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OLD-HOUSE JOURNAL

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 1993

LIGHTS FOR A NEW CENTURY

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ALSO

NEAT WAYS TO HEAT
INSULATION FOR A
DRY ATTIC
REWIRING OLD LAMPS



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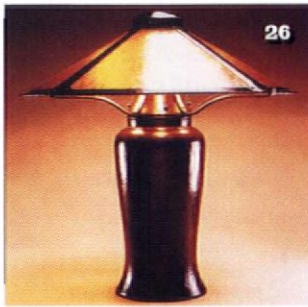
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OLD-HOUSE JOURNAL

Volume XXI, Number 6



LIGHTS FOR A NEW CENTURY 26

BY LYNN ELLIOTT AND GORDON BOCK

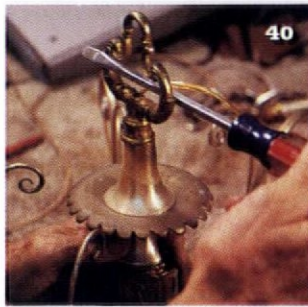
New ideas in all-electric lighting after 1900 opened up fresh possibilities for post-Victorian interiors. Here's a look at four important trends in fixtures, with a source list for buying reproductions today.



FROST IN THE RAFTERS, ICE ON THE EAVES 32

BY GORDON BOCK

In cold weather, moisture and insulation problems show up dramatically at the top of an old house. Here's how to deal with them.



NEAT WAYS TO HEAT 35

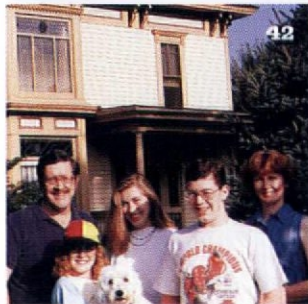
BY DAN HOLOHAN

Options and installation requirements for a variety of new heating systems and devices that can retrofit existing houses with minimal disruption.

RETIRING OLD WIRING 40

BY MARYLEE MACDONALD

Professional advice on rewiring early light fixtures: how to take one apart, renew the wiring, and get it back together.



SURPRISES IN THE CELLAR 42

BY CHAR TUOHY

Unforeseen building conditions are an expected part of old-house living, but these restorers found a pit of black goo entombed in their basement.

THE 1993 OHJ INDEX 79

ON THE COVER: An Arts & Crafts corner in Little Compton, Rhode Island: G. Stickley table c.1910, Bradley & Hubbard lamp c.1918, Grueby pot c.1905. Produced by Karen Vaughan & Galen Snow. PHOTOGRAPH BY STEVE MARSEL

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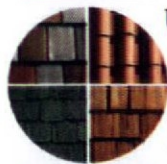
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A TOUR OF 'NINETY-FOUR



MY TRAVELS THIS SUMMER took me to a couple of cities where those big, silver sightseeing buses roam the streets, chock full of out-of-towners taking in everything, from national landmarks to Homes of the Stars, through tinted windows. A man or woman with a microphone always stands up front — the “guide” with eyes in the back of his or her head. Sometimes, as the bus swings by, you can hear them describing the trip over the loudspeaker, cooing over something-or-other on the right, alerting all to the highlight just passed on the left.

To tell the truth, I've always wanted that job, but right now I'm behind a keyboard instead of a dashboard so I'll do the next best thing. All aboard, Ladies and Gentlemen, for the OHJ Tour de Ninety-Four. Please find your seats quickly

The bus leaves from OHJ headquarters, a sweet spot on the tour.

and have your tickets ready so we can get started. Remember to check your tickets; this is the guided tour of sample features to come in *Old-House Journal* for 1994.

We begin our tour with a cruise through the January/February issue — an inside track, so to speak, on the start of a new year. Right in a row we have interiors-oriented articles on **Preserving Stained Glass**, expert advice on **Repairing Decorative Floors**, and the steps for **Canvassing Plaster Walls**. At the end of this block you won't want to miss the **Eastern Exotic Revival Houses** inspired by cultures half-way around the globe.

Next on our itinerary is March/April and a great opportunity to explore working with wood. If you look to our right there's an article on **Circular Carpentry** coming up, and on our left there's two more on **Wood Window Repairs** and **Making Tower Finials**. From here we can also see the **History of Octagons and Round Houses**, as well as some firsthand information on **Pruning Shrubs** outside the old house.

As we approach May/June, we're heading into a masonry issue. Be on the lookout for features on **Brickwork Repair**, solutions for **Rising Damp Problems**, background on **Tudor-Style Stucco**, and plenty of exam-

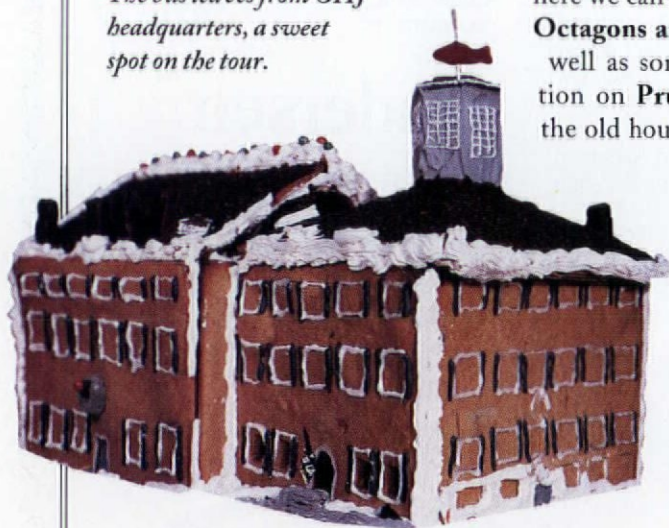
ples of **Early Concrete Houses**.

Just beyond this corner is July/August. We'll stop here to get out for a closer look at **Alterations and Additions** to historic houses, a topic many of you have wanted to see, but a tricky one for restorers. While we're stretching our legs and enjoying a light snack, we'll also make time to investigate articles on **Specialty Graining Techniques** and **Dating Old-House Changes**.

Moving right along again, we come upon September/October and a special Roofing and Siding issue. Here we'll see how to install **Standing-Seam Roofs**, and have a chance to learn more about **Wood Shingles and Low-Pitch Roofs**. If you look quickly off to the right, you'll notice there's an article on **Resilient Floors** as well.

In another minute we'll be passing through the November/December issue and the final leg of our tour. From here we can see a variety of articles on old-house systems, including **Period Showers** and **Pocket Doors**. Last, we have an overview of the **Architecture of Apartment Houses**, a fitting high point on which to end.

We thank you all for riding and hope you look forward to what's ahead. As they used to say in the old movie travelogues, Next Stop: Adventure!



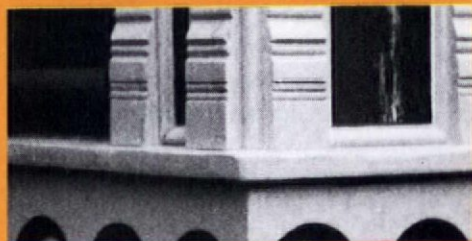
Wood Restoration System



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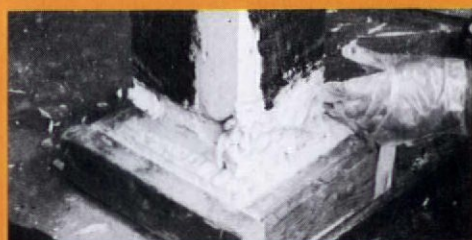
...can be easily and permanently restored...



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10" rotted bottoms of these load-bearing columns...



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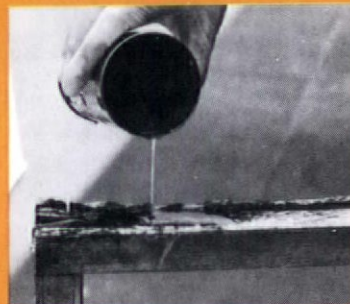
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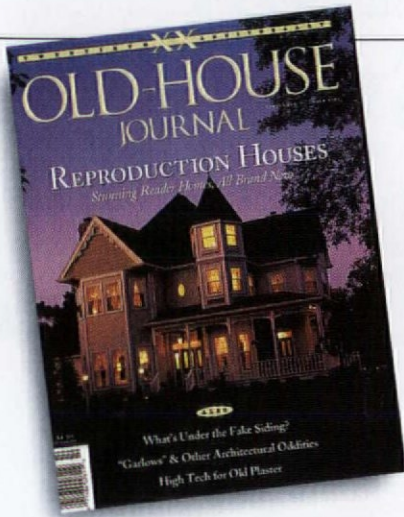


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Letters



Sizzled Siding

Dear OHJ,

I HAVE BEEN AN OHJ SUBSCRIBER FOR the past seven years and very much enjoy each new issue, especially the "Remuddling" page. For the past five years I have driven by this c. 1810 Federal house (*see below*) on my way to and from work, and have often wondered what was entombed beneath the white vinyl siding. The heat from a mill fire across the street answered my question. The clapboards still appear to be in good condition despite the heat! It is a vinyl-hater's fantasy come true!

— MICHAEL BELLOCCHIO
Taunton, Mass.

Updates on Odd Lots

AT THE END OF "AN ARCHITECTURAL Rummage Sale" [September/October 1993], James Massey and Shirley Maxwell ask about Chevy Houses. The Rosedale Gardens subdivision in Livonia, Michigan, a "second ring" suburb of Detroit, used the marketing technique they describe. Advertising material from the late '20s and early '30s offers a free car (probably a Ford, though) to anyone willing to buy a house way out in the country and commute to the city, either on poorly developed gravel roads or on the "milk run" train. This was a middle-class

development named after Rosedale Park, an upper-class subdivision being built in northwest Detroit at about the same time.

Today Rosedale Gardens is a half-mile square area of one-and-a-half- and two-storey brick houses with a variety of architectural detailing, ranging from Colonial to Tudor, with Arts & Crafts thrown in. Some have been remuddled, but most are intact with big trees and beautiful flowers. The subdivision stands in clear contrast to the rest of Livonia, which boomed from the '30s onward.

— PEG GAGE
Detroit, Michigan

I WAS INTRIGUED BY YOUR PIECE ON "Urban Tinys" ("An Architectural Rummage Sale") in your September/October edition. Several years ago I lived in Old Town Alexandria, Virginia, and was told by an older resident that the bandbox-like houses (most are 11' wide) are referred to as "spite houses."

Old Town is on the Potomac

River and was founded as a port village. As time went by, the more prosperous merchants and captains built quite expensive town homes. However, being a port, there were sailors. Where there are sailors, there are taverns. Where there are sailors and taverns, there are "ladies" of the evening. Evidently, these ladies used to entertain their customers utilizing the open spaces between the homes of the well-to-do. Horrified at the goings-on immediately beneath their windows, some residents built tiny "spite houses" in the alleyways to deny that space to those with other interests.

Hope this clears up some of the mystery as to what could have inspired the construction of such unusual houses. I enjoy the Journal — keep up the good work.

— JOSEPH W. KOLETAR
Glen Rock, New Jersey

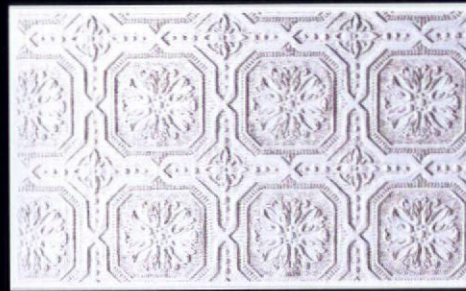
New Old-House Feedback

WHEN I SAW OHJ'S LATEST ISSUE [SEPTEMBER/October 1993], all I saw was "Reproduction Houses" and I could



One removal method not covered in last issue's substitute siding article: Heat from a nearby fire melted this vinyl siding (and the shutters).

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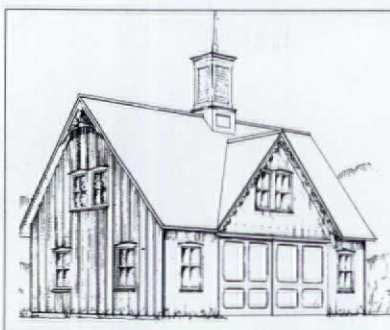
Telephone _____

Letters

hardly wait to get home to read. We are one-year-plus into planning our reproduction Victorian and are, as you so aptly stated, new-old house lovers. Thank you so much. It was such an encouragement to see how others have built their homes to have that old charm about them. Sometimes circumstances do not allow all of us to have one of the old beauties, but we can build and continue on their legacy. Can't wait till you do it again!

— BECKY LAROCHE
Manassas, Virginia

THE "REPRODUCTION HOUSES" ARTICLE [September/October 1993] is not interesting and would be more appropriate in one of the many "Victorian-Style" magazines. The carriage



One of OHJ's most popular designs, the Victorian Carriage Barn (plan CD-03-GA) serves old-house owners lacking an original outbuilding.

houses would have been acceptable if you had included the old houses that the owners were trying to match.

For years I have not understood why you feature "Historic House

Plans." OHJ runs the risk of becoming mainstream by pandering to the needs of those who, for many reasons, are unwilling to commit themselves to an old house or building.

I am an old-house fanatic and have enjoyed all the humorous and informative articles in the past. I have used the networking in "Emporium," and the products that are advertised. OHJ is more than just a technical journal. It's also a support group for all of us off-beat people who are perhaps driven by our hearts rather than our heads and have chosen to spend our time and resources in the endeavor of old-house living and preservation.

— MARY C. FRITZ
Mequon, Wisc.

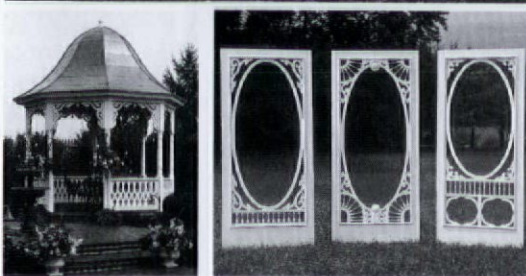
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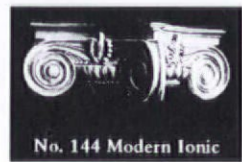
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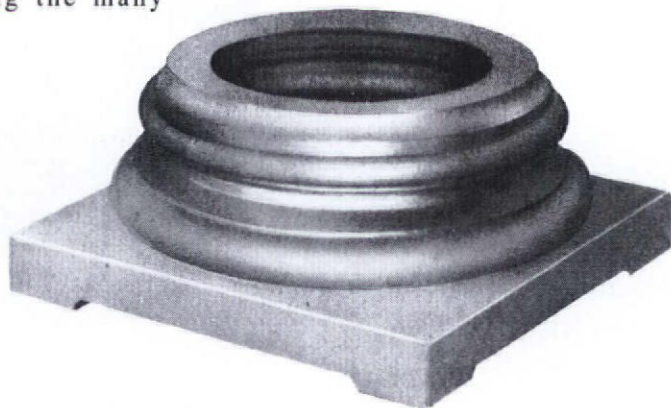
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Letters

The Smiths have blended the present with the past by installing a c. 1900 mail-order mantel inside their new-old planbook house.



MY HUSBAND AND I were very excited to see your article, "Reproduction Houses," in the September/October issue of our OHJ. We also have built a new-old house on the six-plus acres we own just north of Louisville, Kentucky. Using OHJ, we ordered a plan book and chose a house. We modified it by adding a gazebo to the corner of

the porch. My husband is a building contractor, so we didn't run into some of the problems your other readers faced.

We had acquired an antique mantel from my father-in-law. Our refinisher dated it at around 1900 and

told us it was probably from a mail order catalog. The mantel looks right at home. We were very happy to read new-house people can also be old-house people.

