the hallmarks of the Gothic Revival-style (1830-1880) is a vertical emphasis carried out here by triangular windows, arched doorways, steep roofs, and arches created by porch brackets. The builders gingerly preserved these original elements, and the homeowner's restraint in decorating allows them to shine. The stained glass diamond design at the top of this triangular window in the Green cottage is repeated in the outside shingle pattern and in the placement of blue slate flooring in the courtyard. *Clockwise from top left* Under the steeply pitched roof, this bright bedroom is one of four in the Blue house. The placement of porch posts and brackets in the Green house creates a flattened arch. An arched doorway leads the eye through the parlor and onto the porch. This Green cottage bathroom was enlarged, and simple new shelves were angled next to the restored claw-foot tub.







their stained glass and hardware. "We kept the original tubs and sinks, only providing new plumbing fixtures to bring them up to code," Orr adds. "There were strategic walls that were removed to make spaces larger." Unnecessary closets were removed. Since most of the vertical pine boards on the walls had shrunk with age, any new replacement planking, if needed, was set with deliberate gaps to preserve its true cottage character.

The cottage exteriors were clad in new white cedar shingles arranged in both staggered and contrasting diamond patterns. "We researched the history of Shingle-style applications and took clues from the neighborhood and existing cottages," says Orr. The diamond pattern also repeats the shape found in the original glass windows. For further emphasis, the architects echoed this pattern in the placement of blue slate tiles for the courtyard flooring.

From outside, the gabled ends project harmony but maintain individuality. "They are not trying to be identical twins, rather fraternal twins," declares Orr. Together, there is a story-book quality to these predominantly Gothic Revival structures created by the dance of sunlight and shadow upon their steep roofs, dormers, gables, and ornamental woodwork. The trusses in the gables are highly distinct—one has a mysterious "M" pattern and the other a dropped ball accent. Indicative of the Victorian Stick style, both houses share portions of picket-fence-pattern siding and diagonal criss-cross designs in the balcony railings. The front verandas maintain their original post, bracket, and railing designs. The only change made in rebuilding the porches was to move the steps from the front to the sides of the houses nearest the courtyard. Landscaping helps lead visitors toward the porch steps or to the courtyard at the heart of these two cottages.

Of the two houses, the Green cottage underwent the most renovation. Its existing kitchen was removed and replaced by a wider combination family room and kitchen consistent with the spare simplicity of the existing house. There is a mixture of beaded panels for the base cabinets and glass doors for the upper cabinets. Sharon Robinson was eager to retain the original apron-style porcelain kitchen sink. "We chose not to have a dishwasher because it's kind of fun to be together and talk while we take turns washing," she says.

French doors leading to the courtyard flank the fireplace in the family room/kitchen. The same doors in the new, more

Left The Gothic Revival style brought the first widespread use of sitting porches. Here on the Green cottage porch, the open rakes with exposed rafters, as well as the solid chamfered posts, brackets, and pendants reflect the Carpenter Gothic-style of construction. By shifting the entry steps from the front to the sides of both porches, more sitting space was gained, and the houses became more united. *Above right* "Everyone takes outdoor showers in the summer," says Sharon Robinson. Here the outdoor shower of the Blue cottage displays the same post design found on its front porch posts. *Below right* A hammock on the Blue cottage porch symbolizes the relaxing atmosphere of these two cottages. "Our grandkids love it here because it is so different," says Robinson. "We wanted a beach house with an old look, nothing modern."





modest Blue cottage kitchen also lead to the “outdoor family room” as Sharon Robinson calls it. She says, “No one ever seems to eat inside.” The terrace space, backed by a low stone wall and native plantings that lend privacy, is oriented toward an outdoor brick fireplace that shares the chimney of the Green cottage. Whether furnishing the patio or indoor spaces, Robinson strives for simplicity. “The whole point is to keep it simple; therefore, we can immediately relax and have more time to enjoy it.”

In fact, a desire to use the Green cottage throughout various seasons prompted the Robinsons to begin a second phase of renovation in late 2004. While the new back addition had been winterized, architect Matt Cramer of Mark Hutker Architects oversaw the careful insulation process of the cottage’s old portions from the inside. His creative challenge was to install rigid foam insulation in a 2 1/2-inch space while keeping the home’s interior character intact. Each room with an exterior wall had unique issues. “They had either different bracket, ceiling, door, or window conditions to address, so there was no standard rule-of-thumb solution to follow,” says Cramer. Upstairs, the original exposed rafters were covered over in the insulation process, but the new ceiling boards follow the vertical lines seamlessly. Window and door details were re-created to resemble the originals, and outdoor storm panels were obtained to protect the old windows. The result is a camp-style cottage in which new conveniences artfully blend with the old.

Between the two dwellings, the Robinsons can sleep 16 people comfortably in summer. (The Blue house is not winterized.) As they sit on their gracious porches or in the courtyard, they are in keeping with the spirit in which these Oak Bluffs homes were originally designed—the mixing of family, friends, and neighbors. “We have a nice sense of community here,” says Sharon Robinson. “There is always some back and forth for cocktails.” Clearly the Robinsons know that every moment spent in these traditional cottages is worth celebrating. **NOH**

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

For Resources see page 81.

