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CAPITOL HILL HOUSE AND GARDEN TOUR

1997

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WELCOME

Dear Friends and Visitors . . .

Welcome to the Capitol Hill House & Garden Tour! In 1997, we celebrate our 40th year of opening our homes and gardens to the public. There are many reasons that people chose to live and raise their families on Capitol Hill. The Hill offers residents beautiful Victorian architecture, convenience to the DC job center, and a culturally diverse village community. In today's high-tech, fast-paced world, living on Capitol Hill provides residents with a rare combination of old world charm in a convenient urban setting.

Just as the Hill has defined its space within the city, homeowners have defined their personal space to meet their own physical and emotional needs. Not surprisingly, on this tour you will experience decorating themes that are as old as the city itself, and those with a distinctly modern flare. Each style has its place, and all provide a setting that ensures the comfort and enjoyment of our home owners.

You will also find that our tour houses and gardens are not reserved just for the wealthy or those without children. The Hill is home to those of all income levels, as well as many young and growing families. We have tried to ensure that the tour provides a glimpse of life on the Hill that includes a diverse cross-section of lifestyles, from the practical to the extraordinary. For ex-

ample, you will find that the artwork in the tour homes ranges from museum quality oil paintings to objects that were found and salvaged from sidewalks on trash day! Each piece has been carefully woven into a living fabric that makes each of these homes and gardens unique and special.


Each year, it takes scores of people many months to prepare and stage the tour. We want to thank all of our volunteers and sponsors who contributed to making the tour a success. Many businesses also take part, and we encourage you to show them your support.

The houses selected for the tour demonstrate good preservation practices. However, CHRS cannot ensure that houses on the tour comply in all respects with the current zoning and historic district regulations.

Finally, we want to thank each of you for coming and sharing the tour with us. Enjoy the show!



Brad Braden
President, CHRS



Lem Hooper
House Chair

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CAPITOL HILL RESTORATION SOCIETY*

For forty-two years, the Capitol Hill Restoration Society, the largest civic association on the Hill, has played a key role in helping to promote and protect the way of life we all enjoy here on Capitol Hill—a place where one can walk to work, school, stores, and restaurants; a neighborhood where our best friends live next door or around the corner; and our neighbors are diverse, stimulating, friendly, and caring people.

The Society has become an important force for the preservation of the Hill's architectural heritage and the amenities of urban life. Our members, whose talents and interests comprise the diversity of Capitol Hill, share a common commitment to the continued vitality of our residential community. The Society believes that Capitol Hill should be a good place to live and work, and that restoring its fine old houses benefits all of us who have committed ourselves to the Hill's future.

Over the years, the Society has fought to defend the residential and commercial character of the Hill and to oppose those without a commitment to life in the city—particularly those who want to exploit the existing residential base of the Hill while ignoring and weakening



its community resources. We have worked to save Eastern Market and our local police substation, fought the imposition of highrises incompatible with our street-scape, supported initiatives to establish residential parking, and developed a master plan with the Architect of the Capitol.

We would like to thank you for joining us in this year's House and Garden Tour and ask you to consider becoming a member of the Society if you're not already. Your membership will help to preserve the character of our historic community.

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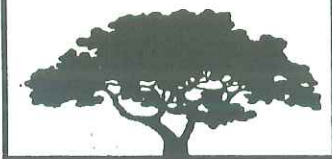
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LIVING ON CAPITOL HILL

Capitol Hill dates back to the 1790s. It is one of the oldest and most architecturally diverse residential communities in Washington. The design of its streets and parks was developed by Pierre Charles L'Enfant in his 1791 plan. Early development centered around boarding houses for transient congressmen clustered near the Capitol and homes for construction workers at the Navy Yard. Most of the rowhouses were built in the late nineteenth century resulting from the prosperity and growth of the government after the Civil War.

