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RESTORATION  
MAGAZINE

## The Charisma of Columns

## New Life for Old Chimneys

Buyer's Guide to Best Liners

## Making Trim with a Twist

How to Bend Mouldings (p.42)

## SPECIAL SECTION:

Pro Tips for Door Hinges

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Sagging Floor Fixes  
Linoleum Rugs

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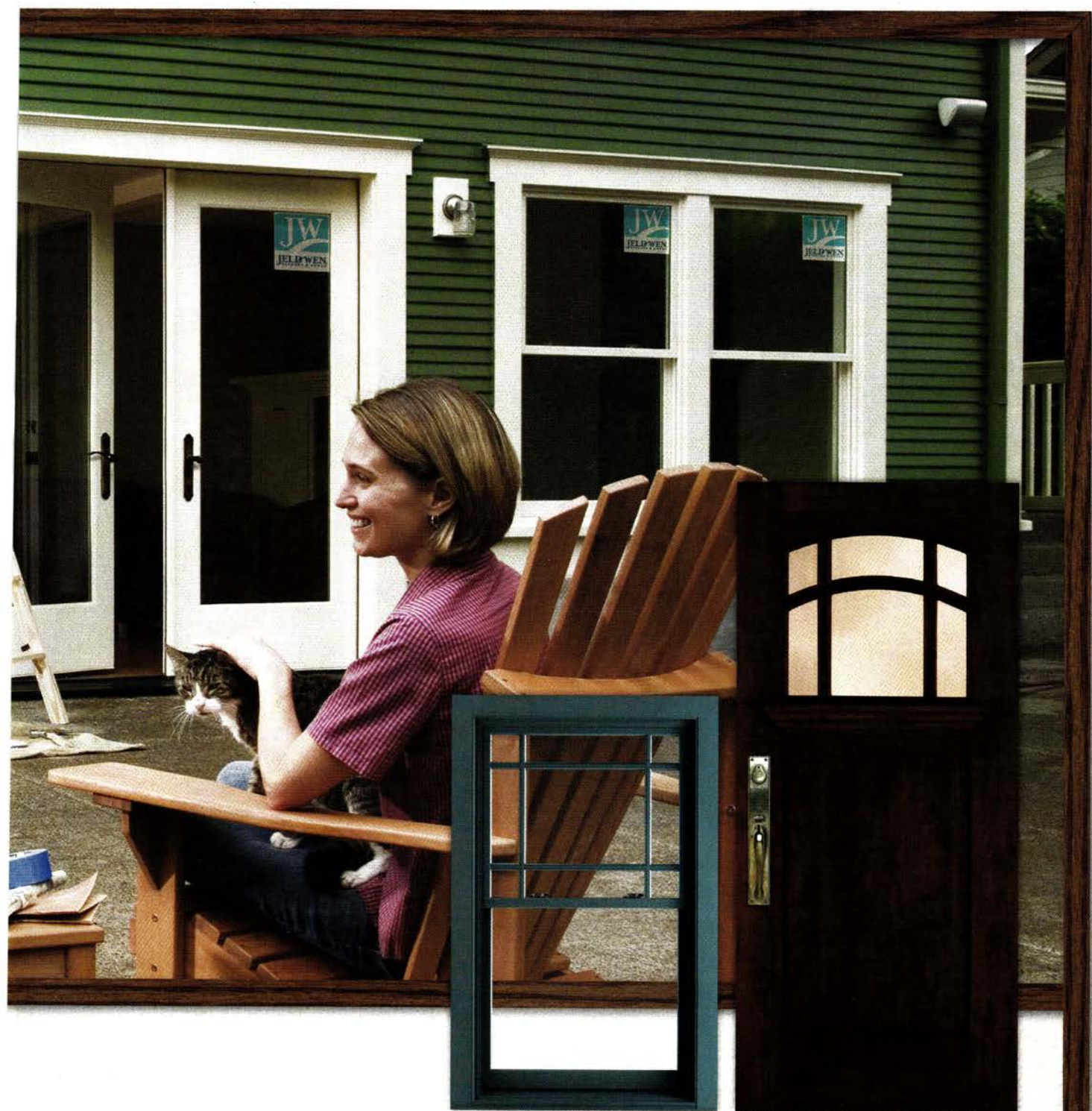
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# Features

## Old·House JOURNAL®

November/December 2007

Volume 35/ Number 6

Established 1973

### 36 Making Sense of Chimney Liners

BY MICHAEL CHOTINER

Regular maintenance is critical for the safety of your chimney, but even more important is making sure it has a proper liner. This buyer's guide explores the best options for a variety of old houses.

### 42 Learning Curves

BY DEMETRA APOSPOROS

When walls throw curves at you, creating mouldings to fit them is impossible without some specialized, time-tested carpentry. We visit an Italianate building in Michigan to learn how it's done.

### 46 Getting to the Bottom of Sagging Floors

BY STEVE JORDAN

Uneven floors aren't simply a fact of life in old houses—they're often a symptom of more serious conditions. Here are the basics on determining their cause and finding the best solution.

### 48 Lie Like a Rug

BY JANE POWELL

The linoleum craze of the early 20th century also ushered in a popular spinoff: the linoleum rug. An authority takes a look at the early appeal of linoleum rugs and offers tips on collecting and caring for them today.

### 54 Plaster Repair Options

BY GORDON BOCK

Flat wall plaster is one of the most defining features of old houses—and one that often needs the most work. This crash course on the make-up and methods of historic plaster will get you started on its repair.

### 58 In Step with Coming Unhinged

BY NOELLE LORD

Keep your doors swinging freely with these simple fixes for worn hinges.

### 60 Old-House Living: Restoration Lessons

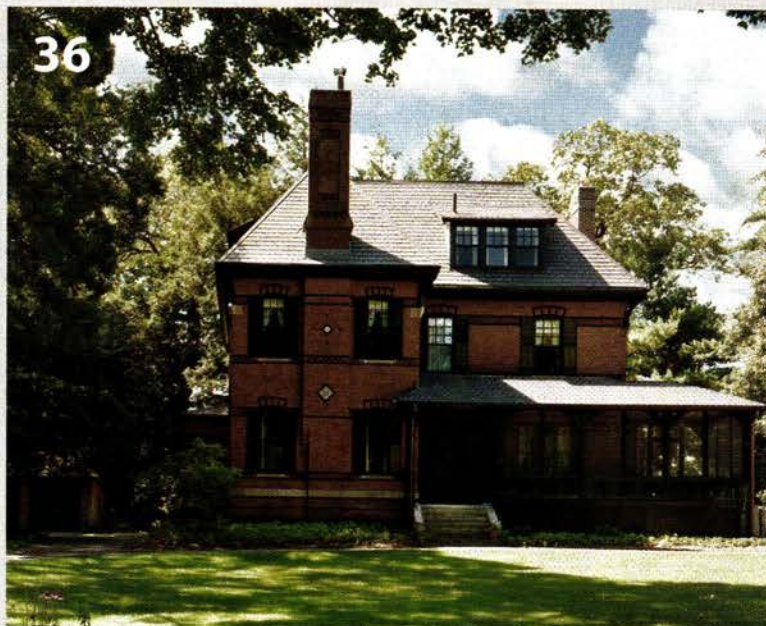
BY ALICIA CAMPBELL

Putting old-house experiences into context helps one couple streamline ongoing repairs to their Greek Revival house.

### 64 The Architectural Alchemy of Columns

BY JAMES C. MASSEY AND SHIRLEY MAXWELL

The column is the most enduring ornament in American architecture, spanning from colonial Georgian houses to the post-Modern structures of the last century. Our architectural historians explore the many forms of this timeless feature.



#### ON THE COVER:

The prominent entry portico supported by four evenly spaced columns on this 1810 house in Louisville, Kentucky, is typical of buildings designed in the Early Classical Revival style. Photo by Kevin R. Morris.



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BY TONY AND CELINE SEIDEMAN

A preservation-minded competition inspired one town to restore its historic treasures.

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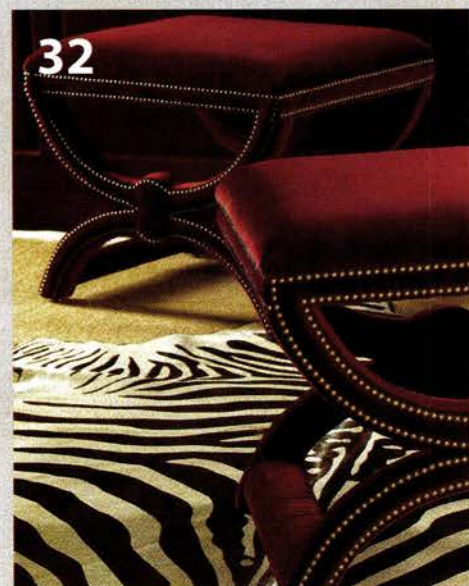
Greek parlor window.

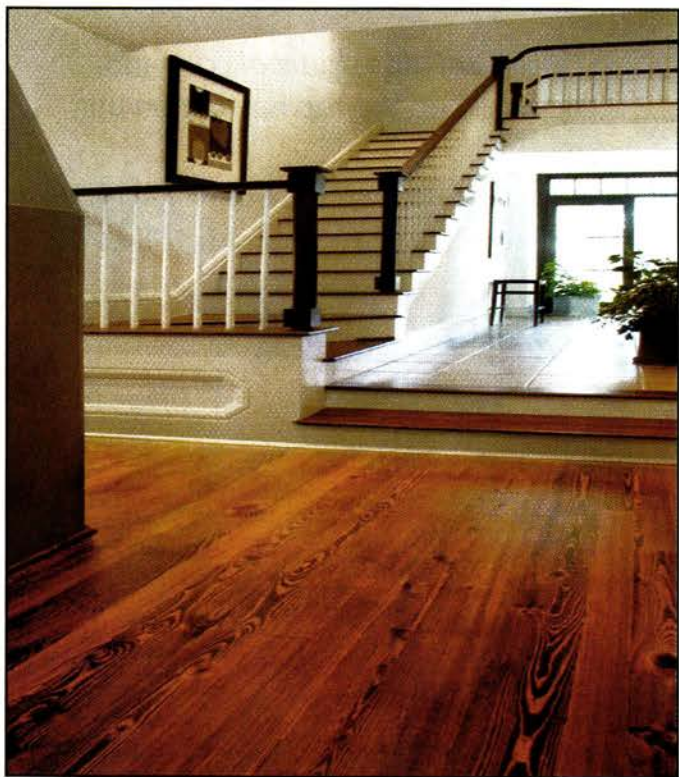
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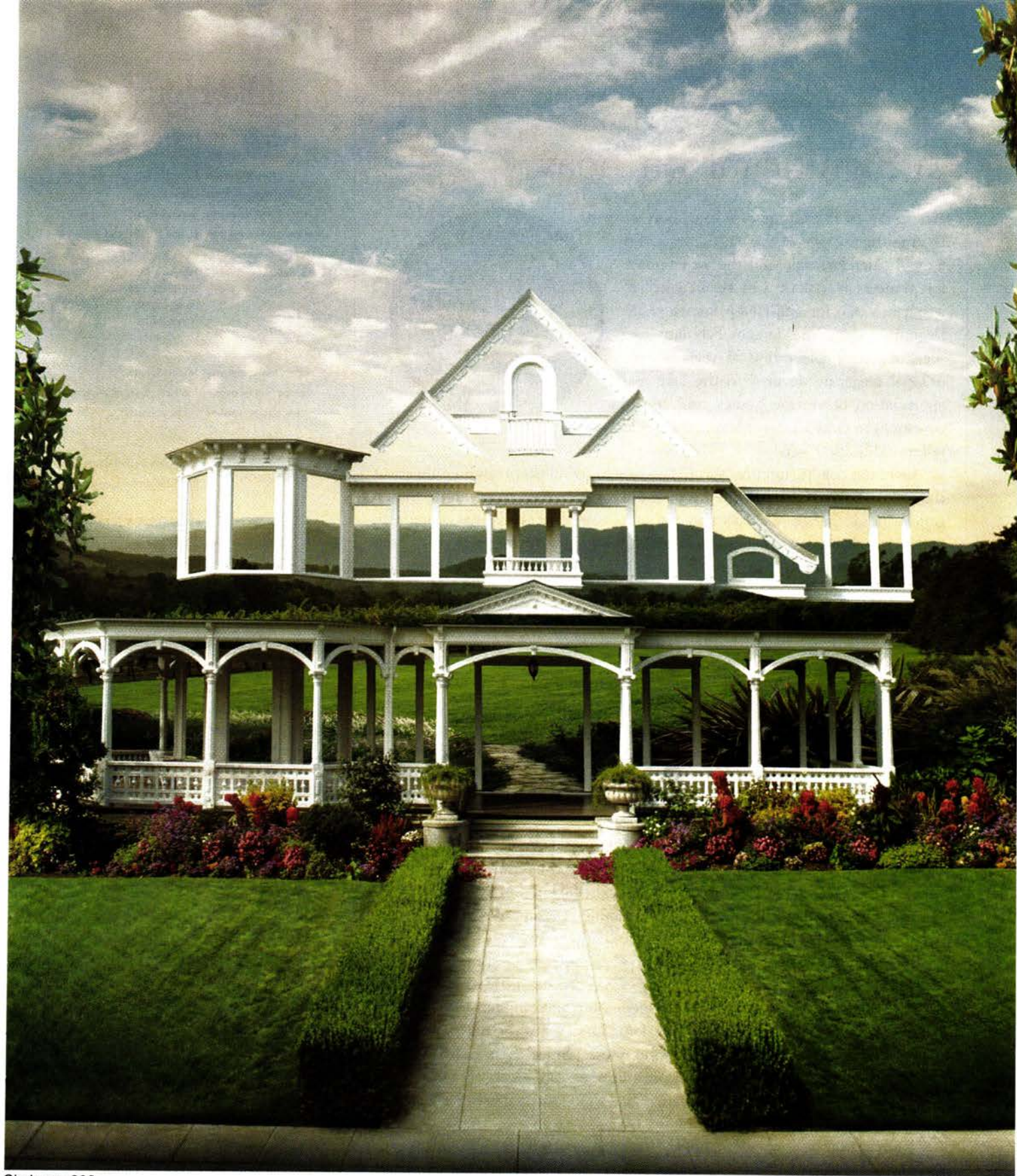
**Melissa certainly is.**

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# Editor's Page

## A Significant Birthday

According to the Chinese zodiac, soon we will be entering the year of the rat, the start of the animal calendar cycle and the year known for pioneers, but 2008 will be an equally auspicious one for *Old-House Journal* too. Beginning with the January/February issue, we'll start celebrating 35 years of the original magazine devoted to the care and appreciation of vintage houses, and one that continues to grow along with you, our readers and fellow old-house lovers.



Over the coming months it would be easy to spend pages reminiscing about the past, where OHJ has come from, and what it has seen over more than a generation of change. We'll do a bit of that, of course, in every issue, along with presenting articles on subjects you've asked for, from outfitting period kitchens to picking paint colors to reviving floors and windows. More useful perhaps than a backward glance will be to peer into the future to see where OHJ, old houses, and historic preservation in general might be headed, and what challenges and accomplishments we expect to find there.

Historic preservation is changing as it grows, and indeed, here in the first decade of the 21st century, we all have entered uncharted waters. I can remember when Earth Day and the environmental movement—not to mention the restoration of old houses—was outside-of-the-box to the point of being eccentric, something unfamiliar that didn't make sense to a lot of people, but that's not the case anymore. Though it never really went away, today green building is back big time, not because it's a farfetched fashion but by virtue of the fact it makes sense in a world of mounting greenhouse gases, energy costs, and landfills. The experts I admire prefer the word "sustainability," and they all acknowledge that when it comes to environmentally sustainable architecture, high on the list is the restoration and preservation of quality existing buildings—a pursuit OHJ has helped lead since its first days. In the coming year's articles, look for more about where the lines of green building and old houses intersect and intertwine, as well some special subjects we're going to keep under wraps for now.

Another area we'll explore is how what was once a little-known passion has gone mainstream, not only in the media, but in communities across the continent. For more than 20 years *Old-House Journal* was the only publication of its kind devoted exclusively to historic houses. Since then, we've seen the subject and interest expand to spawn organizations and events of many ilk, as well as a variety of magazines, small and large, that address specific segments of the field.

Here at OHJ, we're happy for the company because, as a colleague and friend of mine puts it so well, "the bigger the fire, the warmer everyone gets." In the same spirit, we look forward to sharing our birthday with you over the next year and hope you'll enjoy the glow as much as we will.

*Edna Beck*

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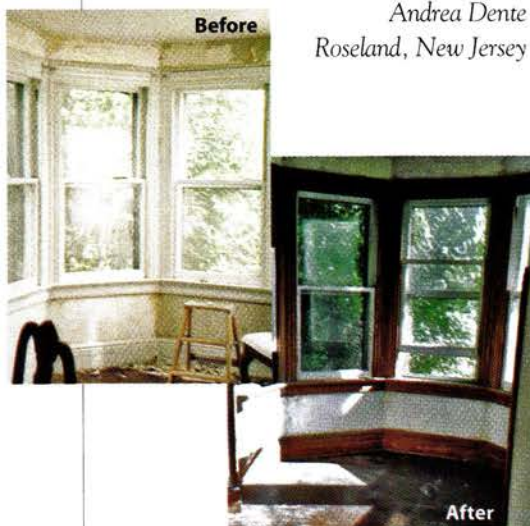
# Letters



## More Stripper Secrets

"Confessions of a Stripper" was the first article I read in my September/October issue—I'm doing the same thing to the 1870 bull's-eye moulding in my dining room (below). I intended to sand just enough to be able to add yet another layer of paint, but my favorite stripper loosened all the layers in one or two applications. When I saw the beautiful oak underneath, I resolved to remove all of the white paint around the doorway, archway, and six windows. I would have gotten very discouraged if I hadn't also discovered a two-tip moulding scraper at my local paint store. It's saved me a lot of time and thoughts of turning back. And my marriage is doing very well, although we both look forward to the day the dining room is back to its late Victorian splendor!

Andrea Dente  
Roseland, New Jersey



## A Familiar Façade

As an architect, I've been collecting bungalows for the past few years in relation to design and guideline projects I've done. What fun to read "The Ubiquitous, Multifarious Bungalow" [September/October], and particularly to come across the house in Madison, Ohio (above), that I'd thought was my personal discovery.

Jonathan Hale  
Watertown, Massachusetts

*This distinctive variant is often called an airplane bungalow (by virtue of the second-storey "cockpit") and is an illustrious example of how this relatively simple house form can be manipulated in highly creative ways.—Eds.*

## The Lowdown on Teardowns

In response to the request for information on preventing teardowns ["Letters," September/October], there are several legal mechanisms homeowners can use to prevent future owners from demolishing their home.

First is a façade easement, where an owner donates the rights to make changes to the building to a nonprofit or local government. A similar mechanism is a deed restriction, where restrictions are placed in the deed at the time of sale to require that future owners not demolish or alter the historic building without the permission of a third party, usually a nonprofit preservation organization.

Theoretically, easements and deed restrictions become part of the title and continue in perpetuity. However, lawyers for future buyers can legally challenge them in court and cause costly fights to have them removed. Property owners also can solicit the local govern-

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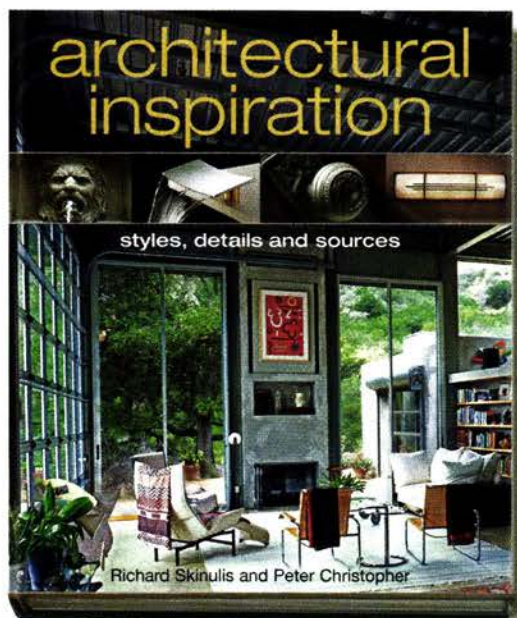
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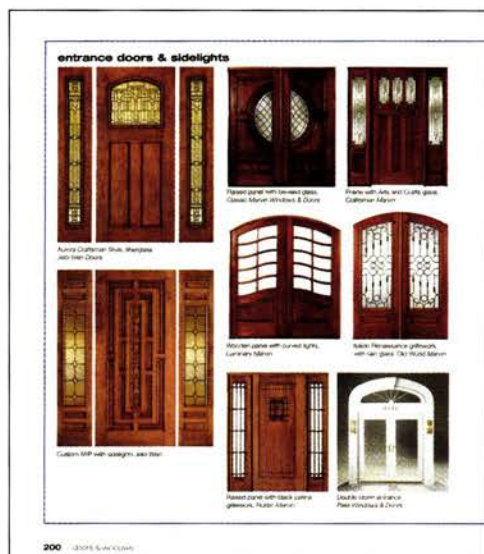
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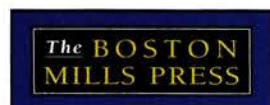


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## Letters

ing body to adopt a historic preservation ordinance, which requires that changes to historic buildings be submitted to an architectural review board. But because ordinances can be overturned and review boards can be infiltrated by non-preservationists, an ordinance may not be the best option for perpetual protection against future teardowns.

*David Kimmerly  
 Doylestown, Pennsylvania*

As a historic preservation consultant in Los Angeles, preventing teardowns is an issue we deal with quite a bit. The two favored means of protection here are listing the property as a Historic-Cultural Monument and/or as part of a Historic Preservation Overlay Zone. Both options place restrictions on what can be done to the properties. The first can be done by the individual homeowner, but the nomination does require a fair amount of research and writing. The second is a lengthier process and requires the agreement of a controlling percentage of homeowners within the established boundary. HPOZs have become very popular as people realize their ability to maintain historic communities and increase property values.

I am not familiar with preservation laws in other states, but if these types of planning tools have not yet been implemented, perhaps preservationists can begin to advocate for them. Without any kind of legal covenant, there is no way to control what happens once you sell a property. This aspect of preservation is as important as the restoration process.

*Mitzi Mogul  
 Los Angeles, California*

## The Great Energy Debate

I loved the article "Embracing Energy Efficiency" in the September/October issue. My job as the historic preservation coordinator in the city of Kalamazoo, Michigan, means that at least once a week, I have a conversation that includes the phrase, "Of course you'll get the same energy efficiency from a well-maintained historic window and a properly installed storm as you would with a brand-new double glass window." I will be referring to this article frequently as winter approaches.

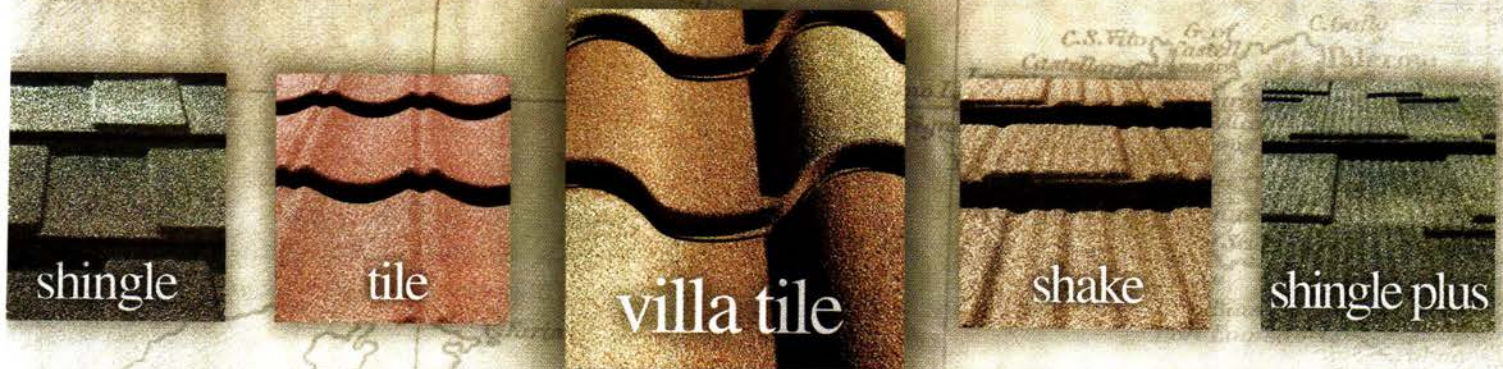
*Sharon Ferraro  
 Kalamazoo, Michigan*

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### Delaware Antiques Show

This year's show will feature a lecture by designer Bunny Williams and an exhibition of historic American flags. Admission is \$15 per person (Winterthur members receive \$2 off), and free for children under 12.

[www.winterthur.org](http://www.winterthur.org)

Nov. 9-11

WOODVILLE, MS

### Woodville Antiques Show & Sale

Historic Woodville will celebrate its first antiques show with home tours, a special museum exhibit and a plantation dinner party. Admission prices range from \$5 (sale) to \$50 (dinner). [www.historicwoodville.org](http://www.historicwoodville.org)

Nov. 16-Jan. 1

CAPE MAY, NJ

### An Old-Fashioned Christmas

Experience Christmas through the ages at the Emlen Physick Estate, which will feature vintage decorations and toys celebrating decades of holiday traditions. Admission is \$2 for adults, \$1 for children 3-12, and free with any tour of the estate. (800) 275-4278, [www.capemaymac.org](http://www.capemaymac.org).

Nov. 22

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Need a little help getting your Arts & Crafts-based research project off the ground? The Arts & Crafts Research Fund is again awarding grants to those studying topics associated with the movement, to offset research costs and allow for the publication of findings. Applications are due by Dec. 31, and grant winners will be announced at the annual Grove Park Arts & Crafts Conference in February. Past award winners have included such topics as Arts & Crafts glass, Stickley furniture production records, and Arts & Crafts lighting. For more information, visit [www.arts-craftsconference.com](http://www.arts-craftsconference.com).



LYNN HAMON PHOTO

Funds for the grants come from a silent auction at the conference.

## Head of the Glass

Anyone who's ever dealt with stained-glass restoration knows it's an arduous (not to mention expensive) process. So when Pittsburgh's Union Project faced the daunting task of restoring the dozens of stained-glass windows in the abandoned Baptist church they'd purchased as a headquarters for their social-outreach nonprofit, they came up with an ingenious solution: Team up with a professional restorer to offer classes in stained-glass restoration. The class materials? The church windows.

The idea—dubbed Glass Action—was such a hit that the first two classes offered in 2001 filled immediately. Glass Action began drawing participants from all over the country, and over the course of three years, most of the church's 100-year-old stained-glass windows had



PHOTOS COURTESY OF UNION PROJECT



Class members often aid in the meticulous task of taking apart and cleaning stained-glass windows.

been completely restored.

"The vast majority of people doing restoration work are taught through an appren-

ticeship," explains Justin Rothshank, one of Union Project's founders. "If you're a do-it-yourselfer, it's a real

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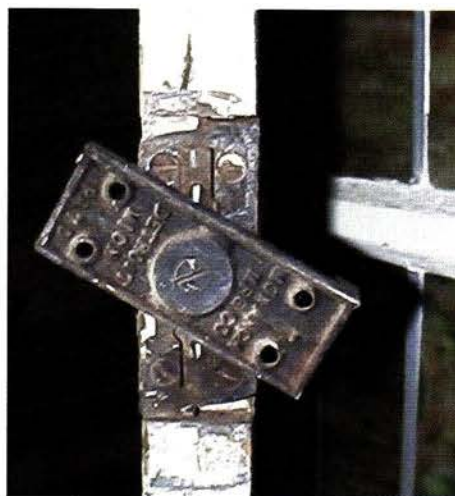
## Pivotal Panes

We're trying to identify some window styles that we salvaged out of a small, wood-frame church built about 1915. Each window is tall (about 6') and narrow and hinged half way up with unusual hardware. Any ideas?

Lowell Roberts

Stewartsville, Missouri

**W**e put your question to the historic hardware experts at the William J. Rigby Company ([www.wmjrighy.com](http://www.wmjrighy.com)) who, true to form, offered more than you ever wanted to know about your hardware and windows. According to Bill Rigby, what you have pictured is a Tabor Patent Sash Center (with some minor improvements). These devices were found in a lot of commercial installations and many high-end residential applications. Most often they were installed on the horizontal to allow a window to pivot out at the bottom and in at the top. They were also used for vertical applications, although this was not common.



One of many versions from a 1916 patent, these Tabor sash centers set into the sash and window jamb. As seen in the Monarch model (above) the center screw adjusts the floating bar that holds the window at different angles.

