

Special Issue

American Know-How

HOUSE & GARDEN

JULY
\$1 1976

Breakthroughs

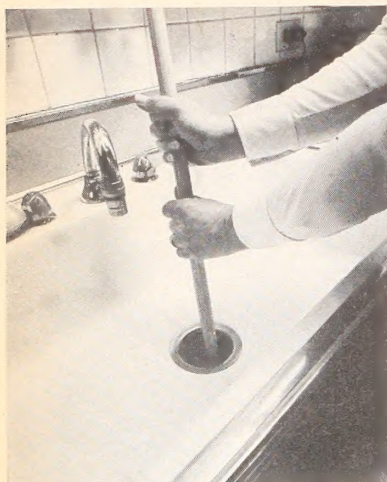
- A fabulous apartment and house that has everything
- Electronic marvel — the house that thinks for itself
- Terrific family kitchen for quick and easy cooking
- 15 new low-calorie party recipes
- Movers and doers coast to coast
- 4 ways to live longer, look younger

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HOUSE & GARDEN

(INCORPORATING LIVING FOR YOUNG HOMEMAKERS)

Vol. 148 No. 7



BEADLE

ON THE COVER: For people who love summer: a family kind of place, for lunch or a late supper before everyone rushes off to see the fireworks. It's just an old-fashioned Long Island veranda (your own back porch would do), turned into an outdoor dining room by its owners, Mr. and Mrs. Lee V. Eastman. The table, one of two, is all down-home Fourth-of-July, clothed in red cotton and surrounded with mismatched old white wicker chairs cushioned in blue denim. The soup bowls are blue and white Gienware, a heavy pottery used in the provinces of France. Along one wall nearby, a buffet shelf has been installed near an electric outlet so foods can be kept warm on trays. The Eastmans keep their entertaining informal always, with two or three simple, delicious dishes—most with ingredients fresh from the garden, and all the kind that encourage you to help yourself. For the summer lunch here, a soup of clams and mussels stewed in a savory liquor of white wine, shallots, and thyme. With it, a tomato and onion salad, a plum tart for dessert. The flower garden was planned like an old-fashioned English one, with mostly annuals growing in masses and clumps—fewer weeds, a natural, prettily tousled look. This summer, marigolds, cosmos, zinnias, snapdragons, daisies, a begonia border—and a birdbath for the cardinals that love the setting (and the Eastmans who feed them) so much that they stay all winter long.

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BRITISH HOUSE & GARDEN

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RALPH F. TIMM, PUBLISHER

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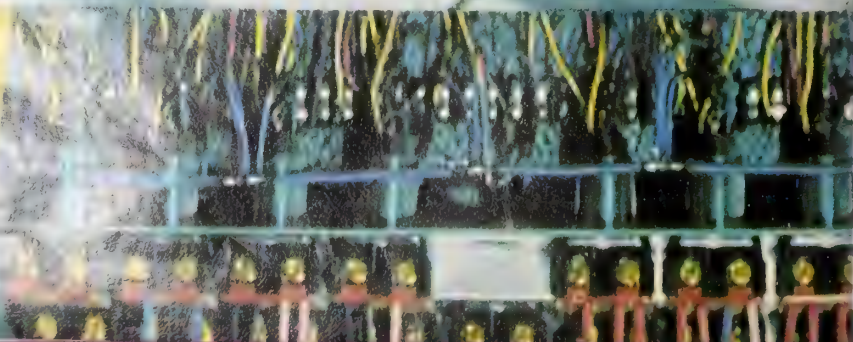
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Breakthrough



A HOUSE
THAT THINKS FOR ITSELF





COMPUTER

WIZARDRY

ADAPTED

FOR LIVING

A house is a machine for living in," the late Swiss architect Le Corbusier once said, but he never imagined a house like this. An inventive design by Stanley Tigerman using industrial materials, modular construction systems, it also contains amazing devices adapted for residential use by young electronics wizard Robert Phillips. Most stunning: a central computer that can control:

All 200 ceiling lights in the house, in any combination, and with a choice of brightness levels.

All 17 telephones, which, through adjacent speakers, can convert to phone-to-phone intercoms or house-wide paging systems. Also digital read-outs for time and temperature.

The dishwasher. □ A snow-melting system under the driveway. □ The outdoor water supply.

Thermostats of the house's two heating systems (radiant heat in the floors plus forced warm air from ceiling diffusers), and heating of an indoor pool.

Television sets which can be remotely tuned. The house has several antennas, each designed for optimal reception on a single channel, the computer automatically connecting a set to the right antenna as channels change. Programs can be recorded, seen later; kitchen screen displays recipes.

Security devices: fire and burglar alarms, electric eyes that replace doorbells, closed-circuit TV that shows approaching visitors.

