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INSPIRED BY THE FRENCH COLONIAL ARCHITECTURE OF HISTORIC PARLANGE PLANTATION, DESIGNER CHUCK CHEWNING'S CONSTRUCTION OF POINTE COUPEE IN PALMETTO BLUFF EMBODIES THE GENTLE PACE OF LIFE IN THE LOWCOUNTRY.

Gracious Lowcountry Living



Upon retirement, Joe Herring—a successful health-care industry entrepreneur and former CEO—dreamed of designing and building a river home. So in 2015, he purchased three secluded acres on the May River, a peaceful tidal tributary that flows amidst the preserve of Palmetto Bluff in South Carolina’s Lowcountry. He wanted his home to be inspired by the French Colonial architecture of Parlange Plantation House, a 1754 National Historic Landmark in New Roads, Louisiana’s Pointe Coupee Parish. Pointe Coupee would soon become the name of Herring’s new home—a place intended as a nearby retreat from his lovingly restored 1857 city dwelling situated on Forsyth Park in Savannah’s Historic District.

Enlisting noted designer Chuck Chewning to manage a project of this magnitude seemed the perfect fit and the beginning of an amazingly ambitious collaboration. Owner of Charles H Chewning



Previous pages: The screened porch of homeowner Joe Herring’s peaceful retreat sits gracefully poised with views of the May River in South Carolina’s Palmetto Bluff preserve. Even the laundry room exudes Lowcountry elegance with a hand-painted mural by Chris Walker. Above: “Joe had always wanted to reproduce a raised cottage on a brick basement and pillars with wraparound verandas,” says designer Chuck Chewning. Left and opposite page: The interior layout includes a traditional center hall connecting the front and rear porches. Millwork details were adapted from Parlange Plantation using Historic American Building Survey drawings. The living room features a John Stobart maritime painting over the fireplace and a rendering of the May River by Henry von Genk, III.



Interiors based in Coastal Georgia, Chewning's meticulous attention to detail, combined with his well-studied background in historic architectural preservation, paved the way for what would become an unimaginable work of art beyond Herring's wildest dreams.

When Chewning presented Herring the full interior design scheme for the house, they spent hours going through each space and everything proposed to go into each room. When they finished, Herring looked at him and said, "There is not one thing here I could have done myself."

"That was the best compliment ever coming from a former CEO," says Chewning. "My favorite aspect of the project was being involved in both the interior architecture and the decorating while applying historic design and embellishments along the way. There are

This page: The dining room holds some of the owner's most prominent objets d'art, including an 18th-century Bruxelles tapestry, an English oak gateleg dining table, a needlework coffer, and an antique corner cabinet that once belonged to Virginian Bernard Moore, who descended from Sir Thomas Moore, Henry VIII's chancellor. A cache of antique silver, crystal, and linens reveals the homeowner's passion for exquisite collectibles. Opposite: An antique lantern and maritime painting adorn the staircase.





Left: The study's beamed ceiling and wood-paneled walls exude a masculine air, while a layering of patterned textiles, including Pierre Frey draperies and an antique rug, lend elegant warmth. The antique desk was restored with tooled leather from Whitechapel. Opposite page, clockwise from top: An inviting hub for entertaining, the kitchen features an oversize island surrounded by Hickory Chair stools upholstered in Jane Shelton fabric and slipcovered in a charming George Spencer plaid. A Ralph Lauren chandelier punctuates the space, and a Paul Ferrante wingback sofa provides extra seating. The river porch invites lovely allfresco dining with an assortment of slipcovered rush-seated chairs surrounding a generous antique table. A daybed swing layered with Old World Weavers pillows epitomizes relaxed Lowcountry living. An antique Châteauneuf-du-Pape grape harvesting hotte provides a stunning focal point against the cabinetry.

26 different shades of paint used throughout to achieve the desired patina for the finishes. The carefully designed details and furnishings give the house the feeling of being a restored historic home rather than newly built.”

