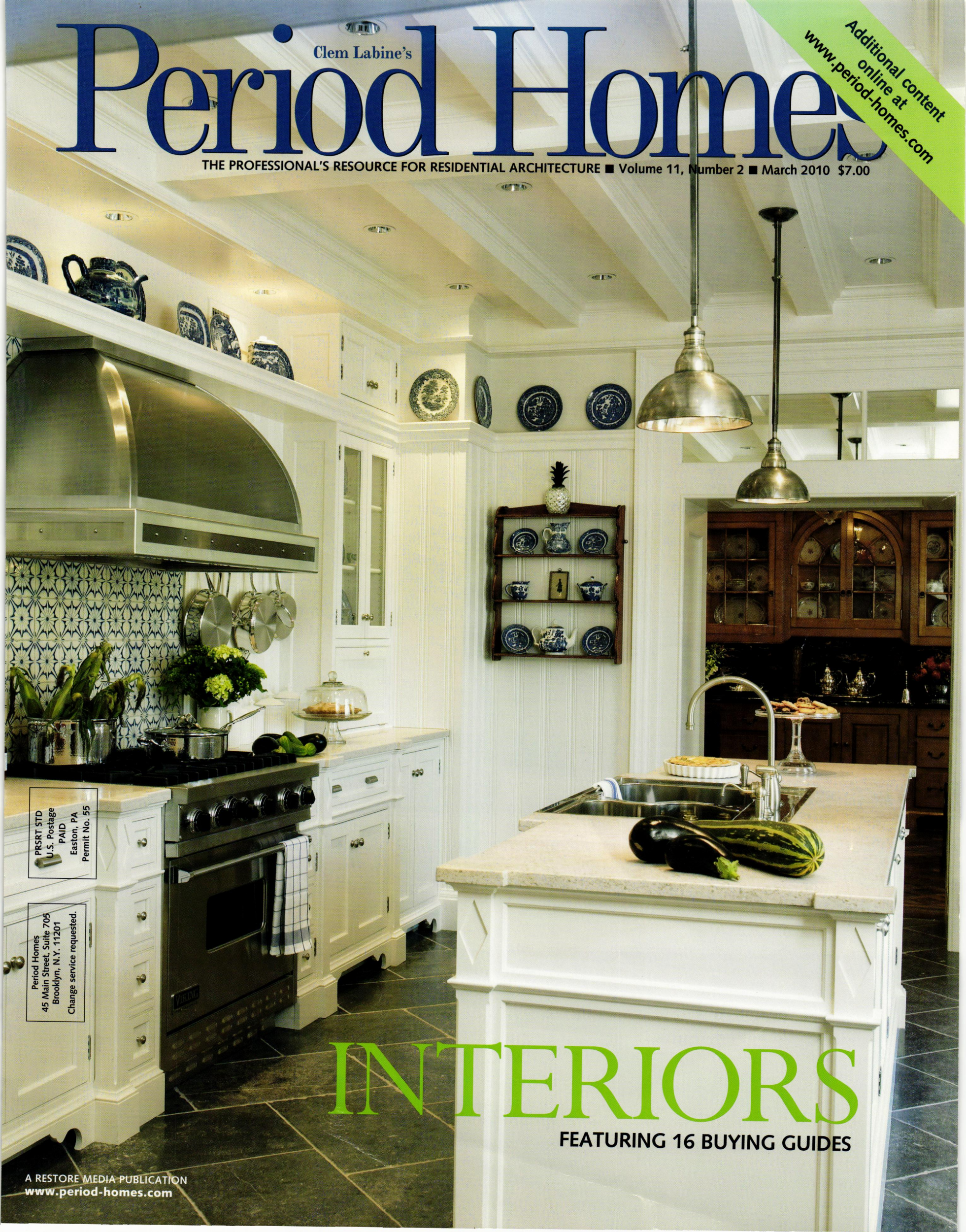


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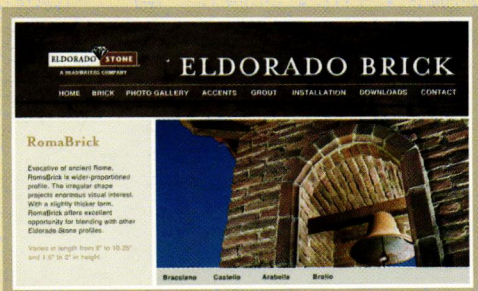


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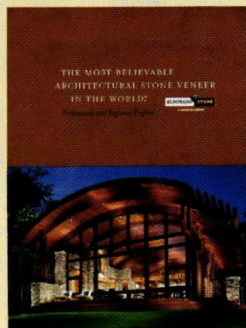
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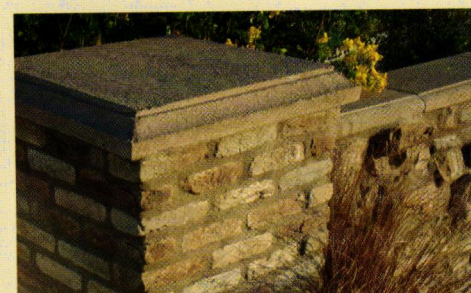
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Profile

With New England in Mind, by Dan Cooper

From single-family homes to mixed-use and New Urbanist projects, Providence, RI-based Donald Powers Architects specializes in modern interpretations of historical precedent.

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The kitchen has evolved significantly over the years, but the age-old principles of Classical architecture offer valuable guidelines for contemporary kitchen design.

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On the cover: SBD Kitchens of New Canaan, CT, utilizes the principles of Classical architecture in designing contemporary kitchens, such as this design, which drew on the Ionic order. See page 10.
Photo: Nancy Hill



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The screenshot shows the Period Homes website interface. At the top, there's a search bar and navigation links like 'THE MAGAZINE', 'PALLADIO AWARDS', 'PRODUCT SEARCH', 'PRODUCT LITERATURE', 'NEWS TALK BLOGS CONTACT'. Below the header, there are several featured articles and product listings. One article is titled 'Model Home' and another 'What I Learned at the Builders' Show'. There are also sections for 'New Blogger' and 'Search the Product Database'. The layout is clean and organized, typical of a professional website.

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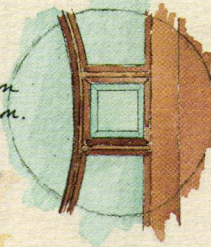
CIVITAS

If you could design your dream window, what would it be?

This is a dream window with a very real purpose. I have a picture window in my family room which can't be opened.

This forces me either to turn on the air conditioning before it's needed in the rest of the house, or to roast. Usually the air conditioning wins out.

Square apertures to be sized to fit 4" x 4" glass bevels to create spectrum light patterns when the sun strikes them.

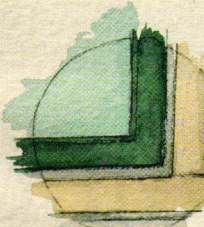


*Glass to have low emissivity coating & to be filled with argon between panes for a U value of .30
Designation - Low E3-366 w/argon*

Natural cherry frame, sash, & muntins on interior of window to match color of existing trim.

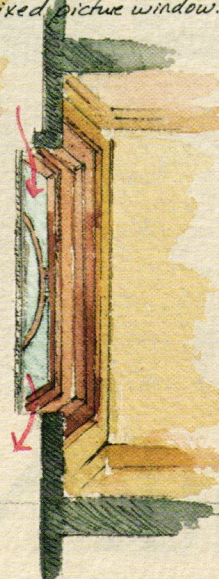
Muntins to be 1 1/8" simulated divided lites (SDL) throughout window design.

Venting picture unit to replace existing fixed picture window.



*Clad colors for exterior:
Frame - pebble gray
Sash - evergreen*

The window/envision is composed of two archetypal forms - a circle that frames the view held within a surrounding square. It's simple yet elegant, & best of all it's energy efficient and capable of providing natural ventilation when desired. A truly 'not so big' solution!

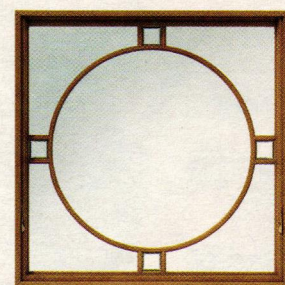


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With New England in Mind

A Rhode Island firm enhances the fabric of the region's architecture through the creation of single-family homes and New Urbanist projects. *By Dan Cooper*

Every architect holds some specific era close to their heart; no matter how proficient they might be at executing work from any point in history, their affection for this style is usually evident as one regards their portfolio. For Donald Powers Architects (DPA) of Providence, RI, the honored period in question is the early part of the 20th century, a transitional time in architecture that is seldom given the recognition it deserves.

"The first decades of the 20th century have always appealed to me," says president and principal Donald Powers, AIA, LEED AP. "It was the last generation of architects that were well-schooled in traditional forms and details, but who were also influenced by Modernism. It was a time when we were freeing ourselves from the Classical dogma, yet it hadn't been replaced by the Modernist dogma."

As with so many architects of the current generation who have come of age during the revival of traditional architecture, Powers embraces the past without being burdened by it. "I've always bridled against the constraints at either end of the spectrum," he says. "I want to push back against the rules while maintaining a respect for the foundation of tradition, but not in a cursory or condescending way. Tradition should be a springboard and not a straightjacket."

Post-Victorian, Pre-War

A fascination with post-1900 residential architecture manifests itself in the work of Powers and his associates. Their wood-frame, single-family houses reflect the styles that emerged from the Victorian era and still share some of these trappings while maintaining a decidedly 20th- and 21st-century vocabulary.

The Edenville Cottage in Warwick, NY, appears to be a ca. 1917 Dutch gambrel built from the pages of one of dozens of period patterns books until the observer notes the exaggerated shingle flare between the first and



Providence, RI-based Donald Powers Architects was founded in 2000 by Donald Powers (above left), who was joined in 2003 by principal Douglas Kallfelz (above right). Over the last decade, the firm has developed a wide portfolio of mixed-use, New Urbanist and single-family projects, including this residence (top) in Westport, MA. *All photos: courtesy of Donald Powers Architects*



Right: The Westport residence features a steeply pitched roof and a projecting balcony on the shingled second story.

Below: The Edenville Cottage in Warwick, NY, has a gambrel roof, an exaggerated shingle flare between the first and second stories and a gently bracketed bay window.



second stories and the gently bracketed bay window. DPA is adept at the subtle twist instead of the architectural bludgeon, as Powers notes: “Our work looks traditional at first glance, but then people look at it longer and become aware that it’s more than that, they invariably say ‘it’s really interesting.’ This gives me far more pleasure than creating another ‘funny-shaped’ building.”

Similarly, a DPA-designed house amid Shingle Style and Colonial Revival residences in Westport, MA, features sharply raked rooflines merging with sprawling, Classically trimmed porches and shingled balconies projecting above tightly clapboarded first stories. It’s a masterful and original reuse of architectural motifs from an era that drew from so many different styles.

In Carmel, NY, the architects played upon the late-Shingle Style vocabulary by designing a home with a first floor finished in wood trim, while the second floor and gable are shingled; the distinctively winged gable is uncommonly symmetrical for this architectural style. Once again, it seems like a roughly century-old building until closer examination reveals the modern interpretation.

The firm is more flexible about its interiors, and while these often draw upon time-honored elements such as

tongue-and-groove paneling and substantial molding profiles, there is an airiness about them that is certainly contemporary. “As architects, we are not averse to designing a completely modern interior, as it owes no debt to the streetscape,” says Powers. “Interiors do not have the same imperative to defer to a context, so we feel less constrained.”

New England Urbanism

The majority of the New Urbanist architects typically work in the warmer climes of the southeastern part of the country, occasionally venturing into mid-Atlantic cities to create large mixed-use urban developments. But there appears to be a paucity of New Urbanist projects being undertaken in New England. As Powers explains, “The manner in which New Urbanism is viewed is certainly different in the northeastern part of the country; first of all, there aren’t the large tracts of land available such as you’d find elsewhere, and there’s also a tradition of political activism and the public’s ability to object to developments that has reduced these projects to where New Urbanism suffers alongside the other proposals.”



Above: The first floor of this DPA-designed house in Carmel, NY, is finished in wood trim, while the second floor and distinctive winged gable are shingled.

“The political reality in New England is that small towns are inherently Urbanist communities, and people here oppose the new developments perhaps more than elsewhere,” adds principal Douglas Kallfelz, AIA, LEED AP. “I think they feel that it’s trying to replicate history, and since they live in the original, it’s somehow cheating. Everyone forgets that many of these 19th- and early-20th-century towns were originally planned developments with little trees sticking up between the newly built houses.”

“It is more difficult to build a New Urbanist community in New England, and they tend to be smaller,” says Powers. “It’s harder to think in terms of a 300-unit complex. Instead, we focus on underutilized areas within an existing neighborhood and work on creating in increments of six to 20 units instead of 60 to 200 units. This has become our specialty, and we’ve taken the lead on finding developers to work with us.”

The architects thus actively pursue these more modest developments. “Rather than voice their objections to a whole green-field development,” says Kallfelz, “these smaller projects are perceived much less skeptically by the residents in the existing communities, and they recognize that as the number of units gets incrementally smaller, they become much more positive and feel that we’re restoring the fabric of the village structure; generally they’re delighted with these sensitive additions.”

“There’s a phase in our job codes where we assign a certain number of hours for precedent study,” adds Powers. “We want to be responsible and respect the existing neighborhood before we add onto it. If you think about it, architecture is different than any other profession in the world in terms of precedent; if you are a doctor or lawyer, you’re always looking to the accumulated knowledge of the past. I wish architecture schools formalized historic studies instead of having this gratuitous attitude towards history.”

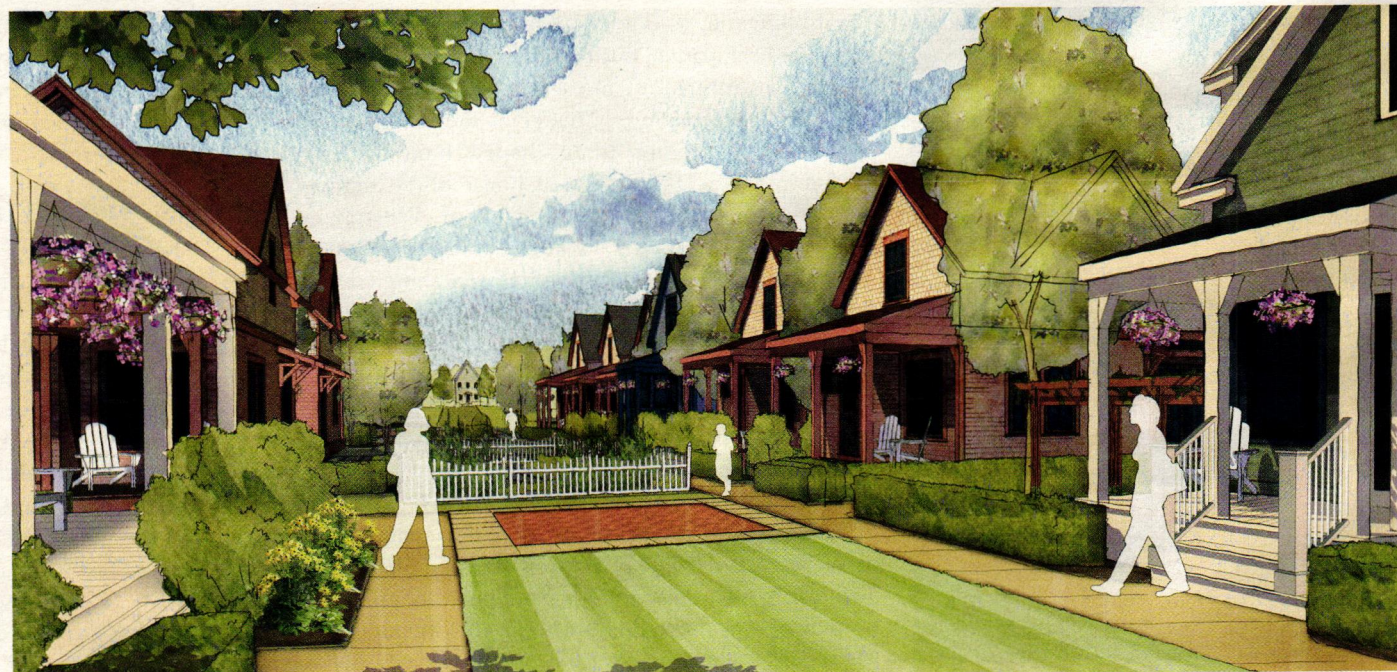
Fifteen DPA-designed units are currently in the process of being built in Powers’ hometown of East Greenwich, RI. “Because the project

size is so much smaller, the design and execution can be so much more controlled, to the ultimate benefit of the town,” he says. “It’s funny – it’s described as ‘innovative housing’ by the press, yet it’s essentially a resurrection of the Bungalow Court of the early-20th century combined with New England workman housing. Both of these concepts were great models.

“Another distinctive difference about building this type of project in New England is that the weather here pre-determines a certain kind of social pattern; people are indoors half the year, and there’s the Yankee tradition of simpler architecture that is less expansive than the Southern idiom.”

These parameters of climate and restrained ornamentation are evident in the firm’s larger projects, such as Capitol Square and Broad Elmwood in Providence, which are derived from the three- and four-story frame structures built after the turn of the century in every New England city and larger town. The ground levels are comprised of retail storefronts of masonry and glass while the upper residential floors are clapboard or shingle. Powers and his colleagues utilized obvious architectural cues such as the steep gables, brackets and dormers to emulate the original buildings, yet subtly play upon them with variations; a bay window may be suggested by a paneled

Below: The Greene Street development in East Greenwich, CT, derives its footprint from the Bungalow Courts of southern California but employs the architectural lexicon of New England. Rendering: courtesy of Donald Powers Architects



Right: In the Capitol Square development in Providence, DPA utilized steep gables, brackets and dormers to emulate turn-of-the-century buildings.

Below: The Broad Elmwood project in Providence is derived from the three- and four-story frame structures built after the turn of the century in every New England city and larger town. The ground level is comprised of retail storefronts of masonry and glass while the upper residential floors are clapboard and shingle. *Drawing: courtesy of Donald Powers Architects*



window casing that does not actually affect the footprint, but lends complexity to the façade.

In another example, 57 Parkis Avenue in Providence is a mixed-use building that is sited adjacent to a taller Second Empire structure. Ever mindful of the new structure's role in the streetscape, the architects specified the broadly overhanging, corbelled soffit similar to its older neighbor. It is only upon closer examination that the viewer realizes the angularity and finish reveals that this is indeed a recent structure that recognizes the aesthetic of the street while carefully stating its own identity.

It is this delicate use of indigenous ornamentation that is the crux of the firm's design philosophy. "New Urbanists are often accused of trying too hard with their architectural detail, and if you look at the best historic neighborhoods in the Boston area, they were built from a position of extreme frugality and simple shapes," says Kallfelz. "We try to deliver a great neighborhood cost effectively by bringing a superior level of craftsmanship down to the production-house level.

"The way New Urbanism is executed in New England is different than the Southern areas, where all the buildings tend to be designed to the highest level of that style. In New England, that would overwhelm the project; we have to suppress that urge and stress connectivity and the indigenously appropriate level of ornamentation, and elevate above this only when needed. Yes, there is a time and place to express your freedom architecturally, but you have a responsibility to knit a city together. A civic building can give you license to stand apart from the existing architecture, but with the underlying fabric, you have to be more reserved in terms of your ego."

The New England Aesthetic

The firm is fully cognizant that in keeping with vernacular housing, different architectural solutions contribute to the "believability" of a structure than might apply to a high-style public building or mansion. As Kallfelz notes, sometimes the "builder's interpretation" of a Classical detail can be charming in its own right. "The charm of the locally designed and built house can be observed in how, instead of the perfectly designed Classical cornice, a carpenter might fudge the returns on a more humble dwelling," he says.

"There's a place for the 'proper' use of ornament, but every two-bedroom cottage does not need to be the pinnacle of perfect detail," he continues. "There is a simple and intelligent solution that's not as complex as one might use on the courthouse in the center of town; the vernacular allows you to manipulate the manner in which the returns meet the rake edge of a heavy cornice."

Powers says that the firm has made a conscious decision to balance its custom work with a focus on the areas that are often neglected by other architects, creating the background fabric that forms the greater whole of a neighborhood. "It may not always be the highest form of architecture," he says, "but our work uses the best level of material and crafts possible. It's not that we would turn away a courthouse commission or a wing to the Museum of Fine Arts, but we pride ourselves on our ability to infuse our designs with a sense of appropriateness that is both congruent with history and reflects a tendency towards simplicity and frugality that we find throughout New England." ■



This kitchen from SBD Kitchens is a reproduction of a McKim, Mead and White butler's pantry; the Corinthian order was used to establish the size of the entablature, as well as the shaft (wall cabinets). The absence of cabinets along the sink wall allows for full use of the counter space and for tall appliances. Photo: Nancy Hill

Classicism and the Kitchen

The principles of Classicism applied to the 21st-century kitchen. By Sarah Blank

The evolution of the kitchen over the centuries began with the fire pit, which later became the hearth, which evolved into the central area where friends and family would gather for food and warmth. As the kitchen became more defined in the 18th century, it was relocated from the central living area to a remote area on the property or placed on a lower level. Later, in the early-20th century, more and more kitchens were located on the same level as the main living quarters; they were often small and part of a back service area. The "back of the house," as it is known today, had many rooms to support the kitchen – service pantries, storage closets, silver storage and, of course, the butler's pantry, which continues to be the staging and main support area for the dining room.

After World War II, advertisements began to portray the kitchen as a fashionable part of the home where the woman of the house would plan and execute the daily meals. The kitchen gained more importance as technologies advanced, and as the years went on, families spent

more and more time there. Sometime around the 1970s, the back of the house began to be replaced with large kitchen/family rooms where family members would gather. As a result, supporting rooms and the hierarchy of the house were lost.

I have been in the kitchen design business for 30 years. At some point during that period I began to realize that these so-called "great rooms," often too large and impractical, were not giving homeowners what they needed. Kitchens also began to take on a life of their own – rarely was the designer taking the age or style of the home into consideration, and there was no order to what was being designed.

The Classical Approach

Integrating Classicism into kitchen design means learning and applying the principles of Classical architecture. Once the rules are understood, their application to contemporary design becomes clear. Maybe author, Notre Dame architecture professor, Rome Studies Program director

The Ionic order was utilized in the design of this kitchen; the correct shaft size was achieved by extending the wall cabinets down to the countertop. Photo: Nancy Hill

and Institute of Classical Architecture & Classical America fellow emeritus Steven W. Semes explains it best. The following is excerpted from his book *The Architecture of the Interior* (W. W. Norton & Company, 2004):

We are all children of the modern world; if we want to understand the older, underlying tradition we must step outside the framework of the modern and see the world through classical eyes. . . . Classical architecture, no less than classical literature, painting, sculpture, or music, is a continuing encounter between the achievements of the past and the concerns of the present.

Once we understand the principles of Classical architecture we can apply these rules to designing a kitchen, or any room in a house. The parts make up the whole, and compositional arrangement organizes the process – an entire room can be composed based on the principles of Classical architecture. Semes, in *The Architecture of the Interior*, writes, “The patterns that govern the process of subdivision in classical composition are not mysterious...”:

Trystan Edwards [*Architectural Style*, Faber and Gower, 1926] identifies the three most essential patterns as the canon of number, the canon of punctuation, and the canon of inflection. Applying these principles to the interior, the canon of number concerns the avoidance of unresolved duality or undifferentiated equality. Two adjacent and equal parts – or any even number of equal parts – are perceived as unstable. . . . The canon of punctuation concerns the use of bordering and framing devices as transitions between parts. Objects are not simply juxtaposed, but are set off from one another by transitional frames, moldings, and ornaments designed to separate and unify adjacent elements. . . . Finally, the canon of inflection concerns the mutual adjustment of the parts to avoid monotony. A succession of undifferentiated equal parts, as in the orthogonal grid, is visually dead.

