HISTORIC WALL COVERINGS

If you don't read the fine print or ask the right questions, you may wind up with a teacup pattern on your walls.

Here are some wonderful historic wallcoverings out there in the market. But there are even more "adaptations" that are based on patterns taken from various "historic sources," such as china patterns, book papers, hatbox linings, and the like. For some projects, these adaptations may be perfectly acceptable. But on other projects, only true historic reproductions will do. In any case, you should be aware of whether you're installing a true historic reproduction or merely an adaptation.

In the Special Report on Historic Wallcoverings in this issue, we list 20 sources that provide true documentary historic papers.

continued on page 5

SOURCES FOR SPECIALTY WOOD FLOORING

PAGE 15

Cover Illustration: Neo-Grec wallpaper roomset by Bradbury & Bradbury. It's reproduced from designs of the late 1880s created by architects Leong and Maurice Adams of London and New York.
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Circle No. 121
Raymond E. Enkebohl
Architectural Accoutrements Carved and Sculptured in Solid Woods

Circle No. 19
Circle No. 147
100 Years Of Historic Battles

BY CLEM LABINE

This year the AIA celebrates the 100th anniversary of its formal commitment to historic preservation. The evolution of AIA’s role reflects America’s changing attitudes toward preservation.

H

A

yone who lived through the "less is more" era and the urban renewal blizzards of the 1960’s might find it hard to believe that the architectural profession has a 100-year record of formal commitment to historic preservation. But it’s true. For a full century, the American Institute of Architects has had a committee charged with keeping an eye on America’s historic resources. Today, with the designation “Committee on Historic Resources,” the group is the AIA’s oldest standing committee.

The AIA’s Committee on Historic Resources has a four-fold mission: (1) To act as the eyes and ears of the AIA Board of Directors on issues involving historic architecture; (2) To recommend policy to the Board in the area of historic preservation; (3) To organize educational programs in architectural conservation for AIA members and the public; (4) To provide networking opportunities for historical architects around the country.

Today, the Committee with its 343 members is one of the largest and most influential within AIA. But it wasn’t always so. The membership and prestige of the Committee has waxed and waned, mirroring trends in our culture. William Murtough, who among other things was Keeper of the National Register of Historic Places from 1966 through 1979, has been a member of the Committee since the 1950’s. Murtough recalls: “The late 1950’s was the heyday of Bauhaus architecture. We were lucky to get 5 or 6 members at our meetings, which were held in a tiny room in the basement of The Octagon. But today, with meetings sometimes drawing over 100 participants, if you arrive late you can’t find a chair!”

And In The Year 2000...

Historic preservation will probably be of even greater importance to the AIA in the coming decade. The Institute recently completed a project called “Vision 2000,” which had the goal of identifying issues that will have greatest impact on architects and the built environment in the next 10 years. The study predicted that the two leading issues affecting the practice of architecture would be: (1) Computer-aided design and (2) Growing public support for preserving America’s architectural heritage.

According to Ted Pappas, FAIA, past president of the Institute and the spearhead of the Vision 2000 project, “The message is inescapable: Americans want preservation. Architects and the entire design and construction industry must be prepared to meet that demand with skill and sensitivity.”

The Treasury Building Crisis

A century ago, of course, the concept of historic preservation hadn’t even been invented. But the triggering event leading to the AIA’s involvement in historic matters sounds distressingly contemporary. In 1890, The Old Treasury Building on Wall Street in New York City was threatened with demolition. This handsome Greek Revival structure had been modeled on the Parthenon and built before the ad-

vent of iron supports in construction. The building had been the site of Washington’s first inauguration, and so had great historic as well as architectural significance.

Richard M. Upjohn, FAIA, reacting to the impending destruction of this landmark, made an impassioned presentation to the 24th Annual Convention of the American Institute of Architects, held in Washington, D.C., in 1890. "It is our duty as architects to be conservators of public architecture," Upjohn declared. "To have such a building as that torn down merely for real estate speculation, and have it replaced by … office buildings, would, in my judgment, be wrong."

Upjohn concluded his plea by encouraging the Convention to appoint a committee that would "call attention of this Institute to any action which is to be taken by the authorities which would be detrimental to the cause of art."

By unanimous vote, the 24th Annual Convention established The Committee on Conservation of Public Architecture. Not surprisingly, Richard M. Upjohn was appointed chairman of the Committee to be assisted by the presidents of the local chapters. And it has been this committee, through 13 name changes, that has survived to the present day as the Institute’s watchdog on historic preservation matters.

Like all early preservation activities, the focus of the committee’s initial work was on great public buildings and structures connected with historic events. This concern was reflected in many of the early names of the Committee. A typical title: “Committee on Preservation of Historic Monuments and Scenic Beauties.”

Grassroots Impact

From the outset, the AIA’s influence on historic preservation has depended heavily on involvement of the local chapters. In 1909, even as the Institute on continued on page 28

Recent Chairman Of The Committee On Historic Resources


Richard M. Upjohn, FAIA, Chairman — 1890

Spencer Leineweber, AIA, Chairman — 1990

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 1990 3
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Circle No. 296
special report

HISTORIC WALLCOVERINGS

by Eve M. Kahn

HISTORIC WALLCOVERINGS (3)

companies who Kelly, a original possible."

rows amalgam Street Damask," papers, derpattern also have reproduced old papers, "Heaton." A manufacturers, with a few highly specialized distributors included. All but three will do some custom work, everything from providing custom colors to carving new wallblocks. The companies range in size from two-person shops to large manufacturers. Many of them offer fabrics that coordinate with their papers. Their literature ranges from bound sample books to thin flyers; as indicated, some of the literature is free, and some is not.

Any prices quoted in the accompanying brief write-ups are prices to the trade. If you need information immediately, call or write these companies directly. We've provided all contact information on the SourceList. (Please mention TRADITIONAL BUILDING.) You may also find a local showroom by checking in your telephone book.

If you simply need information to update your files, it may be more convenient to use the enclosed Product Information Card or the Form on page 29.

A very durable alternative to wallpaper are Designs in Tile's murals. They cost between $50 and $350 per sq.ft., the price rising if "I have to develop new art or a new glaze," says owner Selene Seltzer. She also makes mosaic murals; she creates large-scale patterns with tiny tiles.

