

Built on a tiny peninsula, Gary and Susan Ball's lake house offers a spectacular view of one of the cleanest lakes in Ontario.

BOTTOM LEFT: Stone steps lead from the three-storey home to a large deck on the lake.

BOTTOM RIGHT: An angled pergola guides visitors to the front door of the stone and wood-sided home.



family treasure ON KENNISIS LAKE

BY LORI FRANCYK // PHOTOGRAPHY BY SANDY MACKAY

Soaring high above the Haliburton Highlands in his small float plane, Gary Ball savours the ultimate feeling of freedom. A pilot since he was 16, Gary has seen his share of spectacular sights. Nothing compares, however, to the breathtaking view from the veranda of his six-bedroom, country home on Kennisis Lake. As the sun sets over the lake's pristine waters, Gary and his wife Susan delight in a panorama of rich, vibrant colours. "We love sitting here enjoying the sunsets. It's one of our favourite rooms in the house. It's perfect," says Gary, relaxing in his bright, cheery, fully screened Haliburton room. *Continued on page 27*



TOP LEFT: Reclaimed wood was used to create some of the home furnishings with an antique look.

BOTTOM LEFT: Builders carefully finished new wood in the cabinetry and block panelling to complement the reclaimed pine flooring.

ABOVE: Pine and American poplar were used in the coffered ceiling of the living room where custom-made furniture gives it a warm and welcoming ambience.

Located southwest of Algonquin Park, Kennis Lake is regarded as one of the cleanest lakes in the Trent River watershed. The Balls' home is perched on a tiny, wooded peninsula with 1,650 feet of lakefront property that spans 70 acres. Gary and Susan moved to Florida 16 years ago but recently decided it was time to build a house in Canada. "When the grandchildren came along, we started to think about a country home," says Susan.

Although the custom-built lake house is new and modern, it has the feel of a much older home that has been in the family for generations. "We wanted this place to look like it's been here for years," says Gary, a co-owner of Medical Data Systems, a Florida-based company. Building materials including reclaimed and distressed pine, block panelling and

multi-sized, American poplar beadboard enhance the impression that the house is a time-honoured family treasure. Custom-made furniture, designed to look antique, further adds to the home's cosy appeal.

A warm, welcoming foyer, featuring a fireplace that ascends through all three levels of the house, greets friends and family as they enter. Gary and Susan credit architect **Harry Morison Lay** of Toronto and designer **Susan Calhoun** of **Collage Designs** in Toronto, with bringing to fruition the look they hoped to achieve both inside and out. "Susan did full working designs. Her level of detail is staggering. We were fortunate to have all the right people in the process. Everyone was really professional and talented," says Susan. *Continued on page 30*

feature



OPPOSITE PAGE: Arm chairs flank the fireplace in the kitchen, providing ultimate comfort for anyone watching the cooking.

FAR LEFT: Black leather chairs provide ample seating at the dining table and alongside the kitchen island.

LEFT: Gary and Susan Ball love entertaining family and guests at their Haliburton Highlands lake house.

BELOW: The large granite-topped island with its built-in sink provides plenty of room when the Ball family gets cooking. An alcove circling the dining area bathes the room in morning sunlight.





An air tub provides soothing relaxation with a view of the lake in the master bedroom's en suite bathroom.

TOP RIGHT: Trimmed with cherry wood, the master bedroom is in a separate wing on the main floor. The cabinet at the foot of the bed contains a television that emerges for late night entertainment.

BOTTOM RIGHT: With its 14-foot high ceilings, the library doubles as an office where Gary conducts business for his Florida-based company.



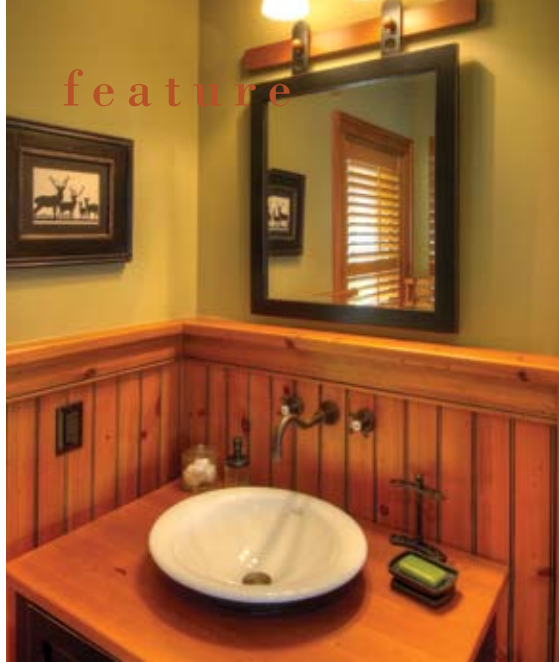
A large, bright, airy kitchen facilitates the family's joy of cooking. "We love to cook as a family. There are lots of windows and you can see the sun rise from here. The kitchen is the centre of activity," says Gary. Although the cookery features modern appliances and an ample island, equipped with a large sink and granite countertop, it's the framed, pine cabinets resembling fine furniture that give the room a country feel. A walk-in pantry adjacent to the kitchen provides generous storage for supplies as well as a sink and additional space for food preparation.

