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HomeLifeStyle ♦ Arlington Connection ♦ February 2009

Safe Company Thrives In Arlington

Local company thrives by selling safes to security-minded.

BY DAVID SCHULTZ

Peter Groves has sold safes to high-ranking government officials and to foreign heads of state. He even once installed safes in the vehicles of the Israeli intelligence service so they could secure their handguns.

But he also installs safes in the homes of Northern Virginia residents. Groves is the owner of FedLock, an Arlington-based company that specializes in making safes for government, business and individual clients.

“People want to put them in

difficult places, with a lot of weight and the floor won’t be able to take it,” he said. “Usually [we install] just a wall safe in a closet, tucked away behind the clothes. Lots of people like to use that as camouflage.”

Groves said he first became aware of the importance of safes when he was a graduate student living in Rosslyn and a burglar broke into his home. “Every residence should have a safe,” he said. “Your valuable documents, your heirlooms, [they] don’t have a price.”

Groves said the majority of their business consists of serving clients who are from the government or clients who do business with the government.

But individuals also make up a sizeable chunk of their clientele,

he said.

Many people want to keep their valuables in their homes rather than in a safe deposit box in a bank, Groves said. “No one wants to have to wait for the bank to open if they’re working on their taxes, or they’re working on their will, or they want to access a fine piece of jewelry,” he said.

“You can just go right to your safe and open it up and get everything you need.”

He says that as the economy has worsened, his business has boomed.

“Because the economy gets worse, crime increases,” Groves said. “That always happens. ... When the economy gets bad, the security business gets better.”



FedLock co-owner Michael Groves founded FedLock 20 years ago in Arlington with his brother Pete.

“Every residence should have a safe.”

— Pete Groves, co-owner, FedLock



PHOTOS BY LOUISE KRAFFT CONNECTION

For antique collectors, FedLock has a few custom made safes that exceed today’s fire and burglary standards.



Electronic locks for entry doors and safes.



Safe At Home

“There are good bargains now in 18th and 19th Century American furniture. Tables that sold for \$10,000 five years ago might be selling for \$6,500 now.”

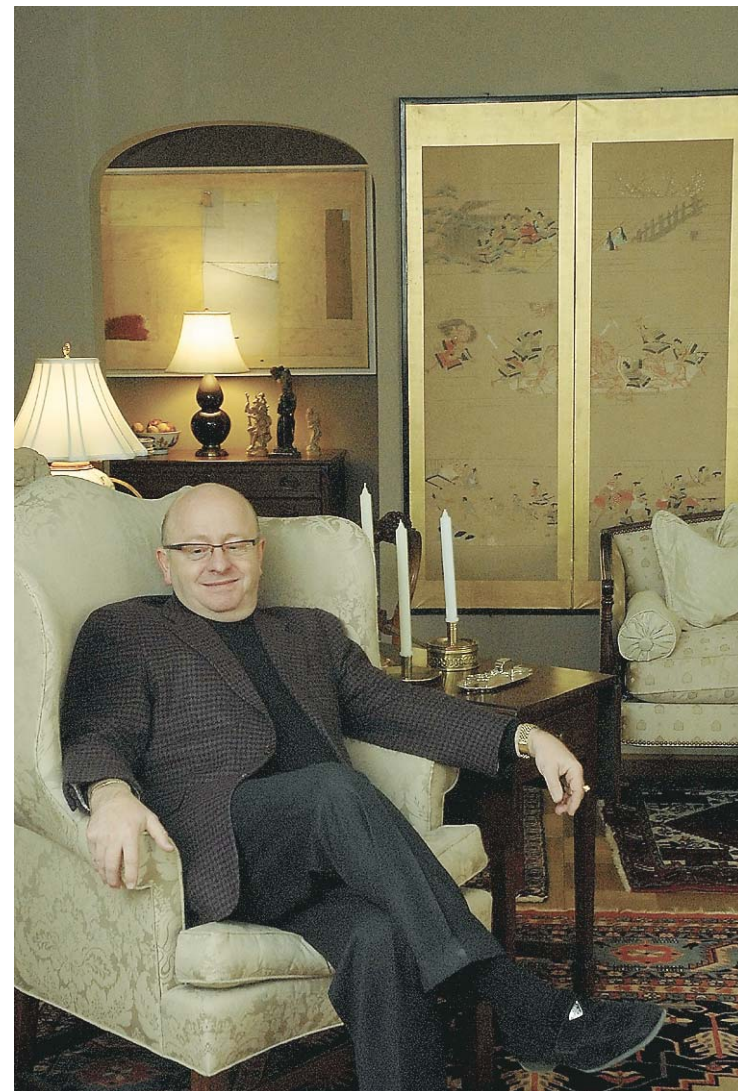
— Lincoln Sander, Executive Director, ADAA

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL

Julian Fore purchased his first piece of antique furniture in the 1970s when he was a graduate student at the University of Virginia. It was a mahogany English bachelor's chest that he found at a shop in Charlottesville. He bought it because he found it affordable and well made, but he later found an historical treasure.

