The Franklin tree’s blooms are as fragrant as they are beautiful. PHOTO BY THOMAS SCHEITLIN

August’s profile of a well-designed living space
Take a look at a photo gallery at www.newsobserver.com, search home&garden.

Craftsmen with a modern spin

By Paul Bettagna, CORRESPONDENT

Looking to move their family from the big city to a place with small-town values, Bruce and Marge Lynch purchased a property in historic Wendell. “We wanted to live in a place with a sense of community,” said Bruce Lynch, “somewhere authentic.”

Then they watched the house go up in flames.

Of course, that was just how they planned it.

The house had suffered through years of neglect and had been stripped bare by pilferers. Even Habitat for Humanity declined to salvage what remained. “They told us there was just nothing left,” Lynch said.

So the couple offered the house to the fire department, which happily burned the structure in a training exercise. The house was removed, the firefighters gained experience, and then there was a lag. The foundations of the old house were still standing on the lot while the couple unsuccessfully interviewed a number of architects. The fit was just never quite right.

Then, at a home show, Marge Lynch noticed the display of 2SL Design Build Inc. and called her husband over. “I knew the moment I saw their portfolio,” Bruce Lynch said.

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The project

Wendell bungalow

architect

John Sibert, 2SL Design Build Inc., 3230 Glen Royal Road, Raleigh, www.2sldesignbuild.com

project location

3230 Glen Royal Road

square footage

2,920

key attributes

Modernized Craftsman-style Bungalow

completed

June 2007

The exterior

Owners and architect collaborated on details of the pickets and panels on the central stairway.

Franklin tree rewards

By Catherine Bollinger, CORRESPONDENT

Here’s a weakness for exquisite trees like the Franklin tree (Franklinia alatamaha). I probably would have tried to grow a specimen in my yard.

It was lucky for me and other lovers of exquisite trees like the Franklin tree (Franklinia alatamaha), I probably would have tried to grow a specimen in my yard.

Some years later, William Bartram discovered a small grove of this species growing by the banks of the Altamaha River in what is now Georgia in 1765. On a later trip, William collected seeds, from which he grew specimens in their Philadelphia garden, naming the tree in honor of Benjamin Franklin.

This tree can be tricky to keep happy. It needs rich, moist, well-drained soil, protection from strong winds and summer heat, and mulch to keep its roots cool. But if you can give it what it needs, your reward will be exceptional flowers on an exquisite tree — in August!

The Franklin tree’s blooms are as fragrant as they are beautiful. PHOTO BY THOMAS SCHEITLIN

we wanted to live in a place with a sense of community,” Bruce Lynch said of the historic Wendell property. Architect John Sibert proposed a modern interpretation of an Arts and Crafts-style bungalow.
The couple met John Sibert, a licensed architect and general contractor with 11 years of professional experience. The first time they saw the site, the only thing left was a charred foundation, Sibert said.

From the ashes
As the team began to focus on a design, the Lynches were keen to correct what they saw as the flaws in their kitchen. The windows were small; you couldn’t see the cook from the dining room; you couldn’t entertain there to eat; the house had an “inefficient plan.”

In addition, they had a wish list of features, including a smaller yard, an “open” floor plan; a low-maintenance, energy-efficient house. RobertBobertBobert built a modern interpretation of Arts and Crafts style. The proposal had several contextual advantages. During the 1920s, Brooklyn was full of modest but well-proportioned residences. Within its streets one could find a number of Sears & Roebuck kit houses and more than a few bungalows.

The project was an appropriate use of the site and led to the scale of the neighborhood. The main facade appears very much like those of the neighboring houses. Unlike the surrounding houses, each side of the new house is treated as a facade and enjoys a convenient level of finish and detailing.

But the house extends well beyond the porte-cochere, and the doors lead to a generous two-car garage toward the rear of the lot.

The true size of the residence can only be appreciated upon entry. The volume of the house, orchestrated and composed with care, successfully only on the exterior, contains an open, flowing plan.

It was intended to be a modern interpretation of a craftsman-style house,” Sibert reckoned. Accordingly, the main living areas on the first floor connect in a manner conducive to comfort and flow. But an appropriate scale of the entire building reinforces the dining room and the master suite.

The upstairs bedrooms constitute their own separate domain. This is where the children live. They have separate bedrooms adjoining a central living area. Each bedroom connects to a Jack-and-Jill bathroom, providing access to separate toilets and shared tub/showers. One of the accent touches ups – stairs, the daughter’s room has been fitted with a window seat.

Craftsman details
While the floor plan and architectural elements of the house are modernized, many of the details are decidedly period. The project’s detailing, for example, is an example of these efforts. But the house extends well beyond the porte-cochere, and the doors lead to a generous two-car garage toward the rear of the lot.

The attention to detail is not only aesthetic. The climate-controlled steam system features eco-friendly Pronex refrigerant, but water is provided by an energy-efficient on-demand tankless water heater. The Lynches insist that a well-thought-out design, done as a design-build project, should be appreciated for its ability to implement design during construction because your architect and builder are one and the same,” Sibert said.

Often, the carpenter mocked up trim and casework profiles with samples on-site. The Lynches could see, at full-scale, what the finished product would look like.

The detailing of the perimeter of the central stair case stands as the most striking example of these efforts. But the same quality is exhibited in details such as the bold hood at the ceiling and the profiles sketched into the open-rafter ends.

The front door, bought from Habitat for Humanity’s Restore, has a distinctly Arts and Crafts appearance, as does the front light fixtures and door hardware throughout the house.

The detailing is done so as not to make the house seem too much like a facsimile, but rather like a house that was built in the 1920s or 1930s. The Lynches couldn’t be happier. Their house is the first substantial renovation in the area in recent years. They have the house they wanted in the environment they sought for their family. And since they had the foresight to place the master suite on the same floor as the living room, they have a very comfortable rest that they can enjoy for many years.

Paul R. Briggs is a registered architect and an accomplished professor of architecture at the NCSU College of Design.

RARE CAST-IRON CLOCKS

BY RONNIE AIN-TRUE-KOVES C

October 2008

www.norwalkfurnitureidea.com

For two reasons, metal clock cases were used in the 19th century. Because the cases could be molded, the clock could be very easily mass-produced.

The front doors, purchased from Sears & Roebuck, are made of rare cast iron and depict baseball figures. The doors, which were manufactured in 1920, are studded with antique iron and are studded with antique iron.

The doors are sold at auction for this iron clock at the Brooklyn Antiques in the 1870s, as was the case. It was new at the time that the noted Vermont clock maker Charles Burt designed a rare iron clock that was several inches long, 19th century, 29 by 8 by 3 by 2 inches, $2,000.

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