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## NEW OLD HOUSE



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Photo by Eric Roth Olson Lewis + Architects & Payne Bouchier Builders

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### EDITOR'S PAGE



## In the Details

While I was putting this issue together of *New Old House*, the saying "God is in the details" kept coming to mind. Although this phrase is attributed to modernist architects, who seemingly put very little details into their buildings, it is traditional architects who create details that give a building its character. Moldings, lighting, hardware, flooring, siding—are all details specified by architects, designers, and builders that create the overall aesthetic of a design.

In this issue, we'll look at traditional details that give new old houses their inherent charm. Architect Russell Versaci reminds us of what authenticity means in home design he sees authenticity as habitation and place-making and truly creating livable spaces. Much of this comes through a house's details.

We also visit designer and builder Rafe Churchill's Shingle-style design in Massachusetts (p. 36). He masterfully explores detailed shingle patterns and millwork, which bring the house alive and celebrate the style to the fullest.

A Colonial Revival house receives a major overhaul by LDa architects (p. 46). The firm adds loads of wonderful details to make the space more livable. Built-in shelving, window seats, and entertainment centers, all with traditional molding profiles, are found throughout the nooks and crannies of the house.

Architect Sandra Vitzthum infuses an Adirondack cottage with just the right touches to create a welcoming, warm getaway home for a family in Upstate New York (p. 62). Details such as stained fir beadboard walls, a smooth, rippled river stone fireplace, and salvaged flooring all create a home that pays homage to its Lake George setting and historic Adirondack cottages.

Kahlil Hamady of Hamady Architects sketches his design details by hand for a West Virginia mountain house (p. 54). His level of attention to every detail creates a structure that offers a sense of place and belonging to this natural setting. Speaking of Hamady's artwork, he will be teaching a course at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston this autumn along with two other talented architects—Sheldon Kostelecky and Aaron Helfand—for the Institute of Classical Architecture and Art. Visit classicist-ne.org for more information.

Enjoy these beautiful, traditional houses where the details truly shine.

Nancy E. Berry Editor

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### CONTRIBUTORS



Editor-at-Large Russell Versaci is a residential architect who has spent two decades designing traditional houses. He attended the Harvard University Graduate School of Design in 1973 and received his graduate degree from the University of Pennsylvania Graduate School of Fine Arts in 1979. He has designed traditional country houses, cottages, and farmhouses, as well as restorations and significant additions to period homes. Versaci is also the author of Creating a New Old House and Roots of Home (Taunton Press).

Mary Grauerholz is a freelance feature writer who focuses on sustainability, architecture, health, and food. In her previous career as a journalist, Grauerholz won many awards for project management, editing, and writing. Since then, she has written for a variety of magazines, newspapers, and websites, including The Boston Globe, Cape Cod Home, Spirituality & Health, and Suffolk University Alumni Magazine. She lives on Cape Cod.





Michael Weishan is host emeritus of PBS's The Victory Garden and has shared his design tips, expert advice, and trademark sense of humor with gardeners of all levels. In addition to heading his own design firm, Michael Weishan & Associates, which specializes in historically based landscapes, he has written for numerous national magazines and periodicals and authored three books: The New Traditional Garden, From a Victorian Garden, and The Victory Garden Gardening Guide. Weishan lives west of Boston in an 1852 farmhouse surrounded by three acres of gardens.

For more than 30 years, Eric Roth has been capturing life through the lens, which has guided him on local, national, and international journeys. He has shot for such publications as Traditional Home, Metropolitan Home, Elle Decor, and Coastal Living. He lives in Topsfield, Massachusetts, and has two lovely daughters.



## NEW OLD HOUSE

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OLD HOUSE JOURNAL'S NEW OLD HOUSE (ISSN 1941-7721) is published by Home Group and Active Interest Media Inc. The known office of publication is located at 5720 Flatiron Parkway, Boulder, CO 80301. The editorial office is located at 5720 Flatiron Parkway, Boulder, CO 80301; (303) 625-1600; fax: (303) 413-1602. COPYRIGHT: 2015 by Cruz Bay Publishing, Inc., El Segundo, CA. This publication may not be reproduced, either in whole or part, in any form without written permission from the publisher.



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Authentic interiors that are inviting and warm are the hallmarks of the new old house. Payne Bouchier creates traditional spaces that are welcoming. C & K Studio designed the interiors.

## Aura of Authenticity

Why we value tried-and-true traditions in a modern world. BY RUSSELL VERSACI | PHOTOS BY ERIC ROTH

In an over-hyped, media-obsessed world, it's hard to believe in anything these days. So few things ring true, and most come with a stark warning label buyer beware! Separating the real from the fake has become a full time job, demanding a sharp eye for authenticity.

ARCHITECT'S PRINCIPLES

What is authenticity? A dozen books have come out in the past decade by writers trying to parse its meaning. One thing is for sure, though. Amid the din of 24/7 online sales pitches that bombard our daily lives, it's harder than ever to figure it out. The desire for authenticity is a desire for a deeper connection to the things we choose to like, to live with, and to live in. In business, authenticity sells. In the world of beverages, small craft breweries challenge behemoths like Coors and Budweiser, launching an industry of small producers emphasizing premium ingredients and artisanal methods—both hallmarks of authenticity. Authenticity engages people; knowing a bit about where a beer came from, who made it, and how it's processed gives a layer of meaning that doesn't exist in a Coors Lite.

In food service, restaurants offer locally sourced food and regional recipes, attempting to engage diners with menu listings that tout regionally grown ingredients, historical vignettes, and stories of how a recipe originated in Mama's kitchen. This cozied-up approach pays off. In surveys, diners say they prefer these dishes to more generic ones and claim they taste better. While taste is subjective, narratives about people, places, and times nuance our food choices through connections.

In publishing, authenticity is key to the competition between print and digital. Which feels more authentic, a physical book or a Kindle book? A real book brings many pleasures—the touch of woven paper, the elegance of typography, the swoosh of flipping a page, the satisfaction of making progress as you bookmark your place. A book carries memory and meaning as you add it to your library. Your bookshelves





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#### ARCHITECT'S PRINCIPLES

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In architecture, authenticity has been a major divisive issue since the early twentieth century. Revered by traditionalists and rebuffed by modernists, ownership of authenticity has been an intense battle between the two opposing camps. Within the profession it's called the Style Wars, but in architecture, these wars are less about business and more about society, culture, and the arts. Both sides are deeply entrenched.

