

25th Anniversary



ow happy is the little Stone
That rambles in the Road alone,
And doesn't care about Careers
And Exigencies never fears—
Whose Coat of elemental Brown
A passing Universe put on,
And independent as the Sun
Associates or glows alone,
Fulfilling absolute Decree
In casual simplicity—

—“#1510, How happy is the little Stone” by Emily Dickinson





SOLID AS A ROCK

Steve & Mary Ellen are not new-comers to Restore 'N More. Although their house (Photo #1) is less than 15 years old, we had already completed some renovation projects for them. A couple years ago, Steve called Gary to tell him that he thought there might be some stones coming loose on the gable side of their house, right where the roof of the one-story addition connects to the main house. Because the stone façade on Steve & Mary Ellen's house is "stick-um" stone (real stone cut a mere one inch thick and applied to the structure on a bed of mortar), Gary initially assumed by the phone conversation that the problem would prove to be a failure of the flashing along the roofline, and it would be a relatively easy fix. Once he got up on the roof and saw first-hand the crumbling stone face, he realized that he and Steve & Mary Ellen were looking at a much bigger problem. (Photo #2)

The most alarming part of what Gary saw there was the nearly non-existent wire lath. Wire lath is secured to the structure, then stucco is applied to that, and then the "stick-um" stone is embedded onto the wet stucco. The wire lath is, in effect, the foundation that secures the stucco and stone to the façade of the building. If it's deteriorated, there's nothing to keep the stone and stucco from eventually coming crashing down. And the evidence was already there that things above that roofline were falling apart.

Steve & Mary Ellen took the logical approach to fixing the problem: Remove the entire gable and front façades (they're holding their breaths on the other gable and rear façade), and do a total "re-do." Thankfully they chose that approach because, as our crew began the removal process (Photo #3), we discovered many areas of stone facing that simply fell off almost by breathing on them. On the other hand, some areas had to be worked off, with quite

some effort, using chipping hammers. Throughout the entire demolition process, the crew protected all windows and doors by securing plywood over the openings as they worked their way across the structure.

With everything stripped away (Photo #4), Steve & Mary Ellen had a "clean slate" to consider several options for how the new façade might be finished. They definitely wanted to add a pent eave across the front and wrapping around the gable. But they had choices of how to finish the façade above and below the new pent eave; stone or stucco below with log above, or stone below and log or wood siding above, or stone below and stucco above. They chose stone below and stucco above, and also requested that we change the window trims and the front door so they would have a historical feel to them.

The choice of using real stone — not "stick-um" stone — for the lower level necessitated digging and installing a new foundation for the much

weightier stone facing. The crew from Haldeman's Excavating very carefully dug a narrow trench right against the house foundation, and also removed a massive concrete and stucco front-door stoop. (Photo #5) After we poured a reinforced footer, Sonny Weaver, Unique Masonry, then laid up a new block foundation up to grade. The Restore 'N More carpenters had already framed up the pent eave structure.

Because the new stone façade on the lower level would be six inches thick (five inches thicker than the "stick-um"), all the lower-level windows and the





boards for Steve & Mary Ellen to select from and approve. The plasterers also produced sample boards of stucco for the upper level façade.

The stucco crew from Ladd Plastering rolled onto the jobsite ahead of the stone masons and applied a 3-coat, custom colored stucco to the entire upper level.

front door had to be “built out” by that same distance. All the windows and the door had to be removed and re-set in order to extend the sills and jambs on the interior as well (Photo #6); the added benefit is that the window sills are much deeper and Mary Ellen can now place houseplants and candle lights on them.

While the framing of the pent eave was still open, the electricians from Suydam Electrical added “wall-washer” lighting on the underside of the eave. (Photo #7) These lights are positioned so that the light bathes the lower-level stone façade in soft light while one light directly above the front door is positioned to cast lighting onto the new stoop. While all this preparation was being done in advance of the stone masons, Steve & Mary Ellen sent Gary to look at certain Lancaster County barns to look at stone patterns they particularly liked. The masons from Heritage Stone Masonry then made up 3' x 3' sample



In the process they were very careful to protect the roof of the adjoining addition. (Photo #8)

Once the stucco process was complete, the masons returned to lay up the lower-level stone façade. Using a blend of four colors of ashlar (square-cut) stone, they started at the farthest end. (Photo #9) By starting at the farthest end, Steve & Mary Ellen could decide, before the masons got too far along, if they wanted to adjust the proportion of stone colors.

