

# New Kid on the Block

Eureka's famous 19th-century architecture is reflected grandly in the Bauriedel's new Queen Anne.

Written and photographed by Esther and Franklin Schmidt

A grand painted lady steps out of a child's book of fables, turreted, multicolored and just a little more fanciful than other homes built in the middle of the 19th century. However, this is not a fairy tale castle or even one of Eureka, California's famed lumber baron mansions. In fact,

this house dates back just to the 1990s, built by a forward-thinking, imaginative and historically-minded couple named Sile and Kim Bauriedel.

Their Queen Anne-style house was built more by serendipitous happenstance than by long term planning. "We owned an authentic historic Victorian house in the heart of town for years,"

Kim Bauriedel says. "We did a great deal of work to restore and refurbish it, and we were truly fond of the place. However, over time we decided we wanted more privacy than the town life provided, so we bought three acres of land on the outskirts of the city. Our idea was to build a new house—Victorian style was not a criterion for the design."

Kim and Sile Bauriedel's new Victorian nestles elegantly within a lush landscape on the outskirts of historic Eureka, California.





Looking into the formal dining room from the parlor, a tall mahogany china cabinet defines the space. Bradbury & Bradbury wallpaper and a richly patterned carpet create a strong link between these two important rooms.



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The fireplace surround is an original Eastlake piece. The Baunedeis wisely let the Bradbury & Bradbury border and the wall and ceiling papers be the star of the show, without competing with patterns in the upholstered furniture. Although most of their chairs and sofas are of period-carved wood, all are covered in solid tones.



**Above left:** The Bauwiedes were practical in their choices of building materials. In the entryway, they utilized store-bought linoleum with a pattern suggesting mosaic tile. The music box and table date to the late 19th century. Made by Cochon, the French music machine holds six cylinders that each play eight tunes.

**Above right:** The fanciful rounded standing music machine is actually a multophone phonograph, built just prior to the 1920s. It plays four-minute Amberola records.

**Left:** The light-colored wood piece is a Wurlitzer piano that plays a 65-note paper role of music and dates to the 1920s.

He continues, "Our initial requirements were far more about floor plan for our lifestyle than wasting an historic-looking home. With a good number of excellent builders in the area who were perfectly capable of following blueprints, we opted for using a building plan from a design catalog instead of hiring an architect. Unfortunately, most of those books provided spaces that just didn't work for us. For example, we knew we didn't want a downstairs master bedroom that most plan books offered and we definitely wanted a two-story home, also rare in those blueprints.

"After considerable time combing the catalogs, we came upon a design that with some modification—including raising all of the ceilings to ten feet upstairs and down, adding attic space



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and doing away with the basement—worked for us. Once we were satisfied with the interior spaces, we looked at the exterior of the house and found that it was, in fact, a Victorian.”

#### A Perfect Fit

Building a new Victorian was the perfect idea for the Bauriedel family because they already had a great deal of mid-to late-19th-century antique furniture from their previous historic house. Here was a chance to enjoy it once again. Another reason for them to choose to live Victorian was that the décor perfectly accommodates the spectacular collection of rare Victorian music boxes and photographs (“boom boxes of the Victorian era,” as Bauriedel calls them) that he has collected since his college years. These were extremely popular with Victorians because they were often their only form of entertainment.

Once the idea of living in 19th-century style took hold of the Bauriedels, they jumped into the design spirit wholeheartedly. If there were any period furnishings the couple lacked, they filled in with reproductions or contemporary pieces that blended with Victorian style. “We weren’t purists for the historically correct, we just wanted to stay within the Victorian aesthetic,” Bauriedel says.

One of the major design decisions the Bauriedels made was to utilize dramatic Bradbury & Bradbury wall and ceiling papers throughout most of the house. Instead of following one set of papers designated for a certain style, as the company’s sample catalogs suggested, they mixed and matched at will, with considerable help from designers at the company. “All we had to do was choose a base color and pattern for the largest segment of the walls and the designers at Bradbury & Bradbury filled in with matching papers for the dado, borders and ceilings. We feel they made great choices for us and we’ve been delighted with the outcome.”

