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The Colonial Concepts Log Home was shipped to its current location on 10 acres of forest and rolling hills near Hanover, then constructed by Chris Schaus of Inline Builders. **OPPOSITE MIDDLE LEFT:** Guests are welcomed to the country by this rustic sign at the end of their long laneway. **OPPOSITE BOTTOM LEFT:** A charming garden shed to match the house. **OPPOSITE BOTTOM RIGHT:** Homeowners Sherry and Eric Hallman enjoy working in one of the many beautiful gardens planted on the property.

SKI SHACK TO *Country Estate*

BY JIM FOX // PHOTOGRAPHY BY SANDY MACKAY



A rustic wooden sign before a bright forest backdrop of cedars, pine and bright maples states: WELCOME TO OUR COUNTRY SHACK. The welcoming sentiment is genuine. The friendly hospitality of Eric and Sherry Hallman is never in doubt as they invite you into their comfortable log country home between Durham and Hanover.

A correction – the new log home the two have custom built is far from the ski shack that once stood on these grounds.

The gravel laneway to the home is covered by a high forest canopy of towering trees that protects one's passage when snow falls and leads to a rustic log home set in a country landscape of forested rolling hills.

The Hallmans chose this 10-acre site because of its proximity to their workplace, **Hallman Motors** in Hanover. "It's only 10 minutes from town," says Sherry. "After working with the public all day, it's nice to escape for a while. The house is simple but nice and quiet. It's so private. We love it here!" *Continued on page 43*



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A huge slab island with bar seating provides a great space for the Hallmans to entertain guests and prepare tasty feasts. **BELOW LEFT:** The dining area off the kitchen is set for a simple lunch. **BELOW RIGHT:** Antique furniture and collectibles acquired over the years give the new kitchen a familiar comfort.



The house, a **Colonial Concepts Log Homes** model was shipped to the present site from Lindsay, Ontario and the logs were stacked then constructed by **Chris Schaus** of **Inline Builders**, who is also responsible for the stunning interior finishing.

Eric and Sherry lived for almost three years in a small house on the property while their dream home was being constructed. This transition home was built in the late '50s on the foundation of a cross-country ski chalet.

The terrain, so suitable for skiing, is what originally attracted the homeowners. In Eric's words, "We've had this parcel of land for seven or eight years. We spent some time looking for a piece of property in the country with plans of building some day. The reason we liked this site is because there was no level land. In fall the property is really, really nice." Sherry agrees, "In the fall, with our eastern exposure, as the sun goes down in the west, the reflections make the maple bush look like it's on fire – it's awesome."

Excavating and designing of the "flow" of the land was done by **Cedarwell Excavating** with input from Schaus. **Ground Effects Landscapes** of Hanover prepared and seeded the planted areas, and this season, Schaus added a unique curved entrance path of interlocking brick from **Grey Bruce Brick & Landscape Supply** of Hanover. The many attractive flowerbeds enhancing the home, created by Sherry herself, provide a stunning backdrop for the garden crafts she creates. "Flowers are my passion," she smiles.

"I always had in mind a log home," she says. "Now I can fill it with family heirlooms and antiques that I've collected over the years." The historic pieces that grace the home seem to have always existed here. The furniture complements the comfortable country interior. From the refurbished dining set to the unique, antique dressers and bureaus found in the master bedroom, the treasured pieces that Sherry has introduced are perfectly at home in the rustic setting.

"We looked at plans for years," explains Sherry, "focusing on the outside rather than the inside," Eric adds, "We found the exterior of the house we liked with Colonial Concepts, then we designed the interior ourselves." Inside, the Hallmans wanted an open-concept design for easy entertaining. In their previous home, the couple found that their space was broken up and guests inevitably gathered in the kitchen. Their new, much more spacious kitchen includes a huge island and stainless steel appliances (**Modern Appliance Centre** in Hanover) and has become, as expected, the social hub of their new home too, except no one is left out here. Sherry helped Schaus design the solid wood cabinetry and Schaus built and installed the cabinets. *Continued on page 44*

A solid wood staircase anchors the open-concept living space and leads upstairs to the guest rooms and downstairs to the walkout basement. **BELOW LEFT:** An incredibly efficient geothermal system installed by Tom Ramage of Northern Heating and Ventilation. **BELOW MIDDLE:** A woodwaiver lifts firewood from the basement to the main floor, next to the fireplace. **BELOW RIGHT:** With a crackling fire, the living room represents true country comfort.



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The large master bath lets in lots of natural light and has plenty of charm with a relaxing vessel tub, his-and-her pedestal sinks and glassed-in shower. **TOP RIGHT:** The Hallmans used antique furniture pieces as washstands and bathroom storage throughout the home to maintain the country allure. **BOTTOM RIGHT:** The master bedroom sports a colourful quilt and direct access to the deck through double patio doors.



Next to the food preparation area, a refinished mid-century modern dining table painted a tasteful cream is ready to accommodate visiting guests. "I love this table," says Sherry. "It has plenty of extra leaves for occasions like Thanksgiving when we have all the family home."

A wood-burning fireplace, faced in river-rock cultured stone, rises 23 feet to the cathedral ceiling and is the focal point of the family room. A unique feature is the woodwaiver that allows Eric to easily lift logs from the basement to a wood box beside the hearth. "The fireplace basically heats the entire house in winter," Eric says. "It saves a lot in energy." So does the home's state of the art geothermal energy plant installed by **Tom Ramage of Northern Heating and Ventilation** in Owen Sound. The modern water furnace and in-floor heating for tiled areas, along with forced air, air conditioning provide the Hallmans with energy-efficient cool summers and warm winters. "Tom and his people were more than accommodating in helping me spec a system out for our new home," says Eric. "They had someone come in and give us a couple of different options on systems and explained why they went with the system they did, and it all made sense to me. There was no cutting corners with Tom and I now understand why."

The main floor of the Hallman home is purposely designed by the homeowners to allow for easy flow-through of people with an eye to functionality. The large three-car garage has easy access to the kitchen via a mudroom. Steps away lies a large laundry room with a modern combination washer/dryer, complete with lots of freezer space and a vintage mid-century sink.

The master bedroom, beside the family room, opens onto the huge sun deck. The en suite bathroom with its modern stand-alone tub and large glassed-in shower, like all the main floor spaces, is flooded with natural light and provides a wonderful view of the forest beyond.

"We designed the home to be plain and easy," states Sherry. "We wanted the office and guest bedrooms upstairs and everything on the main floor to be within reach and easily accessible." The couple's hopes have been realized.

The owners' thorough pre-planning results in a comfortable country home that is both practical and beautiful. This cosy log home is at one with its environment and in sync with the couple's busy lives. **OH**