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25 BEAUTIFUL HOMES

'My first thought was, it's the perfect Christmas house'

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Take a seat for 25 truly welcoming homes...

Country barns, dramatic terraces, a pumping station and MORE!





1 & 2 The kitchen sink is French stone enamel, the floor tiles are Bath stone, and the table and chairs came from antiques shops and auctions. Judith's copper cooking pans hang on the walls, all of which have been given a natural pigment wash

Judith and Richard Bond were both born and brought up on the Somerset Levels where Judith's family ran a nursery and peat-works. They were at school together and when they married 25 years ago, one of the first houses they looked at was an old farmhouse beside a church. 'Don't touch it!' exclaimed Judith's grandfather ominously.

'The water used to run in through the back door and out through the front!'

Judith laughs as she remembers his dire warning now, as soon afterwards this 15th-century farmhouse made of blue lias stone and elm beams became their home. 'We have made lots of alterations and additions since,' explains Richard, who now runs the family ▷

Particulars

LOCATION
Somerset

AGE
1455

BUILDING
Two-storey
stone Somerset
Long House

ROOMS
Kitchen/dining room,
laundry room,
2 sitting rooms,
5 bedrooms,
4 bathrooms

MOVED IN
1975

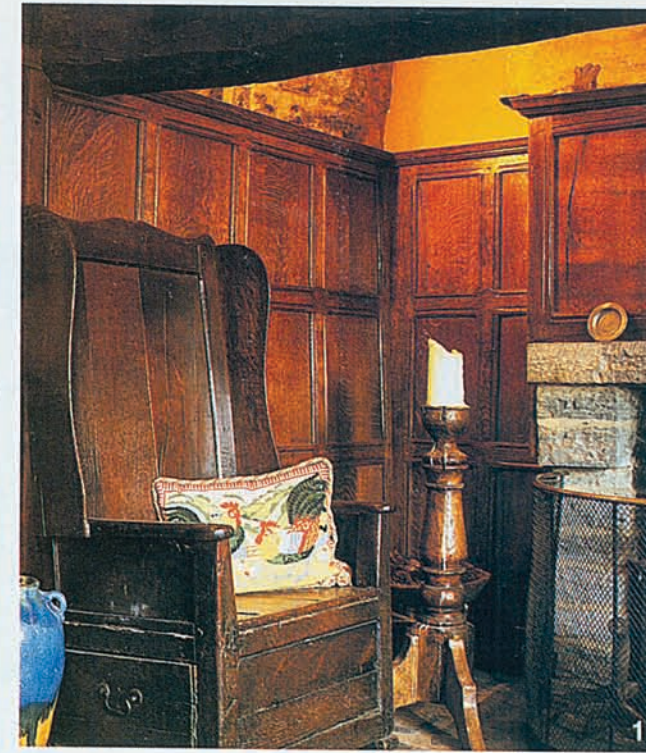
CURRENT VALUE
£450,000



Golden buy

After 25 years, Richard and Judith Bond still delight in their ancient home - a 'Through-Passage Long House' typical of local Somerset architecture

Judith made the cushions on the drawing room's blue sofa, bought from the Curtain Pole (01458 834166)



'We have made lots of alterations and additions'



peat business. 'The rear of the house has changed dramatically because we installed a bathroom upstairs and erected four little gables instead of a cat-slide roof. Originally the roof would have been thatched, but it's now a mixture of different tiles including pantiles and double-Romans.'

Judith is a keen cook and once their children came along, the old kitchen became too cramped. 'So 12 years ago we built a new kitchen where the old garage was and added our bedroom above it,' explains Richard. 'You can hardly tell that these two rooms are not the same age as the rest of the house.'

The downstairs area that once formed the original entrance hall has changed too. The couple asked John Edmonds, a good friend and skilled craftsman, to turn the awkwardly-situated staircase around, so that it now takes up an impressive position in the middle of the house. Using elm and oak, John has done a magnificent job, resulting in a staircase that looks several hundred years old.

When Judith and Richard first bought the house there were three bedrooms and one downstairs bathroom – now there are three children, four bathrooms and five bedrooms, of which their son Charlie, now 12, has the oldest – it has a rare arched and beamed ceiling and an exposed section of wattle >

1 The oak settle in the hall came from Pilgrim Antiques (01404 41219). Judith made the cockerel cushion

2 The magnificent elm staircase in the hall was re-built by local craftsman, John Edmonds (01458 210359)

3 The oak chest and gun cases on the landing are antique. The beamed ceiling was also built by John Edmonds



'The rear of the house had changed dramatically'



1 The lincay which stands at the top of the garden makes a perfect outdoor 'room'

2 Fergus the dog stands guard at the door

3 An antique Welsh quilt covers the master bed, which Judith designed herself. The bed linen came from the Antique Centre, Somerton (01458 274423)

4 The oak panelling around the en suite bath was salvaged from poet Dylan Thomas's former school

5 A section of exposed apple twig wattle from the property's original orchard sits high above Charlie's bed. The quilt was an auction buy




5

and daub, dating back to 1455. 18-year-old Emily's bedroom, by contrast, is one of the more recent additions to the building and eldest daughter Lucinda still views her bedroom as her domain, despite the fact she now lives and works in London.

Opposite the kitchen are a group of old outbuildings that Richard has turned into a study and in the garden is a newly-built Devon lincay (pronounced 'linnie'); an open-fronted

barn which serves as the perfect place for the family to sit on summer evenings.

One of Judith's favourite spots is the garden shed, an elegant little building with double-skin reclaimed bricks. 'We call it the 'Taj Mahal,' laughs Richard. 'Judith said she wanted a garden shed and it ended up costing more than I like to remember. After she found the antique arched windows there really was no stopping her!' 

WORDS Olivia Temple PHOTOGRAPHY Mark Bolton

25 Good ideas

The tall vase in the Bonds' drawing room came from Rome, but alternatives are available here. Dartington Crystal (01805 626262) have a range of crystal vases which includes the Old Fashioned Pink model (shown), £17. Heal's (020 7636 1666) also carry a good selection of stylishly tall vases.

