

F O R T W A Y N E

Living

A LIFESTYLE MAGAZINE FROM THE PUBLISHER OF BUSINESS PEOPLE

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Making
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up

GORDIE BROWN
AT THE VENETIAN

LAS VEGAS
off the beaten strip

French Country
Living in NE Indiana

Ed Souers' Car Collection

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of brandywine, coffee brown and amber tones, creating the look of a rustic earthen floor. The natural, tone-on-tone colors give the floor depth and character.

“Concrete floors have become very popular,” says Eldridge of her choice. “You can do very interesting things, like this country floor.”

The warm, welcoming look of the great room is further enhanced by the fireplace, which also serves as a narrow dividing wall between this room and the master suite. The man-made surround sits on a hearth wrapped in a decorative concrete overlay, which is designed to resemble old Indiana limestone. Fischer applied an antique color wash of sienna

and gray to age it. A large sofa is positioned in front of the fireplace to soak in the effect.

To one side of the couch is the open kitchen, complete with dangling iron and copper pots and modest curtains on the front of the base cabinets. Three large, narrow windows, capped with shorter windows, usher light into the entire area. A rustic three-drawer piece of furniture serves as an island and effectively separates the kitchen from the living room. The simple dining table, which was refinished years ago by Eldridge’s father, is stationed behind the couch.

On the opposite side of the couch sits a large bookshelf, which is open on both sides.

It creates the illusion of a separate room without blocking the natural light that streams in from the home’s tall front windows. A variety of floor plants add even more warmth to the space.

Because of the open design, the master suite can be seen from this area, the kitchen or even from the couch. A custom-made bed of metal posts that blossom into tree branches stands in the midst of the room. A large screen covers the entrance to the walk-in closet and a window seat, designed with Eldridge’s grandchildren in mind, adds extra charm to the room.

The outside wall of the bedroom houses



“I visualized the house for so long that since I moved in, it doesn’t seem new or strange at all. I’m really happy with it.”

glass and wood patio doors and panels, partially covered by wooden screens. Above these doors are five small, square windows that ascend from each side like steps and meet in a point at the fifth window.

The master bathroom, which includes a soaking tub and open shower, is another room showcasing Eldridge’s creativity and Fischer’s work. While the sides of the shower are lined with small white tiles, the long back wall features decorative concrete and arbitrarily placed groupings of thinly sliced stones. The resulting look is one of an old house that is weathered and decaying. A lowboy with a shabby chic finish serves as the bathroom vanity.

This home’s originality continues on the other side of the first floor, in the room with the baby grand piano and antique desk. Here, Eldridge selected a multi-tonal maple hardwood floor. The natural wood is hand-scraped to give it an aged look.

The home’s second fireplace is located in this space and again features Fischer’s handiwork. The hearth resembles Indiana limestone,

while the fireplace surround is a replica of the old cast iron surrounds fired by skilled blacksmiths. Deceptive decorative elements create the illusion that the surround is mounted with rivet heads.

The staircase to the studio features a faux finish similar to the hearth, as well as a custom handrail fabricated from raw steel. After six steps, the stairway turns left at a 90-degree angle, leaving the handrail to drift vertically up a barn beam towards the ceiling. Meanwhile, a second handrail safely carries travelers to the loft, which overlooks the great room.

Surveying her home, Eldridge reflects on the unique, creative design. “When you build a house, you need to think about who you are and how you want to live,” she explains. “Home is supposed to be a happy place. I didn’t build this house to sell it. This was an idea whose time had come.

“This is so much fun,” she adds. “I visualized the house for so long that since I moved in, it doesn’t seem new or strange at all. I’m really happy with it.” **FWL**

French Country Living

in Northeast Indiana

Edna Eldridge builds her dream home with the help of builder John Niemeyer, architect Victor Martin and designer Rick Fisher.

article by LauraMarie Carmody • photography by Steve Vorderman

Amidst the quaint houses lining the main street of Roanoke stands a home that offers a glimpse of life in the French countryside. Light-colored natural stone of various shapes and sizes fit together to create a charming, rustic cottage clearly

After receiving a listing for a lot in Roanoke, Eldridge decided to make the move from upstate New York to this small community.

What drew her to the area? For starters, one of Eldridge's daughters lives in New Haven with her family, making the grandchildren a lot closer than before. The town of Roanoke and more specifically, Joseph Decuis, also intrigued Eldridge, who previously lived in Fort Wayne from the mid-1960s until 1970.

