Beautiful Designs Inspired By You …

Sugarbridge Kitchen & Bath

Wood-Mode Fine Custom Cabinetry

484.318.8367 • www.sugarbridge.com • Paoli Design Center, Paoli PA

VISIT OUR BEAUTIFUL NEW SHOWROOM AT THE PAOLI DESIGN CENTER

FEBRUARY 2014

$3.95

COUNTY LINES

Unique places, interesting events, fine dining, great shopping and the special lifestyle of Southeastern Pennsylvania and Northern Delaware

Celebrating 37 YEARS of Publishing

Fine Homes & Design

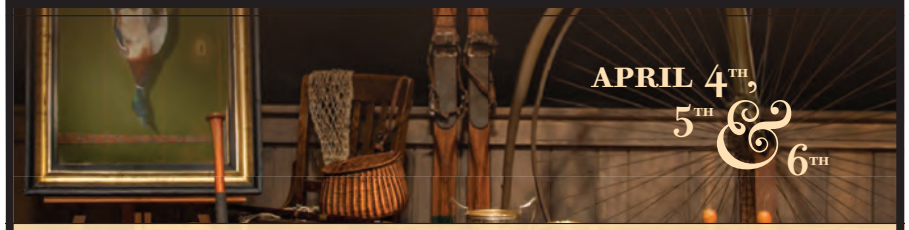
Historic Welkenweir

Kitchens for Men

Education Focus

JOHN MILNER ARCHITECTS, INC.
www.johnmilnerarchitects.com

CCHS Recreation, Hobbies and Leisurely Pursuits 2014
CHESTER COUNTY ANTIQUES SHOW
A BENEFIT FOR THE CHESTER COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



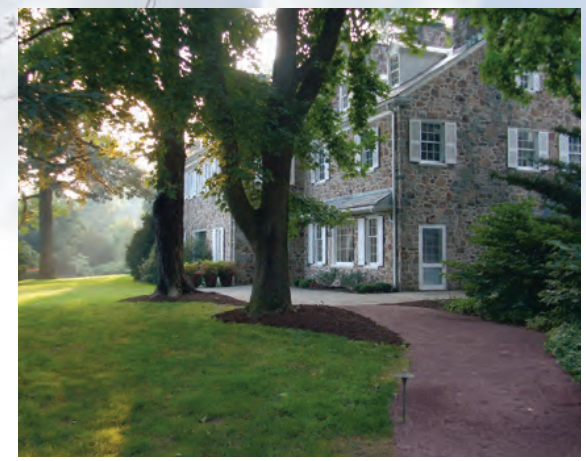
APRIL 4TH, 5TH & 6TH
Featuring Fine Quality 18th and 19th Century Antiques.
AT THE PHELPS SCHOOL MALVERN, PA
610-692-4800 | CHESTERCOHISTORICAL.ORG
PRESENTING CORPORATE SPONSOR
PECO
An Exelon Company

Welkinweir

Where Sky Meets Water

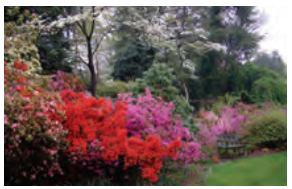
An Ordinary House, on Extraordinary Land

Jaimielynn Cooper



Rodebaugh addition under construction, 1940

Grace and Everett Rodebaugh, early 1940



Chester County didn't always look the way it does today. In 1682 when the county, one of the first in Pennsylvania, was founded, the land was awash with dense woodland, lush forests and abundant wildlife. A summer haven for Philadelphians, the county became home to quiet country houses that soon sprang up, offering solace and quiet in contrast to fast moving city life. And so began the history of Welkenweir.

Forging History

It wasn't long until industry too found its way here, on the backs of steel-made millionaires who saw their fortunes in the forests of Chester County.

Furnaces and forges quickly began to appear here. One of the first revolutionary blast furnaces used for iron manufacturing, Reading Furnace joined the many that soon made the county their home. Among them, Hopewell Forge and Furnace, Coventry Forge and Works, and Joanna Furnace.

The 18th century saw Pennsylvania's steel industry booming and becoming one of the driving forces behind the American Revolution and America's push to become an independent economic power. Iron also played an instrumental role in the American Revolutionary victory. This victory, however, cost more than money and soldier's lives. The land suffered as well.

By the beginning of the 19th century, although iron and steel continued to be lucrative for the United States, the way they were produced changed dramatically.

Furnaces across Pennsylvania and the forests cut to fuel their fires were left barren and abandoned. One of these forests, Hopewell Big Woods, which played a key role in the industry's expansion, suffered a long history of deforestation and re-forestation. No longer relying on massive logging, but instead

Reprinted COUNTY LINES MAGAZINE February 2014

Second Lives for Special Buildings

Outbuildings, land forms, mature trees, gardens and orientation to the sun all contribute to the creation of an intimate residential setting. ~ John D. Milner, FAIA

Matt Freeman

Houses, for all their variety, have one thing in common—they're the generalists of the architectural world, playing a variety of basic roles. All of them keep out the elements, provide a place to eat and sleep, and give you a place to take delivery on packages from Amazon.

