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Doing Right by Wright

After two decades, the restoration of Frank Lloyd Wright’s Darwin D. Martin House nears completion.

BY KILEY JACQUES
Frank Lloyd Wright, arguably the most influential architect of the 20th century, is distinguished for the genius ways in which he wedded the built environment with its natural environs. The Darwin D. Martin House (1903–1905) is a prime example of that genius. In fact, the 1.5-acre property is considered one of Wright’s crowning Prairie-style achievements. The National Historic Landmark is located in the Parkside Historic District of Buffalo, New York, and was commissioned by 37-year-old Martin, a self-made billionaire and secretary of the Larkin Soap Company. Martin and his wife, Isabelle, lived in the home from 1905 to 1937, after which time it remained vacant for 17 years.

After decades of neglect and subsequent states of ownership resulting in partial demolition, the property found its savior. In 1992, the Martin House Restoration Corporation (MHRC) began raising the necessary funds to oversee the property’s complete restoration. Major work began in 1997, and in 2009, the Eleanor and Wilson Greatbatch Pavilion was opened to the public as a visitor center. The $50 billion project goal is to restore the entire property to its 1907 state for use as a public museum.

The residential complex comprises six interconnected buildings: the Martin House, the George Barton House—where Martin’s sister and brother-in-law once lived—a carriage house, a conservatory, the pavilion, and a gardener’s cottage, which was added in 1908. Other significant structures include a pergola connecting the Martin House to the conservatory, and a greenhouse.

The Martin House demonstrates the strong horizontal planes, deep overhangs, cantilevered roof, grounded foundation, and central hearth for which Wright was famed. To date, its exterior reconstruction and renovations are complete. The next phase, now underway, is focused on the interiors. (It is significant to note that no other Wright site has undergone such degradation and remained standing.)

The home’s pièce de résistance is the wisteria mosaic fireplace. Though fireplaces feature prominently in Wright’s residential designs, few included a mosaic element. The 360-degree glass work spans all four walls of the double-sided fireplace, which provides a spatial divide between the entry and main living area. Wright’s beloved bronze, gold, and green palette colors the patterns of winding wisteria vines—a natural element found in the exterior landscape. Most of the original mosaic was lost to damage that occurred during the 17-year vacancy, though salvaged tiles were incorporated into the replicated mosaic. The restoration took two years to complete, and was the parview of Botti Studio of Architectural Arts—a family-operated business with roots that date back to the 16th century—in collaboration with HHL Architects.
ABOVE: Original Wright designed furniture is on display along the west wall of reception room. Photo by Biff Henrich.

TOP: The view of “light unit” shows the restored wood cabinetry and interior brick work with gilded mortar joints. Pairs of replica light sconces flank casement windows with Wright designed art glass. Photo by Biff Henrich.

MIDDLE: An axial view from restored front entry of Martin House looks north through the pergola toward the conservatory. Restoration efforts included faithful reproduction of wall finishes and furnishings, including Japanese prints given to the Martins by Wright. Photo by Sandra Kicman.

Spearheaded by founding Architect, Theodore Lownie, HHL Architects initially joined the project in the early 1990s, when the University of Buffalo owned the property. The firm was called in to assist with the reparation of a second-floor glass porch, which evolved into a project to restore the roof on the 50,000-square-foot Martin House. “It’s almost a hybrid between a commercial building with concrete and steel components, and a lot of [more residential] wood framing,” notes Matthew Meier, AIA. Replicating building materials, which during Wright’s time would have been fairly conventional and easily found, proved challenging. For the terra cotta roof shingles, for example, they used a 300-year-old company based in France that makes shingles by hand. “We couldn’t re-create them using the original manufacturer because they don’t make them that way anymore,” Meier explains.

Project manager Jamie Robideau describes the impact the materials had on construction: “There’s a learning curve . . . [today’s] workforce hasn’t worked with this type of terra cotta tile or plaster or style of masonry. They had to use special mortars and rake the joints in the manner needed for this project. Our
masons, roofers, plasterers, and woodworkers all had to get acquainted with older methods or create new methods to mimic what [the original builders] were able to achieve."

The house includes 394 works of glass art designed by Wright—more than any of his other projects.

Art glass pieces, which Wright referred to as "light screens," were vital to his Prairie style. They feature in windows, doors, skylights, and laylights or "false" skylights that run horizontally and are electrically illuminated. This project is home to the "Tree of Life" windows—Wright's most famous glass work. Alone, it contains 750 individual panes of glass. The design intent was to connect the inside experience to the natural world beyond; Wright used casement windows because they literally open into the landscape, and invite it in.

"It's a complicated facility," says Meier. "Everything about the architecture and the finishes was integrated—the trim was part of the structure, and the exposed brick within the house was also part of the structure. Back then, that was a foreign [idea]." He cites the multiple built-in elements—some of which housed radiators, others books, chinaware, and kitchen cabinetry. "This was really his first signature Prairie house that integrated everything—the walls, the ceilings, the inside and outside, the furnishings. The dining room table was built no differently than the wall trim."

Wright designed all of the furniture and selected the artwork—the team worked to both restore the pieces still on hand and to re-create all of the missing components including fabrics, color washes, and finishes, which Meier describes as an "almost archeological" process.

