



## BEST TRADITIONAL HOME

This remodel by Architectural Resource wins our best-traditional-home award for its embrace of the past, present, and future. The new details harken back to the original style, the rearranged floor plan suits modern life, and the craftsmanship and materials are prepared to endure another century of service.

# Forever Arts and Crafts



PAINT  
sherwin-williams.com

STAIN  
myoldmasters.com

BACKSPLASH  
motawi.com

CABINET HARDWARE  
emtek.com

## A smart remodel has an updated floor plan and traditional roots

BY MICHAEL KLEMENT

**O**ur firm is honored to have been recognized for best traditional home. Despite that, no one specific style is our specialty. If we have a specialty, it's working with clients who have a passion for their home and want to make the most of it, be it traditional or contemporary. That said, there's no shortage of 1920s bungalows here in southeastern Michigan where we work.

Lindsay and Sue Brooke found us through an article I wrote about another Arts and Crafts remodel in nearby Ann Arbor.

**Arts and Crafts exposed.** *Open spaces require details both subtle and overt. Paints from Sherwin-Williams's Arts and Crafts collection separate the kitchen from the den. A casual place to sit at the counter, an interior window, and a small cabinet frame the wide opening.*

It turned out that we lived in the same area, and they called to discuss their project. They wanted to recast their home to accommodate modern life, but they also wanted to respect the soul of the home: its Arts and Crafts style.

What we find most exciting about this type of traditional architecture is the fact that it has a legacy. The 1920s saw a flourish of bungalows, starting on the West Coast and proceeding across the country. Bungalows are simple, modest homes. They typically have two or three bedrooms and only one bath. Their scale is human, and their character is warm and welcoming. In this enclave of Plymouth, there are quite a few Craftsman bungalows. This home, however, is a classic Arts and Crafts bungalow.

Outside, the hallmarks of the Arts and Crafts style include low-sloped roofs, large overhangs with exposed rafters, and



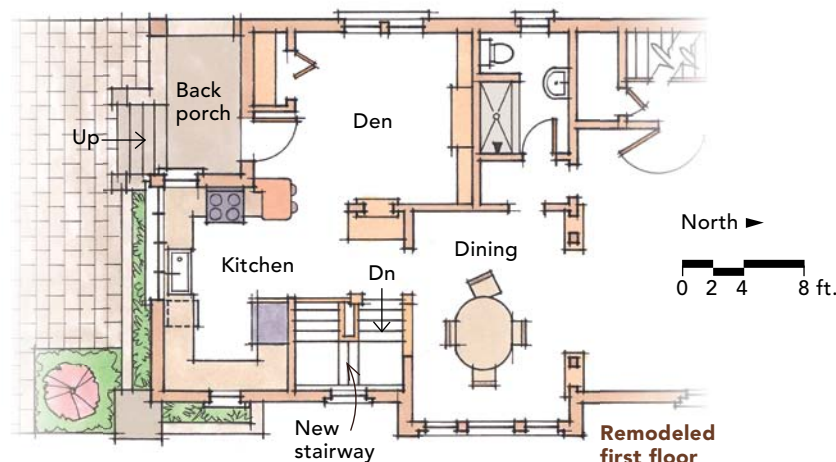
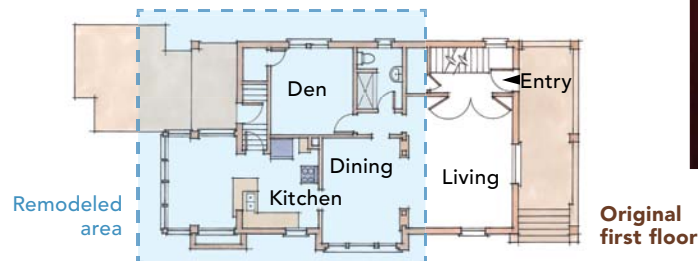


**The meaning of craft.** Taking its cue from original details such as the tapered column seen in the background, the new basement stairway exemplifies the Arts and Crafts style. The understated newels, balusters, and wainscot let the craftsmanship and materials speak for themselves. The finishing touch, two stained-glass windows, are also a hallmark of the style.



## REARRANGED FOR THE BETTER

While only a slice of the house was remodeled, the work, and its impact, was significant. Moving the kitchen to the back of the house took it out of the regular traffic flow and created the opportunity for the main work zone to have a bank of windows with a great view. Opening the den to the kitchen, stair hall, and dining room made the small home feel more spacious and connected the three main living areas. Relocating the basement stairs created a safer way of reaching the lower level and accessing the backyard.



## SPECS

- Size:**  
original, 1876 sq. ft.  
renovated, 1833 sq. ft.
- Bedrooms:** 3
- Bathrooms:** 2½
- Cost:** \$159 per sq. ft.
- Year built:** original, 1920; renovated, 2011
- Location:**  
Plymouth, Mich.
- Architect:**  
Architectural Resource,  
Ann Arbor, Mich.
- Builder:** Old School  
Construction,  
Ann Arbor, Mich.