—BARBARA SMITH
Sellersburg, Indiana

Correction: *The data about ABATRON INC. on page 112 in the book, Old-House Journal Guide to Restoration, published by Dutton, is an error that was published in the May/June, 1989 issue of Old-House Journal, then corrected in the September/October, 1989 issue. We regret that the book reproduced the error, not the correction.*

—THE EDITORS

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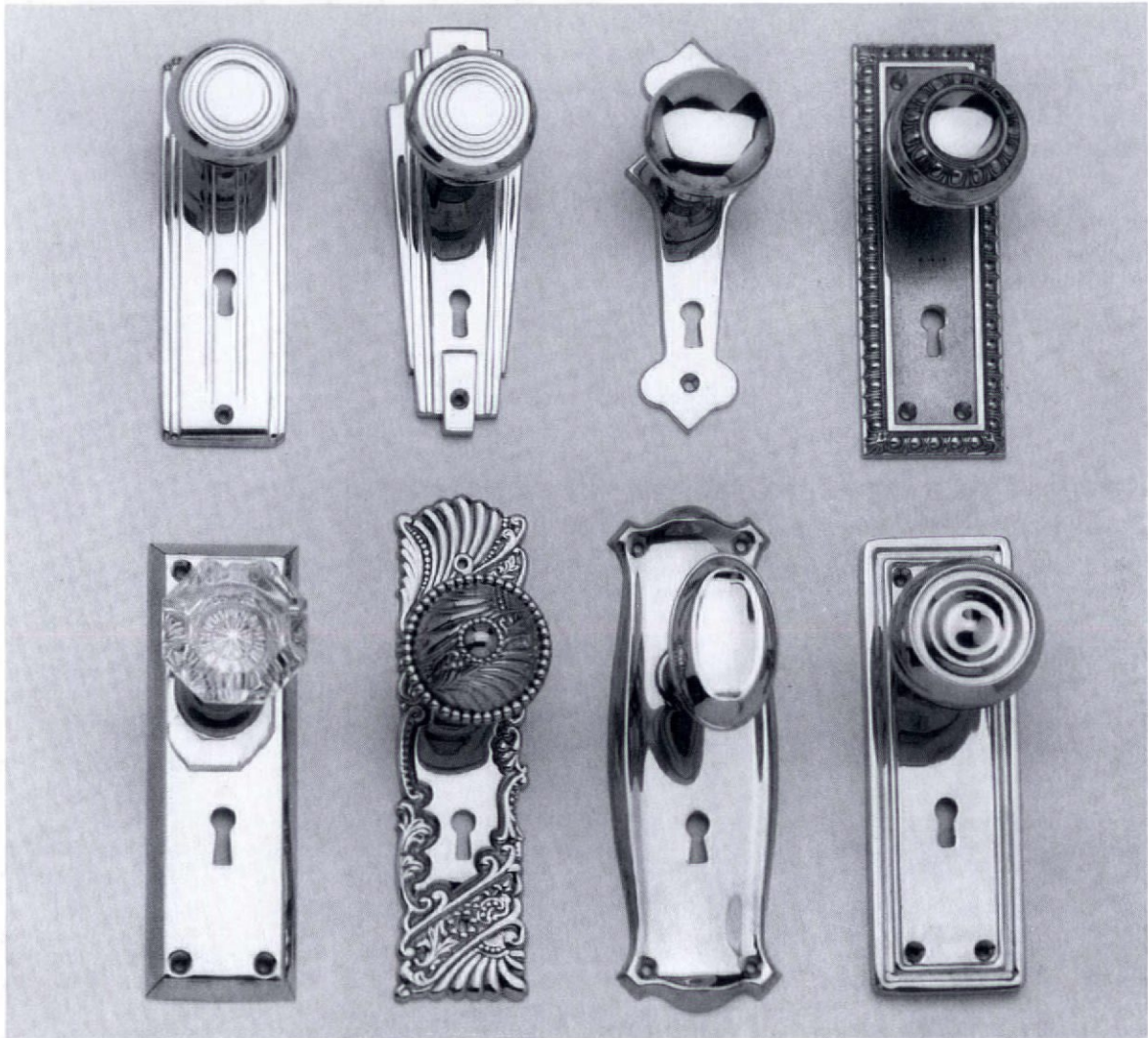


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- 1) Cut the bottoms off 10 rectangular plastic trashcans with handles.
- 2) Lay the cans on the ground, and insert each one 1' deep inside the next to create a tube.
- 3) Join the cans by threading rope through the handles and tying each one off.
- 4) Connect the cans tight enough

that they will not pull out of each other when suspended.

5) Leave 20' or so of rope on each end. You will need this for securing the chute.

6) Brace a ladder inside the dumpster and lean it up to the window to support the chute and keep it angled away from the house.

7) Attach the top of the chute to a window opening. (We anchored ours to 2x4s fastened across the inside of the jam). Extend the chute down the ladder and secure the bottom inside the dumpster.

You now have a telescopic debris chute to use whenever you need it.

— STANTON MCKIBBIN
Pittsburg, Penn.

Paint Cleaning Poultice

INSIDE OUR NEW OLD HOUSE, THE painted walls and woodwork were caked with dirt and grime. Some areas were stubborn and wouldn't respond to scrubbing, so I made a cleaning poultice: 2 to 3 tablespoons of Ivory liquid detergent, ½ cup of flour, and ½ cup of dry wallpaper paste whisked together in a bucket of warm water. I let the mixture set up for 20 minutes, then brushed it on. After 5 or 10 minutes, the poultice dissolved the dirt. It rinsed right off with a clean sponge and a bucket of clean warm water.

— AMY PASCH
Jacksonville, Florida

Sandpaper Origami

PROPER PAPER FOLDING MAKES sanding by hand much easier and ensures economical use of a 9" x 11" sheet. Fold the sandpaper the short way and tear it in half. Fold one half-sheet in three equal sections, the same as you would fold a letter. This forms a handy-size packet of doubled-sided sandpaper, with a variety of edges for getting into corners. The extra section tucked inside will stay clean until needed. This method keeps the sandpaper from slipping on itself, or out of your hand.

— CLARENCE TUNKEY
Buffalo, New York

Loose Louver Tip

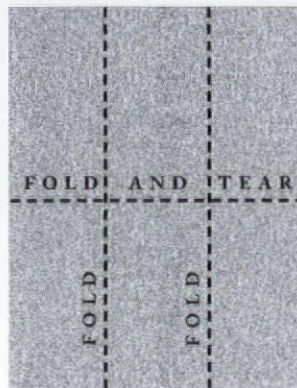
FOR INTERIOR WINDOW SHUTTERS with louvers that won't stay put: Just take a toothpick (square-cut ones work best), force it into any one of the sockets as tightly as possible, and break it off neatly. The entire set of louvers will work stiffly, and remain where you want them.

— THOMAS H. REED
Marengo, Illinois

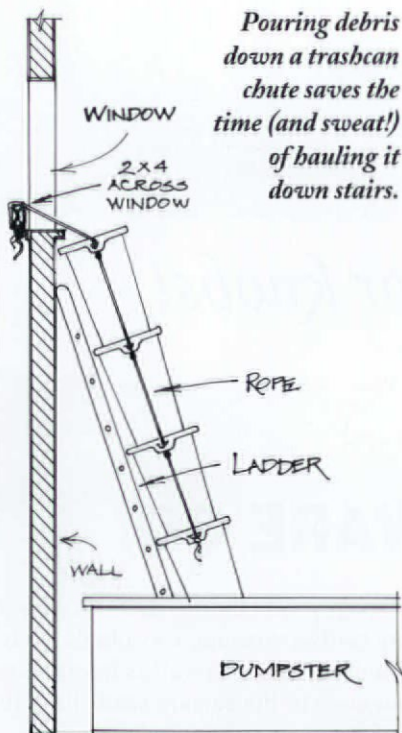
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Reading the Old House

IT'S FRENCH, WITH A CALIFORNIA FLAIR

by James C. Massey and Shirley Maxwell

WITH THE ENCLOSED PHOTO, can you help me read my old house? The building permit was taken out in 1932. I've recently completed a major restoration and addition in the rear, in keeping with '30s specifications and the original design.

— WILLIAM FARRIS
Santa Ana, Calif.

IN THAT PERIOD BETWEEN WORLD wars, the taste for medieval architecture was almost unstoppable in the American suburbs. These houses were meant to evoke picturesque European cottages and castles. The most popular styles would seem unorthodox to a European, being hybrids that could only have come from the American imagination.

Your charming, mostly French-style house is an excellent example of the freewheeling approach to house design in the 1920s and '30s. Its stuccoed walls and wood-shingled roof are obviously intended to mimic the folksy materials, irregular rooflines, and unplanned accretions of an early farm-



On the Farris' home, the hipped roof and the distinctive, gently-cambered roofline over the picture window point to French Revival.

house. But where on earth would that fantasy farmhouse have been located?

The big, arched picture window, with its very modern (for 1932) steel sash, was a common feature of both French and Spanish Revival houses. The double gable over the front entrance — especially the precipitous cat-slide angle of the rear gable roofline — and the prominent, front-facing chimney are a bit more English than French (or Norman, as the builders' terminology ran). The round-arch doorway would work equally well on a French, Spanish, "Mediterranean," or English house. In fact, with only a few changes to the facade and rooflines, this house could

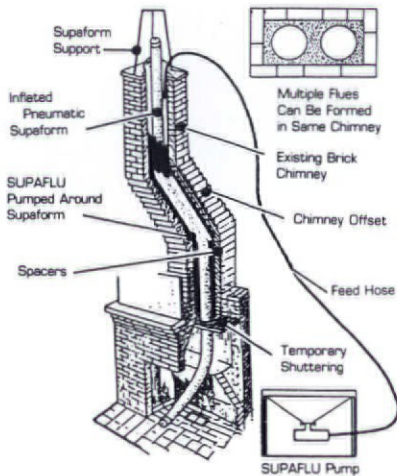
have belonged to any one of these popular styles in the picturesque mode. What tips us off that it belongs in the French camp? The steep, hipped or pyramidal roof, the deep eaves of the square section at the left of the entrance, and the gently arched, eyebrow-shaped roofline above the picture window.

So the answer is: It's French with a distinct California flair. It wouldn't be too hard to imagine this house with a red tile roof rather than the very appropriate wooden shingles. That would further confuse its stylistic context... but maybe that was the real point of the 1920s and '30s revival styles. In architecture as in the glorious movies of the era, there was little call for reality when mere suggestion was enough to set the beholder's heart reeling with the promise of other times and other places!



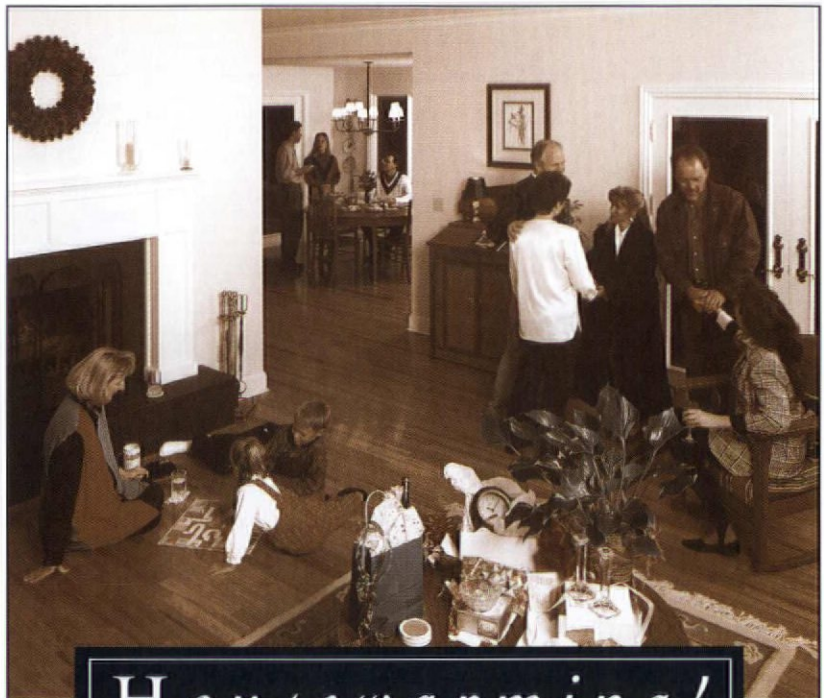
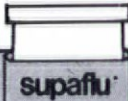
The steeply pitched double-gabled front and massive front-facing chimney appear again on a typical English Revival house in Kansas.

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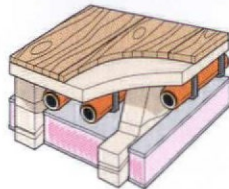


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Coating Cast Iron

■ *I would like to find the proper methods to prep, prime and paint the ironwork on my 140-year-old home. It has already been sandblasted and primed by a contractor. Some sections appear to be red oxide primer, and some have had latex paint. Now the ironwork looks like rust.*

— SHELLEY WAMMES
Bellevue, Ohio

YOUR ORNAMENTAL METALWORK appears to be cast iron, the mid-19th-century wonder material. Although more corrosion-resistant than low-carbon steel, cast iron will oxidize rapidly when exposed to moisture and air.

Careful surface preparation is critical for proper adhesion of new paint. All corrosion, flaking paint, dirt, salts, oil, and grease must be removed. Tightly adhered old paint can be left on as long as it's compatible with the subsequent coatings (check manufacturers' recommendations). In cases of severe deterioration, low-pressure grit blasting is often the most effective method.

Exterior cast iron balustrades on this 1853 house should be thoroughly protected with zinc- or iron-oxide primer and alkyd enamel paint applied by brush or spray-and-brush methods.

Also, blasting with a moderately sharp aggregate gives the metal tooth, for good paint adhesion. However, it's prohibited in some areas because of the airborne dust; wet sandblasting is not a good alternative because it causes surface rusting.

Immediately after cleaning, prime the entire surface to prevent any new rusting. Traditional anti-corrosion iron primers were made with red lead and linseed oil and are now mostly prohibited. The best current alternatives are alkyd metal primers rich in iron oxide, zinc oxide, or zinc phos-

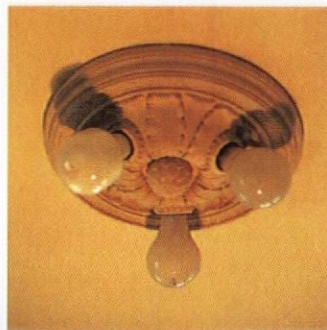
phate pigments. Allow primer to cure, then apply a second prime coat tinted to match the finish color. Alkyd enamels work well as a top coat; high gloss offers best resistance to dirt and abrasion.

Water-based primers cause immediate oxidation on bare iron, and are not recommended. Vinyl or acrylic paints can be used as a finish coat, but if the alkyd primer coats are poorly applied or damaged, water-based paint will promote oxidation.

Bright Ideas

■ *In our 1922 bungalow, three rooms have plaster ceiling fixtures that each hold three light bulbs. We would like to shade or partially cover the bulbs to cut down on glare, but we're afraid of harming the plaster, and we can't seem to find shades that work in those positions. Any suggestions?*

— PETER & EILEEN CARLSON
Washington, D.C.



This c. 1922 pan light was designed without shades to maximize low-watt lamps and show off electric power.

YOUR CEILING FIXTURE is a pan light, an economical fixture very common in bedrooms and other informal areas from the 1910s to 1930s. Most were made of pressed or spun metal with sockets pointing straight down. However, various kinds of cast, reinforced composition material, such as the

Lightolier Company's "art fiber," were frequently used. Also called cluster lights, these fixtures often had an-

[Continued on page 22]

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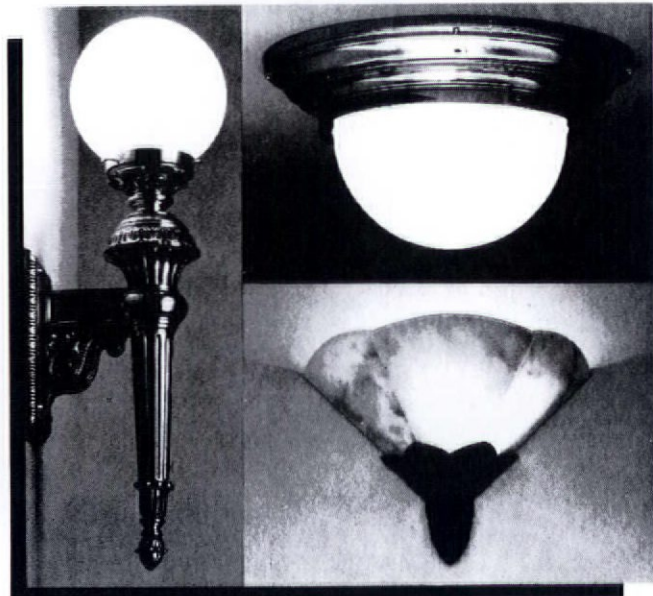
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[Continued from page 20]

gled sockets and floridly decorated bases. By the mid-1920s, both types were intended for use with globe-shaped, frosted, 15- to 40-watt tungsten lamps (bulbs) — left bare on the manufacturers' assurance that they would cast more of a glow than a glare. Adding shades will hide the fixture's decorative design, so consider sticking with authentic exposed lamps. Today's refrigerator lamps are a near match for these globe lamps, or you can look for reproductions at lighting shops or specialty suppliers.



A globe lamp from 1922; tipless versions were also available by then.

Finding Firebrick

■ *I am interested in restoring the firebrick in a cast iron stove. It is a coal burning stove in very good condition. I would appreciate any information about where the lining might be acquired.*

— J. REIMANN
Bellows Falls, Vermont

STOVES ARE LINED WITH VARIOUS shapes and sizes of firebrick to retain heat, improve fuel economy, and protect the stove. Although refractory brick manufacturers may be able to supply standard sizes, many stove restorers opt to custom-mold their own using plastic refractory brick. This inexpensive material contains the same components as unfired firebrick and comes in moist, malleable blocks.

Soak a block in water to bring it to the consistency of modelling clay, then break it into smaller pieces and work it inside the stove. A wallpaper seam roller and a masonry trowel are handy tools for pressing and smoothing. Although it may shrink slightly after drying, it performs as well as original firebrick. One supplier is Eastern Refractories Co., Dept. OHJ, 20 Flanders Rd., Belmont, MA 02178; (617) 489-0700.

