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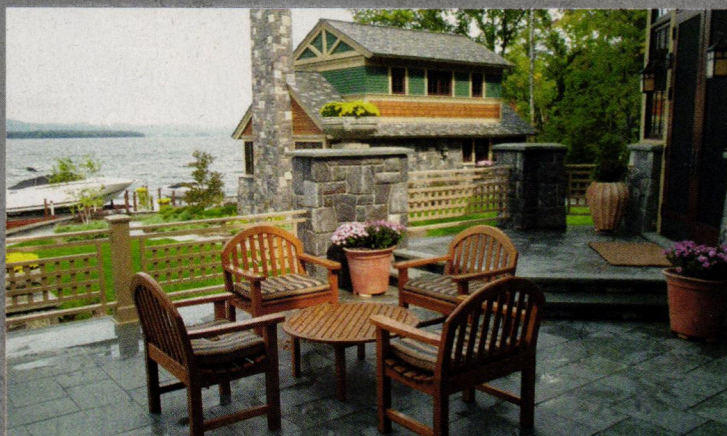
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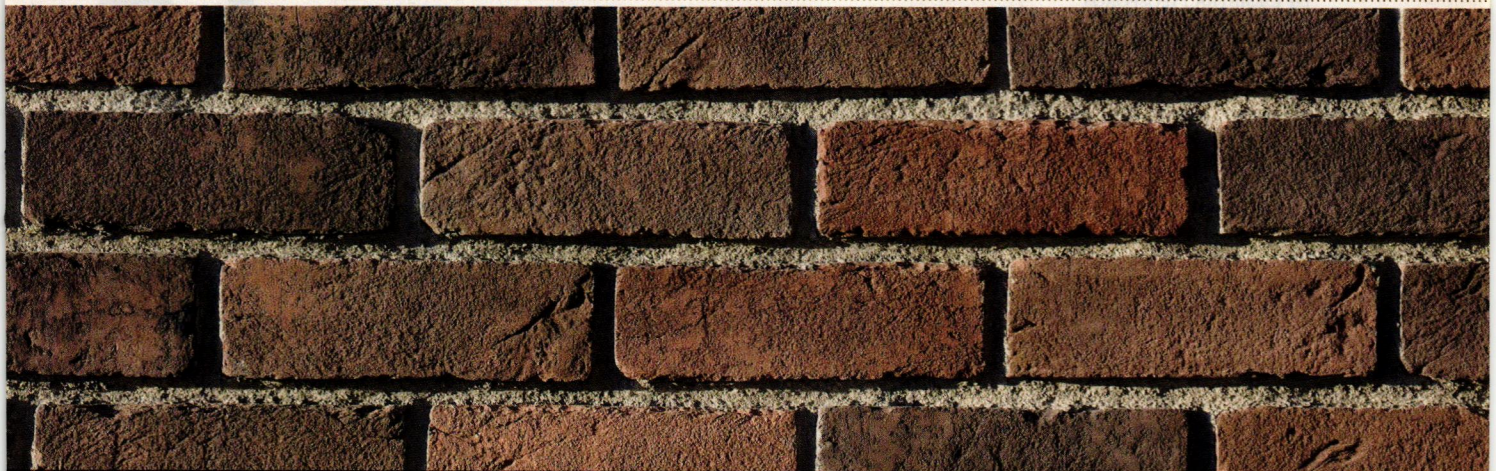
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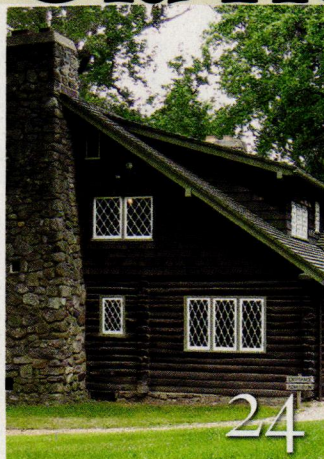
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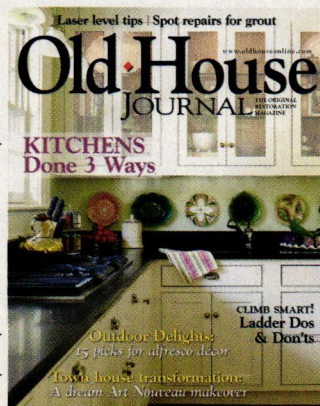
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Cover: Photo by Gridley + Graves. A renewed kitchen in a circa 1800 house blends turn-of-the-century details with modern amenities.
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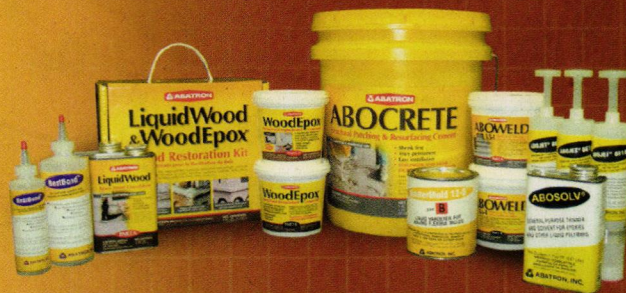
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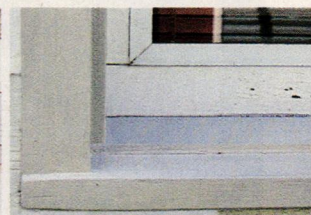


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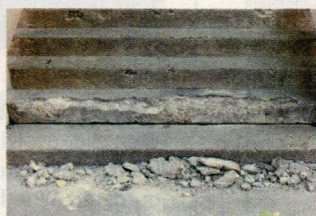
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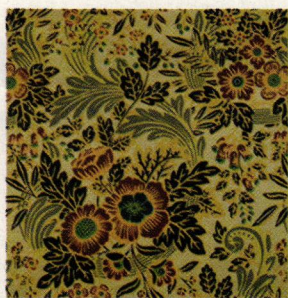


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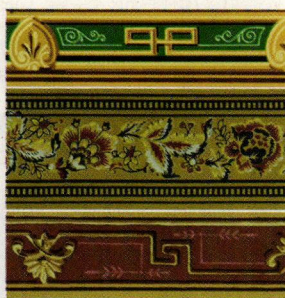
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Kitchen Ideas Galore

With ever-evolving technology and tastes, it's no wonder kitchens are a frequent target for updates that quickly feel outdated. Whether yours needs a complete period retrofit or just a minimal makeover, we've got tons of ideas for blending modern amenities with period touches. Start with the three kitchens profiled on page 44, then check out even more great strategies in our online photo gallery.

Small-Town Tour

The tiny town of Waterford, Virginia, is a rare unspoiled slice of vintage Americana. Part of the reason it maintains its 18th-century charm today is because of its band of history-loving citizens (including Cornelia "Neil" Keller, who saved the eclectic home profiled on page 26). Come along on a tour of Waterford's bucolic streets, and learn the secrets behind this well-preserved community.

Notes on a Farm Garden

When creating the lush-but-simple farm garden profiled on page 16, screening the house from undesirable views was a major challenge for landscape designer Laura Kuhn. While you might not need to hide a tractor or a manure pile, her recommendations for which plants to use and how to use them could help you block out a nosy neighbor. Log on to download the chart.

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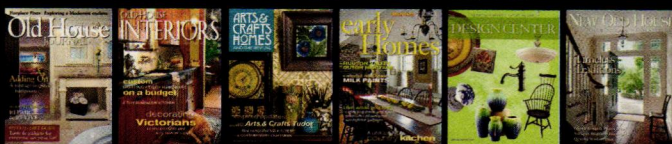


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editor's note

Safe and Sound



THE FIRST OLD-HOUSE MYSTERY in our new digs began in the morning, with a musky, animal smell in the library. I blamed our dog at first, but as I investigated this possibility, it appeared she was not guilty. What, then, could account for the strange odor? I soon figured out, as I heard rustling and a chewing sound above my head, that something was in the rafters between the first and second floors. This prompted me to thoroughly investigate the garage attic for any evidence of critters or an entry point to the house. (I went armed with my trusty, now-vindicated dog and a broom.) I couldn't find anything there. Next, I did what

any self-respecting old-house nut would do—pulled out the ladder to search for cornice holes, missing screens over gable vents, or punky wood that could account for an entry point. Luckily, I'd just finished editing Mark Clement's ladder safety story—otherwise I might have misused my 24' extension ladder and ended up in the emergency room, as so many folks do each year. While ladders are straightforward tools, don't assume you know everything you need to do to stay safe on them—take the time to read this pro's advice and ensure that you're following the best work practices (see "Steady Climb," page 38).

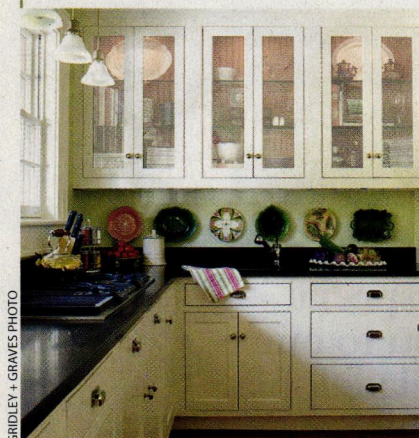
This issue marks our annual roundup of kitchen ideas. Since there are so many ways to tackle kitchens in old houses, we decided to visit three homeowners

who took very different approaches to these rooms, each perfectly reflecting the style and era of their houses—a simple 19th-century farmhouse, a woodwork-filled Arts & Crafts bungalow, and a streamlined mid-century ranch. You can learn about their decisions beginning on page 44 (see "Kitchen Strategies"). And just for fun, we're highlighting even more kitchen ideas online—including our cover kitchen, at left. Be sure to log onto oldhouseonline.com this month for more tips on combining timeless vintage features with modern amenities.

In the end, it's still a mystery as to what type of critter I heard rustling in the ceiling and how it came to be there—but I haven't

heard him again, either. I can only hope he's moved on to greener pastures, now that milder temps have returned.

Classic white cabinets with period hardware suit a range of old houses.



GRIDLEY + GRAVES PHOTO

A handwritten signature in black ink, likely belonging to Demetra Aposporos.

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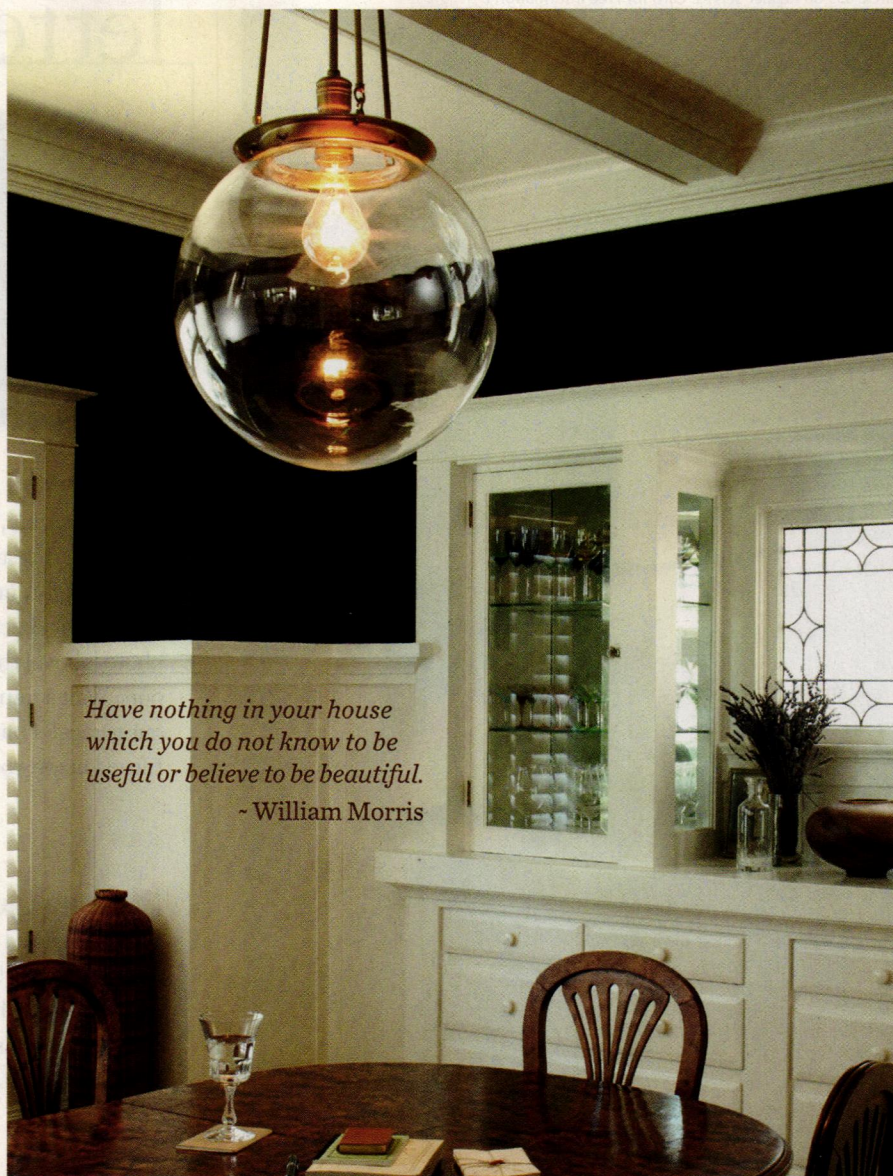
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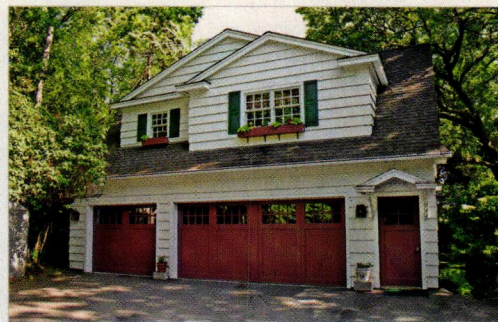


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letters



A Familiar Sight

Your magazine, my favorite old-house publication, arrived in the mail yesterday. I was paging through it before retiring for the night, and I paused at "The Garage Door Dilemma" [April/May] because I like interesting garage doors. I noted a photo [above] that had doors just like ours, on a garage just like ours. Wait a minute, I thought, that's not like our garage, that is our garage! Thank you; we're famous—and happy not to have turned up on your Remuddling page!

Judy Starkey
Wayzata, Minnesota

Burning Questions

While I enjoyed your article on gas lighting and how to electrify it ["What a Gas!," April/May], I looked in vain for information on where to find fittings—mantels or burners—that would give our two remaining gas sconces decent light rather than the blue flame they now produce.

Donald Weggeman
Los Angeles, California

We checked with lighting guru Paul Ivazes of Quality Lighting, who recommended going to gas-lights.com/burners.html. "This distributor has a wide variety of different types of burners and can accommodate just about every application needed for today's consumer," Paul says, adding that he also has a supply of old burners in his shop (qualitylighting.net). —Eds.

Once you electrify gas fixtures, how do you mount them? I've been told there are only two sizes of mounting nipples, and neither fits my gas pipe. I've also been told gas pipes are different from electrical threading, which rules out conventional mounting hardware.

Lynn S.
Via OldHouseOnline.com

According to Paul, "Gas fittings are very different than electrical fittings. The black iron pipe on the old gas fixtures is threaded with a taper called NPT (National Pipe Taper) and can only be used with

Reader Tip of the Month

To repair the clapboard siding on my 1883 home, I use the same cut nails that would have been used by the original builder. A #6 nail is the perfect size, and besides being a museum-quality restoration item, it has other advantages not always possessed by modern siding nails. Traditional cut nails are slow-rusting, nail flush with the siding surface, and don't split delicate (and expensive) 4" cedar clapboards. They hold snug, but are drawn out more easily than a lot of modern siding nails. I buy mine from Crown City Hardware, but I'm also able to reuse most of the original nails I take out. They straighten nicely with a few taps of the hammer, ready for more decades of service.

Tom Leonard
Grand Rapids, Michigan

Got a great tip to share with other old-house lovers? Let us know at OHJEditorial@homebuyerpubs.com.

the old gas lighting fixtures. For mounting old gas fixtures, it is very important to use NPT open or closed hickey that are designed for gas chandeliers and sconces. When you use new NPS (National Pipe Standard) open or closed hickey to mount gas fixtures with NPT fittings, there is a risk that the fixture can come loose or even fall down." *Quality Lighting also carries NPT hickey.* —Eds.

Nailing Down Details

"Fixing the Porch" [April/May] was another timely OHJ article to aid in the restoration of our 1892 Queen Anne Victorian. I would like a clarification of a statement on page 34 that the contractors "chose 5/4 (1" thick) vertical-grain Douglas fir." I've always thought 5/4 was 1 1/4"-thick stock, and have been searching for lumber with such dimensions. Also, when they finished the floor and cut the end boards to length, did the router leave a 90-degree finish, or was there a slight dome shape?

James McPherson
Via e-mail

It seems a typo crept onto page 34—it should have read 1 1/2"-thick, which is currently the standard size for 5/4 lumber, according to author Steve Jordan. He adds, "Old 5/4 was 1 1/4", but modern 5/4 is usually closer to 1 1/2" thick." As for cutting the deck boards, Steve says, "Ted cut a bullnose profile on the ends of the boards, which was a typical historical detail around here." —Eds.

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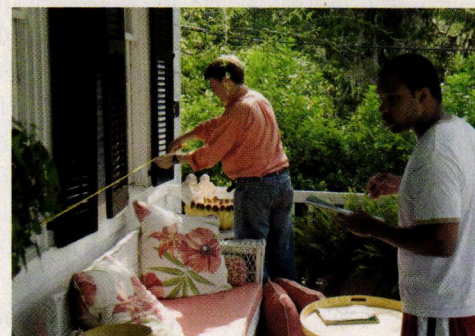
ON THE RADAR

Back to School

No kid wants to hear the words "summer" and "school" used in the same sentence, but for adults, summer vacation presents an ideal time to learn something new. For students at historic preservation field schools, that "something new" is an in-depth education in preserving old buildings.

Scattered across the country—and around the globe—these schools offer college students and members of the community hands-on lessons in professional-caliber historic preservation methods, from restoring wood windows to uncovering a building's age. "We're really teaching students the protocol of how architectural historians do what we do," says Dr. Carl Lounsbury, who heads the Field School in the Methods of Architectural History offered by Colonial Williamsburg and The College of William & Mary. His four-week course focuses primarily on research, with students investigating the history of buildings in Williamsburg and beyond.

Other courses deal with the maintenance aspect of preservation. The University of Oregon offers field schools in both the Pacific Northwest and abroad (most recently, in Croatia) that tackle nitty-gritty tasks such as "painting and priming existing siding, restoring old windows, and stabilizing buildings when there's some sort of structural issue—it just depends on the buildings we're working on," says adjunct professor Shannon Bell, the field school's co-director. Past projects for the Pacific Northwest Preservation



CARL LOUNSBURY PHOTO

Students at William & Mary's summer field school take measurements on a house in Beaufort, South Carolina.

Field School have included a Frank Lloyd Wright house and the Idaho State Penitentiary.