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As the landscape is integral to all Frank Lloyd Wright designs, MHRC is currently planning for the rehabilitation of the property’s historic grounds and gardens. The strategy for the preservation and management of the landscape is based on a recently published planning document, called the Cultural Landscape Report (CLR), which was produced by Bayer Landscape Architecture, PLLC, in consultation with MHRC and HHI Architects. "The CLR establishes the Martin House landscape as an important contributing attribute to the overall significance of the historic property," says MHRC Executive Director Mary F. Roberts. "An accurately documented and rehabilitated landscape is vitally important and lies at the heart of the historic restoration of one of New York State’s most prominent architectural icons."

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1: View of restored living room complete with furniture, art glass, and lighting designed by Wright for the Martin House. This area of the home suffered significant water damage during the time the house sat vacant. Photo by KC Kratt.

2: View of dining room with Wright designed table and chairs. The restoration of this and many other rooms required the artistic blending of new and restored wood trim. Photo by KC Kratt.

3: View of library. As with the rest of the home, the decorative plaster finishes were faithfully recreated following laboratory analysis of original paint layers. Photo by KC Kratt.
The reception room is fully restored and furnished to 1907 condition. Restoration efforts at the second floor above required the removal and reconstruction of the exterior wall (left) and large portions of the ceiling shown here. Photo by Biff Henrich.

ABOVE: Interior view of reconstructed conservatory. A replica "Nike of Samothrace" statue completes the recreation. Photo by Biff Henrich.

RIGHT: Rendering of the property.
Once home to Henry and Clara Ford, Fair Lane is undergoing a restoration of epic proportions.

BY KILEY JACQUES

TOP: Henry and Clara Ford completed their 31,000-square-foot dream house called Fair Lane in 1915. Photo by John F. Martin.

LEFT: Built on over 1,400 acres of farmland in Dearborn, Michigan, Fair Lane was the Fords' home for more than 30 years and is just miles from the Ford Motor Co. empire. Photo by John F. Martin.

OPPOSITE TOP: Conservators from Atlanta, Georgia-based Rosebud Company are working to restore the estate's more than 12,740 square feet of aged oak floors using a passive refinishing process. Photo by John F. Martin.

OPPOSITE: Layers of paint have hidden the beauty of Fair Lane's living room and music room walls for more than 77 years. Artisans from Historic Surfaces LLC continue to peel away those layers to reveal the original beautiful multi-toned inlaid French walnut. Photo by John F. Martin.
The 1915 house that Henry and Clara Ford built on the Rouge River in Dearborn, Michigan, is an intriguing blend of Midwestern Prairie School and English country manor styles. Measuring 31,000 square feet, Fair Lane is one of the first historic sites to be designated a National Historic Landmark. And it is in the midst of a major renovation.

In the Fords’ day, the 1,300-acre estate comprised a working farm, private garage and laboratory, greenhouse, indoor pool, skating house, bowling alley, pony barn, hydro-electric powerhouse and dam, and staff cottages—all surrounded by grounds designed by landscape architect Jens Jensen.

Upon Clara’s death in 1950—three years after Henry’s—most of the estate’s furnishings were sold at auction. In 1951, the Ford Motor Co. bought the property and used it for offices and archives until 1956, whereupon the Fords’ grandson, Henry Ford II, helped transfer the estate to the University of Michigan to serve as a campus. Ultimately, it was closed to the public due to its deteriorating condition and, in 2013, the University transferred ownership to the newly formed Henry Ford Estate, Inc.—the nonprofit now helming the restoration.

PROJECT PHASES
Given the scale of the project, it was broken into phases, the first of which began in 2014 and focused on urgently needed infrastructure repairs; these included redoing the roofs and foundation of both the main house and the 9,000-square-foot powerhouse, as well as rebuilding a retaining wall along the river. Second came the meticulous restoration of the first-floor formal rooms, namely the living room, billiard room, music room, sun porch, library, dining room, and entry foyer; their restoration is set to be completed by the end of this year. Next, they will start populating those rooms with furnishings. The final phase will concentrate on the last of the 57 rooms. “We hope by the end of 2020 to have all of the rooms restored, and about 75 percent of the furnishings done,” says Mark Heppner, vice president for historic resources at Historic Ford Estates.
An expert team of historians and artisans is working to remove over 70 years of wear and tear. Then, they’ll create replicas of the original décor. At their disposal are original photographs of each room, receipts for purchases made in 1915, original catalogs, letters, and other correspondence. They also conduct microscopic and chemical analyses to gather as much information about the original rooms and furnishings as possible. “You’d like everything to be an exact science, but none of it is an exact science,” notes Heppner. “At the end of the day, the foundation of everything we are doing is solid scholarly research . . . to paint the clearest picture of what [this home] looked like—the intent, materials, artisans[hip]. But it is never a 100 percent filled-in puzzle.” It is, however, impressively close.

**PROJECT ARTISANS**

One of the artisans working on the project is Matt White, who, together with his brother Jon, owns Heritage Metalworks, the company charged with the lighting for the library, billiards room, and music room. “They have great archived photos, literature, and documentation showing us a roadmap of what we needed to make,” says Matt. “They were looking to us to interpret what was there.”

