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Profile
City House, Country House, by Dan Cooper
New York City-based John B. Murray Architect specializes in Classically inspired urban apartments and country homes in a range of historical styles.

Recent Projects
Pure and Simple, by Lynne Lavelle
A stone farmhouse is Chester County, PA, dating to the early-18th century is restored by Archer & Buchanan Architecture.

Saltbox for a New Century, by Gordon Bock
The comprehensive restoration of the Colonial-era David Field House in Madison, CT, is completed by Gulick & Spradlin.

Return to Form, by Will Holloway
A Minneapolis couple orchestrates the painstaking restoration of the Frank Lloyd Wright-designed Willey House.

Set in Stone, by Annabel Hsin
A 20th-century stone house in Darien, CT undergoes a renovation and expansion designed by Vicente-Burin Architects.

Book Reviews
The Cotswold House: Stone Houses and Interiors from the English Countryside, by Nicholas Mander, reviewed by Anne Walker
Historic Preservation: An Introduction to its History, Principles, and Practice, by Norman Tyler, Ted J. Ligibel and Ilene J. Jaber, reviewed by Kim A. O'Connell

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On the cover: The restoration of this three-story, early-18th-century Pennsylvania stone farmhouse was recently completed by Archer & Buchanan Architecture. See page 10. Photo: © Tom Crane 2008

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- Blogs by Period Homes and Traditional Building founder Clem Labine, Preservation Trades Network executive director Rudy Christian and writers Kim O’Connell and Dan Cooper
- The latest traditional architecture news
- The Product Report of the Month
Buying Guides

In this issue you will find 18 Buying Guides on our issue theme: Restoring the Period Home. The Guides contain information on suppliers, manufacturers, custom fabricators, artists and artisans, as well as many photographs of their work. The Guides range from Doors, Windows, Shutters & Hardware to Lighting & Electrical and Stone Brick & Masonry. They form a most comprehensive source for professionals working in restoration, renovation and traditionally styled new construction.

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City House, Country House

Architect John B. Murray lends a tasteful Classicism to the many facets of residential construction. By Dan Cooper

ew Yorkers, as a rule, are creatures whose passion for living in their city is unrivaled; yet so many of them are equally desirous of a country retreat that serves as an escape from Gotham's hubbub. This dichotomy of rural and urban living is often resolved with the purchase of a residence in both locales, and these homes may display the extremes of elegance, depending on the owner's taste and purse.

While there are certainly many architects who specialize in rural or suburban architecture built from a historical perspective, there are far fewer bringing such an interpretation of Classicism into an urban cooperative. Fewer still are the professionals who are adept at both scenarios.

One notable exception is John B. Murray Architect, a firm based in Midtown Manhattan that creates lyrical, Regency-esque interpretations of Classicism within the intimidating confines and restrictions placed upon the construction trade in Manhattan cooperatives.

Classically Restrained

Reinterpreting Classical architectural forms and ornamentation requires a deft touch. We all have seen far too many examples of would-be Classicists who dwell under the impression that one's abilities are best measured by the size of their pilasters; while the application of ornament is usually dictated by its order, it is the proportion and judiciousness of this application that is crucial to a successful project.

"Working within the context of New York City, there's usually a limit to ceiling height," says firm principal John Murray. "We often don't have the 12- or 13-ft. ceiling heights that you find when you get out of the city. You need to adapt the detailing so that it accentuates the attributes you have -- you take what wall height is available, tailor it to the design, and try not to overdo it.

"The key to this is analyzing every condition of detail by drawing and having the experience to understand what those drawings imply, and how the room will look when it is actually built. Understanding the relationship between the drawing and the built work prevents you from being heavy-handed. We often render full-size drawings -- for example, a section of a paneled library wall -- to study the proportion of the parts of the whole, know that the scale is correct, and that it results in a successful composition."

Cooperative Challenges

Those of us involved in residential construction outside of the urban milieu seldom spare a thought for those who must build within city limits, particularly in an area as densely populated as Manhattan. Murray and his firm thrive in what can only be described as one of the more intimidating construction environments imaginable, and on top of this, this environment is populated by clients who are, shall we say, not known for their usual attitude concerning deadlines.

"The biggest challenge we have to face is what is known as the 'summer schedule,' and it applies to most of the buildings we work in," says Murray. "This is the period of time between Memorial Day and Labor Day, but in some cases, construction isn’t permitted until late in June. This schedule is very inflexible; a number of buildings have onerous financial penalties if you have to work past Labor Day, and some will just shut you down. This is also aggravated by the noise restrictions, so you can’t begin work until 10 in the morning, and you have to finish up by four in the afternoon."
Murray says that every year he's typically faced with two or three projects that need to be completed within a summer schedule. "This process isn't for the faint of heart, and a colleague has described it as 'D-Day,'” he says. "You need a really good general contractor who is comfortable with the summer schedule, because there is no room for failure. Part of our success is because we're very mindful of who is going to build the work. We've learned that everyone from the team has to pull their weight, and that's there's no room for reinterpretation."

For a typical summer-schedule project, according to Murray, the existing property will be demolished in the first summer, exposing any surprises and allowing the firm to create a thorough layout before proceeding the following year.

"On a city project, very little typically remains of the original apartment, as we've found it more cost effective to demo the entire unit because of the intricacies of HVAC and electrical systems within a normal apartment footprint," says Murray. "We take it down to the bones of the structure, which usually are the building masonry walls and the structural slabs above and below – it's basically a concrete environment. Buildings have taken to limiting the amount of time for demolition, therefore this work is contracted out to one of several reliable firms that specialize in it. They know this aspect of the business well and will systematically tear out everything."

The next step in preparing for a summer-schedule project involves the months of planning and design. "We'll secure the general contractor by the winter before the project starts, and a certain amount of pre-construction occurs," says Murray. "Materials, such as doors and windows are ordered and some room, like libraries and dressing rooms, are prefabricated so as much as possible is completed before the summer of on-site construction. Once it begins, we'll have 20 to 40 persons on site every day, including plumbers, electricians, carpenters, stonemasons and plasterers.

Another daunting aspect peculiar to urban construction is the task of simply getting materials on-site. "Typically, our only option is getting everything in through the service elevator," says Murray. "If you think about it, imagine all of the materials you'd use in a country house having to pass through a small doorway. When you're doing a New York project, you're limited to whatever you can get through the basement maze of hallways and into the service elevator. Often, materials need to be cut down to smaller sizes; otherwise – and this does happen – we'll have to use a crane."

The City Apartment

Paging through Murray's portfolio, one cannot help but be impressed with the elegance and caliber of finish of the firm's work. Apartment projects located on Central Park West, Park Avenue, the Upper East Side and the Upper West Side reveal a graceful use of ornamentation and proportion that manages to be grand without being ostentatious.

The firm designed this intimate library with wood paneling for an apartment far above the streets of Manhattan.
A hallmark of Murray's projects is the detailed built-in cabinetry in the dressing areas and halls, all of which efficiently utilize precious Manhattan square footage while maintaining a spacious feel to each room. Galleries, libraries and bedrooms often incorporate substantial moldings, mantels and paneling designed with a careful eye for proportion and massing, while another trademark of the architect's is the parquetry floor, which adds tasteful ornamentation to accompany the decorative plasterwork. A library in one residence conveys a clubby feel with its dark wood paneling and ornamental frieze, and in another, an intricately embellished wine room features a curved storage vault to maximize access to a larger number of bottles. In this latter flat, Murray created an elliptical staircase with an iron and bronze balustrade that displays the delicacy of late-18th-century Classicism. In sum, one finds it remarkable that these hub, historically inspired apartments exist high above the streets of New York City and not just over the Connecticut border.

The Country House

Murray's exurban work spans the realm of historic design, from a massive Georgian Revival edifice to a restrained interpretation of indigenous Upstate New York rural architecture. The first is a sprawling, brick-faced estate adorned with symmetrical, front-gabled wings, an intricate sunken garden and rough-stone outbuilding that, in this architectural conceit, pre-dates the main residence. Embracing a circular drive, the house's grand presence is embellished with details such as white-washed brick, stone lintels and four matching chimneys that convincingly impart the impression that the structure is far older than it actually is.

This fascination with the supposed evolution of a house over time is evidenced on a simpler scale in a current project in Columbia County. "It's a new 'old' house, and as we developed the plans, we considered how this complex would have evolved over the decades," says Murray. "It's on 120 acres of a former farm property that did not have a house on it, and our approach included using reclaimed doors and other components, such as antique wood for the floors and ceilings, to help age the building. We gave it Dutch roots, and then added a Federal addition on one side, with a simple, later 19th-century addition to that on the opposite side, so you can observe how it changes from an 18th-century structure into a late-19th-century structure."
A hallmark of Murray’s projects is the molded, built-in cabinetry in the dressing areas and halls, all of which efficiently utilize precious Manhattan square footage.

Another facet of Murray’s work is the renovation and restoration of existing historic estates. "On an early 20th-century stone estate project, the existing house had been empty for a long time," he says. "In the 1990s, the owners removed the secondary floors, essentially converting a four-story house into a two-story house with double-height ceilings. Our client commissioned us to return it to more of its original feeling; we added an entry portico, garage, screened porch, dormers and chimney, and matching the old stone proved to be quite a challenge. We had to find identical black granite, have it quarried, and then we re-pointed the entire building, power-washed and sealed it.”

