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The American House—

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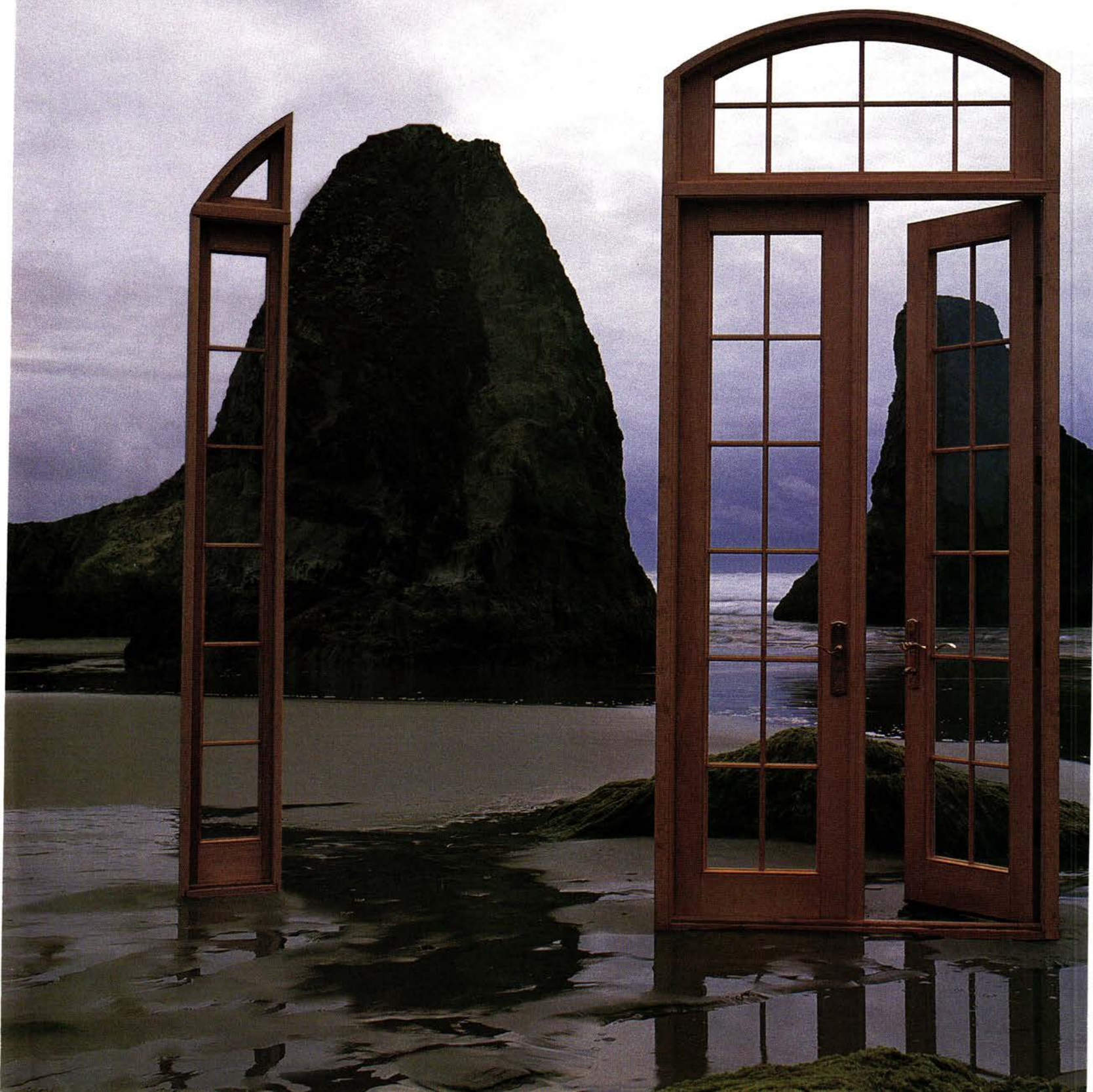
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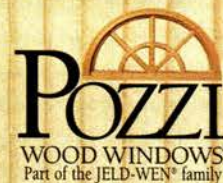
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C O N T E N T S

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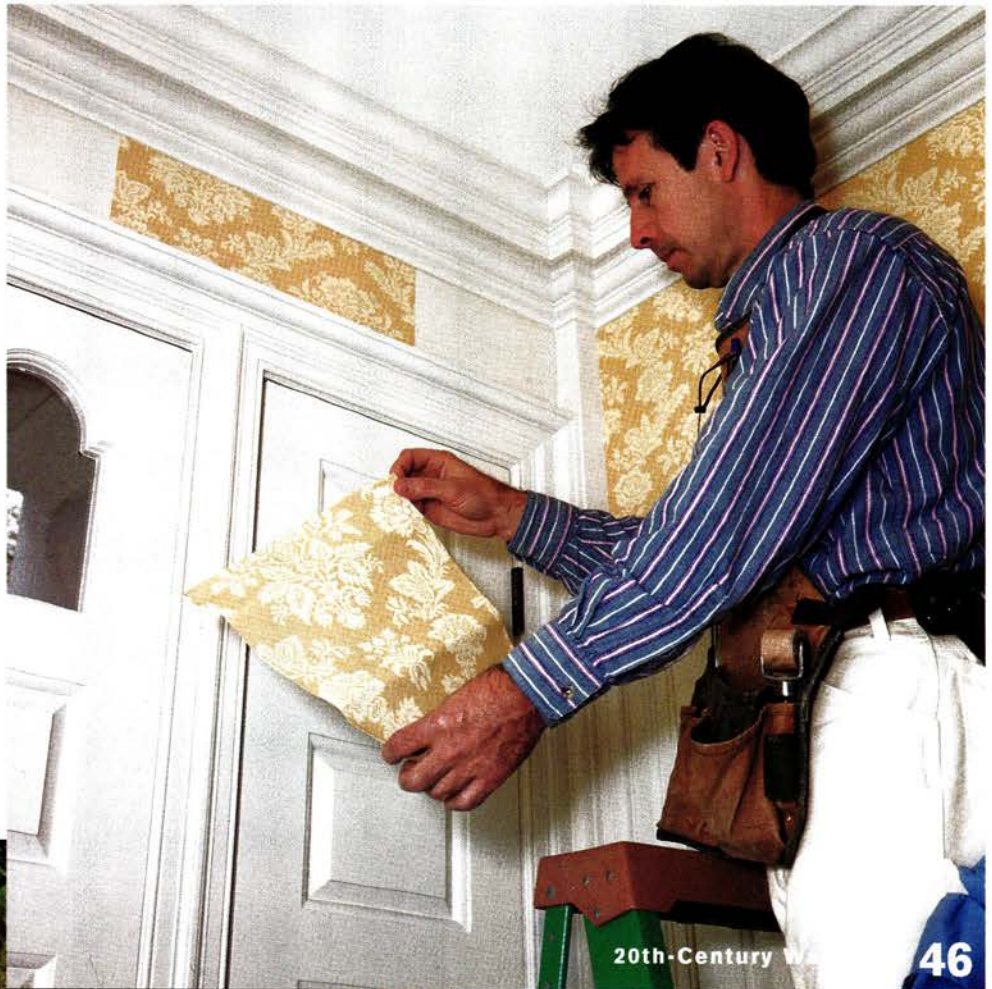
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40 A Tale of Two Doors

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54 Enemies in the Earth

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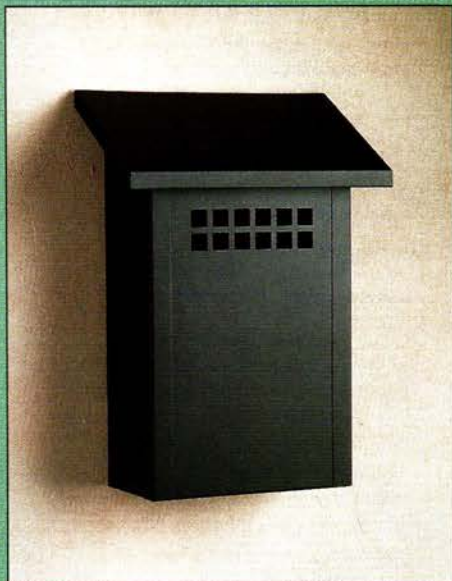
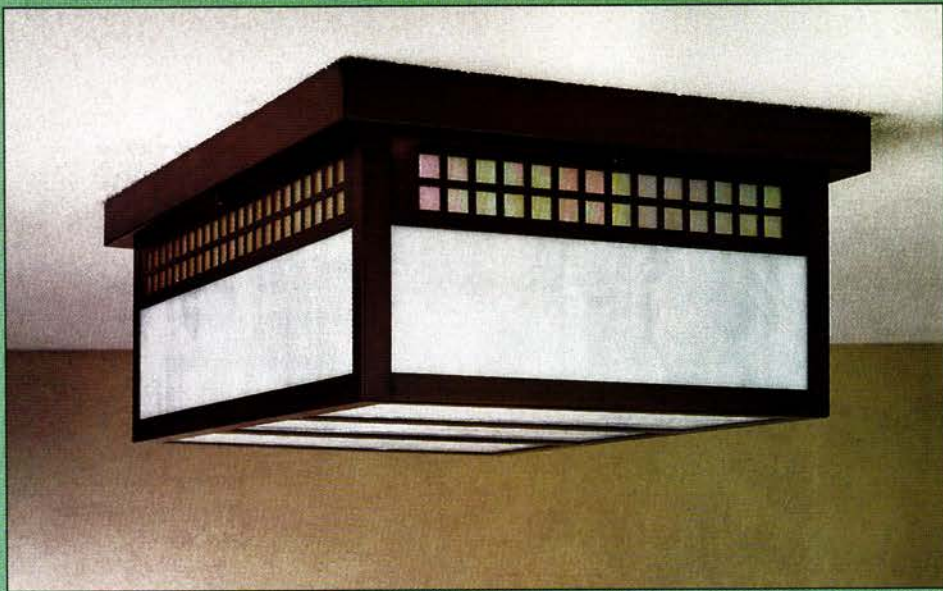
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Mid-Century Musings

IN A MATTER OF DAYS, the much talked about turn of the millennium will be upon us. The impact is largely numerical, of course, computer programming glitches notwithstanding. However, dates have special meaning for old-house folks and January 1, 2000, is no ordinary birthday.

Given that 50 years is the general age that defines an old house, the roll of the century mark brings home the reality that buildings built in 1950—the dawn of the decade when Modernism came into full swing—are undeniably historic. Most preservationists have been sounding the call of the recent past for well over a decade now, those forward-looking buildings from the 1930s and '40s. Indeed, OHJ has followed suit with our forays into the post-war land of ranch and split-level houses. What's ironic though is that countless mid-20th-century houses, specifically designed to emphasize clean, sheer lines, absence of ornament, and no reference to the past, are now in the same group, if you will, with elaborate Queen Anne, Beaux Arts, and Colonial Revival houses—the very kind of building they sought to break with.

Theory aside, the nature of mid-century houses represents a new era of challenges for restorers. On a practical level, these buildings are not at all the same as those that came just before them, and the differences are surprising:

DIFFERENT CONSTRUCTION—The call

for quicker house construction in larger quantities radically changed the way houses have been built since the late 1940s. Besides being smaller, they are thinner with far fewer spaces in walls and attics—not to be overlooked when you're trying to hide new mechanical systems in an older building.

DIFFERENT MATERIALS—We also are just beginning to learn how mid-century materials age, and how they can be restored. Unlike bricks and mortar, resins and plastics do not have a track record of centuries. The good news is many of the building materials used in mid-century houses—most wallboards, for example—are still with us and readily available. Not everything, though. Try to replace an ogee-shaped asphalt tab shingle colored with a blend of blue green and red, out of production since the 1960s.

DIFFERENT LOOK—Houses of centuries past often base their appearance, if not their style, on applied decorative features. In many mid-century houses, the structure is the finish. The surface of the building is the look. Poured concrete is a perfect example.

Mid-20th century house restoration promises to make the 21st century interesting, and it's bound to be a lot of fun.

Gordon Bock

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TEL (978) 283-3200
FAX (978) 283-4629
SUBSCRIPTION INQUIRIES (800) 234-3797

PUBLISHER John A. Pagliaro
SENIOR PRODUCTION MANAGER Cathy Underwood
DIRECTOR OF RETAIL SALES Chuck Tripp
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CIRCULATION MANAGEMENT ProCirc Inc.
READER SERVICE SUPERVISOR Clare Sullivan
MARKETING MANAGER Alison Goldfind
BUSINESS OFFICES Hanley-Wood, LLC
One Thomas Circle, NW
Washington, DC 20005
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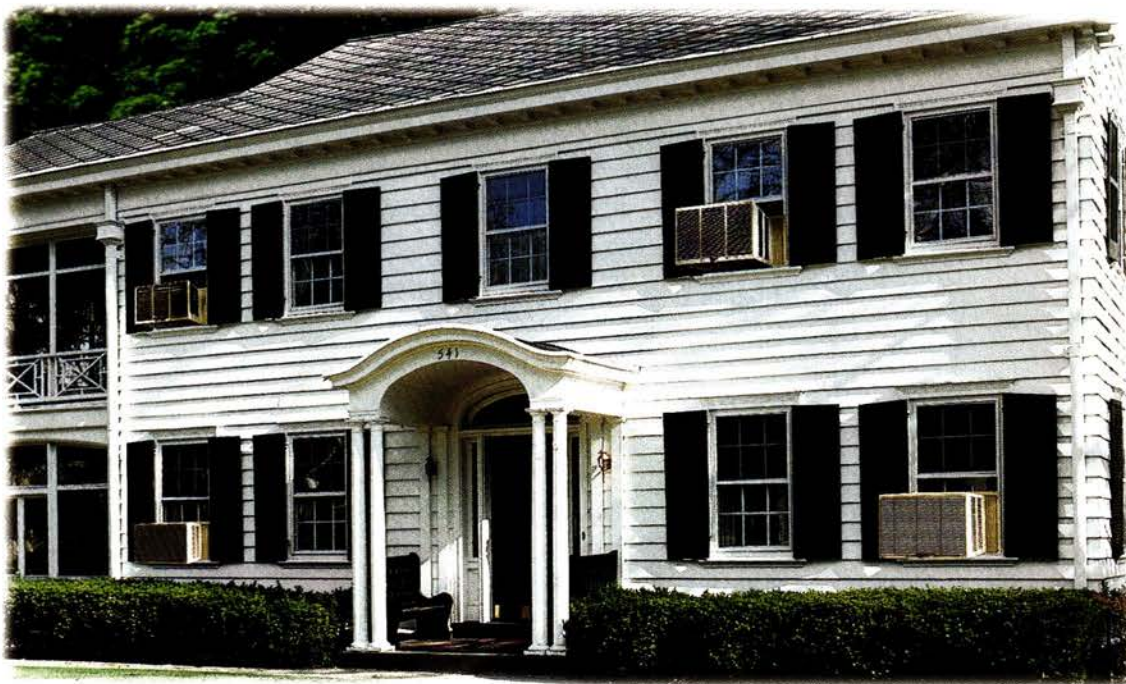
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STEEL APPEAL

THANK YOU for sending me a copy of the Nov./Dec. '99 issue of *Old-House Journal*. I found the article about steel homes very interesting, and I was quite surprised to see a photo of my house and me included.

The magazine is most attractive and I shall look forward to future issues.

—EDNA MAY
Troy, Ohio

Our photo of Ms. May and the 1938 Hobart House was photographed by Ty Greenlees of the Dayton Daily News. —THE EDITORS.

NOTABLE BRAGDON

MARY ELLEN POLSON'S excellent article ["Aglow in the Dark," Nov.-Dec. '99] on lighting [missed a chance to identify] Claude Bragdon, FAIA, as an eminent Arts and Crafts architect. The event she mentions was one of several "Festival of Song and Light" performances held in New York State, which Bragdon helped to produce with Harry Barnhart.

Several of Claude Bragdon's buildings remain in Rochester. Outstanding is The First Universalist Church. Others are the Rochester Chamber of Commerce, the Maplewood Branch of the YMCA, and a number of residences.

The [reference to Bragdon] becomes more telling to readers when they learn that Bragdon abandoned the practice of architecture in 1923 for the theatre and Broadway. His exquisite designs for the Walter Hampden production of "Cyrano de Bergerac" were well known. He also wrote treatises on ornament, available in larger libraries and occasionally in the rare book market.

—CHARLES N. CLUTZ, AIA
CNC Associates
Hyde Park, Mass.

THE PAST IS PRESENT

IN "HOW DO HOUSES GROW?" [July/Aug. '99], Mark Alan Hewitt contends that "designing additions or renovations to historic houses demands knowledge of both architectural history and general principles of formal transformation." I guess this only applies to the truly old, for in his own work he felt "challenged to reform" a forward looking mid-20th century ranch house he found

dull (p. 44). By remodeling it to look like a late-19th-century Shingle style cottage, he gave it a vaguely "historic" style that speaks mainly of today's architects' dream of the past.

One doesn't mind the romanticizing: that's just what designers in the Ital-

ianate, Gothic Revival and even Shingle style periods were doing. One simply resents doing so in the name of correcting for "appropriate" forms and styles, as if a house, like the ranch, can have no place in Long Island's newest "summer cottage" leisure-land. Mr. Hewitt just doesn't like the recent past, so he erases it. Fine, but please don't then link it to preservation or "maintaining the distinctive public visage."

—HELI MELTSNER
Cambridge, Mass.

The original ranch house, altered by client directive, was a poorly constructed eyesore on a street noted for its late-19th-century shingled cottages. The article did not show the degree to which some original features, such as roof pitches, are retained. Moreover, this design, unlike other examples in the article, was intended to be a substantially new building, in a traditional idiom still vital today.

I have written sympathetically about the wonderful and varied architecture of




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America's suburbs in my books and articles, and worked for their preservation here in New Jersey. As a preservationist I value the recent as well as the distant past. As an architect I learn important lessons from contemporary as well as ancient masters. Nothing in my article suggested otherwise.

—MARK ALAN HEWITT, AIA
Bernardville, New Jersey

SEEING DOUBLE

ENCLOSED IS A PHOTO of the Victorian-era house I bought two years ago. We've raised it and replaced the foundation. The roof is new. I have \$22,000 worth of windows on order. The plumbing is all new as is the electrical service. On page 130 of the Sept./Oct. '99 issue ["Remuddling"] there's a picture of a double-bowfront house. I would love to know where the house is;

it is almost identical to mine.

—GARY HOBENSACK
Galt, Calif.

The "unremuddled" 1872 double-bowfront Victorian shown in the Sept./Oct. '99 issue is on Pacific Avenue in the Pacific Heights neighborhood of San Francisco. —ED.

DEAR MR. BOCK

THANK YOU FOR the magazine. I like it because it tells about things I haven't heard about.

—MATTHEW CORRIVEAU (age 10)
Storrs, Conn.

OLD-HOUSE VETERAN

MINE IS A FAMILY place on which I've been working since the early 1960s. Part of it is

log tavern from the 18th century; part clapboard cottages joined to it in the 1830s; the most recent flourish a bathroom addition for me. I've learned over the years that sanity returns when you realize you will never finish. Guests have given me a pillow inscribed, "The only thing that works in an old house is the owner."

I am saddened (as a B & B owner) over the diminishing number of "real" places. I review B & Bs for our state association. I have seen so many museum settings and stage sets but very few places with continuity and family history, furniture and pictures and books—memories. My memories go back to the 1930s, when my family weathered the Depression here.

At times I've thought of submitting an article but the quiet continuity here lacks the drama and flair of your recon-



struction/restoration/salvage accounts.

—JEN RANDOLPH BRUNS
Warm Springs, Virginia

PROPER I.D.

THE TRIPLE-SASH window shown on page 42 of "The Window Decision" [Nov./Dec. '99] was made by Marvin Windows and Doors. (800) 346-5128.

BOOMERANG NO MORE

THOSE OF YOU begging the Formica Corp. for information on the Boomerang pattern ["Laminates We Love," Sept./Oct. '99] can stop calling. Unfortunately, the classic colored rubber band design was recently phased out. But the company that gave us Starburst does offer a line of other retro patterns. Contact Formica Corp., (513) 786-3400, www.formica.com.

GOOD COMPANY TOWN

I ENJOYED READING about company towns [Nov./Dec. '99] and would like to share some history of a company town in Ohio. A Columbus businessman, Peter Hayden, saw the prospects of a settlement known as Hocking Furnace and purchased it in 1853, renaming it Haydenville. The company houses were designed using samples of the different bricks, blocks, and tiles from Hayden's Mining and Manufacturing Company. The United Methodist Church was built in 1893 of different types of block and brick. Also surviving is the Round House, built of silo tiles in 1911 as housing for immigrant workers. The Haydenville Community remained a



company town until the early 1960s when the houses were sold to individuals. Many are still owned by people that grew up here. Haydenville was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1971.

—NYLA VOLLMER
Haydenville, Ohio

Deb & John Baier
Their house has been the talk of the neighborhood since 1994.

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Unexpected Love Story *by Mary Ellen Polson*

PHOTOGRAPHS BY DAN FRANCIS/MARDAN PHOTOGRAPHY

SOMETIMES AN OLD HOUSE brings people together in unpredictable ways—and keeps them together beyond all expectations. When Peter Michael asked long-time friend and interior designer Donna Barr to tour the 1888 Albert W. Coffin House, a Queen Anne he'd just bought in a historic Indianapolis neighborhood, they ended up holding hands.

Not, at first, for romantic reasons. The house was in terrible shape and had been boarded up. "I literally saw the house by flashlight beam," says Donna. "Peter held onto my hand so I wouldn't trip over all the boards that were covering the holes in the floor."

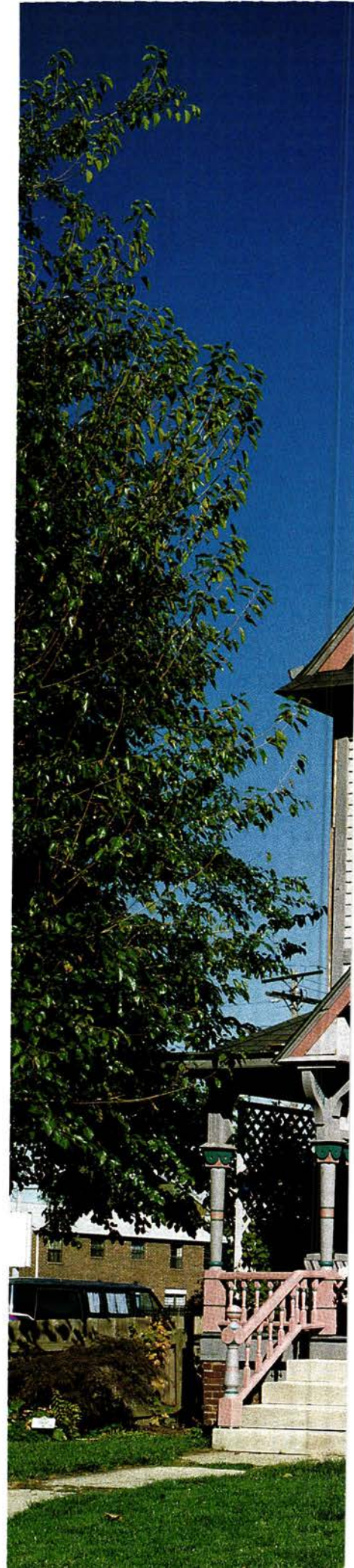
Undaunted by the house's condition, Donna recommended an architect, and together she and Peter started on a plan to renovate the house. "In the process of working together, we realized that we were something more than just friends," Donna says. "He fell in love with the house

first, and me second."

