



Talked the Talk & Walked the Walk

Completion of Holli's project brings an outstanding new look.

BY HOLLI APPELQUIST · PHOTOGRAPHY BY HOLLI APPELQUIST

Ahhh... the sweet here after. To think that less than 3 months ago we took possession of this house only to gut it and start over seems so long ago. As I sit at my new window seat having coffee on this quiet Sunday morning it is hard to remember that this house was once a dusty, dirty construction zone that was uninhabitable. Eleven weeks later we are enjoying the fruits of our labour. How sweet it is!

Summary of Major Work Completed

Structural:

- wall between kitchen and dining room removed
- New wall constructed between kitchen area and office including transom windows, corner pantry and two large storage closets in the office
- Three new various-sized kitchen windows installed in different locations from the original windows
- Stucco patched on exterior of house where window placement changed

Kitchen:

- gutted completely back to the studs and new everything installed

Flooring:

Changed throughout the house:

- New antique grade natural maple hardwood installed in main areas
- Existing laminate from main areas removed and reinstalled in bedrooms where carpet had previously been
- New linoleum in bathrooms and laundry room

Electrical:

- Electrical reconfigured in kitchen to include recessed 4" pot lights and pendants lights above a newly installed island. All light fixtures, electrical plugs and switches updated.

Various other Projects:

- Main floor ceilings scraped and refinished
- New fireplace surround and mantel
- Existing window jams painted white



- with new window trim and baseboards
- New ladder back style interior doors with antique pewter hardware
- Central air conditioning installed
- All walls patched and repainted
- New woven wood roman shades installed in main areas of the house and shutter blinds in bedrooms

Basement Changes:

- Walls patched and repainted including all wood paneling, mystery wood feature wall, pine wainscoting
- Existing mahogany doors and trim painted white to freshen it up
- New, soft Berber carpet with best underlay installed throughout basement
- New linoleum in half bath to replace existing glued-down Berber

Looking Back...

Reflecting on how this happened in such a short period of time I think the key to the success of the project was the people involved. First and foremost was the unwavering commitment and tireless effort of my husband Barry. His varied skill set and farm-boy work ethic stretched our renovation budget an

estimated \$20,000 and allowed us to upgrade to finishes like hardwood and granite that we wouldn't have otherwise been able to fit into our original \$50,000 budget. We need to thank the volunteer efforts of our fantastic friends who attended the weekend long "demolition party." They too helped to hang drywall, install hardwood, paint basement walls, doors and trim and much more. You had to be careful coming over to our house for a visit - most times you were quickly put to work! Help from friends saved us so much time (not to mention money) and we are truly grateful.

The dedication, flexibility, and collaborative approach of Chris Murray and his team at Chris Murray Custom Cabinets was impressive. Chris worked through all the details and issues to ensure we were completely happy and satisfied with the end product and result. He was with us every step along the way and provided professional guidance and support. Kevin at Reinhardt Plumbing and Wayne at Tubello Stoneworks demonstrated patience, attention to detail and pride in everything they did. The reliability and com-



petence of painter extraordinaire Brenda Burns, “framing wonder” carpenter Brian Cattell and the flexibility and professionalism of all the trades people involved made this renovation the best possible experience. As we progressed through each stage of the renovation it was good to know there were capable, qualified, reliable and ethical people to help us along the way. Our deepest gratitude to everyone involved.

Subtle Changes Important to Overall Look

Beyond the obvious changes like flooring, kitchen, and colour changes there are a few subtle but key revisions that significantly impacted the feel of our home. First we scraped the popcorn finish off all ceilings on the main floor and applied a new spraytex finish. Next we updated the lighting configuration in the kitchen by installing 4” halogen pot lights in the traffic areas and pendant lighting above the island. The pendant lighting makes a statement immediately and helps to define the style of the kitchen. Thirdly we updated all plugs and switches throughout the main floor. It may not seem all that important but every time you turn on or off a light the change feels good. Next we installed 3 1/2” baseboards and trim throughout the main floor for a slightly heavier look that was still budget friendly. Lastly we updated the interior doors and added French doors and interior transom windows where possible to

allow light to flow throughout the house. These changes don’t provide the “wow” that people often crave after a major renovation but they do add to the overall feel and appeal of the house. If you’re considering renovating, seriously consider addressing these details for a completed look.

Challenges Along The Way...

Every renovation has some surprises – things you didn’t expect that often cost you more time and money. That’s the challenge of renovating! Having “been there, done that” before, we expected some surprises-and were not disappointed.