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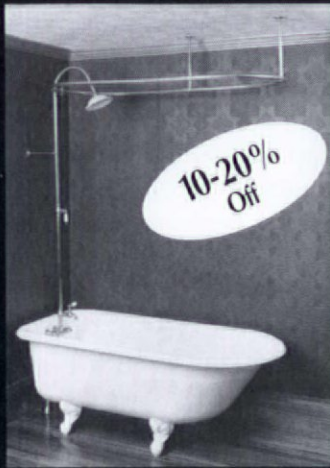
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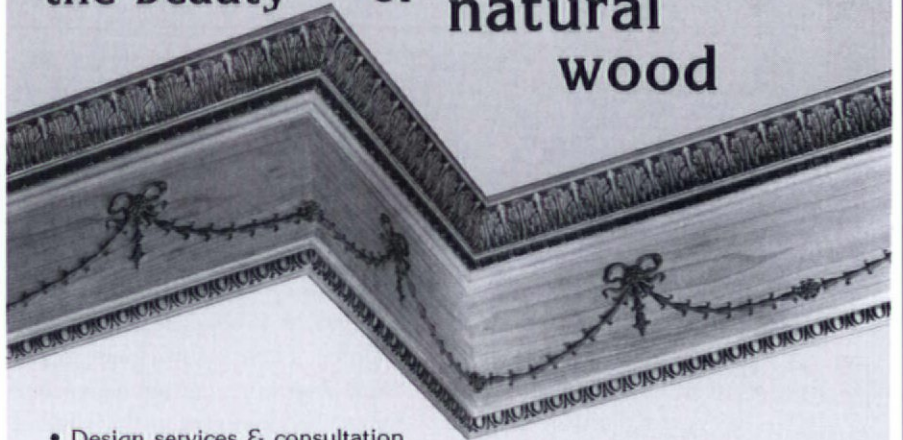


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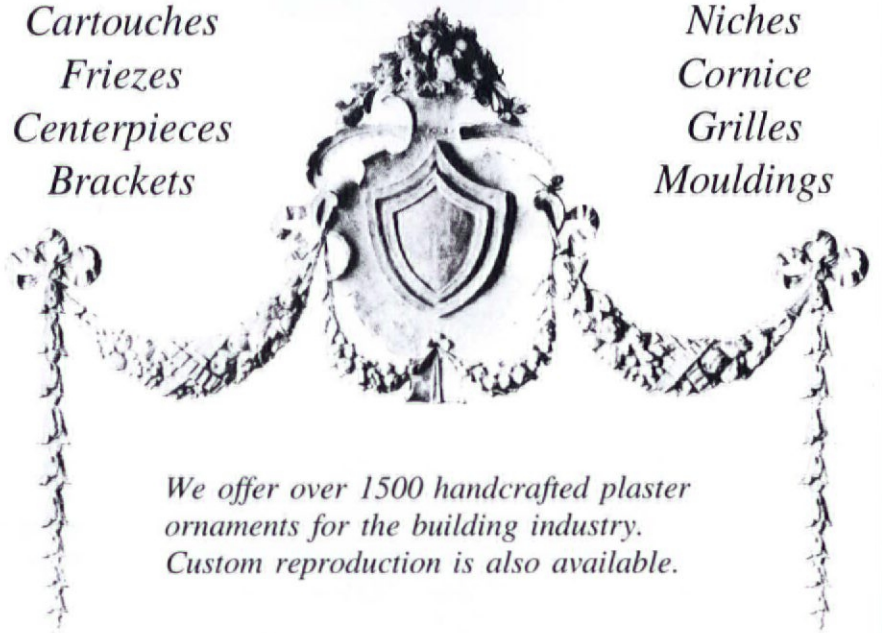
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Good Books

Here are a few titles to be tucked in your old-house kid's Christmas stocking.

The Great American Landmarks Adventure

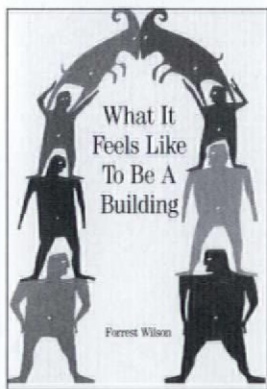
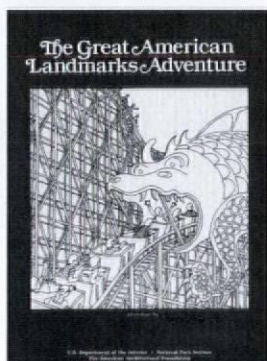
by Kay Weeks; Pub: U. S. Department of the Interior, Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402-9325; (202) 783-3238; 1992; 46 pages, b&w; \$3.25 ppd., softcover.

MOST KIDS WILL GROAN AT THE thought of visiting any place with the musty, museumlike title of "National Historic Landmark," until they find out the Playland Amusement Park in Rye, New York, is one — not to mention the Rose Bowl in Pasadena, California, and Independence Rock in Casper, Wyoming. Although it doesn't gloss over well-known historic buildings and sites, *The Great American Landmarks Adventure* by Kay Weeks lets kids know that there's more historic places than ex-presidents' homes.

The educational journey begins with the Pictograph Cave in Billings, Montana, and travels across the country to 42 other historic locations. Along the way, *Adventure* makes stops at the Old South Meeting House in Boston, Massachusetts, the U.S. Capitol in Washington, D.C., and the Gateway Arch, in St. Louis, Missouri. Aside from showing off these sites with rich illustrations, the book places them in context — how the past is linked to the present — and turns potentially

static monuments into places of activity where telephones were first made, the right to vote was fought for, the west was expanded, furs were traded, and a Constitution was signed.

As a footnote, the text, which is intended for students in the 4th to 8th grades, can be adapted to younger children. There is also a guide to *The Great American Landmarks Adventure* for teachers and parents that's full of ideas to stimulate student interest as well as a directory to additional resources.



What It Feels Like To Be A Building

by Forrest Wilson; Pub: The Preservation Press, National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1785 Massachusetts Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036; (800) 766-6847; 1988; 48 pages, b&w; \$14.95 ppd., softcover.

PUSH, PULL, SQUASH, Squeeze, Droop, Bend, and Brace — a new set of Disney dwarves? No, it's *What It Feels Like To Be A Building*. Using bold graphics of people, rams, and a few dogs, Forrest Wilson explains architecture through body

language — concepts kids can not only imagine, but imitate.

Like the steps in constructing a house, Wilson starts the narrative at the bottom with gravity and works up to domes. For example, an explanation of how buildings stand up straight leads to one about load-bearing components, such as columns (which, incidentally, feel like Squash) and walls (multiple Squash). Continuing

on, acrobatic people create arches, soaring rams teach about flying buttresses, and a pile of canines show how corbels are, well, dogged. Throughout, the lively, colorable illustrations are backed up by a simple text full of word pictures — that is, words that look like what they're describing.

Written for children seven or older, this book is an action-oriented guide through basic building principles that is never intimidating or boring. One thing's for sure, flying buttresses will never look the same.

— L.E.

Other Tomes for Tykes

CHECK OUT THESE THREE CHILDREN'S books from The Preservation Press (National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1785 Massachusetts Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036; (800) 766-6847):

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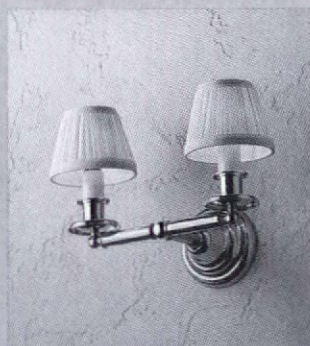
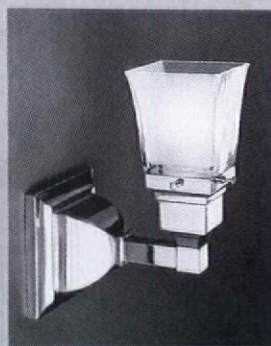
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LIGHTS FOR A NEW CENTURY

BY LYNN ELLIOTT
AND GORDON BOCK



EARLY ELECTRIC LIGHT REMAINED A PROMISING BUT peripheral illuminant for nearly two decades. It had been around since 1879, when Edison perfected the incandescent lamp, but service was

unreliable, and the light itself barely compared with improved gas burners. About 1900, however, the picture shifted. Better lamps and power made electric light a good buy and people in all types of houses wanted it. Manufacturers and designers soon heeded the call. Most hedged their bets by adding electricity to models made for gas or oil, but some seized the chance in all-electric electroliers to make new ideas in lighting and interior decoration a reality.

There was no mistaking these new breeds of fixture. You couldn't run them on anything but electricity, even if you had wanted. Electric lighting did not have to account for air flow, so necessary for oil and gas, or the byproducts of combustion: soot and heat. The new freedom meant new opportunities in placement — close to ceilings and walls, for instance. It also inspired new approaches in design. Four of these trends led the way in the years up to World War I. A variety of the fixtures that embody them are being produced again, just in time to light many post-Victorian houses for another century.

Opposite: An Arts & Crafts-style room filled with lighting options: A four-arm Craftsman chandelier is the luminous centerpiece, hanging lanterns highlight the beams and nooks, and a Mission dome lamp brightens the table.



Relief ornament on the bowl (left) helps this 1915 semi-indirect light fit an eclectic Colonial Revival living room. Neo-classical (above) and other styles can be had today.

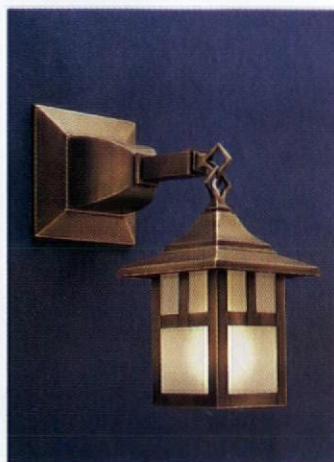
INDIRECT AND SEMI-INDIRECT LIGHTING

Rerouting light leads to new looks in design

•••••

LIKE ELECTRICITY ITSELF, INDIRECT LIGHTING WAS A NEW APPROACH to illumination. The concept was scientific but simple. Instead of casting light straight on the subject as in direct lighting, lamps and fixtures were focussed on ceilings (or in some cases walls) to reflect light back down into the room. Brighter tungsten-filament lamps, available by 1911, not only made this effect possible, but desirable. All the bouncing diffused the harsh, shadow-producing light of these un-frosted lamps so that it came out "attractive," and "very pleasant for the eyes," according to writers of the time.

The principal involved required fixtures made specifically for indirect lighting. In true indirect fixtures the shallow bowl or shade was opaque in order to shield the light source. Made of light metal, plaster, ceramics, or composition material finished in metallic tones, they were suspended from ceiling centers where they hung like lost planters waiting for a fern. Special reflectors of silvered glass were used inside the bowl to concentrate and aim the light produced by one large or several small lamps.



The freedom of chains — not the round and square pipes needed to hang gas lights — was made possible by electricity and turned to decorative use.

There was also semi-indirect lighting. By using a translucent bowl, these fixtures had it both ways, casting some light down directly and reflecting the rest off the ceiling. Typically made of white glass in alabaster or opal tones and decorated in a choice of motifs, these fixtures were noted for their artistic effect and became very popular in commercial and public spaces.

Use of indirect and semi-indirect lighting also had practical considerations to be reckoned with. Most important, it was recommended that ceilings be painted in very light tones to better reflect the light. Since the fixtures were suspended by sizable pendant chains, low ceilings were out, and it follows that these lights are seen more in the room heights of two-storey Foursquare and Colonial Revival houses than ground-hugging bungalows. In an age when homeowners still consumed electricity with habits learned from gas, indirect lights were regarded as more expensive to run than direct lights. Dust and dirt that accumulated visibly in the bowl was a constant concern with semi-indirect fixtures. However, after 1919 when Prohibition arrived, the generous size of these shades became a fa-

Mission bracket lanterns, like this reproduction, were for outdoor use, too. Entrances and porch posts were often illuminated by these dual-purpose fixtures.



*The unique design of Van Erp's table lamps, similar to this one (above), quickly influenced other copper-smiths. Note the Van Erp-like lamp in this illustration from *The Craftsman* (left).*

favorite hiding place for liquor and other contraband — at least in the minds of cartoonists and Hollywood actors.

INCIDENTAL LIGHTING

Wall and hanging fixtures shed a new light on interior features

.....

TO ENHANCE THE EFFECT OF INDIRECT LIGHTING FIXTURES, incidental or mood lighting began to appear as a decorative feature in house interiors. Wall fixtures were used to add a soft glow to rooms or highlight architectural features. In many places, sconces or bracket lanterns brightened hallways and fireplace surrounds. Occasionally, newel-post lamps illuminated staircases. These fixtures were also useful in rooms where indirect lighting wasn't possible, such as on the low ceilings of bungalow living rooms. When used as primary lighting, individual lanterns were hung in rows from chains that sometimes alternated in length.

Tastemakers suggested that artistic fixtures — particularly custom made ones — were the only appropriate choice for such installations since "ready-made designs, like ready-made clothing can, at best, only fit approximately." Be that as it may, the artistic pieces ran the stylistic gamut from the surprising "Bubble Blower," a bronze figure blowing an iridescent glass bubble, to the comparatively tame "Golden Pumpkin with Clinging Vines." Homeowners with less exotic tastes (and smaller budgets) found refuge in the vaguely medieval looking lanterns of the Arts & Crafts movement that suited another decorative ideal: "In a well-designed house no detail or fixture must be too prominent, too insistent."

Mission-style lanterns were made of wrought iron or hand-hammered copper or brass. These solid, geometric pieces

were softened by panels of opalescent, frosted, stained, and rippled art glass that matched the prevailing tones of most Arts & Crafts interiors. Stickley had these pieces finished in antique copper, a rich brown hue that gave the appearance of age, and natural copper, a finish created from speeding up the process of natural oxidation. On the West Coast, the Greene brothers were ordering patinated lanterns with a Japanese flair. They were crowned with exaggerated caps almost the shape of Oriental straw hats, and the art-glass panels were adorned with copper cut-out overlays, such as the simple "cloud lift" motif — a flourish far more ornamental than anything "wrought from the Craftsman."

VAN ERP TABLE LAMPS

A craftsman's honesty starts a modern style

.....

AS THE USE OF ELECTRICITY BECAME MORE WIDESPREAD, table lamps were also freed from the rigid design conformity of oil and kerosene lighting. The Victorian fixtures with up-turned shades and bulbous bases for holding fuel were no longer necessary. Lighting makers, such as Tiffany, began to design table lamps with downward-turned shades and slender bases.

Out of this new trend grew, if you'll excuse the pun, the mushroomlike table lamps of Dirk Van Erp. Van Erp was a West Coast coppersmith who moved to California from Holland in 1886. Adhering to the Craftsman tradition, all of his lighting fixtures were hand wrought, and structural elements, such as rivets, were the only ornaments. Van Erp was one of the first to create modern-looking lighting with flowing, clean lines influenced by Japanese designs. The



The hanging lights in Wright's Unity Temple use elements common to many Prairie fixtures: framed squares or rectangles, balls, and glass.

table lamps with conical-shaped mica shades and flared hand-hammered copper bases are a distinctive stylistic break from earlier lighting. Even Van Erp's pieces with spherical copper bases seem more akin to modern fixtures, such as the ubiquitous gingerbread lamps, rather than another incarnation of some historic lighting form.

Like other decorative shades of the period, the mica shades of the Van Erp table lamps served a dual purpose. They not only cast a warm glow that complemented the oak furniture and natural wood interiors of bungalows, but they also dulled the harsh glare of tungsten-filament bulbs, much to everyone's relief. These practical works of art were also as attractive by daylight as they were when illuminated at night. This was an important quality to homeowners who heeded the interior designers' dictum that lighting "must be considered apart from its chief charm of light itself" because "for the greater part of the time it is not in use."

PRAIRIE SCHOOL LIGHTS

Architects ahead of their time create original fixtures

.....

AT THE TURN OF THE CENTURY, A GROUP OF TALENTED young architects in the Chicago area set out to create an original, American architecture, one that was to have a revolutionary impact on houses to this day. Now known as the Prairie School, they rejected the historical eclecticism of the Victorian era and the European Beaux Arts, and instead set out to produce designs suited to wide and open spaces of the Midwest.

"Great individuality has



The Prairie School-style lantern (above) was a form also mounted on posts. The reproduction Wright table lamp (left) has the characteristic stained glass shade seen on hanging lights as well.

been developed in this section of the country," wrote house authority Charles E. White, Jr. in 1912, "with the result that many of the new ideas are delightfully fresh."

These architects were on the cutting edge of design and readily embraced the latest building technologies. Frank Lloyd Wright, Robert Spencer, Walter Burley Griffin, George Maher, George Elmslie, and William Purcell all had their hand in creating fixtures to go with their houses. Naturally, many of the design ideas that drive and distinguish Prairie School houses appear in this lighting: honesty of materials; unpretentiousness; geometric, planar forms that meet sharply and are crisply defined; rare use of more than two materials. Like the houses themselves, these fixtures were — quite deliberately — unlike anything seen before.

Glass played a starring role. Wright, in particular, was interested in manipulating light with glass early on, as shown by his many skylights and involvement with prismatic glass tiles for commercial buildings. Stained glass was as popular in Wrightian Prairie shades as it was in his windows. Opal glass, cathedral glass, and similar translucent art glass appears in fixtures by the other designers — still a filter for bright lamps, but also functioning as three-dimensional designs.

The forms used in Prairie lighting are as geometric and unconventional as the houses they complement. Boxes and rectilinear enclosures framed in brass or zinc came light up to become chandeliers or sconces. The shades of table lamps or hanging fixtures echo the triangles and low pitch of Prairie hipped roofs. Spared the chimneys and ports needed for burning oil or gas, these shades now become glowing solids. Perhaps most striking are the large and small milk-glass balls. These shapes work as architectural elements, illuminated or not.

The designers of Prairie houses put these electric lights to use in carefully planned ways, placing fixtures judiciously for specific tasks — over a reading or dining area, for instance — or for calculated architectural effect. The versatility of electricity was a good match for these fixtures, most so different at the time that they had to be custom made. Moreover, electricity was novel in its own right, the ideal light for a new type of house.