Within two years, Donna and Peter's once-professional relationship had blossomed into engagement. The house, naturally, hadn't come nearly as far. Still, Donna and Peter were looking forward to sharing the house that had brought them together. That's when Peter reluctantly decided to fire a part-time worker. Although the man had helped on a few exterior jobs,

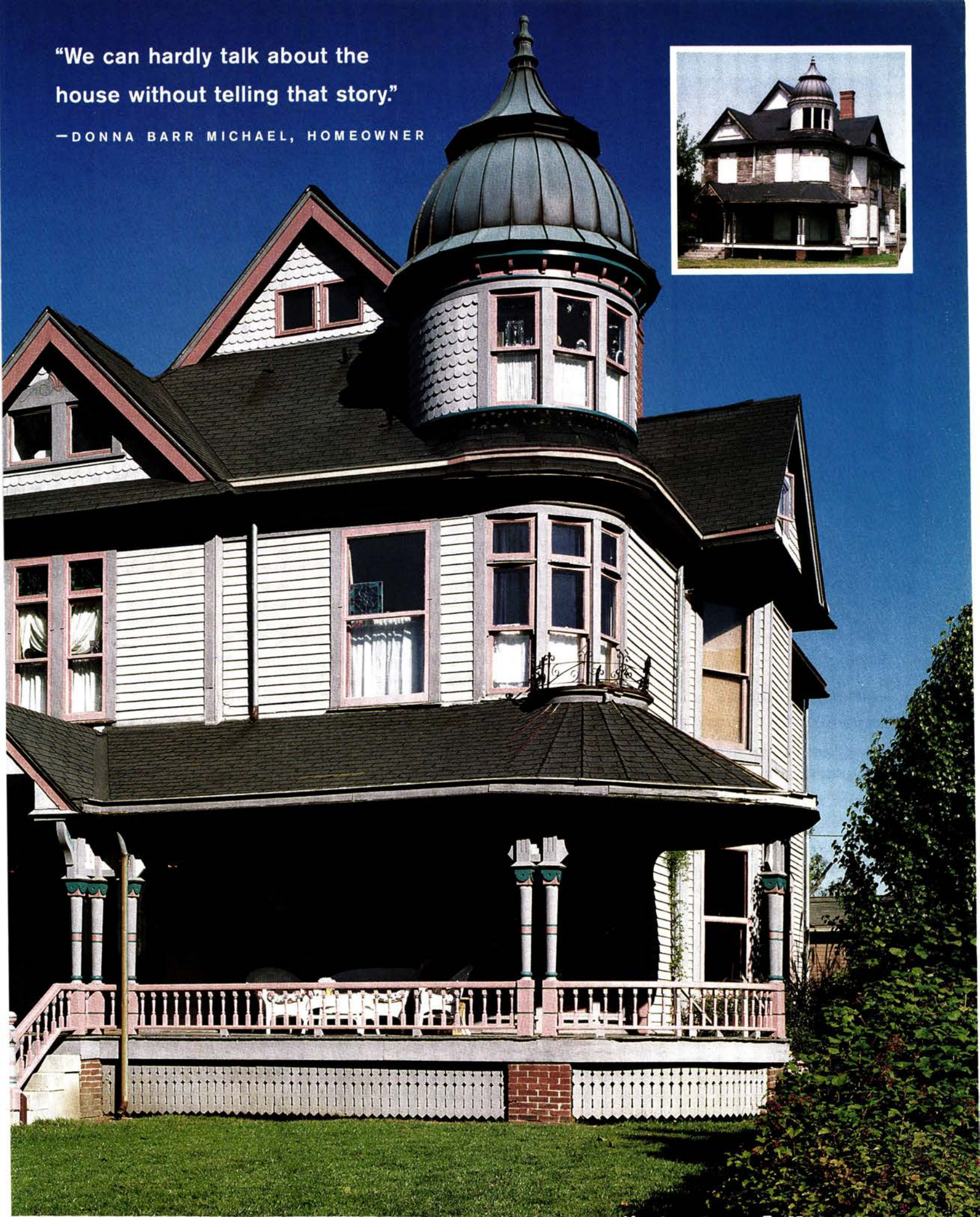
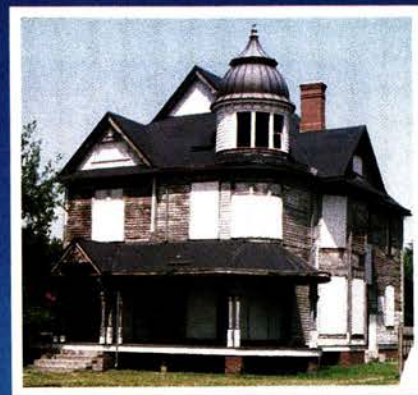


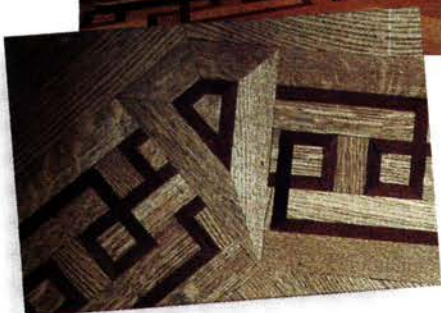
Peter and Donna Barr Michael decided to stick with their Queen Anne home in spite of traumatic events that took place there five years ago.



"We can hardly talk about the
house without telling that story."

—DONNA BARR MICHAEL, HOMEOWNER





Clockwise from top left: Only a few pieces of window trim remained; most has been remilled to match. Peter's great-great grandmother watched the smoke from the Battle of Antietam from the rocker. Repainting the exterior was an extended family affair. High on the scaffolding, Peter's 80-year-old mother paints a tower window. A detail of the Greek key inlaid flooring pattern.



QUEEN ANNE

OWNERS: Peter and Donna Barr Michael

LOCATION: Indianapolis, Indiana

DATE OF HOUSE: 1888

ON-GOING PROJECTS: Re-creating missing moulding, piece by piece.

OF INTEREST: When Peter spotted the spectacular Victorian chandelier that now hangs in the dining room, he thought he'd found a bargain in spite of its missing globes. "Peter had missed a decimal point on the price tag," Donna says. "But it was already out the door."

he was a drifter with a drinking problem.

"About a month later, he showed up at the door with a gun," says Peter. The drifter forced Peter inside the house and tied him up. Donna arrived two hours later.

The man forced the couple to withdraw money at a bank machine and then, holding a concealed gun on Donna, to buy a bottle of liquor at a package store. Then he brought them back to the house. "We were both blindfolded and tied up for a long time," Peter continues. "He kept on telling us he was going to kill us—burn down the house with us inside."

With Peter tied up downstairs and the stereo blasting, the drifter took Donna upstairs, apparently intending to rape her. He began to drink. When he told Donna to get up and close the door, she fled, slamming the door behind her and racing down the stairs.

The front door only unlocked with a key, so Donna broke out a window. "There just happened to be a police car out here on 16th Street," Peter says. "The officers heard the glass breaking and came over. She was screaming. They

kicked the door in, and got her out."

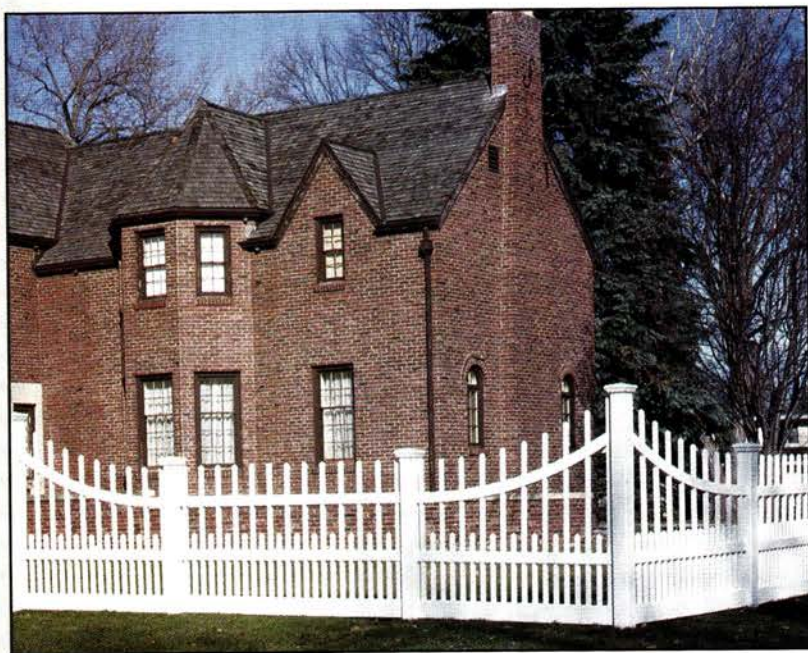
A few minutes later, Peter freed himself, using a Kraft knife on the coffee table. Once Donna and Peter were both out of the house, the police entered and found the drifter passed out drunk. He was later convicted on a number of counts, including cruel confinement, armed robbery, attempted murder, and attempted rape.

"The wedding was two weeks after that," Donna says. It was a big one, with 350 guests, plus some last-minute additions. "Everybody



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Top: Peter has become adept at carving designs into headblocks.
 Left: It's hard to tell the replacement blocks from the old ones, which were all unique.

said, 'Aren't you going to call off the wedding?' and I said, I am *not* calling off the wedding. It was six months of hard work and planning, and we had people coming in from all over the country."

She invited the entire police force, firefighters, emergency medical service personnel—everyone who helped them that weekend. "I just kept saying, 'We're getting married in two weeks.' I was in shock. That's the only thing that was holding me together."

Peter later made headlines when he told reporters that no one—not even a man who had held two people hostage—was beyond redemption. "He did something that was pretty stupid, but I'm convinced that alcohol was part of it, and poverty," says Peter, a former pastor. "I think that once he was in the situation, he didn't quite know how to extricate himself."

Despite their ordeal, Peter and Donna decided to stick with a neighborhood they liked and a house they loved. Why they should they allow circumstances to rob them of both? "We've ended up going through an awful lot together," Peter says.

With plenty of hands-on help from friends and relatives, the Michaels have re-

built the porch, added a kitchen, and painted the exterior. Inside, work proceeds slowly. The inlaid floors in the downstairs formal rooms were literally in pieces.

Donna and Peter eventually puzzled together sections of each of three patterns and sent them to Dick Norton at Historic Floors of Oshkosh, who re-created them in the same wood species combinations. One of the patterns is a Greek key. "Dick said, you know, we still have this in our patternbook," Donna recalls. "When it was made in 1888, it was 18 cents a foot. I said, I'll take it!"

Donna and Peter—who paid far more than 18 cents a foot—laid the flooring themselves. Using locally bought 2 1/2" strip oak flooring around the inlays, they finished work in January 1999. After seven years, the Michaels were finally able to take the dust barriers down. "It's not terribly embarrassing to have people in the house now," Peter quips.

The woodwork in the foyer still lacks a finish coat, but the newel post boasts a new bronze figurine—a gift to Peter from Donna. "It's called the 'Spirit of Life,'" says Peter. "Since this is the Coffin House, we thought that was appropriate."

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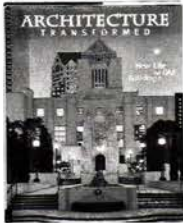
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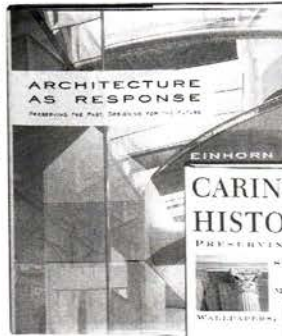
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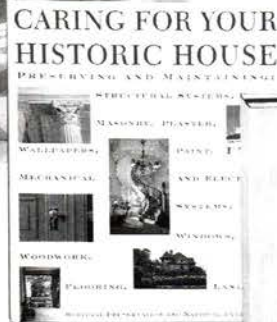
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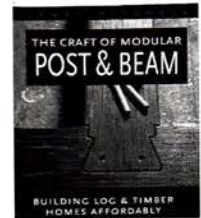
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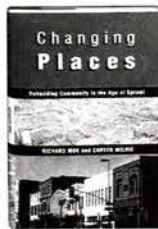
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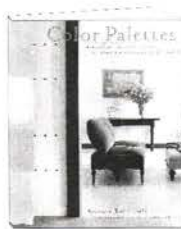
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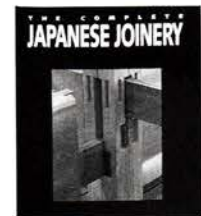
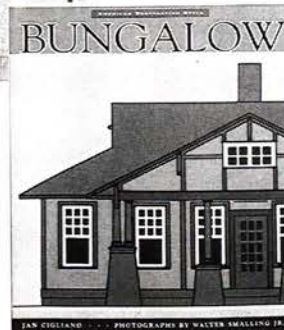


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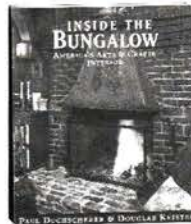
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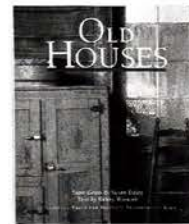
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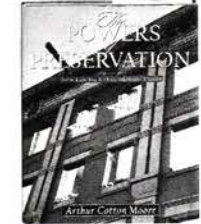
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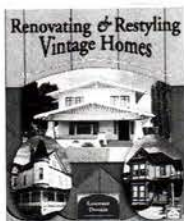


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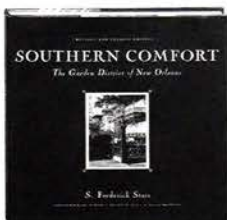
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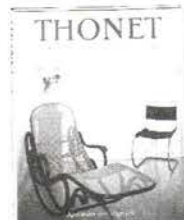
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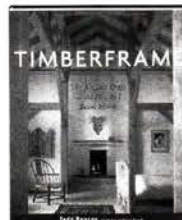
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Insuring for Replacement Value

ASK YOURSELF a tough question: If your old house was severely damaged by fire or a natural disaster tomorrow, would your homeowners' insurance pay to replace the features that make it unique?

Unless you hold a policy that includes a replacement rider, the answer is probably no. And even if you do have replacement coverage, you could still be in for a rude shock. These days, "replacement coverage" often means insurers will only reimburse you for up to 125% of the amount of the policy, should your house be damaged or destroyed by a covered peril. This may enable you to walk away from the disaster with enough cash to buy a new home, but it may not

be enough to rebuild a home with irreplaceable craftsmanship or materials. Not exactly a comforting thought if you value your old house above rubies, is it?

There is an alternative, however: insurance targeted specifically for old and unique properties, underwritten by the Chubb Group ("Masterpiece") and Fireman's Fund ("Prestige Plus"). Both programs are affiliated with the National Trust for Historic Preservation's Historic House Insurance Program.

These policies cost more, but they include guaranteed replacement cost coverage as a matter of course. They're also designed to place realistic cost values on unique [continued on page 22]



who they were...what they did



With the exception of Andrea Palladio, no name implies rational, elegant design like that of **ROBERT ADAM (1728–1792)**. Born into a large, close, Scottish family, Adam was just one of four brothers who followed in the footsteps of their architect father. After studies at Edinburgh University and travels in Italy, Adam moved to London at the age of 30. Determined

to make his mark as an **ARCHITECT**, he sought new ideas that would appeal to an aristocratic clientele, while separating him from other classically inspired designers. By the 1760s, when he hit his stride, Adam had fused elements from various eras of antiquity into an original, eclectic vision. As versatile as he was prolific, Adam would design a house down to the smallest details of swags, garlands, and urns—hallmarks of the Adam Style.



Ice dams

may look postcard pretty on your eaves, but they wreak havoc on your old house. The fruits of late midwinter, when roofs are warm enough by day to melt snow, but cold enough at night to freeze water, ice dams do more than destroy gutters. Just up the roof they create ponds deep enough to push water under shingles and into attics, leaving walls and rooms soaking wet. Ice dams have multiple causes, but the chief culprit is little—or poorly installed—insulation. Solutions range from the mechanical (installing rubber membranes or metal skirts at the eaves), to the environmental (maintaining a "cold" roof). One of the best resources on the subject is the Minnesota Extension Service. For information or publications, search the keyword "ice dams" on their web site: www.extension.umn.edu.

[**INSURANCE** continued from page 21] materials, such as 18"-wide floorboards and hand-glazed antique tiles. Additionally, they include unlimited

coverage for an item that can add substantially to the cost of replacing or repairing an old house: rebuilding to code. In some communities, you may be required to bring an old house up to code even if the structure is only partially damaged.

Unfortunately, in today's risk-averse insurance market, Masterpiece and Prestige Plus are not available in all areas.

Lois Schapiro of American Phoenix Corp., who sells policies for both programs, no longer writes replacement coverage policies for properties in hurricane-plagued Florida and earthquake-prone California.

What's an old-house owner to do? First of all, if you've got a unique house, you should consider buying premium insurance. In addition to the above-mentioned programs, check with state and local insurers, especially if you live in an area with a high concentration of historic houses. For example, Middlesex Mutual Assurance Co. (877-569-4530) in Middletown, Connecticut, recently began offering a new homeowners' pol-

icy called the Restorationist, specifically aimed at owners of antique houses. The company writes policies in Connecticut and Maine.

Here are a few other suggestions to help you bushwack your way through the old-house insurance wilderness.

- Buy enough insurance to cover replacement cost, which can be more or less than the appraised value of the property. In New England, for example, the cost to replace a historic house runs between \$140 to \$180 per square foot, and sometimes \$200 or more, Schapiro says. Add endorsements to cover outbuildings, barns, and carriage houses as necessary.

- When you buy homeowner's insurance, look for guaranteed—not limited—replacement cost. This way, your claim will be paid regardless of limits set by the insurance company.

- Include extra coverages that will enable you to rebuild your house to code if it's damaged or destroyed; this is referred to in the insurance industry as full "building law and ordinance" coverage.

- Insure personal property for all perils if possible. Add specific endorsements for unique valuables, such as fine art or antiques.

- Be sure the policy you buy includes a "cash out" option, which entitles you to a cash settlement on a total loss should you choose not to rebuild.

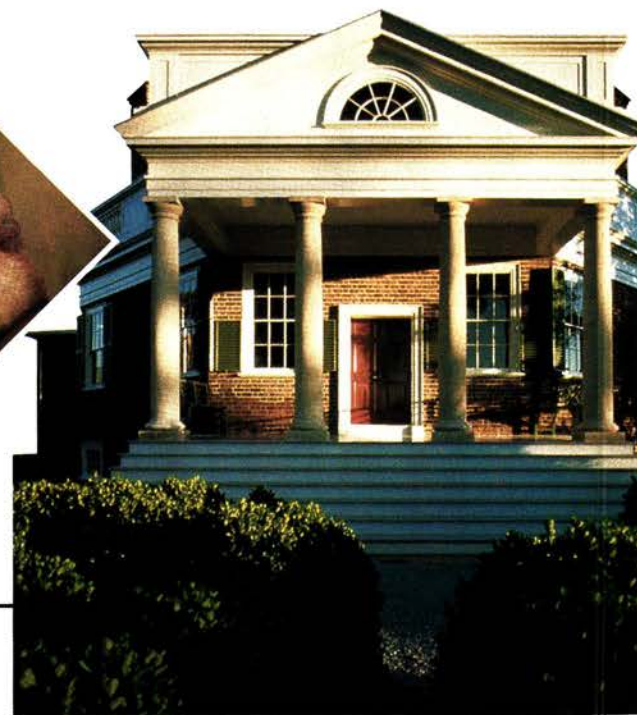
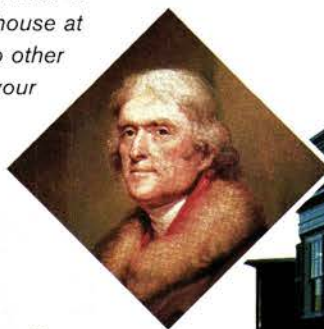


These days, "replacement coverage" often means insurers will only reimburse you for up to 125% of the amount of the policy, should your house be damaged or destroyed.

PRESIDENTIAL PALACES

We all know Washington lived at Mount Vernon and Jefferson built Monticello (as well as the house at right), but just try naming the homes of more than one or two other U.S. presidents. Here's a little quiz to help you brush up on your presidential residences (answers on next page).

- | | |
|---|------------------------------|
| 1. The Beeches | a. Andrew Jackson |
| 2. Hyde Park | b. John Adams |
| 3. Montpelier | c. Thomas Jefferson |
| 4. Sagamore Hill | d. James Madison |
| 5. The Hermitage | e. Franklin Delano Roosevelt |
| 6. Oak Hill | f. Calvin Coolidge |
| 7. Poplar Forest | g. James Monroe |
| 8. The White House (who lived there first?) | h. Teddy Roosevelt |



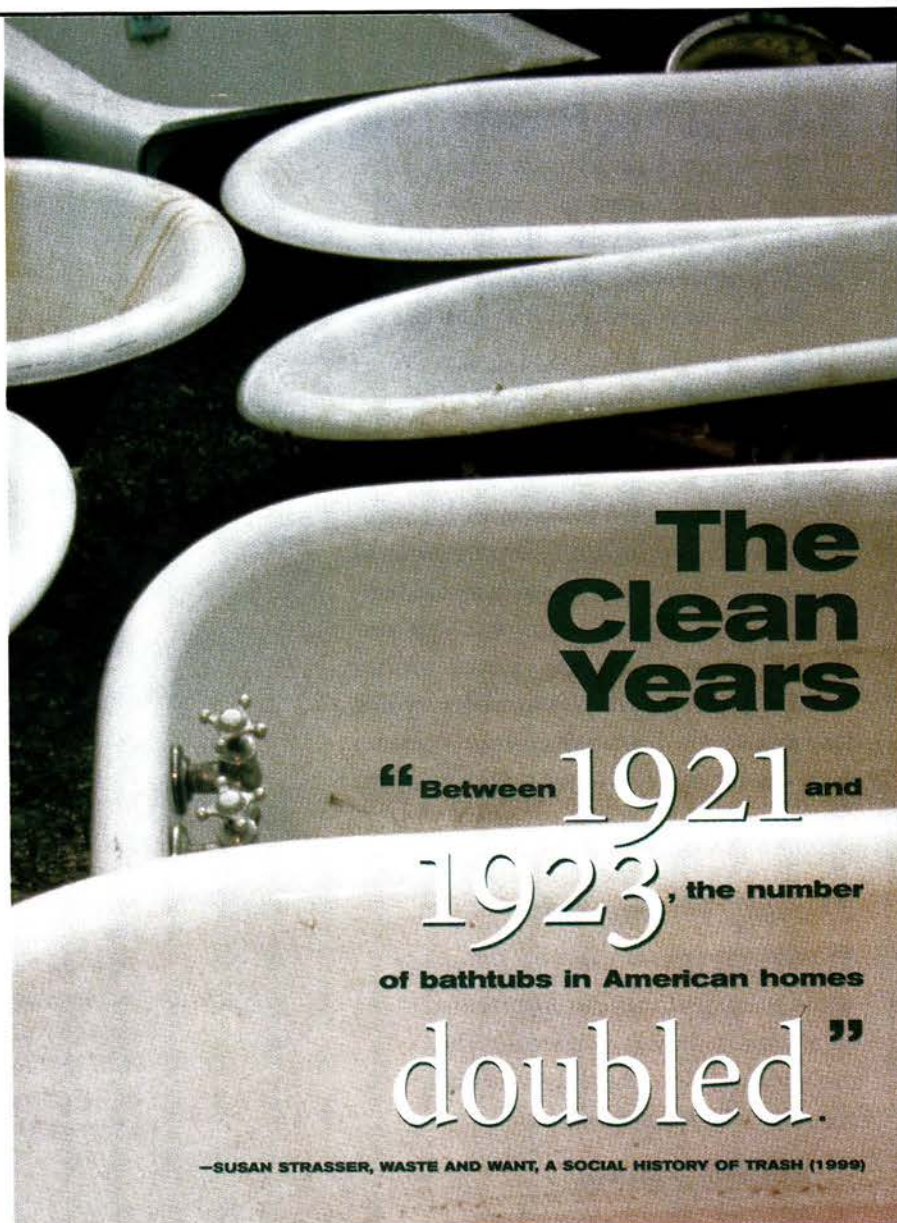
■ Once you've purchased insurance, review and update your policy at least once every three years. Make sure your coverage keeps pace with your house's appreciation—especially since property values in certain parts of the country have been jumping as much as 10% per year. Keep your personal property insurance up to date as well.