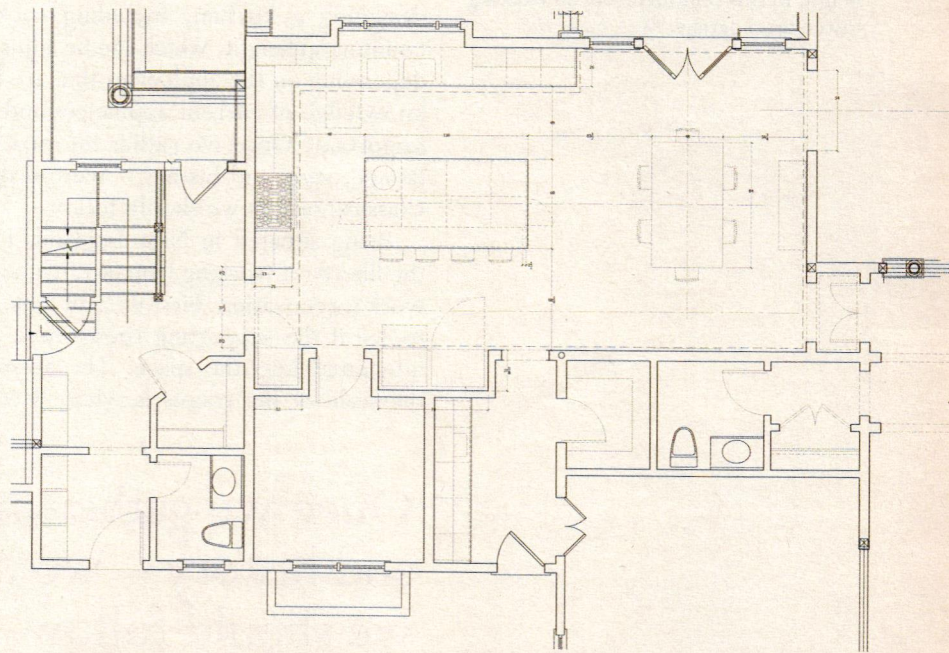
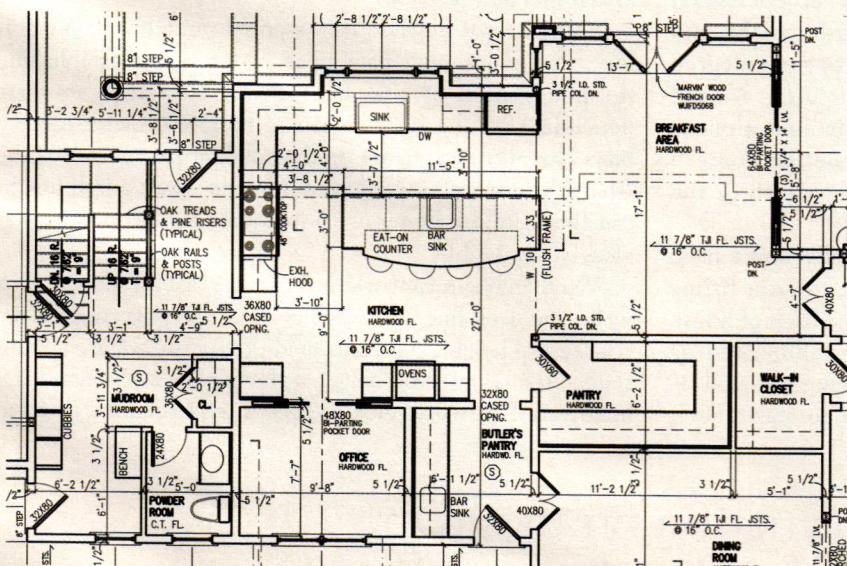
In terms of kitchen design, the canon of numbers applies, for example, to arranging an elevation of cabinetry so the center axis falls on an important subject or focal point, rather than in between. The canon of punctuation means



breaking down elements; the more the parts are broken down, the more the adjacent elements are separated and framed. The canon of inflection means, for example, not paneling the remaining walls of a kitchen or pantry by dividing them in half, but breaking the panels into thirds; wall cabinets are not double stacked so they are of equal size, creating differentiation rather than duality.

Today's Kitchen

Today, the back of house – storage closets, mudroom, butler's pantry, sport closet – is as important as it was in the past, and possibly more. We are spending much more time



This back-of-house layout (above) was brought to SBD Kitchens for a redesign and build. The revised back-of-house layout (right) improves flow and function; in developing the floor plan, SBD Kitchens considered which appliances would work best for the homeowner without compromising the aesthetic composition. Floor plans: courtesy of SBD Kitchens, LLC



The ceiling details and entablature of this kitchen were informed by the Ionic order. SBD Kitchens gained height in this remodel from an existing lower-level garage. Photo: Nancy Hill

in our kitchens today than in the past, thus the kitchen's presence is as important as the other living quarters.

There are certain criteria we must accept when designing a kitchen, including backsplash height and countertop height, which can be adjusted to some degree depending on the appliances that are being used. A solid knowledge of current appliances and their limitations is important. Once we gather information on the home – its age, style and history – we can decide which of the Classical orders we should follow.

Being situated in New England, I usually don't have the liberty of working from scratch, so most of our firm's work is renovation. First we will look at the back of house to see if the supporting rooms have been eliminated or integrated into the space. The arrangement as well as the scale of the rooms is where we like to start. How

the kitchen has been set up to work with the supporting rooms and traffic flow in and around the work space are also important factors.

Proportional devices are essential guidelines. We follow the rules of a particular order when establishing the punctuation of a room; the ratio selected can vary, depending on the style (we use the Doric order quite a bit). This allows us to set up the entablature, as well as the "shaft" height – the wall cabinet height. Backsplash height can fluctuate, allowing us to maintain our proportions as closely as possible.

We then begin to work in the frame or elevation of each wall. The dado line unfortunately must be governed by the countertop height. As mentioned previously we are able to reduce the countertop height if the appliances selected can be lowered. We use selected orders to govern the division

Once we gather information on the home – its age, style and history – we can decide which of the Classical orders we should follow.



Above and right: The Doric order was used in this Manhattan apartment, where space was limited. Photos: Curtis Lew

of the different spaces – the entablature, shaft and pedestal (the base cabinets). The moldings of the entablature and the base follow the same patterns of punctuation and differentiation throughout the entire elevation, as well as all the stiles and rails of the millwork. For example, the entablature is made up of the cornice, the frieze and the architrave. All of the parts will make up the whole. When refining the architectural millwork in the room we will also use punctuation. The style of the home will also influence our decision to use a 1:5 or 1:7 ratio. We must also keep in mind the personal aesthetic of the particular homeowner.

To recap, we begin by reviewing the “back of the house” layout; next we review the elevations and break up the parts based on the order that has been selected; third, we select a ratio to be used, and, not deviating from that ratio, break up each part.

I use these guidelines every day – and the more I apply them, the more I understand. By taking the time to learn and understand the rules – I continue to study at the Institute of Classical Architecture & Classical America – we will only improve the interiors, as well as the exteriors, of our future buildings. ■

Sarah Blank is the principal of SBD Kitchens, LLC, a New Canaan, CT-based designer, supplier and installer of kitchens and other rooms.

Related Resources:

The Architecture of the Classical Interior, by Steven W. Semes (W. W. Norton & Company, 2004)

The American Vignola: A Guide to the Making of Classical Architecture, by William Ware (Dover Publications, 1994)





New York Story

A 1917 apartment is renovated on Manhattan's Upper East Side.

PROJECT: RESIDENCE,
NEW YORK, NY

ARCHITECT: TIMOTHY
BRYANT ARCHITECT,
NEW YORK, NY;
TIMOTHY BRYANT,
PRINCIPAL

“New Yorkers aren’t born, they’re made,” is a favorite expression of Timothy Bryant, an architect well suited to the city that never sleeps. Born and brought up in Windsor and High Wycombe, England, he moved to the U.S. in 1983, leaving behind an economic recession that had all but halted new construction at home.

Besides a background in interior design and the instinctual education of growing up with a father who worked as a builder, Bryant brought with him a strong sense of destiny. “I had this mental image when I was 21 that I could come to America and become an architect,” he says. “I came here with the idea that people were building more, so I’d have a better chance of actually becoming an architect and finding work because there was a greater need. Nobody was building much in England at the time and I really wanted to build.”

Between arriving in Seattle, WA, in 1983 as part of an agricultural exchange program and opening his own office in New York City’s Tribeca neighborhood in 1997, Bryant lived by the maxim “no job too big or too small.” The list includes renovating and painting apartments, driving a tractor, making and selling jewelry and working as a barista. While doing the latter, a chance encounter with the owner of the design arm of the Westin Hotel Group led to work on hotel renovations, commercial stores and restaurants, and later, a promotion to the company’s New York office. A lighting firm and a corporate facilities’ designer provided the short-term stepping stones to Bryant’s big break, working for Thierry Despont, where, he says, “The transformation really happened.”

Bryant spent three years in Despont’s office, working on complex residential projects. “I was a good draftsman from an early age, and I worked really

Top: Timothy Bryant Architect renovated this 2,900-sq.ft., John Carpenter-designed apartment on Manhattan’s Park Avenue to create a timeless Classical showcase for the clients’ eclectic art, furniture and textile collection. *All photos: Simon Upton*



Bryant's elegant molding work – Wren-period Georgian profiles and James Gibbs-inspired cornices – gives the apartment a 1930s feel.

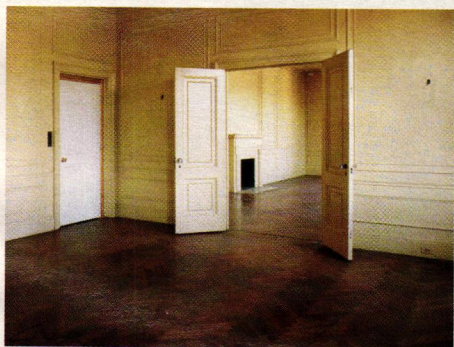
hard,” he says. “I studied the drawings – I didn’t even know how to read a steel manual – did more overtime than anybody else, and basically taught myself how to understand it all. I was then able to work on buildings just by going to see them and reverse-engineering what was being built related to the drawings.”

After leaving Despont for the Japanese firm Yendo Associates in 1992, Bryant then moved to Ferguson Murray Architects (later Ferguson & Shamamian) in 1993. It was here that he accumulated the balance of experience required to pass the Architecture Registration Exam, enabling him to open Timothy Bryant Architect in 1997. Recommendations came thick and fast, leading to work all over the country. Thirteen years on, little has changed: “[Today] I have projects in California, I have projects in Wisconsin... I like to go where the work is,” says Bryant. “That has allowed me to understand what I am good at, which seems to be solving complex projects regardless of their stylistic

idiom. I approach everything in the same way that I approached becoming an architect: ‘How do I solve this?’, ‘What do I need to do to make this project as good as it can be?’”

Interactions with clients, craftspeople and builders provide the answers. At an elementary level, “you have to be able to interpret someone’s wishes without being too literal,” says Bryant. “Sometimes I use the analogy that it is a lot like trying to find the right word for a poem, or a way to describe how something feels. You need to articulate on many different levels.”

Recently, the architect’s approach found its match in a Manhattan restoration and renovation project for client with an extensive art collection and a strong point of view. Located on Park Avenue, the 2,900-sq.ft., John Carpenter-designed apartment was built in 1917, and had the original paint and wallpaper, maids’ rooms, transoms, stove, butler’s bell, metal windows and woodwork, and original electrical system to prove it. “It was



Prior to the renovation, little had changed in the apartment since 1917. The original paint and wallpaper, maids’ rooms, transom, stove, butler’s bell, metal windows, woodwork and original electrical system remained; only a new electrical panel added in the ‘50s and a door from a lumberyard added to the dining room marked the passage of time.



Above and right: Oriental rugs, and a lantern by Hector Finch of London, England, transform the kitchen from a sanitized work space to a continuation of the main living spaces.



just amazing. Seeing all of this was like going back in time. I took pictures because I had never seen anything like it,” says Bryant, noting that with the exception of a new electrical panel added in the ‘50s and a door from a lumberyard added to the dining room, nothing had changed. “The design of the original apartment felt stripped, like somehow the lifeblood or the vitality was missing. There were a number of stock components – fireplaces and such – that weren’t particularly spectacular. They looked like they had come from a builders’ catalogue.”

One of the criteria on which Bryant was selected was the strength – and reputation – of his molding work. “When they think of Classicism, most people focus on moldings,” he says. “They don’t think of Classicism or Neoclassicism per se, or whether I have a particular idiom. So from that perspective, I met the client and showed her my portfolio and she immediately responded. She had a winning, engaging, exuberant personality and I just connected with her immediately.”

Wren-period Georgian profiles and James Gibbs-inspired cornices form the basis of the design, and give a loosely 1930s feel. Charles Edwards of England supplied the swirl doorknobs on the front door and the Regency-style ebonized beehive doorknobs for the black egg-and-dart molding in the mahogany doors and the brass beehive doorknobs in the master area. “I like those particular pieces because they weren’t from the usual suppliers,” says Bryant. “They felt unique to the client and the project.”

From the original Cuban mahogany floors, with their little creaks and gaps, to the original metal windows that occasionally leak, the clients were enthusiastic salvagers. “I explained everything to them – the advantages and disadvantages – and they loved what was there,” says Bryant. “And I would have done



The mirror in the living room was one of many pieces collected by the client in Ireland. It complements a new Georgian-style mantel by Pennsylvania-based Ahmad Suleiman.

the same thing. I would have lived with the little problems because you either love old things and the marks of the people who made them, or you don't."

The new floor plan retains a traditional configuration, with service areas private from the formal living spaces. However, circulation problems meant that some subtle reworking was required. Bryant retained the original formal entry sequence and library location, but added a rear circulation hall and expanded the master suite. "We made a multifunctional sitting room, and the clients suggested hiding closets behind bookcases," says Bryant. "I was really surprised they wanted to do this, as most people don't like faux books, but they did and we ordered faux book covers. His bathroom was almost shoe-horned behind plumbing pipes and everything else, while also accommodating another circulation from the kitchen to the back hall. It was very tight."

A brand new library, made from old-growth Oregon pine and fabricated in Paris, was installed in the original library location. It showcases a salvaged Georgian pine mantle from Barry Perry of New York City and, behind bookcases, a concealed bar and television. "She was into the theater of the concealed pieces," says Bryant. "Some people don't like that, they think it's too fussy, but she was able to control the whole sense of the place." The fireplace in the living room is complemented by a new Georgian-style mantel, executed in scagliola by Pennsylvania-based Ahmad Suleiman.

In the absence of a professional interior designer, the client's tastes and idiosyncrasies shine from every wall, cabinet and table: pictures of her ancestors; furniture she collected in Ireland when she was 23; old Georgian side chairs; the pedestal console in the entry hall; the mirror over the mantel and the custom-painted Chinese wall panels in the dining room – every piece fell into place. And where pieces were missing, such as oriental rugs for the kitchen, she found them herself. "Nothing was really selected for her," says Bryant. "And I didn't really know what she was planning on doing. One of the problems of being the architect in a situation like this is that you don't always see the fabrics, furniture and color that people have; you don't see all the pieces. There were items that she didn't tell me she had and then there they were, with a lovely natural feel to them."

Completed in 2006, this quintessentially New York project remains one of Bryant's favorites. "These little gems come along once in a while and there is an opportunity to really connect with the spirit of the work," he says. "For me, I want things to feel natural, to have understood the character of the place and worked with the grain. I like the reaction to be, 'Oh, of course. Why would you have done anything different?'" – *Lynne Lavelle*



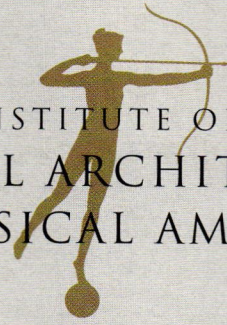
As few items were selected for the client, the décor of every room reflects her personal taste, travels and background. Pieces were introduced as the renovation progressed, sometimes to the architect's surprise.



The client enjoyed the "theater" of concealed pieces and faux book covers in the new library. Made from old-growth Oregon pine and fabricated in Paris, it features a bar and television hidden behind bookcases.

WEB ONLY: For additional photographs of this project, go to www.period-homes.com/extras/March10Bryant.htm

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Watercolor Sketch, Grand Canal, Venice, 1989 by Brian Connolly.



Sublime Sanctuary

Architect Ken Tate blends Federal and Greek Revival narratives in Oxford, MS.

“There is quite a subtext to the design – it’s really a house within a house,” says award-winning architect Ken Tate as he begins to describe the 9,000-sq.-ft., U-shaped Southern Greek Revival residence he created for a couple in Oxford, MS – home to novelist and Nobel Prize-winner William Faulkner. And much like Faulkner, who mastered a number of stylistic narratives based on the local color of Mississippi, Tate has also mastered the art of melding different stylistic narratives into his Southern vernacular designs.

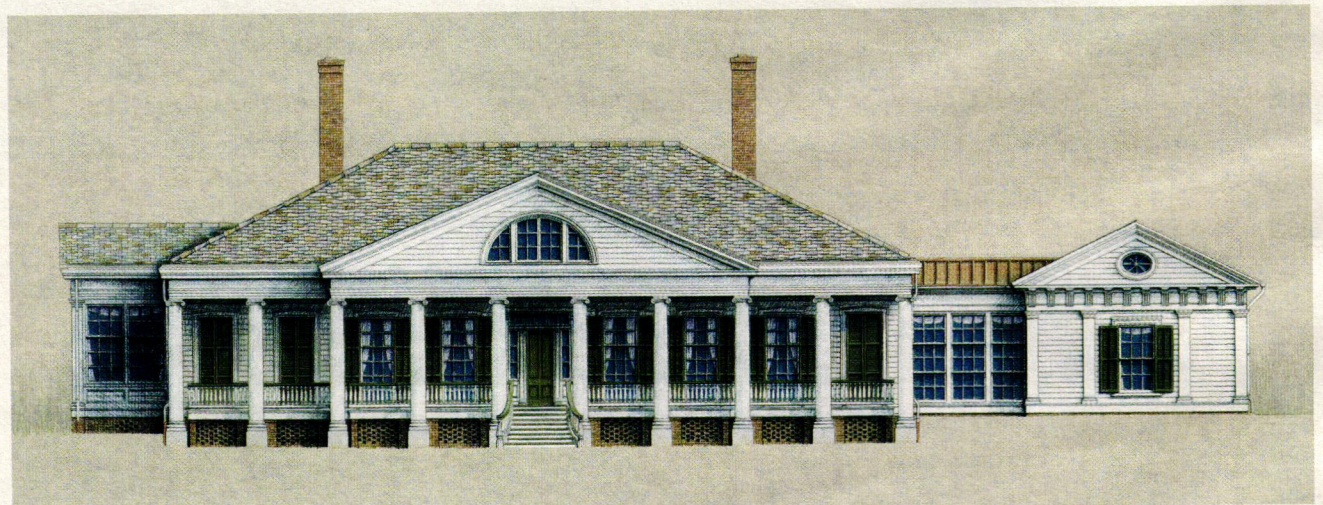
The couple fell in love with the house site, a beautiful piece of land with mature trees and plantings; but the existing house on the property was far less desirable, so they hired Tate, giving him carte blanche to design a new house. After spending six months on a design that Tate describes as “the perfect 14,000-sq.-ft. Greek Revival house,” the couple decided they wanted to take another tack. They had visited the Briars, an 1818 Federal-style house in Natchez, MS, and were drawn to its Federal layout, although they still desired a Greek Revival idiom, which would be in keeping with the historic homes in Oxford.

PROJECT: RESIDENCE, OXFORD, MI

ARCHITECT: KEN TATE ARCHITECT, MADISONVILLE, LA; KEN TATE, PRINCIPAL

CONTRACTOR: GRANTHAM CONSTRUCTION, OXFORD, MS

Tate’s challenge was to create a Federal floor plan within a Greek Revival context. “Southern Greek Revival homes typically are symmetrical two-story houses with a center hall and two square rooms off to each side of that passageway,” says Tate. “The Briars is a one-and-a-half story house with an entry hall bordered by two rooms and a parlor that sits perpendicular to the entryway.” Tate needed to marry the two styles under one roof without making the structure look schizophrenic. In order to



While the layout of the house is Federal, the one-and-a-half-story house appears Southern Greek Revival on the exterior, where Ionic columns support a large pediment with a fanlight window above a deep sitting porch. *Rendering: courtesy of Ken Tate Architect*

Top: This 9,000-sq.-ft. home by Ken Tate Architect sits on the highest point on a 10-acre property in Oxford, MS, surrounded by mature trees. *All photos: Timothy Dunford*

Right: The 1,000-sq.-ft. living room faces the terrace and pool area. The bank of windows allow for natural light to flood the space. On the opposite wall, interior floor-to-ceiling windows retract into the wall above to create walkways between the dining and living spaces.

Below: Tate referred to Minard Lafever's 1833 *The Modern Builder's Guide* to create the Greek Revival moldings for the interiors.



achieve this goal, he created a narrative for the house – a fictitious timeline that would allow the design to appear as if it had evolved over a number of decades. “We really wanted the house to feel like a Federal that had been brought up to fashion 50 years later,” says Tate. “Although the layout is Federal, the interior cornices, baseboards, pilasters and trim have Greek Revival proportions.”

The revised program, consisting of a main house, a guest house and a pool house, mixes materials in the construction of the buildings: The main house is wood while the dependencies are brick. Again, this gives the illusion that the structures were built during different time periods. The house is sited on the property's highest point, which happens to be the farthest point from the road and the perfect spot for privacy. A long winding drive meanders through the established trees to an antique granite cobblestone car court that reveals the Greek Revival façade.

One of the greatest puzzles in designing the house was to express the Greek Revival style in the one-and-a-half-story house. “Federal proportions are not as tall as the common Greek Revival,” says Tate. “Interior ceilings in a Federal are usually under 12 ft. high, but in a Greek Revival, they can be as high as 16 ft.” To create the correct proportions on the exterior of the home, Tate placed the Ionic columns and plinth blocks that flank the front of the house below the porch floor level to achieve the desired scale. “The wooden columns on the house have a distinct Roman influence,” he says. The columns support a large protruding pediment – a hallmark of the Greek Revival style



The kitchen and breakfast room are outfitted with sinker cypress cabinetry and wall paneling. The floors throughout the home came from an old tobacco warehouse.

– which contains a thermal fanlight window. The porch balusters are thick and masculine on this deep sitting porch, also in keeping with the Greek Revival language. To follow the illusion that the house had been altered and remodeled over time, Tate included a brick stair with an iron railing on the front of the house. “Many old wooden steps on houses in the area have rotted away and have often been replaced by brick.”

Tate's ability to meld two divergent styles is evident upon entering the building. The Federal layout is cleverly overlaid with Greek Revival detailing. “We relied on 19th-century architect Minard Lafever's *The Modern Builder's Guide* to design the Greek Revival-inspired cornices, capitals and interior trim



work in the interiors,” says Tate. The entry hall is flanked by the dining room to the right and the gentleman’s study to the left. The dining room, which was designed for formal dinners, has two large interior floor-to-ceiling windows opening into the living room. The interior windows serve several purposes: they create the illusion that this room was a later addition to the home; they increase the natural light in the rooms (the deep porches cut down on the amount of direct sunlight); and they create a flow to the spaces while the home is being used for entertaining. The 1,000-sq.-ft. living room has a bank of custom double hung six-over-nine paned windows looking onto the back porch. To avoid them looking like one large modern picture window, the windows and their trim become an architectural device – a Classical frame for the porch and shimmering pool beyond. The window trim is built up into the cornice and the panes are made of hand-blown glass.

The service spaces – the sinker cypress kitchen, laundry and pantry – border the east side of the house to capture early morning light while the private spaces – the master bedroom, master bath, sitting room and his and her walk-in closets – border the west side. The 12-in.-wide heart-pine flooring throughout the house is reclaimed from old tobacco warehouses. Tate tucked two guest bedrooms into the home’s front and rear pediments. Interior designer Jimmy Graham of Memphis, TN-based Jimmy Graham Interior Design added flourishes of the Federal period, which appear in the way of antiques and mural wallcoverings that reinforce the storyline Tate has created. The two masonry dependencies – the pool house and exercise cabana – that flank the pool are pure Greek Revival narratives; Tate describes them as masculine and austere. The brick structures and the Greek Doric columns were erected using traditional construction methods of stacked bricks with a stucco overlay. The wall and patio brick are queen-sized Carolina handmade brick. Tate had the bricklayers clean the brick with wire brushes (rather than harsh chemicals) to give it a more antiqued effect; the mortar is made of white lime and also gives the appearance of being older.

The end result of this Southern storybook house is a testament to Tate’s deep understanding of the language of architecture and his ability to apply it in creating works of art in our built environment. – Nancy Berry

Nancy E. Berry is the editor of New Old House magazine. She has written extensively about architecture and interior design for a variety of publications and is the author of Adding Wainscoting, Mantels, Built-ins, Baseboards, Cornices, Castings and Columns to Your Home (Rockport Publishers, 2007).



Above and above left: The pool house pediment is supported by masculine Greek Doric columns, which were constructed using traditional methods: stacked bricks with a stucco overlay. The bricks used for the terrace are queen-sized Carolina handmade brick.



Tate designed the dependency buildings in the true Greek Revival style and the material used (brick) varies from the main house (wood) to give the illusion that the structures were built in different time periods.

WEB ONLY: For additional photographs of this project, go to www.period-homes.com/extras/March10Tate.htm

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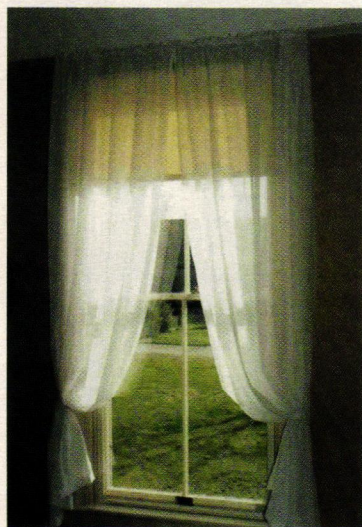
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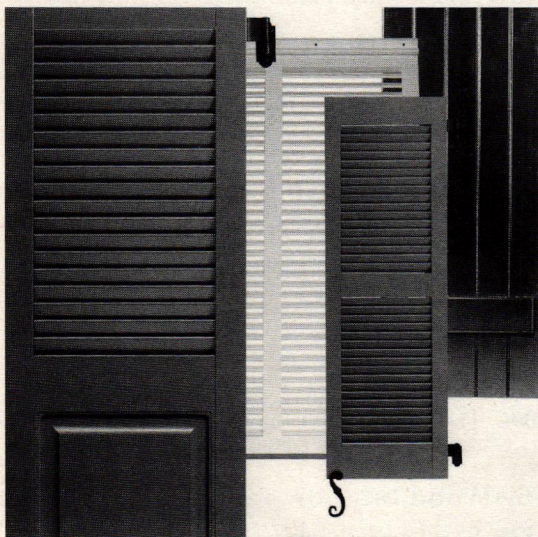
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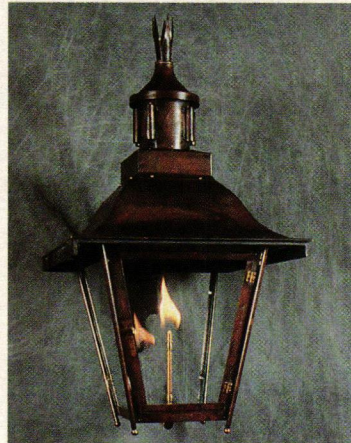
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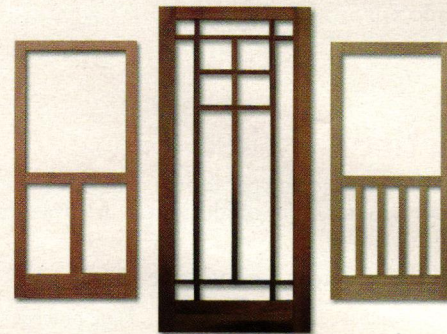
The historic color scheme for this home was specified by The Color People.

