

Chester County

TOWN & COUNTRY LIVING

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ESTATES OF EXCELLENCE

Griffiths Construction builds uniquely individual homes that are specific to the individual client's needs

BY MARY BETH SCHWARTZ

A rich history, open landscapes and a diversity of people make Chester County a unique region of Pennsylvania. Griffiths Construction of Chester Springs creates distinctive homes with all of these qualities in mind.

"As a teen, I worked as a laborer for a local builder. I loved to ride by big beautiful homes—they were so inspiring. I knew then that was what I wanted to build, so that I could leave behind a legacy of quality," Bob Griffiths of Griffiths Construction said.

After attending Penn State University in the late 1970s,
continued on page 110



Opposite right are Bob Griffiths (left) and Wayne Rowland of Griffiths Construction. Left, a stone house with round tower in front. Above, an interior with a built-in library, beautiful wood paneling and a handsome fireplace.



Griffiths worked for a carpenter. In 1978, he started his own contracting business. Then, in 1982, he got a job as a project manager for a Main Line builder, managing field operations.

During those years, Wayne Rowland was also working in carpentry. He worked a bit for a cabinetmaker. In 1978, he decided to take the position of project manager for a competitive Main Line builder.

Griffiths and Rowland got to know each other through their work with the Main Line builders. Both questioned the longevity of their respective companies; both wanted something better. It was now or never. So, in late 1992, Griffiths and Rowland became partners of Griffiths Construction.

"We had our own passionate ideas and genuine philosophies on how a company should be run. The new company would have the best group of workers in the area. We would do high-end work for clients, giving them the ultimate—whatever their dreams desired. Above all, the building experience would incorporate sharing and a family atmosphere," Griffiths explained.

Money was not the motive for the duo's new business—it was a love of the trade. According to Griffiths and Rowland, they are on a constant search for excellence.

"Our building is in its own niche. You cannot put our estates in a category. Each one is unique, and specific to a client's needs," Rowland said.

The partners find that clients do not want to be pigeonholed into the classic Chester County farmhouse that has been over killed in the past 15 years. They want something unique and different. "We work with up to five architect firms and the designs come off of their tables. Each one is different. One home

may have several styles incorporated into it. We do not own the designs and properties, we are general contractors that simply build what the architects have designed," Griffiths noted.

Variations of the following styles have been built, or are in the works, according to the construction team: turn-of-the-century manor; shingle style; smart and smaller Tudor; Federal Classic and an 18th century formal stone mansion.

One of the homes the partners spoke of is a stone house in the Unionville area, designed by Archer and Buchanan. This fanciful house is under 5000 square feet and features a timber frame section, barrel ceilings, a custom mahogany library

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and a long wine cellar. A round tower sits in front of the house, and it has a loft at the top, which is a girl's bedroom—something right out of a fairy tale.

Designs can range from 4,500 to 15,000 square feet, with a price range of one to eight million dollars. A superintendent is assigned to each job, from start to completion. Six projects are worked on at a time.

Griffiths and Rowland have completed projects in Northern Delaware, Chester County, Montgomery County, the Main Line and Delaware County. Most of the locations, they said, are secluded, often horse farms, and cannot be seen simply by driving by.

Every step is taken to use only the best of materials. For example, white onyx from Pakistan for a lux-

urious bathroom, or use of reclaimed antique materials, like handmade ironwork and hardware. Or limestone and old doors brought back from France for use in a wine cellar. Stonework is prominent in construction, as is use of rot-resistance materials, such as mahogany and Spanish cedar.

Along with quality materials, Griffiths and Rowland believe in quality service. The company's service department is on hand to follow up with jobs after the home is completed. Some clients add on to the grand estates, some require service on complex mechanical systems, such as home theaters and smart home technology. The service staff can even see to additional needs like gutter cleaning and snow removal.

This constant commitment to excellence has led to Griffiths Construction winning awards from the National Home Builders Association, as well as Custom Home magazine's Grand Award for a custom home over 5,000 square feet. The 11,000-square-foot home was a stone English manor with limestone detailing and a slate roof located in Gladwyne. It took 18 months to complete, and was designed by architect Peter Zimmerman.

According to Griffiths, the home has an old English castle feel to it. There are several limestone mantles throughout the house, and a grand mahogany library complete with secret passageways.

Their dedication also extends to family life. Griffiths and Rowland enjoy spending time with their families, whether it be coaching the baseball team, or fishing. If you would like to contact Griffiths Construction, call them at (610) 827-7990, or write to 851 Chester Springs Road, Chester Springs, PA 19425. ♦

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