In the kitchen, the delft tiles and AGA stove, with its stovepipe reminiscent of a woodstove, carry through the Victorian flavor of the house.



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One of the key architectural features to any fine Victorian home, old or new, is the millwork.

The master bedroom at the head of the elegantly carved stairway is made comfortable with the use of the fourposter cotton lace canopy and bedding. It is hard to tell that this is not an authentic Victorian house.



## Blue Ox Mill

Blue Ox Mill, the Eureka, California-based company that custom-made virtually all of the millwork for the Bauriedel house, provides architectural materials for houses throughout the United States. Company owner Eric Hollenbeck began a logging business 31 years ago with his wife, Viviana, and several other partners. Soon, the company was also producing exterior buildings and sheds for backyards.

A slump in the housing market in the 1970s steered the small firm toward the production of hand-milled products for period and new Victorian houses, and then it went on to produce a wide range of residential designs nationwide. Hollenbeck, clearly proud of the

team of five artisans that makes up Blue Ox Mill, says, "We can make any size redwood guttering, flooring, turnings up to 20 feet long and all manner of patterned shingles."

To maximize the historic look of all of Blue Ox products, artisans use only antique and vintage tools. The impressive mill is comprised of two acres under one roof—8,000-square-feet of fine woodworking, as well as a shingle mill, print shop, plaster casting shop and a blacksmith shop. Originally a California company, Blue Ox Mill now sells upwards of 98 percent of its products to contractors and homebuilders throughout the United States.



**Left:** In this guest bedroom, the Bauriedels once again used simple upholstery fabrics and solid colors against the Bradbury & Bradbury papers.

**Below:** The antique carved dresser with shelves at the foot of the matching carved bed holds some of the couple's favorite porcelain pieces. Kim and Sile found these locally at an estate sale. They had been in the same family since the 1880s.



Bauriedel says. They were so pleased with the infusion of Bradbury papers that they included them in their living room, dining room, study, master bedroom and two guest bedrooms.

#### Details, Details

One of the key architectural features to any fine Victorian home, old or new, is the millwork. Well-designed and created trims, moldings and window casings can make or break the quality of the finished home. When the Bauriedels owned their historic house in town, they used the services of Blue Ox Mill, a well-known millwork company in Eureka. The artisans there create wood, metal and plaster architectural elements for all style residences, and the Bauriedels found that the company was able to re-create many of the elements in their old house that were damaged or destroyed over time. When it came time to build the new house, the Bauriedels

went directly to this family-owned company for all of their millwork.

Blue Ox Mill made all of the exterior trims and shingles, as well as all of the crown moldings and other interior trims, giving the new house a distinctly historic feeling. One of the reasons that the Bauriedels were so adamant about using Blue Ox Mill is because of its commitment to making its products look as historically authentic as possible. The way that the company accomplishes this is by using equipment that is as old as the style of materials it is recreating. The newest piece of equipment at the mill dates to 1948; most of it dates to the mid 1800s. The Bauriedels are certain that the Blue Ox Mill materials have added greatly to the authentic look of the house.

With that kind of attention to detail, the Bauriedels took their time getting the house completed. Construction began in the summer of 1991 and was done just

under a year later. "We took almost another two years to get the landscaping the way we wanted it," Bauriedel says.

#### Blending Old and New

Today, the Bauriedels have the best of both worlds—Victorian and modern. They live in a large, bright and airy Victorian with large windows and cozy rooms. But they also have none of the typical old house annoyances, such as the continual repair and renovation of old pipes, archaic kitchens and rotting wood.

Building a new house with a historic feeling has been a happy change of lifestyle for both Kim and Sile. By leaving the heart of Eureka, they found the privacy they wanted. Now, they have an acre of landscaped land with another two acres of woods that seclude the house from other homes in the neighborhood. There is a life of Old World Victorian elegance in a grand, new historic-style home. ✻