

Residential
Lobby

Restaurant

YMCA

Distillery



Architectural Woodwork Institute

design solutions

Spring 2021 | \$6.25



Surrounded by live Oaks and Spanish moss, sits the newly built Firefly Distillery located near Park Circle in North Charleston, South Carolina, just up the road from Charleston. Firefly is South Carolina's oldest distillery. It produces 32 different products, some distributed nationally and internationally. The company started in 2007 in a horse barn and moved to North Charleston upon completion of its new 20,000 square foot distillery in February 2020.





Rustic Brand.

South Carolina's Oldest Distillery Builds New Facility.





The new distillery was designed by Rush Dixon Architects, LLC of Mount Pleasant, South Carolina. Architectural woodwork for the project was fabricated and installed by Low Country Case & Millwork, Inc., an AWI member located in Ladson, South Carolina. The 20,000 square foot building cost \$5 million to build.

Rustic Design

“We wanted to have a rustic feel to stay true to the authentic nature of our brand,” explains Firefly’s Jay MacMurphy. “Our architect spent a lot of inspirational time at the distillery and brought us many samples of wood from which to choose. We had to consider the cost and limits to each sample.”

Rush Dixon of Rush Dixon Architects says, “The design goal was to capture the casualness of the Firefly brand. Programmatically, the design included a gift shop, tasting room and distillery. Industrial and rustic materials, plus local artisans and craftsmen were utilized to achieve that goal.”

Many rustic elements were produced by Low Country Case & Millwork for the project, David Stasiukaitis explains. For the gift shop, a custom desk was provided at the entrance. The front of the

at a glance

AWI MANUFACTURING MEMBER:

Low Country Case & Millwork, Inc.

LOCATION:

Ladson, South Carolina

ESTABLISHED:

1990

FACILITY:

52,000 square feet

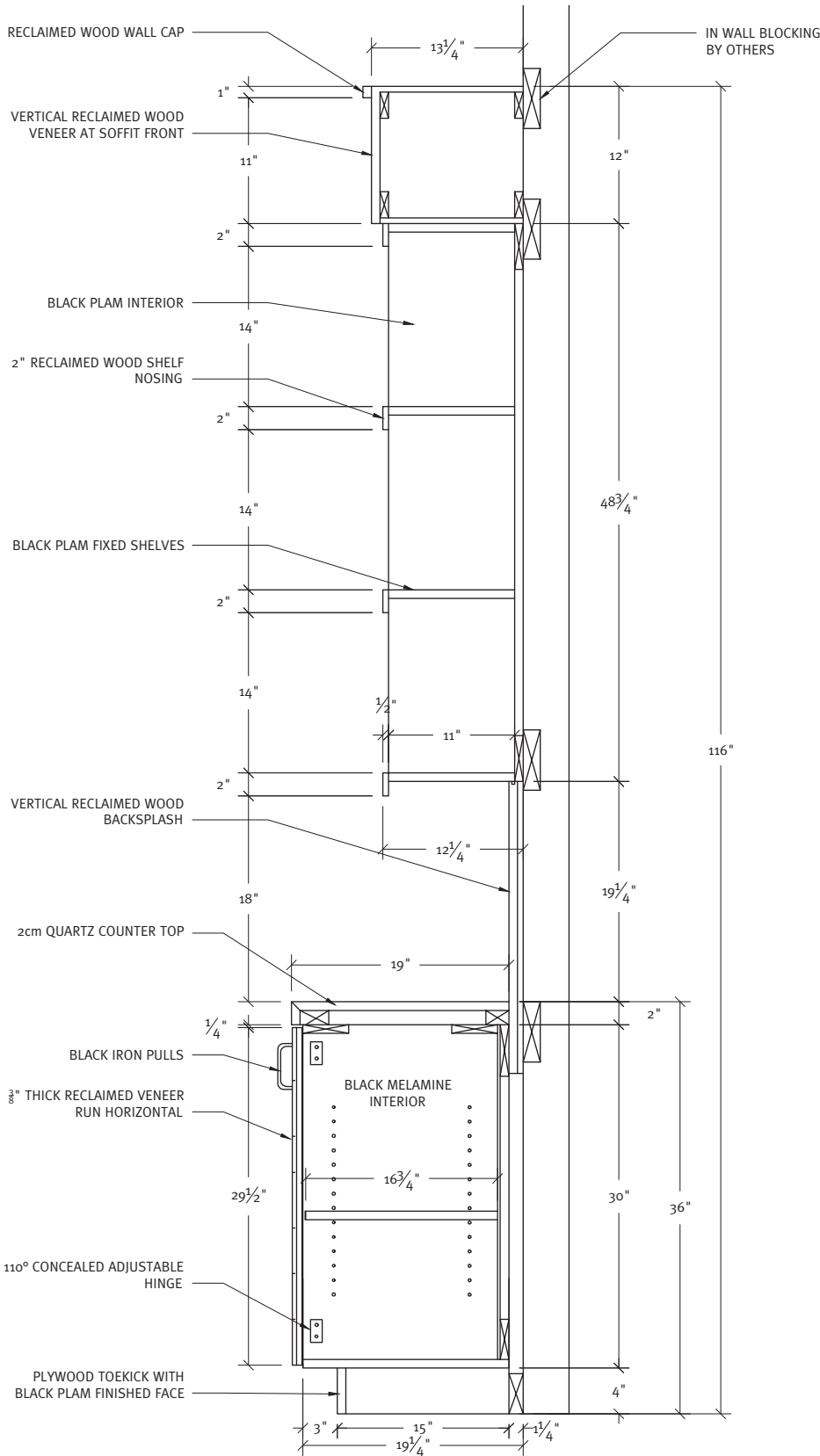
EMPLOYEES:

