

one Samuel Hall for sixpence, although it was reported that she was 'not loath to transfer').

This colourful history is hard to reconcile with the elegant square of today and the remodelled Wig and Pen Bar and Dining Rooms, named after their proximity to the city's law and accountancy firms. But the restoration of the building perfectly captures the finest design points of the era. The Wig & Pen is run by Nosh Bars, whose founding managing director, Malcolm Schooling, is also a founding partner of design and architecture practice People in Space. The Wig & Pen is just one of many bars and restaurants it has designed for corporate and individual clients. Read more about the design details in the case study on page 72.

When Edge Architecture and Design and Oliver Redfern Design were commissioned to carry out a nationwide programme of refurbishment for the Mercure hotel group, the challenge was to formulate a rollout bedroom design that would suit varying property styles and periods, from the Georgian splendour of Bath (see case study below) to the 1960s architecture of the group's Winchester hotel. At the same time, the designers had to avoid a 'corporate' look while maintaining an upper mid-market three- and four-star branding. The answer was to create an offer relevant to each local area, sympathetic to the character of the buildings (many are listed) and featuring details unique to each.

The Mercure group includes 24 ▶

Hotel

Project: The Francis Hotel, Bath
Design: Oliver Redfern Designs and Edge Architecture and Design

The design used for the bedrooms at the Francis Hotel in Bath is part of a nationwide revamp of 22 Mercure hotels. Many of the buildings (including their public areas and bedrooms) are being completely upgraded.

At Bath, rich textures and colour characterise the 95 ensuite rooms. The bespoke Cavalier carpet, with a unique contemporary bark texture finished in a moleskin tone, gives the impression of warmth. The curtains framing the magnificent full-height Georgian windows are in a traditional Sanderson damask and their light metallic finish, border edges and piping add an individual feel of luxury.

A sense of craftsmanship comes from the Willis & Gambier furniture, including the four-poster bed finished in American black walnut and contemporary Morgan soft furnishings in luxurious lime green velvet by Harlequin. Quilted decorative bed throws by Wylies with unique zigzag stitch patterns also add texture and interest.

Bespoke triptych canvases of historic scenes of Bath, produced by Spires Art, provide the local touch required to give each hotel an individual character, while a sense of homeliness comes from subtle details such as matching the green glass orbs of the bedside lamps to the colour of the piping on the cushions and curtains and the feature wall covering, Linkage by Muraspec. Muraspec wall coverings were also specified for the public areas: Paisley and Audio in corridors and Lyon in the restaurants.

The bathrooms have Porcelanosa tiling with sandstone and wood effects, set off by contemporary Duravit sanitaryware and Grohe brassware. To link the bathrooms to the bedrooms, the same American black walnut was used for the tops of the vanity units and the beds.

www.oliveredfern.com

www.edge-a-d.com



Education

Project: Stowe School, Buckingham
Design: Idiom

Grade I-listed and featuring the work of a number of leading 18th-century designers (including Vanbrugh, Adam and Gibbs), the historic Stowe House is set in landscaped gardens, owned by the National Trust, and is home to Stowe School. As part of the continuing restoration of Stowe House — which began in 2000 and is scheduled to be completed over the next few years — the period Garter Room was recently refurbished. The room accommodates the serving area for all meals served in the school, so the refurbishment had to withstand robust use by several hundred children and although its listed status meant that aesthetics had to be prioritised along with practical demands.

The fit-out included the installation of a porcelain parquet-effect floor supplied by Capital Marble Design. The brief was for a hygienic, easily maintained, hard-wearing floor that would meet English Heritage stipulations.

Capital Marble Design supplied 900mm x 225mm porcelain tiles, which resemble an aged wooden floor. In keeping with the period of the house, the tiles feature a narrow parquet design. A dark wood tone with a hand-scraped timber pattern was selected for its aged, natural wood appearance, which complements the retained original floor of the adjoining dining room. The finished floor looks authentic, will withstand heavy foot traffic for years to come and is easy to clean.

The team also included Sterling Food Service Design of Birmingham, which designed and specified the servery, and the buildings manager at Stowe School, who project managed the complete installation.

As well as serving three meals a day for the school's mix of boarding and day students, the servery is also used for corporate hospitality events and private functions, which had to be integrated within the layout of the Temple Room and State Dining Room. After talking to catering staff and school management, Sterling Food Service Design chose the Garter Room for the new servery, replacing the outdated three counters located in the inadequate area located between the State Dining and Garter Rooms.

