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C O N T E N T S

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2001
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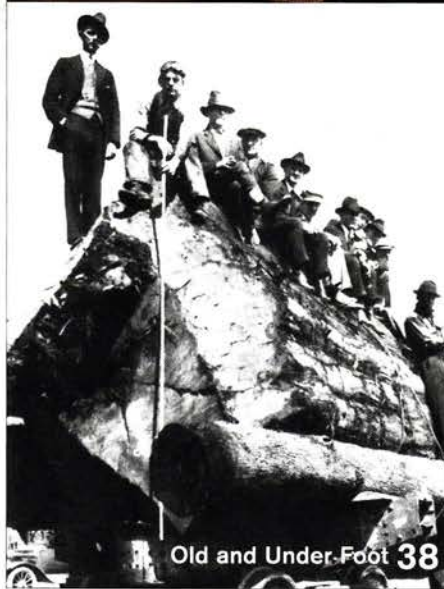
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Fine Fittings 27

ON THE COVER: At the turn of the 20th century, middle-class homeowners topped their wallpaper with friezes in a complementary design. This Hunter Stripe pattern was reproduced by Thibaut from an original found in a 19th-century home in Walpole, N.H.

Photo by David Sharpe



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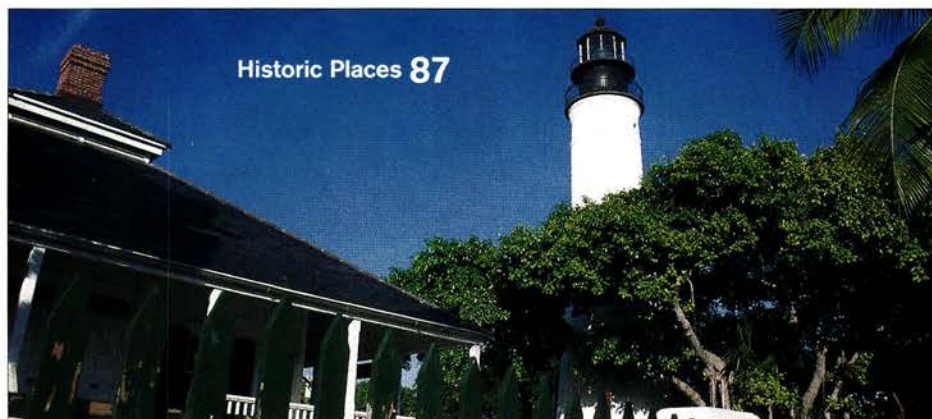
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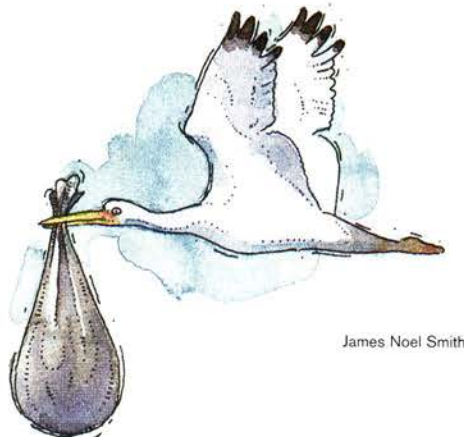
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James Noel Smith

New Arrivals

The beginning of a new year is an auspicious time to launch growth projects and set new ideas in motion. With this spirit in mind, here's a few of the plans in the works at Old-House Journal for the year 2001.

Starting in this issue, look for a new column called Design in Time that will be a regular feature in upcoming OHJs. As the name suggests, the running theme of this front-of-the-book department will be the architectural principle or concept behind an aesthetic element commonly seen in old houses, especially as it relates to history and the ebb and flow of house styles and decorative modes. Design in Time may center on the interior architecture of rooms, but this will only be a starting point. From here we want to explore the relationships of, say, door and window trim to furnishings, or how they connect with the stylistic elements on the outside of the building.

For the premiere installment we decided to return to a favorite wintertime subject, the world of wallpaper, and to examine a specific area of this multifaceted decoration—the frieze. As author Robert Kelly explains, wallpaper friezes are not only architectural in the manner they are used at the top of a wall, they are architectural in origin, literally taking both their form and early patterns from the exterior ornamentation on ancient buildings. It is this kind of surprising relationship we hope to learn more about in future Design in Time articles. Other subjects on the docket are why there's more to chair rails than chairs, how the writings of a British furniture critic wound up changing American

Victorian porch woodwork, and the origins of mid-century-modern window shapes.

Regarding the latter, watch out for more articles in the coming months on houses from the first half of the last century. No, I'm not talking about the 1850s but the 1950s. As I write, the houses built before 1951 are now fair game for serious architectural scrutiny, and the buildings themselves are presenting interesting restoration questions. Actually, it's their materials that have us most excited. While we move through the editorial year we plan to cover more on structural glass, laminates, and innovative construction methods, such as the thin-wall systems of Frank Lloyd Wright's Usonian houses.

Not bad for a fresh crop of ideas but, as they say on TV, wait there's more! Through the pages of the Historic Places feature, we'll be traveling off the usual house museum circuit to visit distinctive towns such as Asheville, N.C. and Mason City, Iowa. Over the summer, enjoy a special issue focusing on stone houses and masonry that will also take a decidedly horticultural turn with rock gardens. All the while we'll keep exploring historical kitchens, bathrooms, paint schemes, and the other endlessly rich areas of old houses that OHJ readers always ask about. Even better, you'll be able to find more or related information for selected articles on the OHJ web site, www.old-housejournal.com. Stay tuned for an interesting year.

OLDHOUSE JOURNAL

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Subscription Sales & Service: (800) 234-3797

Back Copy Sales & Service: (800) 931-2931

Bookshop Sales: (800) 931-2931

The Restoration Directory: (800) 931-2931

Historic House Plans: (800) 931-2931

Reprint Sales (bulk): (877) 734-6650

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PLAINS FANCY

WE READ YOUR Spanish Colonial Revival feature (Gatefold, Nov/Dec 2000 OHJ) with great interest. Our house is a Sears, Roebuck & Co. Honor Bilt Model #2090 "Alhambra," one of those Mission Revival catalog homes you mentioned. I'm sure it was considered quite an oddity in 1923 when my great-grandparents built it out here on the South Dakota prairie.

As you can see from the photo, they were really a Foursquare in disguise with Mission-style parapets on the dormers, porch, and attached stairway. A matching garage completed the package for around \$2,000. The oak interiors are Arts & Crafts styling, but Sears' "suggested interiors" décor was more romantic—over-stuffed rather than Mission.

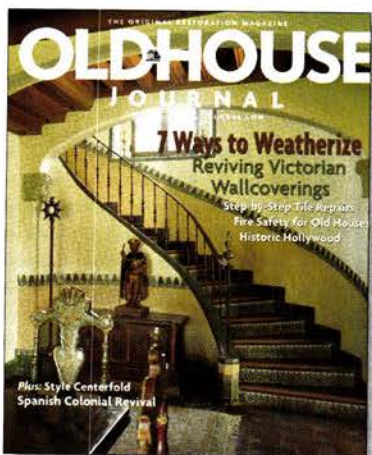


My grand-
parents made no changes in the interior or exterior except for a small addition, so the house is as it came from the catalog, even its woodwork and kitchen. A great aunt who grew up in this house said it has 409 window panes.

We've been subscribers and avid readers of OHJ for about five years. Every other month it's a race between us to see who gets to our rural mailbox to get their hands on the magazine first.

Many thanks for your helpful advice on stucco repair in your June 1998 issue. We found an expert in our state and repair is ongoing.

We wish we'd known of OHJ when going through the process of placing our



home on the National Register of Historic Places. We have since learned a great deal from your magazine about architectural features and preservation/restoration. OHJ has been invaluable while rehabilitating our home as a B&B.

Cheers for OHJ and mail-order catalog homes. They've stood

the test of time. We hope the fifth and sixth generations enjoying this old house will continue to enjoy your publication.

—KENNY AND LYNDY IRELAND

Philip, South Dakota

CANVAS ANSWERS

I COULDN'T BELIEVE IT when I read Karen Bonadio's "Making a Full Recovery" (Nov/Dec 2000 OHJ). I have asked hundreds of people what to do about our walls and ceilings, which are covered in hand-stenciled canvases dating from about 1900. No one had any answers. When I read the article, I knew you did. Several of the surviving canvases have separated from the walls and ceilings.

Many places are cracked and brittle, some are water damaged, others (egads) have been painted over with latex paint. Any suggestions for re-adhering the canvases without removing them? To do so would further damage many of them. Can the latex paint be removed without also taking off the original designs? (I think they are covered with shellac.) I will need help recreating some of the missing or damaged images, although there are already a lot of big ticket items to be addressed in our 117-year-old beauty. Thanks for your contribution in keeping these gems shining!

—CHERYL PALERMO
St. Joseph, Mo.

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LETTERS

Karen Bonadio responds: Removing latex paint is a delicate operation, especially when there are stencils underneath. If your budget doesn't allow for a skilled conservator to do the work, at least have an expert take a "look-see" before you proceed. All projects involving painted-over surfaces are case-by-case.

Use a least-invasive product, which stays on the surface rather than penetrating. (Citrus Strip has a pleasant scent and is user friendly.) Test it on a small area and leave it for several hours. If it starts to dry, apply aluminum foil. Then wipe it off. Do not use the solvent on any area more than once, or you may cause permanent damage.

Secure loose panels with the Spray 90 recommended in the article. For corners or edges, Liquid Nails is an easy-to-use product.

GUTTER REACTION

I APPRECIATE William T. Cox Jr.'s "Toward

Better Gutters" (Sept./Oct. 2000 OHJ). Having lived in a turn-of-the-century Victorian for almost 20 years, I can attest to the importance of functioning gutters. In this regard, however, it should be emphasized that not everything designed 100 years ago is worth saving or restoring.

Our house was originally constructed with wooden gutters about 12" in from the edge of the roof, so that water was trapped there. This might work for a while, but over time it is destined to cause problems. On a roof edge 30' above ground, it is simply not practical to maintain a permanent watertight seal. Our inspections indicate that it led to repeated major water problems over the past century. Since moving in, we have gradually replaced all the wooden gutters with hanging metal ones. Now if the gutters get blocked, all that happens is that water falls straight off the

edge and we know about it immediately. Although the original appearance is altered, the white gutters match the trim and they surely look a whole lot better than an authentic roof edge with rotting eaves.

On another matter, the author suggests that one can clean gutters by renting a cherry picker for about \$80 a day. I wonder where he lives or if he is just remembering the good old days. Where I live it can cost several hundred dollars for just half a day.

Thanks again for an important article.

—WAYNE MITZNER
Baltimore, Md.

William Cox says the cost in his area has gone up since he wrote the article. A self-propelled 20-foot man-lifter (as they're called in the rental trade) will set you back \$93 a day. In the Baltimore-Washington, DC, area, the smallest gas-powered machine is



a 40-footer for \$250 a day. Smaller electric contraptions can be had for around \$200.

SHINGLE IN THE CITY

RECENTLY MY COUSIN invited me for lunch at her "new" old house on Buffalo's Linwood Avenue. While waiting for the chicken to be grilled, I picked up your magazine, turned to the article about old houses in Buffalo (Sept./Oct. 2000 OHJ) and realized that the opening picture was the view I had from the living room window. I thought you might like to hear more about one of the houses on Linwood.

Joseph O'Gorman and Ellen Reilly bought their 1891 Shingle-style house in 1999, and their "Project" has become famous locally. The interior is 4,500 square feet with 12' ceilings and much intricately carved woodwork. The seven ceiling-high fireplaces of oak, cherry, or maple have

built-in nooks and crannies with little glass doors. Some have ceramic tile facings and hearths, all in different colors and designs. This house also boasts stained-glass windows, a porte-cochere, and a carriage house.

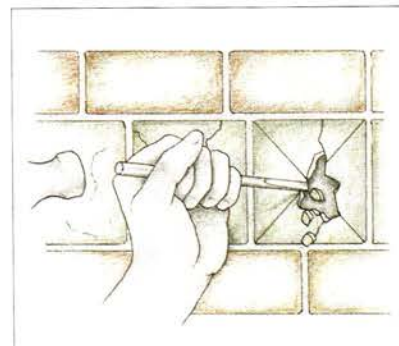
Former owners had divided the house into five apartments and the whole thing was in disrepair. Joe and Ellen are doing as much as they can on their own or with the help of family. The latest work-in-progress has been the removal of a room that had been built out onto the expansive front porch. Before I came for lunch that day, they had located the site of the grand staircase that had long ago been removed. The banisters and most of the other pieces were in the attic.

Every day they make a new discovery, and they will have the showplace of the neighborhood when their restoration is completed.

—DOROTHY HENSEN
Williamsville, N.Y.

BACK TO THE DRAWING BOARD

Oops! In "The Six R's of Tile Repair" (Nov./Dec. 2000 OHJ) we managed to leave out one of our explanatory drawings and run another one twice. Here's the correct drawing for Step C in removing a tile: "Next, working with a small cold chisel, break the tile out in pieces." If you like you can cut (from this issue) and paste (into that one).



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OLD HOUSE LIVING

Opinion



REMUDDLING MEDLEY

We've had such a symphony of remuddling letters come our way of late, we thought we'd orchestrate them into a set, so to speak, for this issue's Old-House Living feature. The idea is not so offbeat. Old-House Living is typically a tale about the human impact of the restoration process, and what happens to the exterior of an old house, restoration or not, affects all who see it.

As long-time OHJ readers know, remuddling is defined as misguided remodeling—that is, an alteration that is insensitive to the architecture or character of the house. Remuddling is presented as a negative education, but it is also meant to be a bit of fun. This back-of-the-book department debuted nearly two decades ago in October 1981, and ever since then it has been the most popular and well-known page in OHJ. In fact, the word remuddling has entered common use.

You get the picture. As ever, if you are inclined to submit a picture for Remuddling, please send original color prints—no newspaper clippings—and try to include a photo of a similar, but unremuddled building. If we use your photos, we'll conduct you a melodious \$100.

WHERE NO HOUSE HAS GONE BEFORE

From Flushing, New York, not far from the site of the 1964 World's Fair, comes a photo of a vintage building with a space-age sleek, ultramodern ground floor and chimney. "I guess the old house is buried underneath and trying to peek out," writes Ira Cohen of Great Neck. Perhaps there's a time-warp between each storey.



MATERIAL DIFFERENCES

"This home is in the lake area of Southeastern Wisconsin," says Dave Abresch of Menomonee Falls. "I'm not sure of the material and style, but it may be built of local limestone." We can't say for sure either, but the way the horizontal siding meets stonework is unique to say the least.



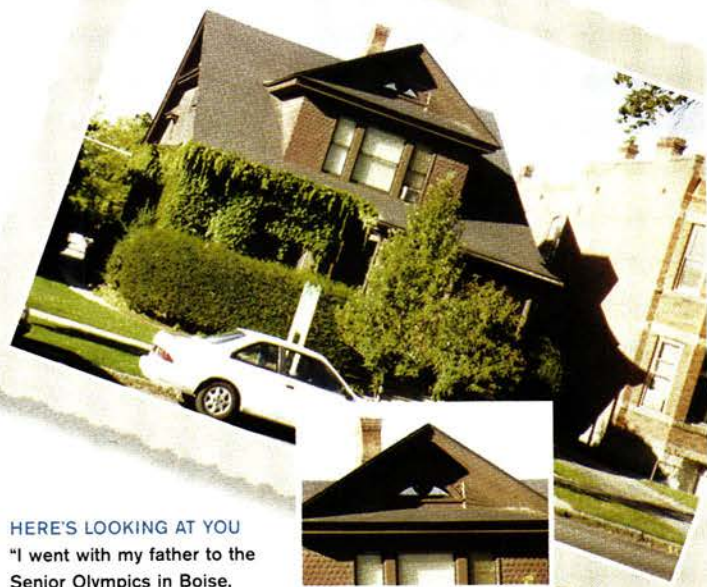
RAISING THE ROOF

"I enclose prints I took on a side trip to Fulton, Missouri, known for Winston Churchill's famous Iron Curtain speech," writes Ed Weillbacher of Waterloo, Ill. "The town has a wonderful collection of historic homes, and we marvel at the energy that many people put into a proper restoration. On the other hand, it pains us to see people spend good money to devalue their property." His photos show a gable roof being erected over a mansard roof. Indeed, roofs help define the form and style of a house, and when an entire roof is altered, it's bound to change the house.



PORCH PERSPECTIVE

"I spotted this charming porch facelift and corresponding eye-catching color treatment in a bungalow neighborhood near my house," says reader Marian Austin. "Loveland (Colo.) is filled with these small bungalows, so it was no trouble to find its unmolested version a few blocks away." Full-width porches are important character-defining features on small houses; when they're lost or filled in, the appearance of the building often shifts radically.



HERE'S LOOKING AT YOU

"I went with my father to the Senior Olympics in Boise, Idaho, recently when I came across this house in the downtown area," relates Joe Benintonde of El Cajon, Calif. "Is this an eyebrow dormer or what?" Maybe the house needed help seeing over all the vegetation. That would make it a creeper peeper.



BEING IGNORED IS BLISS

"Ironically, the house on the left was a semi-derelict for many years before an enlightened family who cared about the home rehabilitated it," says August Gene Grulich of Tacoma, Wash. "Most of the features remained intact but covered with dull gray peeling paint. It's a case of what I call 'preservation by neglect.' Its companion to the right, on the other hand, appears to have fewer details today, despite some recent attention.



SUNLESS DISPOSITION

Thomas Bullock of Pollock Pines, Calif., writes: "As I drove through Cimmaron, Kansas, I noticed this house (at left). Driving around the block to get another picture, I found a second, similar house (below). Given the size of the town, I am confident that both houses were the effort of the same architect/master carpenter of 1885. Were the brick pillars an attempt to change the Fourquare to a bungalow?" Judging by the dimly lit areas under that low-pitch gable roof, only the shadow knows for sure.



EXTRA CHEESEY?

Ordinarily, adaptive re-use is to be applauded as an alternative to bringing in the bulldozers, but this Foursquare in Hanover, Penn. may be of a different order. "I'm not sure how long it has been this way, but I remember seeing it as a pizza parlor for at least 15 years," says Theresa Bethune of Westminster, Md.



DEAR DEPARTED

"Here are photos of a beautiful brick Queen Anne buried by a mortuary," writes Mona Rummel, who lives in Eugene, Ore. "I couldn't help noting the We Care sign nearby." There's no question that building upgrades can be a big undertaking, but they shouldn't risk being a grave mistake.



MULTIPLE PERSONALITIES

Philip Nord of Bryn Mawr, Penn. sent in this photo with the terse comment that he "Thought this might be of interest." That's putting it mildly. While it's hard to divine what this house looked like the day it was built, chances are it didn't have three different configurations of windows on the first floor, two on the second floor, and three on the third floor—or a third floor at all.

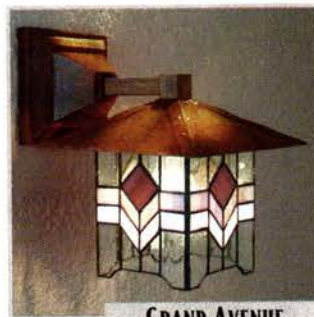


FRUSTRATING FENESTRATION

"The enclosed photos were taken this spring in Cedar Rapids, Iowa," says John Weger of Littleton, Colo. "One stands in sharp contrast to its 1930s neighbor (inset) and many other similar homes." Over and above what appear to be other recent changes, such as the entrance porch and low shed dormer, again it's the assortment of window types—picture window on the right of the first floor, for example, triple windows on the left—that sends a mixed stylistic message



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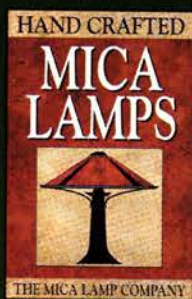
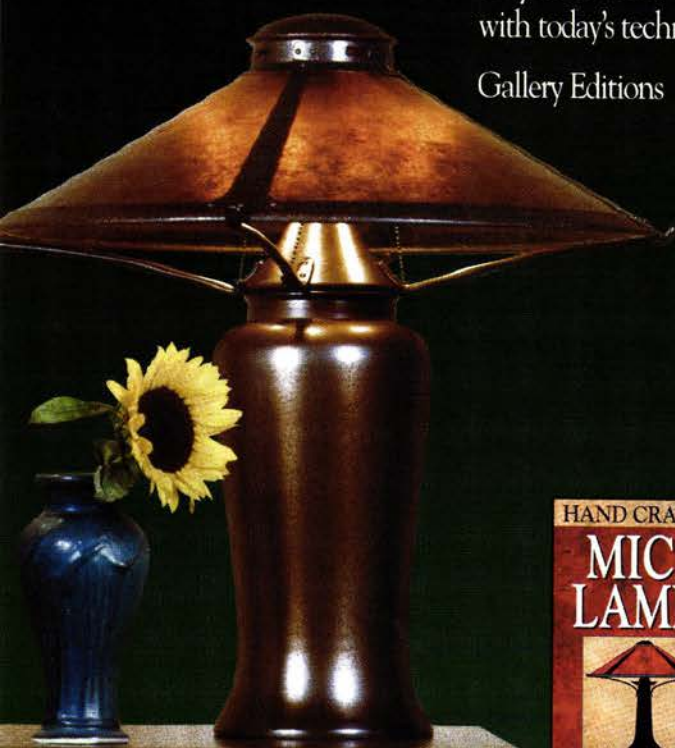
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Upping the ante on architectural ripoffs



Photo by Allison Kelsey

WHEN BOLD THIEVES STOLE \$30,000 WORTH of stained and beveled glass windows from a Philadelphia suburb last summer—half in one night and the rest 24 hours later—it was the last straw.

Reporter Tom Ferrick, who was covering the cityscape for the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, had grown tired of seeing architectural theft treated as a minor league crime. “I had to do something besides sit and wring my hands.”

