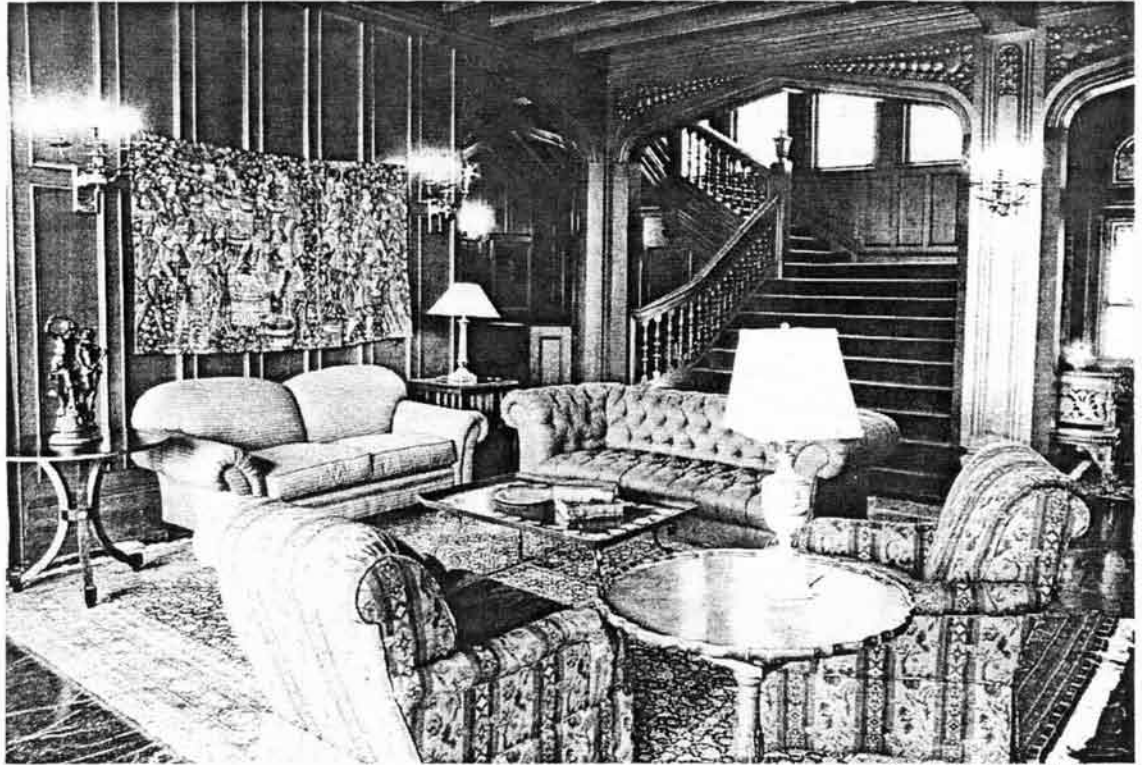


# MARKETPLACE

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Sunday, June 26, 1994

The redecorated lobby at Cranwell Resort and Golf Club, with elegant woodwork and staircase, uses overstuffed sofas for comfort. William Caligari Jr., below, was in charge of decorating.



Photos by Joel Librizzi / Berkshire Eagle Staff

## Cranwell renovates for \$1.5 million

### Bright future seen for resort

By Lewis C. Cuyler  
Berkshire Eagle Staff

**D**aniel A. Burack, the managing partner for the just refurbished Cranwell Resort, is betting that three markets will establish it as the diamond with the most sparkle in the Berkshire cluster.

Those markets are corporate conferences, vacation travelers and the local trade of weddings, functions and dinner parties.

Both he and his general manager, Joseph A. Corso, predict that guests will be drawn to the resort's exquisite surroundings and creative appointments, which combine up-to-date amenities with a sense of rich and established history.

"We are committed to the Berkshires, there is no debt on the property, the surroundings are unequalled and we are involved in the community," Burack said in an interview last week at the completion of a \$1.5 million renovation project. Last September he and three other partners bought the property for \$3 million from the New England Financial Resources Group, representing a consortium of banks, which took control after the previous owners defaulted on bank debt.

