

home remodeling

CAPE COD, THE ISLANDS & THE SOUTH COAST

FALL 2011

RETHINKING THE **Renovation**

Recreating New England Homes

Plus...

- Starting over on an Island
- Aging in Place... with Style
- Big Changes for a Little Yard
- New Vintage Kitchen



Historic Preservation

A True Reflection

OF THE PAST

*An 1870s barn is moved from
Maine to the Cape and along the
way, it's completely restored and
gains an apartment*

ON CAPE COD in recent years, the buzz has been as much about agriculture as aquaculture. Farmers' markets are sprouting from Buzzards Bay to Provincetown, there is renewed interest in backyard gardening, and membership at the local Slow Food chapter is on the rise. But if you think farming is new to this anglers' paradise, think again. In the history of Cape Cod, farmers hold as significant a place as fishermen. Plus, some of the prettiest landscapes on the Cape have nothing to do with sand and water.

By Janice Randall Rohlf
Photography by Dan Cutrona



Historic Preservation

The historic barn was altered to include an apartment but at its heart, this is still a fully functional utilitarian space.



Heavy beams, fully restored board by board, offer support to the massive barn. The window, set into the wall, allows additional light to flow into the master bedroom.

These people just love barns

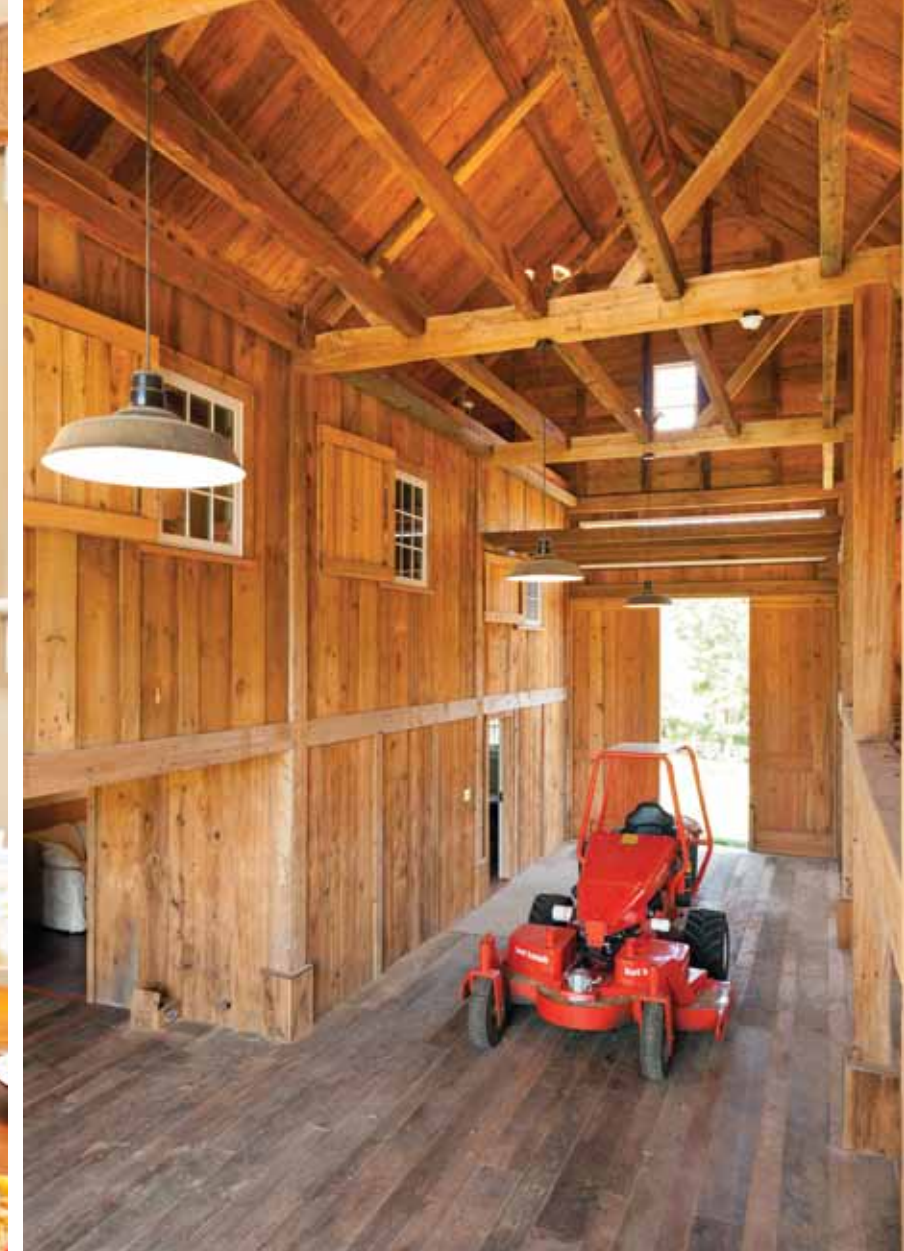
When a couple that had been Cape part-timers wanted to create the feel of their Vermont farm in East Dennis they needed to look no further than their own back yard, literally. They own a three-acre parcel of land from which their Cape-style home overlooks Cape Cod Bay in one direction and cranberry bogs in another. Away from the water, the densely wooded property had a house on it along with a small section of rustic rock wall. Here they envisioned siting a barn, similar to the antique barn frames that dot their land in Vermont, and expanding the rock wall. In the Green Mountain State, they have an Angus herd and a handful of horses and pigs, but that's not the only reason for the barns. "Frankly," says the husband, we have barns "because we love [them] and love having the opportunity to put them back in play and enjoy them."



