

ROOFING 101

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# At Water's Edge

A lakeside pavilion  
offers shelter with a view

A dated concrete-block storage shed on the beachfront of Mack and Carol Travis's property on Cayuga Lake put them in a quandary.

Should they just replace the shed's damaged roof? As the roofing deteriorated, the wildlife began moving in. Should such a prime location be given over to a shed?

As they discussed the situation further, Mack and Carol thought of their post-and-beam vacation cottage and a new vision emerged.

## Continuing the Theme

In the early 1980s, Mack and Carol Travis had been digging around in the backyard of their 20-acre parcel and happened upon a buried slab of concrete. They had heard a rumor that there once was a caretaker's cottage somewhere on their property, but that it had been torn down. At the time, Mack's parents had an apartment in nearby Ithaca, New York, and were spending their winters in Florida. Mack and Carol decided to clear the concrete of its years of debris and leaves and convert it into a pad where Mack's parents could park their motor home in the summer.

"Several years later, my parents settled year-round in their Ithaca apartment," Mack says. "They would come out to visit us on the weekends because they loved it here so much."

Mack and Carol decided to build a vacation cottage retreat for his parents on their lake property. "They could visit us as often as they liked and still have their privacy and their own belongings around them," Mack explains. The couple contacted Woodhouse: The Timber Frame Company and worked with owners Patrick Seaman and Steve Keller to complete a 900-square-foot timber frame cottage that houses a living room, one bedroom, a bath and a loft sitting area.

Thinking back to that positive experience with Woodhouse and how much they love the cottage,

Mack and Carol contacted Patrick to see what might be done with the shed. Their desire was for a shelter on the lake and a pavilion where they could read and meditate.

"Even as wonderful as the lake is, we don't want to spend all of our time outdoors in the sun and wind," Carol says. Steve met with the couple and suggested adding a second-story timber frame to the existing concrete-block structure. Within a week, he presented the couple with a plan for a 440-square-foot open room with a meditation loft.

Carol was adamant that overnight guests would stay in the main residence or at their guest cottage and the beach house would be for day use only. She purposefully did not include a kitchen or any running water. A composting toilet was to be located on the ground level.

## Fun in the Sun

On one of their outings, Carol and Mack came upon a field of glacial cobblestones. They asked the farmer if the stones were for sale. In the end, they purchased all the stones they needed for their deck support pillars for only \$40.

Carol assisted with all of the final finish and staining of the pavilion. She furnished the interior with items that are suitable for comfort and are durable enough to withstand sand, water and wear-and-tear.

The pavilion is generally buzzing with activity most weekends during the summer. For one of those weeks, Carol hosts a kids' camp for a dozen or so children of family and friends ages 2 to 12 years. The youngsters enjoy a host of water activities including swimming, kayaking and fishing.

When colder weather comes, the Traveses still enjoy their retreat. "Even in the winter, it is a delightful place to be," Mack says. "We put in a Vermont Castings stove that keeps the beach house cozy. We love to spend an afternoon reading or just watching the geese from the deck."

In addition to the main residence, the guest cottage and the beach pavilion, the property sports a boat-house where the Traveses store their antique boats, a

OPPOSITE: Cedar siding and architectural shingles protect the exterior of this pavilion at the edge of Cayuga Lake. A wrap-around, pressure-treated deck is supported by cobblestone pillars and pine uprights. "We are able to see two miles across the lake and 15 miles in either direction," owner Mack Travis says.

RIGHT: Light floods through the arched French doors and windows to tie this pavilion to its natural setting. Carol furnished the beach property with two sofas and a chair-and-a-half for comfort. Jay Seaman fashioned the bird sculpture.

BELOW: The two-story pavilion's frame is Eastern white pine, as are the tongue-and-groove ceilings and walls, and flooring. Two parallel purlin beams support the roof system. Woodhouse builder Jay Seaman constructed the ship's ladder leading to the meditation loft, as well as the stained glass and wrought iron railing.



fleet that includes a 1941 Garwood Runabout, a 1947 Chris Craft Sedan Cruiser, a 1954 Penn Yan motor boat, and a 1918 Old Town canoe, reserved for those who wish to paddle around the lake.

“Working with Woodhouse is such an enjoyable experience,” Mack recalls. “They are very creative in their designs, often finding ways to accomplish the same goal less expensively. They also were respectful of our suggestions.” Mack says that the Woodhouse staff recommended high-quality materials, but at the same time, helped keep their budget in line. “For example,” he says, “they provided us with some recycled red oak beams that were incorporated as the pavilion’s first-floor system and exposed to the lower level.”

Carol and Mack often gravitate to the pavilion

when they need time away from the pressures of their everyday lives. It is their place for quiet time and meditation.

“This pavilion is open to the world and protected from it at the same time.” Carol says. “We occasionally have very strong winds at the lake, but the timber frame is so sturdy that it doesn’t shake or budge.”

Mack adds, “We feel so close to the earth at Cayuga Lake and the beautiful timbers in the pavilion have such a traditional feel. Our time at the pavilion intensifies our bond with nature.”

Resources:

**Woodhouse: The Timber Frame Company,**  
(800) 227-4311, [www.woodhousetimberframe.com](http://www.woodhousetimberframe.com)



What was once an ordinary, square concrete block storage shed is now covered with stucco and reinforced with an oak timber frame to handle the load for the second-story pavilion. Copper accents and gutters contribute to the building's elegance.