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May / June 2005

Volume 33 / Number 3

Established 1973



### ON THE COVER:

Photo by  
Andy Olenick  
This charming Queen  
Anne in Amsterdam,  
New York, displays  
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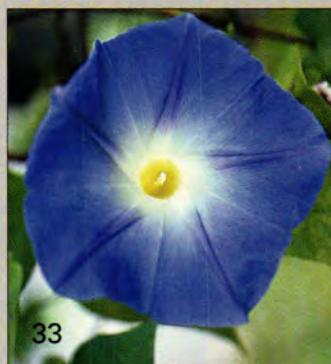
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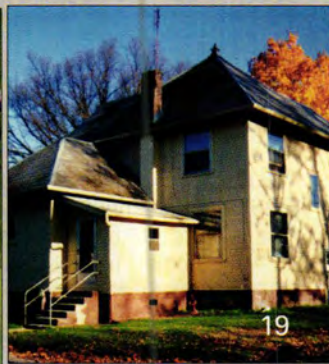
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## New Old-House Journal's 2005 Restoration Directory

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## Kitchen Classics

An up-to-date buyer's guide reveals what to look for when you're in the market for vintage appliances.

## Old-House Journal's New Old House

For a quick look at the latest magazine from *Old-House Journal's* growing stable, visit the home page and see for yourself how everything new can be wonderfully old.

[www.newoldhousemag.com](http://www.newoldhousemag.com)

## Restoration Exchange

A companion site to OHJ Online, the exchange is your guide to the world of building renovation, restoration, and preservation.

[www.restorationexchange.com](http://www.restorationexchange.com)

## Historic Homes for Sale!

As the spring home-buying season heats up, turn to this national portfolio for a close look at hundreds of historic homes that are on the market now.

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## Dormer Days

This first weekend of spring, my wife's cousin came to help us shingle our dormers—a project that has been waiting more for someone willing to ascend a long ladder than any turn in the late-winter weather. Cladding the triangular walls—the cheeks—of these three windows is the last phase of a new roof, but it's still not without questions, or a few minor revelations.

Our Queen Anne old house dates to sometime in the 1880s but, like a dowager aunt who has obscured her true birth date and reinvented her personal history, we don't know exactly what the house looked like originally. The dormers, in particular, could have been around since Day One, but there's no photographic record of them before the 1930s when they already showed clear signs of maturity. When we got the house, the cheeks were sided with 1970s-vintage asphalt shingles that had faded from green to a bilious brown, and we could find no evidence about what other cladding might be more in keeping with the house—that is, until we started work. There, under brittle sheets of dirty asphalt and black paper that pried off like a molting shell, lay the shiny tin squares of Victorian sheet-metal shingles—very likely the material for the roof at the turn of the last century.

We decided to re-side the dormers in plain wood shingles, based upon promising cedar scraps around the windows and the fact that the upper storey of the house is shingled, too. As anyone who has tried their hand at it knows, shingling is closer to an art than a science, more a jazz improvisation than a classical performance of a score. The trick is to lay the courses of shingles so they all look even, horizontal, and natural where they meet doors, windows, and eaves. However, creating this impression of precision invariably takes playing with spacings as you go and cleverly fudging dimensions where necessary—especially in old houses. A case in point is our dormers where, my wife's cousin announced, "The left dormer is 1 1/2" out of level running downhill, while the right dormer is 2" out going uphill!" A seasoned builder, he knew just what to do: subtly angling the courses one way so they ended perfectly parallel with the top of the right dormer, tiptoeing them the other way to make the left dormer come out fine.

A man once explained to me that any fool can execute a project that goes according to plan; getting out of a problem neatly, however, takes real skill and experience. Sitting on top of the roof with a view beyond my immediate world, I was struck by another notion: shingling dormers is a bit like life. It's important to have visions and goals, but you have to be prepared for surprises, and to make adjustments along the way to get where you want to be.

*Gordon Bock*



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# Letters



## Information, Please

I read your article in *Old-House Journal* about 20th-century appliance restoration ("Kitchen Classics," March/April 2005). I am looking for the phone number of Mike Arnold who is quoted in the article. We have pre-1930 appliances and are looking for parts.

Thanks for your help,

Bob Baier

Whitesburg, Tennessee

*Mike Arnold's business is called Monitor Top. He can be reached at (518) 272-7916 or visit his Web site at [www.monitortop.com](http://www.monitortop.com). —Eds.*

## All in the Family

I am writing in reference to the brief article in your magazine on the Colden Mansion ("Annunciator," March/April 2005). I am a descendant of the Colden

family, and I wanted to share with you an 1895 photograph of the Colden House. The photo (below) shows the house with its original hipped roof (taken before, as your article states; it was given a mansard roof in the 1920s). I was pleased to learn that something is going to be done to resurrect the house.

Sincerely,

Julianne R. S. Hansen

Via email

## Lost in Time

In your recent article on tin ceilings ("Pressed in Time," January/February 2005), you quote Ken Postlethwaite. I thought that name was lost in time. In my genealogy there are references to a Samuel Postlethwaite and land owned on the Maryland/Pennsylvania state line. I'm going to look this historian up! Oh, and thanks for a great article.

Sincerely,

Ellen M. Wright

Phoenix, New York

## Spring Balances Spring Eternal

After reading your article "Spring Balances Bounce Back" (January/February 2005), I wanted to share another source for Caldwell balances. The product is now sold through my company, L & L Concepts.

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Dave Lushbaugh, president

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## Letters

### Salvaging the Past

We enjoyed reading the article about the building and materials reuse program in Burlington, Vermont ("Recycle, Train, and Save," *Annunciator*, November/December 2004). We have recently opened a business, called ReStore, in the Port Richmond section of Philadelphia that offers some similar services. We will help cost-conscious contractors and home remodelers reduce the costs of demolition and dumpster fees by dismantling and removing still useable materials, such as flooring, bathroom fixtures, doors, and cabinetry. We will clean them and display them for homeowners looking for unique items for their homes while preserving natural resources and taking pressure off landfills. We also offer a design and construction service.

Linda's concept of preserving resources was deeply ingrained by being raised on a Pennsylvania farm by parents who survived the Great Depression. After a stint as a social worker, she spent 20 years as a carpenter, during which she actively sought out and used salvaged pieces. Lara spent more than 10 years as an art department manager for Hollywood films, a job that required locating outdated building materials and props for such movies as *12 Monkeys*, *Quiz Show*, and *Philadelphia*.

Visit our Web site at [www.restoreonline.com](http://www.restoreonline.com) or call us at (215) 634-3474.

Linda Lee Mellish  
Lara Kelly  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

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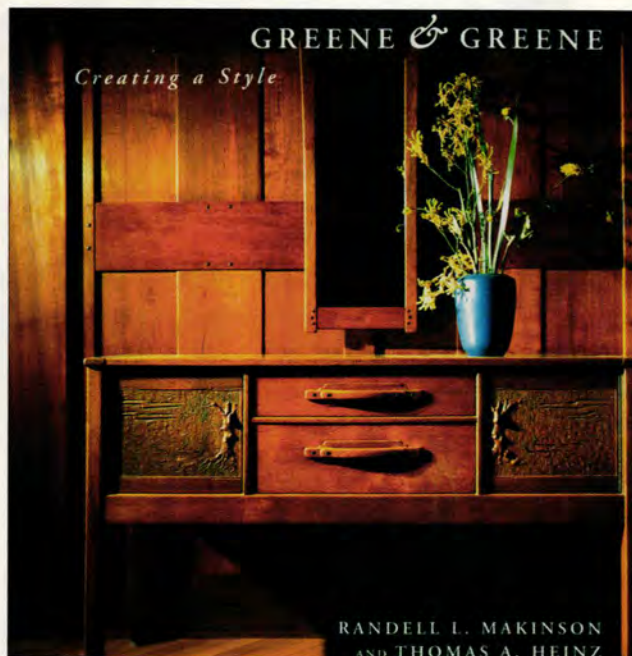
## Arts & Crafts Confab Comes East

This June 16–19, the seventh annual New York University Arts & Crafts Conference comes to Buffalo to explore the territory that gave the movement two of its legendary leaders—Gustav Stickley and Elbert Hubbard—as well as fertile ground for a wealth of other brilliant designers and buildings at the turn of the 20th century. Seminars and tours will explore the impact of idealist enclaves such as Hubbard's Roycroft community, Chautauqua, and Byrdcliffe, along with architectural landmarks like the Darwin D. Martin House complex by Frank Lloyd Wright, Louis Sullivan's Guaranty Building, and the Kleinhans Music Hall by Eliel and Eero Saarinen. Top experts scheduled to

## Books in Brief

Can there be anything more to say about the genius of the brothers Greene? Apparently so, when the words and pic-

tures are from premier authorities such as Randell L. Makinson and Thomas A. Heinz, who have collaborated



speakers include David Cathers, Jean France, Julie L. Sloan, and Richard Guy Wilson. For more information on the

four-day conference, or to register, contact NYU at (212) 998-6911 or visit [www.scps.nyu.edu/crafts](http://www.scps.nyu.edu/crafts).

## Save the Date

October 20–22

New Orleans is the perfect spot for the fall 2005 Traditional Building Exhibition and Conference. The city's lively streetscapes and nearly 300 years of historic French-, Spanish-, and Caribbean-influenced architecture have built New Orleans into the international city it is today.

This year's event, located at the Ernest N. Morial Convention Center, will showcase more than 150 exhibitors of hard-to-find products and services and offer over 60 educational seminars and workshops covering a wide array of topics including commercial, institutional, public, and residential traditional building.

For more details, visit the Web site at [www.traditionalbuildingshow.com](http://www.traditionalbuildingshow.com); call 800-982-6247; or email [info@restoremedia.com](mailto:info@restoremedia.com).

on a new book: *Greene & Greene: Creating a Style* (Gibbs Smith, Publisher). This highly readable little tome is full of beautiful photographs—some amazing archival shots, some rich, contemporary views—but it's far more than iconic portraits of the Gamble and Blacker Houses, the surreal super-bungalows that are the masterworks of Charles and Henry Greene's early career.

Through the informed eyes of Randell Makinson (director emeritus of the Gamble House and professor emeritus in the U.S.C. School of Architecture) and Tom Heinz (prolific researcher of Frank Lloyd Wright buildings), we enjoy fresh visits to lesser-known commissions that, coupled with the authors' revealing insights, explore new and different sides of the brothers' oeuvre. For example, while it is all but gospel that the brothers drew inspiration from Japan and the Far East (especially through assiduous study of American magazines and exhibitions, as lucidly documented by Edward R. Bosley in his book *Greene & Greene*), there's clear evidence they looked to their Arts & Crafts contemporaries in England and the West, as when designing the amazingly Voysey-like Henry Robinson House. A book whose sophisticated subject is accessibly and beautifully handled, *Greene & Greene: Creating a Style* will surprise and inform anyone interested in the wellsprings behind timeless residential design.





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## Cross-bred Building

It appears that our old house falls between several styles. One source tells us that it is a Queen Anne with Foursquare influences; another says it's Colonial Revival and Craftsman. Can you help?

*David Frederick  
Huntington, Indiana*

**W**e'd agree with your general assessment. Few old houses fit neatly into one textbook style, and your house shows influences from at least two building currents flowing at the turn of the 20th century. While it's not easy to pin down the plan of the roof from the front of the house, the rear view makes it clear it's a pyramid—a shape common to both Queen Annes, which were sunsetting in popularity after 1900, and Foursquares, which were on the rise. The cubic massing of the

house, in fact, is consistent with the Foursquare house form, as is the full-width front porch (if it's original). But what about that off-center cross-gable up front? While such a gable could be part of many houses, running a prominent cross gable off a pyramidal hipped roof was a widespread practice on Queen Annes, and a holdover of sorts by the time your house was built. As for stylistic trappings, the porch as it appears now with the square supports looks almost Prairie, rather than Craftsman or Colonial Revival.



What appears from the front to be a plain-Jane Queen Anne (with, perhaps a later porch), looks very Foursquare from the back).

## Catch a Wave

We think the original roof on our 1925 Tudor was wood shingles that ran up and down, like some Hansel-and-Gretel style houses we saw in California. Where can we get such a roof?

*Michael and Diane May  
Washington, D.C.*

**F**rom what you describe, we think you're referring to a roof where the butt lines of each course of shingles are not straight horizontals but undulating lines. Successive courses then create shingle exposures that expand and shrink, like dual waves on an oscilloscope. This theatrical effect



was just one in the bag of tricks used to create the imitation thatch roofs in vogue for high-end Cotswold Cottage-style houses of the 1920s and '30s. Though the technique was sometimes used on its own, it was often used to enhance a roof laid over complicated rolled-eave framing then covered with shingles steamed into curves. While labor-intensive to install, the mesmerizing "wave roof" effect, is surprisingly simple in principle. Basically, the roofer would use wood shingles cut at their butts

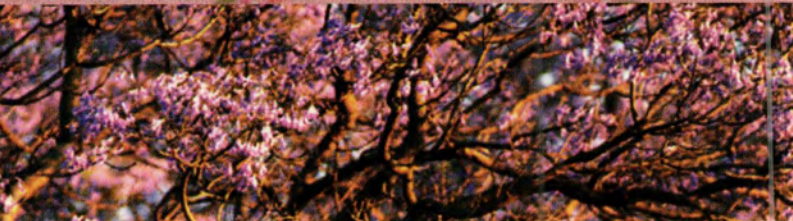
The "wave roof" effect made a virtue of uneven exposures and course lines for adding thatch-like ambience to 1920s wood shingle roofs.

in curves or slight angles (rather than square cut at 90 degrees). Nailing

each new shingle to the short side of its neighbor would make the course line rise; reversing the process made the course line drop down, thereby varying the shingle exposure. In the 1920s there were companies who manufactured these shingles pre-cut, but today they would have to be made by the roofer—not that difficult, but extra effort. An alternative is to contact firms who specialize in such roofs, such as Country Cottage Roofs ([www.endureed.com](http://www.endureed.com)).



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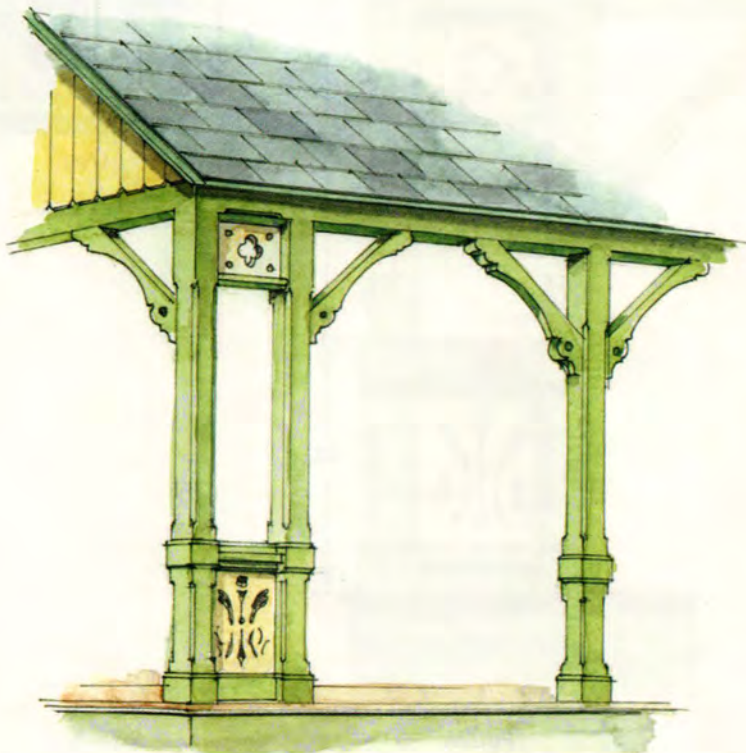
Circle no. 88



# 19th-Century Cottage Details

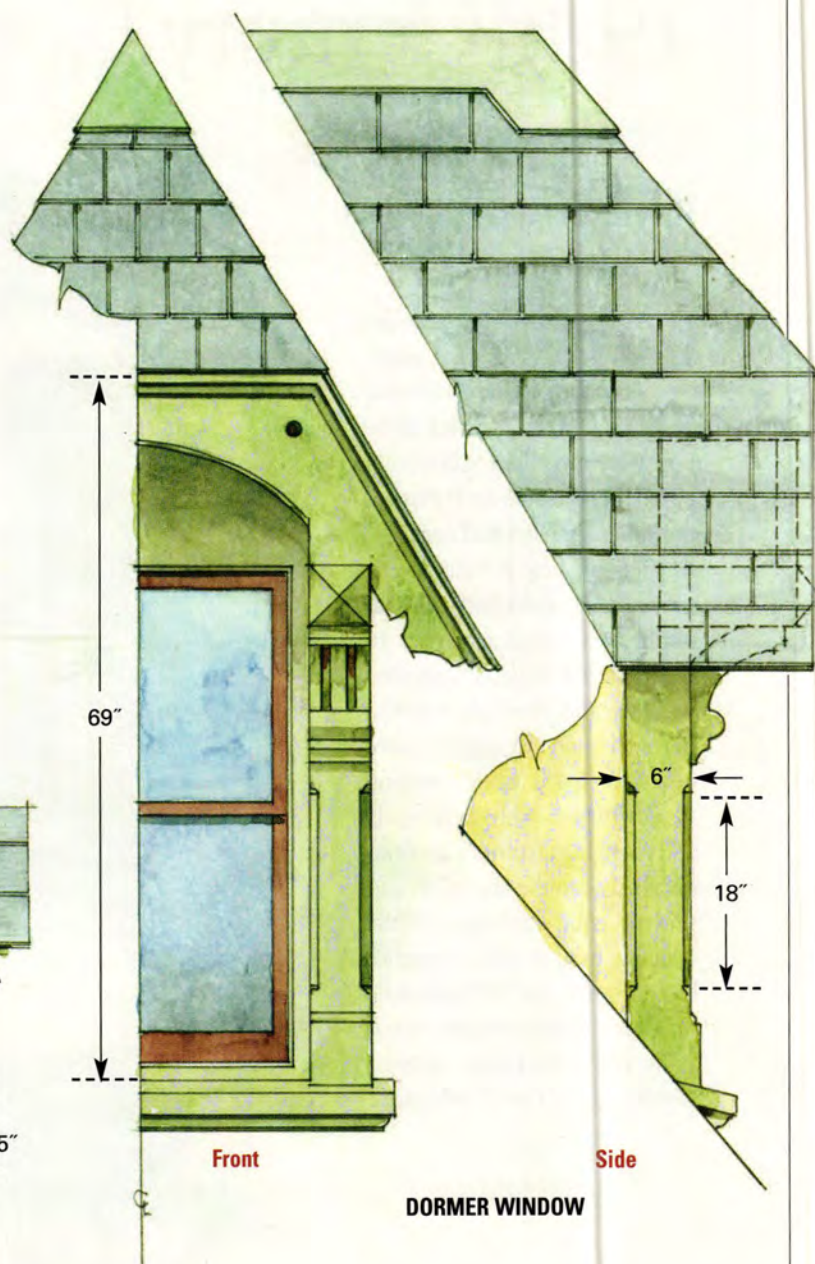
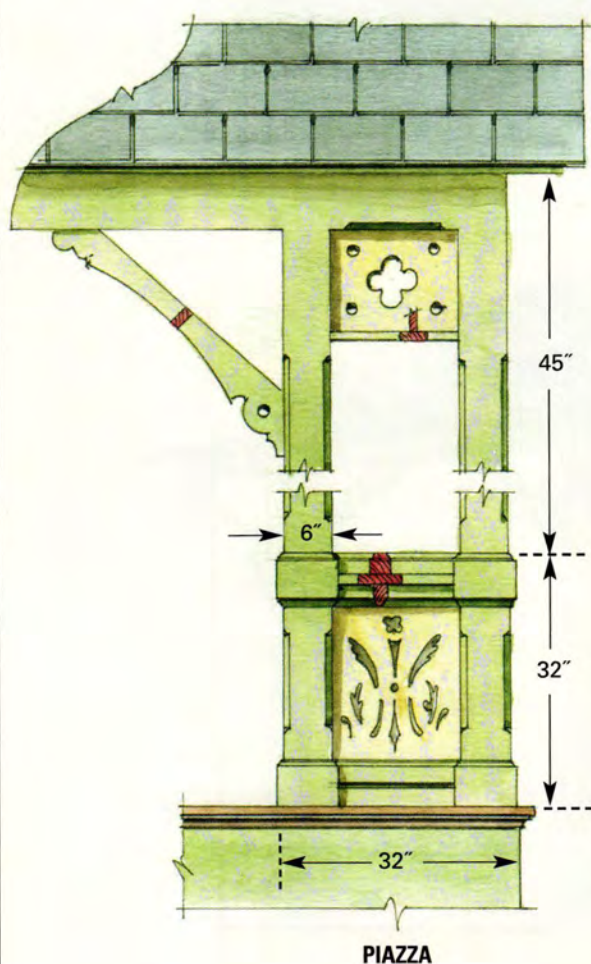
**Drawings by Rob Leanna**

Two of the characteristics that separate Gothic Revival and Stick-style houses from their classically based predecessors are the use of prominent porches and dormers. After 1840, new framing techniques and abundant sawmill lumber enabled carpenters to readily build large ornamented porches and multiple fanciful dormers that extended facades out into space while creating visual interest with dark voids and changing textures. These two details date to the late 1870s and present good examples of the detailing used to enliven porches or dormers on a Stick-style or Queen Anne cottage—especially one with robust exterior woodwork and Gothic influences.

