Initially built in the early 1900s and known as the East Major House for its original owner, this Tudor Revival estate in Newton harks back to a bygone era. The home's complex massing, imposing brick exterior and handmade clay tile roof, as well as a crenellated oriel with diamond paneled windows were just a few of the features that made the house an impressive sight to behold before it fell into a state of disrepair. When the current homeowners acquired the property, their friend and interior designer Anthony Catalano of Anthony Catalano Interiors introduced them
to Kenneth Vona Construction who was then called upon to restore the home to its former glory with the help of architectural plans by Greg Colling and Peter Zimmerman Architects. Now, after undergoing an addition and an extensive restoration based on black and white photographs of the home from the 1940s, the new version has surpassed the original.

Completing the restoration was no easy feat. The existing structure was essentially gutted—taken apart down to the steel and timber frame and reconstructed. The seamless addition allowed the team to expand the kitchen, build a new family room, a three car garage and three bedrooms above, each with full en suite bathrooms. The goal of the project was to make everything about the estate look like it had always been there—from the design and construction of the new addition to the landscape and interior design details, every element of the project was meticulously addressed. Catalano worked hard to create a sense of continuity throughout the home by choosing finishes, furnishings and fixtures that were a combination of antique, reproduction and custom made items that created a Gothic atmosphere that felt natural and cohesive in the setting.

Previous Pages: The side entrance is adorned by a stately, arched diamond-paned windows that draw the homeowner to purchase the property. Gilson and Company crafted the elaborate stonework on the home which included the painstaking recreation of the original arched stone windows and need to be rebuilt with new steel structural components.

Landscape architecture, designed by Dan K. Gordon Associates, and built by the Scheuerman Companies, incorporated a stone band in the arched window that is framed by evergreen hedges.

Inside the arched (at right on previous page), a door was built into the space and antique reproduction lighting and chairs echo the details of the arch overhead.

Left: Anthony Catalano Interiors used a combination of reproduction and antique furniture and light fixtures here and throughout the home. The living room also features an antique rug.
Opposite: The starting point for the interior design of the library (formerly a scriptorium) was the inlaid oak specimen marble floor in a gothic design. The desk and chairs are antiques, and the homeowner found Tiffany lamps that fill the space perfectly. The tone of the wood is consistent with that used throughout the home, and the same hand-hewed oak custom rods were also used throughout to maintain a level of continuity and establish a sense of an old element that could have been original to the home.

Left: The scriptorium as it was in the 1940s.

Below: The dining room, leading into the newly expanded kitchen, features a beautiful marble ceiling, antique furniture and rugs, and a limestone fireplace with a custom forged iron enclosure. The exquisite dining room, while oak wood floor was reclaimed by Kenneth Viera Construction from an existing 19th century mansion and each piece was painstakingly numbered and reinstalled in the dining room. Most leaded-glass doors created the feeling that is consistent with the tone of wood they used throughout the home.

Below left: The dining room as it was in the 1940s.
The new kitchen was designed to feel as though it had always been there. Anthony Cavallaro Interiors chose a pale yellow for the cowtanetry to make the space feel fresh. Every element from the thick kitchen backsplash behind the island to the white bronze hand forged hardware and Burnished Copper Backsplash is designed to stand with a warm feel to it. The light fixture is striking and the kitchen features both a broadcut 12” red stone farmer’s sink.
The ground of the estate also received a makeover; landscape architects at Dan K. Gordon Associates created gardens and landscaping worthy of the home’s grand and sophisticated stature. Gordon described the landscape that is constructed and maintained by the Schumacher Companies as a series of outdoor spaces that are closely related to the interior architecture. New features include a well-defined oval lawn with an inset band of stone-off of the side entry and several levels at the back of the home that feature a great deal of topographic grade change along the natural slope of the land. As was the goal for the architecture and interiors, the landscape suits the property and looks like it has always been there.

Ken Vona of Kenneth Vona Construction described this Tudor Revival as a dream project. “Working on this home was a once in a lifetime opportunity,” he said. “We had the most incredible homeowners, who are truly some of the nicest people I have ever met, and they had the means and the desire to do justice to this magnificent property.”

It is a credit to the successful collaboration between the homeowners and the team of highly qualified professionals that when you walk onto the property today, you are presented with a sprawling estate that is true to its Tudor Revival roots while being subtly enhanced with modern amenities. The home was rebuilt brick by brick and boasts a seamless new addition, but instead it appears to be a beautifully maintained home from the 1930s with interiors, exteriors and landscape architecture that have stood the test of time. Communication, collaboration, and expert craftsmanship never go out of style.
The home was rebuilt brick by brick and boasts a seamless new addition.