In this fight, what matters is how we define authenticity in architecture. I start with the premise that architecture is a profession focused on habitation and place-making—the built environment. That, then, raises the question, "What is the best way to make livable places?"

The Roman architect Vitruvius described architecture as a tripartite system based on *utilitas*, *firmitas*, and *venustas*, usually translated as "commodity, firmness, and delight" now called the Classical Canon. Since Vitruvius's time, architecture has been defined as equal parts design, construction, and aesthetics, often becoming a tussle among these competing elements in a threedimensional game of chess.

In such a complex game, how can you decide what is authentic? In my view, the answer lies in which "—ism"— Traditionalism or Modernism—you think does the best job of being practical (commodity), buildable (firmness), and beautiful (delight). In other words, which best follows Vitruvius's canon.

Traditionalists look to the old ways of building for the answer. Traditions represent building truths handed down through the ages, like the sanctified five classical orders. At first, they were experimental solutions to building problems, but they worked so well that they became customs, which were then adopted over many generations to become traditions. They finally became accepted as authoritative and unassailable.

When looking at contemporary modernist houses in *Dwell* or on



Houzz, the first impression is that people couldn't possibly live there. These spaces are minimally furnished and are spared the usual trappings of life, such as books, flowers, and toys, with modern art.

If modern houses appear to be contrived stage sets, traditional homes touch the twenty-first-century soul with the promise of permanence and continuity over time. These homes draw from deep roots, tracing narratives that tell the story of particular regions, cultures, and their people-connections that add tangible value to a home.

The label of authenticity cannot simply be slapped onto an outlier in order to make it sell. A true home must first satisfy the basic human yearning for livability—to live comfortably, to be well protected, and to settle in harmony with one's surroundings—to be "at home." That is the highest calling of architecture. NOH

For Resources, see page 72.





Fit & Trim Expert advice for designing rooms with traditional trim. BY JENNIFER SPERRY PHOTOS BY ERIC ROTH

Trim is the cornerstone of a historic or new-old interior. It anchors a home in its appropriate era while showcasing the time period's craftsmanship. However, incorporating convincing new-old millwork into an interior designed for modern living is no small feat. Many factors, from crown moldings to baseboard profiles to window casings and chair-rail heights, can make or break the effort.

While architects often take the lead in determining an interior's millwork package, homeowners can also rely on the knowledge and experience of builders and, even more specifically, millwork companies to oversee the finer details. It is important for a project's design team to collaborate in ensuring a cohesive look from floor to ceiling as well as a logical progression of formality throughout the house.

#### **CLUES FROM THE PAST**

The best-case scenario when determining appropriate trim for a traditional interior is when existing details set a precedent. Even if only a few bits remain—the paneled base of a window casing, a fireplace surround—these historic clues can act as stepping stones for a home's entire trim package.

"When millwork already exists, we collaborate with the project's architects to harvest details out of the existing patterns," explains Stephen Payne of Boston-based Payne Bouchier Fine Builders. "Once the patterns are established, we then collaborate as a design team to decide how best to use them."



Known for its work in historic Boston neighborhoods like Beacon Hill, Back Bay, and the South End, Payne Bouchier Fine Builders is no stranger to trim. "In these neighborhoods, the architectural style is typically Greek Revival or Beaux-Arts. We've put our hands on a lot of original 19th-century millwork and seen what it looks like, how thick it is, how many layers there are, and what types of wood were used," says Payne.

During a project, the building company produces custom moldings either onsite or in its woodshop, which features a full line of custom knife profiles and milling machinery. The shop can also source any species of wood, including reclaimed products. "Back of house" wood types used in and around Boston include first-growth Carolina pine and red gum, for example, while native hardwoods such as walnut, chestnut, mahogany, white oak, and sycamore were reserved for more elaborate "front of house" designs.

In special cases, when chestnut, for example, is hard to source due to blight, Payne Bouchier's carpenters improvise with American white ash. "Even though ash is a much heavier, denser wood, when it's stained to a chestnut color and used in collaboration with walnut, the effect can be quite historically convincing," says Payne.

Overall, choosing a builder who is conversant with a particular region's architectural styles goes a long way towards trim success, adds Payne. "We've worked with some talented architects and interior designers who understand the nuance of detailing very well, and we bring yet another level of hands-on expertise to the mix."

#### SOURCING SIMPLIFIED

Anyone who's seen a molding profile catalog knows that choosing trim from scratch can be a daunting process. That is why Kuiken Brothers Company Inc., a building material supply company with eight residential and millwork showrooms across New Jersey and New York, launched its Classical Moulding Collection in 2010.

The collection includes 70 historically inspired molding profiles categorized into six distinct architectural styles: Early American, Georgian, Greek Revival, Federal, Traditional Revival, and Colonial Revival. Besides crown, casing, base, chair-rail, and panel moldings, there are also CAD files available for each profile so that the details can be quickly incorporated into architectural plans.

Crafted from Appalachian poplar, a locally sourced wood, the millwork defies "off the shelf" bias with thick stock and exacting standards.

"For the past 60-plus years, molding companies have been publishing these huge catalogs of two-dimensional line drawings, and the selection has been confusing," says Ryan Mulkeen, director of marketing. "We have brought millwork back to basics by creating a historically true yet simple selection experience, which is helping to promote classical and traditional architectural styles to a larger audience."

The organization of classical moldings by architectural type, both online and in catalog form, helps alleviate the challenge of coordinating styles from Right: The rich details found in the stair railing and entryway create depth and beauty in the design.

that first chosen piece. "If homeowners, architects, or designers find a casing profile that they like, they can go to our website and find the matching crown, base, panel and chair-rail profiles that would have been installed during that time period," says Mulkeen.

In addition, six full room packages "help our customers start to visualize how the packages come together. And while some of the profiles may be too large or small for their specific project," he continues, "we offer 5½", 4½", and 3½" proportionately sized casing profiles and all of our base moldings have a matching base cap."

Kuiken Brothers applied a great deal of architectural research—as well as milling and installation expertise to each individual collection. "For



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Right: Payne Bouchier created the paneled walls for this seacoast home. The interiors are by C & J Katz Studio of Boston.