Part of their work required “filling in the blanks.” Blurred photographs omitted the refined details that characterized lighting fixtures by Sterling Bronze Co. and Caldwell & Co.—two companies from which many of the original fixtures were purchased. The Whites looked to their archived work, held by the Smithsonian Museum, to make decisions about how to fill in those blanks. Because those photos are black and white, determining finishes was a challenge. They researched metal finishes and fabrication processes of the period, and reviewed purchase receipts from Sterling Bronze Co., which often specified finishes. Additionally, by referencing millwork, molding, plaster work, and other key points in the library, they were able to determine the size of a missing chandelier and sconces. It’s this kind of sleuth work that makes the project so demanding and rewarding.

Reconstituting the cold-cast and gilded music room sconces and wrought-iron smoking stands required a mix of techniques. In some cases, the team used 3-D printing to form design plans; other times, hand sculpting was used. Pieces were cast using the lost wax process, which can pick up highly refined details, and is effective for lending a feeling of age.

**RESTORATION PROCESS**

Heppner says practicing patience is key to the painstaking restoration process. He also stresses the value of the relationships formed with the tradespeople...
1: Fair Lane’s music room as it appeared in 1939 after Clara Ford decided to remodel and paint the wall a putty color. Photo by John F. Martin.

2: Restoration and repairs to Fair Lane began in 2014. Photo by John F. Martin.

3: The forged iron smoke stand was reproduced by Heritage Metalworks from archive photos of Fair Lane’s sun porch and lounge. Photo by John F. Martin.

4: Sconce arms for the music room were created by Heritage Metalworks. They were cold cast to pick up carving texture of original bobeches and bodies - after pattern work and casting but prior to adding a painted finish. Photo by John F. Martin.

5: Austin Eighmey of Historic Services LLC removes paint from the window frames in the music room. Photo by John F. Martin.
working on the project. “We are celebrating the arts, crafts, and trades of the past as well as those of the present and the future,” he says, adding that he expects people working on the project to see themselves as invested partners willing to go to extreme lengths to get things right. “They have to be passionate about what they do.”

Forging relationships with the right tradespeople also makes it possible to employ best practices. Heppner cites the example of a hardwood floor restoration expert who uses a passive refinishing technique to remove layers of stain and wax to reveal the original floors, which he then treats with oils used at the time they were laid. “The history and heritage are in the wood floors, and by sanding them you lose all that history, and you are weakening the floor,” Heppner explains, adding that, were it not for that expert input, they surely would have sanded the floors.

He also references an unofficial Brunswick Balke collender billiard table expert who suspected the ornate cabinet that stood flush with the wall in the billiards room would have been recessed in Ford’s time. After tapping around on the wall behind it, he was proven right. It has since been relegated to its original position in the room—adding yet another authentic detail to the house.

When renovations are complete, Fair Lane will frame the Ford family’s story. Visitors will enjoy a house museum experience without boundaries—they will be free to explore all aspects of the home that once meant so much to one of America’s great captains of industry.

Fair Lane’s white oak floors were laid in a herringbone pattern, including staircases and closets. Photo by John F. Martin.

Conservator Mark Gervasi performs detailed repairs to Fair Lane’s floors Photo by John F. Martin.

Historic Surfaces LLC worked to remove layers of cream paint from the ceiling, stabilize and repair the plaster, and refinish it with a beautiful glazing to match the original that Henry and Clara commissioned to complement the rich wood walls. Photo by John F. Martin.

Conservators work to repair the wood floors in between Fair Lane’s living and dining rooms. Photo by John F. Martin.
Reviving a Back Bay Grande Dame

Meyer & Meyer recaptures the spirit of the original design on this beautiful Back Bay townhouse in Boston.

STORY BY EMILY O'BRIEN | PHOTOGRAPHY BY PETER VANDERWARKER

ABOVE: Prior to renovation, the building lacked character.
TOP: 9 Commonwealth Avenue's entry once again engages with No. 7 Commonwealth. The new balustrade and fanlight reinforce similarities between the buildings and the pilasters flanking the balustrade are exact replicas.

OPPOSITE: Skilful details and craftsmanship on the new facade blend harmoniously with that of the original twin. The now extinct Nova Scotia limestone was replaced with a creamy buff limestone from Vermont.
The exterior of a seven-story 13-unit townhouse on Commonwealth Avenue, in Boston's historic Back Bay area, touted as one of the most unspoiled areas of 19th-century American urban design, had seen better days. The townhouse, built in 1861, was originally designed as the symmetrical twin of its neighbor, each with a bay extending through the mansard roof.

In 1870, the townhouse was sold to an importer and crockery dealer and former Mayor of Boston Otis Norcross; it remained in the Norcross family until 1937, when it was sold to a realty company. Originally built as a single-family home, the new owners eliminated the entry and stairs to create room for two additional floors, forming a total of 13 units. All Nova Scotia limestone on the façade, which is now extinct, was interchanged with marginally detailed brick, stone, and precast concrete. The cornice lines and mansard roof were removed, and with its new under-scaled entry, unusual window proportions and mediocre materials, the building was rendered uncharacteristic of the Back Bay neighborhood.

Hoping to recapture the essence of the original building, its owner reached out for help.

