

LIVING LARGE

The Soloves renovate in New Albany

This golf course mansion acquired a facelift to fit its homeowners' lifestyle. Now formal dinner parties often begin with cocktails and hors d'oeuvres served in the newly built carriage house and end with port and cheese in the wine cellar. "I have a crazy passion for antique silver," says Solove, who began collecting it 40 years ago when visiting an antiques store in New York City with two good friends from Central Ohio.

By Teresa Woodard

Photography by
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When developer Richard Solove and wife LaDonna purchased their grand New Albany home, they appreciated its golf course setting and the first floor master suite. But, most of all, they were passionate about the home's potential for hosting formal dinners and other events.

"I love to entertain," says Solove, who has worn a tie every day of his real-estate career. Black-tie dinners aren't uncommon at his house, as Solove's philanthropic efforts have been wide ranging. Most recently, he made national news by auctioning his collection of Rolls-Royce automobiles to benefit the cancer facility at Ohio State University that bears his name:

the Arthur G. James Cancer Hospital and Richard J. Solove Research Institute.

An immediate renovation of the New Albany house was in order when the Soloves purchased their Georgian-style home six years ago. This house was a drastic departure from their previous contemporary residence that sat on a ravine and eight acres of property in Blendon Township. (They also own a Mediterranean-style vacation home in Naples, Florida.)

It was important to Solove that the New Albany house be designed to fit their social lifestyle and to accommodate some precious collections that would be on display. To accomplish the task, Solove

pulled together a team that included architect George Acock, builder Ralph Fallon and decorator Pam Yost of Grand DesignGroup.

The goal of the project was to transform what Acock describes as "the big drywall box" to a space that now features classical architectural details complementing the interior's high ceilings and large rooms.

To begin, Acock sketched each room and then Fallon followed with millwork samples for the homeowners and the team to review. Yost recommended a refined elegance for the décor: classic tailored styling and restrained ornamentation.

The grand foyer of this



Architectural elements were added to break up the space in this large, semicircular room that features 27-foot-high ceilings and symmetrical sets of circular and arched windows.



**Solove's garage
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Left: An arched entryway to the dining room is flanked by museum-style, custom-created cases that display the Solove collection of English and French antique silver.

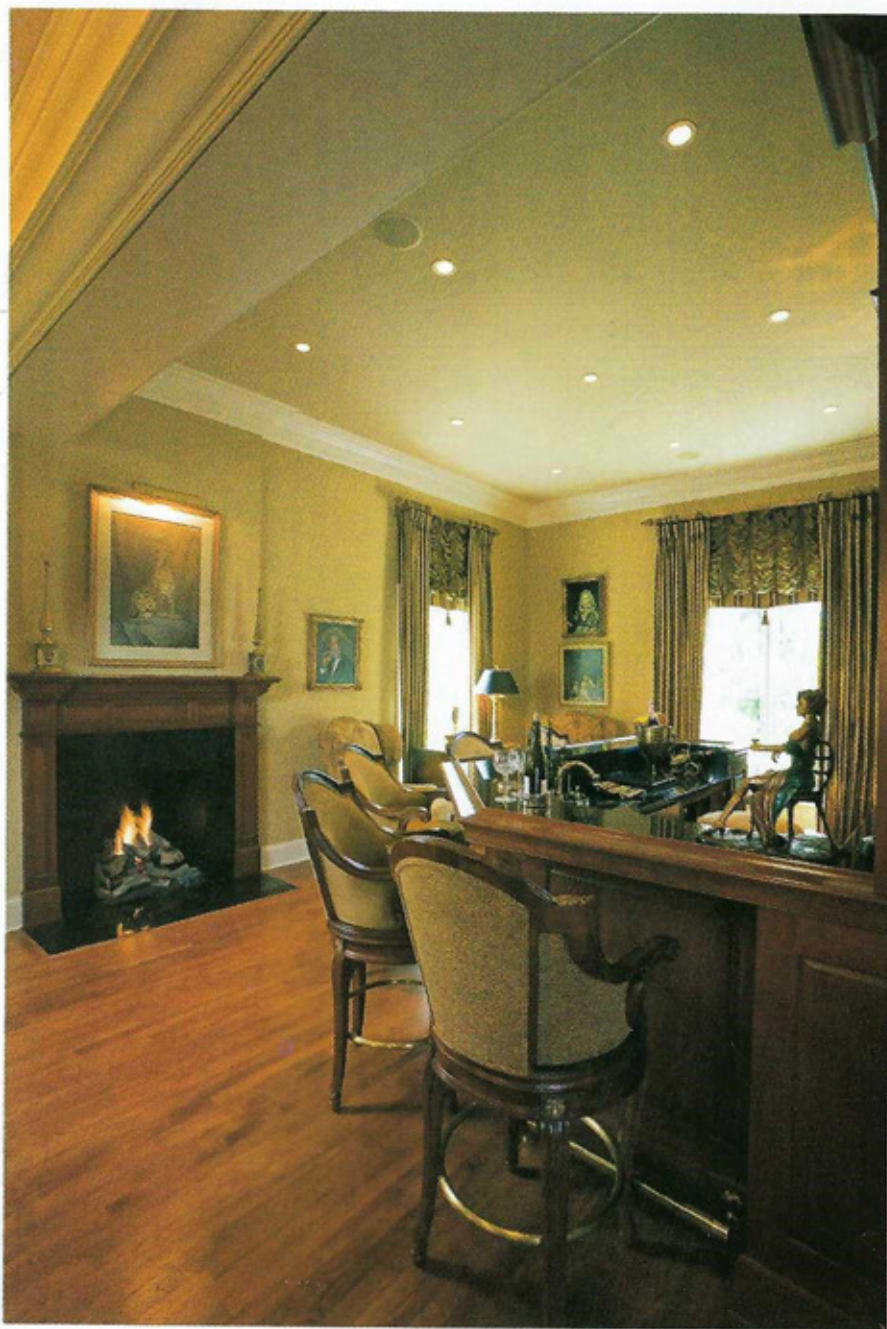
Right: The second story of the home's garage features a cupola and custom-created iron railing accented with Rolls-Royce motifs.

home features a circular staircase with a custom-created iron and brass railing, antique-glazed wood-paneled walls, marble flooring and a large crystal chandelier. Two sculptures by Italian glass artist Lino Tagliapietra are situated along the 21-foot-high curved wall.

