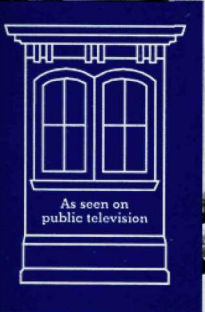


JANUARY/FEBRUARY

This Old House



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SECRETS OF A **Timber Frame** CRAFTSMAN

FABULOUS **Nantucket** FINALE • A **Fireplace** THAT WORKS—AND DOESN'T POLLUTE

REPLACEMENT WINDOWS • **SNOWBLOWERS** • CHISELS • **GUEST BATH**

Secret garden

Snow, sleet and dark of night no longer need keep gardeners from their favorite pursuit. Through the wonders of the Internet, anyone can direct a robotic arm to plant and water seeds in a six-foot plot of dirt in Linz, Austria. First-time visitors to the garden's Web site get a password that allows them to water a section of the plot. After racking up 100 hits, they get to plant a radish, marigold, phlox or other seed from a list that changes each month. And although there's no strolling with early-morning coffee to check for new shoots, visitors can view snapshots of the plants as they flourish, thanks to a constant 68 degrees and 15 hours of light each day. The garden started at the University of Southern California, where engineers designed it as a project in Internet robotics. So far, a virtual community of 3,000 has taken good care of all the seeds planted, with no over or underwatering. Overgrowth is inevitable, however, and the soil is turned about twice a year, says codirector Ken Goldberg. You can visit the Net nursery at <http://www.usc.edu/dept/garden/>.

