

Architecture

MINNESOTA

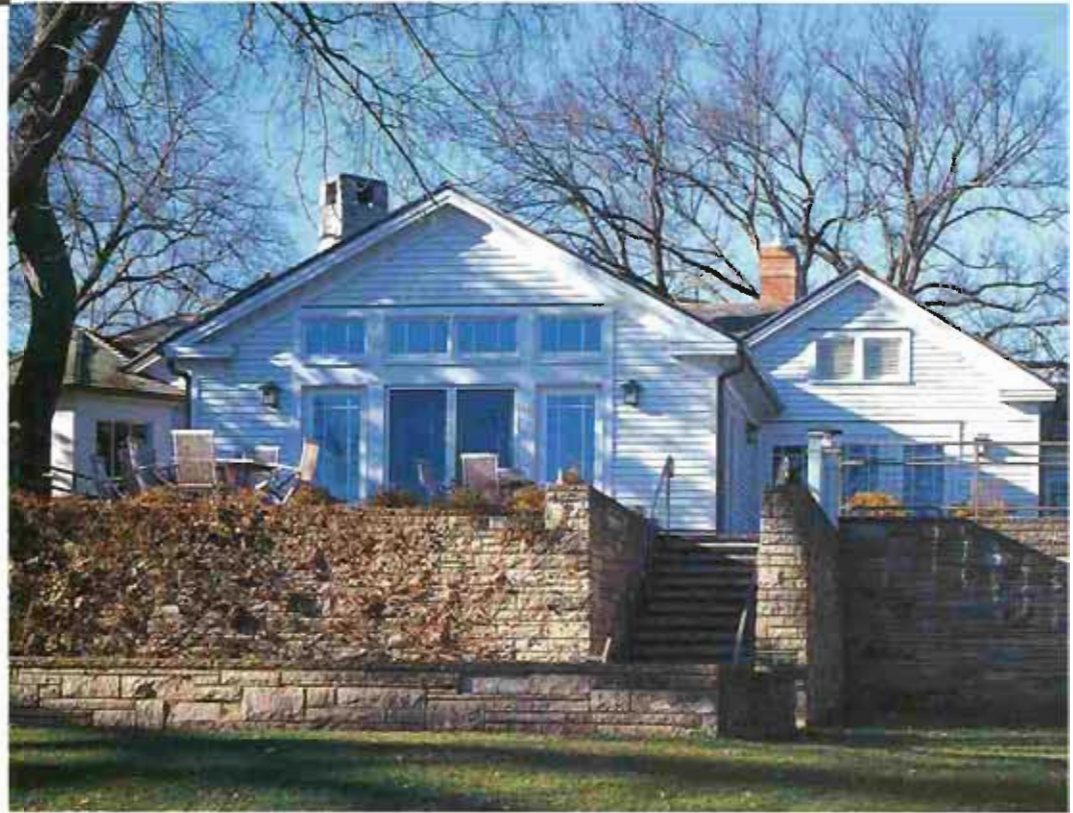
**New Century,
New Work**

**Science Museum of Minnesota
Sustainable Enterprise
Home-Grown Restoration**



HOME *Grown*

By preserving and updating the Andersen family home site, Andersen Corporation gains new corporate meeting spaces and a renewed sense of tradition



BY CAMILLE LEFEVRE

The Andersen Corporation, headquartered in Bayport, may produce the most recognized brand name in the window and patio-door industry. But the company reached that stature from humble beginnings. And despite its reputation for innovation, Andersen takes pride in tradition and its heritage.

So when company executives decided to renovate the old Andersen house and guest cottage, and build new offices for the Andersen Foundation, they called on Robert Claybaugh, Claybaugh Preservation Architecture Inc in Taylors Falls. "Andersen is a company that is conscious of its history and of maintaining it," Claybaugh says. "The company has high standards, but isn't ostentatious. They wanted things done correctly with high-quality materials."

Three delightful buildings now sit in a pristine parklike setting just 100 yards from the industrial facility and corporate offices, and next to the St. Croix River. Although different in size and purpose, the quaint buildings reflect variations on Greek Revival- and Crafts-



The complex of three buildings (left) offers a residential retreat adjacent to the industrial facility (cottage, foreground; house, right; foundation office, behind).

man-style architecture. While preserving a significant aspect of the corporation's history and keeping the site's residential feel, the buildings also project the company's forward-thinking approach to business.

