

Don't Bungle a Bungalow

Part I: Homework

Invest in knowledge and raise your vintage home's value by keeping its charm.

BY MICHAEL LOGAN



PHOTOGRAPH BY JAIMEE ITAGAKI

above

The Craftsman bungalow style is enjoying a tremendous rebirth, as this new home exemplifies.

SO YOU JUST BOUGHT A 1914 CRAFTSMAN BUNGALOW AND can't wait to start restoration or remodeling. Apply the brakes now; and if this is your first attempt, then set the parking brake for the next six months. That's right, six months of no tinkering. You will need that time for educating yourself in order to refrain from doing something you will later regret. The first pearl of wisdom you need to acquire is the fact that an intact Craftsman bungalow will be more sought-after and valuable. If you remove any original features from the interior or exterior, you will reduce the desirability and hence the overall value of the home. And if you are planning to put back features that have been re-

moved by a previous owner, you must do your homework to ensure historical accuracy is maintained in the home.

The Craftsman bungalow style of the early 1900s through the mid-1920s is enjoying a tremendous rebirth. Just look at new shopping centers, hotels, commercial buildings, housing tracts, custom homes and remodels. Earth-tone shingles and tapered columns atop stone piers are popping up everywhere from coast to coast, and more homes are sporting porches again. The increase in popularity is likely due to the fact that the Craftsman style has proven to be timeless. It also evokes pride in construction. If you are lucky enough to own one of these originals, with most vintage features in-

tact, then you are a caretaker of an Americana treasure chest.

Unfortunately, these treasures are being lost every day as a result of natural disasters, being in the way of "progress" and due to the ignorance of an owner who is not aware of the value of what he or she has. As the bungalow inventory shrinks, the pool of savvy buyers looking for vintage bungalows grows and the worth of these homes continues to rise.

Warning Signs

My family's first bungalow was a 1917 single-story Craftsman in Pasadena, California. Nearly all the homes on our block were of the same style and built in the teens. In four years of living there, we witnessed about eight go up for sale in the midst of the early 2000s real estate boom. Six of these bungalows sold in between two days and two months, with most getting multiple offers and more than the asking



above

Christmas icicle lights would look out of place on a vintage bungalow but seem fitting on this bungled example. Stucco and aluminum windows complete the forlorn package.

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above

1970s ranch house flagstone placed over bungalow-style wood siding has hurt this home's authentic appeal.