Our first surprise occurred during our “demolition party” as we removed the window trim, chair rails and baseboards. We noticed that the red paint on the lower half of the walls below a chair rail was peeling off with the trim as we removed it. The paint peeled off the walls like wallpaper, taking the first layer of paper underneath the drywall with it. While we’re still not sure why this happened we think it was due to the application of too many coats of paint without adequate drying time between coats. This problem led to much discussion about the most cost and time effective way to solve the issue.

We tossed around two options:

(1) re-board the entire area as all of the walls in the main areas of the main floor were affected or (2) pay the additional

labour needed to re-skim all the walls. This problem required more time (and money) to fix the problem and threw the construction schedule off by about a week. In the end we elected to re-skim all the walls affected and the problem was solved.

The second issue came later on in the process. Installing hardwood looks simple, quick and easy on the instructional video. For a handyman like my husband Barry it looked like it would be a snap. Barry was looking forward to putting a new notch in his belt by adding “hardwood installer” to his set of accomplishments. Even after the folks at Envision Flooring warned us that a professional installer might take a week working at it full time to install the 700+ square feet of hardwood we needed we still underestimated the time involved. While it was relatively easy, it is a time intensive process. Staggering the joints, dealing with problematic areas, stair nosing, etc. takes time. It took us 9 days to install the hardwood during evenings and weekends but that put us behind our trim installation schedule. The ripple effect of the hardwood installation, coupled with the drywall problems meant that we were still installing doors (never mind trim) the week that we moved in. The movers were coming July 20th as our “old” house had sold with a possession date of July 22. That week I packed up the “old” house while Barry continued hanging doors and installing trim at the new house. The

HOME DESIGN & DECORATION



entire time we both worked full time. It was a crazy week and I'd like to thank my clients during that timeframe for their patience and understanding!

The last major surprise came from an unlikely source: the new island in my kitchen. The highly customized island includes recessed cubbies for every day dishes, a wall mounted faucet, custom cut granite around an apron front sink, three electrical outlets plus garbage disposal and pendant light switches, a hidden cubby hole for charging cell phones, vac pan in the kick for easy clean up, tip down drawer for keys, and a raised, apron-style top with legs. As I designed it I didn't completely think through all the stages involved in its actual construction. We were surprised when the plumber had to return 3 separate times, the electrician twice, granite installers 3 times, and the carpenter many more times yet. In the end, the island is a highly functional "workhorse" in my kitchen and was worth the additional time and effort in creating it.

Happiness Is...

Following my own advice to clients, I splurged on a few things to get the look I wanted. My first indulgence was the kitchen cabinetry. The cabinetry includes solid, stained maple upper cabinets and apron-style footed kicks on the perimeter cabinets. This look gives that "furniture feel" to the kitchen. Face frame cabinetry on the window seat

drawers and island towers flanking the eating bar give that old fashioned feel. Other cabinet details include customized pullouts for spices, garbage and recycling, a tip down drawer for keys, a hidden cubby for charging cell phones and the custom built valance above the window seat. I can not adequately describe how happy I am with my kitchen. My expectations were far exceeded! My everlasting thanks go to Mr. Chris Murray and his team for a job well done.

The second splurge was granite countertops. We juggled the budget by opting to refinish the driveway with asphalt instead of cement and used the savings from that decision to offset the cost of granite countertops. We decided we'd rather have granite countertops than a concrete driveway – priorities for us, right? Even though it was not a standard installation Tubello installed the countertop with professionalism and ease. The drywall returns on the awning windows in the backsplash area of the window meant that the granite had to recess into the window well perfectly flush to the window's base. The 9-foot long island had to be perfectly cut to fit and the exposed edge on the sink had to be perfect. I was so impressed with their installation. It was stress free. I love the granite and would make the same decision a hundred times over.

Other minor indulgences included the custom ordered pendant lights from

Richardson Lighting - a company that is always a pleasure to deal with.

Customization in the laundry room included a simple but very functional cabinet and laminate countertop installed over my existing front load washer/dryer professionally installed beautifully by The Bevelled Edge. This is already making laundry and cleaning a breeze.

Holli's Favourite Things...

Considering all that's been done, I'm most happy about the functional changes that make my daily tasks easier. My double wall ovens will be wonderful during holiday meals or speed baking for my children's activities/events. You're all invited for Christmas! The new hardwood flooring keeps dust to a minimum and will be easier on my daughter's asthma. The laundry room cabinet helps keep those mundane tasks organized and efficient. Lastly, the tip down drawer in the island provides a convenient location to drop my keys and sunglasses each day. Now I can actually find them when I need to! It may be sad but true that most of us appreciate those little things which make our lives easier. They aren't always the most expensive or flashy but save us endless time and stress.

Colour Palette...

