# New England HOWENSHIP

### Connecticut

Celebrating Fine Design, Architecture, and Building

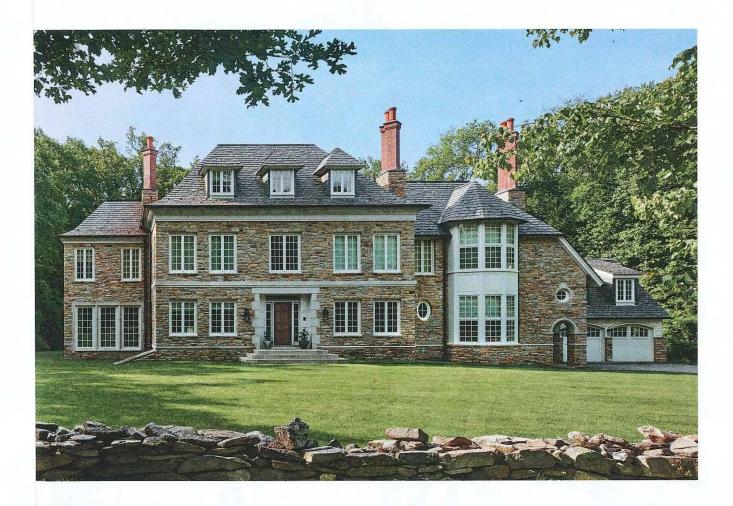
### Delightful Diversity

The perfect touches of this and that combine for chic, easygoing looks

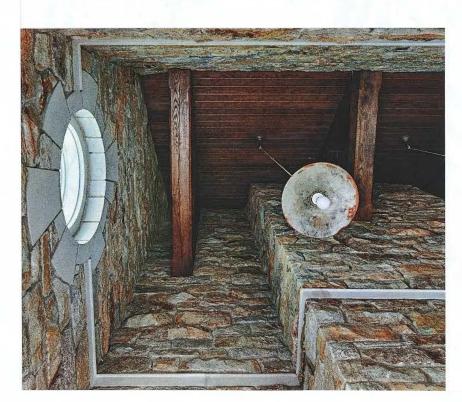








## THE STATELY HOME, COMPLETE WITH A BACKDROP OF MATURE TREES, LOOKS AS THOUGH IT COULD HAVE BEEN COPIED FROM A PHOTOGRAPH

