



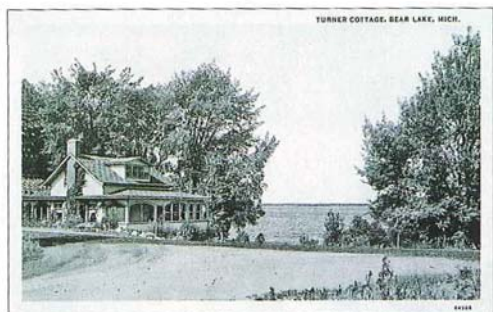
Coming Home to America



"OUR ARCHITECTURE," wrote Louis Sullivan, "reflects us, as truly as a mirror." If so, we are a nation that values unshowy style, tried-and-true comforts. Today's architects have learned that nothing suits Americans better than our own regional styles—bungalow, gingerbread, Greek Revival—brought boldly into the future. Houses based on tradition help us put down roots and, like mirrors, enable us to see ourselves more clearly.

Postcards courtesy of Lake County Museum (Illinois), Curt Teich Postcard Archives





A Prairie Home Solution

Renovating a lakeside bungalow, a young architect makes a good American thing even better

UNPRETENTIOUS COMFORT: Lake Michigan's old summer cottages offered it in abundance. Asked to renovate one of these charming bungalows of the Twenties,

Chicago architect Peter Landon saw a chance to indulge his Arts and Crafts affinities while eliminating the sun-dodging details of the past. Turning a screened porch into a welcoming entry (below), and adding large windows with grids inspired by the house's coffered ceilings (right), Landon enhanced its basic shapes and rural flavor, while gently merging past and present. With this renovation, Landon didn't just preserve a classic—he improved it.

Produced by Newell Turner and Victoria Lautman; Written by Victoria Lautman; Architecture by Peter Landon; Photographs by John Hall

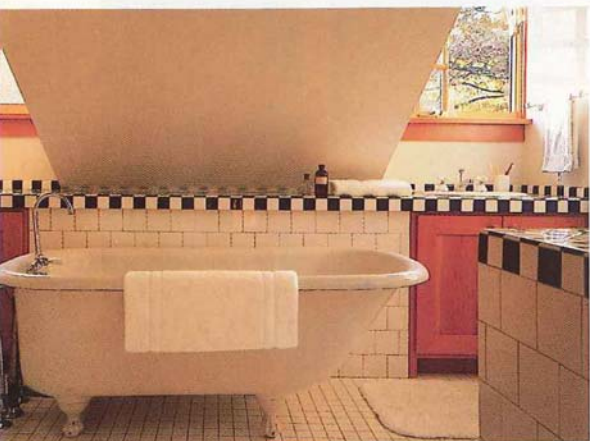




WHEN PETER LANDON first saw the Michigan cottage—the weekend retreat of a Chicago couple and their young child (and one on the way)—it was a dark, airless place with tiny windows, he recalls. The architect set out to make the cottage as enjoyable to live in as any new house. By carving a notch into the back of the building, he created a dining room (right) with three exposures—an eating porch that's comfortable in every season. The pyramidal ceiling adds drama; the paneling gives the room warmth. "Everything I added is very straightforward," says Landon, 41, who worked as a carpenter before becoming an architect. That experience shows in his respect for natural materials and careful construction. See *Resources*







TILING AN under-the-eaves bathroom (above) was Landon's way of using craft to add visual interest to an awkward space. "Everyone's bumped their heads on that obstruction," the architect says with a laugh. "But

there's something so charming about the room, it doesn't matter." Landon added large windows and a balcony to the second story (top), turning a once-dark attic space into a light-filled master bedroom. *See Resources*

"This isn't nostalgia," says Landon. "It's reality. People still want to live this way today"

THOUGH THE HOUSE RETAINS its vintage charm, Landon's renovation was extensive. To the rear facade (above), he added so many windows that the asphalt-

shingled roof seems perched on panes of glass. The deck, where patio furniture soaks up sunlight, replaced a claustrophobic porch. Inside, the architect used a system of transoms and interior windows (right) to carry light to every room. But Landon, a Chicago native who once traveled cross-country photographing the vernacular architecture of the prairies, lets the house's humble origins shine through. The reason: He followed lessons he learned on his road trip, as well as from California Arts and Crafts apostles Greene and Greene. "The embellishment is the construction," says Landon of his approach. "It's all natural, clearly expressed, uncluttered." Like the cottage itself, Landon's love of honest gestures is a relic of the past worth saving.

