

house.

A DREAM *Escape*

An expanded Cape on Morris Island, built in the 1980s, gets a complete makeover from Polhemus Savery DaSilva Architects Builders to accommodate a client's growing family.

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Photography by **BRIAN VANDEN BRINK**

The home received a new roof and siding, a three-bay garage, new shutters with Polhemus Savery DaSilva-designed starfish cutouts and a new entry.

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When the homeowner first saw this dated Cape on Morris Island while searching for the perfect summer escape with her daughter, she wasn't exactly impressed. "It looked like a spec house. Not everyone would have looked at it and said, 'This is it.'" Her daughter, however, saw past its imperfections. They both loved that it was an expanded Cape, and it came with a yard big enough for a pool—a key requirement given that the client's three grandsons are competitive swimmers.

Before she bought the place, the homeowner consulted with Peter Polhemus of Polhemus Savery DaSilva Architects Builders, who investigated the house and pronounced that it had "good bones." The owner, who worked with architect Sharon DaSilva,



The family room has white woodwork, which matches the kitchen, and custom bookshelves.

said the highest priority was creating spaces for play and privacy for herself, now semi-retired, her grown children and five grandchildren.

DaSilva knew she needed to simplify and clarify the existing structure. She spent time with the house, absorbing its layout, sketching her thoughts, imagining what this misshaped 1980s Cape could be. "The house looked fairly traditional, but it was dated and oddly asymmetrical," says DaSilva. "There were dormers and roofs everywhere, with multiple



The mahogany-topped island includes ample built-in storage, and new white cabinets balance the dark counters and island.

With the help of Classic Kitchens & Interiors, the kitchen received a dramatic makeover.

architectural styles." There were issues with how the house flowed. Hallways were narrow and cramped. Other spaces were large and poorly defined. Spaces that wanted to be open to each other were connected by "mouse holes"—narrow openings with arched tops. "The Cape is a formal symmetrical design," she says. "It required a fair amount of reorganizing to make sense out of the spaces." The house was gutted and rebuilt.

Outside, it received a new roof and new siding, a newly designed cover for the connector between the house and the three-bay garage, new shutters with PSD-designed starfish cutouts and a new entry. "Capes don't typically have a front porch," says DaSilva, "but the owner wanted one, and she wanted something traditional."

The new entry, with its thoughtful arch and columns, twinned windows on each side and petite two-over-two-paned windows above, looks seamless. There had been three tiny dormers over the original entry, but DaSilva removed those and added two larger dormers to the wings, which further improved the symmetry and allowed the bathrooms on the second floor to be enlarged.



In the study, a handsome wood mantel surrounds marble facing, adding both weight and warmth to the room.

The first-floor master bedroom “was rearranged to make better use of the space,” says architect Sharon DaSilva.



A bunkroom over the garage features built-in beds with storage and nautical lights.



The major renovations continued inside. With the help of Classic Kitchens & Interiors, the kitchen received a dramatic makeover. While the original was large, its layout was awkward, with full-height cabinets and ovens occupying its center, requiring everyone to walk around them. “We took that out and put in an island with a sink in the middle, which opened up the kitchen,” says DaSilva. The range is now situated across from the island, so the space makes sense with a proper food prep area and cooking zone. The mahogany-topped island includes ample built-in storage and the new white cabinets balance the dark counters and island.

The family room, too, was rearranged. “The room wanted to be symmetrical,” says DaSilva, “so we took the two dormers that had been on the other side of the room from each other and put them across from each other instead.” Though in her other homes the homeowner has favored a clean, white, modernist aesthetic, she knew in this vacation home, the furnishings “needed to be able to stand abuse,” so she selected dark, sturdy fabrics for the sofa and loveseat.



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The landscape was designed by Clara Bachelor of CBA Landscape Architects.



A built-in storage unit provides plenty of storage for shoes, hats, bags and towels.



A fish weathervane selected by the homeowner adds a personal touch.

The first-floor master bedroom “was rearranged to make better use of the available space,” says DaSilva. Some of the space occupied by the oversized dressing area was reclaimed and transformed into a study nook and intimate sitting area with a fireplace. The master bath was outfitted with a new tile shower and tile flooring; a soaking tub replaced the outdated Jacuzzi.

Not only were the original spaces redone, new spaces were added, including an all-season sunroom that overlooks the pool that has become a favorite spot and playroom for the grandkids.

To accommodate the three grandsons, DaSilva created a bunkroom over the garage. Each has his own space with a built-in bed and storage underneath, a nautical light and bookshelf with an outlet. This is DaSilva’s favorite room: “As a kid, I would have loved having my own space like that.” Dressed in nautical blues and whites, the space has a tidy ship feel to it. A long window seat overlooks the pool that the grandsons love so well.

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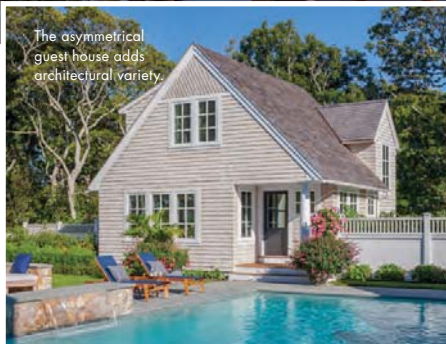


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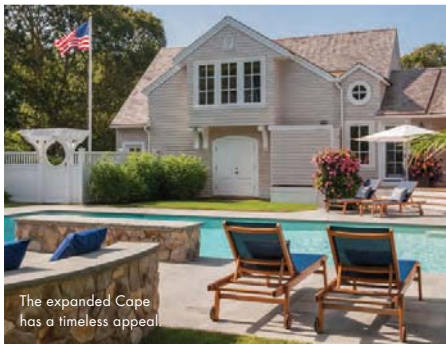


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The outdoor living space includes a beautiful pool, waterfall, fire pit and mahogany deck.



The asymmetrical guest house adds architectural variety.



The expanded Cape has a timeless appeal.

The pool, with its enchanting waterfall, is just part of the outdoor living space. There is also a shower, a wind-protected dining area, a mahogany deck and a fire pit encircled by curved stonewalls and a sectional wooden bench with plenty of storage. All of this is set in a lush landscape tamed and designed by Clara Batchelor of CBA Landscape Architects.

At pool's edge is another new addition: an asymmetrical guest house. It feels like it came out of a fairy tale, with its own kitchenette, sitting area and powder room on the first floor, and bedroom and bath on the second.

While the guest house adds architectural variety, the original home pays homage to the classic extended Cape. Named "School House" for those in the family involved in the education field, this Cape may feel brand new, but it has a timeless appeal. "My daily walk often takes me by the house," says DaSilva, "and it makes me happy to hear the voices of children playing in the pool." 📍

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