

FROM '40s TO *fabulous*

BY ANDREA TOMKINS
PHOTOGRAPHY BY SUZANNE BIRD
STYLED BY TANYA COLLINS



Black accents help anchor the light coloured living room. The main floor space was opened up to make full use of each room. **OPPOSITE:** The dining room's focal point is a stunning chandelier made of Capiz shell. An heirloom dining table and custom drapery panels from C&M Textiles complete the look.



Small homes have a certain charm worth preserving. Ask Ariel Burns and Tom Murphy, young parents who decided to renovate their 1940s Westboro-area home rather than move out or rebuild from the ground up.

"Lots of people suggested we tear it down," says Ariel. "But it would have been such a loss, such a shame."

They always loved the character and architecture of their home and preserving that feel was important to them. Architect **Richard Chmiel** created a unique roof line with dormers and roof supports to help keep the character of the era. A stucco band was added to break up the brick of the original house with the new brick on the addition.

The inside of the home was charming and quaint, but at the same time its dated layout had limitations. Storage was an issue, and as a family who likes to cook and entertain, Ariel and Tom knew they needed to acknowledge that families live differently today and decided to rethink their living space.

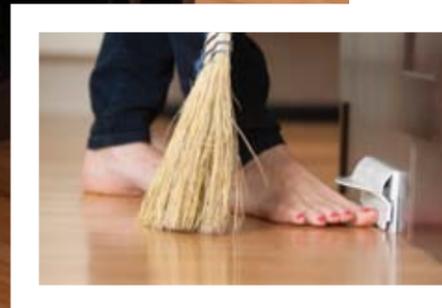
In the 1940s the trend was towards small and practical. Economy played a big role and many of the living spaces were very modest and separate from one another. This was true of this home's original layout.

With the help of **Fine Spaces Construction** and **Tanya Collins Interior Design**, Ariel and Tom opened up their home and designed something infinitely more liveable. Sophisticated and family-friendly are two very different home design concepts that aren't normally used in the same sentence, but when you have a vision it is possible to find an exception to the rule, and this renovated home is it.

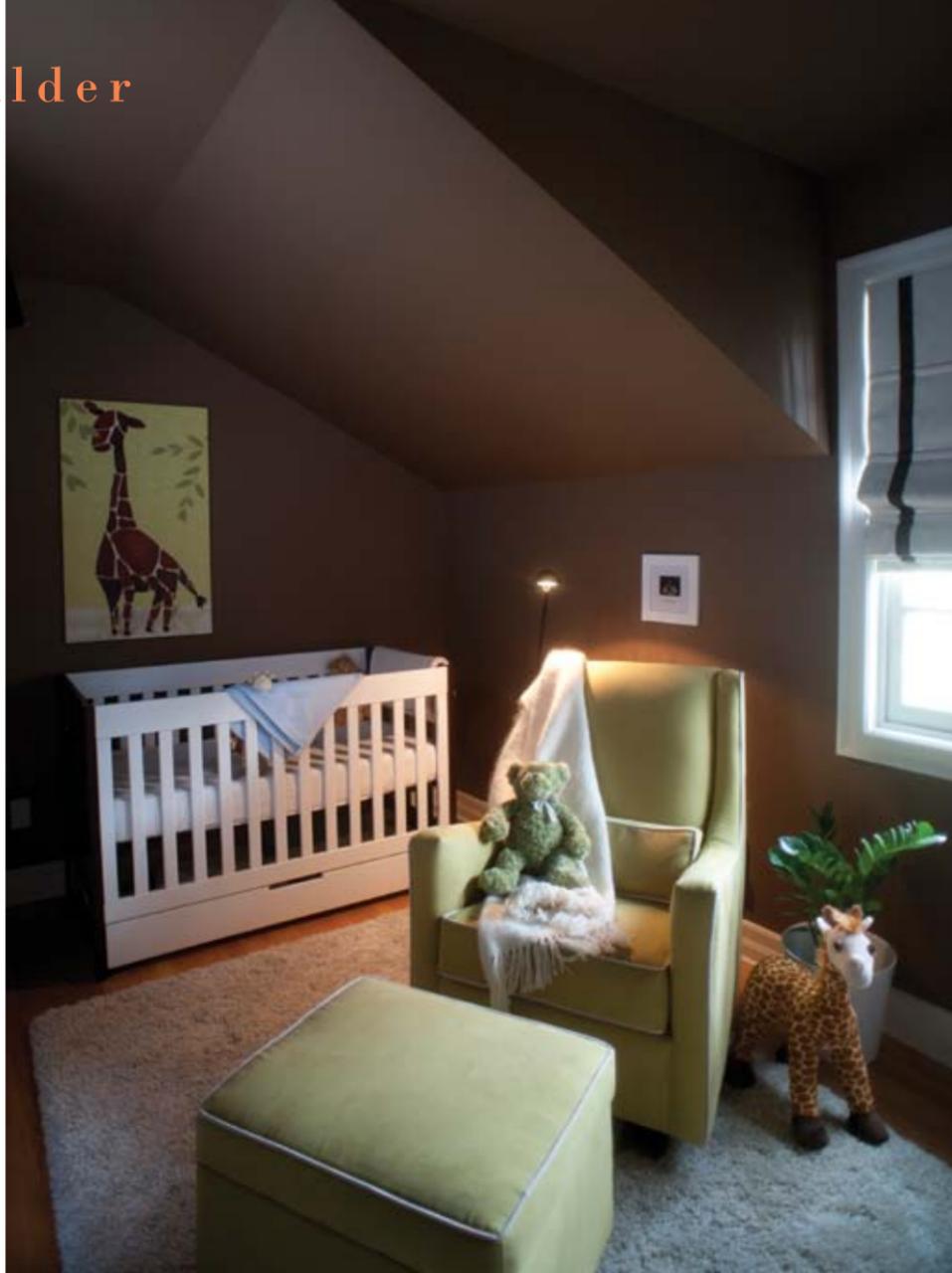
The old kitchen was awkward and cramped and could barely fit two or three people. The goal in the redesign was to create a highly usable space with much better flow. The new kitchen by **Lauryesen Kitchens** is now a focal point to the main floor; a light-filled space that draws people and keeps them there like moths to a flame. *Continued on page 26*



