

GREAT HOMES OF DURHAM



■ The Dimmigs' fieldstone farmhouse was built from the ground up. At top right, Jane Dimmig in the Amish-built barn with one of her beloved horses, Monty; and Jane in her kitchen with friend and decorator Lane Blank.

A LOOK INSIDE THE MOST BEAUTIFUL
AND INTERESTING RESIDENCES IN DURHAM



GREENER PASTURES

The Dimmig family finds tranquility and a nostalgic taste of their native Pennsylvania on their 60-acre horse farm in North Durham

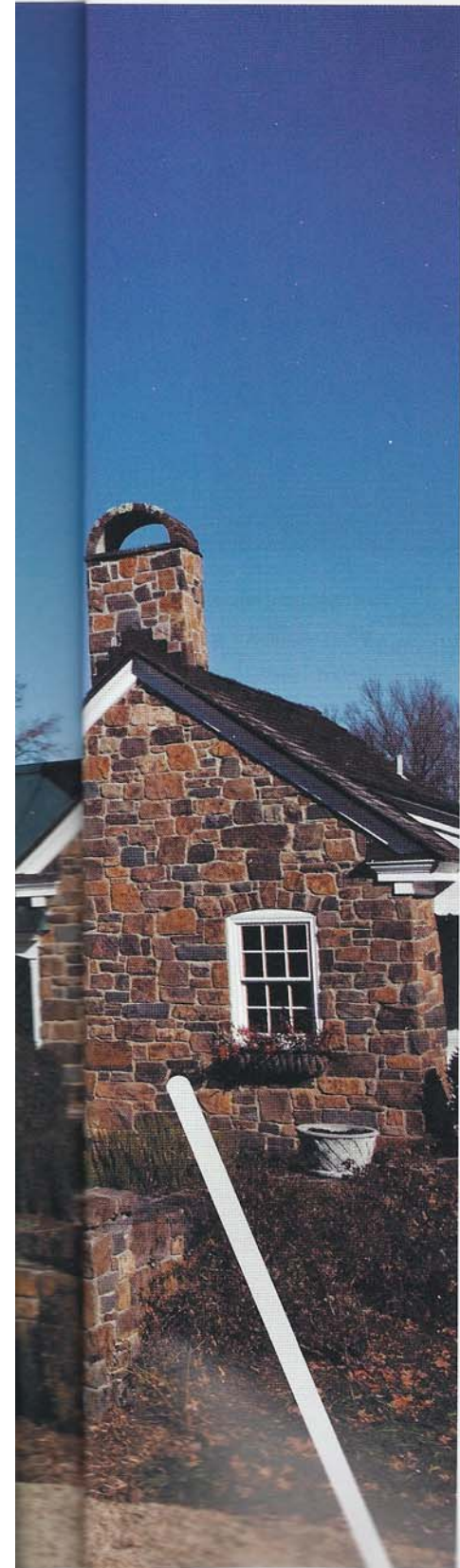
By Dana Lange | Photography by Briana Brough

When **Jane** and **Tom Dimmig**, both native Pennsylvanians, arrived in Durham as newlyweds in 1975, they thought their stay would be temporary. But, like many transplants to Durham, every time the Dimmigs had a chance to move, they decided against it. A visit to their 60-acre farm in North Durham makes it obvious why.

When you first enter **White Oak Farm**, you pass two ancient tobacco barns, the kind that dot every N.C. backroad. But as you continue along the gravel road, you're transported to

the Pennsylvania Dutch countryside of Jane's youth, complete with horses in a barn built by honest-to-goodness Amish folks.

The Dimmigs' four dogs - **Teenie**, **Ellie**, **Higgins** and **Bodie** - are the first to greet you before you catch a glimpse of the effortlessly elegant Jane. Dressed in a starched white collared shirt, jeans and cashmere sweater, she comes out to welcome us. Everything about Jane is classic, from her brown bobbed hair to her needlepoint shoes. And her house is a classic, too. It's hard to imagine that this





■ (Left to right): Above the family room fireplace hangs an oil portrait of *Derek*, the Dimmigs' most award-winning horse. The living room was decorated by Lane Blank of Palley & Southard Designs. The beams in daughter Avery's bedroom are the same ones she and her brother, Walker, reclaimed from the original farmhouse that sat on the property.

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fieldstone house has not always been here, but it was all the creation of Jane and a team of trusted advisers.

THE LONG & WINDING ROAD

The Dimmigs first moved into a small house in Trinity Park while Tom did his residency at **Duke Hospital**. In 1978, Jane opened Foxgloves clothing store in Carrboro, eventually opening branches in Charlotte and Durham.