**WINDOWS**  
pella.com

**COUNTERS**  
corian.com

**SINK**  
kohler.com

**FAUCET**  
moen.com

**RANGE**  
kitchenaid.com

**RANGE HOOD**  
zephyronline.com

**PENDANTS**  
materialsunlimited.com



**Traditional style, modern living.** All of the materials, from the white-oak cabinets to the custom pendant lights, were chosen to stay true to the home's original style. The open layout reflects modern life, and varying ceiling heights distinguish the spaces.

deep covered porches; dormers that create headroom when the home has a second floor; and banks of double-hung windows with multiple panes above and a single piece of glass below.

Inside, you'll find an open floor plan with the entry often spilling directly into the living room; lots of millwork in quartersawn oak, including tapered columns, wainscot, and built-in bookcases; cozy inglenooks; and large fireplaces often crowned with a furniturelike mantel and flanked by cabinetry. This house had all of the characteristics of a traditional Arts and Crafts home. And it had some issues.

A poorly constructed glass sunroom was added to the rear of Lindsay and Sue's house in the 1970s. Not only was this change not in keeping with the home's style; it also was a great energy burden—cold and drafty in winter and hot in summer.

In addition to the energy penalty, the home's layout was muddled. The new sunroom, which was built ostensibly as a dining area, dupli-

cated an existing dining room that was already oversize. It provided a function that was not needed and consequently made the kitchen into a hallway sprinkled with an assortment of workspaces, cabinets, and appliances.

Traversing the original stairway to the basement put life and limb at risk. It was frighteningly steep and too narrow. To compound the risk, a poorly designed intermediate landing provided the only direct pathway to the backyard. Upon opening, the door fully swept the depth of the landing, which was too tight a space to begin with. The landing at the bottom of the stairs was too shallow as well, and those clambering down had to duck to avoid hitting their heads on a low-hanging beam above.

The existing floor plan also isolated the first-floor den—the family's main gathering space—from the rest of the house. It was tucked around the corner, some distance from the kitchen. In today's homes,



everything originates from or gravitates to the kitchen. Surely, no primary family-gathering space should be so distant or detached.

Our challenge was clear: fix the floor plan to work for modern living, make a better connection between the interior and the backyard, and keep all of the details in concert with the Arts and Crafts style.

For a house of this size, multiple dining spaces did not make sense. Removing the sunroom allowed us to retreat the southern edge of the building to a position correctly juxtaposed with the existing roof eave. We relocated the kitchen out of the main traffic flow and gave it a commanding view of the rear garden through a bank of windows. We relocated the basement stairway to where the kitchen had been, creating a more direct and safer path to the basement and a feature element in the design. We reunited the den with the kitchen and also with the backyard through a new, gracious, semi-enclosed porch on the back of the house.

As you come into the house from the front door, your first encounter is with the original main stairway and the colonnade of tapered columns and cabinetry separating the living room and dining room. These details became our guides for the new work.

For the new basement stairs, we took design cues from the existing second-floor stairway in such elements as banisters, newels, treads, and risers. We then added a carefully detailed Arts and Crafts-style wainscot that enveloped the passageway to the lower level.

With a nod to more contemporary open plans, we connected spaces within the home with interior portals. The wall formerly separating the dining area from the kitchen, for example, now has a new framed and cased opening.

Back when bungalows were flourishing, people preferred smaller, enclosed spaces. We're now more open, and this shows in our homes. As we made the main living spaces more open to one another, however, we needed to find ways to make the spaces distinct as well. In this case, we defined the kitchen and the den by varying the ceiling planes and incorporating soffits, which also gave us a place to hide mechanicals.

While Lindsay and Sue hadn't requested a deep-energy retrofit, they were interested in doing as much as their budget would allow. We made improvements in the building's thermal envelope with spray-foam insulation, and we air-sealed wherever possible. We installed new mechanicals, including a more efficient furnace and water heater. The new windows are also an energy improvement. Lindsay and Sue plan to address the rest of the windows as part of ongoing energy-efficiency upgrades. In the meantime, they were thrilled to discover through all of the work we've done that their home's energy consumption has already been cut in half. □

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Photos by Beth Singer, except where noted.



**Back to basics.** Transforming the rear elevation was all about finding the home's true character. First, the sunroom addition was removed, and the roofline was extended the length of the eave. A simple brick porch was then added under the roof's deep overhang. Clad in reclaimed brick, the back of the house now looks like it was meant to look a century ago.

**DESIGN VIDEO** For an inside look at this home and those behind its design, visit [FineHomebuilding.com/houses](http://FineHomebuilding.com/houses).