

Built to Last

Times change, but the Charles Shultz house remains the same

WRITTEN BY **CINDY SCHWEICH HANDLER** PHOTOGRAPHY BY **7TH SIGN PHOTOGRAPHY**



At a time when news events are reported instantaneously and a day can feel like a week, it's important to remember that in the past, life moved at a gentler pace; home designs were thoughtful, and structures, or at least the auspicious ones, were built to last. Embodying that sensibility is the stately Charles Shultz home, aka "Evergreens," which sits on 2 acres above North Mountain Avenue. The estate, built in 1896 by Hoboken Bank president Charles S. Shultz, was also inhabited by extended family members, and ultimately inherited by Shultz's granddaughter, Molly. She took full ownership of the property in 1962 and bequeathed it to the Montclair Historical Society, where she was an active member, in 1997. It is currently being marketed by realtor Christine Lane of the Lane Team.

TURN-OF-THE-CENTURY TASTEFULNESS

It is not unusual for a prestigious Victorian home in Montclair to change hands. What's striking about Evergreens is the way history is preserved within it. The interior of the nearly 8,000-square-foot, 21-room home with two-bedroom carriage house has remained uniquely unchanged over the decades. "I haven't ever seen a house in the metropolitan area in its original condition from more than a hundred years ago," says Lane. "The architectural detail and quality — you can't duplicate what's there today without spending multi-millions of dollars."

For example, the seven fireplaces in Evergreens have unique carvings and tile work. Other architectural details include carved wooden ceilings and herringbone floors, pocket doors, a library with wood- and glass-enclosed bookcases, and huge leaded glass windows. The home offers views of Manhattan from an enormous wraparound porch and roof deck. A tour of the property reveals the care — and expense — taken to create this family refuge.

(Right, clockwise from top) Evergreens' ample oak woodwork can be seen in the kitchen's built-in shelves, entrance hall with detailed staircase, and eating area with intricate coffered ceiling. Delft tiles surrounding the fireplace feature windmills and other images associated with Holland. >



INSET: COURTESY OF THE MONTCLAIR HISTORICAL CENTER





LEISURELY LIVING

In the home's living room, the eyes are drawn to the fireplace, with its ornate carvings of lions' heads. Original sea-green wallpaper and oak moldings cover the walls; the floor is made of inlaid wood. One of the windows is designed to open so air flows in from the front porch.



