

home remodeling

CAPE COD, THE ISLANDS & THE SOUTH COAST

SUMMER 2010

Tear Downs & Additions

Cape Cod Homes at Their Finest





A Former Garage

Tear Down

An outdated Harwich Port beach house is replaced by a comfortable home

The much-loved and well-used screened porch off the living room. At left: A small balcony off the master suite's sitting area offers stellar views.



Becomes a Proper Cottage

Design:

Jane Hewitt,
Architect

Construction:

McPhee
Associates

When Ann and Steve bought their Harwich Port beach house in the '80s, the youngest of their three kids was just a year old. The un-winterized cottage was the family's favorite escape. It was the perfect place for the three active kids to burn energy and enjoy the outdoors. But as the kids got bigger, the family outgrew their getaway. As much as they loved their little waterfront house, the mishmash of rooms was hardly conducive to family activities or entertaining.

Text & Photography by: Roe Osborn

Tear Down



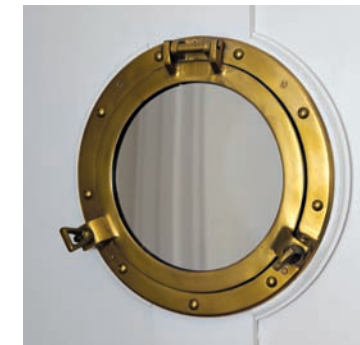
Exterior details keep the scale down

The original house began life as a relocated garage. Then a shed was added in back of the house, and the two were connected. “That rambling old cottage had so many fond memories for us,” quips Ann. But alas, the most economical and most practical way to create a place for their growing needs was to build a new house from scratch.

Wanting to keep the charm of their beach cottage, the couple went to Quincy architect, Jane Hewitson, who has a reputation for designing new houses to look as if they’ve always been there. To gain enough space for activities and entertaining, yet still have plenty of room for sleeping, Hewitson added a second floor. “I tried to pay particular attention to the scale,” she explains. “The house sits on a natural knoll, so I kept the eaves as low as possible, and then let dormers open up the second-floor spaces.”



Above: There are no cabinets on this side of the kitchen leaving it open to the water views beyond the dining area. **Below:** The cabinets separating the dining area from the living room are topped with wood salvaged from the original home.



Above left: The front of the house has a steeply pitched roof, keeping it from looking too tall. **Below left:** Period details in the kitchen include the custom modified table-as-island and a vintage lantern. **Above:** Antiques with a nautical feel.



On the water-view side of the house, a long shed dormer gives the second floor plenty of head room. The roof above the front entry bends gently into a lower pitch that softens the vertical scale of house while uniting the main volumes. “I had more fun with the driveway side,” Hewitson says. “On that side, the shed dormers extend up in the same plane as the outside walls of the house, as they would have with an older house (and) the building crew from McPhee Associates did a masterful job executing all these details just as I’d drawn them,” she added.

Tear Down



It's all about the views

Inside the house the prime directive was to make the most of the water views. A view through the house to the water greets visitors as they first enter. Hewitson designed the floor plan to open up views of Nantucket Sound and to give the first floor an open, airy feel. Instead of walls, she let details delineate the spaces. Between the living room and kitchen, a peninsula with overhead beams divides the space visually without interrupting the view. Windows in the dining room let in the sunrise over the water, while French doors out to the porch look to the sunset.



Top: A private sitting room off the master suite features a wood-burning fireplace and ocean-view deck. Bottom: A unique design feature provides even the den, located at the back of the home, with great ocean views.



Above: One of the home's three wood-burning fireplaces is flanked by custom cabinetry. Below: The center hallway on the second floor.



Hewitson intentionally put the laundry, powder room and stairway in the back of the house where the views weren't so important. The back portion of the house extends past the main house footprint, so even the back bedrooms on both floors have vistas of the sound. Two additional bedrooms, including the master, overlook the water on the second floor. The light and lofty master bedroom looks out to the south and west.

Hewitson took the master suite a step further. As Ann explains, "We needed a quiet place when the kids entertain their friends on the first floor. The master suite's sitting room steps down and away from the hubbub of the rest of the house, both literally and figuratively. It is our getaway within the getaway." This room has its own TV and library and a tiled fireplace to keep it cozy on chilly days. A secluded deck extends the sitting room space outside.

Ties to the past

Ann and Steve also collaborated with Hewitson to make the interior look and feel like a traditional beach cottage. The trim is square-edged and painted white. The bedrooms all have plain white walls, but Hewitson used beadboard in the first floor public areas. Broken up by the doors and windows, as well as the cabinetry and built-ins, the beadboard becomes a time-honored accent material rather than a dominant design element.

The kitchen cabinets have flat-panel doors, again in keeping with the unadorned beach cottage vernacular. The kitchen island is made from an old wooden table that Ann had. "It wasn't high enough, so the McPhee crew built a matching table underneath to raise it up," Ann points out. "The granite for



An upstairs guest room; white on white has never looked so good.

the kitchen countertops looks like sand after a wave has receded, complete with flecks of seaweed.”

Elements inside the house tie to the past literally. The peninsula countertop is white pine flooring saved from the original house and Ann stalked architectural salvage stores in Boston with Hewitson, to find decorative old mantels for the living room and sitting room.

Out of the wind

As inviting as this house is inside, a beach house really is all about living outdoors. Three distinctive outdoor areas grace the updated cottage. The main deck in back of the house functions as a large outdoor living space and includes one unusual element. “The old deck was built around a pine tree that grew up and over the house like a piece of art,” remembers Ann. “For the new deck, we planted a new tree and they built the deck around it.”

On the east side of the house, a brick patio provides a more intimate eating area sheltered from the prevailing southwest breezes. The screened in porch on the other side of the house is protected from the easterly winds, and the screens have interchangeable windows. “We are able to dine outdoors in all but the windiest weather,” says Ann. “And the porch windows extend our outdoor enjoyment in both the spring and the fall.”



The honey-hued wood flooring was carried throughout the house, even into the master bath, giving the home a sense of age.

WHERE TO BUY



1



2



3



4

1 Powder Room Sink

This sink is a classic Chatham Pottery design, available at, where else, Chatham Pottery. The fixtures are Kohler, model # K-12183, and were purchased at J.D. Daddario/Ferguson Enterprises with a location in Mashpee.

2 Farmhouse Sink

The homeowner went with this all-American classic to give the home a sense of age; Kohler model # K-6546-40 in Dickson white, also from J.D. Daddario/Ferguson Enterprises.

3 & 4 Cabinet Pulls

Like the kitchen's farmhouse sink, the gently aged bronze and brass cabinet pulls and drawer handles make the home feel like it has a history. Both are from Cape Cod Brass in South Yarmouth.