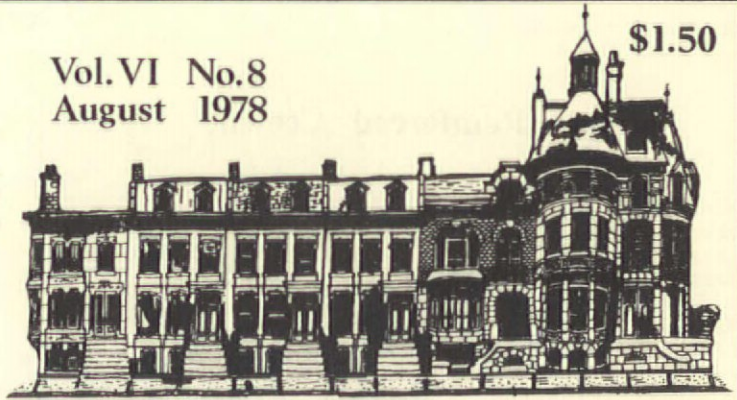


THE OLD-HOUSE JOURNAL

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Restoration And Maintenance Techniques For The Antique House



Chimney Sweeping

By Eva Horton, Kristia Associates

I SHALL NEVER FORGET the thunder-like roar in the house and the panicky look on Mom and Dad's faces as we waited for the fire department to come and put out our chimney fire. That was in Norway during the Second World War. Today in the United States there are 40,000 chimney fires a year. You might be as lucky as we were and not lose your house, but you'll be scared half to death and your chimney will probably be wrecked.

DIRTY CHIMNEYS cause these fires. Your fireplace has not been cleaned for a couple of years, the soot lining the chimney flue has become saturated with creosote from the burning logs, and one day the hard, flaky, highly flammable stuff goes up!

IT DOESN'T TAKE MUCH-- a newspaper fire sends flames up to the damper, then in a matter of seconds the fire spreads up through the flue creating a draft. Now the fire begins to howl and roar. The mortar between the bricks melts and drips into the flue, only to be caught up in the tremendous updraft and sent shooting out the chimney and onto the roof in the form of little fireballs.



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Coming Next Month

INSTALLING A HOT AIR HEATING SYSTEM

IF YOU CAN KEEP YOURSELF from running out the door, the chimney fire can be controlled by throwing rock salt on the floor of the fireplace, and covering the opening with a wet blanket. Call the fire department and hope for the best.

HAVING YOUR CHIMNEY CLEANED is a lot easier than keeping your cool in the face of a fire. But who is going to do the cleaning? In Europe the chimney sweep is an everyday sight. He is a professional with high standards set by his trade. But here in the United States? Yes, chimney sweeps do exist. I have organized an association of trained professionals in 25 states who will inspect and clean your chimneys. (See box on page 92.)

OUR TASK IS TO TRAIN homeowners as well as professionals to keep their chimneys clean and safe. Safety means inspection of your chimneys by a professional--chimney sweep, building inspector or fire marshal--and following up on their recommendations.

BUT DON'T THINK because you have lined your old flue with chimney tile that you are safe. You have only prevented fire number one. A chimney fire can cause even tile linings to crack. So, if you have a second chimney fire, it is

(Continued on page 92)

Glass-Reinforced Cement

To The Editor:

YOUR JUNE ISSUE contains a most interesting feature on the Secrist house in Georgia. In the article, there's a reference to a fiber-glass reinforced cement.

YOUR READERS might be interested in learning that the product is Surewall surface bonding cement from W. R. Bonsal Co. The material is primarily intended for construction of block walls without conventional mortar. But it can also be used for renovation of existing walls in applications similar to that used by the Secrists.

THE SECRISTS' application was especially interesting because they were able to achieve an effect similar to straw stucco. The reasons for using this material are normally confined to its speed and ease of use.

A FREE BROCHURE on Surewall surface bonding cement can be obtained by writing: Jim Trowbridge, W. R. Bonsal Co., P.O. Box 38, Lilesville, N.C. 28091.

John S. Ruch, Manager
Eastern Region Public Relations
PPG Industries

More On Solar Heaters



To The Editor:

THE ARTICLE ON SOLAR HEATING in the May issue was most interesting. But many readers may have shared my reaction: All that effort for only \$23/yr. savings? People who aren't natural tinkers might get discouraged about solar. But they shouldn't be—at least on the basis of the system described.

BECAUSE OF its simple homemade design, the collector described is relatively inefficient. Based on the photos and text, the area of the collector is about 100 sq. ft. And from the data given, it gets about \$23/.024 = 958 kwh./yr. This is equal to 3,258,333 BTU's per year (958 x 3,400). So the system utilizes about 32,583 BTU/sq. ft. of collector/year. This is about 10% of the energy striking the collector. A really high-technology system might get 70%. A simple system might get 25-30%.