Although he is certainly passionate about Classical architecture, Murray does not limit his work solely to that style; a Hampton residence reveals a graceful Shingle Style more in keeping with its ocean environs, and occasional Tudor, Norman and other Continental influences are to be found in his work as well.

Murray lavishes equal attention on outbuildings, when so charged. For example, he created a pool and tennis pavilion that neatly combines a gentle curve with Classical motifs, and yet the raw wood finish tempers the formality of the structure. “We chose a crescent shape that would sit comfortably in relation to an existing tennis court and swimming pool. The geometry of the pavilion straddles the two structures quite successfully.” Another pool pavilion, far more formal in nature, is in the Cotswold-Tudor style with a carved limestone fireplace whose flames reflect out onto the central axis of the pool. The project was recognized in 2009 with a Palladio Award.

By establishing his firm not only as a resource for artful Classical design, but also one that can complete it in the proverbial New York minute, Murray has flourished in these challenging times and he continues to do so. “While our city versus country work ebbs and flows as to which is greater at any given moment,” says Murray, “it’s our ability to fulfill both sides of our clients’ idea of a house – both city and country – that’s been a key to our success.”
Pure and Simple

A Chester County farmstead is renovated for a wide variety of uses by future generations.

RECENT PROJECT

RENovation & Addition

PROJECT: RESIDENCE, CHESTER COUNTY, PA
ARCHITECT: ARCHER & BUCHANAN ARCHITECTURE, LTD., WEST CHESTER, PA; PETER C. ARCHER, AIA, PARTNER IN CHARGE
BUILDER: HALLER CUSTOM HOMES, WAYNE, PA; LEE HALLER

In 2006, the future of a 26-acre 18th-century Chester County, PA, farmstead hung in the balance. Comprised of four historic structures - a carriage house, a spring house, a large bank barn and a stone Colonial house - the property had not been significantly renovated since the 1930s, when renowned local architect Walter Durham worked on the Colonial house. Since then, the buildings had become obscured by thoughtless tackling on additions, and neglected to such a degree that the spring-fed pond the house overlooks was barely visible.

While West Chester, PA-based Archer & Buchanan Architecture was finishing up a renovation project at the adjacent property, rumors began to circulate that the farmstead may be sold for a dense sub-development. As a result, the clients decided to extend their property by purchasing the farmstead and restoring and renovating it for use by future generations. "They did not have a specific use for the farmstead," says Peter C. Archer, partner in charge. "But through the rears of working with them on their main house, they had developed a great trust and confidence in our firm and turned the entire project over to us, with a realistic but modest budget to restore the property and the buildings to a level that could be maintained."

The first order of business, before the buildings could be properly assessed, was to clear away decades of overgrown foliage, debris and even an old refrigerator. What remained was a true diamond in the rough: The original three-story Pennsylvania stone farmhouse, which dates from the 1720s, had a large fireplace on each floor; the land was punctuated with remarkably well preserved stone walls; and spring water flowed through a series of small ponds to a larger pond below. "It had so many wonderful attributes that had been covered over by foliage and neglect," says Archer.

The firm immediately removed all post-Durham shed additions to the main house and added two gabled dormers at the front and a long shed dormer at the rear. As the house was only one room deep, creating a full third floor was preferable to expanding outwards. "We decided to utilize..."
the existing footprint and not add onto it at all,” says Archer. “It was not a primary residence, and we were working thoughtfully but within modest means and in keeping with the history, precedents and proportions of traditional Pennsylvania farmhouses.”

Though it did not drastically alter the configuration of the rooms, the firm made their functions considerably more user-friendly. The basement level kitchen is now a den/meeting room and laundry room, and leads to the south terrace, while the first floor houses a new kitchen, as well living and dining spaces. The second floor contains two bedrooms and two bathrooms and the new third floor dormers accommodate an additional bedroom and bathroom. “We didn’t move many walls and we tried to work within the main frame of the structure,” says Archer.

Working with Winnie King and Laurie Shapley of Exton, PA-based Environments H.C., the firm kept the interior decor simple and low-key. Again, there was much to work with—the floors had been replaced during the last major addition project and were in great shape, and a beautiful wood end wall in the living room was left in place and restored. “We also restored the fireplaces and some original hardware on the fireplaces and on the two main doors,” says Archer. “But we didn’t add a whole lot of additional detail because we wanted to keep it very subtle and simple, as the farmer would have done in the early days.”

Before all new electrical, mechanical and plumbing systems were added, the firm took the basement structure “down to the bone.” Years of water damage had rotted the wood flooring and compromised the framing. However, it wasn’t all bad news, according to Archer. “A portion of the lower level was covered in a brick floor,” he says. “Once we cleaned it up, it was in great shape. In the areas that were wood on top of dirt, we replaced the floor structure and at the same time dug crawl space underneath to separate the wood from the earth and prevent future issues.”

Though the initial intention was to restore the original windows, the firm decided after much research that they were beyond repair and ultimately, not original to the house. After investigating custom window options, Archer decided on manufactured windows by Pella, with custom sizes for each opening. Replacement was fairly straightforward in the original stone section, where the original sizes were retained. However, the firm took the opportunity to make the wood section appear more uniform.
by replacing a large modern picture window in the center with a double-hung window in proportion with the house.

In addition to the house, the firm also worked on the farmstead's outbuilding structures. Of the three, the spring house was in the worst state of disrepair. ("The whole thing was rotting away," says Archer.) Before the firm could redirect the spring, the floor and roof structure had to be rebuilt. "We brought back the water," says Archer. "It flows at about 15-20 water gallons a minute, so there is a nice, constant flow of water that runs from the spring house down to the main house."

After being divided with plywood panels and used as a shop, the refurbished ca. 1820 horse barn is back to its original incarnation—the owners lease the stalls and it is a valuable component of the farm. And the carriage house, which dates from the same time period, is now a garage; the firm replaced portions of the timber roof, re-pointed the stone walls and installed new carriage doors.

Working with Jonathan Alderson Landscape Architects of Wayne, PA, Archer & Buchanan repaired and restored the hardscaping and landscaping. New walking and horse trails provide a 600-yard walkable shortcut from the clients' main residence to the farmstead, as opposed to a half-mile drive on the main road. "The land steps down from the barn in several tiers," says Archer. "After we removed piles of debris, stones, fallen trees etc. — 'grubbing the site' as we call it — we blended everything to create a very natural look. The vision was a 'gentleman's farm.'"

While the clients had no specific plan for the farmstead, it is in almost constant use today and will likely house in-laws in the future. "The clients have a big family, with lots of brothers, sisters, grandchildren and nephews," says Archer. "So this is the place everybody goes for birthday parties and holiday gatherings." — Lynne Lavelle

The refurnished ca. 1820 barn houses horses once again. Photo: © Jon Cone 2008

The revitalized buildings and site are now in almost constant use as a horse farm and family gathering place. Photo: © Jon Cone 2008
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Saltbox for a New Century

Reviving a Colonial-era house for modern living involves more than putting back missing pieces.

S

hould you think restoring a Victorian house or 1910s bungalow in the 1970s had its learning curves, consider what it's like to resurrect an 18th-century house in the 21st century. While many of the old hurdles, like finding period-design hardware and paint colors, have gotten easier, working on a 300-year-old timber frame in the digital age brings another bag of challenges—not the least of which is how to thoughtfully blend pre-industrial craftsmanship and materials with modern sustainable building practices and energy-efﬁciency needs.

Fortunately, that's just the intersection where the folks at Madison, CT-based Gulick & Spradlin like to operate. Firm principal Peter Gulick, designer/contractor for the restoration of the 1720 David Field house in Madison—a project that earned an award of merit from the Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation—recently shared some of the company's insights about very early houses and just how far building can come back after centuries of use and abuse.

Given the illustrious history of the Field house, it's hard to believe that there was a time when its future didn't look very rosy. Built by David Field, a great-grandson of one of the original settlers of Hartford, CT, the building has housed many famous Field descendants, from Timothy Field, who was a captain during the Revolutionary War, to Cyrus W. Field—the intrepid entrepreneur who laid the first successful transatlantic cable in 1858—to Stephen Field, an associate justice of the U.S. Supreme Court. The house was already a local landmark in the 1930s when the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) documented it in a set of 10 measured drawings.

By the early 2000s, however, the house had also made the ranks of the "most endangered" list of the Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation. Long out of the hands of the Field family, it sat empty for four or five years and fell prey to vandals who, says Gulick, "robbed it of a lot of the really nice features—some of the paneling, all of the best floorboards and many old doors." Then, to add insult to injury, a developer bought the Field House and planned to subdivide the 10-acre site into four lots—that is, if he could deal with the house. "Back then, it was boom time around here, with lots selling for $300,000, and the Field House sat on one of the proposed lots," says Gulick. "Being a volunteer fireman, I heard through the grapevine that the developer offered the house to the local fire department for training if they would burn it down."

