

Promised Land

Memories inspire an artfully crafted Idaho lake-view home.

STORY BY ROLAND SWEET | PHOTOS BY BRIAN BROWN

Built of hand-peeled Atlantic white cedar logs with 12-inch average diameters, this home features plenty of windows, decks and balconies to enjoy the view of Henrys Lake. Located at 6,500 feet elevation, it's built on a steep site, that dictated a vertical profile.

RIGHT: The arch in the beam above the stairs was carved to accommodate homeowner Rodger Camping, who is 6 feet 4. The upholstered leather chair is from Cabela's.

OPPOSITE: The owners bought the decorative screen for the river rock fireplace in Jackson Hole. Shown at the top left is part of a detailed carving by Gordon Alcorn.

Once Rodger and Jonnie Camping decided to finally build their log home in Idaho, they didn't hesitate to state their log preference: cedar. Even though the species isn't native locally, the Campings favored it because it's mentioned often in the Bible as a tree of high stature, most notably the cedars of Lebanon that Solomon used to build God's temple (1 Kings 5-6). The Campings didn't order their logs from Lebanon. Instead, they came from North Carolina's Great Dismal Swamp.

The finished home is more than just a retreat from their busy life running a ranch in Southern California. It's the realization of Rodger's long-held dream. "When we were growing up, Dad liked the outdoors, and almost every summer he'd take three- and four-week vacations, and we often camped in Yellowstone National Park," Rodger recalls. "I had such good memories of that area."

After Rodger and Jonnie married and started raising a family, they stopped coming to Yellowstone, but in 1985, they returned and bought a half-acre lot in a development at Idaho's Henrys Lake, about 15 miles west of the park. "Our goal was someday to build a cabin," he says. "We sat on that lot for a long time, then finally it came about that we were able to build there."

During the intervening years, the couple read log-home magazines collect-



ing design ideas and even ordered plans they saw advertised. They took them and other design ideas to Dan Davenport, an architect and builder, whose card they spotted in a local restaurant. "I remember Jonnie bringing a big binder full of ideas she wanted to incorporate into the home, in addition to the set of plans," Davenport says, adding that they worked out the design over several conversations

and a visit to the site.

Their main goal was a three-story front, with every bedroom facing the lake and distant mountains, and as much porch as possible. The design challenge was that the footprint had to be deep and narrow to fit the site. "We went right up to the boundary," Davenport recalls, "and even then had to get one log to cantilever over the line."





Artful logwork, a breathtaking view, openness and bold-but-casual furniture make this great room a treasure. Gordon Alcorn inscribed the window panel Bible verses.

CAN DO ALL THINGS THROUGH CHRIST
WHO STRENGTHENS ME
PHILIPPIANS 4:13

WITH GOD ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE
MATTHEW 19:26



The Campings designed the home with two master suites. "Our bedroom is upstairs for a better view," Rodger explains, "but we figured when we got old and couldn't go up and down stairs, we'd use the one on the main level."

They wanted some drywall for interior walls, but the home is rich with wood. Besides the Atlantic white cedar wall logs, ranging in diameter from 10 to 14 inches, it features Douglas fir posts, trim crafted using aspen and alder trees from the site, and hand-scraped walnut for the great room floor. Yellowstone Log Homes fashioned the logs and pre-assembled them at its yard in Rigby, Idaho, then shipped them

ABOVE: The chandelier above the handmade dining set is made from large fishhooks and embellished with wrought-iron figures.

OPPOSITE: Custom cabinets, granite countertops and an Italian tile floor highlight the kitchen. The decorative ceiling trim was made by applying dark cutout squares to lighter colored tongue-and-groove boards.

the short distance to Lake Henry. There, Davenport's crew reassembled the shell and proceeded to finish the home.

The work was not without its challenges. The crew had to fit the house, well and septic field on the tight site while observing the development's restrictions. "We had to dig the well behind where the full-log garage was supposed to go, so we couldn't

build it until we'd dug the well," Davenport notes, adding that the steepness posed logistical challenges for the building crew.