THE REASON that the system picks up so little heat is that the pipes don't cover the roof and don't have little plates attached that do. Thus, a lot of energy that strikes the roof gets reflected back to the sky. The other major problem is that the pipes themselves aren't insulated (usually done by a glass or plastic cover). As a result, much of the energy collected by the pipes is dissipated to the atmosphere. Just putting some old storm windows (perhaps not readily available in Sacramento) over the pipes would help a lot.

THE OLD-HOUSE JOURNAL®

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Editor	R.A. Clem Labine
Decorative Arts Editor	Carolyn Flaherty
Circulation Director	Paul T. McLoughlin
Circulation Assistants	Joan O'Reilly
	James Graham
	Shirley Zucker
	Michael Carew
Midwest Editor	Tom H. Gerhardt
Contributing Editors	Claire Wood Labine
	R.A. Labine, Sr.
	H. Weber Wilson
	Barbara Schiller

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AS A GUIDE, your readers should consider these criteria as a minimum for solar systems:

- 25% efficiency (uses 25% of year's sun)
- Yields 75,000 BTU/sq. ft. of collector per year
- Saves 20% of first cost each year in fuel savings (for owner-built systems).

H. A. Russell
Hugh Adams Russell Architects, Inc.
Cambridge, Mass.

Help Needed: Radiators

To The Editor:

WE HAVE 14 old cast-iron radiators in our 1832 Greek Revival farmhouse. Because of cost, all we can do at the present time is refurbish the current heating system and try to make it as efficient as possible. Right now, the radiators are heavily encrusted with old paint. Perhaps your readers can help me with three questions:

- (1) What's the best way to remove paint from cast iron radiators?
- (2) Should the stripped radiators be painted? And if so, what color and what type of paint? (We have received a lot of conflicting advice on this.)
- (3) What's the best way to hide radiators in an old house?

I'D GREATLY APPRECIATE any advice. Thanks.

Nan Harrington
Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio

This is a fairly common question. Has anyone come up with a good answer? We'd like to publish a symposium-in-print on the subject of old radiators. Let's hear from you!—Ed.



Sometime after World War I, the Queen Anne porches were removed and the present front porches erected. In 1977, before the exterior was stained, the house looked ghostly.



After the exterior was stained with DeVoe solid-color stain, the house became an asset to its neighborhood. The conservatory is to the left.

Old-House Living...

Reclaiming A Queen Anne In Missouri

By Tom H. Gerhardt

IN 1976, Mrs. Lois Liden returned to her native Southeast Missouri and desired to buy a house in Cape Girardeau where her brother, Carl Blanchard, has lived for several years.

HER BROTHER DROVE her around town to see what was available. After seeing houses ranging from 30 to 50 years old, nothing had really struck her fancy. Then she asked to stop in front of a house that fascinated her. Meanwhile, her brother was stating something to the effect that he sure didn't know that she wanted a house that old!

THE HOUSE LOOKED very old because it was the Vogelsanger house--well known around town for the fact that it had not been painted in so many years that there was no paint left on the frame structure except for some flakes under the porches where the walls were protected. The large, grey structure loomed in front of her with two-storey porches, a sort of bay window structure to the left that had a glass roof on it, and yard growing up with weeds. All it needed was a witch on the porch, bats flying from the attic windows and a few jack-o-lanterns.

THE DAY THAT SHE BOUGHT the place was a very fortunate one for the house and the city. Most people who had looked at it had given up being able to do much in an authentic way for it.



This is how the house looked around the time it was built for John F. Vogelsanger, a well-known hardware merchant in the city. The house was probably finished by Dec. of 1899 as there is an electric bill confirming that service began as of that date. Although the lovely old front porches that gave the house its Queen Anne style are gone, the interior has retained its architectural character.



The restored kitchen, papered in dark red, provides an authentic setting for utensils sold in the shop.



A pantry was tastefully converted into a modern kitchen where food is actually prepared.

THE INSIDE WAS A SURPRISE. The walls and plastering were very solid; most of the woodwork had its original varnished finish; there were the original interesting early electroliers that had swirled iridescent shades left on them; the Queen Anne staircase with plenty of wooden lacework surrounding it was beautiful; there was a stained glass window with a fanlight above it; the conservatory, complete with panelled wall, looked like a quaint Victorian greenhouse; and there was a huge attic with sort of a widow's walk above it.

THE WINTER OF 1977 was a hard one, but as soon as the last snow drifts melted away, Mrs. Liden--armed with wallpaper and paint samples, a mop and a broom, an enthusiastic teenage restoration crew, a dust scarf to tie over her head, and expert but often puzzled carpenters, plumbers, electricians, plasterers, and decorators--led her own way down the restoration path. She had to really get down to work, as she wanted to open her antique shop, Victoria Park, on the lower floor by Christmas.

