



ENGLISH TUDOR *Meets* MODERN CHIC

Design, Ron Wolz, Bittners
Architect, John Warmack, Design Plus
Landscape Design, Jon Carloftis
Writer, Laura Ross
Photography, Robert Burge

RIVER BLUFF REVIVAL

Some of the best stories start with “Once upon a time, in a land far away,” and so we begin the tale of a true architectural gem of Louisville. At the turn of the 20th century, wealthy Louisville businessmen and entrepreneurs sought the peace of a traditional country life, where they could relax and raise their families away from the dust and bustle of downtown Louisville. That far “country” began along the banks of the Ohio River east of River Road.

As the estate-laden hamlet of Glenview took shape in the hills above River Road, George Babcock, the founder of Kimberly Clark, commissioned the noted firm of Townsend and Fleming Architects from Buffalo, New York, to create a spectacular country retreat in 1911. A three-story brick, stone and stucco Tudor Revival home took shape and formed a commanding presence in the area, surrounded by lush gardens in a peaceful setting with spectacular views of the Ohio River.

More than a century later, the Babcock estate is now home to a young, active family. With an eye toward tradition and with a desire to upgrade the home to 21st century standards, they enlisted Bittners’ Vice President of Residential Design Ron Wolz and a talented team of architects and designers to transform their home. Clever design details with smooth flowing modern spaces fit the lifestyle of this young family.

“The biggest challenge we faced was maintaining the integrity of the great country house while making it contemporary and relevant at the same time,” said Wolz. “I think we were very successful in finding this balance.”

The project, which began in 2010, tackled renovating the main house with a total redesign of the kitchen, family room and master bedroom suite. New his-and-her baths were added, all of the windows were upgraded and the motor court was reconfigured. A major element of the renovation brought the front of the house back to its original 1911 design.

Wolz’s team included architect John Warmack of

Design + Inc., along with his assistant Eric Ferry. Ken Fromme of Atteberry-Smith oversaw the kitchen and bathroom design and build-outs. John Carloftis and Dale Fisher completed the team as landscape architects for the project.

The second part of the transformation began in 2011 with the razing of the original carriage house, which was not structurally salvageable. It was rebuilt to match the original design and the interior was crafted to serve as a guesthouse and location for the homeowner’s company team-building meetings. “It’s my favorite part of the renovation,” said Wolz. “It really is spectacular. You would never guess it is new construction. It honors the original carriage house and comes to life with new, perfect details.”

The final renovation wrapped up this year with the addition of a new pool and pool house, which also features a Pilates studio and an apartment for live-in staff.

Tudor homes have generally dark interiors, but Wolz and his team transformed the interior into a bright, modern and comfortable space with a lot of white, soft gray and warm blue as backgrounds. “The homeowners wanted an updated, fresh and comfortable place to raise their family,” added Wolz. “Our homes are our escape from all the distractions in the world. They are a place to recharge our souls and enjoy each other.”

“This project is an example of exceptional design with the perfect calibration of talent,” said Douglas Riddle, President and COO of Bittners. “Our designers understand that the best of design involves teamwork. From this teamwork, the very best of design is created.”

The effort paid off. The modern elegance of this English Tudor and its accompanying houses, make it one of Louisville’s finest homes.







Ron Wolz, Vice President of Residential Design, Bittners



