The large island is the perfect place to perch with a laptop or share a cup of coffee with a friend. Stainless steel appliances (Universal Appliances) and chrome and glass pendants add a hint of sparkle to the new kitchen. **INSET:** Sweeping is a breeze with a clever central vac kick plate built into the kitchen island. **OPPOSITE, TOP LEFT:** Ariel and Tom say their newly renovated space is infinitely more liveable and family-friendly and are thrilled with the end result. **BOTTOM LEFT:** Family photos are proudly displayed in the staircase. **CENTRE:** The front entranceway has a relaxed, casual feel. **RIGHT:** Ariel helps her eight-month-old son take a few steps.



RIGHT: Ariel and Tom opted to keep the second floor's sloped ceilings where it made sense, creating some delightfully cosy rooms such as the nursery. **BELOW:** Incorporating the laundry room into the upper level was a sound decision for the young family.



It might sound cliché, but there is truth to the saying that the kitchen is truly the heart of the home. "It's funny how everyone always gathers in the kitchen," jokes Tom.

Two contrasting colours were used in the kitchen. The island has a buttermilk coloured countertop on top of dark cabinetry while the surrounding cabinets have the reverse colour treatment; light cabinetry with espresso-coloured quartz countertops.

"We definitely live in this space," says Ariel, explaining how the main floor is comfortable and liveable. "We didn't want it to be too modern. We live pretty casually," she says.

The kitchen overlooks the dining area, which features a vintage teak dining room table (which once belonged to Ariel's grandparents) and a stunning Capiz shell chandelier from **Architectural Antiques**.

Following the advice of Tanya Collins, the main floor space was opened up to make full use of each room. "Our initial vision was to just add an extension to the space," says Ariel. "If it wasn't for her vision we would have ended up with these tiny sectioned-off rooms that we never would have used," she says.

The living room walls are filled with artwork pieces that Tom and

Ariel had chosen prior to the renovation. "I had gathered everything we had from before and asked Tanya what her thoughts were on the pieces," says Ariel. "She grabbed her hammer and just went to town hanging them up. It was amazing!"

Ariel also credits Tanya with bringing together some pieces that were important to the couple. A wooden cabinet that once belonged to Tom's great grandparents displays floral artwork painted by Ariel's great-grandmother. These are just some of the thoughtful pieces that personalize their living space to truly make it their own.

Sloped ceilings are a regular feature of homes from this era. As many homeowners will attest, they're a mixed blessing. While they lend great character to the bedrooms, sloped ceilings drastically reduce the amount of available storage and living space.

Ariel and Tom have a full second storey, and have kept some of the sloped ceilings where it made sense. As a result, they created some delightfully cosy rooms. In fact, a double vanity in the en suite with contemporary chrome faucets from **Preston Hardware**, is built right into the slope. "That one is Tom's sink," laughs Ariel, pointing to the one with the most clearance overhead.

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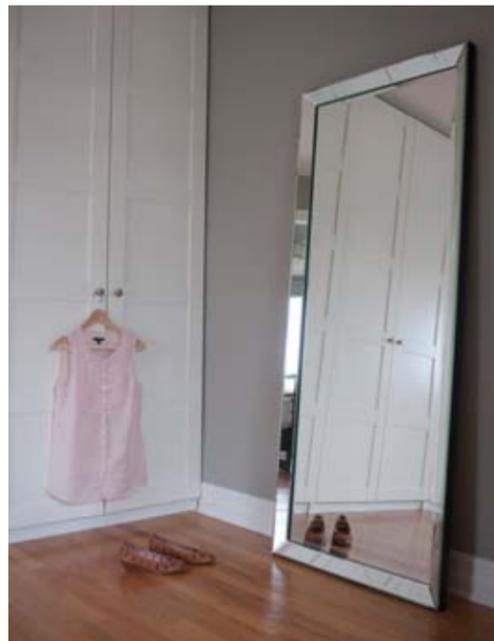
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LEFT: The soft colour palette extends to the master bedroom. **BELOW:** If needed, the master bedroom's dressing room/closet can easily be reconverted into a bedroom in future. **BOTTOM:** The mirror above the en suite's double vanity was designed to work with the sloped ceiling.



Ariel and Tom opted for a large shower in the en suite instead of a tub. It doesn't actually have a door, something a visitor might not notice if it wasn't pointed out, but it makes sense. It's easier to keep the glass polished and streak-free. "We got tired of cleaning around the handles of our old glass shower door," explains Ariel.

The master bedroom's very clever walk-in "closet" isn't really a closet at all. It's actually a future fourth bedroom, which acts as a dressing room that can easily be converted when needed. Inexpensive cabinets create floor-to-ceiling storage that didn't exist in this home's former incarnation.

The idea of an upstairs laundry room was recommended by Ariel's aunt. "I'm so glad we did it," admits Ariel. "It makes sense for a growing family not to have to lug laundry up and down several flights of stairs."

From top to bottom, Ariel and Tom managed to create plenty of open, bright, personable living space that, despite the boost in square footage, still maintains the home's 1940s charm.

"We are absolutely thrilled with it," says Ariel. "Renovating can be stressful but we had great help 'til the end. When we began this process, I don't know that we imagined we would be this satisfied at the end of it all." **OH**

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