THE EXTERIOR, of course, was the big problem. While the speculators and skeptics were all watching and keeping tabs on their estimations, she and her daughter, Ellen, supervised mixing shades of solid-color exterior stain. Because the wood was poplar, very little repair work had to be done to the wood. But Mrs. Liden wanted the color scheme of the house to reflect wood-tones so that it would not be a sudden, shock-

ing color change to the area. A brown was picked out to accent the trim; and a yellowish grey color was arrived at for the poplar siding (after two or three wall areas were stained with trial colors.) Attesting to the fact that the color scheme accomplished its wood-like objective was when one woman came to the house nearly a year after it was stained and said that the interior looked so nice and complete, but wondered when they were going to paint the exterior!

AFTER HAVING A PLASTERER REPAIR CRACKS in the walls using drywall tape and compound, Mrs. Liden then began to undertake the decoration in the rooms. Her teenage restoration team also assisted her with some of this as well as much of the basic work, such as stripping paint and wallpaper, and various other cleaning operations. Some of the team members were friends of her daughter's; others heard that members were having fun while earning money and came to apply. The young people said they never knew that this kind of work could be so interesting and enlightening. They also said that their greatest motivational force was the boss for whom they liked to work.

THEY PAINTED THE WHOLE INTERIOR OF THE third floor studio to resemble stucco with the trim boards being a brown--sort of like a gable in a Tudor house. They used dozens of cans of spray paint to re-gild the radiators. They stripped the kitchen woodwork. Many members of the team received a bonus at the end of the work--a photographic enlargement of the house's original Queen Anne porches.



Getting the observatory back into operation included replacing several of the ½-in.-thick glass panels on the roof. Long pipes or box coils that follow the design of the room under the windows had been disconnected--either to cut down on fuel bills or because they leaked. Tension mounted as the plumbers reconnected the coils to the boiler in the cellar. However, it was a joyous occasion as the last air was exhausted out of the lines and there was no need to clean up what could have been a disaster.

search that determined it would not be safe to use the fireplace with its present flue.

THE WALLPAPER THAT EXISTED in the downstairs rooms had to be very near the original, if not the original. It was so faded that the colors only showed on pieces that were behind the mouldings. But it had an interesting border pattern that she followed through with when redecorating the rooms. Borders of around 4 inches ran around and down all of the corners of the rooms and across the tops of the baseboards. Using paper borders along with paint and regular wallpaper, she retained much of the past flavor in the decoration of the rooms.

WITH THE HOUSE RESTORED and Victoria Park in operation, one might think that Mrs. Liden's dreams are accomplished. They almost are in the "big house" but it should not be forgotten that the property also includes the little brick cottage next door, where chimneys lean and one could easily fall through the floor. Yet, she still says that it has a nice front porch, good lines, a wonderful central hall... she had better go get her dust scarf, for it won't be long until the new project will materialize! ■■



The wallpaper used in the downstairs sitting room is a mini-print by Laura Ashley-Raintree Designs (available in good wallpaper shops) and the border is from A. L. Diamant & Co. (see OHJ 1978 Catalog.)

AN ARTIST also appeared asking for work. He later sanded and finished a floor in one of the rooms in which he was allowed to exhibit his work during Victoria Park's opening. But his most interesting contribution to the house came earlier. Mrs. Liden had been talking about how the oval mirror in the downstairs fireplace needed resilvering but that they did not know how to remove the mantel to have access to the glass. The artist overheard her.

HE OFTEN WORKED LATE in the evenings and would be allowed to lock the place up when Mrs. Liden had already left. This particular evening, he decided to surprise her and remove the mantel and mirror glass. Oh, he did a fine job of removal--with the lights on brightly, no curtains at the windows, and the police sitting in a squad car out in the street watching the operation carefully and only thinking the obvious! They paid him a visit, and he spent the rest of the evening telling them how and for what reasons one removes a mantel. The mirror looks very nice now; but much to Mrs. Liden's disappointment, her son, Eric, did re-

Applying Wood Preservatives

WOOD WILL LAST FOR CENTURIES--when properly maintained. The reason that we see so many badly deteriorated wood houses is that the owners have ignored the basics of proper maintenance.

PROPER MAINTENANCE starts with a water-repellent preservative solution (WRP). These are sold at major hardware stores and paint supply centers under a variety of trade names, such as "Wood Life," "Wood Good," etc. WRP solutions guard against damage to wood and paint caused by water and by rot and stain fungi (mildew).

EVERY PIECE OF WOOD intended for exterior use should have a WRP treatment. It is possible to buy certain types of wood that have been pre-treated--which is best because the pre-treatment is done under pressure that forces the preservative deep into the wood. However, most homeowners will have to do their own treatment. Wood should be treated before final assembly so that every surface and every end is protected.

A WRP is a solution that gives wood the ability to repel water, such as rain and dew. It can do this because it contains waxlike material. By repelling the water, it fights decay and stain by denying fungi that cause these conditions the moisture they need to live. Wood surfaces that remain free of mildew have an attractive natural-finished appearance. A WRP also reduces water damage to the wood, such as the excessive swelling and shrinking that lead to cracking and warping. In addition, a WRP protects paint from the blistering, cracking, and peeling that often occur when excessive outside water penetrates the wood.

