

Sun trust

*Going solar? It isn't as
hard as it seems*

Design-wise

*Architect Bob Paxton
continues the tradition*

Green gardens

*An eco-friendly roof in an
unexpected spot*

Inside
Outside
Home.

JULY 2016


Aboodcville

A modern-day
home on
the range

One designer's
traveling
inspiration

Hidden haven

Inside (and outside)
Lynn Easton's
city sanctuary



The old saw about real estate—
“location, location, location”—also
sums up what Dean Andrews and
Lynn Easton Andrews appreciate
about their house. They love the
neighborhood, Lewis Mountain; they
love the landscape that surrounds
their home; and they love the spot it
occupies in Charlottesville history.
“We are crazy for it,” says Lynn.

Sweet spot

A city house revels in
a woodsy landscape

BY ERIKA HOWSARE
PHOTOGRAPHY BY VIRGINIA HAMRICK



That's not to understate the charm of the house itself, which is considerable. It turned a century old in 2000, the year the couple bought it, and its white brick exterior reminded Easton of the house in New Jersey where she grew up. Trim though it may be, with its black shutters and modest entrance, it is also unmistakably a house from an earlier era. Its details—an agreeable mishmash of exterior materials—make that clear.

Back at the turn of the last century, this was a farmhouse, not a city house, with far fewer neighbors than it now has. The Lewis Mountain neighborhood has grown up around it, acquiring over time a gentility that springs from its close proximity to the most historic parts of UVA Grounds. "It's a classic professor's neighborhood," says Dean.

The original rural feel could easily have disappeared during a century of growth, but the Andrews' house revels in a forested landscape that feels as though it's communally shared by a whole cluster of nearby houses, unbroken by fences. "In a suburban house, you'd have something to delineate your yard," says Lynn. "This landscape is uncontained."

Garden magic

Upon entering the front door, one's gaze immediately continues through French doors onto



The stream that runs through the garden defines the spaces that are within the sphere of the porch, and those that are further up the hill.

the patio and the gardens beyond. The space that awaits there—a large bluestone porch with a double-height ceiling—is oversized for the house, but perfectly in scale with the landscape it embraces. "The porch roof gives this house a great sense of dimension," says Lynn.

Lanterns hung from porch columns, along with ample seating, create the kind of ineffable atmosphere that makes for magical gatherings. "It's a very tranquil setting across the seasons," says Dean.

The garden is defined by a small stream that runs from side to side, a few paces off the back porch. Michelle Smith became the gardener here this year. "This stream going through is a real focal point for the whole yard," she says.

Contained within stone walls, the stream is fringed with many varieties of ferns (royal, lady, ostrich, autumn leaf), plus roses and perennial bulbs like daffodils. These "cover the seasons with different blooms," says Smith.

Overlooking the creek is a special treat during morning coffee, says Dean. He and Lynn, both entrepreneurs—their company, Easton & Porter Group, manages Easton Events, Pippin Hill Farm & Vineyard and Red Pump Kitchen, among other ventures—value the chance to put in morning work time on the porch. "It's lovely to have that cognitive time in a peaceful setting," he says.

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Walk this way

A stone path leads over a curved bridge and on toward a cottage at the rear of the property, in which former U.S. Senator Ted Kennedy once lived.



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A stone path leads over a curved bridge and on toward a cottage at the rear of the property, in which former U.S. Senator Ted Kennedy once lived. The cottage faces toward a section of lawn that was once a swimming pool. Lynn and Dean decided to have it filled in, creating a flat area edged by a white fence and extensive banks of azaleas.

The uphill section of the garden, more distant from the house, features planting beds at the feet of mature tulip poplars, red maples and cedars.

Most of the major plant species in this garden, initially planted 50 to 75 years ago, are time-tested classics. Boxwoods line the edge of the porch. Dogwoods, rhododendrons and azaleas bring spring color to many corners of the yard. "It has old-fashioned appeal," says Smith.

Interior charm

The couple added inviting French doors to a living room that had previously felt "long and narrow and dark," says Lynn. Lined with bookshelves, the room had cramped proportions and little light. Removing the shelves and letting in the sun made the space comfortable and intimate; seating centers on the fireplace at one end of the room.

"We didn't 'interior design' this," says Lynn. "We brought almost all the furniture we had and, miraculously, it fit." Local designer Alana Woer-



The couple have made a few changes to their century-old home—as in the once-dark living room, where they removed a wall of shelves and let the light in—but maintained the integrity of its traditional style in architecture and décor.

pel chose window treatments and accents such as throw pillows.

A wide-plank pine floor signals that this is the oldest section of the house, and details like window hardware and the narrow dimensions of the staircase also harken to an earlier time. The couple had the shutters on the exterior replaced with period-appropriate reproductions.

But the house is modernized in all the ways that count. The couple have updated systems and renovated the kitchen and bathrooms. They also enclosed a screened porch to create a den.

The space is set up to make both entertaining and private life flow easily.

"This is where we live," says Lynn, gesturing to a nook just off the kitchen that holds two armchairs—just the place to land at any restful moment of the day. The kitchen is at the center of the couple's hosting and family life. When their grown children visit, they say, "We'll sit in here talking until 2am."

The room is laid out in a basic U, with a central island that can expand to seat as many as 10

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people. Cherry cabinets with textured slate countertops offset the island, custom-made from heart pine, that sits directly across from the cooktop. “It’s really range-to-table,” says Dean.

Just outside the kitchen door, “I have a small tiered kitchen garden,” says Dean. “We grow herbs, tomatoes and miniature fruits.” He’s planning a stone grill there too; when it’s complete, the worlds of gardening and cooking, inside and outside, family and friends will come full circle.

Though the house has hosted as many as 80 people at a time—circulating comfortably through the French doors to the porch—most gatherings here are more intimate. It’s mostly on big holidays when the house’s small dining room hosts meals. At other times, the dining table (in its smallest configuration) is a place to display coffee table books. Art from the couple’s travels, orchids and family photos take their places around the room.

With one bedroom downstairs and three upstairs—none of them especially large—the house is of a fairly modest size. “We love its scale,” says Lynn. Still, they hope to add a new master suite, following the traditional style of the existing home. “When you buy an old house, you feel a sense of being a custodian,” says Dean.

Though they sometimes consider moving, Lynn says, “We will never love a house the way we love this house.”

Going public

Lynn Easton and Dean Andrews bring their sensibility for spaces not only to their home, but to a number of other ventures. Their Easton & Porter Group oversees properties in Charlottesville and Charleston, South Carolina, as well as Easton Events. Here in town, there are two ways to experience the couple’s flair for luxury hospitality.

Pippin Hill Farm & Vineyard is a farm-to-table eatery and a winery hosting weddings and other events. Indoor and outdoor spaces let the setting—the rolling hills of Bundoran Farm in North Garden—shine. Wedding-goers line up at tables on the wide porch of the barn-style building on an elevated site that makes the most of the views.

Downtown, Red Pump Kitchen mixes European influences—Spanish- and Danish-style seating, a Paris-worthy wall of windows and a pressed-tin ceiling that references old Downtown storefronts. The bartop, made from a 350-year-old Alamo cottonwood tree, is striking in itself.

With a wealth of travel and hospitality experience, the couple brought plenty of ideas to the Bushman Dreyfus-designed renovation of the Red Pump space. “We knew what we wanted,” says Lynn.—*E.H.*



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