

A MUSICIAN  
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REMODEL THAT  
TURNS HIS  
BOYHOOD HOME  
INTO A SYMPHONY  
OF ENGLISH STYLE  
AND ELEGANCE.

# MUSIC BOX TUDOR

Like the instruments in an orchestra blending into a single harmony, the refurbished Tudor of Gary and Faye Smith in north Sonoma County is a melodious marriage of old and new.

Built in 1940 by architect Hans Witter, the two-story Tudor was in good repair when Gary Smith, 56, inherited it from his mother in 1988. But the Smiths wanted to expand and modernize it before they moved in.

Insistent that new sections of the house look as authentic as the original parts, the Bay Area couple spent a year working out alterations with Sebastopol draftsman and contractor Theodore Kirby.

It was no easy task, says Gary, because of the many interior angles, jogs, and exterior corbels in Witter's design. "Witter didn't like straight lines," he explains.



The small boxed-in kitchen grew to include a library with doors that open — in the manner of an English country home — to gardens and a brick patio.

Faye, 53, a high school counselor, says the library has become one of her favorite rooms. "This is the kind of house you can really sink back into and feel comfortable," adds her husband.

The couple hand-picked each of the Mexican clay tiles for both library and kitchen, and were thrilled when they found one with two racoon paw prints. The tile was placed so their beloved Boston terriers Phoebe and Winston can dine next to the whimsical paw prints.

In the dining room, the home's cadence is more refined. Richly stained birch china cabinets were added, and ordinary white drapes were replaced with forest-green and paisley English shades. Glancing at the verdigris chandelier crowning the room, Gary Smith notes, "My folks never threw anything away, but we couldn't find the light that had been here. So we had this made in the same style as other original lights in the house."



Gary is the dean of arts administration at a Bay Area community college and a retired member of the Oakland Symphony, so it's no surprise there are two pianos in the elegant living room. The older one is a Herrington that has been in his family for 100 years, he says.

Hearty beams in the living room ceiling above the pianos come from an old winery in the Alexander Valley.

An essential addition to the home of these music lovers was a state-of-the-art sound system. When the stereo is in use, the Smith's Tudor home becomes a giant music box, sending the chords of Puccini undulating through their Victorian neighborhood.

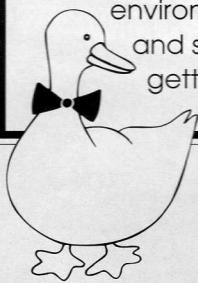
Upstairs, Gary's boyhood bedroom was turned into a cedar-lined closet for the new master bedroom, as the three-bedroom house grew from 2,100- to 2,600-square-feet.

Atop an antique bureau in the guest room is a carefully arranged collection of glass milk bottles — a memento of Gary's father, a Sonoma County civic leader who owned the milk bottling plant in Healdsburg from the late 1940s to the late 1950s.

Wall sconces, positioned throughout the

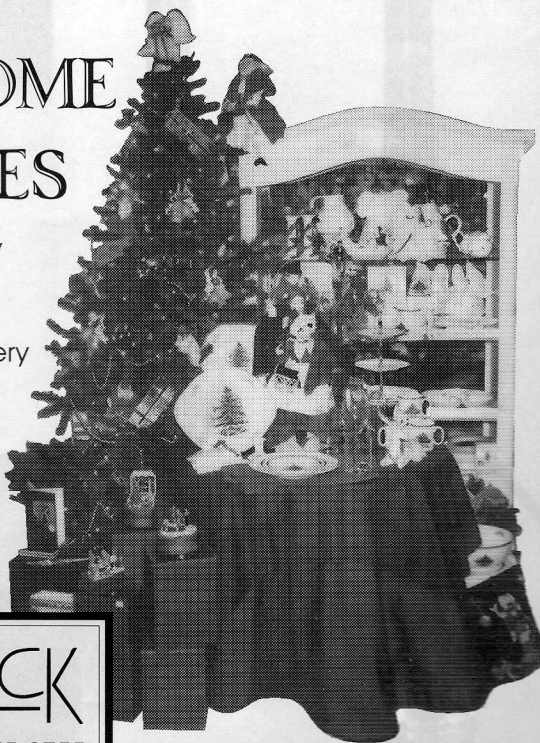
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home by Witter long ago, add a touch of staccato to nearly every room. The original hardwood floors shine like glass. "I've been waxing these floors since I was 10," says Gary with a smile.

