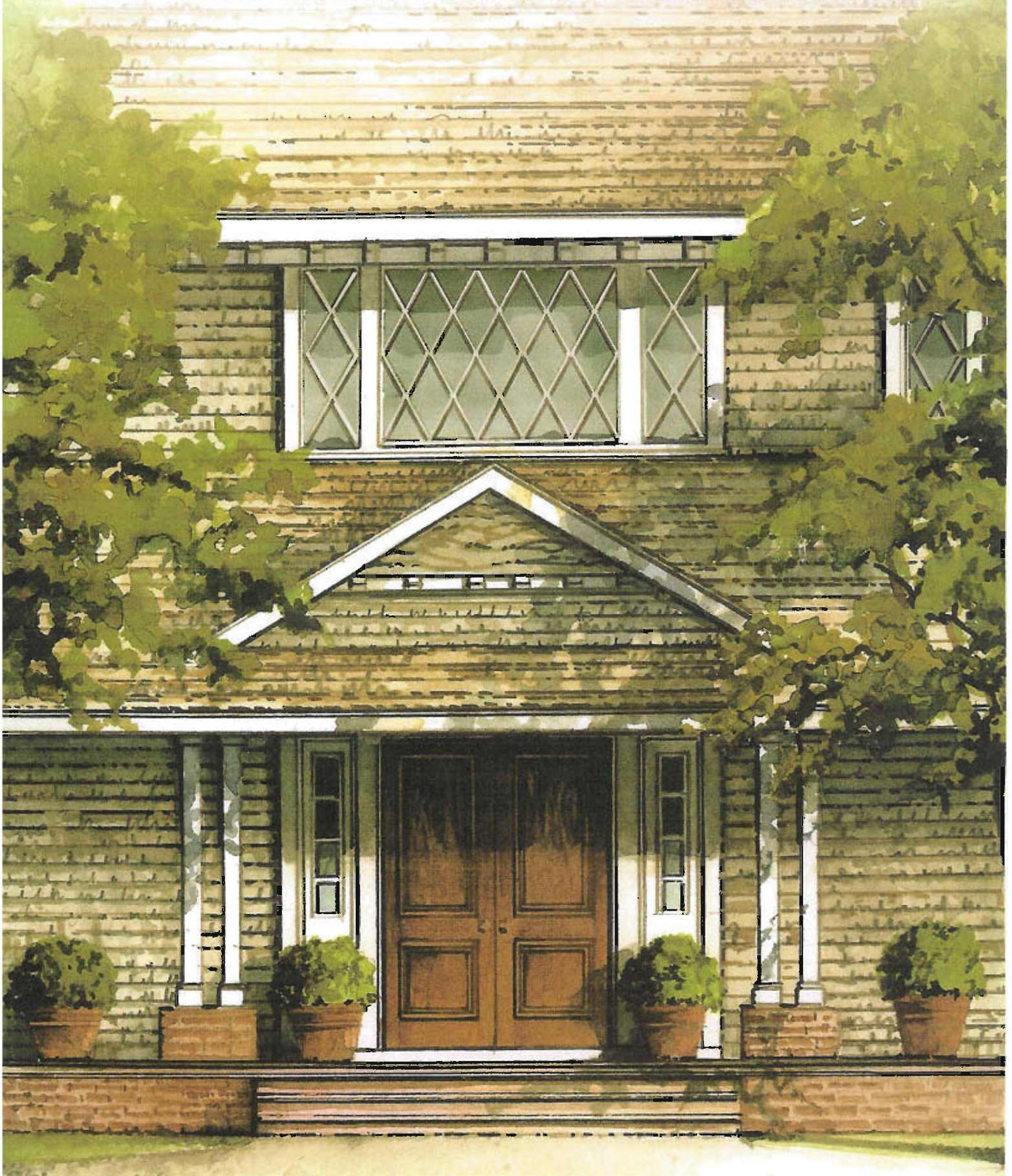


THE HAMPTON DESIGNER SHOWHOUSE

PRESENTED BY HOUSE & GARDEN TO BENEFIT SOUTHAMPTON HOSPITAL



Lear Landscape Associates

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3 Kitchen Potager



Elizabeth Lear and Brian J. Mahoney

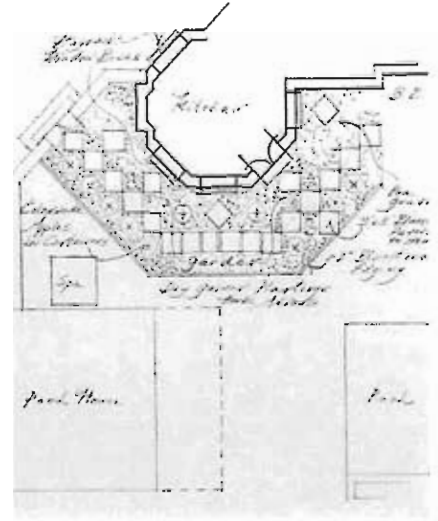
A client list of Lear Landscape Associates reads like a Who's Who of the Hamptons: Elizabeth Lear has achieved renown as a preeminent landscape designer in a range of projects that includes both residential and commercial clients. In addition to landscape and garden design as well as garden restoration, Lear has shared her expertise as a teacher, lecturer, and volunteer preservationist. While she takes her inspiration from her clients, Lear is attuned to her natural surroundings and historic influences as well – her designs are informed by tradition, but very much of their time.

