

# Southern Accents

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# Reviving Timberlane

Architect Wayne Good's rejuvenation of Timberlane Farm includes a new pool and pavilion designed in the Georgian Revival style of the original five-part manor built in 1937.

WHEN MARYLAND ARCHITECT WAYNE GOOD was tapped to renovate and remodel Timberlane, a Georgian Revival country house on Maryland's Eastern Shore, he was surprised by its interiors. They had been "changed out piecemeal or indiscriminately added on over time—and not with the quality of workmanship that built the house in 1937," he says.

When architect **Wayne Good** remodeled a plantation house on Maryland's Eastern Shore, he delivered far more than the Georgian Revival style that distinguishes its 1937 construction

"The lapse was disappointing but fairly typical of later 20th-century American taste to layer on the lowest common denominator."

Fortunately, Timberlane's newest owners shared Good's conviction that remodeling could remedy the errors of previous decades and deliver a comfortable retreat for them and their two young children. "Maintaining the building's period character through rigorous updating meant borrowing from the original architecture to make the changes seamless," Good says. "Respecting the architecture was key."

The two-year process was challenging because the

original construction Good so admired consisted of 6-inch poured-concrete walls with brick veneering, a first floor resting on an 18-inch-thick concrete slab, a second floor comprised of steel bar joists, and a steel-frame roof surmounted by concrete decking and slate. "The rumor about Timberlane's original owner, Hollyday S. Meeds Jr., was that his family experienced a house fire when he was a child," explains Good. "Meeds instructed the Philadelphia architectural firm of George, Edwin, Pope, Albert, Kruse to use no combustible materials in the construction of Timberlane."

For his clients, Good envisioned a classic, open, Eastern Shore-style kitchen that might have evolved from a hearth-centered plan one would find in a house built centuries earlier. Unfortunately, there was no fireplace in the existing, unremarkable, 18-by-24-foot galley space. To remedy this, the walls of two adjacent rooms—a servants' lounge and a pantry—were removed to create a large combined working kitchen and family sitting room, complete with a fireplace. "It made sense to divide the areas—each 12 by 18 feet—with a sub-island," he says about a long storage cabinet



AFTER

ABOVE AND ABOVE RIGHT: A wall that once separated the kitchen from a servant's room was removed in order to enlarge the kitchen to include a family sitting room. The heart of the remodeled kitchen/family room complex is a preexisting fireplace enclosed in new floor-to-ceiling paneling. The fireplace was set 2 feet out from the original wall to create storage.



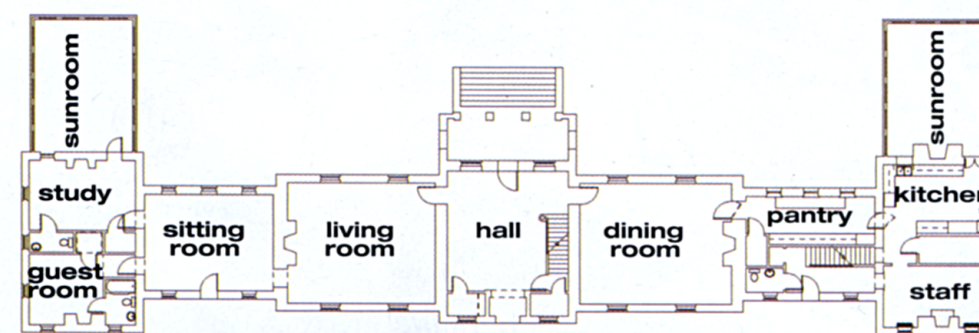
BEFORE

backed with a sofa on the sitting room side. Good also designed an 18th-century-style kitchen dresser to serve as a home-office center straddling the two areas.

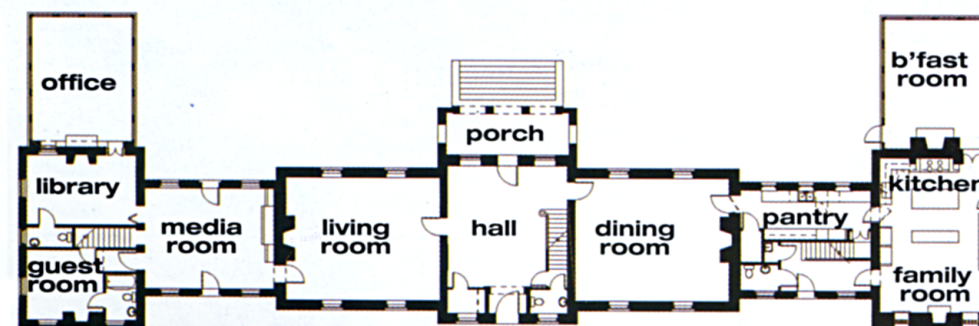
Baltimore designer Mona Hajj was a perfect complement to Good's classicism. The pair worked closely to give the kitchen the feeling that it had evolved over time. In place of a real hearth, "we designed the stove's 'fireplace' alcove—something that might have been there centuries ago in an authentic Georgian house," says Hajj. "We also distressed later-era beaded-board cupboards to conform to the dresser's look of wear."

