

# THE MASTER CRAFTSMAN

*Van Dusen's goal is to bring back original woodwork details of San Diego's old homes*

William Van Dusen is a self-taught craftsman, starting his woodworking career more than 35 years ago when he was captivated by the historical features of the town of Julian.

During a period of rejuvenation of the town, he began to build his first business, Julian Millworking, which provided the historical millwork for many of the gold rush-era commercial buildings and homes. In the following years he worked with master craftsmen, architects and well-established companies in high-end residential and commercial woodworking. In recent years Van Dusen returned to the work that first inspired him.

"It's fantastic that many of our older San Diego neighborhoods are being rejuvenated by enthusiastic homeowners with an appreciation of how special homes and neighborhoods affect their lives," said Van Dusen. "There is a newfound sense of community and home in these historical neighborhoods."

These homes and neighborhoods have been through a lot. In the 1960s through the 1990s, many of these homes were flipped, relegated to rentals or torn down with no regard to their history. Old homes were stripped of their original features, vinyl windows replaced wood sash, MDF moldings and particle board cabinets replaced original woodwork.

The big box stores were helpful in promoting low cost replacements and "upgrades." Often, the homeowner is faced with many

layers of previous improvements and remodels that are like bad makeup hiding the true beauty of a home.

Fortunately, homeowners today have found an interest in the past. Taking on even a partial renovation can be stressful, costly and time consuming. Homeowners need help and advice to navigate their way through their projects. It is important for the homeowner to do their homework and work with people that are experienced with special needs that an older home presents.

Van Dusen's goal is to bring back the original woodwork details of San Diego's old homes that may have been lost over the years. He does his research on the built-in bookcases, china cabinets, molding and other millwork features common in specific neighborhoods or by a specific builder.

Using his collection of vintage American-made woodworking machinery, traditional craftsmanship and historically correct wood, such as White Oak, Gumwood and Douglas Fir, he re-discovers history one project at a time.

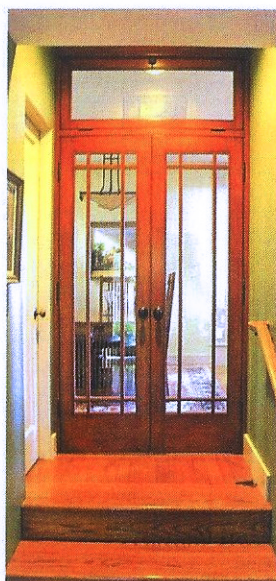
William Van Dusen Millworking can be reached at (619) 443-7689. Van Dusen's email is: [william@wvdmillwork.com](mailto:william@wvdmillwork.com).



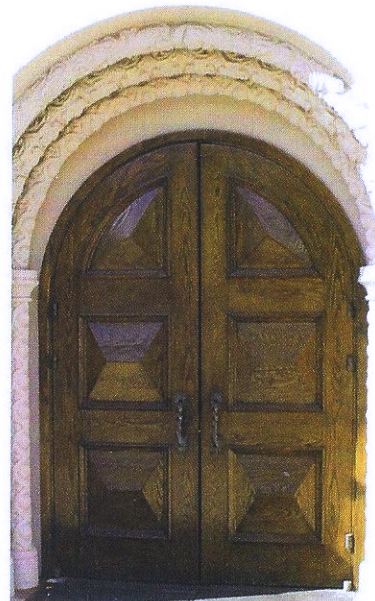
William Van Dusen in his shop.



Woodwork on a 33rd Street house in North Park.



French doors and transom



Door at the University of San Diego