



# albemarle

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# Virginia Country

## Keswick's Airlie Takes on a New Face

Photographs by Philip Beaurline



**O**nce, the property was more an extended family dwelling than an estate, but today, Albemarle's Airlie has taken on a new identity. Architect Robert Paxton, AIA, of Browne, Eichman, Dalgliesh, Gilpin and Paxton, P.C., worked very closely with the current owners to renovate this turn-of-the-century home; it now stands as one of the fine estates of Keswick.

The challenge was to design a plan that would pay tribute to the original style, yet open up the home to more classical lines. One way Paxton achieved this was to remove the original gabled roof and add a hip roof, then for the entrance, he added Doric columns. This gave the house a sense of order, restoring a central focus lost since additions were made in the 1920s.

Another goal of the project, which was completed with Shelter Associates Ltd. builders, was to integrate the indoor and outdoor living spaces with careful attention to landscaping and natural light. Skylights were installed in the center-section widow's walk to bring in natural light for the stairway and entrance hall.

**Above:** The turn-of-the-century Airlie is situated on a slight rise overlooking the hayfields and horse country of Keswick.

**Right, the Stair Hall:** With marble entrance floor, the central stairwell rises three stories to the widow's walk at rooftop.

**Table of Contents Page, the Living Room:** All the millwork in the house was crafted by Gaston and Wyatt Inc. A good example of their work is found in the living room with re-worked fireplace, archways and wainscot, and with triple-hung windows.





**Top Left, the Kitchen:** Opening up onto the family room, the kitchen features marble countertops, bleached sugar pine cabinets and coffered ceiling lights.

**Bottom Left, the Den:** Atlanta's Jenny Magher Interiors helped with the design. Ceiling fans accentuate the breeziness of Airlie and the added bay window looks out onto the landscaped garden.

**Right, the Family Room:** The spectacular two-story rise sets apart the family room and library, while the mahogany paneling helps provide a rich atmosphere. A glass colonnade opens out onto the southside terrace.

*"What we tried to do everywhere we could," Paxton says, "was increase the natural light and open the house up to the landscape, merging the two." Landscape architect Meade Palmer of Warrenton was called in to work with Paxton and facilitate the landscaping design.*

*In working to enhance the historic tones of the property, Paxton paid close attention to detail. Bricks for all the chimneys and outdoor terraces were fashioned using a hand-made, wood-molded technique, and the siding is constructed of redwood clapboard. Six- to 12-inch heart-pine flooring runs throughout.*

*Set on a knoll under gracious old linden trees, Airlie is the picture of Virginia charm. Putting an accent on the countryside, the owners even installed an exterior portico fireplace for warmth during those chilly Albemarle evenings of early spring and late fall. **a***