Left Project architect Charles Orr says the kitchen ceiling is made of beams “with exposed planked flooring above, like the old tradition. We actually had to elevate the second-floor bathroom floor in order to run plumbing to the fixtures so that it would not be exposed below.” *Above right* Light and airy, the new kitchen/family room addition to the Green cottage continues the Gothic tradition of leading the eye upward through the use of sturdy posts and a stairway ascending to the new master bedroom and bath. *Right* The extra-wide chimney allows space on the reverse side for the outdoor courtyard fireplace, which serves as the anchor of the “outdoor family room.”



Craftsman Design

TEXT BY NANCY E. BERRY

Jonathan Miller Architects creates a harmonious Craftsman-Inspired house for Traditional Building's Design Challenge competition.



COURTESY OF JONATHAN MILLER ARCHITECTS

The first annual Traditional Building Design Challenge took place during the Traditional Building Exhibition and Conference in Chicago last year. The American Institute of Building Design, the Institute of Classical Architecture & Classical America, and *New Old House* magazine put eight architects to task to design a new old house that would fit into one of Chicago's nationally recognized historic districts—the Ridgeland/Oak Park, the Gunderson, or the Frank Lloyd Wright Prairie School of Architecture historic district.

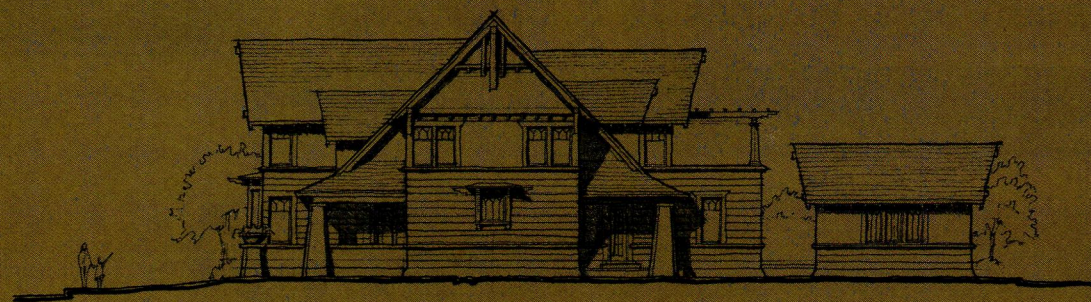
Working with set parameters, such as period (1880 to 1920), lot size (50 by 125), square footage (2,200 to 3,200), and style (Foursquare, Prairie style, bungalow, or Victorian), the competitors had three days on the show

floor to complete the renderings and floor plans by hand and then present them to the judges.

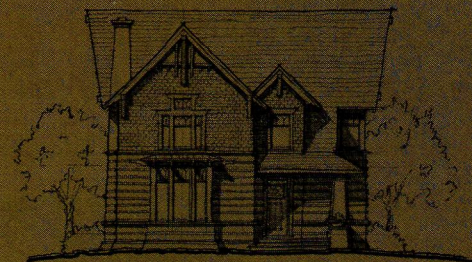
Architect Jonathan Miller Architects winning entry is a Craftsman house with Prairie style detailing. His design influences were homes located in the neighborhood of Oak Park as well as work by architects Frank Lloyd Wright and John S. Van Bergen. The highlights of this Design Challenge winner are its open floor plan, grand fireplace, spacious kitchen, wine bar, walk-in pantry, laundry room, and mudroom. Each bedroom has its own bathroom suite, and the master bedroom features a private outside terrace.

Miller recommends that the house be finished with a clay tile roof, cedar shake siding, horizontal board and batten, timber eave brackets, and exposed dovetail rafters. **NOH**

Craftsman House



Side Elevation



Front Elevation

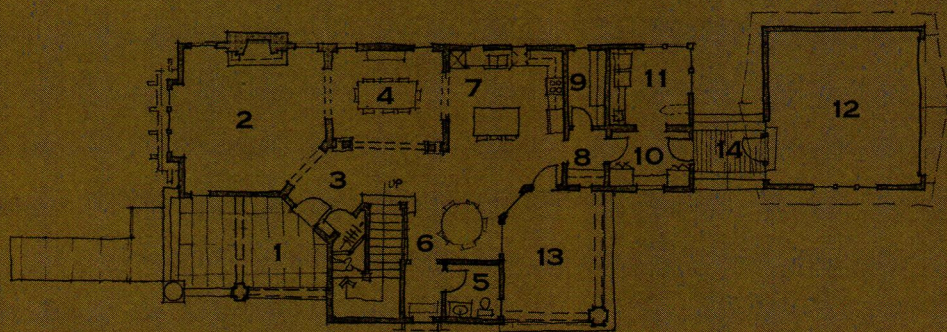
TEXT BY RUSSELL VERSACI

Square Footage:

MAIN LEVEL - 1,762 SQUARE FEET
UPPER LEVEL - 1,503 SQUARE FEET
TOTAL 3,265 SQUARE FEET

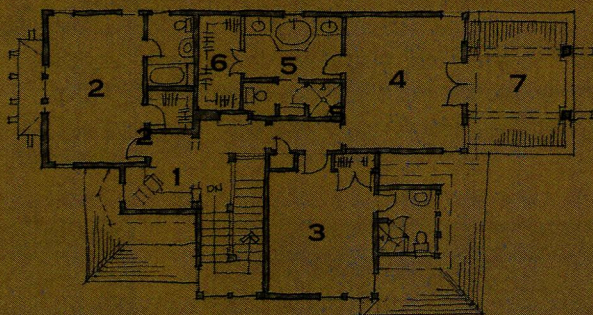
House Dimensions:

