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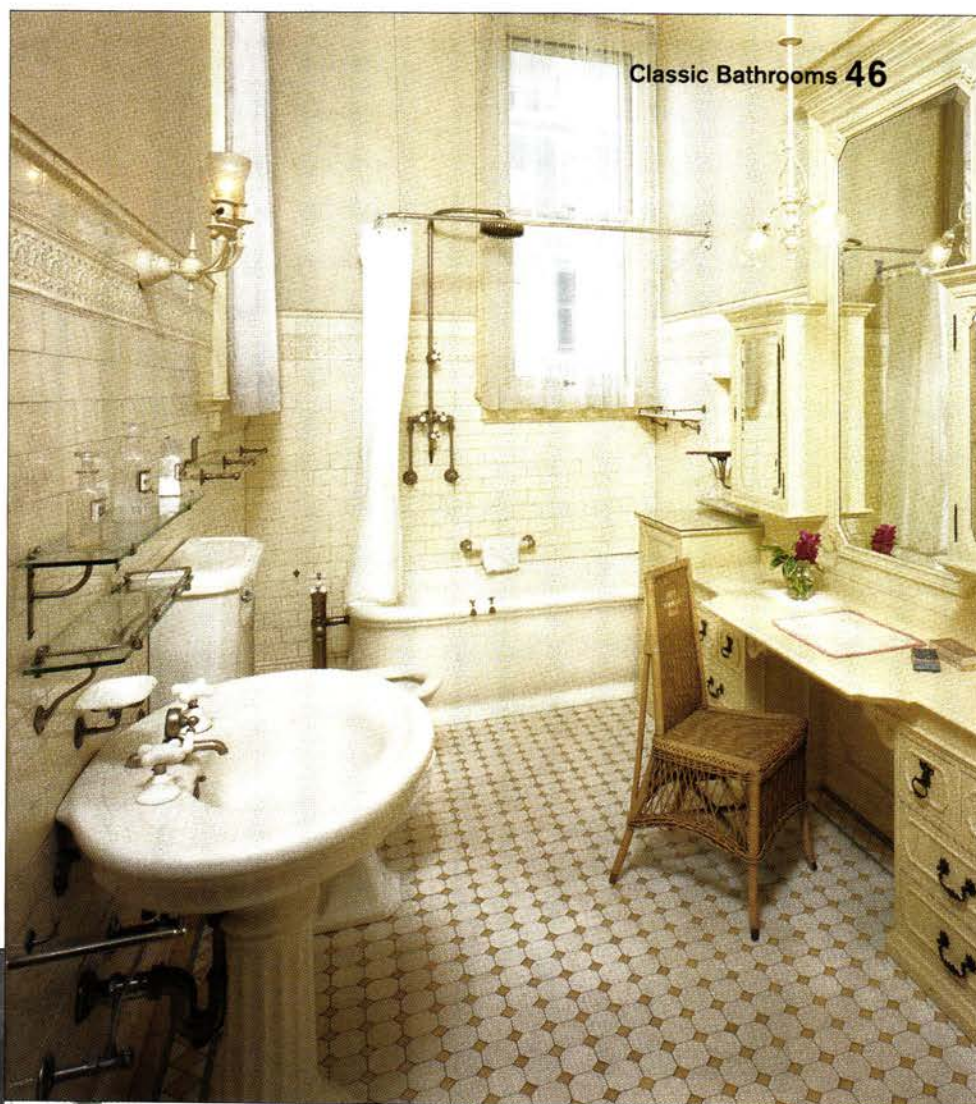
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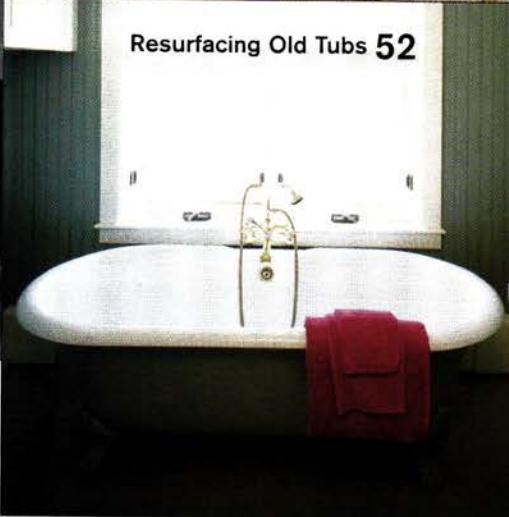
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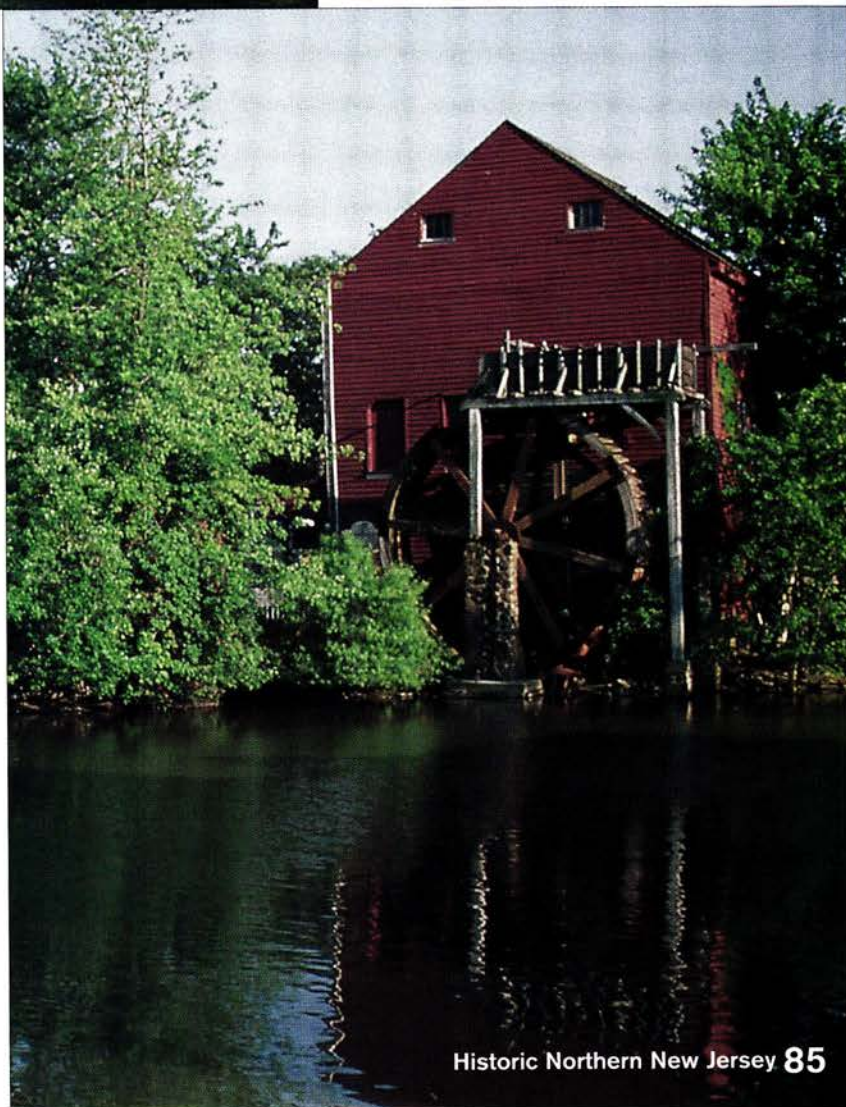
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Thumbs Up

SCIENTISTS TELL US THAT the opposing thumb is one of the features of the human body that allows mankind to be a tool user, and sets us apart from the rest of the mammalian world. Based on wide anecdotal evidence, I would argue that the human thumb *is* a tool—in fact, one of nature's most generous gifts to old-house owners and restorers.

Should you be unconvinced, let me first describe a couple of the wider practical applications of the thumb. Doctors of course know that the thumbnail is a translucent window on the health and circulation of blood. In surgery, thumb color is a quick indicator of the oxygen and anesthesia levels of a patient. The very same digit is also a traditional testing device in the auto body repair industry. In the shop, spreading a drop of paint or lacquer on a thumbnail is an old trick for gauging the amount of thinner to be added to a spray gun.

In the world of old houses, you don't have to be Fu Manchu to know that, dressed to a reasonably keen edge, a thumbnail is a personal stiletto for opening packages of hardware or rolls of wallpaper. Who hasn't turned to their trusty thumb for restarting a roll of tape—especially to find that lost edge you can't even see? Stiff, yet gentle to other materials, the thumbnail is also the ideal scraper for removing everything from paint spatter to glue-on plastic bricks.

Turned to larger tasks, the thumb becomes an invaluable implement for quickly reinstalling a loose doorknob set

screw. In masonry analysis, one way to tell soft lime mortar from hard portland cement mortar is to dig your nail into it. (If the mortar scratches, it's lime). When at a bank, how would you cash a large check—say, to pay for a load of roofing materials—if you couldn't supply a thumbprint for identification?

Best of all, a raised thumb is a visual indication of approval, a welcome sign to anyone navigating the ups and downs of a construction project. As you work on your old house this year, remember to keep your thumb handy.

New for 2001

OLD-HOUSE JOURNAL, THE ORIGINAL restoration magazine, is now a co-sponsor of *Today's Classic Homes*, the Public Broadcast Television series that explores the evolution and history of home building. Now entering its third season, the 13-part series will document the work on the Kelnepe House, a 1924 Mediterranean Revival estate in Jacksonville, Florida. Starting in the May/June issue, look for an episode-by-episode update in our Journal section on the progress of this interesting project, and how OHJ is helping to bring back its historically significant features.

James Noel Smith

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ON THE HUNT FOR BLOCK

I JUST READ THE GLASS BLOCK article in the January/February 2001 issue. In it the authors, Elizabeth A. Patterson and Neal A. Vogel, mention and show a picture of the William Lescaze townhouse in New York City.

By coincidence I am working for the current owner to renovate the house and in particular the glass block on the front façade. The original glass blocks by MacBeth-Evans are still in place but are in very bad condition (about 90% need to be replaced). By the way, they are not all solid block, but hollow block.



Photo by Michael Devonshire

William Lescaze townhouse, 1934

The building enjoys New York City landmark status and therefore, any changes to the front façade must be approved by the NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission. They are insisting that the new block match the existing block as closely as possible in size (5" x 5") and texture. For the last six months I have been looking for a manufacturer or studio to reproduce the block,

with no real success. I have found a European block that measures 4½" x 4½" but it does not have the same edge conditions or glass sheen as the 1934 blocks by MacBeth-Evans.

Your article was most informative, but as you might suspect I found it both enlightening and frustrating. I would be interested in hearing from anyone with a source for hollow or solid MacBeth-Evans glass block suitable for this project.

—ROY S. GEE

EMORY ROTH ASSOCIATES
New York, NY

OHJ readers who know of a source of the glass blocks Mr. Gee is seeking can contact him at rothgee@earthlink.net.

SPOTTY HISTORY

I USED TO WORK as an architectural historian for Hess Roise & Co. in Minneapolis, where I became intrigued by the history of glass block while researching a project. I started a personal file on it, but found there is very little concise material on its history. Thanks!

—CHRISTINE CURRAN
Salem, Oregon

INSPIRING READING

AFTER WATCHING A VACANT HOUSE for several years, researching its history, learning about the original family (who had owned it for 106 years!), and *finally* hearing from the family that it was available for purchase, we jumped to buy the beautiful old home. Unfortunately, we learned that we were 24 hours too late and another couple had made an offer—one that the owners felt they had to honor.

We were crushed! While out shopping one evening a short time later and feeling rather blue, I happened across your December 2000 issue. I purchased the magazine and took it home to read

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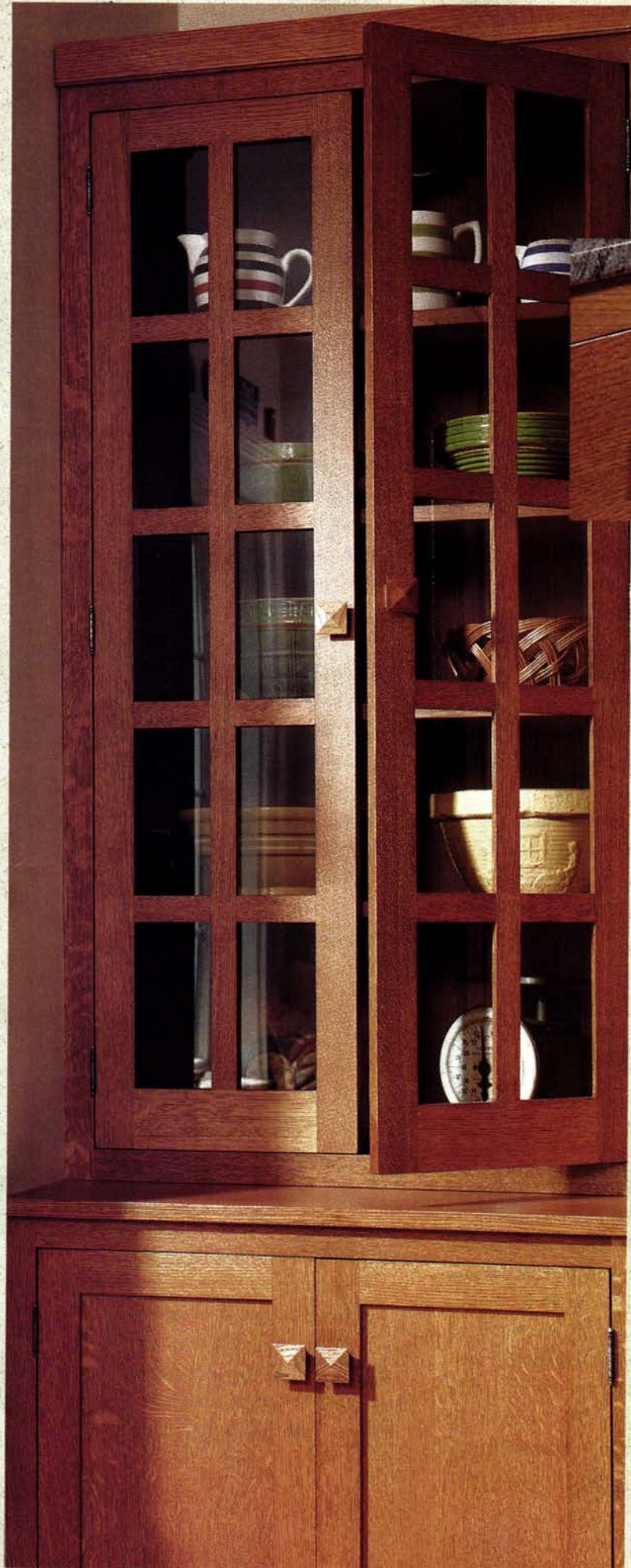
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and weep in private. What I read was so encouraging that my husband and I agreed we could not simply give up the search for an old house to live in and love. We are heartbroken that someone else will get to live in what we thought would one day be our home, but as Gordon Bock wrote on the editor's page, there will someday be another house to tempt us and quite possibly, it will be an even better old house. And after all, isn't looking half the fun?

Thank you for a great publication.
Please keep up the excellent work!

—KRISTA AND DAVID WYATT
Gardner, Kan.

FRONT ROW SEAT

YOUR FEBRUARY 2001 ISSUE IS, as they all are, interesting. The article "Old and Under Foot," about logs being rescued from rivers and lakes for use in flooring, was of special interest. My husband's family's long-time summer home is on a Canadian lake that used to be part of the route of logs to market, and where sunken logs are now being commercially raised.

—ELIZABETH H. STEWART
Rochester, N.Y.

OUT OF TUNE

REMUDDLING MEDLEY in the February issue immediately captured my attention with the photo of a mansard roof being covered by a peaked roof. The article certainly shows what people can do to ruin an architecturally significant building.

We have a wide variety of styles here in the university area of Syracuse, from four-square to Queen Anne, from bungalows to Stick Gothic. Because I enjoy architectural diversity, I have photographed many of the older buildings in town.

I would like to see more in OHJ about circa 1916 homes.

—GERALD BARTH
Syracuse, N.Y.



WILLY-NILLY PHILLY

UNIVERSITY CITY IS NOT a suburb of Philadelphia ("Upping the Ante on Architectural Thieves," Jan/Feb 2001 OHJ Journal), but a neighborhood of Philadelphia. All Philadelphia neighborhoods, with the exception of Old City, were at one point separate towns or suburbs, so that many have names that sound like cities, such as Germantown, Center City, and Bridgeburg. To further confuse matters, the state later defined the city limits so that the boundaries of the county, municipality, and school district are all the same. Simply crossing the street can take you into a different county and a separate township that sounds like it could be a Philadelphia neighborhood.

—CHRIS PURDOM
Philadelphia, Pa.

TESTING YOUR METALS

THANK YOU FOR THE ARTICLE "Tackling Tarnish" (Jan/Feb 2001). I recently moved into a 1927 bungalow in Atlanta, and although all the windows are original to the house, the layers of paint covering the windows' sash lifts are not. I'd been searching for ways to remove the paint from the brass lifts without scratching the finish. I took the author's advice—I unscrewed the lifts from the sash with some help from WD40 and

placed them in a pot of boiling water with two spoonfuls of baking soda. After about two minutes, I took them out and removed the paint with an old scouring pad. It took a bit of muscle, but the effort revealed beautiful brass hardware.

My brother had a similar problem in his Boston brownstone. After chipping away some black paint on the living room wall scone, he discovered the light fixture was made of decorative plated metal. He first tried to remove the paint with a stripper, but found that it was too harsh and stripped the antique finish. After disassembling the light, he used the same baking soda-and-boiling water technique to remove the paint without damaging the surface of the metal. He has been able to recover the original look of the fixture without scratching it. I hope this information will help your readers when they begin their investigative work to find what's underneath the years, decades, and even centuries of paint at home.

—WENDI BROWN
Atlanta, Ga.



VISITING ROBIE HOUSE

OUR PRAIRIE STYLE GATEFOLD (Jan/Feb 2001 OHJ) listed old information about visiting the Frank Lloyd Wright Robie House in Chicago. Weekday tours are at 11 a.m., 1 and 3 p.m.; weekend tours begin every 20 minutes between 11 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. Call (773) 834-1847 or visit www.wrightplus.org

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OLD HOUSE LIVING



Photos by Jon Crispin

Top: Slightly aloof even when aloft, Gypsy the beagle keeps Tony Seideman on a short leash as he sands floors and paints walls in their 1903 house. Left: One of Gypsy's favorite perches is the middle landing of the large front hall staircase, where she can poke her snout between balusters to supervise contractors. Above: Gypsy came complete with personal effects, such as her bowl inscribed "Rugwrecker".

The Gypsy Life *by Tony Seideman*

OLD HOUSES AND OLD DOGS seem to go together. It's a combination that can prove positive, poisonous, or somewhere in between. Our experience turned out to be a bit of all three when we came across a magnificent turn-of-the-century house in the beautiful city of Peekskill, N.Y.

Just days before we visited what would be our future old house, the owner passed away. She was 87 and had been a serial beagle owner, living with one long-eared, sharp-nosed pup after the other during the 60 years she'd been in the house. At first, this bit of background struck us as really, really cute and adorable. Picture parades of beagles marching through the years — and peeing through them, as well. Oh, yes. While our predecessor loved animals, she hated training them, but this would be a future discovery.

We'd been hunting for a house for close to a year. I knew that house restoration starts with a dream and a vision. I had very clear, solid, guy views. I wanted a huge garage (where I could store books, boats, cars), a giant basement, and a house with real character. My fiancé, Celine, also set some specifics: very Victorian (or "Vicky" as we came to call it), within an hour of Manhattan, and Not In New Jersey. In addition, Celine wanted a turret, pocket doors, and a house that was as much a magnificent piece of furniture as it was a home.

We'd chewed through a few real estate agents. Most seemed less than comfortable with older homes. Others used

fingernail-on-blackboard phrases such as "If these walls could talk" when what we wanted to hear was solid advice on a project we knew would take years to accomplish. Nonetheless, we did meet a couple of gems. One of them, Greg Schatz of Albert Schatz Realtors in Ossining, N.Y., actually understood our desires. He found a listing with an eight-letter description that made most prospective home buyers shudder with terror but utterly energized us, novices that we were: NEEDS TLC (translation: huge house at an affordable price).

I'll let Celine describe the place. "It doesn't ooze curb appeal," she says. "It's not a gingerbread painted lady; it has a rather sedate, dignified exterior, but inside it's spacious, elegant, and beautifully laid out, with gorgeous detailing that's

continued on next page



Celine, Tony, and Gypsy surveying the work-in-progress front porch, which did extra duty as a "pre-disposal storage area" for several rooms' worth of discarded carpeting.



Above: Tony notes that architecturally the house is "part Colonial Revival, part Queen Anne, and part Ebay."

The online auction service is the source of several antique ceiling fixtures now hanging in first-floor rooms. Right:

Gypsy, the canine queen of three dogs in the house, poses regally on the window seat of the tower room.



COLONIAL REVIVAL QUEEN ANNE

OWNERS: Tony & Celine Seideman

LOCATION: Peekskill, N.Y.

DATE OF HOUSE: 1903

ON-GOING PROJECT:

Refinishing maple floors that have too much character and aroma.

OF INTEREST:

Finding Arts & Crafts-style wall stencils under wallpaper in the dining room, and original building blueprints in the attic.

surprisingly intact." Though it sounds a bit clichéd, the house possessed a wonderful aura. It had been in the same family since it was built in 1903, and the last owner was an incredibly generous, active woman. Gypsy, the last of the owner's beagles, was an extra prize, one made all the more valuable by some disturbing news. People were warning us she might be put to sleep if we didn't take her.

When we first saw our house, two animals lived there—that we knew about. (The bats weren't included in the count.) There was Daisy, who looked gaunt, sick, and fragile, and 17-year-old Gypsy, who defined the word dogged as she arthritically stumped after us into every corner of the house and then followed us into the back yard and garage, her nose constantly sniffing at our heels.

I asked the lawyer to write in the contract that if we didn't get the dog, we wouldn't take the house. Gypsy might not be in great shape, but she had those gorgeous, needy beagle eyes, and we couldn't deal with the karma of killing a dog to get our home.

We sensed that whatever the legal papers might say about the estate, someone knew who the house's real owner was, and she had four feet. Gypsy didn't really appear to accept us. She was, after all, a purebred, and we are anything but. However, she did appear comfortable with our presence, so we put in a bid immediately. During the long, difficult negotiations, we got regular reports on the dogs from the house's caretaker, Tommy. Daisy, sadly but probably appropriately, was put to sleep a few weeks after we met her. A couple of weeks after that, we got news that Gypsy had had a massive stroke. We figured, "That's it for her," but we didn't know our furry future landlady at all. Though at first Gypsy couldn't walk, Tommy the caretaker helped her take care of herself. The vet was optimistic, saying that dogs usually

recovered from strokes quite well. Little did we know how truly he spoke.

Our commitment to Gypsy was cemented one day when we went up to the house to check on some work that was necessary before we could complete the purchase. She was lying in the sunlight in the reception hall when we arrived. Our entry woke her up, and she staggered to her feet. Gypsy looked the very portrait of a stroke victim, her head twisted to one side, her legs moving out of sync.

