



TRACT 11



SPRING HOUSE

circa. 1888

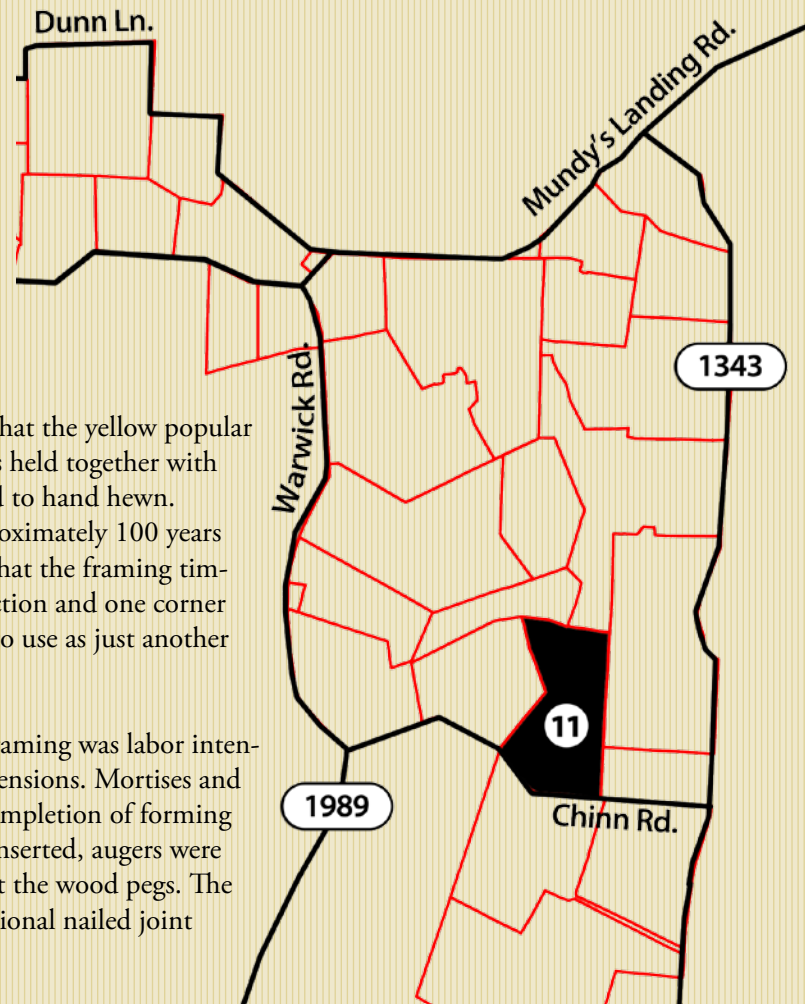


SPRING HOUSE

With the purchase of the Wilkinson Farm in 1988, Anderson Circle Farm acquired several barns as a part of the purchase. As a part of all new acquisitions, inspections were performed to determine the condition of the facilities and make repairs as required. During these inspections, we were confronted with a genuine surprise while inspecting one of the barns near Route 127. From the exterior, the barn appeared to be a typical Kentucky transverse tobacco barn with a central passage and five bents in length. However, this proved to be all that was typical about this Kentucky tobacco barn.

This was a rare find from a construction standpoint. We discovered that the yellow popular timber structure had been constructed with mortise and tenon joints held together with tapered wood pegs. The framing members had been sawn as opposed to hand hewn. Based on old farm records, it was determined that the barn was approximately 100 years old. Upon close inspection of our newly found gem, we discovered that the framing timbers were in remarkably good condition except for one corner sill section and one corner post. Ralph immediately recognized that this barn was too valuable to use as just another tobacco barn. It should be restored and preserved.

From a historical construction standpoint, mortise and tenon type framing was labor intensive. Framing bents had to be carefully laid out for location and dimensions. Mortises and tenons had to be prepared using augers and chisels. Following the completion of forming operations, tenons had to be inserted into the mortise joints. Once inserted, augers were used to drill holes through the assembled framing members to accept the wood pegs. The resulting joint was exceptionally strong and far superior to a conventional nailed joint connection.



Typical construction practices were to preassemble all the barn bents flat on the ground. The foundation was prepared, and huge sill plates were laid down. Mortise joints were prepared in the sill plates to accept the tenon joint located on the bottom of each vertical post. After all the bents had been preassembled, the task of raising these huge sections into their vertical position required the efforts of many people, hence the barn raising tradition. The barn raising tradition in America evolved into one of the most festive occasions of rural farm life. Except for church gatherings, it was one of the few opportunities farm families had to gather, to gossip, to eat and have fun. There was no shortage of manpower to raise the great barn structures of our nation.

With the growth of Anderson Circle Farm, accommodations for overnight guest were needed. Since this need existed, what better use to make of the magnificent barn structure than to reconstruct it to a guesthouse. Ralph and Ruth thus conceived the birth of the Springhouse. It would be used by guests of Anderson Circle Farm as a retreat house and getaway spot for the weekend. However, the location on Route 127 was less than desirable for a guesthouse. Without a second thought, Ralph decided that the barn structure would be moved to one of the most beautiful and historic spots on the farm, i.e. Shawnee Springs.

The views from this vantage point overlooked the springs, the magnificent cypress trees near the springs, and the hill on the other side of the spring branch valley. This was also one of the most heavily wooded parts of the farm. In addition to the natural beauty, there was absolutely no noise.....just peace and quite. Since the reconstructed barn would be located near the springs, what better name to give the recycled barn than the Springhouse.

One of the most fundamental design requirements for the Springhouse was to leave the timber structure exposed with little





or no modifications. Based on this requirement, the floor plan for the Springhouse was left totally open except for the enclosure of the bathroom and mechanical closet located on the first floor. The original barn had a second story loft on either side of the central passage, so it was decided that one side of the loft would be reconstructed to serve as a bedroom sleeping loft. Access to the sleeping loft would be provided with a period style cast iron spiral staircase. This would require much less floor space than a conventional stair would require.

Since the site selected offered wonderful views to the north, east, and south, the design team decided that the outer skin should be totally glass to the greatest possible extent on these walls. This not only would dramatize the framing, but would also give the interior a light, spacious feeling. To add to this spacious feeling, it was decided that the original loft space on the east side would not be installed. To provide warm and ambience to the interior design, a limestone fireplace would be constructed on the south wall adjacent to the entrance.

Disassembly of the timber structure started, piece by piece. The disassembled timber structure was moved to its new location and reassembled exactly as it had originally been constructed except the omission of the second floor loft on the east side. Since the tapered wood pegs used to hold the mortise and tenon joints together could not be salvaged, new pegs were milled for reassembly.

The total design and construction process took about one year to complete. First and foremost, the interior would have no painted surface. The exposed timber framing was left exactly as it had originally been found with no added finishes. Wall surfaces would remain as unfinished, exposed horizontal cedar wood siding. Flooring surfaces would be vee grooved, pegged oak with a satin finish.

Shaker and period type furniture was collected from throughout the country to be used for the interior design. The railing of the sleeping loft proved to be a wonderful place to display some of the family collection of quilts. In lieu of the conventional kitchen, a period style cupboard was purchased and modified to house the sink, range, and a small refrigerator.







HOME DETAILS

1st floor - 41 x 33 – open concept flooring, east wall is all windows, spiral stair case to loft – 4ft diameter, chandelier lighting.

Working fireplace is 9 ft wide made of stone that extends down to the fireplace floor

Bathroom - 6' x 10'

Loft - 41' x 11'

Deck - 10' x 42' - wood decking

Foyer entry is stone flooring, other flooring is hardwood



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