

From Stroud, with love

Though once a little unloved, with leaking Cotswold stone roof and freezing-cold annexe, the Daniells' Arts & Crafts house is now a much-adored family home

WORDS: Victoria Jenkins ♦ PHOTOS: William Goddard

With two very young boys, Sarah and Philip Daniell wanted a house with large rooms and a large garden – “which would also be suitable for a dog,” says Sarah. They found just what they wanted in an Arts & Crafts house near Stroud which offered panoramic views over Minchinhampton and Rodborough Common yet was in a tucked away position.

“It was built in 1895 – and we’ve always preferred old properties,” she continues. “Plus, there was lots of room for improvement and we’ve always liked to take on a house and put our stamp on it.”

They particularly liked the off-centre fireplaces (typically A & C), the painted wood panelling on the walls and ceilings downstairs and the plaster gargoyle decorations.

So, the couple decided to buy the house, despite the many single-glazed windows, dark William Morris wallpaper in the hall, clashing colours in the sitting room and the tiny 50-centimetre-wide cooker in the kitchen. This was 11 years ago, and the two boys Thomas and Mark are now 14 and 12, respectively. (There’s also a retriever called Lily!)

The house was actually half of a much bigger house, designed by architect Percy Richard Morley Horder for a Victorian mill owner, Ebenezer Evans. Then, in the 1960s, it had been divided into two.

“When we saw our half, it had only three bedrooms but came with a 1960s flat-roofed annexe behind the house, consisting of a storeroom with study below and apartment above,” says Sarah. “Apparently this annexe had been built on the site of the

LEFT: Sarah rescued the mahogany board room table (which seats 12) and chairs from a businessman who was planning to burn them. She got them in exchange for treating him and his wife to a dinner out. The dinner plate is one of a number in a 1940s Pareek design by Johnson Brothers which Sarah inherited from her parents, and, she says, they might have inherited them in turn from one set of grandparents



ABOVE: The sitting room: designer Susan Hesp painted the walls and ceiling in 'Portland Stone' by Little Greene. The sofas and cushions are from Laura Ashley
BELOW LEFT: The original window seat, dating from c.1905, with its decoration of Arts & Crafts plaster gargoyles. The curtains are 'Silver Birch' by Laura Ashley

'Despite the tiny oven, I'd managed to cook family meals on it for years, including for 35 people for my father's 90th birthday'



old servants' quarters. An old lady had lived in the house before the previous owners and had let out the apartment to another elderly friend. I don't know how this second lady had coped as the walls were single-skinned, there was no insulation at all and only night storage heaters to keep it warm – which they didn't." But upon moving in, the family then discovered a few more glitches, some rather more major than others. "Quite a lot of water was leaking into a room at the side of the house and we discovered then that Cotswold stone tiles – however charming on a roof – cost a huge amount of money when it comes to repairing and replacing them," says Sarah. "Because of these unexpected costs we had to put off various other improvements for quite a while."

Yet another glitch had to be fixed as soon as possible. "For some reason the banister spindles on the landing were so widely spaced that a small child could have easily fallen through them, especially two little boys, then aged two and one," she explains. "We had to put chicken wire up there for a while until a carpenter could build extra spindles for us." Another glitch also had to be sorted out quickly. This was the annexe itself. "It was sealed off from the main house but, because we didn't want the pipes to freeze during that first terrible winter, we switched on the night storage heaters in it to run full-time," says Sarah. "We ended up with a horrendous electricity bill and an annexe which still felt chilly. So, we knew that had to be tackled next."



ABOVE: Last year the couple splashed out on a new handmade Shaker-style kitchen, hand-painted in Little Greene's 'Portland Stone' and 'Stock', made by Woodchester Cabinet Makers. The granite worktops and splashback are 'Kinawa Bianco' from Bristol Granite & Marble. The limestone floor came from Rock & Wood
BELOW LEFT: The mahogany bureau, bought from an antique shop years ago, now holds the family's crystal and glassware

'We had to put chicken wire up for a while until a carpenter could build extra banister spindles for us'



New insulation was inserted onto the walls and roof and the rooms reconfigured. "The old sitting room became a bedroom, the hallway became a shower room and the kitchen became a hall," says Sarah. "We changed the metal single-glazed windows into timber-framed ones of double glazing, rewired it and extended the gas central heating into it then completely redecorated. Then we opened up the doorway between the two dwellings so we now have a five-bedroom house with two bathrooms, a shower room and two cloakrooms, one upstairs." They also asked a company called Ark Stained Glass to repair some of the original (but now cracked) mullioned windows in the main house and a stained-glass window in the hall. "It had several broken panes and a hole in one that the wind really

blew through," she says. "This stained glass, which shows a heart, was put in by a previous owner for his wife," she continues. "He had built on an extension in 1905 comprising the hallway, sitting room and bedroom and bathroom above; it was a romantic gift of love to her and this heart, together with another heart on the living room fireplace, commemorates it." Then last year the couple felt they could make some more improvements, starting with the kitchen. "Despite the tiny oven, I'd managed to cook family meals on it for years, including for 35 people for my father's 90th birthday," says Sarah. "But now as a complete contrast I have two Neff ovens and a very wide Smeg hob." Sarah asked Woodchester Cabinet Makers to hand-make and instal her new



ABOVE: Main bedroom: designer Susan Hesp painted the walls in Little Greene’s ‘Pearl Colour Mid’. The antique bed came from Victorian Dreams in Farnham
LEFT: The Daniells’ house, which is to the left of the dividing stone garden wall, shows many Arts & Crafts features, such as the mock-Tudor half timbering, and the terracotta tiles in the gables
BELOW LEFT: Sarah, who works as a staff tutor for the Open University

Shaker cabinets and granite worktops. But first she changed the flooring to one of stone tiles. “Woodchester Cabinet makers also made some beautiful built-in cupboards in the living room to complement the design and theme of the new kitchen,” she says. “At the same time, we also had Sue Hesp’s painting and decorating company to decorate the sitting room, hall, kitchen, utility, our bedroom, bathroom and also to refurbish with tiles the boys’ cloakroom and bathroom,”

She finishes, “We are delighted with the house as it is now, although I already have another small project in mind – definitely my sons’ room! The house and garden are wonderfully spacious and ideal for holding big family gatherings – when allowed! It has

a warm yet calm feeling, which is really what we were aiming for with our neutral palate of creams, greys, blues and greens. It’s a perfect home to relax in as a family.” ♦

ADDRESS BOOK

- Alternative plumbing and heating solutions (Bill Parnham-Cope)
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- Ark Stained Glass, 01981 540 330,
arkstainedglass.co.uk
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- Nick Layton Electrical Services,
01453 763183
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- Rock and Wood (Jaime Robbins)
rockandwoodinteriors.com
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- Steve Mills Roofing, 01453 825699,
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- Susan Hesp & Morgane Chapman,
07875 133220, susanhesp.co.uk
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- Woodchester Cabinet Makers,
01453 835580,
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