

BOWLING GREEN

HOME

AND *Lifestyle* **ISSUE ONE 2025**



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Weaving

NEW LIFE INTO A BELOVED HOME



Pretty patterns and expert craftsmanship in Scottsville, KY.

While discussing the updates to Beth Hester and Scott Gilbert's home, I realized we can learn from the architects of the past to update for today's energy needs and simplify our spaces. Marie Kondo told us how joy-struck we could become in a

simplified space. Maybe we have something to learn from her and Bob Villa of This Old House fame. Beth and Scott's old house is more than 100 years old and has seen few owners as dedicated to its success. The couple purchased the home from Myrtie Osborne Erwin, whose father and brothers built the

house. Bought in 1989, the bungalow home was serviceable, but renovation was definitely on the horizon.

Beth and Scott wanted their kitchen to serve as the heart of their home. They understood that planning involved traffic flow and its effect on the house. They imagined their furniture and Beth's grandmother's antiques within newly built spaces. Their renovation was about to become a team sport. The couple, who are every bit community, artist, and patience-driven, amassed six years of preparation into a cozy, modernized, and beautiful Bungalow home-sweet-home. They were also hooked on This Old House and dreamed of getting their home up to date while maintaining the integrity and style of the original 1918 Craftsman.

Having friends who went through a renovation, they heard great things about Tim Graham and the Design Builders team. Scott elaborates on their discussion, to preserve the natural beauty of the wood, the exposed beams, and angular ceilings to add cabinetry and how to mesh the Arts and Crafts era and new styles. Beth and Scott enjoyed researching the Arts and Crafts Movement and understood that the modern aesthetic we see today owes much to Gustav Stickley's 19th-century Mission furniture. Each item is crafted with a designer's skill and a nod to international styles and elements of the natural world; the

Stickley family legacy is strong as their ancestors continue to build in upstate New York.

Who can deny some obsessing about potential home renovations? The home improvement bug is inescapable. The "what ifs" are seemingly endless and can lead us down a "pig's path" of possibilities. It's not uncommon to get overwhelmed in the muck. But that didn't stop Beth and Scott. Nor should it stop you. Beth advised that "zoning in and taking all the patience and time needed for agreed-upon changes. While also learning how the flow of traffic in the home will be changed" is worth the time. Inspiration and ideas from the "mother of interior design", Candace Wheeler understood that incorporating women into the interior design industry was paramount to its success, and with her guidance interiors were revolutionized to include in her design, beauty and contemporary usage for everyone, beyond the upper classes.

Are you asking, "Where does one start"? Paramount in the "want and needs" column was plumbing! Beth and Scott did not enjoy the luxuries of county water when they bought their bungalow in 1989. They had to use cisterns, large tanks that stored water for the household. The affectionately named "dog house" cistern now sits unused and adjacent to the front porch. It piped into the house for the kitchen and bathroom. The



Original double-hung windows over look 3 bucolic acres.



Unique and eclectic work from the couple and reminder of the community of artisans they helped curate.



The original angles of the ceiling were revealed. Adding interest, and authenticity to this refined bathroom.

second was a hand-cranked option for drinking and cooking water conveniently placed outside the back porch. Another “to do” was taking Mertie’s wood clapboard and vinyl siding down and replacing it with LP Smart-side-siding, which offered more durability and an authentic look. Hester and Gilbert wanted to bring back the traditional extended eaves as seen in the Bungalow houses of the period. The Design Builders crew, with over 30 years of experience, a portfolio of projects, and dedicated specialists, were ready to work.

In 2019, the couple embarked on major renovations. With a closer-to-period exterior, more space, and a better flow to the household, they knew these projects required careful planning. Beth and Scott temporarily moved into a trailer for 2 years while the team worked from sketches, 3D modeling software, and source material about American Bungalows. Patrick Gilbert Scott’s brother, and architect, who was on hand throughout the process, commented on ways to move forward and still honor the home’s past. Upon completion of the interior, Patrick commented, “It looks good and the same.” Eaves were extended, the porch was reset, and the columns were fixed and enhanced to showcase the brick posts. It was important to the couple to keep American Arts and Crafts pioneers in mind and still enjoy the benefit of updated bathrooms and a larger kitchen to entertain and accommodate their artist community.

And then COVID hit. Undaunted, the team managed kitchen updates, after multiple trips to Nashville and back, to obtain appliances. Within the heart of the home, the new kitchen, with the newly opened floor plan allowed for more seating, and again, focused in on the hearth. The updated

range and induction stove with its architecturally appropriate exhaust –needed a little something extra. Beth and her friends got to work. Weaving copper foil in an intricate pattern, these artisans created a focal point for kitchen visitors. The weave encircles the exhaust on all sides and is indicative of the relationships the couple have forged while highlighting their expert craftsmanship. Additionally, the backsplash which is one continuous piece, was inset with Beth's decorative tile. Their foreman matched and shaped the granite counter to hint at the Arts and Crafts motifs with gentle organic curves on an otherwise straight piece. Incorporating all of these elements while capturing the couple's aesthetic enhanced the natural lighting, and opened the floorplan to accommodate a host of family, friends, and artisans.

With great determination and fortitude, they also matched the original wood framing within the home and refinished the floors. Behind the scenes, the house was warming its occupants with new geothermal heating, in addition to the working fireplaces. The lighting fixtures, acquired by the couple so many years ago illuminated new spaces with stained glass indicative of the more modern, Frank Lloyd Wright (Prairie and Mission styles) style lighting, showcasing clean lines, organic colors, and natural motifs.

The couple thoughtfully displays their treasures and showcases them without ostentation or clutter. Family heirlooms like furniture, mirrors, and paintings acquired from friends, each have their special spot. In the sunroom, Brenda Brown's jeweled corn painting washes the sunny wall with color. Weavings from oak and honeysuckle baskets and bold textiles like breadcrumbs, trail through the home and artfully



Sink space so nice you don't mind sharing. Cabinets for the present and future, honoring the past.



Cabinetry by local centenarian and carpenter Bob Underwood made from sassafras wood and honey-stained to further warm the sunporch.



The grand Eastlake style bed, carefully being mended by Scott Gilbert.

tell the story of a life in the arts. From their years weaving within the Kentucky Guild of Artists and Craftsmans a large display of baskets and keepsakes is featured at the top of the stairs. A whimsical domino-inset table acquired in Rugby, TN, rests in a reading nook. Sculptural works from Chris Ratus (Bowling Green, blacksmith and artist) and Lynn Ferguson, the retired, Artist in Residence at from Kentucky Museum, have works residing within the Hester and Gilbert home. The

retired couple, having fulfilled the dream of owning a lovingly restored bungalow are not resting on laurels. Last year, Beth's and Scott's weaving was showcased in August at the Kentucky Museum, White Oak Gathering, and the aptly named "From Many Hands" show. This Spring, Scott's work can be seen in the upcoming Abound Credit Union, Celebration of the Arts at the Kentucky Museum on Western Kentucky University's campus, from March 7th-April 18th. **BG**





Bold weaving, and red tiled fireplace compliments the original wood and geometry of the house.



Beth's beautiful tile work on the each fireplace, with expertly arranged art.



Hearth-as-art, and a closer view of Ms Hesters copper-accent weaving.



Whether rocking on the porch or hopping cobblestones, the views are inspiring creativity and joy.



Angular countertops and cabinets updates, with Design builders the team well-managed complimenting original stain of the home.



With abundant gathering space, the kitchen, is the heart of their home



Picture-perfect new windows and geothermal heat keep the top floor warm.