

Dining room's gone, everybody's happy

"We needed a room where we could talk," said Scott Stupprin Co. interior designer Sandy Robinson.

Try to come up with even a reasonable facsimile in a standard subdivision home. Most people resign themselves to conventional mediocrity. Not this lady. She refused to compromise family priorities (travel and other luxuries) for a larger, high-cost home.

So she devised a scheme to eliminate the nine-foot by 11-foot dining room ("It was too small to serve any real purpose, anyway," she said) and replaced it with a library-guest room.

The last remaining vestige of what had been the little-used dining room is a handsome brass-milk glass chandelier that fits in with the oak decor.

"At last my husband has his own retreat," Mrs. Robinson said.

Once the opening from kitchen to dining room was sealed, it became his. There is no TV, no radio, just books, memorabilia and a wide, shuttered window overlooking the 12-varying rose garden.

Large double oak doors close off the din of daily living. Open, they allow a flow into the adjacent living area to help make it look even larger. The good feeling of freedom here in this relatively small area comes from unified carpeting and beamed cathedral ceilings.

Wide, floor-to-ceiling solid oak shelves comprise one wall. Those remaining are covered in textured grass cloth. Furnishings are simple in design and substantial. Oatmeal and gold hues blend subtly. Accessories are basics like a Tiffany lamp, varieties of mugs, brass objets d'art, wall prints and throw pillows.

Each furniture piece plays a dual role. The sofa is also a bed. An end table is a chess table, with king's men and pawns readied for play. A lounge chair can be pushed around the corner to augment seating arrangements in the living room.

The massive oak desk doubles as a home-office unit for audiologist Dr. Dale Robinson. Here he studies, researches and writes before publishing his reports. And, when needed, the room is for guests.

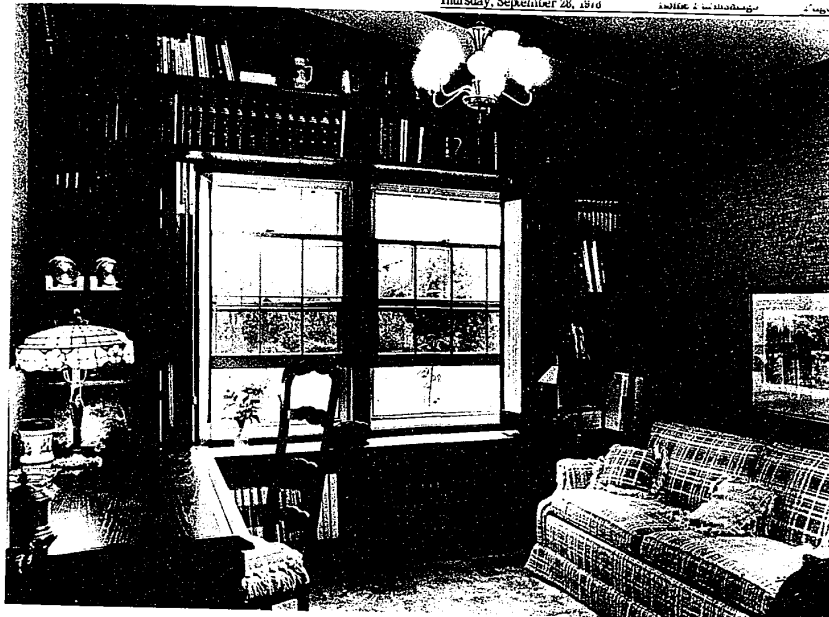
Mrs. Robinson, who planned and designed the project, earned her bachelor's degree at Michigan State University after a two-year stint at University of Iowa.

"It took me 11 years in between children to get it," she said.

She has ambitious plans for kitchen remodeling—but not before another conversion job on the family room ("also too small for practical purposes") into a more formal dining area.

—MILLICENT WORRELL

Doubling as guest room and library, this once-little-used room is popular with its owners for study or quiet conversation. (Staff photo by Stephen Cantrell)



Get acquainted with windows

Whether a face is lovely to look at or a house is delightful to see depends on how well the features fit together.

Most of us have to accept less than perfect faces. But, by combining the right entry, windows, siding and roof, anyone can have a home passersby will pause to admire.

Of all house features, few are more essential to over-all appearance than windows, which often comprise a major portion of the outer walls.

Fortunately, wood sash windows come in a wide style range and are easily matched to exterior decor. Popular styles include:

- Double-hungs, which operate vertically. Found in most homes, they're adaptable to any architecture.

- Casements, which are hinged at one side, open like a door. They give good visibility and ventilation, are easy to reach and operate, especially above sinks and countertops, and have a contemporary look.

- Both bows, which are convex, and bays, straight in the middle and angled at each end, have a gracious look and generous glass areas. Used with removable

multipane grilles, they are "de rigueur" for Early American homes.

- Sliders, which operate horizontally, create a dramatic glass wall effect when used in series. Sliding glass doors combine wide visibility with handy access to patios and decks.

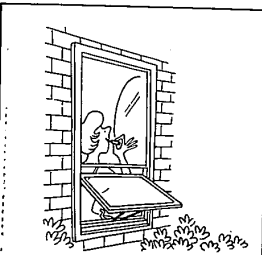
- Awnings, which open out and up, and hoppers, in and down, offer unlimited views, adjustable ventilation, and contemporary design when stacked or installed in series.

Used with fixed-sash, they provide air flow for picture windows.

Wood windows add substance to style with preservative-treated sash, factory-applied weatherstripping and optional double-pane insulating glass or storm panels.

Their energy-efficiency reduces heat loss and reduces condensation. Wood sash can be stained to enhance the natural grain or painted to blend with decorating schemes.

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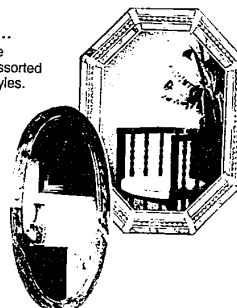
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