

East And West Really Meet In Charles McKenzie Home

By PAQUITA FINE

When one enters the home of Charles and Margaret McKenzie on Christopher Road, the impact is one of beauty. These two master decorators have successfully blended Eastern and Western decor.

"Actually," said Mrs. McKenzie, "our decor stuns our decorator friends, but everyone else seems to enjoy it, and Mac and I like it."

According to a recent article in Life magazine, the McKenzies are far ahead of their critical decorator friends. A mixture of furnishings from many countries is the latest thing in interior decorating. It is not only stylish to put your collectors' items on display for others to enjoy, but it is also a symbol of the world traveler.

An example of this artistic blending is first seen in the entrance hall. A Turkish brazier, holding a plant, sits in front of a floor-to-ceiling mirror which is framed by an intricately carved headboard taken from a Chinese marriage bed. The carvings are Chinese symbols for fertility. Flanking the unique mirror are two directoire chairs.

Victorian furniture, slip-covered in Indian crevel work, tin vases from Mexico, and rare green spode from England share honors with Viennese carvings and cherubs in the living room.

Separating the living room from the dining room and reflected in the large mirror in the entrance hall, is a Chinese Coromandel screen made of baked clay and decorated with scenes on one side and chrysanthemums, sacred symbol of Chi-

nese emperors, on the other side. Picking up the theme of chrysanthemums is the dining room chandelier, a large, floating chrysanthemum ball of copper, made in Mexico. This copper chandelier is so highly reflective that the McKenzies use a green bulb inside, instead of the usual white bulb. Mexican "tin" has been on display in this room since May, but will be replaced with English silver in October when the McKenzies go through their changeover from summer to winter house furnishings.

Wall-to-wall bookcases in the library are filled to capacity with books, and small items collected from the countries the McKenzies have visited. Beneath the mantel is a collection of English Horse Brasses which measure about two inches in diameter. Considered a rarity is the one which was made for the coronation of the Prince of Wales, King Edward VIII, a coronation that never took place. This Brass bears a likeness of the Prince, but the inscription has been erased.

Yellow net curtains from Belgium offer a strange and enchanting contrast to Japanese bamboo shades, Malayan dolls, and Egyptian wall hangings in the sunroom where the McKenzies do most of their work. "Mac has three desks, and I have two," said Mrs. McKenzie. "But you can see," she added, pointing to two cluttered card tables, "this is where we really work." Part of their work is for their own enjoyment and consists of clipping news items about their friends, a habit picked up by Mrs. McKenzie from Joseph Daniels who used to wear a pair of blunt-end scissors on a ribbon around his neck and who often remarked that Jonathan, his son, got paid by the inch but that he got paid by the pound.

Everywhere in the house are dolls, a small part of a collection of 750, which Mrs. McKenzie began in 1926. "I began a collection of costumes, originally," she said "because, back then, it was quite the fad to hold costume parties. But costumes are too bulky to collect, so I switched to dolls, all in native dress. Actually, dolls is not a good term for the collection since many are figurines and puppets and vary in size from one inch to two feet. Mac and I find them interesting from two standpoints, historically and sociologically." She picked up

two from Israel. One looked like a figure from a Biblical scene, and the other showed the influence of modern times.

The bulk of Mrs. McKenzie's doll collection is now in Raleigh where Mrs. J. Melvin Broughton, widow of the former Governor and Senator is trying to find a permanent home for it. "The main problem is finding enough space to display them," said Mrs. McKenzie. "When Mac was president of Mary Baldwin College, the dolls filled shelves in several rooms and along the corridors. The shelves were ceiling high and the ceilings were very high."

Mrs. McKenzie, the former Margaret Hines, was born and reared in Goldsboro and later lived in Raleigh where she often stayed with her aunt, Mrs. B. H. Griffin. Mrs. Griffin founded the Yarnborough Cabinet, now known as the Sir Walter Cabinet. "At the age of five, I passed sandwiches to this group; I suppose this makes me a charter member," said Mrs. McKenzie.

