



Meeting of the Minds



An all-star team comes together to enhance a unique family compound graced with centuries-old structures

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One of two historic spring houses on the property.

Among the many jewels of this enviable in-town family compound, whose idyllic acreage is distinguished by a pair of centuries-old stone spring houses, is a newly built pool, bathhouse and gatehouse, the latter of which was inspired by those found at the entrance to notable horse farms throughout the Bluegrass. An all-star team comprised of architect Tim Winters, builder Aaron Esposito, interior designer Amy Cimba of Bittners and landscape architect Ben Page of Nashville worked in unison to lend their own talents and unique perspective to the project, in which each structure amiably fulfills its stated purpose of serving as a family gathering place, while sitting lightly on the land and having the architectural staying power of the existing 18th- and 19th-century structures. “Each of the new structures were positioned to afford beautiful moments with the spring houses,” remarked Cimba.

“Everything about this unique property is about family and friends,” said Cimba, who pointed out that the parents of both the husband and wife reside in homes whose property lines abut theirs. Cimba added that because the clients put great faith in the team members and that each of the professionals involved in the project had a particular aspect to focus on (and sometimes fight for), the end result was nothing short of spectacular.

The pool and bathhouse was the first project the team tackled. Located near the far rear corner of the main house, Cimba explained that the essence of the bathhouse “developed out of the desire to accentuate the existing structures.” She singled out the pair of oval tilt windows perfectly positioned in the center of matching shingled pavilions with a copper pyramid roof that bookend an open-air living room as the starting point for the

design process. Displaying great balance, the structure and its corresponding raised landscape beds comprise a rectangle that mirrors the shape of the pool.

Reclaimed wood beams define the ceiling in the open-air living room; a cantilevered pergola accentuating the underside of the flat roof follows the same lines. Reclaimed wood was also used for the mantle on the stacked stone fireplace. That detail, as well as the bluestone tiled floor, is consistent with a large covered porch nearby that is attached to the main residence. “With so many structures on property, consistency from one to the next is important,” Cimba pointed out.

Operated by a unique pulley system, the opening above the bar can be securely closed off during inclement weather or for safety reasons. In keeping with the refined, yet rustic appeal, Cimba chose a weathered wood chandelier and easy all-weathered slipcovered upholstery. In the changing pavilion, custom-milled shutters for the oval windows provide privacy. Durable slate tops are found on bench seating. Ample linen storage and a concealed washer and dryer eliminates the need to schlep towels to and from the main residence.

Appearing as though it is original to the property, Cimba remarked that the gatehouse was conceived as a way to “soften” entry into the estate. The handsome structure repeats several architectural elements that define the poolhouse, such as the shingled exterior, copper roofline, gas lanterns, reclaimed wood and stone accents. “The gatehouse is the play place, where the kids can have sleepovers or [the homeowners] can entertain or just sneak away for some quiet time on their own,” explained Cimba.

An antler chandelier is suspended above a custom Bittners-made pool table in the garagehouse.





Reclaimed wood was used for the ceiling beams and fireplace mantel in the pool house.



A forged iron ladder in the
gatehouse leads to a sleeping loft.
The painting above the fireplace is
by Martin Rollins.





Reclaimed wood floors from Longwood are laid in a herringbone pattern in the gatehouse.





As with the poolhouse, rustic refinement is the pervading theme for the interior of the two-level space with sleeping loft. Interior walls are painted stucco. Reclaimed wood on the vaulted ceiling and herringbone-pattern floor is from Longwood. The unique angles of the brig ceiling are further accentuated by pyramid-shaped accent windows and hand-forged iron ties that crisscross overhead and can be adjusted to accommodate any settling of the structure over time. The ceiling culminates at a widow's watch, which provides abundant natural light and adds architectural interest to the copper-clad roofline.

An antler chandelier sourced from California hangs above a substantial drop pocket pool table with beefy barley-twist legs, crafted by the woodworking artisans at Bittners. A custom table top makes quick work of the transition from playtime to meal time. Ample storage space allows the space to be infinitely versatile;

several foldable wine tables can be taken in and out as needed and are attractive enough to remain out on a more permanent basis.

At the top of an iron ladder in the living room, a trap door opens to reveal a sleeping loft with a balcony that overlooks the billiards area. The heart of the living room is a stone hearth with a solid limestone slab mantelpiece. The painting above the mantle by Louisville artist Martin Rollins depicts a scene at Cherokee Park and is one of several pieces present by local artists. Drapery and upholstered pieces here and in the adjacent room are comprised of linen and raw silk with hide and leather accents. "It's all about the textures," said Cimba.

Harmony is achieved across the varying aspects of this unique property through careful attention to design, materials and to the subtlest of details that whisper, rather than shout, for attention. "With so many beautiful elements everywhere, both natural and manmade, the entirety of this place is right as rain," said Cimba. 