When you buy homeowner's insurance, look for guaranteed—not limited—replacement cost. This way, your claim will be paid regardless of limits set by the insurance company.

■ Make a videotape inventory of your home and possessions; the tape can be invaluable if you have to make a claim. Move through the house room by room, documenting the condition of every room and as many items as possible. Include close-ups of especially valuable items, whether they're fixtures or personal property. Then put the videotape in a bank safe deposit box and leave it there.

—MARY ELLEN POLSON

FOR MORE INFORMATION *about Historic House Insurance Programs*, contact Lois Schapiro, (800) 899-6004.



B&B FOCUS

THE OGÉ HOUSE INN ON THE RIVERWALK, SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS Once the home of a



Texas Ranger and cattleman, the historic Ogé (pronounced Oh-jhay) House is one of the quietest spots to sleep along San Antonio's famed Riverwalk. That's because the stone walls of the 1857 Texas Historic Landmark are 14" to 18" thick. The double galleries (added in the 1880s) on this raised Greek Revival afford spectacular views of the river and downtown, just a few blocks away. Inside, all is restored to period elegance and decorated with antiques. Even the ceiling mouldings and newel posts are gilded.

Even the ceiling mouldings and newel posts are gilded.

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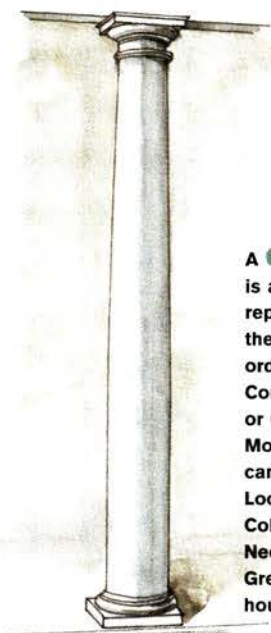
Tracing the Paper Trail

The histories of period building products can be as curious as old buildings themselves. The origin of rosin paper—that woody pink stuff still used to block drafts under floors and siding—was unusual even 100 years ago.

SOMETIME DURING the year 1871 a paper was introduced called rosin-sized cane-fiber sheathing. The paper was made near Norfolk, Va., from sugar cane, the method of preparation being somewhat peculiar. Having cut the sugar cane into the required lengths, the material was placed in an old-fashioned muzzle-loading cannon and then discharged against a brick wall. This so bruised and crushed the cane that it was easily prepared [and manufactured] into rolls of about 60 pounds each. —CARPENTRY AND BUILDING, APRIL 1902

Post, Pier, or Column—What's the Difference?

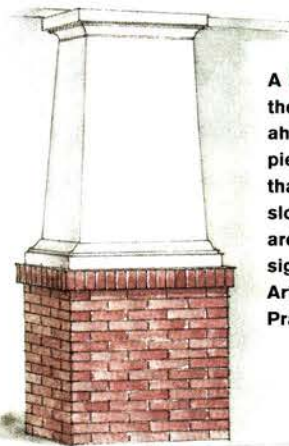
WHEN IT COMES to porch supports on an old house, there is a difference. The distinction between the three structural supports is largely architectural.



A COLUMN is a historical shape, representing one of the five classical orders (Doric, Ionic, Corinthian, Tuscan, or Composite). Monumental columns can span two storeys. Look for them on Colonial Revival-, Neoclassical-, and Greek Revival-style houses.



A POST can be chamfered or even turned on a lathe, but, ornamented or not, it's still basically a parallel-sided support. Pillars appear on a variety of late-19th-century house styles, including Queen Anne and Gothic Revival.



A PIER, on the other hand, is ahistorical. Porch piers are battered—that is, they have sloping sides. Piers are a common sight on bungalows, Arts & Crafts-, and Prairie-style houses.

VERNACULAR HOUSES



HIGH HOUSES OF THE GULF COAST

With its linear room arrangement and African-Creole roots, the Shotgun House is a well recognized vernacular house form. Less well known is a two-storey variant, the High House—so called to differentiate it from the Shotgun's original Haitian moniker of *maison basse*, or low house. The typical wood-frame High House has a front-facing gable roof and a tiered porch that extends across the façade. High Houses sprang up in Gulf Coast cities from Jacksonville, Florida, to Port Arthur, Texas, between 1890 to 1920. Cramped onto narrow, inner city lots as little as 15' across, many have been lost to highway construction, redevelopment, and neglect in recent decades.

— Sidney Johnston, DeLand, Florida

ANSWERS TO PRESIDENTIAL PALACES: (continued from page 22) 1 (f); 2 (e); 3 (d); 4 (h); 5 (a); 6 (g); 7 (c); 8 (b).

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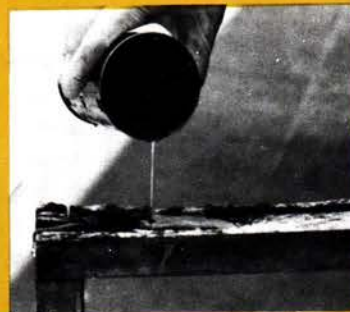
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Splendor in the Grass *by Nina A. Koziol*

SPIKY OR PLUMED, low to the ground or soaring a dozen feet in the air, the reedy ornamental grasses once prized by Victorian gardeners are back in a big way. Elegant, versatile, and surprisingly colorful, such early-20th-century favorites as pampas grass, giant Eulalia grass, and the whimsically named gardener's garters (ribbon grass) are true heirlooms you can plant today.

These ornamental grasses are also relatively unfussy. "Not particular as to soil, they will grow where many showy flowers fail, and in late fall give a character and tone to a garden that distinguish it from the average," wrote Parker T. Barnes in *The Garden Magazine* in 1906. "If you want something easy and singular, grow grasses."

A well-chosen grass can successfully edge a flower bed, screen an undesirable view, create a focal point, serve as a groundcover, or blend in with annuals, perennials, shrubs, and evergreens. While ornamental grasses vary in color from green and blue to shades of gold, grey, deep red, and even chartreuse, they're often most striking at the end of the season, when their graceful arching blades and delicate seed heads gain depth of color in the austere light. A spray of wheat-colored blades creates unexpected drama against a blanket of winter snow.

GIANT GRASSES The Victorians were particularly fond of giant reed grass and pampas grass, displaying both species on the front lawn.



The tallest of the ornamental grasses at 10' and up, **giant reed grass** usually held court in the center of a large, formal planting bed, or alongside a pond. A striped variety with broad green-and-white leaves, *Arundo donax* 'Variegata', was especially sought after. The giant reed's long-lasting seed heads, which form large, creamy white clusters, can be cut and dried for winter decorations, or left on the plant to enliven the winter garden.

The feathery plumes of **pampas grass** make an emphatic focal point, whether bordering a planting bed or standing alone on the front lawn. Pampas grass can reach heights and widths of 8' or more, especially in warm areas of the country, where it is a perennial. Extremely sharp leaves make gloves a necessity when handling this plant.

"They will grow where many showy flowers fail, and in late fall give character and tone to a garden . . . If you want something easy and singular, grow grasses."

—PARKER BARNES, 1906

Opposite: Tall, bottle-green grasses add to the lush feel of this Spanish Mission Revival courtyard garden in Hollywood, California. **Above:** The feathery tufts of foxtail (*Alopecurus pratensis*).

Grasses for Gardens

SPECIMENS AND BORDER COMPANIONS

Giant reed grass (*Arundo donax*)
 Sideoats grama (*Bouteloua curtipendula*)
 Perennial quaking grass (*Briza media*)
 Feather reed grass (*Calamagrostis acutiflora* 'Stricta')
 Pampas grass (*Cortaderia selloana*)
 Purple love grass (*Eragrostis spectabilis*)
 Blue fescue (*Festuca glauca*)
 Blue oat grass (*Helictotrichon sempervirens*)
 Giant Chinese silver grass (*Miscanthus floridulus*)
 Porcupine grass (*Miscanthus sinensis* 'Strictus')
 Striped Eulalia grass (*M. sinensis* 'Variegatus')
 Zebra grass (*M. sinensis* 'Zebrinus')
 Maiden grass (*M. sinensis* 'Gracillimus' and 'Graziella')
 Purple moor grass (*Molinia caerulea*)
 Fountain grass (*Pennisetum alopecuroides*)
 Ribbon grass (*Phalaris arundinacea*)
 Switch grass (*Panicum virgatum* 'Heavy Metal' or 'Prairie Sky')
 Indian grass (*Sorghastrum nutans*)
 Prairie dropseed (*Sporobolus heterolepis*)

GRASSES FOR PART SHADE

Golden sedge (*Carex elata* 'Bowles' Golden')
 Northern sea oats (*Chasmanthium latifolium*)
 Tufted hair grass (*Deschampsia caespitosa*)
 Crinkled hair grass (*Deschampsia flexuosa*)
 Japanese forest grass (*Hakonechloa macra* 'Aureola')
 Japanese blood grass (*Imperata cylindrica* 'Red Baron')

Right: Feather reed grass and miscanthus sway in the late afternoon sun. Bottom left: A loose hedge of fountain grass borders a shingled New England barn. Below: *Pennisetum* combines well with evergreens.



DWARF GRASSES Dwarf grasses are versatile whether paired with taller grass specimens or massed as an edging plant. The unusual pale blue leaves of **blue oat grass** work especially well when mixed with pinks (dianthus), pale yellow coreopsis, or silvery lamb's ears. Smaller than blue oat grass and attractive in large groupings, the dwarf-sized **blue fescue** offers a dense cushion of fine, wiry bluish-grey leaves.

ARCHING GRASSES Another heirloom, Eulalia (*Miscanthus sinensis*), or Japanese silver grass, has a characteristic arching or vase shape. Among dozens of showy cultivars are the tall, horizontally striped **zebra** and **porcupine grasses**, **variegated green-and-white-leaved grass**, and others that form sturdy clumps from 3' to 12' tall. The exceptionally dense foliage of these grasses creates an attractive backdrop for perennials and mixes well with shrubs and other grasses. Another old favorite in this family is **maiden grass** (*M. sinensis* 'Gracillimus'). Its seed heads form coppery red tassels in late summer, melting to silvery white in autumn.

Prominently displayed at the Pan-American Exposition of 1901, **fountain grass** creates a lovely edging for flower beds and borders. Blooming early to midsummer, this graceful, 3'–4' tall plant matches up effectively with perennials, and can be

planted in a container. Pair it with old-fashioned rugosa roses to create outstanding fall colors from rich golden-yellow to red and orange.

TREMBLING GRASSES Perennial **quaking grass** takes its name from the giant clusters of dainty flowers that "quake" in the slightest breeze. The long-lasting blossoms, which bloom in spring, should be left on the plant to dry before cutting. Amenable to full sun or part shade, the **Northern sea oat** is a good choice as an accent in a flower bed. The grass bears dangling clusters of oat-like seed heads on 3' to 5' stems. The delicate 3' to 4' clusters of **switch grass** seeds also tremble with each passing breeze. The soft, teal-colored leaves of 'Prairie Sky' and the reddish fall color of 'Heavy Metal' switch grass are particularly appealing when combined with asters, sedums, chrysanthemums, and other fall bloomers.

COLORFUL GRASSES With its familiar green-and-white striped foliage, **ribbon grass**, or gardener's garters, has been a staple for a century or more. Unusually hardy, the grass thrives in full sun or part shade. Ribbon grass can reach 2' to 4' and is a rampant and aggressive spreader. Choose planting sites carefully, as it is hard to remove once established.

The green blades of **Japanese blood**



grass gain color beginning in summer, when the first signs of burgundy appear, through late fall, when the grass is a blaze of garnet. This 12" to 18" accent plant is especially dramatic when it's massed where the setting sun can backlight the reddish leaves. Perhaps the most elegant ornamental grass of all is **Japanese forest grass**. With its foot-high cascading waterfall of chartreuse-golden leaves, this plant makes a lovely accent in shady spots and near water. The leaves turn a warm reddish-pink in autumn.

If you're considering adding an ornamental grass or two to your garden, do so with caution. Dried grasses are extremely flammable and should not be planted near the house or other combustible structures. Instead, enjoy them on the lawn, or in a border mixed with perennials, annuals, and shrubs. Some other suggestions:

- Pick the right plant for the space available. If it is a clump-forming grass, determine its ultimate height and width before you place it.
- Consider the amount of sun, shade, or moisture available in your yard, and whether it will meet the plant's needs. For example, miscanthus grasses do best in full sun, but will become loose, leggy, and slow to flower if grown in part shade.
- Keep aggressive, running plants, such as ribbon grass or blue Lyme grass, from spreading by planting them in sunken drain tiles or bottomless containers. Leave an inch or two of the pot above ground.
- Cut plants to within a few inches of the ground in April or early May. Keep large, clump-forming grasses healthy by dividing them every two or three years.
- Highlight a collection of ornamental grasses in a special grass garden or in a bed of perennials, such as shasta daisies, cone-flowers, and sedums. They are especially beautiful planted in front of evergreens, and with deciduous shrubs or old roses. 🏡

NINA A. KOZIOŁ is a garden designer in Palos Park, Illinois.



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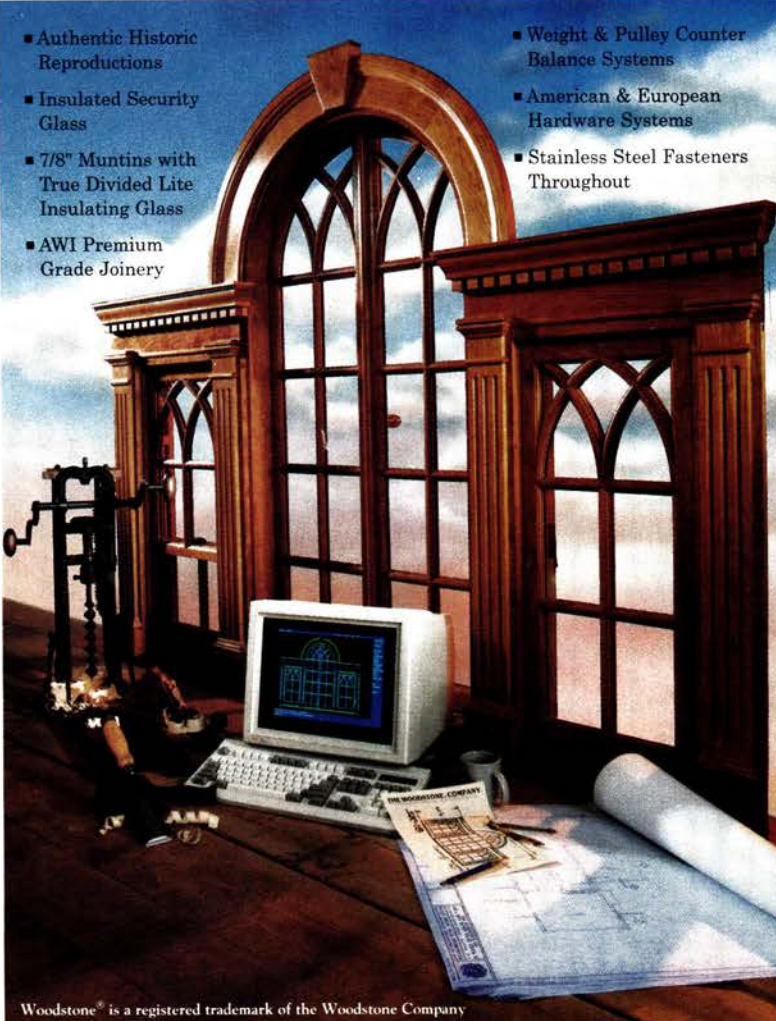


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Finishing is just the beginning.

Kitchen design: Lee Wanaselja, CKD. Kitchens by Design, Plainville, NY/Photo: Cune, Baze





PERFECTLY CLEAR With names like Depression green, cobalt blue, and milk glass, these reproduction cabinet knobs in full-lead crystal are dead ringers for the originals in your grandmother's kitchen. They're available in 1", 1 1/4" and 1 1/2" sizes, at prices from \$7.50 to \$18.50 each. Contact Crown City Hardware, (800) 950-1047, www.crowncityhardware.com. Circle 1 on the resource card.

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HERE'S LOOKING AT YOU, KID Engraved line details give this fan-shaped mirror a feel for the '40s. The bevel-edged mirror comes in two sizes; the 36" high version is 23 1/2" wide at the bottom; it sells for about \$495. A smaller (23" high) model retails for about \$285. Contact St. Thomas Creations, (619) 474-9490, www.stthomascreations.com. Circle 4 on the resource card.



ELLIS ISLAND Designer Harvey Ellis spent only months at Gustav Stickley's Craftsman Workshops, but his 1904 sideboard with a dramatically arched apron is now back in production. In quartersawn oak trimmed with copper hardware, it measures 42" x 54 1/2" x 21 1/2". The retail price is \$4,636. Contact Stickley, (315) 682-5500, www.stickley.com. Circle 5 on the resource card.



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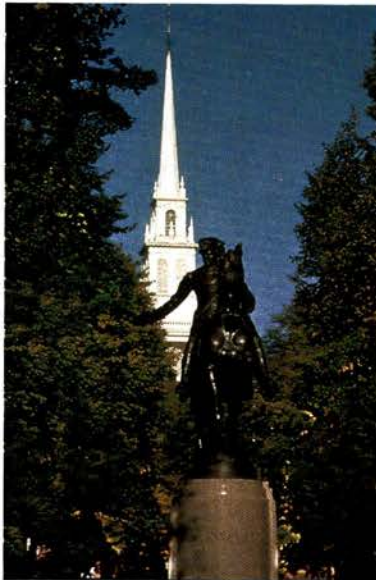
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Work Sharp, Be Sharp! *by William T. Cox Jr.*

MY DAD SPENT evenings sharpening his knife while Mama and I watched TV. As if yesterday, I can still hear that blade sliding back and forth over an oil covered whetstone. When Dad finished wiping away the oil—swoosh!—he tested his knife on newsprint with clean, effortless slice. Surgeons should have scalpels so sharp.

I never have the time to work a whetstone like my father, but I do recommend these tools as the foundation on which to build a sharpening station. Begin by shopping for a two-sided Arkansas whetstone, soft on one side, hard on the other. Called a bench stone, this 2" x 8" rock is a good size for sharpening chisels, knives, and plane irons. Anything shorter doesn't provide enough stroking room.

Select a $\frac{3}{4}$ " or 1" mortising chisel for learning control. Fresh from the manufacturer, the new blade will show machine marks on the face, and it should be covered with lacquer to prevent rust. (Remove this to the chisel's shoulder.) It will probably also need stropping to remove any burrs. For now, run the bevel up and down a wide piece of stiff leather a few times with a trailing stroke. Then notice the improvement with your thumb—but don't press too hard. Practice mortising on a piece of oak, which is easier to work than softwoods.

BEFORE LONG, CHISELS NEED A TUNE-UP.

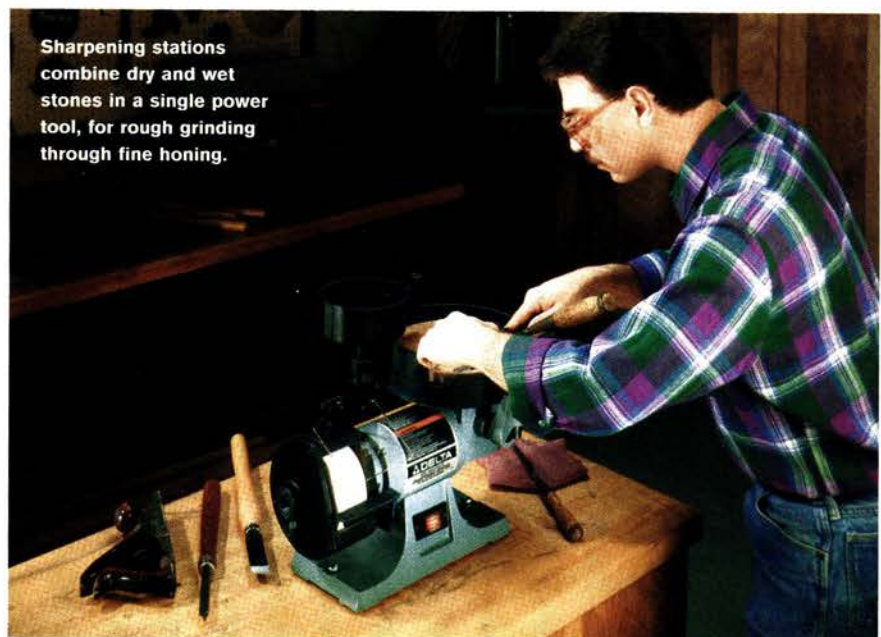
Begin by squirting a little honing oil on your whetstone. Sharpening stones are lubricated with either oil or water, depending upon their na-

ture. Traditional stones—both natural and man-made—usually call for oil, which is great for sharpening (it holds metal particles in suspension) but messy to work with. Waterstones work cleaner, but they must be kept wet.

