

before & after: the live-in living room

Country Home

February 2003

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add character to a new house



26

ways to build old-fashioned charm into a brand-new house



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PHOTOGRAPHED BY QUENTIN BACON



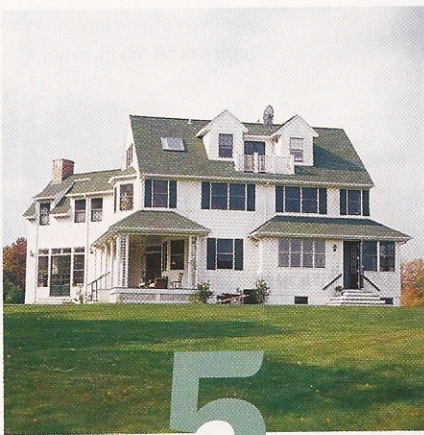
PRODUCED BY LESLIE ALLEN AND MEREDITH LADIK



Attention to every detail, large or small, is what makes this new 3,200-square-foot New England farmhouse livable and lovable. Inspired by styles of the 1920s and '30s, it's packed with terrific ideas and smart solutions—from architecturally quirky nooks to the use of modern, allergy-friendly surfaces. Step inside as owners Marjorie and Jonathan Glass, architect Jeanne Stoney-Disston, and interior designer Leslie Allen share their inspirations.



The living room's spectacular floor-to-ceiling **curved bookshelves** and step-down entrance support architect Jeanne Stoney-Disston's chief goal: to create vintage charm by building special features in every room of this new house. The curved entrance is also a clever design trick: It helps smooth the visual transition to the room, which angles off sharply from the main house in order to take advantage of the panoramic side views. The curve directs the flow of the home, says Stoney-Disston, "so you don't feel like you're facing the wrong way." Built-in cupboards below the bookshelves store the family's games and videos.



2: Ten-foot-high ceilings grace this comfortable living room; ceilings on the rest of the first floor are a generous 9 feet high. The extra height, says the architect, creates dramatic spaciousness without extra square footage. A focal point of the room is the fireplace, which was built with fieldstone found on the property. Tall 16-over-1 wood windows open up the room to vistas of (and breezes from) the surrounding fields.

3: Built-in corner cupboards in the dining room didn't fit properly at first and required extra millwork, but they were worth the effort. To add character, interior designer Leslie Allen lined the cupboard walls with striped fabric that she stapled in place; she used the same fabric on the wicker chairs. The picnic-style table is made from old wood with an inset zinc top; the relaxed attitude of the table and chairs

is reminiscent of dining on the porch.

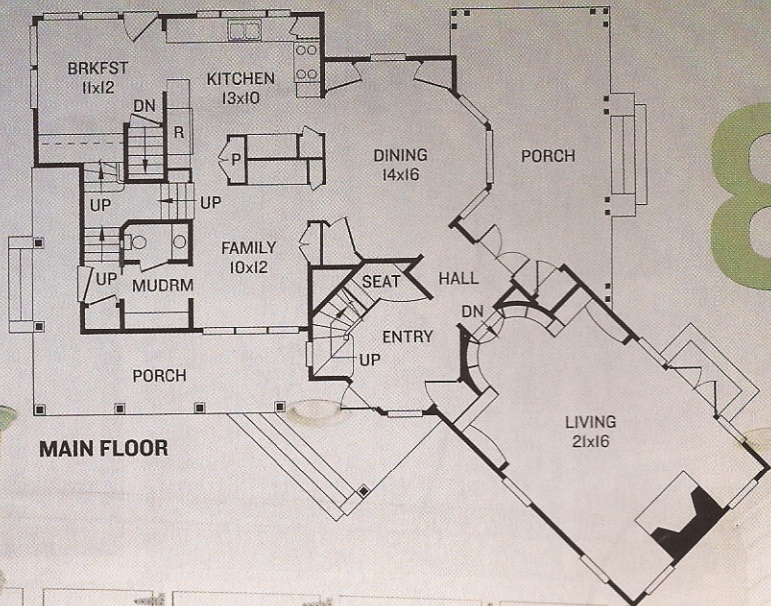
4: To re-create the look of vintage lighting in the dining room, a sconce was made from a new lamp that recalls those once found on 1940s dressing tables. A lamp store reconfigured it to a wall-mounted fixture.

