

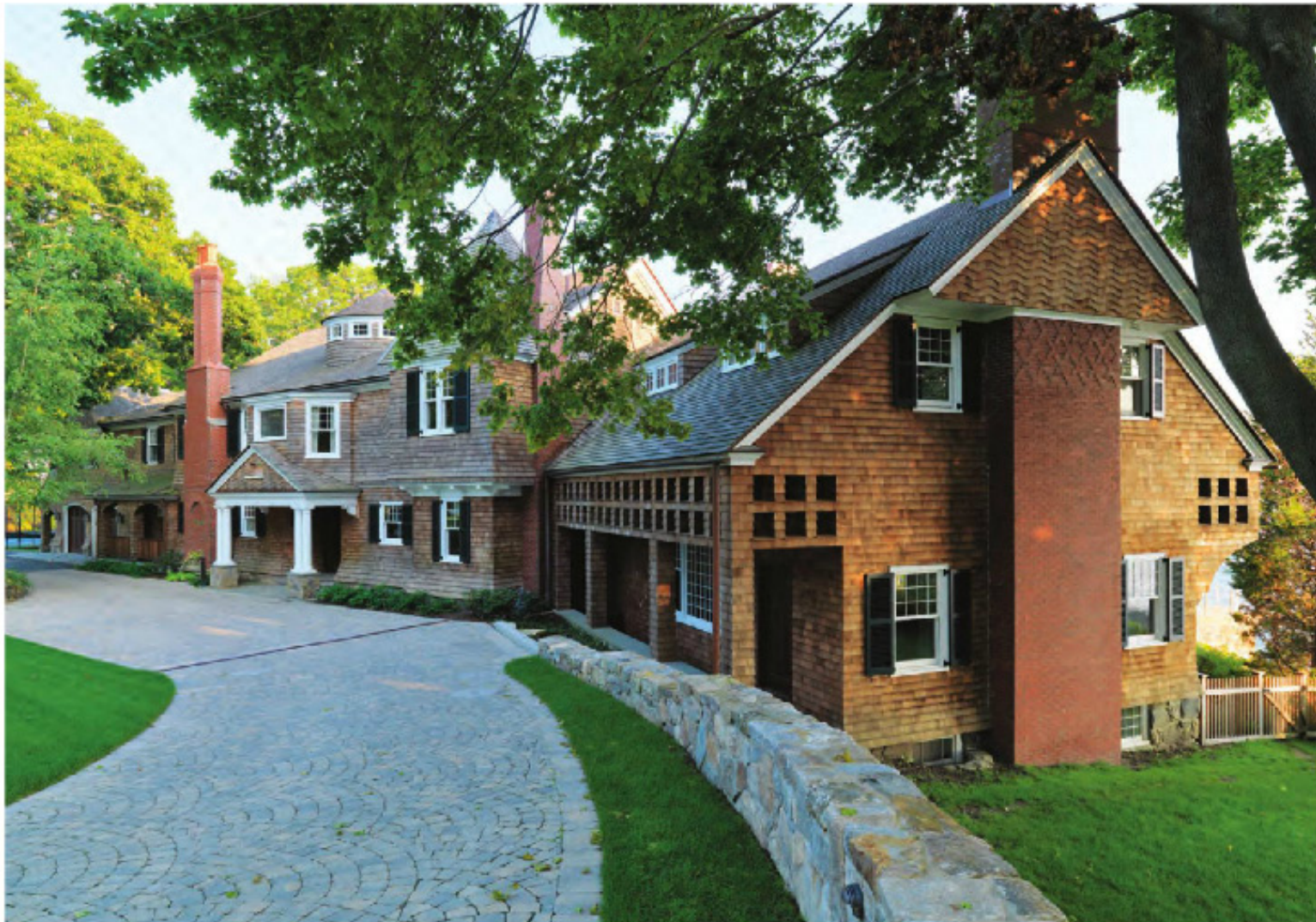


Shingle Style *by the* Sea

CARPENTER & MACNEILLE DESIGNS A CLASSIC COTTAGE
THAT PAYS HOMAGE TO ITS ORIGINAL STRUCTURE.

By **Mary Grauerholz** // Photographs by **Richard Mandelkorn**





As striking as a house can be at first glance, sometimes it is the details that tip it to breathtakingly beautiful. One such house is OakLedge in Manchester-by-the-Sea. Set on an ocean-side stone outcropping, its shingled cladding shining in the sun, the home achieves that elusive stature of appearing delicate in its artisanship, yet formidable enough to withstand anything the Atlantic could throw at it.