And then there are the specialists—the outbuildings. A couple of centuries ago, these buildings had a specific job to do in the daily life of the times. Springhouses kept perishable foods cool, barns kept livestock in.

Today few people use spring houses for their original purpose, and keeping horses, while still an avocation for many, is no longer widely done just for transportation. But as a number of relatively recent projects done by John Milner Architects, Inc. shows, outbuildings still have roles to play. The Milner firm is widely famed for its authentic period renovation and traditional design, but life and architecture change with the passing years. Accordingly, some of the projects are updated versions of classic structures that continue to serve their traditional purpose, and others have been imaginatively transformed to be used in a new, but still specialized, way.

From Cooling to Contemplation

One of the more unusual redirections in function was a project in which the Milner designers converted a springhouse on a large farm into a private chapel. Christina Carter, a principal with Milner, says a low shed in the building still is a working springhouse, but the owners saw "an opportunity to take over a portion of the building for this unique function." On the outside it's fieldstone and shingles, with rounded door and window tops, set at the bottom of a hill near a narrow stream. But the interior of the chapel has unadorned white walls, spare wooden furniture that harks back across the centuries, and an austere serenity that fits its new role

Although it retains part of its function as a springhouse, this outbuilding now serves as a family chapel.

Providing second lives for old barns, party barns are prime spots for socializing—often in less formal settings.

Barn for Entertaining

The Barn for Entertaining or "Party Barn" project gives a traditional structure, in this case a Gothic-style barn, a new role to play. Carter said the barn had gone downhill over the years, but the owners "saw the original charm underneath that," especially the beauty of the wood. The designers saved as much of the original material as possible and added salvaged 19th-century wood where necessary.

Edward Wheeler, a Milner senior associate, says that like many owners who don't want to keep animals in the barn, the owners of this particular barn converted it into a space for socializing.

The large interior glows with golden wood from the floor to the vaulted ceiling. A chandelier hovers high above a seating area with leather-upholstered couches and easy chairs, and a bar occupies one corner. Carter points out the party barn concept is convenient for socializing, since the space is designed specifically for that, and it gives the homeowners a chance to take a different aesthetic approach, often something less formal, more rustic and casual than the main house.

Working Barn

Plenty of people in the area have barns for their horses, of course, including some clients of Milner's who wanted a barn that would harmonize with their home. "It's all function," Wheeler says, "very much a working barn." But don't be mistaken—it's also very much an attractive barn, with traditional fieldstone walls, wood shingles on the roof, and brick arches over handsome red-trimmed windows and doors.

The interior is just as refined, with carriage lanterns above a brick floor, wood paneling everywhere, including the sliding box-stall doors, and ironwork with a traditional feel throughout. Carter says it reminds her of the sort of barn you might see in the racehorse-breeding farms in Kentucky.

Barns used for animals can still be beautiful and well-integrated into the land, like this one.

Pool House

Pool Barn

Pool Projects

The private swimming pool is mostly a 20th-century thing, but several Milner outbuilding projects built around pools are inspired by architectural traditions and the natural settings around them.

The Pool House takes what Carter calls an "English Garden" approach. The house itself is a dignified neoclassical building that looks out over a dark pool accented with statuary, more like a reflecting pool in a formal garden than a typical swimming pool. For another pool house project not pictured, the owners "wanted to have a kind of duality in the way it looked," Carter says, because the house looks out over the pool toward the Chesapeake Bay, and the designers made the interior of the pool dark so the water would harmonize with the look of the bay waters in the distance.

In contrast, the Pool Barn is a straightforward structure in which a pleasantly rustic building provides the amenities for swimmers to enjoy the pool area without having to go back and forth to the house. The building shelters beneath a stand of tall trees, and a diving rock lends an old-time, swimming-hole flavor.

The Pool Pavilion project has two open pavilions topped with red-shingled hipped roofs and connected by a pergola. There are bathrooms for changing and a grilling area in one and open space for sitting and enjoying the outdoors in the other. Hardscaping extends outward so people can sit and gather, but the pool itself (not visible in the photo) is surrounded by grass. Wheeler says the idea was to limit the hardscaped area to keep the setting open and natural.

Pool Pavilion

Doesn't everyone want a garden folly? A fanciful decorative outbuilding.

Garden Folly

In architecture, a "folly" is traditionally a fancifully decorative outbuilding, and this one is accordingly "whimsical," Wheeler says, "something a little playful." The idea was to create a pleasant space to sit and relax in with views of the owner's garden and reflecting pool. The folly shows in the design, with a dash of Asia in the roof and a soupçon of the Near East in the exterior decorations, but Wheeler says the designers kept practicality in mind as well. A typical addition would have blocked some second-story windows in the main house, so the folly was placed farther out, more like a separate pavilion. ♦