

SUMMIT HILL

A Social Magazine for
the residents of Cathedral,
Crocus, Ramsey and Summit Hill

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living



Photo by Scott J. Hedblom

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MEET ELLEN SUE STERN



Celebrating

TWENTY YEARS AS A STEWARD OF SUMMIT HILL HOMES

home matters

Article by Summit Hill resident and Coldwell Banker Burnet Realtor, **Michaela Toohey**
Home photos by **Susan Gilmore**

David Heide Design Studio has been a fixture in downtown Minneapolis' historic Grain Exchange Building ever since he first opened shop 20 years ago. Today, Heide's company, which specializes in the design of new and remodeling of historic homes, has grown to 15 people and the offices on the sixth floor of the Grain Exchange have been expanded multiple times to make room for the growing business.

I sat down with Heide, a long-time resident of Summit Hill, and some of his employees recently to talk about their company's history and design philosophy, and what they love about Summit Hill, where Heide's company has done many remodeling projects over the years.

Q. How did you get your start in the design and architecture business?

DAVID: I studied interior design and architecture at MCAD and the University of Minnesota. I was working at a great firm, McDonald & Mack Architects when I started moonlighting on my own projects. They were wonderfully supportive, and after three years, I struck out on my own.

Q. You are a long-time resident of Summit Hill; what do you love about living here?

DAVID: I grew up in suburban Des Moines, but I've

never felt more at home than I did the day I arrived at Macalester. The Summit Hill neighborhood helped launch my business. It's a thrill to be part of the continuity of this neighborhood – it's a living, breathing thing. I believe we're stewards of the buildings we occupy while we own them, and there's a pride of place here that's very unique.

Q. How has your company changed in the last twenty years?

DAVID: It has changed a lot; we started out with two people and now there are 15 people in our office. I've tried to surround myself with people that are better at things than I am and that shore up my weaknesses. Ten years ago, we added interior design, which doubled the business. Now about half of our work is architecture and half is in interior design. Having these two practices in the same studio affords a really holistic approach.

Q. What is your philosophy as a company? What makes you different?

DAVID: We have an overarching philosophy of work and we stay true to it: good design transcends style.

We strive to 1) hear what our clients are telling us, 2) Listen to the house, understanding and respecting the original design intent, and, 3) at the end of the day, it's about the client and their home. The project, whether a new house, or a remodeled one, must be a reflection of the client and a manifestation of their goals.

We work very collaboratively. It's all about the right connection between clients and our three project architects. They're fantastic – and we've all been working together for more than 15 years. While often I am very involved in the design process and creative work, I always tell clients they don't want me managing the project! We have folks who are far more skilled than I.



Owners of David Heide Design Studio, David Heide and Michael Crull.
Photo by William Wright.

Q. What do you consider some of the company's greatest accomplishments?

DAVID: Beyond the honor of running into clients and having them tell us how much they love their new home or remodel (which is truly an honor), it's been very gratifying to be recognized by our international peers. It was a career achievement to win first place in the Sub-Zero & Wolf International Kitchen Design competition. A project right here in St. Paul was selected from over 1,500 other entries from around the globe. We've also won two national first place awards from Marvin Windows.

It's been a pleasure to have new opportunities open to us as we've grown – we recently designed the remodel at Summit Brewing's Rathskellar [beer hall].

Q. What's your favorite room in your house?

DAVID: The summer house in our backyard.

Q. Where do you get inspiration and recharge your creative batteries?

DAVID: They say design happens when you're not at the boards, and that's true for me. I find inspiration most often when I'm immersed in something outside of work – when I'm at the theater or a concert, or when I'm driving.

Q. Tell us about your penchant for vintage cars

DAVID: I've been into cars and houses forever. For me, with cars, it's a lot about the design aesthetic and the experience. We have a 1968 Datsun Roadster.

I also got a chance to talk with Brad Belka, Director of Design, Michael Crull, Senior Interior Designer, and Leanna Kemp Kristoff, Design Associate, about their work at David Heide Design Studio.

Q. What's different about working at David Heide Design Studio?

LEANNA: It goes back to David himself, he's an inspiring person and inspiring designer to be around. It's also a privilege to work on a 100-year old home and have the level of craft [for the new work] be at the same level or better than the original

BRAD: The singular type of homes we work on; and the work we do is unique and different from many others – the focus on detail really sets us apart. I love working on very detailed projects; the level on many of our projects is unmatched.

MICHAEL: We work really well as a group – it's a collaborative effort in a design studio environment. We're great at integrating interior design and architecture – it's hard to tell where one begins and the other ends.

LEANNA: Every single team member is valued, no matter where they are in the hierarchy.

Q. What changes in how we live will affect your work in residential design in the future?

LEANNA: I think we'll see a move towards greater density and living in the city.

MICHAEL: Yes, and we also see a strong interest in intergenerational living. We just finished a new home in Iowa where three generations of a family are planning to live together

BRAD: Clients continue to be interested in aging in place and designing their homes to allow for that.

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