

Family-friendly lakeside

By Mary Jane Doerr
Photos by G. Randall Goss

Elegant, expansive and sophisticatedly simple, the Dunbar cottage is serenely situated on the very southern edge of Burt Lake. The water is calm, the breezes gentle and the shoreline spattered with fine samples of Petoskey stones. The first clue this house is really a place for children to hang out is the glass cabinet display of beach stones carefully collected by the Dunbars' grandchildren. Near the cabinet is a wooden figure "Bob, the Food Sheriff," a relic from the cottage's former décor.

The Dunbars have owned this summer home since 1999 but Stephen Dunbar has been on Burt Lake since 1952. He had waterskiied and explored every inch of the lake, so when he and Karen wanted to purchase a larger summer home, they knew exactly where they wanted to be — on the southern edge where the water was quiet and the winds mellow.

This original English-style home had been decorated, as Karen says, in cowboy and Indian décor. The ceilings were dark blue, the entrance was blocked from a view of the water, asbestos tiles covered the floors and log siding covered the front. Rugged "hunting" lodge furniture completed the decorating scheme. While



Water views

The Dunbars' summer home is situated on the southern edge of Burt Lake, where the water is calm, the winds mellow and views nothing short of spectacular.





Erosion problems? Nothing 6 tons of carefully placed boulders can't fix.



Stephen loved it, Karen was not so excited.

As the couple began spending more and more time on their nine acres of wooded wildlands, by 2014 they decided they wanted to make the "cabin" their own and a place for their grandchildren to thoroughly enjoy.

They began interviewing architects and found Stephanie Baldwin of Edgewater Design Group in Petoskey, who respected their wishes to preserve elements of the house they liked. She had creative ideas to enhance the overall plan such as bumping out a wall to preserve the staircase and the newly renovated bathroom. They also "clicked" with Ben Fettig of Harbor View Custom Builders. His careful attention to details, such as the attractive trim work that makes the inside so beautiful, was just one of the things they admired about his work.

Thoughtful best describes the couple. Everything they decided to do in this total makeover had a purpose — from the "barn" on the cliff overlooking the property for the kids' toys and the truck, to the basement and porch addition on the side of the structure. As Stephen said, the house had great bones and was something they could work with to turn into a Northern Michigan-style home.

Nothing was done quickly, but carefully considered. They didn't start with the house but first addressed the erosion problem on their beach with six tons of carefully placed boulders. The design, the work

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of Chad Stemple and Natural Landscape, provides easy access to the water and areas of natural uncomplicated low maintenance foliage.

Karen's choice of colors throughout the house is drawn from those natural surroundings on the property; blues from the sky and water, browns from the woods, and greens from the leaves and foliage. She chose Benjamin Moore colors OC-65 Chantilly Lace for the woodwork; 2108-40 Stardust for the living room walls; OC-32 Tapestry Beige for the master bedroom, foyer, dining room, kitchen, family room and basement; and HC-146 Wedgewood Gray for the bathroom. Misty Air OC-44 was used throughout the upstairs.

The living room fireplace of limestone and brick was original so Stephen and Karen integrated it into their overall plan. Emmet Brick and Block enhanced it with a stunning limestone slab. It is not the Dunbars' style to discard things, so the rustic furniture from Modoc Log



