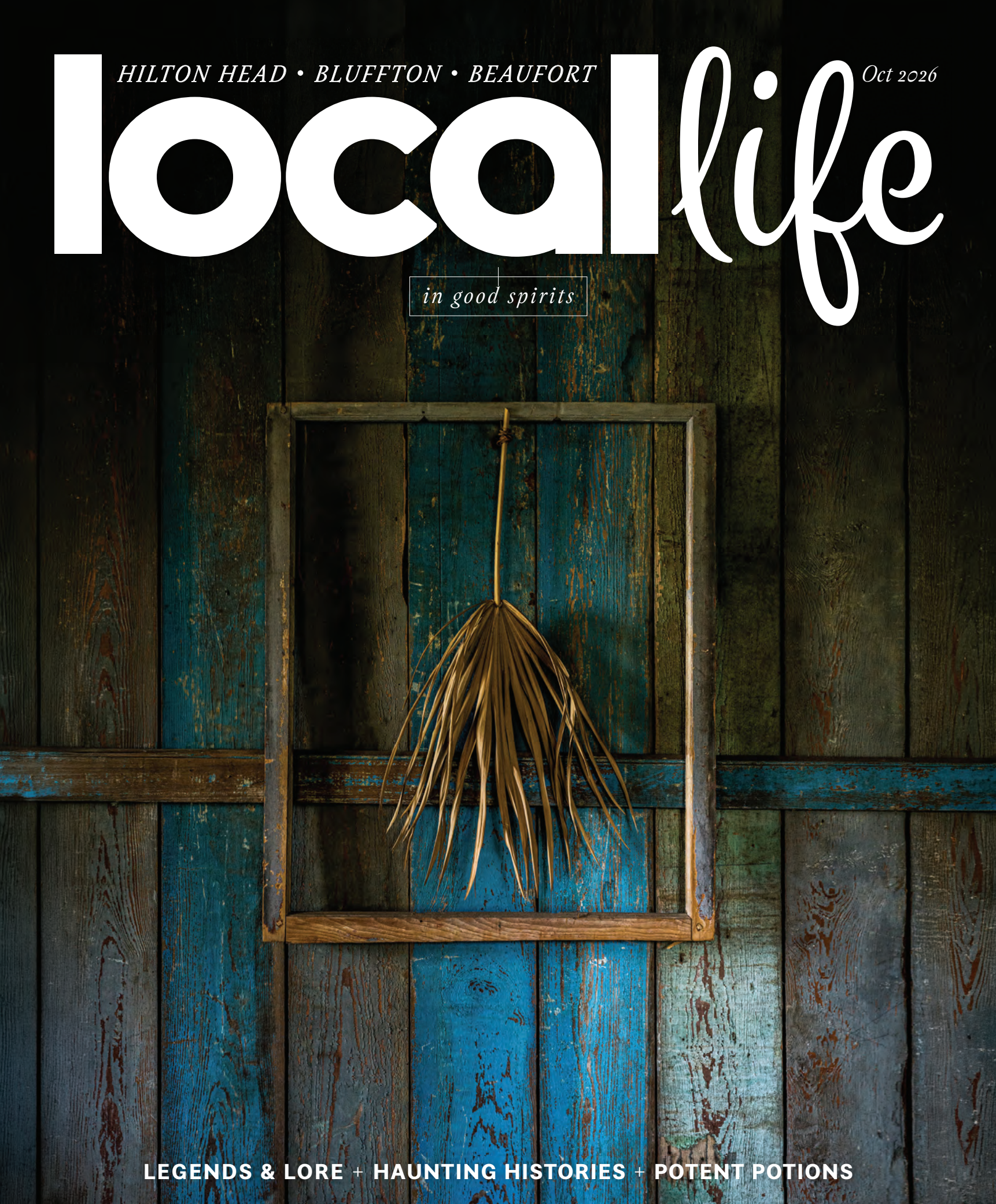
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Oct 2026

local life

in good spirits



LEGENDS & LORE + HAUNTING HISTORIES + POTENT POTIONS



WELL BALANCED
A symmetrical layout and arched inset cabinets create a formal atmosphere in this living room, yet the abundance of natural light makes it warm and inviting.



