

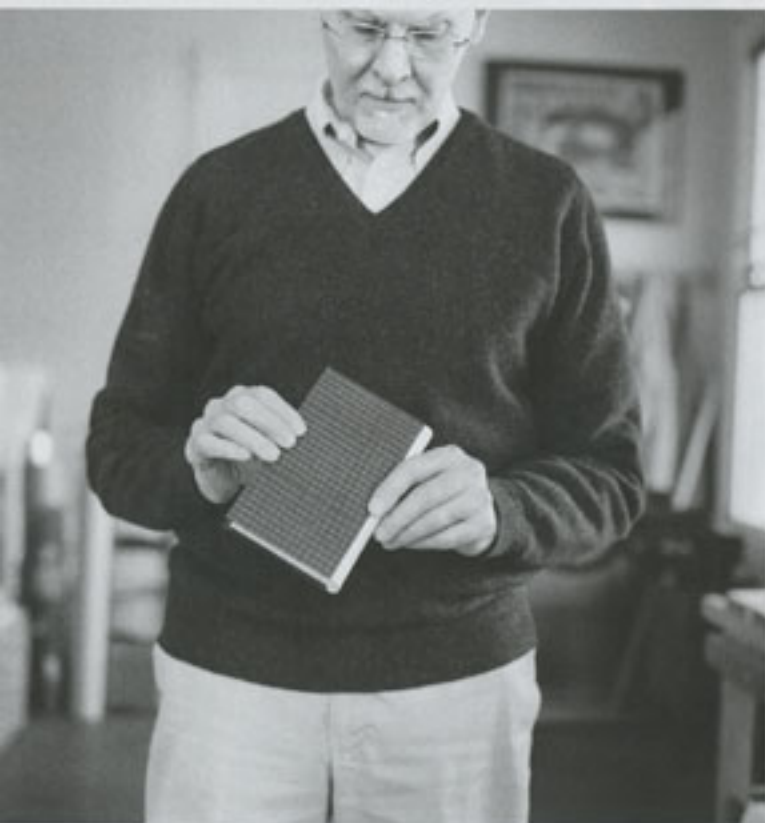
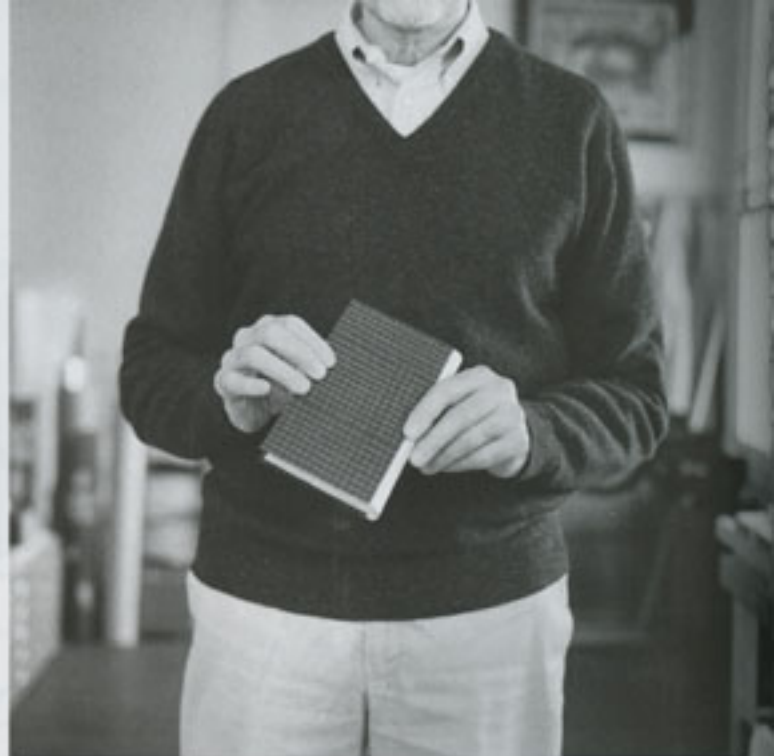


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As they drove through a seemingly deserted town in the New York countryside, the car filled with the smell of sulfur. A quick survey of the ghostly main street revealed a dilapidated building emblazoned with a faded sign for The Imperial Baths. Shooked by the mysterious sight of the main street they parked their car and walked to the nearest sign that informed them that they had entered the historic town of Sharon Springs.

