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BY NANCY KEATES

PHYLIS YALE and Tucker Taft long spent their Martha's Vineyard vacations at a rustic communal colony—a place where members are assigned daily chores, meals are shared and some of the tiny cabins don't have bathrooms.

After a couple of decades, the couple decided to build their own house, where they could make their own rules and set their own schedules. At the same time, they wanted a house that evoked the summer-camp feeling of the colony.

Their new 2,950-square-foot, five-bedroom compound, in the tiny town of West Tisbury a few miles down the road from the colony, echoes that spirit in several ways. It is made up of three structures: All three have bedrooms, like the cabins, and the large central building also has a kitchen, living room and dining area where everyone gathers.

While the structure might be campy, the overall aesthetic of the new house is a far cry from the colony's ungraced buildings, some of which date back to the 17th century. Designed by Maryann Thompson Architects, a firm whose other work ranges from schools to museums, the house is streamlined and modern. The buildings have almost flat roofs, with slightly angled pitches, white oak floors, white walls, pendant lighting and custom furniture. Lofts take advantage of the 17-foot-tall ceilings.

Instead of the colony's large walls made of large irregularly piled stones and a scruffy yard, the house has a neatly manicured lawn and lots of hydrangea bushes. The lot leads down to a slice of Tisbury Great Pond, where the couple likes to kayak.

The colony's members pay \$225 a person a day (meals included); the house was about \$2.5 million to build and its 3½-acre lot cost about another \$1.5 million.

The couple began heading to the colony in the 1970s, invited there by a college friend. They loved it so much they joined and started going a week ever summer, taking their two daughters.

Decades passed. Mr. Taft, 63, is now director of language research at AdaCore, a global software company; Ms. Yale, 59, is an advisory partner in Bain & Company's Boston office and chairman of the boards at Kindred Healthcare and Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts. The couple's full time house is in a Midcentury Modern development in Lexington, Mass. They decided they wanted to spend more time in the summer on Martha's Vineyard and stay longer into the fall.

Ms. Yale, who oversaw the design and construction, approached it in some ways just as organized and methodically as she might a consulting job.

She made a list of three overall objectives: to create a place where



INSIDE STORY

A Contemporary Summer Camp

A couple creates a Martha's Vineyard home inspired by a rustic colony

SINGLE-FAMILY COLONY The five-bedroom compound is made up of three structures. All three have bedrooms, and the large central building also has a kitchen and living area. Owners Phyllis Yale and Tucker Taft like going outside to get from their bedroom to the kitchen because it connects them to the outdoors.



WOOD AND WHITES Ms. Yale and Mr. Taft, above. The home has white oak floors, pendant lighting and custom furniture



friends and families could all stay at once yet still have privacy; to have a design that took advantage of the views of the land and the pond; and to be as sustainable as possible.

To achieve privacy, clusters of bedrooms were separated in different buildings. The main structure has two bedrooms, a bathroom with radiant heat stone floors and a loft; the guest structure has two bedrooms, a bathroom and a loft; and the master bedroom and bath-

room are in their own structure. As at the colony, the couple has to go outside to get from their bedroom to the kitchen—something they love because it connects them to the outdoors.

The views are maximized via glass walls overlooking the pond. Skylights and clerestory windows bring in light from up high, making the inside feel more like the outside since the light outdoors comes from above. An outdoor covered passageway between the

master bedroom structure and the main structure lets air circulate to keep the house cool.

The home is south-facing, which keeps it warm in the winter from the sun, but has large overhangs that provide shade from the higher summer sun, explains architect Maryann Thompson. Photovoltaic panels on the roof supply much of the home's electricity and a ductless HVAC system keeps the loss of energy down. Large spouts on the roof overhangs direct the rainwa-

ter to massive stones on the ground, creating a fountain effect

The couple has since created their own communal environment. They have their two daughters or guests up every weekend and every summer they host a potluck for their entire neighborhood.

Still, they miss the company at the colony and go there occasionally for dinner. Sometimes they even miss the rules: "He's not quite as eager to do chores here," jokes Ms. Yale about her husband