

Two homeowners decorate with flair



Photos by Treve Johnson

Pattern, color, and quirky pieces with a story charm in this thoroughly remodeled Cape Cod home.

By Jan Howland

Two homeowners with strong design sensibilities and a talent for the bold and eclectic took very different approaches to their new homes, both of which are on the Children's Support League Heart of the Home Tour this year. Both houses were built early in the last century and needed refreshing. The results are striking examples of personal taste that will give tour goers something interesting to notice at every turn.

Bringing a Cape Cod back to life

Julie Gardner is a realtor who naturally sees a lot of houses, and with this weathered 1911 Cape Cod, she and her husband were taking on their sixth remodel. They drew on all that experience when it came to remodeling and decorating this house.

"We could see that it had solid bones," says Julie, but it needed a

pomegranate front door opening into a fresh white entry that introduces coffee-colored stained oak floors that run throughout the home. The vibrant door color is repeated in the dining room, with navy added to the pomegranate for depth.

"Wallpaper should make a statement," said Julie and, indeed, the dramatic wallpaper adds a splash of pattern color. The original coffered ceiling was retained, and a white, beaded chandelier creates just the right mood for entertaining.

The thought and care this homeowner brought to the entire renovation was matched by her efforts in the garden. Julie selected and placed every plant with her sister. Their rewards are sunny afternoons spent among flowering cherry, boxwood, wisteria and climbing hydrangea. Cool evenings are warmed by a large built-in fireplace. A passive water collection system in which five tanks, mounted below the porch, collect more than 2,000 gal-



Family items, inherited art, and eclectic finds -- there's interesting detail in every corner of this decorator's family home.

lot of work. The thorough remodel opened up the dark, choppy interiors, replaced the flooring, added a new wraparound porch, and completely redid the landscaping.

During her many remodeling projects, Julie has developed and refined her decorating sense. She scours flea markets, antique stores, and shops of all kinds, looking for treasures. She decorates with a free, but sure, hand using color and pattern to bring life into the rooms.

The statement begins at the

lons of rainwater for irrigation.

As an experienced renovator, Julie offers advice to all who venture to decorate on their own. "Never be afraid to change your mind," she stated emphatically. "Good design needn't always be expensive," she added. "Don't be afraid to mix the old with the new, antiques with modern pieces, found objects with curated ones, and memorabilia that speaks only to you. That's what makes a home personal and uniquely yours!"

Making a French

Normandy right for a family

When Chloe Redmond Warner and her husband sold their condo in San Francisco, they had 30 days to move. Chloe was pregnant at the time and they both wanted a neighborhood where they could raise a family. They fell in love with their Crocker Highlands home and neighborhood, and four days later they were homeowners.

Chloe, the founder of Redmond Aldrich Design, was ready to put her touch on this 1924 French Normandy home. Except for the kitchen, it didn't need much remodeling, but it did need refreshing and decorating.

Chloe is an interior designer, but this job was different.

"Having my family as a client is wonderful," she said. "I don't take anything too seriously, and I am less stressed if something doesn't work out. When I'm working with a client, everything must be cohesive and ready at the same time."

She was able to take her time when working on her own home.

Aside from the kitchen, which was thoroughly reworked for the family, Chloe and her husband didn't embark on any major construction in the house. Chloe said she loves to see what can be done in a house without any remodeling.

"I am not concerned by what one might consider limitations of the layout or condition of the house. I accept the given conditions and work from there," she said.

Chloe believes there is power in color, pattern, texture, and light, and these elements are evident everywhere in this house. She also mixed antiques and family heirlooms with more contemporary furnishings. She believes that a house needs a "grown-up" room and in this house that is the living room. On one of the walls are two trophy heads, one shot by Chloe's grandfather. The other walls display art that she received from her parents and grandparents. The furniture is a mix of heirlooms and vintage finds, and it all works.

Chloe also had to design the interior of her home to be family friendly. She believes that children should learn how to appreciate and like nice things, but they should also have a place where they can be just kids. The family room is the place in this house with space for play and plenty of storage for toys.

TOUR DETAILS

Advance tickets to this year's Children's Support League Tour are \$45 for a tour of five homes, and \$55 with lunch. Tickets are now available now at ChildrensSupportLeague.org. VIP tickets (\$125) are limited, and ticket-holders will enjoy a Kick-Off party on Wednesday, April 26 at a sixth Piedmont home, as well as a VIP Friday breakfast with guest speaker, Piedmont author Julie Barton, whose memoir, *Dog Medicine: How My Dog Saved Me from Myself*, was on the New York Times Best-selling list.

Once again, the Piedmont Community Center hosts a pop-up boutique featuring offerings from new and returning local artisans. A catered lunch, provided by El Sur and GrilledCheezGuy, will be available from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. on both Friday and Saturday, April 28-29. Lunch tickets are \$10 in advance or \$12 on tour days. Wine and desserts will be available for an extra charge.