One of the last things to be completed was the new front stoop. (Photo #10) Steve & Mary Ellen wanted something that would complement the new overall historical style, yet wouldn't dominate the picture. They chose a wooden stoop with simple handrails and balusters; definitely historical in style with a real country feel to it. (see Cover) Made of cedar with ipe decking, the entire stoop is low maintenance requiring only a coating of preservative every couple years.

From start to finish, Steve & Mary Ellen's project was a huge success, and that was thanks in great part to their active role not only in the decision-making process but also in the physical process. Steve & Mary Ellen willingly took on the entire job of cleaning up all the demolition debris — all the “stick-um” stone, old stucco, and wire lath, as well as the dirt piles made while digging the new footers — and still had enough energy left over to do all the priming and finish painting. Now they want to rest up awhile before tackling their next project. ☺



Brick Hotel, the Appetizer Course

The historic town of Odessa, Delaware, is one of the most beautiful places on the east coast. We've said that before, and we'll keep saying it because it truly is. Restore 'N More has had the privilege of working for The Historic Odessa Foundation (HOF) several times already, and here we are once again for the transformation of The Brick Hotel; a project that spent a couple years just in the planning and development stages.



For several years, the Board and staff of HOF had been mulling over ideas on how to enhance their visitors' experience and also benefit the entire Odessa community. The brainstorming eventually honed in on one thing the town lacked entirely: a restaurant. And what better place to bring this plan to fruition than in the very heart of Odessa, in one (or two) of the HOF historic houses?

Over a period of a couple years, Gary met several times with Bill, liaison for the Board and Debby Buckson,

Director of HOF, as a participant in many conversations about concepts on how this vision could be made a reality. All aspects of the planning process were covered, with every possible option explored. Gary has always said, "The most important part of any project is the planning phase." And in this case, his words rang so true. There were many hurdles to be cleared before this project could make it even onto the drawing board.

Perhaps one of the very first hurdles that had to be cleared (within the Restore 'N More ranks) was the simple thought of saying "restaurant and commercial kitchen" and "Restore 'N More" in the same breath! The two just don't seem to mix, right? Thankfully, the Board and staff of HOF confidently said those in the same breath. What an opportunity!

What started out initially as a small "add-on" to the Brick Hotel (built 1822) then expanded to include another historic structure: the Janvier Stable, built in 1791, originally located next to the Janvier House — a few blocks west of the Brick Hotel — and moved to its present location behind the Brick Hotel in the mid-1900's. In today's terms, this is called an "in-fill" project; new construction that joins two otherwise separate structures. Because the entire town of Odessa is a major historic site, we had to go through several historic review board meetings for every little detail of the new structure. Everything external on the new structure had to be historically sympathetic. That doesn't sound too complicated. We're used to those type of requirements. But the process is still rigorous and full of many set-backs.

After many, many months in planning, development, design, engineering, and municipal review and approvals, we were finally ready to dig in. The first order of business



was clearing out the space between the two structures. **(Photo #1)** The space between the two buildings had been fenced to conceal the massive air conditioning units and electrical transformers. All this equipment had to be dismantled, electric supplies had to be temporarily re-routed, the vintage fencing was carefully salvaged, and the interior of Janvier Stable was also salvaged.

The cleared area now had to be excavated **(Photo #2)** for new foundations and a crawl-space beneath a



new connecting wing which would contain the working kitchen, ADA bathroom, and a new main entry for the restaurant. The stable floor was also dug down to create a crawl-space as well. We had to use extreme care working up against the two historic structures, literally undermining the old foundations in the process so that we could then reinforce what extant foundations were there. The original Hotel would become the dining area of the new restaurant, and the old stable would be transformed into a restaurant-grade walk-in freezer and refrigerator as well as a food preparation area.