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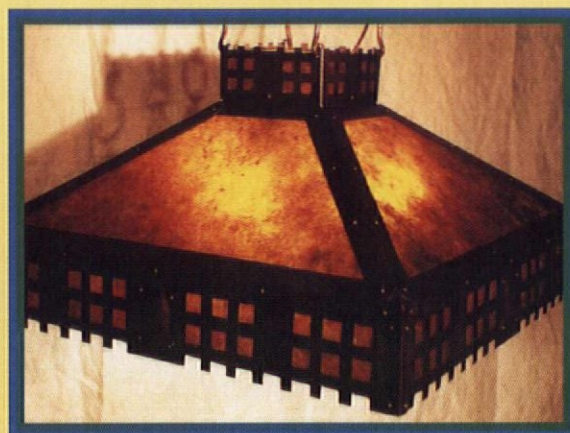
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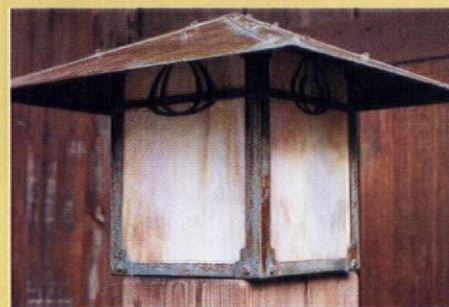
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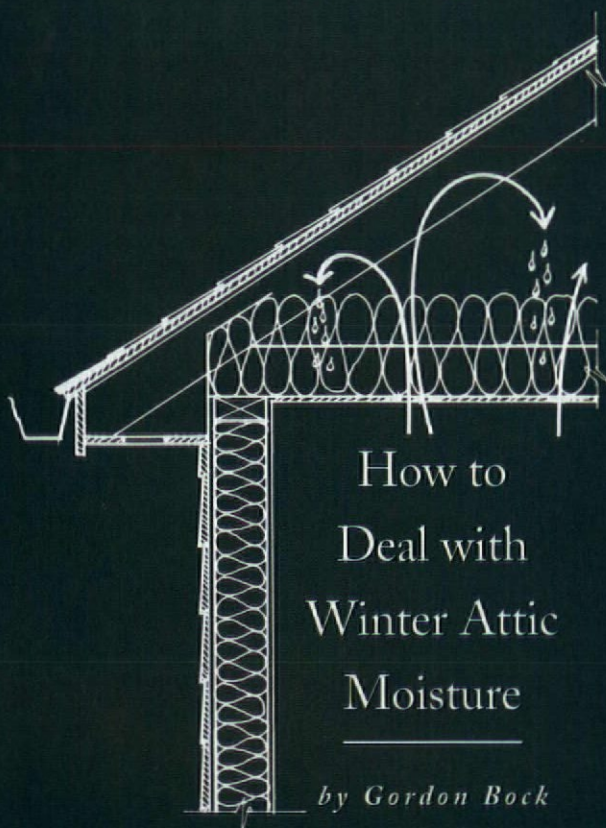
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Dirk Van Erp-style table lamps, Limbert Prairie-style lamps, Arts & Crafts wall lanterns, and Greene and Greene copper lantern.



FROST IN THE RAFTERS, ICE ON THE EAVES



How to
Deal with
Winter Attic
Moisture

by Gordon Bock

WATER, IN ITS SUBTLE WAYS, IS THE SOURCE of many old-house maintenance problems, but at least it's a familiar one to handle. In wintertime, though, water often takes its solid or invisible forms, ice and water vapor, and this makes dealing with its dirtywork much trickier. Attics are where water causes some of the greatest headaches. Not only is this a triangular space where walls and roof meet, it's the site where heat, cold, air, and insulation all have to work together to sustain the comfort level in the house. Unfortunately, it's not easy to see the ill effects of moisture in an attic — that is, until it produces gross problems. Here we'll look at the two most common winter water attic ailments, what causes them, and what to try for cures.

A Memo on Moisture

THERE WOULDN'T BE AS MANY ATTIC PROBLEMS, OF course, if we didn't have to deal with moisture. Basements, crawlspaces, below-grade walls, houseplants, and environment control systems, such as humidifiers, all add moisture to the air inside a house. Modern families and their lifestyles are a big factor too. Cooking food, washing and drying clothes, bathing — especially showers — are all activities that generate moisture. So does human respiration, with a family of four evaporating 2 to 3 gallons of water a day. Not only are these generators often adding moisture at historically high levels, many of them are relatively new features in old houses.

Added to this is the energy-conscious building practices of the last two decades. We put a premium on reducing air infiltration in houses old and new, and intensive use of storm and thermal windows, sealants, and weatherstrips has created houses that are much tighter than in the past. While this means energy savings because heat leakage is reduced, it also means that moisture tends to build up in a house, especially in winter, because there are fewer ways for it to get out.

Frost in the Rafters

HIGH MOISTURE LEVELS MAY BE PRESENT IN A HOUSE ALL year round, but in winter they come home to roost most dramatically in the attic. In cold weather there is even less exchange of air in a tight house, and moist air tends to move towards the roof.

When air is at 100% relative humidity it is regarded as saturated with all the moisture it can hold. The temperature at which this occurs, and below which the moisture is likely to condense, is called the dewpoint. When

When air near its dewpoint climbs into the attic through holes in the ceiling, it can condense to form "leaks," frost, and other forms of moisture mayhem.

Right: Removing soggy insulation between rafters exposed the cause: melting frost under the roof deck. Below: Baffles maintain the air path to soffit vents and can be bought, as here, or homemade.



moist air near its dewpoint comes in contact with the cold parts of an uninsulated roof, the result is condensation on deck undersides and nails. Often this condensation freezes to frost or ice. The short-term effects are usually stains and mildew on attic surfaces, and saturation of insulation that reduces its performance. Repeated or prolonged frosty attics can lead to some severe problems, particularly delamination of plywood, fungal decay of wood building parts, rusting metal, and compacted insulation. To control frosty attics :

Reduce moisture levels within the house — Make sure bathrooms, clothes driers, and kitchens have exhaust systems that are ducted to the outside of the building. Cover exposed earth in crawlspaces with 6-mil polyethylene film (even thicker is more durable). Reduce humidifier use.

Seal leakage paths to the attic — Most are penetrations in the second-floor ceiling, and in an old house there can be many of these. Caulk or tighten up all joints at chimneys, plumbing vent stacks, and recessed lights. Use gunned sealants, caulks, spray foams, weatherstripping, and sheet materials as needed. Attic stairways and hatches are a particular hotspot and should be weatherstripped or covered to make an effective barrier.

Add a vapor retarder — Limiting moist air migration through building materials, such as plaster, is less of a priority than sealing penetrations, but will help. If possible, install a vapor retarder (polyethylene film or similar membrane) on the attic floor. If insulation is already present in the attic floor, apply two coats of vapor retarding paint to the second-floor ceiling (either a specifically made product, such as Glidden's Insul-Aid, or aluminum-based).

Ventilate the attic — Good attic ventilation can't be overstressed, or overdone. Current research indicates that if a vapor retarder is present, attic ventilation should equal at least one square foot of free vent area for every 300 square feet of attic area. If a vapor retarder is not used, the vent area should be doubled. (Ventilating products should be labeled with their net free area; adding insect screening cuts the free area by half, louvers and screen reduces the free area by two-thirds). Traditional gable vents alone are

often not sufficient. Adding spaced or continuous soffit vents will increase the vent area and improve air movement through the attic.

Ice on the Eaves

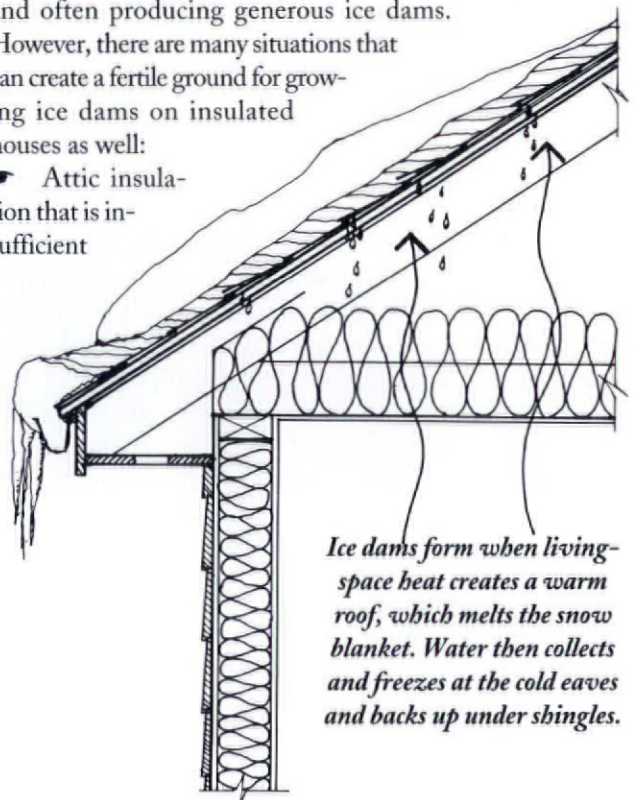
THE METHODS USED TO CONTROL indoor moisture and heat also play a big part in the control of outside moisture — the most notorious example being ice dams. Snow is a good insulator. When it collects on the roof of a warm attic, the trapped heat — not the sun — causes it to melt and run down the slope. As the melt hits a cold area, it freezes. Typically, this freezing takes place at the roof's edge and, as the melt accumulates, it backs up and builds into a mini-glacier known as an ice dam. The icicles produced outdoors at the eaves are a threat in their own right, pulling off gutters and cornices and falling on shrubs or building parts

below. The greatest damage, however, comes from ice that works its way up under shingles. Once under the roof, it melts causing active "leaks" that saturate sheathing, insulation, and attic interiors. It can even saturate the ceilings of the rooms and exterior walls below.

In old houses with next to no insulation, living-space heat goes right to the roof, melting it clean of snow and often producing generous ice dams.

However, there are many situations that can create a fertile ground for growing ice dams on insulated houses as well:

- Attic insulation that is insufficient



or sloppily installed. Ceiling or roof insulation that allows heat to build under large areas of the roof while letting eaves remain cold sets up the ideal conditions for ice dams.

☛ Heat that finds its way through leaks in the ceiling and service penetrations into the upper storey.



Top: Moisture condensation and ice dam leaks have blackened this attic with mildew and now feed fungal growths. Above: Heating cables — a popular but dubious ice dam cure.

- ☛ **Low-pitch roofs.** Gravity makes these more likely to collect dams and be penetrated by leaks than steep roofs.

- ☛ **Poor cathedral ceiling-type insulation.** Under roof insulation that is unvented or insufficient, or lacks a vapor retarder, contributes to a warm roof and ice dams. Skylights, a contemporary flourish sometimes visited on old houses, compound the problem by creating thermal holes in the insulation.

The solutions used to alleviate or prevent ice dams over the years are many. Like a lot of building problem cures, they either attack the symptoms or the problems. The classic symptom solution is electric heating cables laid along the roof perimeter to prevent ice dams or melt them away. These devices generally only do the job over a small area, and where they end a secondary ice dam usually develops. Furthermore, snow

movement can tear them off the roof. Insurance companies may prohibit them for fire safety reasons. Another is metal roofing or flashing installed 3' or so up the roof as a belt that sheds ice before it can build up. This method dates to at least the 19th century and is one commonly seen on old houses in heavy snowfall areas. Though undeniably slippery, in some houses ice dams merely form at the top of the belt instead of the roof edge.

Better responses use materials specifically designed for dealing with roof and attic problems and employ them with an understanding of the dynamics that create ice dams:

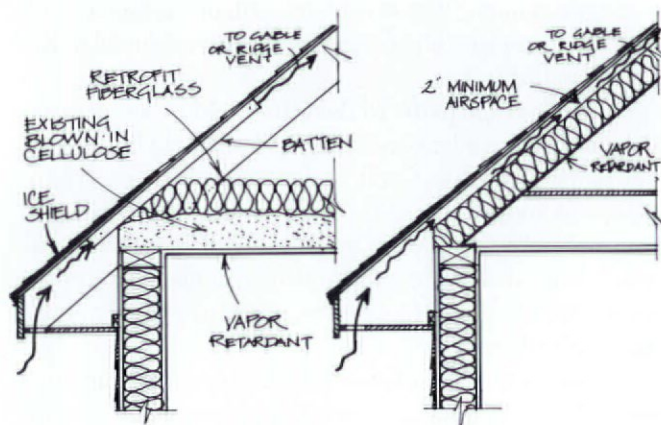
Minimize heat loss to the attic and roof — Insulate the attic floor or roof underside, taking care to cover potential thermal voids, such as around joist bridging and

the backs of hatch doors and accesses. If existing attic floor insulation is insufficient, upgrade by adding unfaced blankets (important to avoid introducing another vapor retarder) or loose fill.

Seal all air leaks — As with frosty attics, tighten up all penetrations and accesses through the second floor ceiling — tedious work, but effective.

Install a vapor retarder — Again, carefully adding an appropriate film or paint on the living space side of ceilings and walls limits moisture movement and maintains insulation effectiveness.

Ventilate for a cold roof — Every house has a different roof configuration and individual ventilation needs, but the object is to vent away any heat that does make its way to under the roof. In floor-insulated attics, pay particular attention to the area over the building plate or its equivalent. For soffit vents to work there has to be an air passage through this tight area — often blocked by retrofit insulation (see drawing below). Adding manufactured baffles or homemade versions will open this path. Under-roof insulation or cathedral ceilings pose much the same situation on a larger scale. Here a ventilated air space between insulation and roof deck (often terminating in a continuous ridge vent) keeps a flow of outdoor-temperature air under all the roof.



Avoiding ice dams: Baffles over the top plate (left) ensure air movement, especially where insulation has been added; an air space between cathedral ceiling insulation and deck (right) helps maintain a cold roof.

Install an ice shield — Even after putting controls on all the potential causes, ice dams can still be hard to beat. In these cases a good line of defense is an ice shield product, such as W.R. Grace's Ice & Water Shield (Grace Construction Products, 62 Whittemore Ave., Cambridge, MA 02140). This bitumen membrane is installed at the eaves under the roofing so as to form a continuous water barrier that seals around nails and blocks any of the water that can be released by ice dams.

Neat Ways to Heat

UPGRADING OLD-HOUSE HEATING SYSTEMS INVISIBLY

By Dan Holohan

FOR YEARS, FRUSTRATED OLD-HOUSE OWNERS HAVE SHRUGGED THEIR SHOULDERS when vintage radiators bang, rumble, and spit water on the curtains. Quiet and comfort seem out of the question in winter. When a room is too hot, you open a window. When it's too cold, you plug in a space heater. When the heating system bangs, you throw up your hands and sigh, "What can you do?" Nowadays the answer is: Plenty. Modern technology offers heating units that are either invisible or cleverly disguised. This means you can keep those wonderfully ornate cast-iron radiators in place — you just may not use them anymore. Today there is a world of comfort options, none of which need change the character of your home.

I. The Return of Under-Floor Radiant Heat

THERE'S NOTHING NICER THAN A WARM FLOOR. It invites you into a room and beckons you to kick off your shoes and relax.

The idea of providing comfort by making the floor warm has been around since the days of Ancient Rome and is certainly the oldest method of central heating known.

Under-floor heating (commonly called "radiant heat") works on the principle that the human body is a "radiator" that will give up its heat to any nearby cold object such as a wall, a window, the floor, or even the furniture. An under-floor heating system strives to control the rate at which your body loses heat to its surroundings. When you and the surrounding surfaces are the same temperature, you feel comfortable, even though the air temperature may be five or more degrees cooler than to what you're accustomed!

You experience this type of radiant heat loss every

time you're in the supermarket. On your next trip, stop by the housewares aisle and pick up a room thermometer. Put it in your shopping cart and keep an eye

on it as you walk through the store. Notice how you feel comfortable in the grocery aisle, but chilly in the frozen food section? Now look at the thermometer. The air temperature in both aisles is the same!

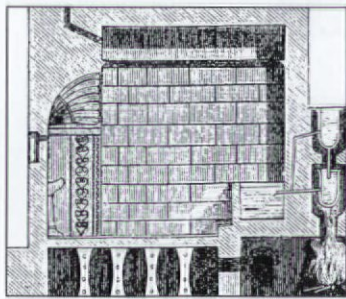
Heating engineers call this phenomenon "Cold 70." It's the feeling you get when there's a great difference between the temperature of the air and the temperature of the objects in the room. "Cold 70" gives you the sensation of being chilly, even though the thermostat registers 70°. You can

experience "Cold 70" by standing next to the single-pane glass window in your storm door on a cold day. The air in the room is warm, but you feel chilled because your body is a radiator that is throwing its heat toward the cold window.



Modern radiant heating, which first became popular for slab construction in the '50s, is back with improvements for old houses.

A radiant heating system is different from all other types of heating systems because it heats objects rather than air alone. It surrounds you with building surfaces and furniture



Roman hypocaust radiant heating warmed floors with hidden baffles.

that are 85-90°F — the temperature of your skin. When you're surrounded by warm objects, your body radiates less heat and you feel comfortable even though the air temperature in the room may be cooler than what's considered normal.

This is one reason why radiant heating systems operate at a lower

cost than other types of heating systems. Since the air in the room is cooler than usual, it feels fresher — a nice plus! Radiant heat also cuts down on drafts because the air doesn't rise and fall from floor to ceiling as it does when radiators or hot-air ducts heat the room. Those ferris wheel-like currents of air can streak your walls with dirt as they zip around the room. They also increase the heat loss of your home because they push a pillow of hot air toward the ceiling. Typically, a radiant heating system exhibits only about a one-degree difference in temperature from floor to ceiling.

You save fuel, too, because the air at the ceiling is cooler. The speed at which heat moves out of a house is largely determined by the difference in temperature between the indoors and the outdoors. In most homes, the air at the ceiling is a lot hotter than it is at the floor. This is why builders put more insulation in the ceiling than they do in the walls. Radiant heat turns the table around. The temperature difference from floor to ceiling is hardly noticeable.

Under-floor heating was widely used during the post-WW II building boom of the 1940s and 1950s. Unfortunately, it fell out of favor because the materials and work habits of the time led to failures on a large scale. However, over the past 20 years or so, advances in plastics and rubbers have breathed new life into this, the oldest method of central heating. Today's materials resist the wear which caused the earlier copper and steel pipe to fail.

In North America, contractors are installing much of the tubing in existing homes by stapling it to the underside of the floor between the joist bays. This allows them to modernize an old heating system without changing the character of the home. Radiant heat is totally invisible; only its comfort shows that it's on.

