

## **Zonta Home Tour Features Former Veenschoten Cottage**

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The Veenschoten family arrived on Sanibel in 1928 from Erie, PA, with two small sons, David and John. John grew up on Sanibel, served in the Army-Air Corps during WWII and, after retirement, was a long-time member of the Sanibel Planning Commission. He also founded the volunteer Hammerheads who restored buildings in the Historical Museum & Village. He passed away in February, 2009 at age 85.

Veenschoten family land on West Gulf Drive included a beachfront cottage, later relocated across the street during property exchanges within the family. Three years ago, the cottage went on the market for the first time. The lucky buyers were Vonnie and Gerry Wilson, who envisioned creating a vacation retreat for three generations of their family.

“We were the only buyers who wanted to preserve the original home, including the cypress ceilings,” said Vonnie Wilson. “Our wish was to create a plan that would honor the past and its charm.”

Guests of Zonta’s 9<sup>th</sup> annual A Peek at the Unique home tour on March 13 will step into a luxurious yet comfortable interior with many of the original features intact. The renovation project faced unique challenges: the original 2-bedroom, one-bath cottage had undergone many additions over the years, including a garage and a pool. The Wilsons worked with Dan Hahn Custom Builders to unify the home’s interior and update the exterior. The final design incorporates the rare, vaulted cypress ceilings and other historic features. A second floor was added, providing two bedrooms, and a magical spiral staircase leads to a sunny open deck. The staircase has solid wood treads and wrought iron railings which continue around the top floor. The home is crowned by an ornamental cupola

“This was a unique opportunity to work with the homeowners to maintain the integrity of the original structure while introducing modern comforts and amenities,” said Kevin Vertesch, vice president of Dan Hahn Custom Builders.

A Peek at the Unique, always a sellout, is the principal fund raiser for the Zonta Club and last year raised \$70,000 to fund programs that enhance the status of women. A few seats remain for the afternoon portion of the tour: call 1-877-750-3849.

The Wilson home is generously sponsored by Dan Hahn Custom Builders, Inc. exclusively serving Sanibel and Captiva for two decades. Kevin Vertesch will serve as speaker at the home, as well as Dick Fortune, art photographer, whose work graces the interior.

The Zonta Club of Sanibel/Captiva is a service organization of professional women working together to provide hands-on assistance, advocacy and funds to strengthen women’s lives on the islands, in Lee County and around the world through Zonta International. For information, visit [www.zontasancap.com](http://www.zontasancap.com).



View of spiral staircase, looking up



Original cypress ceilings were preserved



A small nook contains historic Veenschoten memorabilia