

“It Could Happen To You”

Beware: it all began with a lamp shade!

My father, Stewart Maxwell, was on a business trip to Hartford, Connecticut in 1964, and I was waiting to say hello on the telephone and tell him about my day at Lotspeich School. My mother Marilyn and I had gathered ourselves onto my parents’ Colonial-style canopy bed in their Master Bedroom in order to place the long distance phone call: its cascade of crisp, white organdy bedhangings and the ice blue satin comforter created a nurturing, comforting nest in this large Colonial-Revival room of Wedgewood blue and white decorative tones.

As I waited for my turn to speak to my father on the telephone, I heard my mother say to him that she felt we needed a new shade for a lamp in our Living Room. To this innocent request, my father had quickly responded in the affirmative, but my mother wasn’t through. She then said that the lamp was not particularly attractive and maybe we should get an entirely new lamp to go with the new silk shade. Upon reflection, he felt that this was a perfectly sensible request. However, my mother was on a roll, and my father never saw it coming. Her next pronouncement was that she never really liked the Living Room’s black sofa with its gold lurex flecks in its upholstery – an item my mother had received – like it or not – from my father’s belongings (his “dowry”, if you will) at the time of their February, 1955 wedding. My mother knew that she was treading on thin ice in criticizing his sofa: it was comfortable (even my mother admitted that), but it did not conform to her unerring eye in what she considered to be aesthetic and in “good taste”. The sofa was a favorite destination of my father on the weekends where he would recline on his back with the stack of reading materials, including the New York Herald

Tribune, The New Yorker, Time, Newsweek, and peppered with the latest exploits of James Bond, Mickey Spillane, or Horatio Hornblower. However, my father also loved his Pall Mall cigarettes as he lay on the sofa reading, and this inevitably led to his falling asleep with them lit in his hand. Fortunately, he would always awaken before he and the sofa “flambé-ed”, but it left an unsightly number of burn holes in its rubber carcass. Even my father had to admit that the latest scare and burn mark in the sofa meant that she should look for a replacement – maybe one not as comfortable, so that he wouldn’t fall asleep. With this gauntlet lowered, my mother charged forward. She reasoned that if we had a new lamp shade on our new lamp with our new sofa, we ought to get a new area rug for the room, a seemingly guileless request until one realized that the room measured forty feet in length and fifteen feet in width. The existing rug was meant to be “temporary” when my father bought it years earlier, but its gray swath across the room was still lingering long after it should have expired. My mother had dramatically painted our Living Room walls black with white mouldings, fluted Ionic columns, pilasters, and fireplace. At the last ten feet of the room, there was a checkerboard black and white marble floor which completed the overall affect. With a new carpet, it made perfect sense to also acquire new draperies to finish the room. It was my mother’s next observation that propelled this Living Room redecoration into an ambitious eight year remodeling of the entire home: she noted that the large mid-19th century Victorian 1/1 paned windows were so poorly insulated that the draperies billowed with the wind in the dead of winter. She reasoned that if we were going to have new draperies, we should purchase new Colonial Revival windows to match the earliest ones on the front of the

house. Thus began the very expensive transformation of our circa 1825, thirty room home into what our New York decorator would later nickname: “Versailles West”.

One of the things that my parents shared in common was their love of art, architecture, interior design and fashion. My father had grown up in a large Tudor Revival home at the corner of Raymar Boulevard and Erie Avenue in Hyde Park and designed by Walter W. Cordes in 1928. My mother was always surrounded with beautiful furnishings – her father, Samuel Boster, was an art and antiques collector, but she had lived in a dozen different homes in her young life (about one per year). This peripatetic existence was the result of her father’s career as Head of District Sales for Hiram Walker Distilleries. Every year they opened a new sales office, he had to move his family to get the office established, only to have to move again a year later. Although born in Cincinnati, my mother soon moved with her family to Toronto, Canada, then to Boston, Rochester and Syracuse, New York, Cincinnati briefly again, then on to Houston, Dallas, San Antonio, Omaha, and back to Cincinnati. Having familiar objects placed in ever-changing surroundings must have been intriguing to her early design sensibilities, and this encouraged her to take interior design and art classes in school. As an adult, my mother moved to New York City to become a successful fashion model of haute couture for Christian Dior, Norman Norell, Jean Dessé and Lillie Daché and was regularly featured in the late 1940’s and early 1950’s in Vogue and Harper’s Bazaar magazines.

