



Arch enclosed by a wall of glass.

From humble beginnings

anyone else who wants it."

As a regular customer, Fred had trouble cutting a deal for tailings. "I'd already figured I'd need 800 tons of granite for our house," he says. "They loaded it for me at \$1 a ton, and I found someone to haul it down here for \$4 a ton."

Fred may not admire New England windows, but he clearly understands New England frugality. He created an elegant mansion out of pink material.

"I brought a group of eight guys from my Charlotte office," he says. "They set up an assembly line and built the walls in three months." It took six months more to finish the house. Fred and Ginger got it for a modest \$100 per square foot of floor area.

It's a simple and beautiful dwelling, certainly one of the best recent houses in the Boston region. There's a austerity to the crisply detailed

stonework and the steep gabled roofs. Except for a thin trim line of pink granite — just enough to relieve the overall gray — there's no ornament.

Ginger and Fred spent two years designing the house with architects Peggy Deamer and Scott Phillips of New York. Deamer and Phillips had previously done an addition for the family's home in Atlanta.

The new house is laid out like a railroad train: Each room is a separate car and they're all in a line. The layout is reminiscent of the "big house/little house/back house/barn" sequence of a traditional New England farm. First comes the garage (with an in-law apartment upstairs), then the rear entry hall, then a huge eat-in kitchen, then a formal dining room, then a living room, then a front entry. At that point the house changes, widening into a two-story library/bedroom wing.



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Ceiling and walls of the formal dining room contain a mural by Wenham artist Lena Fransioli that transforms the space into the likeness of a ceremonial tent. The chandelier was handmade in Arizona.

Running along beside the train, so to speak, is a long sunny south-facing porch, onto which everything else opens. A wall of glass encloses it, giving a view of the 50-acre site. On the inside, the porch is defined by a row of granite piers. Besides being the main drag for circulation, the porch serves as informal living

space. One segment has been taken over by the dogs and is known simply as the dog room. Fred says the layout was influenced by the Southern so-called "dog-trot" houses, in which an open breezeway connects all the rooms.

Besides the main house, there's a guest house to accommodate more visiting in-laws. And down the driveway, there's a horse-and-donkey barn.

As you might expect from a builder, the house is filled with innovations. The heating is underfloor, for better comfort, but it isn't buried in the usual concrete slab. Instead hot-water tubing is affixed to the underside of an ordinary plywood subfloor, where it can be easily accessed and serviced if necessary.

The finish floors are made of pecan. Fred discovered another construction job where costly heart-grain pecan was being installed. Lesser pecan was being discarded — the so-called "character grade," which is itself a beautifully grained, quarter-sawn wood. As with the

granite tailings, Fred saw his opportunity and took it.

The pitched roofs are made of zinc — "for low maintenance" — and they're free of the usual clutter of plumbing vents, which instead are artfully concealed. The wood-framed, triple-glazed windows are a German brand, made in Canada, that Fred settled on after researching more than 30 manufacturers. Most of them are casements, and some of the casements also pivot down from the top, as hoppers, for ventilation.

It's all ingenious, but it's not pretentious. The interiors are plain drywall, painted white. Dogs seem to pile up wherever you look, like teddy bears on a little girl's bed. Most of the decor is family snapshots.

The only touch of formality occurs in the dining room. Here, the ceiling and walls are painted with a mural by Lena Fransioli, an artist from Wenham, the town next door, that transforms the space into the likeness of a ceremonial tent. There's also a chandelier — a Christmas present from Fred to Ginger — handmade by a craftsman in Arizona.

Solid, durable, beautiful stone on the outside.

Big, bright, livable space on the inside.

Order and value everywhere. This is a convincing house.

It's a simple and beautiful dwelling, certainly one of the best recent houses in the Boston region.