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Indian Summer 2007
CAPE COD LIFE PUBLICATIONS
Display until November 13, 2007



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ORLEANS WOODLAND GETAWAY

VINEYARD AUTUMN HARVEST

CRAFTSMAN-STYLE HOUSE BY THE SEA

BACK TO NATURE

WITH A DEFT TOUCH, A HATCHVILLE COUPLE CARVE LIVING SPACE FROM A WOODLAND SETTING.

BY MARY GRAUERHOLZ - PHOTOGRAPHY BY DAN CUTRONA

Some houses simply occupy a property. Others flow with the land, following the lines of nature.

Then there are houses that seem to have a living, breathing relationship with the landscape. So nurturing and natural looking, these homes make a collection of boards and nails look as organic as the surrounding earth, plants, and sky.

This very special partnership between land and its owners is exemplified in the Hatchville home of Stephen Stimson, a landscape architect, and architect Jill Neubauer. Perched on Deep Pond and surrounded by majestic pines, the house and outbuildings seem to roll with the hillocks and valleys of the woodlands that meander to the edge of the pond. Here, the land is as important, if not more so, than the house.

So to emphasize the landscape around it, the Neubauer-Stimson home is simple and rustic, its luxurious features arising in understated details. "It is a very straightforward, linear house," says Neubauer.

Stimson, who oversaw every detail of the landscape, says, "The spaces between the buildings are as important as the buildings." So the design and positioning of the buildings on the site required a very close professional partnership between the couple, who have been married for 19 years. Although Neubauer was the primary designer of the house and Stimson designed the landscape and outbuildings, both saw the project as a whole, created by both. "It has been a design collaboration over the entire site," Stimson says.

The house and the property's outbuildings—including a barn, a shed with a cozy guest bedroom, a paddock, and riding ring—are mostly unadorned architecture that let the bucolic setting dominate. But as is the case with so many things that seem simple, there was a great deal of dreaming and scheming to produce the home's quixotic personality: rustic yet urbane,

OPPOSITE: The homeowners created a little bit of Wisconsin camp in their Hatchville home, amid the pond and pine tree surroundings.

EAGLE RIVER



THIS PAGE, FROM LEFT: Like much of the house, the kitchen is a blend of modern and rustic, with pine trunk supports, pine planks, and Fiestaware next to stainless appliances, sleek counters and steel I-beams. A curved wall separates the bathroom from the sleeping area in the master bedroom. The corner windows make the most of the view.



sophisticated yet simple, luxurious yet barebones.

The result is a home as rich in character as its inhabitants, Neubauer, Stimson, and their daughters, Annie, 15, and Elizabeth, 12.

Stimson and Neubauer, who met at Harvard University Graduate School of Design, poured their histories into the creation of their home. Neubauer grew up in Wisconsin, in “a white-pine camp tradition,” a place of grand lakes and untamed nature. “My favorite place in the world is my grandparents’ Wisconsin cabin,” Neubauer says. Stimson’s childhood was spent on Charbrook Farm in Princeton, Massachusetts.

Stimson knew that Neubauer missed her Wisconsin roots, so they planned a house familiar enough to let her feel at home, and roomy enough to host her large family every year for Christmas. The couple, who have offices in Falmouth, looked for four years for a site, until the day Stimson called Neubauer and reported, “I’ve found you a piece of Wisconsin.” Neubauer, inspired by Frank Lloyd Wright, loves modern architecture, and both she and Stimson are drawn to antiques. So for their house, they settled on what Neubauer calls a “modern camp.”



"A modern cabin in pine woods made sense," Neubauer says. "It lets me know I can find my way in New England."

Their builder, Phil Miller of Miller Starbuck Construction in Falmouth, shared their vision of creating structures from a mix of natural elements and modern architecture, situated in a rustic environment. Measuring about 20 feet by 60 feet on three floors, the home has a slanting shed roof, with exposed white pine rafters. Generous windows afford a different view from every side—the expansive pond from one window; from others, a glimpse of woods, a rising sun, the beautiful barn. There is no paint in the house, just pigmented plaster in shades taken from the surrounding nature: soft velvety green, deep rust, and sand. White pines cut from the site were dried, peeled, and reintroduced into the house as the structural system. The line of trees, along with an exposed steel beam, holds up the three floors and introduces a strong organizing element to the house. "The trees are so soulful, but they're working," says Neubauer.

