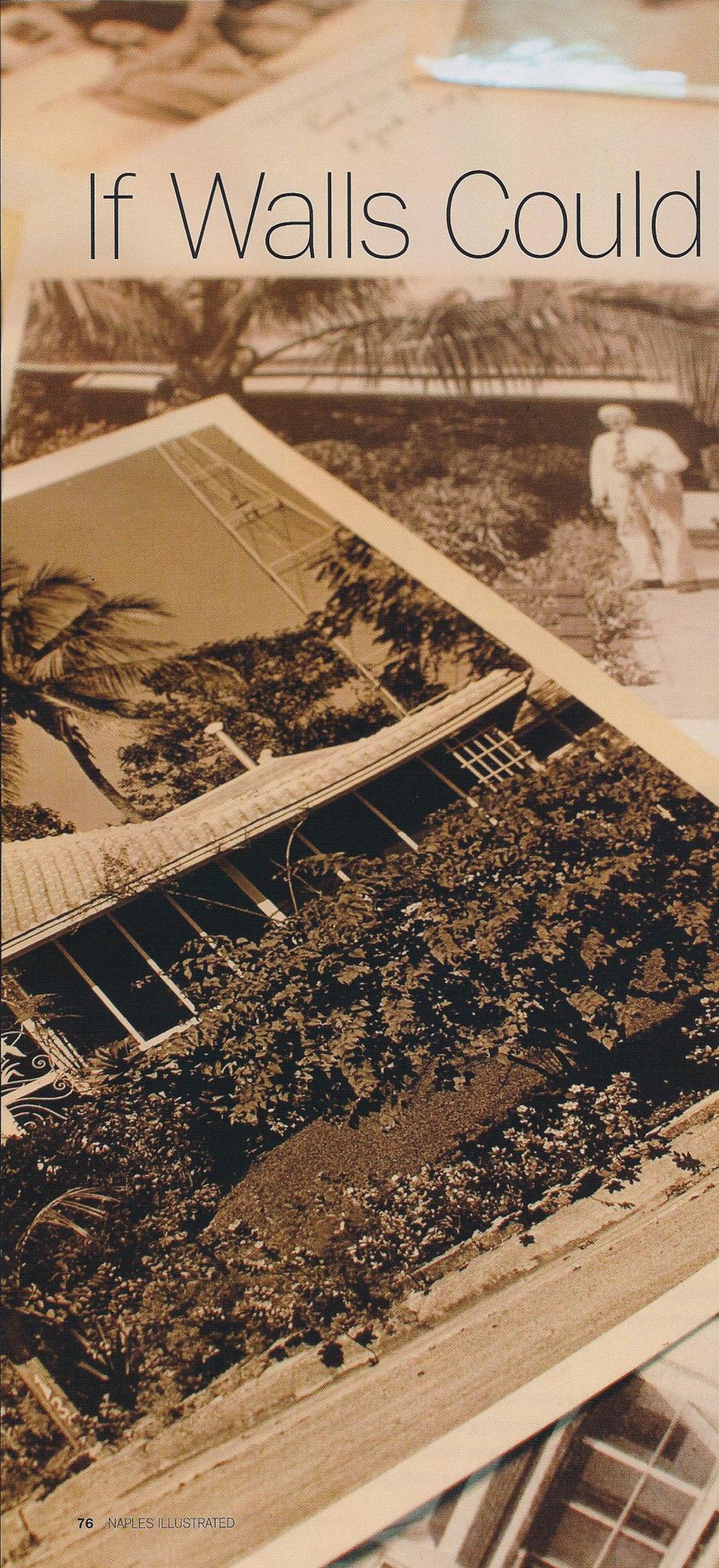


# If Walls Could Talk

DAVID AND JUDY BISHOP RESPECT THE VOICES OF THE PAST, EVEN AS THEY MAKE A HISTORIC OLD NAPLES HOME THEIR OWN.

BY KATHY BECKER

PHOTOGRAPHY BY JERRY RABINOWITZ





David and Judy Bishop honored the past of their historic cottage while making it modern, adding a large outdoor room where a patio was believed to have been, and creating more space in former porches. Hurricane windows help ensure the home's future survival.

