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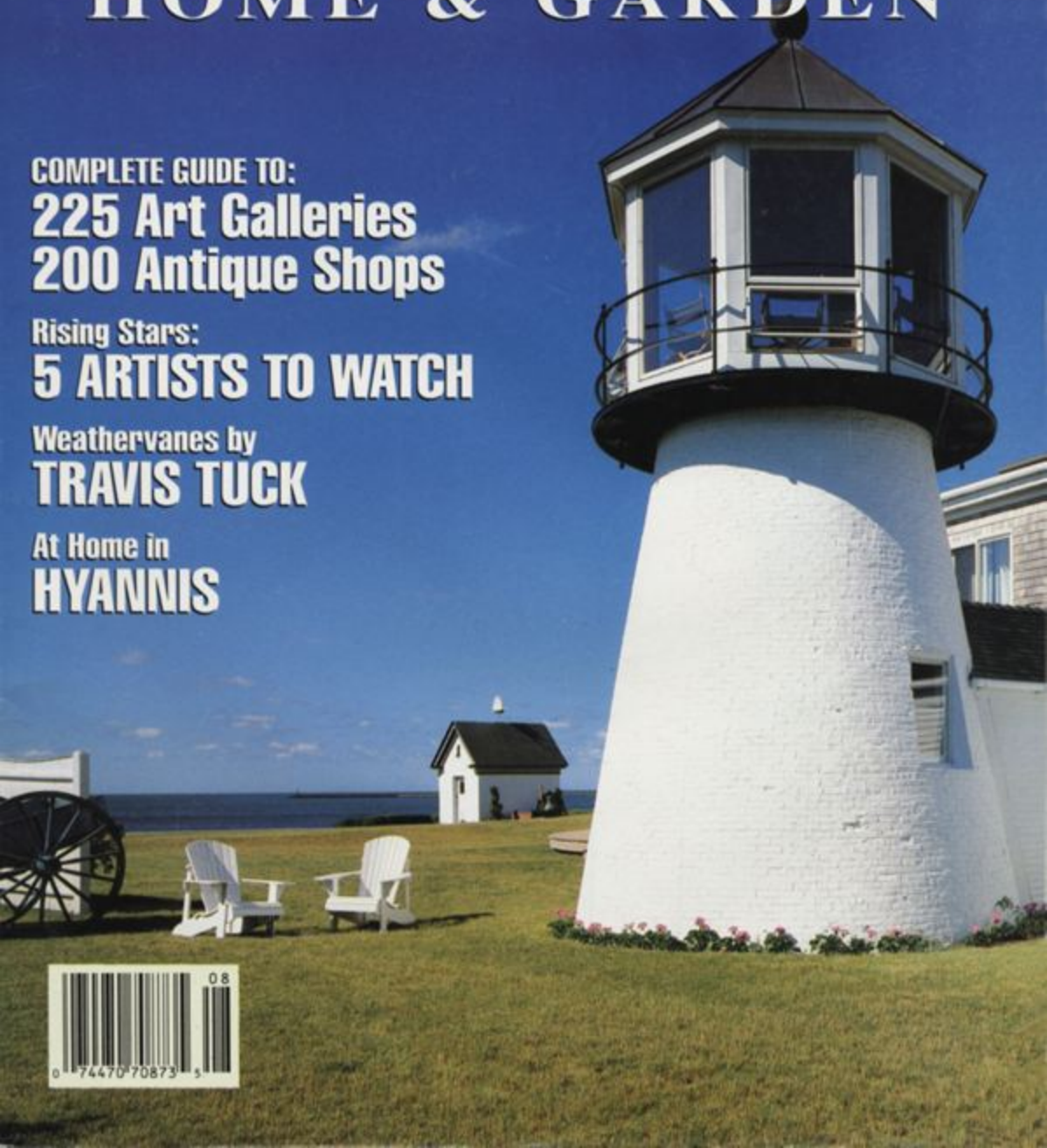
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LIVING WITH ANTIQUES

BY ELISA WOOD

Photography by Patrick Wiseman

The first thing Alan Granby sees when he opens his eyes in the morning are 19th-century schooners. Like ghosts, they seem to have sailed through time and emerged in the waters of 20th-century Hyannis.

The ships are not a dream, but an illusion Granby and Janice Hyland have created in their historic seaside home on a bluff overlooking Nantucket Sound. The schooners are antique models that sit atop a beam in front of a water view window. From the bed, the beam is hidden, so the ships appear to be floating on distant waves.

The display is just one example of the couple's all-consuming devotion to maritime culture and antiques. Internationally known for their collec-

tion, they have spent the last several years remodeling their house to complement their aged treasures.

