

# Clem Labine's Period Homes

THE PROFESSIONAL'S RESOURCE FOR RESIDENTIAL ARCHITECTURE ■ Volume 10, Number 4 ■ July 2009 \$7.00

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## 2009 Palladio Awards

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Winner: **John B. Murray Architect, LLC**



**Project:** Pool Pavilion, Greenwich, CT

**Architect:** John B. Murray Architect, LLC, New York, NY; John B. Murray, AIA, principal

**Contractor:** Cornerstone Construction, Cos Cob, CT

**Landscape Designer:** Deborah Nevins & Associates, Inc., New York, NY

**Interior Designer:** Jennifer Garrigues, Inc., Palm Beach, FL

## English Reflections

The rustic architecture of the Cotswold region of southwest England is identified by a variety of names and features. Its sloped roofs, small dormer windows, large chimneys and general asymmetry have earned the nickname Storybook (or Hansel and Gretel) Cottage, and commonly, English Country and Tudor — a reflection of its medieval roots. American architects such as Harrie T. Lindeberg and Albert Kahn adopted the Cotswold style in modern versions of rustic homes in the 1920s and '30s, and its most popular elements are frequently reflected in Georgian and Arts and Crafts styles.

When the Olmsted Brothers designed Khakum Wood in Greenwich, CT, it was with the American Cotswold Tudor style in mind. This park-like, pastoral setting recalls the English countryside and is home to many translations, old and new, of its signature styles. It is here that a series of projects by John B. Murray Architect — all in keeping with the Olmsteds' holistic approach — completed the plan for an 11-acre estate. The last of these was an 1,800-sq.ft. pool pavilion that faces the main house and has become a cohesive part of the landscape.

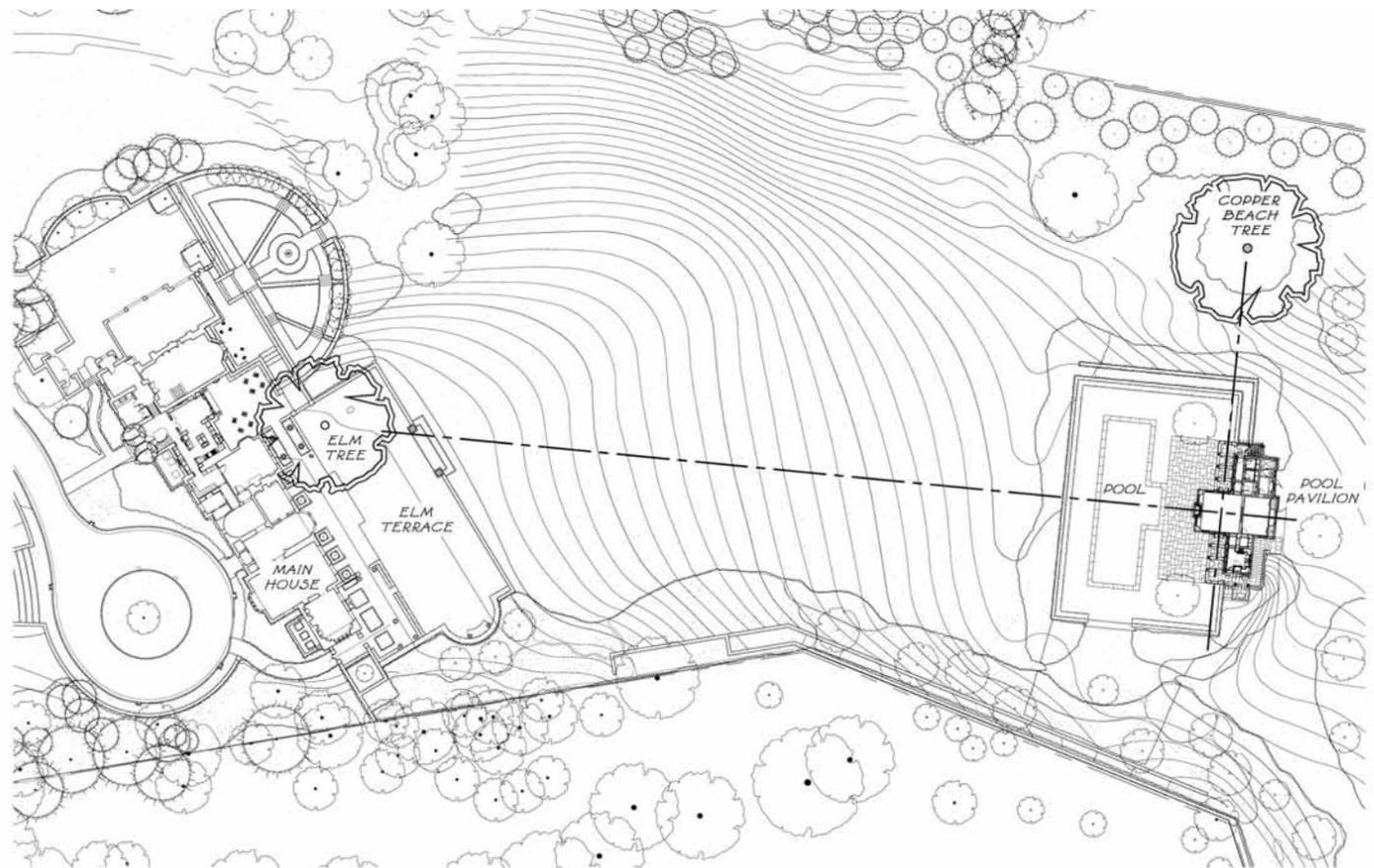
“The concept for the pool house was that it would be visible, that the house would look towards it, which is somewhat of an English landscaping concept,” says Murray. “They would sometimes build a folly for this purpose, which of course this is not — its purpose is to support activity at the pool. However, the notion of making it a part of the view was a big step for everyone involved. It put a lot of pressure on its being perfectly scaled so that it became an asset to the view, rather than a complication.”