Although field schools are college-level courses (participants pay college tuition rates and may have the option of living on campus), prior training in preservation usually isn't necessary. "Occasionally we get someone who has a background in preservation or art history," says Lounsbury, "but most of the students don't." Classes tend to be small, usually 10 participants or fewer, to allow for individualized attention.

Because field schools are ultimately designed to help train the next generation of professional preservationists, their curriculum may be more specialized than the average homeowner needs. But for those with a deep love for old buildings, it's a win-win: "If nothing else, you'll gain more insight into how important your building is," says Bell.

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Simple Searching

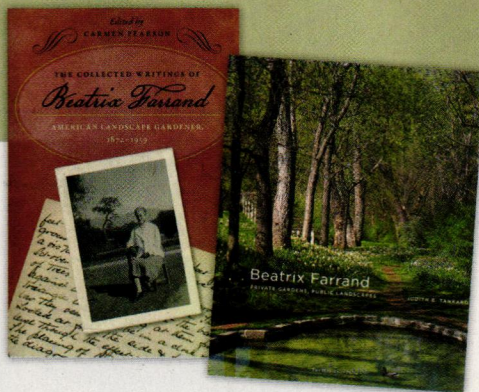
Want to know all the projects in your city that have benefited from historic-preservation grants and tax credits? Or perhaps you're planning a road trip and want to check out a few house museums on your way. The National Park Service's expanded map-based search tool puts a wealth of information on nationally recognized historic sites at your fingertips. Each state has its own page, which features a Google map embed-

ded with 10 different layers. Selecting a layer (for instance, "National Register of Historic Places" or "Preserve America Grants") will pinpoint all of the relevant properties on the map. For more in-depth info, each page also features profiles of notable projects, such as a Sears Roebuck power plant in Chicago that was converted into a high school using federal tax credits. To try the tool, go to nps.gov/findapark.

BOOKS IN BRIEF

If only period landscapes were as well-dictated as the features on their accompanying houses—but more often than not, figuring out an appropriate design for the land surrounding your vintage home requires going straight to the source.

If your house was built in the early 20th century, one of your primary informants should be Beatrix Farrand, the landscape designer whose notable commissions helped to blur the lines between classical gardens and naturalistic landscapes. In *Beatrix Farrand: Private Gardens, Public Landscapes*, historian Judith Tankard presents a beautifully illustrated

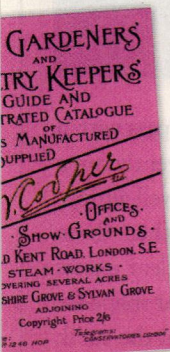


guide to Farrand's many commissions, from intimate walled gardens to Ivy League campuses. Walking the reader through the process of designing each landscape, Tankard provides considerable insight into Farrand's methods. Blueprints of the gardens are scattered throughout the book as well, making it an invaluable resource for anyone seeking to imprint Farrand's signature style on their own outdoor spaces.

For those who wish to delve even deeper into the motivation behind Farrand's designs, *The Collected Writings of Beatrix Farrand* offers up her journal entries, magazine articles, and notes on various commis-

sions. Compiled by Carmen Pearson (a distant relative of Farrand's), the compendium helps illuminate the inspiration behind some of the 20th century's most beautiful gardens.

If you'd rather not consult a designer (past or present), there's the DIY approach to designing a historic landscape—leaf through period catalogs. *The Gardeners' and Poultry Keepers' Guide* is a gorgeous hardback reissue of Victorian-era catalogs from William Cooper, Ltd., a British outbuilding manufacturer, and includes drawings of everything from conservatories to chicken coops. While, unfortunately, you can no longer purchase a 150-square-foot garden-shed kit for £10, you might just find a solid springboard for constructing your own outbuilding.



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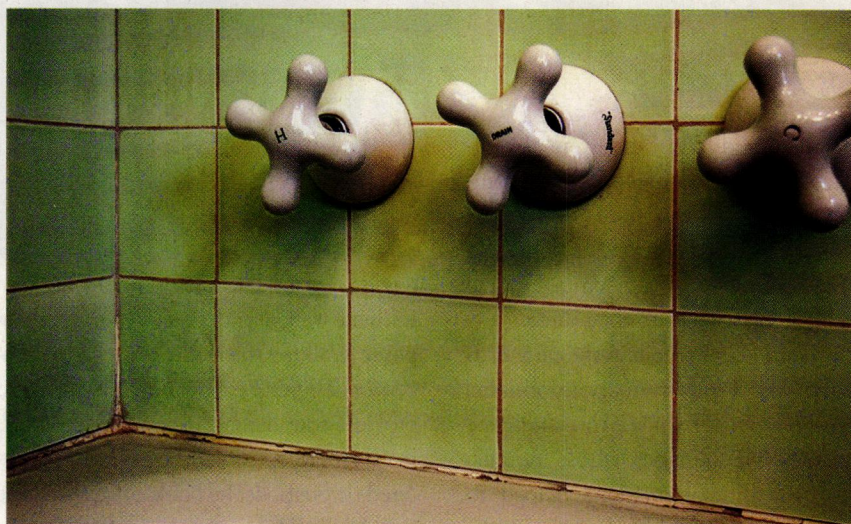
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ask ohj

Q: The grout in my 1920s house is falling apart in a few areas near the tub. How can I patch just the damaged spots?

A: **Riley Doty:** Over time, old cement-based grout is likely to crack where the tiles meet an adjacent material or where there's a change of plane within the field of tile (i.e., where two walls intersect). To repair it, use acrylic caulk, a material that's water-soluble when fresh, but highly water-resistant after it has cured. While acrylic caulk isn't as long-lasting or flexible as urethane caulk, it's much easier to work with, emits virtually no toxic gases during application, and is readily available in a wide range of colors. (Modern tile dealers offer acrylic caulk to match 40 or so available shades of grout.)

Aim to produce a joint that closely matches the surrounding grout in color, width, and shape. Proper caulk selection will ensure a color match; careful taping controls the joint width; and finger-smoothing produces a slightly concave profile to match original joints. Before you start, gather all of your tools, create a mess-containment island by placing a



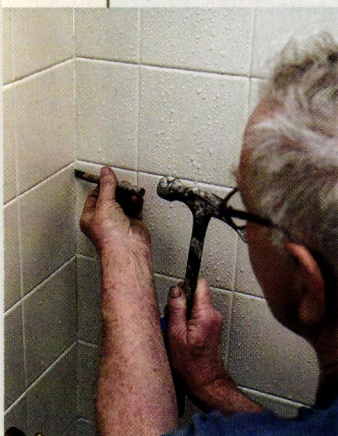
dropcloth or cardboard square on the floor to house dirty tools, and keep a clean, damp rag handy to help wipe away messes.

First, carefully dig out the old grout or caulk, using a utility knife on joints $\frac{1}{8}$ " or smaller or a hand saw (available from tile dealers) for wider joints. An aluminum-handled Xacto knife with a #18 square-tip blade, used in conjunction with a hammer, makes an excellent precision chisel and carries less risk than a full-sized blade of marring adjacent surfaces. Work slowly and methodically. Vacuum or brush-clean the area, and wipe it down with an acetone-soaked rag.

Once the old grout is removed, carefully tape off the joint on either side of the tiles. The distance left between the bands of tape determines the exact width of the finished joint. Next, use a caulk gun to apply the caulk, then press it down with a pallet knife and smooth it out with a gloved finger (wear snug-fitting nitrile or latex gloves). Wipe away any excess material from the tape with a putty knife, and smooth the joint a second time. These tooling stages should be done in rapid succession.

Finally, gently remove the tape, then

make one more smoothing pass with a finger. For final touch-ups, gently run a clean, damp sponge that is well wrung-out across the joint. Together, these steps will pack the joints, clear excess material, and refine the joint shape for a like-new appearance. After the caulk has cured in a couple of days, you may need to wipe the tiles and tub with a rag soaked in mineral spirits to remove any haze or film. 🛠️



ABOVE: After decades of use, it's common for grout to fall away in patches where it meets adjacent materials.

LEFT: Riley removes old grout with a small Xacto knife and hammer.

RIGHT: Carefully taping the work area is key for a proper grout installation.



Riley Doty has worked with tile for more than 30 years. He's a member of Artistic License and sits on the board of the Tile Heritage Foundation.

Have questions about your old house? We'd love to answer them in future issues. Please send your questions to **Ask OHJ**, 4125 Lafayette Center Dr., Suite 100, Chantilly, VA 20151 or by e-mail to OHJEditorial@homebuyerpubs.com.

old-house toolbox

Laser Level

This handy tool coaxes straight lines out of not-so-square old houses.

By RAY TSCHOEPE

Installing a chair or picture rail around a room usually requires a great deal of patience and skill, and a certain amount of luck.

Using a long spirit level from point to point invariably results in human error and a line that doesn't connect. You could try stretching a string affixed with a "line level" across the room to mark various points, but this is usually a multi-person task. Water levels (the kind used to mark out a foundation) are great outdoors, but can be a little messy in your newly papered dining room. Enter the laser level.

What to Look For

For a number of years now, spirit levels with an attached, high-quality laser have been available for as little as \$50. A level fitted with a laser is like having a spirit level as wide as any space you need to mark.

You can purchase lasers that split a single beam into several tiny points of light at precise right angles, affording you the ability to verify plumb and level with a single tool. Some levels even include lenses that take these beams and transform them into lines so that a perfect grid of intersecting lines can be produced to indicate plumb and level across your room.

Don't purchase more level than you think you'll need—invest in accuracy instead. Lasers are usually rated at their deviation from level at 100'; look for lasers that can guarantee accuracy to 1/4" or less over this distance. This will be more than enough accuracy for most home projects.



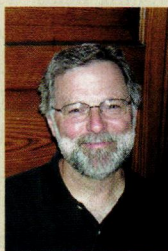
RAY TSCHOEPE PHOTO

Where to Use It

Laser levels can be useful for anything from constructing a new addition to hanging several pictures at the same height.

Contractors regularly use a tripod-mounted laser level placed in the center of the room for tasks such as installing chair rails. An internal motor spins the red dot of the laser around the periphery of the room so rapidly that it appears as a thin line. After a few carefully placed marks, chair rails can be installed perfectly level.

This same system can be employed by homeowners, although contractor-caliber systems can be pricey for occasional use. Fortunately, small lasers, usually the size of a torpedo level (about 8") work just as well to save you hours of time and frustration. Mount it at the correct height in the center of the room (most can be attached to a camera tripod) and mark a series of points on the walls. Now you just have to find those elusive studs. 🏠



Ray Tschoepe, one of OHJ's contributing editors, is the director of conservation at the Fairmount Park Historic Preservation Trust in Philadelphia.

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outside the old house



A Farm Reinvented

A professional landscape designer takes on the challenge of revamping a garden for a centuries-old working farm.

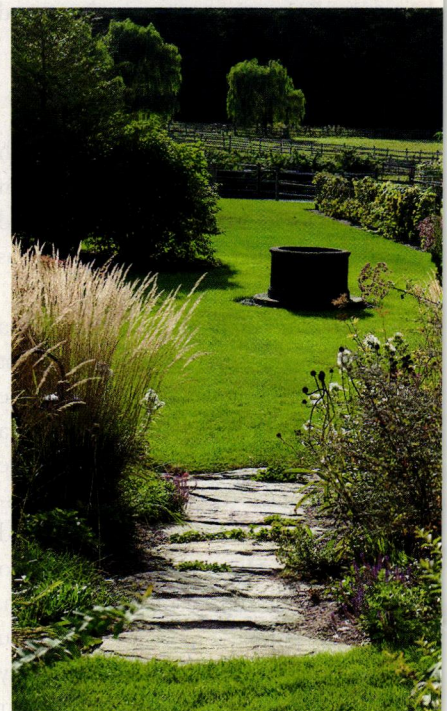
STORY BY LAURA KUHN ♦ PHOTOS BY RICH POMERANTZ

My first visit to Bent Stone Farm was in the spring of 2006, in the pouring rain. Stretching before me was a rain-sodden maze of muddy paddocks, bordered by endless lines of weathered cedar fencing, all stitched together by ribbons of vibrant green lawn.

At the time, the Massachusetts parcel was a small horse farm, and had been used for agriculture almost continuously for at least the last two centuries. My clients planned to convert the farm back to its

20th-century use of vegetable production, but with offerings updated for the palates of 21st-century Boston chefs.

But before this could happen, the property needed to undergo a massive overhaul to convert its crisp, square stone-dust paddocks to nutrient-rich, rolling fields. The initial planning phases would include expanding the main barn and laying out access paths, an orchard, a vineyard, wells, irrigation systems, drainage, propane tanks, and a production greenhouse. This project would be about infrastructure as much as aesthetic enhancement. It would also be my clients' home.



TOP: The house is framed by sturdy flowering plants such as hydrangea and cone-flower. **ABOVE:** The view from the farmhouse patio takes in a granite wellhead, the edge of the vineyard, and neighboring pastures.



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: The restored farmhouse and new garage. Along a winding garden walk, a haze of soft color helps to obscure the greenhouse. A grassy path leads through the vineyard to the border of the farm.

Embracing Constraints

The first priority at Bent Stone Farm was to mitigate the effects of a decade of equestrian use. Regrading about four or five acres of property immediately around the house and main work areas helped to reclaim the impact that well-used paddocks and pastures had imposed on the land. Large, rectilinear footprints of mud, stone dust, and compacted soils were gutted, their entire surfaces overhauled and raised. Hundreds of weathered cedar posts and rails were removed and stored for later reassignment as grape arbors and ornamental fencing.

With so many factors competing within a tight, high-performance space, a major challenge was to avoid “overdesigning” the farm. We had to efficiently combine steps, walls, and multiple structures, all while avoiding the telltale graphic stamp of software-based design tools. All around, decisions were guided by the rural aesthetic of a property whose use had evolved over time.

For example, in order to function in

tandem with the main barn and allow circulation and access from all work areas, the greenhouse needed to be placed between the house and the barn. Knitting the greenhouse, barn, and accessory areas to the higher-elevation house was managed with a combination of retaining walls, steps, and soft slopes designed to mimic the gentle feel of New England’s rolling contours. Slopes feather to adjacent areas to mask former paddocks; a neighbor’s septic field is disguised as a central pasture area; walls taper down to grade where they are not expressly needed.

Creating Views

Because Bent Stone Farm would serve as both a home and business, my clients needed a functional farm, but they also wanted to feel surrounded by beauty. They needed to be able to reach the greenhouse quickly in

fickle weather, but they preferred not to have its large blowers within their direct sight line. On summer nights, they wanted to enjoy dinner on the patio in the glow of their 19th-century farmhouse, but not with a view of their farm equipment.

The main views from the house included a picturesque series of rural scenes: the greenhouse with fieldstone foundation, horses in the neighboring riding academy’s pasture, production fields neatly laid out in the distance. But these same views also included tractors and trucks, fans and propane tanks, and even a “manure bunker.”

Creating gardens close enough to screen the home’s patio without eliminating the pleasing elements of the vista meant balancing concealment with distraction. Large ornamental beds frame the patio, highlighting certain views from the house while obscuring others. A stone path provides direct access from the front of the house, but it curves to obscure any direct sight lines. Placed along the way, an antique whetstone supporting a sundial helps to catch and slow

outside the old house

the gaze. A Mexican granite wellhead leads the eye past the outbuildings to the open vista of neighboring pastures. Similarly, bed shapes and the paths within them were configured to suggest the drift over time that is characteristic of very old gardens. Large slabs of local granite, used as steps and landings, were relocated from elsewhere on the property. Natural fieldstone slabs appear as step stones within beds to suit the large scale of the open space.

Planning Plants

The wind-swept feel of the farm called for an effusive, colorful, free-spirited style of planting. An abundance of mid-height herbaceous material provides screening suitable for the house without overwhelming its graceful architectural details. The landscape includes many native species and their cultivars and hybrids: Joe Pye weed, purple cone-

flower, prairie coneflower, aster, Canadian burnet, little bluestem, feather reed grass, Northern sea oats, and tufted hair grass.

They're accompanied by farm-garden classics: peonies, lavender, meadow sage, agastache, hydrangea, and boxwood. A simple assortment of larger plants supports all this—'Robusta Green' Juniper and Persian Parrotia are anchors that hold their own against their showier counterparts.

Farms are quintessential "living landscapes" that demand receptiveness to change in the search for greater efficiency. Likewise, farm gardens should edit themselves: The ornamental beds here are designed to reseed and self-perpetuate. Most need little in terms of additional nutrients and supplemental water. Those plants that suffer in drier soils were placed to receive shade from their neighbors. Although gardening maintenance has been necessary for the first

few years, this need will recede over time.

I like to think that the farmers who worked this land for most of the last two centuries would appreciate the new changes, even as they could not have predicted them. Both planting style and garden ornament were chosen to refer to history, rather than to replicate it. And since they seem to have taken their own belongings with them all those years ago, they can't complain about a few unfamiliar imports hanging around the garden. 🏡

Laura Kuhn has been designing ecological landscapes in New England and beyond for more than a decade.

Download a guide to the plants used in the garden at Bent Stone Farm.

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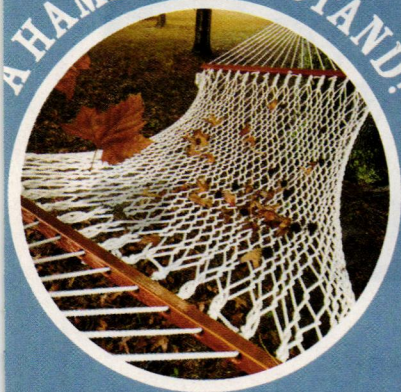
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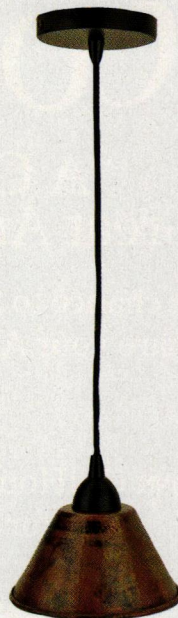
BY CLARE MARTIN

Pretty and practical finds for Arts & Crafts and Victorian-era homes.



Persian Delight

For pattern-loving Victorians, the exotic designs of the Eastern world were a favorite well of inspiration. Bradbury & Bradbury's new Persian wallpaper set elegantly captures the mystique of far-flung locales with patterns reproduced from antique Indo-Persian designs. The room set includes coordinating wall and ceiling fills, a frieze and ceiling border, plus a variety of trims and medallions—so you can decide how over-the-top you want to go. Fill papers, \$59 per roll. Call (707) 746-1900, or visit bradbury.com.



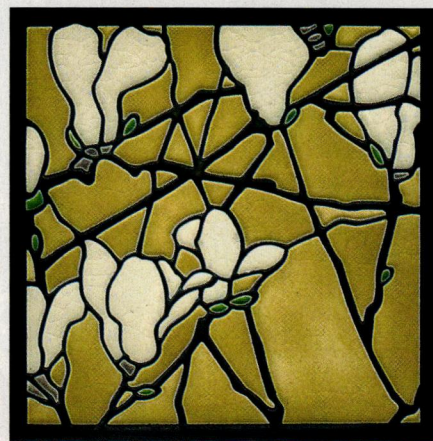
Copper Topper

Hand-hammered copper has long been a go-to material for Arts & Crafts kitchens, for everything from sinks to range hoods. Now, Premier Copper Products has applied their signature material to a new surface: lighting. The collection includes pendant lights with copper shades in both flared and domed profiles—perfect for illuminating a breakfast nook or a central workspace. From \$100. Call (877) 251-4486, or visit premiercopperproducts.com.



