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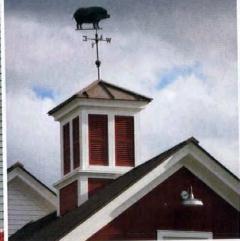














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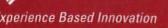
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#### **OLD HOUSE JOURNAL**

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ON THE COVER A sunroom added to the old Cape brings the garden inside. PHOTO BY ERIC ROTH. SEE STORY ON PAGE 76.



### Learning to love paper

Historic-wallpaper specialist Burt Kallander (burtwallpapers.com) once told me that a marketing survey uncovered two fears that keep people from buying wallpaper: the fear of its application, and the fear of interior decorating. "In other words," Burt says, "they're afraid of out-of-control mess, and afraid of what their friends will think.

"So, to address these customer fears, the big firms sell pre-trimmed and pre-pasted paper, and they keep the designs no more interesting than elevator music."

Well, that's not what you'll see in this issue! How about a panorama depicting the unspoiled natural wonders of North America, and dizzying op-art designs dating to the neoclassical, supposedly staid Federal period? Most of the installations you'll see here are traditional. With the renewed popularity of wallpaper in recent years, however, we've come across nontraditional applications: People paper the backs of bookcases, or use paper only on one accent wall, or panelize it within mouldings, and they might frame antique or boutique paper as artwork.

Paper in a room always defines the mood and creates or emphasizes proportions. It can add history or tell a story. My own theory is that a generation of DIYers who painstakingly stripped the



papers pasted on walls from the 1940s through the 1970s (-reams of emerald ivy on faux-shadowed trellises, brown teapots, metallic bathroom papers, groovy orange-and-pistachio paisleys, all of it stained by nicotine—) got their fill of wallpaper. Maybe, after several decades of Linen White, we've finally gotten over it.

Wallpaper doesn't have to come from the hardware store. Handblock-printed papers never lose their appeal. Panoramas transform a room. We can choose from affordable hand-silk-screened papers by American companies like Bradbury & Bradbury-created by artists and craftspeople with expertise in color, drawing, and printing. You can add a frieze or a dado, a border, even a perimeter stripe on the ceiling with small corner treatments—all traditional applications that don't require papering entire walls. Unless you want to.



# SIDE NOTES

#### **PORTLAND TOUR**

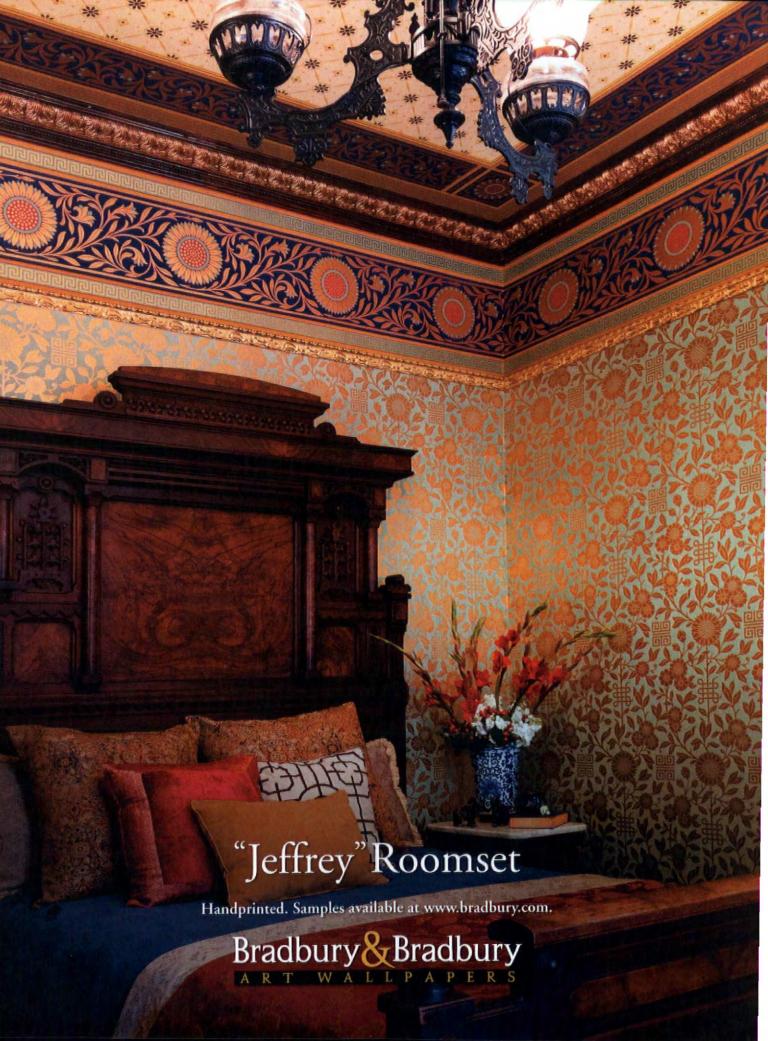
The Architectural Heritage Center's Old House Revival tour is a spring highlight in Portland, Oregon. Visit restored and gently updated houses for ideas on reversing bad remodeling, creating compatible new space, and preserving original materials. Houses represent many eras and styles. Homeowners and contractors are on hand to answer questions.

"With the ongoing struggle over demolitions, the Center feels it's critical to demonstrate the adaptability of older homes . . . they can come up to a 21st century standard without losing character," says Gwen Jones of Bolling & Co. (bollingco.com), whose own 1917 home will be on the tour. The Architectural Heritage Center works to remind citizens that historic buildings provide context, conserve cultural heritage, and are a vital element of livable cities.

This year's tour is Sat., April 14, running 10 am-4 pm, tickets \$25-35. More info: (503) 231-7264, visitahc.org



ABOVE The antique and art wallpapers gallery of Bolling & Co. is also on this year's tour.



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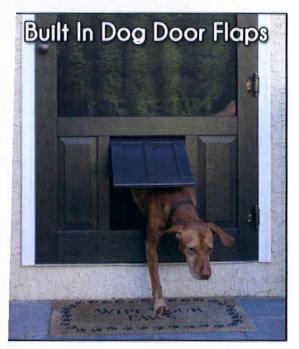
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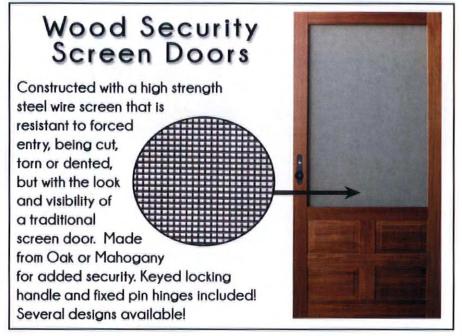
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# Decorated Walls and Ceilings

Color and texture for every room surface, all from the best in historical design.

By Mary Ellen Polson

#### 1. TWENTIES REVIVAL

This new collection offers faithful reproductions of vintage wallpapers from the 1920s. Printed with archival-quality latex inks, each double roll covers about 60 square feet. The group includes floral, geometric, fruit, and leaf-themed papers. \$152 per roll. Bradbury & Bradbury, (707) 746-1900, bradbury.com

#### 2. DEEP RELIEF

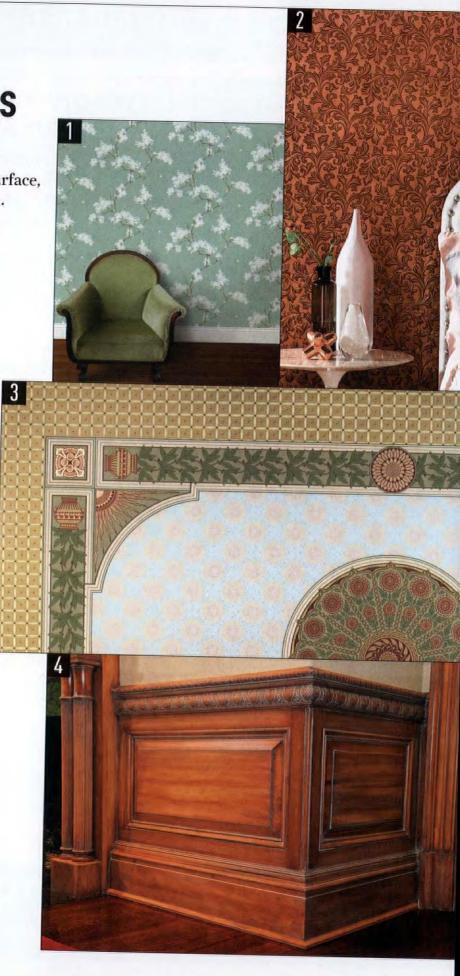
Invented in 1877 to mimic the look of intricate plasterwork, Lincrusta in patterns like classic Acanthus enhance walls in settings from Victorian to Moderne. Made from molded linoleum, Lincrusta should be finished with oil-based paints. A 56-sq. ft. bolt is \$379.99. WallpapersPlus, [888] 242-7448, wallpapersplus.com

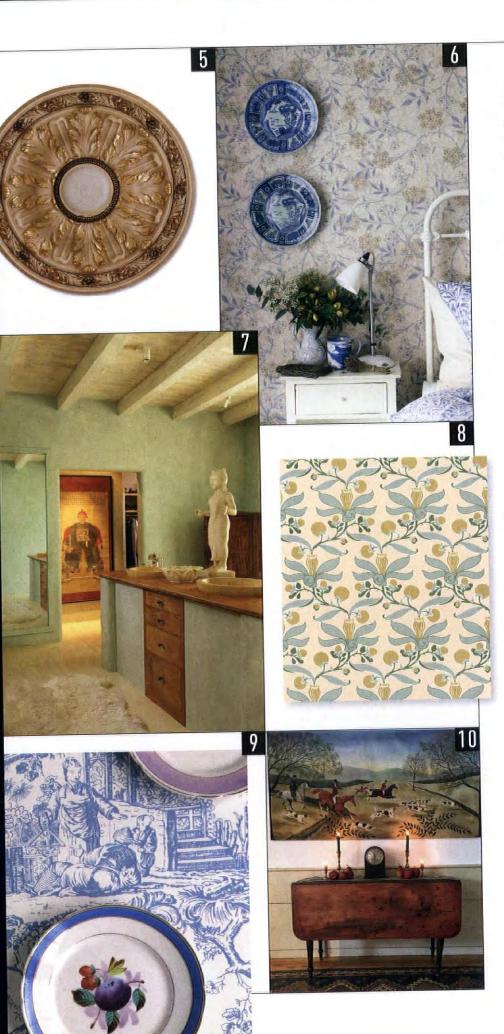
#### 3. UNDER THE SKY

A suite from the Aesthetic Movement collection centered on the Redgrave ceiling fill (\$60 per yard) includes the Hudson Enrichment and Howard borders (\$24–27), the Decameron rosette and fans (\$33), and Isabella and Sunflower blocks (\$24–27) used as appliqués. Mason & Wolf Wallpaper, [732] 866-0451, mason-wolf.com

#### 4. COLONIAL RE-CREATION

Built up from in-stock mahogany mouldings scaled to the room, this raised-panel wainscot was given a whitewash finish to highlight detail. This is a custom installation, but components like the pineapple egg-and-dart bolection moulding are \$4.32 per linear foot. Driwood Moulding Co., [888] 245-9663, driwood.com





#### 5. PERFECT CIRCLE

The Acanthus Rosette from the Signature Plaster series is a perfect ceiling medallion, whether finished simply or with gilding or another decorative treatment. The rosette measures 24 ½" in diameter and is 2 ¾" deep. \$319. J.P. Weaver, (818) 500-1740, *jpweaver.com* 

#### 6. SPRING PERFUME

Designed by William Morris in 1872, Jasmine features a background pattern of hawthorn leaves overprinted with a meandering jasmine trail. The Morris & Co. paper comes in five colorways and coordinates with Jasmine embroidery fabric. To the trade. Style/Library, [800] 395-8760, stylelibrary.com

#### 7. FROM THE EARTH

Nontoxic earth plasters and pigments can be blended to create custom natural colors for walls, ranging from bone white to sienna red and sage green. Plasters (\$75–\$160) and pigments (\$15 to \$35) are both sold in 50-pound bags. American Clay, (866) 404-1634, americanclay.com

#### **8. GENTLE PETALS**

The Solanum is a soft, undulating rendering of stylized nightshade plants, adapted from a ca. 1898 design by C.F.A. Voysey. The paper is 21" wide with a 12 %" matching repeat; sold in 30-sq. ft. single rolls. \$210. Trustworth Studios, [508] 746-1847, trustworth.com

#### 9. TRUE TOILE

Printed in a single color such as green or blue on a white ground, toiles were wildly popular in the late 1700s. Toile D'Etienne is part of a new collection of sold directly to the public. \$87 per single roll. Thomas Strahan, [212] 644-5301, thomasstrahan.com

#### 10. ANOTHER PLACE AND TIME

Lisa Curry Mair hand-paints canvas wall hangings in pastoral and scenic styles reminiscent of 19th-century imagery. Measuring 3' x 6', the hunting scene comes with a rod pocket for wall display. \$2,800. Canvasworks, [802] 263-5410, canvasworksdesigns.com

**Early and Original** 

Fittings and furniture for those rare early houses, and folks who love them.

By Mary Ellen Polson

#### 1. ANCIENT IRON

Based on a medieval pattern, the Norwich doorknocker is hand-forged in iron using 18th-century techniques. One of half a dozen hand- and machine-forged knockers available, it measures 6" high x 4" wide. \$84.75. Historic Housefitters, [800] 247-4111, historichousefitters.com

#### 2. CHECKS AND FLOWERS

With its floral center and checkerboard border, the Yarmouth floorcloth marries colonial aesthetics and contemporary innovation. Originally one of three in a custom order, this version measures 5'6" x 8'6". \$45 per sq.ft. Gracewood Design, [503] 522-7660, gracewooddesign.com

#### 3. COUNTRY RADIANCE

Punched and pierced metal panels for uses from pie cupboard to cabinet door panels come in a choice of tin, copper, and brass in a choice of finishes. Blanks, patterns, and tools are available, too. Most are \$16.95 to \$25 and up. Pierced Tin Designs by Country Accents (570) 478-4127, piercedtin.com

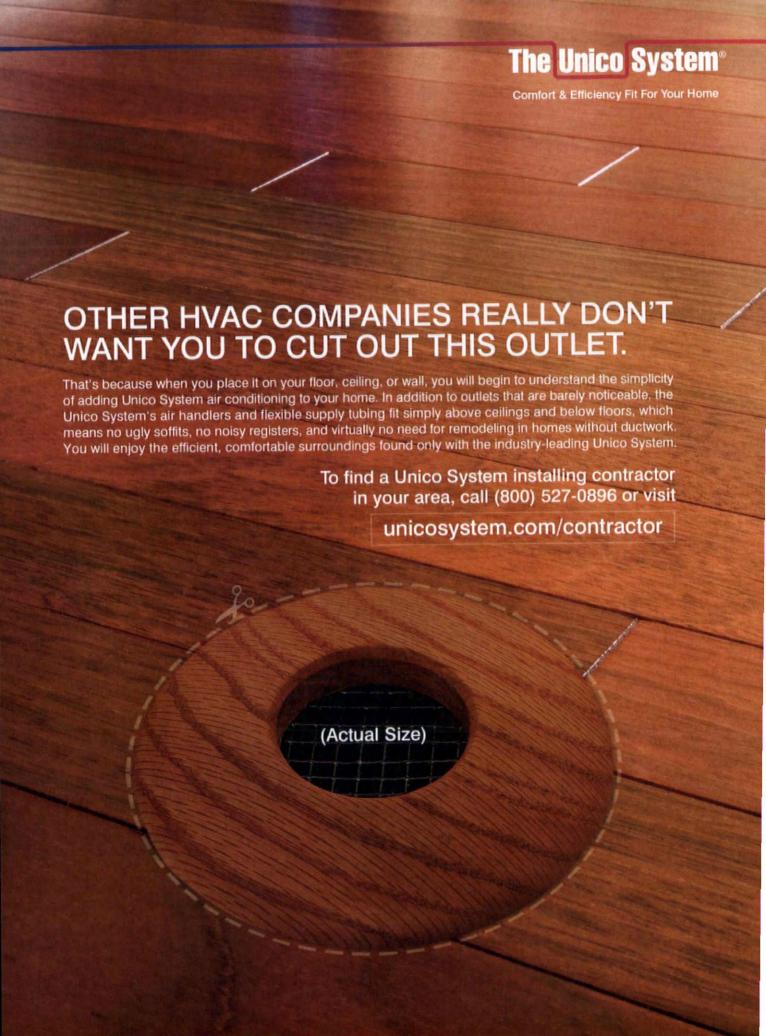
#### 4. LITTLE RED SIDEBOARD

Inspired by early dry sinks, the Eleanor sideboard measures 52" high x 48" wide x 18" deep. Made with traditional joinery, each made-to-order piece is available in a choice of no-VOC paints and finishes. \$1,133. Fable Porch Furniture by March Legend, (866) 611-5224, fableporchfurniture.com

#### 5. BALL POST BED

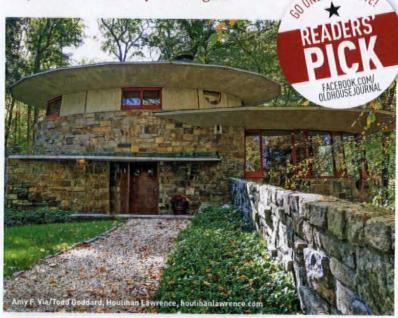
The Ball Top Lowpost Bed features a curve-detailed 51" high headboard and four ball-topped posts. Shown in tiger maple with Olde Amber glaze; also in cherry in five finishes. Offered in twin, full, queen, and king sizes. King, \$4,410. D.R. Dimes, (603) 942-8050, *drdimes.com* 





## **Wrightian Houses**

Houses by Frank Lloyd Wright or his protégés: they're not as rare as you thought.



