

VICTORIAN REDO • RAYADO RANCH • SCENIC FALLS

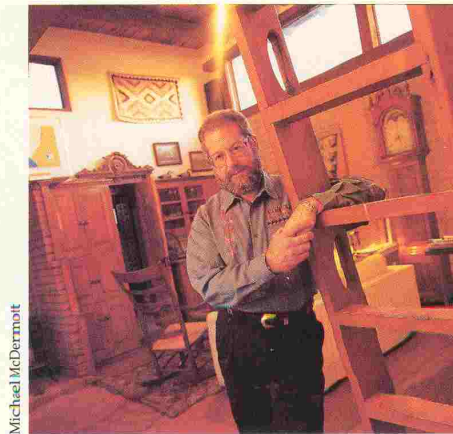
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*Inside O'Keeffe's home
Sandstone shrines
Funky furniture*



Michael McDermott

Mark M. Feldman takes a break in his office at his home in Albuquerque.

Albuquerque designer builds with the landscape in mind

by Emily Drabanski

When most folks think of Southwestern homes, they envision a traditional adobe shaped like an oversized shoebox with a roof as flat as a shoebox lid. While comfortable as an old shoe, many of the tract adobes often leave little to the imagination or eye.

Mark M. Feldman loves the old traditional adobes, but he enjoys designing homes inspired by the past that also accommodate contemporary needs and aesthetics. So not all of his homes are made of adobe nor do they all have flat roofs.

The Albuquerque builder/designer has spent many a day renovating old adobes, much like the one he and his family live in near Old Town. It still has the comfortable, sturdy feel of the traditional homes, but it also incorporates skylights and Trombe walls (for passive solar heating).

He admits he has the most fun when he can create a home from scratch to fit in the Southwestern environment. Two of his favorite contemporary designs are a home

he built for a couple in the foothills of the Sandía Mountains and another that he built as the family's vacation home in the Jémez Mountains.

"No matter what the style, I like to create beautiful buildings. As a designer, I deal with a number of issues including arrangement of space, view, natural light, access, use of site. Of course, you always get an aesthetic sense from the client," Feldman explains. "So often my buildings look quite different. People don't look at them and automatically say that's one of Mark Feldman's designs."

In the case of the home in the Sandía Heights, he worked very closely with the client, who is a physician. "The home has a lot of influences from Anasazi building, such as what is found at Mesa Verde (the monument in southern Colorado)."

As he always does, he took into consideration the surrounding environment, preserving the rugged terrain surrounding the building site. He designed the home to look as if it were an extension

of the landscape.

"Of course, a major consideration was the commanding view from here," he says. The east view takes in the towering Sandías, while to the west, city lights sparkle at night. He designed the living room to take in the expansive views. As a central gathering place, he also included a kiva fireplace. It features a raised hearth, allowing for wood storage below (a feature that many of his fireplaces have). He used a smooth white plaster with a semi-gloss enamel so it can be cleaned easily.

When designing the home he also incorporated passive solar gain, as he does in most of his designs, to take advantage of the sun for heating. A passive solar Trombe wall stores and radiates heat into the dining area. He also kept in mind the position of the sun when he built the outside stairways, so that the sun would burn off snow and ice in the winter.

The 3,300-square-foot home is
please see page 76

Jerry Rabinowitz

divided into two levels. The upstairs was designed as a zone for adults with a living room, dining room, kitchen, study, master bedroom and a hot tub room. On the lower level, the space is designed with kids in mind, with the family room, baths and three bedrooms.

Since both he and his wife Dede, who runs a public relations firm and recently ran for the Albuquerque city council, work out of offices in their home, they decided they really needed a place to get away from the demands of their work. Both agreed that the Jémez Mountains offered the perfect getaway—cool in the summer, with opportunities for cross-country skiing and indulging in the nearby hot springs in the winter. Their 13-year-old daughter Abby also enjoys the country.

"I guess this is every designer's dream—to build his own dream house," Feldman says. "Again, this place is inspired by the Anasazi. I like the use of circular towers that are found at Mesa Verde," he adds. "Also, I found the whole house to be birdlike—as if it were spreading its wings with tail feathers in the back. It's just waiting at the edge of a precipice to take flight. I had fun with that." Because of this aspect, he has a woodpecker designed by Michael Smith of Ojo Sarco that seems to be perched on the circular center column.