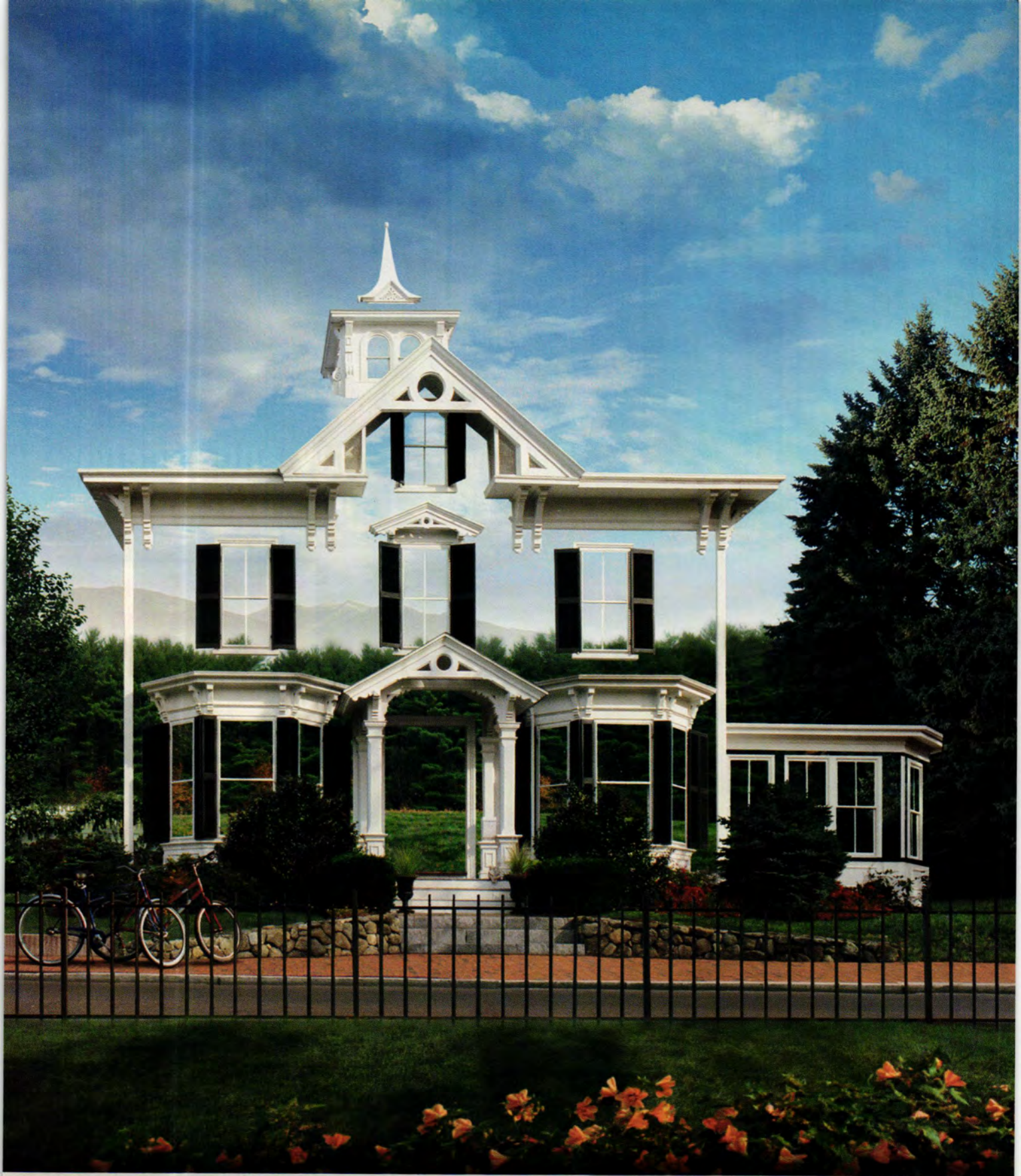




The porch or piazza is supported by square posts decorated with chamfers and incising of the kind found on many houses of the era derived from medieval models. The “baluster” between the rails is a solid panel with a fretsawn decoration, as is the frieze panel above with its Gothic quatrefoil. The dormer is distinguished by the heavily clipped gable roof—another medieval treatment—with more bold posts supporting the rafters cut with decorative tails. All dimensions shown are only guidelines provided to convey general scale and proportion. Actual construction is subject to the standards of modern materials and building codes—particularly if the porch railing must meet safety regulations. 🏠







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## Let the Sun Shine

**Q: Is it true that the National Park Service has a surplus of National Register-eligible buildings that are available to the public for leasing?**  
—Monica Von Geldern, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

We can describe in detail one particular house available for lease, as well as something about the program that offers these National Register-eligible buildings on a competitive bid basis. The Ramirez Solar House is a property of the National Park Service (NPS), located in Milford, Pennsylvania, in the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area. It was designed in 1944 by Henry Wright, Jr., as the weekend home of Gustavo Ramirez, and is the second oldest extant solar house in the country, following a George Fred Keck-designed house near Chicago.

One way the NPS keeps such historic properties going is through its historic leasing program. For example, the Park Service acquired the Ramirez House in 1986 from then owner Harold Nadler, and though it has since undergone considerable repairs and improvements, it needs additional stabilization and systems updating. A couple of years ago it appeared that the house might be well taken care of under a proposal to make it a bed and breakfast, with the prospective lessee agreeing to spend \$180,000 on new plumbing, heating, electrical, and cosmetic repairs. In addition they would have paid the Park Service \$112,000 in rent over 20 years.

"The solar house was but one of several park properties available for historic lease both then and now," says Tom Solon, NPS historical architect in charge of the Recreation Area's historic structures. However, since it took a while for that lease agreement to be negotiated, over time the prospective lessee lost interest. So the house will soon be open for bids, once again.

By KATHLEEN FISHER

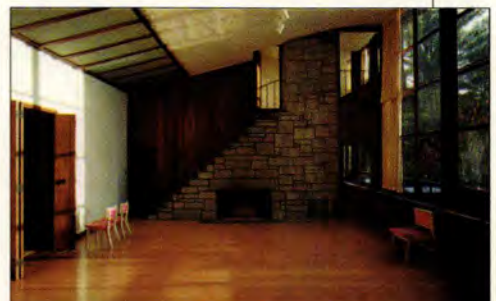
Below: The 18' glass wall of the Ramirez House stands on the blue-stone masonry of the former retreat.  
Bottom: Inside, the great space of the living room.

### A Singular Solar

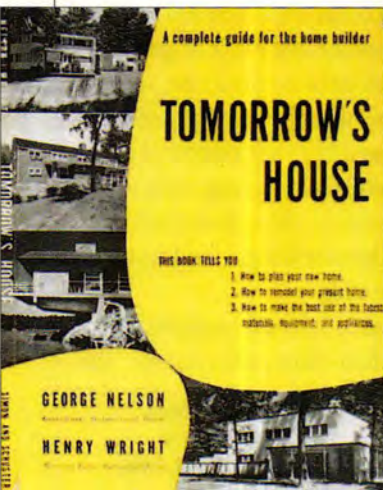
The Ramirez House is both distinctive and National Register-worthy due to its being an early example of passive solar design. Solon notes that while the ancient Greeks and Romans, as well as Native Americans, practiced solar design, modern interest first emerged in Europe following World War I. In America, he says, "Articles concerning solar orientation, shading and available sunlight began appearing regularly in both popular and professional magazines by the 1930s and '40s." Several sun-heated homes were built in the 1940s by a developer named Sloan near Chicago, including the first George Fred Keck-designed "solar home," a term coined by the *Chicago Tribune*.

Earlier, Wright's father, city planner Henry Wright, Sr., wrote several articles on site planning and solar orientation. Wright, Jr., studied the effects of window orientation in the New York City area, summarizing his findings in a 1937 *House & Garden* article. Then in 1938 he expounded on solar mechanics in *Architectural Forum* of which he was managing editor. In 1945 he co-wrote with George Nelson *Tomorrow's House: How to Plan Your Post-War Home Now*, a guide for the layman for remodeling an existing home, which included the Ramirez House as one of his examples.

A journalist as well as an educator, Henry Wright, Jr., featured the Ramirez Solar House in his 1945 book on the future of postwar houses.



ALL PHOTOS THOMAS E. SOLON





## Preservation Perspectives



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Wright's design for the Ramirez House could be dubbed Rustic Modern. He began by removing the upper storey of an existing circa 1910 rustic retreat house, retaining the two rectangles that made up the original main wing and servants' wing. He thus achieved the modern horizontal look but was left with a less-than-exact south-facing orientation for solar design. To compensate, he removed an old verandah blocking the winter sun, completely altered the building's rooflines, and created an insulating window wall that rises 18' to a shed roof that gives the master bedroom, living room, and dining room both magnificent views and maximum sun exposure. A dramatic roof overhang fully shades the midday path of the sun in summer. (The servants' wing and northwest elevations have both less glazing and fewer roof overhangs.)

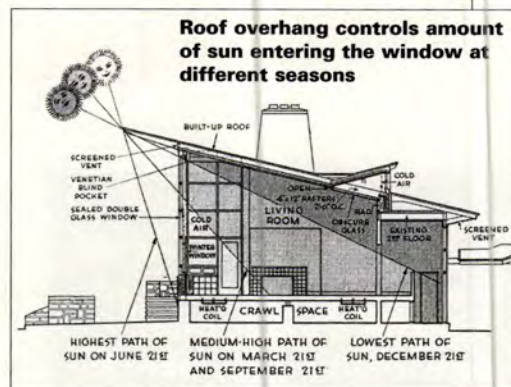
Wright installed Thermopane, a relatively new insulating glass introduced by Libbey-Owens-Ford Glass in 1935, made of hermetically sealed air between two pieces of glass and said to reduce heat loss 50 percent. "Winter windows" placed 8" behind the bottom 5' of window wall channel downdrafts of cold air to concealed radiators. Solar heating did not replace, but rather augmented, the original steam heating system, beefed up by under-floor radiators, crawl space heating coils, and clerestory radiators. When the house was being remodeled, then-standard 4"-thick paper-faced mineral wool batts were added for insulation.

### Open Future Options

Rehabilitation of the building envelope, such as adding better insulation and weather stripping, would improve performance, but not eliminate the imbalance of glazing to thermal mass (the heat storage capacity of the house's basic construction, such as walls, floors, ceilings, and fireplaces). Current recommendations for glazing-to-floor ratio in direct solar gain areas, such as the main wing, are 12 percent, compared to the Ramirez House's 24 percent. Solon says that adding permanent thermal mass to the Ramirez House would be difficult without changing aesthetically or historically significant elements. "This wouldn't rule out improving thermal storage inside interior partitions, below floors, or using portable elements," he adds.

Along with the suggestion for the house to become a bed and breakfast, it has also been mentioned that it could become a combination office and residence. The Park Service has found both of these applications appropriate, but is also interested in hearing other proposed uses that are compatible with the agency's mission, which focuses on the preservation of natural and cultural resources and the provision of recreational opportunities and visitor services. Solon personally would like to see it used for scientific research by a solar engineer or architect, with some public access, envisioning it not as a museum artifact but as a "dynamic artifact" and a "visible example of prototype solar design."

The building will likely be offered for lease sometime this year. If you'd like to get on the Park Service mailing list to receive notification when it is offered, please send a message to [Bill\\_Halainen@nps.gov](mailto:Bill_Halainen@nps.gov).



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For related stories online, see "All Historic Districts Are Not Created Equal," "New Horizons in Historic Preservation," and "Projects That Pay You Back." Just click to "The Magazine" section, and go to the alphabetical list of recent features.





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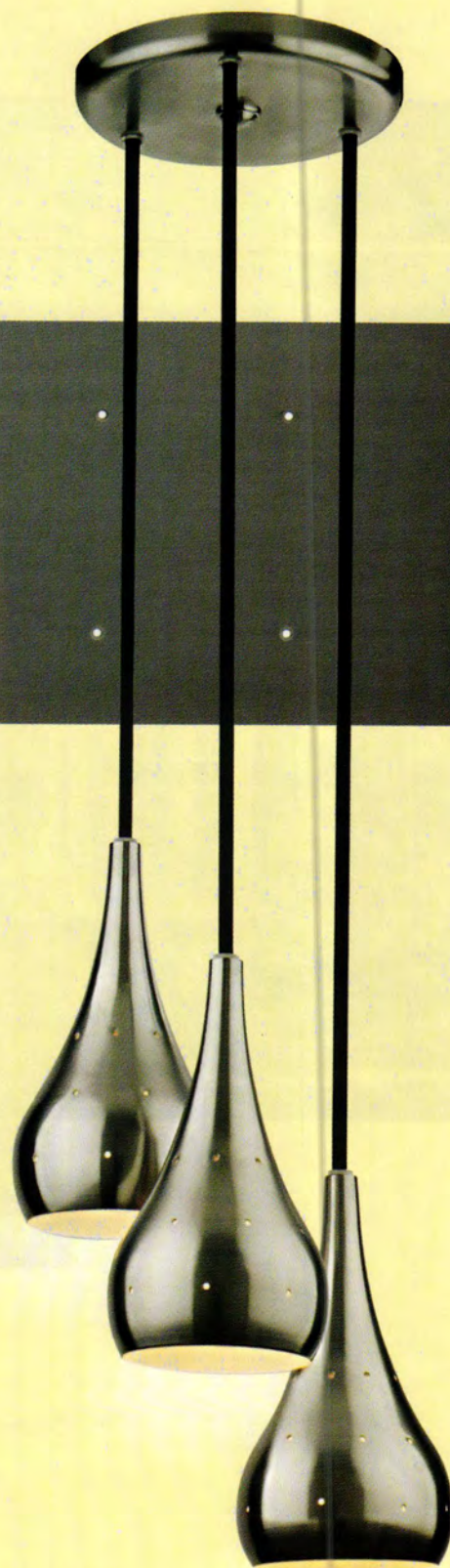
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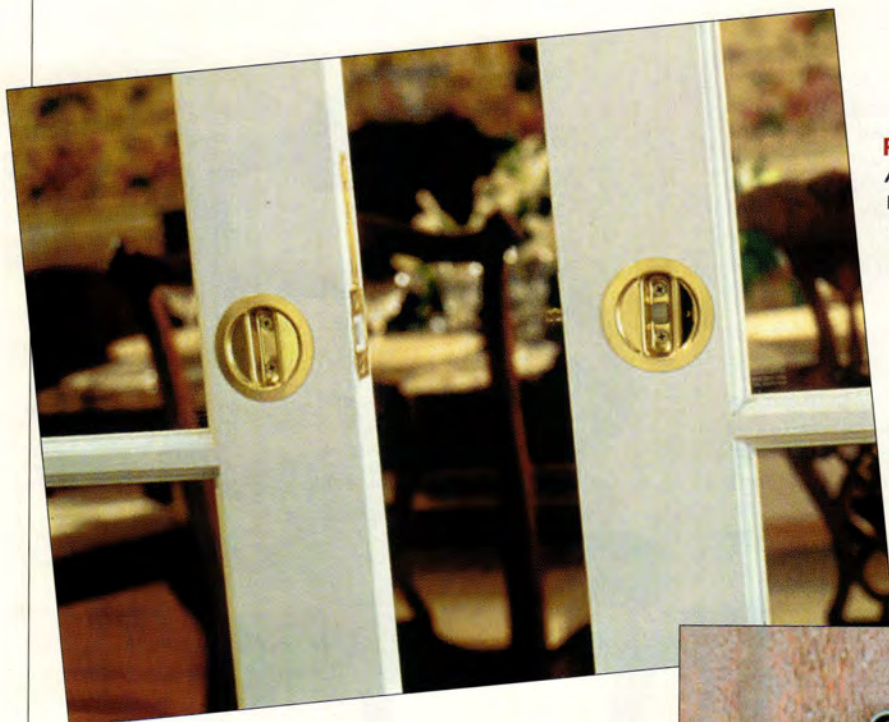


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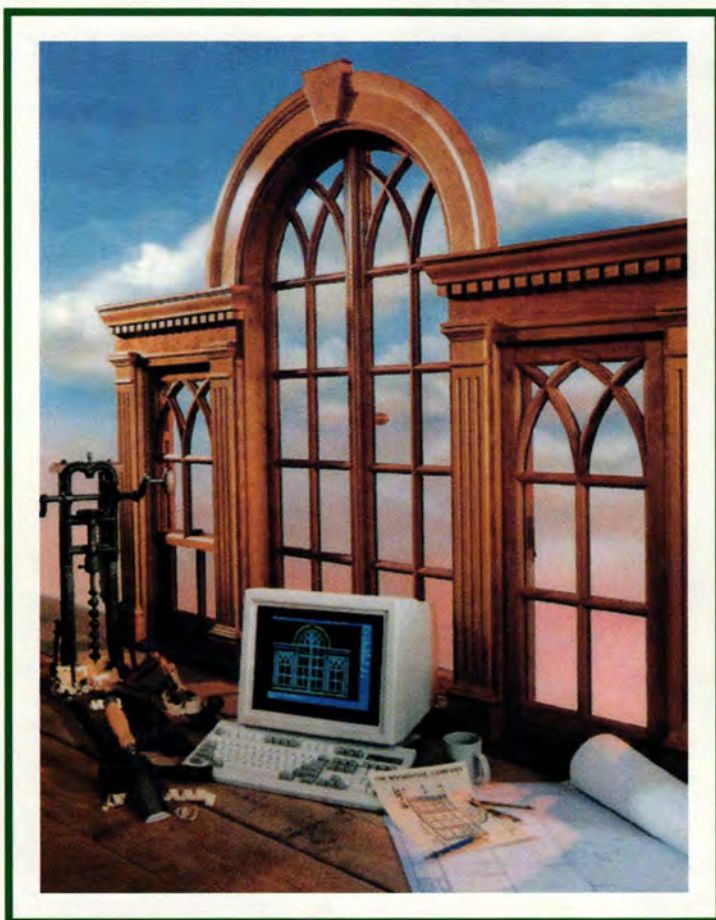
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# A Place for Everything

There are junk drawers, and then there are old-house junk drawers.

The first is universal to all American homes, from condos to cottages. Crammed with twist ties and stray screws, the standard junk drawer is a sanctuary for items we hoard out of practicality or affection or the nagging fear that “this may come in handy some day” (think of the hex key used once to assemble IKEA shelving).

But the old-house junk drawer is more than a household helper. It is a true survival kit, accumulating some very specific items that can't be found in ordinary homes. Even its commonplace contents have uses unique to homes fitting that double-edged description, “charming.”

In our house, some junk-drawer cardboard slipped under the torchere creates the optical illusion that the lamp is standing straight when it's actually crooked but in line with the window frame. A piece of Velcro will latch the medicine cabinet until the bathroom reaches its turn in the renovation rotation.

Here's what we count on finding in our own old-house junk drawer:

- Wire in two colors—brown for discreetly straightening wayward cabinet doors, green for invisibly snugging a fern into the alcove so visitors squeezing by in heavy coats won't knock it over.

- Picture hangers that fit existing holes of varying sizes. In my home office, formerly a bedroom, the bulletin board hangs in a pe-

culiar spot 8" higher than the calendar, and the calendar hangs about 1/4" from the bookshelf. But they won't be rearranged more aesthetically because saving the plaster from unnecessary pounding is top priority.

- Packing tape, for returning those purchases that aren't quite right but that could only have come from restorers' mail-order catalogs and Web sites. The local Wal-Mart simply does not stock cast brass square cup casters.

- Rug tape, to keep area rugs artfully arranged to show off the hardwood floors. (And under the sink—the junk-drawer annex—hardwood floor cleaner, within easy reach during a red-wine-spill-induced panic.)

- Measuring tape, for the hold-your-breath moment when you bring home that flea-market console and pray that it really will fit perfectly in the dining room nook that's *juuuust* too small for standard-sized pieces.

- Abandoned cat toys. Let's face it. While cats accessorize the parlor so beautifully, they show affinity for certain toys for 10-minute segments. After that, complete rejection.

- Crazy Glue. Sure, it never really works. But when the cat knocks the majolica vase off the built-ins, we can dream, can't we?

- Flashlight, to give the man of the house some light when he's sent into the basement crawl space to retrieve the cat who bolted after breaking the vase. The dark recesses of old houses mean that junk-drawer flashlights are for more than power outages. A colleague of mine who lives in an old house once followed a flashlight beam on the trail of a pitifully mewing but out-of-sight cat and discovered a

hidden cistern in his basement.

- S-hooks, because our closets (all two of them) refuse to conform to the organizing gadgets and gear that have miraculously decluttered everyone else's homes. We continue to rely on our wits, using s-hooks in organizing schemes that involve hanging baskets from shelves and hardware from pegboards.

- Sharpies, for marking the baskets and pegboards so we can find things once they're organized. The organizing craze seems to have bypassed the classic junk drawer, but all those DIY Web sites like to imply that reform is possible. The basic gist of their junk drawer organizing tips: Arrange stuff by category, line drawer with egg cartons, put stuff in. What they don't say: Wait three months. Note return of disarray.

- Paint samples from past projects, in case we need to reference the colors again. They live in the junk drawer because we know, in our heart of hearts, that we never will get around to gathering all those details in a renovation journal.

And for the benefit of future generations, I would add one junk-drawer contribution that could be the most important of all. If we're lucky, our restoration projects have uncovered inscriptions on the walls by plumbers from 1910 and homeowners from 1930. These messages from the past reveal linkages, affirming our place in the chain of owners who have loved, hated, neglected, abused, or coddled our beautiful homes. As we renovate and restore, we can memorialize our place in the chain of ownership by inscribing the bare walls with our names, there for future renovators to uncover, and written with—what else?—a pencil pulled from the junk drawer. 🐾

**M. Diane McCormick**, her husband, and cat live in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. She is president of Historic Harrisburg Association, a preservation advocacy organization.





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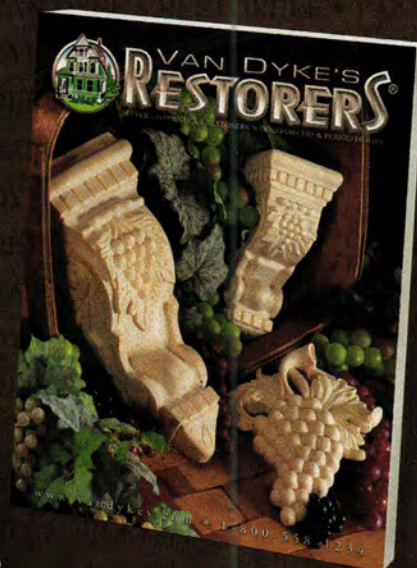
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## All the Hues That Fit

**Awaken sleepy garden beds with splashes of long-blooming heirloom annuals.**

BY JESSIE ANNE KEITH

Annual and tender perennial bedding plants can provide color from early summer to frost if you choose your plants wisely. Many of my favorites are the tried-and-true old-fashioned varieties that my grandmothers and great-grandmothers grew. Not only do these ornamentals maintain a sense of history and nostalgia that suit both me and my 1930s Foursquare, but they also come in every size and color and perform just as well as many of the newer, more highly bred varieties.

Using period plants in the landscape of an old home is as essential to restoration as choosing a period light fixture or color scheme. Nothing is more fitting for a Queen Anne home than a sweep of purple heliotrope, pink geraniums, and asparagus ferns or more enchanting than an Arts & Crafts bungalow bedecked with rambling nasturtiums and sky-blue morning glories.

Selection is not limited either. There are many specialty heirloom plant and seed sellers with a wide variety of selections available. Every year more old gems, once thought to be lost, are being rediscovered and reintroduced commercially.

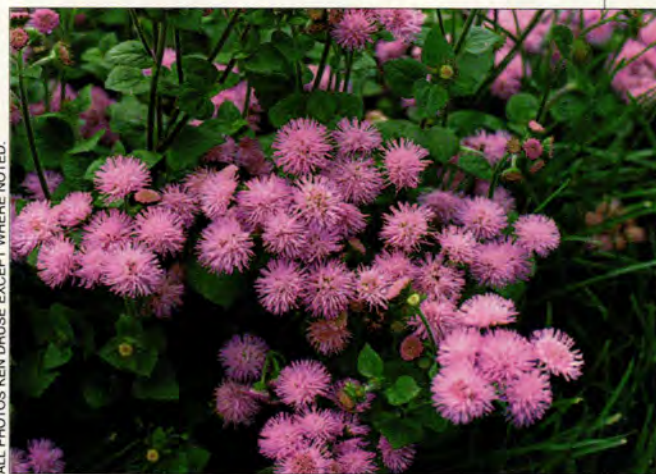
When selecting old-fashioned annuals, I seek the most trouble-free, long-flowering plants available. Next, I organize them by cultural requirements (e.g., light and soil needs) and then appearance (flower color, height, shape, and texture). Finally, I consider the most complementary plant combinations and draft my planting plans. These plans always include annual color in all of my gardens—including perennial, herb, and even vegetable beds.

Here are a just a few of my favorites, arranged by color, with heights and sun requirements.