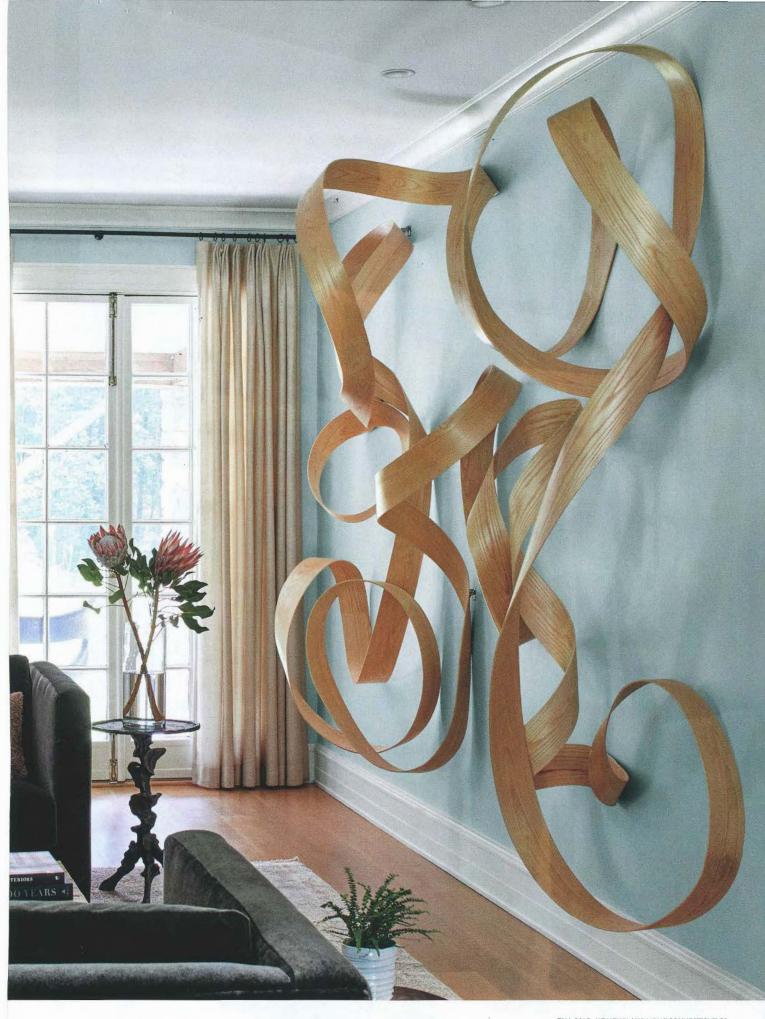


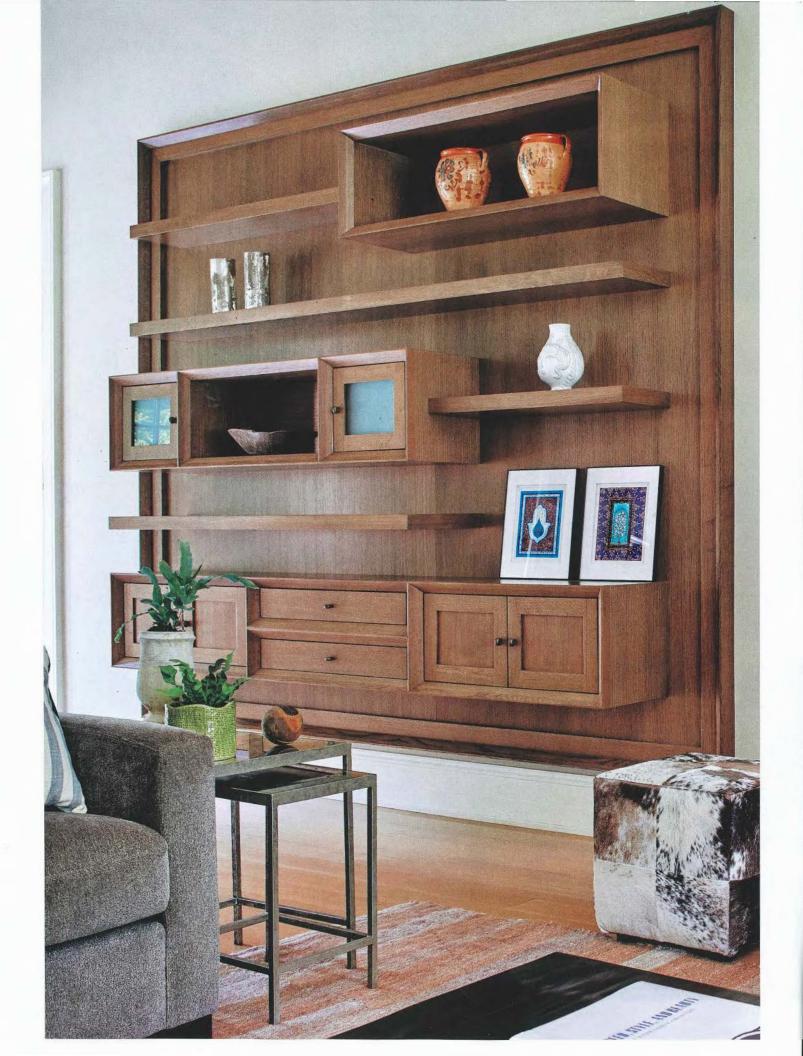
of the English countryside of a century ago. Passersby probably take turns guessing the building's age. Maybe they conjure images of cricket matches on the generous lawn. Never would they surmise that this glorious Greenwich dwelling is the reincarnation of a 1960s house.