A WRP also contains a fungicide that kills any surface mildew living on the wood. This fungicide is usually penta (pentachlorophenol.) Other components of the solution are a resin to improve paintability and to reduce blooming or crystallizing of fungicide on the surface.

THERE IS A FURTHER BENEFIT from a WRP treatment of exterior wood species such as redwood and western red cedar that contain colored water-soluble extractives. When water soaks into these woods through the paint and then dries out again, the colored substances are sometimes left on the paint surface. WRP treatment will effectively reduce this type of paint discoloration.

IN MIXING AND APPLYING WRP, care should be exercised. The safest place to do mixing is outdoors. The solution is a volatile flammable mixture. Don't breathe its vapors or expose them to flame or sparks. It is wise to

wear protective clothing on the hands and arms and to take care that the solution is not splashed in the eyes or on the face.

Application Before Painting

A PPLYING WRP SOLUTION to the surface of the wood with a brush, or by dipping, is an effective treatment for siding and exterior millwork (doors, window sash, door and window frames, sills, moldings, fascia), for wood fencing, and for lawn furniture.

THE FOLLOWING STEPS are suggested for application to new wood:

- (1) If treated siding or millwork is purchased, brush or dip-treat only the freshly cut surfaces.
- (2) Wood which has not been factory treated can be treated by either dipping, brushing, or spraying. Care should be taken to treat the ends of boards and joints between boards. Open joints should be caulked after treating and priming.
- (3) Allow freshly treated wood to dry. If applied with a brush or spray, allow 2 days of favorable drying weather before painting. If dipped for 10 seconds, allow 1 week of favorable drying weather before painting. If enough time is not allowed for most of the solvent to dry from the wood, the paint applied over it may be slow to dry, or it may discolor or dry with a rough surface that looks like alligator leather.

WHEN APPLYING WRP to previously painted wood, remove the loose paint, brush the WRP into the joints only, and wipe off excess solution from the paint surfaces with a rag. Allow 2 days of favorable drying weather before repainting.

WHETHER TREATMENT is to new wood or previously painted wood, particular care should be taken to apply the solution well at the ends of boards and joints between boards. Some homeowners do not realize that water will climb up the back of bevel siding from the lap joints. It does this by capillary flow. WRP applied to lap joints of the siding does a good job of preventing capillary flow. Accordingly, places that should be treated well include the butt and lap joints of horizontal siding, edges and top and bottom ends of vertical siding, and the edges and corner joints in window sash, sills, window frames, doors, and door frames.

OFTEN BOTTOMS of doors and window sash are overlooked. These are areas where water can penetrate deeply and cause extensive damage if not treated. Treatment with WRP will eliminate many problems later.

Application For Natural Finish

THE COLOR AND APPEARANCE of weathered wood can be affected, to a marked degree, by mildew. In most parts of the country, mildew grows on the wood surface and gives it a dark gray, blotchy, and unsightly appearance. In contrast, weathered wood in very dry climates or in coastal regions where salt atmospheres may inhibit the growth of mildew, has a clean, silvery appearance.

THE COLOR OF WEATHERED WOOD is influenced to a lesser degree by highly colored wood extractives in such woods as western red cedar and redwood. These extractives gradually diffuse to the surface and produce a dark-brown color. This color may persist in protected areas not exposed to direct sun and rain. The extractives can be removed by scrubbing with detergent and rinsing.

A CLEAN GOLDEN-TAN COLOR can be achieved in the weathering of wood by treating the surface to retard the accumulation of wood extractives and mildew on the surface. The treatment, originally recommended by the California Redwood Association, consists of applying a WRP to the wood surface. This method of finishing also is recommended for the popular siding species and for the natural finishing of exterior plywood, brushed plywood, and low grades of lumber that do not hold paint well. The treatment also reduces warping and cracking and prevents water staining at edges and ends of wood siding.

THE FIRST APPLICATION of the WRP is usually short-lived. When the wood surface starts to show blotchy discoloration caused by extractives and mildew, clean it by mild scrubbing with a detergent or trisodium-phosphate solution and rinsing. Then re-treat with another liberal brush application of water-repellent preservative solution.

FREQUENTLY it is necessary to clean and re-treat smoothly planed wood surfaces after the first year of exposure. After the cleaning and re-treating, the treatment should last much longer and need be refinished only when the surface starts to show an uneven discoloration pattern or small black spots indicating the start of mildew. The treatment will be more durable on weathered or rough-sawn surfaces because they absorb a greater quantity of solution than a smooth surface.

PIGMENTS IN THE FORM of colors in oil and tinting colors can be added to the WRP solution to give a desired color effect and improve durability. A quantity of 4 to 6 fluid ounces of colors per gallon of solution is usually adequate. Pigmented WRP should be applied to the full length of a course of siding without stopping to avoid the formation of lap marks. Lap marks would also be minimized by applying two coats.



PENETRATING PIGMENTED STAINS are considered more durable than the WRP type finish and can always be applied to wood previously finished with the WRP.

