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## 2002 PALLADIO AWARDS

RESIDENTIAL ARCHITECTURE: RESTORATION & RENOVATION

WINNER: HISTORICAL CONCEPTS

# Restoration With An Historic Twist

**PROJECT:** Low-Country Plantation House, near Hilton Head, S.C.

**ARCHITECT:** Historical Concepts, Peachtree City Ga.;  
**Project Team:** Jim Strickland, the late Philip Windsor, Terry Pylant, David Bryant, Andrew Cogar, Sandra Guritz and Michael Moss

**INTERIOR DESIGN:** Ruth Edwards, Ruth Edwards Antiques and Interiors, Bluffton, S.C.

**LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE:** Don Hooten, Decatur, Ga.

**GENERAL CONTRACTOR/BUILDER:** Willis Ponds, Ponds Construction, Lodge, S.C.



**K**nown for their sensibility for the past, Historical Concepts of Peachtree City, Ga. — led by President Jim Strickland — combined vernacular styles and classical proportions with functional interior amenities for their work on a long-forgotten farmhouse.

Originally constructed in 1914, the Langford House was uninhabitable when discovered by the current owner. Practically falling down, the structure was moved from its original site to rest on a 1,000-acre coastal hunting preserve near Hilton Head, S.C. Several recently constructed ancillary buildings (also designed by Historical Concepts) — a boathouse, a cane mill, and a series of one-bedroom guesthouses — are reminiscent of an old village, and were designed to appear as if from the same era as the farmhouse. It was the owner's intent to add a main structure that would

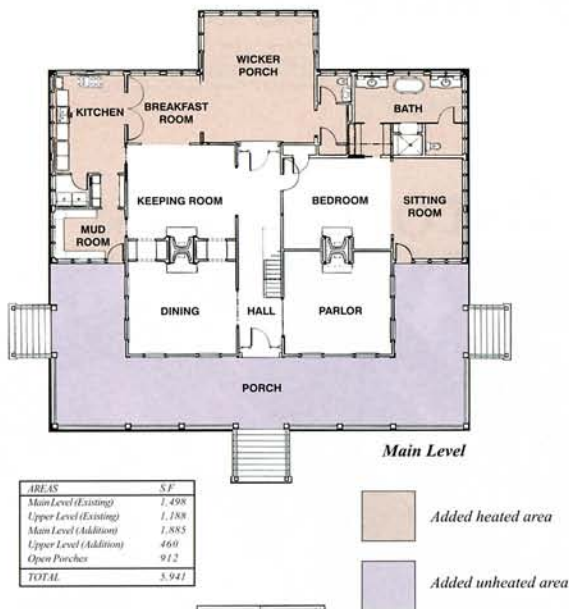
*To imbue a "plantation" designed and built in the 1990s with historical accuracy, the Langford House, c. 1914, was moved from its original site to a site near Hilton Head, S.C. Special engineering and five feet of fill were required to accommodate the footings of the derelict farmhouse. These images show a side elevation prior to the move (top) and the front elevation after the house landed on its new site (bottom) where Historical Concepts of Peachtree City, Ga. would give the structure another life as a low-country raised plantation house.*

*(All photographs courtesy of Historical Concepts, Inc.)*





The house is well-situated thanks to sensitive landscaping by Don Hooten of Decatur, Ga. Two lines of palms indigenous to the low country form an allee that flanks either side of the garden to dramatic effect. Here, the side elevation with the open porch is visible on the left, and the enclosed “porch” of the master suite is on the right.



The original Langford House contained four rooms with a central stair hall on the main level and two small bedrooms upstairs. The design team enlarged the house by crafting a porch that wraps around the entire perimeter. The front portion of the porch is left open to welcome guests, while the rear is completely enclosed with windows to significantly expand the main living space without further altering the footprint. The 2,345-sq-ft. addition includes a mudroom, kitchen, breakfast area, and wicker porch. A sitting area and bath were also incorporated into the master suite.