Principal Interior Designer of Meyer & Meyer, Inc. Architecture and Interiors Laura Brooks Meyer, says “Our firm welcomed the opportunity to show that the exterior of the Back Bay townhouse could be redesigned to sit appropriately among its historic neighbors while a gut renovation resulted in modern condominiums within.” The firm, which had been carefully selected for the project, had the full backing of the City of Boston Historic Commission.

“The challenge was keeping the additional floor the developer added years ago and designing an exterior that balanced the new exterior with the sister building. Because the floor-to-floor heights were reduced by crowding additional stories into the structure whose overall height remained primarily the same, there was a significant challenge because the lower floor plates had to be retained in order to keep the project economically viable,” notes John Meyer.

To help disguise the misalignment of two additional floors, new windows were clustered to elongate their proportions. Using strategically placed enriched cornice lines, belt courses, and stone coursing, the horizontal banding of the two buildings was reconstructed. The top floors look more continuous now that the true mansard style—with scalloped slate and capped matching metalwork and crested wrought iron railing—has been revitalized.

Extensive improvements to the front façade now evoke the grandeur of the initial building, and Meyer & Meyer focused the new features to be indicative of the French Academic style. “As of result of the current renovation, the number of units was decreased from 13 to 6, and the redesign of the exterior restored the building’s symmetry by extending belt courses across the elevation and replicating other masonry details including balustrades and carved limestone panels,” says John Meyer.

A newly designed, elegant two-story entry is equipped with all the bells and whistles it should behold—ornamental detailing, two pilasters flanking the entry, all allowing the above balustrade to reconnect with its sister building. A shallow porch now safeguards the newly recessed vestibule.

The elevator head house was reduced in height and set back from the street view. A new driveway ramp with a covered entry at the rear provides access to the ground parking for six cars. Two additional parking spots remained on-grade at the rear of the building. Limestone veneer now replaces the brick and stone cladding.

Meyer & Meyer designed a new rooftop deck for the penthouse unit, in addition to a private terrace along Commonwealth Avenue. Construction cost for the project stayed within the developer’s budget and took just under a year to complete.

“It gives us great satisfaction to know that the original historic aesthetic can be maintained while all new systems and interiors will benefit the owners for years to come,” says Laura Brooks Meyer.
G.P. Schafer Architect designs this Federal entry for a country house in New York. Note the brass hardware and strap hinges. Photo by Eric Roth.

Making an Entrance

Regardless of its traditional style, the front door, the signature of the home's architecture, is designed to make a grand entrance.

BY NANCY A. RUHLING
**BELOW:** This double door with arched glass window is a hallmark of the Victorian-era style. Photo by Eric Roth.

**ABOVE:** Architect Jim Collins incorporates French doors into this North Carolina home, which floods the interiors with natural light. Photo by Eric Roth.

It is the first element that engages guests before they step inside, it sets the tone for the style of the rest of the period-style house and adds welcoming age-old character and charm.

With the addition of classical millwork and glass side panels and transoms, the front door becomes a signifier of timeless design.

In all styles of traditional architecture, there are a variety of ways to make the entry stand out, whether the door is a plain and simple Shaker or a fancy Victorian Painted Lady.

“It’s important to get it right, because where you enter can enhance the entire building,” says Wendy Wynncoll, special projects administrator for Historic Doors in Kempton, Pennsylvania, which designs and makes period-style custom doors. “It’s a great way to make a first impression.”

Shelby Vanderwilt, entry door product specialist for Pella, agrees, adding that “the entry door should have curb appeal. It’s a statement piece. More attention is being paid to front doors, and traditional homes can distinguish themselves with bold entry doors.”

The choice, Wynncoll adds, is becoming even more crucial because front entries are getting wider, taller and more sophisticated in style.

Vanderwilt notes that “we’re seeing 8-foot- and 9-foot-tall entry doors. Even side doors are now that tall. And we’re seeing bigger hardware to match the new heights and widths.”

**MATERIALS**

Although period-style doors are available in various materials, including aluminum cladding and steel, wood generally is the preferred choice for full-scale historic restorations and for homes where authenticity is desired.

“Mahogany is the most popular because of its durability,” says Ron Safford, president of Parrett Windows & Doors in Dorchester, Wisconsin, which manufactures custom-crafted doors, grills and accessories. “It has a lot of character and is pleasing to the eye.”

White oak, Douglas fir and pine also are top choices, according to Safford.

Wynncoll says customers choose wood because “it’s natural, authentic, and a great insulator.”

Pella’s Architecture Series offers wood entry doors as well as high-end Fiberglas-skin doors.

“Our wood doors have custom capability, but the Fiberglas models are easier to maintain and are a little bit less expensive than wood so they are slightly more popular,” Vanderwilt says. “Real wood is used to make the grain pattern on the Fiberglas doors so the graining appears natural. They are paintable and stainable just like wood or can come painted or stained straight from our factory.”
ABOVE: The Tudor-style door echoes the trim on the entryway. Photo by Eric Roth.

COLORS AND STAINS
The choice of paint or stain depends on the architectural style of the house and, to a lesser degree, the preference of the owner.

"With my customers, a natural finish is most popular," Safford says. "A clear coat allows you to see the beauty and warmth of the wood. When people ask for colors, the palette is all over the place, but pure black and pure white are popular."