The inventor, Clinton Tabor, was from Staten Island, New York, and his patent dates to 1916. Monarch, the maker of your centers, was one of many manufacturers of this design. Corbin in the 1920s was another. These centers became popular because they were designed for rabbeted sash edges and jambs, thus eliminating any applied stops. The resulting installation provided a very sleek appearance when

closed. The screw in the center was for tension adjustment of the floating bar, which fell into the various grooved detents to hold the window at certain positions. This adjustment was made at the time of installation. Centers were available in different widths for the different sash thicknesses available. This Tabor patent is only one of the many types of sash centers that were available in their day.

## Fueling Around with Cookstoves

Is there something I can buy and hook up to an old gas stove in order to have it run on propane instead of piped-in gas?

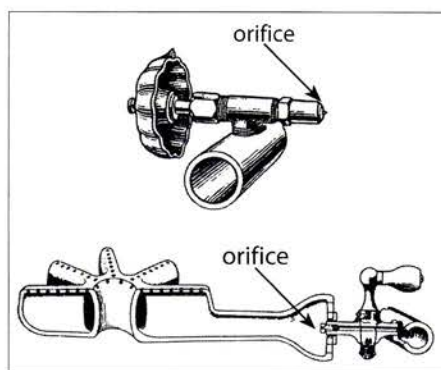
Anne Cunningham

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

**H**ighly versatile because it can be delivered as a liquid and stored in tanks, propane—or LP (liquefied petroleum)—gas is derived from processing natural gas or refining crude oil. It has been marketed for cooking, among other applications, since the 1920s, and many cooking ranges manufactured in the last 50 years are capable of being converted from natural gas to propane. Basically this involves changing the orifice fitting on each burner assem-

bly to one with the appropriate diameter for propane.

While the process is straightforward, it is a job for a professional because the particular range may also require converting the regulator and oven, as well as adjusting the flame. Moreover, switching stove fuel sources has other implications. "Once you remove a range from its original installation," reports Tammy Lee at the Good Time Stove Company, "in most areas you can't hook it back up again until the appliance is brought up to code. With vintage stoves, this can mean adding features like insulation and gas-safety shut-offs." Such upgrades can get expensive, and always involve transporting the range to and from the restoration



The orifice is a small fitting in the burner with a tiny hole sized for a specific gas.

specialist. Good Time, however, will provide a free estimate of the work to anyone who mails a picture of their stove and manufacturer data to: Good Time Stove Co., P.O. Box 306, Goshen, MA 01032 ([www.goodtimestove.com](http://www.goodtimestove.com)).



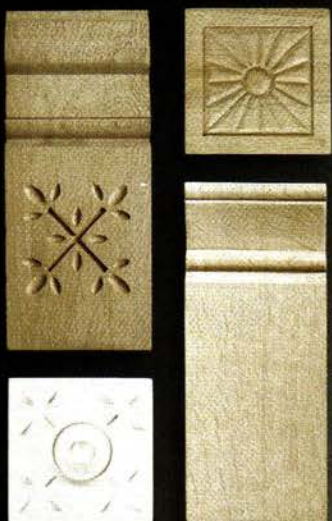
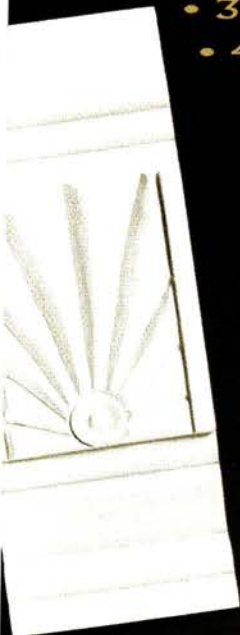
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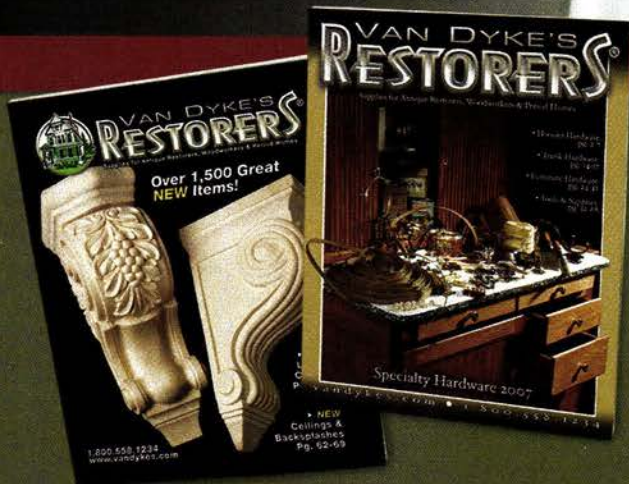
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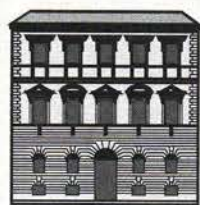
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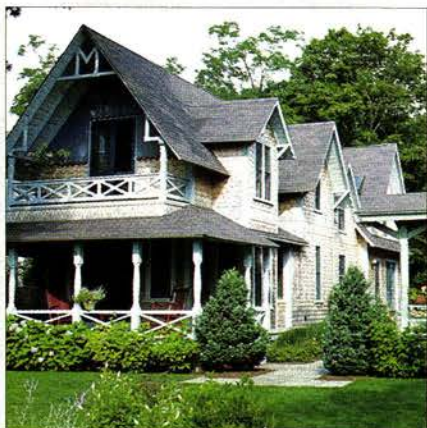
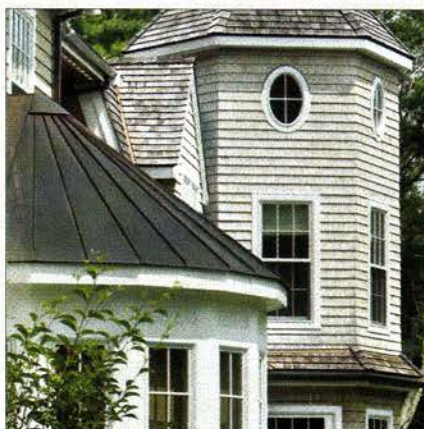
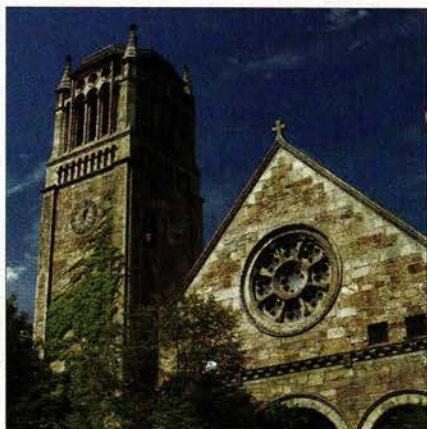
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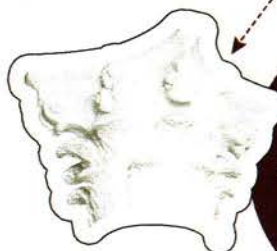
## Empire

The Empire Capital comes from the Ionic order featuring scrolled ends angled out for eye-catching depth. Beading, traditional egg and art ornamentation and foliage medallions give this capital a texture as rich as its heritage.



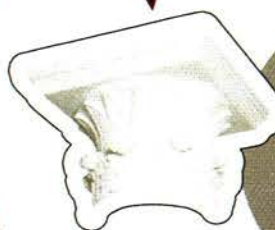
## Roman Corinthian

The Corinthian Capital comes from the last of the Greek Orders. Our Roman Corinthian is a truly elegant choice classically blending acanthus leaves with small scrolls, or "volutes", in a variety of intricate combinations.



## Temple of Winds

Natural beauty marries with precision and uniformity. The Temple of Winds is a festive choice featuring two tiers of acanthus leaves that contrast against a subtle, yet sharp square abacus.



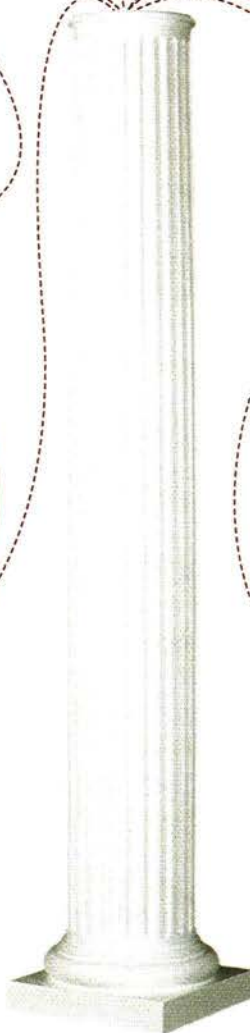
## Tuscan

The Tuscan Capital is a simplified variation of the Doric. Favored early on by the East Coast for its ease of construction, it has emerged as the standard in architecture. Classical yet sturdy, the Tuscan's simple design makes it the choice for a solid look.



## Roman Ionic

The Roman Ionic Capital features spiraled volutes wrapped in acanthus leaves, crowned by a square dentil abacus. This classical design is a staple in Roman architecture.

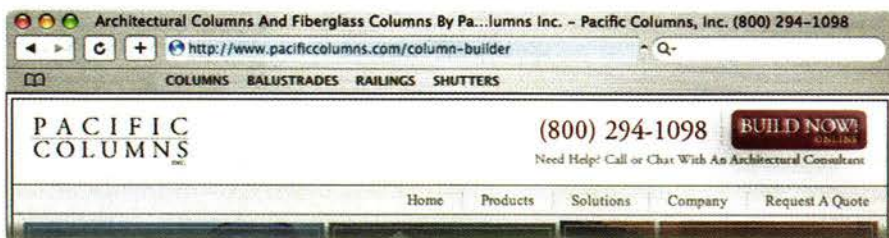


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Circle no. 354

# Preservation Perspectives



*Little brass plaques can motivate entire communities to make preservation a priority.*

ARTICLE AND PHOTOS  
BY TONY AND  
CELINE SEIDEMAN

## Rewarding Good Works

Historic preservation is about more than paint, wood, slate, and steel. It's also about image, morale, motivation, and even politics. No house is an island; every building is part of a community, one that can choose to encourage preservation and support the renewal it brings. Anyone involved in restoring a house knows it can be long, costly, lonely work that leads to people feeling isolated, even neglected. Our city of Peekskill, New York, discovered a clever way to help break through this cycle of restoration frustration and stimulate preservation at the same time: a historic plaque awards program. Our program gives old-house restorers an added incentive—a “medal” that's a vivid, permanent symbol of how much the community values their efforts. It has been so successful at promoting preservation—motivating members of the community, generating positive publicity, and assuring residents and outsiders alike that preservation is a top priority in Peekskill—that my wife Celine and I think it can serve as a model for other cities around the country.



An 1895 postcard shows the diversity of Peekskill's architectural inheritance.

## Carrots, Sticks, and Plaques

Here in Peekskill, a small city of about 25,000 souls on the Hudson River, we've faced more than our share of preservation challenges. In the 19th century, Peekskill was known as the Gem of the Hudson, a thriving hub of wood-burning stove, brick, and agricultural tool manufacturers. By the 1950s, the de-industrialization of the North had sent Peekskill's economy plummeting. Urban renewal ripped through the city like a



Mayor John Testa awards homeowners a plaque on the porch of their restored 1890 house.



Repairs to Victorian details like gingerbread trim and shingle imbrication often measure a restoration's depth.

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# Preservation Perspectives



**Winners, like this bungalow with unique porch columns, are profiled on a website.**

federally funded tornado, annihilating 350 buildings. When city planners bent on redevelopment targeted the Herrick House, a Victorian-era masterpiece designed by William Rutherford Mead of McKim, Mead, and White, preservationists decided that the slaughter had to end. Banding together, they purchased Herrick House in 1976 and turned it into the Peekskill Museum, an act that helped bring the urban renewal era to a close. These same folks dreamed up the city's first historic plaque program, aimed at honoring buildings with history and helping prevent their destruction. It was the starting point for what we have today.

In the beginning, the plaque awards were completely volunteer-driven, but as the program grew, organizers approached the government for sponsorship. Seeing the benefits of stepped-up preservation efforts—including turnarounds in spotty neighborhoods—the government agreed to partner with the program. This opened the door to more funding and grant opportunities, at both the federal and state level, for homeowners doing restoration work.

Peekskill's modern plaque program evolved through Mayor John Testa, who was elected in 2002. Before then, Testa was known around town for the dedicated preservation of his family's 1920s bungalow, going so far as to disassemble each window, repair the components, and put them back together. He brought the same focus and dedication to his mayoralty, beginning a revitalization rooted in preservation that aimed at transforming the city. Testa started working with the Historic Preservation Advisory Commission (HPAC) that oversees the plaque awards—by then a city government-named volunteer board (one my wife, Celine, chaired for years)—to completely revamp the program to honor and encourage the work of historic preservationists, publicize Peekskill among preservation professionals, and showcase the city's extensive historic housing stock.

Publicity and outreach are integral parts of our plaque awards process. Starting each spring, the seven-person HPAC team solicits requests for nominations. Anyone in the commu-



**Paint can be another measure of restoration success, as on this polychrome porch.**

**From stone-accented bungalows to wood-beamed Tudors, house repairs are judged on their faithfulness to individual, original styles.**





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# Preservation Perspectives



Attentive repair of the oriel window and arched entry made this Tudor a shoe-in for a nomination.

nity who has seen preservation work they like can nominate a building. The advisory council usually receives about 30 nominations and whittles these down to 12 finalists on the basis of historic accuracy, quality of work, authenticity of materials, and hurdles overcome in the restoration process. Finalists are then submitted to an independent board of jurors, consisting of four architects, who then vote on nominees. The jurors work in the region but live outside of town—an important qualification that helps avoid complaints of favoritism. The plaques are coveted by the nominees, and the judging is very competitive.

This year, six homeowners received individualized plaques highlighting the year their house was built and the Peekskill Preservation Award logo. Awards are presented in the fall at a gala dinner shown live on the government-run cable channel. As part of their acceptance speech, winners get to discuss their project on TV, adding to their time in the sun. Homeowners are expected to exterior-mount the plaques within a year, which adds to the program's visibility and success.

The value of a good plaque program extends beyond restoration. It can also help attract tourists, define historic districts, and bolster funds available for community grant money. If you're really lucky, it can even get the neighborhood-at-large to start batting around my wife's favorite refrain: "Is that house plaque-worthy?" 🏠



A proud homeowner shows off his plaque, a lasting symbol of his community's appreciation.

## Creating a Program

Any community hoping to encourage preservation should create a plaque awards program. Here are some steps to take when starting your own:

- 1 Decide what you're going to reward.** Longevity? Restoration work? Setting strict criteria is a crucial component. Peekskill's current rules say that buildings must predate 1940, should have original windows and siding, and be substantially intact as built.
- 2 Find a partner, preferably the city government or local independent historical society.** Having a partner helps to spread the workload and also gives the awards more clout.
- 3 Recruit preservationists to your advisory committee.** People not involved in preservation often have a difficult time understanding what makes a project special—or terrible. It's crucial to have committee members who know about everything from choosing historically appropriate colors to dealing with recalcitrant contractors.
- 4 Find local architects with an extensive knowledge of your community and invite them to sit on the judging panel.** Communities with significant preservationist movements draw the attention of local and regional architects specializing in preservation. A good resource for finding them is often the local planning department, because the city government is usually involved in the process of granting building permits.
- 5 Establish contacts with the local media.** Publicity is one of the most important aspects of any plaque program. Find out who at

your local paper covers real estate, building, and do-it-yourself activities, and ask them to be a judge—if their papers' policy permits it.

- 6 Understand the political nature of the program.** Preservation involves change, which by its nature involves politics. Programs should reach out to people on all sides of the red/blue divide, and never play favorites. One of the most challenging tasks Peekskill's HPAC had to face was when Mayor Testa's house was nominated for a plaque. Luckily, the independent judges awarded it first place, muting any complaints about special treatment of the city's leader.
- 7 Budget about \$200 apiece for the plaques.** Bronze, full-sized plaques aren't cheap. Some communities reach out to local hardware retailers and contractors for sponsorship dollars to pay for plaques. In Peekskill, the plaque program is important enough that the local government funds it—but all refreshments at the awards dinner are paid for with sponsorship dollars.
- 8 Schedule a timeline and stick to it.** This is critical, given the many elements that need to fit together in a plaque program. Start by setting the date of the awards ceremony, then work backwards. You'll need four to six weeks to get plaques made, two to three weeks to submit nominees to judges and get responses, and about a month to get the initial nominees and evaluate them.
- 9 Make the awarding of plaques a broadcast and social event.** Virtually every city with a cable system also has a government access channel; that's where Peekskill's plaque awards are presented live each year. This helps publicize, and humanize, the preservationist movement.

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Circle no. 88

## Greek Parlor Window

DRAWINGS BY ROB LEANNA

Classical design took a new direction in the 1830s when a young United States turned its back on a century of colonial Georgian and Adam buildings (and by extension their source, England), and went in search of a style fitting for a new republic. What grabbed the fancy of Americans was the Greek Revival, inspired not by imperial Rome but the ancient temples of Greece, a nation that had just fought its own war of independence beginning in 1821. Sentiments aside, what helped the Greek architectural vocabulary catch on big in America was the way it translated readily to wood construction in houses and public buildings alike, and how it was widely popularized through new printed books of details. A good example of the latter is the elongated Parlor Window presented here, an 1835 design adapted from *Beauties of Architecture* by Minard Lafever.



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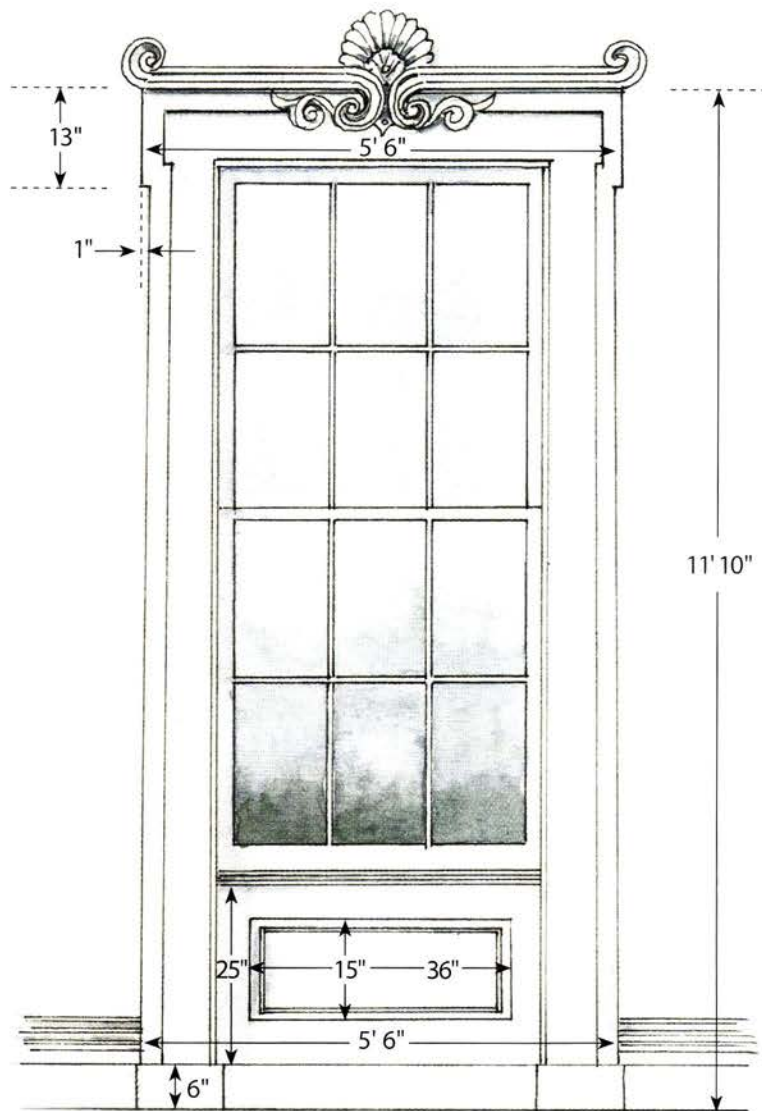
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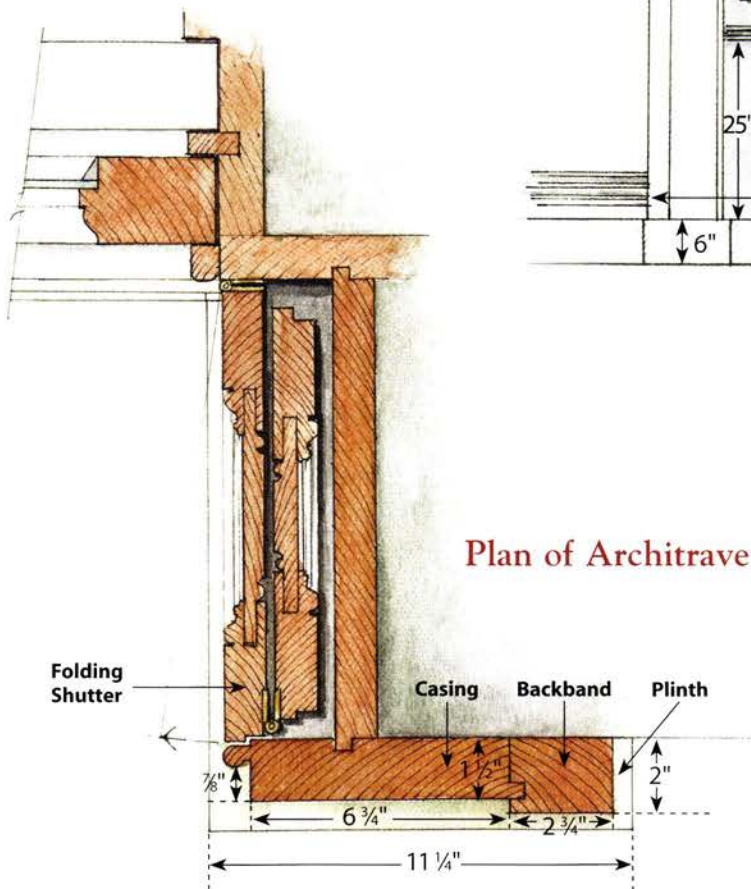
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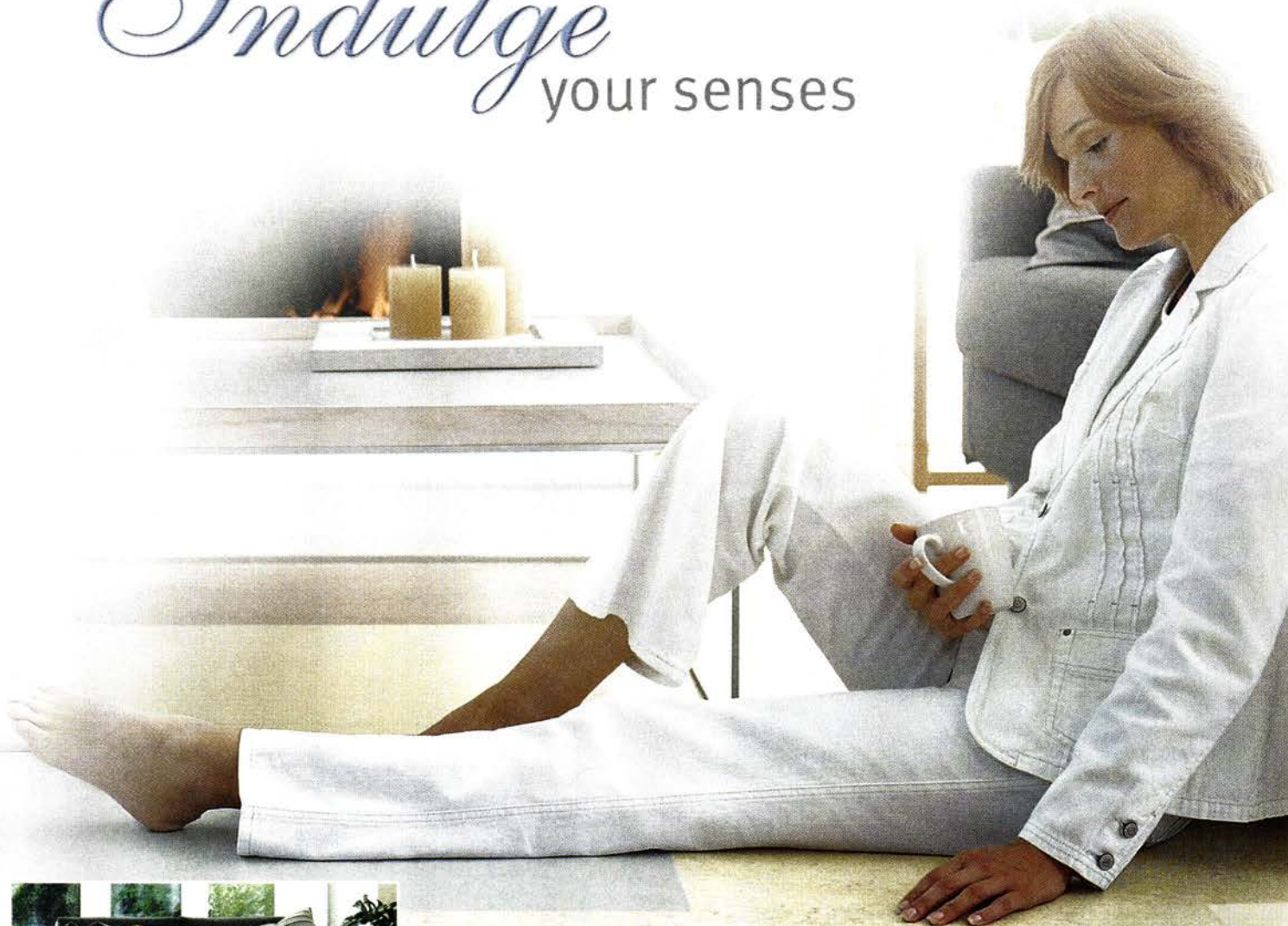
Typical for the era, Lafever's design is lean on working dimensions or construction descriptions, leaving them to the day's common carpentry practices, but there's plenty to glean from the drawings. The architrave, or window frame, is a simple but striking flat casing with a bead on the inner edge and a raised backband on the outer edge. The architrave rests on plinth blocks at the window bottom, and the backband bumps out into characteristic "Greek ears" just below the carved cresting of the window crown. The panel below the window sashes is another Greek Revival treatment, chastely handled here to good effect, and sets the stage for the paneled folding shutters, a textbook feature of these houses. All dimensions are for reference only and subject to the builder and needs of the project. 🏠



Plan of Architrave



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## French Quarters

*From Beaux Arts buildings to the ubiquitous Louis XV chair, there's no denying the impact that France has had on American architecture and décor. Because authentic Gallic touches for old houses can be difficult to find on this side of the pond, we've spotlighted six of our favorites on these two pages.*



### Best in Château

Sure, outdoor lighting is a must on any home, but there's no reason to settle for tacky, boring fixtures that merely get the job done. While Burgundy's Château de Puligny-Montrachet is better known for its wines than its lighting fixtures, it did help to inspire Horchow's intricately ornate Montrachet outdoor sconce. Mounted near the front door of Tudor, Richardsonian Romanesque, or other medieval-inspired homes, the sconce will banish any ideas of boring porch lights. It retails for \$1,149. Call (877) 944-9888, or visit [horchow.com](http://horchow.com).



### Doorknob Delight

Why keep eye-candy Beaux Arts detailing confined to the recesses of cornices and balustrades? Rejuvenation brings that time-honored filigree down to earth with its Hamilton interior door set, which features the Neoclassical egg-and-dart border often spotted on Beaux Arts structures. Originally called the "Mantua" when it was introduced in the early 1900s, the Hamilton's mix of classic patterns makes it a natural fit for a variety of home styles, from Victorian to Colonial Revival. As shown, the set is \$108; it also can be customized. Call (888) 401-1900, or visit [www.rejuvenation.com](http://www.rejuvenation.com).



### Deco a Go-Go

The event where Art Deco made its first mark on the world (and appropriated its name) was the 1925 *L'Exposition Internationale des Arts Décoratifs* in Paris. French kitchen-and-bath outfitter Herbeau was at the legendary exhibition, and two years ago debuted its Monarque collection in celebration of the 80th anniversary of Art Deco's introduction to society. The Monarque lavatory set displays the classic geometric lines that Deco is known for, but the graceful curve of the faucet can't help but belie its Art Nouveau roots. Available in seven finishes, from \$1,219 to \$1,619. Call (800) 547-1608, or visit [www.herbeau.com](http://www.herbeau.com).