The house, the gardens, and the 1880s garage — which housed the darkroom for the local newspaper in the early 1940s — hold many memories for Gary. He recalls, for instance, waking at 4 a.m. one morning when he was 11 to the sound of his father and fellow políticos loudly crooning, "Show me the way to go home," beneath the backyard kumquat tree.

Now the same kumquat tree and fishpond are serenaded with opera songs as the sun goes down. □

# TOURING

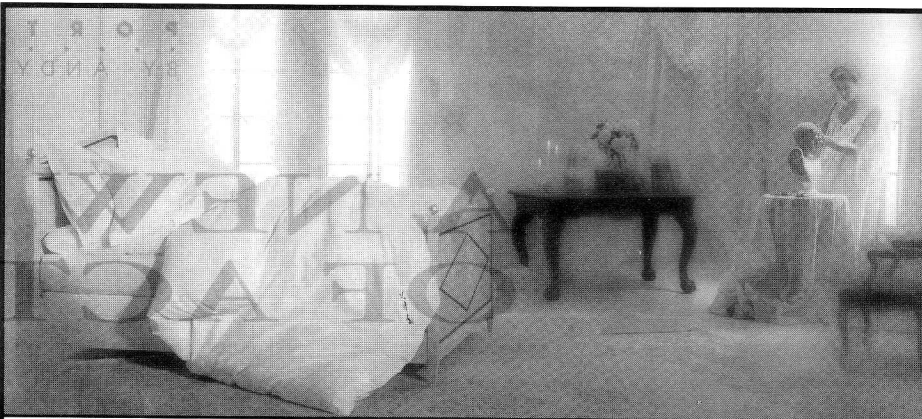
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## GREAT HOMES

BY JANET HERRING-SHERMAN  
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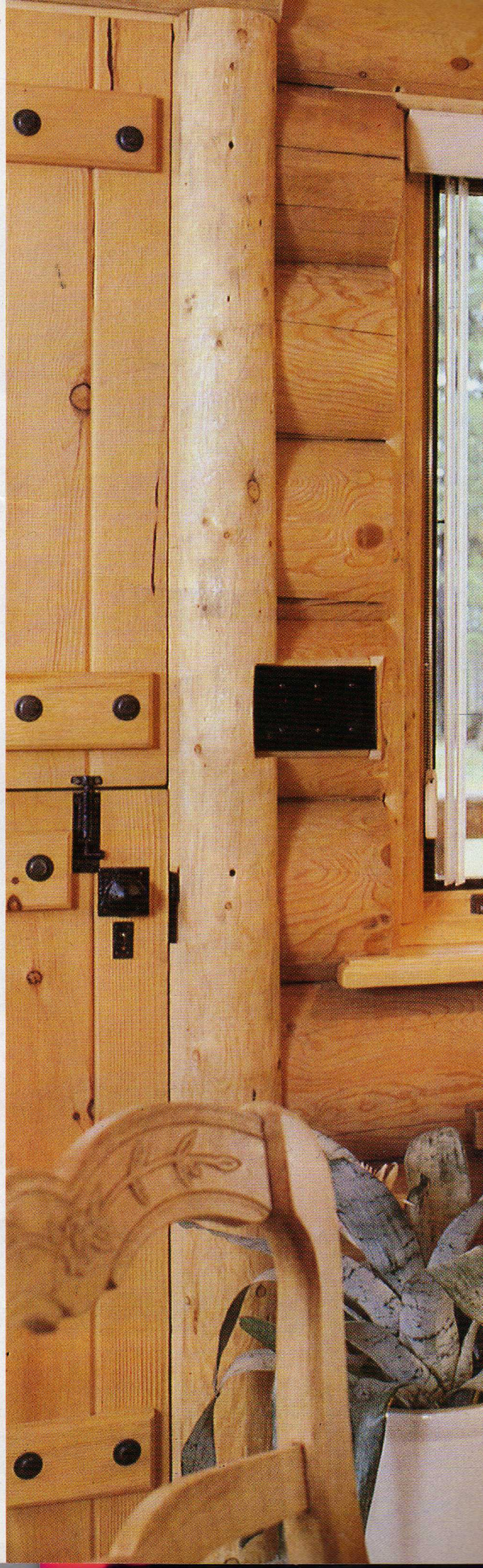
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# LUXURIOUS LOG OUTPOST