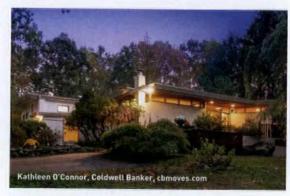
#### PLEASANTVILLE, NY /\$1,500,000

Unusual for Wright, this 1948 masonry Usonian has an overlappingcircles design, taking "organic" up a notch with a mushroom-cap carport. Stone fireplace with floating loft; trapezoidal cabinets in the kitchen.



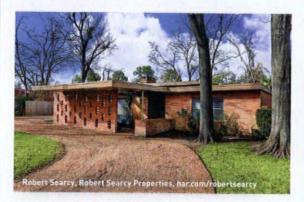
#### MINNEAPOLIS, MN / \$1,295,000

Offered by the original owners, this FLW design with dramatic, swooping carport was built in 1960. Wright details include Cherokee-red concrete floors, triangular recessed ceiling lights, original furniture and built-ins, and a vaulted window with geometric supports in the living room.



#### WESTON, CT / \$699,000

Attributed to a Wright apprentice, this 1954 Mid-century Modern home makes use of such trademarks as oblique angles, clerestory windows, and a massive stone and wood fireplace. It's got a period-sympathetic kitchen, too.



#### HOUSTON, TX / \$359,000

The heart of this modest 1960s Modern built on horizontal lines is the family room with towering beamed ceiling and two-sided fireplace embedded in a flagstone wall. Terrazzo floors and a winged floor plan also nod Wright's way.



#### CAREFREE, AZ / \$729,000

On a 1960s house, homages to Taliesin West begin with a stepped roofline and continue inside with Wrightian furniture and lighting, floor-to-ceiling glazing, paneling, and hieroglyphic cutouts. Walls pierced by boulder outcrops are a Wright motif.



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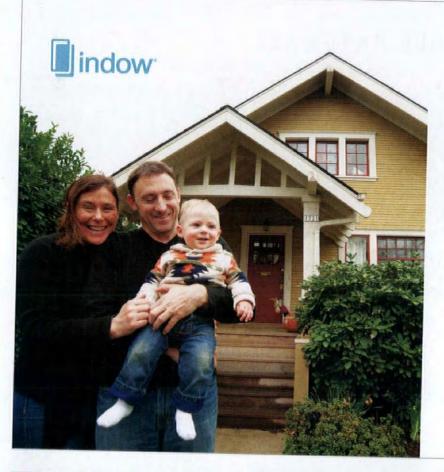




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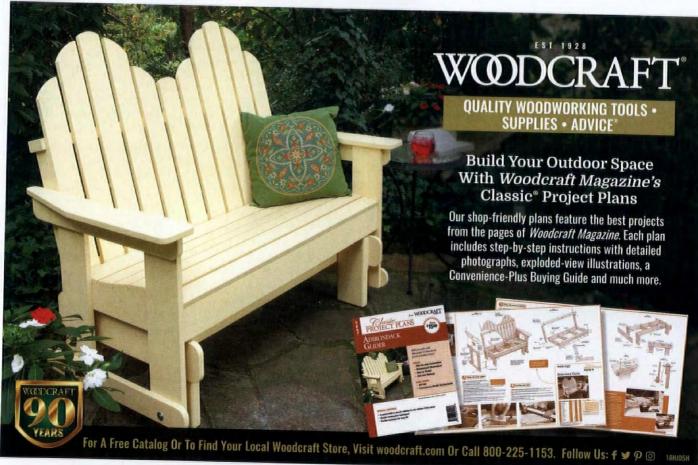


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# ONCE AN UGLY DUCKLING

Gutted and back on the market, the gambrel house showed

promise. By Laurel LaBauve, South Portland, Maine I'm not sure if should call this a remodeled

old house or a new-old house, because we did need to make some dramatic changes to render it livable. We kept such original features as the

My little company is called SoPo Cottage. exposed-joists ceiling. We are all about saving these old houses by renovating them for new use. Many people buy the old homes to tear them down. When I first got the phone call about buying this one, I was excited. Sure, it was a shell: the previous owner had gutted it, changed plans, and moved on. But I saw potential in the 1906 gambrel with its pretty roofline and eaves.

Saving it was a challenge. Turned out there were no footings under the foundation and the original walls were under-built, with 2x3 construction. Not a lot of original material remained (hardware, doors, woodwork), and the house needed to be expanded for a garage and a mudroom (a necessity in Maine) and additional bedrooms.

After several iterations, we went forward with an addition that celebrates the gambrel design. The original house's footprint remains. It took some juggling to meet all the town setback requirements as we tried to maintain period character. We allowed one thoroughly



ABOVE The gambrel had suffered from remodelings and abandonment.





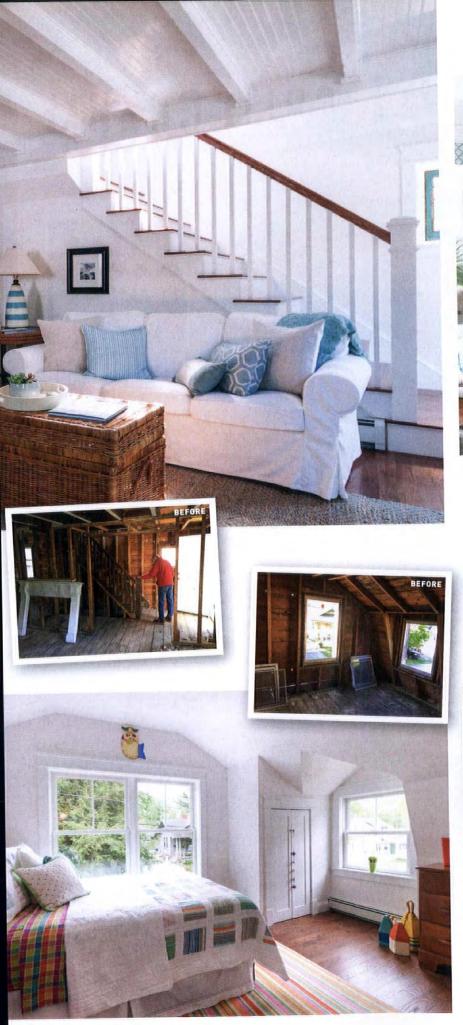


modern update, on the garage addition: a third-floor deck that overlooks Casco Bay, the islands, and the Spring Point lighthouse.

Inside, we opened up the floor plan so that the bigger new kitchen would be the heart of the home. The center island provides storage, food preparation area, and eating space. My favorite feature, though, is the ceiling. We maintained the vintage cottage ceiling by carefully running all plumbing and electrical around the perimeter, with thin little LED lights to give the room added illumination. We also salvaged the collar ties from the house and used them to cover the LVL framing. Every trade worked hard but the effort was worth it.

I rescued an antique wood mantel to give the living room some character. Paint stripping revealed the carvings. (I learned about Blue Bear Soy Gel stripper from OHJ—it's easy to work with.) Our carpenters fitted the mantel seamlessly around the new gas fireplace. We are thrilled with it. Reproduction doorknobs from Nostalgic Warehouse are among the period details we added.

The rescue and redo has been a boon to this neighborhood filled with turn-of-the-20th-century homes. No teardown!



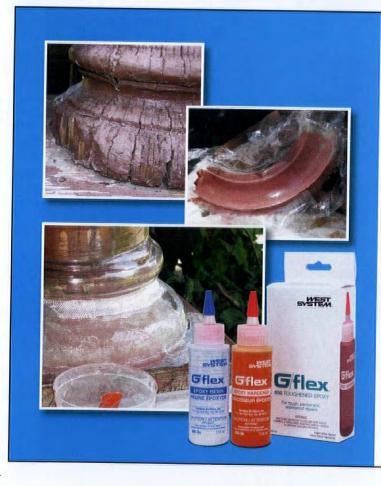


OPPOSITE TOP Ceiling beams and exposed joists organize the open-plan rooms.

OPPOSITE BOTTOM Interesting details distinguish the clean new kitchen anchored by a wood floor. TOP LEFT Distinguishing elements were retained during the rebuild. ABOVE The fireplace surround and salvaged antique mantel create a focal point. BOTTOM LEFT The newly finished attic added bedrooms. BELOW A roof deck atop the addition is a new amenity.







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# DESIGN



22

#### THE SCENIC ROUTE: WALLPAPER MURALS

Painted, block-printed, and silkscreened wallpapers bring panoramic history, or an outdoors scene, to rooms inside.

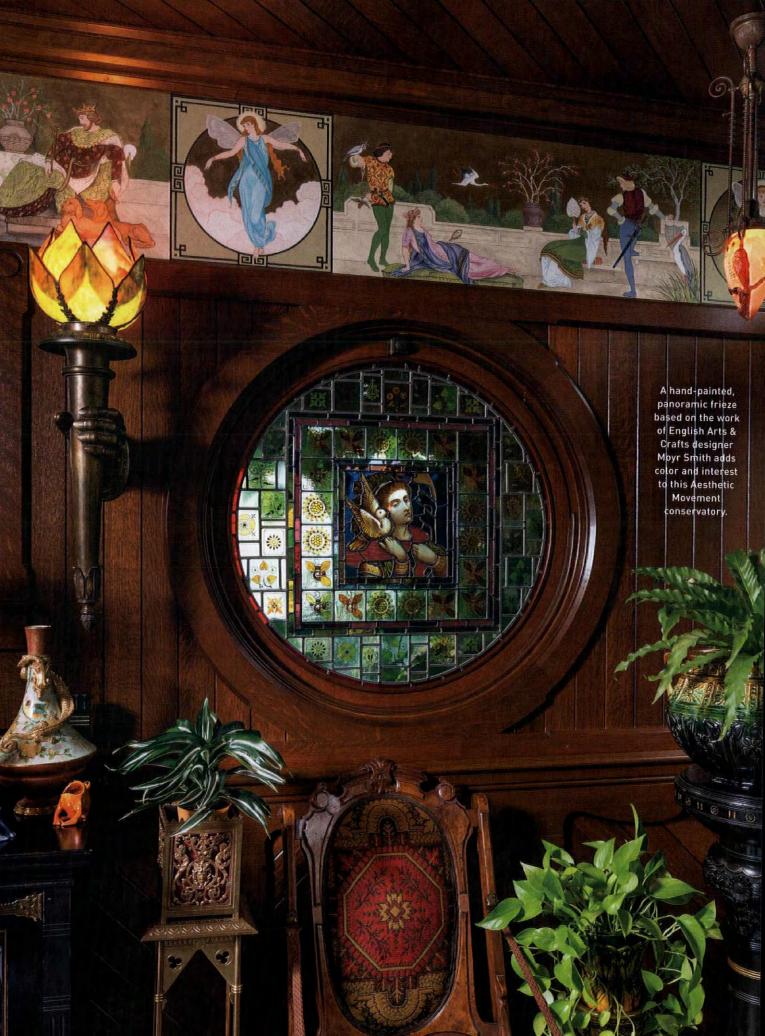




# The **SCENIC** Route

Hand-painted and wood block-printed wallpapers surround us with historical scenes, both real and imagined, or they can bring the panoramic outdoors to rooms inside. Cycling in and out of fashion since the 17th century, scenics are on the rise again. Options run from traditional, almost three-dimensional views in brilliant color to quiet grisailles, modern interpretations, and friezes. BY BRIAN D. COLEMAN





### Hand-painted Murals

Earlier householders who could not afford expensive, imported silk panoramic papers often chose a hand-painted mural instead. In Colonial America, itinerant painters (the most famous being Rufus Porter in New England) worked throughout the Colonies, painting panoramas and scenes of local life that would become important documentation of the times and culture. (A surviving mural by Rufus Porter is shown below.)

Whether primitive, sophisticated, or contemporary, custom murals have never lost their appeal and remain a popular alternative to panoramic papers today.

MORE IN RESOURCES, PAGE 103.



oreign travel was difficult in the 18th century. Those who did not venture afield would pay a small fee to view dioramic or panoramic spectacles: viewers sat in the middle of a room while scenes painted on screens were rolled in a circle around them, giving a 360° impression of an exotic locale. Thus inspired, French wallpaper manufacturers created similar panoramas to paste on walls. With scenes of Roman ruins, Mount Vesuvius erupting, tropical birds and toothy crocodiles, these papers transformed ordinary rooms. They held lessons on geography and history, depicting mythological stories, military campaigns, and daily life in faraway lands.

Panoramic wallpapers were hung in entry halls, dining rooms, stairwells, sometimes living rooms—sparsely furnished spaces with broad expanses of wall. Narrower murals in friezes



The Chinese began producing "wall papers" for export in the early 17th century. Shown above is The China Trade Room at historic Beauport in Gloucester, Mass., with hand-painted Chinese wallpaper imported to Philadelphia in the 1780s, never hung, and installed here in 1923.

replaced floor-to-ceiling papers as ceilings were lowered in the 20th century. Designers today sometimes frame a single panel of hand-painted or –printed wallpaper.

The Chinese, who invented paper 2,000 years ago, produced wallpaper for export to the West starting in the early 17th century. Hand-painted with water-based gouache or tempera on joined sheets of mulberry paper (or silk), these papers were vividly colored and naïve in perspective, with background figures often as large as those in the foreground. Pagodas, fishermen, and snow-capped mountains were softened with delicate birds, butterflies, and lotus flowers.

French panoramic or scenic wallpapers—the terms are interchangeable—stole the show when they were introduced in the late 1790s. San Francisco Airport Museum Curator Nicole Mullen explains that durable paper made from linen rags was



Grisaille is a **method of painting**, done in shades of grey, meant to **imitate classical sculpture**. Old Masters such as Rubens used grisaille as a practice exercise before executing a fully colored painting. **Grisaille panoramas** lend a classic presence to a room, as shown in this Manhattan townhouse dining room hung with **Zuber's 'Les Lointains'**.



the townhouse dining room.



SCENIC PAPERS TODAY A.L. Diament & Co. aldiament.com Antique, never-hung,
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fr/en/scenic-wallpapers Scenic papers hand-printed from original wood blocks 1797–1870







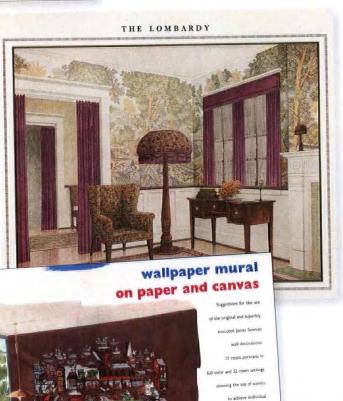
pasted together to form long rolls, which were then coated with Flanders glue in a process called grounding, which stabilized each color as it was added. Printing blocks were carved from finegrained pear wood. A paper might need a few hundred to several thousand blocks; rolls were usually eight to 10 feet long and 20 inches or more wide, and a scene could take from five to more than 40 panels. Lithographs of the completed panoramas were made for buyers to preview. The most famous scenic wallpaper manufacturer was Frenchman Jean Zuber, whose factory opened in 1797. It took 20 engravers several years to produce their first paper, 'Views of Switzerland', in 1804, using 1,024 wooden blocks and 95 colors. Jim Francis and John Nalewaja of Scenic Wallpapers explain that Zuber was known for exquisite detail, creating 25 panoramic scenes between 1804 and 1860. Other contemporary French companies include Dufour, known for large panoramas and expressionistic clouds; the firm closed with Dufour's death in 1827. Zuber still produces their iconic papers today, at the original factory, a French designated national historic monument, which holds 130,000 documents and 150,000 original wood blocks.



#### An archival view of scenics

With machine printing, wallpaper was readily available, and expensive hand-blocked panoramas fell out of fashion. The Victorian tripartite division of walls into dado, fill, and frieze dealt a blow to floor-to-ceiling panoramas. Scenic friezes came back during the Arts & Crafts era, when peaceful woodlands, flying geese, and sailboats decorated artful dining rooms and libraries; neoclassical panoramics returned for Colonial Revival homes. Bo Sullivan of Bolling & Co. points out that American watercolorist Charles E. Burchfield designed 'Country Life and The Hunt' for Buffalo-based H.M. Birge & Sons in 1924. Cleveland's Schmitz-Horning Co. sold the San-kro-mura line of washable scenics after 1900, with such popular themes as automobiles, pastorals, and the Wizard of Oz. (Though San-kro-mura sounds vaguely Japanese, it's really a contraction of the words sanitary, chromatic, and mural.)

TOP San-kro-mura mural #308 depicts the Villa Medici; six sheets made a 30' repeat. ABOVE Birge medieval frieze, 1906. RIGHT 'The Lombardy', Schmitz-Horning Co. 1917 catalog. FAR RIGHT Birge's 'Tree Tapestry', 1908. BELOW Screenprinted 1960s mural, James Seeman Studios, depicting Fisherman's Wharf.



