

Mobile Celebrates Its 300th Birthday

Southern Living[®]

FEBRUARY 2002

A Look Inside

The South's Best Houses

Winners of Our
Annual Southern
Home Awards

Quick & Easy:
Cinnamon Rolls,
Scones, &
Muffins

New and Nifty
African Violets

Weeknight
One-Dish
Dinners



At Home With Nature

This new house embraces its land in North Texas.



A series of sliding fir doors on either end of the central living space can be opened for entertaining or closed to create a more intimate atmosphere.

Henry David Thoreau wrote in *Walden*, “I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life, and see if I could not learn what it had to teach, and not, when I came to die, discover that I had not lived.”

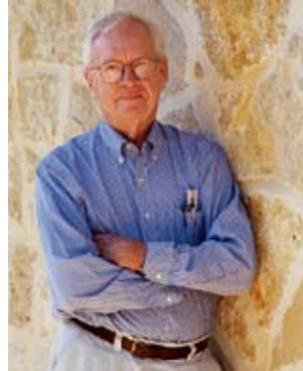
Though it may not be the sparse space Thoreau celebrated in his classic work, these Texans have, in the construction of their new home, embraced life in the woods—literally. And I think he would approve. In fact, their new home, built on a 3,000-acre wildlife preserve and situated on the highest point of the North Texas site, is known simply as “The Woods.”

Bringing the Outdoors In

This design team has created a home that embraces its environs. The area is a remote one; snakes, spiders, and scorpions abound. But just as the land, materials, architecture, and decor reflect nature, the owners have found ways to live with their animal neighbors. In fact, whimsical plastic bugs within the home playfully peek around corners as if to



Frank Welch, architect



WHY IT WON

Wonderful architecture, interesting use of materials, and a unique floor plan made this home a winner in our new home category. Here's what the judges had to say.

■ “Exciting main living spaces express the materials and textures used throughout this project.”

Eric Watson, AIA

■ “I love the stark simplicity of this house.”

Joan Fabry, AIA

■ “It has a good integration of contemporary interior and traditional exterior—an extraordinary use of natural light.”

Gordon Wittenberg, AIA

remind the couple of what lurks outside.

Though they may approach these creatures with a sense of humor, this is a serious house. The architecture and interior design are clean and sophisticated and punctuated with details not often seen in residential construction.

Natural materials used both inside and out ensure that the home's appearance is not at all fussy. “The primary supporting walls of the home are solid native masonry accentuated by corrugated zinc panels,” says architect Frank Welch. “The roof is zinc, the interior floors are concrete, and the terraces' flooring is Oklahoma flagstone.”

Frank's Favorite

Minimal, honest details abound throughout this structure. “One of my favorite things about the home is the central living



Time Well Spent

In the interiors natural colors and fibers echo the outdoors as well. Dallas designer Punkin Peterson Power worked with the owners to ensure that the home's decor is at once stylish, comfortable, and forgiving. The durable yet attractive fabrics are perfect for three big dogs and a house that is often full of people.

Plan for Privacy

Two-story wings on either side seem to sprout from the central space—a master bedroom is located above the kitchen at one end, with secondary bedrooms and a guest suite occupying the other. Sliding track doors on either end of the living space can be closed for privacy.

“The plan was developed into discrete sections to provide privacy for the owners, their children, and guests. But these areas are connected by a central gathering spot,” Frank explains. The long linear design helps take advantage of views.

What They Were Looking For

“Ultimately we wanted a retreat that would be comfortable, durable, low maintenance, and aesthetically pleasing,” say the owners. “It was important to convey these goals with a simple design and enduring materials—and by openly displaying the mechanics of the structure.”

The result is a delightful plan—one full of surprises (scorpions and all), and one that will stand up to time and any weather this North Texas clime has to offer. The home is a testament to good design and architecture, and it can be expected to endure for generations.

“We think John Ruskin best expressed our hopes,” say the owners. “He wrote, ‘Let it not be for present delight, nor for present use alone; let it be such work as our descendants will thank us for.’”

Alicia K. Clavell



PHOTOGRAPHS: JEAN ALLSOPP / STYLING: LISA POWELL

above, left: This pergola is a favorite gathering spot for friends and family. above: Skylights and sliding glass doors flood the central gallery with light. A progression of trusses guides your eye through the living room and into the kitchen.

space [called a gallery],” says the architect. And it's not hard to see why. The room, like the house, is a feast for the eyes. Mossy green beams overhead lead your eye through a mixture of glass, stone, and light to the view outside of the sliding glass doors. The exposed steel trusses and simple planes create an element of surprise when mixed with natural light.