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# A Beautiful Blend

Builder Tim Smith of Minglewood Homes joins old and new elements harmoniously in a Chatham antique.



It's not too often one comes across a piece of old Cape Cod so well preserved that you feel as if you've stepped back in time. The 18th-century Benjamin Godfrey House on Stage Harbor Road in Chatham is such a place. Evoking the feeling of a bygone era, the Cape-style dwelling is situated on an acre of undulating lawns, which feature moss-covered stone walls, an old barn, an ancient fruit orchard, and views to Mill Pond. The Benjamin Godfrey house was first deeded in 1789. Although there are no documents showing the actual build date, Smith believes the house was erected circa 1750. Benjamin Godfrey operated the town gristmill, which was once located north of the property and was moved to Chatham's Chase Park. Godfrey lived in the house until he passed away in 1818.

When Smith, a native to Cape Cod, had the opportunity to purchase the house, he jumped at the chance. "This property embodies the feeling of old Cape Cod," notes Smith. Owner of Minglewood Homes, Smith loves the antique cape houses dotting the area's coastal landscape. "It's always fun to work on older houses, although not always easier," he laughs. Smith intended to restore the old structure while improv-

BY NANCY E. BERRY / PHOTOS BY STACEY HEDMAN



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ing on its livability by incorporating sensitive additions to the original house. “We wanted to maintain the integrity of the existing building as well as the unique plantings on the property, which include the only known Sequoia Redwood Tree on Cape Cod,” notes Smith.

Smith began the restoration project by doing a bit of forensics. The structure is a classic full Cape with a center entryway flanked by two sets of windows on either side. A center chimney warms the two front parlors and original “keeping room.” The antique dwelling has all of its original 12-over-8 and 9-over-6 windows, Colonial paneled doors, wide-plank flooring, wood paneling, wainscoting, coffered ceilings, gun-stock posts, and built-in cabinets with original panes of glass still intact. “We wanted to preserve as much of the original structure as possible. If it could be salvaged, we would salvage it,” notes Smith. “We also had to determine how structurally sound the original portion of the house was before we proceeded with the additions.” After examining the sill, Smith realized it was rotted and needed to be replaced. The good news was that the house’s original floor joists, which were made of tree trunks—with the bark still on—were all in great condition. “We jacked the whole house and laid a new foundation as well as a new sill,” says Smith.



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Once the older section was shored up, Smith began building the addition. The new section echoes the older portion of the house, but was updated for a modern lifestyle. Smith broke down the additional square footage into two wings connected to the main house by a stairway and mudroom. “We added modern amenities you would not find in an older structure,” notes Smith. Across from the mudroom, which offers built-in benches and cubbies and closets, a hallway leads to a large master bedroom and bath. The master bedroom is located in an older ell that was added to the house at a later date. Smith enlarged this space and created a second floor for additional sleeping quarters.

“More and more people would like the master bedroom on the first floor,” notes Smith. The master bedroom offers a set of French doors leading to a private patio. The same hallway leads to the kitchen and great room wing. The kitchen, designed by Eileen Nadeau of Botello’s Kitchen Design, is transitional—blending both old and new elements into one space. Cool marble counters and a white porcelain farmhouse sink offer period-inspired style. Stainless-steel appliances, such as the Viking stove, offer modern convenience. The custom cabinets are an interpretation of butlers’ pantries popular in the late 1800s. The hand-hammered pulls are based on Colonial-era design.



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## The Godfrey Gristmill

The Godfrey Gristmill was moved to Chatham's Chase Park in xxxxTK from its original spot on Stage Harbor Road and has undergone extensive historic restorations to bring it back to working order. The wind-powered gristmill was built by Colonel Benjamin Godfrey in 1797 to grind corn and was an active commercial operation until 1898. Today it is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Godfrey's Gristmill will once again grind corn occasionally and visitors to the 18th-century mill will be able to relive a bit of town history during Chatham's tricentennial this year. —Details supplied by the Chatham Historical Commission

The kitchen opens directly to the great room, which has a cathedral ceiling with exposed salvaged beams. A series of French doors topped with transoms open to a blue stone patio enclosed in fieldstone walls. Views of the lush landscape and saltwater inlet beyond are captured through the doors of glass. A large wood-burning fireplace constructed of brick salvaged from the property warms the room.

“The mantel is based on a simple Colonial design,” notes Smith. On the opposite wall from the hearth, a bank of six-over-six double-hung windows with transoms allows for additional afternoon light. The room is finished in pickwick pine painted white to create an old Cape feel. Smith incorporated a window seat that stretches the length of the windows for additional seating. A stunning pine table Smith made from reclaimed boards from the property seats 12. The wide pine floors offer a period look to the new interiors.

Smith converted an old barn on the property into a recreation room complete with wet bar, fireplace, and an old-fashioned wooden swing. The barn rafters and walls are exposed for a rustic feel. A large sliding barn door was also refurbished and used. To complete the compound, Smith added a two-car garage with a loft space above that can be used as a home office or guest quarters.

Paying homage to a stunning centuries-old property, Smith blended the historical and contemporary elements of this Cape Cod treasure seamlessly, creating a tranquil getaway retreat for a family to make their own summer memories for years to come.

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