



FOR SALE: “GREEN GEM”

IN OUR LAST ISSUE OF MIDTOWN, WE TOLD YOU ABOUT THE HOLIDAY HOUSE. IN THIS ISSUE, WE’LL SHOW IT TO YOU IN ALL ITS GLORY AND REVEAL MORE ABOUT THE BUILDER BEHIND IT.

BY CHRISTA GALA || PHOTOGRAPHY BY AZUL PHOTOGRAPHY



Dixon/Kirby & Company Inc. is used to being in the spotlight. In 1998, *Better Homes & Gardens* magazine chose the company to build its New Millennium Home in Chapel Hill. Five years later, *Southern Living* tracked down the builder for its showcase home.

These projects were later the springboard for the Holiday House in Ramblewood, which was open to the public from December 8th through the end of last year. The home was also rented out for parties. Both events raised thousands of dollars for The Healing Place of Wake County, a rehabilitation center for homeless people facing alcoholism or chemical dependency.

After his two magazine projects, Kirby had been interested in doing another showcase home and began talking with the board of directors at The Healing Place. He thought the timing of the holidays combined with the challenges the non-profit faced was especially fitting. “It’s so easy to forget that the holidays are the time of the year when people deal most

with substance abuse and depression, especially when they don’t have that strong family core,” says Kirby, president of Dixon/Kirby & Company. “So we thought it was a double home run to do this, not only to do it with the Healing Place but also at that time of year.”

The program at The Healing Place is a double home run too. Seventy percent of graduates are sober one year later, meaning the program helps kick addiction and homelessness at the same time. “It does break the cycle,” says Barrett Joyner, the organization’s development director. “You get somebody off the streets. We work with them in finding a job. So when they leave here for society, they have gainful employment and stability in their lives.”

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MEETING A GROWING NEED

But now the showcase home at 3724 Rolston Drive in Ramblewood is for sale. The home features not only the latest in materials and amenities, but also the forward-thinking design that is Dixon/Kirby's hallmark. "We really believe that new housing is either undergoing a dramatic shift in terms of what people want or it's about to," says Kirby. "We are trying to serve a market that we don't believe is served very well right now. That's for folks who want location, location, location and they want very nice finishes, but they don't want the huge house."

"Typically, you tend to associate really nice finishes with really big houses and that seems to run counterculture to the whole movement of being environmentally responsible and being careful about our natural resources," Kirby continues. "We would like to think that people can have a very nice home that doesn't occupy a huge footprint."

Soon, all of Dixon/Kirby's new homes will embrace the Energy Star components, including tankless water heaters and sealed crawlspaces. The company is also working with a firm that designs the shell of each house, making it 15 to 20 percent more efficient than most new construction.

Regarding design, Dixon/Kirby also follows strict parameters, namely to build a custom house for the lot and to build in classic styles, mirroring the architecture one finds in Hayes Barton, Five Points, Historic Oakwood and Boylan Heights.

The house on Rolston Drive is a 3,700-square-foot Dutch Colonial with a cedar shake roof. The design itself took three months because Kirby wanted to get it just right. "We didn't shoehorn a plan that wouldn't fit," he says.

The colors both inside and out are lighter and brighter; Kirby says designers are starting to slowly move away from the earthy colors such as rust and olive green that have been popular for so long. The home also features African mahogany floors and divided light windows that incorporate old fashioned design with modern convenience and efficiency. "What, to us, is terrific flattery is when people wonder when (one of our homes) was originally built because it feels like a high-quality remodel," says Kirby. If there's a company motto at Dixon/Kirby, it's likely: New construction should never "look" like new construction.

FAMILIAR FACES

Dixon/Kirby has managed to set itself apart again, even in a soft real estate market. "We're trying to give people a high end lifestyle and essentially we're giving them what is tantamount to a green house without it being obviously green," says Kirby, noting five years ago a "green" home conjured images of solar panels and hay bales.

The homes the company is building now, both in Ramblewood and also at The Oaks at Fallon Park in Five Points, feature the latest amenities and are indeed green, but with very familiar faces. ♦

The Holiday House Was Made Possible Thanks to Generous Contributions From: The Advanced Concrete Coatings ~ Alta Cabinet Design ~ ArtSource ~ Capital Tile Carolina Building Products ~ Carolina Glass and Mirror ~ Dickerson Hearth Dixon/Kirby & Company, Inc. ~ The English Garden ~ Interior Design by Boyles ITC Millwork ~ Kitchen & Bath Galleries ~ Lights Unlimited ~ NewWave Systems Overhead Door Company of the Capital City ~ PSNC/Legendary Lighting Raleigh Decorative Hardware & Plumbing ~ Rugworks ~ Southern Staircase Stock Building Supply ~ Summer Classics ~ Western Cedar Roofs World Granite and Stone Art, Inc



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