

Transformation



This Linville Ridge home has breathtaking views of Grandfather Mountain and is one of the crowning achievements of Dacchille Construction.

DACCHILLE CONSTRUCTION

Transforming Your Dream Home into Reality

Bill Dacchille, owner of Dacchille Construction, has seen a little bit of everything in his lifetime. From growing up seeing his father working in the construction business to being a ski gear sales representative for two decades and then starting his own

By Nathan Ham

construction business in 2004, there has been a lot that Bill has been a part of. "You can't get from New York City to Boone, North Carolina unless the Holy Spirit brings you here. God had a plan for

me, I just didn't know it at the time," said Dacchille. Born and raised in Staten Island, New York, Dacchille permanently moved to the High Country in 1981 and was part of the Sugar Mountain Ski Patrol. Skiing was also a passion for Bill as he started hitting



The living room and kitchen areas feature the styling of a classic French Chateau with the modern day appliances and amenities.



BEFORE

The complete transformation of the main living room at the Linville Ridge home involved new flooring, new ceiling beams and the installation of a 3,000-pound fireplace hood that came shipped from France. The floor was constructed from pieces of flooring from a French Chateau that the owners purchased and shipped over from France as well.



AFTER



The fine stonework craftsmanship is on full display along the wall of this living room.

The House Before Remodeling Began



the slopes at the age of 13.

Dacchille earned his Bachelor's and Master's Degree in mechanical engineering before completing his MBA.

After being in the ski business for 20 years, Dacchille decided it was time for a change.

"The ski business was good to me, then I got married and started having children. When my boys were probably ages six and ten, I realized I needed to be home more. I needed to get off the road," Dacchille said.

That's when home construction started calling his name again.

"When I got out of the building business the first time, I swore that I'd never get back into the building business again. So of course 20 years later, I get back into the business again in 2004," Dacchille joked.

Bill said that they started off doing a lot of modular homes.

"It was a unique niche that no one was filling significantly at the time. It was a very cost-effective way to do things," he said.

Not long after that, however, the housing market and the economy both hit a recession that made life tough on most every builder across the country.

"When the recession hit, I had to make a decision. Do I stay in business or go into something else? I had watched my dad make it through recessions, and I knew if you could make it through, on the back side of the recession, you will come out stronger," said Dacchille. "During the recession, I started doing a lot more remodeling business. New home projects died and remodeling kept us going. They were not profitable years, but I was able to keep my crews and that's what counts. When you have good guys you've got to keep them. It's not easy to find good craftsmen."

One of those good craftsmen, Keith Grogitsky, just happened to meet Dacchille when the two came together to construct the Foscoe Fishing Company building on Highway 105 roughly 10 years ago. Keith is now one of four project managers that Dacchille has working for him.

"If you ever see me on your job with a hammer and a saw in my hand, I had better be bringing it to one of our crews, otherwise we are both in big trouble," Bill joked. "I am the business end of the business. That's what I do. I work with the clients, I work with the inspectors, I work with the banks and the subcontractors. I make sure all of that goes on as it should."

Right now, Dacchille says they are working on 10 different projects across the High Country, none bigger than this one currently going on at Linville Ridge.

"I feel like this is one of those once-in-a-lifetime projects because it's so unique. It's the biggest job we've ever done," said Dacchille.

They have been working on this house for three years and other than a few walls and the front door, everything has been completely transformed.

"We left the perimeter of the house, but we went section by section, took it down, and rebuilt it to the new plan," Dacchille said.

The owners wanted a unique design that Grogitsky has been hard at work fitting to their desires.

"They wanted a brand new, 300-year-old French Chateau," Keith laughed.

The ceiling beams inside are all at least 250 years old and many of the furnishings are that old as well. One of the fireplaces that Grogitsky helped build has a 3,000-pound concrete hood that was shipped to the site and Keith and the crew had



Most of the cabinetwork included hand-carved designs.



This library was shipped from France and was built into the walls.

The crew hoists beams up to the ceiling (below). All of the ceiling beams in this house are at least 250 years old. Business owner Bill Dacchille (right), has been doing construction projects in the High Country since 2004.



to hang it on the wall. Most all of the furnishings and every inch of the floor came shipped from France in containers.

The flooring came from a French Chateau and had to be pieced together like a puzzle to fit each room. Once the pieces were fit together, the crew had to pull every inch of it back up so they could then put the mortar down to hold the floor pieces in place. Some of the floor tiles are rough while others are very smooth, indicating the tiles that served as walkways for many years in the French Chateau.

Some of the wooden furnishings were made from European Brown Oak. To be able to match them with cabinet construction and other décor that Grogitsky

had to build, Keith said they had to take white oak and cover it in a stain made from black tea and vinegar.

"It takes a couple of coats to make that age in the wood look just right. The tricky part is when you put it on, it comes out lighter. You have to wait a couple of days to actually have the full effect of it," he said.

As the project has gotten closer to the end, Grogitsky said that the owners even flew him to France once to show him some of the finishes and how they envisioned it looking in their transformed home.

With this project and many others like it, owners have to decide whether remodeling a home or building a home is the better fit for what they want.



Keith Grogitsky, one of the project managers for Dacchille Construction, stands next to a finished door with the library shelves in the background.

"I maintain that at least 90 percent of the time, if you like your location and like your view, we can tear it mostly down and rebuild cheaper than we can start from scratch and build new," Dacchille said. "The cost of building new is higher than it has ever been in my experience. So remodeling can be a better value."

Landscaping features, driveways and retaining walls that are already in place would cost a homeowner many tens of thousands of dollars as part of a complete new project. Septic systems and wells add even more.

"I am a home builder, I would prefer to build a new home than to do a smaller remodel project, but the fact of the matter is I can't tell you in good conscience that I can build you a new home for less money than I can remodel this home," said Dacchille.