"For example, the molding profiles in the Federal collection feature cavetto shapes and simple beads, which help the molding read lighter and more refined in a room," says Mulkeen. "Conversely, the profiles in the Georgian collection have bold shapes and proud projections and are symbolic of a pre-Revolutionary style primarily installed in the homes of wealthy merchants and well-to-do landowners."

With profiles culled from actual historic homes, the classical collection is indeed 100-percent made in the USA and reflective of the country's decorative roots. In fact, the Kuiken Brothers catalog is like a walk through American architectural history, one trim piece at a time. NOH

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### DESIGN DETAILS



## Cook's Kitchen

The renovation of a dated kitchen brings function and a classic look.

BY ALEXANDRA PECCI | PHOTOS BY ERIC ROTH

When Karen Gendall and her husband, David, first bought their Dutch Colonial Revival-style home in Beverly, Massachusetts, 21 years ago, a massive kitchen redesign wasn't practical.

"We knew from the beginning that it needed to be redone, but it was a huge expense," Gendall says. So instead, they contented themselves with some do-it-yourself cosmetic improvements, such as sanding away the bright red color of the 1940s-era cabinetry, and living with the kitchen's sub-optimal functionality.

But after the Gendalls' children had grown up and moved away, Gendall knew it was time to get the kitchen she had always wanted. So she enlisted the help of Patricia Finn, principal of Finn-Martens Design in Massachusetts, who specializes in renovation, remodeling, and space planning. "What I really enjoy doing is renovating spaces for the use that they have now," Finn says. "I love before and after. It's such an interesting process."

The Gendalls wanted Finn's help in designing and remodeling their kitchen in a way that was functional, beautiful, and in keeping with the home's traditional style.

"The house has a lot of rich detail," Gendall says, such as lovely woodwork and crown molding, and those details point to its history. "We didn't want something that didn't flow with the house...that didn't fit in."

Finn says she began her work with the Gendalls by asking them a series of questions about how they use the space. Do they cook a lot? Do they cook together? Do they like to entertain?

She discovered that Gendall loves to cook and bake, and that the couple

often eats dinner and entertains on their deck. But the kitchen's layout wasn't very user-friendly. The stove and refrigerator were up against side walls, which hindered their functionality and even prevented the refrigerator door from fully opening. There was also very little counter space, and the kitchen sink, countertop, and appliances were lined up against a single wall in a straight line. "It was just a very inefficient use of that space," Finn says.

Plus, the couple and their guests couldn't access the deck directly from the kitchen, and instead had to walk through several rooms to get outside. With all that in mind, Gendall's love of cooking guided the redesign. "Her number one priority was to have double wall ovens," says Finn. "So that was a driving force within the design." Finn opted to create an L-shaped kitchen, with a pull-out pantry and center island, which opened up much more space for cabinetry and work surfaces, and exponentially increased the room's functionality. They also added a five-burner cooktop, a deep single sink, and of course, the builtin, double wall ovens that Gendall wanted so much. There's also much better cookware storage, thanks to deep drawers underneath the cooktop. Gendall says that crawling on her hands and knees to find her pots and pans is a thing of the past.

In addition, Finn replaced one of the kitchen windows and added a door, providing access to the deck, as well as air and light to the space.

Although the space's layout and design is thoroughly customized for the needs of the modern home cook, the home's history is also important to the couple. "There's a flavor to the house," Gendall says, adding that her husband "likes to tie into the history" and even has hanging on a wall a framed 1870 map of the city of Beverly, which shows the Gendalls' house. But they weren't slaves to the traditional, either, as evidenced by the pops of gray-beige contemporary wallpaper on either end of the new kitchen that adds, as Finn calls it, "quiet background texture" without looking incongruously modern.

The kitchen's aesthetics include plenty of nods to the traditional. For instance, Finn removed peel-and-stick vinyl in favor of oak flooring, to match the hardwood flooring that's used throughout the rest of the house. She also opted for an easy-to-clean and versatile white porcelain subway tile backsplash behind the cooktop.

Gendall admits that she never would have picked out the subway tiles on her own, saying she would have been drawn to something "flashier." But now, she says, "I absolutely love the subway tiles, the simplicity of it." Finn also calls the kitchen's white, Shakerstyle cabinetry "as classic as it gets."

"It's a really nice fit for the house because it's classic, and therefore always in style and never looks dated," Finn says. "And it would certainly be appropriate to the age of that house."

The woodwork and trim around the doors, limestone countertops, metal drawer and cabinet door hardware, and glass and metal pendant lights hanging over the sink and island also add touches of traditional design to the kitchen.

And Finn says she is so satisfied to hear her that her clients love their new kitchen, especially when they tell her, "It's everything I wanted and more." NON

#### finn-martensdesign.com

For Resources, see page 72.



### TRADITIONAL TRADES

## Mission Friendly

Stickley continues to endear generations of admirers well into the 21st century. BY STEPHEN T. SPEWOCK

Even to the untrained eye, you know Arts & Crafts style furniture when you see it: simple designs, linear lines, balanced proportions, and wonderful patina. Maybe it's the singular perfect pieces of oak or cherry wood used to create each piece. Or possibly the exposed construction unhidden by adornment: what Gustav Stickley called "honest furniture." What started in 1900 as a departure from ornate designs of the Victorian era has evolved into one of the largest Craftsman-style furniture companies today.



#### **REPEATING HISTORY**

Early iconic Mission pieces include Stickley's chalet table (oak, ca. 1900-1901), Prairie settee (oak, ca. 1914), and drop front desk (oak with copper hardware, ca. 1903-1904) but by the 1960s, Stickley's dominance in the American furniture business was on the wane.

"In 1974, my late husband Alfred and I had the opportunity to purchase the L. & J.G. Stickley company," explains Mrs. Audi. "At that time, the company had only 25 employees and annual sales were just over \$200,000," she confides. "We didn't think about the fact that we were taking on a sacred entity; we just set about resurrecting the brand through disciplined focus." (Alfred's father had been the largest Stickley dealer and Alfred's Colgate College frat house had been full of Stickley furniture. He was always a big fan of Stickley.)

They began by hiring the best

craftsmen they could find and training them well. Once the craftsmen were up to speed, they started to bring back the older classic designs. As the construction process became more streamlined, they shortened the production time-cycle of each piece significantly. Now able to provide a quality product in a short amount of time, they grew their relationships with more dealers.

