

An Historic Jewel in Rhode Island



RHODE ISLAND

CASE STUDY: June 2018

Introduction

Overlooking a magnificent rocky coastline sits a Rhode Island jewel: Stone Lea. Originally constructed in 1884, this 9,000 square foot home has been painstakingly restored to its original glory.

Stone Lea was designed by **McKim, Mead and White** and is fondly known as the project the architectural firm warmed up on before designing the famous Narragansett Towers. The first owner was Philadelphia's **George V. Cresson** and this two and a half storey home was built as one of the first mansions in the area. It's appreciatively described as a "... large, 2-1/2-story, stone and wood-frame Shingle Style dwelling with a flared hipped-gable roof, gable and hip-roofed wings to the west, and a glazed veranda facing the ocean..." Extension renovations occurred in the 1940s.

Source: *"Historic and Architectural Resources of Narragansett Rhode Island"* published by the **Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission**, which is the **State Historic Preservation Office**, in cooperation with the **Narragansett Historical Society**.



A fabulous way to spend an afternoon



An elegant dining room and hearth setting

Re-roofing a Masterpiece

Keith Lescarbeau, President of Abcore Restoration Company, personally oversaw the re-roofing work. Unusually strong wind currents from the Southwest are part of life here on the coast. Some of the winds reach over 100 miles per hour in the area's famed Nor' Easters. The re-roof project originally tried using asphalt shingles, however, due to the weather and the unique flares on the roofline, the asphalt shingles kept blowing off, even though correct application procedures had been followed. **Certisawn® tapersawn shakes'** superior wind resistance allowed the reroofing project to move ahead with confidence.

Lescarbeau also serves as **Chairman of the Historic District Commission/Town of Narragansett, RI** and donates countless hours of his time to the community. Much of this volunteer work involves meeting with homeowners to ensure historically accurate building products are used in their quest to stop settling and fix leaks on historical properties. Maintaining the character of this town's history is critical and starts with the original dwellings painstakingly maintained by their current owners.

The town is an historically protected area and housing restrictions are in place; renovations are allowed with departmental permission, however, are expected to be done in an appropriate and inconspicuous manner as possible. For example, at Stone Lea, the kitchen has been redone, other interior improvements made, however the general historic feel and grand spiral staircase in the foyer has been maintained. The roofline, however, was always considered sacred!

Stone Lea's current owners originally bought the home 20 years ago and first operated it as a Bed and Breakfast establishment. Their affection for the home and the area grew and as the years passed, they decided to one day make it their personal residence.

Roofing contractor and restorer **Lescarbeau** started renovating homes 18 years ago in Providence, Rhode Island and was an advocate of the SWAP Program = Stop Wasting Abandoned Properties. After rehabbing fire damaged properties, he moved to Narragansett to continue in the building industry and now owns a thriving family business. He counts courage and being a good judge of character as key elements to his success.



Ample space to enjoy the outdoors looking out over endless ocean

Northeast District Manager Tony Bonura was consulted several times for his guidance on installation procedures and general good practices for cold weather application. **Lescarbeau** recalls thinking *we wanted to do everything we could so we didn't have to go back up on the roof* [to correct an error]. Traditional, proven installation methods were used,

including nailer and spacer plus felt paper. Non-permeable membrane was used only at the eaves and valleys as an ice dam barrier. Overall the project took four months to complete during the summer. **Lescarbeau, his son and his nephew** were the crew on the job, and handled all complicated reroofing work.



Uniquely designed porte cochère offers cover during inclement weather

*A grand entrance
staircase*



*Another angle of
the dining and
hearth area*



*A lovely outdoor
pool to enjoy on
warm days*



Side view of this lovely home

More difficult areas included the dormers, flares and valleys; a special eyebrow feature on the portico required soldered copper at the top. Another specific challenge encountered was at the front of the home where the flat roof over the entrance could not be lifted up on sleepers due to the proximity of the window sills on the wall directly above the roof. Half-round copper gutters were crafted. Two specialty curved glass monitor windows on the top floor took three months to source. When they finally arrived, one was cracked, and as the original manufacturer was out of business, a new source had to be located. Glass was much preferred to plexiglass due to plexiglass' tendency to yellow in the sun's UV rays.

Certi-label® cedar and proper craftsmanship produced a beautiful result. A total of 45 squares of **18" x 5/8" Certi-Sawn® Premium Grade Tapersawn shakes** were used as well as **Certigrade® sidewall shingles**. An estimated 8-bundle square was needed due to the intricate design of the various roof areas. The stonework on the house is made of Westerly granite, a locally sourced material. Combined with the recyclable and renewable qualities of cedar shingles, this is a home respectful towards the environment. The home sits adjacent to a public access road direct to the seashore. It's a certainty that everyone coming to enjoy the water will take a good, envious glance at Stone Lea, truly a gem on the Rhode Island coastline.



Written by:

Lynne Christensen is the CSSB's Director of Operations. She has worked for the CSSB since 1998 and is involved in a variety of departments with a focus on marketing. Christensen holds a Master of Business Administration degree as well as the Certified Association Executive credential. She resides in British Columbia.



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Tony Bonura is the CSSB's District Manager, Northeast. He has over 45 years of technical, sales and marketing experience in the forest products industry and shares his immense knowledge with a wide range of marketplace participants. Bonura is the Past Chairman of the Joint Forest Products/Coatings Committee, headquartered at the Forest Product Laboratory in Madison, WI. He resides in New York State.

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