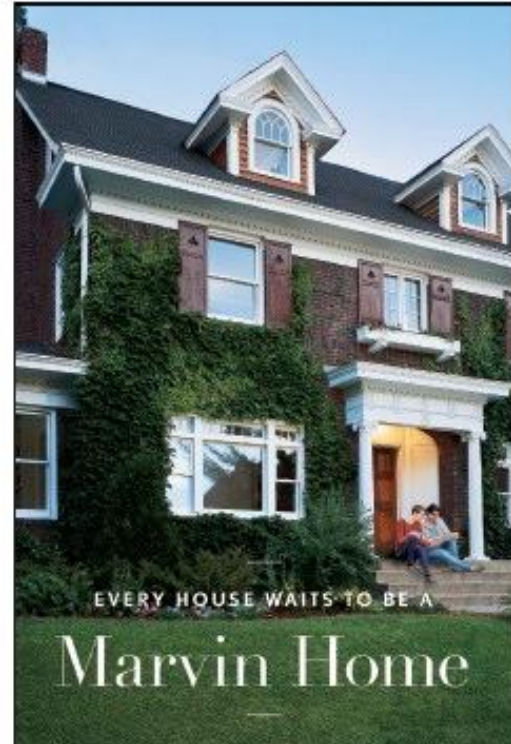
Furniture was moved to their new basement which Stephen loves and calls his room.

The fireplace bricks were copied on the outside of the house below the new sable brown siding by CertainTeed. They changed the location of the entrance to their



home to get full benefit of the view of the water through the large windows that augment the front of the home. Karen brought in treasured family pieces including a bench made from a Jenny Lind bed and blended them with other furniture she liked and things she found functional such

as the stylish sideboard for their fine dishes. Glass sectioned pocket doors separate the main rooms but continue the openness of the front of the house from one end to the other. The asbestos tiled floors had to go and were replaced with hardwood floors from the Mazama Handscrapped Tropical Collection.



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The porch is a dream for entertaining and children's parties with a "pull-up" design table for eating and desk work. The vertical four-track windows from Eze-Breeze make the room usable three seasons of the year.

Most intriguing is the two-kitchen design — one for daily use, and another across the hall for food preparation. The second one is separated with a pocket door and makes food preparation for company and parties convenient, easy and safely stored until it is needed. There is no mess in the main kitchen and food is always ready when friends and family arrive.

The Dunbar home is a wonderful blend of cultivated taste with fun, friendly indestructible fabrics and furniture that serve well for parties and children's days. The house is also dog-friendly due to a most charming feature: a special, lighted, doggy room under the stairway closed off by a half size railing.

A baby grand completes the atmosphere of a home that welcomes children and showcases everyone's hobbies and interests.



The two-kitchen design in the Dunbar home assures the kitchen for daily use (top) is always company-ready.

Karen Dunbar's choice of sophisticated wall colors enhance the home's natural surroundings.

A pull-up table in the porch area (left) is ideal for children's activities.

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RESOURCES FROM THE DUNBAR HOME



Builder
 Harbor View Custom Builders, Petoskey;
 Ben Fettig, owner, Nick Fettig, project manager

Architect
 Edgewater Design Group, Petoskey;
 Stephanie Baldwin, owner/president

Interior design
 Karen J. Dunbar Interiors

Kitchen island pendant
 Hubbardton Forge Brindille Collection

Living room swivel chairs
 Henredon fabric, Robert Allen Villa,
 paisley print, color frost

Bookcases
 Drexel New World, dove gray finish

Sofa
 Vanguard; Kravet ultrasuede mushroom,
 trim brush fringe

Paint colors
 Benjamin Moore



Window treatments and soft furnishings
 Kathleen Thatcher Designs,
 Petoskey

Woodwork
 Thomas & Milliken Millwork,
 Petoskey

Kitchen cabinets
 Great Lakes Fine Cabinetry,
 Sault Ste. Marie

Countertops
 Capital Granite Inc., Petoskey

Sound system and electrical
 Bear River Electric, Petoskey

Security
 Sunrise Electronics & Security,
 Petoskey

Heating and cooling
 M&M Plumbing and Heating,
 Indian River

Doors and windows
 Old Mission Windows, Traverse
 City; house windows, Kolbe;
 three-season porch, Eze-Breeze

Stone
 Emmet Brick and Block, Petoskey

Stonework (house, patios and porches)
 Custom Works Construction;
 Nick Fettig, owner

Landscape
 Natural Landscape, Indian River;
 Chad Stemple, owner

Irrigation
 Aqua Irrigation, Cheboygan;
 Ed Showan, owner



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