A separate wing of the main floor, with the master bedroom and bathroom, is reserved for Gary and Susan's personal use. An adjoining home office allows Gary to conduct business away from his company's head office in Florida. This wing of the house is trimmed in cherry wood

and features an impressive 14-foot ceiling in his office and library.

Gary and Susan love to entertain family and friends and have incorporated comfort, beauty and convenience on the second storey where guests stay. There are four, unique guest bedrooms, each with an accompanying bathroom that contains different fixtures and finishes. "We wanted each room to have a different feel and be very comfortable for our friends and family," Susan explains. "There are a total of seven bathrooms in the house and no fixtures are the same," Gary adds. Hydronic heat in the bathroom floors further enhances guests' comfort by keeping everything nice and warm. The Balls, who have been married for 36 years, have two daughters, Jana and Marla, as well as two granddaughters, Kate and Julia. *Continued on page 34*

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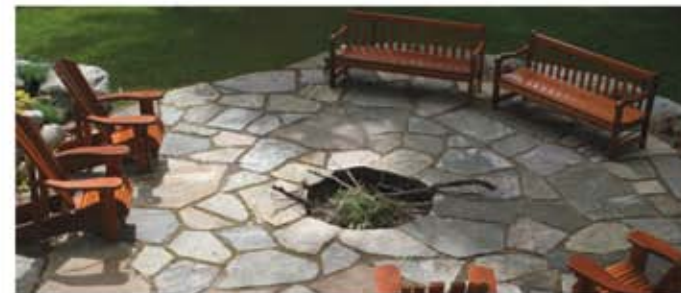


The sitting area in the guest bedroom at the eastern end of the upper floor has a panoramic view of Kennisis Lake.

TOP LEFT: Each of the home's seven bathrooms has its own style of fixtures and finishes.

BOTTOM LEFT: Above the main entrance, this screened veranda provides guests with outdoor space overlooking the lake.

BELOW: This second floor bedroom provides guests with a fireplace and a private deck overlooking the lake.



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A screened-in veranda, situated above the main entrance, allows guests to linger over a cup of coffee while they enjoy a picturesque view of the lake. A fridge, coffee maker, sink and other small appliances provide guests with the opportunity to be self-sufficient during their stay if they wish.

It isn't unusual for **Rod Thurston**, principal owner of **Rodco Enterprise**, who built the Balls' lake house, to drop in on former clients for a cup of coffee and a chat. A resident of Haliburton since he was 12, Rod enjoys the beauty of the highlands and the magnificence of the ever-changing seasons. "I like to remain in contact with my clients. We provide whatever they need after the project is finished," he explains. With nearly 30 years of experience in the construction industry, Thurston is committed to delivering a high-quality product that features superior craftsmanship and outstanding attention to detail. "The size of the house or price range doesn't matter. We provide a good quality house," he says.

Gary says he and Susan have a great relationship with their builder. "Rod has an unbelievable group of tradesmen. They take a tremendous amount of pride in what they do," he says. Some tradesmen and sub trades have worked with Thurston for over 25 years and bring a wealth of experience and dedication to the company. "We have developed a relationship within our sub trades," Thurston says. "Our employees all want to achieve the same results. We're like a big family."

There are many features that make Gary and Susan's home unique. The most unusual, according to Thurston, is the fact that it has been designed to fit into a 100-foot setback from the high water mark of the lake. "There are 43 corners and it makes the outside very unique," he explains.

The house may be unique but what makes it special is the care, attention and heart that Gary and Susan have put into every aspect of their lakefront home. "We've left a lot of ourselves here," Susan says. **OH**



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The three-season Haliburton room, one of the Balls' favourites, is an ideal spot to enjoy the sunset or a relaxing view of Kennisis Lake.

ABOVE: Granddaughters Kate and Julia smile from the top bunk in the children's guest room.



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