II. Planning for Radiant Heat

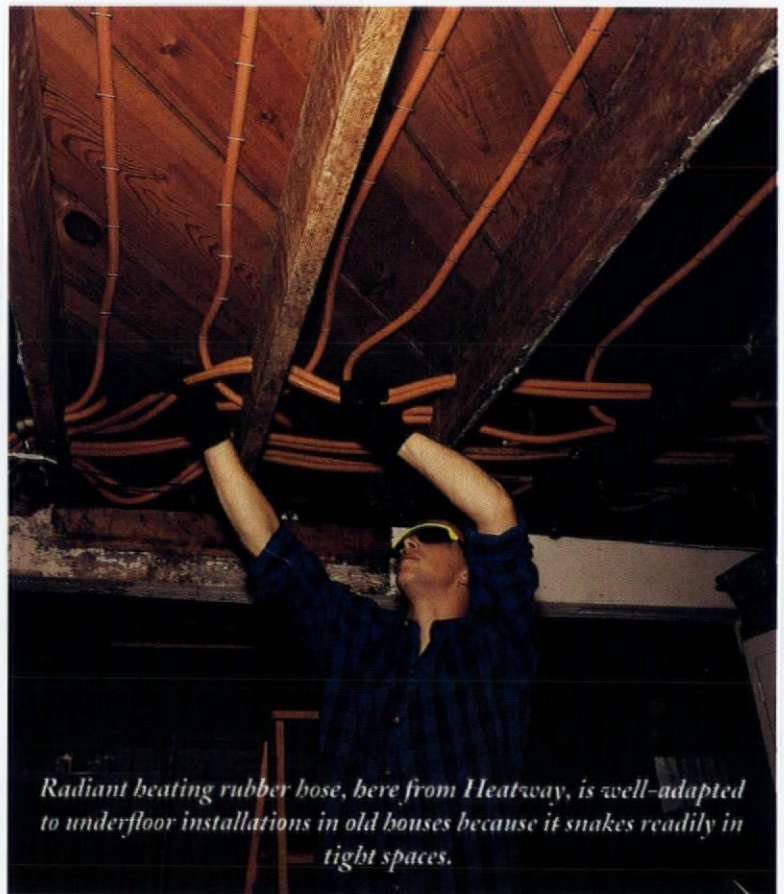
SINCE UNDER-FLOOR HEATING IS A RELATIVELY NEW FIELD, do your homework before deciding to go with this system:

• **Choose a competent heating contractor who has had experience with "staple-up," under-floor heating.** Make sure the contractor performs an accurate heat loss calculation for the room and then carefully considers the material that makes up the floor. The thicker the floor boards and the carpeting (if any), the more tubing will have to be used underneath. Staple-up floor heating will always require more tubing than in-slab floor heating.

On the first visit, the experienced contractor should be able to tell you whether or not the room can be heated solely with under-floor tubing. If tubing can't do the whole job, the contractor will probably suggest a supplemental heat source (a kick-space or panel-type heater, for example) that will back up the radiant system on very cold days.

The contractor will install the stapled-up tubing as a separate zone with its own thermostat. A three-way mixing valve will probably be used to blend the hot supply water (going to the zone) with the cooler return water (coming back from the zone). This will control the comfort level in the room and allow the under-floor zone to operate at a lower temperature than the other zones in the house.

After boring a series of 1/4" holes through the center of the ends of your joists, the contractor will loop the tubing



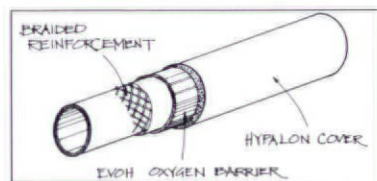
Radiant heating rubber hose, here from Heatway, is well-adapted to underfloor installations in old houses because it snakes readily in tight spaces.

back and forth through the joist bays, just like lacing up a sneaker, stapling the tubing up along the way. The ends of the tubing get connected to copper supply-and-return manifolds that are strategically placed in one or more joist bays. The contractor will then pipe from the manifolds to your boiler, using either metal pipe, or a larger size of the plastic or rubber tubing used between the joist bays.

☛ **Select the tubing material carefully.** The most-popular types of tubing are rubber hose and PEX (cross-linked polyethylene) plastic. Both materials can be made as “barrier pipe,” which stands up very well to wear and resists the intrusion of oxygen (see supplier’s list, page 39). This is an important consideration because oxygen can move by osmosis through any non-metal pipe into the system. The degree to which oxygen moves varies with the temperature of the water and



Rubber hose with an internal barrier (above) can be stapled up. Note the air space before insulation. The oxygen barrier is inside the wall (below).



becomes more of a problem as the water temperature exceeds 140°. Oxygen won’t damage the tubing, but it can cause the metal parts of a heating system to corrode prematurely.

While barrier pipe is more expensive than other non-metal pipes (such as polybutylene, polyethylene, and polypropylene) it is well worth considering for its oxygen resistance. With non-barrier pipe you’ll probably save money on the installation, but you’ll

have to add a corrosion-inhibiting chemical to the system water if your system operates over 140°, and check it from time to time. A competent heating contractor will be well aware of this need and lay out your options on the first visit to your home.

The non-permeable “barrier” is a sheathing similar to the material in those silver-colored helium balloons. This type of barrier, called an EVOH, is regularly used in the food-processing industry to keep fresh air from coming in contact with food. Potato chips are frequently packed in shiny bags made of an EVOH. Most PEX pipe manufacturers place their EVOH barrier on the outside of the tubing. Your contractor should take care not to scratch the exterior barrier layer as the tubing is woven in and out of the joist bays.

He or she will also have to use special aluminum plates to hold the PEX tubing tight against the floor boards. PEX

tubing can’t be stapled directly to the floor because the staples can tear the barrier as the pipe expands and contracts. If you choose rubber tubing, you might want to consider Heatway’s Entran 3 because it has the EVOH barrier on the inside of the pipe. This means your contractor can staple this tubing directly to the underside of the floor without using the aluminum plates (usually at a lower job cost as well).

Many contractors prefer rubber tubing over PEX plastic for staple-up jobs because of the rubber’s greater flexibility. They have to snake the tubing past the thickets of electrical wires and plumbing pipes already in most old-house joist bays. This is one area where rubber tubing shines. PEX, while an excellent material, is much more rigid than rubber and often difficult to work with on staple-up jobs.

Once the tubing is stapled up to the floor, your contractor will insulate the joist bays from below, making sure to leave an air gap of at least 2” between the tubing and the foil side of the insulation. That air gap is an important detail that should not be overlooked. Since only a small part of the tube is in contact with the floor, just this fraction heats through conduction. The rest heats through radiation as the insulation foils reflect the radiant waves of energy through the air gap and back up toward the floor. The insulation should never touch the tubing; if it does, the result may be uneven heating known as “striping.”

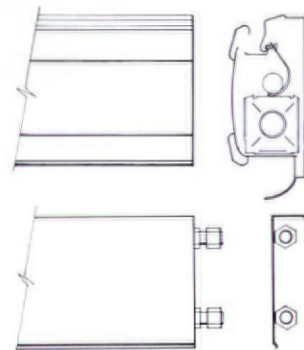
III. Beautiful New Baseboards

OLD-HOUSE OWNERS USUALLY DON’T CARE FOR THE contemporary look of baseboard radiation, but there are two new products designed to overcome some of the old objections. The first is a type of baseboard that sits nearly flat against the wall and practically disappears into the woodwork like base molding. The RADIANTPANEL (see suppliers list) is a radiator in the true sense. It sends radiant waves of energy across the room, heating the floor as it goes. The result is quiet comfort with no noticeable heating units.

The baseboard heaters common in newer homes are convective systems. They employ copper fin-tube radiation, which works by heating the air nearby. The warmed — and now lighter — air rises toward the ceiling and is replaced by cooler air which scoots across the floor and enters the baseboard from the bottom. These convective currents of air move around the room and warm the people. Convective systems differ from radiant systems because they don’t immediately make the surfaces of a room warm.

RADIANTPANEL baseboard isn’t a convective heater so it puts out only about one-

Convective baseboards (top) employ fin-tubes; radiant baseboards are fin-less.





RADIANTPANEL (right) is a true radiant baseboard heating system with a slim (about 1") profile that makes it nearly invisible. DesignLine (left) is a convective system that can be dressed with any choice of decorative panels.

IV. Regulating with Thermostatic Radiator Valves

IF YOU'RE IN LOVE WITH THAT OLD ONE-PIPE steam system, but you're not happy with the way some rooms constantly overheat, consider thermostatic radiator valves. These small, non-electric units fit between the radiator and the air vent and allow you to regain control of the comfort level in any room.

Thermostatic radiator valves (TRVs) are totally self-contained and need no wiring. You simply unscrew the air vent and replace it with the TRV. It's a simple job that can be done by any handy restorer. The thermostatic, room-air sensor is built into the valve body and typically mounts directly on the side of the radiator. If your radiators have covers, you'll use the remote-sensing model, which places the thermostat outside the radiator cover on the wall.

third of the heat (per linear foot) of convective fin-tube baseboard. That means you need more of it to do the same amount of heating. However, because there's very little movement of air in the room, the sensation of drafts is nearly eliminated. It takes the place of base molding and, ideally, should run from wall to wall. Your contractor will connect the sections of RADIANTPANEL with short pieces of PEX plastic tubing.

RADIANTPANEL COSTS more than copper fin-tube baseboard, but its architectural discreetness makes it well worth the price in a period home. You can paint this aluminum radiator any color you like. It can't rust, there are no fins to collect dust, no expansion noises (when properly installed), and you can put furniture anywhere in the room.

If you have a small wall to work with and you want to deliver more heat per foot of radiation, consider DesignLine, by Mestek. This is an extruded aluminum fin-tube radiator which comes in 19 standard colors. It differs in appearance from traditional types of baseboard radiation because you can slide an accent piece into the front panel to match, or compliment, your wall covering. The company has over 60 standard panels available in various colors and textures, or you can insert your own wall covering strips.

This type of radiator provides convective heat by moving the air from floor to ceiling, heating it on the way. The result is more heat per linear foot than a purely radiant baseboard such as RADIANTPANEL. You'll probably still run the radiator from wall to wall to keep the architectural lines flowing, but since its output is higher, foot for foot, than the output from radiant baseboard, your contractor may substitute some bare pipe for fin-tube inside a portion of the cover. Too much fin-tube can lead to over-heating.

When the air in the room reaches the desired pre-set temperature, the valve will close. If the air can't get out, the steam can't get in. The trick to using these valves is not to place one in the room where the electric thermostat is located. (The electric thermostat, ideally, should be in the coldest room in the house.) The nice part about thermostatic radiator valves is that you don't have to put them on every radiator — just the ones which over-heat. Try one or two this winter, and if you like the way they perform, add a few more next year.

When you're shopping for TRVs, look for those with a built-in vacuum breaker. Danfoss Automatic Controls offers an excellent choice with their RA-2000. The vacuum breaker's job is to open and allow air back into the radiator once the room air reaches the temperature you've selected. Without the vacuum breaker, the room can overheat because the vacuum (which is created as steam condenses inside the radiator) will draw more steam toward itself. Vacuum is not

The Danfoss thermostatic radiator valve prevents this 1920s slim-type radiator from overheating.



Photography (top) courtesy of Mestek, Inc., Radiant Technology, Inc.; (above) courtesy of Danfoss Automatic Controls

normally a problem in one-pipe steam radiators, but once the TRV closes, air can't reenter the system through the air vent, so this becomes an important feature.

V. Turning Steam into Hot Water

MANY HEATING CONTRACTORS ARE NOW CONVERTING OLD one-pipe steam systems to quieter — and more controllable — forced hot water systems by tapping the old steam radiator at the point where the air vent normally mounts. They use small-diameter PEX plastic tubing or rubber hose (the same materials we looked at earlier) and simply track back along the steam risers and mains to the boiler. The hose or the PEX tubing is attached to the old steam mains using electrical cable ties. The tubing allows them to snake through the walls, just as an electrician snakes a wire.

Back at the boiler room, your contractor will plug the tubing into a series of copper manifolds, which allow the house to be zoned in whatever way you choose. If you're keeping your old boiler, the contractor will remove the low-water cutoff, the pressure controller, and the gauge glass. The new equipment will be one or more hot water circulating pumps or zone valves, an expansion tank, and some valving.

Before making the conversion from steam to hot water, your contractor should first bring the steam pressure up to at least 10 psi to check for leaks in the system. If the piping is sound, it should be able to withstand the higher working pressures of a hot water system. If you find a lot of leaks, you'll probably be better off not making the conversion.

Most hot water systems operate at about 180°, while most steam systems run at 215°. Because of this difference, your contractor should perform an accurate heat-loss calculation on your home to determine if the steam radiators (which are usually smaller than hot water radiators) will be able to put out enough heat on the coldest day of the year.

If you decide to go ahead with the conversion, consider using an outdoor-air reset control to operate the system. These remarkable devices sense the outdoor temperature and constantly reset the water temperature to suit the needs of the day. As it gets colder outside, the temperature of the water goes up, and vice versa. The circulating pump runs continuously in this system and the indoor temperature stays at a perfect level. Tekmar Control Systems, Inc. makes an excellent reset controller for this purpose.

Converting two-pipe steam systems to hot water is generally a bit easier to do since that second pipe is already there. You'll usually find a steam trap on the outlet side of each of your radiators. Inside the steam trap is a thermostat, similar to the one in your car's radiator. Your contractor will remove those thermostats and replace the traps' covers.

Be aware, though, that a device other than a steam trap on the outlet side of the radiator may make conversion much trickier or impossible. During the "Vapor Era" (1900-1930) manufacturers used many strange devices to keep the steam from entering the return lines. Most of these are not

easily converted to hot water use. A competent contractor will be able to recognize these devices and advise you on the best course of action. Balancing any converted system can be challenging, too, because of the difference in size between the supply and return lines. This is another good reason to consider continuous circulation and a reset control.

So don't be frustrated by that old heating system. There's plenty you can do to bring it up to today's standards. The best part is no one will see the change!

DAN HOLOHAN *operates a consulting firm that specializes in older heating systems: Dan Holohan Associates, Inc., 63 North Oakdale Avenue, Bethpage, NY 11714; (516) 796-9276.*

S U P P L I E R S

Heatway

3131 W. Chestnut Expwy, Dept. OHJ
Springfield, MO 65802
(800) 255-1996

Entran-3 barrier-pipe rubber hose.

...

Wirso Company

5925 148 St. West, Dept. OHJ
Apple Valley, MN 55124
(800) 321-4739

PEX tubing.

...

Radiant Technology, Inc.

11A Farber Drive, Dept. OHJ
Bellport, NY 11713
(516) 286-0900

RADIANTPANEL baseboard heating systems.

...

Mestek, Inc.

260 North Elm St., Dept. OHJ
Westfield, MA 01085
(413) 568-9571

Designer baseboard for hot water heating systems.

...

Danfoss Automatic Controls

Building Controls Division
4971 Mercantile Road, Dept. OHJ
Baltimore, MD 21236
(410) 931-8250

RA-2000 thermostatic radiator valves.

...

Tekmar Control Systems, Inc.

4611 23rd St., Dept. OHJ
Vernon, B.C., Canada V1T 4K7
(604) 545-7749

Outdoor-air reset controllers.

RETIRING CO

How To Rewire Early Electric Fixtures

BY MARYLEE MACDONALD

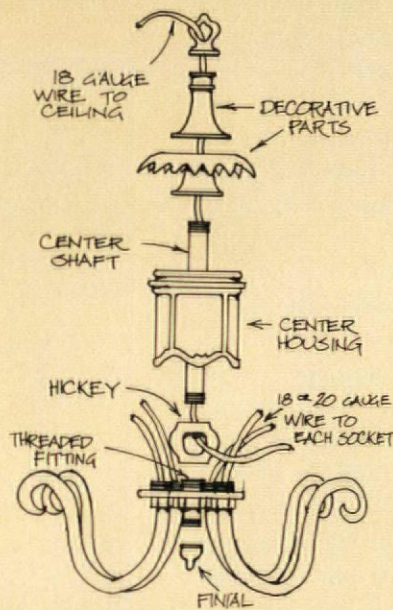
EARLY ELECTRIC LIGHTING fixtures should be rewired. Frayed fabric or brittle insulation on original wiring can create an electrical or fire hazard, but period fixtures can be used safely, if you replace all the old wire. For a step-by-step look at how a pro rewires old fixtures, we visited the lamp shop at Al Bar-Wilmette Platers, a lighting and replating company in Chicago.

Ease Out The Old

AL BAR RECOMMENDS THAT YOU DOCUMENT your work. Start by photographing the fixture; make sure you can see all the parts. As you begin to disassemble the fixture, sketch the individual parts and how they mate (drawing A).

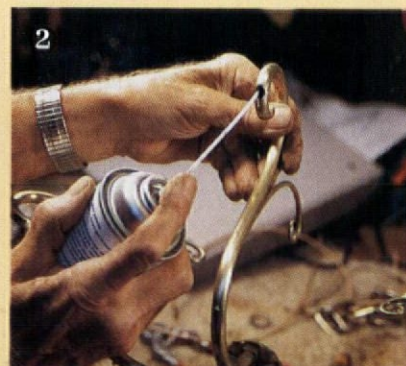
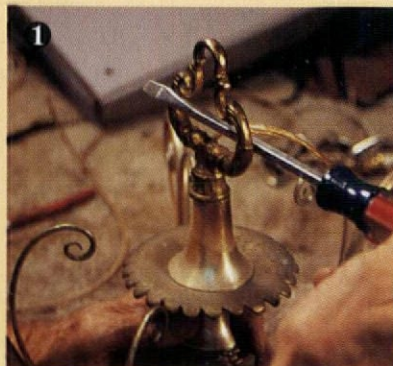
Unfasten the center shaft parts. Unscrew finials at the top and bottom. ❶ These parts may be threaded or pressed together. Try twisting gently, using a lever if necessary. Sometimes a shot of penetrating oil such as WD-40 will break loose a frozen thread. If the pieces still won't budge, grab a heat gun or hair dryer. Fixtures from the 1920s were often assembled with thick, red glue that looks like sealing wax. Place the fixture in a vise (cushioning the jaws), heat the joint and, while it is still warm, try again. With heat, however, you may have to sacrifice the finish.