Visiting the lavish log home of Bridgit and Cameron Thieriot near Occidental is like stumbling into a "Bonanza" rerun on television. Sure, log cabins may be more familiar in snow country than in western Sonoma County's rolling pastures, but Cameron Thieriot has always liked to do things differently.

Surveying his 24-acres of wooded slopes and green valleys, Thieriot admits he'd never actually been inside a log home before he built his, but he sensed it would be as cozy as a thatched-roof cottage, his favorite kind of abode. His instinct proved right.

The Douglas fir and pine logs of the house have a sheen like the sunlit coat of a palomino horse. Their rugged but polished texture is not unlike Thieriot's, an out-





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doorsy man in his thirties who has raced off-road Baja trucks and cars for Toyota, B.F. Goodrich and Yokohama. He has an intense gaze, purposeful gestures, and a love for the old and the beautiful.

Thieriot's log home is a haven for century-old stained glass and beveled glass doors, many from Holland. Their muted colors bathe the logs in a lantern-like glow, giving a satiny softness to the entire 3,600-square-foot, four-bedroom, three-and-a-half-bath home.

A stickler for perfection, Thieriot hand-picked particular furnishings to accentuate the home's rustic flavor. Fired by midnight inspirations, he sleuthed through favorite shops, such as Maria's Antiques in Los Altos and Anna Lisa Wolf Antique Store in San Francisco.

Among his finds were lamps from Utah with log bases and tin shades that reflect the gray rocks in the hearth created by Occidental's Bob Rossini.

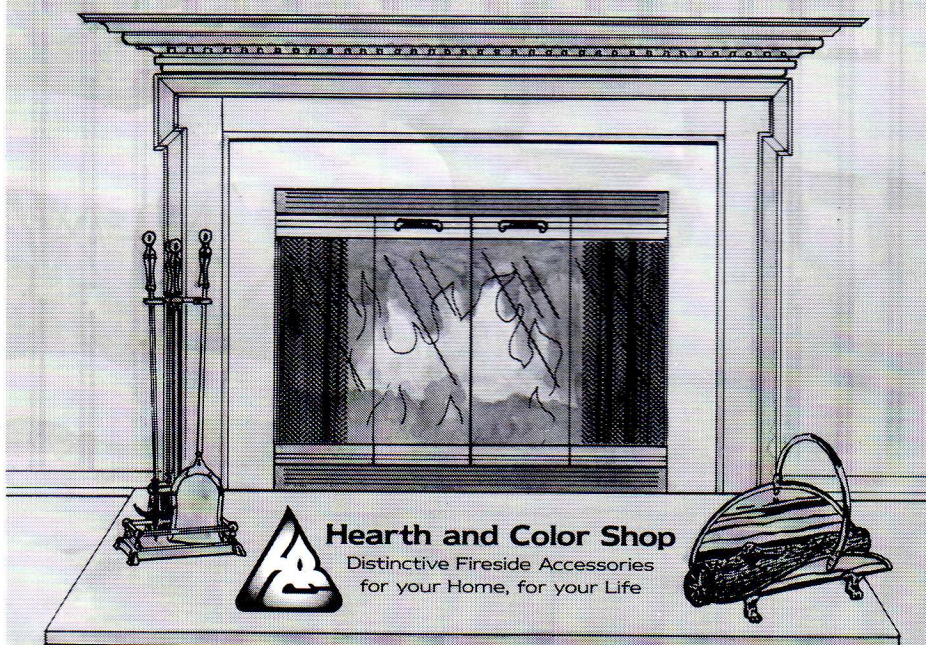
A long, low pine table in the dining room holds a parade of antique earth-colored water jugs from France. Above it, instead of a painting, there hangs the view, as seen through window panes framed with split logs. An ornate nickel stove as tall as a person fills a nearby corner. "We brought it back from Minnesota to use as a wood stove, then found out it was a coal-burner," says Thieriot, fondly brushing his hand across its finish.

