

The Valley Breeze

HOME OF THE WEEK ~ August 16, 2011

'Tea Room' house once part of the Lippitt Estates Country Club

CUMBERLAND - This much-admired house on Scott Road, at the corner of Theater Drive, was once the Stonehenge Tea Room, a stop on the way to the Barn Theatre next door, now also a private residence.



Back in the Lippitt Estates Country Club days in the early 1900s, this loop of buildings on the north side of the neighborhood pond were a part of the estate that drew vacationers and theater-goers from all over New England during the summer.



Both the Stonehenge Tea Room and Barn Theatre were accessed by entering between wide, tapered stone columns that are still seen from Scott Road. (This home's driveway, by the way, was once the start of Theater Drive, until the town required a wider roadway and moved Theater Drive a few yards to the west.)

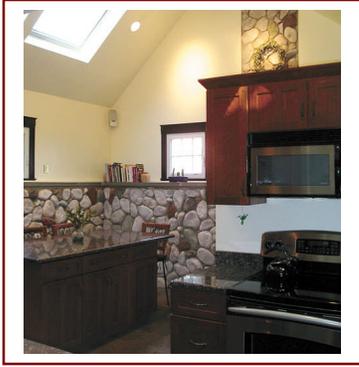


The house retains much of the warm character of the old tea room, with dark paneled walls and beamed ceilings, and two enormous floor-to-ceiling stone fireplaces. It was here that one very long table accommodated the guests, who were seated banquet-style in the center of the 50-foot-long room. From this main room, a glass door leads out to a pergola-covered terrace, where one can imagine patrons dressed in their showy best sipping their pre-show beverages.

Today, this great room is used as a family room and billiards room, and has a wood-burning stove that, using just seven cords, according to the selling agent, heats the house for the season. (A large woodshed in the back yard is already stocked for the buyer's first winter.)



On the opposite side of the great room is a long, sunny four-season porch with beadboard walls and ceiling. Windows have the original wavy glass panes and removable storm windows.



Beyond the great room is a large dining room, where the second of the impressive fireplaces is located. Here, too are the original wooden floors, and wooden, beamed ceiling. A couple of the original floor-to-ceiling posts define the dining section from the fireplace area. On each side of the fireplace is a built-in china cabinet.

Beyond the dining room, a delightful new kitchen has been designed with stone walls that mimic the fireplaces and the house's foundation. Counters are granite and appliances stainless steel. A large center island seats several for casual dining, and faces a wall-mounted TV. Built into the island are the trash and recycling bins, and a fold-out ironing board. In the cathedral ceiling are skylights that have rain sensors, automatically closing the windows against the weather. The tile floor has radiant heating. Around a corner, a side entrance hallway houses the laundry room and pantry cupboards.



Also on the first floor is a bedroom and full bathroom. Upstairs are two bedrooms and one bathroom. The upstairs bedrooms each have a cedar closet; one has an additional full-size closet, the other has eaves storage.

All around this wonderful property are gardens - vegetables, flowers, perennials - and the stonework that lent its name to the tea room - Stonehenge means hanging stone in old English. The foundation is stone, as are the walls of the main walkway and stairs to the front door. On the landing of the stairway that leads to the sunroom is a cozy seating area. On the front lawn is an enormous pod tree, with a rope swing suspended from a lower branch. A detached, oversized two-car garage has a full loft above.

The property is listed at \$359,000 by Marilyn Boyce of Keller Williams Realty. Reach her at 401-323-0008.