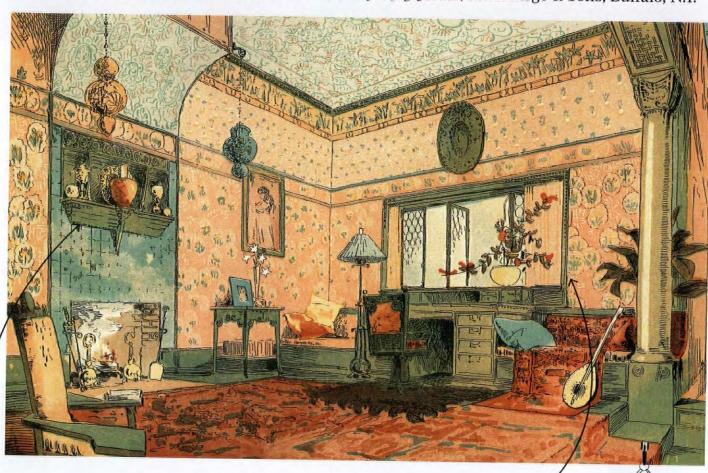
acter and vivid charm in every type of room





# A Morning Room, 1888

From Illustrations in Color of the Interior Decoration of a City House, M.H. Birge & Sons, Buffalo, N.Y.



Unusual treatments in the high-ceilinged room include the mantelshelf hung on a tile wall, and a desk integrated into casement window trim and flanked by built-in couches.

30

Elegant is the word for the new collection of Japanese papers from Bradbury & Bradbury Art Wallpapers. Patterns hand-printed with warm metallic inks were inspired by motifs in antique lacquer-ware, kimonos, and origami paper. Priced at \$72-81 per 15' roll. See also the company's entire suite of highly colored, Victorianera Anglo-Japanese papers. bradbury.com

Wallpaper maker M.H. Birge (in business 1834–1982) described this room as "slightly Japanese in character but not slavishly so." It has no fewer than six different wallpapers. Note the cove over the mantel.

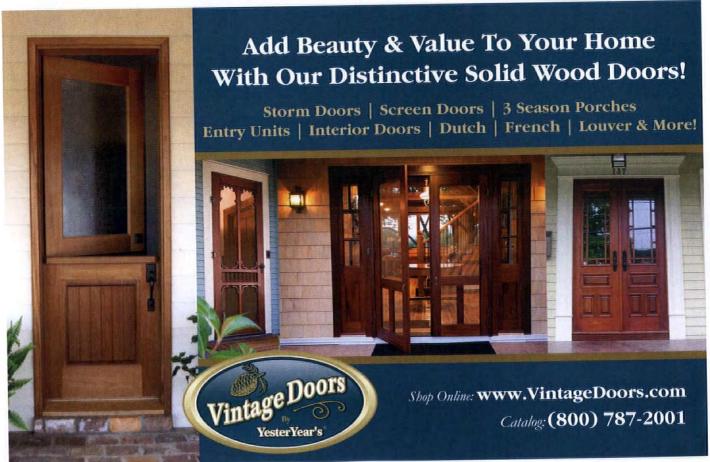
Debey Zito and Terry Schmitt based their Modern Aesthetic low table on a pewter bowl by Scots Arts & Crafts designer Archibald Knox. The Japonesque table in ebonized black walnut, 17" tall, is \$6,800. Commissioned and custom-design work accepted. zitoschmittdesign.com





The 'Palace Ceiling Lamp' from Moroccan Prestige adds a handsome touch of the exotic. The artisan-made metal ceiling lamp with intricate piercing is 13" x 13" x 14" and retails for \$198. moroccanprestige.com





# The Decorated Bath, Vintage Style

In an old house or one built in a revival style, default to the look of early 20th-century bathrooms with white fixtures. **By Patricia Poore** 

These bathrooms were designed for a new-old house in Vermont, one loosely patterned after Hildene in nearby Manchester, which was built in 1905 for Robert Todd Lincoln. Interior designer Amy Thebault designed five bathrooms for the house, each of them classic and traditional but with a twist. Every bathroom has white subway tiles, and all bath fittings are from the same suite by Waterworks. Marble mosaic floors and marble countertops are practical if luxurious classics. Owing to such details as well as exposed plumbing, the rooms look as if they could date to the early 20th century.

Still, each bath has its own identity, created with wall coverings and textiles. Thebault, who was trained as a scenic painter, admits to a preference for wall coverings over paint. "Adding color to the upper walls gives each bathroom a finished, three-dimensional look," she says.

#### 1. A SMALL ROOM IS FUN

A powder room in the house shows that this is a perfect place to indulge. Even expensive wallpaper is affordable if you don't need much of it. You won't get tired of strong color or pattern in a room used just minutes at a time.



#### 2. BLACK & WHITE VIRTUE

White tile and plumbing fixtures and a black-and-white scheme will always be classic. Shiny chrome and glass add another dimension. With its pictorial pattern, toile is an excellent choice for an otherwise restrained room.

#### 3. WELL FURNISHED

Using an antique table as a vanity (left), adding a lamp, hanging artwork: furnishing a bathroom ties it to the rest of the house. Here, antique botanical prints that introduce color to the room are treated to deep ebonized and gilded frames.

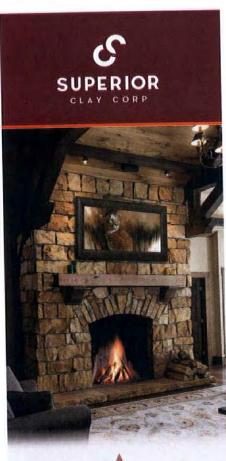
#### 4. TOUCH OF INFORMALITY

Tile around the tub changes over to a beaded-board wainscot in the rest of the room. Painted white, it is both sophisticated and cottageinformal, and another classic finish for service rooms in old houses.







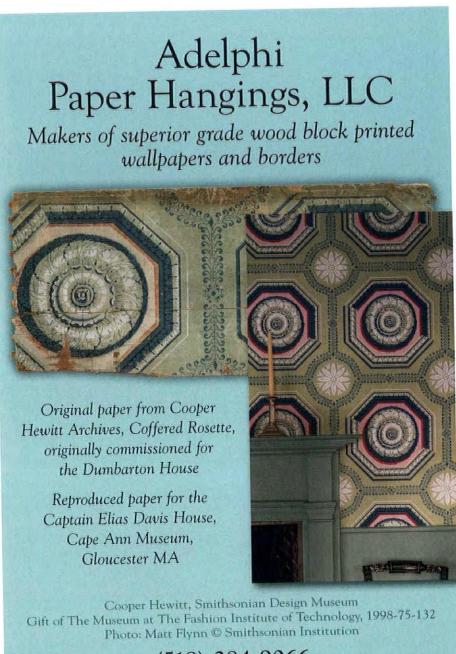


# Genuine work of

Art

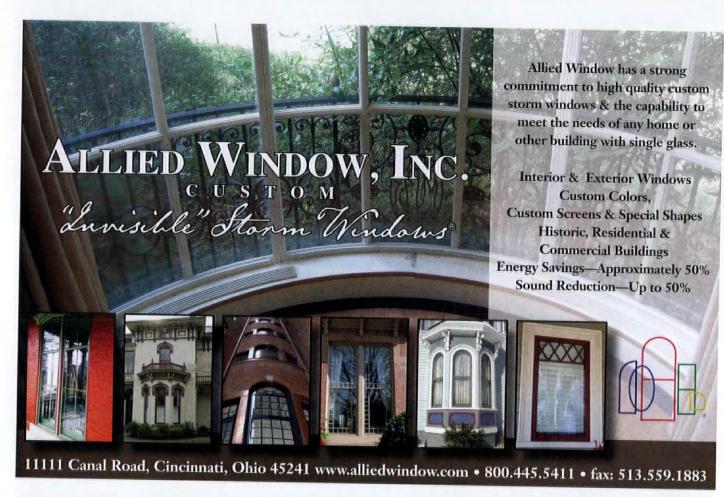
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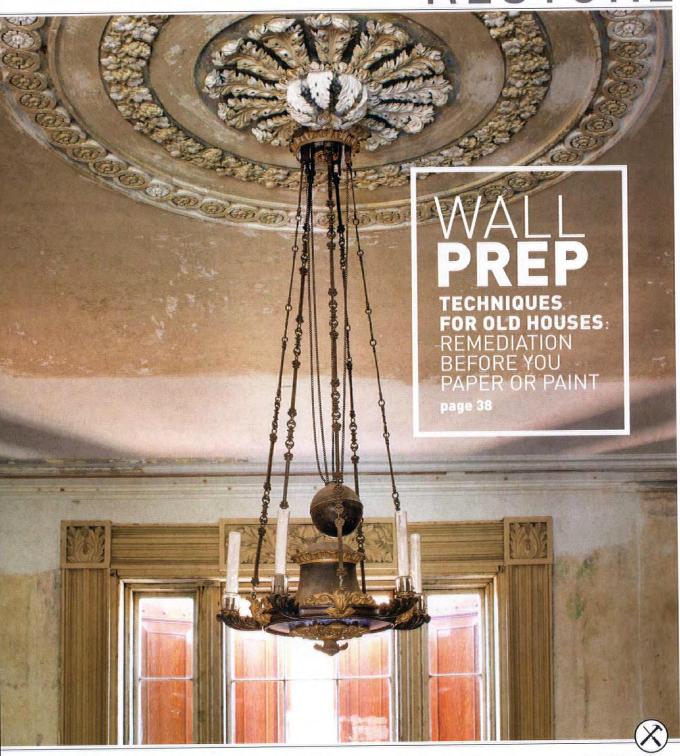
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# RESTORE



48

QUICK MAKEOVERS: SURFACE SOLUTIONS Secure a bookcase, apply Venetian plaster, or add a coffered ceiling.

+

46 TOOLS + MATERIALS 50 KNOW-HOW

55 STUFF A D-I-YER SCREWED UP

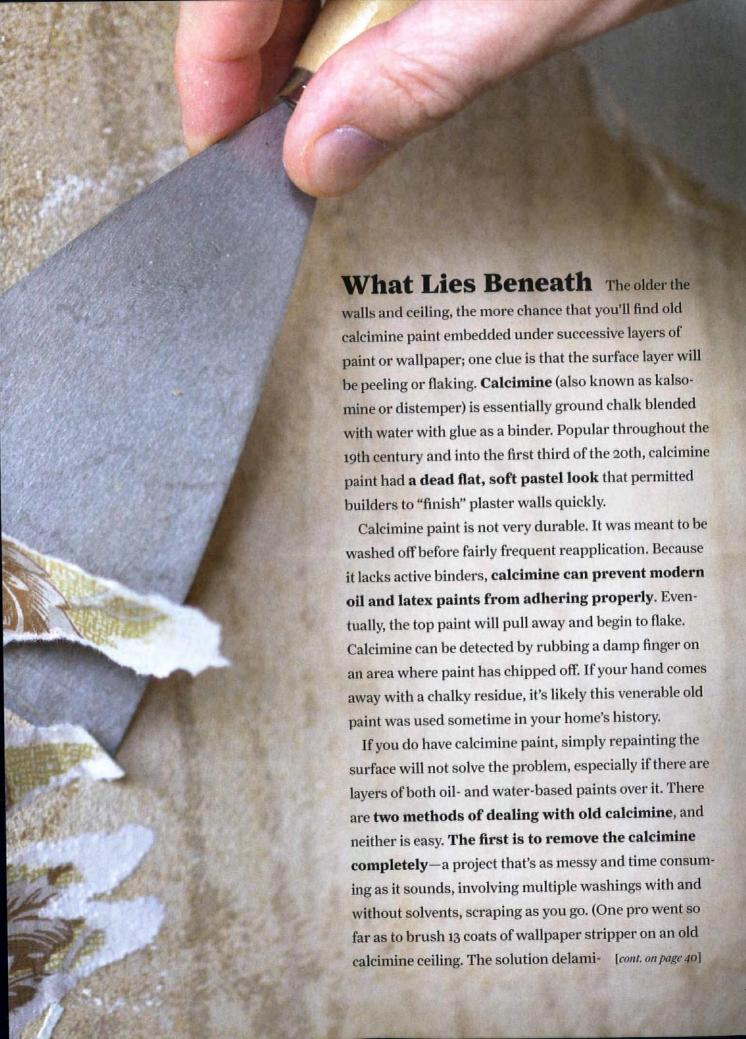
56 SALVAGE IT 59 DO THIS, NOT THAT

60 ASK OHJ



# FOR PAINT & WALLPAPER

Calcimine, old papers, peeling paint! Preparing the plaster substrate is the key to a good paint or wallpaper finish. In an old house, it's not always an easy job: surprises likely lurk behind the recent latex and that floral vinyl upstairs. BY MARY ELLEN POLSON





Proper preparation of plaster surfaces is critical when the new papers are this eye-catching. These are Dresser designs from the 'Centennial' collection, Bradbury & Bradbury.

nated every coat of paint on the wall, which then had to be scraped away.)

The second method is to encapsulate the calcimine by sealing it. The first step in this process is to scrape away all areas of peeling or popping paint. Follow by washing the surface with a well-dampened sponge. (Some experts recommend mixing in a little vinegar, then cleaning with fresh water, then repeating the process three times.)

Allow the cleaned walls or ceiling to thoroughly dry before applying a sealer coat. While any number of products can give results that last several years, none will solve the problem forever. Options include priming the surface with an alkyd- or oil-based primer that can be followed by latex paint; applying a "calcimine recoater" such as Benjamin Moore's Super Spec; or using other problem-surface coatings, including Scotch Paints' Draw-Tite and Zinsser's Gardz.

## PAINTED-OVER WALLPAPER

If you encounter wallpaper that's been painted over, first try the wallpaper stripping techniques recommended at right. If the paper is impossible to remove, you'll have to intensively prepare the wall before painting.

Remove any areas of loose paper first. Then apply joint compound to all seams, nail holes, bumps, or other damaged spots. After the walls are thoroughly dry, sand smooth. The more time spent filling holes, patching, smoothing, and sanding, the better the end result. As a final test, close your eyes and rub your hand over the entire wall surface. If it's not perfectly smooth, it will be evident to all that old wallpaper remains underneath your new paint.

# STRIPPING WALLPAPER

is time consuming and labor intensive, but it isn't difficult if you follow these tips from the Wallcovering Installers Association (wallcoveringinstallers.org):

**Step 1** Strip off the outer face of the wallpaper, leaving only the backing material and glue. If there's only a single layer of paper, try a stripping solution of water mixed with a few drops of dishwashing liquid. Apply with a large sponge, or put the solution in a plastic container with a spray nozzle and spritz the paper until it is completely damp.

**Step 2** Allow the solution to soak in, rewetting as necessary, for at least 10 minutes.

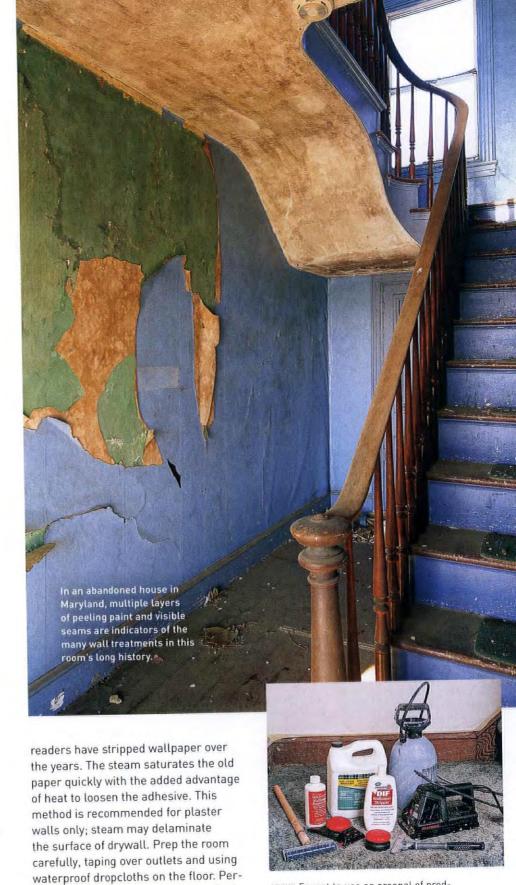
**Step 3** Using a wallpaper scraper or a wide putty knife, scrape away the backing material. Rewet as needed. The more soaked the paper, the easier it will be to remove.

**Step 4** For tougher papers or when there are multiple layers, try a solution of 2 parts water to 1 part white vinegar, or use a commercial wallpaper stripper, such as Dif. (The vinegar method only works on wheat- and starch-based adhesives.)

**Step 5** Remove the glue behind the backing; otherwise it will show through the fresh paint. Mix a solution of 2 tablespoons of liquid fabric softener to a gallon of water and apply it to the surface, then rinse with clean water. To check for evidence of glue, wet the wall and feel for slick areas. Repeat until all the glue is gone.

**Step 6** For vinyl and denser wallpapers that won't budge, score the surface with a wallpaper scoring tool such as Zinsser's PaperTiger. The tool may damage drywall underneath the paper, but it should not hurt plaster walls. Then follow the steps outlined above until the walls are clean and smooth.

Oddly enough, the Association does not mention using a rented wallpaper steamer, perhaps the primary way OHJ



forate or score the paper as described

above. The steamer will make a mess,

and create streams of super-hot water,

so wear heavy gloves and eye protection.

**ABOVE** Expect to use an arsenal of products to remove wallpaper, from steamers and scrapers to proprietary wallpaper strippers.



## WALL LINERS

Walls in older houses present all sorts of problems you don't find with fresh drywall or plaster. The solution for previously patched plaster, small cracks, bumps, and cracked and flaking paint—even for old wood paneling and sandfinish plaster—is to use a wall liner. A time-honored tradition, wall liners smooth away defects so that almost any wall can accept new paint or wallpaper.

To a professional, a wall liner is the best way to guarantee a long-lasting, trouble-free wallpaper installation. The techniques date to the early 18th century, when delicate imported papers were pasted to strips of canvas before hanging.