Compared to in-town neighborhoods in other East Coast cities, Capitol Hill has a unique appearance: wide streets, bay fronts, front yards, red bricks, and a varied architecture including the Federal, Italianate, Second Empire, Romanesque, Queen Anne, and Classical Revival styles. The architecture reflects the early social diversity of the Hill, continued to the present. Elaborate ornamental pressed-brick structures were built adjacent to earlier and simple, unadorned frame buildings. The homes of current residents include former manor houses, stables, alley dwellings, small two-story frame structures, and grand four-story town homes. Many townhouses were built with basement entrances, providing rental income for early and current owners.

A feeling of spaciousness is one of the key attractions of Capitol

Hill. The L'Enfant plan envisioned wider streets than you see today. However, by 1870 it was clear that existing streets would not be widened to their limit. A law was enacted allowing residents to extend their houses out onto public space, creating room for the bay windows you see on many houses. In addition, front yards were extended to the sidewalks. The especially deep front yards on East Capitol Street and the many avenues on the Hill provide dramatic views of the Capitol, sky, and trees.

Capitol Hill's many parks and government buildings with public spaces are another gift of the L'Enfant plan. They provide a focal point for neighborhood gatherings of baby strollers, joggers, and dog walkers. These include Lincoln, Stanton, and Folger parks, and the Union Station Plaza.

Capitol Hill also includes many fine commercial buildings, particularly along Pennsylvania Avenue and Eighth Street SE. Landmarks in the neighborhood include Christ Church at 620 G Street SE (1806-07); the Old Naval Hospital at Pennsylvania Avenue and Ninth Street SE (1865-66); Eastern Market at Seventh and C Streets SE (1873 and 1908); the Folger Shakespeare Library at 201 East Capitol Street SE (1932); Friendship House at 619 D Street SE (1795-96); and the Marine Corps Commandant's House at Eighth and G Streets SE (1801-04).

810 A STREET SE
JUDITH CAPEN & ROBERT WEINSTEIN

1.



A Tale of Two Houses: Award-winning architects Judith Capen and Robert Weinstein were just starting out in life and looking for a house they could afford. Eight-ten A Street had an intact roof, was just barely affordable, and it had a rental unit. Young and unaware of all the challenges they would face, Robert and Judith took the plunge. The results are a fascinating house brought back from the brink.

There were lots of unattractive features to overcome. Some, like revolting color schemes inside and out were easily remedied. Others, like miles of ranch molding, fake beams, reduced window openings, grossly inappropriate replacement windows, and a back porch in “early tenement” style were less easy to remedy.

The pace of renovation and restoration—dictated by constraints

of time, money, and family allowed the owners’ thoughts on the nature of houses and historic preservation to evolve. They are eloquent exponents of sensitive restoration. Eighteen years into their work, they have reversed most of the previous owners’ ill-advised efforts.

Look for the whimsical evocations of the brick “eyebrows” removed by the previous owner. The new eyebrows at the first floor support a Chinese wisteria known for its extravagant blooms.

The casement windows are a significant improvement over the previous windows (multi-pane, colonial windows in reduced openings) and were honest reflections of the house’s third set of windows: i.e. did not try to suggest they were original windows.

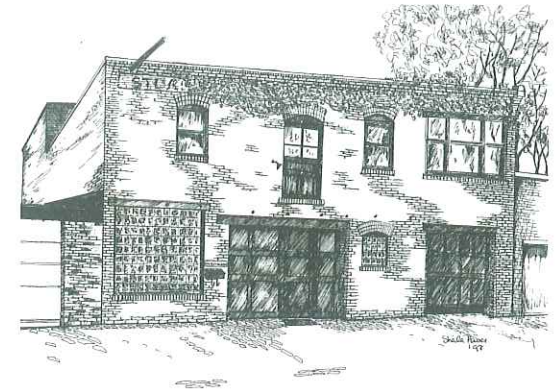
Judith and Robert have handcrafted an interior that is creative and stylish. Where “remuddling” had destroyed the original detail, the owners have made interesting and sometimes dramatic use of spaces. They’ve included a variety of built-ins that help accommodate all the needs of a growing family.

The owners have created a jazzy, modern kitchen that leads through a reconstituted back facade to the verdant and secluded garden.

