



*This Dresden home built in 1925 was updated while keeping the original spirit intact.*

# Family home finds new life through renovation

Stacie and Mike Freeman took on renovating Stacie’s family home in Dresden and the result is an inviting space that blends contemporary conveniences with “character and cubbyholes.” Check out what their experience was like in this brief Q&A with Stacie who serves as the director of Global Studies at Bethel University and the executive director of the nonprofit Bright Light Volunteers.

Q: How long did the restoration take?

A: We’re still working on it, but less than one year to get the major projects completed.

Q: Who did it?

A: Vancleave Construction

Q: Was this your family home? If so, when was it built and how long had it been empty before you started your renovations?

A: Sort of. I have always been told that my great grandfather was one of the builders of the home back in 1925. The home was originally built for the McCuan’s. The Drerup family (my family) purchased it from the McCuan family in 1979-1980 range. Our family moved in at that time.

Q: What were your intentions -- to keep the integrity, to modernize, etc.?

A: Both. I love the oak hardwood floors, rolled glass

windows, swinging kitchen door, and crystal doorknobs. But that popcorn ceiling and sparkling wallpaper my parents installed in the 70’s -80’s had to go. So, I tore that out and replaced it all with a thin layer of sheet rock. I also updated the kitchen and bathrooms. As i was growing up in the house we had a claw foot tub. When I returned to the home in 2008 it was gone. We replaced that in the front bath and installed a walk-in, stone, rain shower in the second.

Q: What were unanticipated challenges in doing the renovations?

A: When I purchased it from the Drerups in 2008, the en-

tire house needed a complete overhaul. Rewired, replumbed, reroofed, exterior painted, windows restored, new HVAC, refinished hardwood, new storm windows, gutters, landscaping etc. (It had been rental property for 20 years so you can imagine.) It was like a complete rebuild. None of this was unanticipated. The “big stuff,” we saw coming. It was the little things like getting a call one day at work from the Vancleaves, “We found a chimney in your master bath, what do you want us to do with it?” Me: What? Where’s the fireplace??? And having to make split second decisions ...

Q: What would you advise

other DIY-ers regarding such a project?

A: Be patient, get the right folks on the job (highly recommend the Vancleaves). Do it right the first time!

Q: Anything else you want to add?

A: Just that restoring my old house is one of my life’s great joys. I’ve seen lots of beautiful places in my travels, but nothing compares to home. Pulling into that driveway - after a long day at work or week of international service - under those old maple trees to my little house. To me, it is the most beautiful place on earth. My heart and soul find peace there.



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