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# Old House

## JOURNAL

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## Arts & Crafts Fireplaces

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A Bungalow Beauty

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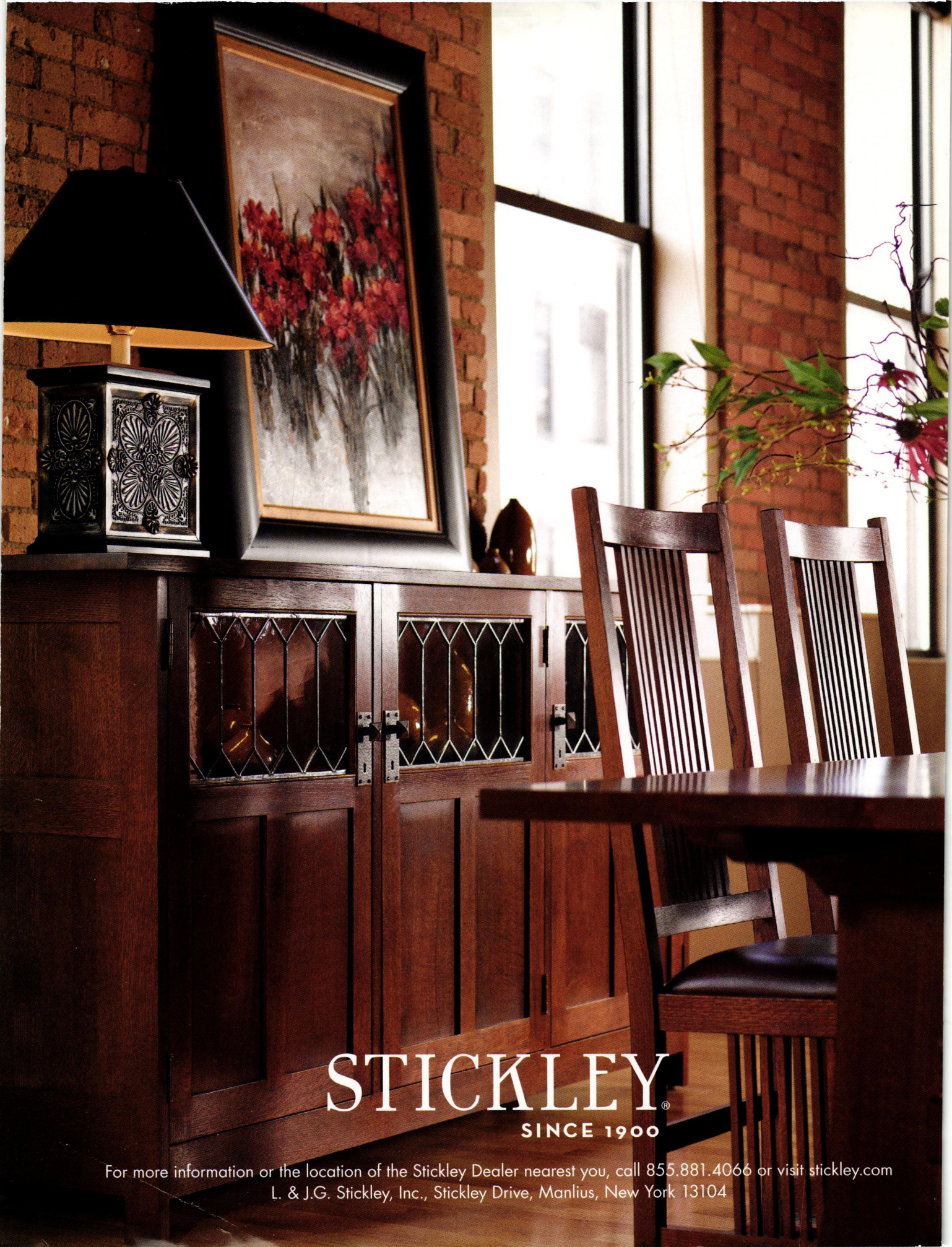
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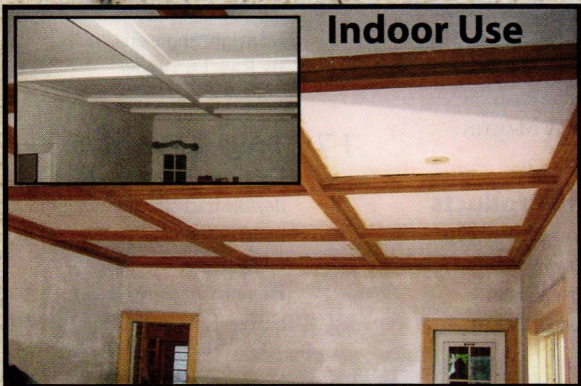
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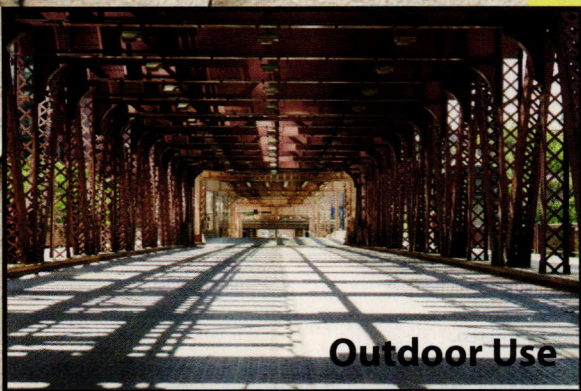
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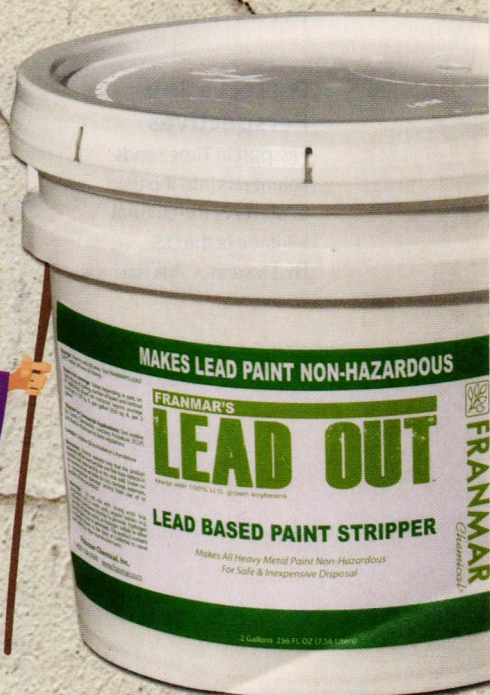
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# Old House JOURNAL



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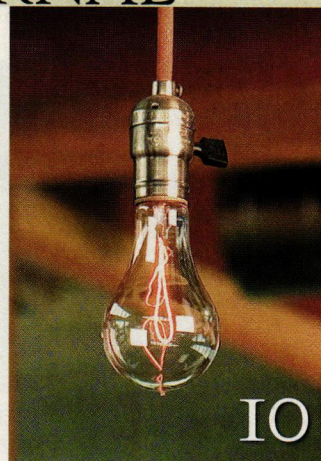
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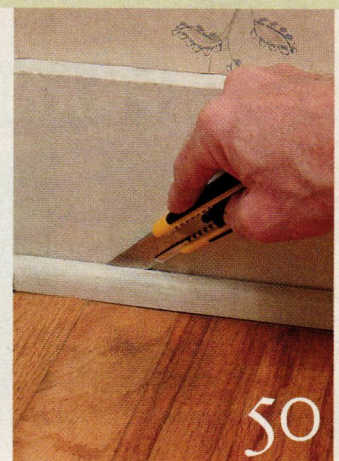
Bring some flair to your bungalow with these Arts & Crafts-style picks.

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By THE OHJ EDITORIAL STAFF

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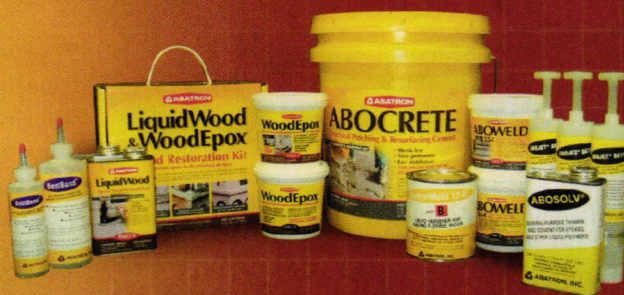
Cover: Photo by Linda Svendsen. Glazed green tile and an oak mantel make for an arresting fireplace in a Memphis bungalow. Story page 22.

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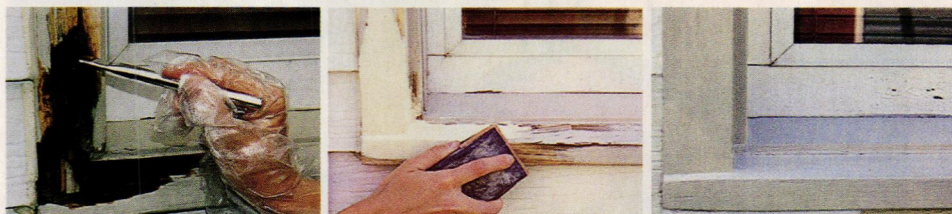
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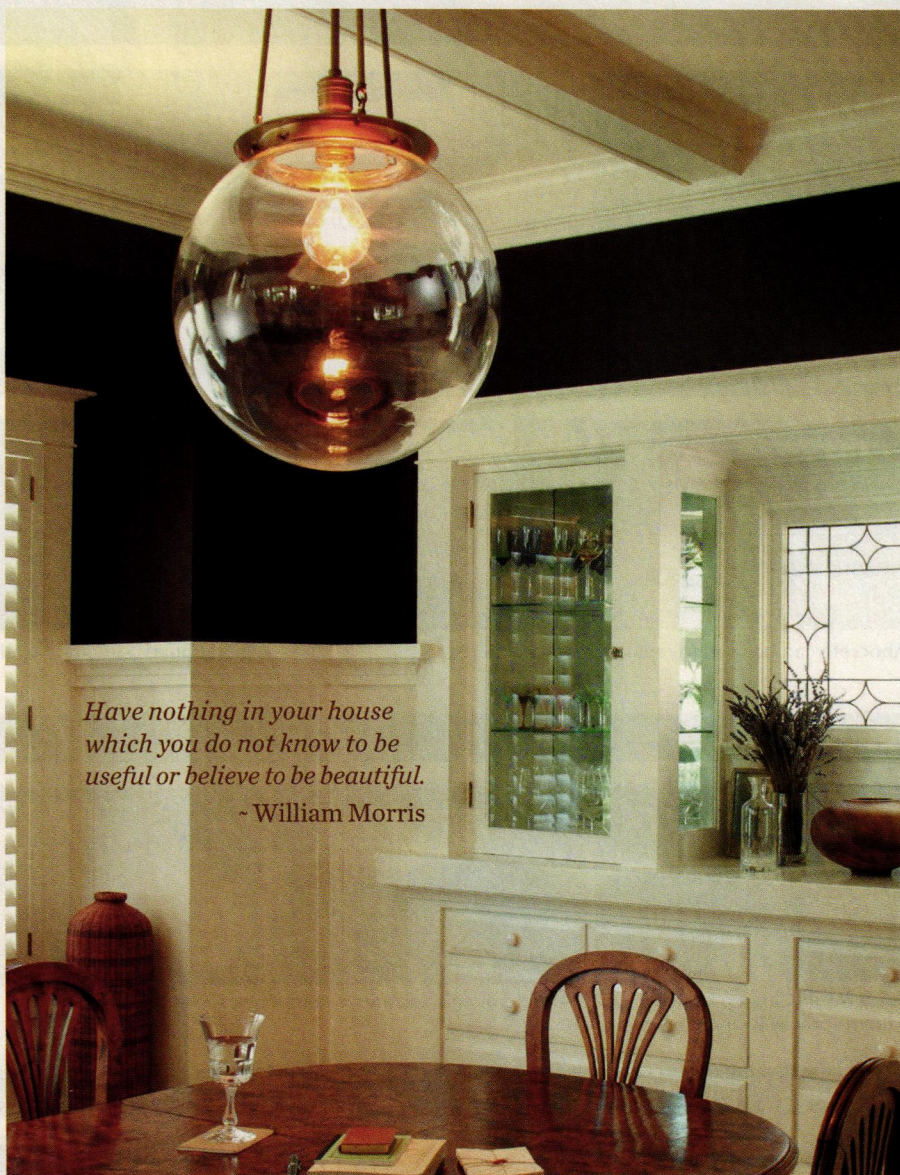
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### What Not to Ring

On the whole, multitone vintage chimes (see page 30 for more) are a sweet-sounding antidote to today's electronic doorbells. But as antique doorbell expert

Tim Wetzel explains, there are some vintage chimes you're better off avoiding, whether it's because they're prone to problems, difficult to repair, or nearly impossible to find replacement parts for. Before you invest in a set of vintage chimes, read Wetzel's blacklist and save yourself a few headaches.



### Arts & Crafts Fireplaces to Go

Whether they're tucked inside an inglenook or boasting an eye-catching tile surround, fireplaces in Arts & Crafts homes are understandably revered centerpieces. Once you've read up on their history on page 22, consult our online guide to see where you can spot some one-of-a-kind fireplaces in the wild. Whether you need restoration inspiration or an excuse for a mid-winter getaway, these cozy corners are sure to hit the spot.

### Share Your Budget Ideas

No one ever said restoring an old house was an inexpensive endeavor—but there are ways to stretch your budget without compromising on the quality of your restoration. Homeowners Tim and Paula Schmitt accomplished it by taking their time to tackle projects and doing whatever work they could themselves (see their story on page 34). Log on to our special forum to share your own cost-saving tips and get ideas from fellow old-house owners.

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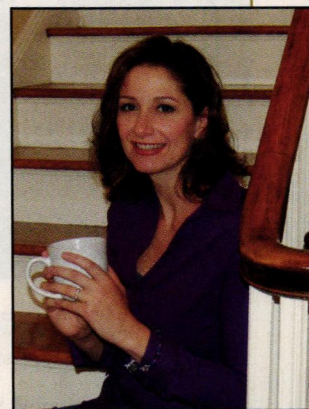
## Working Harder

FOR THIS FIRST OHJ issue in 2012, we thought we'd give the magazine a couple of tweaks to ring in the New Year. I've been hearing that you'd like to see more how-to in our pages, and I've been listening. For starters, we'll have a brand-new two-page story in every issue that outlines a simple—but critical—old-house repair. In this issue, we explain how to remove molding without breaking it, something every old-house owner will need to do sooner or later to patch in broken pieces or refinish woodwork (see *Restore It Right*, page 50). You'll also find more instruction in stories like "Ring My Bell," an overview of vintage door chimes with insights on how to get them sounding again (see page 30). Expect, too, to see more hands-on articles featuring DIY tips from pros over the next year, like this issue's "Custom-Carved Cove" (page 40), which details how to make cove molding from stock lumber. Even our classic historic overview articles will get a little more hands-on; in this issue, bungalow queen Jane Powell both examines the architectural diversity of Arts & Crafts fireplaces and gives tips for restoring them (see "Hearth of the Matter," page 22).

Arts & Crafts is a popular topic in February, because that's when Asheville, North Carolina's Grove Park Inn holds its annual conference on the subject, drawing devotees from all over the country. To celebrate this event's 25th anniversary, I invited its director, Bruce Johnson, to walk us through his favorite Asheville highlights in *My Town*. You won't be surprised to learn that the Grove Park Inn makes his list—see what else did beginning on page 18. For more bungalow inspirations, check out *Old-House Insider*, which chronicles a creative approach to this classic house style both inside and out (see page 44).

Finally, since I've been having so much fun exploring the architecture of my new home state of Michigan, I asked Style gurus James C. Massey and Shirley Maxwell to overview one of my newfound treasures: the Ford Homes District in Dearborn. It seems that in addition to bringing multiple innovations to car manufacturing, Henry Ford brought some to neighborhood development as well (see "Neighborhood Assembly," page 56). His visionary approach to building houses resulted in a distinctive, charming community we old-house folks would all be proud to call home.

Be sure to let us know how you like these changes, and what else you'd like to see in the magazine. I always enjoy hearing from you.



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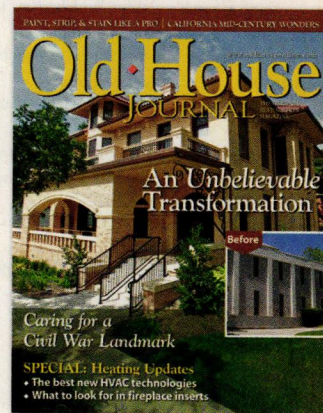
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# letters

## Feeling the Heat

I've been a longtime reader of OHJ; your recent feature on high-velocity mini-duct HVAC systems ["Small Wonder," December/January] was of special interest to me. I live in a not-so-old (1937) house that has single-pipe steam heat, and about a decade ago, I installed a high-velocity system for air conditioning.

The biggest benefit of the system came when I decided to put in a geothermal heating and cooling system. Because we had already installed a forced-air system, the change was fairly simple (changing the air handler, installing the geothermal unit, and drilling wells). The pay-off has been fantastic. We went from burning through countless gallons of oil and the temperature swings and balancing issues that come with a steam system to much lower overall energy consumption and constant, even heat. Our old house now has a fairly cutting-edge, energy-saving heating system. And if we feel nostalgic, we can still crank up the boiler and feel the steam!



Peter Rothstein

Huntingdon, Pennsylvania

## Going Soft

Your sidebar about different types of mortar [in "Stone by Stone," October/November] was great—I have very soft brick that was hand-fired in the front yard back in 1871. The problem is, I cannot find Type O or K mortar mix. Is there a way to make N mortar mix into the softer O mix? Or do you know of a dealer who sells this mix?

Keith Lewis

Via email

According to author Steve Jordan, you cannot buy type O or K mortar premixed; it must be mixed on site. "To make a lime mortar today," he says, "masons use modern hydrated lime and sand. Most masons agree that mixing the mortar a day or more ahead improves workability. Many masons also prefer adding Portland cement to improve the workability and decrease set-up time. For Type K mortar, mix 1 part Portland cement (white or gray), 3 parts lime, and 10 parts sand; for Type O, mix 1 part Portland cement, 2 parts lime, and 9 parts sand." For more on historic mortar formulas, see Technical Preservation Services Preservation Brief 2 at [nps.gov/hps/tps/briefs/brief02.htm](http://nps.gov/hps/tps/briefs/brief02.htm). —Eds.

## Reader Tip of the Month

When my wife and I put a new kitchen in our old house, we had a window that dipped below the height of the countertops. Instead of modifying the window opening (which would have involved replacing exterior siding), we simply dropped the level of the countertop below the window opening by using an upper cabinet with a false toe-kick below and the countertop above. It created a unique “nook” area, broke up the monotony of continuous countertops, and provided a perfect spot to unload grocery bags.

Andy Streenz

Via MyOldHouseOnline.com

**Got a great tip to share with other old-house lovers? Let us know at [OHJEditorial@homebuyerpubs.com](mailto:OHJEditorial@homebuyerpubs.com).**

## Ghosts Busted

In regard to your story about haunted houses [“Is Your House Haunted?”, October/November], I am a ghosthunter as a hobby. EMF detectors are used mainly to look for EMF in houses in high amounts. Old homes tend to have this problem; the occupants will claim the house is haunted, but will find out that their exposure to high EMF was causing hallucinations and creepy feelings. Often, when the electrical issues are resolved, the “haunting” goes away.



JMB PHOTO/FOOTIA.COM

Diagnosing a house as haunted by using an EMF detector is just plain incorrect.

Emily

Via OldHouseOnline.com

You're right, Emily. We have a 100-year-old home, and every few years around spring, we heard a child sobbing—at first outside, then in the house. My daughter heard her name called. Whisperings and footsteps late at night were also common. Finally, we replaced our electrical system, and that ended our “haunting.”

Janeen

Via OldHouseOnline.com

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MARCH 16-18  
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### Historic Home Show

Sponsored by *Old-House Journal* and *Old-House Interiors*, the popular suburban Philly show has a new location, but the same mix of free workshops, demonstrations, and old-house-friendly exhibits. (800) 782-1253; historichomeshow.com

MARCH 24-25

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## ON THE RADAR

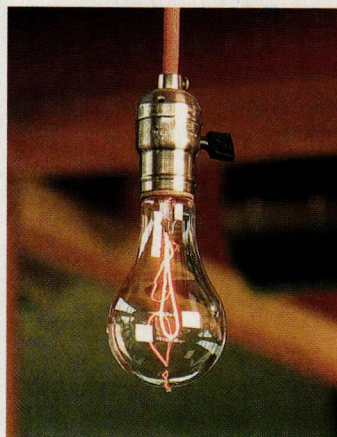
# Lights Out for Incandescents

Since the debut of the carbon filament lightbulb more than a century ago, the warm glow emitted by incandescent bulbs has become a staple of old-house interiors. But when the Energy Independence and Security Act goes into effect in January, incandescent bulbs as we know them will begin to disappear from store shelves.

