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DESIGN

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THE LIVING/DINING AREA of the "mess hall" has a bank of French doors that opens to the river view. Natural light from the cupola fills the space, and when the clan gathers for meals, there's room for everyone at the three dining tables. The cherry floorboards are hand-planed with knots slightly raised for a worn look.

Gathering Place

NEWEST ADDITIONS TO A COMPOUND ON CAPE COD
BALANCE FAMILY SPACES WITH POCKETS OF PRIVACY

WRITTEN BY *Courtney Goodrich* • PHOTOGRAPHED BY *Richard Mandelkorn*



It's a plan grandmas and grandpas often like to hatch together:

establish a summer house where all their children and their families can visit — and feel at home — at the same time. For that to work, spaces must be carefully thought out, flexible, and comfortable, and there should be room for everyone to have some privacy. This will be a place where memories are made, a spot so special that when family members are away, they can't help but wish they were back there together. For the couple who own this Cape Cod family compound, of which the two newest buildings are a large “mess hall” and a cottage/office, there was the added attraction of a picturesque view of a river opening to Nantucket Sound — an especially beautiful sight when the low light of the afternoon sun hits it. “There's a sparkle on the river,” says the husband, “and the salt marsh grasses glow. It's really soothing.”

THE VIEW of the “mess hall” from the river (ABOVE) emphasizes its ordered architecture. The screened porch on the right faces the main house. In the kitchen (ABOVE RIGHT), the island's green cabinetry keeps the space cheerful and ties in with the greens and blues of the living/dining area. Pocket windows above the counter can be closed or open as preferred.

They are happy to report their plan worked. Almost all of 16 of their children and grandchildren are there every weekend in the summer.

When the couple, who live year-round in the Boston area, bought the property in 1998, it had a house and a detached garage. In 2002, they added guest rooms to the garage, then three years later, purchased the lot next door to build the mess hall, which they originally envisioned as a wide-open summer camp-like space where everyone could gather for meals. But the growing needs of their growing family made them realize that “if we were going to build it,” says the husband, “we have to put some bedrooms there.” And so with the help of architect Ivan Bereznicki, whose firm, Bereznicki Architects, has offices in Cambridge and Osterville, Massachusetts, they came up with a more suitable design.

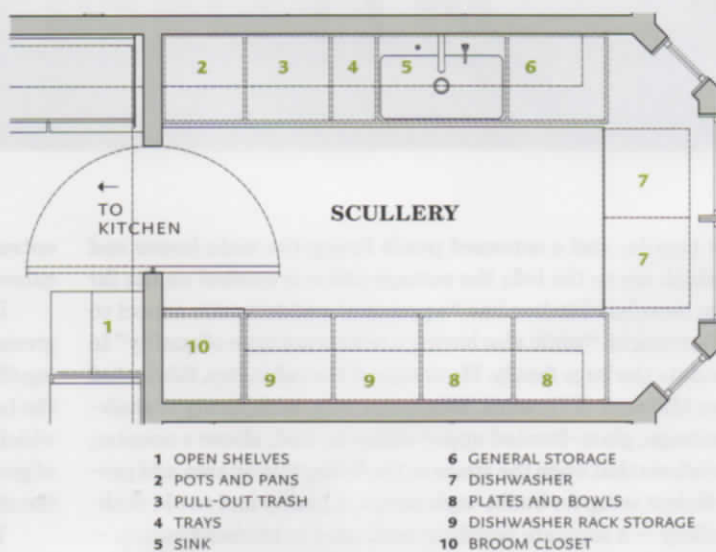
Down the hydrangea-lined entrance, the landscape, designed by Rick Lamb Associates of Cambridge, opens to a circular driveway, lush green grass, and the sparkling river. The mess hall is to the right, symmetric and stately with two floors, a central



DESIGN DECISION *Kitchen Cleanup*

Although there are a Viking refrigerator and a Miele dishwasher in the kitchen for everyday use, two small side rooms — the pantry and the scullery — are integral to the kitchen's ability to efficiently handle a large number of people. There are a commercial freezer and a commercial double-wide refrigerator by Traulsen in the pantry, which has its own entry, important when bringing in food or calling on caterers. The scullery is devoted to dishwashing and cleanup, with two Hobart commercial dishwashers, a 33-inch-wide sink with a Franke professional pull-out spray faucet, and stainless steel countertops.

"Sculleries are in large English houses, where very often you had very large numbers of guests," says architect Ivan Bereznicki. "It is where all the dishes got washed, by hand, by a scullery maid." Here, high-tech appliances do the trick.