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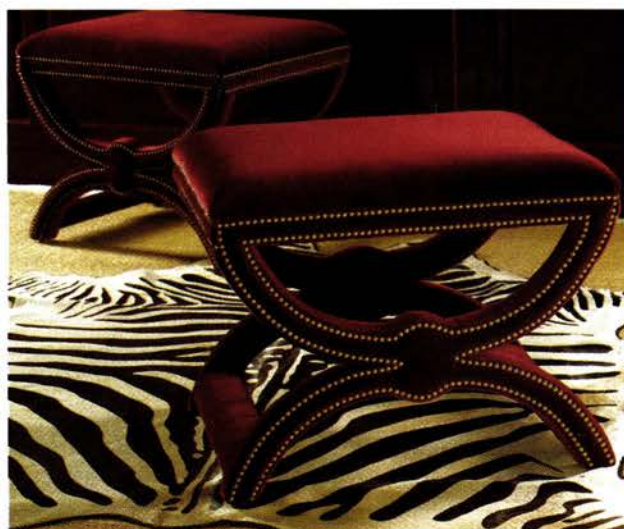
## Toile Tales

Few fabrics are so synonymous with their country of origin as toile de Jouy is with France, but after Christophe-Phillipe Oberkampf introduced the fabric style in 1760, it didn't take long for toile fever to spread to the States. In the centuries since, a mind-boggling 30,000 patterns have cropped up, making it downright difficult to choose a chair covering. But you can never go wrong with a classic, which makes Pierre Deux's new 40th-anniversary patterns—*Versailles* (right) and *Les Quatre Parties du Monde* (left), featuring the work of period artists such as Fragonard and Huet—such an easy pick. Both are available in a range of shades for \$75 to \$85 per yard. Call (888) 743-7732, or visit [www.pierredeux.com](http://www.pierredeux.com).



## Come to the Tabouret

Everyone could use a little extra seating now and then—even royalty. Take a cue from the court of Louis XVI, which so favored the elegant tabouret as portable seating when in audience with royals that the phrase *droit de tabouret* (right of tabouret) was assigned to those who had earned the privilege of communing with the queen. While you might not want to put on such airs with houseguests, Source Perrier's red velvet Alexandria tabouret (priced at \$975) will lend an additional note of regality to homes with stately origins. Call (888) 543-2804, or visit [sourceperrier.com](http://sourceperrier.com).



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Antique window sash consolidated with **LiquidWood** and rebuilt with **WoodEpoxy**.



Consolidation and rebuilding of rotten windowsill with **LiquidWood** and **WoodEpoxy**.



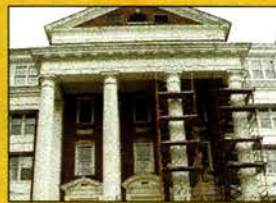
**AboCrete** is much stronger than concrete and bonds permanently.



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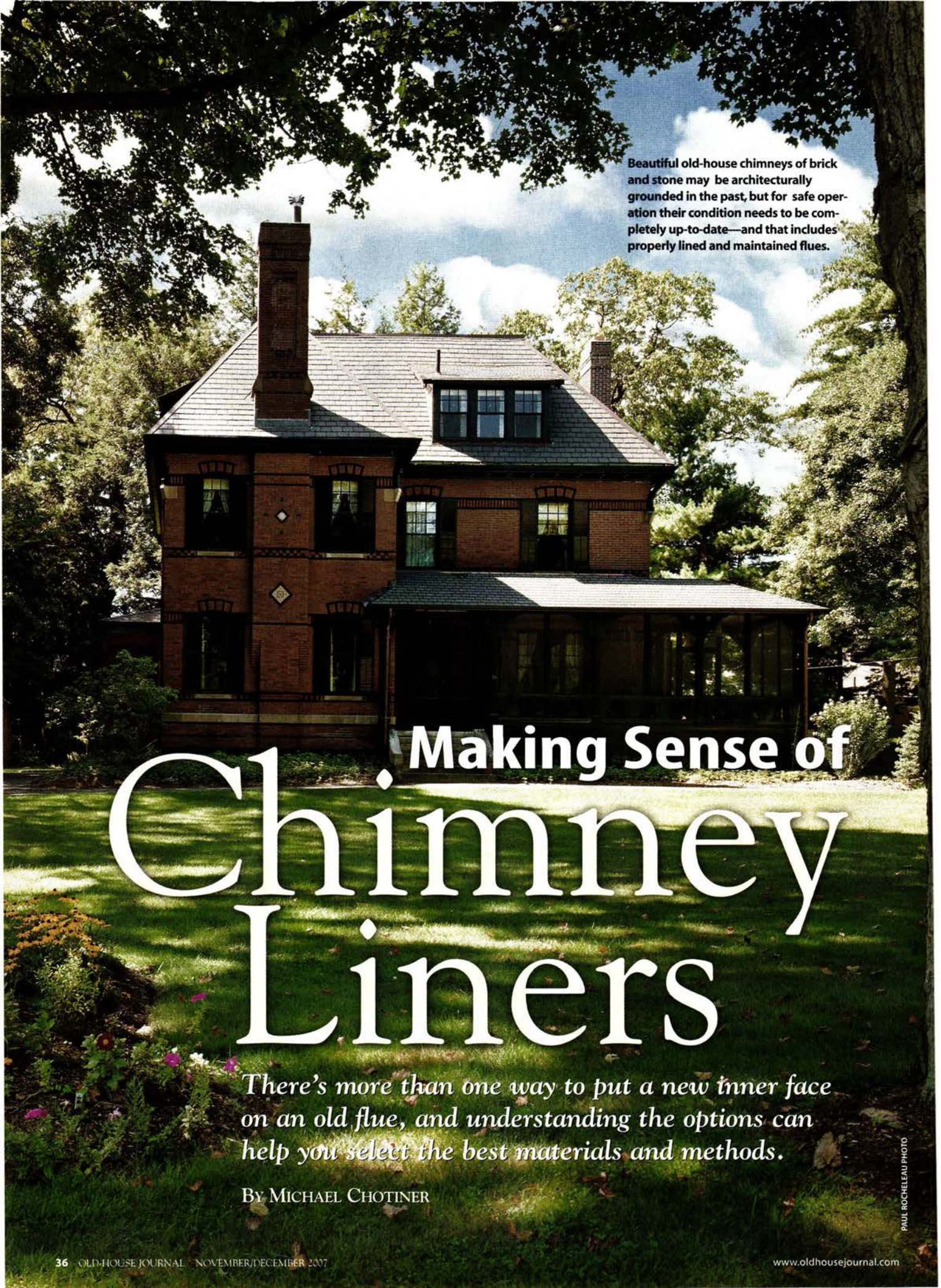
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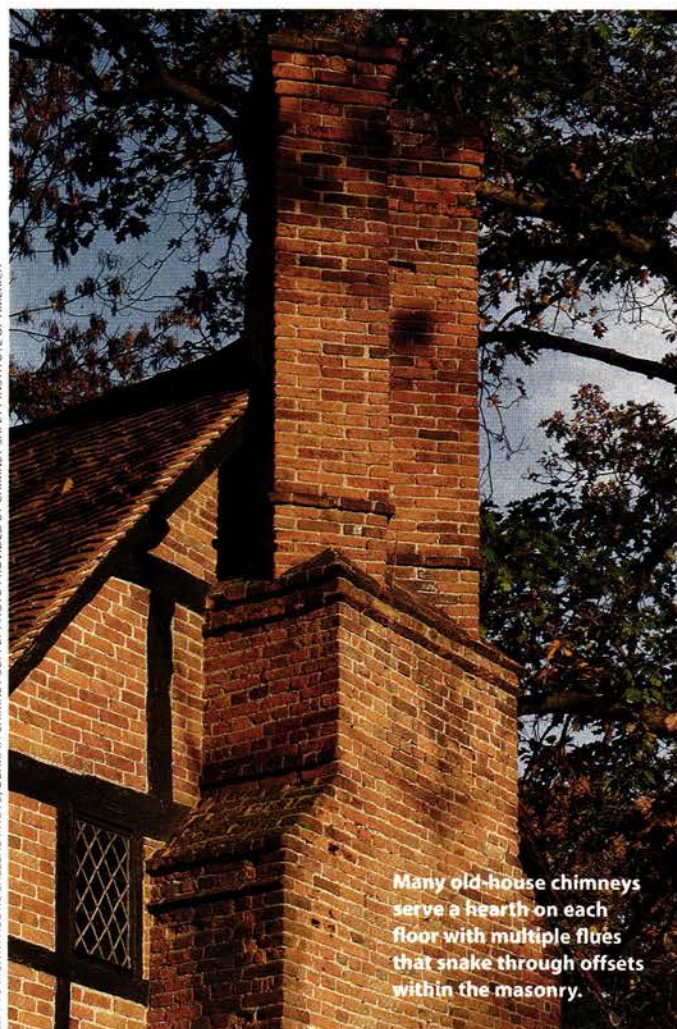
Beautiful old-house chimneys of brick and stone may be architecturally grounded in the past, but for safe operation their condition needs to be completely up-to-date—and that includes properly lined and maintained flues.

# Making Sense of Chimney Liners

*There's more than one way to put a new inner face on an old flue, and understanding the options can help you select the best materials and methods.*

By MICHAEL CHOTINER

PAUL ROCHELEAU PHOTO



Many old-house chimneys serve a hearth on each floor with multiple flues that snake through offsets within the masonry.



Flexible liners, such as this corrugated, stainless steel one, are well-adapted to retrofitting flues with offsets or tight dimensions.

Most old-house owners savor the warmth of fireplaces or heating stoves, so they know it's important to routinely inspect and clean a working masonry chimney. The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) recommends that chimneys burning solid fuel—wood, coal, or pellets—be inspected yearly and cleaned as often as needed. Such upkeep helps to ensure structural integrity, identify defects that might allow deadly combustion gases to vent into living spaces, and prevent chimney fires caused by the buildup of creosote, a natural byproduct of burning wood.

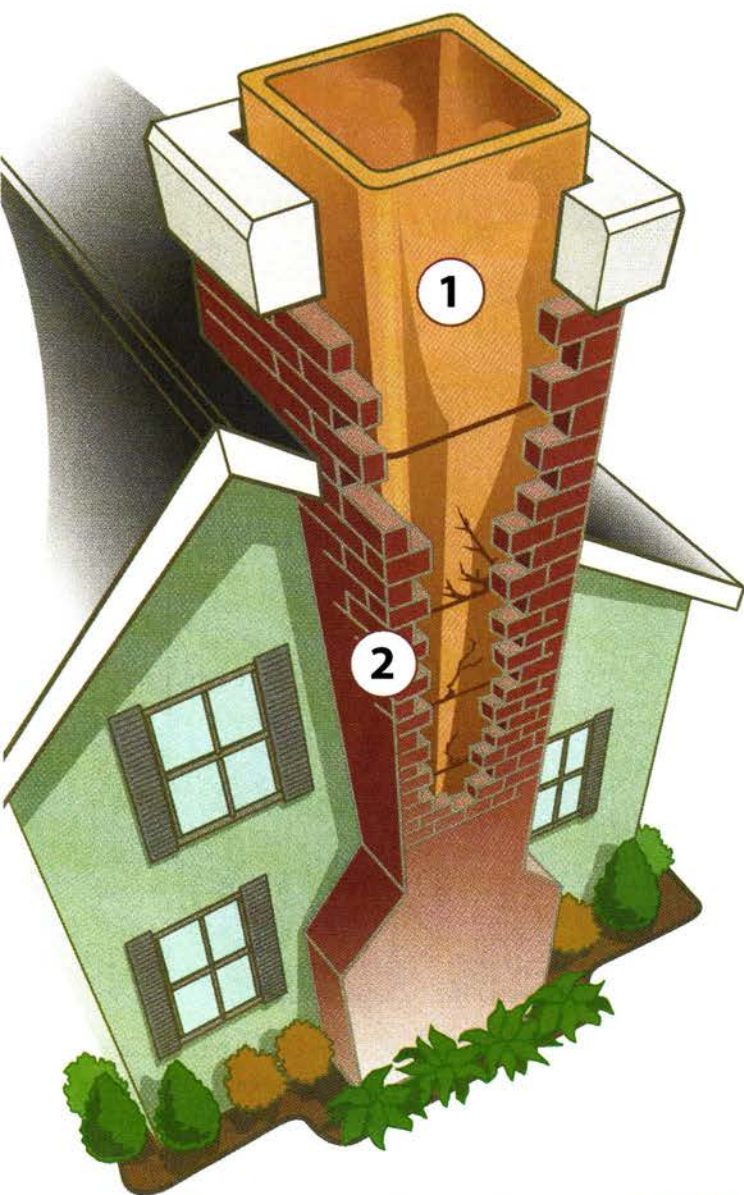
However, few homeowners who use their chimneys merely to vent gas or oil-fired furnaces and boilers are aware that maintenance and sound conditions apply to them, too. That's a problem because the byproducts of burning gas and oil are just as insidious as those from solid fuels. Chimneys—or more spe-

cifically, the flues within them—must be clean and sound to carry heat and gases safely up and away from the chimney top, but these combustion byproducts can also deteriorate a flue's inner surface over time. So let's say that you get your chimney inspected, and let's say that the report recommends that your flue needs to be relined. We'll explore what that means, as well as the best way to go about correcting the problem for your particular chimney and house.

### The Line on Liners

Among the best reasons for relining a masonry chimney is that it wasn't built right in the first place—that is, without a flue liner, a material that provides a smooth, relatively seamless surface as well as insulation. Historically, well-built chimneys were parged with mortar to line the flue, and clay tiles have been standard liners since the 1900s. Nonetheless, linerless chimneys remain very common

in old houses as well as newer ones. Builders and heating equipment installers don't always keep up with recommended practices, and even if they do, they may not take the trouble to observe them. If your chimney does have a liner, another reason you may need to reline is because it is defective. Age and use can open cracks in tiles, and combustion gases combined with rain will erode parging and masonry joints between bricks or stones. If the preponderance of evidence points to relining, you've got some choices to consider. You can 1) reconstruct clay tile flues with new clay tile liners, 2) reinforce the chimney and create new flues with poured-cement liners, or 3) reline existing flues and run new ones with metal flue liners. Each method has its benefits, limitations, and challenges. The approach you ultimately choose should be the one that's best suited to the problems of the particular chimney and the appliances vented through it.



- 1** Clay flue tiles are rectangular or round ceramic units 24" tall that are stacked with mortared joints to make a liner.
- 2** While highly durable, tiles can crack due to age or damage, and their weight and rigidity make them complicated to retrofit.

## A Clay Tile Alternative

If careful inspection of a clay flue liner indicates that the mortar joints have gaps but the tiles themselves are more or less intact and in alignment, you may wish to consider a relatively new approach. Through a network of local contractors, Firesafe Industries ([www.firesafeinc.com](http://www.firesafeinc.com)) offers a product called FireGuard and an application method for refilling defective joints, and patching and smoothing existing clay flues.

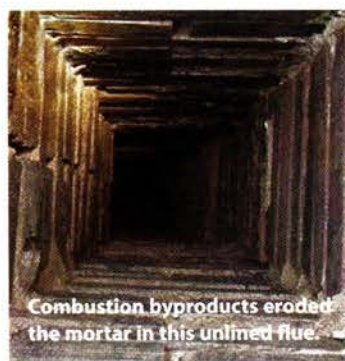
FireGuard is a ceramic sealant said to have a service temperature of up to 3,200 degrees F. When applying FireGuard, technicians first thoroughly clean the flue, then lower an applicator (which looks something like a rocket nosecone congruent in size and shape to the inside of the flue) using a cable from the top of the chimney. FireGuard of a mud-like consistency

## Clay Tile Liners

Clay tile flues are the traditional favorite. Flue tiles are virtually impervious to the heat and corrosive byproducts of burning any and all fuels. With refractory mortar joints properly finished, a clay tile flue's service life can be projected at 50 years or more with very little maintenance other than regular cleaning.

But square and rectangular flue tiles are not the most efficient shape for venting smoke. By nature, smoke spirals upward through a flue in a helical pattern, leaving incongruous air spaces at the margins. At best, these air spaces simply take up extra room within the chimney that may be needed for additional flues; at worst, they reduce draft. Round flues are much more efficient.

Clay liner tiles are relatively inexpensive—about \$10 for a typical 24"-tall unit. But what you save on materials will most likely exceed the cost of installation labor. Clay flue liners are hard to retrofit in an existing chimney, especially if it isn't straight. Even for a straight run, it's necessary to break through chimney walls every few vertical feet to gain access for removing the old flue tile and laying up the new tile.



Combustion byproducts eroded the mortar in this unlined flue.

For chimneys with offsets (bends), flue tiles need to be cut at precise angles for acceptable joints. In some areas, it's difficult to find anyone who has the skills for this kind of installation, and it's definitely not an owner-restorer job.

is pumped into the chimney, and the vibrating applicator is slowly drawn upward, forcing the sealant into gaps at the joints and defects in the liner.

The promise of the FireGuard system is that it effectively reseals clay flue liners with a fraction of the labor for replacement. The process doesn't appreciably reduce the size of the flue, which means that any fireplace or stove that it serves should show no changes in performance.



Cracked clay liner



Flue tiles can be square, rectangular, or round.

CLOCKWISE: RANDY SWETZER ILLUSTRATION; SANDKUHL CLAY WORKS PHOTO PROVIDED BY CHIMNEY SAFETY INSTITUTE OF AMERICA; FIRESAFE INDUSTRIES PHOTO PROVIDED BY CHIMNEY SAFETY INSTITUTE OF AMERICA; METRO HOME INSPECTIONS LLC PHOTO BY JOHN SENDER

# Top 20 Reasons for Relining Chimneys

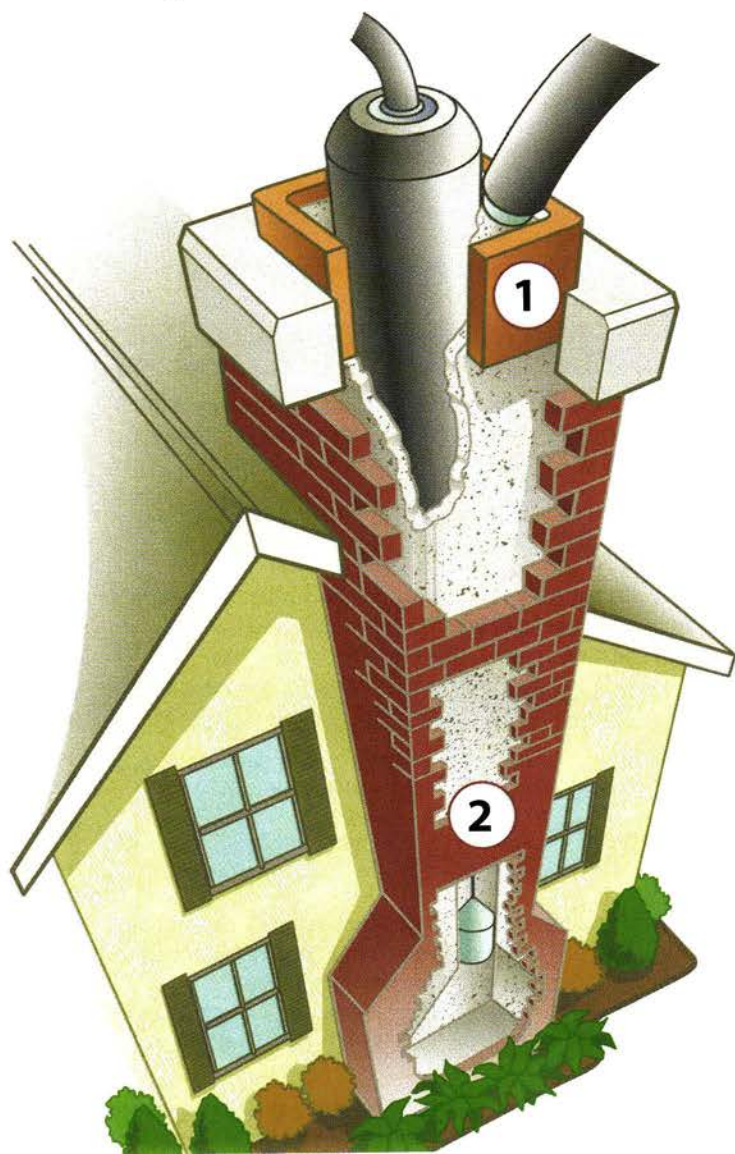
SYMPTOM/CONDITION		NOTES
EXISTING CHIMNEY/ALL FLUE TYPES	Chimney appears to be collapsing	Where deterioration is visible from the outside, deterioration on the inside is likely.
	Chimney contains no flue liner	Not uncommon for chimneys built prior to 1906
	Creosote staining/accumulation on chimney walls or between existing liner and chimney walls	Indication that existing flue is leaking
	Recent fire	Exposure to excessively high temperature can damage all types of flues.
	Recent lightning strike	Same as above
	Inadequate clearance between chimney/flue liner and combustible materials	In old houses, framing was sometimes attached to chimneys.
	Smoke from fireplace or stove wafts into living space	May be caused by incorrect flue size
	Sooty or oily deposits collect in living space	Indicates inadequate draft
	More than one appliance vented with a single flue	Very common
	Flue sized incorrectly	Often a problem when an existing flue is converted for use with an appliance of a different fuel type or efficiency level
	Smoke alarm/carbon monoxide detectors trigger	Indicates inadequate draft, leaky flue
	Home occupants suffer frequent headaches	Indicates inadequate draft, leaky flue
	An existing fuel-burning appliance served by the flue is replaced with a different model or type	Different appliances have different venting needs with respect to size and other features; check with appliance manufacturer for recommended flue specs.
	A new fuel-burning appliance is added	Each appliance present should be vented through a separate flue.
CLAY TILE FLUES	Gaps between flue tiles at mortar joints	Age and use can cause mortar joints to deteriorate, but this problem is most often caused in newer chimneys by failure to use refractory cement in flue tile joints.
	Flue tiles misaligned	The inside of flues should be smooth with no spots for creosote and/or soot to accumulate.
	Flue tiles cracked or spalling	Clay tile normally resists heat and corrosive byproducts in smoke, so if defects are present, something is wrong. Flue must be sound to contain heat and smoke.
METAL FLUES	Creosote leaking out through joints	Indication of improper fastening, inadequate cleaning, or damage caused by expansion and contraction
	Visible corrosion	Evidence of improper alloy selection with respect to fuel type and/or flue operating at too-low temperature
	Appliance changed from conventional to high-efficiency model	High-efficiency appliances produce lower flue temperatures; flue size may need to be reduced and insulation improved to prevent condensation, corrosion.

# Cast-in-Place Liners

Where new clay tiles are not an option, it's possible to create a new flue within a damaged masonry chimney by using one of several poured-cement processes. Generally speaking, this approach offers all the advantages of clay flues, plus a couple more. Cast-in-place flues are virtually impervious to the harmful effects of heat, acids, and condensation, regardless of the type of fuel that is burned. Temperatures inside cast-in-place flues are generally high because of their insulation properties, so they burn cleaner and reduce creosote accumulation.

Expect poured-cement flues to last at least as long as clay tile—50 years or more. Some companies claim that cast-in-place flues can stabilize unsound clay flues and chimneys, since they're poured inside either the existing flue or the chimney walls.

While a cast-in-place process can be less laborious and invasive than reconstructing clay flues, there are a number of different proprietary methods for casting. In some projects, the cost of labor required can equal or exceed that for relining with clay tile. As always, the best approach depends on conditions specific to the particular job. In no case is casting flue liner in place a do-it-yourself job. The materials and equipment for casting flues in place are supplied by a number of different manufacturers to distributor/technicians who perform the installations.



Cast-in-place liners create a new, smooth, seamless surface through the flue and, if necessary, into the fireplace smoke chamber.

If the problem chimney has one or more clay flues within it, the installer will determine whether the tile can be left in place or needs to be removed. Determining factors include the structural condition of the existing flue and chimney, and how much space is needed based on the size and number of flues required.

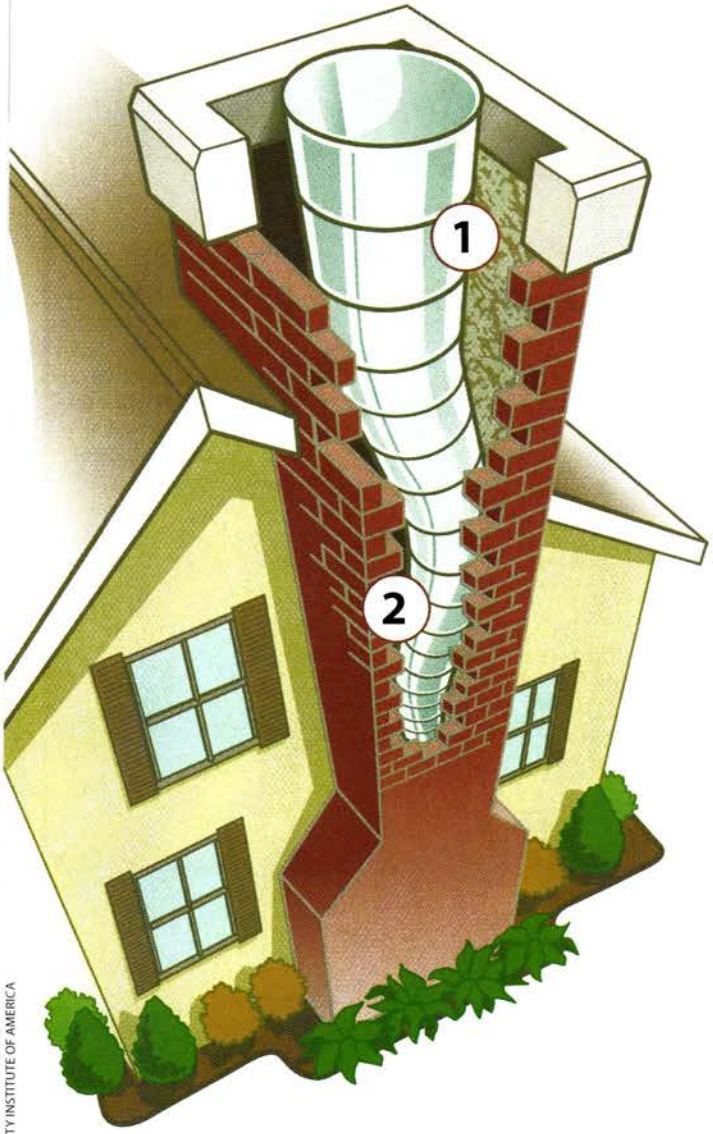
In the first of the two prevalent flue-casting methods—marketed variously under the brand names Golden Flue ([www.goldenflue.com](http://www.goldenflue.com)), Solid/Flue Chimney Systems ([www.solidflue.com](http://www.solidflue.com)) and Supaflu Chimney Systems ([www.supaflu.com](http://www.supaflu.com))—relining starts with a preparatory flue cleaning. Then, technicians insert one or more inflatable bladders from the heating appliance outlet to the top of the chimney. Next, they install formwork at the base of the chimney and place spacers around the bladders to separate them from chimney. At this point, they pump a mud-like mixture of lightweight refractory cement and insulating aggregate is into the chimney until it fills to the chimney top (see drawing at left). Once the cement hardens, the bladders are deflated, the formwork is removed, and any necessary finish work is performed. The result: one or more structurally rigid, smooth, continuous, amply insulated flues.



Like many retrofit liners, the new flue in cast-in-place liners is smaller in cross-sectional area than the old flue.

In a second flue-casting method—marketed under the brand names Ahrens Chimney Systems ([www.ahrenschimney.com](http://www.ahrenschimney.com)) and Guardian Chimney Systems ([guardianinc.com](http://guardianinc.com))—technicians slowly pump mud-consistency lining material into the chimney as they draw a vibrating bell (a pointy forming tool) up through the cement to form the flue opening. In the Ahrens method, there's a second step where the technician sprays a slurry topcoat onto the flue channel to provide a smoother, non-absorbent surface said to increase draft and facilitate cleaning. Both casting methods have been used in Europe for more than 70 years, and in the U.S. for more than 30.

- 1** Cast-in-place liners are proprietary processes that pump mortar within the chimney to form a new flue. One method, illustrated here, employs an inflatable bladder to form the flue.
- 2** Instead of a bladder, an alternate cast-in-place process draws a pointed bell up the chimney to form the flue.



- 1** Stainless steel flue liners come in rigid and flexible forms and a variety of designs and alloys, making them among the most versatile liners.
- 2** One of the advantages of flexible metal liners is their ability to accommodate offsets and other old flue surprises.



## Stainless Steel Flue Liners: Alloy Selection Guide by Fuel Type

FUEL TYPE	RECOMMENDED ALLOY
Coal	316L or T1
Gas	AL29-4C
Oil	316L or T1
Wood	AL29-4C

## Metal Flue Liners

Pragmatists, including many installers and fire-protection experts we consulted, tend to like stainless steel flue liners. They generally require less labor to install than other types of liners, and they're readily available in types and sizes for all common heating appliances, including fireplaces and wood stoves. Installed by a pro, a metal liner costs about \$100 per foot.

The trouble for old-house restorers is that there are so many different metal flue types and sizes that it can be hard to sort out which is best for a given application. The good news is that most of the commonly used flue liners are available in kits, complete with insulation wraps and fittings to hook up to fireplaces, stoves, furnaces, and boilers.