Since a liner is essentially monochromatic, it goes up faster than a patterned wall-paper with repeats. Pasted and unpasted wallpaper liners are usually available from wallpaper dealers as well as online. Other options include acid-free lining paper and blankstock (try paper-hangings.com) and fiberglass mat systems like Nu-Wal (nu-wal.com, abatron.com).

**ACID-FREE PAPERS** These moderately heavy papers are ideal for situations like historic restorations where

longevity is a goal. Made from traditional rag paper, acid-free liners are highly porous and can expand about 1 percent. Paper-Hangings recommends applying acid-free papers with a paste with a high water content, such as a thinned premixed clear paste or a wheat/cellulose blend.

BLANKSTOCK This traditional product provides a smooth, receptive surface for wallpaper, especially block-printed papers that contain distemper inks. It absorbs excess moisture from the finish paper, allowing it to dry quickly. It's also a good choice for very thin papers, such as hand-prints. Blankstock requires sizing, or prewetting with a

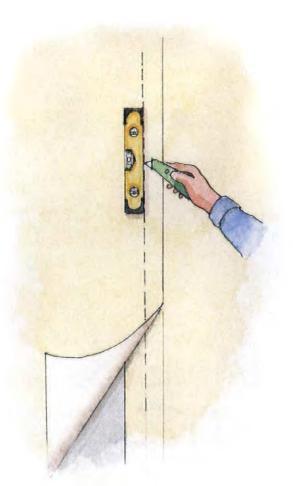
wheat-paste sizing product, followed by overnight drying.

FIBERGLASS Durable fiberglass matting makes an excellent substrate for wallpaper, especially over walls that have surface flaws. The matting is cut to rough size and applied with an elastomeric saturant that's vapor retardant. Once the excess material has been trimmed away, a second coat of saturant is applied. When the walls have cured, they can be painted or papered. Although the system is very forgiving, the walls still have to be stripped of peeling paint or paper, and any damaged plaster repaired and reinforced before installation can begin.

## Hanging Fiberglass Liner

Installing a fiberglass wall liner is something you can do yourself. The material is strong, doesn't need sizing, and can be ordered with all necessary materials, including the saturant that also acts as the adhesive. Here's a step-by-step guide:

- > Measure a section of wall and cut the fiberglass mat to size, with about 4" to 6" of overage on all sides.
- ➤ Apply the saturant to the section with a paint roller. Use a paintbrush for hard-to-reach areas. Apply the mat to the wet wall surface, smoothing in place with a 4" or broader putty knife.
- > Trim the excess material at ceilings, baseboards, mouldings, and outlets.
  Smooth out any air bubbles by dragging the putty knife over the liner. Follow with another coat of saturant.
- > Once all the sections are hung, apply a second coat of saturant and allow to dry for at least 48 hours before priming walls.



**Double Cutting** When you hang a new section of liner next to the previous one, **here's a trick** to make the seams disappear. It's called double cutting.

- Hang the second section of liner so that it overlaps the first by about 1".
- Once it's in place, hold
   a 6" level or another
   straightedge down the
   center of the lapped seams.
- Run a sharp utility knife or new razor blade along the straightedge. If the

- cut is a long one, change the blade every couple of feet so that it's sharp.
- Carefully peel away
   the strips of liner on both sides of the cut.
- Smooth the panels back together. You should have an almost invisible seam between the two sections.

**If you plan to bang a dark-color wallpaper**, prime or paint the walls in a similar shade before you begin. Once the paper is on the wall, it may shrink slightly; a dark color underneath eliminates the potential for white lines to appear between the panels.







## **CUSTOMIZING FOR THE ROOM**

Lavished with original stained woodwork and built-ins, the dining room in a 1912 Arts & Crafts home was near pristine. The scenic wallpaper hanging above the plate rail, however, had seen better days. Dating to the 1950s or '60s, it was cracked, peeling, and discolored from water damage.

To replace it, the owners asked Bo Sullivan and Gwen Jones of Bolling & Co. to create a custom paper based on a period original. After looking through the studio's collection of vintage wallpapers and sample books, they decided to do trial runs of several options from around 1910 to 1915. Rather than reproduce new papers based on each design, Bolling & Co. created digital mock-ups of each pattern, shown in the context of the room, to be

previewed on a computer screen.

After considering an English paper with a peacock motif, a subtle "leather" embossed paper, and a hawthorn-berry frieze, the winner turned up: an Arts & Crafts pendant frieze with a coordinating border paper. Machine-printed on a buff oatmeal paper with soft colors and gold metallic accents, the ca. 1915 paper had a nice balance of detail and simplicity, with warm colors in a subtle yet rich palette.

There was enough of the full design repeat in the sample that it was possible to scan and re-create the paper without losing any distinctive details. Digital printing allowed Sullivan and Jones to tweak the size, scale, and layout to make the frieze easier to apply, especially around corners

and doorways. Bolling & Co. also tested the design in different colorways to get just the right blend to coordinate with other furnishings in the room.

Since the height of the wall area was only about 36", it made sense to print the new paper in a horizontal orientation rather than the more typical vertical strips. That eliminated most vertical seams and allowed the decorative pendant and border patterns to be integrated directly into the plain oatmeal fill paper in a single printing.

The overall design was adjusted for size so that it perfectly fit the wall space, with a bit of blank space at the edges to accommodate changes in wall height and trim lines. Additionally, to minimize waste, the pendant pattern for areas over the tops of doors, windows, and cabinets was printed separately in multiple side-by-side strips.





RIGHT Wallpaper professional Shannon Russell installs the new paper over walls that have been stripped, cleaned, double primed, and lined to create a smooth, trouble-free surface.

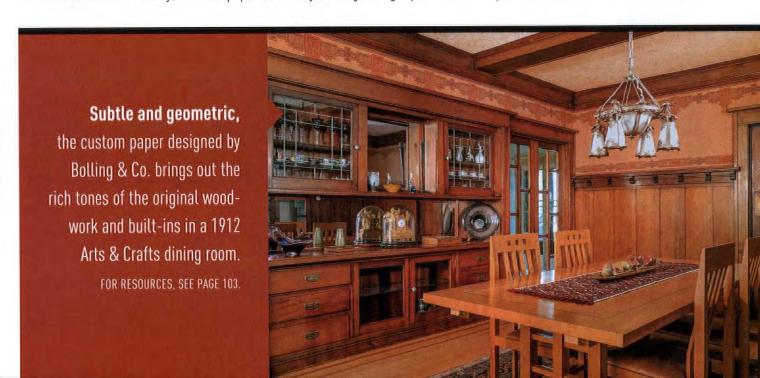
OPPOSITE (top left) Bo Sullivan tries out the chosen paper in a corner of the dining room. (top right) A peeled section of old wallpaper reveals the original deep-blue calcimine coating underneath. (btm. left) A "virtual room" mock-up previews a William Shand Kydd English frieze from about 1910. (btm. right) The new paper was rescaled from an original pattern in a 1915 wallpaper sample book.



Beast Before Beauty

After stripping two layers of existing wallpaper and an original liner paper from the walls, wallpaper pro Shannon Russell made an interesting discovery. The original plaster had been painted with a cold-water or distemper paint in an intense deep blue. (Other common colors of the time included deep red and deep green.)

This original paint was made by mixing ground pigments with cold water, the usual formula for calcimine. As everyone quickly realized, the old cold-water paint posed a problem for the new installation. Calcimine paints are notoriously unstable and tend to cause delamination of successive applications of paint or wallpaper (see "What Lies Beneath," p. 39). Once all surrounding surfaces were protected with plastic and drop cloths, Russell moistened the layers of wall covering with a diluted solution of Dif, an enzyme-based wallpaper stripper. Once the solution had soaked through the layers, Russell carefully removed the mess, using a scraper and broad knife. Once stripped, the next task was to remove the original wallpaper paste. The moisture from the stripper had freshly dissolved the pigments underneath, and the deep matte color spread everywhere. To stabilize any remaining colorants, Russell primed the walls with Draw-Tite, a penetrating sealer designed for chalky surfaces. Once the walls were fully dry, plaster cracks were repaired using mesh tape secured with screws. All the walls were then smoothed, sanded, and primed with a Gardz, a paintable wall sealer intended for use over chalky surfaces with adhesive residues. Russell finished the preparation by adding a white, acid-free wall liner to help achieve strong cohesion and a smooth installation. Finally, the new paper was ready to hang, using a premixed clear paste, Pro-880 from Roman Adhesives.





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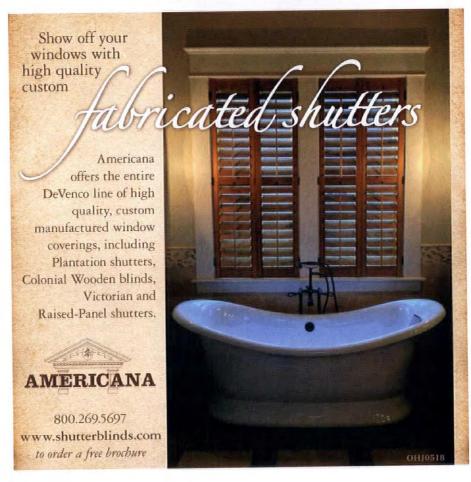
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## Safety Fix & Surface **Sophisticates**

Upgrades for walls and ceilings this time: a secure bookcase, DIY textured plaster, a threedimensional ceiling. **By Lynn Elliott** 



## Secure a **Bookcase**

Bookcases easily topple over, whether because of an out-of-level floor or kids climbing on them. Prevent a mishap by securing the bookcase with 15" furniture straps-which don't require drilling holes into an antique. Empty



the bookcase. Locate and mark studs behind the bookcase on either side. (No studs? The furniture-strap kits usually come with wall anchors, too.) With the unpeeled adhesive side facing down, attach each strap with a screw or wall anchor to the wall where studs are marked. Most straps have two screw holes. Repeat on the other side. Next, clean the top of the bookcase with an alcohol wipe. Peel adhesive backing and affix the strap's Velcro section to the bookcase. Leave 1 1/2" of "give" to allow some movement. Try not to reposition the Velcro. Repeat on the other side. Restock the bookcase in an aesthetically pleasing fashion!



## Create a Venetian Plaster Finish

So-called Venetian plaster produces lustrous, textured walls. The technique takes some effort, but the result is impressive.



## STEP 1

Prep walls before project day: Paint a base coat the color of the Venetian finish, to prevent white spots. Practice the technique on a sample board to get a feel for the process. Working in 6' x 6' sections, dampen a roller using a spray bottle of water. Roll the first coat of synthetic-based plaster onto the wall. Quickly follow with random sweeps of the trowel held at a 15-degree angle. Clean the trowel often as it fills with plaster, to keep it smooth. Once the room is done, let the first coat dry for four hours.



## STEP 2

Before applying the second coat, bend the trowel slightly to prevent scratch marks. Have an assistant work with you if possible. With the trowel angled 15 degrees, apply the plaster in random arcs and crosshatches to create texture. Avoid creating a uniform pattern. Let dry. With 400-grit sandpaper, sand the walls in a circular motion. (If you're working alone, use an electric sander.) Wipe the walls with a clean, damp rag. To burnish the surface further, press the trowel flat against the wall and create a sheen.

## WEEKEND

## **Install a Coffered Ceiling**

You can buy a kit to create a customized, coffered ceiling using intersecting boxed beams—it's a relatively simple process.



## STEP 1

Plot the ceiling pattern on graph paper. Factor in any existing exposed beams, lighting fixtures, and details like chimneybreast protrusions. Using painter's tape, mark out the pattern on the ceiling. Find ceiling joists with a stud finder and mark these on the ceiling and along the wall. Check that you have the center of the joist by making small holes with a 1/8" drill bit. The holes will be covered by the beams. Adjust the pattern as needed.

## STEP 2

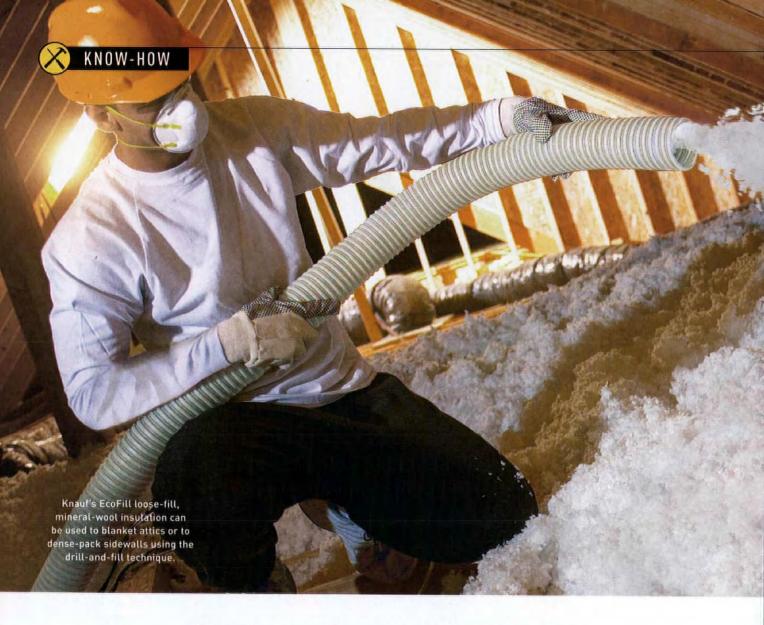
You'll need ladders or scaffolding, as well as an assistant and an adjustable support pole, for this project. Attach the coffers to the ceiling by drilling the shim screws through the fastening flange and into the joist. Don't angle the screws; keep them straight. Continue with each coffer, checking alignment as you go. Some designs have specialty or detail coffers; if so, install them at this point. Using a laser level, check each coffer horizontally and adjust the fasteners until all of the coffers are level.





## STEP 3

With a square tool, mark the location for the nailing boards in all four corners of the room. Snap a chalk line and install the nailing boards along it. Working around the room, fasten the perimeter boards to the bottom edges of the coffers. Any gaps between the wall and the board will be covered by trim at the end. Next, trim the beam boards to length for the sections between the coffers. For a better fit, install the longest pieces first; then fit the shorter ones. Last, attach the trim around the perimeter of the room.



## **Updated Insulation Savvy**

Adding insulation to an old house means choosing the right product—for the right place. By Mary Ellen Polson

Older houses are notorious for lacking adequate insulation, an essential for comfortable indoor temperatures. Selecting the right type of insulation for the situation—a drafty back room, for example, or to fill gaps and crevices around windows—is the key to indoor comfort. But how do you choose from all the varied options?

"There's no one product that can solve all your insulation needs," says Ted Winslow, a technical advisor for CertainTeed. "All of our homes today are hybrid systems in terms of insulation."

Batt insulation, for example, comes in

rolls of uniform width, making it easy to pop into place between standard-width studs in walls or between floor joists. Affordably priced, it's a logical choice for additions, unfinished garages, or basements with an open stud system in place. It can be finished on the surface with kraft paper, no paper, or progressively more sophisticated moisture barriers. On the other hand, batt insulation isn't practical for existing walls, especially the precious plaster walls found in older homes.

Even if batt insulation makes the most sense for an upcoming project, there's

the question of its composition, weight, and cost. Should you choose fiberglass, stone wool, or an eco-friendly blend of natural materials? (See "Rock or Glass?", opposite.) No one type of batt insulation is superior to the others in terms of R-value—provided it's properly installed and air sealed, an important caveat. Industry studies show that walls with R-13 fiberglass batts perform just as well as walls with R-13 stone wool—or, for that matter, with open- or closed-cell spray foam. For that reason, once you've identified the right type of insulation for your project, choose the product that



gives you maximum R-value for the price.

That may be why fiberglass batt insulation is the most popular insulator. It's lighter and more than three times as compact as stone or rock wool. It also costs about half as much. The only knock against fiberglass is that it can make exposed skin very itchy; modern batts are typically surface finished so that there's less chance for contact.

Unless you plan to redo interior walls, or replace exterior cladding, the best solution for insulating existing walls is probably blown-in-place, loose-fill insulation. Loose fill is also used to quickly insulate attic floors. Made from either fiberglass or cellulose, loose fill is the least expensive type of insulation. The fiberglass version is spun from molten sand and recycled glass into fibers, while cellulose is composed of recycled newspapers to which fire

retardant chemicals such as boric acid have been added. In either case, the fill material is installed using the "drill and fill" technique. The material is blown in through small openings drilled in either exterior or interior walls, which are later plugged. Done properly, the material should not settle, and will retain its R-value.

Both cellulose and fiberglass allow air to pass through and need to be paired with an air barrier in order to slow drafts—an important consideration in cold, windy weather. Since both can trap moisture, they can be problematic in high moisture environments such as basements. Additionally, loose insulation laid in an open space like an attic is subject to wind washing, causing the material to drift like snow. On the other hand, you don't need to worry about meeting OSHA regulations to install it.

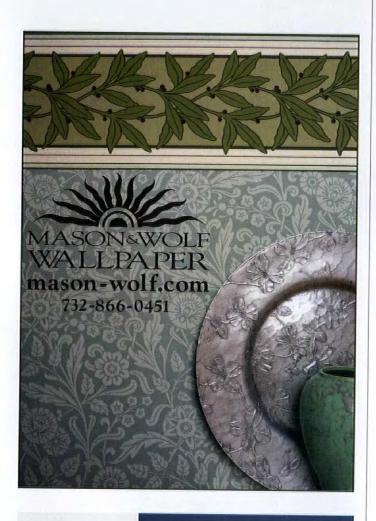
## ROCK OR GLASS?

Confused about the nomenclature?
Join the club. Batt, blanket, and loose-fill insulation are variously marketed as fiberglass, rock, stone, and mineral wool, and as many variations in between.
As it turns out, all fall under the heading of mineral fiber insulation because all are made of spun fibers.

