

Hapgood style returns to lakes region

The rustic suburb of Mountain Lakes, built around six lakes between Denville, Boonton and Parsippany, is still the ideal year-round residential community originally envisioned by local engineer Lewis Van Duyne and entrepreneur-developer Herbert J. Hapgood. Between 1910 and 1923, Hapgood built more than 600 homes to meet the demand for spacious country retreats refreshed by lake breezes and conveniently accessible to New York City by train. Based on three models designed by Van Duyne (the Manor, Chalet and Semi-Bungalow), all of the Hapgood Homes were individually customized according to the tastes of the buyer. Today these houses, each distinct yet each recognizably a Hapgood, contribute to the unique character of Mountain Lakes.

"The antithesis of Victorian frivolity, Hapgood's designs present a solid appearance and functional use of space," explained architect Robert B. Heintz, of Short Hills. Heintz, whose expertise in the architecture of older homes is the result of numerous renovations including Victorian homes at the New Jersey shore and Hartshorn homes in Short Hills, has teamed with ARPAD Prestige Homes Enterprises, Inc., of Denville, to renovate and modernize a Hapgood Manor on Ball Road.

The enormity of the proportions in the three-story, seven bedroom manor presented unique design problems when planning an addition to satisfy today's tastes and needs, explained architect Heintz. An attached two-car garage and shop with a 21-foot-by-22-foot second floor area that can comfortably serve as a family room or servant's quarters has been constructed at the rear of the home. The large scale required to maintain the integrity of the Manor's design presented many challenges. The final result, however, is a garage that seems to have always been there.

Fortunately, builders Arpad and Joseph Bogdany of ARPAD Prestige Home Enterprises, Inc., enjoy meeting the challenges of unique building requirements. They specialize in renovations as well as highly customized new homes, catering to just about anything their clients desire. In addition to various new homes and renovations in Short Hills, Summit, Mendham and Bernardsville, the brothers' experience includes a passive solar home especially designed for an owner confined to a wheelchair. The non-institutionalized result was featured in a 1983 issue of Home Magazine and serves as a major part of Velux-America Inc.'s national advertising campaign for skylites.



The Hapgood House model at Mountain Lake

The respect that the builders and architect feel for the beauty of the Manor is illustrated by their careful stripping and refinishing of the original chestnut paneling and hardwood floor with its inlaid borders. From reinforcing the exposed chestnut ceiling beams to restoration of the original molding, every effort is being made to preserve the integrity of the original Hapgood design.

"Use of local building materials is a characteristic of the Hapgood homes," noted Judy Cook of Weichert Realtors' Parsippany/Montville office and co-listing agent of the house. "All the foundations and many of the fireplaces are built from the fieldstone deposited in the area by the Wisconsin glacier 10,000 years ago. A local sawmill made the beautiful chestnut wainscote paneling from the trees cleared to build the houses."

At the same time that the Hapgood Manor is being restored to its original grandeur, it is being modernized to offer all the convenience and luxury of a new home. A new two-zone gas heating system and two-zone central air-conditioning assure comfort year round. New plumbing and electrical system hidden behind the walls will be noticeable only by the absence of problems. And completely insulated exterior walls and ceilings will not only conserve energy but will also serve as a fire stop.

One difference between the tastes of the busy executive of 1912 and 1987 is seen in the bathroom. The Hapgood of 1987 includes a whirlpool jet tub and separate shower in the master bath with Corian vanity top and marble covered walls and floor. Fifteen running feet of bifold mirrored closets will enhance the 32 by 14½ foot master suite with its sitting room and private balcony.

"By adding the garage, laundry room and large family room off the kitchen, with a service entry, architect Heintz has made it easier for owners to separate the service and children's areas from the living atmosphere and sense of history in the library, living room and dining room," noted Cook.