In the process of building new foundations, it was decided to create additional crawl-space under the entry area. In order to do that, the old concrete stoop at



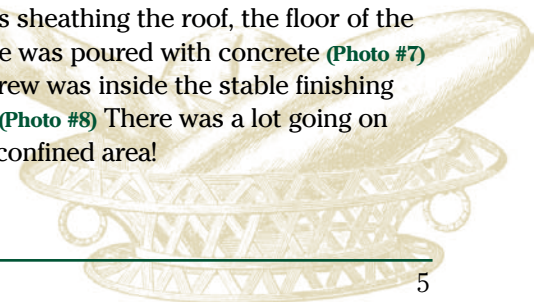
the rear door to the Hotel had to be removed. **(Photo #3)** The layout of the foundation and, therefore, the building design had to be “tweaked” to avoid hitting an existing well which had been overlooked in the design phase. (see vertical pipe to right of worker)

Block foundations and the crawl-space floor were poured and laid **(Photo #4)**, then trenches were dug for the new electric supply lines coming from the rear of the neighboring Collins-Sharp House. The new 600-amp power line would then be brought into a small reproduction outbuilding (watch for that in our next issue) and then distributed to the supply panels within the old Hotel.

All the time that the new foundation was being worked on, which happened to be in the dead of winter, we still had to supply water to the neighboring museum houses that were served by that well. An insulated water line (see **white flexible pipe, Photo #5**) was draped across the work site which kept water flowing without interruption throughout the project.

Steel beams were installed across the new foundation to support the massive weight of the new kitchen. Floors and walls were erected and sheathed, and then a brick veneer was laid up to floor height. **(Photo #6)** The new brick were matched as close as possible to the brick on the old Hotel; mortar was custom mixed to match the original color also. Because this was being done in the middle of the winter, the area was tented in and heated.

Roof trusses were then lifted into position from a boom truck. Once the trusses were on, and while the carpentry crew was sheathing the roof, the floor of the stable’s crawl-space was poured with concrete **(Photo #7)** and the concrete crew was inside the stable finishing the concrete floor. **(Photo #8)** There was a lot going on that day in such a confined area!





After the stable's floor was finished, new wall and ceiling framing was completed, basically creating a structure within a structure, in order to accommodate space for mechanical rough-in and special insulation for the freezer/refrigerator rooms. (Photo #9) The carpentry crew then finished up the framing that connects all the differing adjoining rooflines, making the whole appear like stepped "add-ons." (Photo #10)



At last, at the end of January, the new main entry (to the right of the tree trunk) and the new kitchen (to the left) were taking shape (Photo #11), at which point the roofing crew could then install the standing-seam metal roofing on the kitchen area. (Photo #12) Amazing, how unusual this past winter was; snow on the ground at the end of January, yet the roofers were working in T-shirts in the middle of February!



Hopefully we've whetted your appetite with this little appetizer. The next course will prove to be even tastier. ☘





Gary's Exceptional Excerpts

Stucco

The art of using mortars in some shape or other, is as old as civilization, as we find evidences of its use in ruins that date long before historical times....so far as we yet know, some of the earliest plastering which has remained to us excels, in its scientific composition, that which we use at the present day....The pyramids of Egypt contain plaster work executed at least four thousand years ago...



Very early in Greek architecture we find the use of plaster, and in this case a true lime stucco of most exquisite composition, thin, fine and white. Some has been found at Mycenae, a city of Homeric date. We know that it existed in perfection in Greece about five hundred years before the Christian era. With this the temples were covered externally, and internally where they were not built of marble, and in some cases where they were. This fine stucco was often used as a ground on which to paint their decorative ornament, but not infrequently left quite plain in its larger masses, and some of it remains in very fair preservation even to this day. The Temple of Apollo at Bassae, built of yellow sandstone about 470 B.C., has on its columns the remains of a fine white stucco (see above photo).

Pavements of thick, hard plaster, stained, of various colors, were common in the Greek temples. One of these, that of the Temple of Jupiter Panhellenius at Ægina, built about 570 B.C., is described by Cockerell as existing in the early part of the century, in good condition, though the temple itself was destroyed; and I have seen at Agrigentum plaster existing in perfect state, though scarcely thicker than an egg-shell, on the sheltered parts of a temple built at least three hundred years before our era, whilst the unprotected stone was weather worn and decayed.

