

a picture



Gavin Design-Build's plan included a gallery to showcase Ann's heirloom furniture.



Close up of the gallery.

perfect remodel



Ann & Bob Manzi, homeowners

**renovation
of a
Broomall, PA,
home
captures an
interior
remodeling
award**

By Karen Appold

Photography by
Dennis Gavin

The floor plan of Robert and Ann Manzi's 1950s custom-built ranch house wasn't functional. Ann's heirloom furniture from her family dominated the living room, which was cut off from the rest of the house and rarely used. Robert, a sports fan, was relegated to a small nook off the kitchen to watch a TV tucked into a corner.

"We considered moving but loved our home and neighbor-



This computer generated picture shows how the furniture is now displayed as an ensemble with lighting to accentuate the pieces.



The new floor plan improved traffic flow.

hood,” Ann says. “We then thought about a minor renovation, but we wanted the change to look like it was part of the original house.”

A postcard in the mail featuring pictures of completed projects by Gavin Design-Build Inc. peaked the curiosity of the Broomall, PA couple. During his first visit, Dennis Gavin, CR, CKBR, president, Gavin Design-Build Inc., asked about the Manzi’s remodeling ideas. Ann was particularly impressed with Gavin’s ability to listen to them.

During Gavin’s second visit, he presented a computer program that allowed the eye to be the camera

lens. “He explained that our original idea could be so much more,” Ann says. “The wow factor became apparent.”

Gavin also shared renderings of the Manzi’s Delaware County home inside and out with a new patio, garden and lighting. “We sat speechless at his extraordinary talent,” Ann says. “We discussed cost, estimated time frame and the procedure to forge ahead.”

CHALLENGES BECOME HIGHLIGHTS

According to Gavin, the main challenge was to discover how the space could be reorganized to accommodate the couple’s needs. However,

determining the overall design was a highlight of the project.

“We were able to create a gallery for the antique furniture as well as open up the floor plan and create great traffic flow in the living room, gallery and kitchen,” Gavin says. “Now the whole area is connected and fully used.” The living room provides ample space for Robert to watch sports with family and friends.

The remodel only required 50 additional square feet. The roof was raised on a breezeway porch and small den. “We simply altered how the spaces were used,” Ann explains. “The old living room did not have a TV, yet it was far larger than the unused den. The porch was also unused, but improved air flow into the home. After the renovation, we now use all the space to its full potential.”

INCORPORATING PERSONAL TOUCHES

The Manzis both admired Gavin’s taste and together they incorporated their ideas into his design. “I have always loved yellow with blue accents in our home,” Ann says. “I added subtle neutral shades to give the living room a more contemporary look. It was the perfect opportunity to replace our living room furniture and window treatments.”

The walls were removed on either side of the fireplace to open up the area, with the wall behind the fireplace as a focal point. “I knew it needed personality and with Dennis’ input, we chose a faux finish,” Ann notes. “We used the background of a picture for inspiration.”

Every decision was important for the overall scheme. “I was given samples and literature on products such as flooring, windows, paving stones and lighting

to view and compare,” Ann says. “With an open floor plan, it was important that colors and wood tones flowed from room to room.”

DETERMINING DETAILS

The living room, dining room and hallway already had new light cream wall-to-wall carpeting. Gavin suggested Bruce hardwood oak flooring for the gallery area.

“I chose a caramel color that not only complemented the yellow walls, but also provided contrast to the dark wood antiques,” Ann says. This space also opens into the kitchen, which has a linoleum floor. It was important to make sure all elements had a transition to neighboring spaces. “Having hardwood floors also brought back memories of my childhood home in Wayne,” Ann says. “I added a small area rug in front of the faux fireplace to break up the wood floor.”

Another detail of Gavin’s plan was to add a column. “It brought the house into the 21st-century and was an unexpected architectural element,” Ann says. It is situated between spaces but is visible upon entering the house.

Gavin says the column is more for aesthetics than structural purposes. “It broke up the large opening and also helped to define and separate spaces,” he explains.

COME ON IN

When visitors enter the living room, they can peer into the gallery that displays the Manzi’s treasured antiques. On the opposite side of



The porch door was replaced with windows so traffic is now directed to the front door. The floor in the porch area was raised to the level of the rest of the house.



The living room was separated from other rooms and rarely used.

the wood burning fireplace is a faux mantle with blue and white tiles. “Antique furniture was incorporated with new pieces,” Ann says. The rooms are full of natural light and flow with color and style. The new indoor and outdoor lighting added another dimension.”

The kitchen table is now in front of sliding doors that lead out to the deck, pool and yard. The kitchen is no longer crowded with a table and chairs. “My ideas of a buffet custom made to match the cabinetry and pendant lighting complete the look,” Ann says. “I often marvel at the stars and moon through the skylights.”

MORE THAN PLEASED

The Manzis are glad they seized the opportunity to remodel. “The ren-

ovations have changed how we use the rooms and give us such satisfaction,” Ann says. “Anyone who saw the home before the remodel is awed by the change.”

Says Ann, “Obviously, we don’t have one favorite thing. We love everything. We actually have the home that was initially revealed via the computer. Our home is comfortable for our family as well as entertaining. We feel like we have a new home without the packing and moving van.”

When viewing the home from the street, Ann says the changes aren’t really noticeable because the renovation was designed to look original.

Adds Ann, “Dennis says your home should feed you and now



Walls were removed on either side of the fireplace to open up the area.

ours does just that. We only wish we had remodeled sooner. It was not a typical renovation and had some unexpected surprises. We are very proud and look forward to working with Dennis again.”

The project also had another surprise -- winning the 2006 DelCy award for an interior remodel under \$100,000 from the DelChester National Association of the Remodeling Industry. While the award is for only for specific areas of the interior, Gavin also installed additional lighting above the kitchen cabinetry and focal lighting for the fireplace and opposite wall in the living room. New windows were installed in place of the porch and a new picture window was put in the living room.

Gavin custom designed a patio with pavers and a new front stoop. The patio’s design incorporates Ann’s idea of a pineapple fountain to welcome visitors. Robert installed lighting around the fountain and throughout the new garden he created. A contractor installed a lamppost in the garden along with wall-mounted lighting on either side of the garage and above the front door. The Craftsman look complements the new style of windows and completes the outdoors. “Dennis suggested a custom color for the window trim that truly makes a statement,” Ann remarks. “It definitely completes the design he hadenvisioned.”

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Started in 1980, Gavin Design-Build Inc. is a member of the DelChester Chapter of NARI. The company is located at 1072 Palmers Mill Road, Media, PA. Call 610-353-8890, e-mail dgavin@comcast.net or visit gavin-designbuild.com for more information.

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The kitchen and TV area before the remodel had limited functionality.