

# Maine Home

+DESIGN

July 2010

## Shingled Modern

Classic meets modern on the banks of the Benjamin River

**Bo Bartlett  
& Betsy Eby**

An artist couple's life  
on Wheaton Island



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75 Market Street

Suite 203

207-772-3373

[www.mainehomedesign.com](http://www.mainehomedesign.com)

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# Total Transformation

A Florida-style ranch gets a Maine makeover

by Debra Spark  
Photography François Gagné

For several years now, Ted Andrews of Harborside Design in Freeport and Christine Maclin of Maclin Design in Portland have been collaborating on the incremental renovation of a house near the tip of Bailey Island. Can you badmouth a house? The Bailey Island home had at least one surprising detractor: the current homeowner, who wasn't particularly fond of the house when she and her husband bought it. They were searching for a house with Maine character, but the home they found looked, says Paul Seaman, the architect for the project, "like a Florida one-story ranch." With its siding, triptych hip gable roof, and front portico, the home didn't fit with the shingle-style vernacular of the neighborhood. Other details just seemed of another era. The floor and vaulted ceilings were paneled in dark wood. A dark-yellow shag carpet covered the floors. The living room included a sunken bar area. The new owners planned to do considerable



entertaining, but not the sort of entertaining that the bar area seemed to suggest. Everything that might have made the house right in the past made it wrong for the new owners, a family with young children and roots in Maine. Indeed, the Bailey Island house was so out of line with what the new homeowners wanted that it might seem surprising that they chose it. Surprising, until one sees its location. The home sits on a rise on the narrowest point of Bailey Island. From the back door, the view looks east to the Atlantic Ocean; from the front door, west to Mackerel Cove and the Merriconeag Sound. One might as well be on a boat, with water in every direction and no trees to block the view—just the enormous expanse of sky and sea all around.

It's not uncommon to hear Maine builders and architects speak of a house needing to "live up" to a property. The Bailey Island house, despite everything, was "a good solid building," according to Andrews. The finishes were really the problem. At first, Seaman says, the homeowners made "line-item improvements." They replaced the vinyl siding with factory-stained white-cedar shingles, and the asphalt-shingle roof with cedar shingles. These projects, Seaman says, "began to tie the house's character back into the neighborhood." Once the project collaborators replaced the siding, it only made sense to start talking about changing the windows and doors. Much time was spent considering different mullion configurations for the windows and doing façade studies before all the windows were replaced with custom Marvin windows. The façade was further reworked by introducing more substantial columnar support for the front portico and a frieze board to give visual support to the large roof. The team used AZEK—a weather-resistant PVC product that looks like painted wood—for the frieze and additional trimwork. Cupolas were added to the roof, and lanterns to the façade.

After these projects were completed, the clients were able to devote themselves to interior changes. Originally, the kitchen had been closed off from the main portion of the house, so the builders knocked down the wall between the kitchen area and dining room, opening up the entire space. Meanwhile, the former sunken bar area became a living room alcove, and a new red-birch floor was installed.



Originally this space (above) consisted of a sunken bar area. The feature didn't suit the new homeowners' lifestyle, and it broke up the visual connection between the living room and dining room. Now the space functions as a living room alcove and offers direct views of the Atlantic.



The sailboat pictures and crab pillow (left) continue the home's beach theme. Wood paneling on the walls and vaulted ceiling once darkened the room; now the walls, ceiling, and beams are all painted white to give the room an airy feel.

The kitchen (left, bottom) was a major portion of this home's renovation. A wall was opened up between the kitchen and the dining room, the ceiling was reconfigured, and internal and external doorways were used to create new views to the east and west of the home. All the materials in the space are new. The pantry was adjusted to allow the homeowners to go through doors to the left and right of the stove to access supplies. "We didn't want anything formal," says the homeowner. "We wanted everything to be used for family."



The changes connected the home's public spaces and naturally drew sightlines toward the ocean and horizon, which was just what the homeowners wanted: "The outside view was so spectacular, we didn't want anything in the house to distract from what was so naturally beautiful."