"Today we have 13 companyowned showrooms across the country,"



Vintage Stickley pieces are coveted treasures. Stickley continues the tradition of making beautifully crafted furniture.



says Mrs. Audi, "with an additional 150 independent dealers nationwide." But the one thing that she is most proud of is that her employees stay. "Most important," Mrs. Audi says, "we take care of our employees." Today they have 1,400 people working for Stickley and are proud to say that not one person has been laid off, despite weathering a few economic storms—"even during the most recent recession," she recalls. A big reason for the stability is due in part to the decision to reissue the Mission oak line back in 1989. "Mission oak went out of vogue in 1917, and completely disappeared by 1920—the dealers didn't carry it, nor did they want it," explains Mrs. Audi. "Throughout the 1980s, we monitored auction houses and customer demand, and decided to bring back Mission oak." A New York magazine responded by running a cover article on the decision, proclaiming the bold move a revival of the fittest. "It was a huge risk at the time, but a very pivotal moment for the company," recalls Mrs. Audi, "not to mention reviving the Arts & Crafts design movement."

Demand for Stickley furniture has since soared, resulting in the company building three new facilities to help better streamline the workload. In 1985, they had moved from their century-old factory in Fayetteville, Stickley creates beautiful Mission oak furnishing inspired by original Stickley designs.

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New York, (now the company museum) to neighboring Manlius (just outside Syracuse), where they continue to produce furniture around the clock to this day. The manufacturing facility in Archdale, North Carolina, produces the upholstery and leather sold to the dealers as well as the Stickley, Audi & Co. retail showrooms. Then, in 2005, the company opened a brand-new 187,000-square-foot facility in the Binh Duong Province of Vietnam to manufacture their Antiquities Collection. "We wanted to expand globally, and felt Vietnam provided the best springboard to do so," says Mrs. Audi.

After expanding their manufacturing footprint, Mrs. Audi and her son Edward have taken to beefing up their infrastructure to help expand their product lines. After Mission oak came cherry—followed by Fine Upholstery and Leather, Classics, Modern, Designer Rugs, and Antiquities (as previously mentioned). They've also diversified by purchasing both Nichols & Stone and John Widdicomb and adding them to their brands.

"We focus on continued steady development of product lines and market presence," says Mrs. Audi. "We take a conservative approach and believe in controlled growth, knowing that a company should never stand still-otherwise it risks getting run over," she adds.

What started over a century ago under Gustav Stickley's motto, "als ik kan," which roughly translates in Flemish "to the best of my ability," continues to be the driving force under the Audi family's business.

"Over the past 22 years, I'm so

proud of how hard my son Edward has worked in various roles within the company—from the factory floor, to customer service, to sales, and now president," says Mrs. Audi. "It is important that this company remain family-owned and -operated, that we adapt over time, and stay in it for the long haul."

As her grandchildren play near her tenderly cultivated garden during a summer vacation respite, Mrs. Audi says, "Whether you have a family or a business, it's all about creating memories." NOH

Stephen T. Spewock is a freelance writer living in Massachusetts.

For more information, visit stickley.com

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HEIRLOOM GARDENS

## Mum's the Word

Chrysanthemums are the essential fall flower.



It's a facet of every autumn: Right around Labor Day, chrysanthemums begin to appear by the thousandshundreds of thousands-in supermarkets, garden shops and roadside stands across the land. They are purchased and transported home, to adorn doorways, window boxes, front hallways, even gravestones, almost always the same monotonous assortment of purple, copper, or gold little balls which, desiccated and forlorn, wind up in the compost bin just after Halloween. So commonplace have mums become that people barely give them a second thought, appreciating the bit of temporary color they provide, but never suspecting that a plant with a long and distinguished pedigree lurks behind

the foil-wrapped pot, whose perennial cousins could provide a welcome burst of long-lasting bloom to the autumn garden year after year.

The chrysanthemum (formerly *C. x morifolium*, now a tongue-twisting *Dendranthema x grandifolium*) is a fairly recent introduction to Western gardens, arriving late in the 18th century. Before that, however, the flower was revered for thousands of years in the Far East. Mentioned by Confucius as early as the fifth century BC, the plant was actively being bred in China by the first centuries AD. The mum next crossed the water to Japan, where by the fourth century AD it was immediately embraced by the gardening gentry. So popular in fact was the

plant that in 797 it became the personal symbol of the Mikado, and the cultivation of the flower was restricted to the Imperial family and members of the uppermost nobility. To this day, the Supreme Order of the Chrysanthemum remains the highest and most exclusive honor in Japan.

The chrysanthemum is first thought to have been successfully grown in Europe by a certain Monsieur Blancard, a merchant from Marseilles who imported three cultivars, white, violet, and purple, in 1789. Other types were soon brought from the East, and numerous crosses were made between these specimens, and, apparently, with other related species. (Given the extreme length of



the mum's history, not surprisingly its genealogy is rather murky.) Within decades, hundreds of new types were available, from small pompom varieties to large greenhouse specimens bred specifically for cut flowers. (The mum proved to be a particularly valuable and welcome addition to the Victorian florist trade, for unlike many plants, it can be forced into bloom during any season by manipulating light levels.) While the first chrysanthemum society was formed in England in 1846, the plant was not without its detractors even early on. George Glenny, in his Handbook of Practical Gardening, (1851) notes that the chrysanthemum "had nothing to recommend it but its late season of flowering and its gay colours. It has no fragrance, and withal, has not the recommendation of good habit ... left to itself, it becomes bare of leaves at the bottom and very ugly...In the open ground it wants the support of a stake, or it will lay about." (And heaven forbid you should have such slackers in your garden!)

Despite such criticism, as the stalwart of the late autumn garden, the chrysanthemum was here to stay. And while Mr. Glenny could still reasonably complain today about the lack of fragrance, modern hybridization has by and large ameliorated most of the other flaws of the early garden types. Today's modern varieties are far more compact plants, ranging anywhere from inches to feet in height, and coming in a profusion of flower shapes and colors. One caveat though: If you want to grow mums in your garden—and you should—consider the pots you see for sale along the road side in the fall exclusively as annuals for deck or door-side decorations, and buy actual perennial specimens for your garden from a reputable nursery.

