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## A place for a business lunch, and some history sleuthing

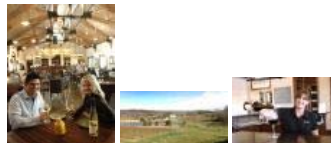
By Eric Becker  
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The Defiance and Augusta areas are well known for their wine country roots, and so when Bond Wolfe Architects Inc. set out to construct Chandler Hill Vineyards with co-owners Chuck Gillentine and his brother, they knew they had to appeal in a new way. So they set it up to attract business clients in addition to weekend lunch and dinner crowds.



Roy Sykes photo -- Chandler Hill Vineyards is seeking to set itself up as a corporate retreat in addition to a restaurant.

"We did not import any materials," beamed Matt Wolfe, one of the partners at Bond Wolfe. That included reusing lumber from one site and stone from the foundation of an old home on the property to build a stone fountain along the entranceway.



The stones that line the driveway and form a fountain near the entrance came from the basement of the house of Joseph Chandler, a former slave for whom the winery is named. Artifacts from his former home on the property, which were uncovered during construction, wait in an unfinished portion of the winery to be displayed in a glass viewing case. Rusted parts of an old gun and dining utensils and other unearthed heirlooms will be available for visitors to see. The old house, Wolfe said, was given by the former owners of the property to Joseph when he was freed.

Wolfe also points out the plasma televisions and Wi-Fi Internet connection, and the projector system that can turn the dining space into a corporate conference hall.

Because it was the architecture firm's first winery design, much was involved in its planning.

"We did a lot of research with the owner," said Jilian Oxler, the firm's director of marketing.

That included finding a fireproof wood from South America for the deck, called ipe. The winery also makes use of natural ventilation and a reflective metal roof to reduce cooling costs.

But the construction process could have come upon a hitch or two, Wolfe recalled. Neighbors were worried about noise when music groups play at the winery on weekends. In the end, Wolfe said, they came to an amicable agreement and some neighbors even took part in the project.

Chuck Gillentine, co-owner, worked with his brother-in-law to convince his wife's father to use the land, which he already owned, to create a boutique winery. Then, the plan became a little larger. Beyond a restaurant, the corporate board room was added. The vines on the property will not produce wine for another two years. When they do, tours of the production process will be available on-site.

For a first-time viticulturist, Gillentine is pleased he has already hosted two weddings on the site, with six already booked for next year.

In the future, Gillentine says, he could turn an old house on the property into a guest place.

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