That modest structure was clad in clapboard and totally of the era. This classic stone manor commands its site, exuding character even from afar. For the young family inside, the house is the epitome of comfort. And, as the best British homes always do, it will only grow better with age.

Indeed, architect Jeff Kaufman, who heads a firm with offices in Westport and Greenwich, must have channeled the English architect Edwin Lutyens, a talent he admires, when he accepted the

TOP: A granite exterior with custom limestone detailing gives the house presence. LEFT: The architect enclosed what had been an open connection to the garage, incorporating beams and stones to create a lofty secondary entry the family uses regularly. RIGHT: On the living room wall, an abstract wood sculpture by Jeremy Holmes nods to the fluid movement of the home's central staircase and railing.







commission. Lutyens designed many of Great Britain's finest country houses, and his influence is evident in Kaufman's use of materials and close attention to detail. Still, this being the twenty-first century, Kaufman was tasked with building a house that would be gorgeous while meeting all of today's high standards for convenience and efficiency. Stellar baths, an upscale kitchen, and an exercise room were givens.

On top of that, there were also building constraints mandating that the new design adhere to the existing footprint and wetland regulations concerning the rear of the property. Kaufman, though, seems to have been inspired rather than deterred by the challenges. "It's a magnificent house with a huge amount of quality," he says with obvious and well-deserved pride.

The extensive renovation resulted in a

significant makeover. Restricted from adding onto the back of the house, Kaufman, working with builder Larry Kendall of ACI General Contracting, expanded to the left and forward. By extruding the front facade, they forged space for a grand entry and a bigger living room and library. At the same time, the kitchen was reinvented and the dining room enlarged. Awkward floor levels—leftovers from previous additions—were remedied by minimizing the number of steps, lowering floors, and lifting ceilings. Throughout, scale and proportion were enhanced.

All those life-altering moves aside, though, it's the core Kaufman ingeniously carved for the floating elliptical staircase, with a remarkable custom-designed railing by Canadian David Hind, that's the showstopper. The stairs spiral from the entry to the new third floor. "It was a cool

Mirrored Urban Electric sconces, a sparkly Arctic Pear chandelier by Ochre, and a shimmery Phillip Jeffries wallcovering give the dining room as much appeal by day as by night. FACING PAGE: Nesting tables and versatile animal-hide cubes ensure family-room functionality. Designer Dale Blumberg framed the bookcase "to make it more like a piece of art," she explains.

#### **PROJECT TEAM**

**ARCHITECT:** Jeff Kaufman, JMKA Architects

**INTERIOR DESIGNER:** Dale Blumberg, Dale Blumberg Interiors

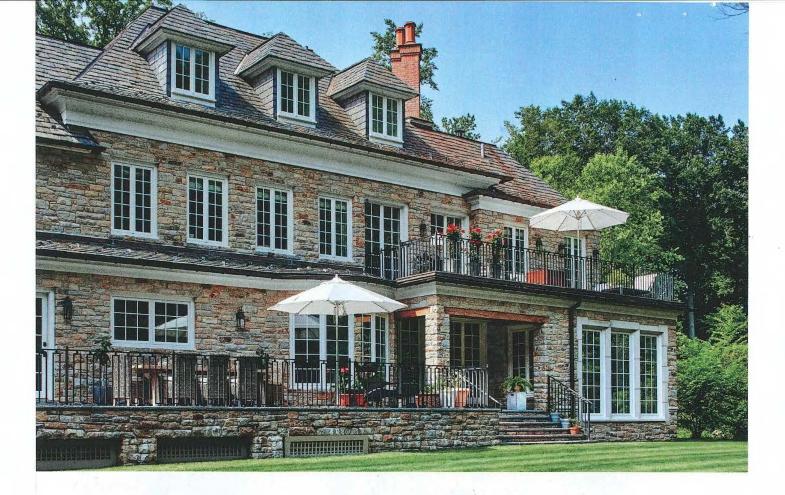
**BUILDER:** Larry Kendall, ACI General Contracting