The couple, who both hold doctorates in communications from Boston University, can't remember where it all began. He had always loved collecting; she loved the sea. But their lives took a major turn one day about seven years ago when he came home (they then lived in an antique captain's house on Route 6A) and said, "I think you'd better sit down and have a drink. I have to tell you what I bought today."

Janice didn't understand. He was always buying something for his collection. What was so special about this purchase?

"I bought a lighthouse," he said.

"You mean you bought a model of a lighthouse," she said. "Why would you do that?"

"Because it's the biggest marine antique that I don't have," he confessed.

He had bought not only a lighthouse but also an adjoining two-story, wood-frame keeper's house on nearly an acre of land where they could live. The next day Janice went to see it. She had one word for the house — "rotten."

"Every beam was gone. Joists were gone. I fell through the floor twice. Every single carpet was the ugliest gold you've ever seen. All the bathrooms were blue with gold speckles. All of the closets had wallpaper with skeletons on it," she said. "You know, skeletons in the closet."

(Right) The Great Room of the renovated keeper's house is filled with antiques from floor to ceiling. A 19th-century pine blanket chest anchors the room, while a 6ft., gold leafed beehive billet-head (c. 1860) from a ship's prow and a telescope made by James Robson in London (c. 1860) stand proudly. Note the schooner in the rafters.

**A renovated lighthouse
and adjoining keeper's house
are home to a magnificent collection
of maritime antiques and artifacts.**





Spiral staircase was designed and built by local artist Phil Pieper. Red oak steps wind around the imitation ship's mast fashioned from cherry. At left are two Wallace Nutting braceback Windsor chairs.



The lighthouse wasn't much better. It had lost its lens room years before only to become a partying hide-out for neighborhood teen-agers. But, oh, the view. The view was magnificent and the history so rich, Janice couldn't resist.

Known as South Hyannis Light, the lighthouse was built in 1849 as a range light for vessels carrying coal and wood into the then busy port at the end of Sea Street Beach. The lighthouse was decommissioned in 1929, probably because of rum running. After that it had a series of owners, and at one point the keeper's house was left unoccupied and unheated for 17 years.

Janice and Alan spent two years making major structural renovations to the house. In 1987, they moved in.

Now the house can be described as a museum with all the comforts of home — or a home with all the intrigue of a museum. Many of the larger antiques "live" in a great room, which bustles with at least a dozen people on any given day — designers, artists, carpenters, collectors, historians, neighbors and friends.

Phil Pieper is often among the crowd. The owner of Pieper Gallery on Route 6A in Dennis, he is the aesthetic mastermind behind many of the house's more unusual touches. Trained as a carpenter by his grandfather and as an artist/sculptor in school, Pieper had a hand in designing, decorating or rebuilding almost every nook and cranny in the house. He designed the lens room on top of the lighthouse, built displays for the antiques, constructed a wooden staircase that winds around an imitation ship's mast, restored

an antique hobby horse and designed an oversized compass rose in the center of the round deck facing the sea. And those are just a few of his projects.

"Whatever we need, we know Phil can do it," Janice said.

One of his most challenging tasks was a dark, comfortable pub-like room, tucked to one side of the house. The couple asked Phil to install a set of antique cherry cabinets and panels that had been in the 19th-century Clough and Shackleby drug store on Boston's Beacon Hill. It was no simple job. The cabinets were six inches taller than the ceiling and there were too few panels to go around. Alan described the project as "a big jigsaw puzzle."

Undaunted, Phil went to work. He carefully disassembled, trimmed and reassembled, without disturbing the intricate carvings and moldings. The cabinets had been painted and stripped to a chalky uneven white. So he stained and refinished them, then buffed every plane and crevice with pumice to create a low gloss shine. To fill in the empty walls, he built more cabinets and panels, carefully mimicking the originals. Now he can't remember which are which. The owners can't tell the difference either.

As a final touch, he created a collage (his specialty) out of old papers, cards and bills that he found in the cabinet drawers. It hangs at the room's entrance.

Working on the house has influenced his own artwork. He finds himself creating "almost forgeries of antiques. I'll see things here and I'll say, 'Now there's an interesting concept.' And I'll use it in a collage."

Sometimes the intricacy

and elegance of the antiques intimidate him, particularly when he's asked to create stands for delicate, big wheel bicycles and finely crafted ship models. "It's a lot to live up to," he said.

His goal is to create displays that complement the antiques without overwhelming them. The owners have made it clear that the house is subservient to the antiques and not the other way around. They ripped a fireplace mantel out five times because it wasn't quite right as backdrop to a prized half hull.

Pieper is currently creating a carousel scene of plywood horses, with the help of his wife Karen Pieper, a painter. The horses are attached to the walls so that they "run" in a circle around the top of the spiral staircase. They are painted in bold reds and blues, a shocking splash of color compared to the sedate drugstore paneling below.