A little exploration ended with a relaxing dinner at the American Hotel, an historic hotel from when people would 'take the waters' of the natural hot springs at Imperial Baths. Brent and Josh met the owners, Doug and Garth, and were lucky enough to take the last room available that night. When they left the American the next morning, they took the scenic route down Route 10. Stopping to read all of the historic landmarks, they approached a large white

house overlooking a beautifully fall-colored valley. This was the Beekman Mansion, once been owned by a local congressman named William Beekman. They both stopped in their tracks when they noticed a sign that read REALTY USA, MICHELLE CURRAN, REDUCED. Calling the real estate agent, the two immediately toured the farm and fell in love with the house. They were wary of the mortgage they would have to take on, but driving home it was all they could think about.



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A community can be established anywhere. It can form around people who universally believe in some idea that unites them. For the Beekman Boys of Sharon Springs, New York the desire to revitalize a small town and promote local artisans started after a fateful trip to the area in the fall of 2006.

Before moving to Sharon Springs,

both Brent Ridge and his partner Josh Kilmer-Purcell had been city dwellers. Though Brent was born and raised in rural North Carolina and Josh had been brought up in small-town Wisconsin, each had called New York City home for about a decade. Since meeting the two had regularly left the city in search of relaxation, and planned annual fall trips to apple orchards in upstate New York. For them the quality time spent away from the city allowed them to reflect on the virtues

they both learned from their small town childhoods.

When Brent and Josh went for their annual orchard adventure in the fall of 2006, they didn't expect to find their home upstate. For them it was just their way of getting away from the hustle and bustle of the city, a release from their dog-eat-dog careers. Fate had other plans for Brent and Josh.



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"It was also the idea for the cookbook. We wanted the things we sold to last for generations so that each item inspired the family that owned it to pass it down with a new story each time." Their families also help create new products for Beekman 1802. Josh's mother Jackie, a crafter and frequent Goodwill shopper, creates beautiful pedestal cake stands for Brent and Josh using repurposed vintage plates and candlesticks. "My mother is the definition of thrifty," jokes

Josh. "She has lunch at the hospital cafeteria and visits Goodwill so often she has a rewards card."

Today the business operates out of a space in the historic Roseboro Hotel building on Sharon Spring's Main Street. "We could've built a metal garage on our property to house the business," says Josh, "but we wanted to stay involved in our community and where they ran their businesses. The main street of

a small town is the nucleus of the community and we wanted to stay in close proximity to all of the small businesses we were working with to build our own business."

The Beekman Boys put Sharon Springs and their brand on the map in 2010 with the premier of *The Fabulous Beekman Boys on Planet Green*. "When we started the show, we wanted to show how this community could band together as friends to revive a



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with their local community. After the goat milk soap, there came a line of natural skincare, and Brent and Josh started working with other locals to produce a line of products that represented their home in upstate New York. Their home served as the base for the brand in the early days of Beekman 1802. Brent recalls using their attic as a soap-wrapping station for most of the early days, but after an appearance on the Martha Stewart Show and the public announcement of their online

blog and business the orders for soap started to flood their emails.

"We had a lot of challenges when we started the business, but we were lucky to have so many supportive friends in the community to help us through them," says Josh. "For instance our cheese, Blaak, it went through many test batches and trials before we got it right. Luckily we had experienced friends there to help us when we failed." Their friends in the community have been

great solution-seekers for the boys. The Cruik gardening tool was a solution given to them by a local blacksmith to manage their 52 raised beds in the garden. "He brought it to us unsolicited and asked me to try it in the garden. It's now the only tool I carry with me when I garden."

"When we started the journey making all of our products, we wanted them to have an heirloom quality," explains Brent.