Cathy Choi, a certified lighting specialist for Bulbrite, likens the change to increased fuel-efficiency standards for automobiles. Beginning in January 2012, bulbs with a brightness equal to 100 watts can only consume a maximum of 72 watts of energy; over the next two years, the efficiency requirements will be upped for 75-, 60-, and 40-watt bulbs, too.

As an alternative, Bulbrite offers halogen bulbs that meet the new standards and are comparable to incandescents in appearance, price, and light quality. "Halogen is a type of incandescent bulb, so the way it produces light is very similar," Choi explains. "It's a very easy transition." Halogen bulbs also are easily dimmable, making them a good choice for fixtures hooked up to a dimmer switch.

If you're looking for greater energy gains than hal-



Specialty bulbs (like historic reproductions) won't be affected by the law.

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ogen bulbs provide, Rejuvenation product manager Tina King points to the advances that have been made in compact fluorescent (CFL) and LED bulbs. "Most consumers still think of the cool light that the first CFLs produced, but the technology has greatly improved." CFLs are given a color temperature rating, she explains, typically between 2700K and 5500K. The lower the number, the warmer the light will be. "If you want a warm glow, go for a bulb in the 2700K range," King suggests.

Rejuvenation also offers CFLs fitted with covers to mimic the look of incandescent bulbs.

If you're more concerned with appearance than efficiency, reproduction bulbs—such as the Edison-style bulbs offered by both Bulbrite and Rejuvenation—remain untouched by the legislation. "I think the intent of the law was to reach the most commonly used bulbs," Choi explains. "Replica bulbs aren't widely used for general illumination."

While many incandescent bulbs will soon be history, it's clear that the warm glow beloved by old-house aficionados isn't going anywhere. "We just have to re-educate ourselves about something we took for granted for a hundred years," says King.

## OLD-HOUSE RESOURCE

### Home on the Ranch

Mid-century ranch houses may be considered historic these days, but there's still not a lot of ink devoted to them in the old-house world. That's why the online publication *Ranch Houses in Georgia: Guidelines for Evaluation* is such a great resource for ranch owners, even if they live nowhere near the state. Published by the Georgia State Historic Preservation Office's Ranch House Initiative, the digital booklet gives a comprehensive overview

of the style's evolution (complete with archival images and ads, floor plans, and current photos), a guide to identifying ranch houses, and a checklist for determining a ranch's suitability for a historic designation (with remuddled examples as a warning sign). As ranches take their first steps into the world of historic housing, this publication can help their owners avoid potential stumbles. Download a copy at [georgiashpo.org/historic/housing](http://georgiashpo.org/historic/housing).

## BOOKS IN BRIEF

The process of decorating an old house is often as challenging as it is enjoyable. For every perfect salvage-store find that's just right for that corner of the living room, there's certain to be plenty of empty space you just don't know what to do with. Add to that the fact that most mass-produced furnishings tend to be a bit anachronistic in old houses, and you've definitely got your work cut out for you. Fortunately, two new books provide loads of inspiration and ideas for giving old-house interiors an instant sense of history.

In *Passion for Primitives*, Franklin and Esther Schmidt (a husband-and-wife team whose photographs have appeared in countless shelter magazines,



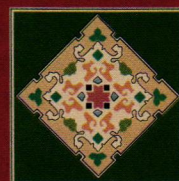
including OHJ) turn their lens on folk décor, showcasing painted furniture, pewter serving ware, canvas floorcloths, and a host of other simple, artisan-made items in a variety of settings. With chapters devoted to outdoor décor, the art of mixing high- and low-style primitive antiques, and the best architectural settings for displaying primitives, the book is an excellent source of ideas for anyone looking to decorate an early American house.

In a similar vein, Steve and Brooke Giannetti explore the idea of using antiques and salvaged items to create timeless interiors in their book, *Patina Style*. The couple—who are behind the design firm Giannetti Home and the blog Velvet & Linen—walk readers through the building blocks of their decorating philosophy, which relies heavily on salvaged elements with time-worn finishes. Beyond the eye-candy photographs, the Giannettis offer up plenty of tips for working one-of-a-kind pieces into a room, from using salvaged doors and shutters as wall decoration to repurposing an antique cabinet as a double-sink vanity.

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# ask ohj

**Q:** Do you have any advice on how to clean and paint a cast iron radiator?

**A:** **Dan Holohan:** With radiators, as with many things in an old house, preparation is the key. Paint will adhere better to a clean surface than to one that's dirty, so get some stiff brushes that can reach around corners and into tight spaces, and a bucket filled with hot water and trisodium phosphate (TSP). TSP is a powerful soap that will clean just about anything, but some communities don't allow it because phosphate detergents can damage aquifers. (A good substitute for TSP is MEX, an inexpensive commercial soap. If you can't find MEX, look for phosphate-free TSP.)

If paint is peeling off your radiator, you'll have to remove it before you can prime the radiator. This can be a very tough job, especially if you're leaving the radiator in place while you work on it. You'll want to use a wire brush to scrape away flaking paint. You also can use paint strippers, heat, steam, or a multi-tool—but be careful with heat, as it can damage the paper gaskets between radiator sections that some manufacturers used in the old days. How many times you can paint over old paint depends on the condition of the paint. If it's in good shape—i.e., has minimal flaking—there's no limit to the number of layers you can have. Paint offers no insulating value, so that's not a concern—but many coats of paint will dull the Victorian detailing of older radiators.

The ultimate way to prepare a radiator for painting is to have it sandblasted, but this involves removing the radiator from your house, which can be challenging since old pipes sometimes break when you put a wrench to them. If the pipes look OK, and you have a strong back and helpers, remove the radiator and take it to a professional painter's shop. They can have



PHOTOS COURTESY OF DAN HOLOHAN

Even neglected radiators sporting decades' worth of peeling paint (below) can be restored to like-new condition (left).



your radiators sandblasted before they paint them. If you don't want to hire a pro, check with a place that sells cemetery monuments—they may be able to do the sandblasting, but won't take responsibility for any leaks that may result.

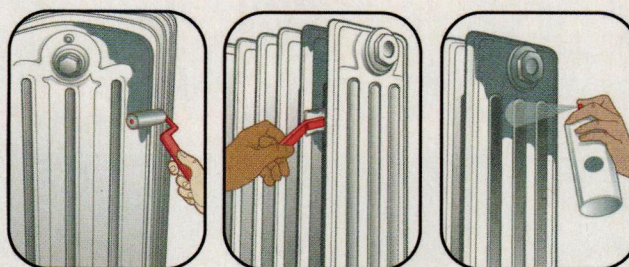
Sandblasting will bring the cast iron back to its original condition; from there, you should consider powder coating, which will make your radiators look brand new. Powder coating is a process that uses positive and negative electrical charges to draw the powdered paint to the metal, then heats it to create a smooth, porcelain-like finish. Normally, radiators are powder-coated at 400 degrees F, but be sure to ask—a temperature higher than that can burn paper gaskets, which can cause leaks. Depending on where you live, sandblasting and powder coating a large radiator can cost as much as \$400, but the results are terrific.

If powder coating isn't in your budget and you want to paint the radiator yourself, the right tools for the job are a small paint roller and a radiator brush. The latter looks like a tiny hockey stick; the shape makes it easier to get into those tight spots.

Professional painters prefer oil-based paints and primers for radiators, because they adhere very well to any marginally prepared surfaces. (You may not be able to clean every nook and cranny.) Some heating contractors also have reported good results with latex paint over an alkyd, oil-based primer. As for brands, Sherman-Williams, California Paints, and Benjamin Moore Satin Impervo are all good choices to use in a spray mechanism. Benjamin Moore sprays particularly well and finishes beautifully.

The low-budget approach will have you shopping for cans of spray paint designed for metal surfaces, but from what I've seen, standard Rustoleum-type spray paint takes quite a while to stop out-gassing once the radiator gets hot, and that's not pleasant. It also becomes tacky when the radiator heats up, especially on steam radiators—a tacky


RANDY SWEETZER ILLUSTRATIONS

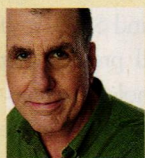


If you want to paint a radiator yourself, the right tools for the job are a small paint roller (far left) and a radiator brush (center), which helps get into the tight spots. For a lower-cost alternative, use spray paint designed for metal surfaces (near left).

## MORE QUESTIONS ANSWERED

radiator is not a good place to leave those wet hats and gloves. (Rustoleum does make a high-temperature spray paint, which gives better results, but is limited in the choice of colors.)

Speaking of color, if you're trying to match the wall behind the radiator, choose a color that's a shade lighter than the color of the wall. Radiators seem to darken after a few heat cycles, so if you begin with a lighter shade, you should end up with a match. 



Dan Holohan, a longtime contributor to OHJ, runs the website HeatingHelp.com and is the author of the book *The Lost Art of Steam Heating*.

**Q:**

Some of my interior doors are warped. Is there any way I can repair them? A few are bad enough that the center horizontal brace in the door is starting to split, along with some of the panels. —Martin

**A:** It's going to require removal of the doors into your shop, lots of steam, very long pony clamps, and some wood blocks...lots of work and lots of patience, and you may get them improved. —John K.

**A:** I had a really warped door in my previous house. We took it off the hinges and clamped it down to straighten it out. —Red Queen

**A:** How are the doors finished (paint, varnish, oiled, bare, etc.)? Doors can sometimes become warped if they are finished on one side only or have a different finish on each side, which can cause uneven moisture absorption and drying characteristics. Occasionally, when the source of warping is eliminated or mitigated, a warped door might eventually straighten out on its own. —A.R. Bowes

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](mailto:OHJEditorial@homebuyerpubs.com).

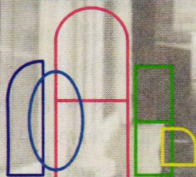
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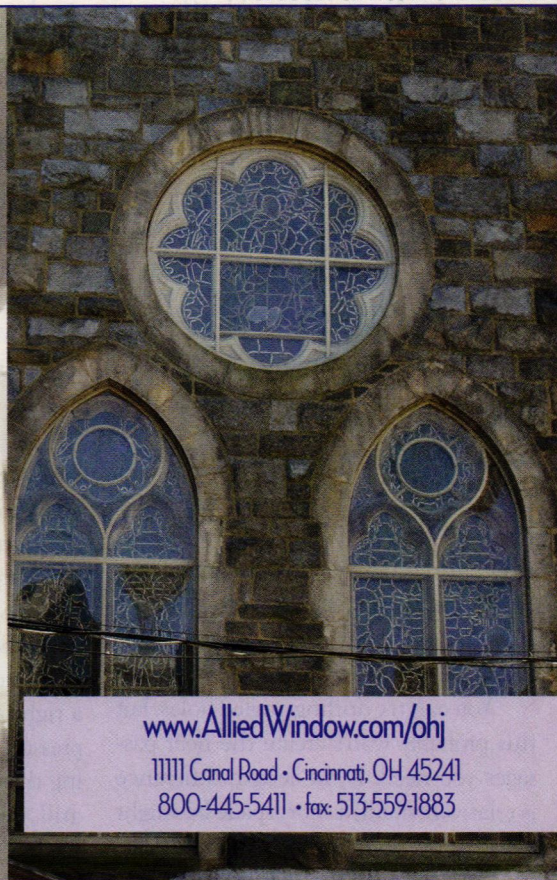
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# old-house toolbox



A right angle drill fits easily into the space between wall studs.

RAY TSCHOEPE PHOTO

## Right Angle Drill

*For drilling in tight spaces,  
a right angle drill is a DIYer's best friend.*

BY RAY TSCHOEPE

When you're restoring an old house, it's not uncommon to need to drill a single hole or a series of holes in wall studs or floor joists to accommodate wiring or plumbing.

And after just a few minutes into the project, you're likely to discover that, although you've carefully mapped the route, you can't drill the holes because your drill and bit are too long to fit into the space between the joists.

You can try drilling angled holes, but this probably won't create the neat passages you need. If the length difference is relatively small, a short spade bit might work. If not, you need a right angle drill.

### What to Look For

Many manufacturers produce a line of right angle drills. They look just like typical corded or cordless drills, except they have a geared head that rotates the chuck at 90 degrees to the axis of the body. Without the bit, the head (including the chuck) is only a few inches long, much smaller than an ordinary drill. (Despite the smaller size, right angle drills still can accommodate most ordinary bits.) This design allows you to work in tight places that otherwise would be impossible to reach.

One thing you'll notice when you use a right angle drill is that you can't exert pressure on the bit with the hand holding the drill, as you would with a regular drill. Rather, pressure is best applied to the back of the drill head with your other

hand. Most manufacturers offer handles that screw into the side of the head so you can apply pressure where it's needed.

When you're comparing drills, keep in mind that the shorter the main body of the drill is, the easier it will be to control. I also find that a small light built into the body of the drill is a helpful feature—chances are, if you're using a right angle drill, you're already in a tight spot, so any additional lighting is beneficial.

On average, a good-quality right angle drill will set you back around \$200, so if you're working on a small project that only requires boring a few holes, purchasing a full right angle drill might not make financial sense. In this case, you can get a right angle attachment with a shaft that you can chuck into your existing drill. This rotates gearing inside a closed housing and changes the output angle at the chuck by 90 degrees. The result is a light-duty version of the right angle drill. (If you're looking at serious plumbing or electrical work, however, or if you're going to be drilling through tough material such as oak, iron, or stone, go ahead and spring for the full drill.)

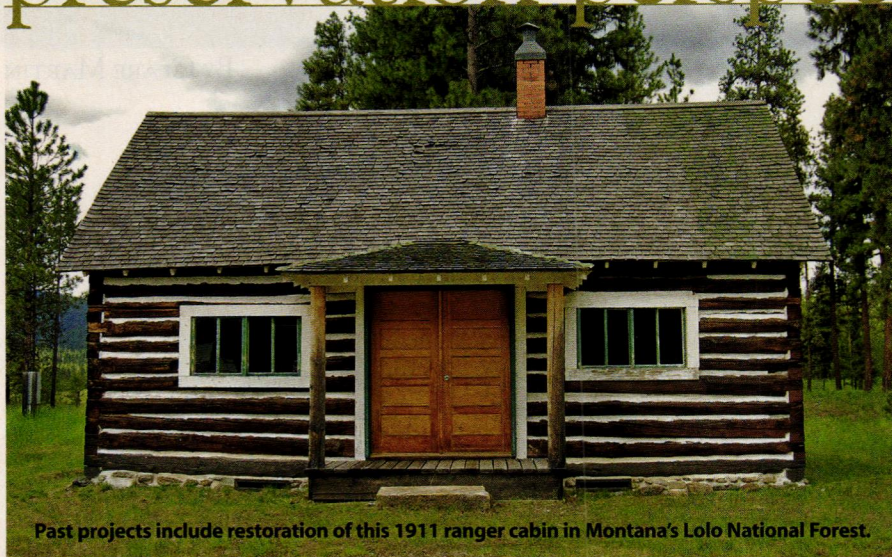
### The Bottom Line

A right angle drill will be the one you reach for when you need to drill close to a corner or when you're working through a small hand hole to attach an outlet box to a stud. These drills also can be fitted with screwdriver bits for fastening in tight spaces. Although it seems specialized, the right angle drill is a handy tool that will definitely pay for itself over time. 🛠



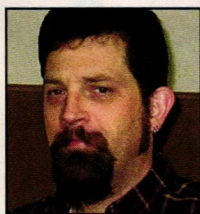
Ray Tschoepe, one of OHJ's contributing editors, is the director of conservation at the Fairmount Park Historic Preservation Trust in Philadelphia.

# preservation perspectives



Past projects include restoration of this 1911 ranger cabin in Montana's Lolo National Forest.

## Minding Time



Passport in Time is an innovative program that lets volunteers participate in cultural heritage projects across the country. Program Manager Matt Dawson tells all.

BY DEMETRA APOSPOROS

**DEMETRA APOSPOROS:** What is Passport in Time (PIT)?

**MATT DAWSON:** PIT is a volunteer program, backed by the US Forest Service and now partnering with the Bureau of Land Management, that gets volunteers around the country involved with cultural heritage work. Our projects can involve archaeology, archival records, historic restoration, paleontology, and more. PIT has been operating since 1989.

**DA:** Describe your goal.

**MD:** The overall goal is to make the public aware of their collective cultural heritage, and to preserve it. Most people don't realize that sites and certain buildings may be considered archaeologically and/or historically significant after only 50 years, or that if you have to put a road where an archaeological site sits, it must be carefully removed and recorded, or the information that's there may be lost forever.

**DA:** How broad is the range of available work projects?

**MD:** We typically have projects in a range of categories. Because there's a cultural and historical focus to a lot of compliance work that many federal agencies do, there are probably more archaeological projects than others, but the next most common is historic restoration; then the list is peppered with different projects like paleontology, archiving records, and much more.

**DA:** Can anybody volunteer?

**MD:** It's project-specific. There are some projects that will allow kids to come (accompanied by an adult), and some where participants must be over 18. I'd say about 60 percent of our projects want people 18 or older, and the rest are looking for different mixtures of volunteers: some for family units, with some specifically encouraging parent/child volunteers; some for the experienced; some specifically designed for the inexperienced.

**DA:** How are applicants selected?

**MD:** Unfortunately, we have a lot more interest in the program than there are projects some years. For example, if you've got a project that only takes 10 volunteers, and we get 100 applicants, we obviously can't take everybody. The more projects people apply for, the better the chance that they'll be selected; each project requires a separate application.

*The goal is to make the public aware of their collective cultural heritage, and to preserve it.*

Sometimes special skills—like carpentry and photography—play a role in selection, too. Applicants should be sure to list these.

**DA:** How does the Forest Service's cabin rental program impact PIT?

**MD:** The cabin rental program gives people the opportunity to stay in historic structures on public lands for a nominal fee of approximately \$10 or \$15 a night, depending on the site. Often that small revenue is enough incentive to justify restoration of a building that's been in disrepair and disuse forever and put it back into service. The cabin rental program has allowed structures to be saved that would otherwise have been lost, and owes its success to the efforts of hundreds of PIT volunteers across the country.

**DA:** What's the timeframe for the volunteer work?

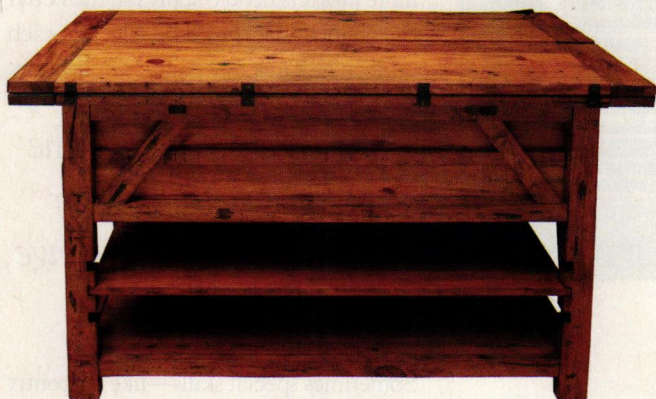
**MD:** The "season" starts after federal budgets are approved—somewhere around the middle of February. So projects begin trickling in by the end of February, then start to pour in from mid-March through August. Fieldwork typically takes place from spring until late fall.

For more information on PIT and to see project listings, visit [passportintime.com](http://passportintime.com).

# period products

BY CLARE MARTIN

*Bring some flair to your bungalow with these Arts & Crafts-style picks.*



## Island Time

Counter and cabinet space can be scarce in old-house kitchens, which makes Arhaus's Salem Island a must-have addition. The hefty piece features a fold-out top that expands its compact 28" width to 55" worth of prep space, and integrated drawers and shelves offer a wealth of storage. Made from solid pine by Amish craftsmen, its simple, rustic look is a natural fit for a range of old houses, from primitive Colonials to basic bungalows. Call (866) 427-4287, or visit [arhaus.com](http://arhaus.com).

## In Bloom

If you're a fan of C.F.A. Voysey's graphic designs but can't bring yourself to paper an entire room, channel the legendary Arts & Crafts designer on a smaller scale. With swooping birds, blooming topiaries, and an Asian-inspired pavilion, the crewelwork on the Gazebo Pillow from Charleston Gardens recalls the nature-inspired whimsy of Voysey's wallpaper patterns. It's a decorative touch that's sure to lighten up an oak-filled Arts & Crafts interior. \$195. Call (800) 469-0118, or visit [charlestongardens.com](http://charlestongardens.com).



