

*as seen in...*

**Bucks County**

# **HOUSE & HOME**

**YOUR #1 RESOURCE AND DESIGN MAGAZINE**

## **FROM DRAB TO FAB**

**1980s Solebury  
bath is now  
an elegant space**





The shower is a complete sensory experience.



The existing vanity failed to make use of available vertical space.

By Matthew T. Patton  
Photos by Randi Bye

When Jacquie F. Lewis chose a contractor to remodel her 19-year-old bathroom, she turned to someone whose work history she experienced firsthand: John Gemmi, CR, CKBR, owner, Gemmi Construction Inc.

The choice proved to be award-winning, as the Solebury project captured a 2008 National Association of Remodeling Industry (NARI) Contractor of the Year (CotY) Award for the category of Residential Bath over \$60,000.

#### **HIGH VALUES, INTEGRITY**

“I am very lucky because I’ve known John Gemmi since he was a child,” Lewis says. “I know him and his family, their high values and integrity. Early in his career, John did two jobs for me. He extended my kitchen eating room and built a gazebo at my pool. Both projects went smoothly. When I thought of

renovating my bathroom, I thought of giving the job to John. Over the years, I have seen his business grow and saw the quality of his projects.”

Gemmi and his staff get “very enthused” about their projects, Lewis says, offering options and solving problems as issues arise. “Their enthusiasm makes the project even more exciting and I had every confidence they would deliver the project as specified,” she adds.

Gemmi says his goal was to create an elegant, peaceful oasis for relaxation. “The space, originally created in the mid 1980s, was out of date and there were functional and aesthetic issues that needed addressing,” Gemmi says. “The client felt that the Jacuzzi tub was cumbersome to enter and exit. The toilet and shower area were located in an adjoining room, lending a disconnected feeling to the space as a whole.”

“I never liked my previous tub, but the home builder talked me into it. I only used it to bathe my dogs,” Lewis says. “The bathroom had blue tile and a small, plastic-like shower unit. I felt the bathroom needed upgrading to go with the rest of the house and I wanted it to be more neutral in color. I wanted it to be elegant, much like a bathroom in a five-star hotel.”

### SPACE CHALLENGES

“We faced the challenge of locating a gas fireplace in a



The homeowner says Gemmi Construction exceeded her expectations in providing a room with an aura of grandeur. Exquisite details are combined to create a stunning room.

wall that adjoined the closet,” Gemmi says. “We did not want to lose much closet space, so we created a simple, framed box for the firebox and chimney and minimal space

Another challenge was the lack of space for light switches. The solution was a Lutron-manufactured grafik eye lighting control system to create total control of the lighting and to consolidate

wasn’t fully aware of available options and how to get started. Gemmi recommended Cathleen “Cate” Burton Conti, a kitchen and bath designer and space planner, to work with Lewis on design and layout.

“John, Cate and I met to review my thoughts, while he and Cate provided samples of the new technology,” Lewis explains. “I provided pictures of bathroom features I liked, and Cate created her interpretation of my ideas into a plan. It was a team effort and I never felt that I was talked into something I didn't want. I respected each of them for their talents and knowledge they brought to the project.”

When Lewis and the designer selected the tile,

“Their enthusiasm makes the project even more exciting and I had every confidence they would deliver the project as specified.”

*-Jacquie F. Lewis, homeowner*

was compromised.”

Gemmi explains that another challenge was installing the large chandelier. The large bathroom window was removed and the chandelier was manipulated to get it into the space.

all of the light switches. “We located the controller in the closet,” Gemmi says. “This took the place of five switches.”

### PROJECT REFLECTION

While she had some ideas of her own, Lewis says she

Lewis says she fell in love with a pattern sample at the tile store and that is how the green was introduced. "The shower gadgetry was all John's idea and I am glad he provided so much knowledge about available options because I didn't have a clue," she says.

### ELEGANT DETAILS

"My favorite part is the shower because it is so large. It has all types of sprays; you don't want to leave the space," Lewis says. "The fireplace adds a warm and inviting space and the tub adds elegance."

Gemmi says he enjoyed working with William Draper Cabinetmaker on the elegant vanity that reaches high into the ceiling. Additionally, he says, the bathroom remodel used high-quality products and high-quality subcontractors. "All the colors and textures were chosen by our client and our designer," Gemmi explains. "Both have a great eye!"

Additionally, Lewis says the fireplace, tub and chandelier are something she saw in magazines. These key items helped create an

elegant atmosphere.

### EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS

"I could go on and on talking about Gemmi Construction," Lewis says. "I've had some bad experiences with other contractors, so I know when I have found an organization that employs individuals with integrity, attention to detail and creative minds. Their ultimate goal was to create a quality project that met or exceeded my expectations. I don't think people realize how important selecting the right contractor is not just for the quality of the work or price, but also how well they communicate throughout the project and how well the team works together. After all, these people are in your house every day and it is important that you have a good rapport or it could be a nightmare."

Lewis says the completed project is outstanding. "When my granddaughter walked into the bathroom for the first time, she said 'Wow.' I giggle each time I enter the space because I feel so unworthy of such grandeur. Things I do in my house, I do to make me



Although removing the dividing wall between the two rooms of the bathroom eliminated the sense of disconnection, it created an uneasy vastness. This was tamed through innovative use of color, accent moldings and cabinetry.

happy. This bathroom is such a wonderful place to start and end the day. The room makes me feel good, and what could be better than that?"

*Gemmi Construction Inc., founded in 1997, is a*

*member of NARI and is located in Mechanicsville. Call 215-340-4600, e-mail [john@gemmiconstruction.com](mailto:john@gemmiconstruction.com) or visit [www.gemmiconstruction.com](http://www.gemmiconstruction.com) for more information.*

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