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First Floor

- | | |
|------------------|------------------|
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| 2 LIVING ROOM | 9 PANTRY |
| 3 ENTRY | 10 MUDROOM |
| 4 DINING AREA | 11 LAUNDRY |
| 5 POWDER ROOM | 12 GARAGE |
| 6 BREAKFAST NOOK | 13 COVERED PORCH |
| 7 KITCHEN | 14 TERRACE |



Second Floor

- | |
|--------------------|
| 1 COMPUTER STATION |
| 2 BEDROOM |
| 3 BEDROOM |
| 4 MASTER BEDROOM |
| 5 MASTER BATH |
| 6 MASTER CLOSET |
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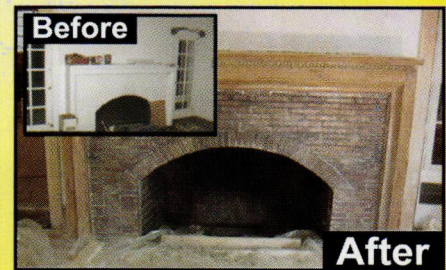
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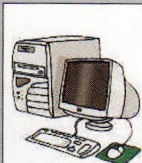
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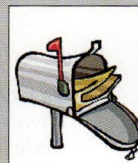
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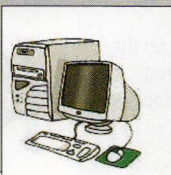
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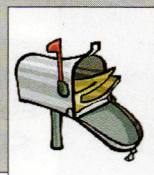
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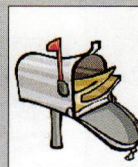
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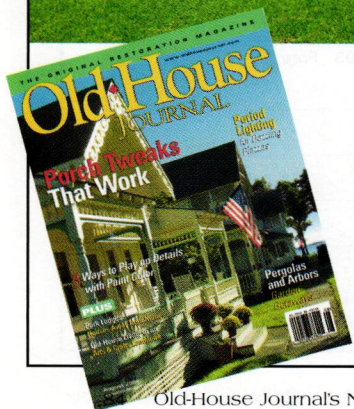
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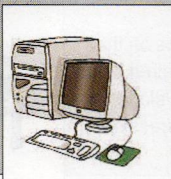
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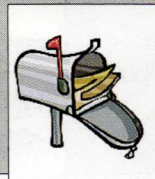
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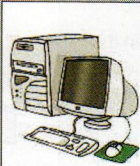
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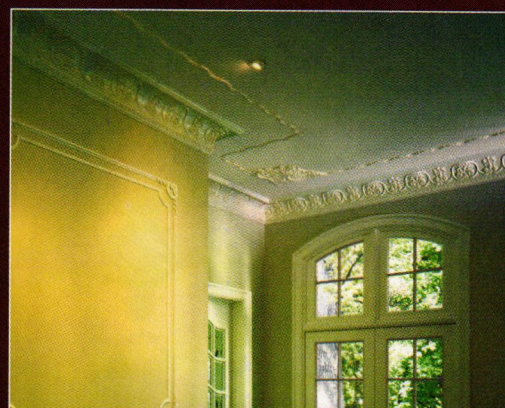
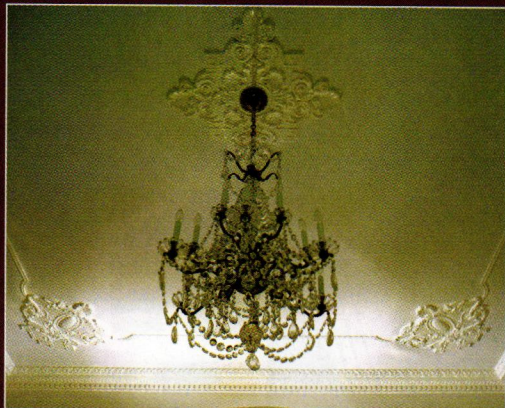
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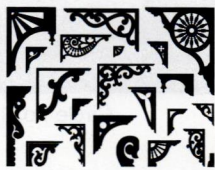
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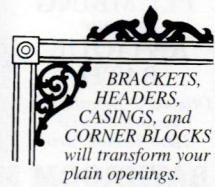
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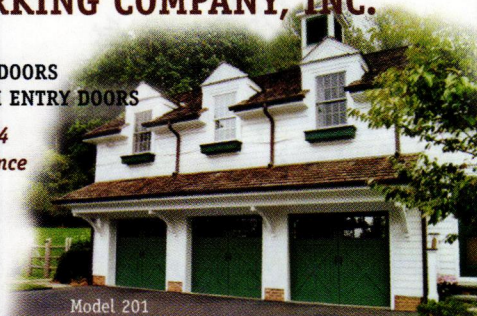
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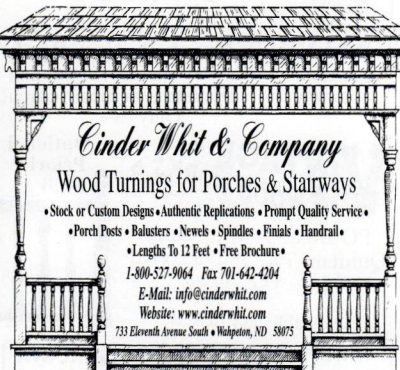
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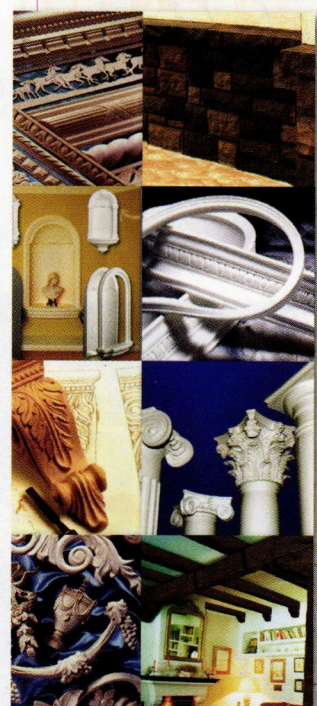


