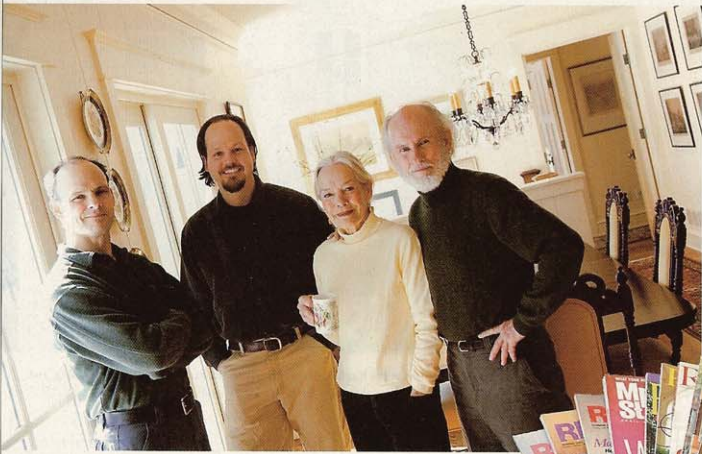


Quality Time

A MINNEAPOLIS COUPLE'S QUEST TO BE WITH FAMILY LEADS TO A PASSION FOR RENOVATING HOMES WITH CREATIVITY AND CARE.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY STEPHANIE COLGAN



● Camilla and Terry Hughes' home—the 30th of their own that they're renovated or built—features a dining room with French doors that look onto a pond. Here, sons Terry Jr. and Tim join the couple.

● The Hughes' work has been the focus of 20 magazine articles, most national.

Albums and magazines fill the shelves of Camilla and Terry Hughes' Edina home office with nearly three decades' worth of personal notes, project photos, and plans. The couple ponder over the pages, noting the "interesting bungalow" on Kenilworth Place, the "classic colonial" on Franklin, the "great Victorian" on Irving.

This timeline of renovation "befores" and "afters" goes back 27 years, when the couple decided to leave their jobs (Terry worked in graphic design, Camilla was with a women's apparel line) and start something new. "We wanted to find a way to work together and be with the kids more," Terry says.

What began with renovating a home near Lake Calhoun became their work—and way of life. "Every time we'd finish a house, we'd get excited about the next one," Terry says. "Each house was a graduate course. Living through

the renovations ourselves gave us a little bit of a different perspective than when you do it for someone else."

Renovating their own homes also gave the couple the opportunity to work with their sons, Tim and Terry Jr. "I was in about the fourth grade when they dropped out of what they were doing and started building houses," Tim says. "I always thought it was neat my folks were around and weren't the typical nine-to-fivers, even though we lived in some pretty precarious situations."

Nonetheless, the number of renovations grew, as did the couple's reputation for quality work. As full-time house "flippers," long before the term came into popular use—and with it, the stigma sometimes associated with fixing up homes for quick profit—they did eight of their own homes before agreeing to take

on jobs for others. "Getting to know the people, that's our favorite part of the process," Camilla says of working for clients. "It's so rewarding to help them figure out their views for the future and how their houses might fit for their families."

Collaborating with Lee Meyer Architects of St. Paul and a family of subcontractors, the couple's work has drawn attention from local and national publications, landing some 20 articles in such magazines as *Better Homes and Gardens*, *Renovation Style*, *Old Home Renovation*, and *Mpls.St.Paul*.



● Attention to detail brings coziness to the Hughes' living room, from the exquisite millwork, paneling, and built-ins—all painted a warm white—to the cabinet hardware and leaded-glass cabinet doors.

Terry and Camilla recently wrapped up what they call a California cottage in Edina that features butted-board paneling (where boards in various widths are butted together in random patterns) and "millwork details more typical of an older city home," Terry says. It's the thirtieth house of

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their own that they've worked on. "Because we've lived in most of them, we've learned the value of what can be done," Terry says. Camilla agrees. "Our creative selves have grown through living in each one of these houses and experiencing all we did," she says.

Sons Tim and Terry Jr. now work side by side with their parents at what's grown into the family's firm, The House Dressing Company. Tim

lives with his family in an Orono home with charming Arts and Crafts details, the ninth home he has renovated.

"Terry Jr. is a different breed of cat," Terry says. "He's lived in the same house with his family his whole life."

Still, the two generations have seen a constant flow of work that's moved to the next generation: the children of former clients. And the four of them just might be getting ready to bring on the next batch of Hugheses: Oscar, 9; Henry, 8; Oliver, 6; Truman, 5; Frannie, 3; and Finnegan, 1. "They're still pretty young, but I know they love coming along to different job sites," Tim says. "We were just talking about this the other day, about how neat it will be that they have this option when they're out of college, that we could pass this along to the next generation as well." ■

The House Dressing Company, Edina, 952-920-8301, housedressingcompany.com