Throughout the structure, period details were fully restored and then reconstructed bringing the barn back to its original glory.



A custom kitchen, designed and built by Wychmere Woodworks, is at the heart of the new apartment. Below: Builder Tim Sherry used a piece of salvaged wood to handcraft an ingenious vent cover.



At its highest point, the barn is a full three-stories tall. At left: a Rohl fireclay apron sink was the perfect choice in the kitchen.



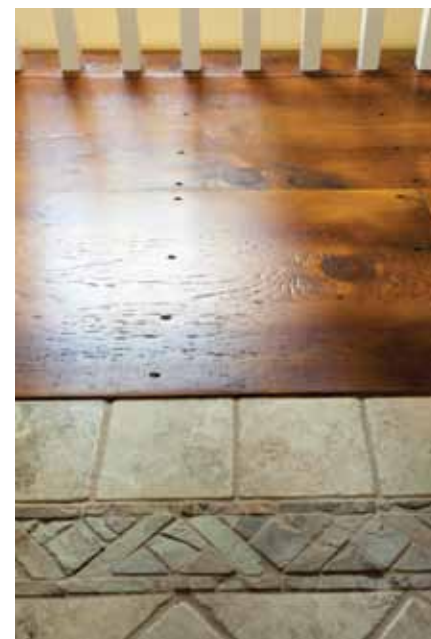
Driving by the now mostly cleared property tucked between the Bay and Sesuit Harbor, the homeowners' arresting expanse of green has a small apple and chokecherry orchard behind it. A handsome barn, strategically situated, looks like it has been here forever. Indeed the structure is 130 years old, but it has only been sitting on this piece of land, Seth Crowell's farm in the 1800s, for about 12 months. Plucked from its site in Leeds, Maine, by Ken Epworth, owner of The Barn People in Vermont, the 1870s barn was disassembled and re-erected on a new foundation constructed by East Dennis builder Tim Sherry, who headed up the remodel. Tim Sherry Homes, Inc. specializes in tear-down projects.

"The large field gave us an opportunity to try and do something interesting," say the owners of the barn who razed the preexisting house. Originally, they wanted to leave the barn as a barn, mainly for storage. But town zoning didn't allow a secondary structure without a primary residence, so they contemplated building a new house on the property. Aesthetically, however, the two structures just didn't work. The solution? Connect the loft space to the ground floor with a staircase and create living quarters in the space.