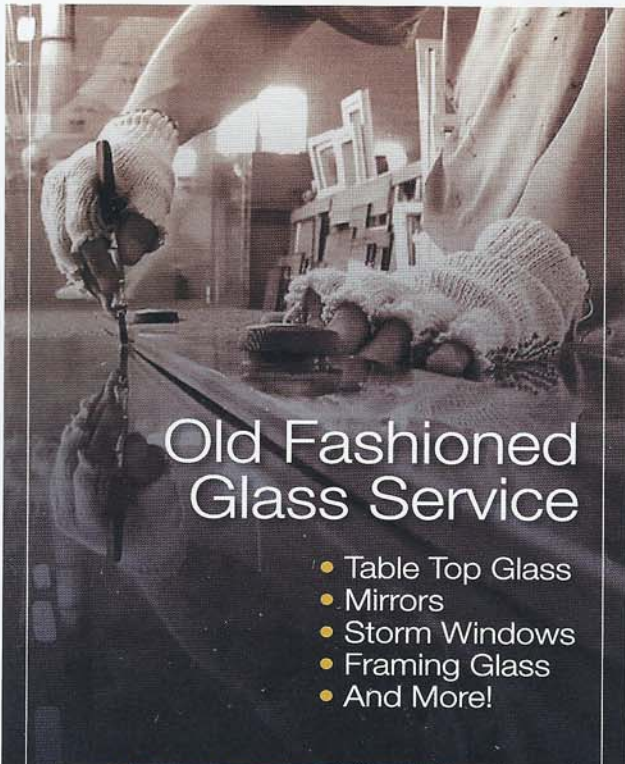
In 1983, the Dimmigs, now including 1-year-old daughter, **Avery**, moved into a house on Laurel Hill Road in Chapel Hill. Son, **Walker**, came along in 1985.

A few years later, Avery found a passion that would have some far-reaching effects: horseback riding. As she continued to show a talent for the sport, her parents decided it was the perfect excuse to buy a farm. Jane closed her three stores, and the Dimmigs found the diamond-in-the-rough that was White Oak Farm. None of the structures on the land – an old house and many out buildings – were habitable. But their Chapel Hill home sold so quickly that they did not have



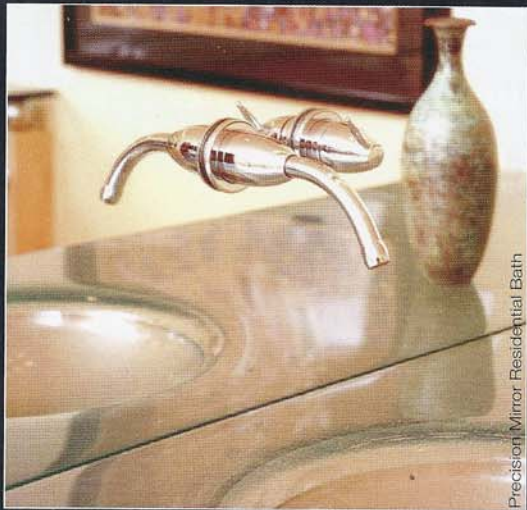
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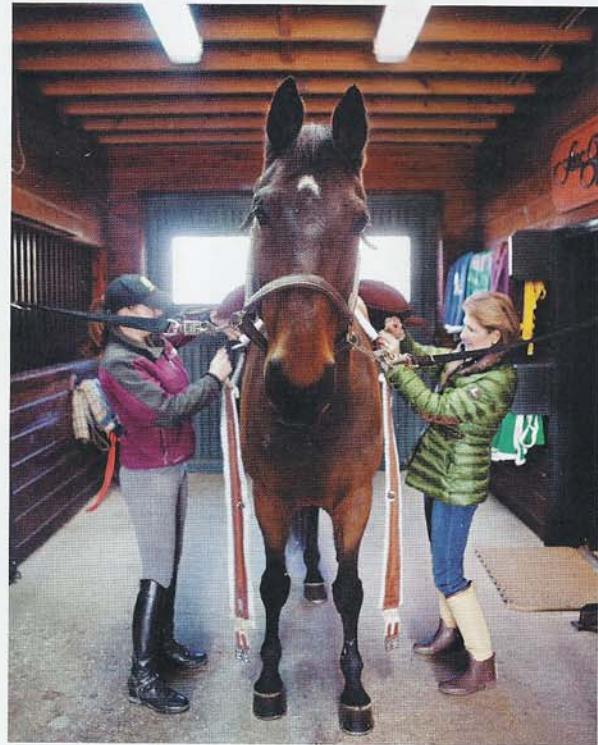


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■ Above, barn manager **Amy Indence** and Jane tack up **Monty** in the barn built by six Amish teenagers.

Below, the elegant front staircase includes the hand-rail that was carved from a beam salvaged from the original house that sat on the property.



time to build a house at the farm. So they built a three-car garage with an apartment above it, which they lived in for three years. “We looked like the Clampetts moving out of Chapel Hill, pulling a horse trailer full of our furniture,” Jane recalls.

The second structure the Dimmigs built was their barn, hiring an Amish construction firm.

CREATING THE HOUSE

Jane had a vision for exactly what she wanted in her Pennsylvania farmhouse, so she hired Pennsylvania architect **Phil Lederach**, who had renovated her parents’ home. It took Jane three years to collect the raw materials



■ At top left, the barn includes five horse stalls, feed room, wash stall, office and tack room.

