

POLHEMUS SAVERY DASILVA DEBUTS NEW BOOK: THE ART OF DESIGN

CAPE COD HOME

MARTHA'S VINEYARD & NANTUCKET

THE COLOR ISSUE

Color sets the stage
from Nantucket
to the Cape
to the Vineyard



★ ANNIVERSARY ★

CAPE COD LIFE
PUBLICATIONS
— Since 1979 —

When Life Gives You Lemons...

Interior designer Melanie Gowen helps a Nantucket family turn a negative to a positive with a reimagined pool house.

By Leslie Hatton



There is an expression, “Out of limitations comes creativity.” Many great creations, in fact, were borne out of tragedy—chocolate chip cookies, penicillin and margarine to name a popular few. So, when there was a disastrous sewer accident at a Dukes Road home in Nantucket, the owners decided to seize the opportunity to transform an existing structure on the property into a pool cabana meets guest house to better support their growing family’s needs.

Award-winning Nantucket interior designer Melanie Gowen says, “It was really a situation where we endeavored to make lemonade from lemons.” The homeowners came to her with the intent to put a pool on the lawn between the main house and the garage, which now had an opportunity to be reimagined. It needed to become a multifunctional space that would serve as a pool house, a guest space as well as a partial nanny quarters.

Gowen set about working her creative magic within the parameters of budget and design preferences from the homeowner. She says, “With children of varying ages, it needed to stand up to bare feet running in and out, sand or grass coming in and be impervious to any kind of damage that may happen again.”

The loveseat and slipper chairs, as well as the ottoman, are designed by Gowen herself, and all furniture is covered in a durable performance fabrics by Kravet, Pindler, and Quadrille. She laughs, “The chairs are a terry cloth so you even can sit on them in a wet bathing suit!” It isn’t often that the floor is the star of the show in a pool house, but the high-gloss cement painted in Benjamin Moore Blueberry puts



it front and center as soon as the barn doors sweep open to reveal the glossy shine.

Working within a budget, Gowen was able to blend old with new—splurging on some key elements but curating others from the islander’s secret gem, the Hospital Thrift Shop. The designer mixed the high-quality resistant fabrics over existing pieces, like the loveseat that welcomes you in and invites you to put your feet up on the storage ottoman-turned-coffee table, the latter designed by Gowen herself and built on Cape by a fabricator in Hyannis. A versatile, textural bar cart on brass casters from Serena and Lily sits below a wall-mount television, ready for happy hour beverages or to display special, found treasures.

Benjamin Moore Sailor’s Sea Blue dons the bathroom walls and barn doors, tying everything together in a classic coastal style. Gowen shares, “I love when clients aren’t afraid to trust me, and this was really fun.” Despite boundaries of space or budget, Gowen stretched her imagination to include details like a whimsical grass hula skirt that covers exposed bathroom

pipes, a fun painted skim board that hangs above the bed, and cabinetry hardware that mimics boat cleats and gives a nod to the homeowner’s love of sailing.

All pieces in the cozy space are purposeful and beautiful while simultaneously being substantial and stylish. Gowen’s ability to build connectivity between the main house and the pool perfectly bridges the gap between style and durability. 🏠

Leslie Hatton is the assistant editor at Cape Cod Life Publications.

