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home of the month



Grand Central's architects leave a homey legacy in Crocus Hill.

BY DAVID ANGER
PHOTOGRAPHY BY KAREN MELVIN

revival of a tudor

Above: Thirty original panels of Zuber & Cie French wallpaper—panels that now sell for \$1,000 each—were restored in the reception hall, site of designer David Heide's award-winning limestone table. Top: A nineteenth-century cast-iron chandelier, salvaged from a Summit Avenue mansion, illuminates the Jacobean table and William and Mary chairs in the oak-paneled dining room.

Jill Harmon and Frank Fairman's eighty-six-year-old Tudor Revival-style manse atop St. Paul's Crocus Hill is testament to the endurance of beautiful architecture and a celebration of sensitive renovations.

Before Harmon and Fairman bought it in 1990, five other families lived in this masterwork by Reed and Stem, architects of Grand Central Station. Leo Goodkind, vice president of the former Mannheimer Brothers department store in downtown St. Paul, built the 7,000-square-foot residence for \$20,000. Remarkably, most of the house's fifteen rooms look much the same today as they did then, according to photos and letters shared with the couple by Leo's son Louis.

Even so, Harmon, an executive recruiter, and Fairman, an investment banker at U.S. Bancorp Piper Jaffray, asked David Heide—a Minneapolis designer whose *raison d'être* is preserving historic landmarks—to enhance the home's turn-of-the-century sublimity. Today, the exterior is as splendid as it was in 1914, its limestone first story and half-timbered second and third floors historic-district compliant (the neighborhood is on the National Register of Historic Places).

The reception hall is breathtaking. Heide's custom reception table, constructed with salvaged altar gates and a limestone slab,

takes center stage; a Gustavian sofa by Carl Johan gives guests an elegant place to pause while coming or going. Lining the hall are thirty restored panels of exquisite Zuber & Cie French wallpaper depicting Roman ruins.

The oak-paneled dining room takes on Tudor flair with an oil-on-leather screen, cast-iron chandelier, Jacobean table with William and Mary chairs, and former church sconces.

With Heide's assistance, the living room has assumed a club-by feel, with antique Persian rugs and 1920s Chippendale reproduction sofas. He's also helped convert third-floor servants' quarters into Arts and Crafts-style bedrooms and a play area for the couple's three children. Harmon herself took on the master bedroom, finding a seventeen-by-twenty-five-foot Persian wool rug upon which to set their hand-carved, four-poster bed.

She's restless about the next big project: gutting the galley kitchen, now stuck in the sixties with its white-metal cabinets and vinyl floors. "The house has had a profound effect on me," she says. "I'm much more interested in restoration than style. The swags I bought at the beginning are gone—and someone got a *great* deal at the Goodwill." ■

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