He wondered: Why not reward tipsters who would rat on the thieves or their buyer? The University City Dis-

life without fodder

PRESERVATIONISTS, NEIGHBORS, and new owners—everybody wins with imaginative examples of adaptive re-use. (That’s the altering of a structure built for one purpose to function in a different role). One creative example is this five-level home on the Virginia side of Washington, D.C. On the market this fall for \$850,000, it was built in 1957 and renovated 13 years ago. The work won awards from the National Trust for Historic Preservation and *Remodeling* magazine. The biggest challenge was cutting windows through the 3”-thick concrete, steel reinforced to withstand the pressure of the grain. Developers of the community that replaced the dairy farm on the site didn’t stop with the silo. They also converted barns into a day care center. Just think what you could do with that old chicken coop....

Wanna tour the silo site? Try www.homedatabase.com and plug in MLS #FX3278386.

B&B Focus

WILLIAMS HOUSE, HOT SPRINGS NATIONAL PARK, ARKANSAS

Less than five blocks from Hot Springs’ historic downtown shopping area and famous Bathhouse Row, this brick-and-brownstone mansion was built in 1890 by a physician and businessman. Four generations of his family called it home before it became the first bed and breakfast in the state in 1980. David and Karen Wiseman have completely renovated the house since buying it in 1996. They ripped up carpet, rebuilt a 1928 gas boiler, and moved back inside a red oak stairway that had been used to create a separate residence on the second floor. Victorian antiques that the Wisemans have purchased in a half dozen states sit side-by-side with modern amenities such as VCRs and whirlpool tubs for two.



Three rooms, two suites, \$95 to \$145, Williams House, 420 Quapaw Avenue, Hot Springs National Park, AR 71901, (800) 756-4635, www.bbonline/ar/williams/house

trict (UCD), a neighborhood improvement group, and the University City Historical Society grabbed the ball as co-sponsors, and other neighborhood associations and businesses passed the hat for a total of more than \$8,000. They enlisted the Citizens Crime Commission, a group of retired law enforcement officers already running a hotline to help solve murders and assaults, to also accept tips on architectural thefts.

Tips received so far haven't resulted in an arrest, but with the exception of a UDC board member whose iron gates were stolen in October, "the theft has virtually dried up," said UCD executive director Paul Steinke. "We think it could be attributed to the considerable publicity we received. The thieves got the message that they could no longer operate with impunity."

Architectural theft is a growing problem in historic neighborhoods, especially those where a high proportion of houses are empty, either because they've been



Unlike some neighboring homes, this University City porch retains its finials (top). Owners of the iron fence (above) were less fortunate.



Photos this page by Allison Kelsey

Ornate cast-iron fences, as well as gates, are a favorite target of architectural thieves.

abandoned or are being renovated before new owners move in. Hot items in Philadelphia are decorative fences, grates, and other ironwork. Bricks and bootscrapes disappear. "One entire block had trouble getting to work one morning because all their brass doorknobs were gone," said Allison Kelsey, public information director for the UCD. "A woman in another neighborhood had half of the columns on her house removed."

The coalition sent photos of the stolen windows to salvage dealers and architectural fairs throughout the region, "but we were taking a stab in the dark," says Kelsey. "These things were mass produced, not singular treasures." Even if a stolen item is found, owners usually have to prove provenance: that the gate or window is actually theirs and not a lookalike.

University City is a trolley-car suburb of middle-management homes built primarily in the late 1800s, according to historical society president Kathy Dowdell. The nearby University of Pennsylvania offers incentives to employees buying or renovating in the area—including the people whose windows were stolen.

"Most thefts have been little things

Bold thieves stole

\$30,000

worth of stained and beveled glass windows—half in one night and the rest 24 hours later.

like window grates or finials on porch columns," says Dowdell, an architect. "Still, the accumulation over the years was very frustrating and annoying. But the window theft was so egregious. You know how it is with an old house. You see something like stained glass windows and think, 'Well, that will make peeling all the wallpaper worth it.' Then the windows are gone but you still have to deal with the wallpaper."

Ferrick would like to see other Philadelphia neighborhoods offer rewards to protect their architectural heritage, or law enforcement agencies adopt a comprehensive approach, such as identifying tags or code numbers. "I hope this idea doesn't end with University City," says the journalist. "We can at least add an element of risk to what these thieves are doing."

Architectural salvage dealers can also

continued on page 20



GUDE HEEVENING!

WE HAD SUCH A GOOD TIME putting together the last Historic Places article on Hollywood (Nov./Dec.2000) that we decided to share some of the fun. Guess which of these bungalows was the home of Bela Lugosi, the actor whose mesmerizing stare and Hungarian accent in the role of Count Dracula linked him for eternity with spook flicks.

vampire? Keep in mind that Lugosi earned less than \$1,000 for one of his best roles, in "The White Zombie," and originally was offered a mere \$500 to play Igor in "The Son of Frankenstein." At that point he was virtually bankrupt. We can only speculate about his home's interior décor. We suspect, however, that it didn't include any mirrors and that the scent of garlic never wafted from the kitchen. Answer below.

Think none of them look grand enough for the movieland

It's B (for Bela). Photo by Billy Vasquez

HISTORY ON YOUR WALLS

EVER WONDER IF someone could use that pretty old wallpaper rolled up in your attic or found under layers of mediocrity in your dining room?

Richard E. Thibaut, Inc., the Irvington, N.J.-based producer of historical wallpaper and fabrics, is again on the prowl for patterns to include in a new volume of *Historic Homes of America*. The books compile designs from the 18th to early 20th century found in vintage structures, from mansions to millhouses.

Historic Homes VII will include 75 to 80 fabric and paper patterns and borders, drawing on samples from private homes as well as museums and decorative-arts collections. If Thibaut includes your old wallpaper they'll give you enough to paper a room. The sample doesn't need to be in perfect

condition, but it should be big enough to show the entire pattern.

The National Preservation Institute (NPI), a Washington-based non-profit that provides courses on historic preservation, will authenticate the patterns. Lori Reagle, Thibaut's art director, is in charge of making sure they are beautiful—and salable. She says the new papers, like earlier ones, will be silk-screened or roller-printed (up to a dozen colors in each pattern) from hand-drawn designs, and produced in modern hues as well as in the historically correct colors.

Volume VII will be published in spring 2002. Volumes V and VI are expected to remain available.

Leading the search for NPI are advi-



Samples can be in less than pristine condition (a previous entry above right) as long as they show the whole pattern. You may win enough new paper for a whole room, right.

sory board members James C. Massey and Shirley Maxwell, OHJ's longtime architectural historians. If you think you have a worthy contender, mail your paper or fabric to them at Massey-Maxwell Associates, P. O. Box 263, Strasburg, VA 22657.



PILGRIMAGE TO ASHEVILLE

IF THE ARTS & CRAFTS AESTHETIC is your passion, the third weekend in February may be perpetually reserved on your calendar. That's the date of the annual Grove Park Inn Arts & Crafts Conference in Asheville, North Carolina, to be held this year Feb. 16 to 18.

Started as an antiques show in 1988, it's now the largest event in the nation focusing on this early 20th-century design movement. This year special exhibits will include ironwork by Samuel Yellin, photographs by Edward Curtis, Saturday Evening Girls' (Paul Revere) Pottery, and crafts from the Roycrofters-At-Large Association and Gustav Stickley's Craftsman Farms. Contemporary crafters will also display their wares.

More than 2,000 people from as far away as England flock to this Blue Ridge Mountain town to hear experts lecture on such subjects as kitchen design, architects of the period, and terra cotta, and to attend seminars that enrich special exhibits. Other



The Grove Park Inn, an Arts & Crafts showplace, is the conference site.



presenters this year will share their skills in demonstrations of pottery repair, paper-making and printing, furniture restoration, and tile making.

Much of the festival's success stems from its setting, the 1913 Grove Park Inn. Rooms in the inn were virtually booked up last February but you can still see the exhibits and attend the workshops. For more information call (828) 628-1915, or visit the conference web site at www.arts-craftsconference.com.

continued from page 18

help instill fear in scofflaws, says Mark Steinke, managing director of Salvage One in Chicago. (He's no relation to the UCD director.) His company makes a photocopy of the driver's license or other ID of anyone bringing them salvage, and pays only by check. Steinke doesn't do business with anyone "if I smell a rat—if they don't seem in a position to have something like that, or if they say, 'Oh, I just found it lying around in the back yard.'" He also has a prominently placed bulletin board with law enforcement alerts about stolen artifacts.

Steinke buys primarily from England, where architectural antiques are more carefully documented and he knows the dealers. Salvage One, in business for 20 years, is considered one of the premier salvage suppliers in the nation. "I want our customers to know that they have a rightful claim to what they buy," Steinke says. "It wouldn't do me any good to have it heard that I buy stolen merchandise." Because he grew up in this architectural mecca and knows its building ornaments intimately, "People would have to be really dumb to come to me with anything from Chicago."

There are plenty of less prestigious outlets for these treasures, of course. Some believe that stolen goods from eastern cities are heading west, where structural adornments are rare. But maybe not. Told that finials are one of the big draws for University City thieves, Steinke reacts with some surprise. "You know, I've been seeing a lot of Philadelphia-style finials around here. At flea markets."

RESTORERS' NOTEBOOK



When you need a plumb bob for a project and can't find one, here's a tip that will save you a trip to the hardware store and a couple bucks. It works just fine, although it helps to either

be a fisherman or have one in the house.

If you have a tackle box, look through it for a 6-ounce weight, shaped like a triangle with an eye on top. Tie a long piece of string in the eye, and there is your own inexpensive plumb bob.

*Frank Savage
Avenel, New Jersey*

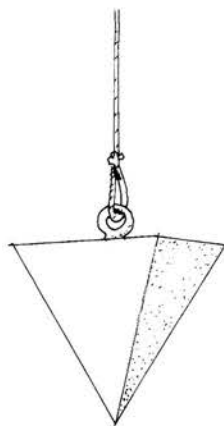


Illustration by Rob Leanna

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Courtesy Bradbury & Bradbury

Frieze Frame *by Robert M. Kelly*

TO THE ANCIENT GREEKS, a frieze was part of a stone entablature, running between the architrave and cornice. As applied later to wallpaper, the term simply means a broad band of decoration at the top of a wall. Even so, there is nothing simple about the history of the wallpaper frieze.

Wallpaper friezes first became popular as part of the Neoclassical style of the late 18th century. (In fact, discoveries at Pompeii inspired early frieze patterns of reds and black over graceful arabesques). However, their real heyday as major players in the wallpaper ensemble came a century later, from about 1880 to 1920. Friezes could be used alone above a painted wall, or in a two- or three-part system of wallpaper decoration. They went through many changes during those decades and came in a variety of widths—usually 9", 18", and 36". What inspired this elaborate decorating scheme, and where did that three-part thing come from anyway? Let's look back a bit.

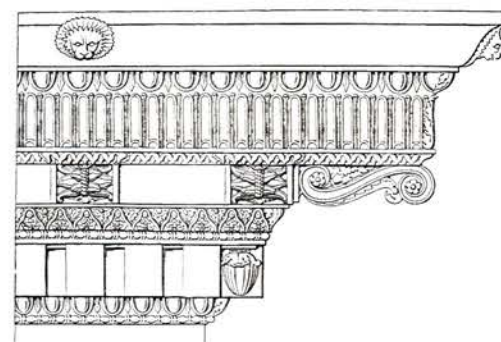
Border Skirmishes

FRIEZES ARE NOT A STYLE but a form: a panel of deep decoration at the top of a wall. Nonetheless, soon after they appeared, friezes were mustered into one of those

cyclical swings away from a previous generation's tastes—in this case, the wildly popular large French borders of the 1820s and '30s. Swagged, satined, and sophisticated, these borders were often paired with equally overpowering sidewalls. The rich color palette and sheer size of the patterns provoked one decorating authority to protest in 1841 that "...all wallpapers should be very light...large-figured papering makes a small room still smaller. It is now much out of use."

So out with the large, in with the small. Large patterns derived from fabrics dwindled away, and the unpatterned area on the wall increased, resulting in a "spaced out" look. White and gold parlor wallpapers topped with small borders were considered the height of elegance. We can see the style today in the parlor redecorations at Andrew Jackson's Hermitage (1837) and Martin Van Buren's Lindenwald (1841). In 1852, *Godey's Lady's Book* pronounced the experiment a success, observing that "Heavy borders are seldom used now; they make a room low, without being ornamental."

For a while, wallpaper remained a nearly frieze-free zone. Was it because the revival styles of the mid-19th century often sported vertical borders, strapwork, and paneling? Who knows, except that it wasn't



In classical architecture, the frieze is the central section of the entablature—the structure that lies horizontally across the columns. Depending upon the order, a frieze may be plain or highly decorated, as in the Temple of Dioscuri shown here.

Wallpaper friezes came into full flower during the Victorian era as the highest—and often most interesting—band in a three-part system of wall decoration. This Anglo-Japanese pattern is right in step with the oriental fad that swept the U.S. after the 1876 Centennial.

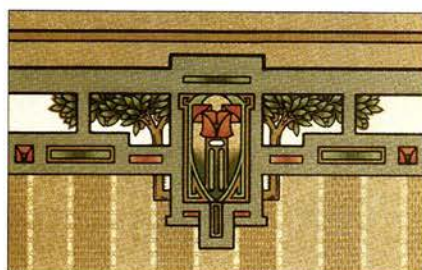


Courtesy Thibaut



Courtesy Bradbury & Bradbury

What separates a frieze (right) from a border (left)? By some standards, only its generous width, though friezes tend to have a distinct pattern and are, by definition, always horizontal and at the top of the wall.



Courtesy Bradbury & Bradbury



Courtesy Hermitage

Arts & Crafts friezes (top) are stand-alone papered or stenciled decorations. In the 1830s and '40s friezes became narrower like this pattern from the Hermitage. (above).

hard to predict that borders would bounce back in a big way. In the late 1860s, English tastemaker Charles Eastlake championed a more elaborate wall treatment—frieze, side-wall, and dado—as an alternative to what had become a rather large and boring expanse of wallpaper. In case anyone missed his point, another English writer described the trio “...as a reaction from the unspeakable dullness of the white and gold wall.” She even laid down rules for the system: At least one of the three should be patternless, and the whole wall should never be decorated in similar tones.

Very sensible rules, it would seem, but they were promptly broken by wallpaper consumers, aided and abetted by mass-market manufacturers. To understand why, remember that the market for custom-made “art” wallpaper (the finest example of the three-part system) was small in both North America and Britain. More to the point, perhaps, the mar-

ket for cheaper paper was much larger.

Nonetheless, mass marketers didn't see the frieze/sidewall/dado combination as an opportunity to indulge in art for art's sake. Far from it. For them it became a new wrinkle in the endless quest for novelty patterns. The high-minded reform movement, which pushed flat, conventional patterns at the expense of French naturalism, only primed the pump. It mattered little that the friezes consumers preferred looked a lot more like realistic flowers than Japanese prints.

Friezes at Their Height


It took a while for the three-part system to catch on in both upper-class and middle-class markets, but by the 1880s, when it was in full flower, a funny thing had happened. All the interesting patterns seem to have filtered upward into the friezes, which became ever more fanciful, while the sidewalls and dados grew ever tamer. For the first time, sidewalls began to resemble the popular stereotype of wallpaper: boring, small-patterned decoration that seeks to complement something else and recedes from view rather

than engaging our attention. As time went on the dado dropped from favor, leaving a two-part system of sidewall and frieze that endured for another 15 years or so.

The sidewall/frieze wallpaper scheme continued to be popular after 1900 because it was an economical way for middle-class families to emulate the Beaux-Arts homes of the wealthy, with their full-blown wall decorations based on classical models and materials. The frieze and sidewall were closely (but not exactly) matched, lending some eye-catching style to what was, after all, a cheap industrial product.

Then suddenly, everyone grew tired of any attempt at grandeur, but there was still a place for the frieze, especially the hand-stenciled variety that was the specialty of English firms, such as Shand Kydd. As a custom-made (or at least hand-made) decoration, the frieze could be colored to match furniture or carpets much

more easily than could a sidewall, which required machine production to be economical. In this way, the frieze held on as a stalwart part of the Arts & Crafts movement, showing up regularly alongside embroidered pillows and dyed linen tablecloths. Once again it was high art.

Unfortunately, wallpaper seems to require a mass market to survive, and reducing the frieze to a stand-alone, custom product spelled its end. As Elsie de Wolfe said in 1913, "A fine frieze is a very beautiful decoration, but it must be very fine to be worthwhile at all." Apparently consumers decided that the friezes on the market weren't that fine—or worth the asking price—because after 1925 we find very few examples of large friezes in use. 

ROBERT M. KELLY is the principal at WRN Associates in Lee, Mass. (www.paperhangings.com).

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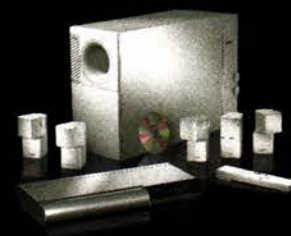
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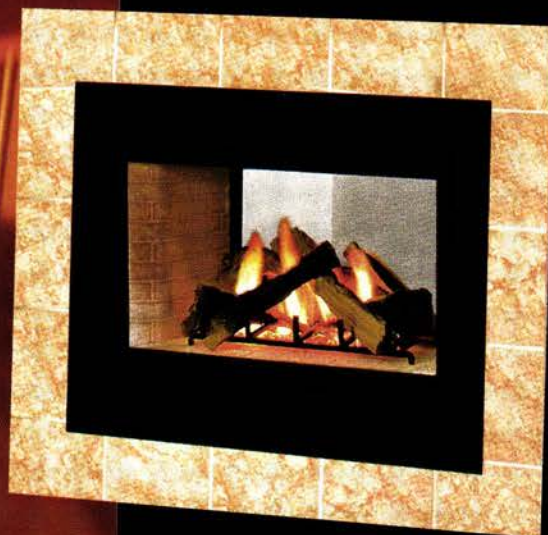
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BY KATHLEEN FISHER

WOODN'T IT BE LOVERLY?

Do your walls seem a bit...flat? Give them some new dimension. Rectangle, Ovals, Arches, Scallop, and Chip (from top) are among a dozen new patterns of carved wood accent mouldings. Laser cut from $\frac{1}{4}$ " balsa wood, the mouldings are approximately $2\frac{1}{2}$ " to $3\frac{1}{2}$ " wide in 45" to 48" lengths and are priced between \$10 and \$16. They can be either stained or painted. For more information contact Architectural Products by Outwater, (800) 835-4400, www.outwater.com. Circle no. 21 on the resource card.

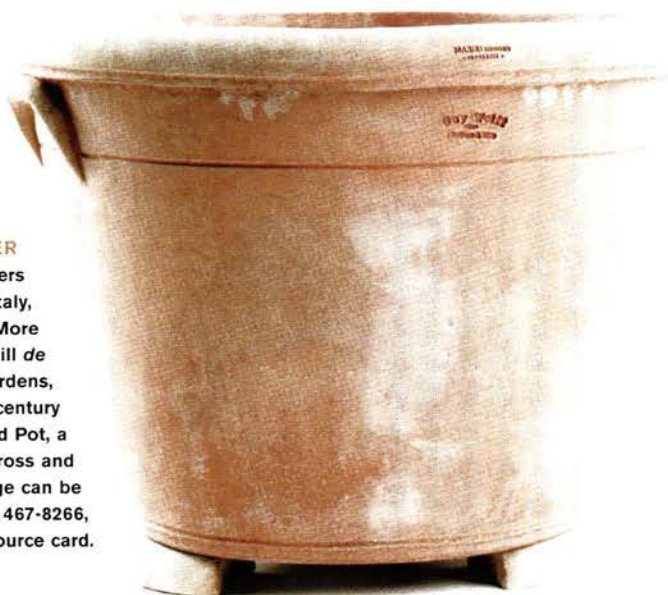


UP TO YOUR OLD BRICKS

Before the Industrial Revolution paved the way for manufactured bricks with precise dimensions, masons made the most of quirky shapes and intriguing textures. Boral Bricks' new 17th Century line is made the way they were 300 years ago, in handmade wooden molds dusted with sand. As a result the edges are softened while the texture is rough. You can use these decorative brick shapes outside around windows, doors, or steps, or indoors to shape distinctive mantels. The same process has been used to make rectangular bricks in 19 colors. Contact Boral Bricks, (770) 645-4500, www.boralbricks.com. Circle no. 22 on the resource card.

YANKEE PLANTER

In the late 19th century, American landscape designers began aping Renaissance landscapes of France and Italy, complete with their terra cotta urns and oil jars. More than 100 years later, well-made terra cotta is still *de rigueur* for formal gardens. At home in less formal gardens, and taking its inspiration not from Europe but 19th-century terra cotta pots found in New England, is the Hartford Pot, a new design by potter Guy Wolff. It measures $22\frac{1}{2}$ " across and 16" tall and sells for \$500. Wedges to improve drainage can be ordered separately. Contact Seibert & Rice, (973) 467-8266, www.seibert-rice.com. Circle no. 23 on the resource card.



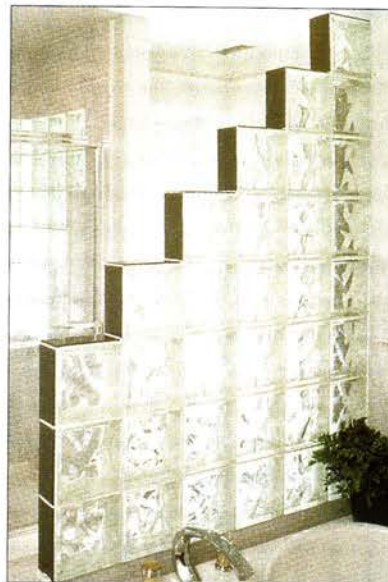


NEW NOUVEAU

An ambitious exhibit of Art Nouveau furniture and décor at the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C., has fired up collecting of this turn-of-the-century style. Just in time to help scratch that itch is a Classic Glass line of lamps in gold, silver, and bronze, inspired by Lalique jewelry and glass designs so "oo-la-la" in the Paris of that era. The shade is made of heat-fused, fine-textured iridescent art glass, while the base is solid bronze. Sold in 16" and 20" heights, the suggested retail prices are \$698 and \$890 respectively. Contact Mica Lamp Co., (818) 241-7227, www.micalamps.com. Circle no. 24 on the resource card.

