

RENOVATION STYLE

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she got an estimate of \$7,000 to do that, she quickly changed gears, opting instead to hire a worker to tear the brick off in one weekend—for a tenth of the cost. Linda then reinsulated the outside walls and specified board-and-batten cladding to get a carriage-house look. She replaced the pizza-parlor metal posts with fat wood columns and splurged on solid-mahogany doors that she designed for the front.

To give the house the outside focal point it badly needed and to offset the hefty brick chimney, she invested in a custom, oversize oeil-de-boeuf window over the front doors.

As a bonus, it also floods the foyer with light. She balanced the window by lining it up with an inexpensive cupola topped by a mermaid weathervane, both of which she bought online.

Linda still marvels that she lives in a '50s-era ranch rather than the historic house with lilac bushes and rolling lawns she always envisioned. "There's a lesson here: When you can't find history in the architecture, you can create it," she says. "We gave our house a past—its own heritage."

Architect: Linda Banks, Banks Design Associates

For more information, turn to Sources on page 114.

ABOVE: Finishing a previously unused attic and adding dormers yielded space for a large home office and guest suite. A veteran bargain hunter, Linda found the twin beds at a tag sale. She stripped off their gray paint and reupholstered them. **OPPOSITE:** When Linda installed new windows downstairs, she salvaged the old ones to use upstairs. She values the dormer niches for the cabinet space they provide.