

President
Alex Dean, CR, CGR

Construction Mgr.
Michael Colman

Project Coordinator
Brian Stone

Lead Carpenter
Steve Mayberry

Carpenters
Marvin Samoya
Greg Lacy

Administration
Kathy Poland

Members of:
NARI DC Chapter
Montgomery Co. Builders
Association

Recent Awards:
2003 Montgomery
Co. Builders Assoc.

2002 NARI
CotY Awards (2)

2002 Montgomery
Co. Builders Assoc.
Awards (4)

2001 Montgomery
Co. Builders Assoc.
Awards (4)

2001 NARI
CotY Awards (2)

2000 NARI
CotY Awards (4)

2000 Montgomery
Co. Builders Awards (2)

1993 - 1999
Multiple Awards



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Was your builder Sears Roebuck & Company?

Who would have thought when railroad station agent, Richard Sears, and watch repairman, Alvah Roebuck, became the world's first jewelry and watch catalog retail merchants in 1887, they would also pioneer one of the world's first homes to be advertised and sold via catalog? For 32 years, beginning in 1908, Sears & Roebuck sold more than 100,000 homes to Americans through their innovative Modern Homes Program featuring almost 450 designs from comfy three-room (no bath) vacation cottages to multi-storied, elaborate models. Most models were mid-range, single and two story bungalows that originally sold for under \$1,000, and were shipped direct to the purchaser with complete instructions, nails, windows, and eventually, all the appliances a new homeowner might want or need.

Alex Dean, president of The Alexander Group, has remodeled other Sears' homes in the past, but

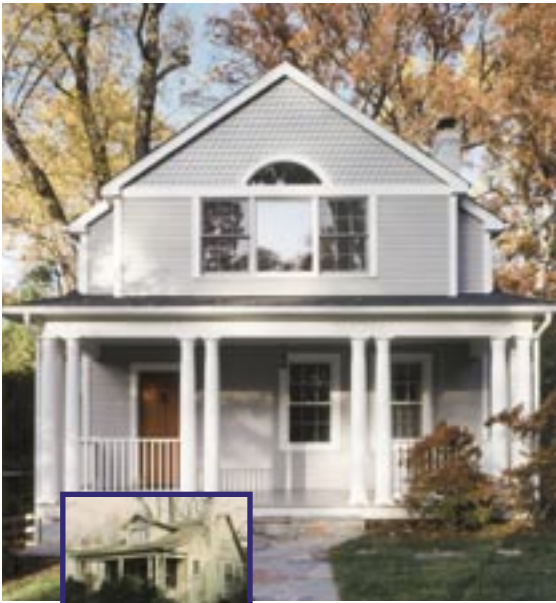
this Maryland piece of history was a particular challenge because of the amount of renovation involved.

The owners, with a growing family, asked if Alex and crew could rise to the occasion, meet their objectives, yet retain the historical charm of the original design. To accomplish this, the Alexander Group team needed to address the lack of space by adding a 16 x 24 foot, three-story addition to the rear of the house. In addition, major work was needed upstairs and on the basement level. The Alexander Group broke the job into three categories: structural, exterior, and interior.

Structurally, the original Sears' homes used what was known as the "balloon style" method of framing, which was well suited for the times and for assembly by an individual carpenter. Times have changed, as have building codes, which meant

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constructing an entire new second floor and roofing system and integrating the original gable ends to allow for additional bedrooms and a bathroom without making the house appear top heavy. The front porch was also rebuilt and the front door and windows were relocated—without changing the character of the entrance. It was important to keep the original craftsmanship in place by retaining as many of the original doors and antique hardware as possible.

The interior work included creating a new foyer and hallway with a new arched opening and an entry closet under the stairs with custom 5-panel closet doors in keeping with the other 1920s doors. The first floor now has an expanded dining room, new kitchen, a family room, breakfast area and new deck.

To match the existing 1920s baseboard, the window and door casings required a custom milled detail. The new kitchen, which was originally a small area, now accommodates an industrial cook top and the new cabinets match the existing ones.

The second story now has three bedrooms and an additional bathroom. A home office with a separate entrance was created in the basement. The original first floor bedroom and bathroom were converted to serve the needs of a teenager. Finally, with all the new space and renovation of old space, a new heating/cooling system was installed, to integrate with an existing hot water heat and separate AC system.

On the exterior of the house, the original wood siding was replaced with “Wolverine Restoration

Featured Vendor: R&R Aluminum Siding Company

Our homes wear a suit of clothes—just like we do—to protect them from the elements and to make them look good. Where a well-dressed man sports a tweed jacket and sharply pressed slacks, a “well-dressed” house can be found wearing a number of “coats” not the least of which is siding.