Cut the cord that runs down the center shaft if you need to, but leave the old cord leading to the arms in



drawing A

place. To pull it out, you'll need several inches at both ends of the arms. Next, disassemble the sockets. Most old socket shells (the upper part) are stamped "Press Here." Slide a thin-bladed screwdriver between the shell and its cap (base) at this point to remove the shell (drawing B).



Beneath this you will find a cardboard insulator covering a porcelain socket. Be very careful not to damage the insulator. Not all shapes and sizes are still made. The old Bakelite switches can also be reused, as long as they're free from defects, such as scorched metal or chipped porcelain.

The base of the socket is threaded to the end of the arm. Glue may also have been used to hold it in place. Here, a specialty lamp tool called a "socket wrench" is essential. It fits right down inside the socket and has a long arm for leverage.

With the sockets removed, you should see 2" to 3" of cord sticking out the end of the fixture arms. Sometimes, the original wiring at the center of the fixture is crammed tight beneath the center housing. Do the best you can to take this rat's nest apart. Squirt a shot of silicone lubricant (CRC Extreme Duty Silicone is one brand) down each arm ❷. Then begin pulling slowly with a pair of square-nosed pliers. Don't force it. You don't want the

OLD WIRING

wire to break off inside the arm. If you meet resistance, squirt silicone down the other end and try pulling from there. Push from the opposite end.

If the fixture has ever been wet, the fabric covering the wire could be swollen. Keep trying silicone and gentle pressure. Sometimes a single wire will be easier to pull than two at a time. In the worst case, bore a hole in the middle of the arm (on the ceiling side, where no one will see it) and use physician's forceps to grab the wire.

Wire In The New

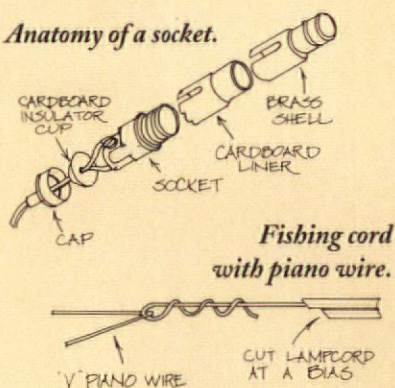
NEW CORD IS MUCH EASIER TO SNAKE than old cord. Use 18- or 20-gauge stranded lamp cord (sold at all hardware stores) for the fixture arms. Measure the length needed to go inside the arms plus about 16" extra. Cut a diagonal on both ends. Give the inside of the tubing another shot of silicone. Try sliding the wire in from one end.

If you have trouble, use piano wire or a chain to "fish" the new cord through. Double the piano wire to form a V-loop. Then strip 1-1/2" of insulation from one conductor of your new cord and attach it to the wire. Pull the piano guide-wire gently while pushing the new wire into the arm. Another way to fish new wire is to use a

length of light chain. Use the handle of a screwdriver to tap the chain through the arm.

When you've pulled new cord through all the arms, screw the socket cap to the arm. Place an insulator cup **3** in the bottom of the socket. (This protects the base from shorts.)

Anatomy of a socket.



drawing B

Split the cord and expose about 1" of bare wire on each conductor. Bring each up to a terminal on the socket and wrap the exposed wire around the screw in a clockwise direction, then tighten the screw. Snip off stray strands of wire to avoid shorts. Place the cardboard insulator sleeve over the socket **4**. Remove any slack by pulling loose cord toward the center of the fixture.

Snap the metal socket shell in place.

In the final step, connect the branch wiring from each arm to a single, center cord. In some fixtures, the area where all the wiring meets is tiny. Still, leave as much cord as possible; connecting short, stubby wires is tough.

Use 18-gauge wire from the ceiling connection to the arms. Again, make sure you leave this wire plenty long. Thread the wire through the center post. At the base of the post is a special fitting with a hole in it, called a "hickey". Bring the wire out the hole.

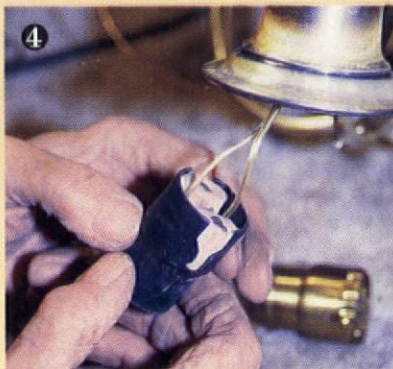
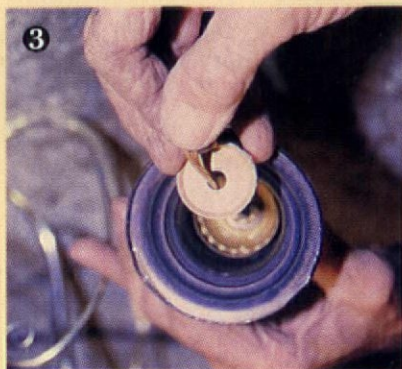
Split back about 4" of the ceiling cord. Strip one end. Connect the stripped end to the stripped ends of half the arm wiring. Twist all the wires clockwise. Trim the end to leave 1/2" to 1" of bare wire. Twist a wire nut on clockwise until it grips the wire securely and completely covers all bare wire. Repeat for the other set of conductors.

Reassemble the fixture. Force the wire back where it is stored. Be careful not to pop the wire nuts or expose bare wire. Use your drawings and pictures to place all the pieces back together correctly. Now your fixture can safely light your old house for many decades to come.

Suppliers

AL BAR-WILMETTE PLATERS
127 Green Bay Road, Dept. OHJ
Wilmette, IL 60091
(708) 251-0187
Antique metal restoration shop.

AMERICAN-DE ROSA LAMPARTS
3674 Noakes St., Dept. OHJ
Los Angeles, CA 90023
(213) 269-6300
Wholesaler only, call for retail information.

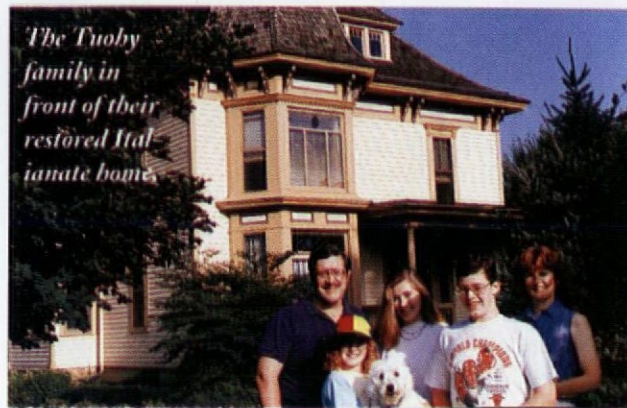


Dismay, to say the least, was my first reaction when I saw the house. Overgrown, tangled shrubs and severely peeling paint greeted us at every corner. I turned to my husband, Bob, but said nothing. I could see the excitement in his eyes; he saw something that I didn't. I looked back at the house and thought, "Well, maybe."

We owned a seven-year-old, ranch-style home in a quiet Chicago suburb, but for years our fingers itched to peel off paint from a huge old house. Bob is a salesman and travels through many quaint towns on business. He began inquiring about vintage homes for sale, but the price was always out of our range. Then while passing through Peotone, Illinois, one hot July day, he found a majestic Italianate with a mansard roof that fit our pocketbook.

And so on Friday, September 13th, 1981, we signed the papers — a sort of marriage contract with a house that needed much love and attention after years of neglect. At the same time, we learned our third child was on the way, due in April. We thought it appropriate timing as we embarked on this new adventure.

The house was built by John Conrad in 1887 and stayed in his family for several generations. In the 1970s, though, it was rented out and became downright shabby. We set aside \$20,000 from the sale of our ranch house, figuring this would cover all of the repairs necessary to put this house back in shape. Looking back, little did we appreciate the truth behind the "mushroom factor," or how it was growing in the dark of our newly acquired basement.



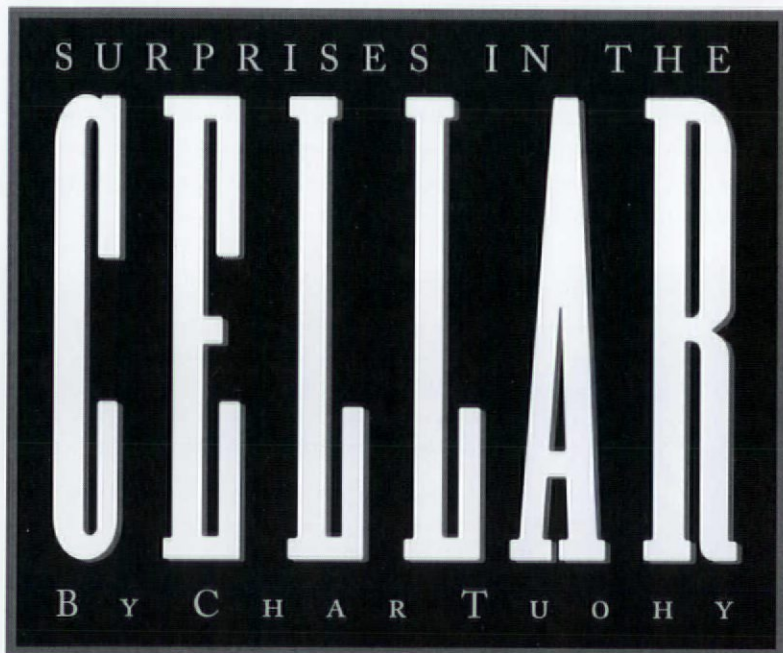
The Tuohy family in front of their restored Italianate home.

OLD-HOUSE LIVING AND...

From Heating Headaches to Drafty Holidays

BOB SPENT THE FIRST DAY PRYING OPEN THE 33 windows on the two main floors while I scrubbed the kitchen and front hallways. During a search in the basement for screens, he decided to try out the furnace. It was an inefficient behemoth that had been a coal-burner until converted to gas about 50 years ago. I nearly fell off the ladder as a huge coughing shook the floor upstairs, followed by what sounded like squirrels running through the heating ducts. I ran downstairs with our two kids, Beth and Bobby, in tow to hear their father announce, "It's got to go," as he shook his head.

In short order we hired an independent contractor — with emphasis on the word independent — to install a new, fuel-efficient furnace. He began work smoothly enough while the weather was still warm, backing his truck up to the basement door, hooking a heavy cable up to the old gas-eater, and pulling it out of the basement. The old ducts were also hauled out, revealing insides half-filled with rust sediment.





The 1887 Conrad house (above), modernized ten years later with a mansard roof, tower, and two leaded-glass bay windows, as it looks with a 1992 paint job. Early outdoor work (inset): Removing a century of peeling paint.

At the same time, Bob began building a three-car garage to house our car, van, camper, various bikes, big wheels, and other things we brought from our first home. I knew the garage was a necessity, but in my condition I had hoped to start with a bathroom door. Ours fell off the hinges every few days. I could live temporarily with plaster chunks in the bathtub and a toilet whose pull-chain often failed to work, but I became obsessive about that door. "Patience," Bob muttered as he made more new holes in the rotting door frame, but my patience wore thin in the weeks ahead.

First, immense shrubs were removed from around the foundation, evicting little critters who subsequently sought refuge inside the house. We also learned to walk down the back stairs at an angle since the porch was sinking into the ground. Then, an electrician became a regular visitor after bare wires were discovered in a gaping hole behind the refrigerator.

As winter approached, our "independent" contractor slowly made progress on the furnace and ducts. Many days he never came to work. As the nights grew colder, we grew anxious. Finally, he completed the job, but not before we learned

a lesson: Recommendations are a top priority in hiring a contractor.

Our new, clean furnace was a big improvement in heating, but even with two pairs of socks my feet were like ice cubes. Beth and Bobby often wore coats because we just couldn't keep the house warm. The ceilings and walls were crumbling and they had dark, ominous holes in them. By pasting paper and stuffing rags, we covered holes in the children's bedroom walls and kept nightmares about monsters to a minimum.

Christmas was coming and dinner for 26 was at our house. Since we were living like gypsies amid the work, I had no idea where my china or linens were buried. Turkey dinner was served on paper plates. Even with our new heat turned up to 75 degrees, the house remained cold. We set up the Christmas tree in the living room bay window, then stepped back to enjoy the fresh balsam scent. To our chagrin, the tinsel floated at a 45 degree angle in the breeze coming from the windows and floor boards!

In the ranch house, we were accustomed to \$40 heating bills, but that December it came to over \$350.00! We discovered



The incredible pit we uncovered in the basement (right), and Bob hard at work mining the smelly, black goo that had to go (top).



our 15' high attic was warmer than the first floor. Double socks were not needed up there, so Bob added another project to his growing list. On New Year's Day, he pulled up attic floorboards and laid insulation between the rafters. This was our most energy-conserving project, and the gas budget is \$60 per month now.

False Beams and a Project That's the Pits

WITH TODDLERS AROUND, PARENTS OFTEN FIND THEMSELVES a private place to discuss daily happenings. Ours was the basement. Since we were far from finishing the upper floors, this "getaway" helped us focus on upcoming projects.

As we talked on a memorable frosty day, Bob leaned against one of the wood support posts in the basement. With barely a nudge it fell over, crashing to the floor. We both looked at it, then each other; our kingsize waterbed lay directly overhead! Cautiously, I followed Bob around to inspect the other posts. He had plenty of room to insert his hand between the timbers' top and the ceiling. They were all loose. The ceiling was suspended only by interlocking beams hanging on the foundation perimeter. Nothing else supported it.

Our basement is unusual because the dirt floor had been cemented over many times — whenever a previous generation had the whim to pour concrete, it seems. This produced a variety of levels, and oddities such as doors left ajar that were mortared in place. So, it was no surprise to find that although the posts had rotted away at the top, the concrete floor held

marriage was getting a real work out!

Bob rented a jackhammer and set to work digging the 13 holes recommended by the engineer. The plan called for new metal posts to support metal beams placed under the original oak ones. Bob successfully dug seven holes at an amazing speed. When he began the eighth, however, the jackhammer went through an inch of brittle, old concrete and then sank about two feet into something soft.

I had just come down to see how things were going. (Since I was getting pretty big, I wasn't much help with the heavy work.) Perplexed, Bob pulled out the jackhammer. Immediately, I held my nose. The jackhammer was coated with a thick,

"Power-thinning" overgrown foundation plantings with an earthmover.



them upright. Here I had been worried about falling plaster when I should have been concerned about the waterbed crashing into the basement. Bob emptied it to be safe.

A structural engineer worked out a plan to support our sagging house. We had known the floors weren't perfect. Marbles rolling to the middle of the room, or eggs waddling off the kitchen counter were commonplace. Within a week, the engineer mapped out precisely what was needed to level the floors and, more importantly, keep the house from caving in. All other projects — from insulating to electrical work — ceased. The door on the bathroom was finally pitched into one of the dumpsters and replaced with a sheet. This

black goo. The stench was indescribable. My eyes watered, and my nose stung. Chopping away at the thin crust of mortar with a pickax, Bob revealed a circular area in the floor. The black goo in the pit was surrounded by bricks.

Later, we found out that it was a 95-year-old grease pit. Grease and other cooking liquids were poured down a pipe from the second-floor kitchen, and this emptied into the pit. The pipe was later rerouted to the sump pump for water drainage. (Because the drain wasn't plumbed straight down it hadn't made sense to us before, but now we realized this was why the soil lines often backed up.) By 1925, the grease pit had reached its capacity. One of the Conrads then concreted it over. Now, it reappeared, smack dab in the way of one of the supports.

The odor permeated the house. Beth came down to the basement, crying hysterically, so I packed up the kids and took them away from the stench. Luckily, it was mid-March and, though cold, we could open the windows. Still, the smell even fouled the yard.

Bob had just sent off one of our many dumpsters, so he

Here, a shot of the front foyer and newly uncovered stairway (below) taken from our bedroom. Decorative woodwork and oak panelling adds character to the study (right).



Old-House Mechanic

GETTING A GRIP ON HANDLES

by Gordon Bock

THE HEADS OF HAMMERS, sledges, axes, and other striking tools will perform for years before they wear out, but it won't make a difference if their handles quit first. Although steel and fiberglass are seen today, wood has been the handle material for ages — and with good reason. Wood handles are strong

2) Drive the wood plug back out of the eye with a punch or the leftover handle. Set the head upside down on blocks; work on a solid surface.

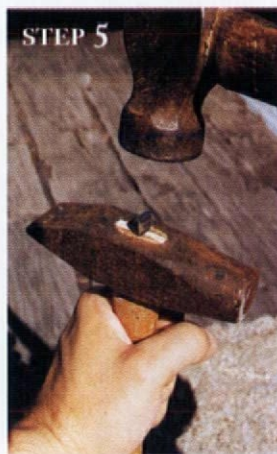
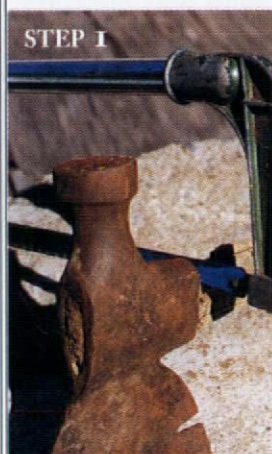
3) Test the new handle for fit. Make sure the head is on rightside-up; the eye is tapered in towards the center from both sides. If the handle is too large, rasp it down carefully at the

release the old handle from the head, slip in the new handle, then tamp the head to secure it. Wood handle care is pretty basic too, and maintains the health of both the tool and the user:

- Never paint a handle. You want to see right away if the wood is split or drying out and soon to break. Most handles never see another finish after the light varnish they get at the factory, but if you want to give yours some TLC, wipe it down occasionally with a mixture of 4 ounces of paraffin shaved and dissolved into 1 pint of mineral spirits (store the mix in a covered can). A dab of shellac or paint on the wedge end will seal the handle and help it remain tight.