Supermarket/flower-stand mums, although often billed as "hardy," are really hot-house species, the word "hardy" here being somewhat disingenuously used to denote that they can take some limited amount of frost while in bloom. To get these delicate souls through the winter requires an almost impossible amount of attention, and no small amount of luck. Add to that the fact that even if they do survive, their habit often seems to revert back to the lanky nature Mr. Glenny so abhorred, and you're best off taking them out of the garden and putting them on the compost pile after bloom time.

The true hardy perennial types, along with their close companions the asters, are available in garden centers from spring to fall, and make invaluable additions to the autumn landscape. Perennial mums come in three general groups, arranged by size, from ground hugging to 4' tall. Some of my favorite minis are Chrysanthemum pacificum (4-6"), which spreads a golden mass in front of the border in October, and 'Sweet Peg,' which grows 12-18" tall with pink blossoms. For the middle border, try 'Sheffield Pink,' an old standard. whose pinkish buds open to a mass of pale apricot 2-3' tall. True to their Asian heritage, in the tall category you might try 'Emperor of China' 3-4', a double pink, and 'Bronze Elegans,' a bright, coppery orange. While mums can be planted at any time of year, keep in mind that they won't reach their full size for a number of seasons. Full sun and a deep rich soil will produce the best results. NOH

Landscape designer and PBS horticultural guru Michael Weishan gardens outside Boston and writes a nationally acclaimed weekly garden blog at michaelweishan.com.



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### STYLE NOTEBOOK

## **Design Elements**

Create period style with these traditional products.

BY THE NOH EDITORIAL STAFF

### 1. Arroyo Craftsman

Inspired by Frank Lloyd Wright's architecture, Arroyo Craftsman's Prairie collection features chandeliers, pendants, sconces as well as floor and table lamps. The 18" Prairie inverted chandelier with ½" square stems shown here, can be custom crafted in any of the firm's 10 metal finishes and outfitted with any combination of their 10 glass options. For more information, visit arroyocraftsman.com.

### 2. Authentic Design

The original of this four-arm chandelier was found in Pennsylvania and is now part of the Deforest Collection of New York City's Metropolitan Museum. Authentic Design's version captures the original's distinctive line and decorative chain swags. The hexagonal shade is hand built in heavy brass and its large size is perfect over kitchen islands. The family-owned company prides itself in handcrafting historically accurate light fixtures in their rural Vermont workshop. For more information, visit authenticdesigns.com.



### 3. Le Mont Hardware

Handcrafted in solid brass by Le Mont Hardware's artisans, the hand-hammered Lutyens Major privacy door set features a rosette knob and a floral design on the escutcheon plate. Shown here in oil rubbed bronze, the set is also available in polished brass and buff nickel. The company offers complementary cabinet hardware as well. For more information, visit lemonthardware.com.



3

1

### 4. Rocky Mountain

Rocky Mountain Hardware's broad collection of cabinet pulls is crafted to meet any design aesthetic. Many of the pulls come in a range of different sizes to accommodate the smallest drawers all the way up to pulls for refrigerators and dishwashers. Crafted in solid bronze, the drop pull shown here is available in two sizes, 10 patina options and can be paired with different cabinet roses. For more information, visit rockymountainhardware.com.
#### 5. Emtek

Founded in 1981, Emtek has established a name for itself as a reliable manufacturer of custom quality door hardware that suits every homeowner's personal style. The traditionally inspired Merrimack Lever is the perfect example. Shown here in bronze with the Quincy rosette, it is available in six different finishes and can be installed with any brass rosette within the company's extensive collection. For more information, visit emtek.com.

5



#### 8. Horton Brasses

Nowadays, it's not uncommon to find barn doors inside the home—they're great as focal pieces and conversation starters. Horton Brasses has been fabricating hand-forged iron barn hardware since 1936. Their seven blacksmiths use exactly the same traditional methods and copy original American patterns. The wrought-iron cane bolts shown here are individually crafted for strength and versatility in style to match a variety of woods. For more information, visit horton-brasses.com.



#### 6. Heritage Metalworks

Skilled craftsmen at Heritage Metalworks worked closely with Hull Historical Architectural Millwork to fabricate the cabinet hardware for this kitchen restoration in Avondale, Texas. The wrought iron HL hinges, handles, and knobs complement the new custom cabinetry designed to match the home's Colonial style. For more information, visit heritage-metalworks.com.

#### 7. Vintage Hardware

With over 30 years of experience, Vintage Hardware and Lighting has become a leading manufacturer and supplier of period hardware and lighting. Shown here is their Victorian Lady Large Bin Pull designed and fabricated to pull the heaviest drawers. Available in four different finishes, this pull has been popular for over a century. For more information, visit vintagehardware.com.



For Resources, see page 72. Old House Journal's New Old House 35

# DETAIL ORIENTED

A Shinglestyle house in Sherborn, Massachusetts, exemplifies Rafe Churchill's feel for architectural complexity.

BY KILEY JACQUES PHOTOS BY MICK HALES





ompleted in January 2014, Rafe Churchill's 2014 Bulfinch Award-winning house on Ford Pond in Sherborn, Massachusetts, is an exceptional rendering of the Shingle style. Enjoying several waterfront acres, the structure emulates Newport, Rhode Island's Isaac Bell House—of which the client is very fond. Based on that reference, principal architect Churchill and his team studied Shingle-style homes in both Rhode Island and Maine to inform the design program.

Typifying the style, visual complexity, eclectic sculptural compositions, and expansive horizontal massing characterize the home. Of course, detailed shingle patterns and millwork, porches and a rear balcony that encourage a tactile interaction with the outdoors, Palladian and small oval windows, and asymmetrically arranged gables all feature prominently. A coursing of shingles over the front entrance, a shingled stair tower, a wood-shingled roof and siding, and decorative elements on the front porch railing and chimneys further push the concept.

The design suits the client's full-time needs, as the family of three resides there year round. Prior to retaining Churchill, in fact, the client had been living on the property for a year already. She grew attached to the land, the gardens, and the orientation of the original house, which was ultimately torn down and replaced. "It can be a challenge to work with clients who have been living in a house or on a property for some time, and have set ideas about what is successful and should be kept," says Churchill. In this case, the challenge was the house's orientation. "The hard part was defining how the house would sit on the property because we didn't believe the existing house fully utilized the site." After much discussion, they decided to shift the house 30' to the west (the former house was justified to the east) to optimize the view.

