

Ford was able to get 14 circa 1920s windows, with their trim and casings, plus half a dozen vintage doors, moldings and head trim, and green roof tiles that aren't made anymore.



This was an 850-square-foot bungalow prior to three years of extensive reconstruction.



Photos by Sergey Shayevich, The Arizona Daily Star

An area that had held a cramped kitchen, dining room and bedroom has become this spacious, modern kitchen plus a dining area.

Rescuing a 1925 bungalow

Renovation, expansion deliver modern home



Architect Bill Ford in his completely new studio

WHO DID WHAT

Some key contributors to the Ford-Leed project:

Architect and builder: William Ford

Construction foreman: Steve McKenna

Demolition/windows: Kinne Demolition and Excavation

Tile supplier: Dal Tile

Tile setters: Tom Bossart, main house; Keith Ramey, studio

By Thom Walker

The Arizona Daily Star

Home remodeling has been known to end marriages. For William Ford and Julie Ryan Leed, it was a beginning.

Shortly before their wedding in 1995, Ford and Leed launched a three-year renovation and expansion project that completely revamped their home.

Until then, the house had been a tiny, 1925 Spanish Colonial bungalow in Feldman's Neighborhood near the University of Arizona. Soon, it looked like the site of a bombing.

To make way for the expansion, the house's back wall had to be ripped out, along with several interior walls. The roof and every structural part of the building had to be propped up with timbers to keep the whole place from collapsing.

Leed and the couple's two children moved to a more habitable rented home a short distance away.

Ford, an architect, stayed on in the open wreck of a house. By day, he sweated through construction work on the bungalow. And late into the night, he sweated over clients' house plans to pay for the stream of bills from his own project.

He had the foresight to leave the kitchen sink and stove attached, so he could fix dinner for himself — once he'd cleared off all the dust and rubble.

"It would have been infinitely easier to just build a new house," Ford said.

But he and Leed had considered that option and rejected it. Ford grew up in

mitment to their bungalow and the inner city.

The only problem was, the house was too small — 850 square feet, with two bedrooms. The dining room measured 7-by-8 feet; for family gatherings, dinner had to be served either in the living room or out in the back yard.

There was a ramshackle guest house out behind the main house, in a low area subject to flooding. It was ready for demolition.

But the main house had many things going for it, despite its size. It had double brick walls, red oak floors and a great stone fireplace in the living room, perfect for toasting your feet on a cold morning.

The work on the main house began in February 1995. Ford and Leed got married the following May.

Over the next 21 months, Ford and a friend, Steve McKenna, added 830 square feet to the original house. The finish work took another 12 months.

Everybody pitched in. Leed said she and her daughter, Monica, now 17, did the "painting and schlepping and the sanding

and the painting and . . ."

Ford and Leed's son, Owen, (now 11), got the job of chiseling plaster off salvaged brick used in the project. Ford salvaged about 1,000 bricks from the demolition of the back wall.

Another 1,500 bricks came from the old Casa de los Niños building on Speedway, which was being torn down after the agency moved to a new location. That proved to be a great resource for

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Tile supplier: Dal Tile

Tile setters: Tom Bossart, main house; Keith Ramey, studio

Framer: Pete Ellison

Cast concrete planters: Randal A. Holm, Woodwork and Design (available at Ponderosa Cactus Inc., 1870 W. Wetmore Road)

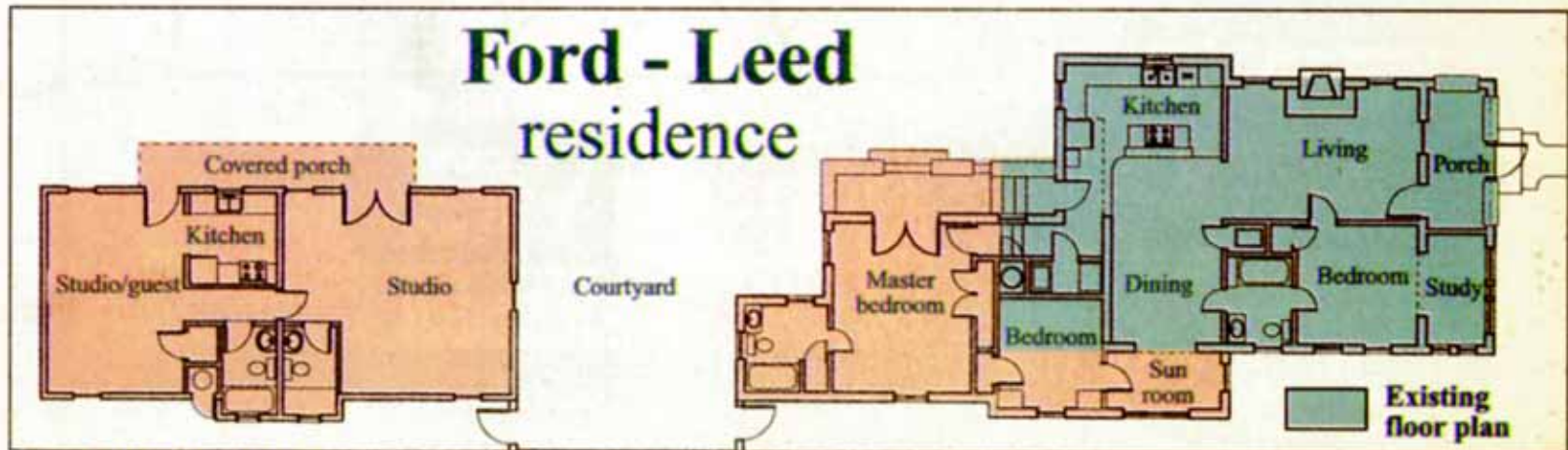
"It would have been infinitely easier to just build a new house," Ford said.