WHEN WOOD WEATHERS NATURALLY, it is important to use nails that are highly resistant to rusting. Iron nails rust rapidly and produce a severe brown or black discoloration around the head. Aluminum nails and galvanized nails to a lesser extent, are corrosion-resistant and prevent such difficulties. Brass screws are often used because of these problems.

Precautions

WOOD PRESERVATIVES (a type of pesticide) can be injurious to man, animals, and plants. Therefore, for safe and effective usage, it is essential to follow the directions and heed all precautions on the labels. The wood preservative, pentachlorophenol, for example, is toxic to humans and animals and is a strong root poison and defoliant for plants. It is, therefore, advisable to wear rubber gloves and protective masks (approved for use with pesticides) and to cover nearby plant life when using any material containing pentachlorophenol such as the FPL natural finish or a water-repellent preservative. The application of preservatives using any spray method can be especially hazardous and extra precautions must be taken. Avoid spraying whenever possible. Do not use any preservatives containing pentachlorophenol indoors.

STORE PRESERVATIVES in original containers under lock and key--out of reach of children and pets--and away from foodstuff. Use all preservatives selectively and carefully. Follow recommended practices for the disposal of surplus preservatives and preservative containers. ■■



CHIMNEY SWEEP GUILD

THE CHIMNEY SWEEP GUILD was formed for professionals to exchange ideas on occupational techniques, hazards, insurance and prevention of potential health hazards.

SWEEPS, owners of fireplace stores, firefighters and building inspectors are encouraged to join. The Guild also publishes a newsletter. For information about joining the Guild, write to: Chimney Sweep Guild, c/o Kristia Associates, P.O. Box 1176, Portland, Maine 04104.

An Odd-Sized Chimney Brush

IF YOU HAVE a non-standard size chimney flue, a too-large wire bristle brush may be cut to size with wire snippers. The tighter the brush, the heavier the weight you must have in order to lower it down the chimney. But it will probably take with it more soot and grime than the loosely fitting brush.



make sure that you close the stove down. Don't necessarily put it out--gunky creosote gets harder to remove as it cools.

WORKING ON A ROOFTOP is hazardous--so do as the professionals do. Use a sturdy 14 ft. or 28 ft. extension ladder to get to the roof, and once up there look before you put your feet down. If you can see the rafters outlined on the roof, a weak roof board condition may exist. Never walk in the valley of

(Chimney Sweeping--Cont'd from page 85)

possible for sparks to penetrate into your structure through cracks in the tile. And even if the tile lining is sound, it is possible for a chimney fire to set your roof (or a neighbor's roof!) ablaze--as a result of the fiery debris that is shooting out your chimney.

A CLEAN CHIMNEY IS A SAFE CHIMNEY. So sink into a chair, make yourself comfortable and read "how-to" before you get out the ladder and get up on the roof.

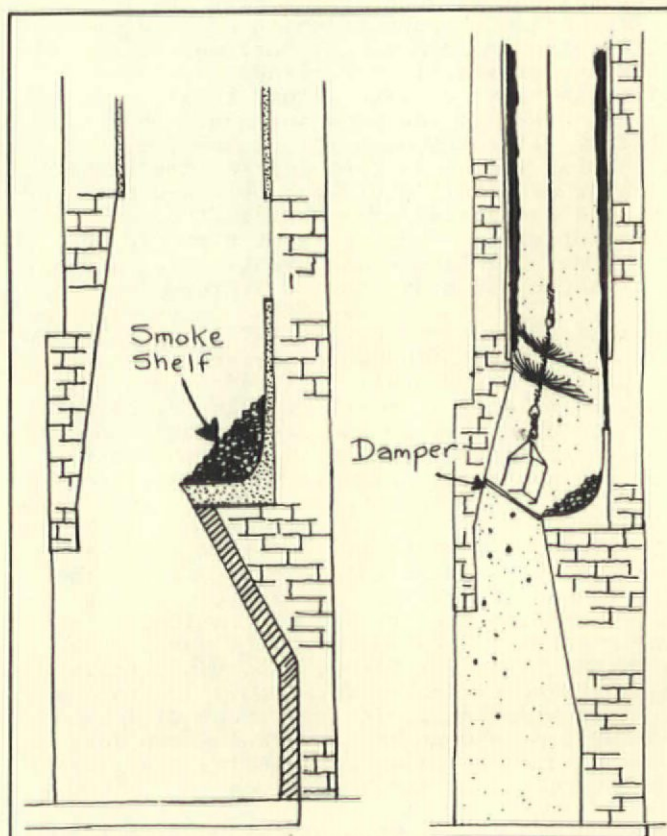
How To Clean A Chimney

FIRST YOU MUST GET your tools together. The most important tool for chimney sweeping is a round or square brush--slightly larger than the flue if the bristles are soft, almost an exact fit if the bristles are hard. Most masonry chimneys are the standard sizes of 8 in. x 8 in., 8 in. x 12 in., 12 in. x 15 in. Non-masonry double or triple wall chimneys are usually 6 in., 7 in., 8 in., 9 in., 10 in., 12 in. and 14 in. in diameter.