## Glass Act

With bold colors and geometric designs, Kichler Lighting's Walcott collection puts a new spin on the art-glass lighting legacy of Louis Comfort Tiffany. The bronze-finish canopy and field of amber-colored glass on the semi-flush-mount fixture (shown) lend a traditional bent, while touches of turquoise and cut stone provide a shot of pizzazz. The same design is also available as a pendant, sconce, and table lamp. \$417. Call (866) 558-5706, or visit [kichler.com](http://kichler.com).



## Partly Cloudlift

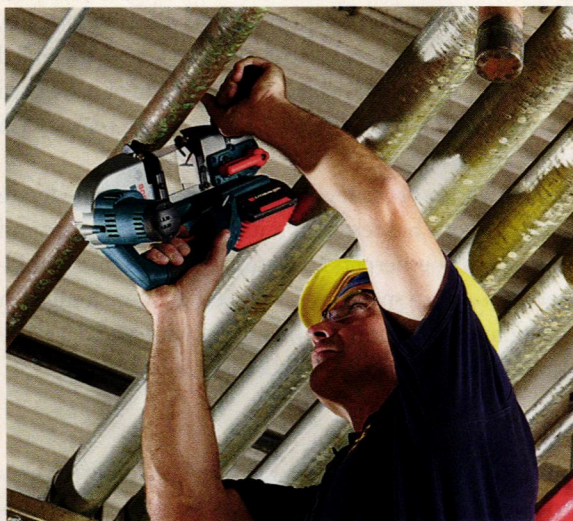
The tiered cloudlift design popularized by Greene & Greene is one of the lasting hallmarks of Arts & Crafts styling. For his Tretter Buffet, furniture maker Michael Colca blended this Asian-inspired element with other Far East influences. In true Arts & Crafts fashion, the heirloom-worthy piece showcases the beauty of both material (in this case, Appalachian cherry) and construction (pegged joints, dovetailed drawers), making it a striking addition to a bungalow dining room. \$13,750. Call (800) 972-5940, or visit [michaelcolca.com](http://michaelcolca.com).

# tools & materials

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

## Quick-Change Artist

Specialty tasks—like cutting small holes for plumbing or wiring—often require specialty saws, which can necessitate having multiple tools at hand. But with their new 5-in-1 hacksaw, DeWalt has merged five of those specialty functions into one compact, flexible package. In its primary configuration, the 5-in-1 is a standard 90-degree hacksaw that can withstand up to 330 pounds of pressure. With a quick reconfiguration of the frame and blade, however, it transforms into a 45-degree saw, a low-profile hacksaw, a long-reach saw, or a pistol-grip jab saw. The tool comes with both hacksaw and reciprocating blades; the blade not in use can be conveniently tucked away in storage compartment on the handle. \$24.97. Call (800) 433-9258, or visit [dewalt.com](http://dewalt.com).



## Compact Power

A power saw that can squeeze into tight spaces? No, you're not dreaming—at just 7.7 pounds, Bosch's BSH180 cordless band saw has the light weight and slim profile needed to perform in close confines. Its 18-volt battery pack can hold a charge through 150 cuts and is mounted above the handle for a balanced, ergonomic design. The blade can cut through up to 2½" of a wide variety of materials—including metal, copper pipes, and electrical cables—in a single pass, making it a particularly handy tool for plumbing or electrical work. \$399. Call (877) 267-2499, or visit [bosch.com](http://bosch.com).

## It's a Snap

When you're making repeated cuts with a utility knife (such as when removing old carpet or slicing through paint buildup), it's easy to get slowed down by a dull blade. Irwin's 4-Point Snap Blade eliminates the hassle of having to regularly swap out blades—the carbon blades are scored on each edge so the end can be snapped off when the point gets dull, doubling the blade's lifespan. (The scoring is shallow enough not to affect the blade's cutting stability, but deep enough to be broken off easily with a pair of pliers.) Four notches on the top of the blade allow it to be fully extended regardless of how many tips have been snapped off. Prices start at \$1.29 for a five-pack of blades. Call (800) 464-7946, or visit [irwin.com](http://irwin.com).



# my town

## Asheville, North Carolina

*A local walks us through this gem of a city bursting with architectural treasures.*

BY BRUCE JOHNSON

**A**sheville, North Carolina, is a city flanked by two famous bookends: the 1895 Biltmore Estate and the 1913 Grove Park Inn. Gilded Age Victorian to the south, austere Arts & Crafts to the north.

In between, like a collection of books, is an array of architectural delights—from Queen Anne and Colonial Revival to English Tudor and Art Deco, with enough bungalows mixed in to earn it the distinction of Arts & Crafts capital of the South. Combined, they create a city that's delightful to explore by car or by walking through the quirky, artsy, active downtown.

As cities go, Asheville was a late bloomer. Nestled in the lush French Broad River Valley and completely surrounded by the imposing Blue Ridge Mountains, it wasn't until the arrival of

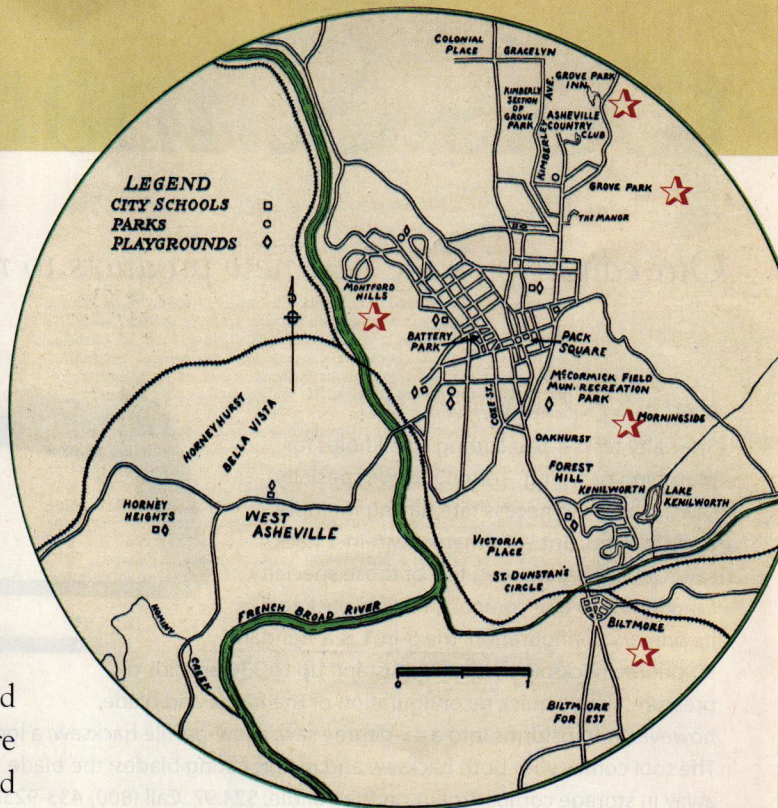
the railroad in 1880 that word spread of its healing effects. The city's warm natural springs, clean mountain air, hiking trails, panoramic views, brief winters, cool summers, and extended spring and fall seasons soon brought a steady stream of exhausted businessmen, Washington politicians, and curious tourists via the Southern Railway.

The combination of Asheville's location and its moderate yet distinctive seasons has resulted in its becoming a year-round tourist destination. Southerners come to escape heat and humidity, Northerners to avoid snow and ice. Together, they strengthen the local economy and support the trendy restaurants and upscale galleries unusual for a city of just 83,000 residents.

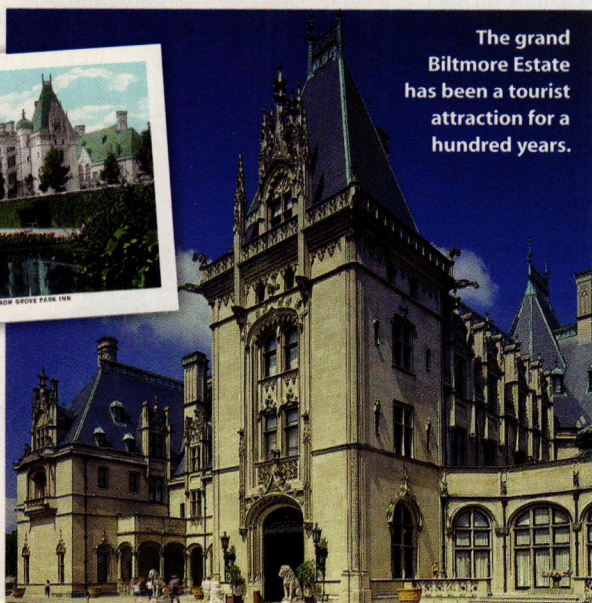
### The Biltmore Estate

Among the city's early arrivals was George Vanderbilt II, who became so enchanted with Asheville that he spent nearly his entire inheritance on the 125,000-acre estate and 250-room manor he christened Biltmore. Designed by Richard Morris Hunt and modeled after a chateau the two men had toured in the Loire Valley, the Biltmore mansion and grounds replicated a working French estate. Vanderbilt spared no expense in its design, which included an indoor pool, bowling alley and exercise room, elevators, forced-air heating, and an intercom system—all considered revolutionary in 1895. Still family-owned, fully restored, and expanded to include a winery, world-renowned gardens, a hotel, several restaurants, and numerous outdoor activities, the Biltmore Estate attracts more than a million visitors to Asheville each year.

Just outside the estate's gate is the picturesque Biltmore Village, a collection of stucco-and-half-timbered buildings



The grand Biltmore Estate has been a tourist attraction for a hundred years.





Montford is one of Asheville's many walkable neighborhoods, and includes such architectural gems as the Queen Anne Rumbough House (above) and the Asian-flaired Arts & Crafts Keyhole House (right).



HISTORIC RESOURCES COMMISSION OF ASHEVILLE AND BUNCOMBE COUNTY PHOTOS

designed by Hunt's assistant, Richard Sharp Smith, a dapper and refined Englishman who became Asheville's most prolific Arts & Crafts architect. Once home to Vanderbilt's employees, Biltmore Village's buildings have been restored as gift shops, restaurants, and art galleries beneath leafy oak, maple, and sycamore trees.

## The Grove Park Inn

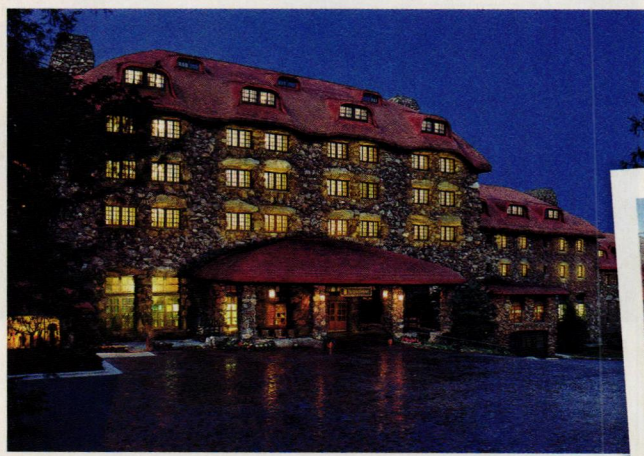
Pharmaceutical manufacturer Edwin Wiley Grove arrived in Asheville in 1898 on his doctor's orders and, like many of us, fell in love with this mountaintop city. Grove developed a number of Arts & Crafts neighborhoods before placing a jewel atop Asheville's Sunset Mountain—the Grove Park Inn. He turned to his son-in-law, Fred Loring Seely (a friend and client of Roycrofters Elbert Hubbard), for the design of the 150-room resort. Seely created an Arts & Crafts masterpiece sculpted of granite boulders collected from Grove's 1,200 acres of land, and topped it with a natural red clay roof. As a result, the hotel looks, from a distance, as though it has risen out of bedrock.

Completed in 1913 and furnished by the Roycrofters of East Aurora, New York, the Grove Park Inn at once became known as "the finest resort hotel in the world." Today it's become a mecca for Arts & Crafts enthusiasts who yearn to relax in the Stickley, Roycroft, and Limbert settles, rockers, and Morris chairs filling the cavernous Great Hall and spilling out into the nearby hallways. The addition of a restored Donald Ross golf course and a world-class spa, plus the national Arts & Crafts Conference each February, enhance this historic hotel's cachet.

## Asheville's Neighborhoods

Ask a local what makes Asheville special, and you'll often hear this simple answer: the neighborhoods. Laid out on lazy, winding streets with small lots, Asheville's cozy neighborhoods blossomed during the Arts & Crafts era, and remain as popular today as they were a hundred years ago. Walking down the streets of Norwood Park, Kenilworth, Albemarle Park, Grove Park, Beaver Lake, or Montford is like navigating the pages of a bungalow picture book.

A stroll down Montford Avenue through the city's first historic district lets you witness the career of Richard Sharp Smith unfold before your eyes. His early Queen Anne turrets give way to sprawling bungalows with wraparound porches, anchored to

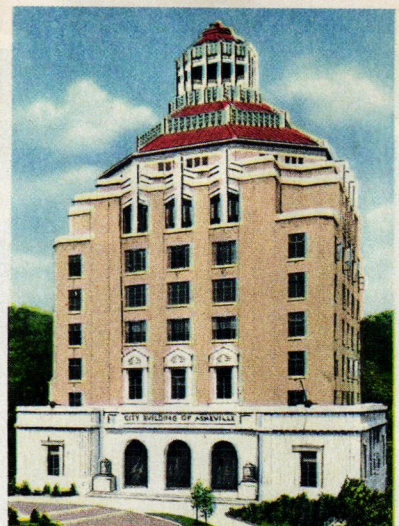


The Grove Park Inn, today (far left) and in an early postcard (near left), remains an Arts & Crafts icon and a mecca for the movement's enthusiasts.

## my town

the ground by fieldstone foundations and square balustrades that resemble a Gustav Stickley spindle settle. Twenty years ago, many of Smith's homes were boarded up and neglected. Today, without exception, they all have been meticulously restored, with some of the larger ones carefully transformed into sumptuous bed-and-breakfast inns.

The gateway to north Asheville's Arts & Crafts district is Albemarle Park, another turn-of-the-century historic district. While cars no longer can squeeze through the arched entrance beneath the antique Gatehouse, the drive up the slope of Sunset Mountain feels like a journey back in time. Narrow streets, granite retaining walls, and fieldstone-lined swales make this neighborhood a fit walker's delight, its eclectic mixture of homes—from rustic cabins to English Tudors, and even a Richard Sharp Smith brick Georgian home called



VINTAGE POSTCARDS COURTESY OF BRUCE JOHNSON

**The Ellington-designed City Hall, with its octagonal roof, is an Art Deco masterpiece.**

Breezemont—creating a dazzling texture of architectural styles.


### Art Deco Relief

When architect Douglas Ellington arrived in 1926, fresh from the Beaux Arts Academy in Paris, Asheville was swimming in cash. Looking for something fresh and



exciting, civic leaders embraced Ellington's proposed city building in the urban and colorful Art Deco style. He soon was under contract to design an Art Deco church, restaurant, public school, and fire station all within a mile of downtown Asheville, all of which were completed just months before the stock market crash of 1929. Well-constructed, this color feast of pinks, blues, and greens initially seemed out of character in this mountain Arts & Crafts city, but the buildings remain popular to this day—a reflection, perhaps, on the equally eclectic collection of people who now call Asheville their home. 🏠

**Bruce Johnson** directs the annual Arts & Crafts Conference and Antiques Show at the Grove Park Inn (February 17-19; [artsandcraftsconference.com](http://artsandcraftsconference.com)), and operates the website [artsandcraftscollector.com](http://artsandcraftscollector.com).

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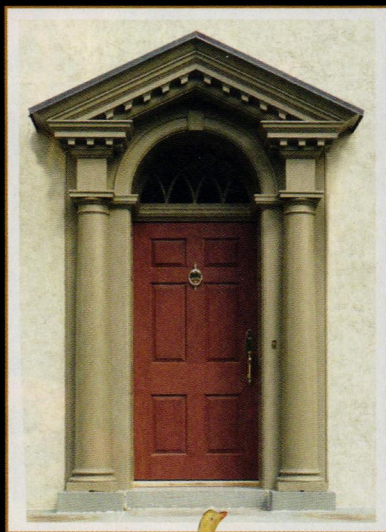
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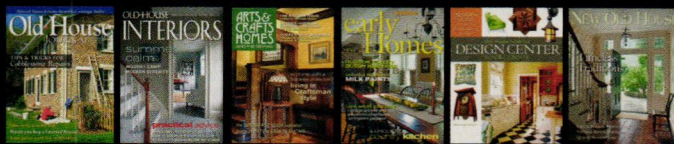
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painted the entire  
thing red.





**LEFT:** An arched limestone fireplace in another Memphis bungalow features a hearth of Rookwood tiles. The firebox is home to a set of 1930s vintage gas logs.

LINDA SVENDSEN PHOTOS

# Hearth of the Matter

*A look at the wide array of Arts & Crafts-era fireplaces.*

BY JANE POWELL

Fire fulfills a deep and primal role in the human psyche. Even today, when fires are no longer needed for heating or cooking, fireplaces are routinely installed in houses. In Arts & Crafts homes, the fireplace took on almost religious significance, and even bungalows in warm climates were built with one.

Gustav Stickley was a big proponent, writing in *The Craftsman*, "The big hospitable fireplace is almost a necessity, for the hearth-stone is always the center of true home life."

Almost always a feature of the living room, fireplaces also were found in dining

rooms, bedrooms, dens, and basements. Frequently the fireplace was surrounded by built-in benches or settles to form an inglenook, which often had a lowered ceiling that provided a feeling of coziness and set it off from the rest of the room. With or without

an inglenook, the fireplace usually was surrounded by some sort of built-ins—often glass-door bookcases with high windows above, but a drop-front desk on one side was fairly common as well.

## Bricks and More

Chimneys were of masonry construction (brick, stone, concrete block), but the fireplace itself could be faced with a wide array of materials, including brick, stone, ceramic tile, cast stone, concrete, stucco, metal, or

Set off by a spindled colonnade, this brick fireplace is surrounded by a generously sized inglenook with cushioned benches.

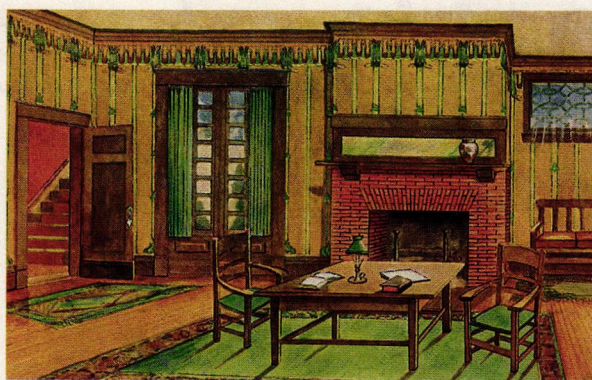


DOUGLAS KEISTER PHOTO; OPPOSITE: LINDA SVENDSEN PHOTO

## Grate Expectations

Given the popularity of metalwork in the Arts & Crafts movement, andirons—the metal supports for logs in a wood-burning fireplace—were a popular item. Because andirons aren't terribly practical as a support device, they now serve a primarily decorative function—logs are generally held by a more practical grate.

Old fireplaces were open—they didn't have glass doors or "chain mail" curtains. What they did have is freestanding fire-screens, generally made of metal; some of these were quite decorative. Generally they were either an upright rectangle, held up by a couple of feet, or a three-part folding screen, the center part generally being larger. The majority of the screen was some sort of mesh—brass, bronze, copper, or steel—with a metal frame around it, with decorative elements such as cutouts applied over the mesh. For summer use, a wood-framed screen around an embroidered or otherwise decorated fabric panel was an option.



ARCALUS ARCHIVE

**LEFT:** A simple red brick fireplace with a mirrored overmantel and a mantel shelf holding only one piece of tasteful art pottery is centered in a room that is otherwise sparsely furnished, as was generally the case at the time.

plaster—anything that wouldn't burn. Brick was much favored, especially clinker bricks, those that had become vitrified and misshapen by sitting too close to the fire in the brick kiln. Before the bungalow era, clinker bricks were thrown away, making them cheap or even free, which no doubt made the eyes of many a speculative bungalow builder light up. Because clinkers were organic and

interesting to look at, the movement embraced them, and soon they became trendy. Many other kinds of brick were used as well, from basic red or gold bricks, to wire-cut (textured) bricks, to bricks that were multicolored or spotted, and even decorative molded bricks.

Brick sizes have been standardized for centuries at  $2\frac{1}{4}'' \times 3\frac{3}{4}'' \times 8''$ . They come in many colors and textures, and

Clinker bricks are mixed with other bricks in a style of masonry known as "eccentric brickwork," which becomes less eccentric as it moves up into the chimney. Just above the firebox, bricks form the letter A, the initial of the first owners.