The first floor is open and roomy, encompassing a spacious kitchen and a nearby living

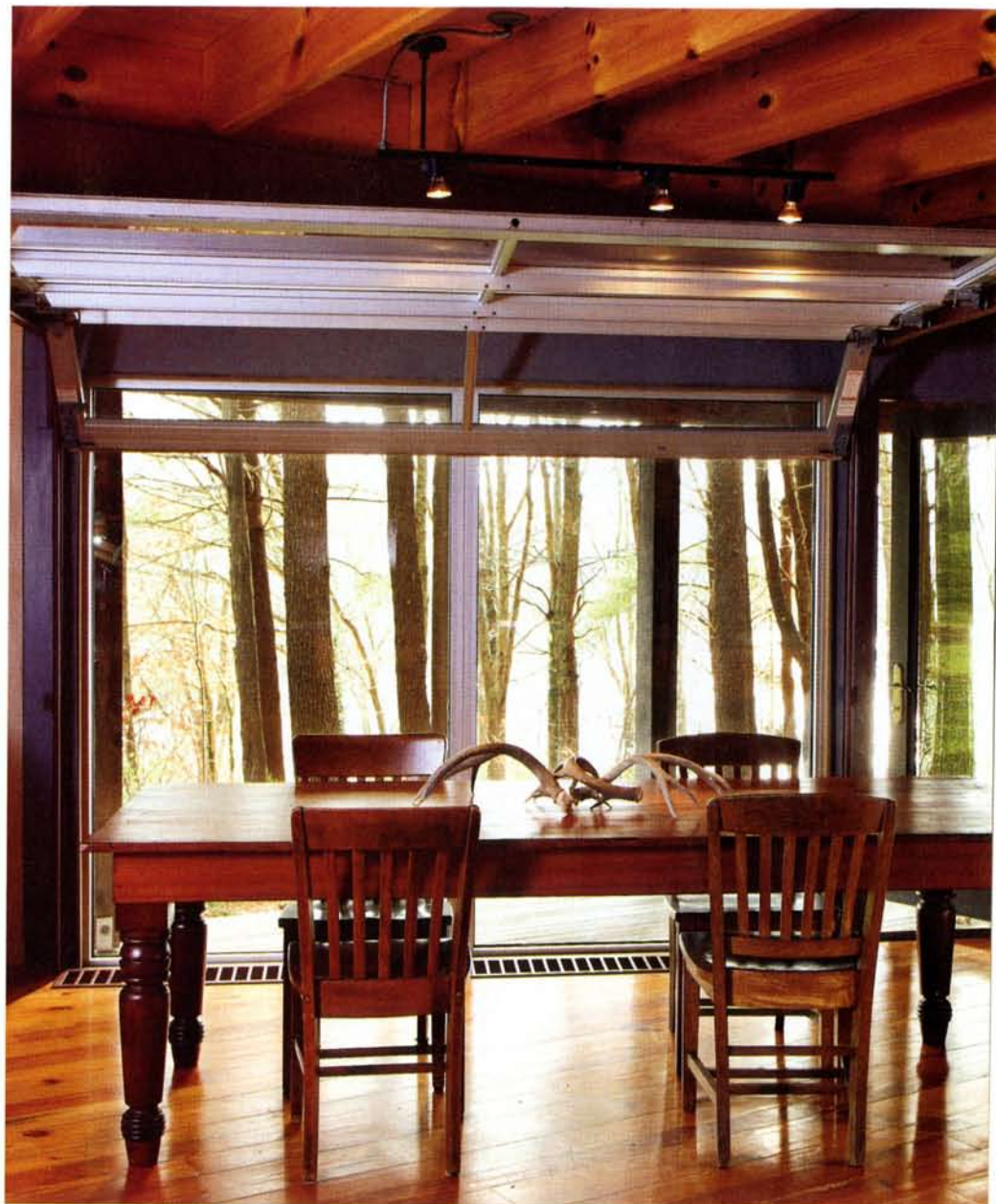
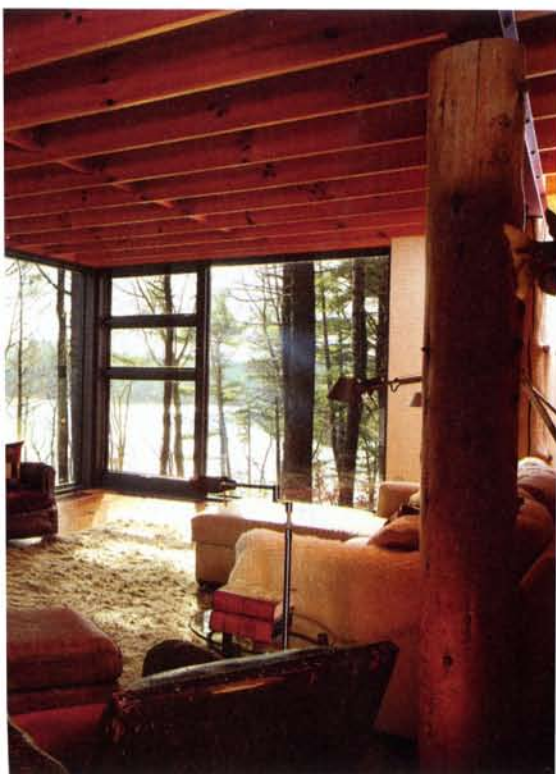
THIS PAGE, FROM LEFT: The Neubauer-Stimson house is decorated with family collections, and awards and artwork from their daughters, who know how to make the most of the relaxing, rustic environment. The living room fireplace is set into a concrete wall, in stark but balanced contrast to the pine beams and hewn supports. Dining among the trees is easy in this house.



