

INSIDE THE GREENWICH ECONOMIC FORUM: The Pundits Explore Where Our Economy Is Headed

GREENWICH

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WHAT'S SELLING,
WHO'S BUYING,
THE BEST STRATEGIES
FOR A NOT-SO-
BLACK-AND-WHITE
MARKET



THE YWCA
A LOOK AT
100 YEARS OF
EMPOWERING
WOMEN



home

BY JILL JOHNSON

as seen in
GREENWICH
magazine

LIVING THE DREAM

GREENWICH **ARCHITECT CHUCK HILTON** CELEBRATES A MILESTONE



1988. With the Gulf War in 1990, work dried up at my employer's firm. I went out on my own, cofounding a very successful partnership in March of 1991 and worked for the next twenty-two years in Greenwich until I launched my own solo venture, Charles Hilton Architects, in March of 2013.

GM: Why Greenwich?

CH: I had been working in the field of architecture for eight years, starting when I was a sophomore in high school in 1980. That experience was very influential in my decision to come to Greenwich. I wanted to design the finest residential work possible. Greenwich's proximity to



above and below: Hilton's extensive body of work includes this Georgian Revival home and a nautical-themed study.

As of this year, architect Charles Hilton has spent thirty years designing gorgeous homes and buildings in our area (and beyond). That's a lot of facades, but Hilton, who goes by the down-to-earth "Chuck," is the opposite of a "facade." He was a 2016 Inductee into the New England Design Hall of Fame, 2016 Greenwich Citizen of the Year and a four-time winner of *Ocean Home's* Top 50 Coastal Architects. His work is also featured in a recent coffee-table book, *The Classical American House*. Here, Chuck shares highlights from his three decades in Greenwich and insight into architectural trends for the future.

GM: When did you move to Greenwich and open your business?

CH: I arrived and began to practice in Greenwich in May of



PORTRAIT: NICHOLAS ROTOND; PHOTOGRAPHY: GEORGIAN REVIVAL HOME: ROBERT BENSON PHOTOGRAPHY; STUDY: WOODRUFF/BROWN ARCHITECTURAL PHOTOGRAPHY



above: Rendering of a new waterfront brick Georgian home in Cos Cob

all NYC resources, its history and tradition of fine residential design, and Greenwich clients with their discerning taste drew me to the town. I found myself gravitating toward Greenwich's waterfront and proximity to the rest of New England.

GM: What inspires you?

CH: Beauty in all forms; articulate deep thinkers (I love TED talks); nature, especially waterfront settings; and travel. I love to explore new countries and cultures. I am fortunate that my work takes me to new distant destinations a couple times a year.

GM: How would you describe your architectural style?

CH: While our architectural expressions vary widely in response to our diverse clientele, our company mission statement

sums up the values we try to infuse in all our projects. We aim to produce imaginative buildings that delight and inspire; humanistic architecture that meaningfully improves the lives of its inhabitants and designs with timeless relevance.

GM: What are some of your favorite projects you've done in the Greenwich area?

CH: Having built hundreds of projects through the years, it is hard to single out just a few. If I have to choose, I'd have to say, first, Sleepy Cat Farm. It's a beautiful fourteen-acre, seven-building, twenty-three-year labor of love that seamlessly integrates the inspiration from the owner's travels and his collections, the picturesque landscape and highly detailed interiors, creating a European oasis in the heart

of Greenwich. Next, a New England Shingle-style residence that we designed for a stunning waterfront site overlooking the Sound. It was designed to maximize the light and integrate its waterfront views with a variety of comfortable and beautiful interior details. And, finally, our new four-building Lakeside Georgian Estate in mid-country was an exciting project that allowed us to blend the traditional exterior with modern interiors. The estate features a beautiful main house with a long alley entry, a tennis pavilion, a lakeside pavilion and a pool pergola.

GM: Tell us about the historic signs you have designed for Greenwich.

CH: Our firm has been active in a number of preservation efforts through the years in

connection with the Greenwich Historical Society, the Greenwich Preservation Trust and the Greenwich Preservation Network. We recognized that one of the challenges with preservation around the town was that many people did not know about the town's historic districts or recognize the importance of these resources in their community. The signs are an effort to change this through information and education. Partnering with the Greenwich Preservation Network and the Greenwich Historical Society, we designed a series of signs, one for each historic district in town. The signs not only serve as markers but also include a map of the district, identifying contributing structures in the area, and give a short history explaining the significance of each location. Cornerstone Construction installed the signs pro bono, and many sponsors around the town funded the construction of the signs.

GM: What architectural trends do you see dominating the next decade in this area?

CH: More modern design, energy efficiency, indoor/outdoor living, accelerated integration of technology, home designs for healthy living, use of low-maintenance building materials, design features for an aging population, and continued strong demand for home entertainment and personal hobby areas.

GM: How do you relax?

CH: "I love to be outside boating, fishing or doing almost anything on the water. I also love to travel. I'm looking forward to our next trip to visit my daughter in Barcelona and then traveling through Tuscany.