Office Space

Taking its cue from Arts & Crafts-era library tables, Thos. Moser's American Bungalow desk combines heirloom-worthy craftsmanship with some surreptitious modern touches. Its slim, reverse-tapered legs, connected by curved braces, hint at the Japanese influences popular during the period, and its corners are secured with sturdy lap joints. But while the desk may look like a period artifact, its center drawer is actually a flip-down keyboard tray—a decidedly 21st-century addition. \$7,750. Call (800) 708-9045, or visit thosmoser.com.



Take on Tiffany

The iconic stained-glass designs of Louis Comfort Tiffany were the genesis of Motawi's new tile collection—company founder Nawal Motawi worked with the Charles Hosmer Morse Museum of American Art to adapt pieces from their vast collection of Tiffany works into art tiles. The Magnolia Tile, above, is based on a fragment of the 1885 Magnolia Window, which Tiffany designed for the library of his family's New York mansion. The 6" square tile is available with either a sky-blue or ochre background. \$62. Call (734) 213-0017, or visit motawi.com.

house helpers

Our editors pick the best new products to make your old-house projects easier.



A New Staple

Who says you can't make a good thing better? The folks at Arrow have just redesigned their staple gun with comfort and ease of use in mind. The T50 R.E.D. Professional Electric Staple Gun features electric firing technology that lets users set staples correctly on a variety of surfaces—from screening and roof underlayment to insulation—plus precision fastener control to resist jams. A soft, ergonomic rubber grip staves off fatigue and feels comfortable in-hand, while the bottom-loading staple reservoir makes for quick refills and accommodates six staple sizes, from 1/4" to 3/8". \$59.99. Visit arrowfastener.com.



Easy Driving

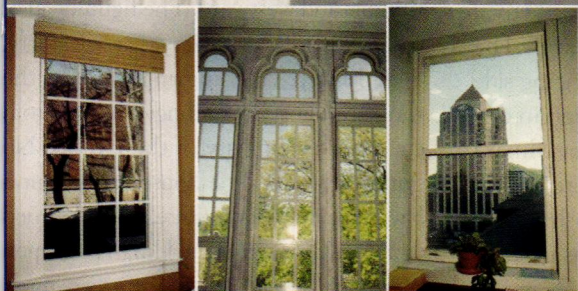
For screwing jobs that can tax the arms (like installing a series of cabinet hinges and pulls), Ryobi's TEK4 4-volt screwdriver is a battery-powered dynamo. The lightweight tool is great for a variety of screwing and driving jobs, and its handy LED light illuminates dark spaces. The tool's 1/4" Speedload+ quick-connect chuck makes for fast and convenient bit changes (and fits all Speedload+ accessories), while a 24-position clutch lets users adjust the torque to suit their needs. The TEK4 comes with a six-piece bit set and tool bag. \$29.97. Visit ryobi.com.

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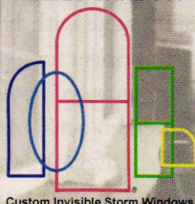
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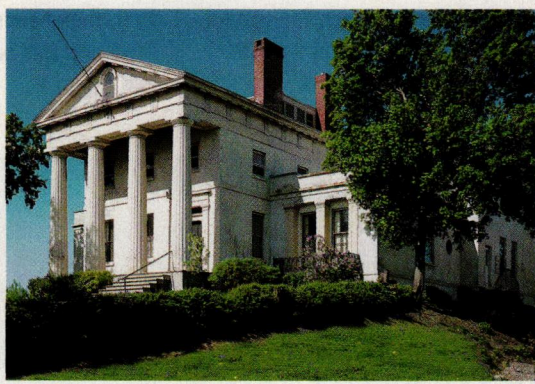
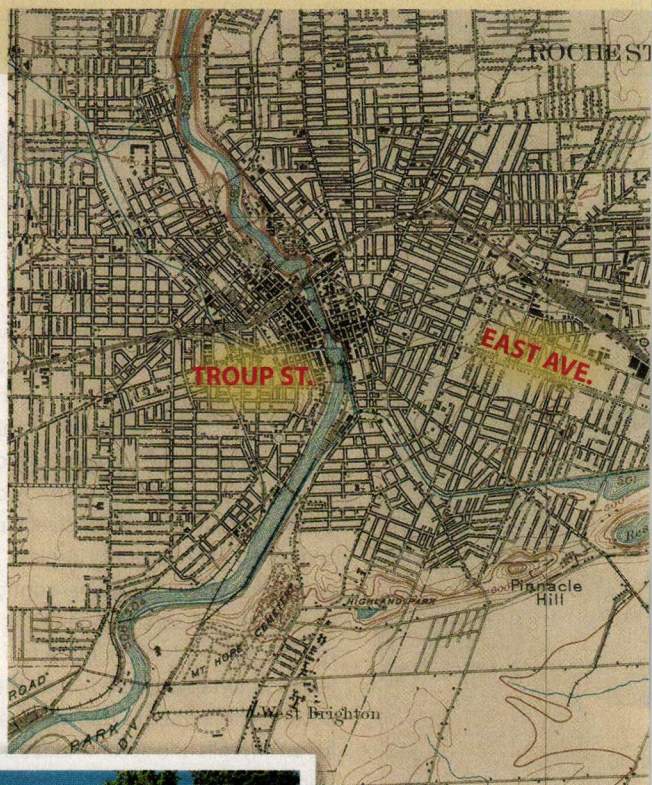
An architectural historian tells us how Rochester's houses cover the recent history of American building.

STORY BY JEAN FRANCE ♦ PHOTOS BY ANDY OLENICK

Rochester, New York, isn't the only Rochester in the United States. There is a good story (perhaps not true) of pilgrims debarking at the Rochester airport looking for the Mayo Clinic. Unfortunately, that famous medical center is in Rochester, Minnesota—not an easy cab ride.

My Rochester is in New York, about halfway across a very big state. Please don't come expecting to be close to the latest Broadway shows—Rochester is at least seven hours by car from Manhattan. We're a little short on skyscrapers, but boy do we have old houses.

I am a card-carrying architectural historian—a real nut who gets high looking at the built environment—and Rochester is my ideal habitat. I look around and see Greek Revivals, Italian Villas, Queen Annes, bungalows, and mid-century modern houses.



LEFT: The Hervey Ely House, fronted by a prominent portico and Doric columns, is textbook high-style Greek Revival

BELOW: In the Richardsonian Romanesque style, the Wilson Soule House is constructed of Indiana limestone and boasts a total of 35 rooms.



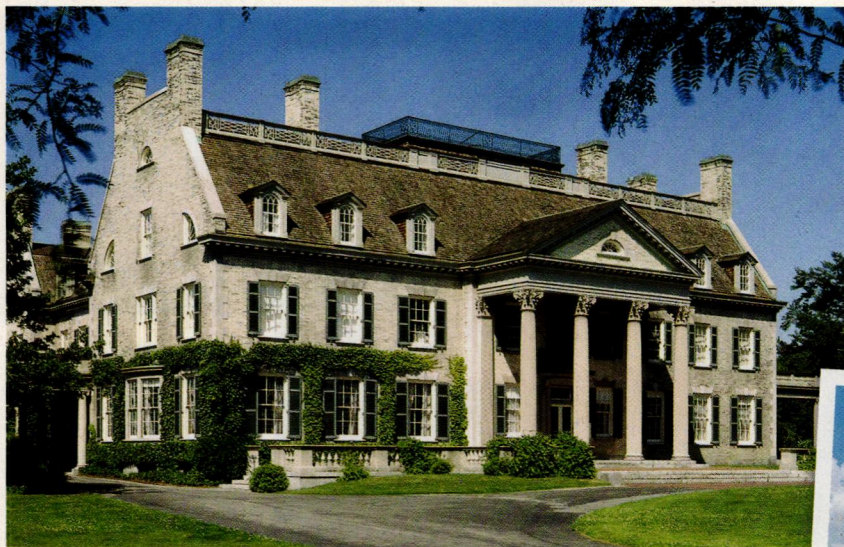
Rochester's architecture covers the history of American building since 1800, and most of it is very good. Skeptical? I've picked five of my favorite local examples of quintessential 19th- and early 20th-century American styles to prove it.

Classic Start

The Hervey Ely House on Troup Street, an early 19th-century Greek Revival mansion, is a good place to begin. The small Greek temple with balancing side wings is a dead ringer for a design in one of the earliest "how-to" books by Minard Lafever. Carpenters across America relied on books like Lafever's for fashionable exteriors as well as instructions on constructing spiral staircases. The house sits

on a slight rise near the former route of the Erie Canal. That area, now called Corn Hill, was the center of Rochester society before the Civil War.

Moving on chronologically, we head for a successful nursery in the suburbs. As Americans moved to new frontiers, successful growers here developed hardy strains of fruit trees for new farms in Ohio, Illinois, and westward. The figurehead of the leading local nursery, Patrick Barry, built his eye-catching mansion in the Italian Villa style—a huge change from the classic simplicity of the Greeks. No symmetry here: The house bumps out a bay here and a tower there, all underlined with heavily assertive moldings. Specimen trees, part of the original nursery, mark



LEFT: Photography pioneer and Kodak founder George Eastman began building this grand 35,000-square-foot Colonial Revival mansion in 1902; it's now a popular museum.

BELOW: The Italianate Patrick Barry House is accompanied by extensive gardens, a lasting legacy of its builder, who was the founder of a successful local nursery.



its appropriate setting; the house now belongs to the University of Rochester.

Along the Avenue

As Rochester's industry prospered, its tycoons moved their houses away from the city center, developing one of America's grand boulevards, East Avenue. Of the Avenue mansions, a remarkable Queen Anne serves as a quirky example of changing times, with a touch of English half-timbering crossed with American colonial details. Built originally as the home for Alexander Lindsay, one of the partners in a local department store, it now serves as a physician's office.

One of the handsomest Avenue homes is a textbook example of Richardsonian Romanesque, a semi-medieval house of rock-faced stone with decorative flourishes. The Wilson Soule House, unlike many others on this street, wasn't built by a self-made man but for the son of one—heir to a patent medicine fortune. (Patent medicine, in those days, contained a high percentage of alcohol. No wonder it sold so well.) Today the house has become the office for an Art Deco/Gothic church that was built next door in the early 20th century.

Another must-see on my lightning tour of Avenue homes is the largest house on East Avenue, the home George

Eastman built for his mother after he had made a success of a little photography business called Kodak. It's very early 20th century and shows the final turn of taste from the complicated forms and multiple allusions of the Victorian era to the revival of styles drawn from America's Colonial past.

Eastman's house design began with his Brownie camera, which he used to take pictures of houses he liked. These he handed to his local architect, who proceeded to adapt them for his wealthy client. Although his mother died soon after they moved in, Eastman enjoyed the house for another 30 years. It is now (surprise!) a museum of photography. The house itself has been meticulously restored and refurnished, and a major attached addition contains a vast photographic archive and a couple of theaters.

On the Side Streets

Off of East Avenue, solid side streets hold smaller, less status-seeking residences, which housed the artisans and junior executives that made Rochester's businesses successful. From this eclectic mix came the area's recognition by the National Register of Historic Places, as

well as protection in the form of an effective city preservation ordinance.

Rochester's houses demonstrate changes in technology as well as changes in taste. Each one throws in a bit of history, signposts of both the economic and cultural past. Today most of the large mansions, planned for a corps of servants, have metamorphosed into offices, museums, or clubhouses. Few remain private homes. Old-house nuts are more likely to put their sweat equity into the more manageable side-street houses—that's my thesis, anyway.

Rochester is my home. I've shown you five reasons why I love it—my favorite examples today. By tomorrow, I'll probably have five more. My town is a treasure chest for those who love old houses, like me—and you. 🏠

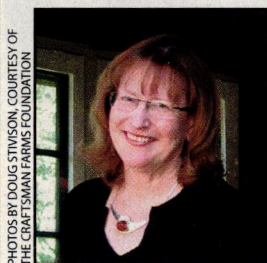
Jean France is an architectural historian, preservation consultant, and former professor at the University of Rochester.

preservation perspectives



LEFT: Stickley's iconic New Jersey home, the Log House at Craftsman Farms. **INSET:** Southland Log Homes' doppelganger design, one of six based on Stickley's vision.

An Arts & Crafts Mission



PHOTOS BY DOUG STIVISON, COURTESY OF THE CRAFTSMAN FARMS FOUNDATION

Gustav Stickley's New Jersey home is celebrating its 100th year. A talk with Heather Stivison, executive director of The Craftsman Farms Foundation, explores the Log House—past, present, and future.

By DEMETRA APOSPOROS

DEMETRA APOSPOROS: What was Stickley's intention for Craftsman Farms?

HEATHER STIVISON: Craftsman Farms was to be the place where Stickley's philosophies were put to the test. Originally planned as a school where young people would learn the value of working with their hands, and briefly intended to be a community of artisans, Craftsman Farms was to be an idealistic place: wholesome, built by hand, in harmony with nature.

DA: How does the Log House embody Arts & Crafts ideals?

HS: It's made of natural materials found on the property—stones that were dug up, logs hewn from indigenous trees—and its goal was to fit the landscape. Today people grade lots to build; this house was designed

to nestle into the existing topography, so it looks like it grew out of the property. Its harmonious connection to nature is apparent throughout the building.

DA: In the end, how long did Stickley live there?

HS: He bought the land in 1908 and began building the cottages in 1909. He broke ground on the Log House in 1910 and moved into it in 1911, but was forced to declare bankruptcy in 1915. The house was sold in 1917. I believe that if World War I hadn't occurred, Stickley's success would have continued.

DA: The property remained in the hands of one family—the Farnys—for decades, and the Stickley connection was largely

forgotten. Then what happened?

HS: Not many people knew Craftsman Farms existed before the landmark 1972 exhibit, *The Arts and Crafts Movement in America, 1876-1916*, reawakened interest in Stickley. So in the 1980s when the Farny descendants considered an offer to convert the remaining 30 acres into town houses, and word got out that this was the only home Stickley had designed and built for his own use, the local residents and

Our goal is to create a center for learning about the Arts & Crafts movement.

the Arts & Crafts community banded together and did an amazing job of preventing the construction. They went to the township of Parsippany and purchased the property with Green Acres and Open Space Trust funds. The Craftsman Farms Foundation was then formed to manage the property.

DA: What is the Foundation's goal?

HS: Our goal is to create a center for

learning about the Arts & Crafts movement, to preserve the property, and to interpret it as it appeared in Stickley's day.

DA: Talk to me about your educational mission.

HS: We work to make the Arts & Crafts movement and history of Craftsman Farms relevant to as diverse an audience as possible. Girl Scouts come to learn about architecture. Twice a year we have family days. We run a summer camp—kids leave being able to explain why Stickley was important. We offer lectures for more serious Arts & Crafts aficionados, encourage scholars, and work with universities. We're all about educating people and making Craftsman Farms relevant to 21st-century lives.

DA: What are your biggest future challenges?

HS: Sadly, they're financial. We are entirely nonprofit, and get no operating money from any municipal, state, or federal budgets. Our income comes from memberships, admissions, donations, and grants.

DA: This year marks the 100th anniversary of the Log House—what are you doing to celebrate?

HS: It's been a yearlong celebration because Stickley broke ground in the fall of 1910 and moved in a year later. We've had an event every month, including field trips like a visit to Stickley's former Craftsman Building in New York City and a July trip to Syracuse. The celebration culminates in October with a symposium and gala looking toward the next 100 years.

DA: One of the centennial projects has been a collaboration on home plans?

HS: Yes, with Southland Log Homes. They've created six designs based on Stickley's homes from *The Craftsman* magazine, which Southland's Mike Loy reinterpreted for modern living in log homes. Two of our board members, architect Ed Heinle and Stickley author Ray Stubblebine, helped fine-tune the designs. It's been a great collaboration and a lovely way to propel Stickley's vision today. And Southland is generously donating a portion of the sale of every one of these log houses.

DA: I understand there's a traveling exhibit as well.

HS: There's a major retrospective on Stickley, *Gustav Stickley and the American Arts & Crafts Movement*—I think it's one of the biggest ever done. It was organized by the Dallas Museum of Art and curated by Kevin W. Tucker, who has done a phenomenal job. The exhibit opened at the Newark Museum last September, moved to the Dallas Museum of Art, and will be at the San Diego Museum of Art from June 18 to September 11.

For more information on the Stickley Museum at Craftsman Farms, visit stickleymuseum.org.

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OLD-HOUSE LIVING



The living room's primitive furnishings play to the home's rustic architectural details.



LEFT: Builder Charles Snead and homeowner Neil Keller visit on the house's spacious back porch. **BELOW:** The staircase that winds up to the log cabin's second floor highlights the mixture of old and new in the house: Rough-finished walls mingle with a polished wood banister crafted by Charles.

Search & Rescue

A dedicated preservationist brings an eclectic colonial-era home back to life.

STORY BY DEBORAH BURST ♦ PHOTOS BY NATHAN WINTER

Surrounded by overgrown weeds, the house was a mishmash of three buildings from three different centuries. With its rusted tin roof, crumbling foundation, broken windows, and doors falling off their hinges, demolition seemed the only solution.

The house had stood vacant for several years after the death of its most recent owners, and a leaky roof and moisture stewing in the basement had led to mold-infested walls and carpet. Contractors admitted it would be a pricey and lengthy project, but Cornelia "Neil" Keller—a respected preservationist who has lent support to a number of local advocacy projects—was determined to restore her newfound colonial-era home true to its history.

The house sits in the village of Waterford, Virginia, which began as a Quaker town in the early 18th century. Without the development of major roads and railways, the sleepy hamlet changed little over time. Descendants of old Waterford families began buying and restoring buildings in the 1940s, and in 1970, the town and its surrounding acreage was designated as a National Historic Landmark.

"I remember the first time I saw it," says Neil with a smile, recalling her 1999 visit to the Waterford Fair, an annual fall event. "This is what America is all about—the children, dogs, ponies, people in antique cars and marching down the street."

Quaker merchant Richard Griffith is the first person associated with the original structure, a two-story log cabin built in the 1790s. A post-and-beam storehouse was





The roofline of the house stayed the same; the brick building that was removed was replaced with a frame addition of the same proportions, which intersects the original log cabin.

INSET: Many social gatherings took place at the home when it was a boarding house; the gazebo served as a dance pavilion.



added around 1799. In the 20th century, the James family operated it as a general store and, later, a boarding house, adding a stone-walled addition that comprises a kitchen, dining room, and porch.

