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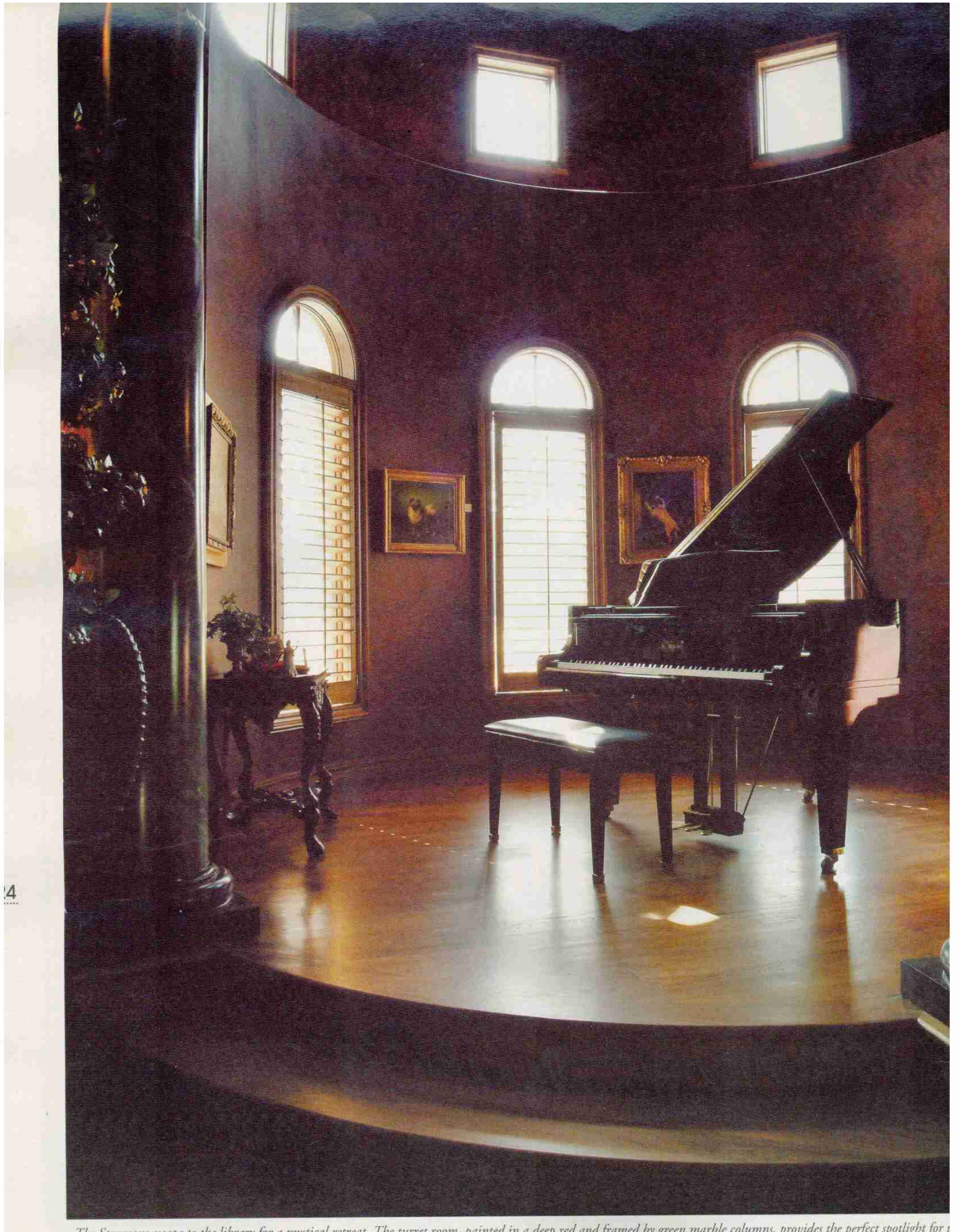
VOL. 2 NO. 3

# Lap of Luxury

## A Colleyville manse showcases collections



**Baking with Fire**



*The Stranahan escape to the library for a mystical retreat. The turret room, painted in a deep red and framed by green marble columns, provides the perfect spotlight for a*



Visitors feel the urge to sing from the balcony in the opera-house-style foyer. Between the two chairs in the living room sits a Tiffany dog-show carrying case from the turn of the century.