"People typically want a view from every room in the house," notes Churchill, "and they usually want a view of the same thing—whether it is a lake, a mountain, or a field—they want to see it out every window." For this project, as with many others, the team took pains to explain that it is not the same view that makes a house interesting and memorable. "You want different

Below: Handsomely situated on Ford Pond, the Sherborn home takes full advantage of its natural environs; every room enjoys some type of view, whether of the water or woodland. Churchill stresses each should offer a different experience. **Opposite:** Heavy mahogany doors are a Rafe Churchill signature element that perfectly complements the rich detailing of the transom windows framing it.



Churchill included quintessential Shingle-style features such as this decorative oval window. Opposite: The design program called for detailed millwork, custom cabinetry, coffered ceilings, and strategic views for nearly every room, making for a richly textured overall effect.







Left: A fieldstone-surround fireplace, plenty of natural light, warm earth tones, and layers of texture make the family room a most welcoming space.

experiences in each room," says Churchill. "The library might have a view of the pond and the kitchen might have a view of the pond, but they should be different experiences with slightly different views. It takes time to explain that, but in the end it has proven to work every time."

The level of detail defining the exterior continues inside. The main floor—with its entry hall, living room, sunroom, kitchen, dining room, and study—is notably decorative. "On a lot of houses, this level of detail is reserved for just the interior, whereas the exterior is traditional but understated. With a Shingle-style house like this, there's opportunity to explore the millwork and detailing on both sides," notes Churchill.

The main entry hall includes wood paneling and a coffered ceiling, as well as a winding staircase that hangs off the tower walls to provide a consistent space around the stairs, which are "delicately suspended within the tower." The living room also has a coffered ceiling, plus areas of wall paneling below the windows and a "somewhat ornate" fieldstone fireplace.

It was for this sophisticated interior millwork and cabinetry that the firm received the Bulfinch Award. And it was the choice of the traditional Shingle style that enabled such elaborate expression. "Our projects are based on historical references," explains Churchill. "We don't necessarily reference specific projects, but we make observations of house museums or landmark buildings." They glean information by taking photographs and measuring millwork, cabinetry, and profiles. "From that, we apply these details to the interior."

Rather than concentrating on one or two rooms as is more typical, this project carried the same level of detail throughout the entire house, though "the program lightens up in the bedrooms," says Churchill, adding that unlike "other projects where you have elements of authenticity, this project is consistently authentic."

Churchill is known for his outstanding kitchen designs. With its coffered ceiling, elaborate millwork, and custom cabinetry, this is a prime example of his signature vocabulary.





The custom windows and solid 21/2"-thick heavy mahogany doors are Rafe Churchill signature elements. "Doors and windows are the things you experience most often," notes the architect. Additionally, his kitchens are fetching, and this one is no exception. North facing, it is sizeable and defined by windows on three sides, including a long bank of double-hung windows over the kitchen sink. Looking out over the pond, the room holds a good-sized island with custommade wood top and room for a dining table. A large stone fireplace with decorative wood surround, a raised hearth, plaster walls covered in paneling, and a coffered ceiling give the room depth. "This one kitchen incorporates more than most of our kitchens in the sense that it's loaded all the way with millwork." There's more detailing on the cabinetry than in most of their projects, too. "That's because we are following the vocabulary of the Shingle-style interior."

Churchill feels it's important to note this is

not a large house, compared to its similarly styled cousins. Divided into two sections, it comprises the main house with its three gables, and an attached carriage house with a finished space above. (The two structures are connected by a breezeway.) The inhabitable space totals approximately 5,800 square feet, including some of the porches. "Considering the scale and the typical program of a Shingle-style house, that's not a huge house," notes Churchill.

Set back and very private, the home speaks of a romantic, distinctly New England lifestyle. "There are moments when you see a bit of a chimney or one of the gables...even from a distance it's very obvious that it's something special." rafechurchill.com NOH

Kiley Jacques is a freelance writer living on the North Shore of Boston, Massachusetts.

For Resources, see page 72.

A reclaimed wood top for the kitchen's massive center island and a dining room featuring slate floors, transom windows, and panel-covered walls make for a combined space that is at once rich in detail and comfortably arranged for the family's daily use.







When a Massachusetts man decided to return to his hometown of Needham, from South Boston, he aimed to find something new in a familiar place. He and his wife bought a 1925 Garrison Colonial in a location the couple had always admired—Fair Oaks Park, a street named by *The Boston Globe* as one of the best places to live in the Greater Boston area.

With a growing family and a desire for a fresh start, the couple hired LDa Architecture & Interiors in 2012 to enlarge and modernize the house while maintaining its traditional look to match the neighborhood and the town.

Principal architect Douglas Dick and project manager architect Andrew Hinterman set out to create a more family-friendly house—adding an open-plan kitchen and family room, incorporating a substantial mudroom, and designing a detached two-car garage. They also added office space on the third floor and redesigned the master suite, including adding a master sitting room and creating a spa-like master bath. The homeowners moved into their renovated home just before Christmas of 2013.

#### **TRADITIONAL & CONTEMPORARY**

Maintaining a traditional, modest presentation for the house while increasing the home's footprint from 5,046 to 8,650 square feet—and bringing in a more modern sensibility required creative thinking.

"The two-story Garrison Colonial house really fit the scale of the street," says Dick. "The challenge was to create this new-old house by expanding back toward the rear of the lot and to make sure the scale of the addition and the scale



The breakfast nook, kitchen, and family room are open and lightfilled, lending a casual, contemporary feel to the space. The color palette throughout the house is subdued, with accents of bright blue.











of the garage were appropriate to the existing home."

The design team created a broad front porch to satisfy the homeowners' desire to be part of life on the street. They kept the structure of the house's original front rooms but switched their functions, so the living room became a generous dining room, while the small dining room became a parlor.

The less formal, family-oriented spaces—the kitchen, family room, breakfast nook, and mud room—are grouped in the addition at the back of the house, where walls of windows let in more light than a traditional Colonial usually sees.

Abundant light is in fact a key element of this modern-meets-traditional design. The four-season sunroom fulfills the same purpose as the original screened porch but with updated functionality. Similarly, the banks of windows lining the breakfast nook and the skylights in the family room create a light, airy atmosphere that reflects a modern openness even as the spaces maintain a bit of traditional formality and intimacy.

"While the front addresses the street more formally with the new porch, the back of the house is really meant to open up to the rear yard so you get an indoor-outdoor experience on the causal side of the house," says Dick.