HOME SHOWCASE

Dream sequence

A homeowner's childhood wish for a grand staircase inspired this elegant Colleton River residence.

STORY BY ALEA WILKINS
PHOTOS BY ANDREW FRAZIER, VOYAGE CREATIVE

From Barbie's Dreamhouse to the Batcave, the imagined homes of childhood rarely become reality. Moat-bound castles are hard to come by, candy-coated interiors wouldn't last in our Lowcountry heat, and hot pink slides are swapped for more practical modes of moving downstairs. This Colleton River Club residence, designed by ***Pearce Scott Architects***, is the exception.

When the homeowners first met with the Bluffton-based firm, they presented a trove of inspirational images for their ideal Lowcountry residence. For the wife, there was one feature that she couldn't live without: a grand, arching staircase.

"That'd been her childhood dream," principal architect David McKinley says. "The entire house was then designed around that stair."

Inspired by the sweeping staircase, this luxurious abode demonstrates how a single show-stopping feature can shape an entire house's design. Its curved form guided the home's architecture, creating a cohesive, cozy and circuitous space, turning a childhood fantasy into a forever home.



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A GRAND ENTRANCE Inspired by the owner's childhood dream, the grand, curved staircase required a team of 12 to install.

Round and round

Immediately upon stepping through the front door, the staircase makes a big impression. Its graceful arc draws upward from the welcome mat to the second-floor lounge, catching the eye with its intricate Art Deco railing. Compelled by its grandeur, the Pearce Scott team let the staircase guide the home's design.

"We wanted to create subtle accents of it all throughout," McKinley says.

In the living room built-in cabinets and a wet bar are capped with a dome. Select doorways and windows arch to match the staircase's rounded structure. Outdoors, dormer roofs and a winding entry route reference its magnificence and complexity.

Around the staircase full-wall paneling encloses the foyer, building depth and dimension that extend into the adjoining rooms. McKinley notes how the design completed the entryway while seamlessly flowing into the rest of the home.

"If we left [the walls] unfinished, it'd feel empty," he says. "We pulled that idea through there to blend those spaces."

Calm, collected

Despite the grand entrance, the owners still wanted their home to feel relaxed. Cozy. "She said that was her favorite word," McKinley affirms. Inspired by the Lowcountry's ease, the home's laid-back atmosphere stems from its open-concept kitchen, dining and living spaces, welcoming friends and family — including their cocker spaniel, Violet — to gather. Its color palette envelops the space in warmth, rendering the cabinetry in a creamy white finish, the armchairs in burnt sienna velvet and the decor in splashes of olive green. An abundance of natural light completes the picture.

Together the interiors strike the perfect balance of formal and easygoing, creating spaces worthy of their front-row views to the lagoon and golf course, while feeling lived-in and homey. McKinley points out the living room as a prime example.

"It feels formal with the furniture layout," he says, noting their positioning before the fireplace, "but the amount of natural light coming in is what makes it more welcoming."







BACK OF HOUSE An adjoining galley kitchen, wrapped in a coastal wallpaper and navy cabinetry, neatly tucks everyday appliances away, while the formal kitchen opens into the living room for easy entertaining.



Built to last

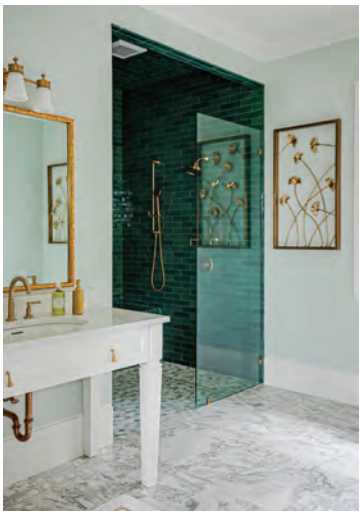
Beyond aesthetics, this dream home delivers on comfort and functionality. Fortified with accessibility features, it illustrates a concept McKinley refers to as "aging in place."

"It's always smart to plan ahead," he says.