TO THE TOP OF THE BRUSH you will tie a strong--preferably new--rope long enough to reach the length of the chimney. Fastened to the bottom of the brush you will need a weight to drag the brush down the chimney--ten to twenty pounds is usually enough. Old window sash-weights can serve as a brush weight.

FOR YOUR OWN PROTECTION: A mask or cloth to cover your mouth and nose and glasses or goggles for your eyes. Drop cloths, newspapers, a tarp, strong tape are all necessary for the protection of the interior of your house. Buckets, double paper bags, pans, a household broom or industrial vacuum are needed for the inside work.

ON THE DAY you're ready to become a chimney sweep, protect the floors where you will be walking and working with the newspapers and drop cloths. Cover the fireplace opening with the tarp. Tape firmly around the edges so it fits tight like a drum. If you're heating with a wood stove or free-standing combi-fire,



CLEANING the smoke shelf can be done most effectively with the damper removed. The damper is normally attached to the damper support shelf with two cotter keys which must be taken out in order to remove the damper. It has been heated many times and could be brittle, so be gentle when cleaning the damper.



While you're involved with the well-being of your chimney, test it for leaks. Station an assistant up on the roof, ready to cover the top of the chimney with a wet towel or blanket. Light a small fire in the fireplace or stove and add a handful of material that smokes as it burns--green leaves or hay. Have your assistant cover the chimney. If you find leaks, replace the loose and crumbling mortar.

an asphalt roof. This is the weakest point of the shingle barrier and you could end up in the attic.

NOW TAKE A LOOK at your chimney from the outside and be sure that it is strong enough to hold a ladder and you. Shine your flashlight--one of those extra strong ones--down the inside of your chimney. More accumulations of creosote will occur in the upper parts of the chimney, because that is where it cools off and condensation is more likely to occur. If you happen to have a non-masonry chimney you will need an assortment of handy tools to unscrew the cap on top of your chimney. You will even have had the foresight to carry some extra bits of metal tied to your belt just in case the brush is too tight to go down the chimney with the weights you already tied on.

YOU HAVE YOUR ACT TOGETHER and finally you're about to clean your chimney. You are ready to go, now brace yourself!

STAND DOWN WIND of the chimney when you are sweeping...if not, smoke and soot will get in your eyes. Lower the brush, weight first into the chimney. Easy does it, you don't want a broken damper. Your brush fits nice and snug, but not too snug, your weights are exactly right. There she goes, slowly, all the way to the bottom. Now pull it gently all the way to the top. The brush will bring with it soot and grime the first time you pull it up. Repeat this six times at least, more if you have an extra dirty chimney. You'll know you've done the job when you don't hear the tinkle of soot and creosote dropping down the

chimney. If you have a non-masonry chimney, screw the cap back on. Now start descending the roof...carefully.

Cleaning Up

CONGRATULATIONS! If you're dirty, you've succeeded. A potential fire hazard is removed. I suggest you keep your protective devices for your eyes and breathing on till the job is all finished. Back in the house, step only on the papers or drop cloths. You have your buckets, pans or double grocery bags ready; no plastic bags please, they just don't hold up.

CAREFULLY UNDO your tightly sealed fireplace and gently sweep out the soot and grime that have accumulated. Don't forget the smoke shelf. Creosote accumulation on the smoke shelf is indeed a fire hazard. You can do this with a broom, but a strong industrial vacuum is a good deal more efficient. If you can't rent one, forget about the vacuum altogether and please don't use your household vacuum cleaner. You'll wreck it forever.

IF YOU HAVE a box stove or combi-fire, chimney fires can begin in the stove pipe. They begin naturally where the flame can reach the creosote. Therefore it is terribly important that creosote buildup be thoroughly removed near where the flame may reach it. Gently disconnect your stove pipe and lower it into a double grocery bag or pan or bucket, and carry it outdoors. Some people recommend that you tape the bag to the stove pipe at one end and brush vigorously allowing the soot and grime to fall into the bag. When done reconnect with care. Ashes can be as dangerous as live cinders and should be treated with equal respect. Therefore, now that you have the ashes in a grocery bag, don't put the bag on the floor. Leave the ashes outdoors in a safe place or in a fireproof container.



Eva Horton is cleaning the smoke shelf with a special brush. You can use an ordinary broom, but don't forget the face mask. Her assistant holds the flashlight.



Did Eva Horton ever sweep a chimney? The answer is, most definitely, yes. Here she is in the traditional sweep's outfit of top hat and tails. Down goes the brush, very slowly and carefully, at the end of a strong length of rope. No frayed rope, please--that brush has a heavy weight tied to it. A brush stuck in the middle of a chimney is a sweep's nightmare!

WHILE YOU'RE ALL DIRTY, it is a good idea to clean your wood stove. Soot acts as an insulator and can cause a drop in efficiency of 10-15%. So get a good sturdy wire brush and scrape out the inside of the stove.