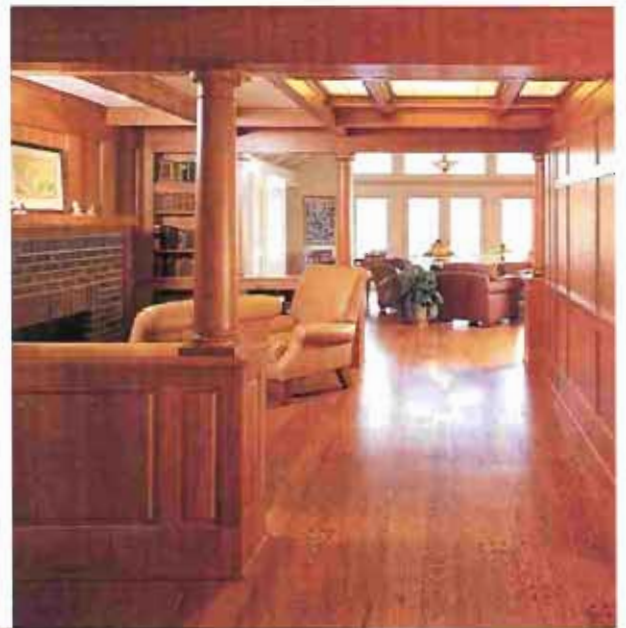
Andersen Corporation was founded by Hans Andersen, a Danish immigrant who started a lumberyard in Wisconsin. Andersen's was the first company to manufacture standardized window-frame units and...the rest is history. The Bayport plant was built in 1913 and today covers more than 2.7 million square feet.

For decades, Andersen's son Fred, who was elected president shortly after his father's death in 1914, ran the company from his home on the St. Croix River adjacent to the factory and offices. Originally a river cottage, the Andersen family built onto the house through the years. "Mr. Andersen tried every new window that came out, so the house had windows everywhere of different styles and sizes," Claybaugh says.

After Andersen's death, the company wanted to preserve the property, "since Fred was such a well-liked man," says Jerry Wulf, the corporation's president and chief executive officer at the time. "Not to make it a shrine. But to have it remain in the company." When Fred's wife died four years ago, the corporation purchased the buildings on the 5-acre, river-front site.

The company wished to keep the building exteriors much as they were, but wanted significant changes inside. Requests included new offices for the Andersen Foundation, accommodations for overnight guests and executive meeting areas. "The Andersen were not showy people," Wulf explains. "We didn't want to restore as much as retain the character of the buildings, which were simple yet elegant."

To reunify the Andersen house exterior, "which had a rather uncoordinated appearance," Claybaugh says, all exterior windows and doors were replaced. The architect also altered some rooflines and opened the



The house's front entrance welcomes guests with Craftsman-style details (opposite above left), while the back of the house features a patio that opens to the river (opposite right). The restored library in the house (above) opens to its airy living room with river views (left).





The Andersen Foundation Office sits in homey contrast to the Andersen industrial facility (above). The building's interior includes an inglenook with fireplace (opposite above) and offices with river views (opposite middle). Overnight guests stay in the Andersen House and enjoy the indoor atrium at the end of the corridor and the outdoor patio (opposite below); the cottage is reserved for business meetings.

back of the house to the river. Inside, the 3,500-square-foot house was gutted and remodeled for adaptive reuse.

The front entry and dining room stayed close to the original design, and are furnished with Andersen family pieces. The master bedroom, however, was modernized and converted into the corporate board room. Three guest bedrooms with baths were recreated in the house, along with kitchen and catering facilities. In the living room, the architect enhanced the spacious feel by raising the ceiling, and installing transom windows and patio doors that offer floor-to-ceiling views of the river and new back patio.

Between the living room and front entry a new library was constructed. The fireplace was uncovered and restored. The ceiling was dropped and a coffer ceiling with art-glass panel installed. Cherry woodwork with classical detailing enhances the room's warmth and inviting feeling.

Because the property is located in the floodplain, some site-grading modifications were called for, which included moving the cottage onto a new foundation just south of the house. Initially remodeled to serve as guest accommodations—with new bath, windows and front-door patio—the 350-square-foot building is now a meeting place for company business.

Just north of the house sits the new Andersen Foundation Office, built on the site of the old garage (which was torn down). The 1,200-square-foot building was designed to be compatible with the existing structures, but project its own character.

The reception room features a vaulted ceiling with art-glass panel similar to the one in the house's library. The adjacent waiting room resembles an inglenook with a



fireplace. The private offices have transom windows and patio doors like those in the house's living room, and likewise provide patio access and river views. Bluestone-paver and wood floors are present here.

White siding of various types further unifies the three buildings: the house is sided with Firbrex, a new Andersen product not yet on the market; the cottage retains its original siding; and the foundation office has painted cedar siding. Limestone retaining walls anchor the foundation offices and relocated cottage, provide flood protection and recall materials used in the original residence. Exterior lighting reiterates Arts and Crafts detailing in the house and the foundation office. Bluestone-paver walks appear outside, as well.

"It was exciting to work with the idea of keeping the original feel of the site and buildings, while enhancing it where we could," Claybaugh says. Wulf adds that few people in the company today knew Fred Andersen, so by restoring the house and property, and maintaining it much in the way the Andersens did, "we're keeping our employees in contact with our history."

Andersen House, Foundation Office and Cottage
Bayport
Claybaugh Preservation Architecture Inc