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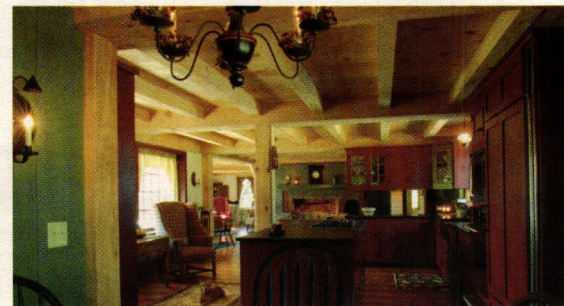
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www.stormwindows.com

Simsbury, CT 06070

Manufacturer of custom glass interior storm windows for energy conservation & soundproofing; maintains the integrity of historic windows; conforms to opening; do-it-yourself installation.

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Glass interior storm windows from Innerglass are made to complement historic windows.



These windows were custom made by Marvin.

Marvin Windows and Doors

888-537-7828; Fax: 651-452-3074

www.marvin.com

Warroad, MN 56763

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800-360-6283; Fax: 404-250-6283

www.oakleafconservatories.com

Atlanta, GA 30327

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This classically proportioned conservatory was designed and built by Oak Leaf Conservatories; it can accommodate up to 150 people.

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800-541-9527; Fax: 877-238-2452

www.parrettwindows.com

Dorchester, WI 54425

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www.phelpscompany.com

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Manufacturer & designer of traditional, hot-forged solid-brass window hardware: sash pulleys, weights, chains & cords, sash locks & lifts, casement stays & fasteners, storm/screen hangers, bronze screen wire & screen-door latch sets.

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Renaissance Conservatories

800-882-4657; Fax: 717-661-7727

www.renaissanceconservatories.com

Leola, PA 17540

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This sunroom was designed and fabricated by Renaissance Conservatories.



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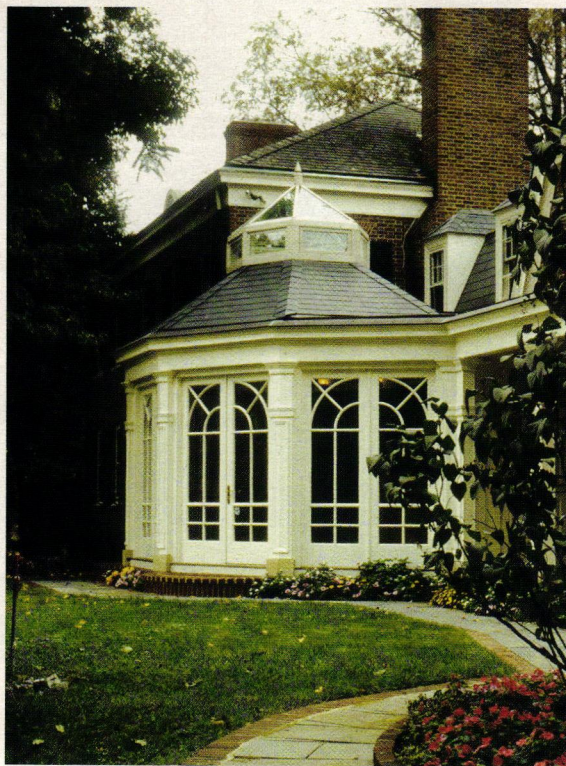
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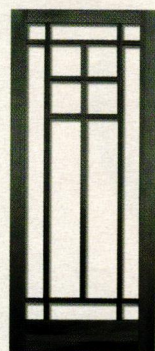
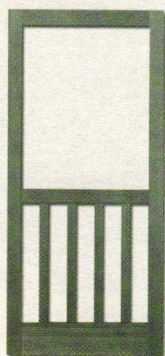
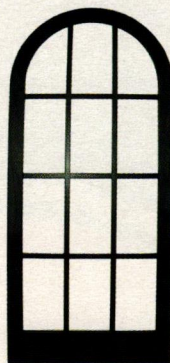
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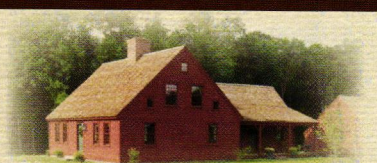
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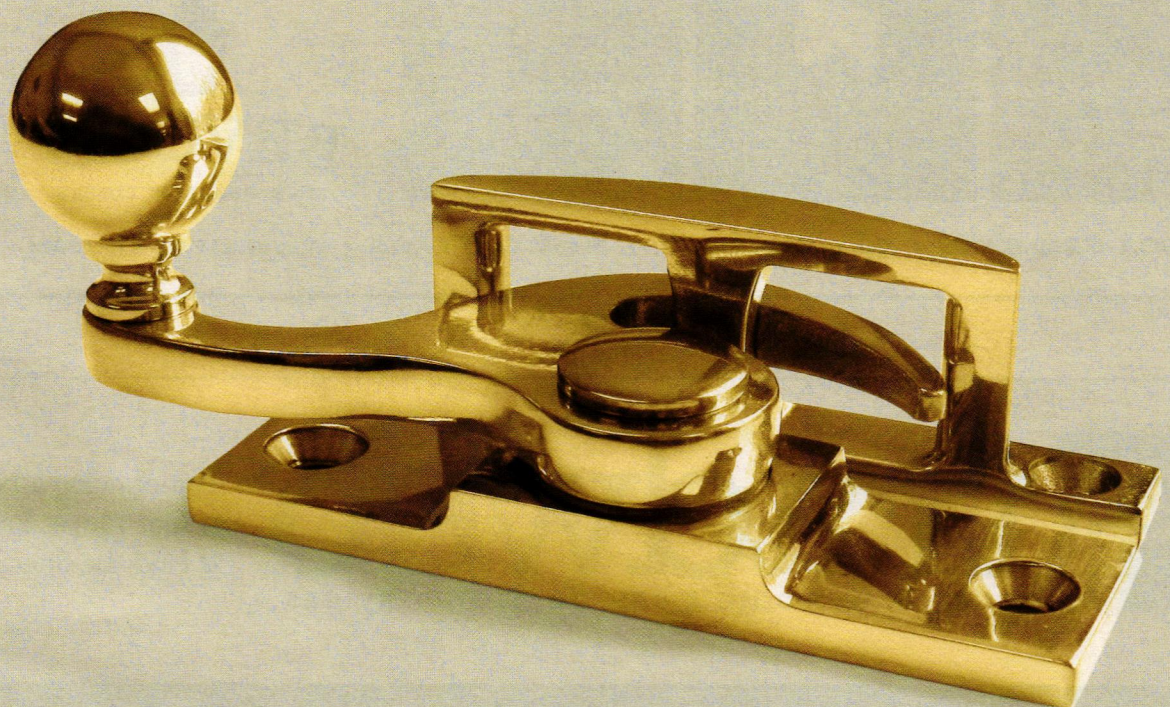
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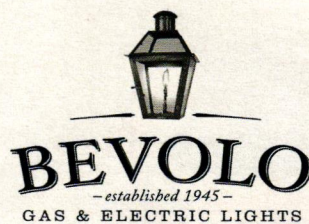
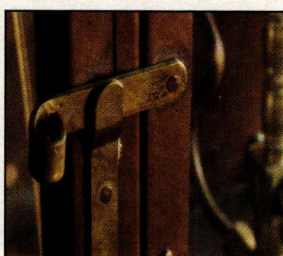
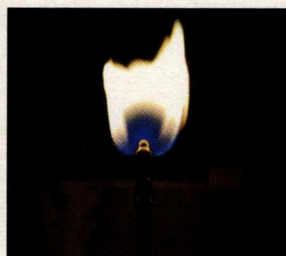
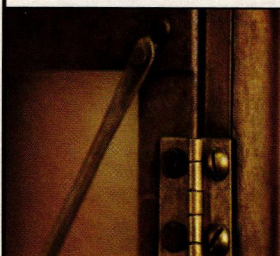
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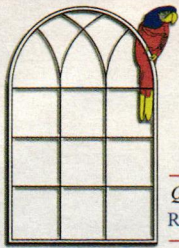
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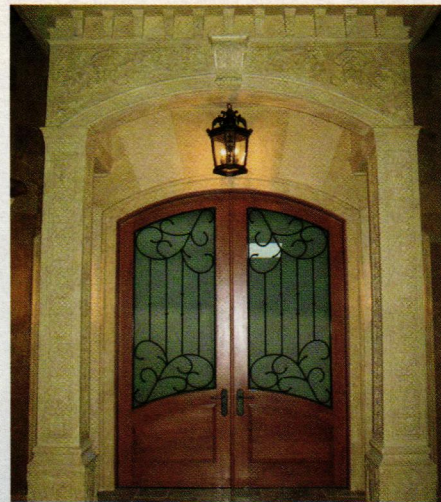
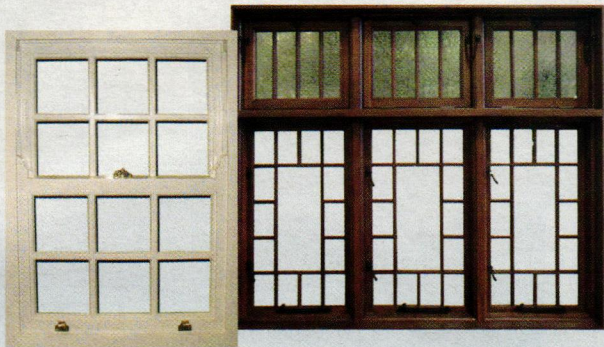
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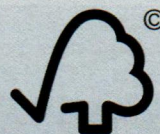
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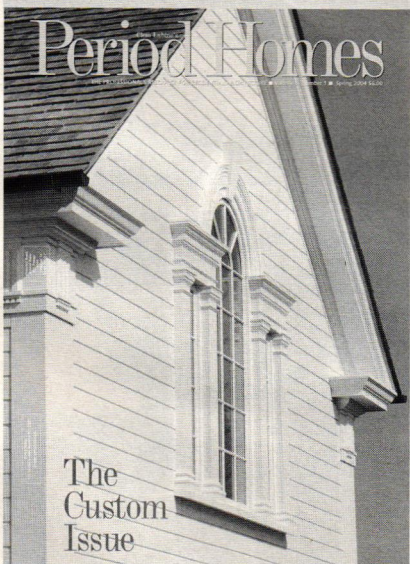


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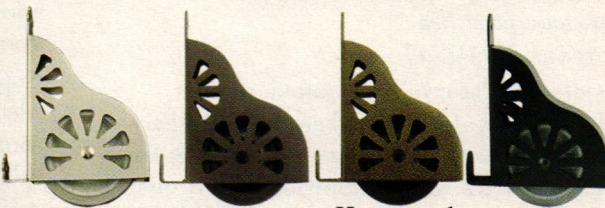


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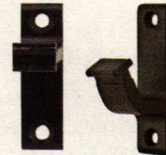
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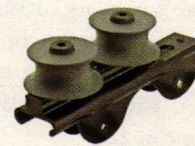
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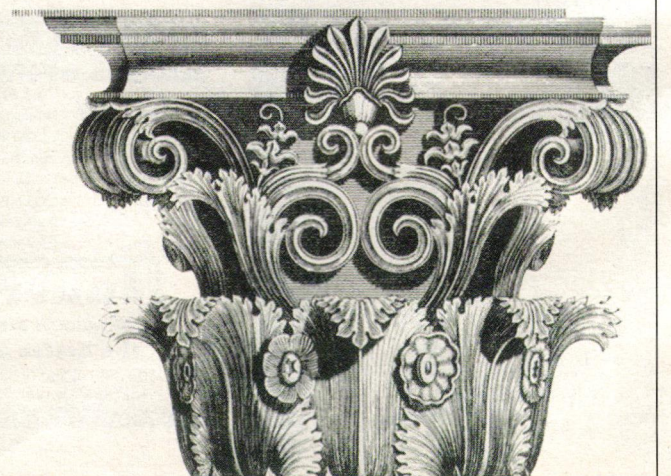
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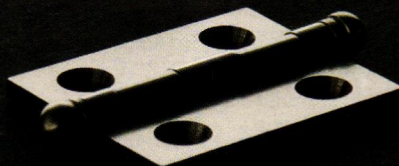
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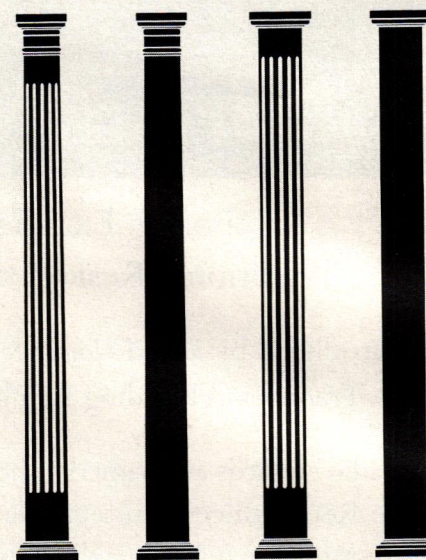
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Supplier of standard & custom moldings & more: embossed, sculpted & polyfoam moldings; columns, capitals, ceiling medallions, niches, domes, corbels, windows, doors, stair parts, hardwood flooring & more.

Click on No. 138



Wood columns in a variety of species are available from Superior Moulding in diameters ranging from 6 to 30 in. and lengths up to 30 ft.

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.

Click on No. 1061

Wilbur, Frederick - Woodcarver

434-263-4827; No fax

www.frederickwilbur-woodcarver.com
Lovingston, VA 22949

Manufacturer of traditional decorative interior & exterior carvings: furniture, mantels, moldings, brackets, friezes, capitals, rosettes & heraldry; original designs & historically accurate reproductions.

Click on No. 1650

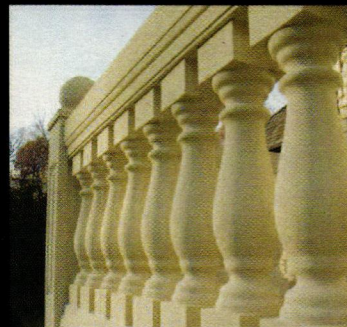
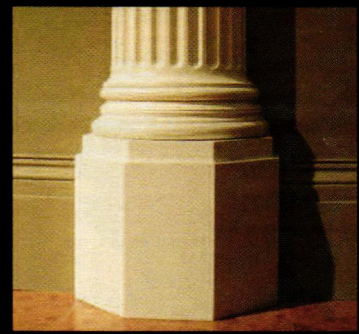
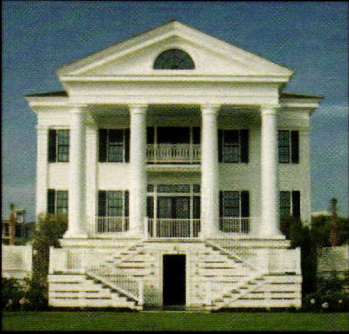


This capital was carved in basswood by Frederick Wilbur - Woodcarver.



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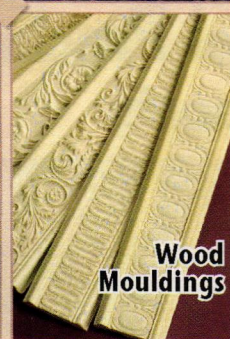
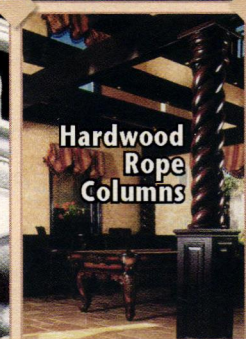
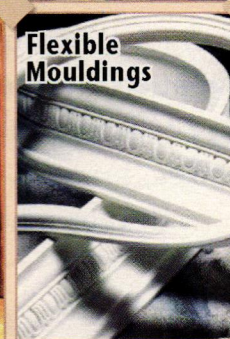
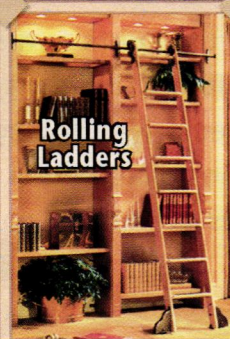
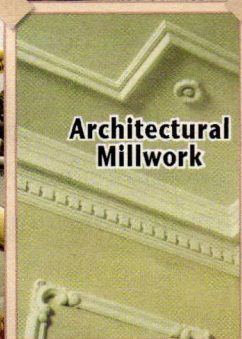
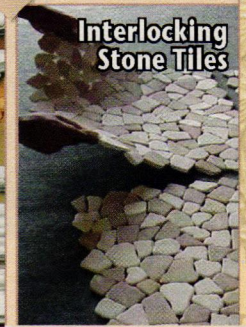
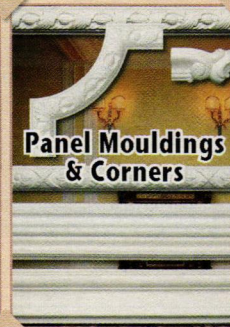
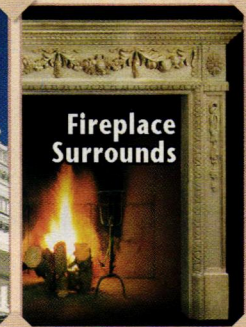
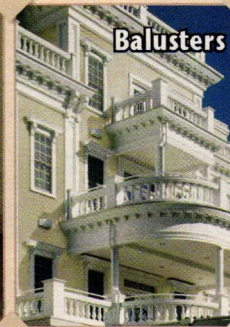
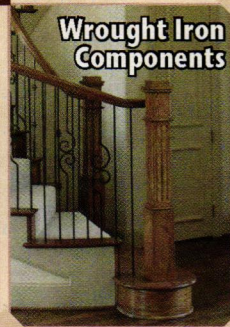
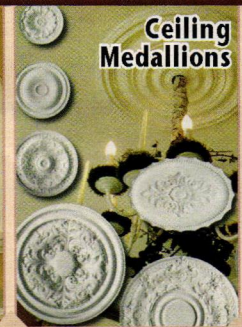
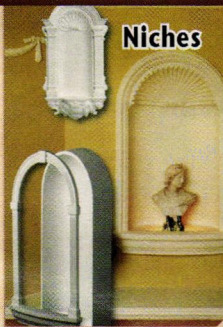
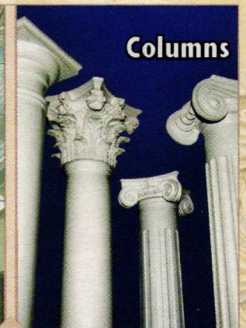
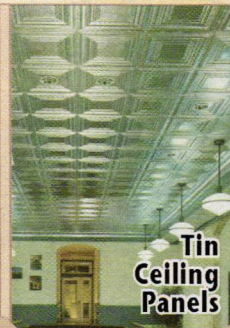
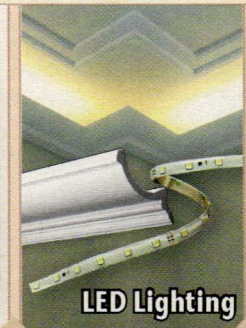
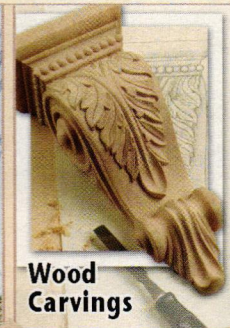
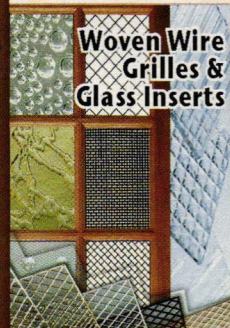


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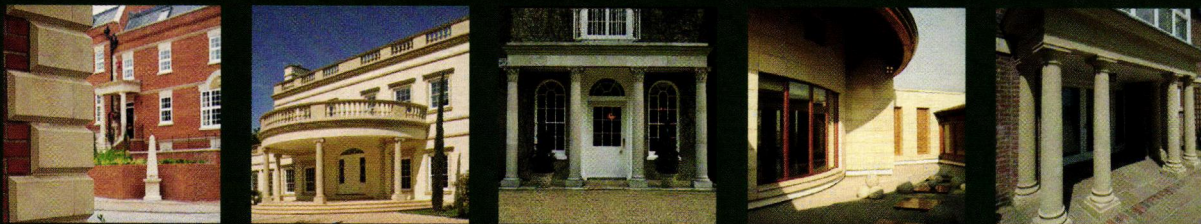
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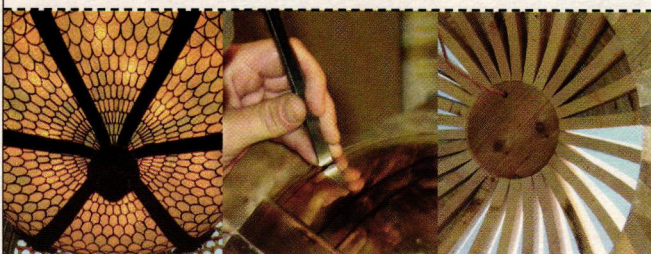
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www.intbau.org

Traditional Product Reports



Traditional Product Reports is a micro site containing in-depth information on traditional building products and materials, including checklists, directories, buying guides, case studies, stories, articles, primers, installation tips, and other information, along with thousands of links to companies serving the field.

www.traditionalproductreports.com

Wood Flooring

To order free product literature from a company listed in this Buying Guide, go to www.period-homes.com/rs and click on the appropriate reader service number.

Antique & Vintage Woods of America

518-398-0049; Fax: 518-398-4011
www.antiqueandvintagewoods.com
 Pine Plains, NY 12567

Supplier of reclaimed & recycled lumber: wide-plank flooring in various species up to 20 ft. long; Signature brand antique plank in tobacco barn oak, chestnut, mushroom wood & other species; hand-hewn & sawn beams up to 42 ft.

Authentic Wood Floors, Inc.

800-765-3966; Fax: 717-428-0464
www.authenticwoodfloors.com
 Glen Rock, PA 17327

Manufacturer of flooring, paneling, molding & wainscoting: antique wood (beams & board stock) reclaimed from houses, barns & factories & recycled; milled & kiln dried; wide-board, strip & random-width flooring.

Bear Creek Lumber

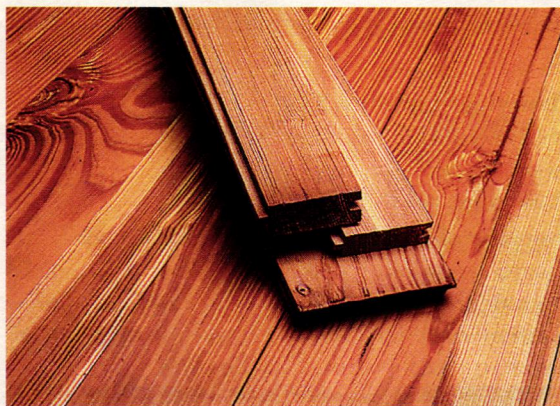
800-597-7191; Fax: 509-997-2040
www.bearcreeklumber.com
 Winthrop, WA 98862

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.

Click on No. 521



Bear Creek Lumber supplied this hardwood flooring.



Resawn longleaf yellow heart pine from Sylvan Brandt comes in widths of 3 to 5 in. and lengths of 5 to 16 ft.

Brandt, Sylvan

717-626-4520; Fax: 717-626-5867
www.sylvanbrandt.com
 Lititz, PA 17543

Supplier of 18th- & 19th-century building materials salvaged from old houses & barns: columns, doors, mantels, sinks & bathtubs; antique & resawn flooring; antique heart pine, ancient oak, chestnut, white pine & hemlock; radiators; since 1960.

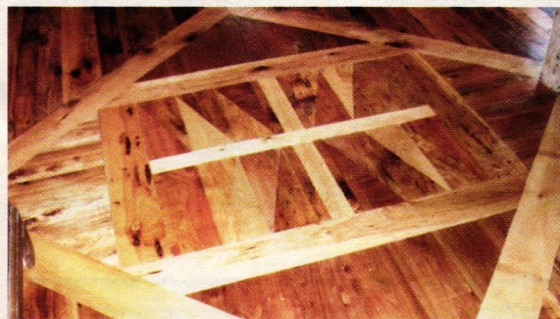
Click on No. 3950

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.

Click on No. 2744



Carlson's Barnwood Co. supplied this antique Americana mixed-species inlay and the antique oak flooring that surrounds it.