The difference is in the material that forms the core of these fibers. Stone or rock wool, for example, is spun from micron-thin stone and recycled steel fibers. It's called wool because the material resembles and feels like a stiff, heavy wool. Fiberglass is made from similarly infinitesimal spun glass plus silica. Fiberglass insulation typically contains binders; some are plant based. Stone wool products generally have oils added to reduce dust.

Both fiberglass and stone wool usually contain a substantial amount of recycled content.

Both have been certified by national and state agencies as non-carcinogenic. They are UV stable, and won't settle after installation.



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## insulation types

- A. BATT: Made from 80% post-consumer natural fibers, Bonded Logic's UltraTouch Denim insulation has no chemical irritants and is easy to handle and work with.
- B. LOOSE FILL: OPTIMA loose-fill insulation from CertainTeed, blown in behind a special fabric, creates a seamless, thermally efficient blanket in new construction or existing sidewalls.
- C. SPRAY FOAM: Spray-foam insulation installs quickly and offers superior protection against air and moisture leakage, but once in place is almost impossible to remove.
- D. SPRAY FOAM KIT: Canned spray foams like Great Stuff are ideal for filling small voids and crevices.









While batt and loose fill are quite familiar, spray foam insulation has been around in various forms since the 1950s and gained traction in the past decade or two. The most popular spray foams for residential applications are open-cell (low density insulation) and closed cell (medium density insulation). Both closed- and open-cell foam insulation are sprayed onto open wall and ceiling cavities as a liquid that quickly expands and hardens in place. The advantages are obvious: the material goes on swiftly and provides a tight, uniform layer of insulation that blocks air leakage and moisture penetration.

When it's applied, however, spray foam releases isocyanates, organic compounds that are powerful irritants to the mucous membranes of the eyes and gastrointestinal and respiratory tracts. Some recent studies indicate isocyanates may trigger asthma and other adverse health effects. For that reason, spray foam must

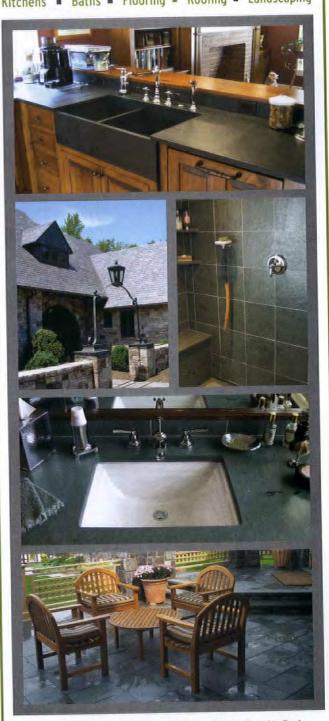
Spray-foam kits and cans are not intimidating to use, and can effectively seal cracks and voids around window frames, sill plates, and outlets.

be installed by professionals wearing full-body personal protective gear, including special respiration equipment. Further, residents and all other workers must leave the building during application.

Unlike other forms of insulation, spray foam isn't easily reversible— a major consideration in historic environments. Removing hardened spray foam is labor intensive and requires special grinders and cutters. "It would be extremely difficult to scrape off spray foam," says CertainTeed's Winslow.

Low-pressure spray-foam kits and cans, available in one-component and two-component varieties, are less intimidating to use and can effectively fill and seal small cracks and voids around door and window frames, sill plates, and incursions like cable and electrical lines or vents, making them weathertight. For homeowners, the safest type is the one-component version, which is sprayed directly from the can. Both types are delivered as frothy mixtures that expand rapidly and cure chemically to solid foam. During application, work in a well-ventilated space and wear protective clothing, including an organic vapor cartridge respirator, especially for a two-part kit. Keep children and pets away during and for several hours after application.

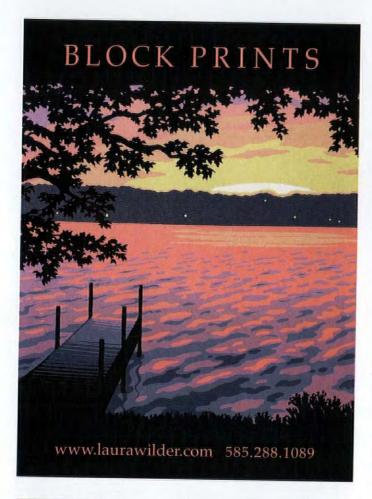
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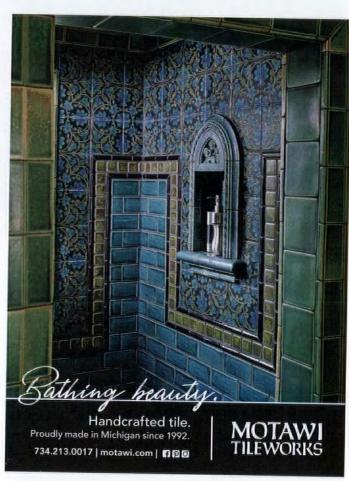


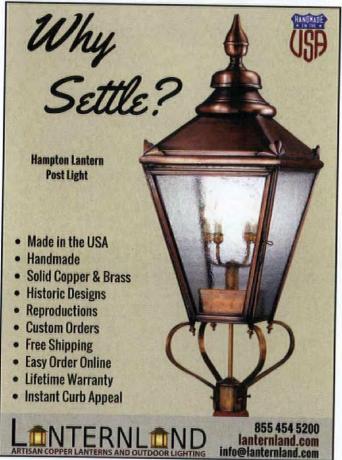
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We came home to find upper cabinets at full tilt, with dishes smashing to smithereens onto the floor!



The previous owner of our 1870s Queen Anne Victorian house had the good taste to order custom, period-look cabinets for the kitchen. But apparently he didn't do such a great job with installation of the wall-hung cabinets. We came home one day to find a bank of upper cabinets at full tilt, with dishes sliding out, falling and smashing on the floor. It created quite a mess! — *Jim Sterling* 

## Share Your Story!

What have you, your spouse, pet, contractor, previous owner (you get the picture) screwed up? Email us at **lviator@aimmedia.com**.

## THE FIX

Kitchen cabinets are designed to carry a lot of weight, but they must be securely fastened into wall studs to ensure that a catastrophe like yours doesn't happen. There are three potential reasons why your cabinets fell. Either the cabinets weren't fastened to the wall studs, the fasteners were inadequate for the task, or you have no studs at all—just a brick wall covered with plaster.

In newer homes, the sturdy 2x4s or 2x6s used to frame up walls occur at regular 16" intervals in order to support uniform 4' x 8' sections of drywall. In older frame-construction homes, however, studs can be as little as 12" or as much as 24" apart. Spacing for wall studs wasn't as critical in homes where the walls were covered with lath and plaster.

Since the wall studs in a 150-year-old home may not occur at standard intervals, use a stud finder to locate them. (If you discover you have brick or masonry walls, see below.) To securely refasten the cabinets, do not use drywall screws! Use cabinet screws—also known as cabinet-hanging, washerhead, or powerhead screws. Use #10 wood screws that are at least 3" long, such as the 3 1/8" cabinet screws from GRK. Anything shorter, and you risk not reaching the stud through the lath and plaster. You want the screw to penetrate the stud by about 1 1/4". If the cabinets themselves are particularly heavy, fasten them together with fine-threaded, #8 trim-head screws that are 21/4" long.

Fastening cabinets to plastercovered brick walls requires embedding anchors into the wall, then aligning the attachment screws with the anchors. This will go a lot more smoothly if you have an assistant, or better yet, hire a pro to do the work.



# REPURPOSED FLOOR TILES

An old floor of earthy geometric tiles rescued from a razed church adds soul to a period-look row-house kitchen.

By Brian D. Coleman

In their New York City brownstone days, serial renovators Robert and Cortney Novogratz wanted to make the infill house (which they designed and built on a vacant lot in Soho) family-friendly while preserving the area's 19thcentury feeling. A large kitchen/dining space makes use of salvaged treasures: a bar from Ohio, a rose window from France. The retro-style zinc countertops were made for them in Paris. But something to tie it together was missing. Then Cortney came across an original geometric-tile floor that had been removed from a Victorian chapel uptown. Cortney bought the entire lot of individual tiles.

ABOVE The owners were careful to preserve some scuff marks and small imperfections. INSET The floor sets the tone for the eclectic room built with Victorian salvage.

## THE COST

ANTIQUE ENCAUSTIC TILES	\$500+
LEVELING COMPOUND	\$10
GROUT	#50
ADHESIVE	#30
MURIATIC ACID	\$10
AQUAMIX SEALER	\$100
PLEECE ROLLER/BRUSHES	\$50
CERA NOBLE I TOUTDA WAY	# 110

TOTAL \$790

## re-using the tiles

### 1. CLEAN THE

Tiles were soaked in water and then lightly scrubbed with diluted muriatic acid (1 part acid: 5 parts water) to remove grout and "mud." Experiment on a sample; wear gloves and eye protection.

## 2. LAY OUT

Beginning with the border, tiles were laid out on the floor, and re-arranged until a pleasing pattern emerged. Use leveling compound if the floor is very uneven. On the floor, draw a grid of the pattern in approximately 2- to 3-foot squares using a straightedge and pencil, to ensure tiles line up and the pattern does not "walk" during setting. Decide on grout joint width-typically 3 mm to 10 mm, often very tight. Larger grout lines have an impact on overall layout and fit.

#### 3. INSTALL

Spread adhesive with a trowel in parallel lines. Set each tile in place with a slight twisting movement, avoiding air pockets underneath; wipe off excess adhesive with a damp sponge. Tamp with a damp grout trowel to create suction for setting. For new tiles, apply one sealer coat before grouting. Natural-tone grout is best; grey is safe. Do a test area to make sure the grout can be applied smoothly and removed without staining tiles. Grout entire floor in one application. Do not overwash the grout as this can result in efflorescence and discoloring. Don't grout perimeter tiles; finish with a silicone sealer after the floor has been resealed or leave ungrouted if covered with trim.



ABOVE Reclaimed Victorian-era encaustic tiles await a new purpose.

### 4. SEAL

These floor tiles are porous and must be sealed. Let floor cure for a week. Grout joints should be clean and free from dust before sealing. Apply a matte or satin finish sealer with a soft brush or short-fleece roller in thin layers and wipe off excess within 15 minutes. Wax may be applied after sealing. Always test.

### resources

ANTIQUE & REPURPOSED TILES

#### L' Antiquario Antique Tile

#### lantiquario.com

A wonderful selection of antique tiles with over 2500 reclaimed tile floors in stock.

## TILE FOR RESTORATION

#### L'Esperance Tile Works

### lesperancetileworks.com

Handmade tiles including reproduction encaustics: restoration and custom work.

## **NEW TILES**

#### Original Style

### originalstyle.com

Modern (vitrified ceramic) geometrics and hand-decorated tiles in quintessentially British designs.

#### Tile Source

#### tile-source.com

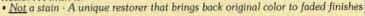
U.S. supplier for genuine, handmade English Victorian encaustics and geometrics. Also: modern Victorian decorated and geometric tiles.

#### Winckelmans

#### winckelmans.com

High-quality and bespoke vitrified tiles made in France, including geometrics and encaustics.

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• Not a cover-up - Restor-A-Finish is a permanent solution

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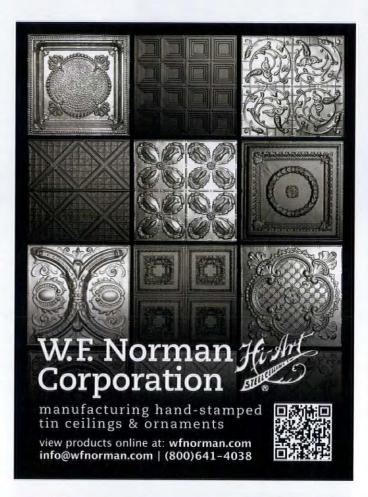


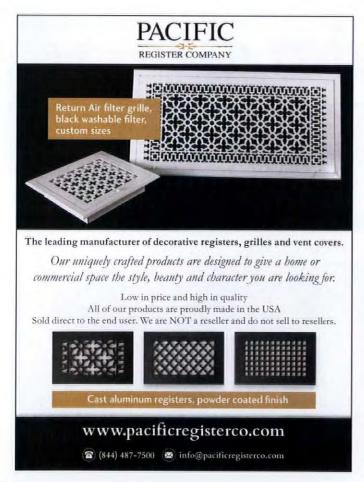


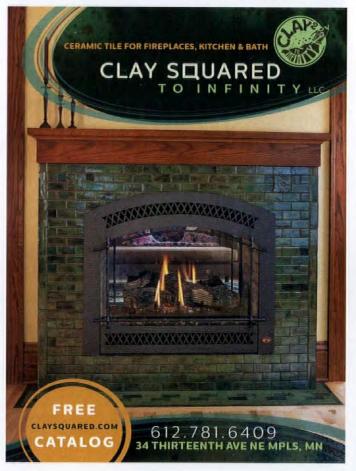




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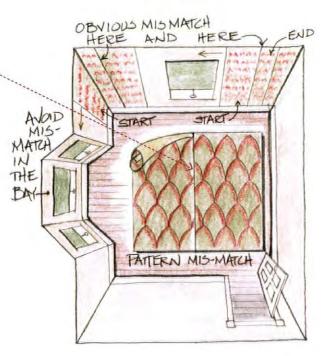
## Laying out Wallpaper

The practice of wallpapering rooms peaked in the 18th and 19th centuries, and has enjoyed cyclical popularity ever since. Designs have ranged from florals to stripes, foliage designs to geometrics—with styles, patterns, and colors to suit every taste and every room. Unlike hand-applied, decorative wall painting, wallpaper printed on sheets (later, on rolls) can be applied and removed at relatively little cost and effort. Wallpapering often fell to a professional hanger, who knew how to match patterns, and how to disguise the start/stop point, even when rolls did not circle the room evenly. How to deal with the uneven match leaves novice hangers scratching their heads! By Ray Tschoepe

## WRONG WAY

## **OBVIOUS MISMATCH**

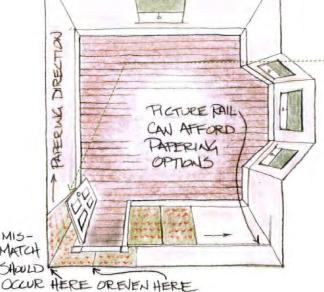
Novices who paper in one direction around the room should never begin papering in the middle of a wall. Avoid beginning at the corner across from the entry point. Also avoid beginning, and thus ending, at or near a prominent feature, such as a chimneybreast, mantel, or window bay.

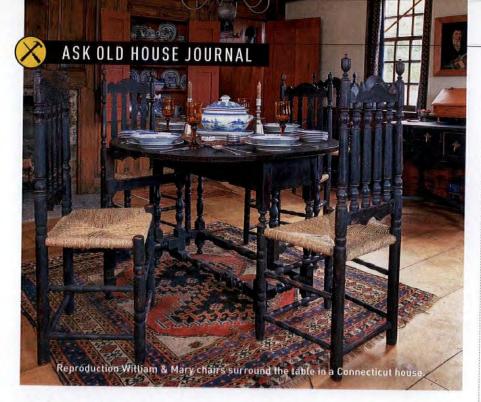


## **RIGHT WAY**

## **UNOBTRUSIVE START/STOP**

Where to start, where to stop? A purist (obsessive) approach is to cut around individual elements in the edge of the paper to create a visually satisfying finish adjacent to the start point. Most of us, even pros, simply take care to make the final joint—which probably will not match up perfectly—unobtrusive. If there is one doorway into the room, begin at the corner closest to the doorway (behind the view of those entering the room). If there are several entries, begin and end over a doorway or in a corner between doors. If the room has a picture rail that intersects with a window or door casing, you can use the break (at door or window) to mask the interruption of the pattern; the mismatched break lines will not be adjacent.





A dining room you recently posted on Facebook has William & Mary furniture. Can you recommend any furniture-makers reproducing this period? —Lisa Pratta, Swedesboro, N.J.

Popular from 1690 to 1730 in the American Colonies, William & Mary furniture is named for the monarch William of Orange and his wife, Mary, the daughter of James II. They had moved to England from the Netherlands, bringing with them Dutch and Huguenot artisans. The furniture features elaborate, baroque carvings and turnings. Far East trade brought Chinese motifs like caning and curved chair backs. The familiar gate-leg table, wing chair, and banister-back chair were innovations in this period.

Today, look to expert traditional furniture-makers Andersen & Stauffer (andersenandstauffer.com); D.R. Dimes (drdimes.com); Lawrence Crouse (lawrencecrouse.com); and The Seraph (theseraph.com). —Lori Viator

Do you know of anyone in New England who still installs a real, stretched-canvas ceiling (or could instruct a skilled amateur)? —Jeremy Moyler, New York City

Today's "stretch wall" or "stretch ceiling" is often a clip-and-track-held membrane that may be ornamental, backlighted, sound-dampening, etc., stretched over an existing ceiling, or used in a new room instead of drywall. Since you're writing to OHJ and implying an old technique, I'll assume you mean a canvaslike fabric applied to the plaster before paint or paper. It's a way to keep hairline cracks at bay, protecting any decorative painting. (The painting can also be done

on canvas in a studio, and then applied to the ceiling.) Also, consider Nu-Wal, a durable fiberglass-mat plaster resurfacing system that is to be used before papering or painting.

Paperhangers trained in high-end or restoration paperhanging can do the job. Find names at the Wallcovering Installers Assn., formerly the National Guild of Professional Paperhangers: wallcoveringinstallers.org. WIA also does online tutorials. —Patricia Poore



Have a Question?