Next place the chisel on the stone, bevel side down, and note the shape of the bevel (see drawing p. 36). It will either be flat or hollow-ground (slightly concave). Also note if the chisel has two flats. The angle of the larger flat should be 25 degrees to the face. The other flat, or micro-bevel, should extend back about $\frac{1}{8}$ " of the blade thickness, and be 35 degrees.

The micro-bevel is the real cutting edge and what you will sharpen as you push the chisel

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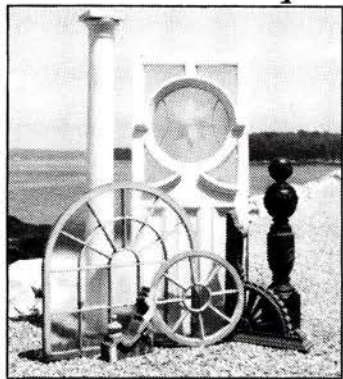
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*Sure, you can just throw away dull chisels and never sharpen.
But even fresh from the box, cutting tools are not at their keenest,
plus you miss learning an important part of a craft.*

across the stone in continuous strokes. Use a honing guide right from the start. Unless you can hold that chisel absolutely steady as it glides down the stone, you'll hone the bevel into a poor-cutting hump, rather than a perfectly flat plane. Tune-up the micro-bevel for now. Or, if there isn't a micro-bevel, make one! Check the bevel often to make sure you apply even pressure across the edge.

A dozen strokes on each side of the whetstone should be enough. Then, flip the chisel over and press the face flat onto the stone for lapping. Your tool will only be its sharpest if one side is perfectly flat. A few back and forth strokes polishes the face and removes the burr formed from sharpening.

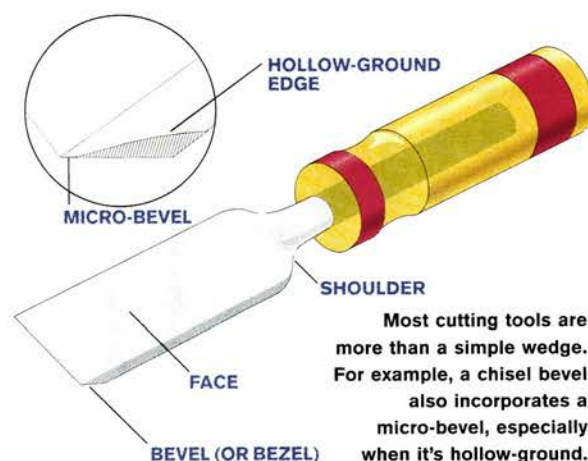
WHO PUT THAT NAIL THERE?

Sooner or later, a nail will tear a gouge in the edge of the bevel that will look like the Grand Canyon. You can spend an hour with a whetstone just removing a nick. Instead, use a power grinder to restore the bevel or, better still, a water wheel. Then finish-hone on the whetstone.

I bought a \$50 water wheel when I started working for myself. Mortising door after door is hard on a chisel, especially the way I sharpen one. I prefer to hollow-grind my chisels on the wheel, then hone the thinnest of micro-bevels. The edge is razor sharp, but dulls quickly cutting anything tougher than softwoods.

That water wheel left me wanting,

so I'm investing in a power sharpening center designed to edge chisels, plane irons, and jointer blades. Power isn't better, it's just quicker when time is money (when isn't it?). My ideal sharpening center has a grinder, water wheel, and a 1" vertical belt sander. The grinder uses a vertical, aluminum oxide, dry wheel (120-grit; 2" wide face) for taking out nicks and gouges. The center's horizontal aluminum oxide wet wheel (8" diameter; 1000-grit) keeps



Most cutting tools are more than a simple wedge. For example, a chisel bevel also incorporates a micro-bevel, especially when it's hollow-ground.

a keen edge on all my tools. Then, if I equip the vertical sander with a 15 micron silicon carbide (1000-grit) belt, or a leather belt and diamond compound, I can hone my tools to a mirror finish.

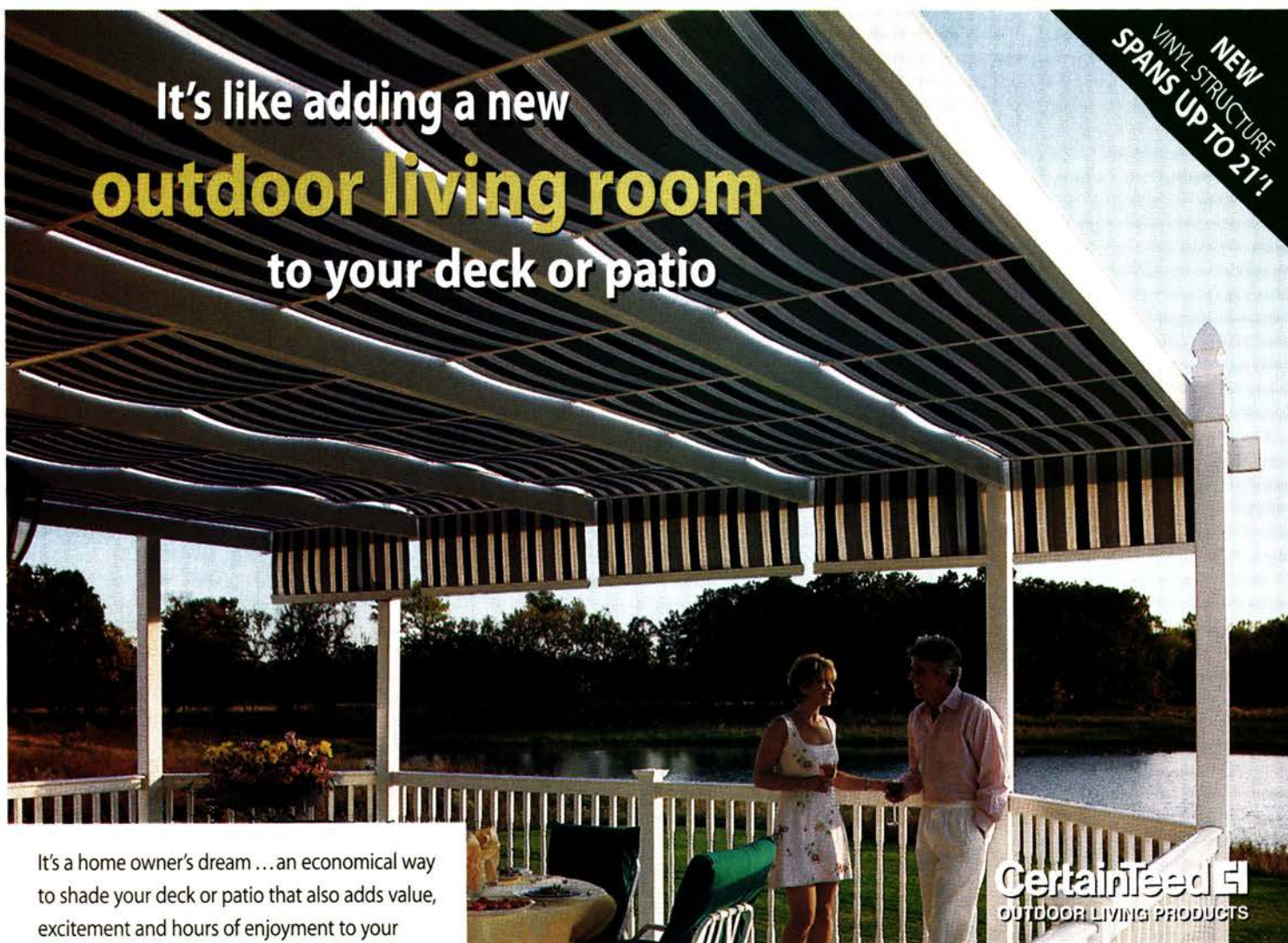
If you don't believe that belt sanders make effective sharpening tools, get this: When I walked into my former helper's shutter shop one day, he was sharpening a chisel on a 21" belt sander with 100-grit paper—just to tease me, I think.

WILLIAM T. COX JR. *stays edgy in Memphis, Tenn.* ([wtcox@bellsouth.net](mailto:wtcx@bellsouth.net)).

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OLDHOUSE JOURNAL



“Erected in a rural valley around 1790, the house was slowly losing key structural members in the Dutch timber frame. Then there were those doors.”

—page 40



January/February 2000

“Chintz was not the only blast from the past to go mainstream. The turn of the 20th century was a period of intense interest in the colonial past. Never mind that wallpaper was rare in colonial dwellings. Americans wanted to romanticize their Colonial and Tudor Revival nests—and tapestries, scenics, Chinoiserie, shimmering stripes, and papers festooned with trellises, ribbons, and roses were one way to do it.” —page 46



“Wiring isn’t pretty. Hugh Hefner, an infamous judge of beauty, knew that. When he created his bachelor pad in a Chicago mansion 30 years ago, he hid the wiring in ways that are still innovative today.”

—page 52

A Tale of Two Doors

Making Period Doors From Plank to Paint

BY GORDON BOCK

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JON CRISPIN

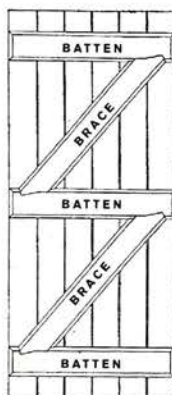
WHEN RICHARD PIEPER began restoring his vernacular farmhouse, he knew he would be re-creating parts lost over two centuries of architectural changes. Erected in a rural valley east of Albany, New York, around 1790, the house was slowly losing key structural members in the Dutch timber frame. Plus, an 1830s makeover had updated the exterior with Greek Revival details, and in 1990 remodelers rearranged walls and rooms on the first floor. And then there were those doors.

After he bought the house in 1992, Richard assumed the original front door was long gone—that is, until he opened walls in the attic. There, nailed across studs as a brace, and plastered with newspapers, were three boards spanning nearly a yard in width. When he wasn't spending weekends restoring the house with brother Robert and friend Hugo Corrigan, Richard was in the field as Director of Preservation for a New York City architectural firm. He recognized the boards as the classic pattern of an 18th-century three-board batten door—most likely his door.

Checked and weathered by 200 years of use and reuse, yet very much intact, these wide pine boards show the shiplap joinery and double-plank thickness of a textbook fully battened door.

What Defines A Door?

Exterior doors must withstand tremendous seasonal forces. In winter, they're dry and warm on the interior side, wet and cold on the exterior. In summer the conditions are nearly reversed. All these changes in moisture and temperature contribute to wood expansion and contraction that would quickly warp a door made from a single board. The solution in traditional joinery is to construct the door with multiple boards in ways that counteract these forces.

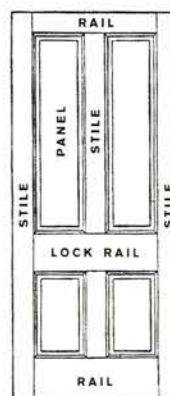


BATTEN DOORS To create a relatively stable door, batten doors simply run battens (horizontal boards) across a set of vertical boards. Beyond the usual edge-matching of boards, there is no joinery in a batten door, so it must rely on fasteners (screws or nails) to hold it together. Traditional batten doors are clinch-nailed, a method where the carpenter drives the nail through the door once, then bends the shank over so it penetrates the wood again. Traditionally, handmade wrought nails were the best for clinching. Since the metal grain runs with the length of the nail, they are less likely to break. Cut nails, on the other hand, tend to snap because the metal grain runs perpendicular to the length of the nail.

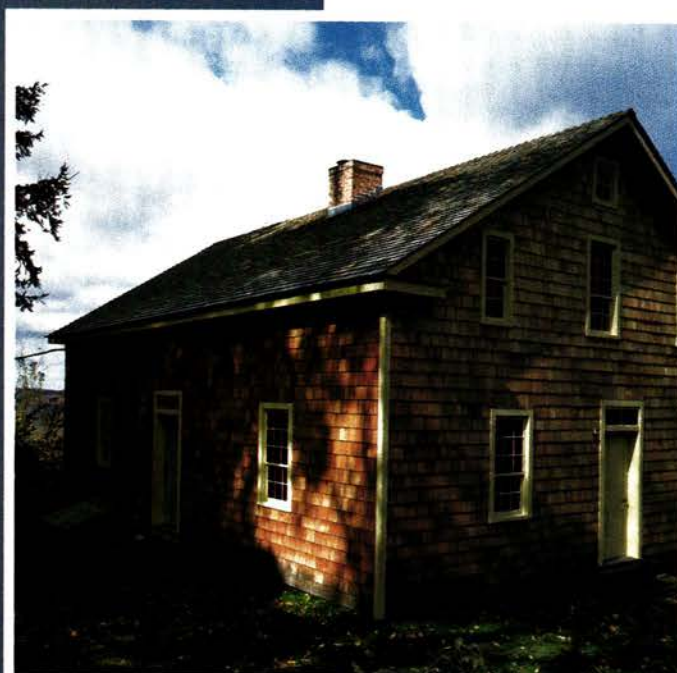
FRAME-AND-PANEL DOORS A more stable method for making a door is to fashion a frame of stiles and rails. This frame holds panels in such a way that they are free to move with seasonal changes. The number and pattern of panels in any door (as well as their decoration) may vary widely, but the construction remains principally the same. Traditional panel door frames are held together with mortise and tenon joints, secured with pegs through the sides of the

tenon, or wedges on the end.

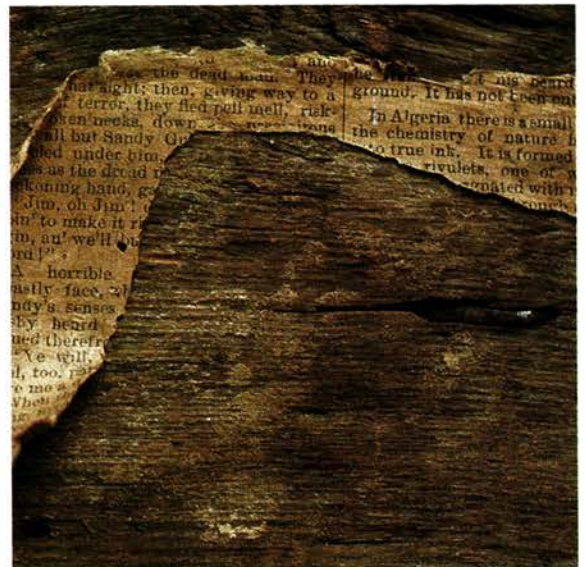
If the joints in a frame-and-panel door do not remain tight all year round, the door will sag. A particular concern is compression set. This is a phenomenon where wood in a confined joint expands to the point the fibers become compressed, never to regain their original dimensions. To avoid the problems of



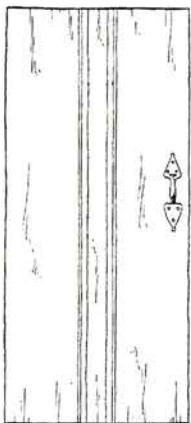
compression set, doormakers never use tenons over a certain size (see sidebar, pg. 43).



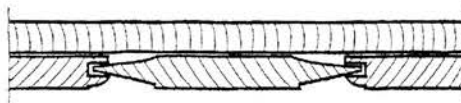
Judging by the evidence found in the building, the blue batten door and transom of Richard Pieper's vernacular farmhouse are close to what was there in the 1790s. The ochre panel door on the side, however, dates to an 1830s makeover in the Greek Revival style.



Above: Beyond scraps of 19th century newspaper still pasted to the surface, the batten door face shows the telltale metal loops of the clinched nails that hold it together. Below: Inside, each batten of the reproduction door half-laps the next in a shiplap joint. The thumbnail moulding copies the original, as do the thumbblatch and iron box lock.



Above: The ample proportions of the historic batten door behind Chuck Bellinger, were dictated by the size of the glass available to make the original transom overhead. The reproduction doorway follows the same tradition. Below: Carpenters of the 18th century often made doors with three exterior boards because they could join them with a standard bead-and-bevel joint (see drawing).



Later, Richard discovered equally revealing evidence about a side door added in the 1830s. Working with Chuck Bellinger of Architectural Components Inc. he turned this promising evidence into museum quality reproductions. The steps they used provide a quick education in not only what doors of the 1790s and the 1840s look like, but also how they can be constructed.

BATTEN DOOR BEGINNINGS Once Richard pried his lucky find out of the attic, it was clear he had uncovered a fully battened exterior door. Unlike a two- or three-batten door, which uses a minimum of boards to span the back, a fully battened door runs boards horizontally (or diagonally) the full length of the door. This method of construction, while still not as sophisticated as a panel door, is common for exterior doors because it creates a thicker—hence warmer—door than the two-batten method. A fully battened door also offers far more security than a thinner version.

Richard carefully measured all the details so that Chuck could reproduce them in the shop. The outer vertical finish boards are mated in a “feather edge” joint much used in the 18th century for interior paneling as well as doors. Here, both edges of the middle board are planed into bevels so they fit into grooves on both the large outer boards, which are moulded at their edges. On the backside, however, the horizontal battens are matched in a shiplap joint finished with a flattened thumbnail bead. Each of these methods adds weather-blocking integrity to board junctions, while disguising joints with decorative shadow lines. Like the original, Richard chose to make the new door from eastern white pine, an easy-to-work species often used for exterior trim. The outside boards are $\frac{7}{8}$ " thick; inside boards measure up to $\frac{3}{4}$ ".

Though all the joinery on the original door would have been cut with hand planes, Chuck's shop used a modern power-driven shaper and stock feeder (see pg.45) to make all moulded and beveled edges on the door boards, as well as the thumbnail profile in the door battens. In this tool, the shaper motor in the base powers

the patterned knives that rotate above the table. Wheels in the bottom of the feeder, positioned on top of the table, feed the stock, making for a smoother finished product than feeding by hand. Having the feeder wheels on top not only protects the user, it maintains a constant back-to-front thickness dimension in critical parts, such as panels. Since the feather edge bevel is a common pattern in Chuck's business, the knives are always in the shop. However, the flattened thumbnail pattern that Richard specified for the battens had to be copied from the original door and then custom ground.

In Richard's original batten door, the clinched nails are T-heads—that is, handmade wrought nails with heads flattened on two sides so they resemble the letter T in profile. Richard had a modern blacksmith rehead his nails with this period technique. T-head nails are only $\frac{1}{8}$ " or so in width and less conspicuous in the work—finish nails in effect. The blacksmith also annealed (heated and slowly cooled) the reproduction nails, a process that removes the brittleness from the metal so the nails can be clinched. Beyond this, batten door assembly is basically a matter of nailing the intersection of every two boards, while making sure board ends are well attached.

THE PANEL DOOR PROCESS While investigating the side entrance on the gable end of the house, Richard uncovered a piece of old door stile nailed to the framing—a tantalizing clue to a past appearance. Though only a fragment, the stile provided nearly all the information to deduce the size and proportions of a much earlier door. By looking at the paint ghosts, Richard determined that this was a flat-panel door with square-edge stiles and rails—pretty typical joinery for the 1830s to 1860s. The number and positions of mortises showed there was a single lock rail, which meant the door had four panels. Moreover, the lock rail was wide at $11\frac{1}{8}$ "—unusual, but not surprising in a vernacular farmhouse. The doorway itself provided the width dimension. At 76" tall then, this was once a rather squat door: wide and short.

As the name implies, a panel door is



Top: There's more to clinch-nailing than simply knocking the point over. The carpenter either bends the nail over a small rod to turn it back into the wood, or hammers it into a metal plate for the same effect. **Above:** Mortise and tenon joints have their nuances too. Wide rails, such as lock rails and bottom rails, are best made with split tenons. This method limits the potential for compression set by limiting the dimensions in any one tenon. Note that tenons, panels and grooves are all the same thickness—typically $\frac{1}{3}$ the frame thickness.



Full mortises are characteristic of pre-1860s frame-and-panel doors. In this construction method, the tenon extends all the way through the stile for maximum support. Note the scalloped surface of the door, the result of surface planing.

basically a rigid frame of stiles and rails. The remainder of the door is filled with panels that float in grooves in the frame, so they are free to expand and contract. The frame is secured not with nails, but mortise and tenon joints. After documenting all the door's dimensions, Richard composed shop drawings for the new door. The one departure was increasing the original $1\frac{1}{8}$ " thickness by $\frac{1}{4}$ " to make the door a little more energy efficient. Again, the door would be made from eastern white pine.

When making panel doors of this era, Chuck's shop uses full mortises (also called through mortises) that extend completely through the stiles. This construction method is traditional, plus it provides the joint with maximum strength. (In a concession to looks, after 1880 door makers started to use half or blind tenons that do not penetrate the stile.)

SHOP SPECIFICS Once an exacting hand process, mortising door stiles is swift work in the shop with a power hollow-chisel mortiser (see pg. 45). Basically a sophisticated drill press, the tool's heart is a twist bit encased in a square chisel. By lowering the mortiser with a foot pedal, the operator punches several square holes in a row to make a rectangular mortise, moving the stile across the table as he goes. It's customary to make the mortises in a door the same width as the panels because plowing the groove for the panel also takes away part of the tenon. Since Richard beefed-up the dimensions of his door, both panels and mortises are increased to $\frac{5}{8}$ " thick.


No less ingenious is the equipment for making tenons. With the single-end tenoner the stock rides on a carriage through three sets of cutters that 1) shape the top and bottom of the tenon, 2) cope the shoulder so it matches the profile on the door stile, and 3) trim the end of the tenon to length. Depending upon the length of the tenon, making a finished tenon may take two or three passes through the machine. However, this is still only a fraction of the time once required to cut tenons by hand with a backsaw, and considerably more accurate.

