

# LIGHTENED UP

## REMODEL TURNS DARK, CRAMPED RESIDENCE TO BRIGHT, OPEN HOME

BY CARON GOLDEN

**F**rankie Hebert and her husband, Robert Twaddle, had two criteria for deciding where to relocate from the Bay Area in 2011: They wanted to be closer to their children, grandchildren and Hebert's mother in the Los Angeles area, and they wanted to live in a beach town because Twaddle was a surfer.

After checking out surfing towns from Long Beach to Dana Point, Hebert recalled Carlsbad as a cool, little town from the days when she lived in San Diego at the beginning of her airline career.

They rented an apartment in Carlsbad for about six months before finding a home to buy. It was a 3,058-square-foot, single-story house with three bedrooms, 2½ bathrooms and a peekaboo backyard view of the ocean.

Twaddle had retired as an electrician. Hebert, who shifted from working as a flight attendant to data processing for airline reservations systems and then to a systems engineer for Visa, worked from home.

Built in 2005, their Tuscan-style house hadn't been changed since its days as a model



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**A color palette of gray, white and blue creates a light, coastal look in Frankie Hebert's Carlsbad home. The bigger kitchen window allows for sunset views.**

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## COASTAL SAN DIEGO HOMES & ESTATES



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Granddaughter modernizes midcentury home without straying far from original look.

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Interior designer Jen Pinto reconfigured the floor plan, removing the walls separating the kitchen and dining area.

## Carlsbad

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home. Many of the rooms lay off a large main hallway that led to the kitchen in the back of the house. The rooms were dark and small, making the house feel — for all its square footage — cramped. The couple never used the dining room because it felt far away from the kitchen. The rooms were closed off from each other and separated by a hallway.

While the home's location near the beach was great, Hebert described the house as "heavy."

The house needed more light, and the couple discussed plans to remodel it. But in 2017, Twaddle was diagnosed with reoccurring melanoma and passed away. Hebert also lost her mother the same year, and she considered returning to Northern California where she had a lot of friends.

But a cockapoo puppy she adopted helped her decide to stay. Hebert went from not know-



**The family room is now more functional with a centered fireplace flanked by shelving and doors connecting to the yard.**

ing anyone in the neighborhood because she worked at all hours to meeting everyone when she walked little Molly.

"I have met more of my neighbors and heard stories about my husband because they would have conversations with him while he was outside the house," Hebert recalled. "All of a sudden it was like, 'OK, I can stay here

now. I'm happy with this place.'"

But the house still needed its overhaul to fulfill the couple's desire for a more open floor plan and brighter rooms. So, Hebert took on the project for both of them, inspired by the beach.

"When I lived in Guam for 10 years as a flight attendant, I quickly fell in love with all the beautiful colors of island life. My

husband had been a surfer most of his life and shared my love of the ocean and the calming, peaceful seaside colors and elements associated with it. Textures such as waves and glass give me a feeling that I'm at the beach on a summer day, so they were also an inspiration."

She also had very specific priorities based on her new life on her own.

"Once I made the decision to stay here, I decided the floor plan didn't work very well for me and decided to make the home a place I could stay in for a long time," Hebert said. "The puppy was also a consideration in my designing of the space. Another consideration I had was having the home grow with me as I got older with age-in-place features."

Hebert researched remodelers and met a few. She attended a homeowner seminar with Jackson Design & Remodeling, liked the company's approach and signed on. Once the scope of the

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**“Mermaid” tiles create accents in the master bathroom shower, and the pebble-style floor tiles complete the beachy look.**

## Carlsbad

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project was determined — the kitchen, dining room, three bathrooms, living area and flooring — Hebert was assigned designer Jen Pinto. Construction began in September 2018, and the project was completed in April 2019.

Pinto immediately saw that part of the problem was the massiveness of some architectural details — such as the thick walls at the entry — taking up a lot of floor space for no discernible reason.

“When we took down a lot of those walls, they turned out to be purely decorative,” she said. “There was no structural component to them, but they made the house feel a lot smaller.”

Because Hebert wanted the space to feel light and airy, they chose a light palette of grays, blues and white, giving Hebert the option of adding accent colors later.

Pinto learned that Hebert loves to entertain. But cooking in the kitchen and then navigating hallways to get to the dining room didn’t work for her; plus the space was dark.

The kitchen wall holding a double oven, microwave and cabinets was removed, along with a wall in the dining room. The area was reconfigured to create an integrated kitchen/dining area, incorporating the hallway that separated the spaces.

