

WEST ARCHITECTURAL

The magazine of the Western Architect & Specifier
JULY/AUGUST 2007 ■ \$3.50

Cover Story...

Concrete Deck Stands Out on
Rotating Home in San Diego
(page 14)

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Outdoor Lighting
Decking



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Editor
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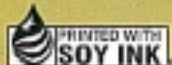
New Products Editor
Ghad Crocker

Editorial Assistant
Theresa DeLucchi-Florez

Technical Advisor
Ken Dillon

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546 Court Street, Reno, NV 89501-1711
(775) 333-1080 • Fax (775) 333-1081
e-mail: info@ArchitecturalWest.com
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Ocean Views

Carmel Home Maximizes Ocean Views

by Mary-Louise Juslin, Ann Hill Communications


 Finding a buildable lot in desirable Carmel, Calif., not to mention one that has ocean views, can be as difficult as winning the California lottery. Most of the property near the Big Sur coast is already "built out," and what available land remains is ultra expensive. Even if a suitable lot is found, the local permitting process is one of the most rigorous in the country, making it hard to get approval for anything new.

None of these obstacles ultimately stopped Fort Worth investor Emmett Murphy, who looked for months to find a second home in Carmel before he decided to build. "I didn't like what I saw or I was outbid," said Murphy. "But the location and the beauty of the place are just unparalleled. It's close to San Francisco, which is a highly sophisticated city, and it's easy to get in and out of the Monterey airport, which gets you to LAX and out. So it just had everything that I was looking for."

After a fruitless round of searching for just the right house, Emmett found a small lot with a dilapidated little two-bedroom bungalow just a block from the beach. A lover of contemporary architecture, Emmett decided to tear down the outdated existing structure and build something new.

The project was not without its challenges. Even though the lot offered stunning views of the ocean, its small size worried Murphy. Could he build a large enough home to accommodate his four growing children on such limited square footage? "The lot had a good view, but I wasn't sure when I bought it how it was going to work out and how much square footage I was going to be able to put on the land," said Murphy.

Enter Rob Carver and Mary Ann Schicketanz of Carver + Schicketanz Architects, Carmel, who created a stunning three-story



contemporary design that offered maximum utilization of the site and took full advantage of the ocean views. At 3,168 square feet, it has plenty of room for the Murphy family to enjoy an active lifestyle.

To help make room on the lot, Carver + Schicketanz excavated the site from property line to property line down to 30' deep. By digging into the sloping corner lot they were able to have a completely underground garage. They shored the perimeter with vertical steel I-Beams and 4 x 12 timbers to prevent the neighboring property from slid-

ing into the enormous hole. After the house was built, the site was backfilled against the retaining walls of the house and "ground floor" access was provided to each of the three floors.

"Being able to go outside from almost every room in the house makes for great flow, as well as a sense of space that is much larger than is contained within the house's footprint," said Carver. "The total space allotted to hallways is probably less than 5% of the floor area; rooms flow into rooms and hallways are actually rooms as well." Three outdoor living spaces cover some 720 additional square feet.

The three floors of the residence are separated into distinct areas. In addition to the garage, the lower level contains the master bedroom, which features a stone fireplace and a master bath with a dramatic sky-lit stone shower. The master suite looks out onto a private garden patio with a hot tub. On the second floor are two additional bedrooms, a shared bath with a large stone shower, and a family room with a custom


designed media chest that has a pop-up TV. The second floor accesses the outdoors with a slate deck.

The top floor contains a kitchen and an L-shaped great room with a stone fireplace; the kitchen is located at the elbow of the L. The living room and dining room open onto a glass block patio deck with ocean views. An ultra-clear glass windscreen protects the patio from the wind. From the kitchen window, the architects preserved and framed a view of the dramatic sunrises that come up over the hills at the mouth of Carmel Valley. The kitchen features natural maple cabinets and granite countertops. Limestone and concrete counter tops add color and luster to the baths. The house is built of concrete and plaster with copper roofing. The ceilings are bamboo and the slate floors carry radiant heating throughout the house. Ultra clear PPG Starphire glass windows surround the house, maximizing the views.

"At night, I am up on the third deck looking at Carmel Bay, watching the sun go down," says Murphy. "Literally 150 yards

away I have the entrance to the beach to walk to. You can hear the ocean and the waves break, and it doesn't get much better than that." "The way the house was designed, engineered, and built allows me to have substantial living space in a relatively small Carmel lot setting," Murphy added. "It makes it separate enough so that I can live well, even with a significant number of people in the house at the same time."

One of Murphy's other requirements was to have advanced communication technology throughout the house so that he could stay in touch with the investment markets. Carver + Schicketanz designed a tech infrastructure that includes an ethernet network as well as provisions for future technology. "Anyone can go into any of the rooms in the house with a PC and plug into the data port in the wall and get out with a DSL line," said Carver.

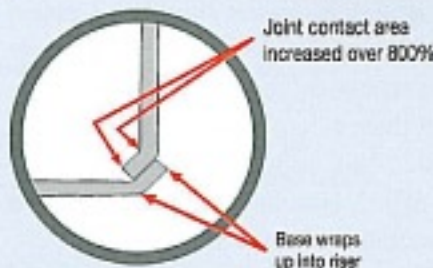
For Murphy, this Carmel home has provided the ultimate in get-away living, and has proven, once again, that less can definitely be more. 

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