Her catalog shows everything from Pennsylvania Dutch to Anglo-Japanese or Art Nouveau designs. Prices range from $2.65 for a simple 3" x 6" spongework tile to $132 for a set of four tiles that depict an Art Nouveau vase of flowers (10% discount to the trade). Patterns and colors can be customized. For more information and a 83 brochure, contact: Designs in Tile, Box 4953, Dept. TB, Foster City, CA 94404 (415) 591-1152.—EMK Or Circle No. 25

Exotic Ceiling Papers

Karl Mann Associates specializes in ceiling papers that look like everything from Chinese trelliswork (Provençal; $1,400 with vines, $1,200 without) to Art Deco plasterwork (Odeon; $1,400). Carlton Court shows; $40 for a 27-in. wide, 15-ft. long roll) reproduces a deeply cof- fered ceiling, complete with shadows, and Balmoral (same price as Carlton Court) looks like delicate plaster tracery. All colors are custom.

Karl Mann Associates, 232 E. 59th St., Dept. TB, New York, NY 10022 (212) 688-7141.—EMK

Aldam and Heatons: The Largest Pattern Possible

Aldam Heaton designed interiors in England in the 1880s and 1890s, and he recommended that anyone using wallpaper choose "the largest pattern possible." He practiced what he preached by creating the oversize foliage pattern shown, which has a 42inch repeat. J. R. Burrows, Historical-Design Merchants, have reproduced this paper and they call it "Heaton." They also have "Aldam" on hand, which is the much less overwhelming watered-silk underpattern of "Heaton." (Heaton actually used "Aldam" in his London showroom, so he apparently wasn't a total zealot.) Prices are available upon request.

Burrows carries other papers, part of a small but very accurate line of reproductions: "Summer Street Damask," a Morris-like amalgam of leaves and fruit, came from an 1865 Mission in Maine; "Persian," with its delicate leaves and flowers, was found in the circa-1890 Burrows showroom; and the intertwined vines of "Chauncy Fritze" were found in Michigan. The company also offers handprinted Victorian custom reproductions, hand-stenciled papers, and custom colors for everything they do.

For more information on J. R. Burrows, see the pullout SourceList in this section.—EMK

Who's Who

We chose 20 companies that make reproductions of old wallpaper for the SourceList on pages 9 & 10. On page 13 you'll find a list briefly describing 12 other companies that make less historically accurate papers: either interpretations of old papers, copies of non-wallpaper documents, or simply amalgams of traditional motifs. Most of the companies on the SourceList are at least thirty years old; some date back to the 19th century and still make their old designs. Most are manufacturers, with a few highly specialized distributors included. All but three will do some custom work, everything from providing custom colors to carving new wallblocks.

The companies range in size from two-person shops to large manufacturers. Many of them offer fabrics that coordinate with their papers. Their literature ranges from bound sample books to thin flyers; as indicated, some of the literature is free, and some is not.

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MURALS IN TILE

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THE EMBOSSED WALL

In 1877, Frederick Walton invented Lincrusta, an embossed linoleum-like wallcovering. Ten years later a former Walton employee named Thomas Palmer developed Anaglypta, a paper-like embossed wallcovering. Today both products are made by the same company, Crown Decorative Products. Lincrusta was used extensively in halls and stairways because of its incredible durability; special patterns were also developed for dadoes and friezes. Lincrusta is available only in its original formula, and its high-relief patterns include Art Nouveau and Neoclassical. There are now four variations of Lincrusta available through Crown Decorative Products, see the SourceList. — EMK

Wallpaper from Down Under

Everything Classic Revivals carries is "absolutely, totally, unabashedly accurate," according to co-owner John Buscemi. "These are very serious historic things." Two of the company's lines come from Australia. One reproduces a half-dozen designs manufactured in England between 1887 and 1894 and found in an old sample book. "There are friezes, dadoes, fillers, and ceiling papers, and they're all compatible," Buscemi says. "It's the Victorian version of mix-and-match." (Shown is the Chrysanthemum Dado, $195 for an 11-yd. roll.) The other line was developed by an Australian architect, he scraped the originals off the walls of the houses he restored. Both lines are available in document and custom colors. An 11-yd. roll can cost up to $200, and borders typically cost between $15 and $20 per yard.

Classic also imports from a Paris company that owns and still uses wood blocks that date back to the 1730's. They hand-print their papers with traditional colors and can custom block any pattern or any part of a pattern with real wool. "They're the last company in the world to do all their papers with wood blocks, and they're one of the few that will carve new blocks," Buscemi says. An 11-yd. roll costs between $105 and $225. For more on Classic Revivals, see the pullout SourceList in this section. — EMK

At Least Second Oldest

Richard Babcock and Steve Reisen, owners of Bassett & Vellum, like to boast that "we use no machines here except an electric typewriter." They screen-print their wallpapers themselves. They also like to say, "If we're not the oldest silk-screen wallpaper manufacturer still operating in the U.S., we're at least the second oldest!" Their line includes 50 wallpapers, 50 borders, and 10 scencis, most of them based on historical documents and all of them reasonably priced: from $2 to $20 per yard for borders and from $19 to $40 for a 7-yd. roll of sidewall. All can be custom colored, and custom replicas of other paper can also be commissioned. Shown is Foston et Pompea, a 17-1/4-in.-tall border which costs $17 per yard and includes, as did its document, 15 colors.

For more information on Bassett & Vellum, see the pullout SourceList in this section. — EMK
Colonial Williamsburg Papers

Colonial Williamsburg offers dozens of reproduction wallpapers, all from the 18th and 19th centuries. They are based on either old wallpaper or fabrics, box linings, and the like. A 5-yd. roll of these vinyl-coated strippable papers typically costs $30 and borders are available for $6 per yard.

For more information on Colonial Williamsburg, see the pullout SourceList in this section. — EMK

CHRISTOPHER HYLAND
Wallpaper/Fabrics/Trimmings/Furnishings


From Leeds to Hollywood

Temple Newsam House was built in Leeds, England, in 1590 and remodeled countless times afterward. Schumacher imports papers reproduced from those found in this house; in rooms that range from the grand gallery to a humble servant room, and manufactured anywhere from 1700 to 1900. The sample book warns that the replicas contain "some slight variations in scale" and that "it is impossible to determine the original color of a 200-year-old wallpaper," but those caveats seem minor given the collection's overall dedication to accuracy. Prices range from $84 to $165 for a roll that covers 35 sq.ft.

Schumacher also owns a 62-year-old company called Hobe (pronounced Hoe-bee) Erwin, whose line includes many reproductions, some of them originally made for Hollywood sets. (You'll see them on the walls in 'Little Women' and ' Gone with the Wind.') Most tend to be elaborate; there are thick bouquets of flowers as well as heavy-looking trompe-l'oeil drapes with tassels. Prices range from $19.95 to $98 for an 11- yd. roll.

The 100-year-old company is now run by the great-great grand nephews of the founder, Frederick Schumacher, and offers an extensive line of reproduction textiles.