The new design enlarged the kitchen window, allowing Hebert to see the ocean from it. The small island was replaced by a long, elegant quartz-topped island that seats four and includes a built-in drawer microwave as well as a food and supply station at the end for Molly.

One of Hebert’s favorite elements of the island is a compartment that holds her KitchenAid stand mixer. A dedicated baker, Hebert had told Pinto that the mixer was too heavy to move around, so Pinto had a swivel and lift mechanism installed, along

with an electrical outlet, so that it takes minimal effort for Hebert to move it in place and it’s always plugged in.

Pinto’s kitchen face-lift also included changing out the dark, brown-toned tile backsplash and granite countertops, the mocha paint on the walls and an obtrusive sloping oven stove hood for a light and bright approach.

DeWils cabinetry in white now lines two kitchen walls and is used on the island in gray. The light gray walls continue into the dining room and hallway. A sleek, stainless-steel-and-glass wall mounted range hood sits in a new spot on the back wall over the Thermador induction cooktop.

The backsplash is a fun mosaic of Panache Glass & Ceramics Sequins tile in gray tones.

The wall with the old gas stovetop and hood now houses a double, built-in KitchenAid oven and a 48-inch KitchenAid side-by-side refrigerator, surrounded by cabinetry. The new arrangement means Hebert can easily get out ingredients and cook or

bake.

Pinto also built a coffee station over a 24-inch-tall wine cooler at the far end of the kitchen. And the new dining area has a wall with more cabinets that also serve as a buffet.

The attached family room got a makeover as well. It originally was dominated by a heavy stone fireplace set in a rounded corner. There was a small vertical window at one end of the wall and a set of windows against the back of the house facing the backyard.

That arrangement made furniture placement challenging and storage minimal. So Pinto had the fireplace taken out and the corner squared to gain space. The vertical window also was removed.

The wall now features a centered electric fireplace surrounded by 24-square-inch gray limestone tiles that have been polished and honed for a three-dimensional wavy texture and reach to the ceiling. The tiled fire-

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place wall is flanked by white shelving and cabinets. The TV mounted over the fireplace is separated from the firebox by a custom-made maple mantel painted white.

And the bank of windows against the back of the house were replaced by a wall of sliding glass doors that create an indoor-outdoor feel and allow the afternoon light to pour in.

The home's bathrooms were another project Hebert focused on.

In the Jack and Jill bathroom between two guestrooms, the inward-swinging doors were replaced with pocket doors. The dated tiles and cabinets were removed as were the wall and door that closed off the toilet and shower/tub and the mock wall that enclosed the tub.

The enlarged space allows for a roomy, curbless shower with a partial pony wall covered in glass tile that provides a place to hang toilet paper. More DeWils cabinetry in gray make up the double-sink vanity, topped by a Silestone polished white diamond quartz



JACKSON DESIGN & REMODELING

## The remodeled Jack and Jill guest bathroom now has pocket doors to save space and a create more open feel.

countertop.

In the powder room, old wainscoting and a heavy vanity were removed, and the space was painted a light blue. The new vanity and Silestone quartz countertop match the ones in the guest bathroom.

Hebert is especially proud of the whimsical, blue glass vessel sink, etched with ocean creatures that she found at Experience Glass in Carlsbad.

The footprint of the master bathroom essentially remained

the same. A large tub separates two vanities. Another vanity space is next to the walk-in shower across from the tub. Pinto expanded the shower with a wide, curbless entry and added bold strips of statement tiles that contrast with the room's soft gray tones.

"Frankie's willingness to do a lot of fun shapes in tiles and mosaics was great," Pinto said. "She was obsessed by mermaid tile so we did that in her shower in a stripe going down one wall and in

the niche, using Newport Scale Ocean mosaic tile."

The floor has a pebble look, and the shower walls are a flowing, wavy ceramic Carrara Leucothea tile.

Tying everything together is new luxury vinyl flooring that looks like hardwood but chosen by Hebert for its low maintenance. Pinto said the low-maintenance flooring was a logical choice because of the young dog, visiting grandkids and sand tracked in from the beach.

Hebert said it's hard to find just one area of her renovated house that she likes the most. "... but definitely the openness of the floor plan makes me smile every time I come home. I especially love the bigger kitchen window that allows my peek of the ocean to really stand out from just about anywhere in the room. It makes me feel like I'm at the beach, and the sunsets are spectacular and more visible from the kitchen, dining room and family room now.

"I absolutely love the flow and feeling of everything in this house now," Hebert said. "It has the natural light and open spaces that exemplify coastal living to me."

Caron Golden is a freelance writer.

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