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HOUSE RULES

HISTORY MEETS HIGH DESIGN AT
THE NEW 'QUIN HOUSE



A pair of custom sofas anchor the Reading Room. The sofas are clad in embossed green velvet from Misia and based on a historic Davenport design.

HOUSE RULES

HISTORY
MEETS HIGH
DESIGN AT THE
'QUIN HOUSE.

BY KRISTIN DETTERLINE
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Five years before The 'Quin House opened, Sandy Edgerley had a vision for a new kind of private social club in Boston.

The entrepreneur, philanthropist and real estate developer was working on a project that involved a number of friends in other cities. A few of them mentioned that private clubs were popping up in London and San Francisco and that Edgerley should consider establishing one in Boston. Though she was intrigued by the concept, it wasn't right for her at the time. But the idea stuck in the back of her mind as she continued her work in renovating historic properties: Could one of these architectural gems be transformed into a private club that offered multiple experiences in hospitality and wellness beneath one roof? She found the answer to her question at the former Algonquin Club.

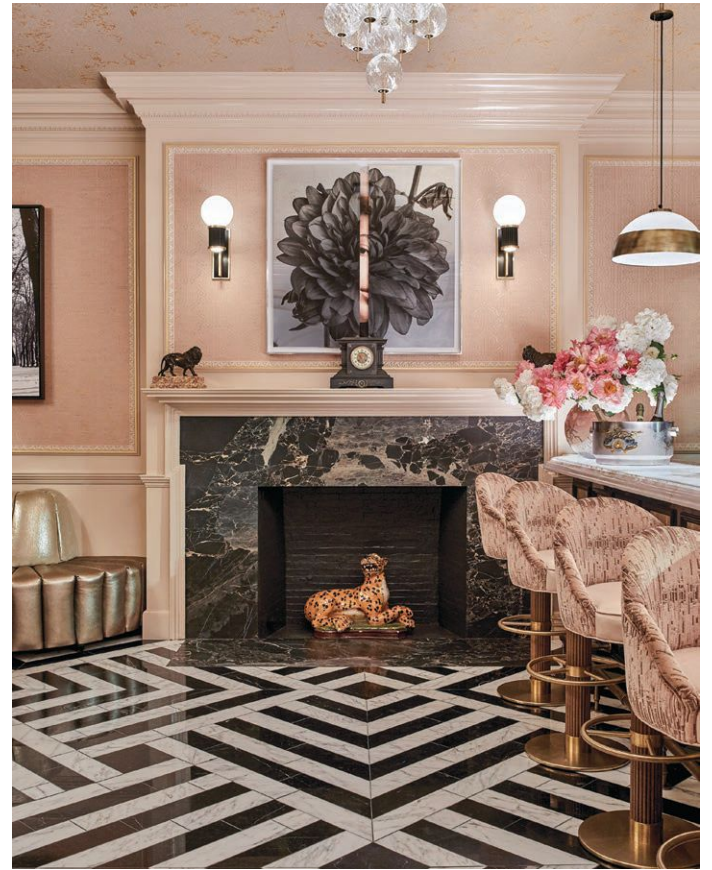
"It was a beautiful building but it needed a lot of TLC and restoration and reimagining, but the bones of it were phenomenal," says Edgerley. "I thought that this was the perfect place to execute this big vision of what a new private club in Boston could be. And that's really how it started."

Edgerley and her husband, Paul, opened The 'Quin House in July. Located in one of the Back Bay's most historic buildings along the Commonwealth Mall with views of the Charles River, the invitation-only private social club spans 56,000 square feet over six floors. It is now home to four restaurants, six lounges, three bars, eight guest quarters, a roof deck, a fitness and wellness center and several private event spaces. The club also serves as





Scottie's bar was inspired by F. Scott Fitzgerald's daughter's name as a tribute to what was formerly the ladies lounge at the club.



the command post for the new 'Quin Impact Fund, a philanthropic initiative that supports local and national organizations that are making positive contributions to the community.