Gypsy peered at us through cataract-fogged eyes, grunted, and started moving. That's when Celine and I witnessed one of the most heroic acts we think we'll ever see an animal perform. (You probably need to be a dog person to understand why we were so moved.) Picture this. Our contractor had a large drop cloth spread out over the floor. It had seen years of use and

looked pretty much like an overdone Jackson Pollock canvas. Gypsy understood that the cloth was something special, and thus valuable. As we watched, transfixed, we realized that Gypsy also had a very full bladder. Even so, the determined way she moved showed that the last place she wanted to go was our contractor's tarp.

Somehow she stumbled and staggered over the drop cloth and onto the grim, green carpet that then covered our home's hardwood maple floors. There, she let loose a small, yellow fountain, going where many dogs had undoubtedly gone before. At that point, Celine and I knew we had to do everything in our power to keep Gypsy alive.

Besides, Gypsy acted like a very sedate, quiet animal who would be no problem at all to handle. As her health improved, we soon learned differently. I'd

been told Gypsy was happy with her backyard and didn't want to go out much. With old dogs, as with old houses, things are not always what they seem. The day we moved in, we arrived after our moving van. The doors to the house were open and there was Gypsy, wandering down the middle of the street. "So what?" I thought. "She's too old to run." Then and there I learned that one of Gypsy's great joys in life is to be chased. So we went tottering down the street, me pulling my belt off with one hand to use as a leash and holding my pants up with my other hand.

Since then, Gypsy's trained us to walk her three times a day. We try to make sure to do so. She's made it clear she might throw us out if we don't. 🐕

TONY SEIDEMAN *is a professional writer, but amateur house and dog owner.*



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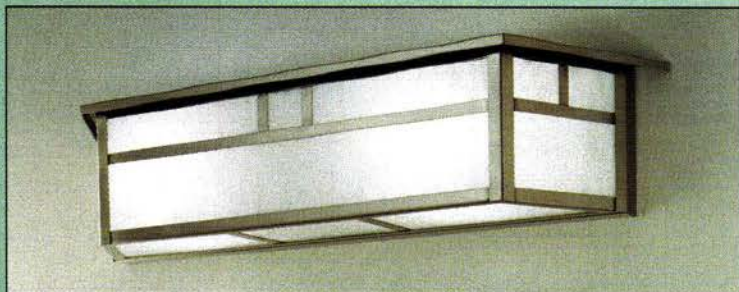
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JOURNAL

OLDHOUSE

Big Believers in Small Houses

Kristi Johnson couldn't believe her eyes when she read what neighbors had to say about the cozy bungalows in her corner of Minneapolis. Like residents of some 50 other areas in the city, they had developed a Neighborhood Revitalization Plan to identify strengths and shortcomings.

"They said Longfellow's biggest weakness was its housing stock," she remembers. "They said it was old and inadequately sized."

Sixty percent of the houses in Johnson's neighborhood are bungalows, built from 1919 to 1930. To her, these small one- or one-and-a-half-storey homes with their intimate living spaces, front porches, and Arts & Crafts details were an asset, not a flaw. "Most of them are pretty much unchanged," she says. "We have a lot of people who've lived in the same houses their whole lives. I wanted to point out that new and big isn't necessarily better."

To sell her immediate neighbors on the virtues of bungalows, Johnson founded the Twin Cities Bungalow Club. Five years later it has 300 members as far away as

New York. Local members attend annual house tours and lectures on restoration, and all members receive a quarterly newsletter. Members and non-members alike can buy the *Longfellow Planbook: Remodeling Plans for Bungalows and Other Small Urban Homes*, which has won kudos from both bungalow owners and preservationists.

Written by Johnson and Minneapolis architect Robert Gerloff, the book offers suggestions for expanding bungalows in architecturally appropriate ways. It tells how to enlarge a kitchen, build a second bathroom, or add the mudroom so popular in new homes, thus addressing, says Johnson, "the reasons people were giving for selling their bungalows."

George Edwards, executive director of the Preservation Alliance of
continued on page 18

Hex Appeal

A little white lie may be a sin, but a little white tile is a joy—especially if it's a 1" hexagon. The ceramic tiles were ubiquitous in bathrooms from 1900 through the 1940s. If you have a house from that period, you might find some under the pink linoleum that's under the orange shag carpet. And it's likely to look pretty good. Because original hextiles were made with uniform color all the way through, they don't show chips and wear like coated tiles do. If you're not so lucky but want the retro look, we found two bonafide suppliers among more than a dozen who claim to carry them (and both suppliers are part of the same company). American Olean offers sheets of hextiles in patterns of white, black, and/or gray. For samples or a catalog, call (215) 822-7300. Daltile has them in 14 colors besides white. Call for a catalog at (800) 933-TILE. You can visit either at www.daltile.com.



Photos courtesy Kristi Johnson

Two typical south Minneapolis bungalows

Some bungalows in Johnson's neighborhood
have sold for as much as

\$200,000

Minnesota, a statewide advocacy group, has high praise for the book. "With older houses, people just don't know where to turn. This gives them the questions to ask so they can steer their architect toward a better plan or their contractors to make more sympathetic decisions."

Not only have Longfellow residents discovered the charm in their bungalows, but so have realtors. Resale value now seems dependent on how much of the home is original. "Some residents had ripped out their original birch cabinets or box beam ceilings, so now you see ads emphasizing 'original kitchen' or 'original bathroom,'" says Johnson. Some have sold recently for \$200,000.

The planbook had an impact beyond individual homeowners. City officials agreed

that the steep stairways so common in bungalows would be grandfathered into the building code, potentially saving homeowners thousands of dollars in renovation costs.

As for Johnson, she has moved on, selling the bungalow she bought for \$61,000 in 1990 for a \$39,000 profit. "I bought an Arts & Crafts-style house five blocks away that was crying out for help," she explains. "The bungalow was finished."

She's also helped write another book, this one on renovating Cape Cods and Ramblers, in cooperation with 13 Minneapolis subdivisions. "They were feeling that the homes weren't glamorous, or big, or new. We hoped they would spend the money to rehab and stay." Sounds familiar. —Alison Rice, Arlington, Virginia



Sweet Home Chicago

LAST SEPTEMBER THE CITY of Chicago launched a Historic Bungalow Initiative with the same goals as the Twin Cities Bungalow Club: celebrating, conserving, and updating these venerable structures.

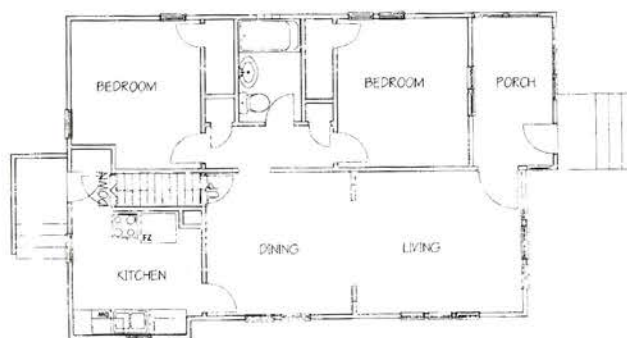
In addition to encouraging architecturally appropriate adaptations and restorations, the city is engineering an array of financial incentives. It plans to offer grants of up to \$3,000 per home for energy conservation measures, expedited processing of zoning and building permits, and free architectural assistance. Alterations such as aluminum siding or inappropriate additions aren't banned outright, but homeowners who agree to city architectural guidelines could be eligible for special bank loans that allow for a 3 percent down payment and no application, appraisal, or origination fees.

More than 80,000 bungalows built between 1910 and 1940 form a "Bungalow Belt" in a crescent along the city's western edge. The typical Chicago bungalow is a one-and-a-half-storey brick structure with attic dormers and a full basement. Never as ornate as their California counterparts, upscale versions nevertheless boast tile roofs, stone planters, premium woodwork, and leaded glass windows. Living rooms have beamed ceilings, built-in bookcases, and fireplaces.

As part of the initiative, the Chicago Architecture Foundation will host a series of conferences, seminars, and tours, concluding this fall with an exhibit and a book on Chicago bungalows. For more information call (312) 642-9900, or visit www.Chicagobungalow.org — Nina A. Koziol, Palos Park, Illinois.



Johnson's bungalow (above) had a typical floor plan: two downstairs bedrooms divided by a bath, colonnades dividing living and dining rooms, and a swinging door into the kitchen.



For a copy of the Longfellow Planbook, send \$21.50 to the Longfellow Community Council, 3249 30th Ave. South, Minneapolis, MN 55406.

To learn more about the Twin Cities Bungalow Club, visit www.mtn.org/bungalow. Single memberships are \$10, couples \$15. Contact Kristi Johnson at 3529 43rd Ave. South, Minneapolis, MN 55406.

HISS-HISS HOORAY

Our friends up the street at the local architectural salvage store do a bang-up business (no pun intended) selling ornate cast-iron radiators. Customers demand them not only for replacing kaput hot-water radiators in old homes, but also for new period-style homes, where they can lend a bit of much-needed historical detailing.

The Victorians, proud to show off central heating devices so clean and efficient (compared to the fireplace), gussied up radiators much as they did everything else, with elaborate raised ornamentation, bronzing, or polychroming to match their wallpaper. By the 1920s, shifting tastes dictated hiding them under covers that provided an additional table top or window seat. Since then, while it's been possible to buy new cast-iron radiators, they tended to be sleek and utilitarian or plain and boxy.

Now, however, architectural salvagers may have some competition from two distributors of reproduction radiators.

One is Burnham, a Lancaster, Pennsylvania-based company that began producing cast-iron boilers in the late 1800s to heat the greenhouses that were their primary product. They have introduced what they call their Classic

radiator. Just a hair under 30" tall, the column-style Classic has more arabesques than Swan Lake and comes in three, five, seven, or nine sections. You can get decorative brass valves for hot water installation or use it with a steam-heat system. Call (717) 397-4701 or visit www.burnham.com/radiator/58320.cfm.

Enerjee, also based in Pennsylvania, is a broker for French-made Chappee Floreal radiators. Similar in size and appearance to the Burnham radiator, its five-, eight-, nine-, and 10-section styles range in price from about \$350 to \$700. Call them at (215) 295-0557, or visit www.enerjee.com/floreal.



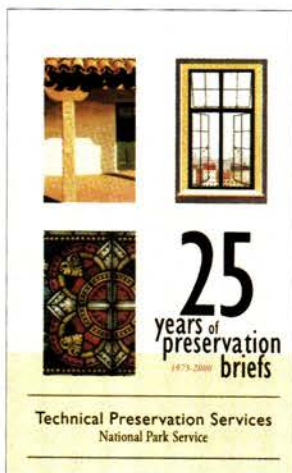
Burnham's Classic radiator brings ornate raised design back to these heating devices, although you may still prefer to explore the range of patterns found in architectural salvage shops.

Briefly Noted

FOR MORE THAN 25 years, the National Park Service (NPS) has been providing inexpensive Preservation Briefs to homeowners, professionals, and organizations maintaining or restoring historic structures. The easy-to-read pamphlets are popular for preservation workshops, and help

tax-incentive program applicants understand how to keep old buildings true to their original character.

For some time now, the text of the briefs has been available free on the Internet,



and beginning this spring, the on-line information will be accompanied by illustrations and photographs as well.

There are more than 40 of the briefs, prepared by NPS's Technical Preservation Service. Their contents ranges from broad topics such as analyzing architectural character to specific techniques (repointing mortar joints) or situations (preserving adobe buildings or log homes). OHJ Contributing Editor Marylee MacDonald wrote Preservation Brief 21: "Repairing Historic Flat Plas-

ter Walls and Ceilings." Roofs, steel windows, exterior additions, interior paint, and slate roofs are just a few of the other subjects covered.

The average brief is 12 pages long, with anywhere from 10 to more than 30 illustrations and charts. Most of the briefs are sold as sets for \$14-\$16.

Review the text by visiting www2.cr.nps.gov/tps/briefs/presbhom.htm To order briefs on line, visit www2.cr.nps.gov/tps/tpscat.htm To receive a catalog of all Technical Preservation Service publications, write to National Park Service, Heritage Preservation Services, 1849 C Street NW, NC-330, Washington, DC 20240.

B&B Focus

THE GENERAL RUFUS PUTNAM HOUSE,
RUTLAND, MASSACHUSETTS

Marcia Warrington says she and her husband Chris closed the deal on this ca. 1750 hip-roofed Georgian home the day before Thanksgiving seven years ago "and have been thankful ever since." Located on 7½ acres in a bucolic town of 5,500 in the geographic center of Massachusetts, the house had spent the last half of the 19th century as a museum. It was not only in pristine condition, but its history was well documented with blueprints, room layouts, and other architectural drawings. The house was built by John Murray, a Scotch-Irish immigrant and Tory tax collector. After a stone-throwing mob drove Murray and his family from their home in the middle of the night, the house was confiscated and sold in 1781 to Putnam, an engineer for George Washington and later the founder of Marietta, Ohio. Architectural features include eight fireplaces (three with original delft tiles) and elaborate wood wall panels. The Warringtons—she's a dance



3 guest rooms, \$100-125, 344 Main Street (Route 122A), Rutland, MA 01543 (508) 886-4864. www.rufus-putnamhouse.com

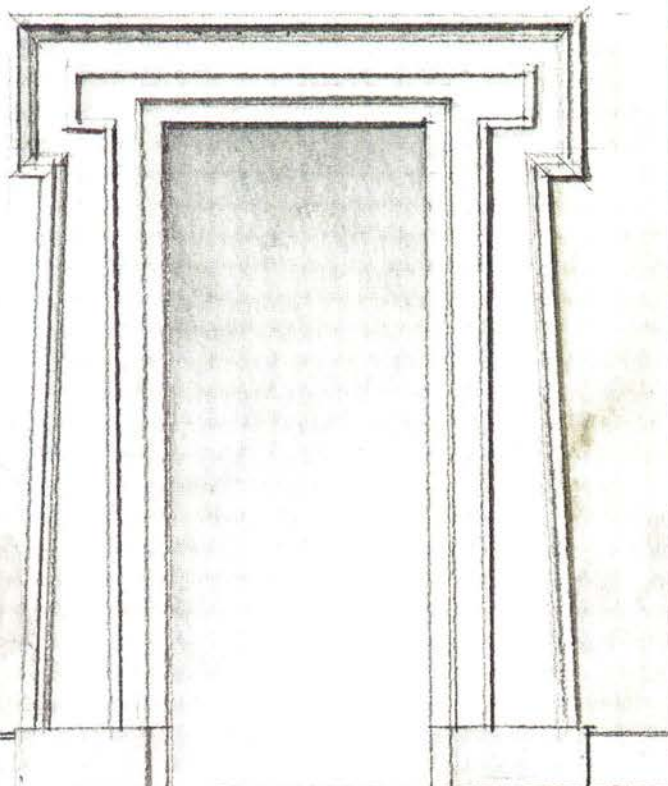
teacher and he's an artist and general contractor—bought the house as their private home, she says, "but after living here a while and feeling the history seep out of the walls, we felt that we had to share it with others."

STYLE NUGGET

BATTERED WALLS AND MOULDINGS



In architecture, a battered wall, pier, or moulding is one that rises from the ground with a steep slope. Batter is closely associated with the temples and pylons of ancient Egypt, where inclined walls resisted earthquakes while producing a severe, monumental effect. In old houses, batter pops up in door mouldings and porch supports, particularly during the Greek Revival and Arts & Crafts eras.



Rob Leanna



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Douglas Krister

The Arts & Crafts Ensemble *by Bruce Smith*

DON'T PANIC! This is not a quiz, just a mental exercise. First, picture three or four great examples of Arts & Crafts houses—say, the Gamble House by Greene and Greene, Frank Lloyd Wright's Robie House, and Red House, the home of William Morris in England. Then, stop and ask yourself: What makes these houses Arts & Crafts? What spirit pervades each of these houses to suggest we group them together?

In your mind's eye, you are probably standing outside one of your chosen houses. Maybe you're in Scotland looking at the stark, roughcast walls of the Hill House by Charles Rennie Mackintosh, or possibly you're in front of the soft, warm, redwood exterior of Bernard Maybeck's Boke House in Berkeley. Then again, it could be the rough-hewn logs of Gustav Stickley's home in New Jersey that you're almost touching. Now stop, take a deep breath, and ask yourself again: Is it not a stretch to find unity here?

Part of the answer is you're in the wrong place. It's not outside the house you should be standing but inside. Walk through the front door of the Gamble House and look around. Marvel at the attention to detail—the book-matched Burmese teak walls, the magnificent stepped rise of staircase that climbs up and over your head. You are in awe of the details, the finger joints and exquisite pegging in the stair construction. Then you

note that the same type of pegging was used for the entry hall table and the same finger joints for the table drawers. You see how all edges and corners in the furniture are rounded in the same way as the wall panels, doors, and the staircase balustrade. Everything around you has been designed by the architects—tables, beds, chairs, a piano, picture frames, carpets, lighting, and stained glass. This is not the product of obsessive-compulsive behavior. It was all done with the goal of providing a unified design, a total experience for the homeowners and their visitors—for you.

Total Design

THE ARTS & CRAFTS ERA is not the first time that architects designed more than the house. There were 18th- and 19th-century architects—Robert Adam and Samuel McIntire, for example—with clients wealthy and pliable enough to allow them to design the furnishings. It was the proselytizers of the Arts & Crafts movement, however, who were the first to advocate the concept of total design as something everyone should live with, from the modest streetcar conductor to the mightiest banker. Popular magazines, such as *Ladies Home Journal* and *House Beautiful*, coached the average housewife on what was good or bad in her home. Using didactic before-and-after pictures, they compared over-cluttered rooms filled with “objectionable furniture”

No group saw the partnership between house and furnishings so clearly, or realized it so completely, as the designers of the Arts & Crafts era.

The principles behind Arts & Crafts furniture—honest, straightforward construction free of applied ornament or decoration from other ages—are equally fundamental to Arts & Crafts interiors, to the point that materials, motifs, and finishes are often shared. Furnishings and building are designed not simply to work together, but ideally to come together as components of a greater whole.



Besides its efficiency, built-in furniture, such as this bench seat and bookcase, represented the ultimate union of house and contents—a perfect philosophical fit with the Arts & Crafts lifestyle.

Douglas Keister


to those furnished with “inexpensive pieces, which are comfortable and attractive”—the latter being the new, straightforward Mission furniture, of course. “The ruling principle of the Craftsman House is simplicity,” pronounced Stickley in his magazine, *The Craftsman*. Not only was the simple, honest construction of the Craftsman furniture good, it was part and parcel of the house, right along with the hand-hammered copper lamp over the dining table and the green matte-glazed jardinière by the front door. All elements indicated the good life that was to be lived in the house: healthy, simple, and wholesome.

This trend began in 1860 when William Morris needed to furnish Red House. He could find nothing available that was not tasteless or vulgar, “Not a chair or table, or a bed; not a cloth or paper hanging for the walls,” he wrote. The architect Phillip Webb who designed Red House also built much of the furniture for his friend. Other talents in the Morris circle painted tiles for the fireplace, murals for the walls, and hand decorated the ceiling. Working with his wife, Morris himself made embroidered and appliqued hangings for the walls.

Now close your eyes and imagine yourself in Wright’s Robie House just after completion—

maybe in 1910, some 50 years after Red House. The house is in-your-face modern for the time, from the wide roof overhang and brickwork-limestone banding to the open floor plan. The entire environment is dictated by the architect. Furniture, light fixtures, rugs, leaded and stained-glass windows all follow a single motif. An open fireplace is all that separates the living room from the dining area so, for the sake of privacy, Wright designed the dining chairs with high backs and placed lanterns on the table’s corner posts, creating a small, secluded world for the diners. The interior is a complete experience again, demanded because Wright found it impossible to buy the specific pieces he wanted for precise places in the house—nearly the same problem Morris faced.

So come back now to the central question: What makes these houses Arts & Crafts? Certainly, it’s the unity achieved by a designer, an architect, bringing together fixtures and furnishings in harmony with interiors and construction, but there is more to it than that. A 1909 *House and Garden* magazine article on “Arts and Crafts Home Making” rhapsodizes about a small “plain, square little house...sturdily built” because the owners had “designed the decoration and made much of the furniture,” creating what the magazine thought “an ideal home.” On the burlap-covered walls they had stenciled a horse chestnut motif and “overhanging the fireplace...is a hand beaten copper hood,” the work, of course, of the homeowners. “All through the house there is a sense of use and of comfort and a feeling that, lovely as it is, it is not ‘too bright and good’ to minister to the needs of a home, but forms a fitting background for the life lived here.”

This is the essential element: the fact that a chair, an embroidered wall hanging, or stained glass in the front door has been done, if not by the homeowner, then by someone who cared both about the piece and how it fit into the integrality of the home. This is what made these houses Arts & Crafts: the unity and harmony as well as the craft. 

BRUCE SMITH AND YOSHIKO YAMAMOTO are the authors of *The Beautiful Necessity: Decorating with Arts and Crafts and Arts and Crafts Ideals* (Gibbs Smith Books).

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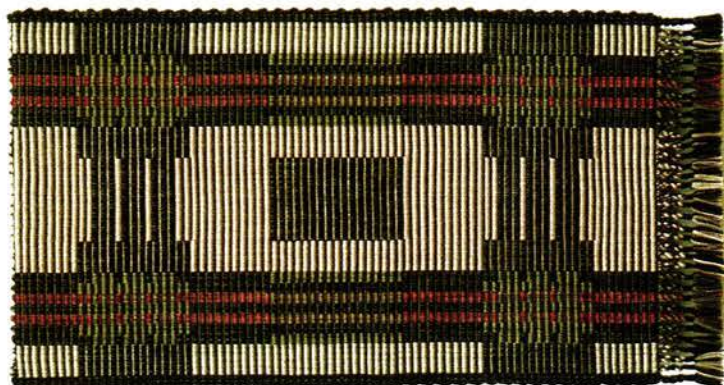
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BACK IN CIRCLE-ATION

Early in this century, metal ceilings were everywhere, since they could jazz up the overhead plane more cheaply than either plaster or wood. This Victorian circle and fleur-de-lis pattern has been rescued from obscurity by the folks at Chelsea Decorative Metal. Made of tin-plated steel, it will resist rust and retain paint, so with proper priming and oil-based paints can be used in kitchens and baths. A 2' x 2' sheet in the Victorian design sells for \$9. Catalogs of 20 sheet designs and 11 cornices are available for \$1. Call Chelsea at (713) 721-9200, or visit www.thetinman.com Circle no. 1 on the resource card.



AN OLIVE FOR THAT BORDEAUX?

Perhaps not a good cocktail combo, but the green and burgundy in "Olive Groves and Wine" might bring refreshment to your floor or walls. Although this design seems quite Frank Lloyd Wrightian, Connecticut textile artist Patricia Burling says the pattern was inspired by a vineyard. Burling uses a warp face technique to give her rugs tubelike ridges. Rayon adds highlights to the wool. This 3' X 5" rug is \$900; all rugs sell for \$60 a square foot. For a catalog call (203) 268-4794. Circle no. 2 on the resource card.



ROLL 'EM OUT

That essential bathroom hardware can be elegant as well when it's gleaming brass. But do you ever feel that you need at least three hands to replace the roller? This "European style" toilet paper holder doesn't require a roller. The tissue roll simply hangs on a curved brass rod that extends from the step-style post. The accessory also comes in chrome, pewter, white, and a brass/chrome combination. The suggested retail price is \$37. Franklin Brass, (800) 421-3375, www.franklinbrass.com Circle no. 3 on the resource card.

