

# MAKING IT COUNT

ADDING FUNCTION IN A COMPACT ADDITION



A COMPACT MUDROOM ADDITION MAKES ROOM FOR FAMILY FUN WITH A PLAY LOFT, BIKE STORAGE, A COZY BREAKFAST NOOK BANQUETTE AND RESPLENDENT MOTHER'S DESK.

Designer Ann McCulloch has worked both sides of the interior design fence - making homes look pretty and mapping out floor plans that really work. While the latter was the primary challenge when addressing Shawn and Sandy Patrick's oft-remodeled 1910 home in the West Hills, ultimately, she carried off both with flying colors.

"I like bones and structure and getting the floor plan right," explains Ann, who does all her own drafting and construction documents. "Sometimes it's necessary to educate clients that starting with a master plan that covers the entire scope of their needs is important before launching into the process. If they have the necessary budget, we do it all at once, if not, we tackle it in phases."

The Patricks, who have two young children and two large dogs, originally asked Ann to look at their back porch as a possible mudroom for muddy boots, wet coats and shaggy dogs. Given its dilapidated state and placement in the set back on the side of the house, Ann told them it wasn't possible. She suggested, however, that they tour the whole house together to discuss areas of their home that were not functioning as they wished. After the tour, Ann came up with a myriad of ideas to remedy that wish list. Finding space to accomplish those needs was the key issue.

By removing two rows of rhododendrons and a retaining wall, Ann told them, they could enlarge their driveway to make room for the main floor mudroom addition and an outdoor play area for their children to bike in. The Patricks were so impressed with Ann's overall vision that they adopted the full plan and worked on all three floors at once.

In keeping with the home's architecture, Ann, who works in concert with DCI Engineers and Hammer & Hand, designed a peaked roof porch for the mudroom entrance with a multi-purpose Dutch entry door. Outside, carriage doors open onto a 10' tall bike and sports equipment storage area that allows bikes to hang vertically. Thinking outside the box, Ann turned that same indoor space into a play-loft for the Patricks' children - Anna Blake, 7, and MacLean, 3.

"I was looking at the space initially for storage when the idea for a fun play loft came to mind," says Ann, who explained to the Patricks that it could always be used as storage when their kids have grown.

The loft features a ladder that invites children of all ages to lounge on a plush carpet remnant, pluck good reading from book shelves and bask in the light from an upper window. Dog-walking neighbors say they often see the children at the window simply gazing

WRITTEN BY DONNA PIZZI PHOTOGRAPHY BY GREG KOZAWA



BEFORE



AFTER

(OPPOSITE) Shawn and Sandy Patrick sit with their children, MacLean and Anna Blake, on the steps of their mudroom addition. (LEFT) By removing two rows of rhododendrons and a retaining wall, designer Ann McCulloch made room for the addition with bike storage area at right. The original exterior appears in the inset photo.



Designer Ann McCulloch's master plans for additions and remodels include everything from floor plans to interior design to working with landscapers, all of which is completed before the work begins. (ABOVE) The Patricks encourage their children's creativity by displaying their framed artwork. Handy storage is found in the built-in banquette.



**DIVIDED STORAGE**

Built-in kitchen desks take up less room than the stand alone type, and can provide easy-to-reach storage for colorful cookbooks, planners and office work.

**SORTING BASKET**

Looking for a place to toss bills, appointment cards and receipts? Create a sorting basket beneath your desk for those "can't deal with it now" items that need your attention later.

**ORIGINAL WALL**

The wall against which the built-in desk now resides used to be home to the family's dark dining room table and chairs - an area lit only by a single slider window.

**WORK SPACE**

Sliding drawers should be part and parcel of your built-in desk, perfect for filing completed work, or highlighting projects that are still in-progress, and keeping clutter out of sight.

**DESIGN INSPIRATIONS**

When creating a nook area over storage, keep a feeling of openness through the use of windows, lighting and airy banisters. Finish it with light paint colors and cozy carpeting.

Multipurpose hooks installed at heights children can reach promote tidiness and eliminate clutter. Sturdy hooks done in finishes that match your decor are a must.

A handy metal boot tray keeps entry floors free of debris from muddy school shoes and wet boots.

Install easy-to-clean flooring in entryways to ward off rainy day messes.

MUDROOM CEILING  
Nuance by Miller Paint

MUDROOM WALLS  
Nomadic Travels by Miller Paint





## DESIGN INSPIRATIONS

Keep ceiling paint colors consistent from room to room to create a visual flow, especially when going from small to larger rooms or vice versa.

When remodeling, choose consistent window styles for enhanced beauty inside and out. These tall French casement windows light up the nook area, while providing insulation from weather and sound.

Banquettes bring family and friends together for conversation around a casual dining/home-work/crafts table. Storage is easily built into the benches. Sturdy outdoor fabrics make pillows and cushions easy-to-clean.

Painted furniture is not only child-friendly, thanks to easy-to-clean surfaces, but it also increases visual flow when painting table and chairs the same color as your walls.



idly through it, watching passersby. Board and batten loft walls provide space for handy hooks for year-round outer wear. The family uses the storage bench opposite for removing wet boots, or posing shopping bags. The newly located powder room spans the distance between loft and bench.

“By creating another entrance to the house,” observes Ann, “the family no longer has to go through the formal entry to drop all of their belongings. Now that entrance is reserved primarily for guests.”

Left of the bench lies a door into the formerly dark kitchen. The reclaimed dining area, originally lit only by a small slider window, is now bathed in light from two handsomely trimmed out French casement windows by Kolbe & Kolbe. These tall windows brighten the area, where a new banquette - another family-friendly design idea by Ann - encourages kids and parents alike to hangout, do homework, or create works of art.

When Ann's suggestion to use indestructible outdoor fabrics by Clarence House and trims by Link Outdoor to finish the banquette was met with disbelief, she gave Sandy some samples to test. “I call them ‘bomb’ proof,” says Ann, “but she didn't believe me!”

Nearly a year later, Sandy is a true believer!

She's also sold on the location of her new desk tucked neatly between the entryway and the dining area, making supervision of her active children an easy task.

“Sandy really needed a desk of her own,” says Ann, “a place to organize her life, keep cookbooks handy, and work online.”

Sandy is also a fan of the painted furniture that ties table, chairs, banquette and desk together to make an airy, light-filled family meeting place.

“Most of my clients are families with kids,” says Ann, who had Hammer & Hand construct this project, “so problem-solving how to make a floor plan work is what I enjoy the most.”

Learning that the Patricks feel the new addition, whose small footprint has created the ability to live more freely, has truly changed the quality of their day-to-day lives was, says Ann, most gratifying. After all, what more could a designer ask?

REMODELING CONTRACTOR

Hammer & Hand [www.hammerandhand.com](http://www.hammerandhand.com)

DESIGN AND INTERIOR DESIGN

Ann McCulloch Studio [www.annmccullochstudio.com](http://www.annmccullochstudio.com)

Banquette Upholstery: Design Furnishings International;  
Desk, Banquette and Cabinetry: Wil McDonald; Appliances:  
Kohler, ProFlo, Tile Installation: Campbell's Tile Concepts;  
Kitchen Backsplash: Ann Sacks Tile & Stone