Edgerley is a celebrated name on the Boston charity circuit. Over the past few decades, she has committed countless hours to numerous causes, including the Boys & Girls Club of Boston, City Year and the United Way of Massachusetts Bay. She currently serves as the board chair of the Boston Foundation and, along with her husband,

remains an active alum of Harvard University. The fund is Edgerley's focus heading into 2022. In September, a panel passed out gifts to nonprofits focused on various issues, including youth and education. Next, they will turn their attention to local arts, as well as discovery and innovation organizations.

"The building underwent a remarkable transformation to make it stylistically relevant while honoring the past, maintaining the architectural integrity and reimagining the interior to reflect the 21st century," says Edgerley. She

CULTURE CLUB

BOSTON'S MOST EXCITING NEW ART COLLECTION ISN'T HOUSED IN A MUSEUM.

"Art is intrinsic to The 'Quin House. In our 250-plus-piece art collection, each work has been woven into the club to offer moments of beauty, inspiration and reflection to tell a story without words," says Sandy Edgerley, who worked with Kate Chertavian and Lucy Rosenburgh of Kate Chertavian Fine Art (KCFA, katecfineart.com) in Cambridge. She says that the overall vision for the collection was simply to be seen and appreciated by members and visitors alike.

"When you walk into the club, you see some very celebrated artists—Auguste Rodin, Andy Warhol, Pablo Picasso—and right next to them is a print by contemporary visual artist Julie Mehretu of Ethiopian descent. To have Mehretu right there alongside these historic greats is one of those important statements, which you see right when you walk in and is reflected throughout the club."

The team also took great care in reimagining the club's existing art collection, which came with the property, so that there was a balance of older, traditional pieces and fresh, modern works.

"The Reading Room is a great example of this: There is an oil portrait of former President Calvin Coolidge in the Reading Room, a former member of the Algonquin Club, which was painted by a very prominent impressionist painter, Edmund C. Tarbell, who was also a member. We were able to surround that piece with an entirely diverse group of artists who also are showcased in the Reading Room.

"Adjacent to the portrait of Coolidge is a piece by contemporary portraitist Kehinde Wiley, the artist who painted Barack Obama's presidential portrait, and among the many BIPOC artists are Samuel Levi Jones, McArthur Binion, Nick Cave. In the same company are female artists such as Harmony Hammond and Cecily Brown."



executed this breathtaking renovation alongside Ken Fulk. The in-demand interior designer, whose collection of stunning projects include the recently opened Contessa, says that his firm was brought on before the Edgerleys had even purchased the club.

"From the outset, their vision for a best-in-class community gathering place was perfectly in sync with our firm's passion for creating unforgettable experiences and

environments," says Fulk, who serves as creative director at The 'Quin House. "Our shared language and mission for the club never shifted: to revitalize this historic purpose-built clubhouse and build it out to be its very best modern-day version of itself."

"We crafted a layered approach referencing the great American styles throughout the 20th century so that the design felt evolved over time and would retain a sense of history and

In one of the restrooms, the Ken Fulk team designed a custom oversized plaid painted on the walls by Deborah Phillips. Opposite page: A sofa covered in Erica Shamrock emerald velvet with Samuel and Sons ombré trim in the Little Bar offers a glimpse into the historic Reading Room beyond.





Centered in Bondo's two-story space is a remarkable, oversized tree sculpture by Donald Lipski that shines with over 2,500 Swarovski crystals.



gravitas. We brought in elements of art deco, Arts and Crafts and midcentury modernism by tying them all together within a streamlined palette of colors and materials.”

Edgerley says that restoration, where possible, was the top priority when considering the design of the property.

“From ornate fireplaces to the marble columns, handcarved ceilings and chandeliers, striking features from the original Algonquin Club have been lovingly restored to their original opulence and others repurposed into modernized masterpieces for their new home,” she says, noting that this was the only building in Boston that was designed to be a private club. McKim, Mead & White, who designed the Boston Public Library, built the property to house the Algonquin Club between 1886 and 1888.