Chestnut Specialists, Inc.

860-283-4209; Fax: Same as phone
www.chestnutspec.com
 Plymouth, CT 06782

Supplier of re-milled flooring from antique barn lumber: authentic antique planks, hewn beams, weathered siding, original flooring, antique heavy timber & salvaged logs for milling.

Conklin's Authentic Antique Barnwood

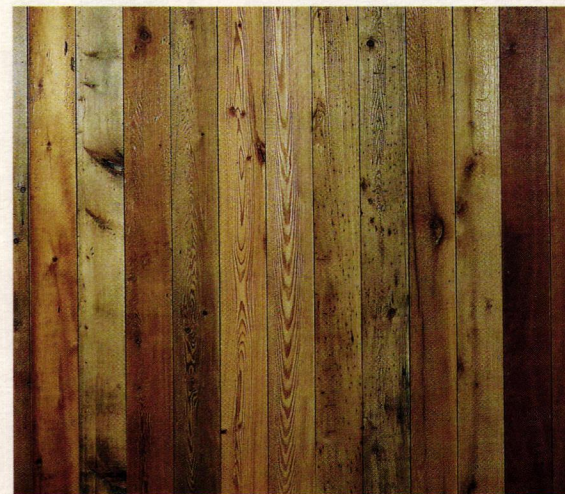
570-465-3832; Fax: 570-465-3835
www.conklinsbarnwood.com
 Susquehanna, PA 18847

Wholesale distributor of antique barn wood & hand-hewn beams: wide-board, strip & random-width flooring; white pine, chestnut, antique heart pine, pine, antique oak & hemlock; hewn rafters, pole rafters & half-rounds.

Country Road Associates, Ltd.

845-677-6041; Fax: 845-677-6532
www.countryroadassociates.com
 Millbrook, NY 12545

Supplier of 19th-century reclaimed flooring materials: white pine, hemlock, heart pine, white oak, chestnut & walnut; widths from 3-18 in.; hand-hewn beams & barn siding; cabinetry & farm tables.



Country Road Associates produces handcrafted flooring, as well as cabinetry and furniture, from 19th-century reclaimed white pine, hemlock, oak, heart pine, chestnut, cherry and walnut.

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 Cambridge, IL 61238
 1-800-734-5824

www.carlsonsbarnwood.com

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Craftsman Lumber Co.

978-448-5621; Fax: 978-448-2754
www.craftsmanlumber.com
Groton, MA 01450

Custom manufacturer of wood flooring & paneling: 6-26 in. wide; antique heart pine, antique chestnut, eastern white pine, red pine, northern red oak, white oak, cherry, walnut & ash; all material dried & machined on premises.

Click on No. 4320



Wide-plank flooring from Craftsman Lumber is dried and machined on the premises.

Housatonic Hardwoods, Inc.

800-924-5684; Fax: 860-927-3911
www.hhardwoods.com
Kent, CT 06757

Supplier of wide-plank flooring: oak, ash, cherry, maple, walnut, southern yellow pine & eastern white pine.



This wood flooring was supplied by Housatonic Hardwoods.

Kentucky Flooring Company

859-539-2372; No fax
www.kentuckyflooringcompany.com
Winchester, KY 40391

Manufacturer of wide-plank hardwood flooring: ash, American black cherry, wormy maple, red oak, white oak, poplar, walnut & quartersawn oak; select & natural grades; widths from 3 to 8 in.

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.



This flooring was installed using reclaimed antique heart pine in a flatsawn select grade supplied by Longleaf Lumber.

Longwood Antique Woods

859-233-2268; Fax: 859-455-9629
www.longwoodantiquewoods.com
Lexington, KY 40505

Supplier of antique flooring & vintage building materials: hand-hewn barn frames for home conversions, antique log homes & cabins; large variety of timbers & beams; antique stall doors from famous Kentucky farms; reclaimed brick.



Longwood Antique Woods provided the salvaged flooring used in this residence.

Lumber Liquidators, Inc.

800-HARDWOOD; Fax: 757-566-0621
www.lumberliquidators.com
Toano, VA 23168

Manufacturer of hardwood flooring: exotic & domestic wood; Bellwood comes with a 50-year warranty; cork flooring; grilles; maple & cherry butcher blocks; 75 locations nationwide.

Click on No. 1261



Lumber Liquidators supplied this Bellwood prefinished hardwood flooring, which is available in a variety of wood species and grades.

Superior Moulding, Inc.

800-473-1415; Fax: 818-376-1314
www.superiormoulding.com
Van Nuys, CA 91411

Supplier of standard & custom moldings & more: embossed, sculpted & polyfoam moldings; columns, capitals, ceiling medallions, niches, domes, corbels, windows, doors, stair parts, hardwood flooring & more.

Click on No. 138

The Woods Co.

888-548-7609; Fax: 717-263-9346
www.thewoodscompany.com
Chambersburg, PA 17201

Manufacturer of wide-plank flooring from new wood & re-milled antique wood: heart pine, oak, chestnut & yellow & white pine; surface-textured flooring; antique beams; stair treads & risers, floor vents, siding, paneling & more.



Wide-plank flooring made from both new and reclaimed wood is available from The Woods Co.

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512-328-8837; Fax: Same as phone
www.wiwpine.com
Austin, TX 78716

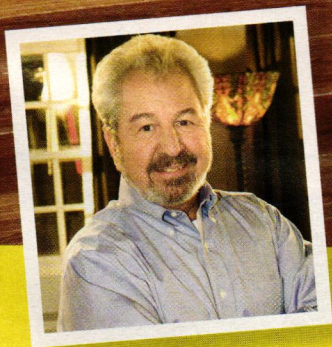
Manufacturer of antique longleaf pine flooring: Old Reveal, a rustic-grade floor that displays old saw marks; clear, defect-free quartersawn flooring; timbers.



The flooring in this room is select-grade longleaf heart pine from What It's Worth.

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American Restoration Tile, Inc.

501-455-1000; Fax: 501-455-1004

www.restorationtile.com

Mabelvale, AR 72103

Manufacturer of custom ceramic tile for restoration & new construction: mosaics; floor, wall, subway, kitchen & bath tile; custom matching of glazed & unglazed tile; all sizes.

Click on No. 172



American Restoration Tile manufactured this 1-in. hexagonal, unglazed porcelain flooring tile.

Architectural Products by Outwater, LLC

800-835-4400; Fax: 800-835-4403

www.outwater.com

Bogota, NJ 07603

Manufacturer of 65,000+ decorative building products: architectural moldings & millwork, columns & capitals, wrought-iron components, mantels, balustrading, door & shutter hardware, lighting, flooring, ceiling tile, furniture & cabinet components, carvings, arbors & more.

Click on No. 5008

Bergen Bluestone Co.

908-237-2680; Fax: 908-237-2681

30 Copper Penny Rd.

Flemington, NJ 08822

Supplier of natural stone: granite, marble, slate, bluestone, sandstone & quartzite; flooring & pavers.

Cantera Especial

800-564-8608; Fax: 818-907-0343

www.canteraespecial.com

Pacific Palisades, CA 90272

Manufacturer of hand-carved natural-stone products made from limestone, cantera, adoquin, travertine, marble & sandstone quarried in Europe & Mexico: fireplaces, fountains, columns, balustrades, gazebos, cornices, flooring, planters & sculpture.



This stone flooring was provided by Cantera Especial.

Designs in Tile

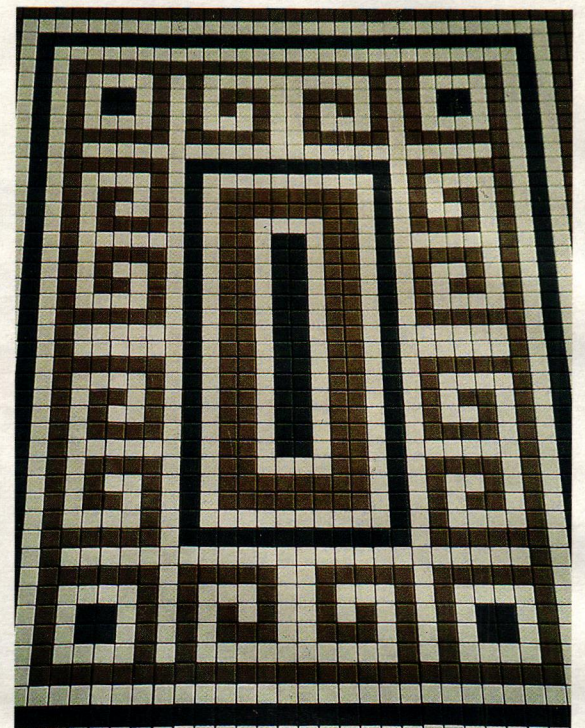
530-926-2629; No fax

www.designsintile.com

Mt. Shasta, CA 96067

Manufacturer of custom tile & murals: Victorian, English & American Arts & Crafts; Anglo-Japanese, Wm. Morris/DeMorgan, Tropicco, Malibu, Catalina, Neogrec, Gothic Revival, Art Nouveau & other styles; cut-tile encaustic flooring.

Call for more information.



This Greek Revival-style, 36x48-in. mosaic floor was manufactured and installed by Designs in Tile for an entry to a brownstone.

Lumber Liquidators, Inc.

800-HARDWOOD; Fax: 757-566-0621

www.lumberliquidators.com

Toano, VA 23168

Manufacturer of hardwood flooring: exotic & domestic wood; Bellawood comes with a 50-year warranty; cork flooring; grilles; maple & cherry butcher blocks; 75 locations nationwide.

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Subway Ceramics

608-237-7274; Fax: 608-237-7291

www.subwaytile.com

Verona, WI 53593

Supplier of handcrafted ceramic subway tile: for kitchens, bathrooms, foyers, fireplaces, door & window frames, flooring & more; geometric mosaics.

Click on No. 1635

Traditional Product Reports

Traditional Product Reports is a micro site containing in-depth information on traditional building products and materials, including checklists, directories, buying guides, case studies, stories, articles, primers, installation tips, and other information, along with thousands of links to companies serving the field.



www.traditionalproductreports.com

Interior Molded Ornament

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A&M Victorian Decorations, Inc.

800-671-0693; Fax: 626-575-1781

www.aandmvictorian.com

South El Monte, CA 91733

Manufacturer of architectural elements: mantels, columns, moldings, balustrades, wall caps, pavers, quoins, coping, planters, fountains & gazebos; cast stone & plaster; stock & custom designs; foam molding.



A&M Victorian manufactures a wide range of architectural molded elements, including capitals and mantels.

Abatron, Inc.

800-445-1754; Fax: 262-653-2019

www.abatron.com

Kenosha, WI 53144

Manufacturer of epoxy wood-restoration system: LiquidWood penetrating wood consolidant hardens deteriorated wood & WoodEpoxy wood-replacement compound for filling & rebuilding; AboCrete epoxy patching & resurfacing cement/grout. Click on No. 1300

Architectural Elements, Inc.

800-399-0268; Fax: 978-263-8504

www.architectural-elements.com

Boxborough, MA 01719

National discount supplier of stock & custom decorative molding & millwork, columns & capitals for interior & exterior: crown, cornice & flexible moldings; ceiling medallions; brackets, corbels & composite & fiberglass balustrade & railing system.

Architectural Products by Outwater, LLC

800-835-4400; Fax: 800-835-4403

www.outwater.com

Bogota, NJ 07603

Manufacturer of 65,000+ decorative building products: architectural moldings & millwork, columns & capitals, wrought-iron components, mantels, balustrading, door & shutter hardware, lighting, flooring, ceiling tile, furniture & cabinet components, carvings, arbors & more.

Click on No. 5008



Outwater offers prefabricated arches manufactured from polyurethane covered in drywall paper.

Century Architectural Specialties

877-262-1999; Fax: 770-590-3190

www.architecturalspecialties.com

Marietta, GA 30066

Manufacturer of interior & exterior moldings: crown, cornice, corner, chair rail, frieze & other moldings; niches, pilasters, plinths, columns, corbels & stair brackets; ceiling rims, domes & medallions.



Century Architectural Specialties' selection of interior molded ornament includes a variety of Classically inspired elements.

Chadsworth Columns

800-486-2118; Fax: 910-763-3191

www.chadsworth.com

Wilmington, NC 28402

Manufacturer of authentically correct architectural columns: complete line of columns, piers, pilasters & posts; interior & exterior; variety of sizes, styles & materials; 4 different grade levels of wood columns; interior molded ornament; millwork. Click on No. 1580 for PolyStone; 180 for wood

Decorators Supply Corp.

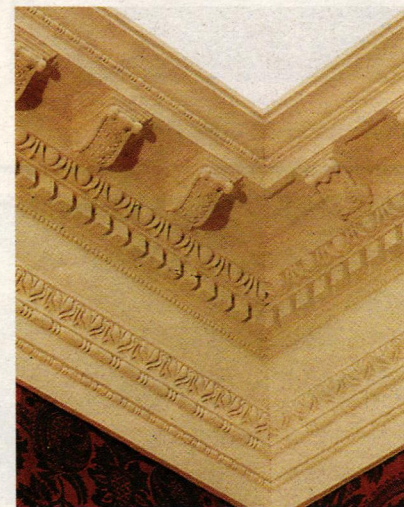
773-847-6300; Fax: 773-847-6357

www.decoratorssupply.com

Chicago, IL 60609

Supplier of 14,000 patterns for period architectural elements & molded ornament: cornices, columns, capitals, mantels, ornamental ceilings, niches, domes, brackets & corbels; plaster of Paris, wood & compo; since 1893.

Click on No. 210



Decorators Supply created this multi-layered cornice molding.

Felber Ornamental Plastering Corp.

800-392-6896; Fax: 610-275-6636

www.felber.net

Norristown, PA 19404

Supplier of historical ornamental castings: cornice moldings, columns, capitals, mantels, ceiling medallions, domes, brackets, corbels, coffers & period ceilings; plaster, GRG & polymer-modified gypsum; design services.



Cornice #6310 and niche cap #7821 from Felber Ornamental Plastering Corp. were used in this custom wall installation.

Foster Reeve & Associates Inc.

631-765-6490; Fax: 631-765-6494
 www.fraplaster.com
 Southhold, NY 11971

Custom fabricator of fine ornamental & architectural plaster details: columns & mantels; specialty plaster wall finish applications & stock moldings; design development (CAD), engineering & plaster program-management services.

Goodwin Associates

585-248-3320; Fax: 585-387-0153
 www.goodwinassociates.com
 Rochester, NY 14618

Supplier of interior & exterior architectural building products: columns, capitals, balustrade systems, moldings, domes, medallions, metal ceilings & more; polyurethane, wood & fiberglass; stock & custom.

Haddonstone (USA), Ltd.

719-948-4554; Fax: 719-948-4285
 www.haddonstone.com
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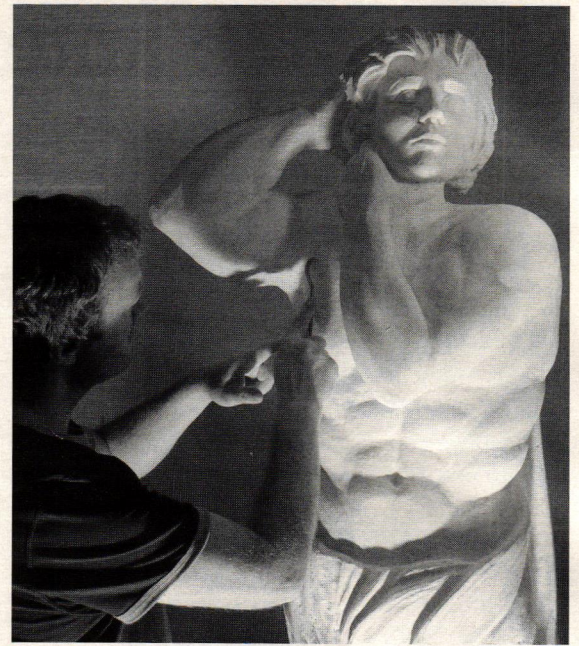
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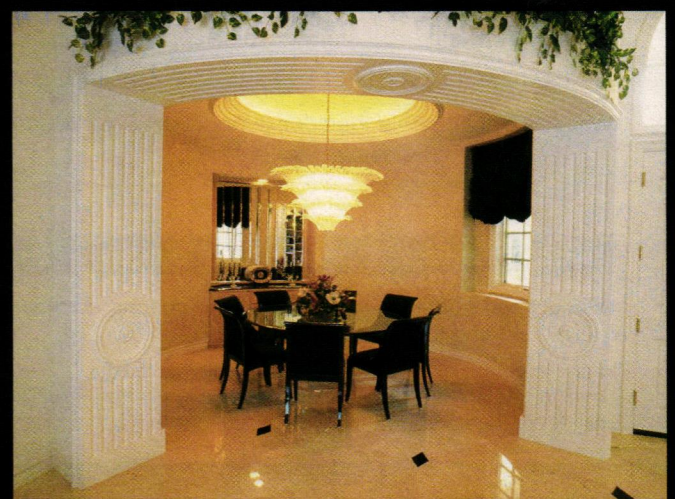
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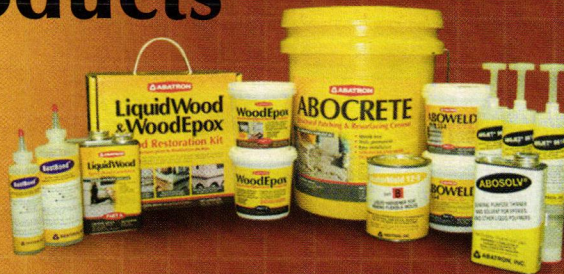
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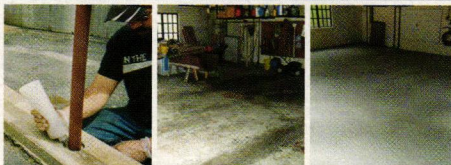


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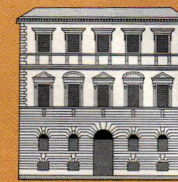
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Reaching New Heights

The embossed patterns of yore are now showing their mercurial metal charms in houses old and new. *By Gordon Bock*

Economical, ever adaptable and unabashedly ornamental, the pressed-metal “tin” ceilings that put their decorative stamp on countless gaslight-era interiors are finding shiny new cache in the high-tech 21st century. From origins as ersatz plasterwork in commercial spaces of all kinds, they’ve made an easy leap in recent years to residential ceilings, walls and beyond by reinventing their industrial charm though what one designer calls “unlimited creativity.”

Only in North America, perhaps, could a material born as a substitute grow scores more uses – and far longer appeal – than what it replicates. Along with sheet-metal shingles, cornices, storefronts and other mass-produced wonders of the Industrial Revolution, pressed-metal ceilings seem to have first appeared in the 1870s – the offspring of not only the age of invention, but also a shifting economy. “When labor started to get more expensive,” says Glenn Eldridge, second-generation owner of Chelsea Decorative Metal of Houston, TX, “so did ornate plaster ceilings, and an economical alternative became putting up a ceiling of decorative metal and painting it white.” The idea expanded into a flourishing industry in the 1880s that, by its heyday in the 1900s, had star trade names such as Wheeling Corrugating Company and Canton Steel Ceiling Company.

Of course, manufacturers who already served a ripe market in public buildings like city halls, department stores and restaurants were happy to expand beyond ceilings. “Before long, metal was being used for wainscots, especially where there was a lot of traffic,” says Eldridge. “The backs of chairs would still scratch the paint, but that was easier to repair than gouges in plaster or wood.” Manufacturers also sold panels of stamped-metal brick and stonework for exteriors.

The dominant patterns of the day were decidedly late-Victorian, and reflected the era’s eclectic tastes with embossed versions of Greek, Rococo,

Empire, Oriental and Gothic motifs, as well as Colonial Revival and streamline idioms. By 1929, though, the vogue for tin ceilings was slipping. “It crashed with the stock market, largely for economic reasons,” says Mark Quitno of W. F. Norman, producers in Nevada, MO, since 1898. “World War II was the final nail in the tin ceiling coffin, because metal was diverted to make planes, tanks and ships – not decorations for ceilings.” It wasn’t until the urban renewal era and the investment tax credits of the 1970s and 1980s that people looked again for the tin ceiling that had defined the early years of the century.

A New Spin on Tin

For a material that started so commercial, pressed metal has undergone a remarkable reinvention as a surface that says “today” for homeowners. “We do more residential than commercial,” says Eldridge, adding that “a commercial order involves more quantity, but there are more residential orders.”

Part of the appeal of decorative pressed metal is the nostalgia factor. “People remember the ice cream parlor or the drugstore from their past and want some of the same look in their house,” says Eldridge. Fortunately, the bulk of designs that long-term manufacturers sell are all historic patterns from the 1890s to 1920s.

The other driver is clearly pressed metal’s versatility. The most common applications by far are for ceilings, walls and backsplashes, in that order, but intrepid designers and homeowners also apply the material to walls in bathrooms and powder rooms. Beyond this, “uses run the



Chelsea Decorative of Houston, TX, makes the Gothic Gold tin-ceiling pattern with a hand-painted finish.

gamut,” according to Brian Greer of Brian Greer’s Tin Ceilings, Walls & Unique Metal Work in Petersburg, Ontario. He’s sold panels for headboards, for tabletops (under glass or poured epoxy), bathhouses and even the insides of cars and trucks. Greer stresses that pressed-metal can fit most any budget by, say, just installing a few panels in the center of a room for under \$100, and that the material finds a home in houses of all sizes, from 1,000 sq. ft. on up. In fact, Greer reports residential jobs of 30,000 to 40,000 sq. ft., where there might be pressed metal in one, two or three rooms.

Regardless of a house’s age or style, kitchen backsplashes have become the application du jour. “People have used our flatter, smaller-repeat patterns for backsplashes for years and years,” says Quitno, “but there has been an upsurge in purchases for backsplash material in the last five years or so. My guess is homeowners got the idea from recent magazine features.”

“It seems to have started with an article in a magazine about 10 years ago,” agrees Eldridge, noting that small patterns work better for backsplashes – 6-in. rather than 24-in. repeats – even for the larger areas behind that are usually also covered.

Of course, anyone who wants to use pressed metal for backsplashes, or any location with high humidity, needs to protect the metal with a good coat of oil-based paint or varnish, priming and top-coating both sides of the panel. Properly treated, pressed metal works in bathrooms and even bath houses. But for added insurance, most longtime manufacturers will custom-stamp their panels out of moisture-resistant metals, such as galvanized steel or pure sheet zinc – even solid brass or copper if the budget allows.

Hot Off the Presses

Indeed, “custom” is the operative word when it comes to pressed-metal because of the material’s malleable nature. As the term implies, pressed-metal ceilings and other products are stamped from sheet metal, typically 29- to 30-gauge steel, by forming the sheet between male and female



This tin ceiling was created using panels from Chelsea Decorative.

Right: W.F. Norman Corp. supplied the pressed-tin panels for this Oriental-style ceiling.

dies. Hydraulic presses of one type or another are most common. At Chelsea Decorative Metals, for example, each panel is shaped by hand-feeding sheet metal into an hydraulic press that sandwiches the metal between male and female dies to forge the raised pattern. "This isn't like printing newspapers with a continuous stream coming off the press," says Eldridge. W. F. Norman, in contrast, uses rope-actuated gravity drop hammers, a time-honored technology once used to make products from table flatware to auto-body parts. Here, the weight of a heavy hammer falls under the force of gravity to bring the dies together – very quickly. "Our old drop-hammers still serve us perfectly well," says Quitno, "and because we have precise control over the distance the hammer head drops, we can produce very fine, sharp detail in the panels and moldings we make."

Generally, die size is what determines panel size, with 2x4 ft. being the traditional standard dimension. "You sometimes see old panels that are 2x8 ft.," says Eldridge, "but that means they still had a 2x4-ft. die and just stamped the sheet metal twice." Older panels and dies might also be designed to specialized dimensions, such as 24x30-in. panels for wainscots. More common today are 2x2-ft. panels, which can be made on smaller presses. "Panels in the 2x2-ft. are also easier for one person to install on a ceiling," says Greer. Small panels are increasingly popular for use in dropped ceilings, "which is sort of ironic," notes Eldridge, "because a lot of old metal ceilings got holes punched in them to hang dropped ceilings."

Moldings, cornices and filler pieces (border panels in nondescript patterns) are typically 4 ft. long and vary in width; some manufactures make these with a hemmed edge for safer installation. Panels, however, are un-hemmed because of the need for an overlapping bead. Historic die patterns used by longtime manufacturers can yield repeats as small as 3 in. or, in some cases, as large as 96 in., and can be combined with moldings and fillers for an almost unlimited range of designs, from deep ceiling coffers to crystalline-looking walls.

It's no surprise that tin plating is the basic finish for pressed-metal ceilings, an appearance that Greer likens to the tin on a grocery store tin can.



The raised, embossed decoration of many tin ceiling patterns makes the perfect canvas for faux-painting, too, Brian Greer's Tin Ceilings, Walls & Unique Metal Work

"Some people like the look of tin plating because it reflects what's on the walls," he says. Depending upon the manufacturer, the finish choices expand widely from here, from galvanizing and electroplating in metals such as copper and chrome to the broad color choices of powder-coating. Many installations, though, are simply hand-painted, and whether to paint before or after installation – especially with ceilings – is a matter of personal preference. The raised, embossed decoration of many patterns makes the perfect canvas for faux-painting, too, where the relief details are picked out in a color that contrasts with the background color.

