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WHEN LOCAL INTERIOR DESIGNER ANDREA KERRISON began planning an apartment space for her mother-in-law, Anne, she knew immediately where to shop. Already familiar with the Hope Chest consignment store in Orono, Kerrison decided to use it as her sole design resource. "There wasn't any doubt in my mind that I would use Hope Chest," she says. The result is a charming space completed on a limited budget, with threefold benefit.

Kerrison knows good design; featured in the December 2009 issue of *This Old House* magazine for one of her residential projects, she has more than 20 years of experience in interior design and architecture. She also knows Hope Chest for Breast Cancer and its mission—to help under-served women and their families affected by breast cancer—for she has spent the past five years volunteering with the organization, as both a sponsor and a chairperson for its annual gala.

With the parameters of 600 square feet, a limited budget and a single resource for furnishings, Kerrison had an interesting challenge. She says that limiting her choices to Hope Chest finds did not complicate her task in the least. "Their merchandise changes so quickly, I knew what I didn't find one day, I would find in the next day or two." Since the store features upscale merchandise in "brand new condition," Kerrison was confident she could find pieces worthy of her mother-in-law. As a designer, she also knew that clients who are redecorating often donate high-end items as they make room for updates. She estimates she saved \$5,000–7,000 by buying the formerly owned, lightly loved pieces.

Though the space is small, Kerrison realized its significance for Anne, who was relocating from California. Homes, she says, "are not just places, but sensory experiences where you enjoy this luxury called life." She found multi-purpose items to make the best use of the space, as well as pretty items to lend interest and comfort. Her favorite found item is "the beautiful secretary" in the living room, which fulfills both of those needs. When Kerrison spotted it at Hope Chest, she immediately recognized its resemblance to one Anne had owned 50 years ago at her lake home in upstate New York. Serving as a desk, sitting area and storage, the piece also anchors the room and provides a warm sense of comfort—



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the perfect spot for tea and toast. The comfortable floral sofa satisfies Anne's love for color; she loves all of the touches Kerrison provided throughout the homey space, including the side chair with its needlepoint seat cover, the decorative pillows and cheery throw.

Soft color and simple comfort define the restful bedroom, with its iron bed and vintage-look "tea stained" bed linens. A traditional botanical print complements the hand-painted oval bedside chest.

With her design complete, Kerrison enlisted the aid of highly regarded interior design photographer Susan Gilmore, who generously lent her talents to document the project in photos.

When Kerrison designs, she treats "a home as a whole—a synergy of details, character and style that together capture the spirit and the stories of those who live there," she says. In this simple, stylish re-do, she has fulfilled that purpose, while also providing that threefold benefit. Kerrison's use of reclaimed items (the most effective type of re-use) benefits our rapidly growing landfills, recovers some of Anne's pleasures and recycles the spirit of those served by Hope Chest's mission. //

HOPE CHEST FOR CANCER

→ Raises funds through: the sale of donated, upscale furniture, accessories and designer women's clothing at its retail stores; fundraising events and programs; and financial donations.

→ Provides emergency funds for rent, utilities, transportation and more to under-served women who are unable to work due to the side effects of breast cancer treatment; delivers nutritional meals for under-served women and their families during breast cancer treatment; and provides early detection education and screening, with a focus on diverse populations.

→ Was founded in 2001 by Barbara Hensley, who survives two sisters who lost their battle with breast cancer.



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