TIME FOR READING AND GATHERING

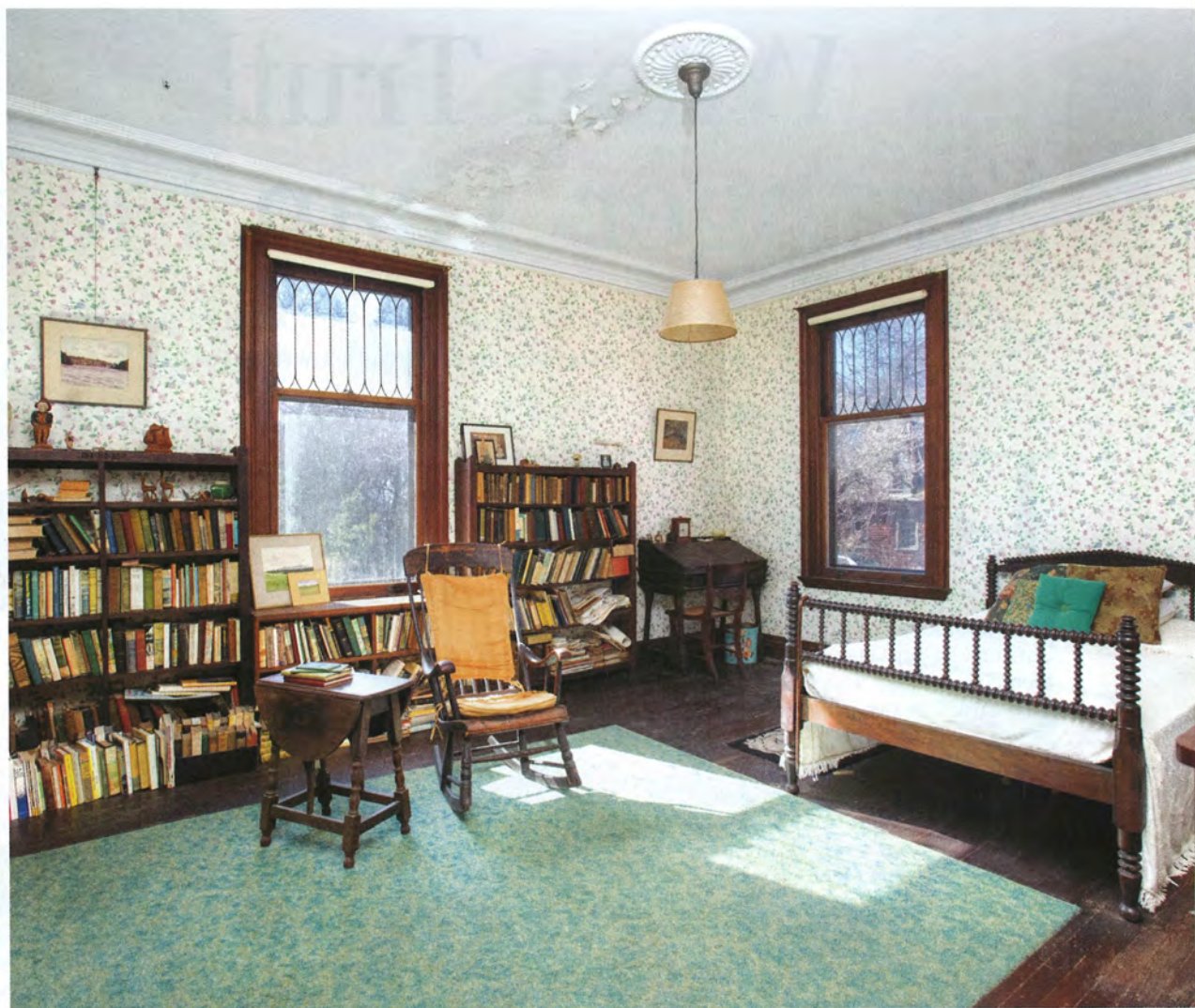
(Above) The library behind the living room has built-in bookshelves lining the walls. Most striking here are the windows that appear to be framed, as in a photo. (Right) It is said that the Shultzes weren't particularly musical, so the music room may have served as a parlor or reception area for guests. The room features some unique elements, including a tray ceiling, a rounded wall (unseen) and birdseye maple wood trim on the fireplace and pocket doors. ➤





ROOM WITH A VIEW

Charles Shultz's son Clifford, his wife Florence and their daughter, Molly, maintained an apartment on the third floor of Evergreens. Here, the area that was used as their living room appears as it did in years past, exemplified by the gramophone and manual typewriter on the desk. Writers seeking inspiration could look out the window onto the New York view. The fireplace is located along the northern exposure of the home.



ONCE AND FOREVER BEDROOM

Molly Shultz's former bedroom is on the second floor. She lived in the home her entire life, and was a well-known figure in Montclair who ran her family's building supply company at a time when being a businesswoman was uncommon. She also threw lavish Christmas parties and welcomed frequent house guests.

(Above) The rooftop deck and observatory was home to a telescope. On clear nights, the Shultzes would go to the home's roof and gaze at the Manhattan skyline and stars. Charles Shultz was fascinated with science and technology, and the house was state-of-the-art in 1896, with an elevator, an electric burglar alarm, lighting fixtures that could be gas or electric and an icebox that could be filled from outside the house. The house retains nearly all of its original systems and furnishings; the carriage house still has horse stalls. ■