

BEFORE



Front foyer



Kitchen

Elbow room

AFTER



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Bumping elbows at the dinner table was getting a bit tiresome for Rick and Kim Craig, not to mention jostling with two growing teenage bodies in the apartment-size kitchen and forgoing a pleasant dining experience with guests.

"We'd have people over, but to make dinner and try to get them even fed was almost impossible. It was too small," says Kim, a 40-year-old lab technician.

Yet with its multi-paned living room window, this 1950s Parkview bungalow was one of the most attractive on the street. The neighbourhood evoked pleasant childhood memories for Rick,

45, the operational supervisor for the city's disabled adult transportation system.

But back in the 1960s, Rick grew up a long bomb football pass down the sidewalk, in another bungalow where his dad still lives today.

So, while moving was considered, the thought didn't last long. But the couple still were uncertain about how to solve the quandary of their small kitchen and dining area.

Nevertheless, with old jeans, safety goggles and work gloves, the professional couple tried getting down on their hands and knees and hammering away at the old ceramic tile floor.

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CHRIS SCHWARZ,
THE JOURNAL

Rick and Kim Craig first tried to do their own renovating, but later opted for professional help. They are shown here in the remodelled kitchen of their Parkview home.

Renovations unified the look of the home



CHRIS SCHWARZ, THE JOURNAL

Rick and Kim Craig in their living room, where a built-in cabinet was removed and the floor matched with recycled hardwood.

BEFORE & AFTER

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It was a lot tougher than it looked, so hard that Rick has instant crystal recall of the task to this day, describing it clearly in words not suited to the pages of a family newspaper.

Renovators came and renovators went. Some suggested expanding the kitchen by using part of the living room, but that idea quickly landed in the dumpster.

All the renovators failed to provide a satisfactory answer, until they ran into Cal Tebb, owner of Home Style Construction Ltd.

Tebb had been working the older west-end neighbourhoods for some time, and word of his work preceded him. His plan was to expand the kitchen with a nine by 20-foot addition into the back yard, and realign the cottage-style roof to accommodate the expansion naturally.

"I was able to convince them to put an addition on the house. They wanted to make it bigger without making it bigger," he recalls.

Rick wanted it done right.

"We saw some jobs where, for a short period of time, structurally everything looks good, but after a period of time you get settling and movement," he says.

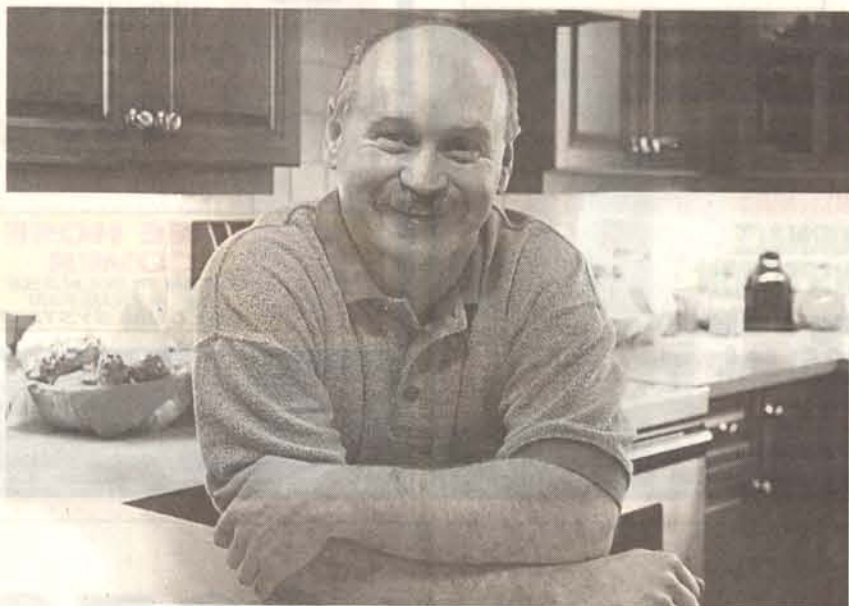
Right was sinking 12-inch diameter piles 12 feet into the ground, surrounded by a structural concrete wall that is two feet high and eight inches thick. It meant a BobCat and hammer first, to remove the original concrete patio that has since been replaced with dark-tinted and sculpted concrete.

Inside, to create a 20-foot wide kitchen, Tebb had to move an inside wall three feet over. That, and the addition of an ensuite three-piece bathroom for the master bedroom, meant knocking out one of the bedrooms along that side of the house. Walls were removed, windows juggled, and a new master bedroom with whirlpool tub ensuite was created.

Slate flooring with a natural mixture of greys, greens, rusts and earth tones, was laid down in the kitchen and dining areas with a matching patch at the bright and airy front entry.

"There's not a day that goes by when we don't really appreciate the look of the slate, the different colours, different light. It really shows nice," Rick says.

The Craigs loved Tebb's ideas. The idea of letting go of the donkey work and going back to their own office work wasn't too hard to swallow either. And now, three years after the job was completed, the \$100,000 price tag doesn't



CHRIS SCHWARZ, THE JOURNAL

Renovator Cal Tebb convinced the Craigs to put on an addition.

look so bad after all.

Tebb said he wanted to see continuity in the house, with similar colours and textures everywhere, so it looked like the project was done as a whole.

"I had to up-sell Rick and Kim to convince them that we should continue the theme throughout. A perfect example would be where we put slate in the front entry and tied the areas together," he says.

So the project entailed all sorts of details to unify the look of the home, like baseboards, hardwood and paint, so that when people walked in the main door, there was basically a new house on the main floor.

The Craigs liked his ideas so much, they let Tebb design the kitchen. He came up with cherry-coloured cabinetry, accented with handmade tiles.

The same cabinet styles were continued in the ensuite.

They chose to emulate the look of dark reddish wood and natural flooring from the traditional decor of mountain lodges and log cabin getaways, one of their favourite haunts.

"Our favourite place to be is actually in the mountains, and when we went to places like that we kind of looked at the way they were decorating. It was kind of similar to this, with slate and the wood," Kim says.

Hardwood flooring was salvaged to lay into a hole in the floor exposed when a cabinet was torn out. The kitchen bay window, a recent addition, was also recycled and put back into place on the extended kitchen.

Tebb also helped with the installation of another natural gas fireplace in the basement rec room, providing even

more usable space for family gatherings.

He suggested rewiring the furnace room and moving the extra fridge and freezer in there. That freed up more space downstairs and the couple created a fitness room.

"Overall, we use the space a lot more efficiently in this house now, so it has the illusion of being bigger. It's more usable," Rick says.

Tebb says his customers are happy because he adheres to a philosophy of using few subtrades. "I find that having quality in-house staff allows me to schedule my jobs a lot better and control the quality on the job site," he says.

The Craigs' pride in the job remains evident. So if they had to do it over again, what would they do differently?

Well, the house did grow from 1,280 square feet to 1,450 square feet, but in their desire to stay on budget, they failed to push out the walls in the master bedroom. As a result, despite the upgrades to the master bedroom, there's not a lot of space.

"It's exactly the same size as it was before. It's quite tiny, but it's functional ... I suppose if we were to do it again, maybe we would have continued with the extension maybe all the way along the back," Kim says.

So what do they like the most about this job?

"It would have to be the improvement in the lifestyle as far as the kitchen goes. We just really love this, especially being able to entertain and have people over. Before, it was such a difficult thing to do."

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