### Purples and Blues

**Floss Flower** *Ageratum houstonianum* (1–2'; full to part sun): The soft blue flowers of this Mexican native, a Victorian favorite, are happily suited to mixed borders. Most varieties are dwarfs, but some old-fashioned selections such as 'Blue Bouquet' have taller, more graceful habits. They're easy to find and look good with pale-pink geraniums and feathery silver *Senecio cineraria*.

**Garden Heliotrope** *Heliotropium arborescens* (2–3'; full to part sun): Large 4–5" fragrant heads of purple flowers adorn medium-sized plants with crisp green foliage. Originally from South America and Mexico, they were first introduced in the mid-1700s and commonly planted in the Victorian era. They complement tall, white *Ageratum houstonianum* and lime-green *Nicotiana langsdorfii*.

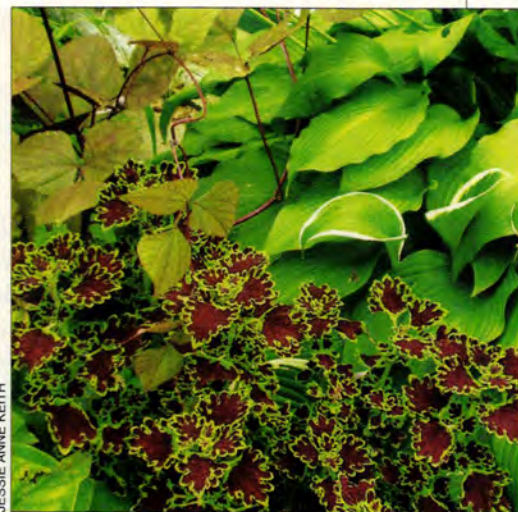


ALL PHOTOS KEN DRUSE EXCEPT WHERE NOTED.

Above: Popular in Victorian times, floss flower is perfect in mixed borders. Below: The purple foliage of hyacinth bean, an early Victorian introduction, hovers above Coleus 'Inky Fingers.'



The 'Heavenly Blue' morning glory is a becoming match to an Arts & Crafts bungalow.



JESSIE ANNE KEITH





JESSIE ANNE KEITH

Introduced in 1841, Spanish Flag is an annual that is heat tolerant and hardy.

**Mexican Tulip Poppy** *Hunnemannia fumariifolia* 'Sunlite' (1 1/2-2'; full to part sun): A 1934 All-America Selections (AAS) winner, 'Sunlite' has a delicate beauty that few annuals can match. Its bright yellow flowers hover over soft, ferny silver-blue foliage and look good with white sweet alyssum and blue *Scabiosa atropurpurea*.

**Shrub Verbena** *Lantana camara* (to 3' as an annual; full sun): Shrub verbena was commonly grown in conservatories—trained into tree-like standards—when first popularized in the early 19th century, but its heat tolerance and beauty have made it a contemporary garden favorite. Its sunny orange and yellow flower clusters light up beside blue-green *Brassica oleracea*.

**Mexican Zinnia** *Zinnia haageana* (2'; full sun): These bushy low-maintenance zinnias—first introduced in the 1860s—have hot orange and yellow flowers. The popular double-flowered cultivar 'Old Mexico' was an AAS in 1962. Partner these with *Cuphea ignea* and ornamental Swiss chard.

## Reds and Pinks

**Mexican Cigar Plant** *Cuphea ignea* (1-2'; full sun): Mexican Cigar Plant is a modern favorite due to its neat bushy habit, fiery red tubular flowers, and heat tolerance, but it's no newcomer. It was also used in Victorian flower gardens. Mix with clumps of garden heliotrope and warm-colored dahlias.

**Spanish Flag** *Ipomoea lobata* (vine to 15'; full sun): The hanging red and cream flowers of this annual vine remind me of an abstract sculpture by Alexander Calder. Introduced in 1841, it is vigorous, is heat tolerant, and looks nice planted among ornamental gourds.

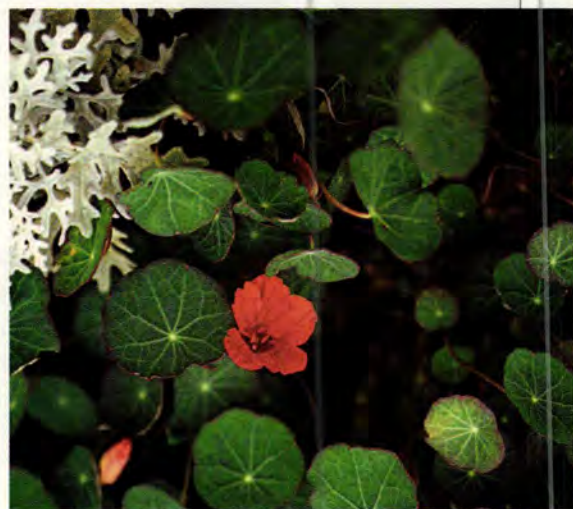
**Zonal Geranium** *Pelargonium x hortorum* (2'; full to part sun): This highly cultivated South African native gained wide garden use by the mid-19th century, and many old cultivars are still available. Of these, I favor the classic red 'Paul Crampel,' a mainstay from the mid-19th century, and 'Mrs. Henry Cox,' an 1879 selection with salmon flowers and tri-colored leaves of red, gold, and near black.

**Nasturtium** *Tropaeolum majus* 'Empress of India' (1'; full sun): The blue-grey leaves and spicy red flowers of this semicascading cultivar stand out in any garden. I pocket them throughout my herb garden because their flowers are edible as well as pretty. 'Empress of India' was first introduced in 1889 and is still widely available.

**Morning Glory** *Ipomoea tricolor* 'Heavenly Blue' (vine to 12'; full sun): This is the perfect old-fashioned sky-blue morning glory. The large flowers of this turn-of-the-20th-century heirloom reach 4" in diameter. For color contrast, plant them with orange or red trailing nasturtiums.

**Hyacinth Bean** *Lablab purpureus* (vine to 20'; full sun): The purple-hued foliage, amethyst flowers, and shiny purple pods of this vigorous vine are all showy and long lasting. An African native, it was first offered to gardeners in the early 1800s. I let mine weave across fences, trellises, and even shrubs.

## Yellows and Oranges



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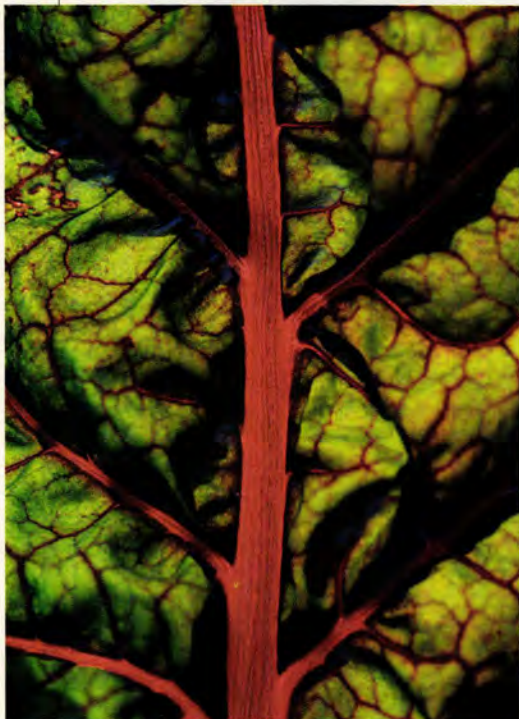
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## Greens

**Asparagus Fern** *Asparagus densiflorus* (1 1/2–2'; part sun): The ferny bright green foliage of this easy-to-grow South African tender perennial always looks great. The popular selection 'Sprenger' was first made available in the early 1890s, but I favor the early 20th-century introduction 'Myersii,' which has tidy foxtail-like branches.

**Swiss Chard** *Beta vulgaris* 'Ruby Red' (2'; full sun): This early 20th-century edible beauty has broad textured leaves of dark green and a center stalk and veins of vivacious vermillion. It adds a structural accent to mixed borders and shines beside both hot and cool colored plants.

**Banana-Leaved Canna** *Canna* 'Musifolia' (6–10'; full to part sun): This bold Peruvian plant is grown for its large banana-like leaves rather than its flowers, which are small and red. First presented in 1858, it was common in Victorian gardens. It creates a great backdrop for tall annuals, such as *Nicotiana sylvestris*, as well as grasses and composites.

## Whites

**Sweet Alyssum** *Lobularia maritima* (6–12"; full sun): The taller white form of this fragrant little garden annual is especially pretty. Its Mediterranean heritage makes it a good choice for rock gardens and border edges, which is how it was commonly planted when popularized in the early 19th century.

**South American Tobacco** *Nicotiana sylvestris* (5'; full to part sun): This tall and elegant Argentinian species has been cultivated since the late 19th century. Its nodding white tubular flowers are sweetly scented and make a pleasing backdrop in mixed borders.

**Annual Pincushion Flower** *Scabiosa atropurpurea* (3'; full to part sun): Planted in American gardens by the late 1700s, these flowers come in many shades, but my favorite is soft white. Pincushion flowers look perforated and edged in lace—hence the name—and make great cut flowers.

## Variegates and Bi-colors

**Imperial Taro** *Colocasia esculenta* 'Illustris' (3'; part sun): Taros look bold and tropical in any border and this early 20th-century selection is no exception. The purple leaf stalks and black mottled blades of this tender bulb look great clumped with *Asparagus densiflorus* 'Myersii'.

**Coleus** *Solenostemon scutellarioides* (1–3'; part sun): This foliage plant became popular in the Victorian era, and many old cultivars remain. Two nice selections are the 1908 purple-leaved, green-edged 'Brilliance' and the green-and-yellow-leaved 'Buttercup' from 1881.

This year, step away from the newest of the new and incorporate a few of these old-fashioned summer annuals into your garden plans. Their history and continuous color make them perfect for every old-house garden. 🏡

*Jessie Anne Keith is a horticulturist, plant biologist, and freelance writer who lives in Wilmington, Delaware.*

*Nicotiana sylvestris* adds a sweet fragrance to the garden.



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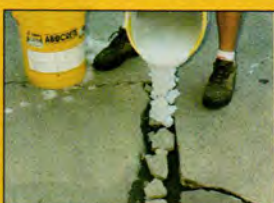
Rotted loadbearing column base sawed off and replaced with **WoodEpoxy**.



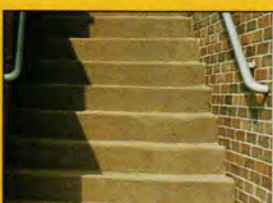
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BY PAUL KELSEY WILLIAMS  
PHOTOS BY CHARLES STECK

## How one shop restores old windows to function like new.

**H**ank Handler, owner of the Oak Grove Restoration Company in Maryland, simply doesn't "do windows." But his company will repair or re-create even the most intricate historic window as part of an overall restoration job, and, since opening for business in 1974, he and his skilled craftsmen have worked on some of America's most prestigious historic buildings. Recently, he invited *Old-House Journal* to one of his millwork shops near Laytonsville, Maryland, to take a peek at the careful process of restoring old wood windows or, if need be, re-creating exact replicas.

After 30 years of experience, Handler believes that it's near impossible to improve on the design of traditional wood-framed sash. "Early craftsmen were really engineers, and their mathematical calculations, materials, and knowledge of the weight and stress on a sash window were all carefully incorporated into the design, which could last for hundreds of years without major maintenance," he says. If left completely unattended, however, windows will eventually fall apart, as any old-house owner will tell you.

# SASH





# TO GLASS



Hank Handler, the proprietor of Oak Grove Restoration Company, inspects a newly arrived sash in his workshop just outside Laytonsville, Maryland, to determine what is necessary for restoration. He believes that original windows are an important historic building fabric, and their largely unchanged design over the past 200 years serves as testament to their superior engineering. Handler uses modern tools to create window components. Inset above: Mortise-and-tenon joints are the building blocks of traditional window construction. Mortises are made using a hollow chisel mortiser. Inset left: A square chisel with a rotating round drill bit is pressed into the wood, cutting a square mortise.







Above: Tenons are cut to fit into the square mortise. The tenoning machine cuts the top and bottom of each joint as the wood passes between the rotating cutters. Left: Oak Grove craftsman Will Arsnow demonstrates a tenoning machine that cuts the tenon on the sash rails.

The unique profile of each sash is cut into tool knives. Custom tooling is essential to milling replacement window parts to match the original sash shape.



## Investigation

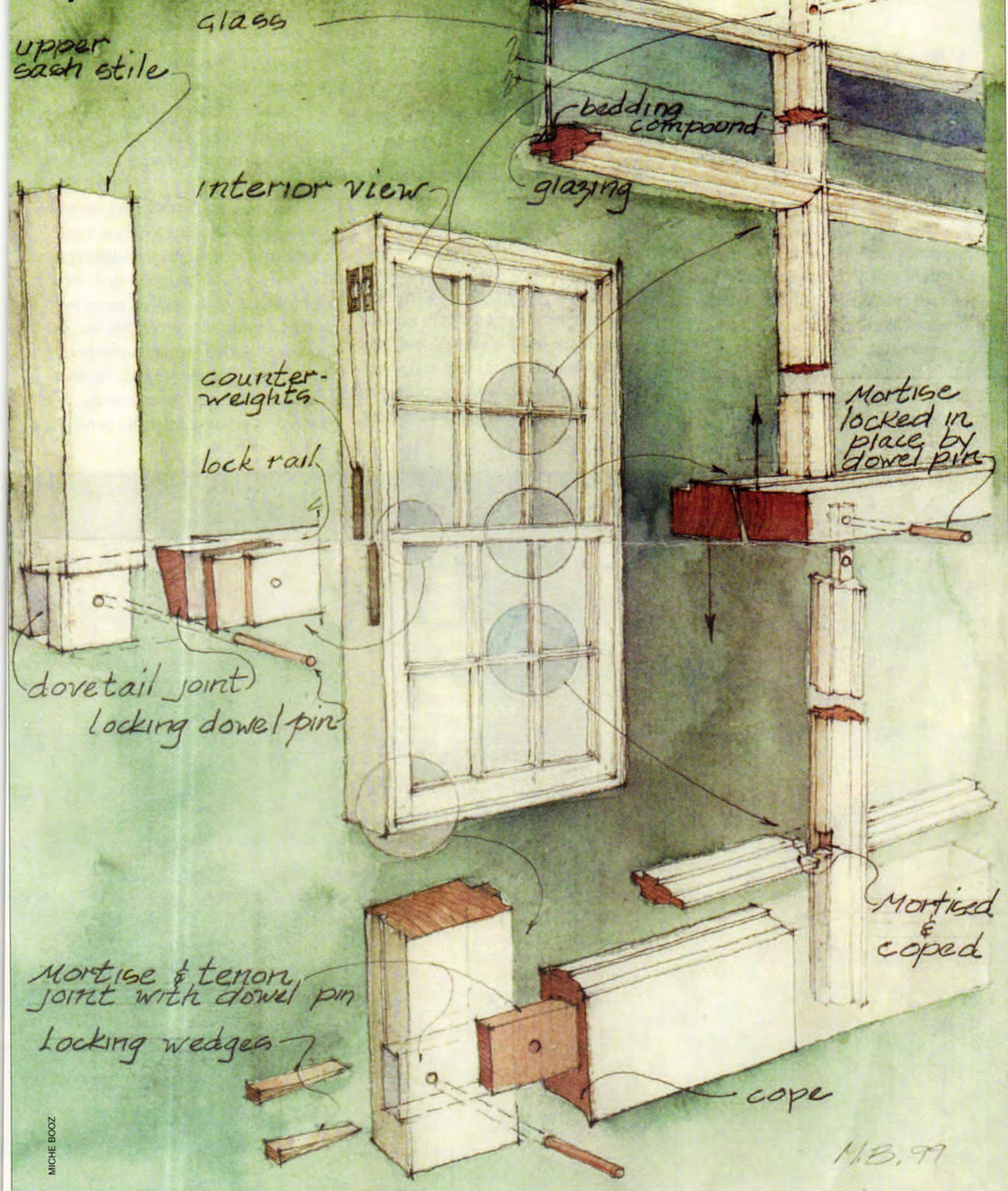
Handler begins the process by removing the sash from the building. He then tags each one with a brass marker inscribed with a unique identifying number. A corresponding number is placed in the window opening—a simple but critical step he learned the hard way on one of his first jobs when he discovered that each of the handmade windows was unique in size and shape. “We didn’t mark their original location, and spent days trying to find the match once they had been repaired,” Handler says.

Once in the shop, he examines each sash to determine its condition—he finds muntins most prone to failure because of their narrow width. Next, Handler’s craftsmen take careful shop notes, measuring all aspects of the window, and make a unique work plan for each sash. During this investigation, Handler has noticed that wood fillers, glues, and inappropriate repairs added in the past have led to rot and failure of the window. “Over time, some wood filler can fail because the wood sash is constantly expanding and contracting, pushing the fillers out of its intended spot,” he says. Handler believes the biggest mistakes people make when dealing with old wood windows is believing that wood filler can be used on the exterior of the sash instead of a dutchman repair and paint that can prevent or stop rot. “We treat the interior and exterior of the sash differently,” says Handler. “Repairs are done so glue joints aren’t exposed to the weather.” To achieve this, Handler designs all bonding surfaces on the interior side of the sash. “This ensures the repair will last longer,” says Hank.

The key to a good repair job is to replace failing parts with wood species that are naturally resistant to rot. Old growth cypress, mahogany, and Spanish cedar are preferred. Though cedars are available in the market today, Handler scours the country for ancient cypress that was harvested long ago but may have never made it to a sawmill. A recent cache was found in the form of sunken logs in a Florida bog that were cut in 1850 and determined to be 2,500 years old. He likes to use tight-grained, clear, all-heart wood with the sapwood cut away. “This is what historic sash are made from,” he says.



# Wood Window Construction by Oak Grove Restoration





## Window Repair

Once the windows are measured and assessed for the level of repair work needed, the glazing compound is removed with an infra-red stripper (or by placing the sash in a steam box), parts are labeled, and broken glass is discarded. For most jobs Handler grinds shaper knives to match the muntin's distinctive moulding profile. The shop's custom knives are made of high-speed steel and can be moved from machine to machine.

Once the new wood muntins are made, Handler secures these replacement parts by dovetailing the dutchmen in place.



Hank Handler keeps his father's hand planes in his shop, a reminder of the attention to detail needed for authentic window moulding repair.

## Building Windows

If a window is beyond repair, craftsman Will Arsnow at Oak Grove will re-create it, having mastered a technique of window building that has been used for more than 200 years. Fortunately, today, he has the advantage of modern power tools to make the job a little faster—although care and precision remain central to the work. First, he makes the stiles, which are mortised at each end. The mating tenon is machine cut

using no less than three different tools. Once the sash is assembled, the joints are locked in place by a slightly tapered dowel pin. Locking wedges are inserted into the edge of the stile to secure the joint.

Like the stiles, muntins are cut with custom cutters to create a unique moulding pattern that replicates the original profile. They are also mortised and coped together, and then held in place by a tapered pin. Handler notes that the pins are critical, as the upper sash needs to support up to 30 pounds of glass. The joints produced are so precise and strong that glue is not necessary. Before the panes are



Left: A shaper, using the custom tooling, cuts the profile into the edge of the sash parts.

Below left: With the millwork complete, the assembly process begins. Mortise-and-tenon joints are slipped together and fasted with wooden pegs eventually sawed flush.

Right: The holes for the wooden pegs are carefully misaligned. As the peg is driven through the joint, the offset of the hole pulls the joint together. This ancient process is called "draw boring."



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installed, the sash is primed.

Arsnow completes the job by cutting new, artisan-blown cylinder glass manufactured by the Bendheim Company to replicate the slight irregularities found in historic glass. A small amount of Glaze-Ease 601 glazing compound and metal glazing points bed the pane in place. A bead of glazing compound is also applied to the exterior of the glass. Then, the window is painted and returned to the work site for installation. Arsnow's exacting work produces a perfectly square window for optimum performance, and any adjustments that are necessary to fit the historic façade opening are made to the jambs or stiles.



Custom-made cutters or tools are the hallmark of Oak Grove, each made to match original window molding profile.

Handler is proud to have worked on many notable buildings, such as Tudor Place and Evermay in Washington, D.C., and Liberia Plantation in Virginia. He also designs and builds additions to both new and old homes throughout the country. His window repair and reconstruction techniques are a vital component to his projects, but he is careful to note that he cannot repair or replace windows economically on a small scale simply because the custom profile knives are expensive to produce.

Handler's preservation philosophy is apparent in the quality of his product. "I'm afraid I'll be struck by lightning if I remove too much historic fabric from any given window or other restoration project," he jokes, preferring to leave as much of the craftsmen's prior work as intact as possible. 🏠

*Paul Kelsey Williams is a writer and architectural historian who lives in Washington, D.C.*

*Special thanks to Hank Handler of Oak Grove Restoration, 5815 Riggs Road, Laytonsville, MD 20882, (301) 948-6412.*



To make long-lasting joints that withstand weather, connections must be snug—not too tight and not too loose. The parts should fit together without being forced. Left and above: In the final sash assembly, the mortise-and-tenon joints are locked in place with a tapered pin and then held in place with locking wedges (right) that are trimmed flush.





By JAMES C. MASSEY AND  
SHIRLEY MAXWELL

# Dormers, & Bays & Turrets

**A historical look  
at how windows  
expand into  
architectural  
appendages.**

**S**ince before written time, windows have functioned as openings in buildings to admit light and air, while visually relieving the expanse of wood or masonry walls with the tracery of muntins and the lightness of glass. Historically, however, there are many kinds of windows that pop out of buildings, defying wall planes or rising from rooflines to add delightful interest to an elevation even as they gain in practicality. Here we'll take a look at three of the most common window projections—dormers, bays, and turrets—and how they have contributed to the design of houses over the course of three centuries.

ALL PHOTOS JAMES C. MASSEY EXCEPT WHERE NOTED







its upscale “restoration” into an elegant country house in the early 20th century—a common practice then that continues to this day.

In the Victorian era, dormers became much more ornamental, as is the case with the Gothic Revival Hermitage in Ho-Ho-Kus, New Jersey, on the opposite page. Note that the dormer rises directly from the wall of the house and is framed in the same brownstone ashlar as the house itself, probably derived from French tradition. To the sides are smaller dormers, raised up on the roof in the normal manner. These dormers are highly enriched with scrollwork and a pinnacle, as well as diamond-paned windows. Actually, the Hermitage as we see it is an 1848 remodeling by architect



## Dormers

Ordinary? Well, yes. Commonplace? Certainly. Still, the dormer window must rank as one of the all-time great inventions in house building. Even in the early 18th and 19th centuries, they were not universally used (all that dark attic area going to waste except for storage), but frame a window into the roof and—presto!—you have light and ventilation, and livable, usable space. A dormer adds a nice architectural touch to the house design as well. Plain shed-roofed dormers like those in the little 18th-century cottage in Haddonfield, New Jersey (center, left), are the most basic type. Some early dormers might also be known as lucernes or

lutherns. Dormers became one of the distinguishing features in fine Georgian houses, such as the 1762 Derby House in Salem, Massachusetts (top), where they provide livable attic space and an architectural grace note to the composition. The end dormers of the set of three have gable roofs, while the center one has a fancier arch-head roof. Naturally they are smaller than the downstairs windows, as befits their rooftop status. At Carter's Grove near Williamsburg, (1750–1755), one of the great James River plantations and now a Colonial Williamsburg museum, a tall roof sports a notable array of hipped dormers (center), tall and narrow in the Virginia tradition. They are indeed handsome but were actually added to the house during

William Ranlett of an 18th-century Dutch house. As at Carter's Grove, such updatings may be found at any period. In the early 20th century, the bungalow became one of the basic American house types, one frequently defined by dormers that provide light and space under a broad, sloping roof over a single storey. This bungalow in Eugene, Oregon (center, right), has triple windows under a high and broad stuccoed gable, which contributes substantially to making a more livable second floor. Some bungalows feature as many as six windows in one wide, linear dormer. In Colonial Revival houses, double dormers became common, with the same advantage, although historically such dormers were not found before the Greek Revival era.



