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# PACIFIC **NW**

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SPRING  
HOME  
DESIGN  
2024

## MULTIGENERATIONAL *Living*



**3 homes designed  
for 3 generations**

**7 inspiring examples  
from our archives**

**1 man's connections  
to home and family**



PHOTOS BY ANDREW GIAMMARCO

The lower level of this multigenerational Windermere home holds Julie and Stefan Hampden's bedroom and a family room (with vertical-grain wood wainscoting and built-ins for a TV and sound equipment) that's a favorite spot for their teenagers, Dylan and Gwen. "We get to be a lot more involved in their social lives," Stefan says. "We've had times where we've come home, and their friends are downstairs watching TV and we're like, 'Oh, where's Dylan?' They're like, 'Oh, we don't know. He said to just come over.'"

**F**EW PEOPLE UNDERSTOOD how Jim Nelson could see any hints of magic at all, much less a legacy, in this lakefront home in Windermere. Certainly no one else had for the year and a half it'd sat vacant.

But that was 1986, and this was a rundown 1950s-era teal urchin overgrown with blackberries and perched on a stiff cliff with a feral forest cutting off water access.

Nelson had just accepted a position with the University of Washington Medical Center, and he and his wife, Katie, and their son had come up from Salt Lake City to shop real estate. (Daughter Julie, at the time, was in boarding school in California.)

After touring options on the Eastside (even though Nelson had lived in San Francisco and dealt with Golden Gate traffic and really did *not* relish another commute over another bridge), the Nelsons and their real estate agent circled Lake Washington and noticed the forlorn "for sale" sign. "The Realtor said, 'Oh, you don't want to look at that,'" Nelson recalls. "That's a mess."

But they did. "My son and I went down to the lake with the neighbor," Nelson says. "My wife was with the Realtor, and

the Realtor said to her, 'He wouldn't buy a place like this, would he?' And Katie said, 'Well, let's see what they say when they get back up.'"

They said, "We'll take it" ("I grew up in a small Iowa town, and I figured I've cleaned up messes before," Nelson says), and all it took was one lowball bid, and then one massive amount of work.

A friend from Salt Lake who'd been trained in architecture helped. By summer 1987, Katie and the kids had moved in, and the blackberries were forced out. They built switchback stairs to the lake.

"My wife and I got it fixed up to the point that we thought it was pretty, pretty dandy," says Nelson.

But eventually the kids moved on and out, and Katie died a few years ago, and Nelson was considering retirement facilities. This is a big house for one.

His daughter had a better idea. Julie Hampden is married to architect Stefan Hampden, of CAST Architecture. They floated the brainstorm of modernizing the original 5,275-square-foot home; moving in with their teenage children, Gwen and Dylan; and adding an ADU for Nelson, who's now 85 and inspiringly active for any age.

"We've been in the neighborhood for



Architect Stefan Hampden of CAST Architecture added this 560-square-foot accessory dwelling unit (ADU) to the Windermere home his father-in-law, Jim Nelson, bought with his wife in the 1980s. The vaulted ceiling in the living room mirrors that of the main home's living room, but Nelson's favorite space just might be the heated porch outside (to the right), where he can hang out with his friends and watch TV through the big windows (there's an outdoor speaker).

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**"My parents had my grandmother living with them for quite some time in New York, and it worked out really well. That sort of gave us the idea that that's a path forward that could make everyone a lot happier."**



a long time," says Stefan. "We always talked about this as a possibility. My parents had my grandmother living with them for quite some time in New York, and it worked out really well. That sort of gave us the idea that that's a path forward that could make everyone a lot happier." ▶

The home originally had a glassed-in dining room with stunning views, says Hampden, "So opening the kitchen up to that gave you this fantastic vista, and we repeated that pattern by putting in bifold doors, so it has a similar rhythm in terms of glazing, and it really opens up the kitchen to the deck."

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**Big windows** always have been a big part of this home; here they fill one wall of the living area. “You can imagine these panels just continue marching around and creating this really strong connection to the outdoor environment,” says Hampden.

They were right — and now, as that inspired path brought three generations together, another keeps them connected.

“There was an obvious place to add to the house,” Hampden says; the new ADU echoes the massing of the garage and creates a formal courtyard in between. “He’s got his own entrance, but it also, under cover, goes right into the main house. So he can just wander in whenever he wants. It’s a nice level of separation that gives him a real sense of autonomy.”

In the main house, the Hampdens moved their bedroom downstairs and reconfigured the previous primary bedroom and two others into en suite bedrooms for their teenagers. “The kids have their own space that’s really quite nice,” Hampden says. “The nicer we make it for them, the longer they’ll come home in the summers and have a place where they really want to spend time. The kids bring friends over all the time, and it feels like it’s made it a better relationship with them as well, because they’re really excited to be here.”

They also love it when Grandpa Jim pops over for frequent family dinners,



**The primary bedroom** moved to a space on the lower level that had been Nelson’s “man cave,” says Hampden. The cave vibe has disappeared into the light, thanks to giant windows reminiscent of the ones upstairs. “What’s so cool about this downstairs room is it repeats that glazing. We actually made them a lot bigger, full-height windows.” The Roman brick, now painted white, extends outside and creates a sunken garden area. “It’s a really neat private bedroom, even though it’s totally open.”

or to regale the younger generation (a truly eager audience, all agree) with fascinating stories of his fascinating life.

“All I have to do is open one door, and I get greeted by the dog,” says Nelson. (That’s Chloe the excitable Aussie shepherd, Hampden reports, “who, despite seeing Jim on a regular basis, still thinks it’s the best thing ever every time he walks in the door.”)

Now filled with family, connections and gorgeous spaces, this waterfront house nobody else wanted stands as a sparkling showpiece of original midcentury design, Iowa-grown DIY ingenuity and contemporary multigenerational living.

“If I do say so, [Stefan] did a bang-up job, absolutely gorgeous. He always said that the house had good bones,” Nelson says — and now, among its updated charms, a much more comfortable bathroom-to-resident ratio: “I grew up with Mom, Dad and five kids with one bathroom, and now every bedroom’s got its own bathroom, so it’s been quite a bit modernized.”

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**By pushing back** one of the kitchen walls into the guest room, “It really opened it up,” says Hampden. “It’s all built-in tall cabinets on one side, a bar against the fireplace wall, a big island in the middle and a really strong visual connection.” The back cabinet also builds on the home’s original wainscoting and curved walls. “Basically, there was sort of this ‘50s streamline; it’s not just a bullnose on the wall. It was really big, a curve in the wall.”

ALCHEMY COLLECTIONS

**1/2 H**  
8.75" x 5.70"