Inside, the home features arched casings opening into high-ceilinged rooms surrounded by French doors leading to the wraparound porches. There are extraordinary views to the outside throughout the interior spaces. Herring purchased many of the furnishings—always with Chewning’s approval—in antiques stores and at auction from New Orleans, New York, and Savannah. Chewning then incorporated these pieces with new upholstery, fabrics, rugs, and lighting to give the house its layered look. Furniture pieces throughout are

delightfully slipcovered, typical of Lowcountry river homes, where families came to spend their summers.

“The house exudes a stately air of informality that makes the visitor wonder if some of the antiques originally came from the city house,” says Chewning. “The interior architecture of the home is heavily detailed and finished so that it immediately feels historic and substantial.”

Glass transoms above doors, reading nooks in dormer windows, and bunk beds all add to the sense that this is a place of retreat. The large family kitchen with its massive island provides a glorious place for gathering. The owner’s suite is strategically located on the lowest level for privacy and convenience to the adjacent swimming pool and





Opposite: Used as a guesthouse, a pigeonier faces the pool area. Inside, a sleek Empire sofa takes center stage. Upstairs, a charming bunk room features an antique ship figurehead. This page, clockwise from above: Third-floor guest rooms provide cozy comfort for visitors. An Italian Venetian burl-wood secretary bookcase highlights the blue-hued room. The bunk room features a quaint window seat. The powder room is wrapped in a Nina Campbell for Osborne & Little wallcovering.



"THE PIGEONIER PROVIDED A PLACE TO HAVE FUN AND BE WHIMSICAL WITH THE MANY ARTIFACTS AND ARTWORK COLLECTED BY THE OWNER, INCLUDING HANGING PAINTINGS ON THE VAULTED CEILING."
—CHUCK CHEWNING





Left: A sunroom adjacent to the owner's bedroom features tranquil pool views and includes an antique wicker chair and ottoman upholstered in fabric from Cowtan & Tout. An antique plant stand, a Suzanne Kasler light fixture, and Roman shades custom-designed with fabrics from Scalamantré and Cowtan & Tout embellish the space. Opposite, clockwise from top: The owner's bedroom is layered in a mixture of luxe linens, including a Schumacher duvet accented with Manuel Canovas pillows. The antique dresser and crystal chandelier exemplify the room's Old-World elegance. In the main bathroom, a generous Victoria + Albert soaking tub floats in front of an antique French painted screen. The curtains are custom designed with fabrics from Designers Guild and Manuel Canovas. A French daybed upholstered with Schumacher and GP & J Baker fabrics provides a cozy nook at the opposite end of the sunroom.



river. An activity barn, outdoor cook kitchen, and an authentic replica of a pigeonier used as a guesthouse surround the swimming pool.

"I worked very closely with Joe, who was raised in Baton Rouge," says Chewning. "He grew up familiar with Parlange and the French Colonial architecture of the Mississippi River plantations. We wanted to incorporate Lowcountry river-house details, such as the painted shiplap walls and the heart-of-pine flooring, so the house still maintained a sense of place. Reclaimed materials were used extensively throughout the house, inside and out—salvaged roof slates, porch beams from a North Carolina tobacco barn, heart pine floorboards from a New York City warehouse, and bricks from a demolished textile mill in South Carolina."

Well curated objets d'art and treasured collectibles bring richness, depth, and character to each space, including an original John Stobart maritime painting above the living room fireplace, a brilliant rendering of the May River commissioned by Henry von Genk, III, and a large antique ship model called L'Avenir by Robert McCann, formerly on display at Chicago's Museum of Science and Industry.

"I truly enjoy furnishing a home piece by piece, integrating a client's collection so the house takes on the homeowner's personality and looks collected and layered over time," Chewning says.

"After living in this home," says Herring, "I still find interesting design and decorative details to appreciate. Chuck's taste is exquisite, and his attention to even the slightest detail is off the charts."