

Bring the outdoors into the bath

If you're planning to remodel your bathroom, designing a special place for small trees and flowers can transform this relaxing haven into a botanical setting.

A free-standing display or bookcase type cabinet with glass shelves can be included against an unused wall. You may also consider installing poles across a portion of the ceiling for hanging plants, or employing wall braces. A plant shelf or greenhouse window can be included in a tub area if the space allows. If your tub will also be used for a shower, plan to install a second curtain or sliding door system. This will enable the plant area to be closed off when the shower is in use and will keep steam and flowing water from hitting the plants.

Adding a skylight in your bathroom can add dramatic accent to the space, and can provide extra natural light for your plants. Remember to turn the plants regularly to give them light on all sides. Interchanging potted bathroom plants with others in sunnier locations throughout the house is also a wise recommendation.

The bathroom can be the perfect place for plants. Foliage plants, in particular, will do much better than flowering plants, since they do not require as much direct sunlight nor a carefully controlled moisture and temperature environment.



Greenery can add a touch of outdoor freshness to the bath.

Start now to plan your spring floral displays

Professional landscape designers use plants the way an artist uses paints on a canvas. By mixing and matching, adding a splash of color here, a more subtle effect there, they use the living tools of their palette to craft a work of natural beauty.

Fall is the time to think about the design of the spring landscape. This is the season to plant flowering bulbs such as tulips, narcissi, crocus and hyacinths, according to the experts at the Netherlands Flower Bulb Information Center.

"Flower bulbs are nature's spring paintbox," says landscape designer Connie Cross. "They come in a full palette of colors, they're very easy to plant and really offer you a chance to express yourself artistically."

In garden design, as in painting, the skillful use of color is a key element. "Color is a very personal thing," insists Cross. "There is really no such thing as a wrong choice so long as it pleases you." She adds, however, there are some tips to follow to get the most pleasing color impact in your spring garden.

Spring gardens can be based on a one-color approach, a carefully selected combination of colors or just a wild riot of color. It all depends on personal taste. "The biggest mistake people tend to make is to plant too few bulbs. Then they're disappointed come spring. One of the reasons is that, in fall, there is still summer color in the garden. It is important to imagine what the garden is going to look like after winter when no other flowers are blooming."

"The other mistake people make is to plant one tulip here and another there or to plant their bulbs too far apart," says Cross. "Mass tulips together. Whether you're planting 20 or 2,000, you'll get the greatest impact by planting bulbs close together in groups or 'color blocks.' Think of creating little (or large) bouquets in the garden."