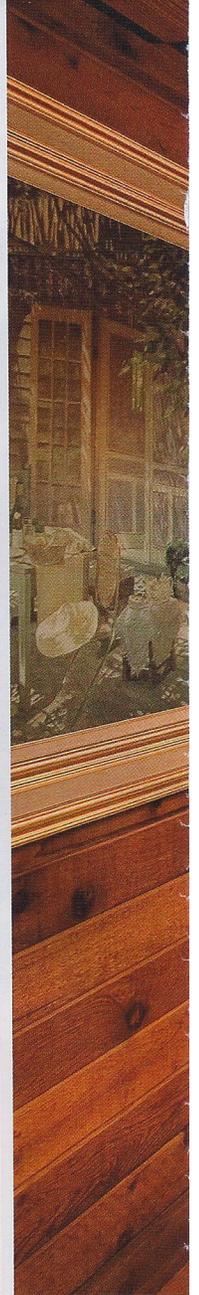
David Bishop has discovered that the story of his renovated historic home cannot be told without exploring the lives of the people who once lived there.

When he purchased his circa 1912 Old Naples cottage, however, he wasn't looking to save a house or its history. After his wife, Judy, took him in 1997 to look at the run-down cottage with its wraparound porches, Bishop was ready to look elsewhere. Despite having renovated other properties, including a 12-room house in New Jersey and an old polo pony stable in Illinois, he couldn't see value in the Naples home other than the property.

"By the time we hit the front door, he was asking where else we'd look," Judy says. "I told him we were done. I never wanted to tear this house down."

David was more practical. "With flood regulations, I didn't think we could save it," he says.

Judy prevailed; they bought the property and continued to rent it out. In 1999, designers for the Naples Historical Society spiffed up the place for a historic home tour, which helped David see the home's charming potential. "They made it so I could like it," he says.

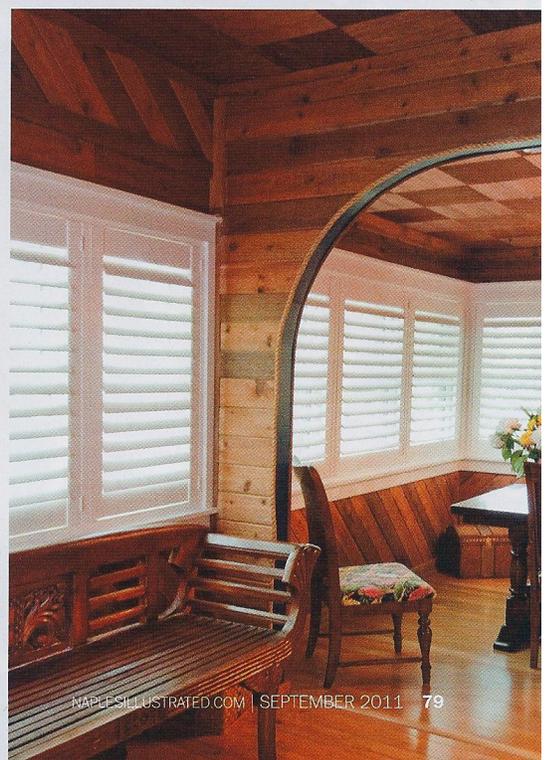
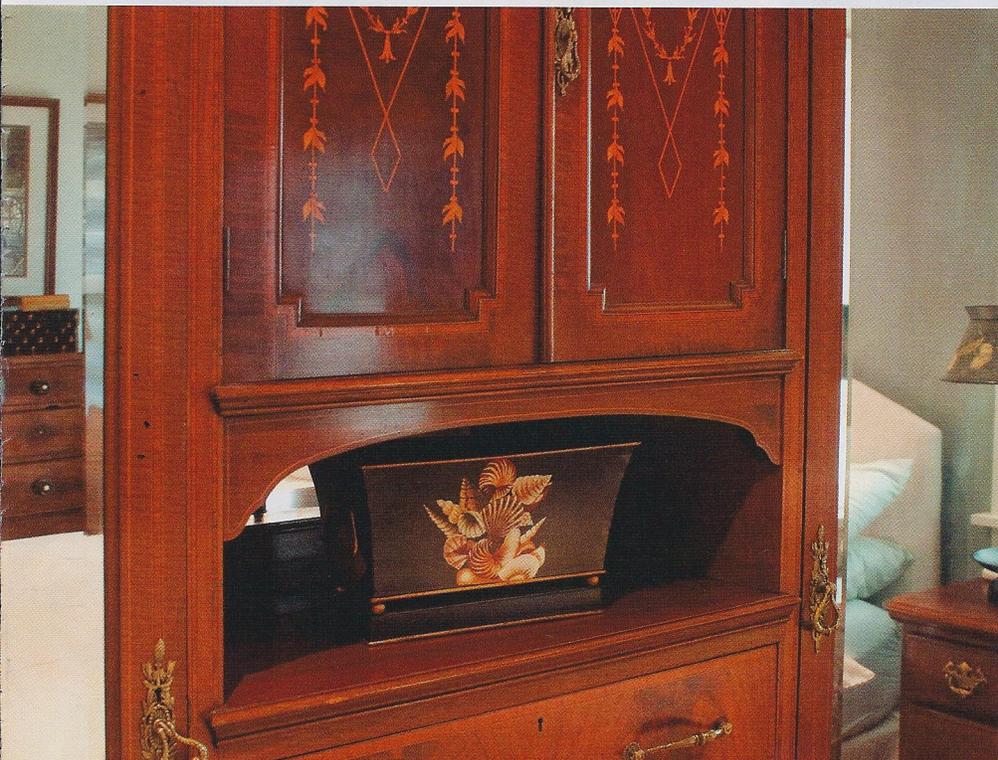