GLASS WITH CLASS

Inspired by our article on glass block? You're in luck. Pittsburgh Corning has redesigned its Lightwise Glass Block to be lighter weight and easier to install. They're still real glass but only 2" thick and have a flat face for a tighter seal and easier cleaning. Silicon bonding creates an all-glass look. The windows come in white or sandstone vinyl frames, 60 sizes, and two patterns with differing degrees of privacy and light transmission. For more information call Pittsburgh Corning at (800) 624-2120, www.pittsburghcorning.com. Circle no. 25 on the resource card.



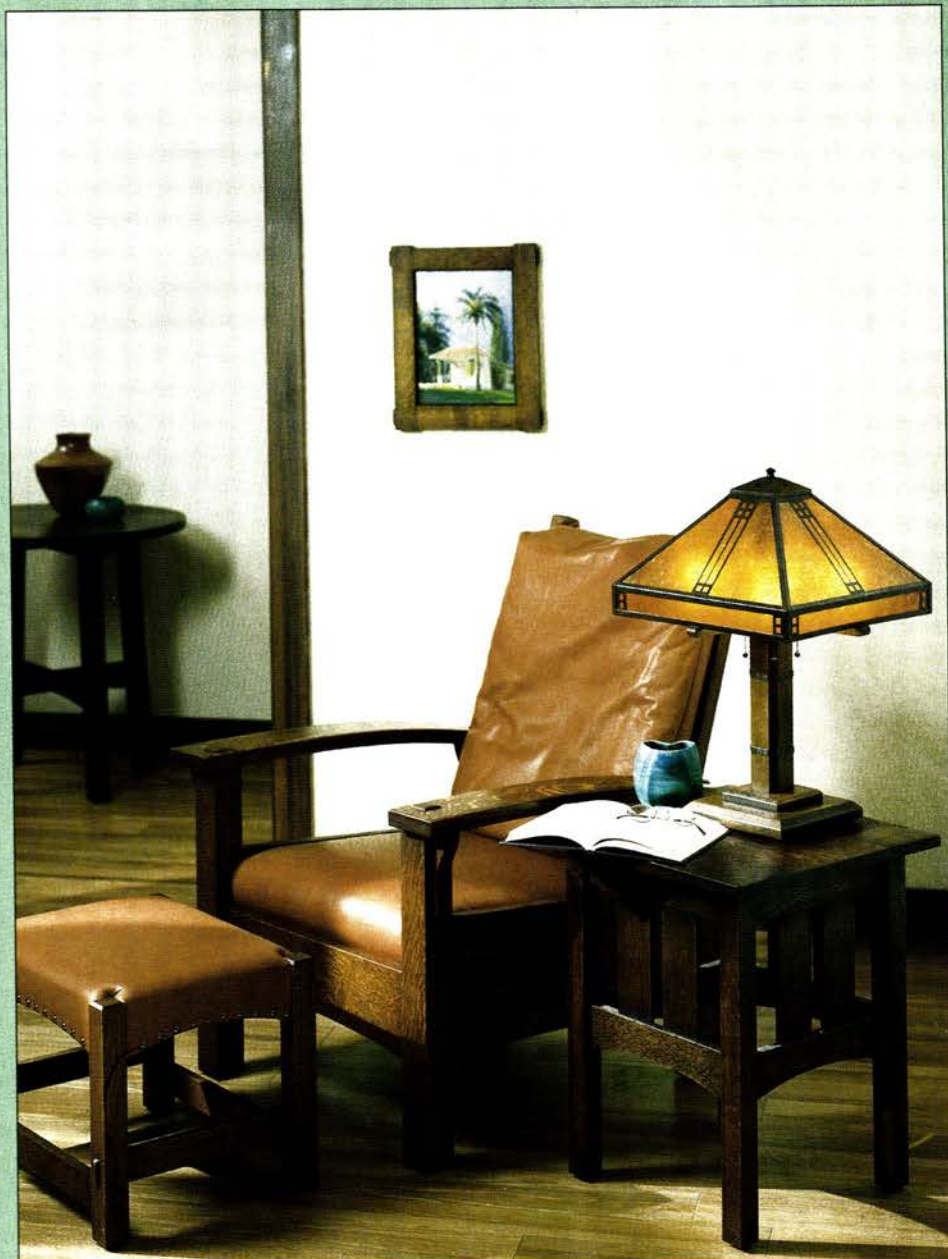
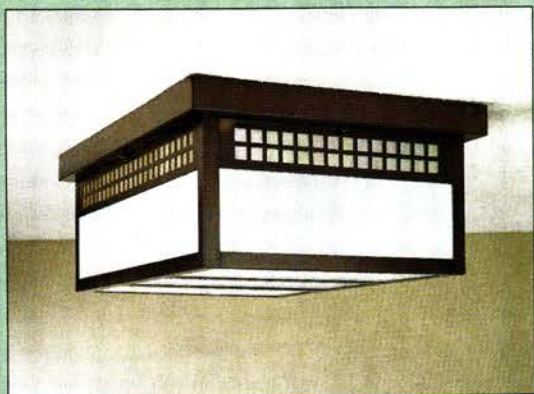
CUT TO THE CHAISE

Are you weary from a day of working on your mid-century Moderne house? Put your feet up in style. Inspired by Finnish architect and designer Alvar Aalto, this chaise marries his sleek '30s look to Shaker simplicity. Sculpted of cherry with mortise-and-tenon joinery, it reclines without any handles and has a removable headrest. An investment of \$2,450 will give you a piece of art masquerading as furniture. Contact Thos. Moser Cabinetmakers, (800) 708-9703, www.thosmoser.com. Circle no. 26 on the resource card.



A FAIR FAUCET

Fair in the sense, of course, of Victorian-era maidens. The kitchen bridge faucet set from Harrington Brass Works has a tall moveable spout for maneuvering around large pans or pitchers, a retractable spray, and hot and cold cross handles. You can order the ceramic hot and cold tabs in French lettering if you want to impress guests with your *savoir faire*. Kitchen and bath accessories in the Victorian collection come in 20 finishes, from antique brass to polished copper. The Perma Brass shown here retails for \$1,200 with a lifetime warranty on the finish. Contact Harrington Brass Works, (201) 818-1300, or email hbw@harringtonbrassworks.com. Circle no. 27 on the resource card.



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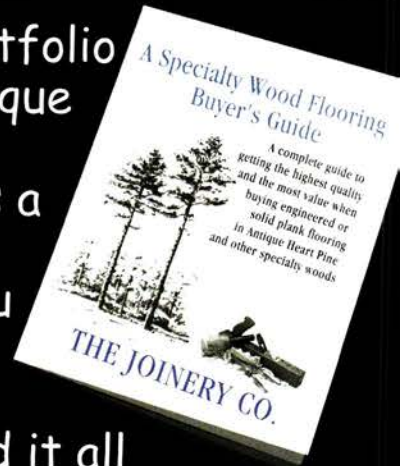
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When Wood Goes Radiant *by Dan Holohan*

Thinking about warming the wood floors in your old house? You can retrofit a hydronic (hot water) radiant heating system beneath your floors and no one will know that it's there. You will notice the comfort, though, and that's really what radiant heat is all about. There's nothing nicer than a warm floor on a cold winter's day, but if it's made out of wood, rather than concrete or tile, you do have to take some precautions.

The first thing you'll need to do is find a competent heating contractor who has had experience with both radiant heating systems and old houses. Most of the time, the contractor will attach the tubing to the underside of your wood floors and between the joists. He'll have to drill a hole through the center of one end of the joists to get the tubing from joist bay to joist bay. It's like lacing a sneaker and, done properly, it will not affect the structural integrity of the house. The contractor will use a circulating pump to move the water through the system, and a mixing valve to blend some of the water that has already been through the floor into the hot water from the boiler. This application typically runs on relatively cool (150°F) water, and that's how they temper the water for your warm floors without affecting the performance of rest of the heating system. Here are some things you should know before you decide to install radiant heating.

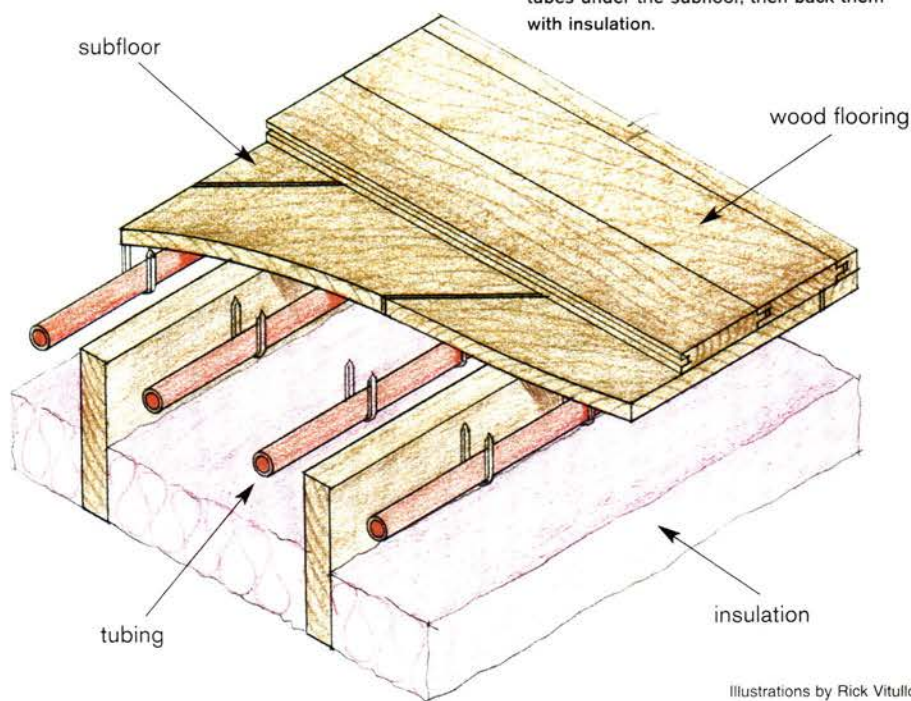
The wider the boards, the greater the chance for trouble—Radiant floor heating works best with flooring that's not wider

than 3". Wide boards can warp, and if your home has plank flooring you should consider another type of heating system.

The same goes for the thickness—Old houses often have more layers of flooring than an archeological dig. The thicker the floor, the harder it is for the heat to work its way through to the surface. An easy way to spot extra flooring is to take a close look at the base moulding. See if you can run a thin blade between the bottom of the moulding

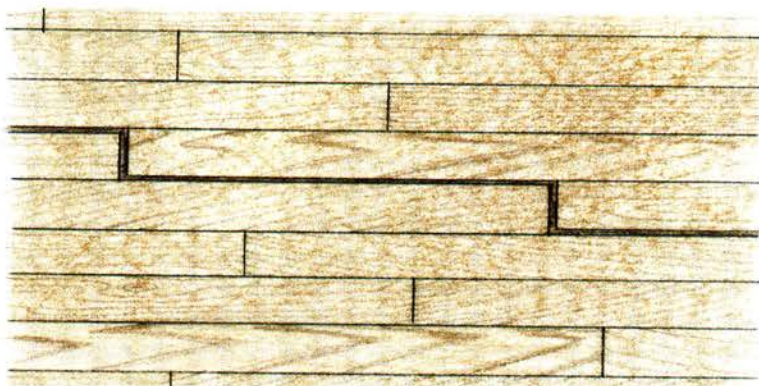
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Above: The lifeline of a radiant heating system is the special plastic tubing that conducts water and heat under the floor. Below: Installers use several methods to run radiant heating under wood floors. For existing floors they typically staple tubes under the subfloor, then back them with insulation.



Illustrations by Rick Vitullo

Tongue-and-groove strip flooring can "panelize" when the finish is so strong it glues groups of boards together. Then when the wood shrinks—during the heating season or dry weather, for example—the dimensional change shows up as one large fault line, rather than many small gaps between individual boards.



and the finished floor. If someone in the past added another layer of flooring, there's a good chance they didn't raise the base moulding. If this is the case, the bottom of the moulding will be lower than the finished floor and you won't be able to slide your blade in there.

Take care with old wiring—The tubes that are under your floor work by heating the air space in the joist bay. If there's also old wiring in that joist bay there's a good chance that the new heating system might bring the temperature within the air space to an unsafe level, which can cause a fire. This isn't a concern with modern wiring, but you need to take great care with old wiring. Move it below the insulation, or replace it.

Control the humidity—Ideally, the relative humidity in a radiantly heated home that has wood floors shouldn't be more than 50 percent. "Without this constant humidity, you must live with the cracks in the wood," according to the experts at the National Oak Flooring Manufacturers Association. But in an older home, there's a good chance that the wood is already cracked (meaning, it has character!), so this may not be a concern.

Give concrete a chance to dry—If you're having new wood installed over new concrete or lightweight concrete, allow enough time for the concrete to dry before installing the wood. If you're in too much of a hurry, the moisture will leave the concrete and enter the wood. A simple way to determine when the time is right is to tape a square of clear, plastic sheeting over the concrete floor and watch it carefully for condensation. Don't let the carpenters install the wood

flooring until the plastic proves there's no moisture left in the concrete.


Beware of construction paper that contains tar or horsehair—These materials may already be present under your old-house floor as wind barriers. When you heat them, they can release lingering odors. Drill a hole up through the floor in an out-of-the-way place and check for tarpaper or horsehair.

Never make a wood floor hotter than 85°F at its surface—Even if you're planning on having rugs, it's not good for the wood. Heating contractors have setpoint controls that can monitor the wood's surface temperature. They often use these in place of air-temperature thermostats in homes with wood floors.

Summertime means more humidity—After that first summer, when the radiant system kicks in, newly installed finish wood just might develop small fissures. That's normal, and it's really not the fault of the heating system. Wood comes from living cells that expand and contract with moisture content (or lack of it). Some cracking is inevitable if the humidity is too high.

Mind the gap—If you put a urethane finish on your nonlaminated hardwood floor the floor is liable to develop gaps. The urethane is so strong it actually "glues" the individual boards together and, as the wood expands and shrinks, the contraction can localize itself and wind up as a gap. This is so common with hardwood floors (whether or not they're heated radiantly) that the hardwood flooring industry even has a name for the phenomenon: panelization.

Learn more about wood—The wood-

floor associations have informative brochures that they'll send you for free, or you can visit their websites. 

DAN HOLOHAN (e-mail at mailroom@J/F01OHJ) is the author of 14 books on the joys of steam- and hot-water heating. Dan also operates HeatingHelp.com, a place to find answers to just about any heating question.

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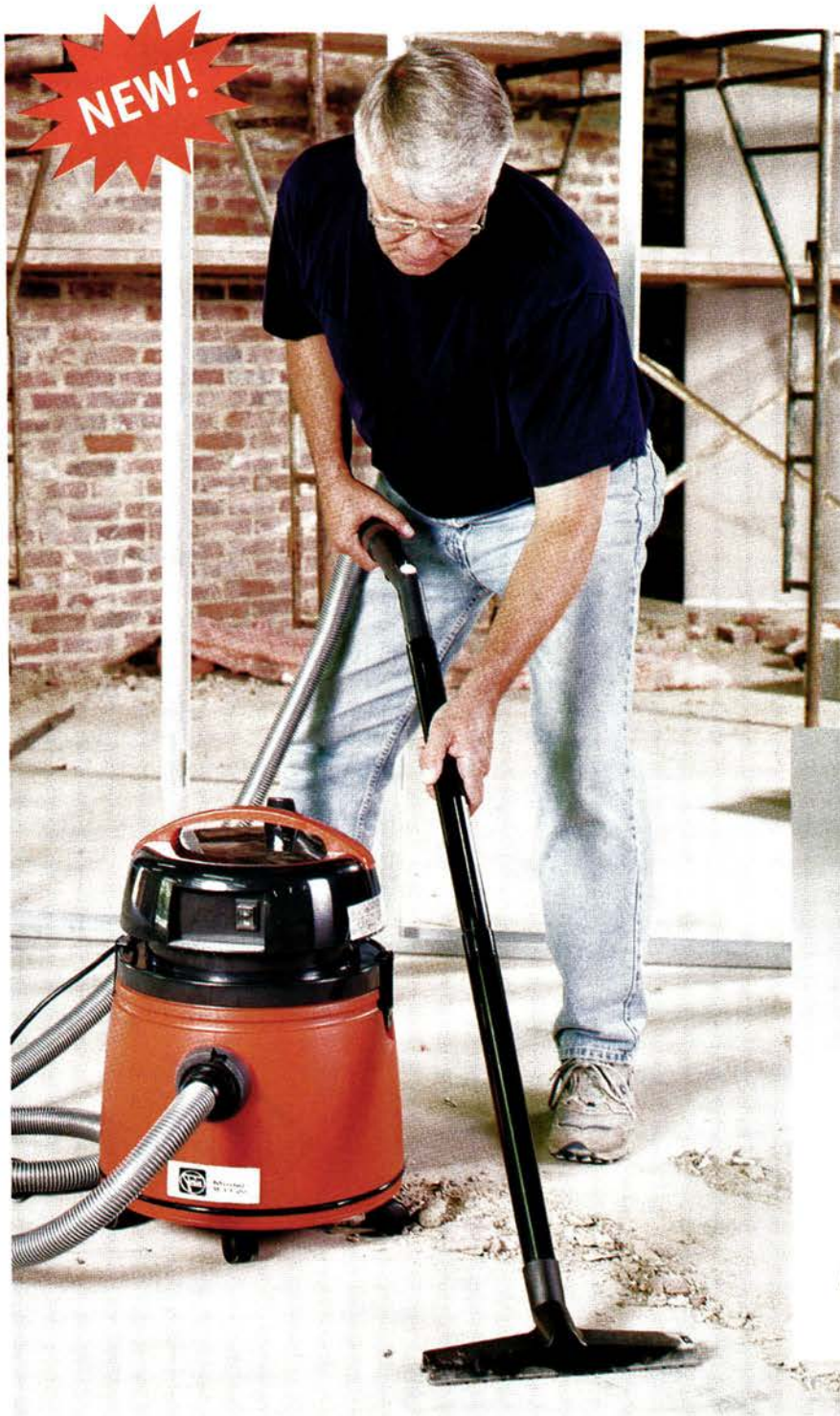
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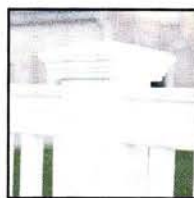
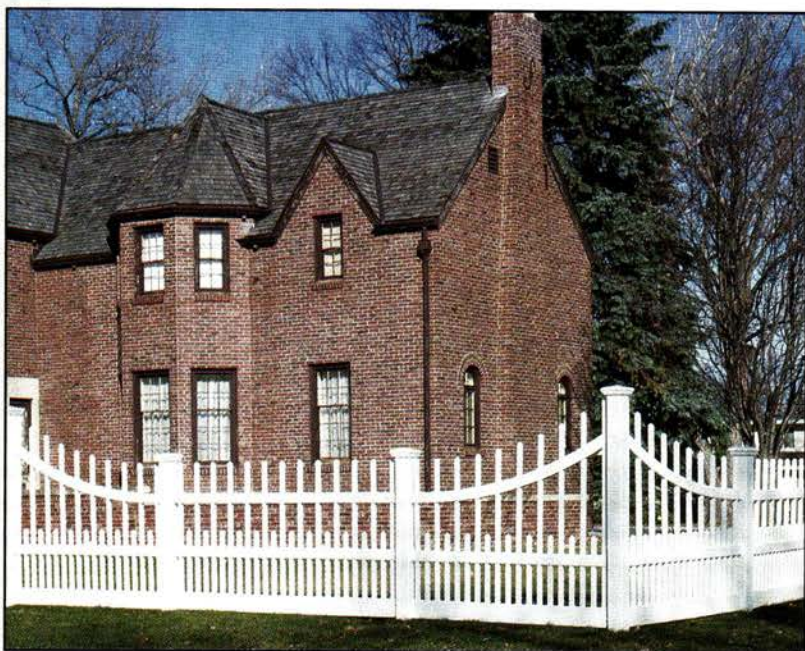
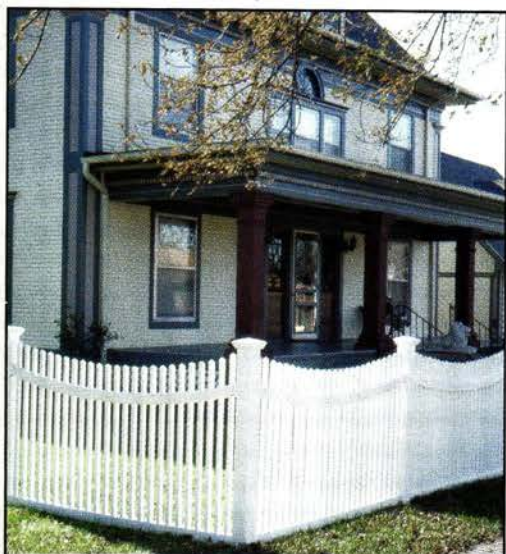
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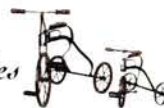
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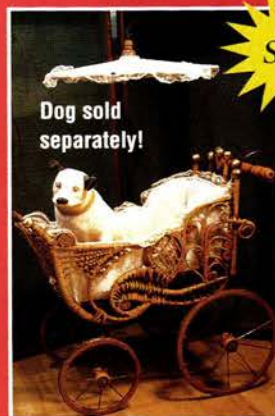
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OLDHOUSE JOURNAL



"Glass block construction, which served both window and wall functions in a single stroke, was enthusiastically embraced by cutting-edge architects of the 1930s."

