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Richard and Patricia Boyle

He walked away from the job of a lifetime. And found a life.

BE FOREWARNED. IF YOU have a job that offers prestige, influence, perhaps even power, a job that may even be the crown jewel of a career, but you feel tense, agitated, you don't sleep, you force smiles and snap at family—if that sounds familiar, then you may wish to skip these pages.

"If you take a plunge and follow your dream," Patricia Boyle tells me, "your life fills." We are eating lunch on the terrace. White wine, fresh hot rolls, asparagus and roast chicken breast over greens. Lilacs and birdsong

fill the air. Richard and Patricia have lived here in Salisbury, Connecticut, for eight years now, in the historic Chittenden House. It is one of the most handsome houses in a Litchfield Hills town full of homes whose owners you wish were relatives.

They came to Salisbury seeking seclusion, but within an easy day trip to the culture and vibrancy of city life. "We really just wanted a little schoolhouse we could fix up," Patricia says, laughing. They found this 1850s Italianate house instead.

In Philadelphia, where Richard was director of the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, he and Patricia (after their four children grew up and left home) had already known the work and pleasures of turning one spacious home into the first Earl Grey, named not for the tea but for a cat. Now, here in Salisbury, they've created another Earl Grey B&B.

They don't advertise. There's no listing for the Earl

Patricia and Richard Boyle with Earl Grey II.



The Earl Grey B&B in Salisbury, Connecticut.

Grey B&B in the local phone book. They close the doors for six weeks in late spring and rent an apartment in a vineyard in France. Their reputation comes from a few guidebooks and from word of mouth. Their two rooms are impeccably tasteful—one with a fireplace and private patio, the other with an 1850 sleigh bed. Their art and antiques flow from room to hallway. The house does its job—you feel pampered and well rested.

"Houses take on the feeling of people who lived there," Patricia says. "This house had happy, happy people. A grandchild of a former owner came to see us one day and said, 'My grandfather at 88 was still sliding down the banister.'"

Richard is dressed in chinos, pink shirt, sockless feet pressed into sneakers. His eyes sparkle when he tells his story. From boyhood in Queens he always wanted to paint. After the Korean War he studied art in England. He came home with a Dutch wife and soon became director of the fledgling Middletown (Ohio) Fine Arts Center. Within a few years he advanced to curator of the Cincinnati Art Museum. Then his wife died, leaving Richard with a five-year-old son. Patricia was working as an administrator at the Art Academy of





Cincinnati. He'd keep making up excuses to see her—did she have pencils he could borrow? They married in 1971. At night he worked on what would become his seminal book, *American Impressionism*. He arrived in Philadelphia in 1972 as the new director of the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, the oldest art institution in America, with a co-joined family of four teenagers.

"I enjoyed the fund-raising at first," Richard says. We are sitting now in the drawing room, surrounded by a portion of his art library. "I had to know everyone in town, and how much money they made. There was a lot of 19th-century money in Philadelphia and some were, let's say, difficult to deal with. Each year I was getting farther and farther away from art. I dealt with lots of behind-the-scenes personality conflicts, lots of bickering among various departments."

He was middle-aged now and he was grinding his teeth to bits. One day in 1982 Richard was sitting in a meeting and he turned to the Academy's president and said simply, "I'm not doing this anymore."

"Richard, I thought you might feel like

that," said the Academy president. "You've been terrific. Don't say anything."

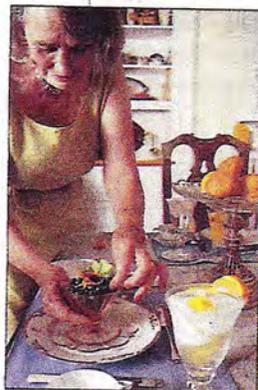
"He took care of me," Richard says. "He gave me security so I could go back to art.

"My last day at the Academy," he adds, "I immediately forgot 50 names. I didn't need to know who was married to whom, and who their children were, and how much money they'd donated in the past."

Then he returned to his passion—the sheer enjoyment of art. They moved to Tokyo, where Richard taught. "It was the happiest time of our life," Patricia says. "I felt the person I was died there and a new person was born. I felt like a child."

There were the wonderful years teaching—teaching that continues each fall when Richard returns to Philadelphia's Temple University for a semester—the selling of the original B&B, and the search for the little Connecticut schoolhouse that brings us right now to our good-byes. We are in the kitchen, a room Patricia has made famous for her breakfasts. "I love presenting it with flowers," she says. "It's a simple meal you can make extravagant."

We leave together. They are off to a haircut, waving good-bye as they drive into the village, the artist and his wife who created their little masterpiece on a Connecticut hillside. —Mel Allen



You feel pampered staying in the tasteful bedrooms and waking up to one of Patricia's famous breakfasts.

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second-floor room \$140.

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