A mixture of family and heirloom pieces, the works of local craftspeople, and lots of creativity and ingenuity have given this house a charming new lease on life.

2.

614 A STREET SE—REAR
JUDITH HARRIS & WALTER KRAVITZ



It took a while to find a place where they could live and work, then Walter Kravitz saw the “For Sale” sign on the carriage house behind 614 A Street. With appropriate zoning variances and some art students, he undertook a two-year renovation.

Through research at the Library of Congress, Kravitz discovered the property had been built in 1910 and had served many functions over the years. It was used to store Eastern Market’s fruit and vegetable carts, to repair Model Ts, and later was a garage for refrigeration trucks. The I-beam by the second story door reminds us of these past lives. It was used to swing various heavy objects into the top story of the building.

Local designer Mary Drysdale stenciled the hall and helped design the entire living space. Kravitz’s painted polycarbonate sculptures come to life in the spacious studio. A nationally recognized artist, Kravitz’s work is displayed at the Hirschorn, the Chicago Art Institute, and other public spaces. Recent works are displayed at Gallery K, Dupont Circle. He’s currently working on a very large piece that will hang in the Reeves Center on 14th and U Streets. The chorus line


design of the piece reflects the Depression-era jazz culture of the Shaw-U Street neighborhood.

Art and furniture downstairs were done by local artists with whom Kravitz trades. The suburban scene hanging in the hall is by Val Lewton, the artist who painted the huge scene of the Capitol on the vent for Route I-395. Much of the furniture is constructed of “found objects.”

The massive ash staircase that ascends to the second floor covers the cement ramp from the house’s old garage days. The space at the top of the stairs has always been an office. During the garage phase, it was covered in two-way mirrors so the foreman could keep an eye on his workers. Furniture in both bedrooms was painted by the owner’s mother, who trained as a professional furniture painter in the 1930s.

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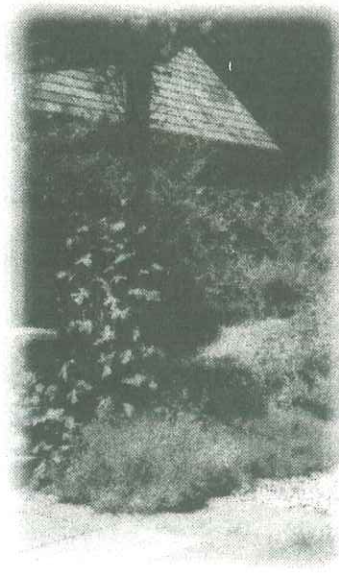
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3.

8 SEVENTH STREET NE
STANLEY B. GREENBERG & ROSE L. DELAURO

How do you make yourself comfortable while commuting between the workplace in Washington DC and the hometown in Connecticut? If you're international pollster Stanley Greenburg and Congresswoman Rosa DeLauro, you paint the rooms of your Capitol Hill home with the same brilliant shades—golden pumpkin, eggplant, maroon, and more—as your Connecticut home.

"It's for continuity's sake," says Greenburg, who admits the zest for bold colors and modern/deco taste comes from his wife. The brightly colored and furnished living room also highlights the couple's involvement in international affairs. (Greenburg has written books on South Africa and works with the African National Congress.)

In the bay window are puppets from Indonesia. Next to the fireplace are Ndebece dolls, featuring intricate beadwork; ceramic versions are on the mantel. The baskets are from South Africa, as is the tapestry over the fireplace. The French antique poster from the '20s, which hangs over the television console, features a common (and a bit perplexing) figure in this Democratic household—an elephant. The bulls-eye looking "bowls" on the wall are Bali boatmen's hats.

The Italian ceramic lamps in the living room, the colorful Italian ceramic pottery in the kitchen and the glass Venetian overhead lamp in



the dining room reflect DeLauro's Italian heritage.

