



Preserving the past and introducing the future...

Profile: **Bartocci Development**

Joe Belmonte has an appreciation for Coronado's historical homes that goes back to his years growing up on the island. He and his Coronado High School sweetheart, Sue, have been married for 44 years and live in a spacious Country Club home, an example of his firm's design and build work.

Most recently, Belmonte and his firm, Bartocci Development, headquartered at 2535 Kettner Ave. in San Diego, completed a remodel of one of Coronado's most iconic homes, a three-story residence at 611 A Ave. built in 1908 by noted San Diego architect William Hebbard. And while a priority was to keep the home's Tudor exterior as intact as possible, the interior renovation was a different story.

"When you are working with a 100-plus-year-old home, you want to modernize the interior for how we live today," Belmonte explained. "You want decent lighting and electrical that works well. These century-plus-old homes usually came with one center light in the bedroom ceiling and one or two outlets on the walls. Plus there was a lot of knob-and-tube electrical wiring, which most insurance companies won't insure today."

Therefore, from a practical standpoint, remodeling older homes often entails "going down to the studs," Belmonte said. "Older homes didn't have adequate and often no insulation. Sometimes we can 'blow it in,' but going down to the studs is usually the answer."

For the A Avenue residence, Bartocci Development's structural renovations included the installation of a steel beam and several headers to provide support and help open up rooms. "There had been some previous remodels, but they really didn't match the style of the home," Belmonte said. "Now it feels like a historical home."

The 108-year-old floors were brought back to life. "These red oak floors had some aging and discoloration; that happens," Belmonte said. "So, we sanded the old floors, installed new matching planks where we needed to and then replicated the stain and decorative accents."

Belmonte noted that it was a general practice in days of yore to use finer oak flooring on the main floor, then pine on second and third floors, "especially when people would carpet over it," he said. Bartocci Development ran the oak throughout and brought more

light inside the house by turning a rear porch into a family room and raising the ceilings in the kitchen and dining room by a foot. "A foot doesn't sound like much," Belmonte noted, "But it made such a difference. We gained more height and light by raising the four headers in the kitchen and dining room and former porch by flush-cutting ceiling joists and cutting in the beams."

The result is a big room with higher ceilings and the whole effect is bigger and brighter, he said.

The redesign removed a fireplace in the dining room and enlarged the fireplace in the living room. "It required a lot of work to bring the fireplace out 10 inches and enlarge the fire pit, but it made a huge difference," Belmonte said.

Belmonte's work extends to new construction as well. At the highest point on the island in the 300 block of F Avenue, he's proudly finishing work on a home occupying one of Coronado's most common lot configurations: 25 feet wide by 140 feet deep. "It's an example of where you can live luxuriously and spaciously through design that is well-thought-out," he said.

The new four-bedroom, four-and-a-half bath home features coffered and box-beam ceilings, two fireplaces (one in the master suite) and stone and brick accents on the exterior.

"The front patio and rear patio of the home will open with bi-fold doors and will visually enlarge the home," Belmonte explained. It also includes a subterranean floor and rooftop deck with wet bar, which takes advantage of the 360-degree island and bay views. A carriage house over the alley garage embodies a mini-cottage feel with kitchenette, sleeping area, two dormer windows that create a great sitting area plus plenty of storage.

An outdoor kitchen and see-through free-standing fireplace provides a space for socializing between the main house and the carriage house.

Next, Belmonte is turning his attention to a project on F Avenue that includes a historic front house with Spanish style that he plans to replicate throughout the project and two new condominiums in the rear. And in the 300 block of J, he and architect Kevin Rugee are working on a historical renovation that has a "compound" feel: an existing home in the front will be renovated with historical designation pursued; a second two-story home was built in the rear with parking for two vehicles and another structure with a two-car garage and a cottage above is being proposed. "

Although it would have two different addresses, it would have a definite family feel. The owner, from Wisconsin, wants to retire here and wants to make sure his kids have a place to stay in Coronado," Belmonte said. "The ultimate family dream!"



Bartocci Development's remodel brought a 108-year-old Coronado treasure into the 21st century which included upgrading electrical and lighting. The exterior of the three-story Tudor home remained intact.



Joe Belmonte, principal at Bartocci Development, specializes in historical renovations.



The Tudor home remodel transformed the third-story bathroom into a luxurious retreat with spa tub, skylights and spacious shower.