Once all the pieces are made, panel doors

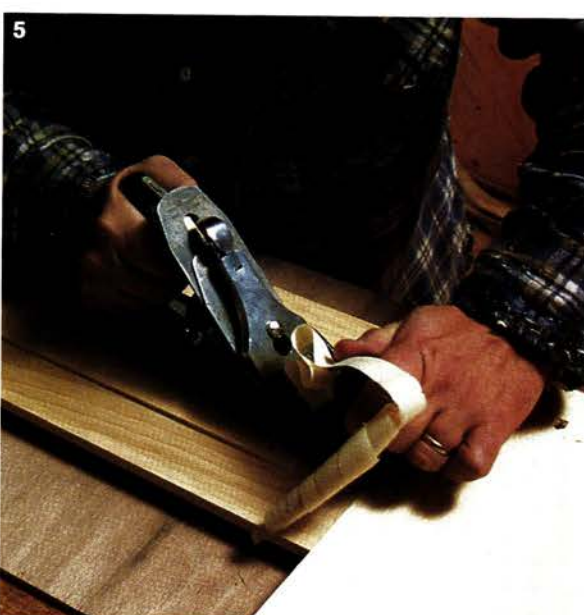
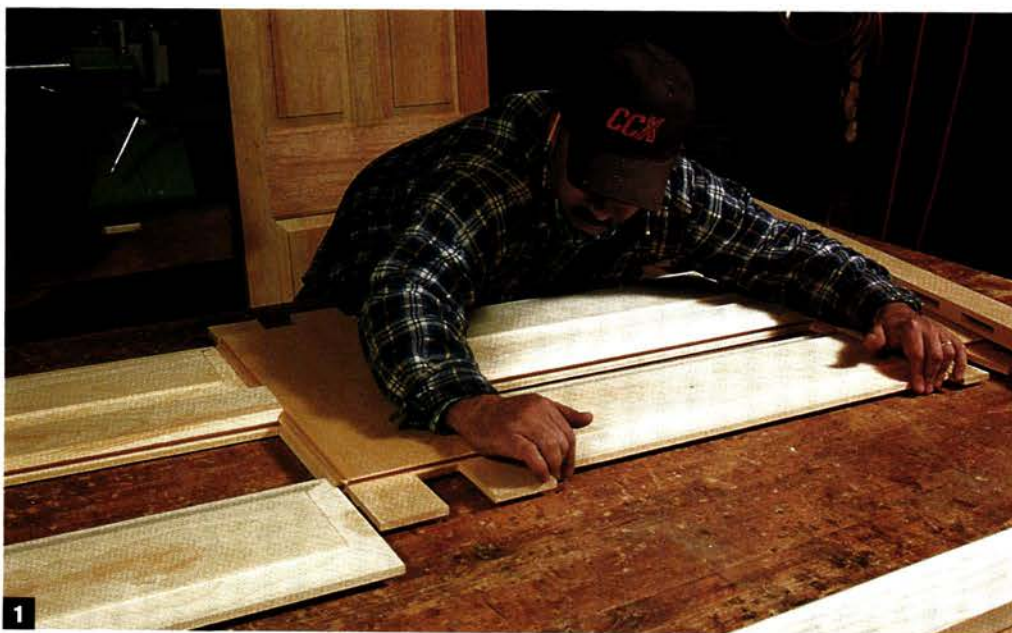
must be carefully assembled on a large worktable. Starting with a middle rail, the joiner fits pieces together, sliding the panels into ploughs or grooves as he goes. Last to go on are the stiles at each side, followed by pipe clamps that hold the door together temporarily. At this point, the joiner bores $\frac{1}{4}$ " or $\frac{5}{16}$ " holes in the mortise and tenon joints and secures them with pegs. These pine pegs are made with squared off sides to produce the proverbial "square peg in a round hole" that wedges the peg in a very tight joint.

Chuck also likes to glue his joints with common aliphatic resin carpenter's glue, a product unavailable to 18th century joiners. Though the glue makes the joints doubly secure, it has a quick set-up time that means assembly must move quickly. Altogether, the door is a very sturdy piece of construction. The big mortise and tenon shoulders, cut to close tolerances on precision equipment, add considerable strength to the system.

However, for the final period touch on doors like Richard's, Chuck and his shop turn to hand tools. Here they hand-plane all stiles and rails before they're assembled. This process takes some skill and care to maintain uniform thicknesses of all parts so that there is no difference in the completed joints.

Before the age of steam-powered milling machinery, early joiners used surfacing planes to smooth and reduce the wood to the desired thickness. Workaday woodwork might warrant only a basic "scrub planing"; finish joinery demanded a second round of planing. The cutting irons in these planes are ground to a slight arc, which keeps the edges of the iron from gouging the wood, as would happen with a straight-edged iron. Chuck's shop shapes their irons in the same way, so the plane produces a characteristic, slightly scalloped appearance in raking light. This look is the hallmark of all handmade joinery and the fitting finish to two newly recreated pre-industrial doors. 

SPECIAL THANKS to Richard Pieper (Jan Hird Pokorny Associates, New York, NY) and Chuck Bellinger (Architectural Components, 26 North Leverett Rd. Montague, MA 01351; 413-367-9441)



Panel Doors in Production

Above: At its most basic, a panel door is the same as Richard Pieper's side entry door: simply four flat panels held in a frame of unmoulded rails and stiles. At left: Though adding raised panels and mouldings on the frame dresses up the door, construction remains the same—even when produced with modern millwork machinery: 1) Dave Sylvester slides panels into a door frame of rails and stiles; 2) the shaper/feeder does the work of planes for adding moulded edges and profiles; 3) cutters on the tenoner form both sides of the tenon, then trim it to length; 4) the chisel mortiser punches several holes in a row for one mortise; 5) surface planing by hand adds period finish.

Call it a romantic revival, or a return to simplicity, suitability, and proportion. By 1920, a sea change had taken place in America; the subdued browns and dark reds of the Victorian era had been swept away on a wave of pastels, florals, and stripes.

20th-Century Wallpaper

by Mary Ellen Polson

CONSULT THE BIG TOMES on historic wallpapers all you want, says Stuart Stark. When it comes to wallcoverings for 20th-century houses, histories give only a tantalizing glimpse of the papers that were truly popular. "Those books are filters for high style," says Stark, co-owner of Charles Rupert Designs, a purveyor of reproduction wallpapers in Victoria, British Columbia. "They don't tell you what 99% of the population was buying."

Considering that the average homeowner ordered his or her papers from the Sears, Roebuck & Co. catalog for much of the 20th century, Stark has a point. Edith Wharton and Ogden Codman Jr. may have dissed wallpaper in *The Decoration of Houses* (1897), but 20th-century homeowners were eager to perk up Victorian-gloomy or blank-as-a-slate walls with fresh new wallcoverings—especially since an entire room could be papered for pennies.

Never before had fashions in wallpaper been in a position to change so quickly. "Up to about 1908, the general public was still buying what you'd call Victorian wallpapers," says Stark, who owns scores of catalogs from the first half of the



Clockwise from left, this page: Early Colonial Revival papers include "Basket Stripe," (Charles Rupert Designs); "Norwich," a paper first revived between 1880 and 1920; and "Quincy Lace," reproduced from an original discovered in 1890 (both Waterhouse Wallhangings). Right: Colonial-style wallpaper lights up a stairwell in a summer house in Maine.





Colonial, or Colonial Revival?

Sometimes you *can* have it both ways. When researchers began documenting colonial papers in the late-19th century, the result was often a custom-made reproduction, which was then hung in the same building. The paper is clearly colonial, but in a sense, it's a revival. Take the example of Quincy Lace (see p. 46), a paper found in 1890 in Quincy, Massachusetts. It's a bona fide colonial paper, says Richard Weil of Waterhouse Wallhangings in Boston. At the same time, you can consider it Colonial Revival, because it was reproduced as a machine print about the time of its discovery.



Top: The 1760 house is colonial, but the paper shown here would be just as comfortable in a Colonial Revival setting—especially set off by glossy white trimwork. **Left:** Two ca. 1905–1910 wallpaper designs by artisan Jennie B. Jones, now available as reproduction papers from J. R. Burrows & Co.

20th century. "Then there was a sea change. The catalogs go from Victorian to Arts & Crafts in literally one or two years."

More was afoot than the shift from Victorian cabbage roses to Arts & Crafts friezes, though. Where Victorians had eclectic tastes, 20th-century moderns looked to a new kind of tastemaker for selective advice: the interior decorator. Despite their disinclination for wallpapers, Wharton and Codman set the stage for lighter colors to emerge, calling for interiors with "plenty of white paint, a pale wallpaper with bow knots, and fragile chairs dipped in liquid gilding, covered with a flowered silk and cotton material."

This last comment was an allusion to chintz, the multi-colored floral cloth popularized in the first decades of the 20th century by America's Princess of Chintz, Elsie de Wolfe. In England, chintz fabrics and wallpapers had never gone completely out of style, and when trendsetters like de Wolfe rediscovered it, wallpaper manufacturers on both sides of the Atlantic revived their old pattern books.

Chintz was not the only blast from the past to go mainstream. The turn of the 20th century was a period of intense interest in the colonial past, and papers from the 18th- and early-19th centuries were widely copied and reproduced. Never mind that wallpaper was relatively rare in colonial dwellings. Americans wanted to romanticize their Colonial and Tudor Revival-style nests, and tapestries, scenics, Chinoiserie, shimmering stripes, and papers festooned with trellises, ribbons, and roses were one way to do it. A group of papers showcased in a 1920 issue of *House Beautiful* hits most of the highlights; just visualize the descriptions.

- A paper with bunches of blue, rose, and lavender flowers descending on linear vines on a warm ivory ground.

- A Chinese tapestry print featuring densely packed rustic scenery (vignettes include a woman under a bamboo um-

brella and a romanticized bridge over a pond) in rose, green, heliotrope, and blue on a black background.

- An English chintz of blossoming roses and vines on a white ground.

- A "Chinese Chippendale" paper, with brilliantly colored, stylized trees and peacocks, and line drawings of pagodas and rocks in the background.

- A paper with detached roses floating on a grey-and-white striped ground.

Papers like these remained popular, in one form or another, throughout much of the 20th century. Perhaps that's because they make use of much older motifs. Stripes, for instance, recall the 18th-century reign of Louis XV, when ribbons of color ran riot over the walls, often in combination with knots and bows, as well as small bouquets of flowers. The symbols in Chinese papers are even older; the bird-and-flower motif, for example, dates back to the Sung period (960-1280). It's a good guess that these "Chinese-y" motifs were reinterpreted more than once before they appeared in mass-market papers of the 1920s.

In any case, did it really matter that

the paper was machine made rather than block printed? "Decorative success does not depend primarily on the means of production but on the quality of the design," wrote Phyllis Ackerman in her 1923 book, *Wallpaper, Its History, Design, and Use*. "The successful use of wallpaper as a decoration is itself an art."

Many of the finishes on these "artful" papers were meant to enhance their ties to the distant past. Some tapestry papers, for instance, were overprinted with light or dark lines to mimic the texture of woven fabric, Stark says. Striped papers were often coated with mica, a highly reflective treatment that made the paper shimmer. A complimentary '20s treatment for a luminous mica-on-white striped paper might be a floral border, die-cut on both edges to follow the shapes in the leaves and flowers.

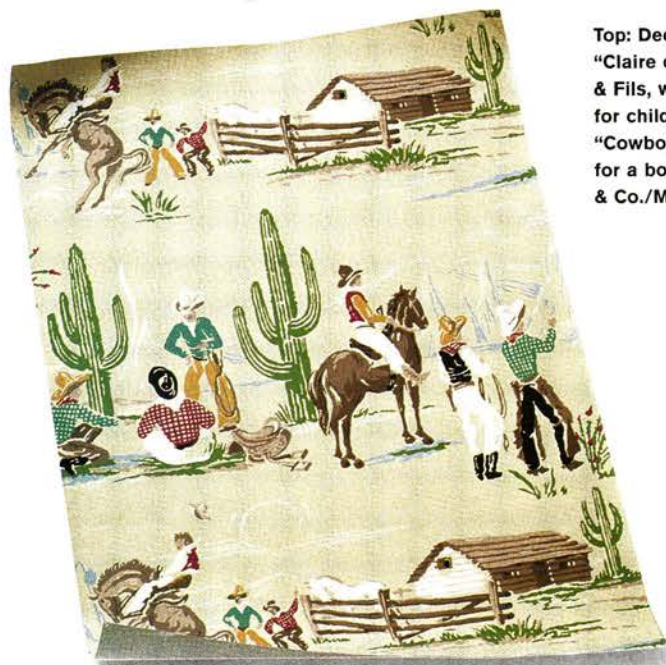
Although friezes had gone out of fashion for formal rooms by the '20s, they lived on in nurseries. Many decorative borders were adapted from illustrations in children's books by artists such as Walter Crane and Kate Greenaway.



Left to right: "Springtime," a 1920s floral chintz; "Regency Stripe," a 1940s striped paper; "Mica Stripe," suitable for homes through the 1920s, complemented by the die-cut "Roslyn Border." All from Charles Rupert Designs.



Left to right: An abstract "Thread" design from the 1930s, where fine lines merge optically to create a subtle color. In "Deco Bird" (1930s), stylized bird shapes form a trellis pattern. Both from Charles Rupert Designs.



Top: Decorative friezes, like "Claire de Lune" from Brunschwig & Fils, were perennially popular for children's rooms. Left: A 1940s "Cowboy Scenic" paper, suitable for a boys' room, from Carter & Co./Mt. Diablo Handprints.


By the 1930s, colors began to drab down. Pastels grew even paler. The first two-dimensional papers appeared—deceptively simple, linear patterns that were almost abstract. Take, for instance, a plaid pattern composed of ultra-thin lines in closely related colors. When the paper is hung on the wall, the lines merge optically to create the impression of a single color.

There was even less color in the early 1940s, as chemicals and dyes went to the war effort. At war's end, however, the romantic pastels and florals popularized in the '20s re-emerged. Spriggled with flowers, polka dots, or bunches of roses, papers were obviously pretty. Perhaps the quintessential '40s Colonial Revival-style paper was a Wedgwood blue or green spriggled with white flowers.

In the 1940s and '50s, vignette papers appeared for the first time. Scenes of islands and lakes float on an off-white background; kitchens with miniature shelves and tiny teacups hover in mid-air. Vignette papers were especially popular for children's rooms (see the cowboy-themed sample at left). "In Canada, we had some great ones with Mounties, igloos, and dog sleds," Stark recalls with a laugh.

Then there are the Victorian holdovers. When Stark stumbled over some papers with amorphous, cloudy shapes sprinkled with mica in his '40s catalogs, he didn't recognize them at first. "They were ceiling papers," he says. "It astonished me to find that they came so far forward. So when you find one of these shiny papers left in a closet, hold onto it. You may have a period piece as old as 1908—or something from the 1940s."

SUPPLIERS BRADBURY & BRADBURY WALLPAPERS, (707) 746-1900, www.bradbury.com. Circle 19 on the resource card. ■ BRUNSCHWIG & FILS, (914) 684-5800. Circle 20 on the resource card. ■ J.R. BURROWS & CO., (800) 347-1795, www.burrows.com. Circle 21 on the resource card. ■ CARTER & CO./MT. DIABLO HANDPRINTS, (707) 554-2682, www.carterandco.com. Circle 22 on the resource card. ■ CLASSIC CEILINGS, (800) 992-8700. Circle 23 on the resource card. ■ CLASSIC REVIVALS, (617) 574-9030. Circle 24 on the resource card. ■ CROWN CORP., (800) 422-2099. Circle 25 on the resource card. ■ IMPERIAL HOME DECOR GROUP, (800) 539-5399, www.imp-wall.com. Circle 26 on the resource card. ■ ROBINSON'S WALLPAPER & INTERIORS, (800) 458-2426, www.robinsonswallpaper.com. Circle 27 on the resource card. ■ CHARLES RUPERT DESIGNS, (250) 592-4916, www.charles-rupert.com. Circle 28 on the resource card. ■ SCALAMANDRE, (800) 932-4361. Circle 29 on the resource card. ■ SCHUMACHER, (800) 332-3384. Circle 30 on the resource card. ■ STROHEIM & ROMANN, (718) 706-7000. Circle 31 on the resource card. ■ THIBAUT WALLCOVERINGS, (800) 223-0704. Circle 32 on the resource card. ■ VICTORIAN COLLECTIBLES, (800) 783-3829. Circle 33 on the resource card. ■ WATERHOUSE WALLHANGINGS, (617) 423-7688. Circle 34 on the resource card.



In a bedroom under the eaves at Beauport, Charles Sleepers' eclectic fantasy on a colonial theme house in Gloucester, Massachusetts, a Chinese tapestry paper hovers over the spool bed.



WIRED

for the 21st Century

by Jennie L. Phipps

NEATLY SPLICED BETWEEN the front gable and side wing, the hipped-roof tower on Herb and Cindy Ritchell's Italianate home in Winnetka, Illinois, looks as though it's been there since 1872. Yet this architecturally sympathetic addition is equipped to handle information technology well into the new century.

Ritchell, a public relations executive who frequently works at home by computer, wanted telecommunications wiring that he could easily update. To provide quick access without having to open the walls, Ritchell had his contractor run 3/4" conduit the height of the two-storey addition and install removable telephone jacks at every level. "That way, if I decide to trade copper for fiber-optic cable somewhere down the road, the job won't be very complicated or destructive," Ritchell says.

No one can predict exactly how telecommunications technology will evolve over the next decade or two, but there are ways to make a house information-age savvy without compromising its integrity (see "Hiding the Wiring," page 53). If you're planning to update old data or telephone wiring, it pays to install the most advanced cable technology you can get.

Most home phones are served by

what the industry refers to as "quad" wiring—so-called because it has four copper wires. While voice phone service requires almost no bandwidth (information-carrying capacity), high-speed Internet and cable TV are much greedier. Today, many homebuilders and renovators are installing Category 5 wiring, which has four twisted wire pairs, or eight conductors. But even "Cat 5" will soon give way to a new category—5E (that's "E" for enhanced)—and then to Category 6, which promises more than twice the bandwidth of Cat 5.

As bandwidth capacities expand and Internet speeds increase, some experts expect the multi-purpose desktop computer to give way to specialized computing devices. This suggests that homes of the future will need high quality telecommunications wiring at various sites in almost every room. Use 8-pin modular (RJ-45) jacks on each wall, with more in kitchens, family rooms, and offices.

You'll need to plan internal connections carefully. Think of reliable, high-speed communications as you do a home electrical system—with service lines that come into a central distribution box. Wiring should radiate from the central location in a star pattern, not a daisy chain. With this method, each outlet or jack has its

own individual "home run" of cable independent of any other connection. This set-up provides three major advantages.

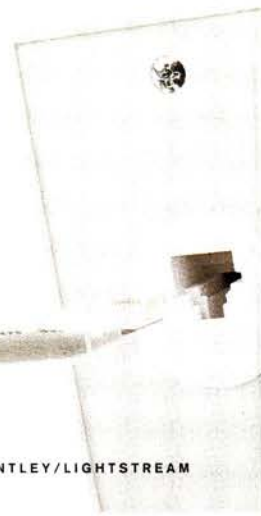
INSTALLATION FLEXIBILITY You can make all changes in service quickly and easily at the central distribution device, and treat each outlet independently.

PROBLEM ISOLATION When damage like a nail in the wall or through the cable interrupts service, it only effects one outlet.

SIGNAL QUALITY The star pattern eliminates signal problems caused by adding connections. (Each additional connection is a potential source of interference that can degrade signal quality.)

Because of the potential for transmission interference, proper installation of wiring or cable is crucial, says William

You can find 8-pin modular jacks and Category 6 wiring at telecommunications retailers like Radio Shack and home and computer centers.



T. Black of the Copper Development Association. For example, data and power cables should be separated by at least 6". Unless you are particularly adept with communications wiring, hire a professional installer (check the Yellow Pages under Telecommunications).

It's also a good idea to add coaxial cable (the kind used for cable TV hookups), which also delivers Internet access in some locations. With high-definition television (HDTV) just around the corner, choose quad-shielded RG-6 coax, with an all-copper center conductor for superior performance. Avoid lesser-grade RG-59.

Should you consider adding the latest and greatest telecommunications option, fiber-optic cable? Fiber optics use light to transmit data, so transmissions suffer less interference and signal loss, at speeds many times faster than copper cable. Since fiber optics are expensive to install and fragile to maintain, phone companies haven't been able to justify the expense of wiring the last mile from transmitters to homes. Putting fiber optics in your home may put you ahead of the curve—maybe too far, since communications technology is evolving so quickly. A better approach is to install a telecommunications system that's both up-to-date and easy to update. That way, you'll be ready for fiber optics, wireless networking—or the *new* new thing.

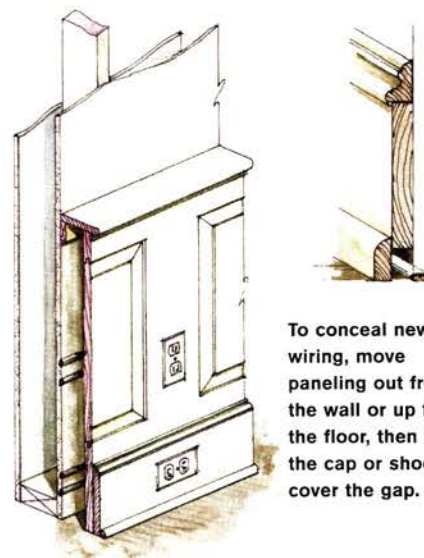
JENNIE L. PHIPPS *stays in touch via ISDN in Bloomington Hills, Michigan.*

Hiding the Wiring

Wiring isn't pretty. Hugh Hefner, an infamous judge of beauty, created his notorious bachelor pad in a Beaux Arts mansion in Chicago. He hid the wiring in ways that are still innovative today.

In the media room, Hefner concealed lights and video cameras in ceiling mouldings, says Ellen Bailey Dickson of Bailey Edward Design in Chicago. In the bedroom, heavy ceiling medallions disguised cameras above the circular bed. It may seem a bit decadent for the average old-house owner, but there are ideas here worth stealing, says Dickson, who was involved in the 1903 mansion's conversion to condominiums.

- Install small stereo speakers near the ceiling if you have ceiling mouldings. It's a good location for sound, and modern equipment doesn't have to be huge. Paint the frieze an accent color and cover the speaker with cheese cloth, which you can paint as well. The result will be a speaker that functions well, but is nearly invisible.
- Run cables and telephone wires in the narrow gap behind picture moulding, or through the dead space underneath wooden crown mouldings.
- Hide wiring behind existing or restored paneling. There are at least two approaches, says Gregory A. Jones, an architect with SmithGroup ArchitectsFour Historic Preservation in Ann Arbor, Michigan. The first moves the paneling just far enough away from the wall (1/2" to 3/4") to allow a run of Category 6 wiring behind the wainscot; the cap is modified to cover the resulting gap. The other method involves temporarily removing the paneling in order to hollow out a channel sized to fit cable in the plaster behind it.
- To conceal wiring behind a baseboard, move the baseboard outward to a depth sufficient for a run of conduit or cable (1/2" to 3/4"). Fill the gap at the top with a wood spacer that serves as the baseboard's finishing edge. An alternate method involves raising the baseboard an inch or two to create a dead space big enough for new cable or wiring between the bottom of the baseboard and the floor. Once you've installed the desired wiring, cover the opening with a new base shoe.



To conceal new wiring, move paneling out from the wall or up from the floor, then adjust the cap or shoe to cover the gap.