ABOVE BOARD

Before cabinet lavatories and even before pedestal models, bathrooms had tabletop basins. If that's a look you can sink your teeth into, Porcher's new above-counter Crescendo may fill the bill. The bowl is 19½" in diameter, rising from 5" high in front to 9" deep in black, with a rear overflow. It sells for \$450 in white, \$500 in black or linen, and \$575 in custom colors. Contact American Standard at (732)980-3000, or visit www.americanstandard-us.com Circle no. 4 on the resource card.





CABINET APPOINTMENT

Back before we discovered germs and concluded that all bathroom surfaces had to be cold white ceramics, beautiful wood was the rule for bathroom furnishings. You can revisit those luxurious days with bathroom cabinetry such as the Winstead line from Aristokraft. Winstead is a full overlay door style, with solid maple face frames and fully concealed, self-closing hinges. The ready-to-ship cabinets can be finished in your choice of three different methods, in Rouge (shown here), Alpine (white), Natural (light brown), and Autumn (golden brown). Contact Aristokraft, (812) 482-2527, www.aristokraft.com Circle no. 6 on the resource card.

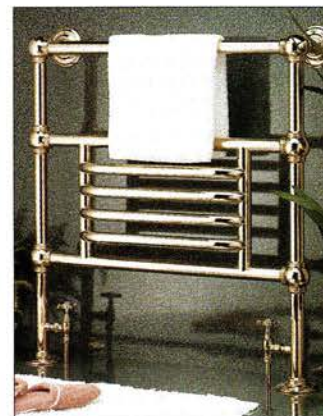
AN OPEN-AND-SHUT CASE

Now that your Arts & Crafts home is dressed to the nines, it needs an entryway that says, "Drum roll, please!" Four models in the Craftsman series of entryways are highlighted by square geometric forms, bold linear planes, and understated ornament. The doors are available in maple, cherry, oak, and alder. The optional sidelights and transom can be had with decorative glass touches such as French crackle and iridescent granite. The stiles are a generous 6" wide and flat panels are held in place with squared moulding. Door prices range from \$1,500 to \$2,500. Contact IWP, (800) 468-3667, or visit www.iwpdoors.com Circle no. 7 on the resource card.



ART DECO ARDOR

If you have a '30s-era home with Art Deco zigzags and chevrons, why give it plain Jane door hardware? These distinctive door sets come in copper and old silver with knobs in two styles. The keyholes are non-functional, but if you need privacy or security you can order matching thumb-turn or deadbolt locks. The set retails for \$248. Contact Southwest Forge and Door Company (250) 494-7307. Circle no. 5 on the resource card.

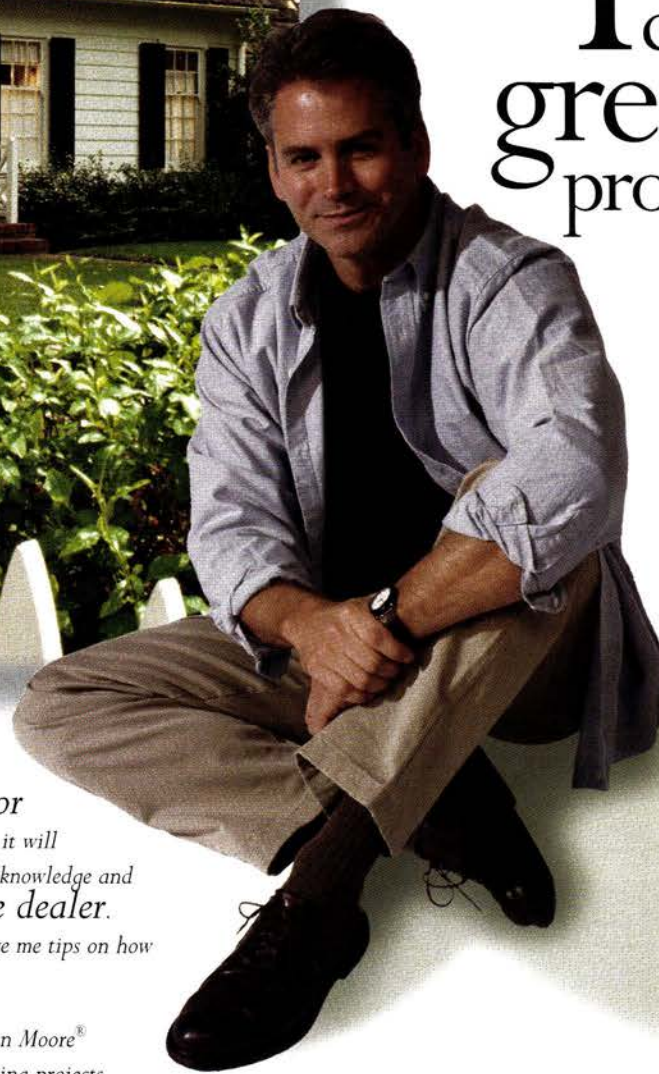


RACK 'EM UP

Once you snaz up your period-style bathroom with a claw-foot soaking tub, what's next? Obviously a towel heater "found in prestigious hotels... and celebrated casinos." Homeowners with water or steam heat are candidates for a Baronial-style Heatrail, but there are other models designed for use with electric heat. You can choose from five metal finishes, enamel colors or two tones, or create your own design mounted to the wall or floor-to-ceiling. Prices range from just slightly over \$1,000 to more than \$7,000 in a gold finish. Contact Wesaunard Inc. (540) 582-6677. Circle no. 8 on the resource card.

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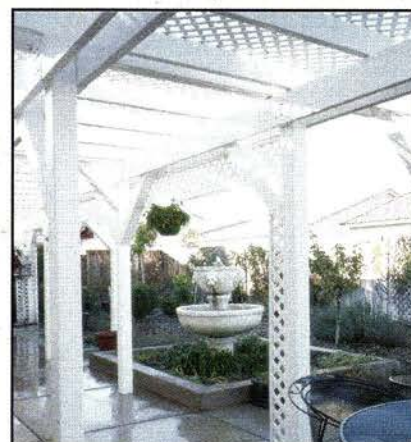


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Photo courtesy Starrett

On The Level *by William T. Cox Jr.*

Since ancient times builders have devised several types of tools, collectively called levels, for aligning structures relative to the horizon. Gravity's effects on weights and water are the two time-honored ways to sense horizontal, but the measuring instrument industry is still coming up with new methods. Here's just a sampling of levels simple and sophisticated, and how you can put them to work in an old house.

Water level—One of the first levels I ever used was a water level—simply a 50'-long, clear vinyl $\frac{1}{8}$ " tube filled with colored water (see drawing at right). It takes two people to operate. The tubing should have been larger to allow the water to settle more quickly, but the price of clear tubing was astronomical back in the 1970s. Today, the stuff costs around \$1 a foot, which still isn't cheap.

The water level is a visual reference device; the water is either on the mark, or it is not. The sole trick to using a water level is always reading the level at the cup of the water instead of at the curved upper lip, or meniscus. Due to the way the water adheres to the inside of the tube, the meniscus varies too much to be reliable. Even so, I've read that a water level is accurate to $\frac{1}{16}$ ", depending on the skill of the people using it.

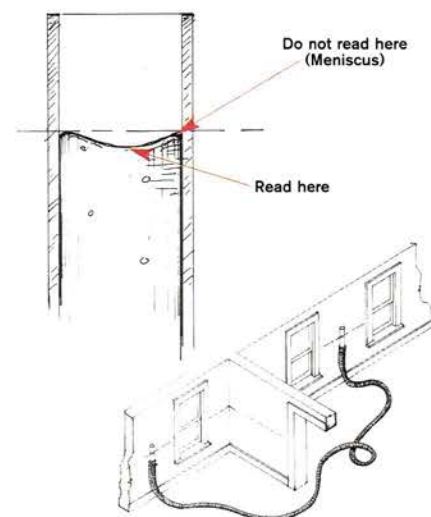
To use a water level to level a line around a kitchen for, say, installing a chair rail, have a partner hold one end of the hose on the wall with the water mark at the desired rail height. Then you can take the other end and simply mark off the wall every few feet by raising or lowering the hose until the water

is on the mark. The beauty of the water level is that it works just as well if the ends are many feet apart or even separated by obstructions, such as a wall between two rooms. (Keep in mind that a chalk line will sag no matter how tight you pull the line; gravity is always at work.)

Flying by instruments—Unlike a water level, a spirit level uses a bubble of air floating in a carefully calibrated vial to sense horizontal. Spirit levels range from hand-sized tools (such as bull's-eye, line, and torpedo levels), through 18" and 24", up to 6' long and more. A 48" spirit level fresh out of its packing sleeve should be accurate to the thickness of a crisp \$100 bill, but even this precision is enough to throw a layout way off if, say, you want to level a line around a 11' x 15' kitchen. Luckily you can compensate for any error by using yet another trick. If you want to use that new 48" spirit level for your kitchen chair rail, each time you draw a line flip the level end over end as you move around the room. This way you reverse any small errors in the level so, in theory, they will cancel each other out. Even so, you may miss your starting point by as much as 1" over the distance around the room.

Here's how to check the level to see if it is accurate. Place the instrument on a flat wall and angle the tool until the bubble reads level. Next, draw a line under or over the level. Then, rotate the level 180 degrees, making sure it returns to the mark you just made. If the bubble still reads horizontal, the level is accurate.

continued on next page



Top: Even though spirit levels, which use a bubble-filled vial for sensing horizontal, have been around since the 1880s, they are still changing with improvement. Such as laminated wood housings. Above: A water level will find horizontal around a room or obstructions. Reading the proper water height in the tube increases accuracy.

Illustrations by Rob Leanna



Sightings — Mounting a telescopic sight with cross hairs on one to four spirit level vials will give you the basics of a builder's level. With this tool you can shoot level across larger distances outdoors, although to do so requires a two-man crew plus a tripod and a surveyor's rod (or 6' folding rule). Contractors use a builder's level to find the grade or height of the building at the starting stage of construction. A surveyor will take a benchmark (a known height from sea level) and transfer it to your job site as a stake in the ground with a surveyor's tack on top. The height of the tack will be marked on the side of the stake. All grades are shot from this point. You may be able to find a benchmark near the corner of your city block — usually a brass plate mounted on a concrete post about 1" above the curb.

You might call the transit level the smaller brother of a builder's level, but it's actually a more educated optical instrument. The transit level moves vertically as well as horizontally to allow you to look down at the surveyor's tacks, and it is used to find the corners of a building as well as grades. It can also be used to plumb walls and columns, but plumb bobs and spirit levels are much simpler for these tasks in an old house. On most job sites, a well-built tripod supports the levels. The tripod for a transit level will have a hole in the center so the operator can drop a plumb bob directly over the surveyor's cupped tack.

Dazzled by the light fandango — The first time I turned on a laser level tool I was astonished. The perfectly straight line

cast by a ruby laser revolutionized the manufacture and use of levels, and since that time there have been even more innovations. One type of laser level projects a plumb line across the floor and up the wall about 6' as long as the device is within 5 degrees of plumb. Not only can it be used for plumbing, it also works for aligning tiles on a floor or countertop. Lasers make ideal builders' levels because they can project a single beam of light (a dot) onto a surface up to 400 feet away. Only one person is needed to operate a laser level, but a buddy is an asset. Don't worry if you're alone and a gust of wind knocks the laser out of level; the dot starts blinking.

At least a couple of companies have introduced an accessory rod that can be jammed between the floor and ceiling to hold a laser. They are not only simple to use but quick to set up as well. I tried one outside attached to a 5-gallon bucket partially filled with pea gravel for stability. The platform that supports the level can be adjusted exactly to the desired height, and the platform lowers to within 6" of the ground. Rotating lasers that trace a line around a room with intermittent light are the latest wrinkle. Some tools even offer more than one speed of rotation. (Depending on the ambient light, my experience is that a slower rotation makes it easier to see the laser light.) In some products, the same level turned on its side can be used shoot a plumb line. With lasers being so versatile it's a shame they can't bake biscuits.

WILLIAM T COX JR. *is based in Memphis.*



Top left: The Laser Jamb is a vertical rod that allows a rotary laser to trace a level line around a room. Top: Rotary lasers emit a single dot of light that, when rotated, reads as a continuous line. Above: Lasers mounted on a surveyor's tripod add high-tech to builders' and transit levels.

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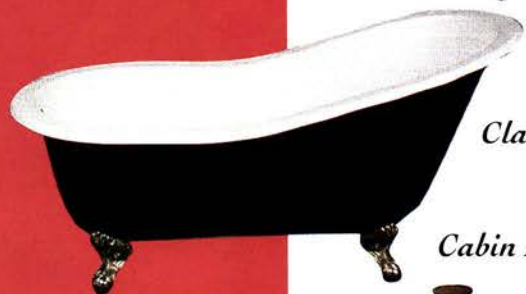
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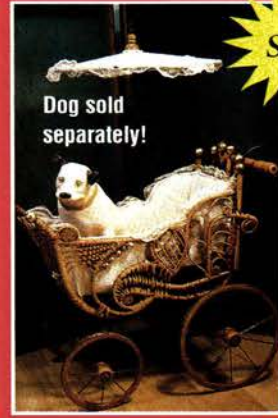
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Addison Mizner transformed Palm Beach with his own brand of Spanish Renaissance architecture. The sumptuous yet sophisticated exterior of the Casa Nana (above) is a good example of his deft handling of columns and arcades. Inside (right) Mizner called on a mix of manufactured and authentic antiques to produce a rich ambiance.



A detail of the niche and ornament above the long colonnade of the Via Flora in Palm Beach.



Photos © Roberto Schezen/Esto

*His vision fed the great south Florida
building boom of the 1920s
and influenced the way the world
would ever afterward see
Florida architecture.*

Addison Mizner—Mad for Beauty by Shirley Maxwell and James C. Massey

It's hard to say what south Florida, the early 20th-century winter playground of America's East Coast millionaires, might look like today if Addison Cairns Mizner hadn't spent a blissful 1919 vacation in Palm Beach with one of his many super-wealthy friends. A southern Newport, maybe—lavish, lovely, but probably without the dozens of Mediterranean Revival mansions that make it so. . . well, Floridian.

For decades, Mizner—a self-trained architect with scores of rich acquaintances and a long-standing reverence for Spanish art and architecture—had been practicing primarily in New York, building Yankee mansions on city streets. During that memorable vacation, he realized he was a Floridian at heart, and he seized on Florida's Spanish heritage as the only valid architectural expression its buildings.

Born in 1872, Addison Mizner fell in love with Spanish language and culture at the age of 16, when he accompanied his parents to Guatemala City. There his father served a brief and hapless ambassadorship to Central America, suggesting on one occasion (rather undiplomatically) that the Central American nations should unite to defend themselves against Mexico and Colombia. Still recovering from a serious childhood injury, young Addison spent much of his only year in Guatemala absorbing the Spanish language and Spanish American culture and honing a talent for drawing. Afterward, Mizner led an exciting life that eluded almost any further

schooling or architectural training but managed to encompass adventurous years in Alaska during the 1890s gold rush and a round-the-world odyssey financed partly by money he won in an Australian boxing match.

Although he never went to architecture school, Mizner did apparently work for a short while as a draftsman in the office of Beaux-Arts architect Stanford White before White



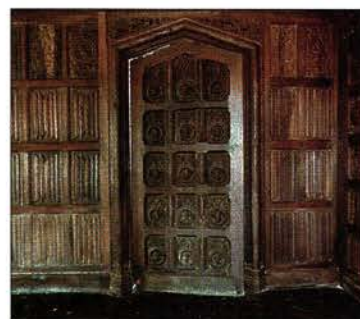
Photos "Courtesy of the Historical Society of Palm Beach County"



Left: Addison Mizner in a typical pose from the 1920s: fondling a cigarette and model. Above: Chumming with silent film stars Marie Dressler and Richard Barthelmess (right in photo).



Running 200' along Lake Worth and downshore from one of his best extant commissions, the Everglades Club, the 1923 Casa del Ensuenos (above) is a prime example of Mizner's waterfront mansions. Details were part of the Mizner touch, as in the iron grillework from the Casa Nana (right) and carved linenfold paneling decorating his own Via Mizner (far right).



Photos © Roberto Schezen/Esto

was shot to death by Harry Thaw in 1906. (Many years later, when Mizner was forced to take a special "Senior" exam in order to be certified for practice in California, he was touchingly relieved to find that he had passed.) For the most part, Mizner learned his trade by intense observation, reading,

and frequent travel in Spain and Italy.

As if talent weren't enough, Mizner was charming too. Tall and barrel-chested, he cut an imposing figure, and his ready wit and urbane air served him well with his clients, many of whom were newer to wealth than he was to

architecture. His good friend and patron, Alice DeLamar, thought him "a great gentleman," and his 1928 biographer, the journalist Ida M. Tarbell, described "a man mad for beauty."

Addison and his younger brother, the rascally, irrepressible Wilson Mizner, quickly became colorful fixtures on the south Florida scene. Addison designed homes for dozens of newly minted Palm Beach millionaires (whose numbers were increasing then almost as fast as today's supply of technoparvenus). In addition, Addison and Wilson were land speculators themselves, investing—and ultimately losing—fortunes in Palm Beach and the new town of Boca Raton just to the south.

For several of south Florida's formative years, between 1922 and 1925, Addison Mizner was the architect of choice. His beautiful L- and U-shaped villas graced the waterfronts of Palm Beach and Boca Raton with a rich play of stuccoed walls, barrel-tiled roofs, and colorful ceramic-studded patios. Large windows and door-

ways with cast-stone trim in Mediterranean designs were signature Mizner touches as ubiquitous as arches and Moorish columns. Moreover, Mizner transformed the towns' shopping districts, turning Palm Beach's all-residential Worth Street into one of the nation's most fashionable commercial avenues. He also designed courtyard buildings—one named Via Parigi (after Paris Singer, the sewing machine heir and West Palm Beach developer) and another Via Mizner (after himself)—as miniature Spanish villages with winding streets of shops on the ground floor and apartments above.

Most of the ornament and much of the furniture for the houses were made by artisans in Mizner's own factories, which he named Los Manos (in an effort to suggest "handmade" in Spanish). The factories turned out brilliant ceramic tiles and urns—often in the distinctive shade still known as "Mizner blue"—iron gates, balconies, and grillwork, hinges and door latches, and cast-stone window and door trim. Mizner ordered reproductions of an-



Photo "Courtesy the Historical Society of Palm Beach County"

Wilson Mizner frequently teamed with Addison on both the social and land-speculation scene.



Photos © Roberto Schezen/Esto

The long, languid lines of the beautiful Villa del Sarmiento (above), typical of Mizner's Palm Beach palaces, contrasts with the surprising verticality of El Castillo (below). Built in 1928, Mizner designed this "castle" with a four-storey tower so the owner, an amateur astronomer, could enjoy the local panoramas.

tique Spanish and Italian furniture, hand-carved of old European walnut, for use in his own buildings as well as for sale to other architects and the general public. An inveterate collector, Mizner picked up everything that caught his eye during his annual buying trips to the Mediterranean. Anything he didn't use in clients' homes went into his antiques shop on Via Mizner. (His residence was, of course, located above the shop.)

Addison Mizner died in 1933, his reputation and dreams of wealth and glory turned to dust by hurricanes, bursting speculative bubbles, the Great Depression, and the ascendancy of 1930s architectural minimalism. Many of his Palm Beach mansions are gone too, demolished in the 1950s and '60s, the victims of developers with other uses for the land and owners who found their dream villas impossible to



Photos © Roberto Schezen/Esto

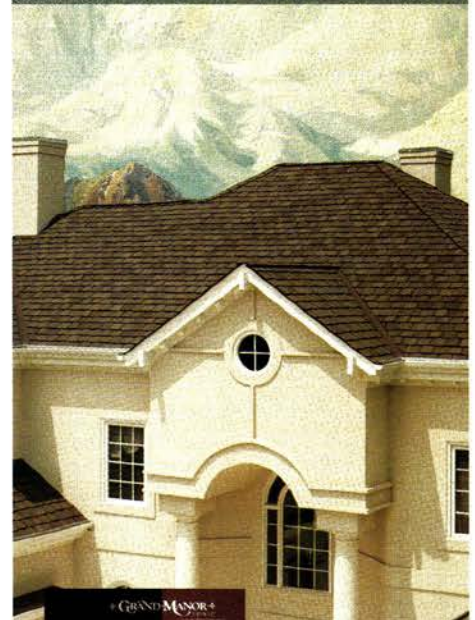
air-condition, much less to staff. The outline of Mizner's plan for Boca Raton, which he had hoped would be his masterpiece, is barely recognizable today. Since the 1980s, however, there have been more encouraging developments. Preservationists blocked the demolition of one of Mizner's last important villas, the William Gray Wardman House, and Mizner's work is finally being taken seriously again. Today, as Modernism's machine-age facades recede farther into history, Addison Mizner, the "man mad for beauty," is being rediscovered as the major architect of the sunshine state, and admired once more for his lovely, lasting incarnation of Florida building.



James C. Massey

A view of Via Mizner. The architect's apartment was above the ground-floor shops.