50

Licensed QCP Manufacturer

desk received barrel staves in an alternating pattern and the countertop is copper sheet metal. The cabinets behind the desk are plastic laminate with reclaimed wood doors and a reclaimed wood countertop. Barrel staves are used for the door pulls. The Firefly logo above the desk is made from thousands of individual copper nails by a local artist.

In the tasting room a custom bar wall was created for the middle of the room. The bar wall face received the reclaimed barrel staves in an alternating pattern and the countertop is copper sheet metal. The back bar cabinetry and displays are plastic laminate with reclaimed wood doors and face frame, while the bar footrail is made from galvanized pipe.



SECTION
@ BACK BAR

Custom display cabinets with sliding, lockable doors were provided for the perimeter of the tasting room. The cabinetry is plastic laminate with reclaimed wood door, face frame, and exposed backs. The upper display shelves received custom sliding doors made from barrel staves to lock up the merchandise. The lower cabinets have barrel stave cabinet pulls.

In the restrooms the woodworking firm provided a solid wood frame made from reclaimed beams. These were custom cut to accept a trough sink. In the work/break room plastic laminate cabinets and countertops were provided and installed. In addition, reclaimed wood walls, baseboard, jambs, casing and other associated trim were provided throughout.

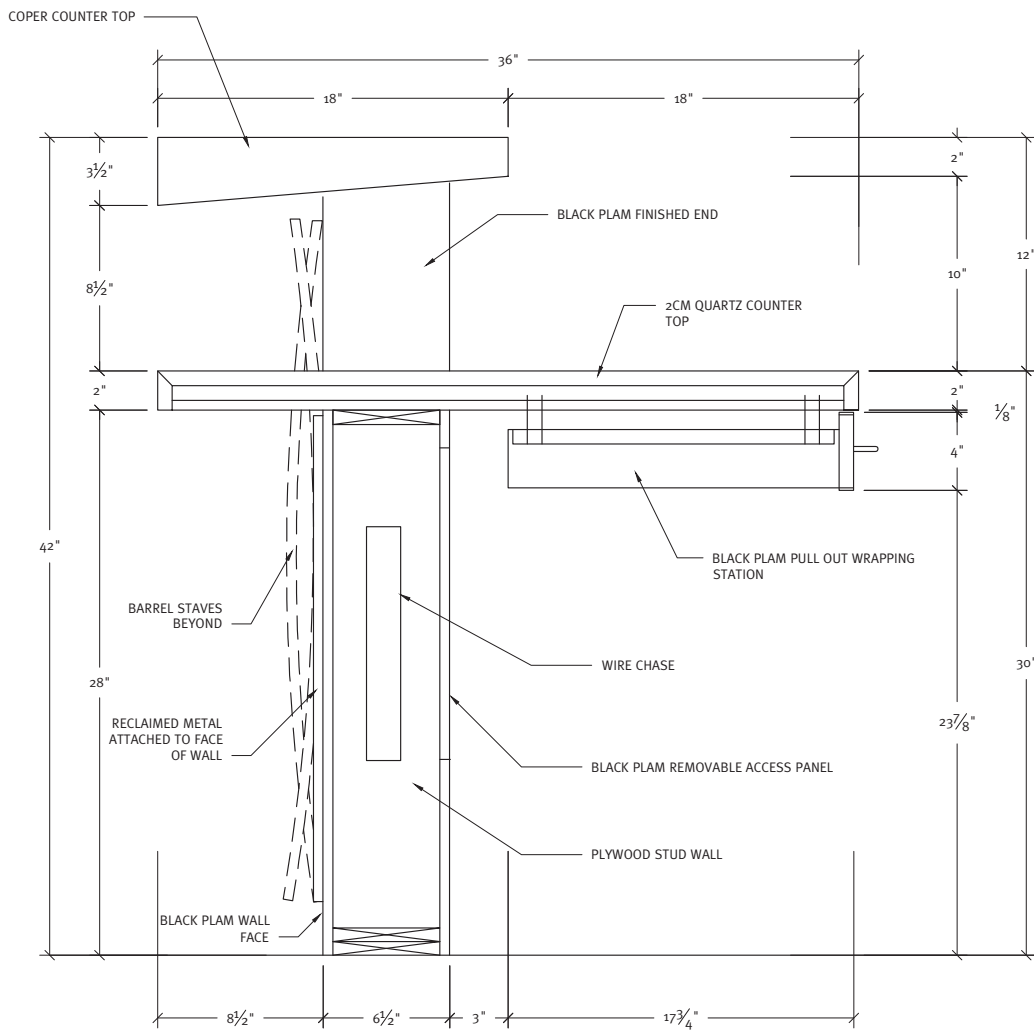
Rustic Wood

“A majority of the wood used on the project was a brown barn board from Vintage & Specialty Wood, Boca Raton, Florida,” notes Stasiukaitis. “The wood was kiln dried and came in random lengths and widths with natural edges. Overall, we used over 7,000 square feet of this material throughout the project.”



“Our expert design team encompasses degrees and certifications in architecture, interior design, and engineering as well as extensive experience in custom cabinetry and architectural millwork.”

– David Stasiukaitis, CEO
Low Country Case & Millwork



SECTION
@ BAR LOW WALL

The barrel staves used at the tasting room bar and the gift shop desk came from Firefly’s very own used bourbon barrels. “Bourbon legally has to be aged in a new charred Oak barrel,” he explains. “This is achieved by literally burning the inside of the barrel prior to storing the bourbon. So, we received around 20 used barrels from Firefly at the start of the project that we had to completely disassemble down to the individual staves. The staves were then scraped to remove the excess and loose char. We then applied a sealer to the inside surface in order to capture the remaining char and keep it from wearing off over time.”

Low Country Case & Millwork sampled a lot of different reclaimed barn wood in order to find the right look and cost point. “The owners specifically wanted a consistent brown coloration with more natural characteristics on the edges and face. We also did a lot of mock-ups to figure out the barrel stave details,” says Stasiukaitis.