When my father turned 21, he hired the late-architect and Literary Club member, Woodie Garber, to design one of the first modern houses in Cincinnati’s suburb of Indian Hill in 1949-50. In order to get the architectural commission, my father told Woodie that he only put one stipulation in his hiring: Woodie had to explain to my father in detail

everything that he was suggesting in the design of the house. Woodie quickly approved this request, and gave my father a list of books to read to begin this dialogue, which included Space, Time and Architecture by Sigfried Giedion, several books on the artwork of Wassily Kandinsky, a book on the Swiss architect, Le Corbusier, and a book on Japanese tea houses. Woodie had my father purchase a work of art by Kandinsky in order to base the design of the house on its angular shapes and bright, primary coloration: it became the house's coda. Its interior was filled with the best in modern design, including furniture by Eero Saarinen, Alvar Aalto, Harry Bertoia, George Nelson, Marcel Breuer, and Charles and Ray Eames. In the Foyer hung the pièce de résistance: an Alexander Calder mobile which spun each time the front door opened, ushering in a blast of air to propel it.

In 1954, after living in this Indian Hill home for just four years, my father lost it in his divorce settlement to his first wife, Elaine Brenner. Because he had taken such interest and pride in the home's design and construction, I always felt that this loss must have been traumatic and devastating, and I once expressed this observation to him. My father corrected me, and I learned one of life's very valuable lessons. He said that it is the act of doing, not possessing, which is most important. Although it was sad to lose the house in his divorce, he also knew that he could do it again, but better. As an aside, I think that he felt the same way about marriage!

With his departure from 7700 Rock Hill Lane, he moved into an apartment in the Vernon Manor Hotel. As luck would have it, Marilyn Boster Fox was moving back to Cincinnati from Miami Beach after barely surviving Florida's summers of excessive heat

and humidity. She, too, moved into the Vernon Manor; they met, sparks flew, fell in love, and decided to marry.

Before their marriage in 1955, my parents wanted to find a house in which they could be married. After much searching, they finally bought the old Longworth/Anderson/Wallingford house on Grandin Road. It had initially been built as a farmhouse for millionaire Nicholas Longworth and his wife Susan in ca. 1825 on her family property, the Howell's. The Longworths would escape from the city on weekends and in the summer to this country residence, now a part of Hyde Park. Their city dwelling was our city's most handsome address: "Belmont" at 316 Pike Street (now known as The Taft Museum of Art). The Grandin Road farmhouse was not nearly as grand, but it was a house filled with light and had a commanding up-river view to what is now Coney Island and Kentucky hills. Over the years, the home passed down through the female branches of the Longworths, that included the families of Davis Carneal Anderson and Buckner Ashby Wallingford. With the passing of time, the house more than tripled in size to contain 30 rooms which also included a separate two-story coach house and servants' quarters. My parents purchased the house one day before they were married by a justice-of-the-peace in our Foyer. For this ceremony, they stood in front of an exquisite 18th century period Robert Adam white carrara marble mantel with a frieze relief of dancing, frolicking putti carved into its breast. This had been an early 1900's purchase by the Wallingfords on a buying trip to England, and was the home's prized possession.

Upon moving into the house, the first thing that my parents did was add color: all 30 rooms had been previously painted stark white. The house had not been lived in for over a couple of years before its purchase; because it was 130 years old at the time, it

needed everything. Years after its initial construction, electricity and indoor plumbing were invented, but pipes were unabashedly installed in corners of rooms with no attempt at concealing their unsightliness. The house was charming, but charm only went so far! My parents knew that the house needed a major overhaul, if they were to continue living in it long term.

The other dilemma facing my parents was their tastes: my father at that time was a confirmed Modernist, having built and furnished that previous contemporary Indian Hill home by Woodie Garber. My mother, on the other hand, had grown up with French antiques and Old Master paintings which were her passion, although she had an appreciation for modern design. When they first began to furnish the house, they did it in the Modern Style with a few eclectic touches reflecting my mother's 18th century interests and tastes. Soon, however, her father began sending antiques and artwork to fill the rooms, and it became clear that a design decision needed to be made as to whether the house would continue with its modern furnishings, or whether my father would surrender in favor of my mother's Francophile passions. In the phone call to Hartford, my parents decided that antiquity had won, and that they needed expert professional guidance in their recreated pursuit of the Age of Enlightenment.