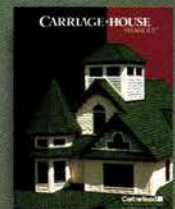
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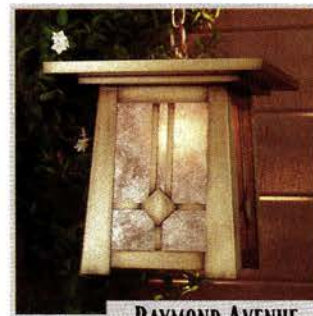
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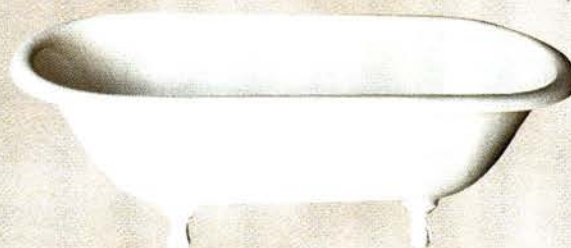
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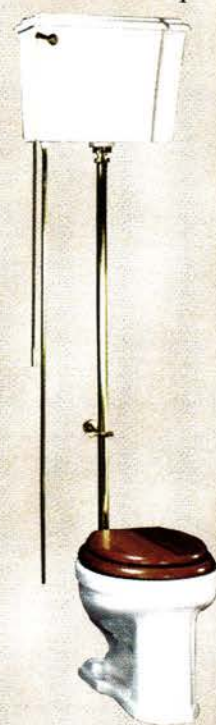
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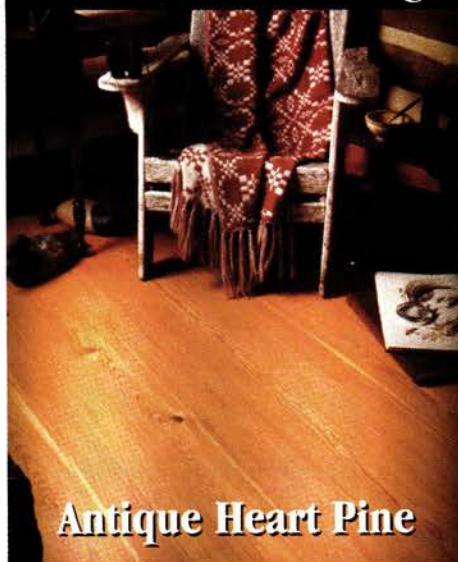
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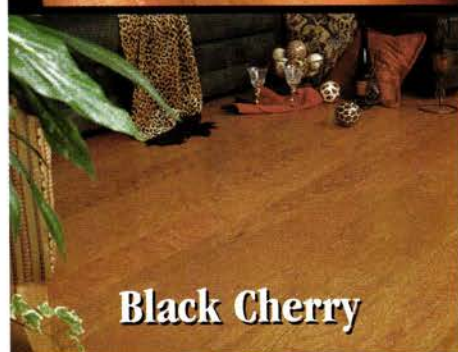
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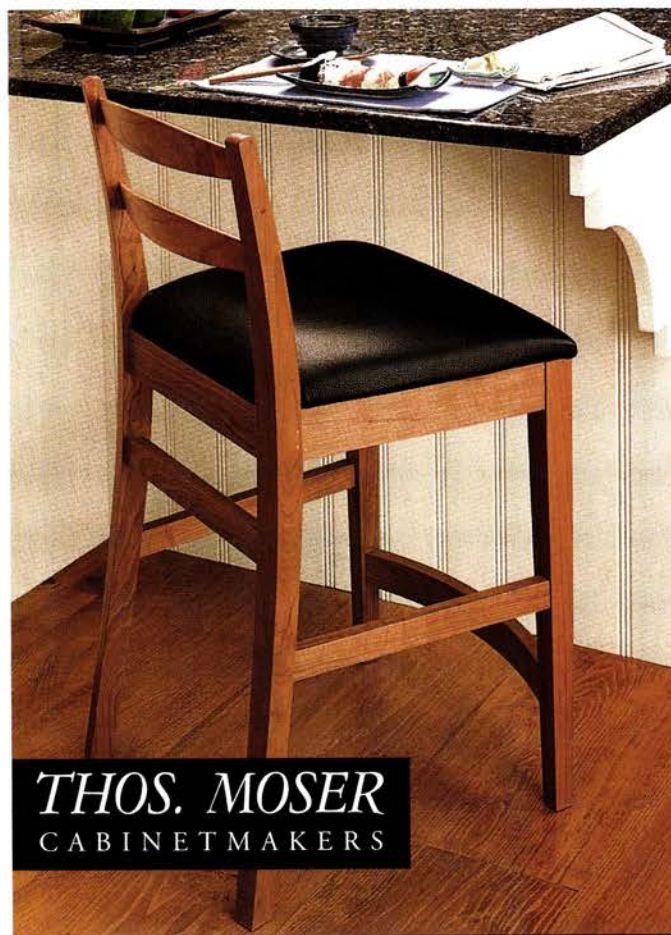
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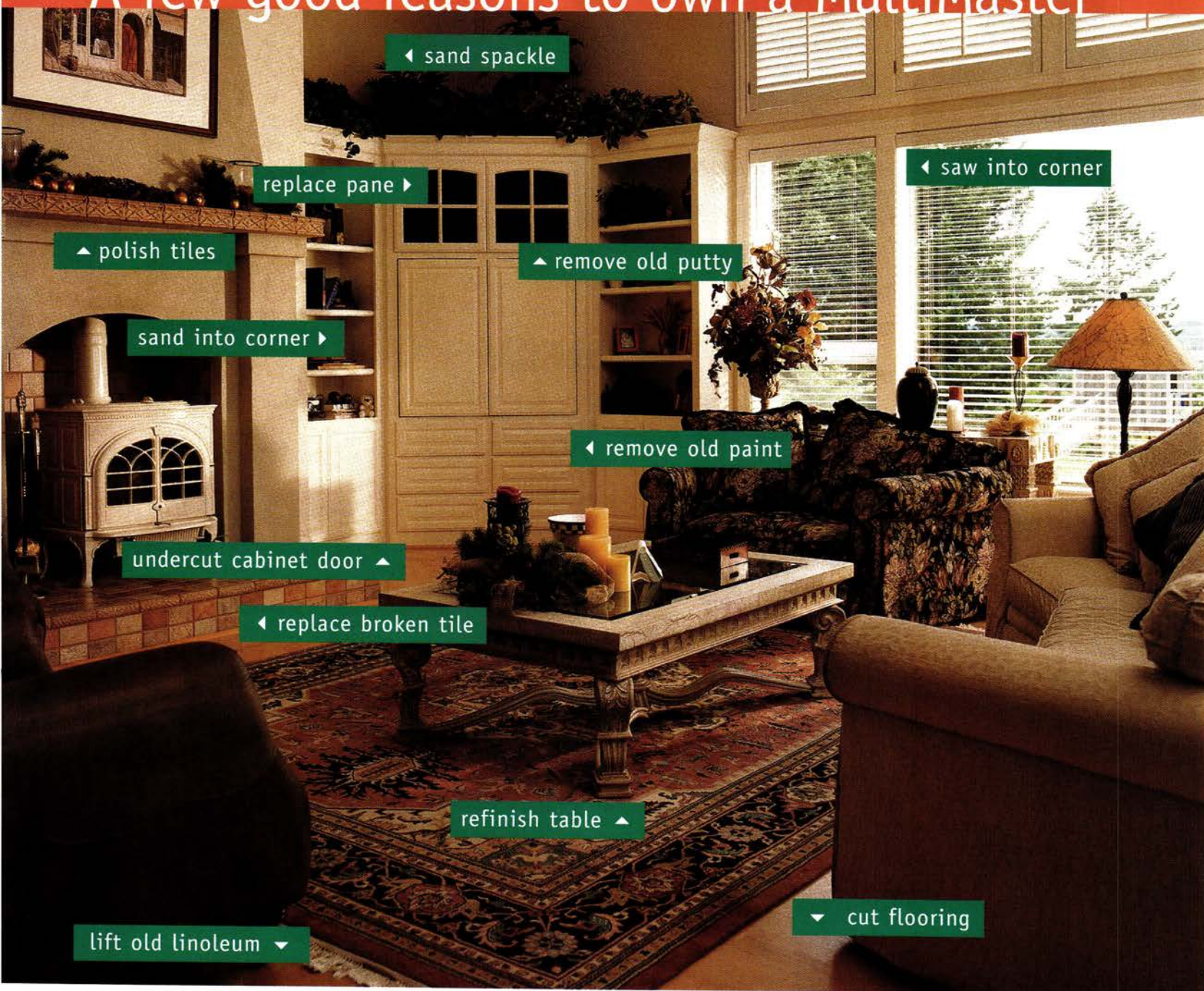


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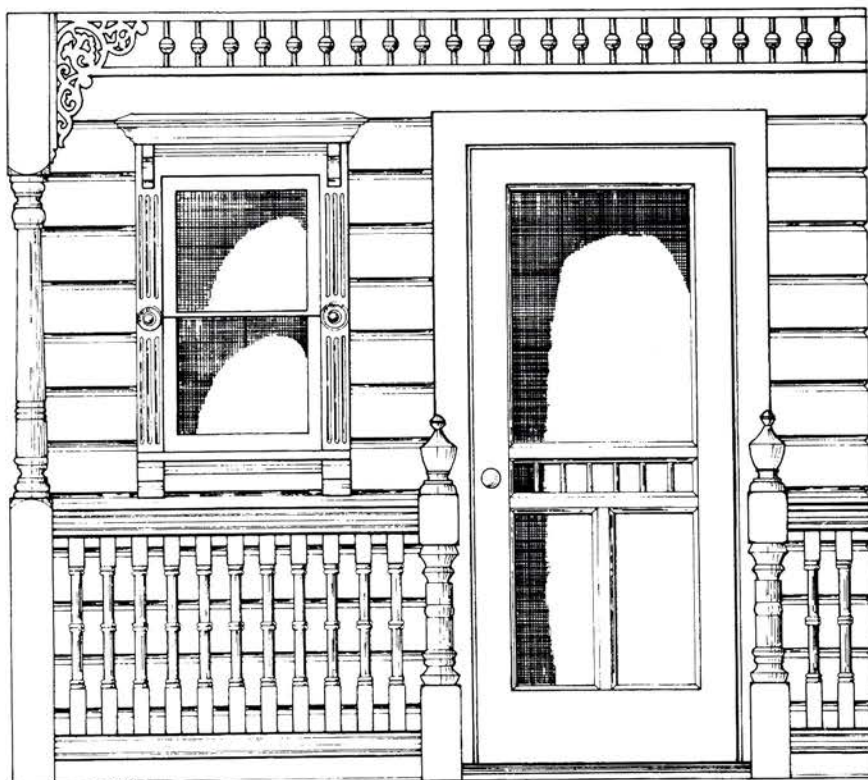
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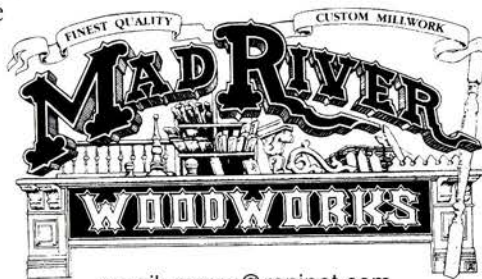
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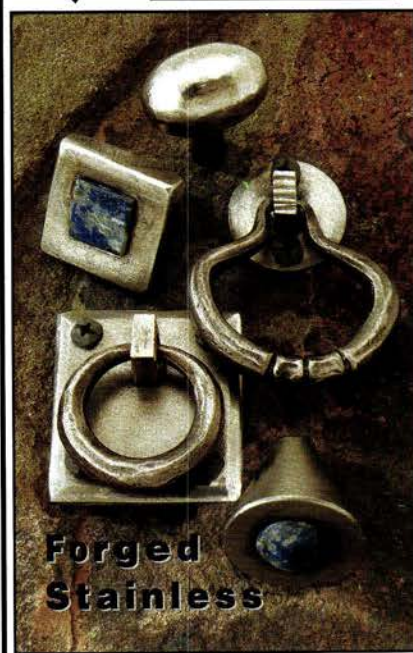
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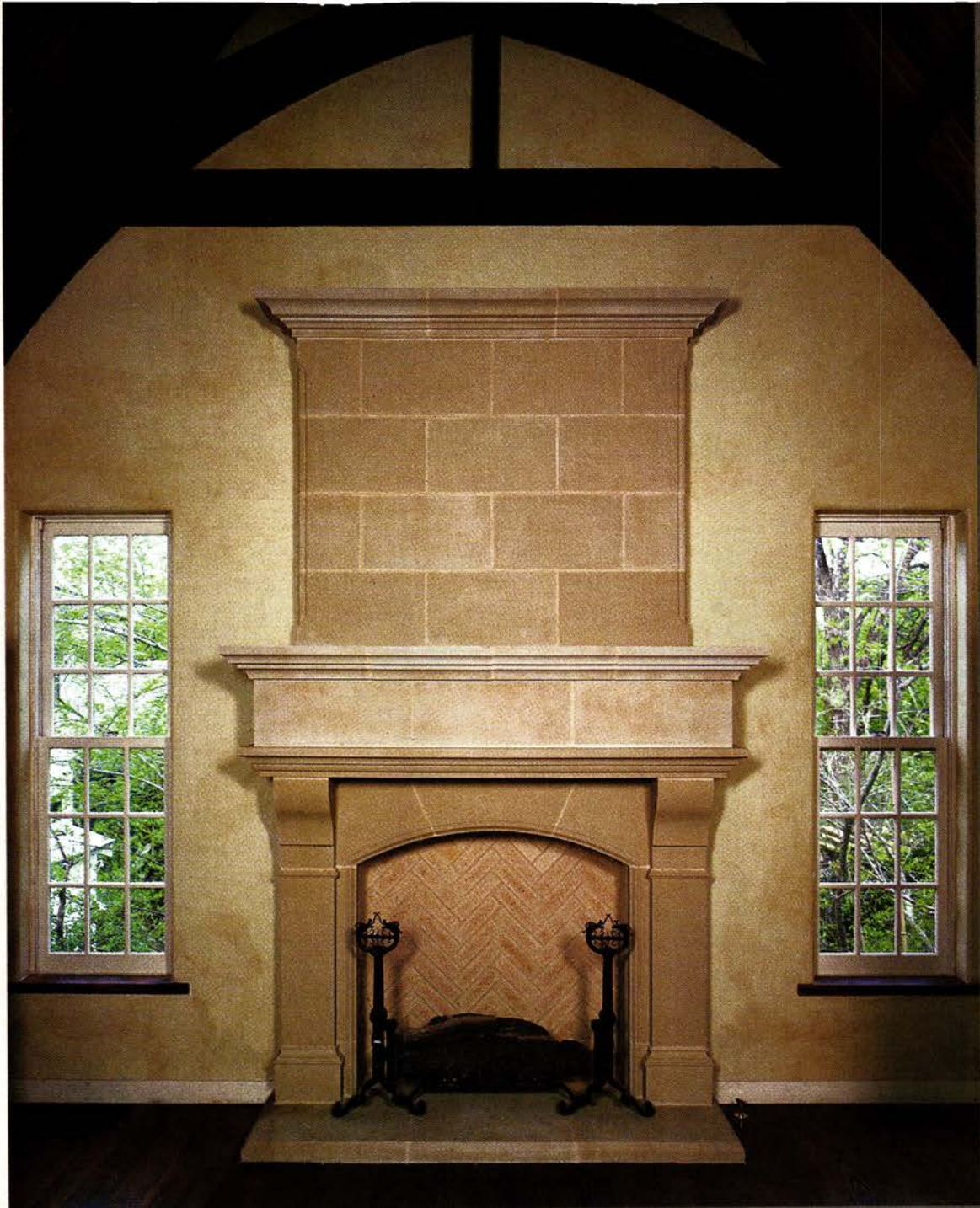
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—page 62



March/April 2001

"This beautiful example of high-quality stone masonry formed part of the foundation of chimney, bake oven, and another hearth overhead, as well as the corner of the building."

—page 56



"Reputable reglazing dealers will often guarantee their work for five years, and with proper care, they say, a well-done job can last a decade or more."

—page 52

Waterworks

A LOOK AT FAUCETS
AND SHOWERS
IN HISTORIC
BATHROOMS

By Gordon Bock

WERE THERE BATHROOMS before there was plumbing? Maybe in the marble and tile caldariums of ancient Rome, but probably not in North America. Though folks have been washing and bathing in and out of houses for centuries, it took the increased availability of piped-in water after 1850 to tether bathtubs and wash basins—formerly portable pieces of furniture—to a fixed location: the bathroom. Faucets, spigots, valves, and their newer cousins, showers, are the working hearts of the modern bathroom and have evolved stylistically and mechanically along with the fixtures they service. Nonetheless, there isn't a lot in print on how these devices have changed. To help fill the gap, here's a quick stylistic rundown of key faucet and fixture landmarks from the 1880s to the 1930s for anyone interested in fitting out their old-house bathroom in step with its era.





When it was remodeled in 1898, the master bathroom of the Haas-Lillenthal House in San Francisco represented the latest in sanitary fixtures and conveniences, including a porcelain lavatory with combination faucets, a shower over the tub, and even a built-in shampoo dispenser.

Photo: Doug Keister

This bathroom shows the mix of ideas and equipment common just after 1900. The marble slab lavatory is a high-end model with marble aprons, nickel compression faucets, and open plumbing below the basin. Note the combination fixture on the tub, but not on the lavatory.

Levers and Handles

THOUGH EARLY PLUMBINGWARE engineers devised many ingenious types of cocks and spigots, such as Doherty self-closing faucets, generally the residential plumbing world before 1930 falls into two camps: those operated with levers and those with cross handles. Assumptions about old houses are always prone to exceptions, but generally lever-handled faucets are among the earliest types and very common right up to the end of the 19th century because they are practical for Fuller ball valves, one of the earliest popular designs (see sidebar page 49). Fuller-style levers are commonly the same metal or plating as the faucet body, but high-end models were also made with decorative inserts, such as ebony or porcelain. Levers lived on after the heyday of the Fuller ball valve in metal or even crystal versions for compression faucets.

Cross handles are by nature associated with compression valves, and appear more regularly from the 1890s on. This decade saw great mechanical improvements in plumbing equipment and fixture manufacturing, coupled with the growing popularity of bathrooms in general. Enclosed cabinetwork around lavatories and tubs started to disappear in favor of exposed or "open" plumbing that was more attractive through the use of brass piping and decorative fittings, as well as less prone to leaks. The typical cross-handle valve had four arms on the cross, but there was also a fashion for a five-arm "star" version, es-

pecially for fancy faucets.

Incidentally, one of the longest running designs for a lavatory was simply a slab of marble cut with an oval hole to accept a porcelain or enameled iron bowl fitted from below. These lavatories were typically equipped with a pair of faucets with individual discharges—Fuller ball types at first, then cross-handled compression faucets. This basic lavatory appeared in the 1880s atop cabinets similar to washstands. By 1910 it was still common but now supported on wall-hung iron brackets to elim-

inate any dark, damp spaces that might breed unsanitary microbes.

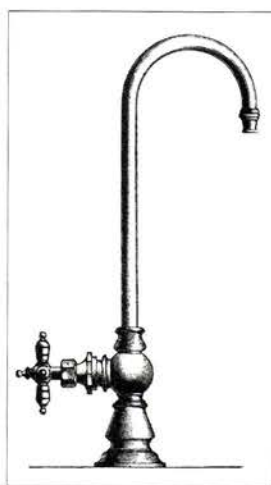
Metals and Finishes

WHILE MUCH SUPPLY and waste plumbing well into this century was made with iron and lead ("plumbing" stems from plumbum, Latin for lead) the mechanical requirements of water controls have always favored brass and bronze. Naked brass appeared as a faucet finish throughout the 19th century and into the 1910s, especially for economical fixtures. Durable as it is, though,

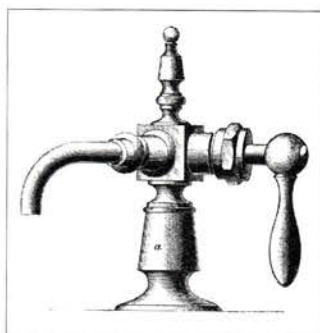




Photos: Doug Keister



Swan's neck tubes (above) date to the 1880s and earlier. In this pre-sanitary era, bathrooms were commonly finished in varnished woods (left) rather than tile.



Fuller ball valves (above) were always lever handled. They appear in plain brass on this Victorian closed-plumbing lavatory (left).

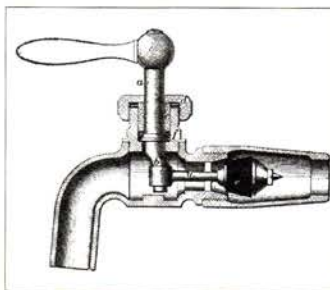
brass takes constant maintenance to stay shiny, especially around water, and plated finishes became the next logical improvement. Nickel in both polished and brushed forms was the metal for bright work in stoves and bathrooms alike, and it was a regular option for faucets from the 1880s into the 1930s.

As new understanding of germs and disease gave rise to the Sanitary Movement around 1900, manufacturers joined the crusade for cleanliness with advances in porcelain-enameled iron bathtubs and sinks—

all antiseptically white, of course. Porcelain faucet handles fit hand-in-glove, so to speak, with this new look, and were most often seen in four-arm cross handles. Chromium, the ubiquitous shiny metal of today, did not come into wide use until 1930, but when it did nickel quickly became passé. Shortly thereafter, chrome plating was joined in catalogs by gold-plated and even silver-plated faucets, all intended to complement the new explosion of colors that by then had taken over bathroom fixtures and tiled surfaces both.

Faucet Fundamentals

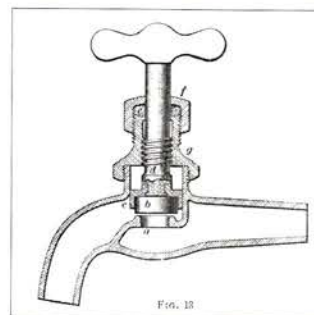
No less than now, the mechanical design that allowed a faucet (also called a cock or bibb) to function a century ago had a strong influence on its form.



FULLER BALL VALVE

Fuller ball valves—Fuller valves became one of the first widely popular faucets for residential sinks because the valve was a relatively simple mechanism to manufacture. In this design, the lever handle is attached to a stem that is bent in an offset similar to a small crankshaft. By rotating the lever, the user moves a conical soft-rubber disc either against or away from a metal seat, thereby controlling the water. The Fuller valve was quickacting, taking only a half-turn flip of the lever to close or open. Nonetheless, Fuller valves started to die out in the 1920s because the rubber ball needed regular maintenance and water flow was hard to regulate.

Compression valves—Always more sophisticated than Fuller valves, compression valves were in use by the 1890s and common a decade later. In the compression valve, the cross (or sometimes lever) handle controls a stem that threads down into the valve body. Rotating the stem two or so turns then moves a hard-rubber disc against a metal seat, closing off an orifice in the valve body and thereby controlling the flow of water. Designed



COMPRESSION VALVE

for frequent use and variable water flow, the basic compression valve remains the nearly universal faucet type in houses today.

Typical for the 1920s, this pedestal lavatory features dual compression faucets with plated cross handles. Its gently curving all-porcelain, all-white surfaces are meant to be easily cleaned and therefore hygienic.

Combination Faucets and Controls

IT'S SURPRISING TO THINK about today, but historic bathrooms clearly show that combination faucets that merge hot water and cold water valves into a single casting (or at least a central discharge) were all but non-existent in residential lavatories until the 1920s. However, this was not due to any difficulty in making such a fitting. Simple Fuller ball combination faucets that mixed the two water temperatures were common on bathtubs by the 1890s. Moreover, sophisticated versions for specialized uses, such as shampoo basins, were on the market in 1900. The reasons for this reluctance are obscure, but literature suggests that even at the dawn of the 20th century most bathers still filled their sinks like bowls to shave or wash, rather than letting the tap run. Nonetheless, by the 1930s the two-faucet lavatory appears in only the smallest or most utilitarian models, and mixers were everywhere.

Showers follow a similar but more understandable history. Cage showers and needle baths, among the earliest shower-like contraptions, started to appear in the late 1890s. These were actually intended for invigorating health treatments, rather than mere daily cleansing, and scientific modulating of water temperature (not to mention pressure and location) was an important concern. With this end in mind, these showers were often fed by a large metal mixing chamber designed to improve the blending of hot and cold water con-

trolled by two or more compression valves.

After World War I, the residential shower quickly took on a more familiar form, especially when combined with a built-in bathtub in the standard 5'-wide bathroom of the 1920s. These showers were typically controlled by a pair of cross-handled valves separate from the pair servicing the tub. An alternate approach that slightly reduced the number of controls was to install lever-handled equipment that could switch the water from tub to shower. Taking this idea a step further, manufacturers debuted

the first generation of single-handle shower controls in the mid-1920s. By rotating a large lever, these devices controlled both hot and cold water with a single valve.