From junkyard  
doghouse to  
pedigreed  
pad, a  
self-made  
colleyville  
man builds  
a home fit  
for a king

by erin l. wade  
photography by terri  
glanger

# lap of luxury

Walking into the Sturgeon's 10,000-square-foot French Chateau in Colleyville, it's hard to believe the homeowners came from such humble beginnings. Self-made auto salvage magnate Ron Sturgeon and his wife Kathi started their lives together in a double-wide mobile home, and now decorate with fine antiques, collectibles and a grand European sense of style.

The home features seven chimneys for eight fireplaces, no two of which are alike, in spiraled brick, native stone, cast stone,

copper and cobblestone. The chimneys are lit at night for a special effect, which Kathi says is the latest addition to the home.

The 24-foot-high, marbled foyer, living room and dining room present an opera-house feel to every visitor, with the grand spiral staircase, floor to ceiling glass windows, wall tapestry from Brussels and a dome faux painted with cherubs. The dining room features two 9-foot torcheres, which are silver over bronze reproductions from the George V Hotel in Paris.

One of the first things you

The couple finds common ground in one thing—their “babies”—three Cavalier King Charles Spaniels.



The masculine master bedroom is a gallery for some of the Sturgeons' favorite canine art as seen above the bed. All feature hunting dogs and are originals from the 1800s.



This one-of-a-kind cast stone mantel in the master bedroom features two dogs supporting it.



The open foyer contains the dining room and living room, including 24-foot

notice in the foyer is the 12-foot-high, antique carved mahogany set of doors from the old Hungarian Embassy in Paris. But the two-story medieval European library that lies beyond these doors is even more magical. The rich, dark woods and cavernous space set a standard by which all libraries should be measured. The ceiling beams, 24-feet up, are almost 2-feet deep and heavily molded, crafted by two men in six months. The back of the library features an 1840 Irish pub bar topped with Napoleonic era carved wood St. Bernard dogs

with a clock from the lodge of a French king. The turret room's grand piano adds a touch to the room. A 100-year stained glass window ceiling dots the room with mystical spots of glass ceiling is even for a custom made dumb lower it for cleaning. details in the room are that you have to look appreciate the special. The 33-inch Coronel actually made with flowers were hand colored, and



Large, floppy dog beds typically dot the landscape of the Sturgeons' family room, where everyone gathers to relax and watch their favorite channel, Animal Planet.



A 100-year-old stained glass window finds new life as a ceiling fixture in the turret room.

houses a Nickel 442 National Cash Register.

But for a library of this size, the Sturgeons have a very small amount of books. The room shelves are instead lined with Ron's ultimate passion—cars. As founder of AAA Small Car World, an auto recycling business, Ron acquired and opened five other recycling facilities throughout Texas, building one of the largest auto recycling businesses in the United States. The library's 600 feet of shelving displays about 1,500 classic and rare toy cars, including handmade Indy 500 and European race cars, and one

of the world's largest toy Mercedes-Benz collections. A section is even dedicated to a collection that combines both of their passions—cars with dogs.

The home, which was featured on the Colleyville Woman's Club Holiday Home Tour of 2002, offered a treasure trove of enviable boy toys for the male participants on the tour. Ron's passion for cars extends to the larger toys in two garages holding 10 full-sized road cars and showcases for his motor memorabilia. The blue garage features European driving school models while the red garage houses cars from Ron's Mercedes-



The kitchen features a hidden refrigerator and state-of-the-art pull-out drawer dishwasher.

Benz, Volkswagen and micro-car collections. One of the garages even showcases an antique crystal chandelier.

Kathi uses the home as a showcase for her own interests as well. One of the upstairs guest bedrooms is dubbed the "Marilyn Monroe Room," which features a collection of the actress's personal items, including a black velvet evening dress and opera coat, wine goblets and flatware.

But the couple, who has three grown children, can find common ground in one thing—their "babies"—three Cavalier King Charles Spaniels. The pups even

have their own room, color TV and outside entrance with green hotel awning embroidered with their own address. It was originally built for a poodle named Clouseau, who unfortunately passed away before seeing it completed.