Feldman said he worked with as many area artisans as possible to create finishing touches on the home. One design that is particularly striking is the tile work on the island work space in the kitchen. Inspired by a Navajo rug design, its rich mauve hues capture the beauty of the area's natural red rocks.

The steep terrain presented a number of challenges, but Feldman says the house was worth the effort. The vacation home, which rises out of San Diego Canyon, takes advantage of the breathtaking views of the Jémez Mountains from a three-acre site

hidden among piñon, juniper and ponderosas and Douglas fir.

Feldman kept in mind the heavy snowfall when he designed the roof. The design of the steel roof with a baked enamel finish helps snow melt and slough off during the winter months.

A simple open design features a dominant great room upstairs with a loft above with two bedrooms. There's a bath downstairs. The spacious open feel of the house has made it possible to have overnight guests willing to have a vacation cabin experience. They did just that when they invited a lot of their old college friends to celebrate their 25th wedding anniversary.

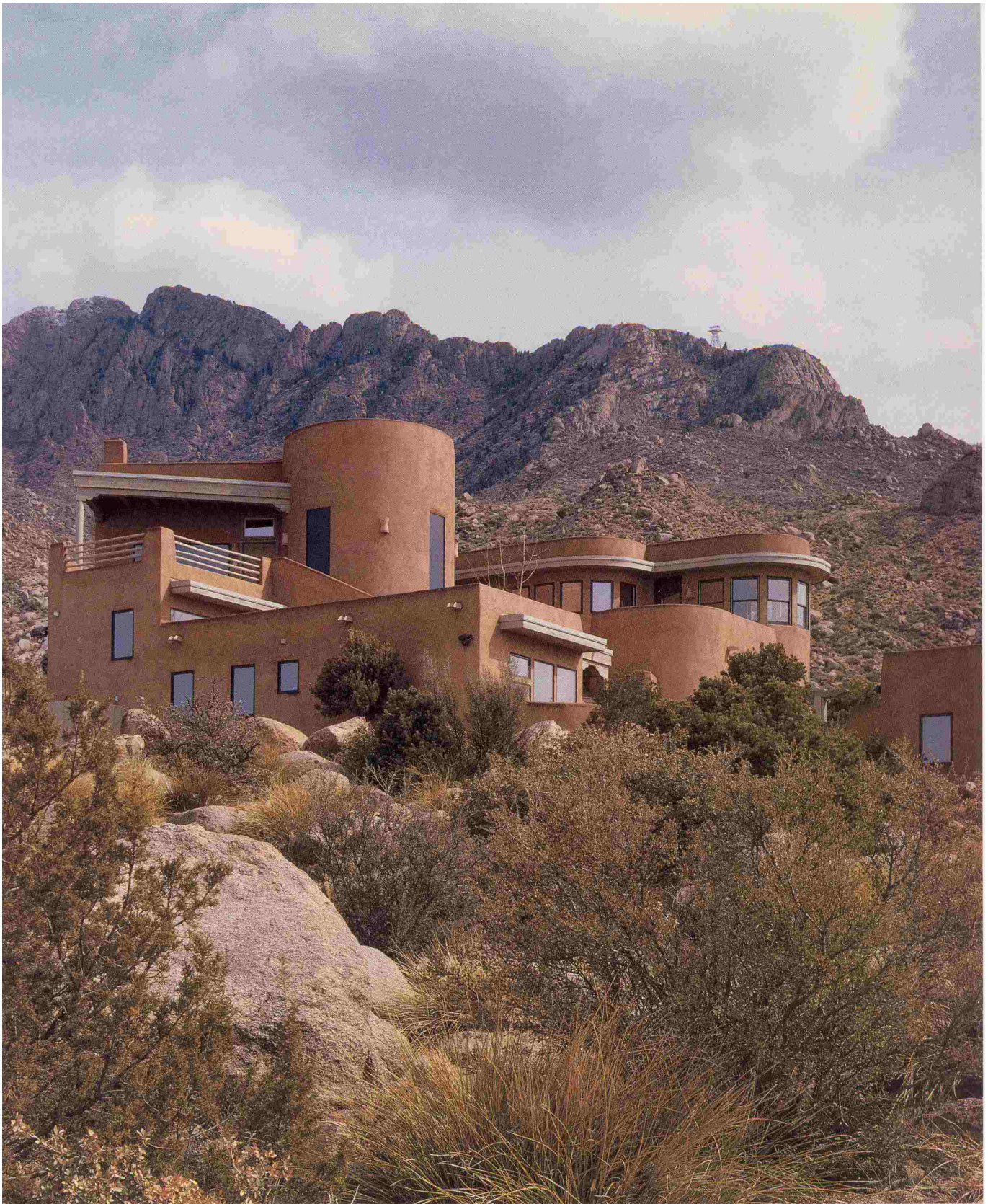
Originally from the East, the couple has lived in Albuquerque since the mid-'70s when Mark came here to attend the University of New Mexico School of Architecture.

