



# Mauchline Manor

A Brava Case Study





## A LEGACY GONE LAX

Located just northwest of the center of Wilmington, Delaware, an expansive property line stretches the length of a city block. Initially part of a sizeable area of farmland owned by the prominent Rodney family of Delaware, it was the property's subsequent owner — Annie Dickie Tallman, wife of DuPont executive Frank Gifford Tallman, Sr. — who brought new life to the land and to the house that stood upon it.

Designed in 1916 by the Philadelphia-based architecture firm Eyre and McIlvaine (led at the time by innovative Italian-born architect Wilson Eyre), the Tudor mansion that still rests on the property today started out as a single-family residence, boasting such amenities as nine bedrooms, five bathrooms, a Great Room, a greenhouse, and a servants' wing. Above the main entrance, "Mauchline" was carved in honor of Annie's father's Scottish

birthplace. The Tallmans spared no expense incorporating both top-of-the-line materials and the most modern technology of the time in their new home, which remained in their family for over five decades before being sold to St. Anthony's of Padua Roman Catholic Church in 1971.

From there, Mauchline served a divine purpose, transforming into a convent and housing the Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia for nearly four decades. When its last occupant eventually departed, the aging, historic Tudor was then shuttered and left to sit, vacant and virtually untouched, for another decade and a half.

It wasn't until the age of social media that Mauchline was given a chance at resurrection. In 2022, the HGTV program "Cheap Old Houses" sought out profoundly neglected and historically significant homes across the country in the hopes of restoring

them to their former glory. It featured the mansion on its social channels, and with just three words — “SAVE THIS HOUSE” — the post went viral.

Several offers were considered, but it was two former San Francisco tech leaders who ultimately became Mauchline’s latest owners — and who surprised nearly everyone by announcing their intention to fully restore and remake the property into their permanent residence, just as its original owners had nearly 107 years prior.

## THE CHALLENGE

Restoring 11,275 square feet of living space is no small feat in any circumstances. But Mauchline, which was listed as “currently uninhabitable” at the time of its latest purchase, presented an array of obstacles that would have given any prospective owner pause: it lacked running water and HVAC; lead paint and asbestos were present; and the electric wiring was, in fact, ancient, being the early knob-and-tube method of the late 1880s to 1930s. In addition, the vast lawn, where a great fountain had once stood, now contained a huge muddy depression.

Then there was the sprawling roof. Asphalt shingles had been installed in the 1980s, replacing the original tile roof that had failed. But the shingles were long past their lifespan, not to mention out of place with the mansion’s inherent character and style.

Mauchline’s new owners, however, had an ace up their sleeve. Former vice president of San Francisco-based Salesforce Inc. Kevin Simmons and Cheryl Black, a former CEO of YouTech, had the remarkable luck of possessing all of Wilson Eyre’s original architectural notes on the home, as well as his correspondence with Frank Tallman. Serving as a construction playbook of

the past, from the number of coats of paint and the types of electric and plumbing to the properties of the cement, it proved invaluable when deciding how best to redo the roof.

It was paramount to Simmons and Black that the roof be restored to its original look and feel from when the home was first built, which represented its own challenge: paying homage to the craftsmanship while utilizing more modern technology. The search was on for a roof that would not only provide the utmost in protection and durability but also properly represent the legacy of “Mauchline Manor” (the updated moniker Simmons and Black bestowed upon their residence).

The use of natural slate tile as had originally adorned the home was far from ideal. Having a preexisting strike against it from having already failed once, natural tile came with additional drawbacks: expensive roofing material (slate is one of the most costly types of roofs); a heavier weight (which can necessitate expensive substructure modifications so that weight can be properly supported); greater shipping costs due to that weight; less ease of installation; and no manufacturer warranty. Even so, the homeowners were concerned that without natural slate, they wouldn’t be able to authentically replicate Mauchline’s original appearance.

When the couple sought a contractor to help them find the best roofing solution, it was, in fact, a tile company that recommended the services of Graven Ramirez and Eagle Eye Roofing. The Bordentown, New Jersey, contractor impressed them with his expertise but also with his artistry. Ramirez’s dedication to old-school craftsmanship combined with his eagerness to embrace new technologies made this practically a fated partnership — and just as fated was when the contractor introduced the homeowners to BRAVA.



## THE BRAVA ADVANTAGE

***“We chose BRAVA simply because in the synthetic tile space, they really make a top-quality product. The look and feel is as close to slate as it can possibly look.”***

— Kevin Simmons, Homeowner, Mauchline Manor

Even though Simmons and Black felt an instant kinship with Ramirez, they nevertheless did their own research into the composite roofing manufacturer, its products, and the expected longevity of a BRAVA roof. The homeowners agreed that BRAVA's old world slate polymer tile, with its rich, natural-looking hues and thick profile — the thickest synthetic slate roof profile available — would be the right fit for the project. They were impressed with BRAVA's commitment to making a top-quality product, even going so far as to research how the manufacturer infuses color into every piece of its roofing tile — which assured them that if any ever needed replacing, their roof's overall look would remain seamless.

For Mauchline Manor's impressively large roof with its two prominent gables, Eagle Eye installed BRAVA's Composite Slate Roof Tile, adding copper details to further highlight its beauty. The homeowners couldn't have been more pleased with the roof's stunningly realistic look, as well as its ability to properly represent the home and its storied history.



Ramirez's company offers all three of BRAVA's product profiles, finding that customers love both the affordability and the authentic look of its color blends while the contractor appreciates the BRAVA tile's lighter weight and ease of install — along with the opportunity it affords to offer customers top-of-the-line durability and protection without sacrificing the incredible aesthetics of natural slate.

Being extremely eco-conscious, Simmons and Black also chose BRAVA's slate roofing tile due to its sustainability, versus mining for natural slate. That, combined with its unsurpassed performance, dependable longevity, and incredible color exposure, gave the homeowners everything they were looking for — and then some.

### PROJECT

Mauchline Manor

### LOCATION

Wilmington, DE

### PROJECT TYPE

Historic Restoration

### ROOF AREA

100 Squares

### ROOFING PRODUCTS

BRAVA Composite Slate Tile | Color: Atlantic

### ARCHITECTS

Wilson Eyre & John Gilbert McIlvaine

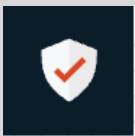
### CONTRACTOR

Eagle Eye Roofing

### MARKET

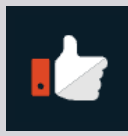
Cultural / Local Community

## THE BENEFITS OF BRAVA



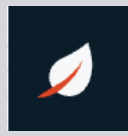
### Durability

BRAVA's composite roof tiles create a natural slate appearance, with a 50-year warranty. Longevity and low maintenance offer an excellent ROI.



### High Wind Resistance

BRAVA tiles meet high quality standards, endure extreme weather, and pass wind tests up to 188 MPH with nails and 211 MPH with screw installation.



### Environmentally Friendly

Our sustainable polymer roofing, crafted from recycled materials, outlasts natural slate, offering durability without the maintenance of natural slate tiles.



### Ease of Installation

Our slate roofing system with installation accessories requires no additional structural support, which is ideal for new construction and re-roofs for various projects.

**BRAVA** Build with **BRAVA**

### BRAVA Roof Tile

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