At this point of their decision, they were both 36 years in age and had studied architecture and interior design for much of their lives. They were familiar with the top designers in the country and decided upon six decorators to contact concerning the remodeling of the house. The six included: Sister Parrish of Parrish/Hadley, Michael Taylor, Billy Baldwin, George Stacey, John Astin Perkins, and Michael Greer. The latter was both their favorite, and he was the first to respond to their letter for an interview.

Michael Greer was born in Monroe, Georgia in 1916 to a fine old Southern family. He was raised with an appreciation for art, architecture, and music, and he realized a move to New York would be needed to fulfill his interests. After attending the University of South Carolina, then the University of North Carolina, and finally the Parsons School of Design in New York, his professional plans were detoured by the Second World War in which he served as a Major in the Army Air Force. After the war, he was recalled for service in the Korean conflict. Most of these war years were spent in the Far East, and while serving there he developed the knowledge and appreciation for Asian antiques.

After serving in the armed forces, Mr. Greer established an interior design firm in New York City, a relatively young profession – especially for men – at that time.

Mr. Greer was a founder of the National Society of Interior Designers and a fellow of the American Institute of Interior Designers. In addition, he served on the faculty of the New York School of Interior Design and lectured on the topic of design throughout the country. He was also the author of several books, including Inside Design, one of the best books on the subject that I have ever read even after 50 years since its publishing. Mr. Greer became one of a few interior designers who quickly became famous for his imaginative designs, as well as flawless, undeviating good taste. Working on five of the available six continents, his client list represented an impressive roster of business, social, and theatrical celebrities which included crowned and elected heads of state. Some of his clients included Mary Martin, Geraldine Page, Ethel Merman, Doris Duke, Charlton Heston, and other famous corporate names such as Ford, Firestone, and Mellon.

One of the highlights of his career was being able to work on the refurbishing of the White House under the Eisenhower, Kennedy, Johnson, and Nixon administrations. In fact, it was Mr. Greer who thought of the idea to furnish the White House with antiques, fine art, and furniture which would be appropriate at the time of its origins. With the support of professional interior design organizations which he headed, he went to Mamie Eisenhower to pitch this concept. At this point in the late 1950's, the White House had been completely renovated during the previous Truman administration: this ambitious project was undertaken when a grand piano fell through a plaster ceiling. When the architectural portion of this renovation was completed, Bess Truman went on a buying trip for furniture at the B. Altman Department Store in New York. Today, we might look upon this with incredulousness – the idea that a First Lady would go to a department store to furnish the White House! However, Bess Truman had good company with other First Ladies who had done the same thing. For example, Mary Todd Lincoln also traveled to New York to purchase her new Belter Victorian furniture – now, so coveted by historians and the White House.

Mamie Eisenhower had always loved antiques and, as the wife of America's most important general, had the privilege of staying in some of the finest historic homes and palaces around the world. Mr. Greer's idea of collecting appropriate period antiques for the White House was received by Mrs. Eisenhower with great enthusiasm. She made the decision of starting the project with the redecoration of the Diplomatic Reception Room which acted as the front entry for guests arriving from the South portico.

When President and Mrs. Kennedy moved into the White House in 1961, Jacqueline Kennedy learned of Mamie Eisenhower's and Mr. Greer's quest to furnish it

in antiques and fine art. With her interest in both of these areas, she eagerly adopted this project as her own. Because of her connections, Mrs. Kennedy was able to assemble a committee of antiquarians and wealthy patrons to extend the redecoration throughout the White House. Mrs. Kennedy's success was so profound that it has completely eclipsed the fact of Mrs. Eisenhower's creation of the project and her early involvement.

Since America was indebted to and influenced by France in the early nineteenth century when the White House was being furnished, the home was filled with French antiques, primarily of the Directoire and Empire periods, thanks to Presidents Jefferson, Madison, and Monroe. As committed Francophiles, Mrs. Kennedy, Mr. Greer, and fellow Paris decorator Stéphane Boudin were perfect to lead the White House's refurnishing that included finding pieces which originally were purchased for it.

After the Kennedy's tragic departure from the White House, Lady Bird Johnson and later Pat Nixon continued this redecoration project with Mr. Greer and Clement Conger, who headed the antiques and fine arts committee as the White House Curator.

