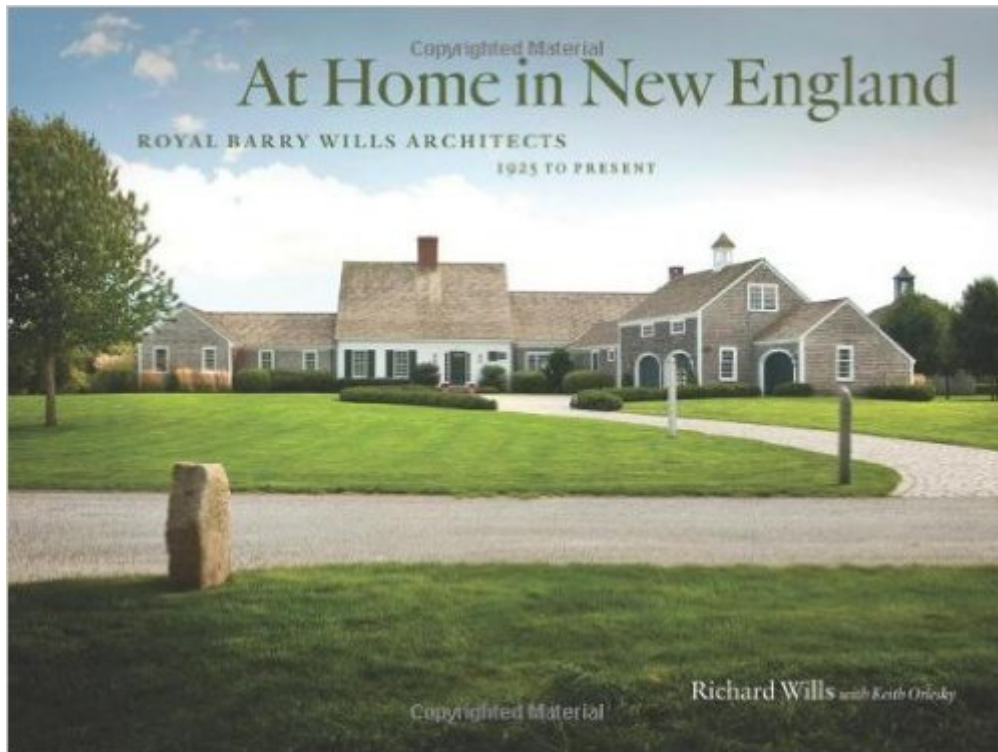


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At Home In New England: Royal Barry Wills Architects 1925 To Present



Synopsis

The now venerable firm of Royal Barry Wills was founded in a one-room office on Boston's Beacon Street in 1925. Initially fueled by word of mouth and occasional newspaper exposure, the firm gained admiration for Wills's fresh take on various New England styles, including Georgian, Tudor, French Provincial, and Colonial American. Driven by the country's desire for both aesthetic appeal and practicality, the firm's popularity increased dramatically with its focus on the creation of modern homes inspired by the one-and-a-half-story Cape Cod houses, which perfectly balanced the classic and the new. Now run by his son, Richard Wills, the firm has been designing elegant private homes in the classically inspired Colonial New England tradition for more than eighty-five years. As time has passed, their Cape Cod-style homes have proven remarkably adaptable to the demands of contemporary life, while staying true to Wills's original flair for intermingling past and present. This book features examples of the firm's work from its founding to the present, with an emphasis on more recent houses that have been built throughout New England.

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Customer Reviews

At Home In New England captures every element of the Royal Barry Wills spirit that I adore - multi-sectioned structures, elevations that nestle into their sites, bonafide wood accoutrements, and rooms planned for privacy and quietude. Most of the 31 homes here were designed over the last ten years by the 85+ year old firm that continues the legendary RBW name and style. I was pleased to

see that some of the older homes from Houses For Good Living are included. (Very hard to find at a reasonable price, but worth it ... Houses for Good Living) And I am positively thrilled that plans - yes, including the second floor - are provided. This makes it easy to forgive the paucity of interior and exterior shots on so many of the homes. As expected, certain modern elements have crept into the newer plans: open kitchen/living areas, larger rooms, and more bathrooms. (Although, I have to say I've always thought RBW was ahead of his time by being fairly generous with the number of bathrooms.) Some of these new designs are positively grand. For instance, a stately brick colonial titled "A House On Cape Cod" boasts 16,000 square feet of living space. My favorite display is the side-by-side old versus new comparison of two versions of "A House in West Harwich". The original plan was good enough to win a Presidential Gold Medal, yet the modern modifications are very well and respectfully done. Fittingly, the last home of the book is the one Royal Barry Wills designed for himself. This "House in Winchester" was designed to fit into an existent rose garden and features a large beamed study. It is unassuming yet dignified and livable. Much like every RBW house I have seen, it is exuberantly sedate and serene - a style I hope is never lost.

I am thoroughly enjoyed reading *At Home in New England*. It takes some time to absorb all the details, flipping back and forth to compare elevations and floor plans. The photography is stunning! I like that the floor plans are drawn in Royal Barry Wills style and would have loved them to be larger and it would have been nice if some of the smaller rooms were labeled, but with the publishing business these days, we are thankful for what we get! I think Keith Orlesky has done a great job with the introduction as I gleaned much new information and insights. I like his writing style in making each description of the individual houses unique. I am thrilled to see how the many examples of how Richards Wills carries on and yet refines his fathers design style to work in today's world of much larger houses. His expertise compliments, if not expounds on the tradition of excellent detailing and superb scale and execution. I only wish that there were more interior shots, but again understand why not.

Absolutely superb. Exactly what I'd hoped it would be. I have a copy of one of Wills's older books, "More Houses for Good Living" and this new monograph honors the spirit of the older book and carries it forward into a new generation. In fact some of the classic houses by Royal Barry Wills from the older book are featured in this new volume, but most of the houses here are by Richard Wills and his firm. The Wills tradition is alive and well, in their hands. The inclusion of floor plans for each house makes it a genuine monograph on the firm's work, not just a book of pretty pictures. Richard

Wills's own designs capture the simplicity, restraint and quiet good taste of his father's work, but in a way that is relevant to how people live today. Very impressive book and very reasonably priced.

Well done!

This book is perfect and I highly recommend adding this publication to any collection of architectural monographs. Great architect representing a legendary firm with nearly 100 years of excellence in residential design. Beautiful photos plus plans of several examples of work over a number of years. I hope there is a volume II in the planning stage. Well done.

I bought this as a gift for my daughter and her fiance, who are building a New England cape to be completed in time for their wedding in 2016. What better helping hand could I lend than this volume dedicated to the work of the guru of the Cape, Royal Barry Wills. He got it right for modern times.

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