

Refreshing landscape

Plantings and hardscape change the look of pool house

BY DEBORAH DONOVAN

Daily Herald Staff Writer

The Barrington Hills estate already had a large swimming pool behind an antique farmhouse. Should landscaping be that important?

Oh, yes, says Pete Wodarz, a landscape architect whose Wheeling-based firm is called Milieu Design Inc.

His plan — which involved plantings and hardscape — softened the look of the pool house, which is also a guest house. Other major changes included improving the deck and

Nearly Wild roses are among the plantings by the pool house in Barrington Hills.

the way the pool is reached from the main house.

It all started with the simple little white pool house with a dark cedar roof. Wodarz described it as “blank.”

He added three separate pergolas across the front of the building. They are square white pillars set on stone bases and holding brown-stained horizontal bars.

The pergolas help provide privacy for the two bedrooms that are separated by the kitchen and living area in the pool house.

A touch that Wodarz is very pleased with is the two trellises, one on each bedroom wing.

A hydrangea climbs up each of the trellises. The landscape architect purchased them at an auction when a North Shore house was being demolished.

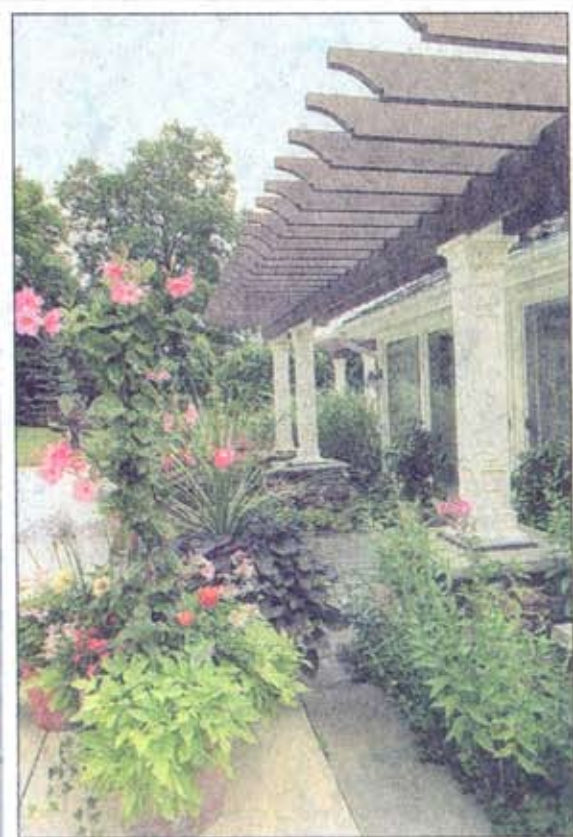
“We were trying to make it established looking, and the climbing hydrangeas covered the white space immediately,” he said.