To create concealed storage in the adjacent family sitting room, Good built out the wall around a preexisting fireplace with new raised paneling based on Timberlane's original staircase wall. He was also careful to design a new mantel sympathetic to the 18th-century-style paneling.

Two glassed-in wings, added on to the house in the '70s, were gutted to the studs because they lacked any real salvageable character. "The walls in both wings are composed of 14 windows mismatched by one to two inches in width," says Good, "and the spacing between windows varied, too—not a symmetrical, Georgian type of attribute." Because he wanted to add period boxed beams to the



FIRST FLOOR BEFORE



FIRST FLOOR AFTER

BY SUSAN STILES DOWELL  
PHOTOGRAPHED BY ERIK KVALSVIK AND CELIA PEARSON





LEFT AND BELOW: Beyond the kitchen is the breakfast room, originally appended to the main block in the '70s. The room's 14 mismatched windows determined the grid for the ceiling's new period boxed beams.



BELOW AND BOTTOM: Beaded-board cabinetry and bare-wood floorboards suit the '30s farmhouse. Before being remodeled, the kitchen had undistinguished '70s-style panel cabinets, dated wallpaper, and unused soffit space.



ceiling of the breakfast room wing, Good took an average of the varying spaces between the windows to calculate the sequencing of the beams. He then carried the look through to a Georgian-style chimney-piece with flanking pilasters.

The plan for the sunroom on the opposite side of the house was to play up its more contemporary porchlike, add-on character, even though it was designated for an office. "How could we make it look and feel like an office and retain the mood of the serene outdoor views?" was the question Good and Hajj asked themselves. Their solution: installing dark-green, exterior-looking horizontal paneling on the walls. The selection and placement of serious furniture tempers the casual effect of this porchlike treatment.

Good also succeeded in carving out two guest bedrooms and two baths from 1,800 square feet of unused attic space. Initially, a closet with a 2-by-2-foot hatch to the attic short-circuited his creativity. "One day, I stood on the first floor and realized the closet ought to be replaced with a staircase to solve the need for guest rooms," he says. Thirty-inch-high knee walls constructed and plastered 2 feet from the attic's sloping perimeters serve as storage space and flank the bed attractively like bedside tables. In one bedroom, Hajj introduced a sunny yellow toile de Jouy as an appropriately country wallpaper finish.

Throughout the remodeling, Good and Hajj reached for subtleties to infuse the stuffy Georgian Revival of



yesteryear with a fresh sense of style. "Country houses usually have durable wood furniture, some bright primary colors on the walls, and good rugs," says Hajj, who dovetailed her work with Good's to finesse a cohesive look. "Our whole idea was to update the feel of the house, whether it's through color, furniture, or fabrics, while preserving the classical elements of the interior architecture." ♦  
For details, see *Sourcebook*, page 186.

### good's advice

- Find a classically trained architect who is experienced and demonstrably talented in renovating the period and style of your house. The Institute of Classical Architecture in New York ([www.classicist.org](http://www.classicist.org)) is a good resource for architects practicing in the traditional manner.

- Craftsmanship of the '20s and '30s, especially of interior woodwork and detailing, was exceptional. Don't lose what is superior through careless obliteration. Remodeling to meet this standard will cost more in terms of time and money but will be worth it in terms of quality.

- As a rule of thumb for reallocating spaces in fine, period-style houses, realize there's a sense of propriety about how far to go. Be sure to stay in character and to borrow the style of elements, such as paneling, window sizes, and molding profiles, from the original design of the house to make any changes look seamless and sympathetic.

- Determine whether your house's mechanical systems need to be updated. This may add to the costs of remodeling but is much easier to correct while the house is still under construction.

ABOVE: To convert the sunroom at the opposite side of the house into an office, Good gutted the room to the studs, replaced the linoleum floor with handsome brick, and paneled the walls with horizontal siding painted dark green. TOP AND TOP RIGHT: Good and designer Mona Hajj transformed 1,800 square feet of raw and unused attic space into two guest rooms and baths. "With a gabled or pitched ceiling, toile is a nice touch and lends a cozy feeling," says Hajj of one of the guest rooms. Good gave the compact rooms knee walls, which created 30-inch-tall ledges with valuable storage space below.