Showers and Discharge Tubes

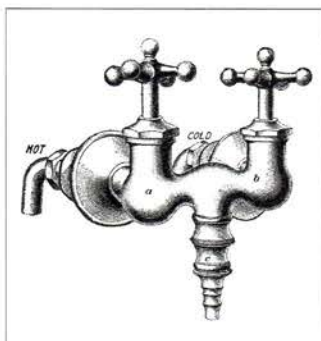
SPEAKING OF SHOWERS, the heads or sprays that discharge the water went through their own metamorphosis. Among the non-therapeutic types used for bathing at the turn of the century were "rain shower" heads. These sizeable spun metal fittings incorpo-



Photo: Brian Vanden Brink



Photo: Ken Druse

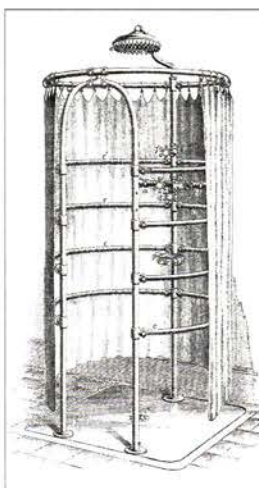


After 1930, porcelain came in colors (above) and lavatories suddenly sprouted combination faucets. Oddly, the combination bathtub tap (left) had already been a workhorse for a half-century.

rated a perforated disc several inches in diameter that was designed to release large droplets of water that simulated rain. Regular shower heads were even larger and often decorated with pierced metal bands and spiraled supply pipes. By the mid-1920s, shower heads had become smaller, smoother, and more utilitarian in appearance, much the same as the bathrooms they inhabited.

Popular today due to their graceful period charm and straightforward practicality, gooseneck or swan's neck discharge tubes date to the earliest days of residen-

Cage showers (below), which blasted bathers in jets of water, ran their course from 1900 to 1918.



tial plumbing. The height and generous spread of the tubes (6" and 8" are common dimensions) are designed to allow the user to place large objects under the spout. They were common in butler's pantries and kitchens for filling and washing pots, but also found their way onto bathtubs and lavatories for washing hair, especially when fitted with a flexible spray head.

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New Life for Old Tubs

A Buyer's Guide to
Bathroom Fixture Refinishing

By Kathleen Fisher

Photo Brian Vanden Brink; Stephen Blatt Architects



Photos Charles Steck

Jim Crowe takes the first steps: removing fittings (right), paint (bottom left), and rust (top left).

Ahhh, there's nothing more relaxing than a long soak in a big clawfoot tub. But sometimes no matter how much bubblebath we dump in, the sensual pleasure is dampened (so to speak) by chips and stains on what should be smooth-as-silk, snowy white porcelain enamel.

If you've ever mused about having a classic bathtub or sink refinished you may have heard horror stories. Maybe a friend's new finish peeled after only a few months. Maybe it turned as yellow as old floor wax. The culprit may have been an epoxy paint kit from the hardware store, costing less than \$20 and slapped on in an afternoon by a do-it-yourselfer.

Painting something born to hold water does seem an iffy proposition. Yet putting a new porcelain skin on your cast-iron fixtures requires firing them in an oven, a large-scale industrial operation too cost-prohibitive for individual tubs.

Fortunately there's a middle ground: professional reglazing with a two-part urethane enamel, consisting of a resin and catalyst. It's still paint and it will cost more than pocket change. But reputable dealers (who all use some brand of this same prod-

uct) will often guarantee their work for five years, and with proper care, they say, a well-done job can last a decade or more. You may be able to get a recommendation from a friend. If not, here are some questions to ask when you let your fingers do the walking.

In My Home or In Your Shop?

Most refinishers prefer to do the work in your home. But if you've found a salvaged tub that you plan to install, you're likely to get a better job done in the contractors' shop—assuming you have a way to get your tub there. An unattached tub can be painted both inside and out, and the refinishers can take their time and do a more careful job.

What Steps Do You Take Before You Paint? After removing fittings, refinishers clean off soap scum with a razor blade and solvent. Then they tackle any old paint with a scraper blade and a chemical stripper similar to the kind used on



furniture. The stripper also loosens rust, which is more thoroughly dispatched with a grinder.

Next comes a crucial step: etching the inside of the tub with hydrofluoric acid, which sets up a surface that allows the paint to bond to the porcelain. "If you look at the porcelain under a microscope, it looks like a mountain range," says Charles Wachter, who has been resurfacing tubs and other fixtures in the Washington, D.C., area for almost 40 years. Wachter says that in his shop, preparing the surface of a particularly paint-splattered or roughed-up tub may take up to six hours, while the spray painting itself can be done in just over an hour. Before the paint goes on, the refinishers have to repair any dents or dings, a process similar to the one used to repair car bodies.

Refinishers can usually arrange to have paint custom mixed for you to match fabric or other fixtures. Wachter's red lavatory is a conversation piece at home shows.



Charles Steck

After sanding to set up adhesion, they fill small nicks with plastic filler and bigger gouges with fiberglass topped with plastic. The fiberglass is stronger, but harder to sand down.

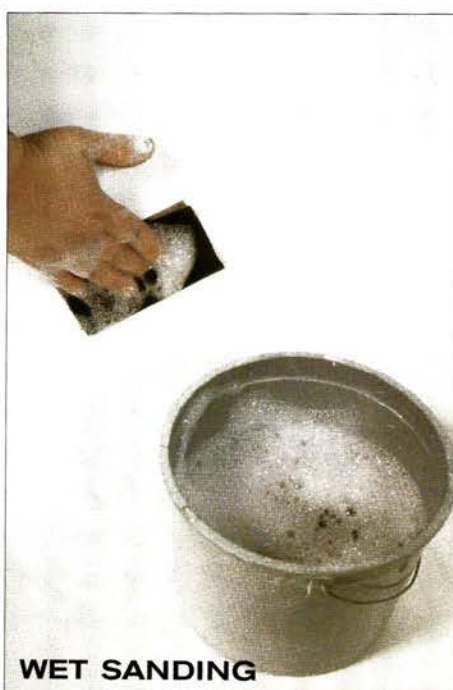
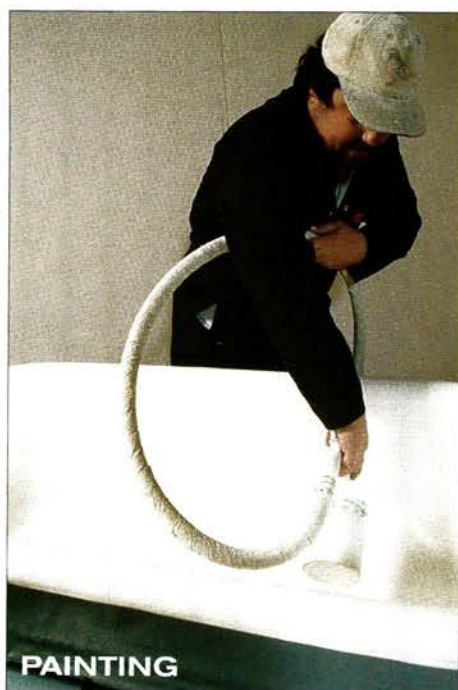
How Much Will It Cost? Wachter charges \$475 to paint the average clawfoot tub—the fancy feet pull off easily and are sprayed several at a time—and \$275 for a sink. That's in his shop. If his painter comes to your home he can only paint the inside of your tub, which will set you back \$350—well under the cost of a reproduction clawfoot (see sidebar).

How Long Will You Spend on the Painting? After the filler is sanded, the tub is ready for painting. Wachter's refinisher Jim Crowe gives fixtures four to five coats, pausing about 15 minutes between coats,

striving for a 4-mil dry-film thickness. Once the paint dries—it takes 24 to 48 hours depending on the weather, although some refinishers speed the process along with a heat lamp—he wet-sands the tub, finishing with 1200-grit sandpaper and a rubbing compound that gives fixtures an almost mirrorlike finish. (Your tub won't get the extra beauty treatment if it's refinished in situ.)

What Colors Can I Get? Although white tubs are in the majority, Wachter's wife, Alice, can custom mix any color (although they prefer not to take on metallic coatings) to match fabric, tile, or wallpaper. A fire-engine-red pedestal sink reglazed several years ago is always a big hit at home shows. In addition to tubs and sinks, Wachter's company has reglazed stove tops and even a barber chair.

What Care Will My Tub Need? Refinished tubs don't exactly need to be babied, but they can't be cleaned with abrasive scouring powders. "You should never use them anyway," says Wachter. "If no one had ever used them, I probably wouldn't have any tubs to refinish. And you shouldn't hang a wet washcloth over the edge of the tub and



leave it there. I tell people the tub needs to breathe. That usually helps them remember."

How Long Will It Last? Wachter says one customer's finish has lasted 16 years, although eight to 10 is more typical. Eventually it's going to peel somewhere and once it begins to get water under the surface of the polyurethane, failure is rapid.

What Is Your Track Record? Porcelite, Wachter's company, isn't part of a franchise although there are several around the country. More important than the brand name is whether painters have been properly trained and whether the company stands behind its work. Just as with any contractor, find out how long the business has been in the same location and get references—preferably someone who's had their tub reglazed several years ago, not just last week.

Ideally, you'll find that special someone who can give your old tub a skin you'll want against your own.

Thanks to Charles Wachter and Jim Crowe at Porcelite (10350 Southard Road, Beltsville, MD 20705, (301)595-9131) for all their time and help, and to Ron Allan and the folks at Washington, D.C.'s Brass Knob for the "model" bathtubs.

ENAMEL MAGNETISM

If you opt for a reproduction clawfoot tub you'll pay a lot more than you would for reglazing (they start around \$1,500), but you'll have several advantages. Not only can you have modern touches like a whirlpool (for about \$3,000), but you'll get a finish that will probably look new for 20 years and possibly longer.

The reason is that the finish is not paint but porcelain enamel, basically the same material that was put on your old tub when it was created 80 or more years ago. Porcelain enamel is also called vitreous enamel because it's essentially glass, not quite as hard as pure silica. The material is resistant not only to scratches but alkalinity and acidity that might be in your water or bathroom chemicals.

A production team at the Kohler Company, which has been making tubs, sinks, and similar products for more than 120 years, explained how the process works there.

After the iron tubs are cast, unmolded, and cleaned up, they're given a base coat of enamel at ambient indoor temperature. Then things get hot. Coated with powdered enamel, the tubs get an extended preheat to 1700 degrees until the enamel virtually melts in. Then they're allowed to cool down and the process is repeated two or three more times, more quickly, in "melt ovens." The thickness of the coating ranges from 35 to 60 mils (thousandths of an inch). The porcelain doesn't need any sanding or buffing because this heating-cooling process leaves it as slick as an ice cube. Then they get a nonslip coating and they're out the door. The process is completely automated for high-volume models, but more elaborate high-end styles such as clawfoot tubs are enameled manually by a two-person crew.

On one thing both reglazers and tub manufacturers agree: Your finish will last longer if you avoid abrasive cleansers. "Some cleansers left on wet actually tend to attack the surface," says Rick Bell, general supervisor of Kohler's automated tub line. "Scouring pads literally grind the surface off."



Kohler workers sift powdered enamel onto a super-heated cast-iron tub prior to refiring it.

Courtesy Kohler



Located in western Maryland, the Rohrbach house is a prosperous farmer's residence that gained its present form in the 1850s with weatherboard siding, refined door and window mouldings, and three elegant porches.

A variety of materials and methods work together in the structural repair of an 1850s building.

Skilled Fixes *for*

*By Gordon Bock
and Douglass C. Reed*

PHOTOS BY BRIAN MCNEILL

HOUSES FROM THE 1850S represent an interesting era of buildings. Not only were they built across the full expanse of North America, but they often bridge a variety of styles and technologies, making them a challenge to restore. Because they are neither totally handmade, nor completely the products of steam-powered sawmills and millworks, they require a mixed bag of techniques and approaches, especially for addressing the realities of time, money, and modern lifestyles.

This is certainly the case for the Noah Rohrbach House. Though the house appears from the road to be stud-frame construction, it is actually a log

house held up by immense oak timbers hand mortise-and-tenoned together in a heavy skeleton (see sidebar on page 48). Moreover, this log skeleton is actually recycled and relocated from a much earlier structure. Clearly the complex mix of skills and techniques needed to repair such a building required the experience of specialists in the restoration of log houses, such as the folks at Preservation Associates, Inc. When we caught up with Douglass Reed and his crew on a frosty day last December, we got a quick education in several restoration methods they are using—both traditional and state of the art—that can be applied to solve a variety of problems in many 19th century houses.



Left: Stripped of its failed plaster, an upstairs bedroom lucidly reveals the skeleton of the Rohrbach House: massive horizontal oak logs joined at the corners in vertical posts. Doug Reed points to vestigial joist pockets, evidence of an earlier use for the timber. Below: Notches such as these once held wall studs in a 1770s structure. The studs had beveled ends, like the scrap in Doug's hand so, in vertical position, they could drain off any collected moisture.



a Log House

A Surprising House

WHAT MAKES THE NOAH ROHRBACH HOUSE such an interesting and challenging building is its surprising history and construction. Located within the environs of the Antietam National Battlefield, the house was already a fixture in the valley when Gen. George Mead stayed there in the 1860s. Studies of the building hardware, such as the bevel-sided, cast-iron rim locks, suggested a date of about 1850 for the current appearance. However, once the failing plaster was removed indoors, the wall revealed a remarkable earlier life. Inspection of the 12"-thick walls showed the skeleton to be vertical-post log construction, a

system where the horizontal logs are let into posts at corners and intermediate points in the wall, rather than, say, lapped with notches. This sophisticated system, which uses carefully constructed mortise-and-tenon joints, was common from the 1820s to the 1860s and represents some 5% of the log houses built in western Maryland.

What is even more unusual about the house is that there is no evidence of chinking or daubing in the spaces between logs. Typically, the timbers for a log house were cut, shaped, and erected while the logs were green, and the spaces between them filled with chinking of wood, stones, or mortar. Then, as the logs dried to their final



What is a Log House?

THE TERM LOG HOUSE defines a specific set of buildings. Generally, log buildings—houses, cabins, and farm buildings alike—are structures built of horizontally laid logs linked at the corners to form a crib, the basic room unit. What separates a log house from a log cabin? By most definitions, the size and refinement of the building. Log cabins are typically no more than 20' on a side—the optimum length of felled timber—and a maximum of 1 to 1-½ storeys.

In contrast, log houses are generally structures in excess of 20' long on one side; log houses can even approach the size of mansions. Another difference is the logs are hewn flat on opposite sides, typically to accept plaster walls inside, clapboard or similar cladding on the exterior. Log houses are also much more refined in terms of the architectural details, such as mouldings, doors, and plasterwork.



Photo: James C. Massey

The Barnett Bobb log house in York, Pa. is chinked and daubed but unsided.



Far left: Epoxy consolidants helped save some of the upper log tenons; an armature of modern 2x8 lumber now carries the loads for the termite-ridden corner post. Left: Bolting up a sill from lengths of pressure-treated lumber allowed the crew to remove and replace the old sill a section at a time without jacking the house. The vertical battens nailed to the logs carry the siding.

dimensions over about two years, they shrank slightly, compressing the chinking. It was only after the frame had reached this stable dimension that the builders could add interior plaster and exterior siding. Since the Rohrbach House never had chinking, the logical conclusion is that builders applied the plaster and siding as soon as the frame was complete because the frame was already stable. Moreover, it was stable because it was fully dried, and it was dried, because these immense logs had been recycled from an earlier structure—judging by the evidence, an 18th-century log house.

Tackling Termites

GIVEN THE LOG CONSTRUCTION of the Rohrbach House and its unique history, one of the challenges the project presented was how to repair parts of the timber frame without removing large sections of the basically sound exterior cladding. And repairs were indeed required. Though the house had been occupied up to the 1970s, since then termites had established major colonies in four areas of the house leading to severe damage to two vertical corner posts and two sets of foundation sills. To correct these conditions, the crew turned to modern materials and techniques.

The massive post in the northwest corner is a good example of one set of techniques. Since replacing this key member with a new piece of timber would have meant disturbing all of the framing connected to it, as well as peeling off exterior siding, the crew decided to leave the post in place, but relieve it of its job. To do this, they added sections of 2x8 lumber on two inside faces

of the post in such a way that it took over the load-bearing work. Where the tenons of the mating horizontal logs were in good condition, they supported them with 2' sections of lumber that, when stacked one over another, carried the loads of the corner down to the foundation. Where the horizontal timbers and tenons were in bad shape, they either reinforced them with epoxy consolidants or, in cases too far gone to revive, replaced them with a built-up assembly of 2x lumber. Doug and his crew use modern pressure-treated structural lumber for this kind of repair but, surprisingly, not primarily for its rot-resistant qualities. Pressure-treated lumber is made from southern yellow pine—one of the strongest, densest woods—and is a good choice for the structural needs of this relatively heavy, nearly three-storey house.

Modern pressure-treated lumber was also the material of choice for repairing the foundation sills on the southeast corner of the building. As is a common scenario with old houses, sections of original solid-timber sills supporting the Rohrbach House had to be completely replaced. While it was relatively easy, and minimally intrusive, to remove a few courses of the horizontal lapped siding to expose the sills, jacking up the walls to remove the deteriorated sill and introduce a new solid timber was not a good option for this log-frame building. Instead, Doug and his crew chose to build up a new sill by laminating several lengths of 2x pressure-treated lumber laid up on edge (see photo above). Using this method allowed them to remove and replace the old material a section at a time, without the

work and disruption of temporarily supporting large sections of the house.

Once the four or five plies of 2x are in place, they are bolted, rather than nailed, together to form an integral member. With built-up beams and sills alike, the positioning of these bolts is important. They are located in the middle $\frac{1}{3}$ of the planks—or about 3" in from the edges of a 2x8—and spaced roughly 18" apart in a staggered pattern. Such a pattern keeps the bolt holes out of the areas of the boards that do the load-carrying work of being in tension and compression, and the staggering reduces the chances of in-line bolts that might cause the wood to split.

Timber Hewing

MODERN DIMENSIONAL LUMBER worked fine for repairs in complicated and ultimately hidden areas of the house, but it did not present an option for an important historic and structural feature: the immense open cooking fireplace in the walk-out basement kitchen. This beautiful example of high-quality stone masonry formed part of the foundation of chimney, bake oven, and another hearth overhead, as well as the corner of the building. Unfortunately the same colony of termites that attacked the corner post had decimated the fireplace support structure as well, turning an 8'-long oak lintel over the hearth to a crumbling shell of wood dust.

Replacing the lintel in kind with another piece of solid oak was the only option, not only for historical authenticity, but because this member was also beveled on its hidden side to form the throat of the flue. To make such a replacement, Doug turned to the traditional skills of hewing timber by hand.

Hewing is the process of turning raw timber—the felled trunk of a tree—into large building members of regular dimensions that can be used for posts, sills, and beams. Timber hewing is a centuries-old technique that remained in use well into the era of water- and steam-powered sawmills. Even though shaping one or two sides of a 20' tree with an axe is time-consuming and labor-intensive, for decades it was still less complicated than transporting a tree (usually cut not



The first step in hewing one end of the massive lintel—some 600 pounds of green oak—is to snap a blue chalk line across the top to establish the new dimension.



Next, standing on top of the timber, Doug swiftly scores the oak every 4" using the felling axe. Each kerf cuts no deeper than the chalk line dimension.



Switching to the broad axe, Doug hews away the kerfed oak to a square, smooth face. The offset handle of the axe allows him to work down the timber without hitting his knuckles.



After the lintel is shaped, the crew seals the ends with melted wax so the oak dries slowly and with a minimum of checks and splits.



Inventor Doug Palmer holds a sample of Air Krete—dyed blue for quality control—showing how it will appear in the log walls.



Screening will hold the Air Krete in place with 3" of clearance until it solidifies.

Inventive Insulation

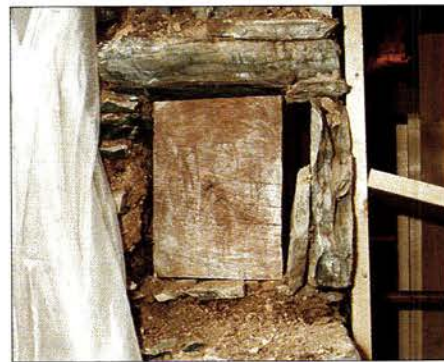
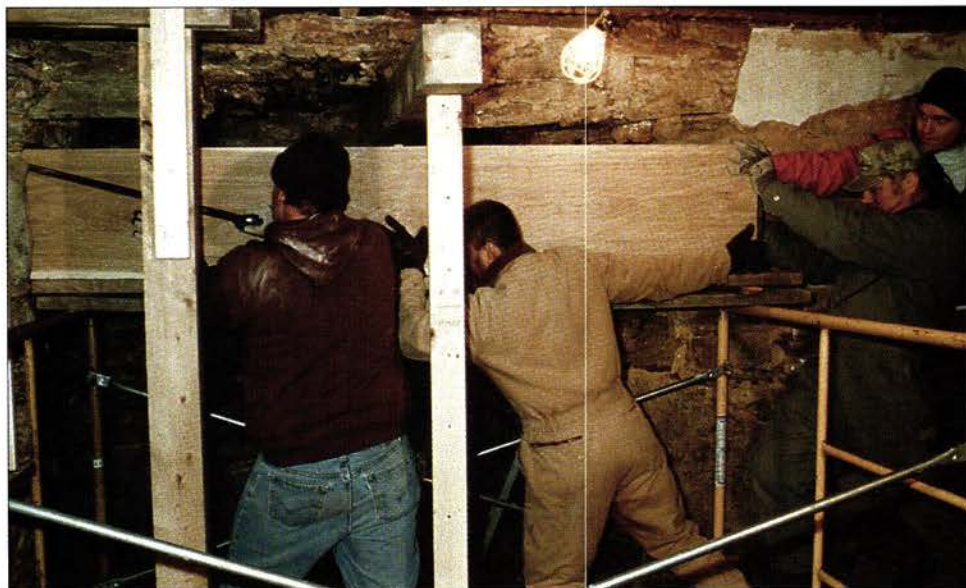
SINCE THE ROHRBACH HOUSE will be a year-round residence, one of questions became how to best insulate the deep, irregular voids in the log walls. The answer in this case was to use Air Krete, a lightweight cementitious foam insulation with unique thermal and environmental properties. To install Air Krete on this project, the crew staples fiberglass screen about midway across the 7"-thick logs, leaving a 3" space between the screen and the interior finish for moisture movement (see photo). Next, the installer fills the void with a mixture of cementitious base, microscopic hollow cells, and blue coloring (for quality control) by pumping right through the screen. When cured, the Air Krete will form a 4"-thick section of insulation with a thermal resistance of up to R-4 an inch without any gaps among all the irregular surfaces of the logs. For more information on Air Krete, contact Palmer Industries Inc. (10611 Old Annapolis Rd., Frederick, MD 21701; 301-898-7848; www.palmerindustriesinc.com).

far from the building site) to a sawmill, and then back to the building site.

The steps and tools Doug uses to shape the lintel are the same ones used by the carpenters who hewed out the leviathan oak logs holding up the Rohrbach House. Starting with a freshly cut green log, Doug and his men measure off the dimensions of the face to be hewn by snapping off a chalk line (see page 49). Next, Doug takes a pole axe with a straight handle about 30" long (also called a felling axe), and mounts the top of the timber. Swinging the axe with the experience to control both the position and depth of the cuts, he scores the log in vertical lines, 3" to 4" apart. In a freshly felled log, these lines, known as kerfs, chip off most of the

rounded portion of the log, leaving a rough but clearly flatter surface still showing score marks.

