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The quintessential house



Jody and Jake Sorofman's transitional two-story foursquare craftsman-style house in Oakwood was built in 1921 at 714 Person St. and was moved to N. Bloodworth Street after the Depression.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

BY IRIS JUNE VINEGAR
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Strolling down the oak-lined streets of Raleigh's oldest intact 19th-century neighborhood you could almost expect to bump into Samuel Pickwick, Wilkins Micawber or other colorful Dickens characters. The Oakwood community, with its quaint, colorful old houses in a variety of architectural styles and beckoning porches calls out to visitors yearning for simpler times.

But don't let those 19th-century façades fool you. Inside many of the houses are all the comforts of home — a 21st-century home.

Take Jody and Jake Sorofman's transitional two-story foursquare Craftsman-style

house in Oakwood. Originally built in 1921 at 714 Person St. by railroad flagman Elvin T. Burke, the neo-classical house became a victim of the Great Depression when the bank foreclosed. It was acquired by Charles Sheldon Arnold, who turned it into a duplex around 1949 and moved it to its present address at 715 N. Bloodworth St. Arnold's descendants sold the house in 1992 to John Beckman, who had done other renovations in Oakwood. He restored the colonial to a single unit.

When the Sorofmans purchased the home five years ago, it had several updates, including 3 1/2 baths. Since then the couple has renovated the kitchen,

added a two-story building for Jody's photography and weaving studio and Jake's workshop, as well as a new roof, gutters and HVAC. The house now measures 3,398 square feet, including the studio building. **3,105**

But because the Sorofmans are moving to Asheville (Jake, a software engineer, is raising venture capital to start a business there), this unique home with 12-foot ceilings, crown moldings and columns is listed for sale with Peter Rumsey of Prudential York Simpson Underwood at \$625,000.

Imagine Elvin Burke's astonishment if he could see his 1921 house today, especially the bright, sunlit kitchen that spans the full width of the house and has an

adjoining sunroom with French doors opening to the deck.

Burke would really appreciate the antique pine kitchen floors reclaimed from an old Burlington factory and the quartz countertops that look like marble, but without the maintenance.

The Sorofmans cook on a new six-burner Viking gas range with a commercial-style hood. "We love to cook," Jake, 39, said. He and Jody have hosted several quasi-competitive cook-offs with neighborhood friends, modeled after Bobby Flay's cooking show "Throwdown." Each of the events has a specific culinary theme, ranging from paninis to cocktails and desserts. Recently, the couple hosted a dinner party with a focus on gourmet bar snacks with recipes drawn from the Tupelo Honey (Asheville-based restaurant) cookbook.

"The kitchen conveys a vintage-modern look that we think perfectly complements the blend of old and new throughout the house," Jake noted. That blend is reflected in the couple's selections such as white exterior kitchen cabinet walls, black interior wall cabinets and backsplashes made of white subway tile.

Like the kitchen, all the interior design inside the 90-year-old house is a fusion of classic old and MoMA new. In the living room, the couple combined antique furniture with eclectic modern and stylized splashes like a white leather chair, faux cowhide ottoman and zebra-striped rug, as well as MoMA-style light fixtures. The living room was designed by Jamie Mears of Furbish in Raleigh. "She's a genius and it's a masterpiece," Jake Sorofman exclaimed.

Outside, the family's huge

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