Pella, which offers 27 paint colors, is expanding its seven-option factory-stain choices.

"We are adding wheat and charcoal," says C.J. Osborn, entry door product manager. "Wheat, when paired with a medium-tone stain on the siding of a Craftsman house, creates a natural yet noticeable contrast with the front door. And charcoal is versatile in a way that makes it an excellent choice for front doors on all home styles."

Even if the door is stained, contrasting paint colors allow the trim to become a defining feature.

"The trim should complement, not overwhelm," Safford says. "Some people choose contrasting trim or a keystone or plinth block on the top of the radius as an accent."

HARDWARE
While traditional polished brass hardware is still a top choice, homeowners are starting to request different finishes.

"Recently, we are seeing a bigger request for muted or brushed," Vanderwilt says.

At Parrett, the most popular orders are brass, bronze, oil-rubbed bronze and nickel finish (bronze finished in a silver color).

SIDELIGHTS AND TRANSOMS
The new bigger doors are ideal bases for surrounding sidelights and transoms as well as columns and capitals and pilasters and porticos.

"We're seeing a lot of sidelights and transoms because it's a specialty for us," Wyncoll says, adding that Historic Doors creates architectural doors and millwork for site-specific needs.

In most cases, Safford says, the panels have insulated glass.

Decorative glass dominates, he adds, because not only is it attractive but it also provides privacy.

"People want the glass options to be a statement piece," Vanderwilt says, adding that this can be something as simple as a wrought-iron panel.

"Frosted glass is being used as a bridge between contemporary and traditional styles for a more transitional look."

Pattered glass, Wyncoll adds, is a subtle way to add texture.

Safford says divided light, where a grill pattern is created with separate panes of glass, is an attractive option.

"There's an equal demand for simulated divided light, where the grill bars are sandwiched between two full panes because it's less costly," he says, adding that Parrett is one of the few manufacturers that still offers authentic divided light. "With complicated patterns, there can be a significant cost difference."

SCREEN DOORS
Screen doors are a simple way to add style or dress up an ordinary entrance at a fraction of the cost of a period-style wooden front door.

They are available not only in standard rectangular shapes but also in arch-top and round-top styles and can be painted or stained to blend in or stand out.

"The simplest screen door doesn't take away
from the entry door when it's made of the same wood and the same finish,” says Ciro Coppa, founder of Coppa Woodworking in San Pedro, California, which sells 350 custom-built, handcrafted styles. “They give ventilation and a view.”

Coppa’s doors are fitted with Phifer Ultravue, a screening material that’s virtually invisible so as not to obscure the architecture of the front door.

“People who buy plain-Jane entry doors will buy a fancier screen door to balance and get a traditional-style look,” he says. “We make custom doors with all kinds of designs — dolphins, palm trees, dogs. One customer was a retired Texas Ranger. He had us replicate his badge for the center of the door.”

When Historic Doors customers request a screen door, the company creates designs that are compatible with the custom front door.

“We only do wood frames and bronze screening,” Wyncoll says. •
Beacon Hill in Boston is home to several Federal townhouses by Charles Bullfinch. All photos by Eric Roth.
American Masterworks

The hallmarks of the Federal Style, 1780-1820

BY JOHN R. TSCHIRCH, ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIAN

Simple elegance, perfect proportion, classical detail. These are the essence of the Federal style in architecture, interiors, and the decorative arts in the period 1780 to 1820, when the United States was a new nation looking to establish its own cultural identity. It is a remarkable period in history when Americans mastered classical design and made it their own.

Along the eastern seaboard, maritime communities growing rich on trade were ready to display both their wealth and taste. From Portland, Maine, to Charleston, South Carolina, architects, woodworkers, plasterers, masons, paperhangers, and upholsterers produced houses and interiors of extraordinary beauty and refinement. These designers and craftsmen were inspired by the classical forms and ornament of the Greek and Roman past as well as the newly fashionable English works of Robert and James Adam. Among the leaders in this artistic flowering were the architects Charles Bulfinch, Samuel McIntire and Russell Warren, to name just a few. Each of these talented individuals had an unerring eye for clean lines, flat surfaces, the subtle use of ornament and the sublime use of oval shapes for entire rooms, staircases and door fanlights. In their hands, less was truly more.

Charles Bulfinch (1763-1844) worked in both Boston and Washington, D.C. His most prominent project in New England was the Massachusetts State House (1789) on Beacon Hill in Boston. The building’s golden dome, inspired by ancient Roman temples, dominates the city’s skyline and fulfilled Bulfinch’s vision to make it a classical metropolis. The rich, powerful, and socially prominent then began to settle nearby. In his three houses for Harrison Gray Otis, built in 1796, 1800, and 1806 on Beacon Hill and on Beacon Street, Bulfinch’s simply elegant Federal Style defined the character of Boston’s most fashionable district. The first feature to capture one’s attention in these houses are the fanlight doors. These are the hallmarks of the Federal style. Based on a half oval, these over-door windows contain numerous versions of delicate tracery in wood and/or metal, creating a fan-like shape. Set against plain brick walls, these fanlights served as the centerpiece of a building. Slender classical columns framed these masterful entrances, focusing attention on the fanlight. In the evening, the tracery caught the interior lighting, creating a magical web-like pattern. Today, one can still wander the streets of Beacon Hill and be thus entertained and enchanted by the discreet show put on by these doors.