And while the car collections are impressive, the canine theme permeates the home in a more subtle way. Cast-stone dogs help up a fireplace mantel in the master bedroom, while the master bathroom is a gallery for unique Vietnamese embroidered art, made from real photos taken of the Sturgeons' of their beloved



Antique Irish pub bar from 1840 sits to the right of the turret room in the library. The 33-inch Coronelli globe is actually made from flat maps from the Victoria and Albert Museum.

was a very difficult design to build, and one big reason is the curves: the eight fireplaces with seven chimneys, one twisting, one round and none standard.



A back-lit stained glass window greets visitors in the upstairs hallway, which the Sturgeons use for displaying even more artwork.

pets. Other canine artwork adorns the walls and niches of the home, from antique oil paintings of hunting dogs to carved wood sculptures, comical busts, etchings in tin and ceramics depicting collies, terriers, pointers, poodles and other breeds.

Despite being a showcase for their collections, the Sturgeons also wanted their home to be comfortable, warm and inviting, typically difficult to achieve in such a large living space.

The Sturgeons hired Fort Worth-based architect Ken

Schaumburg to design the house, Dan Thomas Homes to build the house, and handed the decorating details to architectural interior designer Carol Martyr, Kay Crinkelmeyer of Colleyville-based J.H. Interiors and artist/designer/painter Tim Morris. The Sturgeons, who didn't want to be involved in the building process, handed the team 70 pages of photographs, ideas and details before they began building.

"It was a very difficult architectural design to build, to frame," says Dan Thomas. "One

big reason was the curves: the curved stairs, the round turret tower room built to fit the stained glass ceiling, the curved landing (balcony) and railings, the dome in the grand entry, the barrel-vaulted hallway ceiling leading to the master bath, the arches, the multiple glass and conventional walls with up to seven or more facings in several rooms, the eight fireplaces with seven chimneys, one twisting, one round and none standard."

Kathi's favorite area, the den and kitchen, gives visitors the cozy feel of a Tuscan ski lodge,



The red garage acts as a gallery for Ron's automotive art and memorabilia, as well as two micro-cars displayed in Pebble Beach in 1997.



Sturgeon's favorite painting, "Defense of the Realm" by John Hayes, hangs above the mantel. A turn of the century European automaton of a chauffeur rests above the television.

...ile offering a magnificent view  
the back yard pool area through  
the butt glass windows. Its faux  
painted walls resemble aging  
stucco with grapevines invading  
the cracks, as in an Italian country  
home, and its fireplace with the  
copper Vent-a-Hood evokes an en-  
vironment of a mountain ski chalet.  
The painted vines in the faux  
fisher tie in with the faux tree  
"growing" into the ceiling and the  
trees viewed through the  
adjacent glass wall.

The kitchen, built for cooking  
and entertaining, is made of  
antiqued wood and stone,

complete with its own fireplace  
flanked by two large copper  
lanterns, two Fisher & Paykel  
drawer-type dishwashers, a Miele  
cappuccino/espresso maker, and  
multiple Sub-Zero freezer and  
refrigerator uprights and drawers.  
The kitchen is well contained to  
keep it cozy, along with a  
sweeping breakfast bar, and can be  
accessed three ways, including  
through a wine room passageway  
with an intricately carved walnut  
buffet. A unique glass-front  
cabinet was built on an outside  
window, offering a view of the  
motor court through the cabinet

to see when visitors arrive.

"I wanted to bring aspects of  
all the exterior treatments—the  
brick, rock, copper and cast  
stone—inside, and we did," says  
Kay Crinkelmeyer. "The kitchen  
fireplace features cast stone  
identical to that in the tall 18-  
inch-square columns linking the  
black wrought-iron fencing  
outside."

Another favorite room of  
Kathi's is the master bath, which  
features a heated marble floor, a  
remote control fireplace behind  
and above the tub, an arched  
ceiling which extends through the

master suite, faux-finished with  
blue sky, birds and cherubs. The  
men's and lady's closets in the  
master suite feature antique  
armoires from Red Barons  
Auction House in Atlanta. Ron  
changed the panels of one arm-  
oire to glass to showcase his collect-  
ion of Coogi sweaters and braces.

The challenge for the build-  
ing and design team was to  
incorporate the owner's  
collections into a unified whole.  
Be it dogs, cars, antiques or  
Marilyn Monroe, a home built  
with so much love is sure to  
become man's best friend. ■