

SOUTHPORT JEWEL

HISTORIC HOME WITH MODERN FLAIR



DRAMATIC ENTRY
Designer Ken Gemes dotted the home with black-and-white combinations in the hallways and entry. The cowhide Greek key rug is from Madisons Inc., and a nod to the classic Greek revival style of the home.



YOU KNOW THE EXPRESSION, “If these walls could talk ...” Well, at the historic Greek revival masterpiece at 89 Westway, a stone’s throw from Southport Harbor, I imagine these particular 19th-century walls would have terrific stories to tell. This house is a key dwelling that makes up the Southport Historic District, which was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1971. Many of us admire the majestic beauty of the area, but few know why it looks like this. Between the 1830s and 1880s, the harbor fostered a community of great wealth and prosperity when sea captains were its primary residents. Southport became an enclave for the wealthy (and of course still is today) whose interests were in shipping here and elsewhere. One such man was Captain Edwin Sherwood who built this stunning home, celebrating what was au courant at the time—the Greek Revival style of architecture, considered to be a subset of the larger Neoclassical period. Greek Revival became the dominant style in America between 1820-1850. It was consequently referred to as the “national style” due to its popularity. Another famous owner of the home, Michael Weatherly, Sr. was the first to import Swiss Army knives into the US and became quite prosperous from that endeavor.

DESIGN CHALLENGES Games divided the rectangular living room into two separate seating areas. At one end of the living room, a Southport Galleries abstract painting by Katy Ferraone hangs above a Made Goods cabinet. The Hickory Chair armchairs are in a soft teal blue Zimmer + Rohde fabric. In the kitchen, Century Furniture bar stools in a Donghia fabric mesh with the stainless-steel-topped island.





ENTERTAINING SPACE The custom dining room table is ideal for dinner parties. The allée of Hornbeam trees on either side of the pool add elegance and privacy. The carriage house was a throwback with its white wainscoting and beams. The blue and green that you see when looking out the Palladian window was the inspiration for the navy and white with accents in aqua and teal. Gemes also used an indoor/outdoor rug in a blue diamond stripe pattern from Dash and Albert.



The latest owners of Westway, Catherine and Jim Keating, adore the home as much as any of its previous caretakers, and maybe even a little bit more, as they value every aspect of the home—its history, location, and design—inside and out. The Keatings live in New York City and weren't all that familiar with Southport until they came upon it while home-searching with their dear friend and trusted agent, Rachel Walsh of William Pitt Sotheby's in New Canaan.

"We immediately loved the feel of the historic district of Southport," says Jim Keating. "The older homes are so beautiful and we knew there would be no danger of the house next door being torn down so that a giant, new house could be built in its place. In the other towns, it was hard to find pretty older homes and, if we did, they were often surrounded by much bigger, newer homes that were not our style." The home immediately appealed to them. "The Keatings looked in four towns and ended up falling in love with this house and with Southport" says Walsh. One of their favorite things overall is that the view out of every window is stunning because it is of another beautiful historic home. "We have always owned older homes built in the 1920s or earlier," explains Keating. They also treasure the walkability of Southport, being able to go the local restaurants, the Pequot Library, and Equinox.

"This is the most special house we've ever owned," says Keating. The couple appreciate the balance of historic charm and detail with modern amenities. The home is also perfectly suited for guests and entertaining. "The bedrooms here are all en suite and all occupy their own space in the home," says Keating. For their grown children and all of the guests they have there, it ensures spaces for everyone



SERENE ESCAPE Games combined mossy greens with blues to create a soft palette for this bedroom. The upholstered bed is flanked by curtains from Studio B for Jim Thompson. A white onyx round mirror sits above a Hollywood regency inspired desk from Bungalow 5, with a pale green desk chair from Hickory Chair. The club chair and ottoman in the pale green fabric provide the perfect place to read.



to have their own private time if they so wish. One of the few homes in the Southport historic district to have both a pool and a carriage house, the property is currently for sale with Rachel Walsh of William Pitt Sotheby's International Realty. This period structure is a favorite spot on the property for the Keatings. "We often gather in the carriage house with family and friends for games and movies. Both of our children bring their friends out from the city often and they spend more time in the carriage house than in the house."

For the interior design, the Keatings reached out to their friend of 15 years, Ken Gemes of Bronxville, New York, who has collaborated with them on design for their other homes. "Ken is our friend and a very talented designer. He assisted us with major renovation/design projects in Bronxville and New York City and we knew he would be able to help us achieve the casual and welcoming gathering place we were looking for," explains Keating.

"I fell in love with this classic Greek Revival house the moment I saw it," says Gemes. "The house had gone through a renovation by the previous owners, and the choices they made and the execution of the work fit beautifully into the history of the house," he explains. Gemes lightened the interiors to play off the elegant charm of the house. "The millwork, abundance of French doors, wainscot panels, portrait molding, and fireplaces called for color stories and schemes that would highlight and bring these classic details to the forefront," explains Gemes. He added bright white with black and white accent elements in the entry way and hallways, but also peppered this combination throughout the home to reinforce the classic color story.

Gemes, like most people who visit, sums up how it makes someone feel stepping into the home. "When you enter 89 Westway, there is something that draws you in and makes you want to explore every room." ■

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