


PORCH PONDERING. This screened-in hideaway at the rear of the house overlooks a serene two-acre pond.

wedded




HOLY COW. "You can't grow up in Oklahoma and not be a cowboy," says Roy, who now rides a Harley instead of horses, but still loves Western style.

BLISS

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HOME BY OLD-TIMER LOG HOMES

Newlyweds retire to a country-style love nest in Tennessee.



CENTER STAGE. The mantel on this deceptively realistic faux stone hearth is made of reclaimed wood from a 19th-century cabin.

GOOD TASTE. We love this custom hickory cabinetry, including a space-saving corner unit with opaque glass accents.



GIVING TREE. Roy used trees cleared from the property to craft this dining table and benches. He also made the deer-horn chandelier.





HIGH STYLE (left). The angled, white pine boards behind the bed create a unique pattern and highlight the vaulted ceiling.

SOUTHWEST SLUMBER (right). This guest room is in high demand all summer. "We barely have time to air the sheets, so to speak," says Helen.

As soon as the plane touched down in Oklahoma, Helen McGuire put on her wedding veil and hit the tarmac. What's unique about that? For one, she wasn't even engaged.

"When other passengers asked if I was getting married, I laughed and told them no," says Helen, who explained that she was en route to a blind date set up by her brother and sister-in-law. "I had my doubts, but figured if he did turn out to be perfect, I'd be ready!"

As promised, Helen's match-makers were waiting at the airport with Roy Snow, whom they promised was the ideal guy for her.

"You know how that goes; it's almost always a disaster," laughs Helen, who went through her share of well-meaning fix-ups after her

first husband passed away. "I wore the veil to see if Roy had a sense of humor, but it turned out the joke was on me. I met him in February and we were married in June."

Harley Ever After

Helen was wearing that same veil when she and her new hubby pulled away from the chapel on Roy's motorcycle—the first of many journeys the couple would take together.

"We rode all over the country looking for a place to retire," says Roy, who was planning to step down as a school superintendent in Anadarko, Oklahoma, the following year. "We traveled to Sedona, Santa Fe and Taos, then down through Texas, Alabama and Florida."

But it was an extended pit stop at Helen's nephew's log cabin in Leiper's Fork, Tennessee, that helped the couple see they'd been looking in all the wrong places.

"The community just had this great atmosphere, like our hometown in Oklahoma," recalls Helen. (Although she and Roy grew up just 20 miles away from each other, they never crossed paths before their blind date.)

Soon after, the couple began house-hunting in Leiper's Fork, a rural town about 30 minutes south of Nashville. They spent two years searching for the perfect riverfront log home with no success.

"So we bought a nine-acre lot and built our own log home—and the pond to go with it," Roy says.

COVER UP. The earthy-red metal roof contrasts beautifully with the home's gray-toned stain and chinking.



Made to Order

Helen had a clear vision for the perfect mate—and the perfect log home. So she designed a preliminary floorplan before she and Roy even thought about finding a log home company. But when that time came, the couple decided wholeheartedly on Old-Timer Log Homes of Mt. Juliet, Tennessee.

“They were genuinely interested in helping us build *exactly* the home we wanted,” says Helen.

“Customization is an essential part of what we do,” says Royce Johnson, a log home consultant for Old-Timer. “It’s your home and it should come from your ideas. Just tell us what you want and we’ll try our best to make it happen.”

With Royce’s help, Helen found an appealing Old-Timer stock plan, which the duo then reworked to include her ideas. The customization was significant: the front became the back, the wings were flipped, and a screen porch and nearly 1,600-square-foot basement were added to the design.

During this process, Helen kept in mind that this was the home

where she and Roy would grow old together. “We wanted a home that’s easy to get around,” she says. “All our door frames are large enough for wheelchairs and our bathroom is handicapped-accessible. The only thing we’d need to do is add a ramp out front.”

“Helen had very specific design elements in mind,” Royce recalls. “Sometimes that doesn’t work. But in her case, most everything fell into place.”

In fact, the new plan worked so well that Old-Timer added the design—now dubbed “The Snow” model—to their log home catalog.

Gray Matter

Old-Timer stacked the logs, which were 6-by-12-inch, kiln-dried Eastern white pine with dovetail corners. In lieu of the more common brown hues, the Snows chose a stone gray stain and light gray chinking (both by Perma-Chink), which created a cool contrast against the barn-red, metal roof.

To complete the house, Roy stepped in and supervised the con-

tractors—also providing plenty of his own brains and brawn. Some of his projects included installing the stack-stone masonry, the tin roof, the hardwood and tile floors, and the staircases—one of which he built from timber cleared to make room for the two-acre pond out back.

Places, Please

Several of Helen’s design choices were made to accommodate the furniture that she and Roy had collected during the four years before they broke ground on their log home. “Each piece went in a certain place with plenty of room to walk around,” she says.

Roy crafted many pieces of furniture from 19th-century wood recovered from the property. Some favorites include the dining table and matching benches, as well as the bed in the master suite. He also fashioned several chandeliers and other Western-inspired pieces from deer horns.

“Friends from all over would send me deer horns,” he says. “After I ran out of those, I started buying them on eBay.”



HOMESPECS

Square Footage:
2,874

Log Provider:
Old-Timer Log Homes
800-467-3006
www.old-timer-log-homes.com

Southwest Furniture:
Lorec Ranch
www.lorecranch.com
405-478-2023

Southwest Spirit

Although the Snows ended up retiring far from Santa Fe, they still chose to infuse their log home with an elegant Southwestern feel. The paintings and alabaster sculptures are all originals by Native American artists Robert Redbird and Ted Creepingbear, acquaintances from Roy's Anadarko days. One of the guest bedrooms boasts a replica Colt revolver and Roy's childhood riding saddle.

"You just can't grow up in Oklahoma and not be a cowboy," he says. "But I don't ride horses anymore. I have the Harley now!"

Bluegrass Bliss

The Snows have continued to make additions to their log home in the three years since they moved in. Roy constructed a covered bridge with a red tin roof to match the main house. He also cleared trails for long walks and golf-cart safaris.

But his favorite addition is the 32-by-24-foot pavilion down by the pond, which has proved to be the perfect place to entertain.

"We have Pickin' and Grinnin' parties where you just bring your instrument and play," says Roy. "Around here, you never know how many people are going to show up. Could be 50 or 150. But we all call ourselves the Leiper's Fork family. It's a really great place to live." ■