—page 46



January/February 2001

"Dealers point to richer patina and more character in old wood. You can buy remilled planks as smooth as silk or riddled with evidence of nails, worms, and ancient saw blades."

—page 38



"Besides the normal wear and tear of living, lath-and-plaster ceilings are at the mercy of gravity, and can take only so many leaks and structural movements before they pull away from the framing."

—page 52



What could be more at home in an old house than these reclaimed planks of chestnut—a tree that's extinct as a source of new lumber? Huge old-growth timbers (opposite) were sometimes split with dynamite because there were no saws big enough to cut them.

Old and Under Foot

A Buyer's Guide to Rescued Wood Flooring

By Kathleen Fisher

ANTIQUE WOOD HAS LONG BEEN the choice of restorationists in repairing floors or building additions. Now reclaimed or recovered lumber has growing environmental cachet. Outlets of rescued timber—retail and wholesale—have mushroomed: One dealer estimates that they've increased 10-fold in the past 15 years.

With so many newcomers of various backgrounds hawking these wares, flooring shoppers can run into high adventure sorting through all the glistening samples while avoiding potential minefields—or at least a hidden nail or two.

There are two primary sources for salvaged wood. Lumber is *reclaimed* from previous uses, sometimes from barns but more productively from huge abandoned structures such as old mills, water towers, and factories. Logs are *recovered* from lakes or rivers by divers. These are most often “sinkers”: timber logged 70 to 200 years ago and lost on its way to a mill, or forgotten for decades in a holding pond. In other cases, scuba



Photo Courtesy Goodwin Heart Pine Co. 1870

Photo Courtesy Chestnut Specialists Inc.



1929

“The [Suwanee River] region is a succession of swamps and uplands, and the best pine is always found surrounding the swamps.”

—American Lumberman, 1929

divers use underwater saws to cut down trees still standing in areas inundated by the construction of dams or hydroelectric plants.

Either process is labor intensive. Reclaimers dismantle buildings one piece at a time, haul timbers long distances, then use a metal detector to find hidden nails before prying them out. In rivers and ponds, recoverers assess wood age and quality with flashlights. Then they haul the logs to a dedicated boat ramp for removal. In lakes, sonar allows them to find sinkers more than 100 feet deep. State lawmakers keep a close eye on water loggers to prevent harm to aquatic or bank environments.

All this effort doesn't come cheap. Antique flooring prices are two to three times—or more—that of new wood.

What You Pay For

YET THE SELLING POINTS are many. Dealers point to richer patina and more character in old wood. You can buy remilled planks as smooth as silk or riddled with evidence of nails, worms, and ancient saw blades. What you can't see is its greater durability.

In Colonial America's virgin forest, trees were packed tightly together, competing for soil nutrients and sunlight. The harsh conditions meant they grew slowly and, as a result, produced more dense

heartwood. Antique woods can have more than 30 growth rings per inch, compared to four to seven in a new-growth tree, so they stand up better to foot traffic, water, insects, and even fire.

Some are skeptical about quality differences between old- and new-growth heart pine, the most commonly sold antique wood. But even they cheer the recovery of American chestnut wood, virtually non-existent since a blight wiped out the species early in this century. “Old birch is a color you can't get any more” because there is so much of the reddish heart in these huge timbers, says Charles Rayner. He's sales manager for Timeless Timber in Ashland, Wisconsin, which also recovers sinkers of maple, oak, and hemlock.

In the West, Douglas fir and redwood are the most



Photos Courtesy Goodwin Heart Pine.

The outside boards are river-worn ends of heart pine logs.

often rescued. “The redwood trees we're harvesting today are getting smaller and smaller,” says Bob Legg, president of the Temperate Forest Foundation in Beaverton, Oregon. “Yet people need big timbers for some of its popular uses, like decks.”

Do you need your floorboards long and wide? It's not at all unusual for support beams in an old mill or factory to be 18" thick and 20' long.

Logs recovered as sinkers are generally from tall, branchless trunks, meaning they can produce long boards with few or no knots. And the greater density of old wood allows the milling of wide planks with more stability, fans say.

Then there's the panache of having an interesting tale to tell. We all love to tell friends how we snagged our vintage chandelier at a garage sale or salvaged a stained glass window from a demolished church. Why not some yarns about what's underfoot?

Floor Stories

MOUNTAIN LUMBER in Ruckersville, Virginia, gives homeowners who purchase reclaimed flooring a written and illustrated history about its source. “We were doing so much research on these places ourselves, we decided the buyers should be enjoying the stories too,” says owner Willie Drake. Drake has recovered wood from as far away as St. Petersburg in Russia, where Russian oak intended for use in Trans-Siberian Railway cars was stacked in a warehouse for some 80 years. Some customers make their choice based on these histories. A retired Naval officer ordered Tidewater pine reclaimed from the 85-year-old Naval Yard pier outside Washington, D.C. Baseball fans get excited about the heart pine from Baltimore's Camden Yards, now home to the Orioles.

Finally, investing in antique flooring makes many feel more environmentally responsible. Although wood is a renewable resource, rescued wood “represents an impor-



Divers can recognize some old timbers by their ax-cut ends (left). These timbers (below) came from the Brookside Mill in Knoxville, Tenn., built in 1885.

Courtesy Goodwin Heart Pine

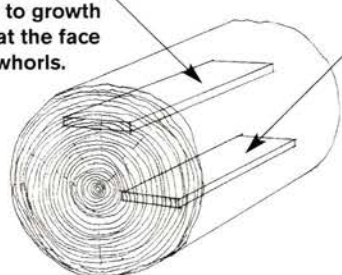
RECOVERED or RECLAIMED



Courtesy Mountain Lumber

Flat-sawn boards (also called plain-sawn) are cut parallel to growth rings so that the face shows whorls.

Quarter-sawn boards (also called edge-sawn) are cut perpendicular to growth rings so that grain runs vertically along the face. They wear more evenly with less cupping, shrinking, or swelling.

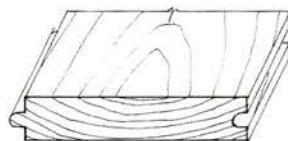


Face

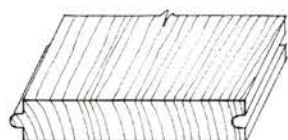


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A tongue cut slightly below the middle of a floorboard allows more sandings.



Flat-sawn



Quarter-sawn

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The heart pine (near) has only a few knots while "naily" pine (center) shows evidence of its previous life. The chestnut (far right) is textured with worm holes and tracks.

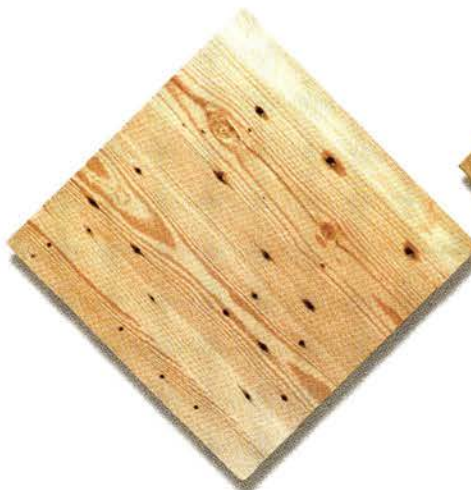


Photo Courtesy Goodwin Heart Pine 1910

The bald cypress can live to be more than 1,000 years old. The trees were girdled before felling so they would dry out and float.

Recovered vs Reclaimed?

Sellers of water-recovered wood say it's superior to reclaimed wood on a couple of counts.

An absence of oxygen makes the underwater environment like a time capsule for recovered logs, whereas reclaimed wood has been buffeted by hammers and nails, heat and humidity. Underwater, substances in wood that would ordinarily crystallize over time are instead eaten by bacteria. Timeless Timber in Ashland, Wisconsin, says this makes its woods ideal for musical instruments because the open cells improve acoustics, while Carol Goodwin of Goodwin Heart Pine in Micanopy, Florida, says it gives the heart pine a more translucent look.

But many buyers want a distressed look, says Goodwin, whose company also sells some reclaimed woods. "I've had people leave wood outside with chains on it or take golf cleats to it." Reclaimed wood is more apt to come with such evidence of age, and sellers say the stress of humidity and temperature fluctuation over the years increases the wood's stability rather than lessening it.

tant sustainability ethic," says Legg. "If we can extend the useful life of wood, we can stretch our resources."

Not everyone agrees, however. James Murray Howard, curator and architect for Thomas Jefferson-designed buildings at the University of Virginia, says he has no choice except antique wood for making historically appropriate repairs. "But I'm pained by the process. You're losing the building you're taking the wood from. I don't say we have to save every old building, but you need to make sure you're robbing [the wood] for a good cause." Reclaimers counter that they're taking wood that would otherwise end up in a landfill, often removing buildings that have become dangerous.

Avoiding Surprises

IF ANTIQUE WOOD APPEALS to you and you can give this slice of history "a good home," as one seller puts it, do some homework before sending in that order.

There is no uniform grading system for antique wood as there is for newly milled flooring. Various dealers

have their own fanciful terms for different grades that may or may not be illuminating.

"Naily" tells its own story, but how many wormholes can you expect to find in "Legacy" versus "Cabin" or "Country"? What appear to be bargains at first glance may involve your paying extra to have nails removed, making your installer fill large knot holes, or wasting a high proportion of your purchase.

What should you look for? **Proper drying.** Most antique wood sellers dry their wood in kilns. Done too quickly this might reduce resin content and damage the wood's cellular structure.

"You can't rush through the process," says Pattie Boden, sales manager at Mountain Lumber. "Every piece of wood is a different animal depending on where it came from. The roof may have been off and it may have been water damaged." In large timbers, the outside can be 15 percent drier than the inside.

Carol Goodwin of Goodwin Heart Pine in Micanopy, Florida, says their river-recovered pine has a



"Granery Oak" (far left) gets its character from original saw marks, while "American Oak" (near) from reclaimed barns, is relatively smooth.

Samples Courtesy Mountain Lumber; Photos by David Sharpe


moisture content about half that of newly cut wood. Nevertheless, they air dry it for two to three months before kiln-drying it for five days. Advocates of kiln drying shoot for a moisture content of slightly less than 10 percent. **Clearly specified content.** If you want 100 percent antique heart pine flooring, make sure that this is what you're getting. Any sapwood will stay yellow instead of turning the heart's signature pinky orange. Some dealers mix pieces of new wood with the old.

Wood cut to expectations. Quarter- (or edge-) sawn flooring will have all-vertical grain, while plain or flat-sawn will have whorls and flame shapes. Those shapes may be what you want. A rare heart pine form called "curly" is full of burls and squiggles. But some connoisseurs, like the UVA's Howard, feel that with heart pine in particular, only quarter sawing will play up the tighter texture of the antique wood.

Appropriate dimensions. Plank flooring $\frac{3}{4}$ " thick is fairly standard, although $\frac{1}{2}$ " is sometimes sold for glue-down installation. Dealers often offer random widths in ranges, say 3" to 5", 3" to 7", and 6" to 10",

and in random lengths of $1\frac{1}{2}$ ' to 12'. Others offer same-width boards, such as $2\frac{1}{2}$ ", $3\frac{1}{4}$ ", $5\frac{1}{4}$ ", 7", and 9". Because so many of these dealers do their own milling, they can accommodate special orders including boards a foot wide or 16' long, or unusual widths or thicknesses.

Several samples. Many dealers have well-illustrated web sites, which is a fun way to begin exploring. Many will send you a photo. But cameras can lie, so ask to see some samples of the actual flooring. "And not one little piece," says Boden, "but at least three of nice sizes."

Guarantees. A reputable dealer will not only certify that the wood is really old, but indicate a maximum amount of waste (5 percent should be adequate unless you have a diagonal or other unusual pattern) and agree to take the flooring back, even if you just don't like the color. And you may want to know the source of reclaimed lumber for reasons other than gleaning a colorful anecdote. Drake researches the buildings' histories to make sure they weren't the site of chemical-intensive industries such as tanning. "I wouldn't feel comfortable with that for my workers or my customers." 



Courtesy Goodwin Heart Pine

Heart pine is sought after both for its hardness and the characteristic reddish hue it develops a few months after installation.

Shaping Up, Not Shipping Out

If building "green" appeals to you and you don't need to match an unusual old floor, the U.S. Forest Service project at its Southern Research Station at Virginia Tech in Blacksburg should be worth investigating.

Phil Araman, a research project leader there, is promoting the recycling of old shipping pallets for flooring, paneling, and counter tops. The flooring is mostly red or white oak, while the other uses include walnut and cherry.

Pallet manufacturers are encouraging the repair of old pallets, but as recently as 1995 surveys showed that only three in 10 pallets were reclaimed from old ones. "That meant a lot of nice wood was being buried or ground up," says Araman. In the mid '90s a not-for-profit organization was established in the Bronx, New York, to train inner city youth to make flooring and furniture from pallets, but the enterprise is no longer operating. For more information call Phil Araman at (540) 231-5341, or email paraman@vt.edu.

As in the beamed ceiling of Southern California's Lanterman House, a few planks of pine or spruce can present ripe opportunities for interior embellishment.



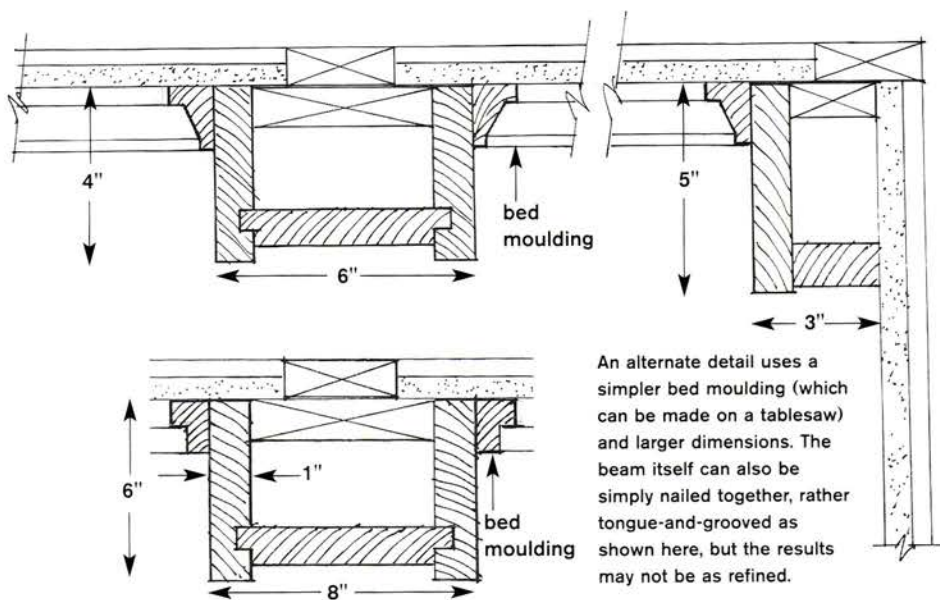
Box Beam Basics

Details for
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By Gordon Bock

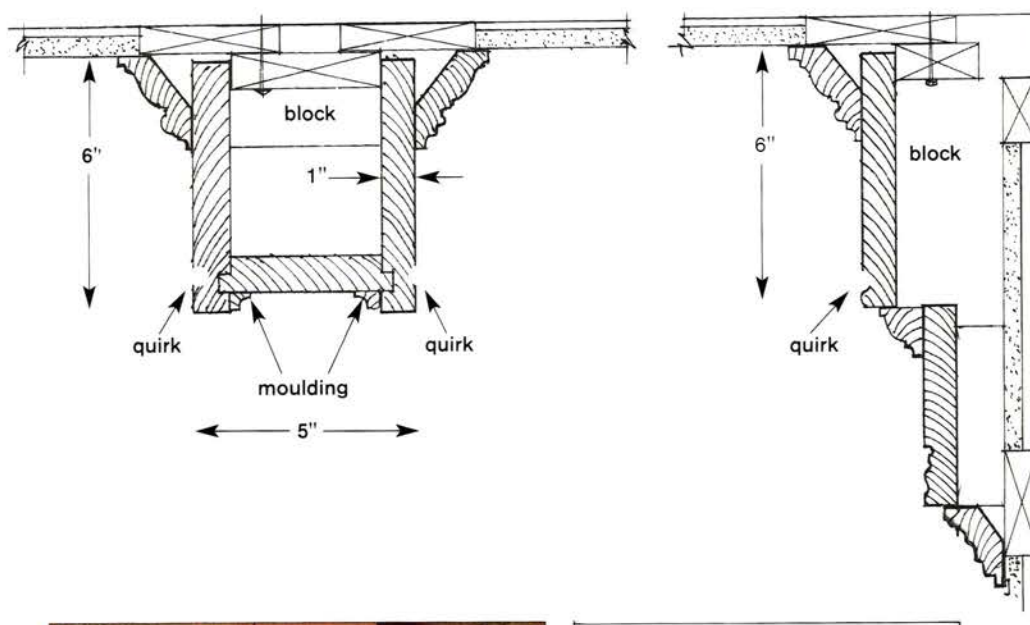
BUILT-UP OR “FALSE” BEAMS are once-common ceiling features that contribute a rich matrix of woodwork overhead in dining areas, libraries, and similar first-floor rooms. One of the few interior details equally popular in both the Victorian and Arts & Crafts eras, they appeared in many styles of houses from the 1880s to the 1920s. Though often lost over the decades to callous cover-ups or wholesale removal, these beams are readily recreated with trim lumber, good carpentry skills, and some accurate construction details.

The latter is really the point. Rather than being solid timbers or anything close to structural, these beams are shells of thin boards—boxes, if you will—tongue-and-grooved together, then anchored to the floor joists that are the true building skeleton. Multiple ersatz beams usually intersected at right angles for a coffered ceiling effect, then terminated at a cornice or band that lined the perimeter of the room. While box beams could be ordered prefabricated from millworks catalogs, they were just as easily crafted on-site from plans. The two presented here are historically accurate and typical. 🏠



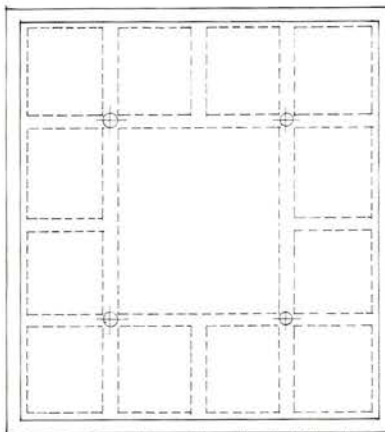
ARTS & CRAFTS STYLE

This beam plan from 1912 is the kind common in bungalows, Prairie style houses, and generally any interior with flat, unmoulded trim-work. Note that the beam itself has no mouldings, and its counterpart on the wall is just a half-beam. Beams are attached to blocking, which is fastened to grounds or joists in the ceiling.



COLONIAL REVIVAL STYLE

Appropriate for a late Victorian or Colonial Revival house, this 1903 plan uses a prominent beam that is clearly decorated. There are small bed mouldings on the face of the beam, quirked beads on its sides, and crown mouldings where it meets the ceiling. The half-beam on the wall may extend to make a cornice of wood or plaster that runs the perimeter of the room.



Photos by Doug Keister; illustrations by Robert Leanna

The layout of box beam ceilings can be quite complex in large rooms, or English Revival houses that mix beams of different dimensions, but the plan at left is common for both Arts & Crafts and Colonial Revival installations. Electric lights were a regular feature at major intersections, especially in dining rooms. Typical fixtures are single husks without shades or small pendants as shown here.

Clear enough
for a window,
strong enough
for a wall ...

The Architecture of Glass Block

By Elizabeth A. Patterson and Neal A. Vogel

Bursting onto the American architectural scene in the early years of the Great Depression, glass block swept the continent over the next decade, promising infinite design possibilities in a totally new building material. Impact-resistant yet translucent, the blocks could be factory-molded into any shape or pattern desired, then laid up as quickly as bricks during construction. While glass block was first promoted for industrial and commercial use, residential architects recognized its ability to transmit abundant natural light while preserving privacy — a perfect fit with the modern house of the 1930s.

Block at Its Beginning

AMERICANS GOT THEIR FIRST LOOK at structural glass-wall construction in 1893, when Frenchman Gustave Falconnier introduced his hand-blown glass "bricks" at the Columbian Exposition in Chicago. Falconnier constructed several greenhouses with the lozenge-shaped blocks, and signs touted their use for "pavilions, conservatories, photo galleries, and surgical rooms." The product remained seldom used in the United States, however, due to chronic problems with internal condensation and glass stability.

By 1911, German-born architect Friedrich Keppler, working on be-



Bauhaus pioneer Walter Gropius built an entrance screen of glass blocks (left) for his 1938 home in Lincoln, Mass. (below).



Photos this page by James C. Massey.



Not surprising for a man who worked with lenses, Kodak scientist Gustave Fassin designed a curved wall of glass block for the 1936 International Style house he built for himself in Rochester, New York.

Photo by Andy Olenick

half of American Luxfer Prism Co., had developed a construction method using slabs of prismatic glass and reinforced concrete. Although the Keppler system also suffered from internal condensation and stability problems, American companies such as Keppler Glass Constructions, Luxfer Prism Co., and Structural Glass Corp. were soon producing commercial building systems based on Keppler's principles.

Nearly two decades passed before Structural Glass Corp. brought the first true hollow glass block to the American market in 1929. Though the new product had little immediate impact, the year is pivotal in glass block history because it marks the merger of two competing glass container manufacturers—Owens Bottle Co. and Illinois Glass Co.—into the enormous Owens-Illinois Corp. Shortly after the merger the stock market crashed, so the company promptly invested in research to diversify its product base. The result, developed in 1932, was the first Owens-Illinois glass block—a five-sided, machine-pressed, soda-lime glass unit sealed with flat glass plates.

