Patricia K Colwell, Owner, Carolina Heritage Vineyard

Pat was born and raised in a small town in northern Wisconsin, one of six children. After graduating from the University of Wisconsin, she joined IBM and spent the next 35 years pursuing a software development career at IBM locations and received her MBA from Duke University. In 2004 Pat and her husband, Clyde Colwell, purchased abandoned farm property in the Yadkin Valley. Commuting every weekend from Cary, they began to clear the brambles and using only organic practices, established Carolina Heritage Vineyard. In 2008 they received their first organic certification, which they have maintained since. In 2008 as they prepared for their first harvest, they designed and began the construction of their winery, which they put 19 feet down into the earth to take advantage of the cool temperature of the earth with the tasting room above. They also began to explore the possible use of alternative sources of energy, knowing that a winery operation would consume a lot of electricity. In 2011 they had a 5.9 kwh photovoltaic system installed on the roof of the tasting room for that purpose. With concerns about the toxicity of spent batteries, they decided to forego batteries and worked with Duke Energy to have their system hooked up to the grid as “net metering.” As their operation grew, Pat and Clyde looked for other uses for alternative energy. Recognizing that hot water and heating were major uses of electricity in their operation, in 2017 they had a solar hot water/heating system installed with a back-up wood boiler to provide heat and hot water to both the winery/tasting room and to their home.