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# HOMES • RESALE & RENTAL

Editor: Sheila Brady, 596-3709 • sbrady@thecitizen.canwest.com



## National honours

Two housing veterans combined their talents, earning design kudos for a thoughtful bathroom renovation. Then Steve Barkhouse picked up a second award for a bungalow that grew into a dramatic two-storey home with a big view of the Ottawa River

BY KATHRYN YOUNG

A gorgeous stained-glass window pulled out of a second-floor vestibule and relocated over a bathtub in a Rideau Canal-area home was the clincher that secured national honours for an Ottawa designer and a renovator.

Chuck Mills, president of Chuck Mills Residential Design & Development, and Steve Barkhouse, president of Amsted Construction, earned national recognition last month when they won a Canadian Home Builders' Association award for the thoughtful bathroom renovation.

Amsted took home a second trophy for the dramatic renovation of a Rothwell Heights bungalow and the addition of a second level so the owners could see the Ottawa River.

"There was a lot of partying going on," says Mr. Barkhouse, who stressed that his staff earned the award.

The Amsted team was a finalist in each of the four renovation categories. "I thought that was enough, and then to win two," says an ebullient Mr. Barkhouse, who was in Lake Louise, Alta., to accept the national honours.

Amsted won a national award a few years ago, but this was a first for Mr. Mills, who opened his business 12 years ago. He wanted to prove that he could compete on all levels, winning local and now national design honours.

"I was ecstatic when I found out," says Mr. Mills, who has earned several awards in the Ottawa-Carleton Home Builders' Association design awards, which are held each fall.

"It takes my own pressure off myself. Now I don't have to chase it."

He guessed his chances of winning were pretty good, since three of the five finalists in that category were projects in which he had teamed up with Amsted. But it was the pleasing combination of old with new, he figured, that ensured the national win. The bathroom also garnered honours at last

fall's design awards.

The homeowners wanted to return a 1910 Arts and Crafts home that had been a duplex for many years to its original glory. They used reproduction hardware, faucets and mouldings; slate on the floor and tub surround; and Mission furniture-style cabinetry. The tempered glass shower stall wouldn't have been used in 1910, nor the hand-rubbed soapstone counter, but the final blend was pleasing.

However the pièce de résistance was the stained glass window of flowers and en-

twined lines that used to be in the second-floor vestibule of the house. Mills removed it, cleaned it, refinished the frame and reinstalled it over the window in the bathroom.

"That's the one thing that really jumps out when you walk into the room," says Mr. Mills. "The stained glass window had a fairly significant impact on (winning the award)."

The two men have been teaming up on projects for five years.

They share a similar philosophy about enjoying their work and listening to clients.

"He's extremely talented so it's hard not to do well with him," says Mr. Barkhouse. "He's passionate, and I love that about him. We make a pretty good team."

Last year, Amsted, which usually does the construction work, took a gamble and ventured into the design side of the business, including the Rothwell Heights renovation.

With a growing family and elderly parents moving in, the owners decided to add a second storey to house a master ensuite, connected through a common area to two children's bedrooms and a playful bathroom.

Downstairs is a private, walkout nanny suite, a new office/playroom, family room with a built-in entertainment centre and the space for an expanded kitchen, living and dining rooms.

The front facade received dramatic new roof lines, stone and stucco cladding, and the addition of a garage and back entryway with a useful mudroom.

The CHBA award for this renovation tells Mr. Barkhouse that going into the design side was the right move for his company.



CHUCK MILLS

Chuck Mills and Steve Barkhouse, combined their talents, and won national honours for the renovation of this Ottawa bathroom, featuring a rescued, stained glass window.

KATHRYN YOUNG is an Ottawa writer.