In 1930 she graduated from Bryn Mawr, and in 1932 she married Charles W. McKenzie. A native of Boston, Mr. McKenzie moved to New Hampshire at the age of six, to live on a farm and feed the cows, dig potatoes, pick apples, and get two cents a box for strawberries. During World War I he joined the Infantry. In 1920 he graduated from Dartmouth and in 1923 he met his future wife on a ship from Montreal to Glasgow. His wife remembers that she was terribly seasick and fell down the main stairs where she was caught by "Mac." (He claims that she threw herself into his arms.) She was only 15, and he was already an instructor in Political Science at Dartmouth. They became acquainted during the ten-day crossing, and their friendship developed via his sister who was the same age as the future Mrs. McKenzie. Nine years later they were married.

Mr. McKenzie went from Dartmouth to Washington University in St. Louis to teach for 17 years, and then, into service again for four years during World War II. He was adjutant at the pre-flight training school in San Antonio. After the war, he was on the editorial staff of the St. Louis Star-Times for six months. He then went to Westminster College in Fulton, Missouri, where he was dean of the college and head of the



Mr. And Mrs. Charles McKenzie At Home

Political Science Department. From 1950 till 1953 he lived in London while doing research on the British party system. In 1954, he became president of Mary Baldwin College in Staunton, Va., where he remained until his retirement in 1956.

Even in retirement the McKenzies are extremely active. They enjoy gardening, traveling, and entertaining their many house guests — since their move to Chapel Hill in 1956, they have had 202 house guests. Mr. McKenzie does all the cooking, but claims he is not a baker. "Broiled chicken a la sherry is my favorite," he said. He learned to cook at Dartmouth; on outings he discovered that the cook didn't have to chop wood. "Mac's real hobby," said Mrs. McKenzie, "is bird watching, and

he is in constant competition with our neighbor, Mrs. Simmons, to see who can attract the most birds. Mrs. Simmons does it with a special peanut recipe, but Mac claims that his cooked rice and sherry attracts them by the hundreds and proves it with his count of over 200 birds feeding at one time under the overhang of the house during one snow and ice period last winter."

The McKenzies helped organize the Raleigh-Durham-Chapel Hill branch of the English Speaking Union, an organization to promote friendship and understanding among the English speaking peoples. Mr. McKenzie was vice president for two years and president for two years; Mrs. McKenzie was secretary-treasurer for one year.

Binkley Sermon Topic Announced

"Three Attributes of Scripture" will be the topic of the sermon at The Binkley Memorial Baptist Church today at 11 a.m. in Gerrard Hall on the University campus. Dr. Robert Seymour is minister.

The church maintains a nursery at 507 E. Franklin Street. Church School commences at 9:45. Classes for adults and students are held in Gerrard Hall. All children's groups meet at the Franklin Street address.

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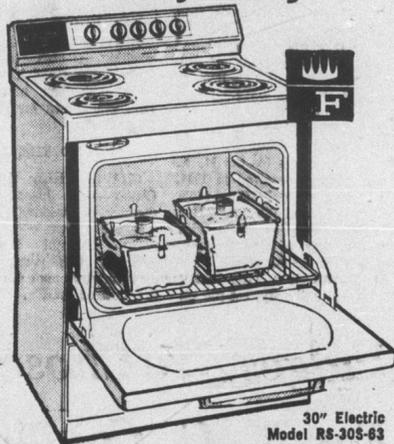
Studying in France

Miss Gloria Di Costanzo, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Nestore Di Costanzo of Mt. Bolus Road, sailed from New York Wednesday aboard the liner "Seven Seas" for France.

Miss Di Costanzo was graduated from the University here in June with a major in French. She was elected to the Phi Beta Kappa Chapter during her junior year. She has been awarded a scholarship by the Alliance Francaise de New York.

During her year in France, Miss Di Costanzo will pursue graduate studies in French literature at the University of Aix-les-Bains.

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