#### DESIGN CHALLENGES

The greatest challenge of the renovation was finding a way to blend the old and the new in a way that would feel seamless and comfortable. An important aspect of walking that line was maintaining the scale of the house





Top left: The formal dining room is now where the living room was originally, providing a larger space for entertaining. Above: The cozy parlor took the place of the original dining room. Left: The sunroom opens directly on the patio to integrate indoors and outdoors. This page: The master suite combined a classic look with contemporary style, including in the spa-like master bath that was added in the renovation. Opposite: The outdoor space, overlooked by the family room and connecting to the sunroom, extends family life into the spacious backyard.









so that it would, in Dick's words, "make the same statement to the street."

Adding to an existing home in a historic setting always begs the same question, says Dick: "How do you provide the space that's needed and the open spaces that people desire without overwhelming the existing home or the existing neighborhood?"

The team answered that question by pushing the addition backward into the yard so as not to alter the home's facade, making an L around the backyard. They also opted to create a separate cottage-like structure to house the garage and a desired exercise space.

Finally, they brought a modern open-plan design to the new family-oriented living area. The kitchen, breakfast room, and family room that make up the addition at the back of the first floor are unified but still defined as three separate spaces using beams and dropped soffits. Maintaining the intimacy of the spaces while opening up the floor plan creates successful "transitional" spaces that join the old and the new for comfortable modern living.

#### **COMING HOME**

Working with a client who felt that he was moving back home gave Dick a special appreciation for the need to gracefully join the old and the new. The new version of the house not only had to fit the needs of a growing 21st-century family, but also to fit a town that relishes its historic character while participating in the life of a modern metropolitan area.

"The challenge of recreating a family home for a client who knew the place as a child was an interesting process," says Dick. "It had this theme of the new-old house. And it was a new-old town as well because he's moving back at a different point in his life."

The result of that process—an unassuming white house with black shutters on the lovely suburban street—is the perfect place for this new family to call their old home. NOH

Katherine Gustafson is a freelance writer living on the West Coast.

For Resources, see page 72.



Sulphur Springs, West Virginia. By Annabel Hsin I Photos by Kahlil Hamady



This page: A trellis and fieldstone walkway create a circular forecourt that connects the main house to the three-car garage. Opposite: Taking its cues from the surrounding natural setting, the exterior is clad with stained cedar shake siding and painted cedar trim and topped with Western red cedar shingles on the root, with regional stone for the chimney stacks.







Hamady Architects of Greenwich, Connecticut, was commissioned by their clients to design a vacation home at the Greenbrier Sporting Cluba lush 10,000-acre residential community located in the Allegheny Mountains of West Virginia, part of the historical Greenbrier Resort established in 1778. "Our clients' program included a large house that would serve as a gathering place for their multigenerational family during their holidays and vacations," says principal Kahlil Hamady. "For many generations, the family has been visiting the historic Greenbrier Resort, collecting memories of the place and its natural and cultural beauty."

Approaching from the west, the

public road straddles the ridge of the mountain as it leads the visitor to the entry of the site, a 15-acre property that lies at the very tip of the mountain ridge forming a semi-conical shape of steep slopes on three sides overlooking the resort, the valley below and the mountains beyond. "Its location provided an opportunity for a house to embrace the dramatic views while its siting, which included a sizable footprint, a vehicular forecourt, outdoor terraces and gardens and a garage, was significantly challenged by the topography," says Hamady. "The lot offered no natural and stable form to serve as a setting to the house."

To maintain a harmonious relationship between the site and surrounding The south porch was strategically placed to frame stunning views of the Allegheny Mountains.

CULCULU



Top: The dining room is positioned next to the south porch for an easy indoor-outdoor dining experience. Above: French doors in the living room open to the formal north lawn to create a smooth procession when entertaining guests. The dramatically sloped gables, bell-shaped bay windows and arched doorways are designed to evoke the natural forms and shapes of the site and surrounding landscape.





### THE HOUSE IS SUCCESSFUL IN HARMONIOUSLY WEAVING THE HOMEOWNERS' CULTURAL IDENTITY WITH THE NATURAL LANDSCAPE.

landscape, Hamady proposed sculpting an indoor and outdoor composition that carved the architecture into the crest of the hill and embedded a house properly scaled to the landscape and carefully proportioned to human needs. In addition, architectural elements such as dramatically sloped gables, bell-shaped bay windows and arched doorways evoke the surrounding natural forms and shapes. "With such a prominent site seen from all directions of the resort and the valley below, the reshaping of the hill had to be carefully considered from both within and outside the site itself," says Hamady. "The relationships of the buildings to the site as well as their shapes and forms and the compositions of the processions through public and private, outdoor and indoor spaces were meticulously considered and orchestrated in order to create a house that appeared and felt belonging to its place."

The gently sloping and curving drive along the west end of the property begins the processional composition as it leads the visitor to the porte cochère and entrance to the house. The forecourt with its two circular ends is framed by retaining walls, the western façade of the house, the trellis frame and the garage, the latter serving as a retainer to the hillside. "The entry porch and porte cochère are an understated introduction to the house and modest submission to the surrounding nature," says Hamady.

Inside, the front entry and foyer, the stair hall and the living room form a carefully composed procession organized along an east-west axis that ends with large windows of the eastern view. Intersecting this axis in the living room at the center of the house, a northsouth axis reorients the visitor toward a garden to the north and a porch to the south. Minor hyphens offer pauses between each space while the decorum and nature of each is further pronounced leading to a resting porch that captures the light and dramatic views. "The interrelationships between the interior and outdoor spaces are closely interwoven so each benefits from and enriches the other simultaneously."

The three levels of the house on the exterior are revealed according to the importance of each façade in relationship to the narrative of the composition and the hierarchy of the views. The west facing entry is grounded fully on the main level; the north elevation facing the resort reveals the second level; the east elevation provides a temple-like sleeping porch that offers views of the valley and early morning sunrises, while the south facade projects the complete three-level composition. "The south elevation can't be fully appreciated due to the steepness of the site, and as examples of great buildings reveal, important architectural gestures are often retained by Nature herself," says Hamady.

To weave further the owners' identity into the composition, the partially cantilevered south porch is supported by large arched brackets, reminiscent of those found in train stations, which are culturally meaningful to the legacies of the homeowners' family.

