

GROWING *From* OLD *to* NEW

DARYL ROST'S SKILL AS AN ARTISAN BUILDER COUPLED WITH HIS WIFE SHANNON'S VISIONARY INTERIOR DESIGN HAS ALLOWED THE HATTERY STOVE AND STILL TO BE REMEMBERED FOR WHAT IT ONCE WAS

By Bob Waite



In 2012 real estate broker Todd McCarty noticed that the Doylestown Inn was in foreclosure. He put in a bid for the property for one of his clients. The client eventually backed out and Todd showed the building to a few more clients. Soon he realized the building would be a good investment for him and several family members. The property needed a lot of work.

Daryl Rost, president of Rost Artisan Builders and an old friend of Todd's from high school who has done work in the past for some of his clients, seemed the perfect person to do this restoration. The first thing to do

was to get the hotel up and running and then build a completely new restaurant.

Daryl enlisted the help of his talented wife Shannon to provide design themes and ideas that would both keep them on budget and make this restaurant a beautiful and winsome space. As Shannon puts it, "I wanted the whole project to be approachable for the person coming in on a business trip, a couple celebrating their anniversary, as well as those who want to go out to breakfast with their kids."

The building had to be stripped to its bones and the



Opposite, exterior of Hattery in Doylestown Inn. Top, downstairs bar with speakeasy look. Bottom left, Daryl & Shannon Rost posing in upstairs bar. Bottom right, a mural in downstairs bar of patrons of Jug In The Wall.

old flooring had to be torn out. It needed a vision and Shannon had one almost immediately, "I walked into the building and it spoke to me. It needed to be remembered for what it once was." And it was many things, a restaurant, a hattery, a cigar store, a speakeasy and a bar called Jug In The Wall.

Shannon looked at the basement, which was a speakeasy during prohibition and where the Jug In The

Wall bar once drew local patrons and hotel guests. "I walked downstairs and it actually looked like a 1990s boardroom. What the previous owners had done to it was sad," she says.

To give the space a speakeasy look, Daryl found a 1934 Buick. He cut off the side of the car and made it a part of the bar. Daryl proudly states, "The headlights and turn signals work." On the top of the bar is the tail of an old



Chevy pickup, with a stack of lumber on top. In bootlegging days, Daryl says, the bootleggers used trucks to move and wood to hide their liquor. So bottles of liquor are inside and on top of the stack, and when the tailgate comes down there is more liquor to be served. Beneath the truck are beer taps connected to an axle that Daryl milled in his machine shop. Shannon used unicycle bar seats because of Todd's fondness for bicycles.

The mural on the wall behind the bar shows scenes of actual customers that frequented the Jug In The Wall. Shannon says, "I had to pay homage to the people who once hung out there." There is also a sliding speakeasy door.

The upstairs bar pays homage to the Hattery by having overhead lights in fixtures that are made using antique hats. The bar is made to look like a riveted airplane wing, symbolizing travel. Antique crates are seen under the bar.

To get items such as suitcases for a wall of suitcases, cigar boxes for a ceiling, hats for light fixtures and to hang on the two-story tree involved trips to Brimfield Massachusetts Antiques Markets. They also received help from friends and family who availed the couple of their collections, garages and attics.

"The tree is symbolic of growing from old to new," says Shannon, whose concept was made a reality by Daryl using the wood from the original flooring that he nailed to a metal frame. The four hats that hang on the tree pay homage to the four owners of the inn. The tree rises majestically from the basement floor to the first floor ceiling.

The chandeliers hanging in the restaurant are not permanent, since they are for sale. In a mutually beneficial deal, Joy at Light World in Feasterville placed the lamps in the restaurant for sale, thus having an extra showroom while The Hattery gets beautiful chandeliers.

A partition in the restaurant is made from windows, and the mirrors seen all over the restaurant are made with mirror glass and frames for art that were left there by the previous owners. Seats in the restaurant are covered with coffee sacks and some with drop cloths on which paint was spilled strategically. The tabletops are made from barn wood that is painted. Red is a color used almost everywhere.

Daryl Rost's work on the hotel is continuing. So far, the rooms were upgraded with more modern amenities and the number of room expanded from 11 to 14. By June, Todd estimates, three more rooms will be finished.

When entering The Hattery, there is flow, a kind of funky, yet classy ambience. Descending into the basement is like traveling back in time. Shannon is convinced that the building is at peace with itself.

The Hattery Stove and Still is located at the Doylestown Inn on 18 W. State Street, Doylestown, PA. For more information about Rost Artisan Builders, visit www.rostartisan.com.

BOB WAITE IS THE EDITOR OF BUCKS COUNTY MAGAZINE.



Opposite top, (left to right) Todd McCarty and Daryl Rost standing behind the bar on first floor made to look like a riveted airplane wing to symbolize travel. Top left, a wall of suitcases. Top right, inside restaurant with view of tree and partition made from windows. Bottom left, inside Hattery there are chandeliers for sale, hanging from the ceiling. Center right, liquor kept in back of Chevy pickup and wood pile. Bottom right, stairs connecting the upstairs restaurant to the bar on lower level.

