



house is retrofitted with plate glass or fake sash windows is at issue. Shannon, owner of a rebuilt 1840s Regency cottage (CQL Summer 2012) regularly holds forth about the beauty and energy efficiency of rebuilt early wooden sash windows over too-expedient modern vinyl replacements.

Shannon, instructor in the Architecture program at Mohawk College, recently conducted a demonstration comparing restored 1830s Georgian windows with new windows. The windows were installed in a 12 by 8 foot building purpose-built for the test, meeting Ontario Building Code requirements for insulation and vapour barrier. An Ontario government-approved energy efficiency test demonstrated there is no difference in air infiltration between new windows and restored pre-war windows.

Factors beyond aesthetics argue convincingly for retention and repair of traditional wood windows. Comparison of the environmental costs of manufacturing – and then consigning to landfill – modern aluminum and vinyl windows with a short life-span versus reusing 200-year-old wood and glass

which will last indefinitely, is compelling.

It takes a bit more work. A bit more imagination. A bit more time. But there are heritage restoration companies who can help. Shannon Kyles urges you to take them up on their offer.

“When bad things happen to good homes,” observes Laura wryly, as she introduces her Edwardian home on King Street in Picton. Laura and Dale Smith are not easily intimidated by big restoration projects. Laura, a weaver and manager of Toronto architecture firm KSA, and Dale, a designer and fearless restoration carpenter, have a few projects on the go.

A few years ago, they bought a stone farmhouse and mill in Northumberland County (see CQL Winter 2013) and remodelled the 1830s house for guests. With six or eight fixer-uppers already under their belts, they have brought their tools to Prince Edward County and are tackling one of their biggest projects to date.

The couple’s gracious red brick Picton home was built in 1890 for Dr. Edward Kidd, on a corner of the original Benson

farm. An elegant curved veranda with iron cresting on the roof shaded the entrance to the physician’s office; two additional entrances served the family. A one and a half storey carriage house probably sheltered a team of steady horses or a Model T ready for those house calls.

By the 1940s, the home had been subdivided into four pleasant apartments. The 1980s saw a conversion of the once elegant home to institutional use. As a seniors’ home, the old place grew a wing clad in incongruous Arizona stone to link the two buildings (and a spa pool in the old coach house!) Things went rapidly down-market, and an alarming interior remuddling (to use another of Laura’s expressions) created a rabbit warren of 15 rooms for a juvenile centre, later a half-way house, ending up as a rooming house.

Dale and Laura are not people satisfied with stripping floors and repainting. Dale is returning the generous interior elegance, exposing original beadboard and mouldings, uncovering buried pocket doors, lifting carpets to reveal

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