Installation methods vary somewhat by project, but most ceilings are attached with nails or other

recommended fasteners to a base of furring strips or 1/4-in. plywood anchored to joists. For wall projects, such as backsplashes, construction adhesive applied to sound drywall may be sufficient. Whatever the project, Chelsea Decorative Metal, W. F. Norman and Brian Greer's Tin Ceilings, Walls & Unique Metal Work make a point of supporting their product and meeting the particular needs of architects and clients alike. "We work with architects, homeowners and building owners every day," says Quitno, "assisting them with technical questions about design, layout and installation." For making new panels to match an existing historic installation, this may go so far as creating new dies if the manufacturer doesn't already stock something similar. More likely, though, the issue is not the material itself, but its new home. "A lot of orders are putting up metal ceilings for the first time," says Greer, and to help he has a crew that will do local installations or consult on finicky jobs further afield. In fact, the hidden beauty of pressed metal is its ease of use. "When people call we're happy to answer questions – it's a very do-it-yourself material," adds Eldridge. According to John Crosby Freeman, longtime contributor to *Old-House Journal*, "A quick decorative technique is to carefully paint the panels with your favorite dark color using a short nap roller (to avoid filling in the pattern with paint), followed by an application of a gold glaze on the corners and centers of each panel." ■

Gordon Bock, longtime editor of *Old-House Journal*, is a writer, architectural historian, lecturer and technical consultant who comments on historic buildings at www.bocktalk.com.



Pattern no. 704 is one of the many patterns available from W.F. Norman in 2 x 2 ft. panels.



A painted decorative metal ceiling, such as this one by Brian Greer's Tin Ceilings, Walls & Unique Metal Work, is an economical alternative to plaster.

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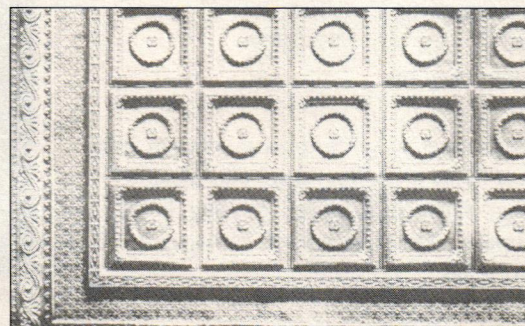
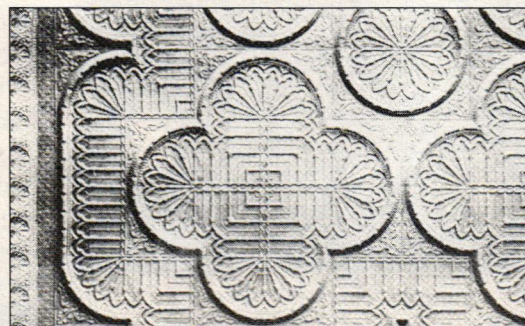
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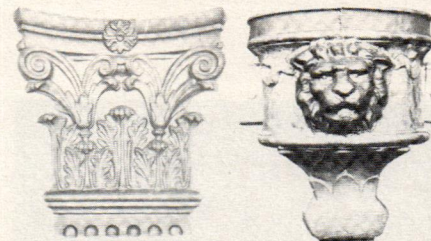
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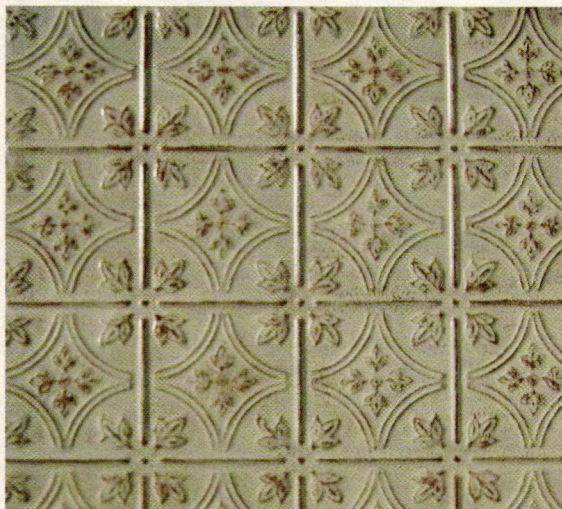
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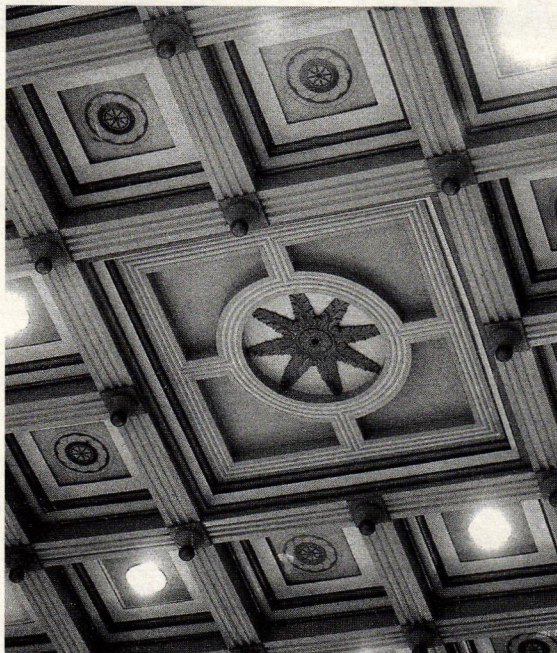
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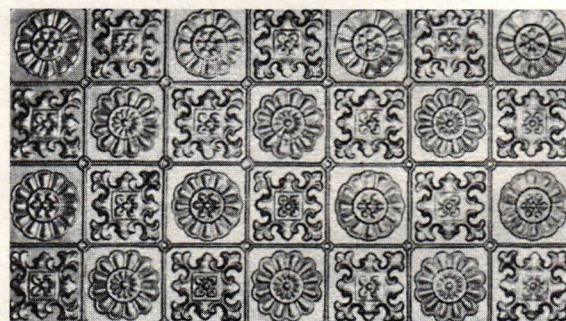
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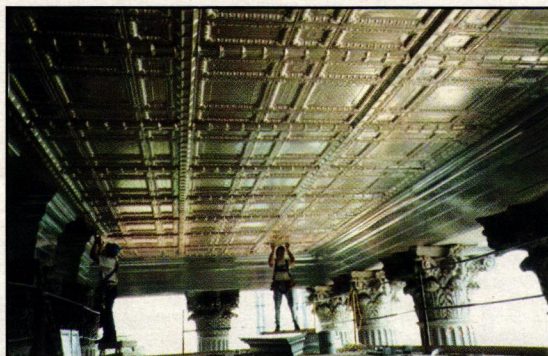
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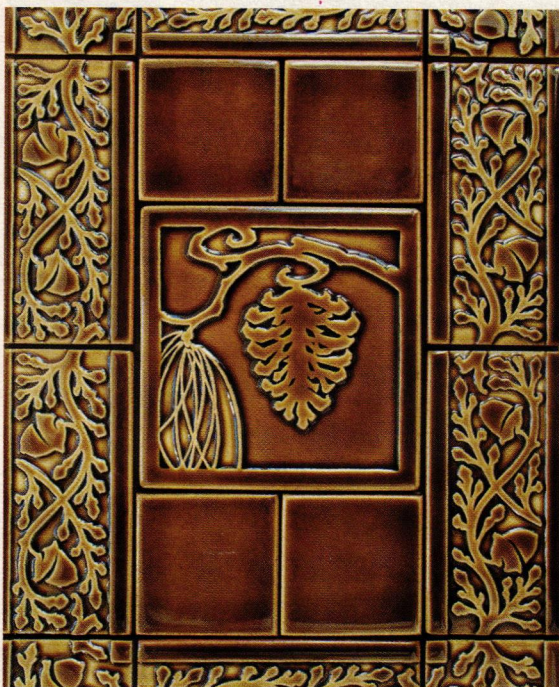
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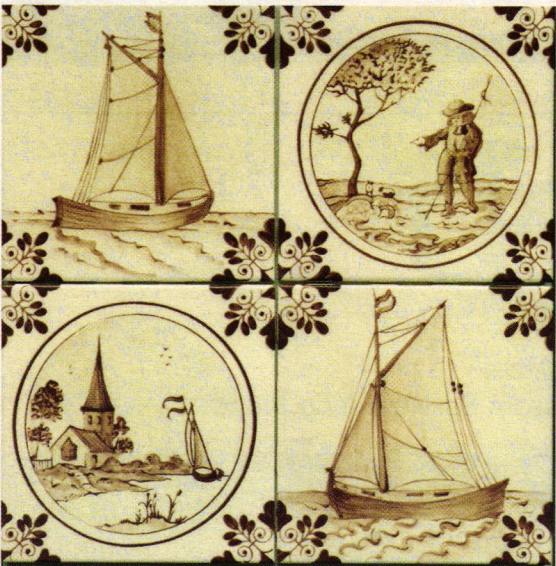


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www.subwaytile.com
 Verona, WI 53593

Supplier of handcrafted ceramic subway tile: for kitchens, bathrooms, foyers, fireplaces, door & window frames, flooring & more; geometric mosaics.

Click on No. 1635

Tile Source Inc.

843-689-9151; Fax: 843-689-9161
www.tile-source.com
 Hilton Head Island, SC 29926

Supplier of genuine encaustic & geometric tile, simulated reproductions & Victorian-style wall & fireplace tile: advice on economical restoration of 19th-century ceramic floors.



Tile Source supplies hard-to-find historic tile, such as these – decorated with William de Morgan designs.

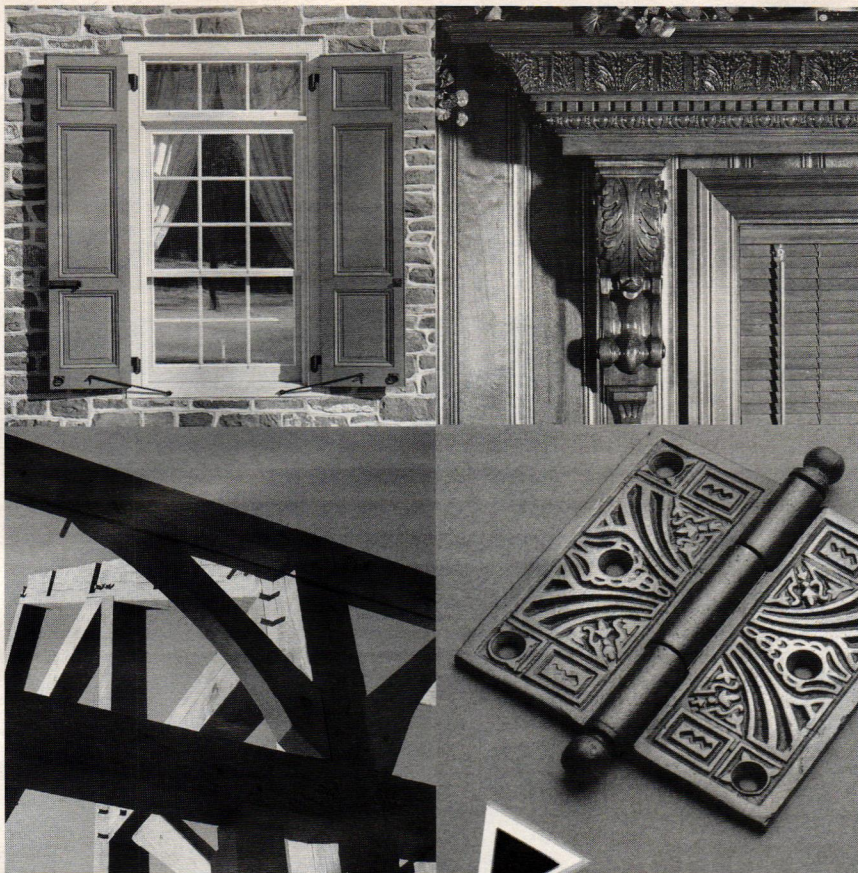
TileArt, LLC

608-255-8453; Fax: 608-237-7291
www.tileartdesign.com
 Madison, WI 53711

Supplier of handcrafted ceramic tile: subway tile; for kitchens, bathrooms, foyers, fireplaces, door & window frames & other applications; geometric mosaics.



The ceramic tile used in this bathroom was supplied by TileArt.



Timberlane, White River, Hugh Lofting, Crown City



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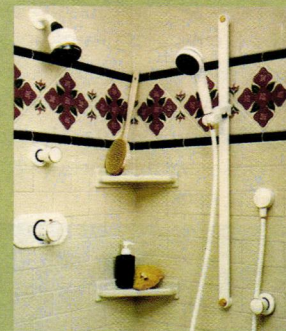
Email: bebyrd@restorationtile.com

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Interior Lighting

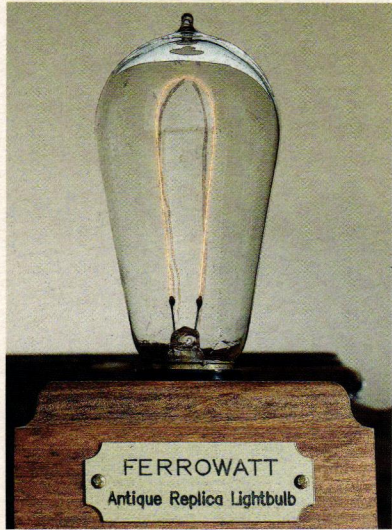
To order free product literature from a company listed in this Buying Guide, go to www.period-homes.com/rs and click on the appropriate reader service number.

AMMSCO Lighting, Inc.

843-278-0000; Fax: 843-278-0001
www.ferrowatt.com
 Summerville, SC 29483

Supplier of authentic reproduction carbon- & tungsten-filament light bulbs: designs based on bulbs from the 1890s-1920s; custom Art Deco sconces & luminaires.

Click on No. 2240



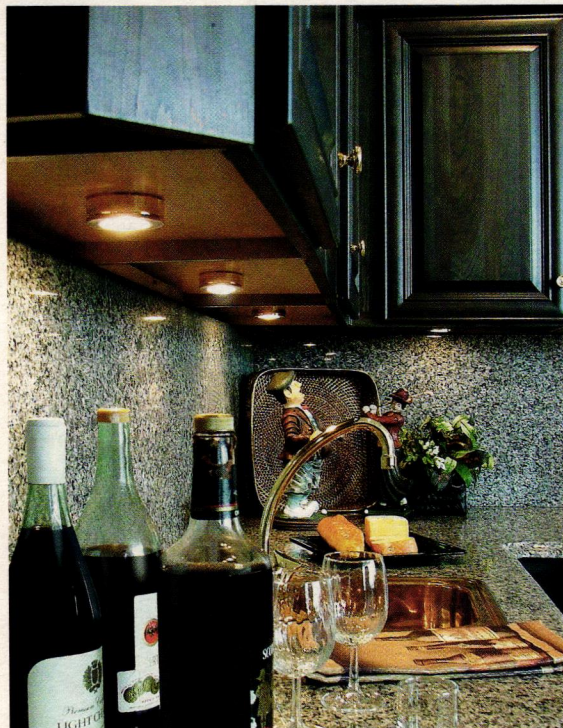
The authentic replica 1900 bulb from AMMSCO Lighting runs at 300 watts and provides 8-candle luminosity.

Architectural Products by Outwater, LLC

800-835-4400; Fax: 800-835-4403
www.outwater.com
 Bogota, NJ 07603

Manufacturer of 65,000+ decorative building products: architectural moldings & millwork, columns & capitals, wrought-iron components, mantels, balustrading, door & shutter hardware, lighting, flooring, ceiling tile, furniture & cabinet components, carvings, arbors & more.

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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.

Click on No. 60



This natural-copper three-light lantern, model #SM LT 6 Stirling from Authentic Designs, measures 19½ in. wide x 13½ in. tall x 7 in. in dia.

Bathroom Machinerics, 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.

Coppersmythe, Josiah R.

508-432-8590; Fax: 508-432-8587
www.jrcoppersmythe.com
 Harwich, MA 02645

Manufacturer of handcrafted lighting: sconces, chandeliers & lanterns; Turn of the Century, Colonial & Arts & Crafts styles; custom.

Call for more information.

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.

Click on 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
 Chestertown, MD 21620

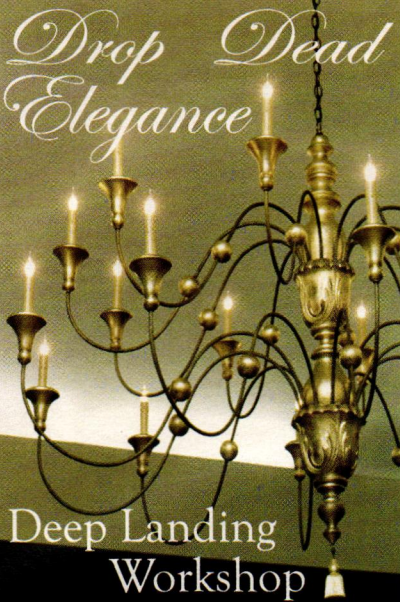
Designer & manufacturer of interior & exterior lighting fixtures: stylized reproductions rooted in the Colonial style.

Click on No. 809



This lead-coated-copper hanging lantern, model #L-1251 from Deep Landing Workshop, is 10½ in. wide and 21 in. tall.

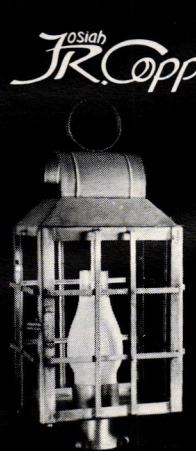
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Hand repoussed bronze leaves and forged acorn drops fabricated by Fine Architectural Metalsmiths accent this carved oak chandelier.

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.

Click on No. 1210



Historical Arts & Casting fabricated this hand-finished bronze pendant lamp.

House of Antique Hardware

888-265-1038; Fax: 503-233-1312

www.houseofantiquehardware.com

Portland, OR 97232

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.

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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.

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Replica historical fixtures are made by Lantern Masters using traditional techniques.

Rejuvenation

888-401-1900; Fax: 800-526-7329

www.rejuvenation.com

Portland, OR 97210

Manufacturer of period-style lighting & hardware: door, bath, window & cabinet hardware; Victorian, Colonial Revival, Neoclassical, Arts & Crafts, Art Deco & Atomic Age; 12 finishes; direct delivery.

Click on No. 7630



The Chelsea is one of many fixtures available from Rejuvenation.

Scofield Historic Lighting

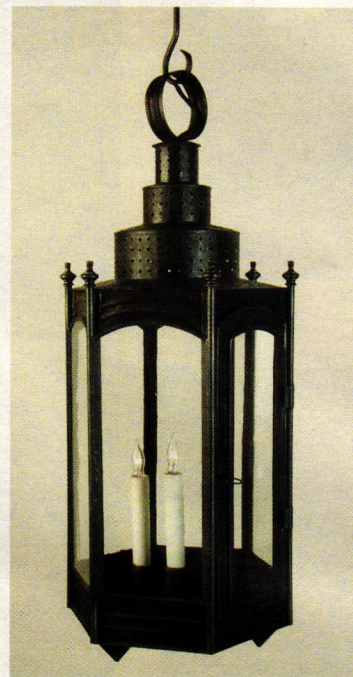
860-767-7032; Fax: 888-860-9266

www.scofieldhistoriclighting.com

Ivoryton, CT 06442

Fabricator of handmade, new production antique & custom lighting: chandeliers, sconces & lanterns; copper, tin, steel & wood; 22k gold leaf, aged tin, bronze, vertigree & leaded-copper patinas; inspired by 17th- to 19th-century American & European designs.

Click on No. 1566



This six-sided lantern with punch work was fabricated by Scofield Historic Lighting.

Steven Handelman Studios

805-962-5119; Fax: 805-966-9529

www.stevenhandelmanstudios.com

Santa Barbara, CA 93103

Manufacturer of hand-forged ornament, lighting & fireplace screens in iron: more than 250 choices of UL-certified lighting; incandescent, low voltage, HID & gas lamps; street lighting; gates, registers & grilles.

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This wall sconce from Steven Handelman is one of hundreds of original fixtures offered by the company.

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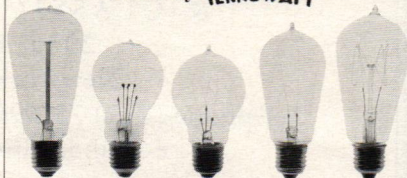
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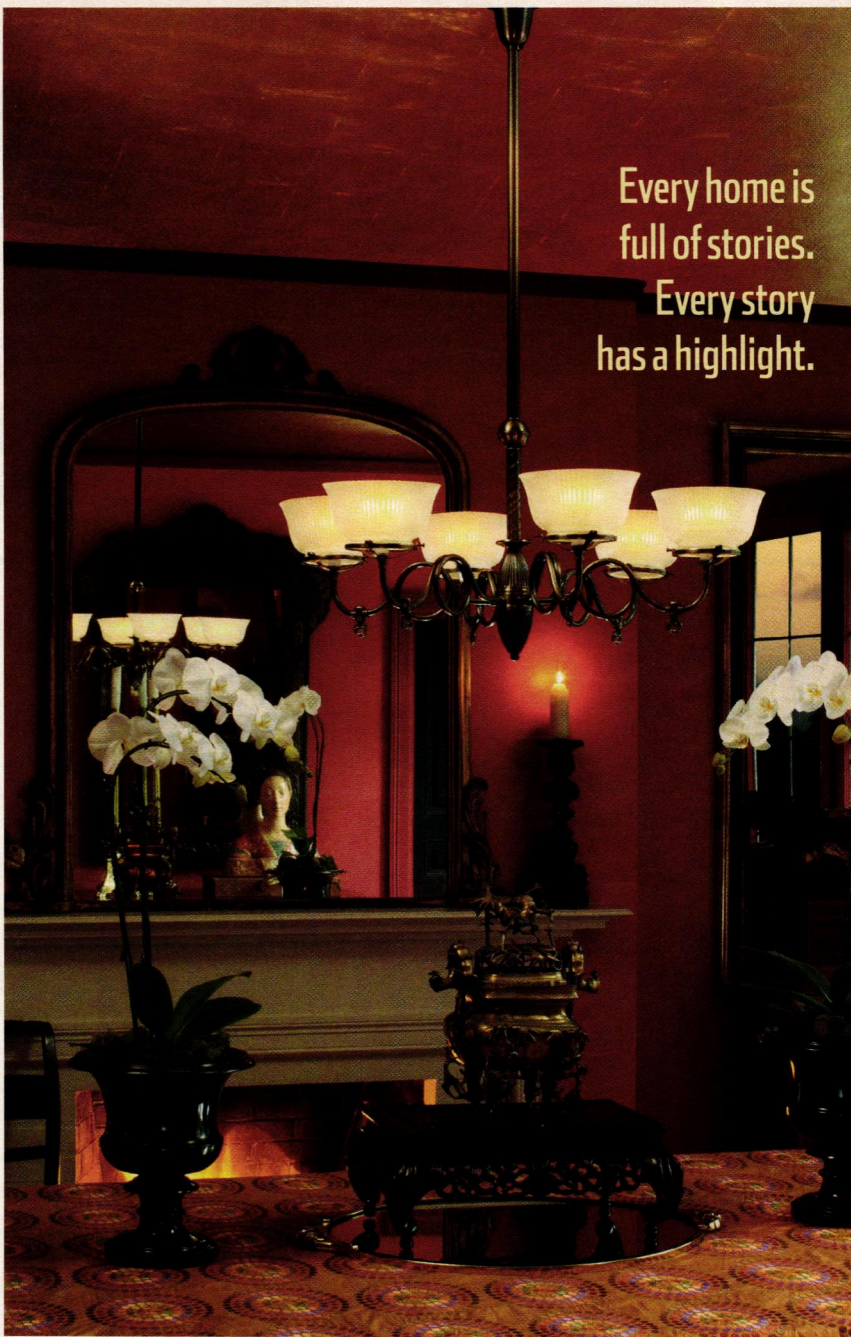
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Wiemann Metalcraft

918-592-1700; Fax: 918-592-2385

www.wmcraft.com

Tulsa, OK 74107

Designer, fabricator, finisher & installer of custom ornamental metalwork: railings, fencing, gates, columns, balustrades, lighting, grilles, doors, mantels & more; all cast & wrought metal alloys, finishes & architectural styles; since 1940.

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This belt-driven ceiling fan with solid-mahogany blades was supplied by Woolen Mill.

Woolen Mill Fan Co.

717-382-4754; Fax: 717-382-4275

www.architecturalfans.com

New Park, PA 17352

Supplier of belt-driven ceiling fans: some built from patterns in Smithsonian exhibit; iron, bronze & aluminum with mahogany blades; handcrafted by old-order Amish; assembled to specifications at PA studio.

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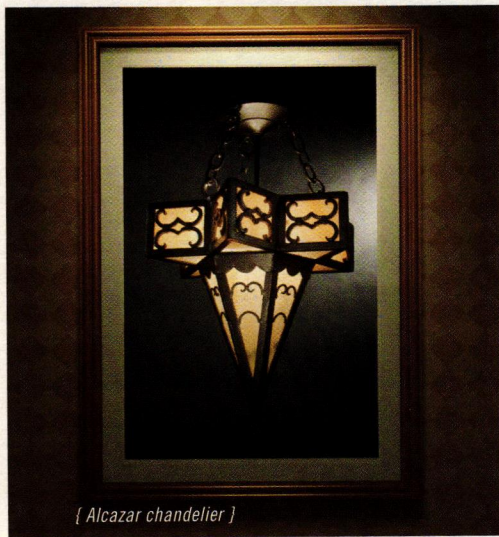
Photograph: Spanish
alabaster urn lantern
with bronze frame for
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www.outwater.com
Bogota, NJ 07603

Manufacturer of 65,000+ decorative building products: architectural moldings & millwork, columns & capitals, wrought-iron components, mantels, balustrading, door & shutter hardware, lighting, flooring, ceiling tile, furniture & cabinet components, carvings, arbors & more.