Stainless steel flue liners come in rigid and flexible formats. Rigid flue pipes are available in diameters ranging from 3" to 10", while flexible corrugated metal tube runs from 2" to 10" in diameter. Rigid flue liners shouldn't be confused with double- or triple-wall chimney pipe, which is designed for unenclosed chimneys and shouldn't be used as flue liner. Rigid liners are best only for straight chimneys with no off-sets or bends.

There is some discussion about whether rigid flue liners are easier to clean than flexible liners, which have a corrugated surface. Our most trusted expert says that flexible liners tend to collect less creosote when used to vent wood fireplaces and stoves because they flex as they expand and contract with temperature fluctuations, causing buildups to loosen and fall away.

For venting a fireplace, choose the diameter that provides a vent opening equal to one-eighth of the total area of the fireplace opening. For wood stoves and other heating appliances, consult the manufacturer's recommendations for flue diameter. The trickiest aspect of selecting an appropriate stainless steel liner is choosing the correct alloy based on the type of fuel being burned. Careful selection prevents corrosion, which is the main cause of premature failure in stainless steel flue liners. (See the table at left for a basic guide.)

It's also good practice to insulate metal flues with wraps or jackets designed specifically for the purpose. Insulation is particularly important around vents for high-efficiency heaters and stoves, since their flue temperatures are typically lower than conventional models. Insulation not only helps to maintain higher temperatures within the flue to reduce corrosive condensation, but it also prevents heat transfer from flue pipes to the home's structure—an added measure of safety, which is what flue liners are all about in the first place. 🏠

*Michael Chotiner is the author of Building Crafts and a longtime writer and editor in the building construction industry.*



**Flexible metal liners are generally corrugated.**

CLOCKWISE-RANDY SWETZTER ILLUSTRATION; OLYMPIA CHIMNEY SUPPLY PHOTOS PROVIDED BY CHIMNEY SAFETY INSTITUTE OF AMERICA



When old-house woodwork meanders around curves—like the crown moulding, chair rail, and baseboard on this wall—specialized carpentry skills can help with repairs.

# Learning Curves

*A hands-on exercise in cutting kerfs can teach you to bend wood like a pro.*

BY DEMETRA APOSPOROS

Old-house woodwork comes in many shapes and sizes, from turned spindles and planed mouldings to whole wainscots, mantels, and gingerbread. Be it plain or ornate, we mostly picture woodwork laid out in straight lines and turning at right angles, but some old houses can throw a fin- ish carpenter curves along walls, stairs, coves, and even turrets. Making wood bend around a radius is a unique branch of joinery that draws on a specialized family of techniques, such as steaming (softening wood with steam), laminat- ing (building up a curved surface with thin strips), or kerfing (a process of mak- ing multiple small cuts along a board to allow it to follow a curve). Kerfing can be found anywhere there are curved mouldings, from vernacular farmhouses to refined high-style Queen Anne and Richardsonian Romanesque mansions. To learn how it's done, OHJ visited The Village at Grand Traverse Commons, an adaptive reuse project on an enormous, historic 19th century Italianate building in Traverse City, Michigan.

Ray Minervini, who heads the res- toration team for the Village project, confided that his craftsmen faced some learning curves when they started to re- create the 1883 building's curved mould- ings, also known as radius trim. "It took some practice to get the geometry of the cuts right," says Minervini. "If your kerfs aren't deep enough you can't bend the board, and if they're too close together, instead of bending the board just snaps in two." After some initial trial and error that resulted in broken boards, the team perfected a system for restoring the scores of baseboard mouldings that are 7½" wide, ¾" thick and curve on an 8" radius.

## Making the Cut

First, the team selects prime boards of ash—a dense hardwood not often made to bend into submission—with very straight grain and clear of knots or checks. Any defects in the wood make it prone to splitting. To match the moulding profile on the originals, they had a local mill cut a special blade to the specifications of the 1883 profile,



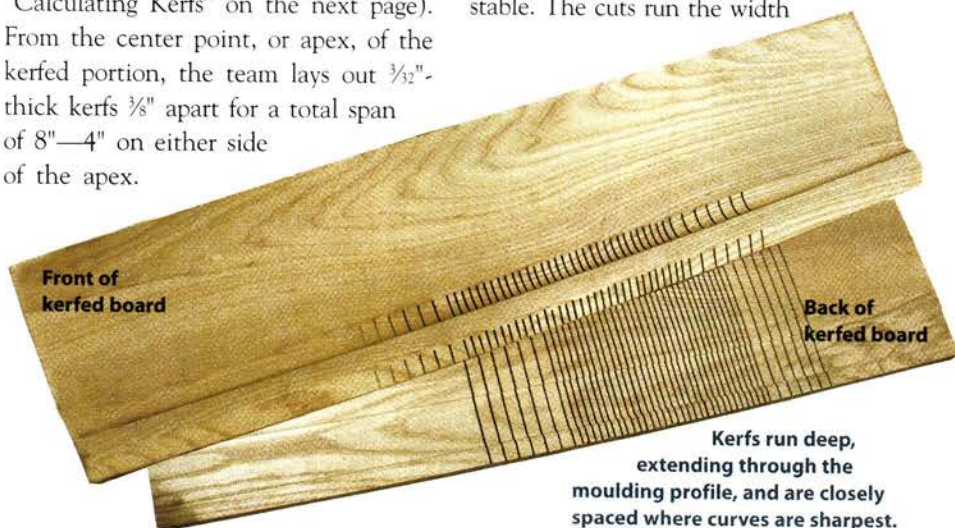
A table saw with a very thin blade cuts uniform kerfs along the width of a board's backside. (Guard removed for clarity.)

something most millworks are equipped to do these days.

Next, they measure and mark the backside of the board where the kerfs will be cut. Minervini's team mimicked the spacing of the kerfs on the origi- nal baseboards—which all turned on an identical radius—but the spacing needed for a specific curve can be calculated using a simple, century-old formula (see "Calculating Kerfs" on the next page). From the center point, or apex, of the kerfed portion, the team lays out ⅜"-thick kerfs ⅜" apart for a total span of 8"—4" on either side of the apex.

This spacing allows for maximum flex- ibility and stress relief right in the middle of the bend. After that, the spacing of the kerfs widens to ½" apart over another 4" per side.

To cut the kerfs, the team uses an 8" table saw with a ⅜", carbide-tipped thin-kerf blade (they prefer those made by Freud). The team chose a table saw over a radial arm saw because it was more stable. The cuts run the width



of the board and are deep, extending nearly three-quarters of the way through its thickness to leave only  $\frac{3}{16}$ " of wood beneath them. It is important to make the cuts uniform in size and depth. Irregular cuts can hamper the uniformity of the bend, telegraph through the wood, or stress the board and even cause it to break. Uniform cuts are also more visually appealing, and help the board bend easily.

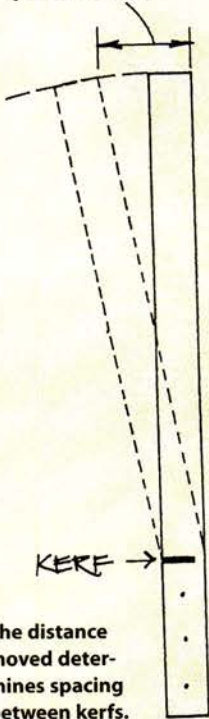
## Getting the Bends

Once all the kerfs are cut, the team begins attaching the baseboards to the curved walls. First, they dry-fit each board into place, measuring and marking where to place the 22-degree lap cut that will cleanly meld it to adjoining trim, the square cut that will butt it against a door frame, or the 45-degree-angle that will fit it into a corner. Next, they use a level to mark the wall where the top of the trim should sit so that it aligns with any adjoining baseboard. The team then applies a good polyurethane glue to both the board and the wall (polyurethane glue minimizes any shrinkage; using it on the wall, too, maximizes



**CLOCKWISE:** At installation, boards are spread with glue, pinned into place using a pneumatic nail gun, and bolstered with a pressure block until the glue sets up. The finished baseboard, with the addition of stain and a similarly kerfed shoe moulding, looks just like the originals.

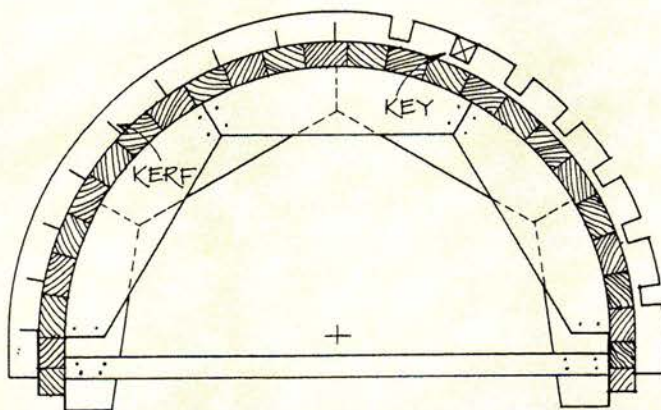
KERF  
DISTANCE



## Calculating Kerfs

To understand how many kerfs, or multiple thin channels, must be cut to bend a board, it helps to visualize how kerfing works. For a 1"-thick board to bend around a semicircle, the circumference of the board's backside must be 2" shorter than that of its front—with the removed wood coming out of the kerfs. So then, it's easy to see why kerf spacing and depth is a critical part of this specialized carpentry equation.

One way to calculate the distance needed between kerfs is the stick method. Starting with a test stick of wood equal in thickness and approximate hardness to the board being kerfed, measure off the radius of the desired bend. Next, cut a kerf at one radius mark to within  $\frac{1}{4}$ " to  $\frac{1}{8}$ " of the surface of the stick, and secure the stick below this point. Then, move the opposite end (furthest from the



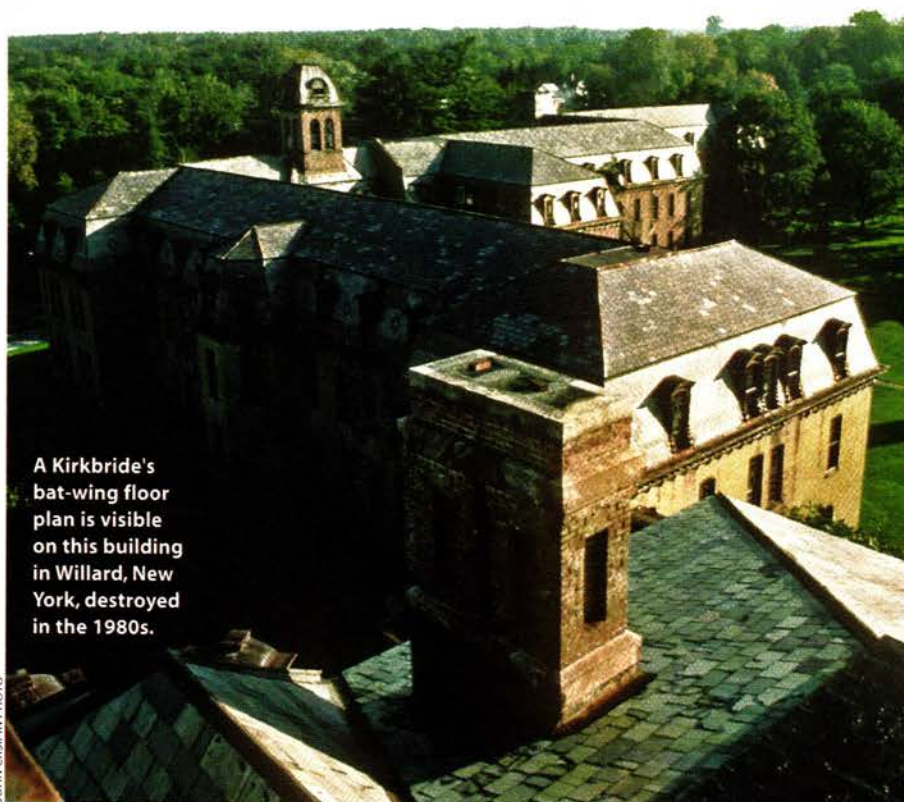
**ABOVE:** Bending wood in the opposite direction—around concave curves—is often accomplished with keying, a process similar to kerfing that uses deep, evenly spaced grooves. The grooves, or keys, are then filled in with close-fitting strips of wood.

kerf) just enough to close the kerf, and measure the distance this free end has traveled. This measurement is the spacing needed between kerfs. Remember that kerf spacing and depth will vary depending upon the type of wood being bent; hardwoods will need deeper kerfs spaced more closely together. The test stick will provide the formula needed for making your board go 'round the desired bend.

adherence) smoothing the glue out with a putty knife to increase the surface contact. Starting at the end, or straight portion, of the board, they press it onto the wall along the level marks and immediately pin it to the wood furring strips that grounded the original plaster using a pneumatic trim gun with 1 3/4" nails. It's important to secure the board into place before beginning to attach the curved section. The team continues to press the board into place around the bend and secure it with nails spaced 4" apart vertically, and 10" apart horizontally, being careful to avoid nailing into the kerfed portion. Once the board is fully attached and nailed, it is braced with pressure blocks to help tightly set the glue. The blocks remain in place overnight, until the glue has completely dried.

After the blocks are removed, the team uses a putty knife to force color-toned wood putty into the kerfs that are visible from the front, much in the way a crack is filled in drywall. The putty is left to dry overnight, then sanded smooth. For the final step, they stain the entire board to match the original color. "We pretty much replicated what craftsmen had done here 125 years ago," says Minervini. "And the resulting radius trim is a seamless fit." 🏠

Special thanks to The Village at Grand Traverse Commons; [www.thevillageetc.com](http://www.thevillageetc.com).



A Kirkbride's bat-wing floor plan is visible on this building in Willard, New York, destroyed in the 1980s.

JOHN CRISPIN PHOTO

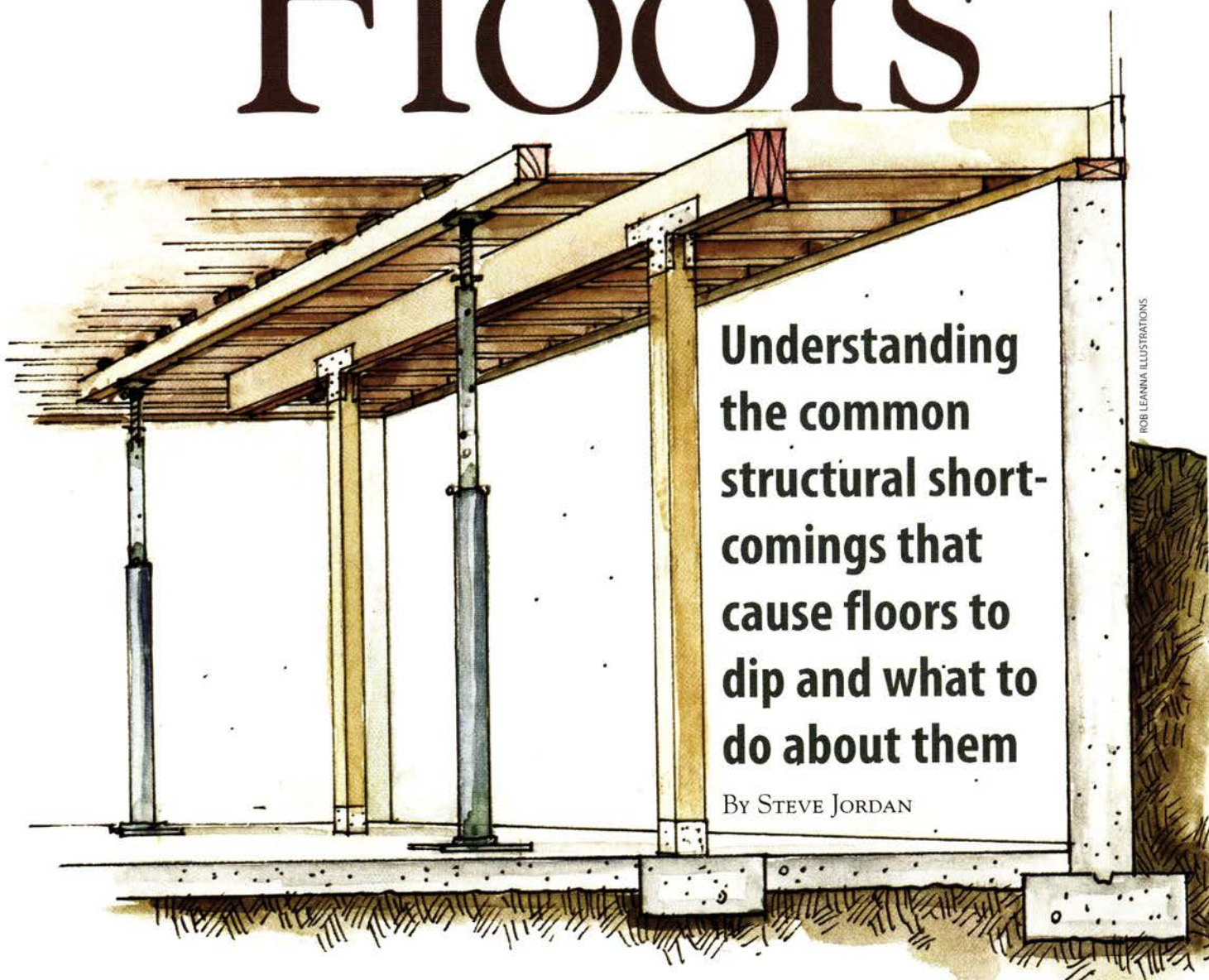
## The Kirkbride Connection

The Italianate structure the Village project saved is a historic Kirkbride building that would otherwise have been demolished. Named for Dr. Thomas Story Kirkbride, a prominent 19th-century physician who advocated for more humane treatment of mental patients through a better layout of hospitals, the building has a linear, bat-wing-shaped floor plan that incorporates more windows and open spaces. The design, thought to promote better healing, is visible on many mid- and late-19th century mental hospitals across the country, such as St. Elizabeth's in Washington, DC. Many Kirkbride buildings still stand in various states of disrepair, and they are prime candidates for adaptive reuse due to their layout and durability. "Our building is five stories tall with solid, load-bearing brick masonry walls throughout, and 2,000 windows," says Ray Minervini, marveling at the construction. "And what's really remarkable, the whole thing was built in just two years."



ABOVE: Once a board is cut with kerfs of the appropriate spacing and depth, it bends like spaghetti, as this series demonstrates. In the photo background, the long hallway shows the scope of radius trim that had to be recreated for the project at the Village; each of the doorways meets up with two curved baseboards.

# Getting to the Bottom of Sagging Floors



**Understanding  
the common  
structural short-  
comings that  
cause floors to  
dip and what to  
do about them**

By STEVE JORDAN

**O**ne of the most common complaints of old-house owners is sagging floors. In my own house, for example, every floor pitches toward the center stairwell. Although generally only an annoyance, sagging floors can be an indication of worsening problems. Here's a quick review of the most common problems and a few of the typical remedies.

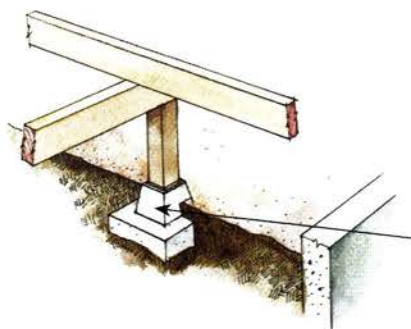
## **Investigate the Problem**

Typically, floors settle near the center of

the house because the perimeter walls are constructed over a sound, deep foundation and settle very little. Major support beams within this perimeter, though, are often supported by makeshift posts.

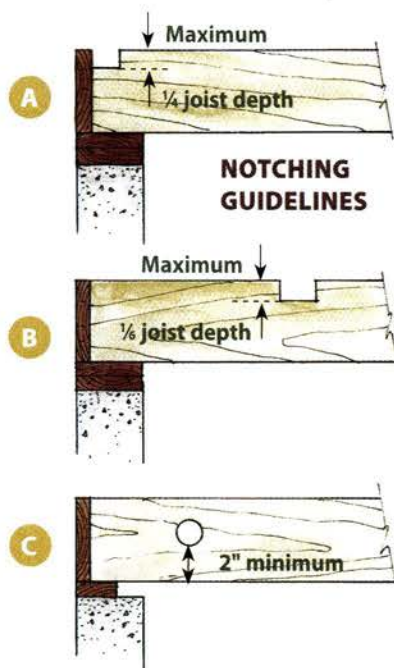
If your house is built over a basement, first inspect all of the basement support beams and posts where they meet the floor. Be suspicious of wood posts set on dirt floors or wood posts with concrete poured around the post bases. As the posts slowly rot and melt

into the floor, the house settles accordingly, bottom to top. As a test, firmly push a metal probe or screwdriver into the post at the floor line. If this area is mushy, punky, or rotten, you may have found your problem. Also look for floor joists that have been cut improperly to install pipes, wiring, or HVAC ducts. If you've had a chronically damp basement or crawlspace, look for indications of insect damage to structural members. Powderpost beetles leave joists and

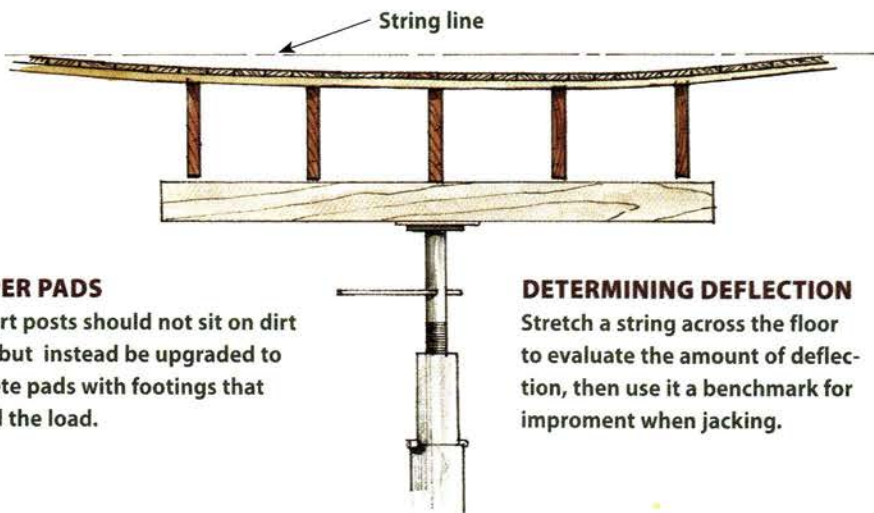


### PROPER PADS

Support posts should not sit on dirt floors but instead be upgraded to concrete pads with footings that spread the load.



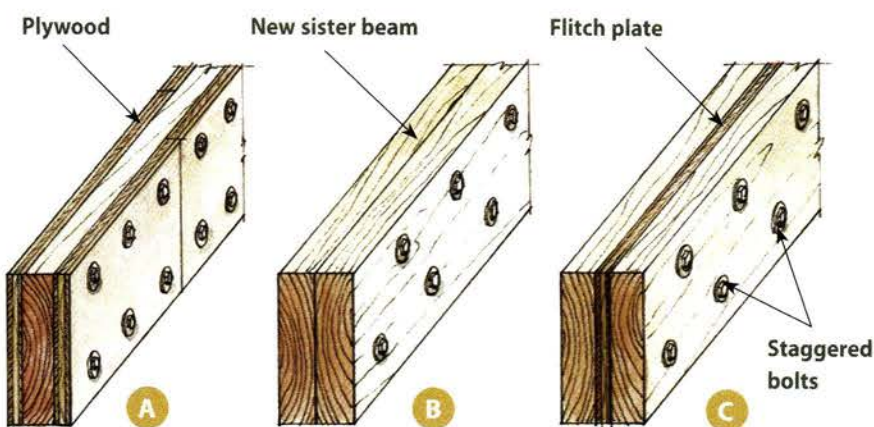
### NOTCHING GUIDELINES



### DETERMINING DEFLECTION

Stretch a string across the floor to evaluate the amount of deflection, then use it as a benchmark for improvement when jacking.

### BEAM REPAIR BASICS



beams riddled with small holes, carpenter ants are usually apparent at the first sign of warm weather in the spring, and termites usually leave telltale mud tunnels on foundations and posts. Then solve moisture problems around and under the house and repair deteriorated or compromised structural members.

Improper holes and notches from alterations and running service lines are a major source of weakened joists (see above). Generally there should never be any cuts or penetrations in the middle third of any joist, or anywhere along the bottom of the joist. Notches at the end of a joist (A) should not exceed  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the joist depth. Center notches (B) should not exceed  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the joist depth. Holes (C) should be a minimum of 2" in from the top or bottom of the joist, and no larger than  $\frac{1}{3}$  the depth of the joist.

## Plan the Remedies

Depending upon the conditions, it is possible to strengthen or repair existing fram-

ing members, such as floor joists or roof rafters, by adding reinforcing material. Sandwiching the member (A) on either side with plywood is sometimes worthwhile, but the plywood must be installed correctly for greatest strength. A better option is sistering (B), where identical lumber is bolted to the member. Better still is sistering with a flitch plate (C), a  $\frac{1}{4}$ " to  $\frac{1}{2}$ " piece of steel or plywood. Two flitch plates may also be used to repair localized damage. Where these repairs are not sufficient, also consider shoring up joists or beams that were cut, drilled, or notched for pipes, wires, or ducts.

One of the good things about floor deflection is that it is repairable. The bad news is that it often takes a long time. The solution to sagging floors, or the damaged sills and joist ends that contribute to them, often involves jacking. A common scenario is to install temporary jack posts and support beams (left in drawing, opposite page) then permanent posts and beams over new footings. A

taught string stretched across the floor will show the amount of deflection and improvement. Posts set on dirt floors should be upgraded to concrete pads with footings. Place wood posts on metal post supports to create a waterproof barrier between the post and the footing.

Jacking must proceed slowly; it took a long time for your floor to sink, so you can't push it back up quickly without causing cracks and stress in the building. As with other structural repairs, jacking must also be done appropriately. You cannot simply put a screw jack under the lowest spot and start turning. Ideally, someone with experience will assess the problem and set up the posts and any necessary beams. You can then screw the jacks up a turn or two each month. Expect some cracked plaster along the way, and aim not for perfection, but simply stability and improvement. After all, if perfectly level floors and pristine walls were important to us, we wouldn't live in old houses, would we? 🏠

While linoleum manufacturers cornered the market in kitchens and baths with plain-Jane patterns, by 1929 competitors were invading living and dining rooms with colorful "rugs" that had never seen a loom and were not necessarily even linoleum.



WESLEY ANCHUTZ

# Lie Like A Rug

Understanding the art, artifice, and unlikely appeal of linoleum rugs BY JANE POWELL

Conniving one material to imitate another is a great tradition in old houses, from manipulating paint into faux wood graining, or plaster into ersatz marble, to simulating the “structural” joinery found in many Craftsman-style Arts & Crafts houses. Yet for sheer practicality, not to mention amusement value, can there be any finer form of fakery than the linoleum rug? Imagine, all the visual loveliness of a woven carpet without the vacuuming, shampooing, and worrying about spills—just damp-mop and you’re done! Although most of the linoleum sold up to the 1960s was probably installed wall-to-wall in kitchens, bathrooms, and public buildings, there was enough demand for rugs that every company’s catalog devoted a healthy batch of pages to them. Should you wonder if make-believe rugs are tacky and déclass  today, have no fear. That’s what makes them so fabulous! Here’s what linoleum rugs and their look-alikes are all about and what to do if you find one in your old house.

## Carpets for Mass Consumption

What separates a linoleum rug from regular linoleum? Not much, beyond the fact that the typical rug is a movable rectangle with a border. Many manufacturers made the same patterns as both wall-to-wall products and rugs, but the latter would also incorporate some sort of design around the edges. In addition, they tended to sell the rugs in standard rug sizes—4’x6’, 5’x7’, 6’x9’, 8’x9’, up to 12’x 15’. Rugs also came as mats (generally 2’x3’) for placing in front of the sink. Beyond this, linoleum rugs don’t always have to look like textiles, and they don’t even have to be linoleum.

The evolution of the linoleum rug begins with the invention of linoleum by the Englishman Frederick Walton in 1863. Initially linoleum came in solid colors, although soon after Walton debuted his wonder flooring, he developed marbled, granite, and jasp  linoleum. By 1892, Walton had introduced two ways to make patterned linoleum: stencil inlaid and straight-line inlaid.



JAMES C. MASSEY ARCHIVE



JAMES C. MASSEY ARCHIVE

**TOP:** Little more than borders and a floral pattern, such this Chrysanthemum design, were necessary to turn functional flooring into a rug fit for living room.

**BOTTOM:** With a deft promotional spin, Congoleum made a virtue of rug patterns that were only paint-deep, promising “freedom from tiresome housework” because they could be “cleaned in a wink with a few strokes of a damp mop.”

