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A letterpress printer and watercolor artist reveres the integrity of her antique Colonial house, enhancing it with Early American furnishings and collections.

WRITTEN BY SARAH EGGE PHOTOGRAPHED BY JOHN BESSLER PRODUCED BY KARIN LIDBECK-BRENT



OPPOSITE Antique letterpress equipment creates inventory for Lynda Campbell's company, Saltbox Press. **THIS PHOTO** The impressive great-room in Lynda's and Corey Greenberg's Colonial Era home was created in the 1980s when previous owners moved a Federal house from a nearby town and joined it to the original saltbox and its exposed beams. Native American kachinas and pottery grace the fireplace amid clean-lined, neutral furnishings, such as a cotton rug and reproduction ladder-back chairs covered in wool.

THIS PHOTO The early-1900s blanket chest wears its original paint finish and is joined by old and new rum bottles and cloches chosen for their green and brown tones. An antique painting of hollyhocks softens this indoor greenhouse space Lynda set up; she uses a primitive dry sink to pot plants.



aS THE SUN CLIMBS IN THE SKY EACH MORNING, its rays filter through the blue and green Mason jars Lynda Campbell has placed along the sills of her east-facing breakfast room windows in Wilton, Connecticut. As a watercolor painter, Lynda knew she would love the glow of softly colored light. It's her favorite time of day in her favorite spot in the house, and it's a moment of simple beauty.

Thirty years ago, when she was about to move into the 1791 saltbox with her husband and young children, the house's unfussy elegance captured Lynda's heart. "I stood there in the great-room without any furniture and just looked at the beams," she says. "The house is so pure and simple, I thought I could never improve it."

And in her view, she hasn't. She has only enhanced it with hand-loomed rugs to warm the floors, neutral paint colors that accent the tones of the woodwork and beams, a few carefully selected collections for depth, and Early American furnishings that convey the same earnest sensibilities as the architecture.

Lynda's collections grew out of the need to furnish the house when she and her husband, Corey Greenberg, moved from a small duplex in Brooklyn. The two frequented antiques sales. "Sometimes we looked for something we needed, then sometimes it was just to go and see what was there. I fell in love with a lot of cupboards. Fortunately, I have a house where a lot of cupboards work," she says.

Gradually they shifted from shopping for practical reasons to shopping for pleasure, and they became collectors of primitive baskets, hooked rugs, and textiles. Trips to Tucson led to an interest in Native American dolls and artwork. When Lynda's three daughters grew up, she started volunteering at the local historical society, learning more about Early American furnishings and curating its annual crafts show. "I got immersed in that world and started collecting redware," she says. "It has taken years and years to get here. I'm in my 60s, so this has been a lifetime of loving stuff. When you look at our house, it reflects us."



TOP LEFT A black-painted front door melds with the dark clapboard siding. Lynda guards the formula for the house color, which dates as far back as anyone can remember. **TOP RIGHT** When she's creating, Lynda wears a heavy canvas printer's apron. "I'm not afraid to wipe my hands on the front," she says. **ABOVE** Used commonly as the main entrance, this door opens into a mudroom. Old houses in Wilton are researched, and any found to have historical significance are eligible for a plaque. Lynda hangs sleigh bells near hers during the holiday season.



ABOVE A variety of topiaries, ferns, and begonias in old English cloches enjoy light through the library's large multipane window. "I always have to have growing things inside the house—for color. I'm starved for color, especially in the winter," Lynda says. She cultivates a large garden, which she studies for her watercolor paintings. **OPPOSITE** Low ceilings and tight quarters are typical in the historical saltbox houses of New England. Rather than remodel to expand rooms, Lynda opted to cozy them up, turning this room into a library with plenty of reading light and comfy upholstery. "We made the house work for us the way it was," Lynda says.





Lynda and Corey are now empty nesters, although two of their daughters live nearby, and the oldest, Meghan, works as a floral designer out of a barn on the property. The house has segued from raising children to nurturing Lynda's creativity. Several years ago, after working at a stationery store, she fell in love with printing. She took several classes then decided to turn the girls' basement playroom into a studio.