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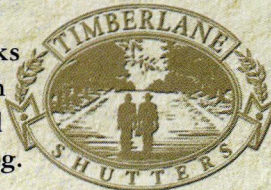
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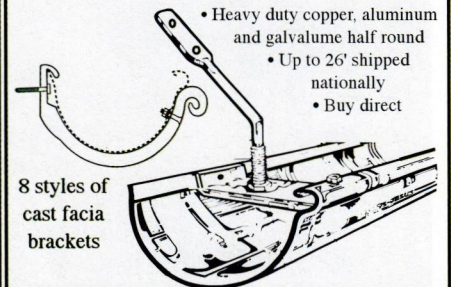


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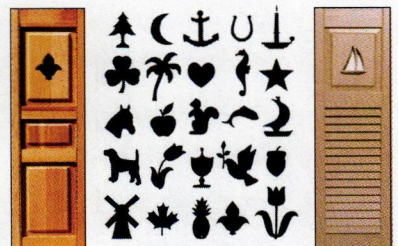
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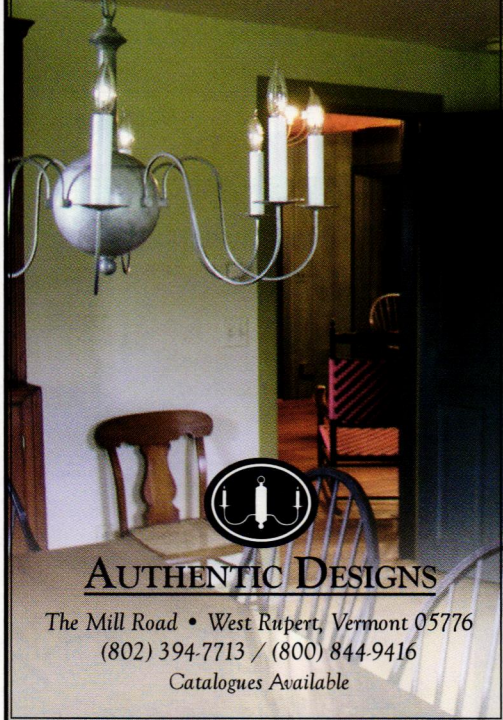
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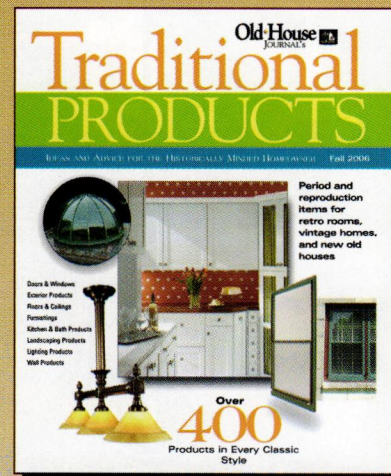
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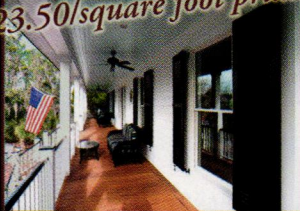


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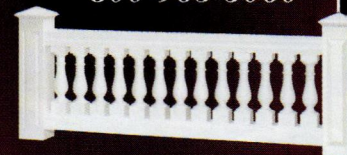
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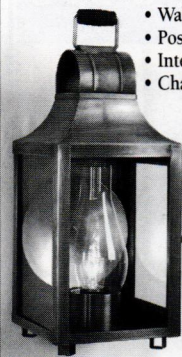


