

THE HOME'S STORYBOOK FEEL IS ACHIEVED BY A MYRIAD OF DETAIL ON THE EXTERIOR INCLUDING A MIX OF STACKED STONE, CEDAR SHINGLE, WEATHERED BARN WOOD AND COR-TEN STEEL ACCENT ROOFS.

the happily ever after cottage

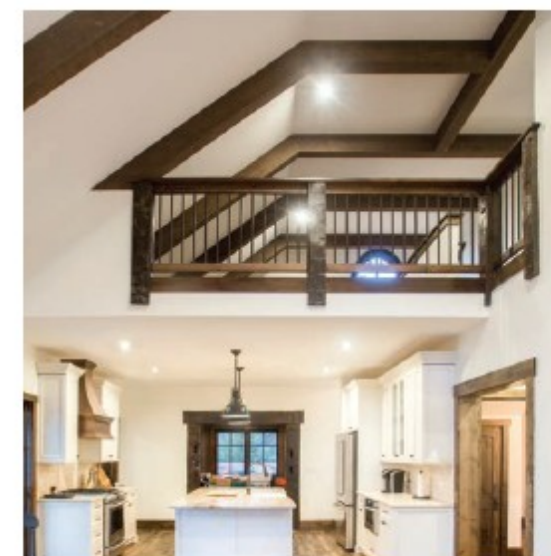
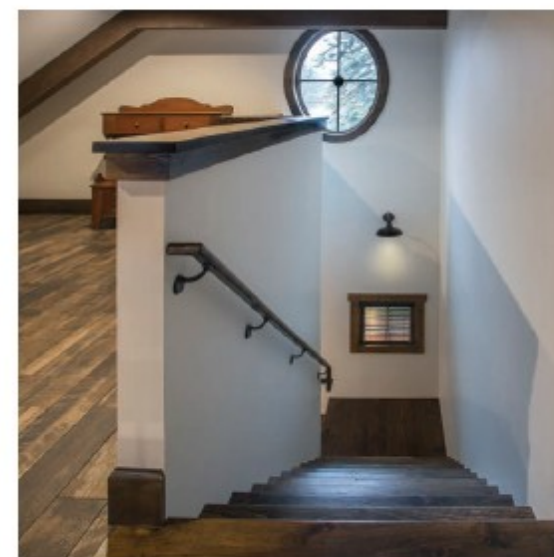
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THE RENOVATION OF AN OLD HOUSE OPENS A NEW CHAPTER FOR A YOUNG COUPLE WITH FAMILY TIES TO MULLETT LAKE



LEFT: WITH ITS ARCHED STONE ENTRANCE AND WHIMSICAL SWOOP ROOF, THE FACADE PRESENTS MORE STORYBOOK AMBIANCE.

RIGHT: DETAILS MAKE THIS HOME AS SEEN IN THE SWEET OVAL STAIRWELL WINDOW, WOODWORK MADE FROM RECLAIMED WOOD AND COBBLESTONE PAVERS ON THE LAKESIDE PATIO.



It began as a wedding wish: The bride's family had longtime ties to Mullett Lake, and she dreamed of being married on its shores. Although the bride and her family are from North Carolina, they have been spending summers on the lake since their grandparents and great grandparents rode the Michigan Central Railroad to the Mullett Lake station.

To make the wedding dream a reality, the bride's family purchased a 1950s ranch on the lake that would be used first for the wedding venue the following summer—

and then as a wedding gift to the young couple. The property is especially poignant for the family because still standing nearby are historic granite railroad markers and signage of the since-abandoned tracks.

The original plan for the old home was a simple renovation. But even the best-laid plans have an unfortunate way of changing. "More thorough investigation showed that there were significant issues with the original foundation, floor framing and other critical elements of the home's structure," says Michael Karr of Edgewater

Design Group, the architect who headed up the project.

With that news, the family decided to tear down and build again. The decision, made in late fall of 2014, meant working nonstop through the following winter to have the home ready for the August wedding—an event that would welcome hundreds of guests.

With the deadline on the horizon, Stephanie Baldwin, owner of Edgewater Design Group, and Karr set out to design a home that would embody the

daughter's vision of a storybook home—a vision inspired by another Edgewater project that she had toured.

The bride's father, a big-picture man, gave the architect the simple instructions: "Just make it awesome."

The mother and daughter, however, were much more involved, Karr says. "They have a very refined and instinctual design eye and were instrumental in the entire process, ranging from large massing decisions to the most minute material selection or detail," he remembers. "Given the expedited

design and construction schedule there were times when we would speak long distance a half-dozen times a day."

Karr refers to the home's style as "Northern Michigan storybook." On the exterior, traditional cottage materials such as stone and cedar shakes are accentuated by more materials such as reclaimed barn wood siding and corrugated COR-TEN steel accent roofs. "The client and general contractor were fantastic in their openness to new ideas and materials, and both the house cladding and the fence are

a result of this," Karr explains. "The fence is a combination of inexpensive steel wire mesh and steel angles, which is intended to age to the same rusted steel appearance as the COR-TEN steel roof accents. The wire mesh also provides a great balance where you achieve the physical separation needed without sacrificing views or the visual connection to the lake."

Inside, interior finishes include hand-hewn timber accents that frame openings and highlight features like the charming entrance reading nook, a homeowner idea. ▶



Natural materials shine against white walls and simply furnished rooms, which include family pieces, such as a grandmother's rocking chair and an heirloom table.

While the house has nods to vintage style throughout, the open-plan kitchen and living area allows for both contemporary living and entertaining. Low maintenance wood-like tile floors are a concession to the family's beloved dogs. Upstairs, an open loft adds second-floor living space and looks out over the living room below. "It creates a lower ceiling area at the kitchen while allowing for more expansive ceiling at the living room," Karr says of the design.

As it turned out, the winter of construction was one of the worst in recent memory. "Nearly record-breaking cold with several subzero days made working along the shore of Mullett Lake particularly brutal," says Karr, who credits Brett Bandi, of Bandi Builders, with doing an incredible job given the very demanding and high-pressured schedule.

Difficult deadline aside, the storybook home was the venue for a storybook wedding. On a beautiful August day in 2015, with some 300 guests in attendance, the bride and groom were married in and around their beautiful new cottage—a

cottage that they'd baptized the Beeline Bay in honor of one of the trains that once plied the tracks.

"It's a privilege to design any family's home but when that home has to also play a key role in such an important day, and then watching it happen successfully was just a great experience," Karr says. 🌿

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