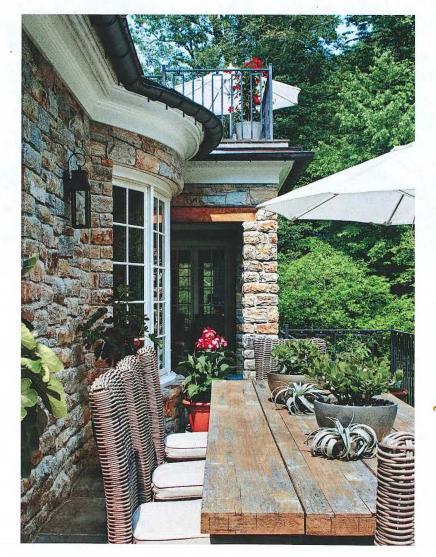




says, with a confident, clean-lined vision

of the designer's astute juxtapositions.





Raw, burlap-like, open-weave window sheers (with just a shot of gold) play off a glossy Phillip Jeffries wallcovering. Above the pale limestone hearth Blumberg devised to take the place of a traditional mantel hover mirrored sconces. In contrast to the stone, the Julian Chichester table is as dark as fine chocolate. The color is so rich it almost looks like it might melt beneath the glow of the dazzling chandelier.

The library and family room have a similar elegant ambience. The former sports a Julian Chichester desk of oak and vellum, animal-hide cubes, and linen window shades. The latter contains a vintage kilim along with a custom-designed bookcase as artful as the vases and pictures it holds.

Not to be outdone, the bright kitchen—in addition to being super functional for the wife, an accomplished cook—displays its own intriguing blend

ABOVE: The second-floor master suite opens to a terrace providing a heavenly respite for parents. LEFT: A generous bluestone terrace also runs along the kitchen, easily accessible for al fresco dining and entertaining. FACING PAGE: A Bourgeois Bohème chandelier with hand-blown globes—hung at precisely the right point—illuminates the stairwell. The landing's quiet reading spot includes an Oly Flowerfall chandelier.





of textures. Marsia Holzer wood bar stools with blackened steel bases line up at the granite-topped island. Overhead, hand-stitched burlap pendants by Bobo dangle from raw-rubbed rope in lieu of chain. Offsetting the warmth of wood and burlap, the countertops are cool marble and the floor is hard-wearing limestone.

Understated but stylish is the theme right through to the breakfast room, where a fabulous photograph of French graffiti on a corrugated door, by Nick Microulis, claims the wall. The blond dining table is surrounded with metal chairs by Casamidy. "I absolutely love them," says Blumberg. "They're like deconstructed Louis XVI chairs."

## INSPIRED BY THE PEBBLED WALL IN THE COUPLE'S BATH, BLUMBERG FOUND OTTOMANS THAT REFERENCE STONES FOR THEIR SITTING ROOM.

Back in the day, no self-respecting English house of similar stature would have been without a billiard room. And thanks to Kaufman's skillful choreography, there's one of those here, taking over a space that once stood as a sunroom. Complete with coffered ceiling, the paneled room is cozy but also contemporary. Visitors note the floor lamp's chain-link base and the organic African side table.

Most likely, they also observe they're picking up a somewhat organic leitmotif, from the living room's amazing wall sculpture to the staircase's sweeping handrail and right into the master bedroom. Inspired by the pebbled wall in the couple's bath, Blumberg found ottomans that reference stones for their sitting room. Holly Hunt wool-sateen drapes fall like water alongside their windows.

The homeowners have nature on demand with a private terrace just off the master bedroom. It's just one more perk Kaufman so adroitly integrated into this lovely home—one that, surely, rivals many we might find across the pond. •

**RESOURCES** For more information about this home, see page 140.