The Field House is a prime example of a Saltbox—a New England vernacular building type that typically begins as a two-over-two. The new roof was ﬁnished with shingles made from recycled materials by Enviroshake.
Needless to say the fire department refused, leaving the developer's plans dead in the water as the real-estate market plateaued. Learning that the Field House and the undivided property might be available, Gulick contacted John and Diana Herzog, with whom he had worked on an earlier project. They acquired the property in 2007 and began the work of restoring the house.

The Field House is a textbook example of a Saltbox, a vernacular building form closely tied to New England. "In this area," says Gulick, "a Saltbox typically begins as what's called a two-over-two — two rooms on the ground floor with two above. At a later date, the loan-to-gets added on the back — probably in the late-1700s in the case of the Field House."

Such characteristic growth spurts represent not only the expanding volumes of old houses, but their shifting uses, and one phase of the Field House rehabilitation was to bring its living space more in line with modern lifestyles. "It needed to be a little larger for a kitchen that would meet today's standards," says Gulick. "so we removed the rotting single-story wing that was on the back and put up a gambrel-roofed addition." Flowing from the addition is a new dormer in the existing shed roof that adds usable space over the Saltbox slope. Sited on the back of the building, the addition neither tampers with nor affects the primary façade, preserving the original floor plan as all of the original rooms in the front of the house. "The addition helps the second floor by creating a bedroom and, in the kitchen eating area, by extending the keeping room and making it larger," says Gulick. "It's really just the latest in a series of additions; beyond this, the rest of the house is pretty much the way it was in 1720, except for new windows, insulation and other upgrades."

When it came to the vandalized historic interior spaces, the HABS drawings offered valuable evidence — both of what the house could look like and what was gone without a trace. "In one room they apparently had a corner cupboard," says Gulick, "and in the 1930s the fireplace actually had an arch to it, but it had all been redone in a Colonial Revival makeover — probably in the 1950s." With original features so scarce, it wasn't possible to bring the house back to its exact original condition, but there were some lucky finds. The upper parlor, which was a kind of bedroom, had been divided into two rooms after the Colonial era, and everything had been lathed-and-plastered over. Once we pulled off the lath and plaster, though, we found the original raised paneling underneath," says Gulick. Though Gulick & Spradlin had to reproduce the panels to the left of the fireplace, the panels to the right and on two other walls were still in great condition.

Bathrooms were another matter. "I don't know how other people wrestle with putting modern conveniences in an 18th-century house," says Gulick, "but my philosophy on designing bathrooms is that they should look like 19th-century bathrooms — the timeframe they first appeared in Colonial houses. Houses evolve, and part of our contribution is balancing the practical with the original, making conveniences efficient, but not over-modernized."

But that is nothing new for Gulick's partner John Spradlin. When they joined forces in 2001, Gulick had already been a building facilities manager, as well as retailer and restorer of a 17th-century house that he still owns. John Spradlin had a contracting business. Since then the company, which rounds out at a crew of five to six people with crew, has specialized in the renovation and restoration of antique houses and barns. With Spradlin on site and Gulick as project manager in charge of design and marketing, they also do period additions to 20th-century houses.

When asked if working on an 18th-century building presents any specific challenges, particularly when the construction is a medieval technology like timber framing, Gulick has a surprising answer. "Timber frame houses are wonderful," he says. "They're actually less of a challenge to restore than stick-built houses, because you can take down interior walls and you don't risk the building falling down." Gulick & Spradlin's appreciation of pre-industrial craftsmanship also extends to the finishes. "We love to expose beams and chimney masonry; it shows how people built the house and the effort they put into it," says Gulick. "When we found the fireplace in this house it was closed up behind a wall and some closets. The company enjoys building their own kitchen cabinets too, especially for vintage building projects."
Where possible, the firm left beams exposed to show the craftsmanship of the house; the kitchen includes a granite and hickory island and white-oak countertops.

Since all the good sash were stolen from the Field house, all the windows had to be replaced, which presented the opportunity for using low-e, gas-filled pane units. Modern building practice, however, would also throw them a curve. "At the time, code required that the second floor have an egress window — large enough for an emergency entrance or exit — but there were no such windows on the market in the right size as double hungs," Gulick remembers. Fortunately the window manufacturer (Marvin Windows and Doors) was able to make casements that look just like sash windows from the outside, filling the requirement. "Now, if you can take out both sashes without tools you don't have to have an egress window."

"We feel pretty strongly about 'green building,' and probably our biggest challenge was integrating sustainable building products and concepts into the house in a sensitive way," says Gulick. In this project, technology helped, especially when it came to retrofitting services in tight spaces. The Field House takes advantage of a small duct, high velocity heating/cooling system from Unico System fired by a wall-hung, high-efficiency heating plant from Germany. In the same way, instead of installing conventional copper or plastic pipe, the house is plumbed with flexible PEX tubing using the "home-run" system that is more efficient to run in confined and awkward wall spaces. On the sustainable materials side, the flooring is reclaimed from salvaged timbers, and the clapboards are all new Eastern white pine — historically appropriate as well as locally produced in New England. "Using cedar that travels all the way from British Columbia is not green building to my mind," says Gulick. "I would love to go further in this direction. For example, on our last project, the whole back roof faced due south — technically perfect for solar panels, but could you put solar panels on a 1730s house?" Perhaps checking in on what Gulick & Spradlin is doing in a year or two will provide the answer. — Gordon Bock


WEB ONLY: For additional photographs of this project, go to www.period-homes.com/extras/Nov09Field.htm

The dining and living rooms are separated by the front stair and foyer.

Completed in 2008, the restoration of the Field House won an award of merit from the Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation. Photo: Pete Gulick
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Return to Form

A Frank Lloyd Wright design is revived in Minneapolis.

Steve Sikora, along with his wife Lynette, runs a graphic design firm in Minneapolis, MN, called Design Guys. Until about seven years ago, Sikora had no idea that a 1933 Frank Lloyd Wright design—the Willey House—stood a few miles from the company’s downtown office. Today, after years of neglect and decline, the Willey House has been completely restored—thanks to a meticulous and often painstaking five-and-a-half-year process orchestrated by the Sikoras.

"I heard about it through my stepson, who had been to an open house,” says Sikora. "He said, 'You've got to see this place—it's unbelievable.' I would ride my bike past periodically, thinking that someone was living there. After about a year, I realized that nothing significant ever changed and there was never a car there. It turns out that I was one of the few people in the Twin Cities who didn't know the house had been abandoned for seven or eight years.

"It was an amazing looking ruin—we completely fell in love with it. As we began the work, we started realizing that there was an immense public ownership of the building. People would literally not just walk up to the door, but walk into the house. You'd come over and people would be picnicking in the yard and you'd say, 'What are you doing?' and they'd say, 'It's okay, we do this all the time.'"

Top: The low-slung, 1,350-sq.ft. Malcolm E. Willey House in Minneapolis, MN, was designed by Frank Lloyd Wright and completed in 1934. After years of neglect and decline, it recently underwent a five-and-a-half year restoration; the ubiquitous brickwork required cleaning, grinding and complete tuck-pointing. All photos: Steve Sikora

Below: While the Willey House doesn't fit distinctly into Wright's Prairie Style or Usonian period, it is often described as a forebear of the Usonian homes of the late 1930s. The flexible main living space, for instance, includes both the living room and dining room and provided the original owners with ample entertaining space.
While such avid public interest is common to Wright designs, the Willey House remains relatively obscure—certainly as compared to, say, the earlier Westcott House, Martin House and Robie House and to the celebrated later works, including Fallingwater and Wingspread, and Usonian designs such as the Rosenbaum House.

The low-slung, brick, 1,350-sq.ft. Willey House was designed for Nancy and Malcolm Willey, the latter an administrator at the nearby University of Minnesota. At the time the Willeys commissioned Wright, the architect was in dire need of work; as the stock market crash of 1929 had put an end to many large projects. "He accepted the commission and the Willeys were delighted," says Sikora. "After visiting Taliesin, they realized that he had just started this school—the Taliesin Fellowship—and there was virtually no work on the drawing board except their house. You get the sense that there was a lot of pent-up energy."

"Scholars generally place Wright's work into vast periods—the Prairie years and Usonia," says Sikora. "This house is right on the cusp of Usonia—in a lot of ways it's a template for that. But it's not necessarily a simple house; it doesn't have the factory-built parts, the offsite-built parts or the sandwich walls. It's all brick construction, and it's pretty elaborate."

There were two designs for the Willey House. Wright was given a budget of $8,000-$10,000, and Nancy Willey (who drove the process) spent a year trying to get the initial two-story design built. Sikora estimates that a similar project in 1934 cost around $2,400.

"The best price she could get on that house, even during the Depression, was $20,000," says Sikora. "In frustration, she finally said, 'I want an $8,000-$10,000 house for $8,000-$10,000. Can I have it?' Wright responded, 'We'll redesign. It's the only way.'"

In December 1933, Wright designed the house that exists today, giving the Willeys exactly what they wanted. Construction was completed just before Thanksgiving in 1934. "They didn't intend to have children and they were a university couple, so he knew that they were going to be entertaining," says Sikora. "The main living space is perfect for that. It's the only way."
The study today includes integrated bookshelves, a built-in desk, filing drawers and a cantilevered sleeping couch that, in a cost-saving measure, were never completed to Wright's original design.