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Fireplace surrounds are available from Architectural Products by Outwater in plaster and oak.

Brandt, Sylvan

717-626-4520; Fax: 717-626-5867

www.sylvanbrandt.com
Lititz, PA 17543

Supplier of 18th- & 19th-century building materials salvaged from old houses & barns: columns, doors, mantels, sinks & bathtubs; antique & resawn flooring; antique heart pine, ancient oak, chestnut, white pine & hemlock; radiators; since 1960.

Click on No. 3950

EJMcopper Inc.

407-447-0074; Fax: 407-447-0075

www.ejmcopper.com
Orlando, FL 32804

Manufacturer of custom architectural copper products: chimney caps, range hoods, cupolas, finials, spires, dormer vents, leader heads, louvers, weathervanes, mailboxes, gutters & more; online catalog.

Click on No. 588

Eldorado Stone

800-925-1491; No fax

www.eldoradostone.com
San Marcos, CA 92078

Manufacturer of architectural stone veneer: fireplaces; cast from molds made from thousands of hand-selected natural stones.

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Fine Architectural Metalsmiths

888-862-9577; Fax: 845-651-7857

www.iceforge.com
Chester, NY 10918

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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, weathervanes, molding, trim, molded panels & more; custom components.

Click on No. 4020



Haddonstone's Deco Chimney Piece features bold, geometric lines inspired by the Art Deco style.

Kayne & Son Custom Hardware

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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.



These andirons were custom fabricated by Kayne & Son.

Klitsas, Dimitrios - Fine Wood Sculptor

413-566-5301; Fax: 413-566-5307

www.klitsas.com
Hampden, MA 01036

Custom sculptor & carver of wood architectural elements: interior & exterior; furniture in all period styles; capitals, mantels, moldings & specialty carvings.

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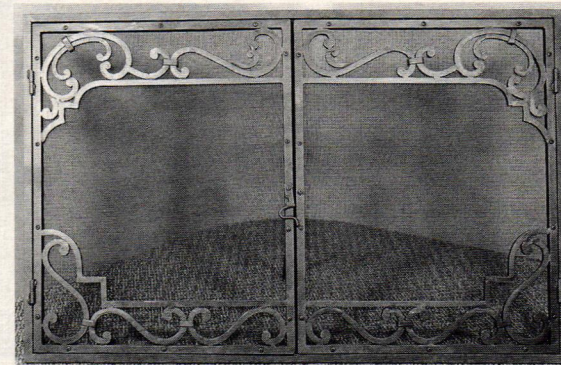
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805-962-5119; Fax: 805-966-9529

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Santa Barbara, CA 93103

Manufacturer of hand-forged ornament, lighting & fireplace screens in iron: more than 250 choices of UL-certified lighting; incandescent, low voltage, HID & gas lamps; street lighting; gates, registers & grilles.

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This ornate fireplace screen was manufactured by Steven Handelman Studios.

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.

Click on No. 1061

Whitesmith & Company

214-871-0305; Fax: 214-871-0644

www.whitesmithandcompany.com

Dallas, TX 75204

Designer & manufacturer of ornamental hardware & ironwork: stock & custom designs; grilles; door, window & cabinet hardware; fireplace equipment; forged & cast steel, iron, bronze, brass & copper; since 1993.

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This detail of a White River Hardwoods-Woodworks fireplace surround illustrates the variety of ornamentation that can be combined to create a unique mantel.

White River Hardwoods-Woodworks

800-558-0119; Fax: 479-444-0406

www.mouldings.com

Fayetteville, AR 72701

Manufacturer of architectural millwork: Mon Reale moldings, authentic hand-carved line of adornments for cabinetry & furniture in linden, cherry & maple; lineals, mantels & range hoods in stock.

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www.wmcraft.com

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Designer, fabricator, finisher & installer of custom ornamental metalwork: railings, fencing, gates, columns, balustrades, lighting, grilles, doors, mantels & more; all cast & wrought metal alloys, finishes & architectural styles; since 1940.

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Wilbur, Frederick - Woodcarver

434-263-4827; No fax

www.frederickwilbur-woodcarver.com

Lovington, VA 22949

Manufacturer of traditional decorative interior & exterior carvings: furniture, mantels, moldings, brackets, friezes, capitals, rosettes & heraldry; original designs & historically accurate reproductions.

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Frederick Wilbur-Woodcarver hand carved this decorated custom mantel.

Zepa Industries, Inc.

704-583-9220; Fax: 704-583-9674

www.zepa.com

Charlotte, NC 28273

Custom fabricator of architectural millwork: interior woodwork; railings, stairs, wine cellars, mantels, paneling, furniture & more.

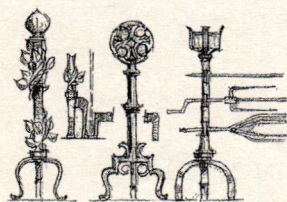
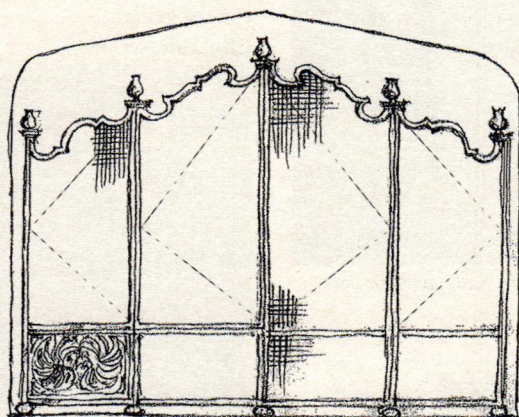
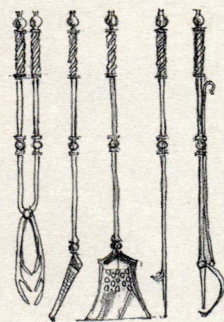
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The scroll lines of this staircase by Fine Architectural Metalsmiths were forged with tapered fern-frond scroll endings and finished with a copper patina.

Goddard Spiral Stairs
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This bronze staircase was custom fabricated by Historical Arts & Casting for a residence in Sacramento, CA.

Historical Arts & Casting, Inc.
800-225-1414; Fax: 801-280-2493
www.historicalarts.com
West Jordan, UT 84081

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.
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This railing with artful scrollwork was custom fabricated by Schwartz's Forge & Metalworks.

Schwartz's Forge & Metalworks, Inc.
315-841-4477; Fax: 315-841-4694
www.schwartzsforge.com
Deansboro, 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.
Click on No. 1667

Stairways, Inc.
800-231-0793; Fax: 713-680-2571
www.stairwaysinc.com
Houston, TX 77433

Manufacturer of metal & wood staircases: straight, curved & spiral; metal stair parts & treads, balusters/railings & newel posts; brass, steel, bronze & aluminum; custom fabricated or kits; any size; ships worldwide.
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www.wmcraft.com

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Zepa Industries, Inc.

704-583-9220; Fax: 704-583-9674

www.zepa.com

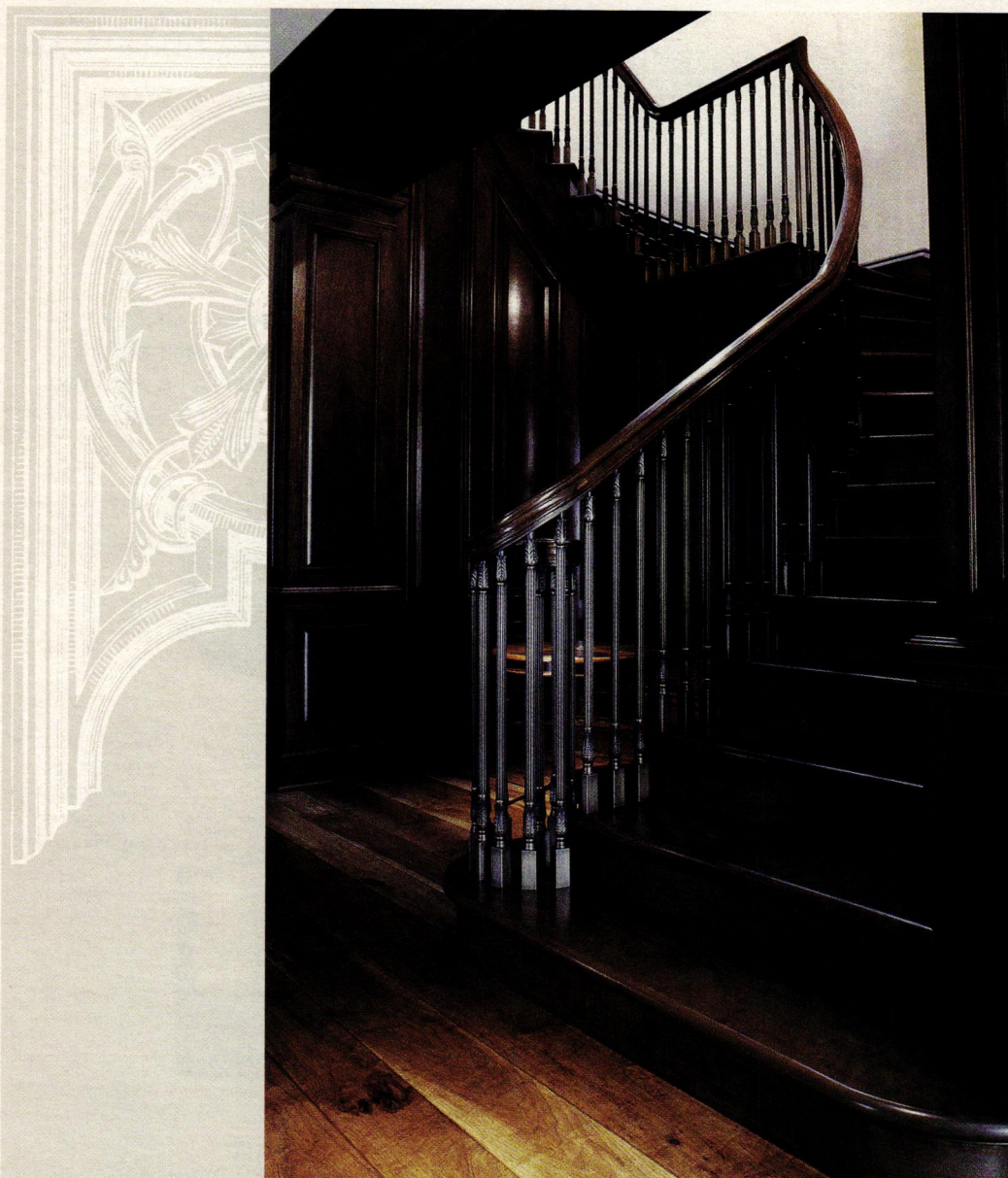
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This monumental staircase was designed and built by Zepa Industries.

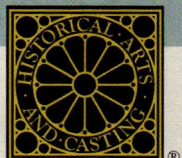


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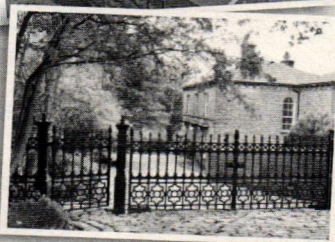


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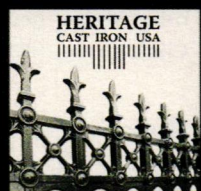
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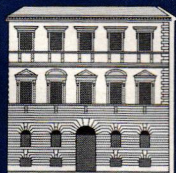
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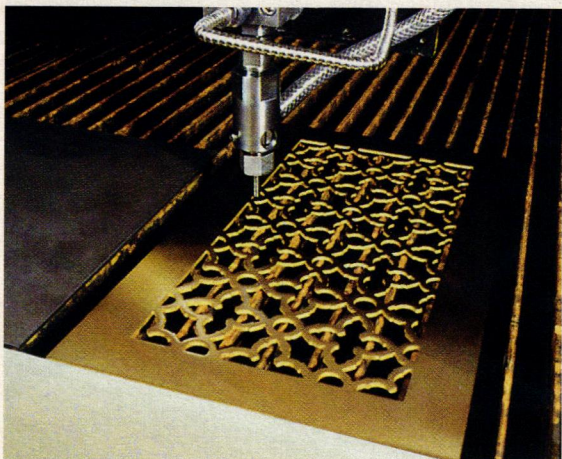
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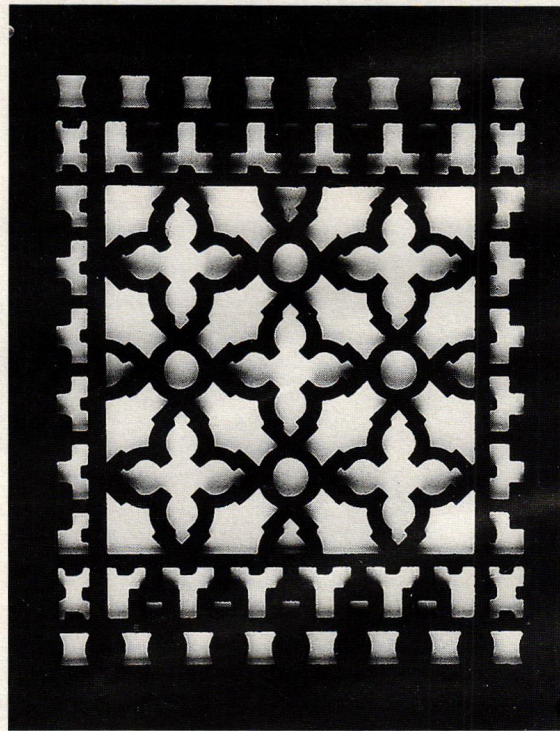
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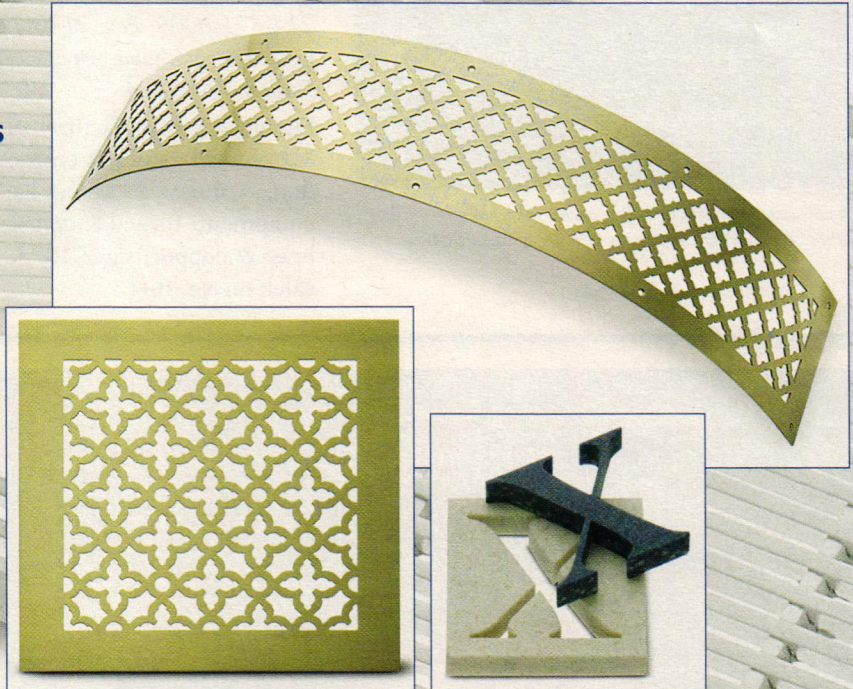
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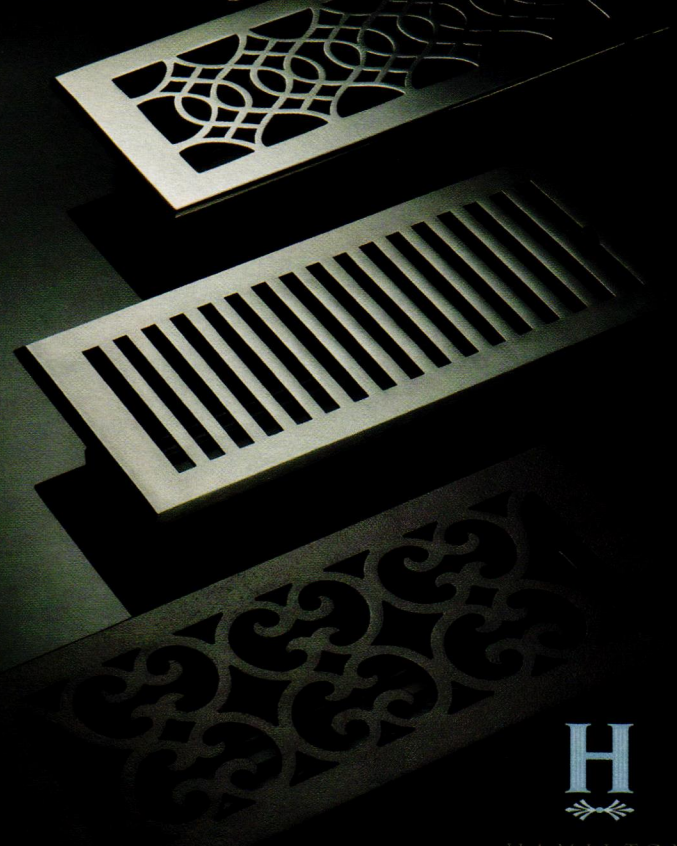
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Calendar of Events

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

ICA&CA SOUTHERN CLASSICISM IN KENTUCKY'S BLUEGRASS REGION TOUR, April 14-18, 2010. ICA&CA will lead a tour exploring southern Classical architecture and interiors in the Bluegrass region of Kentucky. The itinerary includes a visit to the Pope Villa, a rare surviving residence designed by Benjamin Latrobe, the Quinlan Terry-designed Pin Oak Farm and a private residence by Fairfax & Sammons. For more information, call Tom Hayes at 413-243-4155 or visit www.classicist.org.

ARCHITECTURAL WOODCARVING WORKSHOP, May 12-14, 2010. Decorative wood carver Frederick Wilbur will conduct woodcarving workshops at his studio in Lovingston, VA. This three-day course, intended for the moderately experienced carver, includes a discussion on Classical idioms and will focus on scroll and volute carving techniques. For more information on this and other sessions, call 434-263-4827 or email fewilbur@verizon.net.

ANNUAL WRIGHT PLUS HOUSEWALK, May 15, 2010. The 36th Annual Wright Plus Housewalk will tour rare interiors of private homes designed by Frank Lloyd Wright and his contemporaries in Oak Park and River Forest, IL. Newly added to this year's tour are the Solomon Thatcher Jr. House (1874) and David A. Thatcher House (1880) as well as the Frank W. Thomas House (1901), opening to the public for the first time in 21 years. For more information, visit www.gowright.org.

AIA 2010 NATIONAL CONVENTION & EXPOSITION, June 10-12, 2010. The AIA 2010 National Convention & Exposition will be held at the Miami Beach Convention Center in Miami, FL. The event includes seminars, roundtable discussions, tours and exhibitions on the theme "Design for the New Decade." For more information, visit www.aia.org/convention.

SGAA ANNUAL SUMMER CONFERENCE, June 28-30, 2010. This year's Stained Glass Association of America summer conference will be held at the Hyatt Regency Crown Center in Kansas City, MO. Lecture themes will include craft techniques in making art glass, artistic considerations and approaches, techniques in working with the church as well as demonstrations on mosaics and a major exhibition of glass panels. For registration and conference updates, visit www.stainedglass.org/html/SGAAconference.htm.

10TH ANNUAL SAX STONECARVING WORKSHOPS, July 12-18, & August 7-13, 2010. This year, Sax Stonecarving will conduct two seven-day intensive stone carving workshops in Rinconada, NM. The first will feature guest instructor Nicholas Fairplay, who has worked on Westminster Abbey and the Cathedral of St. John the Divine. The latter session features guest instructors Joseph Kincannon, a professional carver with 30 years experience, and Kazutaka Uchida, an artist from Tokyo, Japan. For more information visit, www.saxstonecarving.com.

APT CONFERENCE, October 6-9, 2010. The Association for Preservation Technology International will host its annual conference at the Sheraton Denver Downtown Hotel in Denver, CO. The event features workshops, symposiums, exhibits and field sessions. For conference updates, visit www.apti.org.

TRADITIONAL BUILDING EXHIBITION & CONFERENCE, October 20-23, 2010. The nation's largest event dedicated to historic restoration, renovation, landscapes and streetscapes, as well as historically inspired new construction, will be held at the Navy Pier in Chicago, IL. The conference includes sessions with professional learning units available through the AIA, ASLA, ASID, IIDA, AIC and the APA. It will also feature the Palladio Awards presentations and the Clem Labine Award ceremony. For details on programs and exhibiting, go to www.traditionalbuildingshow.com.

ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL PRESERVATION TRADES WORKSHOP, October 21-23, 2010. IPTN will partner with Frankfort Parks, Recreation and Historic Sites and others to host its 14th annual workshop in the quaint historic town of Frankfort, KY. Attendees will be within walking distance of the nearby River View Park and downtown Frankfort's historic and modern architecture. For workshop updates, visit www.iptw.org.

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. Many of the programs qualify for AIA continuing-education units. 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.



