

# hidden spaces

STORY BY SUZY ATKINS



Lemoyne man  
made most  
out of only...  
a little space



While not the subject of the popular nursery rhyme, this is the house that Jack built.

On a property that overlooks Harrisburg and the Susquehanna River, the late Jack Mattern built a home in the 1940s that still showcases his knack for creating storage areas from the smallest spaces.

There is creative thinking here for anyone trying to make the most out of those hard-to-reach spots within a home.

"He first built this little A-frame styled house to live in while he built his main house," said Jayma Wooditch, Mattern's daughter. The A-frame house has about 500 square feet inside and now serves as a guest house to the property's main home. It resembles a story-book cottage.

It's difficult to imagine that there are two floors within it. The top floor features a full bath, a living room and a bedroom with a full size



Jack Mattern



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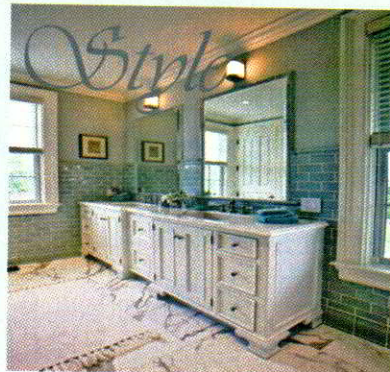
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closet. The bottom floor has a half bath, and an eat-in kitchen.

A walk through the home reveals how Mattern used whatever space was available to create additional storage.

Upon entering the cottage, a visitor will notice a set of sliding wooden doors built into the wall on the right. When opened, storage is exposed to the slanted roof. It really serves as a "side attic."

After a few steps and a landing, the living room comes into view. A picture window frames out a perfect view of Harrisburg. But the question arises: How is furniture moved in and out of here? The stairs are narrow and curved. Mattern designed the house so that the railings could easily be removed.

Another built-in storage space is located behind the railing leading downstairs to the eat-in kitchen and half bath. This space shares the same wall as the "side attic" but is more shallow. Since there was no room for a traditional washer and dryer, a stackable set was added a few years ago inside the hall closet. When company comes, a curtain can be pulled across a rod at top to hide the appliances.

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there is **creative thinking** here  
for anyone trying to make the most out of those hard-to-reach spots within a home.

Wooditch demonstrated two other unconventional ways her dad provided storage in the house he built next to what became the guest cottage. Built in 1946, Jack and his wife, Ernestine, lived in the home for more than 50 years. Inside, each wall appears to be made up of doors as closets and shelves are all built in. If there isn't a bookshelf or closet, then there is a window.

Her father designed the kitchen ceiling to have sliding wooden panels that opened up to additional shelving. Wooditch's mother used the area to store different items in tins.

"If there was space, my dad built shelves, even in the walls between the studs — he was very resourceful like that," Wooditch said. ■