The new serving counters have been designed to be in keeping with the look of the room, featuring wood and granite tops containing stainless steel buttons that act as tray rests. Conveniently placed against the walls at the rear of the main counters is an L-shaped support unit finished in the same materials. This provides additional storage in two mobile, three-door refrigerators while an inset stainless steel hand basin, with drop-down removable bin, satisfies the hygiene requirements.

www.capitalmarble.co.uk

www.sterlingfoodservice.com



EDUCATION: CAPITAL MARBLE DESIGN

former MacDonald Hotels, which were purchased last year by the developer Moorfield. In 2008, six of these hotels — in Exeter, Salisbury, Winchester, Farnham, Stratford and Bath (where the Grade II-listed Francis Hotel overlooks Queen Square) were refurbished.

'Faced with the magnificent frontage of the Francis Hotel, the clientele's expectation of the hotel bedrooms was clear: Englishness with a quality finish,' says the hotel's interior designer Oliver Redfern. 'So I worked very closely with the project managers, Warwick Avenue, to ensure all efforts were made to retain and restore the original features while future-proofing the rooms. For me, the brief meant that the interior had to be a mix of old and new — everything you would

expect of an English period property yet with a contemporary sleek and stylish edge.'

In London, another project in the same architectural style posed similar challenges. Interiors specialist rpa:vision completed work on the new flagship store in London's Mayfair known as the Home of Alfred Dunhill, which houses a retail space and a private members' club with accommodation (see below). Working under the direction of interior designer Graham Viney, the rpa:vision team was responsible for executing a design that transformed the large Georgian property into the new Home of Alfred Dunhill concept, named after the company's founder.

Craftsmen and traditional materials and techniques were used throughout ▶

Retail

Project: The Home of Alfred Dunhill, Mayfair, London
Design: rpa:vision and Dunhill in-house design team

Dunhill's flagship store, known as The Home of Alfred Dunhill, occupies Bourdon House, the former home of the second Duke of Westminster. The building, which stretches to 1,950m², comprises two retail floors of 232m² plus a private members' club with a restaurant, games room, four hotel suites, a humidor and a wine cellar.

The period details and 'masculine' look of the Georgian interior were important to the traditional Dunhill concept. A further consideration for rpa:vision, which collaborated with Dunhill's in-house design team, was the fact that the former residential building comprised a large number of small rooms.

The premises consolidate two main buildings, one Georgian and one Victorian. The Georgian block accommodates a dedicated club/hotel. It has rooms on the ground floor for the concierge plus and a lounge and games room. The club area is divided by a spiral staircase and leads into the retail spaces, comprising three main areas at ground level: two retail rooms known as the 'pine room' and the 'mahogany room' plus a cupola area and changing rooms. The staircase leads to a 'museum' retail space, which is dedicated to the sourcing and restoration of precious objects. This floor also contains the grooming area: the treatment rooms, barber and personal tailoring rooms are all serviced by a dedicated reception. This floor also houses the private lounge, ante-room and private dining rooms.

The second floor comprises the wholesale showroom, offices and tailoring-support rooms (including the alteration, shirt-making and bespoke tailoring services).

A private 12-seat cinema is also provided for members of the private club. The historic humidor has been relocated to this area with a small adjacent bar.

Designer James Breaks says: 'The way the design developed was incredibly organic, it constantly developed and was refined to suit extremely practical considerations, such as the restricted size of the rooms, the modern day servicing requirements and customer comfort. It could be

frustrating at times because there wasn't as much time to spend sourcing and researching as we would have liked.'

Dunhill wanted the building's Georgian heritage to be incorporated into the interior design as much as possible so it called in NEJ Stevenson and Coryndons, craftsmen with specific expertise in Georgian detailing.

'Some of the areas we are most proud of are the simplest rooms, where Dunhill designer Graham Viney's careful dressing has achieved continuity,' says Breaks. Features such as an original 1930s leaded-glass ceiling shade and tan leather club chairs create a historic feel without clashing with the plasma screen TV. Simple off-white shades were used to make the room feel more spacious 'It was essential that we didn't enclose the space any further so patterns and textures were kept firmly to the floor,' adds Breaks.

The timber floor finishes are complemented by Persian rugs by G Viney. One area where the function surpasses historic authenticity is the private cinema. Breaks says this space was one of the most challenging to design because of the size of the space, the servicing requirements and the state-of-the-art a/v installation. Finding cinema seats that would fit the space proved difficult so rpa:vision designed them, incorporating a cup holder that fits a whisky tumbler perfectly.

According to Breaks, the humidor is one of the most successful areas. 'We designed the previous humidor at the Jermyn Street store more than 15 years ago', he says, 'so it was good to work with the manager to update the concept. Light oak brightens the exterior, while raw cedar, chosen to work well in a humid environment, was used in the interior. The herringbone floor is a striking addition that detracts attention from the low ceiling.

The Barber's Room has a masculine and authentic look with quirky touches. The wallpaper is a bespoke Dunhill creation inspired by vintage newsprint advertisements for Dunhill motoring accessories.

www.therpagroup.com