For more on Schumacher, see the SourceList in this section. — EMK

PALM TREES, ICE FLOES, AND CACTI

A. L. Diamant offers reproduction wallpapers based on 19th-century designs, and they also offer spectacular antique papers. Shown is an excerpt from Zones Terrestres, a 31-panel mural which was printed only in 1855 and in the 1910s. It covers 55-1/2 ft. of wall and along the way it depicts Arctic, Alpine, and tropical landscapes: ghostly ships trapped in ice floes and Swiss hillside cottages; lakeside flamingos and grazing mountain goats; cacti, palm trees, and tundra. A full set of the 12-ft.-tall panels costs $55,000.

Diamant's smaller papers are also costly; the owner, fourth-generation Deborah Diamant, describes the company's goals as "to provide the best to the few." "We do a lot of work for embassies and prominent individuals," she says, "but that doesn't mean we won't take an order from anyone else."

For more information on A. L. Diamant, see the pullout SourceList in this section. — EMK
ANAGLYPTA and LINCRUSTA
The original paintable relief wallcoverings made in England since 1877. Line includes total wallcoverings, friezes and wainscoting. Paint or stain can be applied for any effect.

For local sources call:
BENTLEY BROTHERS
918 Baxter Avenue
Louisville, KY 40204
800/824-4777
In KY: 502/581-0705

Christopher's documentary wallpapers from various 16th-century mansions in England, Cincinnati, Ohio 45243
(513) 561-8665
Doors for Lincoln Home restoration circle No. 31

that include patterns taken from a 16th-century mansion in England, from an 1855 wallpaper book by the Victorian designer Owen Jones, and from various French chateaux. His other documentary designs

THE DEEP END
Christopher Hyland reports that his documentary wallpapers are all available in original and custom colorways as well as some colors that "go off the deep end." Among his recent acquisitions are several lines from England.

PASTE-ON COFFERED CEILINGS
Manuscreens' trompe-l'oeil papers reproduce neoclassical and Victorian architectural ornament. For not much money — $16.95 to $26.95 per yard, with discounts to the trade — a room could pretend to have egg-and-dart crown molding, a coffered ceiling, or stone-block walls. All papers are printed and washable; some have paper backings and are peelable, others have fabric backings and are strippable. Custom colors are available, as is custom design. For more information, contact: Manuscreens, 20 Horizon Blvd., Dept. 18, South Hackensack, NJ 07606 (201) 440-7000. — EMK

Scalamandre has been making its famous reproduction textiles since the 1930s and its famous reproduction wallpapers since 1954. The list of buildings they've produced papers or fabric for reads like a list of every historical spot in the country: from Gracie Mansion in New York City to the Villa Montezuma in San Diego (shown in the Montezuma Dado). They've worked on papers in almost every style, from trompe-l'oeil balustrades for the Martin Van Buren home in Kinderhook, New York, to an American Indian frieze for the Molly Brown house in Denver. All these designs are available, either as part of stock lines or for a special order. Prices range from $23.25 to $151 for a 5-7yd. roll. For more information on Scalamandre, see the pullout Source List in this section. — EMK

The Count And Countess Of Wallpaper
Count and Countess Bobrinshkov, who came from Europe many years ago, run a high-end wallpaper business called Zina Studios. They cater to what they call "the most discriminating clientele in the U.S.A." Many of their reproductions have appeared in Newport mansions, such as "Floreal," which includes 17 colors (shown; $75 for a 5-7yd. roll). "Ours are line-for-line reproductions, not 'in the style of,'" the Countess emphasizes, and adds that they will also work on more contemporary commissions. "We love restoration, and we love other kinds of work, too." For more on Zina Studios, see the Source List in this section. — EMK

THE REAL MORRIS
William Morris designed only 41 wallpapers in his lifetime, and his firm added 41 more to the line after his death in 1896, but his influence on other designers was pervasive. Pseudo-Morris papers were all the rage in the last years of the 19th century. Today the real thing is in fashion, and it's available, because Arthur Sanderson & Sons owns Morris & Co.'s paper printing blocks. A large British concern, Sanderson dates back to 1860 and also manufactures fabrics. The Morris papers come in custom and documentary colorways and cost between $60 and $450 for an 11-yd. roll. Shown is Marigold, $68 per roll. Sanderson's own blocks and screens for creating other documentary papers, and these cost between $60 and $110 per roll. For more on Arthur Sanderson & Sons, see the Source List in this section. — EMK

8 JANUARY/FEBRUARY 1990

TRADITIONAL BUILDING
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Forgotten Papers Live Again

Wallpaper doesn’t usually last more than a few decades, but sometimes it escapes time: it hides, forgotten, in a closet, or it belongs to an owner who never redecorates. Thibaut’s “Historic Homes of America” collection reproduces some of those resilient papers, found in 19 houses around the country. They’re accurate replicas coated with vinyl, with contemporary colorways and companion fabrics also available, and they’re inexpensive.

French Woodblock Scenics

Zuber has been making wallpaper in France since 1797, and they’re famous for their scenics. Designed between 1864 and 1905 and still made with original woodblocks, these “decors panoramiques” include scenes of exotic places like “L’Hindoustan” or of hunters chasing stag or partridge, or even of Boston Harbor, West Point, or Niagara Falls. Prices range from $2.370 for a 5-yard roll to $22,000 for 52 panels.

Their other documentary patterns include the trompe-l’oeil curtain shown ($220 each) for an 11-yd. roll as well as many neoclassical sidewalls depicting garlands, wreaths, acanthi, anthemions, lions, and even bees. For more information on Zuber, see the pullout SourceList in this section. — EMK

MUSEUM QUALITY AT AFFORDABLE PRICES

Bradbury & Bradbury’s wallpapers are famous for evoking Victorian design in all its richness, and at the same time they speak of Bruce Bradbury’s personal aesthetic vision. Bruce enjoys the attention he’s gotten for designing them, but he also wants to be known for his accurate restorations. "I was at a conference once and I heard somebody say, ‘Of course, you’d never use Bradbury & Bradbury wallpapers in a museum,’ and I was stunned,” he recalls. “Our documentary division does some of the most technically advanced reproductions I’ve ever seen.”

One recent project involved recreating a turn-of-the-century machine printed paper. “It’s very hard to imitate the translucent inks and the mottled backgrounds they could get with machines when you’re silk-screening,” Bruce explains. “But I’ve got an absolutely brilliant technician, and he practically danced on top of the paper, to get just the right look.” The documentary division has also reproduced everything from early 19th-century papers to a great post-war Picassoesque print. Bruce says.

Bernie Scott, owner and co-founder of Waterhouse, says his company’s documentary wallpapers capture “90% of the old look.” The collection includes about one hundred patterns, based on papers manufactured between 1795 and 1880. They’re usually vinyl coated, but that doesn’t affect their appearance too much. “Most of the museums in the country have used our services,” Scott says. “We’re small enough to pay attention and give them what they want.”