Need more fireplace inspiration? Check out our list of iconic A&C fireplaces you can visit.

OLDHOUSEonline 



The handsome built-ins and reproduction Batchelder tile surround in this 1916 Craftsman home are new, built to replace a remuddled fireplace.

## Mantel Mania

Without a mantel, how could you display your tasteful collection of art pottery? And where would you hang the Christmas stockings? Mantels over Arts & Crafts-era fireplaces ranged from a simple shelf on brackets or corbels to a wide shelf spanning the adjoining built-ins. Generally made of wood—either a thick piece of solid wood or a box built to offer that illusion—mantels also could be made of the same material used to face the fireplace.

The area above the mantel might be filled by an overmantel, which, while much simplified from the excesses of Victorian versions, still could be quite a festival of moldings and mirrors.



ARCALUS ARCHIVE

**ABOVE:** An overmantel with an oval mirror sits on three doubled brackets over a tiled fireplace in an inglenook.

there are many ways of laying them, called bonds. Most people are familiar with running bond, where joints in each row are staggered by half a brick. Flemish bond features one brick turned on end every other brick. Multicolored brick patterns were referred to as tapestry brick. Brick also could be laid unevenly and randomly, known as eccentric brickwork. In Craftsman houses, brickwork was sometimes combined with river rocks to form what is generally referred to as peanut brittle, because of its lumpy appearance. Occasionally some use was made of glazed bricks, which were finished like pottery.

Stone, including fieldstone, river rock, cobblestone, or rubble stone, had the rustic look esteemed by bungalow designers. Split-face ashlar (rectangular cut stone with an irregular face), though a bit more formal, also was used on fireplaces. Cast stone, a molded product made from concrete and

# Hood Ornament

Some fireplaces had metal hoods of copper, brass, bronze, or cast iron. Often merely decorative, some also served to lower the top of the firebox, creating a better draw. If you're dying to have a hand-hammered copper hood in your house, this is where it should go (not over the stove). Coal-burning fireplaces had a cast iron surround and grate, and often had fenders on the hearth to prevent any coals that escaped the fireplace from rolling out into the room. These fireplaces came with summer covers, a matching cast iron piece for covering the fireplace when not in use—few of them survived the scrap metal drives of World War II.



ARCAUS ARCHIVE

**ABOVE:** A tiled corner fireplace sports a hammered copper hood with a decorative motif in the center.

fine aggregates, often was used in place of actual stone. It could resemble whatever sort of stone was required, although sandstone and limestone were most prevalent. Pressed concrete was another option, molded into panels about 1½" thick, and large enough to constitute the entire front of the fireplace. These were molded and colored to resemble tile or stone, and sometimes real tiles were inset as accents.

Ceramic tile was also much in favor as a fireplace facing, from plain 6" x 6" field tiles to decorative art tiles from now-famous Arts & Crafts potteries like Grueby, Rookwood, and Batchelder. Many fireplaces combined decorative accent tiles and field tiles, with accents set into the center above the firebox, in the corners, or down the sides. Landscape tiles were particularly favored, with scenes of medieval castles, Spanish missions, and English villages. Most companies also could supply matching ceramic corbels (to hold up the mantel), keystones (for arched fireboxes), and various trim tiles. It was possible to order the whole fireplace front from the same company so the firebox could be constructed to fit the tiles instead of the other way around.

Some Arts & Crafts houses had transitional fireplace facings—a Victorian/

Edwardian holdover, featuring highly glazed majolica tiles, usually a smaller version of subway tiles, generally measuring 1½" x 6" or 1¼" x 6", but sometimes as small as 1" x 3". These had semitranslucent glazes with color variations from light to dark within individual tiles.

Some fireplaces were simply faced with plaster or stucco, although plaster also was combined with brick, stone, or tile accents. Some fireplaces may have been influenced by Spanish Revival styles—particularly after the 1915 Panama-California Exposition in San Diego, designed in a Spanish Colonial style by architect Bertram Goodhue. A Spanish-influenced fireplace usually features a monolithic plastered firebox and chimney, often with built-in niches.

Many fireplaces were available in kit form: A builder could simply order a fireplace, and it would arrive with the masonry, the facing, and the damper, and could be turned over to the mason to install.

## Finding the Fireplace

Later owners, in some misguided attempt to "modernize," may have painted, covered up, or removed the original fireplace facing. Painting seems to be the most common indiscretion—the most cringe-worthy



RIGHT: LINDA SVENDSEN PHOTOS; OPPOSITE: CRAFTSMAN DESIGN PHOTO BY ARI FREITAG

**ABOVE, TOP:** In an Eagle Rock, California, bungalow, a fireplace faced with large earth-tone tiles is flanked by bookcases with leaded glass doors under high casement windows. **ABOVE, BOTTOM:** The purple and red tones of clinker bricks blend into the surrounding redwood paneling in a Berkeley Craftsman.

# Restoration Ideas

- ◆ Remember that you can always restore a fireplace that isn't as original as it should be.
- ◆ If the fireplace facing has been painted, that's easy to remove from tile; it's harder to get off brick or stone, but still doable. (It will involve chemicals, scrubbing, and probably dental tools.)
- ◆ If the original fireplace was ripped out and replaced with something really horrid like a 1970s woodstove, remove it and build a proper fireplace that complies with current codes. If the facing has been covered up, you'll need to rip off the covering. Sometimes you'll find great tiles beneath; sometimes you'll find nothing because previous owners removed the original facing. At that point, you'll have to figure out what to reface it with.



With multiple layers of paint, a clinker-brick fireplace in a 1905 house was too far gone to save, so designer Michelle Nelson created a new covering.



The new facing uses handmade Syzygy tiles; Michelle laid the pattern out on the floor first to finesse the color distribution and grout lines.

- ◆ If you can't deal with stripping paint, there is always the option of repainting in a more brick-like, stone-like, or tile-like color. (Don't use semi-gloss paint—bricks and stone aren't shiny, nor is most Arts & Crafts fireplace tile). Or you could faux paint it to look like brick or stone, although if you've never faux painted before, you should practice (a lot) before attempting the fireplace. (It might be worthwhile to hire a decorative painter.) Never paint an original, unpainted fireplace for any reason.

- ◆ If the fireplace has already been rebuilt or refaced with something inappropriate, it may be possible to simply cover it up. Many brick manufacturers make thin versions of brick for use as veneer (unfortunately no clinker brick), and tile is another option. Most tiles in the bungalow era were glazed by hand, even if the tiles were machine-made, which results in less uniformity in the glaze than modern tiles. Because a fireplace surround is U-shaped, tiling a fireplace is less straightforward than tiling a countertop (an arched firebox complicates things further). Tiles bigger than 6" x 6" tend to read as modern. Watch your spacing; fireplace tiles tended to have wider grout joints than the minimal ones used in vintage kitchens and bathrooms, especially if the tile was handmade. Joints up to 1/2" were common, although narrower joints (usually not less than 1/8") also were used.



Project manager Chris D'Andrea made a new mantel on site from Western red cedar; it references the design of an original mantel in the living room.

## Friend or Faux

In 1901, Alfred Humphrey invented an inverted gaslight. Soon after, when it became apparent that electric light was going to take over, he used the same technology to come up with the Humphrey Radiant-Fire Heater, which used gas to heat ceramic inserts to incandescence. Many of these heaters were designed to be installed in a fireplace.

Eventually this led to other kinds of faux fireplaces, like gas logs, or my personal favorite, the electric fireplace consisting of a red lightbulb and a rotating cylinder of crumpled tinfoil to simulate flames (combined with a really fake-looking log).

update I've encountered is painting the bricks bright red, and the mortar bright white. The paint chosen to paint a fireplace is invariably glossy, and 99 percent of the time, it's white.

After paint, the most popular refacing material seems to be the dreaded "used brick"—not really used, but rather tumbled after manufacture, and consisting of mixed colors, mostly red, but with a lot of white and black on the surface. "Used brick" also comes in a thin veneer version.

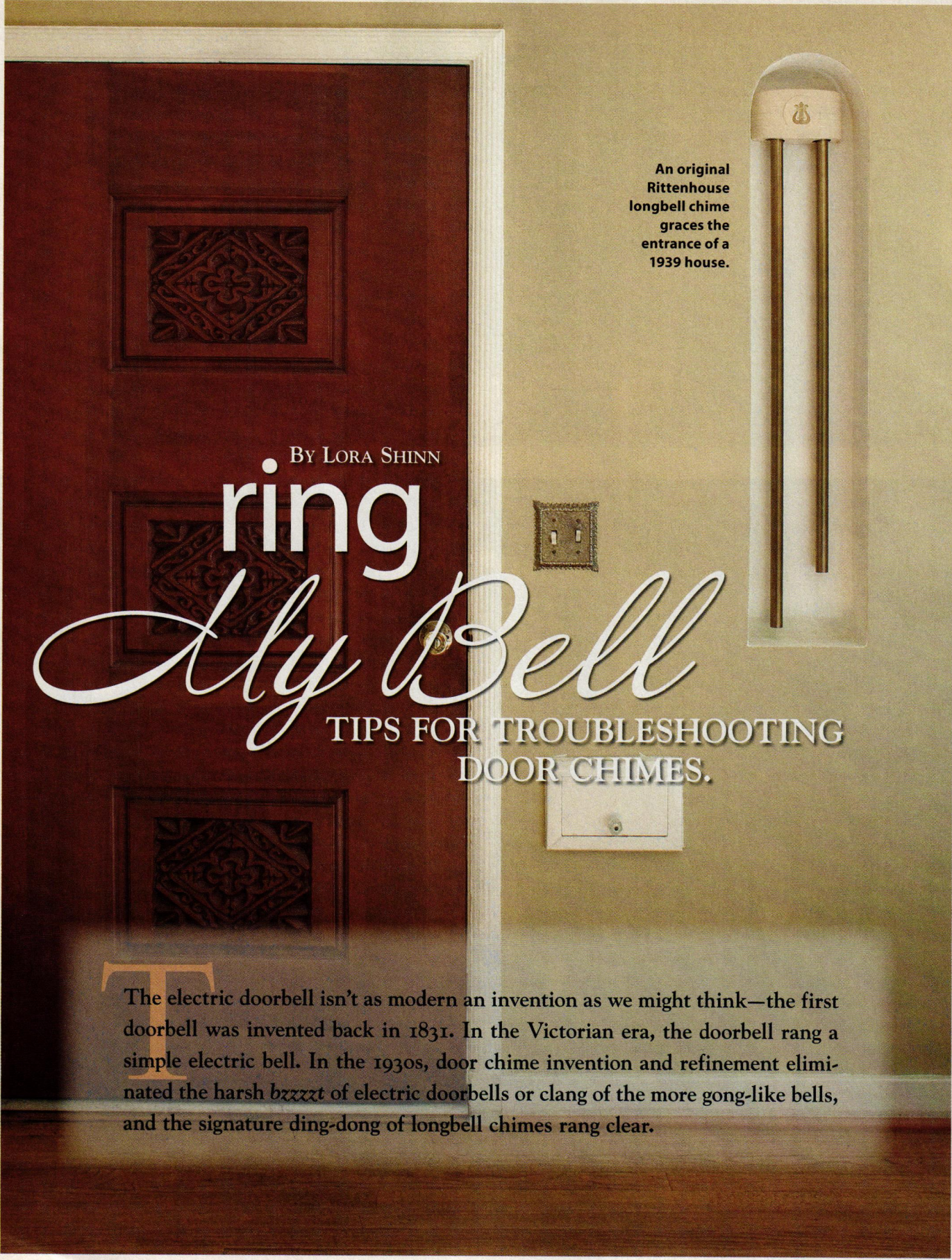
More recent "modernizations" may find the fireplace being refaced with 12" x 12" stone tiles. Granite and marble seem to be the most popular, but slate is up-and-coming—because it looks kind of rustic, people think it is therefore appropriate for a Craftsman home. It's not. However, all of these "updates" can be removed, and fireplaces restored to their original luster, with a little time and elbow grease.

Built during a time of radiators, furnaces, cookstoves, and electricity, most Arts & Crafts fireplaces weren't necessary for lighting, cooking, or heat, yet they were still thought to play a central role in family life, embodied in the phrase "hearth and home." Art & Crafts designers knew that there is no substitute for the joy of gathering around the fire. 🪦

Jane Powell is a restoration consultant and the author of five bungalow books.

Green Motawi field tiles are combined with landscape and other decorative tiles in a seemingly random layout on this fireplace.





An original  
Rittenhouse  
longbell chime  
graces the  
entrance of a  
1939 house.

BY LORA SHINN

ring

# My Bell

TIPS FOR TROUBLESHOOTING  
DOOR CHIMES.

**T**he electric doorbell isn't as modern an invention as we might think—the first doorbell was invented back in 1831. In the Victorian era, the doorbell rang a simple electric bell. In the 1930s, door chime invention and refinement eliminated the harsh *bzzzzt* of electric doorbells or clang of the more gong-like bells, and the signature ding-dong of longbell chimes rang clear.



**ABOVE & RIGHT:** Period advertisements from Marco and NuTone peddle the pleasing sound of door chimes.

**BELOW, CLOCKWISE:** An Edwards compact chime, a Mello-Chime resonator-style chime, and a reproduction Victorian-era bell from Byron Bells.



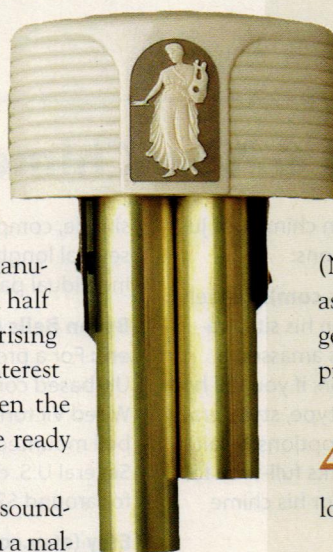
TOP, CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: ARCAUS ARCHIVE/REJUVENATION COLLECTION; TIM WETZEL/KNOCKDOORBELLS.COM; BOTTOM LEFT: COURTESY OF BYRON BELLS



Longbell chimes filled U.S. homes—from bungalows to Tudors to ranches—until about the late 1960s, when the commonplace two-, three-, or four-note devices fell out of favor. Today, most doorbells ring a purely electronic device from a big-box store. But if a plaster niche shaped like a simple rectangle or ornate cathedral window graces your house's entry, that's a clue that it once hosted one of biggest home booms of the 20th century.

Restoring a set of vintage longbell chimes is anything but simple, says Tim Wetzel, owner of Knock Doorbells, whose restored chimes have gone on the sets of films and into homes throughout the U.S. "Most chimes were guaranteed by the manufacturer for one year," he says. "A half century later, it should be surprising that many still work. In the interest of functionality and safety, even the ones that more or less work are ready for some TLC."

If your home's chimes aren't sounding, the problem could stem from a malfunctioning transformer, incorrect voltage, nonfunctioning doorbell buttons, or faulty chime connections, among other problems. If you have the electrical or mechanical skills, you may be able to resolve the issue yourself; if not, call in a pro experienced in chime restoration to troubleshoot electrical or chime problems. Here's a quick guide to getting those bells ringing once more.



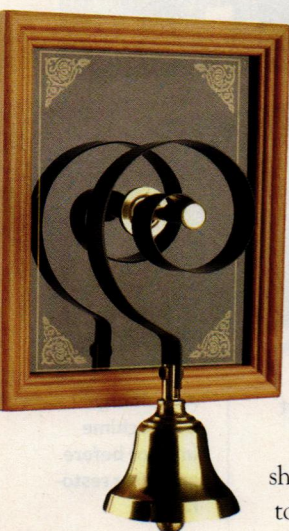
## Fix #1: Cleaning the Plunger and Cylinder

A chime's plunger can easily become sticky from corrosion, dust, and oil. The result? A lack of any sound, or only half of the intended ring (a "ding" but not a "dong"). Here's how to remedy the problem:

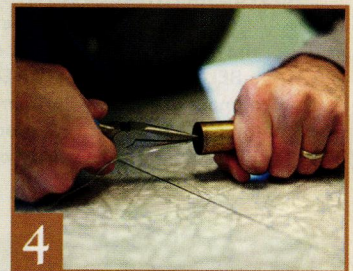
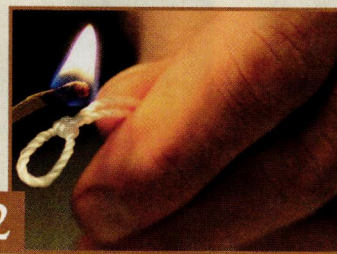
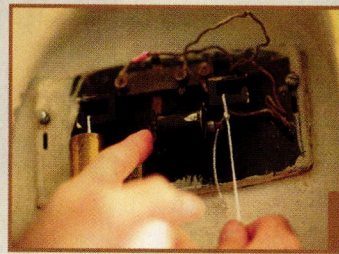
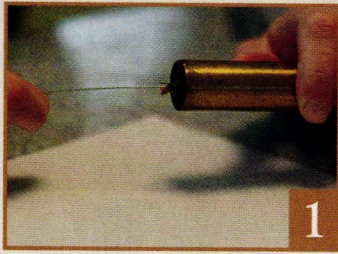
1. Take note of your chime's inner workings (they all can be slightly different). Drawing a simple diagram is a good idea.
2. Slide the plunger out of the cylinder, carefully placing aside the spring. Use extreme care, says Wetzel, as the wires that power solenoids are fragile like butterfly wings.
3. Use a metal polish like Semichrome, Wenol, or Autosol, which offer a protective wax finish; apply inside the solenoid coil tube with a Q-tip. Polishing the cylinder may require elbow grease and a rag. (Note: Chimes should never be oiled, as oil's viscosity causes the plunger to gel up, collect dust, and eventually prevent movement.)
4. Reassemble the cylinder, plunger, and spring exactly as they looked in your diagram.

### tip

Not all chimes are worth fixing—Rittenhouse dashpot-driven multinode chimes can be dangerous. Wetzel says they've been known to ignite house fires due to overheating solenoids.



## Fix #2: Replacing Bell Hanger Loops



A bell's fabric loops can break or degrade, and cause the bell to fall or offer a poor sound. Here's how to replace your loops:

**1.** Remove the old, frayed, damaged loop. You can cut off any exposed old loop cord on the existing chime, and push the remaining cord down into the tube.

**2.** Tie a bowline knot out of nylon cord, making a loop about 1" in diameter. Make sure the knot is positioned correctly so that the plunger's strike face will hit the longbell beneath the knot. Once the knot is in the right spot, use a match to lightly fuse

the knot and prevent fraying (you also can use a drop of super glue). The knot will secure the longbell into position.

**3.** Insert thin crafting wire through the chime's end plug, and push the wire until it comes out the bottom.

**4.** Twist the new loop onto the wire, then pull the wire up through the tube. Use needle-nose pliers to gently pull the wire loop and knot through the top of the bell.

**5.** The bell is now ready to hang (and ring) again.

LORA SHINN PHOTOS

## Restored & New Chimes

Not interested in restoring your own chimes, or just want a new set? Here are a few options:

**Knock Doorbells ([knockdoorbells.com](http://knockdoorbells.com)):** Wetzel occasionally sells restored chimes on his site, traversing a wide range of eras. He has amassed a chime inventory awaiting restoration; if you tell him what you're looking for in terms of type, style, era, price, and urgency, he can suggest options. (Wait patiently for a response; Wetzel works full-time for Rejuvenation and has limited time for his chime hobby.)

**Rejuvenation ([rejuvenation.com](http://rejuvenation.com)):** Sells resonator-style chimes in Craftsman, Atomic Age, and Streamline styles.

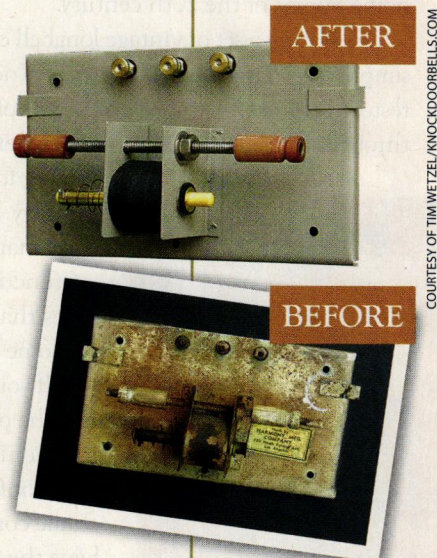
**Historic Houseparts ([historichouseparts.com](http://historichouseparts.com)):** Sells vintage doorbells, new-old-stock chimes, and antique mechanical bells.