What care the ancient Greeks bestowed on their stucco may be inferred from Pliny's statement that in the temple of Elis about 450 B.C., Panaenus, the nephew of Phidias, used for the groundwork of his picture "stucco mixed with milk and saffron, and polished with spittle rubbed on by the ball of the thumb, and," says he, "it still retains the odor of saffron." Lysippus, the first of the Greek "realists" in sculpture, was the first we hear of who took casts of the faces of living sitters about 300 B.C., so the art of plaster casting must have advanced

a good deal by that time, as he made presents of copies to his friends. Afterwards we read of many sculptors who sent smaller plaster models of their works to friends. These were, however, probably carved in the plaster rather than cast.

Whether the Greeks used stucco for modeling is a somewhat doubtful point amongst antiquarians. From certain passages in classic writers I am induced to think they did. Pausanius, who describes the temple at Stymiphalus, an almost deserted and ruined city when he visited it about 130 A.D., describes the ceiling of the Temple of the Stymphalides, built about 400 B.C., as being "either of stucco or carved wood," he could not decide which, but his very doubt would imply that stucco or wood were equally common. Now, this ceiling was ornamented with panels and figures of the harpies — omens of evil, half woman and half bird, with outspread wings. He also mentions a statue of Bacchus in "colored stucco." Of course these are not definite proofs of early Greek stucco modeling, but as the city of Stymphalus had decayed and become depopulated before 200 B.C., there is certainly presumptive evidence of the ancient practice of the art. Again, figures of unburnt earth are mentioned in contradistinction to those of terra cotta, and sundry other allusions to plastic work occur, which lead me to the opinion that quite early in Greek art this mode of using plaster began. At any rate, we know that it was early introduced into Grecia Magna — the earliest Southern Italian colony of the Greeks; and as colonists invariably preserve the customs and traditions of their fatherland even long after they have fallen into disuse in their native home, we can have no reasonable doubt but this art was imported rather than invented by them. Thence it spread to the Etruscans of Middle Italy, a cognate people to the Southern Greeks, by whom both plain and modeled stucco was largely used. The Etruscans, as we have seen, were more closely allied to the Greek than the Latin race, but in the course of time these two races amalgamated, the former bringing skill in handicraft, the latter lust of power, and patriotic love of country and of glory, whilst the Grecian element, which blended harmoniously with the first of these, added a love of art.

What's one more?

“The eyes of all look to You, and you give them their food at the proper time. You open your hand and satisfy the desires of every living thing.”

—Psalms 145:15-16

You know the old saying, “Be careful what you wish for because you just might get it”? I’m here to tell you, be careful what you say you want no more of, because you probably will get it anyway. Gary and I are suckers for taking in stray cats. When you live in the country, well off the beaten path like we do, you can count on finding an unwanted cat on your doorstep from time to time. Our cat population has waxed and waned over the years, yet we’ve never turned one away. We just take each newcomer to Brenda, our veterinarian, and give them the full work-up. Of all the cats that claim our property as “home,” only two old gals — Sophie and Floppy — have the privilege of living in the house with us, but I was getting tired of all the messes that come along with house cats. “No more house cats!” I told Gary, “When these two go to cat heaven, that’s it!”



Then along came Lumpy.

Lumpy is...well, lumpy. He showed up at our back door a couple months ago, looking for a bowl of food along with all the other outside cats, and I took pity on him. His side and belly were all puffed out, like he’d been injured, so I crated him up and drove him to the vet’s office expecting the worse. What the vet discovered is Lumpy has two big hernias on his side and belly, probably a result of being mauled by a dog or other critter. Brenda did her best to repair them, but the damage had been done so long ago all she could do was sew him back up.

But, while he was there, she gave him all his shots and “fixed” him, if you know what I mean.

He also had a big abscess on one leg which had to be treated. (All this involved multiple trips to the vet’s office. This cat was getting expensive.)

Let me complete the picture for you. Lumpy has no tail — just a stub; because of his surgeries his coat had been shaved off in large patches and hasn’t grown back in yet; he never travels faster than a slow amble; and, he rarely meows but when he does it sounds like he has a sore throat. In short, he’s so pathetic that he’s downright lovable.

Did I mention we have three house-cats?

Be joyful always...

Dee-Dee



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