The dining room, an addition completed by earlier owners, also features a dining table and chairs designed for Ringo Starr, a tapestry from Lesotho, a South African country, and eggplant purple walls. At the top of the first staircase is a mural, a gift from the African National Congress. The back office reflects the political leanings and history of the house's owners. The middle room features a Frank Lloyd Wright overhead lamp and hunter green walls. At the top of the second staircase is a Nicaraguan weaving. The master bedroom is joined by a room-sized closet (with its own skylight) and a whimsical bathroom with colorful tiles and fixtures.

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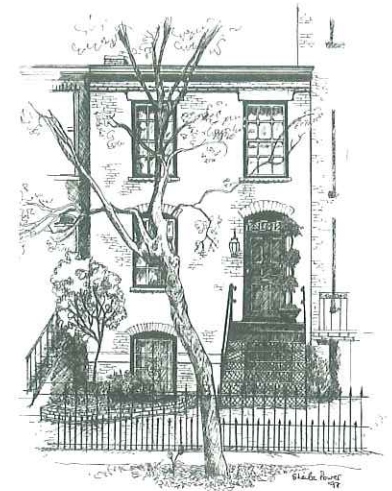
209 C STREET NE AND ADJOINING GARDEN
JOHN WEINFURTER

John Weinfurter moved to Capitol Hill from Adams Morgan fifteen years ago, and will proudly announce his preference for Hill living. After twenty years with Rep Joe Moakley (D-MA), Weinfurter's lifestyle typifies that which is familiar to many Hill residents—the comfortable village dweller moving in the close-knit circles of congressional politics that make Washington the “smallest city in the nation.” John rarely uses his car. His new job as president of the Congressional Economic Institute is two blocks away. Prime location is merely the first of many appealing characteristics of his home.

Built in the late 1800s, the house was originally one-room-deep, a dwelling to house a working class family. Its unadorned, two-story, common brick, flat front might have been home to one of hundreds of German immigrants who settled in the neighborhood during the last half of the nineteenth century.

Inside, John has updated the decor with both historic and contemporary design. The formal living room is centered around the hearth and its vintage mantle. The “covering clock” on the mantle belonged to Weinfurter's great-grandmother.

In the newer part of the house is a gourmet kitchen tucked into what was once a wide hallway. The kitchen and hall open into a soaring, light-filled two-story space with an upstairs balcony. John uses this great



room for dining and informal entertaining. Over another mantle he displays one of his favorite artworks by local artist Tatiana Kaupp. French doors lead to a patio with a fountain landscaped by Kevin Cordt. He and next-door-neighbor Daniel Carrigan have joined their backyards through a period iron gate to double the space for outdoor entertaining.

The upstairs master suite has a full bath and a den perched on the balcony overlooking the great room. The den is full of political memorabilia from John's long career on the Hill, including the signed lithograph by close friend Peter Max. The master bedroom's high ceiling mimics the house's original roofline, and provides wall space for John's print collection of Capitol domes, including another lithograph by Max.

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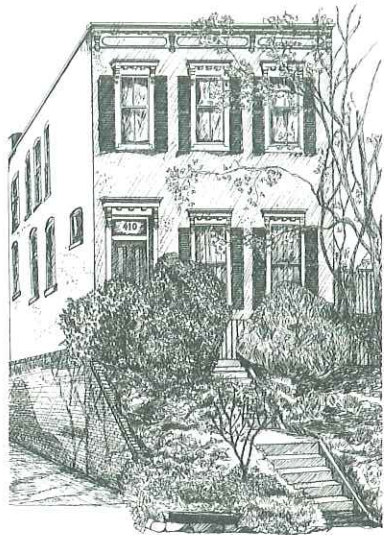
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With just a bit of imagination you might believe yourself to be in a country inn in the Blue Ridge mountains. This 1870s frame and brick house, stuccoed just after the turn of the century, was owned by the Walcott family for almost 100 years. Mr. Hooper purchased it in 1985, and a year later, purchased and reunited the adjacent property, which had originally been part of the Walcott holdings.

