

icious, Maureen said. All the rooms lead into each other so the kids always have a sense of where we are. ... The kids could go in every room and enjoy themselves. They can plop down and color — do whatever they want.” Maureen also likes the large, covered front porch.

“It is a nice extra ‘room.’ On rainy days, the kids can run out and splash in the puddles and run back. We had a pizza party there and use it for Sunday breakfast.”

George said the house feels different today than it did when he lived there years ago. But one aspect has not changed. Both Crickard families used the large, cheerful sun porch as the family gathering place and TV room.

although the Crickards have found that stamping their personality on the house has been exciting.

The house has been a work in progress for the last five years, partly because they insist on the highest quality workmanship.

“It is only the last six months that we haven’t had workmen in the house,” George said.

They have had every room redone except the kitchen. It took two workmen three months just to strip and refinish all the elegant wood that is one hallmark of Prairie Style homes.

They had the walls skim coated and the windows worked on.

Turning an enclosed sleeping porch into a master bathroom was a huge undertaking because there were major complications with the plumbing. But Kuhlman Construction solved the problems by making a heated encasement for the water pipes that run through the basement cold-storage area and the garage.

George said the overall theme of their work has been to maintain the dignity of the home, yet raise their family comfortably in it.

Above: George III and Maureen Crickard had the fireplace mantle redone in a Craftsman-style that suits their taste. Below: The family shown in a mirror reflection include Grace, 3, George IV, 6, Jack, 7 months, Maureen and George III. Lower left: The beautiful Craftsman staircase gives the feeling of a fine piece of furniture.

H-W Photos/Justin Sagarsee



solar projects don't include pumps or motors, yet they are effective and efficient. The simplest of all passive solar concepts is just making sure curtains on south-facing windows are open during the day and closing them at night.

A room heater is a very simple passive solar project. There are several different designs, but any of them can keep a room toasty warm on a sunny winter day. These designs use a thermosiphoning principle. This means hot air is less dense and rises naturally without the need for a fan.

A very shallow solar heater can be built and mounted vertically flush against an outside wall. Cut one small hole through the wall near the bottom of the heater and another one near the top. Seal the perimeters of the holes with caulk. The solar heated air will naturally flow out the top hole and draw cool room air in the bottom.

Another similar design is mounted, on an angle facing the sun, on the outside of a window. The window closes on the inlet and outlet openings so no holes need to cut through the wall. By insulating a baffle between the cool room air and the solar heated air, the thermosiphoning action is created.

These solar heaters can also be used to cool the house during warmer weather with natural ventilation. Open an outdoor vent in the top of the solar heater, block off the outlet into the house and open some windows.

As the heated air exhausts out the top, it draws room air in the bottom creating a breeze throughout your house. If you are energetic or doing some remodeling, consider building a Trombe wall. This is an indoor brick or stone wall built close to a south-facing window. When the sun shines on the wall and warms it, natural warm air circulation is created in the room.

Write for Update Bulletin No. 508. Send \$3 and a business-size SASE to James Dulle, Quincy Herald-Whig, 6906 Royalgreen Dr., Cincinnati, OH 45244.