



Photo Credit: Greg Hadley



BY JOHN BYRD



(Top) Sun Design's Roger Lataille proposed a stacked stone hearth for a sitting area adjacent to the open kitchen. The textural vertical accent-- evoking a cozy cabin-like ambiance-- creates an iconic invitation to sit and interact that had previously been missing from a nondescript corner.

(Above) Wood panelling, wainscoting, and a sled ceiling with faux rafters were among the dated interior details that defined the home's previous interior.

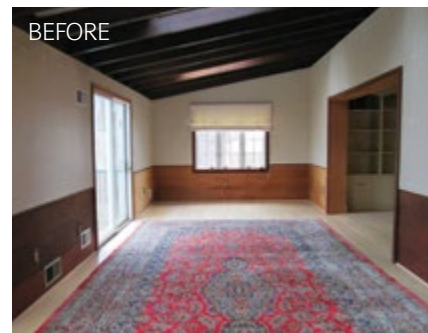
Arlington Makeover

ENHANCES FAMILY LIFE

On-time and On-Budget, Sun Design's Roger Lataille Is a Design Consultant Homeowners Return to for their 2nd or 3rd Project

Meet Roger Lataille, Senior Design Consultant at Sun Design Remodeling and—more importantly—a remodeling resource homeowners turn to, and return to, whenever they need expert advice, hands-on support and commitment.

Case in point: in 2012, a north Arlington couple engaged Lataille to execute a top-to-bottom makeover to their 2,300 square foot home. The goal was to implement functional improvements within a “transitional” interior design style that would work well for a



(Above) Lataille described the interior of the previous family room as “rustic”— something of anachronism in 2015.

(At left) By dropping the sled roof to the standard eight feet, the designer introduces a scale more appropriate to the family room’s size and purpose. Indoor continuum has been enhanced; French doors with sidelights now connect the space to a 17’ x 31’ deck complete with hot tub and outdoor kitchen.

growing family. Delivered on time and within budget, the owners dubbed the results “exceptional” in every detail.

Now, two years later, and with two daughters growing rapidly, the couple asked Lataille for ideas for an addition. As it turned out, the terrain around the property was too steep for the proposed addendum. While space enlargement discussions were still underway, however, the couple learned that elderly neighbors a few doors up the street were planning to sell their nearly 5,000 square foot Colonial.

This was a promising development for Lataille’s space-cramped client, but far

from a slam-dunk.

The neighbor’s house had been built in the late 1960’s and hadn’t been upgraded in decades. Still, more living space was a tantalizing proposition, and the couple soon asked Lataille for an assessment on the feasibility of remodeling the house to the standard he had achieved in their current residence.

In short order, Lataille and client walked through the house and—before any decision had been reached regarding a possible purchase—the designer developed preliminary sketches depicting several remodeling scenarios.

What was obvious to everyone from the start was that the existing house was seriously dated, even degraded in places—

and that the desired upgrade would require considerable vision, budget-mindedness and team performance.

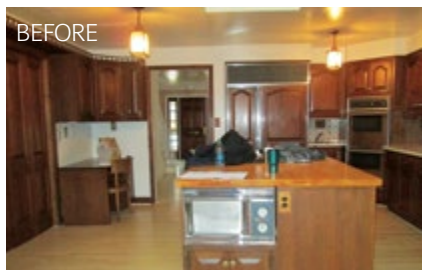
Adding to the drama: if the deal went through, the new owners wanted to put their current house on the market immediately, remodel the purchased property at once and move into their newly made-over residence ASAP.

There would be no interim period of rental properties or furniture in storage.

“Looking back, the qualitative difference between the interiors of the two houses

((At right) Sun Design’s “transitional”- style interior design solution concentrates on pleasing contrasts. The 3.6’ x 8’ cook top island and three stool dining counter features a walnut-colored base topped with a dappled granite surface. The dark-stained oak flooring is offset by ivory-hued paneling that wraps a two-door refrigerator, a roll-out pantry and drawers custom-designed to satisfy the cook’s requirements.

(Below) The existing kitchen’s dated Colonial accents included Dutch-style maple cabinet facings, a mosaic tile back splash and a vinyl counter surface.