But he and Leed had considered that option and rejected it. Ford grew up in Boston and felt more at home in an urban environment. Leed is an artist with a wide range of interests, including theater and interior design. Both felt a strong com-

old Casa de los Niños building on Speedway, which was being torn down after the agency moved to a new location. That proved to be a great resource for Ford's project.

"I kind of made friends with the

See RESCUE, Page 14H



Source: Bill Ford, architect

The Arizona Daily Star

Rescue

Continued from Page 1H

demolition contractor (Frank Kinne)," Ford said. "He basically let me go out and pick up anything I needed."

As a result, Ford was able to get 14 circa 1920s windows, with their trim and casings, plus half a dozen vintage doors, moldings and head trim, and green roof tiles that aren't made anymore.

Getting the windows was a project in itself, Ford said. They were built into the brick walls of the old structure, and the only way to get them out was to carefully chip away the bricks around each window.

"They're easy to damage, and difficult to rebuild," Ford said of the double-hung windows.

At a salvage yard, the windows alone would have cost \$100 apiece, he added. He was able to get the windows, doors and everything else for \$300.

The 1920s material helped keep the additions to the home compatible with the original house - a major goal of the project. Ford also wanted to stay as close to 1925 construction methods as possible.

To match the original walls, he used 8-inch concrete block fired out to a foot thick. Then he threw the plaster on the walls by hand to give the irregular dashed finish of the old days, he said.

Feldman's Neighborhood residents have talked about seeking historic district designation similar to the West University Neighborhood's, Ford said. The neighborhood, bounded by Stone and Park avenues on the west and east and by Lee Street and Speedway on the north and south, was built in the 1920s.

"One of the fears about the district is that the costs will be too-high to meet the compatibili-



Sergey Shayevich, The Arizona Daily Star

Julie Ryan Leed relaxes in the home's remodeled living room

ty guidelines," Ford said. "I wanted to show people how you can build a compatible structure with historic intent for a low cost."

The cost of completely renovating and expanding the house was \$37,000, he said. Of course, his labor is not included in that number.

The major structural work took about a year. At that point, the family began moving back into the house - Owen first, then Leed and Monica.

It was far from finished, but the shape of the home's transformation was clear. The area that had held a cramped kitchen, dining room and bedroom had been turned into a spacious kitchen and dining area with a sun alcove.

There was now a bedroom for Owen and a study addition to Monica's room. Other additions included a laundry room, water

heater closet and furnace room for central heating and cooling.

And the best part: a master bedroom and bath with double doors opening onto a porch. Ford softened the porch with an arch matching the one in front of the house and a seat wall.

Some of the green tile from the Casa de los Niños building went on the porch roof.

Unfortunately, Ford and Leed couldn't enjoy their new bedroom right away. For a while, it had to serve as the office for Ford's architectural firm. Until a detached studio - the second phase of the project - was finished, the couple slept on a futon in their living room.

The studio, a 920-square-foot structure, was built where the old guest house stood.

Work began in March 1997 and was mostly finished by this past June.

In designing the studio, Ford tried to keep the look of the main house, in cost-effective ways. The exterior walls are frame construction, using 2-by-6 recycled studs fired out to 8 inches. Inch-thick plaster and handmade windowsills help give the studio an "old" look.

Ford also used contemporary material such as white aluminum windows to match the look of the main house, while holding down costs. He subcontracted most of the major work on the studio to moonlighting professionals.

Half the studio is Ford's office; the other half is an art studio for Leed, which can double as a guest room, with a full kitchen.

The studio's cost: \$31,000, bringing the total for the project to \$68,000. The property was appraised in 1994 at \$64,000. An appraisal this year put its value at \$160,000.