Ask us at ppoore@aimmedia.com.

I need professional advice on how to open up an old fluted column to remove a colony of honeybees. I have good carpentry skills and understand column construction

-Melvin Farr, Smyrna, Ga.

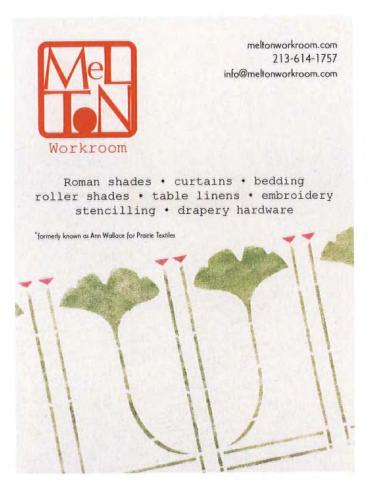
Honeybees are protected; you can't kill them and there are protocols for relocating a hive. Do an internet search for bee removal in your county, and you'll find beekeepers, agricultural extensions and wildlife management organizations, even pest-removal companies who can give advice and do the job. As for opening the column, your best bet is removing the shaft by unfastening it from the base and capital—rather than cutting into the fluted shaft. You'll have to wait until the colony is dormant. Also, check out historichomeworks.com to find preservationist John Leeke's publications and consulting service. -Patricia Poore

Can you tell me what paint color is on the tavern bar in this photo from your website?

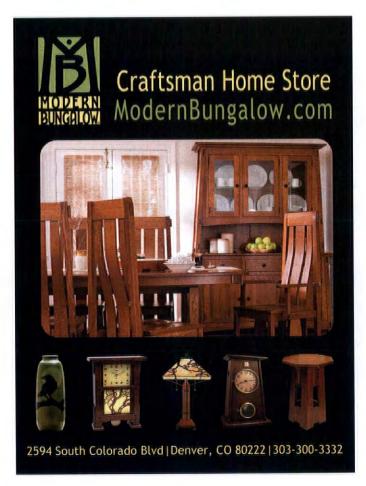
—Robert Allan, Putney, Vermont

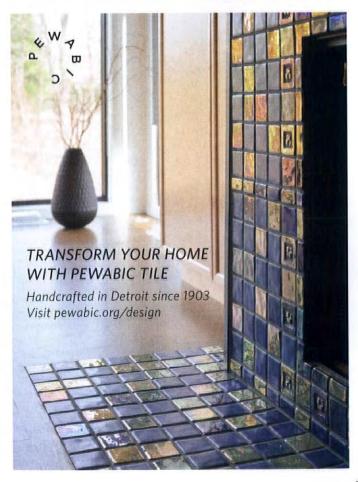


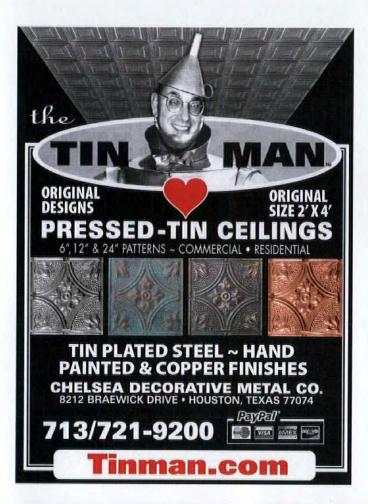
That grey-green was matched by a Benjamin Moore dealer to a (discontinued) Finnaren & Haley color called 'Warren Tavern', after the historic inn in Charlestown, Mass. Pennsylvania homeowner Larry Schopperth says the color is also in the Historic New England Historic Colors of American chart. He used Moore's Regal Select in the eggshell finish. —Lori Viator

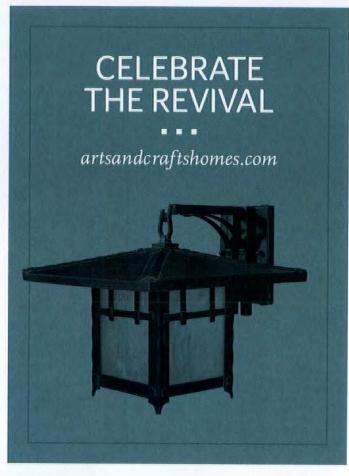


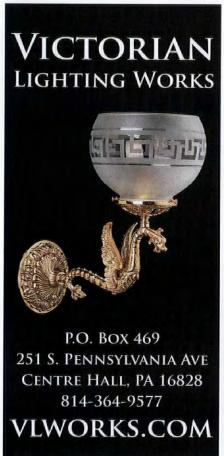






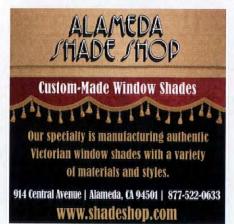






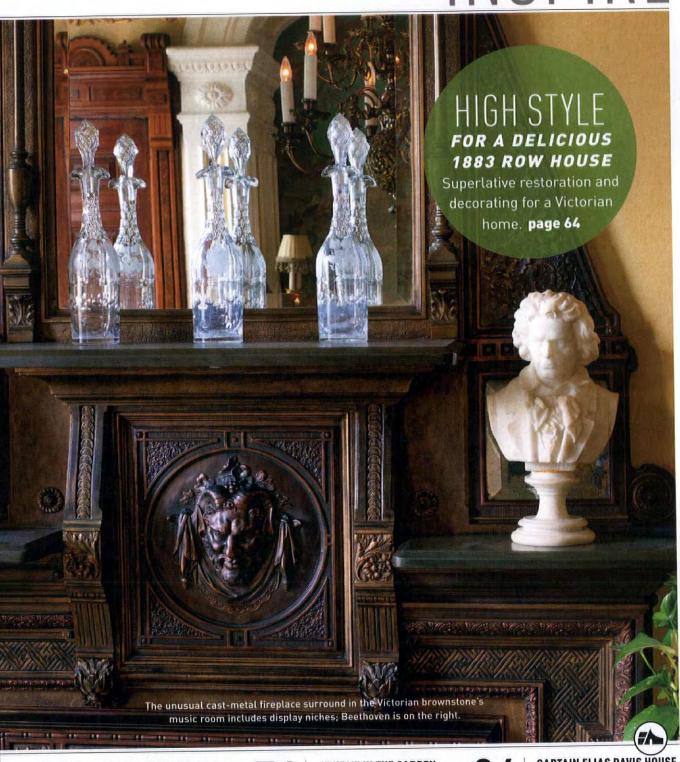








# INSPIRE



64

BROWNSTONE NONPAREIL
Period treatments in Hoboken.
+ ROW HOUSE, TOWNHOUSE

76

**AT HOME IN THE GARDEN**Surrounded by inspired landscape.

+ GARDENS YEAR-ROUND

84

CAPTAIN ELIAS DAVIS HOUSE
Exemplary wallpapers, woodwork.
+ FEDERAL-ERA COLOR





# Brownstone nonpareil

Across the river from Manhattan, a mansard-roofed townhouse built in 1883 gets the superlative treatment, guided by a preservation-minded designer. By Regina Cole / Photos by Steve Gross & Susan Daley

HIS WAS A MONUMENTAL undertaking, restoration with a capital R," says Paul Somerville, a preservation consultant and interior designer based in Hoboken, New Jersey. He refers to a five-storey, 5,600-square-foot brownstone row house located on Hudson Street in Hoboken. The 19-foot-wide building was built in 1883 as the end unit of a four-house cluster; lore has it that the developer kept this one for himself. Surrounded by a balustrade with carved brownstone newels and posts, the house is the star of the lineup. A storey taller than its neighbors, its cresting-embellished mansard roof is laid in three-color rosettes of Vermont slate. (See p. 73.) This was the first mansard roof in town; Hudson Street was then the city's Park Avenue, home to the professional and merchant class.

Brownstone balustrades (recast from the originals) line the stoops on the rhythmic row of brownstones. **OPPOSITE** The scale of fittings in parlors with 12' ceilings is impeccable. The plaster appliques in the frieze are original, as is the magnificent brass filigree chandelier, one of two that survived on this floor.



## More Online

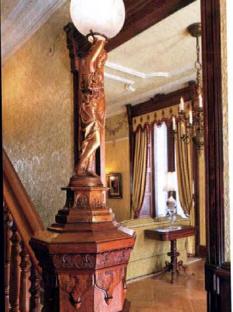
Different approaches for decorating a Victorian house: oldhouseonline.com/ articles/renovatingvictorian This continued to be a posh address into the 20th century. Between ca. 1920 and 1945, it was home to Hoboken mayor George Washington Gonzales, who introduced murals and stained glass to the music room. Later, the area changed and the house became a dormitory for Stevens Institute of Technology, which is across the street. By the time Patrick G. Quinn found it, it was "very rundown," he says. "And they had put up partitions everywhere to make more rooms.

"We had a home in North Brunswick, about 44 miles away, but I had an office a mile and a half from here, in Jersey City," says Quinn, a retired stockbroker. "My wife, Naty, and I have always loved old houses and, in particular, brownstones. So, when I saw a very small For Sale sign in a window, we jumped at the opportunity. In fact, we paid \$80,000 more than the asking price."

An initial engineering report said that the building's structure was sound. "The house was built like a tank," says Bo Dziman, a Realtor with Hoboken's Hudson Place Realty. "It is a solid piece of construction and an incredible representation of the culture of craftsmanship during the 1880s."

Quinn agrees that the house needed attention after years of neglect: "new systems, a new





## **Unusual Fireplaces**

As Paul Somerville's crew removed later partitions and layers of paint, they made an unexpected find. The exotic fireplaces in the parlor, music room, and master suite are made entirely of metal.

"When we first discovered what they are," Somerville says, "we called in Christina Labrie, who is a genius with finishes. She worked on them to bring back their luster, and I think they once again look the way they did when they were installed."

Although Somerville is not certain, he believes that the fireplace surrounds are made of cast iron and that they originated in Europe.



ABOVE Fireplaces are cast metal, now stripped of paint. BELOW Mural painting in the music room was an early change; the rest of the room's architecture is original. BOTTOM LEFT A figural newelpost lamp of suitable size and presence was an antiques-shop find. Ceiling decoration is original.





ABOVE The re-imagined kitchen features a simple wood wainscot, cabinets mimicking a butler's pantry, by Crown Point Cabinetry, and glazed volcanic-stone countertops. Lighting fixtures are antique. BELOW The modern gas cookstove is placed in the location of the original hearth. The old bricks had disintegrated, so these are new.



roof; the chimneys had to be repointed and the exterior balusters repaired."

As soon as the Quinns bought the house, they hosted a party here for the Hoboken Historical Museum. That's when they met Paul Somerville, whose design work takes him into some of New Jersey's most substantial old houses. "We were so lucky to connect with him," Quinn says. "He is so very knowledgeable about what is right for the house."

Somerville recalls: "We spent the next four years restoring. Fortunately, many of the walls were simply covered when they put up partitions, but not damaged or removed—the original walls were still there. The staircase balusters and handrail ended up in the attic, intact, so we simply put them back. Much of the millwork survived, as did two magnificent chandeliers on the parlor level."

Somerville emphasizes that the amount of work was substantial, none of it possible without the parade of skilled artisans who removed





**ABOVE** Upstairs, the cast-metal mantel, ceilings, and Lincrusta friezes are original. **BELOW** Custom cabinets, period-friendly sconces, and Roman shades furnish a glamorous master bath with wall murals.















The **master suite** occupies the entire third level of the brownstone, as it did when the house was built, comprising an L-shaped bedroom, small dressing area, a sitting room, and an en-suite bath.

ABOVE Saturated 19th-century colors mark the entry. The front door, painted a cerulean blue selected by the owners, leads into a red entry foyer. The original door hardware is the 'Brocade' pattern by P. & F. Corbin. RIGHT Boxes of leftover encaustic tiles were found in the house, making repair of the hearths easier.

accretions and restored original features. Happy surprises included the discovery of boxes of leftover encaustic tiles in the basement, waiting to serve the repair of five fireplace hearths. The house now has radiant heat under the flooring and a multi-zoned, high-velocity heating and cooling system.

THE INTERIOR SCHEME created by Paul Somerville complements fine wood flooring and millwork with saturated tones of gold, red, and green. He designed classic upholstered furniture pieces that fit the house.

Somerville designed a kitchen that suits the Victorian house while meeting contemporary demands for style and function. Cabinets are historically inspired. The backsplash is fitted with antique tiles, and counters are made of glazed volcanic stone. The six-burner cookstove

is set against a brick wall that looks like the original chimneybreast.

The 19th-century layout has adapted well to the 21st. The parlors are at the level of a *piano nobile* (the raised principal floor in classical architecture), twelve steps above the street, where the music room is at the back. The floor above is given over to a master suite, including a sybaritic new spa bath. In traditional 19th-century fashion, mahogany wainscots in more formal public rooms give way to mixed woods in bedrooms, and painted pine on the two uppermost floors. The dining room and kitchen, located on the lowest level, open to a brick-paved courtyard in the rear, where the garage occupies the old brick carriage house. The family enters the house through the kitchen, from the courtyard.

FOR RESOURCES, SEE PAGE 103.

# **BROWNSTONES AND ROW HOUSES**

# MEDIUM-DENSITY, NEIGHBOR-FRIENDLY HOUSES OF THE 19TH CENTURY. By Patricia Poore

THE HOBOKEN HOUSE (previous pages and below) is emblematic of the high-style Victorian brownstone. In fact, it's the best house at the end of a prosperous row, with an extra storey and side-wall windows. In typical Victorian fashion, it is a hybrid, sharing typical Neo-Grec details with its neighbors, yet sporting a fashionable mansard roof.

Row houses are found in various iterations, despite the apparently tight design parameters. The party wall shared by neighbors—saving on construction cost and conserving heat—is based on medieval European precedent. In the U.S., row houses take on regional attributes. Philadelphia and Boston are famous for streets lined with brick Federals. San Francisco has its wood-framed Italianate

What is brownstone?

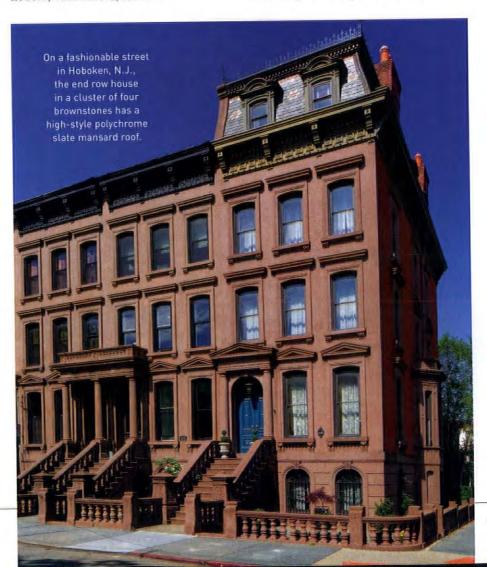
Brownstone is a red-brown or dark chocolate sandstone, usually with a noticeable mica content. Much of the brownstone used to clad Victorian row houses in Manhattan and Brooklyn was quarried in New Jersey, making it more affordable than limestone from the Midwest. Brownstone is a sedimentary rock, meaning it consists of layers. When the stone is naturally beddedwith its strata parallel to the ground-it has longevity. When it is face-beddedset with the layers perpendicular to the ground-it is subject to spalling from water infiltration and freeze-thaw cycles. Brownstone builders sometimes face-bedded the façade slabs to expose a long surface of stone, which is why we see brownstone deterioration today, especially around doorways.

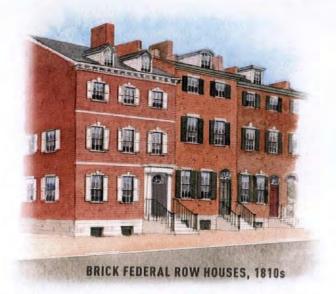
and Eastlake Painted Ladies. Baltimore's brick row houses, famous for both their well-kept white marble steps and the indignities of 20th-century Formstone siding, were built throughout the 18th and 19th centuries. Washington, D.C., Charleston, and Savannah have theirs.

By the Victorian era, row houses (both wood-frame and masonry) were even more widespread. Entire neighborhoods in St. Louis and Chicago are defined by their neat rows. A charming example is Sylvan Terrace in upper Manhattan's Washington Heights, where 20 wood row houses, built in 1882, survive.

Most American row houses were built in pre-platted blocks, one or four or a whole row at a time. Most housed a single family (and servants). They are narrow—12' to 25' wide—and normally just one room plus hall across the width, three rooms deep. Architectural style comes from whatever the builder used to ornament the façade. The cornice, belt courses, windows, and front door provide cues to style and thus date of construction.

Row houses built during the 20th century, as early as 1910, tend to exhibit Colonial Revival sentiment, sometimes emulating surviving brick Federals.







# Row House GLOSSARY

- BROWNSTONE An urban form popular in Northeast cities during the 19th century, named for its facade cladding of brown sandstone (generally over brick construction). Almost all are party-wall houses, built in rows that create a consistent streetscape. In the past 20 years, "brownstone" has, in some cities, become a generic word for 19th-century. party-wall row houses.
- . DOUBLE HOUSE In this context, a house divided vertically by a party wall, designed for two families, one on each side, each house multi-storey. Each side is on its own lot. Double houses may occur in a row.
- GREYSTONE A Chicago term for a brick building with an Indiana limestone façade, dating to 1890-1920s. Greystones range from mansions to semi-detached row houses. Unlike brownstones. which were built as singlefamily homes, greystone row houses were often multi-family. They often have

neoclassical, Beaux Arts, or Chateauesque styling.