Living a couple of miles away, Neil often rode her bicycle through Waterford, but little did she know that the town

and this abandoned home would rescue her from despair. "I suppose restoring this place was a form of therapy," she says; the project took place during what she admits was a very emotional and difficult time in her life. "I had fallen in love with the place and wanted to do right by it."



ABOVE: Throughout the house, the restoration team repurposed materials from the additions that had to be demolished. In the kitchen, Charles used materials from the 1920s lean-to garage to craft custom cabinets.

BELOW: A fireplace in the kitchen is the only remaining piece of the crumbling 1890s brick addition that was removed.



Cleaning Up

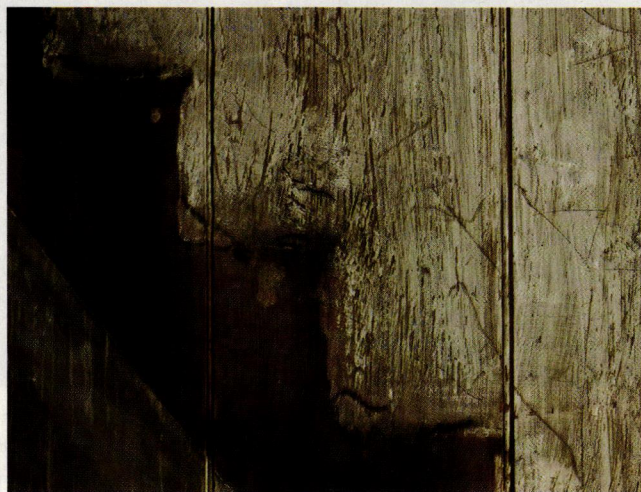
The ambitious three-year restoration project began in early 2000. Relying on her own intuition to guide restoration decisions, Neil hired a very talented team: longtime friend Charles Snead, who specializes in custom millwork and structures, general contractor Brad Brown, co-owner of Maidstone Construction, and architect Tommy Beach.

Diagnosed with a neurological disease in her 30s, Neil didn't let her physical challenges interfere with her involvement in the restoration. With the help of wheelchair ramps built throughout the construction site, she stayed close to the project, making key decisions with a focus on preserving the home's time-worn aesthetic. "For instance, the stonework is very crude, but I like it crude," she says. "I didn't want it demolished in favor of new stonework. We exposed as much as possible: logs, beams, doors, old floors, and original finishes."

The restoration crew started by cleaning out the sludge, examining construction and building methods, and collecting salvageable

materials that could be used in the restoration or as prototypes for new construction. In their studies and examination of the multi-layered structure, the team decided to remove two poorly constructed additions: a crumbling 1890s brick structure and a tin lean-to garage added in the mid-20th century. They kept the original log cabin and the 1920s structures intact, and on the footprint of the demolished additions, created a new sunroom, laundry room, powder room, and a second entrance, taking great strides to maintain the original roofline. Material from the demolished structures was recycled throughout the interior of the reconstructed home.

Since only a quarter of the log cabin's original foundation remained, stabilizing it was the next major task. The challenge was to lift the house off the foundation, remove the mud and stone that had originally supported it, then completely rebuild the foundation. With limited clearance for heavy equipment, the crew used a backhoe to dig a trench between the house and street to



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: Family photos taken by Neil, an avid amateur photographer, are arranged lovingly on antique furniture throughout the home. The cozy living room is one of Neil's favorite reading spots. An upstairs wall still bears the imprint of a long-gone staircase.

gain access. To keep the soil from caving in, they used the bucket of the backhoe to press steel rods and boards against the dirt to reinforce the walls and stabilize the area.

"The dirt had to be taken out by hand," Charles explains. "We went down 8' at the deepest footing, filling in with reinforced concrete and 12" cinder block." The house stayed on jacks for several months while the process was completed.

Pieced Together

From Waterford's Main Street, the house appears to be a simple two-story rectangular building with clapboard siding, which was added in the late 19th century, when siding was commonly used to cover and

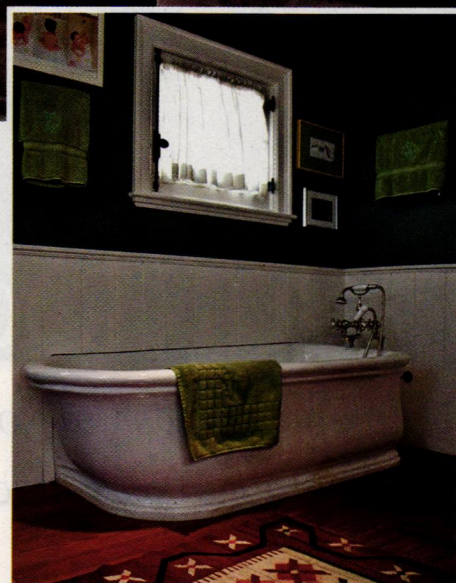
insulate log homes. The home's original exposed siding was long gone, but when they dismantled the brick addition, the team uncovered a 12' section of original white oak siding. Charles used it as a model to custom-mill beaded siding using the same type of wood. The front door and hardware are original to the log cabin, as is the wood shake roof.

At the back of the home, the 1920s footprint of the kitchen/dining area remains the same, with the original fireplace and brick wall (a stabilized remnant of the demolished brick addition). Charles designed custom cabinets, incorporating pieces of tin from the lean-to building, and custom-crafted replacement windows

based on originals found in the attic.

Four steps lead up from the kitchen to the living room, through what was the back door of the two-story log cabin. In the living room, original logs and chinking comprise the walls. "The logs were horribly crooked and filled in with nothing but mud and oyster shells," Charles says. The project's mason advised removing the original chinking and replacing it with sturdier Portland cement mortar.

Above the living area, up the original stairway, three bedrooms harbor painted walls, exposed siding and framing, and wainscoting fashioned from the second-story flooring of the 1890s brick addition. The bedrooms' wide-plank, heart-pine



ABOVE: In the upstairs bedrooms, the team highlighted original construction with exposed framing. **INSET:** The hefty bathtub came from a ship captain's home in Maine; the crew used a crane to lift it in place.

Learn more about the preservation-friendly village of Waterford, Virginia.

OLDHOUSEonline 

floors were removed, cleaned, and reinstalled. Replacement windows, created by Charles, are an almost exact replica of originals. The ceilings hold a wavy, somewhat warped appearance—after stripping off layers of rotted plaster and drywall, the team left their beaded tongue-and-groove paneling exposed, adding new support beams alongside the old. “We went back to slightly above the old timbers,” Charles explains. “The rafters were actually trees, 4” to 4½” in diameter, tapering to 3”.”


Near the top of the stairs, a peculiar pattern leaves an imprint of the past. Like a rustic mural, a stairwell shadow along the wall climbs to the log cabin's long-gone attic. “It was obviously a story that the house was telling us,” Charles says, adding that they tried to recapture the essence of the home throughout the construction process. “We cleaned it as best we could—if something had been painted, we repainted

it the original color, and we used linseed oil on the wood to preserve it.”

Success Story

In May 2010, Neil's efforts were recognized with an award from Waterford's Joint Architectural Review Board. She's also put the property under conservation easement to prevent future owners from undoing the team's hard work.

“It's always rewarding to see the finished project and how much the property has been improved,” says contractor Brad Brown. “This one in particular seemed in grave condition at the outset.”

Many of her neighbors called the restoration a “rescue project,” but Neil just considered it her good fortune. “I honestly don't recall any stress associated with the project,” she says. “I had fun working with my crew to solve each problem as it presented itself. It was a pleasure to watch it evolve.” 



EARLY AMERICAN

Outdoor Refreshment

Making a splash in your outdoor environment is as easy as adding a few well-placed, period-appropriate accessories.

BY THE OHJ EDITORIAL STAFF

The “outdoor room” concept has gotten a lot of press recently, but the idea isn’t exactly a new one. One need only look to the classical gardens of upscale colonial-era homes, the substantial front porches of bungalows and Queen Annes, or the easily accessible patios of mid-century ranches to understand that what’s outside the house has long been as important as what’s in it.

If what’s outside your house is less than stellar, that’s easy to fix. Adding a porch light here, and some seating there will do wonders to enhance both the aesthetic appeal and the livability of your outdoor environment. To that end, we’ve rounded up a few choice picks for three different eras (plus one more online). So what are you waiting for? Get outside, and get decorating!

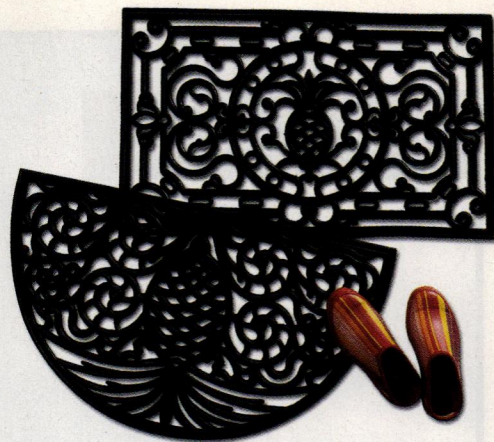
Early homes like this understated Georgian farmhouse call for simple accents with colonial-era motifs.



TOM OLIVEIRA PHOTO/PHOTOALIA.COM

1 During colonial times, pineapples were a universal symbol of welcome. These pineapple-centric welcome mats are designed to look like intricate wrought iron, but they're actually durable, washable rubber.

Pineapple doormat, \$29.
(800) 414-6291;
williamsburgmarketplace.com



Colonial Classics

In America's early years, private pleasure gardens were a province of the very wealthy. For average homeowners, the yard was a more functional space, reserved for practical pursuits like vegetable-growing. Aesthetic enhancements were often driven by prac-

ticality as well—lanterns featured wire cages to protect delicate glass and fickle flames, and blacksmith-forged hardware was designed for maximum durability. But today, it's precisely those utilitarian details that make colonial-era accents so appealing.



2 There's a reason the picket fence is an American classic—it's been around since our earliest days. This version is modeled on the one outside the Benjamin Waller Home at Colonial Williamsburg.

Benjamin Waller picket fence, \$45/linear foot. (800) 343-6948;
walpolewoodworkers.com

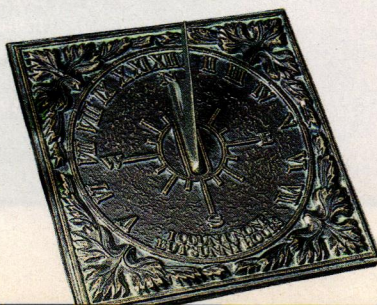


5 Onion lamps (lanterns that feature a round globe encased in wire) were a stalwart of colonial exteriors; Heritage Lanterns' teardrop version is based on the century-old lights used to illuminate the cobblestoned streets of Brooklyn.

Brooklyn Bracket lantern, \$739.
(800) 648-4449; heritagelanterns.com

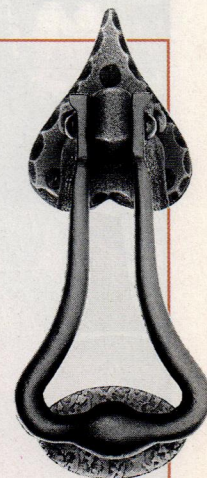
4 Now purely decorative, sundials were essential time-tellers through the 18th century. Cape Cod Weathervane Co.'s aluminum one comes in three patinated finishes (such as weathered bronze, shown) with the inscription, "I count none but sunny hours."

Sunny Hours sundial, \$39. (800) 460-1477;
capecodweathervanecompany.com



3 A hefty door knocker hearkens back to the blacksmith's forge; this one from Acorn Manufacturing incorporates a heart motif often found on era hardware.

Door knocker, \$94.
(800) 835-0121;
acornmfg.com



VICTORIAN



Dressing up a Victorian-era house (like this Italianate-Second Empire blend) means paying attention the exterior as well as interior. Look for accessories that celebrate the period's obsession with fine ornamentation.

1 Lazy, sunny days beg for a hammock in the garden. With weaving that recalls the lace curtains found in many a Victorian parlor, Victorian Trading Co.'s hammock won't look out of place next to your Italianate or Queen Anne.

Wedding hammock, \$119.
(800) 700-2035; victoriantradingco.com



2 Flanking the door with a pair of urn-style planters is an easy way to increase your floral bounty; this one from Haddonstone draws on a period motif of stylized acanthus leaves.

Victoria vase, \$402. (856) 931-7011; haddonstone.com

3 A pendant light over the door adds a stately touch to the ubiquitous Victorian porch; Brass Light Gallery's London Lantern mimics the design of 19th-century streetlights.

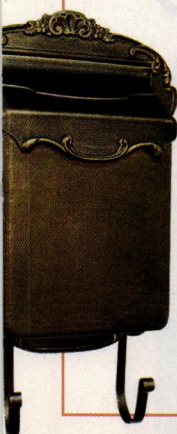
London Lantern pendant, from \$595.
(800) 243-9595; brasslight.com



Alfresco Finery

You can thank the Victorians for perfecting the concept of outdoor living. In the mid-19th century, advancing technology gave the middle class more leisure time than ever before, and much of that time was spent outdoors: strolling and picnicking in public parks, conversing and

courting on front porches, and playing games like croquet and lawn tennis. The abundance of pattern and ornament that typified Victorian interiors extended outside the house, too—accents that replicate intricate scrollwork, delicate lace, and stylized florals are always a good fit.



4 A dainty letterbox pays homage to the era's frilly finery; House of Antique Hardware rendered theirs in practical rust-proof aluminum with a choice of four historic finishes (rubbed bronze shown).

Victoria Design mailbox, \$140. (888) 223-2545; hoah.biz



5 Need a focal point for the garden? The Victorian Bench from Charleston Gardens is a good contender—its Gothic-esque tracery is certain to draw the eye.

Victorian bench, \$1,665. (800) 469-0118; charlestongardens.com

ARTS & CRAFTS



5 Blacksmith Matthew Harris's nature-themed mailbox features hand-riveted joinery and hand-hammered surfaces. The leaves (including oak and ginkgo, shown) are customizable.

Leaf mailbox, \$1,200.
(443) 553-6642;
harrismetalsmith.
wordpress.com



4 With period details like a Caramel glass shade and antique penny finish, plus creative touches like a conical cap and scrolled-arm bracket, Old California's Brinley lantern imparts a welcoming glow.

Brinley wall lantern, \$410.
(800) 577-6679;
oldcalifornia.com



Handmade copper, wood, and clay pieces complement the natural aesthetic of Arts & Crafts houses.



- 1** Copperwork is an Arts & Crafts hallmark. These numbers are cut, formed, and beaten by hand into repoussé designs by master Roycroft renaissance artisan Frank M. Glapa.

Tree house number, from \$500.
(773) 761-2957; fmgdesigns.com

Artisan Accents

Perhaps more than any other architectural style, Arts & Crafts houses are defined by their connection to the outdoors. Instead of standing apart from their environment, they aim to meld with it through the use of indigenous materials, earthy finishes, and low-slung forms. This emphasis on communing with nature, coupled with an affinity for the artistic—hand-wrought being a

major tenet of the movement—means that a wealth of hand-forged, -fired, and -made accessories designed with simple, straightforward construction are suited to bolstering your bungalow's curb appeal.

Go online to see our product picks for mid-century homes.

OLDHOUSEonline 

- 2** Furniture designer Tim Celeski has reworked the classic Adirondack chair with an Arts & Crafts sensibility, paying tribute to Limbert's famous hall chair, with its distinctive triangular cutout.

Leschi Adirondack chair, \$850.
(360) 297-6699; celeski.com

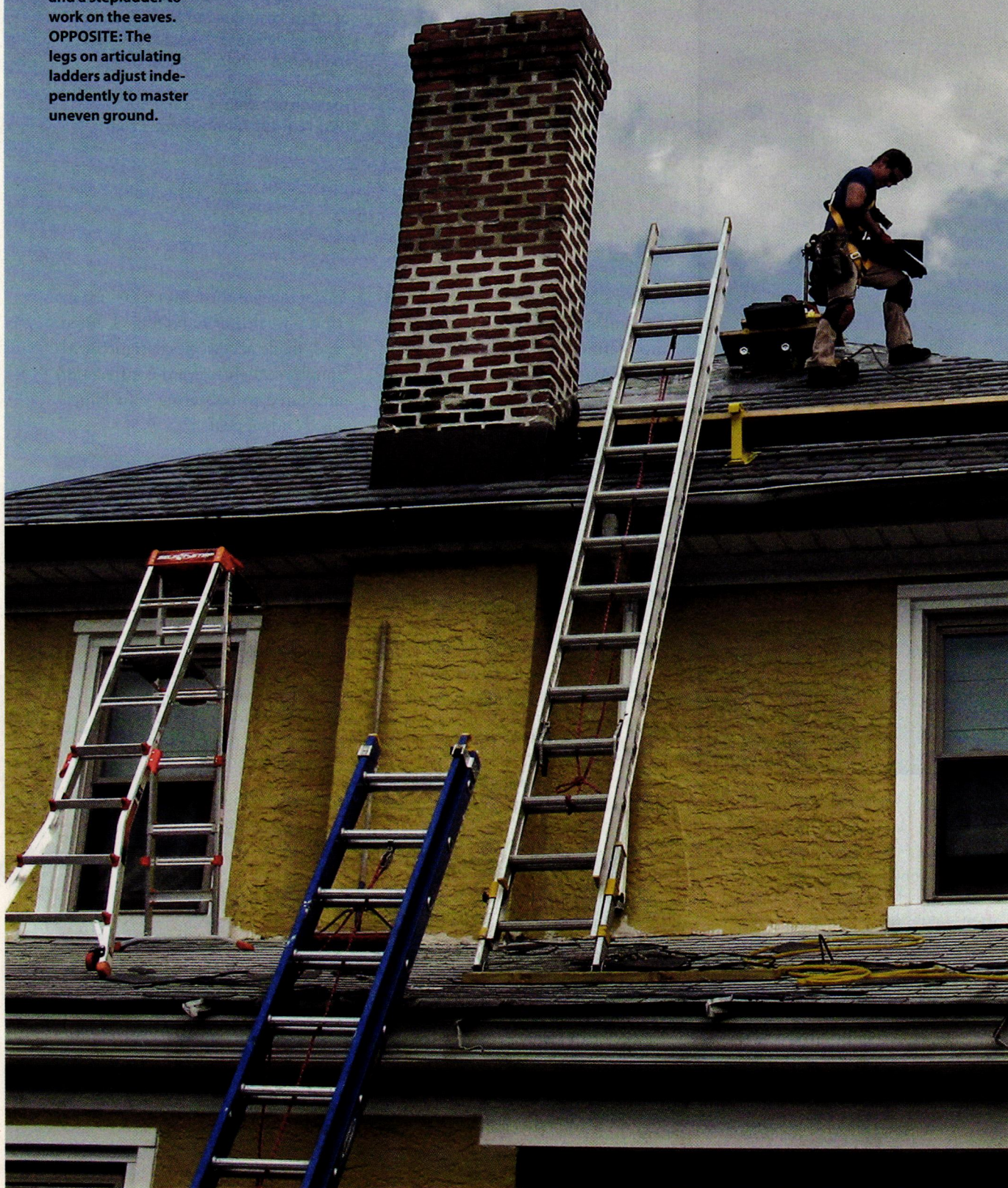


- 3** Highlighting a gnarled oak tree—a design based on a cover of *The Craftsman*—Ravenstone's generously sized tile can be laid in a garden path or hung on the porch.

