



H-W Photos/Jeanne Long

Above: Tom Vanderbor, the current owner of the house at 1124 S. Ninth, looks at the blueprints which call for the novel stone fireplace designed for an electric log. Inset: The house's French Eclectic style is a relatively uncommon one, usually found in suburbs of metropolitan areas.

Cottage at 1124 S. Ninth caught owner's attention during a house-hunting mission

By Ruth Hultz

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There is something charming about the house at 1124 S. Ninth

It's an often overlooked house but once spotted, it has a mesmerizing effect.

That's how it was for the house's current owner, Tom Vanderbor.

Vanderbor had been around the neighborhood for years, driving to work at Quincy Notre Dame High School and to church at St. Mary's. It wasn't until he began house hunting that he discovered this gem on the south side of town.

About 30 houses into his house-hunting tour, he spotted the enchanted cottage.

"I had looked on the East side and nothing really grabbed me," Vanderbor said. "This really caught my attention. I really liked the sun porch and even though it is an older house, it feels really taken care of. Everything is very functional; it didn't need a lot of work."

Vanderbor had to act fast.

Though he hadn't sold his own house, he bought this one before someone else snapped it up.

"A friend told me, 'The only things you regret in



Original kitchen cabinets, with Art Deco hardware, and the French door leading to the winsome sun porch are original to the house.

life are the decisions you don't make," Vanderbor said.

Quincy architect Martin Geise designed the house for Gertrude Peters, who was a longtime legal secretary for the Loos and Schnack law firm. It was patterned after a house in St. Louis that Peters' brother, Carl, sketched for her.

Gertrude Peters' nephew, Dale Peters, said she had the house built on land bought from her parents which has been in the family since 1860.

Based on the French Eclectic style, this "towered subtype" house is often referred to as a Norman cottage. Its identifying feature is the main entrance within the "tower" with a conical roof.

Other distinguishing features are the use of stone and brick, an arched doorway, double hung and casement windows and steeply-pitched roof.

Geise's specifications to the contractor required that materials and workmanship should be "first class in every respect."

The home is built on steel beams instead of the usual joists. The walls consist of steel, clay

tiles, air space and then the outside brick, giving it special insulating qualities.

The interiors warm woods — red oak, birch and yellow pine — add to the charisma of the house.

Vanderbor, a teacher at St. Peter's School, also enjoys the south sun porch where he grades papers.