- To tighten sound but loose handles tamp the heel (end) on a hard surface to drive the head down. Then, set wedges deeper and cut off excess wood.

- Never work with a loose or damaged handle. A good swing can turn a head that barely moves into a projectile that injures anything — and anyone — in its path.



yet light, and they absorb shock before it reaches your hands. Ideal as they are, wood handles do fatigue and eventually need to be replaced.

You can make your own handles if you like working with a drawknife, but most replacements are store-bought. Stick to hickory and ash, the best handle woods, and look for a handle that's a tight fit so the wood will compress in the head eye. Generally, hammer handles are classified by head weight; axe and sledge handles by length. Even so, don't forget to bring the tool with you when shopping to match up new and old handles. To replace a hammer, axe, or sledge handle:

1) Cut the old handle off just below the head, flush with the metal.

rub marks for a tight fit. Then lubricate the handle with a small amount of grease, soap, or paraffin mix (see below). Drive the new handle home until the head is about 3/4" from the shoulder. The handle should fill the eye and almost shave a little wood.

4) Drive in the new wood wedge flush with the head. This expands the handle to fill the top taper, locking it in place. Drive on a solid surface so the head does not work up the handle. Trim the excess handle wood flush with the head.

5) If the handle also requires a steel wedge, drive it in at right angles or diagonally across the wood wedge.

Picks, mattocks, eye-hoes and similar digging tools are even easier to repair. Simply strike the heel to

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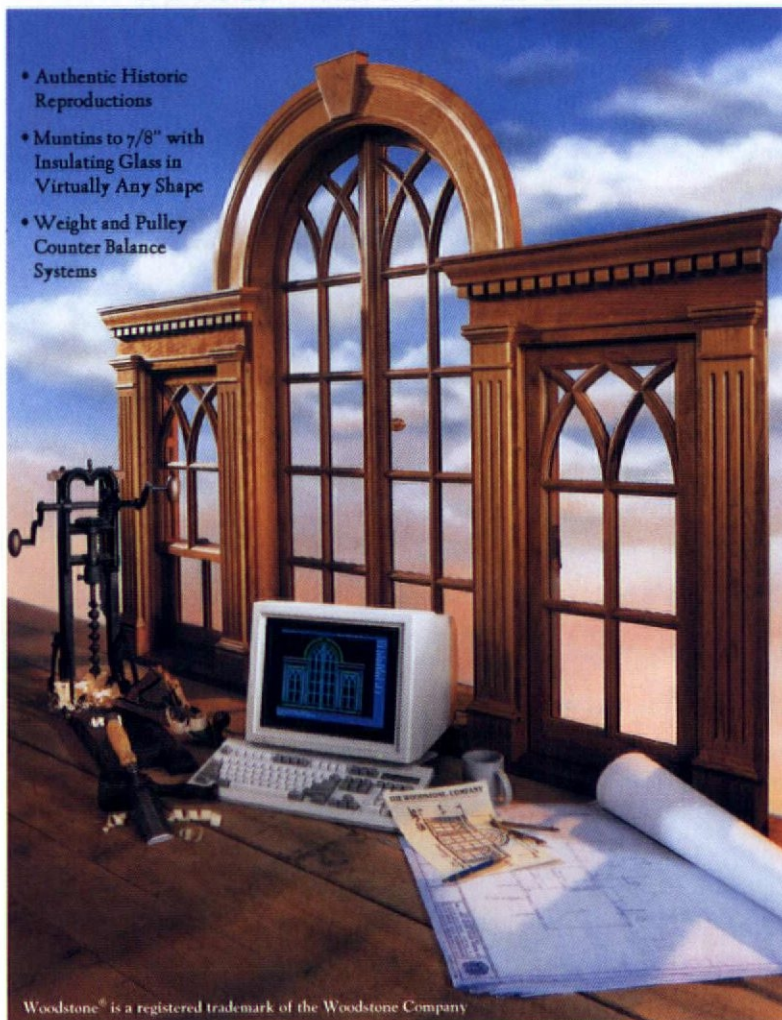
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Restoration Products

COATINGS AND CLEANERS

by Lynn Elliott

It's Easy Being Green

CALLS OFTEN COME IN FROM readers wanting to make old copper look new, or new copper look old. Here's a solution for the latter:



The Patina Antiquing Kit contains enough solution to cover 10 square feet.

the Patina Antiquing Kit from Modern Options. It contains everything needed to create an authentic patina finish on paintable surfaces, including Patina Green and Copper Topper. When sprayed on metals, such as copper, brass, or bronze, Patina Green creates an instant verdigris finish. For non-metal applications, Copper Topper, a liquid-copper solution, acts as a metallic basecoat for Patina Green. Used together, wood, plas-

ter, fabric, masonry, and almost anything else can be patinated. The kit also includes Metal Master, Primo Primer/Sealer, bristle brushes, foam brushes, natural sponges, an emery cloth, latex gloves, and complete instructions. The Patina Antiquing kit costs \$25. For information, contact Modern Options, 2325 Third St. #339, Dept. OHJ, San Francisco, CA 94107; (415) 252-5580.

Peel-Proof Paint

PEELING PAINT AND mildew can be a problem in moisture-prone rooms, such as the bathroom. Perma-White Bathroom Wall & Ceiling Paint from Zinsser & Co. is formulated to prevent mildew growth and blistering. It is a white, water-based coating that can be tinted to match any color, and is self-priming. Available in a washable and scrubbable satin or semi-gloss finish, it comes in quarts, gallons, and 5-gallon pails and can be found at most paint, hardware, and home center outlets.



Moisture-resistant Perma-White Bathroom paint won't chip, peel, or blister.

Zinsser also offers other useful items, such as the DIF enzyme-based wallpaper stripper and the multi-dimensional Paper Tiger, which scores wallpaper without damaging walls. The paint ranges in price from \$15 to \$30 per gallon. For a list of distributors, contact Wm. Zinsser & Co., Inc., 39 Belmont Dr., Dept. OHJ, Somerset, NJ 08875; (908) 469-4367.

Go, Spot, Go

AN INTERESTING new way to restore water stained walls and ceilings has come to our attention. Spot-N-Not removes most water stains from white (not color) painted ceilings, textured ceilings, and drywall. After being sprayed directly on the spot, the stain disappears as the chemical has opportunity to work. The solution of bleaching agents and emulsifiers will not change the paint's finish, so there's no need to repaint. A quart of Spot-N-Not costs \$19.95 plus \$3.55 shipping. For information, write Tomark Industries, Inc., Box 216, Dept. OHJ, Bethany, OK 73008; (405) 495-1633.

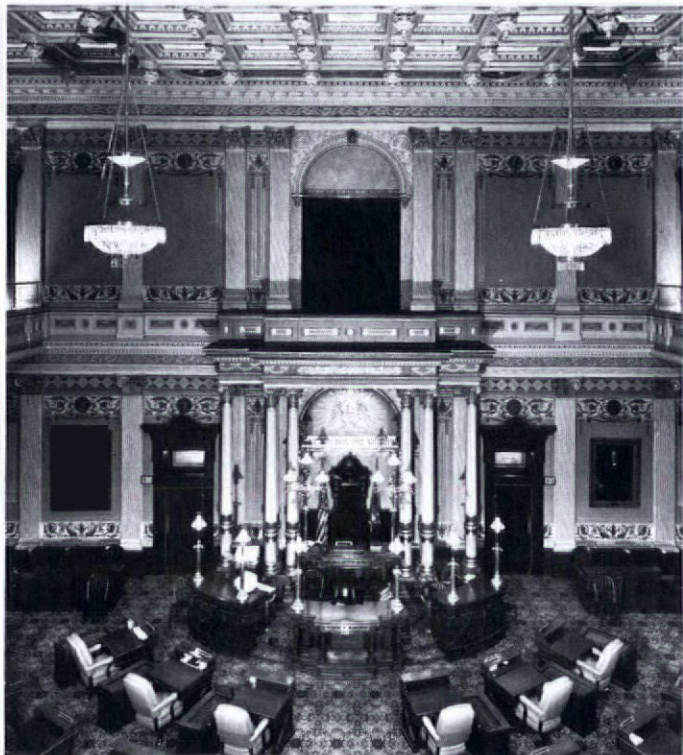


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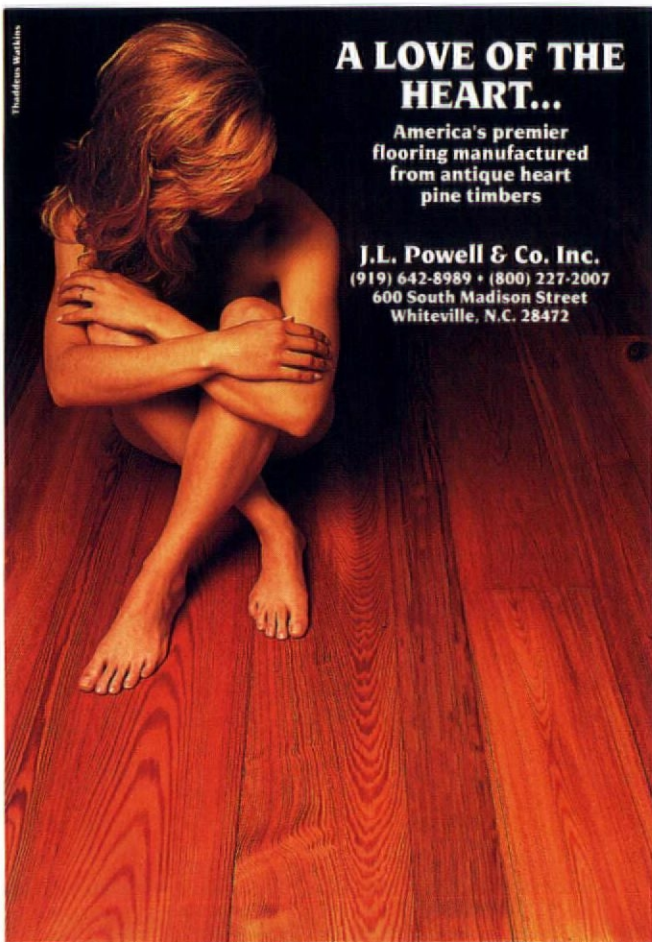


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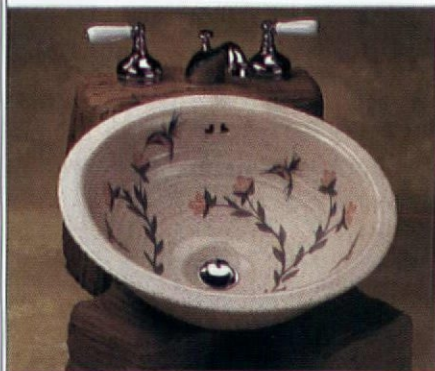
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GRANITE LAKE POTTERY HAS A line of stoneware sinks that are made individually on a potter's wheel and decorated by hand. Crafted with thick walls and strong rims, these heavy-duty sinks are fired to a stoneware temperature for durability. They are cleaned easily and are considered self rimming because the basin's edge rests on the vanity top. The round sinks usually range in size from 14" to 16" in diameter, but custom sizes are also available. Designs



This pottery sink in the Victorian Garland design also comes with matching bath accessories.

include blue and pink spongeware, Victorian Garland, and Pine Bough. Matching decorative tiles and bathroom accessories, such as soap dispensers, toothbrush holders, and tumblers, are available. Offered with a five-year warranty, the pottery sinks cost from \$120 to \$410, depending upon size. For information, contact Granite Lake Pottery, Inc., P.O. Box 236, Dept. OHJ, Munsonville, NH 03457; (603) 847-9908.



A luxurious addition to any bathroom: The 12" Country French showerhead in polished brass.

A Soothing Shower

HERE'S A REPRODUCTION OF A turn-of-the-century showerhead with an unusual feature: a self-contained reservoir. Originally found in a French villa, the Country French showerhead's reservoir creates a gentle spray of water. The corrosion-proof, stainless steel face has 450 openings in a pattern large enough to cover the entire body. The 12" showerhead is available in chrome or brass and is installed easily with the ceiling/pipe adapter. The Country French showerhead costs \$179 for brass and \$215 for chrome; the ceiling/pipe adapter is \$49.99. For information, contact JB Products, Inc. 500 N. Oakwood Rd., Dept. OHJ, Lake Zurich, IL 60047; (708) 438-9100.

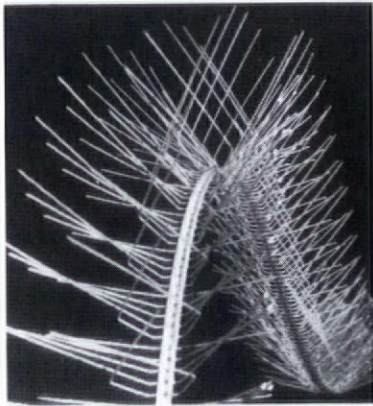
14K Faucets

ALL THAT GLITTERS IS GOLD in Hardware + Plus' new line of gold-plated faucets and fittings. Imported from Britain, the collection has been made in the same styles since 1901 and includes Victorian, Edwardian, and Art Deco basin sets, bath

filler sets, and telephone hand showers. Finished in antique gold or chrome, the taps are made of solid brass with old-style rubber washer valves or, in the Gaslight line, ceramic disk valves. The classic decorative patterns on the porcelain knobs are sealed in a scratch-resistant surface. A second collection offers lacquered brass, chrome, or antique gold accessories, such as soap and sponge baskets, tilting soap dispensers, hand rails, and toothbrush and tumbler holders. For the faucets, prices range from \$250 to \$1,000; the accessories cost from \$10 to \$100. For information, contact Hardware + Plus, Inc., 701 E. Kingsley Rd., Dept. OHJ, Garland, TX 75041; (214) 271-0319.

The Edwardian-style bath-shower mixer set with porcelain knobs is from the Gaslight Collection.





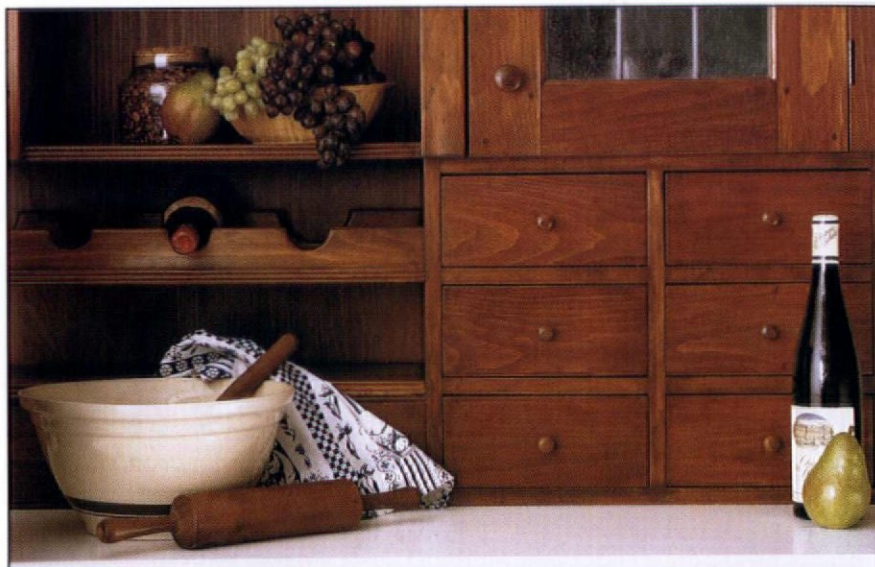
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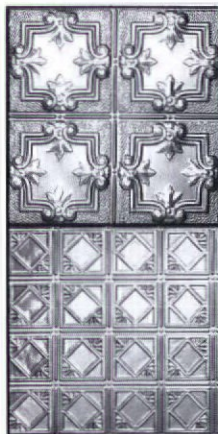
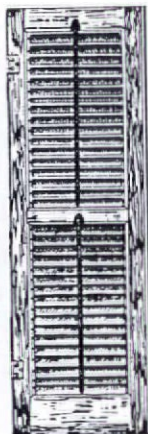
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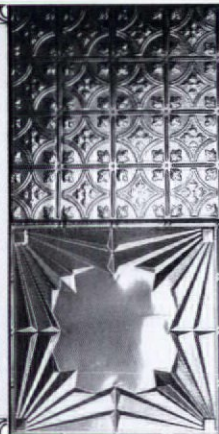
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Mail-order plans have a long history in shaping the residential architecture of the country. Of the thousands of house plans available today, few exhibit good design and a grasp of historical proportion and detail. So, in response to requests from OHJ readers, the editors have "done the homework": We've hand-picked plans. In each issue, we offer the most attractive, authentic, and buildable of the historical designs, from all periods of American architectural history. Let us know what plans you're looking for.

You can order actual blueprints for all the houses featured. These plans are designed to conform to national building-code standards. However, the requirements of your site and local building codes mean you'll probably need the assistance of a professional designer (your builder may qualify) or an architect.

