

Welcome to lakeside living on Sturgeon Lake. The Arbour family cottage deck hosts neighbourhood get-togethers and many sunny family fun days.

LAP OF THE *Lake*

Ah! Those sweet summer months with the family! We look forward to them through 10 months of hard work and tough sledding at school. But then, when they arrive, too often after the first few idyllic weeks, all parents hear is the familiar summer refrain, “I’m bored.” *Continued on page 39*

BY EILEEN ARGYRIS // PHOTOGRAPHY BY SANDY MACKAY

FAR RIGHT: Views and natural light are emphasized on the lakeside of the new Arbour family cottage. Landscaping and stonework are in progress. **RIGHT:** Family friend and building contractor Ryan Hayter of RWH Construction. **BOTTOM LEFT:** The post and beam portico at the front door signals spaciousness within. **BOTTOM CENTRE:** From the slate-floored front foyer, a wooden stairway with iron posts climbs past a cathedral window to the second floor bedrooms. **BOTTOM RIGHT:** From the main floor great room, the Arbour family looks up to the second floor landing.



But, even with three active young sons in the house (Daniel, 16; Anthony, 12, and Zachary, 11) all Neil and Sherry Arbour hear are the shouts of exuberance from the dock as the boys and their friends get ready for wakeboarding, tubing, fishing, jet-skiing, boating, swimming... you get the picture.

Sherry has been summering on Sturgeon Lake near Fenelon Falls since she was a kid; her parents' cottage is next door. "I grew up on this lake," she says, admitting that as a teenager, she wasn't always an enthusiastic cottager; she missed her friends in the city. That's not a problem for her boys. Today, their cottage – really a year-round home in which the couple plans to retire – offers 6,300 sq. ft. of living space and can easily accommodate 16 people overnight so everyone can bring friends to the cottage to share its considerable attractions.

The house, clad inside and out in warm neutral colours, natural woods and stone, has six designated bedrooms but there are all kinds of nooks where a person can curl up with a book during the day or bunk down comfortably at night.

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When the weather outside is blustery, the family can gather on the comfy circular sofas in front of the fireplace in the great room. **OPPOSITE TOP:** The dining area opens from the kitchen in the foreground and shares the double-sided fireplace with the ground floor great room behind. **OPPOSITE BOTTOM:** The lakefront view is extended to the second floor landing above the great room.



Scenic Sturgeon Lake, part of the Trent-Severn Waterway, is an ever-present, ever-welcome part of life. A wall of windows along the east (lakefront) side of the house – including the basement – floods every room with light and panoramic views of the Arbours' 100-ft. water frontage and dock.

Throughout the house, the strategic design gives a totally open feel. With this open concept plan, there are few interior walls and doors. Maximum use is made of glass in interior and exterior doors to bring the outdoors in. Interior walls also have cut-outs to highlight the lake views from every corner of the home. All stairwells have open risers to emphasize the space and airy feel. The safety enclosure around the raised outdoor deck, visible from the windows of the great room, is made of tempered glass so the view is not compromised from any angle.

The great room is designed to accommodate a "campfire" arrangement of two massive overstuffed couches and matching loveseat, set in a circle facing the double-sided fireplace with a matching ottoman in the middle to cradle feet or snacks. Above is a lofty cathedral ceiling from which hangs a unique elk-antler chandelier. The great room opens at one end into a party room with stools around a standing-height bar/games table and all the fixings for everyone's favourite summer cocktails. The other end of the great room opens to a spacious kitchen-dining area, which makes use of the other side of the double-sided fireplace for ideal dining ambience, especially in winter or on evenings when the lake is stormy.

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Sherry Arbour's "dream kitchen" has hazelnut-glazed, oyster-coloured cabinetry. Natural light streams in during the day. Nighttime, there are many lighting options, from brilliant to subtly subdued.

feature

The kitchen, with its hazelnut-glazed, oyster-coloured cabinets and stainless steel Jenn-Air appliances, is Sherry's fantasy come true. "I love the kitchen, the spaciousness, the way you can look out the windows when working at the sink or the stovetop," she says. "To me, it's a dream kitchen." Needless to say, with three growing sons and tons of visitors, it's also a well-used room.

Sherry was the sharp-eyed shopper who spied the great room's elk chandelier at Abacus in Etobicoke, a specialty shop near their home in Maple, where she was assured elk shed their antlers naturally.

Also on the main floor is the generous slate-floored foyer with an abundance of light and open staircase winding up and downward, the media room (to stave off teen and pre-teen boredom when the weather isn't perfect) and a hexagonal-shaped sunroom with a second fireplace off the dining room. *Continued on page 48*

RIGHT: Natural wood and muted colours frame the staircase from the main foyer. **FAR RIGHT:** Dining options include formal sit-down service, or casual snacking at the kitchen island beyond. **BOTTOM LEFT:** The family's cat keeps watch in the hexagon-shaped sunroom, a three-season retreat off the dining room. **BOTTOM RIGHT:** Throughout the cottage home, warm neutral colours and natural woods are repeated.



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The second floor landing leads to a home office and a wing of bedrooms beyond.
BOTTOM RIGHT: The sound of waves lapping on the shore wafts into the master bedroom.
BOTTOM LEFT: Cool and calming colours are used in the boys' bathroom on the second floor.



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Overlooking the great room is the second-floor loft with bedrooms off the landing. Stunning wide-board floors of reclaimed pine run throughout the house, supplied by Antique Impressions of British Columbia and installed by family friend and building contractor Ryan Hayter and his team from **RWH Construction** of Fenelon Falls.

The house was custom designed by the Arbour family with input from **Integrity Construction Services Inc.** of Lindsay. Extensive use was made of local contractors during construction, including **Young's Landscaping & Maintenance** of Fenelon Falls, a dock from **Houston Marine Systems** of Cobocok, **Colin Coppins Electric** of Cameron, **McNamee Plumbing** of Fenelon Falls, and well drillers **G Hart & Sons Well Drilling Ltd.** of Fenelon Falls. Nearby suppliers included Frank Franzen Masonry of Kinmount, Dan's Pro Painters of Oakwood, **Link Heating & Air Conditioning**, **Shepherd Environmental Services** of Cobocok and Jackson Water Conditioning of Woodville.

In years gone by, amenities like three-and-a-half bathrooms and central vacuum were unheard-of in cottages, but this family dwelling, with its superior construction, insulation and weather-worthy windows and doors from All Weather Windows, is well-suited for year-round living.

In their retirement years, when perhaps their children have children of their own, Sherry and Neil will be able to fondly remember summers past as they wake each day in the early-morning hush to the irresistible sound of the eternal lake lapping the rocky shore. **OH**

TOP RIGHT: French doors open from the multimedia room onto the games room on the ground floor. **MIDDLE RIGHT:** Upstairs, the boys battle it out with an electronic game. **BOTTOM RIGHT:** In the games room, glass-fronted wooden cabinets provide display space over the bar counters. Below is ample storage space for beverages and games. **BELOW:** Let the games begin! Take a comfy, elevated cushioned seat at the wooden pedestal table in the games room.



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