Old Oak tile, \$50.
(360) 379-6951;
ravenstonetiles.com



Author Mark Clement uses two extension ladders to get atop the roof and a stepladder to work on the eaves. OPPOSITE: The legs on articulating ladders adjust independently to master uneven ground.





Steady Climb

Choosing the best ladder for the job is key to using one safely.

STORY BY MARK CLEMENT ♦ PHOTOS BY THERESA COLEMAN CLEMENT

For many folks, buying a ladder for a project seems almost so basic you don't even need to think about it. Whatever looks tall enough to get you up there should do the trick, right?

Wrong. Whether you're talking stepladder or extension ladder, buying one and using it safely requires a little know-how. Some anticipation of the future projects you might undertake helps in getting the best ladder and the best value. When I'm choosing a ladder, I consider how often I'll use it, what I'll use it for, and my two most important criteria: how high I'm going and what the ground or surface that I'm climbing from is like.

Properly cared for and used, ladders last a

long time. Buying the right one for current—and perhaps future—projects is energy well spent; you'll hedge your bets against wasting money and taking needless chances with your own safety.

Extension Ladders

The highest climbs I typically make in my residential remodeling practice are over the eaves of a two-story dwelling for anything from painting to gutter maintenance to roof work.



ABOVE: A ladder extended above the roofline makes for easy—and safe—gutter cleaning. **LEFT:** Always heed the warning labels on ladders—especially “This is not a step.”



A 24' extension ladder is the correct choice for most of these kinds of projects; lean one up against the house extended all the way, and it'll probably touch the gutters, no problem. However—and this is something I hope you don't find out firsthand—it isn't the right ladder for getting on the roof.

When exiting the ladder on a climb to the roof, the ladder rails should extend a full 3' past the height you've climbed. This allows you to have the rails within reach, so you can hold on to them and have a rung very close to the edge of the roof as you transition between the ladder and roof and back again. On most two-story homes, this can only be done with a 28' extension ladder. (This 3' extension rule also holds true indoors and for

shorter heights like one-story dwellings; you'll just need a shorter ladder.)

Alternatively, if you have no plans to get on the roof, a 24' ladder will typically get you to the eaves of a two-story house for painting, window repair, and other items along the sidewall. However, it's not unheard of for folks to misuse ladders when unintended situations arise. “Nah, I'll never need to go on the roof,” you think—until a hurricane deposits a tree branch there, or blows off shingles so it's raining in your bedroom. Next thing you know, you're bouncing up your (under-sized) ladder because it's an emergency.

If there's a scintilla of a chance you'll go topside, my advice is to buy up. Better to have it and not need it than to need it and not have it.

6 Tips for Carrying and Positioning Extension Ladders

Here are a few of my favorite tips for using extension ladders. This isn't a complete safety checklist, nor does it cover every situation. For complete information on the situations and ladders you have, check the manufacturer's safety information.

1 Keep it straight. It seems a little counterintuitive, but I find it easiest to carry an extension ladder vertically. I tilt it up from the ground, putting the ladder on its feet. Next, I reach down with one hand to grab the rung below my hip, and up with the other hand to grab the rung above my head, then lift to carry the ladder. Because I'm holding the ladder vertically, when I reach my destination, all I have to do is put the feet down and lean it against the building. (See photos on the following page.)



2 Map your route.

Before I go anywhere, however, I map out my route and plan accordingly. While bumping tree branches is frustrating, bumping the electric supply line to the house is terrifying, if not deadly—even if your ladder is fiberglass.

3 Find your angle.

There's a simple science to positioning the ladder against a building at the proper angle for optimum safety. If you can stand with your toes at the ladder feet and reach straight out with your hands to touch the rungs with your fingertips, you've got the right angle. If not, adjust until you can.



4 Make it plumb.

On uneven terrain, you need to block up one of the ladder's feet so it's plumb. The wider and more stable the item (think a 2x12 instead of a brick), the safer you'll be. Alternatively, there are several ladder-leveling accessories on the market. Remember that whether the ground is level or not, the ladder rungs need to be level for maximum safety.

5 Steady the feet.

In wet, muddy terrain, kick the ladder's feet parallel with the rails and drive them into the mud

before angling the ladder against the building. (Sometimes you'll need to lean the ladder on the building, lift it a little, and roll the feet with your hand.) Some feet have spikes or cleats to help them dig in.

6 Remember the belt buckle.

When you're on a ladder, follow the belt-buckle rule: Always keep your buckle between the rails. No matter how tempting it is to stretch a few more inches to paint that siding, keeping your buckle between the rails helps keep you balanced and in control.



ABOVE: The ladder angle's correct if you can stand with your toes at the feet and, with arms extended, touch the rungs with your fingertips.

LEFT: An add-on ladder stabilizer (or leveler) lets you adjust an extension ladder's legs individually to accommodate uneven terrain.

INSET: Always move feet to make them parallel with the rails, which helps secure the ladder.

LADDER HOW-TO



You can move a ladder into an upright position for easy carrying in three steps. Always make sure you map your path—one that's clear of electrical lines and tree branches—beforehand.

- 1** Lift the ladder to your shoulders.
- 2** Tilt the ladder up as you slowly walk forward to rest the ladder on its feet.
- 3** Reach up with one hand and down with the other to grab the rungs above your head and below your hip. Then move the ladder to your work site.

Stepladders

Stepladders are front-line home improvement tools—and one of the most misused. A 4' or 6' stepladder will get you to the ceiling of an average home for anything from repairing lights to installing crown molding to hanging pictures.

They work well as a team, too. For example, a 6' stepladder is too tall and its legs spread too wide to fit within a door frame to set casing, while a four-footer isn't tall enough to reach a 10' ceiling to hang a ceiling fan. I've found that having both helps me all over the house.

The danger people usually run into with stepladders is that, despite written warnings, they insist on using the "THIS IS NOT A STEP" rung. Climbing there to reach porch gutters or trim a branch often results in meeting the ground at a high rate of speed.

When buying a stepladder, then, the rule of thumb to keep in mind is that your feet will stay about 2' below the ladder's nominal height. For example, a 6' stepladder gets your feet about 4' above the ground. Add your own height to that number for a real picture of where the ladder will get you.

Specialty Ladders & Accessories

A basic stepladder or extension ladder will usually get you where you need to go. However, because they have fixed legs and/or heights, they have their limits, which has paved the way for articulating ladders and other versatile accessories.

For example, the Select Step stepladder (from Little Giant, who pretty much invented articulating ladders) features independently telescoping front and rear legs, which let you work efficiently in all kinds of situations. Personally, I use it all over the place—leaning the ladder snug against the wall to install a porch light, trimming a tree branch on uneven terrain, or cleaning the second-story gutters above my porch roof, adjusting the legs in each situation so the ladder stands close to how it would in normal use.

For a different take on the extension ladder, Extend and Climb has a series of compact, telescoping ladders good for any number



Understanding Duty Ratings

Ladders have very specific OSHA and ANSI duty ratings so that consumers can trust they will perform as manufacturers claim. These ratings are:

Type IAA	375 pounds	Type II	225 pounds
Type IA	300 pounds	Type III	200 pounds
Type I	250 pounds		


I generally choose Type IA ladders. While I weigh less than 300 pounds, I sometimes use ladder jacks and a walk board to create basic scaffolding, which demands greater weight capacity. I also like a smooth ride and a steady climb for everyday tasks—lower weight capacity often equates to a little bounce as you climb, and standing on a flex-y ladder all day gets old. For occasional use, proper height is more important than weight, but you should never exceed the duty rating.

of jobs. They get you where you're going, then retract into a compact, easy-to-carry, easy-to-store package.

While most major manufacturers now make an articulating ladder, sometimes what the doctor ordered is a ladder accessory. Base Mate's Professional Ladder Stabilizer attaches to your existing extension ladder, enabling you to adjust it easily and safely to accommodate uneven terrain.

Rubber bumpers and stand-offs like Werner's QuickClick let you prop an

extension ladder more gently or away from the home so you can span a window or keep from crushing gutters.

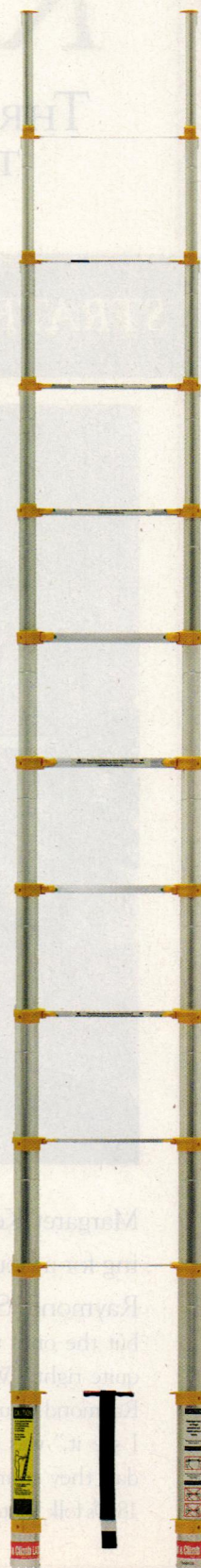
Reaching the top means using the right ladder the right way. Just about everything you need to know about your ladder is printed on it. Read every label—it will help you set up your ladder and use it properly every time, keeping you safe. 

Carpenter **Mark Clement** is working on his century-old American Foursquare in Ambler, Pennsylvania.

ABOVE, LEFT: A ladder reaching just to the roofline is fine for tackling gable-level jobs.

ABOVE, RIGHT: Accessories like stand-offs are an easy way to prop ladders away from the house to work on windows or gutters.

BELOW & RIGHT: Telescoping ladders fold into a compact package when not in use, but unfurl to a standard height.



COURTESY EXTEND AND CLIMB LADDER SYSTEMS

Kitchen Strategies

THREE HOMEOWNERS TAKE DIFFERENT APPROACHES TO CREATE THE KITCHENS OF THEIR DREAMS.

BY THE OHJ EDITORIAL STAFF

STRATEGY:

Add vintage appliances to realize a Depression-era vision.



Margaret Keilty had been searching for a house with then-husband Raymond Shove for some time, but the ones they toured never seemed quite right. "What is it that you want?" Raymond would ask her. "I'll know when I see it," was always her response. One day, they stumbled upon an abandoned 1850s folk Victorian farmhouse in Sharon,

Connecticut, with a dirt cellar and 8'-tall grass encroaching upon the back porch. Raymond dismissed it as a dump, but Margaret was hooked. "There was something about the way it stood there, not too far from the street. I knew immediately that this was my house."

The two-story farmhouse isn't elaborate; it's sturdy and strong, built with hand-cut nails and corner boards that are



mitered in place. Margaret envisioned a simple, utilitarian early 20th-century kitchen, grounded by a well-traveled



OPPOSITE: When cooking on her Bengal stove, Margaret Kelty can enjoy a mountain view through the windows to her right. **ABOVE:** The Monitor Top fridge once belonged to her father. **RIGHT:** Thanks to the pantry's thoughtful construction details, you would never guess that it's a modern creation.



Monitor Top refrigerator.

The fridge had belonged to her father, who had removed it from his brother-in-law's home in the 1950s. At that time, a fridge with a compressor on top was considered a sign of poverty, so the in-laws wanted it gone. The fridge had served as a basement beer-and-soda cooler for Margaret's dad; when her mother said she was getting rid of it after he died, Margaret had to have it. "The Monitor Top fit perfectly with the vision I had for the kitchen," she says.

Margaret and her partner, Mark LaMonica, immediately began looking for a vintage stove to accompany the refrigerator, and found a 1923 Bengal gas-and-coal combination. "It's a cream and green porce-

lain and cast iron number that sits on little legs, with a shelf on top and nickel plating everywhere," Margaret gushes. The couple found it in a nearby town, where someone had been using it as a plant stand. Margaret and Mark took the Bengal apart and gently cleaned it (taking care not to lose the patina), hooked it to gas, and now use it every day. They also worked to undo some of the cosmetic changes (like room partitions) that Margaret's ex-husband had installed in the kitchen, and restored the plaster and refinished the floors.

The kitchen's crowning glory is a pantry that Margaret created by removing a wall between the kitchen and a woodshed. She built the pantry with open shelves on top and cabinets at bottom, then accented

it with a two-tone paint scheme, porcelain knobs, brass hinges, and a 2"-thick pine countertop cut from local wood. While she created the pantry with her ex-husband, it's Mark who added the finishing touch: a row of windows along the back wall that added a drop-dead mountain view to the workspace. Mark and Margaret found the wood double-hungs at the local lumberyard.

"I was very conscious of how I approached it," Margaret says of her kitchen design. "I didn't want to spoil this house by putting anything modern into it." While a few friends don't understand the appeal of her utilitarian early kitchen (some have asked over the years, "When are you going to put a kitchen in?"), Margaret thinks it's perfect just the way it is.

STRATEGY: Create custom cabinets to echo original Arts & Crafts handiwork.



When Diane Mall purchased her modest 1,600-square-foot 1906 bungalow in Pacific Grove, California, it was in fair shape—except for the kitchen. “It was pretty bad,” she recalls. “It looked like it might have been redone in the 1960s.” Layers of linoleum had been covered with hideous ceramic tile, metal cabinets lined the walls, and a closet had been appropriated to add extra space, resulting in an awkward layout.

“I wanted to restore it to what it would have looked like originally,” Diane says—so she called in contractor R.C. Banjanin, owner of Jade Coast Construction, whom



she and her husband had worked with on previous projects.

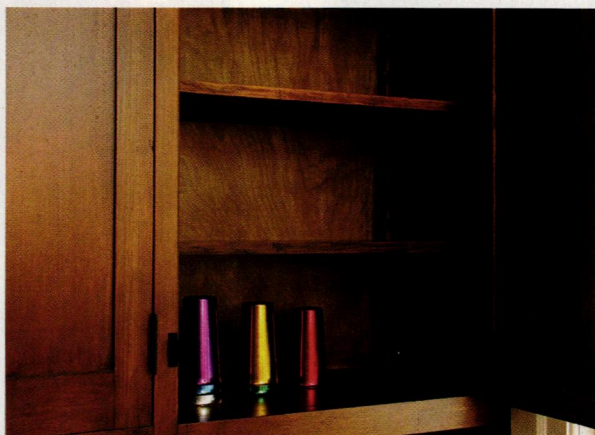
To correct the layout issues, R.C. returned the closet annex to the master bedroom and created space for the fridge by

ABOVE: The rich tone of the custom-made cabinets is set off by reddish Silestone countertops. **LEFT:** After the two-year restoration was complete, owner Diane Mall christened the modest California bungalow a guest cottage.

removing an old chimney that had once vented a wood-burning stove. He also shifted the doorway that leads to the adjacent sleeping porch to make room for more counter space. The layout adjustments actually made the 11' x 13' room slightly smaller, but it feels more open now, thanks to the improved design.

The kitchen did have one redeeming

CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: The existing built-in pantry was fitted with new cabinet doors; only the sliding doors on the pass-through (which were stripped of white paint) are original. The dining room buffet provided a design template for the new cabinets. The custom-made cabinets have fully adjustable shelves.



feature to its credit—an original built-in pantry with a pass-through window to a built-in buffet in the dining room. Most of the doors on the pantry had been replaced (only the sliding doors on the pass-through were original), and the entire thing had been painted white, but the basic structure was still intact.

R.C. removed the pantry's doors and stripped it of paint, then fashioned new doors out of Douglas fir. Their single-panel profile matches the original doors on the dining-room buffet. Above the pass-through window, he fitted the doors with slag-glass panels to allow light to pene-

trate through the leaded glass windows of the dining-room buffet.

He also custom-designed identical banks of cabinets to go under the sink and along the opposite wall, where the metal cabinets once hung. The new cabinets were built entirely on site: "There's no way we could have bought cabinets and made them look right," R.C. says.

He upped the cabinets' authenticity with reproduction catches and bin pulls from Rejuvenation, selected to match the original hardware on the dining-room buffet. "Even though it's brass, the buffet hardware had all turned black, so we decided

to go with a darker finish," R.C. explains.

For the countertops, he originally had planned to use Minnesota pipestone, a reddish clay stone, but in the end, he decided to go with similarly colored Silestone due to its greater availability and durability. He finished the restoration with ½" tongue-and-groove white oak flooring to match original flooring in the rest of the house. "Once we redid the floors, everything just flowed," he observes.

Diane agrees. "A lot of people think it's an old kitchen, but everything except the pantry is brand new."

STRATEGY: Change little, but add a lot of panache.

Some people have terrific vision when it comes to old houses—they can easily see beyond bad wallpaper and shag carpets to the gem that lies beneath. That wasn't the case for Portland, Oregon, couple Michelle and Dan Cutugno. When their realtor first walked them through a 1949 ranch designed by Ken Birkemeier, they told her they weren't interested. "It just looked like a cosmetic nightmare," Michelle says. But then the realtor took them to another Birkemeier house down the street—one that had been nicely rehabilitated. "It was like, 'Wow, that's what our house could look like!'" Michelle explains. They walked back through the ranch with new eyes, thinking of all the things they could do to make it better, and bought it.

Michelle and Dan couldn't move in right away, because the kitchen wasn't functional. It retained just a single working appliance—a dishwasher that appeared as old as the house. As they worked on a plan for the kitchen, they knew they wanted to keep as many original features as possible—features they began to appreciate more and more through an educational program at Portland's Architectural Heritage Center that provided them a wealth of information. (The Cutugnos' kitchen was open to the public on the Architectural Heritage Center's April Kitchen Revival Tour.)

"We really liked the charm of the home and the funkiness of it, including the groovy tile counter-tops in the kitchen," Michelle says. But they felt a little intimidated trying to



find a color for the cabinets that would work with the vivid tiles, so they found designer Jennifer Roos to help them

select paint colors. She suggested a two-tone scheme with off-white on the upper cabinets and a greenish-gray on the bases, a color that would be repeated on the scalloped decorative trim at the ceiling. "We never could have come up with that color combo on our own," Dan says. The scheme works to keep the vibrant tiles the focus of the room.



OPPOSITE: The kitchen's original tiled countertops were a big selling point for the Cutugnos; they had them professionally cleaned and re-grouted. The couple also added a subdued paint scheme, Marmoleum flooring, a new ceiling light from Schoolhouse Electric, and a streamlined faucet reminiscent of 1950s single-lever designs. **LEFT:** A spotlight on the countertops' finished edges. **ABOVE:** Behind the new stove, the couple's modern installation of glass subway tiles, inset with a colorful pattern, pays tribute in feel and hue to the original backsplash.

The cabinets themselves required a fair amount of work. While they are all original, they had contact or wallpaper covering all of their interior surfaces. Dan worked with a contractor to strip, sand, and repaint them. Then he and Michelle selected new pulls with a retro feel, which they found at Chown Hardware. Next on the list was a lighting fixture discovered at Schoolhouse Electric. "It's got that beautiful blue/green color on it that really complements the countertop tiles,"

says Michelle. To accompany their new stove, Michelle and Dan needed to install a backsplash. They opted for modern glass subway-style tiles with an inset design that echoes the hue of the hexes.