They were Richard Mullen and W. David Roche, who bought the former Jesuit School in 1986, and spent \$24 million to transform it into a resort and conference center, a venture that was considered one of the more ambitious tourist initiatives in the county's history.

RESORT, continued on D2

### Caligari directs redecorating

By Lewis C. Cuyler  
Berkshire Eagle Staff

**T**he Cranwell Resort begins its summer season with a \$1.5 million renovation that celebrates the elegance of the Gilded Age and offers a faster-paced society relief from cookie-cutter hospitality.

The challenge of creating this interpretation went to Lenox Design Resources, a five-year-old firm headed by William Caligari Jr.

"We strove to create an interior worthy of the architecture," he said during an interview last week.

That architecture is on the grand scale, thanks to John Sloane of the W & J Sloane Furniture Company of Boston. In 1894, Sloane replaced the original

buildings on the magnificent 380-acre estate with a formal Tudor mansion designed by Frederick Olmstead, a leading architect of the period.

The interior look of understated opulence is greater than the sum of its parts. While there are dozens of those parts, perhaps the most striking are the deep, rich and saturated colors of the carpets, draperies, wall coverings and upholstery.

These are set off by polished woodwork, hardwood floors, large dignified windows, splendid views of the countryside from virtually every window, marble bathrooms, huge fireplaces, and decorative plaster.

Caligari said that three elements came together successfully to achieve the look.

DECOR, continued on D2

# Caligari directs refurbishing of Cranwell

## ■ DECOR, from D1

First, he said, "the owners allowed us to scale back the scope of work so we could spend more money in fewer areas, rather than attempt a 100 percent restoration."

As a result, he said, "whatever we did we did well but we didn't do everything." About 70 percent of the total space received treatment, he said.

Second, the interior motifs reflect the style of William Morris, one of the leaders in the Arts and Crafts movement of 19th century England. He described Morris as "a gifted designer of furniture,

wallcoverings, rugs, stained glass and other interior elements."

"He worked in surroundings of the same scale as Cranwell. We studied his work. The colors are from his palette," said Caligari.

Finally, he said, he was able to obtain the kind of expensive and durable fabrics the project demanded from Sanderson, an internationally known British firm, at very favorable prices because of the size of the order.

"It is not a true restoration," he said. "We are not transforming the spaces to the interiors of the Berkshires in 1894." One reason, he said, is that "they would not

translate functionally into the commercial needs of the Cranwell Resort today."

The second reason, he said, is that by today's standards the interiors favored by the cottagers were so highly ornamented and over decorated that they would be both unattractive and unaffordable if restored with accuracy.

The Morris style, he said, was used widely in Tudor mansions at the turn of the century. It is less formal in appearance and cleaner in design, he said. He said the interior look also benefitted from some lucky breaks in buying antiques.

For instance, he said, one purchase was of a full-length Venetian mirror, a style that sells for \$5,000 up if bought at the high end of the line.

"We obtained one for \$1,400 and it looks like a million," he said.

Another challenge of the job, he said, was to make each of the bedrooms unique. They included the 12 rooms in the mansion and additional rooms in Beecher's Cottage, The Carriage House and The Cottage Suites.

"We worked with six different room schemes, but then we did variations for each room within those schemes," he said. "The result is that no two rooms are

*The interiors favored by the cottagers were so highly ornamented that they would be unattractive today.*

alike; each one is unique."

"In the hotel industry, that's unheard of," he said. He said the project was not the largest in budget that his firm had accomplished but it was the most time consuming and taxing because of the variety of spaces.

At various stages, he said, he used all four of the people on his staff as well as two free-lance designers. Susan St. John of his staff was in charge of the bedrooms, while Ilene Chittenden was in charge of the public spaces.

He established his company in 1989 after an eight-year stint of working as a designer in New York City. The company has served clients in New York, New Jersey and Maryland and has also done work for Canyon Ranch in Lenox and Tucson, Ariz.



Joel Libritzi / Berkshire Eagle Staff

Detail in the music room, used as a Cranwell dining room, shows a tapestry, sconces, decorative scale and formal lamps.