

Unico System Maintains Beauty and Historical Value of Plantation Home

In humid areas, selling the benefits of the Unico System is a breeze

Sprawling across the banks of the James River, just beyond the stone walls that bear the dents of cannonball fire from the Civil War, you'll find the majestic Brandon Plantation of Spring Grove, Virginia. The home is truly a treasure-box full of history: a clock once owned by Marie Antoinette, a collection of Early-American and Chinese antiques, original woodwork and architecture dating back to the 1700s, an addition believed to be designed by Thomas Jefferson in 1765. The list of finds is long, and



The historic Brandon Plantation in Spring Grove, VA.

at the top of the more recent, you'll find the Unico System.

Contractor Joe Kelleher, of the Kelleher Corporation



Brian Kelleher of Kelleher Corporation inspects the Unico System supply tubing used in the installation at the historic Brandon Plantation.

in Richmond, was called upon by the proprietor, Senator Robert W. Daniel, Jr., to update the home's heating and cooling system. Located just two-hundred yards off the river, the massive home is

exposed to frigid winter winds as well as the region's oppressive humidity.

"This home has been in my family since 1926," stated Senator Daniel, "but it simply wasn't very comfortable to live in. The humidity here is oppressive."

The Georgian-style home extends more than 210 feet long and includes five areas: a two-story center struc-

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ture leads off to one-story wings on each side, and two-story additions serving as bookends to the home. Yet the existing central boiler system offered only one thermostat. The Daniel's family occupies the main areas of the home, but allows tours for portions of the historic Plantation. This made it extremely difficult to maintain appropriate temperatures for the varying needs.

Extreme cold, oppressive humidity, an expansive structure. Add to these challenges the historic value of the Plantation, how it was built, its ornately decorated interi-



Condensing units were cleverly hidden in the Old English Boxwoods surrounding the Plantation.

ors — and the need to preserve it all.

"It was extremely important to us that the solution to our heating and cooling system not be obtrusive," said Senator Daniel. "I

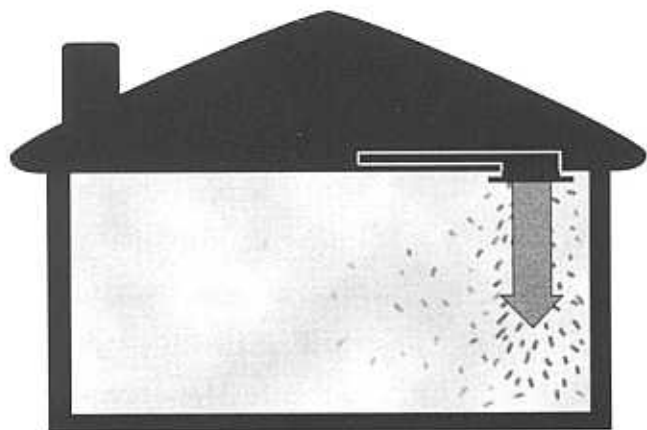
didn't want my home torn apart and I didn't want to see a lot of technical machinery."

So Kelleher provided what he considers the only solution: the Unico System.

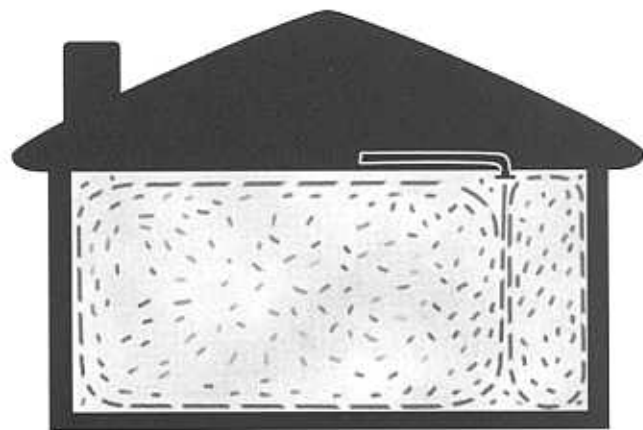
"When you're doing a job like this, working on a home that offers such tremendous historical value, you have to respect everything," explained Kelleher. "So I've found the best way to keep the scarring and marring down is to use the Unico System."

Kelleher's plan for the installation included the use of five Unico System heat-pumps, one for each area of the Plantation (a total of 16 tons). This allows the home-

Draft-Free, Even Temperatures



Conventional systems often leave houses with hot and cold spots as well as drafts.



The Unico System uses aspiration, eliminating drafts and keeping temperatures even and comfortable from floor to ceiling.

owners to regulate the desired temperatures for each area. Because of the thick brick walls in the basement and the desire to preserve the two-inch hard pine supporting structures, the main duct line was installed throughout the ceiling of the basement.

Kelleher installed more than 100 outlets throughout the Plantation, positioning them conveniently in the ceiling on the second floor and throughout the floorboards on the main floor. The round, 5-inch outlets were then painted and stained to blend-in with the interior surroundings. The condensing units were concealed behind the Old English Boxwoods that are dispersed throughout the grounds.

"The Plantation offers formal garden tours," noted Kelleher. "We wanted to be able to preserve the look of the home on the exterior as well as the interior. The System's air handler units fit easily between the basement ceiling joists, and the condensing units are concealed behind the Boxwoods."

The Kelleher Corporation



Above: Unico System air handling equipment fits conveniently above storage cabinets in the pantry.

Left: Kelleher used the Unico System's 5-inch round outlets to blend into the Plantation's décor.

has been offering heating, cooling, plumbing, electric and fuel oil services since 1968. They offer a turnkey system, noting that all of the work is completed by staff personnel to ensure quality, especially in the restoration of older, historically significant homes.

"You have to work fast enough to be efficient," explained Kelleher, "but slow enough to be careful. You have to remember that you can't simply replace or repair something in a home

that's this old. You wouldn't want to."

Another benefit of the Unico System is its ease of installation. Despite the need for cautious steps, it took Kelleher's crew just six weeks to complete the entire Plantation project. And the results?

"We are completely satisfied," offered Senator Daniel. "It has really helped with the humidity. The tourists are more comfortable, and we're certainly

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Conventional System



Unico System

Removes Moisture

Air in the Unico System is passed directly over the evaporator coils at a colder temperature than conventional systems. Because of this unique difference, the Unico System removes 30% more moisture.

more comfortable."

Kelleher, who has been installing high-velocity systems since they first became available in the late '60s, noted that he hadn't always achieved such good results.

"We've used other high-velocity systems before, especially in the more difficult installations, but we kept experiencing a high failure rate," said Kelleher. "So when Unico came along with a better product that didn't leak, we switched to their

system. And we've been using them ever since." □

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Tours of the formal gardens and grounds at the Brandon Plantation are available year-round. Tours of the home are available by appointment only. For more information, contact the Brandon Plantation at 757/866-8416.

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