5: Special attention was paid to the home's exterior details, as this back view of the house illustrates. Measuring 3,200 square feet, the house looks much larger, thanks to the addition of dormers, porches, and banks of windows. The house is taller than average because of the high ceilings on the first floor; the extra height adds to its stately appearance. The exterior's wood shingle siding is painted white. The green roof (coordinating with shutters in front) is a nod to summer cottages Marjorie Glass

recalled from her childhood.

6: Remembering stories about the telephone alcove in her mother's childhood home, Marjorie set about creating a similar space. Now, friends can ring family members at the **telephone nook** that's built under the stairs off the front entry. The nook (softened with a cheerful striped cushion and pillows) is near the front door, yet the back doors are within view, illustrating the balance struck between coziness and openness in the home's design.

7: An octagonal entryway links the main part of the house with the angled wing of the living room. In place of a throw rug, a three-dimensional-looking design was painted on the hardwood floor. Like most of the floors in the house, these are red oak.



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The first-level floor plan reveals the thoughtful solutions that were built into this new farmhouse. A second L-shaped staircase, for instance, forks off the kitchen, family room, and mudroom. As a result, the children can drop their backpacks and go directly up to their rooms if they want. Or, they can sit on the kitchen steps and talk to their mother while she works. Perfectly located for quick washups after a day outside, a half bath sits off the mudroom.



This family-friendly kitchen evokes the **floor-to-ceiling meat-locker look** of old butcher shops and country stores. Curved toe-kicks at the base of the cupboards give them the look of freestanding furniture. On the counter sits a paper-towel holder fashioned from a vintage tin picnic hamper. "When Marjorie looks at an object," designer Leslie Allen says, "she is always thinking of what else it could be."

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10: Marjorie wanted a **mudroom** for a simple reason: She'd never had one.

And with three children, she needed space for balls, gloves, and library books. Baskets hold much of the paraphernalia; a built-in bench handles the overflow, while offering a place to sit to pull on boots and shoes. A transom window over the shelves fills the space with light. Pretty and practical, an old-fashioned Dutch door—one of two—opens the house to fresh spring breezes. The vintage metal floral light fixture was purchased long before the house was built; it influenced the choices of the whites and greens in the mudroom.

11: This vintage Seth Thomas clock adds a **nostalgic touch** and is one of Marjorie's favorite possessions; it inspired the apple-



of the hardwood floors, Marjorie had a diamond border painted; the design replicates old linoleum patterns.

12: Using **old-fashioned fixtures** was important to Marjorie, who fell in love with this new single-bowl porcelain sink for the kitchen. Details such as the old-fashioned soap-dish faucet lend to the house's farmhouse authenticity. "People come and ask if the house has been here forever," Marjorie says. "That's just what I wanted people to say."

13: In the kitchen, a **bank of windows** stacked two high overlooks one of the two spectacular views that guided how the house sits on the property. Only the windows over



the sink open; the English casements push out like doors.

14: In the breakfast



alcove, **extra-wide drawers** are tucked away behind white cabinet doors; the drawers make it easier to get to art projects and supplies. The countertop is covered in tiles, making it a safe place to rest hot dishes.

15: **Period inspirations** guided the design of the charming breakfast alcove. Designer Leslie Allen studied rooms featured in old photographs, catalogs, and movie stills. (The movie *Holiday Inn* figured into Leslie's design.) The built-in cupboard was based on old Hoosier cabinets and complements the kitchen cabinetry; café curtains were made from vintage fabric. Exposed rafters on the ceiling have the look of a rustic old camp.