



CASE STUDY

Le Baron Farm

Location: Jeffersonton, Virginia | New Construction



A French Farmhouse for the Equestrian's Dream

An equestrian from France commissioned Neumann Lewis Buchanan Architects to design a new period house on the banks of the Rappahannock River in Culpepper County, Virginia. That's when Mark Buchanan began his research of French farmhouses and horse stables, adapting it for the pastoral Virginia landscape.

"Natural organic materials appeared time after time when doing my research on seventeenth-century French Country houses and stables," explains Buchanan, principal of his firm whose offices are in Washington, D.C., and Middleburg, Virginia. "And there was this little barn nearby with a buttered mortar that looked very rustic, as if the farmer himself had finished the work. The research gave us precedent for French equestrian design with a Virginia vernacular twist."

Buchanan designed a fieldstone house with a steep pitched roof, presenting a variegated color pattern of Ludowici Clay Tile. "In the French countryside, this roof would have been low-slung, but not in the Virginia Piedmont. Ludowici was very helpful in sending me a variety of color and style samples to help me select what we needed, in the right color ratio," he comments.

"The color ratio was 40/40/10/10," Will Eicher of J.D. Eicher Builder explains. "We got a lot of clay tile samples from Ludowici for client and architect approval. We laid them all out in four groups. That was a first for us." The roofing contractor was Michael A. Jenkins of Warrenton, Virginia.

Tubular trusses spanned the main body of the house and supported a structural ridge. Eicher recalls, "they were too tall to fit on the truck, so we had to weld two pieces together on-site."

Agreeably tying the French sensibility to the pastoral Virginia landscape, this house is one-room deep with French doors that allow cooling breezes and a picturesque view. J. D. Eicher did not install typical eave and ridge vents but rather used a mechanical system, designed by Buchanan, which cycled fresh outdoor air from the basement through ducts, up to the attic, then back down the other side to the basement again, and out.

Lewis Neumann Buchanan Architects and J.D.Eicher Builder won an American Institute of Architects Residential Design Award for Le Baron Farm. "There is no doubt that the AIA design awards jury was charmed by our French country Ludowici Clay Roof!" exclaims Buchanan.

ARCHITECT:

Neumann Lewis Buchanan
Architects
www.nlbarchitects.com

BUILDER:

J.D. Eicher Builder
www.jdeicherbuilderinc.com

ROOFING CONTRACTOR:

Michael A. Jenkins
Warrenton, Virginia

PRODUCT(S):

Provincial Shingle Tile

COLOR(S):

Clay Red
Ebony Mist
Santiago Rose



The expressive architecture of Neumann Lewis Buchanan connects memory and place. Fluency and invention with the language of traditional precedent creates character, grace, and beauty for now and generations to follow. The firm's extensive portfolio ranges from magnificent estates and country retreats to ambling farmhouses, outbuildings, and storybook cottages. Each endeavor is quintessentially of a place, enriching its surroundings while appearing to have always belonged. The firm's partners and team members – most of whom have worked together for decades or more – match expertise with personal warmth and spirit; working closely with clients to shape visions of home.



Photography: © RON BLUNT

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– **Mark Buchanan, AIA**, Partner, Neumann Lewis Buchanan Architects

Devoted to practicing architecture in a language that imbues simplicity, grace, and beauty, Mark Buchanan is a longtime advocate for and student of the principles of classical architecture. Using historic and vernacular precedent, he creates luminous homes with primary spaces that are daylit from two or more directions; that are responsive to the immediate and broader context; present a sense of memory and continuity; and reflect the patina of a family's life. Assemblages of natural materials — stone, wood, iron, copper, and clay — and finely crafted details reveal and reinforce connections to building customs of a given locale. A native of Ohio, Mark is a graduate of the University of Texas at Arlington and holds a Bachelor of Science in Architecture. He is an active member of the ICAA and the National Trust for Historic Preservation.




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