This circa-1850 floral wallpaper has had a long and colorful history. It began in one of the bedrooms in Chateau-sur-Mer, then was covered up in 1916 when the owners, Edith and Maude Westmore, redecorated. The sisters kindly donated a scrap to the Cooper-Hewitt Museum in New York in 1939 and there, forty years later, the association restoring the Camron-Stanford House in Oakland, California, found it and decided to have it reproduced for their family parlor. (Are you still with me?)

The stock designs are equally varied. Bradbury offers seven “room-sets” that consist of dadoes, friezes, borders, and numerous ceiling elements: the pieces can be combined in an infinite number of ways and are typically available in five colorways. The styles include, among others, Neo-Grec, Morris, Anglo-Japanese, and Aesthetic. The tamer roomset is the Woodland, which is mainly floral although a hare and a deer can be seen romping on the frieze. The most sumptuous is the Fenway, where moths and dragonflies dance among spideweb screens on the ceiling and the walls can be covered with designs that look like fish scales or rippled water.

Prices range from $32 to $175 for a five-yard roll of wallpaper and from $4 to $42 per yard for borders or ceiling elements. The papers are washable, “if you’re careful,” Bruce says, but he adds that they can’t be stripped: “They’re not meant to be — ever.” See SourceList for more about Bradbury & Bradbury. — EMK

90% Pure

Wallpaper Goes Full Circle

Bernie Scott, owner and co-founder of Waterhouse, says his company’s documentary wallpapers capture “90% of the old look.” The collection includes about one hundred patterns, based on papers manufactured between 1795 and 1880. They’re usually vinyl coated, but that doesn’t affect their appearance too much. “Most of the museums in the country have used our services,” Scott says. “We’re small enough to pay attention and give them what they want.”

About half the papers are machine-printed and available in either document colors or a few other colorways: the rest are screen-printed, and available in custom colors. Shown is the screen-printed “Old Oaken Bucket,” which costs $30 for a 5-yard roll and was hung around 1790 in an English farmhouse.

For more on Waterhouse, see the SourceList in this section. — EMK

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Circle No. 301

This circa-1850 floral wallpaper has had a long and colorful history. It began in one of the bedrooms in Chateau-sur-Mer, then was covered up in 1916 when the owners, Edith and Maude Westmore, redecorated. The sisters kindly donated a scrap to the Cooper-Hewitt Museum in New York in 1939 and there, forty years later, the association restoring the Camron-Stanford House in Oakland, California, found it and decided to have it reproduced for their family parlor. (Are you still with me?)

The Camron-Stanford House now sells the paper, and one of their buyers has been the people working on Chateau-sur-Mer. They’ve undone the 1916 decorating job and brought the bedroom back to its 1870’s appearance. The Camron-Stanford House Preservation Assoc., 1418 Lakeside Dr., Dept. 18, Oakland, CA 94612 (415) 836-1976. — EMK

January/February 1990 11
With her daughter Wendy, she runs a company called Victorian Collectibles, Ltd. Their wallpapers came from two sources: an old drugstore in Ripon, Wisconsin (now called the Brillon Collection, available as reproductions) and an old paint store in Ripon, Wisconsin (available as originals). Shown is part of the Brillon batch: the Dayle ceiling paper with the Opera Scroll dado and frieze and the Lacy Stripe sidewall. "You'd never believe this was a new condo," Mrs. Schroeder says. Prices are available upon request.

For more information on Victorian Collectibles, see the pullout Source List in this section. — EMK

**Bamboo and Pagodas**

Gracie sells Chinese scenic wallpaper that is not documentary but is "very much based on 18th-century designs," according to Brian Gracie, owner and grandson of the founder. The basic motifs are birds and plants, and they come in a wide variety: from flowering bushes to bamboo, from tiny hummingbirds to bulky waterfowl. Some papers also depict people and pagodas. Backgrounds are usually pastel, but some extend into dark blue or shiny silver.

The patterns typically reach 7 ft. 6 in. high on a 10 x 3 ft. panel and cost $400 apiece. Panels with all-over designs are also available, as are antique Chinese ancestor portraits and antique European murals with hunting scenes or landscapes.

For more information on Gracie, see the pullout Source List in this section. — EMK

**Wall-to-Wall Chinese**

Winterthur Museum authorizes several companies to turn its vast collection of decorative arts into wallpaper designs. Most of the designs are taken from textiles, such as embroidered bed hangings or silk curtains, but a few come from old wallpaper.

Shown is Cathay Chinois, a replica of part of the 18th-century Chinese paper found in the museum's Philadelphia Bedroom. The rest of the paper is replicated as Fleur de Cathay. Each set can be ordered separately as a group of eight panels, or both can be purchased together without a repeating panel. All are 12 ft. tall and 27 in. wide. Price information is available through Robert Luit & Co., 200 Garden City Plaza, Garden City, NY 11530. (516) 741-9440.

For more information on Winterthur Museum, see the pullout Source List in this section. — EMK
Everything for the Traditional Building.

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Sentry offers you a selection of the most beautiful luminare + post packages in the U.S.A.—or a new design created expressly for you. Write, call or fax for immediate attention. Sentry sales representation is nationwide. See us in Sweet's and LAFike.

Custom Window Company
is a leader in innovative window design. The name, Custom Window Company, has become synonymous with the rejuvenation of Historic buildings, designing window systems that emulate historic steel and wood fenestration from low maintenance thermally broken aluminum. The design and budgeting staff are always available to assist you. Call today.

14 JANUARY/FEBRUARY 1990
WOOD FLOORING

WOOD FLOORING

For restorations and custom jobs, frequently the standard 2-1/4" strip oak flooring just doesn't make it. Here are 26 specialty flooring suppliers who can furnish everything from antique pine planks to exotic Asian hardwoods.

BY CLEM LABINE

Wood flooring materials contribute mightily to the character of a room. Yet, too often, strip oak flooring is installed out of habit. And that's too bad, because the restoration boom has caused a blossoming in the flooring products industry. Today's designer has an incredible choice in flooring, ranging from antique planks of 200-year-old chestnut, to new heart pine boards milled from virgin first-growth logs dredged from the bottoms of Southern rivers. So whether you're doing a museum-house restoration, building a reproduction house, or just designing an interior where you want an eye-popping effect, there's a wood flooring material that will fill the bill.