The flooring was a relatively easy selection. At purchase, the kitchen sported a crumbling vinyl floor, which clearly was not original. Michelle and Dan had been intrigued by Marmoleum since they had researched it as a possibility for their last home. It proved to be an

era-appropriate fit, and Jennifer helped them choose a dark pattern that resembles mottled stone.

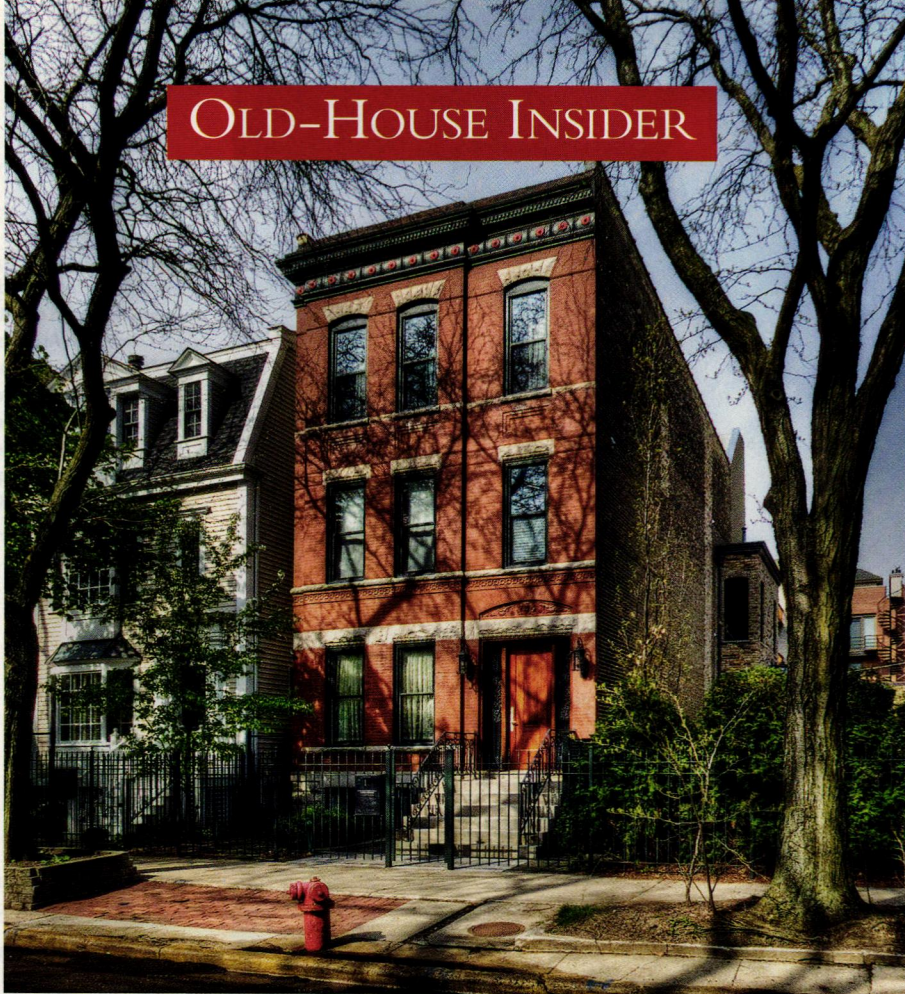
"We wanted to update the kitchen and keep it in character with the rest of the house," says Michelle. "We're really proud of how it turned out."

See more strategies for kitchen transformations, including our cover kitchen.

OLDHOUSEonline 



THIS PAGE: Designer Jean Alan helped carry a two-story 1980s-era addition back in time through the use of warm, Deco-inspired furniture and antique rugs. **OPPOSITE:** The Italianate town house is fortunate to have survived; the house next door was razed in the 1980s.



Period Collaboration

A team effort restores an elegant turn-of-the-century interior to a town house once chopped into six apartments.

STORY BY NANCY R. HILLER ♦ PHOTOS BY KENDALL REEVES

Clara Gabriel fell in love with the façade of her Chicago home the first time she saw it in 2002. Tall and narrow, the 1890s brick Italianate town house with terracotta and stone trim occupies three floors over a basement in the city's Lincoln Park neighborhood.

But once Clara stepped inside, she felt decidedly less enamored. At some point—probably in the mid-20th century, when households had dwindled in size and many neighborhoods had lost their families to the suburbs—the house's multi-story arrangement made it an easy target for conversion into apartments. By the time Clara got there, virtually every

last bit of original architectural detail—doors, trim, built-ins, hardware—had been removed, presumably for sale as salvage.

The building's most recent owners had returned it to a single-family residence, but the stark interior they'd imposed was completely out of place. "The whole front half of the house was a

big, long white room with wood floors," says Clara. "No parlor, no front closet, no entryway. It reminded me of a bowling alley." In fact, Clara had seen this treatment in so many once-fine residences that she had come to consider it something of a style in its own right, albeit a jarring one. "You walk into these beautiful Chicago brick homes and brownstones and think, 'Is this an old house in Chicago or a Mies Van der Rohe high rise?'" she laments.

Still, this house had one element she hadn't seen elsewhere: a two-story space at the rear, with windows on both levels,



LEFT: The completed parlor elegantly expresses the collaboration between client, architect, and designer. Architect Kathryn Quinn defined the space with dark-stained woodwork and built-ins, which are brought to life by Jean's dramatic orchestration of color. An antique French portrait over the Art Deco fire surround makes a stunning focal point.

that had been added on, probably during the 1980s. It flooded the open-plan kitchen and family room with light, which she adored.

Before committing to the purchase, Clara brought architect Kathryn Quinn to see the place. The two had worked together before (on Clara's lakeside cottage in Michigan, as well as a previous home renovation in Chicago) and enjoyed a comfortable rapport. "She knew what I liked," says Clara, "and while this house wasn't it yet, Kathryn agreed that it had enough bones to become something really great."

A Retro Layout

With Kathryn's help, Clara rethought the organization of each floor. Her two

sons' bedrooms, along with two full baths, would be on the second story, and she would create a master suite on the third. The basement would be finished to house a guest room and office.

On the ground floor, Clara wanted the layout to reflect the building's turn-of-the-century origins. Based on her familiarity with similar properties, she knew that a period arrangement would require dividing the space into a parlor and dining room, with a vestibule at the entrance. She also wanted to add a half-bath for guests.

At the rear of the house, Clara didn't mind breaking with tradition. Since the kitchen and breakfast room would have been utility spaces during the house's early years, closed off from public view, she

felt less constrained by period concerns regarding layout. She loved the light, open feel of these rooms and decided to keep the existing floor plan.

The house had two staircases—a formal one at the front and a set of servants' stairs off the kitchen. The formal staircase was one of the house's strongest features, ascending in a sinuous curve to an open landing on the second floor. The entire three-story stairwell was illuminated by an elliptical skylight that echoed the arc of the handrail.

The kitchen stairs, however, were another matter. They protruded awkwardly into the room, obstructing precious natural light that streamed in through the soaring windows. To enhance the open feel of the room, Kathryn suggested reconfiguring the stairs and knocking through the north wall at the back of the house to add a conservatory. At the base of the new stairs, in a short passageway between the conservatory and kitchen, she designed a small office area with a built-in desk.

Interior Vision

Clara, who makes jewelry, pottery, and textiles, has always had a keen interest in



ABOVE: Jean created a sumptuous master bedroom with silk-covered walls, a headboard that incorporates an antique screen, and stunning light fixtures. **RIGHT:** In the master bath, a copper soaking tub could almost be floating amid the watery setting of teal, green, and bronze tile. Kathryn designed the custom mahogany cabinetry and handmade copper sinks.



**AFTER
BEFORE**

architecture and design. "I love early Art Deco, Art Nouveau, and the transition between them," she says of the styles she wanted to work in, which are appropriate to the history of her home.

To bring her ideas to life, she worked with Jean Alan, who owns the interior design and custom furnishings business Alan Design Studio. With extensive experience as a set decorator for films, Jean had the requisite eye for detail and the professional savoir faire to honor the house's period architecture while also expressing Clara's personal taste.

Rather than researching what sort of transitional interior would be historically authentic and then pinning down particu-

lar details, Jean started by asking Clara to show her pictures, books, and turn-of-the-century objects that resonated strongly with her. One, a photo of a bathroom tiled from floor to ceiling in iridescent blue glass, became the inspiration for the new master bath. In many rooms, Jean took her cue from individual objects discovered on trips with Clara to antique stores and architectural salvage shops.

On one of these outings, they picked out several vases and pieces of glassware ("stuff we were madly in love with," says Jean) that turned out to cost a small fortune. Rather than buying on impulse, they decamped to Jean's store to mull over possible alternatives.





ABOVE: At the back of the house, the kitchen, with holophane-style lights and farmhouse sinks, opens onto the breakfast room. **RIGHT:** A conservatory, added off of the kitchen and breakfast room, contributes an upscale Victorian-era detail and brings more light into the house.

PRODUCTS: Bathroom: Fire and Earth wall tiles, Ann Sacks; Etched 4x4 floor tiles, The Fine Line; Victorian copper soaking tub, Diamond Spas, Inc. Conservatory: Conservatory from customized kit, Amdega; Wool sheers, Silk Trading Co.; Drapery hardware, Brimar. Dining Room: Millwork, Der Holtzmacher, Ltd; Chairs (custom), Dessin Fournir; Fantasia Cuivre fabric, Manuel Canovas. Kitchen: Cabinets, Der Holtzmacher; Holophane lights, Architectural Artifacts; Deck-mounted bridge faucets, Kallista. Parlor: Steel fireplace, Architectural Artifacts; Stone surround, Contempo Marble and Granite; Rug, Minasian Rug Company; Mohair upholstery on banquette, Manuel Canovas.

One idea Jean threw out was a shopping trip to Paris. While admittedly an extravagant-sounding suggestion, Jean knew from previous shopping expeditions that the City of Light could provide a wealth of period furnishings to choose from, at prices low enough to offset the costs of travel. Always up for an adventure, Clara immediately pulled out her calendar to find the earliest date she could leave.



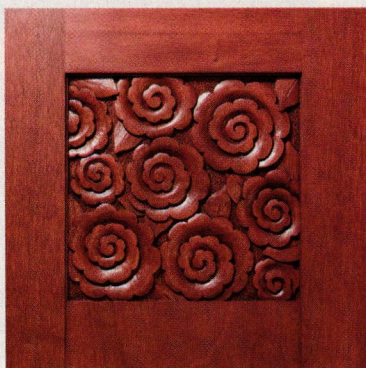
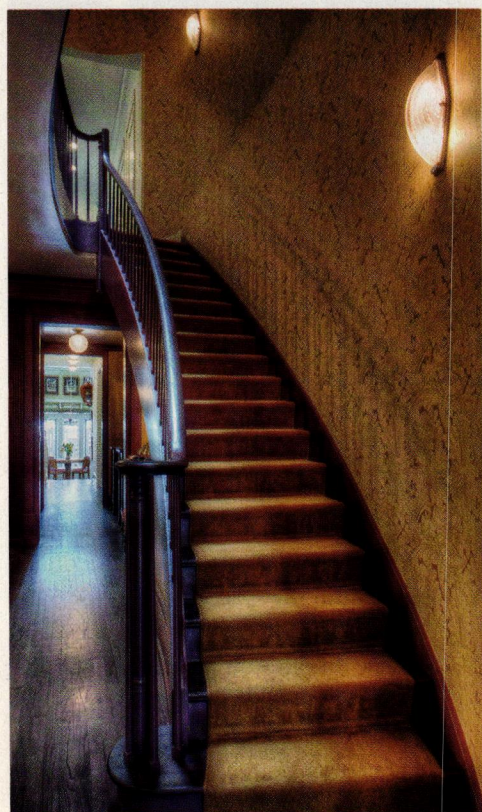
Between Parisian flea markets and antique stores in Italy and the south of France, Clara and Jean found most of the furniture, carpets, dishware, and decorative objects needed to complete the house. Since they were still in the early stages of planning the interior, they were able to integrate their finds fully into the design of each room, using specific pieces as springboards for creative solutions to various challenges.

Dark and Dramatic

The parlor and dining room, for instance, were relatively small and dark, particularly after the “bowling alley” had been divided into separate rooms. Since the house immediately to the south stood just a couple feet away, Clara’s home enjoyed natural light only at the front and back. Initially this had posed a serious problem; Clara was worried that the entrance, parlor, and dining room seemed too dark.

“Whatever we did, we wouldn’t be able to make those rooms light and bright,” Jean remembers. “So I intentionally worked with that and made use of the drama inherent in the space.”

Jean designed the parlor around an antique Persian Amritsar rug, washing the walls with a multicolored glaze of ochre, orange, and yellow, and upholstering the banquette in amethyst mohair. She used the same colors to create custom shades



TOP: Clara's dining table is a 1930s Deco classic; unable to find suitable chairs to accompany it, Jean designed her own. The built-in china cabinet cleverly helps illuminate the naturally dark space. **LEFT:** A sinuously curving staircase, accented by Deco-lined sconces, leads upward from the main floor. **ABOVE:** Kathryn Quinn's stylized floral motif is carved into doors and other woodwork around the house. **OPPOSITE:** Kathryn's Klimt-inspired grillwork accents the sidelights, while a cast medallion by Jean complements the subtly shaded Israeli limestone mosaic floor.

for the windows. As a result, the room has a warm, elegant glow.

The idea for the built-in banquette was Jean's. "She had found a photo of a very old room from that period and said, 'I think we can do this really beautifully,'" remembers Clara. Flanked by a pair of bookcases designed by Kathryn, the banquette provides comfortable seating and display for *objets d'art* while occupying minimal floor area, lending the parlor a sense of spaciousness well beyond its actual size.

Kathryn designed the millwork throughout the house—doors, trim, and cabinetry for the kitchen and master bath, in addition to the elaborate built-ins and paneling in the parlor and dining room. She also devised the stylized floral motif carved into doors and the arms of the parlor banquette. "Clara and I both take a joy in organic form," Kathryn says, explaining that she relished the opportunity

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Amdega: amdega.co.uk

Ann Sacks: annsacks.com

Architectural Artifacts: architecturalartifacts.com

Brimar: brimarinc.com

Contempo Marble & Granite:
(312) 455-0022

Der Holtzmacher, Ltd.: holtzmacher.com

Decorators Supply:
decoratorsupply.com

Dessin Fournir: dessinfournir.com

Diamond Spas, Inc.: diamondspas.com

Kallista: kallista.com

Manuel Canovas: manuelcanovas.com

Minasian Rug Company: minasian.com

Silk Trading Co.: silktradingco.com

The Fine Line: finelinetile.com

to explore the aesthetic shift from Art Nouveau to the more stylized floral representations of Art Deco. To “add another layer of working the wood,” Kathryn specified intricate fluting for the pilasters of the dining room paneling, inspired by the '20s woodwork of Chicago's Casino Club.

Jean incorporated a variation on Kathryn's Art Deco floral motif in the nickel and bronze medallion she designed for the centerpiece of the entry room's mosaic tiled floor. The finished home reflects many such examples of the remarkable collaboration between client, architect, and designer, each of whom gladly took inspiration from elements introduced by the others. “We were so in sync that it's hard to remember exactly whose ideas were whose,” says Clara. The result of their teamwork? A cohesive period interior that looks perfectly right for its setting. 🏠

This house and 17 others are featured in A Home of Her Own, by Nancy R. Hiller with photographs by Kendall Reeves, forthcoming from the Indiana University Press.





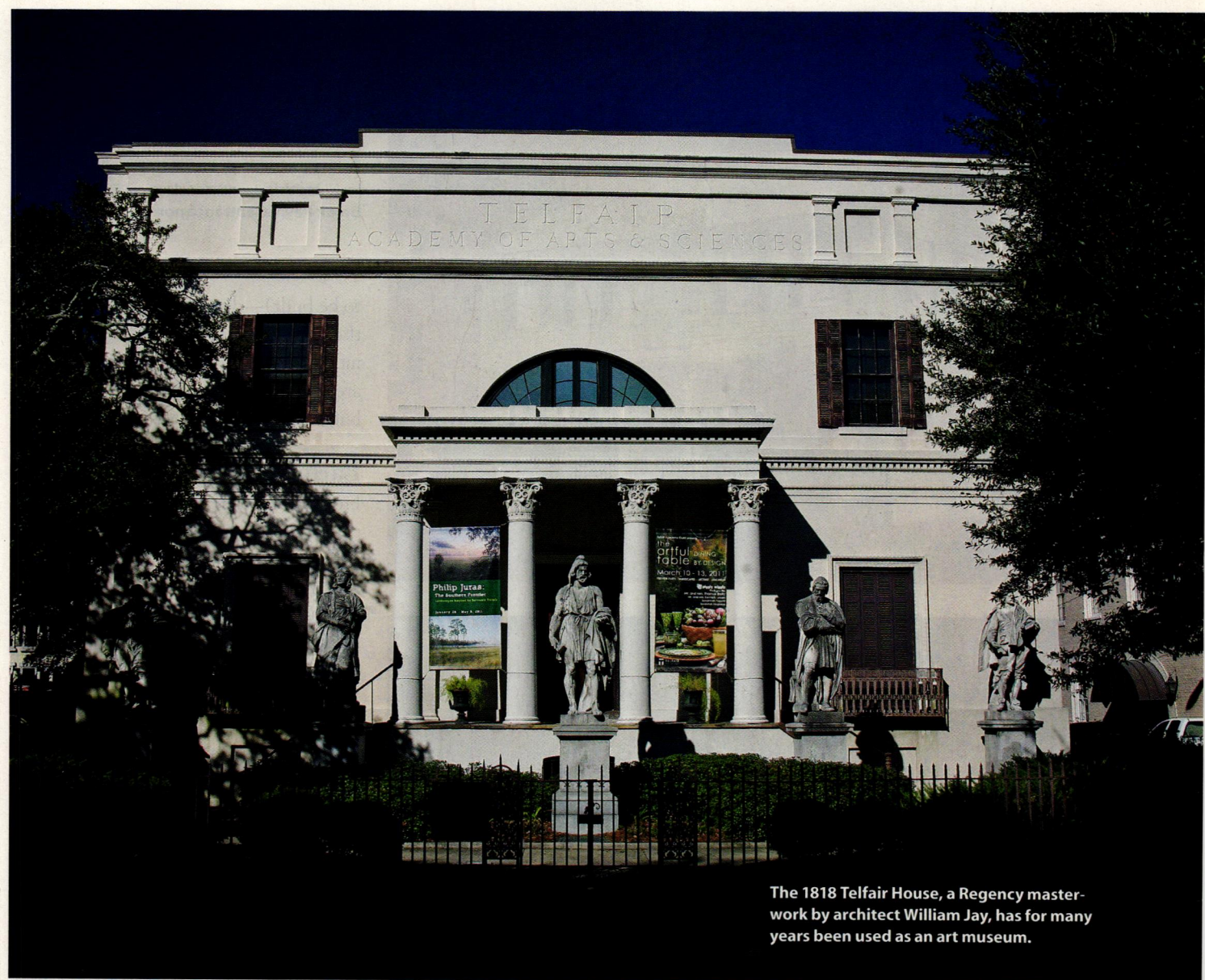
STYLE

In Savannah, houses, buildings, and lush landscapes of all periods blend uniquely together, as in this view of Chippewa Square.