Believe it or not my colour inspiration came from a coffee mug at Sears! For the first time in my life I have what I consider to be a relatively neutral colour palette in my home. It's classic and I love it. I used Benjamin Moore's CC-306 Cable Knit in the main areas of the house with CC-122 Boxcar Red Wagon on the feature fireplace wall and in fabric accents. Brenda Burns, painter and wonderful person, applied Benjamin Moore's Ulti-Matte flat, washable paint in parts of the house. I love the glow and depth it gives to the colour and the walls. In main traffic areas I experimented with a Para Paint product with Teflon that gives a highly durable, washable finish. Although I haven't been in the house long enough to wash the walls I'm very happy with the sheen from the Para product. Trim colour

throughout is Benjamin Moore's OC-130 Cloud White in a latex pearl finish. It is the perfect "universal" trim colour for almost any colour palette. A big thanks to the staff at Benjamin Moore and Yarnton Decorating for their exceptional service and advice throughout the project. Even more thanks to the unwavering dedication shown to us by Brenda Burns, an extraordinarily skilled and reliable painter. My deepest thanks go to Brenda for painting the main floor so quickly and beautifully.

A mix of store bought and designer fabrics from Joanne and Maxwell Fabrics bring the colour palette together on the window seat and add to the modern farmhouse feel I wanted to create. The window seat cushions feature a stripe, solid, quilted pattern and embroidered cotton for a totally pulled together look. The custom made window seat was masterfully created by The Recovery Room. It is a PVC vinyl –woven leather look that is both washable and waterproof – a necessity in my house! The new woven wood roman shades (provided by Holliberries Interiors of course) in the main areas pick up the natural feel of the wood floor and provide a tailored but relaxed feel.

The Budget Report...

Standard rule of thumb when renovating is to expect an average of 10-20% and we were no different. There were smaller scale decisions made during the renovation process that increased our costs and some smaller things that we simply did not budget for. The daily trips to Home Depot for everything from painters tape to finishing nails add up. In the end we're happy with the how the anticipated budget performed. We made decisions with our eyes wide open as we progressed through the process so weren't shocked at the average in the end. As stated earlier, we stretched our budget by \$20,000 to \$25,000 by doing a lot of the work ourselves.


Holli's Best Buys:

- \$3300 for all kitchen appliances at Sears Bargain Center, including tax and delivery. Patience and perseverance pay off if you shop often.
- White porcelain farmhouse-style apron front sink on Ebay for \$499 US plus shipping
- Antique style, wall mounted chrome faucet on Ebay for \$99 US + shipping
- Upgrading interior doors to ladder back style for only \$15 more than a "regular" hol-

low, paintable door with a standard design (ordered through Fries Talman)

Most fun... the demolition party – a week-end long event where we invited all our friends to help demolish the house. With a steady stream of beer and pizza for the adults and snacks and drinks for the kids it was a great time!

Most work... installing the hardwood floor, doors and trim, pot lights in the ceiling, and scraping the ceilings

Most challenging time... moving week was crazy as I packed while Barry worked at the new house to get baseboards installed behind bed locations, doors hung, etc. The week we lost due to the "surprise issues" related to the drywall repair and hardwood installation made our move in date challenging. 

Holli Appelquist is an independent interior decorator and owner of Holliberries Interiors in Regina, Sask. Holli offers renovation planning classes beginning in September. To register or for more information and inspiration visit her website at www.holliberriesinteriors.com or contact her via email at holli.a@sasktel.net.

Recommended Source Guide

| Item | Supplied by | Contact and Phone Number in Regina |
|--------------------------------------|---|---|
| All flooring and tile | Envision Flooring | Cindy at 352-8844 |
| Cabinetry | Chris Murray Custom Cabinets | Chris at 347-0002 |
| Granite | Tubello Stoneworks | Joe at 721-6686 |
| Framing | Brian Cattell Carpentry | Brian at 359-1653 |
| Plumbing | Reinhardt Plumbing | Harry at 543-7400 |
| Painting | Brenda Burns Painting and Decorating | Brenda at 729-4283 |
| Interior Doors, Trim and New Windows | Fries Tallman Lumber (1976) Ltd. | Derek or Duane at 525-2791 |
| Lighting | Richardson Lighting | Judy, Greg or Melissa at 525-8301 |
| Laminate Countertop | The Bevelled Edge | Neal or John at 790-8488 |
| Window Coverings | Holliberries Interiors | Holli at 585-9219 |
| Upholstered Window Seat | The Recovery Room | Scott at 347-0002 |
| Paint | Colourburst Benjamin Moore Yarnton Decorating Ltd | Ryan/Walter at BM 949-1983, Brenda at Yarnton at 791-6211 |
| All Appliances | Sears Bargain Center | Perseverance pays off |
| Patching Stucco | Ron's Stucco | Ron at 536-6070 |
| Design and Décor | Holliberries Interiors | Holli at 585-9219 |