Selecting Wood Types

Eastern White Pine, for over 300 years a favorite in building New England houses, is still one of the most popular and readily available new woods for wide plank floors to create an Early American look. However, white pine is relatively soft and can be dented by spike heels and furniture legs. But, although compressible, the wood itself doesn't wear out — if a finish is maintained over it. (Some penetrating oil finishes, such as Watco Danish Oil, solidify beneath the surface and actually harden the wood by about 25%.) The client just has to understand that any continued on next page
Hardness of some common flooring woods compare:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Wood</th>
<th>Hardness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eastern White Pine</td>
<td>450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hard Pines</td>
<td>660</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Walnut</td>
<td>1,010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red Oak</td>
<td>1,290</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teak</td>
<td>1,290</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sugar Maple</td>
<td>1,450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karpawood</td>
<td>1,803</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hardness is defined as the p.s.i. required to imbed a 0.444-in. dia. steel ball to half its diameter.

Flooring Grades

The presence and frequency of defects determines the grades of lumber used in flooring; all the grades normally used are equally serviceable. The best "select" grade will have few, if any, readily noticeable imperfections and will be rather consistent in color. A lower cost grade, sometimes offered will contain natural flaws of a minor nature and show color variations between heartwood and sapwood. 

Pine flooring grades show a wider range of characteristics. The typical New England farmhouse used wide knotty-pine boards in the 12" to 24" width range. This quality, containing large tight red knots, is graded as #3 common, or "Premium." Smaller and fewer knots improve the grade to #1 or #2 common, or "Finish" grade. The most costly grade in pine is a clear grade allowing only minor imperfections and an occasional small knot, rated as "D & Better Select." No flooring grade would contain major defects such as knot holes or wood rot, such imperfections being culled during grading at the mill.

Over The Edge

After choosing the species of wood, your next decision is the type of edge to specify: tongue and groove, square-edge, or ship-lap.

For wide boards, square or ship-lapped edges are easiest to install. For kitchens, bathrooms, and where sub-flooring has gaps, as often found in old buildings, ship-lapped is recommended. With a good flat plywood sub-floor, square-edged is usually adequate. For narrower flooring, 4" to 10" wide, tongue & groove edges install without much difficulty.

Pine flooring is usually installed with cut nails or screws driven through the sub-floor and into the joists. White pine can be nailed directly, but hardwoods should have pilot holes drilled to avoid splitting. The best method for installing hardwood plank flooring is to drill and counterbore for screws (spaced to enter floor joists), and cover screw heads with wood plugs.

Moisture Content: Critical

Wood flooring should be obtained from a reputable manufacturer — one who has a track record of supplying dimensionally stable wood at the proper moisture content. There are numerous variables in the drying and milling process that can affect how satisfactorily the wood will perform during installation and after.

Flooring wood should be dried to 6-8% moisture content. But how it is dried is also important. When wood is kiln-dried, it must be properly sticked to keep it from taking a permanent set, and there are some woods that should be thoroughly air-dried before entering the kiln.

Hard maple and oak, for example, are woods that must be well air dried, then slowly kiln dried, to prevent case hardening (embrittlement) and honeycombing (internal cavities).

Flooring should be installed with the same, or lower, moisture content than it will have — on average — in the occupied building. In the Northeast, for example, this can range from around 12% in summer to 6% in winter during the heating season. This means that when installed the moisture content in the flooring material should be under 10%.

When installing flooring in the summer, it’s best not to let the wood hang around the job site picking up moisture from the humid air. Also, try to get wood that has been stored for a long period in some lumber yard. Conversely, when installing wood flooring in a centrally heated building during the winter, the wood should be sticked and allowed to sit for at least a week to come to equilibrium with the air in the building.

Who’s On The SourceList

The 26 companies on the SourceList were selected by the editors from among 31 candidates because of (1) the variety of products they sell, (2) the availability of product literature; and (3) their interest in serving the special needs of architects and contractors involved with historical projects.

Special Thanks

Special thanks to Charles Thibeau of Craftsman Lumber Co. for supplying much of the technical information in this article. Craftsman Lumber specializes in supplying wide boards for flooring and paneling, custom millwork, restoration, and historical reproductions. For more information about Craftsman Lumber, see the SourceList on pg. 17.

We are wood specialists. We sell the best products you can buy at reasonable prices. Call for more information and free brochure.