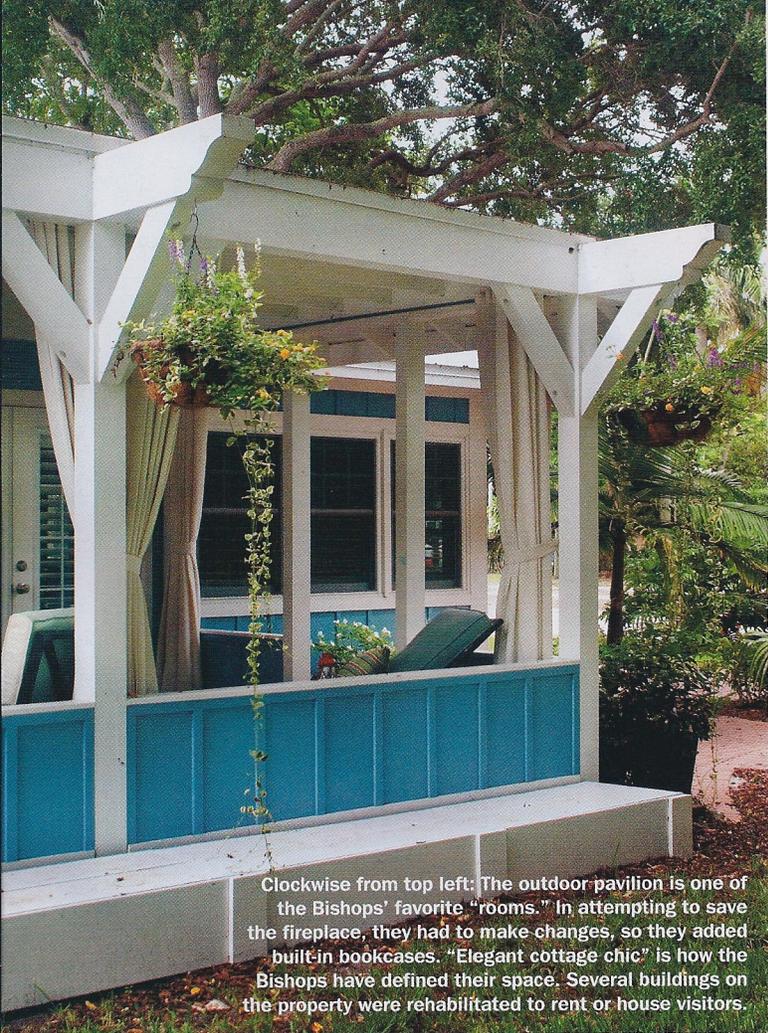
When they moved to Naples permanently two years ago, the Bishops started renovating. "It was an expensive project," he says. "Could we have built another house for what we spent? Probably."

Anyone who has embarked on restoring an old house runs across evidence of previous occupants and the sometimes-puzzling changes made to the home through the years. "It was definitely many 'remuddles,'" David quips. Solving some of the home's structural mysteries led to uncovering the history of its occupants.

