



THE CLINES

Recycling Arizona History

BY DAVID M. BROWN

Arizona history is at home with Jon and Liz Cline—so is an environmental awareness resulting from the family's 150-year pioneer heritage.

In April 1985, the young couple purchased a 3,100-square-foot Tempe home, built in 1968 on a 2.7-acre horse-property parcel. The slump-block three-bedroom, two-bathroom ranch-style house was typical of the era and area.

About eight years ago, the Clines began a process that started as a remodeling and expansion project for themselves and their children. Their original contractor could not continue, so they turned to green-conscious general contractor, R.D. Hendrickson, principal of Scottsdale-based Modern Group, to oversee construction management.

At this time, the couple discovered that the main house structure could not support the expansion, so they decided to rebuild entirely. Their current home, on the same parcel, is 4,000

square feet, with a 1,600-square-foot guest house, which both celebrate the couple's personalities and the family heritage, while also exemplifying green building and repurposing.

Jon is a third-generation Arizonan who grew up east of Payson on a horse and cattle ranch in Star Valley. He wanted to celebrate that heritage, sustainably. Liz wanted her home to incorporate Spanish Mission style—plain, stucco, or stone exteriors and a red tile roof—reminiscent of the Catholic schools she attended in Tucson and Phoenix. She also wanted it to be organic in a Wrightian way.

"I always characterized the missions, and the buildings of that era, as looking like they 'grew' from the ground as a consequence of the influence of the local materials used, and I wanted this home to reflect the same value," she says.

Their work continued from about 2004 through June 2007, when the project was completed.

THE JAMES GANG

“On entering their house, you immediately get a sense of the homeowners’ personalities through the materials that surround you,” says Holly Asher, Allied ASID, an associate in Tony Sutton’s interior design firm, Est Est Incorporated, Scottsdale. “Around every corner of their home is a story, a memory or a sentimental attribute that they can be reminded of every day.”

In the guest house, wood above the fireplace was first used in the barn at the “7A,” the family ranch where Jon was raised. With pioneer history dating back to the 1870s, the Gila County property once housed cowboy author Zane Grey’s “last man” of the Pleasant Valley War, or Tonto Basin War, between two Mogollon Rim families—a 10-year-plus feud rivaling the infamous Hatfields/McCoys for ferocity.

Later, when the ranch was under the stewardship of the Franklin family, Jesse and Frank James, family friends, stopped to rest at the ranch in transit to California, on cool trails from the hot Missouri nooses reserved for them. Legend says that Jesse James, prior to his death in April 1882, even carved his name in a wild cherry tree on the property, although it died and was cut down, probably during the 1950s.

The lumber reclaimed from the walls and roof of the original Tempe house was integrated into the nonstructural aspects of the new construction. The wood was also reused for saw horses, wall bracing and other purposes. Plywood sheathing from the roof of the old house was reused as nonstructural sheathing and as blocking in areas in which heavy wall hangings were contemplated.

From the old living room/kitchen, the exposed beams now form a lattice in the kitchen skylight and the decorative frame in the master bedroom ceiling. Additional Douglas fir beams were acquired and now enhance the great room as nonstructural elements.

“We replaced the beams, adding metal strapping recalling the work of the late 19th/early 20th century Greene and Greene brothers, whose Arts and Crafts style reacted against assembly-line construction,” says Larry Langhurst, co-principal, with Bernie Becker, of Phoenix-based Woodesign, which completed the cabinetry and other millwork in the home. He also notes that Greene’s work, such as their landmark Gamble House in Pasadena, California, inspires him daily.

The razed masonry blocks from the original home were cleaned and reclaimed as a security fence at the home of one of the construction workers; original cabinetry went with another tradesman for cabinets in his home; timbers and plywood from the carport found its way to the Cholla Bay, Mexico, vacation home of another worker. And, excess material is now a hay shed on the Clines’ property.

The original fireplace surround is now part of the new patio fireplace, the old granite countertops from the kitchen are in the laundry room and key drop, and the front door light fixture illuminates the breezeway between the main and guest houses.

In the billiards room, the focal-point mirrors above the bar are from an old barber shop in Miami, Arizona, and have been one

of Liz’s treasures. This room, in fact, was not built around the antique pool table they acquired from New York, as the room name suggests, but to accommodate these wall collectibles. The hickory floors have a subfloor of recycled particle board, and the bar countertops have low lifecycle environmental impact because of their concrete construction.

In addition, Hohokam artifacts, including mano and metate grinding fragments and a stone axe, which Jon found on the property, have been incorporated into the rubble field above the fireplace.

“The Clines were very conscious of recycling and made sure that we used everything we could from the old home,” Hendrickson says, estimating that he was able to reuse approximately 80 percent of the original framing materials.

BLEACHER SEATS THAT OPEN SUSTAINABLE DOORS

The bleachers here are the start—the best seat you can’t sit on. Woodesign’s cabinetry for the three bathrooms, kitchen, billiards room, laundry, key drop, entertainment center and bookcases/displays are from the worn green bleachers of the old St. Mary’s High School gymnasium in Phoenix, which were installed in 1918.

“A friend was demolishing the gym in 2007 and thought we would be interested in the seats,” Langhurst explains. “They even had 89 years’ worth of chewing gum!” he notes. Among the dignitaries who sat on them was Teddy Roosevelt, a frequent Valley visitor who reportedly did so before he died in 1919.

The bleachers are vertical grain Douglas fir, making them straight and strong—and ensuring their reusability. For the cabinets, Woodesign pinned the corners with walnut squares from walnut cut-off pieces from other projects.

“They are amazing, as they show some of the old marks and natural distressing created from their history in the school,” says Asher. “Their natural finish is beautiful and pairs wonderfully with the handmade tiles over the kitchen range.”

“We are green by heritage or perhaps reflex as much as anything,” Jon explains. “Coming from agrarian families that lived close to the earth and knew the hardships of the Depression, we were simply raised not to waste or throw away things that could be reused.”

“In essence, we didn’t declare that this project was going to be green as part of a personal mission statement,” Jon says. “We made conscious choices—doing what we believed were the right things to do.”

Design/Construction Team

- R.D. Hendrickson, principle of Scottsdale-based Modern Group
- Joe Conk, AIA, then associated with the distinguished Scottsdale architectural firm, Swaback Partners, and now principal of Fort Worth, Texas-based Conk Architecture
- Larry Langhurst, co-principal, with Bernie Becker, of Phoenix-based Woodesign, which completed the cabinetry and other millwork
- Holly Asher, Allied ASID, an associate in Tony Sutton’s interior design firm, Est Est Incorporated, Scottsdale.

David M. Brown (azwriter.com) writes on sustainability and other topics. Photos by Dino Tonn