Brushes And Books

VARIOUS SIZES of metal wire chimney brushes are sold through Jøtul stove dealers. For more information, write to: Kristia Associates, 343 Forest Avenue, P. O. Box 1118 CBB, Portland, Maine 04104. Two useful books are available at \$1.00 each from the same address--"A Resource Book on the Art of Heating With Wood," and "The Homeowner's Resource Book on the Art of Sweeping Chimneys."

NOW EVERYTHING IS CLEAN except for you. Sensible chimney sweeps take scrubbing themselves as seriously as they do every other step in sweeping. Indeed the job is not done until every particle of dust and soot from your skin has been washed down the drain. Certain kinds of skin cancer are a real occupational hazard. My recommendation is to scrub and then scrub some more. I don't say this to scare you away from sweeping your chimney. Rather I say it to scare you into taking sensible precautions for your own safety. No sense in making your chimney safe and putting your health in jeopardy at the same time! ■■

EVA HORTON is president of Kristia Associates, the exclusive importers of the Norwegian Jøtul wood stove; president of Kris Comm, an advertising agency; executive director of the Chimney Sweep Guild and sits on the Board of Directors-Junior Achievers. Born and brought up in Oslo, Norway, Eva came to the United States in 1952 to go to Skidmore College. She has three children ages 17, 19 and 21.

Stair Rods Conserve Carpets

THE 18TH AND 19TH CENTURY homeowner often used stair rods to gain many more years of life from their carpets. In English Georgian homes--and here in America--elegant brass stair rods were used to affix expensive Oriental and Turkish carpets to staircases.

BUT THE USE OF STAIR RODS continued throughout the Victorian and Edwardian periods and the rods were often oak or black walnut.

THE PURPOSE OF the stair rod is to keep the carpet from being permanently tacked down to the floor. The rods fit into an "L" shaped bracket and snap out to release the carpet. The carpet can then be easily taken up to be beaten or sent out to be cleaned. But more importantly, the carpet can be shifted periodically. By moving the portion on the tread up to the riser, the life of the carpet is doubled. Actually, it can be shifted a quarter-way on

the treads and risers giving four times as much wear. Frugal homemakers often turned the carpet around (reversing top and bottom) at least once a year to further prevent wearing.

BECAUSE BRASS IS so expensive today, buying stair rods does constitute an investment. But it is well worth it if you have an expensive Oriental runner. And the look of the stair rods is also well worth the investment. They give an elegant, period accent to any staircase.

IT IS WORTH searching in hardware stores that have a supply of old stock for stair rods and sometimes they can be found at garage sales. If you want to buy new ones, Ball and Ball (listed in OHJ 1978 catalog) makes them to the size you need. They cost approximately \$16 a set (rod and bracket) depending on the width of the carpet. Ball and Ball also has a few sets left of the triangular-shaped rods.

Restorer's Notebook

Avoiding Brush Clean-Up

AS A PART-TIME old-house restorer, I have found that make-ready and clean-up tasks consume a great deal of work time. This is particularly true with painting. I have found that I can save a considerable amount of clean-up time on painting tasks that can't be completed in a single day. I don't bother to clean out my brush. Rather, I wrap the brush tightly in aluminum foil and place it in the freezer.

WITH ABOUT 5 MINUTES of thawing time, the brush will be ready to use. This procedure works equally well with both latex and oil-based paints.

Hugh W. Barnes
Raleigh, N.C.

Dripless Paint Can

ONE OF MY MOST ANNOYING problems when painting is the way that paint accumulates in the rim of the can as I wipe the brush after dipping. The paint inevitably starts dripping down the side of the can and creates a general mess.

I CREATED A MOST satisfactory solution by taking an old paint can lid and cutting it in half. I fit this half-lid to the can I'm using and wipe the brush against the straight part of the half-lid. I turned the metal down slightly with pliers so that there wouldn't be a sharp edge to damage bristles. When I'm through painting, the regular lid is put back on the can—without paint oozing down the side!

Norma Walsh
San Diego, Calif.



Operating Manual

WHEN WE MOVED INTO our old house, we acquired a lot of new appliances, heating plant, tools, etc. And, of course, with each of these came a set of operating instructions, maintenance tips, and parts list.

BASED ON WHAT we had gone through in our last home, I knew that these instruction booklets would disappear by the time I needed them to

fix one of our malfunctioning appliances. So I bought the largest 3-ring binder I could find and punched all these brochures so that they'd fit into the binder.