**NuTone ([nutone.com](http://nutone.com)):** Still offers a multinode resonator-style chime in multiple wood finishes;

simple, compact styles; and several longbell options sold in individual parts.

**Byron Bells ([chbyron.eu/en](http://chbyron.eu/en)):** For a pre-1920 home, this UK-based company offers Wired Victoria Bells as a brass bell mounted on a wooden box. Several U.S. distributors sell the bells for around \$250.

**Etsy ([etsy.com](http://etsy.com)) and eBay ([ebay.com](http://ebay.com)):** Both sites can be a good source for vintage doorbells; I picked up two fantastic new-in-box 1940s doorbells. Check used doorbells for functionality; a sticky doorbell stuck in an "on" position could start a house fire by overheating the chime solenoid, according to Wetzel. (Check his website for diagrams and information about doorbell wiring.)



A Harmony-brand chime interior before and after restoration.

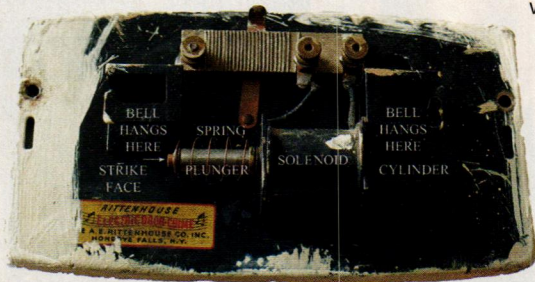
COURTESY OF TIM WETZEL / KNOCKDOORBELLS.COM

# Chime Glossary

**Cover:** The Bakelite, metal, or wood decorative cover that hides the chime's inner workings.

**Bell hanger loop:** The cotton, nylon, or other fiber loop the bells hang from.

**Bells:** The hanging metal tubes that emit sound.



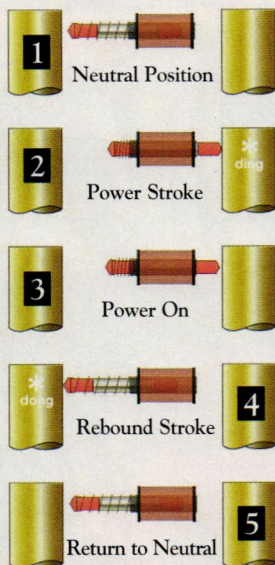
**Solenoid:** An electromagnetic coil, plunger, and spring mechanism that powers the chime.

**Cylinder:** The tube the plunger moves through.

**Plunger:** The moving metal cylinder that brings the strike faces into contact with the bells.

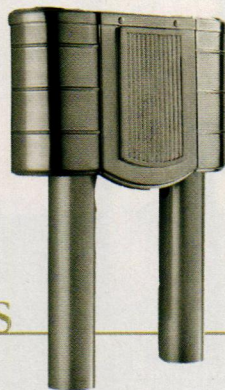
**Strike faces:** The two rubber or wooden bumpers that physically contact the bells, making the ding-dong sound.

**Coil or spring:** The spring that returns the bumpers to neutral.



**LEFT:** Ever wondered how a doorbell works? When the doorbell is pressed (2), the solenoid is energized, and the plunger is driven to the right and strikes the right bell. As the doorbell is held (3), the solenoid remains energized, and the plunger bounces off the bell and rebounds without touching the left bell. Upon release of the doorbell (4), the solenoid is de-energized, and the spring pulls the plunger back and strikes the left bell. The plunger then returns to neutral (5) when it bounces off the left bell.

**BELOW:** Mid-century chimes, in a period advertisement (right) and in reproduction from Rejuvenation (left).



## Chime Types

**Longbells** are the characteristic chime, featuring two, three, or four long metal bells hanging from the chime's mechanism and cover. Popular during the 1930s through 1950s.

**Resonators** feature short, thick tubes instead of long bells. The tubes are actually acoustic chambers that enhance the sound of xylophone-like reeds inside the tubes. Several styles of resonator chimes are available today.

**Compacts** are streamlined, rectangular-shaped chimes featuring neither bells nor tubes. They're more common during the mid-century (1950s-1960s) era through today.



## Fix #3: Replacing a Bell

If one or more of the bells is broken, missing, or damaged, you may want to replace those metal tubes—but doing so isn't easy. You can't substitute a new bell for a nonworking bell unless it's from the exact same model of chime. "Bell tuning is a result of alloy, diameter, length, and wall thickness, and there is no standard for vintage bells," Wetzel explains. Different chime sets feature various brass alloys with differing coloration, volume, and resonance, so it's unlikely to find a bell that can be easily swapped in for the missing or damaged bell. Your choices, according to Wetzel:

**1.** Hang a piece of brass pipe just to fill the gap, for aesthetic reasons only. **Cost:** About \$20.

**2.** Find a stray vintage bell to hang; search reuse stores or eBay. The chime may not sound the same (or even work), but the bell's look may more closely resemble an authentic style. **Cost:** Price dependent upon seller, but generally \$20+.

**3.** Buy an inexpensive new set of bells from NuTone (see "Restored and New Chimes" on the previous page), modify hangers, and replace all bells. **Cost:** \$130+.

**4.** Scavenge a set of bells from a nonworking chime set. Replace all bells. **Cost:** Around \$20 for a badly damaged or abused chime set, but can easily run into the hundreds.

Tim Wetzel divulges the worst chimes ever—use only at your own risk!

**OLDHOUSEonline**

# OLD-HOUSE LIVING





**LEFT:** Before homeowners Tim and Paula Schmitt (below) bought the bungalow, it was obscured by towering pine trees growing in the front and back yards. **OPPOSITE:** The couple repainted the dining room a mossy green and used a lighter shade to highlight the picture-frame moldings. They kept the room's existing chandelier but eventually would like to replace it with an Arts & Crafts-style fixture.

# Bargain Bungalow

*A Chicago couple transforms a neighborhood eyesore into an inviting home—on a reasonable budget.*

STORY BY NICOLE SWEENEY ETTER ♦ PHOTOS BY ANDY OLENICK

For three years, the 1920 stucco bungalow sat empty, home to only rats and grasshoppers and completely shrouded from view by towering pines. But when newlyweds Tim and Paula Schmitt spotted the “for sale” sign on the Evanston, Illinois, house, located just three blocks from Lake Michigan, they were thrilled. Never mind the decades of neglect; the yellowed, stained walls and ceilings; the brown shag carpeting and flamingo-pink kitchen; and the unmistakable odor of pet urine.

“We wanted to find a diamond in the rough, something that needed to be shined up,” Paula says. “When we walked in, right away it felt like there was good integrity to the house. Then it became sort of a fantasy—what could it become?” After house-hunting for a year in the pricey Chicago-area market, the first-time homeowners were relieved to snag a house that cost roughly half of others in the neighborhood. “Our budget wasn’t going to allow

anything exorbitant,” Paula says.

Fortunately, the five-bedroom, two-bathroom house turned out to be a true gem. Soon after purchasing the home in September 2010, Paula and Tim discovered it was an official Evanston landmark. The Evanston History Center files note that “this house is an excellent representative of a bungalow, but its elements taken from the Craftsman and the Prairie styles provide it with a claim to special attention.”





**ABOVE:** An existing window seat (restained by Tim and Paula) helps hide a radiator while providing a sunny perch in the dining room. **BELOW:** After their electrician discovered electrical boxes hidden behind the living room plaster, Tim and Paula seized the opportunity to add Prairie-style sconces. **RIGHT:** Mark Mushinskiy helped draft the couple's kitchen ideas, while carpenter Mykola Rudy executed the plans, blending new cabinets with the old.



## Diving In

Paula, a graphic designer, and Tim, a fifth-generation bakery owner, quickly learned they had inherited the mysterious house on the block. Neighbors gaped from the sidewalk while four overgrown pines were removed, revealing the home's exterior for the first time in decades. They also cleared three 80' pines that had swallowed the small backyard. Paula and Tim hated to cut down the trees, but they weren't appropriate for the lot. A mess of weedy vines and an ugly chain-link fence also had to go. Soon, the 2,200-square-foot interior was flooded with light. They also removed an unsightly aluminum screen door and splurged on a new porch light—a handcrafted, amber mica reproduction of a 1905 Arts & Crafts-style lantern. “We wanted the house to look alive again,” Paula says.

Armed with a stack of bungalow books for inspiration and \$1,500 in Home

Depot gift cards they'd amassed through credit card points, they turned their attention to the inside of the house. They spent more than four months in a mad dash of renovations, trying to get the house into livable shape while they stayed with Tim's parents. “Once we got into the project and we realized the scale of it, I think we got a little nervous,” Tim says.

Initially, they thought they'd move in by Thanksgiving. But then came Christmas. And then New Year's. Without a general contractor, “we learned by doing,” Paula says, “and sometimes doing wrong.” A measuring mishap in the kitchen meant that the sink was 3" from being perfectly centered under the kitchen window, also throwing off the alignment of the range and range hood. Fixing it cost them nearly \$700 and another month's delay. Another setback came when they discovered too late that their newly refinished floors



In the breakfast nook, Tim and Paula's carpenter built a custom table to complement the lines of existing built-in benches—a step up from the Formica table that was there before.

weren't as dark as they'd hoped, forcing them to resand and restrain the hardwood.

They first called in experts to tackle asbestos on the basement's pipes and in floor tiles in the basement and back porch, then hired pros to update the electrical and plumbing. Although their tight timeline motivated them to hire help where they could, Paula and Tim tried to cut costs by performing several projects themselves. For example, when they learned that the water heater's flue would need to be relined—a \$2,000 job—their chimney crew suggested rerouting it to the boiler's flue. Tim was able to do it himself, saving on the expensive repair.

The infrastructure work led to a serendipitous discovery by electrician James Ratajczyk, who was hired to rewire the house. During his initial walk-through, Ratajczyk noticed that the living room's plaster had several areas that changed

slightly in texture. Hidden beneath were five old electrical boxes, which Tim and Paula used to install inexpensive Prairie-style sconces.

### Back to Basics

The electrical boxes weren't the only things waiting to be revealed. "There were all these layers," Tim says. "We tried to get it down to more of a clean slate without destroying the style of the home."

The hardwood floors, for instance, were covered with a patchwork of brown shag, linoleum, and tile. Tim easily tore up the carpeting, whose padding had long stopped adhering to the floor. Prying up the linoleum and tile took crowbars, a chemical stripper, scrapers, and a lot of elbow grease.

The one room with exposed hardwood presented its own challenge: When they peeled back the dining room rug, they

found Chicago newspapers from the 1940s shellacked to the hardwood floor, a relic of the previous owners' incontinent dog. "It looked like a collage," Paula says. "If it didn't smell really rank and awful, it'd be something you'd cut out and save."

They were forced to replace the dining room floor, but were able to restore the oak and pine hardwood throughout the rest of the house. They chose a dark walnut stain and restrained the dining room's French doors and window seat to match the richer shade of the floors. "I think the dark, continuous hardwood floors make the house look larger and the rooms more grand," Paula says. "The darker color also helped hide some areas that had been stained over the years in a few of the bedrooms."

### Affordable Alterations

Some projects turned out to be more complicated than expected. In the first-floor



**TOP:** Paula delights in calling the upstairs bedroom "the free room." "Almost everything in it was either found or given to us," she says. **ABOVE:** A restored clawfoot tub, relocated from upstairs, takes center stage in the refinished main bath.

bathroom, for instance, they needed to replace the broken toilet and didn't realize that their 12" rough-in energy-efficient model wouldn't fit until an emphatic contractor schooled them. So Paula began a city-wide quest for a 14" rough-in toilet, which she finally found at a small local plumbing shop.

They also refinished a clawfoot tub that was too big for the second-story bathroom and relocated it to the main bath. "I love bathrooms with a clawfoot tub," Paula says. They hired a contractor to grind off the tub's layers of paint and reglaze it, then had an antique hardware store replate the claw feet in brushed nickel.

Under the bathroom's yellowed linoleum, they discovered the original 1" white hexagonal tile, and spent a full day scrubbing away the cement-like goo that had secured the linoleum. But when they ordered hexagonal tiles to fill in an area

around the new tub, they learned that today's 1" tiles are only  $\frac{7}{8}$ ". "There wasn't going to be a good way to blend the new tiles with the old," Paula says. So instead, they outlined the area in black pencil tile to make it look intentional.

The kitchen was another big project. "It was a glow of pink," Paula says, referring to the hue that covered the walls and cabinets. They spent hours stripping five layers of paint and were able to preserve most of the original built-in cabinetry, though they tweaked the layout to create more counter space and accommodate their appliances. They also replaced the wall of laminate cabinets added by the previous homeowners with simple, affordable cabinets with recessed front panels to match the built-ins. To help them blend even more, carpenter Mykola Rudyy added trim and repurposed an unused cabinet door as the side panel. "He is really the



guy who made this come to life," Paula says. "He was really good at integrating the new cabinets. He did such a nice job of making them look like they've always been there."

They turned a flea-market find into a cost-effective center island, painting it a mossy green and topping it with butcher block reclaimed from the family bakery. A new copper under-mount sink and antique copper faucet finish the west-facing wall of the kitchen.

In the breakfast nook, Tim and Paula removed a '50s-style Formica table and had their carpenter fashion a table to match the design of the built-in benches, using a Corian countertop also reclaimed from the family's bakery. They hope to eventually add Arts & Crafts-style wallpaper to the nook.

The bedrooms were easily transformed with refinished floors and freshly painted

walls, though the ceilings were so dingy they took four coats of paint. The couple also repaired decaying plaster on the walls and crown moldings throughout the house.

The windows were in bad shape, too. "We love the original double-hung and casement windows in the house, but they have accounted for hours of work," Paula says. "The pros fixed broken panes and ropes. Tim pretty much did the rest." In addition to cleaning years of accumulated filth, he removed and repaired disintegrating screens, scraped peeling paint, and sealed loose panes.

### Next Steps

There are still plenty of projects left on Paula and Tim's to-do list. The upstairs bathroom, which had a rotting floor, remains gutted, though they did find a second clawfoot tub on Craigslist that they plan to refinish.

**ABOVE: Removing the yard's overgrown pines not only reconnected the house to the neighborhood, but also resulted in a much sunnier living room.**

"We're a real working couple with a real budget," Paula says. "We don't have endlessly deep pockets." So, they're pacing themselves. Eventually they hope to improve the insulation, add an upstairs den, replace the garage roof, repaint the exterior trim, and landscape the yard. But at this point, they're content to enjoy all the progress they've already made.

"We're so happy to be here," Tim says. "We love to be home, and everything we do is just icing on the cake." 🍰

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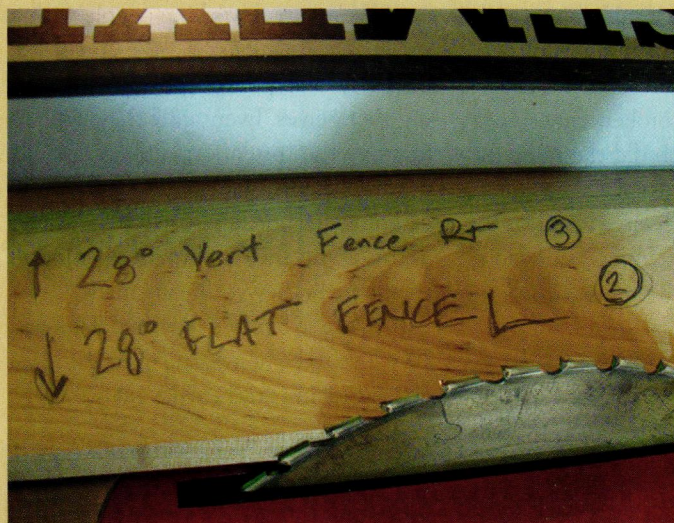
**LEFT:** The new cove molding (top right) is virtually indistinguishable from the original molding (top left) in the adjacent room.

**BELOW, LEFT TO RIGHT:** Before making any cuts, Brian labels the molding stock with the cutting sequence. After three passes across the table saw, the cove begins to take shape.

# CUSTOM-CARVED COVE

*Get the look of historic cove molding by blending off-the-shelf parts with a little woodworking finesse.*

STORY AND PHOTOS BY BRIAN CAMPBELL



Baseboards on the ceiling and upside-down baseboards on walls...as strange as it sounds, these are the elements of a three-piece assembly of cove molding I created to match original 80-year-old cove molding in a newer addition to my 1930s Georgian Revival home in Winona, Minnesota.

The original molding has just a 28-degree spring angle, giving it nearly twice as much rise as run, so it was impossible to find a match. I considered a full custom molding run, but given that it was just for one room, I decided that the setup charge for custom knife-grinding was cost-prohibitive—so I set about milling it myself.

The upper and lower parts of the three-part molding assembly are two pieces of off-the-shelf baseboard stock with a profile that matches the original moldings in the adjacent room. The third (middle) part is an elliptical cove that I milled on a table saw by passing 1x4 molding stock over the saw blade at an oblique angle. I used a 6' level clamped at a 30-degree angle as my fence and cut the cove in three light passes. While milling



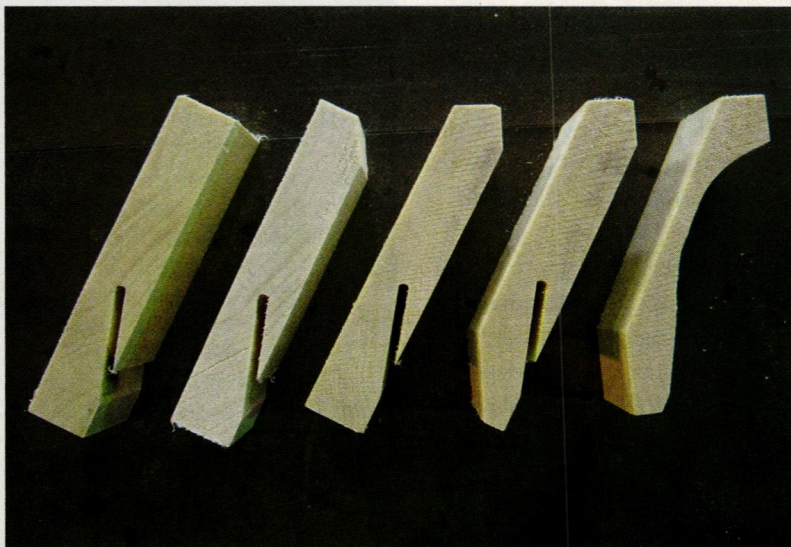
#### SAFETY tip

Using a featherboard to help feed the wood into the saw will help make vertical cuts safer. This project requires the fence to be to the left of an angled blade for two cuts, which is normally a no-no, but using a featherboard helps to keep it safe. I set the featherboard on an MDF sled board, which held the board nicely against the fence while keeping it from squeezing the kerf together and binding on the blade.

a standard cove involves centering the stock over the blade, for this elliptical version, the curve is milled with a tighter radius shifted to one side of the molding and feathered into an angled saw cut at the lower edge of the profile.

The cove in this molding is created from the outside in—you start by milling the angled edges of the molding first; milling the cove into the face of the molding is one of the final steps.

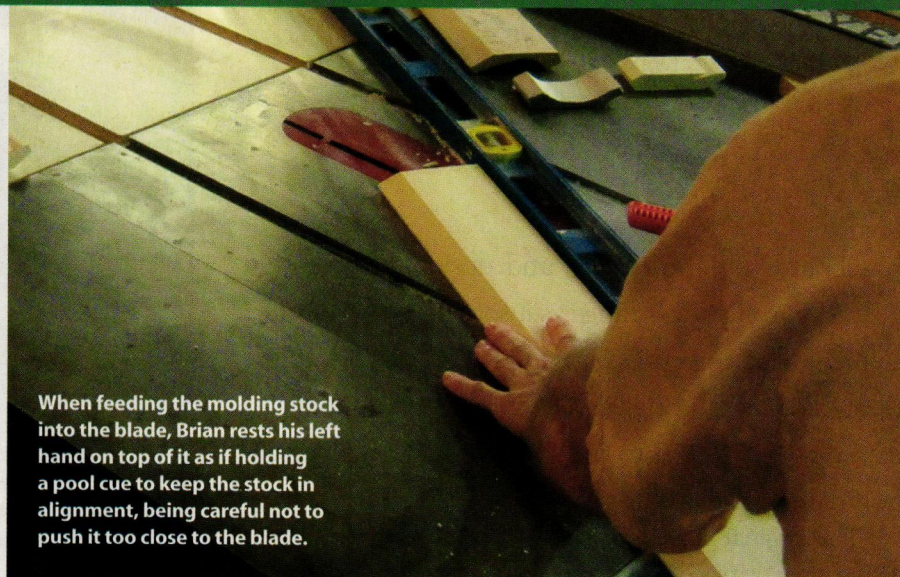
## Evolution of a Cove



The initial cut (shown at far left) is made with the stock placed vertically, the fence on the left, and the blade set at 17 degrees. This is a kerf cut that will eventually become the bottom portion of the cove face (far right), so it should only go about  $1\frac{3}{8}$ " into the stock. The next four cuts are all made with the blade at 28 degrees; they will remove the corners at the edges of the cove. (The cuts meet to create a 90-degree corner at the top right and bottom left of the molding.) The first cut is made with the stock vertical and the fence to the right to shape the edge of the molding where it meets the wall. The second cut, with the stock flat and the fence to the left, shapes the edge of the molding that will meet the ceiling. The third and fourth cuts repeat the process on the other end of the stock; the third is a vertical cut with the fence to the right, while the fourth is a flat cut with the fence to the left. Once all four corners have been cut, the cove is milled at an oblique angle in three slow, shallow passes.