In the past 15 years, he has designed more than 150 homes and built more than 50. Several of his newer projects are custom home communities, such as the Paseo del Prado solar townhomes and his newest project, Las Acequias, which is being built at the northwest corner of Río Grande Boulevard and Campbell Road.

The newest project grew out of his personal love of Albuquerque's North Valley and his incorporation of the community tradition of maintaining *acéquias* (the old hand-dug irrigation ditches). He worries that many of the newer developments in the area have changed the character of the valley.

"Las Acéquias will preserve and build on what I see as the most distinctive feature of the North Valley. And hopefully, the preservation of at least a few North Valley ditches will assist in the current drive to conserve water and encourage neighbors to cooperate or at least talk to one another."

Once again Feldman has found a way to incorporate tradition with contemporary living. ❖

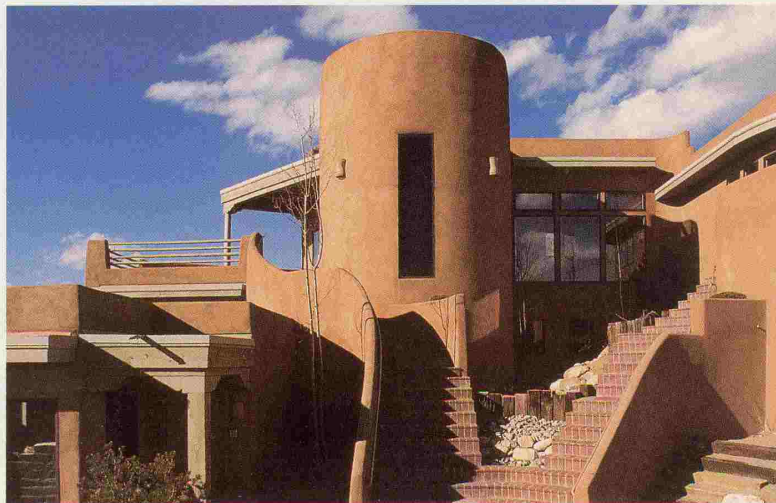


A cylindrical tower juts from the center of this contemporary Pueblo style home, designed and built by Mark M. Feldman. The rocky, natural landscape at the foot of the Sandia Mountains was preserved during construction.