The warm, mellow tones of the original heart-pine flooring are carried throughout the house and help set the stage for an overall feeling of tranquility, aesthetic sensibility, and gracious informality. In the parlor you see a fine oak roll-top desk and leaded glass bookcase combined with fascinating photos and

memorabilia of his career as a physicist. Mr. Hooper contributed to NASA space programs for more than 30 years, beginning in the early 1960s. The owner has combined a mix of contemporary and antique furnishings with an interesting collection of art. Throughout the main level one notices the carefully selected pieces of art displayed with the welded steel sculptures that Mr. Hooper himself created.

In the dining room, actually underneath it, is the wine cellar. Mr. Hooper found this old root cellar spider web infested, dark and dirt filled. He spent days hauling buckets of dirt and debris before he found the brick floor.

There are two bedrooms upstairs with genuine rope beds (which take almost 200 feet of rope each). The real world emerges only briefly in the back office, which hosts two computers used for designing the website for this year's house tour.

Mr. Hooper's garden is unique among Hill greenspaces. Its elevation, fencing, and design provides a delightfully secluded atmosphere. The garden has a wandering brick path, 100-plus specimens of plants, shrubs, and trees, and a grand Southern magnolia arching over the brick terrace. The magnolia shades the patio and invites romantic dining under its luxurious branches. This garden has been featured in the *Hill Rag* and the *Washington Post*.



Maryland Avenue is one of the Hill's grandest. The houses on the 600 block were all built in 1892. For many years this part of the avenue was actually known as "Doctors Row." The horse stables that served these houses still stands at the end of the block, and is now awaiting renovation. The home was still a boardinghouse when the Dixons purchased it. Over the years they have transformed the house, restoring original as well as adding new detail. Mrs. Dixon collects frogs and old linens and you'll see both displayed. Notice the doorbell as you enter.

Throughout the house handsome antiques mix with reproductions and rich fabrics for an elegant comfortable feel. Mrs. Dixon believes the mantel in the living room takes its oak leaf motif from the oak trees that are planted all along Maryland Avenue. The beautiful arched windows and the shutters are original to the house. The two chairs along the stair wall are museum-quality original Hepplewhite pieces.

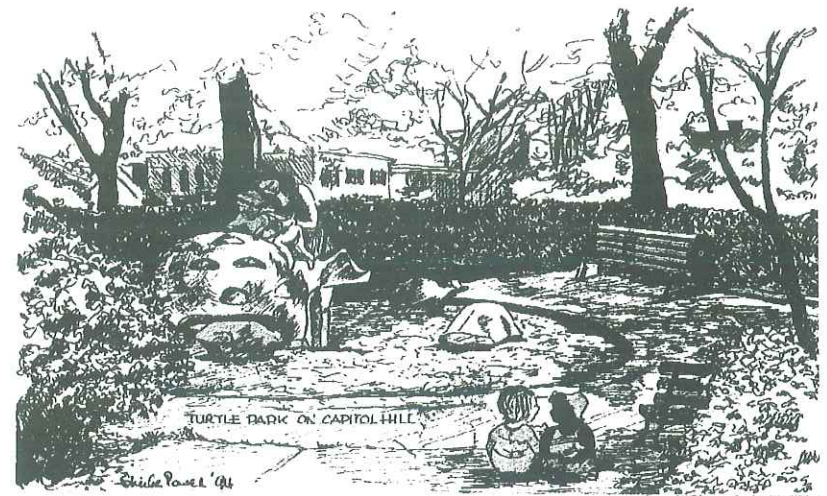
Some of the best furnishings in the house are inherited from Mr. Dixon's grandmother from Raleigh, North Carolina. One of them is the mahogany sideboard in the dining room. Originally a secretary, it now stores china and some of Mrs. Dixon's fine linen collection. The bright gourmet kitchen leads to the private garden where the family

spends much of their time in warm weather. Here an amusing collection of frogs rests among azaleas and other shrubbery. Also in the kitchen is the original secondary, or "servants" stairway.

The master bed and bath are luxurious and pampering. The bed is also from Mr. Dixon's family. Also on this floor, are the children's bedrooms which share a charming ivy-motif bath. Both children's bedrooms incorporate family pieces with other modern pieces.