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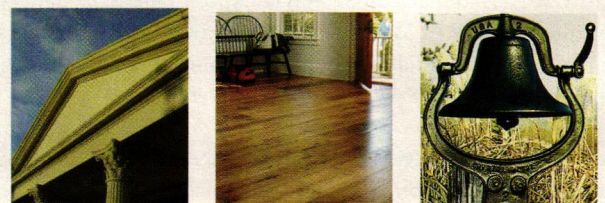
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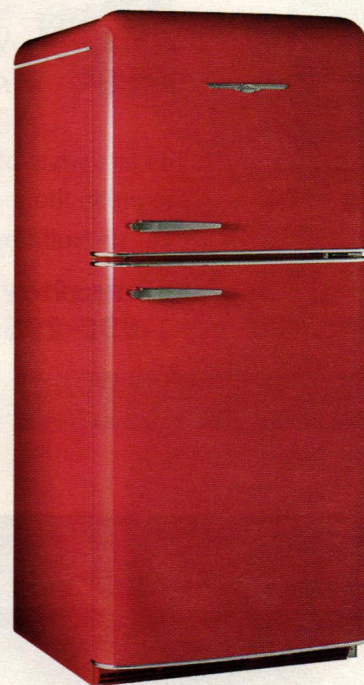
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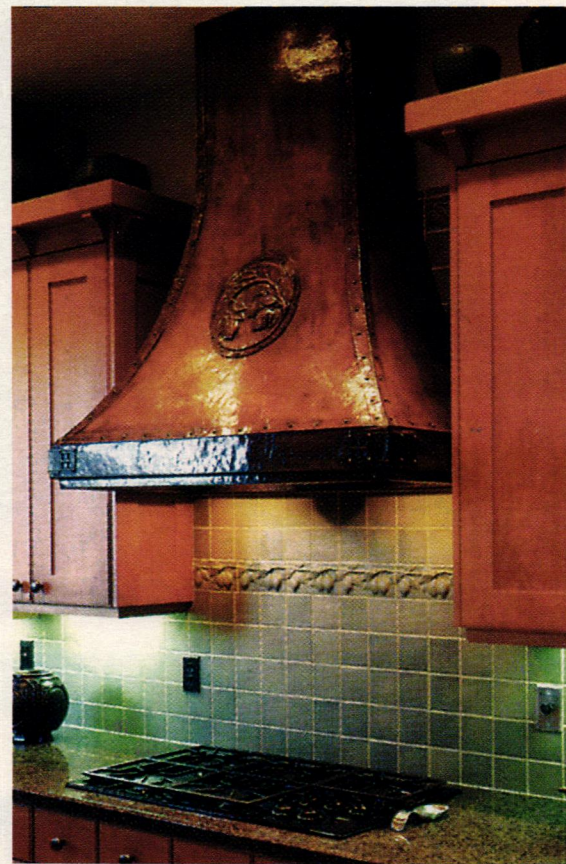
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www.thewinerackcompany.com

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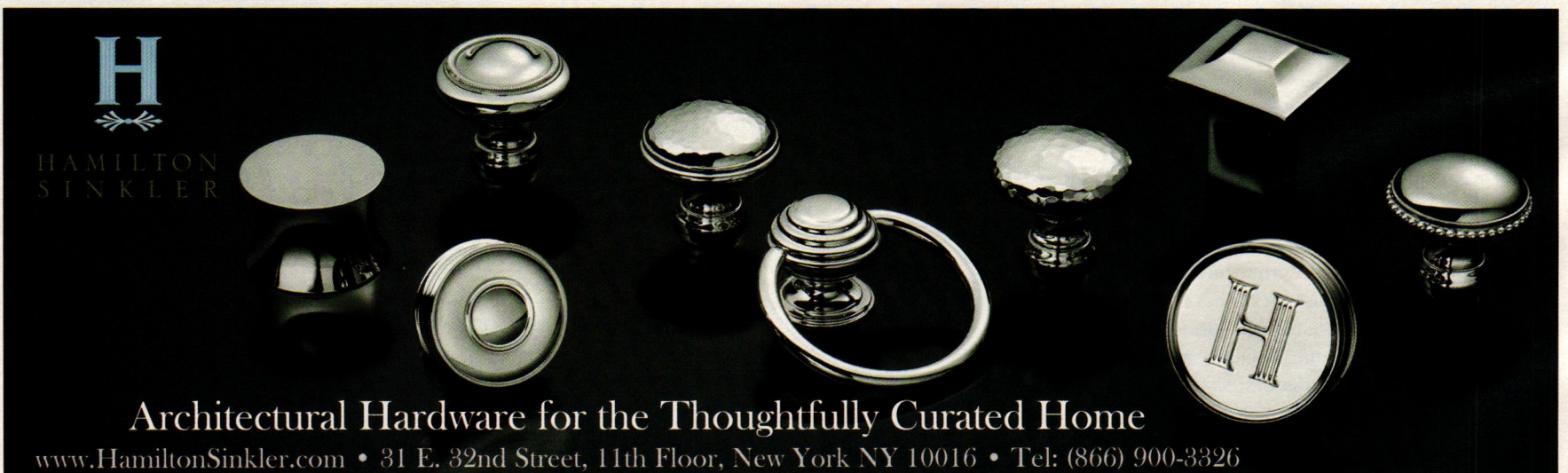
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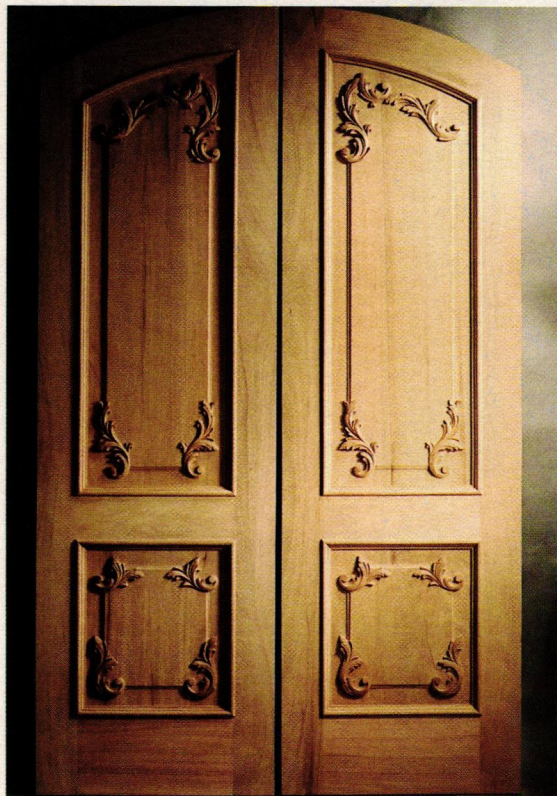
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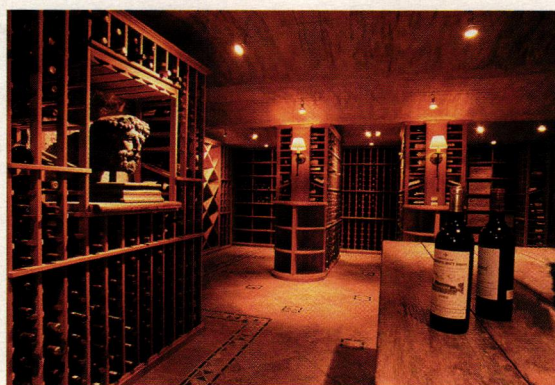


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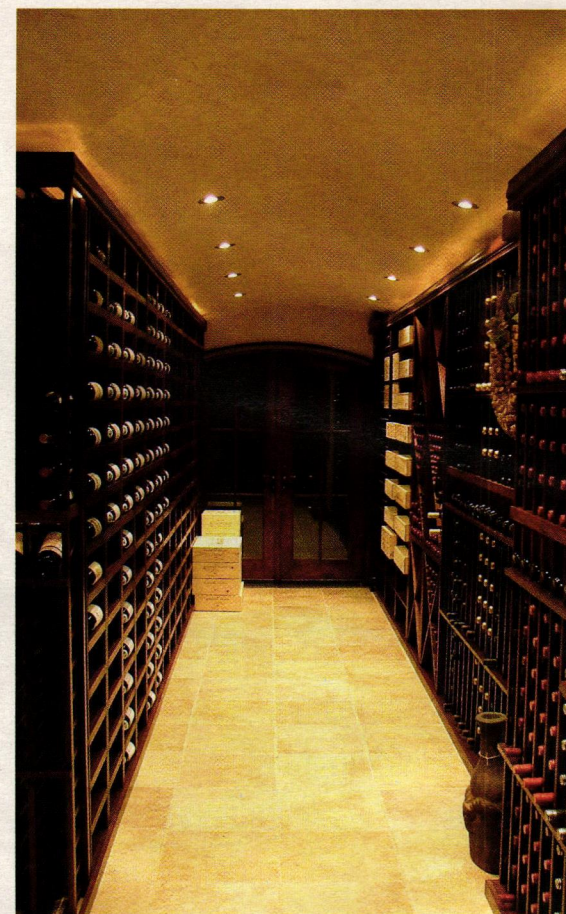
This wine cellar was designed, manufactured and installed by Wine Cellar Innovations.

The Wine Rack Company

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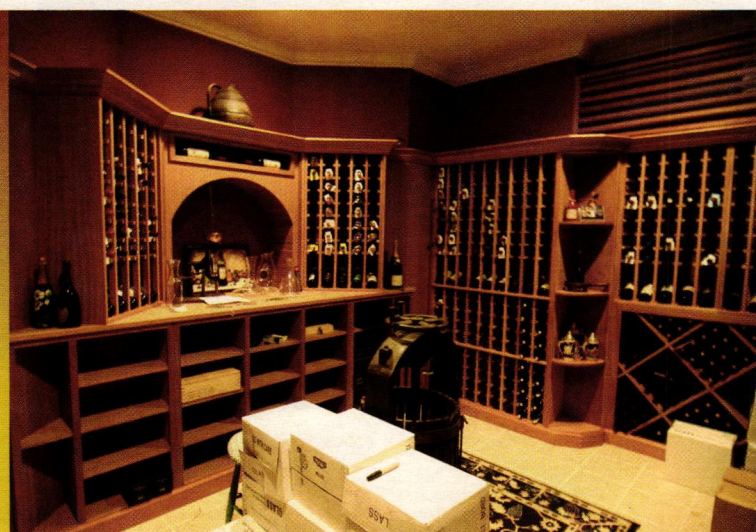
This custom mahogany wine cellar was created by The Wine Rack Company.

The Wine Rack Company

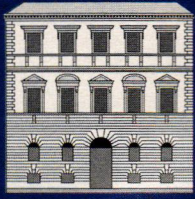
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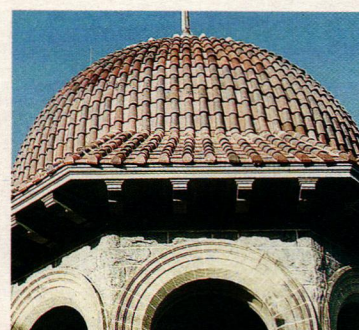
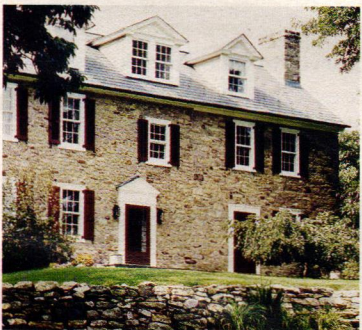
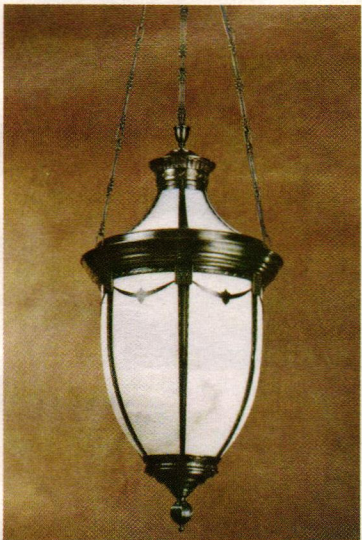


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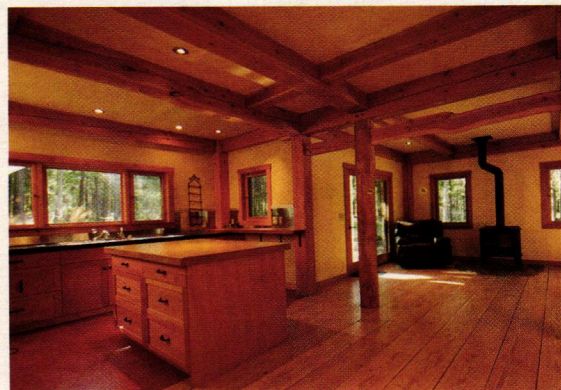


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This walnut panel was carved by Erik Wyckoff.

Klitsas, Dimitrios - Fine Wood Sculptor

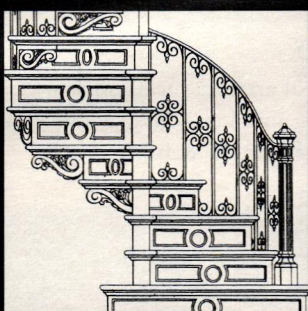
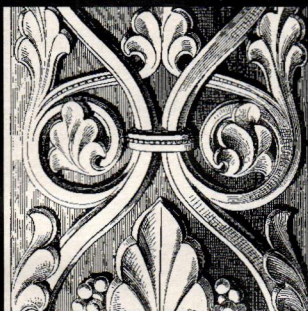
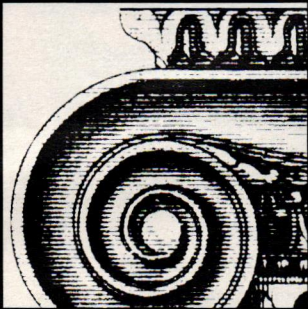
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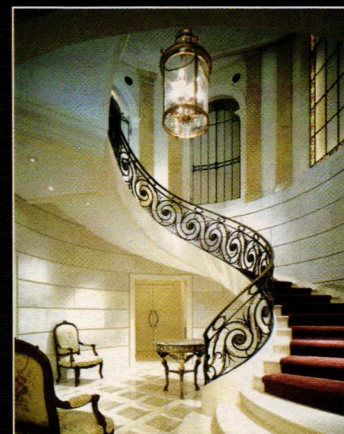
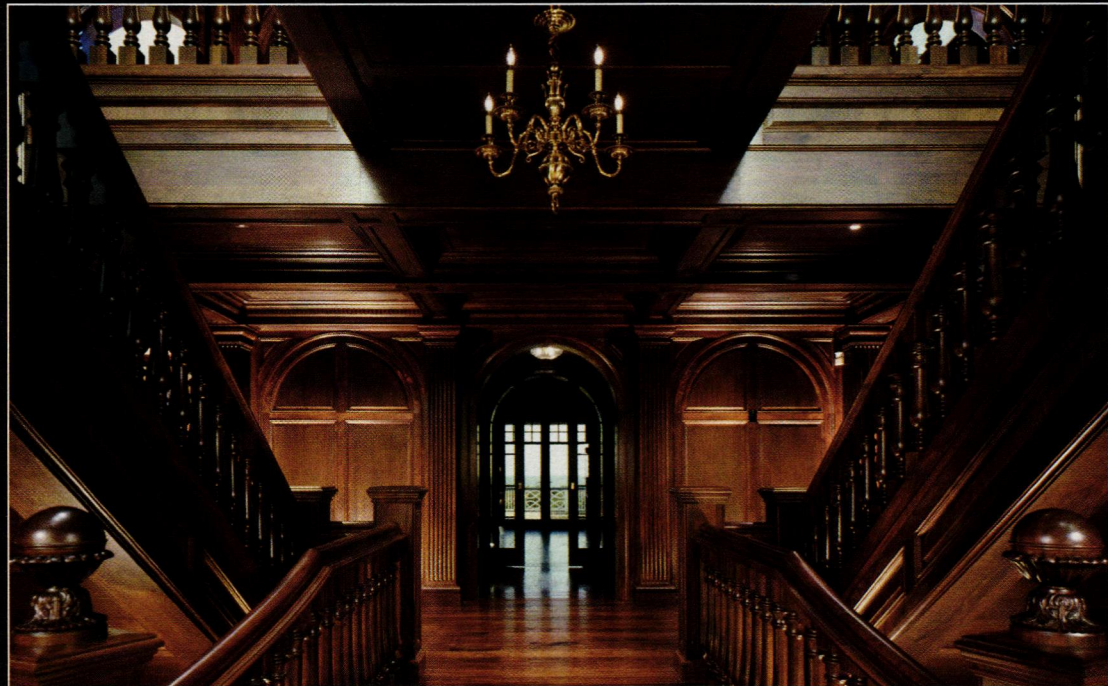
This shell motif illustrates the wood-carving artistry of Dimitrios Klitsas - Fine Wood Sculptor.



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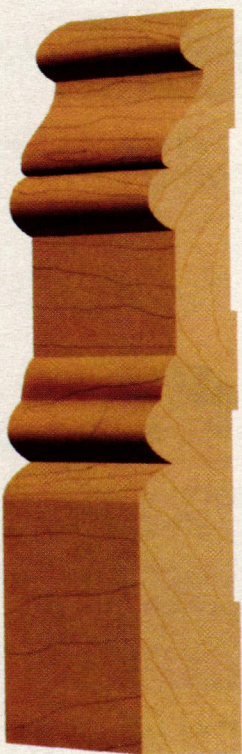
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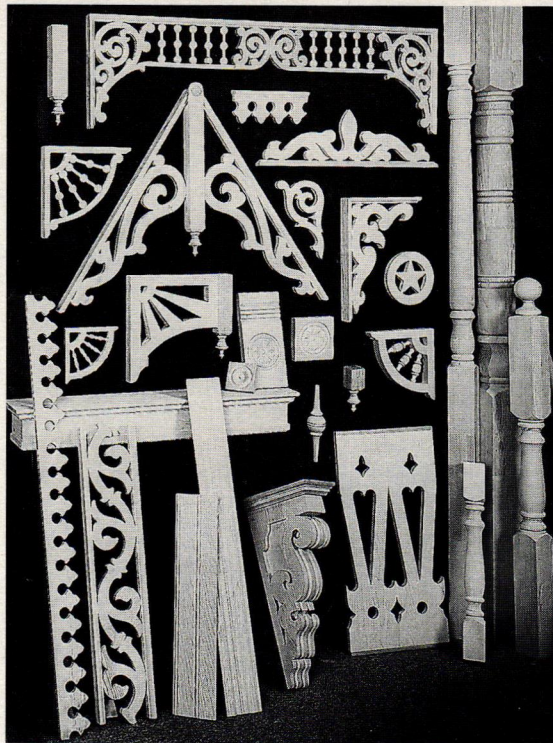
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This rosette was hand carved by Frederick Wilbur - Woodcarver.

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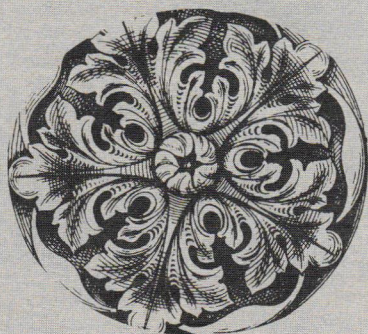
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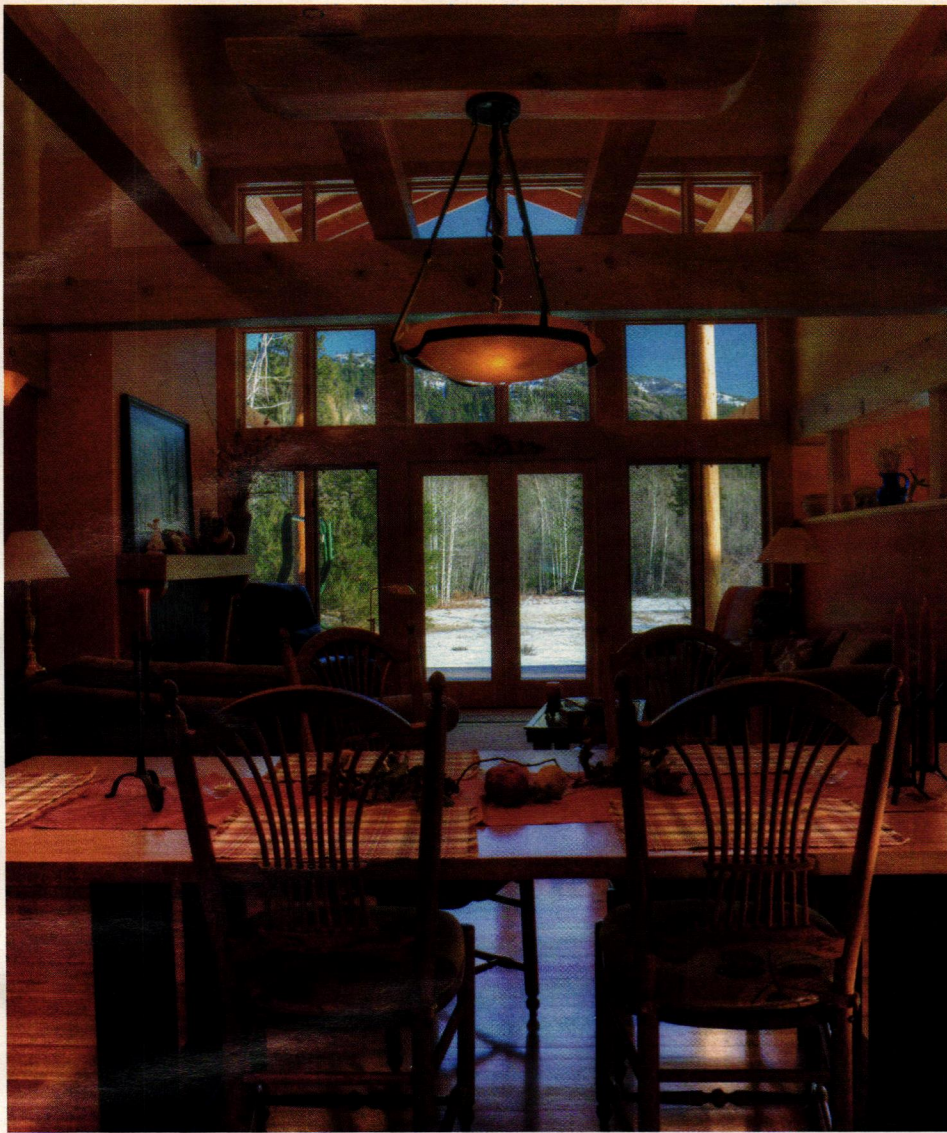


The woodwork in this North Carolina residence was fabricated by Zepssa Industries.



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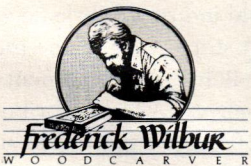
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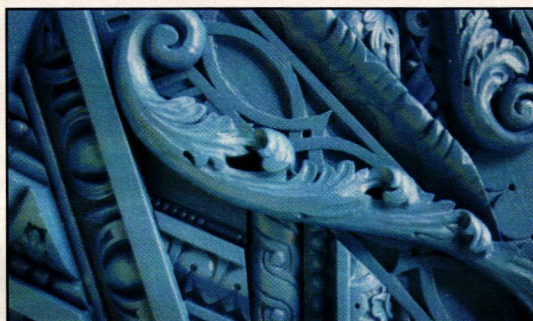
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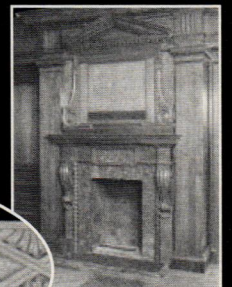
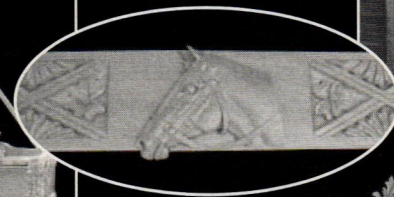
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Civitas in Suburbia

Retrofitting Suburbia: Urban Design Solutions for Redesigning Suburbs

by Ellen Dunham-Jones and June Williamson

John Wiley & Sons, Hoboken, NJ; 2009

256 pages; hardcover; numerous b&w and color images; \$75

ISBN 978-0-470-04123-9

Reviewed by Clem Labine

Here's the good news: The market is proving the validity of New Urbanism's long-held contention that mixed-use, walkable communities are more desirable than suburban sprawl. The bad news: This validation is coming 50 years too late for the millions of Americans who already live in sprawl-based suburbs. That's where *Retrofitting Suburbia* comes in – it advocates drastically overhauling much of America's older suburban development, and shows in considerable detail how to make it happen. At the heart of the opus is an analysis of 36 real-world projects that demonstrate not only that suburban redevelopment is economically viable, but also that the movement is well under way.

Suburban sprawl was a product of cheap gasoline and highway construction subsidized by federal taxes. As gasoline prices rise inexorably, and commutes on traffic-choked roads get longer and longer, the idea of transforming inner-ring suburbs into live-work communities is becoming increasingly attractive. The authors of *Retrofitting Suburbia*, Ellen Dunham-Jones and June Williamson, contend that just as systematic development of cul-de-sac-based sprawl was the main architectural focus of the last 50 years, so the next 50 years will be aimed at redevelopment of sprawl into more urbanized, connected, sustainable places.

Recent proof of the authors' contention is contained in a new report issued by CEOs for Cities, a national group of urban leaders. The report, titled "How Walkability Raises Home Values in U.S. Cities," examines the connection between home values and walkability in 15 U.S. residential markets. Each neighborhood was given a "WalkScore," with zero being totally car-dependent and 100 meaning most consumer destinations were within walking distance of the typical home. The key conclusion: A one-point increase in WalkScore is associated with between a \$700 and \$3,000 increase in home values.

Although *Retrofitting Suburbia* is an advocacy book, it is not confined to theory and polemics. The text provides a lucid, concise overview of demographic and development trends of the past 50 years, showing readers how we got into the unsustainable fix our nation is in today. It then lays out planning principles that can mitigate many of the resource-wasting aspects of typical suburban developments. And it follows with perceptive descriptions and analyses of 36 suburban redevelopment projects across the U.S., ranging from minor big-box remodelings to a \$750-million transformation of a regional shopping center into a downtown neighborhood. One common principle underlying all these projects is that the new construction took place on ground that already bore the imprint of prior development – no woodlands or agricultural fields were harmed in the creation of these undertakings!

The book demonstrates that successful retrofitting of sprawl usually requires major reconstruction to equip sites with features such as streets formed into traditional blocks, interconnected roads, provisions for all transportation types, higher population densities, mixed residential/commercial buildings, affordable housing, set-asides for protected natural landscapes, and well-designed public spaces. The aim of such revamping is to reduce the blight of boarded-up malls, cut car traffic, increase foot and bicycle access and eliminate barriers between residential and retail areas. Dunham-Jones and Williamson argue that major conversions like these are essential to accommodate the rapidly changing demographic and economic realities of our nation.



Above: Belmar, a development that essentially created a downtown for Lakewood, CO, was created by dividing a 104-acre superblock into typical city blocks with mixed commercial/residential activities and a variety of architectural styles to enliven the pedestrian experience. The urbanized blocks are walkable and also served by buses.

Right: Prior to its transformation into Belmar, Villa Italia was an enclosed mall set in a sea of parking lots on a 104-acre site and was quite successful when opened in the 1970s. But by the late 1990s the mall had fallen on hard times and an extreme makeover was called for. Extensive consultation with the community showed that people wanted a "downtown experience."



The authors examine redevelopment possibilities presented by various situations such as dead malls and strip retail centers, old industrial parks, edge-city infill and tract developments adjacent to transit stops. One of the most interesting projects analyzed in some detail is the Belmar development in Lakewood, CO, just a few miles from downtown Denver. A huge moribund enclosed mall, Villa Italia, occupied the center of a 104-acre superblock, surrounded by a sea of parking lots. Working closely with the city of Lakewood and local citizens, developers determined that what people wanted was essentially a mixed-use downtown area, with features similar to what is found in the LoDo district in Denver's center city. The massive transformation began in 2001, with build-out scheduled for completion in 2012.


The current Belmar development creates a downtown center that Lakewood never had, and required the scraping and rebuilding of the entire 104-acre site, starting with the division of the superblock into 23 urban-scaled streets and blocks. The result is a mixed-use, walkable destination with nearly triple the built area of the previous shopping mall, combining retail, housing, commercial and government offices, plus public spaces for civic uses. The new Belmar street grid connects with streets in the adjacent Lakewood community. While the street matrix is fixed, the mix of uses on each block is subject to change over time, as market forces dictate. A network of open spaces within the street grid provides room for arts programming that enlivens the atmosphere and promotes the idea of "going downtown."

The practical real-world tone of the volume makes it an ideal textbook for courses on urbanism and town planning. It's also a must-read handbook for urban planners, developers, public officials, residential architects and real estate professionals – especially those for whom two-hour commutes are a fact of daily life. ■

Clem Labine is the founder of Old-House Journal, Traditional Building and Period Homes. His interest in preservation started with his purchase and restoration of an 1883 brownstone in Park Slope, Brooklyn. He is now editor emeritus of Traditional Building and Period Homes.