Linoleum could also be decorated by hand-block printing with wood blocks—the same methods used to decorate floorcloths, the ancestors of linoleum—and this is the method primarily used to make linoleum rugs.

In 1910 American linoleum producers suddenly faced a competing product that wasn’t linoleum at all. Called Congoleum, a contraction of Congo (the country that was a major source of asphalt ) and linoleum, the flooring was



**Though seldom confused with the real thing, many printed-on rug patterns captured the essence of the material they aped with surprising depth and artistry.**

an asphalt-saturated felt known generically as felt-base. When printed on the surface in oil paint with a linoleum-like design, felt-base looked just like linoleum, and it was cheaper than the real thing by a third. Initially, felt-base rugs were printed by hand using wood blocks in much the same fashion as printed linoleum, an expensive process. Only felt-base rug borders (generally printed to resemble wood flooring) were printed by machine. Within a couple years, though, the Congoleum Company decided to invest in a rotary press, and its first machine-printed rug came off the production line around 1913.

When felt-base was first introduced, linoleum manufacturers fought back, urging consumers to “learn how to tell genuine linoleum: look for the woven burlap back.” To add to the confusion, felt-base makers coated the back of their rugs with the same red iron oxide that linoleum manufacturers used on the back of linoleum. Nonetheless, the Armstrong Company, a leading linoleum producer, experimented with felt-base starting in 1916, producing “Fiberlin”

rugs and flooring. In 1917 they introduced linoleum rugs, which sold so well they dropped the Fiberlin line in 1920. But a few years later they bought out the Waltona Company, another felt-base manufacturer, and began offering felt-base again in 1925. The Waltona line was renamed Quaker Rugs, and Armstrong stopped selling the real lino-

leum rugs after that. Congoleum sold their rug product under the Gold Seal label. Other companies also got into the resilient rug business, both linoleum and felt-base, including Sloane, Blabon, Pabco, and Dominion (Canada). Some continued to offer both products even after the larger companies (Armstrong and Congoleum-Nairn) had stopped making linoleum rugs and only sold the felt-base merchandise. In general, by the late 1920s, most resilient flooring rugs were felt-base instead of linoleum. Felt-base rugs (and flooring) continued to be produced well into the 1950s.

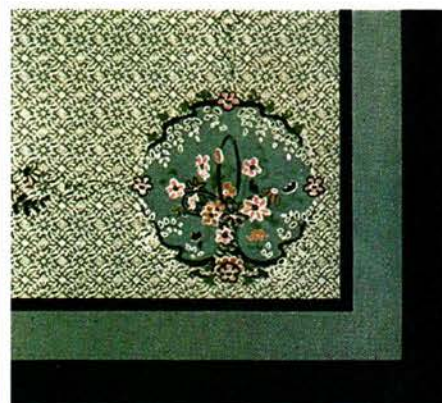
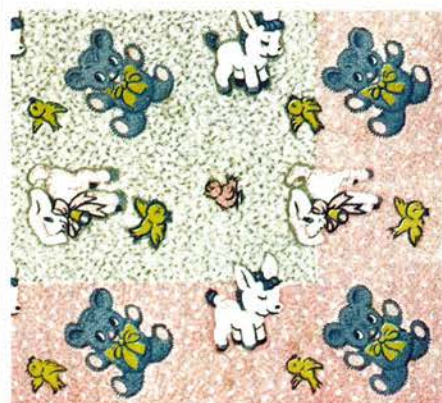
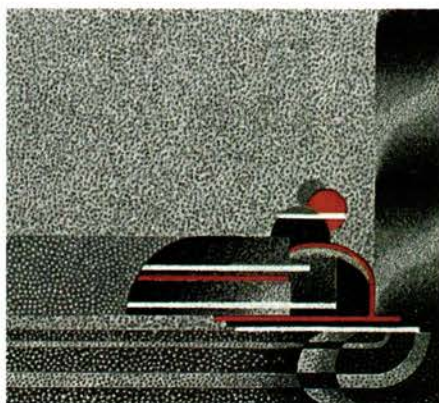
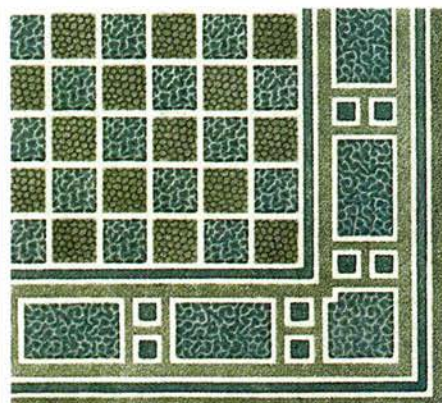
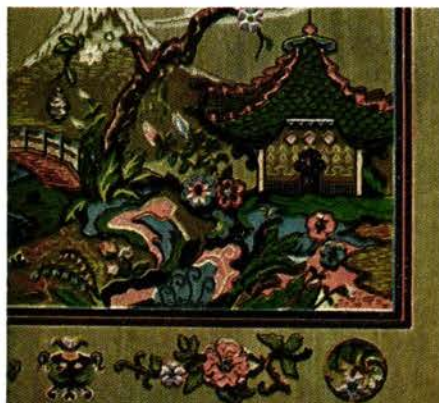
## A Plethora of Printed Patterns

Since these products were marketed as “rugs,” it’s no surprise they were often printed to resemble various kinds of woven or knotted carpets. Some even had printed fringe for full effect. The most amusing of these were based on traditional oriental rugs, though there were also fake braided rugs, rag rugs, and needlepoint rugs. Straw or other fiber matting was another fashionable motif—and easier to keep clean than the real thing!

Florals of all sorts were popular from the 19th century up through the 1950s. Sometimes combined with florals or on their own, patterns that might be called “ferns and fronds” were fashionable, try-



**In 1927 Armstrong advertised its Genuine Cork Linoleum Rugs as a colorful flooring alternative for kitchens, be it this fanciful Japanese pattern or the standard grained look of jaspé.**



The inspiration for rugs ran the gamut of floor materials, from woven textiles to tile-work to wood. Most inventive perhaps were the abstract designs of the '40s, and those for nurseries (bears) and playrooms (cowboys).

ing to resemble broadloom carpeting, perhaps. In the 1950s, tropical florals similar to the patterns found on bark-cloth draperies were offered by some companies.

At least as popular as florals were all sorts of geometric patterns, from tile-like compositions to designs that were termed "jigsaw," "random tile," and "overshot interliners." Geometrics could either be printed as an all-over pattern, or on a background that vaguely resembled marble, clouds, or a pointillist painting. Many rugs also imitated the typical marble linoleum flooring with inlaid borders of solid color or

contrasting marbleized colors.

Patterns resembling wood were most often sold for use as rug borders, although rugs with patterns mimicking parquet were advertised for use in formal rooms (a bit of wishful thinking on the manufacturers' part, perhaps). Though wood patterns always look fake to our eyes, don't let it bother you; as with country wood-graining, embrace the fakeness.

During the 1930s and '40s, there were even a couple of full-on Art Deco/Moderne/Streamline rug patterns, though not as many as one might have liked to see. Similarly, in the 1950s



THE COUNTRY GENTLEMAN

## Have you learned the lesson of time-saving, easy housework?

In a school the children will be off to meet. This formerly meant for mother the beginning of a day filled with the drudgery of cleaning housework.

But modern mothers are discovering time-saving shortcuts... new house-keeping helps... that give time for pleasure, rest and relaxation.

For example, Camellium Gold Seal Keaps! These hand-applied, labor-saving floor-coverings put newwork on a new, easy base. Here are rugs which do not collect dust and germs; sanitary water-repellent carpet which are made spontaneously from pure white, easy mopping. They

worshipping and leaching. No footstool is  
ever needed to keep them fast on the floor.  
But add infinite and healthful clean-  
liness are not the only advantages.

The variety of artistic Complancon  
patterns and their rich, harmonious col-  
ors make Complancon Gold Seal Rugs  
equally valued for their decorative qual-  
ities. They give sparkle, life and style  
to any room. Expensive, too, for prices  
today are lower than ever before.

Complancon Rugs are famous for their  
resistance to hard wear. For the method  
and elaborate process which rugged dur-  
ability right through the entire pattern  
lends for the Gold Seal value you buy!

COLUMBIA-KAYE, INC., General Office, KENNESA, WASH.  
NEW YORK OFFICE: CHICAGO OFFICE: NEW ORLEANS  
NEW YORK OFFICE: MINNEAPOLIS OFFICE: ST. LOUIS  
DALLAS OFFICE: LOS ANGELES OFFICE: PHOENIX  
SAN FRANCISCO OFFICE: SEATTLE OFFICE: SPOKANE

**CONGOLEUM**  
**RUGS**  
look for the  
GOLD SEAL on the rug!

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO



**Executive Order**



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An aggressive and canny advertiser, Congoleum pushed its felt-base rugs with images of labor-saving installations in upscale houses. At the height of the "rug wars," this campaign from 1928 touted their clever Gold Seal branding, reminding the buyer that it appears "only on genuine Congoleum rugs."

there were a few designs that really screamed mid-century Modern. Nonetheless, the 1950s wasn't really as modern as we think it was, and there were many more hokey florals and fake braided rugs than there were Space Age/boomerang/kidney-shaped patterns. More's the pity.

What are almost exclusively the province of linoleum or felt-base rugs, however, are patterns meant for kitchens or nurseries. Kitchen rugs featured vegetables and fruits, dishes, coffee and tea pots, chickens, fish, cows, and the like. Nursery rugs used motifs such as nursery rhyme characters, game boards, cute baby animals, cowboys, spaceships, maps, or the circus.

In their heyday, felt-base and linoleum rugs were most often used in bedrooms, covered porches, and attic living spaces. Sometimes they popped up in dining rooms, and you may uncover one while taking up wall-to-wall carpeting. If you're very lucky, you may discover a never-used rug, still rolled up, stashed in the attic, basement, or garage. Or you may find rug sections lining the bottom of a closet or a drawer. These are pieces of history and shouldn't just be tossed into the trash.

An old linoleum or felt-base rug is worth appreciating because it is unlikely this product will ever be made again. The few companies now producing real linoleum don't offer patterns, let alone rugs, and no one makes felt-base floor-

Almost all manufacturers continued making rugs into the 1950s, running modern and atomic patterns in their catalogs right along with pages of ersatz orientals.

## Rug Care and Repair

Since they grow very brittle with age, old linoleum and felt-base rugs are extremely delicate and can be tricky to handle. This is especially true of the felt-base types, which are particularly prone to tearing or breaking because they are not reinforced by burlap backing. While I am not trained as an architectural conservator, I've worked with many of these materials over the years, and I've had success by employing the following methods and insights.

**1** If you find a rug you want to remove, either temporarily or permanently, you will need to roll it up, and this requires heat and patience. Generally, rugs weren't glued to the floor, but they may have become stuck a bit on their own. Before you begin, obtain a large cardboard tube (like those sold for concrete forms) to roll the rug around. Also, it helps to have an assistant on hand, especially if the rug is large. Roll up the rug with the patterned side out if you can. The best way to do this is to put the whole piece outside in the sun, where it will warm the material and make it more flexible. If this is not an option because the rug is indoors, try using a heat gun (set on low) to warm each section as you roll it around the tube. Hold the heat gun at a distance so you don't take off the paint. Another option is to lay an electric blanket over the whole rug to warm it all at once. The same rules apply to unrolling.

**2** Often the rug will have splits or tears, especially along the edges. On felt-base, these can and should be reinforced before rolling by gluing a piece of roofing felt to the back of the rug.

**3** Real linoleum rugs can be made more supple by applying some boiled linseed oil, then wiping off the excess.

**4** Old linoleum and felt-base rugs are often dirty. Wash them only with pH neutral cleaners, first testing

the effects of the cleaner on a corner of the rug. If that doesn't work, I've had good luck with Mr. Clean Magic Erasers and similar products for removing dirt and stains. Since these rugs cannot be replaced, it is important to conserve as much of a historic rug as possible. If the rug is too far gone to save whole, at least photograph what is there and retain the good parts—they make great drawer liners and shelf paper.

**5** For those connoisseurs who might wish to acquire one of these rugs, they occasionally turn up at antique stores or salvage yards as well as on eBay. Your best bet is to find one in a house that's for sale. Most people don't think they have any value, and you can often get one free or cheap just by offering to remove it. For those who still think these rugs are tacky (what is *wrong* with you people?) and want to get rid of them, be aware that in reasonable condition they sell for decent money on eBay.

Whatever the base material, test cleaners first to determine their effect on the rug's pattern, which is invariably printed-on paint.

### SUPPLIERS

New felt-base or linoleum rugs are no longer made, but true wall-to-wall linoleum is available again.

**Armstrong World Industries**  
[www.armstrong.com/resflram/na/linoleum/en/us/](http://www.armstrong.com/resflram/na/linoleum/en/us/)

**Domco Tarkett**  
[www.tarkett-commercial.com/floors/site/en-fr/topic/linoleum](http://www.tarkett-commercial.com/floors/site/en-fr/topic/linoleum)

**Forbo Flooring**  
[www.themarmoleumstore.com](http://www.themarmoleumstore.com)

ing anymore. The closest you can get is a floorcloth, a pre-linoleum technology, these are usually custom-made and not cheap. So if you have a linoleum rug, treasure it, even if your friends don't understand. 🐾

*Jane Powell* is the author of *Linoleum* and a frequent OHJ contributor.

# Plaster Repair Options



What makes it possible for old-house owners to repair traditional plaster is an assortment of materials that address specific problems. Wall-lining textiles, for example, apply with adhesive like wallpaper and are ideal for covering multiple cracks and surface imperfections.

PHOTOS BY JOHN CRISPIN EXCEPT WHERE NOTED

*There's a lot you can do to cure common wall and ceiling problems if you know the materials and methods behind some basic plaster repairs.*

By GORDON BOCK

Flat plastering is a time-honored, magical craft, the process of mixing dry powders and water into wet, plastic mortar, then spreading it over entire walls so that it creates a surface that is die-straight and alabaster smooth. Skill and handed-down trade practices are the secret ingredients in traditional plaster, and they help make it a durable, original, and beautiful finish that old-house owners go to great lengths to keep. In contrast, flat plaster repairs are usually much small-



Cyclical cracks are the bane of antique plaster walls and must be repaired with care to avoid recurrence. First, dig out the crack in an inverted V (left) that undercuts the plaster, vacuuming out all debris. Next, thoroughly wet the crack with water, then apply bonding agent with a brush at the undercut edges to help new plaster bond to the old. Then fill with patching plaster to slightly proud of the surface and sand flush when dry.

er and more variable, with techniques adapted to the many kinds of damage and decay, from tiny cracks to large holes, and through hard-won experience. Though being handy comes into play here, too, repairs often gain as much from clever products specifically made to improve the results and assist the ad hoc plasterer. What we'll explore here is an overview of these methods and materials to explain what's possible with plaster repairs and how they can help you retain the solidity and beauty of three-coat plaster walls and ceilings.

Historic plaster walls that have stood up well for decades can start to fail for a number of reasons. Pre-industrial plaster from the 1850s or earlier may be affected by shortcomings in the materials themselves, such as lime of uneven quality or sand that contains impurities. A more likely cause, though, is dicey installation conditions, such as plastering in weather that is too hot or humid (which can keep the plaster from setting) or too cold (which causes the plaster to freeze before it can cure). Then there's just the toll of time—movement of balloon framing, for instance, or roof leaks that saturate a ceiling or wall, stressing the plaster and lath with the added weight of water while leaching out binding materials.

## Cracks and Surface Problems

Small, hairline cracks traveling in random directions are generally not evidence of plaster failure, but they can be unsightly and something you'll want to address before repainting. In these cases, first open

the cracks with the point of a can opener or a tool made for this purpose, then fill with spackling compound. Many cracks, however, are cyclical, and these you can't just cover with a quick swipe of a putty knife and spackle because they'll only

return with the next seasonal expansion or contraction of the building. Here, the better approach is to bridge them with dry-wall tape or fiberglass tape made for this purpose, then cover with drywall joint compound, which is more flexible than

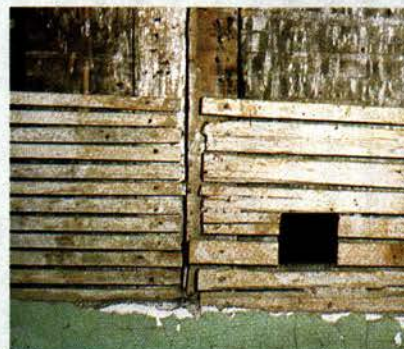
## The Ups and Downs of Plaster

While sheets of paper-faced drywall are the universal wall and ceiling material for buildings today, up until the 1940s the rooms in most houses were surfaced with plaster. Though ancient in origin, plaster has changed over 300 years of North American house construction, so it pays to understand what you're working with for the most effective repairs. Traditional flat plaster is a three-coat system consisting of 1) a coarse base or scratch coat; 2) an intermediate brown coat; 3) a fine finish coat. Originally, plaster mortar was made with lime—calcium carbonate derived from limestone or shells and processed so that it hardens in the presence of water. However, by the early 20th century plasterers increasingly used gypsum (a related material derived from sedimentary rock) to speed setup time.

Wall and ceiling plaster is anchored to the building framing by lath, a perforated base of thin wood strips or, by the 20th century, expanded metal mesh. The scratch coat mechanically interlocks with the lath when the wet mortar penetrates through the openings and hardens into fingerlike keys. Subsequently, the brown coat would attach itself to the scratch coat (so named because its surface was roughed-up with a nail to aid bonding), and the fine finish would anchor to the coarser brown coat.



**ABOVE:** Pre-industrial plaster is marked by irregular lath, such as "accordion" lath, hand split from thin boards. **BELOW:** With industrialization, lath became more regular, from early saw lath (right in photo) to fully mass-produced lath and nails.





Though cotton textiles can still be found, most of the liners used for wall canvassing today are manmade fiber products ordered through wallpaper stores. Though they can't bridge holes or disguise uneven patches, they are a user-friendly way to resurface and preserve basically intact plaster.

rigid plaster products. Even better, if the cracks are large or known to be reoccurring, dig them out in an inverted V that undercuts the plaster to provide added anchoring. Then vacuum out all the debris, wet the new surfaces with a bonding agent to aid adhesion, and fill with patching plaster.

When you have plaster that is fundamentally sound, but riddled with too many hairline cracks to cover one-by-one, a good option to consider is canvassing the wall.

In this traditional technique, you first prep the wall, removing any loose paint and filling plaster defects. Then, after applying adhesive, you cover the entire surface with sheets of fabric—originally canvas, but now usually a modern, manmade fiber product made for this purpose. Canvassing has been used for generations on new walls to create a high-quality surface for decorative painting or expensive wallpaper. In old houses, though, it's a very effective upgrade for covering problem cracks or smoothing walls that have grown uneven through years of minor repairs, repainting, and wallpaper removal.

## Holes and Cavities

Shallow surface gouges and small holes left by the likes of picture hooks can be effectively filled in one application with a good cosmetic patching product or spackle—even drywall joint compound works. However, when the hole is so deep it's down to the scratch and brown coats, the repair requires two applications because a one-step patch will tend to shrink, leaving a concave surface. For small holes less than 5" or so across, first clean the hole of any loose materials and wet down the exposed plaster with a water from a spray bottle to improve adhesion on the next steps. Next, open a bag of perlite-and-gypsum plaster (such as Structo-lite from USG ) and mix



Prior to the late 19th century, plaster was a mixture of aggregate (usually sand), fiber (such as animal hair), water, and lime that set slowly but could last for centuries, as in this mid-17th century house in Massachusetts. The lime came from heating and grinding limestone or oyster shells, bits of which sometimes appear in the undercoats. Gypsum became a common plaster ingredient by 1900 because it set quickly.

up a small batch with water to a wet, mortar-like consistency. Then trowel it into the hole to just below the surface, filling the void and leaving the surface of the mortar rough. When the perlite-and-gypsum has set up (in about 24 hours) return and fill the hole flush with finish plaster or patching compound.

For holes larger than 5" across that are open right down to the lath, you need to take more involved measures. First, begin by wetting down any wood lath to keep it from twisting as well as sucking the moisture out of the new work. At this point many repair plasterers like to beef up the patch by cutting a piece of wire lath to fit the hole, then nailing or wiring it right over the wood lath. Afterwards they brush bonding agent on the old plaster edges as well as the lath. Whatever lath path you choose, the next step is to trowel



Expanded metal mesh is the modern lath common since the 1920s and widely used for large repairs. Here, a piece is cut to the patch shape and screwed right over the old wood lath to improve anchoring for the plaster scratch coat.



For finish coats, patching compound is okay for small areas, but finish plaster is preferred for large holes. Do your best to match the overall character, as a patch that's too rough—or too smooth—may be obvious under paint.



**LEFT:** When wet plaster penetrates the lath and hardens, it forms keys that are the mechanical anchors of the wall. When these keys break, the three coats of plaster will migrate away from the lath, but can sometimes be reattached if there is access to inject adhesive. **RIGHT:** Plaster washers may be practical for re-anchoring plaster where the only access is from the finish side.



in a scratch coat of perlite-and-gypsum the same thickness as the old coat. When the scratch coat has just set, to aid adhesion of the next coat, score it with a nail and let cure. Then follow up with a brown coat and thereafter a finish coat. To reduce chances of cracks between old and new work, lap each new layer of plaster over the old plaster so they are evenly joined and stepped for maximum strength. If the old plaster is slightly wavy or has other obvious characteristics, do your best to emulate these irregularities in the finish coat so the patch will be as inconspicuous as possible.

## Loose Plaster and Broken Keys

Sometimes the flat plaster in an old house is basically intact but showing signs of bowing—even moving. This is evidence that something has broken the keys and allowed the three coats to migrate away from the wall, a condition that, if left alone, will lead to collapse of the plaster. While this may sound like a lost cause, if the plaster otherwise retains its integrity, there are two techniques worth trying before resorting to a total replastering. The first is to try re-anchoring the plaster from the finish side with plaster washers—small, thin, counter-sunk metal discs attached with flathead screws, available from plaster suppliers or by mail order (such as Charles St. Supply, [www.charlesstsupply.com](http://www.charlesstsupply.com)). In this scenario, assess where the plaster is com-

ing away from the lath and determine if it can be moved back into position with gentle pressure. (If the results are promising, but not complete, try making a hole or two at the bottom of the bulge to vacuum out debris that has fallen between the lath and the back of the plaster.) Next, locate and mark the position of the wall studs on the plaster. Then, have an assistant hold the plaster back in position while you secure it with plaster washers at strategic places. When the plaster is anchored again, skim-coat over the washers to hide them and finish the surface (see Sept/Oct 2006 OHJ for more on skim-coating).

If you are fortunate enough to have access to the backside of the plaster—say, from an attic or by removing floorboards in the case of a ceiling—you can try resecuring the plaster from this hidden side. Begin by assessing the bowed part as before, and removing any debris that prevents the plaster from returning to its original position. Next, bore a series of holes  $\frac{1}{4}$ " to  $\frac{3}{8}$ " in diameter along where you need to reattach the plaster, inject construction adhesive into each hole, and gently press the plaster back into position, holding it there with braces until the adhesive has cured.

While this approach may not be appropriate for historically significant plaster or museum-level conservation, it can be an effective alternative for retaining the original plaster and avoiding the expense of wholesale replacement with drywall. 🛠️

# Coming Unhinged

By NOELLE LORD  
PHOTOS BY PETER LORD

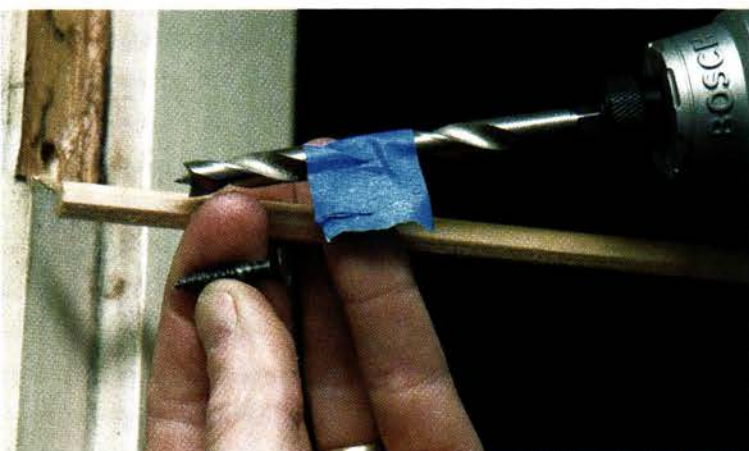
Doors are workhorses designed to open and close thousands of times a year, and it's the hinges that carry the load, supporting the weight and movement each time a door gets opened. Since traditional hinges are held in place with slotted screws that grab into jamb casings about 1" thick, it's common for the top hinge to start loosening up over time. This is especially true if a range of common old-house maladies come into play, like settling, structural movement, and paint buildup. Without attention, a loosening hinge screw will wear a larger and larger hole around itself, eventually falling out or coming unhinged. The problem is common in old houses, but it's a relatively easy one to fix without stooping to the glue-in-a-golf-tee quickie. By fitting a dowel (or face-grained plug) into the stretched-out hole, you can create a stable new surface to screw your fastener into, which will get your door back into the swing of things in no time.



1

## MATCH MATERIALS

Over years of wear, hinge holes can stretch to nearly double their original size (above). To fix them, start by selecting a dowel slightly larger than the worn-out screw hole, and long enough to handle comfortably. Next, find a drill bit that matches the dowel's diameter; you'll use it to bore a clean hole to accept the dowel.



2

## MEASURE DIMENSIONS

The new hole should extend only as deep as the original screw. An easy way to ensure this is with a gauge: Hold the screw next to the drill bit, and mark off its length with blue tape. When your drilling reaches the tape, you'll know it's time to stop.

3

## INSERT DOWEL

Spread wood glue over the dowel, using a paintbrush to apply a thin, even coat. Then take a hammer, and gently tap the dowel securely into the hole. Allow the glue to dry for several hours. Paring flat sides on the dowel helps it hold.



4

**TRIM TO FIT**

It is important to cut the dowel down flush with the bottom of the hinge gain because the hinge must sit flush and snugly in this pocket. Use a kerf saw (pictured) or a small, flush-cutting hand saw to trim the dowel's end, then fine-tune any rough edges away with a small, sharp wood chisel.



5

**MARK THE SPOT**

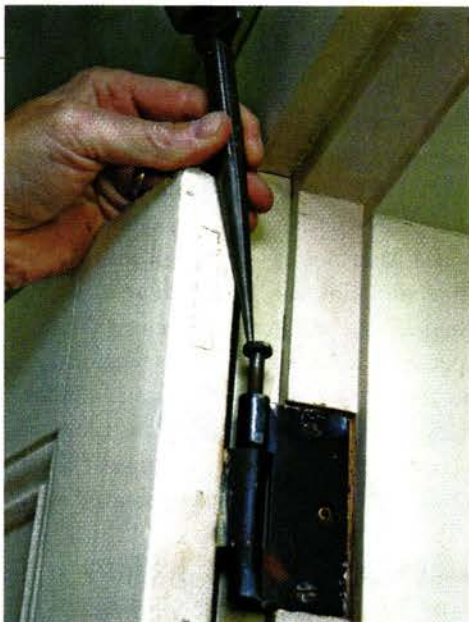
Hold the hinge leaf in place, and pencil a mark where the fastener will go. Then, with a tapered drill bit that is slightly thinner than the fastener, bore a pilot hole the depth of the screw, using the blue tape trick once again to determine when to stop.



6

**REATTACH THE HINGE**

With the pilot hole as a guide, put the hinge in place and reattach the original fastener; it should screw tightly into position.