The metamorphosis of a barn

"What was once a hot plate and college refrigerator has morphed into a full-blown kitchen," says Tim Sherry, standing in the newly installed custom kitchen designed and built by Wychmere Woodworks. The apartment is only 800 square feet, about a third of the barn, but it feels much larger. In addition to the kitchen, there is a small living room and half-bath (with stacked washer and dryer) downstairs, and two bedrooms and a full bath upstairs. The walls are painted sumptuous, historical colors, but otherwise decoration is simple, in keeping with the barn.



Sherry came to know the homeowners when he worked on a much smaller barn on the waterfront piece of their property. Although they have ties to the Cape and have been coming here for years, Vermont is where they say their “appreciation and love for barns began.” The husband, a successful businessman who has always had an interest in landscape design and architecture, took a keen interest in this project. In fact, it was something of a marriage made in heaven when he met

Clockwise from top: A small living room is the perfect place to watch TV. A closet is tucked under a support beam in the master bedroom. Antique Eastern White Pine, with 4 coats of clear Polyurethane, keeps the feeling rustic. Facing page: The door leading into the kitchen, at the rear of the barn.



In the master bedroom, and throughout the apartment, the barn's structural beams were incorporated into the design. At left: The upstairs hallway. Below: A simple door pull is period-correct.



The Barn People's Ken Epworth. Owner Epworth and his company have been dismantling, restoring, and reassembling vintage Vermont barns for more than 35 years. And not just any barn will do. "Everything old isn't great," says Epworth. "I'm looking for character—a certain crude quality, how handmade it looks." He's also looking for functional adaptability; for example, does it have a loft that can be turned into living space, like this one did.

Having worked well with Tim Sherry before, they called on him again to create a look on the outside of the barn that would match the authenticity inside, where old beams sourced from a demolished warehouse and mortise and tenon joints evoke an earlier time. Sherry and his team added a cupola, laid antique heart pine floors salvaged from a Georgia cotton factory, shingled



the outside, and built 3 1/4-inch thick barn doors that weigh about 500 pounds each (the homeowner didn't want skinny ones) at either end of the barn's central section, or wagon row. The storage area of the barn will most likely remain open, says Sherry, explaining, "The homeowner wants to look up and see the beauty of the structure."

Adding a fully custom, and fully functional, kitchen

Sherry and his team, who did all of the interior finish work, turned to David Flanagan, owner of Wychmere Woodworks to create a kitchen that was both compact

and functional as well as aesthetically in keeping with the rest of the apartment's décor. Custom cabinetry, painted in a warm, deep green hue, lines two of the diminutive space's walls. The lower cabinets had to be notched in the back so that they hug the barn's existing beam foundation, according to Flanagan. Honed natural stone counters, in a nearly-black color, and a tile backsplash in shades of charcoal complete the room. Flanagan also custom-made the vanity in the upstairs full bath, another example of his ability to come up with something stunning and functional that wouldn't overwhelm the room's tight dimensions.

Historic Preservation

Other thoughtful touches include an ingenious birdhouse Sherry built in the kitchen to disguise a four-inch metal pipe that was necessary to vent the stove. “Cabinetry would have been too formal,” he observes. Instead, he located a piece of old wood “with a knot hole just in the right spot for an opening to use. And to tastefully camouflage the electric heat baseboards, Sherry convinced the nearly century-old Tremont Nail Company to paint some of their high-quality Overboards black to match the hinges and doorknobs in the barn. Historic colors were chosen for the walls, on which the pegs that hold the mortise and tenon joints together are visible.

As comfortable as the barn looks now in the field, in a few years, when the salt air turns the shingles gray, passersby will be hard pressed to believe that it hasn’t always been in this location. Such is the mark of true craftsmanship. 🏠

The apartment’s second floor includes a full bath with a custom vanity from Wychmere Woodworks. The tile, in earthy hues with a matte finish, complements the barn’s rustic feel.