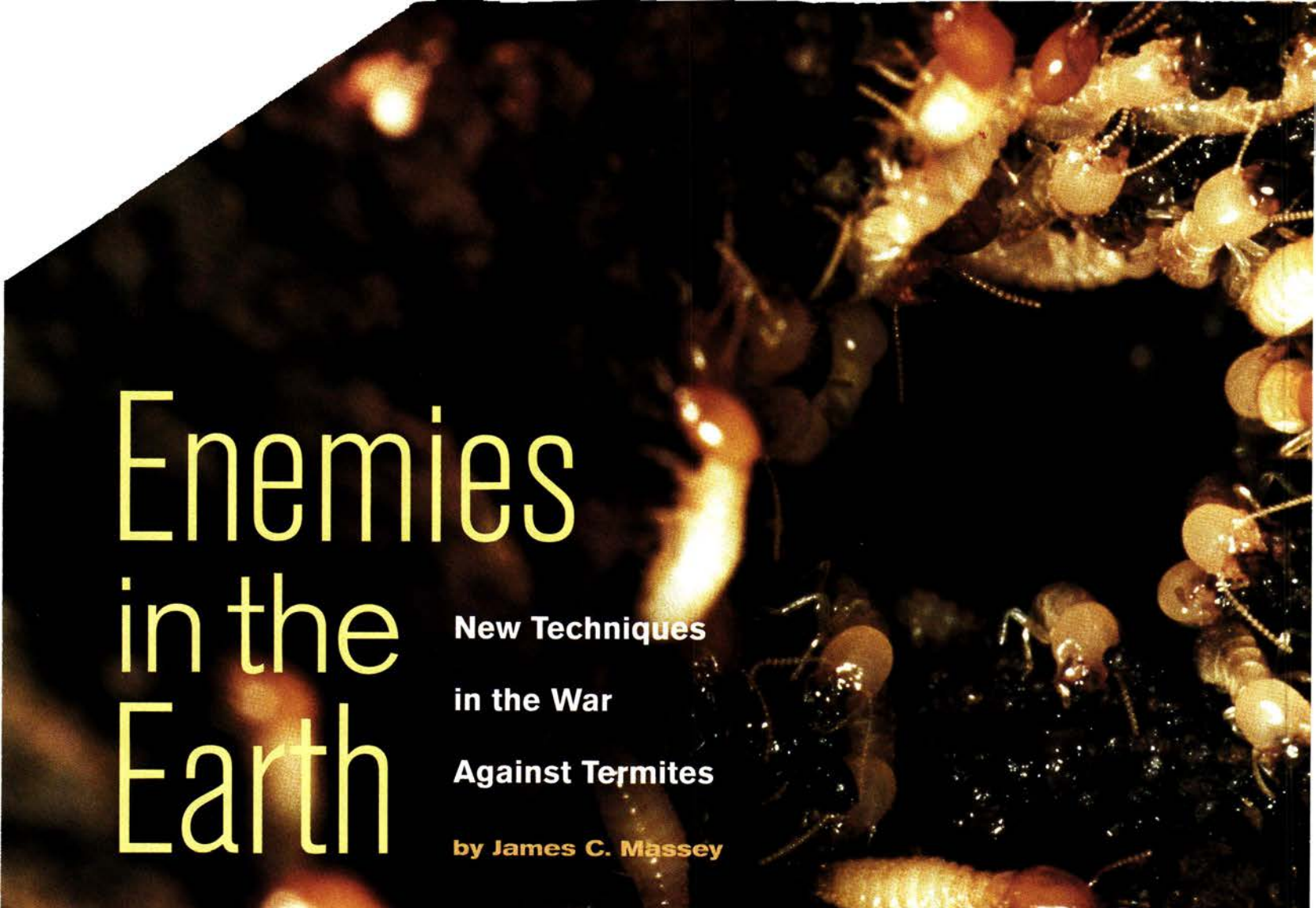
GET IN LINE

T1 This high-speed telecommunications line delivers information at up to 1.5M bps (megabits per second). At \$1,200 per month on average, T1 lines are usually cost-effective only for companies with heavy information demands. You can also get what's called a fractional T1 line, offering speeds of 512Kbps or 256Kbps.

Prices drop accordingly. Ask your local phone company about installation. **ISDN** ISDN stands for Integrated Services Digital Network, or to some users, "It Still Does Nothing." ISDN is available almost everywhere. On average, its speed is 128Kbps—about three times the speed of a 56k modem on a

standard phone line. It costs about \$100 per month. As with the T1, call the local phone company for installation details. **DSL** A Digital Subscriber Line allows you to transmit or receive data over a standard (analog) phone line faster and more cheaply than ISDN. But DSL is only available in a few parts of the

country, and then only within about five miles of a telephone company switching center. DSL allows you to get data much faster than you can send it. The average cost is about \$50 per month. Again, call your local phone company for availability.



Enemies in the Earth

New Techniques
in the War
Against Termites

by James C. Massey

CEASELESSLY marching up the United States, the advance of termites gives new poignancy to the old expression "There goes the neighborhood!" The basic reason is simple: termites live to eat wood, and they've been doing just that for 20 million years. The trouble is, now they are more pervasive, more aggressive and, with the invasion of a new Formosan species, more deadly.

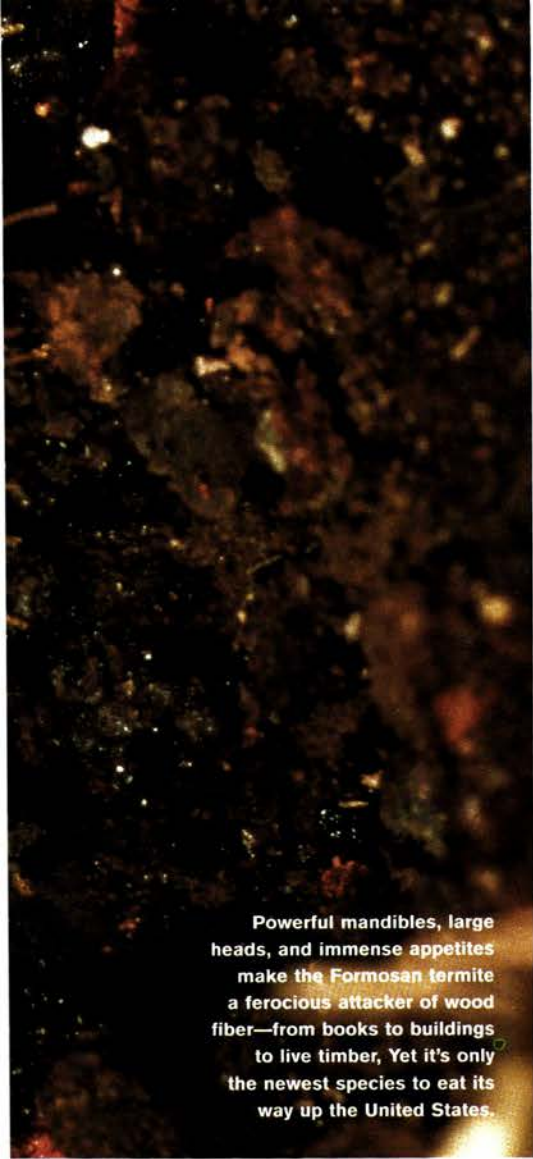
The Formosan termite (*Coptotermes formosanus* Shiraki) is only the latest and most voracious wood eater. The traditional subterranean destructive termite (*Reticulitermes flavipes* Kollar), along with the less common dry-wood type (*Cryptotermes brevis* Weeker), have been chewing away on the mainland for a century or more. In today's global economy, however,

these insects travel easier than ever. Moreover, the spread of heated buildings and water in cold climates (normally not hospitable to termites) has brought their path northward. Termites now appear along the eastern seaboard, along the Great Lakes, and into several Canadian cities as far up as Winnipeg. Indeed, the problem is so severe that in 1997 the National Trust for Historic Preservation added termite-threatened areas in the Gulf of Mexico to its list of Most Endangered Historic Sites.

THE FORMOSAN FRONT The loudest alarm is for the phenomenal spread of the Formosan termite. It must be addressed "like a contagious disease," according to leading scientist Dennis Ring of the LSU Agricultural Center Cooperative Extension Services. The Formosan is literally a super bug.

It shreds wood, eating nine times faster than our usual subterranean termites. Formosans live in colonies with perhaps 5 million "brothers" that will build tunnels extending over hundreds of feet—even under streets—to reach log piles, dead and live trees, and multiple houses. There may be colonies in the walls of buildings as high as attics, or up in trees. In New Orleans, investigators found Formosans on the 40th floor of a new high-rise building, and 185' up in a church tower, feasting on wood from a recent restoration.

As is well known, subterranean termites need moisture to survive. This is why they construct protective mud tubes from the ground to reach a raised source of wood, such as a house. Inside the wood they eat out the cellulose, forming galleries. The voracious Formosan will eat



Powerful mandibles, large heads, and immense appetites make the Formosan termite a ferocious attacker of wood fiber—from books to buildings to live timber. Yet it's only the newest species to eat its way up the United States.

through telephone and electrical high-voltage wires to get at the paper wrapping, multiply in utility vaults where it is moist, and eat through asphalt, plaster, thin metal (even lead), utility poles, caskets, books, paintings, and furniture. All this without normal mud tubes.

As if the two subterraneans aren't bad enough, there is also the insidious drywood termite. This species, which requires very little moisture, invades trees and buildings and furniture. It often leaves behind neat piles sawdust-like frass—tiny pellets or droppings forced out of minute holes in the wood. If New Orleans is ground zero for Formosans, Florida seems to be the epicenter for drywoods.

NEW TACTICAL TREATMENTS The conventional termite treatment—injecting ter-

miticides around the perimeter of the house—is effective in blocking their passage for a time, but it doesn't kill termites inside the corridor, or the millions outside in subterranean colonies. The level of chemical protection was systematically weakened in the mid-1980s when the federal government banned the manufacture of chlordane, an effective termiticide. Substitutes are not as potent or long-lasting, and require larger quantities in applications. The commonest chemicals in use today are chlorpyrifos and four pyrethroids.

Tenting and fumigating a house is an expensive but effective process to control all pests that are above grade, including termites but, again, it does not kill those underground. Also, it provides no residual protection against the million or so perhaps 100' away and ready to go at the building. Tented fumigation is the most effective treatment for drywood termites unless the infestation is in a limited area. Depending on the case, a skilled and licensed pest control operator may also employ heat or cold, electrocution, microwaves, drill-and-inject termiticides, borate surface spray, or wood removal treatments. Killing the colony is the difficult part, as is killing any large life infestations within a house.

Protection against the super termite, the Formosan, is all the harder. Pest control operators and homeowners know relatively little about their treatment, plus the massive destruction can hide within sturdy old trees and seemingly solid walls.

The problem has reached catastrophic proportions in the Gulf states, causing an estimated \$1 billion per year in property damage. Conditions are so bad in the historic Vieux Carré district of New Orleans that researchers are treating an entire fifteen-block area with a new process. This program is a joint effort by the Department of Agriculture with the City of New Orleans Mosquito and Termite Control Board. Research for controlling subterranean termites in historic buildings is also



Top: Formosan termites literally shred wood in their search for life-sustaining cellulose. Originally from China, they have been in Hawaii for well over a century. The famed Iolani Palace in Honolulu, built in 1845, was so devastated by Formosans that it had to be taken down and totally rebuilt starting in 1879. **Above:** In New Orleans, Formosans infest live oak trees with no apparent visual signs.

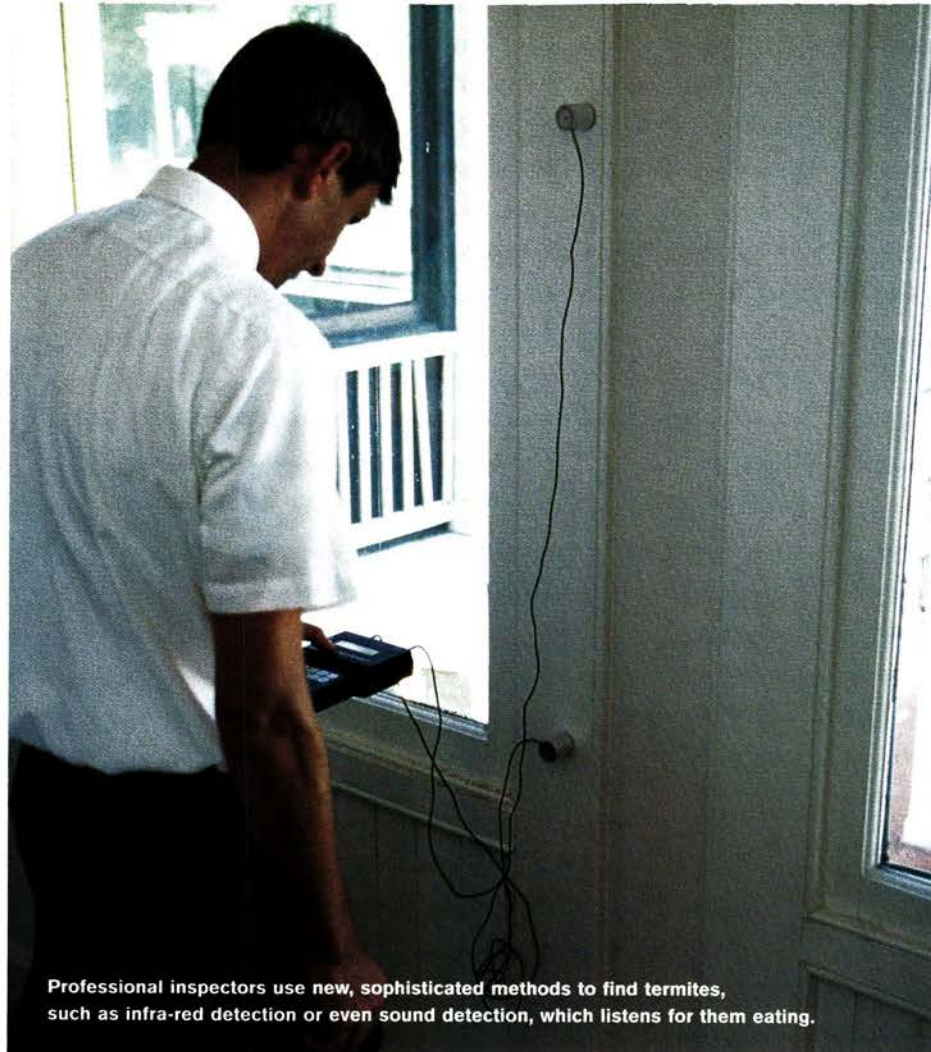


Above: Bait systems are the new approach to termite treatment. Where mud tubes or other evidence of infestation appear above ground, pest control operators mount box-

like traps. Periodic monitoring shows whether termites have taken the bait, as shown here. **Below:** The average trap is a canister placed in the ground at regular intervals. Wood sticks impregnated with termiticide form the bait. The Dow system (trade-named Recruit II and Recruit AG) employs hexaflumuron as the active ingredient, and is sold for professional use only.

sponsored by the National Center for Preservation Technology and Training in Natchitoches, Louisiana, which is "committed to develop training in the application of new preservation technologies" according to Dr. Mark Gilberg, Research Coordinator.

Fortunately, there's positive results from research at several different universities, working with leading chemical companies to develop new products. The new research treatments focus on killing the large, interconnected termite settlements



Professional inspectors use new, sophisticated methods to find termites, such as infra-red detection or even sound detection, which listens for them eating.

rather than attempting to erect a shield around one building. In an inspired change of direction, the favored strategy is to attract rather than repel the enemy. As with so many practical problems, the simplest solution is often the best.

The process is to locate the critters, then bait them with a slow-acting termiticide which they carry back to their nests. The termites transfer the chemicals by feeding the soldiers, king, and queen, and other workers through their sophisticated habit of preening each termite they encounter. Generally, most are dead within several months, but some colonies need further treatments. Monitoring backs up the process to determine what areas remain clear of infestation or become reinfested. The system uses only minuscule quantities of termiticide—less than an ounce rather than several gallons—and it keeps the chemicals out of the house.

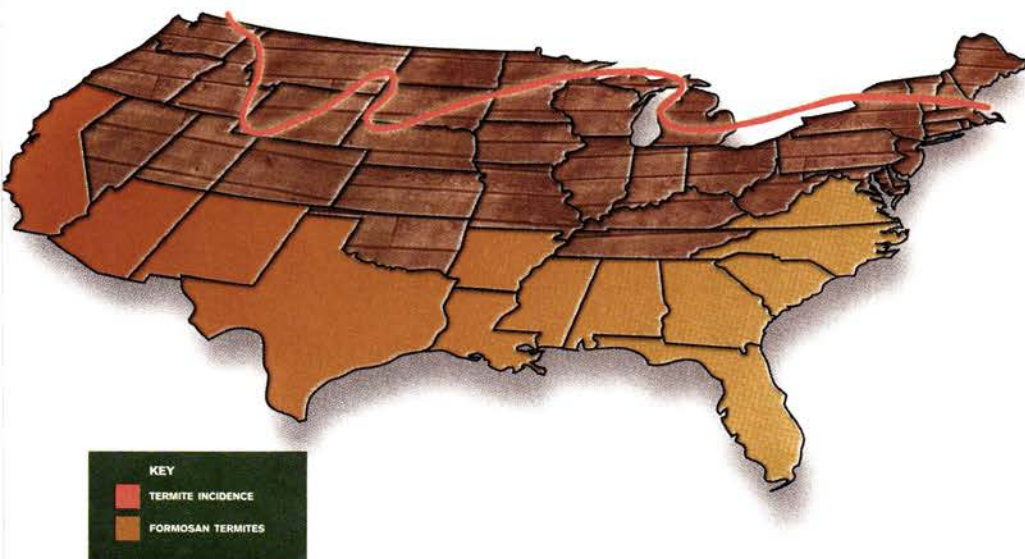
Dow Agro Sciences Sentricon is one

of the most widely used systems. It places a small canister in the ground at regular intervals around the structure, then loads it with soft wood strips as bait. If the bait shows no damage, termites are probably not active at that point. When there is evidence of termite attack, however, an operator inserts termiticide-laden bait, which the termites carry back to the colony with lethal consequences. Canisters are monitored monthly for effectiveness, rebaiting or adding more canisters if necessary. Above grade, where there are termite tubes or evidence of termites in wood members, operators use a similar device in the form of a box-like pack. Incidentally, the process may be even more effective if neighboring infested properties join in the treatment, as a single million-strong colony may be gnawing at more than one house.

Bait-product manufacturers assure the public that these devices are tamper-proof. They are 99% paper and not

TERMITES IN TRANSIT

The Formosan termite, which only appeared on the Gulf Coast in the 1940s, is believed to have arrived via ships returning from the Pacific Theater of World War II. This species became a serious problem by the 1960s, and is now known to exist in states from Texas to Virginia (yellow on map). Drywood termites are worst in Florida, but also found from California to South Carolina. Global commerce and increased numbers of heated buildings have brought the uppermost reaches of all termites (red line) across the Great Lakes and into Canada.



believed to pose problems should humans chew on the bait. Another new baiting system, FMC's Firstline (active ingredient sulfluramid), employs about 20 sunken canisters per house. Ensystex's Exterra is also a new bait system. Other chemical companies are developing new soil termiticides, such as American Cyanamid's Chlorfenapyr (Subterfuge), Bayer's Imidachlomid, or Rhone-Poulenc's Fipronil, now in various stages of EPA approval. Engineered as foams as well as liquids, all hold the promise of better barrier protection, and all are biodegradable.

Given that treating for termites is a job for trained professionals, and that many new technologies are still in the trial stage, what can the old-house owner do? The answer is be on the lookout for termites. In fact, the most practical test for termites is also the simplest. Take a 1"x 2" softwood stake, drive it 2' in the ground every few feet around the house, garage, old trees,

and wood piles, then inspect monthly for signs of termite infestation. In the event you hit a Formosan nest, you will see infestation within a day—deep channels within five days in extreme cases. From here move on to a number of straightforward but state-of-the-art procedures and tests (see sidebar at right).

Researchers predict almost 100% of untreated houses in some southeast regions of the U.S. will be infested with termites in time. Yes, it's that serious. 🐜

THIS ARTICLE is based on a September 1999 workshop, 'New Technologies for the Control of Drywood and Subterranean Termites in Historic Buildings and Landscapes,' sponsored by the National Center for Preservation Technology and Training, National Park Service, Natchitoches, Louisiana. For information on similar workshops contact: Dr. Mark Gilberg, NCPTT, NSU Box 5682, Natchitoches, LA 71497

Protective Measures

Some measures may be used in tandem. Costs may not represent actual PCO (pest control operator) prices.

CAREFUL VISUAL INSPECTION Along with the stick test, inspect basements and crawl spaces—anything near the ground. Test for hollowed wood with a hammer tap or ice pick. Look for mud tubes between ground and wood; open up loose wood.

BAIT TRAP SYSTEMS Locate a certified PCO who offers the systems (\$1500–\$2000 plus \$250–\$300/1 yr. monitoring).

BARRIER CHEMICAL TREATMENTS Continue conventional treatments; consider new chemicals as they become available (\$1000 plus \$250/1 yr. renewal).

TENT FUMIGATION May be combined with other measures (about \$3000).

SANITATION Keep building environs clean of wood and paper that attract termites.

PHYSICAL BARRIERS Special materials seem to block termites. Basalt sand (available only in Hawaii) is too big for termites to move when layered under concrete floor slabs. Fine stainless steel mesh (trade-name Termini-Mesh) resists the metal-chewing habits of Formosans.

WOOD PRESERVATION Preserved wood, the most promising precaution against future infestation for new construction, is equally valuable for additions and repairs. Some new houses in New Orleans are being built with 100% Boron-treated wood, as well as CCA and ACZA pressure-treated wood.

SUPPLIERS

Commercial bait systems; contact for local contractors.

■ **DOW AGRO SCIENCES**, 9330 Zionsville Rd., Indianapolis, IN 46268-1054. (800) 678-2388. Sentricon systems (Recruit II, Recruit AG). Circle 17 on resource card.

■ **FMC CORPORATION**, 1735 Market St., Philadelphia, PA 19103, (800) 321-1362. Firstline system. Circle 18 on resource card.