7

**HANG IT UP**

Don't risk bending or breaking the hinge pin or damaging the leaf knuckles by moving too fast on the door reinstallation. Instead, take a nail set or punch hammer and slowly tap directly above the pin, moving it gently past the hinge knuckles. Then finish setting the hinge with a hammer. The new hinge should operate smoothly for decades, especially if you remember to oil it regularly to help reduce friction and wear. 🛠️

# Restoration Lessons

**A firsthand education helps one couple ease the pains of home work.**

BY ALICIA CAMPBELL  
PHOTOS BY ANDY OLENICK

**W**hen my husband, Todd, and I found our dream fixer-upper house in upstate New York, we had to look beyond the overgrown ivy, layers of peeling paint, and 1950s remuddles to glimpse its potential. Beneath all the vegetation and dirt, vestiges of a grand 1830s Greek Revival style house came into view, including four fireplaces,

original 6/6 windows, and elaborate mouldings. I dreamed of rescuing the house from its nightmare of neglect and filling its rooms with historic wallpaper, restored plaster walls, and period antiques and rugs. We bought the house, and immediately set to work saving it. Fourteen years later, our work still isn't done, but we've grown much wiser about what to do—and what not to do. While we enjoy our house and all the effort we've put into it, every day the restoration les-

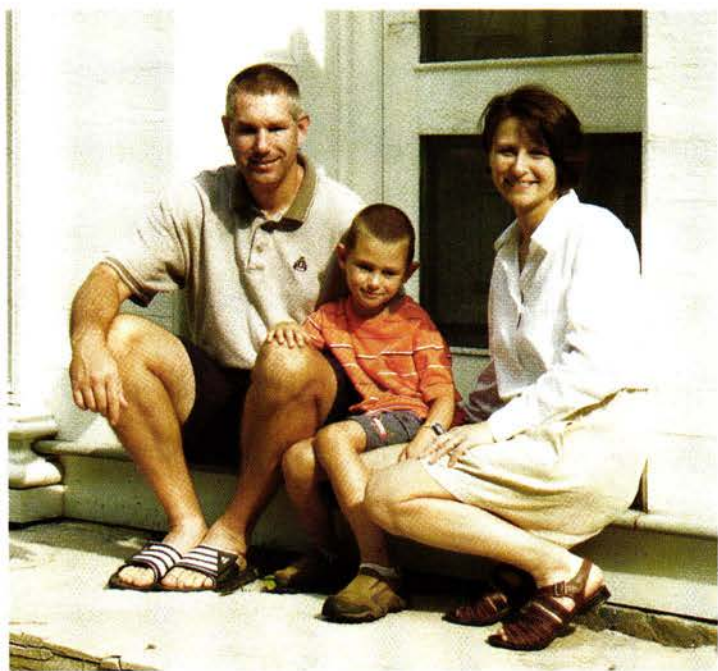
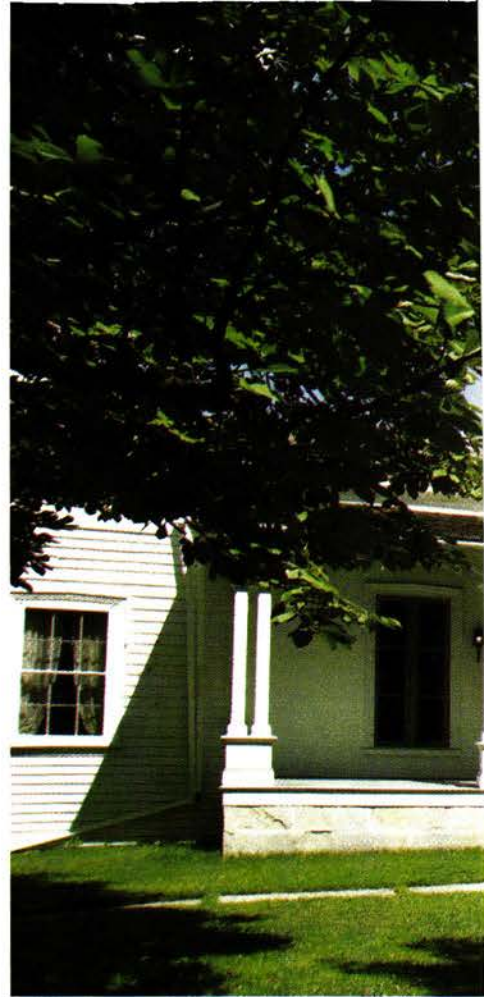
sons we've learned are helping us proceed more wisely with remaining projects, and they can help others, too.

**Be flexible.** We couldn't afford to relocate during the demolition phase, so we had to get creative with living ar-

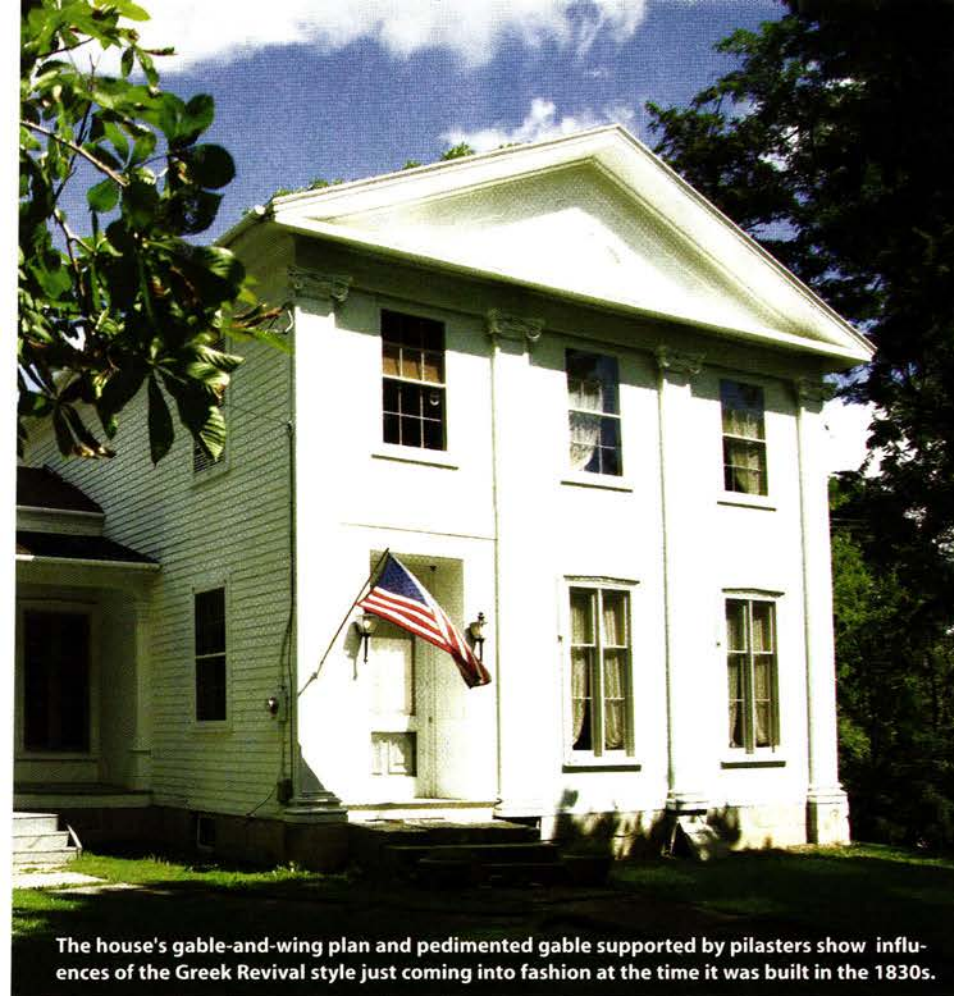
rangements. Over three years, our bedroom moved to four different rooms, and our kitchen to two. The key to living through the changes was having few furnishings, which meant we could readily rearrange them, and being flexible. If you are flexible enough, anything can seem normal.

**Tackle messy projects first.** Those that have the luxury to live elsewhere can take the whole-house approach to restoration; the rest of us must work on rooms one at a time. We found a sort of happy middle ground by doing the demolition on all common spaces at the same time, then one by one finishing off areas we deemed essential for comfortable living, like the kitchen and a bathroom. We learned to group messy projects together after continually washing plaster dust from dishes, beds, floors, clothing, and trim. Moving the destructive work through the house in sections got the worst parts over all at once and saved cleaning time.

**Be patient.** In the beginning, we set lofty goals for every project: I even projected the whole house as a two- to three-



Alicia Campbell, husband Todd, and son Devin pose on the front steps of their Greek Revival house in upstate New York.



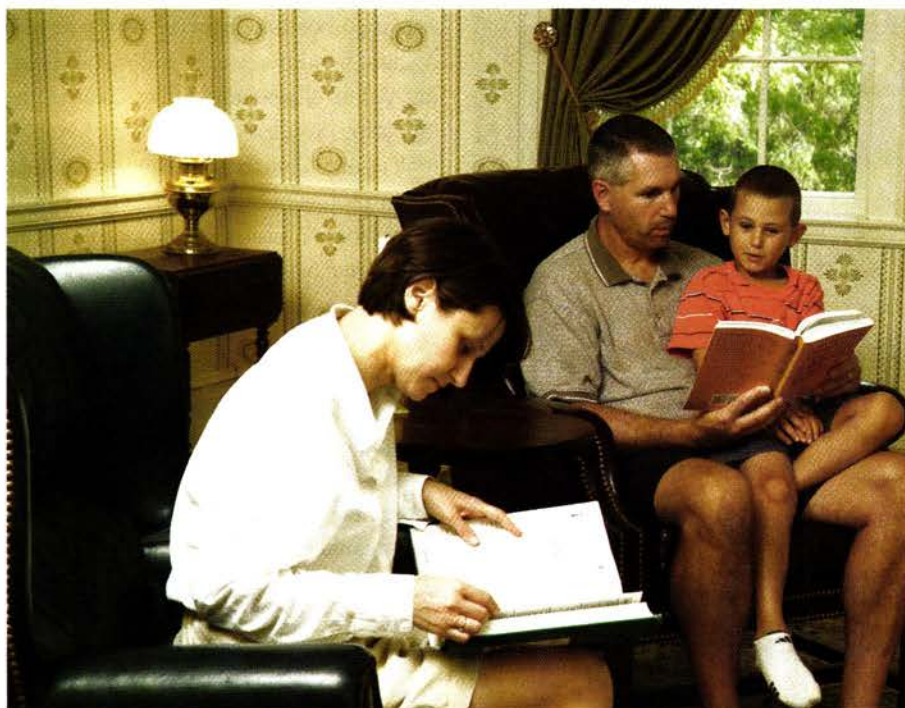
The house's gable-and-wing plan and pedimented gable supported by pilasters show influences of the Greek Revival style just coming into fashion at the time it was built in the 1830s.



Ashlar wallpaper in the entry was reproduced from an original remnant found hidden in a channel beside the door. "It was probably the best find of the whole house," says Alicia.

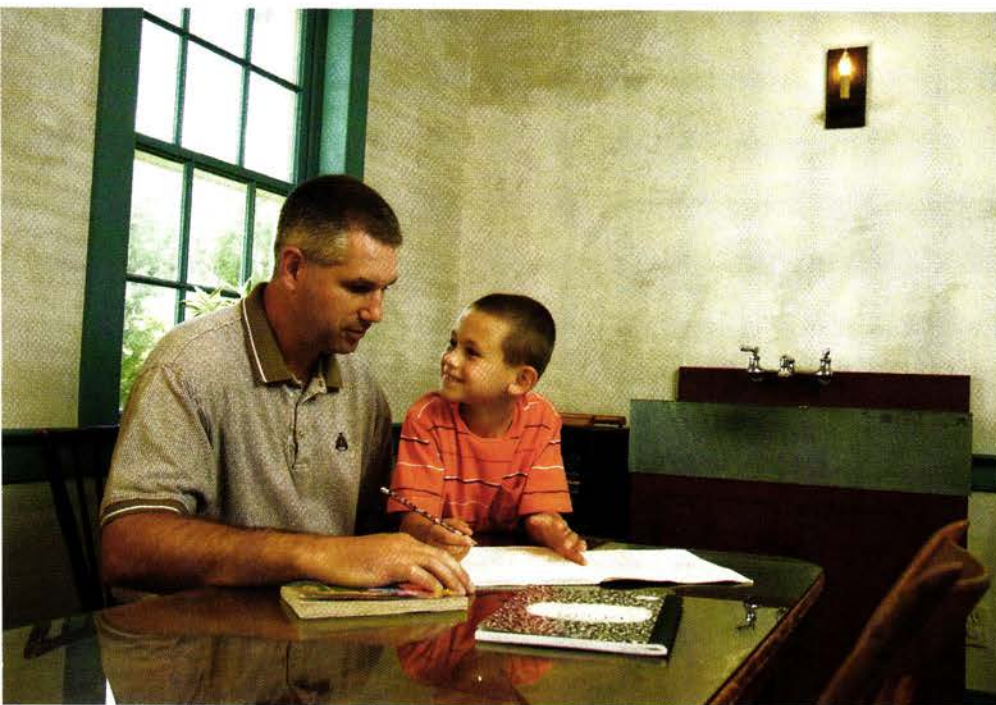
year restoration. This vision was blown six months after we began, when we were still plastering the kitchen. Every room we tackled presented similar surprises and unanticipated costs, and for every step forward we stumbled back a couple as well. Our kitchen alone took a year and a half to complete. Having the patience to live through the mess, and the willingness to take on extra work to meet goals, made surviving the restoration possible.

**Take time away.** In an effort to finish *The Project* early, it was easy for us to get caught up in a daily routine of working exclusively on the house. A couple of times, we even used vacation days from work to get a little further ahead restoring a room. After a while, though, working on our house wasn't much fun anymore. We began to feel we would never finish, and we were coming down with restoration burnout. That's when we learned that spending a weekend or two away from the place could help us forget the pains of ripping down walls, stripping multiple layers of paint, or wiping heavy dust off of tabletops. A couple of days away left us feeling refreshed and ready to continue.



**You can learn anything.** Finding the right craftspeople to work on our house proved more difficult than we anticipated—especially when we wanted to reproduce a historic appearance. We couldn't find many people capable of recreating 19th century techniques, and couldn't

Another find led to the installation of chair rail in the living room. "We saw evidence that a chair rail once existed under the window," Alicia explains. "So we recreated the moulding and extended it around the room."



to rescue the job were disastrous; almost instantly the finish coat dried into a hard, unworkable blob. Not knowing what else to do, we chiseled off the deformed plaster lumps and called a local restoration expert. He referred us to a professional plasterer, whose years of experience made solving the problem look easy. By thoroughly re-wetting the first coat of plaster with a garden hose, then adding retarder to the finish coat to slow its curing, he finished the entire job in two days, for a cost well worth it.

**Be clear with contractors.** Several times, we described a project to a contractor, left the house, and returned to results we hadn't expected, such as several feet of porch trim that just didn't suit the house, or doorways in the same room that differed in height. In some cases we had to fix the damage ourselves or even start over, which was an added expense to our already extensive costs. While contractors were always happy to consult with us, if we weren't on the premises they would continue working and use their best judgment to save time and money. Unfortunately, our visions didn't always agree. In hindsight, we could have avoided these mix-ups with better communication and some drawings, written instructions, pictures from books or magazines, or follow-up throughout the job.

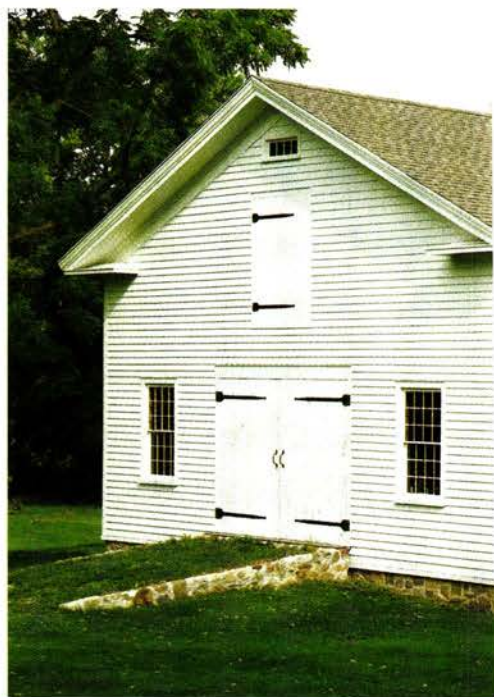


ALICIA CAMPBELL PHOTO

**ABOVE:** Alicia works on plastering the kitchen, a job the couple undertook themselves ceiling to floor. **TOP:** In the finished kitchen, Todd and Devin tackle homework beside a soapstone sink and reproduction light fixture that resembles the room's illumination early on—a single candle in a tin sconce.

afford those who were experts at them. Through *The Old-House Journal Guide to Restoration*, a three-day class, and lots of practice, we managed to learn plastering. Through other books and professional guidance, we also learned to repair and re-glaze windows, patch and install flooring, put up clapboards, and re-create some moulding profiles. Granted, these projects took us much longer than they would have taken professionals, but we achieved the exact look we wanted, saved lots of money, and gained a great sense of satisfaction by doing them ourselves.

**Consult professionals (when needed).** Inexperienced homeowners just shouldn't attempt some tasks. We learned this the hard way when trying to plaster our entire new kitchen and pantry, consisting of two separate ceilings and eight walls. Todd, my father, and I had done a decent job on the first coat of plaster. After a Herculean effort of mixing, hauling, and smoothing, it had turned out pretty well—mostly level, completely floated, and ready for a second coat. The mistake we made was taking a break of about a week to focus on another project. When we returned our attention to the kitchen to install the second, or finish, coat, we discovered that our first coat of plaster had cured to a point where applying a second one was impossible. Our attempts



## Research, research, research.

Through local experts, books, and tools like the Internet, a broad range of information is available on just about any repair. When preparing for a new project, we explored as many options as possible, including several different approaches and materials. Comparing methods allowed us to choose a solid plan, and usually saved us money, too. It also helped us ask contractors the right questions, making sure their approach to a project made sense for us.

**Pace yourself.** After restoring our house for 11 years, we decided to push and finish so we could have time to hike, play tennis, and travel again. But we also wanted an unattached timber-frame barn to replace the 1950s, attached two-car garage that came with the house. So in the middle of finishing up our back woodshed/family room project—and prepping interior walls for paper and painting trimwork—we decided to build the barn sooner rather than later. We began ordering materials, putting on the roof, installing the cornice and trim, repairing old windows, and nailing up all of the clapboards. As with most projects, we hit snags, such as a summer of torrential rain that soaked materials and blew our schedule. The barn was at least three times the work we initially expected.



**ABOVE:** Getting rid of the downstairs bathroom's dropped ceiling exposed an enormous, cast iron waste pipe that ran diagonally across the room. While removing it, the couple learned the benefits a solid sense of humor provides. **LEFT:** The finished bath's period details belie its remuddled past.

Continually exhausted and stressed, we realized we had taken on too much. As cold weather approached, we decided to finish the barn in the spring or as time permitted, and wrapped up only what had to be done before winter. Being realistic allowed us to maintain our sanity.

**Take stock of progress.** I should have kept repeating these words several years ago, when Todd and I were stripping paint off of our upstairs trim. Sweat dripped down our faces behind the respirators; thick, smelly chemicals covered our clothes; and the trim seemed to ex-

tend for miles. It felt like we would never finish. Day by day, though, we looked at our small accomplishments, like exposing the original detail on a patch of trim. Soon our undertakings added up to a section of a room, then a whole room, and eventually several of them. Throughout the work, we kept the vision of a completed historic house in our heads, and it helped us continue.

**Humor is key.** This lesson was easier to realize after most of the hard work was done. While renovating our downstairs bathroom, we removed a dropped ceiling only to discover it had been hiding a long, large cast iron waste pipe. Removing the pipe to reroute the plumbing became a job of epic proportions—a classic example of the Mushroom Factor. We decided to break it loose with a large sledgehammer, but realized the falling pipe would damage the soft pine floorboards beneath it. So we resolved to tie the pipe to a heavy object through a hole in the ceiling above, and slowly lower it down. Thus I became the 'anchor' for the pipe, with a thick rope tied around my waist and my tensed legs braced against a second-storey wall. As Todd slowly guided the pipe downward, and I gently released sections of rope, I envisioned the pipe falling and sucking me through the hole with it. It wasn't one of our safest or smartest ideas, but we accomplished the job without killing ourselves or the floor, and I still laugh thinking about it. 🍄



**LEFT:** An unattached timber-frame barn erected by Todd and Alicia looks as though it has existed on the property forever. Building it, however, (above, with Alicia and Todd at right) nearly did them in. Weather delays and the Mushroom Factor drove them to the brink of exhaustion, and taught them to slow down and better pace their work.

Style

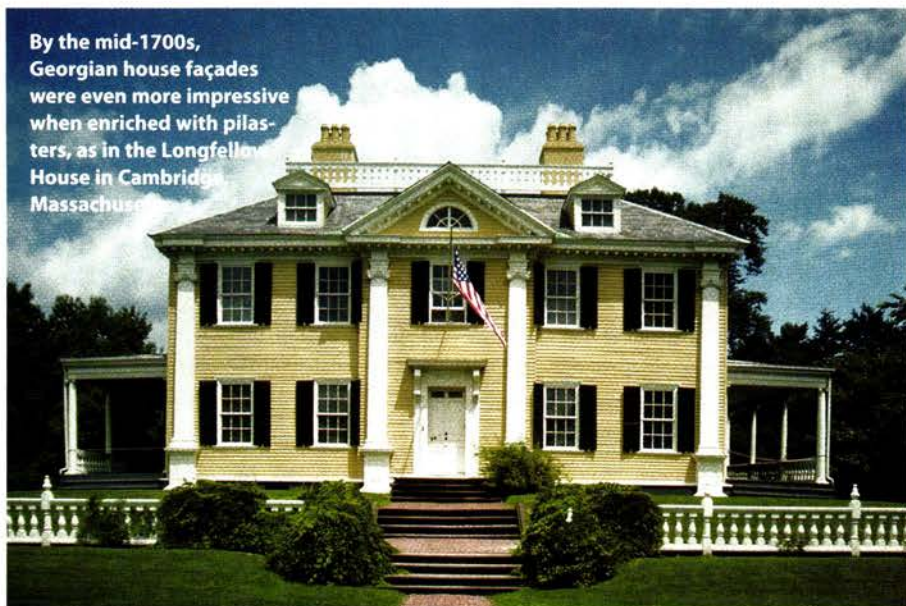


# The Architectural Alchemy of Columns

*From before the time of George Washington, adding columns has been a way to magically endow all ilks of American houses with style and substance.* By JAMES C. MASSEY AND SHIRLEY MAXWELL

Greek Revival mansions such as Melrose in Natchez, with its full-height columns under a pedimented portico, remind us of the antebellum South.

By the mid-1700s, Georgian house façades were even more impressive when enriched with pilasters, as in the Longfellow House in Cambridge, Massachusetts.



The Doric portico at Andalusia near Philadelphia is functional as well as grand, shading the checkerboard-painted floor.



JACK E. BOUCHER, HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

PHOTOS BY JAMES C. MASSEY EXCEPT WHERE NOTED

**O**f all the eye-catching features that have adorned American houses, columns are the most arresting. Aside from their timeless beauty and structural utility, columns make a statement—strong or subtle, but almost always flattering—about the good taste and social standing of the people whose houses have them. That could explain why the column is also the most enduring ornament in American architecture. It's been with us practically since the beginning, and it shows no signs of fading away now. From Georgian to Federal to Greek Revival to Italianate to Romanesque to Classical Revival to Beaux Arts to post-Modern, you'll find a column (or several) to fit most styles and nearly every era.

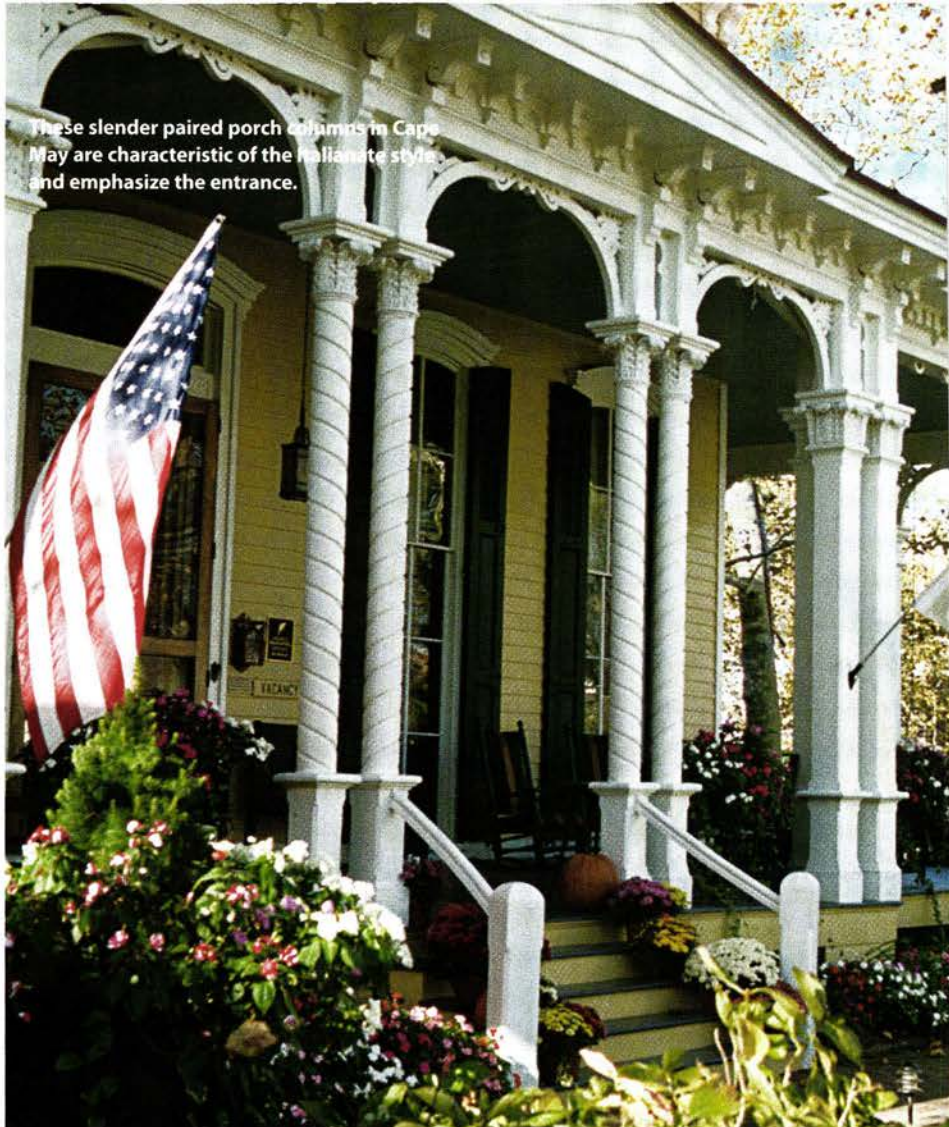
## Pillar Talk

Columns come in various sizes and types, and they may be placed almost anywhere in, on, or around a house. They can be purely decorative, or they can be essential components of a building's structure. They hold up our porch roofs, mark our entrances, decorate our dormers, and march around our perimeters. They can provide privacy and a sense of enclosure or, conversely, create an ambiance of openness. Beyond their practical virtues, columns have a way of imposing order on unruly facades. They confer dignity and distinction on buildings that would otherwise be humble or humdrum.

Think that's an exaggeration? Okay, then, take a close look at a typical 18th-century Virginia planter's home—one that started out fairly large and nice enough in its way, but also a bit plain, rambling, and, on the whole, not much different from the houses of many other prosperous farmers. Next, add a couple of stories to the top and a piazza with eight towering columns across one facade. Now what do you have? Mount Vernon, that's what, an all-American manor house stately enough for the Father of Our Country. (Okay, it also has a dynamite view of the Potomac River from the piazza, but you get the point.)

Not surprisingly, Mount Vernon is far and away the most frequently replicated building in America, and those columns are what give its imitators their historical cachet, no matter how far from Virginia they may appear. For instance, crooner Bing Crosby chose the Mount Vernon model for one of his Hollywood residences (though whether anybody on a tourist bus ever spotted him sitting on his piazza is not known to us). Like George Washington and Bing Crosby, homeowners across history have had an urge to impress their neighbors. They could do this in one of two ways: either by building a knockout house from scratch—one with columns, say—or, like George himself, by adding columns to a less-than-exciting existing structure. After the colonial period,

These slender paired porch columns in Cape May are characteristic of the Italianate style and emphasize the entrance.



Little did George Washington suspect what he started when he added a full columned piazza at Mount Vernon (above). As both a design and patriotic motif, the piazza has been endlessly copied—even for singer Bing Crosby's Hollywood house, shown on this old postcard (right).