Owens-Illinois introduced its new product to an international audience the following year at Chicago's 1933 World's Fair, "A Century of Progress." The company's impressive Glass Block Building featured a five-

In 1934 architect William Lescaze turned to solid-glass blocks by the MacBeth-Evans Glass Co. for modernizing his home and office in New York City.



Photo by Michael Devonshire

story central shaft incorporating blocks that were "many colored, semi-transparent, and approximately the size of ordinary paving bricks," according to an official fair guide. (Six years later, the 1939 New York World's Fair featured a complete glass house in the "Town of Tomorrow.")

By 1935 Owens-Illinois could announce a stronger, less costly version of its block, composed of two identical molded pieces sealed with lead. Designed to lay up easily with traditional bricks, the new Insulux blocks measured $4\frac{7}{8}$ " x 8" x $3\frac{7}{8}$ ". The company soon added 6", 8", and 12" square units. To underscore the virtues of its new product, Owens-Illinois quickly began constructing a new laboratory facility made entirely of glass block.

The promising innovations at Owens-Illinois soon prompted the Architectural Division of New York's Corning Glass Works to develop a competing product. The Pyrex construction block, announced in *The Glass Industry* of November 1935, measured $11\frac{1}{4}$ " x $11\frac{1}{4}$ " x 4" and fused two molded units to create "a partial vacuum of rarified air," thereby eliminating the problem of internal condensation. In 1936, Corning Glass Works and Pittsburgh Plate Glass joined forces to manufacture Pyrex blocks under the new company name Pittsburgh-Corning. Their PC

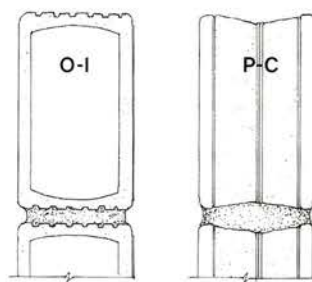


Glass block's strength permits its use in building entire extensions as in Joseph C. Goddayne's 1939 house in Bay City, Mich.



Photos (above) by James C. Massey

Though often partnered with smooth concrete or stucco, glass block worked equally well with brick masonry and was often paired with steel casements for ventilation.



Illustrations by Rob Leanna

Though 1930s glass blocks from Owens-Illinois (far left) and Pittsburgh-Corning had individual cross-sections, both laid up like bricks in a bed of mortar.



Photo: Chicago Historical Society

Block went into production the following year, and Pittsburgh-Corning showcased the product in its sleek new Manhattan headquarters.

Houses of Glass

JUST AS BLOCK PRODUCTION was taking off, residential construction enjoyed an upswing after several years of Depression-induced stagnation. By the late 1930s, trade and design publications were heavily promoting glass block for residential building. The 1937 *Sweet's Catalogue* entry for Owens-Illinois included photographs and architectural plans of residential glass block installations. *House & Garden* magazine praised the "many practical and decorative applications."

Once the public accepted glass block for residential use, manufacturers and architects quickly discerned its best applications within the home. Operating windows were still necessary for ventilation, so they customarily combined glass block and steel casements (or, later, jalousie windows) on facades from the mid-1930s through the mid-1950s. Just as frequently, they framed plate glass windows with block, used it to round off building corners, or constructed entire end walls of the material. Glass block provides a soft, northern-exposure

quality of light for stairs, foyers, hallways, dining rooms, and basement recreation rooms, regardless of their orientation. It's also highly resistant to mold, mildew, and grease, so block reigned in bathrooms and kitchens, where light, privacy, and sanitation are prized.

Many American architects and designers on the cutting edge employed the exciting new material in their work for its smooth, clean lines. Glass block construction—which served both window and wall functions in a single stroke—was enthusiastically embraced by the leaders of the Art Deco, Art Moderne, and International styles, including Walter Gropius (Gropius house, Lincoln, Mass., 1938); Milton J. Black (Ulm house, Los Angeles, 1937); and George Fred Keck (Bruning residence, Wilmette, Ill., 1936). In 1939, *Architectural Forum* and Owens-Illinois sponsored a residential design contest that elicited an impressive 702 drawings. A year later, the magazine praised the glass industry for its extensive research, product improvements, and sales of over 20 million glass blocks in five years.

In the 1930s both Owens-Illinois and Pittsburgh-Corning often compared block and steel windows head-to-head in charts and graphs. Such evaluations were sometimes misleading. Advertisements claimed



Photo by James C. Massey

LARGE-SCALE BLOCK

Among the earliest and most extensive applications of glass block in a commercial building is the 1937 Hecht Company warehouse in Washington, D.C. Designed by the firm of Abbot, Merkt, the bands of glass block are detailed before the curved corner to create a tower effect. Note the concave treatment of the block on the tower penthouse.

that various individual blocks had compressive strengths of 2,000 psi, light transmission of up to 86.5 percent, and insulation values equivalent to those of triple-glazed windows. When installed, however, the mortar joints reduced compressive strength to 400 psi, light transmission to 55 percent at best, and standard insulation value to that of a double-glazed window. Still, the obscured views, fireproof qualities, and sound reduction values (nearly 40 decibels) afforded by block were advantages in any densely populated area.

As America moved beyond the Depression years and World War II, the popularity of glass block began to wane, even as residential construction boomed. The new generation of architects rejected the popular styles of the 1930s, just as innovators of the Roosevelt era had abandoned the traditional architectural styles of their predecessors. Meanwhile, the majority of middle-class homeowners dismissed the sleek, progressive, machine-age architecture of the International and Art Moderne houses as design fads of the rich and famous. Colonial and English revivals were the style mainstays until the 1950s, and glass block did not harmonize with dentils, shutters, or half-timbering. Concurrently, single-glazed steel casements faded

into oblivion as more economical thermal-pane wood and aluminum double-hung windows arrived on the scene. Obscured views became less relevant in the sprawling suburbs of rambling ranches.

Perhaps the popularity of glass block in industry, as well as its practicality, led to its demise in residential construction. Who wanted to have their new house look like the factories and warehouses on the other side of town or to build with materials born in the cash-strapped 1930s? Still, both Owens-Illinois and Pittsburgh-Corning continued to research and expand their product lines with new patterns and better light diffusion in order to survive. In the late 1950s, Owens-Illinois debuted ceramic-faced and blue-tinted glass block in an attempt to buoy sales, while Pittsburgh-Corning re-introduced rectangular blocks. Neither innovation spurred demand. In 1964, Owens-Illinois shut down its glass block line. Pittsburgh-Corning continued manufacturing until the late 1970s, when it too announced the end of production. Eminent architects, led by the editor of *Progressive Architecture*, rose up in protest and persuaded Pittsburgh-Corning to reconsider. The company continued production and marketing with a concerted effort to revive block as a building material.

The large-radius corners of streamline-era facades and stairwells became the perfect place for walls of glass block.



Specialty curved blocks could be ordered for tight-radius applications.



Photo by Neal Vogel



Photo by James C. Massey

Used generously, but solely, in the lower storey, glass block leaves the visual weight of this Winchester, Va. house while emphasizing its horizontality.



Photo by Jim Draeger

In Beaver Dam, Wisc. the striking play of rectangular forms is accented by the glass block corner window at the house's center.

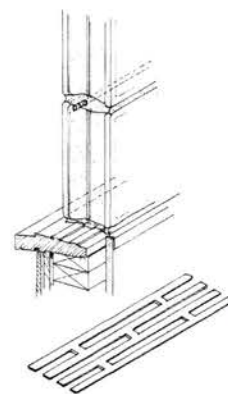
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BUILDING WITH BLOCK

The primary advantage of glass block was and remains its superiority in energy performance over its chief building product rival: the single-glazed steel casement window. Steel windows require diligent maintenance to prevent sizable energy losses due to infiltration, while glass block assemblies permit virtually no infiltration and are nearly maintenance-free. Glass block also greatly reduces solar transmission. Consequently it became fashionable in Miami, Los Angeles, and other warm-climate, trend-setting locales of the Art Moderne era.



Typical residential installations (top) reinforced glass blocks with one or more steel rods between courses. In the 1930s, anchor plates (above) bonded PC block to masonry walls.

Illustration by Rob Leanna

Glass block got its panache back in the 1980s when architects rediscovered its pearly luminescence, as in this 1988 interior by George Woo.

Photo by Balthazar Korab

Block Bounces Back

BY THE 1980s, glass block was enjoying a resurgence, especially in residential construction, and the market continues to expand. Catchy names like Corona, Mist, Twinkle, Dawn, Savona, and Ibuki have helped boost the appeal of new blocks made and distributed by Weck (Germany), Quail Glen Trading, Ltd. (New Zealand), and Nippon Electric Glass Co., Ltd. (Japan). Plus there are a wide range of basic tints, colored edges, sandblasted designs, and tighter curves. Manufacturers responding to energy trends have developed a solar block with a metal oxide coating on the inside surface that reflects 66 percent of the solar energy back outside. Assembly methods and termination for interior partitions have improved as well. Block still is frequently relegated to the bathroom; it has become highly desirable for creating intimacy while affording modesty in today's trendy, oversized, whirlpool-equipped bathrooms.

So what do all these new blocks and uses mean for old-house owners? Hopefully, a glass block industry revived for new construction will lead to more reproduction patterns and sizes of original block—essential for restoration, since most glass block repair

is impractical and salvage block is rare. Pittsburgh-Corning, still the sole U.S. manufacturer, continues to make its original Decora and Argus patterns in 6" x 6", 8" x 8", and 12" x 12" sizes. Less common historic block and oddities, however, remain cost-prohibitive to match for most residential applications. When replacement is absolutely necessary, mismatched block may be the only alternative. Homeowners should document the original blocks and retain good examples in the house until an appropriate reproduction becomes available.

Glass block is back in all its machine-age beauty, and it's likely to increase in popularity. We live in a high-tech world where retro styles like "echo Deco," "neo-Moderne," and "International II" carry less shock value and find greater acceptance the second time around. As before, glass block will take its place in the homes of the future.

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B E F O R E



Top: Stained cracks and suspicious shadows—the telltale signs of a delaminating plaster ceiling. Above: Holding a vacuum nozzle on the drill bit helps suck the $\frac{1}{4}$ " injection holes clear of dust.

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LAST FOR 200 YEARS, BUT THE FORCES
OF AGE, CHANGE, AND GRAVITY LIMIT
THE LIFE SPAN OF CEILINGS.

Hanging

Techniques for Reattaching

WHAT OLD-HOUSE owner doesn't have a cracking or sagging plaster ceiling somewhere? Besides the normal wear and tear of living, plaster-and-lath ceilings are at the mercy of gravity, and they can take only so many water leaks and structural movements before they pull away from the framing. The good news is, it's possible to repair and rescue them from further damage.

We have successfully reattached many old ceilings by injecting adhesive between the plaster and lath where the keys (anchors) have broken away over time. Though variations of this technique are not new—texts from the 1920s recommend liquid sulfur as an adhesive—we use modern materials that are easy to handle and inflict minimal damage to sound plaster. With these methods and good tool skills it's possible to restore the integrity of plaster ceilings for many more years of service.

Sizing up the Ceiling

AFTER CORRECTING WHATEVER problem made the ceiling loose in the first place (leaky roof, structural alterations), the first step is to assess how far the ceiling has pulled away. Gently push on the surface and judge the amount of play between plaster and lath. Hope-

fully, you will feel it move back into place like a jigsaw puzzle piece sliding into its own unique spot. If there are broken keys or debris in the way (see sidebar p. 54), the plaster will resist seating, and it will feel and sound "crunchy" akin to breaking eggshells—or crushing popcorn. Do not force it back into place or more plaster may break. Instead, just gently encourage the plaster with the flat of your hand.

If the separation is slight—say, between $\frac{1}{4}$ " and $\frac{1}{2}$ "—good reattachment is likely because the plaster will usually push back into place solid and flat against the lath. If the plaster sags $\frac{1}{2}$ " to 1" from the lath, there is often too much debris (broken keys, years of silt) between the plaster and lath for success. Unless you can vacuum out all this debris from above, reattachment is probably not an option. Often we find that the worst part of the ceiling has too much debris, and we have to remove this section, reattach the edges, then infill the lost parts with new plaster. Plaster that is soft and crumbly will not hold up during the pushing and drilling and has to be removed as well.

Removing areas of damaged plaster—particularly in a ceiling—will encourage more plaster to come down, especially if you use a chisel-edged tool. (We call this the "domino-delamination effect.") To control this tendency

by a Hair

Plaster Ceilings

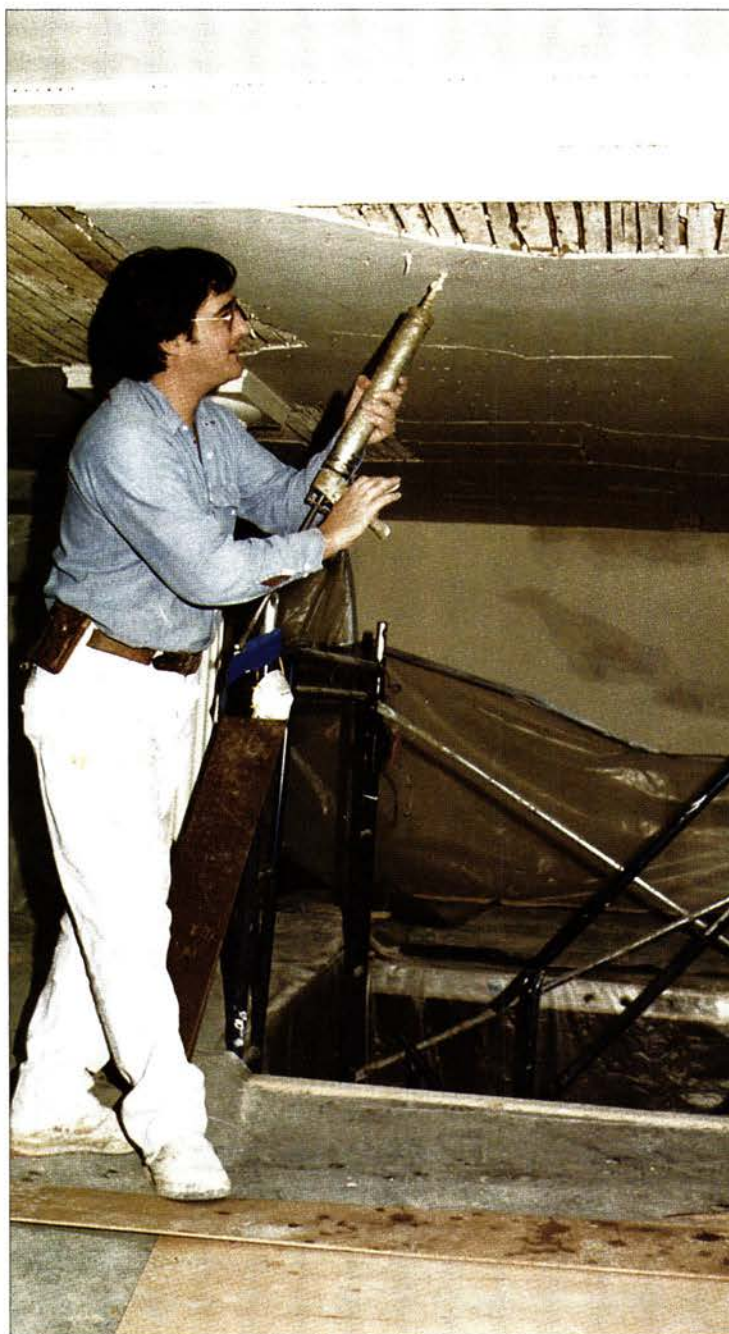
By Peter and Noelle Lord • Photographs by Peter Lord

we recommend carefully marking out your repair plan, then removing any areas with a sharp utility knife. Mark with a lumber crayon or pencil; a pen will bleed through your paint later on.

The holes you bore to inject the adhesive must be directly beneath the wood lath—not the spaces between the lath—so that the adhesive can bond to something solid. If you have removed any plaster, or dug out a crack for repair, then you can see the positions of the lath. In a reattachment-only repair, however, finding lath is basically hunt-and-peck. Sometimes, if the plaster is not too thick, you can stand back and look for “ghosts” or shadows of the lath showing through the finish coat.

Once you have a solid fix on one lath, assume that the rest of the lathing is $1\frac{1}{2}$ " to 2" wide and spaced approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ " to $\frac{1}{2}$ " apart. If you have an in-fill area that needs reattachment at its edges, mark for injection sites $1\frac{1}{2}$ " to 2" back from the edges. If you are only reattaching plaster, plan for injection holes every 3" to 4", no more than 6" apart.

We bore injection holes with a $\frac{1}{4}$ " carbide drill bit. Making these holes presents a second challenge because it is very important to bore only through the injection surface. For example, if you are reattaching from the plaster side, you must bore completely through the plaster, yet stop before going into



Left: Peter Lord prefers a commercial-size gun for reattaching the savable edges of this ceiling. Above: The $\frac{1}{4}$ " injection hole is an effective size for a good seal with the adhesive tube.



Top: Floor to ceiling shores hold the poly-coated forms in place. Note the pre-1840s split lath in the ceiling, and the industrial wet/dry vacuum in the background. Above: Screwing forms to the lath eliminates shores but adds holes.

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the wood lath. Conversely, if you are reattaching from above, you need to bore through the lath, but stop before the plaster. By paying attention to the changing resistance of the materials on the drill bit it's possible to develop a feel for these different layers.

After you have bored your injection holes, you need to vacuum out the debris and drilling dust. Older plaster is soft so be careful not to suck it off the ceiling with the vacuum! Place your hand near the hole to gently support the plaster while you vacuum using the other hand. Do not push the plaster back up into place, however; the void will allow the vacuum to pull some of the debris out through the hole. If you have access from above, you can vacuum more of the silt and debris. Remove keys that are visibly loose or broken as well. Use a wet/dry shop vacuum designed to handle the fine dust. Plaster will kill a household vacuum in short order.

Next, wet the injection holes by either spraying down the lath with a squirt bottle or squirting up into the drilled holes from the plaster surface. Wetting encourages the adhesive to travel farther when it is compressed and will also slow the drying time slightly for a stronger bond.

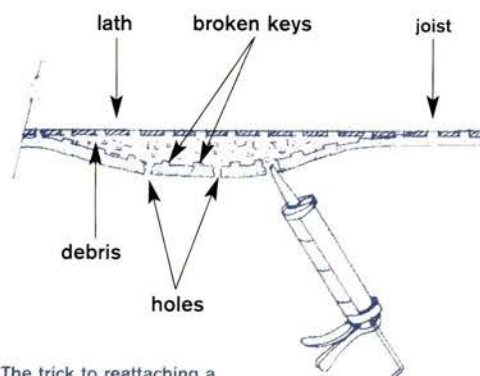
Bonding and Shoring

Finally it's time to inject adhesive. We use a water-based, latex product that is actually a vinyl floor adhesive. However, any good-quality latex or acrylic adhesive can work (for example, Liquid Nails or floor adhesive). You can purchase these products at construction supply houses and hardware stores in caulking tubes for small projects or five-gallon pails for large jobs. We use a caulking gun with the tip cut to fit snugly in our $\frac{1}{4}$ " holes, and inject the adhesive until the plaster moves ever so slightly (one squeeze of the average caulking gun is usually enough). If you

Two Sides for Working

YOU CAN REATTACH AN old ceiling by working from the finished, plaster side. Or you may be able to work from the unfinished, lath side if you have access above the ceiling from an attic or removed floor. There are advantages and frustrations with either method. Reattaching from the plaster side leaves you with holes to fill and further disturbs the plaster.

Reattaching from the lath side usually means working in a cramped, dark space. Nonetheless, this approach is particularly useful when you have ornate plaster, a hand-painted ceiling, or you must disturb



The trick to reattaching a ceiling is removing debris, then injecting adhesive right between the plaster and lath.

Illustration by Rob Leanna

the plaster as little as possible. We prefer reattaching from the plaster side, however, because visibility is better, one person can do the work, and we can tell at any time how the plaster is reacting to the process.

Buttoned Up Tight?

PLASTER BUTTONS OR WASHERS are designed for securing plaster back to the lath similar to the reattachment process described here. They are meant to be a quick, simple solution to plaster delamination, but they have their limits, especially for large repairs. Plaster buttons only bear on an area about 1" in diameter, and they are most effective where there is no residue and silt build-up between the plaster and


lath. (The screws that anchor the buttons must make it through the plaster with enough length to grab the lath or joists for a strong hold.) Buttons can also crack and shatter the surrounding plaster if they are screwed in too tightly. Finally, these large washers need to be skimmed over with two or more coats of filler or compound in order to hide them, sometimes adding to the blending and finishing stages of a repair.

inject too much adhesive you will actually push the plaster off the ceiling. As you inject, follow along with a damp sponge to wipe away the excess adhesive that leaves the holes when you remove the nozzle. Complete your entire series of holes, then go back over the plaster with a clean, damp sponge to remove further glue residue. Follow the same process if you're working on the lath side, leaving adhesive wipe-up as an optional step.

Once we have injected adhesive into the repair area, we push the plaster back into place against the lath and secure it with forms. This step spreads the adhesive so that it bonds to a greater surface area. We use flexible plywood squares ($\frac{1}{2}$ " to $\frac{3}{8}$ " thick) covered with a layer of sheet polyethylene. Do not underestimate the importance of this layer of poly; if you forget it you will glue the plywood to the ceiling and take all the plaster with it if you attempt to remove the form. (Sound like first-hand experience?) Last, we secure these in place with screws or wood shores running to the floor (see photo p. 54), then allow the adhesive to set up for 24 hours. Screws save the time of fitting wooden shores and keep the work area clear, but they can damage the plaster and leave more holes to fill later. Shores are more appropriate for fragile, decorative, or museum-quality plaster, and we use them for both plaster-side and lath-side reattachment.