Salem, Massachusetts, offers another remarkably intact Federal era neighborhood known as the McIntire District. The great mercantile families of Salem tired of houses too close to commercial
wharves and chose in the early 1800s to relocate to broad new tree lined streets. Essex, Federal, and, most distinguished of them all, Chestnut Street, comprise a Federal era time capsule. Although many accomplished builders worked in the area, the name of Samuel McIntire (1757-1811) is legendary. Born in Salem, McIntire rose to become a superlative wood-carver, architect and furniture maker. Such was his influence, and ability, that the entire Federal-era district is named in his honor. He designed several fine houses and public buildings, among them Hamilton Hall (1805), but his masterpiece in the Gardner Pingree House (1804) on Essex Street. The house is a simple three story cube in red brick with a centrally placed door featuring a fanlight with gilded metalwork, a rather grand gesture. The gilding bespeaks the position of the Gardner family who commissioned their house at the height of Salem’s prosperity as a commercial seaport. McIntire also produced delicate wood carvings for the interior, notably the sheaves of wheat and garlands of flowers for the fireplace mantels.

While Bulfinch and McIntire developed a refined form of architecture and decoration in Massachusetts, something very different was afoot in Bristol, Rhode Island. George de Wolf, a general and one of the wealthiest sea-farers and slave traders in the nation, engaged Rhode Island born Russell Warren (1783-1860) to build a house in the center of town. With four soaring Corinthian columns, floor to ceiling windows and elaborately patterned railings, Linden Place is one of the most opulent versions of the Federal style in the country. The front door is surmounted by a fine fanlight, which, in turn, is topped by a fanlight window on the second floor above. A series of ovals and half-ovals interlock within these windows, conjuring up the most intricate patterns. It is a tour de force.

New England’s merchant oligarchs were important early patrons of Federal designers but Southern planters were also quick to produce their own versions of the style, one of the best examples being the Nathaniel Russell House in Charleston, South Carolina. The main façade is an understated affair with two windows at either side of a beautifully proportioned door. Inside, a true masterpiece awaits. Oval rooms are placed at the very center of each floor. This shape especially appealed to Federal-era designers for its elegance and adaptability. An oval form may be elongated in a way a pure circle can not. The oval was the basis for fanlight windows and, at the Nathaniel Russell house, for the elliptical staircase which rises the entire three stories of the building. No ornamental carving appears on the stair balusters or newel post. Only the smooth continuous line of the oval is seen from the first step to the last.

The Federal style was a triumph of simplicity and classically refined ornament. It suited the hopes and desires of an emerging nation. As the country progressed into the 1820s, new aspirations arose giving way, as they always do, to a new style, the Greek Revival, more massive, heroic in scale than the delicate fanlights and ovals of the Federal style. Time marches on, fashions change. What does endure is the legacy of superb design and craft. That is the gift of the Federal style to America. •
The dining room in the townhouse has built-in cupboards.

The Federal-style mantel in this Beacon Hill home showcases Classical design. Note the fluted columns adorning the mantelpiece.
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www.bearcreeklumber.com
Winthrop, WA 98862
Supplier of wood flooring, paneling, roofing, framing, new & recycled timbers & decking: hand-split, machine-cut & fancy-cut butt fire & rot-retardant treated shakes & shingles; quartersawn clapboard & siding; post & beam.

Resawn oak flooring from Sylvan Brandt is available in 3- to 11-in. widths.

Brandt, Sylvan
717-626-4520; Fax: 717-626-5867
www.sylvanbrandt.com
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Supplier of 18th- & 19th-century building materials salvaged from old houses & barns: columns, doors, shutters, mantels, sinks & bathtubs; antique & resawn flooring; antique heart pine, oak, chestnut, white pine & hemlock; radiators; since 1990.

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www.carlsontsbarnwood.com
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Santa Fe Lumber Co.
978-448-5621; Fax: 978-448-2754
www.santafelumber.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.

Foster Wood Products
800-662-9418; Fax: 766-846-3487
www.fosterwood.com
Shiloh, GA 31825
Supplier of specialty wood products: reclaimed heart pine & hardwood flooring & paneling; longleaf & new heart pine; old-growth white pine; treated porch flooring; hand-hewn & hard-to-find beams.

Chesnut flooring is available from Housatonic Hardwoods.

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Belfry Historic Consultants
845-275-4235
www.belfryhistoric.com
Beacon, NY 12508

Purveyors of historically accurate textiles, horsehair fabric, trimmings, wallcoverings, and carpeting since 1986. Belfry Historic employs authentic period techniques to create reproductions in exacting detail. Document patterns are available ranging from the 17th to 20th centuries.

Chadsworth Columns
800-486-2118; Fax: 910-763-3191
www.chadsworth.com

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; shutters. Click on No. 1580 for PolyStone; 180 for wood

This specialty interior column base is one of many offered by Chadsworth Columns.