An automated laundry cart, now being built, and a second cart, being designed, to bring food and drinks from the kitchen.

The house's computer controls the automatic opening and rotation of the family's rooftop observatory, left, above, as well as roll-up garage doors of aluminum slats. Far left, the control center from which everything is programmed. Left, a strip of computer circuitry.

INDUSTRIAL MATERIALS, REMARKABLE LIVING SPACE

The house is built in many ways like a factory, taking advantage of current building technology to a degree very rare in residential building. It is the design of Chicago architects Stanley Tigerman and Associates, and it looks somewhat like a factory, too, but an ultra sleek factory, in a wooded setting overlooking a lake, and with elements—an observatory for the family hobby of astronomy, a heated indoor pool—not commonly found in either houses or factories. Typical construction has been forgone in favor of industrial materials and techniques. Exterior panels are either insulated glass or Alcoa's *Alply*, a core of urethane insulation sandwiched between aluminum facings inside and out. Tigerman's design, appropriate for its electronic fittings, is a neutral machine, with a minimum of fussy detail, depending even for its color on the mirroring of its surroundings.



LONG SPANS, MODULAR CONSTRUCTION

Steel pipe columns support steel joists and the corrugated steel roof decking. This structure, unusual for a house, has unusual advantages: first, the security of thorough fire resistance; second, the opportunity for unobstructed floor area usually found only in commercial or industrial loft spaces. Interior partitions carry no loads, and the central area is a structurally uninterrupted space 35 feet wide and 100 feet long.



The exterior is totally reflective, changing color with the seasons and the weather (above, glowing soft pink at sunset). Right, the living room with a view of the pool enclosure beyond. Painting on left by Wardlaw, on right by Robert Slutzky. Lower right, one of 17 control panels.





A house that thinks *continued*

LONG-DISTANCE CONTROLS

The computer is commanded in a number of ways: by the flick of a wall switch, by pushbuttons, or by radio control from a hand-held transmitter which can be carried to any room, out into the garden, in the car—anywhere, in fact, up to 60 miles from the house. At greater distances, coded commands can be telephoned to the computer, directing it, for example, to heat the water in the pool, *far right*, by switching on the radiant heating in the pool walls and floor.

COMPUTEREASE MADE EASY

Pushbuttons on the house's 17 control panels and on the portable transmitters direct the computer by means of a 3-digit code. The computer is thus programmed for up to 999 different tasks, and the owners say that remembering the right number for each task isn't hard at all. The first button pushed, in each series of three, specifies a part of the house. (For example, the digit "2" could mean "dining room.") The second digit asks for a general condition. (A second "2" could mean "turn on ceiling lights.") The third digit of a series asks for a more specific condition. (Pressing "0" could mean "all ceiling lights"; pressing "4" could ask for the in-

dividual operation of the fourth light from the window.)

SURPRISING SAVINGS

Because computerized switching is done by means of relays requiring as little as 5 volts for each switching operation, the computer's operating cost is negligible. The owners say that so much mechanization actually helps them save. Because controls are always so close at hand, room lights are seldom left burning when not in use. Lighting levels, also, are kept no higher than needed: When the built-in lighting is switched on through the computer, it is at first switched on at a low-brightness level; for more light, buttons must be pressed again. In practice, low lighting levels are encouraged; less wattage used, bulbs last longer.

COMING: A LAUNDRY ROBOT

The system continues to be improved. Now being built is a laundry cart that will run around the house on command, offering clean linen or taking things to the laundry room. How? Before the concrete floor slab was poured, a pattern of wires was laid out below the slab. Motors on the cart will be guided by faint electrical impulses moving through the wires, rolling the cart.

SOON IT MAY TALK

Also planned for future addition is another method for sending orders to the computer: by human voice. Familiar words spoken in familiar ways could be matched by the computer against recorded information about pitch and vibration. Such recognition would trigger the order for an appropriate response. It may even be possible for the computer to talk back, by playing recorded messages through speakers at each control unit.

What effect does living in such a house have? In this case, the house's owner, described by architect Tigerman as "inherently inventive," has been so pleased with the equipment devised by Robert Phillips that he has joined Phillips in a new business venture, Gimix, Inc., in Chicago. With Phillips as president, Gimix is already producing telephone answering and paging devices, and plans soon to market the house's whole computer system.

The owner consults with young electronics expert Robert Phillips, above left, in the house's control room. Right top: a ceiling strip diffuser directs warm air against the glass; a steel pipe column replaces the usual wood post. Upper center: the breakfast, kitchen area, with a construction by Joseph Burlini on left. Lower center: curved glass wall, aluminum-faced cabinets in a bedroom. Bottom: In the study, stainless steel table, cabinetwork by Edmond Fernandez of Architectural Objects. See page 141 for building materials.





ERWITT

