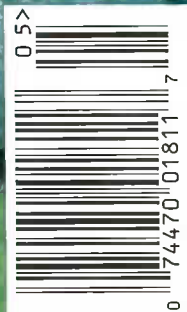


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SHAPES ALONG THE SHORE

FIGURE EIGHT ISLAND HOME DESIGNED WITH A LIGHTHOUSE AS ITS CENTERPIECE

WRITTEN BY **SHERRY MOELLER**
PHOTOGRAPHY BY **LIBBY CULLEN**



Coثرan Harris asked, “What would it look like if a beach cottage was added onto a historic lighthouse?” It would be a design not derived from a well-known style; a possible waterfront getaway built in phases in different eras with copper and cedar shake roofs and cedar shingles and tabby stucco walls. And it would be the right choice for a Figure Eight Island couple. “The owners wanted a new home that would look in place on the beach but different from their neighbors,” says Harris, principal of Coثرan Harris Architecture.

The notion of using a lighthouse as this home’s centerpiece came from the concrete towers built along the North Carolina

beaches during World War II that were sold and transformed into residential spaces with living rooms and bedrooms. The use of various materials outside as well as distinctive interior finishes establish a home that looks like it was added onto by generation after generation of homeowners. This gives it the eclectic, creative character that was important to the owners.

Inside, the first level of the lighthouse tower is the entrance to the modern portion of the home designed for visitors. The guest area is more contemporary than the rest of the resort home, Harris says. This makes the spaces comfortable for anyone visiting, including children who enjoy its aquarium motif and pint-size portholes.

The main level is more sculptural with heavier woods

Designed by Cothran Harris Architecture, the beach cottage on Figure Eight Island outside Wilmington, NC, features spacious, intimate, covered, and uncovered decks with distinct purposes.

RIGHT ABOVE: With a lighthouse at the core of the facade, the new home feels like it has a past.

RIGHT BELOW: A mango leaf design in the railing shows the intricate finishing details of this Figure Eight Island home.



used in the kitchen and in an Arts and Crafts nook with turret ceiling. The front of the kitchen's bar features irregular stones that resemble breaking waves, while the owners added whimsical touches with palm tree leaves wrapping a post. "It's lighthearted," Harris says.

The top floor mimics a wood-paneled Coast Guard lifesaving station, also known as this home's office. There were height and configuration restraints on this level that the homeowners, architect, and builder worked together to resolve.

Harris has designed other homes with a backstory or fabricated history that makes the finished project charming, as if the home had been there for a while and undergone varying stages of renovations. He once fashioned a modern interior

around the concept of an old fishing shack exterior.

"What if a house passed through four different generations?" he asks. What would it look like? The owners have to have the right spirit and frame of mind to envision the finished product in these cases, Harris adds. **ws**

RESOURCES

■ **Cothran Harris Architecture**
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■ **James R. Burriss Construction Co. Inc.**
910.686.5970