In selecting Mr. Greer to lead the renovation and redecoration of our own home, my parents were both very much aware of his work at the White House. As their first choice out of a list of six leading designers, they traveled to New York City to interview Mr. Greer. Truth be told, he was also interviewing them, since he was at the enviable point in his career to be able to pick and choose his clients. He was thrilled with our family and project for a number of reasons: he had worked on the White House, palaces, and embassies, but had never had the opportunity to design for a typical Midwestern American family; at the time of this interview, my parents at 37 were young, and I was nine years old; my parents were very knowledgeable about architecture, interior design,

fine art, and antiques – a great rarity for a client; and most importantly, my parents were hiring him before any major architectural work was begun. The latter enabled Mr. Greer to totally redesign the architecture of the interior of the house, transforming it from 19th century farmhouse detailing to French Louis XV and XVI period décor to be in keeping with our collection of antiques.

Once hired, Mr. Greer came to Cincinnati for the first time to visit our home, and I remember it vividly. Both of my parents were confident and bold, and rarely intimidated by anyone or anything. In fact, my father was the president of an advertising agency – a profession rarely known for shrinking violets! However, my parents were intimidated by Mr. Greer and were on their very best behavior as they led him on the tour of our home. As Mr. Greer walked from room to room, he had the unspoken attitude of clear superiority and that we really needed him. Just as the tour was coming to a conclusion, he pushed open the kitchen door, the last part of the house to be explored. Uncontrollably, he blurted out “Oh, this is wonderful!” My mother was a gourmet cook, and really desired a beautiful new kitchen filled with all of the latest appliances. Thus, the renovation of this 30 feet by 30 feet L-shaped space was done several years before hiring Mr. Greer. Pansiera and Dohme (now PDT Architects) were hired to design this kitchen based upon an 18th century tavern in Duxbury, Massachusetts on Cape Cod. Uncle John Shillito took us to this wonderful establishment for lunch, and it was love at first sight. We all admired its dark wood posts and beams, rough plaster lathe, brick floors and fireplace, and the overall historical ambiance. With the kitchen’s décor by Richard “Dick” Greiwe, this space was decades ahead of its time with its overall spaciousness, eat-in kitchen, sitting area, two sinks, all concealed appliances, and plenty

of storage. Although the house already had two large living rooms, this kitchen area became the home's family room, where everyone enjoyed being there. Because my mother loved to cook and entertain, she often had previously felt ostracized at parties because all of the fun was happening in the Living Rooms and not with her in the kitchen. All of this changed with the new design. To Mr. Greer's credit, he had to admit that this kitchen was beautifully designed – a major admission by him since he very rarely complimented another designer's work.

The remodeling of Maxwell House with Mr. Greer became a family affair, and it encouraged me to become an architect and interior designer. Because of the extensiveness of this project (approximately 15,000 square feet and 30 rooms before remodeling) and since we were living in the house during the renovations, this project was in Mr. Greer's office for almost eight years. Mr. Greer and his indispensable, talented assistant, Donald LeGrand Rice, were mentors to me, and the design of my bedroom and sitting room became my first project. I even was able to get out of sixth grade at Lotspeich School several times to meet Mr. Greer in New York to select fabrics, carpets, colors, light fixtures, and furniture for the space. It was the very best kind of education for me, and I am most thankful for having this invaluable opportunity to learn from a master. Although I had been drawing from a very early age, I credit Mr. Greer for teaching me to carefully study an object before drawing it. This teaching moment occurred as we were visiting various antique stores, shops, and the D & D Building in New York. Mr. Greer had suggested that I sketch each piece which I had selected for my bedroom and sitting room; in that way, I would be able to refer to these sketches to allow me to remember them, since it would take up to a year before their delivery.

