

A FARM BOY'S

DREAM HOUSE

Impressive 'Stonewood' holds Jim Prettyman's special collections



ABOVE: A large balcony overlooks the great room complete with an 1860 French grandfather's clock and a stuffed Canada Goose in flight over the doorway leading out to the porch. **RIGHT:** Jim Prettyman stands in one of his favorite rooms — the home's library. Prettyman would never shoot an animal, but if it's already dead and its head already mounted, he likes to buy it to hang on the library's walls.

Jim Prettyman is “basically a Sussex County farm boy,” he says. A native of Harbeson and a 1962 graduate of what was then Georgetown High School, he still holds things like Farmall tractors and Rhode Island Red hens near to his heart.

So when he opens his 6,800-square foot home, “Stonewood,” overlooking the Lewes-and-Rehoboth Canal in Canal Corkran, just outside Rehoboth Beach, as part of next month's Rehoboth Art League Cottage Tour, visitors won't just see its observation room, with six windows, all looking out onto the canal. They won't just see its custom-made elevator, its two-story library where stuffed heads of caribou, mountain sheep, impala

and deer look down at the bookcases, or its 1860 French grandfather's clock in the great room. They will also see mounted chickens — a Rhode Island Red standing on top of one kitchen cabinet and a barred Plymouth Rock rooster on top of another — paintings of a Jersey cow, a red barn and a Farmall in the observation room and a collection of photographs of his Prettyman and West (on his mother's side, from Gumboro) ancestors hanging on an upstairs wall.

“I like to surround myself with things that I enjoy looking at,” says Prettyman, owner, with his partner, Yost Bonham, of BP Properties, a property management company based in Fort Lauderdale, Fla. “I have been in homes that have been done by a designer and they look very nice. But I can't sit there and think back to when I got this or that.”

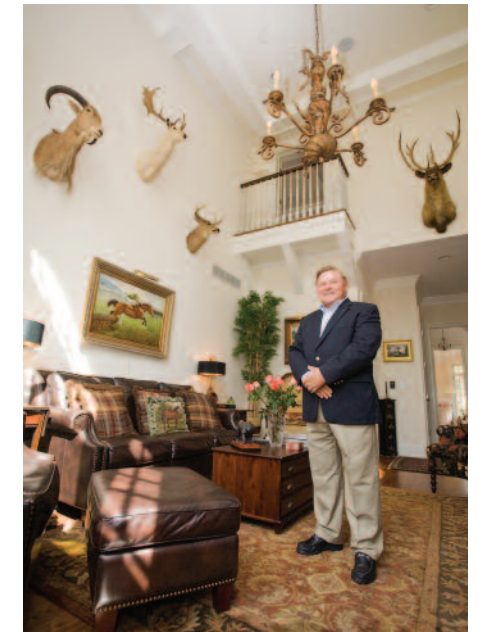
Prettyman and Bonham built their home in 2008. Construction, by Garrison Homes in Lewes and Dover, started in January and the couple moved in in August. Project manager for the construction was Rick Cornell, who “built it as though he was building his own home,” Prettyman says. “He put love into this house.”

Planning for the house started well before ground was broken. The architect was G. A. Hastings and Associates of Ocean View.

“I literally slept with the plans for two years,” Prettyman says. “I would look at them before I went to sleep and when I woke up, they would still be there. But I wanted this to be something I did just right, because I figured it would probably be the last home I built for myself. And I wanted it to be able to accommodate Yost and me as we grow old.”

Toward that end, the third-story master suite is a complete living quarters. In addition to two bathrooms, one with a tub that overlooks the canal, it has a small kitchen and a comfortable sitting area. A two-sided fireplace separates the sitting area from the larger bathroom.

Down the hall from the suite is a large balcony overlooking the great room as



BY LYNN R. PARKS | PHOTOGRAPHS BY CAROLYN WATSON



ABOVE LEFT: Boaters on the Lewes-and-Rehoboth Canal get this view of the home of Jim Prettyman and Yost Bonham and its backyard.

ABOVE RIGHT: A second-floor guest bedroom features a Palladian window that stretches nearly two stories.

LEFT: The observation room, with a table of binoculars at the ready, looks over the canal. The pink and green glass chandelier is from Marino, Italy.

TOP, FAR RIGHT: Oversized crown molding accents the large dining room with two tables. The dining room table can seat 12. The windows overlook the canal.

MIDDLE, FAR RIGHT: Looking into the master bathroom through a double-fronted fireplace. Prettyman always wanted to be able to bathe, look out a window with a view, watch television and have a fire going at the same time. With this bathroom, he can do that.

BOTTOM, FAR RIGHT: Note the two stuffed birds on shelves near the kitchen ceiling, a Plymouth Rock rooster on the right and a Rock Island Red hen on the left.



well as a small balcony where, Prettyman jokes, if he gets so he can't go downstairs, he will be able to park his wheelchair and join in any activity going on in the library below. Even confined to that view, Prettyman would be able to see the cherubs romping in a blue sky that decorate the medallion from which an antique chandelier hangs.

The library also features a large Palladian window, stretching nearly two stories from floor to ceiling. Prettyman says that he wasn't sure about putting in such a large window, but architect Greg Hastings assured him that the scale of the house calls for large features. "That's why you need a good architect," Prettyman adds.

Also oversized to fit the house is the crown molding in the dining room. "It's massive, and impressive," Prettyman says. The dining room table seats 12 and a small round table, in the bay window overlooking the canal, seats two. Two nickel chandeliers hang over the large table.

Throughout the house are paintings that Prettyman has collected: of Palm Springs, where he likes to vacation, of western characters and of local scenes. In the great room there's a large painting by the late Howard Schroeder of Lewes, looking west from Lewes Beach. And there are several paintings by Rehoboth Beach artist Richard Lynam: of sailboats docked at Kent Narrows, of Walls Apartments at the corner of Christian Street and Scarborough Avenue in Rehoboth, of a Rehoboth cottage on Surf Avenue, and of Amish women standing at the edge of the Atlantic.

In a main-floor guest bathroom are nearly 100 silhouettes collected by Prettyman. They include one of himself, a gift from Bonham, and side views of the couple's cats, Lula and Gonzo.

Prettyman travels throughout the country and continues to work at his business. "I don't believe in retirement," he says. He and Bonham have other homes, including a 1924 house in Fort Lauderdale that they renovated and another home in New Orleans, where they spend time.

But there's something special about Stonewood, Prettyman says. "This is a very peaceful, relaxing place to live," he says. "It's quiet here. And it's just around the corner from Rehoboth Beach." ■

LYNN R. PARKS is a longtime contributor to Delaware Beach Life.

Art League Cottage Tour

The 62nd annual Cottage Tour, sponsored by the Rehoboth Art League, will be Tuesday and Wednesday, July 12 and 13. Homes on the tour, including this Canal Corkran home owned by Jim Prettyman and Yost Bonham, will be open from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Tickets are \$30. For details, call the art league at 227-8408, or visit its website, www.rehobothartleague.org. ■