“Tucked inside one of the drawers was the funeral program of one of the prior owners,” said Fore, owner of Fore Consulting Inc., in McLean.

For those who have a penchant for antiques, it is experiences like this that often propel great collections. Today, Fore's Arlington home is a masterful mix of 18th and 19th century furniture, silver, porcelain, crystal and art. Each piece has an intriguing story behind it that evokes a special memory, but purchasing such treasures can be risky



Julian Fore at his home in Arlington.

business unless you do your homework. Learning the principles behind building a collection isn't easy, so when Fore, offered to give me a condensed lesson in antique acquisition, I accepted eagerly.

I met him at his home with author and noted scholar of 18th and 19th century American decorative arts, Sumpter Priddy, who says that whether you wish to furnish an entire house or simply buy a few pieces, it is important to start by defining the style that

appeals to you, be it clean Chippendale lines or graceful Queen Anne curves. A variety of different goals or objectives influence someone's choice of antiques.

“One is aesthetic and another is the sorts of ties you have historically, or regionally to the things that you are buying,” said Priddy, who owns an antiques store in Old Town Alexandria and builds and refines collections for clients that range from museums to private residents.

Fore's keen taste and penchant for 18th and 19th century Mid-Atlantic furniture, particularly from Maryland and Virginia, are immediately evident as a



18 century walnut Chippendale cellaret

visitor steps into his entry hall, greeted by a towering 30-hour grandfather clock from the Harpers Ferry region of West Virginia made of cherry wood and embellished with a floral dial and sturdy, rounded finials. This is a clock that must be wound every 30 hours – it is a less expensive movement.

Across the small room sits a cherry wood game-table with a bookbinder's edge that is flanked on both sides by late 18th century mahogany chairs with intricate inlay designs and horsehair seats.

While Fore's collection exhibits his sense of style, he says his ambitions as a collector extend beyond aesthetic value. “You're also helping to protect history and culture,” said Fore. “It is nice to be



New England Maplewood highboy

able to do that. Hopefully some of these things will go to a place like a museum where they will be cared for a much longer period of time.”

After you determine your taste and goals, take a look at your budget. “If you have deep pockets you might want to focus on the really specialized, high-end dealers,” said Priddy. “If you have a more modest capacity, you still want to find people who specialize in what you like, but maybe you can find them locally rather than having to go a great distance.”

Once you figure out what you want and what you can afford, the next step is to educate yourself. “Learn something about what you are purchasing,” said Fore, a real estate consultant. “Read, visit

museums and find a reputable dealer. Your dealer not only guides your collection, but he also educates you at the same time. Now I can go into a shop and just identify things like the period and where it most likely was made. A relationship with a good dealer is very important.”

Professional antique dealers associations such as the Antiques Council and Antiques

Dealers Association of America (ADAA), of which Priddy is a member, are good resources for locating reputable merchants.

PROVENANCE is another consideration that Priddy and Fore stress. Both say obtaining documentation about a piece's past is paramount.

“When you purchase something,” said Fore, “it is important to have information about its context – who may have owned it and interesting details about the people who might have been associated with it over the years. Not only does that make the piece intrinsically more valuable, it makes the story better.”

Fore has been able to determine the historical significance of many of the items in his collection, including a sideboard from Eppington in Chesterfield, Virginia. He said the piece was in the house when Thomas Jefferson's daughter lived there in the early 1800s.

An experienced dealer should be able to provide historic details. “The people you deal with should stand behind their merchandise and put in writing what you're buying from them, where it was made, when it was made, the condition

“I don't have the kinds of furniture or pieces that you just can't use at all.”

—Julian Fore



Author and noted scholar of 18th and 19th century American decorative arts, Sumpter Priddy and Julian Fore in Fore's Arlington home.

and any restorations,” said Priddy. “That is time consuming stuff, but it is somewhat of an insurance policy.”