Beyond the foyer, the home's central great room reflects the greatest changes made during the renovation. Architectural elements were added to break up the space in this large semicircular room that features 22-foot-high ceilings and symmetrical sets of circular and arched windows. Acock designed 18-foot square columns with raised panels, and exquisite detail was added by Fallon's millwork. Six-inch crown molding was replaced with a layered crown molding that now totals 14 inches in height.

Similarly, the fireplace was redesigned to fit the scale of this large space. A generous limestone mantel replaced the existing smaller one and the wall was bumped out from the mantel to the ceiling to add more detail. On this section of the wall, decorative painter Mike Altman was contracted to faux paint limestone block to resemble a chimney. To replace the relatively simple wood balustrade seen above





*Above: The Soloves' former dinette was transformed to accommodate a full-size mahogany bar.
Right: The extensive wine cellar on the lower level of the home features a wine-tasting area and shelving to accommodate a wine collection of 1,200 bottles.*



on the second floor, Mike La Plante at Friesinger's in Zanesville forged a wrought-iron railing with a brass handrail.

Inspired in part by the grandness of the room's architecture, Yost created couture window treatments with flowing, gold-toned panels and asymmetrical silk swags pulled low to the sides of the six arched windows. She furnished the room with traditional and contemporary pieces, many with gilded finishes that are richly upholstered. Nearby, the

home's original kitchen also suffered from mismatched proportions. By stacking a second set of cabinets atop the original group, the cabinetry better fit the kitchen's 12-foot ceilings. In addition, the island's standard-size granite countertop was enhanced, and the small overhead lights were replaced with large iron and glass pendants. The former dinette was transformed to include a full-size, mirrored, mahogany bar with lighted cabinetry.

The dining room, which is center

stage for the couple's regular Saturday evening dinner parties, received special design treatment. Guests enter the room through an arched paneled door flanked by museum-style, custom-designed cases that display Solove's collection of English and French antique silver.

"I have a crazy passion for antique silver," says Solove, who began collecting it 40 years ago when visiting an antiques store in New York City with two good friends from Central Ohio. He asked the



store's owner about a set of 12 antique silver charger plates. One friend persuaded Solove, who thought the chargers were too expensive, to make the purchase.

Since then, his silver collection has grown. Additional pieces are displayed on a lengthy buffet in the dining room. The solid travertine table gleams when set with the Soloves' glass and platinum dishes and sets of antique Tiffany sterling silver and 22-carat-gold flatware. Solove says he purchased the 800-

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piece gold flatware set and a chest "the size of a casket" from the Pontifical College Josephinum in Worthington.

The dining room's panel molding, originally applied only below the chair rail, now covers the walls in full Georgian fashion. The paneling and walls feature an aluminum gild finish, applied by decorative painter Constance Mengel. The multilayered silk window treatments complement the formality of the room.

Glass artist Dale Chihuly was



Saturday evenings sparkle at the Soloves' dinner parties.

commissioned through the Hawk Galleries to create a gold- and cream-colored wall sculpture. Equally stunning, a lead crystal sculpture by Ohio glass artist Christopher Ries adorns another corner of the room. Gallery-style spotlighting is in place to accent the artwork.

Nearby, Acock designed a coffered hallway ceiling to coordinate with the square columns of the great room. Cove lighting was incorporated in the crown assembly and Solove's antique silver plates and wall candelabras are displayed here.

Now, Saturday evenings sparkle at the Soloves' dinner parties. Cocktails and hors d'oeuvres are served in the newly built carriage-house-style garage. The second floor of this building features a cupola; wood-paneled, cross-gabled ceiling; decorative beams, and a custom iron railing accented with Rolls-Royce motifs that surrounds an octagonal-shaped space that allows visitors to view Solove's car collection a floor below. With the recent sale of his 13 Rolls-Royces, the garage now has fewer vintage cars. However, he says two new Rolls-Royces are on order.

The Soloves' parties often conclude with port and cheese in the home's lower level wine cellar, a former unfinished basement now featuring another of his collections: 1,200 bottles of wine. The curved, stone staircase descends to a series of



Above: The foyer features a circular staircase with a custom-created iron and brass railing. Glass sculptures by Italian artist Lino Tagliapietra are situated along the curved wall.

Opposite: The Soloves' wine cellar features racks made of pecky cypress.

medieval-style anterooms, including a climate-controlled wine cellar, a tasting room and a bathroom. Mica-paneled iron sconces, pendants and torchiers illuminate the rooms' barreled ceilings and stone walls.

The floor is created from 700-year-old stone, reclaimed from a Limassol castle in Cyprus and installed by Classico Tile & Marble. The builders cleverly lined one wall with the sides of old wine crates and crafted sizable wine racks out of moisture-tolerant wood called pecky

cypress. Fallon says the racks were so big they had to enlarge a basement window to make room for their access. What was once a "dry wall box" by its owner, has been transformed into a classical space with exquisite detail.

Indeed, this New Albany home's grand style is a perfect match for the social gatherings its owners continually host. ■

Teresa Woodard is a freelance writer.