Whether you choose to remodel a home or build from scratch, it all starts with having a great design and plan in place. If the owner wants to tweak a few things, that's certainly possible.

"What I have learned is, if you get a good architect, someone who is creative, you can do some amazing stuff," said Dacchille. "Architects come up with a plan, the owner says they want to tweak that just a little bit, so our project managers and the owner work together to come up with exactly what they want it to look like.

There is, however, such a thing as trying to make too many changes.

"Homeowners that watch what we call 'un-reality' cable home shows, we charge extra" laughed Dacchille. "Nothing gets done in two weeks for nothing. There's a lot more to every process to do it right.

You can do something poorly in that period of time. I want the homeowner to have input, certainly, but sometimes we have to point out to homeowners that a simple change mushrooms into this giant chain reaction."

Dacchille believes that a homeowner seeing a 3-D rendering of their design from an architect is one of the most important aspects to building a home or remodeling a home.

"The least expensive way to make changes is on paper before we start building. Once we start building, changes get expensive. I tell people to please take the time to work with a good architect and go through the plan," he said. "I tell people all the time to send me a picture. If you will send me a picture I promise you we can make it look exactly like that. We just need a picture of what you want because I can't imagine what you're imagining."

As the economy has improved, so has the building business. For Bill, that means more projects and more work.

"We'll do small stuff, we'll do big stuff. We're not afraid of anything. If you can show us some plans and some pictures, we can build it," Dacchille said.

Bill estimates that they have been involved in close to 20 projects in Linville Ridge alone and have several projects in line all across the High Country. He estimates that anyone that wants a large project done now will have to wait until 2020 before they can start on it.

"We've got a couple of years of backlog right now. During the recession, sometimes I would be trying to figure out what we were going to be doing Monday on Sunday night," says Bill.

Dacchille sees each project that they work on as not just a remodel or a renovation, but as a transformation, taking one thing and turning it into something very different.

"When somebody walks into our finished project, they shouldn't be able to tell where we added. If they walk in and say 'there's the old house and there's the new part,' then we have not done our job right," Dacchille says. "When you walk inside a project, you have to walk in the door and the first thing you see has to make you say 'wow.' That's a cardinal rule for me. We've got to have a 'wow' factor. We are a higher end builder, it costs more to do what we do, we understand that. You better



This bathroom features a beautiful view of Grandfather Mountain right from the tub.



This office area features another massive stone fireplace.



The transformation of the exterior of the house from BEFORE (left) to AFTER (right)



The crew at Dacchille Construction can transform just about anything you can imagine with some pictures and a plan.

walk in and say ‘wow.’”

Dacchille and his crews have been involved in numerous other large-scale projects, including a remodeling of a house in Beech Mountain the required adding a second floor and turning a one-floor brick house into the three-story law office of Reeves, DiVenere and Wright.

The Beech Mountain project started in 2014 and finished up sometime in 2015, which included having to do some work during the winter.

“Working on Beech Mountain in the middle of winter is extra special. That gave us a little unique challenge,” Dacchille said.

In addition to adding a second floor to the house, there were some really creative renovations done to the house that included a special “trap door” in a storage room that allowed for the home owners to check on their furnace without having to go outside in the winter time.

In a half bathroom, Keith was able to take a rock wall and a piece of live edge tree wood

and placed it behind the sink to make it look like it was floating. Bill said that this is something that they have done before and it always turns into a fun piece for them to construct.

At the attorney’s office, Bill and his crew started with an old brick ranch-style house in April of 2016 and were able to complete the project in eight months.

“When you start off with a 1960’s ranch

house, you never know what you’re going to run into,” Dacchille said. “Envisioning the project is the easy part. We have to go make it happen.”

Bill says they kept the original hardwood flooring from the house on the first level and a few of the other original features as well.

One challenge to this project was having to build a stairwell in the middle of the building.

“This stairwell had to meet fairly restrictive fire code,” Bill said. “We had to



Architect Hunter Coffey chose Dacchille Construction to build his personal residence shown here. Since that time, Hunter & Bill have collaborated on many of these projects - Visit Hunter Coffey’s website at: www.hpcarch.com

create a separate stairwell and when we got to the concrete floor in the basement, we only had a couple of inches of floor. We had to create a whole footing system under the stairwell.”

Bill added that the stairwell goes all the way to the roof, providing roof access should the owners decide they would like to have something on the roof like a deck.

“We often try to understand what could happen in the future. If you ever want to put a deck on the roof, we put structure there so there is a plan for that,” he said.

A couple of other challenges that kept the crews on their toes included having an exact date for project completion.

“They had a drop dead date to be in the building. The old building that they were moving out of was being torn down, so we had to barrel through rain or shine,” said Dacchille.

Turning a brick ranch house into a three-story office building begs the question: What happens to the brick? That’s where the skilled work of Bill’s crews really shined.

“Being able to cover that brick adequately to make it go away is a challenge. You don’t just slap mortar on that brick and expect it to disappear,” Bill said.

If you drive by that law office now, you would never know that building was ever a one-story brick home in such a small space even with its challenges.

“Being able to build something that looks as good as that does and meet all the requirements is never easy when your space is so confined,” Bill said.

Samples of the work done by Dacchille Construction can be found on their website at www.dacchilleconstruction.com/.



BEFORE & AFTER

This small brick ranch-style house was transformed into the three-story law office of Reeves, DiVenere and Wright in Boone. Work began on the project in April of 2016 and was completed in eight months.



AFTER



BEFORE & AFTER

The crew finished this Beech Mountain project in 2015, adding a whole floor on to this house as well as some other really creative features for the home owners.



AFTER



BEFORE & AFTER

A current remodeling project in Beech Mountain.



AFTER