# Dormers, & Bays Turrets

## Bay Windows

**T**he basic American bay window has been in common use from the Victorian period to this day. It's a simple, very functional way to increase light, ventilation, and view in a room. Most bays are three-sided or curved, although there are many variations and some special terms that apply. Their use arose in Europe in the medieval period and Renaissance, mostly in large structures and mansions, not in the simple houses of common folk. The classic American bay window may be one storey or two, but it rises from the foundation, as do most examples here. The



exception is the little rectangular Gothic Revival window (center, right) that is more properly called an oriel, as it does not extend to the ground. The Baltimore row house (center) is a bow-front house, as the bow extends from top to bottom. The bow-front fashion dates to the Federal period. The other bow (right) in Old Town Alexandria, Virginia, is correctly a bow oriel, as it is limited to the second storey. The house at top is a classic Sears ready-cut (Modern Home, #306; 1911–1917) in Strasburg, Virginia. Its prominent two-storey bay window is topped by a large pediment. In the Garden District of New

Orleans (center, far left) is an unusual Queen Anne house with a four-window bay and a center panel between the pairs of windows. The upper sash are fancy small panes and the lower one a single pane, a typical configuration of the period. The bay is surmounted by a projecting balcony on consoles, an unusual feature. In a 1930s bungalow in Reno, Nevada (center, far right), the normal three-sided bay gains visual interest through cobblestone walls and steel casement sash. The popularity of bay windows continued through the 20th century, in everything from bungalows to Colonial Revival houses.





## Turrets

These three types of windows—dormers, bays, and turrets—share the common feature of windows that project from the house—in the roof or on the wall—and provide the pleasures of light and ventilation. The turret, common in the late Victorian, Queen Anne, Eastlake, and Romanesque house, carried the advantage to the maximum. It is a circular or octagonal bay attached generally to a corner of the house and frequently, though not necessarily, rising above the roofline to create an extra storey, as in the circa 1896 house in Laurins, South Carolina, by George Barber, shown at right. Barber's "Houses by Mail" designs most often are



JACK E. BOUCHER



fanciful and highly ornamented; this octagonal example is a model of its kind. Turrets arose in the medieval period in castles and churches, usually for stairs or as watchtowers, in which case they could also be called *échaugettes*. This Victorian house in Washington, Georgia (left, center), has a less common, square corner turret, as well as a fine four-window rectangular bay. 🏠

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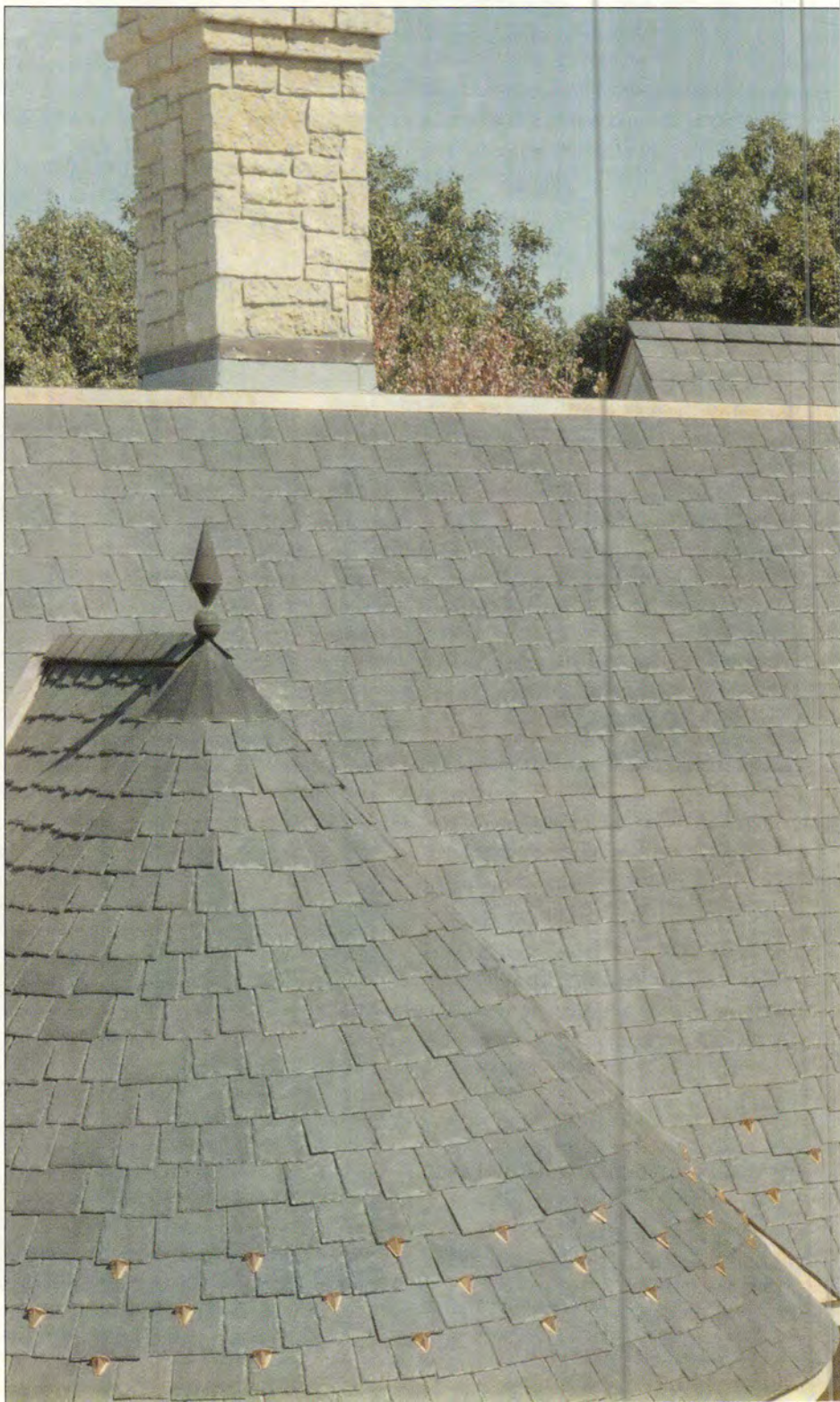
# Making Sense of Slate Roof

**Inventive imitators can match the panache of stone without the overhead.**

BY JOHN LEEKE

**S**late shingles, traditionally split from natural stone, are known to perform for decades—even a century or more with good installation and regular maintenance. Since the 1890s, however, roofing manufacturers have been combining other materials to produce man-made shingles that aimed to last longer, look better, or cost less. Have any of these products ever lived up to their promise? Sometimes, yes.

Many a building roofed with asbestos cement shingles in the 1930s or '40s is still sound and dry today—a testament to the durability of one of the oldest types of “slate pretenders.” When asbestos was eliminated in building products in the 1970s, though, it opened this specialized corner of the roofing industry to new materials and product types that have been growing ever since. Because the industry has changed once again since *Old-House Journal* last reviewed the subject in 2002, here we present our look at another round of seismic shifts in the field of slate stand-ins and what you should keep in mind when considering these remarkable materials for roofing a historic house.





# Stand-Ins



## Fiber Cement Slates

Asbestos based fiber cement slates and shingles first appeared in Europe over a century ago and were being manufactured in America by 1906. In this type of material portland cement binds together tiny mineral fibers that act as reinforcements—like the steel rebar in concrete, but on a much smaller scale. The mix of cement and fibers were cured in molds under pressure to form a variety of building products, including underground drainage pipes, boards, panels, and siding. When manufactured into shingles, the result was roofing that was durable through decades of weather exposure and resistant to fire. Widely sold in the 1920s and '30s for new construction and reroofing existing buildings, asbestos cement shingles lost their market to asphalt shingles in the 1950s and '60s, and the need to eliminate the use of asbestos in the 1970s.

In the 1980s, a new generation of fiber cement products were developed using fiberglass and cellulose from wood as the reinforcing fibers. Fiber cement siding has been popular for new construction

**Above:** Cunning tab patterns combined with laminated shingle technology allow several asphalt shingle products, such as Camelot from GAF, to affect the shadow lines of slate.

**Left:** Composites molded from real slates, such as Lamarite from Tamko, can replicate the actual thickness and texture of stone in lighter, man-made materials.



in the Gulf states, where termite damage is a threat and fiber cement roofing became an attractive alternative to wood shingles in California and the West Coast because it resisted fire. During the 1990s, however, several manufacturers moved in and out of the fiber cement shingle market, indicating that these newer products are still in development. Some of the first fiber cement slates failed when the cement transferred moisture to the wood fibers, causing them to swell and delaminate the slate. Resin or paint coatings can provide protection against water absorption but increase the need for proactive maintenance. (If birds peck at the failed coating, they may expose the shingles' softer core, allowing rapid deterioration and the growth of moss.) When considering fiber cement shingles, consult the manufacturer about use in your region; some products are recommended only for the Sun Belt or where freeze-thaw cycles are minimal.

## Composite Slates

Since the year 2000, the slate stand-in market has been joined by several products that, while quite diverse in individual make-up, can generally be grouped under the heading of composite slates. What relates these products as a category is the way each takes particles of one sort or another and binds them together with plastic polymer resins, such as polyethylene. The particles themselves come from a wide variety of sources. For example, pulverized natural stone, such as slate, shale, limestone, or clay, may be employed as a low-cost aggregate that helps block UV (ultraviolet) radiation from the sun. Some manufacturers add recycled materials, such as shredded tire rubber, to provide flexibility. Carbon black may be included to block UV rays and slow down deterioration of the resin, while cellulose or fiberglass is sometimes incorporated as reinforcement. The composite mixtures are then heated and compressed into molds that imitate the shapes and textures of traditional roof materials such as slates or



Above: Clay tile, shaped and glazed with naturalistic variations, has historic precedent as a slate imitator and is available today in products lighter than stone, such as Celadon Ceramic Slate. Left: Today's slate-like asphalt shingles, such as Capstone from Elk, also come in a wider range of historic slate colors beyond the basic greys and blacks.

## The Preservation Take on Ersatz Slate

Man-made roofing shingles that evoke natural slate inhabit an unusual position in historic preservation. Though their synthetic, nonoriginal nature places them squarely in the category of substitute materials, as defined by the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, some early asbestos cement slate simulacra from the 1930s are now considered historic in their own right. More to the point for old-house restorers is the potential of the best new products to earn cautious federal acceptance for preservation use. While the ideal reroofing material for an old slated house is slate (either new or recycled), the expense, weight, or limited availability of true slate can make it prohibitive at times. In such cases, man-made slate may be an acceptable option—especially when used on rear or subordinate roofs, and where the product matches the "details and craftsmanship of the original, as well as the color, surface texture, surface reflectivity, and finish," as outlined in Preservation Brief #16 from the National Park Service. If you hope to take advantage of tax incentives for home rehabilitation (in states that provide them), first check with your local historical commission or State Historic Preservation Office to make sure using a slate substitute is appropriate for your project.





even wood shingles. Some products have layered or laminated construction.

Recently, manufacturers using recycled particles seem to be moving from postconsumer materials (which can be highly variable) to postindustrial materials (which are more consistent). When the resin binder used to make the composite comes from a recycled source, the resulting shingle is sometimes considered to be environmentally friendly. However, the variety of materials in the composite may complicate the high-value recycling of

try to formulate and design their products to prevent this scenario. When considering composite slates for your roof, listen to an experienced roofing contractor who knows the products and how they perform in your region. Remember that the only certain indication of durability is the test of time.

## Polymer Slates

Substantially different but equally new is another category of slate stand-ins made almost entirely from plastics. In this tech-

nology, mixtures of polymer resins, such as polyethylene or TPO (the brand name for thermo-plastic polyolefin), are injected into molds under high pressure (sometimes after adding fillers and other modifiers), to produce a slatelike product. Since these shingles are a solid resin that has “knitted” together in long strands at the molecular level, they are not layered and cannot fail by delamination. The TPO plastic polymers have been used in the automotive industry since the early 1970s, and their performance and strength characteristics out in the weather are proven and well understood. Polymer roofing technology has a proven track record in the short-to mid-term (three to 15 years) with very limited UV breakdown taking place at the weathering surface.

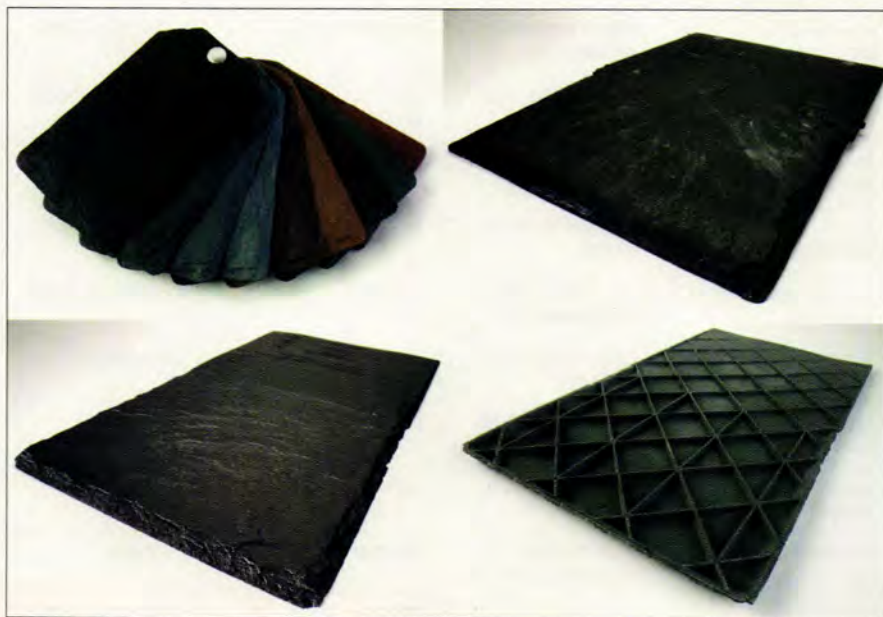
Environmental ratings are high when these shingles are made from recycled TPO and other post-manufacturing materials. High-value recycling at the end of the shingles’ life is engineered-in when the resin is TPO, because it is chemically designed to be readily recycled. Like most composite slates, polymer slates are light, which can be an asset if the roof structure cannot carry the weight of natural slate.



**Above:** Concrete tile, already close to architectural slate in thickness, bears a striking resemblance in products like Natural Slate from Vande Hey-Raleigh. **Left:** Manufacturing technology that varies color not only from tab-to-tab but across tabs adds another level of realism to slatelike asphalt shingles such as Centennial Slate from Certainteed.

installation waste—and recycling of the slates themselves when they reach the end of their service period. Though manufacturers test their products in accelerated weathering chambers that scientifically suggest they will have considerable life, the wide range of ingredients also makes their long-term performance difficult to anticipate. For example, if UV deteriorates the binders, there is the potential to release particles at the surface, so manufacturers

Polymer technology offers new ways to clone stone (clockwise from upper left): multiple, naturally subtle variations in hues (EcoStar); authentic texturing of slate edges and surfaces (Maxtiles); realistic surface enhancements over integral slate color (DaVinci); reduced weight through structural undersides (DaVinci).







Left: Fiber-cement, one of the oldest materials for simulating slate, has seen most use in the sunbelt, where it first became popular as a fire-resistant alternative to wood shingles (Grey Slate from Firefree).



Above: Some polymer slate manufacturers offer products that specifically replicate historic roofing styles, like the large, French Method dimensions and diamond shape of Titus tiles from Ecostar.

## Suppliers

Manufacturer	Phone/Web site	Product	Material	Weight per Square
Re-Con Building Products Portland, Oreg.	(877) 276-7663 13 firefreeplus.com	FireFree Plus Quarrryslate	Fiber Cement	570 lbs.
Auburn Tile, Inc. Ontario, Calif.	(408) 984-2841 14 auburntile.com	Auburn Tile; Auburn Lite	Concrete Tile	1100 lbs. 780 lbs.
Columbia Concrete Products Canada	(877) 388-8453 15 crooftile.com	Columbia Roof Tile Northwest Slate	Concrete Tile	1050 lbs.
Monierlifetile Irvine, Calif.	(800) 273-7663 16 Monierlifetile.com	Slate and Split Slate (standard & light weight)	Concrete Tile	600-1030 lbs.
Vande Hey- Raleigh Little Chute, Wisc.	(800) 236-8453 17 vhr-roof-tile.com	Modern Slate Lightweight Slate	Concrete Tile Polymer	1100-1320 lbs.
Celadon New Lexington, Ohio	(800) 699-9888 18 ludowici.com	Celadon Ceramic Slate Imperial Slate	Ceramic Tile	500 lbs.
Gladding McBean Lincoln, Calif.	(800) 984-2529 19 gladdingmcbean.com	Lincoln Interlocking Placer Interlocking	Ceramic Tile	900-960 lbs.
Crowe Building Products Canada	(905) 529-6818 20 authentic-roof.com	Authentic Roof 2000	Polymer	223-260 lbs.
EcoStar	(800) 211-7170 21 premiumroofs.com	Majestic Slate Titustiles	Polymer	240-290 lbs.
Royal Building Products Canada	(604) 281-8171 22 royalbuildingproducts.com	Dura Slate	Polymer	240-280 lbs.
R and R Building Products Canada	(800) 865-8784 23	New Tech Slate	Polymer	189- 220 lbs.
Certainteed Valley Forge, Pa.	(800) 782-8777 24 certainteed.com	Centennial Slate	Fiber Glass-Asphalt	355 lbs.
Elk Dallas, Tex.	(800) 945-5545 25 elkcorp.com	Capstone Grandslate	Fiber Glass-Asphalt	290 lbs. 425 lbs.
GAF Materials Corp Wayne, N.J.	(800) 223-1848 26 gaf.com	Camelot Premium	Fiber Glass-Asphalt	270 lbs.
IKO Wilmington, Del.	(888) 456-7663 27 iko.com	Regency	Fiber Glass-Asphalt	360 lbs.
Owens Corning Toledo, Ohio	(800) GET-PIN 28 owenscorning.com	Berkshire	Fiber Glass-Asphalt	425 lbs.
Bartile Centerville, Utah	(800) 933-5038 29 bartile.com	New England slate Ultralite Tiles	Concrete	1100 lbs. 750lbs.
Davinci Roofscapes Lenexa, Kans.	(800) 328-4624 30 davinciroofscapes.com	Davinci Slate	Polymer	260 lbs.
Tamko Joplin, Mo.	(800) 641-4691 31 tamko.com	Lamarite	Composite	475 lbs.
Max Sales LLC Jackson, Miss.	(877) 768-9663 32 maxroofingproducts.com	Max Slate	Polymer	250-290 lbs.

For more information on these products, please circle the numbers on the resource card.

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For a related story online, see "Clay in context," "Metal Shingles," and "Slate Roof Stand-Ins." Just click to "The Magazine" section, and go to the alphabetical list of recent features.





## Asphalt Shingles

When they first appeared in the mid-1990s, asphalt shingles that emulate slate stood in the shadows of the immense popularity of colored wood-shingle asphalt roofing products. In recent years, however, asphalt slate stand-ins have clearly come into their own through advances in colors and creative shingle patterns. In their simplest forms, asphalt shingles are composed of felt or fiberglass mats saturated with asphalt, cut into shingle shapes like the ubiquitous three-tab strip, then covered with granules of stone. Throughout the 20th-century manufacturers refined and improved asphalt shingles with occasional major developments, such as the introduction of fiberglass mat bases in the 1970s.

New ways of exploiting these technologies are what gives many asphalt slate stand-ins their enhanced veracity. Employing laminated shingles, where two or more asphalt-and-mat layers are bonded together, creates a thicker shingle and more dimensionality and slatelike appearance. Cutting the shingles in clever patterns adds to the effect by evoking strong shadow lines along courses. Some manufacturers have also devised new ways of subtly varying shingle colors—both from shingle-to-shingle and across individual

shingles—to visually create the volume and natural color variations of stone.

Compared to other slate stand-ins, asphalt shingles are a well-known roofing type with predictable performance and a reasonable life-cycle cost. While basic asphalt shingles typically last only 15 to 25 years, the added material of laminated shingles often adds to this life expectation.

## Concrete & Clay

Two of the oldest and most durable man-made roofing materials are also offered in slatelike tiles. Clay roof tiles, produced for millennia by shaping natural clay and fir-

**Varying the exposure as well as the dimensions of individual slates is a common picturesque effect and also works with polymer slates such as Slate Grey from DaVinci.**

ing it in a kiln, have been manufactured in slatelike shapes and glazes off and on since 1900 and are in production again from the tile manufacturers. Rather than the traditional half-round shapes of lapping barrel or Spanish tile, slatelike tiles are flat and interlock at their edges to create the water-repelling integrity of the roof. The relatively thick ceramic material is by nature a good visual match with natural slate and is glazed in stonelike tones to complete the masquerade.

Concrete tile, an invention of the modern era, is made from portland cement and aggregates (sometimes perlite to reduce weight) and does not have to be fired. Popular mostly in the Southeast, Southwest, and in California, concrete tile is a roofing material with butt lines at least as thick as clay that is further molded or ribbed by some manufacturers to help it convincingly clone stone. The important characteristic to account for when considering clay or concrete tile slates is weight—which can be at least equal to that of true slate and requires a roof that is framed heavily enough to carry the load. Other considerations are porosity, water absorption, and resistance to freeze-thaw cycles. When installed correctly and in the appropriate regions, clay or concrete tile slate stand-ins can offer among the best fire resistance and durability measured in decades. 🏠

*John Leeke is a writer and consultant who helps homeowners and contractors maintain their early buildings (26 Higgins St. Portland, ME 04103; [www.historichomeworks.com](http://www.historichomeworks.com)).*





BY SABRA WALDFOGEL  
PHOTOS BY JOHN GREGOR

# Pass It On

When a house's perfect fit ended for one owner, another enthusiastically took over the reins of stewardship.

COURTESY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA ANDERSON LIBRARY



Above: An original watercolor of the house William Gray Purcell designed for his construction foreman, Fritz Carlson. Right: Today's homeowner Charlie Koch relaxes by the home's restored fireplace.



Above: The Carlson House in south Minneapolis is an example of a workingman's residence designed in the Prairie School style.





From the exterior, the south Minneapolis house is modest. But inside, it's suffused with a special feeling, the result of an affectionate collaboration between two men: the Prairie School architect William Gray Purcell and his construction foreman, Fritz Carlson.

Carlson worked for Purcell's main contractor and by 1917 had supervised several of Purcell's projects. Purcell thought highly of Carlson and described him as "warm hearted" and "an excellent craftsman." When Carlson told Purcell he was getting married and wanted to build a house, he added that he "would not live in anything that we [the firm of Purcell and George Grant Elmslie] had not designed." Purcell designed him a house as a wedding

present—one of a mere 1,377 square feet, not counting the unheated sunporch.