The next day you can remove the forms. Where some of the plastic sticks to adhesive injected from the plaster side, simply scrape it off

with a putty knife. The adhesive is still soft around the holes at this point, but has set up enough to remove the forms. On the plaster side, scrape off the dried adhesive residue with a drywall or putty knife, then use the corner of a putty knife to gently scallop out excess adhesive showing from the hole. As it dries fully over another day or so (depending on heat and humidity) the adhesive will further retreat into the hole, leaving a clear space to fill.

We usually fill the injection and screw holes with Durabond 45 (sandable), mixed to the consistency of peanut butter, because this product has a quick set-up time and dries very hard with minimal shrinkage. However, any vinyl paste filler or plaster/joint compound can be used for this step. Usually, it takes two to three applications to fill the holes flush with the ceiling, depending upon the product. Other than this, the ceiling is now reattached and ready for a skim-coat of plaster or a fresh coat of paint. 

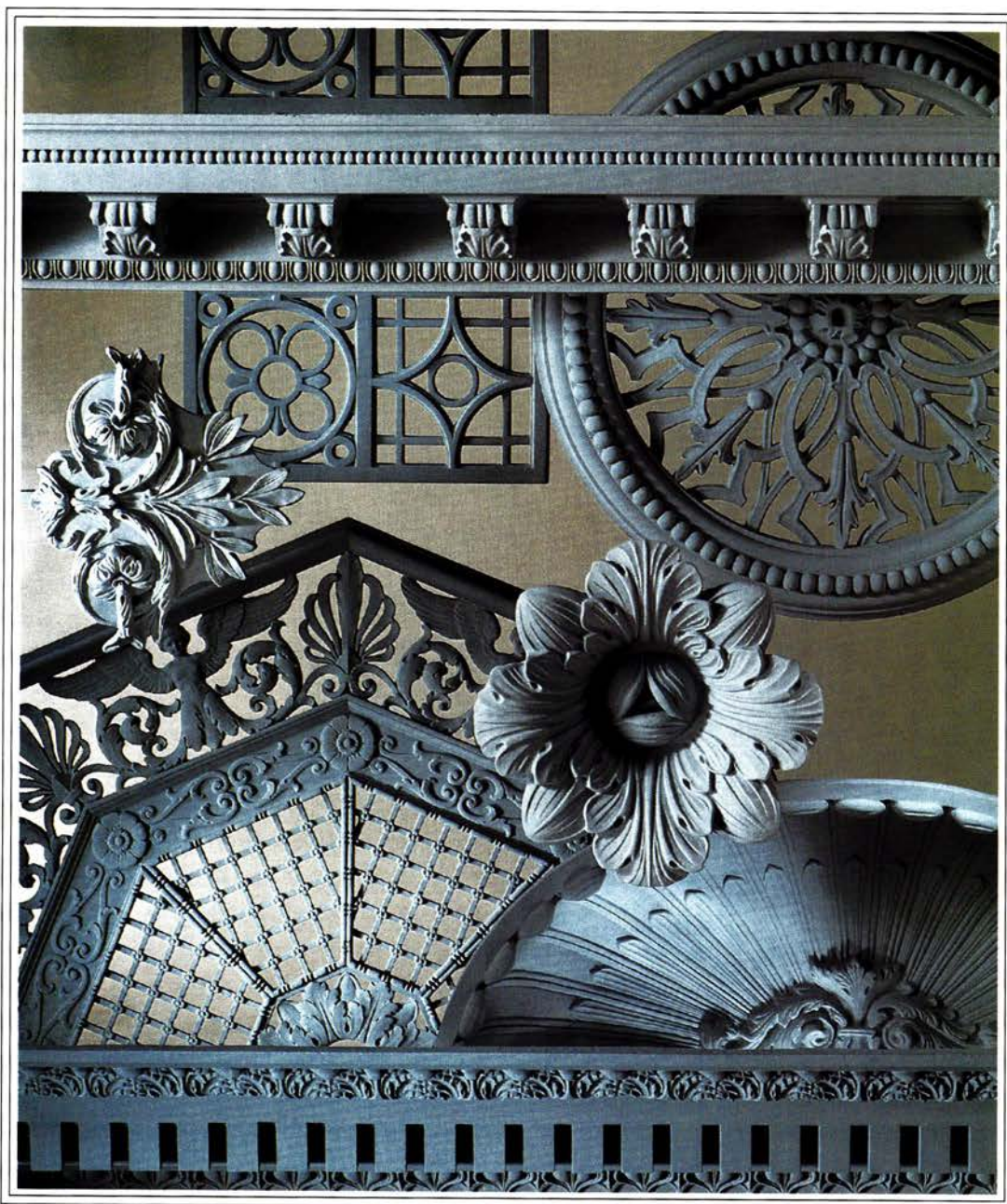
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Top: Bulges too gone to reattach are best removed, then replastered. Above: Adding wire lath over wood lath improves an infill repair. Below: Like all good restoration, a successful repair is hard to see.

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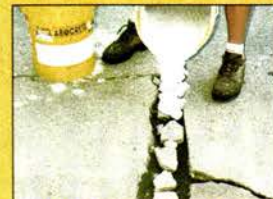
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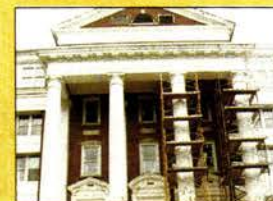
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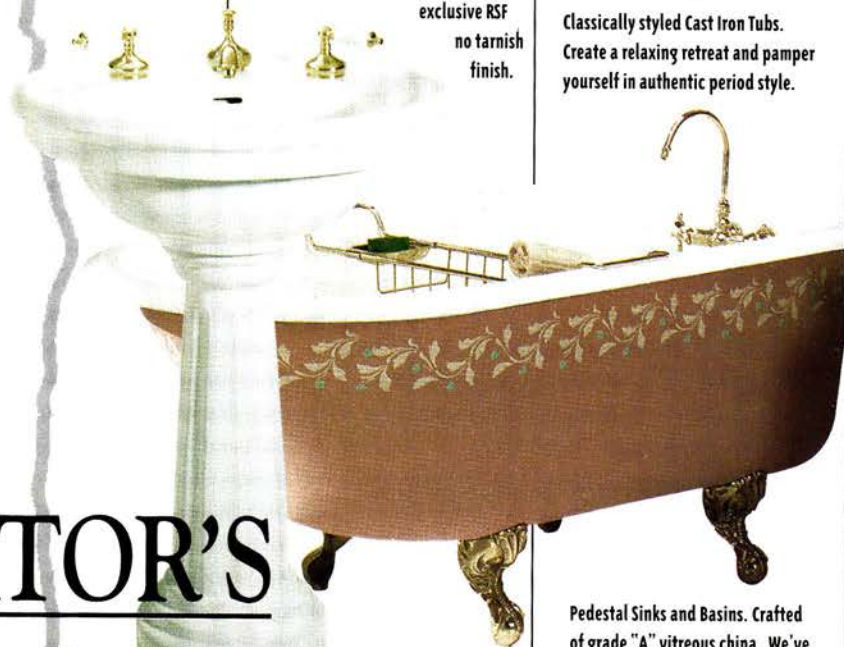


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Christian Korab



THE PRAIRIE STYLE

THE SO-CALLED PRAIRIE SCHOOL, which flourished from roughly 1900 to 1920, was actually a group of innovative young architects in the Midwest—the prairie states—united by a common aesthetic, and to some extent by an association with Frank Lloyd Wright, the most well known among them. They didn't call themselves Prairie School architects, by the way; an architectural historian coined the name half a century later. Several of the first Prairie Schoolers—Dwight Perkins, Robert Spencer, and Myron Hunt—had split office space with Wright in the attic of Chicago's Steinway Hall in 1897; some had been colleagues in Louis Sullivan's Chicago firm. Each shared Wright's conviction that buildings should be "organic"—that is, firmly rooted in their settings, built of native materials, and designed to seem almost part of the land itself.

A typical Prairie House was long and low, with strong horizontal planes emphasized by a low hipped roof, deep eaves, and long bands or "ribbons" of windows and string courses. It was often built of masonry, usually rough stone or color-flecked brick laid in all-stretcher bond. A Prairie House merged with its site in ways the 19th century never dreamed of, with patios, terraces, and gardens that flowed directly from the rooms within, open sleeping porches and balconies, and walls of glass.

Although Prairie Houses were not generally one-storey buildings, in many ways they laid the groundwork for the modern, one-storey open-plan house. The Prairie interior was as open and flowing as the exterior. It usually was centered about a massive fireplace (acknowledged on the exterior by a massive chimney),

which symbolized the heart of the home. If the architect had anything to say about it (and he often did), the interior was beautifully finished in fine woods and plaster, with chair rails, picture moldings, and vertical accents dividing the walls, and wood beams across the ceiling. Architect-designed lighting fixtures in copper and other metals augmented natural light from grouped casement windows and French doors. If the client was willing and financially well-enough endowed, even the furniture, carpets, draperies, and other appointments would be executed to the architect's specifications, again using a spare, linear, but far from austere aesthetic that turned firmly away from traditional decorative motifs. Outside, too, the architect was in charge. Gardens, planters, retaining walls, fences, swimming pools, parking areas and garages (increasingly a design factor) all came under a single, controlling hand that sought to integrate every element of house and site.

As you might expect, Prairie Houses are found most often in the Midwest—from Illinois and Nebraska to Iowa—but they sometimes turn up farther afield, in places like Missouri, New York state, and Puerto Rico. Architects' names to watch for (in addition to Wright, Perkins, Spencer, and Hunt) include Purcell and Elmslie, Walter Burley Griffin, and Marion Mahoney, George Maher, William Drummond, and Barry Byrne, among others. After Wright decamped for Los Angeles, these designers continued the Prairie tradition for several years before the crushing tide of Eclectic Revivalism finally did it in.

—JAMES C. MASSEY and SHIRLEY MAXWELL



[1900-1920]

PRAIRIE



IRVING HOUSE (1909) (above)
DECATUR, ILLINOIS.

Prairie interiors continue the horizontal emphasis with horizontal bands of wood, open floor plans, and ribbons of windows. The massive fireplace once held a mural by interior architect George Mann Niedecken, a frequent Prairie collaborator.

WILLITS HOUSE (1902) (right)

HIGHLAND PARK, ILLINOIS.

Wright extended a cruciform plan into four jutting Prairie wings.



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BASICS

Fresh from the foundry, much architectural hardware gets buffed to a shine with motorized wheels and sticks of rouge, such as the two shown here. Removing tarnish from old-house brightwork, however, calls on a variety of methods, each matched to the nature of the metal.

Tackling Tarnish

By Marylee MacDonald

PHOTOGRAPHY BY DAVID SHARPE

TARNISH DULLS THE finish of historic hardware. More than taking away a little shine, tarnish mutes the highlights that are part of the ornamental details in switch plates, cabinet pulls, door and window hardware, lighting fixtures, silverware, lamps, and hinges. Outdoors, metals such as bronze tarnish quickly, eventually forming a brown to gray-green patina that we accept on statues in our parks. At home, though, where we expect our kickplates and door knockers to be bright, tarnish equals dirty.

Few people have the help to keep all the architectural metal in an old house looking bright. (It's enough of a challenge to clean the silver for holidays!) Given today's two-career households, here are some recommendations to help you remove tarnish and learn to appreciate the understated beauty of patina.

Photography: David Sharpe

TARNISH AND METAL TYPES

TARNISH COMES ABOUT WHEN a nonferrous metal, such as copper, silver, or brass, reacts with oxygen and sulfur in the air. In this chemical reaction, the surface metal is oxidized to its ionic form. Tarnish remover strips away this oxidized layer. If you leave tarnished metal alone, the oxidized surface may further react with moisture (rain, fog, or humidity) to form a protective coating, or patina. A patina can form naturally or be created by chemical processes. It will form more slowly in a dry climate than a humid one.

Architectural metalwork—hinges, drawer pulls, bathroom fixtures, fireplace fenders, kickplates, and lock-and-knob assemblies—can be solid or plated, or a combination of the two. A solid metal is uniform throughout, as seen when you scratch the back side of a brass hinge and the scratch reveals more brass. On plated metal, the back may reveal a different metal underneath—or, it may not. Sometimes, both sides were dipped in the electroplating tank. To inspect more closely, cut through the finish on the back side using a razor blade or sharp screwdriver. If you see yellow, you have brass; red means bronze; white reveals that the underlying metal is steel, cast iron, or pot metal.

In electroplating, steel, cast iron, pot metal, or other base metals are coated with a finer, more expensive metal. Plating is

also added to prevent tarnish. A base metal of brass or copper lies beneath many bathroom fixtures with a nickel surface. Nickel plating is common on lighting fixtures as well. Silver plate is the poor man's sterling. Chrome has been used in plating from about 1930 on. When the plating wears thin, the base metal shows through.

LACQUERED FINISHES

LACQUERED FINISHES CAN FOOL THE EYE. They can look like anodized bronze, copper, or brass. They're found on architectural hardware that might see only minimal wear and tear, such as light fixtures. Some bronze finishes, such as those on some Coleman lamps, are merely dark lacquers applied to a brass base. More recently, clear lacquer has been used on brass restoration hardware—faucets, lighting fixtures, and switch plates.

Before you attempt to "shine up" any metal, test to see if it is lacquer-coated. With a soft cloth, apply polish lightly to an inconspicuous area. The cloth will turn black if the piece is not lacquered. However, if there is no color change, the object is lacquered, and you should try to save this protective coating. Dust with a piece of soft chamois. Never use water on lacquer; it will cloud the finish, just like water on a lacquered table top.



Examine light fixtures closely before making assumptions about metal finishes or polishing. What looks to be solid metal may actually be thin plating or even lacquer; the appearance of tarnish is sometimes an intended "antique metal" effect.

REMOVING TARNISH

THERE ARE TWO WAYS to remove tarnish. You can clean the object in place or remove it and clean in a work area. Before polishing hardware in place, mask off the adjacent paint or varnish finish with cardboard or low-tack painter's masking tape. If you remove the hardware, use penetrating oil to loosen frozen bolts or screws. Then put all the hardware, including screws, in a locking freezer bag labeled with the original location. You can polish several sets at a time or send them out to be polished or replated.

Assemble your tarnish removal kit:

Mercurial Metals

By manipulating plating metals, chemical treatments, and polishing methods, hardware manufacturers and finishers have long been able to produce the same basic fitting in a spectrum of decorative looks—as many as 20 standards in the 1920s. When polishing old-house hardware, first look for evidence of the untarnished finish (in hidden areas, say) to establish the original appearance.



Antique Copper



Bright Brass



Bright Bronze



Bright Nickel



When toasters, stoves, and other cooking appliances overheat, the finish will often discolor with "heat bluing." Though this can be hard to remove, it may respond to polishes recommended for chrome. (Simichrome is one brand.)

cotton swabs (such as Q-Tips) or a wooden cuticle stick; a bag of cotton balls; needle-nose pliers; masking tape (3M blue or other); and a bag of soft cloths (T-shirts, diapers, or the fleecy side of an old sweatshirt). Diaper services sell old diapers by the pound, and if you have a lot of metal to polish, you'll need a plentiful supply of rags.

A high-quality metal polish saves labor and will work on any metal—copper, brass or chrome (see Suppliers list). As always, test before tackling a large area, just to make sure the metal is what you think it is and not a lacquered finish or an

extremely thin—and therefore fragile—plate, as is often the case with lamps.

Don't try to save labor by using tarnish-removing, immersible metal plates. Promoted as a quick way to polish silverware, these products go into your sink along with hot water and salts. If you don't rinse thoroughly after a minute or two, your hardware may "bloom" with specks of white. These are salts that are difficult to remove.

Metal polish comes in either liquid or paste, and the choice is strictly a personal one. I prefer paste for hinges and liquid for tiny screws. To avoid crushing screw threads, wrap them in masking tape and hold the screw with needle-nose pliers while you polish the head. To get at the detail areas, use cotton swabs or a cuticle stick wrapped in cotton.

Never use a toothbrush, especially on silver. The bristles will scratch the metal. The same is true for steel wool, which should only be used to clean up the steel portion of locks. Tiny fibers of steel wool can become embedded in softer metals, and when the steel rusts, tiny orange spots will show up. If you feel the metal is hard enough to tolerate scrubbing, use a green gentle-scouring pad—the kind used for kitchen cleanup on nonstick pots and pans. Turn rags frequently to avoid blackening cleaned areas. Then rinse well and buff dry.

Removing Overpaint

If your hardware is spotted with paint, you'll want to remove this unsightly spatter. Don't use paint stripper, because the chemicals may eat away any electroplating. (In fact, the chemicals in paint can also remove plating.) If the hardware is merely spotted, you may be able to save the finish, but if plated hardware is buried beneath a thick coat of paint, the chances are slimmer. Try to save the plating by removing the paint with the following method.

The idea is to shock the hardware with a hot water bath that makes the metal expand, breaking its bond with the paint. In a stainless steel pot, bring a quart of water to a boil. Turn off the heat and throw in two tablespoons of baking soda (a gentle cleaner that will aid the process). Immediately immerse your door handles or hinges. Leave them in for a minute or two, then take them out and brush off the paint with a green, low-abrasive scouring pad. This method is safe for most plated and solid metals.



Butler Brass



Hand Rubbed Bronze



Satin Nickel

Hardware courtesy Al Bar-Wilmette Platers

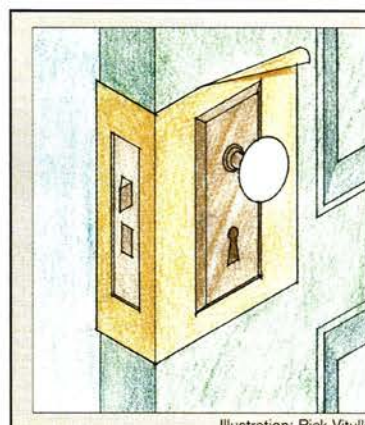


Illustration: Rick Vitullo

Polish Protection

Any polish that can remove tarnish from metal has the potential to damage a wood finish, especially decorative graining. If you can't remove hardware for polishing, protect the nearby finish with masking tape—or, for multiple jobs, a reusable mask. Cut oaktag or a manila folder to fit snugly around the hardware, and as large as two sides of a door lockset.

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Good metal polishes are easy to find at quality hardware and lighting stores. Many come in both paste and liquid form; the choice is largely a matter of personal preference.

tive beauty, use a chamois cloth to dust this metal as well.

Each time you remove tarnish, you wipe off the outer layer of metal, gradually muting the hardware's detail. To reduce the number of cleanings, why not allow a patina to develop on some or all of your architectural metal, except those pieces that cry out to be cleaned? You could buff up the fireplace fender but not the sash pulls. Or you could lightly polish the raised ornament to bring highlights to the piece.

Similarly, since the finish on antique furniture is no longer factory bright, why not allow the drawer pulls to develop a patina? Bright brass pulls can be a jarring contrast on cherry or walnut antiques. Foregoing tarnish removal will save the finish on the dresser, which potentially could be damaged by polishing in place. Use a chamois cloth to remove dust.

If you're determined to remove tarnish, then do so every six to 18 months to keep the job from getting out of hand. You can also extend the time between cleanings by applying a wax compatible with your favorite cleaning product. This is eas-

ily removed by metal polish during your next cleaning.

A final suggestion is to have your pieces lacquered. Lacquer should be applied only by a reputable plater. If you buy a can of spray lacquer and attempt the job yourself, you will be disappointed. Changes in CFC (chlorofluorocarbon) regulations have cut down the retarders that were once routinely added to spray lacquer. Without them, the lacquer can easily trap ambient moisture under its film, turning the shiny metal to a cloudy mess overnight. To remove lacquer from a botched job, you need either acetone or lacquer remover. Both are volatile chemicals with associated health and safety concerns, so leave this work to the pros. Professionally lacquered hardware should not tarnish for 10 or more years.

PLATING COMPANIES

A REPUTABLE PLATING COMPANY can save you a lot of work. Consider sending your hardware to a plater when the detail is highly ornamented or when it is so badly tarnished that the plated finish has worn through to expose the base metal. The plater will put your hardware in a glass bead machine to gently lift tarnish from all areas in relief. When performed by craftsmen, this is the best way to preserve detail and is preferable to removing tarnish with a buffing wheel.

Before you send work to a plater, make sure the company can handle small jobs without losing parts, including your screws. Before you send a large or complex order, try the company out on a small job. Bag each piece of hardware in a locking freezer bag and include a list of parts, then make sure everything is returned before you pay.

Marylee MacDonald is a contributing editor of Old-House Journal.

LABOR-SAVING TIPS

BE VERY CAREFUL ABOUT WHAT you attempt to polish. Metals with a patina do not need to be polished. For example, bronze statues and Art Nouveau lamps should never be polished; the polish will remove the patina. On art bronze, don't use cleaning products that contain ammonia, such as Windex, to remove dust. Ammonia attacks the metal. A soft, dry chamois cloth works best for dusting. (Don't use a feather duster, because the feathers break and scratch the metal.) Once or twice a year, use a cotton-wrapped cuticle stick to remove dust from crevices. Since pewter also forms a patina that is part of its distinc-

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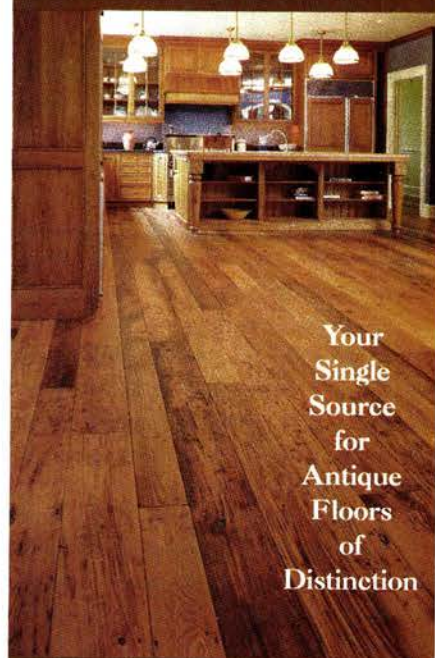


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OLD HOUSE ADVISOR

STANFORD STANDARDS

Lore has it that our 1895 house was designed by Stanford White, the legendary partner at McKim, Mead & White and notorious murder victim. Though we have no definitive proof of the architect, there's a curious inscribed plaque under one window. Since *weiss* translates to white, do you think there's a connection?