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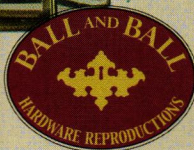
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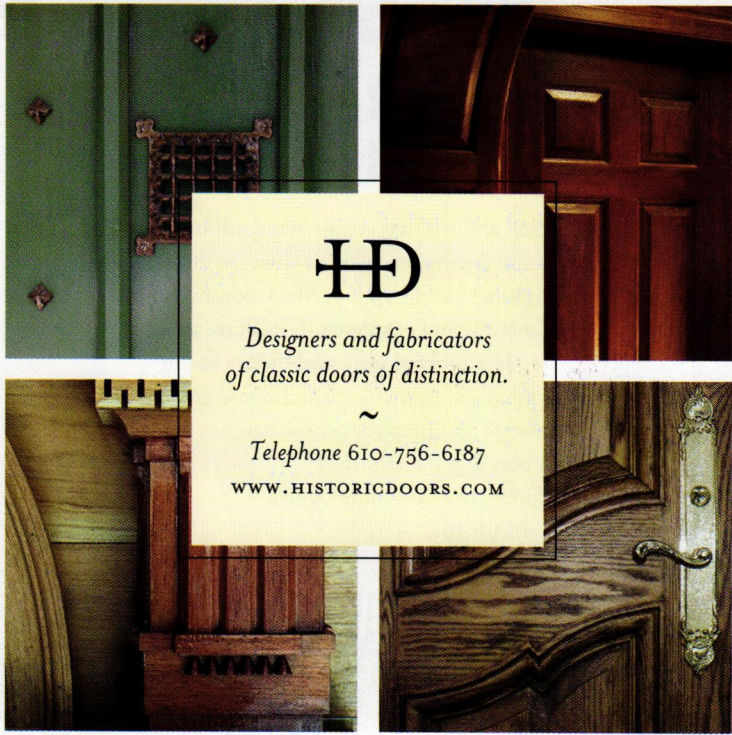
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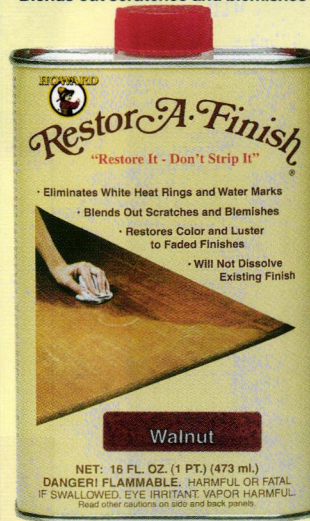
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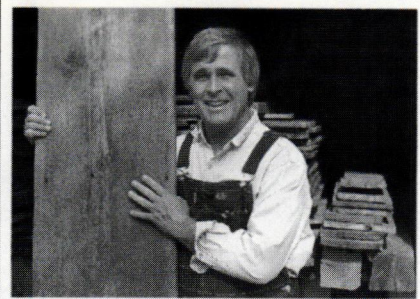
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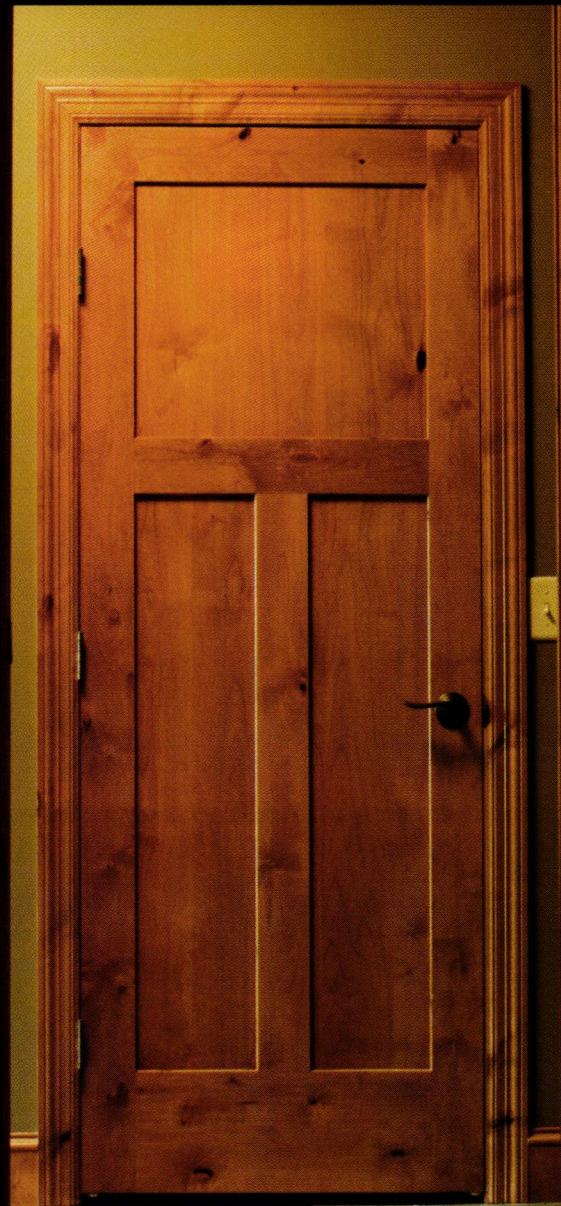
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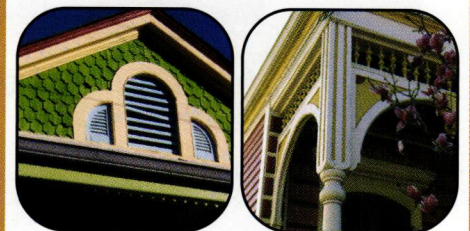
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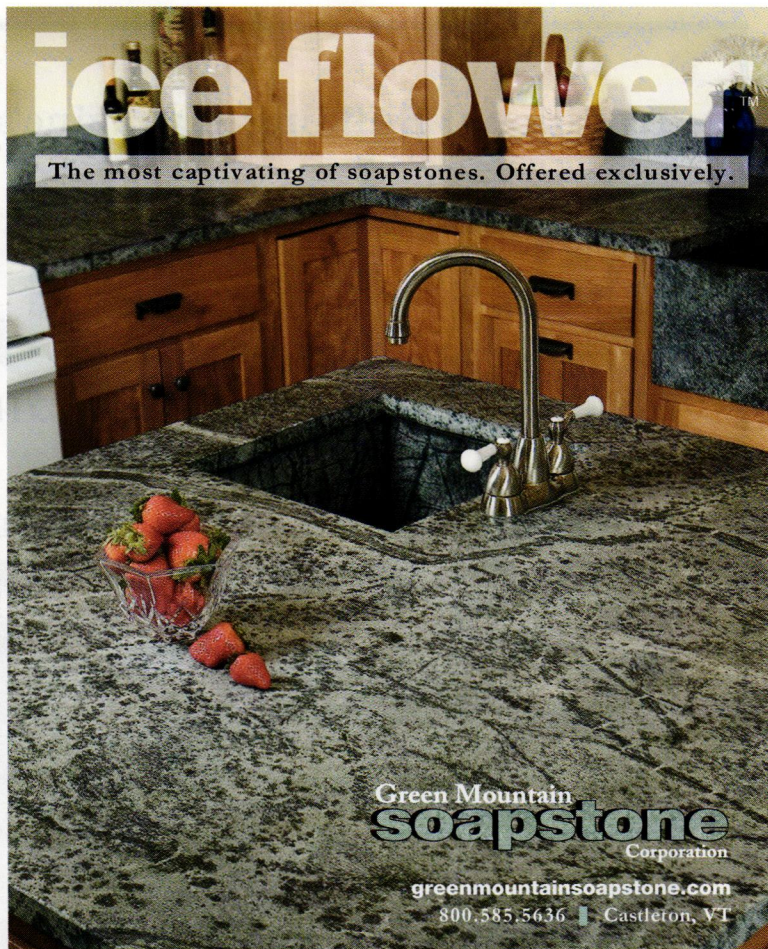
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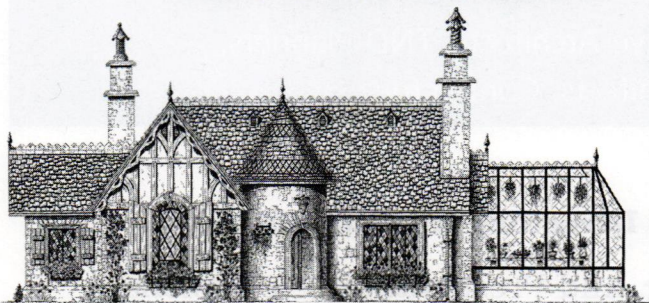
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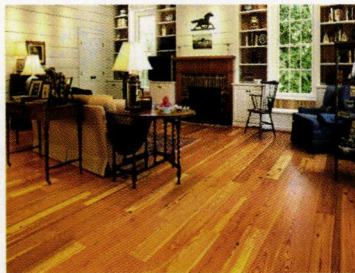
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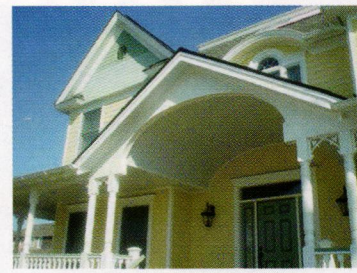
