

Glory Days

FRED ASTAIRE AND GINGER ROGERS WOULD LOOK RIGHT AT HOME DANCING THROUGH THE ROOMS OF THIS RENOVATED NEW YORK GLASS HOUSE

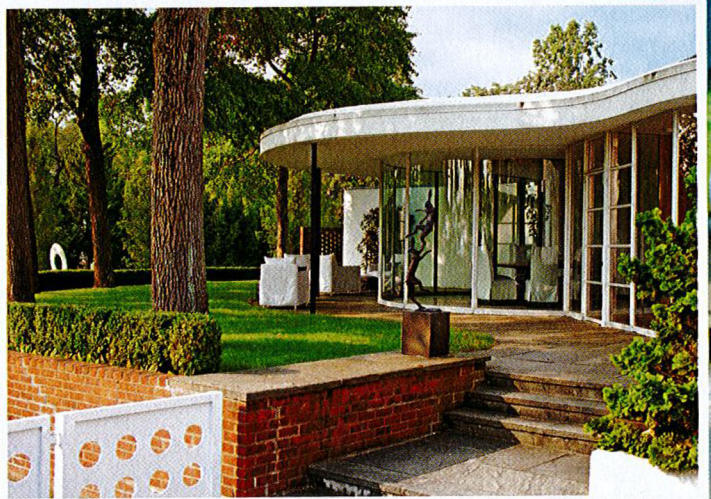
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Houses do have voices. Maybe they're not audible to all, but designer Eric Cohler clearly was listening when he reverently renovated an architecturally significant Long Island home. The glass-and-masonry International Style house was designed by the late modernist architect Edward Durell Stone for A. Conger Goodyear, a highly regarded art collector and founder and first president of New York's Museum of Modern Art (MoMA).



“ I DIDN'T RENOVATE OR RESTORE AS MUCH AS I REBUILT THE HOUSE IN THE WAY IT WOULD HAVE BEEN WHEN IT WAS NEW. WHEN IT WAS FINISHED, PEOPLE COULDN'T TELL THE ORIGINAL PARTS OF THE HOUSE FROM THE NEW WORK BECAUSE IT WAS SO SEAMLESS. ” —designer Eric Cohler



Dining room and exterior

The exterior walls of curved glass provide wide-angle views of the landscaped grounds.

Portrait Designer Eric Cohler sits in front of windows draped with Sunbrella sheers.

Fireplace Lee Industries dining chairs slipcovered in Sunbrella fabrics are on casters so they can slide around the table or move to side walls when not needed for dining.

Sculpture Eric installed artwork throughout the grounds—a nod to the home's artistic past.



"I felt like I was channeling A. Conger Goodyear," Eric says of his four-year renovation. While the structure was "nearly derelict" after sitting vacant for a half century (inside were bird and animal droppings, termites, and a collapsed roof), Eric heard the echoes of its glamorous past.

There were cocktail parties attended by famous artists in the glass-walled, cylindrical dining room. After supper, the dining table—mounted on a motorized post—was lowered to floor level to allow for dancing. French doors opened the house to multiple terraces and a swimming pool, with views of Long Island Sound, the Atlantic Ocean, and the glittering night lights of New York City.

Architect Stone designed the low, flat-roofed house as a weekend retreat for Goodyear, with deep eaves that shaded the art within from direct sunlight. The two men had met when Stone was helping design the first permanent home for MoMA.

While much of the 6,000-square-foot house spoke of art and glamour, the kitchen's voice was hardly inspiring. "The kitchen was very tight and dark. It was originally designed for the way families lived then, with a butler and staff who took care of the house," Eric says.

The working area of the kitchen was surrounded by a cluster of small rooms, including a butler's pantry, laundry room, maid's quarters, a narrow basement stairway, and two powder rooms ("his" and "hers" for Goodyear's large dinner parties).