Thieriot's special treasures show up unexpectedly all over the house: a 1951 Schwinn Phantom bike at the top of the stairs; an unmatched pair of wooden carousel horses standing on either side of an 18th-century armoire in the master suite.

A stone's throw from the log home is a most auspicious guest house: a red caboose. Thieriot got the idea when he saw an ad for old railroad cars in the *Robb Report*, an upscale car magazine. "It took about six weeks to tear out the (caboose's) steel walls and linoleum," he recalls. Now the railcar, carpeted in '40s-style black-and-floral carpet and paneled in Douglas fir, sports two bedrooms and a bath.

Even though the log house is finally complete, Thieriot's passion for his outpost is still burning. He recently added a llama shed, is building a log horse barn and has plans for a four-acre chardonnay vineyard.

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# ECHOES OF THE SOUTHWEST

A trail of rich perfume following her, Lisa Thomas glides through the rooms of her sensuous house. "This is our eleventh home," she explains. When her husband, a corporate executive, was transferred from Texas, Thomas says she told him, "I didn't mind moving from pillar to post if I could have one spot that would always be home." This home was to be the one.

Hungry for scenic views to set off their collection of Southwestern art, the

Thomases, both in their late forties, found a home filled with windows that reach beyond the ceilings. Designed by Santa Rosa architect Bob Zinkhan, the house tops a wooded ridge in eastern Sonoma county. Its curving, suede-like walls and alabaster alcoves showcase the couple's colorful art and antiques.

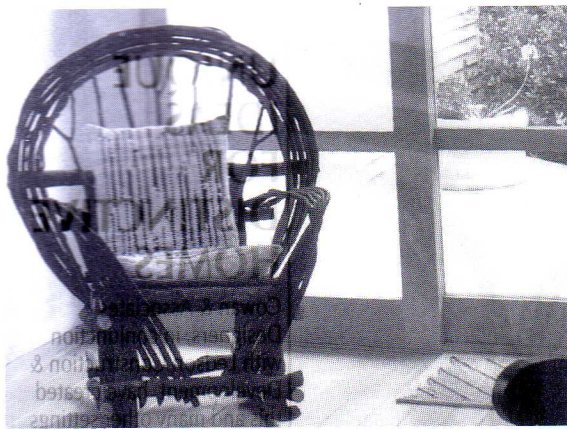
Unfettered by traditional decorating mores, Thomas used a strong sense of placement to add refinement to the relaxed floorplan of the 3,200-square-foot home. The foyer is dominated by a painting of horses and riders — consumed in a flurry of rich blues, purples and grays. Below it is a table made from a 1700s Portuguese door and harness yoke. In the living room, a huge limestone mantel from France is crowned by a pair of tall bronze and rust-colored raku urns.

Fanning out from a curved wet bar, the living room, dining room and kitchen are unified by flagstone floors. Here traces of blue and purple in paintings, lampshades, upholstery and dishware, echo the colors of the pool, sky and landscaping.