- LIMESTONE A more precise term for brownstone-era houses clad with white or pale grey limestone. Limestones may occur in short or long rows, or be interspersed with brick or brownstone façades.
- PARTY WALL Specifically a common wall that divides two houses or units, set on the property line: it's most often structural and provides a fire break. Also used as an adjective to describe attached row houses.
- PHILADELPHIA TWIN Many cities have their own version of the double house, but Philadelphia's twin houses are famous, primarily because there are so many, beginning with those built on early streetcar lines. Bilaterally symmetrical, they look at first like one large home, but have two entries and a party wall. Subject to a unique brand of remuddling. the houses sometimes take on a comical look when two

separate owners disagree on roofing, paint color, and alterations. Twins were often built in detached rows.

- ROW HOUSE The term tends to favor party-wall (attached) houses, but in fact any house in a group of attached, semi-detached, or detached but tightly spaced residences with the same setback are row houseslike the wood-framed beauties in San Francisco.
- TERRACED HOUSE The British term for a townhouse. generally referencing rows of identical or mirror-image houses sharing a common wall or side walls. Terraced

houses date to the 16th century and are still built, but in some locales the term refers to Victorian and Edwardian examples.

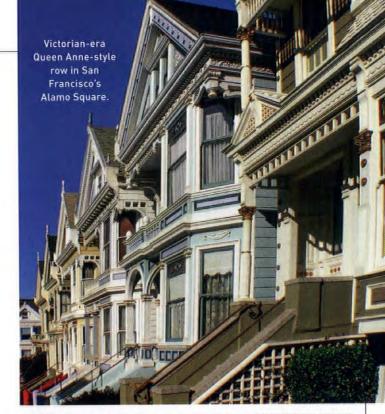
• TOWNHOUSE Early on, especially in England, it was the (often tall and narrow) urban house of a family who also owned a country house. In pre-automobile days, it meant a multi-storey house on a small footprint, attached or in densely built rows. Today it means a private unit in a multiunit row.



VICTORIAN BROWNSTONES, 1880s

# STYLES of Urban Row Houses

In old cities on the Eastern seaboard, row houses are found in almost every period style. West Coast cities exhibit Victorian styles from Italianate to Eastlake/Stick and Neoclassical. The Federal style, today most associated with brick houses from Portsmouth to Savannah, dates to ca. 1790-1830. These are usually two or three storeys and often have a dormered half-storey attic. The Greek Revival style that followed, ca. 1825-1860, is bold and linear, based on plain, Greek post-and-beam architecture. More ornamental is the Gothic Revival style, which overlapped the Greek and was popular until about 1860. The massing of these row houses may be similar to other styles, but Gothic features pointed arches, lancet and oriel windows, and carved stone. • The Italianate style of the 1860s through 1880s is the most common style used for brownstones, as well as row houses in San Francisco. Three to five storeys, they are often symmetrical, with round-top doors or windows, and layered with ornament including large brackets. Nearly as common during the period, the Neo-Grec style returns to more severe detailing, often with columns, architraves, and pediments over doors or windows. Neo-Grec brownstones often have ornamental carvings or incising in the stone. • Gaining popularity during the 1860s, High Victorian Second Empire has many motifs in common with the Italianate style, but it is distinguished by its steep mansard roof. Look for rococo details and curved windows. Highly ornamental Queen Anne row houses date to about 1872-1900. Whether brick, brownstone, or wood-framed, these houses exhibit multiple surface textures, asymmetry, and an abundance of ornament: multi-pane windows, brackets and pendants, embellished bargeboards at eaves, starbursts, and free classic motifs. The Romanesque Revival style (about 1880 to 1890) features mixed materials, bold architecture, and round arches. With flower and wreath motifs, the classical Renaissance Revival style was used for New York rows ca. 1880 to 1920, as well as for wood-framed row houses.







ABOVE These brick,
Romanesque Revival
houses in Park Slope,
Brooklyn, feature
characteristic arches
and brownstone details.
LEFT Paint colors
express individuality in
a row of modest brick
Federal Revival houses
in a 1920s neighborhood
of Washington, D.C.

# AT HOME the garden NEW ENGLAND LANDSCAPE DESIGNER ANDREW GROSSMAN

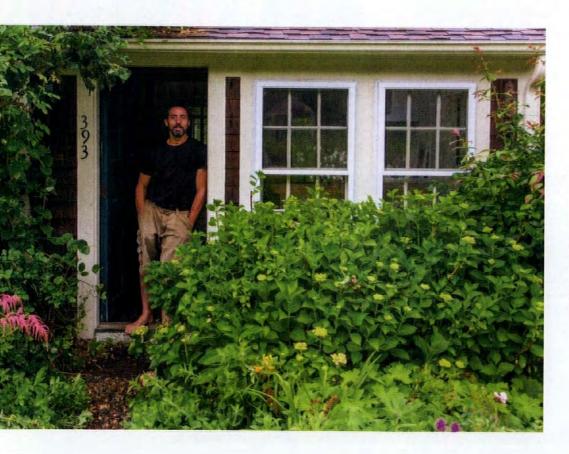
BOUGHT HIS HOUSE, A 19TH-CENTURY CAPE, STRICTLY FOR THE LOT.

BY REGINA COLE | PHOTOS BY ERIC ROTH

URROUNDED by the Martin Wildlife Refuge and bordering the Runnins River, this house is in Seekonk, Massachusetts. Though it's on a main road, the site is secluded and verdant, with a dreamy backdrop of river curving away into the distance. "I bought the property in 1998 because of the land, which measures just under an acre," says Andrew Grossman. "It abuts a wildlife sanctuary and overlooks a river! The house itself was secondary."

Since then, Grossman has created a whole series of display gardens that demonstrate his design principles. The landscape delivers changing, colorful views from every window.

"I'm a garden designer, so I bring clients here to see what's possible and to help them with ideas," he says. (The garden has also been the subject of many blog posts, and even a cable TV show.) Grossman has planted a blue-and-white garden, a checkerboard garden, a pond garden, a side garden,



LEFT Garden designer
Andrew Grossman at
his own front door.

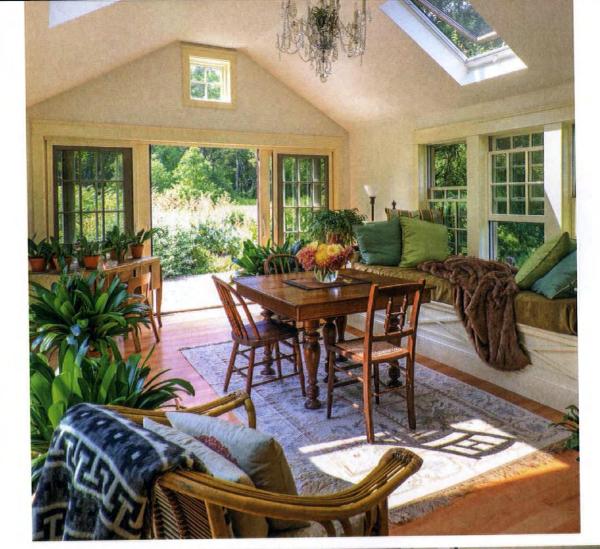
OPPOSITE From inside
the gazebo, the view
across the pond looks
toward what is now
the front of the house.
Dark blue clematis
climbing the metal
structure adds intense
color. Grossman dug
out the naturalistic
"farm pond."



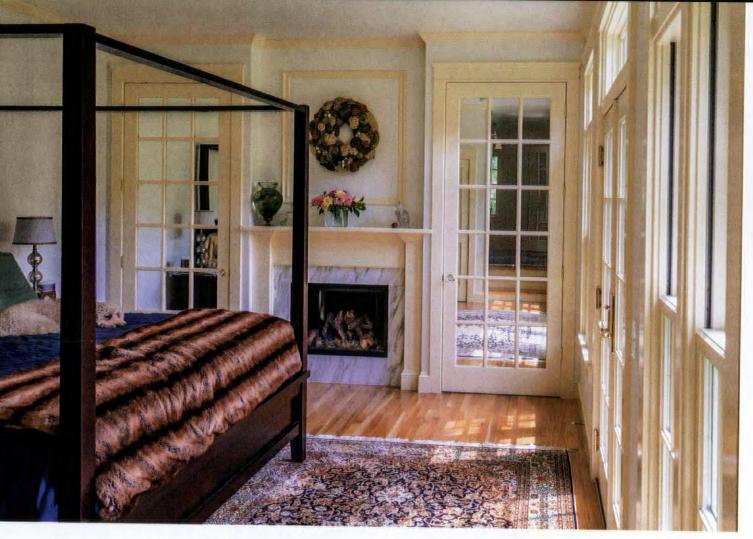




RIGHT (top) The new sunroom is the heart of the house: a bright dining room in all seasons and a place to over-winter less hardy plants. (bottom) The former front door now opens to the kitchen. Just inside, a round oak table makes a cozy breakfast nook occupied by Puck, the miniature Labradoodle. OPPOSITE (bottom) This kitchen area was part of the old mudroom. Now there's room for a butcher block-topped worktable.







ABOVE The new master bedroom looks spacious owing to mirrored closet doors flanking the wall-mounted fireplace. BELOW A cool white, blue, and pink garden surrounds a pot planted in summer with blue and pink annuals. OPPOSITE A checkerboard of slates and greenery makes the transition between house and garden.



had wood floors because they all were covered with carpeting and linoleum."

Grossman mostly gutted the house. He kept the living room intact, prompted by the desire to save original elements including the woodwork and the mantel. The fireplace was still there, but with a wood-burning stove venting through the flue.

Over the years, Andrew Grossman added a sunroom that also functions as the dining room, a new master bedroom on the first floor, and, on the second floor, another bedroom combined with a home office. Today the house measures 1800 square feet. Gravel paths that intersect around four enclosed rectangular garden beds lead to what's now the front entry. The beds hold roses, perennials, flowering shrubs, and annuals in tones of pink, yellow, white, and blue. Fence posts and swagged ropes make up the enclosure; at the end of each gravel path, an arch bearing roses and clematis leads in and out of the garden.

The old front door leads into a kitchen that includes a sunny breakfast nook. Next is the living room with its 19th-century fireplace. With gleaming hardwood floors and a few pieces of seating furniture upholstered in pale neutrals, the room exudes calm. The living room leads in turn into the new sunroom, a vaulted space illuminated by skylights and windows on three sides. Grossman designed a window seat that was built in to stretch across one long wall under a bank of three windows. In the summer, screens cover every window, so the room is open



# More Online

See another checkerboard garden: oldhouseonline, com/articles/ urban-gardenmassachusetts

# A PLEASING GEOMETRY

One of the first spaces designed by Andrew Grossman for his property was the checkerboard garden. It directly abuts the house on what was originally the front façade, but is now the back.

"What used to be the front door now leads into the garden," he explains. "The old garden stairs are not centered on the arbor and door. This checkerboard masks the lack of a centerline, and introduces a fanciful geometric element that has become one of the property's most photographed spaces.

"Geometry feels right, up against a house,"
Grossman says. "I'm not really a fan of garden beds that look like they fell out of the sky. Shapes should not be arbitrary; there should be a reason for the shape or the lines to be there."





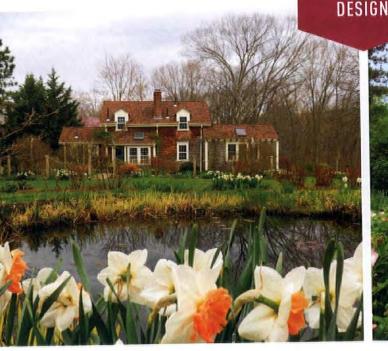


to garden and breezes. In winter, it serves as a conservatory for tender plants that have to come inside when temperatures drop. Radiant heat under the flooring warms the space.

The new master bedroom is downstairs, at the opposite end of the house. Distinguished by a gas fireplace set into the wall with a white marble surround, the simple room focuses on the view. The bed is placed so that his garden is the first thing Andrew Grossman sees in the morning. In what was the original master bedroom upstairs, he'd earlier added a wall painting of maple-leaf branches. It remains in what's now a guest room, slightly enlarged by a new window bay that brings the outside in.

TOP (left) Curves in furnishings balance the ascetic living room with its original, mid-19th-century flat wainscot and fireplace mantel. (right) A corner of the original living room invites the outdoors in. ABOVE Amid lush ferns and Japanese anemone, a rustic pot holds white blossoms embowered by ferns. RIGHT The original master bedroom is now a guest room decorated with maple branches growing across one wall. The new bay window makes the room feel bigger.







# THE YEAR-ROUND GARDEN

# UNDERLYING STRUCTURE + HORTICULTURE = SEASONAL INTEREST. BY ANDREW GROSSMAN

My own gardens are planted so that they are in bloom most months—and I work on them for several hours every day. Many of my garden-design clients do not have that much time or the desire to do this kind of work. So I adapt designs for them by using lots of flowering shrubs instead of perennials.

Because the river, woods, and field of the adjacent wildlife sanctuary are so lovely in winter, my plantings provide little in the way of a winter show. Once the snow flies, the natural environment takes center stage until the first spring bulbs begin to bloom. Even in the dead of winter, seedheads and garden structures provide interest. My favorite time to look at and think about the garden is in January, when there is absolutely nothing I can do!

SEE MORE AT ANDREWGROSSMAN.COM, AND AT AYEARINMYGARDEN.BLOGSPOT.COM

# WATER FEATURES

Neither the naturalistic "farm pond" nor the lily pond (right) has a filtration system. Water lilies, hardy varieties planted in pots resting on the bottom of the ponds, curb algae growth. In the winter I simply let the ponds freeze. Native turtles and frogs have taken up residence.



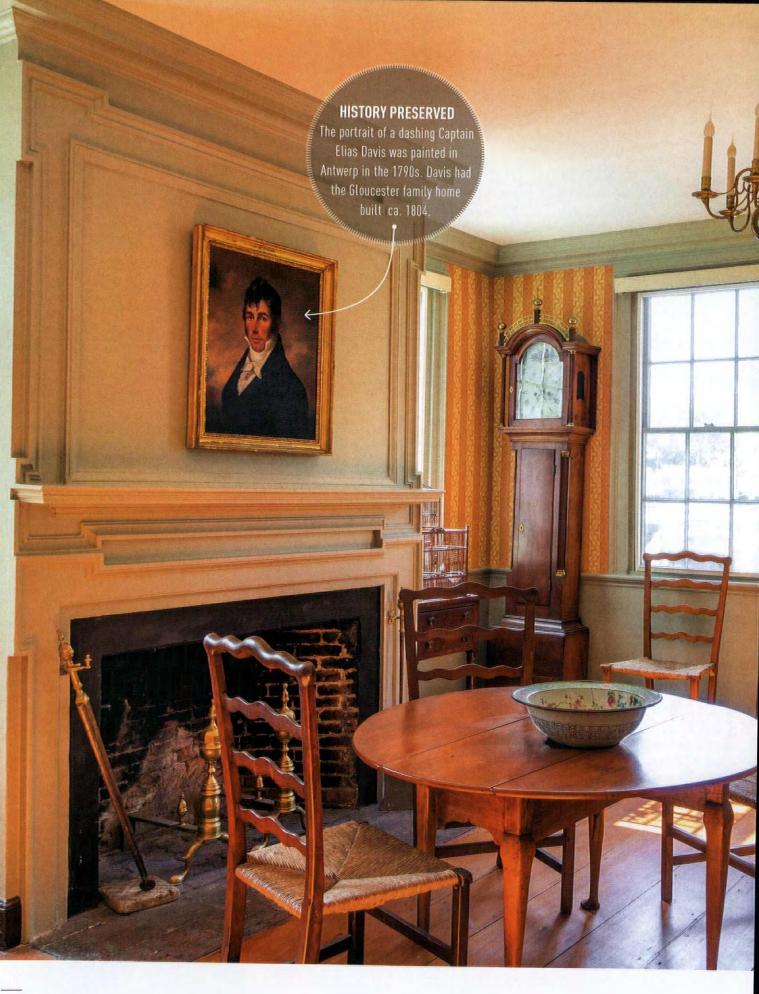




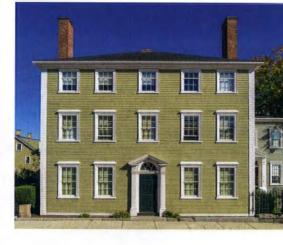


1. Vibrant color provided by *Kerria japonica* arrives in early spring. 2. On a rainy day in late summer, here's the same view. 3. Even in barren winter's drab colors, the checkerboard and columnar yews provide dimension and interest. 4. The lily pond just after installation. 5. Two years later, azaleas, astilbes, and blue catmint (nepeta) spill over the pond's edge.





The owner's portrait overlooks a dining room papered with Moses Grant Stripe', named after an early 19th-century Boston paper-hanger. The golden colors suit this sunny front room. RIGHT The three-storey Captain Elias Davis House exterior has restrained Federal styling with quoins at the corners and a fanlight over the front door.



odest in size and yet a spacious, fine house in its time, this ca. 1804 Federal example has come alive with the addition of period wallpapers. The Captain Elias Davis House is a remarkable survivor that's now part of the Cape Ann Museum in Gloucester, Massachusetts. Recently it was repapered with block-printed designs by Adelphi Paper Hangings.

BY REGINA COLE PHOTOS BY ERIC ROTH

Getting an eyeful at the CAPTAIN ELIAS DAVISHOUSE



# ABOVE Featuring expert woodworking and carving, the corner cupboard in the rear partor displays antique glassware. RIGHT Faux stone blocks were fashionable stairhall motifs in the early 19th century. The eye-popping pattern 'Fancy Ashlar' is a whimsical take. OPPOSITE The public front parlor boasts some of the finest millwork in the house. The portrait in the round frame is of Captain Samuel Somes, who built a virtual twin of this house across the street. The obelisk is a "peep box," a precursor to hand-held picture-viewing mechanisms.