—AMY AND BILL DAHN
SO. ORANGE, N.J.

THOUGH STANFORD WHITE was a prolific designer and remodeler of houses—in addition to being the talent behind masterpieces like the Villard Houses and the original Madison Square Garden in Manhattan—chances are the plaque does not support any connection to your house. While *weiss* is German for white, the rest of the inscription does not appear to make sense in this context. Moreover, a cement-plaster coat-of-arms would be a surprisingly mundane hallmark for an architect who specified the finest imported marbles for his projects and enjoyed a lavish personal lifestyle.

What then is your plaque? Hard to say, but more likely it is a bit of personal vanity by the builder of your house or a major contractor—perhaps the plasterer. Finding such signatures and messages hidden under wallpaper and behind mouldings are part of the fun of old-house ownership and may help establish the history of the building. Judging by the sophisticated Queen Anne-style details, your house may well be architect designed—and by someone named on your plaque. Weiss does

*Weiss him
New York
1895*



This house shows an eclectic mix of Victorian bay windows and porches with Italian Renaissance-style brick masonry—not surprising for the end of the 19th century. An inscribed panel (inset) decorates the underside of one bay.

not show up in any listing of likely architects working in the New York area at that time (*Biographical Dictionary of American Architects* is one source), but this is not surprising. In the late 19th century formal training and recognition of architects was still a new idea, and your designer's name may not have made it into records compiled years after he ceased to practice.

PRESSING QUESTIONS

Could you give me some information on this ironer? It was given to me in beautiful shape, but I wonder how old it is?

—WANDA VOYLES
NEWPORT NEWS, VA.

THE PARTICULAR Hotpoint Rotary ironer you ask about is electrically powered and appears to date to sometime in the late 1950s. Hotpoint, a venerable brand name




Roller ironers with one open end could iron clothes as well as flat work and were made by at least six manufacturers by the 1930s.

in appliances, had its beginnings in the 1920s and is a division of General Electric. The idea of a mechanical ironing appliance to help with home laundry, however, is nearly a century old. As early as 1910, the American Ironing Machine Co. was taking the concept of a commercial laundry mangle to the residential level when it advertised that the Simplex Ironer would do five hours of “back-breaking labor” in less than

one hour. The ironer, which was turned by a hand crank or a small washing machine motor, was heated with an open flame fueled by either household gas or gasoline.

The real flush of modern domestic labor-saving appliances came in the late 1920s as electric power became common and new opportunities for women brought an end to the era of live-in laundry maids. Helped by

smaller, more powerful electric motors, manufacturers came to the rescue of the lady of the house with scores of new appliances marketed to be the new “electric servants.” Ironers for “families with large amounts of flatwork” were featured players in the laundry lineup, along with washing machines and clothes dryers. By the late 1930s, the rollers were electrically powered,

but the heat could come from electricity or gas and gasoline as it did earlier. 

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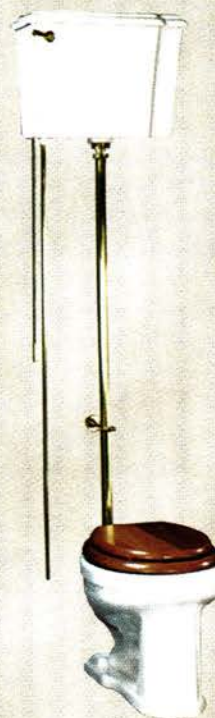
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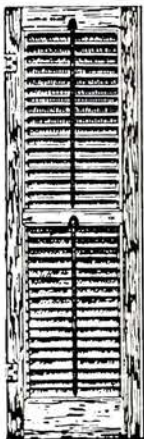
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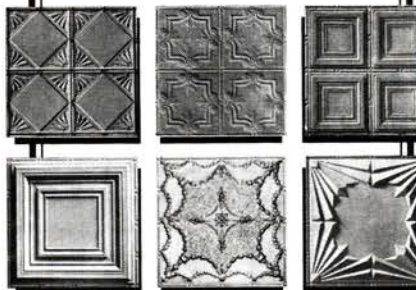
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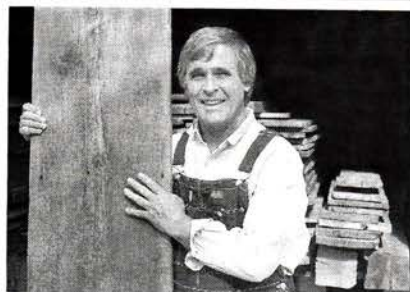
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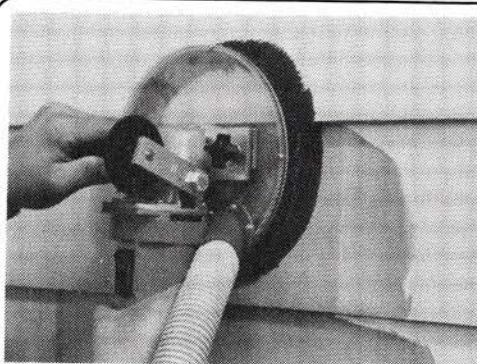
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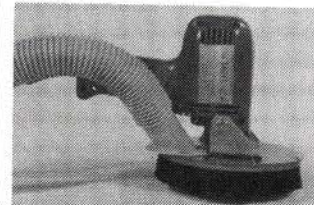


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Ornament Wars

What happened to cause even casual viewers to note the proliferation of boring buildings? A historian explains how modern architects abandoned traditional design, and why the reasons go back not just decades, but centuries.

THE SNAP EXPLANATION for the rapid decline and fall of architectural ornament—especially in the form of applied decoration—goes like this: In the early decades of the 20th century, a few pioneer designers worked to create buildings that expressed the nature of their structure, their function, and the spirit of their own era. Since this modern architecture was supposed to be different than anything built in the past, architects on a wider scale decided to thumb their noses at all traditional styles and conventions, leading to radical departures in building design. Downtowns changed. Ornament vanished, replaced by flat panels of steel and glass. Yet, could any revolution so widespread be so simple? *Architectural Ornament: Banishment & Return*, explains why modern architects delivered only the most recent blow to the long history of building ornamentation, and how it is coming back.

The stripping away of ornament has roots not just in the education of architects, who increasingly thought of themselves as design gods, but in the rise of design theorists and critics in the late 18th century. In this new edition of an earlier book, author Brent C. Brolin writes that, prior to the 20th century, architectural styles had been based on strictly

visual criteria developed from geometric ratios. From the ancient Greeks and Romans, these Pythagorean ratios were passed down to medieval masons. Phidias, sculptor of the Parthenon friezes, and Michelangelo, the final architect of St. Peter's in Rome, were artisans who had come up through a long tradition of apprenticeship and empirical knowledge. So where did Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, Philip Johnson, and Helmut Jahn get the chutzpah to change the 20th-century urban landscape to sheer steel and glass? From 19th century writers and reformers like Immanuel Kant, Friedrich Schiller, Samuel Coleridge, A.W.N. Pugin, and Charles Eastlake, to name a few. It didn't hurt that the Industrial Revolution helped make the no-frills design of bridges and machines enviable, while it gave mass-produced decoration a bad name.

Today, Brolin believes, the pendulum is swinging back. He's tired of the architect who needs to put his stamp on a building, regardless of where it's built, and he believes "a building doesn't have to assault the eye by its appropriateness in order to be considered creative or beautiful." This book explores the interesting connections between big buildings in urban centers and small, functional creations like furniture or fish forks. The author shows us how to see decorative terra cotta or ornamental porch brackets in a new way, not as something "stuck on," but as integral parts of what makes the building pleasing to the eye. —Marylee MacDonald



ARCHITECTURAL ORNAMENT: BANISHMENT & RETURN

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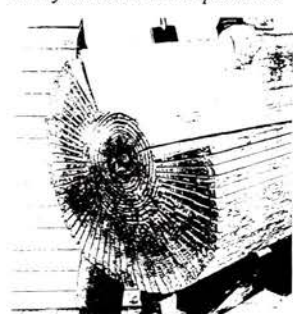
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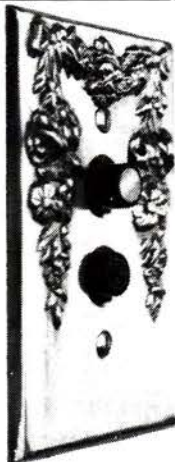
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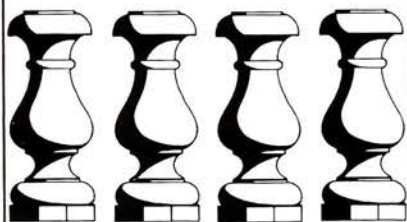
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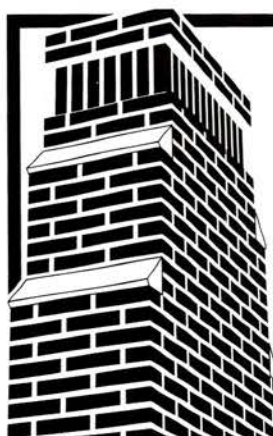
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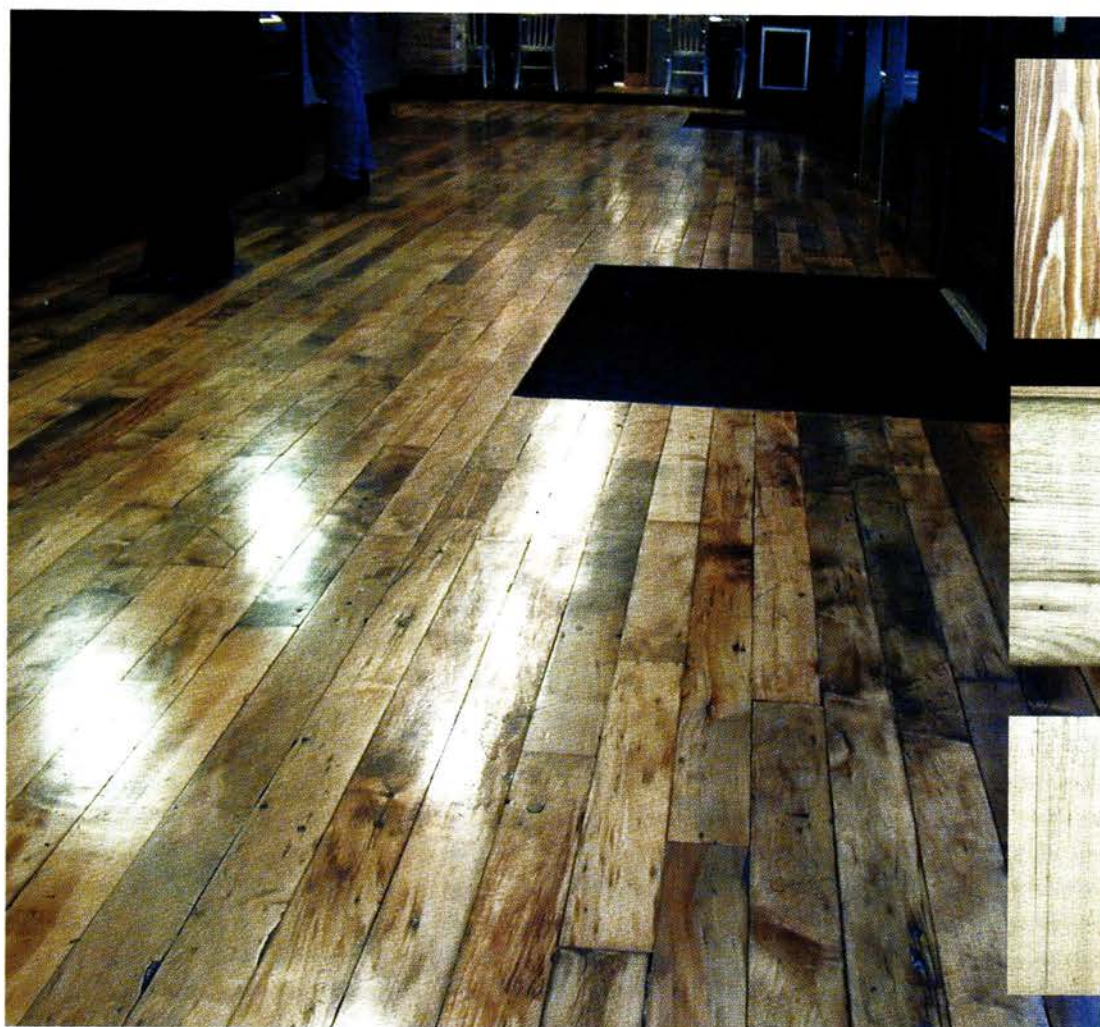
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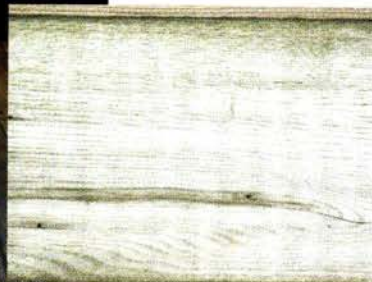
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For God did not send His Son into the world that He might judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him. John 3:17

Low-Key Key West

Sharon Wells

Key West, the southernmost spot in the United States, is famous for margaritas, lime pie, and colorful Caribbean-flavored street festivals. Yet this low-lying city derives much of its relaxing ambiance from a rich architectural heritage that extends far beyond its best-known structure, the atypical Moorish-influenced Hemingway house.

Built on a coral and limestone island only four miles long and a mile and a half wide, Key West has just some 30,000 residents yet more than 3,000 historic structures and more preservation groups than Miami. The island's limited size makes for easy sightseeing by foot, on rented bicycles or gas-powered scooters, although you can also get around by trolley or bus.

In the early 19th century, travelers from the primitive, fortified port of St. Augustine needed a week's passage through dangerous straits to reach this isle. Cuba, however, was only a day from Key West and many of its early settlers originated there or in the Bahamas. By the 1850s, more than 100 square-

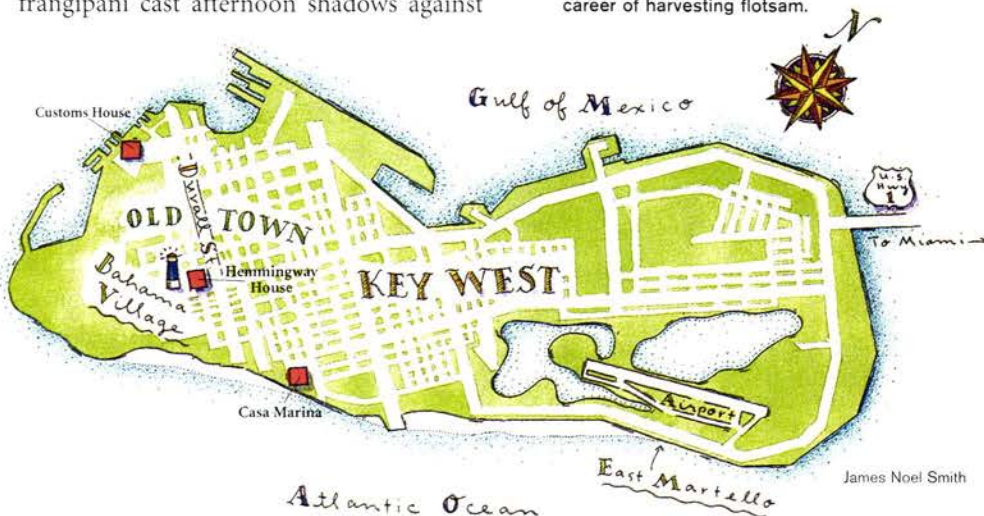
rigged vessels were passing the island each day and the primary industry became "wrecking," or salvaging the contents of ships trapped on its treacherous reefs.

Although the practice could be lucrative, Key West's early pioneer homes tended to be simple structures with clean lines. Classical Revival was the most popular style and many mid-century houses of other designs sport Classical Revival details. Visitors can still see this early architecture in the city's Old Town, where colorful jacaranda and frangipani cast afternoon shadows against

This tiny, laid-back island is a giant when it comes to historic structures.

BY DIANA JARVIS GODWIN

The Key West Lighthouse (above), in use until 1969, could be seen for 11 nautical miles. Reefs around the island are so treacherous that early settlers made a career of harvesting flotsam.

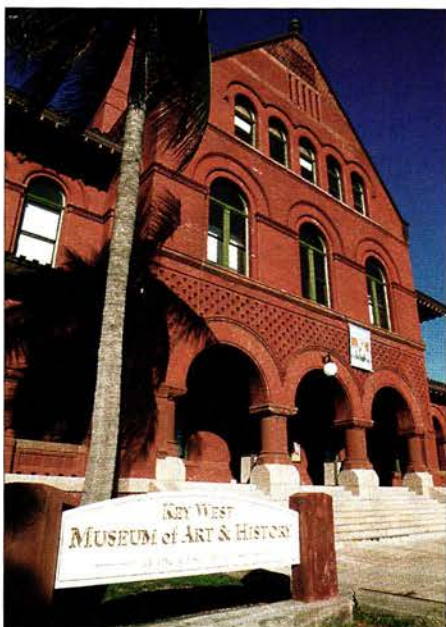


HISTORIC PLACES

Shuttered windows and full porches (right) mark the island's Conch Houses. Key West is full of historic bed-and-breakfasts like the Treetop Inn (below), a Classical Revival home built at the turn of the century by a cigar manufacturer.



Photos this page by Sharon Wells



This port city's Customs House was recently treated to an award-winning restoration.

wooden porches. A fine example is the 1860 Knowles House (1004 Eaton). Owned for 120 years by the Knowles family, Bahamian planters turned sponge gatherers and restaurateurs, it's now a high-end bed and breakfast.

The late 19th century saw the introduction of ornaments such as gingerbread woodwork and decorative wrought-iron. Queen Anne residences with fancy bargeboards and scroll-sawn brackets appeared on the scene. The ornate Roberts House (313 William) sports a tower and double veranda, while the Harris House (1400 Duval) has more elegant classical lines.

Then in 1886 fire destroyed half of Old Town. Wooden shingles gave way to fire-proof stamped-metal sheets, and homes were rebuilt with the balloon framing that used



The stone construction of the Hemingway House is a rarity on Key West.

nails and light lumber. When Henry Flagler completed his railroad to Key West in 1912, he paved the way for prefabricated bungalows. Mediterranean Revival architecture became popular during the 1920s, leading to the construction of the exotic 1920 Cuban Club (1106 Duval) and the imposing 1924 San Carlos Opera House (516 Duval).

Visitors who venture off boisterous Duval Street, with its souvenir shops and seafood restaurants, will find examples on its lesser known byways of two signature architectural styles: the Conch House and the Cigarmaker's House.

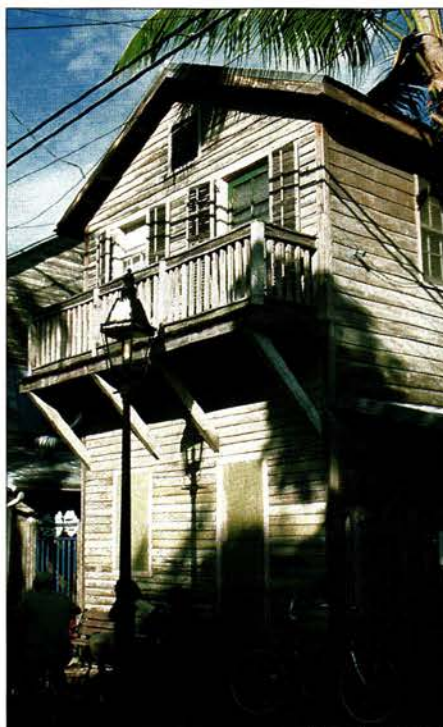
A lilting accent borne of mixed backgrounds marks many of Key West's "Conchs," as old time families call themselves. Conch Houses took several forms, from the camel-back rooflines of the Sawtooth (with two



Randy Batista/Courtesy of Goodwin Heart Pine Co.

conjoined side gables) to the famous Conch Eyebrow, a story-and-a-half structure with windows perched high on its front façade. The identifying features were inspired by the tropical climate, taking advantage of sea breezes and shade to modify the interior temperature. They included a steep gable roof to shed rain, shuttered windows, and a generous porch across the entire façade of each story. Chimneys weren't needed.

The modest Cigarmaker's Houses are largely associated with 19th-century Cuban families, who fled the political unrest of the revolt against Spain in 1868 and found work in Key West either fishing or making cigars. These are small, front-gabled wooden houses with a full, three-bay front porch, similar to the Shotgun Cottages built for workers throughout the South.



Diana Jarvis Godwin

Key West's famous Goombay street festival is held each October in Bahama Village, a cozy shopping district with clean streets and colorful wares that extends southwest from Duval Street. Many unusual and distinctive buildings have been preserved in this historical black neighborhood.

The village includes what may be Key West's biggest tourist attraction, the Hemingway Home and Museum (907 Whitehead Street). Once home to legendary novelist Ernest Hemingway and his second wife, Pauline, this elegant, shuttered two-storey house is open to the public as a museum. A rare limestone block structure now covered with stucco, it's graced with Palladian windows, a mansard roof, and cast-iron verandas reminiscent of New Orleans. The gardens are populated by six-toed felines said to be descended from of the writer's own pets.

The recent restoration of the Key West Lighthouse and Keeper's Quarters, across the street at 938 Whitehead Street, won awards from the Florida Trust for Historic Preservation and the Association for State and Local History. The shaded envi-



Diana Jarvis Godwin

You can rent a bike to ride past shops and homes in Bahama Village (left) or stroll past rows of the modest cottages known as Cigarmakers' Houses (above).