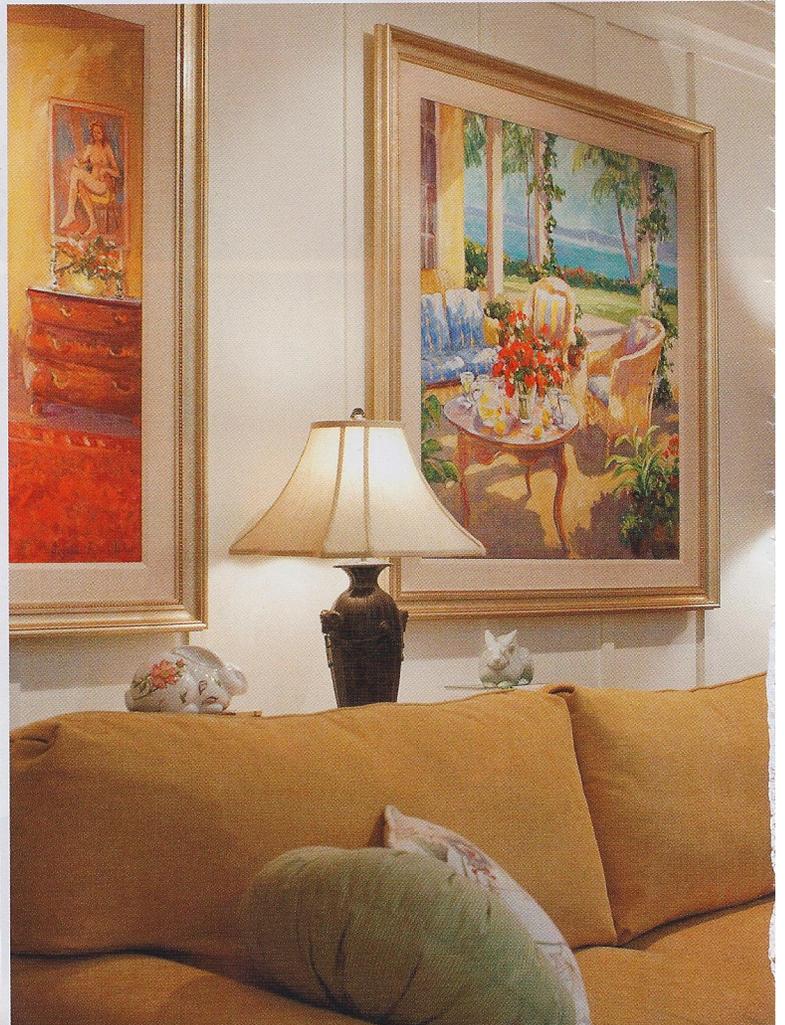
From 1919 to 1940, the home was owned by John "Uncle Jack" Hachmeister and known

**Clockwise from bottom left: Judy and David Bishop researched the history of their home and its occupants extensively. The modern kitchen was created in a former porch. Wood ceilings and walls not original to the cottage but added by other owners complement the Bishops' own dining table, perfect for large family gatherings. The dining room was also once a screened porch. The Bishops have added their own history to the home with their favorite pieces.**





Clockwise from top left: The outdoor pavilion is one of the Bishops' favorite "rooms." In attempting to save the fireplace, they had to make changes, so they added built-in bookcases. "Elegant cottage chic" is how the Bishops have defined their space. Several buildings on the property were rehabilitated to rent or house visitors.



as “Hack’s Shack.” Hachmeister was a retiree from Kentucky horse racing who chronicled early life in Naples through pictures. He also brought the first coconut palms to the seaside community. Hachmeister is credited with starting Naples on the path to beautiful landscaping and boulevards.

The Bishops honored him by creating a palm garden on the property, and by hosting a fundraising event for Naples Backyard History in February at their home. The Bishops added a covered porch on the side of the house, near where the home was thought to have a lanai in Hachmeister’s day.

Another interesting and somewhat mysterious resident was Mackworth Rees, who built a 50-foot radio tower on an addition known as the “Radio Shack.” The building thought to be his radio room is attached to the main cottage and serves as the Bishops’ guest quarters.

David is still researching Rees’ story, including his role in establishing the Collier County Public Library (where a meeting room bears his name), developing early car electronics for Ford and U.S. Navy radar equipment, and being one of the first to hear the news by amateur radio of Castro’s invasion of Cuba.

Even while honoring the home’s past, the Bishops knew ensuring its survival would provide an ongoing template reflecting the lives of all its owners, including modern residents.

Although the Bishops discovered that the original fireplace was enormous, a cracked chimney led them to reconfigure the fireplace and add bookcases. The Dade County heart pine floors were too hard to pull up and restore, but the home’s bead-board ceiling and board and batten paneling remain. Former porches became the modern-equipped kitchen and a bathroom, while the 1960s paneling in the foyer and dining room—although not part of the home when it was built—were preserved, and complement the Bishops’ European wooden dining table.

Some changes just had to be made. “We thought we could save the bathroom, but the floor was only being held up by the mesh of the tile,” David says. Hurricane impact-windows and extra siding were added to protect the home, they hope for another 100 years.

“We support the concept of keeping houses, and bringing them back,” Judy says.



“I knew I could make it functional,” David adds. “I didn’t really have the vision it would turn out so nice.”

And now the Bishops are busy adding their own story to the home, lovingly named the Shack by two Naples pioneers. In recognition of their own imprint on the home’s history, the Bishops call it Terra Palma. ♦

**Wood and original features were saved whenever possible.**