Among the parts of his collection that give Fore the most pleasure are an 18th century, walnut, Chippendale cellaret that he keeps in his dining room, and a stately mid-18th century cherry wood grandfather clock that sits beneath the cathedral ceiling in his bedroom. “Things should nurture us or reinforce us and make us comfortable in our homes,” said Priddy. “It doesn't make sense to spend a whole lot of money unless you are comfortable.”



Detail from a dressing table in the antique shop of Sumpter Priddy in Alexandria.



18th century cherry grandfather clock in Julian Fore's Arlington home.

PHOTOS BY LOUISE KRAFFT/CONNECTION

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Microwave popcorn popper at Sur La Table.

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New Waring popcorn popper at Sur La Table.

PHOTO BY LOUISE KRAFFT/CONNECTION



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**During October, November and December
190 homes in the area sold for \$1million or more,
34 of them in Arlington.**



PHOTO BY ROBBIE HAMMER/THE CONNECTION

The residence at 6606 29th St. N. in Arlington recently sold for \$1,659,900.

Arlington

- ❖ 1111 19th St N #2602 (a 2 BR, 2 FB, 1 HB Hi-Rise 9+ Floors in Waterview sold for \$2,000,000 on Oct. 10, 2008.
- ❖ 3415 Vermont St N (a 6 BR, 4 FB, 1 HB SF Home on 0.23 ac) in Country Club Hills/Broyhill sold for \$2,000,000 on Dec. 16, 2008.
- ❖ 4607 38th St N (a 6 BR, 6 FB, 1 HB SF Home on 0.28 ac) in Country Club Hills/Arlingwood sold for \$1,995,000 on Oct. 16, 2008.
- ❖ 1421 Nash St N (a 3 BR, 4 FB, 2 HB Townhouse on 0.02 ac) in Bromptons At Monument Pl sold for \$1,775,000 on Dec. 05, 2008.
- ❖ 2357 Fillmore St N (a 5 BR, 4 FB, 1 HB SF Home on 0.22 ac) in Woodmont sold for \$1,685,000 on Dec. 23, 2008.
- ❖ 5340 27th St N (a 5 BR, 5 FB, 1 HB SF Home on 0.35 ac) in Country Club Estates sold for \$1,679,713 on Nov. 05, 2008.
- ❖ 6606 29th St N (a 5 BR, 4 FB, 1 HB SF Home on 0.23 ac) in Berkshire Oakwood sold for \$1,659,900 on Oct. 08, 2008.
- ❖ 1401 Oak St N #910 (a 3 BR, 2 FB, 1 HB Mid-Rise 5-8 Floors in The Weslie sold for \$1,650,000 on Dec. 30, 2008.
- ❖ 5330 27th St N (a 6 BR, 6 FB, 1 HB SF Home on 0.34 ac) in Country Club sold for \$1,580,250 on Dec. 31, 2008.
- ❖ 2632 Military Rd (a 5 BR, 5 FB, 1 HB SF Home on 0.26 ac) in Lee Heights sold for \$1,525,000 on Oct. 07, 2008.
- ❖ 2621 24th St N (a 6 BR, 4 FB, 0 HB SF Home on 0.59 ac) in Dover Balmoral Riverwood sold for \$1,475,000 on Nov. 14, 2008.
- ❖ 907 Irving St N (a 5 BR, 4 FB, 1 HB SF Home on 0.18 ac) in Clarendon sold for \$1,455,000 on Oct. 07, 2008.
- ❖ 5367 27th St N (a 5 BR, 4 FB, 1 HB SF Home on 0.24 ac) in Country Club sold for \$1,405,000 on Dec. 04, 2008.
- ❖ 2208 18th St N (a 4 BR, 3 FB, 1 HB SF Home on 0.10 ac) in Lyon Village sold for \$1,400,000 on Nov. 15, 2008.
- ❖ 3111 7th St N (a 5 BR, 5 FB, 1 HB SF Home on 0.15 ac) in Clarendon sold for \$1,400,000 on Dec. 02, 2008.
- ❖ 4904 16th St N (a 4 BR, 4 FB, 0 HB SF Home on 0.27 ac) in Waycroft sold for \$1,350,000 on Oct. 30, 2008.
- ❖ 3049 Military Rd (a 5 BR, 4 FB, 1 HB SF Home on 0.22 ac) in Bellevue Forest sold for \$1,337,885 on Nov. 17, 2008.
- ❖ 906 Highland St N (a 4 BR, 3 FB, 1 HB SF Home on 0.11 ac) in Clarendon sold for \$1,300,000 on Nov. 03, 2008.
- ❖ 1617 Taylor St N (a 4 BR, 3 FB, 1 HB SF Home on 0.27 ac) in Waverly Hills sold for \$1,269,000 on Dec. 12, 2008.
- ❖ 5081 Little Falls Rd (a 6 BR, 5 FB, 1 HB SF Home on 0.35 ac) in Shirley Woods sold for \$1,245,000 on Oct. 31, 2008.
- ❖ 5008 26th St N (a 5 BR, 4 FB, 1 HB SF Home on 0.15 ac) in Country Club sold for \$1,220,000 on Oct. 08, 2008.