Above, Jane poses with her greeting committee.

Below, dachshund Teenie, adorned in her plaid coat, takes a break in the tack room.

Opposite page: Jane believes in really living in her whole house, so the Dimmigs eat dinner in their beautiful dining room every night.



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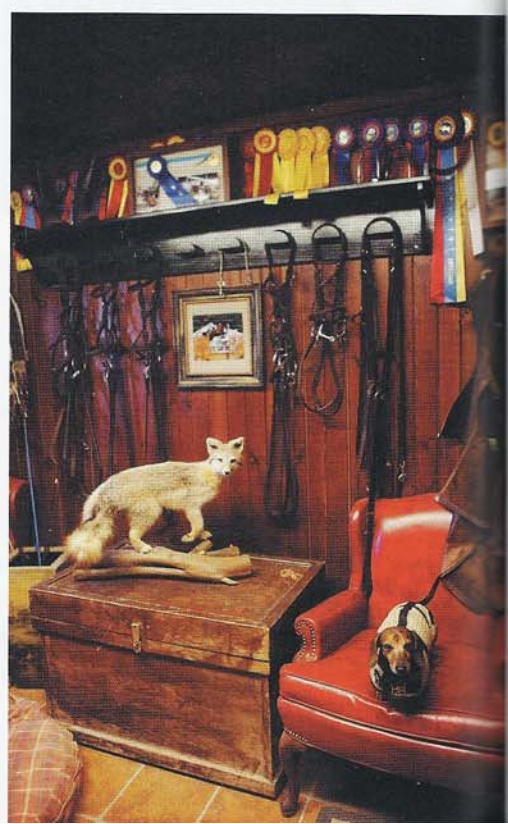


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she wanted. She and her children even dismantled the old house on the property to save the boards and beams, which she eventually reused in the building of her new house. "I told the children as they took the house apart to keep an eye out for the family silver," she says.

"We did not find any silver, but one day we found an old pillowcase and some ledgers of the tobacco farm from 1848. You would have thought I found gold."

This hands-on approach paid off, allowing Jane to pay attention to every detail.

"Living on the property while designing and building the house was the right thing to do," she adds. "I was able to work with **Charles Woods**, our foreman, and hold up every piece of reclaimed wood and decide what looked right."

As with everything about Jane, from her clothes to her house, it looks better than right. It looks like it is has always been there, has always belonged. Classic. **DM**



Home Name: White Oak Farm

Size: 4,200 Square Feet

Bedrooms: 4

Bathrooms: 3.5

Horses: 5

Community: Rougemont

Architect: Phil Lederach

Construction: Telesis Construction Management (George Horton)

Interior Design: Palley and Southard (Lane Blank)

Kitchen Design: The Kitchen Specialist (Mary Liebhold)

Stone Mason: Cleve Wagstaff

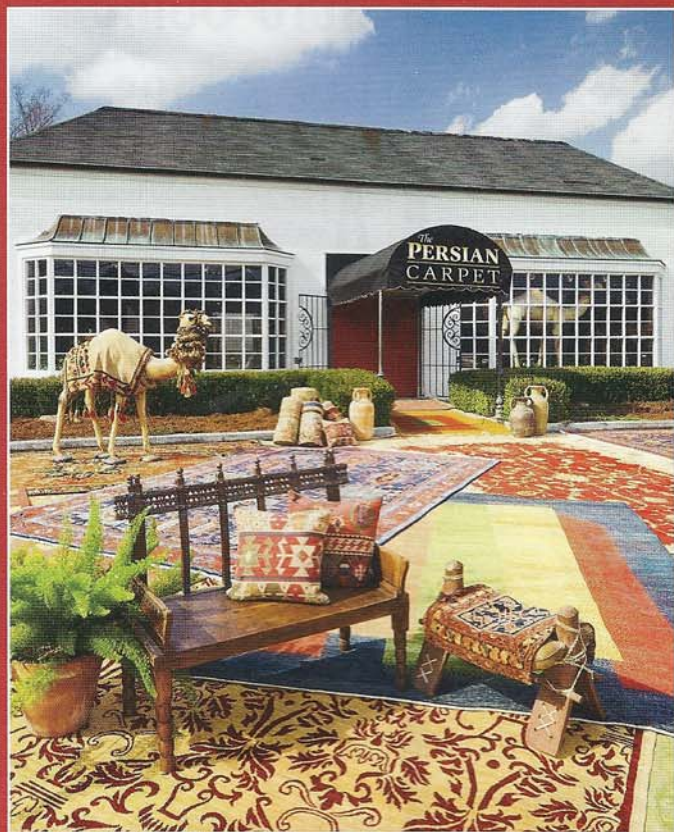
Cabinetry: Y & J Furniture

Custom Woodwork: Garland Woodcraft Co.

Landscape Architect: Butterfly Ridge Design and Works (Jock Wick)

Art Consultant: Art and Placement (Anahid Vrana)

Barn Builders: King Construction



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