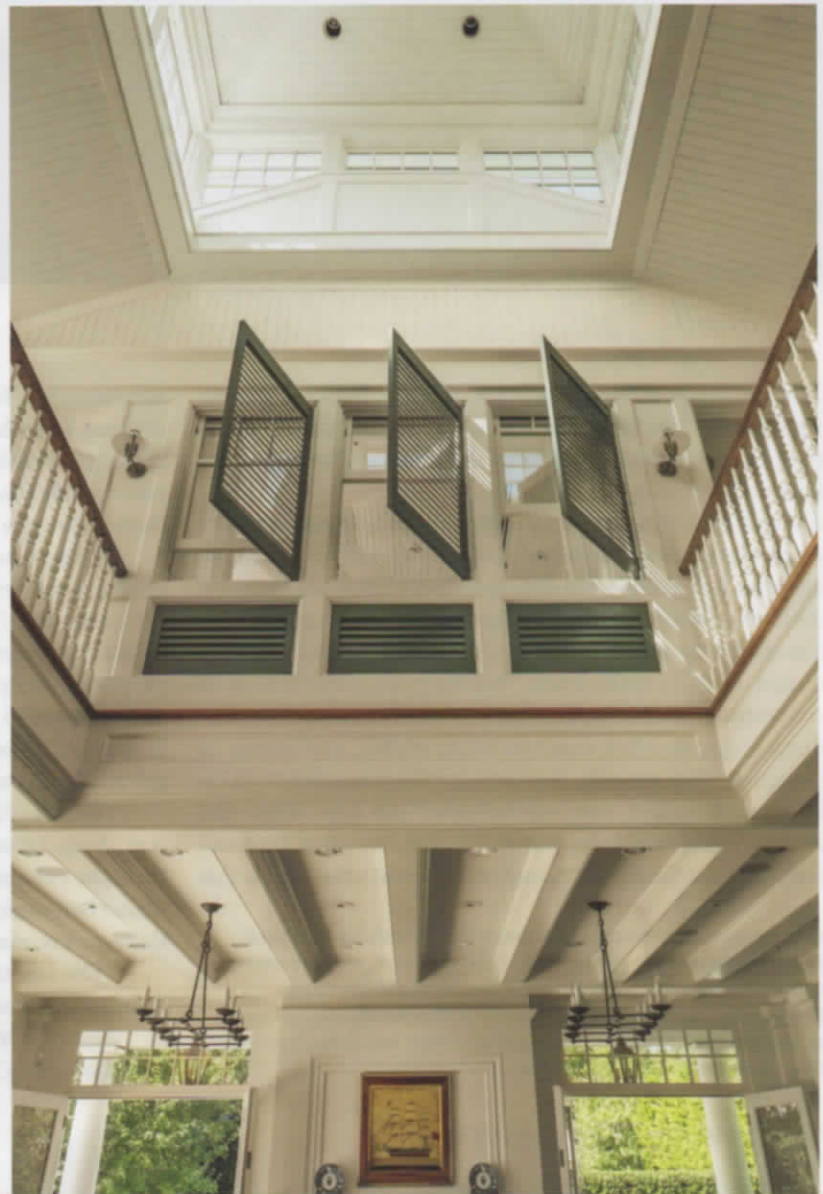


2½-story cupola, and a screened porch facing the main house and garage, which are to the left; the cottage/office is located on the far right. The mess hall kitchen has “a personal and domestic aspect to it,” says Bereznicki, “while also having a restaurant type of quality” to accommodate the large family. He designed the cabinetry, fabricated by Horgan Millwork of Hyannis, Massachusetts, with plenty of shelving and storage, glass-fronted upper cabinets, and, above a counter, pocket windows that open the space to the living/dining area and provide an efficient setup for buffet-style meals. A pantry and an old-fashioned scullery — a separate vestibule dedicated to kitchen cleanup — are stocked with commercial equipment, and the pantry has its own

entrance, which is helpful when the couple host large parties or hire caterers or private chefs.

Upstairs, three bedrooms are placed around the cupola, where green-painted shutters can open to connect them to the spacious living/dining area below. French doors topped with transom windows fill the back wall and lead out to the magic that is the colonnade porch, which has the best view of the river. “The colonnade gives the feeling of groundedness,” says Bereznicki. “It’s a wonderful transition from the closed space to the open lawn that goes down to the water.”

