

AMICALOLA BUNGALOW

BY TRICIA DESPRES

LUXURY HOME QUARTERLY

Driving down the deserted back roads of North Carolina, Corbitt Hills Construction owner Sid Cutts would often find himself pulling over to the side of the road in pursuit of priceless building materials that time had long forgotten.

“North Carolina has all an abundance of old collected architectural items, if you know how and where to incorporate them into your project,” remarks Cutts. “There are a bunch of old tobacco farms in the area and I would regularly stop at these places and pick up pieces such as old barn doors or flooring. One day I came across these 10 inch wide old plank wood floors that had come from Scotland Neck, NC. They were reclaimed from an old warehouse. I remember pulling a sample of these floors out of the back of my truck and the excitement that the owners shared.

These owners of the Amicalola were inspired by these and many other found materials during the building of their vacation home on Lake Gaston. With construction beginning back in January of 2009, the clients were looking for a comfortable, “back in time” feel for their second home and were open to using all sorts of unusual materials.

“As a builder, it was important to have that trust in me to assemble their vision and I quickly understood the rustic elegance they were looking for,” explains Cutts, who started Corbitt Hills Construction, LLC in 2002 alongside wife Julie. “Driving through the county, I found an old weathered barn door from a local farmer that we ended up hanging in the home’s interior gable. Sometimes you just have to get a little bold and keep old pieces the way you find them, whether that means they are old or tarnished or rusted. You never want these collected pieces to lose their character.”

Recently named as the "Southern Living Custom Home Builder" for Lake Gaston, Corbitt Hills Construction worked alongside interior designer Vicky Serany of Southern Studio and Atlanta architectural firm Garrell & Associates on the project.

Since this was the clients vacation home, Cutts relied heavily on jobsite technology and real time photography transmitted online to keep the homeowners abreast of the progress of the project. In fact, due to how well the team communicated online, the Goudy family would only visit the site around four times a month.

“We really relied on photography to demonstrate the progress of the project,” says Cutts, who serves as a member of the Vance-Granville Homebuilders and the Lake Gaston Chamber of Commerce. “I would go out to the property during the day and at night I would download those pictures and actually sketch on top of them. Visually then, we were able to communicate with the clients each and every day without them having to make the 2 hour long round trip to see their home in person. ”

The home's unusual half moon shape is prevalent throughout the layout, with both the informal dining area and basement utilizing circular rooms. Even the outdoor deck goes on to emulate the same half moon shape, with all features ultimately reverberating back to the lake.

"It was very important to set this house on the lot properly," says Cutts. "We also spent a lot of time focusing on the transition between the indoors and the outdoors. For example, the exterior stone was used on both the inside and the outside along with many of the overall textures."

Living just over an hour away in Raleigh, the clients have now been in their vacation home for the past two years.

"They tell me that their blood pressure slows as they enter the property," says Cutts. "Being away from the iPhone and email just puts you in a whole new place emotionally and physically. Even for us, the second home approach is a much more relaxed process. Sometimes we need to challenge our clients to keep the process fun and relaxed; and not revert back to including features that you would typically find in a primary residence. This was the spot that they would migrate to for rest and relaxation, and never once did we forget this during the entire building process."