

# New England HOME

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New England  
Design  
Hall of Fame  
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*BOLD  
Connections*

COLOR IS SERVED!

As with the Shingle-style country houses he designed, William Ralph Emerson gave this Cambridge home a large living room that invites a crowd. With the original fireplace as the focal point of the room, interior designer Kate Maloney created an airy, modern vibe fortified with a custom O'Lampia chandelier. The chenille sofa is balanced with custom chairs by Partners in Design.

# TIME Honored

A historic house moves gently into the twenty-first century.

*Text by GAIL RAVGIALA | Photography by JARED KUZIA*

*Produced by KARIN LIDBECK BRENT*



**H**ow to polish a gem? That was the question for the new owners of a historic house in Cambridge, Massachusetts, designed in 1889 by renowned architect William Ralph Emerson (1833-1917), who's considered the father of the Shingle style that became popular in late nineteenth-century New England. During his fifty-year career, Emerson was also an

**TOP:** The dark brown exterior was brightened with a cheery blue-green Sioux Falls stain by Benjamin Moore. The built-in bench on the porch is a typical Emerson feature. Landscaping by The Landscape Collaborative includes the granite pillars, iron fence, and new brick walk. **RIGHT:** The streetscape is softened with naturalistic informal plantings. **FACING PAGE:** The landing on the hefty staircase in the foyer is flooded with natural light from a large window, its original decorative wooden mullions still intact.





**ABOVE:** Between the foyer and living room, a long-unused pocket door, original to the house, was restored to working order. Also original are the front door with its decorative wood mullions and the newel post and balustrade defining the staircase. **BELOW:** The living room window bay is the ideal spot for a vintage game table. **FACING PAGE:** The horseshoe armchairs from Red Egg provide seating.

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—INTERIOR DESIGNER  
KATE MALONEY

outspoken advocate of historic preservation, notably working to save and modernize Old Ship Church in Hingham, Massachusetts, and Old South Meeting House in Boston.

Surely, he would appreciate that his handsome colonial revival-style house has been well cared for over the years. “We are only the fifth family to live here,” says the owner, who, with her husband, had for decades resided in a nearby townhouse. “I walked by all the time—with strollers and with joint replacements,” she says with a laugh. “I always loved the house.”

When the property came on the market three years ago, the couple, their two sons now grown and on their own,





The mudroom provides entree to the new rear stair; the flooring is antiqued limestone from DiscoverTile. **FACING PAGE:** In the dining room, new bookcases designed by Charles R. Myer & Partners display the owner's collection of Canton china. The vintage table, an estate-sale find restored by Wayne Towle Master Finishing and Restoration, is complemented by cane-back chairs from Made Goods.

decided to buck the trend to downsize, and bought the 5,200-square-foot dwelling. Working with architects Charles R. Myer & Partners, they embarked on a judicious renovation that honored Emerson's intent while adapting the house for today's lifestyle.

"We wanted to preserve as much as we could," says the owner, "but were

mindful of needing to improve the energy efficiency." And while the twenty-year-old kitchen was "gorgeous," access to it was hampered by the constraints of an 1889 floor plan. "Typical for the era," says Alice Dunn, Myer's project architect, "the kitchen was cut off from the dining room and the rest of the house."

