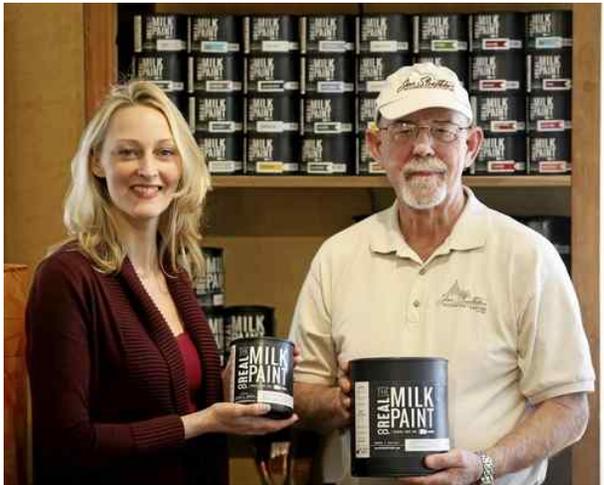


## Kathryn McKenzie, Living Green: New paint color inspired by Stillwater Cove fog

By Kathryn McKenzie, Monterey Herald

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Jon Stuefloten and Kristi Reimers hold cans of Real Milk Paint at Eco Carmel in Carmel. The two helped create a new color for the Tennessee company based on Stillwater Cove fog. Vern Fisher — Monterey Herald



Stillwater Grey was initially created for exterior trim on a large Tudor-style residence in Pebble Beach. (Contributed)

Soon, any house in the world can have a touch of Pebble Beach.

That's because a new paint color said to capture the essence of Stillwater Cove fog is on the way.

It all came about through a unique partnership with a company that creates nontoxic paint products. [The Real Milk Paint Co.](#), based in Tennessee, will be offering Stillwater Grey as the newest shade in its color chart.

The color was initially created for exterior trim on a large Tudor-style residence in Pebble Beach, according to Monterey Peninsula restoration painter Jon Stuefloten, who worked on the project.

Stuefloten came up with the color, a driftwood gray, with help from Kristi Reimers, whose Carmel store Eco Carmel carries a wide variety of environmentally friendly products, including nontoxic paint lines like Real Milk Paint.

Stuefloten and Reimers worked together to expertly match the look and color of an existing weathered board from the project, and then asked Real Milk Paint to create a custom paint.

"It took a few takes to get it right and the end results were perfect," said Stuefloten, whose projects have included the interior portion of Carmel Mission's Crespi Hall, Point Sur Lighthouse in Big Sur and Point Piños Lighthouse in Pacific Grove. "It was a joint effort that took our best work to a new level."

The upshot: The company liked it so much that it decided to make Stillwater Grey a stock color. Stuefloten and Reimers expect it to be available in a few weeks.

"I was so excited when I heard Jon was using Real Milk Paint for a color inspired by the fog in the cove," said Dwayne Siever, owner of The Real Milk Paint Co. "Collaborating with such a talented artist was great — Jon really brought the Stillwater Grey to life."

Milk paint is nothing new — in fact, it's one of the oldest paints there is, Reimers notes. It was commonly used in rural areas of the United States where dairy farms were plentiful, and was used to create that characteristic shade of red that you see on old barns.

A blend of the milk protein casein, limestone and earth pigments, milk paint “is very durable,” said Reimers. “It doesn’t peel or chip.” Stuefloten confirms that milk paint bonds well for exterior use, and he uses an additive that gives it additional staying power.

Also, milk paint has an authentic look to it that designers love, a chalky sort of finish that is perfect for furniture and interiors. It can be thinned to use as a wash, or kept thicker to be more opaque.

The other fascinating thing about milk paint is how environmentally friendly it is. Although there are numerous nontoxic and no-VOC paints on the market, milk paint appears to be about as pure as you can get.

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“It’s so nontoxic that you can actually pour the extra paint onto the ground and it becomes a natural fertilizer,” said Stuefloten.

The Real Milk Paint Co. began in 1995 and is committed to creating paints and finishes that are good for the Earth. Says Siever, “We aim to provide a strong, safe and healthy product for the home, as well as for the environment.”

It just goes to show that we shouldn’t forget about the old ways in our modern age. This is one example of how something that might have been forgotten has been revived, not just for our benefit, but for the Earth as well.

*Do you have questions or tips about sustainable living around the Central Coast? Send them to Kathryn McKenzie at [pardonmygarden@att.net](mailto:pardonmygarden@att.net).*



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