room, where the family spends most of their time together. The open plan is modified by a free-standing concrete wall, to intentionally break the view of the pond from the kitchen and dining area, so that the living room presents the full effect of the water view.

The kitchen is another mix of rustic and modern, with stainless steel appliances that contrast with open shelves of brightly colored Fiesta ware and a gorgeous antique farmer's table, which Neubauer found at the Kane County Fair in Illinois. Above, the exposed steel beam and milled pine provide another contrast. "I love exposed structure," Neubauer says. "We're not hiding anything."

The kitchen sweeps into the living room, framed by large windows that wrap around two walls, and on the pond-facing wall, a fireplace with a steel mantel built into the freestanding concrete wall. The floor is antique pine milled from reclaimed wood by Cataumet Sawmill in Falmouth. A cozy note is introduced with a gray New Zealand wool rug and a large Ultrasuede sofa. Two antique leather club chairs from a Los Angeles gallery are juxtaposed with an Eames chair, modernity defined. "Every architect has one," Neubauer says of the Eames, smiling.



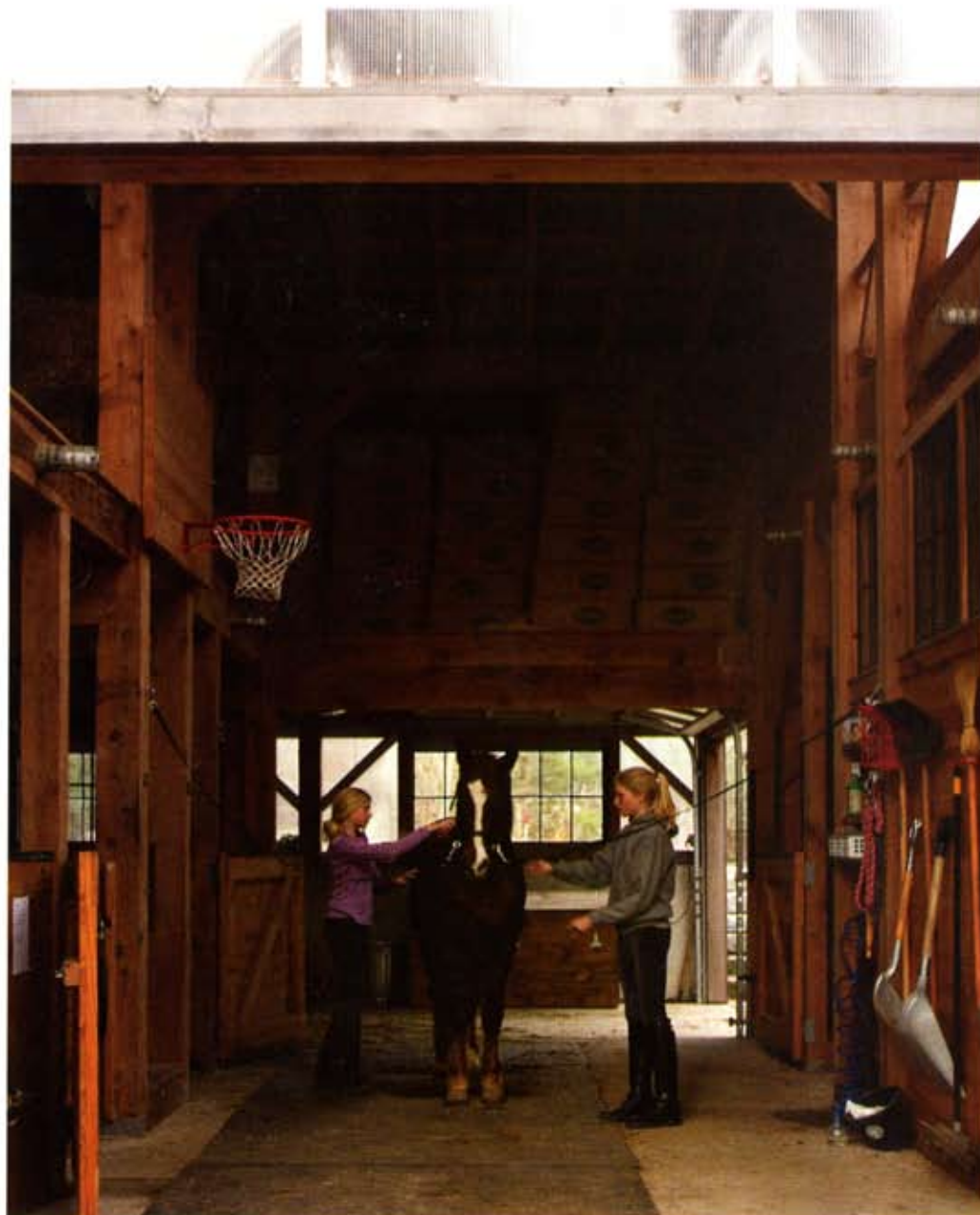
On the second floor, a long hallway has exposed columns of the massive tree trunks cut from the site, each tree extending from basement to roof. On the walls are family collections and photographs. The master bedroom echoes the living room, with glass extending around a corner to take maximum advantage of the view, through enormous pine trees down to the pond. A curved rust-colored plaster wall behind the built-in bed defines the sleeping area and carves out a small bathroom.