My new bedroom was located on the home's third floor which had been formerly a combination of servants' quarters, bathroom, trunk and storage attic rooms. With over 4,000 square feet, it represented a large portion of the house which was heated but unused. It was decided to give me the entire third floor, so that I could have my own apartment within the house. With a lovely river view which extended to Riverbend with vistas of distant surrounding hills, I managed to receive the best quarters of all. The main bedroom space measured 50 feet by 30 feet and took great advantage of the views to the south and Kentucky and to the north overlooking Hyde Park, Oakley, Mt. Lookout, and suburbs further east. The design of my bedroom was based on an artist's studio outside Paris and had a dramatic color scheme: wood beams, chevron carved doors, and random-width pegged floors were stained jet black contrasted with stark white walls. A new staircase leading to the third floor was inserted in what had been my former second floor bedroom; the ceiling of this former room was also removed, allowing a dramatic two-story effect with south light flooding the space. From the new third floor bedroom, numerous views and vantage points were achieved by looking downward into the new second floor sitting room and staircase. Other rooms as a part of my third floor suite included a dressing room/office as well as a den in which I later upholstered the walls with a floor-to-ceiling Ralph Lauren wool broadcloth in a houndstooth pattern. The bathroom, with an early 19th century bronze doré Russian chandelier and a pair of French Empire sconces over the marble vanity, was a luxurious space and a fine way to begin the day.

One of my memories of being in Mr. Greer's office was waiting in his reception area. Sitting in the room with me was an elegantly dressed woman with a beautiful

blonde coiffure: the image of her in a black silk designer dress with the obligatory pearl necklace are indelibly etched in my mind after forty-five years. This woman complimented me on my fine behavior and navy blue suit, and she turned out to be none other than Doris Duke. Only in Mr. Greer's office would Miss Duke be left waiting! By the way, I never did find out with whom Mr. Greer was meeting before us.

In working with me on my bedroom, Mr. Greer had assembled a huge stack of hundreds of fabrics for my review. Before looking at them, he wanted me to not only tell him which fabrics I liked and disliked but also why. For an eleven year old youngster, this seemed to be a daunting task, but I rose to the challenge. The palette which I selected is one that I still prefer: a series of earth tones ranging from cream to chocolate brown with accents of carmel, olive, and rust. With white walls contrasting with polished jet black floors, wood doors and trim, they provided a dramatic background for this color scheme whose fabrics were composed of primarily textural and subtle geometric differences. Having completed my assignment, I was very proud of my fabric selections which were distilled from the stack of hundreds of samples. With four and a half decades later of reflection, I am sure that any choices from his stack of fabrics could be combined and the result would have still been outstanding, and that was Mr. Greer's genius, skillful guidance, and good taste at work.

For furniture casegoods (end table and chest of drawers), I chose classic contemporary designs in mahogany. With my desk selection, an all important decision for a student, I purchased a Parsons-style desk of very simple lines and openness, and it was finished in a faux painted walnut burl – an early 1960's example of faux finishing decades ahead of its time. Chairs were of the Louis XV period in very dark stained

walnut with simple curving, fluid lines which helped to soften the stark, hard-edged geometric forms of the rooms' architecture.

When coming to New York to meet with Mr. Greer over the years, my parents and I always stayed at The Plaza at 59th Street and Fifth Avenue: a family favorite of several generations dating back to my Great Aunt Alice Woodrow Shillito who had maintained an apartment there. My parents knew its manager, Mr. Sonnabend, and the staff very well, and my father even had his own stool at the end of the bar in the legendary Oak Bar with "Vince, the Prince" as the bartender holding court, so nicknamed by my Dad. As a child visiting this beautiful, venerable, historic hotel renowned for its outstanding service, I felt a certain affinity with Eloise and her fictional exploits. An all-knowing appreciation was shown by me with a nod and a wink as I passed her full-length portrait each time in the hotel's Foyer near the Palm Court.

One of my favorite memories of The Plaza and Mr. Greer was when my mother called his office to confirm our morning appointment. His secretary offered to have his car and driver come to the hotel to pick us up. All-knowingly, my mother as a former New Yorker thanked her for the offer but stated that we were just several blocks away from his East 62nd Street brownstone office, and that we preferred to walk the short distance. All of this made perfect sense until we later saw Mr. Greer's automobile: not just any old car, but a Silver Shadow Rolls Royce from the early 1960's. Its gleaming iconic grille, the dual finish of black and silver, and classic lines were eclipsed by one of the most beautiful car interiors that I have ever seen. The supple, charcoal gray kid-skin leather upholstery was accented with real red tortoiseshell panels instead of the usual, pervasive, wood car panels with so much varnish on their surface that they appear to be

plastic. Later in the day as my mother and I stepped into this incredible vehicle for a trip from Mr. Greer's office to a downtown showroom, I teased her that this is what she earlier had passed up for an ordinary walk along the streets of New York! My mother attempted to argue that strolling along Fifth Avenue in the low Sixties was "no ordinary walk", but she got the point.

