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## Our Past, Present and Future - Historic Preservation to LEED Certification

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# The Preservation of a Victorian Gem

A beautiful Victorian home, once the centerpiece of a small Oregon farming community, sat untouched for over 30 years in the small town of St. Paul. Purchased by the newly formed Historical Society in the 1970's, the home was slated for preservation but the funding never came to fruition. In 2004, the home was purchased by a family whose father helped found the Historical Society. They wanted to make a contribution to their community, and had dreams of restoring the home back to its original 1890's beauty in tribute to their father. The family had never owned an historic home nor had they ever participated in such a restoration project. Although they did not know a lot about the process, they wanted to honor the house's history, architecture, and design.

A local interior designer referred the family to ASID members, CJ Hurley Century Arts. **Barbara Pierce** and **CJ Hurley** are most known for their work in Arts & Crafts architecture, but are well versed and experienced in the Victorian Era as well. They were first called to the home as consultants in the summer of 2005. More than two and one half years later, the home was completed and sits once again as the gem of St. Paul. For CJ Hurley Century Arts, the project began with a visit to St. Paul to meet their new clients and examine the house. Barbara and CJ educated the family on the history of the home, what parts of the house could be salvaged, and what needed to be replaced. For missing architectural details, they provided designs that stayed true to the historical period and design of the house. They worked closely with the homeowners and collaborated with the contractors to ensure that they stayed true to their personal preservation ethic. Any materials that could not be used for their original purpose were saved for reuse in other areas of the home. For example, the exterior siding was not salvageable for its original use but when it was milled down, it made a beautiful wainscoting for the kitchen. The contractors and homeowners were inspired by this notion of reuse and it became a common theme throughout the project even with the smallest of items.

"We are not experts in contemporary green building and sustainability practices," says Barbara. "We are very much preservationists. The reality is that green building starts with preservation; the greenest building is the one you save. It is always our goal to educate our clients on the history and beauty of the original materials in their old house. We want to keep everything possible out of the landfill and maintain the authenticity of the home. The old woods with their dings and dents and signs of life give character and relevance to a home."

The preservation and restoration project of the entire interior and exterior of the house took place over two and one half years, and was made possible with a small and dedicated team. Barbara and CJ contributed to every detail important to the authenticity: color, wallpaper, roofing, original linocrusta from England, built-in's, leaded glass, hardware, etc. They collaborated with the kitchen team to ensure the modern functional needs did not take away from original details. When needed, CJ was onsite hand-painting the decorative finishes and polychroming the interior trim. He also designed all of the interior and exterior decorative details that were missing when the home was purchased in 2004.

The work and direction provided by CJ Hurley Century Arts ensured the home was transformed to be the jewel it is today. However, Barbara and CJ say it would not have been possible without incredible clients



Exterior- "Circa 1900 photo" above



Exterior- "Before" above and "After" below





*"Before" - Kitchen left, Drawing Room right and below. When the project began, the original wall coverings were found through layers of bad remodels.*



who were sensitive to every detail, and a contractor team who embraced the preservation ethic. "We were so lucky to be a part of this special project," says Barbara. "Everyone involved was a joy to work with. The contractors appreciated our input and took the historic details seriously. They always called with questions and wouldn't sacrifice anything even if it meant adjusting their schedule. The painters followed every detail we specified and were proud to do all of the exterior handwork that was required. Such dedicated attention to authentic detail rarely happens today and makes this home an extraordinary place." Additionally, Barbara and CJ were careful to refer and bring in ASID and NWSID members when the project called for other resources such as rugs, window coverings, roller shades, etc.

As a special collaboration of uniting the old with the new, CJ and Barbara suggested to their clients the creation of heirloom shadow box frames to commemorate the project. From the beginning, they encouraged the clients to keep samples of every possible original item from the home. The clients embraced the idea and there was a wealth of material for the heirloom boxes. With the help of CJ Hurley Century Arts historic preservation intern and a local framing specialist, beautiful shadow boxes were made from materials salvaged from the house. The shadow boxes contain collages of the original unusable hinges, stained glass, newspaper clippings about the home, new and old wallpaper samples, and many memories. The two heirloom boxes now hang in the completed home to commemorate the transformation and remind the family of their long journey on the road to preservation.

*About CJ Hurley Century Arts: CJ Hurley Century Arts is a small studio operated by husband and wife team, CJ Hurley and Barbara Pierce. They are recognized nationally for their dedication to the beauty, the quality and the traditions of the international*





Gable Detail - Photo above shows that the gable ornament which rotted long ago was missing for decades. Below shows the beauty and relevance of such details when they are remade with care.

"Design Details" - Authentic reproduction shower head left, Period appropriate built-in kitchen cabinet designed by CJ center, CJ's custom designed and hand-built screen doors right.



Drawing Room - In process. CJ hand-painting the Lincrusta.



Drawing Room - Completed, with a view into the master bedroom.



Parlor - Completed, with authentic papers, restored lighting, and Scottish Lace.

architectural Reform Movements of 1850-1950. They are a resource to Interior Designers and Architects and have a talent for developing heirloom quality projects that are deeply meaningful and rich with historical integrity. CJ Hurley Century Arts specializes in custom

designed, hand-painted interiors, design and color consultation for historic homes, and fine art. CJ is one of 50 Roycroft Renaissance Artisans in the country, and the only one on the west coast. For more information, call (503) 234-4167 or visit [www.cjhurley.com](http://www.cjhurley.com).