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Open Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COMPANY</th>
<th>SPECIALTY</th>
<th>Literature</th>
<th>Woods</th>
<th>Thickness</th>
<th>Widths/Lengths</th>
<th>Edges/Finishes</th>
<th>% Custom</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aged Woods</td>
<td>Flooring made from antique woods, mostly first-growth timber 100 to 200 years old, recycled from old buildings or from virgin first-growth logs recovered from river bottoms. Flooring made from old boards has antique color, texture, and distress markings that are natural, not man-made. Also, flooring can be milled from old timbers, which yields antique coloring — but not the distress made.</td>
<td>Free brochure Circle No. 243</td>
<td>All antique woods, White Pine, Hemlock, Oak, Chestnut, Yellow Pine, Heart Pine, Cherry, Walnut, Maple, Poplar</td>
<td>3/4&quot;</td>
<td>Widths: 3' 3/4&quot; Lengths: 2' 10&quot;</td>
<td>T&amp;G with square ends</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albany Woodworkers</td>
<td>Specialists in antique building materials, especially virgin growth antique heart pine, and red fir in cypress. Parket flooring, parquet, fitted flooring, rustic, custom doors, and timber framing are newly milled from antique beams recycled from pre-1900 structures.</td>
<td>Free brochure Circle No. 316</td>
<td>Antique Vintage Growth Longleaf Heart Pine, Red Fir</td>
<td>3/4&quot; up to 5/4&quot; Widths: 3&quot; 4&quot;, 5&quot; and wide planks</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anderson Hardwood Floors</td>
<td>Traditional 5-ply hardwood plank floor in 5 styles, available unfinished or in 3 pre-sanded colored finishes. Parquet in 7 patterns. Film-down or glue-down installation.</td>
<td>Free brochure</td>
<td>Parket flooring, Cherry, Walnut, Maple, Poplar, Oak</td>
<td>5/16&quot;</td>
<td>Blocks from 10&quot; square to 36&quot; square</td>
<td></td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangkok Industries</td>
<td>Parquet flooring and borders in many patterns made from exotic Asian hardwoods, including Kapswood (also called Asian softwood) that has 4 times the hardness of Ponderosa Pine. &quot;Design your own&quot; parquet floor and border system available.</td>
<td>Free brochure Circle No. 202</td>
<td>California Redwood, Western Red Cedar, Pine, Fir</td>
<td>5/8&quot; to 3/4&quot; Widths: 2' 10&quot; Lengths: 3' 6&quot;</td>
<td>T&amp;G, Ship-Lap, Square Edge, V-joint</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bear Creek Lumber</td>
<td>Major supplier of ceder and other specialty lumber products produces a wide range of softwood flooring products, both standard and custom.</td>
<td>Free brochure Circle No. 317</td>
<td>Fir, Hemlock, Cedar, Redwood, Idgho White Pine, Ponderosa Pine, Sugar Pine, Western Spruce, Domestic and Exotic Hardwoods</td>
<td>5/8&quot; to 5/4&quot; Widths: 2' 10&quot; Lengths: 3' 6&quot;</td>
<td>T&amp;G, square edge, or V-gage Smooth face or textured face</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boise Moulding &amp; Lumber Co.</td>
<td>Major supplier of architectural millwork produces wide range of hardwood and softwood flooring. Standard packages or custom long-length planks, random length and one-length planks or ship.</td>
<td>Free brochure Circle No. 318</td>
<td>Among hardwoods available: Ash, Bird's-eye Maple, Cherry, Hard Maple, Red Oak, Walnut, Teak, American Walnut, Subinger, Cocobolo, Genuine Mahogany &amp; 30 others.</td>
<td>3/4&quot;</td>
<td>Width: 3&quot; Lengths: 3' 10&quot;</td>
<td>T&amp;G</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BRE Lumber</td>
<td>Flooring is made from 91% domestic and exotic imported hardwoods of the highest grades, they also manufacture hardwood strips in various species for inlay work.</td>
<td>Free brochure Circle No. 202</td>
<td>Oak, Teak</td>
<td>Park: 1' 1/2&quot;, 3/8&quot;, Parquet: 5/16&quot; to 3/4&quot;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Bruce Hardwood Floors</td>
<td>Wide range of strip, plank, and parquet hardwood floors in both laminated and solid wood types. Glue as well as nailed installation.</td>
<td>Free brochure</td>
<td>Oak, Teak</td>
<td>Park: 1' 1/2&quot;, 3/8&quot;, Parquet: 5/16&quot; to 3/4&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Carlisle Restoration Lumber</td>
<td>Specialists in wide-board flooring and paneling milled from new logs. All boards are cured on hardwood drives or kiln-dried for optimum moisture level. Lumber is graded to a premium-finest grade; no waste percentage.</td>
<td>Free brochure Circle No. 145</td>
<td>Eastern White Pine, Select Red Oak, Southern Yellow Pine</td>
<td>5/4' (nets 15/16) White Pine: 12&quot; to 20&quot; Oak: 10&quot; to 12&quot; Yellow Pine: 6&quot; to 10&quot; Lengths: 10' to 18'</td>
<td>Square, Ship-Lapped, T&amp;G</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coastal Millworks</td>
<td>One of the major sources for antique heart pine, reclaimed both from pre-1900 structures and by dredging southern rivers for virgin logs that sink on their way to saw mills. All lumber is kiln-dried after sawing.</td>
<td>Free brochure Circle No. 319</td>
<td>Antique Heart Pine, both from recycled timbers and virgin logs</td>
<td>5/4' (nets 15/16) Prime Grade: 3&quot; to 12&quot;</td>
<td>T&amp;G</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conklin's Authentic Barnwood</td>
<td>Wholesale of antique wood, recycled from 18th- and 19th-century structures. Flooring and barnwood available in random lengths and widths; barnwood in various colors. Antique plank flooring.</td>
<td>Free brochure Circle No. 115</td>
<td>Antique Pine, Hemlock, Chestnut</td>
<td>3/4&quot; to 1&quot; Widths: 6&quot; to 18&quot; Length: 5' to 18'</td>
<td>Square</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Craftsman Lumber Co.</td>
<td>Specialists in kiln-dried wide pine boards for flooring, paneling, and wainscotting. Boards available in #3 common through clear grades for high-quality restoration or reproduction work. Wide boards of selected hardwoods also available.</td>
<td>Free brochure Circle No. 320</td>
<td>Eastern White Pine, Oak, Maple, Cherry, Southern Yellow Pine, Northern Hard Pine</td>
<td>4/4' (nets 3/4&quot;) or 4/4' to 4/4' by one side shiplap</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dimension Hardwood</td>
<td>Hardwood flooring, paneling, and hardwood lumber for architectural millwork. End-matched and custom parquet flooring. Custom-milled as well as standard products. 2nd location: R.P. 1, Cunclero Plaza, P.O. Box 180, Emerton, PA 16533.</td>
<td>Free brochure Circle No. 338</td>
<td>Hickory, Cherry, White Oak, Red Oak, Maple, Ash, Beech, Walnut, Butternut, Mahogany, Pine, Teak</td>
<td>3/4' std. Other thicknesses 1/4&quot; to 6-1/2&quot; Lengths: up to 18'</td>
<td>T&amp;G, Endmatched, Unfinished &amp; Non-toxic penetrating oil finish</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### TRADITIONAL BUILDING’S
### Wood Flooring Source List