# GLOUCESTER, MASSACHUSETTS,

is famous for its fishing history. The books *Captains Courageous* by Rudyard Kipling and *The Perfect Storm* by Sebastian Junger were written about Gloucester's fishermen. Hollywood made blockbuster movies from both, adding another layer of myth.

Even before Gloucester became "Fishtown," it was a seafaring place, thanks to a deep and wide natural harbor. Local son Elias Davis saw great successes as a privateer during the Revolutionary War; soon after, he became known as Captain Elias Davis, one of Cape Ann's most successful shipping merchants. By the turn of the 19th century, he owned a number of vessels, including the ship *Cadmus* and the brig *Augusta*.

Between 1799 and 1804, Davis commissioned housewright Jacob Smith to build a home for his family in the center of town. Smith, who also built the country's first Universalist Church a few blocks

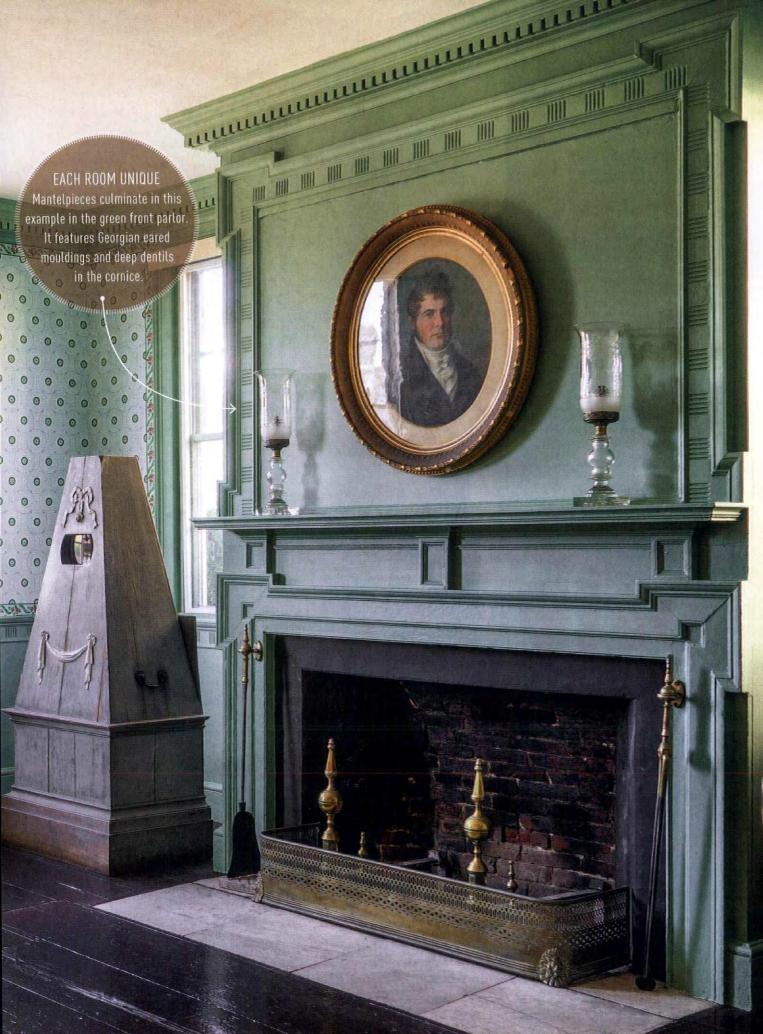
# The Woodwork!

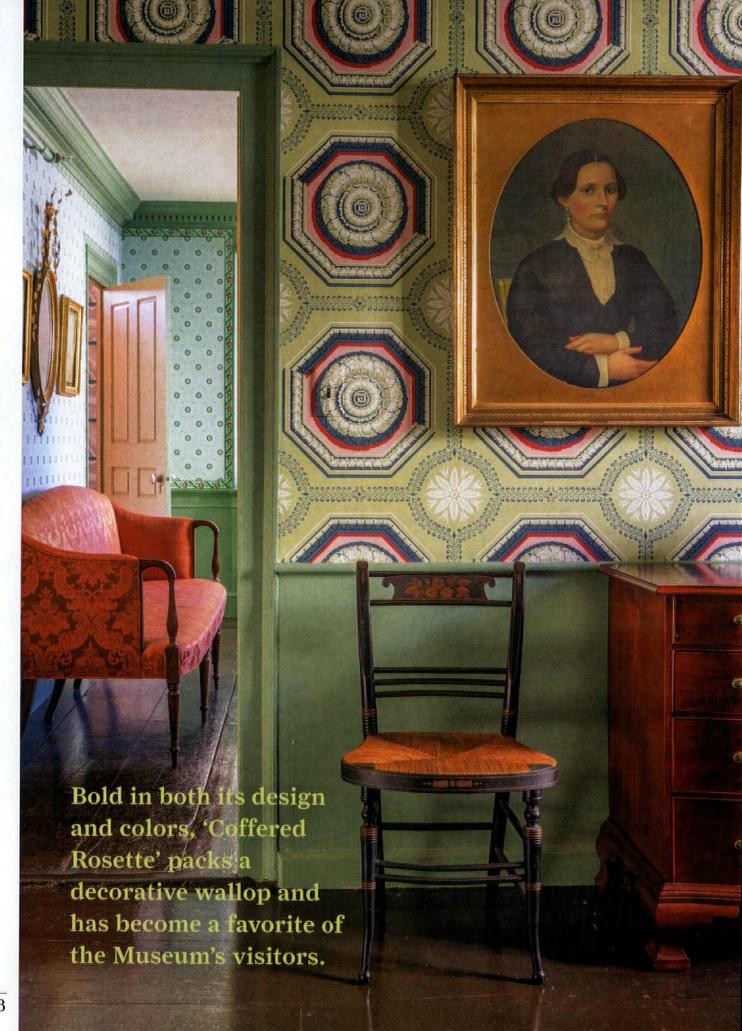
The restrained, almost severe New England Federal exterior of the Captain Elias Davis House belies the wealth of exquisite woodwork inside. Jacob Smith, the housewright who built the stylish house, clearly knew that nothing conveyed wealth and sophistication like fancy millwork. Rooms have embellished chair rails, classical Georgian over-mantel treatments, crown mouldings, and carving. A Federal reeded frieze decorates wainscoting, the staircase, and the fireplace wall in the front parlor, where the cornice has deeply incised dentils. The back parlor is more restrained, yet boasts a built-in corner cabinet with a carved shell motif. The millwork is especially impressive when we consider that each piece was made by hand; power tools were still a long time off.



away, designed and erected a three-storey Federal house with corner quoins and a fanlight over the front door. Captain Davis and his wife, Lucy, raised nine children in this house.

The Davis family sold the house in the middle of the 19th century; by 1860, it had become a two-family home. In 1923, the Cape Ann Scientific and Literary Association bought the building. Founded in 1873, the organization that was devoted to improving the minds of citizens had







**ABOVE** 'Adena Pin Ring' bordered with 'Rose and Sprig' are ideal companions for the millwork in the front parlor. **RIGHT** A closeup shows the whimsical pattern 'Fancy Ashlar' in the stairwell. **OPPOSITE** 'Coffered Rosette' enlivens the rear parlor, where a pair of portraits depict Lucy Greenleaf Day and Captain Sargent Day, who owned the house after the Davis family.

been without a permanent site. The Davis house had great appeal as a headquarters: It was one of the rare early Gloucester houses with an identifiable builder, and the history of the Davis family was knitted into that of the community. It was across the street from an imposing city hall erected during the Victorian era. Informally called the "Scientific," the organization became the Cape Ann Historical Association and eventually the Cape Ann Museum, which holds a superb collection of American sculpture, fishing-industry artifacts, and works by the myriad artists who have come to visit or live on Cape

Ann. Theirs is the country's foremost collection of works by the mid-19th-century luminist painter Fitz Henry Lane, a Gloucester native.

The collections did not, of course, fit into the Davis House. By the middle of the 20th century, the Museum had outgrown existing space. Expansions have resulted in a thoroughly modern museum. Yet the Davis House remains a centerpiece of the collections.

Today it is furnished with primarily Colonial- and Federal-era pieces donated in the 1920s, including objects from the Davis family. The Museum is fortunate



# The Wallpapers!

The four rooms recently wallpapered are those open to the public. Block-printed by Adelphi, the papers are reproductions of late 18th- and early 19th-century patterns.

Faux stone-block patterns were fashionable in stairhalls in the early 19th century, so the hall is an ideal place for 'Fancy Ashlar'. The paper also references the house's quoins. wooden exterior corner trim meant to appear like stone blocks. The sunny dining room is papered with 'Moses Grant Stripe', named after the prominent early 19th-century Boston paper-hanger who first printed the pattern. In the front parlor, 'Adena Pin Ring' is named after the Adena Mansion in Chillicothe, Ohio, where this paper was installed in 1808. It most likely originated in France. The paper is embellished with a border known as 'Rose and Sprig'. Dating to ca. 1795-1810, it was found in an abandoned tavern in Maine. The rear parlor is papered with 'Coffered Rosette', a strongly graphic, architectural pattern of unknown origin.

When Adelphi prints these reproduction wallpapers, it does so with engraved wooden blocks with faces made of Swiss pear wood, just as they were over 200 years ago. This results in a unique look.

"The appearance is distinct from all other printing methods," says Steve Larson, who, along with Chris Ohrstrom, founded Adelphi in 1999. "It is not flat . . . you can see the paint thickness on the paper."

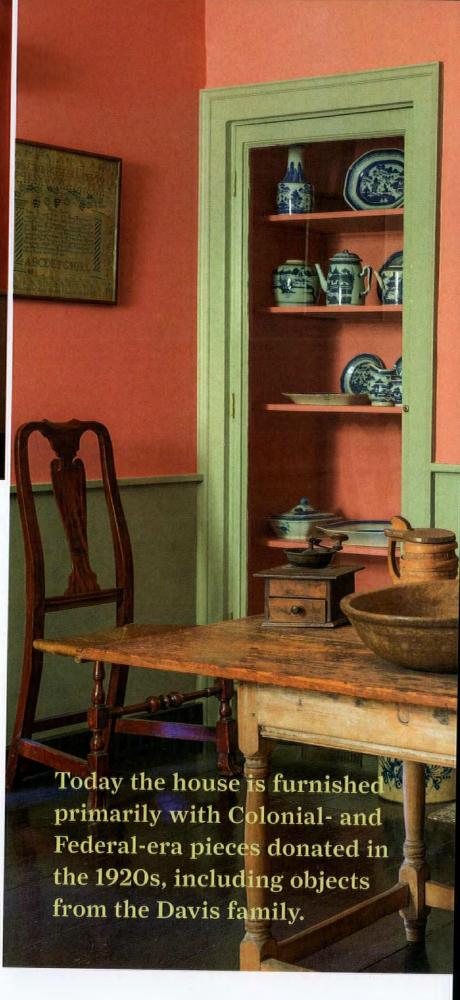


ABOVE Pewter is stored in an antique oak cabinet in the kitchen. RIGHT In a corner near the kitchen fireplace hangs a sampler stitched by Mary Davis, the Captain's daughter, in 1818. It lists all of the 13 children born to Lucy Davis.

to own a portrait of Captain Elias Davis, which was painted in Antwerp in the 1790s; a sampler stitched by his daughter Mary in 1818, which lists all the family members; a pencil drawing of the house done in 1830 by Elias Davis's son Solomon Haskell Davis; and passports for two family vessels, signed by James Madison and John Adams, respectively.

Recently the Cape Ann Museum installed well-chosen period wallpapers in the four main rooms downstairs. Wood block-printed by Adelphi Paper Hangings of Sharon Springs, New York, the period-accurate papers decorate the dining room, the central hall and stairway, the front parlor, and the back parlor. These beautifully proportioned rooms have come alive with pattern and color, a truer representation of the tastes of the times. We can't help but believe that Elias Davis would love the way his house looks now.

FOR RESOURCES, SEE PAGE 103





BELOW The redecoration of Boston's Otis House parlors was a revelation. RIGHT The ca. 1800 French paper, now 'Votive Goddess Arabesque', was reproduced by Adelphi from the original document found in the front rooms of this 1777 seacaptain's home in Newburyport, Mass.

BOTTOM Adelphi's '1776' is a pillarand-arch paper dating to about 1790.

OPPOSITE In an 1803 country manse, original colors were determined by extensive paint analysis. 'Claverack Coffer' is the reproduction Brussels carpet, from J.R. Burrows (burrows.com).







# GEORGIAN AND FEDERAL COLOR

CA. 1770-1830, COLORS WERE BRILLIANT, THE PATTERNS EYE-POPPING. By Patricia Poore

Muted is not the word to describe late-Georgian through Federal era colors, says color historian John Crosby Freeman. He points to the parlor at Boston's 1796 Otis House, headquarters of Historic New England. The redecorating project during the 1970s was revolutionary in its scholarship, returning to the room strong clear yellow and Wedgwood blue—as well as a paper border with a black ground, and orange accents framing fully colored landscape scenes. The carpeting, laid wall to wall, is a graphic pattern in red, gold, and deep green. All of it is based on period evidence.

A common misconception is that the color palette consisted of white, bisque, and grey. In fact, the diverse colors of the period range from strong, greyed-ochre shades and verdigris to brilliant salmon (a Federal period favorite), orange, violet, and brown. Gilding, often used with black accents, was popular on mirrors and lighting devices.

The porcelain colors created by Josiah Wedgwood—not only blue but also green, lilac, and yellow—defined elegant formal interiors in the cities. The Neoclassical architect Robert Adam introduced delicate cucumber green. Pastel rooms arrived during the Federal era.

Readily available to the middle class by this period, wallpaper was fanciful, often printed in geometric or exaggerated designs. The three-dimensionality of Georgian-era patterns survived into the Federal period, as did strong color, but colors became clearer and brighter. Popular papers simulated brickwork or hewn stone (ashlar). Like the era's grain painting, patterns could be whimsical: swirling designs were added to ashlar, and blue or red scrollwork decorated the "mortar" between blocks. Both stripes and diaper patterns (diamond shapes with diagonal repeats) were popular, as were flocked damasks. Ombré or *irisé* papers gave a rainbow effect.

After 1790, more open designs took hold, including swag and drapery motifs as well as French arabesques, or columns of repetitive motifs. Borders echoed changing tastes, often taking cues from Greek key or egg-and-dart motifs, dentils, swags, ribbons, and festoons. Color preferences, pattern scale, and pictorial characteristics changed from the Georgian to the Federal periods, but themes were continually reinvented. For instance, floral patterns were always popular—from damasks to the flower sprigs, vines, and naturalistic French blooms that became popular after the American Revolution. Paper was rarely used on ceilings during this period.

While the floors in entry halls were typically painted, emulating fine woods or a black-and-white marble checkerboard, main rooms were carpeted from wall to wall, often with Venetian carpet (a striped flat weave), or Brussels (with a loop pile). The era's carpet patterns, like the wallpapers, are strongly graphic and color-rich.

Freeman goes so far as to say that the "fashionable colors of late Colonial and Federal interiors were the freshest and most original palettes seen in America until the Jazz Age of the late 1920s."

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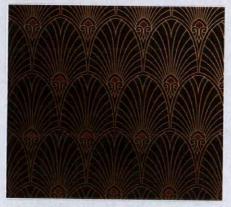
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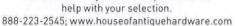
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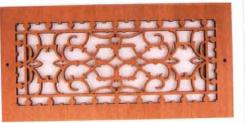
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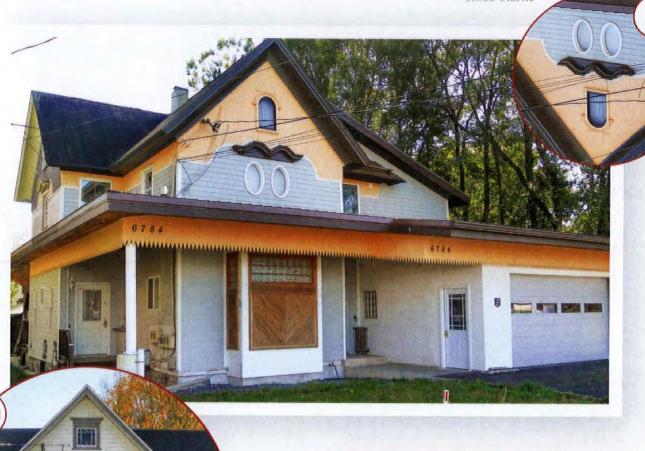
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# Just a bit do

Just a bit down Route 20, another cross-gabled house of similar vintage is intact.

# THE MOUSTACHE HOUSE

This eye-catcher (above) is near the old Chenango Canal in Upstate New York. Built in 1886, the house started out as a cross-gabled Folk Victorian with hooded, round-top windows and some delicate sawtooth trim.

We conjecture that a side-entry porch was removed, an addition with a shallower roof slope went up, and a two-car garage was added at the front. Original windows and doors were replaced. What was probably a window bay was enclosed with tongue-and-groove boards and glass block. As so many Facebook friends commented, we "moustache" what they were thinking!

Someone attempted to reintroduce a Victorian look with over-scaled sawtooth boards and trim to follow the double hood mould (now floating over oval windows). In brown paint, it looks like a handlebar moustache, or a unibrow, not sure what was the intention!

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