For the houses shown in this issue, blueprints include:

- Foundation plan for basement or crawl space. (Crawl space plans can easily be adapted for full basements by your builder.)
- Detailed floor plans showing dimensions for framing. Some may also have detailed layouts and show the location of electrical and plumbing components.
- Interior elevations are included in some plans, showing interior views of kitchen, bath, fireplace, built-ins, and cabinet designs.
- Building cross sections:

cornice, fireplace, and cabinet sections when needed to help your builder understand major interior details.

- Framing diagrams that show layouts of framing pieces and their locations for roof, first and second floors.
- Energy-saving specs, where noteworthy, are included, such as vapor barriers, insulated sheathing, caulking and foam-sealant areas, batt insulation, and attic exhaust ventilators.

Why order multiple sets? If you're serious about building, you'll need a set

each for the general contractor, mortgage lender, electrician, plumber, heating/ventilating contractor, building permit department, other township use or interior designer, and one for yourself. Ordering the 8-set plan saves money and additional shipping charges.

Other notes: (1) Plans are copyrighted, and they are printed for you when you order. Therefore, they are not refundable.

If you order additional sets of the same plan within 30 days of your original order, you can purchase them for

\$15 each. (2) Mirror-reverse plans are useful when the house would fit the site better "flopped." For this you need one set of mirror-reverse plans for the contractor; but because the reverse plans have backwards lettering and dimensions, all other sets should be ordered right-reading. (3) Heating and air-conditioning layouts are not included. You need a local mechanical contractor to size and locate the proper unit for your specific conditions of climate and site.

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ORNAMENTAL QUEEN ANNE



HERE'S A HOUSE PLAN FOR TRUE LOVERS OF EXUBERANT Victorian design. Along with a turned-post porch, the first storey features a bay window capped by an arch of ornamental woodwork. On the second storey, the gabled bays are adorned with sunbursts, finials, corner brackets, and a gargoyle. A grand turret-oriel window on the corner is the finishing touch.

A perfect house for entertaining, the foyer opens to an impressive view of the grand staircase and cozy nook — a gracious place to greet guests before ushering them into the parlor. The dining room, overlooking the arbor, is adjacent to an efficient kitchen with a breakfast bar. Upstairs, the master suite with private bath and walk-in closet has a five-window nook that offers a sunny spot to relax.



Plan HH-13-VI

Cost	\$260
Set of 5	\$320
Set of 8	\$360
Square Footage	2,828'
First floor	1,472'
Second floor	1,356'
Ceiling Height	
First floor	9'
Second floor	8'
Overall Dimensions	
Width	50'
Depth	66'

GREEK REVIVAL GARAGE

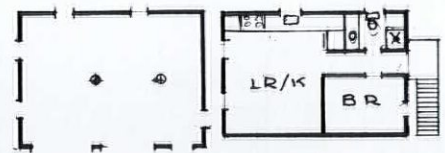
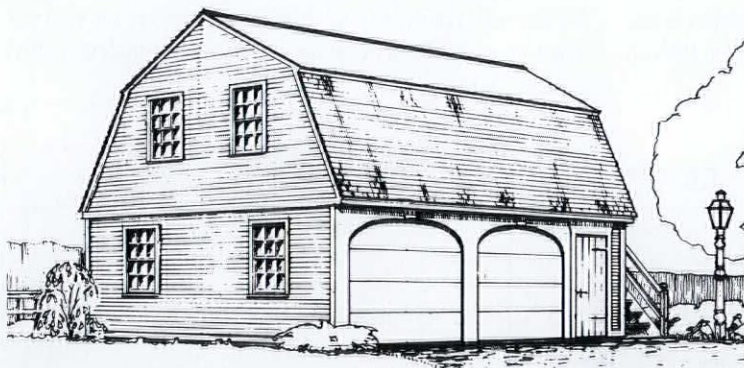


Plan HR-49-GA	
Cost	\$50
Square Footage	1,175'
First floor	750'
Second floor	425'
Ceiling Height	
First floor	9'
Second floor	8'
Overall Dimensions	
Width	30'
Depth	25'

THE SIMPLE, CLASSIC DETAILS, SUCH AS THE RAKING CORNICE AND gable end returns, on this two-car garage would compliment any Greek Revival-style home. On the first floor, there is a extra storage space with an outside entry for bikes and gardening equipment. The spacious second floor, led to by an interior stairway, is a good place for a workshop, office, or guest room. Note the arbored entrance leading into the large carport.



GAMBREL ROOF COACH HOUSE



THIS COLONIAL REVIVAL-STYLE PLAN NOT ONLY HAS ENOUGH space for two cars and a storage area on the first floor, but the gambrel roof provides room for an income-making apartment on the second floor. Accessible by an outside stairway, the apartment has a 12' x 8' 6" bedroom, a compact bath with shower, and a 13' x 17' living room/kitchen. This 20' x 25' space could also make an ideal office, studio, or workroom.

Plan CD-16-GA	
Cost	\$50
Square Footage	572'
Overall Dimensions	
Width	22'
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Real Estate



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SANTA BARBARA, CA — 1892 Queen Anne. Corner lot. Walk to downtown and Mission. Extensive restoration. 4 BRs, 2 baths. Virtually solid redwood, including door/window trim and open staircase. Original handrolled/stained glass. Call Penny Carrick; (805) 969-1133.

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PORTSMOUTH, NH — Captain Daniel Fernald House in historic district. 1 hr. Boston/Portland. 14 room fully restored gambrel, 9 fireplaces. Panelling, double summer beams, custom kitchen w/walk-in pantry. 2 full and 2-1/2 baths. Secluded perennial garden & 3-car parking. \$390,000. (603) 436-8987.

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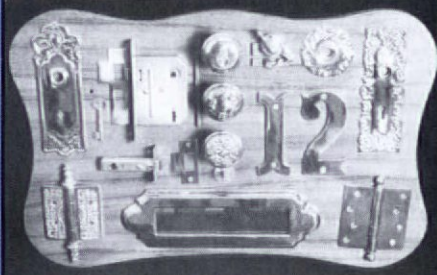
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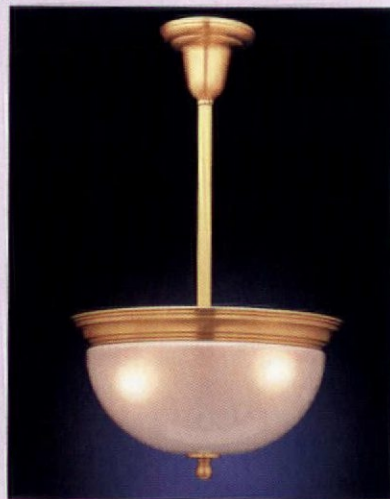
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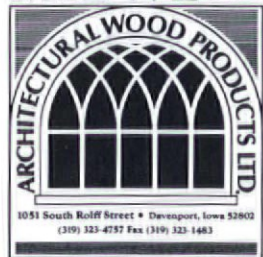
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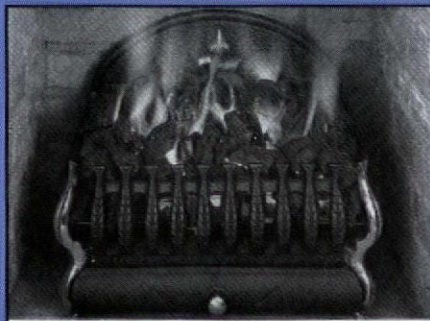
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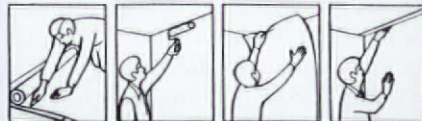


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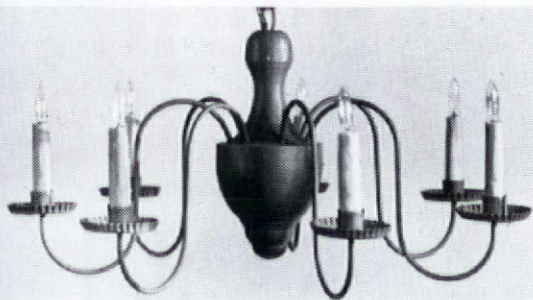


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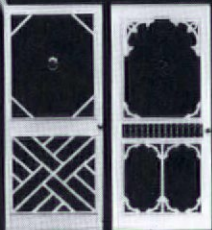
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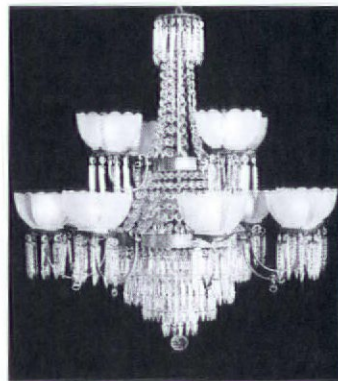
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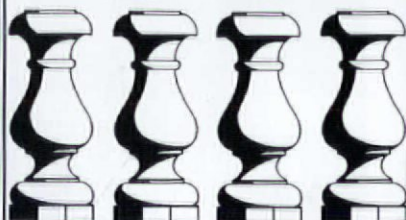
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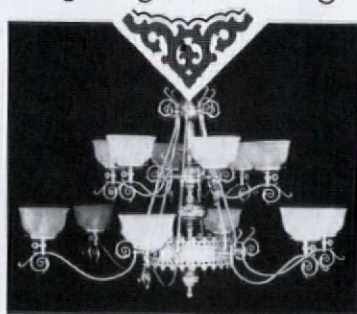
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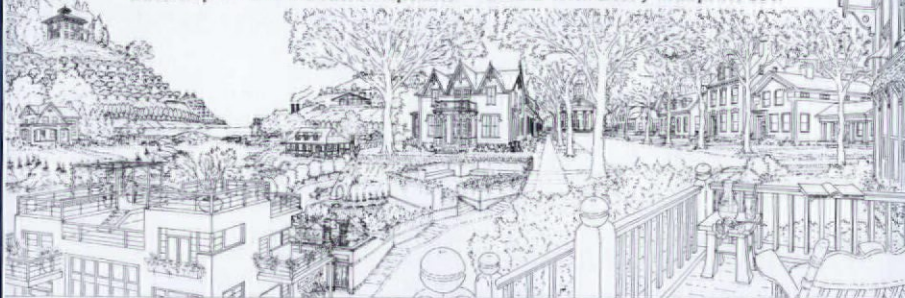
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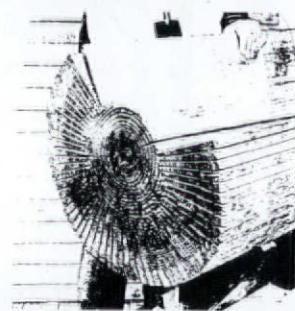


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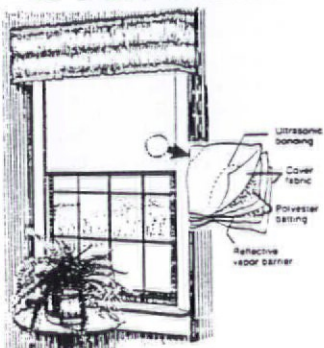
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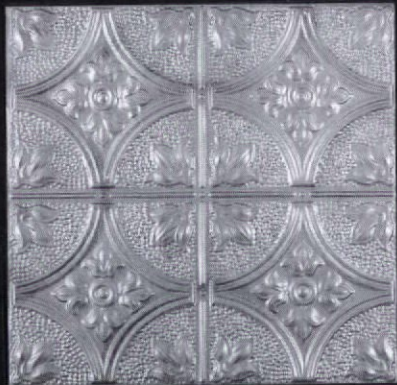
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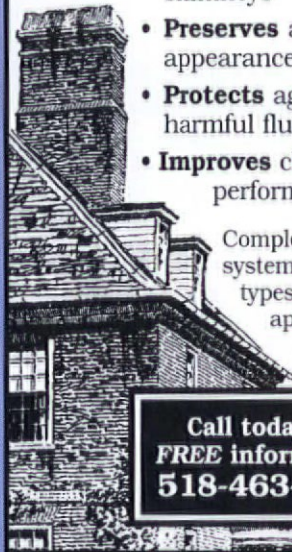
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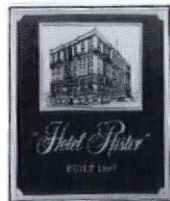
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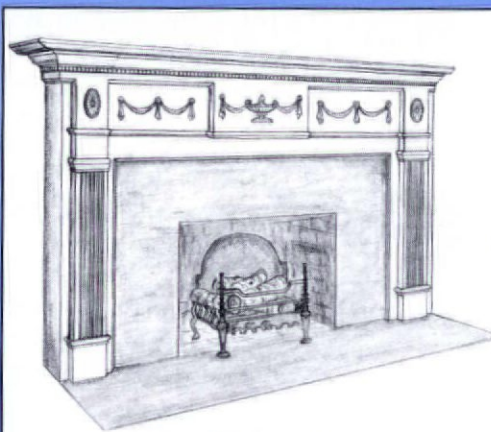
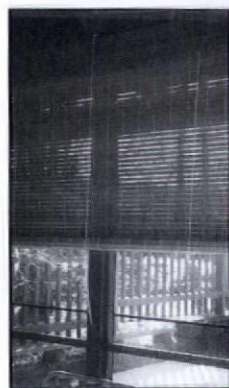
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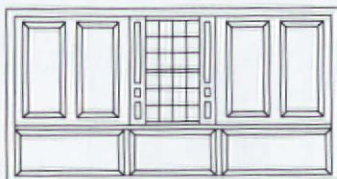
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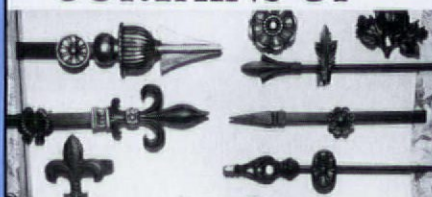


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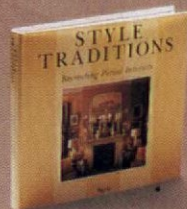
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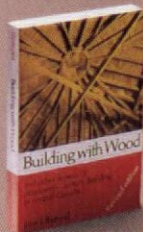
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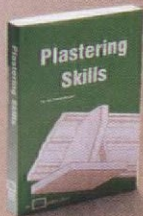
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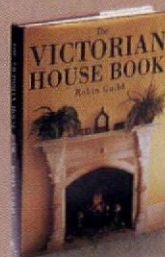
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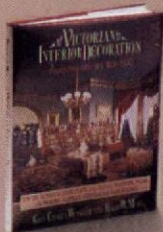
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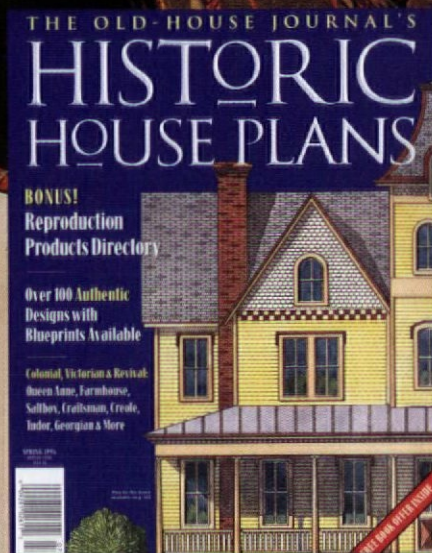
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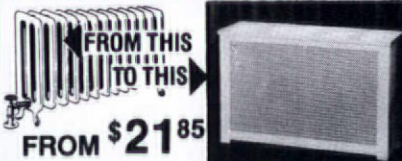


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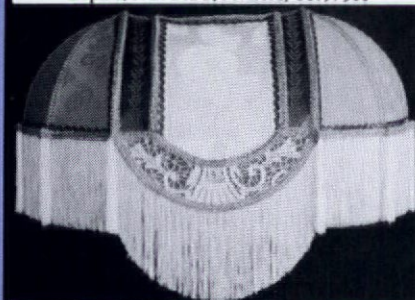
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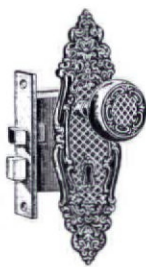
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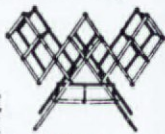
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A turn-of-the-century archival photograph shows Stephen Mills's adobe home that has since been demolished.

MICHIGAN'S GREEK REVIVAL ADOBE HOUSES

OLD-HOUSE LOVERS HAVE LONG admired a collection of early Greek Revival Adobe Houses in Washtenaw County, Michigan. Built of unfired clay, these adobe houses were constructed between 1840 and 1865 by Stephen Mills, who was originally from Phelps, New York.

By using adobe, Mills not only saved lumber and transportation costs, but put to use the county's sticky clay deposits. Earthen blocks, made of clay mixed with straw and sometimes horsehair, were laid in a fire-proof, double-wall configuration with dead-air spaces. Adobe's vulnerable to the elements, so Mills sealed the exteriors with stucco, which were then scored to resemble the stone blocks of Greek temples.

The 1½-storey main block of the Greek Revival Adobe House consists of a parlor, dining room, stair hall, and three bedrooms across the back. Two kitchen wings



Note the stuccoed exterior of this Greek Revival Adobe House (above) in Washtenaw County, Michigan. The typical three-part floor plan (right) included the main section with bedrooms, the adjoining kitchen wing, and rear wing with wood shed.

create a distinctive three-part plan that is the building signature of Mills.

No one knows why Mills built adobe houses in Michigan, but there are theories. First, he might have used earthen masonry because the area lacked pine or other soft-

woods fit for building. It's also possible that Daniel Penfield's "mud" house in Phelps, New York (see "Old-House Living in a Mud House," January/February 1992) was the inspiration for the houses. Mills had returned to Phelps in 1833 and spent two years learning masonry.

Whatever their origins, they are sturdy examples of vernacular architecture in the Greek Revival style that swept the country before the Civil War.

— MARY M. CULVER
Ann Arbor, Mich.