In an encore appearance at the *Hampton Designer Showhouse*, Lear turns her attention this year to a modern interpretation of a kitchen garden or potager. Historically, this garden was a more expansive space used to supply the manor house with vegetables, herbs, and fruits. Lear, together with her partner Brian Mahoney ASLA, has used this smaller garden to create a relationship between the new home and its setting. A colonnade of columnar pear trees gives shape to this very country-style

space while providing a vista and reference point to the beautiful views in the distance. Ornamental plants balance a mix of fragrant herbs, also in containers.

Elizabeth Lear moved to eastern Long Island in 1985. In 1988, she attended the Design, Landscape, and Architecture Professional Program at *Harvard University*, and began her own business. Lear has served as a guest lecturer at seminars of the *National Trust for Historic Preservation*, *Hofstra University*, and the *Horticultural Alliance of the Hamptons*. Her designs have been published in *House & Garden* and *Architectural Digest* as well as several books. The designer's public works include the master landscape plan for Bridgehampton Historical Museum, the site plan for the restoration of Conscience Point Historical Society of Southampton, and the master landscape plan for East Hampton Day Care Center.

When she is not working with clients, she serves as chair of the garden committee of LongHouse Reserve in East Hampton, NY, and is a founding member of the Horticultural Alliance of the



Hamptons. Her projects have been exhibited at the Parrish Art Museum of Southampton, and the National Peace Garden Juried Exhibition in Washington, DC, among other venues.

In 1995, Lear was joined by Brian Mahoney whose background included studies in horticulture and architecture at *Ohio State University*. He has worked on a variety of international projects as well as those in the New York metropolitan area. Mahoney is also proprietor of Horticultural Concepts, which specializes in interior landscape management and interior floral displays for residential and commercial clients.



THE SINGULAR LOOK OF HAND-MADE SHINGLES

- **SIDING** The cedar shingles are new, but to preserve the house's character, architect David Scott Parker copied the irregular shapes of the originals.
- **FIRM BASE** Built on a bed of fieldstone, the 1800 house sagged in the middle. After securing the frame, Parker set steel beams under it, then poured a concrete foundation.
- **BRICKWORK** Parker disassembled the severely leaning chimney prior to the foundation work, and rebuilt it later, tilt and all.
- **WINDOWS** Parker carefully preserved the 19th-century glass and frames. The windows were numbered and removed, their woodwork restored with epoxy, and then put back in place.

TRADE SECRETS

Inside and out, the house is a model of simple, traditional gentility.

FIREPLACE The restored Colonial cooking hearth and bake oven, opposite page, were fitted with a custom-made mantel by John Hummel, East Hampton, NY.

Sann found the andirons at a French flea market.

LIGHTING Table lamp by Circa 1820, Vassalborough, ME.

FABRIC The wing chair is covered in a cotton/poly blend from the Silk Trading Co.

When the drooping, 200-year-old shingled house in the eastern Long Island village of Sagaponack was sold three years ago, locals fully expected that the dilapidated place would soon be, as the phrase goes, history. These days, in the area known as the Hamptons, even "renovation" can mean a cycle of subtraction and addition so radical that the owner gets a virtually new house while tiptoeing around building rules. But the buyers of the Sagg House, as it is called, were different. Nathalie Sann and her husband proposed not only saving the house but also preserving its well-earned signs of age.

In the end, the Sanns did less to change the house's face than did its nineteenth-century occupants, who, after all, had upgraded the street-side fenestration by replacing the 12-over-12 pane windows with stylish 6-over-6s. The Sanns could accept that antebellum alteration, but, as for the rest of the house, "when we found an original detail, we kept it," says Nathalie Sann.

Decrepit as it looked, the Sagg House, in truth, was never terribly well constructed. In the late eighteenth century, farmers, lacking timber on

Long Island's swampy South Fork, had house frames shipped in from Boston—making the Sagg House, like several of its neighbors, a sort of Colonial-era prefab. "Nothing was level, nothing was plumb," says architect David Scott Parker. "That's partly what attracted the Sanns to the house," he adds, with admiration for his clients' respect for "the poetic evidence of decay."

Their having a sense of the house as a record, not only of past days but also of the ravages of time, had recommended the Sanns to the previous owner, Henry Golightly. He was painfully aware of the house's quickening decline. When he saw the Sanns' commitment to the place, he sold it and everything inside, including a Shaker quilt chest that stands on the second-floor gallery and a nineteenth-century salesman's sample case that now serves as a coffee table. He even threw in his 1969 Cadillac. Crucially, Golightly also left notes on the house's history, which would complement Parker's scan of permit filings and historical documents. Says Nathalie Sann: "The house was like a small museum." ➤