Malcolm Willey lived in the house until 1963, when he retired from the University of Minnesota. It was then sold to another university faculty member, who lived there until 1972. The third owner lived in the house briefly, then rented it out to architecture students for a period before it eventually fell into disrepair. Various restoration attempts over the years lacked either funding or the necessary vision.

"At the time we acquired it, all of the utilities had been shut down and more than half of the radiators were broken because water had been left in the system," says Sikora. "So we really started from ground zero." To ensure an accurate restoration, the Sikoras utilized a variety of primary sources, including 54 drawings of the Willey House held at the Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation in Scottsdale, AZ, the correspondence between Nancy Willey and Wright held at the University of Minnesota and the Getty Research Institute in Los Angeles; and Nancy Willey's original photo album, which contained vintage photos.

"After sealing up the outer envelope and getting the heat and lights back on, we realized that, with anything we did from that point on, we needed to make a decision – either take a band-aid approach or fix the root cause," says Sikora. "For example, it was very evident that leaks and roofing problems had been issues for decades – in some cases, they were problems that had been built into the house. We always chose to fix things at the level of the root cause.

"We did it to the best of our abilities and to the letter of what Wright intended. But even in that regard, we were looking at three different factors: the design intention – it's very clear, if you read the correspondence and look at the plans, what the house was supposed to be; what was actually built – sometimes decisions were made on the part of the builder or Nancy Willey because there was something that wasn't entirely practical; and the longevity of the house – if we were going to be the stewards of the place, we wanted to ensure at least another 70-100 years for the house by fixing things the right way."

The first three years of the restoration focused on the south side of the house, where skylights above a bank of French doors had been leaking. Because everything was woven together so tightly – the sheet metal of the skylights runs up the roof and is tied into the sheet metal of the trellis – fixing the skylights involved fixing the roof and the trellis. The trellis, which was slumping about three-and-a-half inches, was bolstered with W-shaped steel supports. In the final two years of the project, the kitchen was restored and unfinished elements in the bedrooms and study were completed.

Sourcing materials for the restoration proved a challenge. "The brick of the Willey House came from two different sources," says Sikora. "The first is a sand mold brick from Menomonie, WI, and the second is a shale brick with exactly the same firing pattern, but a glossy surface, that comes from Chaska, MN. We were able to find some of the Menomonie brick, but we could not find the Chaska brick anywhere, so we enlisted a brick maker in Tennessee [Stone Art, Inc., of Church Hill, TN], who was able to emulate the brick." All of the wood in the house is red Tidewater cypress, which was last commercially available in the 1950s; for the restoration, the wood was salvaged from swamps and rivers in Florida. Other products and materials in the house include a high-velocity A/C system from Unico and spray foam insulation from Iyneone.

The five-and-a-half year restoration was completed in 2007, and Sikora says the reaction has been overwhelmingly favorable. "People really love it," he says. "It's very rare for someone not to respond positively to the house. Everyone has an opinion of Wright, but the opinions usually seem to be dispelled in this case. It's a much simpler house than some of the really extravagant Prairie houses, and it's an interesting model for housing today – in many quarters, we talk about houses being a little more human-scaled, and more practical and sustainable." – Will Holloway
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Set in Stone

Vicente-Burin Architects doubles the footprint of a Frazier Forman Peters-designed residence while retaining its signature stone cottage style.

During the Great Depression, self-taught architect Frazier Forman Peters designed a home for his family of nine in Westport, CT. Inspired by a trip to Europe, Peters favored stone construction – and used stones found on his own property. He believed that houses shouldn’t be overly large and that each room should have a unique character, resulting in strong focal points like cathedral ceilings and large masonry fireplaces. Based on this approach, Peters carved out a career designing stone houses similar to his own in Connecticut.

In 2005, having grown tired of the limited interior space of their Peters-designed home in Darien, Kevin and Heidi Naughton approached Fairfield, CT-based Vicente-Burin Architects to renovate and expand while maintaining the traditional charm of the stonework. The Naughtons wanted to double the size of the house and create both formal rooms for entertaining and casual family living spaces. “The house had an old garage that was converted into a family room and was half a flight down,” says Paulo C. Vicente, partner at Vicente-Burin Architects. “The clients had three kids and all their toys would just collect in the family room; they really wanted to get that out of the way. They also wanted a nicer master suite and to gain another bedroom.”

The structural foundation of the house was still in good shape, so Vicente concentrated on removing a 1960s garage that extended from the family room to make way for new additions. “The previous owner had done a garage addition that really wasn’t in keeping with the house, and the clients wanted to change that,” says Vicente. “We came up with a plan to move the kitchen space down to where the

The kitchen, breakfast room and family room were relocated to the existing family room. Floor plans courtesy of Vicente-Burin Architects.

Top: Vicente-Burin Architects of Fairfield, CT, designed the renovation of, and new additions to, a 1980s Dutch Colonial style home in Darien. The new additions’ stone walls were meticulously replicated, as the home was designed by renowned stone-cottage architect Frazier Forman Peters.

Photo: Dan Lenore
The existing 1960s garage addition (far right) was unsympathetic to the original design and was demolished for new additions that doubled the interior space. Photo courtesy of Francis Ribeiro Architects

family room was and to add a new family room and garage."

To maintain the appearance of a small cottage, the new family room was situated at the rear of the house. The continuation of stone walls on the street-facing elevation was also important to preserving the home's style.

"We used traditional stud-framed walls and stone veneers, except we laid the stones with very widely spaced grout joints to replicate the great work of the original stone veneer wall," says Vicente. "We went through great pains to replicate the original stonework."

Locating the actual stones wasn't difficult, since Peters had used local varieties. "It had a lot of pink hues," says Vicente. "By chance, there was a road cut for highway work nearby and we were able to get some similar stones to use on the site."

The living room, screened porch and studio on the first floor of the original house were left mostly intact, while the dining room was expanded via the removal of a small adjacent bedroom. "The dining room was small and had a couple of windows in the front," says Vicente. "By taking out the bedroom at the back, we opened it up and got another exposure to the back yard. We also added double French doors and a balcony -- the sense of space is better in there because of that exposure."

Vicente gave the dining room its unique character by designing a coffered ceiling using cerused quartersawn oak beams and stucco inset panels that tie in with the stucco walls.

Extensive fenestration in the family-room addition provides ample natural light. Photo: Dan Lenore

Each newly renovated room on the first floor has a unique ceiling design to give the spaces individual character; the dining room features a coffered ceiling of cerused quartersawn oak beams. Photo: Robert Grant

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Supplier of authentic antique brick pavers, granite cobblestones, cinder & common brick: custom matching; large quantities; special shapes; hand-molded & face brick; nationwide shipping.
Key in No. 191

This Victorian cast-iron gate was fabricated by Heritage Cast Iron.
Herwig Lighting
800-643-9523; Fax: 479-968-6422
www.herwig.com
Russellville, AR 72811
Custom manufacturer of handcrafted interior & exterior lighting fixtures & more: cast-aluminum benches, bollards, fences, gates, plaques, signage, street clocks, posts to 14 ft. & columns; since 1908.
Key in No. 9130

Historical Arts & Casting, Inc.
800-225-1414; Fax: 801-280-2493
www.historicalarts.com
West Jordan, UT 84082
Designer & custom fabricator of ornamental metalwork: benches, bollards, balustrades, lighting, gates, fences, grilles, doors, windows, skylights, finials & more; cast iron, bronze, aluminum & wrought iron/steel; many styles; restoration services.
Key in No. 1200

Hugh Lofting Timber Framing, Inc.
610-444-5382; Fax: 610-444-2371
www.hughloftingtimberframe.com
West Grove, PA 19390
Designer & manufacturer of timber frames: private homes, additions, barns, studios, arbors & more; mortise & tenon joinery; many wood species.
Key in No. 663

James Peters & Son, Inc.
215-739-9500; Fax: 215-739-9779
www.jamepetersandson.com
Philadelphia, PA 19122
Manufacturer of period-style hardware: for exterior shutters, doors, windows, gates, garages & barns; new reproduction hardware; wrought steel with black finish & wrought iron.
Key in No. 1240

Kayne & Son Custom Hardware
828-667-8868; Fax: 828-665-8303
www.customforgedhardware.com
Candler, NC 28715
Custom fabricator of door, barn, garage, gate, furniture, cabinet, shutter & window hardware: hand-forged steel, copper & bronze or cast bronze; repair, restoration & reproduction work; fireplace equipment; catalog $5.
Call for more information.

New Concept Louvers Inc.
801-489-0614; Fax: 801-489-0606
www.newconceptlouvers.com
Springville, UT 84663
Manufacturer of virtually maintenance-free, coated aluminum & copper cupolas & louvers in stock & custom shapes & sizes: weathervanes, finials, flashings, gutter chains, leader heads, mailboxes, address plaques, dormer vents, chimney caps & door wraps.
Key in No. 1264

Schwartz's Forge & Metalworks
315-841-4477; Fax: 315-841-4694
www.schwartzsforge.com
Debakey, NY 13328
Custom fabricator of architectural metalwork: straight, spiral & curved stairs, doors, railings, newel posts, lighting, gates, fences, grilles & fountains; forged bronze, monel steel & stainless steel; historical restoration.
Key in No. 1667

Schwartz's forge & Metalworks created this wrought-iron fountain and gate combination.

