



# One-of-a-kind Renovations From Design to Restoration

Doherty House - 2005 Heritage Award of Merit



Glen House

Staff Writer

IMPACT! Special Feature

*"Paul, we are extremely pleased with the results – both esthetic and functional. We have received many compliments on the transformation. A real 'wow'. The renovation has literally transformed the whole feel of the house. Thank you for such a wonderful job."*

– Catherine & Doug, for the "Fairmeadow House" renovation

If you want to see how design and construction can truly be integrated in residential renovation and heritage projects, visit the Deny Builds Design website ([www.denys.ca](http://www.denys.ca)). You'll see dozens of comments from clients who have experienced Paul Denys' truly "one of a kind" approach to renovation and restoration projects.

"By working on site on my projects, I have a more intimate understanding of how my clients live," Denys says. "This allows me to adapt or adjust the design to meet their specific needs."

"A lot of the design work evolves on site," he said. "Not on paper like most designers – I do not design in a vacuum. My design develops interactively with the client."

While heritage work, including projects like the painstaking rebuild of the Rochon House porch based on a 1908 photo, is satisfying and rewarding, most of Denys' time is spent on functional yet appealing kitchen, bathroom and family area projects, with project value and scope ranging from \$20,000 to \$100,000 or more.

*"Paul you did a fantastic job of re-creating our porch from a 1908 photo. You are an artist in your trade. It is with great satisfaction that we wholeheartedly recommend you to anyone who wants renovations."*

Jean Claude & Simone, owners of the Rochon House

Denys says his biggest strength is his ability to help clients make their own decisions, by listening to their wishes and then suggesting ideas. "My role as a designer/builder is not to tell my clients what to do, but to give them the choices and make them aware of the options."



Patterson House - 2007 Honourable Mention OCHBA in Kitchens under 200 sq. ft.

For example, he listens to how long the clients expect to stay in their home (these days, it is usually 10 years or less) and then recommends the level of renovation that will satisfy their needs and retain value for the future. Kitchens and bathrooms, of course, are important both because they are immediately functional and because homeowners can quickly recover the cost of the renovation in increased property and resale value.

"Every client is different," he says. "Some wish to be involved in all aspects of the project, going around to showrooms, and selecting fixtures and the like, and others wish me to take care of all the details."

*"Paul, we want to extend our appreciation for the fantastic renovation you completed. You listened to our needs and were able to turn our vision of a warm, inviting family space into reality."*

*"We were especially impressed with the cleanliness of the worksite and your willingness to perform additional 'handyman' tasks for us that made our move to this new house so much easier."*

*"We would not hesitate to recommend you to family and friends with full confidence that your work would be completed with pride and quality."*

*– Trish and Chris, commenting on the Placel House Gathering Room*

Denys says he is able to handle challenging heritage projects that few renovators or contractors are qualified to tackle, but this specialized work is only a small part of his business. "The type of client who hires us appreciates pride of workmanship," he says. "They want something a bit different, and they need help in

Rochon House - 2001 Heritage Award of Merit & 2001 OCHBA Restoration



Mason House - 1994 OCHBA Best Housing Detail



expressing it – that's where we carve our niche."

He adds: "Anything difficult and finicky to do – that's what we're known for."

Clients always receive real value for their money. Denys' understanding of design, as well as his extensive reading and research on building issues and trends, ensures that the work is both effective and functional. In fact, he gently discourages inappropriate or excessive renovations where the cost of the work far exceeds the value of building a new structure. "I ask how much value is there in a \$100,000 media room, or a complete home renovation to accommodate space needs for a family with teenagers who will soon leave the house," he says.

*"Paul's attention to detail and colour consultation transformed this space and ensured that it merges successfully with the other rooms. I echo the comment of Paul's other clients with respect to his awareness of, and advice on, design and design trends."*

*– Daphne, commenting on the Laurier House Bathroom project*

Denys said he truly appreciates the support from his suppliers and associates (see related story.) "They keep me in touch with the trends and provide the support we need to satisfy our clients," he says. He has deliberately kept his business small and responsive, with a strong network of supporting trades and services for the diversity of projects he completes.

"Each client and project is unique," says Denys. "The common thread for everyone and every project is our appreciation of the harmony between the design

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*"You have an impeccable sense of design, and a really fine knowledge of what's available (continentally, not just locally), but you also listen so thoroughly, and question so carefully, that we end up with a seamless blend of your expertise and our taste. In my experience of craftsmen, that's very rare . . . the renovation is so much in character with our house and our needs that we simply don't remember what was there before."*

*– Ben and Elenor, speaking about the O'Connor House home office project*



Hopewell House



MacKinnon House



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*Paul Denys*

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