



C M Y K

Designer -EXT -FILM X



SATURDAY, APRIL 26, 2008

THE NEWS &amp; OBSERVER



Try This: Organic concentrate helps clean without noxious fumes. Page 3E.

Comics.....8E  
Movie listings.....7E  
Puzzles.....2E  
Television.....6E

[www.newsobserver.com/home](http://www.newsobserver.com/home)

# Home&Garden

**Dollar store gourmets:** Submit your dollar-stretching recipes to [sue.stock@newsobserver.com](mailto:sue.stock@newsobserver.com). For more details, go to [newsobserver.com/lifestyles](http://newsobserver.com/lifestyles).

h o m e o f  
t h e m o n t h

## April's profile of a well-designed living space

Take a look at a photo gallery at [www.newsobserver.com](http://www.newsobserver.com), search **home&garden**.



the exterior

Chips Cottage's generous south-facing front porch faces a landscaped front yard.

### the project

## Chips Cottage

### Architect

Thomas Lawton Architect,  
10 E. Market St., Suite D,  
Black Mountain, NC 28711

### General Contractor:

Black Mountain Bungalow Co., 112 S. Park Lane, Black Mountain

### Project location

54 Cheshire Drive, Black Mountain

### Square Footage

3,800 heated / 840 unheated

### Key attributes

Use of American Craftsman principles, connection to the natural environment, use of natural light in well-proportioned spaces

### Significant Consultants

Tom Mainolfi, Carolina Native Landscapes, Asheville

### Photographer

Tim Bursleson, Frontier Group, 541 Moffit Road, Asheville

## Crafty retreat

### Custom Craftsman meets community development in Black Mountain

By JESSICA BEIL HINDMAN  
CORRESPONDENT

**I**n the Village of Cheshire in Black Mountain, Chips Cottage has a delightful, unassuming presence on a south-facing slope overlooking the Blue Ridge Mountains. Few would utter the phrase "spec house" — one constructed without a buyer — in reference to a house as charming as this.

But architect Thomas Lawton and developer Charles Sparks of the Black Mountain Bungalow Co. aim to recapture the charm and warmth of the American Craftsman while satisfying the needs of modern life — and it appears to be a resounding

success. One Home of the Month selection panelist commented, "You can smell the apple pie."

A Traditional Neighborhood Development designed by Duany Plater-Zyberk & Co., the Cheshire neighborhood is both fresh and nostalgic, with shops, restaurants, offices, townhomes, custom homes and "tree houses," all walkable and seamlessly connected by parks, streams, walking trails and tree-lined streets. The Chips Cottage is perfectly suited, with welcoming porches framing stunning mountain views and generous interior spaces with an abundance of natural light.



The entryway leads to an upstairs room with built-in bookcases.

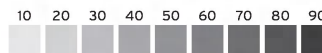
SEE COTTAGE, PAGE 5E





CMYK

Designer -EXT -FILM X



THE NEWS & OBSERVER  
SATURDAY, APRIL 26, 2008

## Home & Garden

5E<sup>+</sup>



The kitchen and breakfast room have transoms over doorways and integrated lighting and hardware.



The living room includes such Craftsman details as abundant windows, natural materials, interior transoms and built-ins.

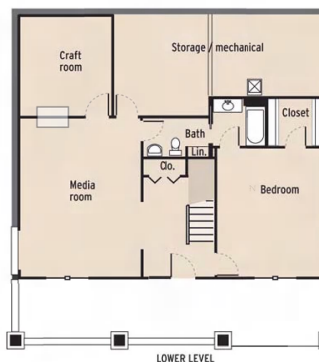
PHOTOS BY TIM BURLISON



UPPER LEVEL



MAIN LEVEL



LOWER LEVEL

### COTTAGE

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1E

Sparks was intrigued by the American Arts and Crafts movement, and both men respected the enduring principles of the



Architect  
Thomas  
Lawton

Craftsman bungalow and wondered how they might be best applied to new development. In the 1901 magazine *The Craftsman*, architect Gustav Stickley promoted the principles that a home must be designed and constructed in harmony with the landscape and use local materials; interiors must be open for family interaction, of pleasing form, functional with built-in bookcases, benches, etc. and with a coherence of design elements from space planning to details; and there should be an abundance of natural light.

Sparks noted that this language of design is "homey with a family warmth." Both Sparks and Lawton enjoyed an article from *The Craftsman* titled "Chips From the Workshop." And thus the Chips Cottage was born.

Lawton does not subscribe to a specific style of architecture; rather, he believes in "sensible design," noting that simplicity and pleas-



A rear screened porch and patio embrace a back courtyard.

ing aesthetic quality are accomplished only through a very complicated design process.

Sparks recognizes that thoughtful design separates an average spec house from a signature home but that the developer must be cost-conscious.

Rather than provide a little bit of everything on a budget for a generic user, Lawton and Sparks imagine a real client, making value-oriented design decisions to create a sense of home.

The mountain setting generated the story of the Chips Cottage client. The ground slopes a full story from front to back, offering accessibility on two levels, perfect for a multigenerational family. The ground level has a generous in-law suite that fosters a sense of freedom and mobility. Upstairs, children's bedrooms are built into the roof

eaves and feature the "cave," a nook set up as a stage to foster creativity.

The main level is a prototype: Its thoughtful design provides all living spaces and a master suite, and it is adaptable to suit another client or another site.

Its relationship to the outdoors embodies both Craftsman and traditional Southern principles. A generous front porch — the "other family room" — faces the street, and a rear screened porch and patio embrace a cozy back courtyard. Carefully planned and beautifully executed, the site design roots the house to the mountain with stacked stone retaining walls, natural stone stairs and subtle landscaping, while mediating the dramatic slope and front porch height to invite visitors.

Spaces in the home are gener-

ous yet intimate, with an abundance of natural light from multiple directions in every room. They graciously open up to and interact with one another. Proportions are repeated for coherence and a sense of rhythm throughout the house in room sizes, windows, facade elements and details. Gently tapered exposed rafter tails peek out under roof overhangs. On the porch, custom cutouts transform standard 2 by 4s to a delightful border.

Transoms over interior doorways mirror transom windows. Well-proportioned board-and-batten wainscoting creates a sense of movement up the stairs. Built-in bookcases, benches and window seats enhance both intimacy and function. Lighting and hardware are carefully integrated into each space. Lawton describes the critical detailing as "touches that are thoughtful but not mass-produced." All of this comes together to create a home with a decidedly custom feel.

Jessica Beil Hindman is a 2003 graduate of the master's program at the NCSU School of Architecture. She is the owner and operator of Studio H Design in Charlotte.

**FREE Medium Popcorn and Small Drink With Purchase of Two Admission Tickets!**