The pavilion is situated on a lawn that slopes away from the house, and is set among large specimen trees and a rolling boxwood hedge; it is oriented on a north-south axis with a grand American elm tree at the main house and is also anchored by a copper beech to the east. As a result, the massing and scale of the pavilion became a primary challenge. Before any commitment was made, a series of stick-framed, full-sized plywood models were constructed and viewed by the clients and architect from the terrace of the main house. “We discussed everything about the proportion, the length and the view, and we also took into consideration the clients' favorite trees,” says Murray. “These constructions were an important schematic design exercise because the height and width of the front elevation were critical to the outlook. It was an exciting moment when the mockup was erected on the site and the backdrop of the lawn and trees joined in the composition perfectly. We realized then that it was going to be really beautiful.”



An 1,800-sq.ft. pool pavilion by New York City-based John B. Murray Architect completed the plan for an 11-acre estate in Greenwich, CT. Besides functions for swimmers, the pavilion also includes a tearoom, a comfortably sized terrace, a guest bedroom and kitchen. All photos: H. Durston Saylor

The pool pavilion sits on a lawn that slopes away from the house among large specimen trees and a rolling boxwood hedge.



Though the site and the folly connotations required that the pavilion be more Palladian/Classical than the main house, they maintain a connection through materials and carefully edited architectural elements; a single gable-ended massing is taken directly from the house, as are the tabbed coping with finials in limestone, stucco walls and limestone quoins. Close up, common details such as iconic graphic carvings around the front door and the quality of the plaster finish over the masonry wall continue the theme. "It was important that the pavilion feel like part of the family of properties," says Murray.

Besides functions for swimmers, such as changing rooms and an outdoor shower, the pavilion also includes a comfortably sized terrace, a tea-room with a pendentive domed ceiling and a guest bedroom and kitchen. As a result, it serves a far greater purpose than its name suggests. "The form was really generated somewhat by the program," says Murray. "It needed to stand as a house. It needed to do certain things independently; it needed a kitchen, ultimately we decided it needed a bedroom and it needed an area where one could relax, have lunch and entertain friends."

All exterior lighting fixtures were custom designed John B. Murray Architect and fabricated by Historical Arts and Casting of West Jordan, UT. They are a continuation of those used in the main house during previous



On the east side, the outdoor shower and teak pergola structure adjoin the limestone loggia.



Like many homes in Khakum Wood, the main house is American Cotswold Tudor in style; the new pavilion was perfectly scaled to complement the view from the Elm Terrace.



Above: Though comparatively more Palladian/Classical in style, the pavilion maintains a connection with the main house through elements such as the single gable-ended massing, tabbed coping with finials in limestone, stucco walls and limestone quoins.



Right: The pendentive-domed tearoom – another English concept – opens to the loggias and pool terrace via French doors.

restorations. Other key suppliers included Skyline Windows, stone carver Chris Pelletieri, bronze-work specialist Josef Custom Ironworks and millwork specialist Gaston & Wyatt, Inc.

Front and center is an outdoor fireplace, which faces the pool and led to the concept of loggias to the east and west. “It wasn’t going to be possible to enter on center,” says Murray. “So the loggias became a way to filter into the house. You enter the loggias from the pool terrace, then turn and go through French doors into the tearoom, which is another English concept. It has a really nice sensibility. When the windows and French doors are open, it really flows.” – *Lynne Lavelle*

Right: The outdoor shower offers views of the landscape beyond.

Far right: The loggias and tearoom form a long axis to a copper beech tree.