A Splendid Civility

Savannah is a city rich in American and British Federal-era architecture—and generous green spaces.

STORY AND PHOTOS BY JAMES C. MASSEY AND SHIRLEY MAXWELL



The 1818 Telfair House, a Regency masterwork by architect William Jay, has for many years been used as an art museum.

The core of Savannah, Georgia—a National Historic Landmark since 1966—is a series of wards, or neighborhoods, each wrapped around a park-like square and connected by arrow-straight streets with median strips resembling linear forests. The squares calm the relentless traffic in the bustling city center, while the border streets speed it toward farther destinations.

Within the squares, live oak trees wave banners of Spanish moss, creating large patches of dark-velvet shade punctuated by shafts of sunlight. Benches and sculpture invite contemplation; generous brick walkways encourage strolling. The squares are orderly but populous—with the briefcase crowd, the homeless, toddlers and nannies, plaid-skirted schoolgirls, portfolio-juggling art students (the Savannah College of Art and Design occupies many of the city's historic buildings), the occasional camouflage-clad soldier, and, of course, tourists.

The soul of historic Savannah is

this artful network of wooded squares and avenues, laid out by James Edward Oglethorpe when he led the first small band of settlers—mostly refugees from British debtors' prisons—to a barren, sandy bluff above the Savannah River in 1733. And Old Savannah's face is the timeless Federal-style architecture surrounding the squares.

These buildings demand equal attention from Savannah sightseers. Oglethorpe divided the land around the squares into "Trust Lots" (his term for plots reserved for public buildings) and "Tythings" (where citizens' houses were



LEFT, TOP: Unlike most of Savannah's large houses, this Federal frame house doesn't sit on a full raised masonry basement. It is also unusual because it has been converted into a double house.

LEFT, BOTTOM: The 1819 Scarborough House, another of William Jay's Regency designs, includes this grand neoclassical Doric Greek Revival entrance porch.



to be built)—distinctions that blurred as the city grew. Historic Savannah today is mostly houses—and a great many of them are Federal-style houses, even if they were built beyond the Federal period.

Early History

Fires in the late 18th and early 19th centuries destroyed much of Savannah's early building stock, and wars (the French and Indian War, the Revolutionary War, the War of 1812) dampened or delayed rebuilding efforts. Peace returned and prosperity increased in the 19th century. By then Savannah, a thriving seaport for exporting cotton, was ready for bigger and better buildings.

The 1816 arrival of William Jay (1792-1837), a 24-year-old British-born and -trained architect, brought a burst of stylish neoclassical exuberance to Savannah's rather subdued architectural scene. A student of the Regency style (named for King-to-be George IV, who was Prince Regent from 1811 to 1820, during the style's heyday), Jay gave Savannah several glorious Regency-style buildings. All are now museums. They include the Owens-Thomas House, built in 1818; the Telfair House (1818-1819), now the Telfair Museum, which was renovated to add a sculpture gallery and a rotunda before becoming the Telfair Academy of Arts and Sciences in 1886; Scarborough House (1819), now the Ships and the Sea Maritime Museum; and the 1821 Wayne-Gordon House, now the Juliette Gordon Low Girl Scout National Center, which, like a number of Savannah's two-story Federal-era houses, gained an additional story during the Victorian period.

English Regency buildings were unde-



ABOVE: The dramatic Regency side porch of the Owens-Thomas House, 1818, displays a wealth of neoclassical detail that's raised on four cast-iron console-like posts imported from England.

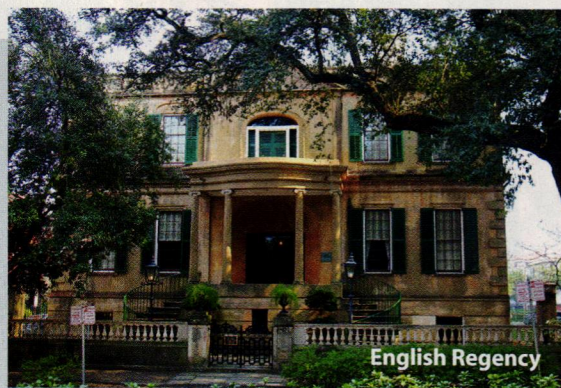
niably beautiful and impressive, but the style didn't always suit America's (and particularly Georgia's) more conservative tastes and pocketbooks. The less-grandiose Federal style was more appealing to the new republic.

Savannah Specialties

Cast-iron balconies, railings, and columns enrich the fronts and sides of many otherwise unassuming Federal-style houses, as well as those of English Regency design. Some of the ironwork on William Jay's houses is thought to have been imported from England, but much was probably made in America.

It's impossible to overlook the lengthy exterior stairs leading to and from front doors: not straight up and down, but veering to one side—or both. Sometimes, in double houses, the steps to the two entrances nearly meet, like good neighbors, at the bottom. Extended stairs were necessary because basements are almost invariably high—generally a full story—perhaps as a concession to the area's high water table or to garner space for service areas.

The prevalence of extant Federal-style frame buildings is



Compare and Contrast:

English Regency & American Federal

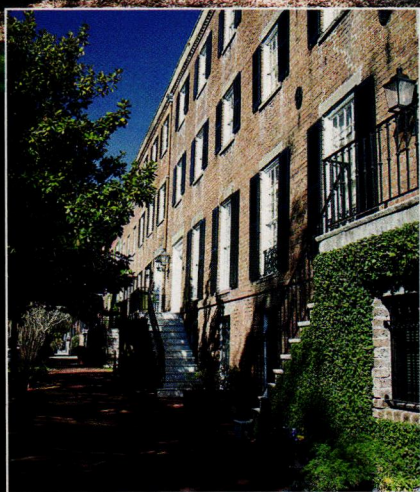
England's Regency and America's Federal styles were both products of the late 18th and early 19th centuries, both of British birthright, both with neoclassical ornament and symmetrical massing, so there's a strong family resemblance. However, there are also some big differences.

Regency, the more formal of the two, is boldly classical. It flaunts big, decorative entry porticos; ornate columns and pilasters; curving entries; "bow rooms" and rounded bays on the rear of houses; look-at-me triple widows on the upper floors; and rich use of wrought- and cast-iron ornament inside and out. Regency speaks with the confidence of an architectural superstar.

Conversely, the delicate lines and discreet ornament of the Federal style, especially in Savannah, are dignified but not pompous. In the drama of Savannah's architectural past, the Federal style is not a scene-stealing diva, but rather a solid supporting player—and that perhaps accounts for its unflagging popularity well into the middle of the 19th century, even beyond the Civil War. Savannah's finest Federal-style example is the elegant stucco-and-brownstone Davenport House of 1820.

Characteristics of the Federal style include flat, shadowless wall surfaces and restrained decoration; elliptical or semicircular fanlights above entrance doors, but no sidelights (at least until the 1830s-40s); unobtrusive cornices or corbelled brick cornices and friezes; and windows with flat lintels called "jack arches" and no trim at the sides. Brownstone trim was occasionally used on stuccoed masonry houses. Floor-length windows at the second floor signal that the principal formal spaces for receiving visitors and entertaining are located there. Windows are usually larger than in Georgian-era houses, but not as large as those in later Greek Revival buildings.





TOP, LEFT: Arched, leaded fanlights distinguish this pair of brick Federal houses, while the doors have later Victorian arched panels. TOP, RIGHT: One of the best Federal frame houses, raised on a full basement, is the circa-1820 Francis Stone House. The staircase and entry porch show a main living floor on the upper level.

ABOVE: One of Savannah's famed city squares, peppered with old live oaks (some dripping in moss), on an atmospheric morning. Such squares give the city much of its character, while slowing traffic to a civilized pace.

LEFT: The Mary Marshall Row is one of several rows of Federal-style houses. It was built in 1855, after showy Victorian designs had arrived, when the more restrained Federal style continued to be preferred in Savannah.



The Thomas Williams House, circa 1808, is unusually wide but has more typical high proportions. Despite fires, frame building traditions persisted in Savannah's historic district.

striking because, in dense urban areas such as Old Savannah, they were usually banned as fire hazards. Whether the house is of frame, brick, or stuccoed

tabby, however, the raised basements are always masonry. Exposed bricks are often the large, soft, locally produced, and much sought-after "Savannah Greys,"

with distinctive mottled surfaces.

Row houses became fashionable here during the Federal period, and they continued to be built—often still in the Federal style—well into the post-Civil War period. Savannah's long, unbroken ranges of uniformly designed row houses are unique in the South.

And here's something to think upon: Savannah, conceived as a last-chance haven for down-and-out Britons, designed by a man who could never have imagined an automobile, and built on what an early visitor called "a pile of sand," is today a lush, driveable city that makes modern visitors of any nationality feel rich as royalty. 🏡

Seeing Savannah

Savannah's Federal-style sights aren't connected. Get a historic district map at the Savannah Chamber of Commerce, 101 E. Bay Street, or download one from savannahchamber.com. Organize your tour by hitting several famous squares—Telfair, Oglethorpe, Warren, and Columbia—and the Parkway (Oglethorpe Avenue). Most of the best viewing is on or adjacent to one of them.

Expect parking headaches, especially in downtown Savannah. Savannah's meter maids take their job seriously—bring quarters and some golden dollar coins. And be prepared to circle the block a time or three.

Or, to get an overview of major historic sites, you could leave the driving to the pros. Tour buses take leisurely turns around the squares, stopping often for photo ops. Then there's the clip-clop option: horse-drawn carriages. In fine weather, well-shod tourists might hoof it themselves, savoring squares, architecture, and shopping (try Broughton Street). Remember, though: brick and stone, not smooth cement, rule on the streets and sidewalks of Old Savannah.

When you're too tired to tour, you might seek out one of Savannah's ubiquitous historically housed bed-and-breakfasts or restaurants.

Further Reading

Savannah Architectural Tours by Jonathan E. Stalcup (Schiffer, 2008)

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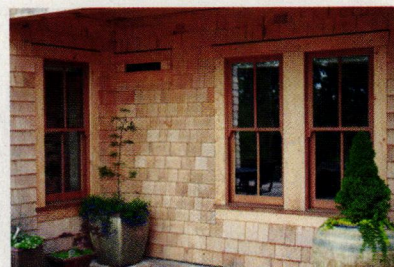


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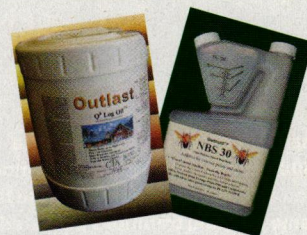
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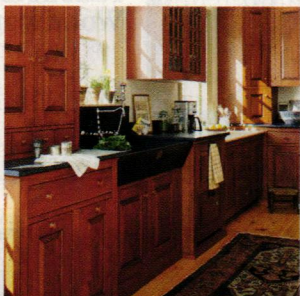


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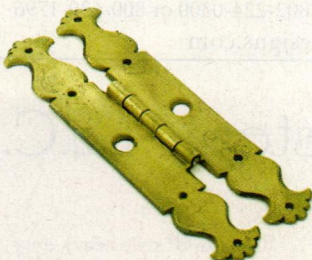


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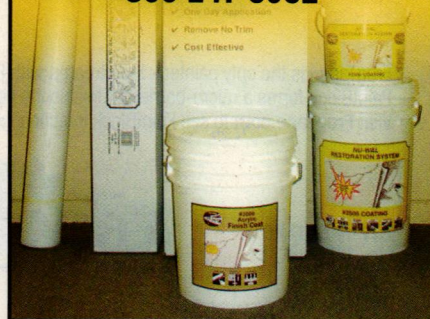
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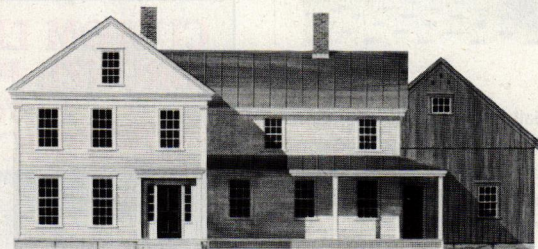


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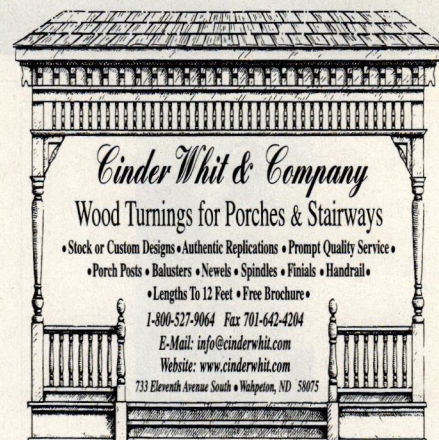
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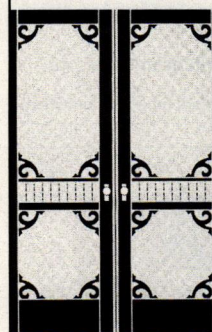
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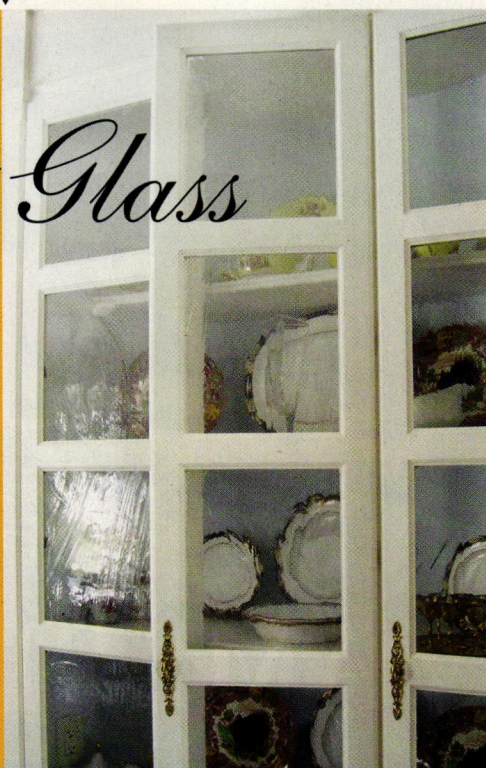
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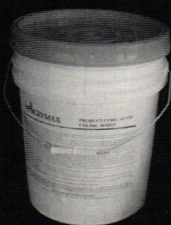
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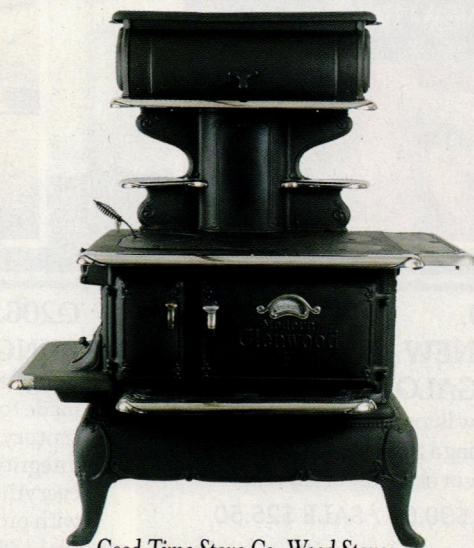


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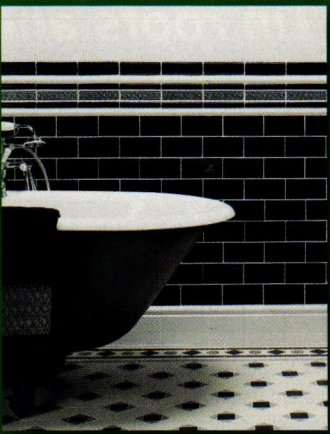
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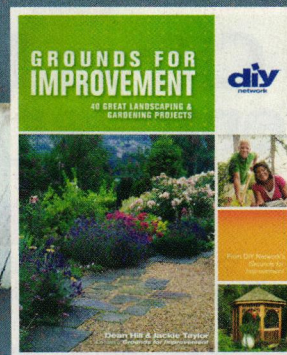
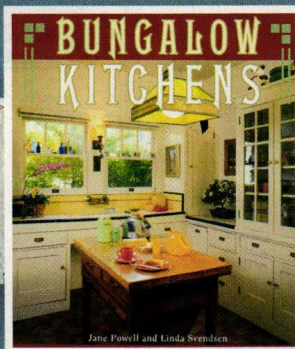
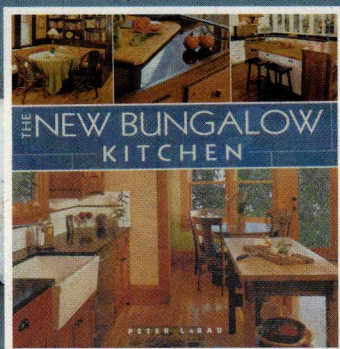


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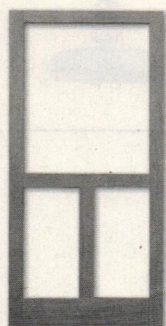
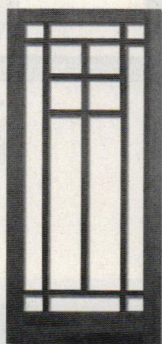
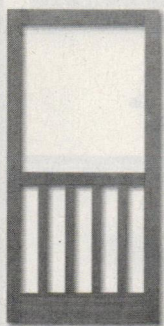
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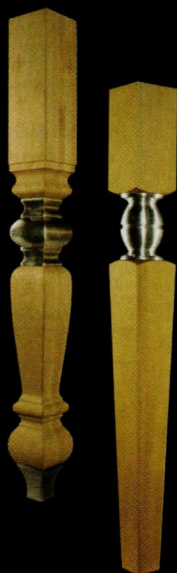


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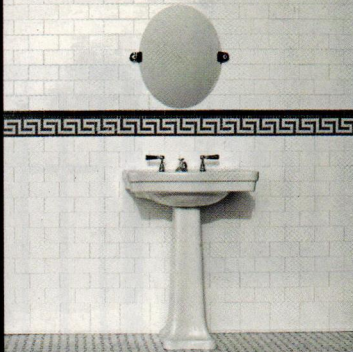


