

AUGUST 2013

BEST OF MONTEREY BAY

Real Estate GUIDE



MONTEREY COUNTY
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Madly Mid-Century

An eco-minded couple seeks—and finds—family friendly modernism in Carmel.

Carmel has a rich history of mid-century modern architecture, those low-slung, lean and clean homes known for their use of glass, rich woods and built-ins—and for leaking like sieves and not necessarily having enough space for modern family life.

What Carmel didn't have, though, was a rich history of preserving these beauties. Instead, says prominent local architect Mary Ann Schicketanz of Studio Schicketanz at Carver + Schicketanz Architects, many were relegated to the scrap heap.

"We lost a lot of them because people weren't appreciating them and they were being torn down," she says. "But they usually have great layouts, with lots of natural light provided by clerestories and skylights."

Carmel Mayor and eco-businessman Jason Burnett and his wife, Melissa Mileff Burnett, who trained as an architect, knew they were attracted to mid-century homes when they moved back here from Washington, D.C. And they knew they wanted their home to reach the highest level of energy efficiency.

"I wanted something architecturally interesting and this region is the birthplace of that type of architecture," Mel Burnett says. "This house had good bones and I was able to imagine the possibilities."

Schicketanz says she loves stripping down architecture to its essentials and bringing it into the 21st century: "In this case we had to be really creative to give the family as much space as possible, within the existing box."

That existing box was 1,843 square feet, built in 1965, and without enough space for the Burnetts to expand their family. (Toddler Sebastian came along in 2011.) Architects have a knack for being supremely clever about repurposing what's already there, so Schicketanz removed one bay of the existing two-car garage to create a third bedroom and add better circulation to the floorplan.

Schicketanz found extra outdoor space for the family by building a rooftop patio, where garden boxes provide herbs and vegetables. A retractable roof over the dining room offers up the feeling of even more indoor-outdoor space.

(Left) The original tub-shower combo in the master bathroom was replaced by a glass stall with a rain showerhead. The window, once hidden behind a textured glass shower door, now lets light into the room throughout the day.

(Right) An outdated skylight situated over the dining area was replaced with a retractable glass roof.



A large island divides the kitchen from the dining and living areas, houses appliances on the kitchen side and the TV on the living-room side.

(Above) Horticulturalist Fred Ballerini replaced non-native plants with native, drought-resistant varieties in the newly added entry court.



The comfort of the home was improved with the addition of dual-glazed windows, cementitious siding, hydronic heat and newly insulated walls and roof. These changes along with the addition of a solar-energy system helped realize substantial energy savings—and resulted in Carmel’s first platinum-certified project under the U.S. Green Building Council’s LEED program.

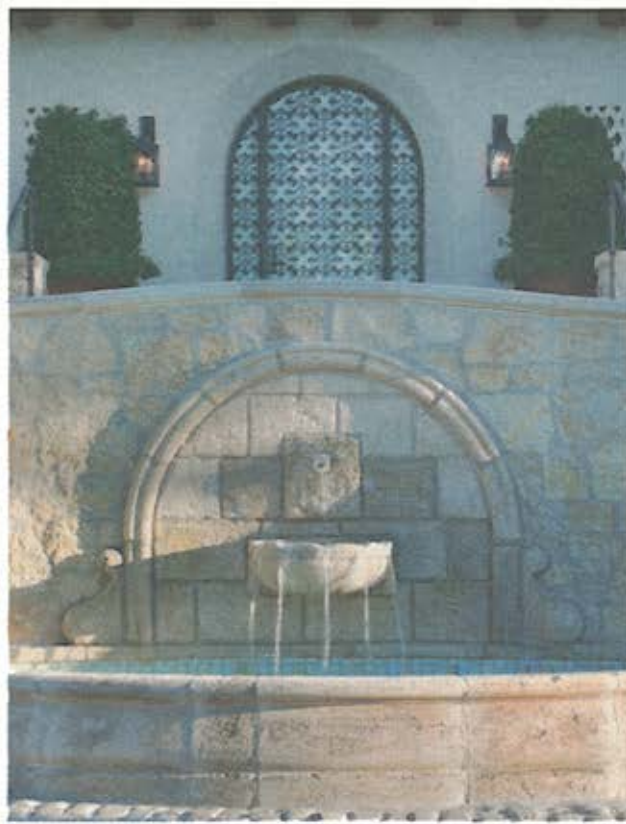
Schicketanz says while she hasn’t had a second mid-century remodel land on her desk since completing the Burnetts’ project, people are asking questions.

“There is much more interest. People are willing to ask about them and listen to how these can become good homes,” she says. “They are much under-appreciated pieces of architecture.” ✪



The rooftop deck was extended over the kitchen, adding a seating area and herb garden.

Framed by painted brick, beam ceilings and white hipoxy floors, the aged fir walls are a standout classic of mid-century aesthetics.



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