Purcell was interested in "the small house" all his career, and he designed this one with the same care he gave his grander commissions. Carlson was a master craftsman; in Purcell's words, he "naturally wanted to put the pieces together [in] the way that best served the design." The result was a house that was comfortable to live in and beautiful to look at.

### Right House—For a While

Richard Mann, a technical writing and training consultant, knew and admired Purcell's work before he saw the Carlson House, but his first glimpse of the house in 1988 was a letdown. It was too plain. The combination of stucco and siding looked

odd. Previous owners, who bought the house shortly after Carlson died in 1967, had painted both the stucco and the siding a yellow that gave him pause.

Once inside, though, his doubts melted away. The windows filled the living room with light and the open space pulled his attention through the dining room to the sunporch at the rear of the house. He instantly saw it as the center of family life for himself; wife Peggy Anderson Mann, a public school teacher; and daughters Laura and Julia, then four and one. A quiet, reflective place for sitting and reading, the living room takes advantage of afternoon sun and the evening breeze.

Once moved in, Mann quickly became absorbed by the house. He consulted the Northwest Architectural



Archives and soon began to keep the plans on the dining room table. His restoration efforts were a mix of research, ingenuity, and guesswork. For instance, he decided to replace the yellow exterior paint with the earth tones—light stucco and brown wood—original to the house. The stucco was the biggest challenge, since the plans didn't document its color and the historic photos were black and white. He finally made assumptions based on other Purcell and Elmslie houses in the area, colors in an archival rendering, and his own feel for the Arts & Crafts color palette. Ruefully, he says, "We discovered that the window well in the basement had the original stucco—after we had it redashed."

Living in the house deepened Mann's appreciation for Purcell and the architecture of the Prairie School. "American archi-



Part of Purcell's original design included a screen at the top of the stairs. Koch used the design as inspiration to replace the iron railing (above) and add a wooden screen (top).

ture of the Prairie School was really built for here [Minneapolis]," he says. "Materials and color were integrated with this environment, not brought from England, Italy, the East Coast, or the West Coast." As a result, he became even more determined to preserve the details of his own architectural gem. He turned down a substantial sum for the light fixture in the dining room, an Elmslie design like the one in the house Purcell built for himself. "The fixture was a key part of the house. We felt the integrity of the house depended on it."

Nine years later, the Manns would come to a difficult decision. The neighborhood remained in transition, and they worried about the safety of their girls. They bought another architect-designed house in a quieter part of Minneapolis, just a house away from Peggy's job and the school

the girls attended at the time of the move.

## Contagious Obsession

Charlie Koch, a gardener at the Minneapolis Sculpture Garden, was always fascinated by architecture. Growing up in a rambler in a brand-new suburb of Minneapolis, he envied his friends in town who lived in bungalows. When he came to the Manns' open house in 1997, he was immediately drawn to the flow of light and space that had charmed its current owner. He was equally impressed with Carlson's work.

The house had an irresistible appeal that overrode his initial objections to a long workday commute and to a neighborhood that was still iffy. Nevertheless, he says, "When I was looking, I always came back to this house."

At the closing on the house, Mann





The open layout for the interior space was innovative for the time the house was built. Below: Richard Mann was offered a considerable sum of money for the original light fixture Purcell designed over the dining table. He declined the offer, believing the fixture should stay with the house.



shared historic photos and those blueprints that lay spread on his dining room table for so long. "Understanding Richard's stewardship, I wanted to follow," Koch says. He admits, he became obsessed. He buttonholed preservationists and archivists familiar with Purcell's work. He interviewed Carlson's nephew, who mowed the lawn when he was a boy, for his memories of the house. Koch toured Purcell's own house—now owned by the Minneapolis Institute of Arts and known as the Purcell-Cutts House. Details like the fireplace, the mural, and the built-in desk fired his imagination and made him long to replicate them in his own house. Today he laughs at these fantasies. "I wanted to bring it to that style, forgetting that it was a workingman's house. His house was more of a showcase. This is where someone would raise a family."

Koch's partner, nurse Kathy Holm, says that now his obsession has cooled a bit and that he's focused on a few details from the Purcell-Cutts House that did seem right for this more modest dwelling. For instance, the Carlson House's original plans included a wooden screen at the entry stairs like the one in the Purcell-Cutts House. Koch used it as inspiration in replacing the iron railing in his entryway. He yearned for some of its stained-glass windows, so he called a local glass shop for help with the design. By chance, he found the craftsman who had worked on replicas for the Purcell-Cutts house and hired him to design inserts for the Carlson house's living room windows. "It was serendipity," he says.

Like Richard Mann before him, Koch is cautious about any move that might disrupt the integrity of his house. He's slowly renovating the kitchen. It wasn't hard to opt to bring back the original cabinets, but it's much harder to decide whether to open the kitchen to the dining room.

Ninety years after it was built, the house still speaks to Carlson's artistry and Purcell's vision for beauty in a small and livable space, and it is still inspiring an affectionate relationship—between the house and the people who now live in it. 🏠

*Sabra Waldfogel writes from Minneapolis about Prairie School architecture.*



# MOVING DAY

**A historic Cape in Chatham, Massachusetts, floats across the sea to its new berth.**

BY NANCY E. BERRY



What do you do with an old house that has stood on its site for over 200 years and is now being threatened by “progress?” You move it. Or at least that’s what one group of concerned citizens did when the 231-year-old Caleb Nickerson House—a one-and-a-half storey full

Cape—was in danger of being demolished. Developers, eager to pepper the pristine 4-acre waterfront property with a few “McMansions,” agreed to sell the building for \$1 provided someone removed it from its longstanding setting on a bluff overlooking the sea in Chatham, Massachusetts.

“The building is one of the best examples of a Colonial house on the Cape—it’s in near original condition. It’s also been in the same family since it was built,” says Edmond Rhodes Nickerson, one of the champions behind the move and restoration effort. “You just can’t build a 230-year-old house. They are not making them anymore.”





## House History

Caleb Nickerson was a Revolutionary War militiaman and the great-great grandson of William Nickerson, the founder of Chatham. Caleb built the timber-framed house on land given to his wife Elizabeth.

Few alterations have been made to the house over the years, aside from the addition of rudimentary plumbing and electricity in the 1950s.

The Nickerson Family Association—founded over a century ago—devised a

plan to save the house. First and foremost they needed cash—moving a house is not cheap. The town was able to use \$100,000 from funds generated through the Community Preservation Act to help pay for the project, while the Nickerson Family

Above: A photograph taken of the Caleb Nickerson House and family members in 1901.

The Caleb Nickerson House is now a house museum and open to the public by appointment. It has been fully restored to the late 1700s period.

STEVE HEASLIP/CAPE COD TIMES





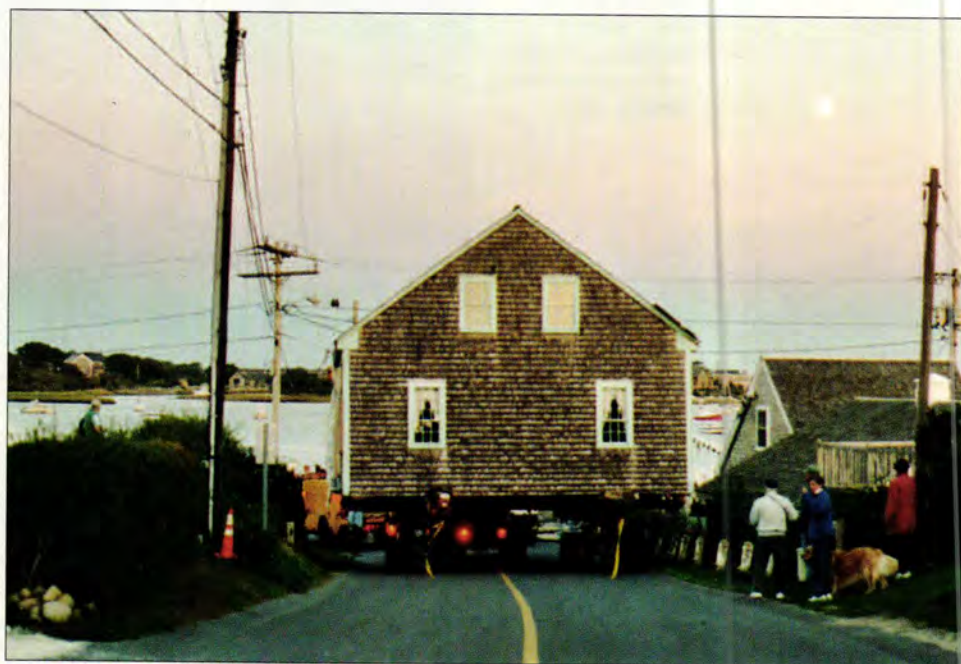
Association raised \$75,000 in private donations that helped pay for the move as well as a new foundation and the restoration work. The next step was to find property to where they could relocate the house. They settled on a one-acre plot of land where the Nickerson Genealogy House Museum sits. Next, the association had to figure out how to transport the old structure without damaging its original center chimney, beehive oven, and sill. "It was important to move the house while keeping its chimney column intact," says Nickerson. "We didn't want to dismantle the house, which is sometimes the practice when houses are moved."

Nickerson consulted Robert Hayden of Hayden Building Movers, Inc., in nearby Cotuit to help with the logistics and the move. Hayden knew that trying to maneuver the 30-ton, 25' x 31' building through Chatham's narrow, windy roads would be impossible. "The road to the new site is also a scenic highway, and we would have had to cut down several trees in order to navigate the structure through the streets—something that the town's selectmen would never go for," says Hayden.

## Open Waters

He looked toward the sea as an alternative route. Although moving a house by water was a fairly common practice 150 years ago, it is rarely done off the Cape today. "The rise and fall of the shoals and strong currents along the coast could beach your building," says Hayden. Hayden partnered with boat-towing contractor Dale McClure and local boat pilot Dave Murdoch, who know these waters well, to float the house 15 miles to its new location—a trip that would take the house past Hardings Beach, around Monomy inlet, out to the Atlantic, through Chatham Bars, and finally to Ryder's Cove.

First, they had to shore up the house for the move. The most difficult part of the job for Hayden was securing the three-breasted chimney and beehive oven. "The base of the chimney was fieldstone," says Hayden, and once the chimney was lifted off its base, it would be unstable. To remedy this, Hayden removed the fieldstones





## Landlubber Restoration

Edmond Rhodes Nickerson orchestrated the restoration of the 1772 Nickerson house, hiring a team of experts from around New England to complete the work. Brick mason Richard Irons of Limerick, Maine, restored the chimney and beehive oven using original bricks and an old mortar mix recipe. Harwich decorative painter Lars Michelsen recreated the original paint scheme in the interiors, by first collecting paint chips which were analyzed for their age and color. He painted the woodwork in faux bois, glazed walls to give them the patina of age, and spatter-painted the floors using a technique found in many 18th-century houses in New England.

Master carpenter Michael E. Chilinski located period wood to rebuild a door and construct new window frames, as well as repair all the original sash in the house. Chilinski also reattached a later period ell that had been cut off with a chain saw for the move. Today the house has been fully restored and is open for tours.



Above: The house was hauled by truck through the narrow streets of Chatham to Stage Harbor. The one and a half mile journey took a full day to move the 30-ton antique Cape.

Top: The three chimneys and beehive oven were in need of restoration, having been neglected for decades.

Restoration Mason Richard Irons was hired on to do the work. Middle: Sash was examined to determine original paint colors. Left: Faux painting techniques were used in the interior to evoke the patina of age.





A crane with a heavy-duty spreader bar lifted the house and placed it on the barge.



The house was maneuvered through a treacherous passage where the shoals are ever shifting.



Once it reached its final destination, the house was placed onto its foundation.



and poured concrete around the bricks to regain the chimney's integrity. Once the chimney was secured, the house was jacked up and the crew underpinned the house with a series of steel beams. Hayden found the oak sill beneath the house in excellent condition. "It's unbelievable that the frame lasted 230 years and looks as good as it does. You would think it was hand hewn yesterday," he says. "You need a sound sill to move a house. If it had been rotted or compromised by power-post beetles, it would have made the move impossible," says Hayden. "The sill supports the walls, floors, and roof. The house could crumble if it had been compromised in any way." Next, the house was rolled onto a truck and ready for the first leg of its one-and-a-half-mile journey to the harbor.

The crane, which could handle 130 tons, lifted the house onto a barge and was ready for its 15-mile float to Ryder's Cove the following day—a trip that would take five hours. The house sat overnight on the docks, while everyone crossed their fingers for good weather. Luckily, the skies were crystal clear and the water and winds were calm; the house was ready for its move. "This was a difficult passage," says Hayden. With the help of a harbor pilot, the barge was towed out through a passage called Southway where they headed for the open ocean then back into Chatham Harbor. Once the barge reached Ryder's cover, it was moored for a few days until the crane was ready to off-load it onto a truck. When it reached its final destination, the building was rolled over the site for its new foundation. Now restored, and open to the public, the Caleb Nickerson House stands as a testament to one family's effort of saving a piece of history. 🏠

The Caleb Nickerson House  
1107 Orleans Road (Route 28)  
Chatham, MA 02650  
(508) 945-6086  
[www.nickersonassoc.org](http://www.nickersonassoc.org)

The house underwent extensive restoration. Mason Richard Irons from Limerick, Maine, rebuilt the chimney with the house's original bricks.



STEVE HEASLIP/CAPE COD TIMES



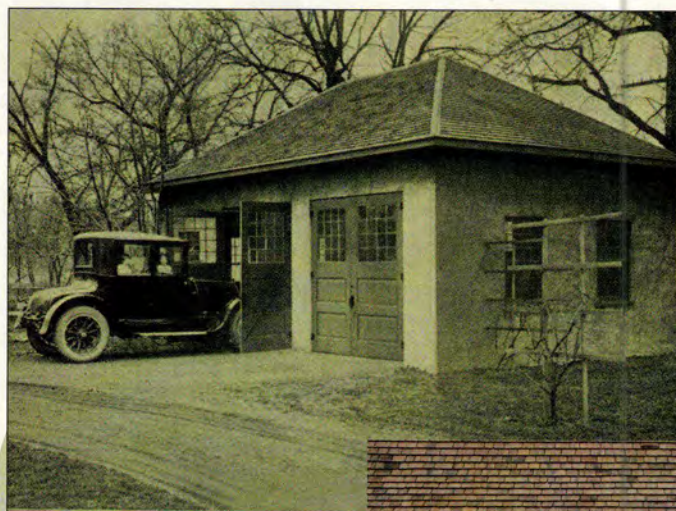
# Garage Door

## Design Book

Knowing how the proverbial car barn opened in its early era can help you make a stunning entrance.

BY GORDON BOCK

Were there garage doors before there were garages? Hard to say. Still, the advent of the automobile had a strong influence on the operation, as well as the design, of vehicular building closures through the first decades of the last century. The point for old-house owners today is that if the entrance to your vintage garage—or a new period garage—is graced by nothing more than a Disco-era roll-up door, it can stand out as a visual mixed message, if not a glaring anachronism. Fortunately, it's easier than ever to find a period-perfect portal for your flivver, as this primer on historic garage door types and styles shows.

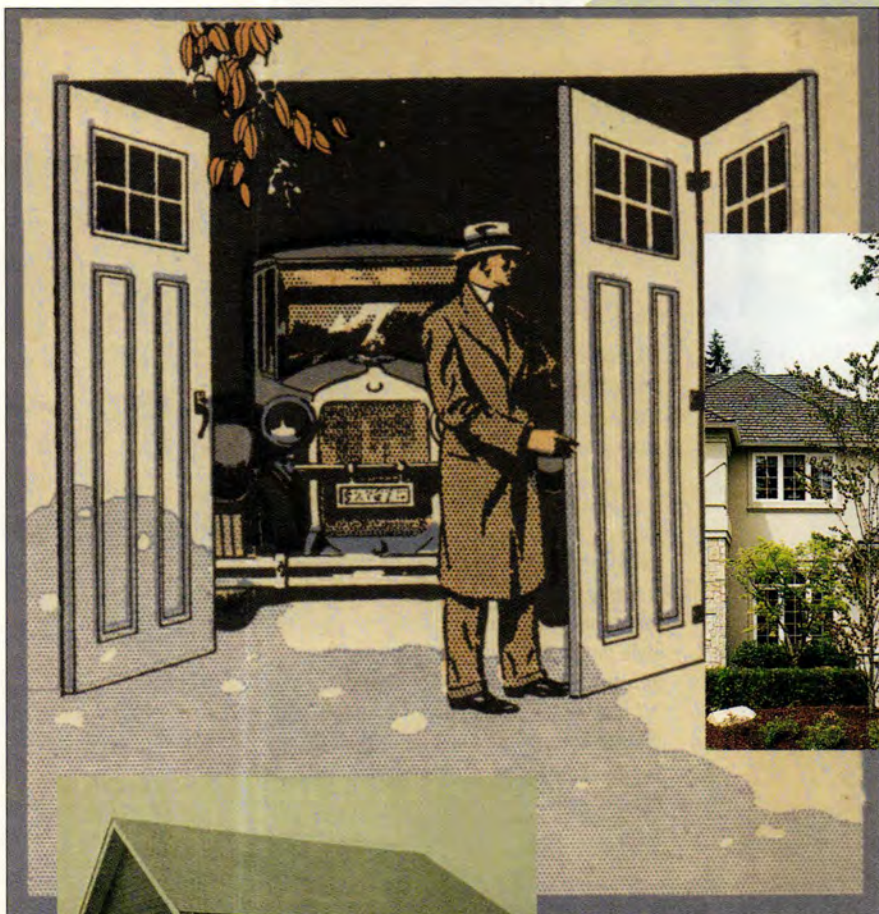


### Swinging Doors

The most prosaic way to open garage doors from 1900 on was to hinge them at their sides in mating pairs, like the proverbial barn doors. Common on multiple and single-car garages and wide by necessity, such doors were often paneled frames reinforced with characteristic diagonal braces to prevent sagging. Modern versions can open traditionally or actually be roll-up doors cleverly designed to look like hinged versions.







JELD-WEN



## Sliding Doors

Garages that accommodated two cars were also big enough for sliding doors—a single large door for each bay. Suspended by a pair of parallel hanger-and-rail systems, one door would pass the other when the bay was opened (inset at left). Since these broad doors were top-hung, they could be built with a simple frame backed by edge-matched boards—typically V-jointed. The look of large V-jointed doors is popular today in a variety of opening systems.

## Adapted Garages

Well into the 1920s, it was not uncommon to find buildings from other uses repurposed into garages. Barns and similar agricultural structures that had become outmoded were typical candidates. Adapted garages might be upgraded with new doors or simply have existing hinged doors retrofitted with more advanced hardware, like an automotive-style roller-and-track system—a conversion heartily endorsed by garage door hardware manufacturers of the day.



JELD-WEN



# Garage Door

## Design Book



DESIGNER DOORS



### Complementary Designs

According to an early 20th-century text, "Whenever possible, the garage should be constructed to correspond to the residence to which it belongs," advice that was carried down to the doors as well. Carpenter- or shop-made probably as often as they were ordered from a lumberyard, doors could easily pick up on fenestration patterns or other details in the house, an option possible today with custom and stock doors alike.

RICHARDS-WILCOX



### Door Hardware

The rapid growth of the automobile spawned a demand for private garages, and with it new forms of hardware. Though early garage door hardware, from hangers to locks, was primarily practical, exposed hinge leaves and handles often carried some of the style motifs of their time. Today, many period garage door manufacturers offer decorative (as well as functional) door hardware, and there are hardware manufacturers that can supply specialized hardware, such as heavy-duty hinges.



AMARR DOORS



AMARR DOORS



### Cross-Buck Doors

The more sophisticated version of the diagonally braced door is the cross-buck door—in essence, diagonal braces running in two directions. A common construction method for side-hinged doors, where it adds structural support against sagging in two directions, it also creates a pleasant visual motif that is reprised in modern garage doors of many types, especially when made of wood.





## Multiple Doors

One of the most distinctive 1920s garage door patterns was the three-door swinging and sliding combination. Here, multiple doors, 32" wide, hang from a single track that spans the entrance, curving back where it meets the side walls. The doors are suspended from swivels and are hinged together at their sides so that they fold, accordion style, against an inner wall. Recommended two generations ago for large garages, the multidoor look has found favor again, especially for adding historically appropriate eye relief to contemporary three-car garages.

DESIGNER DOORS



## Top-Lighted Doors

Though early garages were frequently equipped with conveniences from workbenches to radiators to better service their mechanical residents, natural light through doors was always welcome. Panes of glass are rare in side-hinged, swinging doors, but they were common as top lights in sliding doors, often spanning the width of large doors. Broad top lights are just as practical a century later and are historically appropriate—and also available from period garage door manufacturers.

For a list of  
**SUPPLIERS,**  
see page 92.



# The Ins and Outs of Insulated Windows

BY GORDON BOCK

Understanding thermal issues helps in selecting new windows.

For over a generation, window manufacturers have been on a quest to improve energy efficiency. Windows represent large insulation voids in a house, and while much heat often moves through the roof and via air leakage at sash seals and trim, expanses of glass can be a significant path. Because the high-tech mechanics and materials behind these improvements can be radically different than the design and construction of traditional windows, understanding the options that manufacturers offer, and what their impact can be on an old house, can help guide anyone considering new windows for historically appropriate replacements or additions.

## What's the Window Problem?

In simple terms, energy is able to flow through a basic window in two forms: solar radiant heat gain (solar radiation admitted through a window and released indoors), and heat conduction through the materials (frame, glass, etc.). Sometimes this flow is useful, as when sunlight warms a room on a winter day, but when it's going in the wrong direction, it's a problem. In regions with high heating bills, windows that allow indoor warmth to be lost to the



Hybrid spacers combine materials, such as this dessicant-filled aluminum, to improve efficiency.

outdoors are considered to be low in energy efficiency. In warm regions the reverse situation is the concern: keeping the heat out, rather than in, and limiting cooling bills. Even more important in some ways is the perception of heat or cold by the occupants. In a room that is heated to a comfortable 70 degrees, the inside surface of a single-pane window can be as much as 20 degrees colder, and this can make a person feel cold because the window is not



Rochester Colonial keeps an assortment of spacers in stock, from different colors to varying materials or shapes, to meet the needs of diverse window projects.





At Rochester Colonial Windows and Doors, the staff not only sell windows by major manufacturers, they custom-fabricate their own multi-glazed windows. A first step in assembling an insulated glass window is cutting the glass, such as for this radius window.

reflecting back their own body heat—a phenomenon sometimes called “cold 70.” A cold window is also prone to moisture condensation, which is unsightly and damages finishes. How then to increase window performance? Typically, by looking for thermal improvements in the three areas of glass, gas, and frames.

## Tintings and Coatings

In the search for performance, one of the first places manufacturers looked for improvements was the glass itself. Tinting glass by coloring it with mineral admixtures reduces the percentage of radiation that it can pass. However, because tinting also reduces visual transmittance (the visible light transmitted through the glass), and the coloring looks subtly unlike traditional glass, it became less popular for residential windows than other applications. So manufacturers shifted their attention to another front: altering the surface of the glass. In the past, these alterations have been in the form of reflective coatings and films that limit heat gain and glare, but since the mid-1990s the trend in residential windows has been toward low-e (low emittance) coatings that improve window performance during both heating and cooling seasons.