Wiemann Metalcraft
918-592-1700; Fax: 918-592-2385
www.wiemannmetalcraft.com
Tulsa, OK 74104
Designer, fabricator, finisher & installer of custom ornamental metalwork: railings, fencing, gates, columns, balustrades, lighting, grilles, doors & more; cast & wrought metal alloys, finishes & architectural styles; since 1940.
Key in No. 1223

The 14-in. dia cast-aluminum exterior thermometer/clock with a pine-cone finial is available from Signature Hardware.

Signature Hardware
866-855-2284; Fax: 800-682-6826
www.signaturehardware.com
Erlanger, KY 41017
Direct distributor of traditional cast-iron & acrylic: kitchen & bath items; bathtubs, porcelain sinks, brass faucets, shower rods & rings; mailboxes; floor registers & air returns; decorative door & window hardware; electric & gas lighting.
Key in No. 576

BuildingPort.com
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Introducing BuildingPort.com
BuildingPort.com is the latest addition to Restore Media's robust network of Web sites serving people in the fields of building design and construction (Traditional-Building.com, Period-Homes.com and tradwebdirectory.com).

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and residential design and construction, everything from feature articles to product reviews to links to relevant Web sites.
- It has on-point search tools that deliver targeted results to visitors who are looking for the first time around.
- It has 26 categories of information and hundreds of sub-categories, all of which make it easier to match search terms to usable content on the site.
- It contains information on more than 5,000 suppliers of building products, materials, and services.
You'll find what you need. Come see for yourself. www.buildingport.com

This wrought-iron and copper repoussé flower box was fabricated by Wiemann Metalcraft.
Among the features:

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- 162 online product brochures
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Key in no. 469
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800-442-4766; Fax: 570-296-4766
www.architecturaliron.com
Mifflord, PA 18337
Manufacturer of custom castings: window weights, registers, grilles, fences, stairs, sculpture, lighting, benches, arbors, pergolas, creating, weather vanes & finials; entryways & metal doors; iron & steel.
Key in No. 1085

Architectural Products by Outwater, LLC
800-835-4400; Fax: 800-835-4403
www.outwater.com
Rogers, NJ 07603
Manufacturer of 65,000+ decorative building products: architectural moldings & millwork, columns & capitals, wrought-iron components, balustrading, door & shutter hardware, lighting, ceiling tile, furniture & cabinet components, carvings, arbors & more.
Key in No. 508

Low-voltage under-cabinet lights from Architectural Products by Outwater are available in several finishes.

Authentic Designs
800-844-9416; Fax: 802-394-2422
www.authenticdesigns.com
West Rupert, VT 05776
Manufacturer of Early American & Colonial lighting fixtures: brass, copper, terne metal & Vermont maple; interior & exterior mountings; CUL/UL-listed for wet & damp locations; lanterns, sconces, table lamps, chandeliers & pendants; custom work available.
Key in No. 60

Coppersmythe, Josiah R.
508-432-8590; Fax: 508-432-8587
www.coppersmythe.com
Harwich, MA 02645
Manufacturer of handcrafted lighting: sconces, chandeliers & lanterns; Turn of the Century, Colonial & Arts & Crafts styles; custom. Call for more information.

Bathroom Machineries, DEA
209-728-2031; Fax: 209-728-2320
www.deabath.com
Murphys, CA 95247
Supplier of Early American & Victorian bathroom fixtures & accessories: antique & reproduction bathroom fixtures; tubs, high-tank toilets, pedestal sinks, medicine cabinets, mirrors & more; antique lighting. Call for more information.

Bevolo Gas & Electric Lights
504-522-9485; Fax: 504-522-5563
www.bevolo.com
New Orleans, LA 70130
Fabricator of hand-riveted, antique-copper propane, electric & natural-gas fixtures; Colonial, Victorian, Turn of the Century & Mediterranean styles; restoration. Key in No. 166

Bevolo Gas & Electric Lights fabricated this electric Coach House lantern with a custom Tudor scroll bracket.

Crenshaw Lighting
540-745-3900; Fax: 540-745-3911
www.crenshawlighting.com
Floyd, VA 24091
Manufacturer of custom lighting fixtures in all styles: design services; historic restoration & reproduction; on-site services. Key in No. 1128

This Classical fixture from Crenshaw Lighting has a brass frame finished with an antique bronze patina.

Deep Landing Workshop
877-778-4042; Fax: 410-778-4070
www.deeplandingworkshop.com
Chester, MD 21619
Designer & manufacturer of interior & exterior lighting fixtures: stylized reproductions rooted in the Colonial style. Key in No. 109

This lead-coated-copper hanging lantern, model #L-1231 from Deep Landing Workshop, is 10% in. wide and 21 in. tall.

This traditionally styled chandelier was fabricated by Authentic Designs.
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Larmouth, ME 04096
Manufacturer of handcrafted brass, copper & pewter lighting: reproductions of 18th- & early-19th-century fixtures; brackets, wall mounts, ceiling lights, chandeliers & post lights; rain protection, concealed wiring & more.
Key in No. 1211

Herwig Lighting
800-642-9523; fax: 479-968-6422
www.herwig.com
Russellville, AR 72801
Custom manufacturer of handcrafted interior & exterior lighting fixtures & more: cast-aluminum benches, bollards, fountains, gates, plaques, signage, street clocks, posts to 14 ft. & columns; since 1908.
Key in No. 9130

Historical Arts & Casting, Inc.
800-225-1414; Fax: 801-280-2493
www.historicalarts.com
West Jordan, UT 84088
Designer & custom fabricator of ornamental metalwork: benches, columns, balustrades, lighting, gazebos, fencing, grilles, doors, windows, skylights, finials & more; cast iron, bronze, aluminum & wrought iron/steel; many styles; restoration services.
Key in No. 1210

House of Antique Hardware
888-265-1033; Fax: 503-233-1312
www.houseofantiquehardware.com
Portland, OR 97222
Supplier of door, window, cabinet, furniture, electrical & bath hardware: original antique & vintage reproductions; Federal, Victorian & Arts & Crafts styles; hardware specialists available to assist with renovation projects.
Key in No. 139

Lantern Masters, Inc.
818-706-1990; Fax: 818-706-1988
www.lanternmasters.com
Westlake Village, CA 91362
Custom designer & fabricator of lighting: chandeliers, lanterns, wall sconces & pendants; traditional, Tudor, French, Tuscan, Asian, Provencal & other styles; antique reproduction; gas lighting.
Key in No. 267

Lighting & Electrical
44-020-77 4-0202; Fax: 44-020-7738-9224
www.forbessandlomax.com
London, U.K. SW11 1TH
Manufacturer, supplier & retailer of authentic period electrical accessories: switches, dimmers & outlets; nickel, antique bronze, stainless steel, unlacquered brass & 'invisible'; historic reproductions.
Key in No. 1663

The Invisible Lightswitch from Forbes & Lomax has an acrylic plate and can be supplied with toggle switches or rotary or push-button dimmers.

The DeGunnari wall fixture is available from Lantern Masters.

The Chelsea is one of many fixtures available from Rejuvenation.

Remains Lighting
212-675-8051; Fax: 212-675-8052
www.remains.com
New York, NY 10001
Supplier of antique lighting: E.F. Caldwell & Co., Sterling Bronze Co. & Bradley & Hubbard; new wall & ceiling fixtures; chandeliers, lanterns, sconces & table & floor lamps; Jacobean through Art Moderne period lighting; UL certified.
Key in No. 1342

This 12-arm chandelier is available from Remains Lighting.

Historical Arts & Casting fabricated these wall-mounted lighting fixtures.

Herwig Lighting designed and manufactured this cast-metal light fixture.
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GREENBUILD 2009, November 11-13, 2009. The 2009 annual Greenbuild International Conference and Expo will be held in Phoenix, AZ. The three-day show is the world’s largest event dedicated to green building and will feature LEED workshops, tours of the host city’s green buildings and networking opportunities. For more information, visit www.greenbuildexpo.org.

AMERICAN CLAY HANDS-ON PLASTER WORKSHOP, November 18-20, 2009. American Clay, manufacturer of award-winning and eco-friendly interior wall plasters, will conduct a three-day hands-on plaster workshop in its manufacturing facility in Albuquerque, NM. The workshop will focus on basic to advanced repair techniques and experimentation on clay-plaster coloring. For more information on this and other workshops, visit www.americanclay.com/workshops/NM.html.

ICA&CA GRACIE MANSION TEA & TOUR, November 19, 2009. Interior designer and author Jamie Drake will lead a walking tour through New York City’s Gracie Mansion. The tour will end with a tea service in the grand ballroom, which is now used for ceremonial functions after several major restorations. For more information on this and other events, visit www.classicist.org.