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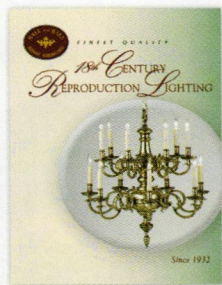
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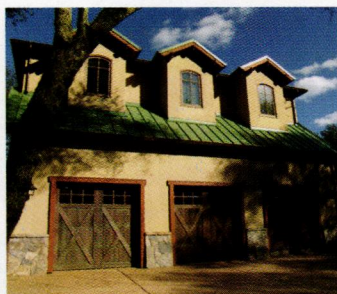
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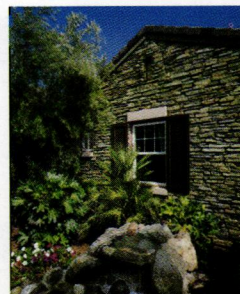
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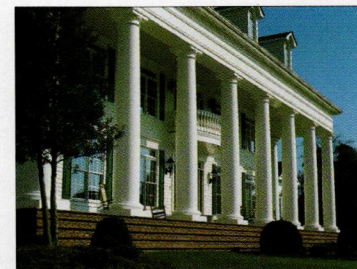
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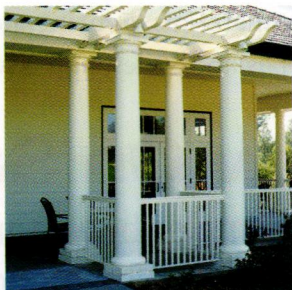
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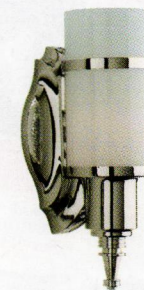
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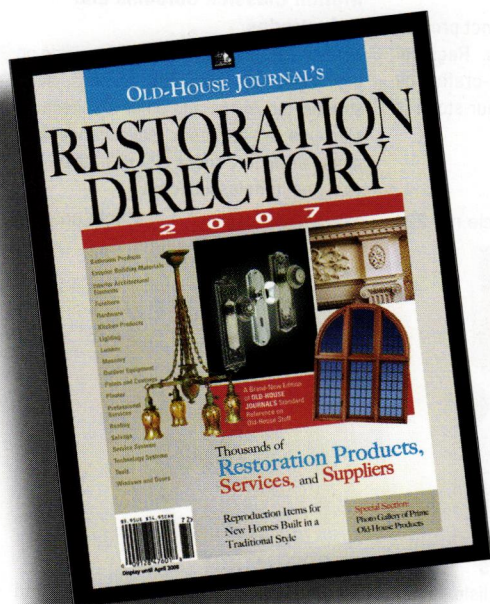
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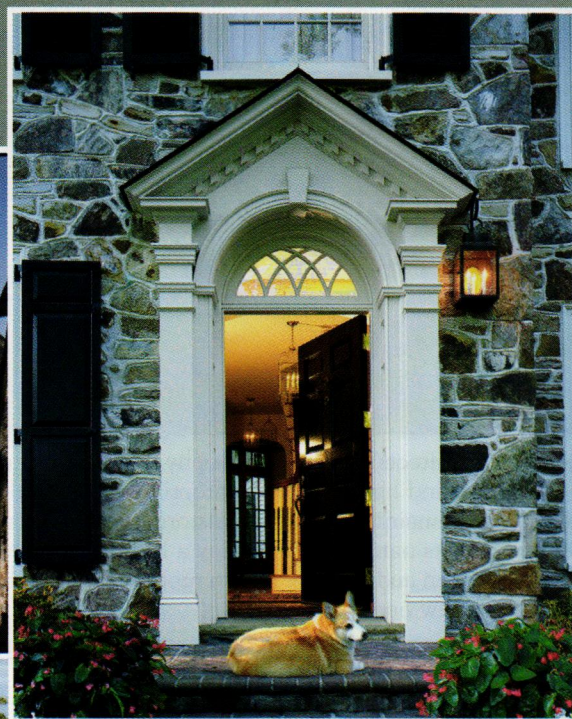
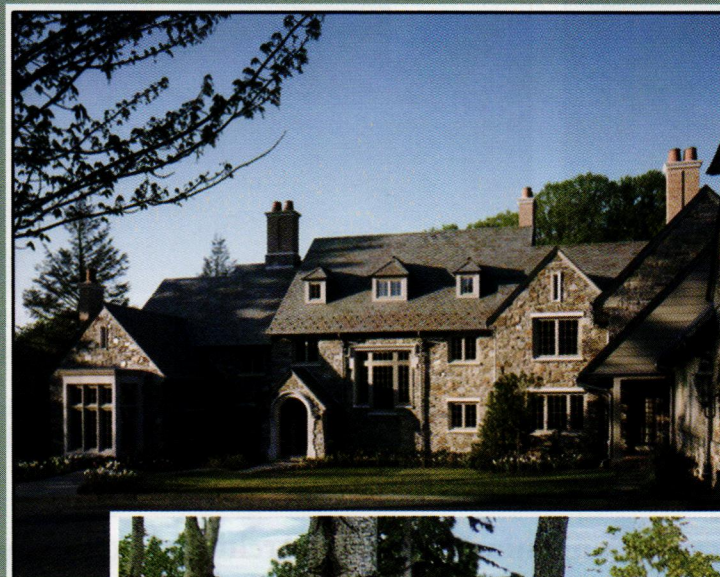
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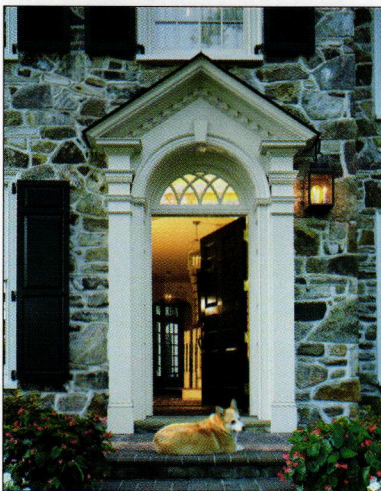