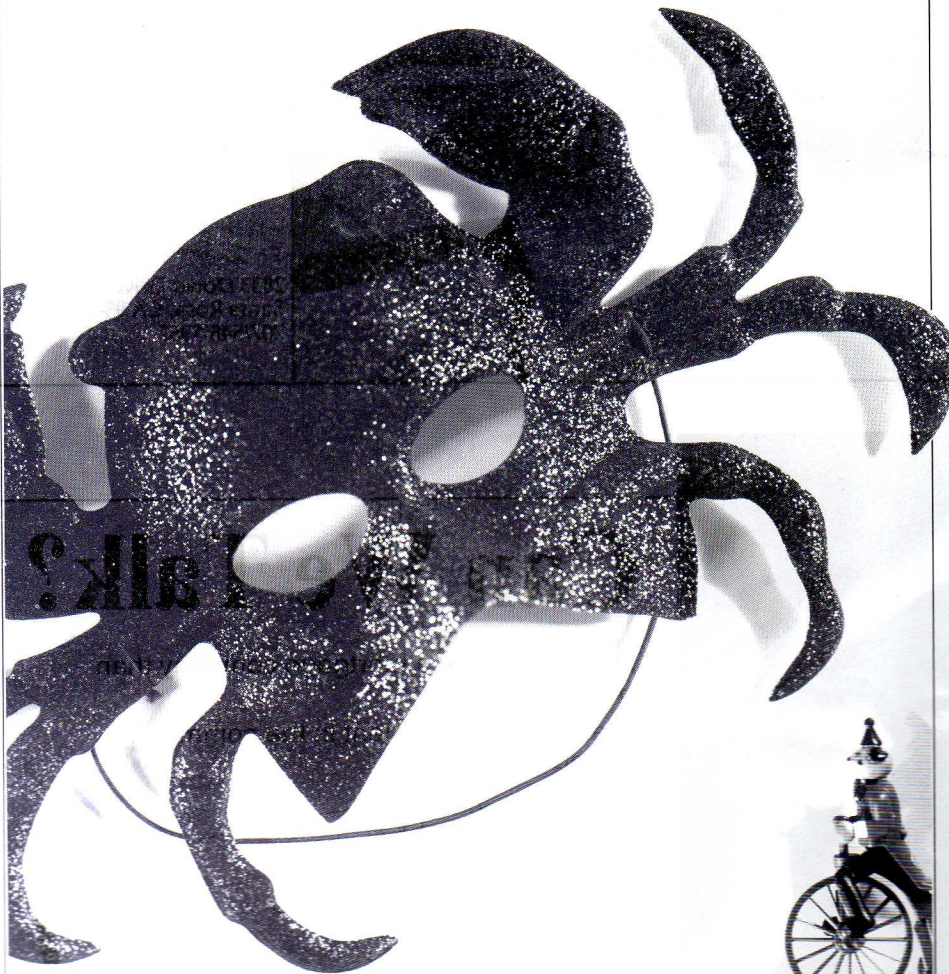
At the far end of the living room, where you'd expect a hallway, a wide doorway opens onto a master suite with a private fireplace. When the door glides open, this room, too, seems one with the living room. A brace of windows parallels the bed and frames the waterfall, pool and horizon.

"This is probably my husband's favorite room," says Thomas of the expansive bedroom. "Imagine waking up and having your first cup of coffee looking at that view."

Her penchant for elegance makes Thomas no less practical. "The only rugs I have are the kind you can pick up and throw in the washing machine," she emphasizes. As if on cue, Gus, the golden retriever, wades through the pool and marches in to nap on a handwoven cotton runner.



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# EAST COAST MANNERS

It was their dog and cat that led Howard Holzapfel and his wife, Lynn Leonardi, to the southern Marin hillside where they built a giant 5,000-square-foot modern Victorian. When they moved to Marin from New York in 1982, they couldn't find an apartment that would permit pets, so they leased a home and fell in love with the sunny meadow across the way. Now their tri-story home, its

roof pitched like the points of a tiara, graces about half an acre in that former horse pasture they once admired from afar.

Howard Holzapfel, a general contractor, built the home and worked hand-in-hand with San Francisco architect Michio Yamaguchi to capture the look and feel of the East Coast homes he grew up in. "We worked hard to make all four sides interesting," he explains. "Typical California homes have only one good side. Back East, each side stands on its own."

The interior is a vision in white made even brighter by windows that form bays, circles and steeples.

