

Charlotte

DECEMBER 2020

# HOME

DESIGN & DECOR®

## GREAT *Gatherings*

**PLUS:**  
TABLETOP  
CURIOSITIES

DESIGN  
ON A DIME



The kitchen, which the homeowner worked on with Kurt Lovekamp and Karen Kettler, who assisted, was already completed when interior designer Lane Brown came on board. The lanterns are from Circa Lighting. The tile is from Walker Zanger, and the countertops were sourced by Harkey Tile and Stone.



# TIME *to* TRANSITION

THE RIGHT DESIGNER WITH THE RIGHT EYE PUSHED  
ONE FAMILY OUT OF THEIR TRADITIONAL COMFORT  
ZONES AND INTO AN AESTHETIC THAT FELT JUST  
RIGHT FOR THEIR FAMILY OF SEVEN.





Brown modernized the look of the den by removing the homeowner's smaller-scale antique chairs. By adding larger-scale pieces such as the Highland House daybed in front of the fireplace, Brown made the room feel larger and more spacious. **OPPOSITE:** The sunroom is a walkthrough from the backyard into the den. As a high-traffic area, the space needed a streamlined pathway, which Brown achieved by stripping away extra seating and adding a pair of chairs and a bench, both by Highland House.



Day Johnson was conflicted. The aesthetic of her Myers Park cottage had always skewed traditional. The home was filled with antiques and family heirlooms passed down from her mother, an avid antique collector. But as the years went by, it became apparent to Johnson that while she'd grown up in an ultra-traditional home filled with antiques from all over the world, what she really wanted was an interior that was more transitional and livable for her family of seven. And less cluttered. "I didn't realize how many pieces I actually had until Lane came into the picture," Johnson says.

Interior designer Lane Brown met Johnson and her husband, Eric, in 2013. At the time, the couple and their five children had lived in their Myers Park home for five years. (Prior to meeting the designer, the Johnsons had renovated the kitchen, bathrooms, and other areas of the home with the help of general contractor Kurt Lovekamp.) Brown, a designer with Phoebe Howard, instantly connected with Johnson, who wanted to update the interiors of their home, beginning with their den. "She described her house

as being a little bit dated and needing a facelift," Brown says. But what the designer noticed was that while the antiques and family heirlooms were impressive, there were simply too many of them. "There were so many chairs," laughs Brown of the dozens of seating options in the family's den. "It's a large space, so it can accommodate a lot of furniture, but there were just too many small little things, so the scale was off."

Lane's priority was to create a more cohesive space that improved functionality and provided enough seating for the entire family. "Larger upholstery pieces that were to-scale helped streamline the den and make the room feel bigger," she says. "By scaling the seating and putting in some bigger-scale pieces, it instantly updated the room." The design process in the den was a balancing act—they kept some of Johnson's family antiques while also modernizing the space with new, more modern pieces. Along the same lines, the experience of working on the den was one in which Johnson began to trust Brown's design choices, which were outside of her traditional comfort zone. "I remember her showing me things at the beginning of designing the den and doubting her,"





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Johnson says. “Then, I started to see her choices and suggestions in places throughout the den and realized that she’s absolutely right.”

One such instance was the daybed in front of the fireplace. “I resisted her for the longest time on that,” laughs Johnson of the Highland House piece. Though placing the daybed in front of the fireplace was untraditional, Brown felt it was integral to opening up the entire den. “I thought it was a good selection because it helps open the space in front of the fireplace, and it gives the kids a nice place to curl up with a book.” The moment Johnson saw the daybed in place, she knew she could trust Brown to update the rest of the spaces in her home.

From there, Brown got to work on the adjacent sunroom, which serves not only as another sitting and entertaining space, but doubles as a walk-through from the backyard into



To soften and ultimately brighten the breakfast dining area, Brown complemented the Johnsons' existing heirloom antique dining table with upholstered dining chairs by Lee Industries. The oversized round mirror above the antique marble-top chest coupled with the artwork by artist Dorothy Shain naturally brighten the space.

**OPPOSITE:** The Jim Thompson wallpaper was the springboard for the powder room. Brown added the console sink by Kohler and the pendant light from Slate Interiors to make the room pop.





the den. “This is a high-traffic area, but Day had so much furniture here that it made it difficult to walk through,” says Brown of the original four large chairs and circular ottoman. “And with five kids and three dogs, that’s just not feasible.” Just as she had streamlined the antiques and extra seating in the den, Brown pared down the space with a pair of chairs and a small, rectangular bench, both by Highland House, swathed in Schumacher and Garrett Leather fabrics, respectively. “The sunroom is an extension of the den,

so eliminating some furniture really made the entire space look even bigger than it is because we eliminated a lot of small things,” Brown says.

Once the two developed more of a rapport and got into a rhythm, Brown began work on the room at the front of the home. “It was always a room Day wanted to have redesigned,” she says. Similar to the rest of the home, this small room felt cluttered and dated, with several small antiques taking up much of the space. “I wanted Day





The homeowner wanted a place to escape, so Brown designed the front reading room with a feminine touch. Blush-pink walls set the foundation for artwork by Caroline Boykin, purchased from Anne Neilson Fine Art, above the fireplace. A Lee Industries sofa with Highland House accent trim completes the sophisticated ladies' lounge. **OPPOSITE:** Brown took advantage of a small niche in the foyer to add a pop of color. Abstract artwork by artist Jenny Primm from Anne Irwin Fine Art in Atlanta sits above a console table by Global Views.



Brown kept the existing celadon wall color in the master bedroom because it was ultimately soothing and relaxing. She then softened the space with an upholstered headboard by Highland House and luxury bedding from Yves Delorme and Matouk. The bedside tables are by Chelsea House from Mrs. Howard and Max & Company. **OPPOSITE:** Upstairs, Brown designed a custom banquette swathed in a durable faux leather by Kravet and added Lucite chairs by Noir to complement the tulip table. A Roman shade in a Georgia Macmillan fabric and an Oly Studio chandelier create a whimsical feel to the space.





to have a room where she could escape the craziness of kids and life and dogs and just relax,” says the designer of the previously blue-and-white room. While Johnson was hesitant to change the paint color, when Brown recommended a pale blush pink, she trusted her. “Lane knew not to listen to me,” Johnson laughs.

“It was your typical small library,” Brown says. “It was a lot of little furniture. A little ottoman, little chairs, little sofa. A lot of hand-me-down furniture she didn’t know what to do with. And because it wasn’t comfortable or inviting, she never went in there.” By giving the room a facelift with the blush paint, removing the traditional wood mantle and replacing it with limestone, and adding updated

furniture and artwork by Caroline Boykin, sourced through Anne Neilson Fine Art, Brown transformed the room into a sophisticated but ultimately comfortable ladies’ lounge. “Now it’s one of my favorite rooms in the house,” Johnson says.

Today, Johnson laughs at her initial hesitation to pare down her beloved antiques and family heirlooms. She sees what Brown accomplished by repurposing them or coupling them with more modern, complementary pieces. “The more we did together, the more I began to trust her design choices,” Johnson says. “By the end, Lane really knew what I wanted and needed in our home. She really did get everything right.” ♦