Classic Ceilings
800-950-0700; Fax: 714-870-5972
www.classicceilings.com

Supplier of decorative wall & ceiling architectural ornaments: pressed-metal wall & ceiling tile, tin ceiling panels, cornices & backsplashes; decorative stampings; perforated-tin ceiling panels & tin ceiling imitations & more. Click on No. 1320

Classic Ceilings supplies tin ceilings from original molds that date back to 1896.

Decorators Supply Corp.
908-782-3369; Fax: 732-947-6257
www.decoratorssupply.com
Chicago, IL 60690

Manufacturer of classic architectural elements: plaster crowns, ceiling medallions, ceilings, niches & savages, 13,000 appliques for woodwork/furniture, 300 sizes of column capitals, pilaster capitals, corbels & columns; 15 styles of traditional wood mantels; classically inspired grilles; since 1883.

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www.motawi.com
Ann Arbor, MI 48103

Manufacturer of handcrafted embossed relief & glazed art tile: Arts & Crafts style; decorative tile featuring historical motifs such as Medieval animals, Celtic patterns & 19th-century architectural details.
Native Tile and Ceramics
310-533-8894; Fax: 310-533-8453
www.nativetile.com
Torrance, CA 90501
Manufacturer of handmade decorative tile: tile "rugs," floor inserts, trim, fireplace fronts & murals; Spanish Mission & Craftsman; custom designs & glazes.

Niko fabricated and installed the decorative ceiling and ornate cornice moldings for this building.

NIKO Contracting Co., Inc.
412-687-1517; Fax: 412-687-7969
www.nikocontracting.com
Pittsburgh, PA 15213
Nationwide contractor, fabricator & installer of architectural sheet metal & roofing: slate, tile, metal & other roofing; ornamental ceilings, cresting, finials, cornices, cupolas, domes, stoeps & snowguards.

Click on No. 8300

Subway Ceramics
888.387.3211; Fax: No fax
subwayceramics.com
Oak Park, IL 60301
Supplier of historically authentic ceramic tile: field tile, moldings & trim pieces; mosaics; Victorian style.

W.F. Norman Corp. manufactured these stamped sheet-metal ornaments.

W.F. Norman Corp.
800-641-4038; Fax: 417-667-2708
www.wfnorman.com
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Authentic Designs manufactured this three-candle electric light fixture.

**Authentic Designs**
802-944-9410; 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 lantern from Deep Landing Workshop was handcrafted using antiqued lead-coated copper and fitted with handmade glass.

**Deep Landing Workshop**
877-778-4042; Fax: 410-778-4070
www.deeplandingworkshop.com
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**Ball & Ball Lighting**
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www.ballandball.com
Exton, PA 19341
Manufacturer of historical lighting fixtures: lanterns, sconces, chandeliers & pendants; porch & gas lighting; brass, tin, copper, pewter, iron & bronze; restoration & refitting; stack & custom.

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167 River Road  Clarksburg, MA 01247

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When contacting these companies, please mention that you saw them in *Period Homes* magazine.
The Coterie Hanging Lantern, part of the Heritage Traditions Lighting Collection by Heritage Metalworks, features an elegant bell jar combined with hand-blown glass, fine lost wax castings, subtle details, and perfect imperfections in its hand-made custom chain.

Heritage Metalworks
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This cast-aluminum sconce from Herwig, model #P-490, features the firm’s #42 statuary bronze finish and crystal moss glass.
Lantern Masters fabricates replica historical fixtures using traditional techniques.

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Period Lighting Fixtures, Inc.
800-828-6990; 413-664-7141; Fax: 413-664-0312
www.periodlighting.com
Clarksburg, MA 01247
Manufacturer & custom fabricator of handmade 18th- & early-19th-century lighting fixtures: original designs from museums such as Historic Deerfield, Old Sturbridge Village & Colonial Williamsburg.
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The Hampton Copper Lantern Wall Light with Bracket, shown here; from Lanternland; is in a traditional Antique Copper finish with Solid Glass.

Lanternland
855-404-5200; Fax: 480-962-1997
www.lanternland.com
Mesa, AZ 85210
Full line of rustic handmade copper and brass outdoor and indoor lighting. Styles include Colonial, Colonial Revival, New-Classic, Greek Revival, Cape Cod, Bungalow, Mission, Arts & Crafts and more. Custom orders and reproductions are specialty. Popular custom options include large and oversized fixtures, custom back plates and mounting solutions, custom sockets, gas lights, low voltage wiring and modification to meet 'dark sky' regulations.
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The Moa belt-and-pulley fan, available in solid bronze from Woolen Mill Fan Co., has handmade solid-mahogany blades.

Woolen Mill Fan Co.
717-382-4754; Fax: 717-382-4275
www.architecturalfans.com
New Park, PA 17532
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.

The fireplace mantel is one of many styles available from Decorators Supply.

Decorators Supply Corp.
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Manufacturer of classic architectural elements: plaster crowns, ceiling medallions, ceilings, niches & swags; 13,000 appliqués for woodwork/furniture; 500 styles of columns; 100 styles of plaster mantels, corbels & columns; 15 styles of traditional wood mantels; classically inspired grilles; since 1883.
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This fireplace mantel is one of many styles available from Decorators Supply.

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The Delaware mantel from Forshaw of St. Louis combines two large trims to create a unique look.

