

Ocean House Matches Old World Style with Modern Elements

Facing the ocean on a beach in Watch Hill, is one of the jewels of Rhode Island. It is the home of one of the country's best kept secrets and one of the most unique hotels on the East coast. It has been no secret that many people have found the coast of Rhode Island to be among some of the most desirable places to stay in New England. The pristine beaches and clean waters of Watch Hill made it the perfect spot for the rebuilding of an old classic seaside hotel called The Ocean House.

The project was no easy undertaking and required a big commitment from its investors. The original \$100 million project was the brainstorm of Charles M. Royce, of Greenwich, Connecticut. But what started off as a remodel soon turned out to be a total reconstruction. A great deal of planning and designing followed as the investors wanted to keep the feel of the original hotel.

What is also quite remarkable is the choice of materials used in its restructuring. Had the new building been built entirely with wood, it would have required a small forest. For many considerations, alternate materials were chosen. Many new green products have been employed on this project, which offer greater longevity and lower maintenance. The steel structure as well as the trim and siding materials alone saved many trees. Where wood was used, such as decking and roofing, only renewable sources or



environmentally friendly choices were used. Many new building techniques were employed to make the new hotel even better than the original classic.

Another very important factor was the commitment to use union labor to build this project. The firm that took on this formidable endeavor is well known in Rhode Island, Connecticut and Massachusetts. H. Carr and Sons has tackled many large and interesting projects in Rhode Island and Connecticut over the years, but few were as ambitious as the Ocean House. In a troubled economy where jobs have been scarce, Carr has

kept many highly qualified craftsmen working on this unique project. There have been very few construction projects where you will see the kind of craftsmanship and attention to detail that are found at the Ocean House.

A lot of credit should go to the people who have lead the way in this process. Mark Banfield was the Project Manager for Dimeo, the Project Coordinators on the Ocean House. Jameson Carr, the owner of H. Carr and the General superintendent for Carr, Tom Golden, hand picked a great crew of union carpenters to do the work. Armando Mauricio was the general foreman, with Steve Price, Bruce Hubbard and Dave Anderson as carpenter foreman. A non-union company would have found it difficult to get the qualified manpower to do a project of this scale. At one point there were close

to 100 union carpenters at the Ocean House from three different states, Rhode Island, Connecticut and Massachusetts. It was from the pooling of the qualified people from these states that this project has come out so well.

Some would think that this undertaking was a bit ambitious, but all those who have been to this magnificent area and enjoyed it realize its unique and beautiful quality will satisfy the patrons of the Ocean House for many years to come. ■

This piece was sent to the New England Carpenter by Brother Ludwig Ostfeld, a 30-year member of Carpenters Local 24 in Connecticut.