The Campings visited the site several times during the project. "As the home took shape, we made some changes in response to the space," Davenport says, adding that the modifications didn't affect the owners' budget significantly because their arrangement was a cost-plus contract, which pays the contractor for all agreed-on, construction-related expenses. The term "plus" refers to the contractor's allowed profit.

The homeowners wanted their logs to have a distinctive look. One of



ABOVE: The lower-level master bedroom includes a custom redwood bed, carpeting and a fireplace that backs to the one in the great room.



LEFT: The log-embodied master bath includes the same cabinetry, countertop and tile flooring as the kitchen.

OPPOSITE: The spacious sitting room on the finished lower level enjoys a panoramic view of the lake and features a rugged log post that ties in with the upper levels. The distinctive ceiling trim mimics that in the kitchen and dining areas, using cutout squares of wood over tongue-and-groove boards to create a pleasing pattern.



Davenport's crew, Eric Treutel, had accumulated some logs to use for furniture, so he and Davenport picked out several rich with character to distribute throughout the home. Treutel also made some of the furniture pieces; others came from Cabela's.

As the home took shape, the Campings asked the crew not to cut off the interior log ends so they could use them for carvings. The challenge was finding the right carver. While shopping for granite, they noticed that granite dealer Gordon Alcorn had done some carvings in a tree trunk. "The detail was unbelievable," Rodger says, "so we asked him to do our carv-

ings. He'd recently gotten married, and he spent his honeymoon at our cabin. He set up scaffolding and did the carvings, and his bride painted them."

After years of dreaming about building their cabin, once it was finished, the couple's enthusiasm for Henrys Lake was renewed. Determined to spend all the time there they could, Jonnie moved in for an entire year and eight months. That span included a winter that locals said was the worst they'd seen, making the couple grateful for the double roof that Davenport recommended to handle heavy snowloads and provide extra insulation.

Snow being a novelty for Rodger and

Jonnie, they enjoy snowmobiling winters through the Caribou-Targhee National Forest, right behind their place. Summers are busy fly-fishing on the small lake, which is renowned for its cutthroat, brook and cut-bow hybrid trout.

The Campings try to visit their cabin every few weeks, staying a couple of weeks each time. "I could even live here year round, if it weren't so isolated," Rodger says. This summer, they're hoping to stay for longer stretches and invite friends and family, especially their grandchildren. "It's a great place for all of us to be together," Rodger says, "and enjoy Creation." ▶

Entry to the house is at the rear, sheltered by a small porch and served by a full-log garage. The house sits 200 yards from Henrys Lake, a small, shallow alpine lake that is considered one of the finest trout fisheries in the West.

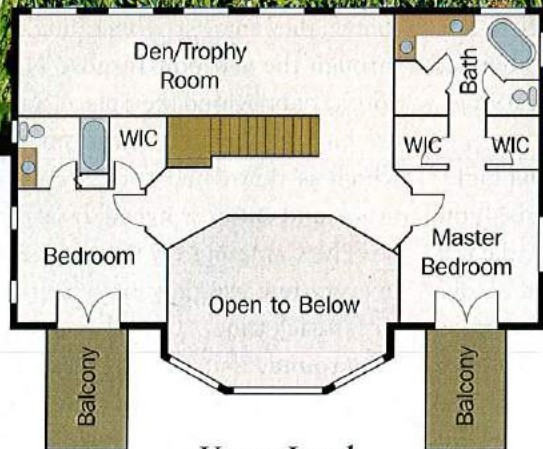
home details

SQUARE FOOTAGE: 4,000

LOG PROVIDER: Yellowstone Log Homes
(208-745-8108, yellowstoneloghomes.com)

DESIGNER/BUILDER: Targhee Construction
(406-640-1166, targheeconstruction.com)

The three-level home (finished basement not shown) focuses on the lake and surrounding mountains. The deck, bump-outs for the dining area and great room and roomy balconies for both upstairs bedrooms accentuate the view. A thoughtful feature is the twin master suites.



Upper Level



Main Level