

# Restoration of The Mark Twain House is a Work in Progress



A newly completed fifth chimney rises on the north side of the House. Only four had existed on the House for decades. The design was replicated through digital enhancement of period images.

The task of restoring The Mark Twain House and Carriage House to their original appearance consists largely of attention to detail. Everyone involved, from the director and curator to the craftsmen and fabricators, is committed to giving visitors the most accurate representation possible of the way the buildings looked more than 100 years ago when Samuel Clemens and his family occupied them. Here are some of the details that have been attended to in recent months:

**The exterior woodwork of the House and Carriage House** was thoroughly examined, and decisions were made as to what could be repaired and what had to be replaced. Ihor Budzinsky, a master carpenter from Kronenberger & Sons restoration firm, replicated the needed pieces in much the same fashion in which the woodwork was created in the early 1870s, while the pieces that needed repair were mended with an epoxy solution. Pieces were then primed

and reinstalled, and all the woodwork on the house was painted, section by section.

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## Early Gifts to the Campaign for The Mark Twain House Aid Exterior Restoration

Through the generosity of The Hartford Foundation for Public Giving and the Hartford Courant Foundation, The Mark Twain House was able to begin the exterior restoration of both of our nineteenth-century buildings in July. The Hartford Foundation for Public Giving's decision to award the museum a grant at its highest level of giving—\$400,000—acknowledges the project's importance and crucial nature. The Hartford Courant Foundation's \$50,000 gift, one of that entity's largest grants, recognizes that the museum's capital projects represent well-thought-out stewardship of this national treasure. Capital Campaign Chairman David W. Clark, Jr. expressed the gratitude we all feel when he said that "The Hartford Foundation for Public Giving and The Hartford Courant Foundation have shown invaluable support and generosity in their early gifts to our campaign."



Left to right: Brewster Perkins, President, Hartford Foundation for Public Giving; Mark Twain House Executive Director John Boyer; David Clark, Chairman, Campaign for Mark Twain House; and Michael Bangser, Executive Director, Hartford Foundation for Public Giving inspect the progress.



Master carpenter Ihor Budzinski of Kronenberger & Sons creates replacements for damaged wood elements of the House.



Workers dismantle an existing chimney not original to the House.

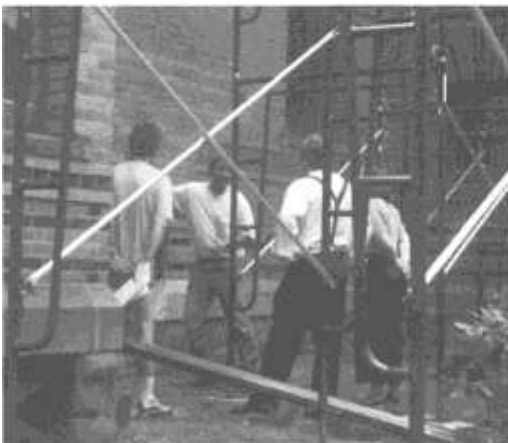
**Chimney work** began with careful study of digitally enhanced versions of period photographs; computer enhancement allowed details to be greatly enlarged and thus to be examined more closely than ever before. Evidence discovered through this close study dictated that all existing chimneys be dismantled and some rebuilt according to the original designs, abandoned because of a structural problem: the corbeling at the top of the chimneys added more weight than the bases could support under late-nineteenth-century engineering practices. Modern engineering techniques allowed us to safely recreate the architect's original vision.

All of the **bricks, sandstone, and brownstone on The Mark Twain House and Carriage House were repointed.** The colors for the mortar mix were based on scientific analysis conducted as part of the museum's Historic Structures Report, as were the paint colors for the house. Curator Marianne Curling asked masons to perform a wining technique, in which lines are incised into the mortar, to replicate the original treatment.

The **sliding doors on the north facade of the Carriage House** were not original to the Clemens era, so they were removed. The opening in the facade was then filled in with brick, and two windows were added to bring the building back to its original appearance.

The **slate roof on the Carriage House** was replaced in accordance with its original design, which echoed that of the main House's roof. Three different colors of slate were brought in from Vermont, New Hampshire, and Nova Scotia. The roofing was completed by the addition of Yankee-style gutters, made of wood and fitted with copper flashing, that sit directly on the roof.

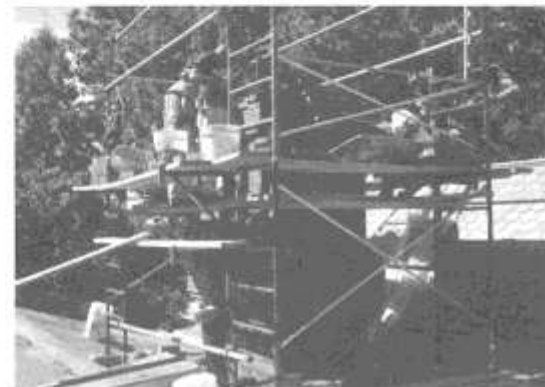
Bill Deuschle of Kronenberger & Sons discusses the proper cleaning treatment for the granite of The Mark Twain House with Executive Director John Boyer, Supervisor of Buildings and Grounds Charles Orcutt, and Curator Marianne Curling.



The restoration crew removes mortar from the east side of the Carriage House to prepare for the repointing of the bricks.



One of the House's several decks is prepared for painting.



Masons build a replica chimney from the Clemens period.