Once Doug has scored the entire side of the timber, he switches positions and tools. The broad axe he picks up is a tool with a large head and blade (9" to 13" long) but a comparatively short handle (around 24" long). Moreover, the handle is bent where it comes out of the eye of the axe head, so the end of the handle is 3" to 4" offset from the blade. This allows users to avoid injuring their hands as they hew the timber. Moving aside the lintel, Doug works his way down the oak timber with the broad axe, hewing the rough side into a smooth flat surface while keeping it as vertical as possible. Here is where the skills of a good timber hewer reveal



Top: Inside the basement, the crew slides the new lintel in place over the hearth using levers and muscle. Left: Outdoors, a swing with a sledhammer sets the lintel in place. Above: The end in its new home.

themselves. The final surface shows none of the earlier scoring cuts, because they were all made at a regular depth.

The last step for preparing the lintel is sealing the ends of the green log with wax. Doug and his crew use this step to slow down the drying of the timber so that it cures with a minimum of checks and splits. Contrary to popular belief, large timbers for barns, sills, and log houses were always hewn green, then allowed to dry out once assembled. It is much easier to shape green timber with axes and saws. Also, structural connections such as mortise-and-tenon joints were often designed so that they became tighter as the wood shrank.

Varied Techniques

AS DOUG REED AND HIS crew address the other structural repairs in the Rohrbach House, they continue with this same blend of traditional materials and methods augmented by state-of-the-art preservation techniques. A good example is the rebuilding of two of the porches. The graceful elevated front porch that spans the full width of the house was still largely intact, due in part to the careful water-shedding designs and meticulous pegged joints employed by the original builders. To rebuild a failing corner on the northeast end, the crew spliced in replacement joists of oak, using the same mortise-and-tenon joinery that had proved successful since 1850. On the back porch, however, where the framing would be completely new and hidden, they chose modern lumber. Even here though, longevity is in the details. Rather than simply spiking the 2x8s together face-to-face, Doug and his men took time to separate the planks with thin strips that create an exit path for any water or moisture that may come between the boards—because in a porch it inevitably will. It is just this kind of attention to detail that will keep this unique house standing well into the 22nd century. 🏠

Special thanks to Douglass C. Reed, Historic Structures Consultant, and the folks at Preservation Associates, Inc. (449 N. Prospect St., Hagerstown, MD 21740; 301-791-7880).



Above: The crew carefully dismantles part of the cooking hearth for later rebuilding. Each stone is carefully numbered and laid out in order of assembly.



Left: Front porch framing replicates the mortised-and-tenoned oak framing. Above: On the back porch, the crew separates joists and trim boards with strips to promote breathing.

Here Drums the Sun

Those radiant beams are silently
beating up your furnishings.

By Susan Maltby



Amount of fading varies with fabric and dye. After three months of exposure, the bottom swatches at right are showing their inferior color retention.

CONTROLLING LIGHT is an old issue with houses. Historically, builders went to great lengths to bring natural light into a house, particularly prior to the advent of electric lighting. On the other hand, homeowners have always understood the need to protect the house and its contents from the sun's damaging rays. Shutters, awnings, and deep porches are but a few of the architectural features used in the past to control light. Today these low-tech methods are still appropriate for old houses, but we can also take advantage of some high-tech materials and approaches.

Light and Damage

LIGHT CAN CAUSE materials to fade, discolor, and literally fall apart. Light damage is most obvious with textiles, such as upholstery and carpets, but it can also fade wallpaper, photographs, and artwork, such as paintings and posters. On furniture and built-ins it can harm finishes, such as varnishes and paints, and degrade unpainted wood.

Dermatologists warn us to cover up outdoors and wear sunblock to filter out the ultra-

violet (UV) component of the sun's rays. UV radiation degrades materials by attacking their molecular structure, and this is equally true for your skin and the materials in your home. UV is highly energetic and a little exposure to it can do a lot of damage. Visible light also causes damage, but at a slower rate. Infrared radiation causes mechanical and chemical changes, making organic materials (wood, leather, and paper) dry and brittle. It's important to remember that there is no level below which light is inactive and that light damage is cumulative and permanent. Maintaining light-sensitive materials in low light will slow their degradation but not stop it.

Traditional Protection

FOR HUNDREDS OF years, homeowners added internal or external shutters to block the sun (as well as wind, rain, and prying eyes). About a century ago, manufacturers developed lightweight steel-pipe frames that made awnings popular for keeping sunlight out of buildings. Draperies and blinds serve a similar purpose and all, not coincidentally, help decorate the house. In *Successful Houses and How to Build*



Sunshine is a welcome sight, but it can damage wood as well as fabric.

Andy Olenick

Them (1912), architect Charles E. White wrote, "Awnings add a pretty touch of color to houses in the summer-time. They add quite a festive appearance and are, besides, useful in making rooms cooler during hot days."

Most of us know well that we'll extend the life of wood outdoors by keeping it painted. Paint protects wood from deterioration by helping it shed water and shielding it from the sun's rays. The pigments in paint not only add color, but also block and reflect light. (This is why varnish and other pigmentless, clear finishes only last a few years outdoors.) However, paint can also be adversely affected by light. Light causes the polymers that make up a paint coat to become brittle and break down. Paint manufacturers now engineer UV absorbers into their exterior-grade paint to extend its life and reduce maintenance.



Grace Davies

Energy-Absorbing Solutions

Many OHJ readers may remember the days when storefront windows, particularly those of clothing shops, were fitted with yellow plastic blinds. Shopkeepers would pull the blinds down at closing time to protect merchandise from the sun. The reason is, yellow absorbs UV light and these blinds were an early form of UV screening. (This is also why beer often comes in amber-colored bottles.)

In fact, common clear window glass alone will absorb much of the UV radiation from the sun, but not enough to prevent damage to interior surfaces. Today's low-E (low emissivity) windows, which some people install primarily to reduce heat loss, have a microscopically thin metallic layer that also absorbs UV light, possibly as much as 85 percent. Many of us prefer

not to replace our old windows, however, because we love the wavy glass, the divided sashes—or because new ones aren't in the budget. Fortunately, there's a much less expensive option: clear UV filtering products, which can increase UV absorption to 99 percent. These can be polyester plastic film, such as Mylar, or a rigid sheet made of acrylic (like Plexiglas) or polycarbonate.



Jonathan Wallen from *The Houses of McKim, Mead & White*/Rizzoli.

Heavy drapes and louvers will block sun, but they will also shut out the view. Sheer curtains are a translucent compromise.

Plastic films are commonly adhered directly to the window. They aren't appropriate for all windows, particularly very old glass. Eventually they need replacing, and must be removed using solvents and elbow grease. The process can break or scratch old glass, and the solvents can damage paint or finishes. You can also buy the films incorporated into roller blinds, though, and the rigid plastic sheets attach to the inside of the window or hang in front of it.

The products all work by absorbing UV. Manufacturers may incorporate the absorber into the adhesive, build it into the plastic, or apply it to the surface of the plastic. The physics behind light waves is complicated (see sidebar next page). In essence though, visible light waves striking a pane of glass set up a chain of both absorptions and re-emissions. UV (and infrared) waves vibrate atoms or even molecules in the material, increasing internal energy and heat, but pass through much less readily. Films extend the range of wavelengths that are absorbed. The process of absorbing UV makes films yellow over time. Like those early storefront blinds they're better absorbers as a result, but they soon begin to crack, allowing UV to leak through.

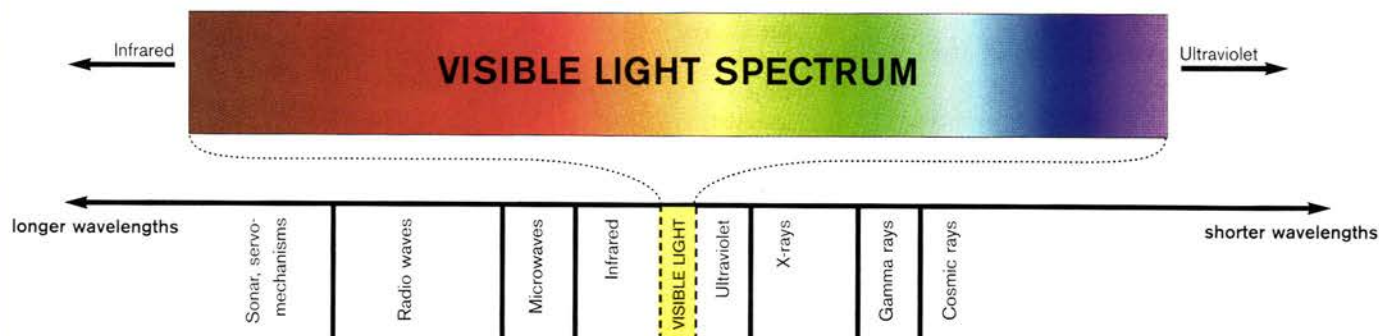
These products only eliminate the UV portion of the spectrum. To eliminate UV *and* reduce visible and infrared radiation, you must consider a solar film. These films are tinted and/or have a metallic mirrored surface, a look that can change the character of a house. Obtain samples from the manufacturer first. You



Courtesy Vista Window Film

Top: Exterior shutters and awnings are a time-honored means of blocking sunlight. **Above:** Modern UV films are best applied by professionals, especially to large expanses of glass.

MEASURING LIGHT



Put simply, light is energy that we describe in terms of wavelengths (most commonly measured in nanometers). Light is part of an electromagnetic radiation spectrum that ranges from X-rays at the lower end to radio waves and microwaves at the upper end. Ultraviolet (UV), visible, and infrared are the three components of the light spectrum that affect your house and its furnishings.

The visible component of the spectrum contains the colors of the rainbow—violet, blue, green, yellow, orange and red. As the term implies, the naked human eye can see light within this range (400-700 nanometers). UV light (300-400 nanometers) is invisible to us and doesn't affect how we discern color. Infrared (that is, beyond red) radiation (700-2,200 nanometers) is also invisible and is absorbed as heat.

Light intensity is expressed in either "footcandles" or "lux." Footcandle is a term most commonly used in the United States and was originally defined as the amount of light falling on a surface 1' away from a candle. Canadians and Europeans tend to use lux to define light intensity. One footcandle is 10.76 lux; for convenience we accept a one-to-10 ratio. Three footcandles, or 30 lux, is the minimum light level at which we can discern color. Museum exhibits of light-sensitive material are often set at five footcandles, which is enough to see color but still seems dim to most people. Conservators and museum professionals measure UV radiation in microwatts per lumen (microlumens). They traditionally consider 75 microlumens—the amount of UV emitted by an incandescent bulb—to be a safe level but some now argue that UV levels should be considerably lower.

might decide that installing sheer drapes (an old-fashioned solar film) suits your old house far better.

It's recommended that a UV or solar film applied directly to your windows be professionally installed. Otherwise, many manufacturers and distributors won't stand behind their products. Some films carry guarantees for as long as 20 years. Read the fine print on care, since some films are easily scratched or lifted from the glass during cleaning. Others can be cleaned with ammonia-based products.

House museums are apt to have film on their windows, in addition to low-tech precautions like awnings, shutters, and drapes. While films won't protect your valuables from the long-term effects of visible light, they can greatly increase their longevity 🏠.

Susan Maltby is a Toronto-based conservator.



Thick-walled houses may have foldaway interior shutters, which can be quickly closed when sunlight is most direct and damaging.

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Dutch Colonial Revival

*A*s the popularity of the Colonial Revival movement expanded through the 1890s, designers began to sift the world of pre-Revolutionary houses not only for more interesting and accurate details but also for building traditions beyond the English-Georgian styles of the Massachusetts Bay Colony. By 1900, several East Coast architects had found a suitably attractive and distinctive model in the 17th- and 18th-century farm dwellings of the Hudson Valley—the Dutch Colonial house.

continued inside

Colonial Revival



WHILE THE DUTCH OF NEW AMSTERDAM built narrow brick houses with steep gable roofs and crow-stepped gable ends—the image of city houses back home—their kinsmen settling the farmlands of present-day New Jersey and eastern Long Island developed a style of building not seen in the Netherlands. The most notable example was a stocky, one-storey house distinguished by a gambrel roof with deep eaves, one that could be extended up front to form a Dutch stoop (covered porch).

Nearly two centuries later, the architectural possibilities of this delightfully flared double-pitch roof caught the eyes of designers creating upscale, but informal, country houses for the well-to-do of the early-20th century. Architects such as Aymar Embury II, Wilson Eyre, and Dwight James Baum, along with Charles Barton Keen and Myron Hunt, made Dutch Colonial houses a specialty, building various large, genteel examples in the fast-growing exurban regions of Philadelphia, New York City, and southern Connecticut.

Usually constructed of stone in the first storey and clapboard or shingles in the second, these houses typically featured one or more dormers in the roof—a device all but unheard of in the originals—and frequently a Colonial Revival-style porch off one gable end. If the centered, sidelighted front door did not fall under a deep front porch supported by plain, beefy columns, it was most likely set off with selected neo-Dutch details, such as a

hooded entryway roof or facing inglenook-style benches. Interiors could be minimally Colonial Revival or, in another eclectic design twist, vaguely English Arts & Crafts with flat mouldings and prominent tile work.

Even before World War I brought an end to the East Coast-based country colonial house and the affluent classes that supported it, the Dutch Colonial house was poised for broader appeal. Looking low and picturesque on the outside, but offering comfortable, efficient space indoors, the gambrel roof was a natural match with the new, smaller houses of the 1920s. Mail-order house plan catalogs, along with kit-house manufacturers and local carpenters, propagated the Dutch Colonial house coast-to-coast, albeit in forms removed once again from the originals. The builders-style Dutch Colonial house of the booming automobile-based suburbs had wood-frame construction. Exterior siding was frequently wide clapboards, wood shingles, or a combination of the two. Front and side porches were subject to sufficient lot and budget, but a single large shed dormer was now essential in order to maximize living space and create a full second storey. Though the signature gambrel roof—the essence of Dutchness—might be framed in a true double pitch, it was just as often nothing more than a clever bit of carpentry: a narrow, double-pitch outline applied to the sides of what was really a two-storey, gable-roofed building.

[1900-1945] Dutch Co



ROOSEVELT COTTAGE (1897)

CAMPOBELLO ISLAND.

Architect Willard Sears of Boston mixed Colonial Revival, Arts & Crafts, and early Dutch Colonial influences when he designed this large cross-gambrel roof house for the Kuhn family. Beautifully situated in Fundy Bay between Maine and New Brunswick, Canada, by 1914 it had become the idyllic summer retreat of Franklin Roosevelt and his relatives.



SPECIAL delivery

A post-office antique is reborn as a first-class, dining-room table.

Though this homeowner collects furniture with a passion, she tempers her zeal with a learned eye. When she came across this old post-office table, she knew it would be just perfect for her dining room. All that remained was to refinish the old workhorse to nicely complement the Dutch Colonial style of her home.

Stripping the old varnish with Formby's® Furniture Refinisher revealed a table made of two types of wood: The top had a veneer of makore, which resembles mahogany but radiates a rippled iridescence under a clear finish. The butternut skirt and legs were much lighter and had to be stained to match the makore. Not a problem. First the makore top received two coats of Minwax® Fast-Drying Polyurethane in a gloss sheen. The top then got a rubdown with cottonlike #0000 (very fine) steel wool to smooth

minuscule rough spots and to take down the gloss just a tad. Matching the butternut skirt and legs to the makore top proved easy with Minwax® Wood Finish™ Colonial Maple, which was followed with two coats of Minwax Fast-Drying Polyurethane in a gloss sheen for extra protection. Overall, the final topcoat provided a sheen just right for this beautiful, functional antique in its new Dutch Colonial home.



BASICS

3 Cures for Calcimine Ceilings

By Peter and Noelle Lord

PHOTOGRAPHY BY PETER LORD

IF PATCHES OF PEELING PAINT hang from your ceiling, or paint chips litter your floors, your old house's past probably includes calcimine paint. Since calcimine is essentially a water-based mixture of chalk and glue binder, in time any modern paint applied over a calcimine base will fail. There are no easy or quick-fix solutions to dealing with calcimine coatings. For any new paint to adhere in a smooth and long-lasting surface, you must remove as much of the calcimine as possible. Simply repainting the surface will not, unfortunately, make your problems go away. Here we'll describe the three procedures we prefer when dealing with determined-to-peel calcimine surfaces.

Calcimine paint is a problem for old-house owners because it does not offer a durable base for modern paint coverings. Calcimine is a very soft coating and any movement by

Though the first few coats of oil-based paint sometimes penetrate a calcimined ceiling and hang on for several years, water-based latex paint can begin to bubble and peel away almost immediately.



Above: Scraping off the failing paint is the first tedious step for dealing with calcimine problems. Oil-based paint dries to a firm, stiff finish, and will likely chip and flake away in small, crunchy pieces. Latex paint dries to a flexible, elastic finish, with a stretchy surface tension that causes it to peel away much faster and in large, rubbery pieces. Right: Carbide scrapers are handy for removing stubborn paint and even the calcimine itself.



today's stronger paint products will cause them to pull away. Environmental and climatic changes (temperature shifts, unheated rooms during winter, moisture and humidity) also significantly accelerate the delamination. The consequences are lots of peeling paint.

1) Identify what you've got— The first process is to identify for sure that you are dealing with a calcimine problem and assess the kinds of paints that might be coated over it. Because it is predominantly chalk, you can easily detect calcimine by rubbing a damp finger (sure, spit works) or a sponge on the surface and looking for a chalky residue. If you have calcimine, it will feel just as if you wet your finger and rubbed a dirty chalkboard.

To identify the subsequent types of paint, first choose a cloth or rag that is a distinctly different color from your surface so you can plainly see the re-

sults of your test. Next, dampen the cloth in rubbing alcohol and rub a peeling spot. Oil-based paint will not be affected by the alcohol, but water-based latex paints will dissolve to some degree, getting sticky and rubbery like an eraser. Sometimes there will be coats of oil paint followed by coats of latex. With this scenario you will see chips with a crackled base (the dry oil paint) and a stretchy, more intact top layer of paint. The rubbing alcohol experiment will remove the top layers of latex paint, then stop when it reaches the oil layer.

2) Consider complete removal— If you really want to get rid of the calcimine problem, you need to scrape off all the paint and scrub away as much of the calcimine as possible. This is a time-consuming process that requires significant amounts of elbow grease, lots of water and detergent, and patience. It is also very messy and wet, so

be sure to adequately protect floors, woodwork, furniture, and fixtures in the removal area.

You might want to begin in a "test area"—perhaps a corner or less visible section of your room. This will help you develop a feel for the difference between paint, calcimine, and plaster and perfect a technique that does minimal damage to the plaster.

(Step 1) Begin by scraping all visibly loose paint using a sharp putty knife or razor knife. If the ceiling is really peeling readily, start with a 6" joint compound knife. Once you get down to more stubborn paint and the calcimine, switch to a smaller 2" knife. (We prefer carbide scrapers at this stage.) Maintain control to minimize plaster damage, but remember that some is inevitable. You can repair blemishes once the calcimine is removed.

As you scrape down to the calcimine level you will notice the tool



Left: When working on ceilings, there's no substitute for elbow grease, but good tools make the job easier. This pad-on-a-pole device (called a "doodle bug") allows the user to work an average ceiling without a ladder. Above: Ample suds, and plenty of vigorous scrubbing, are the only secrets for loosening the glue in old calcimine paint. Below: Equally prosaic are the basic tools: bucket, sponges, and a detergent or cleaner with good sudsing action.

generating more dust. This is the chalk coming off. Then you will begin to see the plaster beneath, and the scraper will stop generating the chalky dust. The surface will feel different, and you can see the white lime coat or the sandy look of the plaster.



to remove the foam and water. Repeat the scrubbing, sudsing, squeegee process several times, using clean water and fresh detergent each time. Usually 2 to 4 wash/scrub cycles are necessary.

(Step 4) Once you feel you have all the cal-

cimene removed, rinse all surfaces using clean water. Follow up with one final clean-water rinse, then let the surface dry completely for a few days.

Test the success of your calcimine removal by firmly rubbing a dark cloth or your finger across the surface in a few different places. If chalk appears, you still have more scrubbing to do! Our goal is to remove all of the old paint and calcimine, and realistically end up somewhere around 80% calcimine-free. Then we rely on oil-based calcimine coating paint or oil primer to make up the difference.

(Step 2) Once you feel you have scraped off as much paint as you can, begin scrubbing and washing. The water will soften the glue and encourage the calcimine to lift from the surface. Wash all surfaces with a detergent or hard surface cleaner (Spic 'n' Span, dishwashing liquid, TSP) using a scrubbing pad. Really scrub at the surfaces, and use a cleaner that will generate as many suds as possible. You want to generate a foamy-froth that suspends the water. It keeps the surface wet longer and helps the calcimine to let go.

(Step 3) While the surface is still foamy, use a squeegee tool or large sponge

CALCIMINE and WATER PAINT

are the right materials to choose for tinting and whitening the interiors of workmen's cottages, hotels, apartments and all industrial or storage buildings.

Calcimines are glutinous color compositions intended chiefly for decorative purposes.

Water paints are caseinuous color compositions intended chiefly for whitening purposes.

Both furnished in condensed powder form requiring the mere addition of water. Both adhere to wallboard, wood, canvas, plaster, cement, concrete, hollow tile and brick.

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The best calcimines are MURALITE and CALCITINE. The best water paints are those called PERMANITE.

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What is Calcimine?

Used throughout the 19th century and well into the 20th century, calcimine paint was a very popular and economical coating for coloring interior surfaces. Also called kalsomine or distemper, it is a dried calcium carbonate product that, when mixed with water and optional pigments, forms a pastel-colored, fast-drying coating for walls and ceilings. In the days of coal heating and cooking, calcimine offered an inexpensive and easy-to-apply way to freshen up walls and ceilings stained with soot. Equally appealing was the fact that it could be used immediately over new plaster. Since traditional three-coat plaster took from 30 to 60 days to fully season, a new coat of oil-based paint would blister and peel off as it reacted with the curing plaster. Calcimine, however, is water-based, so it allowed builders and homeowners to finish their walls immediately by covering stark plaster surfaces in soft whites and pastel tones.



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OLD-HOUSE BASICS

When you are ready to repaint your removal areas, use a calcimine-coater paint if available (see Suppliers). These products can be tricky to locate, but they will penetrate through any remaining calcimine and seal it. Some brands are made to be followed with a topcoat paint, and some are not, so read the labels carefully. If these products are not available, then prime all removal surfaces with an oil-based primer. You can then finish with a latex or oil topcoat of your choice.

3) Try a quick cover-up—If you want only to cover up your calcimine problem, then you can try a spot scrape-wash-seal of only the peeling areas. This approach may work nicely for years (we did a ceiling that's held for 10 years), or it may not be successful. If you have a very small area that is peeling you might want to start with this approach.