The building materials were selected for their traditional qualities and the assembly relied on both time-tested and modern methods. Reinforced concrete and 8"-thick regional stone are used to form the base of the house, which is embedded in the earth on the north and west sides and exposed on the east and south elevations. Above the base, the house is clad with stained cedar shake siding and painted cedar trim and topped with Western red cedar shingles on the roof and copper gutters. Painted wood windows and doors complete the exterior envelope and stone chimneys visually anchor the house to the site.

In addition to the formal living and entertaining areas, the house includes seven bedrooms, six baths, three half baths and an elevator. The kitchen boasts state-of-the art appliances, custom cabinets, and marble countertops. Quarter-sawn white oak flooring installed throughout the main level unites all the spaces, except the foyer and stair hall, which feature Paris ceramic tile laid in a custom pattern. Amenities such as a wine cellar and indoor spa are located on the lower level.

Despite its topographical challenges, the house is successful in harmoniously weaving the homeowners' cultural identity with the natural landscape, all while satisfying their modern lifestyle and entertaining needs. In fact, the project has been such a success that it has won the inaugural 2015 John Russell Pope Award by the Institute of Classical Architecture and Art, Mid-Atlantic Region. "This house was the result of the close collaboration among the clients, the architect and the builder," says Hamady. "It has fulfilled the purpose of providing a meaningful and permanent home that will serve as a memorable setting to the family and a profound connection to the place." NOH

For Resources, see page 72.



## Harmony in Design



Architect Sandra Vitzthum creates the perfect getaway for a family on Lake George in New York. BY MARY GRAUERHOLZ | PHOTOS BY ERIC ROTH



F

The home, set in the foothills of the Adirondacks, establishes a powerful relationship with the land.

Every house tells a story. But once in a while, a house of near-epic proportions appears, a place where rich stories tumble out, one after the other. Architect Sandra Vitzthum, in Montpelier, Vermont, achieved this soulful effect in a home perched on a hill overlooking Lake George, in New York State, using a trove of traditional architectural principles.

The two-story home, a canny blend of Adirondack camp and Shingle style, appears to float on the land, the deciduous forest and foothills that mark the beginning of the Adirondack Mountains. Inside, thanks to Vitzthum's skill with the principle of telescoping, spectacular views unfold through every room, terrace, and porch. "It's a fun design challenge to see how long the sequence can be sustained," Vitzthum says.

While the overall tone is classic Shingle style, the home has the strong bones of an Adirondack camp. Marrying the two styles would be a nerve-racking challenge for many architects; for Vitzthum it was a pleasurable culmination of her and her clients' desires. "The floor plan is perhaps my favorite ever," Vitzthum says.

For the owners, Susan and Rich, every visit to the house represents a homecoming. Both have a long-held love for the Shingle style and for the natural wonder outside their house: beautiful Lake George. "Thomas Jefferson called it the 'Queen of American Lakes," Susan says. She grew up in the area, and when she and husband, both lawyers, were raising their two sons in Andover, Massachusetts, traveling north every summer was a given. "It was a big family summer experience," Susan says. Now that they have their own home here, the experience is even more special.

The basis of the house is its sublime, deep roots on the land. "We wanted it to feel perched on the hillside," Vitzthum says. "The deep porches help give it that feeling." The philosophy of Adirondack style, she says, is all about letting people find their grounding in nature. "It's a romantic idea," she says. To successfully incorporate this style with Shingle style, she started with a large-scale model, 24 inches wide, and worked with Rich and Susan on roof and porch lines. "It was not a passive process at all," Vitzthum says. "It was a lot of work and collaboration."

To create the right mood in the entryway, Vitzthum embraced the "fauces" principle: creating a small space, or "throat," which allows people to humanize themselves from the outside world before they enter a bigger space. The entry hall is intentionally subdued, allowing the powerful mood of entering the great room, the first of several rooms built on the axis that Vitzthum established, to create the panoramic views. A fireplace, framed in smooth, rippled river stones, draws the family in on cool fall evenings. A natural flow leads to the study and beyond it, the





Vitzthum designed the great room (top) and dining room (right) on an axis, providing panoramic views. Above: The second-floor library.



The kitchen radiates sunshine and the flavor of the past, with salvaged soapstone counters and an island that features a base repurposed from a Pennsylvania Dutch store. The top, of raw-edged black walnut, was built by contractor Thomas LaPointe.

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The kitchen's milky-blue open hutch bolsters the entry to the great room.

it, the light-washed master bedroom.

The nearby kitchen and dining rooms are special places for Susan, not just because they signify the gathering of friends and family. The rooms are stellar examples of what an experienced eye can create with salvaged goods. Susan scoured salvage yards for dozens of the pieces in her home. Kitchen countertops are soapstone beauties found in Vermont. The kitchen island, also salvaged, was a checkout counter in a Pennsylvania Dutch store, with a top of rawedged black walnut created by Thomas LaPointe, owner of Graphite Mountain Builders in Hague, the contractor and a true craftsman. The floor, a grid pattern of salvaged slate and wood, is another of his many touches. The dining room, designed like a pavilion, is lined with windows that draw the eye upward, over walls and to the ceiling, all crafted in stained fir beadboard.

Upstairs, in place of a hallway is an airy, quietly lit library, with a salvaged library ladder giving access to hundreds of old books, one of Rich's particular loves.

The house, facing east, affords the family wonderful sunrise views. Porches and a large stone terrace create a transition from indoors to outside, with "reverse telescoping" that allows the spaces to widen as the house gets narrower. The terrace, which spills naturally from the long eastside porch, is a special spot that Susan says never fails to draw guests. Modern features are tucked into the house, including rooftop solar panels and floors with radiant heat.

The house, to which the couple plan to retire someday, represents more than a comfortable home. "It's restorative for both of us," Susan says. "It's the feeling we get, a tranquility. And there's nothing so precious that people can't put their feet up."

Vitzthum still has warm feelings about the project. Her architecture practice is centered on craftsmanship and the human spirit—the way people truly relate to houses. "Every detail," she says, "reveals a reverence for Lake George and its artists, for architectural relics, for family members and good stories. A great camp is all about meaning." Not

Mary Grauerholz is a freelance writer living on Cape Cod.

For Resources, see page 72.


Top: The great room's built-in seating is crafted in clear fir, one of the home's many reflections of its deciduous-forest setting. Above: The bedroom and bathroom include traditional touches.

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