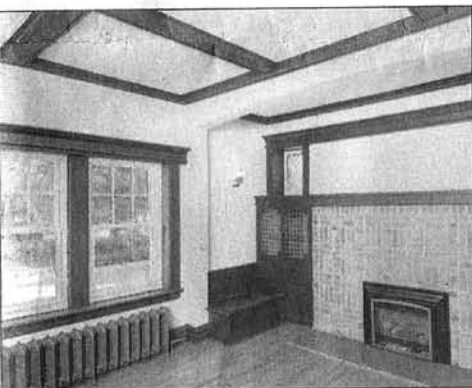
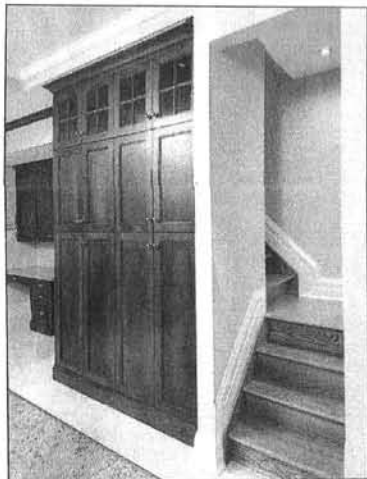


HOUSING DESIGN AWARDS 2009



GORDON KING PHOTOS

An international team of architects and professionals pulled from Ottawa spent more than two years gutting and restoring a grand Tudor home on Clewom Avenue. The biggest surprise was uncovering servants' stairs in the kitchen, prompting a redesign and expansion of the eating area.



The reno professionals

- **Troy Campa**, Newberry Campa Architects, Houston, Texas, www.newberrycampa.com
- **Gerhard Linse**, Gerhard Linse Design & Bldg. Consultants, www.gerharddesign.com
- **Mike Dion and André Jacques**, Oak Ridge Construction, oak.ridgeconstruction@sympatico.ca, 613-913-8568
- **Eric Hovila and Alan Lester**, Karhu Woodworking, www.karhuwoodworking.ca, 613-257-4512.



Time stands still

SHEILA BRADY
HOMEFRONT

New owners spent thousands, hiring professionals to restore iconic Glebe home, earning double design honours

Henrietta Clewom would be amazed if she could see the polished home sitting on the corner of her beloved Clewom Park.

More than 100 years ago, the Ottawa matriarch and area entrepreneur William Powell owned a huge chunk of the Glebe, including lots on what would become Clewom Avenue, a leafy street with some of the grandest homes in the city.

In 1906, Ottawa was bustling and demand for housing was booming, prompting Clewom to apply for a subdivision approval and sell off lots.

Among the early buyers were Albert and Margaret Horton who paid \$1,200 for a corner lot at Lyon and Clewom, commissioning construction of an imposing three-storey home with lots of dark oak trim popular at the time and the same limestone used in construction of the

Rideau Canal.

One hundred years later, time has almost stood still for the six-bedroom Tudor that is now home to an investment adviser and his young family.

The dark oak trimwork, so popular in Arts-and-Crafts homes, is buffed to a quiet polish and the oak flooring has a warm glow.

But did the Hortons really sit down to breakfast in such a large kitchen?

Not a chance.

The new owners spent thousands of dollars and more than three years restoring and preserving the iconic home. This month, the restoration earned an international team of architects and construction crews double honours at the Ottawa Housing Design Awards.

"Most people spend a lot less money on a new house," Ron Desjardins, host for the ceremony, quipped when custom designer Gerhard Linse and Mike Dion and André

Jacques, owners of Oak Ridge Construction and the muscle smarts behind the massive renovation, claimed a hefty glass trophy for renovations topping \$500,000.

The home also won an award for best custom kitchen. This time, Linse and the Oak Ridge boys shared honours with Eric Hovila and Alan Lester, owners of Karhu Woodworking for generous servings of Arts-and-Crafts detailing, creamy granite counters and white travertine marble floors.

Henrietta Clewom would take a second look.

The Clewom house has sheltered several Ottawa families and endured a series of fitful renovations before the investment adviser and his wife saw it in summer 2004.

"I always said our next house was going to be totally modern and solar," says the wife, who was raised in Ottawa, studied architecture in

the graduate program at Columbia University, and along the way picked up a love of older homes and restoration.

"Even if we bought an older place, we would tear it down and build new. Then we walked in and just loved it. It had a really good feeling."

"My creative juices got flowing and didn't stop. I started to see the potential," she says. "We did it because we are nitwits," her husband adds in a telephone conversation.

The happy nitwits kept their neighbours happy because they didn't come to town to raze a house and put up something modern.

