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The homeowners added the screened back porch and use it as a sleeping porch in summer.



**FUNKY TRADITIONAL**  
**In a renovated Chappaqua bungalow, one couple shows off their eclectic taste.**

BY SUSAN HODARA, PHOTOS BY LINDA BELL HALL AND BILL BRAMSWIG



The gracious lines of the meticulously restored 1921 Arts-and-Crafts bungalow contain Bill and Robin Bramswig's prized collections.

The first time Bill Bramswig saw the Arts and Crafts–style bungalow in Chappaqua that he and his wife, Robin Nureck-Bramswig, had purchased was on moving day back in 1990, when he'd flown in from Chicago. "Robin had sent me a photograph, and it looked okay," Bill recalls, "but once I arrived, I saw there were no gutters, the floor was unfinished, and the paint was in terrible shape."

The Bramswigs, who married in 1980, were moving to Westchester to be closer to Bill's brother in Pleasantville, where Bill, a onetime photographer, now works as a recruiter in his family's business, Pharmaceutical Careers, Inc. Robin, once a buyer at B. Altman & Co., had accepted a job in the garment industry in Manhattan.

"It was dirty stucco with brown trim, and a chain-link fence surrounding it," Robin adds. "But it was in our price range. It was our first house."

Sixteen years later, the Bramswigs are still there, now with two Siberian huskies, Heather and Poly, and two cats, Suzy and Slate. But the house—a 2,200-square-foot four-bedroom with detached garage, built in 1921 on nearly an acre within walking distance of Chappaqua's quaint village—has been transformed both inside and out. It is now putty-colored with white trim, its property landscaped with garden plots and flowering trees, its rooms filled with an eclectic assortment of furnishings. The result, more "home" than "house," embodies the Bramswigs' time, energy and talents, and reflects their diverse tastes and passions.



The couple, shown with their huskies and one of two cats.

"Give me a small house and let me make it charming," Robin declares. The Bramswigs' first steps in giving this house its charm were cosmetic: stripping and painting walls and ceilings, sanding floors, repairing the fireplace—work they did themselves after dinner. "We didn't know from contractors," she says. "In the evenings we'd put on sweats and get to work."



And the work never stopped. They patinaed the light fixtures in the living room. Bill, a deft carpenter, built a wooden mantle around the fireplace, chair-rail molding on both floors, and wainscoting in the upstairs bathroom. Robin tackled the yard, which she remembers as resembling "a jungle."



"We had no clue about gardening, but we had great neighbors who wanted to help," she says. Despite their numerous bouts of poison ivy, and occasional run-ins with rabbits and raccoons, the property now boasts a 20-by-15-foot herb garden, fenced-in vegetable garden, and flowerbeds of astilbe, hydrangea, peonies, and, the newest addition, roses. Each plot is bordered by bricks from buried walkways that Robin and Bill uncovered while digging up the soil.

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