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BEFORE

(Above) The previous lower level was little more than a partially finished basement that hadn't been used for recreational purposes in years.

(At left) Featuring billiards and pinball, the remodeled play room is also the site of a weekly card game. Once exposed vertical support beams and HVAC vents are now encased in dry wall. New wood-grained vinyl flooring, recessed lights and tawny/golden wall paint create a brightly cheerful ambiance.

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was profound," Lataille recalls. "The house being considered for purchase was like something from a 1970s movie set. There was large-pattern floral wall paper, wainscot paneling in many rooms; the family room adjacent to the kitchen was covered by a sled ceiling with faux exposed timbers."

Moreover, the interior design style, Lataille elaborates, may have once been loosely described as rustic.

"But the look was plainly anachronistic in 2015," he adds, "A far cry from the contemporary transitional style my clients wanted."

The kitchen, likewise, featured outmoded Colonial accents that including Dutch-style maple cabinet facings, a Delft mosaic tile back splash, and vinyl counter surfaces. There was even a 30 year old microwave—"really a kind of museum piece", Lataille says—"embedded in the food prep island."

Downstairs, a spacious multi-function lower-level zoned as "game room", "playroom" and "work room" had become stale from lack of use.

There was a tired old kitchenette in a rear corner—which meant that fixtures needed for sinks and refrigerators were already in place. But much of the lower level was little more than a partly below-grade basement—hardly a place for upbeat family entertainment.

THE REMODEL

In the plus column: the house featured generously-sized rooms and segues, large windows accessing abundant natural light and an appreciably "open" first floor plan with sight lines in three directions.

"The kitchen-centric first level plan had considerable potential," Lataille notes, "but it needed a more cohesive interior—one that would support a more intimate scale."

The first feature Lataille slated for deletion: the sled roof.

By uniformly dropping the ceiling to the standard 8 feet, the visual experience of anyone in the room now shifts to horizontal sight lines dominated by large windows and outside landscaping. The more sharply articulated indoor-outdoor continuum, in turn, adds focal points and intimacy—yet is more expansive.

To highlight perspective, Lataille proposed a stacked stone hearth for a sitting area adjacent to the open kitchen. The textural vertical accent—evoking a cozy cabin-like ambiance—creates an iconic invitation to sit and interact that had previously been missing from a nondescript corner.

With a panoramic view on one side and the open kitchen on the other, the redesigned niche is transformed into a cozy spot for sitting by the window with a book, or chatting with the cook as meals are prepared.

With the exception of moving interior walls a few inches, the kitchen footprint remains fundamentally the same. Here, Lataille concentrated on introducing wholly new elevations—eliminating all vestiges of the Colonial-style finish work while scrupulously developing a brightly luminous interior scheme composed of granite surfaces and ivory-hued cabinet facings.



The 3.6' x 8' cook top island and three stool dining counter now features a dark walnut-colored base topped with a dappled granite surface. The dark-stained oak flooring, by extension, perfectly contrasts with the ivory-hued paneling that wraps a two-door refrigerator, a roll-out pantry and drawers custom-designed to satisfy the cook's requirements.

French doors with sidelights now connect the family room to a 17' x 31' deck complete with hot tub and outdoor kitchen. The front stairs in the foyer have been re-finished; existing decorative capitals refurbished.

Downstairs, the once darkly cavernous lower-level has been elevated into an all-purpose family play area. Exposed vertical support beams are encased in dry wall, which, likewise, wraps HVAC vents. New wood-grained vinyl flooring, recessed lights and tawny/golden wall paint lend the space a light, cheerful ambiance.

The new play room features billiards, pinball and a card table where Dad hosts a weekly card game. The stacked stone tile fireplace situated in front of an L-shaped configuration of couches offers a perfect spot to watch a plasma screen TV mounted above the hearth.

The old kitchenette, transformed into the family's downstairs refreshment center, provides step-saving convenience that makes entertaining easier for everyone.

Family life—at its most fulfilling.

Sun Design Remodeling frequently sponsors tours of recently remodeled homes as well as workshops on home remodeling topics. Headquartered in Burke, the firm recently opened a second office in McLean. For information: 703.425.5588 or www.SunDesignInc.com



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