The wood paneling that had made the entire home so dark was painted white to lighten the space and give the home a summery feel. The clients wanted a "camp" space, but "chic camp," as Maclin says. "A clean look." Part of this was achieved with efficient new storage space in the kitchen and painted beadboard cabinetry for the mudroom and entertainment center—all of which were designed in collaboration with Andrew Munsey of Harborside Design.

"We wanted a lot of things to reflect Maine," says the homeowner. "We wanted Maine wood floors and the colors and furniture that you would typically see in Maine." Christine Maclin helped the homeowners achieve the desired aesthetics with a blue and white, beach-themed palette. A large, blue and white Barrier Island rug dominates the living room, which is furnished with matching chairs and sofas. There are blue accents throughout the house, such as the glassware in the kitchen, the Ralph Lauren fabric on the mudroom bench, and the pendant lights in the kitchen. Maclin picked nougat-colored CaesarStone for the kitchen island because it evokes beach sand. Other items in the home are not beach-themed but were procured in Maine. The mudroom rug is from Mougalian Rugs in Scarborough, and the ship on the living room mantle is from an antique shop in Rockland. The mantle itself was originally a piece of heavy granite, but the builders replaced it with Maine red birch to match the floor and help lighten the fireplace. River Bend Company in Brunswick built the cabinetry in the kitchen and elsewhere. Linda Gouzie of Westbrook was responsible for sewing the home's new pillows and cushions.

Because the home didn't have a formal mudroom or much closet space, the owners and Andrew Munsey of Harborside Design conceived this built-in mudroom (right, top)—essentially a large, painted beadboard cabinet with alcove and bench. The fabric on the bench is Ralph Lauren. The rug is from Mougalian Rugs in Scarborough.

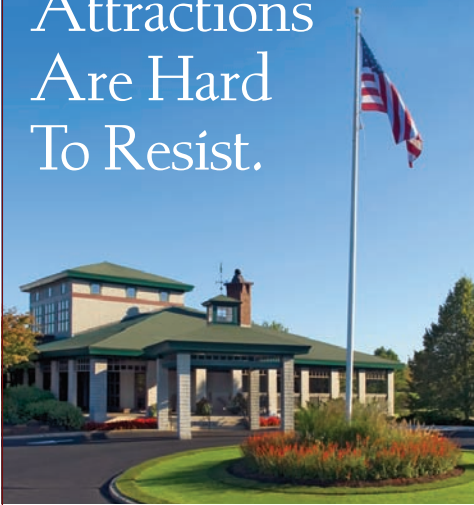
This corner of the kitchen (right) features a wall sculpture from Abacus Design in Freeport and a built-in hutch with glass doors. The hutch is sunk into the wall (instead of standing flush against it). The shelves light from within, and the blue glasses continue the blue and white palette established throughout the house.

Sometimes, says interior designer Christine Maclin, "you know something's right for a job but just don't know how." When she brought a Visual Comfort & Co. chandelier (opposite) to hang in the vaulted ceiling above the dining room table, she sensed it was right, but also too small, so she chose to hang two of the chandeliers side by side. The chairs are from Crate and Barrel, as is the Pacifica teak table. The chair cushion fabric is from Lee Jofa.





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The house is still something of a work in progress. The homeowners want to change the foyer and the master bedroom. They are considering redoing the basement. And then there's the landscaping. "None of the plants and so forth are indigenous to Maine," says the homeowner. "The only thing we did outside was plant a lot of *Rosa rugosa* on the back cliff. When we think of Maine, we think of *Rosa rugosa*." Even with more changes to come, the work that's been done so far has left all the participants pleased. "This is the most transformed of all the houses I've worked on," says Maclin. "It's one of my favorite places." **MH+D**

Smith & Hawken provided the furniture for this bluestone patio (above). Because powerful winds are such an issue off the ocean, a heavy piece of reclaimed marble on two ottomans serves as the family's outside table.

*For more information, see Resources on page 106.*