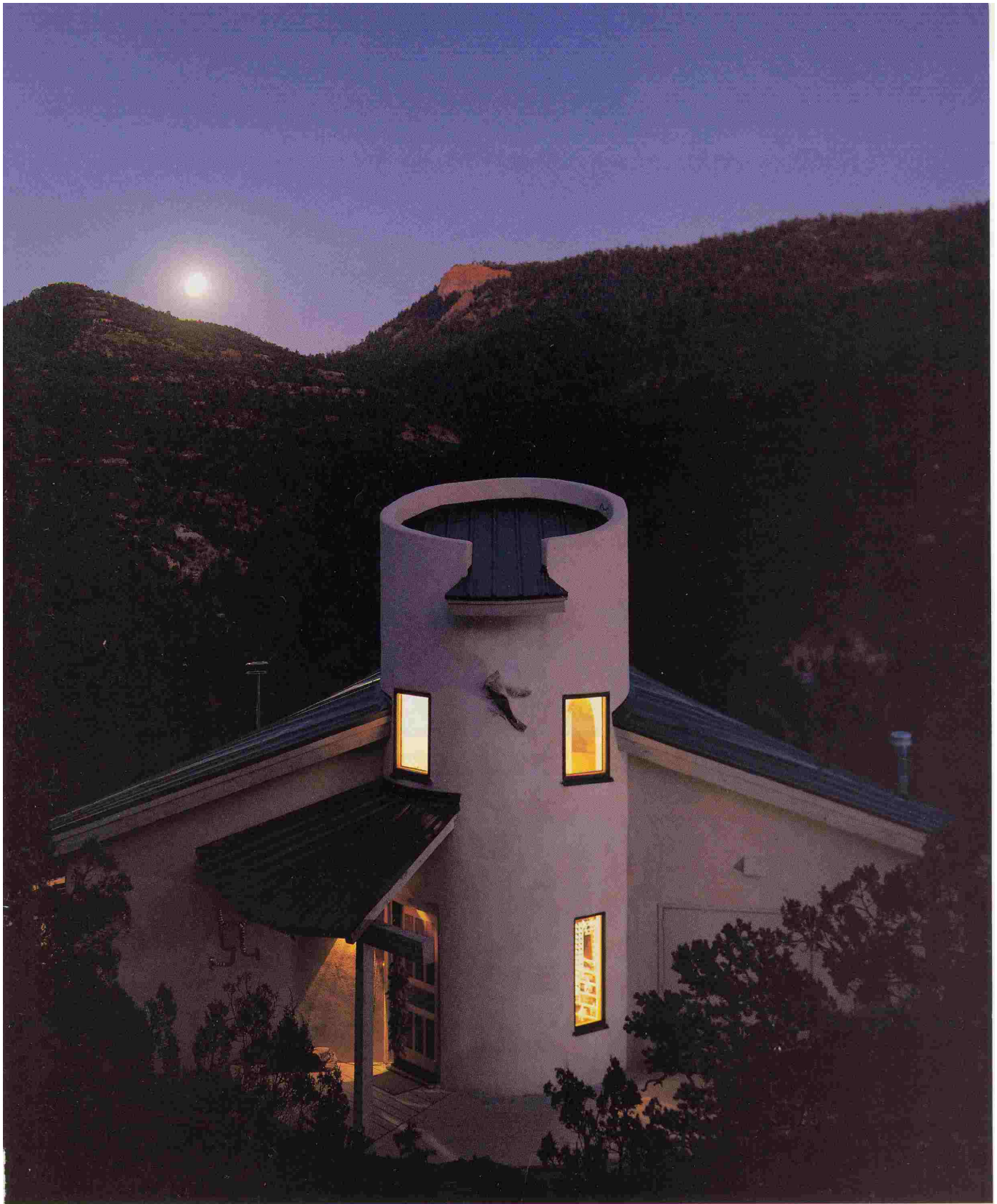
Robert Reck

The spectacular view of Albuquerque's lights and sunsets influenced Feldman's design of the Sandía Heights home. The living room incorporates Southwestern details such as a kiva fireplace, exposed adobe brick and a tile floor.



Robert Reck

A divided stairway takes visitors to separate wings of this 3,200 square-foot home in Sandía Heights.



The dramatic design of the Feldman vacation home takes center stage. A stucco woodpecker made by Ojo Sarco artist Michael Smith perches on the central cylinder.



A 600-square-foot great room forms one entire floor of the Feldman's vacation home. The room is rich in wood details and Pennsylvania antiques. A curved beam takes its place at center stage and an elaborate ceiling with massive beams radiates 180 degrees.

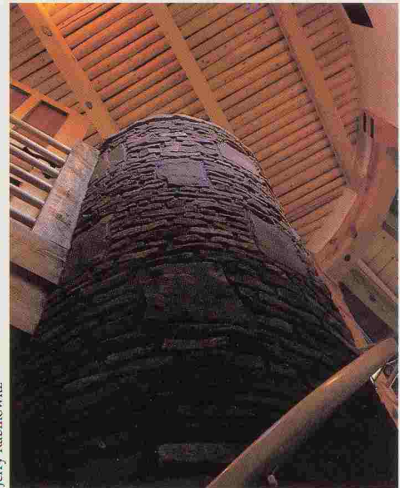
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Left—One hundred and eighty degrees of glass windows circle the great room at the center of the lookout tower design of Feldman's cabin to give spectacular views of the Jémez. **Center**—The cable wire railings of the cabin's deck give an unobstructed view of the mountains. **Right**—A red sandstone pillar, built by Jémez Springs mason Bob Moore, at the center of the cabin is reminiscent of Chaco Canyon-style masonry. Overhead latillas from the nearby forest line the ceiling.

Robert Reck