PALLADIO AWARDS DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS, November 20, 2009. The ninth annual Palladio Awards program, honoring excellence in traditional architecture, is sponsored by Traditional Building and Period Homes magazines and the Traditional Building Exhibition and Conference. For more information, go to www.palladiowards.com.

"IRRISISTIBLE ITALY" LECTURE, December 14, 2009. Beaux Arts Alliance president David Garrard Lowe will give an illustrated lecture on the allure Italy had for Englishmen and Americans such as Inigo Jones, Lord Byron, Henry James, John Ruskin and John Singer Sargent. For information on this and other events, go to www.beauxarts.org or call 212-639-9129.

INTERNATIONAL BUILDERS’ SHOW, January 19-22, 2010. The annual International Builders’ Show will be held at the Las Vegas Convention Center in Las Vegas, NV. The event will feature over 175 education sessions and the exhibit floor will showcase the latest industry products. Visit www.buildersshow.com for more information.

CONCRETE DÉCOR SHOW & DECORATIVE CONCRETE SPRING TRAINING, March 16-19, 2010. The Concrete Décor Show & Decorative Concrete Spring Training will be held in Phoenix, AZ. This event will include seminars for architects, designers and builders and focus on creative alternatives using decorative concrete. Presentations will include case studies of LEED-credited projects. Many seminars and workshops offer AIA CEUs. For more information, visit www.concretedecorshow.com.

RESIDENTIAL DESIGN & CONSTRUCTION CONVENTION & TRADESHOW, April 14-15, 2010. The Boston Society of Architects will host its annual Residential Design and Construction convention and trade show at the Seaport World Trade Center in Boston, MA. The event offers workshops and seminars for homeowners and professionals, and a chance to earn AIA/CES learning units. For more information, go to www.rdcboston.com.

NATIONAL BUILDING MUSEUM PROGRAMS & EXHIBITS. The National Building Museum in Washington, DC, offers a series of exhibits and programs throughout the year on topics dealing with architectural design and building. Current exhibitions include "Cityscapes Revealed: Highlights from the Collection," a study of the building materials, architectural styles and construction practices that defined urban America from the late-19th through the mid-20th centuries. The building itself is worth the visit, and 45-minute walk-in tours are offered daily. For details on current programs and a tour schedule, go to www.nbm.org.

PRESERVATION EDUCATION PROGRAMS. Throughout the year, the Preservation Education Institute, a program of Vermont-based Historic-WindSOR, offers workshops on various preservation skills, technologies and practices for building and design professionals, property owners and others. This year, courses include wood carving, plaster repair, window repair and timber-frame evaluation and repair. For a complete listing of current programs, go to www.preservationworks.org or contact Judy Hayward at 802-674-6752.

WOOD-CARVING WORKSHOPS. Classically trained master wood-carver Dimitrios Klitas conducts classes at his studio in Hampden, MA, for novices as well as professionals looking to take their skills to the highest level. Classes are available for both group and individual instruction. For more details, go to www.klitas.com or call 413-566-5301.

WORKSHOPS ON HISTORICAL LIME MORTARS. A comprehensive two-day course details the hows and why’s of using lime puts mortars for re-pointing historic masonry. The workshop combines lectures and laboratory work with hands-on lime slaking and re-pointing all different types of historic masonry walls. For course schedules and registration details, call 773-286-2100 or go to www.usheritage.com/events.htm.
Roofing & Roof Specialties

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Architectural Iron Co.
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www.architecturaliron.com
Mifflin, PA 17827
Manufacturer of custom castings: window weights, registers, grilles, fences, stairs, sculpture, lighting, benches, arbors, pergolas, cresting, weather vanes & finials; entryways & metal doors; iron & steel.
Key in No. 3085

Bear Creek Lumber
800-597-7191; Fax: 509-997-2040
www.bearcreeklumber.com
Windrop, WA 98862
Supplier of wood flooring, paneling, roofing, fencing, new & recycled timbers & decking: hand split, machine-cut & fancy-cut butt fire- & rot retardant-treated shakes & shingles; quartersawn clapboard & siding; post & beam.
Key in No. 521

Fire-treated western red cedar roof shanks from Bear Creek Lumber were installed on this roof.

GAF Materials Corp.
973-628-3000; Fax: 973-628-3865
www.gaf.com
Wayne, NJ 07470
Manufacturer of roofing: Timberline fiberglass asphalt shingle with wood look; SlateLine imitation slate shingles; Country Mansion shingles with natural stone or slate look; metal roofing; stone veneer.
Key in No. 1178 for Grand Slate; 1179 for Country Estates; 1181 for Country Mansion; 1115 for Camelot; 9276 for SlateLine

GAF supplied Camelot Premium Shingles on Oldie Power for the roof of this house.

Haddonstone (USA), Ltd.
719-948-4554; Fax: 719-948-4285
www.haddonstone.com
Pueblo, CO 81001
U.S. & British-based manufacturer of landscape ornament & architectural cast stonework: mantels, fountains, gazebos, planters, balustrades, sculpture, columns, capitals, porticos, cornices, weather vanes, molding, trim, molded panels & more; custom components.
Key in No. 4620

Haddonstone (USA), Ltd.
This 4x7-ft. cupola with PVC-coated aluminum cladding was restored entirely by New Concept Louvers.

Historical Arts & Casting, Inc.
800-225-1414; Fax: 803-280-2493
www.historicalarts.com
West Jordan, UT 84088
Designer & custom fabricator of ornamental metal work: benches, columns, balustrades, lighting, gazebos, fences, grilles, doors, windows, skylights, finials & more; cast iron, bronze, aluminum & wrought iron/steel; many styles; restoration services.
Key in No. 1210

Historical Arts & Casting, Inc.
This copper scroll window dormer was handcrafted by FJM Copper.

New Concept Louvers Inc.
801-489-0614; Fax: 801-489-0606
www.newconceptlouvers.com
Springville, UT 84663
Manufacturer of virtually maintenance-free, coated aluminum & copper cupolas & louvers in stock & custom shapes & sizes: weather vanes, finials, flashings, gutter chains, leader heads, mailboxes, address plaques, dormer vents, chimney caps & door wraps.
Key in No. 1264

NIKO Contracting Co., Inc.
412-687-1517; Fax: 412-687-7969
www.newconceptlouvers.com
Pittsburgh, PA 15213
Nationwide contractor, fabricator & installer of architectural sheet metal & roofing: slate, tile, metal & other roofing; ornamental ceilings, cresting, finials, cornices, cupolas, domes, steeples & snowguards.
Key in No. 8000

NIKO Contracting created this 37-in.-tall copper cupola, available with or without a weathervane.

Provinces de France, LLC
210-826-9292; Fax: 210-826-5007
www.provincesdefrance.net
San Antonio, TX 78209
Direct importer of French antique clay roof tile: from southern France; antique fireplaces; fountains.

Renaissance Conservatories
800-882-4657; Fax: 717-661-7727
www.renaissanceconservatories.com
Leola, PA 17540
Custom fabricator & installer of traditional conservatories, saunas, greenhouses, skylights, roof lanterns, garden houses, pool enclosures & garden windows: handcrafted mahogany & cedar components.
Key in No. 378

Renaissance Conservatories custom fabricates both skylights and conservatories.
Tanglewood Conservatories provided the skylights used in this pool enclosure.

Tanglewood Conservatories
410-479-4700; Fax: 410-479-4797
www.tanglewoodconservatories.com
Danvers, MA 01923
Designer, manufacturer & installer of traditional wood conservatories, roof lanterns & other glass architecture: sunrooms, pool enclosures, greenhouses, garden houses, folives, gazebos & pavilions; cupolas, skylights, cresting & finials.
Key in No. 8279

Vintage Woodworks
903-356-2158; fax: 903-356-3023
www.vintagewoodworks.com
Quinlan, TX 75474
Supplier of Victorian millwork: western red cedar shingles, porch parts, columns, turned & sawn balusters, railings, brackets, gazebos, cornices, corbels, spandrels, mantels, storm & screen doors & more.
Key in No. 1061

This gable features WE Norman Corp’s Style “A” shingles with its continuous hip finish and a custom-made finial on top.

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800-641-4038; fax: 417-667-2708
www.wfnormalize.com
Nebraska, MO 64772
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Key in No. 520

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www.antiqueandvintagewoods.com
Pine Plains, NY 12567
Supplier of reclaimed & recycled lumber: wide-plank flooring in various species up to 20 ft. long; antique barn beams; antique oak, chestnut, mushroom wood & other species; hand-hewn & sawn wood beams up to 42 ft.

Bear Creek Lumber
206-588-7583; Fax: 206-588-7587
www.bearcreeklumber.com
Winthrop, WA 98884
Supplier of wood flooring, paneling, molding & wainscoting; antique wood (beams & board stock) reclaimed from houses, barns & factories & recycled; milled & kiln dried; wide-board, strip & random-width flooring.

Carlson’s Barnwood Co.
309-522-5550; Fax: 309-522-5123
www.carlsonsbarnwood.com
Cambridge, IL 61238
Supplier of recycled barn-wood planks, re-milled antique flooring, dimensional lumber & timbers in various shades & types: cupolas, porch poles, siding, milled & barn lumber, flooring & paneling in pine & oak.