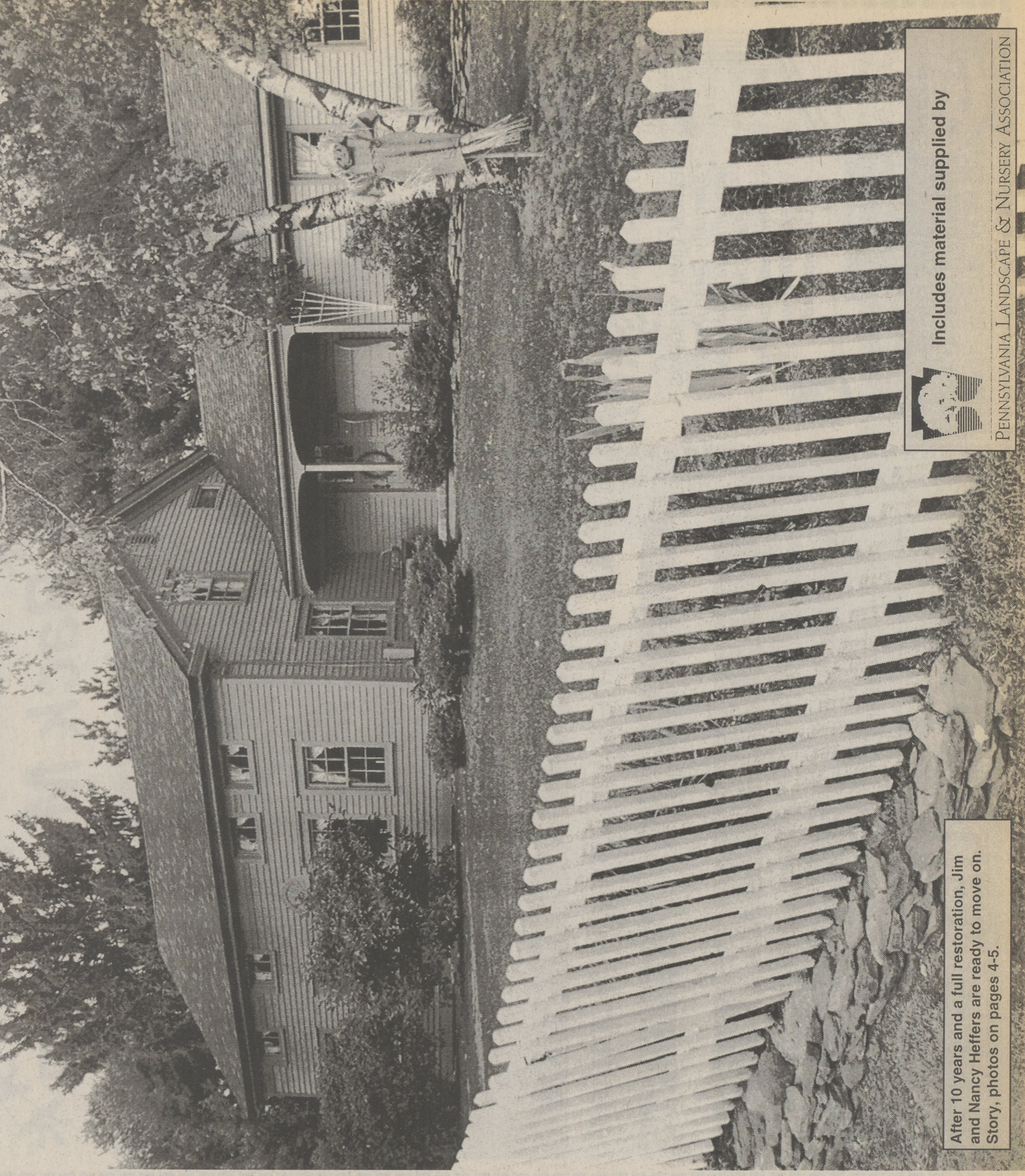
What's most important to remember is fall is the time to think of spring color. Cross sums it up best: "When that first tulip or daffodil blooms in the garden, with nothing else around, it's worth a million dollars."

Fall Home Improvement

The Dallas Post

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After 10 years and a full restoration, Jim and Nancy Heffers are ready to move on. Story, photos on pages 4-5.



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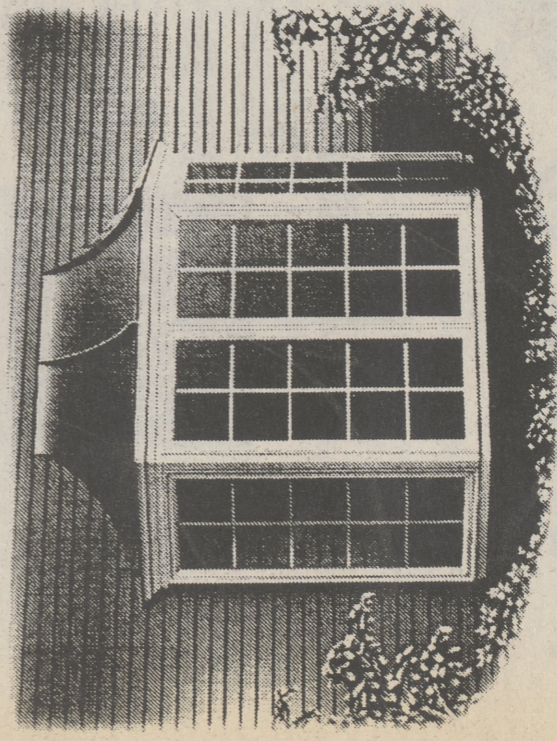
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