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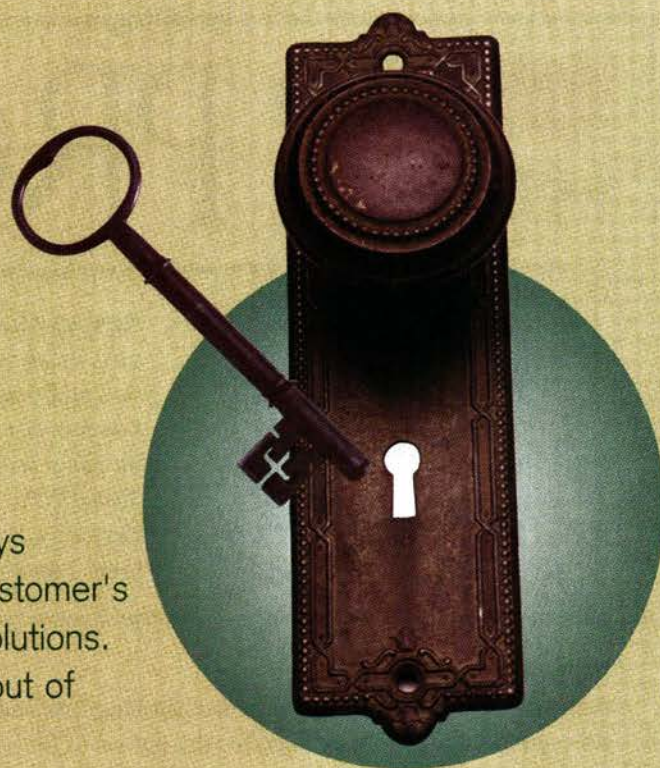
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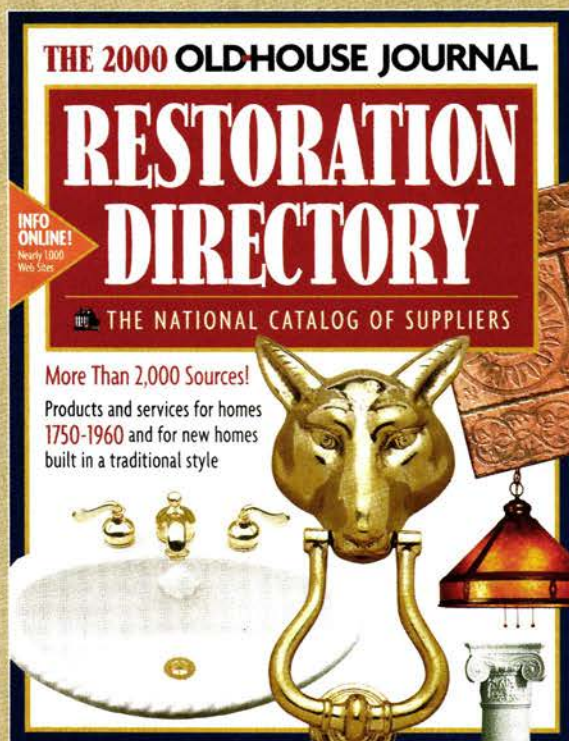
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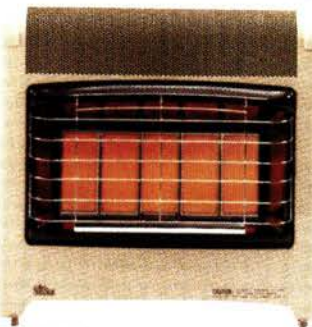
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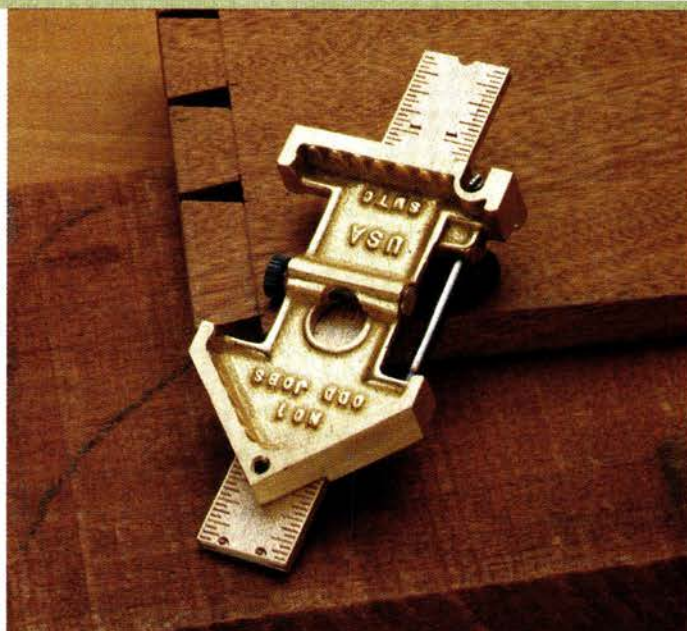
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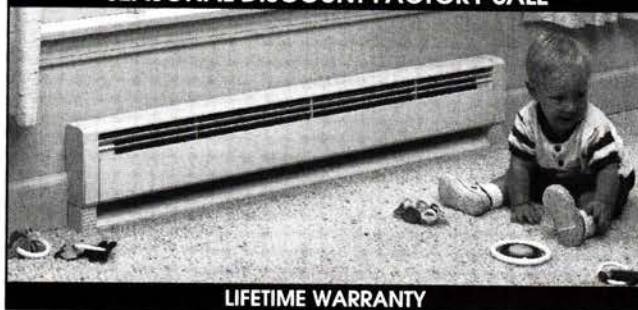
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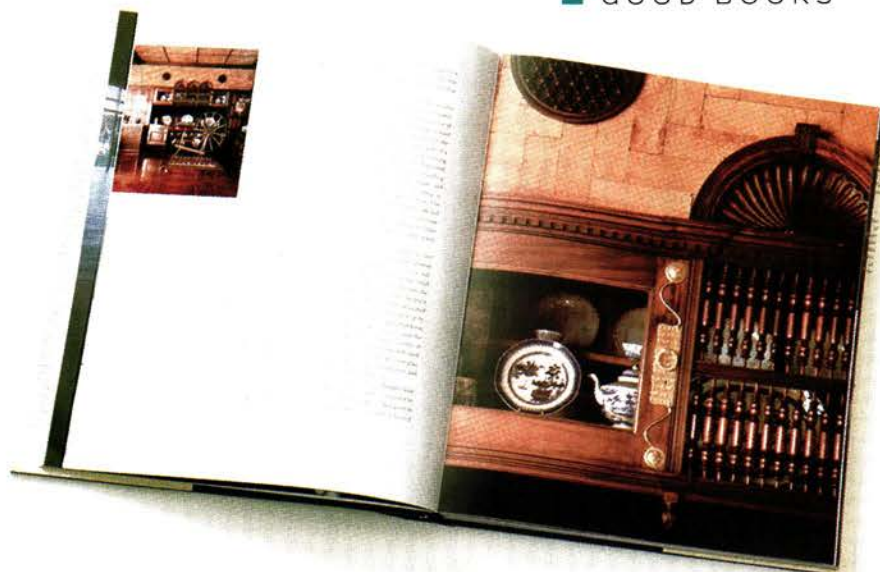
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The Shingle Styles

WHAT IS THE DEEP, enduring appeal of the Shingle style? A little reflection suggests a host of answers. It is an informal style—but not an unstudied or sloppy one: This “architecture of the American summer” celebrates leisure and family, yet it was largely the product of trained architects working for educated clients of means. It has late Victorian sentiment, but shuns the period’s ostentation by design. It is an architecture of natural materials: wood shingles, of course, and native stone. Its medieval character is kept from any Gothic darkness by its embrace of comforting Colonial forms and finely rendered classical details. And it is, essentially, American as no transplanted style

“The new approach . . . would reverberate across the nation in the 1880s and 1890s . . . finally becoming the inspiration for much Postmodern design since the 1970s . . . the Shingle Style.”

with a foreign name could ever be. Shingle style appeals to romantics and modernists alike.

But ask three architectural historians to define Shingle style and you may well get three different answers. Notoriously hard to pin down, named retrospectively and debated endlessly, the style has been dismissed merely a variant of Shaw’s English Queen Anne, or as “Richardsonian Romanesque expressed in wood,” or as the Victorian period’s “modern colonial” style. What

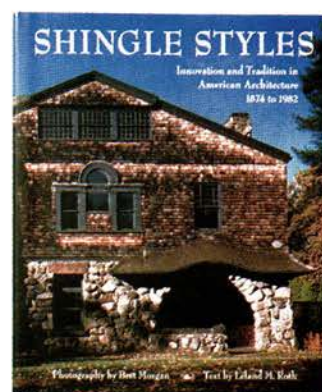
does tie these houses together? And why do many Postmodern houses of the past 35 years so clearly owe a debt to the elusive Shingle style of the 1880s and 1890s?

Someone has taken a stab at answering these questions (someone besides Vincent Scully, the Yale scholar who gave the name Shingle Style to this idiom during the 1950s). The result is a provocative, information-filled book that convincingly relates H. H. Richardson’s Watts Sherman House and Frank Lloyd Wright’s Home and Studio, John Calvin Stevens in Maine and Bernard Maybeck in California, Joseph Esherick’s 1950s Bay Area Regionalism and Robert Venturi’s Hamptons. *Shingle Styles* (subtitled *Innovation and Tradition in American Architecture 1874 to 1982*) may raise a few eyebrows. But I found it a long-overdue clarification of the precedents and relationships that made the Shingle-style language so important for so many decades, and from coast to coast.

The book is not a description of a single historical style as much as it is a chronicle of this distinctly American building idiom *and its evolution*. The thirty key structures portrayed in the book span more than a century. They are in Newport and Oyster Bay, but also in Oak Park, Spokane, and Pasadena.

The Shingle style emerged during the 1870s in the Northeast, as vacation “cottages” built for the elite. Architects as notable as H.H. Richard-

The built-in sideboard in Stanford White’s dining room addition (1881) to Kingscote, a Gothic Revival house in Newport, R.I.



SHINGLE STYLES
INNOVATION AND TRADITION
IN AMERICAN ARCHITECTURE,
1874 TO 1982

PHOTOGRAPHS BY BRET MORGAN
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son, Charles McKim and Stanford White, and William Ralph Emerson are associated with its defining moment. Soon it spread to wealthy enclaves in New York and New Jersey. Then a generation of architects brought it to the Midwest and especially to California, where it took on a regional character of its own. Many of these architects were trained by Richardson, White, and their proteges. The Shingle style flourished between 1879 and 1916, fading slowly (a spectacular example was built in Southampton as late as 1922). It influenced several notable mid-century buildings, which are included in this volume. The style was rediscovered and adapted by post-Modern architects during the 1970s.

More than 200 photographs were

commissioned for this book. They depict early examples by McKim, Mead & White, Roosevelt's Sagamore Hill by Lamb & Rich, Wilson Eyre's house for Charles Lang Freer in Detroit, work by Frank Lloyd Wright, Bernard Maybeck, and Julia Morgan, and that of such late-20th-century architects



Felsted from the bay side: landscape genius Frederick Law Olmsted's last home at Deer Isle, Maine, designed by William Ralph Emerson in 1896.

as Robert A.M. Stern and Robert Venturi. (Photographer Bret Morgan specializes in architecture and interiors with an emphasis on historic preservation. He was also the photographer for the book *The Architecture of the Shakers*. He has a master's degree in architecture from Columbia.) The

text was written by scholar Leland M. Roth, whose previous books include *A Concise History of American Architecture* and *McKim, Mead & White, Architects*.

Thirty important buildings, mostly homes, are chronicled with photographs. They are:

WATTS SHERMAN HOUSE
Newport, R.I., 1874
H.H. Richardson
NEWPORT CASINO
Newport, R.I., 1881
McKim, Mead & White
KINGS COTE
(dining room addition),
Newport, R.I., 1881
McKim, Mead & White
ISAAC BELL HOUSE
Newport, R.I., 1883
McKim, Mead & White
SAGAMORE HILL
Oyster Bay, L.I., N.Y.,
1883. Lamb & Rich
STONEHURST
Waltham, Mass., 1886
H.H. Richardson

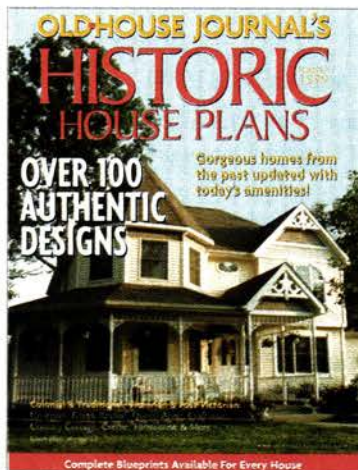
NAUMKEAG
Stockbridge, Mass.,
1887. McKim, Mead
& White
FREER HOUSE
Detroit, Mich., 1890
Wilson Eyre
SHELburne FARMS
Shelburne, Vt., 1885-
1902. R.H. Robertson
HOTEL DEL CORONADO
Coronado, Cal., 1888
James and Merritt Reid
WRIGHT HOME & STUDIO
Oak Park, Ill., 1889
Frank Lloyd Wright
FAIRMONT CEMETERY
CHAPEL
Spokane, Wash., 1890
Kirtland K. Cutter
ERNEST COXHEAD HOUSE
San Francisco
Ernest Coxhead, 1893
ST. JOHN'S CHURCH
Petaluma, Cal., 1891
Ernest Coxhead

FELSTED
Deer Isle, Maine, 1896
William Ralph
Emerson
FIRST UNITARIAN
CHURCH
Berkeley, Cal., 1898
A.C. Schweinfurth
GIGNOUX COTTAGE
Portland, Maine, 1906
John Calvin Stevens
GRAYOAKS
Ross, Cal., 1906
Bernard Maybeck
GAMBLE HOUSE
Pasadena, Cal., 1909
Greene & Greene
THE AIRPLANE HOUSE
Woods Hole, Mass.,
1912. Burcell &
Elmslie
JOHN GALEN
HOWARD HOUSE
Berkeley, Cal., 1912
John Galen Howard
JOHN S. THOMAS HOUSE
Berkeley, Cal., 1914
William C. Hays

GUY HYDE CHICK HOUSE
Oakland, Cal., 1914
Bernard Maybeck
SAUSALITO WOMAN'S
CLUB
Sausalito, Cal., 1917
Julia Morgan
TIMBERLINE LODGE
Mount Hood, Oregon,
1938. William Turner
THE FOUREST
Kentwoodlands, Cal.,
1957. Joseph Esherick
FLINN HOUSE
East Hampton, N.Y.,
1979. Jaquelin Robertson
LAWSON HOUSE
East Quogue, N.Y., 1981
Robert A.M. Stern
PETRIE HOUSE
Wainscott, N.Y., 1982
Robert Venturi
KRAGSYDE
Swan's Island, Maine
(after Peabody &
Stearns 1882). Beyor
& Goodrich 1982-

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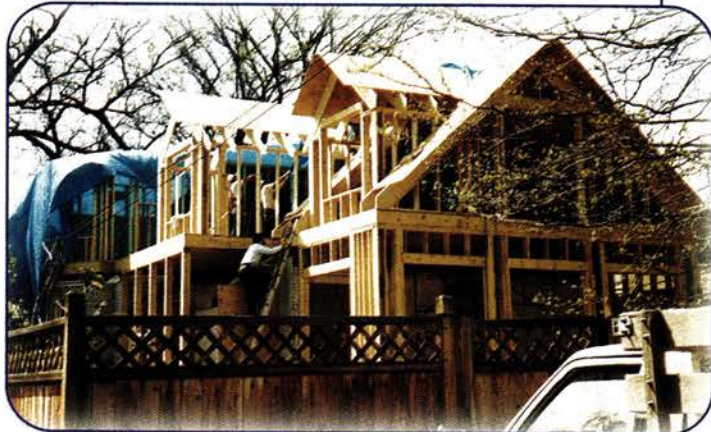
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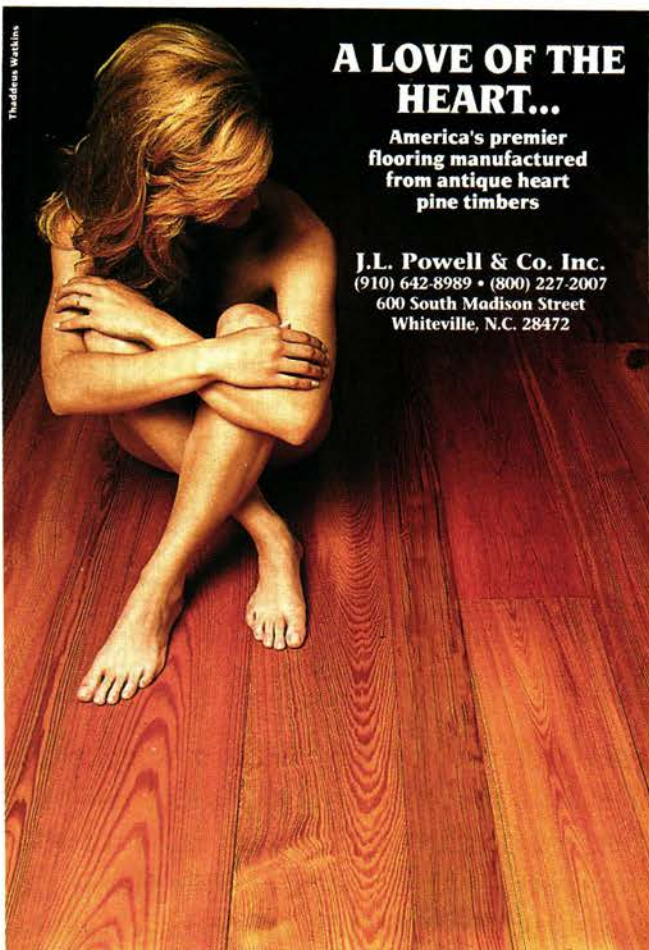
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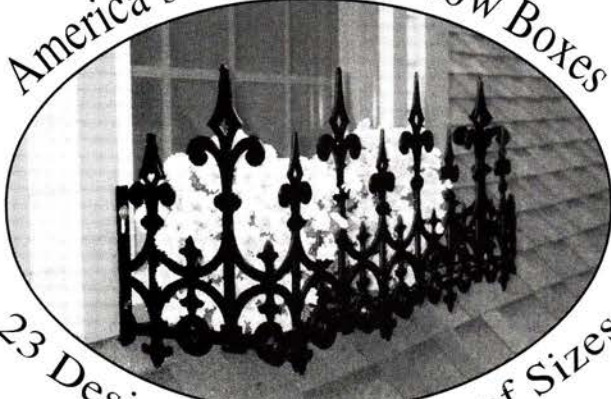
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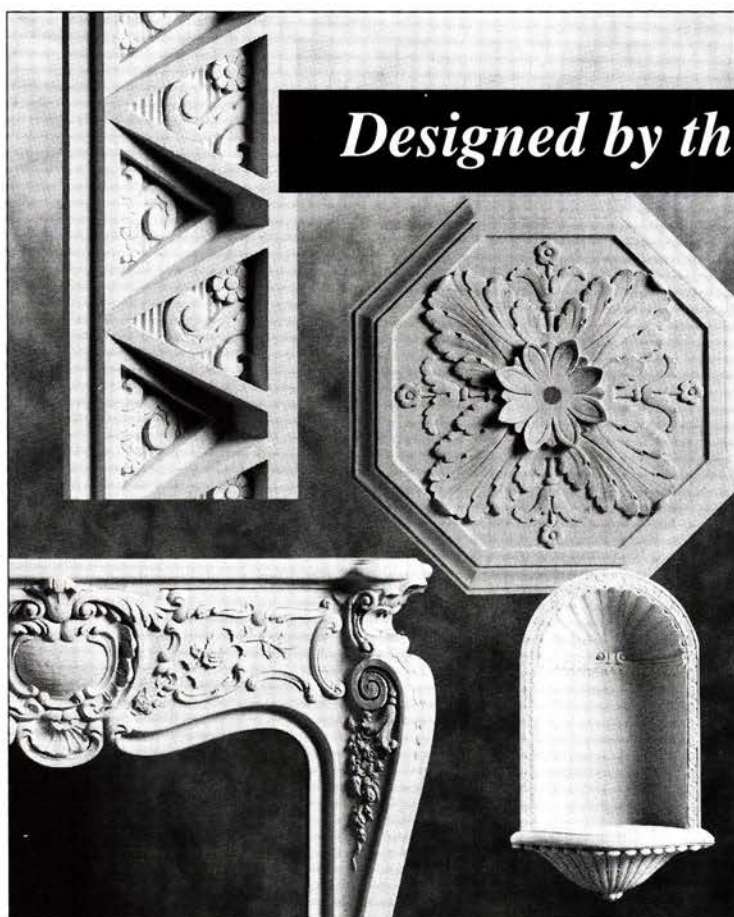
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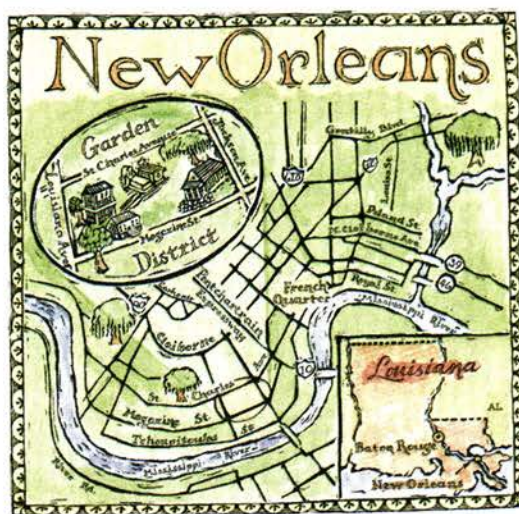
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The Garden District

IT'S EASY TO HOP on the St. Charles streetcar and quickly leave behind the raucous confines of Bourbon Street and the French Quarter, haunt of Mardi Gras revelers. Just \$1 will transport you upriver to the genteel and quaint Garden District, a 66-block, oak-shrouded architectural oasis of gracious living and flowering gardens, worlds apart from the trinket shops and crowded streets of the Vieux Carré. Overwhelmingly residential, this historic New Orleans neighborhood half a mile from the mighty Mississippi is bounded by Magazine Street and St. Charles, Louisiana, and Jackson Avenues.

The Garden District began as a privileged suburban enclave for newly wealthy Anglo-American interlopers who came to New Orleans to make their fortunes, and succeeded wildly. In the early-19th century, Louisiana and the port of New Orleans were new additions to the United States, and the Mississippi River was the lifeblood of American commerce and communication.

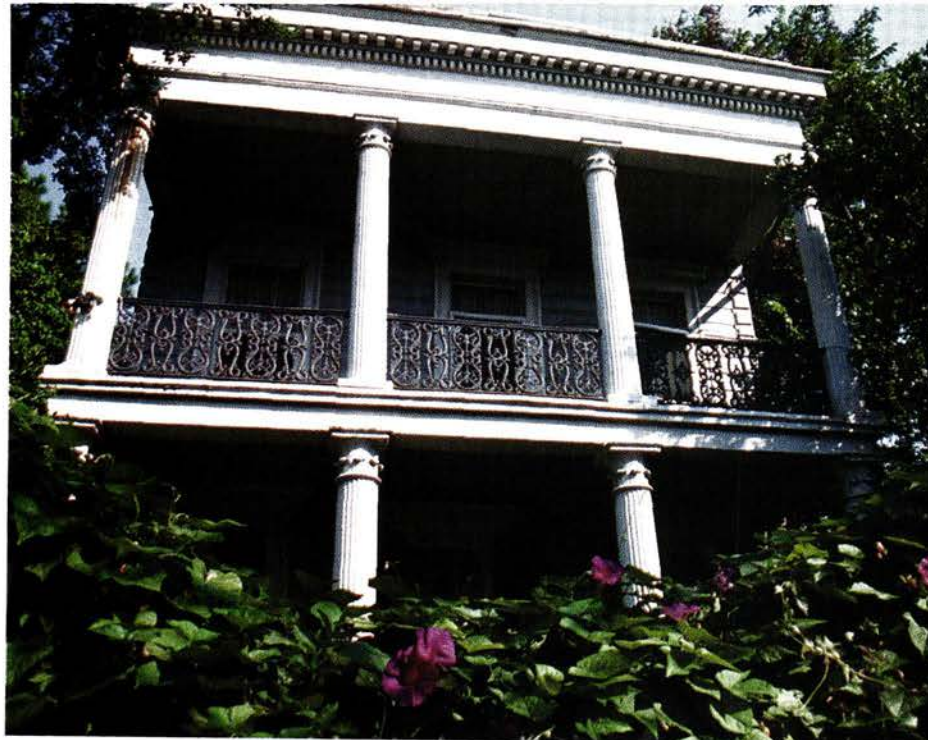
Speculators scrambled to New Orleans, where they became successful wholesalers, ice suppliers, shippers, land developers, and cotton middlemen. Representing only a tenth of the population in 1806, Anglo-Americans were in the clear majority by 1850.