When The Alexander Group requires siding on a job, the first call is to Clyde Reneman, president and co-owner with Pat Reneman, of R&R Aluminum Siding Company.

“We’ve been in business for 28 years,” Clyde said. “Although the name of our company says ‘aluminum,’ we don’t do a lot of aluminum anymore. More than 98% of the siding we apply these days is vinyl.”

Clyde explained: “There’s such a wide range of vinyl siding product, you can choose one that is easily affordable. When compared to wood, brick, stone, stucco or metal, vinyl siding has the most economical initial cost, and maintenance costs while still giving a great appearance. In addition, the durability is superior. It doesn’t chip, peel, or rot; costly repairs are a thing of the past. Upkeep is simple: if the rain doesn’t fully

clean it, just spray it down with the garden hose and it looks great.”

Vinyl siding retains the installed value. According to *Remodeling Magazine’s Cost Value Report 2003*, investing in new siding can recoup 169% of the cost of installation in terms of resale value added to the home.

The construction crew enjoys working with Clyde: “We know we can depend on Clyde, even when he’s bass fishing at his personal retreat along Washington’s Columbia River. His crews are all full time employees. R&R never disappoints us, or our clients.”

“I can’t put my finger on the first job we ever did for The Alexander Group,” Clyde said. “It was a long time ago. It’s refreshing to work for a contractor who has such good people, supervision and who stays on top of things the way The Alexander Group does.”



Historical Preservation Tax Credits

Maryland, Virginia and the District of Columbia offer tax credits to qualifying homes for renovations. To qualify, homes can not be merely “old” but must be listed on a state or national register of historic homes or be in a neighborhood that has been designated historic. (Source: *Washington Post*)

Maryland

- Amount of credit: 20%
- Limitations: Owners must spend at least \$5,000 over a 24 month period. The maximum credit allowed is \$3 million. The law is set to expire on June 1 unless the Maryland General Assembly extends it.
- Receiving the credit: The state issues a check for the amount of the credit beyond a year’s tax bill.
- Contact: Maryland Historic Trust: 410-514-7639; marylandhistoricaltrust.net.

Virginia

- Amount of credit: 25%
- Limitations: Owners must spend at least 25 percent of the value of the structure itself. expenses for additions or enlargements are not eligible.
- Receiving the credit: Property owners can carry over the unused amount of the credit for 10 years or until it is used up.
- Contact: Department of Historic Resources, Winchester office: 540-722-3428; dhr.state.va.us.

DC

- Amount of credit: 15-35%
- Limitations: The credit is not currently funded. If the program were funded, recipients could live only in certain designated historic neighborhoods and would have to make 120 percent or less of the median income. There would be a \$25,000 cap per project.
- Contact: Office of Historic Preservation: 202-442-8818.

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Series,” low maintenance vinyl siding replicating the original appearance. Excavation around 100-year-old trees was required while trying not to disturb their root systems. The rear yard was maintained suitable for badminton, croquet and other family sports.

“It was a satisfying project that challenged our creativity, and spoke volumes about what can be accomplished with teamwork,” said Alex Dean. “It’s not often a contractor gets to have an impact on history and save a valuable piece for future generations to enjoy.”



For more information about the Sears homes, visit www.searsarchives.com.



Alex Dean, left, takes a few minutes out of a visit to Marrokal Construction in San Diego, Ca., to be photographed with Mike Colman (TAG construction manager), Gary Marrokal (CEO Marrokal), and Bruce Howard (director of production, Marrokal). Mike toured numerous job sites with Bruce, while Alex gave a seminar to Marrokal’s four design consultants.

“Marrokal’s new 1,900 square foot design center is very impressive and definitely enhances his clientele’s remodeling experience,” Mike said. “In our exchange of ideas, we learned several valuable ways to improve our production.”

Welcome to our newest employee: Greg Lacy

Please join us in welcoming Greg Scott Lacy to The Alexander Group team. Greg has more than 16 years of experience as a carpenter and specializes in trim work.



“Trim work is the finishing touch on a home,” Greg said. “It is one of my favorite aspects of carpentry work.”

When Greg isn’t working, he and his family enjoy camping and canoeing on the Shenandoah River. He and his wife, Karen, have two children: Brandon, 14 and Katie, 9 and live in Howard County.

■ Visit our Web site: AlexanderGroup.net

■ Excellence in architectural craftsmanship and remodeling

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