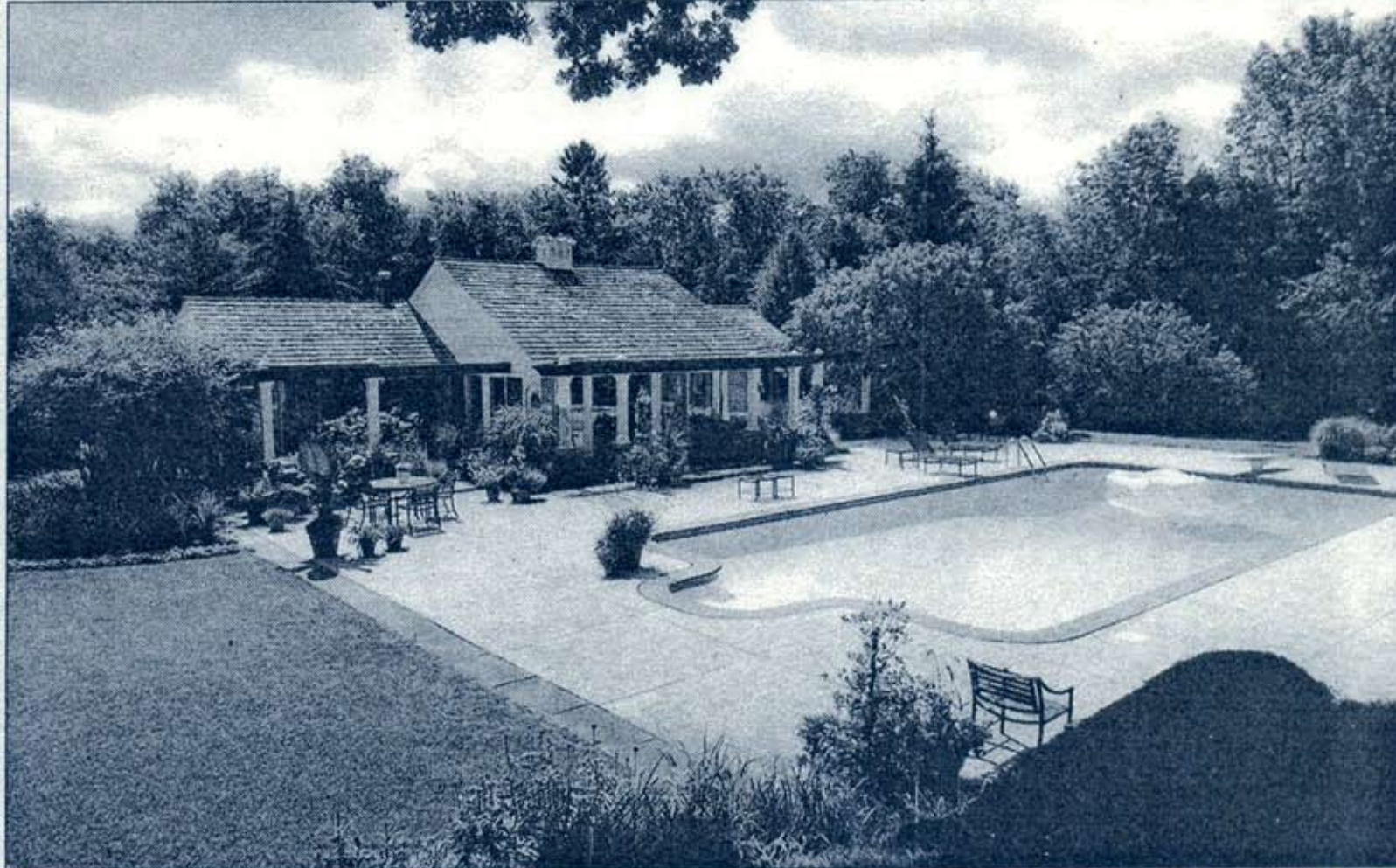
The front of the pool house's main room is mostly windows and glass doors. A small bluestone entrance patio now adds to the sense of separation from the pool deck.

The bedrooms are set back a bit, and Wodarz left just tiny patios outside their glass doors and added lots of plants.

The deck of the pool was another major change. It had been aggregate stone trimmed in concrete.

The new look is a white deck created by spraying and troweling a concrete product called Sundek over the existing material. This is





PHOTOS BY BOB CHWEDYK/DAILY HERALD

Bluestone sets off the white pool deck and creates a sense of separation from the pool house.

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concrete product called Sundek over the existing material. This is trimmed in bluestone.

"It doesn't seem so much like a big aircraft carrier," the designer said. "It's simpler and more elegant."

Some of the old deck was removed — such as a corner under an old hemlock tree. A similar notch was cut in the opposite corner of the pool deck. The deck also needed repairing in spots.

"It's pretty pricey to remove concrete," Wodarz said. "If it were all bluestone, it might be too dark and hot. Contrasting materials is more elegant."

The pool is about 22 by 48 feet and the deck probably 2,600 square feet.

Wodarz' estimates for projects like this in price per square foot:

- Removing concrete — \$2 to \$3.
- Installing new concrete — \$5.
- Bluestone — \$18.

• Sundek over old aggregate — \$7.

The walkway down to the pool from a side patio on the main house is now bluestone. The steps are bluestone slabs on top of chestnut brown or high-land brown lannon stone.

The same lannon stone creates a low wall at the foot of the hill.

"It had been a lawn sweeping down," Wodarz said. "Nothing contained the pool space visually. The wall helps define the space as well."



PHOTOS BY BOB CHWEDYK/DAILY HERALD

Pete Wodarz shows the landscaping he designed for a Barrington Hills pool. Changes include pergolas in front of the pool house, left, and recoating the deck

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