The kitchen had been updated in the '60s, but the yellow metal cabinets were badly rusted, and the terra-cotta floor tiles (installed over black linoleum) were loose. "The metal cabinets and other fixtures weren't original to the house, so we didn't keep them," Eric says. "My goal was to bring the home into the 21st century—to make a functional kitchen designed for the way families live today—but still make it look like it could have been built in the '30s," he says.



That meant blowing out walls where structurally possible and eliminating outdated rooms to gain square footage for the kitchen. The former servants' quarters were converted into a sunny breakfast room and a walk-in storage pantry. The his-and-her powder rooms were decommissioned, and that space was integrated into the kitchen and used for a redesigned stairway to the lower level.

"Now everything circulates and is open, so people in the kitchen can talk to someone in the breakfast room or butler's pantry," Eric says. The new stairway gives access to the formerly unfinished basement. After hauling away a behemoth original furnace from that level, Eric installed hand-scraped maple floors, creating new living space.

To introduce natural light, the designer added a large rectangular skylight in the kitchen, a round skylight above the new stairs, and French doors in the breakfast room that go to a landscaped courtyard (formerly a parking lot for staff and delivery trucks). Three original steel-framed windows on the sink wall were

DURING

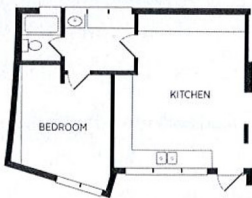


Kitchen An Armstrong classic black-and-white checkerboard floor and aged-looking Danby marble countertops from Artistic Tile seem at home in the mid-20th-century house. Walls were removed to enlarge the kitchen and create a dining area behind the wall ovens. Dark walnut Smallbone of Devizes cabinets with mirror insets and polished nickel hardware add understated glamour.

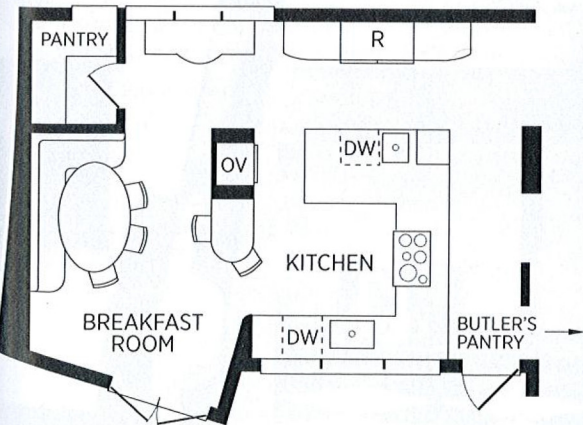
Refrigerator Stainless steel appliances by Sears Kenmore, a stylish pot rack, and multiple work stations speak to the efficiency of the plan. "My goal was to make a functional kitchen for the way families live today," says designer Eric Cohler.

Pull A stitched leather drawer pull recognizes the home's original owner, A. Conger Goodyear.

BEFORE



AFTER





Breakfast room A room next to the kitchen formerly used for staff quarters was converted into an eating area illuminated by a Circa Lighting lantern designed by Eric. A Lee Industries settee and vintage chairs gather around the pedestal table.
French doors New glass-and-steel doors connect the kitchen to a terrace for alfresco dining. **Dresser** Crystal and china are beautifully displayed in a hand-painted and mirrored dresser near the breakfast room.

stripped and restored, and all new windows and doors were custom made to replicate the originals—down to the hardware.

Eric grounded the kitchen with a black-and-white checkerboard floor. The classic floor pattern is typical of those used in mid-century homes, the designer notes, and repeats the grid motif that architect Stone used throughout the property.

An original cabinet in the butler's pantry inspired Eric's cabinetry choice for the kitchen. The walnut and macassar ebony veneer cabinets are accented with inset mirrored strips and polished nickel hardware. "They looked like something you would have seen in a well-built Bauhaus building back in the '30s—contemporary with a little dash of glamour," Eric says. "I could just imagine a black-and-white movie with Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers dancing in the kitchen."

The original butler's pantry piece that inspired the cabinetry choice was restored and installed in the master bath. To add variety ▶