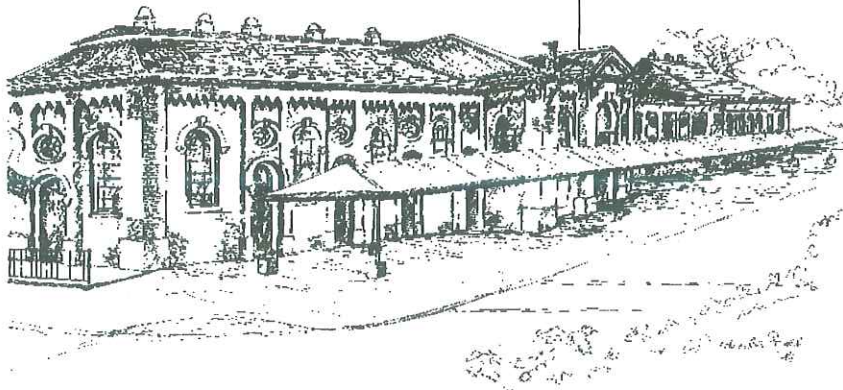
The third floor hosts the family room and guest-suite. Again, Mrs. Dixon's flair for combining good woods and beautiful fabrics has created a refined hideaway for family and friends.

CAPITOL HILL - OUR NATION'S NEIGHBORHOOD



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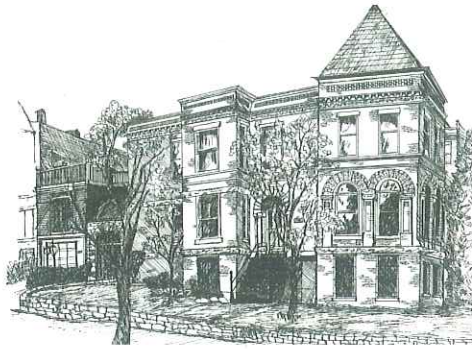
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150 TWELFTH STREET NE
TONY McDONALD & JOHN EVERETT

7.



Two years ago, Tony MacDonald and John Everett moved to their handsome turn-of-the-century rowhouse for its compelling weave of new craftsmanship with original historic fabric. The home's prominent tower with Romanesque round-arched, rough-hewn stone windows punctuates an intact seven-house row all built by the same builder. As the corner building, the principal entrance is on the broad Twelfth Street facade. A low, arched entrance portal flanked by engaged Romanesque columns, stringcourses, lintels, and windowsills all use the noble undressed stone in vogue at the close of the nineteenth century.

The raised basement story provides for a secondary entrance at street-level to the ground floor mother-in-law suite and first floor rooms above—arranged one room deep the full length of the house. This “side door,” surmounted by a huge arched window mimicking that of the principal entrance, leads into

an ample light-filled stair hall with a chestnut and oak staircase, and a ceiling of exposed rafters. New plaster bracketed egg-and-dart cornices grace the hall and most of the house's principal rooms. A pair of Guatemalan wooden horses flank the staircase. Works by the owners' favorite local artist, Charma Lee

Edmonds, are displayed on the first floor landing. The den and kitchen are at opposite ends of the landing. The den is arranged with Arts and Crafts style furniture. A fine Art Nouveau armoire houses the television.

Through the kitchen are the home's formal stair hall, foyer, and living room. The great staircase, also constructed of chestnut and oak, creates a wide, open foyer which Tony and John use as a dining area. The living room, with its corner fireplace is filled with light from the tower's large arched windows. It has a collection of streamlined moderne chairs, settees, and a sofa and artwork by Mary Carly, Scott Severson, and Charma Lee Edmonds.

Upstairs, Tony and John relocated the master bedroom to its original place at the front of the house. The remodeled master bedroom is now a library with a full Jacuzzi bath and wet bar. Through French doors off the library is a stunning deck where the owners do most of their entertaining.

8.