The completed Langford House is seen here from the front drive. The new addition of the partially enclosed wraparound porch takes its cue from what was a traditional practice in the 1920s. In sum, the old house and the new porch together make good on the driving philosophy behind the project: What was old is new again, and vice-versa. Materials were carefully chosen to reflect the period of the original farmhouse and include the seamed-metal roof and custom-milled windows and doors by Fracasso Custom Woodworking, Walterboro, S.C.

lend historical authenticity to the compound and serve as the “main house” for his family and guests.

Strickland says of this project that “it presented challenges and opportunities like no other. The chance to look back in time and re-create an entire farm and homestead as it would have existed a century ago was both thought-provoking and extremely gratifying.” Strickland adds that “every great project starts with the client.” In this particular case, the client came to Historical Concepts with his vision and worked together with them to develop a “storyline” for how the complex might have actually evolved over the past century.

To render the Langford House both habitable and large enough





Woodworking (Walterboro, S.C.) to create new windows, door surrounds, and cabinets to match existing features. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the need to add a significant amount of heated square footage led the design team to come up with a solution steeped in historical precedent: Retaining the original form of the farmhouse, the team wrapped the house with generous porches compatible with the existing architecture. Then, as was a traditional practice in the 1920s, portions of the porches were enclosed to gain more interior space without any major additions.

Historical Concepts' approach of considering how an "old" house might have evolved with each generation is typical of their work and led the design team to create architecture with a charm and quirkiness that many new construction projects lack. Designs were complemented by a mix of old and new materials in order to gain the period effect desired by the client. ♦

*The new kitchen occupies a corner of the enclosed porch. Although it houses modern appliances, every effort was made to design a period room by use of custom cabinetry (by Fracasso Custom Woodworking, Walterboro, S.C.), dish racks above the sink area, red-painted floorboards, and traditionally styled hardware. The same metal roofing used on the exterior of the house was also used in the kitchen as a backdrop for the commercial range and hood. One of the themes for the design team, paramount to the rehabilitation of the house, was imagining what would have changed with the addition of electricity in the 1920s. How a kitchen might have been "modernized" during that period contributed to the final "look" of this new-old kitchen.*

to meet the needs of the owner, the design team at Historical Concepts was confronted with the task of restoring and reconfiguring the old structure, as well as designing an addition that would expand and update the farmhouse without compromising its vintage charm. The first challenge, which required special engineering considerations, was the chore of moving and re-siting the derelict, neglected house.

The next consideration was how to meet the client's design program without seriously altering the existing structural framework or the original elements. A case in point was the staircase: It was seriously rotted and needed to be completely rebuilt. Likewise, the bathroom space on the second floor needed to be expanded and this entailed altering the plan without changing the existing roofline.

The authenticity of the millwork was also of great concern, so the design team worked with custom craftsman Richard Fracasso of Fracasso Custom



*Opposite the kitchen in the enclosed porch is the new master-suite bathroom. Custom freestanding vanities and mirrors were created for the bathroom, necessitated by the window-clad exterior walls. A clawfoot tub completes the elegant look of this lace-curtained period bathroom. For Jim Strickland, President of Historical Concepts, "the success of the Langford House project lies in the dynamic synergy among client, artisans, carpenters, craftsmen, and designers."*





*Inside the Langford House the atmosphere is relaxed and airy. This view runs from the stairball through the door opening and ends at the wicker porch at the rear of the house. The door surround is a mirror image of the front entrance directly opposite. Lighting fixtures throughout the house were restored by Eloise Pickard of Sandy Springs Gallery (Adairsville, Ga.). Other finishing details — bead board on the walls and ceilings and vintage lumber on the floors — contribute to the turn-of-the-century feel of the house.*



*The original steep and narrow stair was in terrible condition; it was completely rebuilt exactly like the original with special permission from the building department. The upper level was reconfigured to provide private baths for each of the four new bedrooms, without compromising the existing roofline. Previously unused eave space was ingeniously incorporated to add additional square footage. The stairball sets the tone of an earlier era with the bead board, which continues up the stair to all the walls and ceilings of the bedrooms.*



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