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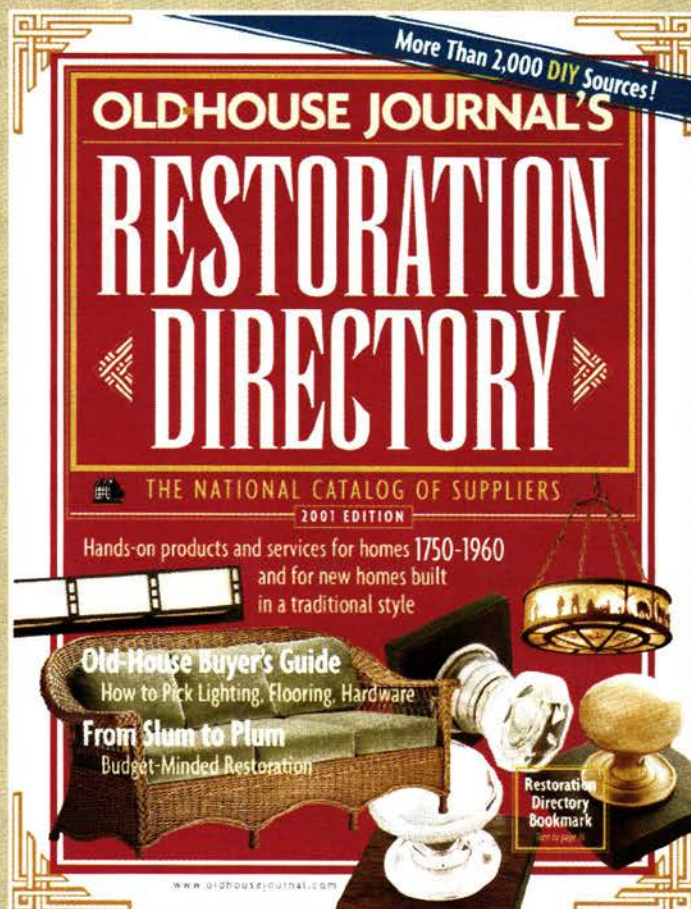
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HISTORIC PLACES

rons provide a respite from hot city sidewalks and in the Keeper's Quarters museum you'll see a huge Fresnel lens and other lighthouse artifacts. The Key West light was visible for 11 nautical miles and remained in use until 1969.

Near the northwest edge of town you'll find the Customs House (281 Front Street), a red stone Richardsonian Romanesque monument that once oversaw the business of the port. Now home to the offices and exhibits of the Key West Art and Historical Society, its stately interiors have been beautifully restored and its galleries climate controlled.

Well removed from Old Town, but convenient to air travelers on its site just south of the airport, is the East Martello Museum and Gallery (3501 South Roosevelt Boulevard). The Key West Martellos were ill-fated Civil War-era fortifications outdated by new weaponry before they were completed. The last to be built and also the most intact, the oceanside East Martello houses an interesting historical and folk art gallery.

With the opening of the Casa Marina (1500 Reynolds Street) on the city's southern oceanfront, the Roaring '20s came to Key West with boom-time elegance and opulence. This Mediterranean Revival hotel was the southernmost edifice in the great Flagler Railroad empire. Flagler's Overseas Railroad bridge to the island was destroyed by a 1935 hurricane and the resort was further doomed by the Great Depression. Renovated and modernized, the Casa Marina is now operated by Wyndham Hotels. From its outdoor dining area you can hear waves lapping just a few feet away. It makes an appropriately dramatic place to end a day of exploring this colorful and history-rich island, maybe with a margarita or slice of Key lime pie. 

DIANA JARVIS GODWIN is an architectural historian and travel writer based in Navarre, Florida.

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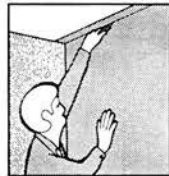
1. Cut fiberglass mat 2" longer than height.



2. Apply saturant to area to be covered.



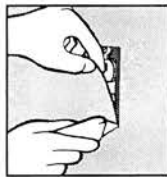
3. Apply fiberglass mat to wet surface.



4. Trim excess mat where wall meets ceiling.



5. Trim mat at baseboard and window.



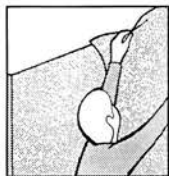
6. Trim mat at outlets, switches, etc.



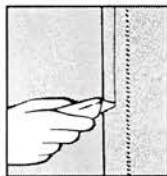
7. Apply second coat of saturant to wet mat.



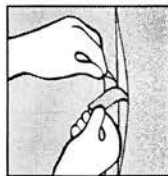
8. Apply 1st coat of saturant to adjacent area.



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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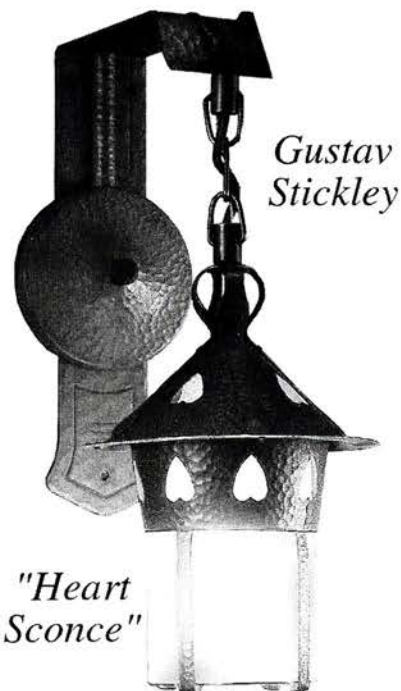
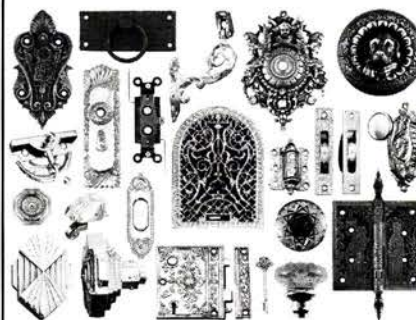
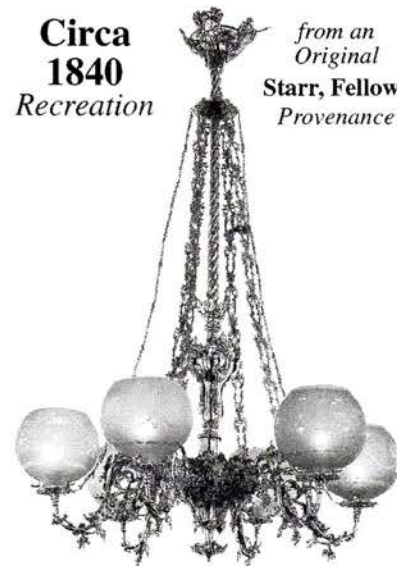
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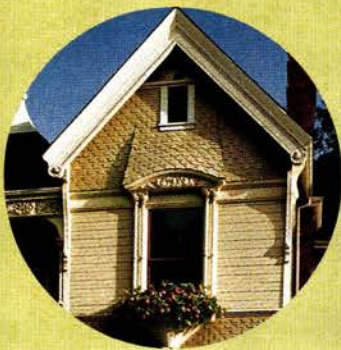
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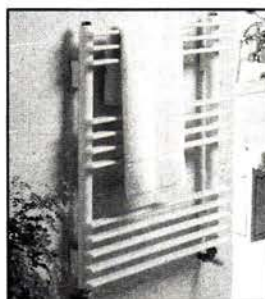
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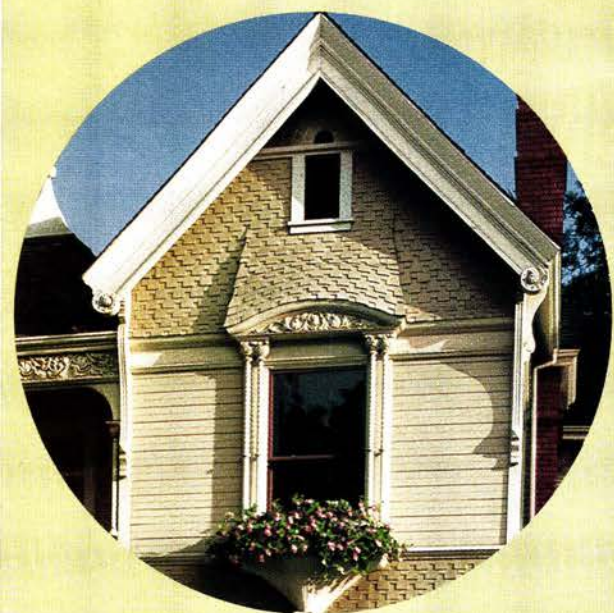
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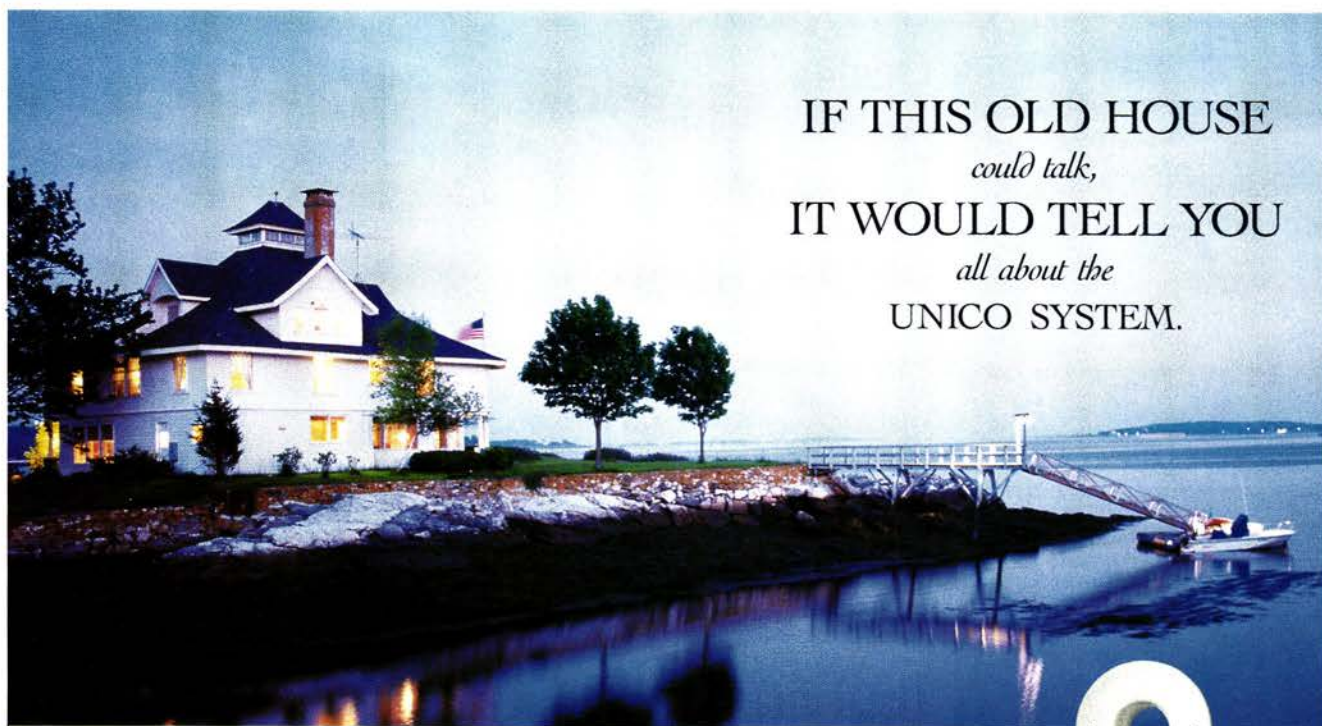


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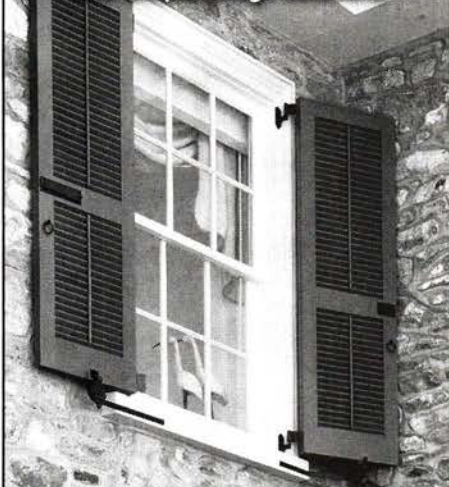
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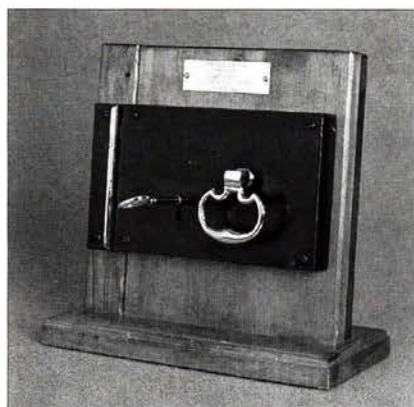
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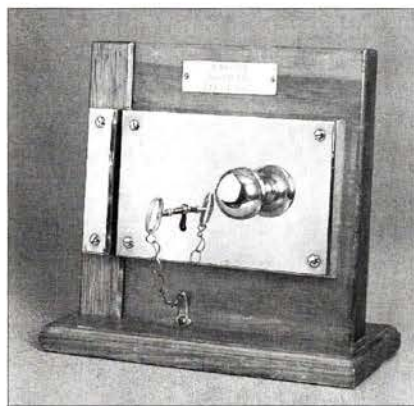
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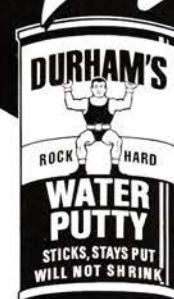
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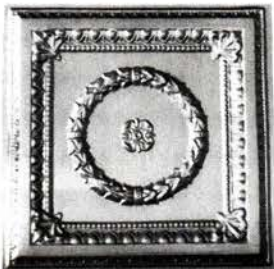
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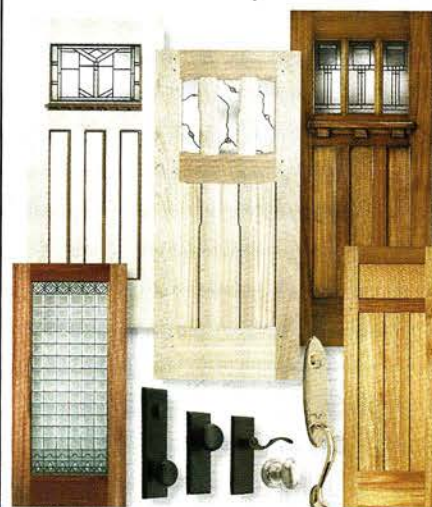
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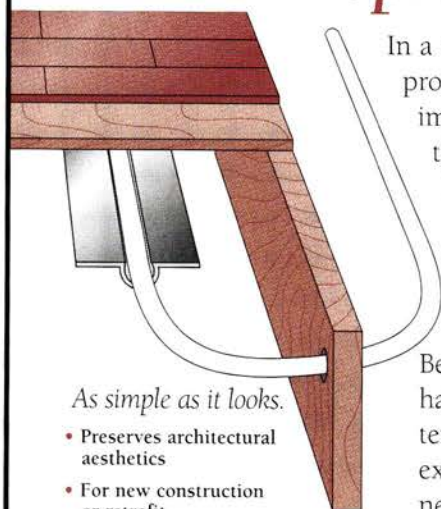
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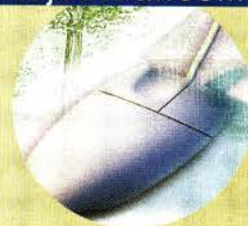
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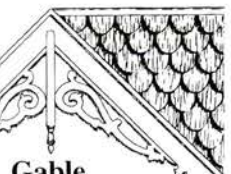
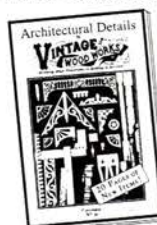


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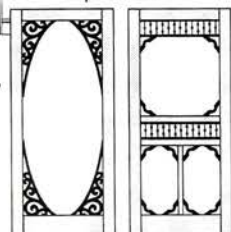
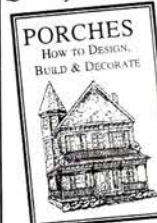
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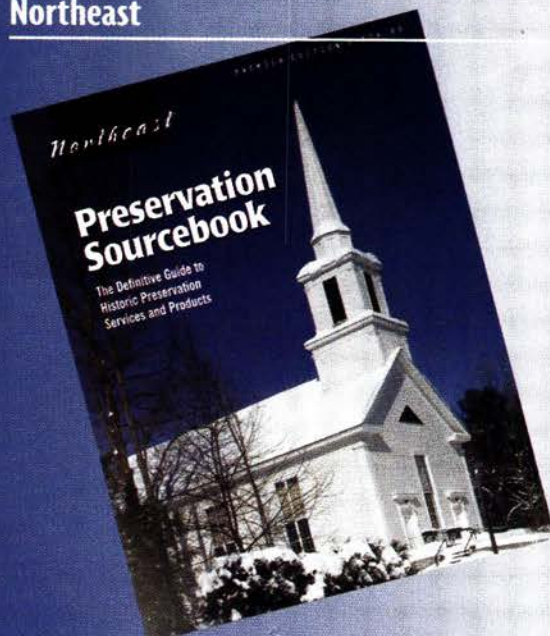
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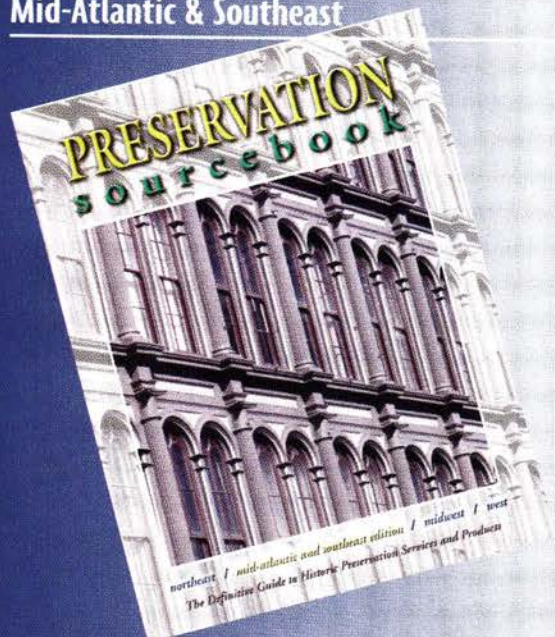
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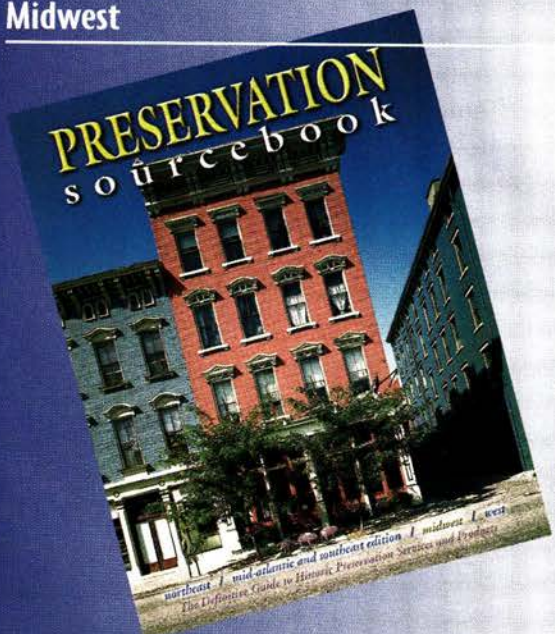
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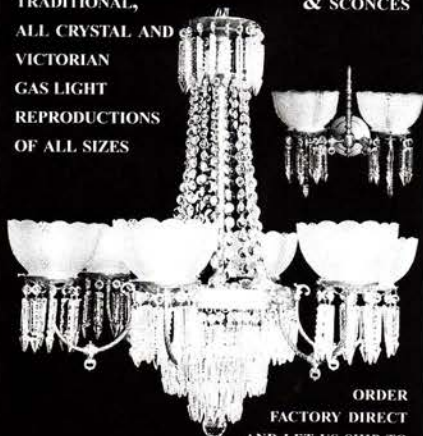
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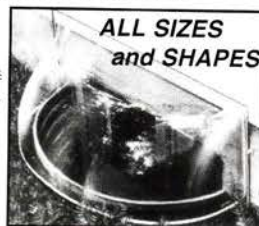
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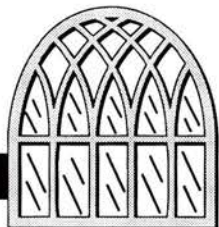


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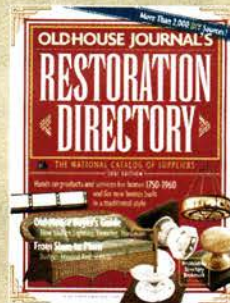
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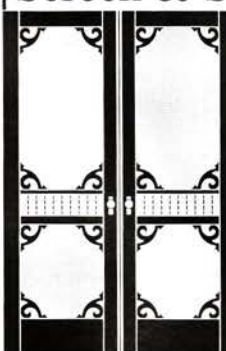
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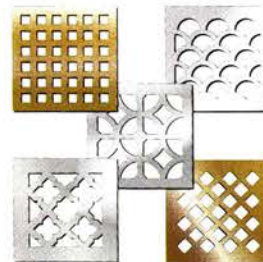
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WINGING IT

Given the clutch of remuddlings in this issue, we saved one worth crowing about for the signature page. From Milwaukee, Wisc., comes a center-hall house with a recent two-storey extension flying over the front entrance (above), and a second extension perched off the back (inset). A similar Colonial-style house (at right) broods across the street. One wonders what surprises are cooped up inside.

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