**BY CLEM LABINE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COMPANY</th>
<th>SPECIALTY</th>
<th>Literature</th>
<th>Woods</th>
<th>Thickness</th>
<th>Widths/Lengths</th>
<th>Edges/Finishes</th>
<th>% Custom</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>E.T. Moore, Jr. Company</td>
<td>Specialist in antique heart pine resin from salvaged timbers. Available in 4 grades, from #2 Grade through Select Edge Grain. Other hardwoods also available. All orders custom milled.</td>
<td>Free brochure Circle No. 321</td>
<td>Antique Heart Pine, Brazilian Cherry, Black Walnut, Cypress, Antique White Oak, Mahogany</td>
<td>6/4&quot;, 5/4&quot;, 6/4&quot;, 8/4&quot;, 10/4&quot; and 12/4&quot; (unplaned)</td>
<td>Widths: 3&quot; to 8&quot; Lengths: 3&quot; to 12&quot;</td>
<td>Square &amp; T&amp;G, V-Edge, Rough Cut</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frank Purcell Walnut Lumber Co.</td>
<td>One of the largest lumber mills devoted exclusively to the production of walnut lumber. Two grades: Premium and Select.</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goodwin Lumber Co.</td>
<td>Specialist in fast-growth heart pine lumber, milled from virgin logs recovered from the bottom of Southern waterfalls and kiln-dried. No recycled lumber from old buildings used. They specialize in long lengths...up to 15 ft. All lumber is number one select grade only.</td>
<td>Free brochure Circle No. 322</td>
<td>American Black Walnut</td>
<td>3/4&quot;</td>
<td>Widths: 1-1/2 to 5&quot; Lengths: 1&quot; to 8&quot;</td>
<td>T&amp;G</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harmony Exchange</td>
<td>Specialist in lumber for log and timber construction. In addition to timbers for exposed beam construction, they also sell a variety of hardwood flooring.</td>
<td>Free brochure Circle No. 323</td>
<td>Antique Longleaf Heart Pine, Red Cypress, Fist and Second Growth, Southern Cherry, Black Walnut</td>
<td>3/4&quot; to 8/4&quot;</td>
<td>Widths: 3&quot; to 16&quot; Lengths: 6' to 20'</td>
<td>T&amp;G, Standard flooring center-matched, V-Joint, Square Edge</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heart-Wood, Inc.</td>
<td>Specialist in products from antique heart pine milled from virgin logs salvaged from the bottom of southern lakes and rivers.</td>
<td>Free brochure</td>
<td>Antique Heart Pine, Tidewater Red Heart Cypress, Southern Red Cherry</td>
<td>3/4&quot;</td>
<td>Widths: 2&quot; to 8&quot; Lengths: 3' to 10'</td>
<td>T&amp;G</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K-Wood &amp; Logs</td>
<td>Custom-manufactured flooring from antique wood, with a distressed or smooth planed surface. Can also produce flooring from any new wood, including White Pine and any other commercially available species.</td>
<td>Free brochure Circle No. 342</td>
<td>Chestnut, Oak, White Pine, Hemlock</td>
<td>2'/4&quot; through 6'/4&quot; (before planing)</td>
<td>Widths: 2' to 10' Lengths: 2' to 10'</td>
<td>T&amp;G, V-Joint, Ship-Lapped</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lausen Hardwood Products</td>
<td>Flooring manufactured from Michigan hardwoods in 2 thicknesses, 4 widths, 2 grades, 3 patterns, and 7 different woods.</td>
<td>Free brochure</td>
<td>Ash, Hickory, Red Oak, White Oak, Hard Maple, Cherry, Walnut</td>
<td>3/8&quot; &amp; 3/4&quot;</td>
<td>Widths: 2'/4&quot; to 8&quot; Lengths: 1' to 8&quot;</td>
<td>T&amp;G, V-Joint</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Livermore Wood Floors</td>
<td>Plank from Northern Appalachian hardwoods, as well as numerous other species. Three basic flooring patterns: Random, Decorative, and Traditional. 4 joint styles. Long, wide, clear planks.</td>
<td>Free brochure</td>
<td>Red Oak, Cherry, Maple, Yellow Beech, Ash, Eastern White Pine, Walnut, Butternut, Heart Pine, Teak, Mahogany, White Oak, Beech, Poplar, others</td>
<td>3'4&quot; (unless specified otherwise)</td>
<td>Widths: 4&quot; to 7&quot; (wider on custom order) Lengths: 2' to 8' (longer on custom order)</td>
<td>T&amp;G (with 4 edge styles)</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Live Oak Pine, Ltd.</td>
<td>Specialists in lumber of fast-growth longleaf heart pine, salvaged from the timplers of large 19th-century commercial buildings. Available in three grades: Select, #1 Grade, and #2 Grade. Flooring in narrow and wide categories.</td>
<td>Free brochure Circle No. 325</td>
<td>Antique Heart Pine</td>
<td>3'/4&quot; to 4&quot;</td>
<td>Widths: 4&quot; to 14&quot; Random lengths to 30'</td>
<td>T&amp;G, Square Edge</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northfield Restorations</td>
<td>Specialist in antique wide-board flooring for 18th-century restorations and colonial reproductions. All wood is planed and ready to install.</td>
<td>Free brochure Circle No. 326</td>
<td>Antique White Pine, Longleaf Yellow Pine, Oak, and Chestnut</td>
<td>7'/8&quot; to 1&quot;</td>
<td>Widths: Up to 25' Lengths Up to 18'</td>
<td>Square Edge or Ship-Lapped</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality Woods, Ltd.</td>
<td>Specializes in parquet and wide plank hardwood flooring from exotic imported Asian hardwoods. Finished and unfinished available. Unmatched oak planks are surfaced with polyurethane, designed for glue-down or floating installation.</td>
<td>Free brochure Circle No. 327</td>
<td>Teak, Rosewood, Oak, Royal Oak</td>
<td>5'/16&quot; to 3'/4&quot;</td>
<td>Widths: 1'/4&quot; to 12&quot; Lengths: 1' to 5'</td>
<td>T&amp;G, Square Edge</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialty Wood Co.</td>
<td>Specializes in long lengths of select grade hardwood plank flooring. Sells both stock flooring and handles custom jobs.</td>
<td>Free brochure Circle No. 328</td>
<td>White Oak, Red Oak, White Ash, Rock Maple, Black Cherry, Elm, Cypress, Black Walnut, Butternut, Curly Maple, Bird’s-eye Maple, Walnut</td>
<td>1'/2&quot;, 3'/4&quot;, 7/8&quot;</td>
<td>Widths: 3' to 12' Lengths: 3' to 16'</td>
<td>T&amp;G, Square Edge, Ship-Lapped, with or without V-Joint</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Woods Company</td>
<td>Offers custom wood products, including plank flooring. They work with both antique wood and new wood, and maintain a large inventory of antique lumber. Can furnish clients a complete interior finish wood package.</td>
<td>Free brochure Circle No. 213</td>
<td>Antique Woods: Heart Pine, Wormy Chestnut, Oak, White Oak, New Woods: Oak, Poplar, Walnut, Cherry, and other hard woods</td>
<td>3'/4&quot; (4/4) to 6'/4&quot; (8/4) (on special order) Lengths: 3' to 12'</td>
<td>Widths: 3' to 8' Up to 12' on special order</td>
<td>Center-Matched T&amp;G, other custom edge treatment available</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
WIDE BOARD FLOORING

All Select Grade, Kiln-Dried Boards Paneling & Flooring

EASTERN WHITE PINE
• Full 15/16" thick — or planed to your specs
• 1" to 20" widths, square edge
• 8", 10", or 12" widths with shiplapped joints

YELLOW PINE
• 3/4" thick
• 6" to 10" widths
• Tongue & groove or square edge

SELECT RED OAK
• 3/4" thick
• 6" to 10" widths
• Square edge

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Restoration Lumber
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Stoddard, NH 03464-9712
(603) 446-3937

Circle No. 155

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The Finest Pine Lumber In The World

Antique longleaf heart pine is the strongest and most beautiful pine lumber available. It is virtually insect-proof and rot-proof. It is the wood of choice for flooring, paneling, millwork, furniture, exposed beams, stair parts, and moldings. Our custom heart pine flooring is available in two width ranges:

NARROW Heart Pine Flooring
> Widths ranging from 4" to 8"
> Thickness: 3/4" (net 3/4")

WIDE Heart Pine Flooring
> Widths ranging from 8" to 14"
> Thickness: 5/4 (net 1"

All Kiln-Dried Lumber
Write or call Tracy for free information.