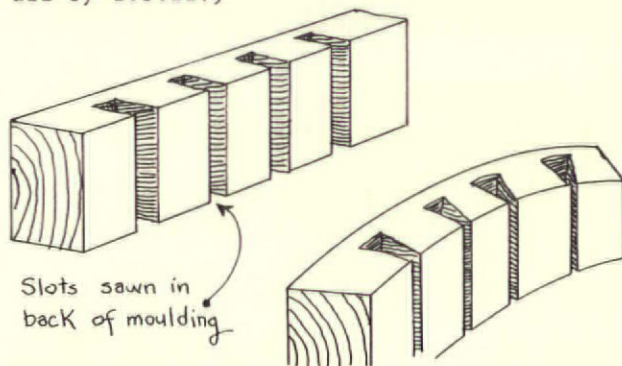
AS WE ACQUIRE new devices that have instruction manuals, they are all duly punched and inserted into the binder. Thus in this one place I have operating instructions for everything in the house. It's sort of the "operating manual" for our entire home.

ALTHOUGH this idea seems obvious once you hear of it, I'm not aware of anyone else who has done it. And believe me, this portfolio is a real life-saver when something goes on the blink!

S. J. Markoski
Chicago, Ill.

Curving Wood

WHEN RE-CREATING some wainscoting in our house, I faced the problem of curving wood around a curved section of plaster wall in our hall. A friend told me about an old carpenter's trick that enabled me to bend the chair rail around the curve. (The chair rail moulding was too stiff to adapt to the curve all by itself.)



WHAT I DID was make a series of cuts along the back of the moulding...about three-fourths of the way through the wood...with the cuts spaced about $\frac{1}{4}$ in. apart. I used my power saw with the blade set for the correct depth of cut.

THE SAW CUTS were visible at the top once the chair rail was in place. But these holes were easily filled with wood putty. By varying the depth and spacing of these backside cuts, you can get greater or lesser bendability in any given piece of wood.

W. B. Higgins
Seattle, Wash.

Got Any Tips?

Do you have any hints or short cuts that might help other old-house owners? We'll pay \$15 for any short how-to items that are used in this "Restorer's Notebook" column. Send your hints to: Notebook Editor, The Old-House Journal, 199 Berkeley PL, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11217.

Products For The Old House

Restoration Millwork

RESTORATION MILLWORK is a new firm and they have just issued their first catalog of wood mouldings. The patterns in this book represent the moulding profiles produced by the more than 200 antique 19th century moulding knives in the company's collection.

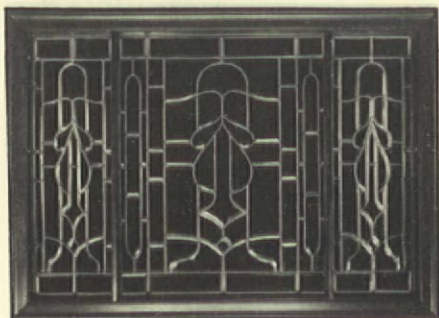
FOR EACH MOULDING PROFILE, many variations in style occurred during the 19th century by varying the width and depth or where the moulding was trimmed. Although only one possibility is illustrated for each profile, the company can make many variations from each knife.

TO RECEIVE THE ARCHITECTURAL Moulding Catalog, send \$1.50 to: Restoration Millwork, B.C.I.C. Building, North Bennington, VT 05257. Telephone: (802) 447-0527.

Beveled Glass

BEVELED AND LEADED glass panel inserts for doors and windows are coming into greater demand. To meet this growing interest in decorative glass, Beveled Glass Industries has started reproducing numerous turn-of-century patterns in beveled and cut glass.

FOR A FREE BROCHURE and the name of the distributor nearest to you, write to: Beveled Glass Industries, Dept. OHJ, 900 North La Cienega Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90069. Phone, (213) 657-1462.



Helpful Publications

Preservation And Business

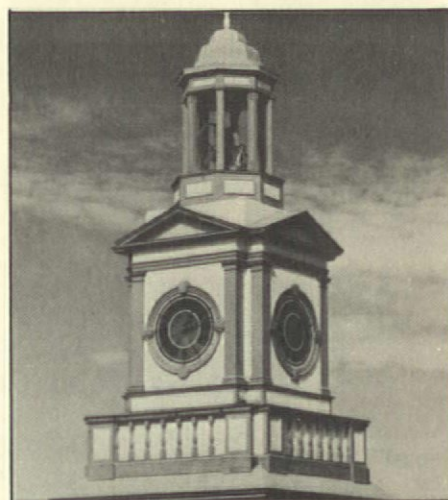
RECYCLING BUILDINGS may be as much an expression of the 1980's as disposable goods and planned obsolescence were of the 1950's and '60's.

AN IMPORTANT NEW BOOK surveys the role of business in this new approach to our urban resources. It is published by Inform-- a non-profit research group analyzing the impact of U.S. corporations on employees, consumers, communities and the environment.

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THIS STUDY provides urban groups with blueprints to interest the business community in redevelopment efforts and is a valuable reference book on how the business community can serve society.

"BUSINESS AND PRESERVATION" is \$14.00 for the softcover edition and \$22.00 for the hardcover. Send check to: INFORM, 25 Broad Street, New York, N.Y. 10004. Tel. (212)425-3550.



This clock tower was once the focal point of Maynard, Massachusetts's American Woolen Co. It now serves the same function for the Digital Equipment Corp.

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