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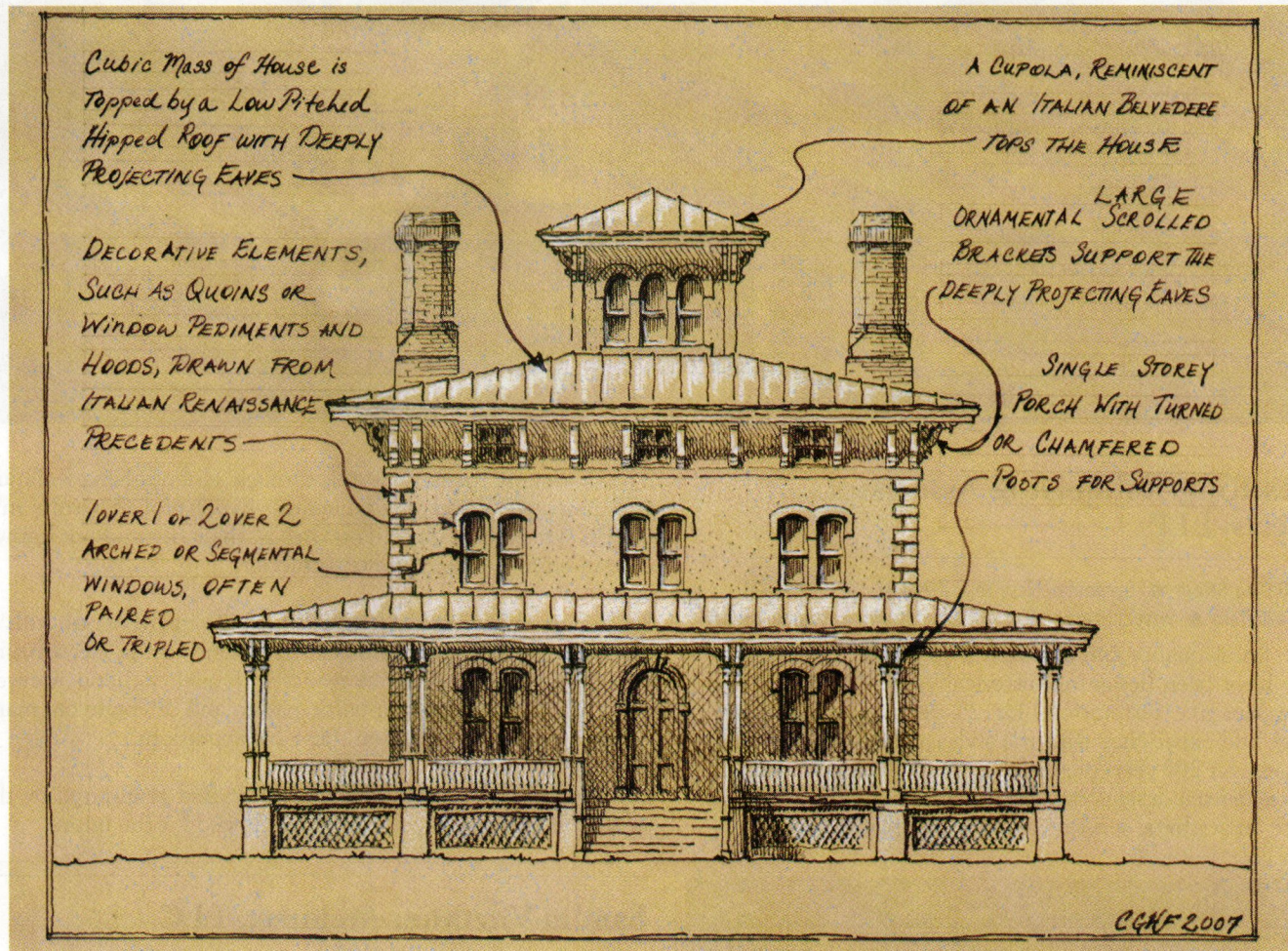
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The Italianate Style