"I poured my energy into raising my girls, I enjoy decorating the house, and I paint watercolors," Lynda says. "But I felt I had this creative side that wasn't getting nurtured." She moved three letterpresses into the space and now operates Saltbox Press, making custom cards, invitations, announcements, and broadsides. Not surprisingly, the presses are antiques, with one dating to the late 1800s. Lynda puts inks directly onto cotton paper using a technique that hasn't changed for generations.

Whether it's through her printing or in the way she captures sunlight in vintage colored glass, Lynda's reverence for beauty is evident throughout the home. "What I love about my house now is that it has a soul," she says. "You can see a collector's heart and mind in it." □

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OPPOSITE TOP A beam that was hefted into place two centuries ago is a focal point in the kitchen. Lynda had the blue cupboard made in an Early American style, complete with seeded-glass panes, to accommodate large pottery and platters. **OPPOSITE BOTTOM** A copper apron-front sink has the right hardworking patina to suit the historical home. Lynda opted for marble countertops that would weather naturally. **THIS PHOTO** With its Colonial-style Windsor chairs, antique gateleg table, and flood of light, the breakfast room is an inviting space—but not for the morning meal. "It's a family joke that we eat breakfast in the kitchen and dinner in the breakfast room," Lynda says.



OPPOSITE In 1998, after years of sharing a single bathroom with their three daughters, Lynda and Corey built a master bedroom suite addition with private space for a lofted office. Lynda chose a Colonial-style tester bed to accentuate the high ceilings. Under the stairs, the couple had storage built with simple Shaker-style drawer fronts and cabinet doors. **ABOVE** "We place a bird feeder outside this window in the winter, and I like to watch the birds swoop in," Lynda says. The walnut trestle table and reproduction Windsor chair are positioned to take advantage of luminous light when she's painting or writing letters. "A woman needs a space to create. Everyone does. Corey would say I need several spaces."

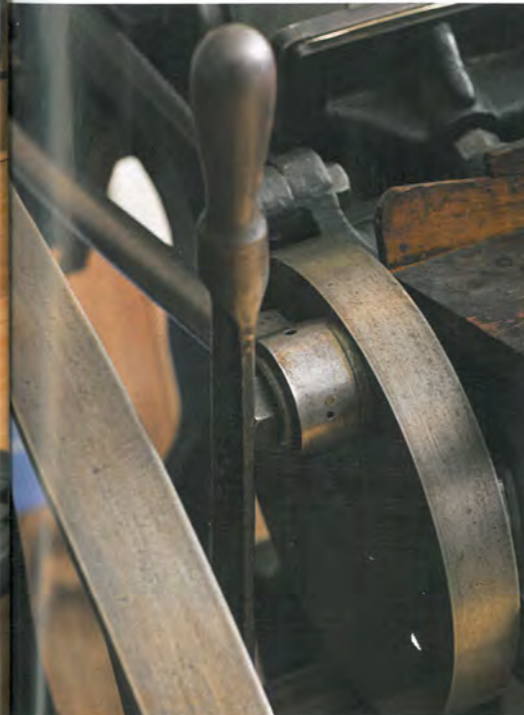


LEFT Lynda is inspired by vintage typefaces and her garden plants. She incorporates the designs into Saltbox Press products, working with friends and family to create custom wedding invitations, baby or business announcements, and individual works of art. **BELOW LEFT** Letters are hand-loaded into the press for printing. **BELOW** The Vandercook proofing press dates to 1953 and is one of only about a thousand left in the world. To make an impression using the 1889 Platen press, Lynda turns the flywheel and pumps the treadle. "I look at these machines made during the industrial age and they are made so beautifully and with care. I have such respect for that," she says.



"I FEEL STRONGLY THAT MANY WOMEN REINVENT THEMSELVES AFTER PARENTING. ONCE I GOT MY HANDS INKY, I WAS HOOKED."

—HOMEOWNER LYNDA CAMPBELL



ABOVE LEFT Ink is loaded on raised type and pressed against paper in the relief-printing process. **ABOVE** After her girls had grown up and moved out, Lynda turned their basement playground into a studio for her printing. Over time, she located three antique presses around the United States and hired machinery movers to relocate them. **LEFT** Lynda considers the presses works of industrial art in their own right. **RIGHT** Type cases hold metal and wood type and copper cuts for Lynda's creations. Her printing started as a hobby. "I didn't really think this was going to be a business, but I've got the time and the inclination," she says. "It's not hard to learn, but it's really difficult to master."