The home, designed and constructed by Carpenter & MacNeille Architects and Builders in Essex, is traditional classic, reflecting the late 1880s heyday of Shingle-style architecture. Eyebrow dormers, artisanal millwork, and decorative shingle patterns punctuated by unique shingle voids give the home a powerful, distinctive beauty.

The condition of the original house on the property was too poor to save it entirely, though some features, including much of the foundation, remain. "The original structure was a cow barn,

Above, Of special note are the shingle voids, which add distinct character to the exterior. Opposite, The great hall received a complete restoration.





a small cottage that was built in 1873," says Michael T. Gray, AIA, managing director of Carpenter & MacNeille and the project director. "The structure had grown over the years, and became a long rectangular house." Gray and his colleagues also retained an entire wing added in 1896 christened the Music Room. "It became the living room," Gray says.

While the exterior fits seamlessly with the area's historic character, many of the materials and techniques are new. The floor plan has some modern features to suit the needs of the homeowners, who have two children. Unseen, but significant, is an innovative 21st-century geothermal and solar mechanical system, which supplies hot water to heat the swimming pool and most of the house's heating and cooling needs.

The home's interior hums with historic style. The centerpiece of the design is the Living Hall, a traditional Shingle-style space in the front entryway that actually serves as a room. Today, the hall, with a fireplace

Above, The living room once served as a music room; Left, The mahogany-paneled study, designed by Niles-Scott Interiors, is full of disguised modern features like a housed computer.



Above, The kitchen offers state-of-the-art appliances wrapped in a country aesthetic.

(crowned with the original mantel) and nearby seating, has a graceful curved panel archway that frames a water view ahead. “Obviously the ‘wow’ factor walking in the door is the view, looking straight out at the ocean,” Gray says.

In the 19th century, the Living Hall set the tone for Shingle-style homes, Gray says. “People would make it the most elaborate room, because that was the first room guests would see,” he says. “It’s the first experience of the house.” Just beyond the archway is the library, a singular space. While an open floorplan is a hallmark of original Shingle Style—and radical for its time—the OakLedge layout is more modern, designed for good flow, pleasing sight lines, and plenty of sunshine and water views. Small rooms, including a study with a fireplace and paneled mahogany interior with hidden doors to house computer wiring, provide other modern touches. The interior designer, Ashley Scott of Niles-Scott Interiors in Manchester, injected

shots of color and texture throughout the house with accent pieces, chunky sisal, and, as Scott says, “hints of surprise” in lamps and other pieces.

Nooks and crannies are everywhere, and they are worth stopping for and admiring.

A paneled stair hall and grand staircase leads to the second-floor landing nook, with a decorative stained-glass window by an Essex artist, offers another quiet space. The family also loves the new ocean-facing porch, outfitted with a pizza oven and fireplace of stacked granite.

The interior’s custom millwork—such as its beveled wall paneling, staircase, and balustrade—was made at Stephen Terhune Woodworking, Carpenter & MacNeille’s own shop. Housed in a trolley car barn next to the architectural offices, the shop’s craftsmen turn out custom millwork, furniture, and some of OakLedge’s finest details, such as the wavy-patterned shingles over the portico. A majestic oak tree sweeps a leafy pattern across the shingles, standing in testament to OakLedge,



whose name derives from that very tree and the waterside granite ledge. "There's a lot of movement and texture in the shingles," Gray says.

The shingle voids (openings in the shingles) that wrap around the front and back of the living room and allow light to filter through, are special to Gray. The architect recalls an 1880s house he worked on, designed by the renowned architect William Ralph Emerson, which had the same motif. "Emerson created a rhythm of space in that detail," Gray says of the shingle voids. "I said to myself, if I ever have the opportunity to do this, I'm going to. It's one of my favorite details. There's a lot of character there."

Some original features of the house were used in the new iteration of OakLedge. The foundation stone for the new work is actually veneer granite that was hand-cut from the original home's stone foundation, Gray says. Tinged orange and brown, the Cape Ann granite (also called Rockport granite) was locally sourced in Manchester.

Another high point of the exterior is the square tower with a brick chimney, made to match the original. "We took it down brick by brick," explains Gray. "We wanted to re-create that tower." Today, the tower stands as a symbol of how OakLedge came to be. As Gray says, "I like to think that if someone who knew the original house came back and saw it years later, they would recognize [it]." ■

See page 180
for resources

➔ **Carpenter & MacNeille Architects**, 106 Western Ave., Essex
978-768-7900, carpentermacneille.com



Here and below, The home provides ample outdoor space for relaxing during spring and summer months. Opposite, far right, A soaking tub is tucked into a window bay. Right, Porches wrap the building. Far right, A powder room offers traditional detailing.

