



Bully Hill *Transformed*

Crafting modern elegance with an ancient technique

by Joy Underhill

When Lillian Taylor visited Bristol Harbour on Canandaigua Lake, she knew she'd found what she was looking for. The spacious open-air pavilion there afforded a full lake view, just the vision she'd had for the renovation of Bully Hill Vineyards in Hammondsport.

In short order, Lillian contacted New Energy Works Timber Framers in Farmington to see if they could replace an aging deck with a structure that was



stylish, weather-hardy, and permanent. Bully Hill, long known for its fun wine tastings, wine museum, extensive winery tours and fine cuisine, was poised to change from a simple farm winery into an exceptional visitor experience.

The new reception deck at Bully Hill was Phase 1 of an extensive renovation that both modernized the serv-

Oak wine barrel staves find new life as balusters.



ABOVE: Renderings bring two-dimensional plans to life so clients can see the finished addition. The addition looks just as the rendering depicted.

RIGHT, TOP: Diners enjoy a breathtaking view of Keuka Lake from the deck.

RIGHT, BOTTOM: Inside the restaurant, guests enjoy the sculpture of timber trusses.

ing areas and opened public places to a stunning view of Keuka Lake. The first phase of the project was completed in the spring of 2010, just in time for the busy summer and fall seasons.

"Bully Hill wanted to elevate their guests' experience," says Ty Allen, design group manager at New Energy Works. "Since weather is always a wild card, it needed an outdoor space to host events in less-than-ideal conditions."

The main building was a 19th-century barn, so the design had to flow from old to new in a cohesive, natural way. "A timber frame design was the perfect complement to the agrarian history of the winery," notes Allen. "We integrated elements such as simple, king post trusses and galvanized metal on sliding doors to pay homage to the old gabled barns so common in this area."

The new deck features roll-down curtains to protect visitors during blustery storms; and custom sliding doors that can be opened wide for an unobstructed view of Bully Hill. Care was taken to extend the blue roofing material between the old

What Is Timber Framing?

Timber framing is an ancient method of building extremely stable structures characterized by wide-open interiors and high ceilings. Unlike conventional construction which uses nails, timber frames use mortise and tenon joinery held firm with hardwood pegs. Many of the timber frames built in 11th-century northern Europe are still standing today.

Here in the U.S., the craft of timber framing has grown in popularity since the 1970s. Because the weight of a timber frame structure is borne by the timbers, not the walls, it resists seismic shifts and supports heavy snow loads. Most timber frames can be raised quickly and are energy efficient, especially when wrapped with structural insulated panels.

Photos and illustrations courtesy New Energy Works and Bully Hill Winery



Peeled beams and an expansive timber frame immediately convey craft and quality, reflecting the food and wine at Bully Hill.



and new sections, match fascias, and employ simple picket railings to maintain design continuity. The structure was raised in just two days, making it easier for craftsmen to complete the work under cover.

With the overwhelming success of the reception deck, Lillian decided to upgrade the restaurant as well. Phase 2 involved removing the existing dining room, moving an outdoor patio, redoing the entryway, and updating the restaurant interior.

The old restaurant featured small windows that hid the lake view. One of the goals of the Phase 2 renovation was to open up the interior to the outside and create an easy flow from space to space. After demolishing an existing patio and a small deck, construction began last November.

"We needed to open the restaurant in May, so all of the construction had to take place over the winter," said Sean King, retail manager at Bully Hill Vineyards. "With the rich heritage of the winery, we wanted customers to feel like they were stepping into an old wine cellar."

To achieve that effect, New Energy Work's fine woodworking group, NEWwoodworks was brought in for custom finishing. Reclaimed wood supplied by sister company, Pioneer Millworks was used throughout the addition, from antique ash flooring to the new staircase and cypress sliding doors. Old wine barrels were employed in the design as tabletops, and massive wine casks were mounted on the walls for an authentic and unique look.

To entice visitors with the view, floor-to-ceiling windows were installed between the dining room and a second covered pavilion. Both indoor and outdoor seating now have full access to an expansive view of Keuka Lake making



Before the renovation, outside dining depending on the weather.



Hot sun and cold rain no longer keep guests from eating outside.

Bully Hill a unique experience in the Finger Lakes. The two renovations elegantly marry history with modern convenience.

"It was important to us to upgrade the customer experience without sacrificing the original barn," notes King. "Using the age-old tradition of timber framing was the perfect design solution and transformed the entire space into a functional, roomy structure perfect for casual dining and special events."

Challenges and Best Practices

- Plan well in advance if you have a small construction window, or if service must be shut down during construction. For more complex jobs, consider using a single vendor to coordinate the entire project.
- Use a custom architectural resource when you must integrate radically different design elements, such as old and new structures.
- Expect challenges when working with old structures, such as settling, shifting and elements that have moved out of plumb.