TEXT AND ILLUSTRATION
BY CHRISTINE G. H. FRANCK

Mid-nineteenth-century America was a time of great energy and change. Cities grew, immigration soared, railroads expanded, and new building technologies emerged. To meet the housing needs and tastes of our growing and increasingly diverse populace, architects designed houses in a multitude of styles. Though widely varied, the Romantic Revival styles of this period all reflect picturesque sensibilities in their yearning for the simplicity of the past to ameliorate the complexities of modern life.

Roman and Greek architectural forms were no longer touted as the only appropriate models for houses. Andrew Jackson Downing (1815–1852) writes that domestic architecture should be “less severe, less rigidly scientific [than public architecture], and...exhibit...the freedom and play...of every-day life.” To spread their philosophy and to make house plans widely available, architects published pattern books for the homeowner, unlike earlier builders’ handbooks which were written to instruct builders. Pattern books, such as Downing’s *Architecture of Country Houses* (1850) and Samuel Sloan’s *Homestead Architecture* (1861) presented designs for houses while they celebrated the ideals of family, home, and rural life.

The Italianate style was but one of many presented. Used as early as the mid-1830s, the Italianate style supplanted the popularity of the Gothic Revival in the 1860s and reached its zenith

in the 1870s. Borrowing from Italian Renaissance examples, architects filtered these sources through the Romanticism of the nineteenth century into something wholly new. Three distinct Italian-inspired sub styles emerged: the Tuscan Villa style, with its asymmetry, arcaded porches, and towers; the more rare Renaissance Revival style inspired by Renaissance urban palaces; lastly, the Italianate style, shown here.

By far, the Italianate (or American Bracketed) style was the most popular. It is characterized by its cubic form, vertical proportions, low-pitched roofs, and often a cupola. Though the massing is simple, the elevations are ornate. One-over-one or two-over-two sash windows, with arched, segmental, or flat heads, are elaborated by decorative surrounds, hoods, or pediments. Windows are commonly paired or tripled together. Deeply projecting eaves supported by ornate brackets, turned or chamfered posts at porches, quoins dressing corners, horizontal bands separating floors, and stone or materials imitating stone complete this style. An excellent example is Sloan’s George Allan House in Cape May, New Jersey (1863).

Looking back on this period of rapid change, increasing immigration, rampant eclecticism, and the beginnings of the plan book and housing industries, one must wonder if we today are not more influenced by this time than we might otherwise think. ^{NOH}