Once the lot was secured, Eldridge presented her design, a paper model and the furniture plan to builder John Niemeyer and architect Victor Martin. Together, the pair aided Eldridge in making her vision a reality.

For the interior, she drew on her own personal taste and ideas she had collected from books and magazines. The rectangular-shaped space includes three distinct living areas on the first floor – a piano and office area on one end, a great room and kitchen area in the center, and a master suite on the other end. The second floor houses an open loft that serves as a studio. The home also has two full bathrooms and a half bath.

It was a chance meeting with local artisan Rick Fischer that helped transform this interior into a true reflection of a centuries-old French country home. Fischer, who owns Deco Illusions, specializes in high-end faux artistry techniques that can be applied to walls, floors, ceilings, doors, furniture and more. His skills meshed so well with Eldridge's vision that she hired him to further her design.

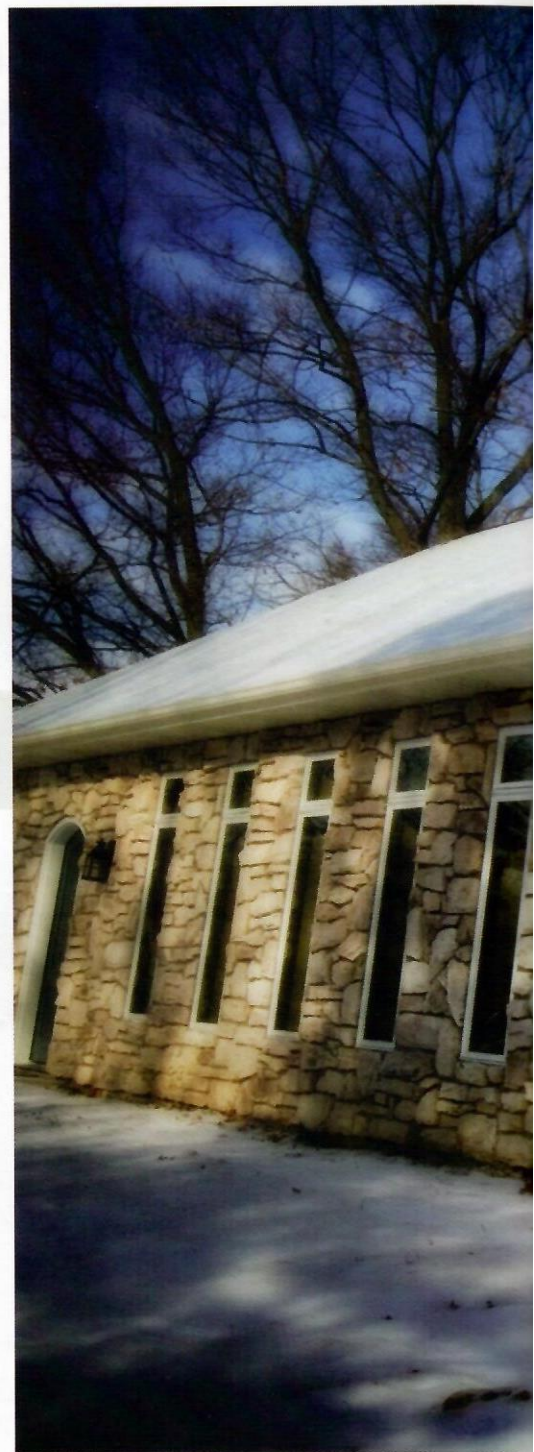


Edna Eldridge

influenced by European architecture.

The home's federal blue front door, sitting in an arched frame, has an antiqued, rubbed finish that gives it a weathered look. To the right are a series of tall, narrow windows, while a round window is located to the left. Two stout, stone chimneys rise gently from the roof.

This newly constructed abode is the culmination of one woman's long-term vision. More than 20 years ago, Edna Eldridge designed her home on paper. But she set the drawings aside until just a few years ago. When the time was right, she began looking for a place to build.



From the moment visitors enter the house, the end result of this decision is apparent and impressive. The textured walls that run throughout the home are a soft, creamy beige tone, highlighted and antiqued with a cocoa brown color. They were created using trowels and sponges, then finessed by hand to look like authentic hand-plastered walls from centuries past. Three people worked for three weeks to plaster, color wash and flat varnish more than 3,000 square feet of walls.

Rather than carpeting the entryway and main room, Eldridge incorporated radiant heat into the concrete slab and utilized it for flooring. Fischer used a reactive stain color wash