“The building was magnificent from the start; it had phenomenal bones and has always been beautiful. It needed a lot of TLC and, in some cases, significant renovation. We put in all-new systems from sprinklers to electrical, sound, Wi-Fi and finishes. Every inch of the building was thoughtfully reimagined. For example, in the Reading Room, we first thought we would keep the original wallpaper, but as we discovered the state of being over 100 years old and stained, we ended up not being able to save it, but rather we re-created it with the leather, painting and gilding to make it look just as it did.”

Also in the Reading Room, Fulk says that a large collection of Davenport custom-made original furniture needed special attention. “Alfred H. Davenport was an early member of the club and worked closely with McKim, Mead & White in providing furniture to complement many



Two custom-designed chairs by Orior Furniture sit by the fireplace in the Pub. Overhead, Tudor-style timber beams and framing are all custom made in local Northeast pine, hand-glazed and charred by local wood artisan Frank Hamm. Opposite page: The 'Quin Club is located within one of the most historic buildings in the Back Bay.

of their concepts. We conserved these pieces with the help of McLaughlin Upholstering and restored them to their former glory by reintroducing original upholstery details back into the furniture that had been removed over time. When I walk into the Reading Room, it is so satisfying to see what it looks like now. I feel like we have done the original space justice in its newest iteration.”

Elsewhere, Fulk says that Bondo, the club’s Japanese restaurant, is the finest example of the careful revitalization of the historic clubhouse. “The grand double-height dining room with original historic paneling has been coated in plum lacquer and combined with bleached herringbone wood floors,” he says. “The centerpiece is a showstopping custom tree root-inspired chandelier by renowned artist Donald Lipski.”

Fulk found a new home for the room’s existing light fixture—“a monumental three-tier Colonial pewter chandelier,” he says—on the new garden-inspired Terrace. Situated one floor up the grand staircase, the former light well was opened up to create year-round cafe seating under a retractable roof. Drawing inspiration from Parisian courtyards, the Terrace features trellis-covered walls, custom-cut stone pavers and bistro lights.

When restoration wasn’t possible, the team welcomed the chance to carve out entirely new spaces for the club. Café Q is one such concept.

“From the beginning we knew we wanted an all-day gathering place, a comfortable spot to grab a coffee with friends, take a lunch meeting or have a relaxed dinner,” says Fulk. “This space was formerly the coat check and back offices of the original club. It’s wonderful to see it brought to life and bustling. Part of the room is covered in soft gray painted paneling, while the other half is clad in lime-washed brick as if to give a glimpse of the building’s bones. The central bar is the focal point, while overhead the room is crowned by





a canopy of pendants in custom 'Quin blue silk shades from our new collection with The Urban Electric Co."

One of Edgerley's favorite design moments at 'Quin House can be found in Café Q. "I was in London with the team on an inspiration tour. Paul, Kate Chertavian and I went to an art fair, and when we were there, we found the Alberto Giacometti prints that line the walls in Café Q and the chandelier Cupola light from studio AMeBE that hangs above the reception in the lobby. Both were pieces that we fell in love with, and we thought, 'I don't know where they're going to go in The 'Quin, but they're perfect!' Those are fun moments from an art perspective."

One of Fulk's favorite places is also one of the smallest, the appropriately named Hideaway. Accessible through a hidden door in the Living Room, the tented Moorish-inspired room is punctuated by a wraparound sectional and outfitted with vintage turntables and a state-of-the-art sound system. Says Fulk, "Here, members can immerse themselves in their favorite musical memories. We always like having a little trick up our sleeves!"

Fulk says the Edgerleys were true partners and collaborators every step of the way. "After seeing all of the elements come together over the past few years, Sandy and Paul were thrilled to be able to step inside the club that started out as just a seedling of an idea," he says. "I think we all were most excited, however, to see the members' reactions to the space. I feel confident that this club will be a frequently enjoyed space for The 'Quin's members for generations to come." *The 'Quin House, 217 Commonwealth Ave., thequinhouse.com* ■