Once you have scraped off the loose paint, you can either scrape off the calcimine or gently wash it away in just the scraped areas. The more washing you do, the more the calcimine will lift off and your peeling areas will grow. Finally, go over these areas with a calcimine coater paint or oil-based primer. If you want to fill the shallow craters where the paint chips were. Use vinyl-based paste or filler compound instead of a water-based joint compound, which can activate the calcimine. Lightly sand with a 120-grit sanding block then gently damp-sponge these areas to remove sanding dust and follow up with another coat of calcimine coating paint (or oil-based primer). If you choose, you can now go over your plaster with a flat, latex ceiling paint. ■

Peter and Noelle operate Peter Lord Plaster & Paint, Inc, (151 Mast Road, Westbrook, ME; 207-856-0156; www.plasterlord.com).

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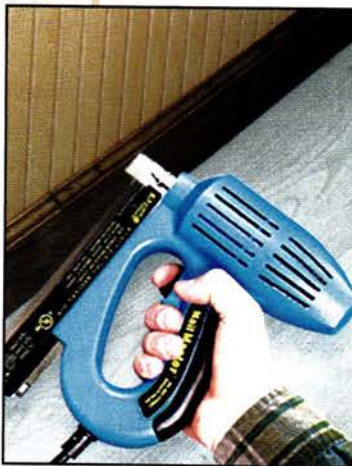
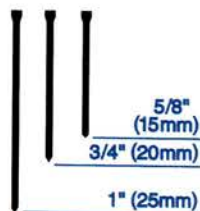
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Rev.700

OLD HOUSE ADVISOR



A TOUR OF THE COTSWOLDS

I was told that my 1923 house might be a Cotswold Cottage. I have been trying to get some information about it and have had no luck. I would like to restore it to its original state and have no idea how or where to begin.

—CAROL ANDERSON-LEWIS
PLAINFIELD, N. J.

THE DATE YOUR HOUSE was built puts it squarely in the period during which Cotswold Cottages were popular, in the 1920s and '30s. The houses were also called "English country houses." The name Cotswold Cottage was popularized by Henry Ford, who brought a 17th-century cottage from that hilly region of southwest England and reassembled it in Greenfield Village in 1915. The village is part of the Henry Ford Museum in Dearborn, Michigan.

Although many of us (and Webster's Dictionary) maintain that cottages are small—either working-family homes, guest homes, or vacation homes—the term is flung about with great abandon and was even applied to the sprawling summer mansions built in Newport, Rhode Island, in the last half of the 19th century. The Greenfield cottage's two storeys total only 1096 square feet, but it served as an architectural model for families with considerable means.

Some considered the Cotswold Cottages a variant on the Tudor style also popular at the time. They usually had high front-gable roofs, often with one asymmetrical roofline as yours has. The roofs were sometimes thatch, real or imitation, but the cladding was invariably stone, brick, or stucco, sometimes with half timbers.

Thus while your house looks cottage-sized to us, neither its size nor its wood-frame and clapboard construction is typical of these cottages. If we had to put a name to your house, we'd call it a builders-style cottage with Tudor influences. Many such houses were built from stock plans during that period, often with Arts & Crafts style flat mouldings and lantern light fixtures on the interior.

TURNING UP THE HEAT TOOLS

I was disappointed to learn that Old-House Journal no longer sells the great heat guns and plates used for paint stripping. I borrowed one from a friend and thought it was very well made and efficient. Where can I buy a similar product?

—SHERRIE MATTESON
RIVERSIDE, CALIF.

WHILE OHJ hasn't offered these tools for direct sale for almost a decade, both are still available from the manufacturers or their distributors. Heat plates work best for stripping flat areas, while you'll be much happier with a heat gun to remove paint from detail areas such as porch rails and balusters.

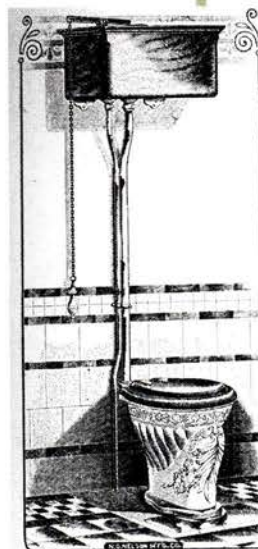
For a heat plate you may want to try Warner Manufacturing Co., 13435 Industrial Park Blvd., Minneapolis, MN 55441, (800) 234-7708.

For heat guns and parts, one source is Master Appliance Corp., Customer Service Dept., 2420 18th St., Racine, WI 53403, (262) 633-7791.

MISSING PARTS

I've just bought a five-unit apartment house in Philadelphia and am having great difficulty finding a plumbing supply company that sells replacement parts for the Victorian pull-chain toilets in each unit. I'd hate to replace them with newer models, but I'm afraid that if I don't find the right fittings—many of the toilet parts have rusted or even deteriorated—I won't be able to maintain these old fossils. Can you give me any suggestions of a supply company in my area?

—ARTHUR FREEN
PHILADELPHIA, PA.



SOME ARCHITECTURAL SALVAGE SHOPS carry replacement bowls, tanks, and handles. In Pennsylvania try Architectural Emporium, 207 Adams Ave., Canonsburg, PA 15317 (724) 746-4301.

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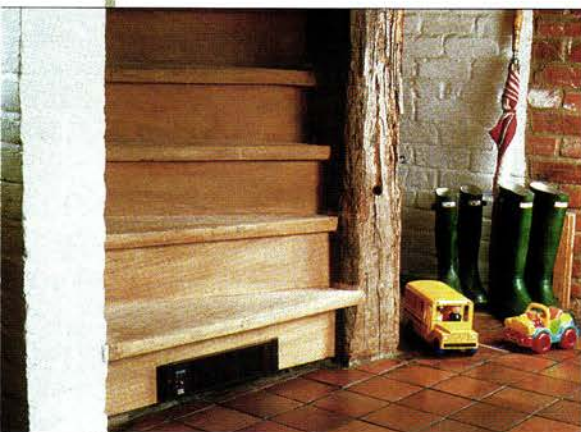
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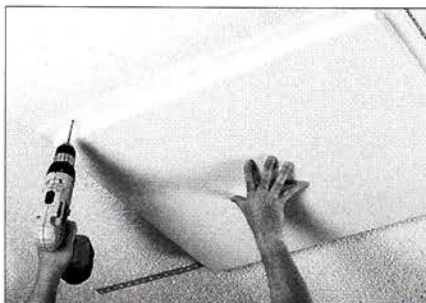
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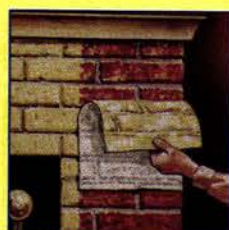
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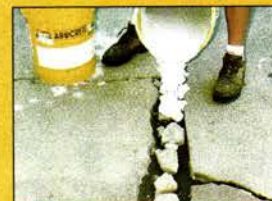
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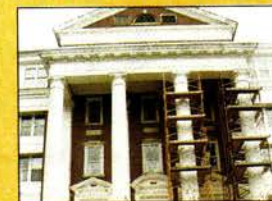
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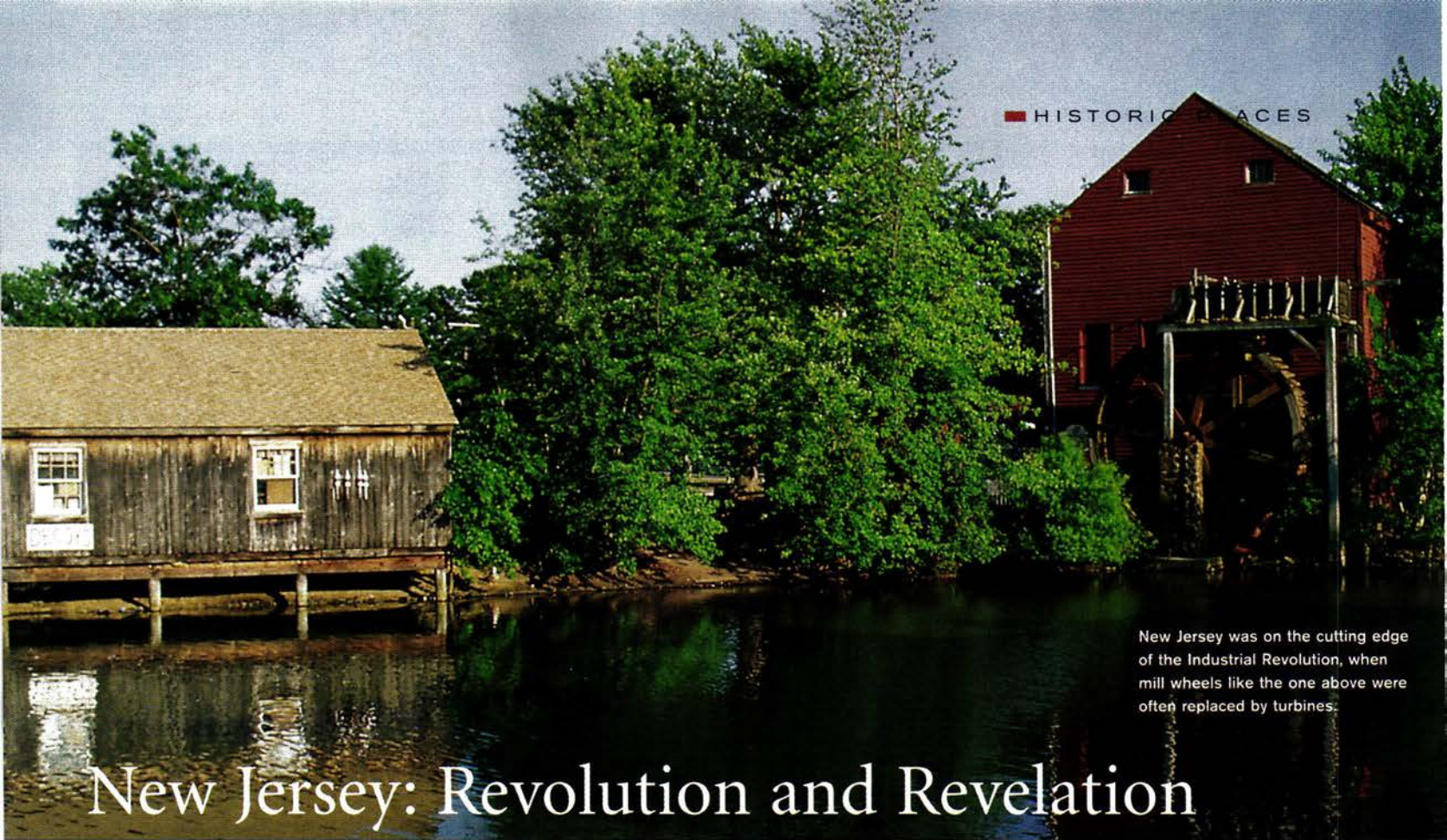
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New Jersey was on the cutting edge of the Industrial Revolution, when mill wheels like the one above were often replaced by turbines.

New Jersey: Revolution and Revelation

Victor Englebert

IT'S EASY TO DISMISS northeast New Jersey as the great asphalt wasteland between New York and Philadelphia. But the region is more than billowing smokestacks, toxic waste dumps, and a string of uninspiring turnpike exits. After all, this is where Arts & Crafts pioneer Gustav Stickley spent some of his most productive years. The area nurtured inventor Thomas Edison and helped set the course of both the American and Industrial Revolutions.

New Jersey has a split personality, home to urban factories that churned out locomotives, glass, and steel to propel the industrialization of America, but also to farmers who helped it become the Garden State. Its northeast is especially full of history, but has been too long obscured by New York City's long shadow. Get in your car, mind your turnpike exits, and cruise down the highway for a peek at the underpinnings of America.

Crossroads of a Revolution

New Jersey saw plenty of action during Rev-

olutionary War battles to control the key ports of New York and Philadelphia. George Washington spent more than a quarter of the war on New Jersey soil, setting up winter headquarters twice in Morristown and once in Somerville. New Jersey militiamen, at first ambivalent in their support of the Continental Army, eventually helped tip the balance in Washington's favor.

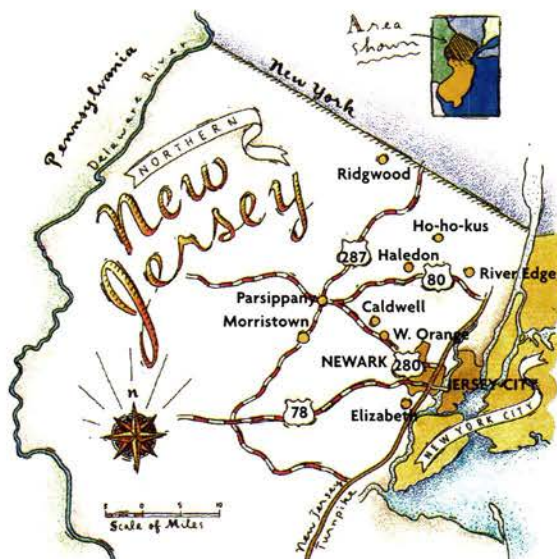
For an overview of the state's role, begin at Morristown National Historic Park about 30 miles west of the Big Apple. It's the site of the Ford Mansion, the hip-roofed Georgian-style home of Col. Jacob Ford Jr. that served as Washington's headquarters in the winter of 1779-80. His troops shivered through the bitterly cold season at Jockey Hollow, 600 wooded acres also within the park. Here you can see the Tempe Wick House, where another general billeted that winter, and log huts built by the Jersey Brigade in the week prior to Christmas 1779.

Plenty of other sites live up to the cliché, "Washington slept here." Check out

continued on page 86

The much-maligned Garden State offers a bumper crop of great destinations.

BY MIRIAM ASCARELLI



James Noel Smith

The Ford Mansion, right, was George Washington's headquarters in the winter of 1779-80. The balcony of the Botto House, below, served as a speakers' platform during a 1913 labor strike.



Courtesy American Labor Museum



Gene Ahrens



Revolutionary soldiers built their Jockey Hollow huts, above, in a week. Lafayette, Hamilton, and Burr were among visitors to the Hermitage, right.

Gene Ahrens



Courtesy The Hermitage

250-year-old Boxwood Hall a few miles southeast in Elizabeth. Elias Boudinot, a Revolutionary War leader who later served as a president of the Continental Congress, entertained the general there on his way to the first inauguration. Northwest of Morristown in Wayne is the Dey Mansion, which sheltered Washington in July, October, and November of 1780. The home of revolutionary patriot Theunis Dey, the gambrel-roofed Georgian-style brick and stone farmhouse was built in the 1740s by his father, Dirck.

Washington and his troops spent four days in July 1778 northwest of here at the Hermitage in Ho-ho-kus. Other visitors to the house during the revolution included the Marquis de Lafayette, Alexander Hamilton, and Aaron Burr. Today Washington wouldn't recognize the former Dutch-style house. Incorporated into a gingerbread Gothic Revival-style mansion in 1847, it houses a museum dedicated to Victoriana.

For insight into how the war pitted neighbor against neighbor, there's the Von Steuben House, a two-storey Dutch colonial in River Edge, once owned by pro-British loyalists John and Peter Zabriskie.



A mantle of snow sets the appropriate mood at the Tempe Wick House, left, where a Revolutionary War general sought winter shelter.

Historic Lodging

NORTHEAST NEW JERSEY

Ironically, even though the Morristown area is chockablock with historic buildings and parks, town leaders only recently approved allowing lodgings within the town itself. Here are three historic B&Bs in Morris County and two farther afield. For more prosaic lodging in the area, visit www.morristourism.org or call (973) 631-5151 to request visitor information.

PARROT MILL INN

47 Main St., Chatham, NJ 07928 (973) 635-7722. This 1790 mill house has 10 rooms, two suites, and private baths.

PUBLIC HOUSE INN

111 Main St., Chester, NJ 07930, (908) 879-6878. Surrounded by antique shops, this 1810 inn was on the stagecoach run from New York to Philadelphia. It has 10 rooms.

THE NEIGHBOUR HOUSE

143 W. Mill Road, Long Valley, NJ 07853, (908) 876-3519. This farmhouse with a sweeping staircase, eight fireplaces, pocket doors, and heart pine floors has four guest rooms.

MARLBORO INN

334 Grove Street, Montclair, NJ 07042, (800) 446-6020, www.marlboroinn.com This 1847 Tudor mansion, originally known as Holmeswood, is near the Cleveland birthplace and only 17 miles from downtown Manhattan. 29 rooms.

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570 Springfield Avenue, Summit, NJ (800) 346-0773, www.grandsummit.com A "boutique"-style hotel built in 1868. Seven miles from the Newark airport, it has vaulted beamed ceilings, chestnut paneling, and a flagstone fireplace in the lobby. 150 rooms

American forces confiscated the house and, after the war, gave it to Prussian drillmaster Baron Friedrich von Steuben in gratitude for his training American troops.

Made in New Jersey

Iron ore began bringing settlers to the state's Wachtung Mountains in the early 1700s. By war time, 45 forges in the area were pumping out iron for camp ovens, tools, and other hardware for the Continental Army. One of the busiest was Ringwood, run by Robert Erskine, Washington's mapmaker.

Less than a century later the Ringwood furnaces were in high gear again, in the hands of the industrial duo of Peter Cooper and son-in-law Abram S. Hewitt, melting iron for rails, girders, and bridges. At Ringwood State Park northeast of Morristown, visitors can tour Hewitt's Ringwood Manor to glimpse the life of a wealthy Victorian family. The park is also home to Skylands Manor, a 44-room English Jacobean stone mansion built in the 1920s.

Stephan Vail's Speedwell Iron Works in Morristown was a major player for decades, providing the engine and other parts for the first steamship to cross the

Atlantic in 1818-1819. His son Alfred and fellow inventor Samuel F.B. Morse worked secretly in the factory to perfect the electromagnetic telegraph, unveiling it at Speedwell in 1838. Today at Historic Speedwell you can visit eight restored outbuildings as well as the family's home, built in the Georgian style in 1820 and renovated in the Greek Revival style in the 1840s.

With industrialization came the labor movement. There's no better window into the fight for the eight-hour day and other landmark labor battles than the American Labor Museum. Located a mile from Passaic Falls in the Botto House National Landmark in Haledon, this 1908 Victorian home once belonged to silk-mill worker Pietro Botto and his wife Maria. During a 1913 silk strike, when more than 24,000 workers walked out of mills in nearby Paterson, labor leaders addressed them from its second-storey balcony.

The Rural Thing

But all is not factories here. Even today, more than 17 percent of New Jersey is farmland. For a primer on agricultural practices of yesteryear, visit Fosterfields Living Historical Farm in Morristown,

Gene Ahrens

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HISTORIC PLACES

once home to Charles Grant Foster, a wealthy New York commodities broker who moved to New Jersey to raise cattle. Overlooking the farm is the Willows, a Gothic Revival-style mansion built by Civil War Gen. Joseph Warren Revere, grandson of Paul Revere. It now serves as a museum dedicated to the social history and decorative arts of the Victorian era.

How about some Trivial Pursuit: Can you name the only U.S. president born in New Jersey? Answer: Grover Cleveland, on March 18, 1837. The Grover Cleveland Birthplace in Caldwell is now a museum.

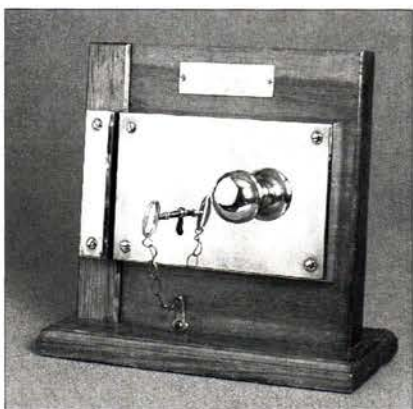
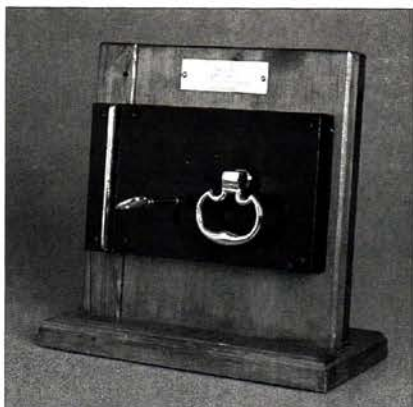
Only a few miles from Caldwell is Parsippany, where Arts & Crafts guru Gustav Stickley lived from 1911 to 1917. Craftsman Farms, his log home during that period, is a symbol of modern American philosophy and design at the turn of the century.

Before Bruce Springsteen, New Jersey's most famous resident probably was inventor Thomas Alva Edison, who arrived in 1870 when he was 23. He settled in Newark, which as a leading industrial center close to the markets of New York City was perfect for an ambitious young inventor.

In 1886—having invented the phonograph, the first practical incandescent lamp, and its accompanying distribution system—Edison purchased Glenmont, a West Orange estate, and began building his vast laboratories there. Today the laboratories and the 23-room brick, stone, and half-timbered home with many gables are part of the Edison National Historic Site.

Perhaps Edison and his laboratories embody the best of New Jersey, this ever-changing creature of commerce and industry. "I find out what the world needs, then I go ahead and try to invent it," he once said. Given its constant evolution, couldn't the same be said of New Jersey? 🏠

MIRIAM ASCARELLI writes about New Jersey from Glen Ridge.