Conklin’s Authentic Antique Barnwood
570-465-3832; Fax: 570-465-3835
www.conklinsbarnwood.com
Susquehanna, PA 18847

Country Road Associates, Ltd.
845-677-6041; Fax: 845-677-6532
www.countryroadassociates.com
Millbrook, NY 12546
Supplier of 19th-century reclaimed flooring materials: white pine, hemlock, heart pine, white oak, chestnut & walnut; lengths from 3-18 in.; hand-hewn beams & barn siding; cabinetry & farm tables.

Carlstone Restoration Lumber
800-595-9663; Fax: 603-446-3540
www.wideplankflooring.com
Stoddard, NH 03464
Manufacturer of wide-plank flooring & paneling; crafted from hand-selected old growth & antique woods; widths up to 20 in. & lengths up to 16 ft.; antique oak, chestnut & heart pine; original surface barn siding & milled barn siding.

Key in No. 5580

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319-354-5251; Fax: 319-688-3086
www.historicalbricks.com
Iowa City, IA 52245
Supplier of authentic antique brick pavers, granite cobblestones, clinker & common brick: custom matching; large quantities; special shapes; hand-molded & face brick; nationwide shipping.
Key in No. 191

Old House Parts Company
207-985-1999; Fax: 207-985-1911
www.oldhouseparts.com
Kennebunk, ME 04043
Supplier of architectural salvage from the 1730s to 1940s: doors, windows, stained glass, hardware, mantels, beams, flooring & more; restoration, renovation & custom-design services.

Longleaf Lumber, LLC
617-871-6611; Fax: 617-871-6615
www.longleaflumber.com
Cambridge, MA 02138
Supplier of antique lumber & flooring: wide-board & random-width flooring; stair parts; custom milling; longleaf heart pine, chestnut, antique eastern white pine & other woods; wide-plank & random-width boards; cork flooring.

Longwood AntiqueWoods supplied this unique brick from historic Hamburg Place; it is gently worn from the hooves of Bluegrass thoroughbreds.

Longwood Antique Woods
859-233-2268; Fax: 859-455-9629
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To Survive and Revive

The Cotswold House: Stone Houses and Interiors from the English Countryside

by Nicholas Mander

Rizzoli International Publications, Inc., New York, NY; 2009
208 pages; hardcover; 100+ b&w and color photos; $50


Reviewed by Anne Walker

The Cotswold manor house and its lush evocative setting is easily fodder for our imagination: a romantic remnant of a bygone lifestyle in which England's gentry lived in agrarian splendor. And, since 1897, Country Life, Britain's authority on architecture and landscape, has continued to substantiate this atmospheric ideal through its cache of well developed articles and stunning photography on the subject. The Cotswold House: Stone Houses and Interiors from the English Countryside happily taps into this unrivalled archive. Exquisite illustrations—the backbone of Nicholas Mander’s new book—hastily serve to brush a layer of dust off the Cotswolds' ancestral homes to expose their beauty and magnificence.

At the same time, the adaptability of these surviving age-old houses, many of which have grown, changed, and been redesigned and reinvented since their inceptions, is compellingly exhibited. The government designated the Cotswolds—a 790 sq.mi. area in the heart of England—an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in 1966, safeguarding its unique landscape of rolling grasslands, river valleys and deep combs as well as its store of architectural gems built from the very limestone in which they are embedded. A tradition of craftsmen, well-versed in the subtleties of working in limestone, gave rise to a vernacular of houses built with dry stone wall and stone tiled roofs whose success fed off the harmonious dialogue that was created between building and setting. As Sir Nicholas Mander aptly points out, “these country houses are often ornaments to the landscape—the highlight that catches the eye.”

These ornamentals, the oldest begun as early as 1051, have been added onto over time and renovated, restored and reinvented through the centuries. More often than not, they are the work of any number of architects and craftsmen. The hand of many of Britain’s best known architects—whether it be William Kent, James Gibbs, the brothers Wyatt, William Morris, Phillip Webb, Norman Jenson, Charles Robert Ashbee, Ernest Barnsley or Sir Edwin Lutyens—have helped to shape this enchanted landscape.

Sir Nicholas Mander, a writer for Country Life, captures the essence of the subject at hand with sympathy and enthusiasm. Not only has he been involved with the management and conversation of historic buildings in the area, since the 1970s, he has also resided at Chelston, a Tudor manor house and garden in Gloucestershire that is featured prominently in the book. Over the years, Mander has known many of the highlighted houses intimately and his heartfelt homage to the region’s spectacular limestone homes and gardens brings to life the lyrical beauty of the area. He orders the book’s contents chronologically into eight chapters and recounts in detail the story of some 30 houses, starting with the handful of existing medieval castles. He goes on to discuss Cotswold and Jacobean manor houses, the classical house, 19th-century revivals and Artists and Crafts cottages before moving on to the 20th century beyond.

Because of his inside knowledge, Mander is able to slip in anecdotes and little-known facts to round out their history, ownership details and architectural description. And, because he has personally witnessed the changing landscape, he has been owners and reinvent them in ingenious ways as the agricultural foundation of the region has slipped underfoot. But while his descriptions are interesting and well-written, it is the striking photographs from Country Life that truly celebrate the range and architectural superiority of the Cotswold stone house.

The integrity and versatility of stone construction and the agility with which architects and craftsmen worked with the material is readily conveyed through the beautiful photographs. The oldest feudal houses, such as Beverton Castle near Tetbury, begun in 1051, and Berkeley Castle (1117), are narratives of changing styles and accretion over time, while the sprawling Tudor and early Stuart manor houses were complex stylistic hybrids. During the building boom from 1660-1830, when 440 new houses were constructed, the stone house morphed into something more planned, conceived and classically inspired, as exemplified by Badminton House in Gloucestershire.

The pages of The Cotswold House also reveal entrancing revival homes, such as the dreamlike Selscote House (1810) on the eastern edge of the Cotswolds, based on the mausoleum pavilions of the Emperor Akbar. Such grand and exotic gestures mingle with Arts and Crafts cottages like the Sapperton Group, where architects Ernest Gimson and the Barnsley brothers, who lived and worked there, found their footing. However, it is Kelmscott Manor (1570), a gabled grey stone manor house where William Morris resided, that has come to encapsulate the glory of the Cotswold stone house and the spirit of the Arts and Crafts movement. At the turn of the 20th century, the Arts and Crafts resonated deeply through the Cotswold hills as many of the region’s oldest homes were carefully and scholarly restored, including Abbotswood (1867), which Sir Edwin Lutyens radically modernized over in 1901 in a simplified classical Classicism.

Because there has been little new construction in the region, the Cotswold stone house, as Mander contends, has continued to adapt in ingenious ways through the modern era. Each house’s unfolding story illuminates the fact that despite its age, the durability of its stone construction has allowed it to persevere and adjust to new circumstances. From farm centers and working estates, these palatial houses and princely piles have become trophy homes or hotels and schools. Some, like Chastleton House (1607), a magnificent Jacobean design, have been gloriously restored as family houses and opened to the public by the National Trust. Others, like Beveton Castle, exist as “ruinous hulks of towers and ivy-mantled walls.” A happy contribution to any library, The Cotswold House compellingly conveys the resolve of these awe-inspiring structures that are as much a part of the landscape as the landscape itself. With many almost as old as the hills themselves, they have continued, as Mander lyrically recounts, “to survive and revive as they have always done.”

Anne Walker is an architectural historian in New York City. She has co-authored a number of books with Peter Pennoyer, including The Architecture of Delano and Aldrich (W.W. Norton, 2003), The Architecture of Warren and Wetmore (W.W. Norton, 2006) and The Architecture of Grosvenor Atterbury (W.W. Norton, 2009).
The Principles of Preservation

by Norman Tyler, Ted J. Ligibel, and Ilene R. Tyler
W. W. Norton & Company, New York, NY; 2009
375 pages; softcover; 100+ b&w photos & illustrations; $29.95

Reviewed by Ken A. O'Connell

When the first edition of *Historic Preservation: An Introduction to Its History, Principles, and Practice* was published in 1994, sustainability was not even listed as an index entry. Although the book indicated briefly that the burgeoning preservation movement of the 1960s was closely aligned with the environmental movement of the same period, "sustainability" was not yet a buzzword or a consideration. In this second edition, by contrast, authors Norman Tyler, AIA, Ted J. Ligibel, and Ilene R. Tyler, FAIA, AIA, PHT, have devoted an entire chapter to the subject, which opens with a pointed critique: "Our culture is drunk on the new and the now," the authors write. "This intoxication clouds our judgment, causing us to profoundly undervalue the legacy of our forebears."

This change reflects how much the historic preservation field has evolved in the past 15 years, growing ever more diverse and relevant, with sometimes widely divergent goals. Some preservationists, the authors explain, focus on saving old buildings or cultural heritage, while others see their role as fostering urban revitalization or sustainability. "The underlying philosophy of the historic preservation movement in the United States," the authors write, "is defined more through activities than theory."

