

North Shore

BY
LUCY ROGERS
HAWKINS

PERSONALITIES.

Ben Marshall's studio in Wilmette, on a bluff overlooking the harbor and the craft of the Sheridan Shore Yacht club, is among the finest show-places in the world, everybody admits. Combining architectural offices for a staff of forty with a home and tropical garden, the villa is unbelievably beautiful in its furnishings and design. Antiques from all over the world furnish the rooms, and the spaciousness and trick effects intrigue the visitor into open-mouthed wonder, even if he is surprise-proof.

At the present time the Wilmette firm is represented by Lewis B. Walton and Frank Kegley, since Mr. Marshall is giving much of his time to the management of the Drake and

management, Mr. Marshall especially enjoys the cuisine. "I can work right along with any chef in the country," he admitted proudly. "When I built the Blackstone, the chef from the Holland house in New York City was amazed at the fine way in which the kitchens were laid out. When something goes wrong—perhaps the biscuits, I don't go out to the kitchen and say, 'These are awful.' I go in and ask for flour and butter and make up a batch of biscuits myself. Then a chef looks up to you."

Finesse for good living is equally well illustrated in the Wilmette villa. The Marshall studio has no formal dining room. When covers are laid for a large party, say 75 persons,

level appears, with food for the first course, and so on.

As for light refreshments, the Marshall villa offers two possibilities: a tiny bar in the form of a ship's cabin wherein an electric switch sets the good ship Ambrose rocking on a painted sea, enchanting mermaids greet the eye from small port-holes, and red leather tops the low stools and deep end-seat; and the French cafe with its side-walk tables a step above the cafe floor, its bottles strung on cord and framed in a lighted aperture beside the fireplace, a la the fashion of the bottles used for decor in the Cape Cod room at the Drake, and its shining copper, pewter, brass utensils, garlic twist, candles—and frank prints.

Prince of Wales Caller

The studio holds many other charms for the visitor, and visitors have been numerous and noted, including the Prince of Wales, whose name is burned into the table top reserved for the guest register, and General Balbo, who sent the architect his autographed photograph a year after his flying visit to Chicago.

A tropical garden is the motif of the Marshall villa, occupying a third of the space. As one enters through the beautiful 15th Century Roman gates and passes through the reception hall with its reproductions of a Raphael and a Michelangelo and its medieval crucifix, the garden's lush greenery and swimming pool lie ahead. At the far end are deep windows which give upon the lake. In summer the windows slide down, leaving only a screen to bar the view. Vines, trailing binder ropes, bamboo trees, palms, banana trees, jasmine, moss, and pink ball trees make of the garden a fairyland. Colored lights and carved lamps enhance the garden's beauty at night. Fifteen switches control the circuits for lights and water.

Effective Flood-lighting

Walks flank the pool, which is curved like a sea-shell, decorated with statuary, and lighted by great flood-lights set in the walls. On one side are a grotto lighted with blue lights, a wayside Japanese tea house (quite the thing for a child's playroom), and the famous Chinese temple. Half hidden in the greenery, the dragon portal admits the visitor to an exquisite interior with red lacquer pillars, gilded dragons, and carpet of quilted satin. Along one wall is a niche for a tiny golden shrine, on another a niche for a bronze Buddah contemplatively resting against a green and gold embroidered hanging. The third wall serves as portal for a luxurious oriental divan, heaped with silken cushions.

Opening off the garden is the studio wherein Italian antiques abound, massive old tables, enormous gas-lighted candles set at intervals around the walls, curious chairs. Bouguereau's "Aurora" hangs in one corner over a diminutive clavichord. The hand-carved stone fireplace is a reproduction of one in the Doge's palace in Venice. Here are more deep windows, so deep that the Filipino caretaker Mogol laughingly confesses he doesn't remember ever seeing them washed. In summer, these are lowered into the wall, and the view of lake and harbor is thus made more intimate. Elephant grey chenille is used in the wall coverings, and the floor is parquet at its best. A scarlet silk hanging from Peking forms the back drop for the tiny stage, which is as well lighted and equipped as any in Chicago.

A huge pulpit occupies one corner of the room, the swinging doors of

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BEN MARSHALL

Blackstone hotels in Chicago. At the Drake he occupies the executive offices with Edwin L. Brashears of Winnetka, his partner. Among their new plans for the aggrandizement of the Drake is the building up of an orchestra composed entirely of clever Chicago musicians, and they are especially proud of the Cape Cod room which has quickly won the appreciation of epicureans for its perfection of food and atmosphere.

Having designed three of Chicago's most famous hotels, the Blackstone, Drake, and Edgewater Beach, Mr. Marshall agreed with this reporter's remark that many an architect who has designed hotels should operate them for a while to determine for themselves how they should be built. "Instead of designing the facade and lobby first," he said, "the initial problems that should receive attention are the dining rooms, kitchen, room service, and bedrooms; then the elevation and the lobbies."

Interested in every phase of hotel

tables kept under the stage at the end of the studio are pulled out and arranged by the deep windows overlooking the lake. En famille lunch or tea is served in the garden. And for after-theater or supper parties, the "Portico of Isis" is the scene, that exotic glassed-in Egyptian room at the very top of the villa, flanked on one side by the landscaped roof garden with its fountain pool and overlooking the vast expanse of Lake Michigan on the other side.

Utilizes Disappearing Table

The famous disappearing table is in the center of this room, which is decorated in red and yellow, with red porcelain lamps, heavy silken panels bearing embroidered Egyptian figures, red lights on the outer window ledge. A dahabiyeh-like divan accommodates twenty persons. The table top forms part of the floor until supper is ready. Then the top moves up toward the ceiling, and the lower

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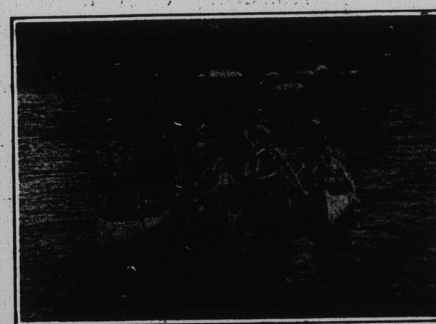
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