The staircase may look majestic now, but its climbing arch may pose more of a challenge to elderly joints. Because the homeowners anticipate caring for their parents in the future, they sought an alternative that still feels luxurious. The solution: a hidden elevator that moves from the ground floor to the rooftop.

"They wanted their parents to be able to access every space of the house," McKinley says. The elevator, in addition to the home's spacious floor plan, helps everyone enjoy every room, view and feature for years to come.











Full circle

While the homeowner once dreamt of a grand set of stairs, she now has visions of the future. Upon seeing the completed home, built to face the sun as it rises over the water, she could already picture her new morning routine.

"When she wakes up, she grabs her coffee, then hangs out on the porch, and then she slowly gravitates all throughout, ending up on the second-floor porch and then heading back inside," McKinley recalls.

It's also a space she intends to share. Each room, she says, has already been claimed by an extended family member promising to visit. To McKinley, those plans for the life ahead make this home a dream come true.

"I think the most memorable thing is walking through and hearing her stories," he says. "It was just really neat to hear [how] the whole thing tied together." *LL*



GET THE LOOK

Stairway to heaven

THE MAKING OF THIS DREAM STAIRCASE INVOLVED PLENTY OF PLANNING, PRECISION AND A DOZEN PAIRS OF HANDS.

STORY BY ALEA WILKINS + PHOTOGRAPHY BY ANDREW FRAZIER, VOYAGE CREATIVE



As far as entrances go, this grand staircase takes the foyer to the next level. In a majestic curve, it rises to the second-floor landing of this Colleton River Club abode, ushering in stately elegance with every step. The feature fulfills one of the homeowner's childhood fantasies. She envisioned one day having a staircase like those she had seen in movies. ***Pearce Scott Architects*** translated that dream into a real, livable home, but making it happen was far from simple.

"When you have this floating curved stair, nine times out of 10, they're built off-site in a factory," says David McKinley, principal architect of the project.

Pearce Scott partnered with StairCrafters Inc., a contractor based in Easley, South Carolina, to bring the homeowner's vision to life. Working from opposite sides of the state, the two teams sent ideas, plans and dimensions back and forth to create the perfect stairway. When it arrived, McKinley was startled.

"It actually came on a trailer," he recalls. "It wasn't completely finished, and they had like 12 guys pick it up and carry it into the house."

However, after tightening the final nuts and bolts, McKinley says that the extra effort was worth it.

"It's one thing to draw it, but to then see it come to life like that is pretty cool," he says.



ABOVE & BEYOND
Above the staircase, a crystal chandelier completes the foyer, creating an elegant focal point that contrasts with the foyer's crisp white walls.

Room to roam

A SEAMLESS SEQUENCE OF PORCHES, PATIOS AND POOLSIDE SPACES MAKES THE MOST OF THIS PICTURESQUE COLLETON RIVER SETTING

STORY BY ALEA WILKINS + PHOTOGRAPHY BY ANDREW FRAZIER, VOYAGE CREATIVE





EASY DOES IT Overlooking the intracoastal waterways of Colleton River Club, this home's backyard embraces the view from a two-story porch. Each space flows from one to the next, mirroring the gentle, natural rhythm of the Lowcountry.

Sitting on a corner lot in Colleton River Club, this home is surrounded by picturesque Lowcountry views. On one side, the green of a golf course rolls along, and out back, a lagoon sparkles beneath the sun. To help the homeowners make the most of their prime real estate, ***Pearce Scott Architects*** created a backyard that invites gathering, sitting and staying a while.

The fun starts in the screened porch's outdoor kitchen. Its fireplace, grill, weather-rated television and abundant seating welcome the opportunity for al fresco dining, complete with a show from the golfers passing by. Around the corner, the backyard expands into a pool deck framed by a spacious lawn, and upstairs, a second-story porch overlooks the entire scene. Principal architect David McKinley notes how the layout has an intrinsic rhythm for easy all-day enjoyment.

"The open porch is a full continuation of the living room that opens up to the pool area, and then it all connects to the screened-in side porch, which flows into the interior kitchen," he describes. "So, the whole thing has this nice circulation to it."

In this backyard every day becomes its own experience, combining the best of Lowcountry living with an unbeatable view. *LL*