Describing those activities, as well as a history of the movement, is the goal of this substantive volume, designed as a textbook for introductory historic preservation courses. I read the first edition of the text in my own first course in Goucher College's master's preservation program, and I remember internalizing the essential differences between the "restore it and improve it" approach of 19th-century French architect Viollet-le-Duc and the "let the building show its age" view of his contemporary, the English writer John Ruskin. Much of preservation falls between these two philosophies, as this new edition ably shows.

Divided into 11 chapters, the book examines topics as wide ranging as the origins of preservation, architectural styles and contexts, legal precedents, historic property designation, intervention approaches, economics and planning, sustainability, heritage tourism and cultural landscapes. Helpful appendices offer lists of preservation resources and degree programs, as well as a delightfully illustrated glossary of architectural terms. The main text is amply illustrated with black-and-white photos and line drawings, the latter of which are uniformly well done.

Drawings of Independence Hall and Mount Vernon, not surprisingly, open the chapter on the history of the U.S. preservation movement. This chapter is checkbookful with information about the federal, state, local and private roles in the field, and includes a summary timeline of high points in the movement's history (significant low points, such as demolition of New York City's original Pennsylvania Station, are not mentioned). The survey of architectural history and styles, furthermore, is a handy primer that could easily be republished as a standalone booklet for use in the field. The text also reflects current preservation thinking in its discussion of Modernism and the recent past. Frank Gehry is served up as the icon of computer-driven architecture, and although the authors mention the sometimes high costs and technical difficulties associated with this kind of construction, Gehry's brand of deconstructivism is nonetheless called "a significant and exciting new direction in building design." (How future generations will judge the historic significance of such buildings is not conjectured.)

The book is particularly engaging when it delves into the legal cases that shaped current policies and thinking about preservation. One case I remember vividly from graduate school and that remains prominently highlighted in this edition is the famous 1978 Penn Central decision. This landmark Supreme Court case — formally known as Penn Central Transportation Company vs. City of New York — addressed the rights of an owner to develop a historic property versus a city's ability to review and regulate that development. Penn Central had applied for a permit to construct a 55-story addition atop Grand Central Station, prompting such notables as Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis and Philip Johnson to advocate for saving the terminal.

Preservation forces prevailed, of course, and Grand Central remains an unsullied (and recently restored) landmark, but the authors are careful to note the ambiguity of the decision — in that the court did not indicate the limits of an agency's ability to control private property rights in such cases. If an owner successfully argued that it could not get a "reasonable return" on its property without it being developed, an agency could be required to compensate the owner for its losses. We can talk about architectural styles and periods of significance, but cases such as Penn Central form the backbone of historic preservation. This should be essential reading for all practitioners in the field.

The sustainability chapter, to which green preservation expert Carl Elefante, FAIA, substantially contributed, is also compelling — even galvanizing. (Elefante and coauthor Ilene Tyler are colleagues at Washington, DC-based Quinn Evans | Architects.) This chapter is more critical than others of the societal mores that led to the environmental crisis in which we now find ourselves, and the authors are unafraid to take preservationists to task for not considering sustainability more profoundly. Sure, preservationists are becoming increasingly familiar with green building checklists such as LEED, but far more "must accept the need to improve the energy performance of the existing building stock," the authors contend. This may mean incorporating solar collectors that look like traditional roofing materials or installing in ground geothermal heating/cooling systems.

A special section on New Orleans recovery in the post-Katrina era is short but timely and profound. The fundamental message here is that we can't separate our buildings from our natural environment; the two affect each other in innumerable ways.

"When we build," John Ruskin famously wrote, "let us think that we build forever." We all know that most builders have not subscribed to this philosophy. Out of this lack, however, has grown a vibrant historic preservation movement, whose fundamentals are comprehensively outlined in this impressive volume.

My only wish for the book is that it could have delved more deeply into the psychology of preservation — what motivates us to save buildings, cities and ways of life, and what drives us in the face of opposition and a culture that is still "drunk on the new" — which would have been inspiring. Still, the authors have comprehensively and compellingly captured the diverse, challenging and ultimately rewarding field of historic preservation. The fact that countless new preservationists will get their first lessons from this volume will go a long way toward shaping a future of which our forebears would be proud.
Preservation Needs a Vocabulary Reset

By Clem Labine

Y
ou find a lot of crazy comments on a website. So my first reaction to the comment from "Andy" was to dismiss it out of hand—especially since I don't agree with Andy's opinion. But as I thought about it, I realized Andy had summarized an attitude that is gaining momentum in our culture. And I find the attitude alarming!

The contents of this essay are: (a) The humane values inherent in the preservation movement are essential to building a sustainable, civil society; (b) in our rapidly changing economy, many—especially the young—are becoming indifferent to historic preservation; (c) to advance the cause of preservation, we have to sell it in a different way than we did a decade ago. In other words, we need a vocabulary reset.

I come to these conclusions reluctantly. Ever since I started the Old- House Journal in 1973, the public's taste for traditional architecture and historic preservation has been increasing year by year. In 1973, for example, "Victorian" was a synonym for bad taste. But now "Victorian" is a sell word used by virtually every bed & breakfast across America. House plans sold today by mail-order design services feature homes based almost 100 percent on traditional forms. Organizations like The Institute of Classical Architecture & Classical America have been growing in membership and influence. These—and other similar trends of the past four decades—had led me to believe the desire for preservation and traditional architecture would grow inexorably with each passing year. But I fear I was wrong.

As a result, mainstream media has lost interest in historic preservation than it did a few decades ago. Back when "less is more" ideology reigned supreme, the idea of reviving richly ornamented historic buildings seemed radical to editors who thrive on all things new and different. Our successes in preservation have ironically caused us undoing with the media: We're not considered new and exciting any longer. That's the preservation movement's own inconvenient truth.

The Great American Reset

No one knows what the Great American economy will look like two years from now. But everyone agrees it will be quite different from what we've known. Some are calling the upcoming radical changes "The Great American Reset." In this reset economy, even environmentalists feel beleaguered. Lisa P. Jackson, Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, recently wrote an essay titled "Why We Need to Sell Environmentalism." Her major point was that many people are so consumed with short-term survival problems they can't afford to think about long-term consequences. As Jackson noted, "Over the years, environmentalism has largely been seen as an enclave of the privileged." You could replace the term "environmentalism" with "historic preservation" and the sentence would be doubly true.

If Jackson is having trouble selling environmentalism in the face of global climate change, just imagine how much harder it is to get the general public—and especially people suffering economic hardships—excited about historic preservation.

Preservation seems irrelevant to many today because we haven't modified our vocabulary in light of changed realities. Most people are worried about their jobs, their financial security and the economic stability of our nation. These are urgent, short-term problems—with many conflicting solutions being debated in the public forum. It's easy to brush preservation's concerns aside using emotionally loaded terms to marginalize us.

The Flip Side of Preservation's Vocabulary

What We Say: Historic Preservation Community Revitalization Preservationist Neighborhood Revitalization Building Recycling Building Restoration Preserving Neighborhoods Humane Values Stewards of Our Architectural Patrimony

What They Hear: Elitist Obsession Gentrification Nostalgia Merchant No Affordable Housing Energy Inefficient Buildings Displacing Poor People No Construction Jobs Dead White Men What's He Talking About?

Old Values, New Words

To attract greater public support, preservation must seem radical and relevant again—not by changing our values, but by changing the vocabulary we use. Some of this vocabulary change has already started, but needs to be accelerated. Here are a few thoughts to advance the dialog:

- Emphasize "new benefits." Abstract ideas like "we need to understand where we've been in order to know where we're going" don't gain traction when people have short-term problems.
- In public discussions, drop the adjective "historic." When survival is the issue, history doesn't seem important.
- Use "conservation" instead of "preservation" whenever possible. The green movement has already built a lot of credibility for the word "conservation."
- Stress that building renovation and restoration is labor-intensive—and that means jobs, that can't be outsourced. Here are a few thoughts to advance the dialog:
- Emphasize "new benefits." Abstract ideas like "we need to understand where we've been in order to know where we're going" don't gain traction when people have short-term problems.
- In public discussions, drop the adjective "historic." When survival is the issue, history doesn't seem important.
- Use "conservation" instead of "preservation" whenever possible. The green movement has already built a lot of credibility for the word "conservation."
- Stress that building renovation and restoration is labor-intensive—and that means jobs, that can't be outsourced.
- Stress green aspects of building recycling by saving embodied energy in existing structures and reducing demolition debris carted to landfills.
- Bringing old buildings up to LEED standards means even more jobs.
- Use "green," "sustainable" and other related earth-friendly terms as often as possible.

Now let's get back to our energy-saving, job-creating, conservation tasks that create sustainable communities!

Clem Labine is the founder of Old-House Journal, Traditional Building and Period Homes. His interest in preservation started with his purchase and restora- tion of an 1883 brownstone in Park Slope, Brooklyn, where he still resides with his wife, Deidre, his German Shepherd, Xena, and black cat, Willie. He is now editor emeritus of Traditional Building and Period Homes.

If you have an idea for a forum, please email Period Homes editor Will Holloway at wholloway@stonemedia.com.

Comment on traditional-building.com: July 11, 2009 at 4:05 pm, Andy says: "Preservation is a group of ideas whose time came—yesterday. Now it's time to move on."
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