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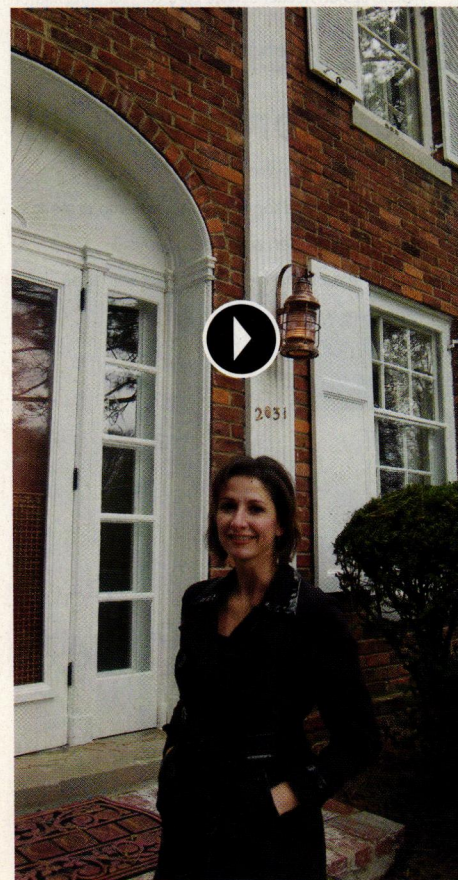


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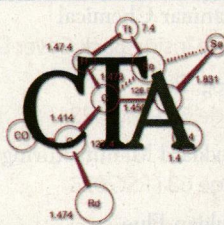
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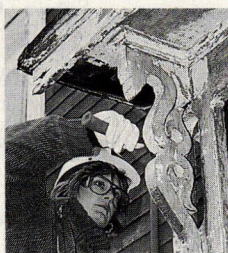


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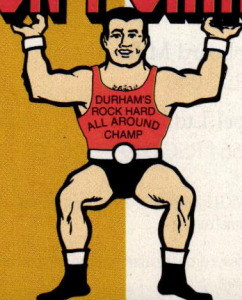
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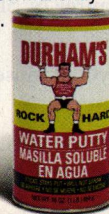
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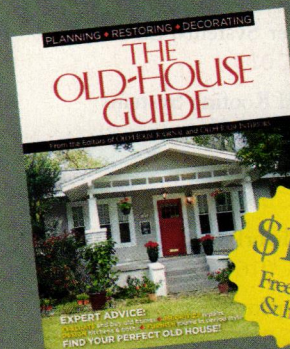
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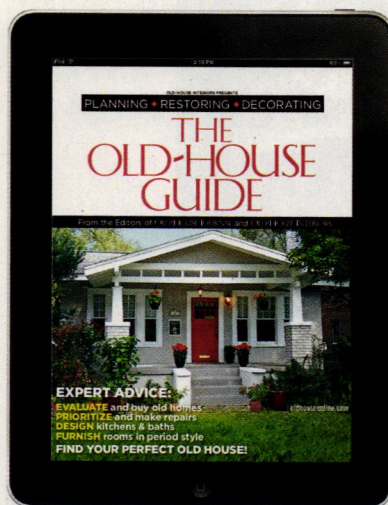
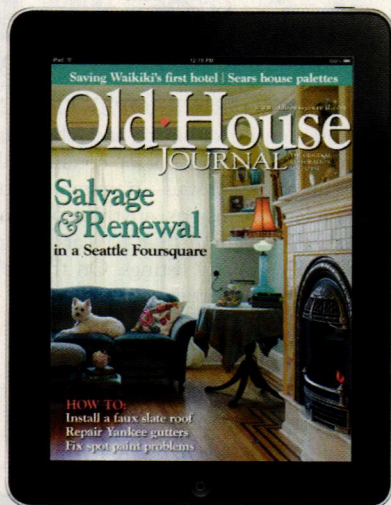
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Historic Properties

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PLANO, IL—Exquisite 1881 Painted Lady Albert H. Sears House, National Register listed; 2-acre corner lot, beautiful landscaping with mature trees, evergreens, and hosta beds. 5 bedrooms, 2 full baths, 2 staircases, beautiful oak woodwork, pocket doors and fretwork. Master sitting room with turret and original stained glass, formal dining room, 3 parlors, library/office with custom built-in cabinetry, butler's pantry, 2 screened sun porches, wrap-around porch; detached 2-1/2 car garage. Professionally decorated. A must see! \$449,000. 630-552-4322 or info@langguthdesign.com

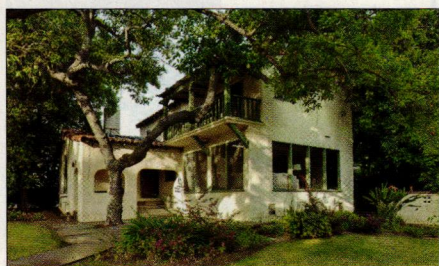
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MONROVIA, CA—Located on prestigious Highland Place in north Monrovia, this two-story 1930 Spanish Hacienda with Mission influences is overflowing with history, charm and potential. 4 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, 2,220 sq.ft. on a 18,639 sq.ft. double lot. Potential historic landmark with significant property tax savings through the Mills Act Contract. \$949,000. Donna Baker, Director of Heritage Homes Podley Properties, 626-408-1408, www.4SaleByDonna.com



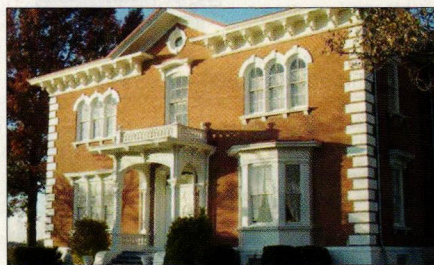
PALO ALTO, CA—Magnificent Crescent Park estate designed circa 1897. Situated in desirable North Palo Alto this spacious three-story Queen Anne Dutch Colonial style home is one of Palo Alto's most cherished residences. 7 bedrooms and 6.5 baths situated on over 7,000 sq.ft. of living space on beautifully groomed grounds of approximately one-half acre. \$3,998,000. Leannah Hunt & Laurel Robinson, Coldwell Banker, 650-752-0730, www.509HaleStreet.com



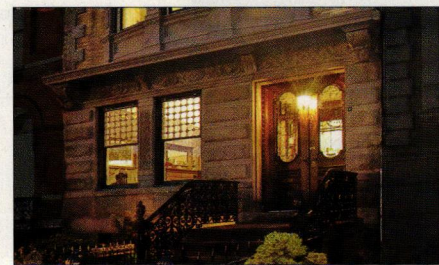
PAONIA, CO—The Bross Hotel opened for business in 1906. Totally renovated, the hotel retains its turn-of-the-century charm with 10 guestrooms, each w/private bath, gracious lobby & dining rooms, conference room/lounge, commercial kitchen, & owners' quarters. Porches, decks, flower gardens, huge old cottonwoods. Turn-key operation as a B&B, but potential for making your dream come true. \$800,000. Bernadette Stech, Paonia Realty, cell: 970-261-5928. www.paoniarealty.com



FORSYTH, GA—Miller House. 1905 Victorian railroad cottage. House is 2 rooms deep with a central hallway on just under an acre of land. Located 0.5 miles from the historic Forsyth town square and one mile from I-75. Zoned commercial or residential. House requires extensive rehabilitation. May qualify for tax incentives. \$20,000. Kate Ryan, Preservation Services, The Georgia Trust, kryan@georgiitrust.org or 404-885-7817, www.georgiitrust.org



LEXINGTON, MO—Linwood Lawn, a 26-room 1858 museum-quality Italianate, is the most remarkable antebellum mansion on the western border. The estate consists of 224 acres with 10 commercial, 130 tillable, 5-acre producing vineyard, 17 acres deep tilled and more suitable for grapes. Don't miss this once in a lifetime opportunity. \$2,350,000. Call Brant & Michelle Neer, Welcome Home Realty, 660-259-2700, www.WelcomeHomeRealty-mo.com



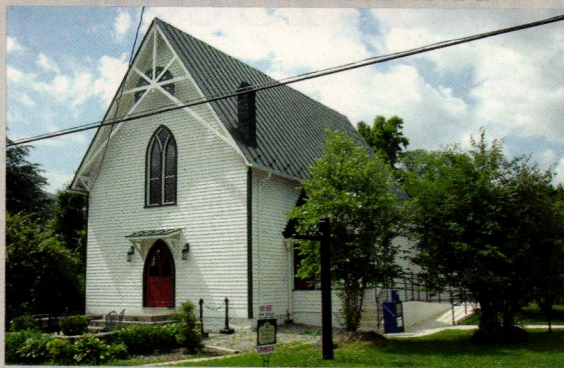
HOBOKEN, NJ—Extraordinary brownstone. This grand 1880s single family home with bonus apartment maintains all the original Victorian detail including museum quality woodwork, 7 fireplaces (5 working), intricate parquet floors, high ceilings, mahogany sideboard and working dumbwaiter. This very rare offering, only minutes from midtown Manhattan, is ideal for the urban family and grand entertaining. \$2,249,999. Bo Dzman, Hudson Place Realty, 201-913-1988, www.hudsonplacerealty.com

Historic Properties



LEETONIA, OH—1859 Italianate restored. 3,700 sq.ft. with 5 bedrooms, library, 2 parlors, formal dining room, conservatory solarium, and 900 sq.ft. remodeled gourmet kitchen. 6 original marble fireplaces, curved black walnut staircase, 10-foot ceilings, and original woodwork throughout. 3-car garage. 1.3 acre corner lot in historical neighborhood. 1 hour to Pittsburgh, Cleveland, Akron or Canton; 20 minutes to Youngstown. \$243,000. Michael or Kelly, 330-719-2012.

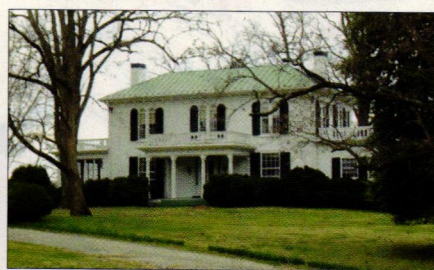
SPOTLIGHT PROPERTY



SPERRYVILLE, VA—The Stonewall Abbey. This Sperryville icon has tremendous potential as a restaurant, shop, gallery or home. It is located on historic Main Street in the heart of Sperryville's charming business district. Formerly an Episcopal church, this 100+ year-old building was remodeled and updated in 2008 with a comfortable apartment, central heat, air conditioning, new metal seamed roof, full ADA compliance and new exterior painting. \$569,000. Martin Woodard, Roy Wheeler Realty, 540-987-8500 or martin@cheriwoodard.com. www.cheriwoodard.com



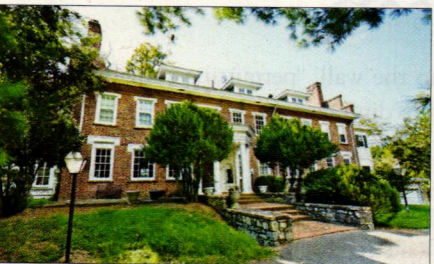
AUSTIN, TX—Renowned Swiss wood-carver Peter Mansbendel designed this unique house for his daughter in 1934 and decorated it with his carvings. For sale for the first time outside the family. It has 3 bedrooms, 2 baths, formal living, dining and family room. Located in the Hyde Park Historic District in Central Austin. Needs some work; eligible for tax incentives. \$499,000. Lin Team, Old Austin Realtor, The Kinney Company 512-472-1930. www.thekinneycompany.com



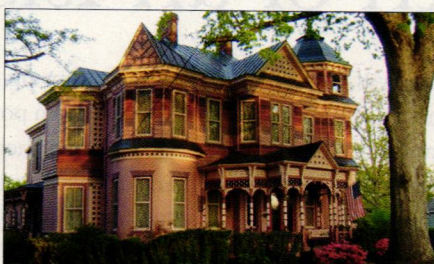
CHARLOTTE COURT HOUSE, VA—1847 Italianate 5,285 sq.ft. manor house on 60 acres. Private lane with woods on left and rolling pasture and pond on right. To the rear of the manor house is a 2,336 sq. ft. guesthouse with central HVAC and in-home generator. Separate cottage. 2 garage buildings with carports, old mill barn, several sheds and 2-stall horse barn. Pastoral views. \$825,000. Max Sempowski, Antique Properties, division of Keller Williams, 434-391-4855. www.oldhouseproperties.com



CLARKSVILLE, VA—Built about 1763. Excellent 2 over 2 home boasts 2 bedrooms, 1 bath, original fireplaces in each major room, English basement, high ceilings and much, much more. On 5 private acres. \$319,900. Call about United Country's Specialty Catalog featuring vintage homes, grand old mansions, farms and ranches steeped in history plus other real estate with historic significance. United Country, 800-999-1020, Ext 108. www.unitedcountry.com/old



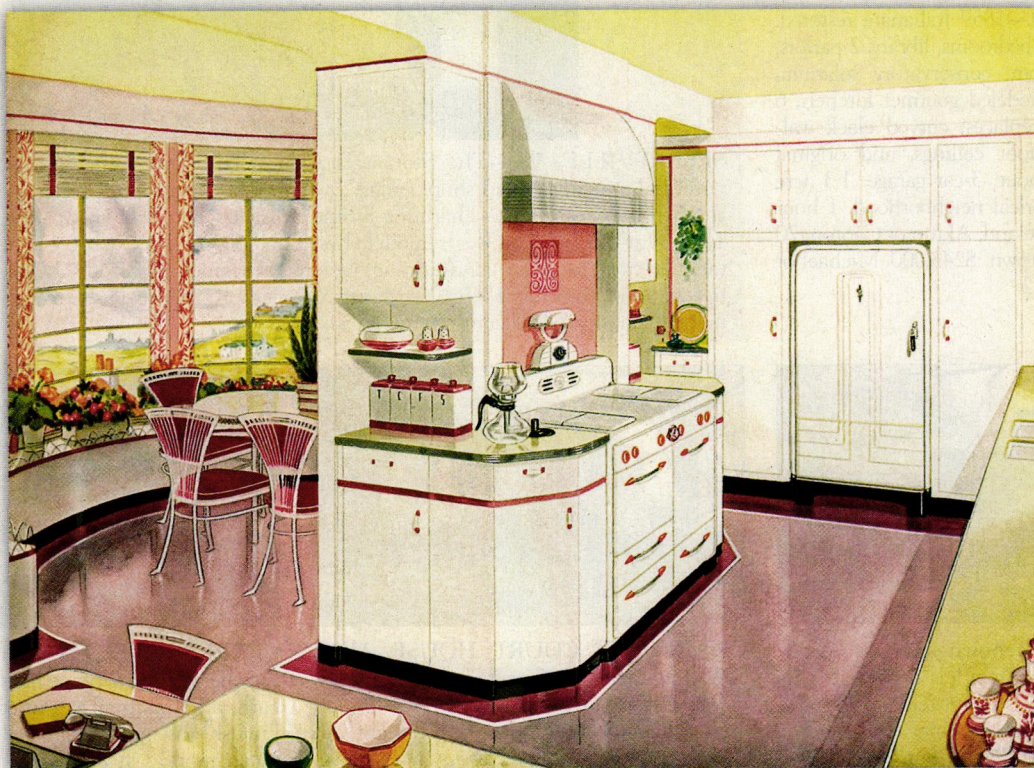
ROCKBRIDGE COUNTY, VA—Forest Oaks, circa 1806-10. Spectacular home on 45 acres of meadows & forest - 10,000 sq. ft., 24+ rooms, 10 fireplaces & English walnut trim. Magnificent views of meadows & Blue Ridge Mountains. Large guest cottage, stable & barn. On National Register. Near Natural Bridge, Historic Lexington, Washington & Lee University, Virginia Military Institute, and Virginia Horse Center. \$1,495,000. James Wm. Moore Real Estate Co., 540-463-7080. www.jwmre.com



SOUTHBOSTON, VA—High Victorian 1892 Queen Anne. 4 different styles of wood shingles and 3 porches exhibiting gingerbread spindle work. The interior is grand with geometric tile in the foyer and different parquet floors. Elegant wood carvings throughout. 9 fireplaces with period mantels and original tiles. This spacious 6,000 sq.ft. house is listed on the National Register. \$657,000. Max Sempowski, Antique Properties, division of Keller Williams, 434-391-4855. www.oldhouseproperties.com



VERNON HILL, VA—Dunn Hill Farm, circa 1860. Painstakingly restored farmhouse on 139 acres. Matching staircases, original woodwork, glazing, and mantels. Architecturally sympathetic addition incorporates kitchen/keeping room with fireplace and gracious master suite. 3 bedroom guesthouse features reclaimed beams and heart pine cabinets. Pool, large pond, and specimen magnolias complete the property. \$895,000. Don Skelly, Frank Hardy, Inc., 540-406-1370. www.farmandestate.net



Today Kitchens Are Planned, Gas Industry of Southern California, 1941

Birth of an Island

Island Provides Easy Access” was the marketing headline—and novel concept—associated with the illustration above, in a booklet entitled *Today Kitchens Are Planned*, published by California gas industry interests in 1941. (Their primary interest, of course, was selling new gas appliances.)

Incorporating the latest trends in domestic engineering and efficiency, this forward-looking kitchen is packed with plenty of progressive ideas: tightly fitted modular cabinets, a new-fangled range-sink-refrigerator work triangle, a control center for daily menu and schedule planning, and a “breakfast bay” with a hinged

table that flips up into the wall, “permitting straight-line traffic from porch to dining room.”

And then there’s the island: While its World War II-era existence might surprise some, this illustration actually tells a more nuanced story. Though this nascent island indeed floats freely in a sea of pastel linoleum, it also remains umbilically attached to the ceiling—an idea not quite fully born yet. The responsibility of cutting that cord would be left to future generations. 🏠

Bo Sullivan is the historian for Rejuvenation and the owner of Arcalus Period Design in Portland, Oregon. He is an avid collector and researcher of original trade catalogs.

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remuddling



Doing Time

LIKE BAD decisions that have long repercussions, the quest to gain more space in old houses can sometimes result in unintended—but dire—consequences. Take, for example, these two mid-century split-level homes in the same neighborhood. One (at left) faces the street with original brickwork, double-hung windows accented with shutters and period flower boxes, a two-car garage, and an entry door and transom window that sit flush with the home's main wall. On the other (at right), the bricks are now blocked in with vertical stripes of siding, the windows and flower boxes locked together and bumped out into bays, the garage doors permanently sealed, and the entry recessed beneath a protruding window “turret” that resembles a watchtower.

“The garage now looks like a jail cell, complete with bars,” notes our contributor. We wonder whether the owner intended to make a house arrest? 🏠

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OLD-HOUSE JOURNAL (ISSN #0094-0178) is published six times a year: January, March, May, July, September, and November by Home Buyer Publications and Active Interest Media Inc. The known office of publication is located at 475 Sansome Street, Suite 850, San Francisco, CA 94111. The editorial office is located at 4125 Lafayette Center Drive, Suite 100, Chantilly, VA 20151; 703-222-9411; 800-826-3893; fax: 703-222-3209. Periodicals postage paid at San Francisco, CA, and additional offices. Vol. 39, No. 3. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Old-House Journal, P.O. Box 420235, Palm Coast, FL 32142-0235. SUBSCRIPTIONS: For subscription questions or address changes, call 800-234-3797 (US only), 386-447-2398 (outside the US). Subscription rates are: US: \$27 per year, Canada: \$35 per year, Other countries: \$41 per year. COPYRIGHT: 2011 by Cruz Bay Publishing, Inc. This publication may not be reproduced, either in whole or part, in any form without written permission from the publisher. PRINTING: RR Donnelly, Strasburg, VA. Printed in the USA.