Low conductance spacer

## Anatomy of an Insulated Window

An insulated window typically incorporates two more glazings (sometimes with laminated glass, as shown here), gas fill, low-e coatings, insulating spacers, and a low conduction frame material, such as wood—the preferred frame for historically appropriate windows (see inset).

Laminated safety glass

Double glazing

Gas fill

Low-e coating

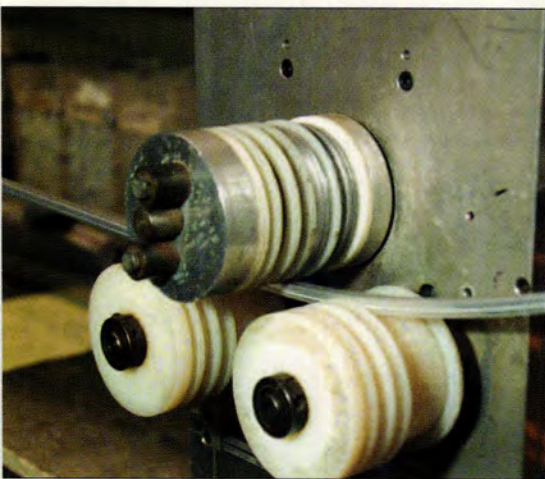
Low conductance frame





Low-e coatings are layers of metal or metallic oxides that are extremely thin (on a molecular level), virtually invisible, and permanently bonded to the glass surface. In double-glazed windows, these coatings face into the gap between the panes of glass and are designed to suppress the heat flow through the window—that is, the radiation from a warm pane of glass to an adjacent cooler pane. Low-e coatings can also be produced to obtain different levels of solar heat gain. Low solar gain coatings, for example, are preferred in regions where keeping the house cool is the main issue. High or moderate solar gain coatings may

Below: Once the glass-and-spacer pairs are aligned, they are held in place with lead weights while the assembler applies sealant to the edges. Later, the stack will be cut apart so that each double-glazed section can be inserted into the sash frame.



be desirable where the emphasis is on heating the house, rather than cooling, and the extra warmth from solar gain is welcome in winter. Luckily for old-house lovers, a byproduct of standard low-e coatings (as well as plain glass) is reducing some of the UV rays that cause fading and fabric damage in furnishings. Plus, these coatings can also be designed to be spectrally selective and keep UV transmittance as low as 16 percent. Even better, low-e coatings are relatively inexpensive options to add to a window (\$1 to \$1.75 per square foot), a cost that may be nearly inconsequential on high-end windows.

## Glass and Gas

Another approach is to enhance the construction of the window, and employing multiple layers of glass is the obvious method. Though the most common con-

Above left: Rochester Colonial uses a mechanical bender to curve metal spacers for specialty windows with radius or tracery glazing patterns. Above: When making a window with multiple panes, identical glass and spacer pairs are stacked to speed assembly.

For a list of  
**SUPPLIERS,**  
see page 92.



## Reading the Labels

Common window industry yardsticks listed on labels from the National Fenestration Rating Council (NFRC).

**U-factor** The amount of energy, as measured in Btus, transferred through the window via conduction (rather than solar heat transfer). The U-factor rating is, in effect, the reverse of R-value (thermal resistance).

### Solar Heat Gain Coefficient (SHGC)

A measurement of the amount of solar heat that makes its way through the window. For example, a window rated at .78 transmits approximately 78 percent of the solar heat that hits the window to the interior.

### Visible Light Transmittance (VLT)

The amount of visible light that comes through the window. Since this measurement includes the window frame, wider frames can reduce the rating slightly.

**Energy Star Label** A regional climate rating based upon minimum Department of Energy (DOE) performance specifications.

figuration for American houses is the double-glazed window—that is, two thicknesses of glass separated by an air space that reduces heat and sound transfer—triple-glazed windows are made for commercial applications or super-insulated houses in cold regions such as Canada. In fact, some manufacturers have developed ways of achieving some of the benefits of triple-glazing without the weight or thickness of more glass by incorporating one or more stretched plastic films between double-glazing.

Today many manufacturers also do their best to bolster the thermal performance by filling the void with a low-conductance gas. When a multi-glazed window is made using air alone, the air space is carefully dried and sealed to guard against condensation and to maximize the insulating ability. Even so, sometimes it can travel in currents that conduct heat between indoors and outdoors. Swapping air for a gas that is more viscous or less conductive helps mitigate this problem. Argon, an inert, nontoxic gas, is commonly used because it's inexpensive and works best in the same spacing as air—about 1/2" between panes. Krypton is a more expensive gas, but it has better ther-

mal performance than argon, so krypton is often the choice for filling windows that must be kept thin (say 1/4" between glazings)—which is often the case when trying to maintain the look of historic windows. Mixtures of argon and krypton are also employed to balance cost and performance.

The materials that wrap glass and gas influence window performance too. In the 1960s and '70s manufacturers started using aluminum spacers at the perimeter of the glass to separate the panes at the proper gap—ideal structurally, but a problem, it turned out, thermally. Aluminum is an excellent conductor of heat, and these spacers became an easy path for heat to bypass the glass-and-gas sandwich, compromising the insulating performance of the window and creating cold edges and condensation.

Since then manufacturers have devised a variety of low-conductance edge systems that cut heat loss. Moving to less-conductive metals, such as stainless steel, is one popular approach, often used in combination with thermal breaks—clever cross-sectional designs that make it harder for heat to migrate across the spacer. Some manufacturers eliminate metal altogether in favor of materials with better thermal resistance, such as thermoplastics, fiberglass, or silicone foam. There are even hybrids that combine a metal or plastic spacer with a desiccant, for instance, or add a thin aluminum or stainless shim to a plastic spacer.

Lastly, glass and spacers have to be held in some sort of frame, and this window component can be a major thermal conductor too. Aluminum frames, for example, are very conductive and can affect energy bills as well as draw condensation. Fortunately for old-house owners, wood is a good insulator and can deliver about the same thermal performance as materials such as vinyl, fiberglass, or composites that are employed for energy-efficient widows today. Plus, wood is light and easily maintained, and has a proven track record of weather service and beauty that man-made materials have several centuries to meet. 🏠



At Rochester Colonial, each piece of glass is meticulously machine washed, then inspected over special lights before it is assembled into an insulating window unit.



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# Winners'

This year's judging of the Great American Home Awards was no easy task with so many wonderful old houses being restored around the country. The following four projects are just a taste of the efforts by *Old-House Journal's* readers—our hats off to all those who entered. Special thanks to this year's judges: Tobin Tracey, architect for the White House, National Park Service; John Dale, AIA, Allan Greenberg Architects; Bill Drewer, AIA, Quinn Evans Architects; Mary Ellen Iwata, Vice President of Program Development, HGTV-Scripps Networks; and Anne Penniman, landscape architect and National Trust member.



## THE JOHN TODD HOUSE

Category: Exterior Rehabilitation, First Place  
Winner and homeowner: Jim Wollard  
Location: West Grove, Pennsylvania

The John Todd House has been a work-in-progress over the past three centuries. The original one-and-a-half-storey chestnut log structure, consisting of one room and a loft, was built in 1722. In 1797 a two-storey brick addition was added. A one-and-a-half storey stone summer kitchen was added next to the brick section in

Above: Before the restoration began on the 1722 John Todd House in 1986, it was in complete disrepair. Top: Today, the house is a testament to a 20-year work-in-progress.



# Circle

A photograph of a historic house. The left side is a log cabin with dark, weathered horizontal logs and white chinking. It has a gabled roof with dark shingles and a brick chimney. The right side is a fieldstone structure with a gabled roof of lighter shingles. It features a central dark door and a multi-paned window. The house is set on a grassy lawn.

Highlights of the 2005 Great American Home Award winners sponsored by the National Trust for Historic Preservation and *Old House Journal*.

By KATHRYN SONANT

The house evolved over the centuries and its facade reveals its history. Originally a log cabin in 1722, a brick addition was built in 1797 and in 1830 a fieldstone structure was constructed.



approximately 1825 through 1835. The log portion was raised to two storeys in the mid-18th century.

Historic restoration began in 1986 by new owners Curt and Kim Evans. The project continues as the house is restored to its 1830 state. Log facings have been restored where necessary, and original window and door mouldings have been replicated. They have used wood recycled from the old structures and only period hardware.

The fieldstone summer kitchen had been covered with stucco, which was recently removed and the stone repointed. A beehive oven foundation on the back was uncovered and has been partially rebuilt, with plans for a complete restoration. A stone swale for water drainage was also uncovered and has been restored.



It is believed that the 1722 log structure was used for commercial purposes.



## THE SALEM FARMHOUSE

Category: Kitchen Renovation, First Place  
Winner and homeowner: Ronald Walker  
Location: Jarrettsville, Maryland

The Salem Farmhouse, originally built around 1850, was in poor shape when Ronald Walker began its restoration. A previous owner had abandoned it mid-restoration and left it open to the elements for 20 years, so Walker had no choice but to begin from the foundation, saving and using the salvageable parts of the original.

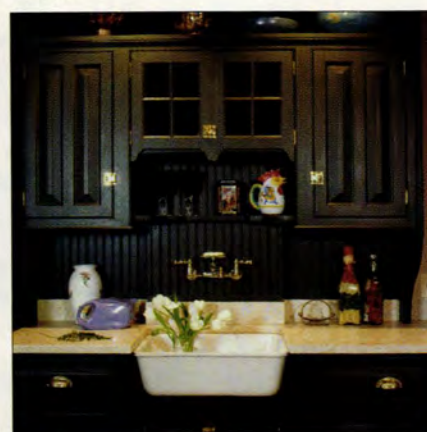
He built the kitchen in the rear addition that had been added about 15 years after the main house. Walker created a large island with a raised fireplace (where the original had been) as the central focus of the room. The fireplace, with a hearth made of local blue stone, was set into a distressed pine-paneled wall also containing a small pantry and a closet. Walker and colleague Benjamin Kirby constructed cabinetry designed to evoke the original period, using glass from the house's original front door. Walker found an antique porcelain wash sink and installed a wall faucet above it. A breakfast nook and a covered porch add to the authentic and cozy effect of the restored room.





Left: The kitchen walls are covered in salvaged paneling. Walker salvaged original glass from the front door for the cabinetry.

Below: The sink was also salvaged from a house on Block Island, Rhode Island.



Left: Walker incorporated this breakfast nook.

Above: The house was in such disrepair that Walker had to start from scratch.





## BIRKENTHAL HOUSE

Category: Sympathetic Addition, First Place Winner and homeowner: Kevin Mason, Architect

Location: Scotch Plains, New Jersey

A two-storey ell addition complements this circa 1920 Craftsman Colonial with great respect to the original style. The addition includes a dining room, family room, and screened porch on the first floor and a master suite on the second floor. In keeping with the original house, the new rooms were sized true to the original architecture's style.

Architect and owner Kevin Mason used materials, eaves details, and window sizes and shapes identical to those on the main house. For example, a gabled bay window jutting from the second floor on the existing house was repeated on the side elevation of the addition. And original stained-glass windows were moved to the new exteriors, appearing as if they'd always been there.

The interior is equally authentic. The kitchen strayed from the house's original look during a 1960s renovation, but Mason restored it to its original style with glass-fronted wall cabinets in the original wood types used in the room. A new screened porch reflects the style of other Craftsman Colonials on the street. The addition increased the home's size by about one third.



Top: A two-storey ell was sensitively added onto this house (above) in Scotch Plains, New Jersey, by architect Kevin Mason.







Jonathan Parks Architect aided homeowners Jerry and Beverly Vross in restoring this 1954 Modern house designed by Paul Rudolph.

## THE COHEN HOUSE

Category: Interior Rehabilitation, First Place  
 Winner: Jonathan Parks Architect  
 Homeowner: Jerry and Beverly Vross  
 Location: Sarasota, Florida

Paul Rudolph designed this Modernist, "Sarasota style" home in 1954 after offering two designs for clients David and Eleene Cohen. The second design won the Progressive Architectural Award in both the residential and overall categories and was referred to as the most original and "the best piece of progressive architecture" submitted that year. Since the Cohens did not agree with all of Rudolph's vision, the final design was a combination of the initial and the award-winning designs.

Jerry and Beverly Vross bought the house after David Cohen's death in 1999 and restored and updated it themselves with the help and guidance of architect Jonathan Parks. The Vrosses and Parks worked to coordinate the interior and the exterior and used the standards of the National Historic Trust as guidelines.

Restoring the mahogany built-ins and walls, some of which the Cohens had covered with white vinyl, was a big project. The other great challenge was restoring the terrazzo floors, which required removing tile, mortar, and grout by hand, filling holes, sanding, polishing, and sealing.

## WINNING CATEGORIES

### Baywood—The Alexander King Mansion

Category: Exterior Rehabilitation, Second Place  
 Winner: Stephen Muse  
 Location: Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

### Davis Residence

Category: Kitchen Renovation, Second Place  
 Winner: Herron Horton Architects, Inc.  
 Location: Little Rock, Arkansas

### Historic West St. Mary's Manor

Category: Sympathetic Addition, Second Place  
 Winner: Stephen Muse  
 Location: St. Mary's County, Maryland

### The Salem Farmhouse

Category: Interior Rehabilitation, Second Place  
 Winner: Ronald Walker  
 Homeowner: Ronald Walker  
 Location: Jarrettsville, Maryland

### Decker's Farm

Category: Adaptive Reuse, First Place  
 Winner: Stephen Decker  
 Homeowner: Stephen Decker  
 Location: Hamilton, Ohio

### Marsden Vacation Residence

Category: Adaptive Reuse, Second Place  
 Winner: Tanya Krawchuk  
 Location: Stalker, Pennsylvania

### Johnson Residence

Category: Landscape Design, First Place  
 Winner: Charles A. Wiechers  
 Location: Lexington, Kentucky

### Pacific Heights Residence

Category: Landscape Design, Second Place  
 Winner: Kathleen Bogaski  
 Location: San Francisco, California

### The Fisher Residence

Category: Bathroom Renovation or Addition, First Place  
 Winner: Owen W. Sutton  
 Location: San Diego, California

### McGilberry House

Category: Infill Residence, First Place  
 Winner: R. Lynn Taylor  
 Location: Nashville, Tennessee



MODERN CENTURY

# Modern



This 1958 house in Providence, Rhode Island, makes a valiant stab at Postwar Modern, but the curving forms are more Art Deco or Moderne than Modern. Its heavy forms and massive rooflines make it look bulky, and the stone-and-board façade and windows are awkwardly combined.

## Beyond Bauhaus

The second house Marcel Breuer designed for himself is in New Canaan, Connecticut, a major center of Modern houses. (The first, in Lincoln, Massachusetts, was built in 1939.) The Breuer House features a wide flush-board-and-glass main floor over a stone-based story.





# for the Masses

**How progressive architects and builders brought high-concept houses to the postwar 'burbs.**

By JAMES C. MASSEY AND SHIRLEY MAXWELL



**W**hen the vets came home from World War II in the late 1940s, eager to use their VA loans to put roofs over the heads of their young families, America's new suburbs bloomed with a hundred varieties of updated traditional houses. These were mostly tiny Cape Cods and Colonials that fit the postwar era's small building lots and modest budgets—as well as a long-deferred vision of the all-American dream house.

Yet, while most buyers preferred a vaguely "Early American" look, the prolonged building drought brought on by the Depression and the war years had interrupted another, very different architectural trend that was now poised to make postwar

reentry. The Modernist Movement, springing from the celebrated avant-garde German Bauhaus school, had formed tentative roots in 1930s America. Before the war, several leading Bauhaus architects—Walter Gropius, Marcel Breuer, and Ludwig Mies van der Rohe among them—accepted positions on the faculties of some of this country's most prestigious architectural schools. There, they and their followers trained an entire generation of students in the discipline of Modernist design. In the process, they changed for at least half a century the way houses would look and the way Americans would look at their houses. The Modern approach to design was in every sense more than a style—it was a cause.





## Subdivision Design

Levittown buyers in the 1951 Pennsylvania planned community liked the Modern ranch with carport, picture window, high bedroom windows, and low, sleek lines. As time passed, however, Levitt designs became more traditional.

## Avant-Garde Models

Over the postwar years, these and other Modern-thinking architects around the nation produced a slew of houses that set high standards for building in the Modern style. The two ultimate examples are Mies' Farnsworth House (1950) and the famous Glass House by Philip Johnson (who was, not so coincidentally, a protégé of Mies and a student of Gropius).

The weekend home that Mies designed for Dr. Edith Farnsworth was a stunning glass-walled beauty located an hour or so from Chicago. It appears to float above its recessed base and, with Johnson's dazzling New Canaan, Connecticut, Glass House of 1949, inspired probably dozens

of lesser imitators. However, Mies's genius failed to impress Dr. Farnsworth, who found she couldn't relax in such exposure. In Palm Springs, California, Richard Neutra's 1946 Kaufmann House (for Edgar Kaufmann, owner of the legendary Fallingwater by Frank Lloyd Wright) seems to have produced no such client complaints. Palm Springs went on to become a mecca for Modern houses.

Even in the relatively far-flung southern capital of Raleigh, North Carolina, the movement had a resounding impact. Under the direction of Henry Kamphoefner, the North Carolina School of Design attracted an array of talented faculty and students who filled the Raleigh suburbs with important Modern houses.

Of course, not all modern (with a small "m") houses followed the strict, rectilinear forms favored by the Bauhaus and the International School. Most people preferred to come home to a less rigidly geometric environment. They wanted clean lines, of course, and lots of glass to bring the outdoors in (or to move the indoors out). They wanted rooms with a minimum of walls, so that living areas flowed easily into each other and blended effortlessly with their surroundings, which were preferably a bit woodsy-looking. They wanted flat or low-pitched gable or hip roofs or perhaps even butterfly (or invert-

## International Influences

In this 1954 photo, the house designed by Frank Weiss in Swarthmore, Pennsylvania, was bright and inviting when it was new. It has the hallmarks of the Modernist avant-garde—paneled walls and long strips of windows.



This butterfly-roof house is in the large development of 450 Modern houses near Alexandria, Virginia, by developer Robert Davenport and architect Charles Goodman. It has been lovingly preserved ever since by generations of dedicated residents.

ALL PHOTOS JAMES C. MASSEY EXCEPT WHERE NOTED





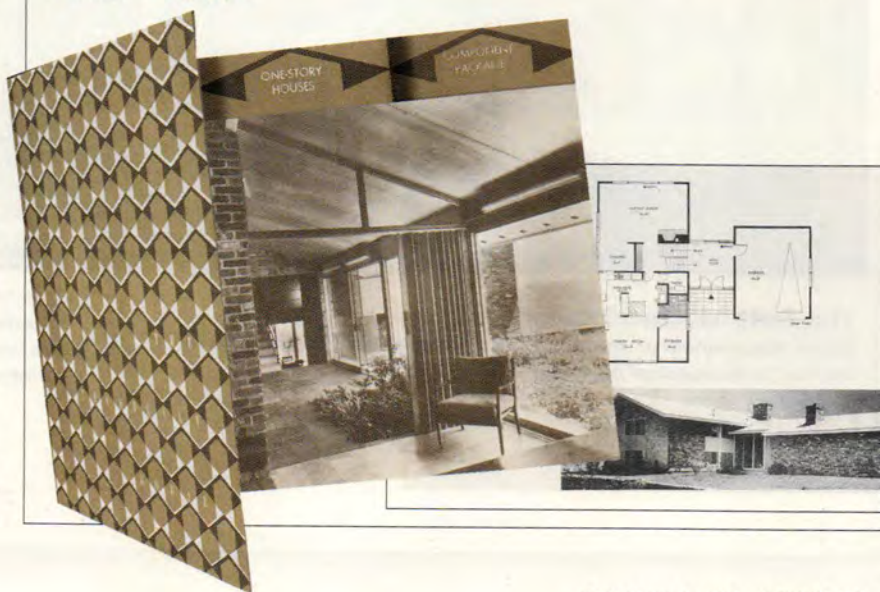
## Tomorrow's Technology

ed gable) roofs. They wanted their home to be oriented toward the back—not the front—of its building lot, with rear-facing walls of glass borrowing visually from the outer spaces.

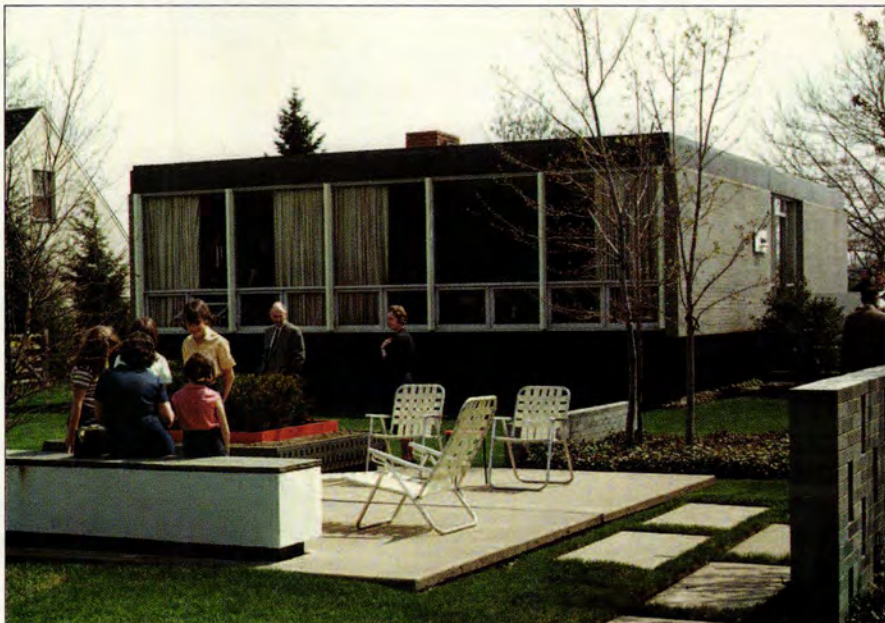
Inside, the houses often focused on fireplaces—massive constructions of stone or brick, whose large chimneys were prominent features. Floors were of modern materials, such as cork, asphalt tile, vinyl, linoleum, or terrazzo, while kitchen and bathroom countertops and cabinets were faced with the new seamless, waterproof wonder material, Formica.

In 1945, John Entenza, the editor of the California-based magazine *Art + Architecture*, began a project he called Case Study Houses, which eventually presented plans for 36 postwar houses by up-and-

**Techbuilt**, the brainchild of architect Carl Koch, was a franchised system of prefabricated, modular panels that produced affordable, individual houses of modern design. Launched in 1954, it promoted a score of built variations by 1961.