Scorned by the Creole elite, *nouveau-riche* American entrepreneurs soothed their bruised egos by creating fantasies of faux stone and classical allusion in the Garden District. As you stroll the District's shady sidewalks, residents are likely to engage you in friendly conversation long before you complete your tour.

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BY DIANA JARVIS GODWIN



Clockwise (from top): A double-galleried Greek Revival mansion, trimmed with ironwork railings and framed by morning glories, is the picture of Garden District allure. The St. Charles streetcar beckons. A cast-iron gallery soars two storeys on the Italianate-style Joseph Carroll House (1869), where Mark Twain attended lavish parties during the 1880s. The angel tomb rises into a blue sky in Lafayette Cemetery No. 1.



These opportunistic newcomers were shunned by the established Creoles, whose inherited wealth was tied to the old plantation economy. The French-speaking natives despised the newcomers, calling them "Cantucks," whether they came from border states such as Kentucky, Tennessee, or West Virginia, or purely Northern regions like New England or the Mid-Atlantic. Creole families considered the upstart Americans hard-drinking and crude, and steadfastly refused to interact with them socially.

Despite their contempt for these brash interlopers, some aristocratic but land-poor Creoles were forced to sell their vast holdings to Anglo-American speculators, who rapidly subdivided them into building lots for quick profits. In the 1830s, on the old Livaudais plantation, Canadian speculator Samuel Jarvis Peters platted out the first grid of what became the ultimate *nouveau-riche* Anglo neighborhood. The Garden District took its name from the luxuriant gardens that framed its mansions and cottages.

The earliest houses in the District were typically three bays wide, executed in the Greek Revival style. One elegant example is the Thomas Toby House on Prytania Street, built in 1838 by a Philadelphia native. By the 1850s, the Greek Revival style had expanded to five bays with a center hall plan, like the double-galleried Bosworth Mansion on Washington Avenue. The finest of these homes reflects the breach between the customs of the Anglo newcomers and native Creoles.

In Creole houses, gardens were courtyard havens; in the Garden District, they were ostentatious displays enclosed by filigreed ironwork fences. While early Creole houses did not include hallways, Anglo-Americans cherished the privacy of interior spaces and included hallways to ensure it. They also preferred muted grey, white, and beige exterior color schemes, while Creoles favored more colorful, light-

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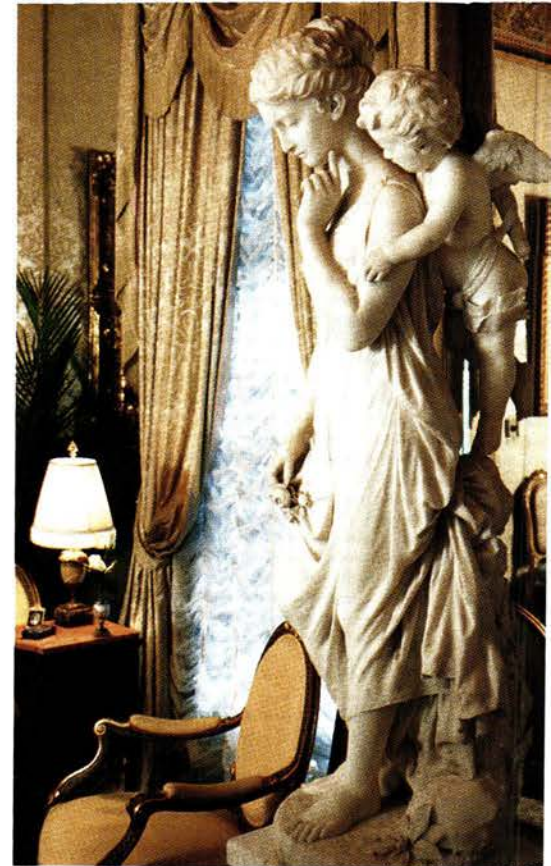


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Left to right: After the Civil War, in-fill housing included treasures like this Camelback Shotgun. Lafayette Cemetery No. 1, an enclave of Anglo-American graves purposely segregated from Creole burial grounds elsewhere in New Orleans. A life-size marble statue of Psyche and Cupid graces the interior of a home on Prytania Street.

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saturated pastels.

Characteristically, Garden District homes usually have generous porches that boldly face the outside world, rejecting the inward orientation of the old Creole courtyards. The graceful wide verandahs and columned, two-story galleries made the subtropical climate more tolerable to residents who suffered from the incessant sultry heat and humidity. The many tall shuttered windows also contributed a great measure of climate control when window openings and shutters were adjusted to admit or shut out light, wind, and heat according to the season.

Over the decades, Neoclassical-, Gothic Revival-, Queen Anne-, Italianate-, and Eastlake-style homes filled in the developing District. Whatever the architectural style, most Garden District houses share the common bond of symmetrical garden plots, bound by elaborate ironwork fences. A landmark example of this classic New Orleans detail is the famous cornstalk fence surrounding the Colonel Short House on Fourth Street. The taste for elaborate fence designs carried over into the famous Lafayette No.1 Cemetery in the heart of the District.

The cast-iron fences encircling the graveyard's eerie, above-ground tombs echo those enclosing the landmark buildings just outside its walls.

Despite its fashionable beginnings, the Garden District was not the exclusive province of the newcomers, nor were all of its homes mansions. Spaniards, Creoles, and people of color also purchased land and built houses there. Lucile Vivant, a free woman of color, owned an entire square in the neighborhood, bounded by Sixth, Coliseum, Washington, and Chestnut. Many elegant double houses and row houses were built as rental and investment properties, often from identical plans in blocks of three to five buildings.

One of the best examples of this pattern is "Freret's Folly," five identical houses on Prytania Street built on speculation. After the upheaval of the Civil War and Reconstruction, new houses continued to be built in the Garden District—many of them in variations of the millwork-be-decked Shotgun vernacular. 

DIANA JARVIS GODWIN is a historian and writer who lives in Navarre, Florida.

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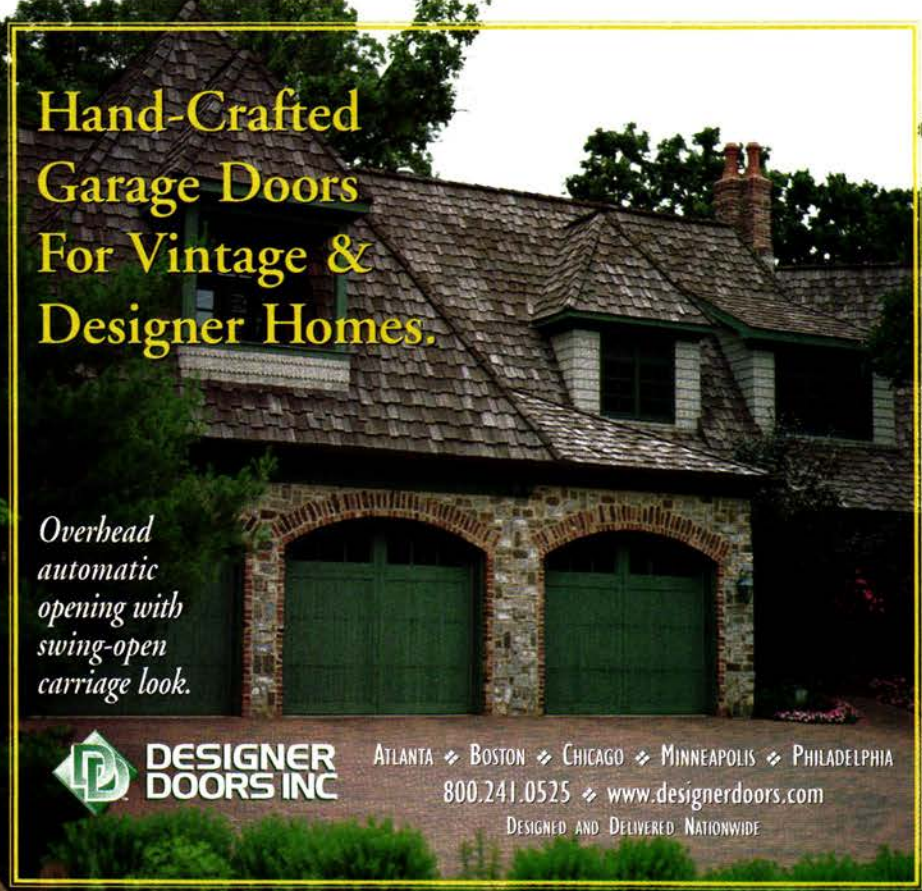
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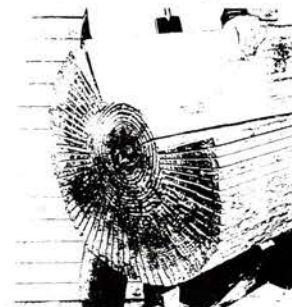
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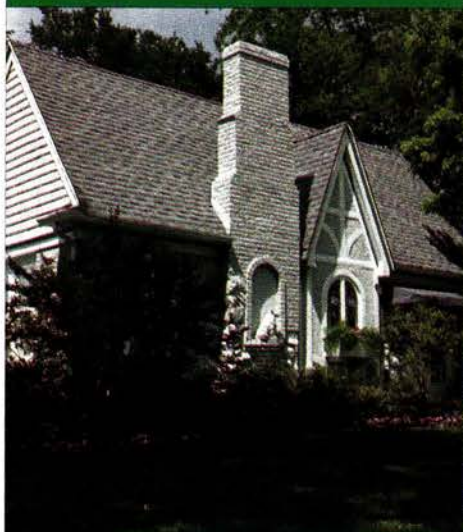
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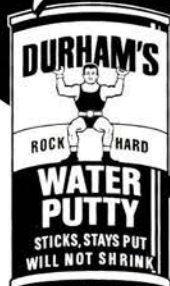


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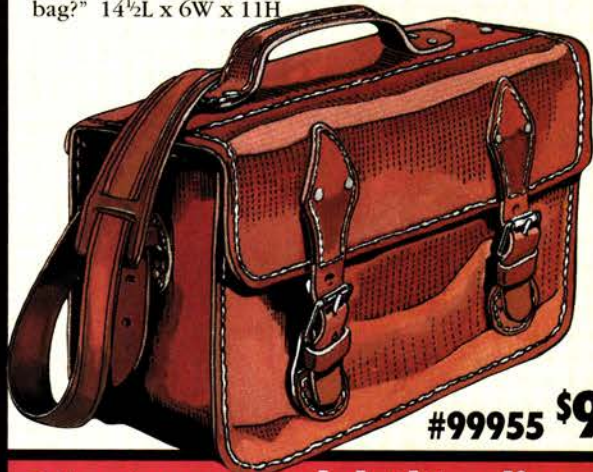
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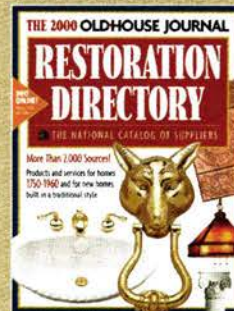
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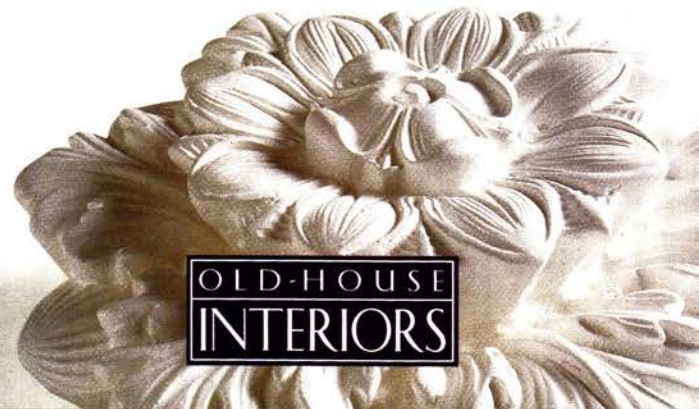
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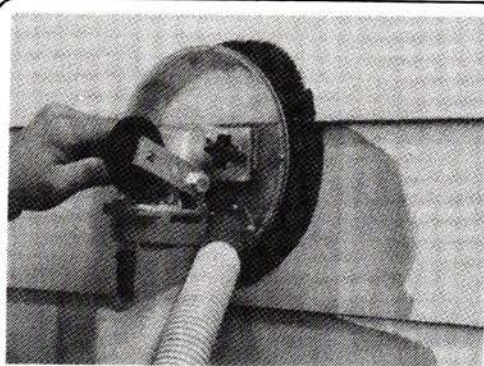
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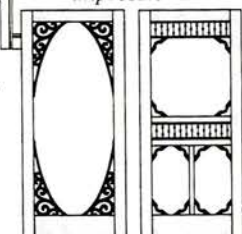
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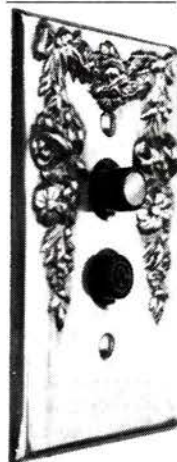
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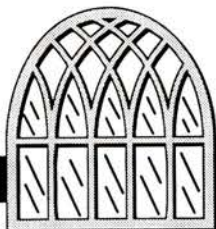
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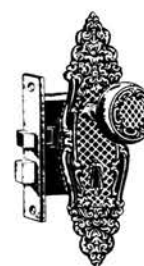


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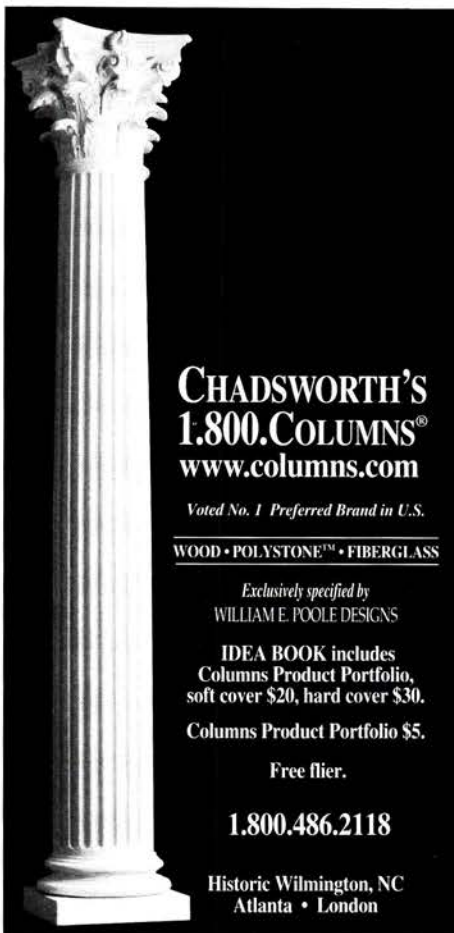
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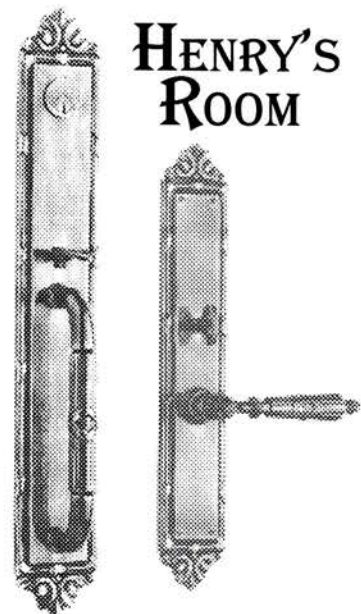
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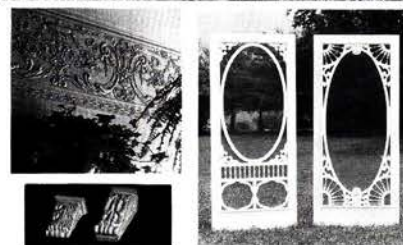
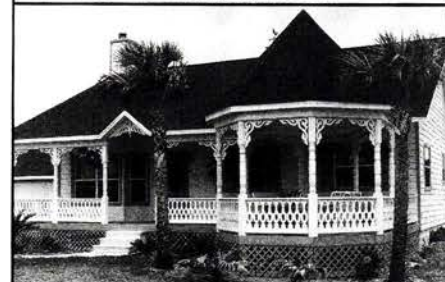
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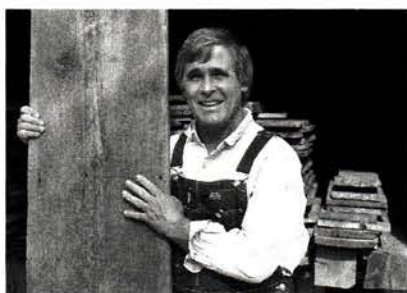


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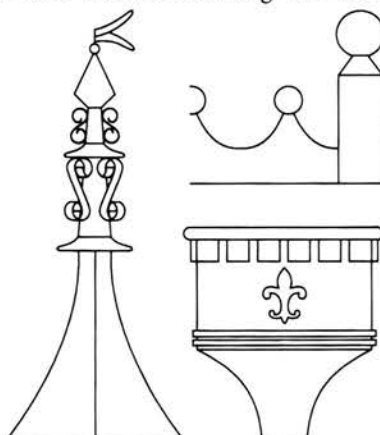
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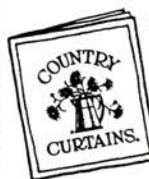
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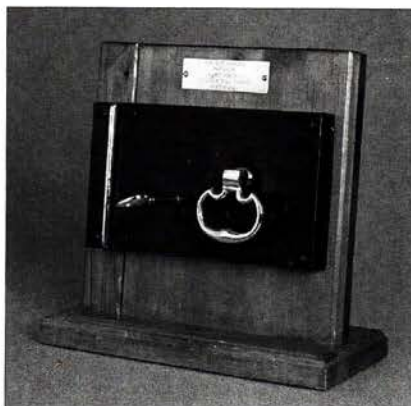
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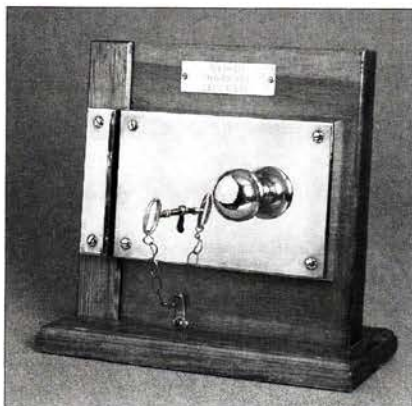
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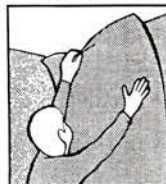
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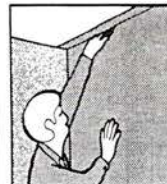
1. Cut fiberglass mat 2" longer than height.



2. Apply saturant to area to be covered.



3. Apply fiberglass mat to wet surface.



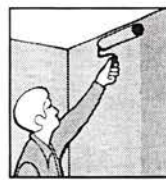
4. Trim excess mat where wall meets ceiling.



5. Trim mat at baseboard and window.



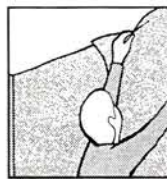
6. Trim mat at outlets, switches, etc.



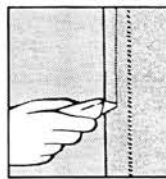
7. Apply second coat of saturant to wet mat.



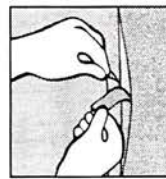
8. Apply 1st coat of saturant to adjacent area.



9. Apply mat to 2nd area, overlapping by 1".



10. Cut down center of overlap (both layers).



11. Remove mat strips on both sides of cut.



12. Apply 2nd coat of saturant (include seam)

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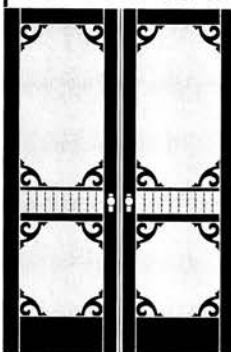
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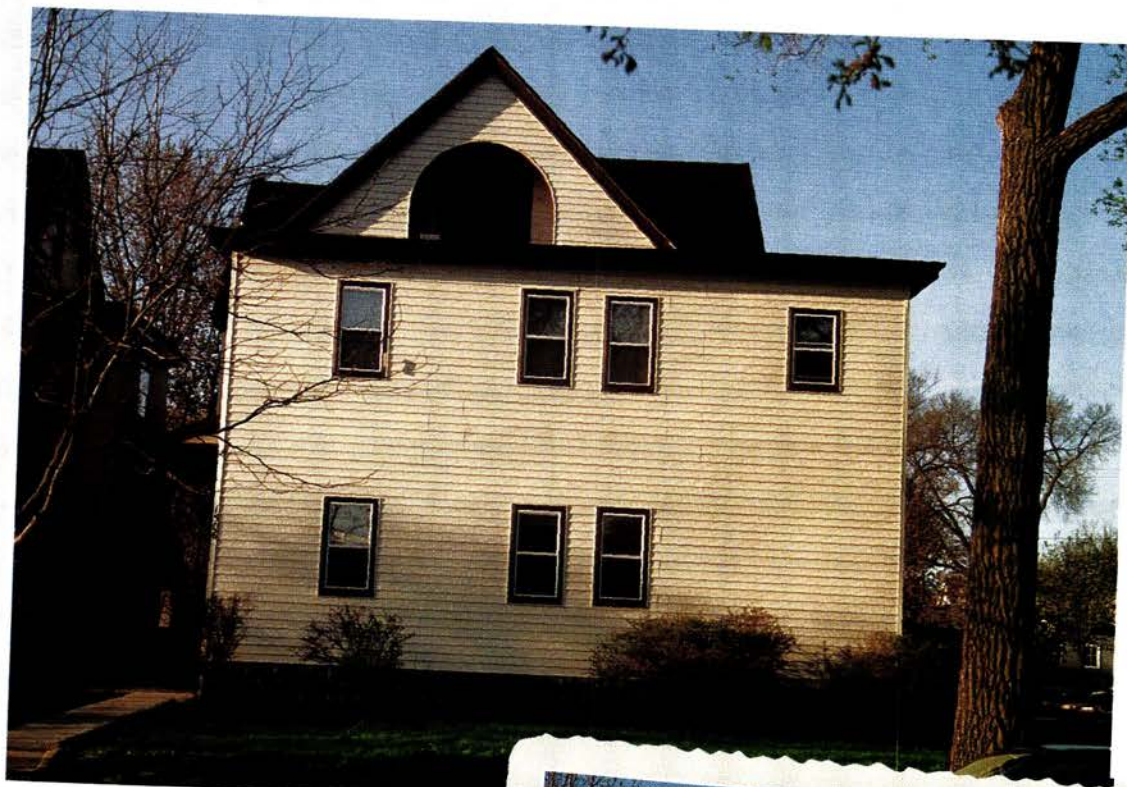
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