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What Will You Learn?

Course 1: Hot Stuff: Energy Performance in Historic Buildings

March 30, 2010, 2:00 p.m. ET, 90 minutes, CEUs pending

Learning Objectives After the session, participants will be able to:

- Assess a building's existing energy performance.
- Develop a strategy that allows for informed decisions about alterations.
- Make changes that improve energy performance, while keeping impacts on the historic fabric in mind.
- Examine the important role that windows play in energy performance—day lighting and ventilation, for example.

Presenter: Mark Thaler, AIA, principal and director, Einhorn Yaffee Prescott, Architecture & Engineering, P.C., Albany, N.Y.

Moderator: Judy L. Hayward, education director, Traditional Building Exhibition and Conference, Restore Media, LLC, Washington, D.C.

Course 2: An Open-and-Shut Case: the History and Performance of Classic Window Hardware

May 25, 2010, 2:00 p.m. ET, 90 minutes, CEUs pending

Learning Objectives After the sessions, participants will be able to:

- Rely on historic catalogs and related publications to design current projects.
- Evaluate the function of traditional locks, sash pulleys, and other window hardware.
- Use appropriate window hardware in period restorations or new old construction.
- Work with hardware suppliers to get the right performance and appearance for period window hardware.

Presenter: Michael F. Lynch, PE, AIA, FAPT, partner, Kaese & Lynch Architecture and Engineering, LLP, New York, N.Y.

Moderator: Judy L. Hayward, education director, Traditional Building Exhibition and Conference, Restore Media, LLC, Washington, D.C.

Course 3: It All Adds Up: the Role of Fenestration in Creating Energy-Efficient Sympathetic Additions to Historic Commercial Buildings

September 28, 2010, 2:00 p.m. ET, 90 minutes, CEUs pending

Learning Objectives After the sessions, participants will be able to:

- Apply effective approaches to designing sympathetic additions for historic buildings.
- Design additions that support improved energy performance in old buildings.
- Learn how energy-efficient fenestration creates new opportunities for using old structures.
- Balance technical, regulatory, aesthetic, and contextual considerations when designing additions to historic buildings.

Presenters: Jeffrey M. Hoover, AIA, principal, Tappe Associates, Inc., Boston, Mass. Chick McBrien, architectural sales representative, Marvin Windows and Doors.

Moderator: Judy L. Hayward, education director, Traditional Building Exhibition and Conference, Restore Media, LLC, Washington, D.C.

Course 4: New Old Magic—Window Replication in Historic Buildings: Two Compelling Case Studies

November 23, 2010, 2:00 p.m. ET, 90 minutes, CEUs pending

Learning Objectives After the sessions, participants will be able to:

- Conduct historical research that enables them to design replicated windows when the originals are missing.
- Keep energy efficiency in mind when using window replications in historic settings.
- Design and schedule a window replication for medium-size and large commercial projects.
- Take adaptive reuse into account when designing new windows for old buildings.

Presenters: Anath Ranon, AIA, senior associate, Cho Benn Holback + Associates, Baltimore, Md., and commissioner, Baltimore Commission on Historic and Architectural Preservation.

William Mincey, AIA, John B. Murray Architect, New York, N.Y. Scott Fox, territory sales manager, Marvin Windows and Doors.

Moderator: Judy L. Hayward, education director, Traditional Building Exhibition and Conference, Restore Media, LLC, Washington, D.C.

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Ancient Values

The Classicist No. 8

edited by Richard John

Institute of Classical Architecture & Classical America, New York, NY; 2009

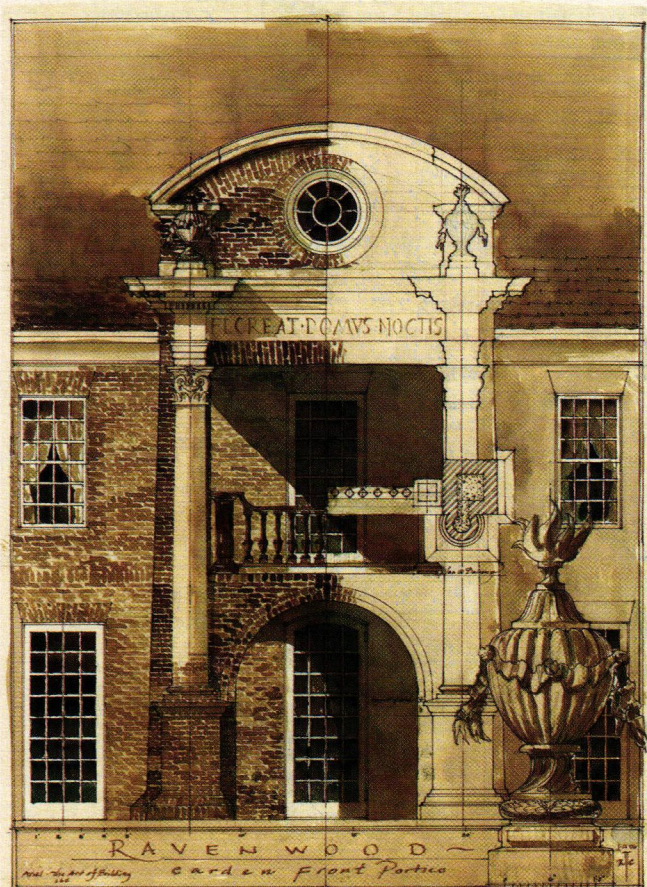
212 pages; paperback; numerous illustrations; \$45 (free to ICA&CA members)

ISBN 978-0-9642601-2-2

Reviewed by Eve M. Kahn

The eighth edition of the Institute of Classical Architecture & Classical America's journal, *The Classicist* No. 8, is the lengthiest and liveliest in the series' 15-year history. How many other nonprofits' publications would manage to summarize a few eons of human achievement, plus the traditions' modern-day repercussions, in so many pages of colorful illustrations and insightful prose typeset in Venetian and Roman serifs with second-century ancestry?

Half the volume is devoted to essays about under-appreciated historical revivals of Classicism. In 1819, we learn from Notre Dame architecture professor Richard M. Economakis, a British military engineer named Sir George Whitmore (1775-1862) designed a government center for Corfu made of Maltese limestone and fronted in a Doric colonnade modeled after Parthenon precedents. Economakis analyzes the building's multicultural facets: from the Britannia statue that once crowned the roofline alongside a Venetian lion and a Corfuote rudderless ship, to the "Palladian reverberation" of the interior's proportions. *The Classicist* also profiles two 20th-century innovators, Charleston-based architect Albert Simons (1890-1980) and British architect/critic Sir Reginald Blomfield (1856-1942). College of Charleston art historian Ralph Muldrow explores Simons' "ubiquitous yet unobtrusive" work, ranging from Georgian Revival houses to Low Country plantations, austere stuccoed college buildings and the occasional Ionic-columned, balustraded, brick gas station. By 1949, Simons had conceded the mainstream to Modernism, although he worried that "there is very little poetry or enchantment in any of it." Blomfield was even gloomier, according to University of Miami architecture professor



Richard Cameron of Ariel - *The Art of Building* sketched this doorway while finalizing designs for a mid-Atlantic mansion named Ravenwood.



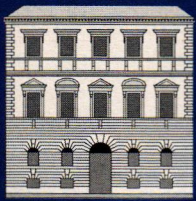
Tableaus of saints surround barrel-vaulted pavilions in Leonard Porter's 2004 mural for a South Dakota church.

Katherine J. Wheeler. He warned of the "insidious and far-reaching" effects of rejecting the past, an unsound fallacy "foredoomed to failure," while prolifically designing the likes of a 1926 vaulted memorial arch in Belgium for British soldiers and a 1913 stone quadrant for Piccadilly Circus.

Of course Blomfield was too gloomy. In portfolios of a dozen architects' recent work, *The Classicist* shows how traditionalists have quietly won battles in many corners of the planet – and not just by designing rich peoples' houses. The mini-portfolios cover churches by Duncan G. Stroik scattered from Indiana to California; scalloped-gable, Bermuda-inspired public buildings in Florida designed by Cooper Johnson Smith Architects and Khoury & Vogt Architects; and townhouse crescents in England and France by Fairfax & Sammons Architecture (with Ben Pentreath) and the Italian firm of Pier Carlo Bontempi. Equally heartening are *The Classicist's* essays on what the next generation is learning: the Doric pavilions that Georgia Tech students have proposed for a Wall Street ferry terminal and a YMCA in Manila; the Gothic dorm for Yale that Notre Dame students believe would look "as if it has always been there"; and the exquisite pencil drawings and oil paintings of ancient statuary that are coming out of the ICA&CA's own Grand Central Academy of Art.

The Classicist took in work by so many authors, however, that not all the prose is consistently good. Economakis' sentences in particular could have used haircuts. A fairly typical example goes like this: "While in many ways typifying early-nineteenth-century eclectic attitudes, the formal nuances, complex organizational strategies, and subtle cultural and political references that pervade Whitmore's work may be offered in riposte to the argument that Late Georgian architecture was compromised by rote copying, capricious application of antique and Renaissance precedent, and a disinclination toward analytical and metaphorical thinking." And the journal's descriptions of new buildings, sometimes a few sentences long, can skim along with generalities about "design that can be enjoyed by the frequent visitors to the area."

But where else, between two covers, would you find an Oxford philologist's 1760s description of battling grass fires in Turkish coastal ruins, an ode to contemporary muralist Leonard Porter's 2009 scene of Greek wind gods anticipating the sacrifice of Princess Iphigenia, and some hi-res photographs of architect Eric Stengel's Tennessee barn with steel straps wrapped around column bases "to resemble the bindings on a horse's legs"? The ICA&CA has to be lauded, again, for bringing to light so many thought-provoking, non-proselytizing variations on its core themes. ■



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OCTOBER 20-23, 2010

Sphere of Influence

The Du Ponts: Houses and Gardens in the Brandywine, 1900-1951

by Maggie Lidz

Acanthus Press, LLC, New York, NY; 2009

228 pages; clothbound; approximately 300 color and duotone photos; \$65

ISBN 978-0-926494-69-5

Reviewed by Annabel Hsin

Few families in American history have had the industrial and architectural influence of the du Ponts, founders of the DuPont Company. In 1802, Eleuthère Irénée was one of the first du Ponts from France to settle on the banks of the Brandywine Creek in Wilmington, DE, where he established a gunpowder mill. He chose the remote location to lessen the impact of possible industrial accidents – E. I. du Pont’s father and wife never recovered from accidental blasts, and his youngest son and most gifted grandnephew was killed by one. To minimize individual monetary loss, the du Ponts practiced communal property sharing. This tradition continued with E. I. du Pont’s son, Henry, who strictly enforced communalism. While the practice had many advantages, such as the ability to feed multiple families with one farm and strong community ties with close household groupings, individual family members did not experience the pride of property ownership.

As the du Ponts grew wealthy and became more Americanized during the 19th century, they looked to their French heritage for a sense of history – full-sized paintings were copied from ancestral portrait miniatures and the names Pierre, Irénée, Eleuthera and Victorine were consistently passed down through generations. Architecturally, the du Ponts also favored French-styled casement windows, tiled roofs and stuccoed walls. Many American-born du Ponts visited Bois-des-Fossés, a country house in France where the family’s early generations lived before emigrating. New homes were built in the Brandywine Valley, while existing houses were expanded during this time – their styles directly influenced by the du Ponts’ travels.

By 1900 – 100 years after the family arrived in America – 14 family houses were located within a few miles of the DuPont Mills: Eleutherian Mills, Upper Louviers, Lower Louviers, Nemours, Hagley, Hagley House, Winterthur, Rencourt, Pelleport, Rokeby, Swamp Hall, Saint Amour, Goodstay and Vireaux. These homes, along with many other 20th-century residences, are highlighted in Winterthur Museum estate historian Maggie Lidz’ latest book, *The Du Ponts: Houses and Gardens in the Brandywine, 1900-1951*.

The monograph features 25 chapters on individual du Pont houses, farms and gardens, arranged by when the property was built or came under the family’s ownership. Each section includes historic images, many culled from private archives and family albums, and an introduction to the property’s architectural aspects. Lidz’ historical background research is largely based on the du Pont family manuscript collection at Hagley Museum, one of the best family collections in America. There is also a house portfolio of over 40 properties that are either private residences or have since been demolished. The portfolio includes an image of each property (with the exception of two residences), architect information, current status and a brief description – which du Pont occupied the property and what architectural changes were made.

The beginning of the 20th century also marked the end of the du Ponts’ communal ownership practice. In 1902 the company was bought out by three du Pont cousins, Alfred I., T. Coleman and Pierre Samuel II, who reshaped the enterprise into one of the century’s most successful international corporations – mostly by selling superfluous residential and agricultural real estate.



Isabella du Pont Sharp’s Meown Farm, completed ca. 1930, was built to stable her horses and entertain friends. Her husband, Rodney, collaborated with architect Albert Ely Ives to design a stone barn with brick corbeling as its centerpiece as well as a bell tower, stable and an attached greenhouse. In the 1950s, a traditional Brandywine-styled addition of a simple clapboard structure was constructed at a right angle to the stone core to supplement the living areas.

Meanwhile, the cousins invested privately in real estate, some of it former company land. Alfred acquired 400 acres for his new country estate, Nemours. He commissioned John Carrère and Thomas Hastings to build the French-style mansion, where he lived with his second wife, Alicia. Coleman purchased a large tract of land west of Wilmington, where he and his wife could farm and garden. They built a weekend and summer house on the land and called it Old Mill. Pierre bought a Pennsylvania Quaker farm, which he later named Longwood and doubled in size. These were the first du Pont family properties built in the new century.

When the last mill in the Brandywine Valley stopped running in the early 1920s, its houses and properties were sold. Du Pont family members had the first option to purchase and many of them took advantage of the opportunity to own and subsequently remodel these residences. Additions and decorations from the late-1800s were removed to emphasize original façades. These homes, mainly Lower Louviers and Eleutherian Mills, soon replaced Bois-des-Fossés as the locus of the family’s history.

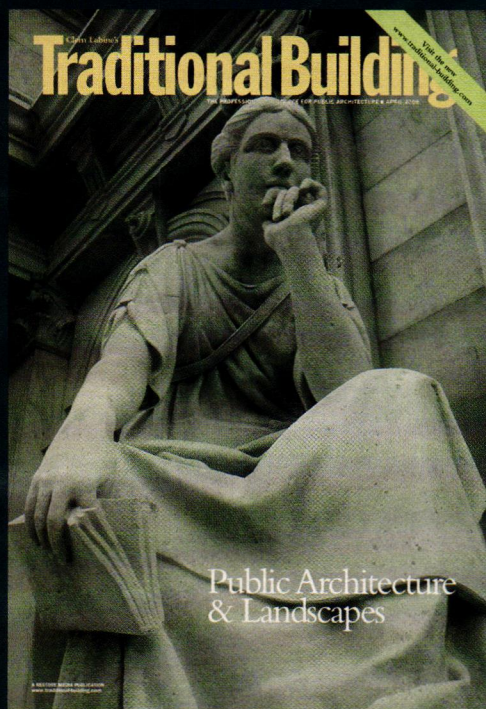
A decade later, Wilmington saw a spike in large country estates; an overwhelming majority of them were built and owned by the du Ponts. During this period, the family hired nationally known architects such as Harrie T. Lindeberg, Mellor, Meigs & Howe and R. Brognard Okie – the latter was responsible for six houses between 1926 and 1940. And a local firm, founded by Victorine du Pont Homsey and her husband Samuel Eldon Homsey, was also involved with many du Pont houses. Their designs are still present at Mt. Cuba, Longwood and Winterthur, and also at smaller residences, including Lower Louviers, Brookdale Farm, Meown Farm, Applecross and the Homseys’ own residence, Tulip Hollow.

While several du Pont properties are currently well-known museums and public spaces (with their own monographs), there are many others worth acknowledging for their contribution to America’s architectural history. George A. Weymouth, third-generation grandson of E. I. du Pont and founder of the Brandywine Conservancy, writes in the book’s foreword, “With so many [homes] destroyed, Maggie Lidz’ book not only documents my family’s varied architectural contribution to the Brandywine River Valley but also reveals how that contribution expresses our industrial, economic, and personal history. Her book adds considerably to our greater understanding of the 20th century.” ■

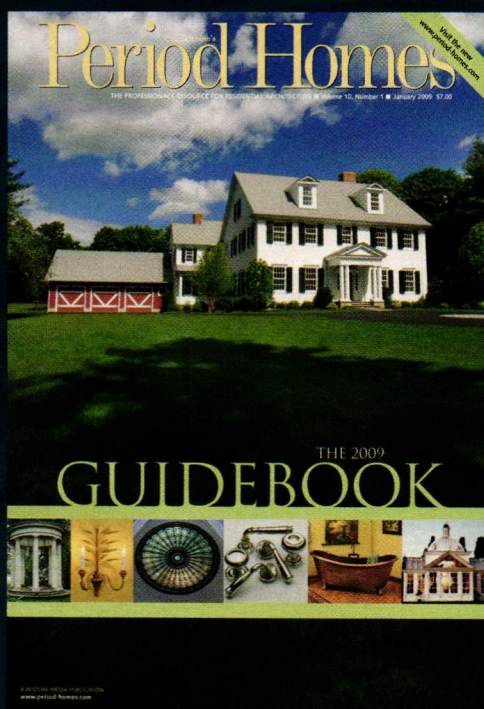
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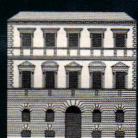
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A Fight for Craftsmanship

By Brent Hull

A few months ago my shop manager and I went to view a CNC machine for our millwork shop as we had heard over and over the wonders and advantages of these new machines. A CNC machine is basically a computer-controlled router; they range in price from a few thousand to hundreds of thousands of dollars. The one we saw cost \$300,000 and we probably wouldn't spend less than \$150,000.

The owner of the machine bragged to us about what the machine had done for him. He had an enviable business. His clients were the top builders and architects in the city and his reputation had been laid by the founder and previous owner from whom he had bought the business five years before.

What would a machine like this do for our shop? It would seemingly increase production speed, but what about quality and the level of craft?

Interestingly, the previous owner had never bought a CNC and the new owner boasted that his production hadn't slipped and that he used fewer workers than the original owner. His tone implied that the previous owner had been a fool for not buying one.

As we watched the large router make door parts – shaping, routing and boring the various pieces – it was quite entertaining. One man operated the machine from a computer pad a few feet from the table. He walked back and forth, blowing away excess sawdust, pushing numbers on a keypad, watching the monitor, waiting, and then eyeing the machine as it worked.

The owner said it took about 20 minutes to make all the parts for a door. While a part of me rolled my hands together like an evil scientist for the savings we could realize, another part of me was more curious and anxious. What would a machine like this do for our shop? It would seemingly increase production speed, but what about quality and the level of craft?

As I continued to prod and probe I discovered that the machine replaced about five workers. It worked over time without complaint, it was never sick – all the advantages of a machine, brought to the humble woodshop. The truth is that the CNC machine is making its way into more and more shops. The price has come down. The machines have improved and can do more. Even the small local cabinet shop can employ a CNC machine with a great deal more effectiveness than ever before. Good news, right?

Well we decided not to buy a CNC, at least for the time being. The reason wasn't just financial, but also the fear that we would kill craftsmanship if we moved a CNC into the shop. I'll admit, I'm an idealist, but truthfully I don't know if I can handle the temptation of a CNC machine yet. Our shop has become a place where craftsmanship is revered. We still use hand tools, we have carvers, we lay out our work with pencil and compass, we build templates; we're old school. I fear we wouldn't be if we bought a CNC router.

I recently wrote a book (along with my friend Christine Franck) on the architectural interiors of the Winterthur Museum called *Traditional American Rooms*. It is an in-depth study/handbook of about 40 rooms at the museum, both Georgian and Federal. My company has also been fortunate enough to reproduce a number of these rooms for our clients. We have discovered that there is a level of detail that cannot be achieved with machines. Furthermore, to complete these rooms takes a level of patience I fear the CNC snuffs out.

Craftsmen today are way too reliant on tools and machines. We have actually forgotten how to problem solve. I tell the story of a carpenter who returns to punch out a job where a piece of shoe mold has come loose from the base. He spends 20 minutes unloading his tools – compressor, hose, nail gun and extension cords. He shoots in

the nail (two seconds) and then spends 20 minutes loading his tools back up. What takes 40 minutes could have taken four seconds if he would have merely grabbed his hammer and nailed the loose trim to the wall.

Tools are awesome today. Not only can they do more, but they also look cool. The miter saw (a saw used to cut crown and trim) has evolved from a simple chopping machine to one that tilts, turns and twists to make cutting crown easier than ever. This machine has changed dramatically in just the last 10-15 years.

These new tools make the craftsman lazy, causing us to forget how to cope the corner of moldings and how to nail things so they hold. Too many times I have seen carpenters nail a gapped board an extra 10 times instead of making the cut right the first time. Instead of approaching a job wondering how-to, we go in wondering if we have a tool for it.

The fear with the CNC is compounded in the shop. Not only does it make you lazy, you also forget the calculations and math that are involved in the geometry of architectural parts – the curve of an ellipse or the proper geometry of a column.

The temptation is to get rid of the most expensive men, and keep only the ones you need to run the machine. When you do this, you immediately become a slave to the machine. I asked the owner of the shop, "Who knows how to layout an ellipse, or the proportions of a column, all the formulas and details?" "I do, and I'm the only one who needs to," he proudly claimed. I feared that the new owner of the high-end mill shop had bought a company full of craftsman and turned it into a company limited by the capabilities of his new machine. And I feared that we would be tempted to do the same.

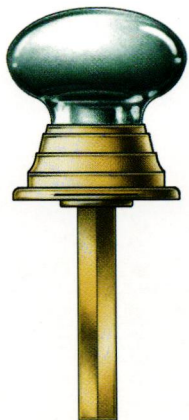
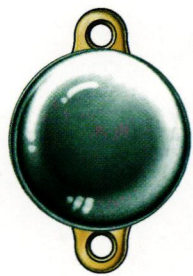
The challenge today for craftsmen is to use machines to speed production and increase efficiency yet still hold on to the craft and in fact use the extra time not to pad profits but to train and increase the quality of our work. Craftsmen must fight to make sure to never use a machine for what could be better done by hand. The fight for craftsmanship is a battle against the easy for the long-term good.

My experience from studying and building historic woodwork is that the small fine details make the difference between good and great. The details that matter are always better when they are cleaned up and refined by hand. The machine today is determining the limits of the craftsman's skill. This is the tail wagging the dog. The craftsman is the master, not the tool. The CNC machine, or whatever machine, should be a tool in the hands of a master – not a novice in the hands of a tool.

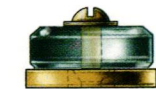
The future of fine quality in architecture production is reliant on quality craftsmen. The machine will dumb down architecture, limiting creativity and making quality too expensive. Carving is an example of this. Carving today is a lost art, simplified and reduced by the machine. Though, I'm sure at first, the advent of the CNC carving machine reduced the cost of carvings, it also reduced the quality. Today the brackets and corbels from some of the large "carving" houses are lifeless and thick. The beauty and artistry of carving is lost. The twist of a leaf, the depth of relief – the magic and life of a bracket has been transformed into a plastic appliqué that looks fake. It stands as an example of the death of craftsmanship.

To my craftsmen brothers, I cry out, "Fight on!" Rage against the machine! Architects and builders, please don't encourage mediocre work. Don't encourage the lifeless. Push us so that we will run. Keep us from getting lazy. Fighting for fine craftsmanship is a worthy fight. ■

Brent Hull, a nationally recognized expert in historic millwork and moldings, is the owner of Fort Worth, TX-based Hull Historical, which designs and manufactures custom architectural interiors for homes across the country.



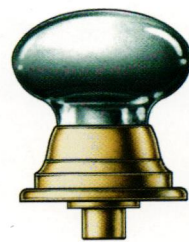
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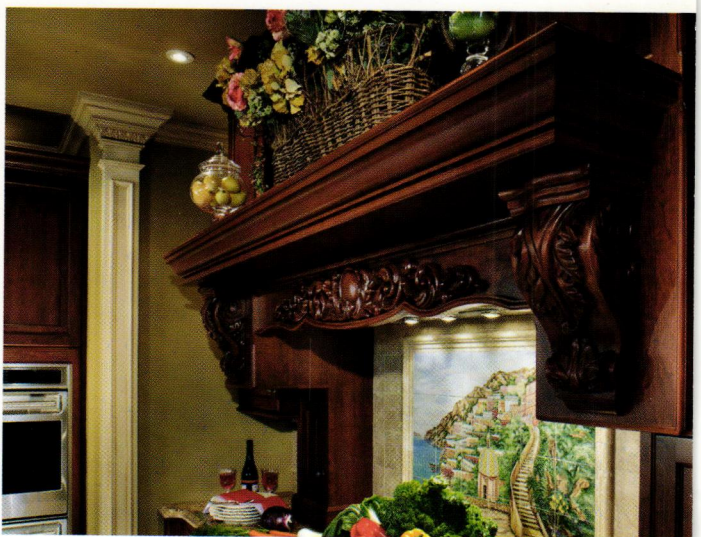
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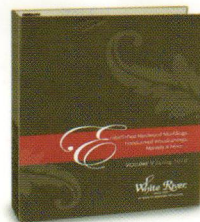


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