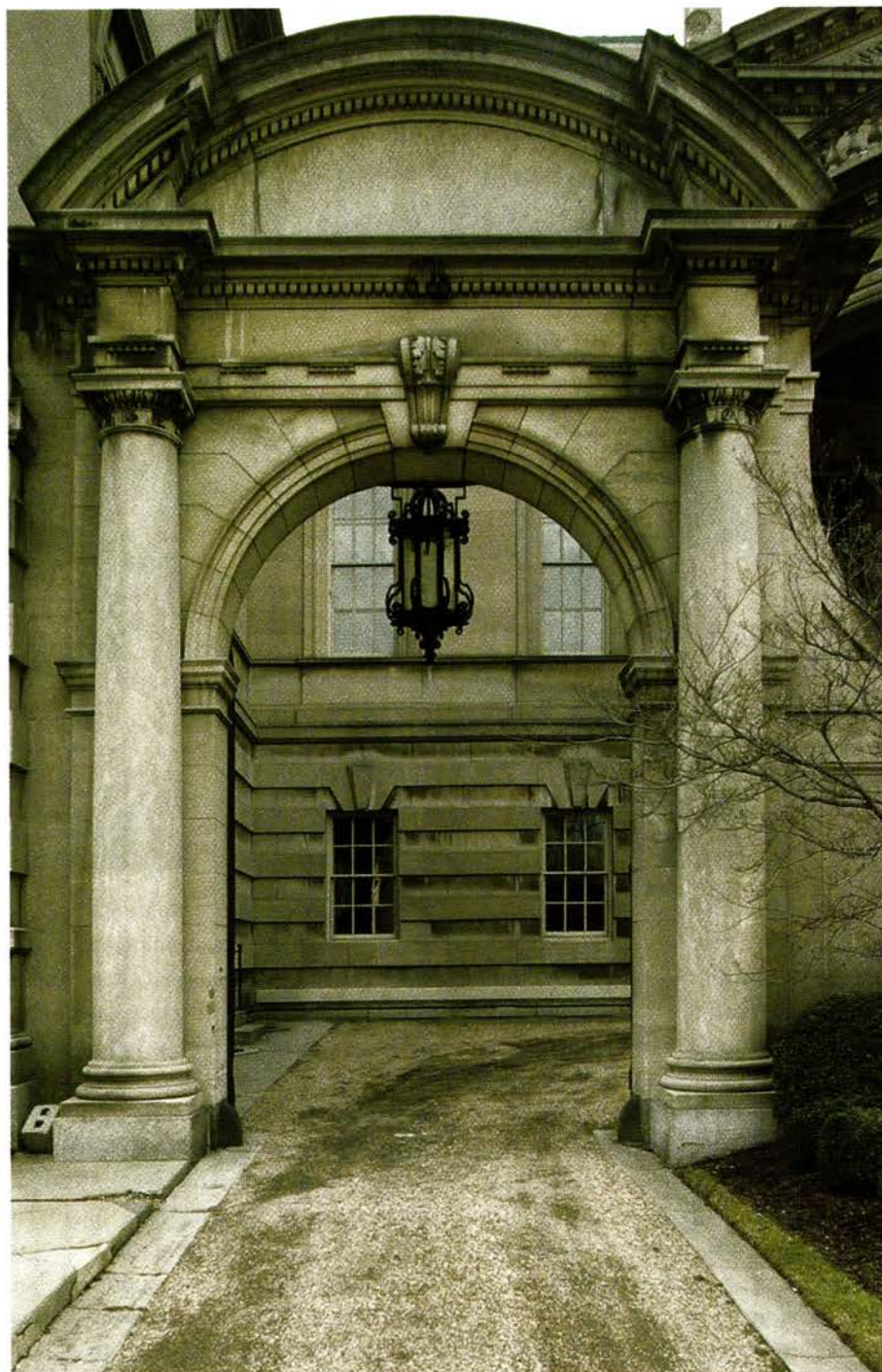




the latter practice gained new popularity from about the 1890s into the 1940s. Given their power, what exactly are these architectural magic wands that can so easily transform a house into a palace?

## Column-ology

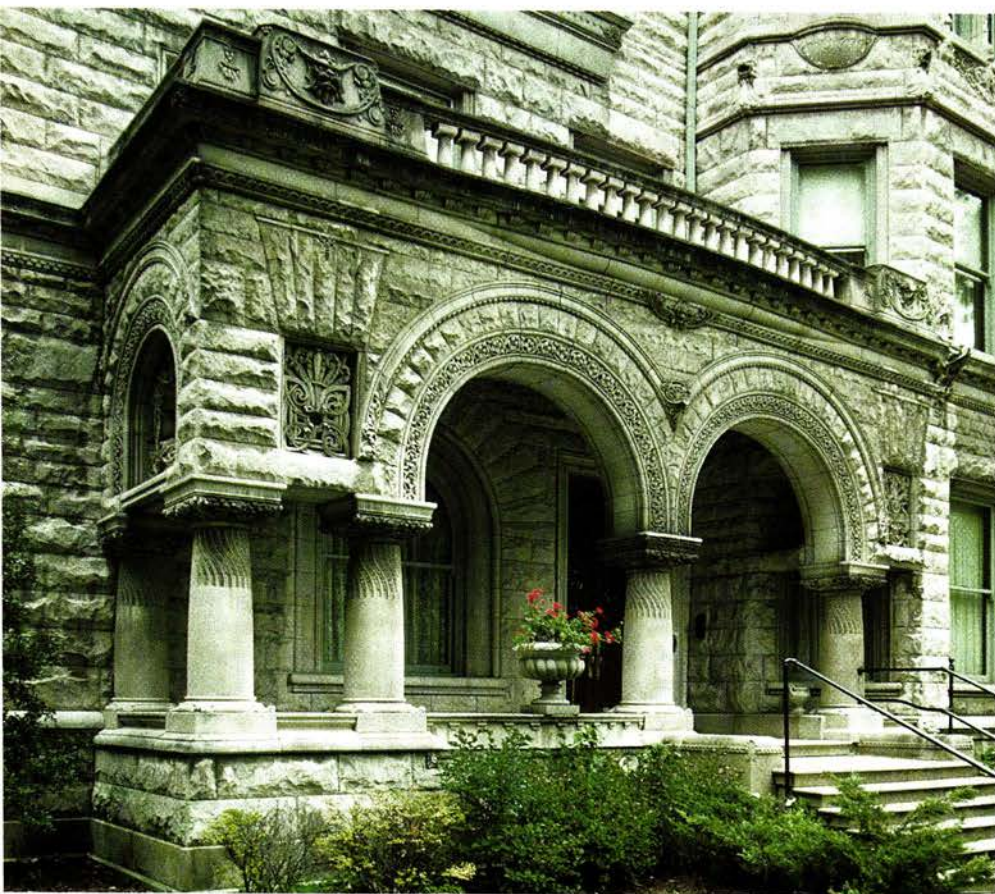
In essence, a column is a long, upright member, usually cylindrical, consisting of a shaft (the main portion), a base, and a capital (the top section). It usually supports something—an entablature, a roof, an arch, or a pediment, for instance. The vocabulary of classical columns is too large and too complex to cover in detail in this article. However, it's handy to know that columns are named for the type of ornament they feature, generally one of several classical orders or systems of ornamentation used in ancient Greek or Roman design. Ranging from the simplest to the most ornate, these include the Greek Doric, Ionic, Corinthian, and Composite. The



simplest of all is the Roman Tuscan. Gothic or Romanesque columns are less frequently found and have their own specific forms.

A column may stand clear of the building's wall surface, or it may be attached to the wall, in which case it becomes an engaged column or a pilaster. Engaged columns often are only half the diameter of a whole column, sometimes less. The shape may be cylindrical or square; if it is square, it is sometimes referred to as a pillar. In either case, the

**The 1905 Anderson House in Washington, D.C., features a forecourt with a gateway of engaged Tuscan columns and an arched pediment in full Beaux-Arts splendor. Forecourts are a formal feature in large city mansions, shielding the entry from the street.**



shaft may be fluted (with concave vertical grooves), reeded (with convex or rounded vertical decoration), or plain. Square columns are often paneled.

Small columns used in multiples are called colonettes. During the Victorian era, the fashion for short or squat columns supporting broad arches was common in Romanesque Revival buildings, while the columns in Gothic Revival buildings were most often slender and clustered, or gathered in bunches of three or more.

Besides Mount Vernon, there is another column application that reached its apogee in the Federal period, from the 1790s through the 1830s. The Federal-style entry porch with its slender, attenuated columns and delicately scaled ornament has been uncommonly helpful through the centuries for dressing up American houses of all sizes, from narrow, big-city townhouses to country mansions to modest 20th-century suburban dwellings. A little later, Greek Revival columns (which were often more massive than highly decorated) became popular because their stout contours lent weight

and importance to any building.

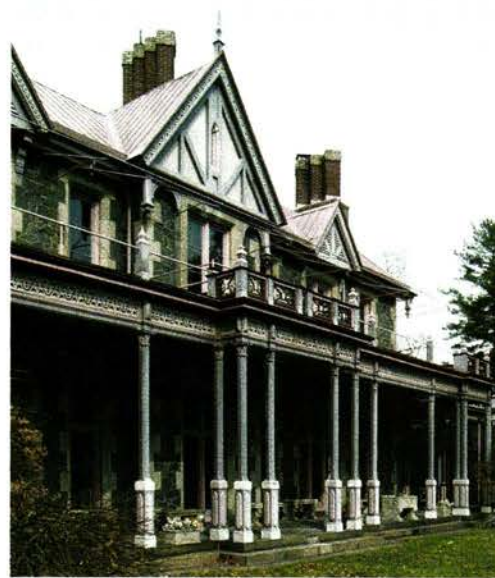
Probably the most impressive columns of all, if only in terms of sheer numbers found in a single place, are those fronting (or even entirely surrounding) Greek Revival buildings, such as the fabled antebellum mansions of the Old South. There was a potent symbolism behind such ostentatious architecture. On a large plantation, there might be dozens of dwellings, from slave cabins to overseers' houses to garçonnières, but there was only one columned Big House, and that was where the master lived.

The porches, porticos, and piazzas that give these houses their unique character are varied enough to warrant several articles on that subject alone. There are triangular pediments supported by colossal two-storey columns; some of these extend across the entire front of the house, while others are confined to the central section of the façade. There are the two-storey columns supporting not one but two separate porches, one above the other. There are two-storey porches with a separate set of columns at each level. There are porches with



Frank Furness designed this unusual recessed corner entry in Philadelphia with battered piers and short Gothic columns in High Victorian style.

**LEFT:** Louisville's Conrad House illustrates the decorated massiveness of the Romanesque Revival, especially its porch with squat columns and round arches.



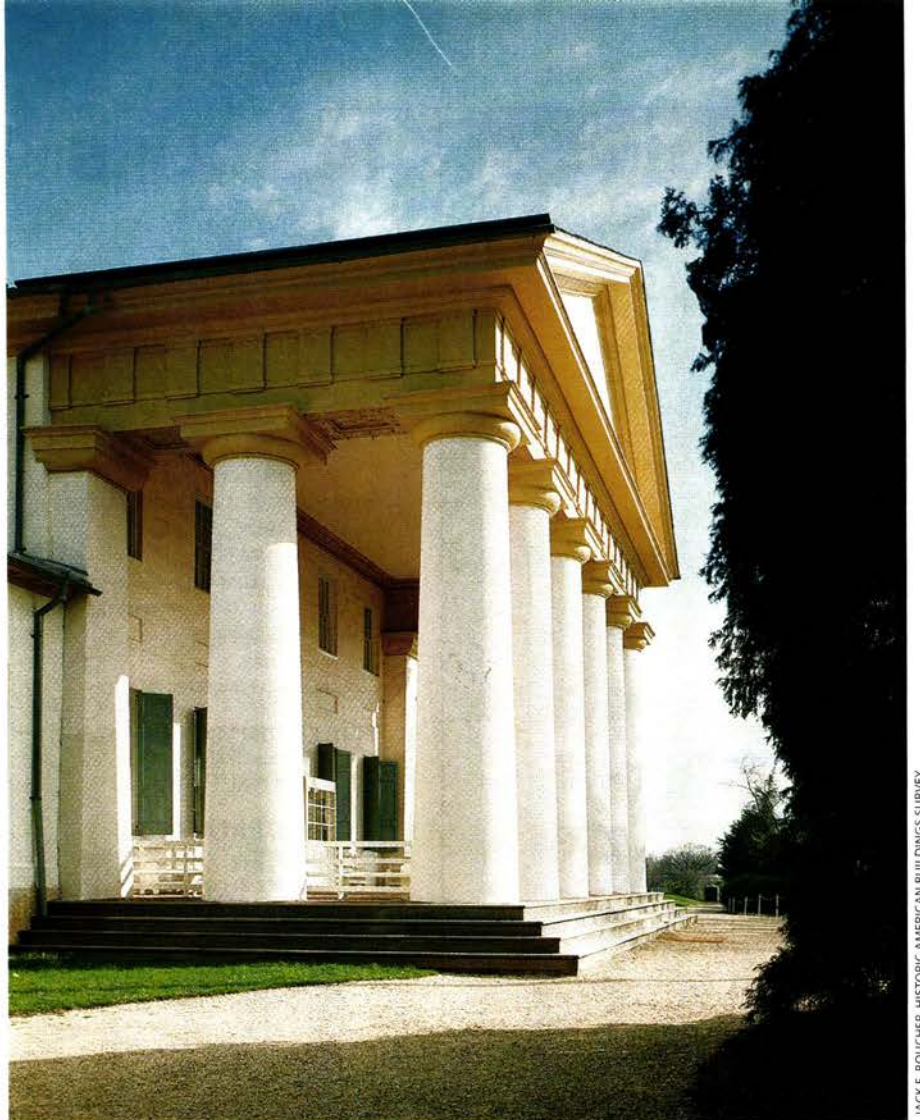
By the 1850s, Gothic Revival designers could use very slender columns, made possible by cast iron, as in this porch at Rockwood in Wilmington, Delaware.

colossal columns and a second-storey balcony tucked within the main porch. Some porticos may extend around two or more sides of the house (called peripteral porticos, if you want to get technical). In other words, the antebellum householder could hardly get too much of a good thing when it came to columns.

Column materials vary widely. Wood is the most common, often faux-finished to imitate stone. Brick covered with plaster or stucco and similarly painted is a sturdy runner-up. In the grandest instances, such as the great Beaux-Arts mansions of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the columns may be real stone—granite, limestone, or marble. Cast iron makes up the strong, slender columns found on many Gothic Revival houses, and ornate capitals and other decorations placed high up on late 19th and early 20th century buildings are often made of sheet metal, a lightweight fool-the-eye way to avoid getting hit on the head by chunks of stone. Even on masonry or wood columns, the capital might be pressed tin. In the modern era, fiberglass or cast aluminum columns often adorn even very pricey McMansions.

At some point, of course, a column-like member is too unimposing to be called a column at all, at which point it is simply a post. Almost always useful, a post may also be quite decorative, like many Victorian-era lathe-turned or chamfered porch posts and spindles. However, a post lacks the essential qualities of the column—the base, shaft, and capital—and it is more functional than impressive.

In the 1940s and '50s, the ascendancy of the Modern style, with its strong anti-decoration bias, sent the column into a decline—but not for long. Look around any growing area and you'll notice that the column is with us again, both in post-Modern houses (many of which sport only a lone column) and in neo-traditional styles. Rather than fading away, it's clear the column was just enjoying a brief timeout, a few decades of rest before getting back into stride in time for the 21st century. 🏡



The Custis-Lee Mansion overlooks Arlington National Cemetery and Washington from these massive Doric-order columns. Designed by George Hadfield in 1818, it is an early example of the Greek Revival style soon to spread to columns across the nation.



At the 1828 Edmonston-Alston House, the three-storey stack of classical-columned piazzas is on the side rather than the front, in the fashion of Charleston.

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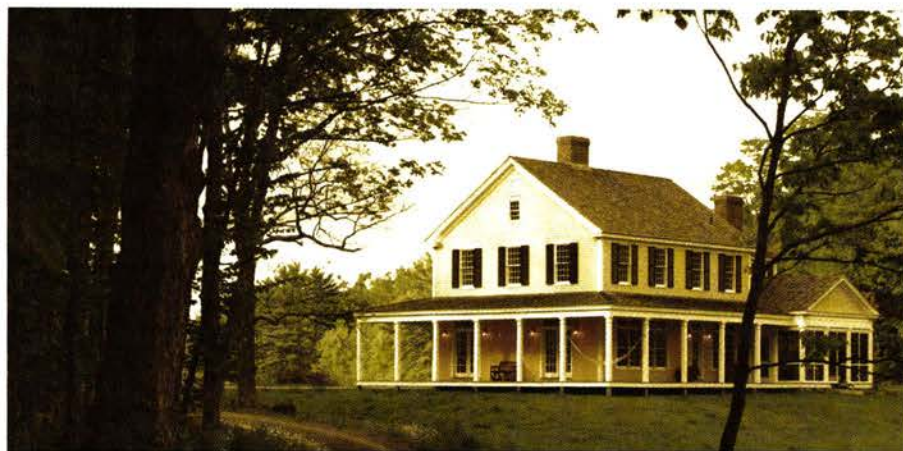
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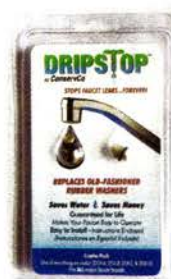
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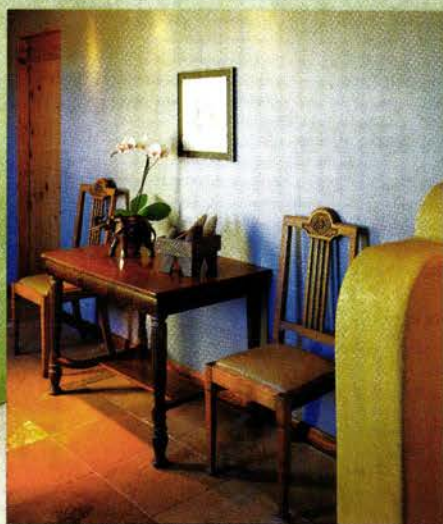
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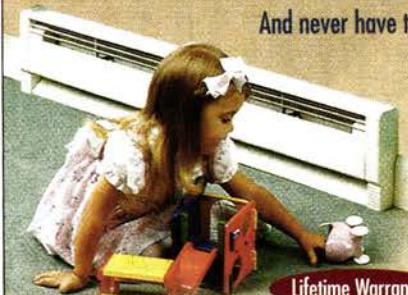
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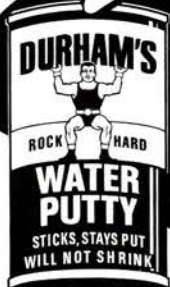
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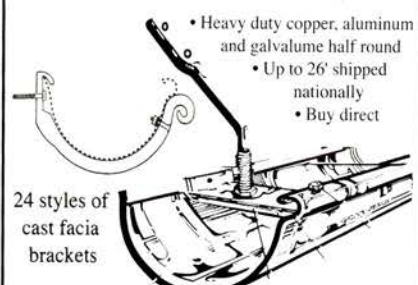


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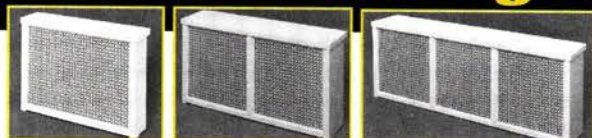
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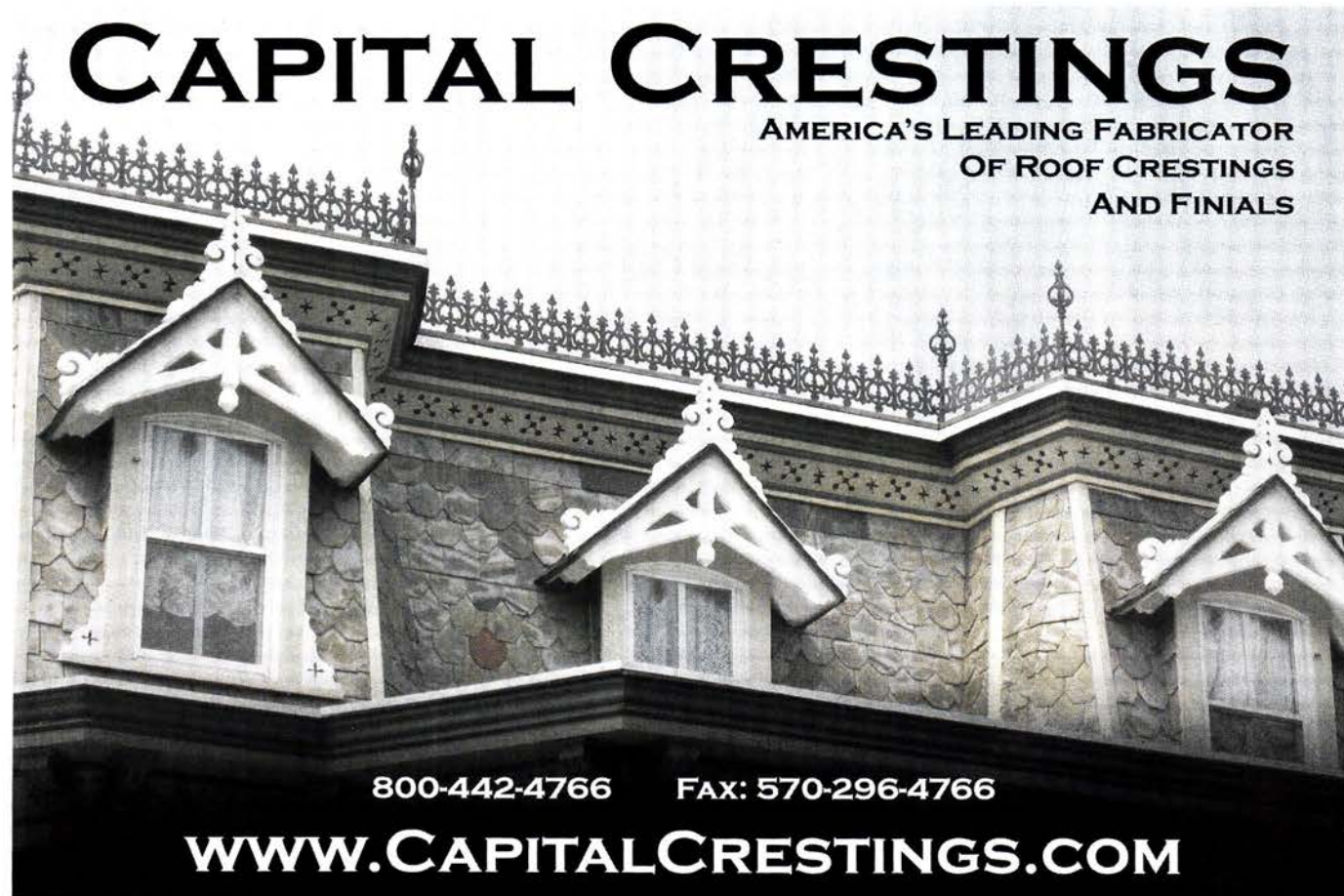
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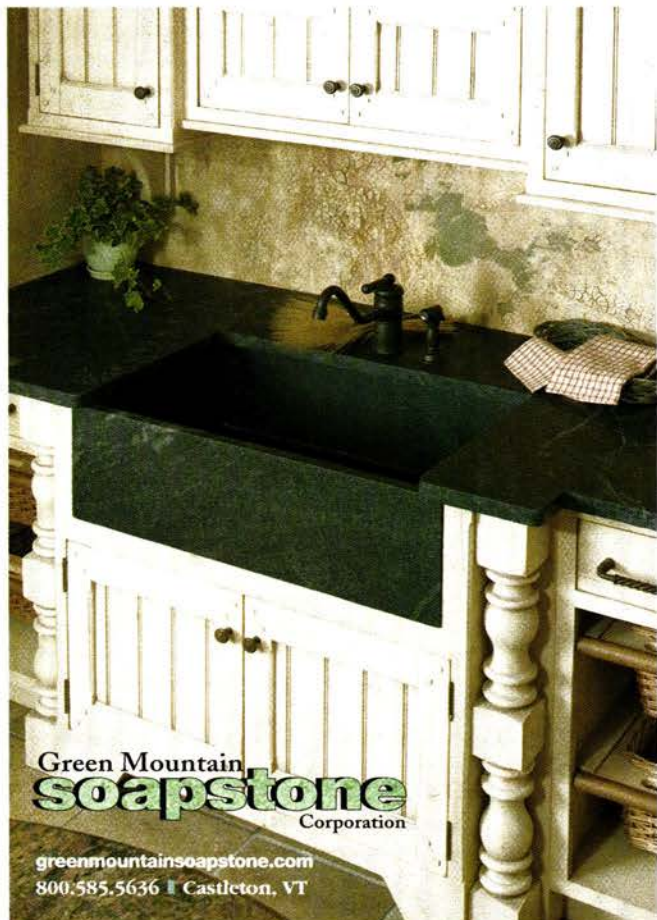


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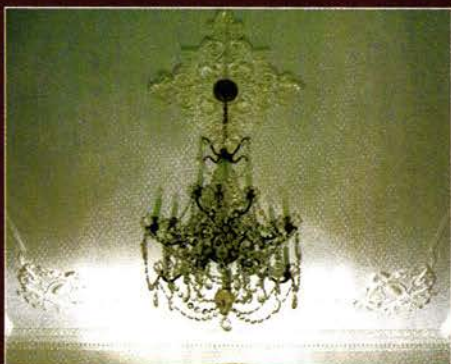