144 TWELFTH STREET SE
JOE & CONNIE CITRO



The Citros' passions for American history, antiques, books, and the city of Washington are reflected in this Edwardian house, which was built in 1909. The original layout of the first floor was altered by the previous occupant, an employee at the Navy Yard, who raised three children in the house. Solid walls and conventional square doorways existed where the archways separating the hallway and the living room, as well as the hallway and the dining room, now stand. A gas fireplace once stood in the corner of the living room, but was removed by the current owners to maximize space.

A professor of U.S. and Civil War history at a local college, one of the owners has collected numerous prints of Washington, DC, and Charleston, South Carolina. Many of the 19th century furnishings were collected at various Washington antique stores.

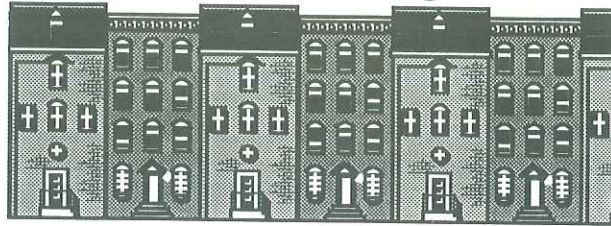
The 1835 grandfather clock in the living room has been in the owner's family for generations. The prints over the living room sofa depict Washington's warrior statuary. In the dining room, the owners added the French doors and balcony as one of their first renovation projects in the 1970s.

In the late 1980s, the owners undertook an extensive renovation of the kitchen and the back of the house. Note the original tin ceiling

painted pink to reflect the owner's collection of pink depression glass displayed in the cabinets. Off the kitchen, the back room used to be an unheated back porch, which the owners used for storage. Now it serves as an office and offers more shelf space for the owners expansive library.

When ascending the stairs to the second floor, note the 1890s crazy quilt on the wall. It is a family heirloom and has several hand-painted squares. Voracious readers, the Citro's removed a fireplace in the master bedroom to make more space for books. More touches from Washington, Charleston, and the Civil War can be found throughout the upstairs.

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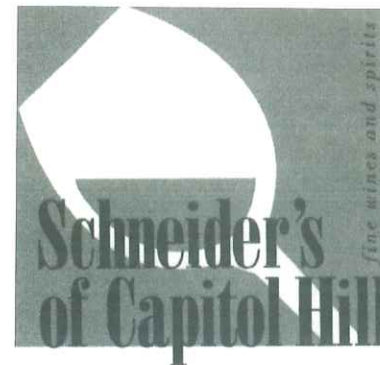


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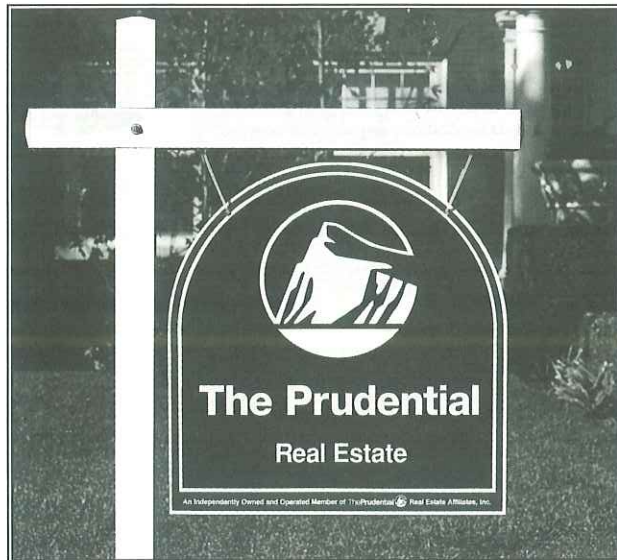


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9.

806 D STREET SE
 MAUREEN O'BRIEN & JEFFREY SANDMANN

One is an artist and one a self-described Bob Villa wannabe. Both have worked to transform this former 1896 boardinghouse and doctor's office into an astonishing three levels (plus basement studio) of textured hues and quixotic collections. Maureen O'Brien (the artist), her husband, Jeffrey Sandmann, and their three children have spent three years renovating their home.