# 4 Steps to Creating Elliptical Cove Molding

**1.** To make the four cuts needed for the edges of the molding, I set the saw blade to 28 degrees (the spring angle of the original molding). All four edge cuts can be made with the same blade setting by simply moving the fence and by making some passes with the stock horizontal and some with it positioned vertically. The cuts must be made in a specific order, or the stock won't have the edge needed to make the next cut (see "Evolution of a Cove," previous page). After the edges have been cut, the cove is milled by passing the stock over the blade three times, carving out very little material on the first pass and raising the blade slightly for each additional pass. To create the oblique angle needed for the cove, I removed the stock fence on the saw and clamped a level to the table at a 30-degree angle to serve as the fence.



When feeding the molding stock into the blade, Brian rests his left hand on top of it as if holding a pool cue to keep the stock in alignment, being careful not to push it too close to the blade.

**2.** After all the cuts were made, I sanded the face of the molding with a  $\frac{1}{4}$ " sheet sander, smoothing out the transition between the concave upper portion of the cove face and the angled cut on the lower portion. The molding was then primed to prepare it for installation.

**3.** To join the finished sections of cove, I cut a 22.5-degree scarf joint on the end of each piece to splice them together. Scarf joints are generally favored by restoration carpenters for historic accuracy—and because they are harder to see, provide more surface area for glue to bond to, and allow the two pieces to be through-nailed to each other, rather than just nailed to the backing. For this assembly, I stapled a 12"-long, 2"-wide rip of  $\frac{1}{4}$ " plywood to the back of the cove to reinforce the scarf joint.

**4.** To install the moldings, I used a marking block to determine the proper position for the two strips of baseboard that would become the edges of the molding, then nailed the baseboard pieces to the wall and ceiling with finish nails. The baseboards function as a nailing surface for the cove layer, which is attached directly in the center of the two baseboard layers to provide a consistent reveal on either side. Once

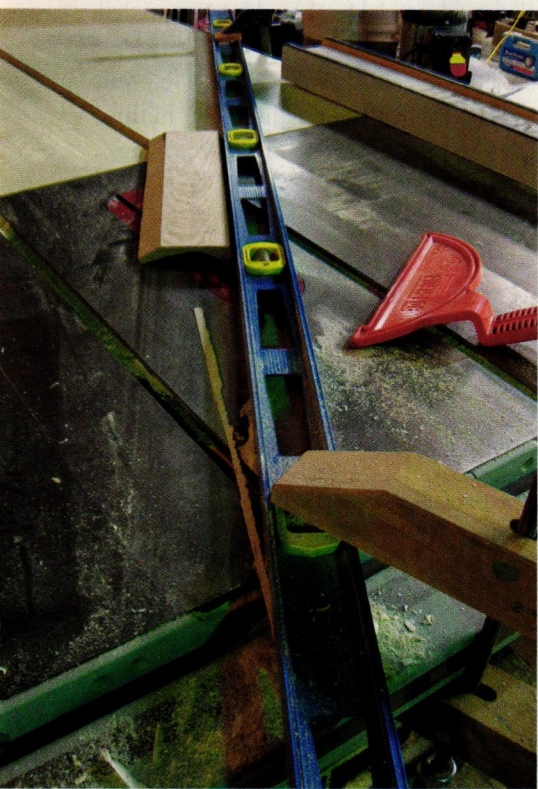
the moldings were installed, I sanded along the scarfs to remove minor variations in profile and blend the pieces together. Once the finished assembly was painted, it was virtually indistinguishable from the original molding in the adjacent room. 🏠

**Brian Campbell** restores historic homes as the owner of Basswood Architectural Carpentry in Winona, Minnesota.

## SAFETY tip

This is a unique process—wood milled at an oblique angle behaves differently than wood

fed parallel to the blade. Not only is kickback a potential problem, but the unique approach angle makes predicting the direction of kickbacks challenging. In addition, the operation must be performed without a blade guard—but because the blade is barely above the table surface, the wood itself acts as a guard in a limited sense. The best way to ensure safety is by making multiple slow, shallow passes. Careful experimentation with the technique is the only way to become proficient with this method, but even those familiar with the technique are wise to go slowly and be very careful.

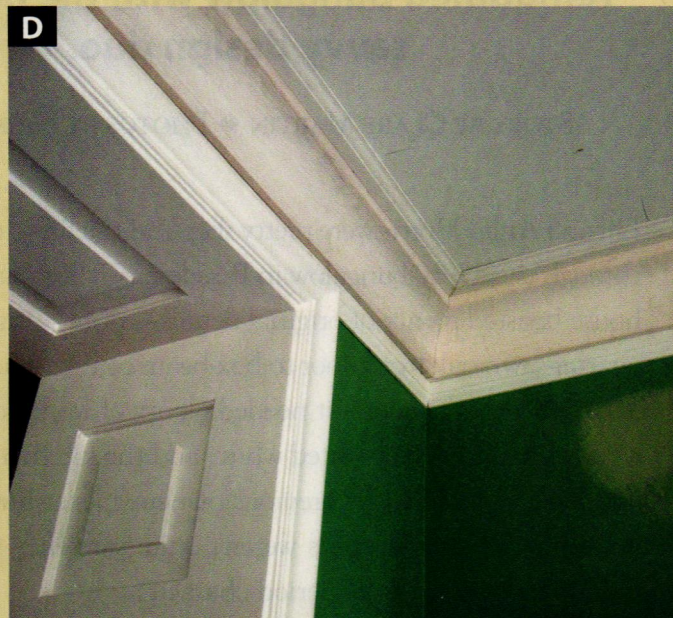


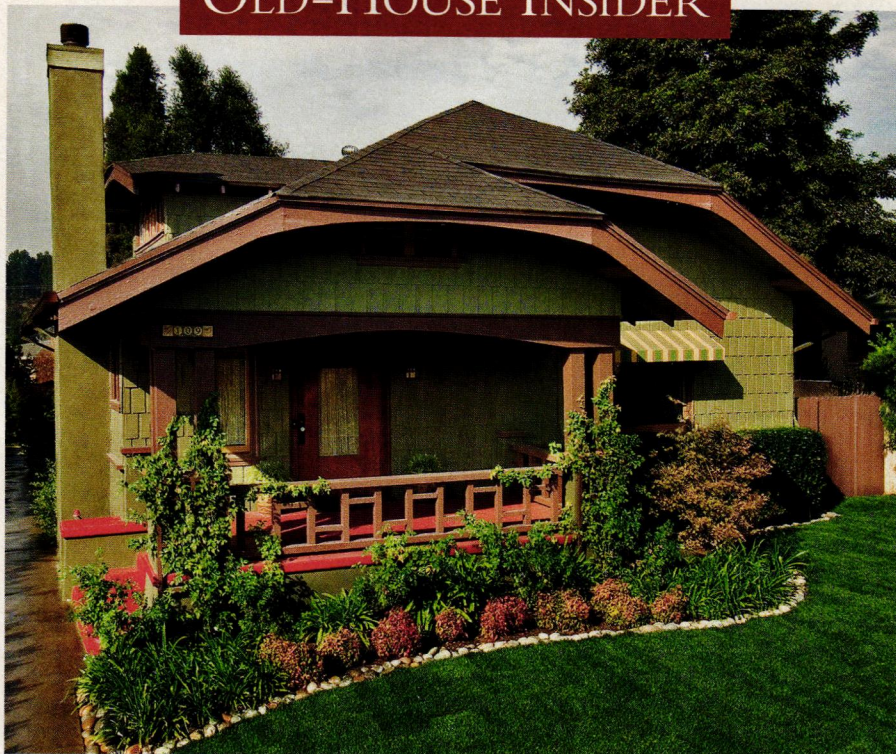
**ABOVE:** To set up the table saw to mill the oblique angle for the cove, Brian removes the stock fence and clamps a 6' level to the table at a 30-degree angle.

# Molding Installation



The baseboard pieces are installed first (A); the cove is then fitted in the center and nailed to the baseboards. Installing molding can be a one-person job with the help of telescoping "third hand" poles (B). Once the cove pieces have been fastened to the wall, the scarf joints connecting them are sanded (C) to create a seamless appearance. The primed cove (D) is now ready to be painted to match existing trim.





# Coming Up Craftsman

**A Pasadena couple revives a worn-down and remuddled bungalow with the help of a savvy design duo.**

STORY BY CLARE MARTIN ♦ PHOTOS BY NICK SAVOY

Bill and Anita Morris were pretty skeptical the first time they walked through their 1910 bungalow in Pasadena, California. Although the house boasted plenty of original details—from shingle siding and a quarter-sawn oak front door to box-beam ceilings and a built-in buffet in the dining room—it needed plenty of work, too. Most of the woodwork had been painted white, and the kitchen and bathroom had been remuddled by previous owners. Never having restored a house before, the Morriszes weren't quite sure they were up to the task of bringing back its period character.



With reproduction Batchelder tiles and glass-fronted bookshelves, the re-created fireplace surround is the focal point of the open den and living room. OPPOSITE: A new color scheme of earthy greens and browns brought an Arts & Crafts aesthetic to the exterior.





**Stripping all of the painted woodwork in the house would have required too much time and money, so designers David Goldberg and John Douglas focused their efforts on key elements—doors and built-ins—instead.**

Enter David Goldberg. A local real-estate agent, he tackles home restorations in his spare time, having caught the old-house bug at an early age while watching his parents re-create an English manor house in Bel Air. Over the past two decades, he's consulted on and restored countless vintage homes in the Los Angeles area. Familiar with David's background, Bill and Anita's agent sug-

gested that the couple meet with him to talk through what restoring the house would entail.

"Often people are afraid of houses that need work," says David, "but after I consult with them, they'll feel confident that they can do the work." Tapping into David's expertise did the trick for Bill and Anita, too; they purchased the home and handed over the design reins to David and fellow designer John Douglas.

### **Bringing It Back**

Although many original details remained, "cosmetically, the house was

very run down," David says. The exterior shingle cladding was a dull gray set against white trim; it was repainted in a mossy green, accented with warm brown and brick red. "The painting made a huge difference in the visual appeal of the house," says Anita.

Inside, all of the original doors were still intact, with their original hardware, but both the doors and the hardware had been painted white. John and David dismantled the doors and had them stripped and stained; the hardware also was stripped, replated, and polished.



With refurbished built-in storage, a custom-blended paint color on the walls, and restored vintage lighting, the dining room—which opens to a small screened porch—is one of Anita’s favorite rooms in the house. “It’s a wonderful space for entertaining,” she says.

One glaring omission from the home’s interior was a fireplace surround framed by built-in, glass-fronted bookcases, a common feature in many bungalows of the era. Referencing other houses in the neighborhood, David and John designed a period-accurate replacement, staining it to match other woodwork in the house and facing the firebox with reproduction Batchelder tile. “As a real-estate agent, I go in houses every week and take photographs or remember details,” David says. “All you have to do is copy things.”

Because virtually nothing original was left in the kitchen or master bathroom, they were gutted and completely redesigned. John and David also converted a large closet into a small ensuite

bathroom for the guest bedroom. For these new spaces, “We were interested in doing things that were in the spirit of the period,” says Anita, “without being period correct.” The revamped kitchen, for instance, features a mix of Shaker-style cabinets, granite countertops, a stainless steel Wolf range, and an art-tile backsplash. “Here in Pasadena, there are resources for everything,” says David. “You can get reproduction tile, pedestal sinks—it’s really easy to redo a kitchen or a bath.”

The small pool in the back yard—a must-have for Bill and Anita—presented a bit more of a challenge for David and John. “We had almost no land to work with, but were able to slam the carport up against the property line, which gave us just enough room to squeeze in a tiny pool,” says David. A decorative tile panel

running along the back of the pool gives it a bit of Arts & Crafts flair. “They wanted it to feel almost like a fountain or a pond,” John says.

**PRODUCTS:** All paints, Benjamin Moore. All tile from Mission Tile West. Exterior: Cladding color, custom mix similar to ‘Cabbage Patch’; Porch deck color, ‘Country Redwood.’ Living Room/Den/Dining Room: Light fixtures and furnishings, Revival Antiques; Rugs, Messerian Rugs. Bathroom: Pedestal sink and faucet, George’s Plumbing Supply; Porcelain sconces, Rejuvenation. Kitchen: Paint color, ‘Eggshell’; Custom cabinets, West Valley Custom Cabinetry; Range, Wolf; Bin pulls and cupboard catches, Restoration Hardware and Crown City Hardware.



#### FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Benjamin Moore: [benjaminmoore.com](http://benjaminmoore.com)

Crown City Hardware: [crowncityhardware.com](http://crowncityhardware.com)

George's Plumbing Supply: [georgesshowroom.com](http://georgesshowroom.com)

Messerian Rugs: [messerianrugs.com](http://messerianrugs.com)

Mission Tile West: [missiontilewest.com](http://missiontilewest.com)

Rejuvenation: [rejuvenation.com](http://rejuvenation.com)

Restoration Hardware: [restorationhardware.com](http://restorationhardware.com)

Revival Antiques: [revivalantiques.com](http://revivalantiques.com)

West Valley Custom Cabinetry: [wvcustom.com](http://wvcustom.com)

Wolf: [subzero-wolf.com](http://subzero-wolf.com)

### The Bottom Line

Keeping the project within budget was a key concern for Bill and Anita—but they didn't want to skimp on the details. "They always went for quality," says John, "but they didn't necessarily spend top dollar." This meant David and John had to get creative in their approach.

**ABOVE:** Designed with Bill, the chef of the family, in mind, the new kitchen is a blend of period elements and modern amenities. Bill designed the small island to provide extra prep space.

Case in point: the light fixtures. For the main areas of the house, John and David selected beautifully restored vintage lights from Revival Antiques, a local store that's often David's go-to source for lighting on restoration projects. In less visible areas, however, they relied on reproduction fixtures from Rejuvenation and Schoolhouse Electric. "The fixtures are accurate reproductions, and they're relatively inexpensive—\$100 versus \$1,500 for a vintage light," says David.

They also decided not to strip the white paint off of the box beams and trim in the living room, den, and dining room, choosing to concentrate instead on refurbishing the built-in buffet and china cabinets. "Stripping things in place is really difficult and expensive," David says. "When you're trying to do an accurate restoration, it can really add up."

Fortunately for the Morriszes, the house had enough original character that they were able to enhance it without breaking the bank. "When you have a nice look to begin with and mix in inexpensive things," says John, "it just looks wonderful." 🏠



**CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT:** Set in a field of inexpensive white subway tile, Art Nouveau-style decorative tiles bring a dash of color to the kitchen's otherwise neutral palette. The small pool in the back yard has a fountain-like feel; to stay on budget, John and David chose to cover the patio with concrete pavers that simulate the look of variegated brickwork. Simple but period-appropriate tile, plumbing fixtures, and lighting highlight a new bath in a former closet.



# Removing Trim

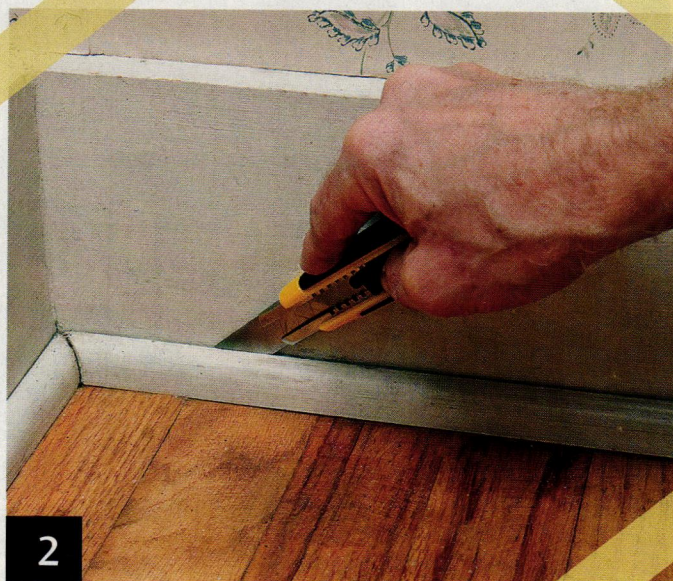
BY THE OHJ EDITORIAL STAFF ♦ PHOTOS BY ANDY OLENICK

Removing finish trim is a skill that will come in handy for any home restorer. Plumbers and electricians often cut through trim to do their upgrades, roughhousing kids and fast-moving pets can damage old or delicate baseboards, and it's often necessary to patch-in repairs—not to mention that after a century of painting, trim often needs stripping to regain its luster and reclaim its profiles. Read on to discover how it's done.

1. First, assemble your tools. For this project, you'll need five basic tools (pictured clockwise): a claw-foot hammer, pry bar, wooden shim (a paint stirrer works in a pinch), nail-pulling pliers, and a utility knife. ►



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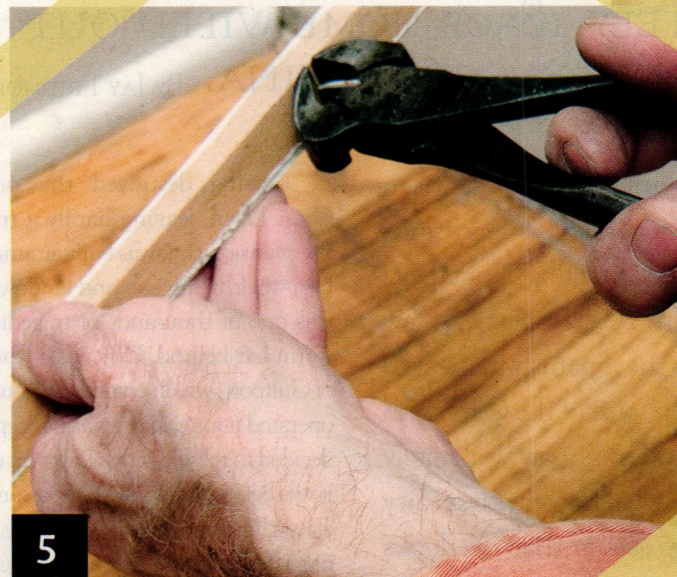
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◀ 2. Start in a corner. Begin by using the utility knife to carefully score through the paint, making several passes over all areas where individual trim components intersect, as here between the baseboard molding and the quarter-round shoe molding.



◀ 3. Next, place the shim behind the pry bar to protect the adjoining trim pieces, and leverage the bar as a wedge to begin prying the shoe molding away from the baseboard. Work slowly and deliberately. If the shoe molding seems stuck, move the pry bar to the floor, and gently work it between the floorboards and shoe molding to help loosen things up. Always place a wooden buffer behind the tool to protect adjacent pieces from scratches and dents.

4. As the shoe molding begins to loosen from the corner, slowly move down the wall. Once you're able to get the pry bar beneath a section of shoe molding, it will become easy to liberate the rest of the molding to the nearest scarf joint. ▶



◀ 5. Once you've completely removed the section from the wall, use the hammer's claw or a pair of nail-pulling pliers to firmly grasp the finish nails and pull them out through the back of the board. This prevents any damage to the surface, splitting of the molding, or dings to the painted surface.



# Born Again

AN AMBITIOUS REBUILDING PROJECT BROUGHT BACK GRASS LAWN, A STATELY 1850S HOME WIPED OUT BY HURRICANE KATRINA. BY JAY PRIDMORE



**TOP:** Grass Lawn—so iconic that it graces the City of Gulfport's official logo—stands once again along the town's beachfront.

**INSET:** Early 20th-century photos of Grass Lawn, such as this one from 1918, helped the preservation team reconstruct crucial details, such as the width of the zigzags on the balustrades fronting the galleries.

Many buildings have risen along the Mississippi coast since Hurricane Katrina landed its punch in 2005. But very few embody the Spanish-moss-and-mint-julep spirit of the Old South quite like Grass Lawn, a stately Greek Revival home with an airy two-story *galerie* that overlooks the Gulf of Mexico.