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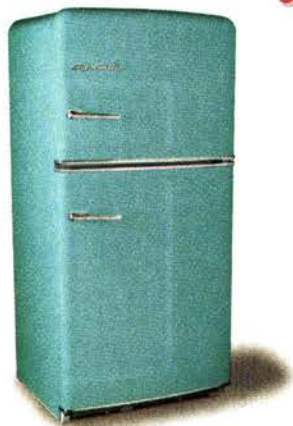
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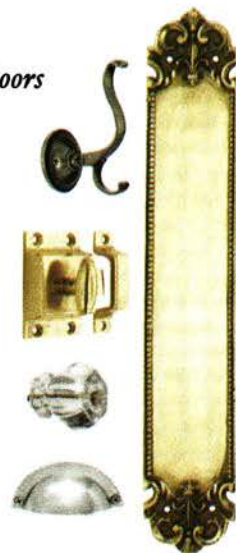
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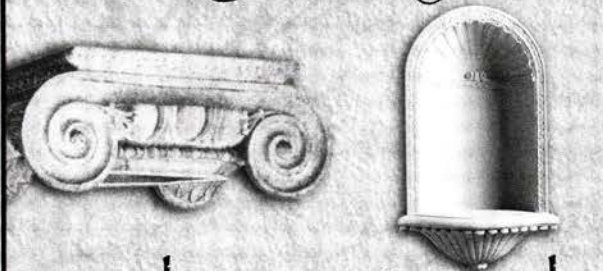
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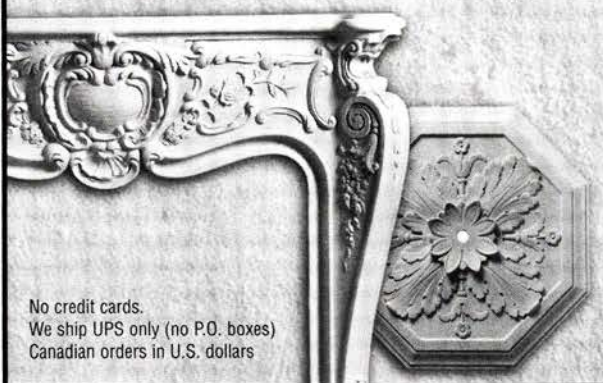
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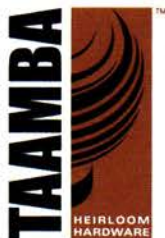
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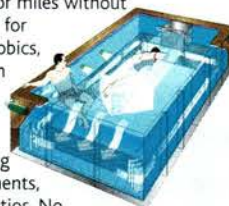
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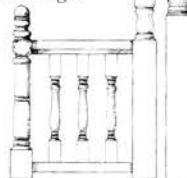
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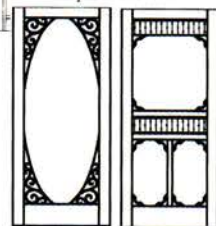
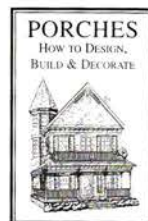
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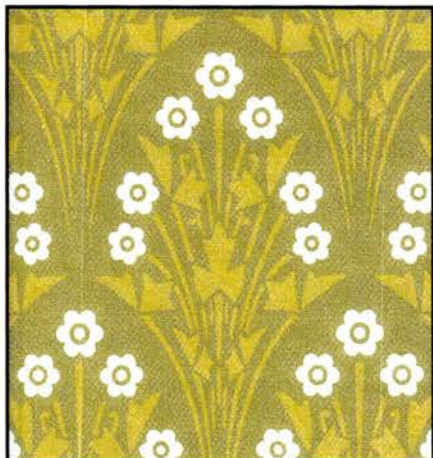
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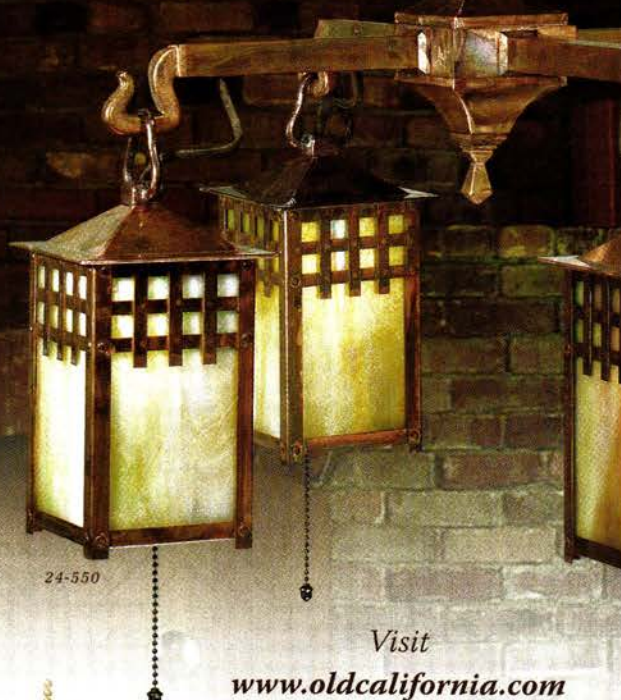
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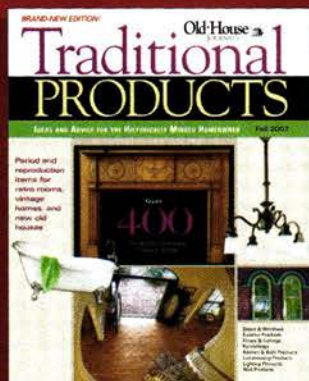
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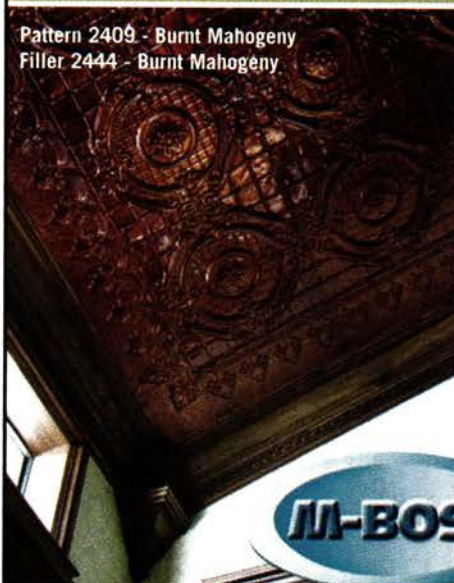
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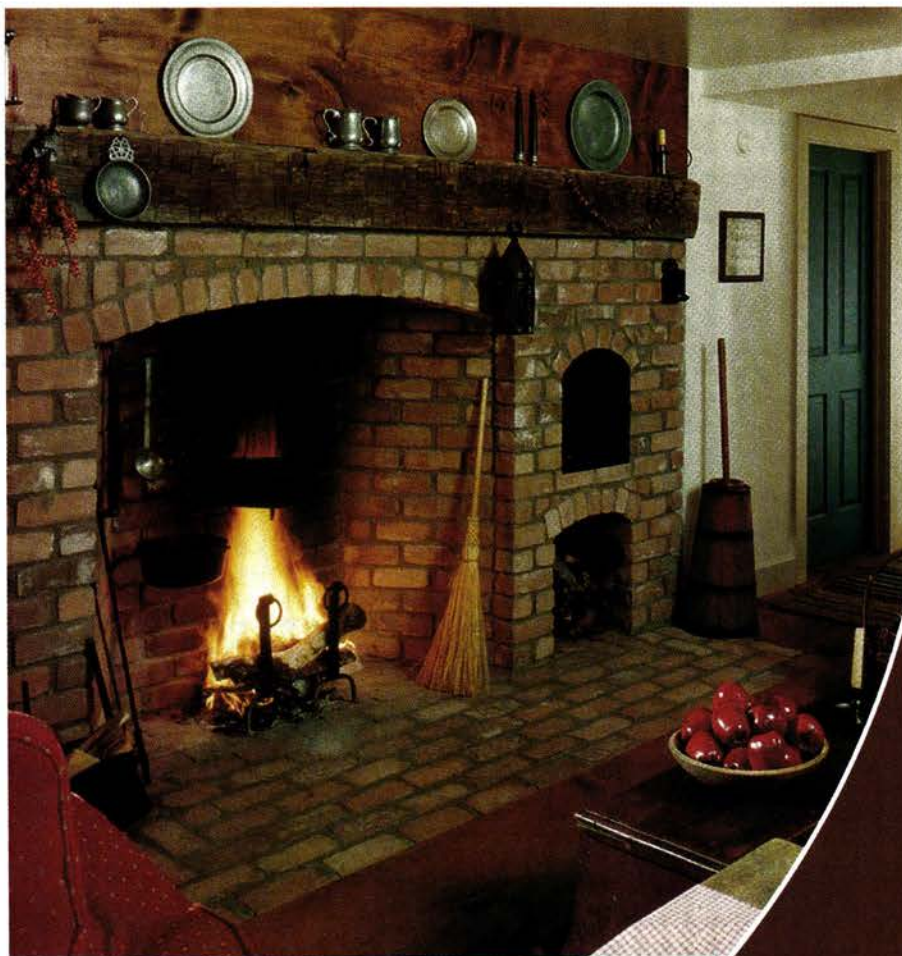


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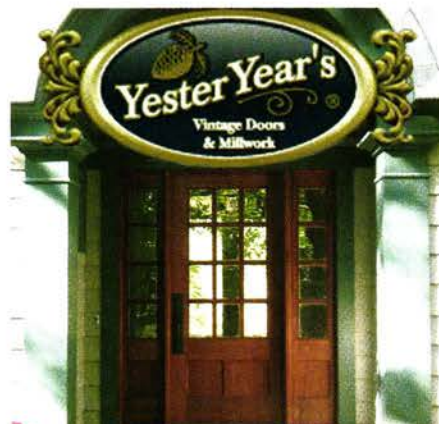
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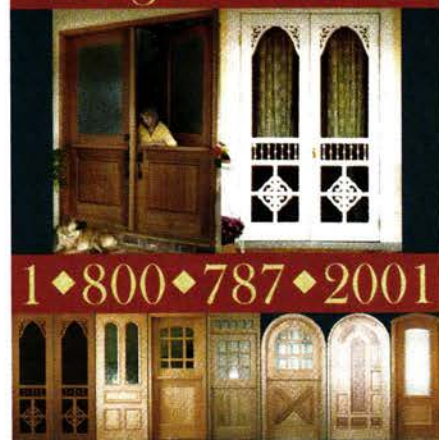
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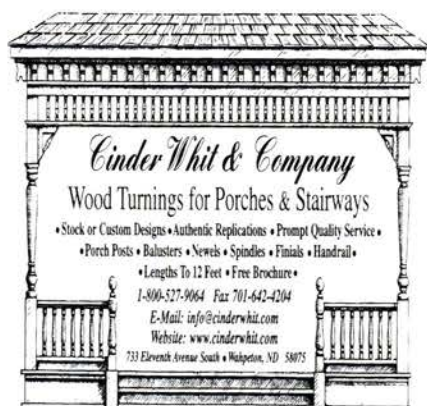
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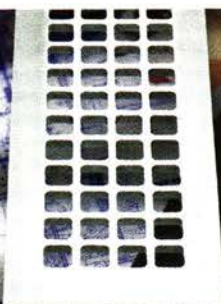
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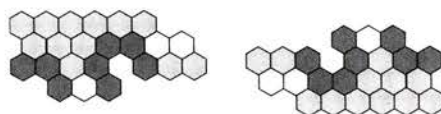


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<b>The Iron Shop</b> <i>See our ad on page 72</i> The leading manufacturer of spiral stair kits since 1931. Free color catalog. 800-523-7427, ext. OHJ; <a href="http://www.TheIronShop.com">www.TheIronShop.com</a> .	340	<b>M-Boss, Inc.</b> <i>See our ads on page 73, 91, Inside Back Cover</i> Period-inspired pressed metal panels, cornice and moldings. Easy installation. Free literature. 888-MBOSSINC; <a href="http://www.mbossinc.com">www.mbossinc.com</a> .	342		
		<b>Monarch Products Co.</b> <i>See our ad on page 92</i> Stock and custom radiator covers. \$1.00 literature. 201-507-5551; <a href="http://www.monarchcovers.com">www.monarchcovers.com</a> .	255		

# Product Literature

[www.oldhousejournal.com/lit/](http://www.oldhousejournal.com/lit/)

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<b>Renaissance Antique Lighting</b> <i>See our ad on page 70</i> Antique & reproduction lighting & hardware. Restoration, replacement glass, custom work, residential, commercial, museum. 800-850-8515		<b>Superior Moulding</b> <i>See our ad on page 75</i>	256	<b>Vintage Fans</b> <i>See our ad on page 90</i> Authentic antique & vintage ceiling, desk bracket & pedestal fans from the 1890s-1950s. Premium restorations, repairs, parts & research available. Free literature. 817-431-6647; <a href="http://www.vintagefans.com">www.vintagefans.com</a> .	407
<b>Schoolhouse Electric</b> <i>See our ad on page 6</i>	400	<b>Sutherland Welles</b> <i>See our ad on page 11</i> Polymerized Tung Oil finishes for any wood or porous stone. Restoration stains. Lowest toxicity possible. Create hand-rubbed "old world" patina. \$7.00 literature. 800-322-1245; <a href="http://www.tungoilfinish.com">www.tungoilfinish.com</a> .	522	<b>Vintage Hardware</b> <i>See our ad on page 70</i>	410
<b>Shaker Workshops</b> <i>See our ad on page 91</i> Reproduction shaker furniture. Free literature. 800-840-9121; <a href="http://www.shaker-workshops.com">www.shaker-workshops.com</a> .	257	<b>Taamba Heriloom Hardware</b> <i>See our ad on page 87</i> Taamba manufactures and distributes high end decorative hardware made of solid brass and bronze. From hooks to hinges we have your hardware needs covered. 866-822-6223.	428	<b>Vintage Woodworks</b> <i>See our ad on page 87</i> Vast array of brackets, corbels, gable decorations, mouldings, porch parts, screen doors & more. Free literature. 903-356-2158; <a href="http://www.vintagewoodworks.com">www.vintagewoodworks.com</a> .	209
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<b>Signature Hardware</b> <i>See our ads on page 73, 86</i> Signature Hardware is a direct merchant of antique-style reproduction fixtures for the home. Free Catalog. <a href="http://www.signaturehardware.com">www.signaturehardware.com</a> .	596	<b>Touchstone Woodworks</b> <i>See our ad on page 93</i> Screen storm doors. \$3 literature. 330-297-1313; <a href="http://www.touchstonewoodworks.com">www.touchstonewoodworks.com</a>	587	<b>Wedge Hardwood Products</b> <i>See our ad on page 89</i>	425
<b>Southern Wood Floors</b> <i>See our ad on page 5</i> Harvests buildings, not trees, to make Antique Heart Pine. Historic wood, meticulously milled for floors, walls, and cabinet stock. Free literature. 888-488-PINE; <a href="http://www.southernwoodfloors.com">www.southernwoodfloors.com</a> .	541	<b>Traditional Building Exhibition and Conference</b> <i>See our ad on page 20</i>		<b>WindsorOne</b> <i>See our ad on page 23</i>	
<b>Specification Chemicals</b> <i>See our ad on page 90</i> An easy "do it yourself," affordable and long lasting system for repairing cracked plaster walls and ceilings. Free literature. 800-247-3932; <a href="http://www.nu-wal.com">www.nu-wal.com</a> .	108	<b>UnicoSystem</b> <i>See our ad on page 78</i> The mini-duct heating and cooling system. Free literature. 800-527-0896	207	<b>Woodstock Soapstone</b> <i>See our ads on page 73, 87</i> Enjoy natural radiant heat from America's most beautiful wood and gas stoves. Whole house heating power; beautiful fire; no power required. 888-664-8188	
<b>Stairways, Inc.</b> <i>See our ad on page 88</i> Manufacturers of spiral stairs in wood, metal, stainless steel, aluminum, and brass. Stock or custom-built to any size. Quality selection and competitive prices. Shipped worldwide. Free brochure. Free literature. 800-231-0793	588	<b>Van Dykes</b> <i>See our ad on page 19</i> Give your home period appeal! Thousands of items geared toward vintage home and antique restoration or new construction. Free literature. 800-558-1234	195	<b>YesterYear's Vintage Doors &amp; Millwork</b> <i>See our ad on page 92</i> Solid wood doors. Victorian, screen/storm, interior, and exterior doors. Free literature. 800-787-2001; <a href="http://www.vintagedoors.com">www.vintagedoors.com</a> .	336
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<b>Sundial Wire</b> <i>See our ad on page 87</i> Free literature.	261	<b>Vintage Brick Salvage</b> <i>See our ad on page 80</i> Thin brick tile for walls and floors made from real reclaimed antique brick. Free literature. 800-846-8243; <a href="http://www.bricksalvage.com">www.bricksalvage.com</a> .	393		
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# Swaps & Sales—Historic Properties

## SPOTLIGHT HOUSE



**ST. JOSEPH, MO**—Famous for History! S.I. Motter House designed by EJ Eckel in 1891. This beautifully renovated Queen Anne features 3 stories with 6 bedrooms, 3 & 1/2 baths, 8 fireplaces, newer mechanicals, original woodwork, leaded windows, large corner lot, and a two-story carriage house converted to residential. Located in Harris Addition Historic District. 30 minutes from KCI. For more information contact Lisa Rock, Re/Max Inc., St. Joseph, MO, 800-765-3781 or 816-262-8462, Lgkid@magiccablepc.com.

## SPOTLIGHT HOUSE



**HOOD RIVER, OR**—1905 Craftsman, 3 secluded acres, breathtaking views of Mt. Hood & Mt. Adams. Fully restored, quartersawn oak and clear vertical grain fir throughout. 9 foot coffered ceilings, moldings, picture rails, built-ins—the works! 2 gas fireplaces. Restored kitchen, floor to ceiling quartersawn oak cabinets, granite. 4,000+ square feet, 4+ bedrooms, 2.5 baths. Beautifully landscaped, 3-storey barn, outbuildings and year around creek. \$995,000. Adjacent 25 acre homesite available. [www.hoodriver1905craftsman.com](http://www.hoodriver1905craftsman.com), 541-386-5785.

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Email or call for prices for *Historic Properties* advertising  
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**MONROVIA, CA**—Historic Queen Anne farmhouse in Old Town. 4 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, front porch with spindled frieze and guilloche design. New plaster walls & ceilings, magnificent Eastlake staircase. Huge master closet from converted attic space. Original mouldings and hardware. Remodeled kitchen & baths, formal dining room w/built-ins. New copper plumbing, dual-zone A/C and foundations. Guesthouse. \$899,000. Donna Baker, Dickson Podley REALTORS, 626-487-0820.



**NEVADA CITY, CA**—Authentic antique home, meticulously preserved. Irreplaceable 1902 Victorian sits quietly atop Broad Street in an historic gold mining town, at the heart of Gold Rush Country. Elegant gas & electric fixtures, hand-carved woodwork, original fretwork, windows, and hardware enhance the elegance of this home. 3,700 sq.ft., 2 levels plus attic on ¼ acre. Lee Good, Good & Company Realty, 530-265-5872 or [www.goodrealty.com](http://www.goodrealty.com)



**LOUISVILLE, KY**—This circa 1901 Queen Anne Victorian is located on land known as Fort Elstner during the Civil War. Offering over 2,800 sq.ft. 4-5 bedrooms, 2 full baths, incredible millwork & architectural details. Lovingly restored to offer the best of Old World charm gracefully blended w/modern conveniences. Approximately ¼ acre lot w/2-car carriage house. \$350,000. Michael Mawood, RE/MAX Connections, 502-445-6914. Details at [www.Obeo.com/390027](http://www.Obeo.com/390027)

## SPOTLIGHT HOUSE



**Round Rock, TX**—Own an office on the historic Chisholm Trail. Zoned commercial. Three buildings; 2,700 square feet. Two buildings, circa 1850 and 1870, on National Historic Register, 18-inch stone walls, new roofs with rainwater collection, 3 half baths, 3 kitchenettes, 3 fireplaces, long leaf pine floors. 1835 hand-hewn log cabin with fireplace. Beautiful gardens with greenhouse and gazebo on 3/8 acre; cobblestone drive; 1915 Aermotor windmill. Perfect country office in a thriving high-tech city. \$1,250,000. Brenda Rhea and Larry Brown, 512-585-5822, [fitzrhea@earthlink.net](mailto:fitzrhea@earthlink.net).



**VENTURA, CA**—Restored Early 1900s Craftsman 2 story bungalow with oriental influence. 4 bedrooms, 2.5 baths. Incredible gourmet kitchen, woodwork, crown moldings, hardwood floors, and beautiful inlaid fireplace. Green and natural materials utilized. Drought tolerant landscaping. Some ocean views from upper level. Walk to beach and downtown. Potential historic Mills Act designation for tax benefits. \$1,300,000. Fred Evans; RE/MAX Gold Coast; 805-339-3502; [www.fredevents.com](http://www.fredevents.com)



**DECATUR, IL**—Grand old Victorian looking for owner occupant to renovate it to original beauty. 3,460 sq.ft. Currently divided into 8 units. In historical district undergoing a lot of restoration and revitalization. Offered at a price where the sweat equity would yield dollars. Owned by NWRAPS, a not-for-profit neighborhood organization. Deed restrictions. \$20,000. Near Westside Restoration & Preservation Society. 217-520-6369. View on [HistoricProperties.com](http://HistoricProperties.com)



**LOUISVILLE, KY**—Wonderfully renovated Circa 1900 Colonial Revival. 4700 sq.ft. w/5-6 bedrooms & 4 full baths. Nestled on a gorgeous court, which was the home of the Southern Exposition in the late 1800's, now known as St. James Ct. in the Old Louisville area, which offers the largest grouping of brick Victorians in the U.S. \$550,000. Michael Mawood, RE/MAX Connections, 502-445-6914. Details at [www.Obeo.com/308604](http://www.Obeo.com/308604)



**EAST NEW MARKET, MD**—Edmondson House—a grand 1790 brick colonial on 1.7 park like acres in Dorchester County MD on the Eastern Shore of Chesapeake Bay. Located in the East New Market Historic District; in state historic inventory with extensive documentation. 3-5 bedrooms, 2 baths, 5 fireplaces. \$849,000. Contact Skip Roper at Advance Realty cell 410-533-3503, office 410-761-1550. [www.EdmondsonHouse.net](http://www.EdmondsonHouse.net)

## SPOTLIGHT HOUSE



**CAROLINE COUNTY, VA**—Bowling Green Farm, circa 1741, is one of the oldest, original homes in Virginia. Nestled among 126 acres, this pre-Georgian brick colonial boasts 5 bedrooms, 4 baths, 9 fireplaces & 2 forty-foot porches. Magnificent 2-acre front lawn lined with ancient cedar trees, beautiful 265-year old English boxwoods, colonial garden terraces, plus pastures & woods. Located just 1 hour from Washington Beltway, 40 minutes from Richmond & 10 minutes off I-95. Frank Hardy, Inc. Realtors, [www.farmandestate.com](http://www.farmandestate.com), 434-296-0134



**ELKRIDGE, MD**—Hursely Manor, circa 1851. Perfect combination of formal and casual living in this 5,500+ sq.ft. lovingly maintained Victorian home. Gorgeous 3+ acre, estate-style setting with detached garages, studio/office, greenhouse, and in-ground pool. Formal parlors, banquet-sized dining room, enormous kitchen, breakfast/sunroom, front/rear stairways, 5-6 bedroom suites, updated home systems including dual-zone HVAC. Much more! Kimberly Kepnes, CBRB, 443-250-4241 cell/410-461-7600 office or [www.kimberlykhomes.com](http://www.kimberlykhomes.com)



**CHILLICOTHE, MO**—1912 Colonial. Spacious home features 4 bedrooms, 1½ baths, hardwood floors, wood-burning fireplace, pocket doors, high ceilings, patio & more. Double carport. \$79,900. United Country - 800-999-1020, Ext. 108. [www.unitedcountry.com/old](http://www.unitedcountry.com/old). *American Treasures*—a Full Color magazine of older and historic properties for sale. Just \$5.95.



**VICKSBURG, MS**—Absolutely gorgeous and unique property! Early 1900s home with a history situated in beautiful country setting on 9.3 acres. 5 bedrooms, 4.5 baths, 3,750 sq. ft. main house and 1,031 sq. ft. guesthouse. Extensively renovated. 3-car garage, swimming pool, terrace. Fabulous landscape resembles an English country garden. It will take your breath away!! \$589,000. Pam Beard Powers, BrokerSouth Properties, 888-447-8791, [www.LiveInTheSouth.com](http://www.LiveInTheSouth.com)



**FAYETTEVILLE, NC**—1920s French Provincial with over 5,000 sq.ft. of living area and a 1,400 sq.ft. guesthouse. 2.75 acres in town. 4 bedrooms. 3 full and 2 half baths. Formal & family dining. African mahogany paneled study. Solarium & screened garden room. Slate patio. 3-car garage. Beautifully landscaped grounds. \$1,800,000. Nancy Haithcock, Townsend Real Estate, 800-504-7653(SOLD) or 910-391-5421 cell. [www.nancyhaithcock.com](http://www.nancyhaithcock.com)



**WADE, NC**—Wonderful turn of the century home on 33 acres in central NC. Great road frontage. Six-stall horse barn. Two-acre pond site. 3,200 sq.ft. with ten rooms and fireplaces. 5 bedrooms, parlor, formal dining, den & breakfast room. Heart pine floors. Beautiful country setting, but only 7 miles to an interstate. \$650,000. Nancy Haithcock, Townsend Real Estate, 800-504-7653(SOLD) or 910-391-5421 cell. [www.nancyhaithcock.com](http://www.nancyhaithcock.com)



**AMHERST, NH**—One of Amherst's oldest homes dating to 1740. Charming center chimney Colonial with huge detached barn. On 3.5 acres perfect for horses. Wonderful original features including 4 fireplaces, wide plank floors and original wall paintings. 5 bedrooms and 2.5 baths. Quiet country road minutes from the Village. Close to Souhegan Woods Golf Course. \$549,000. David Deysher, Historic & Distinctive Properties, 603-485-8300. [www.historicprop.com](http://www.historicprop.com)



**DENNISVILLE, NJ**—This Greek Revival/Italianate circa 1855 restored home is listed on State and National Registers of Historic places. Offering hunting and fishing on 16+ acres overlooking the only trout-stocked lake in South Jersey. Pristine, extra large rooms, with 10' ceilings, original crown molding/medallions and hardwood floors. Abounds in local history. \$645,000. Leigh Ann Fazen, Coldwell Banker Otton, 609-780-7113 or [lfazen@comcast.net](mailto:lfazen@comcast.net)



**LITTLE RIVER, SC**—Coastal Victorian – Restored circa 1848 home features 4 bedrooms, 3 baths, 12-ft ceilings, cypress floors, deck viewing ICW & more. Studio/shop where George Washington's horse slept in 1791! Professional landscaping & moss laden oaks. Antique furniture & appliances included. \$599,000. United Country, 800-999-1020, Ext. 108. [www.unitedcountry.com/old](http://www.unitedcountry.com/old). *American Treasures*—a Full Color magazine of older and historic properties for sale. Just \$5.95.



**NASHVILLE, TN**—Beautiful historic Romanesque Revival church located on 819 Russell Street. Large stained glass windows and soaring ceilings in the sanctuary. Church benches to remain. Currently being used as a church; price includes parking lot across street on corner. \$1,295,000. Karen Hoff, Broker, CRS, Historic and Distinctive Homes, 615-228-3723 ext. 22. [www.HistoricTN.com](http://www.HistoricTN.com)



**FREDERICKSBURG, VA**—"Braehead" circa 1859. Lee had breakfast here the morning of the battle. Grand Greek Revival w/6,000+ sq. ft. on private 18.88 acres w/National Park on three sides. Minutes from DC commuter train. 8 fireplaces. 7 baths. 8 bedrooms. Two kitchens. Marbleized woodwork in public rooms, heartpine floors, pocket doors. 11' ceilings. Conveys w/historic easement. \$1,100,000. Dave Johnston, "The Old House Man"® 804-633-7123. [AntiqueProperties.com](http://AntiqueProperties.com)

## SPOTLIGHT HOUSE



**NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY, VA**—West End. Own a part of early Virginia history. Circa 1790 Manor home of Flemish bond. Impeccably restored, it boasts 21st century amenities while maintaining its integrity. 32+/- acres including formal gardens w/fountain. Close to marinas and Chesapeake Bay. Spectacular views. Grand living and dining rooms, library, gourmet kitchen, morning room, breakfast room, tavern room, and eight fireplaces. Master bedroom w/lavish bath, four additional bedrooms and three baths. Guesthouse. Dependencies. \$3,200,000. Jane Ludwig, Bay Meadows Real Estate, 804-436-6341 (cell) or 804-435-0140



**NASHVILLE, TN**—Three stories of living space! Original inlaid floors, oak carved staircase, 18-inch thick brick walls, custom stained glass, built-in china press, granite counters, custom kitchen with Viking stove. 4700+ sq.ft., 4 bedrooms, 3 full and 1 half baths. For \$250,000, 3 more lots & gardens can be purchased! \$1,250,000. Karen Hoff, Broker, Historic and Distinctive Homes, 615-228-3723 ext. 22, [www.HistoricTN.com](http://www.HistoricTN.com)



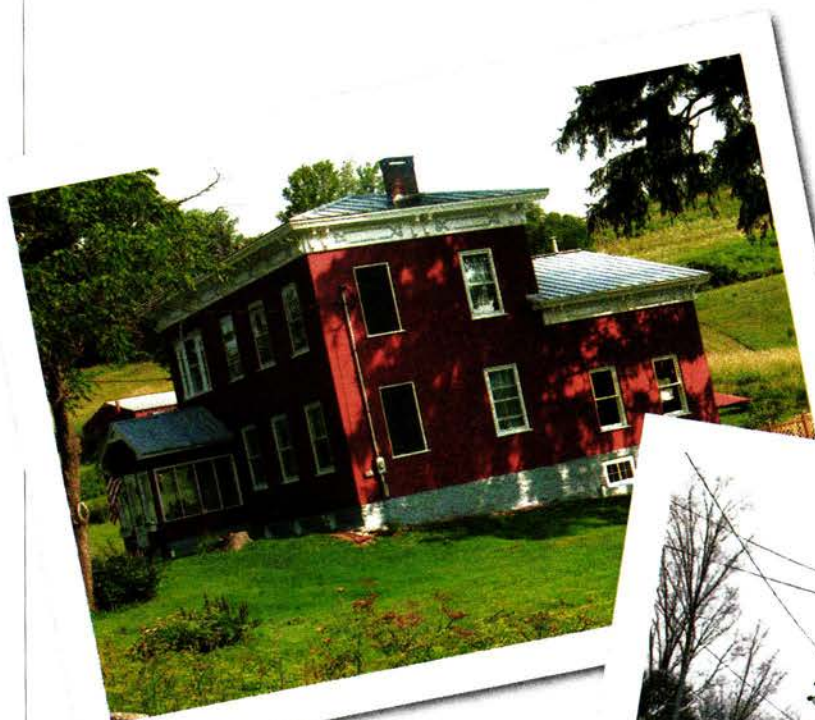
**KEYSVILLE, VA**—The Love Plantation. Brick 2,582 sq.ft. 1904 Colonial Revival is nestled on 40.7 acres with large pond. House has totally been upgraded without original details being compromised. Hardwood floors have been refinished and newly painted inside and out. Several outbuildings. Two enclosed porches. Well suited for horses. Central heat & air. A very special property. \$449,000. Antique Properties, Max Sempowski, 434-391-4855. [www.oldhouseproperties.com](http://www.oldhouseproperties.com)



**CHESTERFIELD COUNTY, VA**—The Ragland House circa 1910. Located in Chesterfield County just 20 minutes from Downtown Richmond on over 5 acres of manicured park-like grounds. Built for Dr. John Ragland, a local physician and state lawmaker, the architecture combines both the Queen Anne and Georgian Revival styles, 90% original integrity remains. Stunning mouldings and woodwork. Deborah James Dendler, RE/MAX Commonwealth Group, 804-402-8662. [VirginiaAntiqueRealEstate.com](http://VirginiaAntiqueRealEstate.com)



**KEYSVILLE, VA**—The Gaulding House. Grand Queen Anne 3,149 sq. ft. Circa 1905 with wraparound porch, original moldings, mantels, hardware and mostly hardwood floors. 5 bedrooms, 3.5 baths. A very well kept home including two staircases. Beautifully landscaped with mature trees. Patio. Heat pump second floor. Hot water baseboard heat first floor. A real gem. Central heat and air. In town. \$199,900. Max Sempowski, Antique Properties, 434-391-4855. [www.oldhouseproperties.com](http://www.oldhouseproperties.com)



## Changes at the Top

Like a corporation, old houses can change radically when there's a shift at the upper levels. Take these two Italianate houses. Both started out with two storeys, bracketed cornices, and hipped roofs. One house (top) still follows its original business plan. The other (bottom), as if in the process of a merger, is buried in the acquisition of multi-level gables that seem to fight for attention like a group of newly crowned vice presidents.

"I'm afraid to go back and see the finished project," says our contributor. It appears that while changes at the top often increase stock market value—or in this case square footage—in the long term they may not add up to an attractive investment. 🏠

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