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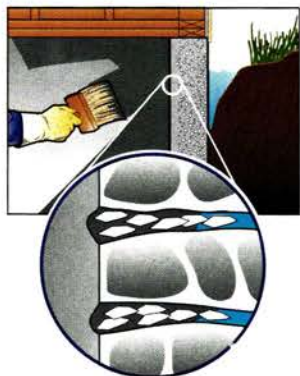


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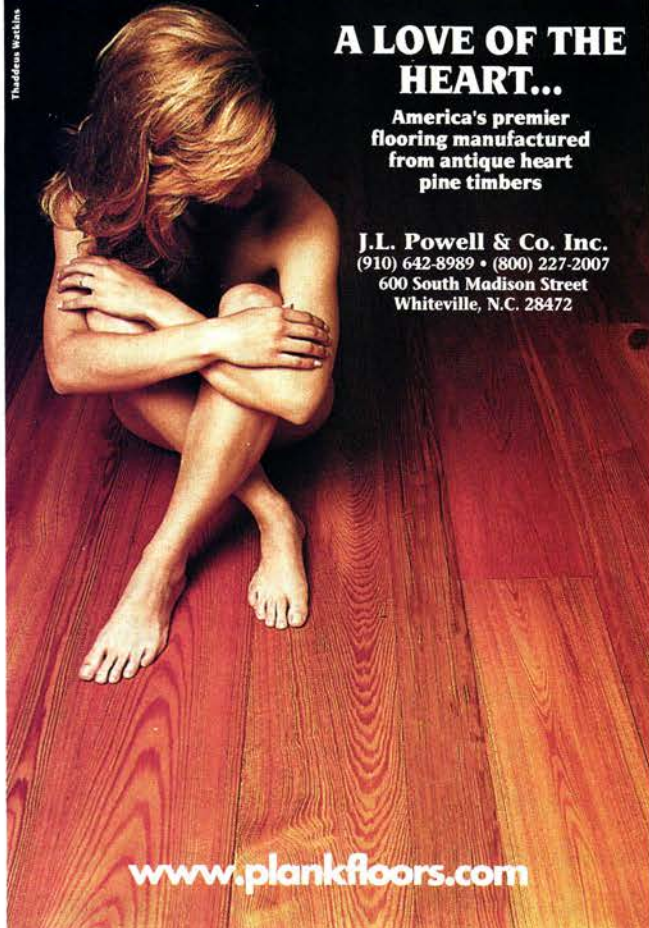
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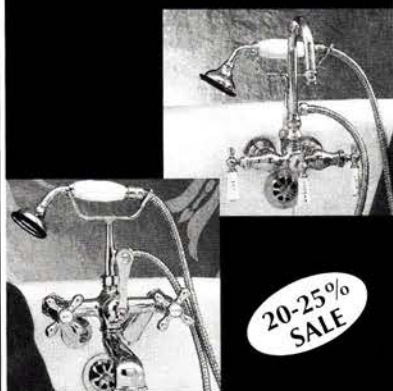
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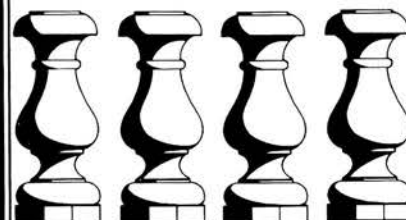
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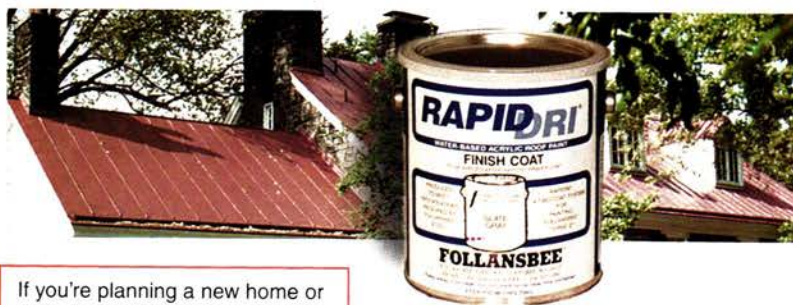
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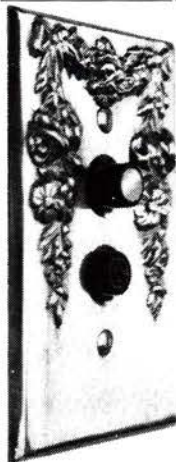
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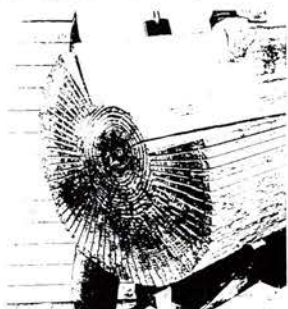
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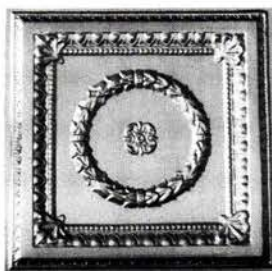
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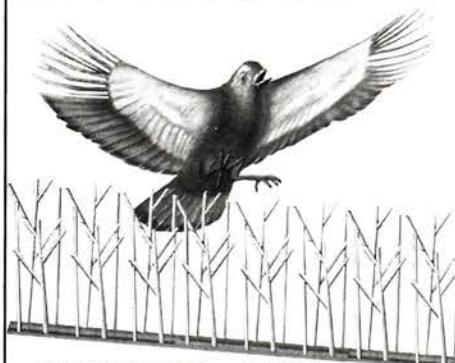
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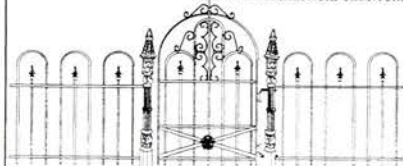
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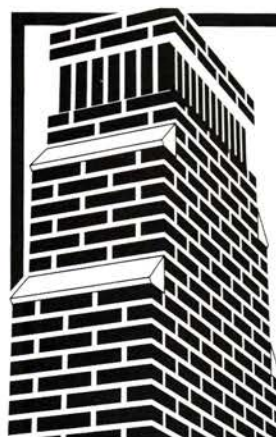
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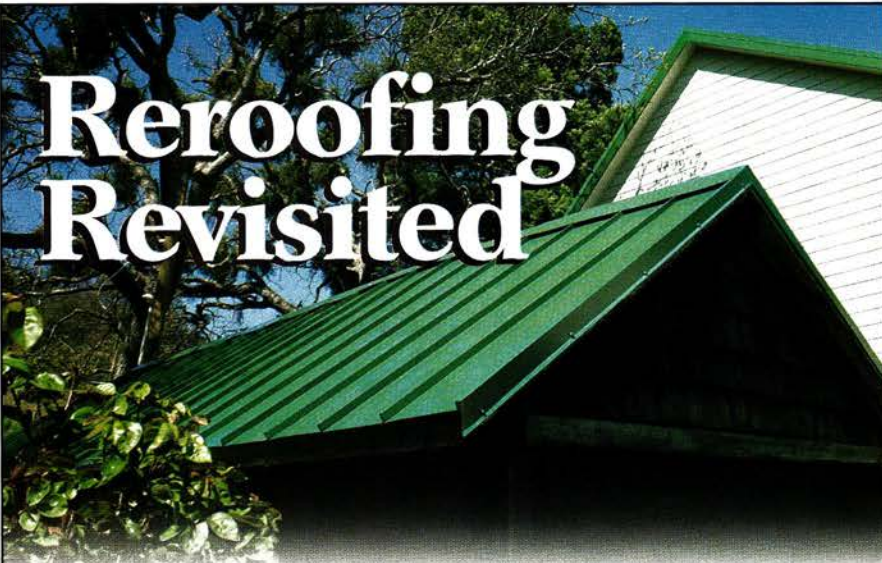
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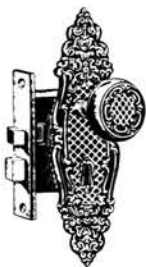
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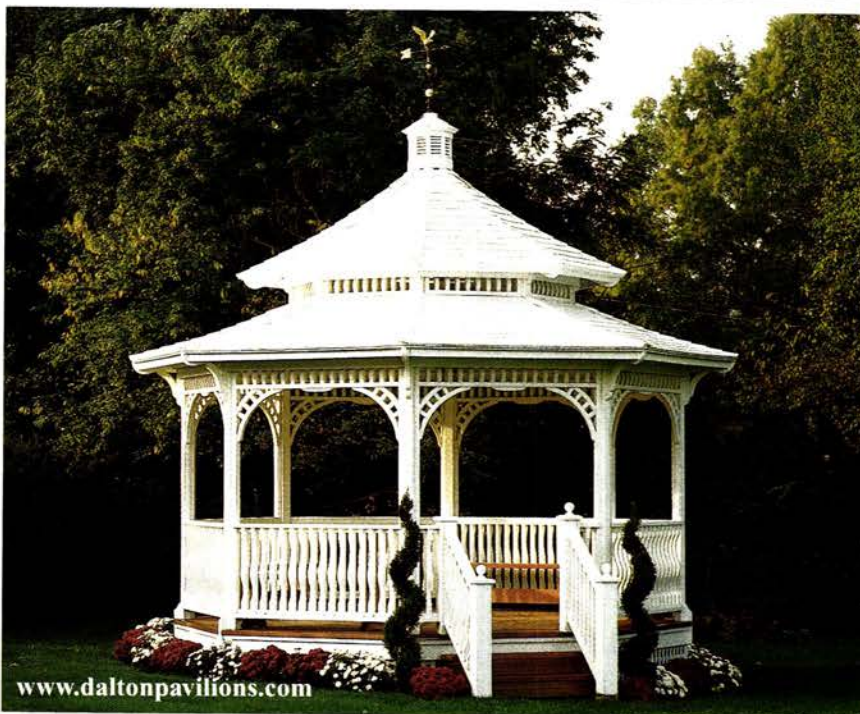
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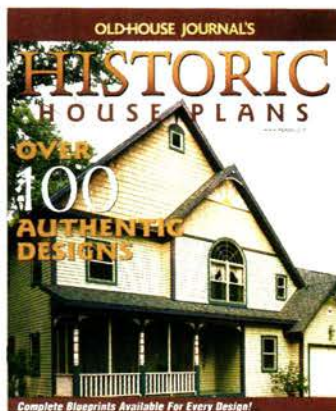
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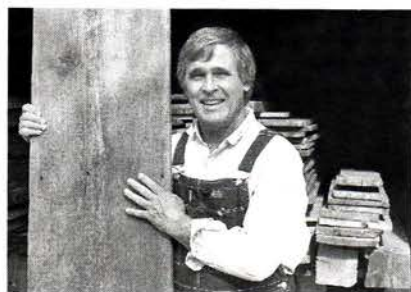


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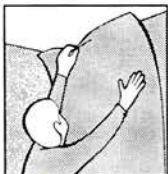
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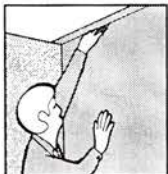
1. Cut fiberglass mat 2" longer than height.



2. Apply saturant to area to be covered.



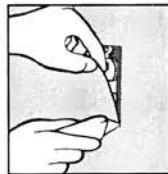
3. Apply fiberglass mat to wet surface.



4. Trim excess mat where wall meets ceiling.



5. Trim mat at baseboard and window.



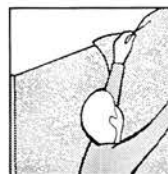
6. Trim mat at outlets, switches, etc.



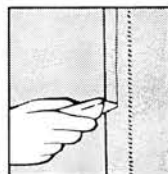
7. Apply second coat of saturant to wet mat.



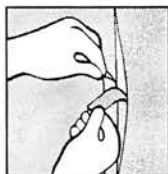
8. Apply 1st coat of saturant to adjacent area.



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



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



11. Remove mat strips on both sides of cut.



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

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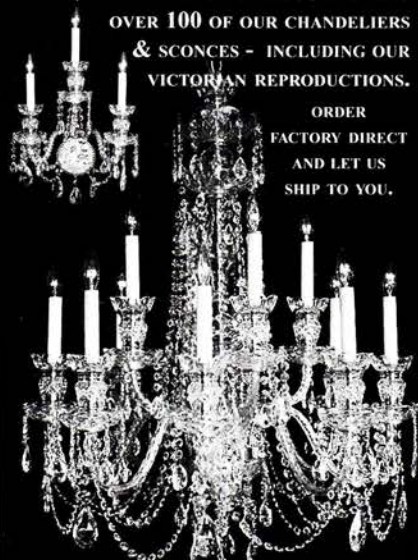
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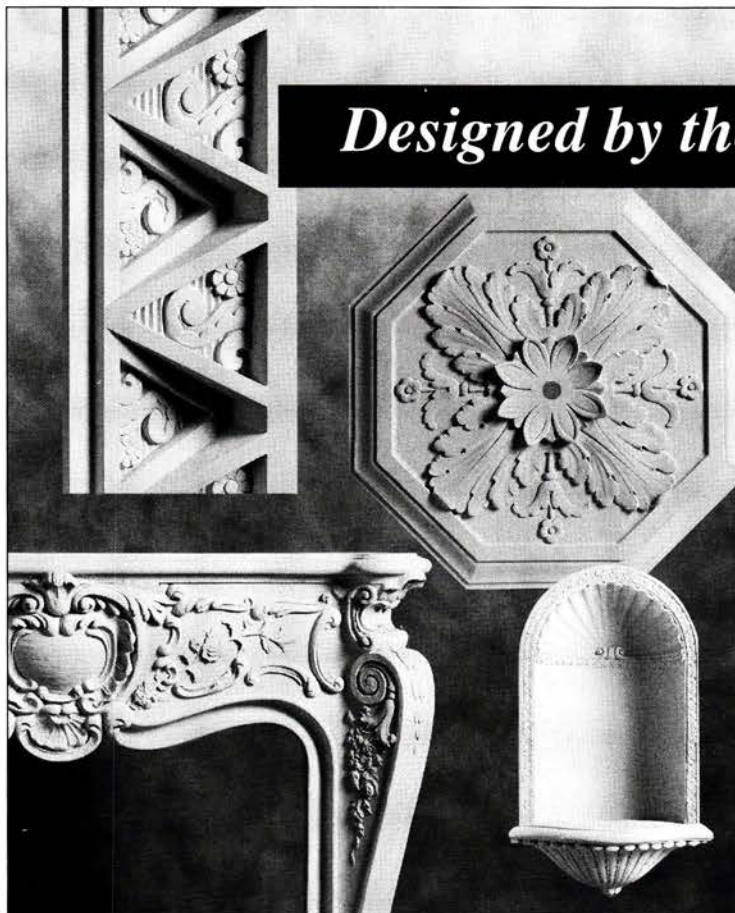


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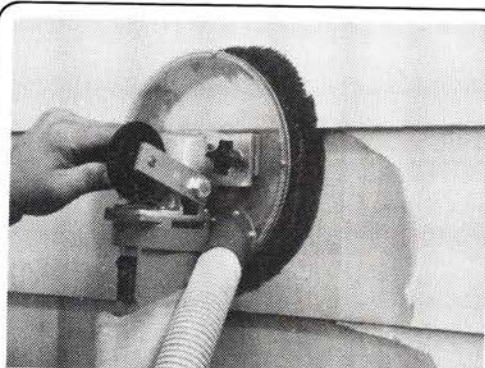
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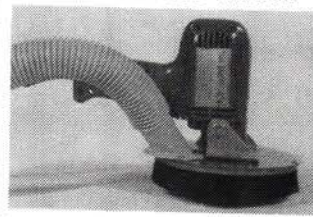


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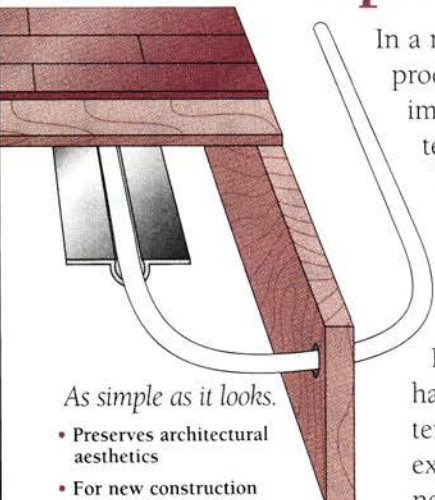
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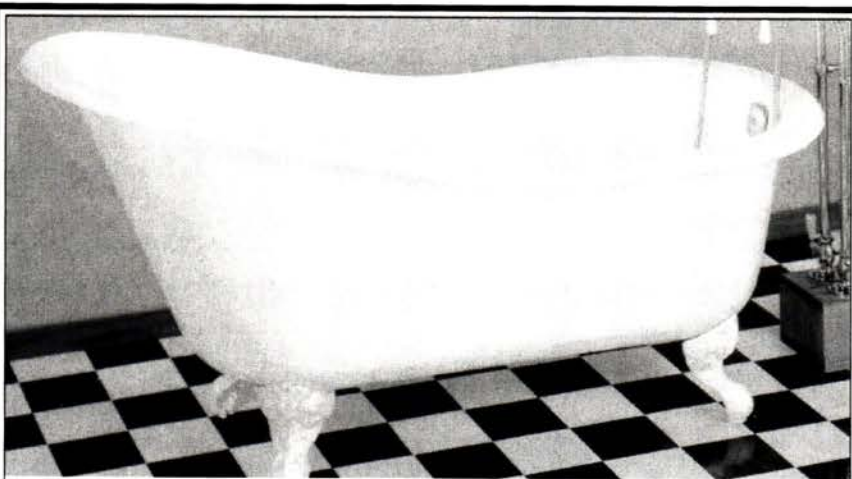
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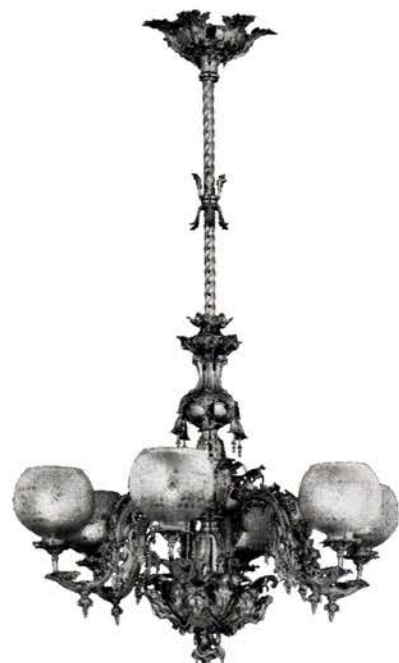
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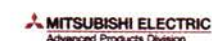
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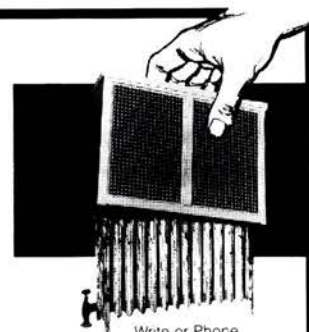
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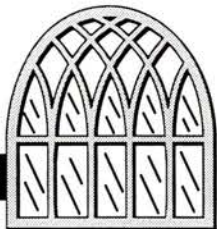
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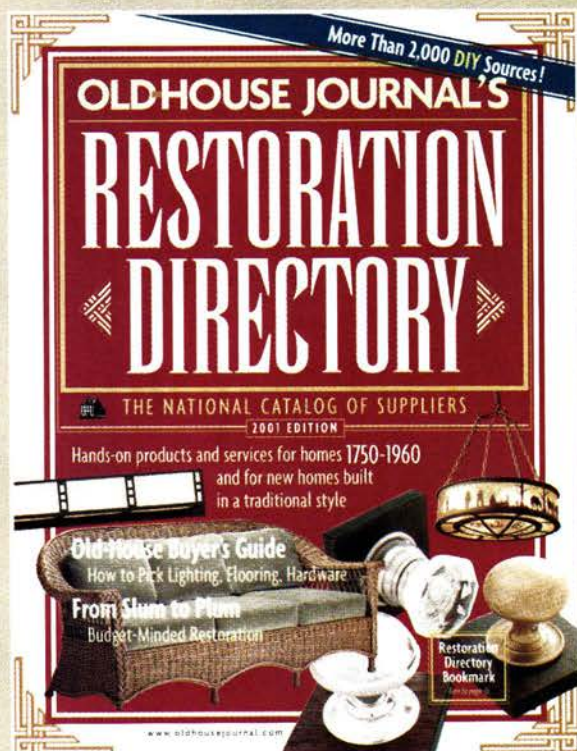
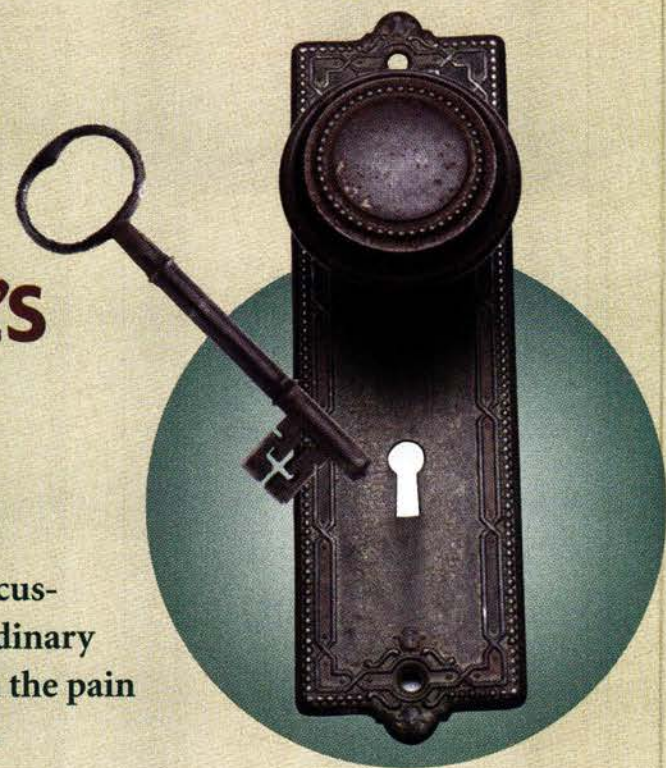
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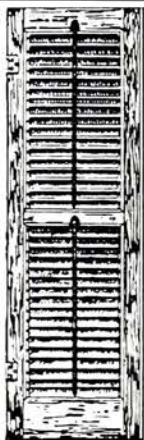
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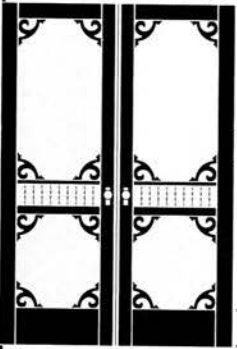
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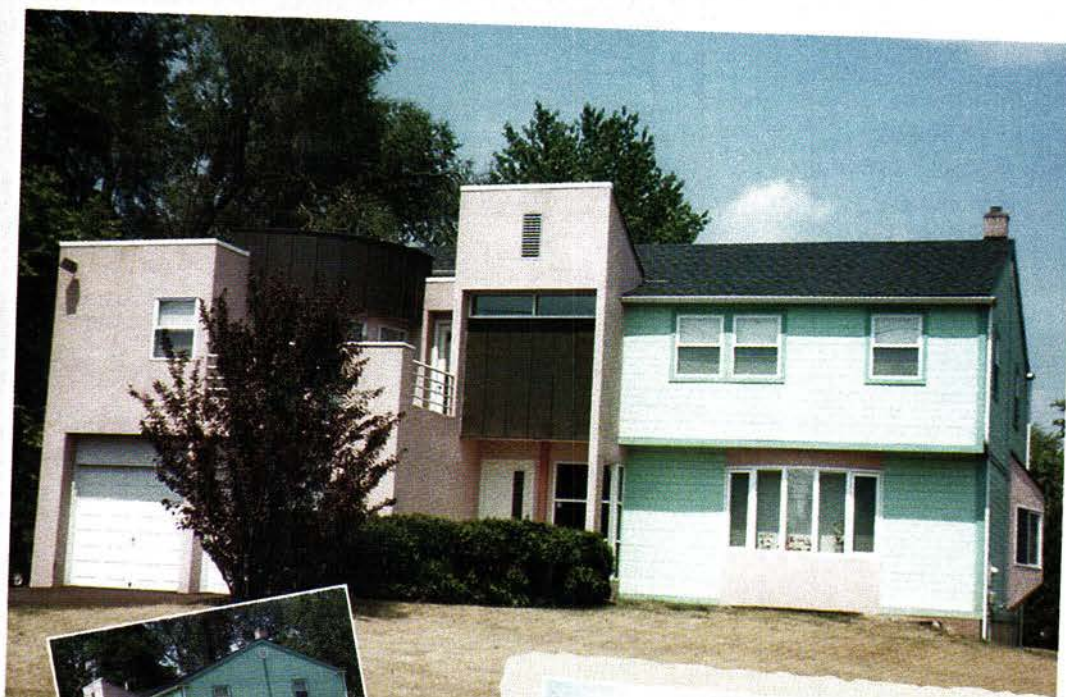
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Opinion



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The overwhelming urge to change things knows no age limitations. While most of the buildings featured in these pages are at least a half-century old, it seems that houses of more recent vintage aren't immune to architectural tinkering. Just discernible under the pink and sea-green appendages (above and inset) is a modern colonial minted so recently that its first coat of paint may still be drying. To the right is a photograph of a similar home in the same neighborhood that has been allowed to retain its dewy fresh complexion.



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