Such incongruities might make some designers flinch, but Janice takes pride in giving each room its own character. One bathroom has richly covered fabric walls, a guest bathroom is painted in primitive lighthouse scenes, and the master bath looks like an English country garden with a speckled floor that resembles beach sand. The designs may be disparate, yet everything has been executed with deep thought.

For example, the guest bathroom, painted by Mindy Jackson-Jeffreys of Vermont, features eight lighthouses whose histories intertwine with South Hyannis Light. "We felt it was very important for people who come here to have some feeling for the history of lighthouses on the Cape," Janice said.

While the guest bath is

a tribute to the house's museum flavor, the master bathroom is a reminder that the house is also a home. Janice had the walls painted with fountains and greenery simply because "when I'm sitting in my Jacuzzi I wanted to be able to look out and feel like I'm in an English garden."

But the house's most intriguing feature is the great room and its adjoining library, filled with so many artifacts it's possible to spend hours exploring.

Ship figureheads and billetheads (figureheads without the human face) stand guard over the water view room. There is also a 19th-century big wheel bicycle, a pre-revolutionary back staff (predecessor to the sexton) made of apple wood and box wood, an 18th-century English signal cannon, an early 19th-century pine blanket chest, a wet plate Excelsior camera circa 1874, a late 19th-century English carousel horse, an 18th-century English spyglass and much more.

The room has a few 20th-century surprises, too. An American blanket chest that appears to be an antique is, in fact, a reproduction out of which rises a television set at the push of a button.

One of the couple's most coveted prizes is a half Fresnel lens, attached to the balcony. Extremely rare, the lenses are almost impossible to purchase now because the government dumped many in the ocean when it decommissioned the lighthouses. Those that remain are in government storage or on loan to private institutions. The couple found the lens in San Francisco. On their return flight they convinced the pilot to store it in his cockpit, the only place





In the dark, comfortable study tucked to one side of the house Phil Pieper installed antique cherry cabinets from a 19th-century drug store on Beacon Hill in Boston. The

American baby carriage with original paint dates to 1880. In the window sits a model (c. 1890) of the three-master *Minot's Light*.

that it fit safely.

Their latest project, just completed in June, was a circular deck off the great room. It was a "hair-splitting" job, Alan said. If the measurements had been just 1/16th of an inch off, the boards would not have lined up evenly. The builder, Scott Horgan of D. Scott Horgan Renovation in Hyannis, said he "specializes in challenges."

Horgan spent four weeks building the redwood deck, which measures 38 ft. across. The owners said they wanted the nails hidden so he used narrow stainless steel ones that won't bleed into the wood. He took extra care in anchoring the deck to safeguard it in case of a hurricane. He's convinced now that a storm may take the house, but it won't take the deck.

Embedded in the center of the deck is the copper and brass compass rose designed by Pieper. Before placing it, Pieper held a real compass over the spot to be sure his oversized reproduction pointed the right way.

The couple's collection has become more than just a personal enjoyment. Their extensive knowledge has led private collectors and institutions to hire them as research consultants. Recently, the U.S. Coast Guard Academy asked them to write a report on its antique maritime holdings and to provide advice on their care.

"Right from the beginning of collecting we were buying more books than artifacts. Between the books and visiting maritime museums in New England, we developed an academic background in the field of maritime artifacts," Alan said. "Part of building the house was to have a facility where we could display and maintain the collection, as well

as have a research library."

While the couple are more than happy to provide insight into other people's collections, they also welcome information on their own, which is one reason why they are so open to visitors.

"People come all the time to visit. They are constantly feeding us information about the history of the lighthouse and coal pier and other tidbits of information. They bring photos and other memorabilia that sheds new light on this place," Janice said.

(Below) White Adirondack chairs beckon guests to enjoy the just completed, circular redwood deck that overlooks Nantucket Sound. The copper and brass compass rose designed by Phil Pieper measures 8 feet in diameter.





The couple are quick to point out that they want the antiques to be enjoyed. None are in glass cases.

"We don't nursemaid the house because of the antiques," Janice explained. "We've had parties with 175 people. We in no way baby the antiques. They are part of our existence."

"It's very fortunate that we've had no losses or breaks," Alan added. "People respect the place."

What is it like living around so many antiques? Looking startled, Alan responds: "I can't imagine living without them."

Elisa Wood is a contributing writer.

(Above) "Rotten" is how Janice Hyland described the keeper's house when she first saw it in 1985. Two years and many renovations later, she and Alan Granby moved in. The old South Hyannis Light, built in 1849, is "the biggest marine antique" Alan owns.