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2840 Peachtree Road, N.W.
Atlanta, GA 30305
TEL: (404) 261-6202
FAX: (404) 261-8502
Circle No. 325

Flooring that Fits First, Last and Always

Conklin’s Authentic Antiques Barnwood and Hand Hewn Beams
Pennsylvania Wall Stone & Flagstone

Barnwood: grey, silver grey, brown, red
5,000-10,000 sq. ft. in stock
Random length and width
Plank flooring

For Further Information Call Or Write

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Souderton, PA 18964

WHOLESALE ONLY

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for Flooring and Paneling

Add a touch of uniqueness and authenticity to your next project. The natural rusticity of our Authentic Antique Planks, used as flooring or paneling, will enhance any home, office or commercial space. Why install boring flooring? Why abuse new wood to make it look old? Use the real thing! Write or call for a free brochure.

Aged Woods®

Circle No. 263

ANTIQUE WOOD PRODUCTS
IN CHESTNUT, OAK, WHITE & HEART PINE, HEMLOCK, AND MORE

Flooring, Beams, Paneling, Barn Siding, Slate, Glass
AND Log Cabins and Post & Beam Frames

K-WOOD & LOGS, INC.
P.O. BOX 39, FREE LAND, MD 21063
(301) 357-8108 (301) 641-2022
Circle No. 342

Circle No. 316

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The catalog is free with a letterhead request and includes a wholesale price list; custom work available. For more information contact: Raymond E. Enkeboll Designs, Inc., 16506 Avalon Boulevard, Dept. TB, Carson, CA 90746 (213) 532-1400. CS# 06440 — JL. Or Circle No. 302

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January/February 1990
AIA ANNIVERSARY continued from page 3

The national level was influencing new development in Washington, they resolved that the local Chapters "exercise a watchful guardianship over any masterpieces of architectural art within their territories, to the end that works of exceptional and abiding interest be not wantonly transformed or destroyed."

To this day, the AIA's efforts in historic preservation depend heavily on the activities of the local chapters and the state coordinators. (Over the years, the chapters in Philadelphia, San Francisco, and New York have been especially vigorous in fighting preservation's battles.) The National Committee on Historic Resources acts as the link between the AIA Board and the local and state levels.

Roots Of The Historic American Buildings Survey One of the Committee's most notable achievements is the backing it gave in 1933 to the formation of the Historic American Buildings Survey. HABS, the brainchild of Charles Peterson, FAIA, had its origins in the National Park Service, and developed into a public/private partnership with the Federal government providing the money, and the AIA providing organization and manpower. The Library of Congress was brought into the loop to maintain the records and provide public access.

In the 1930's, HABS was organized through the existing chapter system of the Institute, with each chapter overseeing one of the 67 geographic districts. Management of the Survey occupied much of the Committee's time during the New Deal, but not all. Another important activity was securing passage of the Historic Sites Act in 1935.

The Octagon As Restoration Laboratory The Octagon building was purchased in 1902 when the Institute moved its headquarters to Washington, D.C. The downpayment of $10,000 was provided by Charles F. McKim, FAIA, who was then the Institute's president. The Octagon was the first American building to become the focus of a major preservation effort in which architectural importance, rather than historical associations, was paramount.

Throughout the Institute's ownership of The Octagon, the Committee has promoted the idea that The Octagon is important historically as an ensemble of buildings and that "any additions or subtractions from the original layout of the house, garden, and outbuildings would invariably destroy the original conception...and consequently diminish the value as a true record of the cultured past."

These issues were far from academic when, in the 1967's, the AIA overrode the office space provided by The Octagon and set out to erect a new office building on The Octagon property. The necessities of space and budget were such that the new building encroached on the land formerly occupied by the outbuildings — but not until there was a loud protest from the Committee.

The Octagon house itself has been deeded to the American Architectural Foundation, and is currently undergoing an extensive restoration as part of the AIA's program to maintain the house as an architectural landmark, dedicated by the profession as a public monument. The restoration project is intended to be a showcase for state-of-the-art architectural conservation techniques.

The Era Of Rebuilding If it's true that the 1930's will be characterized as "The Era of Rebuilding," there's going to be a lot activity centered around old buildings. The 353 members of the Historic Resources Committee, under the leadership of Spencer Leineweber, AIA, are poised to make sure that interests of historic architecture don't get lost in the shuffle.

Much of the information in this article was taken from the report "Architects in Historic Preservation: The Formal Role Of the AIA, 1890-1990," written by Melissa Houghton, with assistance from Russell V. Knae, AIA, James Massey, Erin Matthews, Anne Vyalicit, AIA, and Bruce Krivsky, AIA.

THE ARCHITECT IN PRESERVATION: SYMPOSIUM FEB. 2-3 To mark the 100th anniversary of the founding role of the AIA in historic preservation, the American Institute of Architects is sponsoring a two-day symposium in Washington Feb. 2-3. There will be 26 presenters examining the role of the architect in preservation: past, present, and future. For information on registration, contact: Bruce M. Krivsky at the AIA, (202) 626-7452. Or write him at: American Institute of Architects, 1735 New York Ave., NW, Washington DC 20006. For information on becoming a member of the Committee on Historic Resources, contact Bruce Krivsky at the above address.
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architorture

MANGLED MANSARD

"Architorture" is defined in the TRADITIONAL BUILDING dictionary as “A brutal, mocking, uninformed, or absurd handling of historic forms, either in restoration or new construction.” This addition to the front of a Second Empire house would certainly seem to qualify as “absurd.” The designer gets a few points for trying to pick up the Mansard roof theme from the original section of the house. But it’s clear that when it comes handling traditional forms, he or she just doesn’t get it! — Submitted by Renee Kahn, Stamford, Conn.

Photo: Don Piper

Antique Iron Stairs

Originally an antique dealer, Bernard Snitman stumbled upon a Victorian cast iron stair on a buying trip to England. Before long, he started manufacturing the 4 ft. diameter stair — “The Albany” — and eventually, a 5-footer (“The Barclay”, shown) and 6-footer (also “The Albany”). Add on “The Kensington” (a straight stair), cast iron balusters and table bases, and a Canadian distributorship of related restoration products — Steptoe & Wife Antiques, Ltd. is born.

The stairs are shipped knocked-down, including: Tread, riser, decorative side panel, Georgian baluster with saddle, center pole (spiral), cast brass scroll and finial ball, handrail and hardware. Finish is baked-on black; custom colors are extra.

In addition to being manufacturers of cast iron staircases, Steptoe’s craftsmen are also versatile metal-workers in sheet and cast metal. They are the exclusive distributors in Canada for the Lawler line of castings and W.F. Norman stamped metal products. They also have a metal fabricating shop on premises and can do brass polishing, reproduction metalwork, railings and grilles, and complex commercial jobs such as decorative metal canopies for theater restoration.

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