Wood grains, textures and colored light from stained glass windows are counterpoint to the varying shades of white. Sleek pinkish marble flanks the fireplace in the family room. English-style pine cabinetry custom-bleached the color of pie crust adds dimension to the kitchen. This is the room, in fact, Holzapfel savors most. "The Viking stove is great for Sunday morning pancakes," he says with a grin.

Holzapfel reinforced the home's steadfast Eastern stateliness with red oak hardwood floors, tall baseboards, pocket doors, black-and-white tiles, and period light fixtures. Once his beloved East Coast style was firmly entrenched, he added contemporary touches to the six-bedroom, four-bath home: gold fixtures in the baths, a wall-size television screen in the downstairs family room and a stainless steel dishwasher in the kitchen.

Taking the stairs two at a time, Holzapfel, 38, leads the way to the children's wing and a game room where a Ping-Pong table holds court. He reveals that beneath his traditional house is a very nontraditional indoor pool site.

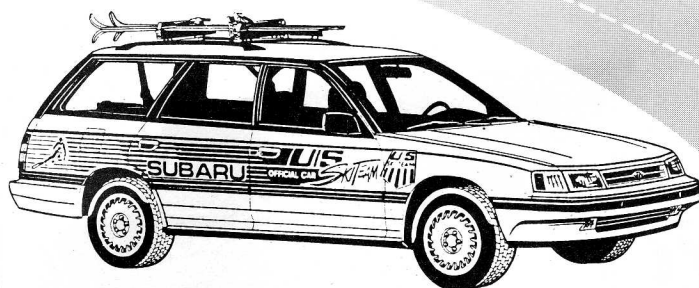
Heading down the hall, he stops to admire

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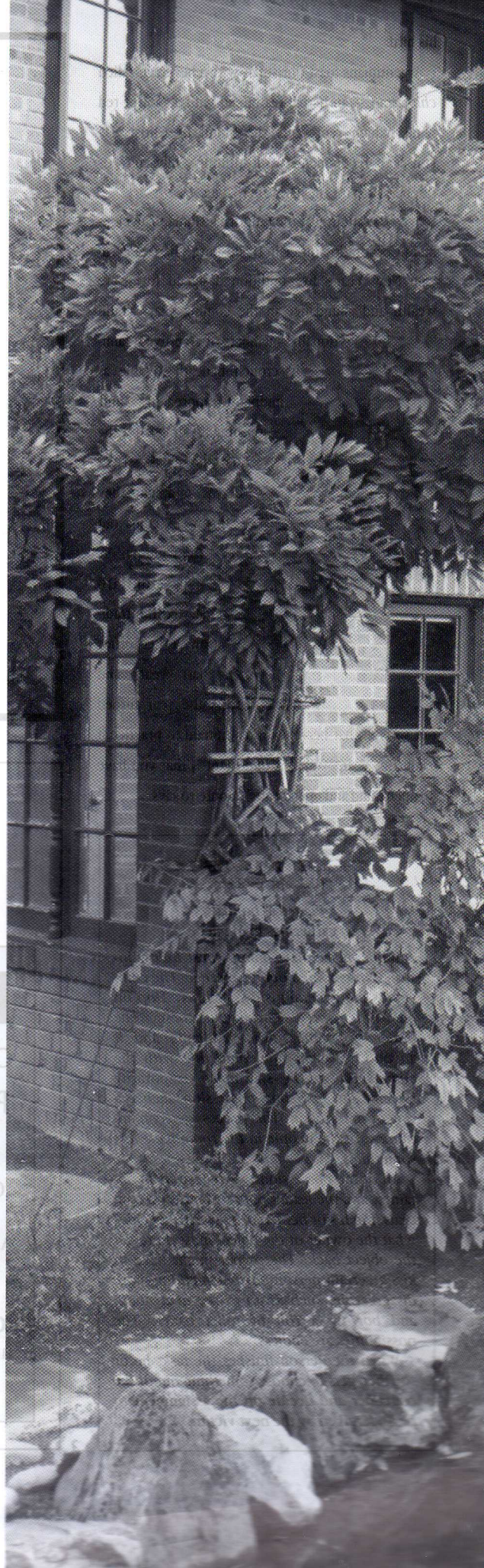
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# SOUND LINES AND LINEAGE

Unrepentant history buffs Terri and Stephen Hohener couldn't resist taking up residence three years ago in a historical home in south Sonoma County. An imposing two-story brick Mediterranean Revival, the house needed lots of fixing, but that only heightened its appeal for Stephen Hohener, a Bay Area business owner who revels in reconstruction work and antique hunting.