Since our house project was in Mr. Greer's office for eight years, my parents and I became familiar with both him as well as his staff. Donald Rice, Mr. Greer's assistant, was one of the most knowledgeable and talented design practitioners that we had ever met. His outstanding abilities were coupled with a charming demeanor, handsome looks, and delightful sense of humor. Over the years, I was privileged to be friends with his wife Carolyn and their two sons, Gerard and Brian. In later years, when I moved to New York in 1976 to work for the architectural firm of Poor, Swanke, Hayden, and Connell, Donald and his family were very welcoming to me and helped make my life in New York seem like a big, friendly neighborhood. The latter was a credit to Donald's personal charm and his infectious enthusiasm and love for New York: no one in his presence was immune to his rapturous excitement about the city and all that it had to offer.

As you can tell, what could have been a simple, straightforward remodeling of a home in Cincinnati turned into a magical, life-altering experience, thanks to my two wonderful parents and Mr. Greer. Seeing this house – 140 years old in 1965 as major remodeling began – transformed from cracked plaster, old pipes, and antiquated electrical system into one of America's most beautifully designed homes had a tremendous impact on my life and career. My parents and I pored over numerous books and traveled extensively to educate ourselves and provide informed opinions on our home's redesign

in an attempt to keep up with Mr. Greer. Although we had Thomas C. Wiggers and Jacques F. Sohn as architects for the exterior and interior alterations respectively, it was Mr. Greer who gave primary guidance in the home's overall conception and execution. Having a knowledgeable and informed client in the case of my parents made this project of great interest and enthusiasm for Mr. Greer, Donald Rice, and the rest of their staff. When we received in the mail the oversized gray envelopes from Mr. Greer's office filled with conceptual drawings, plans, and samples, it was similar to Christmas time for us with every delivery.

One of the most dramatic features of the home's interior included a free-hanging, spiral staircase in the Foyer which curved upward to a second floor landing crowned by a rotunda in the Adam Style, based upon the one at Kedleston Hall. By day, sunlight flooded the interior core of the house as it passed from the rotunda's oculus thirty-five feet above the first floor. At night, small bulbs fully concealed within the rotunda's cornice provided lighting of its diamond coffered surface. As an alternative, lighting placed above the translucent glass oculus was positioned to spotlight each of the fluted Corinthian pilasters which lined the rotunda's walls. Although this artificial lighting was lovely, there was no substitute for Mother Nature: nothing was more magical than to ascend the staircase at night with all of the home's lights extinguished, allowing only the moonlight beam to stream downward and be seen.

Other noteworthy rooms included the library, whose walls were fabricated in black walnut paneling in the Georgian Style, based upon our viewing a room at the Belgian Embassy in Washington, D.C. This room was balanced in plan by a drawing room at the other end of the house, which was designed in the Louis XVI Style. Mr.

Greer had my parents purchase an antique French marble mantelpiece which lent its grace, proportion, color, and scale to the overall room which was designed around it. Subtle shades of powder blue with accents of apricot were selected to complement the Louis XVI antiques, harpsichord, and a 17th century Momoyama Japanese black lacquer chest-on-stand.

A very elegant Robert Adam period mantel, which had formerly graced the front hall, was moved to the dining room when the foyer was enlarged to become one space and to accommodate the spiral staircase. The new dining room, with its beautiful white oak French doors leading to the rear portico, was designed in the Directoire period with a fine Nancy McClelland early 19th century French wallpaper with alternating stripes of corncobs, wheat shafts, and swans celebrating the bounty of America.

On the second floor, two rooms were combined to make one large 32 foot long master bedroom done in the rococo Louis XV Style and decorated in soft shades of pale peach and white. The late Lela Emery Steele once commented that this room was like walking into a seashell. Any house can have one rotunda, but Maxwell House had two! A second dome was added in a guest bedroom which also doubled as my Mother's dressing room. Lying underneath the dome was a wonderful way in which to awaken and witness daylight streaming through its oculus.

With both of my parents long deceased, I decided that it was time for me to leave this wonderful house for smaller quarters last year. Now, another family will have the opportunity to appreciate its grandeur and 187 years of history, and be able to make new memories within its walls.

So the next time you decide to purchase a new lamp shade, remember this story,
and be forewarned as to where it can lead.

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