Katrina destroyed the original Grass Lawn, leaving hardly a trace of the mansion that was built around 1850 by a wealthy surgeon and landowner. It was one of thousands of tragedies the storm left behind. Officials of the City of Gulfport, which owned the house and operated it for weddings and receptions, decided to rebuild Grass Lawn exactly as it was before the storm. They assumed its classic lines and relative simplicity would make for a straightforward project.

It wasn't quite that easy.

PHOTOS: COURTESY OF THE MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF ARCHIVES & HISTORY



**LEFT:** Grass Lawn, as it looked before Hurricane Katrina. Preservation specialist Ron Miller guesses that the more delicate railings shown here were added in 1969, after Hurricane Camille.

**BELOW:** After Katrina, Grass Lawn was little more than a foot-print along the oceanfront.

## Gaining Support

"Normally we don't recommend reconstruction," says Ken P'Pool, director of the Historic Preservation Division of the Mississippi Department of Archives and History, which ultimately oversaw the design. This idea is based on the theory that resources are scarce and are better devoted to existing historic properties. "But we believed that with this particular property and this particular disaster, it deserved special consideration."

For historians as well as Gulfport residents, Grass Lawn was a rare touchstone of the coast's antebellum past, already diminished by previous hurricanes and new casinos that had popped up along the beachfront.

Rebuilding Grass Lawn looked like smooth sailing at first, with \$1.6 million quickly assembled through a combination of insurance, aid from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), and a special federal fund of \$500,000 approved by Congress specifically for Grass Lawn. The last amount was intended to make up the difference between FEMA's bare-bones reconstruction guidelines and the level of attention required to rebuild Grass Lawn according to the Secretary of the Interior's standards.

Getting funding, it turned out, was the easy part. The project hit its first roadblock when it came time to get approval from the Gulfport City Council. One council member vociferously objected to rebuilding, arguing that Grass Lawn was a reminder of the slave-owning South, and there were many more serious needs in the city ravaged by Katrina. That evening, with a mere quorum of the council present, the project was voted down. Only later did public uproar prompt the full council to meet again and vote to approve reconstruction of the house, long regarded as one of the Gulf Coast's most important architectural landmarks.

## Digging Up Details

Exactly re-creating a 160-year-old house is a daunting prospect. In this case, state preservation experts and the City of Gulfport agreed to forgo unseen aspects of authenticity such as hand-hewn timber and pegged joinery, and concentrate on visible elements. The new house would have modern framing and mechanical systems, and meet up-to-date code standards. But exposed elements would be replicated with a verisimilitude that eluded even the pre-Katrina original, which had been renovated and altered over time.

The design of the house—a box with two identical stories, three rooms wide and one deep—was straightforward, and



PHOTOS THIS PAGE COURTESY THE SUN HERALD



**LEFT & ABOVE:** Historic photos guided the rebuilding of the stacked-wood column capitals, similar to those on other 1850s houses in the area.

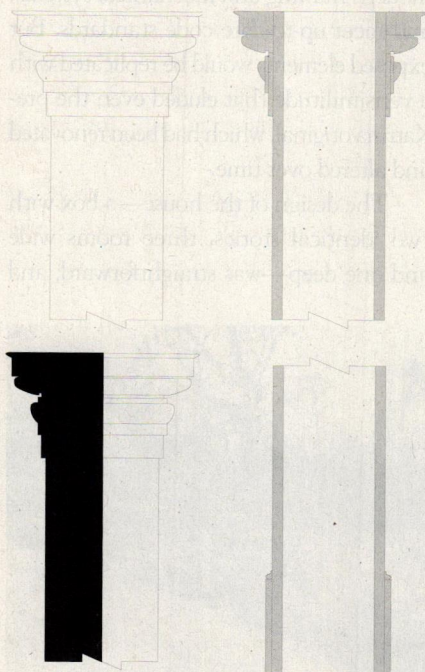
**BELOW:** The rebuilt house begins to take shape amidst the live oaks.

the detail was mostly geometric. But the preservation team knew that re-creating the house wouldn't be as easy as it seemed. While Grass Lawn's vernacular style meant uncomplicated lines and ornament, it also meant that it was builder-designed, without any known architect and absolutely without surviving drawings. Later plans used in recent restorations were found, but they

lacked the level of detail needed to re-create moldings and other details.

What followed was a thorough exercise in forensic architecture at a level rare even for the state specialists, who usually have remnants, if not old plans, to go on. In this case they had photographs, some from the federal Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS), which shot Grass Lawn

in 1978, and others that had survived from various sources. Piecing these images together with historical descriptions and drawings collected from a series of previous restorations, they were able to reassemble the house piece by piece. "It was like a Sherlock Holmes story," says P'Pool. "We were looking for minute clues to reproduce the smallest details."



**ABOVE:** CAD drawings detail the profiles and individual pieces of the column capitals.



Retracing the footsteps of Grass Lawn's original owner helped to unlock some valuable insights. Dr. Hiram Alexander Roberts maintained his primary residence in Port Gibson, Mississippi, a hundred miles northwest on the Mississippi River, not far from the wealthy city of Natchez. This connection provided important clues, especially for preservation specialist Ron Miller, who had previously served as the longtime executive director of the Historic Natchez Foundation. Miller believes the Robertses almost certainly brought builders and craftsmen with them to build their summer home. Photos showed molding profiles familiar to historic homes in Natchez, including ogee-and-angle moldings. "When you see that, you know it was built [within a few years of 1850]," Miller says.

Identifying Grass Lawn's original construction date and the provenances of its craftsmen guided other conclusions as well. Photos showed capitals on exterior columns—not the leafy, carved versions of the Greek Revival's high style, but rather cut, beveled, and assembled like a puzzle—as it turned out, not too different from those on Miller's own house in Natchez. "It was the way many people did it at the time," he says, "but you won't find it in an architecture design book of the period."

## Past Meets Present

Determining form is one thing; reproducing it to exact dimensions is quite another. For the kind of precision that separates historical preservation from the merely suggestive, computers made all the difference. Miller and colleague Christy James imported digital photos into the Autodesk program of their computer-aided design (CAD) system. Using base measurements from known existing documents—mostly plans from a 1970s restoration—plus a rich photographic record, they calculated dimensions for dozens of details to fractions of inches. It was more time-consuming than they ever could have imagined, and not without stubborn ambiguities.

For example, the "accordion rails," the zigzag-patterned balustrades fronting the galleries, seemed in photos to be too thin



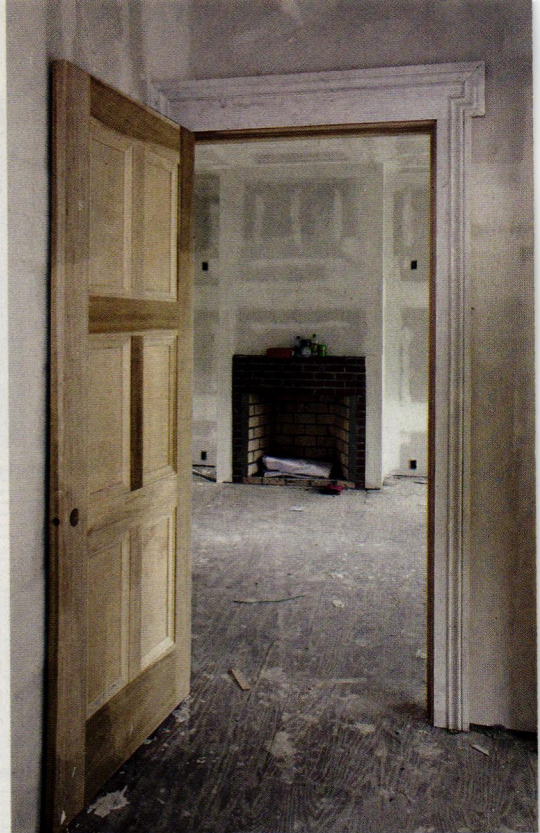
**The restoration team pieced together profiles for window and door casings by examining historic photos in Photoshop to create CAD drawings like this one, which were handed over to the millwork shop to be replicated for the rebuilt house.**

and delicate for the 1850s, based on similar features from the time in Natchez. Miller supposed they had been replaced after a previous hurricane, possibly Hurricane Camille in 1969. Miller and James used an early 20th-century photo, showing the original, stouter version of the railings, to make drawings for the millwork shop.

Even more exacting were the profiles of window and door casings, for which photographic evidence was limited to small parts of larger photos. Miller and James knew, based on the restoration plans available, the precise width of most openings; from there, they extrapolated other measurements, using Photoshop to enlarge images, increase contrast, and even measure shadows in moldings otherwise flattened by the camera. "We went back and forth, trying to extract [dimensions] from the shadows in various places," Miller explains.

## Mission Accomplished

For a successful project, such precise planning must be matched by equally exacting craftsmen and builders. At Grass Lawn, although everyone is pleased with the end result, a few glitches—mostly "cupping" floorboards in the galleries—delayed the



completion and dedication of the project. While neither the city nor the architect would discuss it due to the litigation involved, this particular defect points in part to the use of new-growth pine flooring in the replicated structure, which has a wider grain and greater tendency to warp. More generally, contractor problems speak to the difficulties of using low bids—necessary in government-funded work—for historically based projects that require highly specialized construction techniques.

For this preservation team, the lesson was to leave nothing ambiguous in the pre-bid design stage. Ultimately, however, the success of a project like this will be judged against people's memories, which are shaped by countless minute details and incised by the passage of time. And memory has always played a vital role at Grass Lawn. "The building has had such symbolism and memories for the community," says P'Pool. "It was that symbolism that we wanted to retain." 🏠

**Jay Pridmore** writes about architecture and historic preservation from his home in Lake Forest, Illinois. His books include *Chicago Architecture & Design* (Abrams, 2005).

# Neighborhood Assembly

DEARBORN, MICHIGAN, BOASTS AN IMPRESSIVE ARRAY OF WELL-DESIGNED HISTORIC HOUSES, THANKS TO AUTOMOBILE AUTEUR HENRY FORD.

STORY AND PHOTOS BY JAMES C. MASSEY AND SHIRLEY MAXWELL

Henry Ford once assured Americans they could buy his automobiles in any color they wanted—as long as it was black. Clearly, he was a man who knew his own mind.

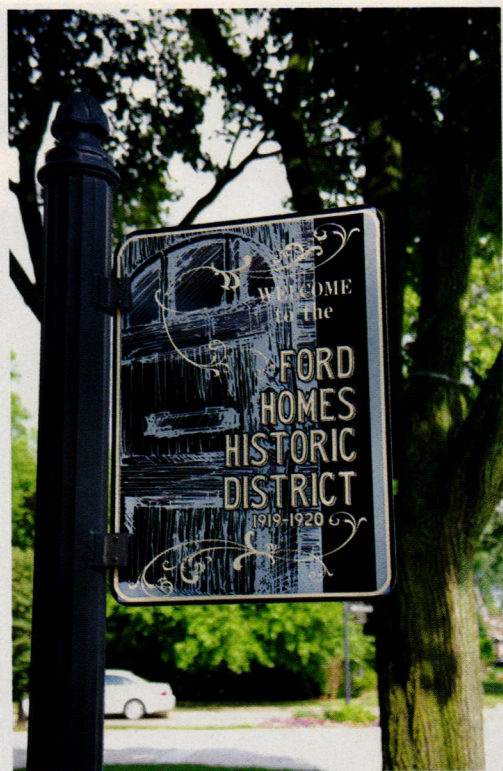
So when he was persuaded—either by his wife, Clara, or his personal secretary, E.G. Liebold (or possibly both of them)—to throw his company's much-vaunted assembly-line practices into homebuilding, there was no question things were going to be done his way.

Ford's way, for both houses and automobiles, called for good design, efficient construction, quality materials, precise workmanship—and plenty of potential buyers. The buyers had to provide stable ownership and reliable maintenance so that the product's value remained high. Henry Ford may have been socially progressive, but he was above all a canny businessman.

## Building Beginnings

The arguments for a Ford-backed subdivi-

sion in Dearborn, Michigan—the Detroit suburb where Ford resided and where he had just built a tractor factory—were impressive. The new factory's work force was drawn mostly from Detroit, where housing was scarce and expensive, and which required workers to take a long trolley ride to and from their jobs. To make matters worse, post-World War I America was caught up in a real estate speculation boom that forced home prices skyward. Ford saw an opportunity to provide well-built homes that middle-class



**CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT:**  
Distinctive historic district signs are posted at each entry street. The decorative arched hood that appears over many doorways is one of several handsome Colonial features. The most popular models were A (bottom left) and B (bottom right), similar yet distinctive in design. **OPPOSITE:** With Arts & Crafts massing and Colonial details, Model F was one of Albert Wood's six basic designs for Ford Homes.





families could afford, and that ambitious working-class families could reasonably aspire to someday own.

The Dearborn Realty and Construction Company (its board of directors composed of Clara Ford, E.G. Liebold, and young Edsel Ford) intended to address all of these problems. The company bought a platted nine-acre site, bounded on the north by the Michigan Central Railroad tracks near the tractor plant, and laid plans for its experimental subdivision.

Building began in 1919 and continued into 1920. The construction crew consisted of 250 to 500 workers from Ford's plants, and work was organized like any assembly-line project—each team and

worker had a specific task. The tools and materials were all at hand, delivered from on-site facilities—a planing mill, lumber warehouse, a plumbing and tin shop—or by freight cars.

### Surprising Variety

The project architect, Albert Wood, drew plans for six different models, beginning with (surprise!) Model A and running through Model F. Most houses had three bedrooms; a few had four. All of the houses were two stories tall with central chimneys, and were uniformly blocky in shape. Yet, by manipulating building elements and varying the orientation of the buildings, Wood was able to create the

illusion of many different designs.

One eye-fooling device was to group the houses in sets of three or four, varying setbacks for the groups from 24' to 36'. While every house faced the street, this ruse helped to create a feeling of variety and privacy, and increased the sense of spaciousness.

Stylistic variations—some small, others a bit bigger—also provided distinction despite the houses' similar footprints. The Ford Homes are sometimes described as "Colonial," but a closer look reveals that they are actually good, early 20th-century house types, generally in the Arts & Crafts mode, enlivened by a few Georgian or Colonial Revival details—round-



**LEFT:** The houses on Nona Street show Wood's varied designs, with alternating setbacks and attractive landscaping. **RIGHT & BELOW:** The arched entry hood set on scrolled consoles is found on many of the houses. The small hanging lantern at its center is original.



## Exploring Dearborn

There are many reasons you might find yourself in Dearborn, a bustling corporate metropolis and the home of The Ford, as the famous Henry Ford Museum and Greenfield Village is officially called. But one extra draw to this near suburb of Detroit is its lovely subdivisions, particularly the Ford Homes District. The boundaries are clearly marked by Ford Homes Historic District signs, but the core of the original subdivision is on Beech, Nona, and Park streets between Military and Nowlin. Ninety-four houses built in 1919 are on Park and Nona; 156 more were constructed on Beech, Edison, Francis, Gregory, and Military in 1920.

**TOP:** Hipped roofs and catslide gables predominate, as in this Model E.  
**BOTTOM:** The recessed entry porches found on many houses, as in this Model B, are both practical and attractive.

## Architect Albert Wood

Born in New York City, Albert Gardner Wood, Jr. (1886-1973) was the son of a builder-cabinetmaker; he trained with his father before heading to the West Coast at the age of 19, where he worked in a Seattle architect's office by day and pursued his professional studies through night-school and correspondence courses.

Around 1912, Wood moved to Detroit, where he met an important client: automaker Henry Ford. By 1919, Wood, now a seasoned architect and member of the American Institute of Architects who had already designed Dearborn's Ford Hospital, was a natural choice to design Dearborn's Ford Homes.

The Depression prompted a move back to New York, where he soon set up what would become a well-known family interior design firm on Long Island. Known as Albert Wood and Five Sons, the company remained in business until 1988.



arched hoods above some entrances, triangular pediments on others; round porch columns here, square ones there; pergola-like recessed corner porches elsewhere.

The most striking differences are in the varied rooflines—hip, gable, gambrel, jerkin-head—which are artfully and variously aligned. Sometimes gables confront the street; sometimes roof ridges run parallel to it, so porches, entrance doors, and

windows assume different relationships to each other and the street. Triple sets of double-hung windows, a frequent feature of houses of the post-World War I era, may occur on either the fronts or sides of houses, adding interest and also giving a clue to the location of living or dining rooms.

Building materials were varied just as deliberately, combined and recombined to

create many looks. Wall-surface materials, used singly or in combination, include wide and narrow clapboards, cedar shingles, brick, stone, and stucco.

Inside, the houses were carefully plotted—small enough to be efficient, but large enough to accommodate family activities. With central chimneys at their core, every living room boasted a friendly hearth. The kitchens weren't large, but



**LEFT:** Some houses, like this Model F, have brick first floors, with upper stories either shingled or clapboarded. Extensive use of triple windows characterizes the district's houses.

were equipped with modern conveniences like electric stoves. A single bathroom was on the second floor, convenient to the bedrooms.

Although the emphasis on careful workmanship never flagged, worsening economic conditions over the construction period made some changes in materials necessary. The oak floors and cabinets used in the earliest houses were replaced in later ones by humbler woods like fir.

### Accommodation for All

Like the houses, lots were comfortable but not overly large. They included front and rear yards with room for small gardens, trees, shrubs, and ornamental planting. Underground wiring with electric poles located in the 20'-wide alleys running

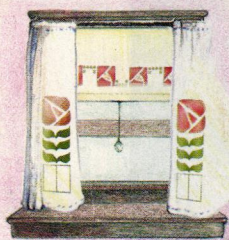
behind the houses made modern conveniences possible. Odd as it seems for a subdivision associated with America's premier automaker, garages were optional rather than standard features—possibly to control costs. (Ford's pragmatism was legendary.) Only a few were built, and they were located, as was usual at the time, at the rear of the building lot.

Ford opened the subdivision to everyone, not just his own employees (many of whom could not have afforded the \$5,750 to \$9,750 price tags), but they had to meet certain criteria: He demanded stability and "suitability" of all prospective owners. In order to prevent real-estate speculation, owners had to agree not to sell their homes for five years, and the Dearborn Realty Company reserved the right to buy back any house within that

time if an owner showed signs of moral or financial undesirability. Since this was the Prohibition Era, making or selling alcohol was a forbidden activity, as at least one wine-making homeowner found to his sorrow.