Forshaw of St. Louis, Inc.
314-874-4316; Fax: 314-874-4339
www.forshaw.com
St. Louis, MO 63144
Custom fabricator of mantels; cast stone & plaster; pine, oak, poplar, cherry & other hardwoods; precast mantels for 33-, 36-, 42- & 43-in. openings; wood mantels fit any size fireplace; stone mantels fit 38- to 42-in. fireplaces.
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www.haddonstone.com
Pueblo, CO 81001
U.S. based manufacturer of landscape ornament & architectural cast stonework: planters, fountains, sundials, statues, garden furniture, balustrades, gazebos, follies, columns, porticos, doors & window surrounds, cornices, molding, mantels & more; custom components.
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Zepsa Industries, Inc.
704-583-9220; Fax: 704-583-9674
www.zepsa.com
Charlotte, NC 28273
Engineer, custom manufacturer & installer of Classical & contemporary architectural woodwork: railings, stairs, wine cellars, mantels, paneling, furniture & more; for estate-level residences, yacht interiors & selected commercial commissions.
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Bill's Custom Metal fabricated this ornate railing with a leaf motif.

Bill's Custom Metal Fabrications
516-333-3562; Fax: Same as phone
www.ironcrafters.com
Westbury, NY 11590
Manufacturer of hand-forged ornamental ironwork: garden furniture, gazebos, gates, railings, furniture, fireplace doors & candelabras; servicing the Long Island & tri-state areas.

Heritage Metalworks executed this project; with Gothic arches and a hammered finish, this custom designed, and-forged wrought iron staircase railing wraps around an eight-foot long vintage Murano glass chandelier, fusing Cottage Gothic and Modern Glamour inspirations. (Designed by Eric Rymshaw of Fury Design; Photo by Don Pearse Photography, Inc.)

Traditionally styled metal grilles are one of the specialties of Coco Architectural Grilles.

Coco Architectural Grilles & Metalcraft
631-482-9449; Fax: 631-482-9450
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Custom fabricator of metalwork: linear bar grilles, perforated sheet-metal grilles & custom metal products; stainless steel, brass, bronze & aluminum; satin, mirror-polished, statuary bronze, antiqued, blackened bronze, anodized-color & baked-enamel finishing options.
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This decorated sheet-metal canopy was fabricated by W.F. Norman.

Wiemann Metalcraft designed and fabricated this traditionally styled gate.

Wiemann Metalcraft
918-582-1700; Fax: 918-582-2385
www.wmcraft.com
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Designer, fabricator, finisher & installer of custom ornamental metalwork; serves a national market with stairs & railings, fencing, gates, lighting, grilles, entry doors, gazebos, balconies, site furnishings & more; all cast- & wrought-metal alloys, finishes & architectural styles; since 1940.

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www.beautifuralradiaitors.com
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SpacePak HVAC systems utilize unique flexible ductwork and is minimally invasive to install and while protecting architectural integrity.

Space-Pak
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www.spacepak.com
Westfield, MA 01085
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800-527-0966; Fax: 314-407-9000
www.unicosystem.com
Saint Louis, MO 63111
Supplier of mini-duct system: has small flexible hoses for retrofitting HVAC systems into old buildings.

Putnam Rolling Ladder Co., Inc.
212-226-5147; Fax: 212-941-1836
www.putnamrollingladder.com
New York, NY 10013
Custom manufacturer of rolling ladders: ash, oak, birch, maple, cherry, mahogany, walnut & teak; 18 hardware finishes available; for libraries, offices, stores, wine cellars, closets, kitchens & lofts; local installation. Click on No. 389

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Kennebec Co.
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Bath, ME 04530

Bathroom Machineries has an extensive line of pedestal sinks and restored faucets and valves.

Bathroom Machineries, DE
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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.

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WineRacks.com Inc.
845-658-7181; Fax: 845-658-5309
www.wineracks.com
Tillson, NY 12486
Manufacturer & retailer of wine-storage products; contemporary metal racking systems & wine-related accessories: designer of custom wine cellars; residential racking systems made of pine, mahogany & oak. Click on No. 520

Wooden Radiator Cabinet Co.
800-817-9110; Fax: No fax
www.woodenradiatorkabinet.com
Chicago, IL 60614
Manufacturer & distributor of wood radiator cabinets & baseboard covers: Prairie & Shaker styles; handcrafted.

Wine cellar racks from WineRacks.com are made from pine, oak or mahogany.

Zepsa did the custom woodwork for this residential estate, including the work in the master bath.

Zepsa Industries, Inc.
704-583-9220; Fax: 704-583-9674
www.zepsa.com
Charlotte, NC 28273
Engineer, custom manufacturer & installer of Classical & contemporary architectural woodwork: railings, stairs, wine cellars, mantels, paneling, furniture & more; for estate-level residences, yacht interiors & select commercial commissions. Click on No. 1675

Zepsa made the custom woodwork for this residential estate, including the work in the master bath.
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2: Built in 1810 for General George DeWolf, the house is an example of the in-town estates built by the merchant elite in the early 19th century. The mansion, in the heart of Bristol, Rhode Island, was designed by noted regional architect Russell Warren.

3: The Nathaniel Russell House in Charleston, South Carolina, dates to 1811.

4: The Nathaniel Russell House entryway.

5: The interior staircase at the Nathaniel Russell House.

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