"We were living in Piedmont and had no intention of moving," he recalls. Then the couple toured and fell in love with the run-down dowager built in 1929 by a prominent businessman enamored with the sun-stained villas of Italy and Spain.

Soon sawdust and rubble were flying. The Hoheners were making frequent trips







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from Piedmont to Sonoma County to oversee their new home's facelift — confident the right cosmetics and a new wardrobe would return her to star status. "We knew the home had good bones. They did everything first class when they built it," says Hohener, "We wanted to make the inside feel modern but not bastardize the home's style."

The kitchen was transformed from a hodgepodge of doors and unusable space to a wide-open room with a glassy breakfast nook and a granite-top island. Terri, a former school teacher in her late thirties, spends happy hours there kneading pie and pasta dough. Sensible yet decorative white cabinets outfit the kitchen.

Unveiling the 56 windows around the house improved the home's demeanor dramatically. "We wanted to maintain the integrity of the home but be able to see outside more," says Hohener, who's in his late forties. Down came the dark, heavy downstairs drapes, revealing floor-to-ceiling windows arched like Greta Garbo eyebrows.

A battleship-gray sunroom was converted to a relaxed office. In spring, vibrant blooms on the birds of paradise peek through French doors and ribbons of glass around the office.

In the living and dining rooms, brandy-colored hardwood floors flirt with the Hoheners' collection of art deco Handel Holmes lamps and early 1890s paintings. Thick gilt frames and barley-twist crown mouldings create an ornate flavor in the otherwise casual rooms. A sleek black Belgian marble mantle makes the once unimaginative fireplace bold.

When remodeling the five-bedroom 4,000-square-foot home, the Hoheners were intent on retaining the original 1920s jelly-bean yellow, green and lavender color schemes in some of the bathrooms. Heath Ceramics in Sausalito created special tiles made to look old and match the lively art deco colors.

The soft, simple master bedroom is a pleasant contrast. Here an intimate balcony and damask curtains, sent fluttering by a rose-scented breeze, set a romantic stage.

The community's first high school once stood on the half-acre grounds that surround the Hoheners' home. Now the property sports a fish pond, fern grotto, waterfall, and trellised brick pathways that lead to a pool and a pool house.



the Richardson Bay views and alabaster sconces in his daughter's nursery then pops into his son's room to check on a parakeet sunning in the morning light.

Window coverings are few in this home, because Holzapfel and Leonardi love sunshine and the outdoors. Literally steps from their mahogany-red front door, the Miwok Trail begins its climb up into the Golden Gate National Recreational Area. A favorite weekend jaunt, Holzapfel says, is hiking the trail with the family and cocker spaniel to the Pelican Inn in Muir Beach for brunch. □

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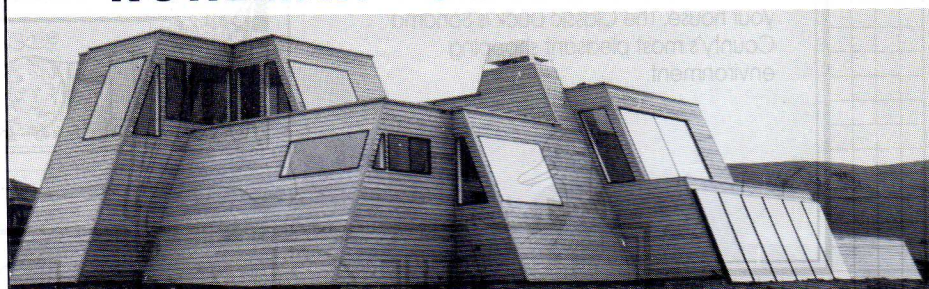
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