Henry Ford wanted to provide his workers with stable, affordable, and well-built houses and neighborhoods, but he wanted even more to demonstrate to builders, developers, and speculators that this could all be done efficiently and profitably. Looking at Dearborn's Ford Homes (a local landmark district today), it is clear that he achieved his goal. The houses are still attractive, intact, and well-kept; the lawns are crisp; and the streets are filled with neighborly activity—not bad for a 92-year-old experiment. 🏠

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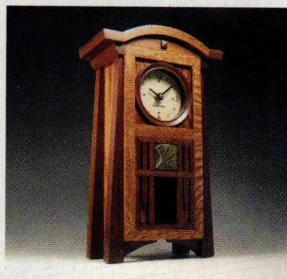


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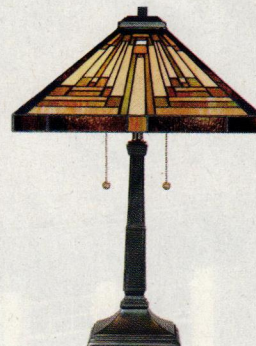


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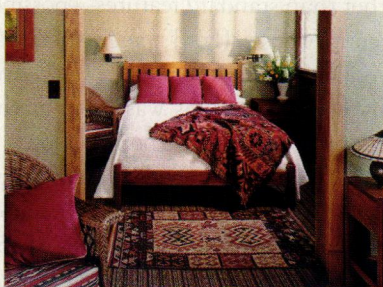
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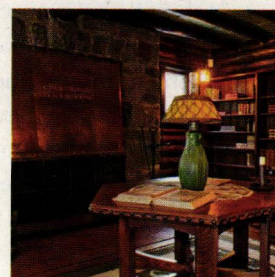


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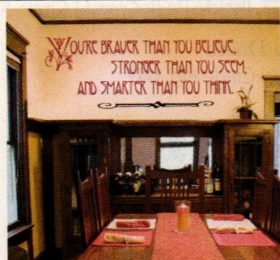
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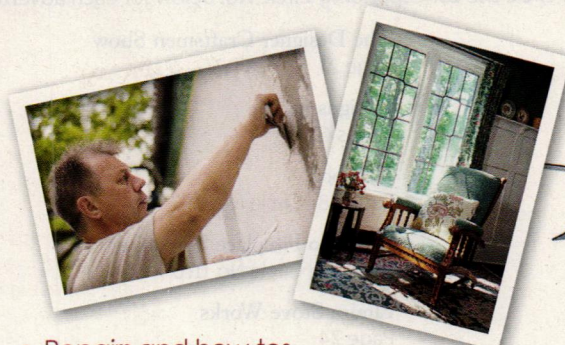
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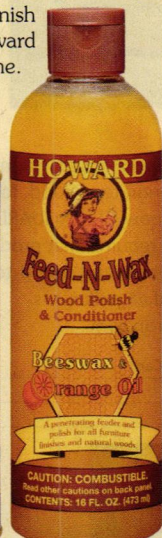
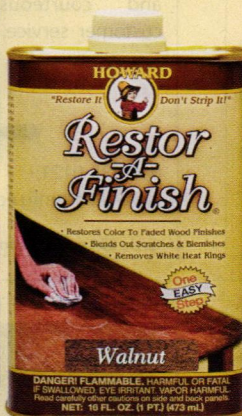
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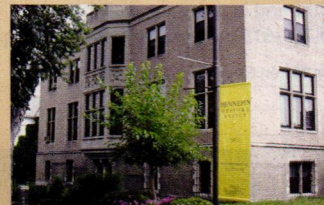
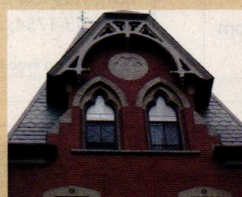
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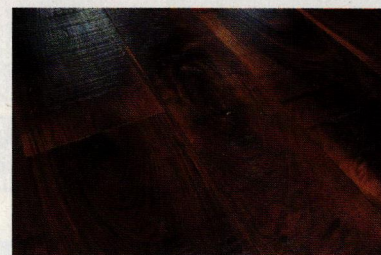
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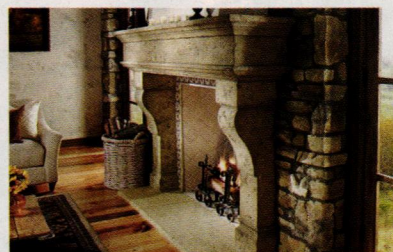
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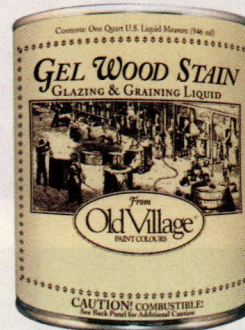
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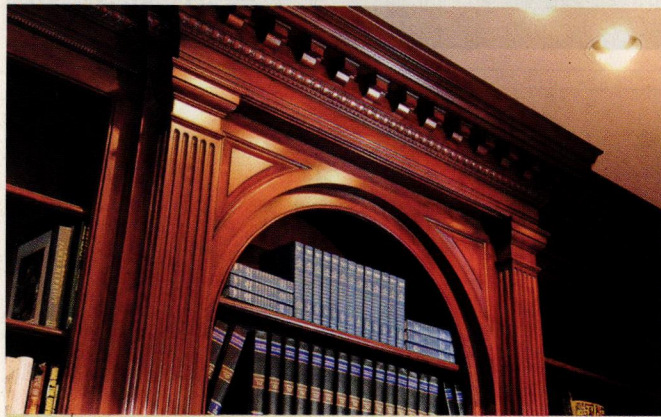
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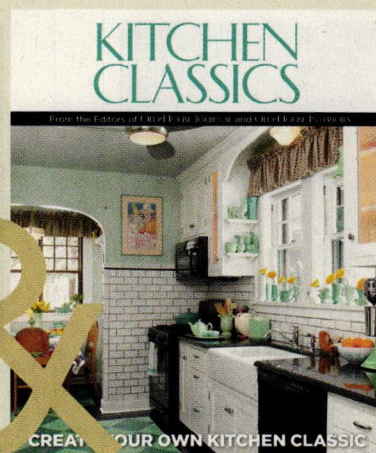
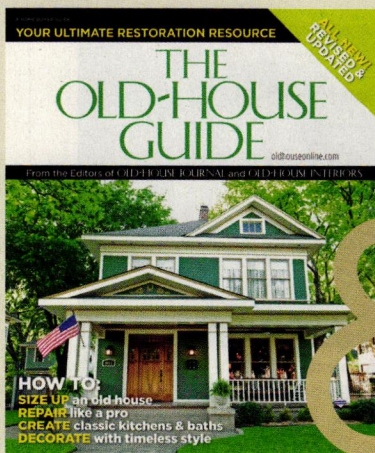
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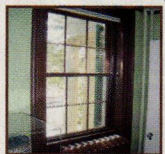
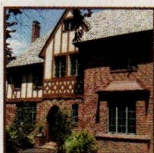


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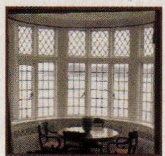
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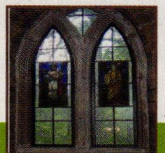
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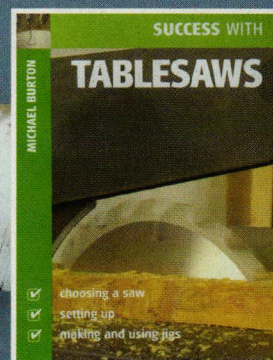
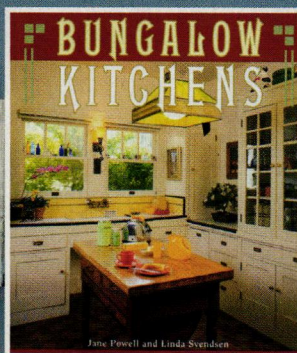
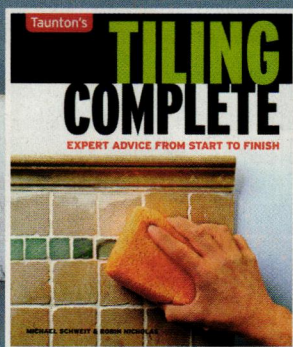
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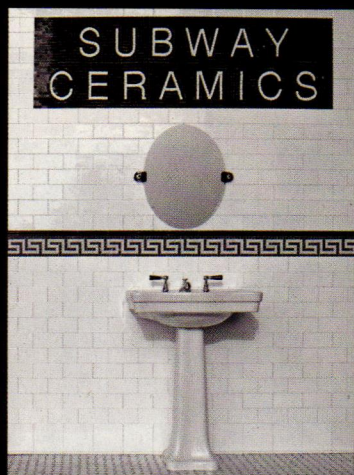
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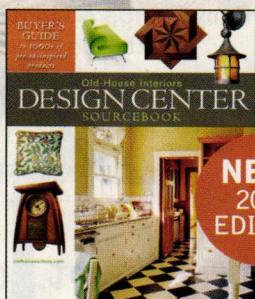
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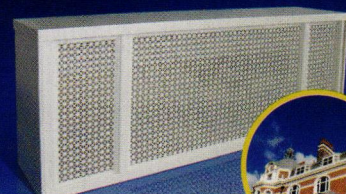
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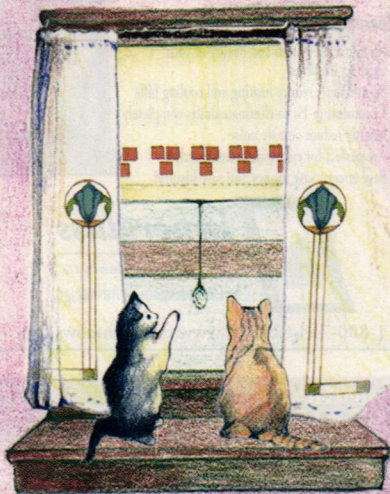
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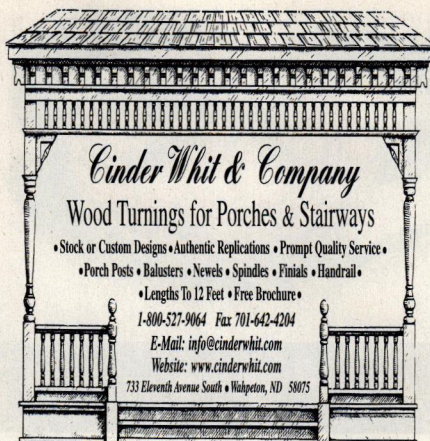
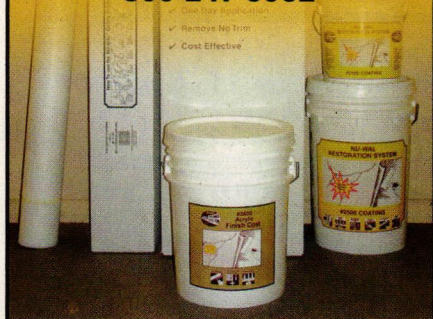
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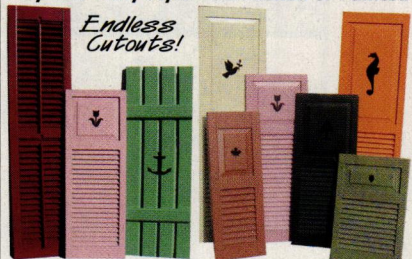
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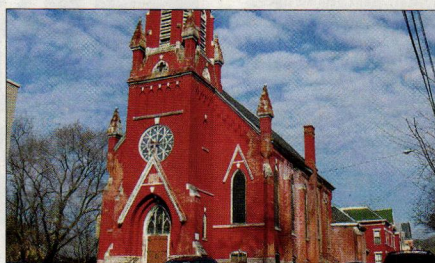
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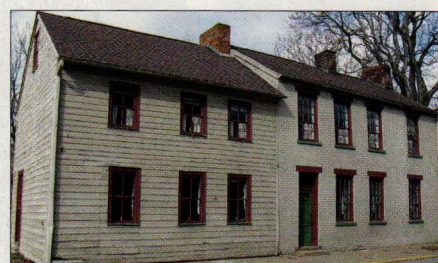
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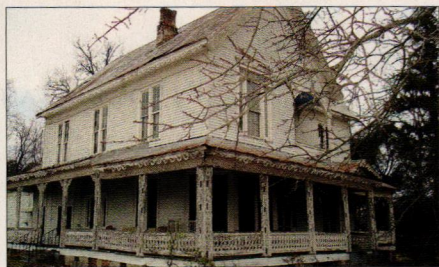
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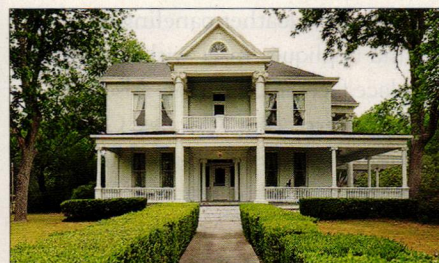
# Historic Properties



**PROSPERITY, SC**—This circa 1890 Queen Anne is an unpolished jewel located in a fast growing area of the South Carolina up country. A wonderful structure that retains original woodwork, doors, staircase and more. Awaiting a preservationist to shine her back to her former glory. Home, B&B or office, this National Register eligible property has many uses. Owner financing available. \$68,000. Michael Bedenbaugh, Palmetto Trust, 803-896-6234. [www.palmettotrust.org](http://www.palmettotrust.org)



**LAGRANGE, TN**—190 Walnut Street. Circa 1847 antebellum home on 6+ acres in the middle of town. 80% of Town of LaGrange is on Historic Register. Needs moderate restoration. Features 6 bedrooms, 8 fireplaces, winding staircase, 9-foot ceilings, heart pine floors, pretty woodwork, built-ins, balcony and screened porch. 1 hour east of Memphis. Wonderfully priced at \$225,000. Mary Jean Smith, Banyan Tree Realtors, 901-853-8666 or 901-359-2520. [www.maryjeansmith.com](http://www.maryjeansmith.com)



**TAYLOR, TX**—Stunning solid brick home, circa 1903, on 1+ acre in the Austin area. Updated and remodeled, 4,000+ sq.ft. 4 bedrooms, 3.5 baths. Intricate molding, columns, tin ceilings, stained glass, crystal chandeliers, 4 fireplaces, decorative stenciling, long leaf pine floors, and elevator. Wraparound porch, porte cochere, pool. 400 sq.ft. carriage house with bath. \$539,900. Lauren Powell, Capital City Sotheby's International Realty, 512-695-0679. [www.1720WLakeDr.com](http://www.1720WLakeDr.com)

## SPOTLIGHT PROPERTY



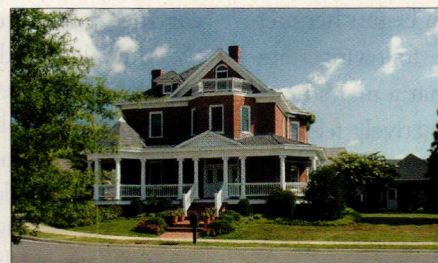
**HOWARDSVILLE, VA**—Restored Greek Revival home in Albemarle County. Circa 1853 mansion with original smokehouse and 810 square foot cottage. Spacious rooms, heart pine floors, 12 fireplaces, and a cupola. Double parlor with pocket doors; gourmet kitchen with adjacent family room; billiard room with wet bar and entertainment area; and office area. 4 bedrooms, 3.5 baths. Multiple outbuildings. Mature boxwoods and cedar grove, gated entry, and pool. Property adjoins the James River. 102 acres for \$2,995,000; 292 acres for \$4,595,000. Natt Hall, Valley Real Estate Brokers, 434-242-9893. [www.monticola.net](http://www.monticola.net)



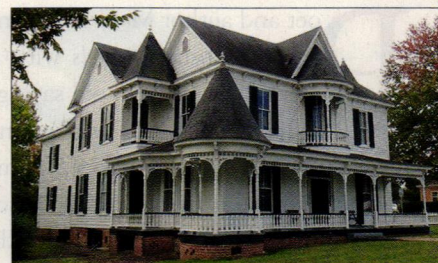
**MEMPHIS, TN**—Mt. Airy, circa 1835. Centennial farm on 6 acres located at 10700 Latting Rd. One of oldest log homes in Western Tennessee. Poplar clapboard over 16-foot hand hewn logs. 10 rooms with almost 4,000 sq.ft. Handsome mantels; hardwood floors. Restoration between 2006-2007. Modern kitchen. Master bedroom with dressing room and bath. Central HVAC. Garage. \$399,500. Mary Jean Smith, Banyan Tree Realtors, 901-853-8666 or 901-359-2520. [www.maryjeansmith.com](http://www.maryjeansmith.com)



**GALVESTON, TX**—Circa 1891 cottage saved and stabilized by Galveston Historical Foundation. Repairs to the exterior include foundation, roof, siding and windows. New composition shingle roof installed over radiant barrier plywood decking. Buyer to design and build out the 1,500 sq.ft. interior including all systems in a way that best suits their lifestyle. Garage apartment. \$98,500. Brian Davis, Galveston Historical Foundation, 409-765-3419. [www.galvestonhistory.org](http://www.galvestonhistory.org)



**CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA**—An elegant Victorian property, this 1898 home has been restored maintaining all its original beauty with modern conveniences. Over 4,500 square feet, the property has 4 bedrooms with 3.5 baths on three levels. With almost half an acre in landscaped gardens, the mountain views extend from the large front porch. \$645,000. Ann Hay Hardy, Frank Hardy, Inc., Realtors, 434-296-0134 or [ahhardy@farmandestate.com](mailto:ahhardy@farmandestate.com)



**CLARKSVILLE, VA**—Morton-Sizemore House, circa 1895. Historic Queen Anne in town with turrets, bays and balconies. 3,825 sq.ft. with molded wood cornice, brackets and variegated shingles in gable ends. Hardwood floors throughout. Includes 2 bedroom guesthouse (Moss Tobacco factory office, circa 1850). Perfect location for residential, commercial or B&B. \$450,000. Max Sempowski, Antique Properties, division of Keller Williams, 434-391-4855. [www.oldhouseproperties.com](http://www.oldhouseproperties.com)



ARCALUS ARCHIVE/REJUVENATION COLLECTION

**Artistic Mantels No. 46, Chas. F. Lorenzen & Co.,  
Chicago, Illinois, circa 1905-1910**

## Home Is Where the Hearth Is

Poet and author Mary Y. Robinson begins her preface to *Artistic Mantels* with the following statement: "There is an old saying that a man's home is his wife's heart, and we instinctively feel that a woman's home is the fireplace." A man or woman could practically make a home in the "Pascal" fireplace above, whose built-in accoutrements—including a slender bookshelf and grandfather clock—imbue it with many of the artistic comforts of a small bungalow.

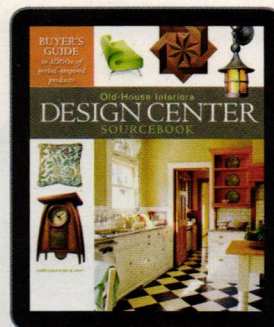
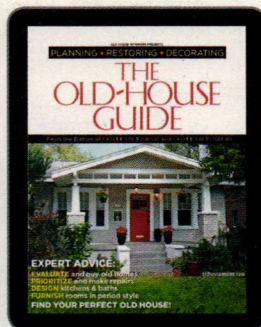
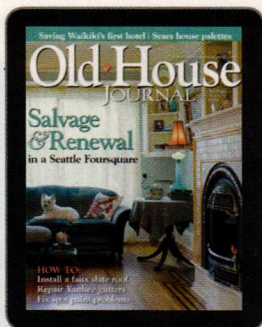
Chas. F. Lorenzen & Company of Chicago was a leading turn-of-the-century manufacturer and distributor of all things fireplace (from wood mantels and gas inserts to decorative andirons and facing tile). Their designs for *Artistic Mantels* reflected the popularity of the Arts & Crafts movement, with bold features such as medieval-style hand

carvings, pithy inscribed mottoes, leather paneling, butterfly joints, leaded doors and appliques inset with art glass, and elaborately tiled fireplace faces and hearths. Also available? The remarkably realistic terracotta "Odorless Gas Log Set"—a bit of familiar fireplace fakery that no doubt put the ideals of Stickley and Hubbard to the test.

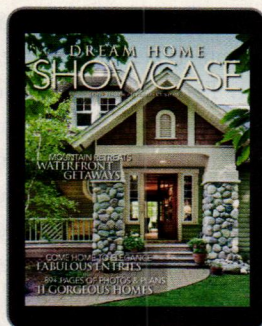
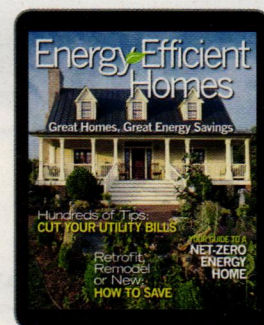
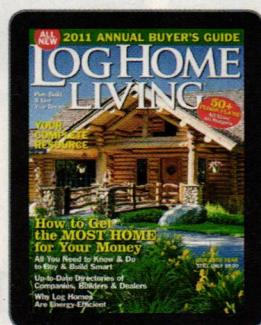
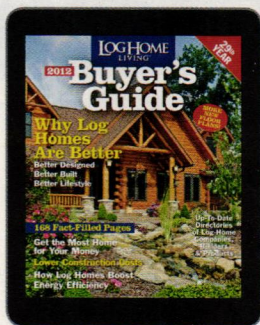
We can't say whether these icons of Arts & Crafts authenticity would have appreciated Lorenzen's inclination to pack each mantel with all of the movement's bells and whistles, but we suspect they'd have at least been sympathetic to the company's unwavering devotion to the fireplace. As Robinson reminds us, "There is nothing cheering, social, or ancestral about a radiator." Ouch. 🐻

**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



## Identity Crisis

When old houses try too hard to change their appearance with off-the-shelf fixes, they can end up losing their sense of self. Take, for example, these two Queen Anne Victorians on the same street. The house at left is secure in its personality, proudly displaying original gable and hipped rooflines, double-hung windows, and a spindled porch. The house on the right, meanwhile, appears to have lost its way underneath a row of modern windows jutting through the roof, a patchwork of new siding, glaringly undersized replacement windows, and a porch that treads too far beyond the building envelope.

"This is a very confused Victorian," notes our contributor. We think that when old houses fall into the wrong repair hands, it's easy for them to become disoriented. 🏠

**WIN \$100:** If you spot a classic example of remuddling, send us clear color prints or digital images. We'll give you \$100 if your photos are published. The message is more dramatic if you include a picture of a similar unremuddled building. (Original photography only, please; no clippings. Also, we reserve the right to republish the photos online and in other publications we own.) Remuddling Editor, Old-House Journal, 4125 Lafayette Center Drive, Suite 100, Chantilly, VA 20151; or via e-mail: [OHJEditorial@homebuyerpubs.com](mailto:OHJEditorial@homebuyerpubs.com).

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