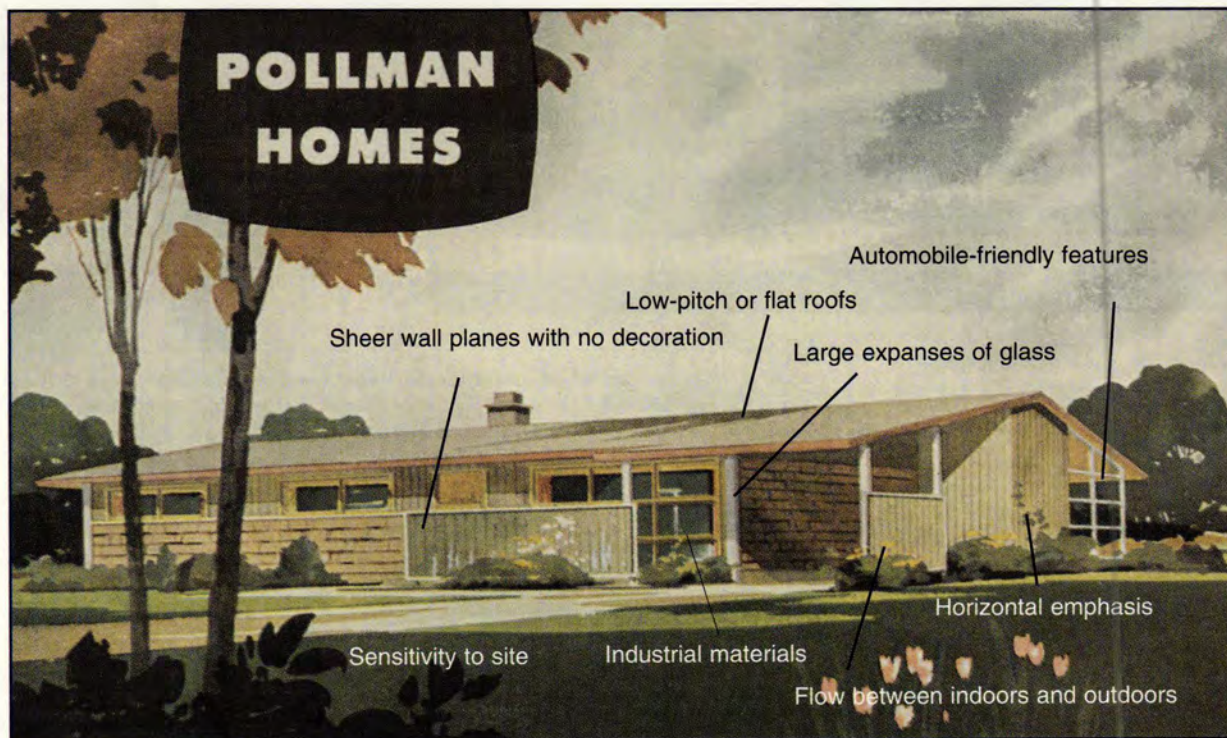




Projecting over its recessed fieldstone base, this 1959 house by Arthur White in Haverford, PA, is geometrically precise and formal in the Miesian manner.



With glass walls all around set in an exposed white steel cage elevated off the ground, the Farnsworth was built in 1950 in Plano, IL. It was one of Mies van der Rohe's masterwork was such a rigid design that its owner soon gave up living there.



### The Soft Modern House

*Ideas that pioneered by avant-garde, modernist architects are applied to residential buildings on popular level.*

This Modern design was nationally distributed by Thyer Manufacturing Corp. Prefabs. The 1955 house is by architect Richard B. Pollman.





coming architects. Craig Ellwood, Charles Eames, Eero Saarinen, Pierre Koenig, and Ralph Rapson all contributed designs for these houses. The idea was to demonstrate that small houses could incorporate excellent design at affordable prices by using innovative building materials such as metal and plywood, mass production methods, such as paneled exterior walls, and prefabricated elements, such as those that had been developed for the war effort. Entenza's own house in Pacific Palisades was Case Study House #9, designed by Charles Eames and Eero Saarinen. The houses were sophisticated, livable, and widely admired by designers and architects here and abroad. Unfortunately, they were also expensive, being made of materials that required different skills than most construction workers had to offer. They were also not popular with a buying public that still had its heart set on cozy brick-and-wood cottages rather than coolly elegant steel-and-glass boxes.

A similar fate met a number of building experiments that used unorthodox materials. The porcelain steel prefabricated Lustron house, for example, was sturdy and attractive in its chilly way, but it was not well enough received to make mass production economically feasible over the long haul. U.S. Steel also produced metal houses, and Alcoa erected an experimental house in Virginia that used aluminum in

new ways, although it was not constructed entirely of aluminum. For the most part, however, metal was still relegated to windows (where aluminum was broadly used), doors, and hardware.

That's not to say that mass production didn't make any headway in the homebuilding industry. William and Al Levitt's various Levittowns, the enormous planned suburban communities that blanketed parts of Long Island, New York, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey after the war, depended heavily on assembly line processes. Only in this case, the workers, not the product, were moving from place to place—a method the Levitts learned building defense housing during the war. They found, however, that their "Modern" model couldn't hold a candle to their popular "Cape Cod."

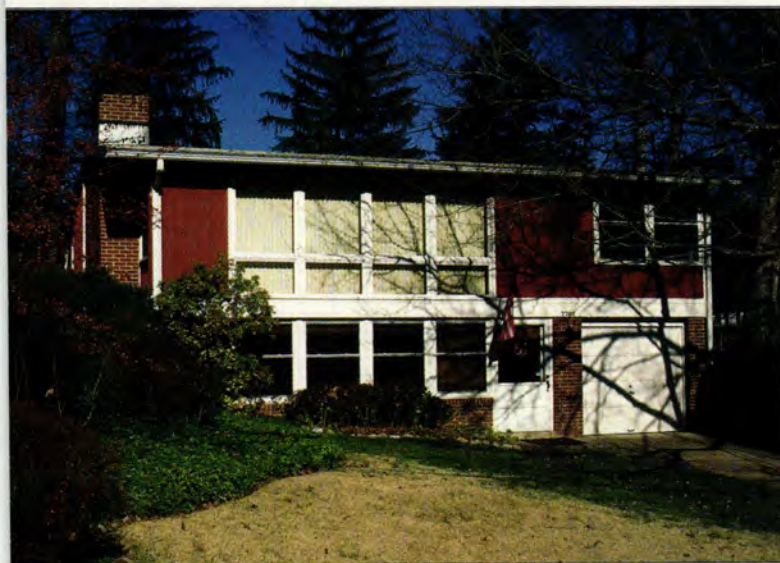
Other mass builders and developers found willing buyers for Modern houses, albeit in smaller numbers and at somewhat higher prices than the Levitts. These developers offered models that have been called "Soft Modern," which eased the lines of the box and may owe more to Frank Lloyd Wright's "organic" approach than to the rigid Bauhaus. One of the best known of the Soft Modern developers was Joseph Eichler, who erected more than 11,000 houses in California during the 1950s and 1960s. Today, the Eichler House, with its sheltering carports and atrium entrance, has become

an icon of 1950s culture.

Edward Hawkins, the developer of Arapahoe Acres near Denver, was another successful mass builder. His architect was a Czechoslovakian immigrant, Eugene Sternberg. Beginning in 1949, Hawkins built 124 houses with mountain views. Having reached the historical designation age of 50 years, Arapahoe Acres is now a National Register of Historic Places District. Techbuilt Houses, partly prefabricated, were not-too-modern houses designed by architect Carl Koch and built with considerable success in the 1960s. They demonstrated once again that mass-produced, standardized building parts could be put together in highly individual ways.

Near Alexandria, Virginia, just south of Washington, D.C., is another successful Soft Modern development, the woody suburb of Hollin Hills. Built by developer Robert Davenport, with houses designed by architect Charles Goodman, Hollin Hills grew to include 450 houses spread over 225 acres. The project benefited enormously from the landscaping advice supplied to early owners by landscape architect Lou Bernard Voight. After Voight's death, another noted landscape architect, Dan Kiley, took over the landscape planning for Hollin Hills. Similar developments can be found all around Washington. One of the best, Holmes Run Acres in Fairfax County, was designed by the Washington





Holmes Run Acres by Satterlee and Lethbridge, 1950, is typical of a number of Modern developments near Washington, D.C., that combined good design with thoughtful urban planning.

architectural firm of Nicholas Satterlee and Donald Lethbridge.

### Clean Designs

The straight lines of the Modern house were enhanced by mass-produced furniture by top designers such as Eero Saarinen, Florence Knoll, or the husband-and-wife team of Charles and Ray Eames. The Eames' 1950 fiberglass chair and their laminated wood chair are Modern classics, but they were only two among many examples of architect-designed furnishings. Danish Modern furniture, a staple of home decorating during the 1950s and 1960s, was an apt example of the international flavor of the Modern style.

Although the Modern house never became the typical American house, many of its features made their way into the building vocabulary of the time. "Contemporary" houses—a 1960s term that reflects the fact that no real estate

### Spacious Sites

This handsome Soft Modern house with a prominent cross-axis front chimney in Harrisonburg, Virginia, combines the clean lines of Modernism, thoughtful massing, and the kind of livability that most people prefer.



agent or developer with a lick of sense would think of calling them “Modern”—were blander, less intimidating buildings, but still equipped with up-to-the-minute conveniences and materials, as well as open plans and plenty of big windows. The paneled walls that typified Modern houses might not have made the cut with the Contemporary crowd, but horizontal windows and glass sliding doors with aluminum frames were readily accepted.

The concept of separate rooms as spaces reserved for specialized activities became increasingly blurred. Except for truly private places like sleeping and bathing quarters, the traditional rooms in the modern house were largely replaced by multifunctional areas. The dining area, for instance, was usually an integral part of the living room on one side while also being open to the kitchen on another side and to the family room or Florida room, if either of these existed, on yet another. Such spatial multitasking could be legitimately explained on practical grounds. It was obviously convenient (easier to keep an eye on the kids, Mom was less isolated in the kitchen) and economical. There was also a genuine design aesthetic at work here. Architects may have led the way in seeing space in terms of volume rather than enclosures, but developers, builders, and buyers quickly caught the spirit of volumetric thinking. The open-floor plan actually did give a feeling of spaciousness

to little houses, made it easier to link to outdoor living spaces, such as patios and backyards, and brought families into more intimate contact with each other.

The open plan also had the faults of its virtues: greater openness meant less privacy, and less space under-roof meant—well, less space. Less room, that is, for people and for the messy, often noisy things that people do, collect, and use—furniture, for instance, not to mention pots, pans, and clothing, television sets, radios, and record players.

To the American eye, the Modern style's no-nonsense lines and hard surfaces seemed fine for business purposes, a good match for skyscrapers, industrial parks, and warehouses, but they were always a bit too extreme for the average American home buyer. Ironically, the Modern house may be about as popular today as it was in the 1950s. In fact, now that 1950s suburbs are finding their way onto local, state, and national lists of historic landmarks, they have a trendy cachet that just may be even brighter than it was half a century ago. 🏠

## Natural Harmony

This 1954 house in Raleigh, North Carolina, was architect George Matsumoto's home and studio. It combines Bauhaus formality with panels and more delicate features reminiscent of Japanese architecture.



Around San Francisco and Los Angeles suburbs, builder Ned Eichler became famous for simple and livable Modern houses designed by nationally prominent California firms in the '50s and '60s.

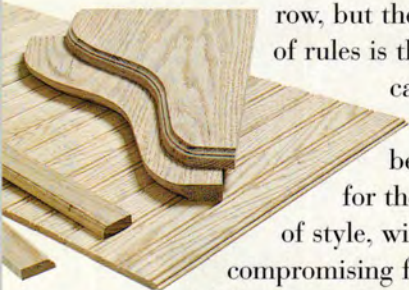




# Cabinet-Level DECISION

## Accenting a kitchen cabinet delivers a custom-crafted look

The rules of kitchen design tend to favor cabinets all in a row, but the beauty of rules is that they can sometimes be bent for the sake of style, without compromising function, and that's exactly what happened in this kitchen. The long row of oak cupboards was nice enough to look at, but in a predictable sort of way. All it took was some small changes to have them stand out, literally.



In the middle of the cabinet row, a nicely designed cupboard was easily removed so

it could be stripped and prepped for a new stain and topcoat. Before the cabinet got its new color, the oak was treated with Minwax® Water-Based Pre-Stain Wood Conditioner. Then it was stained with Minwax® Water-Based Wood Stain Verdigris, one of the 68 custom-mixed decorator colors now available. The final topcoating was done with Minwax® Polycrylic® Protective Finish in a semi-gloss sheen. But instead of simply putting the cabinet back where it was, wood spacer blocks were fastened to the wall to make the unit protrude about four inches. To create the look of a traditional breakfront, oak beaded board and decorative brackets were installed underneath. Up top, new crown molding was installed along the entire row to tie it all together and further enhance the traditional style. The result of this bit of rule-bending gave the kitchen a new contour and a beautiful focal point.



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### Outside the Old House, Page 35

W. Atlee Burpee & Co.,  
300 Park Avenue, Warminster, PA 18974  
(800) 888-1447  
[www.burpee.com](http://www.burpee.com)  
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[www.fedcoseeds.com/seeds.htm](http://www.fedcoseeds.com/seeds.htm)  
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Select Seeds,  
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Seeds of Change,  
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(888) 762-7333  
[www.seedsofchange.com](http://www.seedsofchange.com)  
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### Ins and Outs of Insulating Windows page 70

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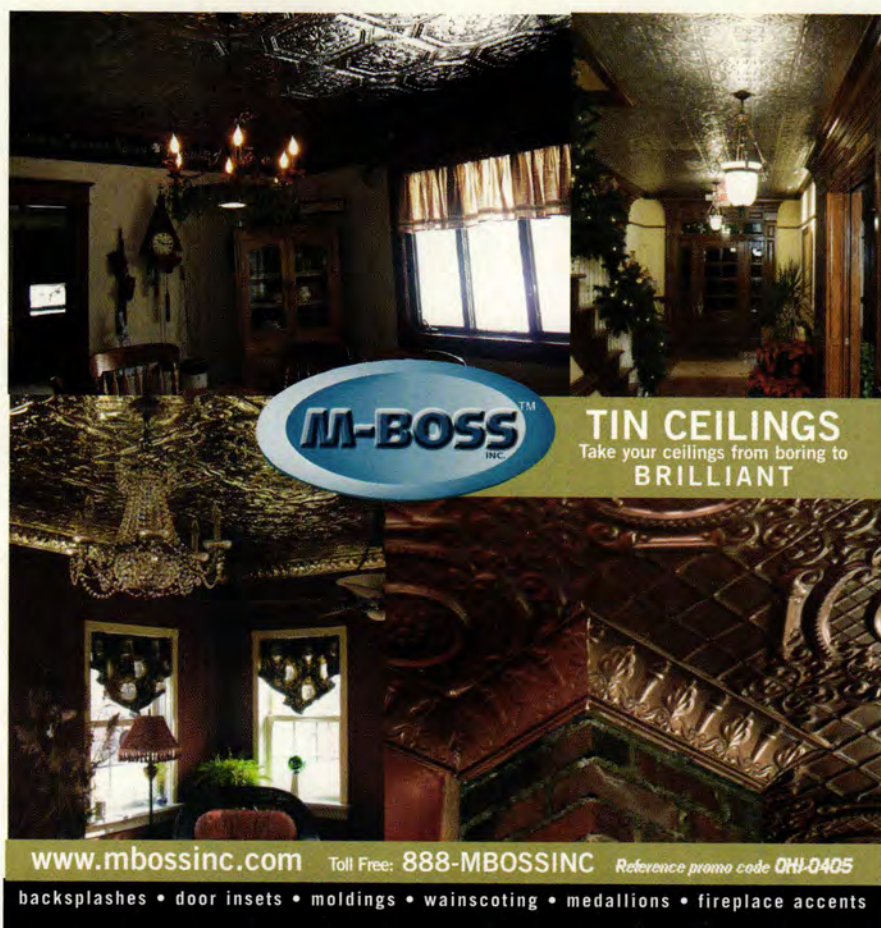
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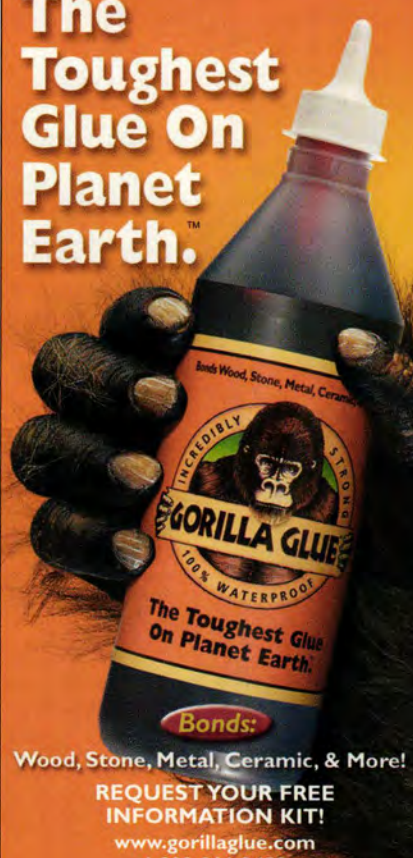
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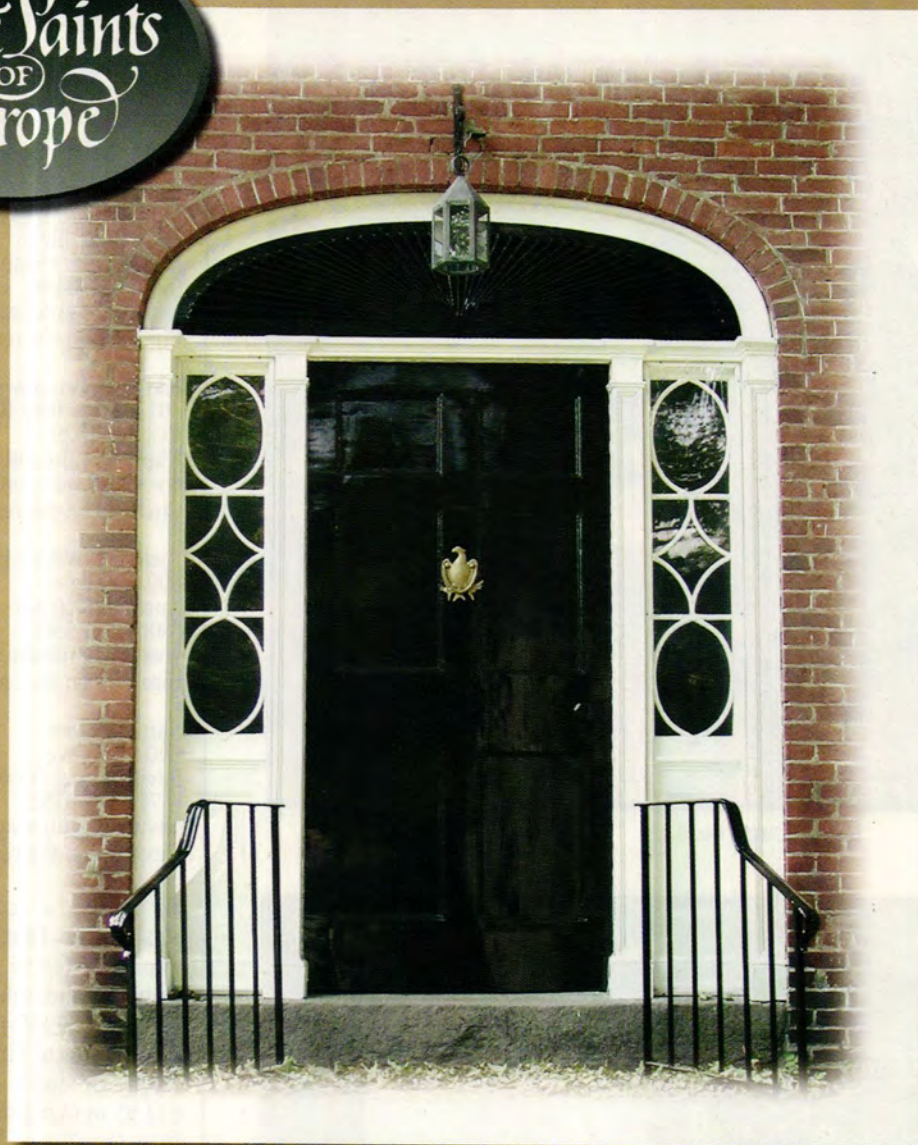
Architectural Garage Door Design  
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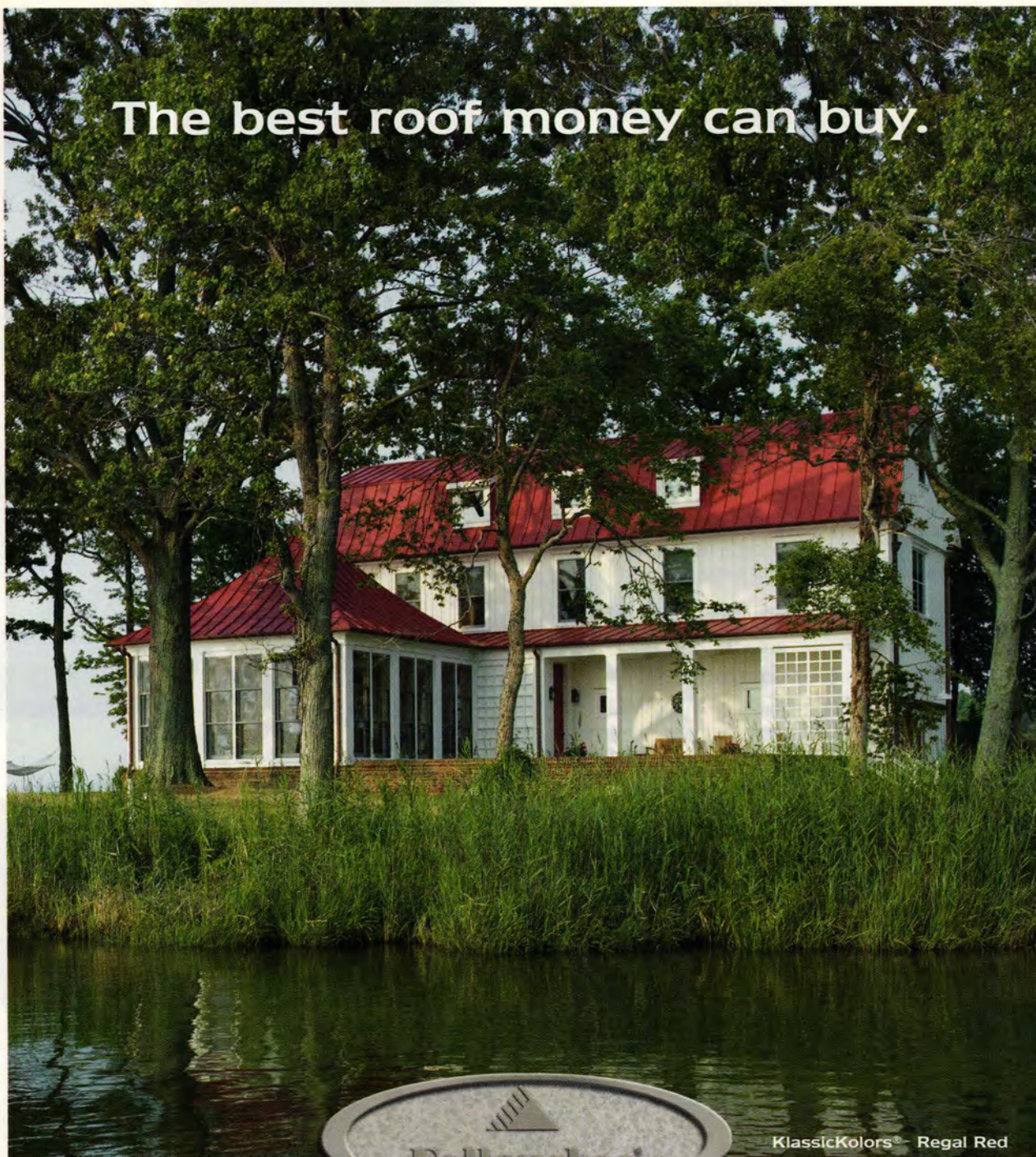