Precious reminders of the original house, however, are everywhere. In the living and dining room, the curious "paintings" over the fireplaces are original plaster uncovered when mirrors were removed. In the dining room, the original basement doors hang like portraits. On the dining room table is a wooden trough, found discarded in the house. Virtually every piece in the house is a "find" or an inheritance. In the living room, the stacked suitcases are about 60 years old, inherited from a great-great aunt. Over the doorway is a collection of maple syrup cans. The lamps are made from fire extinguishers. Maureen says her relatives "never throw anything out without checking with me."

Their zeal for collecting is especially evident in the hallway leading to the kitchen and in the "potting shed" bathroom. One of two original front doors hangs to the left of the kitchen entrance. The kitchen boasts a collection of blue glass and a display of old game



boards. The middle bedroom on the second floor includes the other original front door and turn of the century "fake" extensions for a mantelpiece, uncovered in the renovation. This bedroom also features a gallery wall of Maureen's work.

Collections fill the family room—look for the doorknobs, the chairs, and the kit doll house from the Smithsonian with 2,000 separate pieces. The oriental carpet on the stairs to the third floor was painted by Maureen. A framed remnant of the house's original wallpaper hangs here. On the top floor, a whimsical room with "pureed carrot" walls belongs to their 8-year-old son. Along the hallway walls are more of the owner's artworks. Don't miss the elegant front bedroom with the deep bay and the special cut-outs.

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10.

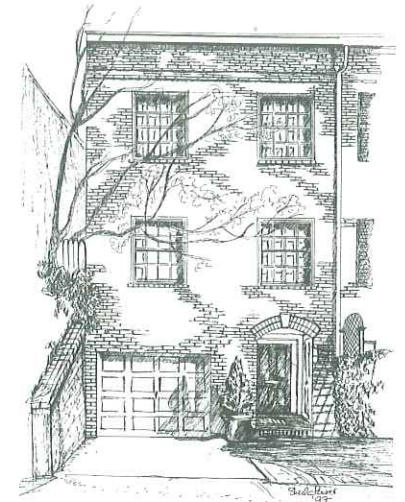
408 FOURTH STREET SE
 ROBERT SCANLAN & DICK PINNELL

This three-story brick row house is one of a group of five built in the early 1960s. Its spacious rooms serve as a showcase for the owners' extensive collection of contemporary art that includes works by Stella, Frankenthaler, Oldenburg, Kelly, Row, Therrien, and Spence, as well as furniture designed by architects Frank Gehry, Philippe Starck, and Eero Saarinen, the designer of Dulles Airport. The first pieces visitors encounter are the bent wooden chair in the entryway designed by Gehry and a series of prints by Andrew Spence.

The house was renovated in 1984, and a first floor efficiency apartment was converted into a family room. Above the fireplace is a print titled "David's Pool" by Howard Hodgkin. On either side of the entertainment center are prints by David Row. The garden and covered, tiered deck with its distinctive classical column, which were part of the 1984 renovation of the house, have been featured in *Southern Living* magazine.

Over the living room fireplace hangs a print titled "Australian Stone" by Robert Motherwell, perhaps the most important piece in the house. Along the opposite wall are leather and wood chairs and a glass console designed by Philippe Starck. Claes Oldenburg's cardboard pretzels are on the living room shelves next to the fireplace.

Through the alley kitchen is the dining room which features a



Queen Anne reproduction table and chairs, in contrast with the room's contemporary light fixture and art. There is a black and white engraving by Frank Stella and a print by Helen Frankenthaler titled "Spoleto Festival."

Upstairs the master bedroom overlooks the garden. In the front of the house on this floor is the guest bedroom. Pinnell, an architect, has been acquiring art since the 1960s, and the pop-art cut-out prints in this room by Carl Gerstner are among the oldest pieces in his collection. Pinnell believes this house, similar in appearance to many others on the Hill, provides the perfect backdrop for his art collection. The building's simplicity allows the art to be the real star. "In a house like this, what you put in it really makes the difference," says Pinnell.

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