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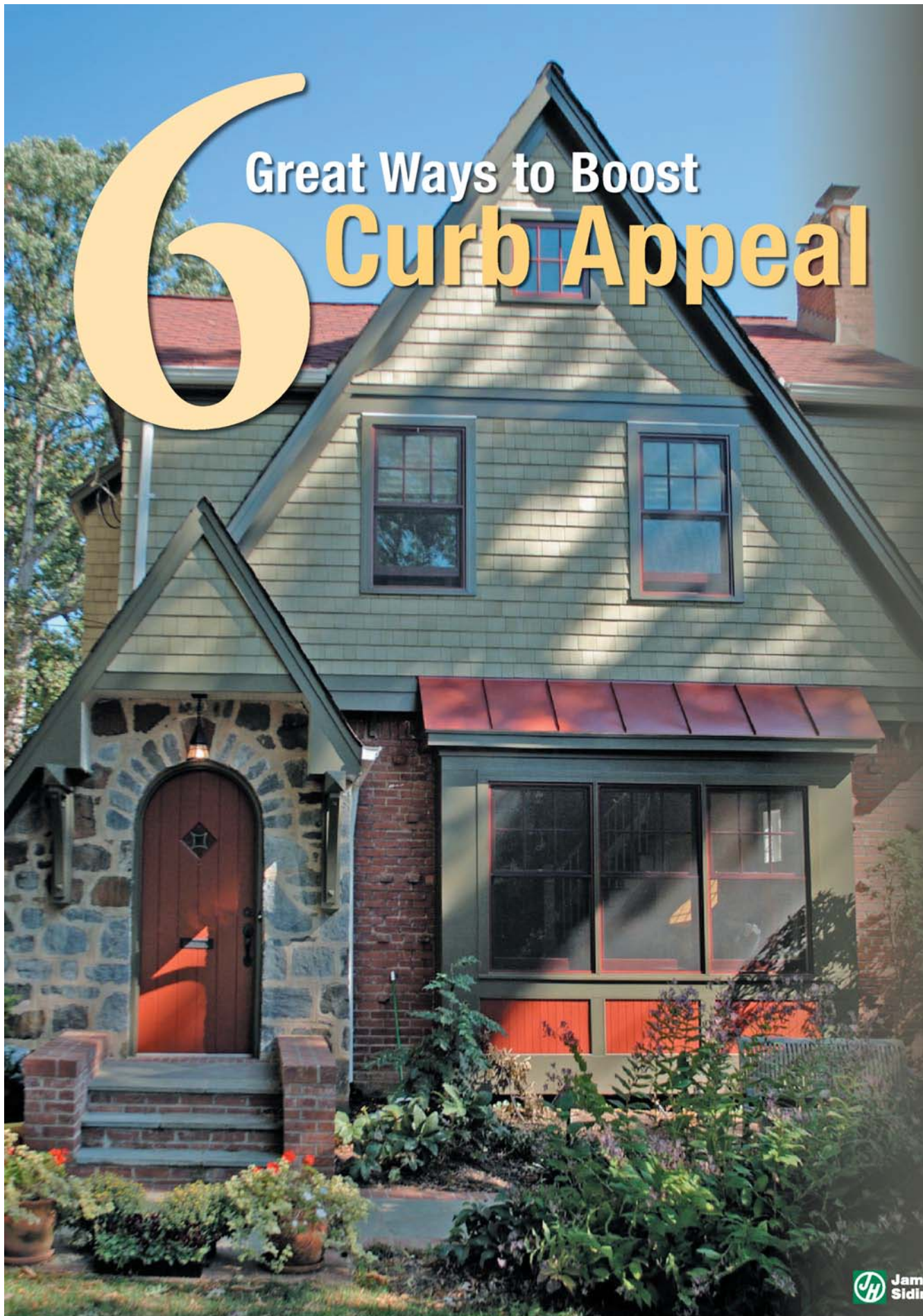
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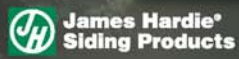
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