

Pane management

Window restoration keeps historic integrity

By Audrey Reed
Staff Writer

For window installer Ed Sanchez, tossing out repairable windows was starting to eat away at his conscience.

When he would put in new windows at the homeowner's or building owner's request, the old ones would end up in a Dumpster.

"It actually got to a point where it started to bug me," Sanchez said. "I'm the kind of guy who puts 400,000 miles on my car before I replace it."

In part to atone for his old job and in part to incorporate his love of historic pieces, Sanchez began **Window Restoration and Repair**.

While his office and warehouse are in Los Alamitos, an increasing amount of his business takes him to homes and businesses in the Pasadena area.

"We get windows to work the way they worked back in 1920 or whenever the house was built," said Sanchez, who employs four other window restorers. "We get them to open with one hand, so people aren't struggling to open and close their windows."

Restoring windows is often cheaper and less messy than buying and installing new ones. On top of that, the old windows are usually of higher quality.

"Many of the windows of past are actually better built than the ones of today," as the wood is harder and deters parasites, Sanchez said.

The process, which costs about \$225 per window, involves reducing the amount of friction between the frame and window. Often, weather stripping isn't needed with older windows because they are designed to fit so snugly, Sanchez said.

Stephen Brandt owns a 1931 Spanish Revival home in San Marino and said he spent a year and half worrying about the condition of his windows and what he would have to do to replace them.

In the course of his research, he



ERIC TOM / CORRESPONDENT

JUST LIKE NEW: Brian Saffel, above, sands an original window before glazing it after repairing damage at Stephen Brandt's 1931 Spanish Revival home in San Marino on Friday. Saffel works for Window Restoration and Repair which repairs windows as old as 75 years old and installs new ones constructed to be identical to the originals. Below, Nick Adkins nails down molding after installing a new window.



can actually repair the rotted area with epoxies and things of that sort," he said. "I can make new windows, but the old ones are better."

Sanchez said environmental concerns should also be taken into consideration.

It makes sense to put new windows on new buildings, he said, but replacing original windows with energy efficient ones may not be the right answer. Often, the cost to replace windows can exceed any savings from the extra efficiency.

Lazzaretto pointed out that reusing materials is also an environmentally wise choice.

Sanchez said that once windows have been restored, the only thing to worry about is painting.

"There are certain areas a painter should never paint," he said. "We'll even talk to the painter and be the bad guy. But it's worth it."

Sanchez tells everyone who works for him that the restoration should last until the next generation.

"You'll be good for another 60 years," he said. "We can make an appointment in another 60 years."

audrey.reed@sgvn.com
(626) 962-8811, Ext. 2230

ran across Window Restoration and Repair's Web site.

"I was pleasantly surprised to see they were big on fixing windows," Brandt said.

Brandt has used the company twice to work on a total of six windows after seeing how easy the repairing actually is.

"There was one window that had so much damage," Brandt said. "I was really concerned because there was elaborate staining, but they brought it back to life."

Christine Lazzaretto, preservation director at Pasadena Heri-

tage, said her group encourages people to repair original windows and doors if at all possible.

"Keeping the original windows and doors goes a long way in keeping the character of the building," she said.

Lazzaretto said that there are many resources available through Pasadena Heritage and National Parks Services to guide people looking to restore windows and doors.

Sometimes windows cannot be restored, but Sanchez said that's a rarity.

"In cases where it is rotted, we

DIGEST