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Builder

BUILDER'S CHOICE 2012

**Indoor/outdoor connections create
award-winning homes for all seasons.**

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hanley
wood

DETAILS

Step Lively

A cut-out stair rail adds shape and dimension with a light touch.

The original home was like a barracks," recalls architect Jacob Albert of the site, with its falling-down house that resembled a 1960s motor lodge, plus a few charming but run-down old farm sheds. The house had to be torn down, but the sheds remained: The spaces between them and the house site formed appealing courtyard spots worth keeping. The aim, says Albert, was to make a new home "that didn't look like it was trying to be some old farm house." The end result was a home with a rambling, relaxed quality, and one that incorporated the refurbished sheds, which are linked to the new house and serve as garage, workshop, storage, and hangout.

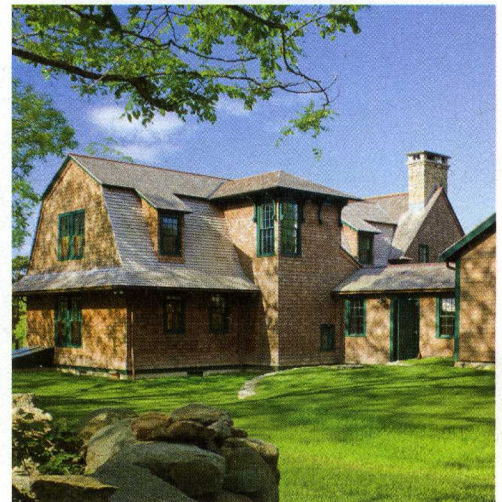
The house wears its influences well: The shingles say eastern seacoast, and the gambrel roof is a reminder that a farm was once here. There's an Arts and Crafts influence, too, with oversized roof brackets that add a playful flourish and details such as the staircase that's built in a tower the same height as the rest of the house. On the inside, corner windows let light pour into the stairwell while wainscoting adds depth and definition. The stair rail is made of poplar, a hard wood that takes paint well. The rail's cutouts add lightness and help daylight travel through the stairwell. It's also a simple way of giving dimension and gracefulness to a staircase without the kind of elaborate carving you'd find in a more formal house. The interior actually has a fair bit of wood trim, but like the stair rail, it's all accomplished with an impressively light hand. — AMY ALBERT



Project River Point House, South Coast, Mass.

Architect Albert, Righter & Tittman, Boston

Builder Roger Wilkie Builder, Tiverton, R.I.



Photos: Robert Brewster/Warren Jagger Photography



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