The girls' bedroom is a dreamy space, centered on a filmy blue canopy draped over their beds and a handmade frame that Stimson built from white birch trees on his parents' farm. All around are signs of the girls' childhood: ribbons that Annie has won in horse shows, a queue of Barbie dolls, artwork by the two. Built-in dressers and closets work with the room's simple lines. In the girls' bathroom is another juncture of modern and antique, an old-fashioned bathtub next to a shower of cobalt-blue ceramic mosaic tile. The guest bedroom is a simple space, with a comfy bed dressed in a velvet coverlet and a wall of old family photographs.



The out buildings and main house are surrounded by natural but planned spaces, making the three-story house feel like it's in the midst of a pine forest. The girls get plenty of riding time with a paddock and riding ring among the out building spaces.

NEUBAUER GREW UP IN WISCONSIN, IN A "WHITE-PINE CAMP TRADITION," A PLACE OF GRAND LAKES AND UNTAMED NATURE. THE COUPLE LOOKED FOR FOUR YEARS FOR A SITE, UNTIL THE DAY STIMSON CALLED NEUBAUER AND REPORTED, "I'VE FOUND YOU A PIECE OF WISCONSIN."



Outside, Stimson created a beautiful segue from house to natural woodland—an “outdoor room” with table and chairs, a hidden grill, and an arbor overhead. The space, part manmade and part nature, says a lot about Stimson’s feelings about the land—an instinct that has won him dozens of prestigious landscape architecture projects over the country. Among his work is a maze-in-progress at Heritage Museums & Gardens, a year-long project that Stimson is donating to the Sandwich museum.

Most of the five-acre property has been left wild, with structures for living carved out of the woodland. “There’s a lot of topography here,” Stimson says. “For me, landscape is more about making space you can occupy, to create areas that are habitable and functional. It’s about honoring the trees, honoring the systems that the house is made of.”

FOR MORE INFORMATION, SEE MARKETPLACE ON PAGE 114.

Mary Grauerholz is managing editor at Cape Cod Life Publications.