The couple had planned to stay in the main house’s master suite, but when E.B. Norris & Son Builders of Osterville finished construc-



OPEN TO THE living/dining area, the second floor has three bedrooms around the central cupola, which creates a gallery effect. The bedrooms' green shutters and interior windows can be left closed (ABOVE) for privacy or opened (RIGHT BOTTOM) to connect to the space below. In a guest bedroom (RIGHT TOP), the tongue-and-groove painted wood ceiling, a simple low-pile rug, white walls, and unlined white linen curtains do not distract from the river view.



tion and interior designer Susan Reddick of Susan Reddick Design Inc. of Cambridge put the final touches on the interior, they decided to move into one of the bedrooms. "Why shouldn't we live in the new space?" reasoned the husband.

What's most endearing about the design (apart from almost every space having a view) is how the rooms connect with each other. In the living/dining area, for example, the sliding pocket windows connect the space to the kitchen while the cupola's shuttered windows more subtly connect it to the bedrooms. "People can be eating, playing, chatting on the screened porch," says Reddick, "but everyone is still in sight of each other. Everyone is still together."

For furnishings, Reddick stuck to blues, whites, and greens to keep the rooms feeling visually connected. "They wanted it to be light and airy, understated, and comfortable," she says. Since the number of diners can vary from two to 16-plus, Reddick kept the furniture arrangement flexible. A round table beneath the cupola can

THE COLONNADE PORCH (ABOVE) connects the mess hall with the backyard. Nestled into the landscape, the cottage/office (FACING PAGE, TOP) is currently the husband's work space. However, his wife, hinting she'd like more grandchildren, says it "could be a nice guesthouse." The family likes to enjoy breakfast on the screened porch (FACING PAGE, BOTTOM), which faces the main house and has an expansive view of the river.

accommodate four, and is where the couple dine when it's just the two of them. To evoke that summer camp feeling, Reddick placed two large rectangular tables side by side near the fireplace. "It is a little bit more manageable than one long table," she says. Each table seats eight, so there's always a spot for everyone.

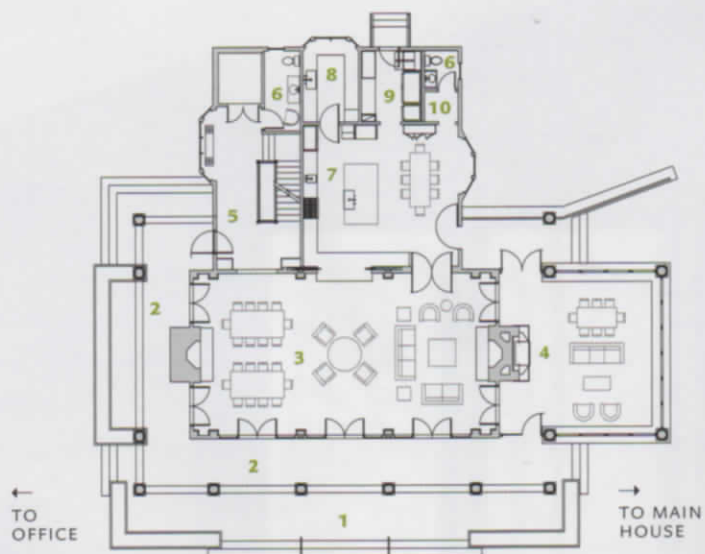
The screened porch, where lanterns hang from the tongue-and-groove wood ceiling, is another spot where the family shares meals. "It's delightful," says the wife. "We eat breakfast here every morning unless it's freezing out." Breakfast is the most informal meal, with people leisurely making their way to the hall to find coffee and food and to see who else is awake. "The nicest times are when we have breakfast," says the husband. "We read the paper and share what's going on in the world."

The rest of the day is scheduled, however. Lunch is served at 1:30 p.m. sharp, followed by an hour of rest. Afterward, everyone scatters for tennis or swimming and then regroups at 6:30 p.m. for cocktails. The dinner bell rings at 7:30 p.m. No matter how many family members are there, or who else has been invited as a guest, this schedule is followed.

"The function is what we anticipated — it's a gathering place," says the husband.

And adds his wife, "Shoes are optional!" ■

FOR MORE DETAILS, SEE RESOURCES



FIRST FLOOR

- | | |
|----------------------|---------------|
| 1 STONE PATIO | 6 POWDER ROOM |
| 2 PORCH | 7 KITCHEN |
| 3 LIVING/DINING AREA | 8 SCULLERY |
| 4 SCREENED PORCH | 9 PANTRY |
| 5 HALL | 10 COATS |

BUILDER E.B. Norris & Son Builders