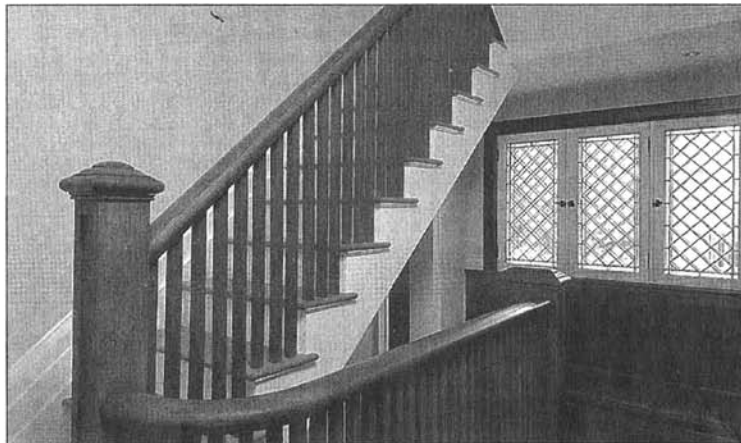
Instead, they saved what they could.

"We got to know people on the street and they have had us over for dinner to thank us for preserving the house," he says.

The couple relied heavily on Houston architect Troy Campa, who restored Arts-and-Crafts homes in the Texas neighbourhood where they had lived, to focus on drafting a restoration schedule for the Clewom house.

Ironically, their 105-year-old Houston house was one-quarter the size of the Ottawa home.

HOUSING DESIGN AWARDS 2009



GORDON KING PHOTOS

PAT MCGRATH, THE OTTAWA CITIZEN

The restored Clemow home is better than new, featuring gleaming bathrooms, a refinished oak staircase and new oak treads on the stairs. André Jacques, left, and Mike Dion, owners of Oak Ridge Construction invested thousands of hours of sweat and building smarts during the extended renovations. "It would break my heart if they ever sold," says Dion.

Time: Structural problems

Continued from PAGE E1

"It's cosy," she says. "But there wasn't a lot of room in Houston.

"There were endless renovations, but we loved the neighbourhood and the Arts-and-Crafts homes in the area."

There is lots more space to spread out in Ottawa and thankfully all of the renovations are done, she says.

There were surprises during the renovations, some pushed up the budget, others extended the renovation timetable.

Ottawa-based Linse was added to the team to refine the plans, expanding the kitchen when Dion and Jacques discovered a second set of stairs hiding behind drywall.

"That was one of the biggest sur-

prises," says Dion, 43, a renovation veteran, who first picked up a hammer when he was 15, to work alongside his father, Phillip Dion.

Linse redesigned the kitchen, pushing out the side and rear walls to accommodate an eating area, mudroom and rear entrance.

There is a new wrap-around rear porch and a bigger garage that looks old because crews reused limestone retrieved from the dismantling — stone by stone — of a major fireplace extending up the eastern side of the house. The fireplace had to be taken down when the kitchen was bumped out to accommodate the servants' stairs.

Now the couple's three sons can race upstairs to their bedrooms by the back stairs or be more formal,

hold onto the oak banister and walk up the main staircase.

Dion and Jacques spent months cleaning and preserving the hefty oak stairs that lead up to the third floor, an area that used to be a separate apartment but now houses the banker's office and extra bedrooms.

Second set of stairs found hidden behind drywall during the renovation.

When original mouldings couldn't be saved, Jacques reproduced new ones to match. His handiwork is also visible in the wood-panelled entrance and woodwork around the fireplace in the restored living room.

The house gleams, a buffed mem-

ory of early Ottawa, but the polishing came at a price.

"There were major structural problems," says Jacques, 56, who studied architectural technology at Algonquin College, joining forces with Dion 15 years ago.

The stone foundation was solid, but wooden supports in the middle had weakened and the house was sinking. Crews jacked it up, completely rebuilding the foundation.

Dion and Jacques supervised installation of new plumbing, heating and wiring systems and new hardwood oak flooring.

Then there was the hot summer day when five men lugged a new 1,000-pound iron tub up to the second floor.

"We didn't know if the stairs

would support us and we had to reinforce the floor in the bathroom to hold the tub," says Dion.

"This house is better than a new house. It has all the modern conveniences, but is in the Glebe," he said during a recent tour.

"We couldn't have done it without Mike or André," says the banker. "We counted on them."

Later, it's hard to say who loves the house more: the owners or Mike Dion.

Dion can't estimate the number of hours he has spent inside the house. He can only shake his head. "It would break my heart if they ever sold it," he says simply.

"We are not going to do that," she says. "But if it ever happens, we have to make it happen that Mike can afford to buy it."

Sheila Brady is the Citizen's Homes editor. You can reach her at sbrady@thecitizen.canwest.com.