MacMurphy adds, “We wanted to reuse high quality wood and in a way that created a comfortable environment that made our employees and customers feel at home. The Firefly team meticulously considered each sample provided. We wanted to find real high-quality wood with genuine character.”



Special Items

The tasting room bar was the most difficult piece, says Stasiukaitis. “The bar is free-standing and wrapped all the way around a central storage room. Coordinating all the necessary electrical and plumbing was very difficult. We made templates for the wall and marked it on the floor early on to help establish the exact location.”

The front of the bar also received the alternating barrel staves detail. “This was extremely difficult and time consuming,” he adds. “Being a high traffic area, we needed to make sure these staves were attached properly. Each stave only touches the bar wall one or two times depending on whether it curves in or curves out. Our fabricators had to cut and install custom wedges for each individual piece to give them further support.”

The main tasting bar was the most difficult to realize, agrees MacMurphy. “The bottom is clad in our used bourbon barrel staves and the top is wrapped in sheet copper. It was done this way as a nod to the copper still that we use to make our bourbon distillate and the White Oak barrels that we use to age the bourbon. The wood staves are elliptical and hard to repurpose. Low Country Case & Millwork did a wonderful job of bringing these ideas to reality.”





Special Team

“Low Country Case & Millwork proved, once again, to be master craftsmen for this project through suggesting detail improvements and impeccable execution,” sums up Dixon.

“We have a great, long standing relationship

with Rush Dixon,” adds Stasiukaitis.” Over the years, we have worked on many projects together throughout the Charleston area. We have developed an excellent relationship of collaboration and trust. It was very refreshing



to have such openness and flexibility from the architect, general contractor, and the owner on this project.”

“Our working relationship has been great and is still going almost a year after the project has been over,” says

MacMurphy. “If we have any new ideas, Low Country Case & Millwork comes in and gets the job done quickly and doesn’t leave any mess behind. We truly get compliments daily about our building and the woodwork throughout it.”

PROJECT:
Firefly Distillery
North Charleston, SC

PROJECT OWNER:
Firefly Distillery, LLC
North Charleston, SC

WOODWORKER:
Low Country Case & Millwork, Inc.
Ladson, SC

ARCHITECT:
Rush Dixon Architects
Mount Pleasant, SC

GENERAL CONTRACTOR:
Trident Construction
Charleston, SC

PHOTOGRAPHER:
Chris Smith
Charleston, SC