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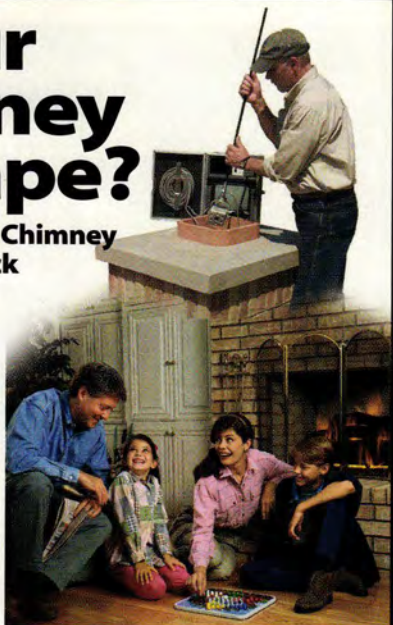
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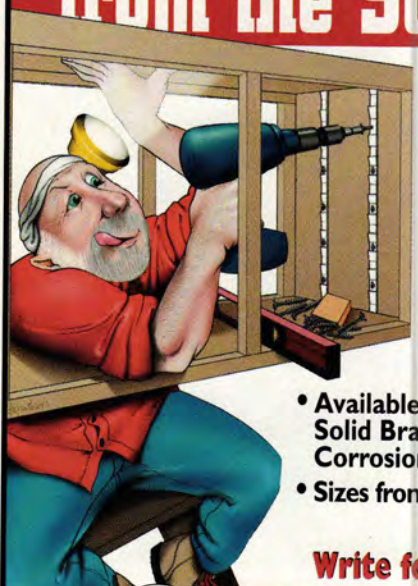
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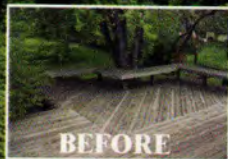
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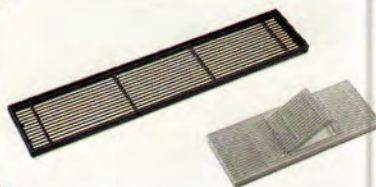
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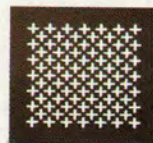
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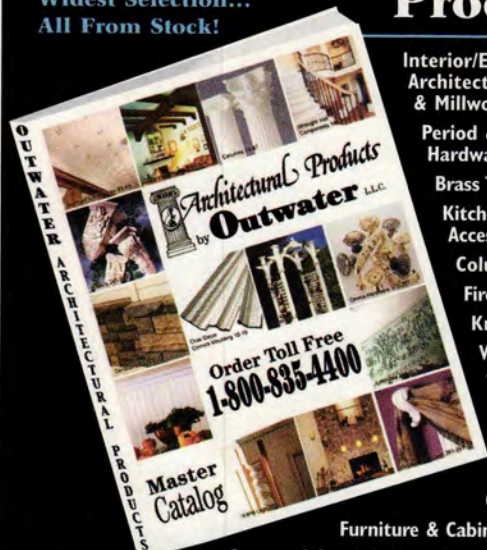
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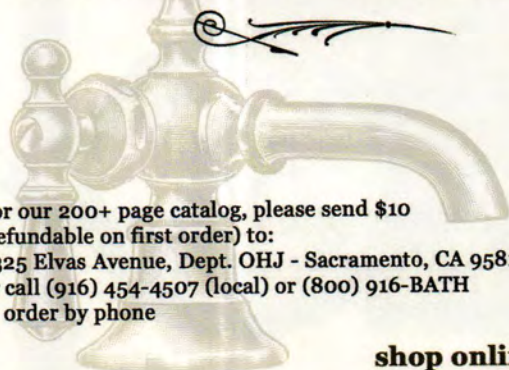


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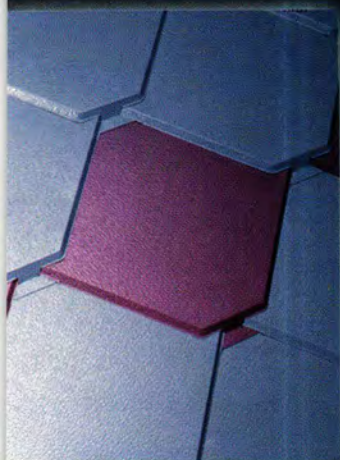


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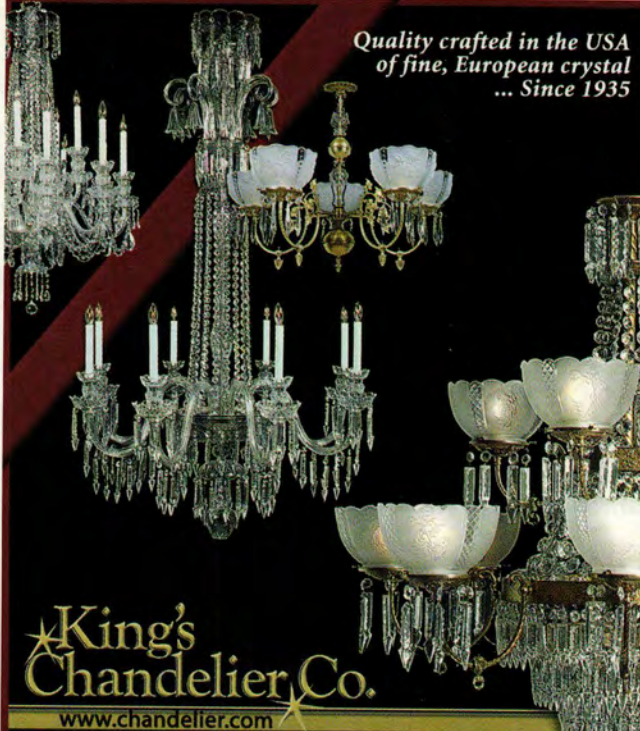


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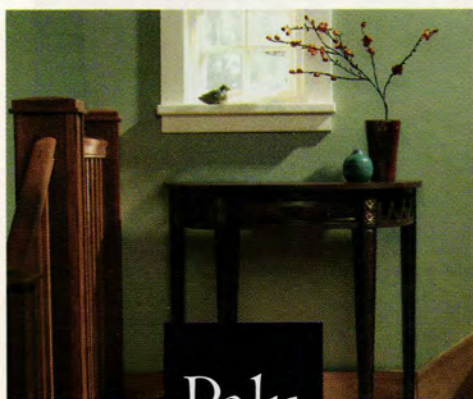


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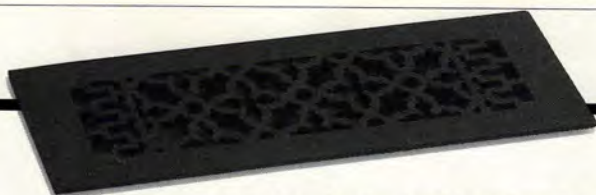
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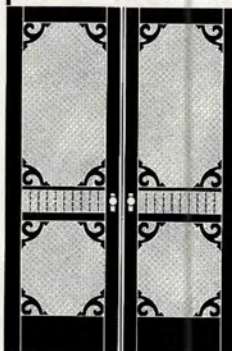


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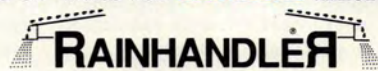
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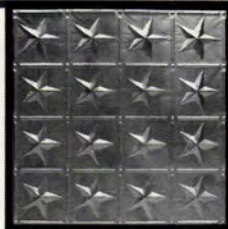
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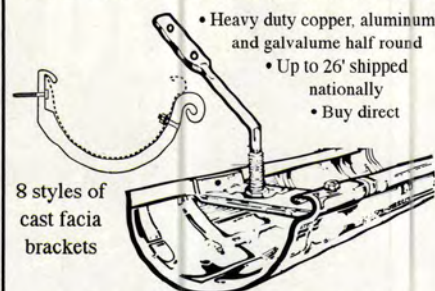
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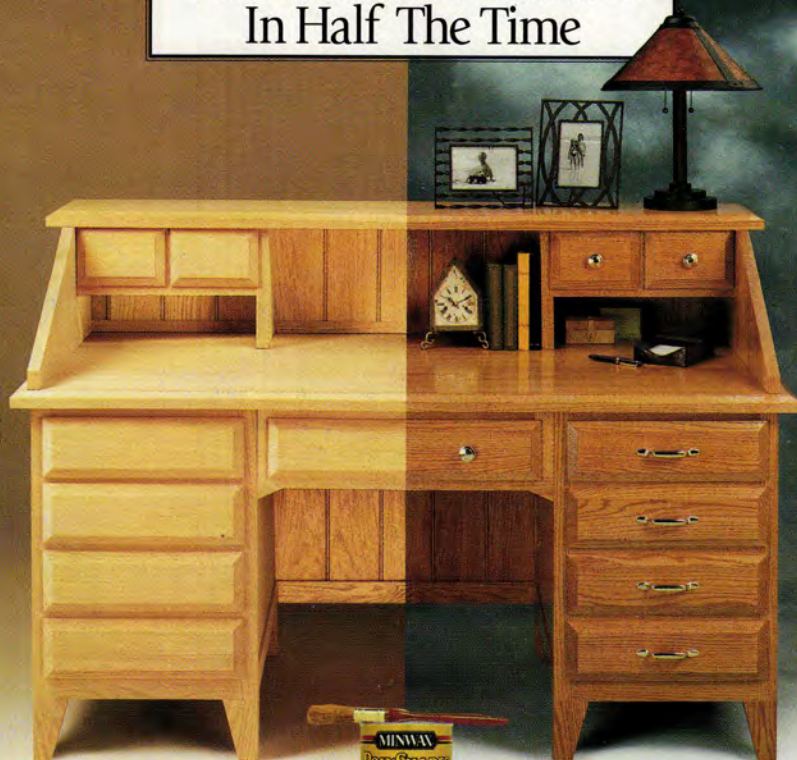
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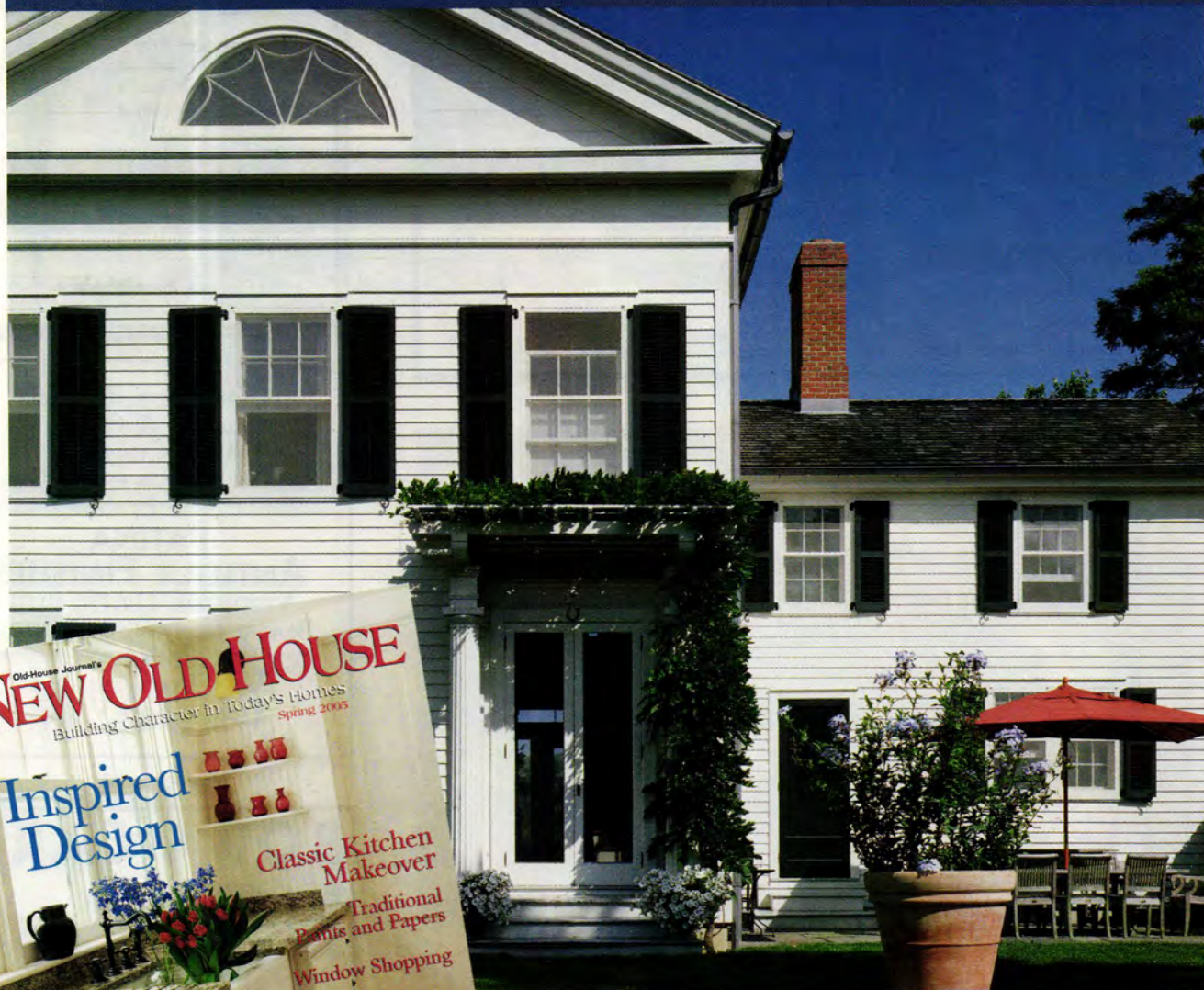
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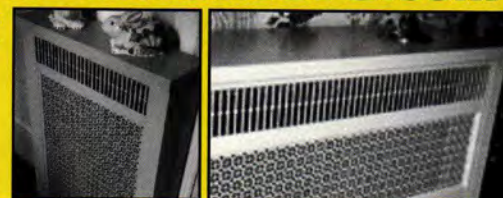
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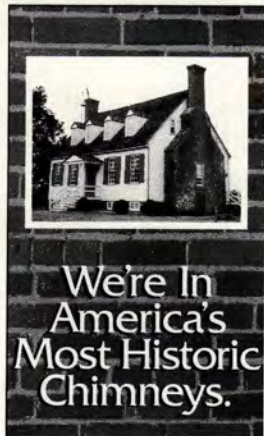
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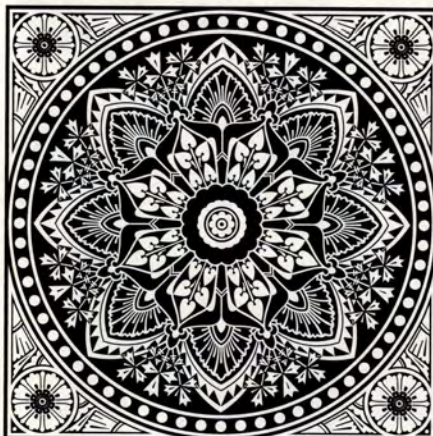
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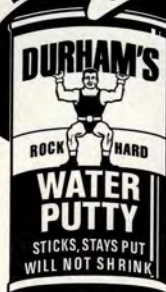
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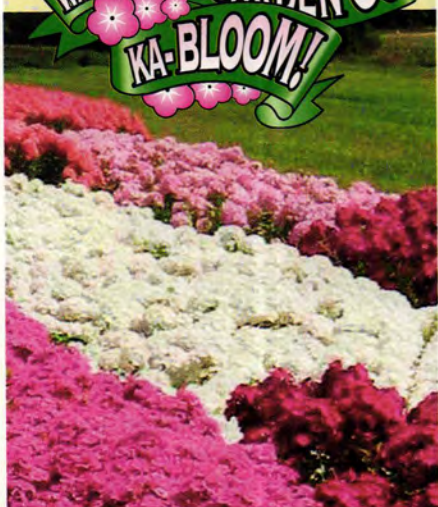


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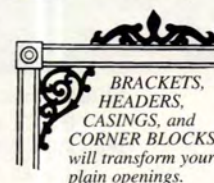
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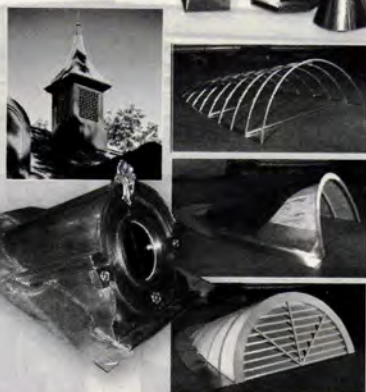
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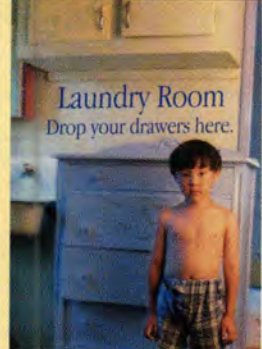
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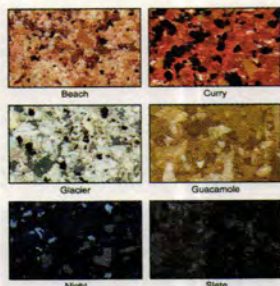
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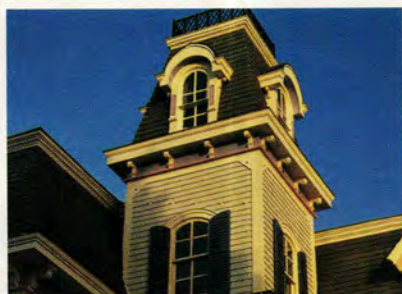
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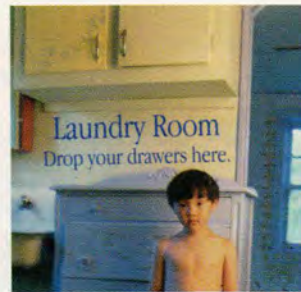
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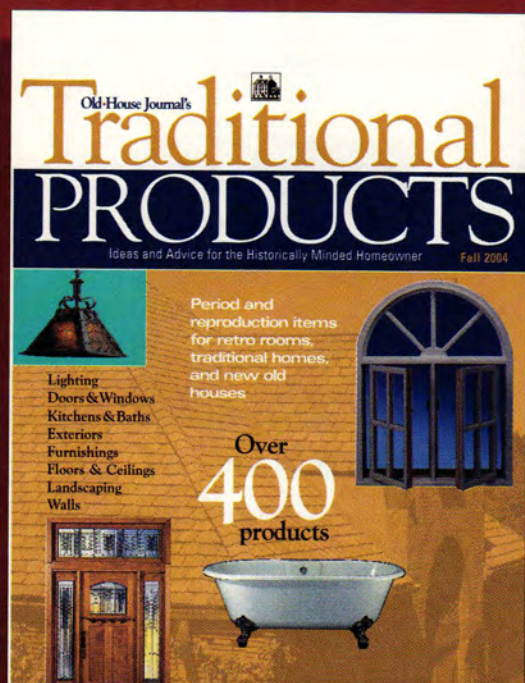
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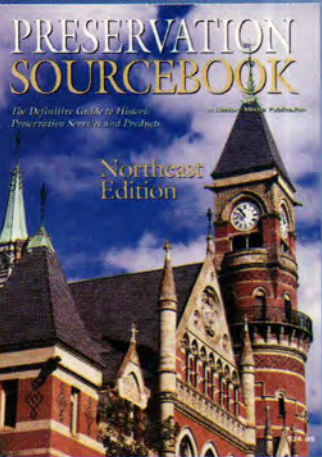
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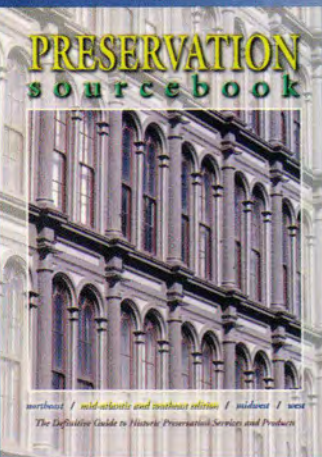
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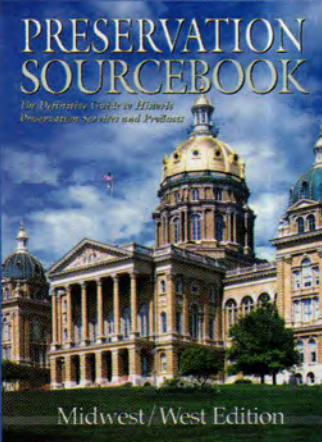
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## Who Knew? (Times Two)

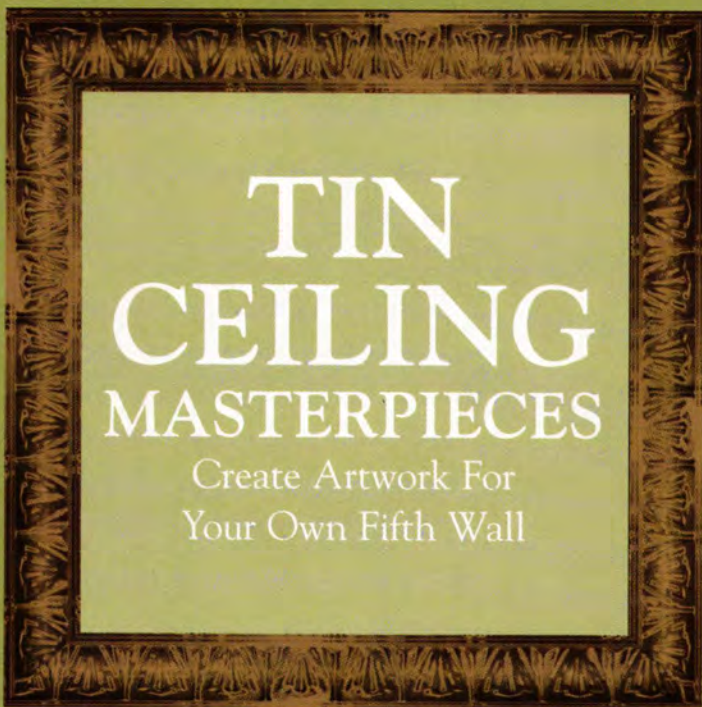
Not all remuddlings knock you off your feet with mushroom pop-ups and bizarre porch enclosures. These two—what appear to be a Colonial Revival in Bloomfield, New Jersey (above, right), and a sort of two-storey bungalow in Fredonia, New York (below, right)—might at first seem to be relatively inoffensive denizens of their respective neighborhoods, except perhaps for the mismatched windows on the former. But vintage photos document the loss of brackets, fretsawn balustrades, turned columns, vergeboards, window cornices, shutters, and spindlework along a porch foundation—not to mention the tower on the New Jersey example. Were all those grace notes too hard to paint? The victims of severe rot? Or did they simply stand in the way of a more modern look? 🏠



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