



WestPoint  
Pepperell

**news**

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#### HOW DO YOU MAKE A FOAM DOME HOUSE?

Today's informal living requires a new concept in architecture, construction and interior design. That is where the new curvilinear house comes in. All over the country dome-like structures are popping up, made of a wide variety of materials. As a reaction to the dehumanizing of the conventional construction techniques used to make rectilinear houses, the more individualistic dome houses appeal to the new adventurous generation.

In keeping with a prior commitment to leisure living and its many facets, WestPoint Pepperell has built a very unconventional dome house made of polyurethane foam using new products from its broad spectrum of textiles. Designed for the company by Felix Drury, professor of architecture at Yale University, the Foam House was decorated with WestPoint Pepperell products by Vera Hahn, Interior Design Editor at American Home Magazine.

Starting with the very core of this unusual house, liquid polyurethane foam was applied onto a fabric target, supported by inflated balloons. The fabric, a heavy industrial nylon coating substrate, was shaped into various dome-like structures to form the required rooms. These placed in clusters were joined in the center by another fabric shape resembling a tunnel, providing a rectilinear refuge and change of design pace.

The result; fluid, almost poetic shapes, with the softness of the folds of the fabric very apparent in the texture of the foam walls both inside and outside the house. These shapes also affect the interior light which comes in through plastic windows and domes, and which thanks to the rounded and curved surfaces bounces back and forth from one to the other, creating a pleasant relaxing interior atmosphere. Thus, an unusual blending of light and form, probably the secret of the appeal of the dome house.

Dealing with curves provided a decorating challenge. After all, most furniture and accessories designed today are geared to right angles. In this Plastic Foam House everything flows together, there is no linear demarcation where the walls and ceiling meet. This called for special seating, storage and doors and windows. Which, of course, immediately brought to mind other problems: what kind of curtains do you put on free form windows? how do you upholster curvilinear sofas? how can you carpet round rooms?

Vera Hahn, the decorator, said: "This house was a great inspiration to me, I felt it demanded a certain way of handling. It needed special furniture, very little furniture. "And, as a result much of the decorating drama was achieved with textures, color and, of course, unusual shapes and

curves. Seating space in the living room, dining room, both bedrooms, hallway and bathroom was built in. So were the beds, all built right into the foam.

All these "built-ins" required a new approach to upholstering. Using a wide range of fabrics made by WestPoint Pepperell, the designer came up with versatile, attractive and practical seating and bedding. In the dining room for instance, the built-in dining table is surrounded by carpeted seating levels which wind around it to form a comfortable conversation pit. The living room has an abundance of bench-like space around the room, foamed in rigidly and, softened with foam cushions covered in sturdy cotton duck, and throw pillows covered in terry cloth, cotton duck and stretch denim. In the two bedrooms, built-in loveseats have been covered in Dacron<sup>®</sup> polyester and cotton sheets in brilliant colors, to match the sheets used on the bed.

Carpeting plays a big role in the house. As Felix Drury, the architect, says: "The world of wall-to-wall carpeting makes a lot of sense in a foam construction because it distinguishes between floor and wall, and helps to soften the semi-orientationless organic world".

Because of the fluidity of the lines, reminiscent of water and its smoothness, the decorator was inspired by the blues, purples and greens and white of the Cabin Craft line of carpeting. The colors blend into one another from one dome to the next in perfect harmony offering sharp contrast to the stark white walls. And, because the carpeting has to be easy-care, as well as durable and naturally colorful, even glamorous, only sturdy

synthetics were used. As a result, the whole house is carpeted: the kitchen, the bath and laundry area, hallway, even the greenhouse/study area, and naturally all living areas.

Thanks to the transparent plastic bubble domes placed in the ceilings, all the colors in the house seem to vibrate even more than they might under normal lighting. A minimum of furniture is used in the house, much of the decorating drama comes from the fabrics used throughout. Colors are very bright in the bedrooms for instance, featuring Lady Pepperell® sheets in brilliant shades and bold designs. These are used in unusual ways, symbolizing a new way of life, necessitating a leisurely approach such as the sleeping bags in the children's room. Or the quilt in the master bedroom. Or the way sheets were used instead of closet doors.

Terry cloth, which is a WestPoint Pepperell staple, and found in a wide variety of prints, jacquards and solid colors, was highlighted in the foam house. Used as an upholstery fabric in the bathroom on a long built-in bench, it also makes marvelous throw pillows. These pillows play a big role in the comfort of the living room seating unit since the back of the seat is just the foam wall. But, they are large enough to be throw pillows on the floor for TV watching or Hi-Fi listening, or that old fashioned activity, reading.

It has been a rewarding experience for WestPoint Pepperell to find that the vastly diversified products made by the company fit perfectly into this almost futuristic environment. And it certainly points out that the role played by technology in the textile industry will affect life styles in

the future, and that color and good design can literally make or break interiors and play a vital role in housing of the coming years.