To improve the floor plan, a back

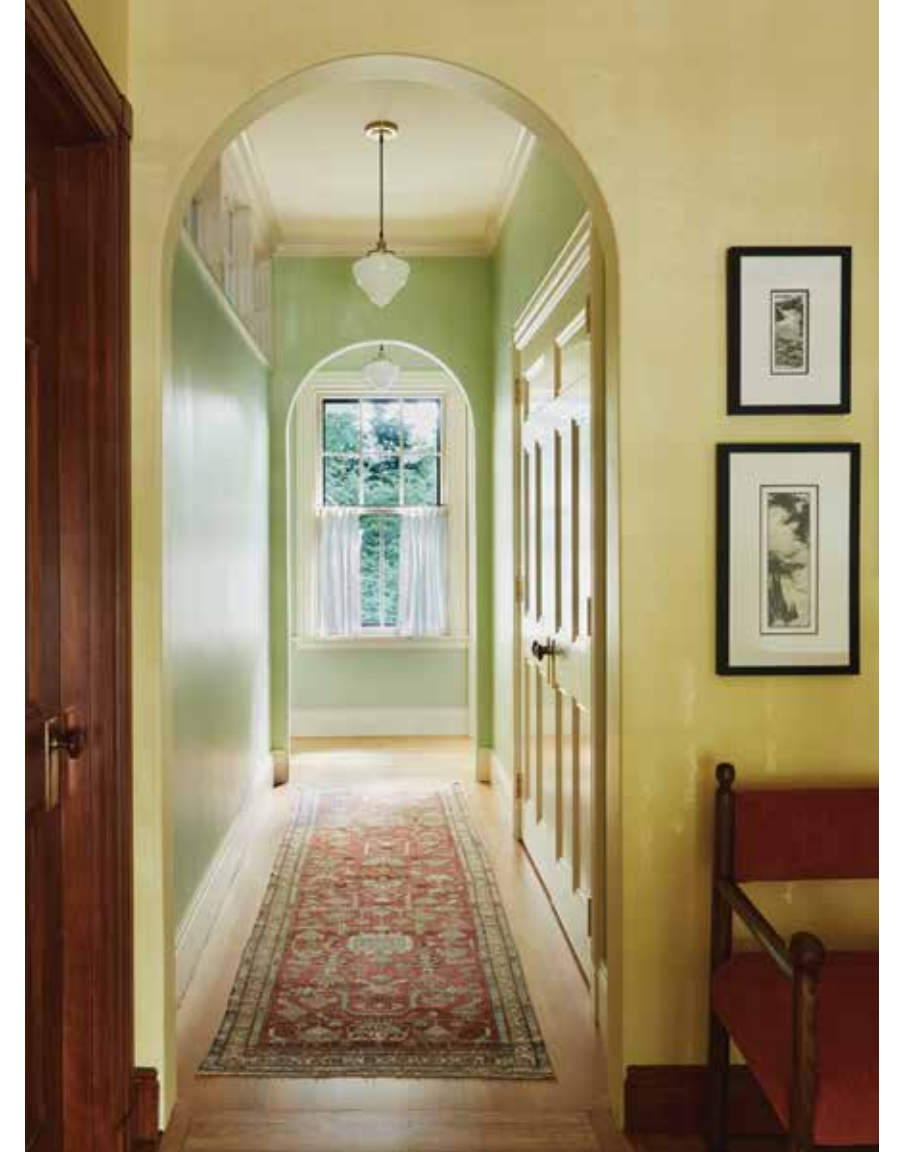


staircase off the kitchen that divided the house was relocated to a side wall. A fireplace and chimney in the dining room were removed to make way for a doorway to the all-new kitchen, and an adjacent charming-but-unused butler's pantry was replaced with a powder room.

In the living room, interior designer Kate Maloney and her firm's senior designer, Elizabeth Stone, realized the owners' vision for decor and furnishings that balance tradition with casual comfort. With a seating area around the fireplace and a game table embraced by a window bay, "the large room is formal

yet approachable. It's one of their favorite spaces whether they use it as a couple or for entertaining," says Maloney.

The dining room is an eclectic mix of old and new. The table, an estate sale find, is paired with modern cane-back barrel chairs. Built-in bookcases designed by Myer reflect the original



**CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE:** Kitchen cabinets are painted Firebush, a special-order color from Fine Paints of Europe. On the second floor, relocating the back staircase inspired architect Alice Dunn to design a charming hallway by duplicating the existing arch (in the foreground) and adding a window to bring natural light into the space. The new powder room features slate countertops repurposed from the old kitchen; Zoffany wallpaper is framed by woodwork painted Benjamin Moore Yellowstone.





**ABOVE:** The existing pantry off the kitchen, which provides out-of-the-way storage, is refreshed with Benjamin Moore Windy Sky. **RIGHT:** A built-in bench and simple trestle table form a breakfast nook; the door leads to an outdoor deck. The leaded pattern in the transom windows reflects the design found on the house's original front door.



architectural details, while a lithe chandelier is a sleek nod to tradition.

With the kitchen connected to the dining room, guests and cook can interact with ease. Simple custom cabinets are painted a fresh, bold burnt orange, while a breakfast nook speaks to cozy tradition.

"I just love walking through the house and watching how the light and shadows play through the old windows,"

says the owner. Just as Mr. Emerson intended.

Says Maloney, "This is what the house wanted to be."

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** For details, see Resources.

**ARCHITECTURE:** Charles R. Myer & Partners

**INTERIOR DESIGN:** Kate Maloney Interior Design

**BUILDER:** Gilman Guidelli & Bellow

**LANDSCAPE DESIGN:** Landscape Collaborative